

Key Recommendations

Social Protection

- Gender Mainstreaming across all social protection systems and programmes
- Lean season planning and preparations must be made well in advance of this year's predicted severe lean season to reassure communities that they will be supported.
- Social Protection programming should target the Urban Poor, with a particular focus on affected women.
- Cash Transfer Programme top ups (both vertical and horizontal) should be considered for affected urban and rural poor.
- Categorical targeting for Social Protection programmes should consider the influence of gender on risk and vulnerability.
- Consider revision of the minimum wage and taxation levels in light of the increasing cost of living caused by inflation and devaluation of the Kwacha.

Agri-Ecology and Planning

- Promotion of gender responsive agro-ecological practices
- Increase financing to farmer extension services on agro-ecological approaches, and ensure services are accessible to women farmers.
- Issue early and timely agricultural advice.
- Increase support (both market and subsistence) for the current winter cropping season to buffer food security.
- Farmers should be encouraged to adopt composting, production of Mbeya manure and other available alternatives to chemical fertilisers in light of the rising prices.
- Farmers should be encouraged to mix of certified and recycled seed.
- Promotion of household gardens in urban and peri-urban areas.
- Launch public awareness campaigns to promote agro-ecological approaches.

Crop Diversification and Market Opportunities

- Expand volume and value of exports through the further commercialisation of the country's agriculture sector.
- Promote access to cash crop seeds and work to generate awareness and demand among small holder farmers.
- Early announcement of clear and detailed plans for the AIP.

Farm Practices and Food Reserves

- Promotion of storage facilities, PICS bags and use of agri-chemical preservation agents to reduce post harvest losses.

Disaster Risk Management

- Early and appropriate updating of response plans and advance prepositioning of supplies to be distributed in case of a natural disaster.
- Timely weather and climate information to allow preparation for any adverse weather events.

Image: Concern participants discuss best next steps for their community, Phalombe. Credit: Chris Gagnon/ Concern Worldwide