

Incorporating Climate Change in Southern African Social Policy: A Malawian Case Study

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A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award
of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Development Studies

Faculty of Humanities

University of Cape Town

2020

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

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Abstract

This thesis examines the inclusion of climate change in Malawian social policy, and the discourse and government documents surrounding it. In Malawi, social protection predates climate change policies – in both policy in practice – however, they have risen up the Governments agenda at the same time. This is unsurprising given the severity and frequency with which the country is impacted by climatic shocks. Moreover, vulnerability and instability in the country leave Malawian disproportionately susceptible to the impact of natural disasters and environmental irregularities. In the wake of a natural disaster, most commonly drought and flooding, there is a significant spike in mentions of both climate change and social protection in Parliamentary discourse. Similarly, Government documents exhibit a well-established connection between these two – mention of disaster risk reduction is frequently coupled with a call for social protection to minimize the effects of natural disasters. In many ways, the most recent and current social protection policy is the logical evolution of this. In 2018, the Government of Malawi released the Malawi National Social Support Programme II (MNSSP II) which focused significantly on shock-sensitive social protection to address and minimize the impact of climate change in the country. Previous social protection initiatives in the country have garnered very little political support, and the Government has exhibited a hesitation to provide financial and technical support to these programs.

Acronyms

3SP – Shock-sensitive social protection

DoDMA – Department of Disaster Management Affairs

DPP - Democratic Progressive Party of Malawi

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization

GIZ Malawi – German Development Agency in Malawi

ILO – International Labour Organization

IMF – International Monetary Fund

MGDS – Malawi Growth and Development Strategy

MNSSP – Malawi National Social Support Programme

MNSSP II – Malawi National Social Support Programme II

MP – Member of Parliament

MVAC – Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee

SRSP – Shock-responsive social protection

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNDRR – United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

WB – World Bank

WHO – World Health Organization

Chapter 1: Introduction

Climate change is expected to impact Africa at a rate unparalleled by any other continent, a trend that is already evidenced acutely in the Southern African region. The impact of climate change is not determined solely by environmental changes, but also by ‘the characteristics and vulnerability of the places and people that experiences those changes’ (Davis-Reddy & Vincent, 2017, p. 48). The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) explains that ‘natural hazards by themselves do not cause disasters – it is the combination of an exposed, vulnerable and ill-prepared population or community with a hazard event that results in a disaster’ (UNISDR, 2008, p. 5). The impact of climate change on a country, and the ability to adapt, is largely dependent on the capacity to manage and respond to shocks, vulnerability and risk. While Africa’s vulnerability to climate change is certainly geographic, it is also – and maybe predominately - an issue of development. The prevalence of poverty in Southern Africa has led to an extraordinary need for humanitarian relief in the wake of environmental shocks and climatic impacts.

It is the centrality of vulnerability that links social protection to climate change. Climate change poses a formidable threat to the achievements and efficacy of social protection programmes in the region. More importantly, social protection schemes have the potential to build resilience, help prepare for and strengthen response to environmental shocks. Seekings explains that drought played ‘a central role in welfare state-building across much of Africa’ (2016, p. 1). Seekings identifies Botswana as an early example of this; drought in the 1960s prompted ‘police reforms that were to lead to the construction, decades later, of an extensive but conservative welfare state’ (Ibid.). However, contemporary social protection programmes in Africa focus on *idiosyncratic* shocks, potentially based on the notion that development provides for most other people. *Idiosyncratic* shocks, Gough & Therborn (2010) explain, are predictable over the course of a lifetime – illness, old age, unemployment, etc. There is an increasing need, particularly in the Global South, for social policy to consider *covariate* shocks which affect entire communities – the most formidable of which is climate change (Gough & Therborn, 2010, p. 716). The effects of climate change are unpredictable, complex and likely to exacerbate existing hazards such as food and fuel price instability, mass displacement, and epidemics (Bastagli, 2014, p. 4). Environmental shocks put pressure on disaster relief mechanisms, as the need for humanitarian intervention increases. This led to the creation of shock-responsive social protection (SRSP), the purpose of which is to respond flexibly to *covariate* shocks (Oxford Policy Management, 2015, p. 1). While there is not yet an internationally recognized standard, ‘shock-responsive social protection’ is the most commonly used and comprehensive term - particularly in reference to Malawi - and is favoured throughout this research.

This case study could have revolved around a variety of African countries as social protection systems become increasingly responsive to the new (heightened) risks of environmental insecurity, whether by design or necessity. The mounting pressures of flooding and drought severely undermine the ability of the poorest to meet their basic needs. Minimizing this vulnerability is a core objective of social protection programmes. Social protection systems in both Kenya and Uganda, which are designed to address and end recurring food crises, focus particularly on drought-prone areas - both programmes have had positive impacts on consumption levels even in the event of extreme drought (Ulrichs & Slater, 2016, p.30). In Ethiopia, contingency funding has been utilized to scale-up benefits in the event of shocks (Ibid., p. 13). However, it is the particularities of social protection in Malawi, and the escalated risk of environmental security in the country, that led to its centrality in this study.

Climate shocks have been particularly consequential in agriculturally dependant Malawi, as 80% of employment is comprised of smallholder farmers (Holmes et al., 2016d, p. 1). Even minor environmental irregularities have led to disaster, an example of which is the 2002 famine caused by erratic rainfall (Menon, 2007). Chronic food insecurity and seasonal patterns of production and consumption have exacerbated the impact of covariate shocks in Malawi (Ibid.). While natural disasters have occurred with some degree of frequency, annual lean season¹ relief accounts for a significant share of the current humanitarian need (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 9). Meaning that environmental vulnerability is both shock-induced and chronic, or seasonal, in nature. In light of the overlap between social protection and humanitarian relief, the Government of Malawi introduced shock-sensitive social protection, linking social protection and disaster management to address the full cycle of environmental shocks and vulnerability in the country (Government of Malawi, 2018, p. ii). The decision to use the term ‘shock-sensitive’ rather than ‘shock-responsive’ was intentional. Tom Mtenje from the German Development Agency (GIZ) in Malawi explained that Government felt, and stakeholders agreed, “‘responsive’ in SRSP implied a focus on disaster interventions ex-post whereas the desire was to have a comprehensive approach incorporating prevention, preparedness, response and recovery and ‘sensitive’ as in 3SP captured this better’. Shock-sensitive social protection was predicated on the notion that ‘even in the absence of large shocks, these households are dependant on weather for their subsistence, and address climate risks that occur with varying degrees of frequency and predictability’ (Holmes et al., 2017, p. ii). Social protection and disaster management were first linked in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II (MGDS II) in 2011 (Government of Malawi, 2011 a). Theme three of this medium-term development strategy - ‘social support and disaster risk management’ – aimed to support the vulnerable and strengthen disaster management (Ibid, p. 46). In many ways the emergence of shock-sensitive social protection in Malawi was unsurprising given the severity and frequency with which Malawi has been subject to environmental shocks, and the humanitarian intervention required to recover.

Although not a comprehensive list of natural disasters, Malawi was hit by flooding in 2003, 2006, 2010, 2012 and 2015, and drought in 2005, 2016 and 2018 (ReliefWeb; IFRC, 2005). Floods, which are the most common climate shock experienced in Malawi, represent ‘74.5% of all disaster events between 1990 and 2014 and produce more direct losses to life and property than droughts’ (Holmes et al., 2017, p. 6). Much of this flooding occurred in a low-lying, flood-prone area of the Shire River basin, which is also where a third of the country’s maize is grown (Ibid.). Dry spells and drought occur in all regions and tend to have extremely long lasting effects (Ibid.). Holmes et al. explain that due to dependence on rain-fed agriculture, droughts have a greater negative impact on the broader economy – typically increasing poverty by 1.3%, although extreme drought can increase poverty as much as 17%, ‘potentially pushing another 2.1 million Malawians over the poverty line’ (Ibid). Critically important in Malawi is the fact that ‘climate and weather events can impact food security even in the absence of extremes. Small disturbances that are within the norm – such as a gap in rainfall during the growing season – can lead to crop failure or reduced yields because of the extreme dependence on rainfall, only marginally suitable crop planting, and low-input agriculture’ (Ibid.).

The severity with which the country is confronted by environmental shocks, has led to a significant need for humanitarian relief and intervention. The Government of Malawi recently reported that ‘for close to 10 years now, Malawi has been supporting an average of about 1.8 million people each year with emergency food assistance ... driven in part by consecutive

¹ ‘Lean season’ refers to the recurrent scenario in which farmers produce less than their annual consumption needs, usually of a staple food, and must rely on purchasing food until the next harvest (Ellis & Manda, 2012, p. 1407).

climatic shocks' (2019, p. 1). After the 2018/2019 growing season alone, an estimated 3.3 million people were in need of lean season support to compensate for a 28% drop in maize production from the 2016/2017 growing season (Government of Malawi, 2019a, p. ii). It is this humanitarian-development nexus, and the consideration of environmental shocks in social protection, that this study attempts to grapple with. Specifically, this study seeks to understand if the shock-sensitive element of the Malawi National Social Support Programme II (MNSSP II) will garner greater political support, given the breadth and severity of environmental shocks in Malawi?

An additional complexity of shock-sensitive social protection in Malawi is its predominantly donor-funded nature. International organizations have played a leading role in the design, funding and implementation of Malawi's social protection system. The 2018 introduction of the MNSSP II could symbolize Government's desire to implement programmes that safeguard the vulnerable against environmental shocks and build resilience to natural disasters. Or this could be an expansion of a donor-driven programme without a great deal of Government buy-in. The following chapters examine the inclusion of climate change in social protection schemes in Malawi, through an investigation of Government policies and programmes and Parliamentary rhetoric. Chapter 2 is a qualitative account of climate change and social protection discourse in key Government documents – analyzing if and how discourse has changed over time. Chapter 3 is a comprehensive analysis of Parliamentary Debates – including both qualitative and quantitative analyses. First, a thematic analysis of Parliamentary debates is used to examine how MPs understand climate change. Then, a quantitative analysis of the use of certain terms in Parliament. Data is represented graphically to allow for comparison and exploration. Chapter 4 will discuss and conclude on the findings of this study and its broader implications as a case for Southern Africa. The rest of Chapter 1 will outline the emergence of social protection in Malawi; then discuss the impact and effect of climate change; and end with an explanation of shock-responsive social protection, and shock-sensitive social protection in Malawi specifically, laying the foundation for the rest of this study.

Social Protection

Late-nineteenth century Europe saw the invention of social protection in what is now known as the welfare state (Castles et al., 2012, p.1). This originated at a time of instability triggered by social, economic and political transformation in Europe (Ibid., 3). With the rise of industrial capitalism came 'two powerful and opposite *interests* converging (to) generate public social policies' (Gough & Therborn, 2010, p. 705). The first was the interest of the proletariat in access to adequate housing and security in case of unemployment, illness or injury; the second was the interest of political elites in maintaining social order (Ibid). It was discovered that capitalism needed to be regulated by the state, in the interest of the collective, in order to be compatible with human life and well-being. This resulted in the development of social policy in Europe, which then served as a model for other industrialized nations. Social protection is one of the many forms of social policy. Importantly, policy refers to the overarching ideals and goals of a society, and programmes are what operationalize and work to achieve these goals.

Social protection is generally understood to include contributory and non-contributory schemes. The former is linked to formal employment such as employment insurance programmes; while the latter is typically focused on the poor. This non-contributory social protection is assistance given to the most vulnerable, marginalized and poorest members of society, with the goal of minimizing risks, reducing vulnerability and providing protection

against shocks (Mtetwa, 2018, p. 135). Support is most commonly delivered in the form of cash transfers, subsidies, pensions and in-kind relief. (Gough & Therborn, 2010, p. 715-716).

The Rise of Social Protection in Africa

The percentage of the African population living in extreme poverty is estimated to have declined from 57% in 1990 to 43% in 2012. Rapid population growth, however, has meant that the absolute number of people living in extreme poverty has increased by more than 100 million in the same time period (Beegle et al., 2016, p. xi). Additionally, undernourishment and severe food insecurity are increasing in almost all African regions (FAO, 2018). These statistics indicate that many of the goals of traditional development have not been realized. Development programmes have been implemented with the intention of minimizing poverty; the most basic and fundamental element of which, is a lack of money. In fact, development initiatives have in many cases been designed to explicitly avoid providing the poor with ‘handouts’ and was far more project-oriented. Ferguson explains that development has generally been viewed as ‘transformative, not charity, and that recipients of aid should get productive skills and the opportunity to work, not handouts and dependency’ (2015, p. 35) - prioritizing *teaching* to fish over *giving* a fish. However, as poverty persists despite decades and millions of dollars’ worth of aid and development, this core belief of development has been questioned.

Enthusiasm for social protection programmes in Africa appears to be based on the recognition that ‘the biggest problem for those below the poverty line is a basic lack of cash’ (Hanlon, Barrientos & Hulme, 2010, p. 2). Ferguson says that the notion of handing out money to those who are deemed in need of it is the ‘really big “development” story of the last twenty years’ (2015, p. 2). South Africa has lead the way in African social protection with a longstanding system of social assistance programmes. Ferguson explains that these programmes, which were highly racialized under the apartheid regime, were de-racialized post-independence and utilized by the liberation Government to deliver ‘something tangible and valuable, even in the absence of jobs’ (Ferguson, 2015, p. 9-10). The topic of social protection in Africa, and specifically Southern Africa, is a well-documented one (Drolet, 2014; Ferguson, 2015; Gough, 2004; Seekings 2008). Much of this research is centered around the viability of the welfare state in Africa; implementation of social protection programmes; ideology, attitudes and beliefs about social protection; and the role of social protection in tackling issues of inequality, poverty and unemployment.

Social protection programmes in African countries include direct welfare programmes (cash transfers, school meals programmes, and food relief), productivity-driven programmes (such as work programmes), policy changes, microfinance and subsidies (Omilola & Kaniki, 2014, p. 2). Often implemented by government with assistance from international organizations, these social protection programmes are economically viable in poorer countries through both conventional and inventive means. More established policies, like that in South Africa, have been paid for largely by tax revenues and government; in Ghana programmes were initially funded with money saved from debt cancellations; outside of Africa, Indonesia and Mexico swapped programmes that benefitted the better-off for those that benefitted the poor (Hanlon, Barrientos & Hulme, 2010, p. 154). How does social protection function in a country such as Malawi, where poverty and vulnerability is compounded by numerous social and economic issues?

Social Protection in Malawi

Poverty in Malawi has been stagnant and remains high, particularly in rural areas – the International Monetary Fund (IMF) explains that in 2010 50% of the population was classified as poor and 25% extremely poor (IMF, 2017, p. 2). Food insecurity is pervasive in Malawi where, in 2013, 65% of all households (84% of rural households) reported at least one month of food insecurity per year, which is a 15% increase since 2010 (Ibid.). When asked by Afrobarometer in 2018 how many times in the last year they had gone without food, 60% of Malawian respondents answered ‘several times’ to ‘always’ (Afrobarometer, 2018). When asked the same question about cash incomes, 80.4% of respondents said they had gone without cash incomes ‘several times’ to ‘always’ in the last year (Ibid.). For comparison, when the same questions were posed in Mozambique in 2016 – a country with similar Human Development Index² classification - 34.5% of respondents indicated they had gone without food ‘several times’ to ‘always’ in the last year (Afrobarometer, 2016) whilst 60% said they had gone without cash incomes ‘several times’ to ‘always’ that year (Ibid.). Although an imperfect comparison given the two-year discrepancy in data collection, this does highlight the prevalence of poverty and insecurity relative to a regional neighbour. Cunha et al. explain that while poverty is endemic across Malawi, there does appear to be some regional disparity – the poorest districts tend to be in the very north and south of the country (2016, p. 2). The southern region is the most densely populated meaning that the majority of Malawi’s poor are found in the South (Ibid.). The economy in Malawi is ‘largely unequal, undiversified and centred predominantly on rain-fed agriculture which accounts for 80 per cent of livelihoods, 64 per cent of the formal work force, and around 28 per cent of the country’s GDP’ (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 8).

This poverty is compounded by various social challenges, which exacerbate the vulnerability of the poor. Particularly notable is the incidence of HIV/AIDS which left 20% of children orphaned by the mid-2000’s and affected the productive capacity of a significant proportion of adults (Davis et al., 2016, p. 282).

In the early 2000s government and development partners attempted to combat endemic poverty with efforts such as debt cancellation and trade policies (Davis et al., 2016, p. 282). However, these activities failed to benefit the poor, and at the same time targeted poverty reduction strategies were ‘largely ineffective – Malawi Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment saw poverty remain unchanged between 1998 and 2005’ (Ibid.). It was this scenario that led to the exploration of social protection, specifically cash transfers, for poverty reduction. Notably, social protection was made a theme of the 2006-2011 Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS), the first of three medium-term development strategies (Government of Malawi, 2006a). The idea of social assistance was not entirely new to Malawi, where various social protection instruments have been in place since 1964, often used as short-term solutions and ‘safety nets’ in times of disaster, such as drought and flooding (Davis et al., 2016, p. 283). What began in 1964 as input subsidies and farming assistance has evolved into cash transfers, public works programmes, school meals, microfinance and loans, and village savings programmes (Government of Malawi, 2018). The Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) and humanitarian aid (food security and nutrition) are technically classified as social protection programmes, however, as Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler highlight, neither are designed to consistently ‘protect the poorest and most vulnerable against shocks’ and are therefore considered separately (2019, p. 13). Social protection in Malawi is comprised of both

² Human Development Index (HDI) is a United Nations Mechanism that assesses a country’s development using a variety of measures. Malawi HDI value is 0.477, Mozambique is 0.437 (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI>)

contributory and non-contributory schemes. However, the Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP), which this research focuses on, is non-contributory and unconditional, targeting the poorest members of society.

Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP)

In 2018, the Government of Malawi introduced the second iteration of its comprehensive social protection policy which, like the first, is designed to operationalize the objectives of the 2012 National Social Support Policy (NSSP). This policy aims to provide support and protection in order to reduce extreme poverty, hunger and vulnerability in Malawi (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 5). While they are designed to meet the same objectives and utilize similar interventions; the first and second iteration of the Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP) differ in approaches. Examination of the programmes, targeting, and impact of the MNSSP provide an excellent starting point for understanding social protection in Malawi. This will be built upon with an explanation of changes and expansions under MNSSP II.

Five interventions are used to achieve the objectives of the MNSSP: Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP); School Meals Programme (SMP); Public Works Programme (PWP); Village Savings and Loans (VSL); and Microfinance (MF) (Holmes et al., 2017, p. 13). The SCTP, which was introduced to Malawi in 2006, is an unconditional cash transfer programme that targets households that are both ultra-poor and labour constrained, using a combination of community-based targeting and proxy means testing (Cunha et al., 2016, p. 49). The objective of this programme is to reduce extreme poverty and hunger, increase school enrollment and improve nutrition, economic and general well-being of households (Ibid.). The SCTP currently reaches 210,000 households and aims to scale-up to include 319,000 households, reaching 12% of the population and 40% of the ultra-poor (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 14; World Bank, 2018, p. 34). Malnutrition and stunting among children, coupled with increasingly low enrollment and high drop-out rates, particularly as grades progress, led to the institutionalization of school meals programme (SMP) in 2016 (SMP) (Cunha et al., 2016, p. 62). SMP were implemented on an ad hoc basis since 1999 by World Food Programme and are now used in social protection schemes to improve school enrollment and concentration, and ensure that children are well nourished (Ibid, p. 63). Districts and schools are targeted based on food insecurity and childhood malnutrition indicators, as well as Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) data (Ibid, p. 64). It is estimated that the SMP currently reaches around two million children (Longhurst & Sabataes-Wheeler, 2019, p. 15). A public works programme aims to transfer ‘income to the non-labour constraint poor by providing limited employment opportunities, often in remote areas where there are few jobs’ (Cunha et al, 2016, p. 68). Public works programmes often ‘operate on a seasonal basis as a safety net during non-farming season’ where income generating opportunities are scarce (van de Meerendonk, Cunha, and Juergens, n.d.).

This programme is self-targeted – with wages set at or less than minimum wage to ‘ensure that projects only attract labourers with few other income generating opportunities’ (Ibid. 69). As of 2018, 950,000 households were involved in the PWP (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 14). The final two social protection programmes – VSL and MF – are MNSSP efforts towards financial inclusion (Holmes et al, 2016, p. 59). Village savings and loans programmes provide services offered by the formal financial market, such as savings accounts, loans and insurance (Cunha et al., 2016, p. 79). Integral to VSL associations are weekly contribution of income to accumulate savings (Ibid., p. 82). A 2015 mapping exercise found 37,461 savings groups with a total of 610,596 members (Ibid, p. 83). Microfinance

intends to minimize poverty by providing access to finance and loans and seeks to address seasonal demand for loans (Ibid., p. 86). There are unfortunately less reliable statistics on the reach of MF.

As the MNSSP came to an end in 2016, a stakeholder-driven review was conducted and later utilised in the development of the MNSSP II. The recommendations most formative in the creation of the MNSSP II were: emphasizing policy objectives rather than social protection instruments; collaboration, flexibility, cooperation and linkages between programmes, agricultural sector and humanitarian relief; and shock-responsive social protection. The first recommendation was predicated on the recognition that the MNSSP was driven by social protection programmes, rather than policy objectives and as a result it was unclear how programmes contributed to the overall goals of the MNSSP (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 26). The MNSSP II was therefore designed using policy objectives to ‘dictate the choice of instruments and program, and not vice versa’ (Ibid.). This is done to increase clarity in achieving objectives as well as to foster collaboration and flexibility among programmes. These improvements are said to make the MNSSP II better aligned with national, regional and global policies (Government of Malawi, 2018, p. 1). The other two recommendations will be revisited later.

MNSSP II was designed with the intention of ‘build(ing) a more coherent and integrated social protection system in Malawi’ characterized by institutional coordination and sustainability (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 26). The stated mission was to ‘provide and promote productivity-enhancing interventions and welfare support for the poor and vulnerable thereby facilitating the movement of people out of poverty and reducing the vulnerability of those in danger of falling into poverty’ (Government of Malawi, 2018, p. 4). To realize this objective, three pillars or priority areas, were defined: Pillar I: Consumption Support, Pillar II: Resilient Livelihoods, Pillar III: Shock-Sensitive Social Protection. These pillars serve to protect (meet basic needs), build resilience, and protect gains, respectively (Government of Malawi, 2018, p. 15-18). The stated goal of the MNSSP II was to ‘reduce poverty and enable the poor to move out of poverty and vulnerability’ (Ibid., p. 4). The document goes on to define the most pervasive sources of vulnerability faced by Malawians: agricultural vulnerability; economic shocks and processes; social vulnerability; health, nutrition risks and HIV/AIDS; demographic vulnerability; life cycle vulnerability (Government of Malawi, 2018, p. 7-8). The MNSSP is designed to address vulnerability using the same programmes as its predecessor – with a focus on consumption support in the first pillar and ‘graduating’ to savings and protection in the latter two pillars. Pillar I: Consumption Support is concerned with meeting basic needs through consumption and income support to improve food security, nutritional intake, shelter, education and health (Ibid., p. 11). This first pillar focuses on three programmes to achieve consumption objectives – SCTP, PWP and SMP (Ibid.). As is suggested by the name, Pillar II focuses on building resilience and supporting ‘livelihoods that can withstand small shocks and that eventually no longer require direct consumption support to remain viable’ (Government of Malawi, 2018, p. 12). This pillar focuses on developing human capital, gender specific challenges and pathways to graduate from poverty (Ibid.). Building resilience under this Pillar will involve SCTP, VSL and MF (Ibid., p. 13). The third and final pillar is of particular interest to this research and will be revisited later.

As of 2019, the MNSSP II is still in its beginning stages, making it difficult to assess its specific impact on social protection programmes. However, impact evaluation studies have been done on social protection programmes previously in Malawi and the benefits are clear. In 2012, Covarrubias, Davis & Winters found that Malawi’s cash transfer programme influenced both household consumption choices and production decisions (Kalebe-Nyamongo & Marquette, 2014, p. 9). Meaning that recipients used cash transfers ‘to meet their basic needs such as food, clothing, education materials and access to health services, as well as investing

to improve shelter and to acquire agricultural tools and livestock' (Ibid.). There is also evidence of improved nutrition and food security, asset ownership, increased school enrollment and attendance, rises in local trading, and improvement in household disposable incomes (Chinsinga, 2009, p. 20). It was also found that cash transfers substantially lowered rates of teenage marriage and pregnancy in Malawi (Kalebe-Nyamongo & Marquette, 2014, p. 9). As for the school meals programme, impact evaluations found that the biggest difference is in attendance of higher grades, which suggest that school feeding and take-home rations are effective for increasing enrollment and diminishing drop out rates (Cunha et al., 2019, p. 66). Assessing the impact of the public works programme appears to be more difficult – an impact evaluation conducted in 2012/2013 found that 'programme participation does not "have a measurable short-term effect on lean season food security"' but speculates that income may be spread across expenses and therefore difficult to evaluate impacts (Ibid., p. 71). Village savings have contributed to an improvement in food security and income generating activities in the villages where they are set up (Ibid., p. 84). Microfinance programmes have not been thoroughly evaluated in Malawi (Cunha et al., 2016, p. 5).

Funding social protection in Malawi is not straightforward, due in large part to the involvement of external organizations. These programmes are, and will continue to be, predominately donor-funded. The Government began contributing to social protection initiatives in 2010, and by 2015 were covering only 10% of the cost of these programmes. The remaining 90% of funding was to come from donors and partners including, but not limited to, the German Government (through KfW), Irish Aid, World Food Programme, Mary's Meals, United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF, the International Labour Organization, the European Union and the World Bank. While the exact funding breakdown of the MNSSP II is unclear, it is likely to mirror the former. Notably, as of 2018, expenditure on social protection programmes was considered low in terms of both need and relative to regional standards (World Bank, 2018, p. 3). The World Bank explains that average expenditure between 2011 and 2016 was around 0.6% of GDP in Malawi; the African region average is double this at 1.2% (Ibid.). Low and stagnant financial contribution raises questions about Government buy-in to social protection programmes. Importantly, Cunha et al. explain that the Government has failed to fund their agreed upon 10% contribution (2016, p. 4). Kalebe-Nyamongo & Marquette state that the failure of the Government of Malawi to allocate funds for social protection programmes is reflective of 'policy choice and political priorities' (2014, p. 9). This is supported by the 2016 stakeholder-driven review which found varying degrees of Government involvement in programmes. There was little Government involvement in VSL, MF, and SMP programmes, however the SCTP and PWP did utilize Government systems (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 13-14). A majority donor-funded programme brings with it the possibility of issues such as unequal power relations in design and implementation, funding delays, and unsustainability (Kalebe-Nyamongo & Marquette, 2014, p. 9). Donors contribute to the fragmentation of social protection through the focus on specific interventions, rather than broader policy objectives (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 14).

Elite Attitudes Towards Social Protection

Joyce Banda, the founder and leader of the People's Party (PP), became President of Malawi when standing President Mutharika died in 2012. Banda established the PP after being expelled from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in 2010; when met with the task of developing a message for the party, Banda, in direct contrast to her former party, championed a pro-poor approach – although difficult to determine whether this was simply rhetorical or sincere (Hamer & Seekings, 2017, p. 6). Where the DPP prioritized growth over poverty

reduction, Banda and the PP took a ‘pro-growth and pro-poor’ stance – central to which was social protection (Ibid.). Whether this was a strategic effort by Banda to distance herself from her predecessor and former party is unclear. However, it did, Hamer & Seekings explain, become a focal point of the 2014 election in which candidates and their parties held contrasting positions on social protection (Hamer & Seekings, 2017, p. 15). For an incumbent president to champion social protection is a significant development for Malawi’s poor, however doing so without action could be indicative of political motivations prevailing over policy objectives (Ibid.). What policymakers believe about social protection is important as their buy-in is necessary to create viable and sustainable programmes.

The idea of giving directly to the poor contradicts the long-standing development notion that ‘handouts’ will create unproductive and dependent societies. However, rudimentary in the support for social protection is the recognition that poverty does not result from individual failings of the poor, but rather it is a consequence of unequal societies, and therefore the poor are deserving of assistance to escape this poverty (Hanlon, Barrientos & Hulme, 2010). The pervasive perception that the poor can in some way be faulted for their own poverty, is in direct conflict with the foundational ideology of social protection, making it a contentious issue. Seekings explains the global categorization of the poor as deserving and undeserving, which is useful in understanding elite support of some, but not all, forms of social protection (2018b, p. 6). Poor people are, in many societies, classified as deserving if they are unable to work – elderly, sick, disabled – while the undeserving are unemployed working-age adults (Ibid.).

The fear of creating dependency is among the most common criticisms of social policy in Africa today. The topic of cash transfers in particular seems to incite voracious debate about dependency and laziness among the poor; African elites favour policies that support the ‘active’ poor and stimulate productivity (Kalebe-Nyamongo & Marquette, 2014, p. 2). This is certainly the case in Malawi, where most elites are critical of the poor and skeptical of social protection as a means for reducing poverty. A study done by Kalebe-Nyamongo & Marquette, highlights the tendency of elites in Malawi to favour policies that benefit society more broadly, rather than focusing on poverty alleviation alone (Ibid., 14). This meant that elites favoured programmes which supported the ‘active’ poor (i.e. not the ‘ultra’ or ‘inactive’ poor) through microfinance, public works programmes and agricultural subsidies. Far less popular were cash transfers, child benefits and unemployment insurance programmes (Kalebe-Nyamongo & Marquette, 2014, p. 2). This highlights the desire of Malawian elites and policy-makers to foster economic growth and development through productivity, and their reluctance to provide ‘handouts’ to the chronically poor and vulnerable. The widespread belief that people become poor through some fault of their own, suggests that politicians who advocate for ‘productive’ forms of social protection, have a greater chance of appealing to the electorate (Hamer, 2016, p. 44).

This same study found that elite attitudes towards redistribution and social protection ‘have a bearing on the policies and programmes that elites are willing to support and implement’ (Kalebe-Nyamongo & Marquette, 2014, p. 6). However, Malawi’s social protection programme is majority donor-funded and therefore presumably influenced by donor agendas and preferences. Meaning that despite elites disinterest, cash transfers and consumption support remain an integral part of social protection in Malawi (Ibid., p. 8). A case study of eight African countries by Hickey et al. explains that ‘whether or not national governments introduce or expand social assistance programmes depends primarily on politics within each country’ (2018, p. 10).

Climate Change

It is difficult to summarize the current climate crisis; in fact, it is almost an art to do so effectively. Even the most accurate descriptions have the tendency to sound hyperbolic and contradictory - climate change will impact everyone and everything, but differently; some of its effects are predictable, others are less well known. One thing is certain, the prognoses are grim. Recent decades have displayed a staggering increase in unpredictable weather, the majority of which can be linked directly to anthropogenic climate change. Contemporary climate risks manifest in extreme temperatures, heavy and unpredictable rainfall, drought and flooding, and rising sea levels, all of which are forecasted to increase in both frequency and severity. Despite a near-universal consensus among scientists about the current climate crisis, world leaders often speak about climate change as if a completely distant and abstract issue. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which was established to set mitigation and adaptation targets for all member nations, has become the epicentre of climate apathy. After 20 years of UNFCCC international treaties, very little headway has been made to mitigate this environmental crisis. In fact, according to the Climate Action Tracker, only seven ratifying countries³ are on track to meet internationally set emissions reduction targets. The rest, which include the largest polluters, are nowhere near reducing their greenhouse gas emissions (Climate Action Tracker). The longer it takes to curb emissions, the farther we move away from 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures and the closer we inch towards 2, 3 and 4 degrees of global warming. Although the difference between 1.5 and 4 degrees, which countries like the US and Saudi Arabia are on track to meet, may seem paltry, even a 0.5-degree increase in global temperature is significant (IPCC, 2018). Much of this inaction is linked to the paradoxical relationship between climate change and power - nations with the most political clout have largely been safeguarded from the worst effects of climate change and have a much greater capacity to deal with it. Whilst Southern nations confronted by climate change daily do not have the political power to manipulate agreements, nor the capacity for adaptation (Bond, 2012). This has led to great tension and apathy in global governance on climate change; if you do not see or feel it, climate change can become a political, or partisan, issue. This is particularly problematic given that the North is responsible for the vast majority of atmospheric greenhouse gases, while the South has contributed very little. In fact, fossil fuel emissions in Africa account for only 3.7% of the global total, which is an absolutely astounding statistic (Godfrey, Burton, & LeRoux-Rutledge, 2012, p. 4).

Climate Change in Africa

Climate scientists declare with a great deal of confidence that due to high exposure to risk and low adaptive capacity Africa will be disproportionately impacted by climate change (IPCC, 2014). Climate-related destruction is already evidenced throughout the region: in prolonged and intensified droughts in East Africa; flooding in West Africa; less frequent but more intense rainfall in Southern Africa; and temperature increases across the continent (IPCC, 2014). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicts with confidence that these effects will diversify and worsen. Temperatures will continue to rise; precipitation will become less frequent and more severe, leading to drought and flooding; and weather will become less predictable overall. This will put greater stress on water systems, damage ecosystems, exacerbate food insecurity and nutrition, spread disease and negatively impact health overall (IPCC, 2014, p. 1202-1204). Agriculture and vulnerability are intimately

³ Bhutan, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, India, Morocco, Philippines and The Gambia

connected to climate change in Africa; the regions extraordinary vulnerability to climate change is due (in large part) to its dependence on agriculture; agriculture is a sector profoundly affected by climate change (Krampe & Aminga, 2019). The poor are inordinately vulnerable as they often occupy the most precarious positions in society and lack the capacity to prepare for and respond to climatic changes. While the rural poor are predicted to bear the brunt of climate, urban centres will also feel its effects through direct– such as floods, drought and rising temperatures – and indirect impacts - changes in the availability and price of food. Additionally, as environmental shocks make rural livelihoods less viable, there is predicted to be an increase in rural-to-urban migration which will put pressure on urban centres (OECD, 2017, p. 72). The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction explains that ‘natural hazards by themselves do not cause disasters – it is the combination of an exposed, vulnerable and ill-prepared population or community with a hazard event that results in a disaster’ (UNISDR, 2008, p. 5). This is important as it highlights the fact that even seemingly benign weather events can lead to disaster in regions that are less equipped to respond to them. All of this is to say that while climate change is bad for everyone, it is particularly bad for Africa – emissions and apathy from the rest of the world are inching closer to a death sentence for much of the continent (Bond, 2012, p. 13).

During my research, Southern Africa was hit by what the UN has called one of the worst disasters ever to strike the southern hemisphere, and a terrifying example of the power of weather (Maclean, 2019). The total devastation of Cyclone Idai, which struck Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi, is still being realized. Over 3 million people were effected by the cyclone – left without food, water or shelter – more than half of whom were in Mozambique (Yuhua, 2019). As climate scientists have predicted, almost immediately following the cycle, there was a cholera outbreak in Mozambique, infecting over 1000 people (Africanews, 2019). While it is difficult to definitively link this storm directly to anthropogenic climate change, Graça Machel, former Mozambican freedom fighter and political figure, said about the cyclone ‘Beira (Mozambique) will go down in history as having been the first city to be completely devastated by climate change’ (ReliefWeb, 2019).

Climate Change in Malawi

Cyclone Idai, which displaced 75,900 Malawians and impacted nearly 868,900 (OCHA, 2019; UNICEF, 2019), is an extreme example of the power of environmental shocks. Malawi is unfortunately familiar with the severity of weather and the effect of climatic events – the former Directors of Poverty Reduction and Social Protection, and Disaster Risk Reduction state that ‘Malawi is increasingly turning into a shock-prone country’ (Holmes et al., 2017, p. foreward). The country’s reliance on natural resources and rain-fed agriculture makes the human and social consequences of climatic events particularly acute. Malawi is more susceptible to climate change than many of its regional neighbours. The 2015 Climate Risk Index by Germanwatch found that Malawi was among the top three countries most affected by climate change – the other two being Mozambique and Dominica (Kreft et al., 2016, p. 2). Malawi’s specific vulnerability to climate change can be explained simply as a high exposure to environmental shocks and hazards and the low capacity to manage and respond to hazards.

Environmental shocks, which have been occurring for decades in Malawi, are recognized by ordinary Malawians. When asked about the climate of the country in 2018 compared to 10 years ago, 84% explained that the climate is ‘worse’ or ‘much worse’ now (Afrobarometer, 2018). The same survey asked how climate change was affecting Malawi, to which 92.6% explained that climate change was making life ‘worse’ or ‘much worse’ (Ibid.). Comparatively, when the same question was asked in Botswana and Mauritius, 66.8% and

64.6% of respondents (respectively) answered ‘worse’ or ‘much worse’ (Afrobarometer, 2017a; Afrobarometer, 2017b). It is the frequency and severity with which climate change has struck the country, and the resulting humanitarian need, that is the basis of contemporary concern with climate change in Malawi. Even minor environmental shocks are pervasive and extraordinarily consequential for the majority of Malawians.

There is already evidence of the trend towards less frequent but more intense rainfall. Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler explain that ‘trend analysis between 2003 and 2014 showed that 20 out of 28 districts in Malawi experienced moderate to high recurrence of shocks (floods and drought), which is expected to increase in frequency and severity in the context of a changing climate’ (2019, p. 9). The most common environmental shocks being flooding and drought (WFP, 2014, p. 13). While a comprehensive list of all instances of flooding and drought is difficult to obtain, the more severe events are documented. Malawi was subject to flooding in 2003, 2006, 2010, 2012 and 2015, as well as drought in 2005 and 2018 (ReliefWeb; IFRC, 2005). The World Bank indicates that Malawi has been hit by eight major droughts since 1980, affecting over 24 million people (2016, p. 1). Flooding is the most common climate shock experienced in Malawi however, the impact of drought on crop yields is sometimes experienced months after and the effects can last much longer (Ibid., p. 6). While droughts occur in all regions, the impact of drought has intensified in the southern region of Malawi due to compounding factors such as population growth and environmental degradation (Holmes et al., 2016, p. 6).

The impacts of environmental irregularities and shocks are extremely costly for Malawi where ‘climate and weather events can impact food security even in the absence of extremes. Small disturbances that are within the norm – such as a gap in rainfall during the growing season – can lead to crop failure or reduced yields because of the extreme dependence on rainfall, only marginally suitable crop planting and low-input agriculture’ (Holmes et al., 2-16, p. 6). Flooding and drought also have disastrous effects on food security and nutrition – 36% of children in Malawi are stunted as of 2012 (WFP, 2012, p. 4). There is a great need for humanitarian intervention and relief to deal with shocks when they occur. A particularly extreme, although illustrative example, of the impact of unfavourable weather in Malawi occurred after the 2015/2016 cropping season. Rainfall levels were 20 to 50% lower than average in southern and central Malawi, which left maize production 30% below the average (IFPRI, 2018, p. 1). The lasting impact of this drought was documented by the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) during the 2016/2017 lean season, which indicated that 6.7 million people – one third of the total population - in 24 districts, were unable to meet their food requirements and were therefore in need of humanitarian relief (Ibid.). The severity of this spike in humanitarian need is evidenced by the years preceding it. During the 2014/2015 lean season there was an 8% need for humanitarian assistance, growing to 18% in 2015/2016, and then peaking at 40% (6.7 million people) during the 2016/2017 lean season, which is the highest in Southern Africa (Homes et al., 2017, forward). Responding to environmental shocks requires an incredible amount of resources and coordination – the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) is responsible for coordinating disaster response; the MVAC collects data on food and nutrition security; and lean season response comes from Government, the World Food Programme (WFP) and other partners (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 12). The 2019 cyclone, which caused extreme flooding in Malawi in 2019 portrays the magnitude of responding to natural disasters. The WFP broke down the cost of this disaster as ‘emergency’ and ‘recovery’ funds – the emergency requirement was estimate to be US\$45 million, and the recovery US\$368 million (WFP, 2019b).

An interesting complexity in addressing the effects of climate change in Malawi is the existence of both chronic and shock-induced vulnerability. A great deal of Malawi’s vulnerability revolves around lean seasons, making it cyclical and predictable in nature. It is

important to note that even chronic and seasonal vulnerabilities, are likely to worsen and become less predictable because of climate change. Lean seasons, which usually span from October to March, lead to consistently high levels of humanitarian need and serve as proof that a *'chronic problem is being addressed through an acute mechanism – the humanitarian response'* (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 9). The 2018/2019 lean season left 3.3 million people, in 27 out of 28 districts, in need of food relief and cash transfers to compensate for a 28.4% drop in maize production from the previous year's harvest (Government of Malawi, 2019a, p. 1). This very clearly exemplifies the pressure put on humanitarian response efforts when used to address a cyclical, and somewhat predictable, problem. It is this nexus of social protection, disaster management and climate change adaptation that has given rise to shock-responsive social protection.

Impact of Climate Change on Social Protection in Southern Africa

Although each take different approaches there are notable similarities in the objectives of social protection, climate change adaptation and disaster management, all of which seek to minimize vulnerability, hazard and risk. It is this intersection, and the increasing need for collaboration to achieve objectives, that has garnered research attention (Béné, 2011; Drolet, 2014; Gough, 2013; Gough & Therborn, 2010; Jones et al., 2010; Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019; McCord, 2013; Ulrich & Sabates-Wheeler, 2018). The relationship between social protection and climate change specifically is an inequitable one – climate change threatens to impede on the efficacy and sustainability of social protection programmes; while social protection may strengthen resilience, response and adaptation to environmental shocks (OECD, 2017, p. 12). Béné explains that social protection 'through its vulnerability reduction interventions – whether preventative (e.g. insurance schemes) or protective (e.g. post-disaster relief) – play a critical role in reducing or buffering the negative impact of climate change' (2011, p. 67). The correlation between climate change and vulnerability poses a significant and specific challenge – a society's capacity to cope with climate change is linked to vulnerability, and vulnerability is compounded by climate change. Meaning, the regions that have contributed the most to atmospheric greenhouse gases, and are the best equipped to adapt, are the least severely impacted by climatic changes. Conversely, in Southern Africa, the prevalence of vulnerability and the rate at which climate change is expected to impact the region, is cause for concern. Kuriakose et al. explain that the direct risk of environmental shocks give rise to a range of indirect risks – food prices, mass migration, disease (2013, p. 21). Meaning that environmental impacts can lead to multiple, unpredictable and varied covariate shocks. As Ulrichs & Sabates-Wheeler highlight 'the focus on building social protection systems in contexts of recurring humanitarian crises and climate-related shocks has led to a recognition of the overlap in mandate, institutions, and target groups between the "humanitarian" and social protection sector' (2018, p. 8).

Shock-Responsive Social Protection

There is an emerging interest among social policy and climate change actors about the overlap between social protection, disaster management and climate change adaptation, and what this means for future policymaking. Given the connection between poverty and agricultural-dependence in Southern Africa, it is not surprising that many social protection

programmes in the region are already responsive to environmental shocks (such as drought and flooding). Seekings explains that the ‘institutionalization of drought relief and recovery programmes across most of Africa between the 1970s and 2000s represented an extraordinary expansion of social protection’ (2018a, p. 44). Only in recent decades, as the need for humanitarian relief increased, did response to covariate shocks enter into social protection agendas. McCord explains that the notion of shock-responsive social protection first gained traction in the years following the 2007-2009 ‘triple F crisis’ – the global food, fuel and financial crises (2013, p. 1). However, more recent conceptualizations of shock-responsive social protection have ‘been framed mainly in relation to climate-related shocks and disasters and the need to address acute needs’ (Ulrichs & Sabates-Wheeler, 2018, p. 8). Therefore, shock-responsive social protection in today’s context looks at the convergence of social protection, disaster risk management and humanitarian assistance (Ibid.). There are other terms that have been used to describe programmes with a similar objective – adaptive social protection, climate-responsive social protection – however, the difference being that SRSP is not limited to shocks caused by natural disasters (Ibid.). In a 2013 review of existing literature, McCord found that there were three main approaches to shock-responsive social protection – social assistance, social security and active labour market policies – the last of which is of limited value to the poor and vulnerable as it does not always reach the informal sector (2013, p. v-vi). There has been very little exploration of alternative instruments for SRSP, focus seems to be on scaling up existing social protection programmes. Oxford Policy Management offers a typology for scaling-up social protection for covariate shock response – presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Options for scaling-up for covariate shocks

Name of option	Description
Vertical expansion	Increasing the benefit value or duration of an existing programme. May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustment of transfer amounts • Introduction of extraordinary payments or transfers
Horizontal expansion	Adding new beneficiaries to an existing programme. May include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension of the geographical coverage of an existing programme • Extraordinary enrolment campaign • Modifications of entitlement rules • Relaxation of requirements/conditionality to facilitate participation
Piggybacking	Using a social protection intervention’s administrative framework, but running the shock-response programme separately. May include the introduction of a new policy
Shadow alignment	Developing a parallel humanitarian system that aligns as best as possible with a current or possible future social protection programme
Refocusing	In case of a budget cut, adjusting the social protection system to refocus assistance on groups most vulnerable to shock

Source: Oxford Policy Management (2015)

In order to respond to covariate shock adequately, each of these scale-up options would have preparedness, response and recovery phases, and alter interventions as appropriate (Oxford Policy Management, p. 6). Preparedness to ensure timely and effective response to shocks; response in the event of crises; and recovery to reassess coverage and benefits after shock has subsided (Ibid.). Crucial to SRSP is the flexibility to adapt in times of crisis (Ulrichs & Sabates-Wheeler, 2018, p. 15). Importantly, SRSP seeks to minimize the impact of, and

build resilience to, environmental shocks which contribute to increasingly high and cyclical humanitarian need.

MNSSP II Pillar III: Shock-Sensitive Social Protection

As will be explored in more detail later, the connection between climate change adaptation, disaster risk management, humanitarian response and social protection is well established throughout major policies and strategies in Malawi ‘providing good anchorage and rationale for SRSP’ (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 20). The concept of shock-responsive social protection first appeared during the 2016 review of the first MNSSP, which called for more developed linkages between social protection and MVAC humanitarian response. Integral to this is the following quote:

Around the world, the shortcomings of social protection system to systemically build the resilience of vulnerable Malawians to livelihood shocks, as well as the increasingly costly and ex-poste humanitarian response to food and nutrition insecurity, have led stakeholders from the ‘regular’ social protection sector and those working in the humanitarian response to consider innovative ways to develop social protection systems that effectively and efficiently response to both chronic and shock-induced vulnerability. (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 21).

The shortcomings of social protection to build resilient livelihoods is most clearly evidenced in the country’s annual humanitarian and lean season need. The review went on to explain that existing linkages between MVAC humanitarian response and social protection programme were ‘weak and not systematically developed’ (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 21). This led to the recommendation that linkages between the humanitarian response and social protection should be strengthened (Ibid. p. 22-23). This review explained that the MNSSP II must ‘break down the silos’ between social protection and humanitarian response in order to become shock-responsive – predicting that SCTP and PWP had the most potential for achieving this (Ibid., p. 25). These recommendations were used in the development of the MNSSP II, which is built around 3 Pillars – Consumption Support, Resilient Livelihoods and Shock-Sensitive Social Protection (3SP). The three pillars of the MNSSP II are accompanied by two cross-cutting pillars which focus on linkages and systems strengthening in order to foster 3SP (Government of Malawi, 2018, p. ii). These linkages intend to promote flexibility in moving between pillars and programmes in order to be more responsive to changing need and vulnerability. The objective of pillar 3 – shock-sensitive social protection – is the development of social protection system ‘that meets seasonal needs, prepares for and responds to unpredictable shocks in cooperation with the humanitarian sectors and supports recovery and the return to regular programming’ (Government of Malawi, 2018, p. 10). It is important to touch upon the use of the term ‘shock-sensitive’ rather than ‘shock-responsive’ as it was a deliberate decision by the Government of Malawi. Tom Mtenje from GIZ explained that it was felt by Government, and agreed by stakeholders, that ““responsive” in shock-responsive social protection (SRSP) implied a focus on disaster interventions ex-post whereas the desire was to have a comprehensive approach incorporating prevention, preparedness, response and recovery and “sensitive” as in 3SP captured this better’. While it would never be able to fully replace humanitarian response, it is believed that shock-sensitive social protection can ‘reduce the need for year-on-year emergency response and reduce the scale of emergency responses that are needed’ (Holmes et al, 2017, p. 55). In fact, there was a spike in 3SP trials in Malawi during the 2016/2017 lean season when one third of the population was in need of assistance, although

some had been in-place prior to this disaster (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 9).

The MNSSP II document laid out general strategic actions to achieve shock-sensitive objectives, as well as programme specific actions. The 3SP seeks to institutionalize coordination and collaboration between humanitarian and social protection actors; make the MNSSP II shock-sensitive by considering seasonal needs, emergency response, prioritizing hazard-prone areas, and utilizing early warning systems; and the creation of a ‘flexible financing mechanism’ to fund expansion (Government of Malawi, 2018, p. 19). The MNSSP II document explained 3SP strategic-actions for each existing social protection programme. Making the SCTP shock-sensitive involves seasonal top-ups and scaling-up in crises; the PWP will focus on disaster risk reduction, intervention in anticipation of and response to shocks, and targeting affected areas (both beneficiary and non-beneficiary households) with shock and recovery labour opportunities; expand SMP to account for shock-related needs; and VSL and MF must promote savings for resilience, and build awareness around savings, consumption and risk (Government of Malawi, 2018, p. 20-21). There should be flexibility and linkages between social protection programmes, in addition to collaboration between social protection, agriculture and disaster management actors (Ibid.).

3SP mechanisms have been trialled in Malawi since 2015 using the scaling-up tactics outlined in Table 1. During the 2015/2016 lean season in Mchinji district, cash transfers for social protection and humanitarian efforts were aligned using the ‘piggybacking’ method (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 15). This was a trial of single delivery – harmonizing MVAC and SCTP payments – in which only a small number of households participated (‘56 out of a possible 2,353’) (Ibid.). Concern Worldwide attribute low participation to technical difficulties and fear of ‘double-dipping’³ (Ibid.). The 2016/2017 El Niño which left 36% of the population, in all but 4 districts, in need of humanitarian assistance, led the Government to declare a State of National Disaster (Ibid., p. 16). Given the gravity and breadth of relief needed, social protection and humanitarian actors decided to automatically include all SCTP beneficiaries from drought-affected areas in the MVAC response, which is an example of the ‘shadow alignment’ technique (Ibid.). In 2017/2018 vertical expansion was used to provide 3,073 SCTP recipient households in drought-affected areas with emergency top-ups – areas were identified by MVAC (UNICEF & WFP, 2018, p. 6). Horizontal expansion was used to register 41,209 households from disaster-prone areas in a database which would hazard mapping and early warning systems – no flooding occurred during the trial period so this was not tested (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. p. 17). The MNSSP II seeks to link the Unified Beneficiary Registry (UBR) with the humanitarian sector to allow for triangulation in targeting (Government of Malawi, 2018, p. 22). This was trialled in 2015 and has since expanded through a ‘harmonized data collection tool with approximately 50 questions’ (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 18). Notably, the UBR is the only social registry in the world that aims ‘to register 100 per cent of its population’ which raises concerns about costs associated with upkeep (Ibid.).

Conclusion

Social protection in Africa seeks to minimize and alleviate the burden of the very poverty which environmental shocks compound. This chapter has sought to explain the connection between climate change, social protection and humanitarian relief in Malawi and the subsequent rise of shock-sensitive social protection. In many ways this seems like the

³ ‘Double dipping’ is benefitting from more than one programme, which is seen as unequitable and highly unacceptable in Malawi (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 15).

natural evolution of a social protection system which is designed to operationalize the objectives of the National Social Support Policy (NSSP): provide welfare; protect assets and build resilience; increase productive capacity; and establish progressive social protection through linkages with economic, social and disaster management policies (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 5). Cyclical or seasonal crises and environmental shocks impede on the ability of the poorest to escape poverty and improve their livelihoods, while also threatening to create vulnerability and insecurity where there previously may not have been. Acknowledgement and inclusion of these threats in social policy is therefore necessary in order to achieve programme objectives. Emerging clearly from the literature is Government apprehension about supporting social protection interventions. The Government's financial requirement has remained stagnant at 10%, however the state has failed to meet this obligation (Cunha et al., 2016, p. 4). The failure to allocate funds is perceived, not as a lack of resources, but as a reflection of 'policy choice and political priorities' (Kalebe-Nyamongo & Marquette, 2014, p. 9). The remaining 90% of funding comes from a variety of donors, which has created a fragmented, inefficient and often unreliable funding environment and contributes to the isolation of social protection interventions (Holmes et al., 2016, p. 15-16). Importantly, the majority of disaster response funding also comes from international donors, which adds an additionally layer of complexity for shock-sensitive collaboration (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 20). It was found that Government favour social protection programmes that foster productivity and support the 'active poor' (Kalebe-Nyamongo & Marquette, 2014, p. 2). This is a shaky bedrock upon which to build a programme that relies on expansion, collaboration and flexibility for its success. In order for shock-sensitive social protection to be effective in Malawi, it must achieve a level of cooperation that seems unlikely without the full buy-in of the government. Hickey et al. explained that a Governments decision to introduce or expand social assistance programmes is dependant on politics within that country (2018, p. 10). The following chapters will examine the emergence of social protection in Malawian policy and programmes, and its mention in Parliament. This is to further investigate the inclusion of climate change in social protection schemes. This chapter has sought to lay a foundational understanding upon which the following documentary analyses can build.

Methodology

This study seeks to understand and investigate the inclusion of climate change in Malawian social protection, which is done through the examination of Government policy and programme documents, and parliamentary debates. The first of two documentary sources investigated were Government policy and programme documents that fall into five categories: agriculture, disaster management, and poverty reduction/development, social protection and climate change. These documents included hardcopies from the University of Cape Town's Government Publications Library, as well as some found online⁴. While many documents were collected and examined carefully, the documents included in this study based on their relation to climate change, social protection and social policy, or both. Documents were divided into the five 'thematic areas' as they emerged through analysis – this was not the original intention of the researcher but categories emerged clearly. The second documentary source central to this study was Parliamentary Debates spanning the years from 2011 to 2018. These Parliamentary Debates were sources from an academic who has spent many years studying Malawian government relations – the years examined were based only on the accessibility of the records.

A qualitative thematic analysis of Government policy and programme documents was used to trace the discourse surrounding climate change and social protection between 2000 and 2019. While the documents analyzed are published by the Government of Malawi, however it is not actually always clear who wrote these documents. In most cases, documents appear to be written by Government officials, specifically those from whichever Ministry has produced the document. In very few instances, assistance from external organizations will be specified in the document – this will be explored in more detail later. As explained by Bowen, the analysis of Government documents is important for context as well as a means of triangulation allowing for an investigation of convergence or corroboration in the next chapter (2009, p. 28).

This is followed by and built upon with a qualitative investigation of Parliamentary Debates to better understand beliefs and attitudes about climate change of Members of Parliament in Malawi. Umney explains the value of analyzing Parliamentary Debates being that 'Parliament can be seen as a place where the country is being designed' and represents MPs views on many topics, including those that are controversial, contested and complex (2016, p. 63).

Upon completion of the Parliamentary thematic analysis it became evident that there was significant disparity in the use of key terms and, therefore, the attention paid to these areas of interest. It was determined that use of key terms could be quantified and represented graphically, displaying their use in Parliament. First, absolute totals are displayed and analyzed. These terms were then broken down by year for comparison, which allowed for a causal exploration. Public opinions and attitudes are further investigated using secondary literature and public opinion surveys, such as Afrobarometer and World Bank Group data.

⁴ Online copies of Government documents were collected from a variety of websites including ReliefWeb, Government of Malawi websites, and other sources.

Chapter 2: Evolution of Climate Change and Social Protection Discourse in Government Documents

This chapter finds that, in many ways, shock-sensitive social protection seems to be the logical evolution of preceding policies and programs. There are two topics that appeared consistently throughout this analysis – the importance of agriculture and socio-economic growth and development. The recurrence of agriculture as a topic is unsurprising given the significance of this sector for livelihoods and economic growth in Malawi. These findings are the result of the examination of the discourse surrounding climate change and social protection in key Government documents in order to understand how rhetoric around these topics have evolved over time. There was a clear evolution of climate change discourse within these documents. An initial focus on environmental management and conservation ultimately evolved into adaptation, resilience-building and natural disasters. This can likely be attributed to the worsening of natural disasters and environmental shocks in the country and as such, disaster management is a recurring theme in these documents. Social protection comes in and out of focus throughout these documents and appears most commonly in conjunction with disaster management, which SRSP is based upon. Recurrent throughout is the acknowledgement that climate change will make agricultural production increasingly difficult, food will become less available, and people will need to find alternative sources of livelihood. Social protection is therefore needed to protect the most vulnerable members of society. There is keen awareness that the poor are particularly susceptible and vulnerable to disasters and early considerations of social protection are often connected to disaster management. The longstanding link between climate change adaptation, disaster management and social protection is important as it provides ‘good anchorage and rationale for SRSP’ in Malawi (Longhurst & Sabates-Wheeler, 2019, p. 20).

Although these documents were published by a wide variety of Malawian Government Ministries, they all mentioned the importance of socio-economic growth and development. The goals and outcomes associated with this term are dependent upon the Ministry. Lastly, the important, if somewhat unclear, realization that the involvement of external organizations is difficult to determine. All documents analyzed were published by a Government Ministry, however many list international organizations (such as UNDP, FAO and ILO) as collaborators, with little specification on their specific involvement.

Government Document Analysis

Efforts to understand shock-sensitive social protection in Malawi benefit from an examination of the path leading to this point. Government documents have been used to trace the evolution of climate change and social welfare discourse. Selecting documents for this analysis involved working backwards by first identifying the policy areas most impacted by climatic changes in Malawi today – agriculture, disaster management, and poverty reduction/development. As this research centred around climate change and social protection, environmental and social policy documents were also included. Ultimately, twenty-five key documents from five policy-making areas were identified for analysis, all of which were published between 2000 and 2019. A full list of analyzed documents (and the partner organisations involved in each) is included in Appendix 1.

Documents are discussed by area of interest in order to analyze how each approached climate change and social protection, and whether this changed over time. This section concludes with a comprehensive discussion of documents.

Poverty Reduction and Development

All but one of the Poverty Reduction and Development documents were published by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development. The sole exception was the long-term development strategy *Vision 2020* which was produced by the National Economic Council. This document stands out for the length of time it spans and the frequency with which it is referenced in other documents. The *Vision 2020*, published in partnership with the UNDP in 2000, is Malawi's long-term, multi-sectoral approach to development (Government of Malawi, 2000b). This plan is operationalized by the three medium-term development strategies *Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) I, II and III* and lays a foundation from which many other policies are built. *Vision 2020* establishes a link between development and the environment, which advocates for the sustainable use of resources, as well as controlled land degradation and deforestation, for socio-economic development (Ibid., p. 61). This focus on conservation and sustainability appears to be driven by the notion that natural resources play a vital developmental role in Malawi and therefore must not be destroyed. The *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* of 2002 calls attention to the intimate relationship between poverty and the environment, explaining that dependence of the poor on natural resources leads to 'unsustainable levels of usage' and in turn, degradation of the environment exacerbates poverty (Government of Malawi, 2002, p. 91). The paradoxical relationship of development and environmental protection is recognized in the *Vision 2020*, which identifies environmental sustainability as a barrier to development (Government of Malawi, 2002b, p. 31). This sentiment runs throughout Development documents which highlight both the importance of natural resources for 'social well-being and economic development in Malawi' as well as the stress that these resources increasingly endure (Government of Malawi, 2011a, p. 105). These Development documents consistently express concern about natural disasters and convey a need to manage this looming threat in order to maintain food security (Government of Malawi, 2000b, p. 61). There is a keen awareness that shocks such as drought and flooding have the power to disrupt development, livelihoods and food systems, and therefore consideration of these threats is crucial for development planning in Malawi (Government of Malawi, 2011a, p. 48). The role of climate change in exacerbating and intensifying natural disasters was first identified in the 2011 *MGDS II*, which designated climate change a key priority area (Government of Malawi, 2011a, p. 105). This was built upon in 2017, when climate change management was deemed crucial for development in Malawi (Government of Malawi, 2017). Interestingly, the very first mention of the term 'climate change' in these documents came much earlier. In 2000, the *Vision 2020* called air pollution and climate change 'relatively small environmental concerns in Malawi' while noting that they could become serious if left unchecked (Government of Malawi, 2000, p. 88). This is quite a grim reflection given the severity and frequency with which Malawi has been victim to anthropogenic climate change.

Concerns about food security, agricultural productivity and natural disasters lead to early considerations of social support in these documents. Both of the earliest documents analysed identify a need for consumption support and safety nets such as grain reserves and food relief - although do not label them as such - to prevent food insecurity among the most vulnerable (Government of Malawi, 2000b, p. 61; Government of Malawi, 2002, p. 65). The first mention of the term 'social protection' comes in the 2006 *MGDS*; which calls for social protection and disaster management to increase resilience to shocks (Government of Malawi, 2006a, p. 35). This is expanded upon in 2011 by the *MGDS II*, which acknowledges sections of the population that do not benefit from economic growth and therefore require social support (Government of Malawi, 2011a, p. 46). The third and final, *MGDS III*, echoes this notion while stating the goal of building resilience to 'disasters and socio-economic shocks' through social support (Government of Malawi, 2017, p. 76). It is interesting to note that social protection

features much more prominently in *MGDS II* than *MGDS III*. The link between social protection and disaster management is maintained throughout Development documents, which all state that building resilience and minimising vulnerability is an important aspect of development in Malawi.

There is a poignant quote in the *Vision 2020*, which states that the biggest challenge for protecting natural resources and the environment ‘is increasing political will, discouraging politicians from having economic interests in natural resources and increasing environmental awareness’ (Government of Malawi, 2000b, p. 88). This is critical in Malawi where economics, livelihoods and agriculture are so intricately linked. The importance of the relationship between poverty, vulnerability and the environment is made clear throughout these development documents. What begins as a concern for conservation and sustainable use of resources, becomes a desire to build resilience to and manage environmental shocks. The dominant and prevailing discourse being that environmental degradation and shocks exacerbates poverty and therefore the most vulnerable are in need of protection from these shocks. The connection between the environment and social support in development planning certainly predates this analysis. However, the content seems to change – early calls for social protection revolved around consumption support; later documents call for social protection to protect the vulnerable from environmental shocks. The current development strategy, *MGDS III*, states that going forward there must be systemic change, explaining that ‘projects addressing climate change in agriculture and other sectors have tended to be small, fragmented and sometimes implemented on a one off pilot basis’ (Government of Malawi, 2017, p. 56).

Agriculture

A productive and sustainable agricultural sector is absolutely crucial for socio-economic development and food security in Malawi and it was therefore assumed that climate change would feature prominently throughout Agriculture documents. However, the term ‘climate change’ was not used until 2010, before which, the focus was on sustainable use and avoided degradation of environmental resources, as well as the impact of environmental shocks. Early documents stated a clear concern about the impact that unfavourable weather – such as drought and flooding – has on agricultural production. In response, these documents focused on inputs (fertilizer and irrigation) to spur agricultural growth in the face of increasingly unfavourable conditions - *National Irrigation Policy and Development Strategy* (2000), *National Fertilizer Strategy* (2006) and *National Irrigation Policy* (2016). The first mention of ‘climate change’ is in the 2010 *National Agriculture Policy*, which aims to ensure food security and poverty reduction through sustainable agricultural growth (Government of Malawi, 2010, p. 3). This document states that reliance on rain-fed agriculture, coupled with the low economic capacity to cope, makes Malawi extremely vulnerable to climate change (Ibid., p. 18-19). In response to this vulnerability, the *National Agriculture Policy* calls for immediate policy interventions ‘to minimize future adverse effects’ on agriculture (Ibid., p. 18-19). This is built upon in 2016 with the release of the *National Irrigation Policy*, a tool ‘for adapting to climate change which allows crop production during droughts and dry spells’ (Government of Malawi, 2016c, p. 2). The last document analyzed is Malawi’s current *National Agriculture Policy* a plan which intends to transform the agricultural sector to one of production and exportation (Government of Malawi, 2016a). This document includes relatively minor consideration of climate change.

Unsurprisingly, there is little consideration of social protection in these documents and where it does come up, these policies favour social support that stimulates agricultural production, including targeting small-holder farmers with inputs such as irrigation, fertilizer and seeds (Government of Malawi, 2000a; Government of Malawi, 2006d). Social protection remains largely unacknowledged until the current (2016) *National Agriculture Policy*, which

very briefly touches upon the idea of social protection to support the most vulnerable (Government of Malawi, 2016a, p. 55).

The content of these documents was surprising as it was assumed that, given the Ministry's mandate to promote agricultural productivity and achieve food security, climate change would feature prominently. This is particularly interesting given the importance of agriculture for building resilience and minimizing vulnerability of the poor. Consistent throughout these documents is the recognition that agriculture is of the utmost importance in Malawi and therefore productivity is paramount. In hopes of increasing agricultural productivity, there is a great deal of focus on input subsidies. However, the very force that threatens the productivity of agriculture, climate change, is unacknowledged until 2010. It is worth noting that the Ministry of Agriculture experienced an evolution during the time period analyzed, which saw the separation of the Department of Irrigation between 2005 and 2013. The motivation for this is unclear although it does appear to impact agricultural policy, which, prior to this change and after its resurrection, relied on irrigation as a means of increasing agricultural productivity. However, during this de-linking, documents produced by the Ministry of Agriculture include no consideration of irrigation. This demonstrates the impact of even relatively minor political changes can have on policy. Natural disasters also appear to influence policy, the 2016 *National Agriculture Policy*, outlines the fact that a severe drought in 2004 triggered significant policy development – food, nutrition, agriculture extension, HIV/AIDS, etc. (Government of Malawi, 2016a, p. 7). However, despite this flood of policies 'lack of coordination and coherence in agricultural policies persisted' (Ibid.).

Disaster Preparedness, Response & Management

The documents in this section were published by the two most prominent actors in the disaster management space - the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) in the Office of the President and Cabinet, and the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC). The former is the Government department tasked with coordinating and implementing disaster management programmes; the latter is a multi-institutional committee formed to assess food security and mitigate food insecurity through early warnings. The MVAC is tasked with assessing and disseminating information on environmental shocks; the term 'climate change' does not appear in either MVAC document analyzed. Though both do frequently refer to natural disasters (MVAC, 2009a; MVAC, 2009b). In fact, none of the documents in this section include the term 'climate change'. The *MVAC Strategic Plan* explicitly states that while 'extreme weather events have also played a role in vulnerability, the seriousness of an adverse event is greatly exacerbated for the poorest people by their low starting base and their inability to cope' (2009b, p. 2). In 2015, partially in response to severe flooding that year, the *National Disaster Risk Management Policy*, laid out a plan to make 'Malawi a nation resilient to disasters' by mainstreaming disaster management into development planning (Government of Malawi, 2015, p. iii). This was based on the recognition that climate change exacerbates natural disasters and undermines efforts and achievements of development strategies (Ibid., p. 1).

The overlap between disaster management and social protection is evident throughout throughout these documents, which clearly state the relationship between natural disasters and poverty. Outlined in their *Operational Guidelines* is the MVAC intention to sustain linkages to the MGDS - specifically for social protection and social development – as 'MVAC activities relate directly to the MGDS' (MVAC, 2009a, p. 6). The social welfare element of disaster management is long-standing and of particular importance in Malawi where, because of agricultural dependence, shocks have a direct and significant impact on food availability. The *2019 Flood Response Plan and Appeal* which outlines the response to severe flooding in March 2019 that affected 868,900 people explains that response to this disaster falls under the mandate

of the DoDMA; however, when initial response to flooding was insufficient, relief from pre-existing, although unrelated, MVAC response was re-appropriated to assist flood victims (Government of Malawi, 2019b, p. 8). While it appears this cooperation was more ad-hoc than intentional, it highlights the overlap between actors in this space.

Social Protection

Social protection documents focus primarily on the types of environmental shocks, such as natural disasters and severe flooding and drought, which have occurred in the past. These documents include little recognition of the minor, although consequential, impact of environmental irregularities such as erratic rainfall. While the 2018 *MNSSP II* was the first document to explicitly mention climate change, there is a keen awareness and acknowledgment about Malawi's disproportionate vulnerability to natural disasters throughout these documents.

The *Malawi National Social Support Programme (MNSSP)* was the first comprehensive approach to social protection in Malawi, which attempts to bring all social protection programmes together under one umbrella. Notably, social protection was in existence long before the release of this programme in 2012. However, previous programmes were fragmented, housed in multiple Ministries and funded by a variety of partners. As a result, programme documents are difficult to obtain and therefore not included in this analysis. Social Protection documents analyzed come from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development. Due to difficulty obtaining the original document, a *Stakeholder-Driven Review* will be used to analyze the *MNSSP*. It is clear that both the *National Social Support Policy* and the *MNSSP* were economically-driven and focused on productivity, with less consideration of human and social development (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 12). This changes almost completely by 2018 when the *MNSSP* becomes focused on building resilient livelihoods (Government of Malawi, 2018). Notably the *MNSSP II* is also the main medium for achieving the SDG concerned with the universal implementation of social protection systems, SDG 1.3.

The documents in this section depict what seems to be the logical evolution of social protection in Malawi. Although importantly, the connection between social protection and disaster management emerges later in these documents – seemingly missing the *MNSSP* all together. The *NSSP*, which the *MNSSP I* and *II* intend to operationalize, seeks to allow the poor to participate in economic developments (Government of Malawi, 2012, p. 1). Subsequently, the *MNSSP* is economically-driven and focused on productivity, while recognizing that natural disasters affect the poor disproportionately. Upon review it was determined that this programme did not effectively achieve its objectives due to insufficient management of environmental shocks and a lack of coordination and linkages – programmes of the *MNSSP* operated in silos (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 11-13). The *MNSSP II* was designed building upon the weakness of its predecessor, which resulted in the focus on building resilience to environmental shocks (Government of Malawi, 2018).

Environment and Climate Change

The starting point for this section is a document that falls outside of the 25 selected documents but is among the most formative in the country – the *Constitution of Malawi*. Although an outlier - being adopted in 1994 - it sets a tone for the other analyzed documents. Referenced in multiple documents analyzed, was the Constitutionally defined goal to:

manage the environment responsibly in order to –

i) prevent the degradation of the environment;

ii) provide a healthy living and working environment for the people of Malawi;

iii) accord full recognition to the rights of future generations by means of environmental protection and the sustainable development of natural resources; and

iv) conserve and enhance the biological diversity of Malawi (Constitution of Malawi, 1994).

This is interesting as it identifies environmental protection, conservation and enhancement as a priority at the same level as fundamental as gender equality, the protection of children and access to health care. The focus on conservation, or avoided-degradation, is one that remains throughout this section. However, before delving into these documents, it is important to highlight the name of this Ministry tasked with environmental issues, and its evolution over time. Between 2000 and 2012, the name of this Ministry involved some combination of the terms natural resources, environment, mining and energy – Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs; Ministry of Mines, Natural Resources and Environment; and Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment. However, from 2012 to 2014, it became known as the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Management. This was a change made when President Joyce Banda took office in 2012 and was reverted after the election of President Peter Mutharika in 2014. At present, it is called the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining – reflecting an earlier iteration. The label given to a Ministry is important as it is indicative of priorities at a given time. This particular example is a clear demonstration of the impact that politics, specifically who is in power, has on the priorities of a Ministry. Moreover, it signals at a hesitation to acknowledge climate change with specificity.

Present in all of these environmentally-focused documents is an overarching desire to manage natural resources soundly and avoid environmental degradation. The underlying justification for this is to develop in a way that does not deplete the very resources which are so crucial to Malawi's growth. This appears to be less about mitigating climate change and more to protect and prevent the destruction of a vital resource and source of development (Government of Malawi, 2004a & Government of Malawi, 2004b). Earlier documents analyzed feature sustainability, conservation and mitigation prominently – it is not until 2006 the *National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA)* that climate change comes into focus (Government of Malawi, 2006b). This document was developed for and submitted to the UNFCCC in hopes of receiving funding for adaptation needs (Ibid., p. v). The top priority of this adaptation document is 'improving community resilience to climate change through the development of sustainable rural livelihoods' (2006, p. 12). This focus on adaptation and resilience is a significant leap from earlier documents. Priorities continue to evolve and by 2012 the *National Climate Change Policy* was focused on reducing the socio-economic impacts of climate change through mitigation, adaptation and resilience building (Government of Malawi, 2012, p. 2).

Environmental documents contain very little consideration of social protection. In fact, only one document even mentions it – *The Second National Communication (SNC)*. The *SNC* is Malawi's reaffirmation of 'commitment to environmental protection in general, and climate change in particular' to the UNFCCC (Government of Malawi, 2011b, p. xiv). The *SNC* calls for social protection and disaster management to 'ensure that the most vulnerable are cushioned against disasters' (Ibid., p. 60). The *National Climate Change Policy* which does not mention social protection, is focused on the socio-economic impacts of climate change (Government of Malawi, 2012, p. 5).

The evolution of climate change discourse in these documents follows a trajectory similar to the others – from mitigation to adaptation and resilience-building. Social protection discourse on the other hand, is much less prevalent. Importantly, the *SNC*, a document used to reflect on the country's performance of addressing climate change, notes that 'despite the remarkable achievements and progress made in preparing the *INC* and *NAPA* documents, none of the proposed measures and strategies for adapting and mitigating climate change have been funded and/or implemented to date' (Government of Malawi, 2011b, p. 11). The *INC* – or the

Initial National Communication for the UNFCCC - is the predecessor of the *SNC* and lays out Malawi's commitment to environmental responsibility. The failure to fund these programmes highlights the fragility of donor funding, particularly when the implementation and success of a multi-sectoral approach, such as this, is dependant upon the release of funding. Five years later this did not appear to come to fruition, although the reasons are unclear.

Discussion

All of these documents, from a variety of Ministries, prioritised the overarching goal of sustainable socio-economic growth and development. While this discourse is seen throughout, its meaning shifts depending on time, policy area and circumstance. For Disaster Response, sustainable development means reducing the 'social, economic and environmental impacts of disaster' (Government of Malawi, 2015, p. iii). In Development, the term generally refers to socio-economic development, infrastructure development and poverty reduction. Social Protection understands sustainable development as ensuring that everyone can benefit from development while minimizing vulnerability (Government of Malawi, 2012). The term is most commonly used in Environmental documents to call for sustainable use of natural resources and improving resilience to environmental shocks (Government of Malawi, 2006b). Lastly, sustainable development in Agriculture seems to be understood as the sustainable production of sufficient and nutritious food and economic growth. The goal of sustainable development is conceptualized differently by each Ministry, and its objectives shift accordingly.

All of these documents also emphasise the importance of agriculture, which is unsurprising given Malawi's dependence on the sector for livelihoods and economic growth. Even minor disruptions in agricultural production have an impact on food availability and security. Specifically, the importance of maintaining an acceptable level of agricultural productivity for food security and nutrition is a sentiment reiterated frequently throughout these documents. Malawi has been victim to numerous, and often cyclical, bouts of food insecurity, and as was the case in 2002, even famine⁵. There is a clear desire, across Ministries, to grow enough nutritious food to feed Malawians immediately as well as building stores for distribution during less prosperous times. This sentiment is often coupled with the recognition that agriculture is becoming increasingly difficult. While the obstacle of population growth is occasionally noted, the most commonly referenced disruption to agriculture is natural disasters – specifically flooding and drought. Mention of climate change, the force predicted to increase and intensify these events, is somewhat scarce throughout these documents.

There is a clear and somewhat predictable evolution of climate change discourse in these documents. What begins as a focus on environmental management, sustainability, conservation and avoided degradation, evolves into adaptation, resilience-building and disaster management. Both conceptualizations of the environment are rooted in its importance for Malawi. The former is based on the importance of natural resources for development; the latter, is based on the impact of environmental shocks. This evolution seems natural given the breadth, severity and impact of climate change in Malawi today.

Social protection seems to come in and out of focus throughout these documents and it is therefore difficult to determine a clear evolution. Early calls for social assistance are limited to input subsidies and consumption support, which is reflective of the importance of agriculture for food security and the consequences of its hindrance. However, the most common social protection discourse is in connection to disaster management, which lays the foundation for contemporary shock-sensitive social protection many years before its introduction. In the

⁵ Flooding in 2001 cut maize production by 30%, and as explained by Rubin, 'this production shock generated the large food deficit that triggered the famine in 2002' (2008, p. 49).

majority of these documents, social protection is acknowledged for its ability to strengthen with disaster response and management. Although interestingly, the country's first comprehensive social protection programme – the *MNSSP* - does not include shock-responsive or shock-sensitive social protection – rather prioritizing economic participation of the poor. It is not until the *MNSSP II*, in 2018, that social protection takes on a shock-sensitive objective. Recurrent throughout these documents is an acknowledgement that climate change will make agricultural production increasingly difficult, food will become less available, and people will need to find alternative sources of livelihood. Social protection is therefore needed to protect the most vulnerable members of society.

Interspersed throughout these documents is reference to shortcomings and failures of former policies, strategies and programmes, which are important. Two of the most comprehensive and impressive plans to address climate change in Malawi – the *Initial National Communication* and the *National Adaptation Programme of Action*, both submitted to the UNFCCC for funding – were never funded or implemented (Government of Malawi, 2011 b, p. 11). As has been discussed, the Government failed to fund their agreed upon contribution to the *MNSSP* and it is proposed that this is indicative of the Governments unwillingness to support social protection programmes (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 15). It was also explained that programmes were fragmented and operated in silos, due in large part to issues related to donor-funding (Ibid., p. 16). The third and final MGDS (2017) explains that former attempts address climate change, in agriculture and other sectors, have been ‘small, fragmented and sometimes implemented on a one off pilot basis’ (Government of Malawi, 2017, p. 56). While it appears that shock-sensitive social protection is a logical progression for social protection in Malawi, there have been Government and donor-related issues of funding on both social protection and climate change programmes and policies in the past – two areas which must collaborate for the success of the *MNSSP II*.

There are two findings from this analysis, both of which are particularly important for this research overall. The first being that, while social protection – both practice and policy - predated climate change policy in Malawi, there is a longstanding relationship between the environment and social protection. The second is that, based on key Government documents, the introduction of shock-sensitive social protection in Malawi is a logical evolution of preceding policies. Meaning that the *MNSSP II* is strongly rooted in and has evolved from former policies and programmes. However, Kalentenborn et al., explain that the progression and expansion of social protection programmes and policies is not necessarily a measure of its success (Kalentenborn et al., 2017, p. 34).

Every document analysed was published by a Ministry of the Government of Malawi. However, due to the limited financial capacity of Government, and the need for intervention, donors are heavily involved in many of these policies, however the extent of their involvement is difficult to determine. While the involvement of external organizations is notable, it is not necessarily illustrative. Half of the policies analysed noted contribution or involvement of external organizations to varying degrees. For example, the *National Agriculture Policy* document listed USAID as a financial collaborator and FAO and UN Women as consultants on its drafting (2016, p. xiii). Similarly, listed in the *NAPA* policy document is financial collaborator, Global Environment Fund, and technical collaborator, UNDP (2006). Both the *Poverty Reduction Strategy* (2002) and the *MNSSP II* (2018) documents listed numerous collaborators including UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, among others. Large donor organizations, such as these, have the power to sway policies and programmes towards their interests. This is potentially unfavourable as it is extremely difficult to achieve goals without the buy-in of Malawians. It is therefore interesting and important to consider Parliamentary discourse of these topics, to understand if and how they align with key Government documents.

Chapter 3: Climate Change in Parliamentary Debates

Having established the evolution of climate change and social protection in Government documents, and establishing that shock-sensitive social protection is rooted in the policies that predate it, it is beneficial to investigate whether these documents are aligned with attitudes and beliefs held by Members of Parliament (MP). Is it possible that the shock-sensitive element of the MNSSP II will garner it political support, given the breadth and severity of environmental shocks in Malawi? Parliament is the place where major issues in the country are discussed and the consideration of a topic may be indicative of its priority (Umney, 2016). The involvement of external organisations and donors in drafting Government documents raises questions about how accurately they represent beliefs held by policymakers. Parliamentary Records have been analysed in order to understand how MPs conceptualize climate change, and whether this has changed over time – using both qualitative and quantitative analyses. Four themes emerged from the qualitative analysis – the threat of climate change; mitigation; adaptation; and disaster preparedness and management. Members of Parliament clearly acknowledged the threat of climate change, and exhibited a desire to do something about it. This crossed party lines – climate change does not appear to be an issue fuelled by politics in Malawi. There was no obvious evolution of climate change discourse in Parliament, there was instead persistent concern for its impact in Malawi. Three important findings emerged from this analysis: the threat and concern about climate change; lack of coordination between Ministries; and misinformation about climate change. MPs consistently expressed concern about the impact of climate change and a somewhat vague desire to do something about it. The desire to do something about climate change seems to be impeded by pervasive misinformation about climate change and lack of ministerial collaboration and coordination.

This qualitative analysis is supplemented by a quantitative analysis of the same source, which involved quantifying and graphically representing the use of key terms in Parliament. Quantifying key terms allowed for a comparative analysis to examine contrast and correlation between them. Of the five policy areas analysed in Chapter 2, social protection, climate change and disaster management were mentioned significantly less in Parliament, than development and agriculture. In principle, social protection precedes climate change in Malawi. However, the following quantitative analysis highlights that, in practice, these topics rose up in the Governments agenda together. The last, and most important, finding is the link between mention of ‘climate change’ and ‘social protection’. It is clear from the graphical representations that there is a correlation between climatic events and the mention of ‘climate change’ and ‘social protection’ in Parliament. Meaning that in response to a natural disaster or irregularity, both climate change and social protection garner attention. Moreover, there is a positive correlation between the severity of an environmental shock, and the attention it is given – the more severe a natural disaster, the most it is discussed. The attention given to a disaster is short-lived – there is significant decline in use of the term ‘natural disaster’ in the year following a shock This chapter will first present the qualitative findings; followed by the quantitative analysis; and conclude with a discussion of both. Analysis of parliamentary documents supports the previous finding of long-standing link between climate change and social protection, laying a solid foundation for SRSP. However, the terms ‘shock-responsive’ or ‘shock-sensitive’ are not mentioned once in Parliament, and very little mention of social protection at all.

Qualitative Analysis

This analysis includes records from 2001 to 2015 (sessions 34 to 45) as well as the 47th session from late 2017 to early 2018 – debates from the 46th session (2016) are unavailable. Understanding MPs beliefs about climate change is beneficial as they are likely to reflect those held by policymakers and elites. The importance of beliefs about climate change is evidenced by the current climate crisis. Industrialized nations have been unable and unwilling to find a meaningful solution despite decades of research and negotiation. Partisan beliefs about climate change appear to be influenced significantly by the extent to which it impacts daily life. In many Western countries, where the majority are safeguarded from its effects, climate change is a polarizing topic, which often leaves entire political parties refusing to acknowledge its existence. However, in parts of the world that are confronted by it daily, people seem to hold more unified views about the threat of climate change. micro-level, although illustrative, example of this is the American state of Florida, which, being geographically vulnerable to increasingly severe hurricanes and victim to unprecedented flooding, is drowning under the pressure of climate change. In a country where climate change is extremely contentious between political parties, Florida has become an outlier. Daily reminders of a changing climate leave no room for party bias within the state – the Republican Governor of Florida has been vocal in his commitment to fight climate change, making him a rarity in his party. This example is internationally applicable as climate change is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore in countries across Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in the Southern Region.

Malawi is an excellent example of this – it was immediately apparent that there is very little, if any, dissent about climate change among parties. Climate change in Malawi is what political scientists refer to as a valence issue. Bleck & van de Walle explain that valence issues are those with general agreement, and disagreement surrounding these issues ‘focuses not on the ultimate objective of policy about which there is consensus, but instead on how to attain desired goals and who is more likely to succeed doing so’ (2013, p. 1397). MPs see clearly the impact that drought, flooding and unpredictable weather has on their constituents and it appears there is general consensus on the issue. In fact, even major changes in government, by both election and death, do not seem to significantly impact attitudes about climate change. One notable change was President Banda’s decision to alter the name of the ‘Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment’ to the ‘Ministry of Environment and Climate Change’. This, President Banda explained, was done with the intention of showing commitment to the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation into development planning (8 February 2013, p. 13). When the DPP won power in 2014, it reverted to a familiar, though different, name of ‘Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining’ which remains in 2019. Throughout the years analyzed there is only one obvious incident of disagreement based on political affiliation and it is a minor one. In 2015, the Leader of the People’s Party in the House, Hon. Uladi Mussa, suggested that the ‘PP is totally against’ what he viewed as inadequate flood response and relief measures by the Democratic People’s Party. This comment was met with the immediate rebuke by the Minister of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, Hon. P. Kaliati, stating that it was ‘really out of order to politicize the disaster situation when our people are suffering’ (2 February 2015, p. 223). This singular example is indicative of the general attitude towards climate change among Malawian MPs – a seemingly unwavering acknowledgement of its existence and the desire to do *something* about it.

Understanding the current *something* – shock-sensitive social protection – by tracing the discourse that led to it, is the goal of this analysis. Four very clear and interconnected themes – the threat of climate change; mitigation; adaptation; and disaster preparedness and

management – emerged from the Parliamentary debates and these will be unpacked here. The goal of analyzing climate change discourse in Parliament is to understand whether there is a relationship between MPs beliefs and what becomes policy.

1. Threat of Climate Change

The most common, and in many cases urgent, sentiment expressed by Malawian MPs is the acknowledgment and concern about the threat posed by climate change. Hon. Sendeza, MP of Malawi Congress Party from Lilongwe South, excellently summarizes this insecurity stating that ‘the only constant about ... Africa’s regional climate is that climate change is here to stay and is unpredictable apart from its capability to cripple’ (15 February 2011, p. 432). This specific vulnerability is reiterated in Parliamentary debates consistently; there is a keen awareness among government officials that not only is Africa particularly vulnerable to climate change, but within that vulnerability, Malawi is among the most susceptible. While climate vulnerability in Malawi is evidenced in multiple sectors, the most commonly expressed threats fall into two categories – threats to poverty reduction and development, and threats to agriculture.

Threat to Poverty Reduction and Development

Frequently recurrent throughout the years analyzed is concern among MPs about the threat climate change poses to development – both achieved and future - and poverty reduction in Malawi. The specific manifestations of this threat are less explicitly outlined. The Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs, Hon. Uladi Mussa, explains that natural resources and rain-fed agriculture form the ‘basis of (livelihood) systems’ and disrupting these systems has a massive impact on the economy and standards of living (4 December 2003, p. 35). Two social measures of development – health and gender - are referenced as being susceptible to climate change. In 2010, Hon. Chilewani (DPP – Nsanje South West) simply noted that climate change will ‘increase risks of diseases including malaria, cholera and meningitis’ (29 January 2010, p. 104). This is built upon by the Minister of Gender, Child and Community Development, Hon. P. Kaliati, with the acknowledgment that ‘women are the ones who suffer most due to the effect of climate change and environmental degradation’ (27 May 2010, p. 12). The lack of specific detail about these threats to development and poverty reduction is interesting and important as it exemplifies the uncertainty of climate change and the difficulty in preparing for its impacts. Evident in the expression of this concern is the desire to address and include climate change in development planning, however what they deem the most effective way to do so is unclear and seemingly unknown. The Government of Malawi named climate change one of the priorities of the first Malawi Growth and Development Strategy in 2009 (Government of Malawi, 2013, p. 15). This was accompanied by President B. Mutharika’s explicit acknowledgement that it is critical to address climate change in order for Malawi to experience ‘socio-economic growth and development’ (26 January 2010, p. 4). It is important to note that all MPs who identified the link between them indicated that climate change would negatively impact development, stability and poverty reduction efforts in Malawi – there is no mention of a positive correlation between climate change and development.

Threat to Agriculture

Concerns about the developmental implications of climate change are intimately connected to the threat it poses to agriculture. This is due to the country’s dependence on rain-fed agriculture. Agriculture is of extraordinary economic and social importance to Malawi and is also an exceptionally vulnerable sector to climatic changes. Agriculture-related threats were among the most commonly voiced by Malawian MPs who expressed concerns about crop

production, food security, and the economic impacts of a changing climate, calling for solutions to confront this threat. The Leader of Opposition, Hon. Kayembe explained that drought ‘threaten(s) the food security of our Nation and the productivity of cash crops that form the back bone of this nation’ (27 January 2010, p. 27). Heightened concern about threats to agriculture are unsurprising given the country’s history of drought, flooding and subsequent food crises as in 2016/2017. There is a keen awareness that natural disasters have disrupted crop production in the past, sometimes to a fatal extent, and these disruptions will worsen as climate change becomes more severe. Despite the improvement in crop productivity under widened access to fertilizers through the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP), MPs express concern that such advances are fragile under climate change. MPs plead for government intervention to address crop failures in their constituencies consistently throughout debates. This serves as an important reminder that climate change is not exclusively experienced in shocks, but that its effects are also evidenced in lower than average rainfall. The link between threats to agriculture and development is clear – even the smallest shocks to agricultural productivity in Malawi have significant effects on development and poverty reduction efforts. MPs calls for climate-action on agriculture are specific – irrigation, seeds, subsidies and grain reserves.

2. Mitigation

Although much less prevalent today, the idea that anthropogenic climate change could be mitigated by planting trees in Africa, was pervasive during the time period analyzed. This was predicated on the notion that that trees planted in the Global South would act as carbon sinks for greenhouse gas emitted in the rest of the world. This conception of climate change allowed consumption and emissions to continue in the North under the guise that trees planted in countries such as Malawi would offset their emissions. Today’s climate crisis has disproven the notion that reforestation, without a radical shift in systems of production and consumption, can mitigate climate change – something climate scientists and activists have been explaining for decades. However, the spread of this notion is reflective of the biggest polluters’ desire to pawn the problem off on the Global South, rather than reduce and reform their own systems. The result of which was a focus on mitigation in African climate action, of which Malawi is no exception to. It is clear from these records that mitigation is a central topic of conversation during the years analyzed, which is an interesting focus considering the country’s exceptionally small carbon footprint.

Deforestation

Forests take an absolutely central role in climate change discussions throughout these debates. Deforestation and its role in Malawi’s increasingly unfavourable climate is one of the most consistently recurring climate-related sentiments in Parliament. Blame is repeatedly shifted to forests and villages where trees are being cut down ‘wantonly’ and negatively impacting weather systems (Hon. Mwenifumbo, Independent – Karonga Central) (19 May 2015, p. 437). This view gains traction in 2010 when President B. Mutharika identifies deforestation in Malawi as an accelerator of the country’s changing climate. In fact, in 2010, the Minister of Natural Resources, Energy and Environment, Hon. Malunga, stated that ‘climate change is a very serious threat to our country due to a lot of deforestation’ (27 May 2010, p. 35). Five years later, in 2015, after listing the evidence of climate change in Malawi – floods, erratic rains and drought – an Hon. Njikho (DPP – Mzuzu City) went on to explain that ‘all these are the side effects of the deforestation we have’ (18 May 2015, p. 367). This is demonstrative of a seemingly pervasive belief that deforestation in Malawi is responsible for unfavourable weather and even natural disasters. While it is absolutely true that deforestation releases greenhouse gases, which contribute to global warming; the rate of deforestation in

Malawi and its contribution to global warming is enormously oversimplified in Parliament. Deforestation is specifically consequential in Malawi due to the ability of forests to minimize the impact of flooding, however this is barely touched upon. Instead, the focus is on overall weather and deforestation. Although it is untrue that trees cut down by the poor and rural in Malawi leads directly to unfavourable weather, the prevalence of this belief is important – where did this understanding originate? There are multiple plausible explanations for this belief, three of which will be speculated upon here. This view could be influenced by the international community; it may be indicative of the governments desire to present solutions to a situation which is largely out of their control; or it could simply be the general understanding of climate change in Malawi at the time. Interestingly, while deforestation is still acknowledged in 2017/2018 the discourse urging for the protection of forests is far less sensational and reforestation is no longer the most commonly touted form of climate-action.

Reforestation

If deforestation is understood as the cause of climate change, reforestation is the solution. Central to President Bingu wa Mutharika's 2010 speech condemning deforestation, was a call for Malawians to combat climate change through reforestation. This call to plant trees was praised by many MPs as the solution to climate change, a sentiment which, for the most part, remained unchanged throughout the years analyzed. Climate scientists have long stressed the importance of mitigation through reforestation, or avoided deforestation, based largely on the ability of trees to sequester carbon (IPCC, 2018, p. 19). The belief that climate change in Malawi can be alleviated by planting trees is expressed explicitly throughout these debates – Hon. Kasambwe (Independent – Chiradzulu Central) stated that ordinary Malawians should 'plant a lot of trees so that maybe we should improve on the coming of rains' (28 January 2010, p. 61). The science of reforestation is outside the scope of this research but what is important to understand is that, based solely on the size of the country, it is untrue that planting trees in Malawi could offset enough carbon to have an impact on weather systems. Whatever the source of this misunderstanding, it has created a feeling of responsibility among Malawians for their own climate-related suffering. As Hon. Mpuzeni (UDF – Machinga South East) stated, 'in developed countries climate change is as a result of industrialization because the Ozone Layer is destroyed. In developing countries like Malawi the main factor and cause of climate change is land degradation' (1 February 2010, p. 153). This micro understanding of climate change views the atmosphere as fragmented and isolated, where action in Malawi can positively impact local weather systems.

The reforestation-centered discourse of Malawi's Parliamentary debates seems to be indicative of global discourse at the time, coupled with an incomplete understanding of climate change. We know with a great deal of certainty that Malawi's changing climate is not the result of deforestation, and therefore cannot simply be reversed through reforestation. However, this idea is believed and vocalized by the majority of MPs who speak about climate change, demonstrating confusion on the topic and the power of global rhetoric. While few would argue that reforestation is ever negative; condemning the poor for utilizing nature for survival and sustenance, is. This is particularly damaging in Malawi where the majority of the country depends on nature for survival. Although it is important to note that deforestation can have an immediate impact on flooding as forests play a vital role in controlling flooding and avoiding sediment runoff – however, this idea is barely touched upon in debates.

Poverty

Throughout these records, firewood and charcoal production are repeatedly cited as the main source of deforestation in Malawi. In fact, in 2010, Hon. Chiumia (DPP – Nkhata Bay West) stated that climate change is due 'exclusively (to) cutting down of trees because of our

friends who make charcoal and timber production’ (26 May 2010, p. 61). Years later, in 2015, Hon. Mailosi (DPP – Phalombe East) attributed environmental degradation to ‘trees (being) carelessly cut down for firewood and charcoal’ (18 May 2015, p. 366). This focus on deforestation, and reforestation for mitigation, puts the poor at the centre of climate change in Malawi and disregards the importance of natural resources for so many livelihoods.

Those living in rural areas have little alternative. Given the country’s majority rural population, dependence on forests for survival (firewood for cooking and heat) and income (charcoal industry) is a crucial reality for the vast majority of Malawians without access to electricity or formal employment. USAID estimates that less than 11% of the population has access to electricity – meaning that around 3.2 million households must seek alternatives for cooking and heating (USAID, 2018). The relationship between access to electricity and deforestation is noted only once, in 2010, when Hon. D.R.L. Luka (DPP – Mulanje Bale) pointed to the Malawi Rural Electrification Programme (MAREP) as a way to reduce forest degradation ‘because obviously most people won’t use firewood and they will be able to cook probably using electricity’ (29 January 2010, p. 81). Although, this was never expanded upon. There is an interesting moment after the 2015 floods in which the Minister of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, Hon. P. Kaliati, declared it out of order to be educating people on deforestation when they have been displaced from their homes (2 February 2015, p. 223). This seems to signify the first acknowledgement that reforestation does not immediately benefit the poor, particularly those most vulnerable to climate change.

The notion that the poor are in-part responsible for climate change due to their use, or ‘abuse’ or natural for survival, is a common one. Overpopulation has been used a blame shifting technique allowing onus to be placed on rapidly growing populations in the Global South. However, a much more effective measure is overconsumption, for which the poor are not responsible. We know that – and this is a statistic worth repeating - emissions in Africa account for only 3.7% of the global total (Godfrey, Burton, & LeRoux-Rutledge, 2012, p. 4). This rhetoric lays blame on the poor for their relatively insignificant environmental degradation without offering an alternative source of livelihoods. That being said, poverty does increase dependence on natural resources for survival and income, and as population continues to increase, so to does the number of people relying on the environment for livelihoods. In 2013, Hon. Kaphamtengo Yona (MCP – Salima North) proposed ending deforestation through ‘soft loans’ which would supplement incomes earned through the charcoal industry (27 June 2013, p. 1235). While this idea did not gain any traction in policy or Parliament, it signifies the first mention of social support to address an environmental issue.

It is important to note that I do not underestimate or wish to minimize the significance of deforestation in Malawi. Forests are being destroyed en masse across Southern Africa, and Malawi is of no exception to this. Deforestation in Malawi is estimated to occur at 33, 000 hectares per year and is ‘mainly attributed to agriculture expansion, tobacco growing, and excessive use of biomass’ (Ngwira & Watanabe, 2019, p. 1). Meaning that, simply stopping the poor from cutting down trees, and re-planting them, without alternative means for cooking, heating and income, is not an effective strategy to end deforestation. Interestingly, a study by Mwampamba et al., explains that the demonization of charcoal industry is fuelled by myths which are perpetuated by widespread beliefs – the most important of which for this study is the myth that charcoal causes deforestation (2013, p. 80). They explain that this claim is an oversimplification: while charcoal production is attributed to forest degradation, these areas regenerate (Ibid.). This belief is evident among MPs in Malawi who frequently attributed environmental degradation to charcoal production.

3. Adaptation

Adaptation is afforded significantly less attention by MPs, which is interesting considering that adaptation appears to be the most effective point of entry for addressing climate change in Malawi. There are minor calls for improved access to agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and seeds - particularly from MPs whose constituencies are experiencing severe drought and subsequent food shortages. However, much of the adaptation conversation revolves around adapting to the increasing scarcity of water through irrigation.

Water Scarcity

It is clear that the most commonly voiced concern about climate change in Parliament is the impact it will have on agriculture. The country's dependence on rain-fed agriculture leaves its food systems extremely vulnerable to climate change; changes in rainfall patterns are particularly consequential. It is well documented and understood that climate change will lead to water scarcity in Malawi, an effect of climate change that has been experienced for many years and is certain to worsen overtime. Climate change, as the Minister of Water Development and Irrigation, Hon. Kalinde pointed out in 2013, will make rain less reliable and ground water sources less sustainable (1 November 2013, p. 288). The Minister of Environment and Climate Change Management, Hon. Gotai Hara acknowledges in that water stress leads to adverse health effects – most notably the spread of ‘environmental related diseases’ such as cholera and malaria (5 June 2012, p. 547). There is also an important distinction made between water availability and water quality. Available water is not necessarily potable water - this distinction is particularly important in consideration of the health-related impact of water scarcity. However, the most common water-related concern was regarding rain-fed agriculture. Throughout Malawi's history there are many instances in which one season of unfavourable weather triggers a domino effect of food insecurity and economic downturn. Water scarcity and stress puts a great deal of pressure on food systems and the Malawian economy, and impacts food availability in ways which require many years to recover from.

Irrigation

Water stress, and subsequent food insecurity, is one of the most consequential effects of climate change in Malawi. Adapting to water scarcity has been an ongoing effort for many years which is unsurprising given decades of progressively worsening agricultural conditions due to drought and unreliable rains. In these Parliamentary debates, irrigation is frequently referenced as an adaptation strategy – it was even included in President Bingu wa Mutharika's nine ‘priorities within priorities’ for socio-economic growth and development in Malawi (26 January 2010, p. 4). There is a clear desire among MPs to invest in and expand irrigation to sustain the productivity and benefits of agriculture and adapt to the worsening effects of climate change. Those who support irrigation implementation and expansion claim to do so on the grounds that it will assist in climate change adaptation - allowing crops to survive in times of drought. While many hope that irrigation will simply minimize destruction of agricultural systems, the Leader of Opposition, Hon. Dr. Lazarus Chakwera, states that irrigation will boost productivity while increasing incomes and food security (6 May 2015, p. 42).

4. Disaster Response and Management

Given the frequency and severity with which Malawi's climate is predicted to change, disaster response is crucial. This has proven to be true in past incidences of environmental hazards. Preparing for and managing environmental disasters has the potential to severely minimize impacts and avoid devastation. Throughout these debates, disaster management occupies remarkably less attention than topics such as irrigation or deforestation and reforestation. This is interesting considering its potential to minimize damage and save lives, which many MPs are seeking for their constituencies. Calls for disaster response policies and

strategies in early years do not explicitly mention climate change, however intervention is often requested to minimize food scarcity resulting from floods and drought. By 2015 it is clear that MPs are not impressed with existing disaster response mechanisms and call for an improvement in the face of a rapidly changing climate. Hon. Chilenga (PP – Chitipa South) even attributed the severity of that years flooding to inadequate early warning systems (2 February 2015, p. 229).

Particularly in later years, calls for disaster management efforts, including early warning systems (EWS) signify an acknowledgement that as weather becomes increasingly unpredictable and erratic it is necessary to prepare. As the Chairperson of the Natural Resources and Climate Change Committee, Hon. Chilenga states, expansion and strengthening of EWS will ‘enhance preparedness and timely response to disasters’ (19 May 2015, p. 440). There is very little overlap between the MVAC and early warning and disaster preparedness in these debates. Food security and agriculture seem to be dealt with separately from climate change, which may explain the MVAC being left out of conversations of climate change. However, this could also be the result of uncertainty about the Committee’s efficacy - mention of the MVAC in these debates is usually coupled with a critique of the Committee’s capabilities. The majority of this criticism is based on the accuracy of information disseminated by the Committee – many fear that figures, estimates and predictions are inaccurate. Hon. Chipiko even accused the MVAC of worsening Malawi’s situation, stating that they are ‘crippling this country by feeding government with the wrong information’ (18 February 2018, p. 435).

Despite a relatively significant spike in the frequency and severity of natural disasters in Malawi, there is very little attention given to the management of climatic events. Hon. Dr. Chidanti Malunga (DPP – Nsanje South West) emphasizes this point in stating that Malawi is ‘dangerously unprepared for any kind of natural disaster’ (2 February 2015, p. 242). It is difficult to gauge just how much attention and funding is given to disaster management, however, it is clear that there is little coordination between the Ministry of Disaster Relief Management and those attempting to deal with climate change.

Discussion

Throughout these Parliamentary records it is made abundantly clear that MPs are concerned about climate change but uncertain how best to address this threat. The most common climate-related sentiment found in these Parliamentary debates was concern about the effect that climate change is having, and will continue to have, on Malawi accompanied by a relatively vague desire to do something about it. This is in many ways representative of the views of the general public documented in the Afrobarometer public opinion survey. Of 2,400 Malawians surveyed in 2018, 79% of respondents indicated that they were aware of climate change and 92% of those aware said that climate change is making life worse in Malawi (Afrobarometer Round 7, 2018, p. 25). Interestingly, of the 79% aware of climate change, 66% believe that ordinary Malawians can do something to stop it (Ibid.). MPs’ beliefs are, at least in part, representative of the national understanding of climate change.

A second, and equally important conclusion to be made from these debates is the seeming lack of coordination between ministries – issues appear to be addressed in siloes. For example, discussions about agriculture and food security often fail to acknowledge climate change in any meaningful way, despite concerns about the agricultural impact of climate change. So, while MPs exhibit a desire to effectively mitigate and adapt to climatic changes, there is, in reality, less evidence of their will to do so.

There is a relatively alarming amount of evidence of misinformation throughout these debates, particularly in the earlier years analyzed. This confusion is justifiable considering the highly politicized and scientific nature of climate change intervention. There is an excellent example of this confusion regarding carbon credits in 2015. Carbon credits are a complicated,

convoluted and often contested mitigation strategy. With the introduction of carbon offsetting to Malawi in 2015, came a great deal of confusion; when asked what impact carbon credits would have on Malawi, the Minister of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining, Hon. Muluzi, explained he did not know what this would mean for the country (23 February 2015, p. 613). The Minister goes on to explain that Malawi is ‘a very good candidate for Carbon Credits. A lot of studies have taken place here and we certainly can also make a very good case for attracting climate finance’ – an answer which, understandably, inspired little faith among fellow MPs (Ibid., p. 614). Carbon financing is complex and rarely, if ever, benefits the Global South in ways the North depicts it to, however the legitimacy of this strategy is not the point of this example. What is important is a willingness to implement and promote a climate change mechanism, which originated in the North, without a complete awareness of the implication for Malawi. This echoes the fight against, relatively small-scale, poverty-driven deforestation in previous years. By 2017 and 2018, the direction of climate change mitigation and adaptation is much less clear, however concern about the threat of climatic changes is unwavering.

Quantifying Parliamentary Debates

The previous analysis of Parliamentary Debates revealed an extraordinary disparity in the use of certain terms and, therefore, the attention given to a topic. Parliament is the place where major issues in the country are discussed and the consideration of a topic may be indicative of its priority (Umney, 2016). In order to investigate this further, the use of key terms has been quantified and represented graphically. Immediately evident from this data was the wide variation in consideration of topics, which this section will attempt to provide explanations for. Additionally, quantifying this information allows for comparative analysis to examine any contrast or correlation between terms. Most importantly, this section provides a visual representation displaying which topics garner MPs attention, if there is a clear cause, and how this changes over time. Data collection involved searching Parliamentary Records for key terms and isolating results by year. This was more straightforward in some cases than others, for example the only additional search term for ‘climate change’ was ‘global warming’. More complex topics required some diversity in search terms – ‘social protection’ for example is comprised of ‘social support’, ‘cash transfer’, ‘school meals’, and other relevant terms. As previously mentioned, Parliamentary Records from 2016 are not available and data is lacking in 2014 (election year), 2017 and 2018. Unfortunately, this is reflected in graphs which display notable dips in these years.

The policy areas discussed in the Government Document section provide an interesting and illustrative starting point for this analysis. Environmental management has been replaced with ‘climate change’ as it is the topic of interest. The results of this analysis are shown in Figure 1. This graph displays the total number of times each of these terms were used in Parliament records and offers an extremely interesting comparison between them. For perspective, the term ‘development’ is used a total of 34,691 times, while ‘disaster management’ is mentioned only 435. In fact, ‘development’ was mentioned over three times more than the second most frequently used term, ‘agriculture’. This is interesting given the critical role that agriculture has in Malawi’s growth and development. Particularly important for this research, is how rarely ‘climate change’, ‘social protection’ and ‘disaster management’ are mentioned. Especially given the frequency and intensity of natural disasters and the humanitarian need during the time period analyzed.

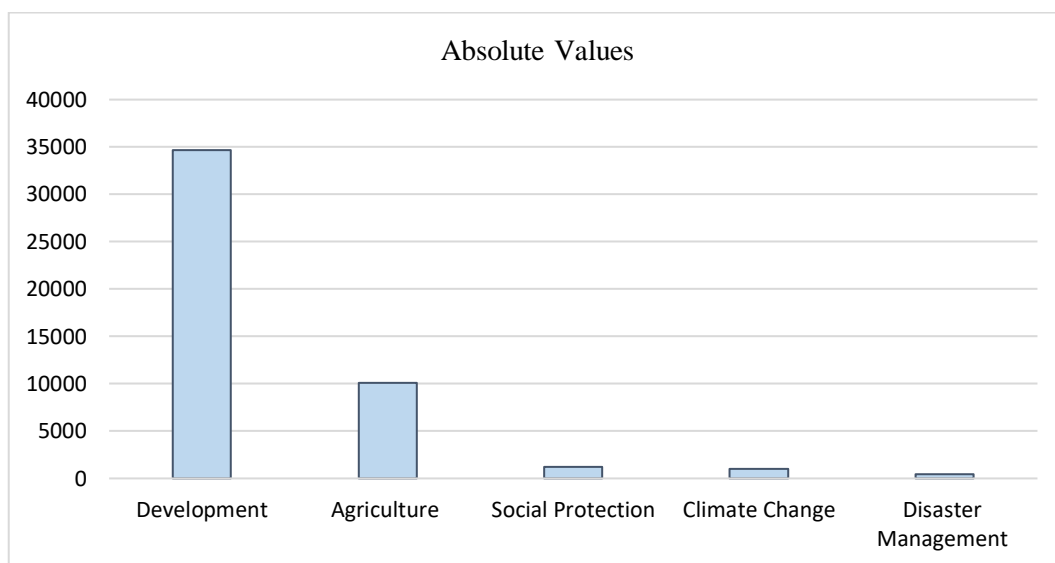


Figure 1: Total mention of Development, Agriculture, Social Protection, Climate Change and Disaster Management throughout Debates

Figure 2 details a yearly breakdown of reference to ‘climate change’ which provides a better illustration of when this issue is raised in Parliament. The majority of the activity depicted in this graph is easily attributed.

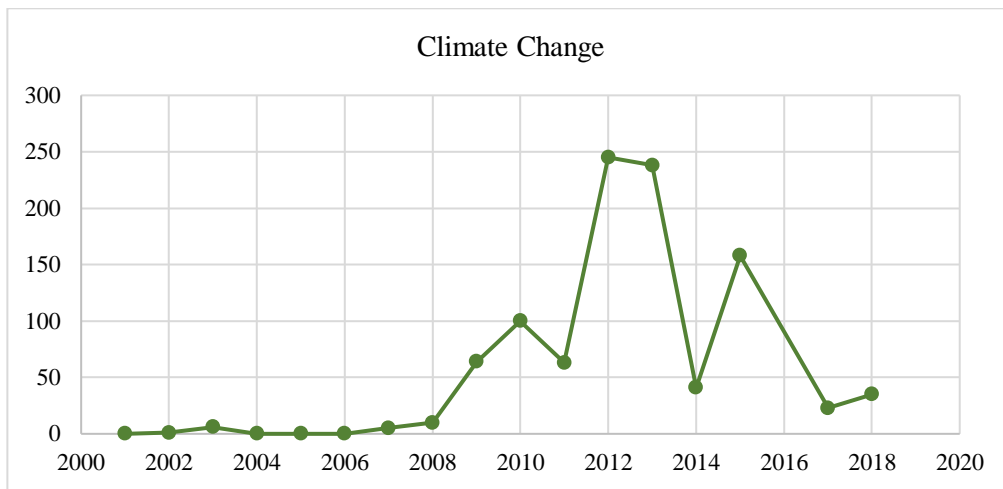


Figure 2: Use of the term ‘climate change’ by year in Parliamentary Debates

Unsurprisingly, there is very little, if any, mention of climate change in early years. However, in his 2009 session opening speech, President B. Mutharika – who held office from 2004 to 2012 - declared ‘climate change, natural resources and environmental management’ as a priority to move Malawi ‘from poverty to prosperity’ (23 JUNE 09, p. 12). This marked the first significant acknowledgement of climate change in these records and is responsible for the spike in 2009 and 2010, with a minor downturn in 2011. The most notable increase in the use of the term ‘climate change’ appears in 2012. This correlates with the release of the National Climate Change Programme, in partnership with the UNDP, which could cause an increase of climate change consideration. Although, a much more likely explanation is the introduction of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Management in 2012. The downturn in 2014 marks the removal of ‘climate change’ from the Ministry’s name. The last spike, in 2015, correlates with extreme flooding in Malawi, which affected over 600,000 people (European Commission, 2015).

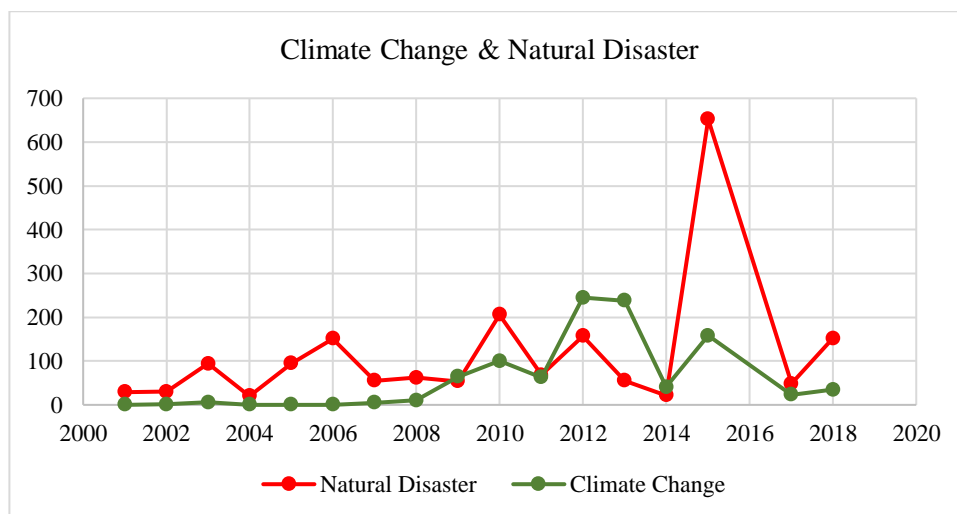


Figure 3: Use of ‘climate change’ and ‘natural disaster’ by year

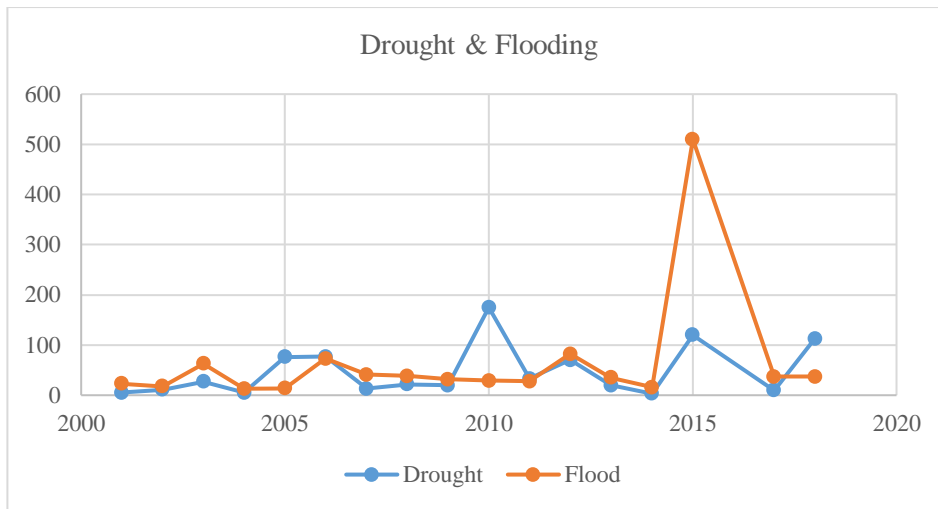


Figure 4: Use of 'drought' and 'flood' by year

Figure 3 displays use of the terms 'climate change' and 'natural disaster', which allows for an interesting comparison. The issue of 'natural disaster' – as well as 'flood' and 'drought' – is raised over two times more frequently than 'climate change' and begins much earlier. Interestingly, while there is some correlation between the use of the two terms, it is clear that 'natural disaster' is favoured to explain adverse weather in Malawi; a trend which was also evidenced throughout Government documents. This may be indicative of MPs not attributing natural disasters to climate change in a broader sense, or could simply be semantic. Figure 4 has been included simply to break down use of the terms 'drought', and the seemingly favoured term 'dry spell', and 'flood'. The topic of flooding is raised more frequently than drought throughout these records. When cross-referenced with ReliefWeb⁶ data, a direct correlation was discovered between use of the term 'natural disaster' and incidence of flooding or drought. Malawi was victim to flooding in 2003, 2006, 2010, 2012 and 2015, as well as drought in 2005 and 2018 (ReliefWeb; IFRC, 2005). The most significant spike is seen in 2015, in which one third of the total mention of 'natural disaster' occurs. While the activity on this graph is explained quite simply, it feels important to dig a bit deeper – why did the disaster in 2015 receive so much attention, when there were many disasters before? Two other significant increases in use of the term 'natural disaster' occur in 2006 and 2010, however their combined mention is just over half of that in 2015. It appears as though flooding in 2015 garnered more attention simply because it was the most severe. The 2015 flood, which led the President to declare a state of emergency, displaced over 175,000 people, killed 79, and caused a cholera outbreak (European Commission, 2015). Flooding affected less than 40,000 people in 2006, and less than 5,000 in 2010 (IFRC, 2006; OCHA, 2010, p. 2). It is therefore reasonable and unsurprising to conclude that there is a direct positive correlation between an environmental shock and the attention given to it in Parliament. The attention given to natural disasters and the severity of the event are also positively correlated – the most severe an event, the more it is mentioned. This is reasonable as more districts impacted, mean more MPs worried about and advocating for their constituents.

⁶ ReliefWeb is 'the leading humanitarian information source on global crises and disasters' and the digitalized service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (reliefweb.int/about)

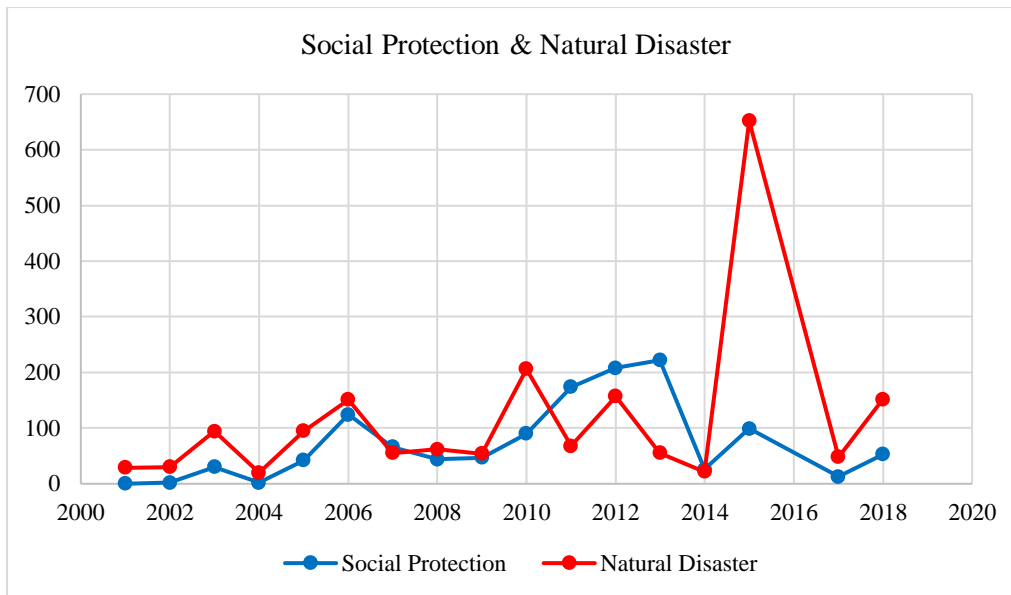


Figure 4: Use of ‘social protection’ and ‘natural disaster’ by year

Figure 4, details use of the terms ‘social protection’ and ‘natural disaster’ in Parliament. Between 2001 and 2009, the two topics follow almost identical paths – with slightly more attention given to natural disasters – and begin to diverge in 2010. One reasonable justification is that consideration of ‘social protection’ simply ebbs and flows with incidence of natural disaster, which is true in the majority of cases. A causal relationship between them would not be surprising given the consistent connection made between natural disasters and social protection throughout Government documents. However, the graph shows that there are years where these terms diverge and therefore something else must have happened in those years. The most notable divergence occurs between 2011 and 2013, when reference to social protection (modestly) overshadows climate change. While it is difficult to pinpoint exactly what would spark this increase, there are a few possible causes. The *MGDS II*, which calls for social support and safety nets, was published in 2011 and could have attracted attention in Parliament. The *MNSSP*, the country’s first comprehensive approach to social protection, was released in 2012. The steady increase into 2013 is a bit more difficult to explain. However, it was also during this time that Malawi’s Social Cash Transfer Program (SCTP) was scaling-up with both the German (through KfW) and Irish governments agreeing to fund additional districts in 2011 and 2013, respectively (University of North Carolina, 2014, p. 1).

Although not an outlier, 2006 is interesting as there is a direct link between drought and a social protection programme that year. In the 2005/2006 growing season, Malawi experienced a drought that led to food shortages, which the MVAC estimated would leave 4.2 million in need of food assistance (World Bank, 2006). This led the Government of Malawi to fund a short-term Public Works Programme and Conditional Cash Transfers to combat food shortages after the drought (Ibid.) Additionally, 2006 was also the year of the SCTP pilot in Mchinji district (University of North Carolina, 2014, p. 1).

Conclusion

This chapter has included a thorough qualitative and quantitative analysis of Parliamentary Debates to understand how MPs conceptualize climate change. Arising from the qualitative analysis was a clear concern among MPs about the threat posed by climate change and the impact it will have on Malawi. Additionally, there appears to be very little collaboration

and coordination between Ministries – issues are addressed in silos. Lastly, there is a fair amount of confusion and misinformation about climate change in Parliament. Through this analysis it became clear that climate change was a relatively low-ranking priority for MPs – garnering less attention than other, often related, issues. Key terms were quantified in order to investigate their use in Parliament. It was immediately evident that social protection, climate change and disaster management are much lower on MPs radar than agriculture and development. Then, broken down by year, the use of terms was compared over time. This data led to an important conclusion about the influence of natural disasters on social protection. In principle, social protection precedes climate change policy in Malawi. However, in practice, they seem to have risen up the Governments agenda around the same time. In fact, mention of social protection appears to have been influenced by climate change, the correlation between them is displayed graphically. There is a clear, if somewhat predictable, link between climatic events - such as drought and flooding - and use of the term ‘natural disaster’ in Parliament. It is also shown that the more severe and widespread the event, the more attention it generates. However, mention of ‘natural disaster’ fades significantly in years without severe climatic events. It is therefore reasonable to assume that there is little consideration of or preparation for natural disasters apart from ad hoc responses when they hit. Given the correlation between ‘natural disaster’ and ‘social protection’ in Figure 4, it is presumed that MPs consideration of social protection ebbs and flows with environmental shocks. If this is true in practice, social protection that responds to these shocks is a fitting progression. However, and this may be the most important finding from this analysis, there is not one occurrence of the terms ‘shock-sensitive’ or ‘shock-responsive’ in Parliament.

Chapter 4: Discussion

Malawi, for many reasons, is an excellent locale to study the introduction of climate change into social policy. The country's widespread dependence on, and connection to, agriculture and natural resources brings with it a keen awareness of and concern for climate change. Vulnerability is prevalent and cyclical, and food insecurity is chronic. In fact, when asked by Afrobarometer in 2018 about the most important issue to be addressed by the Malawian Government, the number one response – at 36% - was 'food shortage/famine' (Afrobarometer, 2018). To put that into perspective, the second most selected response, 'management of the economy', was chosen by 23% (Ibid.). It is clear that food security is a priority issue for many Malawians. This fear appears to be perpetuated by the unpredictability and deterioration of weather. The same survey asked how climate change was affecting the country, 93% of respondents indicated that climate change was making life 'somewhat worse' or 'much worse' (Afrobarometer, 2018). This, compared to 67% in Botswana, is significant (Afrobarometer, 2017a). When Malawian public servants were asked a similar question by the World Bank Group in 2016, 80% of respondents identified climate change as a 'very serious problem' and 17% called it a 'somewhat serious problem' – 97% of respondents indicating concern about climate change overall (World Bank Group, 2016, p. 12).

This sentiment was reflected by MPs who, throughout Parliamentary debates, expressed concern about climate change and recounted the ways in which their constituents are already suffering from its impacts. This is important because, as Vainio & Paloniemi found in Finland, belief in climate change is essential in pro-climate action (2013, p. 389). Accompanying concern about natural disaster and disaster management is a call for social protection to shield the most vulnerable from these shocks. In fact, although social protection predates climate change in principle, my quantitative analysis of parliamentary records showed that, in practice, climate change and social protection rose up the agenda together. Moreover, consideration of social protection in Parliament appears to ebb and flow with natural disasters. Meaning that in years without environmental shocks, there is a significant reduction in mention of both natural disasters and social protection. This may be indicative of Governments ad hoc approach to disaster response, and the use of social protection to minimize the impact of environmental shocks. If this connection between natural disasters and social protection were to be evidenced in practice, it is in line with the goals of the MNSSP II. However, the fact that there is seemingly little consideration of environmental shocks outside of responding to them, is in direct conflict with the goals of shock-sensitive social protection in Malawi which intends to address the full cycle of covariate shocks.

This link between climate change and social protection in Parliamentary discourse is supported through analysis of Government documents. While discussion of climate change is relatively limited, there is a great deal of attention paid to environmental management, sustainability, conservation and disaster management. The connection between disaster management and social protection is made in early documents, and remains throughout. Shock-sensitive social protection of the MNSSP II builds upon this, intending to respond to the entire cycle of environmental shocks, making it a natural and somewhat logical evolution of preceding Government documents.

This, however, is not reflective of MPs beliefs. While social protection and climate change – or maybe more specifically, disaster management – did garner attention together in Parliament, these topics fell comparatively low on MPs priorities. There was not one mention of 'shock-sensitive' or 'shock-responsive' in any of the debates analyzed. This is significant considering the collaboration and coordination necessary for the success of the MNSSP. Moreover, there is very little ministerial collaboration exhibited across Government documents

or Parliamentary debates. The disconnect between MPs and Government documents is further evidence in conceptualizations of climate change.

There are lessons to be learned from previous policies and programmes in Malawi – potentially the most significant of which is the lack of funding, and therefore implementation, of the country’s most significant plans to address climate change. Low economic capacity and a high need for intervention has led to the involvement of funding and partner organizations. Often the extent to which these international organizations are involved is difficult to determine. However, their involvement can lead to implementation issues. This seems to have been the case with the *Initial National Communication* and the *National Adaptation Programme of Action*, both of which intended to address climate change in Malawi. Neither were implemented due to a lack of funding. The involvement of donors also led to fragmentation of the MNSSP as programmes were implemented in silos (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 14). Similar fragmentation was noted in the MGDS III, which explained that projects addressing climate change had previously been small, fragmented and implemented on a one-off basis (Government of Malawi, 2017, p. 56). While reliance on donors to fund social protection in Malawi is due in part to fiscal restrictions, Government’s hesitation to support social protection is presumed to play a role.

The Government of Malawi is selectively involved in social protection interventions – SCTP and PWP – and not in others – VSL, MF, SMP (Government of Malawi, 2016d, p. 13-14). Moreover, Government contribution to social protection programmes has remained low and stagnant at only 10% - the remaining 90% is funded by donors (Ibid., p. 15). As found by Kalebe-Nyamongo & Marquette, the Government of Malawi tends to favour policies that benefit society more broadly and support the ‘active’ poor – focusing on forms of social protection which spur productivity (2014, p. 2). This is supported by Cunha et al., who explain that the Government favours PWP despite comparatively low markers of success, particularly in achieving food security, which is deemed critically important in Malawi (2016, p. 71). This is, somewhat anecdotally, supported by Parliament debates in which PWP is the most frequently referenced social protection intervention.

This research sought to examine the inclusion of climate change in Malawian social protection schemes – tracing its emergence in Government documents and parliamentary debates. This is, in some ways, a case study for social protection schemes in other Southern African countries – many of which shared similar objectives and challenges. Two key lessons emerged from this analysis – climate change, or climatic events, have long been tied to social protection in Malawi; documents, policies and plans published by the Government of Malawi are not necessarily an accurate representation of Parliamentary priorities. Due at least in part to the severity with which the country is struck by climate change, social protection has been considered as a response to natural disasters for many years. Although this discourse appears to be relegated to documentary sources, which are not necessarily reflective of Parliamentary priorities. Climate change and social protection fall very low on Parliamentary priorities. Mention of climate change and social protection, in both Government documents and Parliament, is raised most commonly in reference to natural disasters. This approach has, as of yet, been unsatisfactory in responding to the variety of climate vulnerability in Malawi due to a lack of ministerial cooperation and government buy-in.

These findings are relevant for other Southern African countries experiencing similar climatic instability. Ad hoc use of social protection in response to climatic events and instability is beneficial but not sufficient. Moreover, documents published by Government are not necessarily reflective of reality. This is particularly pertinent with topics as convoluted as climate change, and contentious as social protection. The MNSSP II, the most comprehensive social protection programme in Malawi, is threatened by this disconnect. Other social protection programmes and policies are likely to experience similar hardships unless there is a

great deal of cooperation, collaboration and planning. In order to be shock-sensitive the programme must scale-up social protection interventions, and increase collaboration among different actors.

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Appendix 1: List of Government documents analyzed

Year	Environment/Climate Change	Agriculture	Social Protection	Disaster Preparedness/ Response/ Management	Other (development, macro policies)
2000		National Irrigation Policy and Development Strategy Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation <i>Department of Irrigation</i>			Vision 2020: The National Long-Term Development Perspective for Malawi National Economic Council UNDP
2001					
2002					Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning DfID, EU, World Bank, IMF, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, FAO, GTZ, USAID, WHO, UNHCR, etc.
2003					
2004	National Environment Policy Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs <i>Environmental Affairs Department</i>				
	Malawi National Strategy for Sustainable Development Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs <i>Environmental Affairs Department</i> USAID (financial support)				
2005					
2006	Malawi's National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) Under the UNFCCC Ministry of Mines, Natural Resources and Environment <i>Environmental Affairs Department</i> Global Environment Facility (financial support) UNDP (technical support)	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security Strategic Plan: 2007-2012 Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security			Malawi Growth & Development Strategy (MGDS) 2006-2011 Ministry of Finance Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
		National Fertilizer Strategy Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security			
2007					
2008					
2009				Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) Operational Guidelines MVAC	
				MVAC Strategic Plan 2010-2015 MVAC	

2010		Agriculture Sector Wide Approach Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security			
		Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security Strategic Plan: 2007-2012 Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security			
2011	The Second National Communication for the UNFCCC Ministry of Mines, Natural Resources and Environment <i>Environmental Affairs Department</i> Global Environment Facility & UNDP – financial and technical support				MGDS II 2011-2016 Ministry of Economic Planning and Development IMF, World Bank, EU, UN Country Team
2012	National Climate Change Policy Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Management <i>Environmental Affairs Department</i> Norwegian and Japanese Governments (financial support) UNDP and DfID		National Social Support Policy Ministry of Economic Planning and Development		
2013					
2014					
2015				National Disaster Risk Management Policy Disaster Management Affairs UNDP (financial and technical support)	
2016	National Climate Change Management Policy Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining <i>Environmental Affairs Department</i> UNDP (financial support)	National Irrigation Policy Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development <i>Department of Irrigation</i>	Review of the Malawi National Social Support Programme Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development <i>Poverty Reduction and Social Protection Division</i> GIZ, ILO, UNICEF		
		National Agriculture Policy Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development USAID (financial) FAO, UN Women, CEPA, etc. (consultation)			
2017					MGDS III Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
2018			Malawi National Social Support Programme II Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development <i>Department of Economic Planning and Development</i> <i>Poverty Reduction and Social Protection Division</i> WFP, GIZ Malawi, UNICEF Malawi, ILO Malawi, UNDP Malawi, Irish Aid		
2019				2019 Flood Response Plan and Appeal Department of Disaster Management Affairs	

