

Construction of the long-awaited Irrigation Scheme commences



Contractor clearing the site in readiness for construction

The long-awaited construction of the Shire Valley Irrigation Scheme has started with the contractor Conduril Engenharia mobilizing equipment, constructing a camp and clearing the canal route.

Many studies have been undertaken since 1940's to ascertain the feasibility of having an irrigation scheme in the Shire Valley. To the people of the Shire Valley, the dream has become a reality and the expectations are very high that their lives will be transformed once the Scheme is completed.

The Minister of Irrigation and Water Development, Honorable Charles Mchacha and other delegates from the Ministry visited the project site to appreciate progress of the works on the Intake and first 6kms of the Main Canal since its commencement in March, 2020.

Speaking during the visit, Honorable Mchacha commended the progress made on site despite limitations from the COVID-19 pandemic. The contractor is yet to transport more equipment from Mozambique, Zambia and Angola due to COVID-19 restrictions.

"I am impressed with the progress made since the time the President launched the project in March this year. I hope with the momentum the project has taken, it will be completed in time," he said.

The Government of Malawi is in constant engagement with the contractor to ensure that construction of the Intake and the first 6kms is done within the agreed 30 months despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Plans have been put in place to ensure that all time lines are met.

"We are working out a plan to ensure that not much time is lost due to the COVID-19 pandemic because any delays in the process would be costly," said Mr. Sandram Maweru, Project Coordinator for the SVTP.

The construction of the Intake and the first 6kms of the Main Canal will take 30 months to be completed, while procurement of the contractor for the construction of the remaining 46kms is at an advanced stage.

An estimated 43,370 hectares of land are expected to be irrigated through the SVTP, benefitting 48,400 households.