

***FINAL REPORT***

**EXTERNAL REVIEW**

**OF THE**

**SMALL-SCALE OFFSHORE FISHERY  
TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT  
(SOFTDP)**



**15 – 25 SEPTEMBER 2008**



**Government of the  
Republic of Malawi**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Icelandic International Development Agency (ICEIDA) commissioned an external review of the Small-scale Offshore Fishery Technology Development Project (SOFTDP) in September 2008. SOFTDP is conducted in cooperation with the Department of Fisheries (DoF) on behalf of the Government of Malawi (GoM), with Phase I expected to terminate in December 2008. Dependent upon outcomes of Phase I, an additional 4-year Phase II is planned with regards to technology transfer and evaluation. The specific objectives of SOFTDP are to

1. Develop appropriate fishing gear for small-scale offshore fishery,
2. Develop an appropriate vessel for offshore use by small-scale fishery,
3. Improve the capacity of small-scale fishers for operation in the offshore zone of Lake Malawi, and
4. Assess socio-economic and environmental effects of the proposed fishery.

The Review Team was charged within the Terms of Reference (TOR) to (i) evaluate the status and progress of the SOFTDP cooperation between ICEIDA and DoF, and (ii) make recommendations regarding the next phase of the project. The review included (i) interviews with personnel representing the primary partners and other stakeholders, (ii) scrutinizing various project documents and minutes of meetings, and (iii) site visits to the Madzedze Demonstration Project and other fishing villages near Monkey Bay.

The Review Team documented distinct achievements of the SOFTDP program in training and capacity development, especially noting the community participation and support for the Madzedze Demonstration Project. However, the Review Team recognized that these efforts were secondary objectives to the primary objectives of developing fishing gear and vessels for small-scale exploitation of the offshore fisheries. While various reports and minutes of meetings existed to demonstrate that the project management team had given considerable consideration to various gears and boat designs, the major contentious issues were that (1) no quantitative testing of gear had been performed, and (2) only the hull of a single vessel was under construction at the time of review.

Compounding the issue of (lack of) demonstrated accomplishment aimed toward the primary objectives of SOFTDP, there was an underlying sentiment from DoF that “Malawi had lost ownership of the project” (to paraphrase). This is a vexing issue not easily addressed in a typical program review, i.e., review findings and recommendations are based upon a discovery process and opinions are formed based on a synthesis of input from the stakeholders “as a whole.” Hence, to adequately address such a fundamental concern would have required prior knowledge by the Review Team for it (the Team) to have effectively prepared for and targeted the issue of “...loss of ownership.” In short, the Review Team can only speculate on this issue. However, the issue seems to have manifested itself about mid-term of SOFTDP, 2006-2007, and may be attributable to a number of factors alluded to below.

It is the Professional Opinion of the Review Team that the current governance, management and coordination of SOFTDP are not conducive to the success of the project. However, it must be emphasized that this concern (a) is an issue of the administrative, management and coordination *processes* followed rather than the *personalities* involved, (b) appears to be a cascading effect of the history of the project, and (c) crosses the table to both cooperating

partners. That is, the reviewers are of the opinion that procedures and policies of governance and project management followed in the front end of the project (since 2005) deleteriously affected its performance in the latter stages of Phase I and will continue to do so into Phase II unless steps are taken to remedy the root causes of the major issues.

By example, the highest level of governance of SOFTDP was inadequate, highlighted by the fact that the Project Supervisory Board (PSB) had not met in two years to consider and approve the Revised Project Implementation Plan (PIP) of July 2006. The highest level of project management, the Project Steering Committee (PSC), did not adhere to the priority objectives from the onset of SOFTDP and further was ineffectual, e.g., in soliciting project reports upon which the efficacy of the project is based. The Project Implementation Unit (PIU), responsible for the day-to-day operation of SOFTDP, was impacted in its efforts by (1) the lack of a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual agreed upon by both parties (outlining amongst other issues the general policies on allowances, expense reimbursement, travel, vehicles, etc.), and (2) a shift in Project Managers (PM) midway through Phase I.

The lack of a SOP manual further impacted the project in not having an agreed upon Terms of Reference (TOR) for personnel, committees, and counterparts. For example, the exact management roles of the PSC and PIU, and their respective Chairmen, are ambiguous and overlap.

Thus, with respect to the TOR of the Review Team to evaluate the status and progress of SOFTDP cooperation between ICEIDA and DoF, the Review Team concluded that the contracting partners have distinct challenges before them to successfully implement the objectives of SOFTDP within the original project period for Phase I, 2005-2008. As a consequence, the Review Team recommended a 1-year extension of Phase I through December 2009 with the proposed Phase II being contingent upon the outcomes of the extension. Additional recommendations were provided for the Phase I extension and Phase II. With these regards, the Review Team conveyed a sense of urgency for the successful implementation of SOFTDP to the ICEIDA Country Director and DoF administration in an exit interview on 24 September 2008. Additionally, a DRAFT SUMMARY of the Review's Team's findings and recommendations were presented to each party to facilitate immediate co-planning to address the identified concerns.

Most importantly, both parties are fundamentally committed to the success of SOFTDP. The perceived value of SOFTDP and its objectives cannot be understated, either by the donor (ICEIDA) or its cooperating partner (DoF). That is, SOFTDP has been listed by the Government of Malawi as a Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) with regards to national needs and priorities, while the nearly 20-year legacy of ICEIDA in Malawi is linked to the successful implementation of SOFTDP.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ADB – African Development Bank  
CIDA – Canadian International Development Agency  
DoF - Department of Fisheries  
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations  
FEU - Fishing Economic Unit  
GoM - Government of Malawi  
ICEIDA - Icelandic International Development Agency  
LMAFDP - Lake Malawi Artisanal Fisheries Development Project  
MAFS - Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security  
MOMNRE - Ministry of Mines, Natural Resources and Environment  
MOV - Means of Verification  
OVI - Objective Verifiable Indicators  
PCU – Project Coordinating Unit (African Development Bank)  
PD- Project Document  
PIP - Project Implementation Plan  
PIU - Project Implementation Unit  
PM - Project Manager  
PSB - Project Supervisory Board  
PSC - Project Steering Committee  
PSIP - Public Sector Investment Programme  
SOFTDP - Small-scale Offshore Fishery Technology Development Project  
SOP - Standard Operating Procedures  
TOR - Terms of Reference

## V. PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Country:                       | Malawi   |
| Sector:                        | Fishing Sector   |
| Executing Agencies:            | MOMNRE/MAFS, ICEIDA  |
| Project Title:                 | Small-Scale Offshore Fishery Technology Development<br>Project |
| Project Period:                | 01.10.2004-30.09.2008  |
| Total Estimated Cost:          | 1,760,000 US\$   |
| Donor:                         | ICEIDA   |
| Tentative ICEIDA contribution: | 1,560,000 US\$   |
| Tentative GoM contribution:    | 200,000 US\$   |

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Icelandic International Development Agency (ICEIDA) entered into an agreement with the Government of Malawi (GoM) in 2004 to sponsor a Small-scale Offshore Fishery Technology Development Project (SOFTDP). SOFTDP is conducted in cooperation with the Malawi Department of Fisheries (DoF), which was housed within the Ministry of Mines, Natural Resources and Environment (MOMNRE) at project inception. However, a reorganization of ministerial portfolios in 2007 resulted in the DoF being shifted to the Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security (MAFS).

The rationale and objectives of SOFTDP were spelled out in the original Project Document (PD). In essence, the project grew out of an extensive consultation process during 2003-04 between the DoF and fishing communities along the Nankumba Peninsula, a geographic fishing center on Lake Malawi. It was recognized that the inshore fisheries were being subjected to extensive fishing pressure by the small-scale fishing sector. While not as sophisticated as other commercial fishers on Lake Malawi, the small-scale fishing communities dominate annual catch by the sheer number of available fishermen/-women, thus there is considerable pressure on inshore stocks. Factored into the rationale for SOFTDP was research evidence dating to the 1990s that indicated over 40 thousand tons of fish could potentially be harvested from the under-exploited offshore pelagic and deep-water demersal fisheries of the lake. However, there were significant constraints placed on small-scale fishers to tap the offshore resources, namely (1) the lack of adequate vessels and (2) fishing gear to safely operate offshore as well as (3) a lack of economic capacity in the small-scale sector to purchase the necessary equipment. The goal of increasing fish production from under-exploited offshore waters is reflected in the Department of Fisheries Strategic Plan (2002-2007), which aims to: (a) promote sustainable livelihood strategies in fisheries, and (b) generate information for the development of management plans.

SOFTDP evolved out of this rationale with the specific objectives to

1. Develop an appropriate vessel for offshore use by the small-scale fishery,
2. Design and test appropriate fishing gear,
3. Introduce appropriate fishing gear units into the small-scale fishery,
4. Assess socio-economic and environmental effects of the proposed fishery, and
5. Improve the capacity of small-scale fishers for operation in the offshore zone of Lake Malawi.

The expected outputs of SOFTDP were

1. Appropriate designs of fishing craft and gears were developed and tested,
2. Investment into the fishery would be promoted through the development of tried and tested technologies for offshore fishing use,
3. Accident rate in the small-scale fishery is reduced,
4. Increased fish yields in the target area would increase food security and the standard of living of the community,
5. The local capacity in gear design is improved, and
6. Policy advice on new fisheries is prepared.

The Project Document (PD) was revisited in a July 2006 workshop by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU). It was noted that there was ambiguity in the PD, which also was very ambitious. The cooperative meeting of the PIU is credited for developing a Revised Project Implementation Plan (PIP) that included a result-based framework (Logframe matrix) with clear objective verifiable indicators (OVI) and means of verification (MOV) as an internal process to monitor and assess SOFTDP activities. The revised PIP stated that the

**Overall Goal** of SOFTDP was to aid in the development of an offshore small-scale fishery to allow small-scale fishers to expand their operations to under-exploited resources in the deep-water demersal and pelagic zones of Lake Malawi; and the

**Purpose** was to develop appropriate offshore fishing technology and create awareness on maritime safety for the small-scale fishery on Lake Malawi.

The **specific objectives** of the PIP were to

1. Develop appropriate fishing gear for the small-scale offshore fishery,
2. Develop an appropriate vessel for offshore use by the small-scale fishery,
3. Improve the capacity of small-scale fishers for operation in the offshore zone of Lake Malawi, and
4. Assess socio-economic and environmental effects of the proposed fishery.

The **expected outputs** were revised to include that

1. Appropriate fishing gears were developed,
2. Appropriate fishing crafts were developed,
3. Local capacity for the offshore fishing operation is improved, and
4. Impacts of the proposed fishery are assessed.



## II. REVIEW

### A. EXTERNAL REVIEW

ICEIDA commissioned an external review of SOFTDP in September 2008. The two-person Review Team consisted of Professor Charles H. Hocutt (Team Leader), Walvis Bay, Namibia and Dr. Jeremiah Kang'ombe, Bunda College, Lilongwe, Malawi. The team was charged within the Terms of Reference (TOR) to (i) Evaluate the status and progress of the SOFTDP cooperation between ICEIDA and DoF, and (ii) Make recommendations regarding the next phase of the project.

The review included

- Interviews with representatives of the primary partners (DoF, ICEIDA) (see Appendix 1),
- Interviews with other stakeholders (African Development Bank [ADB], Bunda College) (Appendix 1),
- A review of the Project Document (PD), the revised Project Implementation Plan, minutes of meetings of various co-planning sessions, and Mid-term review of the Lake Malawi's Artisanal Fishery Development Project (LMAFDP) sponsored by ADB, February 2008 (Appendix 2),
- A visit to the Madzedze Demonstration Project and interviews with the Tribal Authority and a number of fishermen, and
- A field reconnaissance of fishing communities nearby Monkey Bay.

### B. REVIEW FINDINGS

#### 1. Perceived value of SOFTDP

To a person, there is clear consensus amongst all parties interviewed that SOFTDP is an invaluable project of international cooperation between ICEIDA and DoF. ICEIDA has nearly a 20-year history in Malawi, and indeed the Republic is ICEIDA's largest global recipient of donor support. SOFTDP was originally conceived through a "bottom:up" process that intimately involved fishermen and the DoF. The perceived value of the SOFTDP and its objectives cannot be understated, i.e., it has been listed by the Government of Malawi as a Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) with regards to national needs and priorities.

#### 2. Progress

a. Training/Capacity Development.- Training was the easiest and the first component of the SOFTDP project to be launched. Training of the end users (fishing community) has thus far been the most successful element of the project with a few thousand persons having received instruction in Safe Navigation, Business Management, and Fish Handling & Processing. Although subjective, on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the highest score, the average score amongst the interviewees for this component was 9.5. There is very good gender representation with women participating in all training sessions, particularly business management and fish handling & processing. Manuals and CDs have been developed on selected topics. T-shirts, diaries and calendars have been distributed to staff members and the fishing communities to promote the project. Radio has been used to disseminate information.

There were various recommendations to the Review Team to expand the training component to include (a) training of trainers, (b) increasing the geographic coverage of training elements outside the targeted fishing areas, (c) providing additional motorcycle training to DoF employees, and (d) expanding the scope of the Madzedze Demonstration Project.

There is much pride in the Madzedze Demonstration Project from ICEIDA, DoF, and fishing community alike. Much has been accomplished and the upside potential as a district training center is exceptionally high. Excluding electricity needs, the facility can be functional by the end of October 2008. The local fishing community provided input to additional (future) needs at the centre: (1) a source for and storage capacity of water for both fish processing and drinking; (2) better road access to the site; (3) water diversion from the site during rainy seasons; (4) additional training in fish handling, processing and preservation; (5) training in boat building and engine repair; (6) cold storage facilities when catches are high; (7) life jackets for the fishermen; and (8) a center (small building) where trainees can sit and be addressed. In addition, the Review Team observed two major constraints: the lack of (1) fish processing tables (rather than a cement floor) and (2) waste treatment and storage. Madzedze fishermen voiced keen support for the objectives of the project and emphasized their desire to participate in technology trials, but questioned (1) why has it taken so long for the technology to be developed and transferred, and (2) how can they access the technology if it indeed proves economically feasible for small-scale fishers?

Apart from end user training, there was consensus among interviewees for tertiary education support from ICEIDA, particularly for Honours, MS and PhD students at Bunda College. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) already exists between the DoF and Bunda College.

b. Gear development.- The gear development component was well documented in reports and scored an average of 7 on a scale of 10. This phase concentrated on examining gears that are commonly used and readily available to the local fishing communities, especially so at reasonable prices. The examination of gear types and their modification reached a plateau in 2007-08. Decisions were made to limit (at this time) gear testing to long lines, gill nets and chilimira. Gear deployment and testing awaits the delivery system (boat).

c. Boat development.- Despite copious planning reports, the design, modification, building and testing of various boats have been delayed from the inception of the project to a late date. Currently, there is a single plank-board hull under construction with an expected delivery date of 1 October 2008. Boat building had an average score of about 3 on a scale of 10.

### **C. CONSTRAINTS ON THE SUCCESS OF THE SOFTDP PROJECT**

As a preface to this section, the Review Team encountered issues that repeated themselves throughout the review process, including interviews and review of documentation. High on the list of concerns is the reoccurring statement from DoF personnel that “Malawi has lost ownership in the project.” This issue surfaced repeatedly and (by inference) is documented in various minutes. For instance, Project Implementation Unit (PIU) minutes noted concern about DoF resistance to participation due to project management (April 2008) and mistrust (May 2008). There has been rather continuous concern over issues such as allowances; transportation; transparency in the budget; project equipment and so forth (e.g., February 2008 minutes of the Project Steering Committee [PSC]; MAFR/DoF minutes February 2008)

that may well have influenced recent DoF attitudes toward ICEIDA project management, coordination, and participation. This condition was likely exacerbated when the Malawi government raised their allowance rates higher than the ones followed by SOFTDP (SOFTDP Annual Report July 2008).

### 1. Governance: Project Supervisory Board (PSB)

The PSB is the highest level of governance of SOFTDP and is expected to provide institutional support and overall guidance to the smooth functioning of the project. It is therefore inexcusable that the PSB has not met in the last two years, regardless of personnel shifts (especially in the case of ICEIDA) and ministry realignment (as in the case of DoF). This inaction included not providing guidance on the annual Project Implementation Plan (PIP) of July 2006 and, regardless of the reason, likely had a negative impact on the overall administration, management and coordination of SOFTDP. Not the least issue related to the inactivity of the PSB is the urgent need for a meeting to request the authorization of funds for continuation of Phase I for another year (PSC minutes, 9 September 2008, p. 2). Furthermore, issues such as allowances, transportation, transparency in the budget, and project equipment (noted above) should have been addressed and put to rest from the inception of the project in the form of a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) guidelines document, cooperatively prepared and agreed upon by the signatory partners to complement the 2005 Plan of Operations, a formality of bilateral cooperation. There is little wonder that the lack of senior administration and management of SOFTDP has led to misunderstandings between the rank and file of the two partners following the new personnel assignments in ICEIDA and the ministerial realignment of the DoF midway through Phase I. Further, neither the former ICEIDA Country Director nor the new Country Director (who admittedly is awaiting this report) have met with the senior administration of the Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security (MAFS), subsequent to the affiliation of DoF to the Ministry, to highlight ICEIDA's commitment to SOFTDP and its objectives.

### 2. Project management and coordination

a. Project Steering Committee (PSC).- The PSC is the highest line of project management with the responsibility for "...monitoring project progress and making suggestions for corrective action and Project cycle management." The PSC conducted two meetings in 2008, but minutes from meetings prior to that date are lacking, hence providing no sense of continuity for the management of the project prior to February 2008. In effect, it appears to the Review Team that the PSC failed *in part* its responsibility for monitoring the project and taking corrective action for most of the life of the project. Internal monitoring and evaluation of the project is a vitally important process (PIU minutes 6 June 2008, p. 4); however, internal monitoring is meaningless unless there is follow-up.

1) Training/Capacity Development.- It is with considerable irony that SOFTDP's greatest success thus far, i.e., training and capacity development, was a secondary feature of the original PD, while the highly acclaimed (even by the Review Team) Madzedze Demonstration Project was not a feature at all (PSC minutes, 9 September 2008, p. 3)! Thus, we interpret that the rapidly developed and highly successful training element in the beginning of Phase I actually contributed to the general lethargy and misunderstandings midway through the project when emphasis was placed on the primary objectives of gear development and boat building, both requiring far greater time and technical input.

2) Gear development.- The project has now (in the third year) settled on readily available gear with modifications. However, only limited quantitative testing has been performed to date on the modified gear, which awaits the project boat. This is a fundamental issue (see PSC minutes February 2008, p.2) given the high priority attached to this objective in the original PD. Had this review been performed at an earlier date, there would have been a recommendation to commence trial tests of recommended gear with other vessels while the project boat was under design and construction. This concern was also addressed as a matter of urgency in a mid-term review of the African Development Bank's Lake Malawi Artisanal Fisheries Development Project (LMAFDP) in February 2008. Thus, it is indeed perplexing why more quantitative evaluations have not been performed.

3) Boat building.- Criticism is leveled at the project monitoring and evaluation process from the project's inception to have let this critical objective slide until near the completion of the funding cycle. Despite numerous planning activities and reports, boat building and a field assessment of available craft should have been at the front of program initiation. Quantitative testing and economic assessments are required to confirm the superiority of the boat and to justify that fishermen change from traditional craft.

4) Report preparation.- Reports on various activities are lacking, despite repeated requests for them (see PSC minutes, February 2008, p. 2-3; PIU minutes, 6 June 2008, p. 3), especially regarding stock assessments upon which the efficacy of the demonstration project is premised. This infers that either the monitoring role of the PSC lacks credibility or that the reports have not been prepared.

b. Project Implementation Unit (PIU).- The PIU has the critical role of day-to-day project management and coordination of SOFTDP activities. Some interviewees questioned (1) the overlap between the PIU and the PSC since membership also overlaps, (2) the inflexibility of the Project Manager (PM) and (3) the necessity of a Project Coordinator (PC). The Review Team responds as follows:

1) The intertwining of the PSC and PIU missions seems inevitable given the (a) overlap in membership and (b) the lack of a SOP guidance manual, complete with TOR for the two committees. Nonetheless, SOFTDP appears to have functioned with a degree of effectiveness through the first half of Phase I right up to a PIU meeting in July 2006, although somewhat misguided toward training and capacity development. Much to the credit of the team members involved in the July 2006 retreat there was genuine concern about project direction, accomplishments, and objectives that resulted in the Revised PIP, complete with a Logframe matrix for internal monitoring and verification. However, a general lethargy seems to have set in after July 2006 and there are no minutes of meetings prior to the arrival of the current PM in August 2007 upon which to assess the "psyche" and accomplishments of the cooperative relationship. The Review Team speculates that this seemingly mid-term malaise signaled a shift in the cooperating attitude toward progress of SOFTDP.

2) Compounding the situation was the unfortunate attack (by persons unknown) of the PM in May 2007, followed by a period of uncertainty while he was on leave prior to his subsequent reassignment. The current PM, who arrived on post in August 2007, inherited a tenuous situation, while at the same time going through a learning curve and imposing a new style of management on SOFTDP. We infer that these events in combination with weak project management from the onset acted synergistically to hamper progress after mid-term. Regardless, the actions of the PM must by necessity be governed by both the policies of ICEIDA *and* the protocol agreed upon by the cooperating partners. Simultaneously, the PM must be (i) authorized by the PSB to have the flexibility to manage the project on a day-to-day basis and (ii) be proactive, constructive, and creative in moving the project forward.

3) The PC has offered his resignation to ICEIDA. We are disappointed in this action given his demonstrated value as a liaison to the project. Further, SOFTDP is entering a critical period (the extension of Phase I) where the current PC's functional role will be more important than ever. While some have questioned redundancy of the PC position with the position of PM, we consider that the Malawian-filled PC post is invaluable in serving as a liaison between ICEIDA, DoF, and the fishing communities, i.e., we would favor the retention of the both the PM and PC posts in Phase II.

### 3. Other stakeholder involvement

a. African Development Bank (ABD).- ABD's Lake Malawi Artisanal Fishery Development Project (LMAFDP) has a broad scope, but nonetheless very strongly complements SOFTDP. LMAFDP was reviewed in February 2008 and recommendations were made not the least of which was that "LMAFDP should urgently develop a joint program with SOFTDP that will aim at the testing of the financial viability of the three types of gears that have been identified so far (Item 2.3.6)." It was further recommended that there be cost sharing with ICEIDA. "The results and conclusions ... will have to be sent to the Bank no later than 31 December 2008 (Item 3.2)." "However, if by 31 December 2008 the project has not clearly identified and backed up with detailed and convincing experimental data on the appropriate fishing gear and boat .... the Bank would be forced to consider the project for cancellation (Item 4.3)." At the time of this review (September 2008), dialogue had just opened up between ICEIDA, ADB and DoF about joint needs and opportunities. Why LMAFDP and SOFTDP were not integrated (MAFS/DoF minutes February 2008) at an early stage is an unanswered question.

As related to SOFTDP, the LMAFDP review was instructive in that it noted (i) only 12 of a proposed 440 Fishing Economic Units (FEUs) (boat, gear, outboard engine) had been deployed (Items 2.3.2 and 2.3.3); (ii) there had been no comparison of the effectiveness of FEUs with traditional fishing plank boats (Item 2.3.4); (iii) the major constraint to the development of the deeper offshore fishery was gear, and that need had been underestimated (Item 2.3.5); (iv) for the FEUs that had been delivered to fishermen, there had been no monitoring of either the economic viability of the FEUs/gear or their catch effectiveness on stocks (Items 2.3.6 and 2.3.7); (v) stock assessment data for offshore stocks requires verification (Item 2.3.8); and (vi) the weakness of the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) (Items 2.3.38-2.3.40 and 3.5). Such issues identified in the LMAFDP review are similar to the present review findings, thus suggesting a common causative factor, likely the lack of DoF *capacity* (as opposed to *capability*). That is, the demands on available DoF personnel are significant. This implies a clear need for advanced training and capacity development at the tertiary level, which (i) is completely lacking in the current SOFTDP dossier, and (ii) counterproductive in the LMAFDP, which trained some 10 B.S. and M.S. students out of country, 2 of whom opted to remain abroad, thus negating the positive attributes of capacity development at Bunda College, University of Malawi.

Lastly, interviewees commonly cited that the difference between ICEIDA and ADB allowances for travel, per diem, and other expenses has influenced DoF morale and participation on SOFTDP activities. While it is easy to argue the moral high ground on such concerns, this is an issue that will persist into Phase II and require attention "for the common good" of both SOFTDP and LMAFDP. Regardless of ADB and ICEIDA home-office protocol, a common approach is needed for these complementary projects, particularly in light of DoF's own rate structure.

b. Bunda College, University of Malawi.- Discussions with the (i) Vice Principal and (ii) Faculty of Fisheries at Bunda indicate a full commitment toward cooperative training and research as related to SOFTDP. Faculty, students and facilities are untapped resources for SOFTDP.

3. External review

As called for in the original PD (Output item 1.6.1), SOFTDP would have benefited significantly from a mid-term independent review in late 2006- early 2007. This Review Team is confident that some of the concerns that have been identified (at this late date) would have been evident at an earlier stage as well.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### A. SCHEDULE

1. It is recommended that Phase I be continued through December 2009 to further address technology development as outlined in the Project Document (March 2005) and Revised Document Implementation Plan (July 2006).
2. It is recommended that follow-up Phase II support of SOFTDP be contingent upon the successful outcome of the extended Phase I.

#### B. GOVERNANCE BY THE PROJECT SUPERVISORY BOARD (PSB)

1. Recommendations

- a. *As a matter of urgency, it is recommended* that the PSB meet in the near term to consider the overall issues of governance and administration of SOFTDP and to reaffirm the collaborative nature of the partnership.
- b. It is recommended that the ICEIDA Country Director meet with senior administrative staff within the Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security.
- c. It is recommended that clear guidance on the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for SOFTDP be developed and agreed upon for the smooth functioning of the project, including
  - 1) Allowances, transportation, transparency in the budget, project equipment, and employment of project personnel;
  - 2) Terms of Reference of the Project Steering Committee and Project Implementation Unit, if indeed both are required;
  - 3) Terms of Reference of the Chairpersons of the Project Steering Committee and Project Implementation Unit, e.g., do Chairpersons simply convene meetings or do they have management responsibilities?
  - 4) Terms of Reference for the ICEIDA Project Manager and Project Coordinator.
  - 5) Terms of Reference for the Country Counterparts.
- d. It is recommended that the PSB makes it clear to the PIU that project reports are a critical need.
- e. It is recommended that the PSB schedule routine meetings over the next 6 months to review progress on SOFTDP, particularly with regards to addressing the above concerns (B.1.a-d).

## C. PROJECT MANAGEMENT and COORDINATION

1. Project Steering Committee (PSC)
  - a. *Given the sense of urgency* that the reviewers have for facilitating the successful implementation of SOFTDP in the near term, it is recommended that the PSC be combined with the PIU in order to streamline project management and monitoring.
  - b. It is recommended that the re-establishment of the PSC be re-considered in Phase II, with the decision based on the experience gained between now and the end of the Phase I extension.
2. Project Implementation Unit (PIU)
  - a. It is recommended that the PSC be integrated into a “new” PIU through the end of extended-Phase I with the “new” PIU having the combined responsibility of both (a) day-to-day management and (b) monitoring of SOFTDP.
  - b. It is recommended that separate office space be provided by the DoF in Monkey Bay for the Project Manager to, among other points, ensure close cooperation and to build camaraderie.
  - c. It is recommended that a senior level DoF *Point of Contact* be designated for the ICEIDA Project Manager to ensure the efficient management of SOFTDP (This is related to the TOR of Chairpersons [II.A.3.c above]).
3. Project Manager
  - a. It is recommended that the Project Manager be given a degree of flexibility to make day-to-day decisions.
  - b. In turn, it is recommended that the PM be more flexible and provide constructive criticism in responding to requests and proposals brought forward by the counterparts.
  - c. It is understood that the current PM’s contract expires midway through 2009. Given the circumstances surrounding the last “changing of the guard” and the lack of continuity in the project thereafter, it is recommended *with critical concern* that the contract of the current PM be renegotiated through the extended-Phase I of SOFTDP, providing (i) this is in keeping with the policy of ICEIDA on such appointments and (ii) there is concurrence by the PSB.
4. Project Coordinator
  - a. The resignation of the current PC comes at a critical time in SOFTDP. Based upon his perceived value to SOFTDP during an extended-Phase I, it is *highly* recommended that the PC be approached to remain in his position through December 2009. Of course, this remains a policy decision with ICEIDA and a personal decision of the PC.
  - b. It is recommended that the PC post be retained in Phase II, given the invaluable liaison role the person plays between ICEIDA, DoF, and the fishing communities.
5. Cooperative financing
  - a. Given the short lifespan of both the LMAFDP and SOFTDP, it is recommended that the cooperating partners, DoF and ICEIDA, meet as soon as practical with ADB to (i) assess the best way forward (in areas of overlap) and (ii) review and prioritize common research needs.

- 1) It is recommended that the link with ADB for economic trials be initiated as soon as possible.
- 2) It is recommended that ICEIDA and DoF provide formal support to ADB to extend the latter's funding cycle to better overlap with SOFTDP in Phase II, at least with regards to
  - a) Training/Capacity development,
  - b) Gear development and testing,
  - c) Ice plants/cold storage, and
  - d) Gear access.
- b. It is recommended that ICEIDA explore cooperative financing with other donors (e.g., FAO, CIDA) to maximize SOFTDP outputs during Phase II.
- c. For cooperative financing of projects, it is recommended that SOFTDP's Standard Operating Procedures (see Recommendations II.A.3 above) attempt to reconcile various procedural differences between the cooperating partners, e.g., with regards to allowances, travel, equipment, etc. Logically, the amount of time in the extended-Phase I might be insufficient to correct these discrepancies, but this is a major point of contention to be addressed in Phase II.

#### **D. INTERNAL MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT**

1. It is recommended that financial reports be responsive to the needs of both ICEIDA and the Government of Malawi requirements for PSIP projects.
2. Research and Training Reports and Minutes
  - a. It is recommended that a repository for all SOFTDP reports and minutes, both hard and electronic forms, be agreed upon. Correct dates, venues, participants, page numbers, etc. should be included. All reports and minutes should follow a standardized numbering process for ease of access.
  - b. It is recommended that all original hardcopies of reports be signed by the Author, Project Manager, and PM counterpart in technology, research or training as the case may be.
  - c. It is recommended that all minutes of meetings be read, corrections made as required, and signed by the Chairperson, Project Manager and Secretary.
3. Activities
  - a. Training/Capacity development
    - 1) It is recommended that training and capacity development be highlighted as an objective of Phase II.
    - 2) It is recommended that an assessment of Phase I training efficacy be conducted in Phase II.
    - 3) It is recommended that the Madzedze Demonstration Project continue to receive support and expanded through the extended-Phase I period and Phase II as an important regional demonstration project.
      - a) It is recommended that the deficiency in design of handling fish wastes and their disposal be addressed in extended-Phase I. It is logical to include ICEIDA's Wastewater & Sanitation Project to assist this need.



- b) It is recommended that fish processing tables be constructed.
  - c) It is recommended that a delivery system for both processing and drinking water be considered.
  - d) It is recommended that a better rain water diversion system be considered for the site.
- 4) It is recommended that ICEIDA budget for 3-5 post-graduate degree fellowships (Honours, MS, PhD) during Phase II in affiliation with Bunda College, especially to gain quantitative information on SOFTDP. Examples of topics might include:
- a) Economic Valuation of Modified Gear to Offshore Small-scale Fisheries (this could begin in extended-Phase I);
  - b) Streamlining Data Collection Methods and Biological Sampling Systems on Small Pelagics in Lake Malawi;
  - c) Analysis of Catch from Modified Gear Used on the SOFTDP Project; and
  - d) Diel and Seasonal Patterns of Catch (by Gear) from Offshore Small-scale Fishers.
- b. Gear Technology
- 1) It is recommended that the quantitative testing of gear be conducted during the extended Phase I, including the use of controls and, preferably, multiple gear.
  - 2) It is recommended that gear testing not stop, but continue to be assessed in Phase II for its efficacy with regards to the objectives of SOFTDP.
  - 3) It is recommended that fishermen be recruited immediately to initiate quantitative testing of gill nets and long lines, perhaps including an ICEIDA or DoF “observer” onboard. Failing this, it is recommended that other boats be leased for such purposes.
- c. Boat building and testing
- 1) It is recommended that at least one plywood boat be built in the extended-Phase I for testing.
  - 2) It is recommended that one fiberglass boat be purchased for testing in the extended-Phase I.
  - 3) It is recommended that studies be continued in extended-Phase I on appropriate winches to retrieve chilimira.
  - 4) It is recommended that the project boat be tested as soon as possible against readily available fishing boats to prove its efficacy, especially in the deployment and retrieval of deep-water chilimira.

## **E. EXTERNAL REVIEW**

It is recommended that an independent Review Team assess the status and achievements of SOFTDP in the latter quarter of extended-Phase I and make additional recommendations regarding programmatic elements for Phase II. Hence, the realization of Phase II is directly linked to the success of extended-Phase I. A mid-term external review of Phase II is required.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

With respect to the TOR to evaluate the status and progress of SOFTDP cooperation between ICEIDA and DoF, the Review Team concluded that the contracting partners had distinct challenges before them to successfully implement the objectives of SOFTDP within the original project period for Phase I, i.e., 2005-2008. Therefore, a 1-year extension of Phase I through December 2009 is recommended. Phase II planning and implementation should be contingent upon the outcomes of the proposed extension of Phase I. It is considered critical to re-negotiate the contract of the PM through the extended-Phase I period. We also urge the retention of the current PC during the extension of Phase I. A high level of “top:down” management is required to emphasize the urgency of need for action. We also recommend the exploration of cooperative funding with the ADB, CIDA and FAO to ensure the sustainability of SOFTDP, as well as to expand research and capacity development into needed areas, e.g., economic evaluations, stock assessments, migratory behavior of target species, and so forth.

Of concern to the Review Team was the expressed belief from DoF that “Malawi had lost ownership of SOFTDP” (to paraphrase). Since this issue arose through the discovery process of the interview, rather than being targeted as a concern from the onset, the Review Team can only speculate as to the reason(s). It is the Review Team’s opinion that this issue arose from a combination of factors that synergistically influenced the general morale of DoF personnel and their enthusiasm for participating on SOFTDP. These include (i) the perfunctory governance, management and coordination of SOFTDP from its inception; (ii) lack of an agreed upon SOP for SOFTDP; (iii) lack of an external review midway through Phase I; (iv) an inability to retain the early momentum of SOFTDP in training and capacity development into the second half of the project toward the priorities of boat building, gear development and testing; (v) the circumstances and time lost surrounding the need to recruit a new PM in 2007; (vi) the new PM’s learning curve and management style; (vii) SOFTDP allowance, travel and per diem rates competing with ADB and DoF; and (viii) a lack of DoF capacity to participate, i.e., too few persons being drawn in different directions.

To finish on a positive note, both ICEIDA and DoF are fundamentally committed to the success of SOFTDP. The perceived value of SOFTDP and its objectives cannot be understated. That is, SOFTDP has been listed by the Government of Malawi as a Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) with regards to national needs and priorities, while the nearly 20-year legacy of ICEIDA in Malawi is linked to the successful implementation of SOFTDP.

## V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Review Team members thank all parties that received them and for the agenda that was agreed upon in advance. Especially acknowledged were the frank and open discussions at all levels amongst the primary (ICEIDA, DoF) and secondary (ADB and Bunda College) stakeholders of SOFTDP. The onsite visit to the Madzedze Demonstration Project and field trips to fishing villages nearby Monkey Bay were especially informative. Every courtesy was extended to the Team.

## **APPENDIX 1. List of Persons Interviewed by the Review Team**

### ICEIDA

Mr. Stefán Jón Hafstein - Country Director  
Dr. Stefán Kristmannsson – Project Manager of SOFTDP  
Mr. Francis Maguza-Tembo – Project Coordinator of SOFTDP

### Department of Fisheries

Dr. Steve J. Donda – Deputy Director of Fisheries  
Mr. Friday J. Njaya – Chief Fisheries Officer  
Dr. Moses Banda - National Fisheries Research Coordinator  
Mr. Levison Fulundiwe - Project Counterpart Technology, SOFTDP  
Mr. Geoff Kanyerere - Project Counterpart Research, SOFTDP  
Mr. Alban Pulaizi, District Fisheries Officer

### Malawi College of Fisheries

Mr. Mathews Chirwa, Project Counterpart Training, SOFTDP

### African Development Bank

Mr. Joe K. Mfuné - Project Coordinator of Lake Malawi Artisanal Fishery Development  
Project (LMAFDP)

### Bunda College, University of Malawi

Dr. Emmanuel K. Kaunda, Associate Professor and Vice Principal  
Mr. Daniel Sikawa – Chairman, Department of Aquaculture & Fisheries  
Dr. Jeremy Likongwe – Retired, Former Chairman, Department of Aquaculture & Fisheries

## APPENDIX 2. Literature Reviewed

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