



Decentralizing Rural Services: *A Working Group Exercise*

Institutional Strengthening Workshop
Lilongwe, Malawi
October 24-28, 2016

Your role



- ⌘ You have been appointed to a task force of stakeholders charged with formulating proposals for implementing your country's new decentralization law in rural areas of your country.
- ⌘ The agenda for the first meeting is to reach some initial decisions concerning how the responsibility for providing seven categories of rural services should be divided among the principal actors.

Principal actors



⌘ Local government

⌘ Local communities

- ☑ Includes community associations, local NGOs, local branches of national associations, and individual members of the community (such as farmers)

⌘ Commercial private sector

⌘ Central government agencies

- ☑ Includes all organizations of a national character (such as central ministries and universities) outside the immediate local area

Seven rural services



- ⌘ Education
- ⌘ Rural Water Supply
- ⌘ Rural Roads
- ⌘ Natural Resource Management
- ⌘ Irrigation and Drainage
- ⌘ Rural Health Services
- ⌘ Agricultural Extension

Instructions



- ⌘ Work through the exercise individually for about 15 minutes to prepare yourself for meeting of the task force.
- ⌘ Working together as a group for about 45 minutes, try to reach a consensus on who should have the *principal responsibility* for each of the 42 tasks.
- ⌘ Chairperson to mark the group's consensus on the transparencies that are provided.

Instructions (cont.)



- ⌘ You may put an “X” in more than one box, only if you feel that two or more entities should *share responsibility equally* for a particular task
- ⌘ If you feel that different entities should be responsible for the provision and production of a particular task, then put:
 - ☑ “V” for “provision” in one box
 - ☑ “D” for “production” in the other box

Policy framework



⌘ Previously, the central government has already established a policy framework for decentralization, in consultation with the major stakeholders.

- ☑ Vision

- ☑ Guiding principles

- ☑ Strategies

Vision



Universal access to demand-driven rural services that are provided in an efficient and sustainable way.

Which shifts the paradigm



From:

- ⌘ Universal coverage
- ⌘ Supplying basic needs
- ⌘ Indifference to costs
- ⌘ Indifference to maintenance

To:

- ⌘ Universal access
- ⌘ Demand-driven
- ⌘ Efficiency
- ⌘ Sustainability

Guiding principles



- ⌘ The central government should be a **facilitator**, catalyst, regulator, and adviser, rather than a direct provider.
- ⌘ Political, fiscal, and administrative authority for the provision of rural services should be **decentralized** to the lowest appropriate level of government.
- ⌘ Long term **financial arrangements** should cover the full operating and maintenance costs in a sustainable way.

Guiding principles (cont.)



- ⌘ Suppliers of rural services, whether in the public or private sectors, should be able to **compete** with each other on a level playing field.
- ⌘ Public decisions concerning the provision of rural services should be **transparent**, and all actors should be **accountable** to those whom they serve.
- ⌘ The provision of rural services should be **environmentally and socially sustainable** over the long term.

Principal reform strategies

⌘ Decentralization:

⌘ Co-Production:

- ☑ The joint production of a particular good or service by two or more different types of organizations in order to take advantage of synergies among the different organizations.