Concept note 2

Project Name: **Enhancing rice production and productivity through the adoption of improved agronomic practices**

1. Background

Climate change and increasing pressure from pests and diseases, inadequate knowledge and skills on rice production technologies and farm management, limited access to financing among rice farmers, inadequate extension personnel on rice production technologies and farm management constantly challenge the sustainability of rice production. Innovative climate-smart rice production technologies that can improve tolerance to pests and diseases, and increase resilience from extreme weather and climate change, increase production and productivity are needed. Integrating the public sector, private sector, and farmers into developing sustainable Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) based on simple and affordable technologies will be important for raising the productivity and profitability of rice farming.

2. Project Site

The project will be implemented in 13 districts of Malawi where rice is commonly produced namely: Karonga, Nkhotakota, Salima, Dedza, Chikwawa, Nsanje, Nkhatabay, Zomba, Machinga, Lilongwe, Kasungu, Mchinji and Thyolo.

3. General Objective

To increase production and productivity of rice among farmers.

4. Specific Objectives

- Increase the access of farm inputs for rice farmers.
- Increase adoption of improved climate smart rice production technologies and practices.
- To promote the provision and utilisation of small and large implements for agriculture mechanisation.

5. Activity

Increase the access of farm inputs for rice farmers.

- Introducing the affordable and accessible agriculture input loan system to the farmer's group/cooperative or link-up with local financing institutions.
- Link farmer with rice production inputs (seeds, fertilizer and agro-chemical) service providers.
- Promoting the seed multiplication.
- Mount demonstration fields on recommended rice seeds.

Increase adoption of improved climate smart rice production technologies and practices.

- Harmonizing the climate smart new rice production technologies (SRI, SLAM, GAPS).
- Develop the training package for climate smart rice production.
- Sensitization Workshop of the training package.
- Conducting the baseline survey.
- Conducting of Training of Trainer (ToT) to the officers and lead farmers.

- Conducting In-field Training to the rice production farmers.
- Monitoring the rice production.
- Conducting the endline survey.

To promote the provision and utilisation of small and large implements for agriculture mechanisation.

- Identify the farmer friendly machines which promote to the farmers by project.
- Conduct the training how to use and maintain the machineries to the farmers.
- Conduct the stakeholder meeting with LUANAR and MUST to interact with agro-machinery dealer, input dealer, financial institution and Rice farmers on promoting mechanization.

6. **Budget:** TBA
7. **Project Duration:** 5 years
8. **Beneficiary**

   The project shall reach out rice producers as the direct beneficiaries, inputs suppliers, traders and millers as secondary suppliers.

9. **Expected Impact**

- Number of farmers using agriculture machinery increased.
- Area under agriculture mechanisation increased.
- Availability of farm inputs increased.
- Number of farmers accessing farm inputs increased.
- Number of farmers adopting improved rice production technologies and practices increased.
- Area under improved rice production technologies and practices agriculture mechanisation increased.
- Number of farmers adopting climate smart technologies and practices increased.
- Area under climate smart technologies and practices increased.

End