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**First Consolidated Annual Report of the Administrative Agent on the Improvement Access and Quality
of Education for Girls in Malawi
for the period 1 January to 31 December 2014**

**Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
Bureau of Management
United Nations Development Programme
[GATEWAY: http://mptf.undp.org](http://mptf.undp.org)**

31 May 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Joint Programme on *Improving Access and Quality of Education for Girls in Malawi* is implemented by the Government of Malawi, supported by UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP, with funding courtesy of the Norwegian Government. Key implementing partners (IPs) are the district sections of: the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Youth and Sports; the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare; the Ministry of Agriculture; and Civil Society Organizations.

The Joint Programme was successfully launched by the Prime Minister of Norway on 2nd July 2014, with a ceremony at Nthulu School, in Dedza district. The Norwegian Ambassador to Malawi, the Ministers of Education Science and Technology, Health, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the UN Resident Coordinator and UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP Heads of Agencies in Malawi attended the function.

Following the launch, several preparatory activities were carried out to promote Government ownership, both at central and district level, and to strengthen community involvement, which is regarded as crucial for the successful implementation of the programme.

Major achievements in 2014 include:

- A set of criteria for selecting implementing partners was agreed among the 3 UN agencies
- A capacity assessment was carried out in 79 schools, with 35 to be targeted in the first phase
- UNICEF successfully initiated a two pronged strategy for engaging adolescent girls in non-formal education
- UNFPA began to map adolescent youth friendly services, helping to identify SRH Needs
- M&E plans, including TORs for a baseline survey, were finalised
- WFP's Field Monitor Assistants have been monitoring the school feeding
- UNICEF will be supporting partners to undertake Malawi's first ever Randomised Control Trail on rape prevention
- A two-fold communication strategy is currently being implemented
- A gender responsive manual was printed in early December and will be disbursed over the coming months.

This Consolidated Annual Progress Report under the *Improving Access and Quality of Education for Girls in Malawi* covers the period from 1 January to 31 December, 2014. This report is in fulfillment of the reporting requirements set out in the Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA) concluded with the Donor. In line with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by Participating UN Organizations, the Annual Progress Report is consolidated based on information, data and financial statements submitted by Participating Organizations. It is neither an evaluation of the Joint Programme nor an assessment of the performance of the Participating Organizations. The report provides the Steering Committee with a comprehensive overview of achievements and challenges associated with the Joint Programme, enabling it to make strategic decisions and take corrective measures, where applicable.



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Programme Title & Project Number

Programme Title: **Joint Programme on Improving Access and Quality of Education for Girls in Malawi**
Programme Number *(if applicable)*

MPTF Office Project Reference Number: *00091269*

Participating Organization(s)

Development Aid from People to People, Malawi
National Small Holder Farmer Association of Malawi

Programme/Project Cost (US\$)

Total approved budget as per project document: \$17,162,991
MPTF /JP Contribution to date:

- UNICEF \$1,665,799
- WFP \$1,867,969
- UNFPA \$1,641,365

Other Contributions:

Norway NOK 112,000,000 / US\$ 18,181,260

TOTAL: US\$18,181,260

Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.

Assessment/Review - if applicable *please attach*

Yes No Date: *dd.mm.yyyy*

Mid-Term Evaluation Report – *if applicable please attach*

Yes No Date: *dd.mm.yyyy*

Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results

Country: Malawi

Locality: Dedza, Mangochi, Salima

Priority Areas: Girls Education

Implementing Partners

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
Ministry of Health
Ministry of Youth and Sports
Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare
Ministry of Agriculture

Programme Duration

Overall Duration: 30 Months

Start Date: **1 July 2014**

Original End Date: **31 October 2014**

Current End date: **31 October 2014**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

UN	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
IP	Implementing Partner
MoH	Ministry of Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
TOR	Terms of Reference
GBV	Gender Based Violence
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DAPP Malawi	Development Aid from People to People Malawi
NASFAM	National Small Holder Farmer Association of Malawi
NFE	Non-Formal Education
AGLIT	Adolescent Girls Literacy
CBE	Complementary Basic Education
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MoGCDSW	Ministry of Gender Children Disability and Social Welfare
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas’s
TTC	Teacher Training College
DEC	District Executive Committee
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
CSB	Corn Soy Blend
SMC	School Management Committee

1. PURPOSE

The Joint Programme on *Improving Access and Quality of Education for Girls in Malawi* is a three-year programme. The overarching aim is to improve the access; quality and relevance of education for girls, through a holistic and human rights-based approach. Simultaneously, the programme addresses key known threats such as poor food and nutrition, inadequate protection, poor quality schooling, and violations of girls' sexual and reproductive rights. The underlying objective will be achieved through the pursuit of 7 primary and related outcomes:

1. Improve the nutrition of girls and boys, in targeted schools, allowing them to stay in school
2. Increase access to second chance education for girls who are in, or have left, school
3. Ensure there is quality integrated youth friendly services, resources and structures, addressing CSE, SRHR, HIV/AIDS and GBV in place for girls who are in, or have left, school
4. Reduce violence against girls in targeted schools and communities, building effective referral pathways
5. Improve and enhance both teacher's attitudes and skills, effectively delivering life skills based and gender responsive methodologies
6. Inform and empower adolescent girls to demand SRHR services, ensuring they participate and take leadership positions within their school and their community
7. Empowered and committed communities will value quality education for all children, especially girls

Through a phased implementation, the programme harnesses a "whole school approach", focusing specifically on girls from standard 5 to 8. 79 primary schools are targeted, in 5 zones, across the districts of Salima, Mangochi and Dedza. Depending on the level of success, a significant scale-up may be developed.

2. RESULTS

2.1 OUTCOME SPECIFIC RESULTS

In line with general pre-implementation guidelines, preliminary activities specific to each outcome of the programme were implemented, and are as follows:

2.1.1 OUTCOME 1

An organisational capacity assessment was carried out in the 79 schools, analysing infrastructure and equipment for preparing on-site meals, the ability to distribute those meals, as well as other complementary elements such as WASH. Based on the results of the assessment, 35 schools (10 in Dedza, 10 in Mangochi and 15 in Salima) were targeted during the first year of implementation. The remaining schools will be phased in as the programme develops.

As part of the initial assessment, existing groups of organised farmers that could become regular suppliers were identified, harnessing the home-grown school feeding model. In Dedza, 4 farmer organizations were assessed; in Salima, 3; in Mangochi, 3. Discussions were also held with potential technical partners to support farmer organisation capacity development including: Land O'Lakes; DAPP; NASFAM; and Malawi Lake Basin. Farmer organisations and supporting technical partners will be selected on the basis of distance to the selected schools.

Non-food items have been procured and are ready to be distributed to the 79 schools. A new construction strategy, which combines community participation with the employment of local contractors, has been developed. Construction designs for kitchens, feeding shelters and storerooms were refined, allowing for the best use of locally available materials while ensuring quality and durability. Local contractors were pre-identified and invited to bid with shortlisting currently in progress. A one day meeting with all District Education Managers, Directors of Planning and Development and work supervisors was conducted to promote networking and solicit support.

Additional staff (a home-grown school feeding programme assistant) was deployed in Mangochi to ensure effective delivery. WFP's Field Monitor Assistants (FMAs) from the 3 districts were briefed on the programme to ensure proper oversight of school feeding activities. Key partners in the provision of technical assistance to smallholder suppliers have been identified. Discussions are currently ongoing to refine the scope of the partnership. Community engagement in construction and the feeding projects has begun in all 3 districts.

2.1.2 OUTCOME 2

UNICEF successfully initiated a two pronged strategy for engaging adolescents' girls, who are out of school, in non-formal education. This was achieved through integrating the programme into the Ministry of Sports and Youth Development's strategic objectives. The Ministry identified a functional literacy model that has successfully been implemented by AGLIT¹, a local NGO working in 6 districts. AGLIT literacy classes subsequently form post-literacy youth clubs, allowing neo-literates to reinforce their literacy skills and health knowledge, while learning how to run small business enterprises. The Literacy to out of School Adolescent Boys and Girls Project therefore requires both improved access and equity of access in education, for all out-of-school children, with various forms of vulnerabilities.

A joint agreement with AGLIT to reach 2,250 girls over 2 years was signed with UNICEF on 14th November, 2014. Subsequently, a non-formal education (NFE) workshop for partners was successfully held between the 17th and 21st of November in Mangochi, presided over by the Minister of Youth and Sports. In addition, Government staff, adolescent representatives and technical experts developed a complementary NFE program, targeting short term skills development. This supplementary NFE program will be coordinated by the District Councils, with the support of AGLIT, the Ministry of Sports and Youth Development and the Ministry of Education.

2.1.3 OUTCOME 3 & 6

UNFPA has ensured that the joint programme is fully aligned with the country office's programme cycle and is ready for implementation. The key implementing partners for UNFPA are: the Ministry of Youth; the Ministry of Health (Reproductive Health Unit); and the 3 district councils. As it will be first time for the agency to work in Salima, a capacity assessment of Salima was conducted, allowing it to be registered as an IP. The assessment has been submitted to management and has been approved. In addition, UNFPA will also work with the Malawi Girl

¹The Complementary Basic Education (CBE) of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), working with AGLIT since 2006, has used AGLIT's working experience with adolescents to develop its own curriculum

Guides Association (MAGGA), which is an existing IP for the agency. MAGGA will work in all 3 districts, focusing on activities that fall under outcome 6. Several activities, particularly under the management of menstruation, will require a consultant to be used, due to the limited capacity of the IPs.

A planning meeting with all the IPs was conducted on the 13th and 14th of November. During the meeting, the IPs discussed the proposed activities in the project document and shared roles and responsibilities according to their capacity. The IPs submitted their work plans at the start of December and they were later consolidated.

UNFPA intends to map the Adolescent Youth Friendly Health services. The results, together with the baseline survey, will help identify SRH needs for adolescents. The Terms of Reference have been developed and the exercise began in mid-December.

2.1.4 OUTCOME 4

In order to achieve outcome 4 of the programme, UNICEF has identified 2 IPs, and a sub-grantee, which will implement all activities that fall under outcome 4. Two project agreements with Plan Malawi and ActionAid Malawi have been passed by UNICEF's internal review committee and have been signed by UNICEF's representative. ActionAid Malawi will be operating in Dedza, with Plan Malawi in Salima and Mangochi. Both partners will be working with an innovative grass roots rape prevention organization from Kenya, Ujamaa Africa, which has recently registered in Malawi.

In addition to core elements of the programme, UNICEF will be supporting partners to undertake Malawi's first ever Randomized Control Trial on rape prevention. This will be implemented as an objective academic study, measuring the effectiveness of the intervention. The 3 core partners in this project, alongside representatives of the Ministry of Gender and Ministry of Education, have had a series of planning meetings and agreed upon a common results framework. As a result, a cadre of Malawian empowerment and self-defense trainers have been recruited and trained to implement the violence prevention work and establish MoUs with the schools. This activity has been critical as the core empowerment/self-defense curriculum runs in schools as an alternative to the standard life skills curriculum, radically transforming gender relations. Therefore, it is critical that strong relationships are established in the pre-operational phase, mitigating tensions that naturally arise.

Upon signing the agreement in mid-November, baseline activities and core skills development sessions will be implemented. This will ensure that trainers are ready to implement participatory reflect processes to ascertain community based protection threats in 2015.

2.1.5 OUTCOME 5

UNICEF has signed a project agreement with TIMVENI to facilitate the implementation of activities under outcome 5. TIMVENI will work in all three districts, focusing on community mobilization, youth participation and communication. An amendment to an existing project agreement between UNICEF and VSO has been finalized and signed by all partners. The project agreement aligns VSO's current work on the project with providing quality teacher training both at TTC level (pre-service) as well as school level (in-service).

A gender responsive manual was printed in early December and is expected to reach all programme schools once they are taken through the gender responsive pedagogy. The manuals are a key tool in the provision of in-service teacher training. Furthermore, it plays an important

role in training, monitoring and assessing other relevant stakeholders at the school and community level such as head teachers, school management committees and mother groups.

2.1.6 OUTCOME 7

As noted above, the pre-implementation phase established a fully developed communication strategy, including: 1) communication for development (C4D) and 2) visibility and partnership. The aforementioned media orientation workshop was held in Salima, Dedza and Mangochi from November 6th – 9th and was delivered in partnership with the Ministry of Information. The purpose of the orientation was to support and clarify the role of media/communication teams in the programme both at district and central level. It emphasised the procedure for conducting social dialogue with various stakeholders and institutions at the community level. It also provided a detailed overview of the programme in relation to all media and communication activities. This included a practical session on ‘letters to the community’; letters used to stimulate social dialogue and discussions on solutions to challenges the programme intends to address. The final output of the workshop was to have each district team develop an action plan for further activities and social mobilization. The plans will be validated and supported by all the UN agencies.

2.2 CHALLENGES/LESSONS LEARNED

The implementation of the programme experienced several delays due to the following reasons:

- Limited engagement of Government in the proposal development stage resulted in negotiations to increase their involvement in the programme delaying the initiation of activities at the district level. All the UN agencies considered government leadership as a critical step in terms of success, ownership and sustainability of the programme
- A necessary pre-implementation period was not counted in the original work-plan
- The decentralization process gave additional powers to the districts and their formal approval is required before any programme can be implemented in each district. A number of activities were therefore planned to follow the right district entry processes including orientation of the DEC, followed by the orientation of the council before communities are briefed on the project
- Funds were not received until September 2014; this delayed some activities for which a budget was required, including the development of contracts with implementing partners and orientation sessions at the district level
- Change of government lead to a reallocation of staff to other ministries, particularly in the MoEST, and affected the decision making timeline.

2.3 QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

The following assessment outlines how the various pillars in the programme were built during the pre-implementation stage in 2014.

2.3.1 SELECTING IPs

UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP conducted a one-day briefing session with potential implementing partners on the 11th of September, 2014. The meeting, which took place in Lilongwe, included 50 participants from key Government Ministries (at both national and district level), Civil Society Organizations and the 3 UN agencies. The joint programme, and its results framework, were presented to the potential IPs and included a knowledge exchange and feedback session. The roles, responsibilities and implementation modalities of IPs were also discussed. Additionally, the meeting focused attention on the need to support girls' education in Malawi, through a holistic approach for maximum impact.

A set of criteria for selecting implementing partners in the first phase of the programme was agreed among the 3 UN agencies. The criteria mainly focused on partners' previous work with the implementing UN agencies, focusing on their capacity to deliver effective programs. In addition, the comparative advantage of each was considered. A final list of implementing partners and key stakeholders, for synergies and consultations, was established at the beginning of October.

2.3.2 Consultation Process

Following discussions with the Secretary for Education, Science and Technology (SEST), a pre-implementation work plan was established. A consultation process, characterized by a bottom-up approach, was also launched to present the joint programme to key implementers and stakeholders. The premise was to ensure that the programme addresses actual needs at the community level and provided stakeholders with the opportunity to agree on the implementation plan.

Included in the consultation process were meetings between the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the implementing UN agencies and the District Executive Committees from Dedza, Salima and Mangochi. Ancillary meetings with implementing partners, M&E and Communications teams clarified roles and responsibilities, with activities for successful implementation agreed upon. More than 170 participants, including central government officials, UN staff members, district officers and representatives from NGOs and Civil Society Organisations attended the meetings, which took place between the 7th and 9th of October. The Principal Secretary for Basic and Secondary Education, Ms. Thoko Banda, participated in the DEC meeting in Mangochi, reiterating the Ministry of Education's commitment. She also announced that the MoEST would provide additional support to the selected schools. In particular, the MoEST will try to increase the allocation of teachers to the targeted areas and support the material needs of the schools. The meetings mapped out relevant stakeholders for future synergies while work plans for the joint programme were also established. Additionally, the proposed list of selected schools was validated and the programme was endorsed by the 3 districts.

On 28th October 2014, a special session of the Education Crosscutting Technical Working Group was organised by the MoEST, in partnership with UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP, to present the

joint programme. The presentation highlighted objectives, expected outcomes and activities, as well as illustrating the results of the consultations that had taken place in the 3 districts. 40 members of the Technical Working Group attended the meeting, providing an opportunity to discuss the key issues related to implementation such as geographical targeting, sustainability, partnerships at district and national level and coordination structures.

2.3.3 M&E

M&E plans and frameworks have been developed for the programme. The M&E plan provides a brief overview of the proposed monitoring and evaluation activities for the Joint Programme, outlining timelines and methods of data collection.

In order to measure achievements against the established objectives, ToRs for a baseline survey were developed, with a team of local consultants selected to carry out the assignment. The baseline survey will determine the current status of the key outcomes and output indicators in the targeted schools and communities. It will also provide a strong contextual analysis, ensuring that UN activities align with the existing barriers and needs of the targeted schools and communities. Furthermore, the baseline survey will identify existing behaviors, attitudes, perceptions and social norms, focusing on how they affect girls' education. A control group of schools and communities will be established in the selected districts, ensuring findings can be compared, allowing for a broader analysis.

Routine data will be collected by IPs, as defined in the M&E plan, with a quarterly report collating the data. In order to ensure that the programme achieves the desired results, a number of indicators have been identified to be collected through real time monitoring on a monthly basis, informing future plans. To this extent, the M&E technical working group is assessing a number of options to ensure selected indicators can be collected in real time, ideally by means of mobile technology and IT solutions. The M&E team will conduct a final review of the available options for real time monitoring by at the end of the year.

2.3.4 Communications

A two-fold communications strategy, including a Communication for Development (C4D) and visibility component, was developed. Within C4D, a combination of approaches will be applied to make communication activities holistic and integrated; ensuring key factors hampering girls' education are equally targeted. Social mobilization, social advocacy, interpersonal communication and a behavioral change communication strategy will be implemented to stimulate engagement with critical players. This aspect will primarily focus on parents, caregivers and guardians at the household level and teachers at the community level. The reach will be expanded to include local leaders, boys, girls and other relevant stakeholders through the use of multi-media to promote behavioral and social change. The strategy will help raise awareness on the importance of community participation in promoting girls' education as well as on other specific areas of intervention (school meals, SRHR, HIV/AIDS, violence and child abuse).

A district level media and communication workshop was held in all 3 districts between the 6th and 9th of November, building the potential to support social mobilisation. On average, 30 participants took part in each district, including partners from UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP and the Ministry of Information and Civic Education. The workshop emphasised the role of media and communications in the programme, as well as the procedure for conducting social dialogue with communities, schools, churches/mosques and other institutions at community level.

The visibility component of the communications strategy is intended to raise the public profile and provide strategic guidance to the joint programme. This component is designed to highlight the impact and results of the programme, thereby contributing to the primary programme objective of improving the access, quality and relevance of education for girls. It will also showcase the value of partnership between Norway-UNICEF-WFP-UNFPA-Government and the people of Malawi. The strategy is comprised of best practice communications and visibility methods, inclusive of, *inter alia*, public information outreach, special events, electronic and web communications strategies.

3. PROGRAMMATIC REVISIONS

Taking into consideration the initial challenges and the current status of the joint programme, the work plan was adjusted and the following activities are envisaged to take place over the coming year:

3.1 OUTCOME 1

- Provide financial training to home grown school feeding managers in 79 schools and to 9 district officers
- Construct/refurbish 44 schools in Dedza, Salima, and Mangochi
- Administer cash take home rations to 8991 girls and OVCs in Dedza and Mangochi
- Distribute food take home rations to approximately 4000 girls and OVCs in Salima
- Deliver CSB to 79,000 school children per month until July 2015
- Issue school meals to 35,000 children by July 2015
- Distribute non-food items to an additional 44 schools
- Implement an award system for the best performing schools and communities involved in the programme

3.2 OUTCOME 2

- Procure non-formal teaching and learning materials
- Enroll and mentor 3,500 girls in functional literacy classes

3.3 OUTCOME 3 & 6

- Complete the construction of 3 youth friendly health centers in each district
- Continue to train girls and mother groups in the production of affordable sanitary pads
- Mentor girls in leadership through radio programmes, school debates, and career talks in all the targeted schools
- Implement early marriage campaigns in the 3 districts
- Increase teacher training in comprehensive sexual education
- Train community youth leaders using the stars approach
- Distribute Youth Friendly Health services recreation materials across the 3 districts

3.4 OUTCOME 4

- Train the trainers involved in the *Your Moment of Truth* programme

- Roll out girls empowerment training in all schools
- Roll out boys programme in all schools
- Establish *Sexual Assault Survivors Anonymous* clubs

3.5 OUTCOME 5 & 7

- Develop criteria for rewarding the best performing head teachers
- Support school and cluster level debates on life skills and sexual reproductive health
- Implement after school remedial classes in key subjects in conjunction with school authorities
- Partner with various media outlets to sensitise communities on the importance of girls education
- Produce jingles outlining the importance of girls education and partner with local media outlets to ensure they receive air time at least 15 times per day
- Establish teacher resource centers
- Plan and procure building materials for construction in 2 schools, with building beginning in July
- Train farming organisations and SMC's in 79 schools

3.6 COORDINATION

- Plan and procure building materials for construction in 2 schools, with building beginning in July
- Finalise the baseline survey
- Implement the first stages of the real time monitoring system
- Facilitate district coordination meetings where joint work plans will be presented
- Implement the visibility strategy for Delivering as One
- Review the programme with donors and UN agencies to finalise the budget for year 2 and validate all financial and progress reports
- Plan a special study on cash transfers