

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW

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1.0 THE NEED FOR A VISION

Since attaining political independence in 1964, the Malawi Government has been concerned with addressing various development issues. During the 1960s and 1970s, the approach to development planning was mixed. It comprised an approach oriented towards state intervention but at the same time allowing for private enterprise to thrive. However, such private enterprise had heavy political underpinnings especially in the ownership of estates but also in how the Press Group crowded out other private initiatives. The private sector was also over-regulated as evidenced by government price controls and various administrative and legal controls. Emphasis was on the agriculture sector, that is, farming enterprises and agro-based industries. The manufacturing sector was not actively promoted.

Development management was approached through medium term plans covering ten-year periods. The first 'Statement of Development Policies (DEVPOL)' covered the period 1971 to 1980. The second covered the period from 1987 to 1996. In addition, the Government has used the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP), a five-year rolling investment programme; Sectoral Policy Framework Papers (PFPs); and the Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEFs) as complementary development management tools.

The economy performed well in the 1960s and early 1980s registering average annual growth rates of 6%. However, the economy's growth eventually faltered because of external shocks - the oil crisis, drought, political instability in the region and technological developments in the western world which created substitutes to the country's primary implementing Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in which the Policy Framework Paper (PFP) - a three-year rolling policy programme - has been the key document for coordinating the implementation of medium-term economic policy objectives. In addition, there have been specific sectoral programmes on policy changes and investment covering periods of between three to five years.

There is increasing concern that in spite of past economic growth rates which compared favourably with other sub-Saharan countries, progress on basic long-term development goals has been slow and somewhat disjointed. There has not been significant social and human

development. This, together with the unpredictable nature of the global economy, has necessitated the use of long-term strategic thinking and management of the development agenda. The Vision framework provides one such long-term strategic approach to development management.

A long-term approach to development is seen as appropriate because most of the development problems, including policy prescriptions, take a long time to be implemented and to achieve their intended outcomes. The unpredictability of economies, finance, politics and many facets of human life have made strategic planning and management essential in corporate and development management.

In addition, the Vision is based on a long-term multi-sectoral approach. This is so because it has been established that the hitherto economic approach to development has contributed to the failure to attain long-term development goals. Development is multi-faceted and multi-sectoral and involves changes in the social, political, technological as well as economic realms. All these changes interweave and influence each other. The new Malawi Constitution has underscored the multidimensional nature of development by describing "development" as comprising social, cultural, political as well as economic change.

A Vision provides a framework in which a country formulates, implements and evaluates short and medium-term plans of both the public and private sectors. It provides detailed background information and justification for the aspirations of the people of the country and the recommended strategies for achieving the aspirations. However, a Vision does not provide details of projects and activities that have to be implemented in order to realize the aspirations. Identification and implementation of these detailed projects and activities are the responsibilities of government departments and private organisations.

A major and important difference between the Visioning process and past medium term planning efforts is that development relied on natural economic comparative advantage. But the Visioning process helps the country to create the economic competitive advantage that can lead to significant economic growth and consequently improved material well being of its people.

1.1 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING THE VISION

The conceptual framework for developing the vision is adapted from the National Long-Term Perspective Studies (NLTPS) approach formulated by the African Futures Group in Abidjan. The NLTPS methodology is used as a tool for setting priorities for development and development management. It emphasizes the following conceptual elements: strategic

long-term thinking, shared vision and visionary leadership, citizen participation, scenario planning, strategic management and national learning. These are briefly explained below.

1.1.1 Long-Term Strategic Thinking

The need for long-term planning has been underscored by various technocrats and scholars from very early times. It is generally agreed that a miscellaneous group of projects, each unrelated and uncoordinated to a master plan for the development of the economy as a whole, would take a country nowhere and may lead to chaos. In spite of this understanding, the concept of long-term strategic thinking has so far been missing from most development management efforts of countries such as Malawi. Development plans in Africa typically covered four to five year periods while Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPS) have even shorter time horizons. However, the importance of longer-term perspectives to development has now been recognized especially in explaining the economic successes of countries such as Korea, Malaysia and others in Asia.

An important element of long-term strategic thinking is for Malawi to avoid relying solely on her "natural" comparative advantage. The country has to examine various factors strategically and then determine what and where her national competitive advantage will be.

1.1.2 Shared Vision and Visionary Leadership

Long term strategic thinking should incorporate a shared Vision of where the country needs to go and how to get there. In corporate strategic management, the importance of a shared Vision is recognized in motivating the members of the organization to achieve corporate goals. At the national level, a worthwhile achievable vision of the country's development priorities is one that is widely shared and becomes a force that motivates everyone towards greater achievements for the benefit of the country. The competitiveness of a nation is based on its ability to mobilize domestic resources in accordance with a shared Vision of the future and an appropriate and sustained strategy for achieving it.

Thus, the processes of formulating shared visions to guide a country's development efforts requires, among other things, visionary leadership. This is leadership that is constantly forward-looking, creative and strategic in its thinking as well as actions. It also means that a way should be found to review the ever-increasing number of development issues and agree on those that represent genuine national aspirations and therefore, the country's development priorities.

1.1.3 Citizens' Participation

Experience has shown that lack of popular debate over national development policies and implementation impose severe constraints on motivation for high productivity. Citizens should be encouraged to participate not only in forging a shared vision for the country but also in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the development process. The NLTPS process helps to create awareness of developmental issues and needs within government and the general public. It is intended to enlist the people's active input as well as sustained support and interest in the resultant Vision. The success of the Vision depends on the public's awareness of their responsibilities to achieve the Vision.

The role of technocrats is to enhance this participation and make the citizen aware of which aspirations are technically feasible given the permutations of public, private and community resources. This avoids creating a wish list of aspirations for which the citizens hope that the government is their benefactor.

It is important to have this kind of approach because resources will always be insufficient to meet all the people's wish lists. Thus, the people participate in the decision-making process and setting of priorities and should express their thoughts regarding the allocation of public resources. In this way, the technocrats will be certain that the plans they have finally made reflect the legitimate aspirations of the people. This increases the chances of success in the implementation of the final plans.

1.1.4 Scenarios Planning

Long-term strategic thinking requires long-term forecasting. However, in today's rapidly changing world, conventional forecasting methods are inadequate because they cannot help to anticipate major discontinuities or raptures not easily captured or predictable using these methods. The oil crisis of 1973-74 is a good example of an event with major cross-impacts but which could not be forecast using conventional methods. Similarly, innovations in biotechnology may lead to precipitous fall in the demand for some high value agricultural products of the developing countries and yet trend analysis or other conventional statistical analyses may not help very much in predicting these. Instead, the use of scenarios to forecast what is likely to happen in the futures has been found to be a more appropriate approach to futures analyses.

Scenario planning is a technique whose aim is to achieve interactive forecasting by using strategic intelligence from the economic, political, environmental, cultural and technological domains. Scenario planning

may also take account of past trends, future bearing events, the role of main actors and critical uncertainties of the social system.

Scenarios are hypothetical stories of the future which are constructed for the purposes of focusing attention on causal processes and decision points. Since it is often argued that unexpected changes in the external environment were partly responsible for non-implementation of development plans in Africa, it is necessary to anticipate such problems by planning for alternative scenarios on the out-turn of the external factors. Scenarios ensure that plans avoid sub-optimal development paths by exposing negative events that might happen in the future and preparing in advance how to take care of these.

1.1.5 Strategic Management and National Learning

Steps should be taken to realize shared visions. This involves the process of strategic management. Strategic management involves the determination of the basic long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise, the adoption of appropriate courses of action to achieve the long-term goals and the allocation of resources necessary for accomplishing these goals. The concept of strategic management treats planning and implementation as complementary activities. In the course of implementing the activities, there is need to learn from mistakes and to steer the course in line with the vision.

1.2 PROCEDURAL PHASES IN DEVELOPING THE VISION

The process of Visioning can be divided into five phases that are interactive:

- Phase I Issues Identification
- Phase II Basic Studies
- Phase III: Formulating scenarios/Vision
- Phase IV: Strategy Formulation
- Phase V Implementation and Evaluation of the Development Strategy

Phase I is about identifying the hopes and aspirations of the people and grouping these into themes and issues that may need detailed understanding and action.

Phase II provides the knowledge base for the design and implementation of the national development strategy. It is necessary to emphasize that the purpose of the studies carried out is to identify important factors which will help determine alternative scenarios as well as the strategies for realizing preferred scenarios or avoiding unfavourable ones. The studies must cover the economic, social, political, environmental,

cultural, and technological domains in order to provide a solid base for an effective development strategy to be designed in Phase IV. The information collected under the various domains constitutes a Strategic Intelligence Matrix (SIM) - which is a systematic investigation and compilation of information relating to all the domains mentioned above. Phase II takes advantage of existing studies and knowledge as far as possible and focuses on themes, issues and sectors which have significant bearing on the realization of national aspirations. The country's internal and external environment needs to be analyzed in order to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT Analysis) confronting the nation in her endeavours to realize aspirations.

As part of the SIM, the country's historical and present situation is analyzed to identify relevant trends and other factors, including actors. The analysis of the role of actors is important to an understanding of future development and to the design of appropriate development strategies.

Phase III involves constructing scenarios about the future. A country can therefore explore alternative scenarios of its future, decide on the future vision, and work to realize the vision.

Phase IV is concerned with strategy formulation. The chosen strategies would take into account what the citizens desire (Phase I), what can be done (Phase II) and what the long-term goals or visions (Phase III) are.

Phase V is the development, implementation and evaluation of short term, medium term and long term plans to achieve the Vision.

1.3 THE MALAWI VISION PROCESS

The main objective of Malawi's Vision 2020 is to help the Government, the private sector and the people of Malawi to embark on a development path that arises out of the consensus from the NLTPS process. The Vision provides the framework for national development goals and the policies and strategies to achieve them. The outcomes of Malawi's Visioning process are as follows:

- a. a consensus between Government and the Civil Society, through a participatory National Long-Term Perspective Study process, regarding the long-term development direction of the country;
- b. a successfully completed, nationally conducted and systematic study of Malawi's past, present and future options for social and human development;
- c. a long term framework for the government to prepare its short and medium term plans;

- d. a national participatory machinery for preparing and up-dating long-term perspective studies on development;
- e. an integrated data base on development issues affecting Malawi; and
- f. a civil society sensitized to the need for, and the process of strategic development management.

To achieve the objective of creating the Vision, the Government set up a National Core Team (NCT) comprising 10 persons from the private sector, the Government and the University of Malawi to manage the process. The National Core Team (NCT) was assisted by a Working Group (WG) which comprised of over 60 people. The WG comprised a cross-section of stakeholders such as chiefs, trade unionists, civil servants, representatives from the private sector, interest groups, Members of Parliament, women's groups, representatives of people with disabilities, representatives of political parties, the Police, the Army and the media among others.

The steps that led to the creation of the Vision and its accompanying National Development Strategy were:

1. training of the NCT in the methodology for developing the Vision (January 1996)
1. conducting the First Vision (NLTPS) Workshop at the Kwacha Conference Centre between February and March 1996 whose output was a Draft Vision;
2. conducting nation-wide consultations with Malawians to solicit their aspirations and perspective of how to attain them (July - September, 1996)
3. implementing various information, education and communication (IEC) activities to increase the people's awareness of the Vision process;
4. conducting networks of Malawian experts on the various strategic issues and actions which were identified during the First Vision Workshop at Kwacha Conference Centre. The experts were given the task of reviewing the background papers, the ideas from the nation-wide consultations, and all other documentation on the Vision. The review led to the development of strategies for achieving the Vision. The outcome of this stage of the Vision process was a draft chapter on each of the strategic issues identified, namely: good governance; sustainable economic growth and development; vibrant culture; well developed economic infrastructure; food security and nutrition; human resource development and management; science and technology-led development; fair and equitable distribution of income; and

- sustainable environmental management.
5. conducting the Second Vision (NLTPS) Workshop (January, 1997) held in Mangochi;
 6. Conducting a National Conference (November 1997) in Blantyre; and
 7. Launching of the Vision by the State President, His Excellency Dr Bakili Muluzi on March 31, 1998.

The training of the NCT lasted for four days. Although the period was short when compared to other countries (where it lasted three weeks) the objective of exposing and imparting the NLTPS methodology to the NCT was achieved.

During the First Vision Workshop (February 19 - 8 March, 1996) participants (members of the NCT and WG) went through the first four phases of the NLTPS process. Major aspirations that were identified during the workshop were grouped under the themes of; good governance. Competitive economy, fair and equitable distribution of income and health, food security, human resource development, vibrant culture, socioeconomic infrastructure and science and technology-led development in a sustainable environment. Subsequently, "sustainable environmental management" was added as a separate strategic issue and "Competitive Economy was changed to "Sustainable Economic Growth and Development".

During the Workshop the country and its environment were thoroughly examined using the strategic intelligence matrix (SIM). This was the beginning of Phase H (basic studies) of the NLTPS methodology. Based on this analysis, several scenarios for the future were developed. These scenarios, together with information from Phase 1 (issues identification), were used in formulating the draft national Vision.

The Basic Studies Phase (Phase ID, was made up of four major activities besides the SIM from the First Workshop. These were: preparation of working documents on each of the strategic issues; nation-wide consultations; networking; and further refinement of SIM.

Members of the NCT wrote background papers (Working Drafts) on each strategic issue. The aim of the papers was to provide further insight on the strategic issues. In view of time constraints, the papers were produced solely on the basis of desk research. The substance of the papers was complemented by information collected during the consultations.

The aim of the consultations was to obtain the aspirations of the larger and more diverse group of Malawians. AR districts in Malawi were visited.

Consultations were made with various groups such as students in primary and secondary schools; the general populace in urban and rural areas; and specific interest groups such as the judiciary, the police, trade unions, lending institutions, people with disabilities, women's groups, youth groups, district development committees (DDCs), District Executive Committees (DECs) and political parties. The consultations brought the Visioning process to the people and new aspirations and strategies emerged under each of the nine strategic issues. The extent and nature of the consultations showed that the Vision was a result of a truly shared process.

Throughout the Visioning process, information, education and communication (I.E.C) activities were relied upon to solicit for additional contributions of views and ideas from Malawians. These activities took the forms of radio announcements, advertisements, and programmes. Other IEC activities involved the print media through newspaper articles and commentary as well as publication of some papers on Vision 2020 from the general public.

During the Networking stage, experts in the various strategic issues analysed data and information collected under their respective strategic issues. This material comprised information gathered during SIM and SWOT analyses, background papers on each strategic issue, information collected from the consultations exercise and correspondence from Malawians within and outside the country. The main output of the networking exercise was a chapter on each strategic issue.

One of the objectives of the Second NLTPS Vision Workshop was to review the chapters and related action plans. Other objectives were: to review or revise the Vision Statement since the original one was constituted as an Initial Concept; to discuss the institutional framework for the implementation of the Vision; and to formulate the national development strategy.

Following the Second Workshop, the chapters were revised based on the observations made by the Workshop participants. The revised Chapters were subjected to further discussion in consultation meetings with Cabinet and officials and from all Government ministries and parastatal organisations.

A final draft Vision Document or Draft National Development Strategy 1997 - 2020 was tabled at a National Conference where a broader spectrum of Malawians including representatives of Malawians living abroad participated in discussing the final Vision 2020 documents. The Vision was then launched by the State President Dr Bakili Muluzi on March 31, 1998 as the framework for developing Malawi for the next 24

years as from 31st March 1998.

Concurrent with the final discussions on the Vision documents were the efforts to translate the Vision into a computerised model. A team was set up in NEC to work with the NCT in developing measurable indicators of the themes and sub-theme in the Vision. These indicators and other data were used to build the model called Threshold 21 Model for Malawi. The model will assist with strategic planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluating achievements of Vision goals.

The National Development Strategy discussed in the subsequent Chapters is a result of this long process of consultations culminating in the National Conference and the launching ceremony. The Strategy as discussed in subsequent Chapters, was founded on the aspirations of Malawians collected through nation-wide consultations and synthesised by the NCT, Networkers and the National Working Group.

1.4 THE VISION STATEMENT

Following nationwide consultations, network activities and national workshops, Malawians came up with the following Vision Statement.

By the Year 2020, Malawi as a God-fearing nation will be secure, democratically mature, environmentally sustainable, self reliant with equal opportunities for and active participation by all, having social services, vibrant cultural and religious values and being a technologically driven middle-income country.

1.5 THE STRATEGIC CHALLENGES FOR MALAWI

Based on the discussions held at the First and Second National Long-Term Perspective Study Workshops, the consultations with various stakeholders in Malawi, written contributions of various Malawians including networkers, it was agreed that Malawians cannot achieve the proposed Vision unless they successfully achieve the following: good governance, sustainable economic growth and development, vibrant culture, well developed economic infrastructure, food security and nutrition, science and technology-led development, social sector development, fair and equitable distribution of income and wealth, and sustainable environmental management. The scope of these issues was defined to include related sub-issues which are summarized below:

1.5.1 Good Governance

1. how to enhance national unity;
2. how to improve the role and performance of the public sector;

3. how to improve the role and performance of the private sector;
4. how to make Malawians aware of their rights and responsibilities;
5. how to enhance and sustain the rule of law and respect for human rights;
6. how to enhance the separation of powers and checks and balances;
7. how to enhance and sustain political participation by the general populace;
8. how to attain transparency, accountability and a corruption-free society;
9. how to nurture and elect foresighted leadership;
10. how to improve internal security,
11. how to promote political and strategic studies; and
12. how to promote national service and self-help.

1.5.2 Sustainable Economic Growth and Development

- a. how to develop the manufacturing sector;
- b. how to increase savings and investment;
- c. how to develop the financial sector;
- d. how to develop tourism;
- e. how to make Malawi an export-oriented economy;
- f. how to develop agriculture;
- g. how to develop mining; and
- h. how to develop entrepreneurial culture and skills.

1.5.3 Vibrant Culture

- a. how to ensure a positive work ethic;
- b. how to strengthen self-reliance and community participation in local development programmes;
- c. how to restore self-confidence and pride in being Malawian;
- d. how to promote cultural practices that enhance health and support good natural resource and environmental management;
- e. how to reduce gender and all other forms of inequities among social groups; and
- f. how to promote spiritualism that strengthens ethical and moral conduct.

1.5.4 Economic Infrastructure

- a. how to further expand the development of infrastructure;

1.5.5 Social Sector Development

- a. how to reduce illiteracy and improve the quality of education;

- b. how to develop, deploy and effectively utilise human resources;
- c. how to improve the education system; and
- d. how to improve the availability, accessibility and quality of health services.

1.5.6 Science and Technology-Led Development

- a. how to improve Science and Technology (S&T) education, training and culture;
- b. how to promote Science and Technology research and development including commercialization;
- c. how to adapt and promote transfer of new and emerging technologies;
- d. how to promote environmentally-sound technologies;
- e. how to achieve effective Science and Technology; and
- f. how to promote implementation and use of information technology.

1.5.7 Fair and Equitable Distribution of Income and Wealth

- a. how to reduce unemployment;
- b. how to promote enterprise development;
- c. how to reduce poverty;
- d. how to raise agricultural incomes including the improvement of tenancy arrangements;
- e. how to improve access to land;
- f. how to increase social services;
- g. how to control population growth;
- h. how to reduce gender inequalities;
- i. how to address disability issues;
- j. how to improve the marketing system; and
- k. how to further develop infrastructure.

1.5.8 Food Security and Nutrition

- a. how to increase food production;
- b. how to develop the livestock sector;
- c. how to develop irrigation;
- d. how to improve the efficiency of markets;
- e. how to improve land utilisation and management;
- f. how to reduce post harvest losses;
- g. how to improve the nutritional status of Malawians;
- h. how to promote non-farm income generating activities;
- i. how to attain effective disaster management; how to economically empower the poor in Malawi; and

- j. how to improve policy analysis.

1.5.9 Sustainable Natural Resource and Environmental Management

- a. how to prevent and control land degradation;
- b. how to attain sustainable utilization of forests;
- c. how to promote effective sound water resources management;
- d. how to reduce the threat to biological diversity;
- e. how to develop the human habitat;
- f. how to control high population growth;
- g. how to prevent and control air pollution and climate change;
- h. how to control noise pollution;
- i. how to prevent improper management of industrial and hazardous wastes; and
- j. how to enhance political advocacy for natural resources and the environment.

The above challenges and the strategies for tackling them are presented from Chapter 2 to Chapter 10 of this Volume and in Volume II. While this Volume is a summary of the Vision and strategies, Volume H is a more detailed technical presentation of the challenges and strategies. In both volumes, the challenges are presented in the same sequential order. Chapter One is the introduction.. Chapter Two presents the issues on good governance. Chapter Three presents the issues on sustainable economic growth and development. Chapter Four presents the issues for creating a vibrant culture for Malawi. Chapter Five is a presentation of the issues on economic infrastructure. Chapter Six presents the issues on food security and nutrition. Chapter Seven looks at social sector developments emphasising health, education and population. Chapter Eight presents issues on achieving a science and technology-led development. Chapter Nine discusses fair and equitable distribution of income and wealth. Lastly, Chapter Ten discusses the issues of natural resources and environmental management.