Appendix 1: Question guides for Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews

1. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT FLOODING
   a. How often, when and why do floods happen in your community
   b. How does flooding impact your community?
   c. In your opinion, are floods increasing, decreasing or they are the same in your community?
   d. In your opinion, what characteristics and structure does your community have that helps you in managing flooding?

2. LOCAL KNOWLEDGE FOR FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT
   a. What do you understand by the term local knowledge for flood management?
   b. What is the local knowledge that helps your community with flooding?

   SUBQUESTIONS
   i. What is this local knowledge you are using BEFORE the flood?
   PROMPTS
   - How do you know flood is coming?
   - Can threshold be distinguished? (water levels for impacting agriculture, livestock, roads, houses?)
   - How do you prepare? What actions do you take and what makes you decide so? Provide more explanations of these actions.
   - How much these actions help (in terms of impacts and losses)?
   - Any specific construction practices?
   - Indigenous flood zoning (how do they determine the line where the houses are not built?)
   - In terms of livelihoods- will they change how they plant and harvest? Will they store food? Will they prepare their houses? If moving uplands, where do they move?
   - Any organisations or individuals within the community that help them?

   ii. What is this local knowledge you are using DURING the flood?
   PROMPTS
   - What do you do?
   - How do you evacuate?
   - How do they decide to evacuate?
   - How do you decide to leave the house, move the cattle?
   - Where do you go when you evacuate?
   - Who do you listen to tell you what to do in times of flooding?

   iii. What is this local knowledge you are using AFTER the flood?
   PROMPTS
   - How do you rebuild the houses? Are they in the same place?
   - How do you go back to the situation prior to flooding?

c. What is the most useful local knowledge for you?

3. STATUS OF LOCAL KNOWLEDGE/ LOCAL KNOWLEDGE: NOW AND THEN
   a. In your opinion, is there a difference in the use of local knowledge for flood management now compared to in the past?

4. CREATION, HOLDERS AND TRANSMISSION OF LOCAL KNOWLEDGE
   a. Where do you get the knowledge in relation to flood risk management in general?
   b. What are the ways in which local knowledge is shared in your community?
   c. What factors influence the use of local knowledge by community members?
   PROMPTS
   - Age, occupation, education, level of poverty, being a part of a specific community group

5. BARRIERS FOR LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND ENHANCEMENT OF USE
a. What do you think are the problems with using local knowledge for flood management in your community?

b. How can these problems be solved?

c. In your opinion, can local knowledge improve flood risk management/disaster risk reduction in Malawi?

6. ADDITIONS

   a. Is there anything else you would like to add?