Michigan State University

New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support (NAPAS) Activity

Associate Cooperative Agreement no. AID-612-LA-15-00001

Quarterly Report

1 April 2015 to 30 June 2015

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USAID/Malawi Quarterly Progress Report

Project Name: New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support: Malawi (NAPAS: Malawi) Activity

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Project Objectives: The New Alliance Policy Acceleration Support: Malawi (NAPAS: Malawi) is an activity under the Sustainable Economic Growth project of USAID/Malawi. It is being implemented by Michigan State University (MSU) in collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the University of Pretoria (UP). NAPAS aims to enable the government of Malawi to implement the policy reform agenda to which it committed under the New Alliance Country Cooperation Framework for Malawi. NAPAS has the goal of *providing effective technical support to the government of Malawi so that it sustainably achieves the high-level commitments to policy reform made in the New Alliance Country Cooperation Framework for Malawi.* These policy reforms have the broader aim of improving the agriculture investment climate in Malawi through commercializing and increasing the role of the private sector in Malawi's agricultural sector. NAPAS has the following three principal objectives:

- 1. Provide effective technical support for policy formulation by working jointly with the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development in Malawi and members of pertinent Technical Working Groups (TWG) to draft evidence-informed policy and program design documents for consideration by senior government officials and stakeholders in agriculture and food security policy processes.
- 2. Engage in effective policy communication to inform debate on agriculture and food security policy issues in Malawi. Improve the quality of debate among participants in the policy process through which policy reforms committed to under the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition will be undertaken. NAPAS: Malawi will contribute to policy communication efforts led by other policy research and civil society organizations in Malawi. These policy communications efforts will include conferences, workshops, or production of periodic policy briefs.
- 3. Ensure that gaps in expertise constraining effective agricultural policy reform are filled.

I. Overall Progress of the Project for the Quarter

In the period April 1st 2014 to June 30th 2015 additional progress has been made by the NAPAS: Malawi activity. The NAPAS: Malawi team cemented relationships with staff in the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD), particularly in the Department of Agricultural Planning Services (DAPS) as well as with the Principal Secretary II, Principal Secretary and the Honourable Minister. Additionally, the relationships that the NAPAS staff had begun building with various key non-state stakeholders in the agriculture sector in Malawi have

further strengthened, particularly with the Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM), the Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET) and IFPRI Strengthening Evidence-Based Agricultural Policy (SEBAP) who partnered with NAPAS: Malawi in a policy communication training held at Ufulu Gardens on April 1st, 2015. This training activity is the beginning of a series of trainings which will be conducted in partnership with FUM, CISANET, SEBAP and LUANAR along with several journalists from various media organizations. To further broaden relationships across line Ministries, the NAPAS team engaged a consultant working with the Ministry of Industry and Trade, in order to obtain substantial input from MoIT into the National Agriculture Policy as well as to engage with the leadership in MoIT, including the Principal Secretary of Industry and Trade as well as the Honourable Minister of Industry and Trade. As part of this strategy, an Economist from MoIT was included in the drafting team of the National Agriculture Policy and a Chief Economist was asked to participate in a televised discussion panel that NAPAS: Malawi financially supported. The NAPAS team (Malawi) met with Neil Orchardson of the Oil Seeds Products Technical Working Group (TWG) in the MoIT to help improve coordination between MoIT and MoAIWD. NAPAS team expressed interest in attending meetings of this technical working group and Neil Orchardson added NAPAS to the listsery of members on the TWG. To strengthen relations with LUANAR, the NAPAS team held a meeting with the Vice Chancellor of LUANAR and the Head of Agricultural and Applied Economics Department. Todd Benson and Flora Nankhuni attended the meeting and a closer working relationship was developed that resulted in LUANAR promising to engage MSU and/or IFPRI in the application to become a Centre of Excellence for Agricultural and Applied Economics and LUANAR asking Dr. Nankhuni to be an external examiner for one of the PhD. students. This is an activity that NAPAS has taken on in light of the relationships that NAPAS has established with LUANAR faculty and given the longterm capacity building gains associated with playing this role.

With respect to the policy formulation objective of the NAPAS activity, the NAPAS team has continued to support the DAPS in finalizing the National Agriculture Policy (NAP), through coordinating a drafting team that analysed the inputs from the eleven national consultations previously held across the country. The NAPAS staff helped incorporate the stakeholder inputs into the draft NAP document. Currently the draft NAP, along with the implementation plan and monitoring evaluation plan have been drafted and are receiving final internal reviews prior to being shared with various stakeholders in preparation for a validation workshop of the NAP which is likely to take place by the end of August 2015.

The NAPAS team was also called upon by the Director of Planning in MoAIWD to take the lead role in finalizing the Contract Farming Strategy. The NAPAS team provided comprehensive comments on the draft Contract Farming Strategy and these were shared with the consultant who was hired to develop the CFS. The NAPAS team will play a major role in the validation of the Contract Farming Strategy and will work closely with the FAO team that provided support to the Ministry in the earlier development stages of coming up with the Contract Farming Strategy.

During the period between April 1st and June 30th, 2015, NAPAS:Malawi provided input on the National Seed Policy and Strategic Plan to the Department of Agricultural Research Services based on literature reviews on seed policy formulation. DARS has since incorporated some of the input from NAPAS:Malawi and has also welcomed the NAPAS:Malawi's input on the on-going drafting of the Fertilizer Policy and Strategy and Fertilizer Regulatory Framework.

The NAPAS: Malawi team also shared comments and edited sections of the National Nutrition Policy and Strategy in support of the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS (DNHA), which is leading the drafting of the policy and strategy. The input given was largely derived from literature on agriculture-nutrition linkages and especially the recent research which the IFPRI SEBAP team has been conducting. This research was recently disseminated at a launch event for the research, which was entitled "Mapping the linkages between agriculture, food security and nutrition in Malawi" held on April 28th, 2015 at Ufulu Gardens, Lilongwe. During this launch event, the Chief of Party of the NAPAS activity gave a presentation on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition Policy Landscape in Malawi. The presentation was very well received and helped improve the profile/visibility of the NAPAS activity to a large number of stakeholders. Some of NAPAS' close relationships e.g. with FAO country representative of Malawi, were birthed at this meeting. Several people asked for the presentation, including Catherine Mkamanga of Save the Children, who is one of the people helping with drafting the revised National Nutrition Policy and Strategy. The presentation posted was the **MSU** webpage on http://www.afre.msu.edu/people/nankhuni_janet/pre and on the IFPRI MaSSP newsletter http://www.slideshare.net/IFPRIMaSSP/02-flora-agriculture-nutrition-landscape-04282015

The DAPS requested the NAPAS team to provide input into the drafting of a Climate Smart Agriculture Project proposal. The NAPAS team prepared a presentation which was delivered at the MoAIWD where several stakeholders attended including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Department of Land Resources Conservation (DLRC), Department of Crop Development, other departments in MoAIWD and the ASWAp-SP project secretariat. The FAO team asked the DAPS to allocate one of the NAPAS staff to a task team on Climate Smart Agriculture. Dr. Mabiso was assigned to that task.

In May, the NAPAS policy analyst was asked to lead a team of economists from the DAPS to assist the Agriculture Marketing and Development Corporation (ADMARC) in developing a reforms paper. ADMARC had been asked to appear before the Public Sector Reforms Commission, out of the Vice President's office, to present potential reforms in light of the poor performance recorded by ADMARC in 2014. The policy analyst worked with senior management of ADMARC for several consecutive days (including weekends) which the Principal Secretary commended. The NAPAS policy analyst suggested a number of reforms for ADMARC, including the separation of commercial and social functions of ADMARC, financial management reforms and down-sizing of ADMARC infrastructure through leasing or franchise arrangements with potential private sector investors. More importantly, the NAPAS policy analyst advised that the market operations of ADMARC should be rules-based and be made more predictable and transparent to avoid disrupting grain markets in Malawi. ADMARC senior management reacted with substantial resistance to some of the recommendations but over time and through long deliberations, some of the reforms were finally incorporated in the internal ADMARC reforms document, which will be tabled to the Public Reforms Commission. The process of reforming ADMARC will continue under the leadership of the Public Sector Reforms Commission of the Vice President's office. This will thus continue to be an area of long-term engagement for the NAPAS team, especially since several aspects of ADMARC market operations are pertinent to efforts to encourage private sector investments in agricultural markets and are also included in the

forthcoming National Agriculture Policy; as such implementation will likely take place in the forthcoming years.

The DAPS also requested support on developing a Commercial Agriculture Project as part of brainstorming the forthcoming development financing from the International Development Association of the World Bank. NAPAS staff together with DAPS economists were asked to prepare a presentation on what might be included in the forthcoming Commercial Agriculture Project. Much of the input drew heavily on some of the work done under the National Agriculture Policy as well as the previous period's work on Refocusing Agriculture in Malawi.

With respect to the second objective of *engaging in effective policy communication to inform debate on agriculture and food security*, the NAPAS team has made input in discussions and meetings in several technical working groups as well as the agriculture sector working group meetings. The NAPAS staff attended the mid-term Joint Sector Review meeting as well as the Agriculture Sector Working Group meeting and provided input on several policy issues and agricultural public investments during these meetings. For instance, the Chief of Party of the NAPAS activity gave an update on the NAP to the Minister and other stakeholders present at the Joint Sector Review meeting. In addition, issues pertaining to ADMARC reforms and linking the Legumes and Seed Policy were discussed by the policy analyst. Of particular note, was the European Union's Ambassador keynote speech at the JSR meeting congratulating the MoAIWD on the successful way they conducted the NAP consultation process so far, saying "All stakeholders, both at districts and national level have been consulted intensively and this was very welcome". The NAPAS team led this process.

Todd Benson of IFPRI, who is supporting the NAPAS team from Washington DC started GIS mapping work on the agriculture zoning exercise. It was well received and supported by the Director of Agricultural Planning Services. The NAPAS team initiated meetings on the zoning exercise and met with Mr. Stephen Nanthambwe, who worked with Todd Benson many years ago on GIS work related to the mapping being done for the zoning exercise. Another meeting was arranged with Mr. John Mussa, the Director of the Department of Land Resources and Conservation in the MoAIWD. Several staff in the DLRC also attended the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss efforts to recover some of the shapefiles and data that were used in the original mapping of crop suitability. The NAPAS team followed up by hiring a short-term consultant, Mrs. Sophie Nambuzi. The consultant completed the recovery of map data on June 18, 2015 and additional analysis of the map data continues to take place in an effort to develop a comprehensive analytical document that informs Government of Malawi policy on agricultural zoning. In relation to this work, the NAPAS team (Dr. Todd Benson and Dr Flora Nankhuni) met with MSU professors working on GIS-related work on Malawi (Dr. Joe Massina and his GIS team) to see complementarities between the two activities. It was agreed that should NAPAS Malawi want to do a course on GIS, Joe's department can send a representative from their team to show how policy analysts in Malawi can access and use the data sets that MSU has developed for Malawi and other countries, e.g. on calculations of net primary productivity and its link to fertilizer use in Malawi.

In terms of policy communication with private sector investors, the NAPAS team helped the DAPS team prepare communication materials for the Malawi Investment Forum that was held on June 29, 2015. The policy analyst of the NAPAS activity was asked to help represent the MoAIWD at the Malawi Investment Forum and to play the role of rapporteur on behalf of MoAIWD. Leading up to the Malawi Investment Forum, the NAPAS policy analyst worked with the DAPS economists and the Department of Agricultural Extension Services' Communication Branch staff to develop a document and brochure on bankable investments in the agriculture sector, which were shared with private sector investors during the Malawi Investment Forum.

With respect to the third objective of the NAPAS activity, filling gaps in expertise constraining effective policy reforms, the NAPAS team has continued to engage with the economists in the DAPS on a daily basis, providing on-the-job capacity strengthening on policy analysis. The NAPAS staff assisted the DAPS staff in organizing the NAP drafting team as well as analysing the inputs from the consultations and incorporating them into the draft NAP document. Moreover, the NAPAS team has provided analytical capacity building to economists in the DAPS in the area of developing concept notes and project proposals as well as helping in the preparation of presentations and speech writing¹.

As alluded to above, the NAPAS team collaborated with CISANET, FUM, IFPRI-SEBAP and the Food Security Policy (FSP) Innovation Lab led by Michigan State University to deliver a one-day training on policy communication. A total of 35 trainee participants attended the workshop, including staff from the Department of Planning in the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, CISANET, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) and various public media organizations such as the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), the Nation Newspaper and Farm Radio Trust, among others.

The training was introductory in nature and covered a wide range of issues including the importance of networking, policy analysis and evidence-based policy communication. During the workshop the participants decided to establish a new policy communication network that consists of the various agricultural policy stakeholder organizations in Malawi with the goal of continuing the exchange of best-practice knowledge on policy communication.

II. Challenges, Solutions and Actions taken

The NAPAS activity has continued to face challenges in procuring project vehicles. This has necessitated the continued hiring of vehicles for local transport in Lilongwe as well as for long-distance travel to meetings and consultation events outside Lilongwe. The project vehicles have not yet been procured due to delays in obtaining duty and VAT tax exemption from the Ministry of Finance and Malawi Revenue Authority. The NAPAS Chief of Party was able to meet with the Secretary to the Treasury to discuss this challenge and since then there has been some progress

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¹ NAPAS staff helped MoAIWD staff prepare the speech for the Principal Secretary that was delivered on April 28, 2015 at the Launch Event for "Mapping the linkages between agriculture, food security and nutrition in Malawi". NAPAS staff also helped prepare the Honourable Minister's speech that was delivered at the Malawi Investment Forum on June 29, 2015.

towards procuring the project vehicles. USAID/Malawi staff have assisted with obtaining the necessary documentation on the NAPAS activity in order to obtain tax waivers from the Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA). There are signs that at least one of the vehicles will be procured in the following quarter.

A challenge that also continues is that different agricultural policy reforms under the New Alliance are being handled by different departments in the Ministry and this necessarily requires the NAPAS team to engage broadly within the Ministry, beyond the DAPS. As such, the pre-existing tensions in relationships between policymakers in different departments pose a risk to the NAPAS activity as it is seen as primarily responding to the DAPS. The tension between the Director of Agricultural Planning Services (Mr. Alex Namaona) and the Controller of Agricultural Services-Institutions (Mr. Gray Nayndule Phiri), which was highlighted in the previous quarter continues to prevail. An additional tension that has now been recognized by the NAPAS staff is that between the Principal Secretary of Agriculture and the Principal Secretary of Irrigation. Since Irrigation was previously in a separate Ministry and since the incumbent Principal Secretary of Agriculture used to be the Principal Secretary II in Irrigation, under the Principal Secretary of Irrigation, there seems to be challenges in coordinating the activities in the Department of Irrigation and those in the rest of the Ministry. A solution to this problem has been to continue making efforts to build rapport with the staff in the Irrigation department and to highlight the benefits of collaboration among the different parties. A separate issue that was also highlighted in the previous quarter is the tension between the EU-funded consultant and the NAPAS staff. The solution which was identified in the previous quarter, which is to minimize interactions with the EU-funded consultant, appears to be working.

III. Lessons, Best Practices and Recommendations

While there are many demands in the MoAIWD that end up at the desks of the NAPAS team, the ability to manage these demands and ensure they are aligned to the mandate and objectives of the NAPAS activity is crucial. At the same time building capacity of the DAPS staff will be a critical component towards managing the levels of demands coming to the NAPAS team. In recent months, more and more demands for technical assistance are coming to the NAPAS team, which in some sense is a good sign that the DAPS staff see the NAPAS team as resourceful expertise they can turn to when in need. However, it will become more important to build capacity among the DAPS staff to ensure that they are not continuously asking for assistance from the NAPAS team for every task at hand. As such striking a balance between simply performing a task versus working closely with the DAPS staff and building capacity on-the-job, will be critical in the coming months.

IV. Success stories

NAPAS: Malawi was able to bring together staff from several line Ministries to be part of the NAP drafting team the camped out in Mangochi to move the process forward of developing a NAP. The sentiments from various stakeholders suggest that previously drafting of policies did not include a wide range of experts. As such, this new approach has been hailed a success by several stakeholders and will probably facilitate approval of the policy by the Office of the President (OPC), as OPC participated and advised on what the contents of the policy should be. Similarly,

the collaboration between NAPAS: Malawi, FUM, CISANET, SEBAP and ECAMA in putting together a televised policy discussion has been considered a success as it brought together several non-state actors as well as representatives from the MoAIWD and MoIT to discuss policy issues in the Agriculture Sector in a public forum.

V. Management Issues

The current administrative assistant decided to extend his work period until the end of July 2015. This has given NAPAS additional time to hire another administrative assistant. Interviews of the 5 shortlisted candidates have already been completed and it is hoped that a successful candidate will be offered the position in July 2015.

VI. Update of the PMP

The NAPAS team has begun implementation of the Food and Agricultural Policy Stakeholder Survey, which will serve as a baseline for the NAPAS intervention. To implement the questionnaire interviews, NAPAS: Malawi hired a consultant who will follow up with various stakeholder and ensure that a sizeable sample of stakeholder is obtained and that the data collected are of good quality. The survey is expected to go on until the end of July 2015.

In addition, the NAPAS team continues to track several outputs as shown in Table 1 below. The last column in Table 1 reports on the progress for each indicator that NAPAS tracks and reports on a quarterly basis.

Table 1. Indicators for Monitoring Progress of the NAPAS activity

| Result Area | Indicator | Unit of Measure | Data Source | Method of Data Collection | Frequency of Data Collection | Result & Description |
|----------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| 2 | Number of policy reform commitments the government of Malawi made under the Country Cooperation Framework to support the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Malawi for which MoAIWD is responsible that have been completed or are in progress. | New Alliance policy reform | Twenty-six policy reforms were made in the New Alliance Country Cooperation Framework for Malawi that are the responsibility of MoAIWD to implement. Records on progress on these policy reforms will be updated on a regular basis by NAPAS: Malawi staff. | NAPAS:Malawi record keeping; contact: New Alliance secretariat | • | 5 (NAP, Seed Policy, Contract Farming Strategy, National Nutrition Policy and Strategy, FISP)** |
| 3 | Number of demonstrated uses by policy makers of evidence (analyses and policy papers) generated or presented through NAPAS:Malawi. | Number of demonstrated uses | Annual NAPAS:Malawi records will be used. NAPAS:Malawi will maintain records of use by policy makers of evidence supplied by the project | NAPAS:Malawi record keeping | Annually and quarterly | 6 – FISP brief; Refocusing Agriculture paper; ADMARC Reforms paper; Climate Smart Agriculture Presentation; Commercial Agriculture Discussion Paper; Agricultural Zoning Paper |

| 4 | institutional architecture for agriculture and food security policy | Index of quality of institutional architecture | Measured by stakeholder evaluation survey to capture level of satisfaction and confidence. Baseline survey in April 2015; endline survey in mid-2017 | Stakeholder survey implementation and analysis | life of project | N/A |
|---------|---|---|--|---|-------------------------------|--|
| 5 | processes in Malawi. | Index of quality of policy processes | Measured by stakeholder evaluation survey to capture level of satisfaction and confidence. Baseline survey in April 2015; endline survey in mid-2017 | Stakeholder survey implementation and analysis | Twice over life of project | N/A |
| Output: | | | | | | |
| 1 | policy practice papers generated. | Number of papers produced | | record keeping | Annually and quarterly | 2 – FISP brief, NAP background paper |
| 2 | forums on agriculture and food | Number of learning forums | | | quarterly | 3 - Beating Famine; ECAMA Research Symposium; Climate Smart Agriculture; |
| 3 | Number of people receiving short-term training in policy analysis, planning, formulation, advocacy, monitoring, and evaluation. | Number of trainees | | | Annually and quarterly | 35 |
| 4 | | Number of institutions | | | Annually and quarterly | 0* |

| | society organizations assisted to | Number of firms & CSOs assisted | | | Annually and quarterly | 31 |
|--------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------|
| Input: | | | | | | |
| | 1 Labor allocations to activity, | Person-weeks | Annual and quarterly | NAPAS:Malawi | Annually and | Technical |
| | disaggregated by level of expertise | allocated | NAPAS:Malawi reports to | record keeping | quarterly | support-16 |
| | and type of activity – technical | | USAID/Malawi – 3 weeks spent | | | man weeks |
| | support, communications, capacity | | on technical support (writing and | | | and 1 man |
| | strengthening. | | revising the NAP and the | | | day |

| 2 Financial resources directly expended | US dollars | Commercial Agriculture Project | \$94,983 |
|---|------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| by NAPAS:Malawi on policy process | expended | document by Dr. Nankhuni), 4 | |
| strengthening activities. | | weeks writing and revising the | |
| | | Draft National Agriculture Policy | |
| | | document by Dr. Mabiso. 1 week | |
| | | editing Bankable projects in | |
| | | agriculture document and | |
| | | preparing brochure for the | |
| | | Malawi Investment Forum | |
| | | 3 weeks writing sections of the | |
| | | National Agriculture Policy - | |
| | | NAPAS Consultant and IFPRI | |
| | | Analyst respectively. | |
| | | Communications: Roughly 1 week | |
| | | spent by each of these: Dr. | |
| | | Mabiso; Dr. Mabutwa; Dr | |
| | | Nankhuni; John Mazunda; and 1 | |
| | | day by Dr Benson communicating | |
| | | the refocusing document and | |
| | | getting inputs from different | |
| | | departments of the MoAIWD. On | |
| | | capacity building roughly 1 week | |
| | | (each) spent interacting with | |
| | | Junior staff of the MoAIWD on | |
| | | the NAP consultations and | |
| | | analyses of the data collected | |
| | | during the NAP consultations: | |
| | | Done by Dr. Mabiso and John | |
| | | Mazunda. | |

^{**} These are the policies and strategies that NAPAS has worked on.

VII. Planned Activities for Next Quarter

The following activities shown in Table 2 are planned for the 3rd quarter (April-June) for the NAPAS activity:

Table 2. Planned NAPAS activities for April to June, 2015

| Activity Description | Month or | Description of NAPAS | Staff responsible |
|--|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Finalize Baseline Stakeholder Survey and begin data analysis | July - September 2015 | contribution or efforts NAPAS staff will implement a baseline stakeholder survey for M&E purposes and analyze collected data | Dr. Flora Nankhuni (NAPAS) Dr. Athur Mabiso (NAPAS) Dr. Todd Benson (FSP IL) Dr. Mywish Maredia |
| Validation workshop for the NAP | August 2015 | Department of Agricultural Planning Services has ownership but with significant support from NAPAS. NAPAS will provide financial support for the validation workshop and collaborate with FAO in supporting the DAPS | (FSP, IL) Dr. Flora Nankhuni (NAPAS) Dr. Athur Mabiso (NAPAS) |
| Policy Communication Training | September, 2015 | NAPAS to support training on Policy Communication for various stakeholders including DAPS staff, civil society, LUANAR and journalists in collaboration with Food Security Policy Innovation Lab, FUM, CISANET and SEBAP. | Dr. Athur Mabiso (NAPAS) Dr. Flora Nankhuni (NAPAS) Dr. Suresh Babu (FSP IL) Dr. Sheryl Hendrix (FSP IL) Ms. Noora Aberman (IFPRI-SEBAP) Dr. Candida Nankhumwa (FUM) Mr. Tamani Nkhono- Mvula (CISANET) |
| Validation workshop for the Contract Farming Strategy | September, 2015 | NAPAS will provide financial support and help DAPS organize a workshop to validate the NAP | Dr. Flora Nankhuni (NAPAS) Dr. Athur Mabiso (NAPAS) |
| Analysis and writing Agricultural Zoning brief | September 2015 | Led by FSP Innovation Lab and supported by NAPAS | Dr. Todd Benson Dr. Flora Nankhuni Dr. Athur Mabiso |