

Improving access and quality of education for girls in Malawi



Joint UN proposal by UNICEF, WFP and UNFPA



Project Title	Improving access and quality of education for girls in Malawi	
Organization Name	Joint UN-UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP and UNDP	
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Project Goal	Improving access and quality of education for girls in Malawi	
Location	Mangochi, Salima and Dedza district-phase 1 and national scale up in phase 2	
Project Duration	3 years (2014-2017)	
Implementing Partners	UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, UNDP -in collaboration with the Government of Malawi	
Target Beneficiaries	<p>16,618 children in standard 5 – 8 56,635 children in standard 1 – 4</p> <p>Approximately 15,000 out of school youth</p>	
Total Budget	USD 17,162,991	
Norway Contribution	USD 17,162,991	
UN Agencies Contribution to education sector in Malawi	USD 40,000,000	

ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CBDA	Community Based Distribution Agents
CRECCOM	Creative Centre for Community Mobilization
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CVSU	Community Victim Support Units
DEC	District Executive Council
GBV	Gender Based Violence
FO	Farmers Organizations
HGSF	Home Grown School Feeding
HIV	Human Immune Virus
ICT	Information Communication Technology
JPAG	Joint Programme on Adolescent Girls
KGIS	Keeping Girls in School
LOE	Level of Effort
LSE	Life Skills Education
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NSSP	National Social Support Policy
NESP	National Education Sector Plan
ODI	Overseas Development Assistance
OVC	Orphaned and Vulnerable Children
OSC	Out of school children
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PLWHIV	People Living with HIV AIDS
PTA	Parent Teachers Association
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMC	School Management Committee
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
STAR	Society tackling aids through rights

THR	Take Home Rations
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
YFHS	Youth Friendly Health Services

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Defining the Problem:

Girls in Malawi have been and continue to face a myriad of interrelated challenges in attaining quality education ranging from social, economic, protective and health. It is recognized that the many negative educational outcomes for girls are a result of complex contextual factors such as poverty, cultural practices and gender inequalities; attitudes and behaviors of boys and men, parents, teachers and other community members; as well negative attitudes and behaviors by the girls themselves.

The fundamental premise of this proposal is that there are ***multiple threats to girls' education. Without a comprehensive approach which simultaneously addresses key known threats such as poor food and nutrition, inadequate protection, poor quality schooling, violations of girls' sexual and reproductive rights; then girls may avoid one threat only to succumb to another.*** The proposal is prompted by the unique availability of technical expertise of three UN agencies (UNICEF, WFP and UNFPA) in support of the Government of Malawi's second Growth and Development Plan. The programme will initially be implemented in a phased approach. It will make use of a 'whole school approach' as well as targeting girls from standard 5 to 8 in five targeted zones in the districts of Salima, Mangochi and Dedza. The programme will be implemented in all 79 schools in the five targeted zones for a period of 3 years. This proposal outlines outputs related to the 3 district coverage but anticipates a significant scale up depending on the lessons derived in each project review.

This programme builds on lessons learnt from the successfully implemented three year Joint UN programme on Adolescent Girls (JPAG) also funded by the Norwegian Government. The JPAG programme focused on improving access to education for adolescent girls in two districts in Malawi. Key lessons from that programme such as the importance of working with community members, especially parents and cultural leaders will be brought into this programme.

Defining the Solution

The overall objective of the programme is to improve access and quality of education for girls in three districts of Malawi; Salima, Mangochi and Dedza¹. The overarching objective will be achieved through pursuit of 7 primary and related outcomes:

1. Girls and boys in targeted schools are well nourished and able to stay in school
2. Increased access to second chance education for both in and out of school girls
3. Quality integrated youth friendly services, resources and structures, addressing CSE, SRHR, HIV/AIDS and GBV in place for both in and out of school girls
4. Reduction of violence against girls in targeted schools and communities and effective referral pathways in place
5. Teacher attitudes and skills are improved/enhanced to effectively deliver life skills based and gender responsive methodologies

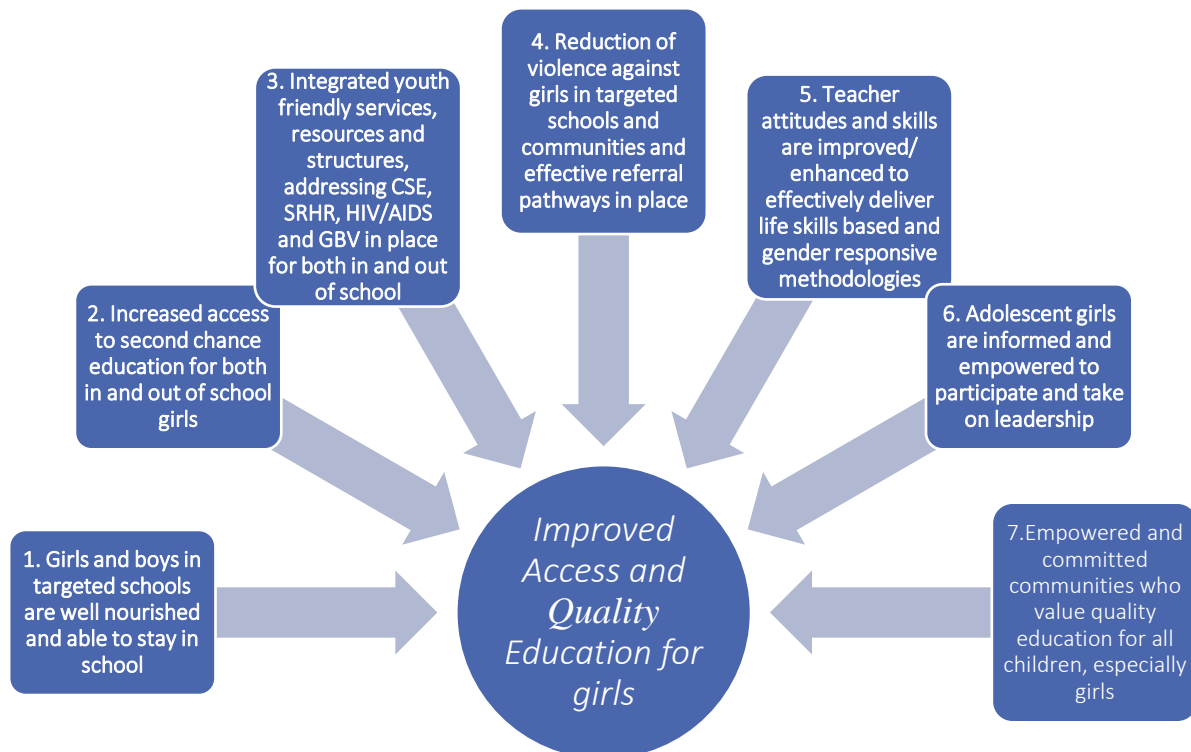
¹ These districts have faced food insecurity over the past two years (MVAC 2011/12 and 2012/13), are prone to flooding (Salima and Mangochi). They have the lowest enrolment rates, highest drop-out rates and widest gender disparity indicators. Of the three districts Mangochi district stands out as one of the most highly populated districts with over 30% of the population facing ultra-poverty. Interventions will take place in three educational zones incorporating 79 schools; 33 schools in Salima, 32 schools in Mangochi and 14 schools in Dedza.

6. Adolescent girls are informed and empowered to demand SRHR services, participate and take on leadership positions within the school and the community
7. Empowered and committed communities will value quality education for all children, especially girls

This education intervention is inter-sectorial in nature and recognizes the myriad of issues that impact girl’s access to education and their ability to complete it. The intervention focuses on schools as the entry point where the relevant UN agencies are able to apply their technical expertise and leverage change to the greatest extent (as compared to the home where children also spend much of their time).

The project will be managed through the establishment of a national steering committee and technical committee. An overall project coordinator will be recruited and supported by a project coordinator for each district. Existing coordinating mechanisms will be used for district implementation. The program proposes a joint monitoring and evaluation framework to track project results and meet accountability requirements. The framework is aligned with key education goals as proposed in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Ministry of Education’s strategic objectives. The UN agencies request a total of USD 17,162,991.00 to implement this integrated proposal in three districts over a 3 year period. This grant will be supplemented by a total of an estimated USD 40,000,000 annually which is the sum total of what all three agencies (combined) contribute to the education sector (to all districts in Malawi).

The basic theory of change postulated by this proposal is that improved access and quality of education for girls can only be achieved through a mitigation of multiple factors. The figure below provides a summary of the theory of change.



Based upon this theory of change, a set of both short and long term key results are expected. In an effort to remain holistic, these key results were chosen as the best indicators to measure the achievements in which all agencies contribute significantly to through their joint and individual activities. In the short term, or the first year of the intervention, key expected results include:

- 1) Increased attendance for girls in the targeted schools;
- 2) Reduced dropout rates for girls in the targeted schools;
- 3) Increased percentage of dropouts who returned/readmitted to school or non-formal education

In addition to marked improvements in the short-term results, by the end of the intervention in 2017, impact-level results are also expected in four key areas:

- 1) Increased enrollment of girls in basic education in the targeted schools;
- 2) Improved pass rates for girls in the targeted schools;
- 3) Improved survival rates of girls completing grade eight without repeating or dropping out;
- 4) Resilient and empowered communities who sustain girls in school

While the UN Joint programme might not have direct control over results at impact level, the project will still measure contribution towards such changes. The measurement for this contribution calls for a baseline (at the onset) and an *independent* evaluation at the end of project.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this proposal is to provide a holistic and human rights based programme which aims to improve access, quality and relevance of education for girls in the districts of Salima, Mangochi and Dedza in Malawi. The fundamental premise of this proposal is that there are multiple threats to girls' education and without a comprehensive approach which simultaneously addresses key known threats such as poor food and nutrition, inadequate protection, poor quality schooling, violations of girls' sexual and reproductive rights, girls will avoid one threat only to succumb to another. Girls' education in Malawi may be compared to a bucket with many holes; unless all the holes are sealed, girls will continue to leak out of the system. This programme therefore aims to ring-fence targeted schools for girls' education ensuring that known threats are mitigated against and schools become a safe quality learning environment for girls and boys alike.

The proposal is guided by technical expertise of three UN agencies (UNICEF, WFP and UNFPA) in support of the Government of Malawi's second Growth and Development Plan. The programme will be implemented in a phased approach starting with 34 schools in the first phase. It will make use of a whole school approach as well as targeting specifically girls from standard 5 to 8 in Salima, Mangochi and Dedza districts in all 79 schools in 5 targeted zones for a period of 3 years. Girls in standard 5 – 8 form the targeted group based on the fact that it is exactly within this period where girls in Malawi tend to drop out of school due to numerous socio-economic and cultural reasons. However, the general whole school approach, applied in the programme, ensures that girls at all ages as well as boys in the targeted schools will also benefit from the programme. Improved girls educational attainment requires improved gender relationships between girls and boys. Boys will therefore be empowered to respect and support girls participation and leadership in school; as well as to interrogate existing power relationships between girls and boys.

The proposed programme seeks to build on lessons learnt from previous programmes and projects such as the UN Joint Programme for Adolescent Girls (JPAG) funded by the Norwegian Embassy. Furthermore, the programme aims to make use of existing systems and policies affecting the complex process of girls'

education attainment. More importantly, the proposed programme emphasizes the importance of youth participation, sustainability and ownership with a strong focus on consultative and community led processes. Hence, the approach involves different levels of stakeholders and beneficiaries, with the ultimate one being the girls themselves.

UN COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

The United Nations has been working in Malawi for the past 50 years during which we have developed five year UN Frameworks in support of the Governments development priorities. Through the three implementing agencies (UNICEF, WFP and UNFPA) the UN is a key partner in the Education Sector, bringing on board technical expertise and building on close and lasting relationships with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Youth.

In a review of the current United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2012-2016) at the end of 2013 – the following notable results have been achieved by the UN in Malawi relevant to this project:

- a. Development of the Free Primary Education Policy Guidelines, girls' education communication strategy 2014 and the National School Health and Nutrition Policy;
- b. Joint Programme of Adolescent Girls in Mangochi and Chikwawa.
- c. Developed and piloted “best practices” through a Joint Programme on Adolescent Girls' Education (JPAG) which has demonstrated both school and community based interventions that address barriers to girls' education;
- d. Provision of school meals to over 800,000 children to increase access and completion of primary school education and;
- e. Support to over 24,000 smallholder farmers with training in post-harvest management, warehouse management and agribusiness skills.
- f. Development of guidelines and support to youth friendly health services to youths, including adolescents
- g. Training of life skills including comprehensive sexuality education to in and out of school youth including adolescent girls
- h. Training and advocacy of gender responsive budgeting in the education sector.

Going forward, the UN, *working together as one*, has been and continues to be a strategic partner of choice to the Norwegian Government based on:

- a. Our focus on **results based management** which serves to demonstrate our effectiveness and ability to deliver value for money. This commitment to results is reflected in the projects' theory of change (see a detailed version on p. 37) which demonstrates how outputs are directly attributable to the UN and how outputs and outcomes are linked;
- b. Our ability to **communicate and deliver as one and undertake joint advocacy efforts** which serves as a powerful tool for promoting and addressing key issues in Malawi such as human rights, gender equality and resilience and;
- c. Our commitment to **more effective programming** through: i) establishment of dedicated windows such as on girls' education. ii) Sustainable approaches including enhancing partnerships with government and CSOs, government institutional capacity building, and programme mainstreaming and scaling up.
- d. Our **strategic partnership with the government of Malawi** which ensures continuity and sustainability of programmes through government scale up and application of knowledge gained from pilot of comprehensive programmes globally, regionally and nationally. The project will provide **support to on-going interventions, with scale and intensity**. The project will

furthermore document lessons that will have the potential for scaling up nationally to other districts.

For this proposal, the three agencies bring on board specific expertise in the following relevant areas:

- Developing and supporting national education quality programmes, national child protection systems and integrated programmes on children (child survival and development) – (UNICEF)
- Developing and supporting a quality integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights program for adolescents, youth and women as well as gender mainstreaming and empowerment of girls and women. And, facilitate delivery of an evidence-based quality life-skills based comprehensive sexuality education for in and out of school young people, especially adolescent girls (UNFPA)
- Alleviating food security, promoting nutrition; enhancing access to education and building long term resilience (WFP)

It should be noted that due to the post-cash gate period and subsequent suspension of donor-aid to Malawi in 2013, the education sector has suffered a severe set-backs in the GOM providing much needed support. This proposal provides a unique opportunity to mitigate against further losses against initial gains made in the sector.

3 SITUATION ANALYSIS

RELEVANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Malawi is a landlocked country located in Southern-East Africa with a population of 15.91 million², (49% males and 51% females) where the majority, or close to 85%, live in rural areas relying on rain-fed subsistence agriculture. The population of Malawi has increased by 32% from 1998 to 2008, representing an annual growth rate of 2.8% (National Statistics Office, 2008). In 2011, it was estimated that the total fertility rate (TFR) was 5.98 births per woman³ despite the general approval and knowledge of family planning. TFR is particularly high in rural areas where it is reported at 6.1.⁴

If the fertility rate remains constant, the population is projected to reach approximately 40.6 million by 2040.⁵ Subsequently, the number of young people is projected to increase to 7.9 million by 2025 and to 15.9 million by 2050.⁶ The projected growth will place an enormous burden upon on the education sector. Malawi is also one of the poorest countries in the world in terms of income, health and education; registering at 170 out of 186 countries (UNDP Human Development Index, 2013). Poverty is compounded by widespread food and nutrition insecurity, which manifests most significantly in the poor nutritional status of children (Emergency Food Security Assessment, 2013). Education has been free since 1994 and, consequently, enrolment has risen steadily from 1.89 million in 1993/4 to 4.49 million in 2013 (including boys and girls)⁷. Gender parity is now reported at 1:1 in the lower grades of primary schools.

² World Bank <http://data.worldbank.org/country/malawi>

³ Demographic Health Survey

⁴ National Statistics Office and ICF Macro, 2011

⁵ Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, 2012.

⁶ RAPID, 2012

⁷ Education Management Statistics System: Education statistics 2000, 2013 bulletin

However, disparities emerge as early as standard 4 with girls dropping out and repeating to a much greater extent than boys. Indeed, less than 25% of girls ever finish primary school.⁸ Notable progress has been made in the education sector over the last decade with the primary net enrolment rate (NER) almost at 100%. However, provision of basic education services still face huge challenges. Pupils-trained teacher ratio is at 95 while pupils-classroom ratio stayed at 107 in 2012⁹, making it extremely difficult to deliver quality education. The dropout rate is as high as 18% and girls are the most disadvantaged in schooling in Malawi. For upper primary level the promotion rates for girls are significantly lower than that for boys (74% vs. 70% at Standard 6, 74% vs. 63% at Standard 7, and 69% vs. 54% at Standard 8, respectively.) Attendance of students and teachers is also problematic, and it is negatively affected by poverty and economic hardship.

GENDER DISPARITIES

According to the 2012 UN gender inequality index, Malawi ranks 124 out of 148 countries. Inequality is most evident in rural areas where female-headed households are more likely than male-headed households to be poor and less educated (IFPRI, 2011). This can be explained in part due to the specific impediments women face in accessing vital productive resources and education, as well as cultural practices that are a barrier to women's empowerment. Girls in Malawi continue to face a myriad of interrelated challenges in attaining quality education ranging from social, economic, protective and health. It is recognized that the many negative educational outcomes for girls are a result of complex contextual factors such as poverty, cultural practices and gender inequalities; attitudes and behaviors of boys and men, parents, teachers and other community members; as well negative attitudes and behaviors by the girls themselves.

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

There is compelling evidence to show that girls are not safe from sexual abuse at school. In late 2014, the Malawi Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare, will release a nationally representative quantitative survey on Violence Against Children which has found that more than one in five girls experience sexual abuse before the age of 18 and half of these before the age of 13; a third of all 13-17 year olds who had experienced sexual abuse reported that the abuser was a class or school mate; and, between 10-20% of all sexual abuse incidents reported occurred at school. Furthermore, the NSO 2012 Gender Based Violence baseline survey reported higher figures finding that 26% of rape and defilement cases were reported to have taken place in schools as were 23% of cases of unwanted sexual touching, and 17% of cases of unpleasant remarks and sexual harassment (NSO 2012). The 2012 KGIS Baseline Survey also found that girls frequently did not attend school due to a lack of school sanitation facilities.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS FOR GIRLS

Around 50% percent of all girls are married by age 18 in Malawi and 25% of all adolescent girls already have a child (UN Foundation, 2012). Despite general approval and knowledge and use rate (42%) about family planning, the total fertility rate (TFR) for Malawi remains high, especially in the rural areas where it is reported at 6.1 (National Statistics Office and ICF Macro, 2011). Most sexually active adolescent girls in Malawi do not use any form of contraception, especially Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives (LARCS) which could positively impact on the country's total fertility rate and provide sexually active adolescent girls a chance to prevent unwanted pregnancies and remain in school. Furthermore, according

⁸ Education Management Statistics System: Education statistics , 2013 bulletin

⁹ EMIS 2012 report

to the MDHS (2010), girls are four times at risk of being infected with HIV compared to boys. Most of these women contract the virus when they are adolescents. Adolescent girls remain vulnerable to HIV due to many factors, some biological in nature others cultural and social, such as early marriages and sexual debut. This is further compounded by the existence of various sexual abuses, as well as transactional multiple concurrent partnerships in search of resources to meet their basic needs. In addition, although more women are now reported to have comprehensive knowledge on HIV, fewer than ever before reported to have used a condom at the last high risk sexual encounter study (MDHS 2010).

RETENTION OF GIRLS IN SCHOOLS

Data from the NSO (2012) revealed that 58% of girls drop out of school and out of those remaining in school, 18% became pregnant and 8% married (NSO 2012). The failure to retain girls in schools in Malawi is largely attributed to harmful cultural practices, lack of age- appropriate reproductive health information and knowledge, self- efficacy and utilization of services which, if made available, could assist in reduction of drop out through pregnancy prevention as well as reduction in HIV/STI transmission.

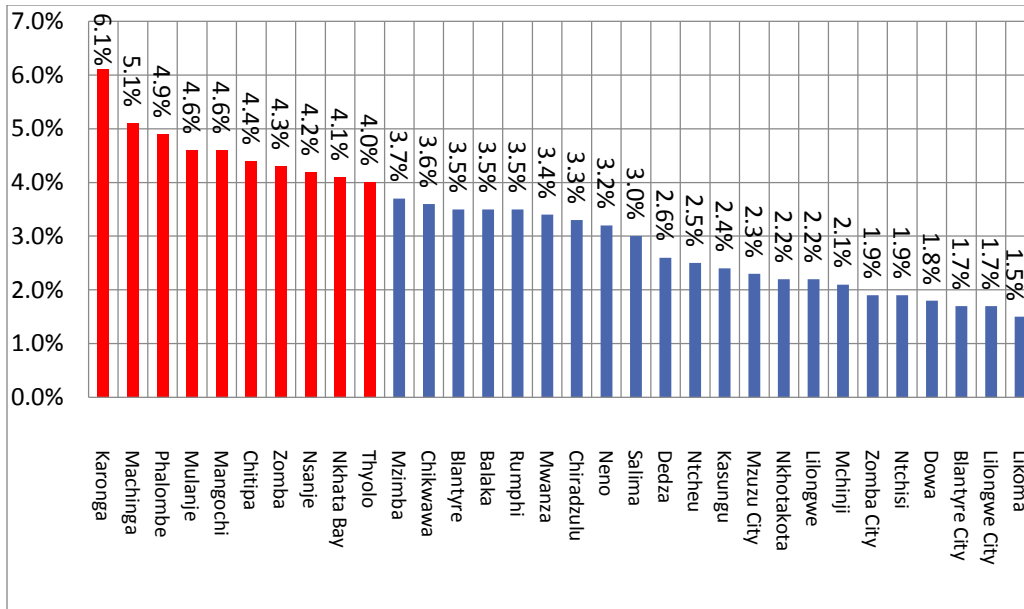
In addition, there is still growing tendencies to educate boys rather than girls. In most rural households in Malawi, parents are smallholder farmers and income is limited¹⁰. The direct costs of education (i.e. uniform, books, and registration fees) means that parents can rarely afford to educate all their children and paying for a son's education rather than a daughters' is seen as a better investment since girls are expected to work at home and to join their husbands' families at marriage. Secondly, a lack of reproductive health information, comprehensive knowledge, skills and services results in girls not able to exercise their sexual and reproductive health rights and they therefore become more susceptible to early sexual debut, early marriage and pregnancy. Sentinel monitoring conducted by UNICEF recently observed that students' attendance at primary school was largely sacrificed during the economic crisis, particularly during the first quarter of the year when they are mobilized for agricultural cultivation.

As an illustration of the extent and nature of the issue in Malawi, the figure below shows the ranked distribution of the districts based on marriage or union before the 15th birthday. Mangochi district is one of the top ten districts:

Graph 1: Distribution of percentage of those married/union before the 15th birthday by district¹¹.

¹⁰ UNFPA, 2012: Marrying too young End child Marriage pp68

¹¹ EQUITY ANALYSIS OF SELECTED TEN INDICATORS UNDER CHILD PROTECTION SECTION, UNICEF, 2013



QUALITY OF SCHOOLING

An unfriendly school environment with scarce resources is another critical barrier to girls enjoying quality education. The national pupil qualified teacher ratio is at alarming 76:1 (EMIS, 2013) where teachers, especially in the rural areas, are working within an extremely challenging environment; low salaries, classrooms generally with over 100 students (well above the national target of 60:1) lacking most or all teaching and learning materials. A multi-level analysis was carried out with SACMEQ data from 2007 to identify the major school level factors influencing reading and mathematics scores for 6th grade students in 15 SACMEQ countries, including Malawi. The most significant factors affecting learning outcomes in both reading and mathematics for students in Malawi were class sizes, school resources, number of female teachers in the school and the amount/years of professional training teachers had received. One interesting outcome of the analysis showed that pupils who had never repeated a grade did better in all the 15 countries than pupils who had repeated once or more (Hungu, 2011). This is of particular interest for Malawi where repetition rates are extremely high. There is a prevailing culture for making children repeat classes. A summary of the status of quality of education in Mangochi district is attached as an annex as an example of the three districts. A recent presentation on the status by the District Education Manager below highlights this deplorable situation:

Mangochi District School Profiling and Gap analysis by Sam Kalanda MOEST-2014

- Status for Mkumba Zone is very bad
- **Pupil/teacher ratio:** 119:1
- **Pupil/classroom ratio;** 104 : 1
- **Latrines ratio;** Boys 97:1 - Girls 77:1
- **Pupil/text book;** 6:1
- **Pupil/desk;** 14:1
- **Repetition rate;** 12,5%
 - Because of frequent absenteeism due to cultural practices, e.g. initiations → No involvement of the community
 - Poor delivery of lessons → Teachers do not know what to teach

!!! High girls drop-out rate (7%)

SCHOOLING AND FOOD INSECURITY

The third Integrated Household Survey (IHS 2010/11) reported that over half of the population remained poor and one quarter were living in extreme poverty, with total expenditure below the food poverty line (an income of MK 22,956 [US\$ 146] or below per person per year). In addition, almost half (47%) of the children under age 5 in Malawi are short for their age (stunted) due to the long-term effects of malnutrition and 20% are severely stunted. Most Malawian families live with food insecurity during a particular period of the year. This situation generally results in children, mostly girls, being asked to stay at home to work and look for food. Those that attend school struggle with hunger manifesting in the student as low energy and an inability to concentrate.

4 LESSONS LEARNT

WORKING WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Key lessons from the three year Joint UN programme on Adolescent Girls (JPAG), which focused on improving access to education and skills development for adolescent girls in two districts in Malawi¹², point to the importance of working with community members, especially parents and cultural leaders. Despite results in terms of decreased dropout rates and increased attendance rates, several girls were still married due to pressure from their parents and guardians who forced their adolescent girls to get married; or to attend traditional initiation ceremonies to prevent out of wedlock pregnancies and for economic gain. Similar challenges can be found in other projects aimed at retaining girls in schools. In a quarterly report from CRECCOM (October, 2013), working in five districts in Malawi, it is mentioned that the largest barrier to readmitting girls in school after they have dropped out are cultural beliefs and attitudes of parents who consider the girls as adults if they have become pregnant or married. One key lesson from the CRECCOM report is the importance of communities developing their own by laws, contracts or code of conducts which support girls' right to education. The role of professionals, should therefore, focus on providing support to community members to understand and promote the realization of girls' rights including their sexual and reproductive health rights, to promote access to quality integrated youth friendly health services and to apply education policies and laws.

IMPACT OF PROVIDING SCHOOL MEALS

One of the major interventions proven to enhance educational access (enrolment in particular) is through providing school meals or supporting schools with home grown school feeding programmes. Through the provision of school meals, schools in Malawi have seen attendance and retention rates rise above the national average, drop-out rates decline and the perception of teachers is that children are more alert and participatory in the classroom. In 2013, schools who were supported by the World Food Programme reported 5% drop-out rates for girls, compared to the national average of 16%. Furthermore, enrolment, attendance and pass rates all improved within a period of one year in schools which offered school meals. Overall results show that girls who do not receive school meals or take home food rations are more affected negatively than boys especially with regards to pass rates, where boys are 14% higher than girls (MANEB 2013).

EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES FOR GIRLS (LIFE-SKILLS AND BEYOND)

All adolescent girls go through a transition period from childhood to adulthood, and as such need to be equipped with knowledge to understand how their bodies function as they grow physically, sexually and socially. Girls must be provided high quality sexual and reproductive health information on how pregnancy occurs and how it can be prevented; importance of duo protection (protection from sexually transmitted infections/HIV and pregnancy); how to protect themselves from sexual exploitation, GBV and harassment; how to manage themselves during menstruation and how to negotiate for safer sex. Despite some of these topics being integrated into the Malawian Life Skills curricula, open and informed discussions including human sexuality are not commonly taught by teachers in schools. Furthermore, parents do not feel comfortable to discuss sex and sexuality issues with their children. Even the existing traditional structures that socialize young people to sex and sexuality do not provided age-appropriate SRH information and instead the information provided push most girls to exercising early sex and

¹² The UN Joint Programme was implemented in TA Katuli in Mangochi and STA Masache in Chikwawa with UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO

marriage. Consequently, young people are denied critical age-appropriate human sexuality information when they are both in and out of school.

The National HIV Prevention Strategy (2011-2016) specifies activities to provide life skills based comprehensive sexuality education for in and out of school youth, as well as providing gender responsive and sensitive peer education on sex and sexuality for youth. These policies are in line with evidence showing that comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) which is scientifically accurate, as well as culturally and age appropriate, can provide young people with the knowledge, skills and self-efficacy to make informed decisions about their sexuality and lifestyle (UNESCO, 2009). Research also indicates that CSE can delay sexual debut among young people, as well as increasing condom and overall contraceptive use among sexually active youth (Boonstra, 2007). Furthermore, important lessons from the JPAG have shown that mentorship of out of school girls has resulted in some girls abandoning marriages and returning to school. In addition, SRH mentorship resulted in sexually active adolescents either achieving secondary abstinence or accessing modern family planning methods, especially condoms, from youth friendly community based distribution agents (JPAG final report, 2013).

CONCLUSION

The key lessons drawn from our combined experience and the available research are that the programme must have the following components to ensure impact:

- *Community participation and cultural transformation/social behavior change;*
- *Girls' empowerment (including leadership and participation at school and community development activities) and support to exercise sexual and reproductive health rights;*
- *Poverty reduction and food security programming focused on children and especially girls;*
- *Schools must be safe and protective; free from gender based violence and girl friendly.*
- *Schools must be supported to deliver a quality education (reduced class size, improved curriculum, sufficient resources/scholastic materials/education package, quality training for teachers, incentives to motivate teachers to perform well. With mechanisms to allow girls to access sexual and reproductive health information and services, etc.)*

5 JUSTIFICATION

Years of research and evidence prove that investing in girls' education is an effective way to not only improve gender equality, but also to hasten development and break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition, hunger and poverty. Girls' education is a fundamental tool in stemming population growth and increasing girls' access to their sexual and reproductive health rights. According to the World Bank (2007) an extra year of primary school raises girls' future wages by up to 20% and for every 1% increase in the proportion of girls with secondary education, a country's annual per capita income growth rate increases by 0.3% points.

Educated girls marry later, have lower mother-to-child HIV transmission rates and have fewer children who lead more productive and healthier lives (UNESCO 2011). Additionally, educated women are more likely to resist domestic violence, harmful traditional practices that perpetuate gender inequalities (e.g. early marriage) and discrimination against girls and women at home, in society and in the workplace (Council on Foreign Relations, 2004).

Malawi needs a programme that can holistically address the multiple barriers that girls face to attaining good quality education. The basic tenet of this proposed program is that the bottlenecks (*the "push"*)

factors) around girls accessing and completing school can only be overcome by providing an integrated approach (*the “pull” factors*) that tackle multiple factors that inhibit girl education.

Building on the existing organizational infrastructure of delivering as one UN and the now concluding Joint Programme on Adolescents Girls (JPAG), the three UN agencies actively engaged in the Malawi education sector will harness their core competencies and respective comparative advantages to provide a comprehensive platform and facilitate delivery of a package of services for increasing girl’s access to basic education.

6 SUSTAINABILITY

This programme is defined within the government structure and as such it will help to implement the government sector implementation plan (2013 – 2016) with specific references to the Girls’ Education Strategy and the Primary School Improvement Plan (PSIP) which are key documents in the realization of quality education in Malawi. Advancing girls’ education is of a strategic importance for the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) II, and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF 2012-2016). These documents confirm government and UN commitments to ensuring that all boys and girls, in and out-of-school, are enrolled and retained to complete basic education by 2016. Focusing specifically on girls’ education is further backed by strong political will for gender equality and women’s empowerment that has taken form in policies and legislation, such as the Gender Equality Act (2013), the draft National Gender Policy (2011) and the aforementioned Girls’ Education Strategy (2014). Furthermore, the Government of Malawi has clearly prioritized issues on quality education, good physical and mental health, food, nutrition and livelihood security in its various policies and plans (MGDS II, National Social Support Policy, National Nutrition Policy and Strategic Plan, National Education Strategic Plan, Education Sector Implementation Plan I and II). Those were also among the priorities identified by Malawian children and youth during the post 2015 consultations in 2013 (UNICEF & Save the Children, 2013).

With specific reference to the school feeding programme, school meals which are linked to agriculture production are a major component of the National School Health and Nutrition Strategy (2010). Efforts are being made to expand school meals and shift towards government management. In order to reach universal coverage for school meals, the national school meals programme aims to look at more sustainable models using “home grown” foods enabling schools to source food from community farmers that will not only improve livelihoods, but also the nutrition and health of Malawian children while they stay in school and finish their education. The ‘home grown’ feeding approach will be adopted in this programme to enhance the sustainability of the overall initiative.

Protection components within this proposal are fundamentally aimed at *sustainably* preventing violence in the community by radically transforming attitudes towards the acceptability of violence. The interventions aim to stop the culture of violence and to end the intergenerational cycle of violence experienced by Malawian children. The government led Violence Against Children Survey to be released later this year conclusively shows that a culture of violence exists in Malawi’s schools (and communities) and that these schools are unable to refer survivors of abuse to relevant service providers. The central finding of the Violence Against Children (VAC) Survey is that much of the violence experienced by children is perpetrated by other children and at a younger age than previously thought (50% of abuse occurs before age 13). The VACS Response plan (to be released in the last quarter of 2014) will outline government priority areas, including the need to increase child based programming within schools to prevent young boys reacting to the violence they experience by perpetrating upon others; and through supporting girls to strengthen prevention and empowerment strategies. Interventions proposed in this document have emerged from two recent planning meetings with the Ministry of Education in the week of

10 June and the week of 7 May and are, therefore, grounded by nationally representative evidence of the prevalence of violence and government designed strategies to respond.

As mentioned before, this programme is also aligned to government priorities outlined in the 2014 Girls' Education Strategy. It furthermore strives to ensure that relevant ministries at the national and district level are central to the design and implementation of the project. This has been done through consultation meetings at national and district level, when for example choosing the respective districts, zones and school communities to work within. Implementation and ownership of the programme will further be strengthened by convening planning meetings prior to the commencement of the programme with all relevant stakeholders, including district education committees and officers.

The project has a phased approach whereby the first 18 months are considered the piloting phase to ensure impact (and to test the validity of key assumptions) before scaling up and fine-tuning in later years. However, the sustainability of this intervention demands continued investment from the Malawi government, donors and development partners. Given existing structural and cultural barriers to girls' education, investments must be viewed as **long-term commitments** if we are to break the intergenerational patterns of discrimination and neglect that are the foundational barrier to girls' education. UNICEF, WFP and UNFPA are committed to this intensive collaboration specifically because it is viewed as a more sustainable and impactful method to achieve girls education that attack key barriers simultaneously.

7 APPROACH

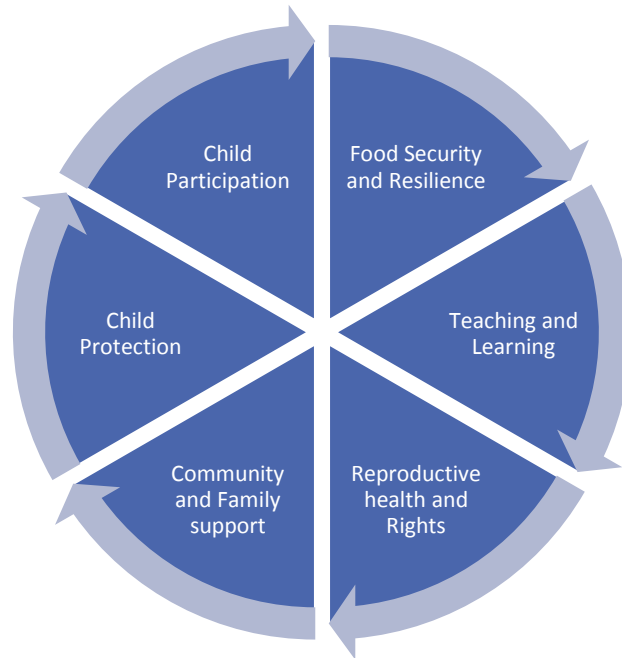
While this intervention is inter-sectorial in nature and recognises the myriad of issues that impact girls' access to and ability to complete education; at its core, this is an education intervention. The intervention focuses on schools as the entry point where the relevant UN agencies are able to apply their technical expertise and leverage change to the greatest extent (as compared to the home where children also spend much of their time). As discussed in the comparative advantage section above, WFP has established feeding programmes in schools, UNICEF has an education programme and UNFPA is supporting integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights programmes in schools. We have relationships at different levels; with head teachers, district officers and respective ministries and can therefore bring our programmes quickly to scale through exerting influence upon the way in which schools operate, how they engage with the community around them and the standards of teaching and curriculums developed. The framework being applied to this programme follows the 'quality education' framework which incorporates five critical dimensions (UNICEF 2000):

- 1) Learners who are healthy and well nourished, ready to learn and supported by their families and communities;
- 2) School environment which is healthy, safe, protective and gender sensitive;
- 3) Content reflected in relevant curricula and activities contributing equally to academic knowledge, services and skills as well as on life skills subjects such as gender, protection, HIV/AIDS prevention and sexual and reproductive health rights;
- 4) Teachers are using child-centered teaching approaches/methodologies in a well-managed classroom;
- 5) Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes which are linked to national and universal goals for education as well as active participation in society.

This definition of quality allows for an understanding of education as a complex system which is embedded in a political, cultural and economic context. The right of the child to survival, protection, development and participation must always be the core focus.

8 INNOVATIONS

The joint programming element in itself is an innovation that can be replicated in other sectors besides education in the context of actualizing the ONE UN approach. The strategy and approach will be systemized, documented and shared with the UNCT in Malawi. The core of the innovation, as highlighted in the theory of change, will be that a holistic approach will accelerate access and quality of girls' education in Malawi as indicated in the figure below:



In an effort to learn and develop more advanced and effective programming, the following specific key innovations will be integrated into the intervention:

- **Cash Transfers:** In recent years, governments and agencies have increasingly used social cash transfers to alleviate poverty and vulnerability. As a part of this growing trend, WFP Malawi has integrated cash transfers into its emergency programming for the last two years, reaching more than 150,000 food insecure beneficiaries. It is in this context that the use of Cash as a THR modality is an excellent opportunity to apply this proven and innovative tool to the inter-related issues of food security and girl's education.
- **Real-Time Monitoring:** To enhance availability of beneficiary data and key output indicators, WFP will use an electronic registration, attendance tracking and data management system called System for Cash Operations (SCOpe) as a part of the THR Cash Transfer activity. The application is a WFP real-time monitoring tool developed as part of the Cash and Voucher operations. SCOpe offers both on-line and off-line registration and attendance tracking platforms, allowing WFP to use the system in remote areas with little or no internet connectivity. This will also be an opportunity to link directly with the cohort tracking system of the ministry of Education which will give further information at child level.
- **Teaching and learning:** UNICEF will also make use of ICT for monitoring purposes to measure the quality of education and to enhance monitoring of results for *improved equity* (MORES approach). It will also strive towards making use of innovative measures and systems ensuring relevant and contextualized inputs for teaching and learning including continuous professional

development of teachers. Making use of ICT to both monitor **and** provide inputs to the teaching and learning process will be of great value to respond quickly and effectively to bottlenecks within the programme which will then improve decision making when planning and reprogramming.

- **Home Grown School Feeding:** The Home Grown School Feeding model consists of a decentralized school feeding intervention in which schools receive funds to procure food commodities locally from small-holder farmer organizations. Its objectives are multiple; 1) human capital creation through better education and health of school children and 2) physical and financial capital generation for farmers through increased production, improved quality and better prices; and 3) local development through economy activation and empowerment of community structures.
- **Comprehensive Sexuality Education:** Research to explore the impact of comprehensive sexuality education on adolescent girls will be applied. In addition, boys will be targeted as champions in support of girls' education while girls themselves remain the focus of the programme.

9 OVERALL OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND RATIONALE

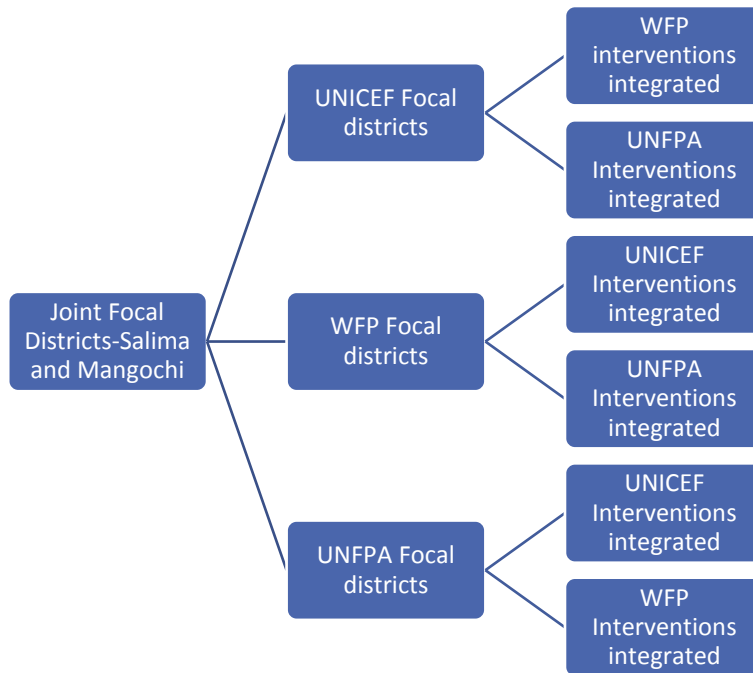
The overall objective of the programme is to improve access and quality of education for girls. Initially, in three districts of Malawi; Salima, Mangochi and Dedza. These districts have faced food insecurity over the past two years (MVAC 2011/12 and 2012/13) are prone to flooding (Salima and Mangochi), they have the lowest enrolment rates, highest drop-out rates and widest gender disparity indicators of all district in the country. Of the three districts Mangochi district stands out as one of the most highly populated districts with over 30% of the population facing ultra-poverty. Interventions will take place in five educational zones incorporating in total 79 schools; 33 schools in Salima, 32 schools in Mangochi and 14 schools in Dedza. The second objective and strategy¹³ is to scale up the programme to all the zones and subsequently other districts in Malawi. This will depend on the project review annually as well as national consultations with GOM.

Scale up scenarios are as follows:

1. Extend the project of convergence of the 3 agencies to new districts to be chosen on the project target district criteria (status of girls education);
2. Extend the project to each of the non-convergence areas each agency is working on the area of education. For instance, UNICEF is currently working in Dedza, Nakhotakota, Nhakatabay, Chitipa, Chikwawa, Nsanje, Salima, Mangochi, Thyolo and Machinga. Extension would then mean, applying the newly tested integrated approach (including food security and reproductive health elements) to the on-going work in other districts.
3. Scale up to be done on the decentralized model and included in the district education plans, and selection to be guided by the GOM;

¹³ The current budget and framework does not include these scenarios. This be considered in the project review.

Hypothetical scale up of Joint UN integrated girls' education Programme in Malawi¹⁴



The objectives of the programme will be reached by focusing on a set of outcomes explained in more detail below. The overarching objective will be achieved through the pursuit of 7 primary outcomes:

1. Girls and boys in targeted schools are well nourished and able to stay in school
2. Increased access to second chance education for both in and out of school girls
3. Quality integrated youth friendly services, resources and structures, addressing CSE, SRHR, HIV/AIDS and GBV in place for both in and out of school girls
4. Reduction of violence against girls in targeted schools and communities and effective referral pathways in place
5. Teacher attitudes and skills are improved/ enhanced to effectively deliver life skills based and gender responsive methodologies
6. Adolescent girls are informed and empowered to demand SRHR services, participate and take on leadership positions within the school and the community
7. Empowered and committed communities who value quality education for all children, especially girls

¹⁴ This scenario builds on the theory of change discussed- that the integrated approach to mitigating negative “push” factors that keep girls out of school. The innovation or difference is the availability of multiple services offered by the three UN agencies. Since each agency is already working in certain districts, the scale up should ensure a coverage of this initially before rolling out the programme in all districts in the country. The desired outcome will then be the reflection of the integrated approach in all district education plans.

THE PROJECT STRATEGY

The project will employ 5 pronged multi-faceted strategies to tackle both human resource capacity as well deeply seated social norms that keep girls out of school. These strategies are based on proven time tested models employed by the UN. The figure below illustrates this:



1. Child friendly and resilient school communities (holistic, life cycle and government structure);
2. Community mobilization and Advocacy using various communication strategies - media and interpersonal;
3. Capacity development (Multi-dimensional and within decentralized and national levels);
4. Partnership development and inter-sectorial linkages
5. Research (Baseline and Operations) and knowledge generation and management.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

Outcome 1: Girls and boys in targeted schools are well nourished and able to stay in school

Description of Activities

The project will ensure that all learners that attend school are provided with diversified and nutritious meals using the Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) model. HGSF is one of the strategies aimed at increasing resilience households to withstand, recover and avoid economic and natural shocks and reduce their exposure to seasonal variations through interventions aiming at building up households' human, physical, financial, natural and social capital. Complementary interventions with different specific objectives, adapted according to context analysis, will therefore support resilience building. In this framework, HGSF draws from WFP's extensive experience in school feeding and local purchases, in particular the Purchase for Progress initiative.

The model consists of a decentralized school feeding intervention in which schools receive funds to procure food commodities locally from farmer organizations. Its objectives are multiple; human capital creation through better education and health of school children and, by extension, their families; physical and financial capital generation for farmers through increased production, improved quality and better prices; and local development through economy activation and empowerment of community structures.

The project will therefore promote sourcing of locally produced food of the right quality and quantity to students at the right time and increases knowledge about the use of locally available food at the household levels thereby contributing to dietary behavior change at household level; empowers schools to be autonomous in managing their own funds for successful decentralization process; create awareness in communities about the importance of providing nutritious food to learners and applying lessons learned in their homes. Increases smallholder farmers' capacities in productivity, storage management and negotiation skills, the project will provide a market to small holder farmers to meet the demand created by the schools using existing community structures and accountability mechanisms. Ministry of Agriculture and available non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as NASFAM and Malawi Lake Basin will be engaged to build the capacity of farmer organizations in order to provide required quantity and quality food commodities demanded by the schools.

Girls and orphaned boys from Standard 5-8 will receive a conditional take home ration (cash / food) as an additional incentive for parents / guardians to keep them in school. Take-home rations will only be distributed to designated students after attending at least 80 percent of school days in a month, as verified by teachers and PTAs in the class register.

An assessment will be conducted at the outset to determine levels of preparedness to implement HGSF at the school level. Depending on capacity, schools will be supported with additional infrastructure such as storerooms, kitchens, feeding shelters and equipment necessary for safe and hygienic food preparation, storage and distribution.

Inputs: Financial resources, skills and supplies, and infrastructure which provide for sustainable community driven school feeding and conditional take home rations

Activities:

- 1.1 Identify and train local farmer organizations, PTA's, SMC's and food committees on production of adequate diversified food commodities for dietary diversification, nutrition, hygiene and sanitation, post-harvest and warehouse management as well as negotiation skills.

- 1.2 Distribute diversified meals to all target schools through the home grown school feeding model. The meals consist of one third micronutrients recommended for the age group
- 1.3 Distribute take home rations to girls and Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (boys) in standard 5 – 8 upon at least 80% attendance per month
- 1.4 Construct/rehabilitate kitchens, feeding shelters and store rooms (non-cost) for quality school meals delivery¹⁵
- 1.5 Provision of cooking and eating utensils, including fuel efficient stoves, cooking and eating utensils
- 1.6 Provision of appropriate low cost hand washing facilities (buckets – 20 per school)¹⁶

Outcome 2: Increased access to second chance education for both in and out of school girls

Description of Activities:

The project will provide second chance education for both in and out of school girls. The programs will be based on providing functional literacy and numeracy skills. For the out of school girls, Literacy and numeracy skills will be provided through a nine month youth functional literacy programme delivered at the community level using an already developed and certified curriculum. The curriculum will be modified to include effective aspects of sexual reproductive health including community specific functional areas such parenting, reproductive health education and practical sessions.

Inputs: Financial resources to support project activities, technical support and supplies.

Specific activities

- 2.1 Mobilize communities to open 220 NFE learning centers in the targeted districts
- 2.2 Capacity building of tutors for non-formal education
- 2.3 Local procurement of teaching and learning materials for non-formal education
- 2.4 Out of school girls identified and provided with second chance education opportunities through functional literacy and numeracy programmes which includes parenting education
- 2.5 Create pathways back to formal schooling through: i) Orientation of communities on the re-admission policy in the targeted communities ii) direct participation in formal examinations

Outcome 3: Integrated youth friendly services, resources and structures, addressing CSE, SRHR, HIV/AIDS and GBV in place for both in and out of school girls

Description of Activities:

Life skills education that incorporates comprehensive sexuality education sessions for both in and out of school girls will be provided through specially adapted curricula. An attempt will be made to integrate key CSEC in youth friendly activities in sports and arts. The program will also link school to youth friendly health services, GBV prevention and management structures within their communities to promote access to YFHS including HIV counselling and testing, treatment, care and support. Need based support will be provided to networks of girls living with HIV and post- test clubs.

¹⁵ This is at No Cost to the programme. WFP will cover this

¹⁶ To be covered by the UNICEF WASH Programme

The project will also activate school health programs through provision of integrated youth friendly services including, but not limited to, CSE, YFHS and GBV in the targeted schools and communities. Peer to peer approaches will be deployed to increase girls' participation and create safe spaces for adolescent girls to access SRHR services and discuss sensitive SRH issues. As a result, peer educators will be trained to impart knowledge on CSE and SRHR (addressing life skills CSE, SRHR, HIV/AIDS and GBV) for both in and out of school girls. Demand for YFHS will be created through raising awareness of existing YFHS for young people especially adolescent girls. Related recreation and educational materials will be procured for all YFHS sites and target schools to attract young people to visit the facilities.

Inputs: Financial resources to support project activities, technical support and supplies.

Activities:

- 3.1 Build capacity of 100 Trainers and 200 peer educators in CSE Peer education
- 3.2 Conduct trainer of trainers Life skills based Comprehensive sexuality education sessions for out of school girls and boys
- 3.3 Renovate and rehabilitate youth friendly health services and link schools to youth friendly services, GBV prevention and management structures within their communities to promote access to YFHS including HIV counseling and testing, treatment, care and support
- 3.4 Train youth friendly service providers (CSE, YFHS, and GBV) in the targeted schools and communities
- 3.5 Support school and cluster level debates on life skills and SRH
- 3.6 Create demand for YFHS services among young people
- 3.7 Procure YFHS recreation and educative for YFHS sites and schools
- 3.8 Support Provision of YFHS outreach services for young people, especially adolescent girls

Outcome 4: Reduced violence against girls in targeted schools and communities and effective referral pathways in place

Description of Activities:

Through this outcome, participatory approaches will be used to identify key protection issues faced by students and teachers at the school, while at the same time developing community led solutions. The activities will strengthen community, parent, teacher and student collaboration in understanding protection issues and through the process, will be mobilized to actively break down social norms and mitigate against other barriers to creating a safe school for all children. The approach builds on the participatory 'reflect' model whereby the stakeholders themselves (students, teachers, parents and relevant community members) are guided to reflect upon the key protection issues/threats faced by themselves in and around the school environment and then are supported through a facilitated process to develop school based strategies to mitigate against these threats.

Strategies will be developed and articulated through a 'School Improvement Plan' which will include actions to address the following 4 layers of the protective environment of the school:

- Environment – What modifications to the school and community environment/ infrastructure are required to make the school safer for vulnerable groups and girls;
- Social norms – What social norms exist in the school and surrounding community that are barriers to the attainment of quality education for vulnerable groups and girls; who are the perpetrators of violence and why is it accepted? what strategies can be implemented to transform these norms to strengthen commitments to quality education for girls;

- Personal prevention strategies – What preventative strategies can be implemented by vulnerable groups and girls to mitigate against violence or succumbing to harmful traditional practices?
- Response services – what support exists in the community and beyond for survivors of violence or for those seeking additional information or sources of support to prevent becoming victims of abuse and/or harmful practices.

Once the school improvement plan has been finalized, support will be provided through civil society partners to implement the plans with the leadership of the school and student led groups – such as the student council. The facilitated process is expected to identify key common strategies at schools in order to facilitate inter-school learning and collaboration to improve support networks between schools and enhance student led mobilization against negative practices and gender inequalities. Key strategies likely to be supported include:

- Establishment of student councils
- Student driven Safe Schools Code of Conduct
- Development of school referral pathways with community focal points
- Establishment of school (student led) complaints mechanisms
- Empowerment/self-defense curriculum for girls
- Boys transformation programming

Inputs: Financial resources, technical advice, resources and materials to facilitate participatory protection programming at the school level. Support in developing policies, standards and community by-laws that make schools and communities safe and protective. Follow up inputs to ensure the development of School Improvement Plans.

Specific activities:

- 4.1 Design of participatory ‘reflect’ safe school planning and facilitation curriculum/guide
- 4.2 Trainer of Trainer (ToT) for community facilitators to undertake ‘reflect’ safe schools process
- 4.3 Implementation of school community ‘reflect’ process in 79 schools to identify key protection threats and identify community driven strategies to mitigate against protection threats. Including the development of School Improvement Plans.
- 4.4 Support for implementation of School Improvement Plans including targeted resources for each of the 4 levels of school protection [environment, norm change, self-prevention strategies, and response services]
- 4.5 Monitoring of School Improvement Plans and safe school community strategies.

Outcome 5: Teacher attitudes and skills are improved/ enhanced to effectively deliver life skills based and gender responsive methodologies

Description of Activities:

A major hindrance to effective life skills training is negative teacher attitude and lack of essential skills in promoting gender responsive training. The project will focus on reaching teachers through relevant gate keeper organization such as teacher unions and teacher associations as key peer influencers. The second approach that will be adopted by the project involves using the supervisory authority of the MOEST in ensuring that core elements of the LSE program will be assessed as part of quality assessment and standards.

The project will facilitate the training of pre and in service teachers on life skills and gender based methodologies, provide teaching and learning materials of LSE as well as target building the capacity of selected community based groups involved in school management. Head teachers will also be supported to effectively implement the re-admission policy. Furthermore, re-admitted girls will be provided with catch up mentorship sessions/classes to improve their performance.

Inputs: Teacher training and mentoring programmes in place which promote life skills based- and gender responsive methodologies, school leadership and management skills

Activities:

- 5.1 Print and distribute of practical guide on gender responsiveness
- 5.2 Training pre-service and in-service teachers on life-skills based and gender responsive methodologies
- 5.3 Development of a school improvement plan which responds to gender inequalities, protection issues and promotes student participation and leadership
- 5.4 Training of SMC's mother groups and PTA's on importance of life skills, gender responsiveness (including effective re-admission policy)
- 5.5 Support establishment for Teacher Resource centers for mentoring teachers on gender responsive methodologies and development of local materials, as well as peer networking on best practice
- 5.6 Construction or rehabilitation in two school sites (Dedza and Salima)
- 5.7 Support provision of teaching and learning materials in the schools (through the SIP)
- 5.8 Support re-admitted girls with catch up classes and/or mentorship

Outcome 6: Adolescent girls are informed and empowered to participate and take on leadership positions within the school and the community.

Description of Activities:

The project will provide girls of all ages with opportunities for direct involvement in the outcomes through strategic participation. Based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) that provides for participation as a basic right, forums to exercise this will be hosted through strengthened in and out of school clubs. In schools, elected school councils that will function to facilitate functional participation in ensuring other rights are met will be established.

Drawing on adolescent participation and leadership opportunities for girls, the project will support the convening of leadership forums where critical girl child indicators will be advocated for. A phased network of new leaders among girls and mentors will be supported to anchor attitudinal change from within the girls. Vulnerable and adolescents girls in difficult situations such as early marriage, pregnancies and PLWHIV will be targeted.

The project will also provide models of strengthening resilience and coping mechanism among the adolescent girls. These include, but are not limited to, providing simple economic survival income generating activities (producing sanitary towels), entrepreneurship training and locally based saving and credit schemes.

Activities:

- 6.1. Establish/strengthen in and out of school clubs
- 6.2. Conduct SRHR/ GBV dialogue sessions, mentoring and role modeling for in and out of school girls.
- 6.3. Train and Support Girls' networks (PLWHIV, GBV survivors, mother groups and readmitted adolescents) to manage menstruation and produce affordable sanitary pads

Outcome 7: Empowered and resilient communities who value quality education for all children, especially girls.

Description of Activities:

A communication and community mobilization strategy drawn from the National Girls' Education Communication Strategy (January 2014) developed by MOEST will be implemented to support for the project. The overall result will be reduce the environmental and socio-cultural factors that cause girl children to drop out from school or result in low attendance, retention and transition. The focus is on knowledge attitudes, practices and behaviors which impact on girls' participation in education. Key actors are; Community traditional leaders, teachers and school management authorities and the media. The project will ensure development of role models, guardians, mentors and supportive/protective leaders, thus providing a conducive environment which addresses current social cultural barriers as well as school based constraints.

The strategies will include the following:

A tripartite campaign comprising mobilization and advocacy with Teachers/Head teachers Unions, National and district organizations for traditional, leaders and the media around best practices, plans, codes of conduct, school and community policies and bylaws which address barriers and protect girls as well as provide role models. Specific actions under this campaign will include:

- Mobilization of the community members
- Sub-national social advocacy
- Community led dialogues
- Alliances with the mass media
- Creating alliances and partnership with the media for production and distribution of culturally relevant multi-media information, Education and Communication messages. This partnership support the campaign.
- Community based mentoring and support mechanism strengthened: To specifically establish, strengthen and support mother support groups to support girls education

Inputs: Incentives, social mobilization, advocacy and empowering programmes in place for commitment, action and accountability for girls' education

Activities:

- 7.1 Train Farmer Organizations (FOs) in market access and post-harvest handling and negotiation skills
- 7.2 Train community members on food management, nutrition, hygiene and sanitation

- 7.3 Participatory consultation meeting to develop a programme criteria on awarding best performing head teachers (schools) and communities
- 7.4 Develop/strengthen and implement a “teacher incentive programme” on awarding best performing teachers, Head Teachers and/or schools and communities (Teachers Union, DEM, PEAS, chiefs)
- 7.5 Mobilizing, lobbying and advocating for girls education and services with chiefs, parents and other relevant stakeholders
- 7.6 Develop a multi-pronged communication campaign, distribute and disseminate advocacy and IEC materials on nutrition, hygiene , SRH and sanitation and gender related laws and policies
- 7.7 Mapping of bi-laws around girls education in the targeted areas
- 7.8 Documentation of best practices in implementation of established bi-laws

10 MONITORING AND EVALUATION STRATEGY

MONITORING

In an effort to be evidence-based and learning-focused, the program has put in place a joint monitoring and evaluation framework to track project results and meet accountability requirements. The framework, which aligns with the key education goals as proposed in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Ministry of Education’s strategic objectives, will track indicators at output and outcome levels created to ensure key results are achieved. Monitoring activities will include: Joint monthly visits by UN agencies and implementing partners to monitor the results they are accountable for. These will be aimed at tracking progress on the ground and supporting implementing partners resolve operational challenges; quarterly/biannual review meetings bringing together IPs and the three UN agencies to share reports on progress, operational challenges and devise ways for improving implementation performance. Reporting formats and monitoring tools will be developed jointly to facilitate capturing of operational data on key performance indicators for the project at all levels. The Education Management and Information System (EMIS), the Ministry of Education’s main data system for tracking education results, will be used and supported extensively at both the central and district levels to provide quasi-real time monitoring. Inclusion of Real-time monitoring activities using innovative and tech-based systems will also be piloted on activities surrounding the Take Home Ration (THR) portion of the intervention.

BASELINE

The UN will contract a team of two external consultants to conduct a Baseline to establish status of the key outcome indicators at the start of the project, and provide a strong comparison to the final evaluation to determine impact of the UN intervention. The Baseline will assess the existing education results in the targeted school and provide a strong contextual analysis to ensure the UN activities are aligning with the existing barriers and the needs and desires of the targeted schools/communities in relation to access and quality of Girls’ education.

THE MIDTERM REVIEW

Using the same consultant team from the baseline for continuity, the UN will conduct a Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the project, scheduled for February 2016 after completion of the 3rd Phase. The MTR will assess project progress to date and indicate adjustments that may need to be made to ensure the success of the programme. It will also provide an opportunity to ensure that funds are used effectively and efficiently to deliver planned outputs/outcomes. The process of MTR will further provide an opportunity for detailed stakeholder participation. A national facilitator will be hired to lead the Mid-Term Review.

THE END OF PROJECT EVALUATION AND REPORT

As the principal recipient of this award, the UN will prepare an End of Project Report for submission to the Norwegian Government covering the entire agreement period. The final report will detail achievement of project outputs and outcomes, progress against overall strategic objectives, and review successes, issues, and challenges during the project lifetime. The report will also provide key recommendations for successes that need additional follow-up and key areas that still need addressing.

The end of project evaluation will be led by Ministry of Education to ensure national ownership and will be conducted by a team of two external consultants supported through the UN. The primary purpose of the evaluation will be to determine the extent to which the project has achieved its proposed outcomes and contributed to its proposed strategic objectives. The evaluation will review not only the extent to which the project itself has delivered the outputs and outcomes detailed in the project's M&E matrix, but will also serve as an opportunity to assess progress made in the Ministry of Education's overall management and leadership of the national response on girls education.

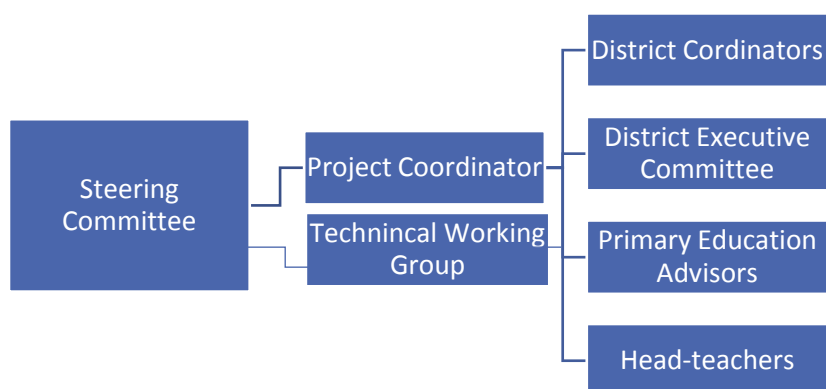
OPERATIONAL STUDIES

Targeted operational research will also be conducted to generate necessary information to help address pertinent issues affecting programme implementation as required. Specifically, WFP is looking into many elements of the effectiveness and efficiency of their activities, including THR Modalities and Home Grown School Feeding. UNFPA will be conducting additional operational research. Operations research will be done on some selected comprehensive sexuality education strategies to generate robust evidence on their effectiveness in terms of influencing social and behavior change. UNICEF will focus on drawing lessons from equity based interventions, child friendly communities and real time monitoring.

11. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

PROJECT STRUCTURE

This project shall be managed through the following structure:



- a. Project Coordinator: The UN will establish a Project Coordinator who will be responsible for monitoring project progress, overseeing programme implementation, coordinating project activities, and assuring achievement of project outcomes. The Project Coordinator will serve as a staff member of WFP and be based at their Lilongwe Office. WFP will hire a consultant during the initial period of the project while recruitment process of the Coordinator is

underway to ensure the project commences as planned. The Project Coordinator will be directly accountable to the Steering Committee of this Project.

- b. **Steering Committee:** A Steering Committee consisting of all UN Heads of Agency (UNICEF, WFP and UNFPA), a senior Representative from the Norwegian Embassy, the Principle Secretaries for Education, Agriculture and Gender. Participation of the Ministry of Gender shall be within the context of the Joint Sector Plan for Gender, Children, Youth and Sports. The Principle Secretary for Education shall Chair and Project Coordinator shall also serve as Secretariat to the Steering Committee. In the first Phase, the Steering Committee shall meet every 3 months and in the second and other phases meet every six months. The steering committee will be set up within the first two months of the project being established.
- c. **Technical Working Group:** A technical working group shall be convened consisting of Directors of Education, Agriculture, Gender, Local Government, Health and Youth. The Director of Education shall Chair this Group and the Project Coordinator shall serve as Secretariat. This group will be responsible for monitoring project progress, overseeing programme implementation, coordinating project activities, and assuring achievement of project outcomes. They will meet monthly in the first phase and bi-monthly in the second phase onwards. Decision making points from this group will be taking to the Steering Committee.
- d. At sub-national level, this Project shall be overseen through existing leadership and coordination mechanisms. As such the District Commissioner with the support of the District Planning Officers in Mangochi and Salima respectively shall provide leadership over these projects. Implementation shall happen through the District Education Officers who shall convene participating sectors including WFP Field Monitors, District School Health and Nutrition Coordinators, District Social Welfare, civil society members and provide feedback to the District Executive Committee.
- e. In support of the District Education Officers, two national Officers will be engaged as focal points for the project. They will assist in technical support, oversight and capacity development issues related to the Project. Below the District Coordination structure shall be a coordination, planning and implementation team lead by the Primary Education Advisors through to the Head-teachers in schools in Mangochi and Salima.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Project funds will be controlled through the One UN Fund, then to the respective UN agencies and will then be disbursed to the Ministries of Education, Gender, Local Government and Agriculture at national and sub-national levels in periodic installments based on a six monthly work plan to be developed with the Ministries as well as accountability for funds already disbursed in earlier tranches. The UN Harmonized Cash Transfer system will be used. This is a systematic and simplified process of working with national partners based on capacity development and risk management system. For instance, the UN will also make direct payments to service providers and suppliers of procurements such as computers and other equipment. Preliminary micro-assessments, regular spot checks and audits will be made to the implementing partners to ensure that implementation is going on as planned and that funds are being utilized for the planned purposes. In addition, as need may arise and based on prior agreement with the Ministries, the UN will sign project cooperation agreements with other partners to support the Ministry in some of the project activities.

Other risks related more directly to project's results are listed in the following table and classified as medium, high or low risks.

GOAL AND OUTCOMES	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Development Goal: Improved access and	Political, economic and social instability in the target	Lack of commitment of partners for complementary	

quality of education for girls in Mangochi, Salima and Dedza districts by 2017	districts.	activities Lack of timely availability and disbursement of funds for project implementation	
Outcome 1: Established school feeding programme in all schools	Funds are utilised for intended purpose and according to plan	Farmers and FOs have the capacity to continually supply schools with necessary food commodities and tonnages	
Outcome 2: Out of school girls identified and provided with education opportunities		Ineffective implementation of re-admission policy due to socio-cultural practices and beliefs	
Outcome 3: Integrated youth friendly services, resources and structures, addressing CSE, SRHR, HIV/AIDS and GBV in place for both in and out of school girls		Lack of community support to provision of comprehensive sexuality education to adolescent girls.	Tendency of unaccountability for results and resources by accustomed Implementing Partners
Outcome 4: Reduced violence against girls in targeted schools and communities and effective referral pathways in place	Accurate information not obtainable due to sensitive nature of issues. Implementing partners (CBOs and NGOs) fail to secure community and school buy-in resulting in a superficial analysis of protection issues and challenges in developing strong School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and/or unwillingness to implement SIPs.	Community leaders attempt to undermine community based protection programming due to fear at losing power or resistance to changing existing social norms.	Inability to recruit sufficiently skilled and motivated staff at the community/district level with capacity to implement community based protection analyses and strategies leads to poor quality plans/strategies resulting in low impact.
Outcome 5: Teacher attitudes and skills are improved/ enhanced to effectively deliver life skills based and gender responsive methodologies		Teachers lack motivation, teachers and/or are constrained by the system they work within (opposing new methodologies)	
Outcome 6: Adolescent girls are informed and empowered to participate and take on leadership positions within the school and the community.	Lack of role models in the communities to champion adolescent empowerment and participation in leadership positions	Sensitive and conservative values around adolescent sexuality and role in society may impinge on progress	

ASSUMPTIONS

There are several underlying assumptions which will influence the degree to which implementation of the project is successful. The project will require an ongoing commitment from the Government of Malawi to undertake its management. In strengthening this partnership with the Ministries, the UN assumes that Ministries will continue to commit its staff to manage this project. The project's success

will also necessarily be impacted by the degree to which the GoM prioritizes Girls Education budget allocations.

PROJECT REPORTING

The UN will submit progress reports to the Norwegian Government after the first nine months and then every six months thereafter. These progress reports will include a financial update, review of progress made during the six month period against each project outcome, and a review of issues, challenges and lessons learned. Progress reports will also include a brief review of key activities, targets and projected expenditure for the coming six months.

The complete reviews, reporting and funds disbursement schedule is as follows:

Phase 1: July 2014 – March 2015 (9 months)

The following outputs will be submitted by 31 March 2015:

- A. Progress report
- B. Payment request
- C. Financial report

Annual Review meeting held in April 2015

Phase 2: April 2015 – September 2015 (6 months)

The following outputs will be submitted by 30 September 2015:

- A. Progress report
- B. Payment request

Phase 3: October 2015 – March 2016 (6 months)

The following outputs will be submitted by 31 March 2016

- A. Midterm review report
- B. Payment request
- C. Financial report

Midterm review scheduled for February 2016

Phase 4: April 2016 – September 2016 (6 months)

The following outputs will be submitted by 30 September 2016

- A. Progress report
- B. Payment request

Phase 5: October 2016 – March 2017 (6 months)

The following outputs will be submitted by 31 March 2017

- A. Progress report
- B. Payment request
- C. Financial report

Annual Review meeting held in February 2017

Phase 6: April 2017 – September 2017 (6 months)

The following outputs will be submitted by 30 November 2017

- A. End of Project Evaluation report
- B. Financial report

PROJECT STAFF

The following staff will be actively engaged in project management and implementation. Project resources will only be used to support one full-time International Staff Member who will fill the position of a project coordinator. Other management, programme and finance/operations staff time utilized represents part of the United Nations (UNICEF, WFP and UNFPA's) contribution to this programme. For further budget details please see budget matrix.

No	STAFF MEMBER	TITLE	LEVEL	LOE	Billed to Project
1	Vacant	Project Coordinator	L3	100%	X
A	UNICEF				
1	Charles Nabongo	Chief, Basic Education and Youth Development	L4	10%	
2	Kimanzi Muthengi	Education Specialist	L3	30%	
3	Clara Chindime	Education Specialist	NOB	30%	
4	Eva Hardardottir	Education Specialist	JPO	30%	
5	Nankali Maksud	Chief, Child Protection	L4	10%	
6	Brendan Ross	Child Protection Specialist	L3	30%	
7	Alexander Mwale	Child Protection Specialist	NOB	30%	
8	Tsitsi Mhene	Finance Office	L2	10%	
B	WFP				
	Chalizamudzi Matola	Programme officer - Education	NOC	40%	
	Luca Molinas	Programme CIFF – M&E	P2	10%	
	Martin Mphangwe	Snr Programme - Education	NOA	50%	
	Vacant	Snr Programme Assistant- HGsf	SC 6	100	
	Grace Makhalira	M&E officer	NOB	10%	
	Joshua Wunderlich	Prog Ass – M&E	Fellow	20%	
	Patricia Mikuti	Program Assistant P4P	SC	40%	
	Thom Kamkodo	Field Monitor Assistant	SC5	50%	
	TBD	Field Monitor Assistant	SC5	50%	
	Aaron Kumwenda	National Finance Officer	NOB	10%	

UNFPA					
1	Jean Mwandira	National Programme Officer- Reproductive Health Specialist	NOC	30%	
2	Beatrice Kumwenda	National Programme Officer – Gender Specialist	NOC	30%	
3	Bernard Mijoni	National Programme Officer – Monitoring & Evaluation	NOB	30%	
4.	Thandiwe Mijoya	Programme Coordinator – HIV Linkages	NOB	30%	
5	Rose Khonje	Programme Associate	G7	30%	
6	Martha Elisa	PA	G6	20%	
7	Gloria Mpelembe	Finance & Admin Associate	G7	20%	

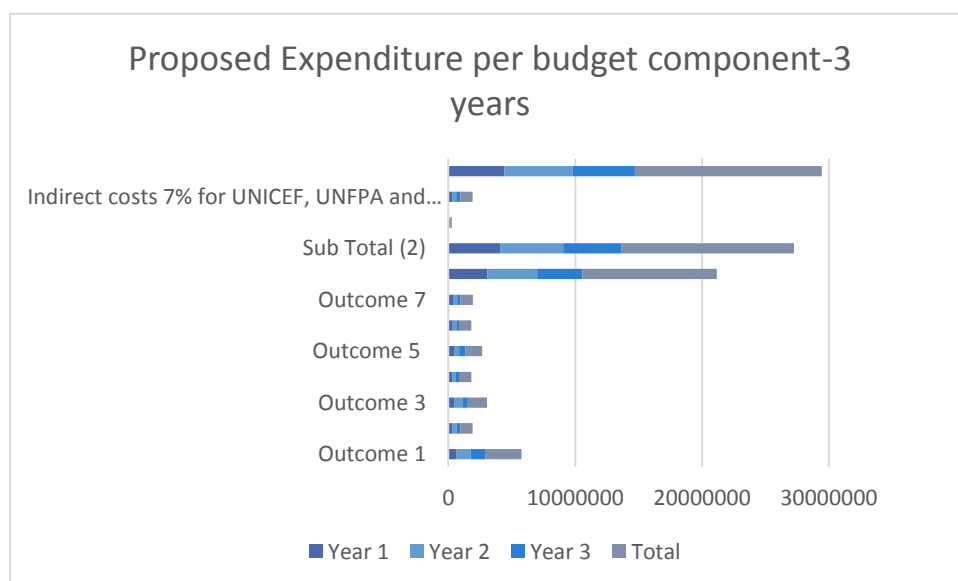
12 PROJECT BUDGET

The UN agencies request a total of USD 17,162,991 to implement this integrated proposal over a 3 year period. This grant will be supplemented by a total of USD 40,000,000 in the education sector by the combined agencies.

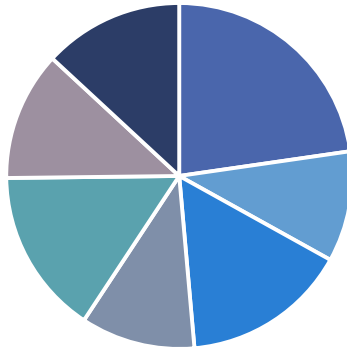
Table: 3 year Project Budget (USD)

No	Intervention	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
1	Outcome 1: Girls and boys in targeted schools are well nourished and able to stay in school	785,300	1,453,558	1,497,800	3,736,658
2	Outcome 2: Increased access to second chance education for both in and out of school girls	385,000	425,000	360,000	1,170,000
3	Outcome 3: Integrated youth friendly services, resources and structures, addressing CSE, SRHR, HIV/AIDS and GBV in place for both in and out of school girls	650,000	820,000	410,000	1,880,000
3	Outcome 4: Reduction of violence against girls in targeted schools and communities and effective referral pathways in place	420,000	435,000	405,000	1,260,000

5	Outcome 5: Teacher attitudes and skills are improved/ enhanced to effectively deliver life skills based and gender responsive methodologies	585,000	540,000	590,000	1,715,000
6	Outcome 6: Adolescent girls are informed and empowered to participate and take on leadership positions within the school and the community.	410,000	360,000	260,000	1,030,000
7	Outcome 7: Empowered and committed communities who value quality education for all children, especially girls	480,000	395,000	320,000	1,195,000
8	Project and Monitoring Activities (project coordination, program activities, administration cost, district coordination)	4,870,300	5,813,558	5,207,800	15,891,658
	<i>HQ overhead costs (1%) - ONE UN FUND</i>	48,703	58,136	52,078	158,917
10	<i>Indirect costs 7% for UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP)</i>	340,921	406,949	364,546	1,112,416
	Grand Total	5,259,924	6,278,643	5,624,424	17,162,991



Proposed Expenditure Per Outcome-Year 1



- Outcome 1
- Outcome 2
- Outcome 3
- Outcome 4
- Outcome 5
- Outcome 6
- Outcome 7

Annex 1: Table: Mangochi District Education Data for Quality and Relevance (2009-2011)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Indicator	2009	2010	2011	2011 National average	2011 Gap National Av.- District (E-D)	NESP Target	Gap NESP Target -District Average (G-D)
Repetition rate, Std.1	29	22	22	24.7	2.7	15	-7
Repetition rate, Std.5	14	17.5	17.5	17.16	-0.34	15	-2.5
Dropout rate, Std.1	7	9	19	13.96	-5.04	5	-14
Dropout rate, Std. 5	9	11	18	11.33	-6.67	5	-13
Pupil-Teacher Ratio *Public schools	113:1	113:1	91	76:1	-15	60:1	-31
Pupil-Qualified Teacher Ratio *Public schools	134:1	134:1	91	92:1	1	60:1	-31
Pupil-Textbook Ratio English *Public schools	2:1	2:1	3:1	2:1	-1	1:1	-1
Pupil-Textbook Ratio Math *Public schools	5:1	2:1	3:1	5:1	2	1:1	-2
Pupil-Textbook Ratio Chichewa *Public schools	2:1	2:1	3:1	2:1	-1	1:1	-2
School – Teachers Guide ratio *Public schools	1:50	1:49	1:49	1:115	66	1:1	-48
Special needs pupil-special needs teacher ratio	329:1	331:1	407:1	6:1	401	5:1	-402
Number of schools supervised	120	142	170	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
PSLCE Pass Rate	51.07	62.2	69.47	68.6	-9	N/A	N/A

Annex 2: Possible implementing partners

Mangochi, Salima and Dedza district education office

Mangochi, Salima and Dedza district health office

Mangochi, Salima and Dedza district youth office

Mangochi, Salima and Dedza MOGCSW office

Mangochi, Salima and Dedza Ministry of Information

AGLIT

Malawi GIRL Guides Association (MAGGA)

CAMFED

CRECCOM – Creative Centre for Community Mobilization

Plan Malawi

Girls Empowerment Network - GENET

Action aid

Malawi Lake Basin

NASFAM

Forum for Women Educationalists in Malawi

VSO - Voluntary Services Organization

TIMVENI

Major “Push” factors keep girls from accessing and completing basic education

Collaborative partnership between UN agencies based on comparative technical advantages- Education/Protection, SRH and Food and completing basic education

National Partnership grant between UN and Norwegian Government

Phased Programme focused on one goal in three districts on improving education access and quality for girls

- Increased Financial resources, skills and supplies and infrastructure which provide for sustainable community driven school feeding and conditional take home rations
- Implemented policies and programmes, standards and community by-laws that make schools and communities safe and protective
- Implemented teacher training and mentoring programmes which promote life skills based and gender responsive methodologies, school leadership and management skills
- Integrated youth friendly services, resources and structures, addressing CSE, SRHR, HIV/AIDS and GBV in place for both in and out of school girls
- Increased incentives, social mobilization, advocacy and empowering programmes for commitment, action and accountability for girls education
- Increased participation and leadership opportunities for girls in place

Girls and boys in targeted schools are well nourished and able to stay in school

Increased access to second chance education for both in and out of school girls

Integrated youth friendly services, resources and structures, addressing CSE, SRHR, HIV/AIDS and GBV in place for both in and out of school

Reduction of violence against girls in targeted schools and communities and effective referral pathways in place

Teacher attitudes and skills are improved/enhanced to effectively deliver life skills based and gender responsive methodologies

Adolescent girls are informed and empowered to participate and take on leadership positions within the school and the community

Empowered and committed communities who value quality education for all children, especially girls

- Increased access to basic education from 86% to 95% by 2017 in target areas in Salima, Mangochi and Dedza
- Reduced dropout rates from 12% to 5% for girls by 2017 in target areas in Salima, Mangochi and Dedza
- Improved pass rates for girls from 60% to 80% in targeted areas in Salima, Mangochi and Dedza
- Resilient and empowered communities who sustain girls in school in the targeted Salima, Mangochi and Dedza

Improved access and quality of education for girls in Mangochi, Salima and Dedza districts by 2017