



**Spotlight
Initiative**
*To eliminate violence
against women and girls*

Malawi

Annual Narrative Programme Report

Programme Start Date: 01 January 2019

Reporting Period: 01 January 2021 – 31 December 2021

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations:



Programme Title & Programme Number

Programme Title: Spotlight Initiative Country Programme for Malawi

MPTF Office Project Reference Number:¹
00111640

Recipient Organization(s)

UNDP
UNFPA
UNICEF

Programme Cost (US\$)

Total Phase I approved budget as per the Spotlight CPD/RPD: 20,990,484 USD

Phase I Spotlight funding:² 20,000,000 USD

Agency Contribution: 990,484 USD

Spotlight Funding and Agency Contribution by Agency:

| Name of RUNO | Spotlight Phase I (USD) | UN Agency Contributions (USD) |
|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| UNICEF | 4,077,502 | 169,670 |
| UNDP | 4,506,897 | 310,000 |
| UN Women | 5,850,290 | 70,000 |
| UNFPA | 5,565,312 | 440,814 |
| TOTAL: | 20,000,000 | 990,484 |
| TOTAL: | 20,990,484 USD | |

Priority Regions/Areas/Localities for the Programme

Nationwide with a particular focus on six proposed districts (Mzimba, Nkhata Bay, Ntchisi, Dowa, Nsanje and Machinga), selected based on performance on key indicators, as well as presence of other programmes and UN organizations.

Key Partners

Government: Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Youth Sports and Manpower Development, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Malawi Police

Associated Agencies: UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNHCR

CSO Partners (during 2021): 39 CSOs: 22 are national CSOs, 12 are grassroots organisations, and 5 are international CSOs

Others: Media, Academia, traditional leaders

Programme Start and End Dates

Start Date:
01.01.2019

End Date:
31.12.2022

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The Spotlight Contribution refers to the amount transferred to the Recipient UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

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List of Acronyms

| | |
|----------|---|
| ADC: | Area Development Committee |
| AGEC: | African Gender Equality Conference |
| AGYW: | Adolescent Girls and Young Women |
| CBO: | Community Based Organisation |
| CEDAW: | Convention on the Elimination of all forms Discrimination Against Women |
| COP: | Community of Practice |
| COMSIP: | Community Savings and Investment Promotion |
| CSE: | Comprehensive Sexuality Education |
| CPW: | Child Protection Worker |
| CPD: | Caring for Persons with Disability |
| CSNRG: | Civil Society National Reference Group |
| CSO: | Civil Society Organisation |
| CVSU: | Community Victim Support Unit |
| DaO: | Delivering as One |
| DDP: | District Development Plans |
| Eol: | Expression of Interest |
| EUD: | European Union Delegation |
| ESP: | Essential Services Package |
| FGD: | Focus Group Discussion |
| EVAWG: | Ending Violence Against Women and Girls |
| FSWA: | Female Sex Workers Association |
| GBV: | Gender Based Violence |
| GBVIMS: | Gender Based Violence Information Management System |
| GEWE: | Gender Equality and Women Empowerment |
| GDP: | Gross Domestic Product |
| GoM: | Government of Malawi |
| GRB: | Gender Responsive Budgeting |
| GRL: | Gender Related Laws |
| GTWG: | Gender Technical working Group |
| HACT: | Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer |
| HIV: | Human Immo-deficiency Virus |
| HLI: | Higher Learning Institutions |
| HOA: | Heads Of Agency |
| HP: | Harmful Practice |
| IMTF: | Inter Ministerial Task Force |
| IP: | Implementing Partner |
| INGO: | International Non Governmental Organisation |
| JOL: | Journey of Life |
| LGBTIQ: | Lesbian,Gay,Bisexual,Transgender, Intersex, and Queer |
| LNOB: | Leaving No One Behind |
| MACOHA: | Malawi Council for the Handcapped |
| MBC: | Malawi Broadcasting Cooperation |
| MDA: | Ministry Department and Agency |
| MHRC: | Malawi Human Rights Commission |
| MoGCDSW: | Ministry Of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare |
| MoH: | Ministry of Health |
| MoHAIS: | Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security |
| MoLG: | Ministry of Local Government |
| MPS: | Malawi Police Service |

| | |
|---------|--|
| MTA: | Mid-Term Assessment |
| MTR: | Mid-Term Review |
| MOU: | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NCHE: | Nationa Council for Higher Education |
| NICE: | National Initiative for Civic Education |
| NSC: | National Steering Committee |
| NAPHAM: | National Association for People Living with HIV and AIDS in Malawi |
| OF: | Obstretic Fistula |
| OPC: | Office of The President and Cabinet |
| PFA: | Psychosocial First Aid |
| PEP: | Post Exposure Prophylaxis |
| PME: | Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation |
| PSEA: | Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse |
| RC: | Resident Coordinator |
| RCO: | Resident Coordinator's Office |
| RUNO: | Recipient United Nations Organisation |
| SDG 5: | Strategic Development Goal 5 |
| SGBV: | Sexual and Gender Based Violence |
| SI: | Spotlight Initiative |
| SMEB: | Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket |
| SEP: | Social Economic Profiles |
| SSIPA: | Spotlight Specific Integrated Protection Approach |
| SRH: | Sexual Reproductive Health |
| SRHR: | Sexual Reproductive Health Rights |
| STI: | Sexual Transmitted Infections |
| TA: | Traditional Authority |
| ToR: | Terms of Refernce |
| UNCT: | United Nations Country Team |
| UNDP: | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNHCR: | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| UNESCO: | United Nations Education, Science, Culture and Organisation |
| VDC: | Village Development Committee |
| VAWG: | Violence Against Women and Girls |
| VAP: | Village Action Plans |
| VSU: | Victim Support Unit |
| WEE: | Women Economic Empowerment |
| WFP: | World Food Programme |
| YFHS: | Youth Friendly Health Services |

Executive Summary

In its third year of implementation, the Spotlight Initiative (SI) Malawi is on track to achieving its targets, with 167% of the targeted number of beneficiaries reached cumulatively and a year of the Programme still to come.

The tripartite alliance between the Government of Malawi (GoM), European Union Delegation (EUD) and the United Nations (UN) along with the important impact achieved by the SI has positioned the Spotlight Initiative as the leading multi-stakeholder programme on Eliminate Violence against Women and Girls (E-VaWG) in the country. This is evidenced by the increasingly extensive media coverage of the SI with 47 media products featuring the SI in 2021, including newspaper articles, television programmes, and radio shows.

The strategic leadership of the 2 SI Line Ministries- the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW) and the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) continues to be critical in ensuring national ownership, and the SI's alignment to National Development Priorities. While the MoGCDSW provides policy direction to the SI, the MoLG has ensured the leadership of district authorities, and the steadfast commitment of traditional leaders (overseen by the MoLG).

The UN-EU-GoM alliance, coupled with the Programme's alignment of the SI to the UN Reform Agenda has granted the Programme an important degree of convening power. The leadership of these 3 entities jointly engaged several senior figures and decision makers (e.g. Speaker of Parliament, the 1st Lady of the Republic of Malawi, Ministers), thus enhancing the visibility of the SI and conducting high level advocacy campaigns.

The 4 United Nations Agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women), led by the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) worked alongside over 50 SI partners and stakeholders to E-VaWG in 2021. This includes Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), traditional and religious leaders, media houses, academia, Government and Quasi-Governmental Entities, and crucially, women, girls, and their communities.

Partnerships under the SI strongly reflect the Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) Principle, firmly embedded throughout the SI Malawi. Interventions prioritise women and girls who are especially vulnerable, including those with disabilities, widows, key populations, refugees, and those living in remote and hard-to-reach areas.

The meaningful engagement of Civil Society is therefore a critical component, including as Implementing Partners (IPs) and advisors- through the Civil Society National Reference Group (CS-NRG). Collaboration with grassroots actors has been especially prioritized, in line with the global and contextualized national Grassroots Action Plan (GAP). The Malawi GAP was developed in phase II to facilitate the shift in focus from ensuring the equal participation of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) as partners in phase I, to supporting the capacity building of grassroots actors as existing SI partners in phase II. From 2020 to 2021, the SI increased the number of CSO partners by 39%, while placing emphasis on the engagement of grassroots organisations as part of the sustainability strategy. With dedicated funding in 2021 the CS-NRG accelerated its efforts to bolster the SI's efforts by conducting monitoring visits and developing concrete recommendations to improve the SI's delivery of results.

With so many partners working to achieve the Programme's goals and objectives, fewer Covid-19 related hindrances, and a well-established approach to E-VaWG, the year 2021 saw the SI achieve considerable progress and impact. Under Pillar 1, for instance (on laws and policies), the drafting of

7 by-laws not only abolished or amended 18 HPs, but they also facilitated a community led movement to protect women and girls that is sustainably grounded in a legal framework.

The now established Chiefs Forums under Pillar 2 (Institutions) enabled an escalation of efforts by Traditional Leaders to E-VaWG. Following the training of 1,561 Chiefs, these champions of change collectively annulled 1,222 child marriages (representing 98% of registered child marriages in the 6 districts), and the re-enrolment of the girls in school. Under the same pillar, a Model Gender Policy for Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) was developed and adopted by 22 Universities. The Policy represents an institutional stance against the sexual harassment of women and girls, and empowers them to denounce such violence, while providing them with avenues to seek services- thus mitigating violence and encouraging help seeking behavior by survivors.

The alliance with a broad array of community-based actors under Pillar 3 (Norms and Prevention) has prompted communities to take the E-VaWG into their own hands. With nearly 25,000 mentors and mentees, the protective network of women and girls who support each other to stand up to violence, promote behaviour change and access services has expanded substantially. The girls facilitated the re-enrolment of 959 girls in school and referred nearly 2,000 cases of mostly sexual violence to the authorities. Under the same pillar, 6,459 male champions have become active agents of change and are promoting positive masculinities towards E-VAWG and SRHR using the male engagement operational guide drafted under the Programme. School-based SGBV has been considerably mitigated for 112,219 learners in 98 schools, who now have access to complaints boxes directly managed by the Malawi Police Service. Consequently 31 cases of rape were identified and investigated by the Police- sending a strong message of deterrence to students and teachers.

These community led efforts supported by the SI have resulted in a dramatic increase of reports of violence, which are being ably handled by SI funded service delivery points (Pillar 4- Services). In 2021 36,439 SGBV cases were reported and followed up on, including 709 child marriages of which 430 were annulled and the girls re-enrolled in school. These figures represent an 87% increase in the number of cases reported compared with 2020- suggesting a significant degree of SGBV/ HP service demand creation achieved in SI districts. The innovative SI Community Fund which contributes to survivors accessing services and recovering from violence is a success, as the self-sustaining is directly managed by community leaders.

With the SI's support through Pillar 5 (Data), Malawi is now on its way to having official internationally comparable and disaggregated data on SGBV/ HPs and SRHR. This is owing to the standardization of data collection tools being used by Policy, community structures and district officers and the establishment of the GBV Observatory Hub. The hub already has 2,798 recorded cases.

Finally, the district women's assemblies under pillar 6 are steadily growing with 790 new women's rights activists recruited in 2021. The SI has focused on building an inclusive movement of diverse women who are actively holding duty bearers accountable for their response to VaWG using scorecards.

The various interventions across all pillars are driven by a diverse group of partners who work cohesively to facilitate the comprehensive response to E-VaWG envisioned by the Programme's Theory of Change (ToC). This approach is similarly bolstered by the UN Reform Agenda, as all partners have been brought together to collectively respond to and eradicate VaWG under the SI umbrella- irrespective of donor reporting lines. In practical terms, the SI Communities of Practice (COPs) established in all SI districts ensure that partners regularly coordinate their work through monthly meetings led by district authorities. SI COP meetings provide a platform for SI stakeholders to collaborate and leverage on each other's interventions, expertise, and resources.

The result is a network or movement of actors working towards the same goals, and a holistic Programme that supports GBV survivors from multiple angles.

In June 2021 the National Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Deputy Chief to the President and Cabinet and the UNRC, approved the Phase II Workplan. The SI team then turned its attention to developing a detailed sustainability strategy, inspired by SI Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) principles that place survivors and their communities at the center of all decision making. A series of consultations with SI beneficiaries, as well as on the performance of IPs provided the basis for the phase II SI sustainability strategy, as well as joint IP assessments. The latter determined which IPs would continue in phase II, and which required targeted capacity building in line with the SI Malawi Grassroots Action Plan (GAP).

These initiatives were jointly implemented by the UN team and the SI Line Ministries, in homage to the Delivery as One (DaO) principle, and UN Reform. In this regard, the SI Malawi applied its innovative DaO Accountability Framework, aimed at measuring progress towards DaO through performance indicators. The results of the 2021 DAO assessment found that 92% of survey respondents (from the UN team) believe that there is cohesiveness in how the Programme is being delivered, and 93% agree there is a strong sense of team spirit.

While 2021 was a year of general success for the SI Malawi, a number of challenges were encountered. Limited capacity by grassroots actors, and the complexities of coordinating 44 IPs in addition to GoM entities and other stakeholders pushed the team to think outside the box and find creative solutions. The Malawi GAP is one such solution, which focuses on strengthening the capacity of grassroots actors, while the joint IP assessment pointed out which CSOs to prioritise for partnership in phase II and beyond.

Contextual Shifts and Implementation Status

Malawi remains one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 172/188 on the UNDP Human Development Index and 173/188 on the UN's Gender Inequality Index (GII). Significant inequalities, governance gaps and the spill over consequences of COVID-19 from 2020 threaten development gains to date as well as internal stability.

In late 2021, the GoM increased the price of fuel by more than 20%, leading to price hikes in essential goods and services across the country including fuel, cooking oil, and fertilisers. This created political turbulence, as thousands took to the streets to protest towards the end of the year.

While moderate and severe food insecurity reduced somewhat by June 2021, the poorest households continued to be the most insecure. Poverty and inequality remain stubbornly high in rural and marginalized communities, with female headed households particularly affected. The World Food Programme (WFP) reported the highest recorded Survival Minimum Expenditure Baskets (SMEB) since April 2020- reflecting a 19% increase.

Poverty in Malawi is to a large extent driven by low productivity in the agriculture sector, which accounts for approximately 42% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This has a disproportionate impact on women, who make up 70% of the agricultural labor force, produce 70% of household food and perform between 50% and 70% of all agricultural tasks. Despite their integral role in the agricultural sector, women produce significantly less than men because of their limited access to land, labor, knowledge, fertilizer, and improved seeds, and they earn three times less than their male counterparts.

According to the 2021 World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report, women in Malawi continue to be disadvantaged across several sectors. Out of 156 countries, Malawi ranked 115 in the Global Gender Gap index, 111 in the Economic Participation and Opportunity, and 129 in Educational Attainment. In 2021, nearly 40% of all students selected into public universities and colleges were women compared to 60% men. Nearly half of the girls in Malawi are married and drop out of school by their 18th birthday according to Malawi Development Health Survey (MDHS) 2015.

Low levels of educational performance and high levels of child marriage in Malawi are associated with decreased levels of human capital accumulation, which affects women's school-to-work transition, and hampers their capacity to participate equitably in the workforce. This is exacerbated by the high prevalence of sexual harassment in the workplace: with SI support, the Malawi Human Rights Commission (MHRC) conducted a national survey on sexual harassment in 2021 which illustrated that 98% of sexual harassment cases in the workplace and schools go unreported due to fear of repercussions.

The GoM continues to make important efforts to ensure women and girls enjoy their rights through policies, action plans, strategies, and legislation. However, implementation of these instruments has been hindered by persistent patriarchal norms and harmful practices, limited political will, limited capacity across relevant institutions and groups in terms of implementation and monitoring of interventions, inadequate financial resources allocated to advance gender equality and women empowerment (GEWE), and limited and selective enforcement of laws.

In January 2021, the Government launched Malawi Vision 2063, that aims at transforming Malawi into a wealthy and self-reliant industrialized upper middle-income country. The strategic document states its intention to eliminate all gender-based discrimination and violence, including harmful practices such as child marriage as a means to accelerate the pace of inclusive wealth creation.

In line with its obligations under article 18 of the Convention to Eliminate Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), in 2021 the GoM submitted its 8th State Party report. The document refers to the priority areas of action to E-VaWG, which include the prevention of GBV by addressing root causes and promoting transformation of harmful social norms; promotion of an early referral system that identifies violence and thus reduces impact and continuation; and creation of an effective response mechanism supporting victims of GBV. The Report also refers specifically to the SI as an integral component of their efforts to eradicate GBV.

More positively, important strides were made in the protection of girls' human rights after Muslims and Christian leaders signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) allowing female Muslim learners to wear hijabs in public and Christian-owned schools- where previously they had been turned away.

Malawi's economy continues to be heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The economy was severely hit by the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic which largely subsided by March 2021, however a third wave led to a jump in case numbers from June to August. During the 2020 outbreak of COVID-19, Malawian women and girls faced heightened risks of violence, particularly rape and child marriage which saw a steep increase in numbers- with 13,000 child marriages between April and September alone. This, coupled with limited access to SRH services further resulted in nearly 40,000 teenage pregnancies in the same period.

In 2021 the country struggled to recover from the lasting effects of this spike in violence, as well as the disproportionate socio-economic impact of the pandemic on women and girls. The greatest obstacle faced by the SI Malawi in relation to the pandemic was travel restrictions imposed by both the Government and the UN Country Team (UNCT). This impacted upon the UN team's ability to monitor interventions and take corrective action during the course of the year. This was mitigated by the district authorities' strong leadership of the programme on the ground, including with the support of the 6 SI district coordinators situated in all districts.

Adjustments made to the programme in 2020 continued to be relevant throughout 2021 and to benefit the implementation process. These include provision of data and airtime to key stakeholders, transportation for front-line service providers, and the strengthened partnership with grassroots actors and community leaders who monitored the situation of women and girls and ensured access to quality and essential services through functional referral pathways.

In light of travel restrictions faced by the UN, Civil Society and traditional leaders proved to be vital partners to the SI. Both were instrumental in raising awareness of SGBV and Covid-19 at community level, rapidly detecting and referring cases of violence to service providers. CSOs were also crucial in terms of continuing with the implementation of SI activities where feasible and in adherence with the preventative measures. UN agencies further adjusted IP agreements to include Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) for themselves and for the communities they were working with.

The Malawi phase II proposal developed during the year took cognizance the growing protection needs of women and girls following the pandemic and allocated greater percentage of funding to pillars 3 and 4. This is in line with programme criticality exercise that formed the basis for the SI Covid-19 Response plan developed the previous year.

Awareness raising on the increase of VaWG in the midst of the pandemic, and the importance of reporting cases to the relevant authorities formed a crucial aspect of the SI in 2021. The ongoing leadership of the SI Line Ministries at national and district level, as well as the strong partnership with the EUD proved vital in this regard. The tripartite partnership served to draw nationwide attention to the matter through a number of high-level activities.

Overall, the Programme is on track to achieve its goals and objectives, though with some delays in pillars 1, 4 and 5. This is partly due to delays in funding disbursements to the programme. Delays also resulted from the participatory consultative processes required for the adoption of data collection tools, and the passing of legislation and policies which, though lengthy, were constructive and ultimately contribute to sustainability. The SI team intends to prioritize these pillars in 2022 by working closely with relevant authorities to ensure any remaining consultations and decisions are expedited. The team is also planning to mobilise resources for the continuation of any activities that may remain to be followed up after 2022.

As the SI Malawi closed its first chapter of implementation (phase I), and kickstarted phase II towards the end of the year, emphasis is placed on ensuring sustainability of all interventions. This was done through a series of participatory consultations at all levels, with emphasis on obtaining feedback from Programme beneficiaries.

Implementation progress by outcome area:

| Spotlight Initiative - Outcome areas | Implementation progress at 31 Dec 2021 |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Outcome 1: Legal and Policy Framework | 100% |
| Outcome 2: Institutions | 100% |
| Outcome 3: Prevention and Norm Change | 100% |
| Outcome 4: Quality Services | 93% |
| Outcome 5: Data | 98% |
| Outcome 6: Women's Movement | 100% |
| TOTAL | 95% |



Programme Governance

A. National Steering Committee

In July 2021 the NSC was convened under the chairmanship of the Deputy Chief to the President and Cabinet (OPC) and the UN RC, in keeping with the UN Reform Agenda. The meeting was very well attended at the most senior level, including the EU Chargé D'Affaires, Permanent Secretaries of several Ministries, the Executive Secretary of the MHRC, the Police Commissioner, the Registrar of the High Court, 3 members of the CS-NRG and others.

The NSC is the highest level of governance and oversees the overall Programme implementation by providing strategic policy direction and guidance. According to the SC Terms of Reference (ToR), meeting frequency was originally biannually, however the meeting in 2021 was the second meeting held since 2019. This is largely due to 2 rounds of turbulent elections followed by a change in administration in 2020, which led to the unavailability of key Government officials.

The NSC meeting in July focused on i) sharing information regarding the SI's progress and impact achieved to date, ii) disseminating the results of the internal Mid-Term Review (MTR) and the Mid-Term Assessment (MTA), and iii) presenting the draft phase II proposal. Crucially, the meeting endorsed the phase II proposal, and issued the following key recommendations: i) conduct consultations on sustainability to further develop the brief sustainability strategy included in the proposal; ii) strengthen involvement of central level ministries; and iii) conduct orientations on phase II proposal at district level.

Thus, the NSC meeting provided strategic and concrete guidance to the technical committee, who have since acted on all 3 recommendations. Despite the irregularity of meetings, the NSC and the outcomes of the meeting in July are an important reflection of the initiative's principles of inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, consensus-based decision-making processes, and national ownership.

B. Civil Society National Regional Reference Group (CSNRG)

The Malawi CSNRG is a group of 10 experts (5 males, 5 females) on E-VaWG, SRHR and LNOB. Initially the group comprised of 14 experts, but 4 members have left the group and will be replaced in 2022. To support the principle of LNOB the membership of the group includes female sex workers, traditional leaders, representatives of the LGBTIQ community.

Supported under pillar 6, the CSNRG has consistently met on a quarterly basis to plan and strategize their support to the SI. These meetings have served as a platform for the CSNRG to discuss programmatic progress with the UN team and offer strategic recommendations to respective RUNOs and IPs for optimal delivery. To ensure meaningful engagement of CSOs affiliated with the SI, the CSNRG ensured their inclusion during strategic moments of planning meetings.

The CSNRG has an approved and budgeted work plan which is supported under pillar 6. The key elements include documentation of lessons learned and experience sharing, advocacy, independent monitoring of the SI, development of White Papers on areas of thematic priority and including recommendations; and contextualization and launch of the Spotlight Specific Integrated Protection Approach (SSIP) in the context of Malawi. The total budget for the CSNRG for 2021 was USD 30,000.

To support the meaningful engagement of the CSNRG in the SI and foster mutual accountability, 2 representatives of CSNRG were nominated to join the SI Core team which meets on monthly basis.

Members of CSNRG also participate in SI quarterly pillar coordination meetings; CSNRG members are assigned to pillars based on their expertise and experience.

The work of the CSNRG improved considerably with the allocation of funds and the subsequent development of a costed work plan. Nonetheless challenges remain as members are expected to put their jobs on hold in order to contribute to the SI without compensation. The new guidance regarding remuneration of CSNRG members was received after the budget had already been allocated. Retroactive adjustment of the work plan will therefore be necessary if Malawi is to adopt the new guidance, which may lead to the sacrifice of some planned activities. That being said, the SI Malawi feels it is more important to prioritise the quality of activities over the quantity, and certainly, the ability of CS-NRG members to fully dedicate themselves to activities will support this prioritization.

C. Inter-agency coordination, technical committees, and other governance mechanisms

At the technical level, the SI is steered by a national technical committee led by the line Ministries (MoGCDSW and MOLG) in collaboration with the SI Malawi Secretariat and with participation of the RUNOs. The committee is the primary platform whereby the RUNOs and the Line Ministries jointly drive the Programme. In 2021 the committee did this through various joint activities, including monitoring visits, assessment of IPs, consultations on sustainability, high level advocacy visits, development of phase II proposal and orientations on phase II work plans. This structure has been vital for ensuring Government ownership, joint decision making and mutual accountability.

Challenges in the SI's governance arose when the SI Line Ministries express dissatisfaction around the funding modality, which they requested be changed to direct cash transfer from direct implementation. While this has created some barriers in the degree of cooperation between the UN team and the Line Ministries, the matter is under discussion and a constructive solution is being sought.

The technical committee furthermore identified the absence of a broader committee that includes all Ministries and GoM entities involved in the SI. Although an Inter-Ministerial Task Force had been proposed and an initial meeting held as early as Q2 of 2020, discussions around the implementation modality once again stalled progress in its establishment. The Steering Committee has since recommended that this discussion be re-visited, and the UN team together with the Line Ministries agreed to conduct the second meeting in Dec 2021/ early 2022. This Task Force will be vital for harnessing the expertise of numerous actors in support of a multi-dimensional response to VaWG.

Given the Programme's prioritization of activities at the district level, the SI has placed considerable emphasis on establishing strong coordination mechanisms of the SI through district authorities. Two years on from their establishment, the SI Communities of Practice are now widely acknowledged by all SI stakeholders as instrumental in promoting cohesive and complementary implementation of the SI by all IPs and stakeholders. The CoPs report to the district Gender Technical Working Groups (GTWGs) and are therefore integrated into existing coordination structures.

The SI is also actively represented in several coordination mechanisms, including the Gender and Human Rights Donor Group, UN Programme Management Team, Protection Cluster, and the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Core Group. The Programme's representation in these mechanisms have been largely related to maximizing visibility of the SI through sharing key lessons learned on E-VaWG and on strengthening UN Reform, as well as ensuring coordination of SI interventions with other relevant programmes and actors.

Programme Partnerships

The SI has enjoyed a wide range of partnerships with key stakeholders involved in the E-VaWG. Further details of this partnerships from a programmatic perspective can be found under the Results section.

A. Government

In addition to the SI Line Ministries mentioned under Programme Governance, the SI works with a number of government and quasi-governmental entities, in contribution to a sustained collective effort to E-VaWG in line with national development priorities and plans. The systematic engagement of a number of Ministries has furthermore strengthened the multi-sectoral approach envisioned by the SI.

The work under pillar 1 (laws and policies) is firmly led by the Ministry of Justice, who also collaborated with the SI under pillar 5 to ensure the new case management system for the Judiciary captures VaWG data. School-based activities and scholarships for survivors of violence are coordinated by the Ministry of Education, and in close partnership with the Malawi Law Commission-a quasi-Governmental entity. With 70% of the SI Programme dedicated to SRHR, the Ministry of Health (MoH) is a critical partner of the SI, and at district level health workers are an integral part of the referral pathways and systems.

Similarly, under the Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security (MoHAIS), the Police remains a close partner of the SI and a key stakeholder in ensuring access to justice. The MoHAIS is furthermore mandated to oversee Dzaleka refugee camp, where the SI is actively working to E-VaWG among the refugee populations, and in line with the principle of LNOB. Under pillars 1 and 2, the National Council for Higher Education facilitated the roll out of the model Gender Policy for Tertiary Education institutions, while the National Statistics Office has assumed firm leadership of the Data Observatory Hub, which acts as a repository for SGBV, HP and SRHR data collected through various actors.

Other critical quasi-governmental partners that the SI has partnered with include the Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA), and the Malawi Human Rights Commission (MHRC). MACOHA has proved an invaluable partner to the SI in its ability to galvanise and empower women and girls with disabilities, while the MHRC has contributed to the E-VaWG with the SI's support through its policy development and guidance, including for example of sexual harassment the workplace.

B. Civil Society

The SI is designed to safeguard full and transparent engagement with civil society throughout the programme cycle. From 2020 to 2021, the SI increased the number of CSO partners by 39%, while placing emphasis on the engagement of grassroots organisations as part of the sustainability strategy. Thus, 4 additional CBOs were added to the list of SI partners in 2021. In doing so, RUNOs referred to the 2019 call for Expression of Interest (EOIs) to invite CSOs to submit applications to new calls for proposals. By the end of 2021, a total of 39 CSOs were engaged as IPs. Of these, 22 are national CSOs, 12 are grassroots organisations, and 5 are international CSOs.

One of the biggest challenges experienced with CSO engagement remains the limited capacities of grassroots actors- particularly in financial management, results-based monitoring and reporting, and programme design. To address this, the SI Malawi developed a Grassroots Action Plan for phase II based on the global Grassroots Action Plan. The intention was to reflect the current

programme cycle, and pivot towards greater emphasis on grassroots capacity building, as opposed to focusing on the recruitment of new CBOs- which was the case in 2019 and 2020.

An important measure under the Malawi GAP was to encourage consortiums including both grassroots actors and national CSOs. This allowed the SI to engage several grassroots organizations and build grassroots capacity through the creation of partnerships with more established NGOs. As a result of this capacity building, 2 of the grassroots organizations have since branched out of their consortium to receive direct funding.

Moreover, several capacity building workshops were conducted by RUNOs to strengthen CSOs capacity to respond to E-VaWG. The workshops focused on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT), programme management, gender response budgeting, results-based monitoring, and resource mobilisation.

Upholding the LNOB principle, the Malawi SI partnered with several CSOs focused on E-VaWG and the intersecting forms of discriminations faced by women and girls. Sex workers and key populations were supported through the Female Sex Workers Association, women living with HIV-AIDS were targeted through the National Association for People Living with HIV and AIDS in Malawi (NAPHAM). Women and girls with disabilities were also empowered through Caring for Persons with Disability (CPD), Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA) and Faith Based organisations like the Anglican Council of Malawi.

C. European Union

Despite some turnover in the EUD team overseeing the SI, the partnership between the UN and the EUD remained strong and productive throughout the year. The Malawi SI Secretariat had regular meetings with the EUD at technical level, while Senior Management of both entities collaborated consistently at the strategic level. In regard to the latter, the RC and EUD jointly and successfully lobbied the Office of the President and Cabinet to operationalize the Steering Committee.

While these interactions were not formalized through a specific coordination mechanism, the cordial relationship between the EU and UN has meant that both sides frequently initiated discussions on matters of the day. The EU's shift from a conventional donor to a more active development partners resulted in valuable recommendations to strengthen the phase II proposal and improve ongoing interventions. This shift was further supported by the EU's easing of Covid-19 travel restrictions, which allowed the EUD to observe the SI's work at district level firsthand.

With the EUD chairing the donor coordination group on gender and human rights, the EUD positioned the SI and confirmed its status as the country's most important initiative to E-VaWG. The SI team presented at most meetings held during the year and utilised the platform to share and promote best practices, lessons learned while highlighting major bottlenecks in the national response to VaWG.

As in previous years, the focus of the EUD-UN partnership through the SI has been on advocacy to E-VaWG at the policy level, awareness raising at national, district and community levels, and enhancing visibility of the good practices and lessons learned of the SI. A number of high-level events leveraged on the EU, UN, and government tripartite partnership to secure maximum media coverage, thus ensuring the dissemination of key messages around E-VaWG nationwide. Details of these events are further outlined in the communications section.

D. Cooperation with other UN Agencies

The SI collaborated closely with UNHCR on the prevention of VaWG in Dzaleka Refugee Camp. In

addition to youth empowerment interventions under pillar 3 (see results section) the SI conducted a high-level visit to the Camp featuring top GoM Officials such as the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, and other senior UN and EUD officials. A 5 Ws was jointly developed for the SI at the Dzaleka refugee camp, thus improving oversight and management of the SI in the camp in relation to other relevant protection activities.

Collaboration with UNESCO centered around the training of both in and out of school youths on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). In support of the implementation of the SI supported School Re-Admission Policy, UNESCO disseminated information about the policy in communities to encourage survivors to re-enrol in school. UNESCO also leveraged on the SI mentorship programme to target youths for the training, thereby deepening the impact on SI beneficiaries.

E. Other Partners

The SI Media network continues to be an essential ally of the SI Malawi. Throughout the year, the SI constantly engaged network members through high level visits, visibility events like study visit for Zimbabwe team to Malawi, special programs during global commemorations like International Women's Day and 16 Days of Activism. The SI also collaborated with the National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) along with Malawi Broadcasting Cooperation (MBC) to create a radio soap opera on ending VAWG and HP. The series raised national awareness on key gender related laws, harmful cultural practices, male engagement, and referral pathways.

In 2021 traditional leaders have emerged as one of the SI's most strategic and impactful allies; the details of this work are further outlined under outcome area 2. Their efforts have allowed the SI to operate in remote and hard to reach areas, where the Chiefs reside, thus upholding the principle of LNOB. As part of the knowledge management strategy, the SI Malawi hosted a study visit from the Zimbabwe SI team, which included a senior Zimbabwean Chief. The learning exchange showcased how Malawi has partnered with traditional leaders to transform harmful attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate VaWG through harmful cultural practices. The study visit allowed for objective observations and helpful recommendations from the SI Zimbabwe team, and the participation of the Zimbabwean Chief has highlighted areas for improvement in the Malawi programme based on good practices in Zimbabwe.

The Government of Flanders also transpired to be an important ally for the SI Malawi. The documentary film made by Belgian documentary makers; 'A Girl's Gaze' captured the horrors lived by sexually exploited teenage girls. The UN, EU and Flanders joined hands to raise awareness on this issue and managed to capture the nation's attention through a high-level screening event (more details available under the communications section). Further collaboration with the Government of Flanders is planned in 2022.

Results

A. Capturing Broader Transformation Across Outcomes Leaving No One Behind

In its interventions, the SI Malawi continues to prioritize the following marginalized and vulnerable populations: refugees, women and girls with disabilities, women and girls living with HIV/AIDS, key populations and women and girls living in remote and isolated rural areas. The latter make up the bulk of the Programme's beneficiaries, since the SI has deliberately targeted remote rural areas to work in, where few other development partners have a presence. The distribution of motorbikes and bicycles to front line service providers was based on the success of the previous distribution, which allowed for enhanced access to service by rural women and girls. The SI's support to the Female Sex Workers Association (FSWA) has strengthened their presence in all SI districts and the growth of a protective network of sex workers to support each other. The SI has facilitated inclusive movement building by linking FSWs and Women living with HIV/AIDS to activist groups established under the SI.

As always, disability continues to be mainstreamed throughout the 6 pillars- either through the development of scorecards and data collection tools that reflect and ensure the VaWG response to women and girls with disabilities, inclusive service delivery, mainstreaming disability in district development plans, awareness raising and community sensitization, and the engagement of women and girls with disabilities as rights holders.

More information on the SI Malawi's work to reach those furthest behind first is included under the outcome areas.

UN Reform

In 2021 the Malawi SI rolled out its innovative Delivering as One Accountability Framework. The DAO monitoring framework is a tool to monitor and track progress in how the SI team upholds the principles of UN Reform using performance indicators agreed on by the UN team, while also identifying bottlenecks on the same. In addition to the performance indicators, a DAO survey was conducted to measure the levels of satisfaction of the UN team in various areas related to joint programme DaO. The team either met or superceded all performance indicator targets, while the survey showed that 92% of survey respondents believe that there is cohesiveness in how the Programme is being delivered, and 93% agree there is a strong sense of team spirit. The RC's leadership of the SI continues to bring together all UN actors at the strategic level and ensure the harmonious delivery of the Programme.

Shift in Attitudes/ Perceptions/ Beliefs

With Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) a cornerstone of the Malawi SI, the team regularly seeks feedback from women, girls, and their communities on what they believe is working to E-VaWG through the SI. The findings of these consultations - e.g. the joint IP assessments and the sustainability consultations, described in more detail under the next section on Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME), consistently show that VaWG is now viewed as a criminal offence that hinders developmental progress. In particular, respondents noted that prior to the SI harmful cultural practices were seen as an important part of the culture and communities protected their application. They further note that the SI has shown that cultural practices can be modified so that the harmful elements are removed. The role of Chiefs has been particularly instrumental in these shifts of attitudes and perceptions; more information on this is available under the results section.

The SI Comprehensive Approach

The district SI Communities of Practice (COPs) are now a recognized best practice by district authorities. The cohesive implementation of SI interventions by such a large number of IPs (44 in 2021) is largely attributable to these coordination mechanisms. The below examples showcase how district-based actors are leveraging on each other's efforts and expertise.

With the SI's support, Traditional leaders (under pillar 2) are flourishing in their roles to E-VaWG. They provide guidance and oversight to all community-based activities, including by supporting efforts to end violence by mentors, barbershop members and male champions, children/ youth, religious leaders (pillar 3) and women's rights groups (pillar 6). They identify and refer cases to relevant authorities (pillar 4) and where harmful cultural practices are concerned, they have developed bylaws to enforce their modification or eradication (pillar 1). A total of 1,600 girls accessed family planning services (pillar 4) after being referred from the mentorship programme under pillar 3, and similarly mentors and mentees accessed economic empowerment opportunities under pillar 4.

Similar examples exist at the national level where policies, institutions and networks strengthened through the SI have amalgamated into a multi-dimensional response to VaWG. For instance, the Model Gender Policy developed in partnership with the National Council for Higher Learning Institutions was piloted and then adopted by 22 other Universities. The policy (pillar 1), led to strengthened capacities of Higher Learning Institutions to adequately tackle VaWG (pillar 2), and contributed to considerable awareness raising on the rampant sexual harassment of students (pillar 3). This in turn leads to demand creation of services, improved referral pathways in universities (pillar 4), and the establishment of systems that document and track reported cases (pillar 5).

Covid-19

The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic were greatly reduced during 2021. Other than some travel restrictions, the need to reduce meeting and workshop sizes, and standard preventative measures, the SI Malawi was able to conduct its business fairly as usual.

B. Reporting on the implementation of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME)

PME remains a salient feature of the SI Malawi, and is applied in a cross-cutting manner, as well as in specific pillars.

The COPs are a vital mechanism for enhancing participatory monitoring. In Machinga, the COP was decentralized from the district to the Traditional Authorities (TA) level, whereby communities organized themselves in a forum that strictly and closely monitors SI interventions. Members are comprised of Implementing Partners, community leaders and members, and programme beneficiaries. Members reports to the forum during monthly meetings and hold each other to account for the quality delivery of results.

“Through participatory monitoring in our community, we are able to share information and follow up on cases until the case is concluded”-Amin Willard-Community Police Member TA Kawinga, Machinga

In collaboration with GTWGs and community stakeholders, the SI coordinated the joint assessment of the Implementing Partners (IPs) I in all districts. The assessment allowed beneficiaries and district stakeholders (including authorities and community leaders) the opportunity to rate IPs' performance in phase I. The report also included recommendations for how IPs could improve their delivery. RUNOs have based their recruitment of IPs in phase II on this assessment and put in place

improvement plans for low performing IPs who are being re-recruited in phase II.

As the team prepared for phase II, sustainability consultations were conducted with key stakeholders at both district and community level. This exercise was jointly conducted with local and national authorities and was a recommended exercise by communities during the Mid-Term Review conducted in 2020. The consultations enabled the SI team to prioritise its focus in phase II and plan for a smooth programme phase out that will do no harm.

Under Pillars 2 and 6, the SI supported programme beneficiaries to develop scorecards and assess the performance of SGBV/ HP/ SRHR service providers. The scorecard assessments allow both communities and service providers to identify and resolve challenges. For instance, the need to scale up mobile courts was flagged by communities using these tools; in phase II mobile legal assistance was indeed scaled up.

A standard practice during monitoring visits is community feedback sessions, whereby a concerted effort is made to amplify beneficiary voices on how to strengthen SI interventions. The sessions, in the form of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), have enhanced ownership of the programme by beneficiaries and community structures and empowered them to lead and support community efforts to E-VaWG.

As the operating environment shifted due to several factors, including Covid-19, and SI interventions altered community dynamics and efforts, PME permitted the SI to adjust to the evolving needs of beneficiaries. For instance, community fund management committees expressed concerns on missed investment opportunities that would grow the fund and allow them to maximise support to survivors. Accordingly, the SI intends to incorporate entrepreneurial/ financial management capacity building for these committees, and thus improve their sustainability.

C. Capturing Change at Outcome Level

Outcome 1: Legal and Policy Framework

In 2021, The SI prioritised the review of the Deceased Estates Administration Act due to the widespread practice of property grabbing and forced evictions that has a considerably negative impact on widows in particular. The review involved a series of stakeholder consultation meetings organized by the Ministry of Gender that proved a key foundational process since these pinpointed gaps in the law's implementation. Following the reviews, the SI worked to enhance knowledge and understanding of this law, through awareness raising and the dissemination of the laws to communities. This was done in partnership with Chiefs, thus ensuring the adequate enforcement of the laws, towards the protection of women and girls. The exercise contributes to the creation of an enabling environment in which women and girls are protected from abuse and violence that emanate from misunderstanding in the disposition of deceased estates.

In collaboration with the MoLG, the SI supported the amendment of Chief's Legislation (New Chiefs Act). The amendment rectified weaknesses in the legal framework governing the role of Chiefs in E-VaWG. Specifically, the current policy and legal framework does not formally recognise the role of Chiefs in E-VaWG, nor provide a platform from which Chiefs can contribute towards ending violence in a harmonised manner that is in sync with a human rights-based approach and the LNOB principle. The new Chief's Bill will therefore formalize the role of Chiefs in ending early marriages and SGBV by assigning them a legal mandate, which in turn will strengthen their accountability to women, girls and their communities.

During the reporting period, the SI supported the participatory development and validation of 4 draft policy briefs on ending VAWG and promoting SRHR in Malawi. The policy briefs tackle the following areas: i) Eliminating GBV in schools; ii) Ending HPs through community engagement; iii)

Engaging men and boys to promote gender equality; and iv) Ensuring SRH care for adolescent girls. The briefs will form the basis of discussion in the upcoming policy dialogues that will push for an improved response to VaWG in relation to the above-named areas.

A total of 195 informal leaders from 85 different communities were trained to develop bylaws using national bylaw guidelines, resulting in the formulation of 7 draft bylaws focused on SGBV, SRHR and child marriage on SGBV, SRHR and child marriage. The laws abolish or require the amendment of at least 18 HPs. Following their approval, they were enacted and are now being enforced.

The by-laws also include the introduction fines for parents that stop their children from going to school; the money generated from the fines is then used to support girls that lack the financial means to attend school. While this practice encourages parents to ensure girls attend school and to seek community support where the bottleneck is financial, there are ongoing discussions to avoid revictimization of families where poverty is the culprit.

In connection with the by-laws, Chiefs and community members publicly pledged to end all forms of SGBV – in particular child marriage and HPs. Their pledges were aired or captured on community and national radio stations and national newspapers, lending gravity to the process and providing an entrance for women, girls, and their communities to hold them to account in E-VaWG.

SRHR Reporting: Outcome 1

The SI's work on laws will help Service Provider personnel identify and refer cases to court as well as stand in court as witnesses. The reviewed laws protect women and girls from GBV and HPs which impinge on issues of sexuality and their SRHR. A policy brief on ensuring adolescents access SRH services and their rights will similarly provide a backdrop for further dialogue on SRHR while raising awareness on the gaps in laws, policies, and services- with focus on adolescent girls who are most vulnerable to teenage pregnancies and child marriage.

Outcome 2: Institutions

District and community structures and traditional leaders have improved capacities in responding to VaWG and are now more coordinated in handling GBV and child marriage cases. These results owe to the project's continued support in the establishment of chiefs' forums, revamping of gender technical working groups (GTWGs), inclusion of gender related interventions for area development planning and district development planning sessions. The enhanced coordination has resulted in 100% referral to relevant services of all cases identified by community-based actors. This reflects a considerable strengthening of the community-based networks of protection of women and girls from violence, which constitutes a highly sustainable approach to E-VaWG.

Using the SI Chief's Forums established in 2020, traditional leaders are now ably and actively monitoring the implementation of SGBV related interventions within their jurisdiction in a coordinated manner. In 2021 the Chiefs commenced GBV patrols in collaboration with mentors, mother groups and child protection workers leading to the identification and referral of 897 SGBV related cases. Of these, 60% were concluded through mobile and district courts, which now prioritise SGBV cases due to increased pressure through the GTWGs and community structures.

Following the capacity building of 1,561 members of the Chief's Forums to monitor implementation of SGBV/HP and SRHR laws, policies, programs and services, SI districts saw an astounding escalation of efforts by traditional leaders in 2021. This led to the annulment of 1,222 child marriages- 98% of registered child marriages in the 6 districts, and the re-enrolment of girls in schools, as outlined above under pillar 1.

The overwhelming support on E-VaWG by traditional leaders was somewhat unanticipated, as VaWG- especially harmful practices- are driven by cultural orientations that deeply entrenched and difficult to dislodge. Traditional leaders are the custodians of such cultural practices, yet they have given their unwavering support to the SI and united to E-VaWG, going as far as using their own resources and influence to support survivors of violence, and of child marriage in particular. In doing so, Chiefs have taken a leading role in educating, engaging, and punishing parents that permit child marriage or cover up GBV incidents. Thanks to the commitment and dedication of Chiefs, child marriages and VaWG are increasingly viewed as harmful and negative practices that hinder developmental progress- representing a massive step towards the sustainable ending of HPs in Malawi.

The SI supported the MHRC to position the matter of sexual harassment in the public, private and informal sector as one of national priority through the launch of a [situational analysis](#) on this topic. The report illustrated that 98% of sexual harassment cases in the workplace and schools go unreported due to fear of repercussions, thus enabling effective advocacy for urgent action to combat sexual harassment in the workplace.

The SI went further in supporting the development and launch of [MHRC Guidelines for Developing Anti-Sexual Harassment Workplace Policy](#). The guidelines were used to orient 12 government ministries and departments on how to develop the public service anti-sexual harassment policy for the workplace.

Similarly, female students and University workers are now empowered to defend themselves against sexual harassment in Universities after the SI supported Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) to develop and implement policies that penalize GBV. Following the development of the [Model Gender Policy for HLIs](#) led by NCHE, 22 public and private universities adopted and developed their own gender and anti-sexual harassment policies. For the first time, HLIs have formalised GBV reporting procedures with emphasis on the protection of confidentiality.



These policies on sexual harassment in workplaces and Universities are crucial, as they signal an official institutional stance against rape culture and sexual harassment that serves as a legal foundation to address violence. Formalised reporting procedures deter would be perpetrators and formally empower women and girls to report violence and hold those in violation to account. The process of the policy development has been equally important as the end products themselves, because these have led to considerable awareness raising while encouraging women to speak out and table the issue of sexual harassment in various platforms with decision makers and policy holders.

The SI successfully influenced the inclusion of gender and VaWG related activities in Village Action Plans (VAPs) in all SI districts using a [gender and disability mainstreaming tool](#). The VAPs now dedicate at least 40% to specific gender related interventions, while gender is mainstreamed across almost all outcomes, outputs and targets. Considering that VAPs inform the development of District Development Plans (DDPs), which determine how funding at district levels is allocated, this work will improve gender equality and ensure the sustainable response to VaWG in all districts. DDPs similarly dedicate at least 50% of their budgets to specific gender related interventions, while gender is mainstreamed throughout. This is an improvement from 2020, where DDPs dedicated between 35 and 45% to gender specific interventions. These important results are attributable to the Programme's support to the MoGCDSW to develop indicators for minimum data requirements for VAPs, DDPs and district Social Economic Profiles (SEPs).

A total of 95 local government officials and 420 village women rights advocates in SI districts have acquired greater knowledge and capacities to demand accountability from duty bearers on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB). This follows a capacity building in the use of tools on GRB guidelines. The programme also supported the orientation of 35 Council Chairpersons/mayors, 30 Controlling Officers and 65 women councilors on the use of GRB guidelines. Consequently, there is greater demand for duty bearers to include GBV in district budgets.

SRHR Reporting: Outcome 2:

Trainings on SRHR laws and good practices for Chiefs has enabled them to take an active role in promoting SRH for women and girls. This includes promoting access to services, such as family planning- which are often a source of contention in rural areas. The annulment of over a thousand child marriages has been critical, as it has likely contributed to a decrease in pregnancy among young girls' pregnancy among and supported their continued enrollment in school. Policies on sexual harassment also contain important clauses that protect women and girls from discrimination when pregnant. The Model Gender Policy for HLIs facilitates access to family planning for students and lecturers, HIV-AIDS services and once again prohibits discrimination against women who are pregnant.

Outcome 3: Prevention and Norm Change

The SI continued to strengthen the implementation of the Safe Space Mentorship programme targeting adolescent girls and young women. The programme graduated 11,239 mentees between June and July 2021 from 435 safe spaces across the 6 districts. Currently, the programme has 447 safe spaces for a second cohort of 13,758 mentees.

As a result of the mentorship sessions, close to 12,000 girls are more empowered to report violence and challenge negative social norms that promote harmful practices such as GBV, child marriage and teenage pregnancies. Over 1,600 adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) have avoided unwanted pregnancies by accessing family planning methods. The Mentors convinced and

supported 959 girls from safe spaces to go back to school, 682 girls have sought help after experiencing sexual and gender-based violence, and 480 girls and young women have ended domestic violence in their homes by reporting cases to their mentors or authorities. Many girls from safe spaces bravely and determinedly facilitated referrals of GBV and SGBV cases even in instances where communities have attempted to shield perpetrators. Of the 60,250 GBV cases that were reported in this year in the service provision points, safe space mentorship girls referred 1,945 GBV cases (mostly sexual violence cases).

With the support of the SI, mentors and mentees from this intervention have collectively transformed their communities by demanding and achieving a culture of accountability among decision makers in the communities. For example, the girls in Dowa district protested against the negligence of health workers in the health facilities, which prompted district authorities to instate an investigation on the matter. Similarly, in Mzimba district, the girls successfully advocated for the arrest and prosecution of an abusive traditional chief in the district. This was possible due to the girls' strength in numbers (a protective network that protects them from social backlash and stigmatization), their enhanced confidence to demand social justice and the increased number of E-VaWG allies established through the SI (e.g. senior Chiefs and community leaders). The safe space girls conducted 48 engagement meetings with the traditional leaders to address and resolve issues emanating from safe spaces. As mentioned under outcome area 2, traditional leaders in turn have actively supported the efforts of mentors and mentees in communities.

A Safe Space assessment study confirmed the readiness of 3,371 mentees (30% of the total number of mentees- the remainder are still completing the curriculum) to graduate, having demonstrated understanding of all the session topics (e.g., as SRHR, GBV, human rights, life skills) as well as a transformation of attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions. The study included an assessment of the mentors, and confirmed their high capacity to facilitate quality sessions, in particular their effective use of participatory methods, preparation of sessions, motivation of and emotional support to other mentees. The graduated mentees continue to contribute to the network by getting involved in mentoring and engaging newer mentees- leading to an ever-increasing network of girls who are standing together against VaWG and thus de-normalising it in their communities.

In support of LNOB, the SI extended the mentorship programme to Dzaleka Refugee Camp in consultation with UNHCR. Twelve safe spaces of 25 mentees are currently functioning.

With support from the SI, 6,459 male champions have become active agents of change and promoting positive masculinities towards E-VaWG and SRHR using the male engagement operational guide. The male champions serve as positive role models for their peers by speaking out against VAWG, promoting WEE and sharing household responsibilities more equally. In the same vein, religious leaders are now meeting men and boys in their mosques and churches respectively to engage them in a dialogue regarding E-VaWG. Due to the SI's engagement of religious leaders, in SI districts there is zero record of child marriage officiated by religious leaders during the year.

Towards the achievement of SDG 4 on education, the SI reduced the risk of exposure to GBV for 584 adolescent girls (survivors of child marriages and teenage pregnancies) by enabling them to access secondary education through the SI Scholarship. Of the 584 girls, 220 completed their secondary education. The construction of girls' dormitories in Machinga and Nsanje districts created a safe learning environment for the girls and thus will contribute to enhanced school retention and assure the success of the scholarships.

In 2021, 559 youths (322 girls and 237 boys) increased their knowledge on child and gender-related laws and became Legal Literacy Champions and spreading their new-found knowledge with 1000 other adolescents. The training targeted primary school learners and secondary students, including out-of-school youth participating in youth clubs, branded Ifenso Platforms. The training

in legal literacy has increased the likelihood of timely reporting and referral of GBV cases among youth and raised awareness that GBV is not to be normalised or tolerated.

The SI contributed to a reduction in school based VaWG by orienting 450 police officers on the safe schools' concept. Of these, 180 officers are part of the One School One Police Officer Initiative, an intervention aimed at increasing the visibility of police officers in schools and communities as a deterrent to violence and improving the rapid and effective response to SGBV.

Accordingly, the SI funded Safe School Programme granted 112,219 learners (58,072 girls and 54,147 boys) in 98 schools, access to violence reporting mechanisms (complaints boxes) managed by the MPS. In 2021, 1,131 complaints were registered, including incidents of defilement, indecent assault, forced marriages, school dropouts due to teenage pregnancies and others. The MPS investigated 31 defilement cases reported, of which 19 were completed, and annulled 12 child marriages- thus providing youth with yet another avenue to report violence and access justice.

Additionally, the MPS extended the outreach program to the community and improved the knowledge of 44,576 out of school children and adolescents (23,992 girls and 20,584 boys) on violence reporting mechanisms.

The safe school program also targeted duty bearers and stakeholders at the school level. Subsequently, 11,383 stakeholders (including head teachers, teachers, members of Mother Groups, Parents Teachers Association, and members of School Management Committees) were equipped with knowledge and skills on child protection and SGBV services. They are now able to identify and refer cases to appropriate services.

The widespread airing of radio programs and jingles has reached an estimated 5,806,578 community members in six targeted districts with vital information on gender and child-related laws. The jingles raised awareness on the rights of children, the responsibilities that communities have towards children, and existing child protection services with emphasis on SGBV, including HPs and SGBV.

Having received training in social accountability and advocacy, 129 male and female role models are actively raising awareness on VaWG and have educated another 750 fellow adolescents on SGBV prevention, reporting, and services. The growing cadre of youths are making strides to prevent SGBV/HPs and transform peer attitudes and behaviours, as well as engaging duty bearers to identify community solutions in addressing GBV at the school and community level. The 'best friend strategy' is one such example, where learners are encouraged to support their friends and peers to report violence and access service should the need arise.

In its quest to scale up legal literacy training, the programme improved communities' understanding of VaWG from a rights-based perspective as a key VaWG prevention strategy. As such, the SI developed and distributed various pedagogical materials on Gender Related Laws (GRL) to 100 schools, including training manuals and 100 comic books. Connected to this, 874 members of the school and community-based structures are now effectively supporting 1,500 learners and out-of-school adolescent girls and boys after receiving training in legal literacy and awareness. As a direct result, 35 girls were re-enrolled in school.

An additional 31,680 children benefitted from new protection structures established through the Journey of Life (JoL) community mobilisation tool. A total of 113 communities and 3,465 community members comprising village heads, religious leaders, youth, and other special interest groups were mobilised in the name of E-VaWG. Each community developed a plan strategizing how to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls and other protection risks in their communities. Out of these plans, 93 Children's corners, 97 Community based childcare centres, 145 mother

support groups, 26 community child protection committees and 11 community policing forums have been established where there were none and revamped where they were nonfunctional.

SRHR Reporting: Outcome 3

SRHR is mainstreamed throughout most interventions under pillar 3, with a strong focus on raising awareness on how to avoid unwanted pregnancies. SI Mentors have proved to be influential in advocating for increased access to quality SRHR; they organized interactions sessions with clinician and nurses, through which 1,335 girls accessed family planning services. The mentorship programme requires graduates to demonstrate comprehension on SRHR, while pillar 3 efforts to transform harmful attitudes includes the notion that SRH is a human right for all. In this regard, male engagement interventions prioritise the transformation of toxic masculinities towards SRHR.

Outcome 4: Quality Services

In 2021, the SI facilitated the reporting and follow up of 36,439 SGBV cases, including 709 child marriages of which 430 were annulled and the girls re-enrolled in school. Of these, 2,964 were concluded in courts. These figures represent an 87% increase in the number of cases reported compared with 2020- signalling a significant degree of SGBV/ HP service demand creation achieved in SI districts. In addition to SGBV cases, the SI provided SRHR and other support services to 68,960 vulnerable women and girls, of which 48,272 were for SRHR.

These could partially be attributed to the 39 demand creation events undertaken during the year that reached 18,994 individuals (of whom 13,015 were female). On the other hand, the figures may be explained by the distribution of 120 motorcycles and 400 bicycles for service providers- thus enhancing access to services of women and girls in hard-to-reach areas. The distribution of motorbikes and bicycles was scaled up following monitoring reports in 2020 that showed how this considerably supported the principle of LNOB, and particularly during the pandemic.

In 2021 the SI community fund has grown considerably and taken root in SI districts. Through the community funds, 873 survivors were able to access court, SRHR, police and counselling services, among others (see annex D for more information). Some communities used the funds to create a revolving fund for Village Savings and Loans (VSL), as a way of sustaining the initiative beyond the programme period.

Similarly, the SI survivor fund economically empowered 2,024 GBV survivors through the provision of start-up capital to engage in economic activities. Considering linkages between poverty and domestic violence and the stigmatization of survivors who leave abusive partners, the new-found economic independence of the above-mentioned survivors is critical to averting further violence and to their social reintegration. The SI also financed economic activities of 11,329 mentees, who are currently operating various enterprises including VSLs. The economic empowerment of mentees ensures the sustainability of the safe space mentorship programme while also motivating newly recruited mentees.

In upholding the LNOB principle, the programme improved access to services for women and girls with disabilities by constructing disability friendly structures in 48 community health facilities. In parallel, the SI supported 414 adolescent girls and young women with disabilities to access services, attend schools and participate in girls empowerment interventions through the procurement and distribution of items such as wheelchairs, tricycles, hearing aids and more. This contributed to 1,376 women and girls with disabilities accessing services.

Since the SI supported re-opening of the Bwaila Fistula Center in Q2 of 2021, 90 fistula patients were treated successfully. To support the effective running of the center and ensure provision of

quality services, 12 district based nurses and clinicians were trained in the management of obstetric fistula. The SI went on to furnish 60 fistula survivors with solar units which they are using various business ventures; This economic support will also help them to restore their dignity and reintegrate into the community.

The SI strengthened the quality and availability of integrated SRHR and SGBV services, which benefitted at least 1,601 survivors. This was achieved by training 360 nurses and clinicians from the 6 districts on the intersections of SRHR and SGBV. Basic SRH commodities were also provided to district health centers to facilitate integrated SRHR and SGBV services (family Planning, Sexual Transmitted Infections (STI), post abortion care, obstetric fistula, PEP and HIV).

The SI improved the quality of SGBV and SRHR services and scaled up by building the capacity of 310 community-based service providers from the police, social welfare, gender, judiciary, and health sectors on how to handle cases of violence based on GRLs. Enhanced quality of service delivery was also achieved through the development of SGBV guidelines, the adjustment of GBV Registers in line with international human rights standards and a survivor centered approach, and the development and validation of Clinical Management of Rape guidelines.

Similarly, and in keeping with the SI's focus on reaching those furthest behind first, as the principle of LNOB, the SI has improved access to justice for women and girls in hard-to-reach areas by building the capacity of 23 Magistrates who will be deployed to rural courts. In the words of a Third Grade Magistrate who was trained on core competencies on justice for women and children: "We are now better equipped to apply the law for the protection of women and children. As an example, I used the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act to provide some monetary relief to a woman who was chased by her husband. The woman was able to get financial support from the husband as they await divorce proceedings."

Access to justice for marginalised communities was also accelerated through mobile courts, which benefitted 623 GBV survivors in hard-to-reach areas. During the year, the SI supported 193 mobile court sessions to conclude outstanding cases and deliver judgments, with 179 cases concluded. The courts are conducted in plain sight of all and are thus an important deterrent to would be perpetrators. Survivors are also reminded that GBV is illegal and punishable by law, thus encouraging them to report violence and seek justice. Improved access to justice through this modality is evidenced by the increased number of cases concluded, from 85 in 2020 to 179 in 2021.

The 173 legal clinics conducted during the year further bolstered the SI's contributions to improved access to justice for survivors of violence, with 548 beneficiaries benefitting. The clinics improved communities' knowledge of GRLs, namely, Prevention of Domestic Violence Act, The Deceased Estate (Wills, Inheritance and Protection) Act, the Gender Equality Act and the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act. In understanding these laws, women and girls now have a legal footing from which to challenge harmful norms and behaviours.

The programme improved the financial security of 2,675 GBV survivors after equipping them with entrepreneurship, VSL and vocational skills. Furthermore, the programme linked 18 best performing marketing groups to formal markets and financial institution to access loans, thus ensuring the sustainable economic empowerment of thousands of survivors. The linkages to formal markets led to 5 commercial contracts being signed with commercial buyers for ease of marketing as well as sustainability of profitable markets thereby benefitting 340 survivors.

Moreover, the SI has placed 70 survivors from VSL groups well on their way to financial recovery and independence after being awarded Contract Farming by Community Savings and Investment Promotion (COMSIP) to grow legumes, yellow maize and produce honey. Of these, 24 women bought COMSIP shares and another 46 accessed farm inputs loans. The women benefit from

capacity building by COMSIP, who also supports them to sell their produce.

The SI mitigated the risks of school-based violence by strengthening referral mechanisms between primary schools and Community Victim Support Units (CVSUs). A total of 450 CVSU members are now better able to provide services related to SGBV, child protection, and Psychosocial First Aid (PFA) following their capacity building in SGBV service provision. The rehabilitation of 13 CVSUs, activation of 50 CVSU committees and review of the national SOPs for CVSUs has also contributed to the sustainable enhancement of service provision, including effective referrals to other key service providers.

Case referrals by CBOs and community social welfare workers were improved considerably following the training of 510 Case Managers and 960 Case Workers in Child Protection Case Management, including SGBV. The training led to the identification and referral of 3,159 cases of VaWG. Equally, the Programme considerably improved survivors' access to PFA after building the capacity of 750 service providers in PFA. Consequently, 12,345 females received PFA to help them overcome the immediate effects of SGBV and other emergencies.

Unexpectedly, a large number of men have benefitted from SI supported GBV services targeting women and girls. Following the above-mentioned case management training, 2,585 cases of GBV against men and boys were identified and referred, while the PFA capacity building led to 8,230 men and boy receiving support services. While the SI Malawi remains true to its goals and objectives to protect women and girls from violence, it is possible that the massive spread of information on the harms of GBV are also encouraging men and boys to seek support. Another possible reason could be the approach used in PFA and case management. Further enquiries on how and why there has been a surge in such reports is warranted.

SRHR Reporting: Outcome 4

The SI Malawi dedicates 70% of pillar 4 activities to SRHR, and as such, 48,272 women and girls received SRH services through the Programme in 2021. This is a massive increase compared to the 517 women and girls who accessed SRH services in 2020 and can be attribute to the widespread awareness raising and information dissemination carried out under this pillar. A total of 1,600 girls accessed family planning services after being referred from the mentorship programme under pillar 3, demonstrating strong cross-pillar linkages. Trainings for service providers focuses on how to deliver integrated SGBV and SRH services, including for women and girls with disabilities. Treatment for fistula patients also increased in 2021, who benefitted from an added component on economic empowerment and social reintegration.

Outcome 5: Data

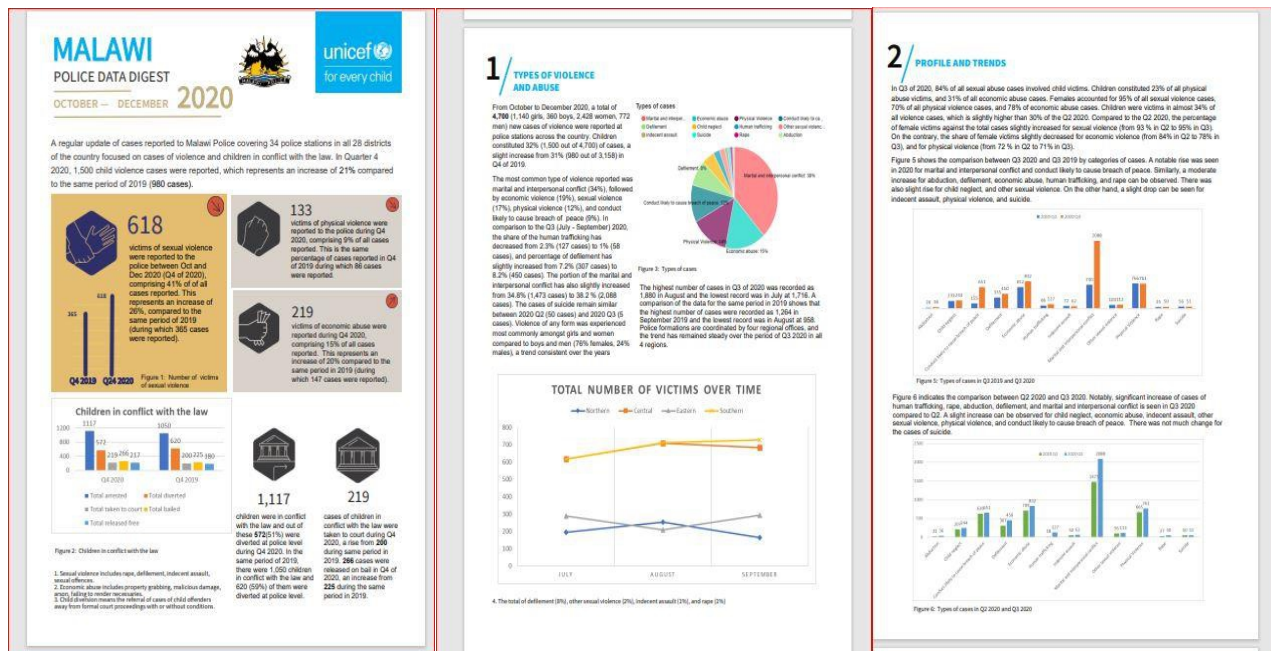
A total of 60 police officers are now able to conduct DNA forensic investigations in SGBV cases following the in-depth training of investigators, prosecutors and VSU officers. This is an important step towards improved access to justice for survivors, as quality forensic investigations generate vital evidence required for the successful prosecution of cases.

With the SI's support, Malawi is on its way to having official internationally comparable and disaggregated data on SGBV/ HPs and SRHR from the six spotlight districts. This is following the standardization of data collection tools (being used by Policy, community structures and district officers) and the establishment of the GBV Observatory Hub, hosted by the National Statistics Office. Since its establishment, the hub has 2,798 recorded cases.

The collection of data by Police and other service providers through the SI supported Systems (GBV Management Information System (GBVMIS) and RapidPro) has enabled greater availability of SGBV/ HP and SRHR data.

This was possible following software improvements, and the training of around 400 data collectors. As a result, RapidPro experienced a considerable improvement of data reporting, from approximately 10% of data collectors reporting to 95%. From Q1 to Q4 2021, 17,041 cases of violence were reported to police and documented in RapidPro, representing an increase of 55% when compared with the same period in 2020.

The data is subsequently organised in a visually digestible manner that allows for evidence-based decision making and programming:



U-Report Malawi continues to support the SI in tracking Malawian attitudes, perceptions and behaviours around Harmful Practices, gender equality and female empowerment and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and abuse (PSEA). During the reporting period, 3 polls obtained the views of 3,447 respondents in the Spotlight districts.

According to the poll on norms and female empowerment, 42% of respondents say they think girls are ready to marry after 18, constituting an encouraging 2% increase from the last poll. When asked how they view women/ girls who carry condoms, it was positive to note that 72% say they view them wanting to protect themselves. Conversely, 20% believe females who carry condoms are too sexually active. The polls provide an excellent basis for community dialogue, while giving the SI team an evidence base for where to focus behaviour change efforts under pillar 3.

The SI has improved knowledge management on VaWG in Malawi with the establishment of the Kuwala Knowledge Management Platform following district level consultations in all 6 target districts. The Platform aims to facilitate access to knowledge products on all areas related to VaWG, thus avoiding duplications, maximizing efficiencies across the sector, and promoting joint approaches to and interventions on E-VaWG. Plans are currently underway to link the Kuwala Platform with the GBV Observatory Hub.

SRHR Reporting: Outcome 5:
 SRHR is incorporated into all SI supported data systems, enabling the production of quality information that shed light on SRH needs and gaps for women and girls in Malawi. Service providers are also trained on how to gather this information. The U Report collaborated with the SI by conducting a specific poll on SRHR, including access and quality of services, which allows for analysis of the gaps and corrective action thereafter.

Outcome 6: Women's Movement

The programme strengthened district wide movements that coordinate 790 community-based women movements. Using the scorecard approach, the women movements engaged service providers and duty bearers on the improvement of service delivery.

The project supported the formation and strengthening of six district wide movements, each coordinated by a steering committee that pulls together 69,155 women's rights activists in all SI T/As. In 2021, the onboarding of several grassroots and national actors focusing on LNOB by specifically targeting women and girls with disabilities, sex workers, and women and girls living with HIV/AIDS. An additional 790 women joined the movements during the year, signalling their growth, and creating a ripple effect of transformation towards the E-VaWG. The women organise activism events, bring concerns on VaWG before traditional authorities and promote positive gender norms in their communities.

The project further supported the development of community scorecards, opinion polls, grievance, and redress structures for SGBV and SRHR across the six districts. A total of 5,081 stakeholders (3,987 women, 264 men, 712 girls and 118 boys) were engaged through meetings and focus group discussions including, service providers (health, police, courts), traditional leaders, and CVSUs. These mechanisms provided a platform for discussion with duty bearers, thus increasing accountability and transparency by service providers and decision makers. For example, in one SI district, women and CSO activists used the score cards to raise concerns about health care for survivors and jointly identified solutions for improvement.

Using social accountability tools on E-VAWG, women's rights advocates at T/A Malemia, in Nsanje District unearthed buried cases of impregnated girls by teachers and violations of SRHR at the hospital in their area and escalated the issues to district council. This prompted the District Commissioner to demand reports from heads of departments for Education and Health to address the cases that had not been resolved since 2016. Two teachers have since been interdicted and the cases conclusion is imminent.



In partnership with 471 women's rights advocates, the SI supported 135 Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and 11 community action groups to develop costed action plans to eliminate harmful social cultural norms and gender stereotypes. The plans have created an open environment and enabled sexual violence screening through identification of survivors of sexual violence. Following the development of the action plans, 1,330 community leaders (Traditional, religious, and ADC/VDC leaders) across the 6-spotlight district have been oriented on the action plans and the implementation arrangements. Following the plans' development, CBOs and community action group conducted 72 awareness raising campaigns.

SRHR Reporting: Outcome 6

Pillar 6 strengthened technical capacities of women and youth organizations to consolidate their role as watchdogs on VAWG and SRHR, in particular access to SRH services. By understanding district councils budgeting cycles, targeted women can lobby for dedicated budgets for improved access to SRHR. 1,188 marginalized women and girls including FSWs, key populations, those with disabilities, living with HIV have been trained in SRHR to further bolster their advocacy efforts.

Rights Holders

| Indicative numbers | Direct for 2021 | Indirect for 2021 | Comments / Explanations |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------------|---|
| <p>Women (18 yrs. and above)</p> | <p>205,845</p> | <p>1,515,969</p> | <p>Women traditional leaders, women rights advocates, government officers from various departments, justice sector, higher education institutions and CSOs, Community members attending interface and Accountability Sessions, YFHS, Psychosocial support, GBV SRH service referrals, Teachers, Parents. Religious leaders</p> <p><u>How calculation was done</u> In line with the guidance for counting beneficiaries, the estimated indirect reach calculation assumed that for any women directly reached, they reached 5 more people. Each teacher or head teacher is assumed to have reached 72 more children (based on average school figures), and the formula for calculating indirect reach for service providers was used counting staff from the courts, child protection workers, police. The total population reached covered more than the total population of the area and the assumption is that some people were reached more than once</p> |
| <p>Girls (5-17)</p> | <p>519,439</p> | <p>2,597,195.00</p> | <p>The data includes girls rescued from child marriages and supported through mobile courts, girls supported with scholarships reported girls' cases of violence reported through police, CVSUs and Ifenso platforms, girls who underwent legal literacy sessions, girls who underwent martial arts program, girls who were reached with SI.</p> <p><u>How calculation was done</u> In line with the guidance for the beneficiaries counting, the estimated indirect reach calculation assumed that the areas of operation for the girls directly reached is the community and for every one girl reached directly, 5 additional people were reached indirectly through the girl. Therefore, the total direct reach for all the girls was multiplied by 5 to get the estimated indirect reach figure.</p> <p>The data include, Community members attending interface and Accountability Sessions, Service providers including Police Officers, Court Clerks, magistrates, Education advisors, Head teachers, Teachers, PFA providers, CSOs, Faith community, School and</p> |
| <p>Men (18 yrs. and above)</p> | <p>135,174</p> | <p>2,217,017</p> | |

| Indicative numbers | Direct for 2021 | Indirect for 2021 | Comments / Explanations |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|--|
| | | | <p>community structures, Parent associations, members of Mother Groups, Members of School Management Committees, Village heads Religious leaders, youth, and other special interest groups.</p> <p><u>How calculation was done</u> In line with the guidance for the beneficiaries count, the calculation for indirect beneficiaries assumes that for any young and older women directly reached, 5 more people received the information. For each teacher or head teacher, the assumption is that an additional 72 people will be reached (based on average number of students in a school). The formula for calculating indirect beneficiaries for service providers was used counting staff from courts, CPWs, police. The total population reached covered more than the total population of the area and the assumption is that some people were reached more than once.</p> |
| Boys (5 -17 yrs.) | 454,603 | 2,273,015.00 | <p>The direct includes youths participating in E-VAWG campaigns, Child marriage withdrawals, YFHS, Psychosocial Support, GBV SRH service referrals boys who are Role models, trainings in GBV, police outreach programs, Children's corners, out of school programs for adolescents reported boys' cases of violence reported through police, CVSUs and Ifenso platforms, boys who participated in the Transformation Training Programme, boys who underwent legal literacy sessions, boys who underwent martial arts program, boys who were reached with SI communication services</p> <p><u>How calculation was done</u> In line with the guidance for the beneficiaries count, the estimated indirect reach calculation assumed that the areas of operation for the boys directly reached is the community and for every boy reached directly, 5 more people were reached indirectly. Therefore the total number of direct boy beneficiaries was multiplied by 5 to get the estimated number of indirect beneficiaries.</p> |
| TOTAL | 1,315,061 | 8,603,196 | |

Challenges & Mitigating Measures

More information on challenges and mitigating measures is further outlined in Annex B on Risk Mitigation.

Funding Modality: In 2021 SI Line Ministries repeatedly highlighted the question of funding modality as an area of major concern and requested a shift from direct implementation to direct cash transfer. This has had an impact on the partnership between the UN and the GoM. To address the query, the UN team came together to explore the possibility of making this change to the funding modality. Various discussions with the RC and RUNO HoAs and Senior Management of the Line Ministries took place, and a final decision and way forward will be jointly agreed in early 2022. The harmonised approach by the UN under the leadership of the RC has contributed to maintaining an active working relationship with the GoM.

Operating as One: While the UN is committed to the principles of UN Reform and DaO, the team struggled to identify opportunities to operate as one. This is largely because the operational rules and procedures of the RUNOs vary considerably, and greater exploration is needed on how these can be harmonised.

Delayed Funds Disbursement: There was significant improvement in the timeliness of funds disbursement for phase II. The Malawi coordination team communicated regularly with the global-level Secretariat to provide and receive feedback on the Phase II fund transfers to collectively streamline the processes and expedite the timelines. However the delayed funding disbursement for phase I in mid-December 2020 had a spillover effect on the Programme delivery in 2021. Specifically, the unanticipated shift in the timelines in 2020 required the programme team to reassess work planning, particularly in terms of relationships and contracts with Implementing Partners, whose delayed onboarding in 2021 resulted in some delays in the implementation of activities.

Management of Implementing Partners: During 2021 the SI engaged 44 IPs, including but not limited to CSOs. Many of these are grassroots actors, and the level of capacity is considerably diverse across the board. The high number of IPs also meant that district coordinators and authorities had to work hard to keep track of who was doing what and where. The SI team mitigated this through the established COPs at district level which mapped IPs using 3/5W templates. In addition, the SI team conducted joint IP assessments to determine which IPs were performing well, and which require additional capacity building. This once more allowed for a concrete improvement plan based on the needs of each IP.

The Continuum of Care for Survivors of Child Marriage: As in 2021, the absence of economic, educational, and psycho-social support for girls withdrawn from child marriages continues to pose an important challenge. In many instances, girls and their parents resort to marriage due to a lack of livelihood opportunities amid high levels of poverty. Where girls were withdrawn from marriages without ensuring a fall-back plan, they often returned to the marriage or refused to leave their spouse in the first place. SI partners continue to work cohesively to prioritise these girls and refer the girls to each partner's particular programs to benefit from the various interventions, however, the overwhelming demand was difficult to meet. The issue of child marriage and teenage pregnancy is mainstreamed as a priority throughout the workplan, and the team has added in a tagging system to facilitate this mainstreaming.

This challenge is being mitigated through the Survivor and Community Funds, have proved to be a vital mechanism to support child marriage survivors through sustainable means. The efforts by Chiefs to financially support the re-enrollment of girls in schools have also proven indispensable.

Capacity of IPs, Particularly CBOs: in adherence to the SI principles of local ownership and sustainability, the SI Malawi prioritised the recruitment of locally based organisations to implement the Programme. As a result, the same intervention may be implemented by a different partner in different locations. Unfortunately, this approach has highlighted differing levels of capacity across partners, leading to differing impacts of the same intervention across districts. Additionally, low literacy levels, low absorption rates, inadequate financial management, limited understanding of the Programme's ToC and low capacity on results-based management have ultimately led to lower delivery rates by many IPs and an added strain on RUNOs to meet targets.

Despite this challenge, the Malawi team remains firm in the belief that engaging national and grassroots organisations is critical for sustainability and has instead intensified efforts to build their capacity to deliver results as planned. In addition to RUNO specific support, the coordination team offered a training on gender and disability sensitive monitoring and reporting, which improved levels of understanding on the SI ToC. In year 3, further capacity building plans are under way, including on financial management.

Lessons Learned

The SI provides a crucial basis for nationwide and cross district networking. The large number of SI actors and partners from all segments of society enables a truly multi-disciplinary conversation on E-VaWG that in turn facilitates comprehensive joint action. In addition to national level interventions, the SI is enabling knowledge sharing among key stakeholders both within and across districts. Traditional leaders have used the SI network to identify and adopt good practices in by-laws and encourage one another in their efforts to E-VaWG. Similarly, the cross-district exchange visits of SI district authorities allowed each district to proudly showcase its best practices for others to learn from, while learning lessons on how to effectively lead the SI; the visits produced a healthy sense of competition among districts who were all keen to demonstrate their effective leadership and ownership of the Programme.

The number of IPs recruited by each RUNO should be carefully defined: As RUNOs strived to include more grassroots actors as partners, the number of SI IPs grew to a whopping 44 during 2021. This put a considerable strain on district coordinators and authorities to ensure a cohesive approach, although the well-established COPs effectively mitigated the risk of siloed implementation. It also compromised the quality of results, particularly where grassroots actors were not receiving the necessary technical support and capacity building, including through field monitoring visits. Bearing in mind that capacities vary across RUNOs, there should be careful and realistic consideration by RUNOs on how many IPs can be effectively managed.

Knowledge Management needs extra attention as Joint Programmes mature: With the increasing number of valuable knowledge products created by the Programme, it quickly became apparent that a harmonised and organised approach was needed, now more than ever. The risk of products being shelved and forgotten increased as the number of products increased while RUNOs struggled to ensure speedy delivery of results. This limits opportunity to showcase the SI's results and enabling the use of the product for the overall improvement of response to VaWG. Moreover, failure to effectively disseminate products creates a risk of other actors re-creating similar products, which in turn results in an inefficient use of funds as well as a break down in partnerships-as stakeholders accuse each other of reproducing their existing work.

Implementation of UN Reform depends on a sense of team spirit: The excellent disposition of the UN technical team to coordinate efforts on E-VaWG through the SI is vital to ensuring a DaO approach, and thus, effective programme delivery. The regularity of meetings and discussions by the UN team around how to improve the Programme has further ensured that IPs work together and leverage on each other's expertise, resources, and experiences, irrespective of the funding Agency.

New Opportunities

The upcoming training on Survivor Centred Reporting for the media and Police Public Relations Officers (PROs) will strengthen Pillar 3 efforts to transform harmful attitudes behaviours and perceptions. A potent partnership has been formed between the MoG, MPS, MoI, EUD and the UN team to deliver this training as part of the IWD commemoration. The training is expected to improve reporting on VaWG in the country in line with a survivor centred and rights-based approach. This will ensure that stories on VaWG do not cause harm to survivors, and that key messages around E-VaWG are reiterated by numerous media outlets. The subsequent development of a handbook for journalists and PROs will be done in partnership with academia so that University curriculums are adjusted and incorporate responsible journalism towards gender equality- thus enhancing the sustainability of this work after the SI.

The formalisation of the Inter-Ministerial Task Force (IMTF) in early 2022 is expected to result in several improvements to Programme implementation. In particular, the Task Force will enhance technical level coordination, improve the comprehensive approach of the SI and ensure Government ownership beyond the 2 SI line Ministries.

The Malawi Phase II Grassroots Action Plan will ideally strengthen grassroots actors towards improved sustainability of the SI after phase II. The number of CBOs available to implement VaWG activities is an important contribution from the SI and will ensure continued action in communities towards the achievement of SDG 5.

The End-Term Evaluation planned by the SI team will facilitate a harmonised approach to resource mobilisation for phase III, since the evaluation will form the basis for the development of a phase III proposal. These plans have been communicated to the EUD, who has expressed their support for mobilising resources both internally as well as with EU Member States.

The innovative SI DAO Accountability Framework rolled out in 2021 will hopefully serve as a foundation for improving the delivery of the UN Reform Agenda for Joint Programmes. The Framework will also provide key inputs for the SI team to strengthen their joint delivery in 2022 and beyond (phase III).

The successful Zimbabwe study visit has created linkages between the two countries that can be leveraged on for further knowledge exchange. Discussions are currently ongoing regarding a Malawi study visit to Zimbabwe to learn from their own success stories, which can be adjusted and adopted for phase III.

Good, Promising and Innovative Practices

The below practices are only briefly outlined below; for further information about the results achieved, please see Annex D.

A. Good Practices

i) **Community & Survivor Fund Initiative- Key in supporting GBV survivors to access to services**

Community and survivor funds were established to, improve access to services by survivors and Obstetric Fistula patients (OF) from marginalised and remote areas and ii) support the economic recovery of survivors and OF patients as part of their long-term rehabilitation. The funds also improved access to justice in SGBV cases by supporting witnesses of SGBV cases in courts to facilitate access to justice.

The interventions were initiated following reports from communities that most survivors are from poor households who cannot afford to seek justice or essential services. Long distances to services typically oblige survivors to spend limited funds on transport, which they are understandably reluctant to do. This reality contributed to the widespread impunity of perpetrators, and ultimately normalized VaWG.

Among key results achieved through these funds are 11,239 mentees provided with start-up capital to operate various enterprises and the annulment of 430 child marriages followed by the re-enrolment of the girls in schools. A total of 68,970 AGWY were also supported to access services, including 1,376 AGYW with disabilities. More information on this good practice is available under Annex D.

ii) **Model Gender and Anti-Sexual harassment policy**

The SI supported National Council of Higher Learning (NCHE) to develop a model Gender and Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy to guide tertiary education institutions institutionalize a systematic response to SGBV and improve SRHR.

The Policy seeks to ensure accountability of perpetrators of sexual harassment- both lecturers and students. The document acts as a guide that clearly outlines referral pathways available at individual institutions in cases of sexual assault or harassment while strengthening access to SRHR for women and girls. Each University Policy includes an indicator framework to allow tracking of implementation progress. Following the launch of the Policy, 22 public and private universities reviewed or developed their own policies, thereby sending a collective message of zero tolerance against SGBV and sexual harassment in their entities.

iii) **Transforming and Empowering Adolescents: Girls Empowerment and Self-Defense and Boys Transformation**

Under the SI Empowerment Transformation Training (ETT), learners in targeted schools undergo an empowerment and transformation curriculum that targets girls and boys. This is a rigorously tested programme that prepares boys and girls to protect and defend themselves as well as others against different forms of violence and to be agents of change in social and cultural norms that promote violence. The girls' curriculum, Girls Empowerment and Self-Defence (GESD), trains girls to reduce their exposure to danger and shift power away from potential abusers. The boy's programme focuses on preserving positive gender norms, promoting courage to protect women and girls, challenging cultural practices that perpetuate violence against women and girls and teaching skills for successful bystander intervention to stop acts of violence against women and girls. The ETT has

shown a 40% rate of efficacy in reducing violence against girls.

B. Promising Practice: Joint EU-UN High-Level Advocacy

In June 2021 a series of joint high-level visits to SI districts captured the Nation's attention. In addition to the UN RC and the EU Chargé D'Affaires, the visits included the Speaker of Parliament, Deputy Speakers of Parliament, Minister of Gender, Inspector General of the Police, and other senior Government officials. The visits made numerous headlines, with over 20 media stories covering the visits. In addition to enhancing the visibility of the SI, a joint advocacy strategy for the visits ensured harmonised messaging aimed at promoting social behaviour change towards the E-VaWG in Malawi.

C. Innovative Practice: Joint IP Assessments

In collaboration with district GTWGs in all 6 SI districts, the SI conducted a joint assessment of IP interventions. With the onboarding of numerous new IPS, challenges were observed in the delivery of results by some IPs. A joint assessment matrix was developed based on an agreed set of criteria to score each RUNO based on feedback from district authorities, beneficiaries, and their communities. The assessments were intended to support RUNOS determine which IPs would continue into phase II, and how to better support capacity building of IPs struggling to deliver. The exercise was conducted in the spirit of UN Reform and ensuring a harmonised approach to programme management.

Communications and Visibility

A. Overview

In 2021, the SI Malawi reached 7.6million people through national radio and another 11.7 million through television with messages on E-VaWG. Special TV and radio programmes, soap operas and jingles were developed and aired on national, private and community radio and TV stations, thereby promoting behavior change and drawing visibility to the SI at all levels.

Objective 1.1: To raise awareness on VAWG

The programme worked with the SI Media Network to raise awareness on VaWG in Malawi. 3 high-level visits to 3 of the 6 SI districts were organized involving the EU ambassador, RC, Speaker of Parliament, Minister of Gender, and a High Court judge. Leveraging on these visits, the programme engaged 13 media houses resulting in 20 published articles in print, electronic and online media. 15 of the articles highlighted SI work in the 6 districts while 5 were in-depth feature stories on the situation of VAWG in Malawi. The SI also partnered with MBC to raise awareness on VaWG by sponsoring a football match; strategic messages were delivered by the EU and UN over MBC radio, reaching around 80% of Malawi's Population. Moreover, the 16 days 16 champions campaign launched during the 16 days of Activism against GBV as well as the high-level screening of A Girl's Gaze (both described below) were also critical in raising national awareness on VaWG.

Objective 1.2: To illustrate and promote the impact and results of SI interventions

The SI was the lead sponsor of the Africa Gender Equality Conference (AGEC), the largest gender equality event in the continent, and enjoyed continuous media visibility throughout the 3 days. The event was attended by high-level dignitaries such as the First Lady of the Republic of Malawi and included a dedicated SI side event at the highest level. The side event was coined SI @ 2 years and included a high-level panel discussion that was live streamed on Times TV, reaching 322,990 people, and the For Equality social media Facebook page reaching 1,600 people. The Malawi team published another edition of the [SI Newsletter](#), which was widely disseminated through the UN Malawi website as well as Reliefweb- accessed by 15 million users. A short documentary titled “SI@2years” was produced and aired on Times TV and Times Malawi 360 Facebook page.

Objective 1.3: To provide communication for development support to strengthen SI's programme implementation

The SI developed a number of products to promote social behavior change towards E-VaWG:

- 23 episodes of a radio soap opera on VaWG were developed in partnership with NICE. The episodes were aired 3 times a week on national radio and 9 community radio stations for 3 months.
- 30 radio jingles and 5 special radio programmes were aired on 1 private national radio and 5 community radio stations to sensitize the public on VaWG.

Objective 1.4: To ensure visibility for the Spotlight Initiative, its donors, and partners

Various visibility materials were produced and distributed to communities and key stakeholders. These included fact sheets, brochures, torches, folders, tote bags, pens, ISI branded cloth, and mugs. Branded billboards and signposts with targeted messaging on E-VaWG were also mounted in all 6 SI districts.

B. Messages

Through traditional and social media, and leveraging on other events by partners and stakeholders, the SI disseminated several messages on E-VaWG. The effectiveness of these messages and SI interventions is evidenced by the frequent media requests for information about the SI (on average

3 enquiries per quarter in this reporting period) and references, as well as published stories.

Message 1: “E-VaWG begins with you, Report all forms of violence to the relevant authorities’

Target audience: Women, girls, communities

Message 2: “Everyone has a role to play in E-VAWG. Let's all work together to ensure that women and girls are protected and access justice,”

Target audience : Traditional leaders, community structures, district authorities, Police

C. Media and visibility events

Forensic Graduation: Through the SI in partnership with the University of Malawi and the Police, 60 Police officers graduated in forensic investigations. The event was graced by the Minister of Gender and the EU among other dignitaries.

Launch of 16 Days of Activism: The First Lady of the Republic of Malawi presided over the launch of the 16 days. The event was attended by the Minister of Gender, the UN, development partners and other stakeholders

International Women's Day- Africa Gender Equality Conference: The SI supported the launch of the International Women's Day as the lead sponsor of AGECE, featuring the First Lady, Second Lady, Minister of Gender, and others.

SI@2 years: 2 years of SI implementation was marked in Malawi during the Africa Gender Equality Conference. Besides showcasing impact, the event featured a high-level panel discussion on E-VaWG with the Minister of Gender, RC, EU Chargé D'Affaires, the CEO of the COMESA Federation of Women in Business and a Paramount Chief.

A Girls Gaze- In partnership with the EU and the Embassy of Belgium, the SI co-organized two high-level screenings of a documentary on the sexual exploitation of girls in Malawi, including how climate change has exacerbated the situation. The screening was attended by the First lady of Malawi.

High Level Visits- Conducted to 3 of the 6 districts implementing districts. The visits involved the 1st and 2nd Speakers of Parliament, EU Chargé D'Affaires, Minister of Gender, Minister of Local Government, Inspector General of the Police, Paramount Chiefs and other high-level officials.

D. Campaigns

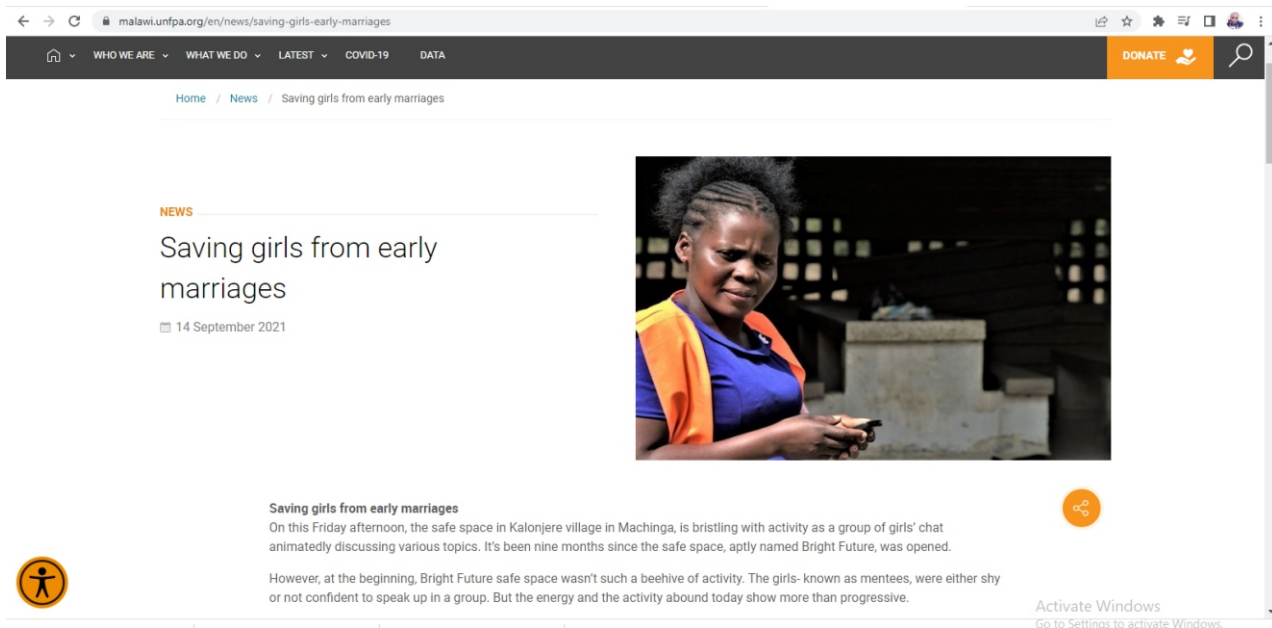
During the 16 days, the SI launched the '16 days, 16 champions' campaign. Sixteen influential Malawians filmed messages on various aspects related to VaWG and in line with their area of expertise or profile. The Champions included EU ambassador to Malawi, The RC, Speaker of Parliament, Minister of Gender, a High Court Judge as well as the Executive Secretary for the Malawi Human Rights Commission. The videos were aired on national TV reaching 11.7 million, and private TV stations reaching 11.3 million people. The campaign was also featured on EU and UN Malawi social media pages reaching 13,863 and 14,000 people respectively.

E. Human interest stories:

Saved from child marriage: hope for a new beginning

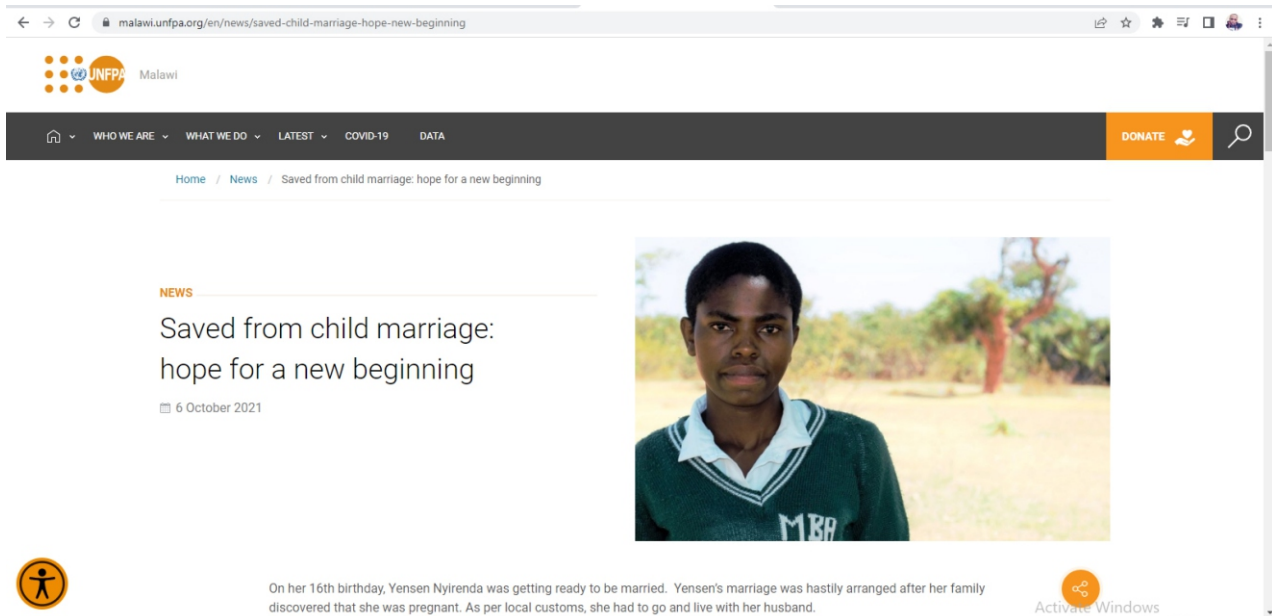
On her 16th Birthday, Yensen Nyirenda got married because she got pregnant. A few months into the marriage, Yensen suffered abuse from her husband. With the support of a Spotlight Initiative

mentor Yensen was withdrawn from the marriage and is now back in school. <https://malawi.unfpa.org/en/news/saved-child-marriage-hope-new-beginning>



Saving girls from early marriages

Pushed by lack of basic amenities to take care of herself, Charity, 13, was determined to get married to survive until she met Jessica Amali, a mentor at Bright Future Safe Space in Machinga district. After counselling sessions, Charity ditched the idea of getting married and is now back in school. <https://malawi.unfpa.org/en/news/saving-girls-early-marriages>



Annulling one child marriage in Malawi, giving hope to many girls

15-year-old Sifati Mustafa's dream of becoming a pediatric nurse was almost shattered when her uncle decided to marry Sifati and her two sisters off. Through SI interventions, Group Village Headman Kwacha intervened and rescued Sifati and her sisters from the marriages. Sifati is now back in school and still dreams of becoming a pediatric nurse. <https://africa.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2021/11/annulling-one-child-marriage-in-malawi-giving-hope-to-many-girls>

F. Testimonials:



His Excellency Rune Skinnebach,
EU Ambassador to Malawi



The EU recognizes E-VawG as a priority area in development. It feels great that our partnership with the UN is registering remarkable success.



Aisha Adams,
Second Deputy Speaker of Parliament



Machinga is one of the districts with high cases of SGBV. The coming of the SI has changed the status quo, we are doing better, and we can see change.



Jaqueline Nathawa,
Machinga



I got pregnant when I was in form 2. The man abandoned me and the baby. Spotlight Initiative enrolled me in the Village Savings and Loans and a tailoring course. Now, I can take care of myself, and I am happy



Professor Samson Sajili,
University of Malawi



Malawi Police Service, SI and the Judiciary decided to partner and provide specialized training in the application of DNA forensics in investigating SGBV cases. It was amazing how we all came together to share knowledge of our efforts to E-VawG.





Inkosi M'mbelwa V



The SI has empowered both chiefs and communities, people are more aware, and chiefs have been equipped to sensitize their subjects on VaWG.



Inspector General of Police,
Dr George Kainja



We receive reports of Sexual and Gender Based Violence on a daily basis. However, we are impressed that through intensified awareness campaigns under the Spotlight Initiative, people are coming in the open to report cases of gender-based violence and sexual offences, unlike in the past when people used to shield perpetrators of abuse.



Next Steps

In its final year, the SI Malawi will consolidate the Programme implementation based on the good practices and lessons learned identified in years 1-3. Ensuring the sustainability of the SI's gains based on the sustainability consultations conducted in November will be the biggest priority, along with resource mobilisation for phase III.

The sustainability consultations included a thorough participatory exercise which obtained views and recommendations of communities and district authorities on how best to sustain the results achieved to date. The results were documented in a report which will be used to beef up the sustainability strategy for phase II as well as guide year 4 implementation.

In the year 4, SI Malawi will plan to conduct an internal end term review in preparation for end term evaluation. This exercise will support the development of SI Malawi's Phase III proposal.

Additional areas of focus in the coming months are also highlighted below for each pillar.

Pillar 1

- Finalizing the amendment for the prioritised 5 Laws and 2 Policies and advocating for adoption by Parliament
- Presentation of Chief's Policy to Cabinet and Parliament
- Capacity building of community leaders (including Chiefs and religious leaders)- ministries, formal and informal legislators on policies and laws addressing SGBV/SRHR and CMs.

Pillar 2

- Strengthen awareness of gender and sexual harassment policies in the high learning institutions, selected private and public institutions and Malawi Police Service
- Strengthen chief's forums to monitor the implementation of SGBV/HP and SRHR laws, policies, and support community-based responses to VaWG.

Pillar 3

- Scale up promotion of positive masculinities on E-VAWG, HP and SRHR through the implementation and of the male engagement operational guide as well as mentorship sessions for boys.
- Comprehensive sexuality education through gender transformative programmes and awareness raising on sexuality education and life skills.
- Focus on establishing stronger data collection for the mentorship safe space programme.
- Official opening of school dormitories

Pillar 4

- Systematic professional development for frontline service providers (police, social welfare, justice, health) to respond to survivors of VAWG and provide quality services in accordance with global standards
- Monitor and provide technical backstopping to the committees which received community fund to ensure effective use of the funds for the purposes of sustainability
- Scale up legal aid services, including mobile courts and legal clinics
- Establish market groups and ensure viability of women's small-scale businesses by facilitating linkage to markets through cooperatives

Pillar 5

- Develop data sharing protocols and monitoring the use of the protocols.
- Finalise harmonisation of GBV Data Systems through unified tool and approach

- Strengthen SGBV/SRHR/ HP Data Observatory Hubs at national and district levels, and link to Kuwala platform

Pillar 6

- Support the implementation of community scorecards, opinion polls, grievance and redress structures and other social accountability mechanism for SGBV/HP and SRHR related reporting and monitoring.
- Strengthen district and TA level and girls' networks/assemblies to lobby, advocate and challenge negative social norms and harmful practices
- Support the CSNRG to budget, cost and implement their work plan

Programme Governance

- Formal establishment of Inter-Ministerial Task Force & conduct Q1 meeting
- Convene Steering Committee to discuss: i) sustainability strategy; ii) approval of phase I budget revisions, and iii) resource mobilisation/ phase III plans.

M&E/ Knowledge Management

- Continued quarterly joint monitoring exercises & data collection on key results
- Finalization of sustainability strategy based on consultations
- Conduct end-term assessment as basis for phase III proposal development
- Documentation of promising practices and lessons learned
- Conduct Learning Visit to one the African SI country.

Communications & Visibility

- Commemoration of International Women's Day 2022
- Development of a Media Practitioners Guide on SGBV survivor reporting



Spotlight Initiative

