



# **The Evaluation of the UNICEF Accelerated Girl's Education Initiative (AGEI)**

August 2008

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## **ACRONYMS**

ACEM	Association of Christian Educators in Malawi
AGEP	Accelerated Girls Education Program
AGLIT	Adolescent Girls Literacy Training
AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
CBO	Community Based Organization
CBM	Community Based Management
CCPJ	Catholic Commission on Peace and Justice
CDSSs	Community Day Secondary Schools
CEFAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CFS	Child Friendly Schools
CIDA	Canadian international Development Agency
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRECCOM	Creative Centre for Community Mobilisation
DEMs	District Education Managers
DEOs	District Education Officers
DFID	Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DTED	Department of Teacher Education and Development
EFA	Education for All
ESAR	Eastern and Southern Africa Region (UNICEF Designation)
EU	European Union
FAWEMA	Forum for African Women Educationalist in Malawi
FEMSA	Female Education in Mathematics and Science in Africa

FRESH	Focusing Resources for Effective School Health
GAP	Gender Achievements and Prospects in Education
GABLE	Girls Attainment of Basic Literacy and Education
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRBAP	Human Rights Based Approach to Programming
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IECD	International Economic Council for Development
IMCI	Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses
IMEP	Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan outcomes
JCE	Junior Certificate of Education
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LFA	Local Fund Agents
LOU	Letter of Understanding
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MESA	Malawi Education Support Activity
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MITEP	Malawi Integrated Intensive Teacher Education Programme
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Sport and Technology
MoGYCS	Ministry of Gender, Youth and Community Services
MPO	Master Plan of Operations
MPRSP	Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate of Education

MTSP	Mid-Term Strategic Plan
NESP	National education Sector Plan
NGO	Non Government Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation
NSTEM	National Strategy for Teacher Education in Malawi
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for International Development
OVC	Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children
PCAR	Primary Curriculum Assessment and Reform
PEAs	Primary Education Advisors
PIF	Policy Investment Framework
PLWHA	People Living With HIV/AIDS
PPA	Participatory Poverty Assessment
RSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSLCE	Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education
SIP	Sector Investment Programme
SMART	Social Policy, Advocacy and Communication
SPAC	Social Policy, Advocacy and Communication
SSTEP	Secondary School Teacher Education Programme
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach
TA	Traditional Authorities
TEVET	Technical, Vocational, and Entrepreneurial Education and Training
TTC	Teacher Training College
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCT	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
YTSC	Youth Technical Sub Committee

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents findings from a five month effort taking place January through May 2008 to conduct an assessment of the UNICEF-funded Malawi Acceleration of Girls' Education Programme (AGEP). Specifically, the findings and lessons learned from the evaluation were to:

Strengthen future program design and implementation around 2006-2009 MTSP targets, MDG 2 and 3 and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS).

- 1) Assist the government and development partners within the framework of the National education Sector Plan (NESP.
- 2) Document success stories of the various initiatives and provide information on ways in which they are contributing to the enrollment, retention and completion of girls' education.

The methodology for this evaluation included the use of multiple data collection techniques including surveys, interviews, and participant observation from site visits to nearly 10% of the schools receiving support through the AGEP. Working in collaboration with an external evaluator, 30 Malawian educators from the Ministry of Education and NGO and CBO representatives formed data collection teams and took part in data collection action activities.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Access to schooling: There is near parity in the enrollment of girls in the lower primary standards. However, as girls get older and move into the upper primary standards, issues related to puberty begin to negatively affect their opportunities to go to school. Poverty negatively impacts the schooling opportunities girls have as well as their ability to do well in school. Opportunity cost continues to be the primary reason girls are not in school followed by parental concerns over their safety. Girls who are orphaned and/or disabled are at great risk of dropping out of school if they are enrolled. The absence of community documentation on the birth of children restricts Head Teachers and other community leaders to engage in data driven educational planning. It also makes it difficult to ascertain what percentage of girls are enrolled thereby hampering community-driven efforts to achieve UPE. The most notable difference in terms of the access, participation and retention of girls between schools participating in AGEI and those that were not was rested on the role the of the Mother's Group.

In AGEI-supported schools girls have a champion in the Mother's Group that "keeps an eye on them" to encourage them, provide them with uniforms and school supplies and counsel them about appropriate behavior during puberty and adolescence. Mother's Groups track the enrollment and attendance of girls in their communities and visit their

parents to encourage them to support the education of their daughters and send them to school. Although the thrust of the work of Mother's Groups is focused on girls in school, they continue to monitor and work with girls no longer in school in large part to try and encourage them to return to school. In some communities their work with out-of-school girls have evolved into clubs for out-of-school girls that brings them together with girls still in school in an effort to provide girls a forum to talk about things that influence their educational experience and identify and respond to barriers that force them out of school.

Training: The Joyful Learning training has significantly influenced the way in which teachers see their job as facilitators of learning responsible for fostering a girl-friendly learning environment. School Management Committee members find the training effective at expanding their understanding of the need to provide expanded opportunities for girls' education and ways to sensitize parents about the benefits of schooling girls.

Child rights—protection and justice: Head Teachers and school leaders are knowledgeable about the rights of children/girls but are not empowered to act upon this information. In part this is because their understanding isn't grounded in the realities of what takes place in the daily routines of children/girls such as agricultural work in family gardens, work in the market, domestic labor, etc. But it is also influenced by the lack of clearly defined guidelines and procedures on what steps they should take when problems arise. Consequently, Head Teachers and other leaders are disempowered to act on behalf of the girls in their care.

Leadership at the Schools: Leadership at the school is overwhelmingly male. Other than Mother's Groups there are few female role models at the school and community level; but those roles models that are present have a powerful influence on the girls they work with. Girls are vocal about their schooling needs. They also play a key role in community outreach about HIV/AIDs clearly demonstrating their desire to gain agency and take an active role in effecting change in issues that are meaningful in their lives.

Pregnancies: Girls are acutely aware of the risk pregnancy has on their long term educational goals. Despite the government policy that permits girls to return to school after delivering a baby and school level efforts to bring them back to school, anecdotal information suggests as many girls leave permanently as return once they learn they are pregnant. Data also suggests that large numbers of boys do not leave school when they impregnate a girl student and are thereby not held accountable for their actions. Greater effort needs to focus on prevention and the provision of support to students when they do become pregnant. Revisiting the policy to ensure the focus is on finding ways to get both the girl and boy through the primary cycle is a priority need.

Classroom Patterns: Classrooms interactions are positive and teachers use praise to motivate all students—girls and boys—to do well. Teachers understand the core



principles of girl-friendly teaching and learning and make valiant attempts to implement what they have learned in their classroom exchanges. However, high student:teacher ratios, overcrowded classrooms and limited instructional materials mitigate in their efforts to utilize participatory learning activities including cooperative learning and small group activities that favor the learning styles of girls. Consequently, teachers still use a high degree of rote memorization, chalk and talk and lower level instructional practices. They also focus on boys more than girls particularly as they engage their students in higher order learning/thinking activities.

*Healthy, Safe and Protective Environment:* Construction projects including classroom blocks, latrines and boreholes have made a significant improvement in the schooling experiences of girls. They not only afford them improved learning environments, privacy and more sanitary conditions but have reduced the workload in the daily school experiences of girls. Despite this far too many schools remain a difficult environment for girls. Both girls and Mother's Groups recounted stories of teacher harassment and abuse; chores continue to be unequally allocated to girls—particularly chores that deal with cleaning; and boys and men bully and accost girls as they go to and from school.

*Mother's Groups:* Mother's Groups play a vital role in lobbying for support in the schooling of girls and other at-risk students. Girls see the Mother's Group as a primary advocate in their quest to obtain a quality education and look to them to garner support with their teachers as well as with their parents. Most Head Teachers and SMC/PTA groups view Mother's Groups as a valuable and critical partner in their efforts to improve schooling for all students. Mother's Groups often play an instrumental role in assisting vulnerable children who are orphaned or disabled. They frequently report providing them with school supplies, clothes and less commonly food. However, on-going training and a clearer mandate about their role hold promise they can play an even more significant role and leverage even more dramatic results for girls in their communities Expanding their role nationally to ensure all schools have a Mother's Group is one of the most important things that can be done to enhance the education of girls in Malawi.

*School Feeding Programs:* School feeding in schools in areas experiencing temporary famine is a catalyst to increased enrollments and improved retention for girls. School feeding also enhances the learning experiences of girls because of the impact added nutrition and calories has on temporary hunger These are temporary gains, however, as anecdotal data suggests when food is no longer available girls—particularly older girls—do not continue coming to school. Clear exit strategies need to be developed in partnership with the beneficiary schools at the onset of the program to ensure school leaders understand school feeding is a temporary solution and short term response to a longer term problem of food shortages. Cross sector support to enhance better community planning in regards to agricultural production and food storage is a high priority.

Monitoring and Evaluation: There is a considerable need to improve data driven decision making at the school level. Schools are unable to provide accurate information about key issues affecting girls such as the incidence of pregnancy and follow-up on the schooling status of girls (and boys) who parent a child. Information about the special learning needs of students is also unavailable. Schools have no data about the number of children in communities within their catchment area and have no established procedures with community chiefs/leaders to solicit household level information about the number of unschooled girls in their communities.

## CONCLUSION

Tremendous progress has been made in the past two decades to improve the education of girls. UNICEF-sponsored initiatives have promoted changes that make achieving a primary school education attainable for both girls and boys. The introduction of Child Friendly Schools through AGEP has leveraged notable changes in the way teachers view their jobs and interact with students. Although teachers and other decision makers at the school have not been able to implement all the changes because of the lack of resources to make their schools a totally girl-friendly environment, the growing awareness about the *need* to be responsive to issues around the rights of the girl, the need to create schools that emotionally support girls and schools are places for *all* children especially girls is a monumental leap forward.

Despite the fact not all schools equally benefited from the inputs of the AGEP, they all noted a dramatic difference in the schooling experience of their girls. Additionally, all the contributions supported through the Accelerated Girls Education Program have powerfully sent the message that schooling for all children is no longer a luxury for those that can afford it but a vital need for all students in a more challenging environment and global economy.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS .....	ii
EXCECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	iv
Introduction.....	1
Table 1 EFA Goals and MDG.....	3
Purpose and Scope of Evaluation .....	4
Objectives of Evaluation .....	5
Methodology.....	6
Figure 1: Data Collection Process .....	7
Representative Sampling.....	9
Constraints .....	11
Discussion of Findings.....	11
<b>Interventions</b> .....	11
Interventions Table .....	12
<b>Policy Framework</b> .....	12
What Research Tells Us.....	13
What We Found .....	19
Pregnancy policy.....	19
Sexual Harassment and abuse.....	22
Child Rights .....	22
Language of instruction.....	24
Affirmative Action Strategies.....	24
Chart 1: Gender of Head Teachers.....	25
<b>Increased Access and Retention</b> .....	25
What Research Tells us.....	25
What We Found .....	25

Enrollment of Girls.....	28
Girls Work at Home; Girls Work at school.....	28
Chart 2: Study Time.....	30
At-Risk Students.....	30
Table 1: Disability 2006-2008.....	31
Personal Hygiene.....	33
Latrines and Boreholes.....	34
What Research Tells Us.....	26
What We Found .....	27
Latrines and Boreholes.....	28
Security, Harassment and Abuse.....	35
<b>Participation and Performance.....</b>	<b>38</b>
What Research Tells Us .....	38
What We Found .....	40
Girl Friendly Classrooms .....	40
Graph 2: Questioning Patterns .....	42
Graph 3: Placement in Classrooms .....	43
Graph 4: Grouping Patterns .....	44
What Research Tells Us .....	44
Science, Math and technology.....	44
Physical Education and Sports .....	47
What We Found.....	48
Science and Math .....	48
Physical Education and Maths .....	49
<b>Community Involvement and Participation .....</b>	<b>50</b>
What Research Tells Us .....	50

What We Found .....	51
<b>Mother's Groups</b> .....	52
<b>SMCs and PTAs</b> .....	57
<b>Girls Participation in Leadership Roles</b> .....	58
Table 2: Girls Speak Out.....	60
<b>Overall Status of Girls Education Under AGEI</b> .....	61
Affirmative Action Strategies .....	63
Formal and Non-Formal Strategies and Interventions to Support Girls' Education.....	63
Accompanying School Links for Girls' Education .....	63
Collaboration and Cooperation of Broad Stakeholder Support for Girls' Education .....	63
Advocacy and Communication Strategies to Support Girls' Education .....	65
Inter-Sectoral Approach.....	64
Rights of the Child .....	64
<b>Recommendations</b> .....	65
Girls' Enrollments and Participation .....	65
Non Formal Education.....	66
School Feeding.....	67
Monitoring and Evaluation .....	68
Policy Framework in Key Issues Relating to Gender .....	69
Child Rights—Protection and Justice .....	70
Conclusion .....	72
<b>Documents</b> .....	73
<b>Annexes</b> .....	76
Annex 1: Workplan .....	77
Annex 2: Contacts .....	78
Annex 3: Data Collection Instruments .....	79

Annex 3.1	Donor Survey .....	80
Annex 3.2	Statistical Data From.....	83
Annex 3.3	Classroom Observation Guide .....	86
Annex 3.4	School Overview .....	88
Annex 3.5	Mothers' Group Focus Group Protocol .....	90
Annex 3.6	School Management Committee Focus Group Protocol .....	92
Annex 3.7	Girls Focus Group Protocol.....	94
Annex 3.8	Head Teacher Interview Protocol .....	96
Annex: 3.9	Child Friendly Rating Scale .....	99
Annex 5:	Policy Framework.....	130
Annex 6:	Table High and Low Age .....	134
Annex 6:	Orphans Graph.....	136
Annex 7:	A TAXONOMY OF LEARNING: HIGHER ORDER AND LOWER ORDER QUESTIONNING PATTERNS IN THE CLASSROOM.....	137

## INTRODUCTION

It has been consistently demonstrated that education is the lever for sustainable development. Both the social and economic returns for education demonstrate that educated people can access knowledge better and have skills that can lead to increased agricultural productivity, improved health and socio-economic status. Education is also crucial to preventing the continued spread of HIV. Studies across Africa show that HIV spreads faster amongst uneducated girls and girls who stay in school are far more likely to practice abstinence than their counterparts who drop out of school<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, research shows that the benefit of the education of women and girls is substantially greater than for those of boys and men largely due to the central role they have in the well being of the family. Indeed, UNICEF forecasts that “*girls’ education is a key to breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty and catalyzing progress towards a host of positive development outcomes.*”<sup>2</sup>

Illiteracy is particularly devastating for girls because of the cascading benefits it has overall on girls and the way in which it impacts society overall. Unfortunately, sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest gross female enrollment, the second lowest female literacy in the world, and the lowest combined youth literacy rate of all the regions. In fact, just under 30% of the world's illiterate youth population live in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>3</sup> Given this, it is worrisome that the Gender Achievements and Prospects in Education (GAP) report of 2005 warned it is highly unlikely the Millennium Development Goals will be met unless there is significant progress in girls’ education.

Although Malawi has made great strides in increasing access of children--especially girls--to primary school this improvement has netted negligible improvements in completion rates. High dropout and repetition rates contribute to exceedingly low survival rates. Additionally, survival rates remain lower for girls than boys until grade 4 when girls drop out in higher numbers than boys. While the boys and girls enter grade 1 in roughly the same number (47% girls and 53% boys) girls were nearly twice as likely to leave school prematurely. As a consequence, literacy levels are especially low for women (The Integrated Household survey conducted in 2004-2005 estimated that 76% of males are literate compared to 50% of women), although they have greatly improved over the years. The rate of change is lower than expected given the massive enrollments that

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<sup>1</sup> <http://home.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/cice/JEF2report5e.pdf> Policy Panel: “Promoting Girls’ Education: Viewpoints from Developing Countries”

<sup>2</sup> EXAMPLES FROM THE FIELD: UNICEF AND GIRLS’ EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS Paper prepared by UNICEF for the ECOSOC Ministerial Roundtable on Primary Education and Girls’ Education in Rural Areas April 30, 2003 p.1

<sup>3</sup> (<http://www.iaco.ca/literacy-rates.html>)

occurred after 1994 because of the high dropout rate which occurs before the majority of girls who attend school have acquired permanent literacy and numeracy.<sup>4</sup>

For more than three years, Malawi has taken part in a pilot program supported through UNICEF Global Girls Thematic Funds to implement an accelerated strategy and approach to improve girls' enrollment, retention, completion and achievement. The pilot initiated in an effort to meet UNICEF's global Medium Term Strategic Priorities (2000-2005) targets for Girls Education selected countries to participate where the net enrollment rate for girls was less than 80%.

The UNICEF accelerated strategy to girls' education is framed on a child rights approach championed through the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). It also couples with other global initiatives such as Education for All (EFA) and the Fast Track Initiative both led by the World Bank. It is framed on five key strands meant to more effectively leverage what has been learned about girls' education and what is currently underway to support the education of girls.

1. Affirmative Action Strategies: To support girls' education the initiative promotes the use of policy frameworks that foster strategies to get girls in school, keep them in school and support them to do well in school. Policies include those that examine resources to the sector (capital and human), the content of the learning experiences and empowering women to take a more visible and active role in support of education for their children particularly their daughters.
2. Formal and Non-Formal Strategies and Interventions to Support Girls' Education: In order to ensure educational opportunities are available to all girls the initiative supports learning along a life-long continuum spanning from early childhood and pre-school to educational programs for out-of-school girls and adult women that include literacy, micro-enterprise and life skills training. Additionally, educational programs utilize innovative strategies to reach under-served and hard-to-reach girls such as sex, agricultural, and domestic workers through distance education, computer and internet-based technologies (ICT) and alternative learning programs.
3. Accompanying Country Links for Girls' Education: To better leverage funds, the program identifies countries with the greatest need for intensive intervention. Specifically this means that additional resources are available to countries to serve as a catalyst to engage in activities to speed up getting girls into school, keeping them in school and ensuring their completion of school.

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<sup>4</sup> Kadzamira, 2004, p. 4



**Table 1**

**EFA Goals**

- (v) Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- (vi) Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
- (vii) Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs;
- (viii) Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;
- (ix) Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality;
- (x) Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

**Education-Related Millennium Development Goals with Related Targets**

Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education

Target 3: Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling.

- Net Enrollment Ratio to Primary Education (UNESCO)
- Proportion of Pupils Starting Grade 1 who Reach Grade 8 (UNESCO)
- Literacy Rate of 15-24 year-olds (UNESCO)

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015

- Ratio of Girls to Boys in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education (UNESCO)
- Ratio of Literate Women to Men Employment in the Non-Agricultural Sector (ILO)
- Proportion of Seats Held by Women in National Parliament (IPU)

Source: Education for All: A basis for enhancing collective effort among the EFA convening agencies UNDP – UNESCO – UNFPA – UNICEF - The World Bank Global Action Plan: Improving support to countries in achieving the EFA Goals

4. Collaboration and Cooperation of Broad Stakeholder Support for Girls' Education: Another critical aspect of this program is the intensive way in which development partners work together to support girls' education. This is needed not only to eliminate fragmentation found all too often but also as a means to intensify inputs and foster synergy among those working in the sector. In this way, coordinated efforts at the country level can build on existing mechanisms and networks thereby better leveraging the limited resources available to ministries in support of girls' education.
5. Advocacy and Communication Strategies to Support Girl' Education: Experience has taught us that developing effective communication strategies to advance the education of girls is an invaluable tool for governments and development organizations to leverage change. The media is particularly key to communicating with a wider public toward advocating and promoting the education of girls. But visibility also entails risks. It means greater public scrutiny and misunderstandings about what governments and development organizations are doing. Having said that much has been learned and benefitted from sensitization and awareness campaigns<sup>5</sup>. Recent studies examining the benefits around communication and advocacy strategies has shown that sensitive issues in the lives of adolescent girls (for instance, issues such as pregnancy, reproductive issues, HIV/AIDs, etc.) demand input from a wide range of stakeholders, cross sector input about what the messages need to include and on-going monitoring and feedback to effectively leverage change.<sup>6</sup>
6. Inter-Sectoral Approach: Decades of work has clearly shown that integrated actions in related fields yield the greatest results for girl's education. A key aspect of sustainability involves developing maximum synergy with work being done in other sectors to support the well-being of girls. This is particularly important for services contributing to child protection, nutrition, health, water and sanitation and addressing barriers keeping girls out of school such as lack of infrastructure, or urgent situations such as HIV/AIDS, food shortages, and natural disasters/political strife.

## **PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF EVALUATION**

The Accelerated Girls' Education Program (AGEP) in Malawi was part of the 2002-2006 Country Program, nested within the Basic Education Country Program and developed around girls' education. The project had two primary objectives: to increase female school attendance and to improve the quality of the education provided. Three key components were introduced to achieve results. First, the project suggested hosting social mobilization of communities to identify attitude and information gaps and develop

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.cendevcom.org/pdf/brochure.pdf> Communication Strategies to Effect Social Change

<sup>6</sup> Flórez-Aréstegui Cornejo, M. and R. Barreto Silva (May 2004). Culturally Appropriate Information, Education and Communication Strategies for Improving Adolescent Reproductive Health. USAID: Cusco, Peru

communication strategies to change behavior. Secondly, the capacity of both technical and management skills at school, district and national levels were supported through the delivery of training and resources. Finally, advisory and policy support was provided to government ministries.

The general program was designed around the existing “joyful learning package”. Joyful Learning is a comprehensive package of interventions which seeks to improve the overall quality of education. The package includes the rehabilitation/construction of school blocks; the provision of water and sanitation facilities; health, nutrition and hygiene training of teachers; supply of teaching/learning materials and school furniture; training of teachers on child-centered and participatory teaching methods; the introduction of Life Skills Education; and, in some cases, the introduction of school feeding in partnership with the the World Food Programme for communities in which there is documented severe hunger.<sup>7</sup> The package reaches outside the school environment to mobilize and sensitize communities, on interventions including the establishment and training of “Mother Groups” which identifies and brings together women in the community who provide specific support to girls enrolled in school, advocacy for parents to enroll their children and support to the head teacher and SMC and PTA on issues about the schooling of girls. The Accelerated Girls’ Education Project aimed to expand the implementation of this package of interventions with a particular emphasis on the attendance and achievement of girls, gender parity, and on mobilizing other partners to support the education of girls.

The Accelerated Girls’ Education Project is headed by the Ministry of Education and works through existing support mechanisms. At UNICEF four sections contributed: Basic Education and Youth Development; Water and Environmental Sanitation; Child Protection and OVC; and Social Policy, Advocacy and Communication.) Other development partners include FAWEMA, AGLIT, UNFPA, WFP (school feeding) and UNAIDS (for Life Skills and HIV/AIDS education). Supporting these is a network of strategic partners which promote girls’ education, including NORAD, CIDA, DFID, USAID, JICA, GTZ and the World Bank. Although donor coordination to leverage a cohesive gender strategy is a key part of the project this evaluation focused on results at the community, school and classroom level to determine what the impact has been on the primary beneficiaries—the girls.

## OBJECTIVES OF EVALUATION

The Evaluation of **UNICEF’s Acceleration of Girls Education Initiative in Malawi** project is intended to provide feedback on the performance of UNICEF Malawi in

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<sup>7</sup> WFP launched a development project to provide food assistance to children in primary schools with the primary objective of enabling poor households to send their children to school where they will get nutritious meals and an education. Under this project, the number of pupils supported by school feeding has increased from 442,000 to 635,000. The number of schools has also increased from 489 to 679 in 13 districts. [http://www.wfp.org/country\\_brief/indexcountry.asp?country=454](http://www.wfp.org/country_brief/indexcountry.asp?country=454)

achieving the UNICEF global Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2000-2005 targets set against girls' education.<sup>8</sup>

Specifically, the findings and lessons learned from the evaluation will be used to:

- 1) Strengthen future program design and implementation around 2006-2009 MTSP targets, MDG 2 and 3 and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS).
- 2) Assist the government and development partners within the framework of the National education Sector Plan (NESP), which recognizes girls' education is a major equity challenge.
- 3) Document the success stories of the various initiatives and provide information on ways in which they are contributing to the enrollment, retention and completion of girls' education.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The overall approach for this evaluation includes the use of multiple data collection techniques and instruments to canvass a wide range of stakeholders. Although an international consultant was engaged to design the evaluation and carry out the analysis of the data, 30 Malawian educators from the Ministry of Education and NGO and CBO representatives including individuals from FAWEMA (one of the major partners in the implementation of gender-based school interventions) formed data collection teams and took part in data collection action activities.

The evaluation design utilized a wide lens to examine the current status of the education of girls in Malawi and took into consideration multiple perspectives about what was happening and what needs to happen. This enabled the evaluation team to triangulate the information to ensure the various viewpoints enriched our understanding of the context, the needs and options for future work to target girls enabling the Ministry, development partners, and communities and schools to improve educational opportunities for their students and in particular, their girls

Primary principles of the study and the way in which it was implemented includes collaboration and the participation and input of ministry officials at multiple levels of the system, utilization of action-based participatory methods of data collection, fostering local ownership, building local capacity of Malawian educators, promoting sustainability,

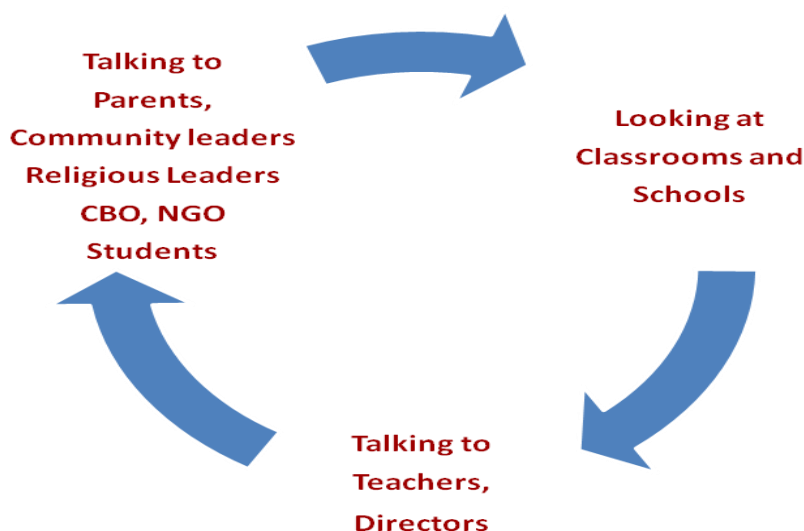
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<sup>8</sup>Focus Area 1: Young Child Survival and Development. Focus Area 2: Basic Education and Gender Equality; Focus Area 3 : HIV/AIDS and Children; Focus Area 4: Child Protection; Focus Area 5: Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights; (*Global Action Plan: improving support to countries in achieving the EFA Goals*)

and building on best practices and lessons learned examining what is working as well as identifying what needs to be improved.

Figure 1 demonstrates how the multiple perspectives of the various stakeholder groups were taken into consideration. A key aspect of the evaluation was to ferret out what the different stakeholders—including the girls the ultimate beneficiaries—thought about

**Figure 1: Data Collection Process**



educational opportunities for girls, what factors contributed to their success or failure in school and how the package of UNICEF interventions influenced their educational opportunities, retention, participation and achievement.

Five major data collection techniques were used:<sup>9</sup>

1. Participant Observation in standard 1-8 classrooms observing a range of classes taught in the primary school curriculum.
2. Broad stakeholder canvassing with key interlocutors including
  - Community leaders
  - Girls
  - Parents (mothers' groups)
  - Chiefs and other community leaders (for example, health and school feeding officials)
3. Interviews with key stakeholders including
  - Implementing partners (MOE, FAWEMA, etc.)

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<sup>9</sup> Although a donor survey was developed and disseminated they were not returned and data is unable about donor collaboration on this initiative.

- MOE officials
  - School Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers
  - DEMs
  - UNICEF representatives
4. Mapping of school facilities.
  5. Conducting a rapid appraisal survey assessing the key components of a child-friendly school.

The following evaluation tools were used to collect data.

Child Friendly School Rating Survey (CFSRS): The CFSRS is a rapid appraisal tool and index used to determine how effectively a school responds to global expectations for a Child Rights-based school. The survey examines the five core categories of a Child Friendly School and includes how inclusive a school is, how effective and relevant the academic program is, how healthy and safe the school environment is, how gender responsive the school is and how participatory the school management is at getting teachers, parents and students involved in decision-making and management of school policies, programs and procedures.

The rating survey is structured in a way that reviewers rank how well the school meets identified criteria under each category. An eight-point scale (0-7) identifies specific indicators and a school receives a total score based on how many of the indicators are satisfied in each identified criteria. The CFSRS is a modified Likert Measurement Rating Scale and provides both qualitative and quantitative information in the five dimensions the Child Friendly School Model. Key aspects of each of the five dimensions is deconstructed into a sub-scale and uses a rating scale ranging from 0-7 with 0 representing a negative presentation and 7 the strongest in meeting the qualitative aspects of the specific sub-scale in the various dimensions.

Classroom Observation Guide (COG): The COG is a structured data collection tool that permits the observer to collect information about the student population, teacher location in the classroom at specific points in time, use of teaching methodologies, use of instructional materials, student seating assignment, questioning patterns disaggregated by gender and use of higher order critical thinking skills. The COG permits the researcher to monitor the use of teacher/student talk and the use of lecture and/or performance-based learning activities. Part of the COG includes a map based on the four quadrants of the classroom. The map of the classroom includes documentation and use of learning centers, the teacher's movement in the classroom and student participation and questioning patterns.

School Statistical Data Form (SSDF): This data collection tool was used to gather basic information about the student population disaggregated by gender. Categories of information include general enrollment by standard; single and double orphans by standard; disability by standard and type of disability; basic information about pregnancies; and general information about the school, classroom construction and UNICEF interventions.

School Overview: This tool was used to collect information about the physical facilities such as school and classroom layout, facilities available (e.g. library, computer room, laboratories, etc.), number and condition of bathrooms, basic school construction and amenities available, playground area, and so forth.

Protocol were also used to interview the Head Teacher and conduct focus groups with girls in Standards 4-8, Mother's Groups, School Management Committees, Parent Teacher Associations and other key stakeholders such as chiefs.

The specifics activities of the study consisted of the following.

1. The training of a core team (MOE) on developing and using indicators, tools and methodologies for assessing child friendly schools.
2. Development of child friendly indicators, tools and methodologies focusing on classroom and learning activities observations.
3. Utilizing the child friendly indicators, tools and methodology to determine the areas for development, and making recommendations on improving how girl friendly schools are.

### **REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLING**

In order to better understand how interventions were influenced by geography and urban/rural variables, a broad sampling of schools from different parts of the country were included in the sampling. Approximately 10% of the schools receiving UNICEF support through three interventions (Child Friendly Schools, Joyful Learning, and Schools for Africa) were selected for site visits. In addition to these schools, another 5 schools that received no support from UNICEF were included in the sampling and served as a control group. Site visits were made to a total of 90 schools in the northern, central and southern regions of Malawi. This sampling consisted of 85 UNICEF supported schools (representing 8% of the total number of 1024 schools receiving UNICEF support).

The regional distribution of the schools included eight in Nkhata Bay, ten in Mzimba South, five in Mzuzu Urban, five in Rumphi, five in Kasungu, five in Dedza, ten Lilongwe Rural East, ten Lilongwe Rural West, eleven in Blantyre Rural, five Chikwawa,

one in Blantyre Urban, five in Zomba Urban, and ten in Mangochi. The sampling included a mix of urban, rural and very remote schools. Schools in which there had been effective implementation of UNICEF interventions were selected as well as those where there were known constraints. Finally, schools were selected based on the number of years they had been receiving support. Some had participated in one or more of the UNICEF-funded programs for three years while others had only been targeted for interventions for one or two years.

The distance from the main road to the school and the amount of time it took to drive that distance served as a proxy to capture the “remoteness” of schools. Although remoteness and difficulty to access a community is not necessarily a proxy for poverty, it does represent how easily supplies can reach a community and school. Additionally, when a community is more remote it is harder to engage in activities that include professional development training and other outreach activities that foster change in one’s personal and professional life. The average driving distance of the schools from the main road was 5 kilometers with a range of 1 kilometer to 18 kilometers. The average drive time to the schools from the main road was 60 minutes. Driving time to schools ranged from a 5 minute drive to the nearest school to a two hour drive to the most distant school.

A total of 78,345 students were enrolled in the schools visited. Of this number 39,863 were girls and 39,085 were boys. There were 3333 girls and 3126 boys in the 100 classrooms in which observations were made. The total number of teachers in the school sampling consisted of 679 women and 404 men. Out of 90 schools only 11 were headed by women. In the sampled schools of 55 Deputy Head Teachers 19 were women. Sixty-three percent of the teachers in the sampling were women and 37% were men although four districts Mzuzu, Zomba, Lilongwe Rural West and Blantyre had dramatically higher percentages of women than men. Consequently, with the exception of these districts, men out-numbered the women although in most districts there were only marginally more men than women.

Focus groups with the girls were conducted at each school. Although it was up to the discretion of the Head Teacher to select the girls who participated in the Focus Group, the evaluation team members were encouraged to limit participation to 10-15 girls in order to better facilitate the discussions with them. Additionally, it was felt girls would be more candid with a woman so unless circumstances would not allow this the focus group with the girls were conducted by a women member of the evaluation team. In total 701 girls participated in the focus groups. 70% were 13-15 years old and 7% were 16 or older. With few exceptions the girls taking part in the focus groups were in standards 4-8.



## CONSTRAINTS

Tensions between insider and outsider perspectives always provide a challenge when carrying out any study or assessment activity. The overall approach utilized by this study responded to this dichotomy by engaging Malawian ministry and NGO/CBO representatives in the data collection process. In this way, the data collection would not only include data collected by the “outsider” consultant engaged in this evaluation it would also include data collected by Malawians.

The enumerators participated in a one day intensive training exercise reviewing the instruments and learning how to implement them. The training also included discussions and role plays about “*what things look like*” in order to develop a shared understanding on the meaning of things. This took place to increase inter-rater reliability (for instance, what does a lower order or higher order question “look” like or what does positive, neutral or negative feedback “look” like). Despite this, it is difficult to ascertain that everyone rated things in a consistent fashion. Additionally, not everyone on the evaluation teams approached the evaluation with the same level of commitment and consistency. Some members of district teams had notably less detail in the notes leaving gaps in the data collected and on the instruments. In some cases, the missing data was significant and impacted the opportunity to better understand gender dynamics at the school and in the classroom.

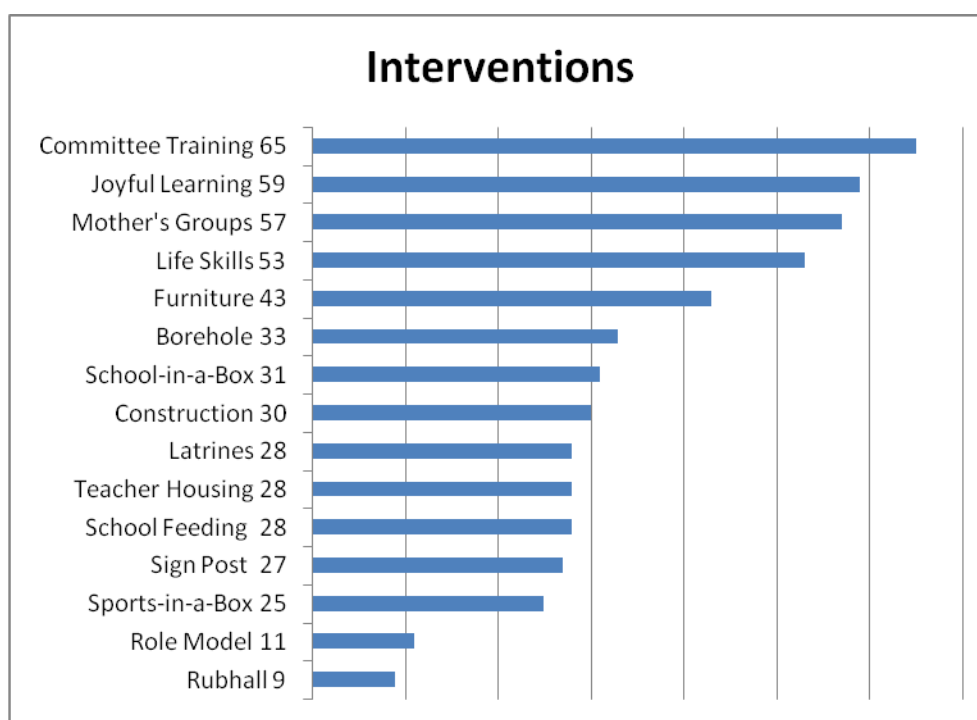
Finally, whenever data is collected by a group of individuals and is collated and analyzed by a third party the possibility exists that things will be misinterpreted and/or misunderstood. Every attempt has been made to address any issues that might arise from this process. Outliers that varied dramatically from the data collected during the pilot phase of the data collection period were noted for further study and to solicit additional information.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

**Interventions** The following chart captures the Head Teachers’ self reporting on the package of interventions their school received through the AGEI. Each intervention is identified with the number of schools that received that intervention. For instance, out of 90 schools in the sampling 65 of them received training for the SMC and/or PTA. With only a few exceptions there are no written records at the school level on the actual inputs received. Additionally, at many of the schools the Head Teachers who were surveyed about the UNICEF interventions were not the ones who were there when the school began receiving support through the initiative. Therefore, in some cases they had sketchy details about what the schools overall package consisted of particularly when it came to construction projects. SMC and PTA representatives were sometimes better informed but

even with those groups attrition and change in group representation created a lack of institutional memory around the specific package of interventions.

Despite the issue with self-reporting, generally representatives at the school level were well informed about the number and kind of outside inputs their school received even when they were unable to identify the specific group or funder that provided the assistance. Probably what is most notable is the infusion of hope and increased awareness to move forward on improving educational opportunity for the children in their community support from outside jumpstarted in all of the communities in the sampling. Therefore, UNICEF in partnership with other groups supporting AGEI, constructed 149 girls' latrines, 129 boys' latrines, 38 staff latrines, 161 general latrines in 28 schools, 125 school blocks in 39 schools and 49 teacher houses in 28 schools. The greatest percentage of teacher houses were built in Chikwawa (11), 27 school blocks were constructed in Dedza and Nkhata Bay and Dedza benefited from the greatest number of latrines.



**Policy Framework:** This section of the report examines the legal framework that buttresses the ministry's key goals and objectives to support the education of girls—especially primary school education. An attempt has been made to identify those laws, policies, goals and objectives that foster gender balance. In some cases, however, it is the absence of any kind of official mandate that is most notable and significantly impacts what happens to girls in primary school classrooms. The discussion begins with what has

been learned from research particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa; the report then examines what was learned about the policy framework as it currently exists in Malawi.

What research tells us The focus on girls' education needs to be made explicit in national systems. An inclusive program requires a seamless integration of different types of educational provision and methods of learning in order to provide equitable public resources to a wide range of approaches, including non-formal programs, alternative learning programs and community schools. Bridging strategies to allow girls who drop out of school, or never attend, to come back and be part of accredited national programs essential to realizing Education for All objectives. To accomplish this there must be strong links between gender-affirmative action and a solid national reform initiative. Outcomes to achieve girls' education prove to be more sustainable and comprehensive where multi-sector effort address health, family income security, child protection and care and good coordination within Ministries of Education and other government agencies and sectors (particularly those of national finance, economic and social development planning, and health).<sup>10</sup>

A national perspective is needed to enable a broad understanding of the range of barriers affecting girls' access and persistence. There are core responsibilities that should be assumed by national governments. At the same time, empowering local communities is vital as a complementary strategy to ensure horizontal collaboration and integration at the local level. Stronger more coherent, systems for monitoring and evaluation are essence as a means of bringing data on educational inequity for girls to the attention of decision makers and to generate public demand for change.<sup>11</sup> Public policies and initiatives designed to help eliminate past and present discrimination based gender consist of economic, special quotas, re-entry, awareness, "girls only" and content-focused strategies.<sup>12</sup>

Economic strategies include:

- abolishing school fees at primary level
- Scholarships and bursaries for girls are another common approach

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<sup>10</sup> Making a Difference in Girls' Education: Selected Examples from UNICEF's Field Experiences EFA Global Monitoring Report 4 June 2003

[http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&rlz=1G1GGLQ\\_ENUS267&q=Advocacy+and+Communication+Strategies+to+Support+Girl%E2%80%99+Education&btnG=Search](http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&rlz=1G1GGLQ_ENUS267&q=Advocacy+and+Communication+Strategies+to+Support+Girl%E2%80%99+Education&btnG=Search)

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index\\_14358.html](http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_14358.html) Bernard, A. (2002). Global: Lessons and Implications from Girls Education Activities. New York: UNICEF.

<sup>12</sup> Challenges for Teacher Training in Instituting Gender Responsive Pedagogy in Schools in Africa. Seminar on Cooperation on Teacher Education, Bergen, Norway, 27th Sept – 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct 2005.

- stipend to meet all direct costs of education including school fees, stationery and school uniforms to girls in primary and secondary schools from rural communities

Special quota strategies include:

- preferential selection) for secondary and university selection, social mobilization campaigns,
- re-entry programs for teenage mothers and community schools by reserving a certain percentage of school places for girls and selecting girls on lower aggregate scores than boys
- positive recruitment strategies to attract women teachers and school administrators particularly in under-served and remote areas

Re-entry strategies include:

- policies of readmission that allow teenage mothers to complete school
- policies that permit girls to attend alternative schooling programs after leaving the formal system
- Flexible scheduling

Awareness strategies include:

- Social marketing and sensitization strategies
- Ethnographic research,
- Theatre for development and participatory group discussions with key stakeholders in the community

Girls only strategies include:

- single sex schools or gender segregated classes
- gender streaming in math and science classes

Content-focused strategies:

- gender-sensitive curricula
- development of girl-friendly textbooks and other instructional materials.<sup>13</sup>

Research has consistently shown that a holistic and cross sector package of interventions embedded within an enabling policy framework is needed to support the education of

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<sup>13</sup> [http://www.osisa.org/files/openspace/1\\_1\\_p35\\_esme\\_chipo\\_kadzamira.pdf](http://www.osisa.org/files/openspace/1_1_p35_esme_chipo_kadzamira.pdf) Kadzamira, E. Affirmative Action Policies for Girls Education: A strategy that works. Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa. pp. 38.; <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/eoo/edu/programme/ugmes.htm> Equality of Opportunity in Education and Training International Labour Organization

girls.<sup>14</sup> Experience and review of activities have shown that specific policies important to support girls' education include:<sup>15</sup>

- Utilizing a child-centered approach that focuses on protecting and enhancing the rights of both boys and girls. (UNICEF has encapsulated this in their child-friendly approach to schooling. Aspects of a child-friendly school will be discussed in other sections of this paper—for examples, factors such as using national languages as the medium of instruction, provision of sufficient numbers of appropriate toilets that offer privacy and access to water, erection of security fences, etc.)
- Adopting an intergenerational and cross-institutional gender effort vis a vis education, in this case the triangle girl-child, mother and female teacher, in order to break the vicious circle of female discrimination.
- Integrating children's education and adult education within a lifelong learning framework, within and outside the school system. It is essential to integrate and complement formal, non-formal and informal education and learning, identifying and taking advantage of all learning opportunities in everyday life. This also means supporting alternative approaches to support the education of girls particularly those that have limited opportunities through the formal system (modular and distance learning, schools of second chance, etc.)
- Scholarship, stipend or other incentive programs (for instance take-home rations in school feeding) to stimulate greater interest in sending girls to school.
- Non-punitive pregnancy policies that permit girls to stay in school as long as possible during her pregnancy and encourage her return to school after the birth of the baby. Policies that also hold male students who impregnate girls accountable and place restrictions on their participation during the timeframe the girl-mother is unable to participate in school.
- Using school mapping technologies that place schools closer to where girls live.
- Utilizing gender disaggregated statistics that target gender disparities at all levels of the educational system and which can capture differences based on geographical, urban/rural, and other variables such as by age, by language or ethnic group, etc.
- Reducing both direct and indirect costs of schooling.
- Review and revision of the curriculum and instructional materials for gender bias and discrimination.
- Increasing the number of women at the school in leadership roles.

Two major trends influence the effective implementation of policies, practices and programs. The first is to ensure the availability of needed resources, namely skilled and

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<sup>14</sup><http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTEDUCATION/0,,contentMDK:20298916~menuPK:617572~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:282386,00.html> Girls Education.

<sup>15</sup> <http://home.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/cice/JEF2report5e.pdf> Policy Panel: "Promoting Girls' Education: Viewpoints from Developing Countries"

available teachers, and appropriate academic tools. Secondly, parents and the rest of the community need to be sensitized to the benefits of educating girls. To achieve this partnerships must be forged among the government, school administration and populations, and opinion leaders (religious leaders, business leaders, other important figures such as chiefs, etc.) to raise awareness.

It is important to note that creating policies and procedures is only the first step in a long process to leverage change. In order to effect sustainable change stated policies must be disseminated in a transparent manner that fosters accountability. In other words, policies and procedures must be publically announced to a wide range of stakeholders, written copies of circulars explaining what they consist of must be shared with all key stakeholders and steps to implement and enforce the policies and procedures must be common knowledge among all those responsible for implementing them as well as those who benefit from them. Research has shown these steps frequently do not occur.

Wolf et al<sup>16</sup> found in their research in Namibia and Malawi that these steps were seldom carried out and explained, in part, why many of the policies failed to be successfully acted on. Indeed, in the process of tracking policies from the central ministry level through the system down to the school and community level their work highlighted how uncommon it was for people at the levels who were responsible for implementing policies to have a shared understanding of what the policies meant as those who conceived of the policies. In fact, in some cases what was being implemented on the ground was the direct opposite of what was intended when the policies were conceived. In his work on coupling in educational systems Elmore<sup>17</sup> underscores how “sticky” it is to effect change in educational systems without transparent mechanisms that force both increased capacity and accountability.<sup>18</sup>

What we found: Malawi has made significant progress at the policy level to develop a gender sensitive educational framework. The ministry’s Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) for the period from 2000 to 2015 and the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper (MPRSP) underscore the need to be responsive to the gender imbalance and inequity in the education system at all levels.<sup>19</sup>

In addition, the National Gender Policy recognizes gender as a cross-cutting issue affecting sustainable development. The policy identifies an equitable education as critical

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<sup>16</sup> Wolf, J., G. Lang, B. Mount and D. Prouty. (1999). *The Process of Policy Implementation in Namibia and Malawi*. Washington, DC: USAID.

<sup>17</sup> Elmore, R. (2002). *Building a New Structure For School Leadership*. Harvard Educational Press.

<sup>18</sup> Elmore, R. (2005). *From Policy Implementation to Policy Change: A Personal Odyssey*. Springer Netherlands.



to achieve the goals of equality of access to and attainment of educational qualifications for both boys and girls, women and men. The policy also supports ongoing efforts of the sector to develop a gender-responsive curricula and inclusion of gender sensitivity in pre-service and on-going professional development for in-service teachers (Ministry of Gender, Youth and Community Services, 2000).<sup>20</sup>

The government of Malawi has taken a strong position on the general principles of equality and human rights. The constitution is built on the principle of equality and human rights. Although primary and basic education is considered a human right guaranteed by the government schooling is not compulsory which undermines efforts to get all children into primary school. The Malawi government is also a signatory to the UNESCO Convention against discrimination in education and has signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women. The Government of Malawi is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (adopted by UN General Assembly in 1989), and the Declaration of the World Summit for all which underscored the principles of equal rights of girls to education.

While signing and ratifying UN instruments and provisions in a constitution do not in themselves guarantee gender equality, they nevertheless provide a point of reference for the mobilization of efforts to achieve national equality. It also reflects a commitment to support struggles for equality within the legal system and in other spheres of society. Both the constitution and the legal instruments are therefore necessary and have a normative value in attaining equality. Consequently, the following discussion of findings on specific policies (or lack of policies as is the case in some situations) is framed around and takes into consideration how the existing conditions, legal framework and planned objectives impacts the education of girls.

Malawi's *National Education Sector Plan 2008-2017* has outlined an aggressive approach to achieve MDG and EFA goals. It sets out the government's objectives to (i) improve the overall quality of education for all children including those with special learning needs, (ii) make education more relevant in efforts to meet the needs of a global economy and provide for the gainful employment in the informal, private and public sectors, (iii) equalize educational opportunity at all levels of the education system, (iv) increase civic participation, and (v) improve the living conditions of its people.

To meet these objectives the government has proposed boosting access to early childhood development and care, continuing non-formal education for out-of-school youth and adults, increasing access to quality primary, secondary and vocational/technical schooling and increasing access to and expanding post secondary schooling. In order to achieve the

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<sup>20</sup> Maluwa-Banda, D. (May 2003)

specific goals at the primary level, the government has outlined a 20 point guide. It includes the following:

1. Achieving a 60:1 student:teacher ratio by 2103/14 and below 60:1 by 2017/18.
  2. 30% of the teachers to receive hardship funds by 2014/15.
  3. Transfer of 200 teachers from CDSSs to primary schools by 2008/09.
  4. Increased use of distance teacher education training by 2017/18.
  5. Replenishment of textbooks every three years.
  6. Provision of learning materials for students in standards 1-8.
  7. The implementation of the PCAR in all standards by 2009/10.
  8. The use of IRI to all standards by 2014/15.
  9. IVL implemented in 50 schools a year starting in 2007/08.
  10. Increasing the use of double shift schools to 20% by 2012/13 and then reduced to 15% by 2017/18.
  11. Accelerate school construction by 50 schools a year.
  12. Reducing classroom construction from 2930 a year in 2007/08 to 400 by 2017/18.
  13. Provide grants to communities in difficult areas to erect temporary classroom shelters.
  14. Construction of 1000 teacher houses a year from 2008/09 through 2017/18.
  15. Provision of school grants to support orphans from 20% of schools in 2009/10 to 100% by 2013/14.
  16. Monetary incentives for girls in remote areas in Standards 6-8 starting n 2009/10.
  17. Mothers Groups in all schools by 2017/18.
  18. School feeding for 635,000 children from 2008/09 onwards.
  19. Provision of school health and nutrition to all public primary schools.
  20. Training and monetary incentives to support community participation.
- (NESP, 2008, 11)

Specific policies to address gender that have been implemented in the past 15 years include the following:

- The school uniform policy was reviewed in 1994 and school uniform is no longer a requirement for school attendance at primary education level.
- Ongoing revision of the curricula to make it more gender sensitive
- The re-admission policy allows school aged mothers to return to school after giving birth. The policy also requires school age fathers to leave school during the period the mother is out of school and return at the same time the girl mother is able to return to school.
- The establishment of a Gender Appropriate Curriculum unit at Malawi Institute of Education to offer training on gender sensitivity and ensure that curriculum textbooks have been engendered.
- Social mobilization campaigns with the aim to change attitudes and behaviors affecting girls' education at the grass-root level.



- The creation of gender-balanced community schools to bring schools closer to communities for the purposes of reducing distance to primary schools for girls.<sup>21</sup>

Pregnancy policy: Pregnancy has been identified as one of the major reasons adolescent girls drop-out from school.<sup>22</sup> In the past, any girl who was pregnant would immediately be expelled from school. But a new pregnancy policy allows a pregnant girl and the school boy responsible for the pregnancy to return to school after the birth of the child. According to the policy statement, this chance is supposed to be given only once during a girl's education. The policy stipulates that the girl will be readmitted upon application as long as there is evidence of the proper care of the baby. It further states that if a male student is responsible for the pregnancy, he is also supposed to be withdrawn together with the girl for one academic year and re-apply for admission in the following year.<sup>23</sup>

Although the intention of this policy was good and attempted to move away from a pregnancy policy which unduly penalized girls for getting pregnant, successful implementation of the new one has been problematic at best. In the absence of clearly laid out procedures on how to move forward with the removal and readmission of pregnant girls and boys who father the babies, it is left to those at the local level to interpret when to take action and what action to take. Unfortunately, many schools are gender insensitive to this policy and are not implementing it as the ministry intended. As a result, in many cases they only expel the girl. In some schools, students are not aware of this policy and girls leave without knowing they have the opportunity to return after the birth of their baby.

Our data confirmed what others have already noted: large numbers of girls were not returning to school upon getting pregnant. Indeed, the majority of girls left school of their own volition before anyone at the school was aware they were pregnant and before they were officially asked to leave. This meant that school staff and groups such as Mother's Groups were unable to assist them prior to the birth of the child and advise them on how best to move forward and make informed decisions about the best actions to take. When asked what had been done by the Head Teacher, SMC and/or Mother's Groups to encourage a girl to re-enroll, avoid an early marriage, etc. we commonly learned few steps had been done to find these girls and provide them with support.

During the focus groups many girls confirmed that despite the policy a girl can come back to school if she becomes pregnant, their hopes to pursue an education were dashed if they become pregnant. Very few of the girls felt their parents—especially their mothers—would make any accommodations to assist them to return to school and to support their continued studies. Although we do not have robust data to confirm this,

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<sup>21</sup> Maluwa-Banda, D. (May 2003)

<sup>22</sup> Wolf et al, (1999).Kadazmira,

[http://www.osisa.org/files/openspace/1\\_1\\_p35\\_esme\\_chipo\\_kadzamira.pdf](http://www.osisa.org/files/openspace/1_1_p35_esme_chipo_kadzamira.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Wolf et al, (1999).

what we do have seems to support what the girls say: girls fled school when they became pregnant and did not return. Furthermore, efforts at the school to monitor the progress of their pregnancy in hopes of luring them back did not happen. Other than the actions taken by the Mother's Groups, girls felt that pregnant girls were not encouraged by the Head Teachers or SMCs to return. Indeed, some even sensed girls who got pregnant were alienated and not particularly encouraged to return.

When asked whether or not they would confirm if a student was pregnant upon learning of a possible pregnancy or let "nature take its course," most Head Teachers felt it was their responsibility to confirm whether or not the rumor was true and to be proactive in asking a girl to leave once the pregnancy had been confirmed. The justification for their decision ranged from concern over the welfare of the mother and baby, to fear it might prompt promiscuous behavior in other students, to questions around the "morality" of having a pregnant girl among the student population. Very few took a more lenient and forward-looking stance that the girl (and boy) should remain in school as long as possible and that the priority objective should be to provide a supportive environment for her and the father if he was also a student.

It is doubtful the intent of the current pregnancy policy to *keep students in school* was for school leadership to take proactive measures to seek out information about pregnancies to ensure the girl and boy *leave* school during the pregnancy. However, despite their adamant position to take a strong stance on following up on rumors about girls being pregnant, most Head Teachers in schools in which there was a Mother's Group deferred decisions about pregnancies to Mother's Group and left it up to their discretion to advise the girls on steps to take and to decide when the girl should leave school. In some cases, the Mother's Groups were also consulted about a student father and when he should be asked to leave school although this was a considerably more unusual role and decision for the Mother's Group to be engaged in.

It is worrisome that few Head Teachers admitted they would be as aggressive in their efforts to identify the father of the child as they would be to determine whether or not a girl is pregnant. Indeed some shared that unless the girl openly named a student as the father no action should be taken to confirm whether or not a student fathered the child. In two conversations with Head Teachers in which they *knew* a student had fathered the child, the boys had transferred to a new school before the Head Teacher was able to notify other schools in the area about the situation. When they learned the boys were accepted at a nearby school both Head Teachers felt it was best to let the boy remain enrolled in the new school clearly negating the intent of the pregnancy policy which held both the girl and boy accountable. In part, decisions such as this occurred because of a lack of a clear understanding on the specific steps that must be taken in cases where a student is the father of the baby.

If the ministry hopes to hold boys accountable for their actions clarification is needed on what steps a Head Teacher is required to take to ensure both the girl and boy remain out of school. In particular, when boys make mid-term transfers Head Teachers should be required to confirm with the previous school the reason for the transfer prior to accepting the boy into the school.

Head Teachers reported 100 pregnancies during the 2006, 2007 or 2008 academic school years. Since Head Teachers are not required to monitor and report on student pregnancies, there was a high probability this number of pregnancies was significantly lower than the real incidence of pregnancy. Despite this, the data provided information about the percentage of girls who marry and those who return to school. Additionally, limited information was also available on fathers and whether male students who fathered the babies were asked to leave the school during the same period the girl was required to leave school.

Of the 100 girls for which there was data, 50 girls were in standard 6, 49 girls were in standard 7 and 1 girl was in standard 8. Twelve girls were 14 years old, 56 were 15 and 32 were 16. The majority of the girls-- 84%--left on their own—in most cases prior to anyone at the school becoming aware of the pregnancy--and 16% were asked to leave by the Mother's Group (the most common approach), Head Teacher and/or SMC. 48% of the girls married the father of the child and only 9% of the girls returned to school after the birth of the baby. There was one reported case in which a girl married but still returned to school after the birth of the baby at the insistence of the father who was not enrolled in the school as a student.

In nearly every case in which a girl returned to school after the birth of the baby she did very well. Additionally, most girls continued with their studies at the secondary school. In twelve cases a student fathered the child. Eleven of the boys were asked to leave during the same period the girl was out of school. There was a 13<sup>th</sup> boy who fathered a girl at a different school but the Head Teacher provided no information about the girl and whether or not she was asked to leave school or returned after the birth of the baby; nor was the Head Teacher able to provide any information about the role the boy had in supporting the child. In all the cases the Head Teacher had no information about the status of the boys and whether they returned to school after the birth of the baby. However, in several cases the Head Teachers reported that the girl and the boy eventually married but neither the girl or boy returned to school after the birth of their baby.

The majority of the girls in our sampling who left school because of pregnancy left permanently and eventually married. Their experience bears out that there is a tremendous need for information about sexual activity and birth control to be part of the planned curriculum or through extra-curricular activities in the early years of primary school. Mother's Groups should play an active role in this instruction. More importantly,

the information should be available to both boys and girls long before puberty and no later than standard 3.

The MOE needs to revisit the policy to ensure that the best interest of the girl, boy and baby are being served when they are forced to leave school. There is no medical research that demonstrates that in a normal pregnancy regular school attendance (even when the girl is required to walk several kilometers to attend school) places the mother or child at risk. Indeed, it is highly unlikely that the girl will be under greater duress attending school than if she leaves school and remains at home and engages in routine gardening, market activities or regular household chores. Even if the girl and boy are required to leave school there should be an out-reach program that is pushed into gear that provides them with training for the impending responsibilities of parenting. There should also be a support system to help them return to school after the birth of the child. This may require a program that presents them with alternative schooling options.

Sexual Harassment and Abuse: There are no explicit regulations and policies on sexual harassment. This absence was critical since research conducted in Malawi consistently highlights the failure of schools to ensure the safety of girls.<sup>24</sup> Nor was there a clearly defined teacher code of conduct. However, most schools had locally defined and in many cases tacit codes of conduct for teachers and students addressing harassment and. Despite an awareness of the need to protect girls most schools failed to protect girls against a plethora of risks including harassment and abuse from teachers and security while walking to and from school. In fact, in general those in leadership roles at the school failed to see issues like security walking to and from *their* school as any real threat to the girls' well-being.

It was noted that most schools failed to visibly post codes of conduct. Nor did they have an established defined strategy or steps they followed if situations arose in which a girl was treated inappropriately. Although most Head Teachers deferred to the SMC for situations that involved harassment or abuse very few SMCs had any policies or procedures that were transparent and held teachers and students accountable. Failure to take proactive steps to define policies, procedures and actions to take to ensure a healthy, safe and secure school and then to post and disseminate them so parents, teachers and students are aware of them increased the possibility that girls would be harmed or threatened.

Child Rights: Although there is no legal framework protecting the rights of the child, the government of Malawi is a signatory on numerous global initiatives that mandate the protection of children. However, in the absence of any kind of legal mandate defining what constitutes acceptable behavior and support to children complicates the actions of

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<sup>24</sup> Chimombo and Chonzi, 2000; Maluwa-Banda and Lunguzi, 2002; Mbilizi, Kanyongolo, Nzimpita, 2000

leaders at the community level to protect children—especially those that are in vulnerable situations. Despite this void there was a growing awareness at the community level that children have rights and that adults needed to be held accountable to ensure these rights were enforced and children were protected from situations that were harmful to them and placed them at-risk.

Determining what people understood about child rights and what constituted a child-friendly learning environment was important because of the critical role these rights played in defining an enabling environment for the schooling of girls. When asked about the rights almost everyone responded, “*The right to go to school.*” Although this was one of the identified rights, and was an understandable response because it was paramount for educators to think of rights through this lens, it was only a small part of the package of rights of the child. It was also the easiest one to understand because the *right to an education* primarily meant the child had the right to go to school. Other rights of children dealing with abuse, neglect, and child labor (rights that were particularly key to the well-being of the girl child) weren’t as easily defined and had an element of subjectivity to them.

Definitions of what constitutes neglect, abuse or child labor ranged considerably underscoring how difficult it was for Head Teachers and school leaders to enforce these rights. Although, they were in positions which made them likely candidates to monitor and enforce these laws in their communities and to act on the behalf of the girls, their lack of understanding of what the rights mean or what an infringement of those rights might “*look like*” dis-empowered them to take appropriate and timely action. Nor did they have the tools to enable them to act including clear guidelines from the government on what steps to take if they suspected a girl’s rights were being infringed or a girl was being abused. The overall lack of understanding about child rights and what it meant in terms of policies, procedures and basic actions to be responsive to them meant school leaders were ill-prepared to create supportive and safe places for girls.

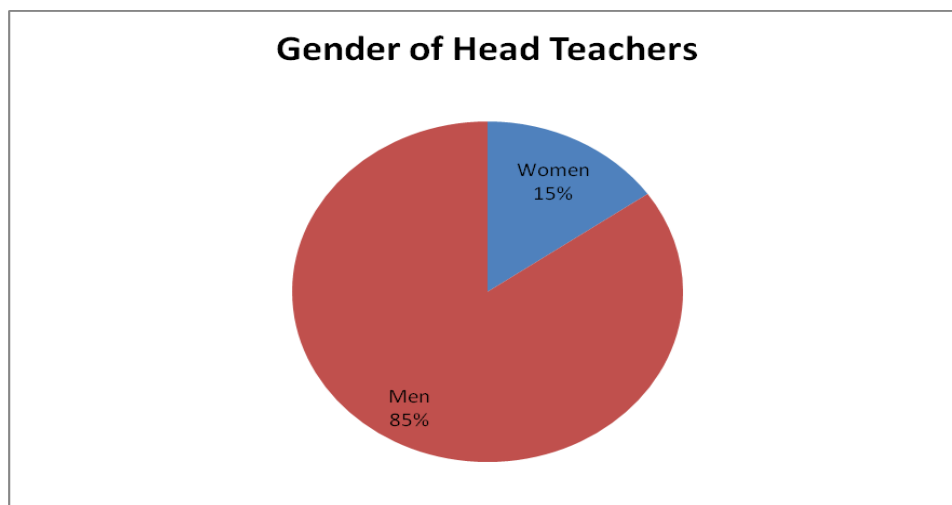
Most Head Teachers and other officials at the school repeated in a rote fashion what child rights were but discussions around what these meant were full of contradictions. Indeed, discussions around what constituted child labor were extremely ambiguous. Even more illusive were discussions that focused on what their role was in pursuing situations in which the rights of the child were infringed and children were actually be at-risk. Some sketchily spoke of procedures they were supposed to follow such as notifying the chief, SMC and DEM about infractions, etc. but most expressed anxiety over taking any direct action for fear of legal reprisals or lack of support from the system in cases where parents or officials reacted or retaliated for their actions. Therefore, in the absence of written guidelines outlining the steps they *must* take Head Teachers were unlikely to be proactive in protecting the rights of the children under their care.

Even though Head Teachers were able to talk about the rights of the child in the abstract it was not always evident in decisions they made about school activities whether or not they really understood them in the concrete. For instance, conversations about corporal punishment and what kinds of measures could be taken to reprimand a student were not always clear. Additionally, activities students were expected to carry out to support the school development program also demonstrated a murky understanding of the kinds of activities that constituted child labor. In one extremely remote school the Head Teacher expounded at length about difficulties with parents forcing their children to engage in heavy agricultural work and then shared with the evaluation team two fund raising activities he hosted in which students from standard 3 on were expected to carry loads of wood to the tarmac road to sell—a walk of well over 90 minutes in one direction. When questioned about the appropriateness of this and the risk he was sending a double message to the parents about child labor he saw no problem with it since it was “*for a good cause.*”

Language Policy: The government’s policy to use the child’s mother tongue as the language of instruction in the early grades greatly enhanced the performance of girls in the early years of primary schooling when learning a second language as the medium of instruction would significantly limit their ability to engage in and do well in school. Additionally, more child-friendly instructional practices and assessment procedures fostered classroom environments that were more supportive of the ways girls learn best. Interviews with the Head Teachers underscored the commitment of school personnel to provide a learning environment that was supportive to the children’s learning capacity.

One of the major ways they felt the teaching and learning was child-friendly was through the use of mother tongue language of instruction. It was commonly observed for teachers to switch between one language to another in an effort to facilitate what was being taught and reinforce what the students were learning. Even in the upper grades where the language of instruction is English, teachers accommodated the learning needs of their students by switching into Chichewa or other local languages used by the children. Responses on the CFRS indicated that nearly 100% of the schools used multiple languages in their teaching in all the standards.

Affirmative Action Strategies: In many communities there were few educated role models who were women. Additionally, leaders at the schools were overwhelming male. In some cases at the more remote schools even the teachers were all men. Other than the Mother’s Groups (which had 13 male members) men dominated decision-making at the schools. As the following graph shows, fewer than 20% of the Head Teachers were



women and only 37% of SMC members were women. The implications of this played out in multiple ways including limited opportunities for girls to confide in women about situations which placed them at-risk or in troubling situations.

**Increased Access and Retention:** This section of the report examines the impact AGEI has made on the access and retention of girls to and in school. The discussion will first examine what research tells us about strategies to increase access and retention for girls as well as the primary barriers that keep them out of school or cause them to leave prematurely. The report will then discuss what the data suggests about the current situation in the schools in the sampling in Malawi.

What research tells us: In 1994 when the government implemented the policy to provide free education to all primary-age children, only about 55% of children were enrolled in school and total enrollment rose from 1.9 to 3.6 million children. The Apparent Intake Rate (AIR) for boys dropped by 115 per cent while that for girls dropped by 104.9 per cent. The AIR for boys rose from 198 per cent in 1990 to 292.1 per cent in 1994 and declined to 83 per cent in 1997 while that of girls rose from 184 per cent to 306.8 per cent and shortly thereafter dropped down to 84.5 per cent. The 65.2 per cent rise in GER for girls between 1990 and 1997 indicated that the participation of girls in primary school education had more than doubled. Since 1995 the GER in Malawi increased more than 100 per cent for girls indicating Malawi has been, in theory, enrolling all primary school age girls. Similarly, the 58.4 per cent rise in Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) for girls showed that the number of girls who enrolled in primary school from the official primary school-age-group of 6-13 years old had more than doubled.<sup>25</sup>

However, despite this impressive progress variations emerged in the actual enrollment of girls particularly when patterns were examined across the country. The 2002 education DHS carried out by USAID captured not only the progress made over the past decade but

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<sup>25</sup> [http://www.unesco.org/education/wef/countryreports/malawi/rapport\\_2.html](http://www.unesco.org/education/wef/countryreports/malawi/rapport_2.html)

documented some of the variations as well. The DHS noted a gender parity index of 0.9 which translated to nearly equal enrollments for boys and girls. Net attendance rates (NAR) were at 81 percent while the gross attendance rates (GAR) for boys exceeded those of girls. However, the data noted substantial regional differences for both net and gross attendance ratios. In the Southern region, 76 percent of the children age 6-13 attended primary school, compared with 84 percent in the Central and 93 percent in the Northern regions. A similar pattern was noted for GAR by region, with the lowest GAR in the Southern region and the highest in the Northern region. The DHS data also noted significantly more boys were overage learners in Standard 8 and more likely to repeat a grade.

While there are many reasons for variations in enrollment many are related to poverty. The need to supplement family income is one of the main reasons why girls do not attend classes or enroll in school<sup>26</sup>. Research shows that 18 percent of children aged 5-14 are economically active, amounting to some 211 million children, about half of whom are girls. Cost is another major barrier.<sup>27</sup> A recent study in the Gambia found that parental decisions to send their girls to school were based on an intersection of factors, including parents' value for education for their children, locus of authority, parents' socioeconomic, educational and religious background, community expectations, sex-role socialization of boys and girls, school characteristics and policy matters. However, the predominant factor for all parents was their overall value or desire for their daughter's education. The mother's role in making that decision was noted to be particularly important.<sup>28</sup>

In food insecure and poor populations, poverty often prevents children from attending school, even if it is provided for “free”. Not only are there indirect costs associated with school (e.g., clothing, books), but there are also the lost labor and opportunity costs families must take into consideration. These costs strike girls in a particularly egregious way. Although both boys and girls are forced to contribute to the family's subsistence in impoverished homes, girls not only provide agricultural labor in the fields and sell goods in the marketplace, they are also engaged in domestic chores including fetching water and wood, preparing and serving food, caring for other children, and/or by working as domestic laborers outside the family.

World Food Program officials claim school feeding strategies tackle poverty and hunger in a sustainable way linking food aid to chronic issues such as the low levels of schooling of girls. The WFP tackles poverty-linked issues affecting girls' education with food in a two-pronged way. In addition to feeding at school-which improves a child's capacity to

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<sup>26</sup> ILO Concept Note. Breaking the Cycle of Violence against girls: From Child Labour to Education. April 2007.

<sup>27</sup> [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=17039&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=17039&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

<sup>28</sup> <http://digitalcommons.libraries.columbia.edu/dissertations/AAI9939459/> Factors that affect girls' access to basic education in the rural areas of the Gambia



learn because it reduces temporary hunger, improves nutrition and adds calories—the WFP also provides take-home rations for girls to compensate their families for the loss of their labor in the home thus freeing them up to attend school.<sup>29</sup> The WFP experience shows that the two-pronged approach to school feeding works: when food is available at school, enrollment and attendance rates increase, and dropout rates decrease. Children are more likely to stay in school longer if they have enough food to learn and thrive. And when take-home rations are provided in addition to in-school feeding, poor families have an incentive to send their daughters to school and to maintain their school attendance.

Research also shows that girls have less time to focus on their schooling which leads to high rates of repetition and dropout. Sey and Prouty<sup>30</sup> research in Malawi over a decade ago found that girls in rural areas had 50% less time to focus on their studies than their male counterparts who lived in urban areas. Girls in rural areas suffered from chronic fatigue and sleep deprivation because they frequently got fewer than 6 hours of sleep a night because of their high domestic workload in the early morning and late at night. Not surprisingly, girls carrying the heavy out-of-school workloads frequently left school long before completing the primary school cycle.

Although more recent research<sup>31</sup> conducted by the Population Council showed that lives of adolescent boys and girls in developing countries were becoming more similar than in the past, adolescent girls still worked longer hours than boys particularly when one takes into consideration the gender division of labor that typically developed in the family that combined labor market work with non-wage domestic chores. A recent study in Thailand<sup>32</sup> found that although girls had an equal amount of time to focus on their studies they had considerably less time than boys to engage in play, watch television or play sports. Additionally, girls were expected to spend at least three hours a day on average engaged in household chores or caring for siblings compared with 1 ½ hours for the boys. All of these factors had profound impact on the commitment girls made to long term schooling goals.

What we found: Since the early 90's there have been numerous projects focusing on increasing girls' access to school and in moving towards the goal of Education for All. Although the vestiges of each of these programs were still visible in the conversations of people as they talked about the need to educate girls the piecemeal approach of many of the activities failed to provide a national framework needed to ensure a long term

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<sup>29</sup> School Feeding Works for Girls Education. World Food Programme

<sup>30</sup> Sey, H. and Prouty, D. (1996). *Peeking Through the Windows: The Schooling Experience of Girls in Malawi*. Unpublished document. Washington, DC: USAID

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/wp/193.pdf> Ritchie, A., Cynthia Lloyd, and Monica Grant/ (2004). Gender Differences in Time Use Among Adolescents in Developing Countries. Population Council. New York.

<sup>32</sup> Prouty, D. (2007). Bias Study in Thailand's Schools and Classrooms. Bangkok: UNICEF.

sustainability. Indeed, one of the most significant aspects of AGEI was the national framework it created to bring all the key players together to address the system-wide factors influencing girls' education in a sustainable way. It cannot be underscored enough how important this was.

The ministry, its development partners and community mobilizers had been highly instrumental in sensitizing parents and school personnel on ways to get girls into school, keep them there and help them to do well. There was a groundswell of support for educating girls and the results were easily seen in primary school classrooms. Most importantly, *everyone* demonstrated sensitivity to the schooling needs of girls as well as a desire to address those needs. No one questioned the *rightness* or the *appropriateness* of sending girls to school even as they become closer to marriageable age. This represented a seminal change in the mentality about the schooling of girls. Additionally, no longer did conversations revolve around primary schooling; Head Teachers and committee members frequently mentioned the need to support opportunities for girls to go to secondary school. Their evolved thinking about increasing access to secondary schooling had become common currency.

However, mobilizing communities and instilling them with knowledge about the need to educate girls does not necessarily translate into concrete actions that leveraged a difference in girls' opportunities to attend school. This was the case in many of the schools visited. Those we spoke with in leadership positions at the school (including representatives of PTA, SMC and Mother's Groups) and girls themselves were all acutely aware of what needed to be done to improve opportunities and remove barriers to girls' schooling. Despite this knowledge, in many cases, those in charge of decision making at the schools failed to act on the behalf of the girls to improve their chances and increase their opportunities to complete the primary cycle. In most cases this was not because of a lack of will; more often than not it was because of the paucity of resources or because of understanding on how to move forward to leverage changes.

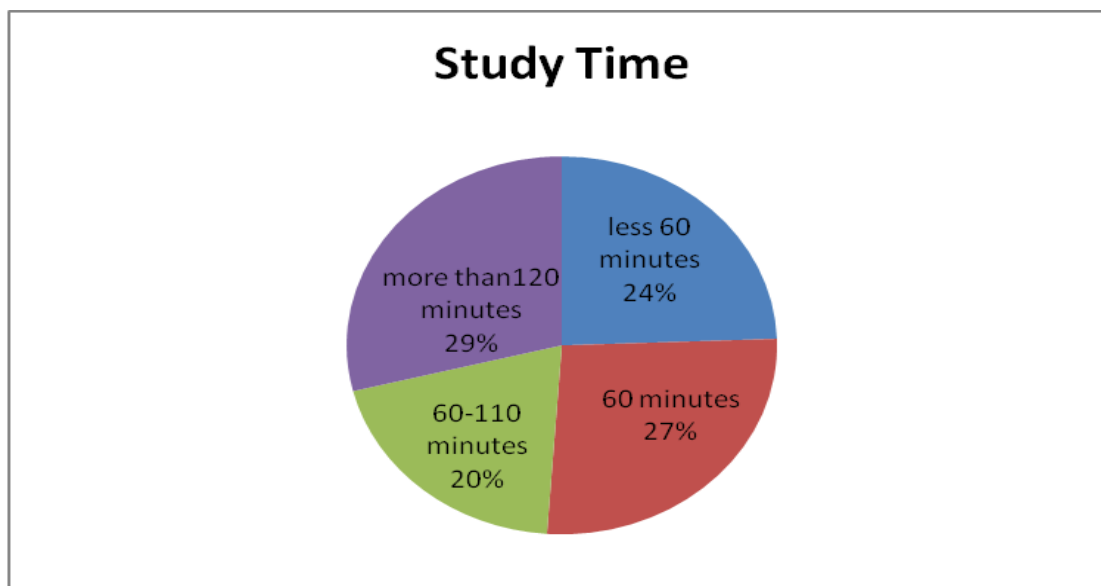
Enrollment of girls: In 2000 Maluwa-Banda found that girls' enrollment at the primary school level had overtaken that of boys by a margin of 0.6% in standard 1 but in standard 8, only 42.5% of those enrolled were girls. Our data found a similar pattern. Parity existed in gender enrollments relatively consistent throughout the standards. However, as the following graph demonstrates, the slight edge girls maintained in standards 1-6 leveled off by standard 7 and boys edged slightly ahead of the girls by standard 8. Given this was the age when adolescent girls living in the rural areas began preparing for marriage (including their participation in traditional ceremonies such as "*shaking off the dust*" and *chinamwali* associated with initiation) the decrease in their enrollment was not surprising. The table also illustrates how few girls and boys completed the primary cycle and the high degree of wastage. By standard 5 fewer than 50% of the students were still enrolled in school.

Girls repeatedly mentioned home work obligations as one of the primary reasons girls didn't attend school or do well in school. They also noted that pressure to leave school increased significantly the older girls got until it was almost impossible to hold out against family and community pressure to leave school and marry.

Research has consistently demonstrated girls are at greater risk when there are male students enrolled who are older than the normal age of the other primary students. Although this study did not collect data on the number of over age learners in each standard, data was collected on the oldest and youngest student in each standard in each school. What we learned was that even in standard one there were students who were significantly older than their classmates. The oldest student in the sampling was a 21 year-old man; in one school there was an 18 year old enrolled in standard one. The districts of Dedza, Lilongwe Rural East and West, Machinga and Mangochi exhibited some of the greatest range of ages in their student populations.

Girls work at home; Girls work at school: Opportunity cost continued to be a major deterrent in the girls' efforts to fully engage in school. In addition to the regular responsibilities that they engaged in, because of the high rate of HIV/AIDS infection girls in Malawi had an additional obligation: preparing for and attending funerals.

Girls faced a long day. Over 90% of the girls were up before dawn to help prepare breakfast and complete other chores. Most left for school no later than 6 AM where they began their day at school doing what they did at home: more chores. Depending upon what standard they were in they returned home in the early afternoon to again do chores. A small percentage of girls were fortunate enough to have time to play with their friends when they returned home from school but most began the daily on-going ritual of cleaning, cooking and caring for their siblings or ill family members when they returned home after spending the morning at school. Even if girls attended school, these responsibilities (cleaning, fetching water and wood, caring for siblings) accounted for high levels of tardiness and absences for girls.



As the chart illustrates about 25% of the girls were able devote two or more hours to their homework and studies. Most had less than 2 hours to prepare their lessons and about a quarter of them had less than 60 minutes. None of them got to bed before 9 in the evening. Because of the early hour they were forced to get up in the morning a significant number of them failed to get 8 hours of sleep at night. About half of the girls in the girls in the sampling got fewer than 6 hours of sleep at night.

When asked about the distribution of chores at school, Head Teachers insisted chores were equally distributed between boys and girls. However, observations before and after school could not confirm what we were told. What was observed was that girls swept and washed the classrooms; girls carried water; girls cleaned the latrines for the girls and staff; boys cleaned the latrines for the boys; boys did outside weeding; both boys and girls worked in school gardens. Although schools had made dramatic changes in the way chores were meted out, girls continued to do the lion's share of the "dirty" work and boys had responsibilities that were more supervisory in nature particularly as they moved into the higher standards and became monitors. In visits to schools, it was always the older boys who were observed chasing after the younger students and badgering girls (including pushing/shoving) to do school chores. At no point were girls observed acting in a similar fashion. When asked about this we were told the boys behaved in this manner because they were the school monitors and this was their "job".

At-risk students: At-risk students including orphans<sup>33</sup> and children with special learning needs were seldom provided support to enable them to attend school. Girls who were disabled or orphans were doubly at-risk. It must be noted, however, that it is highly

probable the data collected for this assessment on the prevalence of disability was greatly under-reported. However, the data does offer some baseline information about the representation of children with special learning needs. Understandably, the disabilities which were “visible” and more easily detected were the ones most frequently reported by the Head Teachers. Very few schools had any written documentation about students with special learning needs. Furthermore, with few exceptions nothing was being done to provide accommodations for the children other than the most basic modifications.

As the following table illustrates children with disabilities were enrolled in school. Although the number of children with visible disabilities represented a very small percentage of the overall student population, what was most notable was that schools were attempting to educate them with little or no resources nor any additional support. Although districts had specialists on staff who were expected to provide support to the schools the number of schools they covered and the students they assisted were too numerous.

Disabled Students							
Standard	Total	visual	emotional	hearing	physical	cognitive	mute
1	162	31	17	31	24	34	25
2	75	15	3	22	12	16	7
3	140	41	6	44	23	22	4
4	80	9	12	28	15	13	3
5	70	23	6	13	14	9	5
6	84	29	0	18	23	12	2
7	68	28	3	12	12	7	6
8	70	37	2	17	9	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>55</b>

Many times we were told the specialist had made one visit to the school during the year and despite promises there would be future support none had been forthcoming. Most Head Teachers recognized and reluctantly accepted that they were on their own to develop some kind of educational program that would offer some measure of learning to students who were limited in their ability to respond to the mainstream teaching and learning in Malawian classrooms. None challenged the right of the child with a disability

to be there. Most regretted they were unable to do more to assist them. Many, however, questioned how prepared their teachers were to accommodate children with special learning needs particularly as greater numbers of them enrolled in school.

It is important to note that many health and nutrition-related factors including high incidence of malnutrition, malaria and other diseases, cause a myriad of development deficiencies which may not be easily discernable but dramatically affect the learning potential of children. Schools were ill-prepared to cope with any of these. Not only did they lack the resources to help the children with special learning needs they often lacked the knowledge on how to assist them as well.

Not surprising, the data suggested the students who fared best were those who parents took an active role in advocating for their schooling. Unfortunately, many of the students with disabilities were sent to school and left to navigate the schooling experience in isolation on their own. In general girls who were disabled had few supports for schooling. More than most, girls with disabilities were forced to forage their own way. When an education that could leverage gainful employment in the informal, private or public sector wasn't likely and traditional marriage was also unlikely this left them in an extremely vulnerable position. Furthermore, they were at considerably greater risk for physical and sexual abuse and prostitution. In a country with one of the highest HIV/AIDS rates in the world this was a terrifying fate.

Orphaned girls were also at high risk. In many cases they were responsible for the care of siblings which was a strong deterrent against doing well in school as well as persisting in school. They were also more vulnerable for early marriages and abuse since there was no adult to care for them and advocate for them. The number of orphans enrolled in schools in our sampling ranged from a low of 2% to a high of nearly 30% of the student population. All schools had orphans with an average of 15% of the student population being either a single or double orphan. There were more girls who were orphaned than boys in about 60% of the schools in our sampling. The higher incidence of girls than boys may have been influenced by orphaned boys giving up on schooling particularly as they neared adolescence.<sup>34</sup>

Obviously, such high percentages of orphans placed a tremendous strain on communities and schools to try and ensure basic needs of the children were met. It was unclear how proactive the committees were in seeking assistance for the children although in nearly all the schools it was stressed no child would be turned away because they could not afford the indirect school costs such as post office fees. In over half of the schools the

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<sup>34</sup> The districts with the greatest number of orphans were Blantyre Urban, Mzuzu, Kasungu and Masimba.

Mother's Groups expressed the greatest level of concern over the plight of orphans and tried to provide them with basic school supplies and uniforms.

Another mechanism created to respond to the needs of vulnerable children is the partnership between UNICEF/Malawi and WFP to provide school feeding to areas experiencing temporary famine. Head Teachers noted that schools that participated in school feeding programs noted this had been a huge factor in attracting children to school. Enrollments and attendance skyrocketed when food was available and dropped precipitously when the food was gone.

Head Teachers also noted that often children migrated from one school to another in order to participate in the school feeding programs in the area as there would be food shortages from one school to another. At many schools we noted children who were well under school-age standing in line to receive their daily share. When asked about this one Head Teacher lamented "*What are we to do? We can't turn them away they are hungry too.*" Schools that participated in the take-home rations also saw higher enrollments of girls and retention continued through the higher standards. However, in some of the schools girls in the higher standards assisted in preparing and serving the food taking them out of their classes for some periods during the day.

Personal Hygiene Research has repeatedly demonstrated that one of the most important factors affecting the retention of adolescent girls is appropriate toilet facilities. The toilet designs and hygienic services ensured that all school girls had (1) separate latrines from boys, (2) toilet facilities that offer privacy and secure doors, (3) water for washing, and (4) free or subsidized feminine napkins.

In an average school one out of two 13 year old girls will probably be menstruating. One in eight girls begins to menstruate (menarche) when she is 11 years or younger. During the period a girl is in school from grades 4 through 10 an average girl menstruates approximately 450 days. When faced with poor facilities – inadequate water for washing, lack of soap, no privacy and non-functioning or insufficient toilets--the fact is that many girls don't attend school. Obviously, this impacted their ability to do well in school.

UNICEF found in Kenya that one in ten school-age girls do not attend school during their period. A research project in Uganda<sup>35</sup> found that of 300 primary school girls 94% reported they experienced problems at school during their menstruation and three out of five stayed away from school when menstruating. Research in Peru<sup>36</sup> showed that the onset of menstruation negatively impacted the schooling of girls because they remained

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<sup>35</sup> <http://www.sn.apc.org/fred/quest/quest-strategy.htm#nine> Quality education for social transformation

<sup>36</sup> Office of women in Development, USAID. Peru Menarche and Its Implications for Educational Policy in Peru [http://www.worlded.org/Docs/Menarche\\_Study\\_Final\\_3\\_8\\_01.pdf](http://www.worlded.org/Docs/Menarche_Study_Final_3_8_01.pdf)

at home because of cultural beliefs, not feeling well and inadequate and insufficient toilet facilities.

Although well-designed toilets and access to water were found to be critical to get girls enrolled in school, a combination of education about personal hygiene and reproduction, communication and construction were needed to ensure girls had well-designed facilities and also knew how to use them correctly.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, research has underscored that content in health and nutrition, normal growth and development, and reproductive health should be included in the curriculum with sufficient family-life education materials that are age, language and culture appropriate.<sup>38</sup>

We also know that security is another key issue affecting the schooling of girls. Sadly, in far too many situations schools are unsafe places particularly for girls. It begins with the journey to school and carries through to their experiences while at school. *“Girls experience many different forms of violence. Every day, girls are assaulted on their way to school, pushed and hit on school grounds, teased and insulted by their classmates and humiliated through whisper campaigns, cell phone messages or on the Internet. They face sexual assault from other students, are offered higher marks by teachers in exchange for sexual favours, even raped in the staff room. Some are caned or beaten in the name of discipline.”*<sup>39</sup>

Even though research has shown that urban girls are harassed both physically and verbally when they use public transport, and girls in rural areas may be accosted while walking on remote paths, despite the different circumstances the consequences have been the same: parents stopped sending their daughters to school. Additionally, in many cases girls often elected not to report the abuse because it was considered taboo, they were “blamed” for provoking the attack or the girl feared retaliation particularly when the abuser was their own teacher. This left acts under-reported and allowed the abusers to go unpunished. Experience has shown that escorting girls to school, encouraging them to walk in groups and school security fences that restricted access to outsiders all contributed to a safer environment for girls and promoted their retention and on-going participation.<sup>40</sup> The need to protect girls cannot be over stressed. DFID reported that almost one in five girls had been sexually assaulted and almost one in ten raped or subjected to attempted rape.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> [http://www.schools.watsan.net/home/projects\\_and\\_case\\_studies](http://www.schools.watsan.net/home/projects_and_case_studies). Girl Friendly Toilets for School Girls.

<sup>38</sup> [http://www.worlded.org/docs/Policy\\_brief.pdf](http://www.worlded.org/docs/Policy_brief.pdf) Girls’ and Women’s Education Policy Research Activity (GWE-PRA) Policy Brief: Menarche and Its Implications for Educational Policy in Peru March 2001

<sup>39</sup> [http://www.amnesty.ca/campaigns/svaw\\_safe\\_schools.php](http://www.amnesty.ca/campaigns/svaw_safe_schools.php) Safe Schools: Every Girl’s Right

<sup>40</sup> Strategy Session I.2 Overcoming Obstacles to Educating Girls 2000

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Pubs/files/education/girls-education-factsheet.pdf> Girls Education Fact Sheet January 2007



Latrines and boreholes: Interviews with mothers and girls confirmed the positive impact the provision of latrines had on the participation of girls not only because of issues of privacy and security but because of hygiene as well. Although not all schools benefitted from the construction program, clearly those that did saw the latrines as a major factor in the on-going participation of girls particularly for the girls that had gone through menses.

Of the schools in the sampling 28 schools benefitted from the provision of latrines for students and staffs. (Generally latrines were provided for both boys and girls and staff members but in about ½ of the schools only latrines for girls were constructed.) However, even in schools that did not receive latrines through the AGEI, many have placed the construction of separate latrines for girls as a high priority in their development plans—ahead of the construction of school blocks--underscoring their desire to improve conditions for the girls.

The most observable difference for the schools which benefitted from the latrines was the ability to keep them well maintained and cleaned. Schools with smear and dirt floors were damp with a prevailing (and in some cases overwhelming) odor of urine. In contrast, latrines with cement floors, although no less damp, often had less of a urine odor—most likely because they were easier to clean and frequently had a more regular cleaning schedule. However, it should be stressed there were almost no latrines that passed any kind of “odor” test; nor were there any that were inviting or hygienic.<sup>42</sup>

Thirty-three of the schools were provided with a borehole. Of that number nearly 10% were broken with no apparent on-going activities to repair them. Only a few schools had a regular maintenance program to ensure the proper operation of the boreholes or other structures at the school. One observation was that unless boreholes were fenced off from the communities they became a magnet for people from the community collecting water throughout the day. This frequently increased outside noise around the schools which disturbed classes and added to the challenge to make schools more secure from outsiders and animals wandering around the school grounds.<sup>43</sup>

Almost all the schools with Mother's Groups offered programs on hygiene. Approximately half of those also provided girls with sanitary pads during their menstrual cycles.<sup>44</sup> Mother's Groups were also engaged in programs offering counsel on sex and

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<sup>42</sup> Given the associated risk of the spread of HIV/AIDS from pit latrines the provision of more solid latrines that contributes to better sanitation is clearly a high priority and a significant need.

<sup>43</sup> Obviously, if the school's borehole is the main source of water for the surrounding villages it is difficult to bar villagers from using it. However, times when it can be used that are less distracting during the school day should be negotiated in an effort to reduce distraction and increase security

<sup>44</sup> The pads were purchased and provided to schools under a pilot project on Feminine Hygiene although it wasn't a part of the AGEI.

reproduction. Most of the girls who participated in the focus groups underscored how important these conversations were helping them to not only know how to properly care for their personal hygiene but on ways to protect themselves from “inappropriate” behavior as well.

Security, Harassment and Abuse: With few exceptions when asked if there were problems at their school, Head Teachers insisted there were none. When asked how they’d know if the girls didn’t disclose the incidents, all but a few of the Head Teachers said they *expected* the girls to inform them of any questionable activities. When asked if they thought all their girl students would feel comfortable reporting any questionable behavior--particularly if it involved a male teacher at the school---they reassured us they thought girls would let them know if there were any problems because of the open and trusted relationship they had with them.

However, it should be noted that results from the Child Friendly Ranking Scale <sup>45</sup> demonstrated that only slightly more than 30% of the schools took any measures to ensure the safety of the girls attending their school through the development of enforceable policies or procedures. Therefore, despite the Head Teachers’ tendency to believe girls felt comfortable in their schools and that efforts were made to ensure their safety the truth is very few schools took any concrete measures to provide any kind of security net for the girls attending their schools.

Conversations with the girls confirmed the vulnerable situation girls were in at their schools. Indeed, in 60 of the 90 schools girls indicated there was some kind of inappropriate behavior that took place in their schools—situations in which teachers and fellow students touched them inappropriately or made lewd remarks or suggestions to them. In contrast, in 21 of the schools the girls indicated there were no problems with inappropriate behavior—an amount representing less than 25% of the sampling.<sup>46</sup> When asked what they did when faced with inappropriate behavior—particularly in the case of inappropriate behavior on the part of their teachers—the girls indicated they usually ignored it. In reference to inappropriate behavior by their male teachers—comments such as “*he would punish us*” or “*he would give us poor marks*” or “*it would be uncomfortable if we said anything*” were frequently cited as reasons for their silence on this topic. Not only did they **not** inform the Head Teacher about inappropriate behavior they generally didn’t tell their parents or members of the Mother’s Groups either.

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<sup>45</sup> Because of the amount of time it took to administer the instrument, the CFRS was administered at 70 of the schools in the sampling.

<sup>46</sup> In nearly all cases where allegations were made the girls did not say anything to anyone at the school including the Mother’s Group.

Placing the responsibility on the girls to report unacceptable behavior was unreasonable if not unprincipled. Not only did it place them at greater risk from a teacher who was clearly already demonstrating a lack of professional behavior, it failed to foster an environment which ensured girls were safe and supported. Accountability rested on the school and school leadership to put into place the procedures and safety mechanisms that guaranteed no girl would be harassed or abused by a fellow student, a staff member or a community member.

But accountability didn't rest only on those at the school and community level. The government was culpable as well. In the absence of aggressive action to punish Head Teachers and Teachers for their failure to protect girls in their charge against harassment and abuse it was highly unlikely much was going to change. Furthermore, school personnel who sought and demanded sexual favors from students must be punished to the full extent of the law. These cases like this must have been made very public as a deterrent to others who continued to take advantage of girls.

Only eight schools in the sampling had any kind of permanent security fence around the school. Some had plant groupings—bushes and trees—creating a marker staking out the school boundaries but were of little value in blocking outsiders from entering the school grounds. At many of the schools people could be seen throughout the course of the day crossing the school property—most innocently just taking a shortcut to the market or wherever they were headed. But not all situations were so benign and at several schools the Head Teacher shared harrowing stories of girls who narrowly escaped some kind of personal attack from an outsider entering the school property.

During our interviews more than one Head Teacher referred to the threats girls faced as

Teacher housing makes a big difference. The school is much safer---I don't worry about the school being robbed---since I've lived here we've had much less problem with robberies and things missing from the school. And it's safer for the students as well particularly the girls. We had an incident last year that made me aware how important it is for someone to be at the school all the time. Some of the students had remained after school to do some homework. One of them was a standard 8 girl names Esther. She had to go through the surrounding corn fields to get to her home. At that time of the year the corn was high and a man from a nearby village was hiding in the corn to abduct a girl so he could seduce her when she walked home from school. Esther was able to break away and she ran to the school screaming a man was trying to attack her. I heard her cries and was able to come to her rescue and beat him off. We contacted the police and he was tried and is now in prison. But I often wonder what might have happened to her if I hadn't been here. There are no houses very close to the school and I don't think anyone would have heard her cries if I weren't here.

they walked to and from school. They explained that some of the “threats” were in the form of the male students harassing and hazing the girls on their treks to and from school. Still others were from older men looking to find a young girl to attack. However, a much larger number were alliances and promises made between a young couple in the throes of a youthful romance. Unfortunately, too often those trysts ended in a pregnancy that forced the girl to leave school and terminated her studies.

Despite how common these encounters were (whether they were unwanted or not) and the awareness on the part of school leaders and parents these risks were real, fewer than 15% of the schools implemented any kind of program to secure the safety of girls such as escorting them to and from school or having the girls walk in groups that afforded them a greater measure of safety. And unlike the outcome in Esther’s story in most cases the police were not contacted and the attacker went unpunished free to attack another girl on another day as she innocently walked home from school. In the absence of any kind of law or policy taking a strong stand against these kinds of incidences the message here was that girls walking alone on the paths to their homes were fair game for harassment or worse.

Data from the 2002 USAID DHS education dataset underscored the importance of developing proactive measures to ensure the safety of girls while walking to and from school. Their data found that the mean walking time to the nearest primary school for children living in rural areas was 41 minutes with children in the Northern and Southern areas of the country walking the longest distances. They also found that ten percent of child living in rural areas walked over one hour to get to school. The distances and the time it took to walk to school increased at the secondary level where there were fewer schools for students to attend thereby forcing them to go farther from home to continue their studies.<sup>47</sup>

**Participation and Performance:** This section of the report will examine the factors that influence how girls learn and the way in which the learning environment—the teachers, the materials and the physical structure of the school—affect their learning and schooling options.

What research tells us: There has been a worrisome learning gap in the performance of girls and boys in developing countries in contrast to what assessment data shows for girls in developed countries. For instance, three international assessments of reading showed girls in developed or middle income countries out performed boys at statistically significant levels—32 out of 32 countries in PISA 2000, 42 out of 42 in PISA 2003, 35 out of 35 in PIRLS 2001. In contrast the advantage for girls showed up in only 1 of 19

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<sup>47</sup> USAID (2002). DHS education dataset

countries of Francophone Africa (PASEC) and 4 of 18 tested countries from Eastern and Southern Africa (SACMEQ).<sup>48</sup>

Research studies in schools and classrooms of many developing countries had been found to be environments of discouragement particularly for girls. These studies have revealed that boys tended to get more attention from the teachers than girls, girls were encouraged to maintain the 'good girl' image of being quiet and invisible in the classroom than boys, boys were perceived to be more analytical than girls, and boys were often given responsibilities of power and authority such as the class monitor while girls assumed responsibilities that were related to domestic tasks. The result of all these discriminatory acts was the exclusion of girls from a friendly learning environment and their exposure to poor quality that eventually produced the poor performance of girls that was observed in learning assessments. Getting girls into schools mattered, but what happened once they got into the classroom was paramount.<sup>49</sup> Girls' self-confidence was further eroded when teaching materials portrayed girls and women as lesser beings than men. Sometimes teachers allowed boys to make fun of girls solely because they were girls.

A great deal has been learned about ways learning and teaching has been influenced by gender. Research in the last 10 years or so on brain development suggested that gender differences had as much to do with the chemistry and structure of the brain as the way in which girls and boys were raised. The tendencies of girls to be more contemplative, collaborative, intuitive and verbal, and boys to be more physically active, aggressive, and independent in their learning style seemed to stem from brain function and development.<sup>50</sup> These findings have shifted the focus of debate away from equal access and equal opportunities to how equal were the educational experiences and outcomes for girls and boys. Equal has not necessarily meant being the same. The way that girls experienced school and the world (especially science and maths) did not (and should not) necessarily parallel those of boys.

Although some of it was influenced by physiological differences<sup>51</sup> in the way males and females learned a great deal was also affected by the way teachers interacted and engaged girls and boys in the learning process. Teaching methods that fostered active learning and strengthened the participation of the child using cooperative learning, group learning, or learning through practice instructional techniques were girl-friendly approaches.<sup>52</sup> At school girls were often at risk. Some abuse was extremely physically harmful. There

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<sup>48</sup> <http://home.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/cice/JEF2report5e.pdf> Policy Panel: "Promoting Girls' Education: Viewpoints from Developing Countries"

<sup>49</sup> Miske, S. and VanBelle-Prouty, D. (1997). *Schools Are for Girls Too: Creating an Environment of Validation*. Washington, DC: USAID.

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.gsa.uk.com/default.aspx?id=135> Girls Schooling in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

<sup>51</sup> <sup>6</sup> <http://www.zenit.org/article-17615?l=english> Teaching Boys and Girls Differently: Psychologist Doctor Tells Why Divergence Runs Deep.

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.woodrow.org/teachers/math/gender/11strategies.html> Instructional Strategies. GEMS

were many documented cases of physical abuse of girls at school, including rape. Girls may have been sexually molested by male classmates or even by teachers. In most cases, it was the girls who suffered the public consequences as soon as an abuse became known.

Not surprisingly small things made big differences in the schooling of girls. Research consistently showed that girls who received adequate learning supplies, had access to textbooks and saw the faces of women and girls in posters and pictures on their classroom walls and in illustrations in their textbooks did better than those who didn't. Sey and Prouty (1998) found that the provision of furniture in classrooms made a substantial difference in the active participation of girls. During focus groups with girls in Malawi they were told that when they were forced to sit on the floor they didn't like answering questions because they'd have to stand up and boys would look up their dresses. This was particularly embarrassing for them when they didn't have proper underwear under their dresses.

What we found:

Girl-Friendly Classrooms: UNICEF provided Joyful Learning to over 60% of the schools in the sampling. However, this number was misleading. In about 25% of those schools only a few of the teachers participated in the training; in other cases teachers who took part in the training left their posting at the school and moved on to another school. Without exception teachers and Head Teachers who were asked about the value of the program underscored how useful it was. Indeed, most mirrored the sentiments of one Head Teacher who told us, *"It changed my whole philosophy of teaching and working with children. We have learned that when we use the techniques we were taught our pupils are much happier and enjoy coming to school. We need much more training like this."* Next to the intervention of the Mother's Groups this training offered the most enduring and visible change in schools.

Observations in the classroom confirmed the added value of the Joyful Learning training program. Teachers clearly demonstrated an understanding of not only the *need* to use child-centered approaches and have acquired the *knowledge* of how to do it but they had the *desire* to use these methodologies as well. Unfortunately, teachers were restricted in their efforts to implement what they knew and wanted to use to make learning more participatory and active because of the lack of materials and the tremendously large number of students in their classrooms. Interactions in the classrooms in which observations took place were predominantly positive environments. Gone are the days when teachers used corporal punishment and harsh measures to motivate their students to learn. Instead, the teachers in our sampling modeled an engagement with their students—for both boys and girls--framed around positive feedback and queries to ask questions if students didn't understand.

Although girls were not specifically asked questions about the impact of child-centered methodologies in their learning some observations can be drawn from the classroom visits and their conversations in the focus groups. Girls generally liked school and felt their teachers were fair and “nice” to them. They enjoyed coming to school and believed they were learning a lot from their studies. More importantly girls *wanted* to come to school and many had dreams they could pursue their educations beyond primary school through secondary school and even beyond. Even at their young ages they appreciated the value of an education and saw it as a bridge to greater opportunity in the future. Although none of the girls made stark references to the lives of the women around them and what they missed out on because they didn’t have an education, it was clear as they spoke of the role of the Mother’s Group that they were cognizant these woman supported them to get a better education and felt the void in their own lives and not having the chance to go to school.

Despite overwhelmingly overcrowded classrooms in most schools<sup>53</sup> the interaction between the students and teachers were participatory, interactive and generally positive. Additionally, teachers made herculean efforts to utilize effective instructional practices supportive of students with a range of learning needs despite the lack of teaching and instructional materials. The lack of the most basic infrastructure didn’t seem to negatively affect the positive interaction with the students even when teachers were holding classrooms under trees or students had no benches or desks, etc. Although an extreme example of the relationship between the teachers and students, the following story captured the warmth and even camaraderie that was observed in many classrooms.

One school in the north of Malawi was particularly interesting and provided an excellent example of the level of caring between teachers and students we saw in so many of the schools. There were several teachers with disabilities at this school—this alone made it an outlier—one of them a visually impaired teacher. Before the school day started a group of students took the arm of their teacher and carefully guided him from the staff room to their classroom across the open space in the center of the school block. It was amazing to watch him as he taught his lessons—despite his disability he was totally in control of his classroom and successfully compensated in so many ways for his visual impairment. Often he would refer the students to a page in the textbook and then assign one of the students the task of writing important parts of the lesson on the board as he spoke drawing out examples from the textbook which he’d clearly learned from memory. During one lesson a young boy thought he’d play a trick on the teacher so he stopped writing on the board. The class roared in laughter when the teacher said, *“What? You’ve stopped writing? I know you’re not done. There’s too much to write in the short time you were writing. You can’t fool me!”*

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<sup>53</sup> Other than a small number of schools in remote areas student:teacher ratios well exceeded the MOE policy of 60:1.

There were many positive indicators—real signs—of the positive relationship between the students and their teachers. In some of the schools, students mobbed around their teachers at the close of the class period—sometimes asking questions about their lessons and in some cases engaging in talk about the things going on in their daily lives.

Schools implementing the new curriculum had better availability of textbooks for both students and teachers thereby creating a much more supportive learning environment for girls. Schools without the new curriculum generally had a student to textbook ratio of 6-8:1 *if* there were books. In classrooms not using the new curriculum, many students had no textbooks at all. There were no observed gender differentiation in the distribution of learning materials in the classrooms we observed. Boys were equally likely **not** to have a textbook as the girls were. There weren't significant differences in the pictures and posters on walls: women and girls were equally represented compared with boys and men.

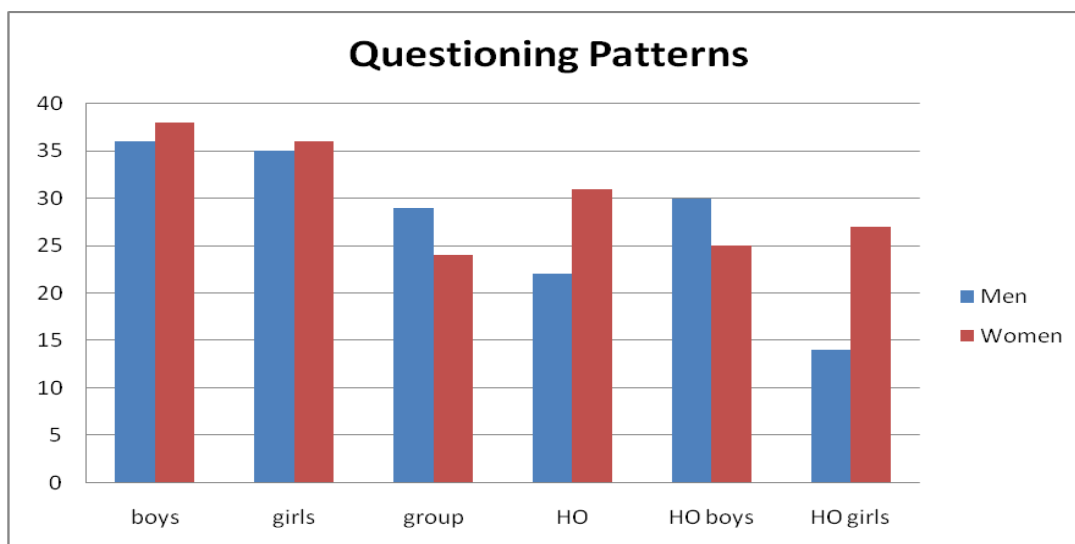
However, despite these positive indicators from the classroom, as the following table highlights, teachers predominantly used questioning patterns at lower levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of critical thinking (comprehension, knowledge<sup>54</sup>). Chalk and talk and rote memorization or assigning students the task of writing notes on the blackboards into their exercise books seemed to be a default mode of teaching. Women consistently called on girls more than men did. Women asked a greater number of higher order (HO) questions of their students than their male counterparts. Women were also more likely to ask a girl a higher order question than a man teacher. The data further showed woman teachers asked girls higher order questions more than twice as often as men teachers. However, despite this, both men and women teachers asked boys questions more often than they asked girls questions; and both men and women teachers asked higher order questions of boys more often than they did of the girls.

The pattern of calling on boys more often than girls and providing them a more challenging learning environment was even more distressing when one considered that the number of boys in standards 1-7 was marginally less than the number of girls. Therefore, boys were disproportionately challenged in the classroom and continually sent the message they were the performers while the girls were the onlookers. This "secondary modality" of learning sent a strong message to girls on their predominant role in the classroom and the appropriateness of them being in school. Working with both teachers and the girls themselves to prompt more active engagement continued to be a high need

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<sup>54</sup> see description of Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning Objectives and examples of Higher and Lower Order questions/activities in the annex



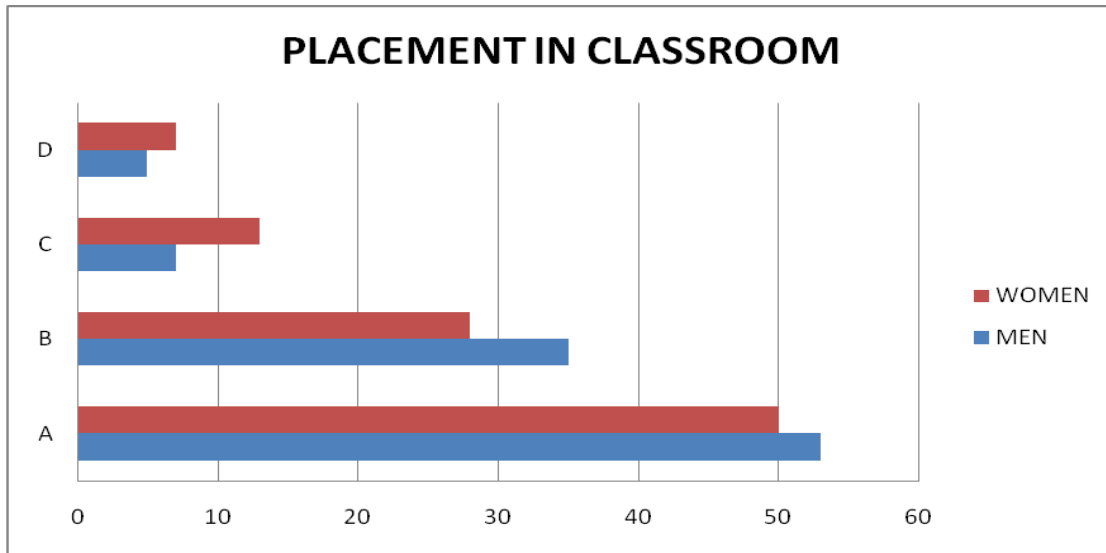


to ensure a gender balanced learning environment in the future.

Research has consistently shown that the place where the teacher stands and moves in the classroom dominated their interaction with the students. In other words, the teacher called on students more often who were located in the area of the classroom where she/he was standing and provided more individual support to students in the quadrant where she/he spent the majority of her/his time. Research also revealed that during the course of a lesson, the teacher spent approximately 75% of her time within a few feet of the blackboard. Therefore, since the placement of students was generally equally distributed among the four quadrants in a classroom, this meant that 50% (or fewer) of the students received the lion's share of the teacher's focused attention.

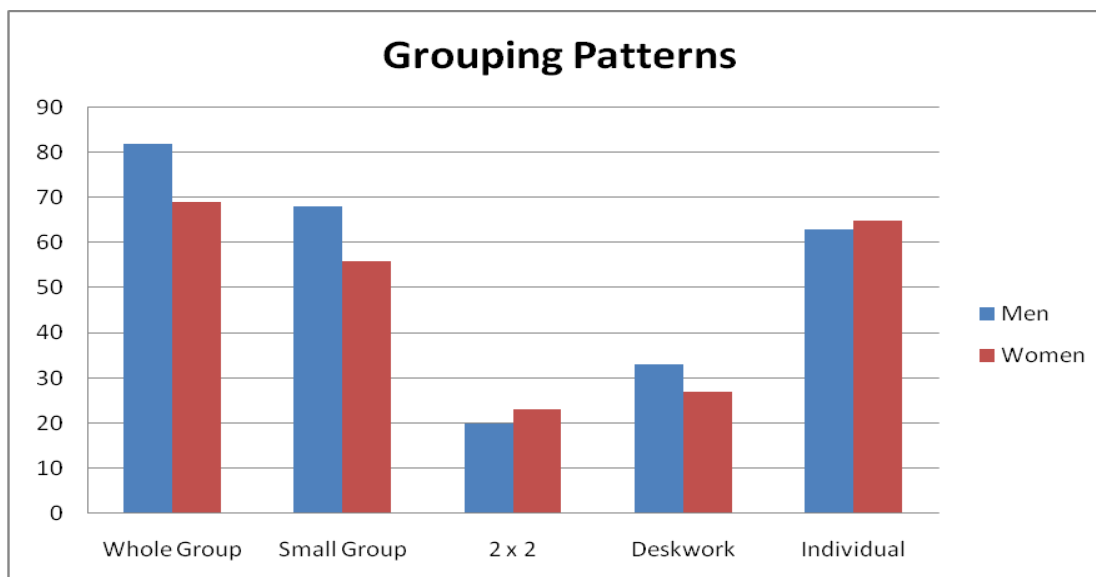
Patterns observed in the Malawi classrooms in which classroom visits took place were consistent with the research. Ninety-eight percent of the teachers spent over 50% of their time in two of the four quadrants in the classrooms (A, B, C or D). To a large degree, the overcrowding in the classrooms and the unusually high student:teacher ratios contributed to the restricted movements of the teachers. But even taking this into consideration, throughout all the classrooms visited in the sampling teachers consistently did not teach to the whole class. Instead, they predominantly taught to the students nearest to them; and they taught to the boys.

What did this mean for girls? Fortunately, girls were often the ones who sat nearer the front of the classroom where the teachers had a tendency to stand and where they focused



their attention and teaching.

This phenomena afforded them an edge in gaining the attention of the teacher and somewhat compensated for less aggressive turn taking which was not uncommon among girl students. Unfortunately, girls were at greater risk than boys of becoming “invisible” in the classroom so when you coupled their risk of invisibility with sitting in a part of the classroom where the teacher didn’t focus attention, there was a high probability a girl would be completely overlooked. Therefore, for those girls sitting near where the teacher was standing they would have a better chance to be called on and receive help when they needed it. If they were in a part of the classroom, other than the area where the teacher generally stood, they were probably ignored. Furthermore, proximity to the teacher did not compensate for low expectations some teachers held about the low performance of the girls in their classrooms.



Research showed that instructional practices that created a more competitive and less cooperative learning environment were less supportive for the learning of girls than they were for boys. This was particularly important when classroom exchanges demanded a student be more aggressive in turn taking to be called upon or received one-on-one assistance from the teacher. As the graph illustrates the men and women teachers in our sampling used varied grouping patterns. However, whole group instruction was used more often than smaller grouping patterns. Additionally, most teachers spent 60% or more of the instructional time lecturing instead of using participatory learning activities with their students. As research has shown, all of these learning strategies favored the way boys learned over the way girls learned best.

#### What Research Tells Us:

Science, mathematics and technology: SMT has long been recognized as the cornerstone of development and prosperity for Africa.<sup>55</sup> This is due in part because these subjects are considered high status disciplines that serve as gatekeepers for higher levels of schooling. They are also part of the core curriculum that leads to professional jobs in high status and high paying fields such as research, medicine (and related fields) and engineering—all key areas vital to social and economic advancements in agricultural production, health and nutrition, infrastructure development, technology and the environment.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, securing equal access for girls in science/mathematics education has been recognized among non-governmental organizations, lending institutions and governments in Africa as a priority issue.

<sup>55</sup> Provisions for ICT were not a part of the AGEI.

<sup>56</sup> Aldridge, J., & Goldman, R. (2002). Gender equity and education. In S. Dragin (ed.), *Current issues and trends in education* (pp. 163-170). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

But Africa has lagged behind all the other continents of the world in terms of provision of science and mathematics education for girls. Examination of enrollments for science education at the tertiary level in Sub-Saharan Africa showed that male students elected the field of science as a course of study 5.1 % of the time compared to 2.8% for females.<sup>57</sup> A study in Ghana on post-secondary school subject choices found 12% of girls chose to study science (physics, chemistry, and biology), 5% of girls enrolled in mathematics and less than 1% of girls entered middle level technical training institutions.<sup>58</sup> Contributing to these low enrollments at the tertiary level has been that girls just underperformed at the secondary school level science and mathematics courses when compared to boys. In fact, A FEMSA study carried out in the late-1990s showed that girls in the participating secondary schools scored significantly lower than boys in all science and math subjects.<sup>59</sup>

One major obstacle to gender differences in mathematics and science performance has been attributed to the early years at home. From the beginning boys and girls were brought up very differently.<sup>60</sup> Boys were encouraged to be more physically active, independent and to learn how to address their own problems. In contrast, girls were inculcated to be obedient, nurturing and conscientious.<sup>61</sup> As a consequence the critical learning tools to do well in science and mathematics classrooms which included discussion, brainstorming, problem solving, and laboratory exercises, were more in sync with the activities and learning modalities which boys were used to. In this way Asimeng-Boahene<sup>62</sup> has written that in this way boys have an *“environmentally-induced head start in science even before they are introduced to the subject in school.”* However, the way in which girls and boys were nurtured and learned were not the only factors influencing what happens in girls’ learning in science and math.

Over the past two decades it has been well documented that some teachers held expectations that mathematics and science subjects were a male domain.<sup>63</sup> Despite their rhetoric about the equality of girls and boys, many teachers (including women) did not believe that girls had the ability to study and do well in mathematics and science. The

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<sup>57</sup> UNESCO (1999a). UNESCO statistical yearbook 1999. Paris: UNESCO

<sup>58</sup> Andam, A. A. (1990). "Remedial strategies to overcome gender stereotyping in science education in Ghana." Development.

<sup>59</sup> FEMSA (1997-1 to 19). FEMSA's Dissemination reports [Report]. Nairobi: FAWE

<sup>60</sup> Woolfolk, A. E. (1998). Educational psychology (3rd éd.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

<sup>61</sup> Mulemwa, J. (1999). Scientific, technical and vocational education of girls in Africa, guidelines for programme planning. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved August 15, 2005, from UNESCO's website: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/00118122eo.pdf>

<sup>62</sup> [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3673/is\\_200607/ai\\_n17173384/pg\\_15](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3673/is_200607/ai_n17173384/pg_15) Asimeng-Boahene, L. (2006). Gender Inequity in Science and Mathematics Education in Africa: The Causes, Consequences and Solutions. p. 3.

<sup>63</sup> Adams, C. M. (Summer/1996). Gifted girls in science: Revisiting the issues [Electronic version] Journal of secondary Gifted education, 4, 447458; Guzzeti, B. J., & Williams, W. O. (September/1996). Changing the pattern of gendered discussion: lessons from science classrooms. Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 40, 38-47; Mewborn, D. M. (1999). Creating a gender equitable school environment. [Electronic version] international Journal of Education, 2, 103-115.

result has been that they have low expectations for girls which has lead to patterns of exchange in the classroom that negatively influenced how the girls performed.<sup>64</sup> For instance, Prouty<sup>65</sup> found in her work in Rwanda that the math teacher in a secondary school frequently called upon low performing girls to complete complex mathematical problems on the blackboard. He would then call a high performing boy to the board to complete the problem when the girl would inevitably fail. Their humiliation would be further exacerbated by demeaning comments ridiculing them for being unable to complete the problems and references about the need women have for men to take care of them and resolve their problems (literally and figuratively).

Although this example was extreme it underscored teacher attitudes that were all too commonly found that science and mathematics were disciplines ill-suited for girls. FEMSA studies spanning a five year period from 1997-2001 in eight African countries<sup>66</sup> found teachers' attitudes and instructional approaches to be a significant contributing factor on the overall performance of the girls in their classrooms. It was also worrisome that the teachers perceived the generally low performance of the girls as inevitable and out of their control. When questioned about the learning environments they nurtured and the interactions they had with the girls in their classrooms, the teachers saw nothing wrong with their attitudes and the instructional styles they used.<sup>67</sup> But the study portrayed a very different picture.

Teachers did not encourage girls during mathematics and science lessons; instead they actively discouraged them at times. One way they did this was to direct more challenging, high order thinking questions to the boys, while asking simple recall type of questions to the girls in their classrooms. The study further showed that girls complained that boys called them names when they tried to ask the teachers clarifying questions. Boys on the other hand faulted the girls for being too sensitive and even used content they learned in their science classes in a derogatory way to mock the girls. When confronted about this teachers or administrators did little to support the girls and put an end to the bullying by the boys.

The UNESCO Special project on *Scientific, Technical and Vocational Education (STVE) of Girls in Africa* succinctly summed up the research over the past two decades that highlight how teacher expectations drove instructional practices that favored boys and penalized girls. From pre-school to college teachers interacted more often and in more detail with boys than with girls. Teachers asked boys more questions and gave them more feedback (e.g. praise, criticism, correction). Teachers gave boys more valuable and

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<sup>64</sup> Rosser, S. V. (1990). *Female friendly science. Applying women's studies methods and theories to attract students*. New York: Pergamon Press.; Kenway, J. & Gough, A. (1998). *Gender and science education in schools: A review "with attitude"*. *Studies in Science Education*, 31, 1-30.

<sup>65</sup> Prouty, D. (1991). *From the Outside Looking In: The Education of Girls and Women in Franco-phone Central African Countries*. Unpublished dissertation.

<sup>66</sup> Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, Swaziland, and Zambia

<sup>67</sup> O'Connor, Joseph. P. (Nov. 2000) *Teachers are the problem in SMT, not girls!* CBA Science Series. [http://library.unesco-iciba.org/English/secondary\\_Science Series/](http://library.unesco-iciba.org/English/secondary_Science Series/) (Accessed 11 February 2005).

specific comments. And, unless assembled by gender small group activities contributed to gender inequity because girls frequently engaged in passive activities such as recording data, while boys handled equipment, dissected, and engaged in hands-on problem-solving.

All of this added up to a very discouraging and demoralizing landscape for girls in their efforts to do well in the high status subjects of science and mathematics. Because of this many countries provided special programs for girls to enhance their achievement. These programs included pre-service and in-service training for teachers focused on how to teach maths and sciences to girls; special grants and resource allocations to make instructional materials available in abundance in classrooms; gender-streaming in core science and maths classrooms to allow girls optimum time on task and hands-on learning opportunities without competition from boys in their classrooms; and more opportunity to engage in first-hand math and science oriented experiences that foster their interest and desire to pursue science and math studies. What they learned was that the girls performed very well with the proper learning environment and emotional support.<sup>68</sup>

Physical Education and Sports: Another area in which gender differences abounds was physical education and sports. Girls' participation rates in all types of physical activities consistently lagged behind those of boys. The drop-out rate for girls from school activities that involve physical activities were also greater.<sup>69</sup> This was due to a myriad of reasons. Girls' experiences were shaped by the quality and expertise of the adults who made decisions, managed, governed, delivered and coached physical activity programming, many of whom had minimal -- if any -- formal training. Outdated, stereotypical standards of femininity and masculinity continued to influence the extent to which girls participated in or shunned physical activity. Female athletes continued to be trivialized through the popular media's widespread "sexualization" of women. Traditional models of physical education organized around competition, team sports, power, strength, and aggression focused on the "motor elite" rather than skill development which disadvantaged girls (and boys) who were less skilled to begin with, which may have contributed to a lack of enjoyment and a shunning of lifelong participation in physical activity.

A 2008 report released by the University of Minnesota's Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport<sup>70</sup> found that poverty substantially limited many girls' access to,

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<sup>68</sup> <http://charityguide.org/volunteer/fifteen/math-science.htm?gclid=CNas2ZvUxpMCFQGbnAodKizVDA>  
Help Girls Excel in Science and Math

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.iapesgw.org/IAPESGW%20leaflet%20final%20version.pdf> International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Women and Girls

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/04/080414082537.htm> Science Daily: Girls In Sports At Record High, Yet Many Not Active Enough

and participation in, physical activity and sport despite evidence that shows girls reaped substantial benefits from participating. These included improved health and reduced risk of obesity and chronic diseases such as Type II diabetes, osteoporosis and cardiovascular disease; fostering of positive youth development, including social, psychological and motor skill benefits; Improvements in academics and lower dropout rates than their non-athletic counterparts. Other studies have shown that in addition to the benefits to health, physical education and sports fostered strategies to engage in conflict resolution, build self esteem and self confidence promoting attitudes and behaviors that built self-reliance which were needed in a more competitive learning and working situation.<sup>71</sup> The impact was far greater for girls who engaged in these activities (particularly competitive sporting activities) than for boys because of the way girls were traditionally encouraged to be more passive, quiet and nurturing.<sup>72</sup>

What We Found: Programs to improve the performance of girls in science and math did not exist in most schools despite the perception that girls under-performed in these subjects. Although some schools had assessment data confirming the low achievement level of the girls in their schools in these subject areas the common perception was that boys out-performed the girls in maths and science even when no data existed confirming this perception. When asked why girls under performed compared with boys the response was the same: limited time to study and less inclination to engage in science and math. A small number of schools offered after school tutoring to the girls to boost the girls' achievement. However, in most cases the parents were expected to pay fees for this assistance. Other than the after school tutoring, Head Teachers and other leaders at the school were limited in developing support systems to boost the learning of the girls in science and maths.

Further contributing to the problem was the lack of instructional and learning materials to concretize abstract learning concepts. In the lower primary grades students were observed using teacher-made learning tools such as the use of soda bottle caps, stones or beans as manipulatives to demonstrate one-to-one correspondence to reinforce emerging numeracy. But as students moved into the higher standards where mathematical and science concepts become more complex there were almost no teaching aides to facilitate the learning of the students for either boys or girls. In many schools the few instructional materials that did exist were kept locked in the Head Teachers office or in cabinets and were available only upon request. Thus, these standard "tools of the trade" were not visible and common elements in the classroom where girls would have extemporaneous opportunities to explore using them in their school work.

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<sup>71</sup> [http://www.un.org/sport2005/a\\_year/IYSPE\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.un.org/sport2005/a_year/IYSPE_Report_FINAL.pdf) UNITED NATIONS FINAL REPORT INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION 2005

<sup>72</sup> <http://www.icsspe.org/index.php?m=13&n=78&o=41&PHPSESSID=7a69e6632927181ac5fa923b96e4aef4> The World Summit on Physical Education

The failure to concretize complex scientific and mathematical concepts was probably the most negative factor influencing the overall low performance of girls the Head Teachers spoke of. Because the teaching in general tended to utilize lower order cognitive skills particularly with the girls, students weren't given an opportunity to exercise problem-solving learning tasks which were essential academic skills to effectively engage in science and mathematics subjects. This, coupled with the prevailing perception by many Head Teachers (and most likely the teachers too) that girls weren't as good in these subjects as the boys were, essentially eliminated girls from the opportunity to "compete" on a level playing field. In other words, the self-fulfilling expectation that girls would not do well in science and math essentially doubled the odds that they wouldn't. This kind of treatment only reinforced and reconfirmed in the minds of both boys and girls 'that science was for boys only.' Over time students perceived these subjects to be a male preserve. Girls then shied away from any active participation during science and mathematics for fear of failing in front of their peers.

Sports and physical education was another area in which differences existed between what boys did and what the girls did. In many schools girls were limited in their opportunity to fully participate in sports activities and watched on the sidelines. The reason? They did not have the appropriate clothing. Lack of personal hygiene products was another factor restricting their participation coupled with beliefs that girls needed to be less active during their menses. So, at the onset of puberty the schooling experience of girls dramatically changed.

In some of the focus groups with the girls and Mother's Groups the need for older girls to exhibit "appropriate" behavior during physical education was also mentioned. However, this was the exception; most felt girls should fully participate if they had proper clothing and sanitary pads. Interestingly, few schools had facilities that permitted the girls to change into their "sports" attire in privacy; however, the lack of facilities to change in private did not seem to be an issue although several schools identified the need for changing rooms for girls as something in their long term development plans.

AGEI provided (through UNICEF support) sports-in-a-box to 25 schools. The schools that received this intervention were pleased to receive the equipment. However, conversations with the Head Teachers failed to substantiate any strong benefit for girls from the sports equipment. Nor did it appear to leverage any substantive changes in the participation of the girls in sporting activities—either those that were organized as class activities or for the pick-up games that were organized before, during and after school. The lack of guidelines accompanying the sports equipment explaining how to provide an inclusive sports environment (for boys, girls and children of all abilities) failed to foster a more inclusive and gender balanced sports program.



**Community Involvement and Partnerships:** This section of the report will examine the impact of participation and partnerships on the schooling of girls. Not only will it explore the role of communities and parents in fostering greater support for girls' schooling it will also discuss how the girls themselves can leverage greater opportunities for learning and improved educational outcomes.

What research tells us: Community participation itself was not a goal in educational delivery, nor a panacea to solve complicated issues contributing to poor educational quality in developing countries. However, it has been shown to be a process that facilitated the realization of improved educational quality. Many research studies have identified various forms of community participation to support the education of their children. Heneveld and Craig<sup>73</sup> recognized parent and community support as one of the key factors to improve school effectiveness in Sub-Saharan Africa particularly in support of the schooling of girls. Through their participation in school activities and frequently communication with teachers, parents and communities learned how girls' education contributed to the improvement of various aspects of their lives, such as increased economic productivity, improved family health and nutrition, reduced fertility rates, and reduced child mortality rates.

Involving parents and communities in discussions as part of school activities also helped to identify factors that prevented girls from going to school. Parents can be encouraged to express their concern, and reasons why they are not sending their daughters to school. Parental concerns and objections were serious obstacles and had to be addressed and overcome in order to promote girls' education. Furthermore, in places where communities were indifferent to girls' education, elderly people or religious leaders who were respected by community members have been shown to foster dialogue with them about schooling their daughters.

Epstein<sup>74</sup> focused on partnerships of schools, families, and communities to: (a) improve school programs and school climate; (b) provide family services and support; (c) increase parents' skills and leadership; (d) connect families with others in the school and in the community; and (e) help teachers with their work. She outlined six specific kinds of activities communities can engage in to improve education:

- (1) *parenting* – to help all families establish home environments that support children's learning at schools;
- (2) *communicating* – to design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communication that enable parents to learn about school programs and their

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<sup>73</sup> Heneveld, Ward and Helen Craig. (1996). *Schools Count: World Bank Project Designs and the Quality of Primary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

<sup>74</sup> Epstein, Joyce Levy. (1995). "School/Family/Community Partnerships: Caring for the Children We Share." In *Phi Delta Kappan*. v.76 (May 1995). pp.701-71

The women of the Mother's Group line the drive leading into the school. Dressed in matching brightly colored outfits they wait and watch in mounting excitement for the UNICEF entourage to arrive. As the car rounds the corner and comes into view the women begin their dance chanting and clapping their hands in unison to welcome the visitors to their school. Children swarm out of the classrooms and huddle together boys with boys and girls with girls. A few of the younger students—mostly boys—chase one another in the sandy areas surrounding the school buildings but most quietly watch the women continue their singing and the visitors as they climb out of the car and quickly survey the school. The buildings and grounds are in pristine condition complete with rows of flowers grouped along the cement sidewalks leading from one school block to another. The staff and parents at this school know just how fortunate they are to receive funding from DFID to construct and sponsor their school. And they are more than willing to stand in the boiling sun waiting for visitors to come hopeful they'll receive even more assistance to educate their children. The Head Teacher welcomes the guests to his school then leads them to an empty classroom where the members of the SMC and PTA are waiting to begin their meeting. As girls pass out bottles of coke and cookies the women have prepared for their honored visitors he leans over and quietly whispers into the ear of one of the guest that not all the students are in school today because the on-going rains have caused a recent outbreak of cholera in some of the nearby villages.

children's progress in schools as well as teachers to learn about how children do at home;

(3) *volunteering* – to recruit and organize parent help and support;

(4) *learning at home* – to provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with home-work and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning;

(5) *decision making* – to include families in school decisions, to have parent leaders and representatives in school meetings; and

(6) *collaborating with the community* – to identify and integrate resources as well as services from the community in order to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning.<sup>75</sup>

The following is a list of ways communities can contribute.

- advocating enrollment and education benefits;
- boosting morale of school staff;
- raising money for schools;
- ensuring students' regular attendance and completion;
- constructing, repairing, and improving school facilities;
- contributing in labor, materials, land, and funds;
- recruiting and supporting teachers;
- making decisions about school locations and schedules;
- monitoring and following up on teacher attendance and performance;
- forming village education committees to manage schools;
- actively attending school meetings to learn about children's learning progress and classroom behavior;
- providing skill instruction and local culture information;
- helping children with studying;
- garnering more resources from and solving problems through the education bureaucracy;
- advocating and promoting girls' education;
- providing security for teachers by preparing adequate housing for them;
- scheduling school calendars;
- handling the budget to operate schools;

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<sup>75</sup> Uemura, M. (1999). *Community Participation in Education: What Do We Know?* Washington, DC: World Bank.

- identifying factors contributing to educational problems (low enrollment, and high repetition and dropout); and
- preparing children's readiness for schooling by providing them with adequate nutrition and stimuli for their cognitive development.

Experience has shown the most successful programs provided real opportunities for participatory decision-making from the earliest planning stage through implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Most importantly, it has been well documented that the best programs were those that placed women and girls in leadership roles that promoted them as role models and built on their own lived experiences in their efforts to gain an equal education.<sup>76</sup>

What we found:

Mother's Groups: In 2004 the Malawi chapter of FAWE (FAWEMA) was invited to the Gambia to learn about a UNICEF-sponsored community-based intervention to support basic education. The research-based intervention used mothers as change agents in their own communities. This approach was framed on studies showing how mothers played a central role in seeking out and supporting the on-going education of their children. The intervention, called Mother's Groups, brought mothers together to create an organized and cohesive unit of women tasked with the primary goal of getting children in school, keeping them in school, supporting them to do well in school and working on behalf of the children to make the school a more child-centered and child-friendly environment.

There were 300 active Mother's Groups in all districts of Malawi except Neno. Although the majority of the women were themselves poorly educated they receive a five-day training on the rights of the child, basic information on health and sex education, how to counsel girls to make wise decisions particularly about marriage and on risks associated with traditional practices or social-cultural issues that negatively affect girls such as cleansing rites and early marriages. In addition to this core training they also learned how to mobilize others in their community to support the schooling of girls and other at-risk students. Currently, 240 Mother's Groups have taken part in the FAWEMA training program.

FAWEMA collaborated with four groups to support Mother's Groups in Malawi. The first was the Association of Christian Educators in Malawi (ACEM). ACEM worked in one zone in each of ten districts. The second group, ICO, was funded by the Netherlands. The third group, EU, supported ten districts and zones. Finally, FAWEMA collaborated with CARE/Malawi to support twenty-four schools in one district and one zone. FAWEMA's goal was to establish twenty Mother's Group in each district of the country.

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<sup>76</sup> [http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/622/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_622.pdf](http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/622/1/MPRA_paper_622.pdf) Pandey, Adya Prasad. (August 2006). Gender disparities in education – needs community participation. MPRA Paper No. 622

FAWEMA used a collaborative and participatory process with district level MOE officials to identify zones to support through Mother's Groups. Selection criteria to participate in the Mothers Groups program included the following:

- No NGO representation
- High drop-out rates for girls
- Low literacy rates
- High poverty levels.

Once the zones were selected, FAWEMA worked with the local assembly to identify opinion makers in each zone from among chiefs, CBO representatives, religious leaders, etc. Then zone ministry officials and the opinion makers chose activities from a menu of potential activities to implement in each community. Finally, FAWEMA assisted the group to develop an action plan for the Mother's Group.

Although the activities and results of their interventions varied dramatically nearly all Mother's Groups saw their role as champions for the education of the girls in their villages as a very important one and took their responsibilities to ensure that all girls got an opportunity to go to school very seriously. Some mothers saw themselves as "reverse" role models. As a reverse role model they pointed to the limitations in their own lives because they did not get to attend school.

There were eight kinds of activities supported by Mother's Groups in the sampling of schools.

- 1) Counseled girls about personal hygiene particularly during their menstrual cycle, pregnancy, pre-marital sexual behavior and ways to dress to avoid problems, encouragement to stay or return to school, skills training and health-related issues including information about STDs and HIV/AIDS.
- 2) Sensitized the community and chiefs about the rights of children and ways to support the education of girls, students with disabilities and orphans.
- 3) Monitored the attendance and performance of students.
- 4) Registered older girls and conducted household surveys to identify school-age girls who are not enrolled or regularly attending school.
- 5) Provided supplies including soap, pencils and exercise books, sanitary pads, uniforms and money for fees.

- 6) Organized development activities including construction projects (housing for teachers, latrines and storage rooms for food) and cooked for school feeding programs.
- 7) Fostered child friendly schools by monitoring school discipline and visiting classrooms to observe how teachers interact with the students.
- 8) Created nurseries for children under the age of 6 years old to ease childcare burdens on girls.

Girls saw the women volunteers in the Mother's Groups as a key ally if not the primary support group lobbying on their behalf. In general, they did not feel a tremendous degree of support from their parents (particularly their fathers) or the community at large. Indeed, the older the girl the less likely she was to feel there's a team cheering her on in her efforts to pursue an education beyond the women in the Mother's Group.

In Chikwawa one Mother's Group encourages girls who get pregnant to form a Girl's Club. Girls who are members of the Girl's Club visit the school and host meetings for the girls in standards 5-8 to warn them not to get pregnant, encourage them to focus on their studies and stay in school to have a "brighter future" than they have. Although the girls who have gotten pregnant would like to come back to school they don't have the resources to return. The Mother's Groups have tried to sponsor these girls to come back to school but the poverty is overwhelming and to date they haven't been able to raise the needed money to assist the girls

Although the activities and results of their interventions varied dramatically nearly all Mother's Groups saw their role as champions for the education of the girls in their villages as a very important role and took their responsibilities to ensure that all girls of an opportunity to go to school very seriously. Women who were members of the Mother's Groups tended to have a minimal level of education. Most had at least four years of education although very few had any secondary schooling.

The average age of the women serving on the Mother's Group was 41 years old with a median age of 40. There was one woman serving on a Mother's Group who was 20 and two women who were 70 years old. Given the heavy workloads women in this age bracket faced on a daily basis—including childcare, gardening and household responsibilities—it is a testimony to their dedication to this issue that so many took the time out of their busy schedules to volunteer to be a member of the Mother's Group.

Through their activities Mother's Groups were able to draw attention to a host of factors that negatively influenced the education of girls including early marriage, pregnancy and excessive obligations in the home including chores and childcare for siblings and ill family members. In many schools Mother's Groups played a key role in decision making around pregnancies and the on-going participation of the girl in her schooling both before and after the birth of the baby. Although most Mother's Group took a conservative stance and decided that the pregnant girl should leave once learning of the pregnancy in a few cases they permitted her to stay until it became more apparent she was pregnant.

Lorina is a standard 6 student in the village of Lufa. When the Mother's Group in her village learned she was not planning to return to school after the birth of her baby, they met with her to encourage her to return. They also urged her to tell her parents the name of the baby's father. But Lorina did not want to tell anyone who the father was. The Mother's Group then met with her parents to discuss the need to identify the father of the baby. Lorina maintained her silence. Not to be deterred, the Mother's Group and the SMC invited Lorina and her parents to a meeting with the Head Teacher to discuss her pregnancy and to encourage her to return to school. During the meeting they spoke to her again about revealing the name of the father of the baby. Finally, Lorina agreed to reveal the name. The baby's father was her class teacher. The situation was referred to the police and the case was taken to court. The teacher has been incarcerated and Lorina has returned to school where she is now in Form I.

Many Mother's Groups took an active role to learn who the father of the baby was and were tenacious in following the course of the pregnancy and birth of the baby in order to encourage the mother (and the father if he were a student) to return to school. In one community the Mother's Group organized childcare services for a young mother to enable her to continue with her studies. Although an intervention like this was not common it offered an example for other communities of ways they could address the very real and growing problem of adolescent pregnancy and teen-age marriages.

Eve is an active member of the Mother's Group in Lilongwe Rural East. One day after counseling with a young girl who had left about continuing with her studies she had an epiphany. If it is important for the girls she helps to counsel get their educations, it was equally important for her as well. Eve made the decision then to go back to school and finish her own primary schooling.

We were frequently told stories describing the role the Mother's Group played in keeping a girl in school either because the parents (and in many cases it would be the father) wanted to discontinue the education of their daughter because of financial constraints or

because they wanted her to get married. We were told at one school, “...when all the women in the Mother’s Groups visited with the father and badgered him about continuing his daughter’s education he decided he didn’t want to deal with them anymore and let her go to school.” When we later met with her and asked if the Mother’s Group had enabled her to continue with her education, her eyes sparkled and her smile widened as she shared how much her father feared angering them and told us “...so now my father let’s me go and won’t stop me anymore.”

Some of the Head Teachers explained how the women mobilized to broaden the impact they had in their communities and were proactive about identifying other ways to improve conditions for all students not just the girls. Indeed, the data suggested when the Head Teachers and SMCs permitted the Mother’s Group to expand their role and authority the women expressed a greater degree of satisfaction in what they were doing and demonstrated a higher level of commitment to their work.

In some of the Mother’s Groups (around 15%) they visited young girls who were in abusive marriages and encouraged them to return to school. In many cases the girls made the decision not only to return to school but to divorce their husbands as well. In some cases the Mother’s Groups negotiated with the parents for the girls to return home and continue with their studies. Although data was not always available concerning whether there were children involved in these situations in some cases the Mother’s Groups indicated they worked with older women in the village to provide child care for children during the school hours freeing the mothers to attend school.

About 30% of the Mother’s Groups formed girls’ clubs for out-of-school girls who’d gotten pregnant. These clubs permitted the out-of-school girls to interact with girls still enrolled in school and provided them opportunities to bring home the risks of getting pregnant while still in school and being a young mother to girls still attending school. Mother’s Groups were very strategic and saw these clubs as an opportunity to achieve two goals: to create a forum where girls were able to talk about meaningful issues in their lives and things that affected their schooling; but they also provided a venue to re-orient the out-of-school girls to the possibilities of returning to school and maintained their links with the Mother’s Groups and other girls their age still in school

The regularity and frequency of meetings was a strong indicator of success. Groups that met twice a month were involved in a disproportionately greater number of activities than those that met only once a month or twice a term. Interviews with Head Teachers supported the underlying value of frequent meetings for both Mother’s Groups and SMC in terms of their efforts to move forward with the school’s development plan and other

activities like monitoring the attendance of teachers and students, fund raising or recruitment of students.

### SMCs and PTAs

All schools in the sampling had an SMC although some were more active and more integrally involved in the day-to-day management of school activities and decision-making. They were, however, a predominantly male jurisdiction. Student participation on committees was something few schools had although some had bodies similar to student councils or governance bodies that appeared to serve a meaningful role in their schools particularly around issues of student social activities. School committees benefited from the initial training of committee members although in many cases those that received the training were no longer sitting on the committee. No strategies existed to facilitate the on-going transition of group membership so there was little transfer of skills they learned from out-going (trained) members to the newly elected ones. Consequently, this negated to a large degree the benefits of the initial training.

Most schools engaged in sensitization activities that encouraged parents to enroll their girls in school. Head Teachers and key decision-makers working on the school's behalf at the community level agreed schools had to recruit and accommodate all children—especially girls—living in the community. What they lacked were the tools—including resources and know how—to make it happen. For instance, awareness one must reduce the household chores for girls did not necessarily mean that one could easily translate that understanding into concrete steps to make it happen and reduce or eliminate the domestic burden on girls. Consequently, factors well beyond the control of the school and school committees—least of which is opportunity cost—made their ability to effect change extremely difficult.

Despite efforts to work with SMC and PTAs to ensure all children in the community were enrolled in school, most Head Teachers or decision making bodies in the school and community had no idea what percentage of children in the community were actually enrolled in school and attending regularly. Only one Head Teacher in our sampling took the initiative to conduct a door-to-door survey to identify children living within the school's catchment area who were not enrolled in school.

Failure to maintain records at the school or community on the birth and on-going well-being of children in the communities prevented schools and its planning bodies to effectively implement data-driven planning. This in turn limited their effectiveness to



enroll all children in school at an appropriate age leading to non-enrolled children or over-age learners.<sup>77</sup>

### Girls Participation in Leadership Roles

What research tells us: Giving voice to girls concerning their own schooling has been shown to be a powerful force to leverage change. In Uganda Jones found the stories girls shared about their struggles to pursue their educations in an increasingly hostile environment extremely useful in her research and provided the girls a platform to discuss issues that affected them and dialogue about ways to address the problems they faced.<sup>78</sup> Although studies about girls' voice conducted in developed countries focussed on issues other than the traditional barriers that limited the schooling opportunities of girls in developing countries,<sup>79</sup> nonetheless they still underscored how important it is for girls to develop agency and act on their own behalf.

A recent study in England demonstrated how effective it can be for girls to be involved in decision-making about their own schooling opportunities. They shared, “...*young people are the experts in their own lives and without their input any policies or services developed will be less effective... [they are] amazingly altruistic and motivated to improve matters for others even when there is no immediate benefit to themselves.*”<sup>80</sup> The Fund Forward organization an NGO that provided grants to support activities for girls and women has experienced tremendous success giving girls voice and power enabling them to utilize grants to improve educational conditions for at-risk women and girls in their communities.<sup>81</sup>

Students also needed to feel that what they were learning is important. They wanted the opportunity to express the concerns they had about their schooling experiences and their future. Students were more likely to develop a strong commitment to the community and its future if they were able and permitted to take part in determining its direction. Participation in decision making at the school level was a means through which students were able to develop responsibility and experience the democratic process. Providing them real situations to exercise skills needed to promote democracy and governance—working on student councils, participating on school management committees, taking part

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<sup>77</sup> Collection of data about disability would also be extremely helpful enabling schools to have a better idea of the upcoming learning needs of the incoming cohorts of students. As it is now schools had no idea what the needs of their student population would be from one year to the next and no way to prepare for students for special learning needs particularly those who needed physical accommodations.

<sup>78</sup> <http://www.publicaffairs.ubc.ca/ubcreports/2005/05dec01/uganda.html>

<sup>79</sup> [http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/wp/access-2002/gender\\_bias.htm](http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/wp/access-2002/gender_bias.htm) An Educator's Guide to Gender Bias. (2002)

<sup>80</sup> <http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/News/2006/Mar/GivingGirlsAVoice.htm> UBC Student Enlists Ugandan Girls in Education Research

<sup>81</sup> [http://www.fundforward.org/about\\_fundforward/stories.php](http://www.fundforward.org/about_fundforward/stories.php)

in extra-curricular activities—were all badly needed capacity building experiences and learning situations.

What we found: Schools encouraged all students—girls and boys—to take part in clubs and community-based service learning activities. In most schools leadership roles were assigned to both girls and boys on a rotation basis—one term it would be a girl who headed up activities and the next it would be a boy. However, the process and criteria used to select which boy and girl to lead wasn't always transparent and varied considerably from one school to the next. In some schools the Head Teacher made the selection independently of others and considered things such as their grades and conduct during class; in others, the Head Teacher made the selection with council from the teachers and in some cases the SMC; in yet other schools, the students in the upper primary standards voted for the student to lead out. Although in most cases the responsibilities they assumed were perfunctory and yielded little in terms of real decision making, the opportunities to engage in any kind of leadership, albeit even one in which their role was primarily that of a “figure head,” was still beneficial for all the students and more so for the girls.

Seventy-five percent of the schools hosted community outreach activities. Many of those consisted of clubs with a specific mandate. HIV/AIDS was one of the most popular clubs for a school to host. In over half the schools girls were the more active in the school clubs and community outreach activities. This was especially true for the community outreach activities dealing with HIV/AIDS.

In large part this was because the Mother's Group had a key role in organizing the clubs and maintaining momentum for the activities. Girls in the HIV/AIDS clubs talked to adults in the community about high risk behaviors and discussed ways to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS and other STDs. We learned that girls also organized skits and theatre productions to increase awareness. All of these activities were extremely beneficial not only because of the opportunities they gave the girls to engage in activities that gave them confidence and learn new things. But they also afforded them agency and an element of control over issues that presented real risks to them and other adolescent girls in their communities.

Girls who participated in the focus groups at their schools had many good ideas about improving school life and increasing the participation of girls in school. Across all schools, girls observed that economic considerations – the direct costs of school fees, materials, and clothes, as well as opportunity costs, the need for the girls' labor – were among the most critical factors affecting the enrollment, on-going participation and

performance of girls in their school. The following table outlines some of their suggestions to the key barriers to their education.<sup>82</sup>

<b>Girls Speak Out</b>	
<b>Obstacles/Constraints</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
Domestic work	Lighten the domestic work, assistance to the parents Sensitize parents about benefits of educating girls, Sensitize the mother, share work at home and at school, water points
Distance to schools; security	Construct rural schools, have girls walk together, hold boys/men accountable who attack girls; make school rules that boys can't mock girl; Separate classrooms for girls,
Lack of privacy	Build latrines; construct rooms for girls to change into sports clothes
Not having the needed supplies	Supply clothes, school supplies and assistance for parents, scholarships for girls
Lack of time for homework	provide school supplies, make schools closer to girls so they have more time to study, after school tutoring classes
Don't know where girls are in the community	Have birth certificates in the village
Financial problems	Scholarships and school materials Sensitize both parents (especially mothers) Increase the number of schools
Failure, lack of money	vocational education and preparation for work, scholarships
Refusal of fathers	Sensitize parents; host days when fathers come to school and see what their daughters can do
Orphans, students with disabilities	Center for children with difficulties, vocational training/home orphanages
Failure, pregnancy	second chances in cases of school failure
Work outside the home	Pass a law that girls can't sell in the market

## **Overall Status of Girls' Education Under AGEI**

In this section the report will summarize the impact of AGEI on girls' schooling in Malawi. Key issues relating to the long-term impact of AGEI will be discussed. Ways to

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<sup>82</sup> Although out-of-school girls were not interviewed for this study it would be extremely beneficial to speak with them to solicit their thoughts on ways to keep girls in school and attract girls back to school who have left –including those who have left because of pregnancy.

enhance future programming for girls' education will be outlined as well as some of the lessons learned from the implementation of AGEI.

As Maluwa-Banda writes "The constraints to girls' access, persistence and achievement in school are complex, multiple and interrelated. Multiple-process driven interventions are needed to help girls achieve in primary and secondary education and single and piecemeal interventions will only have limited impact. A strategy that works to improve girls' education outcomes is the one that attempts to tackle all the main factors constraining girls' participation in school. Gender specific interventions on their own will not necessarily lead to better educational outcomes for girls; there is need for system wide interventions as well." More than anything, the strength of the AGEI was in the way it attempted to bring together a holistic and comprehensive program to address the schooling of girls that was framed on collaboration, synergy and best practices."

Therefore, within this context what were the overall impacts of AGEI on the schooling of girls?

1. Which interventions most contributed to improving access?

Although it is hard to differentiate from the overall package of interventions provided through AGEI the data would suggest those interventions that eased the domestic and out-of-school burdens on girls had the greatest impact. Consequently, providing a community and school with a borehole would be an intervention that would leverage significant impact cutting back on the hours of work girls spend carrying water to their homes. Although other labor-saving devices were not a part of the UNICEF interventions, anything that would reduce the burden of work on the girls (and their mothers) would be a boon to their participation (and performance). Working with committees and communities to identify ways to ease the burdens on girls and freeing them to attend school and focus on their studies is essential.

School feeding programs also significantly increase the enrollments of girls. These are temporary increases however and are doubtful to lead to long term participation. In contrast, provision of latrines has a long term impact on girls' enrollments particularly once girls go through puberty and privacy becomes increasingly more important to their on-going attendance.

2. What was the impact of the AGEI interventions in improving the performance of girls?

Joyful Learning has been tremendously effective at changing the way teachers engage with their students. Classrooms are more child-friendly and children feel much more secure and happy in a learning environment where the teachers have been trained in this methodology. Although there were still evidences of gender

differentiation in the teaching methodologies being used teachers were acutely aware of the need to foster gender balance in their classrooms.

3. Which interventions were the most effective?

Schools in our sampling benefitted unequally from the total package of interventions and some of the neediest and underserved schools received a marginal package of interventions. Fewer than ½ of the schools benefitted from the broad package of interventions. Furthermore, some of the interventions didn't benefit girls disproportionately if at all. (For instance, rubhalls, signposts, school-in-a-box and sports-in-a-box did not seem to singularly benefit girls.) The interventions that most directly affected girls addressed some of their out-of-school responsibilities (such as boreholes), offered them more security and privacy (toilets) or fostered a more supportive and enabling environment (Mother's Groups, Joyful Learning). Indeed, all the interventions that benefitted girls similarly impacted the boys.

Without a doubt Mother's Groups had the most significant impact on the schooling experiences of girls. Although enrollment rates did not vary significantly between schools in the control group and those that received support through AGEI what was most notable was the psychological and emotional support girls felt in terms of their schooling opportunities. Girls in schools with a Mother's Group consistently noted they had a champion in those mothers; girls at schools without a Mother's Group felt very isolated and on their own in their efforts to pursue their educations particularly those that were older and in the higher standards (and, unfortunately, at greater risk of getting pregnant or dropping out to marry). In addition, Mother's Groups were the primary lever for a focus on the overall well-being of the students in the school. They were often the active force (and in many cases the only force) in assisting at-risk children and took the most active role to encourage students—both boys and girls—to stay in school and come back if they left it prematurely. In short, Mother's Groups are a tremendously valuable resource in resource-poor environments.

4. What were the primary constraints affecting the schooling of girls?

Despite all the community mobilization and growing awareness about the social and economic benefits to families from the education of girls, parents are still one of the primary road blocks to a girl's on-going schooling. This gets played out in a myriad number of ways: the on-going demand for their time and support out of school which keeps them from their studies (or prevents them from enrolling in the first place); fears over their daughter's safety; familial obligations to marry and so on. Parents hold legitimate concerns for their daughters and make difficult

decisions in the face of poverty, hostile school environments and growing societal influences that can place girls at tremendous risk. Their reluctance to send them to school and/or support their on-going participation as they reach puberty demands holistic and comprehensive programs that address the range of barriers they face.

Specific issues that emerged from this study include the following:

Affirmative Action Strategies: The *National Education Sector Plan 2008-2017* has outlined a sound policy framework to support the education of girls. Although alternative schooling opportunities targeting girls were not available to most students a proposed initiative by the World Bank targeting older out-of-school youth will address a huge need. Developing a range of alternative options for girls bodes the greatest promise that girls will be able to pursue fruitful options if formal schooling is denied them for one reason or another. Another area that needs more support is the introduction of ICT. Increasing the number of women in leadership positions is another area of priority.

Formal and Non-Formal Strategies and Interventions to Support Girls' Education: Currently there are no non-formal strategies or other mechanisms to support the schooling of girls outside of the formal primary school system. Again, proposed initiatives will respond to this need.

Accompanying School Links for Girls' Education: Building on the same vein at the country level as at the pan-African level, in order to better utilize resources and increase the impact of its interventions, it is important to determine how effective AGEI has been as a catalyst to engage in activities to speed up getting girls into school, keeping them in school and ensuring their completion of school. In other words, how are best practices and successful activities being shared among other schools and communities to leverage results? Better use of technology through the use of database and internet exchanges (bulletin boards, links to useful sites, etc.) to share information can leverage tremendous results. This should be made available to agencies supporting girls' education as well as the girls themselves. Developing new partners to foster information exchanges such as cell phone providers, cyber cafes and libraries offer unlimited potential.

Mother's Groups are the most valuable conduit in which this kind of synergy is being leveraged. Through their established network at both the national and district level best practices are used to bolster the work among all the groups. However, more needs to be done to strengthen the capacity of the weaker groups particularly those that have women who are hesitant to act without guidance and other forms of external support.

Collaboration and Cooperation of Broad Stakeholder Support for Girls' Education: Interventions that depend upon the full support, on-going participation and contribution of a group of development partners is destined to have implementation bumps and

detours. Efforts to collaborate, coordinate and engage in SWAPs too often stall and sadly fail to achieve the intended results. Although donor and development partner coordination was not a primary focus of this study, it was a concern that neither the director or the lead education advisor at UNICEF was aware of the World Bank proposal to begin an alternative education program for out-of-school youth. Future initiatives that build on the intervention of multiple donors and funders needs to ensure there are effective strategies to share information.

Advocacy and Communication Strategies to Support Girls' Education: Sensitization campaigns carried out in the past have been very successful at promoting girls' education. Repeatedly throughout the data collection process respondents spoke of GABLE and the positive impact it made in garnering parental support for girls schooling. Research has shown, however, that threshold levels are generally not met when it comes to mobilizing social change and it's imperative to continually repeat the public messages about the needs to educate girls.

Inter-Sectoral Approach: Life cannot be easily dissected into discreet sectors; neither can projects. Any time a project attempts to couple interventions that demand cross-sector and cross-ministry efforts it becomes much harder to implement, monitor and carry out activities. This intervention is no exception. Although the school feeding and school construction projects of boreholes, school blocks, teacher housing and latrines have a *tremendous impact* at the schools where these improvements are made—the capacity to provide the on-going support to maintain them (or to ensure people at the school level know how to carry out needed repairs) remains problematic. Head Teachers are not always sure who should provide information or support when things break down (figuratively and literally) and become frustrated when they get no response to their requests for assistance. Better coordination for the long term implementation and maintenance of project inputs needs to be developed at the onset of a program particularly those that involve construction.

Rights of the Child: Although Malawi ratified the International Convention on the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor in 1999, laws addressing child labor are inconsistent sending double messages to individuals who are in a position to monitor and act to protect the rights of the child and to stop abuse against children, child labor and child trafficking. For instance, according to the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act under statute 333 it states that “*a child nor a young person must be employed in heavy work.*” Yet statute 334 provides for three exceptions concerning the labor of children. One is that “*a child or a young person may work as long as the employment contract is not in written form. The second is that work in a*

*family business is allowed. The last is that children and young persons are allowed to work in agriculture.”*<sup>83</sup>

It is, therefore, not surprising that Head Teachers (who should be better informed about government policies concerning children than many of the parents in the community) are frequently unclear exactly what these laws mean and what their role is in ensuring the laws are obeyed by the parents of their students. Clarity on the laws are badly needed; circulars should be developed outlining what the rights of children are and should be required to be posted in public places at the schools. Head Teachers, teachers and community leaders require training that heighten their understanding of what the laws and policies are and provide them with clear procedures to take in cases where these laws and policies are broken or not being implemented. Ministry officials need to be given the necessary support to legally pursue cases in which children are harassed and abused. Policies and laws have no value if they aren't implemented.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Girls' Enrollments and Participation**

In the area of girls' enrollments, there has been significant progress in the past years in enrolling girls but enrollments of both girls and boys in basic education need to be expanded. Retention of girls also needs to be encouraged and specific educational pathways developed to allow boys and girls to re-enter the system if they drop out and/or to develop professionally even if they do not proceed to secondary school. Through information materials, seminars, colloquium, should also develop a policy dialog, other relevant ministries, donors to education, school directors and communities on these issues.

Some immediate specific interventions to address increasing girls' enrollment and participation include: (1) grants to provide funding for projects and interventions in schools and non formal programs that offer promising models to increase and retain girls in education; (2) assessing the organizational capacity and cost effectiveness of various models and approaches context; (3) continuing to develop information, skits and media materials on enrolling and retaining girls targeted to different audiences – mothers and fathers, girls, boys, school directors, teachers, etc; (4) working with the ministry and development community on incorporating gender awareness and strategies in curriculum and teaching materials; (5) working with UNICEF and other partners to incorporate life skills and HIV/AIDS and health education in non formal and primary school curriculum and teaching modules; and (6) developing manuals and training of trainer activities for

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<sup>83</sup> <http://www.right-to-education.org/content/age/malawi.html>



student representatives, Mother's Groups, SMCs, PTAs, teachers and Head Teachers on gender awareness. Other interventions that should be considered in the future are providing scholarships to encourage girls to complete and enroll in secondary school and providing more preschools to lighten mother's childcare responsibilities and workloads.

### **Non Formal Education**

In the area of non formal education and professional/technical education there is a need to expand early childhood centers and programs as well as access to professional and technical training for all school leavers (regardless of when they leave the formal educational system). There is also a need to expand opportunities for graduates of non formal education to re-enter formal programs. There is also a need to create continuous cycles of basic education and professional training in order to prepare Malawians for the economy of the future. For example, IT training is critical both in formal and non formal professional programs. In addition, it is important to identify long term market niches and opportunities in developing vocational and technical opportunities. One approach is to harmonize non formal trainings through a data base in order to identify who is offering what types of programs. This not only provides for synergy in the sector but opens the possibility of developing a strategy to link girls up with institutions that offer out-of-school and non formal learning activities.

Alternative non-formal and accelerated learning programs should be provided for students who are older than the anticipated normal age for children enrolled in primary school. This not only provides for a more suitable learning opportunity for them it reduces the risk overage male students presents to girls enrolled in school.

The primary challenge for the educational system is to increase access to basic education to attain its “education for all” goal while retaining quality. Although tremendous progress has been made over the past 15 years, indications are that girls still do not have access to school particularly in the rural and remote areas of the country. The primary reason would appear to be economic –direct costs and opportunity costs – of schooling but socio-cultural attitudes and beliefs about gender roles also keep girls at home, looking after children, fetching water, tending gardens, etc. Parents are also concerned about girls’ safety and security at school and what benefits or not, an education conveys for future earnings and potential. At the same time, there are many boys who are not going to school as well often for similar reasons

Retaining quality will be a challenge as more children are enrolled in school. Those children out of school are more likely to be poorer, lack financial and parental support for schooling, and will be less acculturated to school. There is also likely to be a larger percentage of children with special needs and health problems, who remain to be enrolled. Many of their parents—especially the mothers—are not literate and are uncertain what economic advantages an education offers for their children’s future. These concerns will have to be directly addressed in any campaigns to encourage parents to send and keep their children in school.

A second challenge is to retain children and improve outcomes. Many children, especially girls, are not encouraged to remain in school and succeed only with great will and determination. Lightening the work burden and expectations on these girls is critical. Basic assumptions about work that girls versus boys are expected to do both in the

classroom and at home need to be countered. Girls and boys from relatively more affluent families also have more chance of success because they have role models and parents who expect them to attain a higher education. Outcomes are also low because the examination system is designed to fail and weed out children at every level. Beyond retaking the exam, there are few second chances or alternative routes. Thus, alternate routes to re-enter the system need to be created.

A third challenge is defining not just “education for all” but “education for what”? The government can create an enabling environment but people and communities need to create the new enterprises, productive activities, and structures that will make this thrive. Creating new jobs and opportunities for the future will require new forms of learning, professional, vocational, and technical opportunities, and community engagement. A lot more thought needs to be put into what are potential markets and economic possibilities for the future.

### **School Feeding**

In general school feeding programs are problematic. This finding is not surprising. School feeding programs are hard to monitor at best and ripe with malfeasance and corruption at worst. Having said that temporary hunger and short term periods of famine plague large parts of the country and the humanitarian response to help feed hungry children is a compelling argument of its own to continue whenever possible to provide food.

Despite the government’s long term plan to provide feeding to schools<sup>84</sup> it’s unclear just how long this intervention will be available to any specific school. Therefore, it is discouraging to hear expectations at the school level that school feeding will be something that will continue long into the future.<sup>85</sup> “Because school feeding programs are fully donor supported even when there are on-going funds to sponsor the program issues of sustainability emerge. Another danger is the growing risk of community dependency for food from outside sources.

Unfortunately, there appeared to be a sense of entitlement at the community the “rest of the world” needs to meet their hunger needs during temporary famine. More than anything it raises serious concerns over a community’s lack of long term planning to avoid food shortages and signals the need for accompanying sensitization and training about ways to store food as well as need for changes in behavior and eating habits to prevent children from experiencing temporary hunger and even starvation even though

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<sup>84</sup> As noted in the NESP the school feeding will be available for 635,000 children from 2008/09 onwards.

<sup>85</sup> When probed how long the Head Teacher expected his school would participate in the school feeding program we were told it would “*continue forever until the end*”. When asked to clarify what he meant by “until the end” he replied “*until the end of time—the end of the world.*”

they might have other food available to eat.<sup>86</sup> Equally troubling is that families take food to the market to sell as cash crops instead of using it to feed the family. This finding underscores the need for active sensitization of the SHN strategy since it educates communities about alternatives to the staple foods that they are used to.

Poverty forces difficult economic choices and parents are often driven to make sacrifices for themselves and their children outsiders have difficulty understanding. Therefore, more complex issues are likely to be at play in these cases than the surface-level explanations shared in conversations with Head Teachers around school feeding programs. It is well beyond the scope of this study to examine all the economic decision making that influences how produce is being used in local economies but there seems to be data to suggest issues that need further exploration to be able to help families develop long term strategies to move forward financially while at the same time properly feed their families and not depend upon the government and outside donors to supply emergency food at schools. At the very least schools need to be made aware of the temporary nature of this intervention and be involved from the onset in creating an exit strategy that forces them to take into consideration ways the community can better plan for the lean periods when gardens are not producing the maize to make nsima.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Accurate and reliable data is a major issue at the school and district level. Information does not easily flow from the school outwards so important data about a number of issues needed to effectively plan does not exist. In many cases there is no baseline data about important issues (for instance, no effort is made to monitor how many students are affected by pregnancies, or disability), there are few indicators that are gathered on a regular basis to help decision makers at the school to use data to ground decisions being made. Even information that is collected such as the incidence of orphans does not appear to be used in any meaningful way to assist Head Teachers and committee members to develop strategies to provide these students with greater opportunities.

Part of the problem is that many of those engaged in decision making at the schools fail to see the value of data driven decision making. Our conversations with them about the possibility of registering births in order to better project future school enrollments underscores their limitations in using data effectively. Head Teachers saw this as something that could be extremely useful—but for the most part SMCs were baffled how this could be useful. Furthermore, none of them were able to conceptualize how this

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<sup>86</sup> For instance, in one school we were distressed to learn that although fish were available in nearby streams they would rather go hungry than eat the fish if nsima isn't available.

might be carried out. Indeed, what was most astounding is that very few of the SMCs had any idea that births were registered anywhere—despite laws that all births are to be registered with the Ministry of Health.

### **Policy framework in key areas relating to gender**

It is not enough that people are told about a policy (such as harassment or abuse). Accountability for actions spring from wide dissemination of information confirming policies exist in order to foster dialogue about what they mean and ultimately resulting in transparency in their implementation. These circulars should be written in easy to understand language that school personnel, parents and even students can read and understand. Head Teachers need to understand *why* it is important for information to be posted where committee members, parents and students are able to see them and act upon them as needed.

The MOE should consider revising the current pregnancy policy to take a more proactive role in encouraging schools to permit the students to remain in school *as long as possible* upon learning of a pregnancy. In an environment in which it is *so* difficult to enroll and retain both girls and boys it is regrettable that any student should drop out in the early trimesters of a pregnancy while on-going school attendance and participation is unlikely to cause any harm to either the mother or the baby or negatively impact the other students in the school despite cultural and religious attitudes and beliefs to the contrary.

Information and training should be provided to SMC, PTA and especially to Mother's Groups on ways to evaluate how safe and supportive a school environment is for girls and given training on ways to encourage the girls to open up the channels of communication about what is happening in the school. There should be routine safety and support audits that are carried out by committee members that identify and prevent problems before they happen. In addition, the MOE needs to put in place stricter guidelines and take harsher action when teachers are identified who are abusing their power and placing girls at harm. The MOE should also coordinate with NGO groups—and in particular FAWEMA—to foster greater civic awareness about the community's responsibility to provide a safe and supportive school and monitor what is happening to protect their children especially from those who should be their caregivers and trusted adults.

In other areas addressing the status and security of girls, a disconnect appears to exist between government educational goals (such as EFA, MDG, etc.), that call for girls to remain in school through both the primary and secondary cycles and constitutional laws that seem to undermine those objectives. For instance, the constitution, under section 22 establishes the minimum legal age for marriage at 18 years for all persons yet permits marriages between the age of 15 and 18 years with the consent of parents or guardians. Section 19 of the Marriage Act which governs statutory marriages states a person under

21 years is a minor but can enter into marriage “*with the written consent of his parents or guardians.*”<sup>87</sup>

In actuality, it is not uncommon for girls under the age of 15 who live in the rural areas (particularly in the south and central regions) to enter into marriage. Indeed, in areas which practice initiation rites girls as young as 10 years old can be promised and prepared for marriage. Unfortunately, because the Constitution merely discourages and doesn’t outlaw early marriages they continue and ministry and school officials are effectively powerless to do much to prevent them. No doubt, in the absence of laws establishing the age of consent at a much older age—it likely contributes to older men seducing and even molesting young girls. This, in turn, can lead to a high number of teen-age pregnancies which the data demonstrates drives the girls away from school as well as increases risks for young girls to STDs and HIV/AIDs.

The countries in Sub-Saharan Africa that have been the most successful at addressing girls education and increasing their access to schooling, participation in schooling and retention through primary schooling, have been those that have developed a Girl’s Education Strategy.<sup>88</sup>

### **Child rights—protection and justice**

Unless the steps Head Teachers and others in responsible positions at the school and community should take to address the rights of children are clearly defined it is highly unlikely they are going to act on the children’s behalf. All policy decisions taken by the government (whether at the central level, district level or school level) addressing the rights of the child should be written circulars which are required to be posted in a public place.

Representatives of SMGs, PTAs and Mother’s Groups should be given training and checklists on how to conduct security and safety audits at their schools. These should consist of easy-to-administer steps that are carried out on a regular schedule (weekly, monthly and term). They should also clarify what steps *must* be taken and by whom if infractions are found.

Mother’s Groups should be formed in all schools and given an official mandate by the Ministry of Education to act on the behalf of girls. Their role should be clarified and shared with Head Teachers, SMCs and PTAs to ensure they are able to effectively leverage change and avoid barriers at the school and community level that prevent them from carrying out their mission. Mother’s Groups should also be provided with on-going

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<sup>87</sup> note the use of the male pronoun in the statute’s language;  
(<http://www.right-to-education.org/content/age/malawi.html>)

<sup>88</sup> For instance, Zimbabwe, Ghana and Guinea are all countries that used gender sensitive planning to outline an educational framework. In those countries girls access to schooling more doubled and in some cases nearly tripled.

training. Additionally, they need strategies to help them foster greater support from other women in their communities for the education of girls. It is distressing to learn that women aren't consolidated on this issue and it merits further examination to find ways to address this issue. The research repeatedly underscores the pivotal role mothers play in the education of their children and in particular the education of their daughters so it is imperative to learn of ways to strengthen this all too often silent partner.

Those responsible for school management should work in partnership with village chiefs to document the births of all children in a village. The records should be kept at the school and regularly reviewed in order to make data driven decisions for school planning and monitoring the enrollment of community children. Information such as disabilities should also be noted to assist in early identification and hopefully early intervention. This kind of information will not only help those responsible for assisting the Head Teacher to delivery a quality education to the children living in the surrounding villages it also signals to parents there are checks and balances in place to monitor the school participation of children.

Head Teachers and committee members should be given training in the use of data to make informed decisions. Head Teachers should also be required to keep annual records of pregnancies and document efforts taken to get the girl (and boy) to return to school. This policy will only be able to leverage change if the message gets out that schools really do want girls to return and complete their studies. SMCs, PTAs and Mother's Groups need to join forces on ways to reduce the number of adolescent pregnancies and work collaboratively to disseminate the message that pregnancy does not translate into the end of a girl's education—she can come back and she can succeed. Best practices at getting girls and boys back in school should be documented and shared with schools leaders.

The pregnancy policy needs to be buttressed by stronger efforts to prevent pregnancy as well as efforts to emotionally support girls and boys who parent a child not to give up on their schooling. Further dialogue with key stakeholders might be useful to “*take the temperature*” on a move to allow girls to stay in school through the second trimester. Boys who impregnate girls must also be held to a greater level of accountability. Numerous conversations underscore the ways boys got around the current policy not only by continuing with their education at other schools or by paying off the girl's family to get her to remain silent on his paternity, etc.. Boys also need to be forced to bear the consequences of their actions and accept responsibility for the childcare and finances of the child. Boys need to learn that the failure to do this is unacceptable. Measures need to be put in place to force boys to be responsible for their actions equally as much as the girls must face those same responsibilities and consequences.

Activities such as an **ABC** (*Abstinence is Better than Condoms*) social marketing program should be sponsored at all schools. Girls who have gotten pregnant and returned to school should be given the opportunity to share about their experience—both to promote making wiser decisions about pre-marriage sexual experimentation but also to serve as a role model that returning to school can be done and is the preferred path if you do become a parent. Boys who have fathered a child should be encouraged to share their experience—highlighting the consequences of fathering a child and what it means to have parental responsibilities while still in school. And on-going school attendance for both the girl and the boy needs to be linked to evidence of responsible parenting on their part. The activities that have the greatest potential to going to scale and be sustainable are those that are process oriented. Although one off training for committee members at schools can be highly beneficial unless they are given support at the end of their terms to assist the incoming members with the skills they've learned the benefits are not sustainable. CBOs and NGOs could be charged with this activity possibly through the creation of a working group or steering committee to develop a simple training program to introduce new members to the roles and responsibilities of committee membership.

## CONCLUSION

*A good education is another name for happiness.* Ann Plato

*The only thing better than education is more education.* Anges Benedict

Tremendous progress has been made in the past two decades to improve the education of girls. UNICEF-sponsored initiatives have promoted changes that make achieving a primary school education attainable for both girls and boys. The introduction of Child Friendly Schools through AGEF has leveraged notable changes in the way teachers view their jobs and interact with students. Although teachers and other decision makers at the school have not been able to implement all the changes because of the lack of resources to make their schools a totally girl-friendly environment, the growing awareness about the *need* to be responsive to issues around the rights of the girl, the need to create schools that emotionally support girls and schools are places for *all* children especially girls is a monumental leap forward.

Despite the fact not all schools equally benefitted from the inputs of the AGEF, they all noted a dramatic difference in the schooling experience of their girls. Additionally, all the contributions supported through the Accelerated Girls Education Program have powerfully sent the message that schooling for all children is no longer a luxury for those that can afford it but a vital need for all students in a more challenging environment and global economy.



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## **ANNEXES**

## ANNEX 1: WORKPLAN

Table 1: Evaluation Time Line		
Phase	Date	Participants
Review of documents	December and January	Consultant
January 17	Initial meeting UNICEF	
January 18	Meeting with Simon Mphisa	
January 19-20	Review of Documents	
January 21-23	Modifying instruments Meetings FAWEMA Director of Basic Education MOEST	UNICEF, consultant
January 24-26	Data Collection Lilongwe Rural East Meeting with UNICEF director	Consultant, MOE, UNICEF, FAWEMA
January 28-29	Data Collection North	MOE, UNICEF, FAWEMA
January 31- February 1	Data Collection South	
February 2	Data Collection Training	FAWEMA, MOE
February 4-8	Data Collection	
Collation of Data	March	Consultant
Analysis of data	April/May	Consultant
Review of report	June	UNICEF, MOE & other partners
Finalization of report	August	

## **ANNEX 2: CONTACTS**

### **Ministry of Education**

Mr. Kalanda	Director of Basic Education
Chikondano C. Mussa	Deputy Director of Basic Education

### **NGOs/CBOs/FBOs**

Eunice F. Chamgomo	Project Officer FAWEMA
Esther Msowoya	National Coordinator FAWEMA

### **Development Partners**

Simon Mphisa	Head Education Office UNICEF
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### **ANNEX 3: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS**

Annex 3.1	Donor Survey
Annex 3.2	Statistical Data From
Annex 3.3	Classroom Observation Guide
Annex 3.4	School Overview
Annex 3.5	Mothers' Group Focus Group Protocol
Annex 3.6	School Management Committee Focus Group Protocol
Annex3.7	Girls Focus Group Protocol
Annex 3.8	Head Teacher Interview Protocol
Annex: 3 9	Child Friendly Rating Scale
Annex: 3:10	Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning Objectives

**Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. I am aware of the UNICEF **Acceleration of Girls Education in Malawi** initiative? Y N
2. Check the following **UNICEF** activities you are aware of:
  - ☐ Mother's Groups
  - ☐ Social Compact for the delivery of Basic Social Services
  - ☐ Directory of partners and potential support/interventions
  - ☐ FRESH/WES Sanitation and hygiene education
  - ☐ UNICEF Life Skills and Sexual Reproductive Health Education
  - ☐ Voluntary Counseling and Testing and Youth Friendly Health Services and Sexual Reproductive Health
  - ☐ Community dialogue on cultural/traditional practices
  - ☐ Anti-AIDS clubs
  - ☐ Joyful Learning Training Package
  - ☐ Training community leaders in advocacy and lobbying/sensitizing roles of duty bearers and on the rights of children
  - ☐ Construction/Rehabilitation of school blocks
  - ☐ Distribution of school desks
  - ☐ Distribution of Teaching/Learning materials (School in a Box)
  - ☐ Out of school girls' clubs
  - ☐ School Management Committees training
3. Check the following activities your agency has partnered in implementing:
  - ☐ Mother's Groups
  - ☐ Social Compact for the delivery of Basic Social Services
  - ☐ Directory of partners and potential support/interventions
  - ☐ FRESH/WES Sanitation and hygiene education
  - ☐ UNICEF Life Skills and Sexual Reproductive Health Education



- ☐ Voluntary Counseling and Testing and Youth Friendly Health Services and Sexual Reproductive Health
- ☐ Community dialogue on cultural/traditional practices
- ☐ Anti-AIDS clubs
- ☐ Joyful Learning Training Package
- ☐ Training community leaders in advocacy and lobbying/sensitizing roles of duty bearers and on the rights of children
- ☐ Construction/Rehabilitation of school blocks
- ☐ Distribution of school desks
- ☐ Distribution of Teaching/Learning materials (School in a Box)
- ☐ Out of school girls' clubs
- ☐ School Management Committees training

**Circle the appropriate response to the following questions:**

4. Have you heard about a proposed pilot program funded through World Bank conditional grants called the Complimentary Basic Education Pilot targeting out-of-school children ages 9-17?    Y    N
  
5. If yes, how did you hear about this pilot?  
 Ministry representative    Conversation with World Bank Representative  
 Donor Meeting                      Other    please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Generally, I participate in the development partner group sector meetings  
                  Regularly                      Occasionally                      Rarely
  
5. Generally, exchange of information about what other development partners are doing takes place  
                  Regularly                      Occasionally                      Rarely
  
6. Generally, my knowledge of what other development partners are doing is:  
                  Well informed                      Moderately well informed                      Limited
  
7. The government's role in defining priorities and leading sector activities is  
                  Strong                      Moderate                      Weak

8. Prioritize the three things you think are the most important to improve girls' education in Malawi in order to achieve parity at both the primary and secondary school levels.

1.

2.

3.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years I have worked in Malawi in the education sector for this agency? \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check here if you would like to further discuss this evaluation and/or girls education in Malawi?

*Thank you for your participation in this survey.*

### School Statistical Data Form

Standard	Girls	Boys	Total	Range in Age		
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
<b>TOTAL</b>						

Orphans					
	Single	Double	Single	Double	
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
<b>TOTAL</b>					

Disability					
1			V	E	H P C M
2			V	E	H P C M
3			V	E	H P C M

Year:

Year:

4			V	E	H	P	C	M
5			V	E	H	P	C	M
6			V	E	H	P	C	M
7			V	E	H	P	C	M
8			V	E	H	P	C	M
<b>TOTAL</b>			V	E	H	P	C	M

**Pregnancies**

Standard	Number of Girls	Ages	Asked to leave (A) Left on her own (L) Married ( M ) Returned to School ( R )  Father another student (F) Boy asked to leave (B)

Year:

Number of villages/communities that send students to your school?

What is the longest distance your students walk to school?      km      minutes

Year School Established?      Affiliation:

Number of Teachers: Total \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

(Not counting the head teacher)

Head Teacher: M F Years experience head teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

How many years Head teacher at this school? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you teach in addition to being a Head Teacher? Y N Standard: \_\_\_\_\_

Subjects: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you had any Head Teacher Training? Y N Years experience teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a deputy head teacher? Y N M F

Indicate number of teachers (by gender) in each standard and indicate whether he/she is a trained teacher. Note whether the classroom is inside or outside (O/I). If outside indicate whether it has a roof ( R ) and a cement floor ( C ), by circling the appropriate letter. Also indicate whether it is a temporary (T) or permanent structure (P). *If there are rainy season variations indicate in your school summary notes.*

Teachers –Training---Classrooms (Outside/Inside)							
	Femal e	Trained	Classroom	Male	Trained	Classroom	
Standard 1		Y N	O R C I T/P		Y N	O R C I T/P	
Standard 2		Y N	O R C I T/P		Y N	O R C I T/P	
Standard 3		Y N	O R C I T/P		Y N	O R C I T/P	
Standard 4		Y N	O R C I T/P		Y N	O R C I T/P	
Standard 5		Y N	O R C I T/P		Y N	O R C I T/P	
Standard 6		Y N	O R C I T/P		Y N	O R C I T/P	
Standard 7		Y N	O R C I T/P		Y N	O R C I T/P	
Standard 8		Y N	O R C I T/P		Y N	O R C I T/P	
TOTAL							

### UNICEF interventions

☐ Joyful Learning \_\_\_\_\_# trained ☐ SMC, PTA, MG training \_\_\_\_\_# trained ☐ teacher house

☐ School-in-a-Box ☐ Sports-in-a-box ☐ Construction School Blocks \_\_\_\_\_# classrooms

☐ Furniture ☐ Life Skills Programme ☐ Role Model Programme ☐ Latrines \_\_\_\_\_# built (G B S )

☐ Tent/rubhall ☐ Borehole ☐ Mothers' Group ☐ school feeding ☐ Sign Post

☐ Other Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher ♀ ♂ Is there a prepared lesson ? ( ☐ √ if you get a copy ) Y N Are there teacher manuals ? Y N


**Section 3: Questioning Pattern** (note in each cell the following: g/b/m - multiple, L/H, +/-, etc. for each question asked by the teacher)

1		2		3		4	
5		6		7		8	
9		10		11		12	
13		14		15		16	

#### Section 4:

**Grouping patterns:** (Mark  $\checkmark$  each kind of grouping pattern the teacher used during the implementation of the lesson.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Whole group                      \_\_\_\_\_small group                      \_\_\_\_\_ peer learning (2x2)  
 \_\_\_\_\_desk work                      \_\_\_\_\_ individual instruction (extension/remediation)

**Instructional Materials:** check  $\checkmark$  the different instructional materials the teacher used during the lesson

☐ reference books   ☐ blackboard # \_\_\_\_\_   ☐ posters   ☐ manipulatives   ☐ map  
☐ globe   ☐ other (list)\_\_\_\_\_

#### Estimate the time spent on:

Lecture \_\_\_\_\_ Learning Activities \_\_\_\_\_

% of time students talking \_\_\_\_\_ % of time teacher talking \_\_\_\_\_

Do the pictures on the wall show equal numbers of males and females?

Look at the pictures or charts on the wall. How many pictures of females? How many pictures of males?

**Table 3. Wall Posters**

	# Females	# Males
Wall Posters (Total #: _____)		

Do girls and boys have equal access to materials? Count the number of books you see girls and boys using during the lesson(s) you observe. Does every child have a pen or pencil? An exercise book?

**Table 4. Access to Materials**

	# Textbooks	# pencils or pens	#exercise books
# Girls Present____			
# Boys Present____			

#### Section 5: Summary of the Lesson

*Write a summary of what you observed taking place during the lesson.*

### School Overview

✓ *check in* ☐ *as appropriate*

☐ Urban ☐ Peri-urban ☐ Rural distance from tarmac road \_\_\_\_\_ km \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

Facilities/resources available at school: Circle those which are not accessible.

- ☐ library ☐ computer room ☐ Internet ☐ Cafeteria  
☐ school nurse/sick room  
☐ principal office ☐ guard house ☐ paved yards ☐ phone ☐ fax

#### Physical plant:

☐ one level ☐ more than one level all levels accessible Y N

☐ barrier free bathroom facilities ☐ on all levels

Students Y N staff Y N

☐ ramp ☐ incline allows easy access with wheelchair Y N elevator ☐

floor: ☐ concrete ☐ tile ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

level Y N smooth surface Y N (free of pot holes, breaks, etc.)

roof: ☐ tile ☐ tin ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

walls: ☐ cement block ☐ wood ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

☐ potable water for drinking accessible ☐ on all levels

☐ natural light ☐ fluorescent lights ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

☐ windows ☐ sunlights

☐ working electricity ☐ ceiling fans ☐ air conditioning

☐ play ground area accessible Y N

☐ staff room sufficient to hold planning sessions accessible Y N

All classrooms accessible Y N

Entrance gate to school accessible Y N ☐ security guard(s)



Free of safety hazards:   Y      N

Classroom seating:   ☐ desks   ☐ tables/chairs   adequate space for a wheelchair   Y   N

Free of environmental factors that can influence safety or learning opportunity:   Y   N

Check as appropriate factors that are a problem at the school:

☐ noisy      ☐ too hot      ☐ unsanitary      ☐ odors      ☐ lack of ventilation

☐ dust      ☐ other: \_\_\_\_\_

Technology/audio-visual/basic supplies: *(Check all that are available at the school.)*

☐ photocopier                                      ☐ Computers for teachers/staff (# \_\_\_\_\_)

☐ Television                                      ☐ Computers for students (# \_\_\_\_\_)

☐ VCR/DVD player                      ☐ Internet access for teachers/staff

☐ Tape Recorder                      ☐ Internet access for students

☐ Typewriter

Books/reference materials in library (varying readability levels   Y   N   )

☐ encyclopedia   ☐ dictionaries   ☐ newspapers   ☐ magazines   ☐ fiction

☐ non-fiction      ☐ CDs                      ☐ DVDs                      ☐ picture books

Use this space to draw a map of the school and grounds. Note all features including play ground area, bathroom facilities, special areas such as library, gym, cafeteria, etc. Include basic plan of classrooms and classroom seating arrangements. Note things like gates. Particularly note any environmental accommodations or needs.

**Members present: Women** \_\_\_\_\_ **Range in age:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many of you had the opportunity to go to primary school? (*Ask them to raise their hands for each category. Note the number who attended school.*)  
How many of you completed 4 years or more of primary schooling? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many of you completed 2 -4 years of primary schooling? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many of you completed 1 year of primary schooling? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many of you never had the opportunity to go to primary school? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Raise your hand if you've been in the Mothers Group in your community for more than one year? (*Count the number and note.*) \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many years have you participated?  
☐ 3 years      ☐ 2 years      ☐ 1 year
4. How did you learn about the Mothers' Group?  
☐ Another lady in the village    ☐ Asked by the school director    ☐ Village leader  
☐ Recruited by FAWEMA      ☐ Other: Explain \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many of you have received any training since you have been a part of the Mothers' Groups? (*Ask them to raise their hands. Count the number and not the number who participated*) \_\_\_\_\_
6. Can you describe the training you received? (*Ask different members of the group to describe their training. May have to wait and help them to get them to talk about it.*)
7. Has this training helped you to get your daughters and other girls living in this community to go to school and stay in school?    Y    N (*Ask them to raise their hands if they think it has helped. Note the number of hands raised.*) \_\_\_\_\_
8. How has this training helped you to get your daughters and other girls living in this community to go to school and stay in school?

9. What kinds of activities have you done in your community since forming your Mothers' Groups to enroll girls in school, keep them in school or get them to return to school?
10. Have any girls in your community left school and come back because of your Mothers' Group? *(If they say yes, ask them to tell you about the situation—about the girl and what they did to get her to enroll in school again.)*
11. What are some of the reasons girls in your community:
  - Don't enroll in school
  - Don't go to school on a regular basis
  - Don't doing well in school
12. Raise your hand if you have a problem making the Mothers' Group meetings. (Note the number who raise their hand.) \_\_\_\_\_
13. What are some of the things that make it difficult for you to take part in the meetings and activities of the Mothers' Groups?
14. Raise your hand if you think having a Mothers' Group in your community has made a difference in terms of both girls and boys going to school. (Note the number who raise their hand.) \_\_\_\_\_
15. Tell me how your Mothers' Group has made a difference in this community.
16. How has being in the Mothers' Group helped you be a better mother to your daughters?
17. Is there a girl in your community who has benefited from your work and you think I should talk with to learn more about how you helped her go to school? What is her name?

How often does your Mothers' Group meet each term?

\_\_\_\_\_

**SMG/PTA Focus Group Members present: Women \_\_\_\_\_ Men \_\_\_\_\_ Range in age: \_\_\_\_\_**

2. How many of you had the opportunity to go to primary school? *(Ask them to raise their hands for each category. Note the number who attended school.)*  
How many of you completed 4 years or more of primary schooling? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many of you completed 2 -4 years of primary schooling? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many of you completed 1 year of primary schooling? \_\_\_\_\_  
How many of you never had the opportunity to go to primary school? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Raise your hand if you've been in the Mothers Group in your community for more than one year? *(Count the number and note.)* \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many years have you participated?  
☐ 3 years      ☐ 2 years      ☐ 1 year
4. How did you learn about the Mothers' Group?  
☐ Another lady in the village    ☐ Asked by the school director    ☐ Village leader  
☐ Recruited by FAWEMA      ☐ Other: Explain \_\_\_\_\_
16. How many of you have received any training since you have been a part of the Mothers' Groups? *(Ask them to raise their hands. Count the number and not the number who participated)* \_\_\_\_\_
17. Can you describe the training you received? *(Ask different members of the group to describe their training. May have to wait and help them to get them to talk about it.)*
18. Has this training helped you to get your daughters and other girls living in this community to go to school and stay in school? Y N *(Ask them to raise their hands if they think it has helped. Note the number of hands raised.)* \_\_\_\_\_
19. How has this training helped you to get your daughters and other girls living in this community to go to school and stay in school?
20. What kinds of activities have you done in your community since forming your Mothers' Groups to enroll girls in school, keep them in school or get them to return to school?
21. Have any girls in your community left school and come back because of your Mothers' Group? *(If they say yes, ask them to tell you about the situation—about the girl and what they did to get her to enroll in school again.)*

22. What are some of the reasons girls in your community:
- Don't enroll in school
  - Don't go to school on a regular basis
  - Don't doing well in school
23. Raise your hand if you have a problem making the Mothers' Group meetings. (Note the number who raise their hand.) \_\_\_\_\_
24. What are some of the things that make it difficult for you to take part in the meetings and activities of the Mothers' Groups?
25. Raise your hand if you think having a Mothers' Group in your community has made a difference in terms of both girls and boys going to school. (Note the number who raise their hand.) \_\_\_\_\_
26. Tell me how your Mothers' Group has made a difference in this community.
27. How has being in the Mothers' Group helped you be a better mother to your daughters?
28. Is there a girl in your community who has benefited from your work and you think I should talk with to learn more about how you helped her go to school? What is her name?
29. How often does your Mothers' Group meet each term?
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Girls' Focus Group** Note number of girls: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Ask them their ages: Raise your hand if you are: (Note number for each age)

- ☐ 9 -10 years old \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ 11-12 years old \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ 13-15 years old \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ 16 years old or older \_\_\_\_\_

2. Ask them their standard in school. Raise your hand if you are: (Note number for each standard)

- ☐ Standard 1-2 \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Standard 3-4 \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Standard 5 \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Standard 6 \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Standard 7 \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Standard 8 \_\_\_\_\_

3. What kinds of things have been happening in your community and in your school to help girls go to school, stay in school and do well in school?

Responses from this were not well captured in the report e.g what % of girls think provision of boreholes or toilets or joyful learning is what has helped them?

4. Describe your day to me. Let's make a schedule of your day. (Make a chart of this on another piece of paper. **MAKE SURE TO LABEL IT WITH THE SCHOOL'S NAME**).

- a. What time do you get up in the morning?
- b. What do you do at home before you leave for school?
- c. What time do you leave for school?
- d. What kinds of things do you do at school before you start classes? Do you HAVE to do these things?
- e. What time do you leave from school to go home?
- f. What do you do when you get home from school?
- g. What time do you eat in the evening?
- h. Do you help your mother or caregiver to prepare the meal?
- i. What kinds of things do you do after you eat?
- j. How much time do you have to study in the evening?
- k. What time do you go to bed at night?

5. What are some things that happen in your home that makes it difficult for you to come to school and or do well in school?

6. What kinds of things happen in your home that helps you to do well in school?
7. Have there been any situations when a male teacher or boy in the school has treated you in a way that made you feel uncomfortable? *If yes, ask her to explain and what she did about it?* Did you talk to your father or your mother about it? What did she say to do?
8. Do you have difficulties getting to school on time? If so, why?
9. Do you have difficulties coming to school regularly? If so, why?
10. What kinds of things have the Mothers' Group in your school done to help girls go to school and do well in school?
11. Raise your hand if your mother is a member of the Mothers' Group? *(Note how many girls raise their hands.)*
12. Do you ever talk with your mother about the Mothers' Groups? Ask them to explain.
13. How do you think being on the Mothers' Group has changed your mother?
14. What kinds of things do you think should be done in this school/community to make it a better place for girls to go to school?
15. How many of your fathers ask you about your schooling experience? What kinds of things do you talk with your father about school?
16. Are any of you planning to get married soon? (Ask for a show of hands. Note the number of girls.) \_\_\_\_\_
17. Have any of the mothers in the Mother Groups talked to you about this?

**Make the daily schedule for the girls on this sheet of paper. Note by hour what they do throughout the day.**

### Head Teacher Interview

1. Who calls the meetings with the SMC and PTA at your school?
2. How often do you have meetings with them?
3. When was the last meeting you hosted for all the parents? What did you discuss with them?
4. Do you ever talk to the SMC or PTA specifically about girls' education—trying to get more girls enrolled or how to keep them in school or help them to do better? Y N
5. What percentage of the parents attended the PTA meeting? Fathers and mothers in equal number?
6. I'd like to ask you about parent support for their children's education. Who is more involved—mother? Fathers? No difference? If one is more supportive ask: Why do you think they're more involved?
7. Do you ever meet with the Chiefs of the village to discuss the schooling of children in their villages? Y N If not ask, why don't you? If answer yes ask What kinds of things have you done with the chiefs to get children in the village enrolled and doing well in school?
8. Do you think all the girls in the villages/communities who are school aged are enrolled?  
If the answer is YES ask him/her how he knows that—what evidence does he/she have?  
  
If answer NO ask: Why not? What are you doing to get them enrolled in school?
9. Are the births of babies registered in the villages/communities here? Y N don't know
10. If they are, do you or an SMC member ever go and look at the record for births of children who would be school age (standard 1) to see approximately how many children should be in school? Y N If answer NO ask Don't you think this might be helpful to you and the SMC in trying to get all the children in the village enrolled in school?
11. Do you meet with your teachers every week to discuss student achievement in your school?  
Y N When? What kinds of things do you discuss with them? Do you ever discuss helping girls to do better in school? Y N If no ask, Why not?
12. I'd like to ask you some questions about absenteeism and lateness of students at your school?  
Who is absent more often—girls or boys or there's no difference? If one is absent more than the other ask, why do you think they are absent more often?
13. What steps do you take when you have a student who is absent frequently?
14. Do you have a student code of conduct/behavior rules at this school? Y N
15. Is harassment of other students something that's addressed on it? Y N  
If not ask If not ask Why not?
16. Can you describe for me what harassment is? Give me some examples? *(Try to determine if the head teacher thinks that a Threat to do harm is harassment just as much as actually doing something.)*



17. What steps do you/would you take if one student is harassing another? Are there consequences of their actions? What are they?
18. Have you had any boys who've harassed or abused a girl in your school? Y N  
If yes ask What did you do? If no ask How do you know it hasn't happened?  
If says the girl will tell, ask this question: How do you know the girl isn't afraid to tell someone or that she's been given something to keep her from talking? Or maybe she enjoys the attention and relationship so she won't tell anyone. So, what steps do you take to protect them—even in cases where they aren't upset about what is taking place?
19. Do you have a teacher code of conduct? Y N
20. What steps do you take to ensure the teachers are not abusing the girls—emotionally, psychologically or sexually?
21. What steps would you take if you hear that the teacher is abusing a girl in the village but who isn't a student at this school or possibly at any other school?
22. What steps do you take at your school to help girls who are having difficulties with their schooling?
23. What is your student performance like in science and math? Who achieves better girls or boys or no difference?
24. I'd like to ask you about your exam results. How many students passed last year? Boys? Girls? (If girls didn't do as well, ask the HT about this. Why? What is being done to help them do better?)
25. Who makes the decision about a girl staying in school if she is pregnant—when she must leave?
26. If someone tells you that a girl who is a student in your school is pregnant do you pursue it or wait until you have more positive proof she is – she starts showing? (If says pursue it—ask what actions he/she would take.)
27. If someone tells you that a boy who is a student in your school got a girl pregnant in your school or possibly a girl in another school, do you pursue it? This boy is one of your top performing students—he is EXCELLENT—and you now he will do very well on his exams. (If says pursue it—ask what actions he/she would take.)
28. Can you tell me about factors in the community that affect the on-going participation of the girls in your school?
29. Are there any costs or fees the families of pupils at this school pay each term to enroll their children—for instance, like a post office post fee or a school exam fee? Y N  
If yes, ask this question: What are they and how much is the fee per pupil?  
 What happens if a family can't pay the fee? Are their children allowed to enroll? Who pays the fee?
30. Is there any support that's given to orphans in your school? Y N  
If yes, ask this question: What kinds of things are being done and who is doing them?  
 (SMC, Mothers Group, PTA, etc.)

31. What kinds of things has the Mothers' Group in your school done to support the education of children in your school and the community?
32. In your opinion, is the walk safe for the girls particularly if they are walking alone? Y N  
If the answer is NO, ask this question: What actions has the school taken to ensure the girls are safe when they walk to school? (e.g. walk in groups, father from the village walks with the girls, they hostel them, etc.)
33. Can you tell me what the Rights of the Child are?
34. What have you done to help the parents in the community better understand these?  
If he/she says Nothing ask Why not?
35. What is child labour?
36. What have you done to help the parents in the community better understand what child labour is?  
If he/she says Nothing ask Why not?
37. Is there a problem with child labour in the surrounding villages/communities?
38. If you know of a parent who is abusing his/her child---either beating the child or forcing them to do child labour---what steps would you take
39. What is the average student:textbook ratio in your classroom? (example 1 textbook for every 5 students).
40. Do you have a school action plan? Y N What are some things on this year's plan? Who participates in the development of this plan? (Teachers? Students? All parents?)

### Child Friendly School Rating Survey

Inclusiveness (Education for All--EFA)					
Accommodations for special needs students					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
Stairs Narrow doors No policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Is access to all the classrooms easy for students to use? (There are no stairs/steps or there are ramps that can accommodate a wheel chair.)  <input type="checkbox"/> Are doors wide enough to accommodate a wheel chair?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do Student:teacher ratios meet the government policy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school conduct programs with the parents to sensitize them about inclusion?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do the teachers adapt lessons for students with special learning needs?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do teachers make sure children with special learning needs have access to textbooks and other learning materials.	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the community offers ideas and resources to make the school accepting for all children? (Orphans/children with disabilities)  <input type="checkbox"/> Are teachers encouraged to use participatory teaching methods to help all students learn?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have qualified personnel trained to work with children with special educational needs (can be support from the district)?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do the SMC, MG and school staff actively try and recruit students who have special learning needs?	

Discuss with head teacher what special learning needs and inclusion means—disability (visual, hearing, physical, emotional, cognitive), language, ethnic, religious and racial diversity.

Explain that ACCESSIBILITY means there are no physical aspects of the school that prevents any student from attending (for instance, stairs are a barrier for students who are in wheelchairs or cannot walk well).

- Do you have any students in your school with special learning needs?
- If yes, what are they? (note # of students with disability, type of disability, gender)
- How, do you identify pupils have a disability?
- If there is a pupil in a wheelchair ask how they accommodate the wheelchair at the school? How does the student get into classrooms if there are stairs, how do they use the latrine, etc? Note, if students are not able to function independently at the school and classroom level it is NOT BARRIER FREE. It would not be an inclusive physical environment.
- Student:Teacher ratio policy in Malawi is 60:1.
- If the community assists with the needs of pupils with disabilities, what kinds of things do they do (i.e. help to get a wheel chair)?
- What kinds of things do the teachers do to assist students with special learning needs/disabilities?
- How many villages send children to this school? How far do students walk every day to school? How long does it take them to walk to school each day?

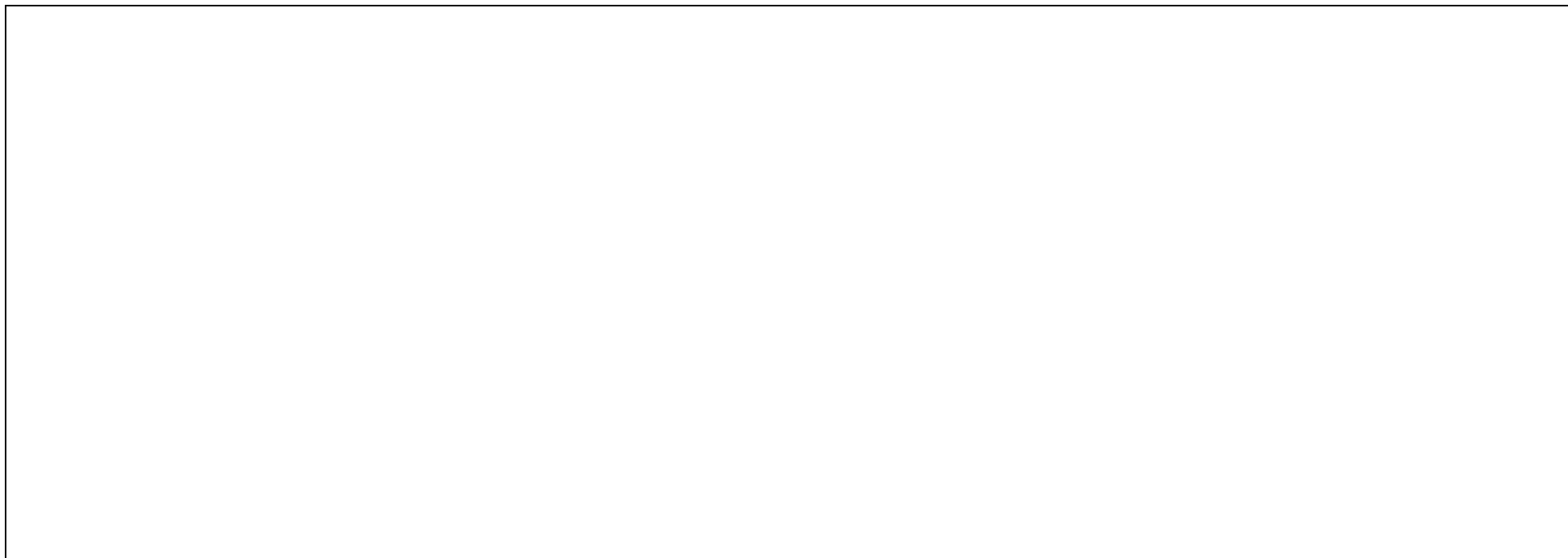
School-based Management					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
No PTA No SMC	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school accept all children regardless of religion, language, and/or disability?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a policy that it is a school that is for any and all students?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do all staff know and understand the policy about education for all students?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the Head Teacher take a proactive role in calling PTA and SMC meetings?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school regularly monitor to check the accessibility/barrier free status of the school?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a written policy that the school offers an education for ALL students?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is the policy posted?  <input type="checkbox"/> Students and parents are informed and demonstrate understanding of meaning of  <input type="checkbox"/> Can student in the school identify negative stereotypes for vulnerable persons? (physically handicapped, those from poorer families, etc.)  “inclusive” education  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have mechanisms to help teachers, parents, and students to identify and help students with special educational needs?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a clear written vision	<input type="checkbox"/> Do students take part in developing guidelines and rules in classrooms and school regarding EFA, non-discrimination, violence and abuse?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school change and adapt policies and ways of doing things to help all children take part in the school? (e.g., the timetable of the classes, expenses, and other things)  <input type="checkbox"/> Do the students understand concepts about equality and discrimination? (physically handicapped, those from poorer families, etc.)  <input type="checkbox"/> Is the school vision statement communicated to teachers, parents and students?	<input type="checkbox"/> Are community members asked to help as resource people to share about their language, culture, ability, etc.?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have information about the organizations (government and non-governmental) that can assist the school in becoming an inclusive school?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is the school vision statement developed with the participations of teachers, parents and students?	

		<p>statement?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the Head Teacher take a proactive role in asking for support from the DEM for support?</p>			
<p><sup>1</sup>Can consider district level support staff to help with pupil special learning needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is meant by “ALL” in the expression “Education for All”?</li> <li>• What are some of the things you do to identify children who have a special learning need-a child with an eyesight problem, or a hearing problem or some other kind of learning problem? Ask for examples of things they have done.</li> </ul>					

Multi-culturalism (ask these questions if there are students in the school who do not speak Chichewa when they begin standard 1)					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
Children who don't speak the language of instructional are given no assistance to learn	<input type="checkbox"/> Do teachers assist students in their mother language when they don't understand in English or Chichewa? (if the language of instruction is in their Mother Language what do teachers do after students are in standard 5 and above?)	<input type="checkbox"/> Do learning materials include content of the history, culture, and traditions of the different ethnic groups in your country?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do teaching and learning materials include positive examples and information about different ethnic groups/cultures?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school host programmes to parents and the community about benefits of different kinds of people in the	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school organize activities (teaching, clubs, extra-teaching and/or outside school) to encourage students from different language groups to mix?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do students have the opportunity to learn a second	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school present programmes /festivals celebrating all the different groups of society?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do school actively recruit students from different backgrounds/ethnic/religious/SES groups, etc. to their school?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school offer scholarships to recruit children from diverse backgrounds, etc.?  <input type="checkbox"/> School recruits teachers who	

		community?	language?	speak mother languages of the children who attend the school.	
<p>What different languages do the pupils in your school speak at home?</p> <p>Do they all speak Chichewa when they enter school in Standard 1?</p> <p>If not, what accommodations do you make to help them learn when they first come to school? If all the children in the school speak Chichewa when they enter Standard 1 skip all questions that are NA.</p> <p>How well do your students speak English when they start standard 5? Can they understand what the teacher says in English? How well do the students in standard 8 understand English?</p>					





Recruitment, enrollment and attendance strategies					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
<p>Children who cannot pay indirect fees are not allowed to attend school;</p> <p>There is no attempt to monitor or track attendance</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Is schooling is free at primary level?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Can children attend school if their family cannot pay indirect costs?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are all children required to attend school at the primary level?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school take daily attendance?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Is there a plan to identify and enroll into school school-age girls and boys in the community?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the Head Teacher and/or SMC members make home visits to improve student attendance /lateness?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are the births of children registered in the community?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school record daily attendance in a book and review it regularly to determine which students are regularly missing school?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school work with parents to monitor the attendance and achievement of vulnerable and at-risk students?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is schooling free at secondary level?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is schooling is compulsory at secondary level?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is teacher housing available provided by the community nearby the school?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is there a master list of all pre-school and school age girls and boys in the community (enrolled or not)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a procedure they follow to address student absenteeism?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school coordinate with local pre-school providers to identify students and help pupils make the transition to primary school?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school arrange for suitable, safe and reasonably priced transport to and from school throughout the whole school year?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who has the list of birth registrations?</li> <li>• How often do you examine the list of all children in your community?</li> <li>• How do you know that all children in this community are enrolled in school?</li> <li>• What would you do if you learned there was a school-aged child in your school community who was not attending school?</li> <li>• Who is absent more often—boys or girls or no difference? If boys/girls are absent more often, why? What have you done to address this</li> </ul>					

problem?

- Who is tardy more often—boys or girls or no difference? If boys/girls are absent more often, why? What have you done to address this problem?
- What is the longest distance any pupils in your school walk to school (one way) each day?
- What has the Mother's Groups done to get all children enrolled in school?
- What has the SMC/PTA done to get all children enrolled in school?
- How have Mothers' Groups done to improve the attendance of all students?
- What has the SMC/PTA done to improve the attendance of students?
- What are the indirect cost? What happens if a family cannot pay them—can their children still attend school?
- Ask about the Head Teacher's efforts to coordinate with the local chief to get all children in the community enrolled in school?

Effective and Relevant Academics					
Instructional Policies and Procedures					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
Teachers are not observed;  There is no professional development program	<input type="checkbox"/> Does teaching take place in the Mother Tongue in first 3-4 years of primary schooling?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is the daily schedule posted on the wall where it can be easily viewed?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is the school calendar posted on the wall where it can be easily viewed?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school keep track of teacher absenteeism and lateness?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the head teacher have a private office where he/she can meet with parents and staff?	<input type="checkbox"/> Are multiple grouping patterns used (whole group, small group, peer, individual)?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do teacher use different activities to help a student when he/she doesn't do well on a learning activity?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the Head Teacher observe in classrooms regularly?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school regularly host teacher staff meetings that focus on instruction/ways to improve student achievement?	<input type="checkbox"/> Do parents regularly receive oral feedback on child's academic achievement/performance?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is school-based staff development conducted on a regular basis (one training seminar/semester)?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do classroom observations include oral feedback?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do classroom observations include written feedback?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do teachers have their own work space?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do teachers have access to information about their teaching that can help them monitor their	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the national assessment procedure utilize criterion-referenced testing?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are off-site professional development activities available to teachers upon request?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are teachers given an opportunity to help plan school activities and participate in long term planning for the school?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are computers available to assist teacher in their teaching?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is a library available to assist teachers in their teaching ?	

			own progress?	<input type="checkbox"/> Do parents regularly receive written feedback on their child's academic performance?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How often do you observe teachers in their classrooms teaching?</li> <li>• How often do you have a teacher staff meeting in which you talk about how to improve teaching and learning in your school?</li> </ul>					

Teaching methods, instructional materials					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
<p>Only chalk and talk teaching/</p> <p>Rote memorization</p> <p>No learning or teaching materials</p> <p>No active participation</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have textbooks available for the students in all subjects?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is there a textbook:student ratio of at least 1 textbook for every 5 students?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do all teachers have guides books for all subjects they teach?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do teachers regularly prepare lesson plans?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do class learning activities have clear performance objectives in which the aims of the lessons and activities are clearly outlined?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Are teachers trained in child-centred teaching techniques?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do teacher lessons provide for children's active participation?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the teacher's interaction with students demonstrate respect of their individual differences and promote their rights and child welfare?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is there a variety of instructional learning materials available in a resource room at the school?<sup>1</sup></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Do teacher questioning patterns push students into higher order activities (application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do lessons take into consider the learning needs for students?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are a variety of instructional learning materials available in each classroom?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Do students regularly take part in activities like group projects, field trips, group brainstorming, etc.?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does each classroom have a learning corner with additional learning materials?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are there exhibits of children's work visible in the school?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are computers available for student use?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is the internet available for student use?</p>	
<p><sup>1</sup> A resource room can consist of space in the head teacher's office.</p>					

Healthy, Safe and Protective Environment					
Discipline techniques					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
Corporal punishment commonly used; rules and regulations not defined or communicated	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have rules defining student behavior? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a policy prohibiting corporal punishment? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a teacher code of conduct? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school discuss child rights with staff? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school regularly work with teachers to develop procedures to prevent cases of teacher misconduct?	<input type="checkbox"/> Is the corporal punishment policy written and posted? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the student code of conduct written and posted? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the teacher code of conduct written and posted? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school discuss child labour with parents? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school discuss child rights with parents? <input type="checkbox"/> Were the rules and conducts developed with participation of teachers, students and parents?	<input type="checkbox"/> Have your teachers been trained on how to use child-friendly methods of student discipline? <input type="checkbox"/> Have all teachers, students and parents been told about the teacher code of conduct?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school work with parents /care givers to promote non-aggressive discipline measures in the home?	

Ask for an explanation of what corporal punishment is. Ask for examples.

Ask for an explanation of the student and teacher code of conducts.

Ask what is meant by “child rights”—ask for examples of rights.



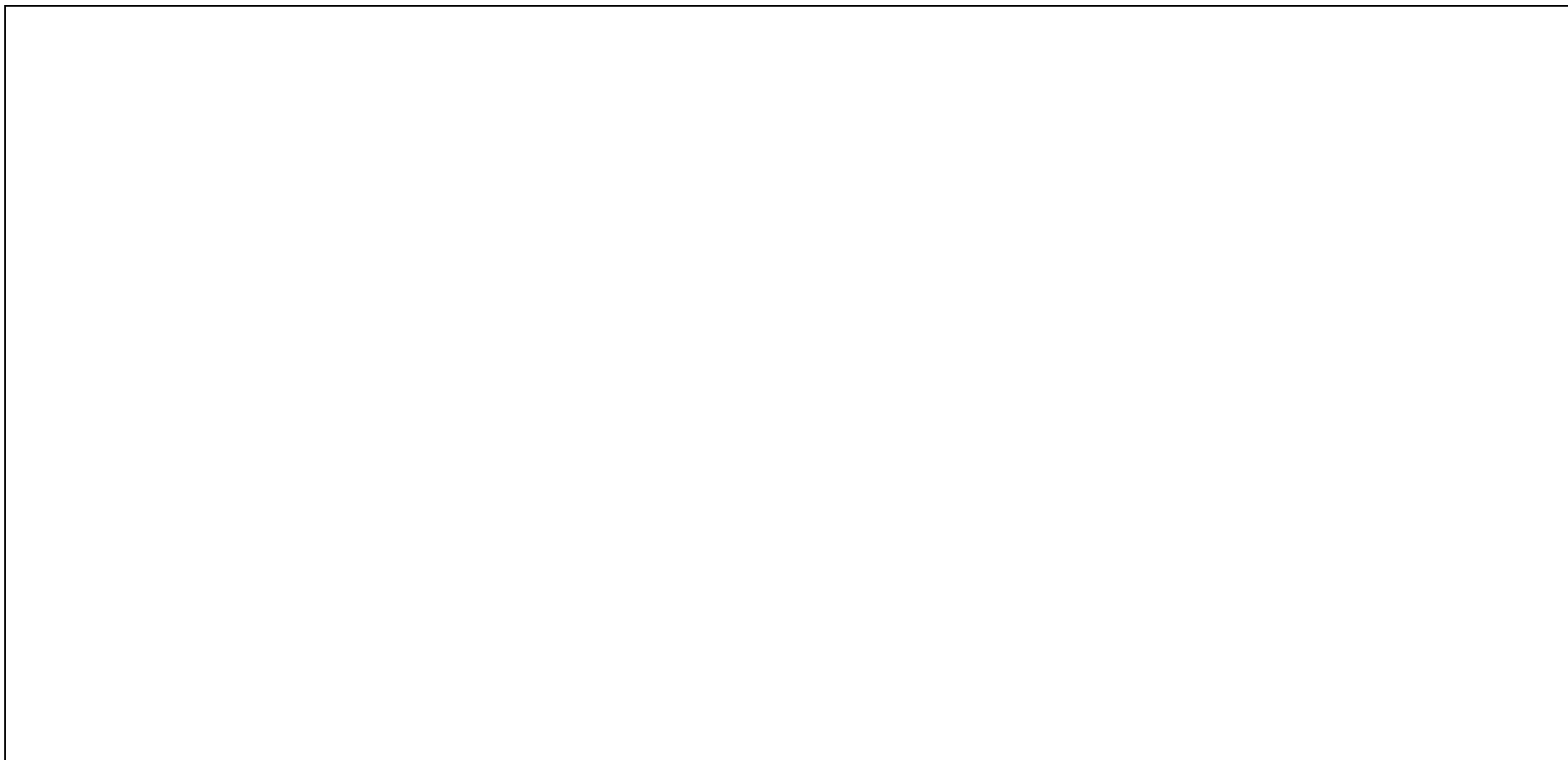
Health Related Policies					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school offer health education in curriculum? (nutrition and personal hygiene)  <input type="checkbox"/> Do all teachers get training and give support to boys and girls about reproductive health (sex education)?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have basic first aid equipment?  <input type="checkbox"/> Have some of the teachers at the school received first aid training?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school gather information from the parents about the health of their children when enrolling them in school?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a written plan for the maintenance and cleanliness of the school?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is the student health record written and updated annually?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are teachers informed of health issues of pupils in their classrooms?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a written health policy?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school carry out activities to address HIV/AIDS?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are life skills taught adapted to meet local need?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school sensitize parents about problems of child labor?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school provide simple medical treatment to students and refer more serious cases to the nearest health center?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school provide annual health screening examinations for students?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school monitor/track implementation of school health policies?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school work with local health agencies to promote the healthy lifestyle of the students?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a procedure to ensure that all food sold to students at the school is prepared in a clean environment?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are teachers tested for HIV/AIDS?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a policy to inform the authorities in cases of abuse, etc. in the home?	

- Do you have an Anti-AIDS club in your school?
- Does your Mothers Group carry out activities to address HIV/AIDS?
- Ask if the school has had the World Bank malaria medicine available to them.
- Ask if there is a high incidence of malaria in the area.

Provision of water and sanitation/other health-related interventions of facilities

0	1	3	5	7	Total
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Inadequate or unsafe pit latrines	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have access to clean and safe drinking water?/Does the school have a borehole?	<input type="checkbox"/> Water is tested regularly for organisms?	<input type="checkbox"/> Are the latrines/toilets cleaned on a regular schedule throughout the day (multiple cleanings)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school regularly disinfect the school environment of insects, lice, and rats to avoid the risk of infectious diseases?	
No borehole or other nearby source of water	<input type="checkbox"/> Do the latrines/toilets work properly? <input type="checkbox"/> Are the latrines/toilets floors clean and dry?	<input type="checkbox"/> Water is tested for impurities (lead, etc.)? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school employ outside staff to clean facilities on a regular basis?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school carry out an inspection of latrines/toilets on a regular schedule (multiple times during the school week)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Are both hot and cold water is available in the bathrooms?	
Latrines or toilets are not cleaned each day	<input type="checkbox"/> Are the latrines/toilets free of odor? <input type="checkbox"/> Are latrines/ toilets cleaned on a daily basis?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a school cleaning plan? <input type="checkbox"/> Are the latrines/toilets cleaned with soap or bleach or other chemicals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Is bleach or detergent used to clean the toilets?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the community subsidize the cost of water and sanitation services? (or do they provide in-kind support to their upkeep?)	
No latrines	<input type="checkbox"/> If the latrines/toilets are cleaned by the pupils do boys clean their latrines/toilets and the girls clean the girls latrines/toilets? <input type="checkbox"/> Is there water available near the toilets/latrines for students to wash their hands?	<input type="checkbox"/> Is there soap available for the students to wash their hands? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a checklist that monitors/ tracks the cleaning schedule?			
<p>How are the latrines/toilets cleaned? What is used to clean them?</p> <p>How often is the school block cleaned? (describe)</p>					



Safe and Healthy Environment					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
	<input type="checkbox"/> Is there a regular schedule of cleaning the school block?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is the school free of obvious safety hazards?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school meet basic facility needs (lighting, ventilation, heating, cooling, etc.)?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do all students have a desk or bench/table to sit at?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are the school blocks enclosed within a secure area?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do all classrooms have a roof?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do all classrooms have a dry floor?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school routinely check to make sure there are no standing containers of water (anti-malaria procedure)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Is school rubbish/garbage properly disposed of?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are measures taken to get rid pests (rodents)?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the head teacher or SMC carry out regular “walk throughs” to identify maintenance and cleanliness problems?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are there appropriately-sized desks/chairs and/or tables/benches available for all students?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is the school enclosed within a cement/iron/wooden fence?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are all classrooms inside a school block and do they all have a permanent roof and cement floor?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a written school maintenance plan?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school host regularly scheduled (each semester/term) “clean-ups and fix-ups”  <input type="checkbox"/> Do students and parents participate in “clean ups and fix ups”?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a gate that secures access to the school grounds?  <input type="checkbox"/> (Ask if there is a school feeding programme.) Is there a plan to make sure all food served to the pupils is clean?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school coordinate with community agencies to identify children who are physically or sexually at-risk?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a security guard or security system?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a security plan and evacuation measures in case of emergency?	

<sup>1</sup>Ask this question if there is a school feeding program. Does your school have a school feeding programme?

How do you dispose of your waste?

Ask who sweeps the classrooms, washes the floor, maintains the lawns, washes the chalkboards? If the head teacher says “pupils” ask if both boys and girls equally share in the responsibility of carrying out these tasks. If not, ask why not?

Supportive Environment					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
	<input type="checkbox"/> Is there adequate playground space available for all students (multiple playing areas)?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do teachers know the ministry procedures for the protection of children's rights?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school work with the SMC, PTA and MG to address issues of child labor?  <input type="checkbox"/> Can all teachers in the school identify what the "rights" of children are?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school sensitize parents about children's rights?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school talk to the students on how to protect their own rights?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school conduct an anti-AIDS program?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the SMC or Mothers' Group take actions to help orphans?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a policy against publically sharing information about the achievement of students? (does not post the results of individual students).  <input type="checkbox"/> Is playground equipment and play areas at the school safe--no concrete, rocky areas, wet areas, etc.?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school follow-up with proper authorities about neglect, rape, abuse, etc. in the home?	<input type="checkbox"/> Are mental health service providers (i.e. guidance counselor, social worker) available to students at school?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do social workers coordinate with school to deal with home issues?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have and implement a policy for safe and healthy use of the internet and other ICT technologies?	
<p>Ask for an explanation of child labor.</p> <p>Do you have any orphans in your school? What kinds of things have been done by the school, SMC, Mothers' Group to assist orphans?</p> <p>Ask what steps the head teacher would take if he/she learned of a case where parents are making their child(ren) work in the gardens instead of</p>					

sending them to school? A case of beating the child or sexual abuse?



Gender Responsiveness					
Access to bathroom/personal hygiene					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
No separate toilets for girls and boys;	<input type="checkbox"/> Are there separate toilets for boys and girls? <input type="checkbox"/> Is there a privacy door or curtain on each stall? <input type="checkbox"/> Are there separate toilets/latrines for the staff (male and female)? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a program on personal hygiene?	<input type="checkbox"/> Is toilet paper available? <input type="checkbox"/> Is there a toilet available for every 40 girls? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the MG make pads available to the girls?	<input type="checkbox"/> Are waste facilities available for personal hygiene articles? <input type="checkbox"/> Are there changing rooms for girls and boys?	<input type="checkbox"/> Do toilet doors lock?	Total
How many latrines do you have for boys? For girls? For women teachers? For men teachers?					

Gender-based policies, programs in place					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a policy to prevent harassment, bullying, and violence against girls?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are pregnant girls allowed to return after childbirth?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do boys who impregnate a girl have to leave school as long as the girl is out of school?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school take measures to ensure girls are able to participate in physical education classes (separate teams for girls and boys, etc.)?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are there programs in place to ensure girls perform well in math and science?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a policy addressing inappropriate teacher exchanges/interaction with girl students?	<input type="checkbox"/> Are harassment policies communicated with all key stakeholders (students, teacher, parents)?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is there a plan/program in place to monitor the implementation of policies?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are all teaching materials, especially new ones, reviewed to find positive role models for boys and positive role models for girls?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are measures taken to identify fathers of babies (if the father is a student) when a female student is impregnated?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is the harassment policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have procedures in place that permits students and parents to voice concerns about inappropriate and abusive behavior on the part of both male teachers and students?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school notify officials if an adult male molests/impregnates a school-age girl?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school library have a range of reading instructional materials that encourages gender diversity?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a strategy to recruit women teachers?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are there strategies in place to recruit women head	

	<input type="checkbox"/> Do girls and boys share equal responsibility for all school-assigned tasks (i.e. fetching water, cleaning classrooms and toilets/toilets, cleaning playground area, erasing the board, etc.)?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the head teacher work with the SMC and MG when making a decision about girls remaining in school when they are pregnant?	written and posted?		teachers?	
<p>Have you had any girls in your school who were pregnant? What happened to her? Was the father of the child a student? If yes, what happened to him? <u>If someone tells you a girl is pregnant do you actively pursue trying to find out if she is or do you let “nature take its course” and wait to see if she becomes visibly pregnant?</u> Who makes the decision on when a girl must leave the school because she is pregnant? What measures does the school take to ensure the boy who fathers a child doesn’t enroll at another school when asked to leave.</p>					

Security and safety features protecting girls					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
<p>No policies or structures in place to protect girls</p> <p>No security fence or barrier</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a way to secure the school ground?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school organize walking groups for girls <b>(ONLY ASK IF STUDENTS WALK LONG DISTANCES)?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is disciplinary action taken against men/boys involved in sexual harassment/abuse?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have procedures in place to monitor who visits the school?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the curriculum include content about appropriate touch/sexual activity and how to protect oneself?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the head teacher work with the Mothers' Group to identify security and safety problems for the girls/students?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Are communication measures taken to inform teachers/parents/student about the sexual harassment policy?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have programs in place to work with community to provide a safe supportive environment for girls?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school hold regular meetings to inform parents and solicit their information/ideas about security/safety of girls in school?</p>	
<p>Does your school have a mothers group? If yes, ask what the group has done to improve the safety/security of the girls in this school.</p> <p>Have there been any incidences in your area of girls being molested on the way to or from school? What happened?</p>					

Participation of Students, Families and Communities					
Community involvement					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
No programs exist to foster community involvement	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a written plan for improving school-community relationships?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have an active board and/or school committee?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a Mothers Group?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the HT take a proactive role in calling SMC meetings?  <input type="checkbox"/> Is every community/village that sends children to the school represented on the SMC?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school include community members on all decision-making and advisory committees?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school provide training for community representatives on advisory committees/boards, etc.?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have regular channels of communication for circulating school information with community?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the Head Teacher work with the local chiefs to support school activities and promote education in their communities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school develop partnerships with local businesses/CBOs /NGOs to support student learning?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school involve community members in volunteer programs?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school regularly post information from SMC and PTA meetings?	<input type="checkbox"/> Are community men and women with special knowledge/skills invited and welcomed into the school as resource people?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the community regularly contribute resources to the school (money or in-kind)?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school regularly involve local community agencies/groups in carrying out self-assessment activities?	

What kinds of things is the school doing to improve the conditions at the school? Is there a school improvement plan?

Student Involvement					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
There is no student participation	<input type="checkbox"/> Does your school have a student council/prefect?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are there student representatives on school board/school management committee?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school allow organizations and after-school activities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school support activities for students to do service learning in their community?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are students elected by the student body to serve on the student council/prefect?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school promote students interacting with others in democratic ways?  <input type="checkbox"/> Do students have an active role in decision-making activities for the school?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the school take measures to give all students the opportunity to serve in leadership roles?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school sponsor activities for students to express their own views/ideas?	<input type="checkbox"/> Do the students plan and implement community outreach activities?  <input type="checkbox"/> Are students engaged in activities to raise funds/resources for school programs?  <input type="checkbox"/> Does the school sponsor things like a newsletter or other kind of publication, student bulletin board, etc.?	

Parent Involvement					
0	1	3	5	7	Total
<p>Parents are not actively involved with the school; school has no outreach mechanisms to the parents</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have an association (PTA, etc)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have an SMC?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school PTA meet regularly?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the SMC meet regularly?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the SMC meet regularly?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are parent representatives elected by parents-at-large?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have a school committee or school board in which parents are voting members?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are a specified percentage of school board members/school committee members elected by the parents?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the SMC have a written plan of action for school improvement/development?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are parents allowed to visit in the school and classrooms occasionally?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Are parents involved in discussions and decisions about what and how students are taught at school?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school conduct conferences with parents at least twice a year?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Do parents regularly receive information from the school about their child's attendance?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the SMC receive training?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Did the student representative receive the same training?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Did your mothers group members receive any training?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Do teachers assign school work that demand interaction between children and parents?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does the school have regular channels for sharing written and/or oral information about what is happening at the school?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are parents from the vulnerable groups included in the School Board and Parents' Councils (i.e., parents of children with special educational needs, from lower socio-economic classes, etc)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Are parents allowed to visit the classroom any time they want?</p>	
How often does your PTA meet?					



How often does your SMC meet?

## Annex : Policy Framework

<i>Policy Environment Framework and Implementation Results</i>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Intent</b>	<b>Implementation Results</b>
1992	Uniforms	Not required to wear uniforms	Students who didn't wear uniforms felt like they were being signaled as "poor"
1993	readmission	policy girls who are pregnant—continue with school after pregnancy; boys who are students father of baby should be asked to leave school during same period as girl	<p>Issues with church sponsored schools allowing girls back;</p> <p>Girls were reluctant at times to name boy students who fathered children;</p> <p>Girls asked to leave once they "show"—girls tried to hide pregnancies;</p> <p>Frequently not readmitted back into same school asked to go elsewhere;</p> <p>FAWEMA worked with MOEST to conduct a massive social mobilization program sensitizing civil society and school personnel about the girls' right to readmission—hopeful this will increase the number of girls who return and begin to change attitudes about letting them back in (to a supportive environment)</p>
1994	Uniforms	Restatement of original policy	Schools have "learned" they need uniforms
1994	Free Primary Education	no fees to attend school through primary school	Indirect costs are still a burden to parents and keep girls out of school;

<b><i>Policy Environment Framework and Implementation Results</i></b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Intent</b>	<b>Implementation Results</b>
			Assemblies wondering why indirect costs can't be abolished and expenses covered through taxes that are already levied
1994/ 95	Scholarship for girls	fees for day and boarding schools at secondary level for non-repeating girls	Initially didn't target the most needy girls; newer scholarships students apply to assemblies who award them—more effort to ensure they target at-risk girls (and boys)
	School feeding	No policy—one is needed	Initiative through WFP
	Early Childhood Education	No policy—under review; question of ministry responsibility between MoEST and MoYGCS	Under consideration is that MoEST would have oversight of children ages 6-8 and MoYGCS would have oversight for children 0-5.
	Textbook Allocation	CIDA distributes to schools; no voucher system being implemented (see SIF 2002)	Tremendous shortages
DRAFT	Language of Instruction	Mother tongue through standard 4; still being debated	
	Accreditation for private schools	None	
	Decentralization		

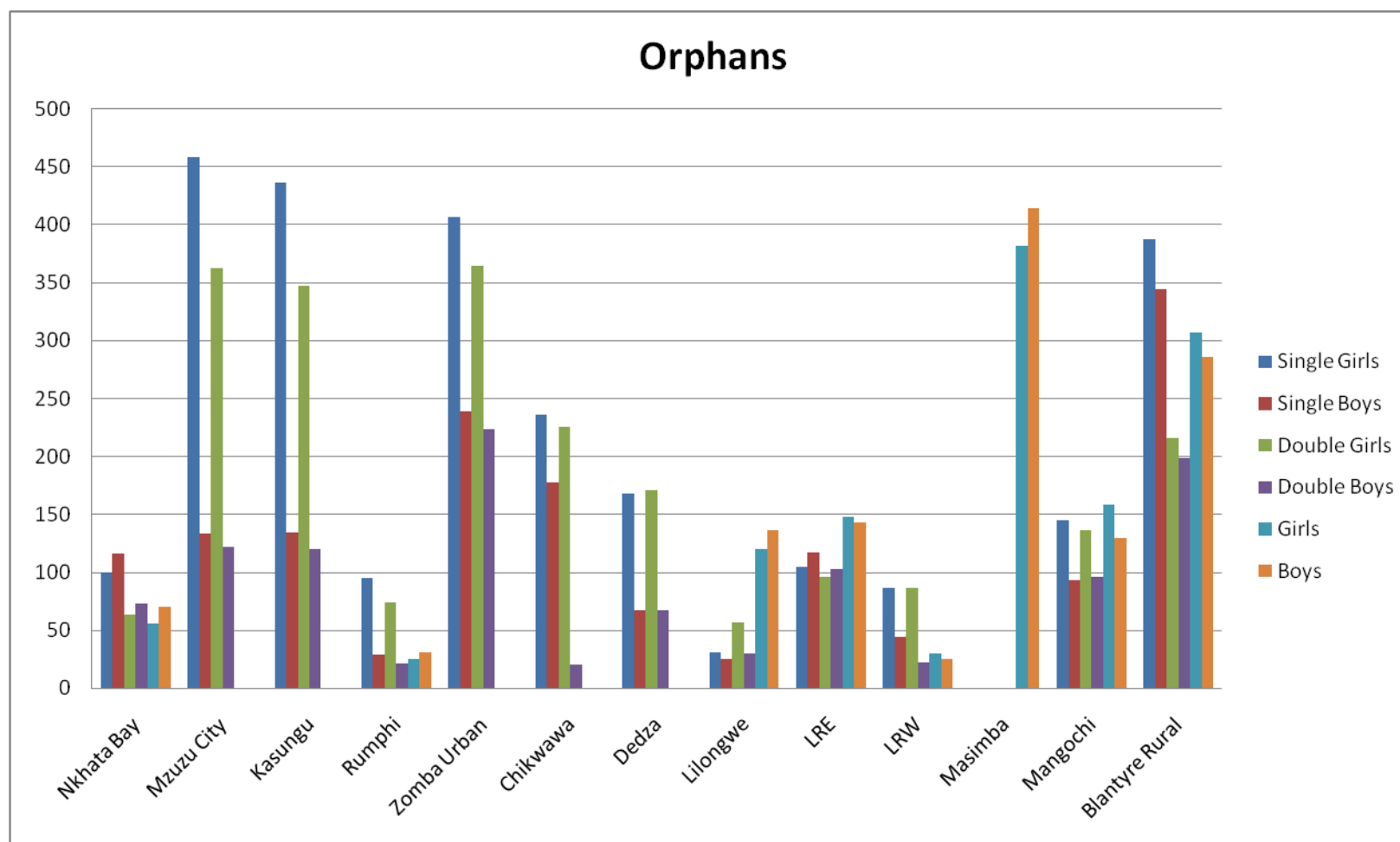
<b><i>Policy Environment Framework and Implementation Results</i></b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Intent</b>	<b>Implementation Results</b>
	School Management Committees		
	Double Shifting		
	Gender Streaming (Science and Math)		
	Incentive system for private investment in secondary education		
	Secondary level boarding schools	Intent is to close them	This will have a tremendously negative impact on access to schooling for girls—
	Pupil cost share of secondary level schooling (50%)		
	Pupil:Teacher ratio		
	Harassment/Abuse	2006 Household domestic violence bill enacted; includes a component on conduct of teachers	Several cases in which teachers are serving jail sentences for sexually harassing/abusing girls; girls need to be empowered to identify teachers who attack them/take advantage of them; currently a Safe Schools program being implemented; very slow implementation on the teacher component of the general policy; FAWEMA instrumental

<i>Policy Environment Framework and Implementation Results</i>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Intent</b>	<b>Implementation Results</b>
			in taking one case of teacher abuse through courts and got a conviction teacher serving 14 years in prison
	Pupil: Latrine ratio	25:1	Communities can't support this low a ratio---too costly to implement; responsibility of assemblies to ensure there is both adequate and appropriate sanitation and water available to schools
	Teacher housing	No policy	
	Registration of births	No policy; under consideration	
2002	Funding to Education	27%	
2002	Funding to Primary Education	65%	
2002	Teacher Training	4%	
2002	Teacher Salaries	80%	
2002	Recurrent costs (non-salaried)	13%	
2002	Per pupil expenditure	\$14	

High and Low Range and Average <sup>89</sup> Age of Students by District													
Standard	Nkhata Bay	Mzuzu	Kasungu	Rumphi	Zomba Urban	Chikwana	<i>Dedza</i>	Llgwe	LRW	LRE	Machinga	Mangochi	Blantyre
Std 1: High	18	10	15	11	9	7	<i>13</i>	8	9	<i>13</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>12</i>	11
Std 1: Low	6	6	6	5	6	5	6	6	6	5	5	5	6
Std 1: Average	7.9	7.4	8.4	7.1	7	6	8.3	6.8	7.9	8.1	6.9	7.6	7.5
Std 2: High	13	12	17	12	9	9	<i>15</i>	10	<i>13</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>	14
Std 2: Low	6	6	7	6	7	7	7	7	6	7	6	6	7
Std 2: Average	8.5	8.8	10.6	8.5	8.5	8.1	<i>10.2</i>	8.1	9.2	9.8	8	9.2	9
Std 3: High	14	16	19	15	11	9	<i>15</i>	11	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>	15
Std 3: Low	7	7	8	7	8	7	7	8	7	8	7	7	7
Std 3: Average	9.9	10.6	11.2	9.9	9.3	8.2	<i>11.1</i>	9.3	<i>10.3</i>	<i>11.7</i>	9.5	<i>10.8</i>	10.2
Std 4: High	14	14	15	14	13	10	<i>16</i>	12	<i>16</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>18</i>	15
Std 4: Low	8	8	9	9	8	8	9	9	9	9	8	8	8
Std 4: Average	11.1	11.2	11.7	11.1	10.5	9.2	<i>12</i>	10.3	<i>11.5</i>	<i>12.5</i>	<i>10.8</i>	<i>12</i>	11.2

<sup>89</sup> Although not a true statistical average of all students in each standard in each school this is an approximation of the average range in age by standard.

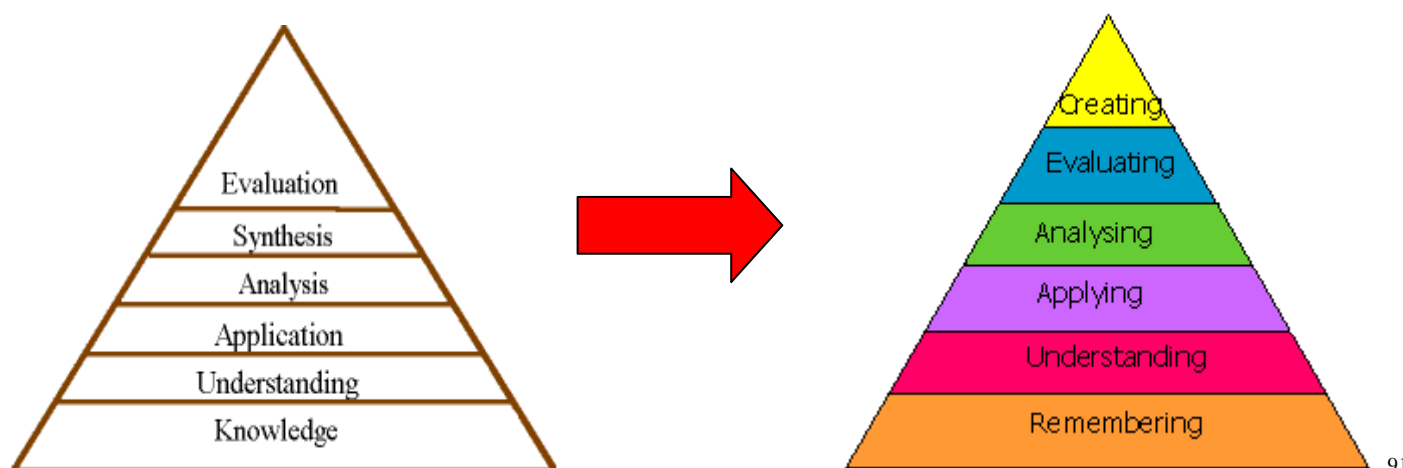
High and Low Range and Average <sup>89</sup> Age of Students by District													
Std 5: High	16	17	16	17	14	12	18	13	18	18	18	19	17
Std 5: Low	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	11	9	8	9
Std 5: Average	12.8	11.8	12.1	12.3	11.6	11	12.8	11.1	12.7	13.5	11.8	13	12.3
Std 6: High	17	18	17	16	17	13	18	15	18	18	21	19	16
Std 6: Low	12	9	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	11	9	11	10
Std 6: Average	14.1	12.8	13.2	12.7	13.5	11.5	13.8	12.3	13.7	14.2	12.9	12	13
Std 7: High	18	18	19	17	17	16	18	17	19	19	21	19	19
Std 7: Low	11	10	12	10	11	9	10	12	10	12	10	11	11
Std 7: Average	15.1	13.6	15.1	13.6	14.3	13	14.6	14	14.3	15	14	14.2	14.2
Std 8: High	17	19	18	20	17	19	18	19	20	19	21	19	19
Std 8: Low	13	11	12	12	13	11	11	12	12	13	12	11	12
Std 8: Average	13.1	14.7	15.3	15	15.2	14.5	15	15	15.3	16	15.1	15.6	15.2





### A TAXONOMY OF LEARNING: HIGHER ORDER AND LOWER ORDER QUESTIONING PATTERNS IN THE CLASSROOM

One of the most frequently used taxonomies of educational objectives is Bloom's Taxonomy. It is a classification system of educational objectives and skills used to measure the complexity of learning students engage in. Like other taxonomies, Bloom's is hierarchical, meaning that learning at the higher levels is dependent on having attained prerequisite knowledge and skills at lower levels. A major goal of the taxonomy is to make learning more holistic and respond to not only all levels of learning but to the different aspects of learning as well (affective and psychomotor).<sup>90</sup> Recent changes to the taxonomy to reflect what has been learned about the ways in which children construct learning include the following modifications.



91

Bloom identified six levels within the cognitive domain, from the simple recall or recognition of facts, as the lowest level, through increasingly more complex and abstract mental levels, to the highest order which is classified as evaluation. Learning activities framed around levels one and two are considered to be lower order cognitive activities. In contrast, learning activities focusing on levels 3 through 6 are considered to be increasingly higher order. Research consistently demonstrates that learning activities which foster higher order thinking foster improved learning.

<sup>90</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloom's\\_Taxonomy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloom's_Taxonomy)

<sup>91</sup> [http://www.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/bloom/blooms\\_taxonomy.htm](http://www.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/bloom/blooms_taxonomy.htm)

Although taxonomies of learning are generally used to identify learning activities within the cognitive domain they can also be used to classify learning activities in other domains as well including the affective and psychomotor domains. Skills in the **cognitive domain** revolve around knowledge, comprehension, and "thinking through" a particular topic. Traditional education tends to emphasize the skills in this domain, particularly the lower-order objectives. Skills in the **affective domain** describe the way people react emotionally and their ability to feel another living thing's pain or joy. Affective objectives typically target the awareness and growth in attitudes, emotion, and feelings. Skills in the **psychomotor domain** describe the ability to physically manipulate a tool or instrument like a hand or a hammer. Psychomotor objectives usually focus on change and/or development in behavior and/or skills. The following table highlights the different levels of learning.<sup>92</sup>

Cognitive Domain		Affective Domain		Psychomotor Domain	
<b>Knowledge:</b> Recall data or information.	<b>Examples:</b> Make a list of the main events.. Make a timeline of events. Make a facts chart. Write a list of any pieces of information you can remember. List all the .... in the story. Make a chart showing... Make an acrostic. Recite a poem. <b>Key Words:</b> defines, describes, identifies, knows, labels, lists, matches, names, outlines, recalls, recognizes, reproduces, selects, states.	<b>Receiving Phenomena:</b> Awareness, willingness to hear, selected attention.	<b>Examples:</b> Listen to others with respect. Listen for and remember the name of newly introduced people. <b>Key Words:</b> asks, chooses, describes, follows, gives, holds, identifies, locates, names, points to, selects, sits, erects, replies, uses.	<b>Perception:</b> The ability to use sensory cues to guide motor activity. This ranges from sensory stimulation, through cue selection, to translation	<b>Examples:</b> Detects non-verbal communication cues. Estimate where a ball will land after it is thrown and then moving to the correct location to catch the ball. Adjusts heat of stove to correct temperature by smell and taste of food. Adjusts the height of the forks on a forklift by comparing where the forks are in relation to the pallet.  <b>Key Words:</b> chooses, describes, detects, differentiates, distinguishes, identifies, isolates, relates, selects.
<b>Comprehension:</b> Understand the meaning, translation, interpolation, and interpretation of instructions and problems. State a problem in one's own words.	<b>Examples:</b> Cut out or draw pictures to show a particular event. Illustrate what you think the main idea was. Make a cartoon strip showing the sequence of events. Write and perform a play based on the story. Retell the story in your words. Paint a picture of some aspect you like. Write a summary report of an event. Prepare a flow chart to illustrate the sequence of events. Make a coloring book. <b>Key Words:</b> comprehends, converts, defends, distinguishes, estimates, explains, extends, generalizes, gives <b>Examples</b> , infers, interprets, paraphrases, predicts, rewrites, summarizes, translates.	<b>Responding to Phenomena:</b> Active participation on the part of the learners. Attends and reacts to a particular phenomenon. Learning outcomes may emphasize compliance in responding, willingness to respond, or satisfaction in responding (motivation).	<b>Examples:</b> Participates in class discussions. Gives a presentation. Questions new ideals, concepts, models, etc. in order to fully understand them. Know the safety rules and practices them. <b>Key Words:</b> answers, assists, aids, complies, conforms, discusses, greets, helps, labels, performs, practices, presents, reads, recites, reports, selects, tells, writes.	<b>Set:</b> Readiness to act. It includes mental, physical, and emotional sets. These three sets are dispositions that predetermine a person's response to different situations (sometimes called mindsets).	<b>Examples:</b> Knows and acts upon a sequence of steps in a manufacturing process. Recognize one's abilities and limitations. Shows desire to learn a new process (motivation). NOTE: This subdivision of Psychomotor is closely related with the "Responding to phenomena" subdivision of the Affective domain.  <b>Key Words:</b> begins, displays, explains, moves, proceeds, reacts, shows, states, volunteers.
<b>Application:</b> Use a concept in a new situation or unprompted use of an abstraction.	<b>Examples:</b> Construct a model to demonstrate how it will work. Make a diorama to illustrate an important event. Make a scrapbook about the areas of study. Make a paper-mache map to include relevant	<b>Valuing:</b> The worth or value a person attaches to a particular object, phenomenon, or behavior. This ranges from	<b>Examples:</b> Demonstrates belief in the democratic process. Is sensitive towards individual and cultural differences (value diversity).	<b>Guided Response:</b> The early stages in learning a complex skill that includes imitation and trial and error. Adequacy	<b>Examples:</b> Performs a mathematical equation as demonstrated. Follows instructions to build a model. Responds hand-signals of instructor while learning to operate a forklift.

<sup>92</sup> <http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html>

Cognitive Domain		Affective Domain		Psychomotor Domain	
Applies what was learned in the classroom into novel situations in the work place.	information about an event. Take a collection of photographs to demonstrate a particular point. Make up a puzzle game using the ideas from the study area. Make a clay model of an item in the material. Design a market strategy for your product using a known strategy as a model. Dress a doll in national costume. Paint a mural using the same materials. Write a textbook about... for others. <b>Key Words:</b> applies, changes, computes, constructs, demonstrates, discovers, manipulates, modifies, operates, predicts, prepares, produces, relates, shows, solves, uses.	simple acceptance to the more complex state of commitment. Valuing is based on the internalization of a set of specified values, while clues to these values are expressed in the learner's overt behavior and are often identifiable.	Shows the ability to solve problems. Proposes a plan to social improvement and follows through with commitment. Informs management on matters that one feels strongly about. <b>Key Words:</b> completes, demonstrates, differentiates, explains, follows, forms, initiates, invites, joins, justifies, proposes, reads, reports, selects, shares, studies, works.	of performance is achieved by practicing.	<b>Key Words:</b> copies, traces, follows, react, reproduce, responds
<b>Analysis:</b> Separates material or concepts into component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood. Distinguishes between facts and inferences.	<b>Examples:</b> Design a questionnaire to gather information. Write a commercial to sell a new product. Conduct an investigation to produce information to support a view. Make a flow chart to show the critical stages. Construct a graph to illustrate selected information. Make a jigsaw puzzle. Make a family tree showing relationships. Put on a play about the study area. Write a biography of the study person. Prepare a report about the area of study. Arrange a party. Make all the arrangements and record the steps needed. Review a work of art in terms of form, color and texture. <b>Key Words:</b> analyzes, breaks down, compares, contrasts, diagrams, deconstructs, differentiates, discriminates, distinguishes, identifies, illustrates, infers, outlines, relates, selects, separates.	<b>Organization:</b> Organizes values into priorities by contrasting different values, resolving conflicts between them, and creating an unique value system. The emphasis is on comparing, relating, and synthesizing values.	<b>Examples:</b> Recognizes the need for balance between freedom and responsible behavior. Accepts responsibility for one's behavior. Explains the role of systematic planning in solving problems. Accepts professional ethical standards. Creates a life plan in harmony with abilities, interests, and beliefs. Prioritizes time effectively to meet the needs of the organization, family, and self. <b>Key Words:</b> adheres, alters, arranges, combines, compares, completes, defends, explains, formulates, generalizes, identifies, integrates, modifies, orders, organizes, prepares, relates, synthesizes.	<b>Mechanism:</b> This is the intermediate stage in learning a complex skill. Learned responses have become habitual and the movements can be performed with some confidence and proficiency.	<b>Examples:</b> Use a personal computer. Repair a leaking faucet. Drive a car.  <b>Key Words:</b> assembles, calibrates, constructs, dismantles, displays, fastens, fixes, grinds, heats, manipulates, measures, mends, mixes, organizes, sketches.
<b>Synthesis:</b> Builds a structure or pattern from diverse elements. Put parts together to form a whole, with emphasis on creating a new meaning or structure	<b>Examples:</b> Write about your feelings in relation to... Write a play, puppet show, role play, song or pantomime about...? Design a cover for a story you write. Make up a new language code and write material using it. Compose a rhythm or put new words to a known melody. <b>Key Words:</b> categorizes, combines, compiles, composes, creates, devises, designs, explains, generates, modifies, organizes, plans,	<b>Internalizing values</b> (characterization): Has a value system that controls their behavior. The behavior is pervasive, consistent, predictable, and most importantly, characteristic of the learner. Instructional objectives are concerned	<b>Examples:</b> Shows self-reliance when working independently. Cooperates in group activities (displays teamwork). Uses an objective approach in problem solving. Displays a professional commitment to ethical practice on a daily basis. Revises judgments	<b>Complex Overt Response:</b> The skillful performance of motor acts that involve complex movement patterns. Proficiency is indicated by a quick, accurate, and highly coordinated performance, requiring a minimum of	<b>Examples:</b> Maneuvers a car into a tight parallel parking spot. Operates a computer quickly and accurately. Displays competence while playing the piano.  <b>Key Words:</b> assembles, builds, calibrates, constructs, dismantles, displays, fastens, fixes, grinds, heats, manipulates, measures, mends,

Cognitive Domain		Affective Domain		Psychomotor Domain	
	rearranges, reconstructs, relates, reorganizes, revises, rewrites, summarizes, tells, writes.	with the student's general patterns of adjustment (personal, social, emotional).	and changes behavior in light of new evidence. Values people for what they are, not how they look. <b>Key Words:</b> acts, discriminates, displays, influences, listens, modifies, performs, practices, proposes, qualifies, questions, revises, serves, solves, verifies.	energy. This category includes performing without hesitation, and automatic performance. For example, players are often utter sounds of satisfaction or expletives as soon as they hit a tennis ball or throw a football, because they can tell by the feel of the act what the result will produce.	mixes, organizes, sketches.  NOTE: The Key Words are the same as Mechanism, but will have adverbs or adjectives that indicate that the performance is quicker, better, more accurate, etc.
<b>Evaluation:</b> Make judgments about the value of ideas or materials.	<b>Examples:</b> Select the most effective solution. Prepare a list of criteria to judge a ... show. Indicate priority and ratings. Conduct a debate about an issue of special interest. Make a booklet about 5 rules you see as important. Convince others. Form a panel to discuss views, eg "Learning at School." Write a letter to ... advising on changes needed at... Prepare a case to present your view about an issue you feel strongly about. <b>Key Words:</b> appraises, compares, concludes, contrasts, criticizes, critiques, defends, describes, discriminates, evaluates, explains, interprets, justifies, relates, summarizes, supports.			<b>Adaptation:</b> Skills are well developed and the individual can modify movement patterns to fit special requirements.	<b>Examples:</b> Responds effectively to unexpected experiences. Modifies instruction to meet the needs of the learners. Perform a task with a tool that it was not originally intended to do.  <b>Key Words:</b> adapts, alters, changes, rearranges, reorganizes, revises, varies.
				<b>Origination:</b> Creating new movement patterns to fit a particular situation or specific problem. Learning outcomes emphasize creativity based upon highly developed skills.	<b>Examples:</b> Constructs a new theory. Develops a new and comprehensive training programming. Creates a new dance routine.  <b>Key Words:</b> arranges, builds, combines, composes, constructs, creates, designs, initiate, makes, originates.

<sup>93</sup> [http://www.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/bloom/blooms\\_taxonomy.htm](http://www.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/bloom/blooms_taxonomy.htm)

