

TITLE: Strengthening the Role of Civil Society in Scaling Up Nutrition in Malawi

LOCATION: Malawi

FOCAL POINT ORGANIZATION: Concern Worldwide, Malawi

TOTAL COST: US\$428,000 over 3 years

SUBMISSION DATE: November 30, 2012



1. DETAILS OF FOCAL POINT ORGANIZATION

Concern Worldwide is a non-governmental, international humanitarian organization dedicated to the reduction of suffering and working towards the ultimate elimination of extreme poverty in the world's poorest countries. Concern has been working in Malawi since 2002 in the areas of health, livelihoods, and education.

In health, Concern works at the national level, supporting the Ministry of Health to scale up and sustainably manage Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM), and through the Innovations for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health project. Concern also implements community-based health and nutrition programming in two districts. Concern also provides support for food security and agriculture in three districts, using a rights-based approach to empower people to realize their right to adequate food and livelihoods.

Concern Worldwide has been involved in advocacy for health and nutrition, for example lobbying the District health offices to include CMAM costs in district budgets through development and training on appropriate budgeting tools. Concern has also been actively involved in advocacy with civil society through its PARL project (Program for Attainment of the Right to Sustainable Livelihood), working in partnership with local Community Based Organizations. Through PARL, Concern has formed strategic linkages with national civil society bodies such as CISANET to carry out advocacy on food security issues. Concern has also contributed towards advocating for gender equality through its education program, in partnership with FACE, a local organization focused on civic education.

The Interim leadership structure for this CSO Network, at least for a year from grant signing date, includes CHAI in their capacity as a Co-Chair of the SUN Civil Society Organizations. CHAI has been the leading supplier of RUTF for children in the Community based Management of Acute Malnutrition program before UNICEF and MoH took over in January 2010, and has continued to be a strong advocate for CMAM scale-up and quality of care and has significantly transformed the care and treatment landscape for children with severe acute malnutrition in Malawi.

CHAI has a good track record advocating for a number of health and nutrition intervention in Malawi. Since 2006, CHAI Malawi has helped advocate and fund scale up of different programs ranging from laboratory systems strengthening, health financing, Vaccines, Access to Medicines, Malaria to Pediatric Nutrition program. This experience and diversity gives CHAI a comparative advantage to implement programs that are comprehensive and transformative.

2. PURPOSE OF GRANT

The purpose of this grant is to facilitate the establishment and running of an influential platform to bring together various civil society actors to advocate for and implement improved programs for nutrition.

The proposed grant will facilitate the CSO alliance to take a leading role in influencing and supporting national efforts through meaningful dialogue, advocacy with stakeholders including Government, donors and the private sector and thus contribute to a successful roll-out of the national SUN 1000 Days movement.

During the last five years, Malawi has placed nutrition high on the development agenda, and was the first country to launch the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative and the 1000 Special Days movement. The Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS in the office of President and Cabinet (OPC), which is spearheading the SUN initiative in Malawi, has outlined a “reach out” strategy which aims to empower individuals and organizations with technical, advocacy and implementation skills that will translate into improved knowledge, action, and practice during the first 1000 days of a child’s life.

Nutrition programming in Malawi has been hampered by limited financial and human resources for program implementation and supervision, with staff shortages affecting all levels. There are very few technically competent people working in nutrition, especially in clinical nutrition and dietetics, partly due to limited resources for training. In the communication front, there is inadequate integration of nutrition messages in most health related communication, including HIV and AIDS, an area where many NGOs/Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and community groups are already active.

The government of Malawi acknowledges that efforts to address such challenges require joint efforts from all actors both in the public, private and Civil Society sectors. Malawi has a vibrant and active Civil Society, including many NGOs and CBOs that focus on health, nutrition, and agriculture. This concept note was jointly prepared by several NGOs implementing nutrition programs, in consultation with OPC and Ministries of Health and Agriculture and Food Security representatives as core line ministries in the overseeing of health and nutrition programmes in Malawi. The proposed grant will facilitate the CSO Platform take a leading role in influencing and supporting national efforts through meaningful dialogue, advocacy with stakeholders including Government, donors and the private sector and thus contribute to a successful roll-out of the national SUN 1000 DAYS movement.

The main CS actors involved in writing this concept note included; Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), Concern World Wide, Consortium of Non Governmental Organizations in Malawi (CONGOMA), Consumer Association of Malawi (CAMA), Farmer’s Union of Malawi (FUM), FOCUS, Heifer International, Malawi Human Rights Commission, Management Sciences for Health (MSH), Heifer International, Consumer, Medical Council of Malawi, National Small Holder Farmers Association of Malawi (CAMA), Project for Appropriate Technologies in Health (PATH), Valid International, and World Vision International. The process also sought policy direction from the Department of Nutrition and HIV and AIDS under the OPC, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture and Food security. In addition, UN partners including UNICEF, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and Bunda College of Agriculture were involved. Irish Aid, as the Convenor for SUN in Malawi, was also part of the process. The consultations have mainly been in the proposal drafting to cultivate diversity of ideas towards the approach and also as awareness to the existing CSO and groups as potential allies of the to-be-established Civil Society Platform for Nutrition.

During the preparation of this proposal, an Interim Committee on the CSO Network was formed, with Concern Worldwide as its chair and a diverse membership of civil society organizations, including those listed above. CHAI was elected to serve as co-chair of the committee. This structure will remain in place to guide the preparation and initial activities leading up to the formation of a civil society platform for nutrition. At that time, new leaders of the civil society alliance will be elected.

2.1`Description of malnutrition situation in Malawi

The Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS, strategically placed under the OPC, has worked to strengthen multi-sectoral networks encompassing government and civil society. National-level sectoral nutrition strategies have contributed to improvements in maternal and child mortality and nutrition indicators over the past decade.

Since 2006, Malawi has successfully scaled up CMAM throughout the country. Large-scale micronutrient fortification projects are also being implemented. A host of partners have combined resources to implement bi-annual Child Health Days, providing Vitamin A supplementation, through all health facilities. A partnership between the government and the private sector has also enhanced action on ensuring adequate market supplies and mass education for use of iodized salt. This has led to a high proportion of households using iodized salt from 50% in 2001 to 87% in 2010¹. Recently through Government of Malawi launched and commissioned the sugar fortification project with Illovo with support from Irish Aid in April and October 2012 respectively. This is aimed at improving the consumption of Vitamin A across the country.

There has been some improvement in nutrition for children under five years of age. However, chronic malnutrition remains high. Some of the factors that contribute to high rates of under nutrition are frequent illnesses among children, inadequate breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices, poor sanitation, and a poor quality diet in many homes². Stunting has decreased, although it remains high, with 49% of children stunted in 2000 compared to 41% in 2010³. The percentage of children who are underweight has reduced from 25% in 2000 to 17% in 2010, and wasting has also dropped slightly, from 5.5% to 3.6%. Community mobilization and communication for exclusive breastfeeding for infants less than six months of age has resulted in improved exclusive breastfeeding rates. In 2000, just 12% of children aged 4 to 5 months were exclusively breastfed, compared with 42% in 2010⁴.

Whilst acknowledging the great achievements that have been registered, there is still need to further advance nutrition in Malawi. It is well recognised that addressing malnutrition requires a multi-sectoral response.

¹ Malawi Micronutrient Survey, 2010

² Consulting with Caregivers Report: Formative Research to Determine the Barriers and Facilitators to Optimal Infant and Young Child Feeding in Three Regions of Malawi (2011)

³ Malawi Demographic and Health Surveys, 2000 and 2010

⁴ Malawi Demographic and Health Surveys, 2000 and 2010

2.2 Description of Project

This project proposes the setting up of a strong, sustainable, influential and prominent CSO platform which will play a significant role in supporting the promotion and implementation of nutrition interventions for the enhancement of the nutrition agenda for Malawi.

The CSO platform will work closely with key stakeholders in nutrition at all levels which include; Government Ministries, OPC - Department of Nutrition and HIV/AIDS (DNHA), implementing NGOs, UN Partners, Private Sector, Academia, and Zonal, district and community structures to ensure nutrition sensitive program planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Overall, the project will ensure there is organised participation of civil society and community based organisations in policy, planning and budgeting dialogue on nutrition issues at all levels. The project will support capacity building of CSOs and community based organisations in the implementation of the National Nutrition Education and Communication Strategy (NECS). To this end, a platform will be created where nutrition best practices are shared among CSO nutrition platform members and policy debate and dialogue with government are encouraged. The project will support the platform to ensure smooth implementation of nutrition activities through advocating for and being part of existing structures in particular providing support where such structures are weak or nonexistent, for instance district nutrition coordinating committees.

2.3 Rationale

Globally, it is recognized that civil society has a critical role to play towards contributing to the design and implementation of country development plans and in holding all partners accountable for achieving national developmental targets. It is further recognized that, while significant progress has been made in engaging Civil Society at the global level, work is still needed at the country-level, particularly across sectors which have traditionally not been involved in nutrition. This then underscores the need for enhancing civil society engagement at country level to support meaningful contributions towards achievement of country development plans.

Civil Society has been recognized as being uniquely positioned to empower, motivate and connect with people around the world to reduce poverty, enhance living standards and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As critical partners in development, their contribution to creating awareness of people's needs and advocating for solutions gives voice to some of the most marginalized and vulnerable people in the world. In Malawi, the CSOs coordinated multi sectoral approaches will make a meaningful contribution towards the achievement of the Malawi Growth and Development strategy (MGDS) and Millennium Development Goals by ensuring that there is sustained political will by the Malawi government in prioritization, implementation and monitoring of SUN in the national development agenda.

Other countries have successfully engaged civil society in nutrition through improving coordination, establishing strategic platforms, and involving non-traditional sectors such as the media and private sector, such as the Nutrition Society of Zambia and the Partnership for Nutrition in Tanzania. However,

in Malawi, most nutrition advocacy is currently government-led. The overall aim of this project is to harness the potential power of cross-sectoral civil society engagement in advancing nutrition within the national agenda.

3.0 GOAL

To contribute to the national goal of having a well nourished Malawi, with sound human resources that effectively contribute to the economic growth and prosperity of the country.

4.0 PROBLEMS THAT THE PROJECT AIMS TO ADDRESS THROUGH ADVOCACY

Three key problems were identified with regard to nutrition from a civil society perspective in Malawi. They are:

1. Uncoordinated and fragmented nutrition programming:

Coordination of information and sharing of best practices is weak, particularly for programs aiming to prevent malnutrition. This often leads to duplication of efforts and inequitable distribution of available resources. In addition, there are missed opportunities for cross-sectoral collaboration; for example, the various coordinating bodies for agriculture and nutrition rarely communicate. There are available platforms for knowledge exchange platforms which are not fully utilized.

Few CSOs are working within nutrition and their focus often is on service delivery and not on consistent advocacy and policy dialogue. While Non-governmental Organizations (NGO) and CSOs have been engaged in the SUN process through various national committees and working groups, at the moment there is no unified coordinating mechanism for civil society to engage with government on issues related to nutrition due to the absence of an established nutrition platform for harmonized efforts.

The Malawi government through National Nutrition Policy and Strategic Plan (NNPSP) recognizes that malnutrition is a cross-cutting issue and therefore calls for all stakeholders, including civil society organizations and the private sector to collaborate with the government in its efforts. Despite this call, the involvement of civil society has been weak. There are no nutrition coalitions to lobby and advocate for the development of nutrition structures and increased and predictable budgetary allocation to nutrition services and programs.

At district level, the situation is exacerbated by inadequate capacity of civil society organizations as there are few local organizations dealing with maternal and child nutrition. Organizations working to improve nutrition have traditionally focused mainly on the health sector. In order to effectively engage a cross-sectoral coalition of civil society, it will therefore be important to increase the awareness of nutrition problems and solutions with the sectors of civil society that have typically been overlooked, such as human rights, agriculture, education, and gender.

2. Limited resource allocation to nutrition programmes: Competition for financial and human resources often means that nutrition is not prioritized for resource allocation by the Government and by

development partners. At the district and community level, commitment and funding for nutrition service delivery is particularly low. Funding for nutrition is generally not diversified, and most CSOs involved in nutrition depend on a small number of donors who are engaged in nutrition at the national level. There are also gaps in legislation and enforcement, e.g. on the control of unauthenticated manufactured food supplements and therapies, and ensuring that the provisions of recent legislation, such as the Nutrition Act, the Right to Food Act, and Food Safety Acts are adhered to.

3. Uncoordinated messaging to foster uptake of best practice in nutrition at household level: Recently the Government of Malawi launched the National Education and Communication Strategy (NECS) as one of the key instruments to enhance the fight against chronic malnutrition. The NECS is intended to enhance multi-stakeholder and multisectoral response to reduce stunting and other forms of nutrition disorders, and is expected to facilitate broader response and action by mobilizing and building a strong movement and commitment towards nutrition among a range of duty bearers.

The NECS will be implemented through a national campaign branded “**1,000 Special DAYS**” whose aim is to create within households, communities and the larger society a “culture” that values special care for women and children during the first thousand days of a child’s life, including attention to the important roles to be played by men, service providers, the media, the private sector, civil society, development partners, local leaders including politicians and the caregivers.

Despite this progress, there is a need to improve coordination in the delivery of the messages at community levels and to promote best practices for behavior change at household level using the **SUN-1,000 Special DAYS** message guide so that communities are able to turn knowledge into practice. In addition, there has to be a process of identifying and supporting reform champions by a) communicating success stories to the wider public; or b) recognizing exemplary and innovative activities and approaches of institutions in delivering public services to citizens. Enhanced coordination will also increase synergies across sectoral programs to ensure community access to adequate information for improved nutrition at community level. Timely distribution of appropriate IEC materials for improved nutrition is also vital for the accessibility of the key health and nutrition messages.

There are many missed opportunities for multi-sectoral collaboration at district level. For example, there is a need to strengthen how nutrition messages are integrated into HIV prevention, treatment, and care and support programs, as there are many NGOs already working on HIV in Malawi. Some organizations have successfully integrated nutrition into HIV and AIDS programming, for example, the SAVE approach which has been adopted by the SDA church HIV program, and is being implemented by FOCUS in Karonga district. However, there is little sharing of successful integrated nutrition programs, meaning that successful interventions remain isolated and are not scaled up. Most of the CSOs dealing with agriculture fail to adequately integrate nutrition messages into programming.

As most CSOs have little knowledge or experience of nutrition issues, there is a need to raise awareness on nutrition within civil society organizations. There may also be a need for capacity building in advocacy for CSOs that have not been involved in advocacy in the past.

4.1 PROBLEMS AND OUTCOMES

Problem 1: Uncoordinated and fragmented nutrition programming			
Outcome1: CSO Platform established and effective in advocacy efforts to influence policy making			
Approach	Targets	Allies	Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate and mobilise existing CSOs for effective implementation of civil society led SUN 1000 special Days campaign • Form a Civil Society Platform drawn from local CSOs for effective and sustained advocacy • Strengthen Communication channels and tools for effective CSO coordination and management of SUN 1000 Special Days including web-based campaign development and other media channels for information sharing and dissemination of advocacy materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National, District and Community Based Organisations in selected areas of operation. • Networks with already existing CSOs at national and district level for a unified voice including Community leaders for Action (CLAN), Nutrition Society of Malawi and the Council for NOs in Malawi (CONGOMA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Media, including mass media, print and electronic media • Cooperation with Donor Partners especially Irish Aid, UNICEF, USAID, Save the Children, CIDA and WFP The Food Industry and Private Sector (nutrition & agriculture), Farmers Union of Malawi, Nutrition Society of Malawi and Council for NGOs in Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping of existing civil society actors and identification of potential CSOs interested in forming an Platform conducted by month 3 • Organizational capacity assessment of the identified CSOs and training needs requirement conducted by month 9 • Focal organization to facilitate the formation of the Platform by end of year 1 • Constitution to govern CSO Platform in place by end of year 1. • Steering committee meetings held every quarter • Bi-Annual board meetings held • Preliminary support for set up of functional website by 2013 with regular updated information. • Advocacy materials available at National, District and community level
Problem 2: Limited resource allocation to nutrition programmes			
Outcome 2: Increased resource allocation and commitment to nutrition programmes through effective public awareness and advocacy campaigns			

Approach	Targets	Allies	Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the media at national and sub-National level to support advocacy campaigns advocating prioritisation of nutrition and the SUN 1000 Special Days • Collection of information for influencing debate and advocacy campaigns to influence decision making at national and district levels • Monitor inclusion and implementation of nutrition activities in the district development plans and budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level decision makers at National and sub-National line ministries including Nutrition Society of Malawi, CONGOMA, CSO Platform members • CBO/NGO organizations traditional and community leadership including CLAN, community groups, womens groups, Traditional Birth Attendants, National Small Holders Farmers Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Media • Members of Parliament, Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC), Department of Nutrition and HIV/AIDS(DNHA), SUN National Task Force and Malawian Personalities (e.g. from the sport, music and entertainment industry etc) • Cooperation with Donor Partners especially Irish Aid, UNICEF, USAID, World Bank, Save the Children, CIDA and WFP The Food Industry and Private Sector (nutrition & agriculture), Farmers Union of Malawi, Nutrition Society of Malawi and Council for NGOs in Malawi • Individuals and households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champions from Parliament, public and private sector including Malawian Personalities identified by end of year 1, to raise nutrition issues with decision makers and lobby for equitable resource allocation for nutrition programmes • Increased media coverage of nutrition issues in year 1 and year 2 • At least 10 CSOs accessing support to incorporate SUN activities into their programmes by year 2 • Annual budget tracking & expenditure monitoring reports produced & presented prior to the presentation of the national budget • Increased trend in national budget allocation to nutrition by 5% in year 1 and 10% by year 3 • Clearly defined nutrition activities included in the District Implementation Plans each year • Area and Village Development Committees have developed action plans to support implementation of SUN activities in year 2 and year 3

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National and district Budget Statements and annual CSO report produced and used for continued advocacy through lobby meetings with key decision makers.
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Problem 3. Uncoordinated messaging to foster uptake of best practice in nutrition at community level.

Outcome3: Households engage in aligned nutrition interventions that result in uptake of best practices

Approach	Targets	Allies	Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities acquire precise and appropriate information to influence behavior change and uptake of appropriate practices for improved nutrition at community level Increased synergies across sectoral programmes to ensure community access to adequate information for improved nutrition at community level Community Leaders are aware of their role as agents of change for improved nutrition for their communities Timely distribution of appropriate IEC materials for improved nutrition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District, traditional and community leadership including Area Development Committees (ADCs), Village Development Committees (VDCs), Village Health Committees (VHCs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith Based Organizations, Community Base Child Care Centers CBCCs), Community Leaders for Action on Nutrition (CLANs), traditional and Local Leadership, Community groups including women's groups, Traditional Birth Attendants, National Small Holders Farmers Association and 1,000 Special Days groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National and District Government Ministries including OPC, DNHA and SUN Task Force Cooperating partners particularly Irish AID, UNICEF USAID, Save the Children, CIDA and WFP Nutrition Society of Malawi, CONGOMA and Farmers union of Malawi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harmonized nutrition messages are available for consistent and effective messaging by end of year 1 Analysis of linkages across sectors for maximizing synergies for effective information sharing conducted Functional Coordination structures across sectors at community level identified and in place by end of year 1 Active involvement of communities in nutrition interventions with community action plans developed by year 2 At least 2 popular mobilisation activities conducted each year in their communities engaging grassroots civil society nutrition champions IEC materials are regularly available and distributed community level to educate and promote uptake of appropriate practices for improved nutrition

5.0 KEY TARGETS/ALLIES AND KEY PARTNERS

The following table describes the key targets/allies and key implementing partners of the project and provides a short overview of their respective involvement or role within the project.

Key targets/Allies	Key partners
<p>National level: <i>Parliamentary Committee on nutrition and HIV/AIDS, Key line Ministries - Health, Agriculture and Food Security, Community Development and Social Welfare, Finance and economic planning</i>, to Ensure continued political will for prioritization of nutrition on the development agenda, Increase awareness of Civil Society for Nutrition to create interest for an establishment of a strong and sustainable SUN CSO Platform.</p> <p>District and zonal level: <i>Key line Ministries as above, District Executive Committee, District Assembly, district nutrition coordination committees and district Nutrition Committee (1,000 special days task force)</i>, to increase awareness on nutrition, identify potential allies for the Platform, establish networks for district and community advocacy, increase inclusion of nutrition activities in the District Implementation plans and prioritization of nutrition activities in the district budgets.</p> <p>Community level: <i>Area Development Committees Nutrition Team, Village Development Committees, Village Health Committees, Community Nutrition Team, Area Technical Committee on Nutrition, Community Based Organizations, Faith Based Organizations, Community Based Child Care Centers, Community Leaders for Action on Nutrition, local leaders, community groups including 1,000 special days groups, HSAs, AEDOs , AEDICs, CDAs, Teachers, PEAs care groups and frontline workers</i> to Increase awareness, knowledge and the importance of appropriate nutrition to for increased uptake of best practices and build the capacity of communities to hold the necessary authorities accountable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern Worldwide - Will take the lead in coordinating the establishment of a Civil Society Platform within year 1 and transfer chairmanship once the Platform is formed. • Civil Society Platform: Overall coordination and project management, establishing linkages and building capacity for lobby and advocacy. • Nutrition Society of Malawi: Though weak at present, technical expertise and capacity building • International NGO's: including Concern Worldwide, Clinton Health Access Initiative, Save the Children etc.: technical expertise, capacity building, linkages to communities • National and community based NGOs for implementation of nutrition activities.
<p>Others: Strategic stakeholders not as directly involved in the campaign work</p> <p><i>Cooperating Partners:</i> including WFP, Irish AID, WHO, USAID, UNICEF, Save the Children, CIDA, that are engaged in the SUN 1000 Special Days process or that have an interest in the nutrition agenda of Malawi (Funding), and their accountability within the process.</p> <p><i>Members of Parliament:</i> to influence political decision-making to prioritize nutrition within the national agenda through awareness on the importance of maternal and early childhood nutrition.</p> <p><i>Media:</i> including mass media, print & electronic media which will help create platforms at all levels for</p>	

advocacy and debate, to attract and influence policy makers' attention to nutrition.

Private Sector/Food Industry: nutrition and agriculture including the Malawi National Farmers Union

5.1 PARTNER MECHANISMS

5.1.1 National-level partnerships: Partnership will be addressed in several ways through this project. First, a Platform for improved nutrition will be formed to improve coordination across civil society as well as to support Malawi government in the scaling up nutrition movement by engaging a wide range of actors. Malawi has a vibrant and active civil society, including many NGOs and Community-Based Organizations that focus on health, nutrition, and agriculture. However, there are many strong civil society actors that have not been adequately engaged in nutrition issues, such as those dealing with human rights, advocacy, education, and the private sector. CSOs with experience in advocacy and mobilization at the community, district, and national level will be particularly targeted for participation in the Platform.

Through this project, existing CSOs will be mapped to identify those working in nutrition, health, agriculture, gender equality and other relevant sectors, with a focus on identifying CSOs who could act as strategic members of a national Platform. Government remains an important partner in providing policy and technical direction in the implementation of nutrition activities.

- **5.1.2. District-level partnership:** Malawi has adopted a decentralized approach to government, with the development of community-driven Village Action Plans an important aspect of district government. In line with the decentralization policy as well as NECS, *District* level coordination is spearheaded by the District Commissioner through the District Nutrition Coordination Committee (DNCC) which will be a subcommittee of the District Executive Committee. DNCC will work closely with all the district levels structures all the way to Area and Village Development Committees.

The Terms of Reference for the DNCC will be the following:

- Coordinate nutrition activities at the district level
- Provide update to the Local Assembly and the District Commissioner/Chief Executive on nutrition issues
- Monitor the implementation of nutrition activities in the district
- Conduct nutrition review meetings at the district level
- Receive and review reports from stakeholders in the nutrition sector
- Provide technical advice to stakeholders implementing nutrition activities in the district

The project will work closely with approximately 5 partner organizations that have a strong presence in each of Malawi's five government zones. Project staff will support these organizations to carry out advocacy and mobilization of civil society within each of these zones. This approach will also allow the project to monitor district budgets and advocate for increased resource allocation in District

Implementation Plans. A feedback mechanism will be developed to facilitate the flow of information to and from the community.

5.1.3. Council for NGOs in Malawi (CONGOMA). CONGOMA is a very large body, and its members do not often communicate across sectors. Because of the lack of communication, it is not clear who is working in nutrition, and what they have achieved. The CSO Platform will work with CONGOMA to identify those working in nutrition, health, agriculture, gender equality and other relevant sectors, with a focus on identifying CSOs who could act as strategic partners.

The Platform will engage CONGOMA to encourage their members to be involved in the CSO Platform and explore the possibility of the CSO Platform being hosted as an umbrella of their organization.

6.0 MANAGEMENT

The project has been designed to minimize staffing as much as possible, working instead through existing civil society organizations and local partners.

Administration: Concern Worldwide will take lead responsibility for administrative management of the grant, monitoring outcomes, and ensuring that implementation of activities occurs according to agreed timeframes. The Clinton Health Access Initiative, a Co-Chair of the Civil Society Organization network, will take on the primary technical advisory role, providing technical support and input for planning and implementation of activities, and acting as the first point of contact for local civil society in need of implementation support.

Concern will provide office space for the management of this project. It is not expected that the national Platform for nutrition will establish a separate office space, with administrative support provided instead by the member organizations. However, exact mechanisms for the operation of the Platform will be determined through strategic planning.

Staffing: A **Project Manager** will be recruited to provide overall guidance and leadership to the project. The Project Manager will be responsible for planning and directing advocacy activities, coordinating with government and other stakeholders, establishing and providing leadership to the national Platform for improved nutrition, and providing overall management support for the project through monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and staff oversight.

In addition, a **Partnership Support Officer** will be hired to support partnership, capacity building, and communication activities. The Partnership Support Officer will be responsible for identifying, developing, and monitoring partnership arrangements with local organizations, and will also take a leading role in building the capacity of CSOs in nutrition, and in developing and implementing a communication strategy.

Program Implementation

In the first year of the project, the Project Manager, Partnership Support Officer, and partner organizations will work to increase the capacity of civil society in Malawi, and lay the groundwork for the national Platform. In year 2 and 3, the focus will shift to supporting the Platform to carry out advocacy and monitoring activities for nutrition, with a continued emphasis on supporting partner CSOs to monitor and advocate for improved nutrition at the district level

The Project Manager will serve as a key member of the Platform secretariat during the first three years, providing guidance and support to ensure that the Platform is sustainable and fully established. However, the project staff will not serve on the board of the Platform in order to allow the Platform leadership to take a central role in decision-making on the activities of the Platform. The CSO Platform will be coordinated and managed by a steering committee. A board of directors will be appointed to ensure transparency and accountability of CSO Platform operations guided by a memorandum of understanding. No member of the board will be affiliated to any of the CSO Platform member organizations.

7.0. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Progress on the SUN 1000 Special Days campaign process will be monitored jointly by the CS Platform secretariat and member organizations with overall progress monitoring coordinated by the CS Steering Committee and shared with the Board. A detailed monitoring & evaluation framework in line with the national SUN Monitoring and Evaluation framework will be adopted at the onset of the project. The mapping exercise to identify existing CSOs who will form the CS Platform will provide valuable information for the project. At the end of project a final evaluation will determine CS results and lessons learned, and will provide recommendations and guidance for the future activities of the civil society alliance.

8.0. DETAILED BUDGET

This is attached as **Appendix 1**. Every effort will be made to reduce costs. Costs associated with venues for meetings will be reduced by member CSOs hosting meetings. Activities shall be done in a consultative manner and where possible they will be done jointly with other civil societies as a cost saving measure. The project will utilize in-house staff to conduct capacity of programme staff and members to cut the use of external expensive consultants. The project will adopt good procurement procedures to ensure good value for money on inputs.