



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

## **Annex 2**

### **Appendix 4 – Village Level Action Plan : Example**

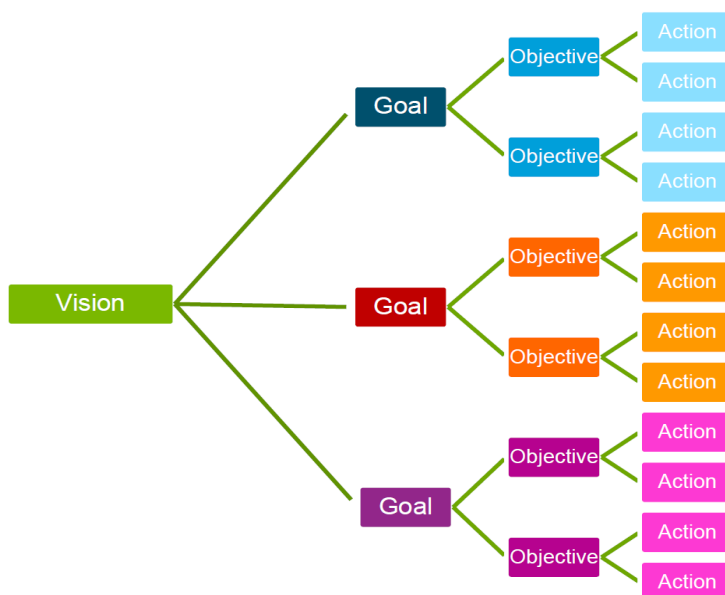
---

*For the GCF-FAO Project “Ecosystems-based Adaptation for resilient Watersheds and Communities in Malawi (EbAM)”*



## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

1. Village Level Action Plans (VLAPs) under EbAM will build on *Malawi National Guidelines: Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure 2015*<sup>1</sup> established by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development. The *Guidelines* provide a toolbox consisting of applicable technologies and a schematic presentation of VLAP contents. The schematic presentation is reproduced below (Figure 2.2.1).



**Figure 2.2.1:** Schematic Presentation of VLAP Contents<sup>2</sup>

2. The *Guidelines* provide a framework for planning discussions, ranging from agreeing on a village common vision and setting goals to translating the goals into actions.<sup>3</sup> The *Guidelines* adopt an Integrated Landscape Management (ILM) approach of starting with establishment of a common vision for the village in the next several years. Goals – which are near term achievements that contribute to making the vision come true – will be discussed and agreed upon. Villagers will be encouraged to categorize and group the goals for systematized understanding of them. The ILM Facilitators, who will facilitate the planning discussions in each target area (see Project Sub-activity 1.1.3.3), will ask questions to help prioritize the goals, such as: what goals are most important to the village; and what goals are most practical and achievable. Objectives must be clearly worded and accompanied by measurable outcomes during the lifespan of the plan. A VLAP should describe: (i) what needs to be done; (ii) when it needs to be done; (iii) who will do the activity; (iv) where the village can get help; and (v) budget.

3. Table 2.2.1 is a reproduction of a table in the *Guidelines* which shows an example of goals and associated objective, benefits and actions (including what, when, who where and required resources).



# Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

<b>Goal</b>	To improve catchment's ecosystem health				
<b>Objective</b>	To prevent and control soil erosion				
<b>Benefit</b>	Keep water in the soil for longer to support crop growth Keep top soil in the field for farming, and not allowing it to be transported to the river				
<b>Management Action</b>	Improved farming activities				
<b>Action</b>	<b>Activity / What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Resources &amp; Cost</b>
1. Implement contour bunding	1.1. Measure and peg ridges.	Farmers	All farm land	Before wet season. Before planting	Line level or A-frame Labour
	1.2. Align bunds across fields.	Farmers	All farm land	Before wet season. Before planting	Labour
	1.3. Dig trenches and make ridges	Farmers	All farm land	Before wet season. Before planting	Hoe or spade Labour
	1.4. Plant vetiver or other grass	Farmers	All farm land	Before wet season. Before planting	Vetiver grass Labour
2. Mulching	2.1. Collect vegetative material	Farmers	All farm land	Before wet season. After planting	Vegetation materials Labour
	2.2. Place mulching materials on garden and fields	Farmers	Vegetable gardens first	Before wet season. After planting	Labour

**Table 2.2.1:** Example of Goal, Objective, Benefit and Actions in VLAP



## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

**Table 2.2.2:** Actions Table' showing an example of VLAP interventions (from the *Guidelines*).

4. The proposed project follows the above framework in guiding the discussion and formulation of a VLAP (see FP and Annex 2; Component 1, activity 1.1.3, Sub-activity 1.1.3.3). Annex 2, Table 17 (Forest Landscape/Watershed Restoration and EbA) contains examples of EbA techniques as well as inputs and equipment required for applying the techniques. The applicable set of EbA techniques for EbAM are contained in Annex 2.1 Ecosystem based Adaptation.
5. One of the most important aspects of management plan formulation is the planning process itself, other than the plan's readability. As elaborated in the FP and FS, past experiences on natural resources management have shown that the success of management greatly depends on the meaningful participation of stakeholders in crafting a plan. Reflecting this lesson learned, the Guidelines (on which the proposed Project builds on) emphasizes the importance of participation of villagers "so that people have both input into and a clear understanding of what their responsibilities are," or in establishing the village stakeholders' ownership of the plan. Another element indispensable for successful resources management is the capacity of the stewards of the resources to engage in adaptive management. Knowledge and skills improve through active participation in management and the relevant ecological, socioeconomic and cultural factors never remain static.
6. EbAM proposes to ensure meaningful participation of stakeholders in planning, and hence strengthen the planning process, by multiple pathways. One is to accord differentiated rights related to VLAP finalization to villagers and other stakeholders. Another is to intervene earlier than the plan formulation stage. It has been recognized that the local stakeholders who do not directly engage in managing the resources, but have socially recognized functions to oversee the villagers, e.g., traditional authorities, religious leaders and local government officials, can provide information and insights that affect the village-level resources management and are unique to their functions. The proposed project engages them as *associate members* who may participate in the VLAP formulation discussions but not in the finalization of the plans. FAO, as EE, and ILM Facilitators will ensure that no associate member dominates the debate, co-opts the local residents or is co-opted by a handful of residents (Annex 2, Component 1, Sub-activity 1.1.3.1). EbAM includes pre-planning activities – charter revision and member selection for the Village Natural Resources Management Committees (VNRMCs); VNRMC is a body elected by the stakeholders of village forest areas, established with the purpose of managing and utilizing village forest areas under the Forest Act 2019. According to the *Guidelines*, VNRMCs are responsible for the protection of water catchment. The proposed project will ensure transparency, fairness and representation of villagers who belong to vulnerable social groups (e.g., space to given to women and youth to voice their views and suggest solutions) through engagement of ILM Facilitators who oversee the village-level activities (sub-activity 1.1.3.3).
7. Other pathways embedded in EbAM for meaningful stakeholder participation are: programming discussion time and communication; and building capacity and raising awareness of villagers' and other stakeholders. Discussions among VNRMC members and other micro-catchment/landscape stakeholders on the matters of charter and member selection will take place five hours per week for four consecutive weeks at each landscape or micro-catchment (Sub-activity 1.1.3.1). ILM Facilitators engaged by the project will ensure that: discussions on inclusive



## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

and meaningful membership take place. In addition to interventions on VNRMC, the proposed project includes landscape demarcation and resource inventorying by the villagers (Sub-activity 1.1.3.3) to lay the foundation of VLAPs for EbA and livelihoods. The VLAP preparation process will span over a period of five weeks, with three days of focused discussions per week, bringing together VNRMC members and ILM Facilitators. In between focused discussions, wider exchanges involving villagers will be conducted by VNRMC members and ILM Facilitators to share the consensus of meetings reached during the VNRMC meetings, validate them and agree on the way forward. The project will also engage a national senior natural resources management expert to support the focused discussions and ensure integration of EbA in the VLAPs (Annex 2, Sub-activity 1.1.3.3). For active participation of the villagers, their capacity will be strengthened on (i) ILM – including landscape demarcation, resources inventorying and stakeholders identification, (ii) climate change – including climate vulnerability and impacts, as well as climatic trends; (iii) water resources management; (iv) ecosystem services and ecosystem-based adaptation (detailed information on EbA and its techniques are given in Appendix 2.1); (v) payment for ecosystem services (PES); and; (vi) adaptive management (Sub-activity 1.1.2.1). The elected VNRMC members will be trained further on these topics from a strategic point of view with gender and social inclusion mainstreamed in each topic (Sub-activity 1.1.3.2). EbAM will raise awareness of the villager beneficiaries, some Traditional Authorities, District government officials, religious leaders and other key figures as well as project staff on gender and social inclusion (Annex 2, Sub-Activity 1.1.2.2).

---

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, 2015. Malawi National Guidelines: Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure, Volume I: Theory and Procedural Catchment Management Guidelines. Government of Malawi.

Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, 2015. Malawi National Guidelines: Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure, Volume II: Village Level Catchment Management Guideline. Government of Malawi.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, 2015. Malawi National Guidelines: Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure, Volume II: Village Level Catchment Management Guideline. Government of Malawi.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, 2015. Malawi National Guidelines: Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure, Volume II: Village Level Catchment Management Guideline. Government of Malawi