



National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage



2018 to 2023



Table of Contents

FOREWORD.....	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	5
ACRONYMS.....	6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	7
INTRODUCTION.....	10
1. Background.....	10
1.1. Situation Analysis.....	11
1.2. Drivers and Consequences of Child Marriages.....	15
NATIONAL STRATEGY TO END CHILD MARRIAGES IN MALAWI.....	22
2.1 Vision.....	22
2.1.1 Guiding Principles and Values Statements.....	22
2.1.2 Key Participants.....	22
2.2 Goal.....	22
2.3 Strategic Objectives.....	23
STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS.....	24
3.1 Transformation of Social and Cultural Practices that Promote Child Marriage.....	24
3.2 Increasing Access to Quality, Equitable and Relevant Girls' Education.....	25
3.3 Access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education and SRH Information and Services for Adolescent Girls and Boys.....	25
3.4 Economic and Livelihood Empowerment for Girls.....	25
3.5 Enforcement of Relevant Legislation and Policies to end Child Marriage.....	26
3.6 Strong Coordination Mechanisms.....	26
PROPOSED STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS.....	27
OPERATION FRAMEWORK OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN.....	30
COSTING FRAMEWORK OF THE STRATEGY.....	59
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAKEHOLDERS IN IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY.....	62

FOREWORD

Child marriage is a marriage in which either one of the parties, or both, is or was a child under the age of 18 at the time of the union. At 42%, Malawi has one of the highest prevalence of child marriage, defined as the percentage of women 20-24 years old who were first married or in union before they were 20 years old. Child marriage is one of the key factors affecting the chances of Malawi achieving her development goals in the education, health, economic and other sectors. The country cannot afford to let this status quo continue. This Strategy underlines the commitment of the Government and its partners to redouble their efforts towards having a Malawi free of child marriage.



This Strategy provides a situation analysis and extent of the problem of child marriage in Malawi, its driving factors and consequences. It also outlines the strategic focus areas of interventions and the key milestones to be achieved by 2022.

The Strategy has been developed within the context of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS III) and is aimed at operationalising some of the policy provisions of the National Gender Policy. It is also linked to the country's regional and global commitments including the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Union Charter, and other relevant national and international policy and legal documents.

I wish to call upon all stakeholders to get committed to the implementation of this Strategy. On its part, the Government pledges to provide all the necessary policy guidance and oversight while strengthening strategic partnerships with players within the civil society, private sector, donor community and development partners who are engaged in the fight against child marriage.

Hon. Jean A.N. Kalilani, MP
Minister of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare is grateful for the technical and financial support from all partners that made the development of this Strategy possible. The development of this Strategy has been a long and participatory process, involving extensive review of relevant policies, legal and programme documents and both grey and published literature on child marriage from the Government, civil society organizations (CSOs), UN agencies, and other stakeholders. The thoughtful and valuable inputs from all these partners and stakeholders have been very useful throughout the development process.

The tireless leadership provided by the Directorate of Child Affairs within the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare is also greatly appreciated alongside the technical support provided by Mr. Henry Sapuwa, the consultant.

Lastly, the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare is highly indebted to UNFPA, UNWomen, Plan Malawi, GENET, YONECO and MHRC for the financial and technical support throughout the development process of this Strategy.



Dr. Esmie Kainja
Secretary for Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare

ACRONYMS

ADC	:	Area Development Committees
AIDS	:	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
AU	:	African Union
CBO	:	Community Based Organisation
CSO	:	Civil Society Organisation
ECM	:	Ending Child Marriage
EMIS	:	Education Management Information System
GBV	:	Gender Based Violence
GDP	:	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	:	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
ICRW	:	International Centre for Research on Women
IEC	:	Information Education Communication
IMS	:	Information Management System
KAP	:	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
M&E	:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDHS	:	Malawi Demographic Health Survey
MoGCDSW	:	Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organisations
PTA	:	Parents Teachers Association
SGV	:	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SMC	:	School Management Committee
SRHR	:	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
UNFPA	:	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Child marriage, defined as a marriage in which either one of the parties, or both, is or was a child under the age of 18 at the time of the union, is a critical priority issue for Malawi, affecting many of the country's development goals, including but not limited to achieving universal primary education, maternal and child health, and gender equality, amongst others.

Girls who marry young are at a much higher risk of pregnancy-related injuries such as haemorrhaging, obstructed labor and obstetrical fistulae. Child marriage affects the emotional, physical and psychological wellbeing of the child and contributes to high fertility, exacerbating the problem of rapid population growth by pushing girls into an early reproductive role. Child marriage exposes young girls to early sex which predisposes them to HIV. Malawi is therefore committed to support girls in avoiding child marriage, delaying child bearing and instead encouraging them to remain in school and continue with education.

At 42%, Malawi has one of the highest prevalence rates of child marriage, which is higher than the sub-Saharan Africa average of 37%. It is categorised alongside Mozambique as having the highest prevalence of child marriage within the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region. Globally, it is ranked 13th on the list of countries with highest prevalence of child marriage. The rate of child marriage is seven times higher among girls than boys, with 12% of women being married before they are 15 compared to only 1.2% for men.

Urban women tend to marry later than rural women. For women age 25-49, the median age at first marriage is 1.7 years older among urban women than rural women (19.7 years versus 18.0 years). These variations are also apparent at the regional level. Women in the Central region marry at a slightly older age than women in the Southern and Northern regions.

It has been shown that, in general, women tend to marry considerably earlier than men. The median age at first marriage is 18.2 years among women age 25-49 and 23 years among men age 25-49. Among women, 47% marry before their eighteenth birthday while for men, it is 8%. For women age 20-49 years, 11.6% had been married at the age of 15. This statistic is almost zero with regards to men within this age group.

Within the adolescent age group of 15-19, about 29% have begun having children, especially in the rural areas where education facilities are poor resulting in school dropout. The problem is worsened by the high unmet need for contraceptives for sexually active adolescents (15-19 years) which stands at 22%.

Child marriage has among others been identified as one of the key causes of high school drop

out rates in Malawi. In 2015, for instance, of those who dropped out of primary school, while 28.1 percent (14.1 percent girls and 14.0 percent Boys) was due to family responsibilities, 5.6% among girls was due to child marriage, compared to 0.9% for boys.

Malawi is a state party to several international treaties and conventions aimed at fighting and prohibiting child marriage. She has also amended her Constitution, raising the age of the child from 16 to 18 years. The Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act recognises 18 as a minimum age of marriage for both girls and boys.

Besides the Constitution and the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act, the Government also enacted laws such as the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act (2006); the Child Care, Protection and Justice Act (2010); the Deceased Estates (Wills, Inheritance and Protection) Act (2011); the Gender Equality Act (2013); and the Trafficking in Persons Act (2015). The aim behind all these pieces of legislation is to protect the rights of women and children at all levels.

Malawi hosted the first symposium on Ending Child Marriage in 2013. In 2014, she launched a campaign on Ending Child Marriage. By involving the mass media the campaign sought to reach out to as many people as possible regarding the nature of the problem, its consequences, and the benefits to be gained if it is addressed. A national child help line has been established to offer children and concerned adults a platform to report to relevant authorities on possible or existing child marriages, domestic and gender based violence and other harmful practices.

In addition, the birth registration system and the national identity registration processes are also, among other strategies, aimed at strengthening efforts to end the practice of child marriage. Birth registration is setting the foundation for the recognition of the child as a legal person and a birth certificate is proof of the age of the child against various child abuses such as trafficking, sexual abuse, child marriage, and child labour.

Within the education sector, Government is implementing the re-admission policy that allows girls who become pregnant while in school to return after giving birth. The Government has also adopted a National Girls Education Strategy that focuses in reducing child marriage and teenage pregnancies.

At the grassroots level, the Government is implementing a number of noteworthy interventions including: annulment of unions and withdrawal of children from existing marriages and supporting them to get re-admitted in school. There are also some social support programmes being implemented to target girls and their parents so that the girls are able to get back into the education system.

However, challenges still remain: there are a number of harmful cultural practices that are promoting or tolerating child marriage; the school system still has infrastructure and other social barriers; teenage pregnancies are still very high and; strict and effective enforcement of related laws is still a challenge.

This Strategy intends to provide leadership, guidance and oversight in national efforts of ending child marriages. The Strategy is tackling the key drivers of child marriage by seeking to empower girls' through increased economic opportunities, and initiating incentive-based programmes to support girls to enrol for school, reduce the dropout rate and keep them in school through to secondary level. The Plan also seeks to effectively enforce laws that were developed to protect children from child marriage. The Strategy also aims at harmonising and popularising the different pieces of legislation and building the capacity of law enforcement agencies. Further, the Strategy is encouraging community engagement in a dialogue on child marriage, in order to change attitudes and social norms and raise awareness of the dangers of child marriage. It also focuses on making available, safe, comprehensive, age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health information, and services to all young girls in Malawi including those who are already married at a young age, by providing adequate and accessible healthcare, psychosocial support and, if necessary, a way out of the marriage.

To improve disaggregated data collection, monitoring and evaluation and deeper understanding of the problem, the Strategy is also promoting further research on child marriage. All these strategies will be implemented in close collaboration with international organizations, NGOs and other partners.



INTRODUCTION

1. Background

The Government of the Republic of Malawi recognizes child marriages as a danger to the physical and reproductive health of the child, with girls under the age of 18 at a much higher risk of pregnancy-related injuries such as haemorrhaging, obstructed labour and fistulae. It is also a danger to their education prospects and human capital development. It contributes to high fertility rates and therefore exacerbates the problem of rapid population growth by pushing children into an early reproductive role, affecting their emotional and psychological wellbeing. Child marriage is therefore a critical priority issue for Malawi, affecting many of her development goals, such as achieving universal primary education, maternal and child health, and gender equality, among others.

The Government is committed to support girls in avoiding child marriage, delaying child bearing and instead encouraging them to remain and continue with their education, which provides opportunities for skills and income generation to break the cycle of poverty for future generations. Reducing child marriages will ultimately, reduce child mortality and morbidity related to child and teen pregnancy or childbirth and also improve maternal health which will reduce vulnerability to STIs, HIV/AIDS, malaria, STDs and other diseases.

In line with this commitment, ending child marriage is one of the key interventions within the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS III) to achieve the medium term expected outcome of *Improved quality and relevance of primary education*.

The National Gender Policy also recognises child marriage as an exacerbating factor for health problems associated with gender and power imbalances. The Policy also recognises child marriage as one of the factors contributing to poor education outcomes at both individual and system levels. To address this, the policy commits the Government and its partners to ensure that gender disparities between men and women in all spheres of education and health programs are reduced.

At the global level, Malawi is not only a signatory but also participated in the formulation process of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of which Goal 5 on *achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls* recognizes the elimination of all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage as a key priority. Goal 16 of the SDGs: *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels* also calls for a significant reduction of all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere and; an end to abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

This Strategy is inspired by this commitment and is intended to provide leadership, guidance and oversight in national efforts of eliminating the problem of child marriage in Malawi. The Strategy articulates the key strategies that will be used in this important undertaking, the implementation structure and roles of stakeholders in implementing the Strategy in the next five years.

1.1. Situation Analysis

Child marriage, defined as a marriage in which either one of the parties, or both, is or was a child under the age of 18 at the time of the union¹, threatens the well being of children and constitutes multiple violations of their rights. It is a reflection of underlying gender inequalities, and girls are significantly more likely than boys to be married off before the age of 18, affecting their physical, intellectual, psychological, and emotional wellbeing.

Globally, children most affected by child marriage are often those who are poor, live in rural areas, and are out of school and without opportunities for participation in the labour force. Every year, about 15 million girls are married², almost always forced into the arrangement by their parents. It is estimated that globally, some 700 million girls and women alive today were married off as children (before the age of 18) and 250 million before the age of 15. In the developing world, 1 in 3 girls are married before 18 while around 1 in 9 entered into a marriage or union before they reached 15 years of age³. Estimates show that a further 280 million girls alive today will be married off by age 18 and by 2030, the number of child brides marrying each year would have grown by more than 14% annually from 14.2 million in 2010 to 15.1 million⁴ if current global trends continue.

Within the SADC Region, child marriage remains a problem due to a variety of factors including poverty; gender inequity; tradition; insecurity, especially in times of conflict, limited education and lack of adequate legal frameworks in Member States, most of which are inconsistent. In seven out of the 15 countries that form the (SADC), the child marriage prevalence rate exceeds 30% and these are the DRC, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe⁵. Of these countries, Malawi and Mozambique are amongst 10 countries in the world with the highest rates of child marriage⁶.

¹ Joint General Comment of the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR) and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) ON Ending Child Marriage

² UNICEF's State of the World's Children report, 2016

³ UNICEF, Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed, Progress Report 2012

⁴ Ibid

⁵ UNICEF State of the World's Children, 2016

⁶ SADC Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage

The child marriage prevalence, described as percentage of women 20-24 years old who were married or in union before they were 18 years old⁷, is estimated to be at 42%⁸ for Malawi, with 9% of the Malawian children being married by age 15. This prevalence rate is higher than the regional average for sub-Saharan Africa of 37%⁹ and the country is ranked 13th in terms of the highest child marriage rate in the world¹⁰.

The problem is higher among girls than boys with the rate of child marriage being more than seven times higher among girls compared to boys (50% girls, 6.4% boys). Furthermore, 12% of women are married before they are 15 compared to only 1.2 percent of men¹¹.

Urban women tend to marry later than rural women. For women age 25-49, the median age at first marriage is 1.7 years older among urban women than rural women (19.7 years versus 18.0 years)¹². These variations are also apparent at regional level where women in the Central region marry at a slightly older age than women in the Southern and Northern regions¹³.

The 2015 Malawi Demographic Health Survey (DHS) Report shows that in Malawi, women tend to marry considerably earlier than men. The median age at first marriage is 18.2 years among women age 25-49 and 23 years among men age in the same age group. Forty-seven percent of women marry before their eighteenth birthday while for men, it is 8%. For women age 20-49 years, 11.6% had been married at the age of 15. This statistic is almost zero with regards to men within the same age group.

Related to the issue of child marriage is the attendant problem of teenage pregnancies, both of which are contributing to high school dropout. According to the DHS (2015), 29% of adolescents aged 15-19 in Malawi have begun having children, especially in the rural areas where education facilities are poor resulting in school dropout. The problem is also correlated to levels of education attained: more than half of teenagers 15-19 years (54%) with no education have begun childbearing compared with 32% of teenagers who have attained primary education and 19% of those who have attained secondary education. Teenage pregnancy is higher in rural areas where 31% of women age 15-19 have begun childbearing, compared with 21% in urban areas. The problem is made even worse by the high unmet need for contraceptives for sexually active adolescents (15-19 years) which stands at 22%¹⁴.

⁷ UNICEF's State of the World's Children report, 2017

⁸ MDHS 2015, down from 50% as reported by DHS 2010 and 46% as reported by UNICEF in State of the World Report, 2016

⁹ UNFPA, "Profiles of 10 Countries with the Highest Rates of Child Marriage," undated

¹⁰ UNICEF's State of the World's Children report, 2017

¹¹ Final Report of a Preliminary Research into the Extent, factors and Effects of Child Marriage Research in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi, VSO Rhaisa, 2015

¹² MDHS 2015

¹³ ibid

¹⁴ MDHS 2015

In an effort to reverse these trends, a number of countries around the world have embarked on programmes and strategies to address child marriage. A global commitment to ending harmful practices including child marriage was made at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015 with the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals. There are also several international human rights instruments that aim at tackling human rights violations affecting rights of children to health, education, equality, non-discrimination and to live free from violence. These instruments include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (the CEDAW). The CEDAW obligates States to ensure the same right for men and women to freely choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent.

Within the continent, the African Union (AU) commitment to end child marriage is expressed in accordance with the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and Agenda 2063. Aspiration 6 of the Agenda 2063 emphasizes that all forms of gender based violence and discrimination against women and girls be eliminated so that the latter will fully enjoy all human rights. The Agenda 2063 also calls for an end to all harmful social practices (especially female genital mutilation and child marriage) and for the elimination of the barriers to quality health and education for women and girls. In this regard, the AU Commission is leading the continental Campaign on Ending Child Marriage which was launched in 2014.

Some of the key regional human rights legal instruments that Malawi has ratified to fight and prohibit child marriage include: (a) the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol or African Women's Protocol); (b) the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Charter on Rights of the Child, 1999); (c) the African Youth Charter which is the epicentre of the AU Second Decade on Education (2006-2015); (d) the African Union Social Policy Framework (2009); (e) the African Governance Infrastructure; (f) Continental Policy Framework for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and the Maputo Plan of Action (MPoA) 2007 - 2010 for its operationalization; (g) the AU Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Newborn and Child Mortality in Africa (CARMMA); (h) the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance; (i) the African Women's Decade; (j) the AU Campaign to End Child Marriage in Africa; (k) the African Common Position on the AU Campaign to End Child Marriage in Africa and (l) the African Union Human Rights Architecture.

A common observation from most of these instruments is a call for a ban on child marriage and an emphasis on the importance of free, full and informed consent to marriage by both intending parties of marriageable age, without exceptions, as a means of protecting the rights of women and children worldwide.

In February 2017, the Parliament of Malawi amended the Constitution and raised the age of the child from 16 to 18 years old for boys and girls.

Besides the Constitution, the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act, legislates 18 as the minimum age of marriage. Other supportive gender related laws include; (a) the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act¹⁵; (b) the Child Care, Protection and Justice Act¹⁶; (c) the Deceased Estates (Wills, Inheritance and Protection) Act¹⁷; (d) the Gender Equality Act¹⁸ in 2013; and (e) the Trafficking in Persons Act¹⁹. These laws aim at protecting the rights of women and children at all levels in accordance with the SADC Gender Protocol which aims to reduce cases of GBV by half by 2030.

The Government among other things, hosted its first symposium on Ending Child Marriage in 2013. In 2014, it launched a national campaign on Ending Child Marriage. In 2017, the campaign engaged the mass media to help reach out to as many people as possible regarding the nature of the problem, its consequences and the benefits to be gained if it is addressed. A national child help line has been established to offer children and concerned adults a platform to report to relevant authorities possible or existing child marriages, domestic and gender based violence and other harmful practices.

Within the education sector, the Government is implementing the re-admission policy that allows girls who become pregnant while in school to return after giving birth. The Government has also adopted a National Girls Education Strategy that focuses on reducing child marriage and teen pregnancies.

In addition, the birth registration system and the national identity registration processes have, among other strategies, aimed at strengthening efforts to end the practice of child marriage. As an act of recording the birth of a child by the government, the birth registration exercise is establishing the existence in law of Malawian children, setting the foundation for the recognition of the child as a legal person. Birth registration of a child provides a proof of the child's age thereby offering protection from various child abuses such as trafficking, sexual abuse, child marriage, and child labour.

At the grassroots level, the Government is implementing a number of noteworthy interventions including annulment of unions and withdrawal of children from existing marriages, an exercise which is led by, among others, chiefs, traditional and religious leaders and child protection officers. Where possible, girls are then supported and encouraged to get readmitted in school. Government, NGOs, CBOs and other stakeholders are also providing school related social support targeting girls and their parents so that the girls are able to get back into the educational system.

¹⁵ Chapter 7:05 of the Laws of Malawi

¹⁶ Act No. 22 of 2010

¹⁷ Act No. 14 of 2011

¹⁸ Act No. 3 of 2013

¹⁹ Act No. 3 of 2015

1.2. Drivers and Consequences of Child Marriages

1.2.1. Drivers

A key challenge to reducing child marriage is the entrenched attitudes and cultures that accept the practice as normal. Other challenges include; (a) high incidences of poverty; (b) gender inequalities; (c) education barriers; (d) peer and societal pressure; and (e) weak institutional, legal and policy environment.

Harmful Traditional, Social, and Cultural Practices

The practice of early sex and child marriage in Malawi is influenced by some traditional and patriarchal culture. In some cultural settings, parents tolerate child marriages to avoid paying *chibadara* in case boys make girls pregnant. For some parents, such marriages are a way of helping boys to avoid promiscuity. Other traditional practices and norms that promote child marriage include; (a) the sex education offered at initiation ceremonies (*chinamwali*) that encourages premarital sex (*kusasa fumbi*), a sexual ritual that young girls who have just gone through *chinamwali* are subjected to; (b) desire by parents, particularly women, to have grandchildren; (c) the practice of *kutomera* by which children get into pre-arranged marriages; and (d) *fisi*, where a male adult has sexual intercourse with newly initiated girls²⁰.

Poverty

Poverty is very rampant in Malawi and it has not reduced significantly from the 52.4% of 2005 to 50.7% in 2015. Over the same period, the incidence of ultra-poor increased from 22.4% to 25% while income distribution has been worsening over time²¹.

As regards children themselves, the child monetary poverty rate is at 43%. At 63%, children multidimensional poverty is even higher especially among the oldest age group of children 15-17 years (73%). On the other hand, monetary poverty rate is highest among children 5-14 years old (44%). Both types of poverty are higher in rural areas relative to urban areas. It is also important to note that 30% of all children are deprived in two or more dimensions yet live in households that are above the poverty line²².

Whatever the case, poor families and even the girls themselves from such poor households, may consider child marriage as a strategy for reducing their economic stress and poverty. For example, *kupimbira* or *kapawila*, a form of debt repayment in which a girl is given to wealthy old men for marriage as payment for their parents' debts, is practiced in some districts. Child marriages are also encouraged by some parents to ensure that they get dowry or some continued support from the girl's husband²³. Due to poverty, girls may be forced or force themselves to

²⁰ Malawi Human Rights Commission

²¹ MGDS III

²² Child Poverty in Malawi, UNICEF and Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

²³ Human Rights Watch, "I've Never Experienced Happiness" Child Marriage in Malawi, 2014

engage in transactional sex in order to meet their own basic needs and those of the family where they come from.

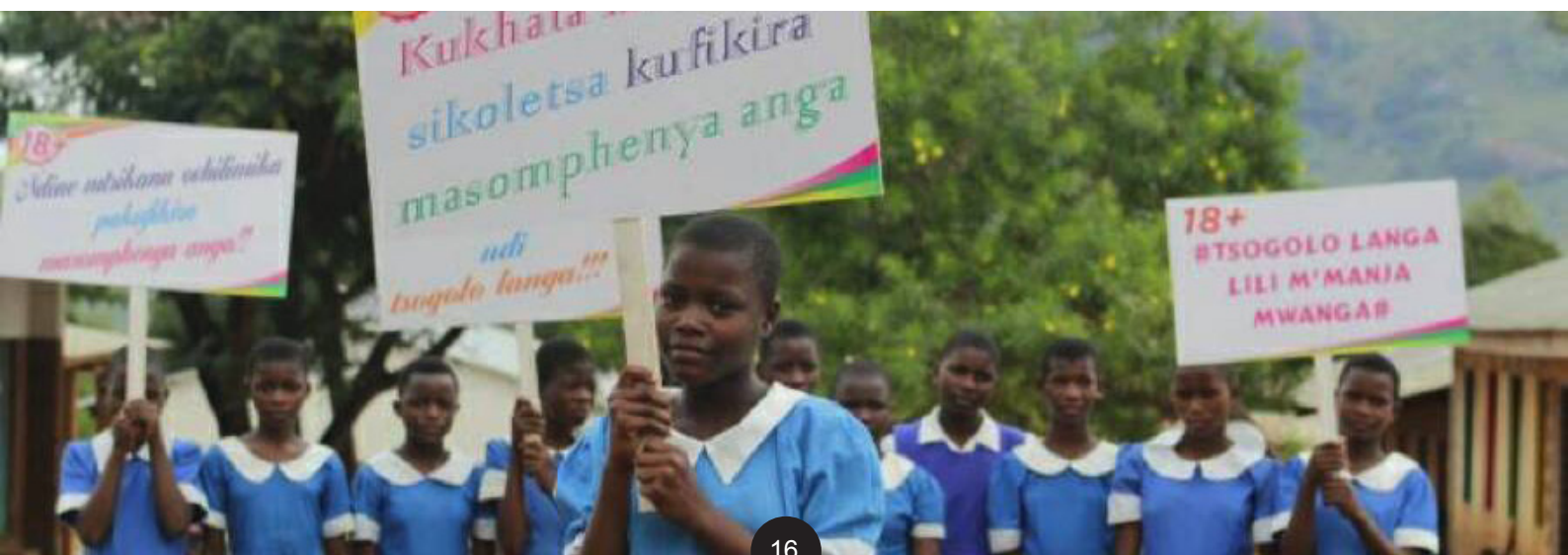
Gender Inequalities

Gender discrimination underlines the various forms of violence and abuse against the girl-child. It causes girls to be regarded as less worthy of care and protection, particularly, in patriarchal societies, where girls lack the same perceived value as boys right from birth. In such cultures, families and communities may discount the benefits of educating and investing in the development of their daughters strongly exposing her to the option of getting married while still young.

Adolescent girls are also at risk of being raped or being enticed or forced into sex. A National Survey on Violence against Children and Young Women in Malawi found that one out of five females and one out of seven males aged 18 to 24 years in Malawi experienced at least one incident of sexual abuse before turning 18 years of age. In the 12 months preceding the survey, nearly one out of five females and one out of eight males aged 13 to 17 years experienced at least one incident of sexual abuse, with over three quarters of both females and males reporting multiple incidents. The average age of first incident of sexual abuse was 12-14 years.

For some parents, marrying off young daughters is based on the ill-informed belief that it will ensure the safety of the child in situations where girls are at high risk of physical or sexual assault. Paradoxically, this may actually end up exposing the girl child to violence since girls who marry before 18 are more likely to experience domestic violence including marital rape than their peers who marry later. In fact, child brides often show signs symptomatic of sexual abuse and post-traumatic stress such as feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, and severe depression.

In situations of humanitarian crises such as droughts and floods, girls face greater risk of forced marriage. Communities in need of security for girls may force these girls into child marriage. Similarly, child brides may be offered by their families to authority figures in exchange for protection or other favours. Allegations have also been made of women and girls being forced to exchange sex for humanitarian aid in times of such crises. This leaves the victims physically and emotionally scarred.



Educational Factors

On average, only 7% of girls in Malawi complete secondary school, compared with 15% for boys. Lack of adequate spaces for secondary education is a barrier for boys and girls which makes the education system fail to absorb learners who have completed primary education.

Specific barriers for the education of girls include lack of privacy in school bathrooms or inadequate sanitation facilities, household poverty, the cost associated with access to education which most families can hardly afford and long distances to school. These factors force the girls to either stay at home when they are menstruating — making them prone to falling behind or dropping out altogether, resulting onto child marriage as an easy alternative.

Poor prospects of moving higher through the education system and securing good employment is also a disincentive for parents to encourage the girl child to stay in school, believing that they can contribute more to the income of the family through petty trading, working in family farms, as well as through marriage when the family receive dowry and other benefits²⁴. In 2015, for instance, of those who dropped out, 28.1% (14.1% girls and 14.0 % boys) was due to family responsibilities²⁵.

Peer and Societal Pressure

Related to the traditional, cultural and social norms is the societal pressure that girls experience when they are not married. While some parents wish children would remain single until they are over 18 years, society might force them into early marriage. In some instances, girls who are above 20 years and not going to school and not married are scorned or made fun of by their peers and the community in general. Such girls are called prostitutes and are not respected. Being a child bride is therefore considered as a sure way of avoiding such ridicule, improving their social status and being accepted among peers. Boys too are treated in a similar manner. Boys who have married regardless of their age are immediately called adults and treated with a lot of reverence which acts as an incentive to enter into a child marriage²⁶.

Teenage Pregnancy

Teenage pregnancy is a cause of child marriage. Most pregnant adolescent girls are forced into child marriage, particularly by parents and relatives who regard the pregnancy outside marriage as a shameful reflection of the daughter's immoral standing. Child marriage is therefore considered as a way of trying to correct the problem.

²⁴ Stephenson R et al., "Community environments shaping transactional sex among sexually active men in Malawi, Nigeria, and Tanzania," 2012, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23215551>.

²⁵ EMIS 2015 Final Report

²⁶ Malawi Human Rights Commission

Weak Institutional, Legal and Policy Environment

Malawi has developed a number of policies to fight the problem of child marriages. It also has strong legislation against the practice, including the Constitution that prohibits any marriage under the age of 18 for both boys and girls.

A few challenges, however, still remain especially with regard to enforcement of the existing laws to prevent or address the problem of child marriage. Offenders are rarely punished for their criminal behaviour. Inconsistencies, contradictions and exemptions between civil and customary laws on marriage which bring their own set of complications. The absence of a mandatory marriage registration system for both legal and customary unions is also an area that requires redress. Further, the lack of knowledge of rights among the survivors of the practice, or knowledge of where to look for assistance is yet another barrier. Within such an environment, the survivors are forced to turn to own families or traditional leaders who prioritize “family reconciliation” over prosecution, to maintain family unity and community peace. However, this is often at the expense of the security of survivors and their ability to obtain justice for serious harm suffered²⁷.

Negative attitudes of some law enforcement authorities including the judiciary and police creates a perception that authorities do not take child marriage cases seriously or are unable to help victims of child marriage to seek legal remedies or support, thus increasing risks and exposure to the practice.

1.2.2. Consequences

Rights, health and development of girls is undermined by the impact of child marriage, early pregnancy and childbearing. Child marriage limits the human capital and future productivity of the girls and has a negative impact on the health, welfare and development of children, families and their nations. Persistence of child marriage therefore hinders efforts geared towards eliminating extreme poverty, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, and combating HIV/AIDS.

Consequences on Maternal Health

Child marriage can have life-threatening health consequences for girls. Under pressure to become mothers soon after marriage, many child brides become pregnant before they are mentally and physically ready to give birth. Since child brides are particularly vulnerable to injury in pregnancy or childbirth - 65% of all cases of obstetric fistula occur in girls under the age of 18 - complications in pregnancy can put girls at risk of injury, and even death. Pregnancy related injuries may leave the victim in constant pain, vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections and diseases including

²⁷ Human Rights Watch, “I’ve Never Experienced Happiness” Child Marriage in Malawi, 2014

HPV and HIV, and incontinence. As a result, they are often shunned by their husbands, families and communities.

Generally, child brides have poor SRH outcomes and it is estimated that the leading cause of maternal mortality and morbidity for girls age 15 to 19 is pregnancy and childbirth. In comparison to girls 20-24 years old, girls aged between 15 and 19 are twice as likely to die of pregnancy and child birth complications while girls aged between 10 and 14 have a five times greater risk. According to the 2011 Magnitude Study by the Ministry of Health, 18% of maternal mortality ratio is contributed by young people below 25 years due to unsafe abortion complications 2011. Furthermore, the risk of obstructed labour resulting in obstetric fistula is much higher among girls²⁸.

Child brides also tend to be married to older men. They are likely to have the first child at a young age and are more likely to have many children in shorter intervals due to pressure from husband and relatives to get pregnant which can be a disincentive to using a condom, thereby increasing the risk of contracting HIV²⁹.

Consequences on Infant Health

Children of teen mothers experience serious health consequences as well. Stillbirths and deaths during the first week of life are 50 percent higher among babies born to adolescent mothers than among babies born to mothers in their twenties. Currently, 1 million infants of young mothers die every year worldwide as a result of pregnancy and childbirth-related causes. If they survive, the infants tend to have higher rates of low birth weight, premature birth and infant mortality than those born to older mothers³⁰. After birth, infants of teen mothers are more likely than infants born to older mothers to have poorer health care and inadequate nutrition as a result of the young mothers' poor feeding behaviour³¹.

Consequences on Education

For most girls, child marriage often means dropping out of school. In Malawi, only 29% of girls finish the full eight years of primary school and are often forced into child marriages, some as young as 9-10 years old. In 2011, in primary and secondary schools, 15% of females (compared to 2.1% of males) dropped out of school because of marriage, and 7.7% of females (compared to 3.6% of males) left to help with house chores³². In 2015, of those who dropped out, 28.1% (14.1% girls and 14% boys) was due to family responsibilities while 5.6% was due to child marriage,

²⁸ Breaking Vows: Early and Forced Marriage and Girls' Education 2011, Plan International

²⁹ ICRW 2012

³⁰ ICRW, 2007

³¹ Save the Children 2004; Kurz 1997

³² NSO, Integrated Household Survey 2010-2011

compared to 0.9% for boys³³.

Child marriage therefore hinders the right to education. Over 60% of child brides in developing countries have had no formal education and, in Malawi, nearly two thirds of women with no formal education were child brides compared to 5% of women who attended secondary school or higher levels of education³⁴.

Consequences on Participation and Decision Making

Child brides who are in abusive relationships lack confidence and have low self-esteem. They are often isolated and marginalised from society and therefore unable to effectively participate in the development of their own households and the community. They have few support systems which leave them powerless and vulnerable to poverty. Paradoxically, this forces them to become dependent on their spouse and render them unable to leave their abusive husband. Since child brides are often married to older men, there is a gender and power imbalance that is skewed against the girls. Such imbalances are a recipe for violent and abusive relationships including experiences of marital rape³⁵. The imbalance accords lower status to married girls within their home, leaving them with less ability to influence decisions about their own lives³⁶. Women who married as children are more likely to have partners who always have the final say on household decisions, including visits to family or friends, health, ability to work or make large and small household purchases, and on contraception³⁷.

Consequences on the Economy

The society and the country also suffer the consequences of child marriage. Child marriage affects the education of girls and therefore undermines development efforts. Child brides usually drop out of school and are denied the opportunity to complete education. Consequently the ability to earn an income and lift themselves and their children out of poverty is significantly reduced especially because they miss out on the skills, knowledge and employment prospects that would enable them to support their families and contribute to the country's economic development and prosperity. Globally, it is estimated that child marriage and early pregnancies generate lifetime opportunity costs as high as 27 percent of a country's annual GDP³⁸. On the other hand, it is estimated that ending child marriage would increase national earnings by 1 percent.

³³ EMIS 2015 Final Report

³⁴ Human Rights Watch, "I've Never Experienced Happiness" Child Marriage in Malawi, 2014

³⁵ Breaking Vows: Early and Forced Marriage and Girls' Education 2011. Plan International

³⁶ ICRW 2005, UNICEF 2005

³⁷ UNICEF 2005

³⁸ UNICEF analysis, World Bank et al (2017).

Consequences on Population Growth

Related to the above are the effects of child marriages on the population of the country. Child marriages are associated with high fertility rates and therefore significant demographic changes. At 4.4 children per woman, fertility rates in Malawi are still high although this is a decline from 5.7 in 2010³⁹. As a result of the high growth rates, the population of Malawi will most likely double over the next three decades, placing enormous fiscal pressure on a national budget that is already extremely stressed. Furthermore, if the population growth is not well managed, the country will lose out on the demographic dividend which refers to the accelerated economic growth that may result from a decline in a country's mortality and fertility, a change in the age structure of the population (increased number of working-age adults), and the increased ratio between a productive labour force and non-productive dependents.

Consequences on Human Rights

In general, child marriage is a violation of several human rights recognized under various international legal instruments to which Malawi is a party. These human rights include: (a) the right to bodily integrity and to be free from violence; (b) the right to education; (c) the right to decide when and whom to marry; and (d) the right to the highest attainable standard of health⁴⁰.

³⁹ MDHS 2015

⁴⁰ Human Rights Watch, "I've Never Experienced Happiness" Child Marriage in Malawi, 2014



Thundu out-of-school girls club meeting in Mangochi district

NATIONAL STRATEGY TO END CHILD MARRIAGES IN MALAWI

2.1 Vision

The vision of this Strategy is a Malawi free of Child Marriage.

2.1.1 Guiding Principles and Values Statements

Implementation of this Strategy will be guided by the following principles:

- Protection of the child
- Best interest of the child
- Child participation
- Non discrimination and inclusion
- Community involvement and participation
- Accountability and transparency

2.1.2 Key Participants

The key participants in the implementation of this Strategy are categorised as below:

Primary Participants: Vulnerable girls (including those already married, withdrawn or at risk of getting married), parents, guardians, relatives and men and boys who help perpetrate and/or are affected by the practice of child marriage; and children peer groups.

Secondary Participants include religious, community, traditional and cultural leaders, policy makers, school administrators and teachers, local government officers, police, social workers, child protection workers, health workers, members of law enforcement agents and the judiciary.

Other participants include non state actors such as international and local NGOs, CSOs and the media. It also includes donor agencies and development partners.

2.2 Goal

The goal of this Strategy is to reduce the prevalence of child marriage in Malawi by 20% by 2022.

2.3 Strategic Objectives

The objectives of the Strategy for Ending Child Marriages in Malawi are:

- i. To facilitate a positive change in the cultural norms, attitudes, behaviour, beliefs and practices that support and promote child marriage;
- ii. To increase access to quality, equitable and relevant education ;
- iii. To increase access to comprehensive sexuality education and SRH information and services for adolescent girls and boys;
- iv. To strengthen incomes of girls, families and communities with provision of economic and other livelihood opportunities for the benefit of girls and their families;
- v. To foster an enabling legal and policy framework which is fully enforced to end child marriage; and
- vi. To strengthen multi-sectoral implementation and coordination mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation structures for ending child marriage.



STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS

The Strategy has 6 key areas of focus as discussed below:

3.1 Transformation of Social and Cultural Practices that Promote Child Marriage

Social norms and practices are key drivers of child marriages and are therefore influenced by attitudes of parents and other family and community members. In most communities, the opinion of families and elders with regards to girls' education, domestic roles, safety, religious practice, sexual relationships, and place in society determine the timing and nature of marriages. With the correct information on how child marriage impacts the health and other socio-economic aspects of children, families and elders would be strong partners in transforming the harmful practices and norms that promote child marriages. Under this focus area, the Strategy emphasizes a gender transformative approach to provide knowledge about the negative impact of child marriage and challenge societal attitudes and behaviours that drive it, not only by empowering girls but also mobilising and educating parents, in-laws, religious and traditional leaders, and other community members on the negative consequences of the practice.

3.2 Increasing Access to Quality, Equitable and Relevant Girls' Education

Programmes that provide or increase access to education for girls are crucial to delaying marriage. Girls with more years of schooling are less likely to marry early. Some literature has shown that, in the developing world, a girl who receives seven or more years of education marries on average four years later. Girls with more years of schooling are not only more likely to question with reason. A number of practices that often affect them, but also fulfil their aspirations, dreams, potential and increase their future earnings. By some estimates, just one additional year of secondary education boosts girls' future earning potential by 15-25%.

While basic primary education is very important, it is not enough. The DHS (2016) shows that the median age at first marriage for women age 25-49 increases from 17.6 years for women with no education to 24.8 years for women with more than secondary education. Girls are more likely to control their own destinies and effect change in the communities when they attain higher levels of education, both formal and non-formal. Education enables girls to develop greater social networks and acquire skills and information to enhance the ability to communicate better, make informed decisions and negotiate their interests and build their economic and social assets.

Some of the key barriers to access, participation, and completion of education for girls in Malawi include:

- Poverty (high opportunity cost of sending girls to school, low value placed on education, disability);
- Socio cultural barriers (place and value of the girl child in society);

- Distance (proximity) to schools;
- Poor and insufficient school infrastructure and furniture;
- Inadequate staffing and lack of qualified female teachers;
- Lack of pedagogic, learning and teaching materials that are gender sensitive;
- Pregnancy, poor menstrual hygiene facilities in most schools and effects of HIV and AIDS; and
- Lack of opportunities even for those who finish school.

This Strategy promotes increased accessibility to high quality education at all levels so that more girls will be enrolled and retained. It also focuses on the need to sensitize parents and community leaders to support girls in school. The reintegration of married girls, who may also be mothers, into both formal and other non-formal educational opportunities, is also a priority.

3.3 Access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education and SRH Information and Services for Adolescent Girls and Boys

Adolescents ages 10-19 in Malawi make up 24% of the total population⁴¹. The onset of adolescence is an important period in the lives of young people, both male and female. Not only does it bring changes to their bodies, but also brings new vulnerabilities to human rights abuses, particularly in the areas of sexuality, marriage and childbearing. Girls may be coerced into unwanted sex or marriage, putting them at risk of unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV, and dangerous childbirth. Girls as well as boys are disproportionately affected by HIV: the HIV prevalence among young people aged 15 – 19 yrs is 3.3% among women and 1% men⁴².

During this period, it is important that young people are able to find accurate information about their health and rights and have access to services needed to protect their health. This Strategy therefore aims at ensuring that adolescent boys and girls (including child brides) are provided with access to comprehensive sexuality education; services to prevent, diagnose and treat STIs; and counselling on family planning. It also aims at empowering young people to know and exercise their rights – including the right to delay marriage and the right to refuse unwanted sexual advances.

3.4 Economic and Livelihood Empowerment for Girls

Child marriage is inextricably linked to poverty both as a cause and a consequence⁴³. Child brides are cut off from educational and economic opportunities and are more likely to be poor and remain poor, leaving them dependent on their older partners. The DHS 2016 shows that the median age at first marriage for women age 25-49 is higher among women in the highest wealth quintile (19.6 years) than in other quintiles (17.8-18.0 years).

⁴¹ Population and Housing Census, 2008

⁴² MDHS 2015

⁴³ ICRW 2007

This Strategy focuses on providing girls at risk of child marriage (or their families) with economic incentives to delay marriage and remain in school and support married girls to go back to school. The incentives include opportunities such as entrepreneurial and business skills training, microcredit or savings clubs, support networks, and jobs and job placement services. Expanding opportunities for girls and young women can increase the opportunity cost for child marriages, helping to change social norms that perceive marriage as an easy option. The Strategy also focuses on ways that enhance the economic security of poor households, making it easier for families to afford fees for education and other costs related to sending girls to school (such as uniforms and school activities).

3.5 Enforcement of Relevant Legislation and Policies to end Child Marriage

The legal and policy environment is instrumental in changing individual behaviour and can signal or even foster shifts in norms away from child marriage. Currently, Malawi has laws prohibiting the practice of child marriages. In addition to having a minimum age of matrimony, the country also has other laws and policies that are directly relevant to safeguarding the rights of girls and women including the right to enter into and dissolve marriage unions freely; the protection from violence in all public and private spaces; and the right to access justice on an equal basis with males, etc.,.

The success of these laws and policies depends on how well they are implemented. Under this focus area, the Strategy aims at ensuring the consistent and effective enforcement of the existing laws and policies at the national and community levels, and developing new legislations where gaps exist. Capacity building of law enforcement structures and advocacy for the strict implementation of such laws and raising awareness among political leaders, government officials, community leaders and members and other duty bearers is therefore very important. The Strategy has also been developed to ensure that the justice system is accessible to all people who are seeking justice and that adequate punishment is legislated for in relation to child marriage.

3.6 Strong Coordination Mechanisms

Integrated, multi-sectoral responses are needed to end child marriage. Coordination, collaboration and communication among different sectors at national and the sub-national level are therefore critical. Ensuring alignment between diverse stakeholders about what needs to be done to end child marriage and maximise collective impact will require strong leadership, commitment, organisation and capacity from the Government. Without strong leadership or political will, efforts for an effective multi-sectoral approach and scaling up of programmes to tackle child marriages will be severely undermined. Under this strategic focus area, the aim is to ensure that there is strong leadership from the Government to foster an effective collaboration mechanism among stakeholders, at both national and sub national levels towards achieving the priority objectives of the Strategy. It also aims at strengthening the monitoring and evaluation function of the implementing partners to generate key data which is disseminated and used for improved programming and implementation.

PROPOSED STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

The strategic interventions are outlined under each of the strategic areas of focus to end child marriages in Malawi namely; (a) Transformation of Social and Cultural Practices that Promote Child Marriage; (b) Increasing Access to Quality Girls' Education; (c) Increasing Access to Quality Comprehensive Sexuality Education and SRH Services for Adolescent Girls and Boys; (d) Provision of Economic and other Livelihood Opportunities for Young Women; (e) Fostering an Enabling Legal and Policy Framework; and (f) Strengthening Coordination Mechanisms. The interventions are designed and implemented to address individual, interpersonal, community and societal factors that influence child marriages.

OBJECTIVE 1: To facilitate a positive change in the cultural norms, attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and practices that support and promote child marriage

STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 1.1: Transformation of Social and Cultural Practices that Promote Child Marriage

Strategic Interventions:

1. Social Advocacy for the transformation of harmful norms and practices at all levels
2. Capacity building, empowerment and engagement of communities
3. Behaviour Change Communication at community level

OBJECTIVE 2: To increase access to quality, equitable and relevant education

STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 2.1: Increasing Access to Quality, Equitable and Relevant Girls' Education

Strategic Interventions:

1. Creating a protective, supportive and safe school environment for girls
2. Increasing access to, retention and persistence of girls in primary and secondary schools
3. Social Mobilization (CSO, Private sector, Mass media, Traditional Authorities, etc) at sub-national level to support the education of girls.
4. Integration of gender and rights education (with a focus on child marriage) in the primary and secondary school curriculum.
5. Promotion of Complementary Basic Education (CBE) and functional literacy for over aged children and adolescents.

OBJECTIVE 3: To increase access to comprehensive sexuality education and SRH information and services for adolescent girls and boys

STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 3.1: Increasing Access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education and SRH Services and Information for Adolescent Girls and Boys

Strategic Interventions:

1. Awareness raising on adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights; Contraceptive use; maternal health; Unsafe abortion, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections
2. Equip health professionals, health workers, nurses, doctors, communities and families with knowledge and skills to support adolescent sexual and reproductive health programs.
3. Enhancing community capacity to support the reproductive health of adolescent girls and boys;
4. Improve access to information, services and education on sexual and reproductive health and rights for adolescents and youth.

OBJECTIVE 4: To strengthen incomes of girls, families and communities with provision of economic and other livelihood opportunities for the benefit of girls and their families

STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 4.1: Economic and Livelihood Empowerment for Girls

Strategic Interventions:

1. Economic and skills support for girls and poor households.
2. Mentorship programmes for girls.

OBJECTIVE 5: To foster an enabling legal and policy framework which is fully enforced to end child marriage

STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 5.1: Enforcement of Relevant Legislation and Policies to end Child Marriage

Strategic Interventions:

1. Advocacy for development, harmonization and enforcement of effective legislation against Child Marriage.
2. Strengthen the civil registration systems to protect boys and girls and reduce their vulnerability to child marriage.
3. Capacity building of the judiciary, law enforcement agencies, and other service providers to end child marriages.

OBJECTIVE 6: To strengthen multi-sectoral implementation and coordination mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation structures for ending child marriages.

STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 5.1: Strong Coordination Mechanism

Strategic Interventions:

1. Strengthening stakeholder coordination mechanisms for effective partnerships to end child marriage
2. Monitoring and evaluation of programmes to End Child Marriage
3. Joint reviews of progress towards ending child marriages
4. Strengthening the coordination and oversight role of government for effective coordination in implementation of the strategy.



OPERATION FRAMEWORK OF THE STRATEGY

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
OBJECTIVE 1: To facilitate a positive change in the cultural norms, attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and practices that support and promote child marriage				
Strategic Focus Area 1.1: Transformation of Social and Cultural Practices that Promote Child Marriage				
Social Advocacy for transformation of harmful norms and practices at all levels	Launch and implement country wide end child marriage campaigns through media tools and platforms and dissemination of IEC materials.	A five year rolling national-wide campaign on ending child marriages in Malawi.	Stakeholders implementing the campaign on ending child marriages at all levels.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		Local radios broadcast programs that encourage an increasing number of debates in the communities.	National launch event of the campaign to end child marriages conducted.	Activity reports
		28 districts conducting campaigns on ending child marriages per year.	Number of local radio stations that broadcast programs that encourage an increasing number of debates in the communities.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		Families, parents, men and women adopting best practices for preventing and combating early marriage.	Number of districts conducting campaigns on ending child marriages per year.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		Boys and men involved in the prevention and fight against	Number of communities that have made public declarations and have abandoned the child marriage practice.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
	Develop and disseminate messages to discourage		Number of communities adopting best practices for	Monitoring and evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	early marriages with families, with special focus on parents, men and women, and children of both sexes.	early marriages.	preventing and combating of early marriages. Boys and men demonstrate a positive change in their agency and aspirations that impact on their behaviour (e.g. delayed sexual relations and marriage).	Monitoring and evaluation reports
	Establish and promote partnerships with all stakeholders, including elected representatives, as advocates against child marriage through community engagement.	A plan of action for elected representatives on ending child marriages in place and implemented.	Number of functional social media platforms used to reach out to the youth with messages of delaying marriage and remaining in school.	Social media posts
			Number of boys and girls demonstrating a positive change in their agency and aspirations that impact on their behaviour (e.g. delayed sexual relations and marriage).	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		193 parliamentarians and all ward councillors advocate against child marriage.	Number of parliamentarians and ward councillors who support and advocate to end child marriage in their community.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		350 functional partnerships	Number of functional	Monitoring and Evaluation

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
		established at national and sub national levels involving elected, religious and traditional cultural leaders and other opinion leaders in the communities for child marriage.	partnerships at national and sub national levels.	reports with participants list in the partnerships
	Promote positive deviance among parents, girls, boys, law enforcement officers, and leaders using community dialogue.	340 community dialogues conducted annually.	Number of communities promoting and practicing positive deviance as part of a strategy to end child marriage.	KAP study reports, Monitoring and Evaluation reports
		340 Theatre for Development activities conducted annually to create awareness on ending child marriages in all communities.	Number of boys and girls aspiring to delay marriage until school completion.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
			Number of communities reached with Theatre For Development activities.	Reports
Capacity building, empowerment and engagement of communities	Build capacity of faith leaders as change agents for ending child marriage.	28 vibrant district networks of faith leaders against child marriage in place.	Number of districts with a vibrant network of faith leaders against child marriages.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		The faith community participates in open dialogue, discussions and public	Number of men, women, girls and boys with a positive attitude towards ending child	Monitoring and evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
		declarations to end child marriage and teenage pregnancy.	marriage, delaying pregnancy and keeping girls in school.	
	Raise awareness among teachers, cultural gatekeepers, community, religious and opinion leaders, youth associations and other local stakeholders on child protection and strengthen its role in the elimination of child marriages.	Communities adopting best practices in preventing and combating early marriage.	Number of communities adopting best practices in preventing and combating early marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
		Prevalence of child marriage reduced by 30%.	Child marriage prevalence.	DHS
		Adolescent birth rate (aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women.	Adolescent birth rate (aged 15-19 years) of 100 per 1,000 women.	DHS
	Provide responsible parenting education to mothers and fathers to build capacity in responding to the needs of adolescent girls and boys.	Parents have capacity to support boys and girls on their needs as adolescents.	Number of parents (Male and female) reached with parenting education.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
	Conduct responsible masculinity education for men.	6000 men action groups are involved to effectively end child marriage.	Number of men action groups established within communities to promote the ending of child marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
			Number of male champions	Monitoring and Evaluation

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	Promote development of and use of community by-laws aimed at ending child marriages.	300 TAs with community by-laws prohibiting child marriage.	making commitment to support anti-child marriage campaigns.	Reports
			Number of TAs with local bylaws prohibiting child marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
			Number of community leaders making commitments to support campaigns against child marriages.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
	Build capacity of ADCs on strategies for ending child marriage.	300 ADCs have knowledge and skills to end child marriage.	Number of communities adopting best practices in preventing and combating early marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
			Number of men, women, girls and boys with a positive attitude towards ending child marriage, delaying pregnancy and keeping girls in school.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
	Engage role models (fathers, mothers, and even girls) to help encourage other members to join them in the fight against child marriages.		Number of schools visited by role models.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
			Number of functional He4She movements established at community level.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	Develop support networks for children and youth, especially the girl child, offering safe spaces for sharing information on life skills and children's rights and talk about sensitive issues.	1,000 girls' clubs and mother groups established to support adolescent girls in schools. Girls and boys are well informed about the dangers of early marriage and early pregnancy.	Number of girls clubs and mother groups established to support adolescent girls in schools.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
			Number of girls and boys with aspirations to delay marriage and pregnancy and remain in school.	KAP study reports
			Number of safe homes/hostels for girls withdrawn from child marriages/or those chased from their homes because of their refusal to child marriages.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
	Promote and support the establishment of community child protection structures to prevent child marriage through awareness raising, counselling and referral.	All 35 local authorities have functional child protection personnel and structures with knowledge and skills to promote delay of marriage, track, support and refer victims of child marriage.	Proportion of local authorities with functional child protection structures.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
			Proportion of local authorities with functional child protection referral and case management system.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
			Number of child protection personnel with knowledge and skills to promote delay of	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
Behaviour Change Communication at community and individual levels.	Develop and implement a communication and advocacy strategy on ending child marriage.		marriage, track, support and refer victims of child marriage.	
			Number of children corners strengthened and supervised.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
		6000 children corners strengthened and supervised targeting children aged 6-17 years.	Number of adolescents reached with messages on ending child marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
			Percentage of adolescents reached out that are able to speak out on issues relating to child marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
		Communication and advocacy strategy developed.	Number of communication and advocacy strategy materials developed.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		All targeted men, women and young people have positive attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and practices towards ending child marriage.	Proportion of targeted men, women and young people with positive attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and practices.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		Program for engaging the media developed and operationalized.	Level of involvement of the media in programs for ending child marriage.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
	Develop IEC and	All targeted communities	Child marriage prevalence rate	Monitoring and evaluation

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	edutainment materials on child marriage.	reporting a reduction in the prevalence of child marriage.	Percentage of adolescent girls and boys 10-18 years with the correct knowledge to delay marriage and sexual debut.	reports DHS, monitoring and evaluation reports
		Adolescent birth rate (aged 15-19 years) of 100 per 1,000 women.	Adolescent birth rate (aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women.	DHS, monitoring and evaluation reports
OBJECTIVE 2: To increase access to quality, equitable and relevant education				
Strategic Focus Area 2.1: Increasing Access to Quality, Equitable and Relevant Girls' Education				
Creating a protective and safe school environment for girls.	Strengthen capacity of school administrators, teachers, other members of staff, PTAs, SMCs, traditional and religious leaders for effective participation in school governance and management to create protective and safe environments for girls.	Reduced violence and sexual abuse in schools.	Number of school officials and teachers trained on creating a protective and safe environment for girls within the school environment.	
		Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 1.02 for Primary Education.	Gender Parity Index (GPI) For Primary Education.	EMIS
		Gender Parity Index for Secondary.	Gender Parity Index for Secondary.	EMIS
		98% girls Net Attendance Ratio for Primary.	Girls Net Attendance Ratio for Primary (%).	EMIS
		Enforce regulations against corporal punishment and	School environment 100% safe for girls.	Number of school administrators and teachers

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	improper learner teacher relationships.		who are held to account after violating/abusing the rights of students.	
	Conduct awareness campaigns and training on the school re-admission policy for communities and school administrators.	An increase in number of girls who get re-enrolled after dropping out of school.	Number of awareness campaigns on the school re-admission policy.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
			Number of school administrators and structures trained on the implementation of the school re-admission policy.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
			Percentage of young mothers who return to school after pregnancy.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
	Train female teachers and extension workers as effective role models to girls in schools.	Schools have teachers with capacity to provide counselling and guidance to learners.	Number of female teachers trained as role models for girls.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
	Train more teachers on guidance and counselling and deploy them especially	100% of schools providing guidance and counselling to learners.	Number of extension workers trained as role models for girls.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
			Percentage of schools providing guidance and counselling services.	Monitoring and evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	to rural areas.	Male teachers have knowledge and skills to support girls, monitor and prevent child marriage and teenage pregnancies.	Percentage of male teachers with knowledge and skills to support girls, monitor and prevent child marriage and teenage pregnancies.	Monitoring and evaluation reports, KAP study report
	Build capacity of male teachers to support girl education in schools.	100% of governance structures (SMC, PTA, students body, board of governors/councils) functional in all learning institutions.	Governance structures (SMC, PTA, students body, board of governors/councils) functional in all learning institutions.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
Increasing access to, retention and persistence of girls in primary and secondary schools.	Train SMCs and PTA, students body, board of governors/councils on detection of risk and prevention of child abuse and child marriages.			
	Improve School infrastructure to promote access to, and retention of girls in primary and secondary education.	A safe, secure and friendly school environment conducive for effective learning for both girls and boys.	Number of new secondary schools constructed.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
		25 girls hostels constructed in Community Day Secondary Schools annually.	Number of new primary schools constructed.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
		Net Attendance Ratio – Secondary for girls of 22 percent.	Number of girls hostels constructed in Community Day Secondary Schools.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
			Girls Net Attendance Ratio – Secondary.	EMIS
		100% of schools are equipped	Percentage of schools with	Monitoring and Evaluation

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	Provide cash transfers/bursaries to needy girls to complete primary school and transition to secondary school.	with basic water and sanitation facilities, separate and friendly for boys and girls.	improved sanitary facilities for boys and girls.	Reports
		35% girls Survival Rate to Standard 8.	Percentage of schools with disability friendly facilities.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
		42.5% girls Transition Rate to Secondary.	Girls Survival Rate to Standard 8.	EMIS
		80% girls survival rate to form 4.	Girls Transition Rate to Secondary.	EMIS
	Provide incentives (school supplies, home visits) for teen mothers who dropped out of school.	20,000 secondary school students provided with bursary each year.	Girls Survival Rate to form 4.	EMIS
		100% re-enrolment of teen mothers who dropped out of school due pregnancy.	Number of secondary school students provided with bursary each year.	EMIS
		Net Attendance Ratio Primary for girls of 98%.	Percentage of teen mothers who re-enrol after giving birth.	EMIS
		–	Girls Net Attendance Ratio – Primary.	EMIS
	Provide monthly take-home rations to girls in senior primary classes (5-8) of rural schools, subject to satisfactory attendance rates.		Number of girls receiving monthly take-home rations.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
Social Mobilization (CSO, Private sector, Mass media, Traditional Authorities, etc) at sub-national level to support the education of girls.	Mobilize, lobby and advocate for girls education and services with chiefs, parents and other relevant stakeholders.	Increased school survival rate for girls.	School completion rate for girls at both primary and secondary levels.	EMIS
	Identify out of school girls and conduct home visits to encourage them to enrol again in formal education or provide them with second chance education through functional literacy and numeracy programmes including parenting education.	Net Attendance Ratio – Primary for girls of 98%. Net Attendance Ratio – Secondary for girls of 22 percent.	Girls Net Attendance Ratio – Primary. Girls Net Attendance Ratio – Secondary.	EMIS EMIS EMIS
	Build capacity of mother groups in all schools to support girl education to reduce vulnerability to child marriage.	100% of schools have mother groups with knowledge and skills to support girls, monitor and prevent child marriage and teenage pregnancies.	Percentage of secondary schools with functional mother groups in place.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
	Identify champions from within the PTAs, SMCs, and the community to encourage parent-to-parent dialogues	300 communities have champions for girls education who are competent to organize interface meetings.	Number of interface meetings organized by champions for girls education.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	and share best practices on keeping girls in school and ending child marriages.	Parents, girls and boys have positive attitudes to delay marriage and remain in school.	Number of men, women, girls and boys with positive attitudes to delay marriage and remain in school.	KAP study and Monitoring and Evaluation Reports.
Integrate gender and rights education (with a focus on child marriage and gender stereotypes) in the primary and secondary school curriculum.	Review the primary and secondary school curriculum to integrate issues of child marriages and disseminate.	A comprehensive secondary and primary school curriculum that integrates issues of child marriages implemented.	Number of schools using the new revised curriculum.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
Promotion of Basic Education (CBE) and functional literacy for over aged children and adolescents.	Establish Complementary Education (CBE) centres across the country.	600 CBE centres established annually.	Number of CBE centres established annually. Number of girls enrolling for CBE annually.	EMIS EMIS
OBJECTIVE 3: To increase access to comprehensive sexuality education and SRH information and services for adolescent girls and boys				
STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 2.2: Increasing Access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education and SRH Information and Services for Adolescent Girls and Boys				
Awareness raising on adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights; Contraceptive use; maternal health; Unsafe abortion, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.	Conduct ToT of peer educators in CSE education.	School girls have knowledge of their sexual and reproductive health rights and needs. 65% of adolescent girls using modern contraceptive	Proportion of girls dropping out of school due to pregnancy Number of girls reached with sexual reproductive health messages and information. Percentage of girls using modern contraceptives.	EMIS Monitoring and Evaluation reports DHS

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
		60% of health facilities accredited to provide Youth Friendly Health Services.	Percentage of health facilities accredited to provide Youth Friendly Health Services.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
	Renovate and rehabilitate facilities for Youth Friendly Health Services and link schools to YFHS, GBV prevention and management structures within the communities.	100% of YFHS facilities functional and linked to the local schools in their catchment areas.	Percentage of YFHS facilities linked to local schools.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
		Adolescent birth rate (aged 15-19 years) of 100 per 1,000 women.	Adolescent birth rate (aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women.	DHS
	Facilitate access of female and male children who are married or in common-law partnerships to sexual and reproductive health, including contraception and support to victims of domestic violence.	All girls have knowledge about their SRH rights.	Number of child brides accessing family planning, HIV and AIDS and maternal health services.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
		400 safe spaces for girl survivors of abusive situations and child marriage established.	Number of safe spaces for girl survivors of abusive situations and child marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
		A vibrant community and school outreach system on YFHS established.	Number of communities reached with YFHS outreach services.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
	Orient religious leaders, chairpersons of PTAs, mother groups and school	Communities, other stakeholders and religious	Number of religious leaders, PTAs, mother groups and school club patrons with	Monitoring and Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	club patrons and other relevant extension workers on SRH and HIV services.	leaders support girls to access friendly SRH and HIV services.	accurate knowledge of adolescent SRH and HIV services and life skills.	
	Train family planning providers in communication and counselling skills for adolescents on SRH.	Family planning providers have capacity to effectively communicate and offer counselling to adolescents.	Number of community visits to increase awareness of, and demand for friendly adolescent health services.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
	Produce and distribute SRH IEC materials for the youth.	All adolescents have easy access to SRH information related to them.	Percentage of family planning providers trained in communication and counselling skills.	Training reports, Monitoring and Evaluation reports
	Conduct SRHR and GBV dialogue sessions, mentoring and role modelling for in and out of school girls.	340 community dialogue sessions on GBV and SRHR for girls conducted annually.	Number of SRH IEC materials produced and distributed.	Materials produced
		Girls and boys have positive attitudes to avoid teenage pregnancy, delay marriage and remain in school.	Number of communities promoting and supporting girls to access friendly SRH services.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
			80% of adolescent girls visited by role models in their communities.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
			Number of Girls and boys with positive attitudes to avoid	KAP study reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
Equip health professionals, health workers, nurses, doctors, communities and families with knowledge and skills to support adolescent sexual and reproductive health programs.	Train health workers, YFHS Coordinator and peer educators in adolescent SRH counselling, case management and communication skills. Train youth friendly health services providers to provide minimum package of YFHS including GBSV.	75% of health workers in YFHS facilities and 90% of peer educators have capacity to effectively communicate on adolescent SRH and offer counselling. Percentage of youth friendly health services providers trained in minimum package of YFHS including GBSV.	teenage pregnancy, delay marriage and remain in school. Number of health workers and peer educators providing youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services. 95% of youth friendly health services providers in hospitals and 95% in health centres trained.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
Enhancing community capacity to support the reproductive health of adolescent girls and boys.	Sensitise communities about the relevant pieces of legislation and policies on girl's education, reproductive and health rights and gender equality and their roles in encouraging safer SRH practices among the adolescents. Build capacity of girls and boys in life skills to end child marriage.	300 communities (T/As) are aware and appreciate the relevant legislation and policies on education of girls, reproductive and health rights, and gender equality. All communities have their children marrying at least after the age of 18. Life skills education integrated in primary and secondary school curriculum to end child	Number of women, men, boys and girls who are aware and appreciate the relevant legislation and policies on girls education, reproductive and health rights, and gender equality. Child marriage prevalence rate. School (primary and secondary) curriculum include life skills education to end child	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports DHS Monitoring and Evaluation Reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
		marriage.	marriage and implemented in all schools.	
		All girls and boys equipped with life skills and delaying marriage and sexual relations.	Number of girls and boys equipped with life skills.	Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
			Child marriage prevalence.	MDHS
			Adolescent birth rate (aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women.	MDHS
	Train district health management teams (DHMTs) in adolescent SRH, communication, and counselling.	All DHMTs trained in adolescent SRH, communication, and counselling.	Number of DHMTs trained in adolescent SRH, communication, and counselling.	Training reports
Improve access to information, services and education on sexual and reproductive health and rights for adolescents and youth.	Provide both in and out of school girls and boys with accurate reproductive health information to enable them manage their growth and development.	All adolescent boys and girls have actual knowledge on the prevention of sexually transmitted infections.	Number of girls and boys accessing reproductive health information.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
		Appropriate support services for SRH are available to adolescents.	Percentage of STI cases among adolescents.	Hospital reports
			Number of out of school boys and girls targeted with Life skills based Comprehensive Sexuality Education training.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
			Adolescent birth rate (aged 15-	MDHS

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
		All schools providing Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE).	19 years) per 1,000 women. Number of teacher training institutions providing CSE as part of their curriculum. Percentage of schools providing quality CSE. Number of girls and boys receiving CSE.	Training curriculum Monitoring and Evaluation reports Monitoring and Evaluation reports
OBJECTIVE 4: To strengthen incomes of girls, families and communities with provision of economic and other livelihood opportunities for the benefit of girls and their families				
Strategic Focus Area 4.1: Economic and Livelihood Empowerment for Girls				
Economic and skills support for girls and poor households.	Provide cash transfer and other support to encourage retention of the girl child in school.	319,000 poor households are provided with cash transfers.	Number of household beneficiaries of cash transfers Number of girls benefiting from the ongoing government social cash transfer. Number of girls provided with cash transfer. Number of girl Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) who are supported with free uniforms and other school supplies.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports Monitoring and Evaluation reports Monitoring and Evaluation reports Monitoring and Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	Support girls with financial saving skills and access to loans (to both in and out of school) to help mitigate the economic motivations of child marriage.	Girl survivors and those at risk of child marriages have professional skills that allow access to employment to support their families.	Number of girls trained in financial management skills.	Training Reports
			Number of girls accessing loans to help mitigate the economic motivations of early marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
	Facilitate access of survivors and those at risk of child marriage (especially those out of school) to vocational, agribusiness literacy and numeracy training linked to market opportunities.	Annual average increase of 5000 girls enrolled in community/technical colleges.	Number of girls enrolled in community/technical colleges per year.	Labour Reports
			Number of out of school girls with agribusiness skills.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
			Number of out of school girls provided with literacy and numeracy skills.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
			Number of girl-owned agribusinesses linked to market opportunities.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
			Number of girls participating in girls saving clubs as a means for building assets.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
	Economic empowerment of families and communities to	Families and communities are able to support the education	Number of girls withdrawn from marriage and re-admitted	Monitoring and Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	support girls education i.e facilitate provision of IGAs to families and communities.	of the girls at all levels.	to school. Number of girls accessing financial support from families and communities. Number of families and communities receiving IGAs.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports Monitoring and Evaluation reports
Mentorship programmes for girls.	Develop and implement a mentorship programme for girls involving the private sector, government and civil society	10, 000 girls are mentored and inspired to remain in school, delay marriage and develop their chosen careers.	Number of girls undergoing apprenticeship programmes. Number of girls engaged in internship programmes. Number of girls engaged in job shadowing programmes. Number of organisations and individuals providing mentorship to girls.	Training and Monitoring and Evaluation reports Training and Monitoring and Evaluation reports Training and Monitoring and Evaluation reports Monitoring and Evaluation reports
OBJECTIVE 5: To foster an enabling legal and policy framework which is fully enforced to end child marriage				
STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 4.1: Enforcement of Relevant Legislation and Policies to End Child Marriage				
Advocacy for development, harmonization, and enforcement of effective legislation against child marriage.	Advocate for the passing and enactment of the Adoption of Children Act.	Adoption of Children Act enacted and popularized	Reviewed Adoption of Children Act enacted. Number of stakeholders sensitised on the amended Adoption of Children Act.	Gazette Monitoring and Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	Harmonization of all child-related laws (Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act, Child Care, Protection and Justice Act, Adoption of Children Act, and the Penal Code).	Existing legislation harmonised.	Number of adoption cases registered, processed, and concluded in courts	Court reports
			Existing policies and statutes harmonized to address ending child marriage (Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act, Child Care, Protection and Justice Act, Adoption of Children Act, and the Penal Code).	Reviewed and harmonized legislations Reviewed and harmonized policy documents
	Finalise and implement the National Child Protection Policy.	A comprehensive Child Protection Policy developed, disseminated and popularized.	Number of statutes that have been amended.	
			Number of districts where the Policy has been disseminated and popularized.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
	Create awareness to popularize and enforce legislation related to ending child marriage.	Increased awareness among key participants regarding, and enforcement of, child related legislation.	Number of institutions and communities applying the Policy. Number of cases of defilement processed. Number of child marriages annulled.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports Monitoring and Evaluation reports Court Reports Monitoring and Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
			Number of children rescued from child marriage.	Police reports
			Number of people or number of child marriage cases prosecuted.	Court reports
			Number of child trafficking cases prosecuted in courts.	Court reports
	Develop other legislation and policies where gaps exist.	New legislation and policies developed and enforced to address ending child marriage.	Number of new legislation and policies developed and enforced.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
	Implement the Human Rights National Plan of Action.	Human Rights National Plan of Action implemented.	Number of activities regarding child marriage implemented from the Human Rights National Plan of Action.	Implementation reports
Strengthen the civil registration systems to protect boys and girls and reduce vulnerability to child marriage.	Support the implementation of the Chiefs' Declaration of Commitment on Gender and HIV.	300 chiefs implemented the Chiefs' Declaration of Commitment on Gender and HIV.	Number of chiefs implementing the Chiefs' Declaration of Commitment on Gender and HIV.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
	Lobby for the full implementation of the National Registration Act.	28 districts have a functional birth, marriage, and death registration system	Number of districts with a functional birth, marriage and death registration system.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
Capacity building of the judiciary, law enforcement community, and other service providers to end child marriage.	Train and support judiciary, paralegals, and law enforcement officers to effectively respond to issues of child marriage.	95% of children are issued with Birth Registration Certificates.	Percentage of children issued with Birth Registration Certificates.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
		80% of children have births registered by civil authorities.	Percentage of children whose births are registered by civil authorities.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
		80% of marriage unions registered.	Percentage of marriage unions that are registered.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
	Train and support judiciary, paralegals, and law enforcement officers to effectively respond to issues of child marriage.	100% of judiciary, paralegals, and law enforcement officers that are trained understand their roles and responsibilities and have capacity in policy and law enforcement.	Number of law enforcement officers trained to effectively respond to issues of child marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports; Training reports
			Number of the judiciary personnel trained to effectively respond to issues of child marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports; Training reports
		Mobile court sessions institutionalised.	Number of paralegals trained to effectively respond to issues of child marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports; Training reports
			Number of mobile courts conducted to try cases of child marriages.	Court Reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
OBJECTIVE 6: To strengthen multi-sectoral implementation and coordination mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation structures for ending child marriages.				
STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 5.1: Strong Coordination Mechanism				
Strengthening stakeholder coordination mechanism for effective partnerships to end child marriage.	Conduct a comprehensive mapping of stakeholders involved in programmes for ending child marriage.	28 districts comprehensively mapped.	Number of districts comprehensively mapped.	Mapping Report
		Coverage and programmatic gaps in ending child marriages are identified and addressed through mapping.	Number of stakeholders and programs identified.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		Capacity building plan for coordination mechanism developed and implemented.	Number of programmatic gaps identified and addressed.	
	Develop and strengthen coordination structures for ending child marriage at national, district, and community levels.	All implementing stakeholder institutions submitting annual implementation reports.	Number of capacity building programmes for coordination conducted involving various stakeholders (government, traditional authorities, CSOs, health workers) implemented.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		Operational guidelines for National, district, and community coordination	Number of stakeholders reporting to the Ministry of Gender on activities to end child marriage. Operational guidelines developed, disseminated and used at all levels.	Monitoring and evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
		structures for ending child marriage.		
		Memorandum of Understanding signed by all key stakeholders on ECM at all levels.	Memorandum of Understanding amongst key stakeholders on ECM interventions at all levels.	Signed MoU on ECM interventions
		Quarterly meetings of the national taskforce on ending child marriages.	Number of quarterly meetings of the ECM taskforce.	Minutes of the task force meetings
	Identify focal point persons in the public sector and other stakeholders.	Focal point persons appointed in all implementing partner institutions.	Number of stakeholders with ECM focal points.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
	Establish strategic partnerships to share best practices and lessons learnt in implementation of programmes for ending child marriage.	4 partnerships (Joint Partnership Committees) on Child Marriage.	Number of local, regional, and international partnerships established and functional.	Partner reports
			Total number of active partners supporting Ending Child Marriage programmes.	Partner reports
		At least 2 fora/symposia held annually to share best practices and lessons.	Biannual fora/symposia held on child marriage.	Meeting reports
	Mobilise resources for	Resource mobilization plan	Fully developed resource	Resource mobilisation plan

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	programmes of ending child marriage.	completed and implemented. Child marriage programmes adequately funded.	mobilization plan for program on ending child marriages. A funding mechanism (involving the government, development partners, donors, civil society and the public sector) for ending child marriage is established.	document Funding and expenditure reports
M&E documentation and reporting of programmes to end child marriage.	Develop a M&E system for ending child marriage. Government, stakeholders, and civil society conduct joint monitoring, supervision, and review of programmes on ending child marriage.	A robust M&E framework established and is guiding, tracking, and reporting progress within the first 6 months of implementation of the Strategy. Stakeholder reporting structure developed and functional. Biannual joint monitoring and supervision visits conducted at national and sub national levels. Biannual review meetings held at national and sub national levels.	(M&E) plan document in place and used by stakeholders. A national database on child marriage updated regularly. Clear reporting structure and format developed and disseminated to all stakeholders. Number of joint monitoring and supervision reports prepared. Number of biannual review meetings held.	Monitoring and Evaluation tools National database in place Stakeholder reports Monitoring and Evaluation reports Monitoring and Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	Support institutions including the police, the judiciary, and civil society to submit periodic data returns on child marriage.	Efficient and consistent reporting by all stakeholders involved in efforts of ending child marriage.	Number of institutions consistently submitting reports on ending child marriage.	Monitoring and Evaluation reports
	Create a module within the existing IMS to capture child marriage data.	A functional IMS on child marriage in Malawi.	Proportion of districts reporting through the child marriage IMS.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
		All service providers have been oriented and sensitized about the MIS for ending child marriage services.	All service providers submit reports through the MIS for ending child marriage services.	Monitoring and evaluation reports
	Commission baseline research on prevalence, magnitude, and root causes of child marriage in Malawi.	A baseline survey conducted in year 1 of implementation.	Baseline values of key indicators developed and report developed.	Baseline report
		Formative research on child marriage commissioned and conducted.	Report on the research findings developed.	Research/survey reports
	Conduct midterm and end term evaluation of the Strategy and document lessons learnt, best practices, and recommendations.	Midterm and end term evaluation reports compiled and disseminated.	Midterm and end term evaluation reports developed.	Evaluation reports

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
	Generate and disseminate evidence using both primary and secondary data to demonstrate the benefits of delaying marriage and of keeping girls in school during adolescence.	Evidence-based programming for ending child marriages.	<p>Number of gender disaggregated research on causes and impact of child marriage, and benefits of delaying marriage and keeping girls in school</p> <p>Number of research areas on child marriage identified, prioritised and disseminated.</p> <p>Number of research institutions and stakeholder organisations supported to carry out gender disaggregated data collection, processing, and dissemination.</p> <p>Number of people reached and made aware of the drivers and impact of child marriage and demonstrating the benefits of delaying marriage and keeping girls in school.</p>	<p>Research reports, monitoring and evaluation reports</p> <p>Research reports</p> <p>Research reports</p> <p>Dissemination reports</p>
Strengthening the coordination oversight role of government for effective coordination in	Strengthen existing and new child protection institutions and mechanisms for promotion of awareness on	A fully staffed unit within the Ministry of Gender responsible for coordinating programmes on ending child marriages.	Number of staff in the unit responsible for coordinating programmes on ending child marriages.	Ministry's staff return

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS	ACTIVITIES	TARGET FOR 2022	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
Implementation of the Strategy.	child marriage and for referral of victims of child marriage.		Number of staff in the unit responsible for coordinating programmes on ending child marriages trained on effective strategies for ending child marriages in Malawi.	Ministry's staff return
		All relevant government ministries have capacity and knowledge on strategies to end child marriage.	Number of ministries with staff trained on strategies to end child marriages.	Training Reports
	Support a high-level technical working committee on ending child marriage and build capacity of its membership to effectively offer strategic guidance and support.	A high-level technical committee on child marriage in place.	A functional high-level technical committee on child marriage.	Minutes of meetings
		Annual high-level technical committee meetings held.	Number of annual high-level technical committee meetings held.	Minutes of meetings

COSTING FRAMEWORK OF THE STRATEGY

This Strategy has been aligned to the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III (MGDS III) and its implementation will therefore contribute to the achievement of some of its key expected outcomes and targets for 2022. In line with these outcomes and targets, the budget of this Strategy covers the cost of implementing intervention in the 6 strategic focus areas namely; (a) Transformation of Social and Cultural Practices that Promote Child Marriage; (b) Increasing Access to Quality, Equitable and Relevant Education; (c) Increasing Access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education and SRH information and Services for Adolescent Girls and Boys; (d) Economic and Livelihood Empowerment for Girls; (e) Fostering an Enabling Legal and Policy Framework; and (f) Strengthening Coordination Mechanisms. However, the focus areas are linked to reflect the multi-dimensional nature of child marriage.

It is estimated that implementation of the Strategy will require about **55.432 billion kwacha** (**≈\$74,657,200**) over a period of 5 years. The financing is expected to come from the Government of Malawi through the national budget allocations and supported by development partners and donors. Below is a summary of the cost of the strategy:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
	MK'million				
OBJECTIVE 1: To facilitate a positive change in the cultural norms, attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and practices that support and promote child marriage	999	921	934	960	1,014
STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 1.1: Transformation of Social and Cultural Practices that Promote Child Marriage					
Strategic Interventions					
Social Advocacy for the transformation of harmful norms and practices at all levels.	577	527	552	556	600
Capacity building, empowerment and engagement of communities .	385	366	364	386	396
Behaviour Change Communication at community level.	37	28	18	18	18

OBJECTIVE 2: To increase access to quality, equitable and relevant education	5,303	4,682	5,554	7,081	7,484
STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 2.1: Increasing Access to Quality, Equitable and Relevant for Education Girls					
Strategic Interventions					
Creating a protective and safe school environment for girls.	341	423	457	489	551
Increasing access to, retention and persistence of girls in primary and secondary schools.	4,132	3,360	4,407	5,832	6,087
Social Mobilization (CSO, Private sector, Mass media, Traditional Authorities, etc) at sub-national level to support the education of girls.	208	194	220	230	246
Integration of gender and rights education (with a focus on child marriage) in the primary and secondary school curriculum.	302	277			
Promotion of Complementary Basic Education (CBE) for over aged children and adolescents.	320	428	470	530	600
OBJECTIVE 3: To increase access to comprehensive sexuality education and SRH information and services for adolescent girls and boys	550	615	687	652	771
STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 3.1: Increasing Access to Comprehensive Sexuality Education and SRH information and Services for Adolescent Girls and Boys					
Strategic Interventions					
Awareness raising on adolescent sexual and reproductive health; family planning; maternal health; and HIV and sexually transmitted infections.	266	323	390	431	531
Equip health professionals, health workers, nurses, doctors, communities and families with capacity to support the reproductive health of married adolescent couples.	88	92	95		
Enhancing community capacity to support the reproductive health of adolescent girls and boys.	196	200	202	221	240
Improve access to information and education on sexual and reproductive health for adolescents and youth.	-	-	-	-	-

OBJECTIVE 4: To strengthen incomes of girls, families and communities with provision of economic and other livelihood opportunities for the benefit of girls and their families	2,344	2,536	3,053	3,715	4,598
STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 4.1: Economic and Livelihood Empowerment for Girls;					
Strategic Interventions					
Economic and skills support for girls and poor households.	2,194	2,386	2,903	3,565	4,448
Mentorship programmes for girls.	150	150	150	150	150
OBJECTIVE 5: To Foster an Enabling Legal and Policy Framework for Ending Child Marriages	329	373	363	380	375
STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 5.1: Enforcement of Relevant Legislation and Policies to end Child Marriage					
Strategic Interventions					
Advocacy for development, harmonization and enforcement of effective legislation against child marriage.	146	173	163	185	180
Strengthen the civil registration systems to protect boys and girls and reduce vulnerability to child marriage.	15	25	20	15	15
Capacity building of the judiciary, law enforcement agencies, and other service providers to end child marriages.	168	175	180	180	180
OBJECTIVE 6: To strengthen multi-sectoral implementation and coordination mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation structures for ending child marriages.	383	338	320	292	393
STRATEGIC AREA OF FOCUS 6.1: Strong Coordination Mechanism					
Strategic Interventions					
Strengthening stakeholder coordination mechanisms for effective partnerships to end child marriage.	110	100	106	111	118
M&E of programmes to End Child Marriage.	235	196	211	178	233
Strengthening the coordination and oversight role of government for effective coordination in implementation of the strategy.	37	42	3	3	3
TOTAL	9,907	9,465	10,910	13,080	14,635

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAKEHOLDERS IN IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

Implementation of this Strategy will require multisectoral efforts involving the Government, civil society organisations, the academia, the private sector and the communities themselves including the girl child. Below are some of the key roles and responsibilities of these stakeholders:

Stakeholder	Roles
Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate all stakeholders implementing the Strategy. • Provide overall policy and technical guidance for implementation of the Strategy. • Facilitate implementation and institutionalisation of the Strategy in the public sector. • Ensure accountability for the resources allocated for the implementation of the Strategy. • Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Strategy. • Facilitate linkages with other existing plans, programmes and policies. • Build the capacity of line Ministries and other stakeholders in strategies for ending child marriages. • Mobilise resources and partners to fund the Strategy. • Ensure mass dissemination of the Strategy and its M&E Plan. • Submit Periodic Reports to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) on the implementation of activities towards ending child marriage. • Organize meetings to disseminate results so that they are utilized for programming and informing project implementation. • Provide appropriate and timely capacity building for Gender Focal Points and other staff in collaboration with MoGCDSW.

Stakeholder	Roles
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure linkages with the Girl Education Strategy and Girls Education and Communication Strategies and the Re-Admission Policy. • Ensure linkages and promote common programmes to address violence and gender responsiveness in schools.
Ministry of Health and other line ministries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect data related to activities for ending child marriage. • Collate data from various implementing entities. • Analyze and prepare composite M&E reports to facilitate accountability in the implementation of the activities under their purview. • Facilitate quarterly implementation monitoring visits. • Provide feedback to implementing agencies on the basis of M&E reports. • Implement and report on programmes for ending child marriage.
Ministries of Information and Communication Technologies and Civic Engagement, Culture and Community Development.	Support and facilitate behaviour and social change communication at household and community levels through community awareness activities.
Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.	Facilitate the technical review and harmonisation of laws on ending child marriage.
Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide sufficient and timely budgetary support for the implementation of the Strategy. • Ensure that issues of child marriage are reflected in national economic development policy processes. • Provide policy guidance on M&E. • Ensure that appropriate indicators on ending child marriage are sufficiently highlighted in the national M&E systems.

Stakeholder	Roles
Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance on institutionalisation of strategies on ending child marriages within the decentralization process. • Facilitate integration of the Strategy into local government policies and programmes. • Disseminate and advocate for the implementation of community activities and behaviour change intervention with traditional leaders.
Local Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate government and non-governmental stakeholders at district level in implementing the Strategy. • Implement, monitor and report on various aspects of the Strategy. • Provide on-going monitoring and technical support to child protection structures. • Follow up with implementing entities to ensure that information for the Strategy M&E system is generated and collated on a continuous basis. • Coordinate data and information gathering for appropriate indicators at the district level. • Support implementing agencies with data analysis.
Development partners and donor agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical and financial support to the MoGCDSW and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Strategy.
Non-governmental organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Strategy at all levels. • Provide reports to the MOGCDSW in accordance with the implementation framework. • Mobilise resources for the Strategy • Support regular review meetings to assess the progress of implementing the Strategy. • Ensure wide regional and community outreach of programmes aimed at ending child marriages.

Stakeholder	Roles
CSOs and Youth groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in assessing the performance of project outputs and management processes. • Participate in assessing the performance of community level institutions. • Follow up and ensure accountability on local level actions arising from the participatory M&E exercises.
Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement programmes aimed at combating child marriage. • Support stakeholders implementing the Strategy as part of corporate social responsibility.
Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in assessing the performance of programme outputs and management processes. • Participate in assessing the performance of community level institutions. • Follow up on local level actions arising from the participatory M&E exercises.





