United Purpose COVID-19 Situation Report 1st July 2020

Highlights

- Under our UK Aid funded resilience programme (PROSPER) a Gender and Social Inclusion (GSI) strategy was finalised and adopted and the team are now in the GSI action planning process - an example of the commitment UK Aid and the INGO/UN consortia has to achieving gender equality in Malawi. The programme has also just finished the registration of an additional 17,326 cohort 2 project participants in Balaka and Mangochi districts who will benefit from various interventions including farm input and training in Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA), watershed management and disaster preparedness including Covid-19.

- With funding from UNICEF, 66 gender responsive emergency prefabricated latrines (EPLs) (30M, 30F, 1B, 1G) have been installed at 7 ETUs and at Mwanza and Mchinji boarder posts. Four additional latrines have been installed and water quality tests conducted at Machinga Technical college where screening of returnees was held.

- This week our Nutrition Projects Manager is working with the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS to develop Nutrition in COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

- With funding from Charity:water, through our Dowa WASH Programme (Di-WASH), we rehabilitated 8 non-functional water pumps. Drilling has commenced and 136 improved water points are planned for completion by November.

- Our Embassy of Ireland funded livelihoods programme (ASPIRE), organised COVID-19 learning forums at district level involving CSOs, District Information Officers, the Police, Social Welfare and community members.

The Situation

As of 30th June there are 1,265 (989 active) confirmed cases of COVID-19; 16 deaths, 260 recoveries and 14,173 samples tested. 41 COVID-19 testing sites are now operational. Approximately 60% of cases are imported with the remainder through local transmission.

640 Malawian returnees and deportees were received by humanitarian partners, including UP, in the past week. Another 48 returnees will arrive this week and will be screened at Machinga Teacher Training Colleague.

With elections concluded there will be reduced exposure through rallies and more focus is expected on the pandemic. One day after the inauguration of President Dr Lazarus Chakwera the Directorate of Road Traffic and Safety Services announced compulsory use of face masks on public transport.

Office Closure: With recorded cases increasing rapidly, UP Malawi offices remain closed for the first half of July. This is reviewed bi-weekly by UP’s Senior Management Team.

Training and Resources: UP COVID-19 Focal points are conducting online refresher training this week across all offices. Internal control systems have been reviewed and strengthened including new contact tracing tracking procedures for our staff.

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Livelihoods and food security

- The UK Aid Funded resilience building project (PROSPER) has just finished the registration of an additional 17,326 cohort 2 project participants in Balaka and Mangochi districts who will benefit from various interventions including farm input and training in Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA), watershed management and disaster preparedness including Covid-19.

- Under our EU funded Pro-Resilience Action Project (Pro-ACT), 61 farmers received irrigation inputs (1 Kg maize, beans and assorted vegetable seeds), 19 project participants received goats (5M, 14F) and 34 (6M, 28F) received chickens under the livestock pass-on scheme in Mulanje. The team supported a live radio broadcast on Mzati radio on integrated disease surveillance and response highlighting the need for communities to alert the DHO of returnees using uncharted roots.

- Our Embassy of Ireland funded livelihoods programme (ASPIRE), organised COVID-19 learning forums at district level involving CSOs, District Information Officers, the Police, Social Welfare and community members. Strong engagement with local leaders was agreed is of paramount importance. In response, we held meetings with community leaders in 10 Village Development Committees addressing myths and raising awareness of COVID-19 prevention and preparedness.

WASH and healthier lives

- With funding from UNICEF, 66 gender responsive emergency prefabricated latrines (30M, 30F, 1B, 1G) have been installed at 7 ETUs, and Mwanza and Mchinji boarder posts. Four additional latrines have been installed and water quality tests conducted at Machinga Technical college where screening of returnees was held.

- UP is the WASH lead in an Integrated Health, WASH and Communication Preparedness and Response for COVID-19 funded by UK Aid through UNICEF. This is a unique partnership with three UN (UNJP), five INGO, 6 national NGOs as well as four academic institutions to strengthen the capacity of health systems in Malawi to prevent, contain and treat COVID-19. Joint site assessments are underway in Nsanje, Chikwawa, Thyolo and Chitipa.

- This week our Nutrition Projects Manager is working with the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS to develop Nutrition in COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Sustainable energy

- Our Embassy of Ireland funded ACCESS project reached 3,000 people in Dedza with public announcements combining COVID-19 messages with promotions for stoves and solar lamps. We are now ready to interview candidates for our study into ethanol briquettes as an alternative to charcoal in urban areas.

- Under the Scottish Government funded EASE project we have successfully completed the testing phase of the micro-grid installation with approval from the Malawi Energy Regulatory Authority (MERA). Our GIZ-EnDev funded RBF project completed the formative research stage of the social behaviour change campaign for the Chitetezo Mbaula. Results will be shared with stakeholders in the CLEANER cooking sector at a workshop next week.

Gender equality

- Under our UK Aid funded resilience programme (PROSPER) a Gender and Social Inclusion (GSI) strategy was finalised and adopted and the team are now in the GSI action planning process. Several meetings between consortia partners as well as UP internal meetings were held to discuss the implementation of the GSI pathways through programme activities to ensure gender and social inclusion is mainstreamed throughout the programme cycle.