



PRIDE



Investing in rural people

Quarterly Publication

Volume 1, Issue 2

January-March 2021

Construction works start in 2021



Lingoni, one of the schemes earmarked for construction this year

This year, 2021 is the year PRIDE plans to commence construction works of the irrigation schemes. Four schemes namely: Matoponi and Mlooka in Zomba, Lingoni in Machinga and Nkhulambe in Phalombe have already gone through tendering stage with evaluation and other procurement processes aimed at identifying the contractor still underway.

The US\$80.4million PRIDE project, which is working in 12 districts, plans to construct 16 irrigation schemes by end of 2023.

Processes leading to identification of contractors and actu-

al construction works, are at different levels with a set of five schemes - Marko and Mafinga Hills in Chitipa, Mzenga in Nkhata Bay, Chipofya at Bolero in Rumphu and Dwambazi in Nkhotakota at design stage.

These schemes are expected to go into tendering once designs are completed.

PRIDE is targeting September or latest October this year as the month to commence construction of the schemes. And with a construction period of one year, the mentioned schemes are expected to be commissioned by October of 2022”.

PRID is a seven year irrigation development programme aimed at developing 5400 hectares of irrigated land and 12,300 hectares of rain-fed land to benefit 19,500 households translating to about a million individual beneficiaries.

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Message from Project Coordinator

We are in 2021, a year which promises to be a busy year as I already alluded to in the last edition.

It is a year that will see PRIDE not only identifying contractors for some of the schemes, but also commence construction works. The quarter under consideration which is January to March 2021 has been a mixed bag.

It is during this period that we witnessed the threat of the Covid-19 pandemic heightening with infections, admissions and deaths escalating to worrying levels. It was a disturbing period as we saw some of our colleagues get infected, slowing down implementation of some activities in the process.

It is pleasing however to note that amidst the threat of the pandemic, we have witnessed positive movements in our preparations towards commencement of construction works of the schemes.

It is during this quarter that we managed to float tenders for four schemes as we try to identify and engage contractors. The four schemes namely: Lingoni in Machinga district, Mlooka and Matoponi in Zomba, Wowo/Nkhulambe in Phalombe are expected to have contractors in place to start construction by September this year.

Barring no serious challenges, we hope that a set of five schemes - Marko and Mafinga Hills in Chitipa, Mzenga in Nkhata Bay, Chipofya at Bolero in Rumphi and Dwambazi in Nkhotakota which are at design stage will go into tendering once the designs are completed.

We could not have been where we are today if it were not for the invaluable support that we have received and continue to receive from different stakeholders that include the Government through parent Ministry of Agriculture, donor partner, In-



Project Coordinator—Munday Makoko

ternational Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), district implementing teams and the farming communities.

We enter final quarter of 2020/2021 financial year with hope and enthusiasm knowing that the ground work, that will aide in the achievement of our set targets for the new-year, has been put in place.

As a departing point, may I urge colleagues and implementing district teams to continue working hard in our bid to achieve our target. Let us also continue to adhere to the preventive measures Government put in place to slow and completely halt the spread of the Coronavirus. We can also do our country a great favor if we go for the Coronavirus vaccine. Remember, prevention is better than cure.

Exploring wonders of fertilizer, manure

With the increased population, the pressure on farming land is unavoidable. Farming communities have had to use the same pieces of land for both commercial and subsistence production for years and years.

Again, for ages, it has been proven, and the farmers know, that continuous cultivation, mostly of same crop for decades and decades of seasons, leads to soils losing their fertility.

Expectedly, farmers who don't have the means to acquire manure or fertilizer have had to labor in vain as they have endured the pain of failed crops.

"In our division, land degradation has been a challenge," agrees Erick Haraman, Program Manager for Blantyre Agriculture Development Division (ADD). Seven districts: Blantyre, Chiradzulu, Phalombe, Mulanje, Thyolo, Neno and Mwanza form Blantyre ADD. In short, Haraman concedes that these districts are facing this problem.

"We look forward to all efforts aimed at assisting our farmers improve their soils," Haraman told a group of agriculture experts, researchers, farmers and journalists at an agriculture field day in Nkhulambe Extension Planning Area (EPA) in Phalombe district.

During the field day held under the theme: "Enhancing maize yields under the changing climate through integrated soil fertility management in Malawi", the researchers and agriculture

experts gathered to display a new farming approach named Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) which is still under trial phase.

The approach combines the use of organic and inorganic fertilizer in the production of crops like maize.

"This technology has the benefit of not only tackling soil fertility and productivity bottlenecks but also addresses the issue of resilience of farms in the face of climate change and sustainable production, through restoration of soil health and functions and reducing the absolute dependency on inorganic fertilizer," says Dr. Austin Phiri, Chief Agri-



A manure and fertilizer demonstration plot at Nkhulambe in Phalombe district

Organic, inorganic manure proving useful

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cultural Research Scientist at Bvumbwe Research Station.



Leading the trials, Phiri (Centre)

Phiri, who is also the Lead Researcher touts the approach as having the potential to increase incomes of smallholder farmers by reducing the cost of production, increasing crop productivity thereby generating surplus marketable crop produce and increasing the profitability of farming through sales of the surplus produce.

The approach is being tested in eight districts of Phalombe, Zomba, Machinga, Karonga, Mzimba, Rumphu, Nkhata Bay and Chitipa where Programme for Rural Irrigation Development (PRIDE) is working to con-

struct irrigation schemes.

“We hope, through the combined use of inorganic and organic fertilizers, the approach

will improve soil fertility and maize grain yields under irrigated conditions. Again, we want to assess changes in soil

moisture under the combined use of inorganic and organic fertilizer in maize production under irrigated conditions as well,” explained Phiri.

As part of its support on the trials, PRIDE provided all the farm inputs – fertilizer, seeds, pesticides except the manure. Farmers sourced the manure locally.

The research on the approach started last year and expected to last for three years during which the researchers hope the approach will be fully adopted and rolled out to all the districts in the country.



One of the trial fields at Wowo Irrigation Scheme in Phalombe

Field days - farmers display farming techs



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1. Mirriam Mwamondwe of Sub-T/A Mwangolera in Karonga district admires her maize crop which she has grown using Conservation Agriculture techniques.
2. Farmer, Daelo Nagoli of Senior T/A Nkhulambe briefs participants to a field day in Phalombe on the benefits of using both organic and inorganic fertilizers
3. Lucy Paipi, of Sub Traditional Authority Nkapita in Zomba district inspects her maturing sorghum crop.
4. A team of extension workers, researchers, seed companies' representative, Machinga ADD officials, admire a CG 9 groundnut field at Masaula in Zomba district
5. A rice field at Wowo/Nkhulambe Irrigation Scheme in Phalombe district.

Senior Chief touts PRIDE Project

Programme for Rural Irrigation Development (PRIDE) is a unique project because of its heavy community involvement, says Senior Chief Chamba of Machinga.

“I have seen projects come and go, many of them, but this one is unique”, said Chamba referring to PRIDE. “Many of my subjects are involved and the benefits are there for all to see,” he said.

Senior Chief Chamba was speaking to journalists after agriculture field day at Lingoni Irrigation Scheme in Machinga district.

During the field day, farming communities showcased fruits of extension services from PRIDE, Machinga ADD, district agriculture officials through the beautiful crop they displayed in their fields.

“I would like however to ask PRIDE and all agriculture officials to continue providing the farmers with the latest information on new technologies because if that happens then the farmers will be able to carry on even after PRIDE project is gone,” said Chief Chamba.

Farmers took participants to different fields to appreciate various farming and storage approaches and techniques as well as good agriculture practices among them conservation agriculture, farmer field and farmer business schools,



Senior Chief Chamba: PRIDE is unique

Similar field days were also held at Masaula in Zomba and Nkhulambe in Phalombe district where seed manufacturing companies took part. The seed companies promised to make available seed varieties that are modern and suit-

ed to the climatic conditions of the districts.

PRIDE is expected to construct two schemes – Matoponi and Mlooka in Zomba, one scheme – Nkhulambe in Phalombe and one scheme – Lingoni in Machinga district.



Participants admire a rice field at Lingoni in Machinga district

Schemes awaiting construction

Chipofya Irrigation Scheme



Sits on 983 hectares. It is located at Bolero, about 11 kilometres from Rumphi administrative headquarters. Once constructed and fully operational, Chipofya Irrigation Scheme is expected to benefit 2291 farming households.

Kasimba Irrigation Scheme



Kasimba Irrigation Scheme is in Paramount Chief Kyungu's Area in Karonga district. About 138 farming households are expected to benefit once the Scheme is constructed.

Lingoni Irrigation Scheme



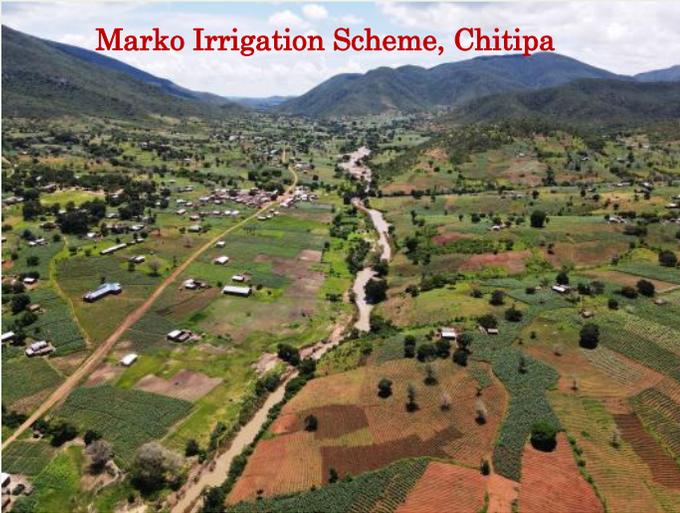
Siting on a 183-hectares stretch of fertile farming land, Found in Machinga under Domasi Extension Planning Area (EPA), the scheme is located about 7 kilometres east of Namwera Turn Off in Zomba. It is shared by Group Village Headmen Mitawa, Mminda, Msambo Chautwa in Traditional Authority Chamba in Machinga. About 1306 farming households are expected to benefit.

Mafinga Irrigation Scheme



Mafinga Irrigation Scheme is at Chisenga, an area located about 16 kilometres off Karonga-Chitipa Road in Traditional Authority Mwenewenya in Chitipa district. The scheme has 97 hectares of land ready to be developed into a fully-fledged irrigation scheme. A fully operational Mafinga Irrigation Scheme will benefit about 166 farming households.

Marko Irrigation Scheme, Chitipa



Marko Irrigation Scheme is in Traditional Authority Mwaulambya's area in Chitipa district close to the Malawi/Tanzania Border. The scheme sits on a 140-hectare stretch of land is expected to benefit 481 households.

Mpamba Irrigation Scheme—Nkhata Bay



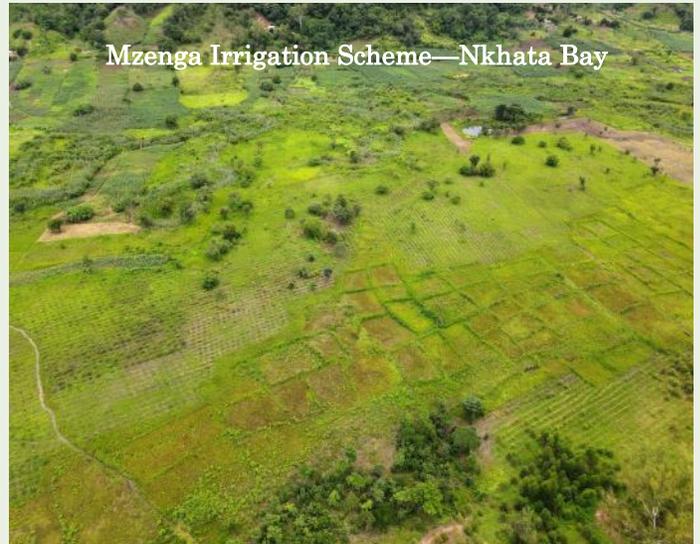
Mpamba Irrigation Scheme is located at Mpamba, Traditional Authority Timbiri in Nkhata Bay district. Mpamba is found about 40 kilometres from Mzuzu along the Mzuzu-Nkhata Bay Road. Once fully operational, Mpamba Irrigation Scheme is expected to benefit 1073 farming households.

Mwenelondo Irrigation Scheme—Karonga



Mwenelondo Irrigation Scheme has 575 hectares of land and is located 7 kilometres before Karonga Boma along the M1 Road from Mzuzu. Once operational, 509 farming households are expected benefit from the scheme.

Mzenga Irrigation Scheme—Nkhata Bay



Mzenga Irrigation Scheme in Nkhata Bay district has 900 hectares of land. Once it is developed into fully operational scheme, it is expected to benefit 494 farming households.



Wowo-Nkhulambe Irrigation Scheme, seated on a stretch of 310 hectares is located Traditional Authority Nkhulambe, about 25 kilometres east of Phalombe district. The scheme will use water from Sombani/Nanyowa River originating from the nearby Mulanje Mountain. Wowo-Nkhulambe Irrigation Scheme is surrounded by Group Village Headmen Nkhulambe, Wowo, Phweremwe, Mapando, Nanyalo and Gwirima. It expected that construction works will take about 9 months with 900 farming households expected to benefit once fully operational.



Fed by Namadzi River, Nazombe Irrigation Scheme is located in Group Village Headmen Mpotola, Balakasi, Kamwendo and Mpawa in Traditional Authority Ntchema's area in Chiradzulu District. The scheme sits on a 500-hectare piece of land and is expected to benefit 1448 households once construction completes.

Quarterly Highlights

- ◆ Public disclosure of Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) Reports for Lingoni and Matoponi took place.
- ◆ Bidders were taken on a pre-bid visit to Wowo/Nkhulambe and Lingoni Irrigation schemes in Phalombe and Machinga respec-

tively following the float- ing of tenders.

- ◆ PRIDE embarked on Mid-Term Outcome Survey to collect data on implementa- tion status and other aspects midway through the project implementation period.

Some implementing dis- tricts– Phalombe, Machinga, Zomba, Nkhata Bay, Karonga, Chitipa and Rumphi conducted agricul-

ture field days where farm- ers showcased fruits of differ- ent technologies and ap- proaches they are using in their modern farming. The field days also afforded seed producing companies an op- portunity to display different seed varieties some of the seeds they are producing.



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