



Integrated Country Strategy

Malawi

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Malawi is a country of extremes: abundant fresh water and arable land yet widespread food insecurity; a 24-year record of democratic rule and a highly professional military but endemic corruption; significant progress in fighting HIV/AIDS but an extremely fragile health system. Fifty-four years after independence, Malawi remains one of the world's least developed countries with widespread malnutrition, a population of 18 million people that will more than double by 2050, chronic food insecurity, and an education system that produces graduates unable to meet the demands of the labor market. Changing weather patterns have exacerbated flooding, failed crops, drought, and, together with deficient agricultural policies, have caused recurrent humanitarian crises.

Malawi stands out for its lack of violent conflict among ethnic groups and peaceful transfers of executive power since 1994. U.S. goals in Malawi are to make Malawi a stronger, more prosperous and healthier partner for the United States, creating new jobs and investment opportunities for American companies and enhancing the security of the United States. No other country in Africa is this poor, this small and this friendly to the United States, making Malawi an ideal testing ground for integrated development assistance, as well as military partnership and scientific research. As Malawi heads into its sixth national election since its democratic transition, it has yet to reap the benefits of political stability and peacefulness. Development partners, led by the United States, continue to encourage the Government of Malawi (GOM) to maintain macro-economic discipline, improve resilience to climatic and other shocks, invest in infrastructure that will spur economic growth, and stimulate private sector development in order to increase Malawi's financing of its own development. Malawi remains a valuable participant in UN peacekeeping operations and a model for low-cost public health solutions in the fight against HIV.

Government of Malawi attempts to implement public sector and public financial management reforms, improve government accountability, and address myriad economic challenges have lagged in the face of capacity gaps, entrenched corruption, outmoded policies and misaligned incentives. With 2019 elections approaching, the country is entering a sensitive phase that is both ripe with opportunity for reform and loaded with risk of regression. Nevertheless, a sense of urgency is lacking in Malawi, even in the face of grinding poverty and widespread food insecurity. The success of U.S. programs here depends on our Malawian government partners continued commitment to implement strong development policies and reforms.

U.S. assistance in Malawi supports U.S. objectives of making Malawi a stronger, more prosperous, healthier, and more democratic partner for the United States. Consistent with the U.S. commitment in the 2017 National Security Strategy to "promote African states that are integrated into the world economy, able to provide for their citizens' needs, and capable of managing threats to peace and security," the United States, the largest bilateral donor in Malawi, is working to break the cycle of poverty, build resilience and push for full

implementation of reforms to address the country's health, education, food security, governance, and other socioeconomic needs.

Our efforts in Malawi fall into three basic and mutually supportive areas – enabling a resilient society through sustainable development; promoting a more responsive, accountable, and transparent government; and working together to promote peace, security, and prosperity. To achieve each of our goals, we will utilize the full suite of cross-cutting public diplomacy tools to advocate, explain, and amplify our policy objectives with the Malawian public and key decision makers.

Resources:

U.S. development assistance has more than tripled since 2008 without commensurate growth in staff, particularly State and ICASS elements. The 2018 M/PRI report recommended one additional USDH reporting officer, an additional USDH Public Affairs officer, and an additional USDH General Services Officer. We continue to work with OBO towards breaking ground on a New Embassy Complex by 2020, a move that will make colocation of all mission elements in secure premises possible. In the meantime, we will need support for creative solutions to manage limited office space, ensure proper security protection in a high crime threat post and provide technical upgrades to facilitate better communications.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1:	Support a more resilient, self-reliant Malawi that can achieve its own sustainable development
Mission Objective 1.1:	Improve socio-economic development (USAID CDCS DO1)
Mission Objective 1.2:	Increase sustainable livelihoods (USAID CDCS DO2)
Mission Objective 1.3:	Expand access to electricity
Mission Goal 2:	Promote a more responsive, transparent, and accountable government.
Mission Objective 2.1:	Support reforms and improve government capacity to make governance more effective, transparent, and accountable
Mission Objective 2.2:	Citizens exercise rights and responsibilities (USAID CDCS DO3)
Mission Goal 3:	The United States and Malawi work together to promote peace, prosperity, and security.
Mission Objective 3.1:	Protect U.S. citizen security and interests, enhancing political, commercial, and people-to-people ties
Mission Objective 3.2:	Increase professionalism and capabilities of the Malawian Police Service to ensure it consistently meets basic law enforcement responsibilities, improving security for U.S. and Malawian citizens and improving the business/investment climate.
Mission Objective 3.3:	Upgrade Malawian capacity to participate in international security efforts.
Management Objective 1:	Right size ICASS staff to provide necessary services for expanding mission while upgrading internal controls
Management Objective 2:	Improve work environment through provision of secure and suitable work space and facilities
Management Objective 3:	Reduce costs and improve mission operations through outsourcing, greening and sustainability initiatives
Management Objective 4:	Improve recruitment and retention of exceptional Locally Employed (LE) staff

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1: Support a more resilient, self-reliant Malawi that can achieve sustainable development

Description and Linkages: The U.S. Mission in Malawi supports broad-based and sustainable economic growth. As the largest bilateral donor to Malawi, the United States is able to help shape pro-growth policies in Malawi and leverage other bilateral and multilateral assistance to support those. With considerable U.S. support, Malawi has been at the forefront of the battle against the HIV/AIDS epidemic and is nearing epidemic control. U.S. efforts will continue to promote innovative solutions to HIV/AIDS while boosting broader Malawian initiatives to finance and develop health and education services, and expand opportunities for Malawi's youthful rural population. As women's empowerment has been shown to be key to economic growth and stability, U.S. programs seek to expand women's educational opportunities, improve their health decision-making, and expand their contributions to economic growth. To break the cycle of food insecurity, the U.S. Mission will work to realign agricultural incentives, increase crop production and diversification, harvest natural resources to power growth in a sustainable manner, and remove regulatory obstacles to investment and international trade. By helping reform Malawi's power sector and improving the electrical grid, we will catalyze investment in power generation, removing the single greatest constraint to economic growth, boosting commercial agriculture and manufacturing and increasing the number of Malawian businesses and homes with reliable electricity.

The Mission's strategy supports the goals of the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan, Joint Regional Strategy, and the National Security Strategy of the United States, which list among their objectives the promotion of: "healthy, educated and productive populations"; "energy security"; "preventing the spread of disease"; "economic growth, trade, and investment"; "inclusive country-led development"; and states that are "integrated into the world economy, able to provide for their citizens' needs."

Mission Objective 1.1: Improve social development (USAID CDCS DO1)

Justification: Malawi has made measurable, sustained progress on health and education, but substantial challenges remain. Continued support from the United States and other development partners will be needed to lock in existing gains and reach new milestones. One in every ten adults is HIV positive, a significant reduction from the peak of 16 percent in the late 1990s. Increasingly targeted interventions are necessary to find and start on treatment the remaining 330,000 people believed to be HIV positive and achieve epidemic control. While Malawi succeeded in meeting Millennium Development Goal 4 on reduction of child mortality, maternal mortality remains unacceptably high.

Access to education likewise has improved greatly over the past two decades, but only one in 10 girls who enters primary school graduates from high school. . As a result, Malawi has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world and one third of 18 year olds are pregnant or

mothers, further undermining U.S. health, population, education and other development objectives. Malawi's rapid population growth, which, at current rates, will more than double the country's population by 2050, undermines hard-won development gains. Malawi has the lowest literacy scores for Standard (Grade) 6 students in southern Africa. Integrating support for public health while advancing key Administration initiatives, such as the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), and Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths (EPCMD), are key to achieving objective 1.1, as is strengthening the capacity of Malawian institutions to respond to the country's health challenges on a sustained basis. A U.S.-supported National Reading Program will enable the Government of Malawi's efforts to ensure students in Standards (Grades) 1 through 4 learn to read and write, and will contribute to USAID's global education strategy objective to provide 100 million children worldwide with improved reading skills. Through the Let Girls Learn (LGL) and PEPFAR DREAMS initiatives, the USG will build the educational capacity of girls, while enabling them to make informed decisions about their families, communities, and economic opportunities.

Per Executive Order 13677, Mission Lilongwe screened climate risk and identified potential climate effects to several social development goals, including increased vulnerability to malaria as higher temperatures allow the disease to spread to higher altitudes; increased risk of cholera and other diarrheal diseases due to increased frequency of both flooding and droughts; and disproportionate negative effects of drought-induced food insecurity on people living with HIV. The government's effective response to this year's cholera outbreak, as well as preparations to respond to a possible spread of Ebola from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (the source of much of Malawi's 38,000-strong refugee population) highlighted that health system investment now may prevent the spread of disease in the future. Investments in water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) will mitigate the risk of these and similar diseases and the Mission will modify other health, environment and development programs to respond to these various risks (e.g., HIV treatment programs may incorporate a nutrition component).

Mission Objective 1.2: Increase sustainable livelihoods (USAID CDCS DO2)

Justification: Malawi's development policies, particularly those related to agriculture, do not incentivize commercial agriculture or food production to ensure food security. We will help boost sustainable livelihoods by working with the GOM to create positive incentives to ensure sufficient income, adequate diet, and resilience to climate change, while utilizing resources in a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable manner.

Inefficient and distorted market policies are a key barrier to growth and food security in Malawi. To strengthen agricultural growth, the Mission will strive to improve the policies to increase commercial and smallholder production of targeted commodities and expand agricultural trade within Malawi and internationally. Interventions will help transform the agricultural sector in Malawi by increasing the competitiveness of targeted value chains with

large numbers of both male and female smallholder farmers. Agricultural growth will then increase availability and accessibility of nutritious foods.

To reduce under nutrition, we will work with the GOM and development partners to improve nutrition-related behaviors, particularly for pregnant and lactating women and children under five, with special focus on the first 1,000 days, i.e. from conception to the second birthday. Increased production of nutritious foods and increased incomes will improve the nutritional status of women and children when complemented with increased awareness and knowledge regarding nutrition and the relationship between diet and health.

To ensure food security, create resilience to adverse weather events and commodity price volatility, and provide jobs to its rapidly growing population, Malawi needs to diversify its economy by energizing commercial agriculture and developing a manufacturing base. Malawi has limited manufacturing capability and imports most of the value-added goods it consumes. The country's unfriendly business environment, uncertain regulatory framework, and constrained physical and regulatory infrastructure have limited domestic and foreign investment. Unpredictable government policies and interventions in the economy, non-transparent government procurement processes, and the high cost of capital contribute to a GDP growth rate that does not keep pace with population growth.

With a small market and tough operating environment, Malawi does not attract significant interest from U.S. companies, yet opportunities do exist, particularly in power generation following implementation of the 2014-2018 Millennium Challenge Compact (See Objective 1.3) and continued investment through the Power Africa initiative. Greater access to reliable energy will loosen the biggest constraint to economic development. Malawians have a positive impression of U.S. brands and regularly look for U.S. business partners. The Economic and Commercial Section will help U.S. companies understand local conditions and find reliable local partners. Better advertising Malawian procurement opportunities and improving the regulatory and policy environment will improve commercial ties, creating jobs and prosperity in both countries. USAID will seek funds to promote diversified economic growth beyond the agricultural sector to reduce the economy's vulnerability to climatic shocks, which stems from its near utter dependence on rain-fed agriculture.

U.S.-supported programming will help mitigate climate risks identified by USAID per Executive Order 13677: reduced yields of rain fed crops; increased frequency of drought-induced food shortages; reduced water supply; reduced hydropower production; increased reliance on biomass to meet energy needs; increased risk of human/animal conflict; loss of biodiversity; and reduced productivity of fisheries. For example, agriculture programs will support the diversification of Malawi's agricultural system, including the identification of drought-resistant crops. MCC and Power Africa-supported efforts to attract private sector investment into the power sector will help diversify Malawi's energy base beyond hydropower. USAID programs will also seek to promote alternative livelihood opportunities that help protect Malawi's natural resources.

In response to climate change, the Mission will increase awareness and application of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) technologies and practices. The Mission will support forest and watershed management, small scale irrigation, soil conservation, and other practices that increase farmers' resilience to climate change. Farmers and fishers will benefit from activities supporting improved biodiversity conservation of resources such as forests, fish, and other economically important wildlife.

Mission Objective 1.3: Expand access to electricity

Justification: Malawi's economy faces numerous challenges, including inadequate power infrastructure and weak institutions that constrain economic development. To improve the prospects for sustained growth, poverty reduction, private sector investment, and improve social service delivery, Malawians need greater access to electricity.

The Embassy is leveraging Power Africa activities implemented through USAID to sustain gains in the power sector achieved through the \$350.7 million Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact that is ending in September 2018. In collaboration with a range of partners (the Electricity Supply Corporation of Malawi (ESCOM), the Electricity Generation Company of Malawi (EGENCO), the Ministry of Natural Resource, Energy and Mining, the Public Private Partnership Commission (PPPC), and the Malawian Regulatory Energy Authority(MERA)), Power Africa works to advance energy policy and regulatory reforms, support financially strong utilities, and accelerate public and private sector investments in energy infrastructure to increase access to electricity. Power Africa activities are designed to sustain and expand MCC investments in the power sector to improve regulation, planning, and procurement of energy; support the commercial viability of ESCOM and EGENCO; operationalize interconnections with the Southern Africa Power Pool; demonstrate and scale renewable energy technologies; implement energy efficiency practices; and increase the human and institutional capacity of Malawi's energy sector.

The Mission will measure electricity access success through MWs added to the grid, increased off-grid connections, MWs made available through energy efficiency approaches, and MWs imported from the Southern Africa Power Pool. Institutional capacity, policy, and regulatory gains are measured through the improved financial and operational performance of EGENCO and ESCOM, the value of public and private sector investments in the electricity sector, and the number of U.S. companies awarded power purchase agreements.

Mission Goal 2: Promote a more responsive, transparent, and accountable government.

Description and Linkages: Building on Malawi's democratic tradition, we will support reforms, and build government and civil society capacity to ensure that the GOM is accountable to its citizens and safeguards development gains. As Malawi gears up for the 2019 national elections, the United States and other development partners will work with the GOM to support full

implementation of electoral, civil service, and public finance reform. To reinforce public accountability, we will work to strengthen the GOM's public integrity institutions and its independent media. The Mission will support the country's decentralization efforts, which will make governance more accessible to citizens and responsive to their needs.

The Mission's strategy supports the goals of the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan (JSP), Joint Regional Strategy (JRS), and the National Security Strategy of the United States (NSS), which list among their objectives the promotion of: "effective governance" (NSS); "institutions accountable and responsive to citizens" (NSS); governments that "counter instability, transnational crime, and violence that threaten U.S. interests by strengthening citizen-responsive governance, security, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law" (JSP); and "strengthen democracy, human rights, and good governance" (JRS). Improved governance will facilitate Malawi's self-reliance, USAID's overarching goal – and which is measured in part by the host government's capacity and commitment to finance and set its own development agenda.

Mission Objective 2.1: Invest in Malawian government reforms and capacity to make governance more effective, transparent, and accountable

Justification: Without a strong commitment to effective, transparent governance, Malawi's government will never be able to respond effectively to citizen demands for improved social development and better livelihoods. A government that has the core institutional capabilities will make better decisions and deliver stronger results for the public. Transparency and accountability must underpin this capacity, eliminating opportunities for corruption and waste. To promote transparency and accountability, U.S. technical assistance will support GOM implementation of key public service reforms related to civil service personnel performance and pay, right-sizing, public financial management, and fraud detection. The Embassy will support efforts to improve the capacity, transparency, accountability, and oversight of local governments by strengthening the budget planning, financial management, and procurement practices of district officials and supporting enhanced citizen engagement for greater accountability at the local level.

Malawians generally hold the United States in high regard and consistently look to the United States for educational and professional development opportunities. The Mission's traditional exchange programs such as Fulbright, Humphrey, the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), and academic study opportunities through EducationUSA – as well as newer leadership development programs such as the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) – are highly sought after and contribute significantly to the professional development of Malawi's emerging young leaders. They also represent an opportunity to identify and empower young Malawians with the desire and ability to create positive change in their country. Malawian media are generally free and active, though often lacking advanced skills. Greater exposure to U.S. media practices will boost Malawian media capacity to monitor and report on elections, public policy and corruption, furthering U.S. governance goals. Increased people-to-people ties will help transfer

technology, boost investment, and increase favorable views of the United States, reinforcing U.S. assistance goals and facilitating long-term improvements in transparency and governance, trade and investment.

Mission Objective 2.2: Citizens exercise rights and responsibilities (USAID CDCS DO3)

Justification: The Mission will focus on increasing citizens' ability to engage with national, district and local governments to advocate for transparent and effective governance and human rights. Support for the Government of Malawi's decentralization efforts will further these goals by bringing government closer to its citizens and increasing district-level transparency, accountability, and capacity for resource mobilization. In turn, citizens who hold their elected leaders accountable will experience better service delivery and responsive governance. Interventions will include supporting civil society organizations (CSOs), media, and citizens to engage in the electoral process, building capacity of CSOs to operate sustainably and engage in advocacy, and supporting an enabling environment that protects civil society and media freedoms, to include internet freedom. Although Internet penetration is low in Malawi (less than 5% of the population), the proliferation of cell phones with some social media capability is steadily increasing, thus also expanding the role the Internet plays in civic and electoral participation.

Mission Goal 3: The United States and Malawi work together to promote peace, prosperity, and security.

Description and Linkages: Our partnership with Malawi's independent and competent military helps the Malawian military to respond to humanitarian crises and to buttress regional security through peacekeeping operations and hosting regional security training. We enjoy excellent cooperation with the Malawi Police Service and work to boost its core competencies and encourage compliance with the rule of law. By protecting U.S. citizen security and facilitating legitimate two-way travel, we will help boost political, commercial, and people-to-people ties.

The objectives within this goal meet the AF Bureau's Joint Regional Strategy Goal 1 to "Advance Mutual Peace and Security Interests" and 2.2 to "Encourage Mutually Beneficial Trade and Investment between the U.S. and Africa."

The ICS security objectives support the National Military Strategy (NMS) commitment to Strengthen Our Global Network of Allies and Partners by fostering stability and building peacekeeping capacity through military training, exercises, security cooperation activities, and military-to-military engagement. The ICS supports the NMS goal to Disrupt, Degrade, and Defeat Violent Extremists Organization with a focus on developing security force capacity to halt illicit trafficking on Lake Malawi.

Mission Objective 3.3 meets the Bureau of Consular Affairs' Functional Bureau Strategic Framework Strategic Goal 1, to protect the lives and serve the interests of U.S. Citizens

overseas, and Goal 2, to strengthen U.S. border security while facilitating legitimate travel. Mission Objective 3.3 also supports Executive Order 13768, Executive Order 13780, and Presidential Proclamation 9645.

Mission Objective 3.1: Upgrade Malawian capacity to join international security efforts

Justification: The absence of secure borders and stable governments threatens the ambitious Southern African Development Community (SADC) trade and economic integration agenda. Regional security and comity facilitate legitimate trade and reduce the economic disruptions caused by strife and migrant flows. Malawi can advance regional stability and demonstrate regional leadership by contributing to peacekeeping missions and enhancing its border security to combat trafficking in persons (TIP), narcotics, wildlife and other illicit goods, as well as control the southward flow of economic migrants and potential terrorists from unstable regions in East Africa.

The Mission will focus on improving the skills and readiness of the MDF to carry out international peacekeeping, maritime security, humanitarian assistance, and disaster management. The Mission will work with Malawian law enforcement to secure Malawi's borders, combat human trafficking, and identify and apprehend terror threats. The Mission will continue to coordinate its efforts with other security assistance partners, including the UK and international bodies.

Mission Objective 3.2: Promote increased professionalism and capabilities of the Malawian Police Service to ensure it consistently meets basic law enforcement responsibilities and improves citizen trust in police

Justification: The Malawian Police Service (MPS) is the main law enforcement entity in the country. The MPS plays a critical role in the fair and impartial administration of justice and should demonstrate the government's commitment to the rule of law. Additionally, the MPS provides critical emergency response services to the people of Malawi and serves as the primary responders to victims of violent crime, tragic accident, and natural disaster. With limited MPS capacity, communities at times take justice into their own hands. Enhancing the emergency response capacity, expanding the criminal investigations capability, and developing a deeper understanding of the rule of law by the MPS will have a direct impact on efforts to discourage incidents of corruption, improve Malawi's ability to respond to the needs of its people, and build respect for the rule and institutions of law.

Mission Objective 3.3: Protect U.S. citizen security and interests

Justification: There is no greater goal than the protection of U.S. citizens—and their interests—abroad. It is also the first and primary strategic goal for the Bureau of Consular Affairs. U.S. Embassy Lilongwe supports this goal by providing timely, transparent, and effective consular services in accordance with U.S. law and regulations. We place a high priority on ensuring the

safety and security of the borders of the United States, while also facilitating legitimate travel for students, business persons, immigrants, and others entering the United States from Malawi.

Malawi's political and physical infrastructure is likely not capable of providing a robust response in the event of a crisis or emergency affecting U.S. citizens. The U.S. Embassy may be the only means of providing information and advice to affected U.S. citizens, many of whom are missionaries or NGO workers in isolated, rural pockets of the country. Identification and documentation of U.S. citizens in Malawi is a challenge, as many U.S. citizens are not aware of registration options like the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) or may not have access to internet or landline telephones. The Embassy therefore focuses considerable effort on outreach to U.S. citizens living outside the capital.

U.S. citizen visitors to Malawi provide much needed hard currency to Malawi's economy and support numerous jobs in Malawi's tourism industry. Yet, Malawi's visa process and high fees discourages travel. This damages Malawi's economy and creates an unnecessary hardship on U.S. citizen travelers intending to come to Malawi.

Malawians are increasingly interested in visiting, or emigrating to, the United States. This increased volume of Malawians seeking consular services, combined with outdated and insufficient waiting room space, has placed a strain on our ability to serve customers in a timely and efficient manner.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1: Right size ICASS support staff to provide necessary services for expanding mission while upgrading internal controls

Justification: USDH human resources support to the management platform has not kept up with steady and continuous foreign assistance and program growth. Expanding staff and assistance programs have dramatically increased the demands for administrative support services, placing increased stress on an already busy ICASS platform, spread out over five major facilities, an offsite warehouse, and 60 residences. Mission Lilongwe's U.S. direct hire equivalents have increased from 53 in 2013 to 68 in 2016 (28% increase), while locally engaged staff have increased from 277 in 2013 to 334 in 2016 (21% growth). Annual foreign assistance funding increased from \$250 million in 2013 to nearly \$400 million in 2017 (including humanitarian assistance), representing 57% growth over the five-year period. The 2018 M/PRI rightsizing review supported the addition of additional State USDH positions in POL/ECON, Public Affairs, and General Services. The report also recommended against reducing the number of LES staff positions in Public Affairs. We need (and have long requested) a USDH Human Resources Officer or Expanded Professional Associates Program (EPAP) Officer to improve service provision, support systems, and accountability. The lack of sufficient USDH supervisors to manage a growing workload has hobbled efforts to detect and prevent cases of internal fraud, malfeasance, and theft, presenting a possible risk to the USG. Intensified focus on internal controls, spot checks, and disciplinary actions has begun to reduce opportunities for misconduct allowing a more effective use of our resources for their intended purpose. However, a USDH Assistant GSO will limit known vulnerabilities, particularly at the offsite warehouse, and provide necessary oversight not possible given current workloads.

Management Objective 2: Improve work environment through provision of adequately-sized, suitable and secure work space and facilities

Justification: Embassy Lilongwe needs larger, unified and better laid out space to carry out its development and diplomatic goals, while meeting department security requirements. Mission entities currently occupy five non-contiguous buildings without space for growth. With DoD, MCC and a new MSG detachment now at post, interagency program staffing levels have increased. Over the past several years, post has continued to modify office space to squeeze in more employees, but is out of realistic additional options. Post has secured land for a New Embassy Compound (NEC) from the Government of Malawi to provide modern and safe space for the entire Mission. Post is working with OBO to finalize a path forward that would permit NEC construction as soon as budget dynamics permit.

Management Objective 3: Reduce costs and improve mission operations through outsourcing, greening and sustainability initiatives

Justification: In a country with minimal environmental infrastructure, Embassy Lilongwe strives to meet Department guidance to increase efficiency and sustainability, while implementing greening initiatives. As the country continues to experience prolonged hours of electricity blackouts, the cost of running backup generators is increasing exponentially. Within the OCCI framework, Post will explore implementation of greening and sustainability initiatives to reduce operating costs that will improve overall mission operations. Implementation of turn off lighting/hot water heater/air conditioner campaigns; reduction of ambient ceiling lighting in favor of point of use task lighting; installation of photo sensors; ride sharing; and use of drought tolerant plants will be among the approaches used as part of a greening and sustainability initiative. Currently Post submits a 11 percent of the Mission's vouchers to the Post Support Unit (PSU), in line with the Department's top eight global priorities. Post intends to make greater use of PSU to streamline voucher handling.

Management Objective 4: Improved recruitment and retention of exceptional Locally Employed (LE) staff

Justification: As bilateral collaboration continues to increase, particularly in areas that require high technical proficiency, such as health, Embassy Lilongwe needs to maintain a well-qualified and motivated local staff. We continue to lose some of our most highly skilled and technically proficient local staff to other donors and implementers. The devaluation of Malawi's currency, continued price inflation for basic goods and services, and the elimination of an office shuttle service (not allowable by regulation) has hurt morale. Mission Lilongwe will ensure that the mechanism of pegging LES staff salaries to U.S. dollars is sustained to cushion LES from the effects of devaluation of the local currency. Mission Lilongwe will look at new innovative ways to fully engage LES both in official Mission activities and in more diverse areas to encourage a real sense of one mission and strengthen the commitment to our common values and goals.