



# AFIKEPO NEWS

## Quality complementary foods nurture healthy futures in Nkhotakota

In Malawi's Afikepo programme, Hajira Mussa's journey went from teenage struggles to raising thriving children. This story of resilience highlights the programme's transformative impact on mothers and children.

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## Chitipa chief leads nutritional revolution

Chitipa's traditional male role in nutrition shifted thanks to Village Headman Mtambo; challenging norms and sparking a revolution. Men now share the burden alongside women, actively seeking resources and educating others.

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## Bakery empowers young mothers in Karonga

In Kayula Village, a bakery isn't just about bread and scones; it's a symbol of empowerment for young mothers battling child marriage and malnutrition.

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## Government hails Afikepo nutrition programme

Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Simplex Chithyola Banda has said government will ensure sustainability of the successes of the Afikepo nutrition programme.

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## SUCCESS STORY



Tughanane care group in session in Karonga. ©UNICEF Malawi/2023

## A collective effort for nutritional wellness in Barton Village, Karonga

Nestled under the protective canopy of a mango tree in Barton Village under Traditional Authority Kyungu in Karonga district, a dedicated group of villagers is rewriting the narrative on community health and nutrition. Here, community participation takes centrestage, ensuring that vital nutrition goals, particularly for pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers, are met and even exceeded.

The scene unfolds beneath the shade, where a group gathers, captivated by a caregroup promoter, Isaac Mvula, leaning over a flip chart, showcasing the community's nutritional

journey, a methodology called community behaviour tracking.

This innovative initiative goes beyond mere discussions; it's a tangible commitment to the well-being of every member. Isaac's chart meticulously outlines the community's strides in nutrition over the past month, applauding successes and pinpointing areas demanding improvement. The initiative becomes a dynamic force, fostering collective responses and pooling resources whenever the need arises.

As Mvula guides the community through the behaviour adoption chart, it becomes evident that Barton Village has embraced a holistic approach to health and nutrition. The focus is not solely on identifying shortcomings but celebrating victories, creating a positive atmosphere that propels the community forward.

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## ○ A collective effort for nutritional wellness in Barton Village, Karonga

Mvula says his job is to ensure that cluster leaders visit the people in their homes to educate people on the best nutrition behaviours and to collect data from the communities.

“When the 13 cluster leaders bring their reports, I compile this into one report which we then use to analyse the nutrition situation in the area and act on areas that show concern,” he says.

He says there are five key target groups they are particularly vested in: pregnant women, breastfeeding women, children aged between six months and two years, under-five children, and adolescent girls.

“When we discover that there are concerning cases in the communities, the care group leader and the promoter visit the person to try to understand why they are having nutrition challenges, and we also step in to help with advice and resources wherever we can,” he explains.

The community leader notes that the Government of Malawi’s Afikepo nutrition programme that UNICEF and FAO have been supporting in their communities, with funding from the European Union (EU), has been a major source of the success as cases of malnutrition are a thing of the past in the area. “When we look at the statistics, everyone here has been eating healthy by adhering to our guide on nutrition, which shows that we have achieved a lot with the Afikepo programme here,” he says.



Mbilika Simwamba, the FAO for Karonga.  
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Lucky Chibaka, 22, shares tender smiles with her 5 month old baby, Wandumi Simbeye in Karonga.  
©UNICEF Malawi/2023

At the heart of this initiative is 36-year-old Marrie Nyirenda, a living testimony to the programme’s impact. Regular visits from the care group provide her with not only crucial nutrition information but also a consistent source of encouragement.

For Marrie and other pregnant women like her, the initiative is not just about nutrition; it’s a lifeline connecting them to antenatal clinics and empowering them to make healthier lifestyle choices.

“Before the Afikepo project, I was really not conversant with issues of a healthy diet; I just ate whatever was available. I did not even know that as a pregnant woman, I was supposed to be going for antenatal clinic as early as three months into the pregnancy,” she says.

The mother of two says since she started her antenatal visits, she has learnt many things about the need to maintain a healthy diet, especially during her pregnancy.

“I have specifically learned about the need for me to consume all six food groups during my pregnancy. Now I make sure that these foods are available for me on a daily basis, including fruits and vegetables. Since I started following this diversified diet, my body has really shown signs of good health,” she says.

The community-driven nature of this initiative establishes a powerful sense of shared responsibility. It is a communal effort that recognizes the unique challenges pregnant

**Barton Village’s commitment to delivering nutrition goals through community collaboration is not just a local success story but a model for fostering health and nutrition in other communities as well.**

women, breastfeeding mothers, young children and adolescent girls face, and the community comes together to actively track the low performing indicators.

By addressing these challenges collectively, Barton Village is building a foundation for lasting health and nutrition improvements.

Barton Village’s commitment to delivering nutrition goals through community collaboration is not just a local success story but a model for fostering health and nutrition in other communities as well.

As the villagers gather beneath the mango tree, they symbolize a united front against nutrition challenges, proving that when communities come together, they can achieve remarkable outcomes.

Litiku Mwamande, who is a cluster leader and village headman Barton Malemia, explains that the journey to nutritional wellness in Barton Village is a testament to the transformative power of collective action and serves as an inspiration for communities seeking innovative approaches to achieve good health and improved nutrition.

The Afikepo project, a Government of Malawi programme, funded by the European Union and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and UNICEF, represents a ground-breaking multi-sectoral effort integrating agriculture, health, and nutrition initiatives.

## Quality complementary foods nurture healthy futures in Nkhotakota

In the serene Kuffi village, nestled under the watchful eye of Traditional Authority Malenga in Nkhotakota District, the journey of motherhood took an unexpected turn for Hajira Mussa at the tender age of 13.

Deprived of proper guidance and support structures, she found herself navigating the intricate responsibilities of motherhood alone, making inevitable missteps along the way.

Mussa's lack of knowledge about the essential six food groups became apparent as she grappled with raising her son without a proper understanding of an ideal diet. The consequence was a series of health complications that unfolded throughout his early years.

Reflecting on those challenging times, she shared, "Back then, I didn't even know anything about the six food groups, and so I raised my son in total ignorance without any guidance on an ideal diet for him."

Fast forward to the present day, the transformation in Mussa's life is evident as she proudly cradles her robust six-month-old daughter. This time around, armed with knowledge acquired through participation in care groups, Mussa ensured a healthy start for her child.

Visibly delighted, she recounts: "When I realized that I was pregnant, I immediately went to the hospital where I was given advice on how to take care of my pregnancy. During the pregnancy, I visited the hospital about seven times until I gave birth to a very healthy baby."

The 23-year-old attributes the well-being of her newest family member to the invaluable care and advice received from the care group that is part of Malawi government's nutrition programme called Afikepo.

UNICEF and FAO implement the programme with funding from the European Union. This is a ground-breaking initiative that integrates agriculture, health, and nutrition to enhance nutrition and food security in Malawi.

Mussa emphasizes the significant impact of the care groups on her parenting choices, particularly highlighting the importance of exclusive and continued breastfeeding.

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**"Back then, before the baby turned six months, we used to supplement breastfeeding with other foods such as porridge, but now we have learned that we should not feed the child with anything but breast milk until they are over six months old."**

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"We have also learned that after six months; we can feed the child with food from the six food groups whilst continuing with breastfeeding up to 24 months of age. This helps fight malnutrition and ensures that the baby grows healthy," she said.

As a beneficiary of a pass-on programme associated under Afikepo, Mussa not only gained knowledge but also received practical resources to enhance her family's nutrition.

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23 year old, Hajira Mussa from Khufi, Nkhotakota, nursing her 4 month old infant, Awetu Banda.  
©UNICEF Malawi/2023

## ○ Quality complementary foods nurture healthy futures in Nkhotakota

**In Nkhotakota, the Afikepo programme is not just a source of knowledge but a catalyst for positive change, empowering mothers like Hajira Mussa and Alabian Chirwa to provide a foundation for good health and wellbeing for their children.**

Rabbits, chickens, and goats provided through the programme supplement her family's diet, while fruit seedlings now grace the gardens surrounding her house, adding both beauty and nutritional value.

"The availability of meat, vegetables, and fruits has made it possible for me to provide all food groups for my family," Mussa happily declares. "Nowadays, because of the availability of these livestock, we are able to have a nutritious diet, and we can choose to eat meat and vegetables. We have a wide variety to choose from."

Sharing the sentiment of improved nutrition, Mussa's neighbour, 21-year-old Alabian Chirwa, sits outside her house, feeding her one-year-old son Swaiba a wholesome plate of porridge.

Grateful for the teachings of Afikepo, Chirwa remarks: **"Afikepo has taught us a lot of things, especially how to take care of our children in terms of nutrition. In my case, I know that I have to make it a point to feed my son with food from all the six food groups."**

"This is because we were taught that from six months to 24 months of age, we should give the child food from the six food groups whilst continuing with breastfeeding. That is why I add eggs, soya, groundnuts, and some other nutritious foods to his porridge."

In Nkhotakota, the Afikepo programme is not just a source of knowledge but a catalyst for positive change, empowering mothers like Hajira Mussa and Alabian Chirwa to provide a foundation for good health and wellbeing for their children.

It's a testament to the transformative impact of comprehensive initiatives like Afikepo that address the intertwined aspects of agriculture, health, and nutrition in fostering resilient communities.



Alabiyene Chirwa, 21 with her 1 year old son Swaiba Selemani, in Khufi, Nkhotakota.  
©UNICEF Malawi/2023

## Chitipa chief leads nutritional revolution

In the serene town of Kaseka in Chitipa on the northern tip of Malawi, a transformative movement has taken root, spearheaded by the visionary leadership of John Mtambo.

As the village headman of Kaseka in the area of Group Village Headman Mwenishakira, Traditional Authority Mtambo, he has orchestrated a quiet revolution, rallying men in the community to form a union committed to advancing nutrition and healthcare in the region.

Chitipa, much like other parts of Malawi, has long and culturally entrusted the responsibility of nutrition to women, who bear the weight of ensuring their families are nourished despite limited and insufficient resources.

Mtambo, however, stands as a beacon of change, challenging traditional norms and reshaping societal perspectives. His efforts have given rise to a paradigm shift, encouraging men to actively participate in sharing the nutritional burden with their partners.

Reflecting on the transformative journey, Mtambo shared: "Before the Afikepo project, we used to delegate all matters related to home diet solely to our women because that was the norm. Even as the village headman, I lacked understanding about nutrition. However, the project opened our eyes, prompting us men to recognize the importance of our involvement."

Taking a hands-on approach, Mtambo has taken on the role of an educator, enlightening his fellow men about the critical role they play in shaping a healthy and nutritious family diet. He emphasised: "When men comprehend the necessity of a healthy diet, they provide substantial support to their wives, ensuring that all necessary resources are available to maintain a well-balanced diet at home."

The results of this collaborative effort have been remarkable, with instances of malnutrition becoming a thing of the past.

As he prepared a mid-afternoon meal for his six-year old son Timothy, the dotting father explained: "Previously, we barely had one meal a day, but now we prioritize healthy eating, and



6 year old Timothy Mtambo and his father John Mtambo a member of the Lusayo care group, in Isyakira, Chitipa. ©UNICEF Malawi/2023

the results are evident. People in my village look healthier."

As a beneficiary of the livestock pass-on programme, Mtambo's homestead now boasts a thriving collection of rabbits, chickens, and goats that supplement his family's diet. Fruit seedlings received through the project now adorn the gardens surrounding his house.

Afikepo, a Government of Malawi nutrition programme implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and UNICEF with funding from the European Union (EU), represents a ground-breaking multi-sectoral effort integrating agriculture, health, and nutrition initiatives to enhance nutrition and food security in Malawi.

Edwin Siyame, the FAO district manager for Chitipa, underscored the project's triumph by emphasizing the influential role played by traditional leaders like Mtambo.

Siyame expressed confidence in the sustainability of Afikepo interventions, citing the active participation of the community.

"Having a village headman like Mtambo, who is influential and a male champion in nutrition, ensures the promotion of interventions not only within the community but also among the care group members," said Siyame.

He said the positive momentum on the ground guarantees that the nutrition activities will endure beyond the programme's closure.

"We have established permanent structures under Afikepo. The care group model is a lasting one, and we anticipate its continuation even after Afikepo concludes. The knowledge bank created through training and capacity building ensures that government counterparts possess the know-how to sustain these interventions," said Siyame.

In Chitipa district, the programme's reach extends to 284 care groups, working collaboratively with 117 promoters, 90 village nutrition coordinator committees, and nine area nutrition coordinator committees.

The transformative journey led by Mtambo stands as a testament to the power of community-driven initiatives in fostering enduring change.

As Chitipa continues to flourish under the influence of this nutritional revolution, the legacy of Afikepo becomes a cornerstone for sustainable nutrition and healthcare.

**Group Village Headman Mwenishakira, has orchestrated a quiet revolution, rallying men in the community to form a union committed to advancing nutrition and healthcare in the region.**



In the warmth of the kitchen, young mothers of the Lughano care group embodies togetherness, turning flour and dreams into a recipe for strength and unity. ©UNICEF Malawi/2023

## Bakery empowers young mothers in Karonga

Outside a mud brick house at the heart of Kayula Village in T/A Mwenelupembe's area, a group of toddlers run around the compound, oblivious of the scorching Karonga heat.

Under the shade of a boisterous mango tree, a group of young women chatter loudly and carefree—occasionally beckoning the toddlers not to stray away from the watchful eyes of the elders.

Meanwhile, several young women dart in and out of the smouldering house, gently wiping away the sweat from their brows and breathing in chunks of air to compensate for the momentary loss of air.

Inside the building, Atupele Bulawula gestures as she directs the tour of the premises.

“So, this is a bakery where we prepare bread and scones that we sell to the community, especially at the market,” says the 18-year-old mother of two.

Atupele leads a 30-member Luwano Care Group that runs the bakery. She says the membership of the group is restricted to young married mothers in their community.

Child marriage is a serious problem in Malawi. The 2017 constitutional amendment raising the age of marriage to 18, for both boys and girls,

was a significant milestone. However, many cases of child marriage persist, with 47 per cent of girls still getting married before the age of 18, and nine per cent before the age of 15.

When girls marry early, the health of their children suffers too as they are at higher risk of low birth weight, preterm delivery, and severe neonatal conditions, as well as being more likely to suffer from malnutrition and stunting throughout their childhood.

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## ○ Bakery empowers young mothers in Karonga

According to Atupele, the young women were selected for the project because they got married when they were young, and lacked knowledge about how to take care of their families' dietary needs.

Atupele is one of the two members from the group who was trained as a mentor, and she imparts nutrition knowledge to her fellow members.

The bakery, she says, is one of the business ideas they came up with to provide nutritious food and sustain their livelihoods. The women also formed a village loans and savings group to save and grow their earnings from the bakery business.

According to Atupele, the members were trained in how to prepare and maintain healthy diets for their families; hence they use proceeds from the bakery to support each member to supplement their diet.

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**“The bakery has really benefitted all of us. As we speak, all members own goats because after we shared the profits in August, every one of us bought a goat. We encourage our members to use the rest of the money to start small businesses that can help them with their day-to-day needs such as school fees and food,”** she says.

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Lawrence Malongo, one of the members of the group, says she has learnt a lot from the group.

She notes that, aside from the bakery, the members were encouraged to own vegetable gardens to diversify their diets.

The mother of two, who got pregnant with her first child and was married off when she was 12 years old, says the Afikepo nutrition programme has helped her find her feet.

“I was young when I got pregnant and my parents were really poor so I had no option but to go and live with my boyfriend. So, I have been married since, raising my first child with very little experience,” she says.

Lawrence says the experience with her second child, a one-year-old daughter has been different.

“Because of the skills that I have acquired from the Afikepo project, I now know what it takes to raise a child and the dietary requirements that are needed to ensure that one gives birth to a healthy baby,” she says.

She notes that there is a huge difference between the health of her first child and that of her second child.

“The second one is much healthier with very few health challenges. With my first child, I had so many complications and the child struggled in the first few years. I believe that it was because I did not feed him the right food to help him grow well,” she says.



Tughanane care group in session in Karonga. ©UNICEF Malawi/2023

One of the achievements from the bakery business is that the women have become independent, giving them enough funds to provide diversified diets for their children, according to FAO district officer Mbilika Simwaba.

Afikepo, a Government of Malawi nutrition programme implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and UNICEF with funding from the European Union (EU), represents a ground-breaking multi-sectoral effort integrating agriculture, health, and nutrition initiatives to enhance nutrition and food security in Malawi.



Lughano care group members. Mwenelupembe, Karonga. ©UNICEF Malawi/2023

## Government hails Afikepo nutrition programme

Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Simplex Chithyola Banda has said government will ensure sustainability of the successes of the Afikepo nutrition programme.

The minister said this at the closing ceremony for the programme on 8th December 2023 in Lilongwe, where households also showcased diversified foods in all six food groups promoted by the initiative as part of the project phase out activities.

He said the Afikepo programme, in its sixth and half years of implementation, aimed at reducing malnutrition and improving the quality of diets for families in Malawi through consumption of diversified, safe and nutritious foods for optimal nutrition for women of child bearing age, adolescents girls, infants and young children across 10 districts in the country.

**“Good programmes like these don’t phase out, but they just transition to something new. I am optimistic that we are making great strides towards empowering our communities to eradicate hunger and ensure every household has access to nutritious food,”** said Chithyola Banda.

Minister of Agriculture Sam Kawale said the Afikepo programme has enhanced the capacity of smallholder farmers to improve diversified food production, saying the programme has contributed towards efforts to achieve an inclusively wealthy and prosperous Malawi.



Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Simplex Chithyola Banda and Minister of Agriculture Sam Kawale appreciating the diversified foods in the six food groups promoted by the Afikepo programme. ©UNICEF Malawi/2023

“We celebrate that our people’s lives in the villages have improved and officers have been equipped with critical knowledge and expertise,” said Kawale.

The programme, implemented by the Government of Malawi, in partnership with FAO and UNICEF, and with funding from the European Union (EU), represented a ground-breaking multi-sectoral effort integrating agriculture, health, education, WASH and nutrition initiatives to enhance nutrition and food security in Malawi.

EU Ambassador Rune Skinnebach said the programme’s closure marked the new beginning and appreciation of the tremendous efforts made to end malnutrition in Malawi.

United Nations Resident Coordinator Rebecca Adda-Dontoh commended the collaboration among the Government of Malawi, EU, the UN and other partners, saying the joint efforts have significantly improved the nutrition of children.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator further commended the Government of Malawi for creating budget lines for nutrition

in all the districts which will help sustain and build on the gains from the Afikepo programme.

“While efforts have been made to improve food systems, more still needs to be done to ensure the systems deliver healthier diets for all age groups. There is a need for greater investments which promote programmes in support of the production of nutrient-dense foods and functional food markets to ensure boys and girls, including those with disabilities, are given an equal opportunity to develop to their full potential,” said Adda-Dontoh.



Some of the farmers showcasing diversified foods that children are fed in their communities to reduce stunting. ©UNICEF Malawi/2023

**Minister of Agriculture Sam Kawale said the Afikepo programme has enhanced the capacity of smallholder farmers to improve diversified food production, saying the programme has contributed towards efforts to achieve an inclusively wealthy and prosperous Malawi.**



# Afikepo Projects

## Status of Key Indicators as of 2022/23

Implementation period: March 2017 to December 2023

<b>&lt;50%</b> Poor	<b>&gt;50% - 80%</b> Average	<b>&gt;80% - &lt;99%</b> Good	<b>&gt;100%</b> Very Good
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Focus Area	Monitoring Indicators	Baseline	Current Status 2022/23	Project Target	Progress Towards Target	Source of Data
<b>1. Enhanced and Diversified Production</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leading to improved food security consumption score (SHA)</li> <li>HDDS and production of biofortified foods</li> </ul>	1.1 Percentage of households consuming bio-fortified foods (maize, iron fortified bean, orange fleshed sweet Potatoes) promoted by the project	13.1%	30.1%	25%	<b>120.4%</b>	Annual surveys
	1.2 Proportion of households consuming at least 6 food groups from the standard 12 food groups (Household Dietary Diversity Score)	16.5%	58.6%	25%	<b>234.4%</b>	Annual surveys
	1.3 Proportion of households producing bio fortified crops	10.20%	34.1%	22%	<b>155%</b>	Annual surveys
<b>2. Improved Diversified Consumption</b> (Dietary diversification) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MAD, MMF and MDD for 6 to &lt;24 months</li> <li>WRA and adolescents consumption of animal source foods</li> </ul>	2.1 Percentage of women of reproductive age (15 - 49 yrs.) meeting the Minimum Dietary Diversity (MDD-W)	30.4%	50.2%	38%	<b>132.1%</b>	Annual surveys
	2.2 Percentage of women of reproductive age (15 - 49 yrs.) consuming animal source foods	47.5%	48.3%	59%	<b>81.9%</b>	Annual surveys
	2.3 Percentage of adolescents (15 - 19 yrs.) consuming animal source foods	51.1%	46.9%	63%	<b>74.4%</b>	Annual surveys
	2.4 Percentage of Infants and Young Children (6 - < 24 months) meeting the Minimum Dietary Diversity	30.0%	46.9%	38%	<b>123.4%</b>	Annual surveys
	2.5 Percentage of Infants and Young Children (6 - < 24 months) meeting the Minimum Meal Frequency	44.3%	60.4%	52%	<b>116.2%</b>	Annual surveys
	2.6 Percentage of Infants and Young Children (6 - < 24 months) consuming Animal Source Foods	26.2%	42.3%	34%	<b>124.4%</b>	Annual surveys
	2.7 Percentage of Infants and Young Children (6 - < 24 months) who receive the Minimum Acceptable Diet	14.8%	34.8%	23%	<b>151.3%</b>	Annual surveys
	2.8 Percentage of children aged (6 - < 24 months) consuming bio-fortified foods	2.7%	18.6%	20%	<b>93%</b>	Annual surveys
<b>3. Economic Empowerment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VSLs and IGAs established, which focused on the functionality and continuity of the groups</li> </ul>	3.1 Number of groups accessing finance provided for the agricultural sector to benefits smallholder farmers and agri-food value chains	0	4,910	1,000	<b>491%</b>	EIB access to finance project data
	3.2 Number of VSLs groups formed	0	11,740	13,400	<b>87.6%</b>	Annual surveys
<b>4. Water, Sanitation and Health (WASH)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(including lessons learnt and what could be done better to improve the impact of this component). Afikepo contributed towards COVID prevention and community levels testimonies allowing for both positives and negatives, intended and unintended knowledge</li> </ul>	4.1 Percentage of primary caregivers washing hands (with soap) at the four (4) recommended critical times	25.1%	33.8%	45%	<b>75.1%</b>	Annual Report
	4.2 Percentage of households using improved sanitation services	61.6%	61.6%	70%	<b>88%</b>	Annual Report
	4.3 Number of people (households) reached on COVID-19 through messaging on prevention and access to services	0	439,450	470,000	<b>93.5%</b>	Annual Report
<b>5. Innovations, Digitization and Adoption of Improved Agriculture Technologies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nutrition information system, irrigation system, digitalization of M&amp;E, community based tracking tool, solar driers</li> </ul>	5.1 Multi-sector Nutrition Information system operationalized	0	1	1	<b>100%</b>	Project Report



## Afikepo

is a Chichewa name, which means “let them [the children] develop to their full potential”. It is being implemented with the aim of increasing and diversifying dietary intake of safe and nutritious foods to achieve optimal nutrition for women of child bearing age, adolescent girls, infants and young children in the 10 targeted districts of Chitipa, Karonga, Mzimba, Nkhatabay, Nkhotakota, Kasungu, Salima, Chiradzulu, Thyolo and Mulanje. The Afikepo nutrition sensitive agriculture project is part of the wider Afikepo programme which is funded by the European Union and is being implemented from July 2017 to December 2023.

A young child with a shaved head is sitting cross-legged on a green mat. The child is wearing a red and white t-shirt and green pants. They are smiling and eating a meal consisting of yellow porridge and green vegetables. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a brick wall. The image is framed by a large green circular graphic on the right side.

**Increasing and diversifying  
dietary intake of  
safe and nutritious foods**

# Nutrition in Malawi<sup>1</sup>

Under-nutrition has characterized the nutrition situation in Malawi for decades and is a prominent factor leading to an annual loss in productivity and economic growth estimated at 10% annually<sup>2</sup>. To address these challenges, the Delegation of the European-Union (EU) is funding FAO/UNICEF interventions under the overall coordination of the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS and the direct implementation of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development. These are part of the Afikepo Nutrition Programme, a 5-year (2017 - 2022)<sup>3</sup> project supporting multi-sectorial efforts to curb malnutrition among children below 5 years, women of childbearing age, pregnant and lactating women and adolescent girls. Afikepo is a Chichewa expression, which means "Let them develop to their full potential."

The programme is being implemented in Chitipa, Karonga, Mzimba, Nkhata Bay, Nkhatakota, Salima, Kasungu, Chiradzulu, Thyolo and Mulanje.

<sup>1</sup> MICS 2020/2021.

<sup>2</sup> African Union Commission (AUC) and NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (supported by ECA and the UN World Food Programme, Cost of Hunger in Africa (COHA) Study).

<sup>3</sup> The project was granted a no cost extension by donors to December 2023.

## Nutritional status of children



**35%**

of children under-five are **stunted**



**4%**

of children under-five are **overweight**



**3%**

of children under-five are **wasted**



**13%**

of children under-five are **underweight**



## AFIKEPO NEWS

FAO Malawi  
PO Box 30750  
Lilongwe 3  
Malawi.

Tel +265 1 773 255/564  
[www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)

UNICEF Malawi  
PO Box 30375  
Airtel Complex Area 40/31  
Lilongwe 3, Malawi.

Tel +265 1 770 770  
[www.unicef.org/malawi](http://www.unicef.org/malawi)



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