

Terms of Reference for Impact Evaluation of the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Programme

A. Background and Context

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the European Union (EU) have been supporting the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW) to implement the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE) Programme in Malawi. The programme aims to support Government's commitment to reduce gender inequalities between men, women and youths (girls and boys) in accessing productive resources and development opportunities, as well as promoting decision making in order to contribute positively to the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) and accelerate attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The 3 year pilot programme became effective on 18th May, 2012 and was initially designed to end on 17th May, 2015. However, a one year no cost extension to the programme implementation period was granted in April 2015 to enable implementation of remaining activities thereby revising the official end date to 17 May 2016

The Programme is implemented in 13 districts of Malawi representing the diversity of gender issues in all the three regions as follows: Chitipa, Karonga, Nkhatabay and Mzimba in the Northern Region; Dowa, Mchinji, Salima and Dedza in the Central Region; and Mangochi, Machinga, Chiradzulu, Chikwawa and Nsanje in the Southern Region. Within these districts, the programme is implemented in two (2) Traditional Authorities which were selected by their respective District Councils based on (i) poor socio-economic and cultural indicators; (ii) hard to reach and under-served communities; (iii) prevalence of cultural practices that promote gender inequality and HIV transmission; (iv) presence of existing structures and programmes; and (v) high HIV prevalence rates. By targeting these 13 districts, the programme is expected to improve these indicators by economically, socially and legally empowering marginalised groups to tap development opportunities.

The 4 priority sectors of the programme are Agriculture, Transport, Education and Health. These sectors were identified as key in contributing to economic development and are deemed to provide strong opportunities for advancement of gender equality and empowerment. The programme uses a comprehensive approach in reaching men and women including the youths in Malawi. The 4 Key Result Areas of the programme include (i) strengthening the institutional capacity of the National Gender Machinery; (ii) strengthening the capacity for gender mainstreaming in the priority sectors of Agriculture, Transport, Education, and Health; (iii) promotion of gender equality and equity among men, women and youths through economic, social and legal empowerment; and (iv) understanding and addressing social-cultural practices and behaviours that predispose men and women to HIV and Gender Based Violence.

Since 2013, several activities have been implemented by the programme to address gender needs in the 4 priority sectors at community level; promote gender equality at community level through economic, social and legal empowerment; and address some of the social cultural practices and behaviours that predispose men and women particularly young girls to HIV and GBV. Efforts that have been undertaken to address gender needs in the priority

sectors include establishment of mobile clinics; establishment of girls' hostels; rehabilitation of school blocks, construction of girls' toilets in schools; and rehabilitation of health centres.

As regards to promotion of gender equality through economic, social and legal empowerment; activities that have been undertaken include (i) popularization of gender related laws and prevention of GBV through community awareness campaigns, legal literacy clubs and multi-media campaigns; (ii) building capacity of law enforcers in gender related laws to effectively handle domestic violence cases; (iii) strengthening promotion of timely access to justice through establishment of mobile courts and legal aid clinics; strengthening of reporting mechanisms, handling and management of GBV through establishment of Community Action Groups, women groups, men groups, girls only clubs, boys only clubs and One Stop Centres; (iv) strengthening the capacity of community structures to engage duty bearers and policy makers to address various gender related issues affecting their communities; (v) raising awareness and changing behaviour of communities on gender equality, women empowerment and link between GBV and Sexual Reproductive Health; (vi) provision of capital for women's businesses through Village Saving and Loan clubs; (vii) promotion of girl's education and reduction of girl's drop-out rates in school through mother groups; education bursaries, provision of learning materials, back to school campaigns and menstrual hygiene management; and (viii) promotion of literacy levels for rural communities particularly women through strengthening of adult literacy programmes

Efforts that have been undertaken to address some of the social cultural practices and behaviours that predispose men and women particularly young girls to HIV and GBV include (i) raising awareness of communities on harmful cultural practices through community campaigns and edutainment activities; (ii) lobbying for elimination and modification of harmful cultural practices through engagement with Traditional and Religious leaders; (iii) elimination of harmful cultural practices through implementation of by-laws; and (iv) building assertiveness skills of women and young girls particularly married adolescent girls.

In 2013, a baseline study on the prevalence of Gender Based Violence in the impact areas of the programme was conducted which collected information on different forms of GBV and awareness of communities on various gender related laws. A baseline study on socio-cultural practices that are practiced in the 13 target districts was also conducted in 2013 which attempted to document social-cultural practices that increase the vulnerability of women and girls to contract HIV; the relationship between some of the socio-cultural practices and gender equality including GBV; and institutions at community level that perpetuates harmful cultural practices. Another study was also conducted in 2013 to understand the barriers to social, legal and economic empowerment of women with the purpose of identifying appropriate strategies of elimination of the identified barriers. A baseline study on decision making for married adolescent girls related to health, social and economic participation was also conducted in 2014.

The findings of the above studies have been used over the years to guide the programme on prioritization of socio-economic and legal empowerment interventions aimed at reducing the vulnerability of women and girls to gender inequality, GBV, HIV and access to quality SRH services. The findings have also guided the programme in coming up with appropriate interventions for raising awareness and changing behaviour of communities towards gender equality issues and influencing modification or elimination of harmful cultural practice.

Considering that the programme will be ending in May 2016, it is imperative to assess changes that different interventions undertaken the programme have brought to the lives of people and communities in the 13 impact districts.

B. Evaluation purpose and target audience

The purpose of the impact evaluation is to assess changes that the programme has brought to the participating institutions (Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, National AIDS Commission and 13 District Councils), Police officers, Magistrates, Social Welfare Officers, individuals, households and communities in the 13 target districts that were directly or indirectly reached by the programme. This evaluation exercise seeks to demonstrate if the targeted beneficiaries in the 13 target districts are better off or worse off now as compared to those that were not targeted by the programme by establishing causal links between interventions implemented and outcomes realised. Specifically, the impact evaluation exercise seeks to assess the impact of different interventions implemented by the programme on (i) strengthening the capacity for gender mainstreaming in the priority sectors; (ii) promotion of gender equality and equity among men, women and youths through economic, social and legal empowerment; and (iii) understanding and addressing social-cultural practices and behaviours that predispose men and women to HIV and Gender Based Violence.

The findings of the impact evaluation will assist UNFPA, EU, Government of Malawi and other key stakeholders to understand the impact (positive, negative, intended and unintended) that the programme has had on intended beneficiaries at all levels by comparing them with non-programme participants; and where baseline data exists; compare current situation with the baseline status . The findings will also provide valuable lessons to all stakeholders including EU and UNFPA as to what has worked, what has not worked and reasons for each scenario for consideration in the design and implementation of other similar programmes. Most importantly, the findings will provide valuable information to key stakeholders on the level of sustainability and potential for replication of good practices beyond the support of the programme.

C. Evaluation Objectives

The impact evaluation should focus to achieve the following objectives

1. What impact (positive, negative, intended and unintended) has the programme made in the participating institutions, individuals, households and communities within the impact areas of the 13 target districts? What are the long term social and economic changes that the programme has contributed or will likely have on intended beneficiaries and their communities?
2. Are the achievements and interventions of the programme sustainable in the longer term?
3. How relevant was the programme in achieving anticipated outputs and reaching out to intended beneficiaries particularly vulnerable groups?
4. What lessons can be drawn from the programme that can be taken by key stakeholders including EU and UNFPA in designing and implementing similar programmes in future?

Additionally, the impact evaluation should analyse changes that the programme has contributed against the criteria that was used to select the 2 Traditional Authorities in each of the 13 districts where the programme is being implemented. Emphasis should therefore be on establishing whether:-

- Improvements have been made on socio-economic and cultural indicators in the 2 focus Traditional Authorities in each district;
- Access to essential services in health, education, agriculture and transport has improved in hard to reach and under-served communities where the programme is being implemented;
- Prevalence of cultural practices that promote gender inequality and HIV transmission has reduced in the impact areas;
- HIV prevalence rates in the impact areas have reduced.

D. Evaluation Scope, Focus Areas and Key Evaluation Questions

Geographical and Thematic coverage

The programme has supported Government Ministries within the 4 priority sectors, duty bearers in the target districts (Police, Magistrates, Social Welfare Officers, etc.), individuals, households, vulnerable groups, clubs and communities with various interventions which this impact assessment exercise should focus on. The impact evaluation is therefore expected to cover all 13 Districts and national level institutions which participated in the programme particularly Government Ministries in the 4 priority sectors, Ministry of Gender and National AIDS Commission.

Within the focus areas of the programme, thematic areas to be covered by the impact evaluation include (i) gender mainstreaming in sectors; (ii) awareness and knowledge on gender equality, GBV and legal issues particularly gender related laws; (iii) GBV prevention, response and management; (iv) access to justice for women and girls in hard to reach areas (v) social and economic empowerment of women including married adolescent girls, GBV survivors and other vulnerable groups; (vi) girls' education and literacy for women; (vii) community advocacy and lobbying; (viii) elimination and modification of harmful cultural practices; and (ix) capacity building for law enforcers on gender related laws and acts. The evaluation team will be required to decide in cooperation with UNFPA on other thematic areas to include based on the context and background of the programme.

Key evaluation questions for the thematic areas

(i) Gender mainstreaming in sectors

- Do priority sectors, 13 District Councils and local level assembly structures (Area Development Committees and Village Development Committees) in the target districts have the required capacity for gender mainstreaming?
- Has gender been mainstreamed in key sectors of Health, Education, Transport, Agriculture and National AIDS Commission through their coordinating ministries? Is gender reflected in their policies, plans, budgets, strategies and other management tools?

- Is NAC and its HIV Partner organizations mainstreaming gender in their budgets, plans, strategies, M&E tools and other management tools?
- Are the 13 District Councils and local level assembly structures in the 13 target districts mainstreaming gender in their plans, budgets, strategies, monitoring tools and other management tools?
- What type of services, products or infrastructure have been provided or supported by the programme to complement community efforts in addressing development issues in the context of gender related to Health, Education, Transport and Agriculture? What proportion of villages in the targeted 2 Traditional Authorities in each district are benefiting from services, products or infrastructure related to health, education, transport or agriculture within their proximity with support from the programme? What difference have these services, products or infrastructure brought to the lives of the people in these communities? What is the level of satisfaction of beneficiary villages regarding services, products and infrastructure provided?
- Will these services, products and infrastructure be sustained without the support of the programme? What structures are there to ensure continuity and sustainability of services, products and infrastructure currently being provided?

(ii) Awareness and knowledge on gender equality, GBV and legal issues particularly gender related laws

- What is the level of knowledge, attitudes and practices of communities with respect to gender equality; Gender Based Violence and gender related laws?
- Are there changes in the level of knowledge, practices and attitudes towards gender issues since the programme started or they have fairly remained the same?
- What structures and approaches are available and used at community level to raise awareness and knowledge of communities on gender equality, GBV and legal literacy? What impact have these structures and approaches had in the communities? How effective are the structures and approaches in raising awareness and knowledge at community level? What is the level of satisfaction of communities regarding services provided by these structures and approaches used? *Efforts should be made to estimate the proportion of women, girls, men and boys that are aware and literate in legal issues including gender related laws.*
- What is the level of sustainability of available structures and what mechanisms are in place to ensure sustainability?

(ii) GBV prevention, response and management

- What structures/groups/facilities are available at community level to assist in prevention, response and management of GBV? Are these structures fully functional? Are their services effective and timely? What impact have these structures had in the communities in prevention and management of GBV? What is the level of satisfaction of communities regarding services provided by these structures? Will the structures/groups/facilities be sustainable without the support of the programme?

What mechanisms are there to ensure that they are sustainable once the programme phases out?

(iii) Access to justice for women and girls in hard to reach areas

- What interventions have been undertaken by the programme to facilitate timely access to justice for communities particularly women and girls in hard to reach areas? How appropriate and effective were the interventions provided? What impact have these interventions brought to the lives of the beneficiaries? What is the level of satisfaction of the beneficiaries on the interventions provided? *Where possible, number of people supported should be estimated.*
- Will the interventions be sustainable without the support of the programme? What mechanisms are there to ensure that they are sustainable once the programme phases out?

(iv) Social and economic empowerment of women including married adolescent girls, GBV survivors and other vulnerable groups

- What kind of social and economic interventions have been provided by the programme to women and men without special needs? How appropriate and effective were the interventions provided? What impact have these interventions brought to the lives of the beneficiaries? What is the level of satisfaction of the beneficiaries on the interventions provided? *Where possible, number of people supported should be estimated.*
- What kind of social and economic interventions have been provided by the programme to women and men with special needs such as GBV survivors, fistula survivors, teen mothers, HIV affected, disabled, widows, etc.? How appropriate and effective were the interventions provided? What impact have these interventions brought to the lives of the beneficiaries? What is the level of satisfaction of the beneficiaries on the interventions provided? *Where possible, number of people supported should be estimated.*
- What kind of social and economic empowerment initiatives have been provided by the programme to married adolescent girls? How appropriate and effective were the interventions? What impact have these interventions brought to the lives of the beneficiaries in relation to household decision making, social participation, gender equality and domestic violence? What is the level of satisfaction of the beneficiaries on the interventions provided? What proportion of the targeted married adolescent girls in the target districts are now able to make independent or joint decisions together with their spouses regarding health issues, economic and social participation?

(v) Promotion of girls' education and literacy for women

- What are the interventions that were championed by the programme to promote girl's education and literacy levels for women? Were these interventions effective and appropriate in promotion of girls' education and raising literacy levels for women?
- What has been the impact of these interventions and structures established at community level in promotion of girls' education and literacy levels for women?
- What structures are available at community level to promote girls' education? What kind of support was provided by the programme to these structures? Are these structures effective in promotion of girls' education and literacy of women? Was the support provided to the structures appropriate?
- What is the level of satisfaction of communities regarding interventions implemented and structures established in promotion of girls' education and literacy for women?
- What is the level of sustainability of available structures and interventions used to promote girls' education and literacy for women? What mechanisms are in place to ensure sustainability?

(vi) Community advocacy and lobbying on gender related issues

- What structures or groups are available at community level to facilitate advocacy and lobbying initiatives with community leaders, duty bearers, policy makers and other opinion leaders to address development issues in the context of gender and other social issues including GBV, HIV and harmful cultural practices? Are these structures fully functional? Are their services effective and timely? What impact have these structures had in the communities in addressing development and social issues? What is the level of satisfaction of communities regarding services provided by these structures? Will the structures/groups/facilities be sustainable without the support of the programme? What mechanisms are there to ensure that they are sustainable once the programme phases out?
- What interventions/approaches are used by the structures to lobby key stakeholders to address identified development and social issues? Are the interventions or approaches used effective and appropriate? Are there tangible examples of development and social issues that have been addressed through community advocacy and lobbying?
- What capacity building initiatives were undertaken by the programme to ensure that the community structures are able to effectively engage relevant stakeholders in the identification, prioritization and solving of identified issues? Were the capacity building initiatives effective and appropriate? What other support apart from capacity building was provided by the programme? Was this type of support appropriate, adequate and effective?
- What is the level of satisfaction of communities regarding interventions implemented by these structures in solving development and social issues affecting their communities? What is the level of sustainability of these structures? What mechanisms are in place to ensure sustainability?

(viii) Elimination and modification of harmful cultural practices

- What is the level of attitudes and practices of communities with respect to various social cultural practices in the target districts?
- Are there changes in the level of practices and attitudes towards certain traditional practices since the programme started or they have fairly remained the same?
- Which harmful cultural practices prevalent in target districts as identified during the baseline have been eliminated or modified? Which other harmful cultural practices not identified during the baseline have been eliminated or modified?
- What approaches or interventions were used to lobby custodians of culture and other opinion leaders at community level to eliminate or modify some of the identified harmful cultural practices? Were these approaches effective and appropriate? Which approaches can be regarded as good practices in the fight against harmful cultural practices?
- What has been the involvement of Traditional leaders, faith leaders, traditional counsellors and other custodians of culture in the fight against harmful cultural practices?
- *What proportion of villages in the impact areas have developed and are implementing community by-laws aimed at addressing harmful cultural practices.*

(ix) Awareness and knowledge on gender related laws and acts for law enforcers

- What interventions were undertaken by the programme to raise awareness and knowledge of law enforcers on gender related laws and acts? Were the interventions used appropriate and effective? Are the law enforcers in the target districts more aware and knowledgeable in gender related laws now as compared to the period before the programme? Are the law enforcers in the target districts more aware and knowledgeable in gender related laws compared to their counterparts in other districts which were not targeted by the programme?
- If there are changes in the level of awareness and knowledge; are the changes attributed to the interventions of the programme?
- What has been the impact of the interventions undertaken by the programme aimed at raising awareness and knowledge of law enforcers on gender related laws
- *Efforts should be undertaken to estimate proportion of domestic violence cases reported in the 13 districts that were prosecuted using the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act by year from 2013 – 2016.*

E. Approach and Methodology

The impact evaluation seeks to assess changes that have been realised within institutions in the priority sectors, 13 District Councils, law enforcers (Police officers, Magistrates and Social

Welfare Officers), individuals, households and communities in the 13 target districts as a result of their participation in the programme. However, it should be highlighted that sufficient baseline data is not sufficiently available for most of the variables that this impact evaluation seeks to focus on. As such, the evaluators will be required to decide with UNFPA on the best evaluation method to use in order to correctly estimate impact in a cost effective manner. Nevertheless, the below 3 listed evaluation approaches should be considered amongst the approaches that the evaluators will propose:-

- *Counterfactual evaluation approach* – The evaluator should present merits and demerits of using a control group approach to assess differences in outcomes between those that participated in the programme and those that did not participate in the programme.
- *Theory based approach* – The evaluator should present merits and demerits of investigating the causal linkage that relates inputs, activities, outputs and impact realised in order to demonstrate that the changes observed occurred as a result of programme interventions.
- *Before and After approach* – The evaluator should consider merits and demerits of analysing the current situation with the existing situation before the programme. Possible approaches should be suggested that are capable of comparing situations in the 2 time periods considering that baseline data is not available for the majority of variables that are to be analysed during the impact assessment study.

Whatever evaluation method will be selected, the evaluator should present a methodology that clearly articulate possible data sources; data collection methods; proposed data collection instruments; sampling procedures; data quality assurance mechanisms; and data analysis methods.

F. Major Evaluation Tasks

- Agree on the scope and coverage of the evaluation in consultation with UNFPA
- Develop an evaluation design in consultation with UNFPA
- Review of documents to identify issues related to scope of the evaluation and proposed evaluation methodology.
- Preparation of an inception report – At the very minimum, the inception report should clearly highlight preliminary findings of desk review; refined key evaluation questions; evaluation method (s); sampling strategies; data collection methods; proposed data collection instruments; roles and responsibilities of each member of the evaluation team and stakeholders; anticipated challenges to the evaluation exercise; proposed implementation schedule; and report outline.
- Plan, design and coordinate the data collection process
- Data analysis and preparation of preliminary findings
- Preparation of the evaluation report
- Presentation of findings to stakeholders for validation
- Report finalization

G. Key deliverables

- Inception Report
- Draft evaluation report
- Final evaluation report (Format to be provided by UNFPA)

H. Evaluation team composition and required competencies

The impact evaluation will be coordinated by a team of 3 experts (Team Leader, Gender Expert and Data Management Expert).

Team Leader

- Minimum of Post Graduate Degree in Economics, Statistics, Demography, Development Studies, Anthropology, Social Science or any other relevant development field.
- At least 15 years of experience in research design and leading complex evaluations.
- Demonstrated experience in designing and leading complex evaluations.
- Highly experienced in a range of evaluation approaches including mix methods
- Strong knowledge and experience in selection and implementation of statistically accepted sampling methods.
- Exceptional data analysis skills for both qualitative and quantitative data.
- Excellent report writing skills.
- Strong communication, documentation and presentation skills.
- Technical competence in the development field with good understanding of development issues in the context of gender.

Gender Specialist

- At least Masters in Gender Studies; Development Studies, Economics, Anthropology, Social Science or any other relevant development field with a strong bias towards gender.
- At least 10 years experience in issues related to Gender and Development.
- Strong understanding of gender related issues in Malawi including Gender Based Violence and gender related laws
- Excellent knowledge on the link between gender and key socio-economic development issues in Malawi
- Previous experience in designing and managing evaluations is highly desirable
- Exceptional data analysis skills for both qualitative and quantitative data from the gender perspective
- Excellent report writing skills
- Strong communication, documentation and presentation skills

Data Management Specialist

- Minimum of Post Graduate Degree in Economics, Statistics, Mathematics, Computer Science, Demography, Development Studies, Anthropology, Social Science or any other relevant development field.

- At least 10 years of experience in research design with strong bias towards sampling procedures.
- Demonstrated experience in development of data collection tools and electronic databases for management of survey data.
- Demonstrated experience in supervising teams in collection of complex data
- Excellent working knowledge with CSPRO, MS Access and other survey data processing computer applications.
- Excellent data analysis skills of complex data using multiple computer applications.
- Good data presentation skills using Tables, Charts, Maps and other visual graphics.
- Excellent report writing skills
- Strong communication, documentation and presentation skills

I. Timeframe

It is anticipated that the whole exercise should not exceed 45 calendar days