



**Self Help  
AFRICA**  
*beyond aid*

# MALAWI STRATEGY

2023 – 2027



Image: Madalitso Phiri, Balaka, Malawi

[www.selfhelpafrica.org](http://www.selfhelpafrica.org)

# INTRODUCTION

In 2021 Self Help Africa and United Purpose combined almost 60 years working in Malawi to scale our operations and reach 1.2 million Malawians, each year.

As of September 2023, we will be jointly known as Self Help Africa. We remain committed to our ambition to move *'Beyond Aid'* in line with The Government of Malawi's efforts to progress towards a self-reliant Malawi.

We are governed by a vibrant Malawian board and work in partnership with District Councils, sub-district structures and communities to implement development programmes across the three regions of Malawi. This strategy sets out Self Help Africa's five-year plan to support the Government of Malawi's 'Vision 2063' and pursue our vision of sustainable livelihoods and healthy lives for all in a changing climate and is set within the overall ambition of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

We have long taken a multi-sectored approach to development and humanitarian response because the root causes of poverty and disasters are multidimensional. Our experience working with rural communities and smallholder farmers during this time has honed our expertise in addressing climate change and its impact on food production and the environment.

Now more than ever, we are focused on shifting power to local actors. This strategy includes commitments to channelling a larger portion of funding directly to local partners and a focus on promoting spaces for the individuals we work with to influence and exercise leadership over priority setting, activity design and implementation, and measuring and evaluating results. We will use our positioning to influence change at a community, district and national, with a focus on advocating for justice and accountability to support equitable and inclusive development.

As a newly merged organisation in Malawi, this strategy is also as much about the culture of the organisation as it is about our objectives and actions, building on the combined experience of Self Help Africa and United Purpose in Malawi and hard-earned reputations as responsive organisations that are honest and accountable.

This is why we have also spent significant time reflecting on our areas of expertise and made commitments to the values, principles, and behaviours that everyone we work with should expect from us.



Malidadi Chilongo from Mkhonde village, Northern Malawi

## CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

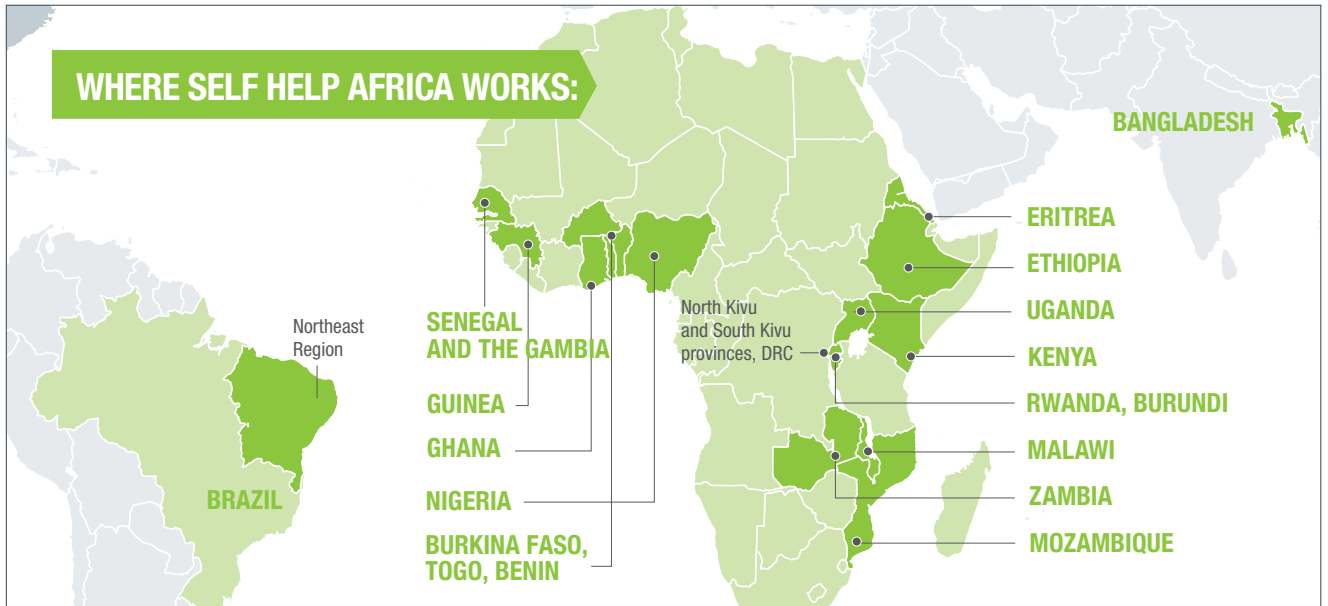
Self Help Africa's Malawi Advisory Committee is delighted to launch the new five-year country strategy. We are committed to ensure that the work of Self Help Africa is guided by the principles of equality; complementarity; aid effectiveness; transparency and accountability; results oriented approach; localization; and diversity as championed by Non-Governmental Organisations Regulatory Authority (NGORA).

These are reflected in our own Values, Principles and Behaviours. As an Advisory Committee, we recognise the need for radical change to tackle the problems of poverty and in a changing climate.

With this in mind, we will strengthen our partnership with government and local actors to work together to fight poverty, to shift power and build a more equal future, ensuring the voices of our project participants are always at the heart of what we do.

A heartfelt thank you to all our donor partners, to our implementing partners and to all our project participants. However you are involved, thank you!

**Henry Mvaya, Advisory Committee Chair**



## WHAT INFORMED OUR MALAWI STRATEGY

**T**his strategy was developed through an inclusive and reflective process, looking both internally and externally. We built upon the extensive consultation during the United Purpose 2021 - 2025 strategy development process and critically assessed how well we delivered against this and the Self Help Africa strategy. The outcome is an ambitious vision for greater impact at a time when climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and economic changes have deepened the scale of need and vulnerability in Malawi.

The sixth report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2021) shows that the east southern-African region will warm faster than the global average, with inland areas rising by as much as 2°C. Cold extremes will decrease, and warm extremes will increase.

Annual rainfall is expected to decrease. However, rainfall seasonality is expected to increase, with more extreme precipitation events and more extreme dry spells. This will likely lead to greater seasonal variation in streamflow, increased flooding and cyclones, and more droughts.

Malawi is still ranked 171/189 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI), with little change since 2015. For the foreseeable future, 80% of the population will be dependent on rain-fed subsistence farming, a precarious livelihood given decreasing access to land coupled with increasing devastating impacts of climate change. Climate change, disasters and deforestation are the environmental factors likely to have the greatest impact over the period of this strategy. Significant work is needed for Malawi to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Compounding this, it is estimated that by 2040 there will be 33.8 million Malawians increasing from 18.6 million in 2020 (of which, 46% are under the age of 15). Whilst Malawi improved its gender parity score in 2023 (67.6%, +4.4 percentage

points;), it still has one of the highest disparities between women's and men's achievements in reproductive health, empowerment, and economic status, ranking 110 out of 146 countries on the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2023.

Trade policies and an unpredictable business environment continue to impede investment and commercialisation, as well as erratic electricity supply. This has been exacerbated by climate change, inflation, the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Limited access to WASH services continues to be a significant risk factor in epidemics, with the ongoing worst cholera outbreak in history in 2022, disproportionately affecting women and girls.

To get back on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, there is consensus in the Government of Malawi and its development partners of the need to pursue development pathways that support synergies and limit the trade-offs between hunger, poverty, nutrition, and climate change. This is reflected in the Report from the Ministry of Agriculture on the National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation of the 2030 Agenda (June 2023). As well as the Malawi Vision 2063 which prioritises commercialisation, industrialisation and urbanisation as the key pillars to reach inclusive wealth and self-reliance with agricultural commercialisation, creating opportunities for youth and digitalisation being at the fore.

A broader changing operational climate has also informed this strategy. Including, but not limited to, new aid actors, increasing demand on Overseas Development Aid budgets, changing regulations under the Malawi NGO Bill, the transition from traditional funding models, the localisation agenda and climate finance. There is a need for greater multi-sector working to meet the Sustainable Development Goals with a strategic approach to long-term alliances with common interests.

# OUR STRATEGY

## OUR WORK

**Vision:** Sustainable livelihoods and healthy lives for all in a changing climate

**Mission:** We aim to alleviate hunger, poverty, social inequality and the impact of climate change through community-led, market-based and enterprise-focused approaches, so that people have access to nutritious food, clean water, decent employment and incomes, while sustaining natural resources



Sustainable landscapes, resilient food systems and healthy communities



Sustainable businesses, decent employment and thriving economies

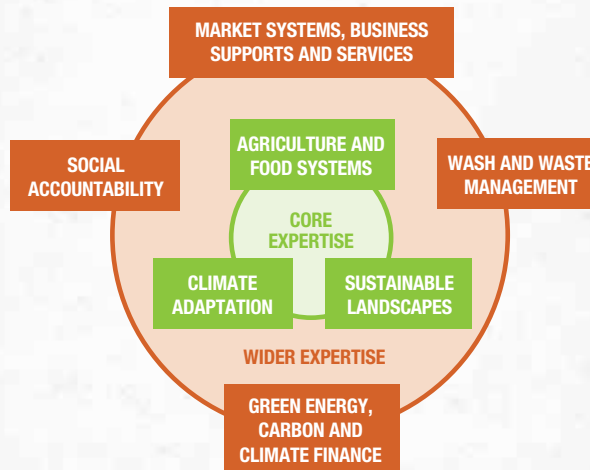


Crisis response and resilience



System strengthening and an enabling policy environment

## OUR EXPERTISE



## OUR ENABLERS



Financing models and funding



Synergies, organisation development and alignment



Culture, people and resourcing



Demonstrating impact

# WHAT WE WILL DO

Our long-term **vision** is sustainable livelihoods and healthy lives for all in a changing climate.

Our **mission** is to alleviate hunger, poverty, social inequality and the impact of climate change through community-led, market-based and enterprise-focused approaches, so that people have access to nutritious food, clean water, decent employment and incomes, while sustaining natural resources.

We want to see all people in Malawi determining their own lives, supported by strong and accountable government services, and effective local markets and value chains. This is recognised in Malawi's Vision 2063, with systems of strong and accountable government, effective local markets and private sector at the core of moving from poverty reduction to resilience.

To achieve our mission, over the next five years, we will work with the Government of Malawi to eliminate poverty and end the recurrent cycle of hunger and humanitarian assistance in Malawi through **four Strategic Objectives**:

- SO1:** Sustainable landscapes, resilient food systems and healthy communities;
- SO2:** Sustainable businesses, decent employment, and a thriving economy;
- SO3:** Crisis response and Resilience

**SO4:** System strengthening and an enabling policy environment.

We will continue to deliver through our seven areas of expertise in Malawi - **Agriculture and Food Systems, Climate Adaptation, Sustainable Landscapes, Market System Business Support and Services, WASH and Waste Management, Carbon and Clean Energy and Social Accountability** - to address key drivers of poverty and vulnerability in Malawi. These are areas where we can best leverage our experience, existing partnerships, and specialism.

All our work is designed and implemented through an environmental, sustainability, climate adaptation and gender and social inclusion lens as this is essential to achieving the global UN Sustainable Development Goals. We are committed to supporting the Government of Malawi in fulfilling climate goals through an inclusive green economy. Our work will continue to be tailored to the needs of our different stakeholders. We will work with entrepreneurs and change makers that are seeking enterprise driven approaches to some of the most complex problems. We will ensure all our programmes work to shift harmful social, cultural, and traditional norms and attitudes, and strengthen women's voice, choice and control over resources and decisions. Over the next five-years, we will also prioritise working

with young people in line with Malawi Vision 2063 because young people have huge potential to transform their lives and communities. All this will be delivered through a strengthened model of working with and through national and district government.

We will work across all regions of Malawi focussing on districts where we have long term presence and expertise. Wherever possible, we will take a 'district-wide approach', aiming to improve conditions, services and governance across districts where we have long term focus, not only specific target communities. Whilst our priority is rural communities, our markets work will ultimately mean strengthening rural-urban value chains.

Our sister organisation CUMO Micro-finance continues to be a key delivery partner, specialising in increasing access to financial and business support services in rural areas, and having a presence countrywide. To deliver this strategy requires refinement in how we operate. Accordingly, we will invest in our funding models, our systems, and our team and strengthen how we measure and demonstrate the impact of our work, to ensure we are equipped to realise this change. Our values of impact, innovation and community will shape everything we do in pursuit of our vision of sustainable livelihoods and healthy lives for all in Malawi.

## KEY METRICS

- PEOPLE SUPPORTED:** 7.5 million people directly reached by 2027 (1.5 million people reached annually)
- WASH SERVICES:** 1.5 million people in support communities access safe drinking water and use basic sanitation and hygiene services by 2027
- FOOD SECURITY:** 80% of supported households are food secure with acceptable dietary diversity
- BUSINESS SUPPORT:** 200,000 enterprises reached by financial institutions we support
- ACCESS TO MARKETS:** 80% supported enterprises report improved access to markets
- LAND RESTORED:** 2,500 hectares of Village Forest Areas and other critical ecosystems conserved and managed sustainably
- DECENT JOBS:** 200,000 in supported enterprises
- CRISIS RESPONSE:** All community structures we work with report having improved skills in crisis response
- LOCAL PARTNERSHIP:** 30% of programmes implemented through local partners (formal and informal)
- GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP:** Partnership guide in place by 2024 developed with District Councils
- INCREASE IN FUNDING:** Grow our income annually by 15-20% to reach an annual income to EUR 15 million by 2027
- CULTURE:** 90% of our team citing Self Help Africa as "an organisation that values its team and provides opportunities for growth"

# OUR EXPERTISE

**Self Help Africa's decades of experience in Malawi has yielded approaches and expertise in the following seven areas. These informed the development of our four strategic objectives and will continue to be areas of specialism and focus over the next five years.**

## AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

We have extensive experience implementing some of the largest, most innovative, and successful agriculture, food security and nutrition programmes in Malawi (KULIMA BETTER, PROSPER, Pro-ACT, SoSuRe, ASPIRE, FNSP). We consider agriculture the key to reducing hunger and poverty in rural areas and fundamental to the sustainable food systems we promote. We have expertise in layering our project interventions to ensure we address systemic issues. This includes projects combining access to green energy technologies with the distribution of agricultural inputs (e.g., crop seed, fertilisers, livestock) with positive food security, soil health and income impacts and Productive Uses of Energy (e.g., solar irrigation pumps and agri-processing equipment) and integrating finance and loans schemes to promote investments in agriculture with 260,215 members in Savings and Loans Groups (SLGs) or VSLs.

We are a recognised player in promoting Climate Smart Agriculture practises with 626,330 (320,089 male and 306,241 female) farmers practising CSA and 383,583 farmers reporting increased yields since 2022. We are a major player in small irrigation (solar, gravity-fed and drip) development with 660 hectares under irrigation supporting 14,130 farmers in 2022 and have refined our approach to building the capacity of irrigation committees for sustainability. We have had significant success with multiplier extension delivery models, for instance we set-up 12,943 Farmer Field Schools benefiting 351,146 people since 2019. We are experts in livestock pass-on schemes and have significant expertise in establishing agroforestry and integrated cropping systems for soil fertility and increased productivity.

## CLIMATE ADAPTATION

All our work is designed and implemented through an environmental, sustainability and climate adaptation lens as we believe this is essential to achieving the global UN Sustainable Development Goals. Our agriculture interventions are designed to achieve ecological intensification of production systems while increasing the climate resilience of farmers, farming communities, agri-entrepreneurs, and food systems at large. Our green energy work provides affordable alternatives to traditional, unsustainable sources of energy which, as well as being environmentally harmful, are becoming increasingly unaffordable for many.

Self Help Africa possesses technical expertise and experience in designing farmer-based agroforestry practices that

integrate trees on to farmland. In intercropping with arable crops, the water retention capacity of soil is enhanced to ensure some yield even in the face of climate-change induced water stress. Our WASH work places an increasing emphasis on climate resilient infrastructure and water resources management.

## SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES

Soil and water conservation through Climate Smart Agriculture has been, and remains, key to our agricultural approaches in Malawi. Our improved cooking work protects forests, improves soil health, reduces carbon emissions, and provides alternative sources of income to livelihoods which deplete natural resources. We have technical expertise in establishing forestry plantations in collaboration with communities. Since 2022 we have planted 2,116,060 trees with 15,050 ha under Village Forest Area (VFA) management with an above-average survival rate of 79%. We have also collaborated closely with ICRAF, through a formal partnership to support agroforestry and now in a five- year land restoration project.

We have supported millions of people to adopt climate smart agricultural methods through a wide range of different agriculture-based projects across the country. Our expertise in delivering participatory and integrated watershed management using the Functional Landscape Approach has been instrumental in providing effective and inclusive natural resource management (land, water, and wildlife) to improve livelihoods and healthy ecosystems. The approach provides linkages between communities upstream and downstream to provide collective responsibility in managing and utilisation of ecosystems.

## MARKET SYSTEMS, BUSINESS SUPPORT & SERVICES

We have 20 years' experience developing and strengthening enterprise, value chains and markets across the food, forestry, WASH and energy sectors, with specific focus on women. This is both to increase access to sustainable products and services, and to create jobs. We work with various actors, from input suppliers through to producers, service providers, processors, and consumers and have developed proven approaches to building demand for products and services. Our expertise in developing and strengthening farm inputs and produce has led to establishment of community grain banks, farmer associations and cooperatives engaging in different value chains including soya beans, groundnuts, orange fleshed sweet potato and pigeon peas. Our improved cooking programming integrates and trains entrepreneurs at all levels of the market system who earn an income from

stove production, distribution, and sales. 15 stove production groups (280 members) which we trained and are actively supporting have distributed over 700,000 stoves since 2016 collectively earning MWK 481 million while our network of over 800 stove promoters have earned over MWK 200 million. In our electricity access programming, we pursue a social enterprise approach to deliver scalable provision of reliable, solar electricity in last-mile communities; to date 85 jobs have been created. We trained 33 local mechanics and spare parts retailers to improve the quality and reach of their WASH products and services. Our sister organisation CUMO is our partner in increasing access to financial and business support services with a client base of over 73,000, of which 83% are women. Since 2017, CUMO has disbursed over £26m in loans and has facilitated over £8.5m in client savings. CUMO's repayment rate for its loan products continues to average at 99.8% per annum with its clients successfully starting or expanding their businesses. CUMO champions financial literacy through a successful Mobile Entrepreneurship Training Centre.

## WASH & WASTE MANAGEMENT

Since 1994, we have since grown to become one of the biggest implementers of rural Water supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programmes in Malawi. Our WASH portfolio includes stand-alone WASH projects, and multi-sectoral interventions with a WASH component. To date, over 342,915 latrines have been constructed because of our interventions, primarily through people-centred approaches to WASH behaviour change, such as Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS). We supported 40 Traditional Authorities out of 173 to become Open-Defecation Free (ODF) representing 23% of the total country ODF achievement. We have either rehabilitated or drilled 3,079 water points reaching over 750,000 people and have developed a service delivery model to rural water supply that aims for 95% functionality in our target water points, and aim to help evolve wider sector approaches to sustainability in Malawi.

This is part of our system strengthening approach where our strong relationships with local governments enable them to co-identify systemic barriers to sustainable, inclusive, area-wide WASH services, and we work with them to overcome these issues. We are a go-to humanitarian partner (delivering 10 Emergency Response to Covid 19, Cyclones and Cholera projects across 15 districts over the past 8 years) and are refining our approach to achieve humanitarian and development nexus. We use sport to engage children in WASH issues and developed the 'Shasha Wathazi' (Hygiene Heroes) and Sport toolkit, which uses play sessions to convey WASH messages in schools. In the urban space, we have recently completed a program strengthening urban waste services in Lilongwe, and our energy work promotes the adoption of Zipopololo FAST stove which uses pellets manufactured from agricultural waste and explores opportunities for the manufacture of, and demand creation for briquettes. Our new strategic objectives build on this expertise in waste management to develop agricultural and energy inputs through the circular economy.

## GREEN ENERGY, CARBON & CLIMATE FINANCE

Our green Energy work started in 2008 and enables market-based solutions for cooking, lighting, and Productive Uses of Energy reaching over 150,000 households with green energy access each year. We have worked in the carbon finance sector for over 10 years and have extensive expertise in designing and implementing forest-protecting carbon finance projects with communities. This includes water supply, improved cookstoves and now land restoration projects. We are among the first organisations to trial carbon for water points sustainability, and we are unique in our ability to reach scaled access (over 150,000 households per year) to locally produced, improved cookstoves through our large networks of village-based sales agents, the majority of whom are women.

This scale is reached by leveraging our team's experience in community engagement and marketing as well as our partnership with the Government's Social Welfare office to provide stoves to Malawi's most vulnerable households. Our leading role in the National Cookstove Steering Committee (NCSC) has allowed us to influence national policy and regulation, using impactful learning from our long experience of promoting improved cooking technologies. Our rural electrification work has seen the installation and operation of Malawi's first SMART-metered solar minigrids and the establishment of a social enterprise for their long-term operation and management.

We focus on not only providing green domestic energy, but green Productive Uses of Energy to foster economic growth and enhance the sustainability of our approach.

## SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Upholding rights and social accountability have been core elements of our livelihoods programming since 1989 and in the last two years as part of our work to strengthen WASH service systems.

We work with communities to enable them to understand and better articulate their rights and concerns regarding services and build processes that hold government and service providers to account. We empower community activism and advocate for local governance and social accountability through the establishment of Citizen Forums at local level (including in WASH in Schools) and a Social Accountability Monitoring Committee (SAMCOM) at district level and facilitating engagement with the authorities through interface meetings and public hearings.

We first started using the REFLECT approach in 2002 and it has been instrumental in promoting people-centred development and self-reliance leading to generation of community led projects funded with their own local resources. To date we have facilitated the establishment of over 350 REFLECT circles leading to increased community sense of ownership in solving own problems with reduced dependence on external support and increased sense of power and control.

# OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

## 1. SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES, HEALTHY & RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

**Objective:** Contribute to equitable stewardship of ecosystems for well-functioning food and water systems, ecosystem services and healthy communities with sustainable livelihoods.

**Why?** Malawi's population is heavily reliant on rainfed agriculture for livelihoods and natural resources for energy, so the effects of forest loss and land degradation are especially significant. Women are disproportionately affected.

The economy is in a vicious cycle in which increasing demand on natural resources contributes to poor and unsustainable management, leading to their further depletion; a fact compounded by a rapidly growing population. Around 80% of Malawi's forest and agricultural land is degraded (World Bank 2021); water quality is decreasing, water tables are falling, and forests are depleting at an alarming rate with local as well as global consequences. Cooking with unsustainable biomass (accounting for more than 95% of all household energy consumption in Malawi) is a key driver of deforestation.

Agriculture and food systems in Malawi therefore face key challenges. Because of climate change, economic slowdowns, COVID-19 and rising food and agri-inputs prices, hunger and poverty have been on the rise. Healthy diets are therefore unattainable for most Malawians and the impacts of climate change are experienced more frequently and severely. In the 2020 Integrated Household Survey, 63.5% of households felt they had inadequate food in the last 30 days, and 35% of children under-five suffered from chronic malnutrition (stunting) (FAO 2021).

Adequate water, sanitation and hygiene is fundamental to ensuring healthy lives, and in resilient food systems food hygiene is key for food safety, and water (and sanitation, for example composted waste) is an essential input to agriculture. Poor malnutrition levels are closely linked to lack of access to water. Nationally, access to at least basic water services is 70% (Joint Monitoring Programme 2022), but 30% of water points

are not functioning at any given time (mWater, 2019). Only 26% of the population have basic sanitation, and 4% still practise open defecation. Worse still, very few people (8%) wash their hands with soap at critical times (JMP, 2020). These factors are a catalyst for diarrhoeal diseases, affecting the health of food producers and contributing to more than 3,100 under-five child deaths every year, as well as magnifying epidemics such as Cholera and COVID-19.



Esther Kipesile, Silogha Farmer Field School, Malawi

Self Help Africa will work in partnership with the Government, private sector, and wider development partners to transform agriculture and food systems (with WASH as a core component). We do this in a way that reduces hunger, makes diets healthier and more affordable, improves the productivity and incomes of small-scale producers, addresses gender inequality, and inequalities in access to basic services such as WASH and mitigates and adapts to climate change.

### How does this support Malawi Vision 2063?

**Pillar 1:** Agricultural Productivity and Commercialisation

**Pillar 2:** Industrialisation

**Enabler 5:** Human Capital Development

**Enabler 6:** Economic Infrastructure

**Enabler 7:** Environmental Sustainability



## ACTIONS

- 1 We will refine our approach to food systems based on sector best practice and all our programmes will be designed with reference to climate trends and predictions.
- 2 We will support communities and governments to develop and implement effective natural resource management plans that deliver sustainable ecosystem services, promote green livelihoods, and foster a circular economy. This includes refining and scaling up the Functional Landscape Approach and integrating land and forest restoration activities in all our agricultural programmes.
- 3 We will promote awareness and adoption of sustainable and climate smart agricultural practices, integrated pest and disease management, agroforestry, climate smart infrastructure, and green energy technologies to support irrigation farming and off-season agriculture production systems.
- 4 We will improve supply chains and post-harvest practices to improve access and utilisation of nutritious agricultural products.
- 5 We will address chronic malnutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, hygiene, and food safety, and further refine our integrated approach to nutrition and WASH.
- 6 Support households to diversify their livelihood options, both on and off farm, as a platform for food system strengthening and support the strengthening of circular markets and value chains. Specific focus will be placed on understanding the evolving demand of rural markets and supporting market-driven production of diverse, nutritious foods as well as commercial and non-commercial crops and livestock.
- 7 We will expand our improved cooking work to reduce biomass consumption in urban as well as rural areas and continue to explore possibilities for circular economies using waste for energy.
- 8 Our work on rural water and energy supply will focus on ongoing service sustainability and climate and wider disaster resilience and will help authorities to do the same. In our WASH work this will include a focus on water quality and building capacities and strengthening wider service delivery and financing models for maintenance, together with strengthening government-led service oversight.
- 9 A new area of focus will be to improve waste management in cities, towns, and market centres through the use of waste-derived agricultural inputs such as compost and animal feed. This will bring the four-way 'win' of improving public health and sanitation in these areas; increasing agricultural inputs and climate resilience of soils; reducing greenhouse gas emissions from unmanaged waste; and creating green jobs from waste value chains.
- 10 We will build on our successes in changing behaviour to eliminate open defecation in the communities where we work by taking a market-based approach to enable households to move up the sanitation ladder to construct and upgrade to durable, hygienic toilets.
- 11 We will strengthen behaviour change techniques across expertise areas to ensure they are creative and engage young people including by building on our sport for change expertise. This will include increasingly linking promotion of WASH behaviours with promotion of WASH products.

**GENDER EQUALITY:** Our approach to food systems will strengthen women's access to, and control over, resources and decisions.

## KEY METRICS:

- 1 # of households with an acceptable level of dietary diversity.
- 2 # of smallholder farmers who have used agriculture practices promoted by the project for >1 season (CSA, Integrated Soil Fertility Management, IPM, Conservation Agriculture, GAP, agro-ecological practices, etc).
- 3 # of smallholder farmers with an increase in crop diversity.
- 4 % of households that are food secure throughout the year.
- 5 Total area (ha.) covered by Village Forest Areas and other critical ecosystems conserved and managed sustainably.
- 6 # households using green / circular economy technologies promoted by the project (e.g. efficient cookstoves, alternative fuel sources, solar, woodlots, waste management and recycling technologies).
- 7 # of households with increased production levels of crops and/or livestock products.
- 8 # people in supported communities access safe drinking water and use basic sanitation services.

## S2: SUSTAINABLE BUSINESSES, DECENT EMPLOYMENT & A THRIVING ECONOMY

**Objective:** Support the creation and growth of inclusive, profitable, and sustainable businesses for the generation of decent employment and incomes for Malawians.

**Why?** Malawi's economy depends upon agriculture, which employs 85% of the labour force. 70% of agricultural production comes from smallholder farmers (World Bank 2022) and a further 10% is from nature-based jobs and forestry. Agriculture is both the driver and an enabler of economic growth, poverty reduction, food security, and nutrition and adaptation to climate change. This is reflected in the Malawi Vision 2063 which promotes agro-based industries as a driver for achieving inclusive wealth and self-reliance.

However, a weak investment, business, and regulatory climate inhibits development of enterprises and value addition, leading most to engage in lower-risk, but detrimental business-as-usual activities. Lack of access to finance compounds this issue and is particularly challenging for those living in rural areas and women - gross value of output per hectare from plots managed by women is 25% less than from plots managed by men, yet women produce over 70% of the food that is consumed locally.

The high level of uncoordinated subsistence farming is a key factor in Malawi's persistent poverty. Individual smallholders have few assets, low purchasing power, limited access to inputs, agronomic and market information, credit, and market linkages. Furthermore, smallholders are fragmented and not organised, without access to market information, so they do not aggregate, which impacts their bargaining power and access to formal markets. Poverty is driven by low productivity, little value addition and limited opportunities for non-farm activities - in part due to lack of energy. Access to electricity is very low (14.9%) and so most of Malawi's population is missing out on quality of life and economic growth opportunities which come with access to electricity. From improved lighting at home, to increasing hours of schooling and shop opening hours, to adding value to agricultural outputs through processing.

This context is challenging, but also presents opportunities for



Eillah Penama with potato harvest, Langazanga, Nkhosakota, Malawi

innovative, long-term focussed, market-based solutions: a disorganised, fragmented smallholder agriculture sector leaves space for the development and formalisation of farming cooperatives with strengthened market linkages; low access and poor-quality energy and WASH services are an opportunity waiting to be filled by entrepreneurs and innovators. The creation of businesses which are financially and environmentally sustainable not only grows the local economy, but increases the likelihood of development impacts extending and growing beyond project and donor timelines.

Our carbon finance work provides an opportunity to leverage innovative approaches borne out of donor funding towards reaching increased scale and longevity of impacts. Through implementing market-based approaches, we increase the viability of local businesses, enterprises and climate positive activities through providing access to carbon finance revenue. This allows traditionally marginalised groups to gain better access to financial services, enabling green growth, the creation of green jobs and circular economies. Self Help Africa will work in partnership to support the growth of inclusive, profitable, and sustainable businesses for the generation of decent employment and incomes for Malawians. We will develop and strengthen enterprise, value chains and markets with specific targeting of women and young people for long and scalable impacts. We will work with various actors, from input suppliers through to producers, service providers, processors, and consumers. Our sister organisation CUMO is our partner in increasing access to financial and business support services with 83% of their clients being women.

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### How does this support Malawi Vision 2063?

- Pillar 1:** Agricultural Productivity and Commercialisation
- Pillar 2:** Industrialisation
- Pillar 3:** Urbanisation
- Enabler 4:** Private Sector Dynamism
- Enabler 5:** Human Capital Development
- Enabler 6:** Economic Infrastructure
- Enabler 7:** Environmental Sustainability

## ACTIONS

- 1 We will work to increase access to finance and business development services (loans, saving and insurance) through collaboration with CUMO, other microfinance Institutions (MFIs) and utilising revenue from carbon offsets.
- 2 Expand and develop new carbon projects that promote positive climate action, improve livelihoods, and serve as a tool for fostering meaningful local development. Revenue will be directed to building long term sustainability and resilience.
- 3 Foster inclusive business creation and bankable identities to ensure that access to and the benefits of employment opportunities reach marginalised groups, including women, youth.
- 4 Leverage digital tools to provide innovative and inclusive solutions to finance, risk management, supply chain management and market access challenges to SME sector.
- 5 We will use market-based approaches to reduce and avoid centralised procurement of project inputs; supporting local suppliers and giving project participants greater agency over their assets through cash transfers, input vouchers, seed and livestock fairs and e-cash.
- 6 Create and leverage employment, profitable businesses and income opportunities in WASH through:
  - a. *Production and promotion/sales of WASH-related products, personal and domestic hygiene products, water treatment and storage.*
  - b. *Working in WASH-related services (water maintenance and waste management).*
  - c. *Producing and selling non-WASH products from waste (e.g., compost, animal feed and briquettes).*
- 7 Promote sustainable agriculture, agroforestry, and food systems to create and leverage employment, profitable businesses, and income opportunities through:
  - a. *Support value chains and market systems development (input and output markets) of non-traditional crops' (sesame, ginger, wheat, garlic), eco-business (beekeeping, renewable biomass energy products and other non-timber forest products (NTFP) of market value through tree-planting and forest management initiatives) and livestock productivity through private sector engagement, expos and market linkages.*
  - b. *Leverage opportunities around Productive Uses of Energy.*
  - c. *Support commercialisation of farming through promotion of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and farmer groups into associations and cooperatives.*
  - d. *Support collective marketing through aggregation of produce and aggregation centres to enhance access to markets.*
  - e. *Improve access to agricultural inputs, such as early-maturing, drought-tolerant, and disease-resistant crops. Promote revolving loan schemes (livestock, crop seed, fertilisers) to boost agriculture productivity and production, as well as community grain reserves/grain banks.*
  - f. *Partner with other stakeholders including private companies, off-takers and processors in agriculture and agroforestry value chains where we can add value including nature-based solutions through carbon markets.*
- 8 Our energy work will continue to focus on market-development and building employment and income generating opportunities through:
  - a. *Delivery of reliable, affordable, renewable, rural electricity services through solar minigrids, kiosks, solar home systems etc. Implement opportunities around PUE which may include fostering energy-based enterprise creation, agri-processing and safe water services.*
  - b. *Support the growth and independence of Malawi's only energy services' social enterprise "Kuyatsa" as a scalable model for replication.*
  - c. *Improving access to improved cooking services through establishing and expanding our network of trained village-based promoters who earn commissions and source improved cookstoves from stove production groups.*
  - d. *Engage local entrepreneurs in the pursuit of an entirely localised market system for cooking technologies*
  - e. *Expand interventions in the urban cooking markets, focussing on building capacity and creating market linkages between entrepreneurs and suppliers.*
  - f. *Enhance carbon markets access for SMEs to expand operations through increased linkage to the global green economy.*

**GENDER EQUALITY:** We will support the creation and growth of businesses that are women-led and our financial inclusion work will focus on increasing women's access to resources and reducing GBV.

## METRICS

1. # smallholder farmers and enterprises which have accessed new markets
2. # of households and enterprises reached by financial institutions we support
3. Percentage of household reporting increased household assets
4. Proportion of households with diversified income sources (%)
5. # decent jobs generated (safe environment, fair wage, job security) in supported enterprises.
6. # of female business leaders trained and mentored.
7. # of Increased turnover of enterprises offering green technologies/ circular economy promoted by the project e.g efficient cookstoves, alternative fuel sources, solar, woodlots, waste management and recycling technologies, compost, animal feeds, etc)
8. Number of households accessing improved cooking services (at least MTF tier 2) and Number of households accessing improved household electricity services (at least MTF tier 1)

### S3: CRISIS RESPONSE & RESILIENCE

**Objective:** Strengthen communities, the Government's and private sector's resilience to a changing climate and other shocks and disasters and supporting preparedness and response to such disasters through increasing the connectedness and complementarity between our humanitarian and long-term development work.

**Why?** Climate change and environmental destruction is increasing the frequency and impact of disasters in Malawi. Cyclones, floods and drought – are now experienced nearly annually in the same areas and we anticipate at least two El Nino Southern Oscillation-related events within the next 5 years. Water scarcity and quality is a growing concern, compounding environmental destruction and will be a future driver of migration in Malawi.

Malawi's largely agricultural-based economy is highly vulnerable, and women constitute 60% agricultural labour force (World Bank Poverty Report 2022). This limits Malawi's ability to withstand other shocks, such as pest outbreaks, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Malawi's vulnerability risk index of 6.1 is the 22nd highest globally and the lack of coping capacity index of 6.7 is 'very high'. Even in a year with normal rainfall patterns, the average humanitarian caseload has been one to two million people, the country faces recurrent cholera epidemics and three cyclones in as many years. This vulnerability to shocks and stresses undermines development gains and blocks the path out of poverty and towards sustainable development. Disasters disproportionately impact women and girls, with evidence suggesting that violence against women and girls increases during disasters. Lack of access to green energy and water, food (as well as other basic services) is a significant challenge for displaced people and puts an increased strain on natural resources. Green energy is poorly integrated into disaster response efforts in Malawi and as such interventions are often poorly coordinated. The national electricity grid is also almost entirely reliant on a stable climate (hydroelectric generation accounts for as high as 90% of electricity supply) which has led to significant load shedding over the last 5 years stymying economic productivity and development across the country.

Despite humanitarian events becoming more frequent and protracted, there are few good examples of the humanitarian-development nexus and often development gains are further undermined by the response to disasters. Linked to this, there are clear opportunities to increase the connectedness and complementarity between our response and development efforts, and given we are a long-term development actor, and major humanitarian player

in the country, we are well placed to work on strengthening this nexus and connectedness. Self Help Africa will continue to use our added value in scale and agility to support the government to respond to shocks and disasters to save lives immediately, protect the gains that have already been registered in our impact areas and reduce vulnerability for affected households. We will use our capability of working in both development and humanitarian spheres to bridge the gap between humanitarian work and longer-term resilience and development, to end the recurrent cycle of hunger, disaster and humanitarian assistance in Malawi through strengthening systems and placing resilience at the forefront of our work.

#### How does this support Malawi Vision 2063?

**Pillar 1:** Agricultural Productivity and Commercialisation

**Enabler 5:** Human Capital Development

**Enabler 7:** Environmental Sustainability

#### ACTIONS

1. We will refine our approach to bridge the gap between humanitarian work and longer-term resilience work. We will appraise the linkage and target synergies between our humanitarian and development work. We will include activities in our development work that reduces risk, increases resilience and builds preparedness capacity. In our response work we will seek to strengthen local systems rather than bypass them.
2. We will support government to respond to shocks and disasters and work through local partners to strengthen civil society capacity to respond in line with our localisation agenda.
3. We will strengthen community and government preparedness to future shocks and stresses including institutions for better surveillance and anticipatory actions.
4. We will strengthen resilience to disasters as an integral part of all our programmes. This will include a climate and disaster resilience strategy for all programmes.
5. Through our localisation work, we will strengthen the capacity of organisations in crisis response, disaster preparedness, anticipatory action and resilience building.
6. We will develop new ways to fund crisis response to ensure rapid response and an ability to stockpile supplies through building crisis modifiers in our programmes in at risk areas.
7. We will explore opportunities to integrate insurance and other forms of financial services to enhance resilience to shocks and support recovery.

**GENDER EQUALITY:** We will tailor activities to meet the different needs of all groups and actively work to reduce risk of GBV in line with core humanitarian standards.

#### METRICS:

- # targeted communities with early warning systems in place
- # districts and GVH with functional Early Warning Systems
- # households with increased absorptive capacity (households assets, savings, livestock, tradeable goods and access to financial services)
- # households with increased adaptive capacity (increased income, increased production, dietary diversity, access to: safe water, markets, value addition; improved sanitation and nutrition)
- # of households with increased transformative capacity
- Increased decision-making power of women at household and community level (voice, choice & control)



Tchaka Zulu manufactures energy efficient cooking stoves as part of a village enterprise in Balaka district.

## S4: SYSTEM STRENGTHENING & AN ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENT

**Objective:** Influence systemic change in and beyond the communities where we work to strengthen and transform structures and institutions to deliver services in ways that are accountable, equitable, inclusive, sustainable and effective.

**Why?** Development and ecosystem services exist within systems made up of different building blocks: institutions, policy and legislation, finance, regulation and accountability, monitoring, planning, infrastructure, natural resource management, and learning and adaptation. Only by understanding these and the linkages between them, can we identify weak points and target interventions for greater effect. Eg. WASH services have a sustainability problem: despite billions of euros of investment, over 30% of water points are non-functional (mWater, 2019) and Malawi is off track to meet the UN SDG targets.

With ambitious targets such as phasing out the use of open fires for cooking, ensuring access to water and sanitation for all, ending hunger to ensure food availability, eliminating Gender Based Violence and sustainably managing forests by 2030, the systems around our sector areas must be strengthened for achievement to be possible.

Malawi faces low levels of citizen activism and poor governance that fails to both properly involve and represent women, and other marginalised groups. Gender inequalities are reinforced through discriminatory social norms, practices and structures within families, communities, workplaces, and institutions. Systems must therefore be strengthened to deliver services in ways that are accountable, equitable, inclusive, and effective.

Self Help Africa recognises that impactful and sustained change in all sectors requires a combination of a variety of factors including technology, finance, regulation, coordination, learning and accountability, and actors including households, communities, public institutions, local government, ministries, market-sector actors, development agencies and others.

Through partnership and collective action, we seek to strengthen the factors and capacities of actors, recognising their interdependence.

### How does this support Malawi Vision 2063?

**Enabler 1:** Mindset Change

**Enabler 2:** Effective Governance Systems and Institutions

**Enabler 3:** Enhanced Public Sector Performance

**Enabler 5:** Human Capital Development

**Enabler 6:** Economic Infrastructure



A solar micro-grid that has been installed in a village in Malawi's Dedza district.

## ACTIONS

1. We will continue to refine the systems strengthening approach currently used in our WASH programmes. We seek to expand our common understanding across programming sectors and bring sectoral 'systems' together.
2. We will continue to refine and scale-up our work on systems strengthening and social accountability, as key vehicles to achieve scale and sustainability of WASH services. Ensure systems diagnostics inform our programming, and wherever possible work collectively with others at national level to share our learnings and collectively influence policy.
3. Develop a comprehensive partnership and localisation strategy aligned to the government to ensure our work puts local actors in the lead, strengthens local systems, and is responsive to local communities.
4. A community-focused participatory approach to programming, including focus on ensuring individuals have influence and exercise leadership over priority setting, activity design and implementation, and evaluating results.
5. Customise our social accountability work to the sectors we are working in, so that women, men, boys and girls are better able to exercise their rights and influence decision making and ensure governance systems have increased capacity to respond to their needs.
6. Promote adaptive co-management practices and revenue sharing that promote collective ownership, accountability and responsibility for management of natural resources.
7. Develop and drive evidence-based contributions to national and donor policies that demonstrate climate-resilient agriculture, energy, forestry, and WASH systems.
8. Continue to prioritise both local and district leadership through strengthening nutrition coordinating committees.
9. Work in strategic partnership with other organisations, net-

works, and clusters to collect and share evidence to create policy and advocacy for joint influence, investment and growth in agriculture, WASH, green energy and food systems.

10. Use our unique experience with carbon finance, and our partnership with CUMO, to prioritise strengthening the finance building block of all systems to provide access to inclusive finance across sectors.
11. Support the development of a viable and effective carbon regulatory framework at subnational, national and international level (Article 6 framework in Paris Agreement).

**GENDER EQUALITY:** We will ensure all programmes work to shift social, cultural, and traditional norms and attitudes, and strengthen women's access to, and control over, resources and decisions.

## METRICS:

1. # women in leadership positions in supported community structures (NRM committees, farmer organisations, etc)
2. % projects integrating Gender Transformational Approaches
3. % changes Systems building block checklists for specific sectors
4. # of maintenance service providers with the skills and equipment to provide effective maintenance services
5. Number of projects where gender and social accountability are embedded.
6. # of governance and social accountability initiatives working towards changes in the legal, policy and institutional frameworks governing Sustainable Food Systems / Sustainable Landscapes/ Green & Circular Economy / safe waste management.
7. Level of progress in partner organisational capacity assessment and support, in a range of competencies

# WHO WE WORK WITH

**W**e aim to support marginalised and excluded people, ensuring that they can assert their rights to services, and addressing this in a responsive and accountable way. Whilst no one is excluded, there is no ‘one-size-fits all’ solution and our work will be tailored for stakeholders. (Eg providing free improved cookstoves to Social Cash Transfer participants and sales to others.)

We will ensure that our programmes are designed with and for women and girls and take advantage of opportunities to transform harmful gender norms; recognising that gender inequality and gender-based violence are major inhibitors to achieving our mission.

We will prioritise working with young people in line with Malawi Vision 2063 because young people have huge potential to transform their lives and communities. We will work with entrepreneurs and change makers that are seeking enterprise driven approaches to some of the most complex problems. We offer financial services and other forms of support to incubate and expand meaningful ideas thereby empowering change through leaders.

A systems approach means that indirectly Self Help Africa will work the different ‘levels’ within a system - e.g. community, service authority, service provider, district and national stakeholders and institutions. This will give our work further reach and influence, indirectly benefiting all across target districts.

## HOW WE DO THIS

We will continue to deliver a mixture of directly implemented and partner-led projects with significant growth in the latter by 2027. Strategic Objective Four puts localisation at the heart of our strategy. We will significantly shift how we work with civil society, private sector partners and local organisations by 2027, with 30% of our portfolio channelled through Civil Society Organisations by that time.

Through much of our work to date we have worked with and strengthened the capacity of national, district and sub-district government structures, such as supporting the Government of Malawi to map water points and working with District Council staff as well as district level structures to develop their capacity and support strategic investment plans. In all districts where Self Help Africa is present, we will evolve and strengthen our work with and through local government, directly supporting their plans, supporting capacity development as defined by the Council and monitoring systems, and delivering programmes through the councils. We will also continue to support strengthening of extension services systems through capacity building of both district and community level structures, such as the District Nutrition Coordination Committee (DNCC), District



Filimoni Malekano is headman of Matembera village, Balaka, Malawi.

Environment Sub-Committee (DESC), District Agriculture Extension Coordination Committee (DAECC), and local structures such as Area Development Committee (ADCs), Village Development Committee (VDCs) and other related structures. This work will be led by the co-creation of a Partnership Guide by 2024 developed with District Councils.

## OUR DEFINITIONS

**Young People:** Young people are defined by the 2013 Malawi National Youth Policy as persons aged 10-35 years.

**Marginalised and excluded:** Those who do not have the same access to services by virtue of: sexual orientation, gender, geography, ethnicity, religion, displacement, conflict, HIV status or disability. Poverty is both a consequence and a cause of being marginalised. Our programme approach involves understanding the people within a community and devising interventions that support inclusion.

## LANGUAGE AND IMAGERY

We refer to individuals in communities where we work with as “project participants”. Similarly, photos that we use are respectful, shared with informed consent, and do not reinforce stereotypes.

Language and imagery have the power to reinforce or deconstruct systems of power that maintain poverty, inequality, and suffering. As we are making commitments to localisation and ensuring community-led programming, we make a commitment to prioritise the role of language, images, and communications.



Demonstrating hand washing with soap on a tippy tap, Sambani, Malawi

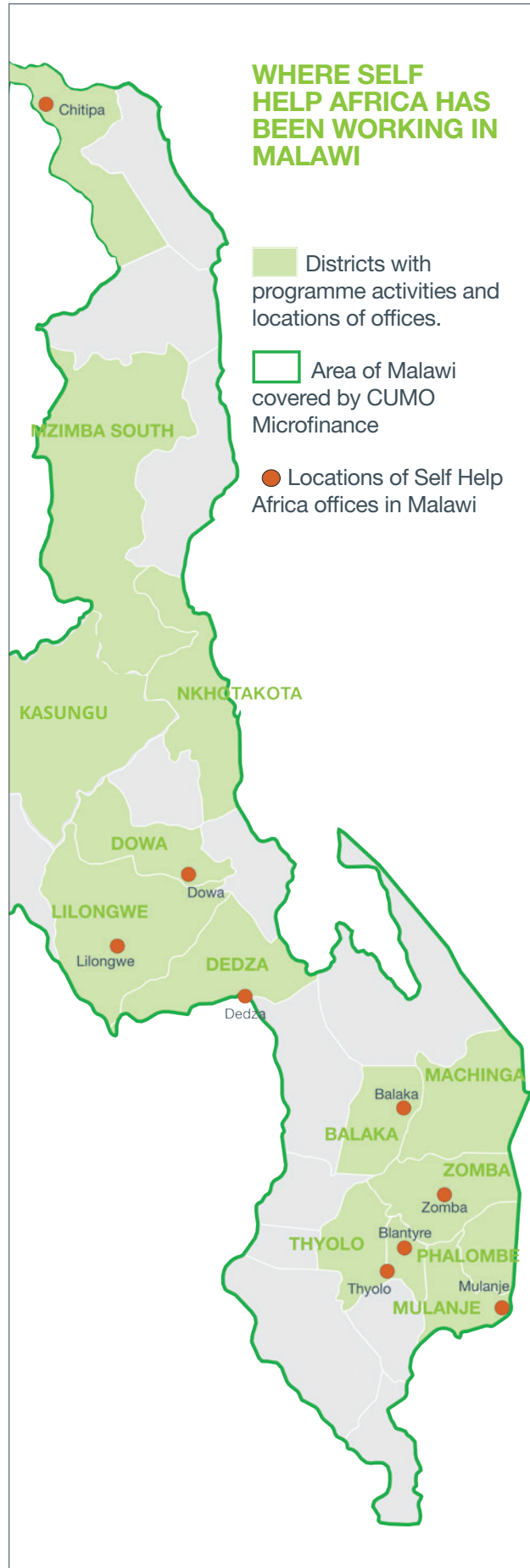
## WHERE WE WORK

**W**e will work across all three regions of Malawi focussing on districts where we have long term presence and expertise. We currently work in 14 districts. We aim to build long-term programmes across our four Strategic Objectives in the districts where we work.

Wherever possible, we will take a ‘district-wide approach’, aiming to improve conditions, services and governance in districts where we have long term presence, not only specific target communities.

Through this we will refine our approach to bridge the gap between humanitarian work and longer-term resilience work.

Our experience in responding to disasters means that where we work will also be flexible in the face of crisis. By working to strengthen systems, we will ultimately broaden and deepen the scale of our impact beyond the target communities and build foundations for sustainable change at a national level.





# STRATEGIC ENABLERS

Our ability to successfully implement this strategy over the next five years depends on refining how we operate. Accordingly, we need to continually invest in our funding models, our systems, our people and strengthen how we measure and demonstrate the impact of our work. Our values of impact, innovation, and community, not only shape what we do, but how we do it and thus guide the following four strategic enablers.

## S5: FINANCING MODELS & FUNDING

**Objective:** Leverage our positive reputation as a partner that delivers with integrity and quality to maintain our existing funding base and further grow and diversify funding streams through partnerships with government, local civil society, social enterprises, and private sectors.



### ACTIONS

1. Through strengthening our partnership approach, we will facilitate long term partnerships and capacity building of local organisations. Capacity building will be defined by our partners; however, areas of focus will likely include governance, safeguarding, compliance, financial management and planning, risk assessments, implementation and resource mobilisation.
2. Refine our approach to working with the government that builds on decades of mutual capacity building and is shaped by District Councils.
3. Target meaningful consortiums that are aligned with our mission and strategic objectives and aim to secure funding that support our journey to move from ad-hoc projects to longer term programmatic focus in target districts.
4. Engage all stakeholders in our mission (donors, trustees, private sector) through impactful communication.
5. Maintain a constituent and equitable cost recovery approach across all funding sources.
6. Grow our carbon portfolio and act as a leader in the sector towards more ethical standards. This will include

7. establishing FPIC (Free and prior informed consent) procedures and an equitable benefit sharing framework for all carbon projects.
8. Build and nurture strategic partnerships with more than five private sector entities.
9. We will work to grow flexible funding to support an agile response to crisis, this will include crisis modifiers and growth of unrestricted funding.
10. Promoting financial innovation and financial tools that contribute to a green circular economy.
11. We will continue to explore blended and innovative financing which link with our evolution of service delivery models across our sector areas including evolving our work with carbon and climate finance and exploring new financing modalities to move away from reactive to proactive programme development.
12. We will support the growth and independence of our existing social enterprise; Kuyatsa and continue to support the development of independent enterprises to achieve scale and sustainability across our strategic objectives.

### METRICS

- Grow our income annually by 15-20% to reach an annual income to €15 million by 2027.
- Nurture partnerships (formal and informal) with local CSOs, with 30% of portfolio channelled through CSOs by end of 2027.
- Partnership guide developed with District Councils by 2024
- Establish an FPIC manual and carbon revenue sharing framework through a participatory and inclusive process by 2024.
- Our social enterprises move towards self-sufficiency by generating income that covers their running costs.
- Increase unrestricted funding to give flexibility on emergency response.

## S6: SYNERGIES, GROUP DEVELOPMENT & ALIGNMENT

**Objective:** Strengthen our organisation to maximise opportunities, impact and deliver future green growth.



### ACTIONS

1. Achieve full integration of the merged organisation as one single entity, with harmonised and strengthened systems, processes and standards by 2024.
2. Leverage the information and communications technology (ICT) sector to provide innovative solutions to our internal systems (finance, grants and compliance, IT, procurement, communications, risk management and human resources) and service delivery in our programmes.
3. Led by our Malawi Advisory Committee, maintain the highest levels of corporate governance and full compliance

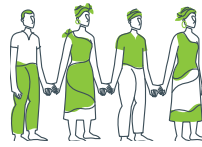
4. with government of Malawi NGO regulations in-country.
5. Develop and apply consistently an equitable shared cost allocation policy to ensure transparency and accountability.
6. Ensure we “walk the talk” and pursue low emissions development strategies. We will track and commit to reducing our carbon footprint across programmes.

### METRICS

- Full integration of the merged organisation by 2024
- Digitalise our underpinning processes (Logistics, procurement, recruitment, Finance) to support efficient effectiveness and strengthen internal control.
- Regarded as a ‘well governed and accountable’ organisation by our partners
- Back-office systems are proven to be robust as evidenced by bi-annual review.

## SO7: CULTURE, PEOPLE & RESOURCING

**Objective:** Nurture a culture of accountability, belonging and wellbeing, prioritising the creation of a safe space, where people can speak up and be heard.



### ACTIONS

1. Strategic objectives require shifts in mindset and skill set of our team. We commit to professional development in: market-based approaches, systems strengthening, carbon financing, social accountability, climate and disaster resilience and policy influencing. A system strengthening approach will require that team work in more partnerships, at higher 'levels' of the system.
2. Build internal capacity and skills to track and respond to crises in our project areas, with a focus on: cholera responses, cash transfers, crop and livestock diseases and pest outbreaks, flood and drought responses.
3. Build a resilient team with opportunities for career and personal growth. Succession planning and movement within and across the team, as will the number and consistency of staff attending organisation-wide communities of practice across different parts of Self Help Africa.
4. Managers and supervisors trained and supported to practice

- mindful, compassionate and feminist leadership, and develop a coaching and mentorship programme to foster knowledge sharing.
5. Build and nurture a safe, caring and thriving culture where all staff and stakeholders understand safeguarding and have the confidence to raise concerns through strengthened reporting and feedback mechanisms.
  6. Implement a Wellbeing programme including stress management and conduct regular surveys.
  7. Implement and develop staff surveys and other feedback mechanisms to gauge staff satisfaction levels.
  8. Set targets for gender inclusion and diversity and ensure gender and social inclusion is reflected in our hiring, promotion, and retention processes.
  9. Strengthen the speed and capacity of our crisis response without impacting our development work, risking humanitarian development silos. This will include building a roster of crisis response staff to enable 'surge' capacity.

### METRIC

- Achieve 90% feedback with our team citing Self Help Africa as "an organisation that values its team and provides opportunities for growth".
- All staff able to deliver training in safeguarding.
- Achieve 50/50 gender balance across all the grades, conduct a gender and inclusion audit.
- Team development and staff wellbeing programmes by 2024.

## SO8: DEMONSTRATING IMPACT

**Objective:** User-friendly, data driven evidence of the effectiveness of our work is shared internally and externally to maximise impact, scale, transparency, accountably, learning and influence. We will ensure that the voices of those most affected by poverty and disasters are at the forefront of our analysis.



### ACTIONS

1. Strengthen impact measurement tools that put individual, partner and community feedback at the centre of our learning. This will include project participant reporting and feedback through digital tools.
2. Conduct evidence-based policy advocacy, focussing on evidence gathering, external communications, building of strategic relationships and investments in action research around the core advocacy themes of climate change and use these as the basis of driving our influencing work.
3. Systematically conduct baselines to demonstrate effectiveness of the innovations we introduce, give credibility to our advocacy to scale-up enable cost-effectiveness analysis and adaptive programming in a changing climate.
4. Nurture and secure partnerships with academic and research institutions for long-term, post-project assessment of the impact of our work.
5. Become a learning and knowledge connector; collaborating

- with other organisations, networks and coalitions to build learning from our community presence up to the district and then national level and vice-versa.
6. Develop and implement an impact communications approach driven by our values: quarterly newsletter aligned to our Strategic Objectives shared with partners, annual impact statement aligned to this strategy that provide insights, personal testimonies, and data, infographics, and track our influence work and reporting on our behaviours.
  7. Through our localisation agenda, support capacity building of civil society in evidence-based advocacy.
  8. Establish metrics for revenue sharing, transparency and social benefits of carbon projects;
  9. Evaluate community perceptions, attitudes and behaviours to climate change initiatives and carbon offset projects.

### METRICS

- Doubling reports from project participants and feedback/ action provided within 2 weeks.
- Partners with research institutions and networks/ # of strategic partnerships nurtured or developed.
- Reports and newsletters developed that effectively demonstrate the impact of our work to improve our reputation among major donors
- Changes in the legal, policy and institutional frameworks resulting from our policy influencing work
- Partners/ civil society actors trained/supported and engaging with government on implementation of policies.
- Quality Benchmarking Standards in learning, influence, effective partnerships, safeguarding, gender, and environmental management (including a system for tracking and reducing our carbon footprint) in all programmes.

# OUR BEHAVIOURS

Our behaviours are how we work. These are what our partners in development should expect from Self Help Africa.

VALUE	PRINCIPLE	BEHAVIOUR
<b>IMPACT</b> We are accountable, ambitious and committed to systemic change	<b>Accountable</b> We consistently deliver on what we said we'd do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We transparently and regularly communicate about challenges, opportunities and progress, trusting that what we say will be listened to constructively and openly.</li> <li>We respect and adhere to our culture, policies, systems and processes.</li> <li>We ensure high quality monitoring, evaluation learning and making improvements to the difference we make, our impact.</li> </ul>
	<b>Ambitious</b> We strive to continually do better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We enable communities, partners colleagues and all we collaborate with to be effective.</li> <li>We co operate with others to find synergies.</li> <li>We influence and challenge to bring about systemic change. We are inspired to do so, by the communities and partners we work with and what we've learnt.</li> </ul>
	<b>Commitment</b> We keep focused on what really matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We keep aligned to our shared strategy and we keep this dynamic and relevant in consultation with our stakeholders.</li> <li>We ensure ownership of our strategy through co creating it enthusing people to take responsibility and make the greatest difference possible.</li> <li>We strengthen resilience. We prevent burnout and help ensure balance by prioritising health and well being.</li> </ul>
<b>INNOVATION</b> We are agile, creative and enterprising in an ever changing world	<b>Agile</b> We appreciate we have to change to keep being effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are driven to remain flexible, be proactive and reattune to emerging situations.</li> <li>We ensure whatever needs to be decided centrally is done so responsibly and fairly, whilst giving clear autonomy to country programmes and our subsidiaries to respond with agility to changing circumstances.</li> <li>We maintain composure in difficult situations, finding ways to keep ourselves and others focused and constructively moving forwards.</li> </ul>
	<b>Creative</b> We find solutions, not dwelling on problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We enable people to lift their horizons, excel and create ideas together. We encourage different thinking and new ways of doing things.</li> <li>We have a learning culture, where time is taken to re flect, learn and share what will be helpful to others, especially from our setbacks.</li> <li>We enable people to feel trusted and safe to share their thoughts and trial better ways forward. We ensure a no blame culture so people are not fearful of making mistakes.</li> </ul>
	<b>Enterprising</b> We know being enterprising is in our DNA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are passionate about enabling pioneering approaches that are generated by the communities and partners that we work with.</li> <li>We are dedicated to facilitating the growth of business enterprises that can accelerate sustainable livelihoods.</li> <li>We have dynamic, participatory, innovative ways of designing and delivering our strategies and programmes.</li> </ul>
<b>COMMUNITY</b> We are inclusive, honest and have integrity in our relationships	<b>Inclusion</b> We have inclusive relationships and feel connected to people with whom we work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We connect with team and community members regularly and in meaningful ways.</li> <li>We ensure fair treatment and opportunity for all by promoting diversity, equality and inclusion and eradicating prejudice and discrimination.</li> <li>We address challenges related to representation and participation at all levels. We ensure voices and perspectives from across the organisation and communities we work in are heard. In doing so, we appreciate and respect everyone's input.</li> </ul>
	<b>Honesty</b> We know honesty enables trust and transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We give and receive feedback in respectful, open and constructive ways.</li> <li>We provide spaces where people can feedback in safe ways without experiencing defensiveness.</li> <li>We have direct conversations with people rather than talking about them to others in order to build trusting relationships.</li> </ul>
	<b>Integrity</b> We maintain safe and ethical working environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We practice integrity in all that we do by choosing to do what is right over what is fast, easy, or comfortable. We are committed to ethical, responsible working practices.</li> <li>We act safely. We always challenge unsafe behaviour.</li> <li>We practice a strengths based approach, recognising and appreciating others on their good work and being willing to ask for help.</li> </ul>



Margret Chirwa, Thyolo District, Malawi



Anastazia Kayange, Chitipa, Malawi



Jenifer Tafatatha with her family in Bondo village, Malawi



Betty Banda farms upland rice in northern Malawi.



**Self Help  
AFRICA**  
*beyond aid*

With thanks to our partners:

