

# Midterm Evaluation of Plan Malawi's Projects on Safe Schools and Ending Child Marriages under the NORAD Framework Agreement 2016-2019



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## Summary of the Project

<b>Donor</b>	Plan International Norway National Office (NNO) - Norad (Norwegian Agency for International Development) <b>(Plan International Norway – NORAD Framework Agreement 2016-2019)</b>
<b>Implementers</b>	<p><b>Plan International Malawi (PIM)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>Project:</b> Promoting Safe Schools and Inclusive Education</li> <li>ii. <b>Partners:</b> Catholic Development Commission in Malawi (CADECOM), Mother Mary Children’s Center (MMCC), and Foundation for Community Support Services (FOCUS)</li> <li>iii. <b>Districts:</b> Mulanje, Chikwawa and Karonga</li> </ul> <p><b>Plan International Malawi (PIM)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iv. <b>Project:</b> The 18+ Ending Child Marriages</li> <li>v. <b>Partners:</b> Girls Empowerment Network (GENET) and Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA)</li> <li>vi. <b>Districts:</b> Mulanje</li> </ul>
<b>Project Purpose</b>	<p>The Safe Schools Project aims at ensuring that children in the high risk communities in Mulanje, Chikwawa and Karonga have access to safer schools and are able to enjoy their rights to quality education in an all-inclusive school environment.</p> <p>The 18+ project aims to contribute toward ending child marriages in Mulanje district by building the capacity of girls, boys and various players at community, school and district levels.</p>
<b>Thematic Areas</b>	Both projects focus on the following 4 thematic areas: Education, Child Protection, Child Marriage and Safe Schools
<b>Period</b>	October 2016-July 2018
<b>Purposes of the Evaluation</b>	The overall purpose of this evaluation is to assess progress made in achieving the project’s expected outcomes, document good practices and the lessons learnt, examine limitations faced and come up with recommendations for improving the implementation of the project in the remaining period and informing the development and planning of similar projects in future.

## List of Acronyms

<b>ACPC:</b>	Area Child Protection Committee
<b>ADC:</b>	Area Development Committee
<b>CADECOM:</b>	Catholic Development Commission in Malawi
<b>CBCP:</b>	Community Based Child Protection System
<b>CCPW:</b>	Community Child Protection Worker
<b>CEFM:</b>	Child, Early and Forced Marriages
<b>CP:</b>	Child Protection
<b>CPC:</b>	Child Protection Committee
<b>CRPD:</b>	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>CSO:</b>	Civil Society Organisations
<b>CWD:</b>	Children with Disabilities
<b>DEC:</b>	District Executive committee
<b>DEM:</b>	District Education Manager
<b>DIP:</b>	Detailed Implementation Plan
<b>DRR:</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>DSWO:</b>	District Social Welfare Office
<b>FEDOMA:</b>	Federation of Disability Organisations in Malawi
<b>FGD:</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>FOCUS:</b>	Foundation for Community Support Services
<b>GENET:</b>	Girls Empowerment Network
<b>M&amp;E:</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MACOHA:</b>	Malawi Council for the Handicapped
<b>MAGG:</b>	Malawi Girl Guides Association
<b>MMCC:</b>	Mother Mary Children Centre
<b>NfYD:</b>	Network for Youth Development
<b>NNO:</b>	Norway National Office
<b>PEA:</b>	Primary Education Advisor
<b>PIM:</b>	Plan International Malawi
<b>PTA:</b>	Parents-Teachers Association
<b>SHN:</b>	School Health and Nutrition
<b>SMC:</b>	School Management Committee
<b>SNE:</b>	Special Needs Education
<b>SRHR:</b>	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
<b>TA:</b>	Traditional Authority
<b>VCPC:</b>	Village Child Protection Committee
<b>WLSA:</b>	Women and Law in Southern Africa
<b>YONECO:</b>	Youth Network and Counselling

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In July 2018, we visited all the three project districts, Mulanje, Chikwawa and Karonga for field work. We would like to acknowledge the time, cooperation and input given by the five implementing partners, Faith Phiri and Tamara Mhango of GENET, Mandinda Zungu and Nelson Nkungula from CADECOM, Jabess Nyirenda from FOCUS, Clara Lungu (WLSA) and Marshall Aucray Nsonga (MMCC).

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The opinions expressed herein are those of the evaluators and do not necessarily reflect the views of PIM, implementing partners and the donor, NORAD.

## Executive Summary

The *State of the World's Children* report of 2016 by UNICEF lists Malawi as one of the 10 countries in the world with highest rates of child marriages. Approximately 1 in 2 girls marry by the age of 18 and close to one third of adolescents (29%) aged 15-19 begin bearing children and drop out of school. Another study by UNFPA in 2010 exposed that 80 percent of girls get married by the age of 18 in Mulanje alone, with 90 percent of them already sexually active before this age. Most Malawian children lead very difficult lives often beset by chronic poverty and a dearth of opportunities. Other drivers of Child, Early and Forced Marriages (CEFM) are harmful traditions, cultural practices, gender inequalities and social norms. In February 2017, the Malawi Parliament amended the Constitution and raised the age of marriage from 15 to 18 years in a bid to end CEFM.

School dropouts in the country are exacerbated by recurrent natural disasters, in particular floods and droughts, which destroy school infrastructure and make them un conducive for learning. For example, in January 2015 Malawi experienced worst floods in the country's history due to Cyclone Bansi that caused continuous and heavy rains. More than 200,000 people were displaced and 175 killed. The displaced sought shelter in schools, there by disrupting learning for weeks or months in some areas depending on severity of the situation. According to Catholic Education Commission in Malawi, in Chikwawa 415 schools were either destroyed or damaged badly by the foods, with 181 schools turned into camping sites. Children with disabilities (CWDs) and from minority groups are the worst affected. Environmental degradation and climate change are the main drivers for poor weather conditions.

With funding from Plan International Norway and in partnership with five local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Plan International Malawi (PIM) is implementing the four-year (2016-2019) 18+ Ending Child Marriage project in Mulanje and the Promoting Safe Schools and Inclusive Project in Mulanje, Chikwawa and Karonga.

As the names reflect, the two projects aim to end CEFM and keep children in schools that are inclusive, safe from natural disasters and violent free. In June 2018, PIM commissioned external evaluators to assess the progress made mid-way in achieving the expected results / outcomes, document good practices and the lessons learnt, examine limitations faced, come up with recommendations for improving implementation of the interventions towards the rest of the project's life cycle and inform the development and planning of similar future projects.

The evaluation used participatory and mixed methods to collect, analyse and triangulate quantitative and qualitative data from the desk study of the relevant literature, 59 interviews with key persons involved in the projects, 25 focus group discussions with pupils (boys and girls) in and out of school, the DRR and 18+ clubs and school governance structures, such as PTAs (Parents-Teachers Associations), SMCs (School Management Committees) and Mother Groups,

and a survey of 36 schools e.g. all the 30 and 6 schools under the Safe Schools and 18+ projects respectively. Questionnaires and checklists were formulated based on the indicators in the Results Framework of the projects and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergency (INEE) Minimum Standards for Education tool. Training and pre-testing of the tools took place in Lilongwe from 2-4 July 2018. Field work was done from 11-28 July 2018 in all the three targeted districts.

### **Key Findings**

- 1. Assessment of project management:** The evaluation found that the two NORAD funded projects work under the banner, “Say No to Child Marriage and Yes to Education”, and rely on the *Champion of Change* tool, the 18+ Global Theory of Change, Gender Transformative Approach and the Safe Schools Framework to tackle CEFM and keep children in school.

Management of the two projects is decentralized and shared with civil society organisations (CSOs) and various local community structures that has helped to increase transparency and accountability. The projects fit very well with the strategies of these CSOs. For example, GENET and WLSA promote education and child protection, focussing on empowerment of girls, community engagement and mobilization, and networking with other key stakeholders, which are core themes for the 18+ project.

Conversely, FOCUS, CADECOM and MMCC are working on disaster risk reduction (DRR), relief and rehabilitation, natural resources management, climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as education and gender that the Safe Schools project is promoting.

Key informant interviews conducted showed that staff from all the five CSOs implementing activities on the ground are well conversant with the project goals and the needs of the targeted communities and schools. The staff also demonstrated awareness about the level of performance and quality of service delivery expected from them. All have knowledge and skills in different areas of the project they are working in – education, child protection, child marriage, and safe schools.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning routines are in place as desired. Lessons are learned and shared with others through a number of platforms, including review meetings, monthly joint monitoring of project activities with government staff at district level, exchange visits and a series of trainings that involve external technocrats and specialists as facilitators. Lessons learned are helping PIM and its implementing partners make the necessary adjustments for the projects to be more responsive and relevant to the needs of the people.

More so, PIM and its implementing partners have a number of sound principles and management procedures they are observing to avoid corruption and abuse of donor's money. As a result, in both 2016 and 2017 Calendar Years (CYs), budgets and expenditures remained within the allowable maximum yearly deviation of +/-10 percent. No cases of abuse have been reported.

- 2. Effectiveness and efficiency.** Analysis of data from the project narrative and this evaluation shows that both the 18+ and Safe Schools projects are progressing well and have a very good pace of coverage that represents good value for money. With very few exceptions the projects have met or exceeded midterm outcomes, attaining 81.7 percent achievement on average, and show a high likelihood that they will achieve all the targets by the end of the implementation period in December 2019. For example, records by head teachers in all the 30 schools under the Safe Schools project showed an increase in the number of children to 40,372 in July 2018 from 40,146 recorded by the project in the census of December 2017 (an increase of 7 percent) and 37,642 at baseline in 2016. Out of the 40,372 children, 20,169 are girls and 20,203 boys that includes 981 CWDs (554 boys and 427 girls). Other vulnerable children enrolled in the schools are 2,521 orphans (740 in Mulanje, 1221 Chikwawa and 560 Karonga) and 597 children who have returned to school after dropping out due to various reasons. Focus group discussions with communities and teachers revealed that before the projects started parents were keeping CWDs at home due to shame and worry about support, care and acceptance at school among peers and teachers.

Generally, school dropouts due to child marriages and pregnancies are on the decrease in the three targeted districts. For example, the evaluation survey found that in 2018, only 43 girls dropped out of school due to pregnancies in the 30 schools under the Safe Schools project, thus a girl or two per school on average. Mulanje recorded the lowest number of girls dropping out at 5 compared to 22 for Chikwawa and 16 in Karonga. This finding confirms the effectiveness of an integrated approach whereby, besides the Safe Schools project, the 18+ project in Mulanje is focusing on complementary interventions aimed at terminating early and forced marriages and supporting girls to get readmitted in school even after getting pregnant. In Chikwawa, child marriages and school dropouts are higher due to poverty. Girls from poor families and minority groups are getting married to seasonal labourers working in the sugarcane estates in the district. Upon expiration of contracts, the labourers return to their home villages, leaving the girls and teenage mothers behind. Boys in the district also drop out of school, opting for work in the estates and are less likely to return than girls. It is therefore important that, during the remaining period of implementation, the projects should, besides intensifying the campaigns for girls' education, target boys with messages that will encourage them to

prioritize education and not the unsustainable economic gains from the short term employment offered by the estates.

On Disaster Risk Reduction and Safety in schools, the Safe Schools project has formed clubs in schools, trained them as rescuers and risk minimizers in addition to supporting them to plant 25,000 trees as part of strengthening resilience to disasters. Communities have understood the messages on environmental conservation well and describe them as relevant. For example, in Mulanje and Chikwawa communities have adopted skills on nursery establishment and woodland development as done by surrounding schools. In Karonga, during the most recent floods on 28 February 2017, Mwambetania and Mwentanga villages sought refuge at Dumila Paramount Chief court yard instead of the their usual camping site, Kasoba Primary School. In contrast, people from Kasisi, a nearby community not targeted by the Safe Schools project sought shelter at a Primary School because they had not yet received awareness messages. To increase awareness, PIM has printed out manuals on Education in Emergencies for the implementing partners to distribute at scale to communities as reference materials.

Conversely, the 18+ project is ensuring that girls and boys have access to *safe spaces* and are empowered with SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights) information to claim their rights and protect themselves from any forms of violence. Interviews with staff from PIM and implementing partners showed that the 18+ project is harmonising bylaws enforced by chiefs to end CEFM and has revamped the Community Based Child Protection (CBCP) mechanism to prevent, report and respond to violence against children.

- 3. Gender equality.** In these projects, PIM along with its implementing partners have embraced a gender transformative approach (GTA) to transform lives of girls, boys, women, men, children with disabilities and those from minority and marginalized groups by tackling the underlying causes of gender inequalities – social norms, attitudes, beliefs and traditions. A key finding is that the evaluation found no gender and sex differences in the way the projects are impacting and benefiting people in the targeted districts. Girls, boys, women and men are all taking part in different activities and benefiting from them. It is basically community dynamics that have resulted in the projects affecting boys and girls differently. For example, since girls are the most affected, the go-back-to-school messages and SRHR education tend to target them.

In this regard, girls are gaining from a number of health (reduced cases of pregnancies and mortality), education and empowerment benefits by virtue of not being subject to child marriage and protecting themselves from different forms of abuse after being



empowered by the projects. Discussions conducted demonstrated that many girls have knowledge about their rights to make choices regarding who, if and when to get married as well as to challenge gender stereotypes and remain actively engaged in the fight against CEFM by among other things reporting the culprits to police and other community based referral system.

Perpetrators of child marriages, abuse such as incest and rape, and gender inequalities tend to be men. However, after being involved in the projects many of them have transformed and become patrons and champions of change. At Muhiyo and Tomali Primary Schools, male champions revealed that some of the members sometimes use their own money to provide education support to girls that are at risk of dropping out of school due to poverty. They reported that, despite facing various challenges, sometimes even emanating from the local leadership who in some cases relapse, they are not prepared to relent until all girls in their communities are in school and the problem of child marriage is eliminated.

4. **Disability inclusion.** In a period of 2 years, the two NORAD funded projects have increased enrolment of children with disabilities (CWDs) from 636 to 981 (554 boys and 427 girls), representing a 54% achievement. By enrolling and providing support to such children in their early years, the projects are helping to uphold rights to inclusive education. In addition, awareness campaigns by the projects are providing parents with opportunities to learn how they can best support CWDs and work effectively with school systems to ensure that they are responsive to their needs. Interviews with teachers, parents and school governance structures showed that inclusive education is benefiting CWDs themselves by allowing them to learn from their peers. Through this, teachers and parents are able to teach other children the values of co-existence and acceptance of human differences. Importantly, the projects have been collaborating with FEDOMA, MACOHA and an Orthopaedic Centre at Queen Elizabeth hospital in Blantyre to help in providing wheel chairs and other assistive devices. These efforts have improved suitability of the schools and learning environment for CWDs.
5. **Value addition and participation.** Generally, the NORAD funded projects have added value to PIM and its implementing partners in various ways by strengthening capacity and creating new linkages through which they share lessons and experiences with others.

The evaluation found that GENET has joined 2 technical working groups (TWGs) on child marriage at national and district levels after being involved in the implementation of the 18+ project. Through this membership, GENET invited and hosted various stakeholders

in a monitoring exercise of child marriage programs that took place in September 2017 in Mulanje. These stakeholders include the District Education Manager and staff from WLSA, MAGGA (Malawi Girl Guides Association), YONECO (Youth Net and Counselling), NfYD (Network for Youth Development), PIM, Ministry of Health and the district commissioner's office in Mulanje. Again, due to this membership GENET was in the taskforce that has developed the Malawi's Strategy for Ending Child Marriage. The TWGs and Task Forces provide a useful platform for GENET to showcase successes achieved under the 18+ project and explore possibilities of further partnerships with like-minded organisations.

On the other hand, CADECOM is in 4 networks, namely the District Education Network, District Civil Protection Committee, Child Protection Network, and the National DRR Task Force on Shelter and WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene). These networks provide vital spaces for learning and coordination with the government and other key stakeholders.

As another example, MMCC in Chikwawa cited improvements in reporting, monitoring and liquidation of funds as a manifestation of value addition from the NORAD funded projects. Other examples to show value addition, community engagement and power sharing by the projects are the involvement of Montfort School and other technocrats to carry out training in different areas where PIM and its partners have no expertise.

6. **Cross-cutting issues.** In the three districts, the Safe Schools project selected communities and schools based on vulnerability to climate change and natural hazards such as strong winds and floods. By July 2018, the Safe Schools project in particular disseminated information regarding environmental management and mitigation of climate change to men, women, boys and girls in the targeted communities. One of the major mitigation activities of the project is DRR through which it has distributed 1000 posters and 1000 T-shirts with messages on environmental conservation besides supporting tree planting activities.

In spite of the many achievements recorded, some challenges still remain that need to be addressed to ensure that all the expected results are achieved as planned. A major issue is that of delays in the disbursement of funds. Plan International Malawi's program management unit (PMU) is in Mulanje and requests for funds are handled far at the head office in Lilongwe. A chain of transactions between the two offices delay the pace of funds disbursement. As a consequence, during the course of implementation the projects have lost more than 9 months collectively without doing any activities on the ground.

Other key challenges identified include continued existence of harmful cultural and traditional practices that frustrates efforts to end CEFM forever, inadequate learning facilities, lack of assistive devices for specific conditions of CWDs, lack of teachers and project staff with expertise in special needs education and psychosocial support, and the dilapidated and lack of strong physical infrastructure in schools to withstand disasters. The mushrooming of video show rooms and night markets that are enabling boys and girls to copy and practice sexual behaviours following weak censorship and monitoring practices by authorities is an emerging challenge as well.

Concerning policy challenges, the MTE found that the education policy prohibits the use and discussion of contraceptives (e.g. condoms) in schools but emphasizes on messages that encourage young people to refrain from sex. The reality however is that some older girls and boys are sexually active and the prohibition is a missed opportunity for them to practice safe sex and avoid teenage pregnancies. In addition, the absence of DRR in the current education curricula limits focus on issues of environmental conservation, which are necessary to keep schools safe from natural disasters.

**Achieving Sustainability.** In these projects, sustainability is underpinned by institutionalisation of activities in the daily routine work of the targeted communities, schools and duty bearers; capacity building initiatives to strengthen their competence; increased community and school resilience to disasters through DRR work on afforestation and capital investments for infrastructure development and renovation. In addition, all implementing partners are domicile in the same districts where the two projects are operating and have other projects that will continue to implement even activities initiated by the NORAD funded projects.

Using the existing system of the 18+ and DRR clubs, Theory of Change and *Champions of Change* has brought many benefits, and is an inherently sustainable approach. However, success in future will depend on the ability to further involve government ministries of Education, Agriculture and Gender throughout the rest of the projects' period, and ensure that approaches developed can be embedded in ongoing school activities. Ending child marriages sustainably and keeping children in safe schools is about social change, and will continue to require work at all levels of the society, and with the widest possible range of stakeholders, communities and all women, men, girls and boys.

The following are the key recommendations for PIM and its partners to implement in the remaining period:

## Recommendations for Plan International Malawi

1. Adopt a more efficient system of disbursing funds to end breaks in the implementation of the project activities and accelerate impact by:
  - i. Decentralizing payments of small grants of less than 15 million from country office to field offices to speed up the process of disbursing funds since they also have finance and program staff which can expedite the process.
  - ii. Initiating processing of sub grants for the coming quarter after the implementing partners have liquidated 70% of the expenditures and are utilizing the remaining 30% to avoid gaps in funding between the quarters.
  - iii. Simply making an addendum for the next quarter rather than a full financial contract, which requires time to prepare on the part of PIM staff.
2. Monitoring, evaluation and learning are crucial to maintain the pace of achievements attained. There is need to improve on building the evidence base. At the moment, the projects have limited systematic approach through which to collect qualitative data. This means much learning is lost and the projects cannot demonstrate the full extent of their successes in this regard. Besides this, the projects lack the performance monitoring plan in the M&E framework and must develop one. The matrix should give details of the methods, sources and responsibilities for data collection among other things. It is imperative that the capacity of key staff and individuals in the communities involved in data collection and monitoring be strengthened to foster sustainability of project activities in future. The contracts signed between PIM and the implementing partners should include a clause on data collection, reporting and management emphasizing on capturing of qualitative data and lessons.
3. Strengthen the Results Framework (RF), data collection and reporting by including other outcome indicators of relevance. For example, while the RF captures the enrolment in schools over the years, some information is lacking on the numbers of children (girls, boys and CWDs) still out of school for various reasons, numbers of children in CEFM, girls and boys withdrawn from CEFM who drop out of school after re-admission, and the kind of emotional and psychological support rendered by the projects. In the absence of such information and given that the offices of the DEM and DSWO lack up-to-date data, tracking of whether the projects have ended child marriages and reduced drop outs after making schools safe and violent free becomes difficult to measure.
4. Through the chiefs, engage initiation counsellors (*anamkungwi* in vernacular Chichewa) to look at the content of the curriculum they teach to young girls and boys, modify it

and agree on eligible age. Liaise to standardize, train and familiarize them with the revised curriculum and attend their sessions to confirm compliance.

5. Bylaws for ending child marriages are different and in other communities enforcement is not there at all. Speed up the harmonization process to start implementing the bylaws before NORAD projects come to an end. In the process, work closely with chiefs and other local leaders as custodians of culture and ensure the enacted bylaws bar children from patronizing video show rooms, and night dances (*Mchezo* in vernacular Chichewa) and markets, avenues where they meet older boys and men.
6. Increase the budget allocation and the number of days for trainings of community structures from the current 2-3 days to 4-5 days to impart adequate knowledge and skills to the participants e.g. training on special needs and basics of sign language for the teachers and school governance structures.
7. Evidence from the MTE survey shows that the complementarities of the two projects in Mulanje is effective and yielding higher results compared to Chikwawa and Karonga where only the Safe Schools project is operating. In light of this, PIM should develop and expand strategic engagements with other organizations that have been implementing programmes aimed at ending child marriages, such as UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, and GIZ to leverage efforts. PIM should also strengthen existing partnerships with YONECO, MACOHA, FEDOMA, WVI and Montfort School to accelerate impact. The Strategic Engagement should be the direct responsibility of the PIM Project Team Leader.

## **Recommendations for Implementing CSO Partners**

1. Improve on the monitoring of girls and boys (teenage mothers and fathers) re-admitted to ensure they remain in school. In some cases, such older girls and boys are lacking the necessary support to overcome challenges like mockery, bullying and teasing by other learners, which leads to absenteeism and eventually dropping out of school.
2. Implement outcome and output indicators that have lagged behind. For example, outcome indicator number 3 “Improving schools’ capacities in inclusion” particularly concerning improvement of infrastructure to accommodate CWDs, developing inclusive learning materials and trainings in sign language or braille.
3. Develop and implement an exit strategy to be rolled out over the next two years. The exit strategy needs to take into account sustainability of achievements, sustainability of approach (community engagement and mobilization, the girl-centred, do-no-harm and safe spaces approaches), and the need for increased and embedded government capacity and ownership. For this to happen, start indicating progress towards

sustainability in all remaining Quarterly Reports e.g. in terms of how the projects are driving down the cost per child ratio and giving evidence of institutional uptake and budgeting of interventions put in place.

The projects should also increase the involvement and training of local structures (SMCs, Mother Groups and PTAs), staff from partner CSOs and district-based government duty bearers (e.g. teachers, PEAs, DEMs and DSWO). With further capacity building, there is a good chance that the local structures and duty bearers involved can facilitate expansion and wider replication of the project activities in future. Areas to focus the training on include M&E for the girl-centred and inclusive education programs, basics of special needs education, basic principles of psychology to deal well with teenage mothers and fathers in and out of school, budgeting, fund raising and financial management.

## Section 1: Background

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Since November 2016, Plan International Malawi (herein referred to as PIM) has been implementing two four-year projects aiming at promoting safe schools and inclusive education and ending child marriages. PIM is the recipient of the funds from NORAD under Agreement 2016-2019 and sub grantees them to five local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) for implementation on the ground.

Catholic Development Commission in Malawi (CADECOM), Mother Mary Children's Center (MMCC) and Foundation for Community Support Services (FOCUS) are implementing the Promoting Safe Schools and Inclusive Education project in Mulanje, Chikwawa and Karonga respectively. The Girls Empowerment Network (GENET) and Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) implement the 18+ Ending Child Marriage project in Mulanje.

The Safe School and Inclusive Education project is in 30 schools selected based on their vulnerability to disasters, closeness to flooding rivers, lack of infrastructure for children with disabilities (CWD) and location in hard-to-reach areas. As the name reflects, the project wants schools to be safe, free from violence and inclusive by increasing access to quality education for all children including those with disabilities and from minority and marginalized groups. The 18+ project is in 13 communities (Group Village Headmen) of Mulanje working to contribute toward ending child marriages. A study by UNFPA in 2010 already found 80 percent of girls in Mulanje married by the age of 18 in the district and 90 percent were already sexually active before this age.

Primary beneficiaries of the NORAD funded projects are girls and boys in and out of school, CWDs and children from minority groups, teenage mothers, youth clubs, schools and duty bearers. Communities immediately surrounding these schools are also considered primary stakeholders. Secondary beneficiaries are the wider population in the larger communities in remotest and most marginalized areas in which the projects are taking place.

The two projects are guided by the PIM's Country Strategy (2017-2022) and the 18+ Global Theory of Change (TOC) for tackling child, early and forced marriages (CEFM), which describe what PIM and its partners will continue doing, how this will bring about change and how the change will contribute to the work on child's rights and protection. Underpinning the TOC is the conviction that child marriages will only end forever when there has been 1) social, attitude and behaviour change, 2) an enabling policy framework, and 3) social and economic resources and safety nets, which transform relationships and power between men, women, girls and boys so that there is greater gender equality.

Activities of the two projects are consistent with the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act adopted in February 2015, which set the minimum age of marriage at 18 to allow girls and boys to be in school before this age. Both projects are also in tandem with the newly enacted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) endorsed by Malawi along with 192 other United Nations member states in 2015. Goal 4 of the SDGs focusses on achieving universal access to primary education. Goal 5 aims at achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls among other things by eliminating all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage. **Table 1** shows the outcomes of the two projects.

**Table 1:** Thematic areas, goals and impacts of the NORAD funded projects

<b>Project</b>	<b>Thematic Area</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<b>Safe Schools*</b>	<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased access to education</li> <li>• Improved quality of education</li> <li>• Improving school's capacity in inclusion</li> </ul>
<b>Safe Schools and the 18+ Ending Child Marriages</b>	<b>Child Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of regulatory frameworks that are effective in protecting children from all forms of violence</li> <li>• Well-functioning community-based child protection mechanisms, including child protection services that prevent and respond to violence against children (improved reporting and response)</li> <li>• Empowerment of children to be able to protect themselves from violence</li> </ul>
<b>Safe Schools</b>	<b>Safe Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools with Comprehensive Safe Schools Framework</li> <li>• Enabling environment for school safety</li> </ul>
<b>The 18+ Ending Child Marriages</b>	<b>Child Marriage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct actions to stop child marriages</li> <li>• Children empowered to claim their rights</li> <li>• Stronger regulatory frameworks to prevent child marriage</li> <li>• Root causes of child marriage are addressed</li> <li>• Youth economic empowerment</li> </ul>

**\*Note:** Safe Schools stands for the Promoting Safe Schools and Inclusive Education Project

In keeping abreast with the need for monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) PIM commissioned this mid-term evaluation (MTE) to assess progress made in achieving the expected results/outcomes, document good practices and the lessons learnt; examine limitations faced and come up with recommendations for improving implementation of the



interventions towards the rest of the project's life cycle and also inform development and planning of similar future projects.

The intended users of the evaluation are the donor, PI Norway, the project team within PIM, implementing partners, concerned district assemblies and government line Ministries of Education, Health as well as Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, and the targeted beneficiaries.

## **1.1 Scope and Content of the Evaluation**

This evaluation was done at the country level, based on the latest result framework, which is a consolidated total results of all NORAD Framework Agreement projects in the country. The evaluation report is organized in headings according to the following sequence:

### **1. Assessment of project management**

- i. To assess the extent to which the two projects fit with the implementing partner organizations' own strategies.
- ii. To describe the monitoring routine, data collection/documentation routine, and learning routine in the project both at PIM and implementing partners' levels.
- iii. To assess the extent to which staff at field level of PIM and implementing partners have good understanding of what the projects try to achieve or are they unclear.
- iv. To list the routines for anti-corruption in the project at PIM and partner organization levels.
- v. If the project has experienced underutilization or overutilization of its yearly budget deviation exceeding 5% per year in the CY2016 and CY2017, describe the main reasons for this, excluding those caused by delay of fund transfer.
- vi. To draw recommendations for strengthening the internal project management at PIM level.

### **2. Effectiveness and efficiency**

- i. To document if the project has achieved reasonable level of results for each of the outcome indicator, given the resources it has (the budget level) and based on the data collected during 2015 (baseline year), 2016 and 2017 as well as interviews with relevant stakeholders.
- ii. For each outcome indicator, the evaluation aimed to:
  - o Establish whether the pace of progression is reasonable and draw recommendations for improvement of efficiency, if needed.
  - o Document whether the target/coverage is reasonable given the resources available / spent and recommend improvement on efficiency, if relevant.

- Establish which specific areas of challenges are there that need to be addressed to ensure results are achieved and with good quality (effectiveness) for a particular indicator? The evaluation aimed also to recommend ways to address these challenges.

**3. Gender equality**

- i. Was the project planning and implementation based on a situation analysis where girls, boys, women and men of various social backgrounds were able to have a say and present their own views?
- ii. Are there differential impacts on girls, boys, women and men (intentional or unintentional) observed during implementation? Do these observations lead to adjustment in the implementation? In which way?

**4. Disability inclusion**

- i. Elaborate the extent to which children/youth with disabilities - thus adolescent girls and boys (19–24)-, parents of girls and boys with disabilities and/or organisations of people with disabilities (DPOs) have been engaged and included in the project, either as active participants or as collaborating partner organisations?
- ii. Document the strengths and weaknesses found in disability inclusion efforts.
- iii. What lessons can we draw from engaging or disengaging boys, girls, men and women with disabilities?

**5. Unexpected results**

- i. Are there unexpected results both positive and negative that the project should document for future learning?

**6. Added Value and Participation:**

To assess the added value and participation level in the projects.

**7. Cross-cutting issues:**

To assess how the projects address the following issues:

- i. Environmental vulnerability to climate change that affects the results of the project
- ii. Has the program put in place interventions that will increase sustainability of the results after the program ends in two years and, if yes, what are specific examples?

## **Section 2: Evaluation Design and Methodology**

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This evaluation was preceded by an inception meeting held on 14 June 2018 at PIM country office to agree on the scope of work and data needs. The evaluator reviewed relevant project documents and developed an inception report, detailing the methodology to be followed, and tools for data collection. Training of enumerators took place in Lilongwe from 2-4 July 2018 (**Annex 1**). The training covered basic techniques for conducting interviews and discussions with young people, probing for answers and recording of responses. It also oriented research assistants on the evaluation objectives, design and methodology to be followed, various roles to be played, work performance expected and ethics in data collection.

After training, data collection tools were pre-tested in Lilongwe prior to field work to identify glitches in wording of the questions, lack of clarity, questions that were not clear enough and needed to be rephrased, and misleading questions. The results of the pre-test study were analysed case by case to ascertain questions that worked and those that failed to attain their intended purpose. Minor changes were made to the questions and structure of the questionnaire. The pre-test sample was for learning purposes and not included in the actual evaluation sample. The questionnaires and checklists were formulated based on the indicators in the project log frame and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergency (**INEE**) Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response and Recovery tool. This tool is internationally recognised and addresses all the components of a quality education response.

Field work was conducted in all the three districts within a period of 18 days in July 2018. The evaluation used participatory and mixed methods to collect, analyse and triangulate quantitative and qualitative data. It carried out an exhaustive survey of all the 30 schools under the Safe Schools Project (**Annex 2**) to verify data the project collected in December 2017 on indicators such as school enrolment, numbers of drop outs and returnees, teacher and pupil ratio and school performance. The MTE interviewed all the head teachers of these schools, reviewed school records and held group discussions with pupils (boys and girls), school clubs and governance structures such as PTAs (Parents-Teachers Associations), SMCs (School Management Committees) and Mother Groups.

The 18+ project works with 20 clubs of girls and boys in *safe spaces* (16 in and 4 out of school) in Mulanje. The MTE conducted discussions with mentors as well as girls and boys from six 18+ clubs in schools, representing 37.5% coverage, and 2 out of school in Namphungo zone. The aim was to establish underlying drivers of child marriages and the roles of culture, traditions socio norms and policy frameworks in promoting or preventing such marriages. In total for both projects, the MTE conducted 59 interviews with key persons and 25 focus group discussions in all the three districts (**Annex 3**).

Purposive sampling was used to select key persons and groups of interest. Numbers of these persons and groups depended on data saturation, a point where new opinions and viewpoints were not coming from the interviewees.

In addition, the MTE conducted simple observations that involved moving around school premises to check conditions and general situations for teaching and learning e.g. whether targeted schools have inclusive infrastructure, learning materials, woodlands and school governance structures.

The evaluation team consisted of 13 people, three consultants and 10 research assistants divided into two teams of 5 people each to collect primary data and conduct preliminary analysis. The lead consultant was responsible for facilitating and supervising fieldwork, managing logistics and ensuring that the data collected were complete, checked and compiled well.

Supervision specifically involved ensuring that the evaluation methodology was followed closely, checking completeness of questionnaires, promoting accuracy in the recording of the information as well as discussing and rectifying any problems encountered in the field.

For each community or school, the evaluation had a field work plan specifying:

- i. The timetable of data collection activities: who will administer which tools, where, to whom, and when (see **Table 2** below for an example)
- ii. Roles of team members: who will administer the tools, who will take notes and who will find and organise participants or other actors involved in supporting the process
- iii. Debriefings: schedule of team meetings during fieldwork
- iv. Reporting: frequency of interim reporting from field teams
- v. Logistics: travel, meals and lodging
- vi. Budget and supplies needed.

Quantitative data from the evaluation were entered in the SPSS computer software package (version 16.0) for analysis and interpretation. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, were generated and used to describe the findings. Cross tabulations were used to disaggregate the data by district, gender, vulnerability and project. Qualitative data from key persons, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with certain individuals were analysed manually through content analysis and reported as anecdotes to contextualize quantitative findings.

**Table 2:** An example of fieldwork activity schedule and responsibilities for one team

(It assumes one site with seven team members represented by 2 consultants (C), a note taker (N) and 4 enumerators (E))							
Activities	C	C	N	E	E	E	E
Introduction of the team to authorities, clarifying expectations, reviewing the schedule of activities	*	*					
Key Informant Interviews	*	*					
Quick team review	*	*	*				
Surveys (of schools and learners)			*	*	*	*	*
Focus group discussions	*	*	*				
Team quick review / Debriefing	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Write-up and communication with other teams while in transit	*	*					

As regards ethics, each member of the evaluation team signed the Plan International Global Policy for Safeguarding Children and Young People (2017-2020) prior to taking part in data collection. Every interview was preceded by a brief introduction by the interviewers about the purpose of the evaluation and then seeking consent from the respondents. The evaluators guaranteed confidentiality of the information they were collecting from the schools, communities and individual participants. Interviewers marked on questionnaires when consent was given. The evaluation team abided by their professional ethical conduct such as neutrality, respect for respondent’s dignity, culture and data verification throughout the process of data collection. Written formal consent was deemed unnecessary because the exercise took place in communities targeted by the project.

## 2.1 Limitations of the Evaluation

This evaluation was not without limitations. Data collection coincided with end of term examinations and as such the evaluation team was unable to observe lesson delivery in classrooms that if done would provide further insights regarding interactions of learners and teachers. In addition, it is possible the girls and boys interviewed underreported some of the issues, given that child marriage and matters associated with the subject, such as sexual knowledge and behaviours, can be sensitive to discuss at times. The evaluation also faced limitations typical of gender studies – variations and failure among respondents to differentiate gender from sex and the misunderstanding that gender equality is about women. In the three districts studied and Malawi at large, the problem is compounded by lack of vernacular terms and phrases. For example, ‘gender’ is ‘*jenda*’ in Malawi and as a consequence many people have problems conceptualizing what it means in real life situation.

## Section 3: Evaluation Results

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### 3.1 Assessment of Project Management

#### 3.1.1 Suitability of implementing partner organizations' strategies

In this MTE, the Safe Schools and 18+ projects were found to fit very well with the strategies of implementing partners. PIM is a child-centred community organization that exists to uplift the rights of children in general and girls' rights in particular. The goal is that "Children in Malawi, especially adolescent girls, transit to responsible adulthood in societies that respect rights."

PIM's key advocacy 'ask' is on ending child marriages under the banner, "Say No to Child Marriage and Yes to Education." With this in mind, PIM scrutinized the strategies, experience and levels of capacity of the implementing partners before partnering with them. It chose CSOs that advocate for children's rights and work in core thematic areas of interest in these projects. For example, GENET and WLSA promote education and child protection, focussing on empowerment of girls, community engagement and mobilization, and networking with other key stakeholders, which are core themes for the 18+ project.

A Strategic Plan for GENET (October 2016-September 2021) defines GENET as "a girls' and young women's rights and not-for-profit organization established in 2008 as a platform where girls' issues are discussed, their voices amplified and put on the national agenda." GENET's vision is that every girl everywhere is empowered and living in an equitable society. Its mission is to promote girls' and young women's rights, inclusive education, skills and leadership development, entrepreneurship and economic freedom of marginalized girls, young women and other vulnerable groups. GENET's Strategic Plan outlines core values that PIM and NORAD require: integrity, equality, equity, accountability and transparency, respect for human rights, tolerance, flexibility and team work. In terms of interventions, the organisation focusses on girls' leadership and skills development, girl education, child marriage and harmful traditional practices, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), GBV (Gender Based Violence), entrepreneurship, system strengthening and effective management practices. GENET is working with WLSA in the 18+ project.

WLSA is a local women's rights organization with the mandate to explore and develop new methodologies and new perspectives for the study of gender and the law. WLSA's core areas are action research, advocacy, training and education on women rights, laws and policies. It is the only organization in Malawi that connects women's rights, gender and the law. WLSA has professional and skilled staff with capacity and commitment to work at multiple levels. Further to this, WLSA has a high degree of visibility in the country and envisions "a society in which the law is conducive to women enjoying their rights".

These core values are complementary to the mission of GENET, which mainly focuses on girls, and help to provide holistic gender-transformative programming. Thus, some of the 'girls' the 18+ project is working with are pregnant and teenage mothers already translating into women. Issues of women and laws become specifically important in the 18+ project in view of bylaws for ending child marriages that are under review and harmonization by PIM and implementing partners. WLSA is an important asset in the whole process.

Conversely, FOCUS, CADECOM and MMCC are working on disaster risk reduction (DRR), relief and rehabilitation, natural resources management, climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as education and gender that the Safe Schools project is promoting.

As an example, CADECOM's mandate is "To create awareness and empowering disadvantaged men, women and the youth at all levels to undertake development which is integral, gender and environment sensitive, sustainable and which promotes justice, human dignity and self-reliance with the active participation of the people themselves so that they take up responsibility of their own destiny". This mandate outlines the need to target the marginalized (disadvantaged) category of people in humanitarian aid, which is one of the pillars for the two NORAD funded projects.

### **3.1.2 Monitoring, Data Collection and Learning Routines**

As part of the inception process, PIM developed an M&E framework for the two projects to guide data collection, monitoring and learning. The thematic M&E framework specifies outcomes and related outputs that each project contributes to. It gives explicit definitions of each indicator, specifying precisely what is to be achieved through the project and by when to enable all stakeholders have a common understanding. In this regard, the framework helps to chart the contributions of each project by NORAD and provides the basis for measuring its progress and effectiveness. This evaluation assessed and documented monitoring, data collection as well as lesson learning and sharing routines followed in terms of the situation as is and desired.

**Monitoring Routines.** As desired, monitoring of project activities is done daily by local structures that are in the same communities where the projects are being implemented. In addition, PIM and its implementing partners do monthly joint monitoring together with other key stakeholders from the line ministries of gender and social welfare, education and youth.

The current monitoring routine ranges from simple observation of activities to periodic data collection to provide the basis for assessing project performance and results. It is done to determine if the projects' activities are being implemented as planned; whether the expected outputs are being generated, and if the outputs are relevant in achieving the expected

outcomes. The monitoring routines also aim to verify credibility of the data reported from the field to ensure that reliable and valid information is submitted to the donor and other stakeholders.

Implementation of activities is a day-to-day activity. PIM and its implementing partners prepare reports for activities conducted by the projects in line with the Results Framework and Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) for a particular quarter and year. These reports are for activities such as trainings, workshops, awareness campaigns and field visits. PIM requires implementing partners to submit activity reports separately apart from adding them in the quarterly or monthly reports. Interviews with implementing partners showed that each one of them submits these reports on time as required by their contracts. In addition, besides activity, monthly and quarterly reports each partner submits detailed half-year and annual reports to PIM's field offices. The annual reports in particular present an overview of the progress of the projects towards achieving their ultimate goals. PIM's field offices in turn consolidate progress reports from the CSOs and submit to the country office on a quarterly basis.

PIM considers progress reports as key tools in monitoring the delivery process. Some of the reports are internal and others for both internal and external audiences, with the former being more frequent than the latter. Weekly and monthly reports focus on the link between resource utilization and the activities executed, and feed into action plans and activity reports.

On the other hand, quarterly reports link the activities to the respective outputs, while six-month reports provide information on the delivery of the expected outputs and the extent of their contribution to the achievement of the thematic objectives. The annual narrative reports wrap this all up with a synthesis of the overall achievements, challenges, and lessons learned. As per the funding agreement, they are prepared by the PIM country office and sent to the donor following the results framework of the projects.

**Data Collection Routines.** The projects have designed registers and other tools for recording specific data as events occur (e.g. number of child marriages terminated, girls readmitted into school and cases of abuse reported). Project staff have been trained on these tools to build consensus and ensure uniformity in data collection. PIM and the CSOs cascaded the training to specific individuals from the local structures such as PTAs, SMCs, Mother Groups, male champions and community mentors. Data is collected daily at the field level by these individuals. Teachers and head teachers are the ones who collect data from the targeted schools. The CSOs have weekly and monthly visits to gather the data from different schools and communities. During these visits, they conduct independent surveys, focus group discussions with girls and individual interviews with certain people to generate additional data.



**Lesson Learning and Sharing.** In these projects, lessons are learned and shared with others through a number of platforms, including review meetings, monthly joint monitoring of project activities with government staff at district level, exchange visits and a series of trainings that involve external technocrats and specialists as facilitators. For example, one of the lessons learned and shared is the need to integrate income generation activities (IGAs) in the fight against child marriage as a strategy for addressing poverty and enabling girls and boys to afford basic school needs.

In particular, for the 18+ project learning can be enhanced in *safe spaces* in and out of school, community bylaws for ending child marriages, sporting activities as avenues where girls and boys meet and from male champions and mentors to dig out what is working and failing. Under the Safe Schools project, more learning is required on inclusive education e.g. trajectories, benefits and weaknesses of retaining CWDs, teenage mothers and children from minority groups in school.

In summary, although the two projects are implementing data collection and monitoring as desired in most cases, the process is challenging. The MTE found that quarterly review meetings have not been taking place as desired, according to interviews with implementing partners. In 2017, two review meetings were conducted instead of four. Internal processes delayed disbursement of funds between quarters that retarded subsequent implementation of activities. PIM reduced the number of review meetings in this regard to catch up with time. Again, in 2018 the projects have carried out one review meeting in a period of seven months (January-July). In the first quarter (January-March), PIM was working on restructuring and changing modalities of the contracts for the CSOs after learning about misappropriation of funds elsewhere outside the two projects, which negated the need for review in the first quarter. Funds were sub-granted end of April for the May-July activities.

Besides this, midway through there is limited documentation of baseline findings and little analysis of qualitative data to showcase success stories, best practices and lessons worth replicating, suggesting the need for improvement. The projects also lack performance monitoring matrix in the M&E framework and must develop one to improve efficiency of data collection and monitoring. It is imperative that the capacity of key staff involved in data collection and monitoring be strengthened. Regular follow-up and mentorship of data collectors and monitors from the communities are important to foster documentation of activities taking place and performance.

**Table 3** below provides a brief summary of the situation as is and desired with respect to monitoring, data collection and learning routines in the projects.

**Table 3:** Monitoring, data collection and learning routines for the NORAD funded projects

	<b>Situation as is</b>	<b>Situation as desired</b>
<b>Monitoring routines</b>	Monitoring of activities is done jointly by PIM, implementing partners and other key stakeholders from government line ministries, particularly the Ministry of Gender and Ministry of Education. Local structures at community level are fully involved in the process. They monitor project activities taking place in their communities daily. PIM and implementing partners do the monitoring exercise monthly, quarterly and yearly. However, it is the reviews that have lagged behind with only 3 meetings taking place in a period of 1½ years instead of six.	Review meetings should be held quarterly as planned at inception to enhance learning and deepen ownership of the project by implementing partners and beneficiary communities.
<b>Data collection routines</b>	Data collection is done routinely (monthly, quarterly and annually) by communities and implementing partners. Tools and guides are available for the exercise. However, the focus is mostly on quantitative data to populate the Results Framework (RF). Not much is being done about qualitative data, especially among the CSOs	Implementing CSOs implementing the projects on the ground should be documenting qualitative data as well to put into context quantitative figures captured in the Results Framework.
<b>Learning routines</b>	There is limited collection and analysis of qualitative data to showcase successes and learn from failures.	The CSOs should collect, analyse and document success stories, case studies and testimonies during data collection.  They should include these stories, studies and testimonies in their monthly and quarterly reports besides sharing them during review / planning meetings and any other forums they meet to enhance learning.

### **3.1.4 Understanding of the project by PIM and the implementing partners**

The MTE found that staff at PIM field level and from implementing partners are very clear about what the project intends to achieve. They are well conversant with the project goals and the needs of the targeted communities and schools. Staff implementing the project are also aware about the level of performance and quality of service delivery expected from them. All of them have knowledge and skills in different areas of the project they are working in – education, child protection, child marriage, and safe schools.

To increase competence, PIM conducted a start-up workshop to prepare them at the very beginning before actual implementation of activities started. PIM also provided reference materials to the project staff, including the Detailed Implementation Plans (DIPs), agreed upon Results Frameworks, and donor funding requirements. All staff also meet with the donor every year and cascade discussions to communities through local leaders and VDCs (Village Development Committees) to ensure they remain updated about the projects as well.

### **3.1.5 Routines for Anti-corruption in the Project**

Regarding corruption, the MTE found that PIM's management arrangements for implementation of the two projects adhere to a number of clear principles to avoid abuse of donor's money. A list of anti-corruption routines used is as follows:

- i. Signing of contracts by implementing partners before sub granting of funds and declaration to observe 'Zero tolerance to corruption'.
- ii. Provision of sub grants quarterly in designated accounts for easy tracking of transactions.
- iii. Transparency and accountability in delivery of services.
- iv. Good practice in administration, underpinned by clear internal processes and procedures.
- v. Shared learning through capacity building of finance staff and ongoing mentorship to ensure compliance.
- vi. Spot checking by finance departments e.g. i) making calls to verify signed lists of participants after implementation of activities and ii) field visits to cross check if certain activities really took place.
- vii. Requirement to get three quotations before procurement of goods and services and avoiding making cash payments to the clients. Issuing of cheques involves a lot of paper work and a number of signatories to avoid fraud.
- viii. Existence of policies at institutional level regarding good financial management, corruption and whistle blowing through the agreed upon safe call number (+44191 516 7774) or online at [www.safecall.co.uk/report](http://www.safecall.co.uk/report) and email: [plan@safecall.co.uk](mailto:plan@safecall.co.uk).

### 3.1.6 Budgets and Expenditures for the 2016 and 2017 Calendar Years (CY)

Plan International Norway and PIM signed the agreement for the Safe Schools and 18+ projects on 25 June 2016. The signing exercise was followed by the start-up orientation of PIM and the five implementing partners by Plan International Norway end of September. Sub granting processes took place in October and the CSOs started implementing activities on the ground between October and November 2016. In this regard, the two projects did not implement all the activities scheduled for the CY2016 that resulted in under expenditure. For example, out of the NOK3, 123,075 granted, the projects spent NOK 1,031,677, leaving 67 percent of the budget (e.g. NOK2, 091,398) unused. The donor allowed PIM and its implementing partners to carry over the activities and use the funds allocated between January and June 2017. Although the donor was flexible to allow carryover of funds and the projects managed to implement all the activities for 2016, the process created work overload and pressure on the part of staff. The two projects were extremely fortunate in the devotion showed by staff who were obliged to work very long hours at times, spend weekends at work and cut back on holidays.

In the CY2017, the two projects spent NOK 7,082,352 against an allocated budget of NOK 6,606,998, incurring an over expenditure of NOK 475,353. This figure represents 7 percent extra costs and is within the allowable yearly budget deviation set at +/-10 percent. The main activity that contributed to the over expenditure is a major advocacy event involving a football match between local teams, Bata Bullets and Silver Strikers, that took place in December 2017 at Bingu National Stadium (BNS). PIM initially under budgeted the cost of this activity. According to interviews with the project team, PIM planned the activity with prior knowledge that the mode of payment at all state-owned stadiums in the country is that government gets 25 percent of the gate collections after an event or a match. It never realized on time BNS has different arrangements and the cost of hiring it is much higher than that of the other stadiums due to payments for extra services. For example, besides hiring fees which all national stadiums charge the Ministry of Sports and Culture requires clients to pay costs of any property destroyed during events at BNS as well as bills for the hiring of stewards, first-aid personnel and cleaning services.

NORAD granted an equal amount of money over spent (NOK 169,604) as a cushion to ensure implementation of other activities is not affected. PIM drew this money from other activities in the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) for both projects. **Tables 4 and 5** show budgets and expenditures of the projects in CY 2016 and CY 2017. Sound planning and consultations can help minimize such anomalies in the remaining phase of the projects.

**Table 4:** Budgets and expenditures for CY 2016 and CY 2017

CY	Project	Adjusted Budget	Expenditure	Variance	%
		NOK	NOK	NOK	
2016	Safe Schools	1,367,210	436,541	930,669	68
	18+	1,755,865	595,136	1,160,729	66
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>3,123,075</b>	<b>1,031,677</b>	<b>2,091,398</b>	<b>67</b>
2017	Safe Schools	3,305,503	3,717,124	411,621	12.5
	18+	3,301,495	3,365,228	63,732	1.9
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6,606,998</b>	<b>7,082,352</b>	<b>475,353</b>	<b>7</b>

**Table 5:** Planned budgets and expenditures for the advocacy activity at BNS

Project	Budget (NOK)	Expenditure (NOK)	Over Expenditure (NOK)	%
Safe Schools	138,028	188,070	50,042	36.3
18+	122,042	241,604	119,562	98.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>260,070</b>	<b>429,674</b>	<b>169,604</b>	<b>65.2</b>

The event generated MK1.8 million Kwacha (NOK 21,276.60) from collection of subsidized gate entry fees at K1, 000 per person. By the time of this MTE, the projects were in the process of procuring 20 wheel chairs for children with physical disabilities using these funds.

### 3.2 Effectiveness and Efficiency

The goal of the Promoting Safe Schools and Inclusive Education Project is to ensure that girls and boys have access to safer schools and are able to enjoy their rights to quality education in an all-inclusive school environment. On the other hand, the 18+ project aims to build the capacity of various players at community, school and district levels to prevent violence and reduce abuses among children and adolescent girls. This MTE found that the two projects have met or surpassed targets for most of the outcome indicators (**Table 6**).

**Table 6:** Performance of the projects for each thematic area given in the Results Framework

Outcomes	# of indicators per outcome	Performance by July 2018		
		# of Indicators Under performed	# of Indicators Met or Exceeded	% of Indicators that have Met or Exceeded Midterm Targets
<b>Education:</b>				
Increased access to education	7	1	6	85.7
Improved quality of education	10	4	6	60.0
Improving school's capacity in inclusion	4	0	4	100
<b>Child Protection:</b>				
Development of regulatory frameworks that are effective in protecting children from all forms of violence	8	1	7	87.5
Well-functioning community-based child protection mechanisms, including child protection services that prevent and respond to violence against children (improved reporting and response)	13	2	11	84.6
<b>Safe Schools:</b>				
Schools with Comprehensive Safe Schools Framework	4	0	4	100.0
Enabling environment for school safety	4	0	4	100.0
<b>Child Marriage:</b>				
Direct actions to stop child marriages	2	2	0	0
Children empowered to claim their rights	7	2	5	71.4
Stronger regulatory frameworks to prevent child marriage	6	0	6	100.0
Root causes of child marriage are addressed	2	0	2	100.0
Youth economic empowerment	4	1	3	75.0
<b>Total # of Indicators</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>81.7%</b>

### 3.2.1 Thematic Area: Education

By design, the thematic area of education is specifically under the Safe Schools Project to enable children, in particular girls, CWDs and children from minority groups, receive high quality education and acquire necessary skills for further development. The immediate section below discusses the three outcome indicators for this theme, triangulating results from the MTE survey of the schools and routine monitoring data by the project whose last census was done in December 2017.

#### **Outcome Indicator 1 (E.1): Increased Access to Education**

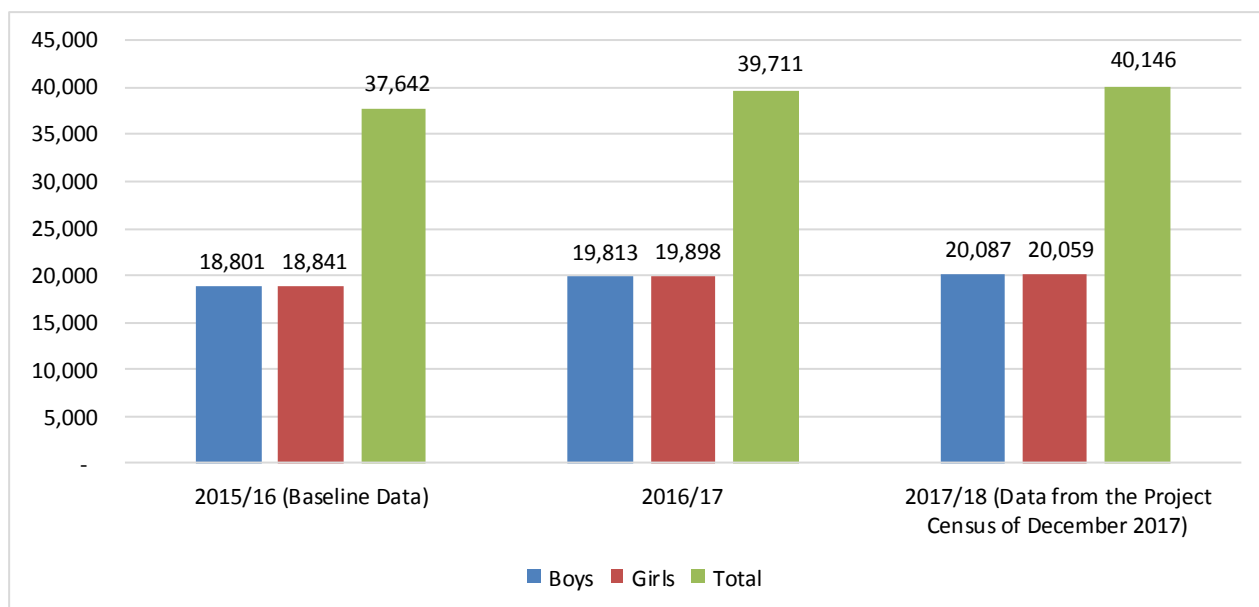
The MTE found that PIM and implementing partners have increased access to education in the targeted districts. Analysis of descriptive data from the MTE surveys conducted with head teachers in all the 30 schools under the Safe Schools Project showed an increase in the number of children to 40,372 in July from 40,146 recorded by the project in December 2017 and 37,642 at baseline in 2016 (an increase of 7.3 percent). Out of the 40,372 children, 20,169 are girls and 20,203 boys (**Figure 1**). The survey confirmed the number of CWDs is 981 (554 boys and 427 girls) up from 636 at baseline. Importantly, it found 2,521 orphans (740 in Mulanje, 1221 Chikwawa and 560 Karonga) and 597 children who have returned to school after dropping out due to teenage pregnancies, early marriages and poverty. By exposing the numbers of other vulnerable children such as orphans and returnees, which were initially not captured by the project, the MTE survey has provided additional information the Safe Schools project needs to focus efforts and resources well.

The MTE team considers the pace of progression seen as satisfactory since additional children keep on registering and those already enrolled are still in school. PIM, implementing partners and local structures (e.g. SMCs, PTAs, Mother Groups and local leaders) conducted massive community and door-to-door campaigns that have contributed to these gains. The projects also involved government staff in the campaigns, in particular the DEM (District Education Manager), Magistrate, DSWO (District Social Welfare Officer), District Information Officer and the Police. During focus group discussions with communities and various school governance committees and teachers, there was consensus that the messages, which advocated for inclusive education, have encouraged communities, parents and guardians to send all children to school irrespective of their background and status.

According to these discussions, the coverage and turn up of children is very good evidenced by returning back to school even by teenage mothers and fathers, who in most cases feel 'older' and shy to be among other children in class. To ensure inclusiveness, the 'go-back-to-school and learn' messages also urged learners to make schools free from violence and conducive to

learning in addition to sensitizing teachers to handle all children with dignity they need to remain in school.

“In the past, many children with disabilities were not going to school. After awareness meetings and the screening exercise conducted by PIM and CADECOM many of them have gone back to school. Initially, parents were afraid of who would take care of such children at school. We can attest now that these children are happy to be in school because they have made new friends and are well accepted by teachers,” Malita Hardwell, Mother Group at Thundu Primary School, Mulanje.



**Figure 1:** School enrolment for the past three academic years (Source: Project M&E data for 2015/2016 – 2017/2018; MTE survey of the schools provided additional data for the period after the project census of December 2017 e.g. January to July 2018)

According to interviews with project staff, by July 2018 PIM and implementing partners provided various forms of support to keep children in school. For example, the Safe Schools project constructed 294 ramps and renovated floors for 46 classrooms to improve the teaching and learning environment. The project provided cement, quarry and payment for local artisan while the community contributed sand, bricks, water and free local labour force. At Nchalo in Chikwawa, Mother Mary’s Children Centre (MMCC) has supported St Mathews Primary School to construct a resource centre.



The centre holds extra lessons for CWDs and other children with learning difficulties for them to compete well in the mainstream classes where they learn together with the rest of the children. Ministry of Education has provided a specialist teacher with training from Montfort School in Nguludi to take care of 11 children (5 boys and 6 girls) who cannot mix well with other children at the centre because they have severe mental retardation. According to project staff, PIM is moving away from the resource centre approach because it wants all CWDs to be in the same classrooms at all times with other children as isolating them limits interaction and togetherness.

In the Results Framework, the two projects planned to have 41,000 children enrolled by the end of 2018 and by implication this means 628 children are still anticipated to join the 40,372 children already in school. In reality the increments in the numbers of new students have been declining over the years based on data presented in **Figure 1** e.g. from 2,069 children (37,642 to 39,711 in 2016) to 435 in the whole year of 2017 and 226 from January to July 2018. Given that the go-back-to-school campaigns are still taking place, declining figures of 'new' pupils enrolling may suggest that a large majority of children who were at home are now already in school. While the targets may be realistic, there is need to conduct a census and mapping exercise in all the 58 communities where the projects are operating to document the actual numbers of children out of school to be returned. In the absence of such an exercise and since the DEM's office lacks up-to-date statistical data, inability to achieve the targets specified in the Results Framework (e.g. an enrolment of 42,000 by 2019) will be interpreted as project failure.

## **E.2 Improved Quality of Education**

To improve quality of education, the Safe Schools project planned to train 1050 teachers in pedagogy as an inclusive approach for teaching and learning. In practice, the project only trained 30 teachers (selected from DRM patrons and matrons) and 6 PEAs (Primary Education Advisors) after realizing that pedagogy is already a key component of the primary school teachers' training curriculum. This 5-day refresher training was conducted by Montfort School between September and December 2017 under the Education in Emergencies Training. PIM and its Safe Schools implementing partners anticipated the trained teachers and PEAs to step down the knowledge and skills acquired to other teachers in their respective schools. Interviews with teachers selected at random from various schools visited showed that those who attended the training have started to brief fellow teachers as part of the continuous professional development (CPD). In turn, the trainings have enhanced knowledge and skills to give appropriate career guidance as well as psychological and emotional support to CWDs and other children such as teenage mothers and married boys who have returned to school.

Besides trainings on pedagogy, PIM and its implementing partners have enhanced the capacity of 35 SMCs and 1097 parents on good school governance and inclusive education, benefiting

40,372 children in the schools. For example, according to project records school-based end of year pass rates for the final examinations to the next class have been increasing from 69 at baseline to 73 percent in 2016 and 78.3 percent in 2017. Girls who wrote these examinations had a pass rate of 71% in 2017 up from around 60% recorded at baseline. Out of the 981 CWDs (554 boys and 427 girls) in school, 723 passed their examinations to the next level -381 boys and 342 girls- representing a 73.7% pass rate. To enhance learning, the Safe Schools project has started following up children with low performance and learning difficulties, in particular 239 mentally challenged children (141 boys and 98 girls), to understand their learning needs and ways to help them. Other schools are offering remedial classes to such children to allow them catch up in addition to standardizing their grades so that they can compete fairly with other children.

### **E.3 Improving Schools' Capacity in Inclusion**

By design, the Safe Schools project aims to increase the enrolment in school of CWDs and children from marginalized and minority groups. As already stated, by July 2018 a total of 981 CWDs, 554 boys and 427 girls, were enrolled in the targeted schools. This figure represents a very good pace of progression since it exceeds the midterm target set at 800. The Safe School project planned to have at least 1,000 CWDs in school before closure in December 2019 and is therefore on track. To attain these achievements, PIM and its implementing partners have been conducting awareness trainings at zonal level on inclusion of CWDs and marginalized children. A total of 1097 parents and members of ADCs (Area Development Committees), PTAs, SMCs, VCPCs (Village Civil Protection Committees) and VDCs have received this training in the three districts. Interviews with them revealed high levels of inclusiveness in education and extra-curricular activities. For example, by July 2018 all the targeted schools were using cultural, ethnic, gender and language inclusive learning materials provided by the training conducted.

#### **3.2.2 Thematic Area: Child Protection**

Child protection is under both projects. The intention is that children, with particular attention to girls, CWDs and children from minority groups, grow up in a safe environment allowing them to fulfil their aspirations and develop their potentials. The Safe schools project envisions achieving this goal by improving regulatory frameworks and scaling up community based child protection mechanisms to more communities. The section below presents progress toward the attainment of outcome indicators under this thematic area.

## **CP. 1 Development of Regulatory Frameworks that are Effective in Protecting Children from all Forms of Violence**

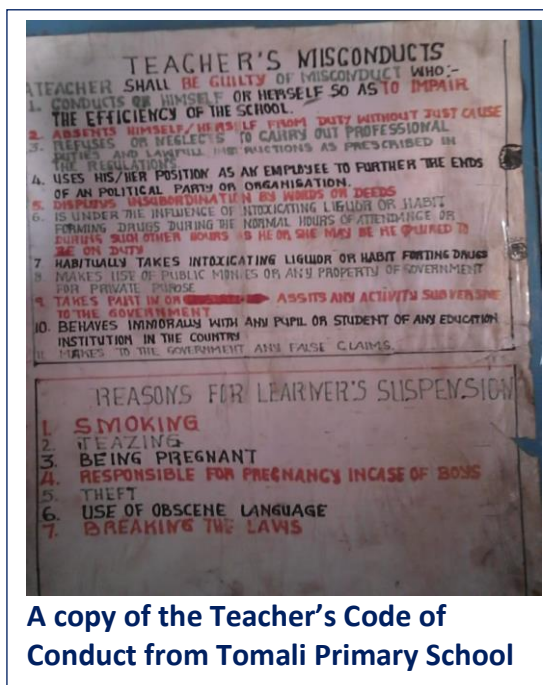
Development and sensitization of regulatory framework ensure that children are safeguarded and protected from all forms of violence. By July 2018, the two NORAD funded projects trained a total of 10,400 people from the general public, 1076 parents, 60 members of staff from implementing partners and 66 government officers on child protection, child marriages and education. The project selected 272 duty bearers (that included teachers, healthcare practitioners, the police, judges and senior government staff from the DEM's office) from the participants and enhanced their capacity on actual implementation of child protection programs.

The duty bearers have in turn cascaded the orientation to local structures, namely Mother Groups, SMCs and PTAs, for them to sensitize their communities. In particular, local structures have sensitized 4,000 people from the 58 targeted communities on the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), making a 33 percent achievement over the 2017 target that set to reach 3,000 people. Besides this, PIM and its partners have supported all the 30 schools to develop Codes of Conduct for learners and teachers to ensure a violent free environment. The Codes of Conduct, which are posted on the walls of classrooms and available from the head teachers in most schools, are school specific and not standardized. Generally, they state what behaviour is acceptable and what is not acceptable for learners and teachers. For example, at Tomali Primary School in Chikwawa the Code of Conduct for learners encourage courtesy, good manners and consideration for others, self-discipline and a proper respect for authority to make the school a true, caring community. To ensure safety of all children the Code of Conduct lists the following as the reasons for learners to be suspended: smoking, teasing and bullying, pregnancy for girls, being responsible for the pregnancy in the case of boys, theft, the use of obscene language and breaking of school rules. The code of conduct at Tomali further states that the head teacher will bring any serious breaches of discipline or any disruptive behaviour to the attention of the parents concerned besides suspending the culprits.

In Mulanje, Nkanda Primary School is one of the schools that is actively implementing the non-violent Code of Conduct. This has helped girls and boys who once dropped out to continue staying in school because of the good reception by both teachers and learners. Milly Jamu "not real name" was readmitted after she dropped out of school and got married in 2016. She joined the 18+ club at her school and fellow learners welcomed her. Some of the classmates were actually helping her with writing notes and assignments after classes to ensure she catches up. The Code of Conduct at the school emphasizes that learners should not be seen bullying fellow learners for whatever reasons.

Similarly, in all the schools visited reviews of records provided by head teachers showed that teachers sign Teaching Service Regulations and Teachers' Codes of Conduct as part of their contracts and as such they are under obligation to abide by ethics specified. In other schools,

the MTE survey found short versions of Codes of Conduct for teachers in various offices. As an example, at Tomali the code specifies that “teachers will be guilty of misconduct if they absent themselves from work without just cause, demonstrate insubordination, take intoxicating liquor during school times, behave immorally with any pupil and impair the efficiency of the school”. Coupled with trainings they have received from the Safe Schools project, the behaviour and conduct of teachers is very good as reported by the head teacher of the school.



**A copy of the Teacher’s Code of Conduct from Tomali Primary School**

## **CP.2 Well-Functioning Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms that Prevent and Respond to Violence against Children**

By July 2018, under the same thematic area of child protection by the Safe Schools project PIM and its implementing partners -CADECOM, MMCC and FOCUS- strengthened the capacity of all the 23 CBCP (Community-based Child Protection) committees as planned in the Results Framework. Run by male champions, the project found these institutions weak and lacking resources. Upon invigoration, the CBCP system has become functional and is working well to prevent, report and respond to violence against children. Under the 18+ project, GENET and NfYD (Network for Youth Development), a local NGO working towards a strong and vibrant youth, have also trained 13 of

the available CBCPs on identification, reporting and management of cases. Together, CBCPs trained by both projects have members from all the targeted communities and this has improved quality of service delivery. As an example, by July 2018 the existing CBCP system reported 99 cases to police related to child marriages, defilement, child labour and neglect. Seventy nine of these cases concerned girls and 5 CWDs.

## **CP.3 Empowerment of Children to protect themselves from Violence**

The MTE found that the 18+ project has oriented 964 learners on child protection, 512 girls and 452 boys, so they can protect themselves from any forms of violence. After the establishment of safe spaces, 542 of these learners (294 girls and 248 boys) received a comprehensive training in child protection and SRHR. A total of 8 CWDs were among the learners trained. Focus group discussions with these learners revealed that the trainings have made children aware of their rights and alert to report abuses. Most of the cases on child abuse encountered in the two projects have been reported to CBCP committees by children themselves. Routine monitoring data by the project show that by July 2018, CBCP committees gave referral support for abuse cases to 50 children (besides those reported directly to police), the majority of whom were

girls. According to MTE interviews with head teachers, 19 of these cases occurred in the 2017/2018 academic year, representing 2 cases per school on average during the two year period. Every case of child abuse reported has been resolved successfully.

## Thematic area: Child Marriage

Issues of child marriages are specifically under the 18+ project. In this regard, PIM, GENET and WLSA are taking direct actions to end child marriages in Mulanje by ensuring girls and boys have access to safe spaces and SRHR information as well as through advocacy and, to some extent, the use of bylaws drafted and enforced by chiefs. Communities have bylaws for ending such marriages, but not all are using them. The bylaws were not standardized yet by the time of this evaluation and levels of implementation are thus different across communities.

### Forms of Child Marriages Encountered

- i. **Boys making friendships** with girls and marrying
- ii. **Boys impregnating girls** and forced to marry
- iii. **Men impregnating girls.** The girls in agreement with men or on their own implicate innocent boys they are in a sexual relationship with. The boys are wilfully or forced to accept responsibility. The culprit lie to the girls that they will be supporting them financially.
- iv. **Men legally marrying girls** as first wives or after divorcing. Girls cheat on age.

The MTE found that the standardization process was underway at district council level, involving all stakeholders. Chiefs, who are the custodians of culture, are well represented in the discussions. PIM, WLSA, YONECO, MAGGA and Network for Youth and Development are in the taskforce to develop child right related bylaws, child marriage inclusive. The work involves looking at various laws for the country, but mainly the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act, to ensure there is harmony.

PIM has also engaged the magistrate to look at the penalties stipulated to avoid violations of human rights. Group Village Headman Kukada and Village Headmen Manolo and Mgumera were some of the chiefs that are using the current bylaws well to end child marriages in their communities. A copy of the bylaws by these chiefs shows that they are aware of the marriage age and other specification by the aforesaid Act. For example, article number 5 of the bylaws by Chief Kukada stipulates that anyone forcing children to drop out of school and get married before the age of 18 should be handed over to police for prosecution. Other violations to be handled by police, according to these bylaws, are for children found selling products at night markets, counsellors who force girls and boys to engage in sexual rituals after initiation ceremonies and parents caught indulging in sex with their step children. The bylaws further state that all forms of child marriages should be terminated and children involved sent back to school. Owners of video rooms must pay a K10, 000 penalty (NOK 118.2) if found guilty of

allowing children to watch films during school time or have their business closed if they fail to pay. The bylaws set the minimum age for girls and boy to attend initiation ceremonies at 10 years. The section below discusses outcome indicators of performance for ending child marriages by the 18+ project.

### **CM.1 Direct Actions to Stop Child Marriages**

The Results Framework of the projects show that output indicators under this Outcome are 1) the number of children with access to safe spaces, 2) the number of children receiving support, follow up and mentorship and 3) the number of child marriages reported by the CBCPs in targeted areas. By midterm, a total of 542 children (294 girls and 248 boys) across the project catchment area had access to safe spaces. These children were supported and followed up by the mentors through home visits and safe spaces according to project records.

### **CM.2 Children Empowered to Claim their Rights**

Under the 18+ project, GENET has formed twenty 18+ clubs, 16 in primary schools and 4 out of school in communities, which serve as 'safe spaces' where girls and boys learn weekly on SRHR and play. These safe meeting spaces may be "virtual" (e.g. they may move from place to place), but they create a space in which girls and boys meet separately to learn about themselves and others, under the guidance of young adult matrons and patrons. Thus, while infrastructure and facilities are important, they are not what makes a safe space for youth engagement and development. Safe spaces include three core elements: safe place, friends and a mentor.

According to Jane Mweziwina, the PIM's manager for the two projects, a distinguishing feature of the 18+ project is a focus on enhancing girls' skills and opportunities as advocates. Through safe spaces, PIM, GENET and WLSA envision girls gaining training in different forms of advocacy and communications skills. In pursuant of this, the 18+ project gives them an opportunity to apply any skills they acquire in multiple ways e.g. through community debates, school performances as well as advocacy days organized at district meetings, parliamentary meetings and/or key sub-regional events. Collectively, these activities have improved girls' assets, agency and capabilities they need to be useful citizens for the country.

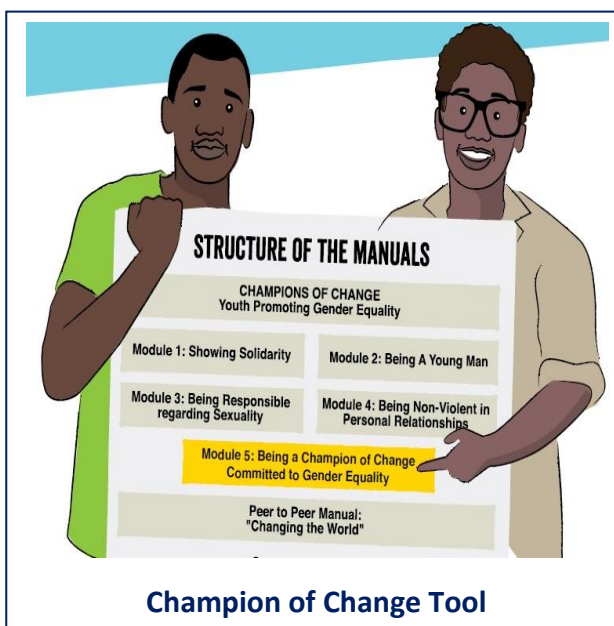
By July 2018, a total of 26,578 children, 13,597 girls and 12,981 boys, were in the aforesaid 16 schools of which 542 (294 girls, 248 boys and 5 CWDs) were members of the 18+ clubs (also known as anti-child marriage clubs in some schools) and had access to safe spaces. The project uses *Champions of Change*, Plan International's wide strategy and tool for promoting gender equality and social norm change, to guide discussions. At the very beginning, PIM provided orientation and technical support to GENET in the *Champions of Change* in addition to training both institutions (e.g. GENET and WLSA) in the 18+ Global Theory of Change to increase their understanding and make application easy.

*Champions of Change* is composed of 5 key components:

- i. Theory of Change, that has been designed around the barriers and opportunities that girls and boys confront to reach gender equality.
- ii. A series of engaging, fun and educational modules that have been purposefully designed to take youth on a journey of personal and social discovery and empowerment
- iii. M/E framework designed to measure changes in 3 levels: individual, family and community and institutional level on boys and girls participants.
- iv. Sixteen characters that represent the different contexts and realities of girls and boys around the world but also serves as a connection among them.
- v. Strong, engaging and powerful documentaries that capture the essence of change.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) lessons following the *Champions of Change* in safe spaces have helped girls and boys to gain information, skills and support they were lacking to protect themselves from unwanted marriages, sex and pregnancies. Interactions in safe spaces have also helped older girls and boys to gain age-appropriate SRHR information and

skills they require to refrain from pre-mature sexual activities. To encourage play and more interactions among children, GENET and WLSA provide netballs, chess and *baa* (a traditional game) for each club, kept by the mentors.



In the country, SRHR services are provided by government health facilities that are meant for general public and young people are generally shy to seek services together with other people. There is need to introduce units or integrate youth friendliness to the available SRHR services and information. There is also need to change stigma by the general public regarding the use of SRHR services by young people. While programmes such as the Marie Stopes

International's Banja La Mtsogolo (BLM) and DREAM also provide similar services, they are not located in all hard-to-reach areas of the country, meaning that safe spaces run by the 18+ project have filled the information gap.



**Left:** One of the safe spaces structures the 18+ project has renovated at Namphungo (Mulanje). In terms of infrastructure the project has rehabilitated only four sites since safe spaces do not necessarily refer to structures, but an environment that provides room for boys and girls to look into issues affecting them.

### **CM.3 Stronger Regulatory Frameworks to Prevent Child Marriage**

To achieve this outcome indicator, the 18+ project has contributed to ongoing efforts by the government of ensuring that the recent constitutional amendment on the definition of a child and the minimum age of marriage are harmonized in all child related laws. The project in partnership with other cooperating partners supported the stakeholders' workshop that discussed all child-related bylaws that have to be harmonized with the national laws. Meanwhile, the 18+ project has already started supporting girls to identify their values and rights, say NO to child marriages, build skills to fight against child marriages, and lead in making decisions concerning child rights. By July 2018, the project trained 272 duty bearers at various levels on child marriages in a bid to create child-marriage free communities. These duty bearers have been working to prevent child marriages from occurring or ending them, and return girls and boys to school. The duty bearers also urge communities and parents to make sure that children remain in school after returning.

### **CM.4 Root Causes of Child Marriage are addressed**

The needs assessment PIM conducted in 2015 already found Mulanje as one of the districts with the highest rates of child marriages in the country caused by many different factors. These include poverty, tradition, harmful cultural practices, gender and social norms. The 18+ project has been working to address these problems and has made a visible impact. For example, the project has sensitized 10,400 parents and local leaders on the repercussions of child marriages. The MTE survey in all the 30 schools under the Safe Schools project indicated that dropouts of girls due pregnancies are declining, with one or only two girls cases per school in 2018. This finding means that girls are concentrating on their education and delaying sex. By July 2018, a total of 514 out of 1131 children in standard 8 graduated from primary school and continued with their education to secondary school. One hundred and ninety seven of children that have gone to various secondary schools are girls and 317 boys. Six out of 8 children with disability are among children who have gone to secondary schools.



## **CM.5 Youth Economic Empowerment**

The concept of entrepreneurship and youth economic empowerment was discussed at the onset of the 18+ project because poverty is the key driver of child marriages. The 18+ Global Theory of Change already singles out addressing poverty as one way of tackling child, early and forced marriages (CEFM) and achieve lasting impact. Originally, the project designed that the youths and their families will just be trained in business and financial management. However, after inception the project realized the huge need for income generating activities (IGAs) in view of the many children who could not go to school due to lack of financial support to pay for development fund, and buy uniforms and other basic school needs.

From 12-21 December 2017, as part of reducing poverty and ending child marriages GENET and WLSA trained teenage mothers, parents and male champions on entrepreneurship skills to equip them with the capacity to grow mushroom, do pottery and tailoring to generate income for supporting girls and boys dropped out of school due to poverty and lack of basic necessities. The training included parents and guardians of the girls at risk of child marriage and 2 CWDs from Mulanje. It distributed sewing machines to 30 of the 177 people trained. The sewing machines have started benefiting the recipients unlike pottery and mushroom growing. According to discussions conducted, Mother Groups have started using the sewing machines to make reusable sanitary pads for distribution to older girls in school besides sewing some clothes for sale to the general public. At Mgodhi and Naphungo Primary Schools, the mothers meet weekly to sew and generate money they use to buy exercise books, pens and other learning materials for needy children, including CWDs. At Mgodhi, the Mother Group showed the MTE team the renovation work on a sanitary facility for girls using the same money from sewing. In contrast, by July 2018 the mushroom and pottery activities had no visible benefits yet after being enrolled most recently, in April 2018. Arguably, these activities require time to take off and establish viable markets in urban or training centres.



### **Focus Group Discussion with Male Champions from Namphungo**

Discussions with male champions at Namphungo Primary School, TA Juma in Mulanje, revealed that poverty remains the main driver for child marriages. Girls and boys lack exercise books, clothes, uniforms and other school needs. Many walk to and from school on an empty stomach. Paradoxically, schools ask them to pay fees for developmental activities.

For example, at Namphungo, each pupil contributes K1, 300 per annum towards infrastructure development, K100 monthly for the watchman and K30 for purchasing sugar and salt for the school feeding programme. Girls and boys who cannot afford these costs drop out of school. If girls are out of school, the only option open to them is marriage. If not, they receive cash gifts from older men that lead to premature sex, unwanted pregnancies and eventually school dropouts. Parents and guardians take part in getting young girls married to be relieved from the responsibility of taking care of them and providing for the daily needs. They claim the girls are over 18 years. No attempt is made by local leaders as well as marriage advocates and counsellors to determine the real age. With the introduction of sewing machines to mothers by the 18+ project, these problems have reduced as the money realised is used to address such problems. According to discussions with male champions, the other influencing factors of child marriages are peer pressure and harmful traditional practices. The commonest form of marriage involves men impregnating girls and implicating innocent boys.

“We have a very big task of raising awareness on child marriages, rights and education. We withdraw children from marriages, send them back to school and support with learning materials. Parents are already aware that the marriage age is 18 years, and chiefs use bylaws to penalise culprits, which make our work easier. Child marriages are on the decrease because of these actions,” said the male champions.

In the discussion, they talked about a 16-year old Ndamile (*not her real name*) of Ngumera Village in the District who was in Form 2 in 2016 when her parents arranged for her marriage to a 25-year old man from Namitambo in Chiradzulu district. A few days before the two got married, the local chief heard and put it on hold, insisting the girl should go back to school. The parents were adamant and went ahead with wedding preparations. The chief together with male champions imposed penalties to the parents and other advocates involved. Each one of them paid a goat and the wedding was called off eventually. Ndamile returned and re-enrolled at Namphungo Community Day Secondary School. She has sat for the Malawi School Certificate Examinations (MSCE) this year and was expected to pass well.

## Focus Group Discussion with Teenage Mothers

### Reasons girls and boys go into early marriages

- Cultural practices which;
  - Encourage early sex after initiation ceremony “*Kusasa fumbi* in vernacular Chichewa”
  - Teach children SRHR information not appropriate for their age
  - Value girls who are married than those staying long before getting married.
- Poverty which influences girls to be getting money from sugar daddies.
- Lack of youth friendly health facilities to provide SRHR information and services.
- Parents encouraging girls to get married. For example, one girl at Muonekera Primary School in Mulanje stated that parents sometimes say things that make girls consider getting married. For example, “If you feel you are old enough get married (*Ngati wakula ukakwatiwe* in vernacular Chichewa) commonly said to children who seem to reason with their parents.
- High unemployment rate which demotivates girls and boys from working hard in school since they see many school leavers just staying at home in the villages
- Illiterate parents who do not see the value in education and have pride in having their children getting married
- Parents failing to make contributions requested by the school for development fund
- Peer Pressure. Girls and boys who are married influence their friend to do the same.

## Thematic Area: Safe Schools

The thematic area of safe schools is under the Safe Schools project with the goal of reducing the risk and effects of environmental shock and stress on the 30 schools targeted in the three districts. It has five outcome indicators as discussed below.

### SS.1.1 Percentage of Children in Schools that have implemented at least two of the Pillars of the Comprehensive Safe Schools Framework

Under the Safe Schools and Inclusive Education Project, PIM and its implementing partners strive to achieve the three pillars of the Plan International Comprehensive Safe Schools Framework of 2013, namely; safe schools facilities, safe schools management and safe schools curriculum. As already stated, the project has constructed 294 ramps in all the 30 schools, renovated floors of 46 classrooms and planted 25,000 in all the schools from Mulanje and Chikwawa to increase safety of pupils. The project has also conducted various training for school governance structures in all the schools and is working to include issues of DRR in the current primary school curriculum.



**Above:** Demonstration toilets constructed by the Safe Schools project for children with physical disabilities. Photo taken at Chiwondo Primary School in Karonga District.

### **SS.1.2 # of Children in Schools with Improved Infrastructures**

A total of 40,372 children in all the 30 schools have received improvements on infrastructures to provide easy access to classes and increase safety of CWDs. Out of the 40,372 children, 20,169 are girls and 981 children with disability (554 boys and 427 girls), including those with low vision, hearing loss, learning difficulties and physical deformities. As already stated, infrastructures constructed include 294 classroom ramps in all the 30 schools and rehabilitation of 46 classroom floors in selected schools, depending on need, across the districts. The project provided cement, quarry and paid local artisan while the communities brought sand, bricks, water and free local labour for the construction of the floors. In addition, the project has constructed disability friendly toilets at 5 schools -namely Namphungo, Chisawani, Mgodhi and Muhiyo in Mulanje and Chiwondo in Karonga, with plans underway to construct more toilets in the other targeted schools.

### **SS.1.3 # of Children in Schools with Integrated Safety Management System**

PIM and its implementing partners have established DRR clubs in all the 30 schools. Each club has 75 learners as members, drawn mainly from standard 5, 6 and 7. Each club has a matron or patron and conducts DRR activities such as awareness campaigns and re-afforestation, involving raising nurseries and planting of trees to conserve the environment. Every club in the 30 schools received equipment for DRR activities, namely 5 wheelbarrow, 5 rakes, 5panga knives, 5 pair of gloves, 2 watering canes and 2000 polythene tubes for the establishment tree nurseries. By July 2018, the 30 clubs planted 25,000 indigenous, exotic and fruit trees around the school premises. The 18+ project provided some of the tree seedlings to 4 schools as prizes for winning debates and quizzes on child marriages, SRHR and education. These schools are Thawale, Mgumera, Namphungo and a community day secondary school in Mulanje. The trees were still young and yet to benefit the host schools and communities in many different ways. A total 40,372 children, of which 20,169 were girls and 20,203 boys, were in the 30 schools with DRR clubs.



In this photo, Clement Bisai of the evaluation team (seated to the right) and DRR club members at Tomali Primary School in Chikwawa discussing hazards and disasters that occur in their communities and schools and how to mitigate them. The children demonstrated high level of knowledge about DRR. They listed heavy winds, floods, prolonged dry spells and cholera outbreaks as of major concern, threatening safety of their schools. “These hazards together cause destruction of school infrastructure, homes and crops,

disruption of classes, soil erosion and death in worse case scenarios. Climate change is the major driver,” said the girls. They also made drawings on flip charts to illustrate the damages.

#### **SS.1.4 # of Children in Schools that have DRR in its Curriculum**

Of the 30 schools with DRR clubs, 19 have conducted hazard mapping and produced DRR and evacuation plans based on the district DRR contingency plans. Most of these schools and clubs are in Karonga and Chikwawa. The plans vary depending on disasters and preparedness of the districts. They outline ways of evacuating people and suggest alternative camping sites besides schools to avoid disruption of classes. By the time of this MTE, DRR clubs in the remaining 11 schools mainly in Mulanje were in the process or planning to develop their plans. In addition to establishing DRR clubs and developing plans, PIM and the five implementing partners have carried out drilling exercises on evacuation in times of need. SCOUT Association of Malawi, which offer military services, drilled VCPC and ACPC in Karonga that in turn stepped down the orientation to DRR club members at the school level. Lessons focused much on rendering community services to vulnerable people during floods, DRR and children protection. In times of floods in future the trainees are the ones entrusted and equipped to offer rescue services to others. In Mulanje, CADECOM hired a national specialist to carry out the exercise and, by the time of this MTE, PIM was in the process of engaging the same person for Chikwawa.

The MTE found that no school has integrated DRR in the curriculum. However, stakeholder workshops and interactions had started among government, education practitioners, relevant subject experts, civil society representatives and other DRR related NGOs. In October last year (2017), PIM and the implementing partners held a meeting with the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE) to map the way forward on how best to integrate DRR in the primary school curriculum. Another meeting was scheduled to take place in Liwonde, Machinga district, from 16-26<sup>th</sup> July 2018 to look at the content of the DDR book UNDP has developed and how to distribute it to all schools in the country. The intention is to allow teachers use the book and suggest critical topics for inclusion in the curriculum. It is expected that DRR will ultimately be integrated into the national school curriculum.

### **SS.2.1 # of Communities with DRR policy/plan**

The MTE found that all the schools and communities targeted were generally aware of DRR. PIM and its implementing partners have been using a number of dramas and other entertainment activities to disseminate messages about DRR to the masses. Communities have understood the messages well and started putting them into practice. As an example, in Mulanje and Chikwawa communities have adopted skills on nursery establishment and woodland development as done by surrounding schools. In Karonga, during the most recent floods on 28 February 2017 Mwambetania and Mwentanga villages sought refuge at Dumila Paramount Chief court yard instead of the their usual camping site, Kasoba Primary School. In contrast, people from Kasisi, a nearby community not targeted by the projects sought shelter at a primary school because they had not yet received awareness messages. To increase awareness, PIM has printed out manuals on Education in Emergencies for the implementing partners to distribute at scale to communities as reference materials.

“Every year our school was a victim of natural disasters. Strong winds used to blow off classroom roofs. As a solution, after receiving awareness from the NORAD projects in 2016 we mobilized communities to bring trees and plant them during the rainy season. PTA members were requested to bring 10, and each pupil one tree. We received additional tree seedlings from CADECOM. Currently, we have a significant number around the school after planting them for the past two years.” – The Head Teacher at Mgodhi Primary School in Mulanje.

By July 2018, PIM and the implementing partners conducted trainings on Education in Emergencies (EiE) for 968 duty bearers from the three districts, 325 females and 643 males. These duty bearers including teachers, members of SMC, PTA, Mother Groups, VPC, CPC, ADC, VCPC, ACPC and local leaders. According to discussions with these groups, the EiE training increased knowledge of disaster knowledge, prevention, preparedness and recovery to promote school safety. Planting of trees is the main activity that schools and communities are doing after attending the training. The projects have been disseminating EiE messages as well through various radios such as MBC (Malawi Broadcasting Cooperation, which is Malawi’s national radio), Gaka Community Radio in Chikwawa, Mzati Community Radio in Mulanje and Voice of Livingstonia in Karonga. The messages aired reach out to many different communities, including those outside NORAD funded projects. The MTE found evidences that communities are receiving the messages and find them useful, evidenced tree planting activities that are taking place. A good example are many different communities surrounding St. Mathews Primary School in Chikwawa that have grown trees, learning from schools and after receiving messages from the radio.



**Above:** Part of the school woodland at Namphungo Primary School in Mulanje. The woodland benefits from bylaws for DRR that ban grazing of animals around school premises. Mothers Groups and children carry out watering of the tree in dry season to ensure survival.

### **3.3 Gender Equality**

PIM along with its implementing partners have embraced a gender transformative approach (GTA) to ensure gender equality. In these projects, the GTA approach entails transforming lives of girls, boys, women, men, children with disabilities and those from minority and marginalized groups by tackling the underlying causes of gender inequalities – social norms, attitudes, beliefs and traditions. The section below presents the situation analysis by the two projects to reveal gender disparities that the two projects found and are now addressing.

#### **3.3.1 Situation Analysis Studies**

PIM's work began with a situation analysis in 2015 to inform the development of the Plan Malawi's Country Strategy (2016-2021). In addition, PIM carried out a multi-country situation analysis for the 18+ project which is also implemented in Zambia and Zimbabwe. These studies involved surveys, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with girls, boys, men, women and vulnerable children who revealed existing social norms, traditions and harmful cultural practices perpetuating child, early and forced marriages (CEFM). These studies also highlighted gaps and needs for communities, parents and children themselves that have informed the design of many PIM country program interventions besides the two projects under review.

For example, the studies found that poverty was a major driver of child marriages and school drop outs in the country, followed closely by tradition. The strongest tradition of all was the idea that boys should be educated because they will be breadwinners of their own future families, and the supporters of their aging parents. Many girls were therefore at home, helping with household chores and looking after young children. Only one in four girls (25 percent) could complete primary school education and, of these, 45 percent graduated to secondary school. The problem was compounded by child marriages and gender-based violence (GBV).

Around 80 percent of girls in Mulanje were married by the age of 18 and around 90 percent sexually active by this age. A number of harmful traditional, social, and cultural beliefs accepted and normalized the harmful traditional practices. These practices included (a) *chinamwali*, a sex education offered at initiation ceremonies to girls when they reach puberty, and *kusasa fumbi*, a sexual ritual that young girls who have just gone through *chinamwali* are subjected to (b) the desire by parents, particularly women, to have grandchildren; (c) the practice of having children get into pre-arranged marriages (*kutomera*); and (d) *fisi*, where a male adult has sexual intercourse with newly initiated girls.

PIM's assessment also showed that school drop outs were common due to child marriages, teenage pregnancies and failure to meet school needs on the part of the parents. Children with disability were kept at home as the school environment was seen not conducive for them.

Findings from the two situation analyses were consistent with results from other studies. The *State of the World's Children* report of 2016 by UNICEF lists Malawi as one of the 10 countries in the world with highest rates of child marriages, having approximately 1 in 2 girls married by the age of 18. The Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS) conducted in 2015 already revealed that 46.7 percent of girls and 8 percent of boys get married before the age of 18 in the country. Three in every 10 adolescents (29%) aged 15-19 begin bearing children in Malawi, especially in the rural areas where school dropout is high.

Among other things, the partnership between PIM and the five CSOs that are involved in the implementation of the two projects aims at addressing the problems and needs that were identified. A number of activities are carried out in this regard that include carrying out sensitization meetings and awareness campaigns, trainings of school governance structures, and promotion of bylaws prepared and enforced by local communities. Under the Safe Schools project, an inclusive approach taken ensures that all girls, boys, women and men participate in the activities of the project. For example, local school structures like Mother Groups, PTAs, SMCs and mentors all consist of women and men. This involvement gives them an opportunity to lead in ending CEFM and encouraging girls and boys to remain in school. In most of these groups, women are taking leadership roles e.g. chairpersons for PTAs in 4 schools from Chikwawa, namely Biasi, Lengwe, Mangulenje and Tomali, are women. Men are involved also as agents of change and community mentors. Each DRR club has a patron and matron. Boys and girls, including CWDs, participate in many different activities such as establishment of tree nurseries and woodlands, community open days, drama performances and some other activities. Youths are the ones playing football and netball matches during awareness campaigns to attract more people.



### 3.2 Project Impacts on Girls, Boys, Women and Men (Intentional or Unintentional)

By midterm, the projects registered an increase in school enrolment and retention for both girls and boys as already stated. School drop outs were very rare according to interviews with teachers. Generally, there were no gender and sex differential impacts and benefits as a result of the projects. However, community dynamics are the ones that have resulted in the projects affecting boys and girls differently. For example, girls are the most affected and most of the “go-back-to-school” messages have been targeting them. In addition, focus group discussions by the MTE showed that girls are gaining from a number of health, education and empowerment benefits by virtue of not being subjected to child marriages after undergoing the *Champions of Change* and the 18+ Global Theory of Change. In addition, after receiving SRHR messages being victims of abuse many girls demonstrate knowledge of their rights to make choices after reaching 18 years of age regarding who, if and when to get married as well as to challenge gender stereotypes and remain actively engaged in the fight against CEFM by among other things reporting the culprits to police and CBCP committees.

In Karonga, Jabess Nyirenda, who is FOCUS Program Officer has seen the change as well, thanks to the NORAD funded projects. “We have evidence that girls are going back to school. Previously, communities considered girls inferior and confined them to the home. Now they are aware of the need to educate the girl child and we have seen an overwhelming support from parents and communities. Many of the parents are encouraging boys to look at girls as their equals.”

On the other hand, perpetrators of gender inequalities tend to be men, but after being involved in the project many of them have transformed and changed their attitude. At Namphungo and Khwalala in Mulanje, for example, male champions highlighted their individual and collective desire to ensure that girls are protected from child marriage and that their rights to education are upheld at all cost, even it means antagonizing some parents and chiefs in their areas. At Muhiyo and Tomali Primary Schools, discussions with male champions revealed that some of the members sometimes use their own money to provide education support to girls that are at risk of dropping out of school due to poverty. The same sentiments were expressed by Mother Groups at Muhiyo and Thundu, who reported that, despite facing various challenges, sometimes even emanating from the local leadership who in some cases relapse, they are not prepared to relent until all girls in their communities are in school and the problem of child marriage is eliminated.

At community level, development and enforcement of bylaws by some chiefs against child marriage, though not standardized yet, are also a manifestation of the transformative results generated by the 18+ project in particular.

### 3.4 Disability Inclusion

Prior to the commencement of the NORAD funded projects, parents and guardians of children with disabilities were concerned about lack or limited availability of assistive devices in schools. Under the Safe School and Inclusive Education, PIM and implementing partners embarked on rehabilitation and construction of disability user friendly structures mainly classroom ramps, and inclusive toilets in five schools. The projects also started to equip teachers with skills on inclusive education to support children with learning difficulties better. Alongside these efforts, door-to-door campaigns were underway encouraging communities, parents and guardians to send all children with different forms of disabilities to school.

In addition, the two projects have been collaborating with FEDOMA, MACOHA and an Orthopaedic Centre at Queen Elizabeth hospital in Blantyre to help in providing wheel chairs and other assistive devices to learners with disability and learning difficulties. These efforts have improved suitability of the schools and learning environment for CWDs.

**Table 7:** A summary of strengths and weaknesses found in disability inclusion efforts

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An enabling environment e.g. government policies put CWDs and other vulnerable children high on the agenda. Policies of relevance are the Constitution of 1995, the Child Care, Protection and Justice Act (2010) and the Disability Act (2012).</li> <li>▪ Increased interest on CWDs by the donor community and development partners.</li> <li>▪ Existence of other NGOs dealing with issues of CWDs e.g. World Vision Malawi that has provided 50 wheel chairs to children with physical disabilities including those targeted by the NORAD funded projects.</li> <li>▪ Increased commitment by communities to help CWDs</li> <li>▪ Understanding by parents and guardians to send CWDs to school</li> <li>▪ Reduced social stigma due to mass awareness campaigns.</li> <li>▪ Construction of a resource centre in Chikwawa specifically for CWDs with severe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of disability friendly facilities (with exception ramps on classroom and toilet entrances the projects have constructed)</li> <li>▪ Inadequate facilities. Like other pupils, CWDs seat on the floor due to lack of chairs and desks. Older girls drop out of school because they lack sanitary pads and privacy when they use the same toilets with young ones and other girls.</li> <li>▪ Limited psychosocial support. PIM and implementing partners have no staff with expertise in this area</li> <li>▪ Few teachers with special needs education</li> <li>▪ Inadequate assistive devices such as wheelchairs, hearing and visual aids e.g. the weakness is seen when a child with poor vision says to the school teacher, “You requested us to come. Here I am. I cannot see on the blackboard. Help me.”</li> <li>▪ Mockery by some peers in the absence of teachers out of childhood or bad manners</li> </ul>

<p>challenges and mental retardation to sharpen them before integration with all other children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Indigenous skills to help are available e.g. putting children with visual and hearing impairment in front of the classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of assistance from other children at times. For instance, during discussions with three CWDs (all boys) at Kisindile Primary School in Karonga one child who was on wheel chair said, “I missed some examinations last term because my friend who pushes me was writing examinations as well. At that time, nobody was there to help me” A parent to one of them reiterated parental support is crucial in the whole process.</li> </ul>
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### 3.5 Unexpected Results

Midway through their implementation, NORAD funded projects have realized some unexpected results. The main ones are an increased number of pupils in school that is exerting pressure on the available services and facilities, provision of unplanned activities based on need and increased geographical coverage achieved through outreach activities by local structures working with the project as explained singly below.

#### 3.5.1 An overwhelming response and increase in the number of children in school are exerting pressure on the available services and facilities

This MTE found that there has been an overwhelming response by the communities after door-to-door campaign, leading to an increase in school enrolment. Children who were at home for various reasons have started returning to school. Large classes mean work overload on the part of teachers and competition for meagre resources, such as text books, classroom space and toilets, which is unintended negative result. Midterm surveys of the schools revealed that 71 percent of the classes were overcrowded, with at least 140 children per class on average. As per design, the Safe School project’s budget is limited to constructing ramps at classroom and toilet entrances and renovation of floors in addition to erecting simple infrastructure (e.g. one toilet per school) for demonstration purposes only. In future projects, PIM and NORAD should strive to address the supply side in terms of facilities, supplies and services necessary for learning after creating demand. Among other things, PIM and NNO can do this by establishing linkages to other funders and supporters, such as UNICEF, UN Women and GIZ, to leverage efforts.

### **3.5.2 Unplanned activities carried out based on need**

Besides unexpected results, the MTE found that the two projects have conducted some activities they never included in the Results Framework and obtained positive results, namely screening of CWDs and the entrepreneurship intervention for poor families. The screening exercise was conducted in Mulanje and Chikwawa by medical practitioners from district and Queen Elizabeth hospitals. The exercise has helped the Safe Schools project know actual disabilities and assistive devices as well as proper teaching and learning materials needed; thus helping to focus resources on those in need. The exercise has also benefitted some children who just required medication and other medical services to know their conditions and seek appropriate care. The other unplanned activity is the entrepreneurship on mushroom production, pottery and tailoring / the provision of sewing machines already discussed.

### **3.5.3 Wider geographical coverage achieved through the use of local structures**

Regarding geographical coverage, the MTE found that under the Safe Schools project Mother Groups, PTAs and SMCs are supporting villages beyond the implementation area. As already stated in the preceding sections, these groups and committees were already existing and working in these areas as school governance structures before the NORAD funded projects started. Many of them were supported by ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency), particularly in Mulanje. Building on that experience, the current NORAD funded projects have offered various trainings on inclusive education, child protection, safe schools and child marriages that continued to add value to the governance of targeted schools. By implication, when carrying out activities the local structures reach out to communities that are even outside the two projects encouraging them to end child marriages and keep girls and boys in school. Pushbikes provided by the projects easy mobility for these groups and committees to reach out even to communities outside the PIM's project impact areas. In Mulanje, CADECOM has received requests from three neighbouring schools to become part of the Safe Schools and Inclusive project owing to the benefits they have seen. These schools have already started emulating what the project is implementing in the district e.g. taking care of CWDs, planting trees and providing sanitary pads to girls.

## **3.6 Added value and Participation**

The section below gives a brief description of the added value and participation after PIM and its five implementing partners have participated in NORAD funded projects.

### **3.6.1 Value Addition to the Implementing Partners**

One of the pillars of the NORAD funded projects is to enhance value addition and participation of implementing partners and local structures. This MTE found and documents examples and evidences of value addition by the projects in different areas of capacity building, linkages with duty bearers and improvement in power balance and learning from exchanges. **Annex 4** shows the results of the assessment of value addition from the projects which are summarized below.

#### **3.6.1.1 Capacity Building**

By July 2018, all the 5 implementing partners had their capacity built on Child Protection, Inclusive Education, Financial Management, Project Management and Results Management. They also reported to have had their capacity improved on mainstreaming strategies for ending child marriages and retaining girls in school mainly through training based on the *Champions of Change* and the 18+ Global Theory of Change. Furthermore, all the implementing partners have received capacity on Gender Equality from PIM, apart from GENET and WLSA, which already had this expertise at the beginning of the projects. Similarly, PIM also built the capacity of GENET and MMCC on inclusive education, while CADECOM already had this expertise at the inception of the projects. In addition, MMCC has received capacity building on advocacy, while the other partners already had capacity in this subject matter before partnering with PIM. For example, WLSA and GENET have been working with UN Women, Southern Africa AIDS Trust (SAT) and other organisations around various issues of advocacy over the years. Interviews with key staff from these CSOs showed that, in the remaining period, they need capacity building in the areas of fund raising, basics of special needs education, principles of psychology to deal with older girls and boys in schools, including those who drop and return to school and financial management for project managers to enable them understand better issues of budgeting, procurement and liquidation.

#### **3.6.1.2 Linkages with Duty Bearers**

The evaluation assessed if the implementing partners have gained knowledge from exchanges through the projects. It found that GENET has joined 2 technical working groups (TWGs) on child marriage at national and district levels by virtue of being actively involved in the implementation of the 18+ project. CADECOM is in 4 networks, namely District Education Network, District Civil Protection Committee, Child Protection Network, and the National DRR Task Force on Shelter and WASH. These networks provide vital platforms for learning and coordination with government and other organisations. For example, through the aforesaid membership GENET invited and hosted various stakeholders in a monitoring exercise of child

marriage programs that was conducted in September 2017 in Mulanje district. Again due to this membership, GENET was in the taskforce that was responsible for developing Malawi's Strategy for Ending Child Marriage.

By the midpoint of the projects, GENET and WLSA initiated and entered into partnerships with Mulanje district sector staff and local leaders to solicit support and enhance local ownership of the 18+ Project's interventions. On the other hand, Mother Mary Children Centre has established partnerships with ILLOVO, FEDOMA and MACOHA aimed at supporting children with disabilities in Chikwawa in areas that include the impact area of the Safe Schools project. This is one of its strategies for leveraging resources and ensuring sustainability of the support from PIM through the Safe Schools project. On its part, CADECOM reported that it is working in partnership with 30 school structures (e.g. PTAs, SMCs and mother groups) in 10 of its target schools in Mulanje under the Safe Schools project. The partnership is enabling them learn from one another, promote ownership as well as improve the quality and sustainability of service delivery.

### ***3.6.1.3 Improvements in Power Balance***

In this MTE, the five implementing partners indicated that there is power balance in decision making between themselves and PIM regarding activities of the two projects. They further regarded themselves as equal partners, evidenced by active involvement in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the project on the ground. The trainings undertaken were also cited as one way the projects have empowered the partners to do different activities of the project with competence. Empowerment is also manifested in the communities' abilities to contribute to efforts of promoting safe schools, inclusive education and ending child marriage owing to the skills and knowledge gained in the trainings delivered by the PIM's partners. The community structures under the projects are now able to identify and make referrals of child marriage cases, for example, and make follow-ups to ensure successful conclusions.

Besides this, the five implementing partners reported a steady improvement in responsiveness to communities needs as another evidence that they are well empowered to act. In addition, the partners acknowledged an improvement in transparency and accountability as a result of their partnership with PIM. In particular, GENET indicated that they are using this experience in preparing reports for other donors and stakeholders. MMCC highlighted improvements in monitoring and preparation of liquidation reports as a manifestation of this experience. With regards to community ownership, there is however more room for improvement as observed by CADECOM in the textbox below.

“Although there is clear ownership of the project interventions and results, some communities are still failing to contribute towards implementation of certain activities due to poor leadership and lack of capacity within the community structures. There is need to carry out more trainings as part of the exit strategy,” Mandinda Zungu, CADECOM.

#### **3.6.1.4 Learning from Exchanges**

The Safe Schools Project provided an opportunity for 2 exchange visits between the implementing partners themselves, which were done in Chikwawa and Karonga. The annual review meetings and joint monitoring visits were also highlighted as good platforms under which the partners have been sharing ideas and lessons. According to interviews conducted, CADECOM also took part in the launch of National Disaster Strategy in Mzuzu after partnering with PIM. At the function, a pavilion was mounted to share information with other stakeholders on the preparedness and response strategies to natural disasters. An official from CADECOM was also a motivation speaker during the Africa Girl Child day where information and lessons on challenges and strategies for improving girls' rights including their access to equitable education was shared.

#### **3.6.2 Community Participation**

**Annex 5** gives details about the degree of participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the NORAD funded projects by various stakeholders. In a nutshell, the MTE found that PIM, the five CSOs and key stakeholders all take part in the implementation and monitoring of planned activities as outlined in the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP). For example, in the previous monitoring the 18+ project involved the Ministry of Gender and the Safe Schools project conducted the exercises with the District Social Welfare, District Education Manager and the District Disaster Risk Reduction Offices.

In addition, Task Forces and Technical Groups to which GENET has become a member after partnering with PIM have been providing a platform to showcase successes of the 18+ project and explore possibilities of further partnerships with like-minded organisations.

The projects have also been involving technocrats, like Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) and personnel from the District Social Welfare office, to facilitate some of the trainings on education and child protection. Other institutions and CSOs have also been engaged to facilitate these trainings. Montfort School, for example, was involved to train teachers on special needs education. GENET and NfYD entered into a partnership to train communities in Mulanje on child protection in this regard. More so, the two projects commemorate significant days for girls and boys together with key stakeholders in the targeted districts. For example, during the International Day of the Girl Child on 11 October 2017 under the theme "EmPOWER girls", PIM and implementing partners conducted joint planning and commemoration.

## **3.7 Cross-cutting Issues**

### **3.7.1 Environmental vulnerability to climate change**

In the three districts, PIM and its implementing partners selected communities and schools based on vulnerability to climate change and natural hazards e.g. strong winds and floods. The Safe Schools project in particular has disseminated information regarding environmental management and mitigation of climate change to men, women, boys and girls in the targeted communities. One of the major mitigation activities of the project is disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) activities by DRR clubs in schools.

Besides this, the Safe Schools project has distributed 1000 posters and 1000 T-shirts with messages on environmental conservation. Demonstrating the need for conserving the environment using different measures, MMCC has used cement blocks to construct the new Resource Centre for CWDs constructed in Chikwawa. No trees were cut to burn bricks, that makes the centre environmental friendly.

### **3.7.2 Achieving Sustainability in the Projects**

By design, the NORAD funded projects are inherently about sustainability and scalability of activities taking place. The MTE looked at sustainability as a measure of whether the benefits of the two projects are likely to continue in the next phase and beyond. It assessed sustainability of the projects to be high ensured through active involvement and commitment of communities and the local structures to make a difference in the lives of the girl child and CWDs, capacity building at various levels, capital investments and evidences of mind set change. The section below discusses some of these factors.

#### ***3.7.2.1 Active involvement of local communities and structures***

Local participation is a critical factor in humanitarian work. In this regard, the NORAD funded projects have put schools, the surrounding communities and duty bearers, like local leaders and chiefs, in the fore front in identifying their own child protection problems and, as rights holders, work together to provide solutions. As an example, the desire the MTE team saw in the youths from Khwalala and Tomali DRR clubs to replicate the tree planting exercises within their localities not only symbolizes an understanding of the importance to conserve the environment, but shows inherent knowledge and commitment in them, which are good indicators of leadership, ownership and sustainability. At the district level, joint planning, monitoring and review meetings have shown to be relevant as well and institutionalized in the monthly routine M&E plans of the DEM and DSWO.



### **3.7.2.2 Capacity building of local structures**

Capacity building of local structures is the main focus and core area of the two projects to improve competence and the quality of service delivery. By July 2018, the projects held many sensitizations and trainings involving communities, school governance structures, girls and boys, duty bearers and various stakeholders at different levels to increase their capacity in child rights and protection. As an example, under the Safe Schools Project trainings of DDR clubs have created a certain level of readiness, consciousness and awareness of disaster risks in addition to preparing them as 'evacuators and risk minimisers' to reduce and mitigate the impact. Under the leadership of the District DRR teams, the clubs have drafted community-based disaster preparedness plans detailing sustainable DRR measures to be used at the local level. In many instances the development of DRR plans involved dedicating time, energy and local budgetary resources that shows interest in the activities of the project.

### **3.7.2.3 Capital Investments in Schools**

In all the three districts, communities are providing labour and material assistance to support capital investments in school and community infrastructure in the following areas: renovation of classroom floors in dilapidated conditions to make them safe for children, construction of ramps for CWDs and demonstration toilets as well as nursery establishment and tree planting as part of afforestation activities to prevent floods, erosion and heavy wind from destroying schools. The benefits are two-fold: 1) improving the learning environment, strengthening resilience as well as safety of the targeted schools that will continue to benefit pupils, teachers and communities at large beyond the two years to come, and 2) demonstrating features of an inclusive school thereby serving as models for others to learn from.

## **3.8 Lessons Learned**

The section below aims to provide more details on some of the key lessons learned during the 2-year course of the projects:

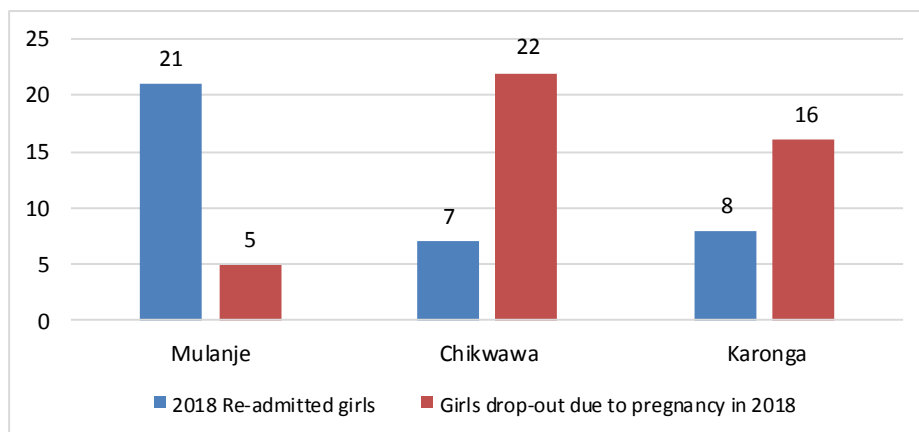
### ***Male involvement is critical to ending child marriages***

In Malawi, especially in the PIM's project districts, older men are perpetrators of child marriages, abuse, such as incest and rape, and gender-based violence. Before the 18+ project and SRHR education in safe spaces, girls never reported cases of abuse to save family honour and avoid negative consequences such as defamation, stigma and retribution. For example, an adolescent girl raped by her stepfather used to be blamed by her family when the stepfather is jailed. Such girls suffered from social stigma from peers at home and school. In view of this, the 18+ project chose men as champions of change in the fight against ending child marriages and has recorded positive results, with declining trends in the cases. Male champions have been reaching out to boys and girls, men, women, parents and local leaders encouraging them to

refrain from child marriages due to repercussions involved. They lead by example and avoid having their own children indulge in such marriages. Throughout the projects, emphasis is on empowerment rather than just knowledge transfer, which is giving girls and boy the courage to say NO to child marriages and remain in school. Focus group discussions in different communities revealed that girls and boys are aware of the marriage age and part of the solution to end early marriages evidenced by an active role they are taking in reporting abuses.

***An integrated approach to end child marriages and promote safe and inclusive schools has shown to be effective for child protection and rights***

In Mulanje, PIM, GENET, WLSA and CADECOM have learned that the two projects complement and synchronize well in ensuring children’s rights and protection. The 18+ project end early and forced marriages and sends children to safe schools under the Safe Schools and Inclusive Project. At these schools, teachers and children are already sensitized to receive the returnees well and provide support they need to learn. The evaluation found declining trends of child marriages and school drop outs in district compared to the other two districts. For example, in Chikwawa interviews with MMCC project manager showed that child marriages and school drop outs are still higher driven by poverty. Girls from poor families and minority groups favour and get married to seasonal labourers working in the sugarcane estates. Upon expiration of contracts, the labourers return to their home villages with their families, leaving the girls and teenage mothers behind. Many girls make uninformed decisions when faced with challenges related to sex and sexuality. Boys in the district also tend to drop out of school, opting for work in the estates and are less likely to return than girls. It is therefore important that, during the remaining period of implementation, the projects should, besides intensifying campaigns for girls’ education, target boys with messages that will encourage them to prioritize education and not the unsustainable economic gains from the short term employment offered by the estates. No organization is running a project like the 18+ to focus specifically on terminating CEFM in Chikwawa. The Safe Schools project addresses some of the problems to help the victims.



**Figure 2:** Number of girls’ readmission and drop out (Source: Midterm school survey)

As **Figure 2** above shows, the number of girls dropping out from school in 2018 due to pregnancies was lowest in Mulanje. This finding confirms the effectiveness of an integrated approach adopted in Mulanje where, besides the Safe Schools project, the 18+ project is focusing on complementary interventions aimed at terminating child, early and forced marriages and supporting girls to get readmitted in school even after getting pregnant.

“I am now convinced that marrying a young girl is disgusting. It is something we are not supposed to do in our culture. Imagine a man cheating and marrying or impregnating your daughter at 14 years whom you want to be in school. This man has a wife and female children as well who are even much older than the girl he has impregnated and worse still stop providing support thereafter. If this girl was your child, how would you feel and figure out her future?” Wondered one of the male champions in Mulanje.

### ***Providing CWDs with opportunities to participate in early education in inclusive settings can help them as well as their communities and parents***

In these projects, providing support to children with disabilities and other special needs in their early years has helped to uphold their rights to education. The awareness campaigns have provided parents with opportunities to learn how they can best support their CWDs and work effectively with school systems to ensure that they are responsive to their children’s needs. Inclusive education is also benefiting children with disabilities and other special needs by allowing them to learn from their peers. Through this, teachers and parents are able to teach other children the values of co-existence and acceptance of human differences.

### ***Lack of understanding, worry and doubts about child care at school prevent communities and parents from sending CWDs to School***

Under the Safe Schools and 18+ projects, PIM and its partners have learned that in a large majority of the communities, parents and guardians, prefer keeping children with disabilities at home to sending them to school. They worry about support, care and acceptance at school among peers and teachers. Children with disabilities on wheelchair need somebody to move them from one place to another, help them seat or stand and so forth. In the absence of the necessary care and disability-friendly learning environment, parents fear from exposing their children to frustrations and more problems. They are desirous of a more inclusive and strong support system for their children within communities and the school environment. The Safe Schools project has taken away the worries and doubts by involving the parents and communities themselves and other learners to understand the existing disabilities and be part of the support system. Different communities are now convinced that disability is not inability. Parents and communities testified about seeing their CWDs as equal to other learners, many of whom showed interest to be in school and integrate with other children.

To increase the quality of education for CWDs in the remaining period of the Safe Schools project, PIM should fund activities under Outcome indicator number 3 “Improving schools’ capacities in inclusion.” Output indicators of interest under this theme are improvement of infrastructure to accommodate CWDs, developing inclusive learning materials and trainings in sign language or braille.

A mother at Kisindile Primary School talked in glowing terms about the future of her deaf and dumb son who had just passed his final exams in standard 3. A school dropout herself, the mother admitted that her son’s performance was inspiring her to consider going back to school and resume her education. Two of the CWDs that the team met expressed their desire, determination and hope to respectively become a teacher and a company manager, when they grow up and finish with their education.

### ***Failure to formulate by-laws for ending harmful cultural practices is negating efforts to end child marriages forever***

Situation analysis studies that PIM conducted revealed a number of drivers for child marriages. Harmful cultural practices were one of the major contributing factors. Initiation ceremonies that happen yearly, organized by communities, and expose girls as young as 8 years old to sexual life were found to be of major concern. These two-week to one-month ceremonies commence in August and counsellors teach sex education to young girls and boys. Lessons cover details about sex to prepare girls and boys for marriage. They are told to practice sex after completion of the lessons. Girls and boys decide who to practice sex with, in many cases it is men who are available. Behaviours such as allowing girls and boys to patronize night events, such as videos, cultural dances and markets, give them an opportunity to meet older boys and men. In the remaining phase of the projects, PIM, GENET and WLSA in particular should involve chiefs actively as custodians of culture to look at the content of the curricula for initiation ceremonies, modify it, train the counsellors, agree on eligible age and attend lessons to check compliance. Age appropriate SRHR that PIM, GENET and WLSA in the 18+ Theory of Change uses ages 10-14 and above. It is also imperative for the project to engage communities in general in discussions on the negative impact of unregulated video show rooms on children’s sexual behaviour and education.

## **Section 4.0 Key Summary of the Findings and Recommendations**

In conclusion, this MTE has found the pace of progression and coverage by the Safe Schools and 18+ projects reasonably good based on the 2 year period of time that has elapsed and human, financial and material resources used.

In many cases, the projects' achievements towards midterm outcomes in the current Results Framework have outreached milestones and targets set. Through various community structures, the projects are withdrawing girls from child marriages and facilitating their readmission into violent free, safe and inclusive schools. The 18+ project in particular has established safe spaces as platforms where boys and girls play, interact with friends and talk about issues that affect them as well as develop SRHR skills they need to remain protected.

By July 2018, the projects were shown to be relevant in the context of the targeted districts, effective, efficient and sustainable assessed based on the OECD-DAC criteria.

In spite of the many achievements recorded, some challenges still remain that need to be addressed to ensure that all the expected results are achieved as planned. A major issue is that of delays in the disbursement of funds. Plan International Malawi's program management unit (PMU) is in Mulanje and requests for funds are handled far at the head office in Lilongwe. A chain of transactions between the two offices delay the pace of funds disbursement. As a consequence, during the course of implementation the projects have lost more than 9 months collectively without doing any activities on the ground.

Other key challenges identified include continued existence of harmful cultural and traditional practices that frustrates efforts to end CEFM forever, inadequate learning facilities, lack of assistive devices for specific conditions of CWDs, lack of teachers and project staff with expertise in special needs education and psychosocial support, and the dilapidated and lack of strong physical infrastructure in schools to withstand disasters. The mushrooming of video show rooms and night markets that are enabling boys and girls to copy and practice sexual behaviours following weak censorship and monitoring practices by authorities is an emerging challenge as well.

Concerning policy challenges, the MTE found that the education policy prohibits the use and discussion of contraceptives (e.g. condoms) in schools but emphasizes on messages that encourage young people to refrain from sex. The reality however is that some older girls and boys are sexually active and the prohibition is a missed opportunity for them to practice safe sex and avoid teenage pregnancies. In addition, the absence of DRR in the current education curricula limits focus on issues of environmental conservation, which are necessary to keep schools safe from natural disasters.

**Achieving Sustainability.** In these projects, sustainability is underpinned by institutionalisation of activities in the daily routine work of the targeted communities, schools and duty bearers; capacity building initiatives to strengthen their competence; increased community and school resilience to disasters through DRR work on afforestation and capital investments for infrastructure development and renovation. In addition, all implementing partners are domicile in the same districts where the two projects are operating and have other projects that will continue to implement even activities initiated by the NORAD funded projects.

Using the existing system of the 18+ and DRR clubs, Theory of Change and *Champions of Change* has brought many benefits, and is an inherently sustainable approach. However, success in future will depend on the ability to further involve government ministries of Education, Agriculture and Gender throughout the rest of the projects' period, and ensure that approaches developed can be embedded in ongoing school activities. Ending child marriages sustainably and keeping children in safe schools is about social change, and will continue to require work at all levels of the society, and with the widest possible range of stakeholders, communities and all women, men, girls and boys.

The following are the key recommendations for PIM and its partners to implement in the remaining period:

### **Recommendations for Plan International Malawi**

1. Adopt a more efficient system of disbursing funds to end breaks in the implementation of the project activities and accelerate impact by:
  - iv. Decentralizing payments of small grants of less than 15 million from country office to field offices to speed up the process of disbursing funds since they also have finance and program staff which can expedite the process.
  - v. Initiating processing of sub grants for the coming quarter after the implementing partners have liquidated 70% of the expenditures and are utilizing the remaining 30% to avoid gaps in funding between the quarters.
  - vi. Simply making an addendum for the next quarter rather than a full financial contract, which requires time to prepare on the part of PIM staff.
2. Monitoring, evaluation and learning are crucial to maintain the pace of achievements attained. There is need to improve on building the evidence base. At the moment, the projects have limited systematic approach through which to collect qualitative data. This means much learning is lost and the projects cannot demonstrate the full extent of their successes in this regard. Besides this, the projects lack the performance monitoring plan in the M&E framework and must develop one. The matrix should give details of the

methods, sources and responsibilities for data collection among other things. It is imperative that the capacity of key staff and individuals in the communities involved in data collection and monitoring be strengthened to foster sustainability of project activities in future. The contracts signed between PIM and the implementing partners should include a clause on data collection, reporting and management emphasizing on capturing of qualitative data and lessons.

3. Strengthen the Results Framework (RF), data collection and reporting by including other outcome indicators of relevance. For example, while the RF captures the enrolment in schools over the years, some information is lacking on the numbers of children (girls, boys and CWDs) still out of school for various reasons, numbers of children in CEFM, girls and boys withdrawn from CEFM who drop out of school after re-admission, and the kind of emotional and psychological support rendered by the projects. In the absence of such information and given that the offices of the DEM and DSWO lack up-to-date data, tracking of whether the projects have ended child marriages and reduced drop outs after making schools safe and violent free becomes difficult to measure.
4. Through the chiefs, engage initiation counsellors (*anamkungwi* in vernacular Chichewa) to look at the content of the curriculum they teach to young girls and boys, modify it and agree on eligible age. Liaise to standardize, train and familiarize them with the revised curriculum and attend their sessions to confirm compliance.
5. Bylaws for ending child marriages are different and in other communities enforcement is not there at all. Speed up the harmonization process to start implementing the bylaws before NORAD projects come to an end. In the process, work closely with chiefs and other local leaders as custodians of culture and ensure the enacted bylaws bar children from patronizing video show rooms, and night dances (*Mchezo* in vernacular Chichewa) and markets, avenues where they meet older boys and men.
6. Increase the budget allocation and the number of days for trainings of community structures from the current 2-3 days to 4-5 days to impart adequate knowledge and skills to the participants e.g. training on special needs and basics of sign language for the teachers and school governance structures.
7. Evidence from the MTE survey shows that the complementarities of the two projects in Mulanje is effective and yielding higher results compared to Chikwawa and Karonga where only the Safe Schools project is operating. In light of this, PIM should develop and expand strategic engagements with other organizations that have been implementing programmes aimed at ending child marriages, such as UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, and GIZ to leverage efforts. PIM should also strengthen existing partnerships with YONECO,

MACOHA, FEDOMA, WVI and Montfort School to accelerate impact. The Strategic Engagement should be the direct responsibility of the PIM Project Team Leader.

### **Recommendations for Implementing CSO Partners**

- 1.** Improve on the monitoring of girls and boys (teenage mothers and fathers) re-admitted to ensure they remain in school. In some cases, such older girls and boys are lacking the necessary support to overcome challenges like mockery, bullying and teasing by other learners, which leads to absenteeism and eventually dropping out of school.
- 2.** Implement outcome and output indicators that have lagged behind. For example, outcome indicator number 3 “Improving schools’ capacities in inclusion” particularly concerning improvement of infrastructure to accommodate CWDs, developing inclusive learning materials and trainings in sign language or braille.
- 3.** Develop and implement an exit strategy to be rolled out over the next two years. The exit strategy needs to take into account sustainability of achievements, sustainability of approach (community engagement and mobilization, the girl-centred, do-no-harm and safe spaces approaches), and the need for increased and embedded government capacity and ownership. For this to happen, start indicating progress towards sustainability in all remaining Quarterly Reports e.g. in terms of how the projects are driving down the cost per child ratio and giving evidence of institutional uptake and budgeting of interventions put in place.

The projects should also increase the involvement and training of local structures (SMCs, Mother Groups and PTAs), staff from partner CSOs and district-based government duty bearers (e.g. teachers, PEAs, DEMs and DSWO). With further capacity building, there is a good chance that the local structures and duty bearers involved can facilitate expansion and wider replication of the project activities in future. Areas to focus the training on include M&E for the girl-centred and inclusive education programs, basics of special needs education, principles of psychology to deal well with teenage mothers and fathers in and out of school, budgeting, fund raising and financial management.



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## Annex 1:

### Gantt Chart for the Evaluation

#	Deliverable	Deadline	2018									
			June		July				Aug			
			Wk1	Wk2	Wk3	Wk4	Wk5	Wk6	Wk7	Wk8	Wk9	
1	Inception report submission by the consultant	19 June	■									
2	PIM CO and NNO feedback to the consultant	21 June	■									
3	Final inception report submission	26 June	■	■								
4	Training of enumerators, pretesting and final review of tools	2-4 July			■							
5	Field work - data collection and report drafting by the consultant	8-25 July				■	■	■				
6	Draft report submission by the consultant	8 August							■			
7	Presentation of the findings to PIM in Liwonde, Machinga	15 August								■		
8	Final submission of the evaluation report by the consultant	24 August									■	

## Annex 2:

### A List of Schools Visited in the Evaluation\*

#	School Name	District	Head Teacher's Name	Phone
1	<b>Namphungo</b>	Mulanje	Sebastian Phiri	0995614511
2	Chisawani	Mulanje	Briton Mbetewe	0888532043
3	Chidziwe	Mulanje	Evalistus Takhiwa	0995327293
4	<b>Thawale</b>	Mulanje	Daniel Chisale	0888124111
5	Thundu	Mulanje	Samuel Goshi	0881100132
6	<b>Khwalala</b>	Mulanje	Gereson Malufula	0881964913
7	<b>Mgodi</b>	Mulanje	Ignatius Msosa	0999482117
8	<b>Muhiyo</b>	Mulanje	Emmanuel Kasiyama	0883851616
9	<b>Muonekera</b>	Mulanje	Enock Bikiso	0881445172
10	Nankuyu	Mulanje	Charles Makhoyi	0884046504
11	Tomali	Chikwawa	Vincent Makolo	0884490145
12	Mangulenje	Chikwawa	Julius Thatcher	0882199205
13	Lengwe	Chikwawa	Beatrice Kopulande	0888541232
14	Biasi	Chikwawa	A. R Bhimingo	0888054808
15	Nyamphota	Chikwawa	Edward Phiri	0999642110
16	Mwanza	Chikwawa	William Chifundeni	0888149845
17	Namicheni	Chikwawa	Ruth Salimu	0995466250
18	St Mathews	Chikwawa	Francis Phiri	0998370214
19	Sekeni	Chikwawa	Chimtambo Njoloma	0999464080
20	Makanga	Chikwawa	Kambani Thesi	0886923534
21	Nchalo CCAP	Chikwawa	Grace Chuma	0881068561
22	Kasoba	Karonga	Benson Mbewe	0997558613
23	Silu	Karonga	Robson Mwentende	0882476509
24	Masoko	Karonga	Benjamin Kaponda	0993686006
25	Chiwondo	Karonga	Tryvin Mghogho	0884339112
26	Lupaso	Karonga	Mr. Mweso	0884710781
27	Kisindile	Karonga	Jasper Mkandawire	0995933389
28	Lukulu	Karonga	Wycliffe Mzedi	0888120830
29	Lemero	Karonga	Bruno Msiska	0995140821
30	Chinsebe	Karonga	Rose Mwaulambo	0999361493

\*Schools in bold participate in both projects

## Annex 3:

### Names and Contact Details of Key Persons Consulted

#	Name	Organization	Position	Phone Number
1	Jane Mweziwina	PIM	Project Manager	0999843909
2	Alinikisa Mphongolo	PIM	Project Officer (18+ Project)	0884256126
3	Allan Mhlanzi	PIM	Project Officer (Safe Schools Project)	0995444258
4	Beda Mnjeza	PIM	M&E Officer	0999329930
5	Faith Phiri	GENET	Executive Director	0888205018
6	Tamara Mhango	GENET	Project Officer	0993444930
7	Mandinda Zungu	CADECOM	Project Officer	0996382237
8	Nelson Nkungula	CADECOM	Project Officer	0881202505
9	Marshall Aucray Nsonga	MMCC	Project Officer	0999747051
10	Jabess Nyirenda	FOCUS	Project Officer	0999210576
11	Clara Lungu	WLSA	Project Officer	0994707686
12	Andrew Chimwaza	Mulanje District Council	Safe Schools Desk Officer	0994681612
13	Robert Sawiche	Mulanje District Council	District Social Welfare Officer	0999429084
14	Charles Muyanika	DEM	School Health & Nutrition Officer (Chikwawa)	
15	Benito Mpapa	DEM (Chikwawa)	Special Needs Desk Officer	0888311599
16	Franklin Mtambo	Karonga District Council	District Disaster Desk Officer	0888930260

## Annex 4:

### Filled Value Addition Tool

The table below shows information on the value added by the project to the five implementing partners. It focuses on the areas of Capacity Building, Linkages with Duty Bearers, Improvement in Power Balance and Learning from Exchanges.

#### i. Capacity Building

Output Indicator	Progress (2016-2017)					Comments
	GENET	MMCC	WLSA	CADECO M	FOCUS	
Number of CSOs that have received capacity building from Plan on gender equality	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	4 CSOs namely MMCC, CADECOM, FOCUS and WLSA received capacity building on Gender Equality under the project. GENET reported that it already had the capacity at the beginning of the project.
Number of CSOs that have received capacity building from Plan on inclusion of people with disabilities	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	Out of the target of 5, only GENET and MMCC have been trained on inclusion of people with disabilities in project activities. CADECOM reported that they already had existing expertise on inclusion which has been used to achieve positive inclusion outcomes
Number of CSOs that have received capacity building from Plan on advocacy	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	Only MMCC out of the 5 CSOs received capacity building on advocacy from Plan
Number of CSOs that have received capacity building from Plan on child protection	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	All the 5 CSOs have received capacity building on child protection (CP). The CSOs indicated that CP is a theme that is repeated at each and every project

						meeting.
Number of CSOs that have received capacity building from Plan on education	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	All the 5 CSOs have received capacity building on education in emergency situations.
Number of CSOs that have received capacity building from Plan on child marriage	<b>NO</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>YES</b>	3 (MMCC, WLSA and FOCUS) CSOs have been targeted with capacity building on Child Marriage. All the partners however indicated that issues of Child Marriage are mainstreamed in their programs as a strategy for retaining girls and vulnerable children in school
Number of CSOs that have received capacity building from Plan on safe schools	<b>NO</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Capacity building on safe schools has been happening continuously since the beginning of the project, particularly focusing on the 3 implementing partners of the Safe Schools Project namely MMCC, CADECOM and FOCUS. FOCUS however recommends that more time is needed for the organisation to be fully equipped on delivering comprehensive support for safe schools
Number of CSOs that have received capacity building from Plan on youth economic empowerment	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	Training on youth economic empowerment was delivered, targeting GENET because of its role in the 18+ project. The training was not considered as applicable to the other CSOs
Number of CSOs that have received capacity building from Plan on financial management	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	All the 5 CSOs were trained on financial management. The training that was done in Zomba was particularly highlighted as critical
Number of CSOs that have	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	Capacity building on programme

received capacity building from Plan on programme management						management has been a continuous theme under the project for all the 5 implementing CSOs, FOCUS however indicated that there is still more room for improvement
Number of CSOs that have received capacity building from Plan on results management	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	All the 5 CSOs benefited from Plan's capacity building on results management which emphasised on sustainability. FOCUS however indicated that they still need more support on this
Number of CSOs that have received capacity building from Plan on strategy or fund-raising	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>NO</b>	None of the 5 CSOs received capacity building from Plan on strategy or fund-raising. However, as an issue, it was discussed within CADECOM in its directors meeting

**ii. Linkages with Duty Bearers**

Questions	Progress (2016-2017)					Comments
	GENET	MMCC	WLSA	CADECOM	FOCUS	
The number of networks/alliance that CSOs have joined as a result of partnership with Plan	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	GENET joined 2 technical working groups on child marriage, 1 each at national and district level. CADECOM joined 6 networks namely District education network, District civil protection committee and Child protection network, National DRR Task Force on Shelter and WASH. The other 3 CSOs did not join any as a result of their partnership with Plan
The number of CSOs that have established contacts with duty bearers as a result of partnership with Plan	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	All the 5 CSOs established contacts with duty bearers as a result of partnership with Plan. GENET and WLSA built partnership with district sector staff and local leaders including chiefs. MMCC established partnership with ILLOVO, FEDOMA and MACOHA. CADECOM is working with duty bearers clustered in 30 community under its 10 target schools in Mulanje



### iii. Improvement in Power Balance

Questions	Progress (2016-2017)					Comments
	GENET	MMCC	WLSA	CADECOM	FOCUS	
Number of CSOs that report improvement in participation	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	The 5 CSOs agreed (4 on a scale of 5) that they have experienced improvement in participation as a result of their partnership with Plan, citing increased school enrolment as an example.
Number of CSOs that report improvement in innovation	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	None of the 5 CSOs reported to have experienced improvement in innovation, attributing this to their limited participation in developing priority activities for the projects
Number of CSOs that report improvement in inclusion	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	The 5 CSOs reported an improvement in inclusion, citing the inclusion of children with disabilities in the projects activities as an example. Poor support infrastructure e.g. assistive devices, was however an issue of concern
Number of CSOs that report improvement in mutual empowerment	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	All the 5 CSOs have reported an improvement in the empowerment of their target communities, indicating that the communities are now able to do what they are supposed to do because of skills and knowledge gained in different trainings.
Number of CSOs that report improvement in ownership	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	The 5 CSOs reported an improvement in community ownership of the projects. CADECOM however reported that some communities are still failing to contribute towards implementation of certain

						activities.
Number of CSOs that report improvement in sustainability	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	The 5 CSOs reported that they have experienced an improvement in program/project sustainability. They pointed out that they have been able to build capacity of existing local structures and mentors to promote ownership of the project. <b>In</b> particular, CADECOM reported that 80% of the committees that they are working with are fully utilizing knowledge and skills gained during trainings, highlighting it as evidence towards sustainability
Number of CSOs that report improvement in responsiveness	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	The 5 CSOs reported a steady improvement in responsiveness among their target communities, pointing at the active involvement of most school and community structures in the project activities.
Number of CSOs that report improvement in transparency and accountability	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	All the 5 CSOs have reported an improvement in transparency and accountability as a result of their partnership with Plan. GENET indicated that they are using this experience in preparing reports for their other donors and stakeholders. MMCC also pointed out to have had improvements in monitoring and preparation of liquidation reports as a result of this experience.

#### iv. Learning from Exchanges

Questions	Progress (2016-2017)					Comments
	GENET	MMCC	WLSA	CADECOM	FOCUS	
Number of knowledge exchange events between CSOs facilitated by Plan	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	The Safe Schools Project provided an opportunity for 2 exchange visits between the CSOs which were done in Chikwawa and Karonga. The annual review meetings were also highlighted as being a good platform for sharing ideas and cross learning
Number of external networks (non-Plan network) CSOs gain from working with Plan	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	Only CADECOM, out of the 5 CSOs took part in a non-Plan facilitated knowledge exchange event as a result of partnering with Plan namely; the launch of National disaster strategy and training manual in Mzuzu. Pavilions were mounted to share information with other stakeholders

## Annex 5:

### Filled Community Participation Tool

The table below summarises the degree of participation (0 – Not involved 1- Marginally involved 2. Moderately involved 3 – Substantially involved) of various stakeholders in the Planning, Implementation and Evaluation of the Project.

Phase	Questions	Government	Target communities	Children/ youth both genders	Member of marginalized groups	PLAN country office	NNO	Observations /comments
<b>Planning</b>	Are you involved in the following planning components of the Project?							
	- Giving inputs during project planning	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	Consultations were done with Government stakeholders in planning for the project. The District Social Welfare Office (DSWO) in Mulanje reported that they provided input in the planning stage of the project including the need to orient and use Community Child Protection Workers (CCPWs) and Child Protection Committees (CPC) as change agents for ending Child Marriages. The District Executive Committee (DEC) was also involved in deciding the location the project was to be

								implemented. However, they are not involved in the annual/quarterly planning and review meetings and as for the target communities, they reported that they too were not consulted and, although they are involved in community level planning and review meetings, they reported that their input is hardly taken on board.
	- Be informed on project goals and/activities	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	Government stakeholders and the target communities were informed of the project goal and activities during the project planning through a presentation made to the DEC. However, there is no evidence that children and other marginalised groups were informed
	- Be informed on project' targets and milestones	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	Government stakeholders are periodically informed of the project targets and milestones during the DEC meetings. However, there is no evidence that children and other marginalised groups are actively informed
	- Be informed on project budget	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	Government stakeholders are aware of the project budget since a presentation was done at the DEC. The communities however are not

								fully aware of the project budget although they were sometimes informed of the budget lines that the project can and cannot support
<b>Implementation</b>	Are you involved in the following implementation components of the Project?							
	- Taking part in monitoring of the project	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	While government stakeholders are involved in the implementation of some activities of the project (e.g. child marriage awareness campaigns; trainings of community structures such as the CPC; participating in open days), they reported that, at the district level they are not involved in monitoring of the project activities. Community structures such as the CPC, mother groups, Male Champions are however involved in monitoring and, in some communities, are able to provide some reports to the implementing partner CSOs. The Country Office is however involved in project monitoring
	- Soliciting regular	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	District public officers receive feedback through both verbal and

	feedback from duty bearers							written reports from community structures (e.g. the CPC) and other government employees such as the PEAs and CPWs. The Country Office gets feedback from the CSO implementing partners to track the indicators of the projects' Results Framework
	- Analysis of why the results are as they are	0	1	0	0	3	3	Unlike the government stakeholders, Plan Country office is routinely involved in analysis of the projects' results so as to be able to update the results framework. To some extent, the target communities are also involved during the periodic reviews of the project
	- Analysis of what can be adjusted to improve the result	0	1	1	1	3	3	The Country Office and NNO conduct analyses of what can be adjusted to improve the results. Government stakeholders however requested to be more involved in review and analysis of the project results. As pointed out above, communities reported that their input is hardly taken on board.
<b>Evaluation</b>	Are you involved in the following evaluation components of							

	the project?							
	- Providing inputs on the questions to be asked during evaluation	0	0	0	0	3	3	The ToRs and tools for this evaluation were developed by the Country Office with input from NNO but Government stakeholders and the target communities were not involved
	- Providing inputs (feedback) during evaluation	3	3	3	3	3	3	During this evaluation, the process involved various stakeholders (government, target communities, the Country Office, etc.) as sources of information
	- Be informed on the findings of the evaluation					3	3	



## Annex 6:

### Terms of References for the Evaluation



#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### FOR

### THE MID TERM EVALUATION OF PROJECTS UNDER THE NORAD AGREEMENT 2016-2019

#### 1.0 Background

#### 1.1 Plan International Malawi

Plan international Malawi (PIM) is a child centered Non - Governmental Organisation which is dedicated to the rights of children and to working with the most marginalized groups. Plan International Malawi programming strives for a just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls. Its main goal is "***Children in Malawi, especially adolescent girls, transition to responsible adulthood, in societies that respect their rights***". This goal is supported by the four thematic areas which are within its Country Strategy 2017-2022 namely; quality health services, safe water and sanitation; child protection and participation; inclusive education and adequate standards of living. These programs are implemented in line with the programme and influence approach. PIM has a country strategy that seeks to respond to the realisation of child rights to fill the gaps identified in the context of Malawi with a focus on girls. Plan International Malawi is fully committed to the gender responsive safeguarding of all children and young people from all forms of violence. The organisation takes very seriously the responsibility and duty to ensure that, as an organisation, and anyone who represents it does not in any way harm, abuse or commit any other act of violence against children and young people or place them at risk of the same.

## **1.2 Overview of the NORAD funded projects to be assessed**

Plan International Malawi (PIM) through Mulanje and Mzuzu program areas with support from Norway National Office (NNO) is implementing "*The Promoting Safe Schools and Inclusive Education Projects*" in Chikwawa, Mulanje and Karonga districts and "*the 18+ Ending Child Marriages Project*" in Mulanje district. The safe schools and inclusive education project is being implemented by PIM in partnership with Catholic Development Commission in Malawi (CADECOM), Mother Mary Children's Center (MMCC) in Chikwawa, Foundation for Community Support Services (FOCUSS) in Karonga. This project mainly aims at ensuring that children in the high risk communities in Malawi particularly in the project impact areas have access to safer schools and are able to enjoy their right to quality education in an all-inclusive school environment. Under the 18+ project, PIM in partnership with Girls Empowerment Network (GENET) and Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) is working towards building the capacity of various players at community, school and district level to prevent violence and reduce abuses among children and adolescent girls. .

## **2.0 The Purpose of the Evaluation**

The overall purpose of the mid-term evaluation of the project is to assess progress made in achieving the expected results/outcomes, document good practices and the lessons learnt; examine limitations faced and come up with recommendations for improving implementation of the interventions towards the rest of the project's life cycle and also inform development and planning of similar future projects.

## **3.0 Scope and scale of the evaluation**

The evaluation will be done at the country level, based on the latest result framework, which is a consolidated total results of all NORAD Frame Agreement projects in the country. From here on this will be referred to as **Country Program**.

## **4.0 Content of the evaluation**

The evaluation will be organized in chapters/headings according to the following sequence

#### 4.1 Assessment of project management

4.1.1 To what extent does this project fit with the implementing partner organizations' own strategies?

4.1.2 Describe the monitoring routine, data collection/documentation routine, learning routine in the project both at Plan and at implementing partners' levels.

The description should cover two dimensions: situation as is and situation as wishes. We are interested in "routine" which implies system that are regularly implemented. If there has not been specific routine made yet – please say so in the situation as is.

	Situation as is	Situation as wishes
Monitoring routine		
Data collection routine		
Learning routine		

4.1.3 To what extent do the staff **at field level** in Plan International Malawi and in implementing CSOs have good understanding of what the project tries to achieve or are they unclear?

4.1.4 What are the routines for Anti-corruption in the project at Plan level and at partner organization level? A list of routines are adequate, no need to elaborate in details.

4.1.5 If the project has experienced underutilization or overutilization of its yearly budget deviation exceeding 5% per year in 2017, please describe the main reasons for this **excluding** those caused by delay of fund transfer.

4.1.6 Any recommendations to strengthen the internal project management at Plan level seen from the evaluator perspective? Please formulate them as simple, concrete recommended actions. Please also suggest who could deliver this.

#### 4.2 Effectiveness and efficiency

Going through the Result Frame work for Country Program. The evaluation shall indicate if the project has achieved reasonable level of results for each of the outcome indicator, given the resources it has (the budget level) base on the data collected during 2015 (baseline year), 2016 and 2017, interview with relevant stakeholders to answer the following questions:

### **For each outcome indicator**

- 4.2.1 Is the **pace of progression** reasonable (use targets and achieved data in result framework). Please recommend improvement of efficiency nature, if needed.
- 4.2.2 Is **the target/coverage** reasonable given the resources? Recommend improvement on efficiency, if relevant.
- 4.2.3 Which specific areas of **challenges are there** that need to be addressed to ensure that results is achieved and with good quality (effectiveness) for a particular indicator? Recommend ways to address these challenges.

### **4.3 Gender equality**

- 4.3.1 Was the project planning and implementation based on a situation analysis where girls, boys, women and men of various social backgrounds were able to have a say and present their own views? Give examples of how the analysis informed the project design and implementation.
- 4.3.2 Are there differential impacts on girls, boys, women and men (intentional or unintentional) observed during implementation? Do these lead to adjustment in the implementation? In which way?

### **4.4 Disability inclusion**

- 4.4.1 To what extent have children/youth with disabilities thus adolescent girls and boys (19–24), parents of girls and boys with disabilities and/or organisations of people with disabilities (DPOs) been engaged and taken part in the project, either as active participants or as collaborating partner organisations? (Please elaborate.)
- 4.4.2 What are the strengths or weaknesses found in disability inclusion efforts?
- 4.4.3 What lessons can we draw from engaging or disengaging boys, girls, men and women with disabilities?

### **4.5 Unexpected results**

Are there **unexpected results** both positive and negative that the project should document for future learning?

#### **4.6 Added value and Participation:**

In this section, we ask the evaluation team to use the given tools to assess Added-value and Participation level in this program.

##### **A) Added-value assessment.**

- a. Use the Added-value assessment tool.
- b. Interview the Civil Society Organization partners of Plan
- c. Fill the data in the tool.
- d. The completed document is attached to the evaluation report as annex.

##### **B) Participation**

- a. Use the Participation checklist to assess degree of participation in the Plan program.
- b. Interview relevant actors.
- c. The completed document is to be attached to the evaluation report as annex.

#### **4.7 Cross-cutting issues:**

Assess how the project address the following issues

4.7.1 Environmental vulnerability to climate change that affects the results of the project

4.7.2 Has the program put in place interventions that will increase sustainability of the results after the program ends in two years? Please give specific examples.

#### **5.0 Roles**

##### **Norway National Office (NNO)**

1. Provide the Standard Format of ToR.
2. Received a decision document from CO which contains
  - a. CVs of the last two or three candidates being considered to lead the evaluation. Preferably with a copy of previously produce evaluation report and TOR of that report.
  - b. Suggestion by CO, which candidate should be chosen with reasons.
3. Give inputs on the first draft of the report.
4. Follow up with CO, the recommendations from the Evaluation.
5. An NNO staff will take part in the evaluation team as member.

## **Country Office (CO)**

1. Lead the evaluator selection process.
2. Produce decision document which contains the item under 2 above. Share this with NNO.
3. Approve methodology and conception report.
4. Facilitate logistic, contacts and all information about the program to the evaluators.
5. Provide feedback to the earlier drafts.
6. Follow up the recommendations from the evaluation as appropriate.

## **Evaluator**

1. Lead and coordinate the evaluation in close collaboration with Plan staff, partners and relevant stakeholders.
2. In carrying out the evaluation, the consultant(s) is/are expected to familiarize him/herself/themselves with secondary data relevant to this project from Plan, her partners, communities and other stakeholders.
3. Develop a data collection methodology appropriate to answer each of the questions posed in the TOR. Information should come from both insiders and outsiders of the projects to ensure objectivity and triangulation. The methodology will be discussed and approved by Plan Country Office before launching the investigation.
4. Analyse data and document the findings according to the structure given in this TOR.
5. Produce the evaluation report that is short and to the point. Recommendations should be concrete.
6. Share the draft report with Plan CO, NNO and its partners for feedback.
7. Finalized the report.

## **6.0 Quality of information**

Data collection shall strive to give a representative picture of the situation. The consultant(s) shall apply participatory evaluation techniques to gather both quantitative and qualitative

data necessary to answer all the questions the TOR. The consultant shall ensure that the voice of women and marginalized groups is heard.

## 7.0 Deliverables

- i. An **acceptable inception report** and evaluation work plan.
- ii. An **acceptable draft report** after the analysis of target group disaggregated data for Plan and stakeholders' feedback.
- iii. An **acceptable final report** in English of no more than 35 pages (excluding references and annexes) utilizing the format below:
  - Front page with title of the evaluation, **date** and authors of the report
  - Executive summary that presents the key points of the different sections.
  - Methodology and Limitations of the evaluation
  - Description of the project or programme
  - Findings and analysis according to section 3 above
  - Conclusions
  - Relevant annexes, which as minimum must include:
    - i. List of people/organizations interviewed or consulted
    - ii. Bibliography of the documents reviewed
    - iii. Evaluation work plan
    - iv. Terms of Reference for the evaluation
- i. A summary of the findings (in Ms PowerPoint) to be used for subsequent dissemination.
- ii. The final cleaned dataset used for analysis and production of final report in an accessible electronic format (csv, excel, SPSS, STATA). All raw sex age disaggregated data (quantitative data files, transcripts of FGDs etc.) should also be submitted to Plan for reference and future use.

## **8.0 Bidding process and requirements**

### **Required information**

1. A detailed technical proposal clearly outlining the proposed gender responsive methods for the evaluation and examples of gender sensitive tools to be used. The disability inclusion perspective should also be taken into account in the evaluation.
2. Curriculum Vitae(s) of proposed staff outlining relevant education expertise and experience including gender.
3. A table clearly stating the level of effort of each proposed team member.
4. A financial proposal with a detailed breakdown of costs for planning and carrying out the evaluation study.
5. A proposed timeframe detailing activities and a schedule/work plan (including a Gantt chart), in line with the timeframe provided in this TOR and with consideration for the time it will take for PIM to review documents (inception and evaluation report, etc.) before finalization.
6. Names and contact information of three references who can be contacted regarding relevant experience.
7. The consulting team/firm profile (including all details of the firm and board of directors)

### **The detailed technical proposal should:**

- Show a thorough understanding of these terms of reference
- Include a description of the preferred gender sensitive data gathering and sampling methods
- Demonstrate previous experience in conducting quantitative and qualitative study approaches
- Demonstrate inclusivity gender equality and non-discrimination in the conduct of the study
- Demonstrate approaches that will be used to ensure child protection and ethics and principles will be applied throughout the design and data collection phases of the project, and how marginalized or vulnerable women, girls, boys and men will be included.



**The financial proposal should contain:**

- Itemized consultancy fees/costs
- Itemized field data collection expenses, including lines for enumerator compensation and transportation
- Itemized administrative expenses
- Validity period of quotations
- Adheres to payment schedule of 30% upon production of an acceptable draft report and 70% upon production of acceptable final report (30:70).

**The consulting team/firm profile should contain:**

- The full names of all participating consultants and their roles, including technical expertise
- Physical address of the firm
- Telephone number (s) of the firm (if applicable) and participating consultants
- Full name and contact information of the contact person within the consulting team
- Date of registration and Registration Number
- Copy of registration or other certificate, VAT and PIN
- Full names of Directors/Proprietors

**10. Timeframe**

The assignment is expected to take a maximum of 60 working days to accomplish the task. Tasks shall include desk-review, field work preparation, data tools development, data collection and analysis, report-writing and dissemination. Take note that these proposed days are subject to agreement with Plan International and the consultant to determine what is plausible.

## **11.0 Ownership**

All documents, project designs, completed survey instruments, drawings, technical data and other information including FGD transcripts shall remain the property of Plan International and shall be treated as confidential by the consultant(s) at all times. Plan reserves the right to access these documents at any point during the consultancy period. They shall not be made available to any third party whatsoever, in any form, without the prior written approval of a properly authorised employee of Plan International.

The utilisation of all proposals, plans and reports and other information provided by the consultant(s) is the property of Plan International and the use thereof is solely at the discretion of Plan International. All documents and other papers, whether in soft or hard copy and whether containing data or other information, provided by Plan International shall be returned complete to Plan International upon completion of the assignment.

## **12.0 Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Ethical Consideration**

The consultant and all personnel employed on the consultancy will read, understand and sign Plan's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy as expression of their commitment to follow the policy to the letter. It is also the responsibility of the Consultant to ensure that all persons hired, used or otherwise consulted by him/her are made familiar with the Policy and agree to abide by it during the execution of this work. The consultants work should indicate how ethical consideration will be upheld during the study ensuring that rights of the children especially the girls are not infringed upon. The consultant shall ensure that issues to do with child safeguarding and protection shall be considered in their work and a statement on how they intend to adhere to the child protection standards for the evaluation. Failure to conform to the Safe Guarding Children and Young People Policy will lead the termination of the agreement between PIM and the consultant

### **13.0 Evaluation and research Standards**

The consultant will pay strict attention to Plan International's detailed evaluation and research standards which will be shared to the team during the initial briefing. Failure to adhere to the standards would have repercussions on the progress of the evaluation.

### **14.0 Consultant(s) Qualifications**

The consultancy team should have an integrated team of experts in child protection, education with a bias in early child hood care and development, M&E specialist, statisticians and public health experts with demonstrated, high level experience in evaluations for development projects with a good working knowledge of gender equity, disability inclusion and child participation.

The Consultants must have the following competencies:

- The lead consultant must have a background in child protection, education with a bias on early child hood care and development or related social sciences field (at a minimum of Master's Degree Level) and have particular expertise in child protection integrated with education and disability inclusion
- Team members should have a minimum qualification of a degree in social sciences, education, health, child protection and an extensive knowledge and understanding of community based child protection mechanisms
- Team members should have at least five years' experience in the area of child protection/ early childhood care
- Experience in the formulation and management of monitoring and evaluation tool for child protection projects will be an added advantage
- Demonstrate evidence of undertaking similar work in East Africa for child protection projects within the past 3 years
- High level of professionalism and an ability to work independently and in high-pressure situations under tight deadlines.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills

- He/she or a team member must be a qualified statistician
- The consultant must have working experience in Malawi and be familiar with the cultural background of rural communities where the project operates
- Demonstrate experience with community development approaches; gender responsive participatory methodologies, disability inclusion, environmental protection, and children participation.
- Evidenced experience in conducting gender sensitive participatory qualitative and quantitative studies
- Evidenced report writing (English language) and documentation skills
- Demonstrates meeting all legal requirements.

## 15.0 Submission of Proposals

The technical and financial proposals MUST be prepared in conformance to the guidelines and template provided in this terms of reference as minimum standard. All applications received by the submission date will be reviewed by a selection committee based on pre-determined objective criteria. Upon selection, the consultant(s)/ consulting firm would be invited for a discussion and requested to submit a detailed inception report and work plan prior to starting any data collection exercise.

Bidders should submit the technical and financial proposal in **two separate envelopes** clearly marked "Technical Proposal" and "Financial Proposal" and sealed in **one plain envelope** clearly marked "***TERMS OF REFERENCE TO CONDUCT A MID TERM EVALUATION FOR THE CHILD PROTECTION PROJECT UNDER THE NORAD GRANT***"

and addressed to:

*The Internal Procurement Committee  
Plan International Malawi, Airtel complex- City Centre, Behind Bisnowaty Filling Station  
P.O Box 2053,  
Lilongwe, Malawi*

Closing date for submission of proposals: **Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at 14:00 hours.**