



Integrated Country Strategy

MALAWI

FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

U.S. interests in Malawi focus on fostering the emergence of a stable, productive, and self-reliant nation. One of the poorest nations in the world, Malawi's recent history has showcased the resilience of its core democratic institutions. After the Constitutional Court decision annulled the 2019 presidential election, the nation's successful election rerun in June 2020 highlighted the independence and competence of its courts and electoral commission, resulting in a peaceful transition of power and the first switch to the opposition since the beginning of multiparty democracy in 1994. Malawi continues to operate as a net exporter of security as the Malawi Defense Force (MDF) provides competent, professional peacekeeping operations abroad and serves as a stabilizing force domestically. Despite its small size, Malawi serves as a governance model to the region, demonstrating that political conflict can be resolved through strong domestic institutions and the rule of law, rather than through violent means. Mission Lilongwe will focus its efforts on supporting these positive trends to our nations' mutual benefit across three, interrelated pillars: Strengthen Democratic, Accountable Governance; Foster the Private Sector; and Support Malawi's Human Capital.

Malawi's recent democratic successes are accompanied by significant remaining challenges to its democratic institutions. Corruption at all levels of society acts as a drag on growth. While Malawi has excelled at establishing legal frameworks and created numerous independent institutions designed to protect the public good, those institutions have been historically underfunded, understaffed, and overwhelmed. With billions of dollars in foreign assistance flowing into the country, ensuring that Malawi's public institutions are both accountable and supported by domestic resources are key to an effective partnership in combating global challenges such as pandemics, climate change, and transnational crime. While Malawi's military can proudly point to its first-class standards of professional and democratic conduct, the Malawi Police Service is one of the nation's least trusted intuitions and requires reforms and professionalization.

With a population of 19 million - slated to double by 2040 - there is no amount of development assistance that will lift Malawi into middle-income status. Moving 'from aid to trade' is

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therefore essential to attain the economic growth necessary to support the country's increasing population. U.S. investments through the U.S. Agency for International Development, Millennium Challenge Corporation, Development Finance Corporation, Power Africa, and other resources will seek to unlock untapped potential and investment opportunities. The U.S. will also engage with Malawi's youth to draw upon its history of ingenuity to encourage entrepreneurship and locally focused investments and access to capital. Economic growth, private sector engagement, and natural resource management will work hand-in-glove with governance programs to support a self-reliant Malawi focused on sustainable development and to promote peace, prosperity, and security.

Economic growth and accountable governance rely upon a healthy and engaged populace. The United States will continue its investments in Malawi's health infrastructure. Malawi's partnership in combating the HIV pandemic has been historically successful as the country has achieved, and seeks to sustain, epidemic control. These investments also present an opportunity to serve as the platform from which the U.S. and Malawi can partner to combat other global health threats, such as COVID-19. Additional investments in strengthening public health will combat malaria, tuberculosis, and other emergent health threats. U.S. investments in Malawi's education at all levels will ensure that its labor force has the skills and abilities necessary to support its public and private sector needs. The U.S. will also work to combat trafficking in persons, child labor, and other transnational crimes while supporting and advancing human rights.

Embassy Lilongwe will begin construction of a New Embassy Compound in FY 2022, which will consolidate our multiple agencies into one facility. To prepare for this transition, and in support of a growing interagency supporting these priorities, Post will conduct a comprehensive internal audit of its management controls, focus on right-sizing its management platform, and develop a residential housing operational plan to ensure adequate, safe, and secure housing to meet the needs of our personnel.

These goals reflect an integrated approach across and within agencies. Policy and public engagement with a Government of Malawi that is responsive and transparent will ensure that

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U.S. government development investments have maximum impact and sustainability while strengthening Malawi's role as a stabilizing force for the region.

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2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Democratic and Accountable Governance: USG engagement with the Government of Malawi and relevant organizations reduces obstacles to effective development where ineffective governance, corruption, and insecurity most negatively impact U.S. policy and foreign assistance efforts. (Incorporates CDCS DO 1 – Public sector is more accountable and effective at national and decentralized levels)

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Support Malawian institutions, including parliament, the judiciary, and accountability institutions, to make governance more effective, transparent, and accountable.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** Improve the integrity and quality of public services, particularly those supported with U.S. foreign assistance and those that affect U.S. citizens.
- **Mission Objective 1.3:** Strengthen the institutional capacity and professionalism of Malawian security and immigration services to improve domestic law enforcement, national and international security, and security and efficiency of passport services and inspection.

Mission Goal 2: Foster private sector expansion to build trade and employment opportunities and create a development trajectory that curves away from development assistance, resulting in inclusive and sustainable wealth generation. (Incorporates CDCS DO 3 – Private sector increases inclusive and sustainable wealth generation)

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Malawi's economic governance is strengthened through targeted reforms and improved policy implementation and oversight, creating an environment for enhanced trade, inclusive and sustainable development, and greater ease of doing business.

- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Develop the private sector by fostering entrepreneurship and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), improving access to finance and markets, and strengthening bilateral and regional trade.
- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Implement climate adaptation and climate mitigation goals, fostering climate positive business, reducing vulnerabilities to climate change, and increasing the country's resilience to shocks and stresses.

Mission Goal 3: Support Malawi's Human Capital Development such that its citizens can freely participate in growth and development as a healthy, educated, and self-reliant population. (Incorporates CDCS DO 2 – Youth lead healthy, informed, and productive lives)

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Improve individual and community agency to an extent that its citizens become more productive, engaged, and resilient.
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Increase access to, and the quality of, health services so that more citizens gain and retain full health and are able to contribute productively at home, in the community, and at work.
- **Mission Objective 3.3:** Expand educational opportunities to equip citizens with foundational and marketable skills responsive to Malawi's public and private sector needs.

Management Objective 1: Develop a multi-residential operations plan that meets the Mission's increased need for housing and realigns the USG-owned to leased ratio of residences in the housing pool.

Management Objective 2: Enhance/improve ICASS services through rightsizing Post's ICASS service provider base and the creation of an ICASS Service Center.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | Democratic and Accountable Governance: USG engagement with the Government of Malawi and relevant organizations reduces obstacles to effective development where ineffective governance, corruption, and insecurity most negatively impact U.S. policy and foreign assistance efforts.

Description | Poor governance, corruption, lack of accountability, and weak law enforcement and insecurity stifles economic growth and development, hinders investment, and erodes trust in government. To support Malawi's continued development as a peaceful and democratic partner of the United States, Mission Goal 1 aims to partner with the Government of Malawi, civil society, and other relevant stakeholders to strengthen Malawian institutions to manage resources more effectively and be held accountable to the Malawian people. This includes supporting Malawian oversight institutions to expand accountability and transparency; assisting government counterparts to increase the integrity and efficiency of public services; and strengthening Malawian security services to improve stability in Malawi and better support international security efforts. This objective not only benefits Malawians, but also improves the lives of 6,000 U.S. citizens in country and contributes to the integrity and effectiveness of U.S. assistance programs, ensuring that U.S. funding is used to achieve its intended goals.

Objective 1.1 | Support Malawian institutions, including parliament, the judiciary, and accountability institutions, to make governance more effective, transparent, and accountable.

- **Justification |** Malawi's historic 2020 constitutional court decision reversing the contested 2019 presidential elections demonstrated the growing independence of the judicial and legislative branches to provide checks and balances on executive power. Strengthened judicial independence and the increased capacity of accountability institutions to tackle corruption and safeguard rights are key to democratic and economic development; bolstering these institutions will strengthen the bilateral partnership and make Malawi a regional democratic model.

- **Linkages** | This objective supports the 2017 National Security Strategy (NSS) (Africa: Political Priority Action), the State Department's Africa Bureau Joint Regional Strategy (Objective 3.1 and 3.3), the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) FY2018-2022 (Strategic Objectives 3.1 and 4.1), Mission Malawi's USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy (Country Development Cooperation Strategies - CDCS, DO 1: Public sector is more accountable and effective at national and decentralized levels), and the UN Sustainable Agenda (Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).
- **Risks** | Weakened legislative and judicial branches and accountability institutions compromise democratic development, hinder economic investment, and feed into mistrust of government.

Objective 1.2 | Public service providers improve the integrity and quality of public services, particularly those supported with U.S. foreign assistance and those that affect U.S. citizens.

- **Justification** | The USG invests hundreds of millions of dollars to support health, education, and other public services in Malawi. Improving the quality and integrity of these services is critical to ensuring USG funding is used wisely and to increase Malawians' abilities to deliver these services on their own.
- **Linkages** | This objective supports the 2017 National Security Strategy (Africa: Political Priority Action), the State Department's Africa Bureau Joint Regional Strategy (Objective 3.1), the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan FY 2018-2022 (Strategic Objective 4.1), Mission Malawi's USAID CDCS Intermediate Result 1.2 (Public sector capacity to deliver quality goods and services strengthened).
- **Risks** | Failure to improve the integrity and quality of public services would have humanitarian consequences - risking disease, famine and lack of education among a rapidly rising youth population.

Objective 1.3 | Strengthen the institutional capacity and professionalism of Malawian security and immigration services to improve domestic law enforcement, national and international security, and security and efficiency of passport services and inspection.

- **Justification** | International partnerships are more reliable and secure when each partner can address their own security challenges. The Malawi Defense Force is a professional force and a net exporter of security to the region and is an eager partner of the U.S. government. The Malawian Police Service has low capacity to properly investigate crimes and address complaints and its human rights record compromises bilateral cooperation and public confidence. The Malawi Department of Immigration and Citizenship Services has limited resources to ensure secure passport applications, monitor and track immigration into Malawi, and utilize fully the fingerprints their agents have collected in the past decade. The lack of progress on trafficking in persons and wildlife trafficking cases has real consequences for U.S. government assistance to Malawi.
- **Linkages** | This objective supports the 2017 National Security Strategy (Africa: Military and Security Priority Action), the State Department's Africa Bureau Joint Regional Strategy (Objective 1.2 and Objective 1.3), the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan FY 2018-2022 (Strategic Objective 1.3), the UN Sustainable Agenda (Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's FY 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.
- **Risks** | Weakened institutional capacity and professionalism of Malawian security services will continue to have a negative effect on the public's opinion and their willingness to report on, collaborate with, and trust these institutions to perform in the proper capacity.

Mission Goal 2 | Foster private sector expansion to build trade and employment opportunities and create a development trajectory that eventually curves away from development assistance, resulting in inclusive and sustainable wealth generation.

Description | Malawi has remained dependent on Official Development Assistance for generations. Despite significant investment from the USG and other partners, Malawi's growth rate remains inadequate to population growth and comparators in the region. A new development model led by private sector investment will be necessary to create a better business climate, improve bilateral trade and replicate the successes seen elsewhere.

Objective 2.1 | Malawi's economic governance is strengthened through targeted reforms and improved policy implementation and oversight, creating an environment for enhanced trade, inclusive and sustainable development, and greater ease of doing business.

- **Justification** | The private sector is currently moribund, adding little to development. Agriculture accounts for more than 80% of the economy. The government has put forward well-crafted private sector reform proposals, and Post sees an opportunity to support enactment. An improved regulatory environment would attract more foreign direct investment and thereby help expand and modernize the economy; Expansion of the private sector must create opportunity for both small and large firms, and for both Malawian and foreign investors.
- **Linkages** | Links to the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan goals two and three and Mission Malawi USAID CDCS DO 3 (Private Sector increases inclusive and sustainable wealth generation) and Intermediate Result 3.3 (Enabling environment for wealth creation improved) are clear. The draft MCC compact II development links to land reform. There are clear links to the Malawian government long term development strategy and other Malawian strategies, as well as the almost concluded national agriculture plan/operational plan, also supported by USAID technical assistance.

- **Risks** | Targeting too many reforms may distract from implementation given the small size of the Mission and limited government capacity. Small market size, low level of regional integration, and non-diversification present real obstacles to foreign direct investment. Pace of reform will be determined by the political will of the government, by how responsibilities are delegated within the government, and by following a shared roadmap/plan/vision. Corruption and nepotism could slow reforms. To overcome risks, Mission efforts and messaging from different agencies must be closely coordinated.

Objective 2.2 | Develop the private sector by fostering entrepreneurship and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), improving access to finance and markets, and strengthening bilateral and regional trade.

- **Justification** | Malawi is landlocked and must look regionally to move up the value chain and give farmers access to more profitable markets. Knowledge acquisition and sharing will accompany market linkages; and foreign, including U.S., businesses can bring in expertise for a new development model. Regional linkages, including within the nascent African Free Trade Agreement countries, and U.S. linkages should be prioritized. Although Malawi has improved its ranking on the World Bank Doing Business Index from 183 in 2011 to 109 in 2019, much of the economy is informal which undermines the creation of a sufficient domestic tax revenue for public investments and limits employment options for Malawians. To contribute to the economic development of Malawi, Post intends to deepen trade relations and identify commercial opportunities for U.S. companies by promoting entrepreneurship and collaboration. Malawi needs to improve its regulatory environment to reduce the stigma of failure and enhance the appreciation of entrepreneurship activity in society. Promotion of entrepreneurship in Malawi will also ensure effective communication among stakeholders including private sector and development partners.
- **Linkages** | There are clear linkages to trade objectives in the Joint Strategic Plan and national security strategy aligned with promoting American prosperity and job creation as well as Malawi's National Export Strategy and Africa Growth and Opportunity

Act (AGOA) strategy.

- **Risks** | Risks are concentrated in capacity constraints and low bandwidth within both the government and the Malawian private sector as well as in the regulatory environment noted in ^{(b)(6)} Objective 2.1. The government must become fluent in its own regulatory and statutory framework and find a way to properly incentivize investment. Quality standards also remain a concern in Malawi, limiting the reach of exports in the region and internationally. Investment processes are opaque. Entrepreneurship is an undervalued component of economic development in the GOM and Post. Much effort has been expended on developing the agricultural value chain, but capacity building among entrepreneurs has lagged in both the education system and among development partners. Collaboration and competition must be championed among SMEs to unleash the economic power of entrepreneurs in a risk adverse environment starving for low-cost innovation.

Objective 2.3 | Malawi implements its climate adaptation and climate mitigation goals, fostering climate positive business, reducing vulnerabilities to climate change, and increasing the country's resilience to shocks and stresses

- **Justification** | Malawi is far from meeting Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 2 targets and is highly vulnerable to multivariate shocks that affect nearly all of its 28 districts. Risk and exposure to shocks and stresses are driven by a confluence of over-dependence on rainfed maize and tobacco, unmodernized agriculture sector, expensive and unproductive subsidies that drive maize-focused production and undermine integrated land and soil management, over dependence on charcoal for cooking and heating resulting in high deforestation and land degradation, undiversified rural economy, and limited access to finance, all exacerbated by climate change. Climate change and population growth have emerged as the twin threats exacerbating other existing shocks, and there is limited adaptation capacity. All climate models show Malawi faced with more rain, on fewer days and shorter seasons, resulting in a continuation of the current trend towards droughts and floods, particular in the

southern and central part of the country. There is little to no climate finance in the country. The GOM is committed to taking urgent action to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change and has submitted its INDCs, but is limited in its capacity to implement them.

- **Linkages** | This objective is fully aligned with GOM and USG strategies. It aligns with Malawi's National Resilience Strategy (NRS), as well as its Charcoal Strategy, and Climate Mitigation and Adaptation strategies. It reflects USG priorities and commitments on climate action, advancing both mitigation and adaptation, and leaning in on climate finance. The objective is linked closely to USAID's CDCS Development Objective 3 (Private sector increases inclusive and sustainable wealth generation) and Intermediate Result 3.1 (Resilient people, households, communities, and systems manage and reduce vulnerabilities).
- **Risks** | GOM's fiscal space represents a risk to GOM-led investments; the political economy continues to pressure the GOM to invest unproductively in input subsidies that do not advance climate-smart agricultural objectives, and leave little fiscal room to invest in other much-needed areas. There are also risks in terms of capacity constraints and low bandwidth within both the government and the Malawian organizations, as well as in the regulatory and enforcement environment. The illegal and unsustainable charcoal trade, that drives rampant deforestation, is driven by lucrative transport industry and enforcement is necessary to address it; similarly, other natural resource management and climate-related regulations are in place but not enforced or implemented. The government must find a way to address inherent corruption, elite capture issues, and properly ensure enforcement of environmental crimes that undermine adaptation and mitigation goals.

Mission Goal 3 | Support Malawi's Human Capital Development such that its citizens can freely participate in growth and development as a healthy, educated, self-reliant population.

Description | Malawi has a growing population of 18 million people, of whom more than 80percent are under the age of 35. Malawi must develop its human capital for this population to serve as the workforce to fuel a flourishing economy founded on a strong private sector that moves Malawi from 'aid to trade'. As the largest bilateral donor to Malawi and with an overwhelmingly positive image among Malawians, the United States is well-positioned to help shape policies that: strengthen Malawi's health services and outcomes; expand educational opportunities to produce adults with more relevant marketable skills; and empower its citizens so they become more engaged, productive, and resilient in building a just, equitable, and prosperous society.

Mission Lilongwe will leverage its long-term PEPFAR, CDC, and USAID health investments to strengthen Malawi's ability to address continuing and emerging threats to the health of its population and continue to assist Malawi in improving the availability and quality of its health workforce. Through continued development and technical assistance, Embassy Lilongwe will expand educational opportunity in Malawi in partnership with the GOM to advance our common goal of forming citizens equipped with foundational and marketable skills responsive to public and private sector needs, and to decrease donor dependence. To support citizen agency, particularly among youth and marginalized populations, the United States will work with communities, the government and other stakeholders to reduce child marriages across the country; the USG will train journalists, citizens, and government employees to make public information about accountability readily available to citizens. The USG will also push to end the scourge of child labor across all sectors.

Objective 3.1 | Malawi improves individual and community agency to an extent that its citizens become more productive, engaged, and resilient.

- **Justification** | With 80 percent of Malawi's population under 35, it is imperative that U.S. government efforts support Malawi in harnessing this demographic dividend and partner with Malawians to develop their capacity to learn, grow, and serve their communities and nation. Encouraging Malawi to better protect the rights of its vulnerable populations and improve citizens' awareness of their civil rights will enable Malawians to gain a stronger sense of agency and enter the workforce with more qualifications and education, making Malawi more competitive on the global market.
- **Linkages** | This objective supports the State Department's Africa Bureau Joint Regional Strategy Objective 3.2 ("Promote and Protect Fundamental Rights and Liberties") and Objective 4.2("Support Equitable Access to Education for All Learners and Training for Africa's Next Generation"), the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan FY2018-2022 Strategic Objective 2.2 ("Promote healthy, educated, and productive populations in partner countries to drive inclusive and sustainable development, open new markets and support U.S. prosperity and security objectives"), Mission Malawi's USAID CDCS Intermediate Result 1.2 and 2.1 ("Citizens rights and responsibilities actively exercised" and "Youth agency and access to opportunities and services expanded"), the UN Sustainable Agenda (Goal 5: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) Gender equality and women's empowerment), and Malawi's National Adolescent Girls and Young Women Strategy.
- **Risks** | Malawi's failure to demonstrate continued efforts to eradicate trafficking in persons or child labor could result in U.S. sanctions, which would have a devastating effect on Malawi's economic, political, and social development and negatively impact our bilateral relations. Malawi's inability to provide citizens with transparent, readily accessible information about public spending and their civic rights would contribute to a lack of accountability in government, contributing directly to massive fraud, corruption and waste.

Objective 3.2 | Malawi improves access to and quality of health services so more of its citizens gain and retain full health and can contribute productively at home, in the community, and at work.

- **Justification** | The United States will strengthen Malawi's ability to address continuing and emerging threats to the health of its population. With Malawi quickly approaching HIV epidemic control, the United States will strengthen Malawi's health systems to be able to retain people living with HIV on life-long HIV treatment to reduce the spread of HIV and improve the quality of life of these individuals and their families. Malawi also lacks the infrastructure, skills, and resources to detect and address new public health threats, such as COVID-19. The USG will bolster laboratory capacity and ability to safely deliver quality essential health services while informing the population about the risk of COVID-19 and other public health threats. Severe shortages of human resources across the country hamper delivery of HIV, COVID-19, and other essential services; thus, the United States will assist Malawi in improving the availability and quality of its health workforce.
- **Linkages** | These activities contribute to the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan Goal 3: Promote American Leadership and Balanced Engagement, PEPFAR Strategy for Accelerating Epidemic Control, and the United States Government Action Plan to Support the International Response to COVID-19 (SAFER Action Plan). These activities also support the Mission Malawi USAID CDCS DO 1 (Public sector is more accountable and effective at national and decentralized levels) and DO 2 (Youth lead healthy, informed, and productive lives). These activities also support CDC/Malawi's goals of improving national capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to health threats as part of the United States Government's Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA)
- **Risks** | Lack of reliable transport and complications from COVID-19 may hamper patients' ability to access health services. Limited domestic resources for health commodities and human resources as well as limitations on the global supply of COVID-19 test kits and an eventual vaccine could threaten achievement of this objective. Well-coordinated, planned, and resourced technical assistance from the USG in collaboration

and partnership with other donors and the Government of Malawi will help mitigate these risks.

Objective 3.3 | Malawi expands educational opportunity to equip its citizens with foundational and marketable skills responsive to Malawi's public and private sector needs.

- **Justification** | It is necessary to boost the capacity of both Malawi's educational institutions and its population writ large to increase Malawi's ability to better equip its citizens with foundational and marketable skills responsive to public and private sector needs, and to decrease reliance on U.S. government and other donor investment. Malawi is ranked the weakest for its performance in English reading against other southern African countries; a negative trend that could worsen without robust Mission efforts in the sector. Malawi's youth are also forced out of formal education due to limited seats, and those who are able to persist may find their skillsets mismatched or inadequate for gainful employment. To spur the type of economic growth necessary for Malawi to become more self-reliant, educational opportunities in Malawi must be expanded by 1) increasing efficiency in the public sector service provision for education so that all Malawians are equipped with foundational skills such as literacy, numeracy, and life skills and 2) creating avenues to develop skills responsive to the labor demands of both public and private sector industry.
- **Linkages** | This objective supports the 2018 U.S. Government Strategy on International Basic Education for Fiscal Years 2019 - 2023, the 2018 USAID Education Policy, the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 goal of "ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all," the Reinforcing Education Accountability in Development (READ) Act, Division 2, P.L. 115-56, and Mission Malawi CDCS DO 2 (Youth lead healthy, informed, and productive lives).
- **Risks** | Failure to demonstrate continued robust U.S. engagement may allow for outsized investments by partners less concerned with building strong institutions and promoting self-reliance, thus weakening an already fragile system. Malawi's young and rapidly expanding population also presents either a risk for instability or potential

for achieving significant growth; supporting Malawian institutions to expand formal and informal educational opportunities reflective of public and private market needs will serve as a mitigating factor.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1 | Develop a two-year residential operations plan that meets the Mission's increased need for housing and realigns the USG-owned to leased ration of residences in the housing pool.

- **Justification** | A new MCC compact and the building of the New Embassy Compound (NEC) will increase the number of Post's USDH positions starting this year, and Post's current housing portfolio does not meet Mission needs. A two-year residential operations plan will allow Post to begin right sizing the housing pool. Working with OBO, Post will look to increase the number of USG-owned residences as both a cost saving and equity building exercise.
- **Linkages** | JRS-AF Management Objective: Advance Diplomatic and Development Effectiveness to Increase Accountability to the American Taxpayer; FBS-OBO Goal 1: Enhance the Security, Safety, and Functionality of Facilities and Residences for Overseas Personnel.
- **Risks** | Securing safe and secure housing in Malawi is significantly constrained by the availability of quality housing that can be brought up to USG safety standards. In addition to bringing on new houses for new positions, Post is at risk of losing current houses due to contractual issues with difficult/absentee landlords. Most leased houses need overdue upgrades and repairs, while most of U.S. Government (USG)-owned houses have been upgraded and repaired. This disparity between USG-owned and leased residences affects morale at Post.

Management Objective 2 | Enhance/improve ICASS services through rightsizing Post's ICASS service provider base and the creation of an ICASS Service Center.

- **Justification |** USDH human resources support to the management platform has not kept up with the Mission's steady and continuous foreign assistance and program growth. The creation of an ICASS Customer Service Center (CSC) will help Post meet ICASS service standards. The CSC will be a one-stop shop where customers can get questions answered, tickets opened, and follow-up to on-going issues, streamlining the customer's experience and providing a Help Desk to navigate the myriad of ICASS services. It will provide face-to-face and remote assistance to Embassy employees and EFMs. The CSC will liaise between the customer and the ICASS service provider and help ensure ICASS service standards are met.
- **Linkages:** JRS-AF Management Objective: Advance Diplomatic and Development Effectiveness to Increase Accountability to the American Taxpayer.
- **Risks |** Expanding staff and assistance programs have dramatically increased the demands for administrative services, placing stress on an already overburdened ICASS support platform, spread out over five major facilities, an offsite warehouse, and 63 residences. Mission Malawi's Customer to Management Ratio (CM Ratio) is 26.1, although the average CM Ratio for similarly sized single-post missions is 22.7. In the last six years the number of USDH and PSC has risen 75 percent and LE Staff has risen 31 percent without an increase in management USDH positions. The Mission's current ICASS support/management platform must include the addition of an Assistant GSO and Human Resources Officer (HRO) to support the current, as well as ever-increasing, ICASS customer base. The 2018 M/PRI rightsizing review supported the addition of one state USDH Assistant General Services Officer and one State Human Resources Officer. The lack of sufficient USDH supervisors to manage a growing workload has hobbled efforts to detect and prevent cases of internal fraud, malfeasance, and theft, presenting a possible risk to the USG. Intensified focus on internal controls, spot checks, and disciplinary actions has begun to reduce opportunities for misconduct, allowing for

more effective use of ICASS resources for their intended purpose.