

Malawi Annual Report 2021

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for every child



Cover: Piana Peter and her baby Mercy at their home in Chikwakwa

UNICEF Malawi/2021/HD Plus

Right: A little boy in Mukwala Village in Phalombe poses for a photo after finishing the day at his nursery school.

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Published by UNICEF Malawi

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Suggested citation.
UNICEF Annual Report 2021.
Lilongwe, Malawi: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2021.

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18-year-old student Winnie
Mbwanayears from Makumba
primary school, Mangochi.

Contents

02	Foreword	49	Innovation Matching today's challenges with tomorrow's solutions
05	Executive Summary		
09	Overview of Key Child Deprivations in Malawi	61	Communicate to Advocate Driving Change for Children
23	Programme Pillars	67	Research, Evaluation and Knowledge Management
25	Pillar One Early Childhood	73	Operations Effectiveness
31	Pillar Two School-aged children	79	Partnerships Delivering as one United Nations
37	Pillar Three Child-friendly, inclusive and resilient communities	84	Major Donors
43	Humanitarian action	85	Acknowledgements
		86	Budget Overview

Foreword



Left: Third cohort African Drone and Data Academy students with the UNICEF Country Representative Rudolf Schwenk

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Last year, seeing the smiles of Malawian children and youth physically taking part in various UNICEF initiatives finally gave us a lighter moment to pause and reflect on UNICEF's mandate of always putting children first and their rights at the heart of everything we do. Whether it was through hearing them speak passionately about issues that matter to them at the World Children's Day workshops; witnessing their exuberance using the ingenuity of arts to learn and share findings drawn from UNICEF's research and evaluation reports, or working together with the dynamic UNICEF Malawi Youth Advocates on key issues like climate change and mental health.

Last year, smiles were also evident on the faces of Malawians, worn down by three waves of coronavirus, as vaccines for COVID-19 finally started to go into their arms. Being one of the frontline partners of choice responsible for the COVID-19 national response in the country, UNICEF provided crucial support with the procurement and delivery of 2.8 million doses to Malawi through the COVAX Facility, a major international effort dedicated to inoculating people living in developing countries against the pandemic. Furthermore, UNICEF also worked endlessly to support the government and partners to increase vaccine demand generation and uptake throughout 2021.

Despite the pandemic challenges, UNICEF continued to prioritize systems strengthening so all Malawian children have equitable and timely access to health, nutrition, water, education, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services and supplies. For example, UNICEF supported the training of 9,595 primary and secondary school teachers from eight education districts to deliver child-centred and gender-responsive lessons. Almost four million children, more than half of them being girls, accessed emergency and non-emergency education services within the education sector through different UNICEF-supported interventions. UNICEF's financial and technical support, with a key focus on strengthening health systems at all levels, contributed to Malawi's continued progress in maternal and child health in

2021. UNICEF's systems strengthening also provided bracing against humanitarian emergencies that impacted Malawi in 2022, including floods and outbreaks of polio and cholera.

Through it all, UNICEF continued the work of long-term development, ensuring children can reach their full potential. For example, more than 700,000 children under five benefited from increased access to maternal, infant, and young child nutrition services, leading to improved diets. In addition, birth registration among under-five children increased from 9 per cent in 2020 to 41 per cent in 2021. In the meantime, 89,450 people gained access to basic water services through the construction of solar-powered water schemes, and 62,018 people gained access to essential sanitation services. UNICEF also supported the government's Social Cash Transfer Programme, reaching more than 600,000 children and their families with small cash payments.

Our many partners' support enabled us to respond quickly to children's humanitarian and development needs in 2021. These partnerships and collaborations continue to play a critical role in our support to the Government of Malawi. Only by working together we can improve and transform the lives of children across Malawi and reimagine a country fit for them.

And now, with the pandemic hopefully nearing its end, we at UNICEF look forward to collectively creating our "new normal", together with our partners, helping improve the wellbeing of Malawian children to grow up in safe, nurturing communities and go on to lead productive and fulfilling lives.



Rudolf Schwenk
UNICEF Malawi Country Representative



Executive Summary

Left: A child during a class session at Paiwe Community Based Childcare Centre in Dedza

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/HD Plus

In 2021, Malawi experienced another three waves of the COVID-19 virus, recording 72,135 positive cases and 2,343 deaths.

As the pandemic entered its second year, COVID-19 fatigue and a real risk of becoming complacent challenged UNICEF and its partners. With more than 50 per cent of the population living below the national poverty line, a high HIV burden, primary school completion rates of just 33 per cent, and stunting – low height for age – impacting 35 per cent of children under the age of five, Malawi could ill afford another 12 months of coronavirus. The pandemic's ripple effects indiscriminately impacted populations, livelihoods, especially affecting children. For example, after schools were closed in 2020, from March to October, they were forced to shut again in 2021, from mid-February to mid-March, affecting 7.7 million school-aged children, already behind in learning from the year before.

In 2021, efforts to combat COVID-19 continued to be a major focus for UNICEF. To address the situation, UNICEF Malawi adapted management priorities to ensure continuity of essential services, and, at the same time, supported the roll out of a national vaccination plan. UNICEF also helped with the procurement and delivery of 2.8 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility, a major international effort to inoculate people living in developing countries against coronavirus. Because of concerns about vaccine hesitancy UNICEF successfully organized a major event marking the first arrival of these vaccines in the country. Increasing vaccine demand generation and uptake was a key intervention in UNICEF Malawi's support to COVID-19 response in 2021. UNICEF strengthened collaboration with partners in 15 districts, with integrated social and behaviour change interventions reaching over 10

million people to boost vaccine uptake and prevent further virus spread.

Furthermore, UNICEF worked with the government and partners to assess and respond to the immediate secondary impact of COVID-19, ensuring continuity of services in education, child protection, social protection, WASH, health and nutrition. UNICEF also worked all year round to strengthen the government systems, such as health and education, which had been stretched to its limits by the first year of the pandemic.

Despite the pandemic, last year UNICEF continued to deliver results for Malawian children. For example, Malawi has continued progress in maternal and child health with UNICEF's support. In 2021, births in health facilities remained high (92 per cent) despite a slight decrease in the early days of the pandemic. The percentage of postnatal care visits in the first 48 hours was 68 per cent against a target of 65 per cent. Birth registration among under-5 children increased from 9 per cent from 2020 to 41 per cent in 2021. Routine immunization also improved with 94 per cent of targeted children (3 per cent increase from 2020) getting their vaccinations against preventable diseases. Of these, 501,786 were fully vaccinated, improving childhood immunity.

The primary school completion rate in Malawi was 33 per cent. Lackluster educational outcomes have been partly driven by COVID-19-related school closures and teachers' strikes. UNICEF responded with interventions that reached about 3.9 million children (56 per cent girls) who accessed emergency and non-emergency education services. Additionally, some 8,740 vulnerable adolescent girls were enrolled in secondary schools through UNICEF scholarship funding. The rate

Right: Liyana Chimamba breastfeeding her son alongside her husband Bernado Chapamba in Pombeze village, Lilongwe

© UNICEF Malawi/2021/
HD Plus

of girl child marriage in Malawi remains very high at 38 per cent. To combat the situation, UNICEF supported the development of key messages on ending child marriage to three million people. Last year, some 13,364 people accessed psychological first aid from service providers trained across Malawi. The Child Helpline and Gender Based Violence Crisis Line have received more than 4,700 calls.

In 2021, UNICEF supported the government's Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP), reaching 619,295 children (312,770 girls and 306,525 boys) with cash payments, helping them and their families to meet their basic needs and pay their school fees. The SCTP also provided COVID-19 top-ups to all SCTP beneficiary households, although transfers were delayed by the pandemic. While 88 per cent of Malawians use improved water sources, high levels of E-coli contamination are present. In 2021, UNICEF explored innovative and sustainable ways of financing the urban sanitation services through a partnership with the World Bank in Lilongwe. UNICEF also continued scaling up climate resilient WASH services in institutions and communities as well as supporting sector policy and financing strategies.

Last year, UNICEF collaborated with stakeholders ranging from government bodies at both national and district level, research institutions and universities, ensuring continuity of services, especially in the context of COVID-19. A total of US\$ 46,464,925 was raised from donor partners for programme implementation. In 2021, US\$ 55.8 million worth of goods and services were procured and contracted by the country office. About US\$ 10.5 million was for COVID-19 supplies and equipment.

On the innovation front, UNICEF piloted the Intelligent Community Health Information System, which aims to improve access to and use of community-based data through an integrated digital platform, initially involving about 210

health surveillance assistants. A total of 89 students (55 female, 64 Malawians) graduated from the African Drone and Data Academy. Since its inception, more than 300 young Malawians (60 per cent female) have completed drone and data technologies training at the academy. At the same time, UNICEF Malawi emerged as a leader on evaluative evidence as it was the only country in the region to undertake a "real-time evaluation" of its own 2020 response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Last year, young people from the University of Malawi harnessed the power of the performing arts to share key messages drawn from research and evaluation reports written by UNICEF Malawi. Using drama, dance, comedy, and songs, around 200 students participated in the workshop, which provided an opportunity to the young people, policy makers, researchers and civil society to interact with and learn from each other. UNICEF also organized major advocacy events and initiatives involving the highest-level decision-makers, influencers, children and youth advocates. As part of the yearly World Children's Day celebration, UNICEF together with the government, organized child-led consultation and interaction meetings with children and duty bearers. The government has identified this as a model activity to increase children's participation in decision-making processes as part of the 2020 pledge made by President Chakwera to Malawian children. At the same time, 141 news stories about the situation of children in Malawi and UNICEF's work were featured by national and international media organizations, including the Voice of America, NBC TV and Der Spiegel. UNICEF also reached over 55 million people, offline and online, with key messages, and engaged around one million people on child-related issues.





Child marriage survivor
Hawa Lloyd with her one-
year-old daughter Praise
in Salima.

Overview of Key Child Deprivations in Malawi



Malawi¹ is one of the poorest countries in the world



ranked
172

out of 189 countries listed on the Human Development Index in 2019.²



70.8%
of the population

live on less than US\$1.90 per day³ and most people in rural communities rely on subsistence farming for their livelihoods.

An estimated **60.5%** of children aged 0-17 years in Malawi are now considered multi-dimensionally poor

(deprived of two or more essential services) compared to 63 per cent in 2012-13.⁴ 50.7 per cent of the population was reported poor in 2019/2020, this was slightly lower than 51.5 per cent which was reported during 2016/2017 (IHS4). Analysis by place of residence shows that the proportion of rural poor decreased from 59.5 per cent to 56.6 per cent between 2016/17 and 2019/2020 whilst the proportion of urban poor increased from 17.7 per cent to 19.2 per cent over the same period.

Only 12 per cent of households have electricity.⁵ Less than one half (46 per cent) of the households use basic sanitation facilities.⁶ Three in every four of the households had basic drinking water services.⁷ More than one third of under-5 Malawian children (boys 39 per cent than girls 32 per cent) suffer from stunting along with other related health issues that can include cognitive impairment.⁸

¹ With support from all programme sections of UNICEF Malawi, this overview has been prepared in January 2022, using the most recent available data from various reports, mainly the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) released in Dec. 2021. This short report is updated every year based on the available national and international surveys and research reports.

² <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/2019-human-development-index-ranking>

³ World Bank, 2016. The completion of the IHS5 in December 2020 will provide new poverty metrics in the course of 2021.

⁴ UNICEF, 2018. The completion of the IHS5 in December 2020 will provide new multidimensional poverty metrics in the course of 2021.


⁵ Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2019-2020.

⁶ National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS) 2015/2016

According to Malawi's 2018 census,



978,293
children are orphans
(paternal, maternal
or both)



Among these
113,941
children are
double
orphans.⁹

Only 33 per cent of the children (38 per cent girls) complete primary school. Children living in urban areas (65 per cent) and richest households (67 per cent) have a higher chance of completing primary school than children in rural areas (27 per cent) and poorest households (11 per cent).¹⁰

**One in
five girls**



**One in
seven boys**



experienced at least one incident of sexual abuse before turning 18. Girls aged 13-17 years report that most often the perpetrators are their peers.¹¹ 40,000 children under five years of age die every year from diseases that are preventable or easily treatable.¹² Boys under 5 years of age have a higher mortality rate than girls (62 deaths per 1,000 live births compared to 50).¹³

9 2018, Malawi Population and Housing Census Main Report

10 National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

11 Violence Against Children and Young Women in Malawi, 2013.

12 Global Health Observatory, <http://apps.int/gho/data/node.country.country.MWI>

13 National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.



Three-year-old Ellen Mwili eating mangoes at her home in Chikwawa



Health



The high **mortality rate** of children under five

is due to diseases¹⁴, including neonatal causes **43 per cent**,



with **80%** of these children dying in the first week of life

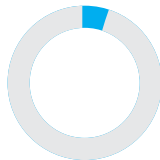
pneumonia

14%



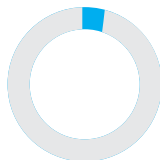
diarrhea

8%



malaria

7%



However, under-5 mortality showed a remarkable decline from 232 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 55 per 1,000 live births in 2016,¹⁵ . About 40 per cent of the under-five deaths occur during the first 28 days of life. These neonatal deaths are largely attributed to premature births, infection and asphyxia, all of which have low-cost solutions. According to the Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20 under-5 mortality rate is highest among the poorest and second wealth quintile (62 deaths per 1,000 live children) compared to the richest quintile (39 deaths per 1,000 live children.)¹⁶

Maternal mortality in Malawi is among the highest in the world,

despite declining from

1,100 to 439



maternal **deaths per 100,000** live births over the period of the MDGs (2000-estimates-2015).¹⁷

This is in part the result of particularly high rates of early sexual debut, child marriage and adolescent birth rates with adverse maternal and neonatal outcomes.

28% only of women



had their first antenatal care visit before four months of pregnancy. Whereas, only 84 per cent of mothers and 88 per cent of newborn babies received postnatal care within two days of delivery.¹⁸

¹⁴ Global Health Observatory, <http://apps.int/gho/data/node.country.country.MWI>

¹⁵ Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS), 2010, 2015-2016.

¹⁶ National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

¹⁷ MDHS 2015-2016.

¹⁸ National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

Skilled birth attendance is at

96.4%

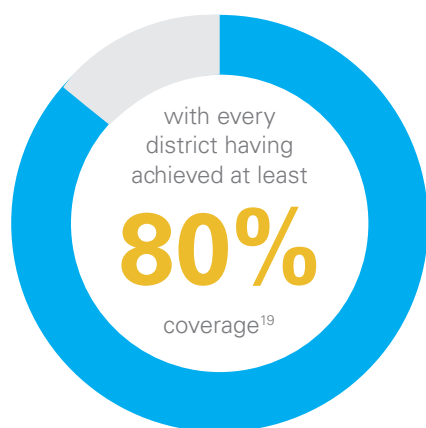
as reported in MICS 2019-20.

WHO and UNICEF estimate infant pentavalent vaccination coverage was above



90%

nationally for **five** consecutive years (2008–2012)



However, challenges include ensuring that children have adequate vaccines and receive all the required vaccines. Nevertheless, 95.9 per cent of children aged 12-23 months were vaccinated for TB by their first birthday.²⁰



Despite the success of the HIV prevention programme²¹ (transmission reduced by 84 per cent from 2000 to 20), children’s access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) is only 74 per cent, compared to 79 per cent for adults.²² Thirty per cent of children living with HIV who are not on ART will die before their first birthday while 50 per cent by their second birthday. Yet, only 31 per cent of HIV-exposed infants in the general population are diagnosed within the first three months of life.²³ Individuals (15-49 years of age) who tested for HIV and received their results within the 12 months preceding the 2019-20 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey were 56 per cent women and 47 per cent men.²⁴ A similar pattern was observed among individuals 15-24 years of age, with 51 per cent women and 38 per cent men. Condom use among men is lower in the age group 15-49 (39 per cent) compared to age group 15-24 (66 per cent).²⁵

19 Tsega, A. et al. *Vaccination coverage and timely vaccination with valid doses in Malawi*, Vaccine Reports, Vol. 6, December 2016.pgs. 8-12.; MDHS, 2015-2016.

20 National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

21 MDHS 2015-2016

22 2020 HIV Estimate dashboard-Malawi

23 UNICEF 2017 HIV Estimates.

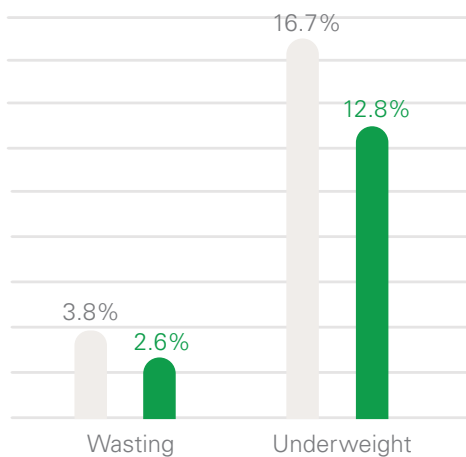
24 National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

25 Ibid.



Nutrition

Although Malawi has made significant strides in reducing chronic malnutrition, stunting (low height for age) remains steady for children under-5 boys (39 per cent) and girls (32 per cent).²⁶ MICS Data revealed that over the past six years (2013-2014 & 2019-2020), the prevalence of wasting (weight for height) has gone down from 3.8 per cent to 2.6 while underweight (weight for age) decreased from 16.7 per cent to 12.8 per cent.



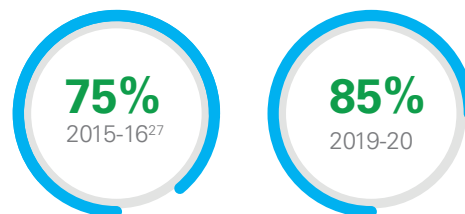
However, stunting with an average decrease of 10 percent is still high with



35.5%
children affected

This is particularly worrisome due to its negative impact on children’s growth and wellbeing. It has persisting negative effects through a person’s life cycle and, on a wider scale, has implications for the country’s long-term development. Inadequate infant and young child feeding practices are major contributors to acute and chronic malnutrition. The MICS results revealed that all indicators related to child diet are deteriorating with a decrease of breastfed children from 70 per cent to 64 per cent. In addition, the minimum dietary diversity (MDD) went down from 25 per cent in 2013-2014 to 18 per cent in 2019-2020. The Minimum meal frequency (MMF) and minimum acceptable diet (MAD) have also decreased from 48 to 39 per cent and from 15 to 9 per cent respectively and demonstrate a dire need for a coordinated effort on sustainable food system transformation to improve child diet.

Even though consumption of iodized salt has been increased from



MICS and vitamin A deficiency has shown a drastic decrease among children under five in Malawi, an unacceptably high percentage is still micronutrient deficient. Sixty per cent of primary school children are zinc deficient, and 35 per cent of adolescent girls (15-19 years of age) are anemic.²⁸

²⁶ National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

²⁷ Malawi Micronutrient Survey (MMNS), 2015-2016

²⁸ Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2019-2020



Education

Attendance at early childhood education (ECE) programmes is low at 34 per cent²⁹. Attendance at ECE is much more likely among urban children (51 per cent) than rural (31 per cent) and high from the richest (51 per cent) than the poorest households (21 per cent).³⁰ Only 1 per cent of children have access to three or more children’s books. Almost half



44%
of children age under-5

were left at home with inadequate supervision in the week prior to the cluster survey.³¹ Only 17 per cent of children aged 3-4 years are developmentally on track in literacy-numeracy.³²

Whereas, free primary education has led to

91%

net enrolment in primary school,³³ the completion rate for primary school is just 33 per cent.³⁴



Girls (38 per cent), children living in urban area (65 per cent) and richest households (67 per cent) have a higher chance of completing primary school than males (29 per cent), children in rural area (27 per cent) and children in poorest households (11 per cent).³⁵

12 per cent of children of lower secondary school age attend lower secondary school or a higher level.³⁶ Lower secondary school completion rate is low (23 per cent), especially for children living in poorest households (3 per cent).³⁷



only
10%

of children of upper secondary school age attend upper secondary school or a higher level³⁸

Upper secondary completion rate is very low (4 per cent), especially for poor households (less than 1 per cent for children living in households in the first three quintile.)³⁹



only
19%

of children aged 7-14 years have foundational reading skills in either Chichewa or English, level

while 14 per cent of children attending class 2/3 were able to read a short story, 11 per cent were able to correctly answer literal comprehension questions related to the story, and 9 per cent were able to correctly answer inferential comprehension questions related to the story.⁴⁰ Moreover, thirteen percent of the children aged 7-14 have foundational numeracy skills.⁴¹

29 National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 EMIS 2015/16.

34 National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

35 Ibid

36 Ibid

37 Ibid

38 Ibid

39 Ibid

40 Ibid

41 Ibid

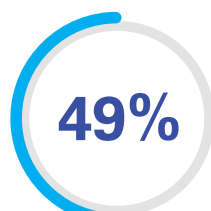
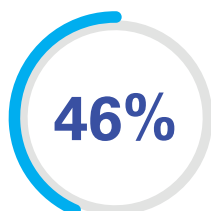


Water, sanitation and hygiene

Malawi has vast water resources centred on lakes and rivers, but their spatial and seasonal distribution has led to significant challenges. Three in every four households have basic drinking water services:



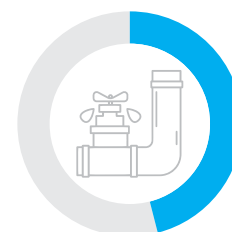
At the same time, 46 per cent of the household population uses basic sanitation facilities while the proportion of the urban population using limited sanitation services is 49 per cent.⁴³



Of the households without water on premises,

6.3%

in urban areas, spend over 30 minutes fetching water per day



compared to 13.6 per cent of the population in the rural areas.⁴⁴

Twenty eight per cent of the population had basic hygiene services: slightly above 1 in 2 urban and 1 in 4 in rural areas.⁴⁵ Over half of the urban population (53 per cent) used shared sanitation facilities and 37 per cent in the rural areas.⁴⁶

⁴² National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.



Child protection

The Life Cycle (Situation) Analysis of Children and Women in Malawi and the UN Root Cause Analysis highlight the strongly entrenched harmful social norms and beliefs as one of the key root causes hampering the realization of children’s rights in the country.

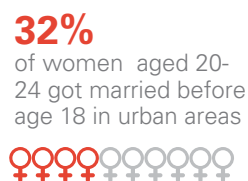
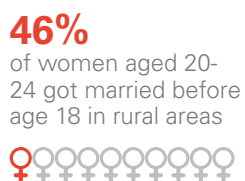
Gender-based violence among adolescents is unacceptably high as



experience at least **one incident** of **sexual abuse** before the **age of 18**.

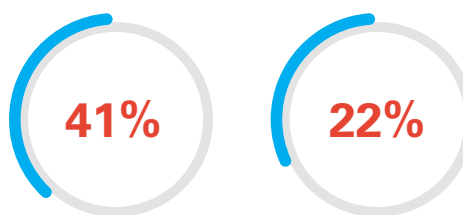
For girls aged 13-17 years, most often the perpetrators are peers.⁴⁷ Fourteen percent of children aged 5-17 years are engaged in child labour.⁴⁸ Twenty percent of adolescent girls aged 15- 19 years reported having been excluded from activities (social activities, school or work) due to their last menstruation in the last 12 months.⁴⁹ Men and boys are more likely to feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, as well as when at home alone, as compared to women and girls in the same circumstances.⁵⁰

Rural urban disparities also exist in Malawi.



(MICS 2019-2020). According to the Traditional Practices Survey, the primary reasons early marriages were the desire to form a family, poverty, and unwanted pregnancies.⁵¹

Women are twice as likely to marry before the age of 18 in rural (41 per cent) than in urban (22 per cent) area;



whereas, for marriages before the age of 15, it is 8 per cent for rural and 4 per cent for urban.⁵² Among married adolescent girls aged 15- 19 years, 6 per cent have a partner who is at least ten years older.⁵³

Birth registration rates are 67 per cent among under five children, of this only 22 per cent had a birth certificate. 65 per cent of children from middle-income households (lowest rate) were likely to be registered compared to 71 per cent from richest households however, an extremely low, at 2 per cent was reported for children under 5.⁵⁴ A national effort in 2017 registered more than 4.5 million children under 16 years of age, but the potential for substantially increasing birth registration coverage is yet to be realized. Without birth registration a child’s vulnerability to violence, abuse, and exploitation, from birth to adolescence, increases. Malawi’s revised age of criminal responsibility – going from seven to 10 – remains below the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child’s minimum recommendation of 12 years. Although the law provides comprehensive protection for children in conflict with the law, compliance has been weak. There is limited adherence to the 48-hour rule for the deprivation of liberty for children -measures that enhance alternatives to detention such as child panels and diversion programs are yet to be rolled out.

47 Violence Against Children and Young Women in Malawi, 2013

48 National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Traditional Practices Survey (Government of Malawi/National Statistical Office, University of Malawi, University of Zurich, UNICEF), 2019.

52 National Statistical Office. 2021. Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019-20, Survey Findings Report. Zomba, Malawi: National Statistical Office.

53 Ibid.

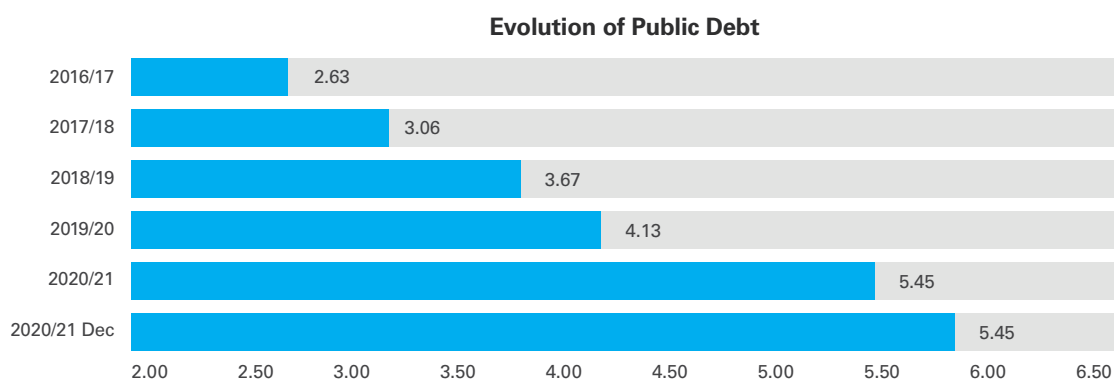
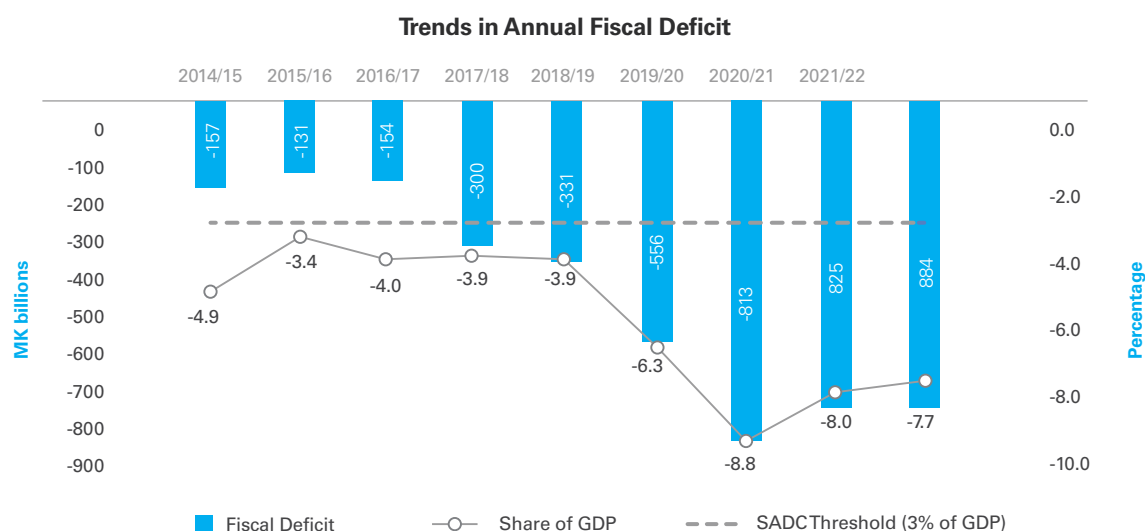
54 Ibid.



Public finance

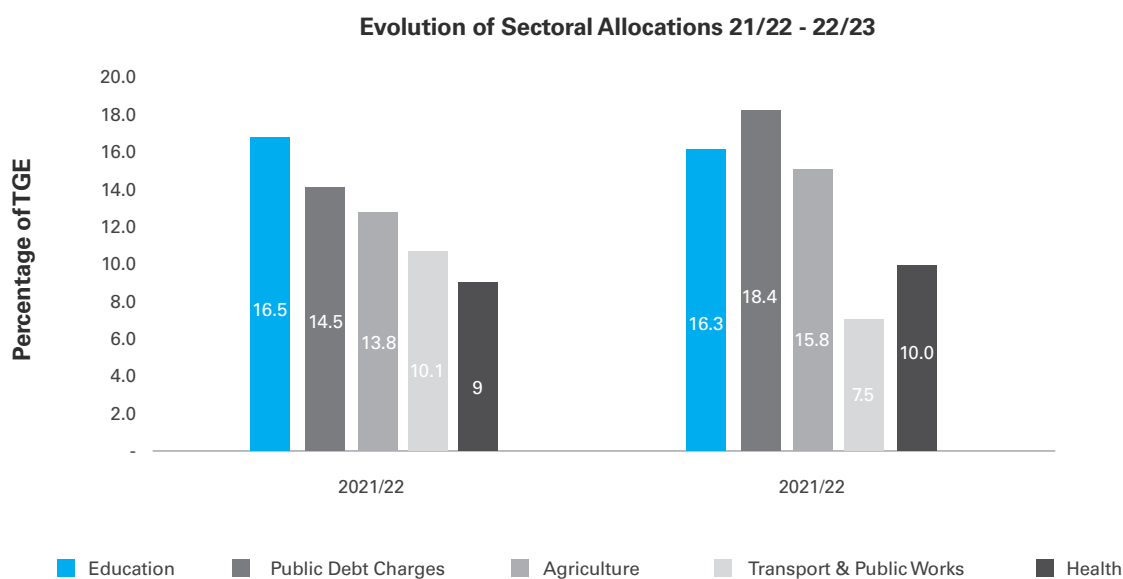
Currently, Malawi’s GDP per capita is of US\$ 636 (2020), lower than the average in low-income countries (US\$ 688) and the 11th lowest in the world. Furthermore, Malawi is facing a challenging and rapidly deteriorating macro-fiscal outlook characterized by increasing exchange rate pressures, unsustainable levels of domestic debt, and limited available fiscal space. Total Government Expenditure is estimated at MK2.8 trillion against MK1.95 trillion in revenues

and grants, translating to MK884 of fiscal deficit that will add to an already high stock of public debt worth MK5.84 trillion as of December 2021. Public debt service (charges to be paid on public debt) is estimated at MK523.75 billion, 4.6per cent of GDP and 18.4 per cent of Total Government Expenditure. At 18% of total budget, public debt service is now the largest item in the national budget, overtaking education (16.3%) and ahead of all other sectoral allocations.



Malawi does not manage to invest sufficiently to counter the extensive deprivations endured by its children, owing to the small size of its budget and the limited capacity of its economy to produce the required revenues. Funding for the social sectors remains unevenly distributed and very different in terms of sustainability. Whereas, education and health continue

to receive significant funding from national resources (16.3% and 10%, respectively), Social Protection, ECD, Nutrition and WASH remain extremely dependent on on-budget donor support (over 90%). Child Protection remains a neglected sector, with barely MK75 (~USD0.09) allocated per child.





Emergencies

Lean season

Malawi is adversely affected by lean season impacts. Malawi's agricultural cycle leads to seasonal, social and environmental stressors, affecting millions of Malawians. During the lean season, in the months before the annual harvest, food shortages disproportionately affect children due to their heightened vulnerability. Food insecurity and disease prevalence peak during this time leading to increases in acute malnutrition. In Malawi, seasonal food scarcity and climate shocks such as droughts increase short-term malnutrition, morbidity, and mortality in vulnerable populations. The lean season, which encompasses two of Malawi's three school terms, also affects educational outcomes as education expenditure is reduced and school enrolment/attendance drops. Moreover, the lean season has several implications for child labour, with peaks not only in the prevalence of child labour at this time of year, but also in hazardous and exploitative work.

COVID 19 Pandemic

By January 2022, Malawi experienced 82,975 cases of COVID-19 including 2,480 deaths. COVID-19 continues to have a profound effect on the wellbeing of children and adolescents in Malawi. During 2020, the pandemic stagnated Malawi's growth momentum and brought about a steep deterioration of public finances. The impact of COVID-19 on children's poverty, survival and health, learning, and safety have been far-reaching, but its effects have been disproportionately severe among the most disadvantaged. When it came to school closures, more than six million students were deprived of quality learning for several months. As reported by the Telegraph in August 2020, COVID-19 induced school closures resulted in doubling of child marriages and teen pregnancies

in some parts of Malawi exacerbating an already grim picture where close to half of the girls were married before 18 years of age. Furthermore, there is additional evidence showing that COVID-19 has resulted in families consuming unhealthy diets contributing to the triple burden of malnutrition. The full socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and adolescents' well-being are yet to be fully determined.

Other Emergencies

Increased frequency of droughts and flooding, caused by climate change, are putting pressure on vulnerable families, disrupting livelihoods, and increasing the risk of household displacement.⁵⁵ Severe weather such as cyclones can also damage and destroy infrastructure critical to child wellbeing including schools, health facilities and transport methods. Droughts and flooding can decimate crops, disrupt water systems, and contaminate water reserves.⁵⁶

Women and girls are most affected as constraints of access to land and natural resources mean their livelihoods are especially precarious, as the burden of securing shelter, food, water, and fuel largely falls on them.⁵⁷

During the lean season, in the months before the annual harvest, food shortages disproportionately affect children due to their heightened vulnerability. Food insecurity and disease prevalence peak during this time leading to an increase in acute malnutrition. In Malawi, seasonal food scarcity and climate shocks have a history of catalysing short-term malnutrition, morbidity, and mortality in the vulnerable populations.

55 UNICEF Malawi SitAn 2017

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.



Cythia Kapesi and her baby
Specious at community
gathering in Zomba organized to
sensitize caregivers on how to
manage ready-to-use therapeutic
food for malnourished children



UNICEF’s work in Malawi

Programme Pillars

Left: A little girl playing at a playground at Paive Community Based Childcare centre in Dedza.

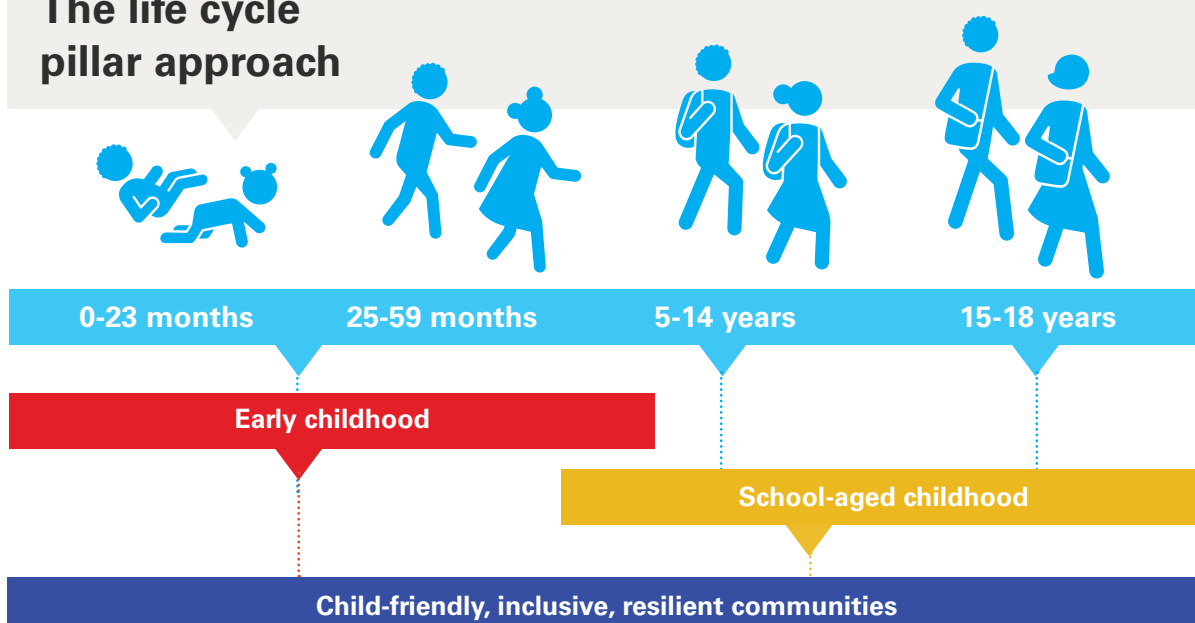
©UNICEF Malawi/2021/
HD Plus

Under the Country Programme (CP) 2019 to 2023, in 2021 UNICEF worked with partners to deliver on its strategic lifecycle approach to providing quality services for children across “three pillars” under which it provides humanitarian and development assistance: early childhood, school-aged children and child-friendly, inclusive, resilient communities. This pillar approach was conceived to ensure that UNICEF’s programming makes the greatest impact during key windows of opportunity in the lives of Malawian children.

To support young children in their first 1,000 days, the early childhood pillar focuses on

the importance of responsive parenting as UNICEF works with the government and other partners to scale up work on maternal, newborn and child health. Under the pillar dedicated to school-aged children, UNICEF is committed to improving learning outcomes for children, especially in literacy and numeracy, with a focus on girls and adolescents. Under the pillar covering child-friendly communities, UNICEF works to empower communities to practise positive social behaviours and, at the same time, become more resilient to climate change and economic shocks, as well as overcome the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The life cycle pillar approach





Programme Pillars

Pillar One

Early Childhood

To ensure every child in Malawi is given the best chance to survive and thrive, UNICEF takes a comprehensive approach to supporting young children in their first 1,000 days of life.

Left: A mother with her baby receiving the Pentavalent Vaccine at Chikwa Village Clinic in Mzimba

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Mvula

The early childhood pillar focuses on the importance of responsive and positive parenting to ensure that children, through age 5, receive the best possible care in a nurturing and protective family environment.

Throughout 2021, UNICEF worked closely with the government and partners to ensure that girls and boys benefit from early learning, caring, nurturing, a clean and protective environment, and quality, integrated, high-impact interventions. UNICEF's financial and technical support, with a key focus on strengthening health systems at all levels, contributed to Malawi's continued progress in the area of maternal and child health. Delivery in health facilities remained high (92 per cent) despite a slight decrease in the early days of the pandemic. Postnatal care visits in the first 48 hours for both newborns and mothers stands at 68 per cent against a target of 65 per cent.

In addition, birth registration among under-5 children increased from 9 per cent (2020) to 41 per cent (2021), in part due to increased information, education, and communication activities across the country. Routine immunization also improved with 94 per cent of targeted children (3 per cent increase from 2020) getting their vaccinations against preventable diseases. Of these, 501,786 were fully vaccinated, improving childhood immunity.

In a bid to reach HIV targets, UNICEF built the capacity of communities and health facilities to identify, test, and link HIV-exposed infants and their mothers to care using peers and other platforms. This led to an increase in early infant diagnosis coverage at 2 months from 61 per cent in 2019 to 86 per cent in 2021.

Through support to 414,093 caregivers and 238,564 pregnant and lactating mothers,

Right: Children playing with learning materials at Paive Community Based Childcare Centre in Dedza

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/HD Plus

740,357 children under-5 had increased access to maternal, infant, and young child nutrition services, leading to improved quality of diets. Further, 4.9 million primary caregivers in targeted districts learned to enhance their childcare and feeding practices through infant and young child feeding education, and counselling offered during home visiting and through community radio stations.

UNICEF supported the launch of the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) 3.0 strategy, led by President Lazarus Chakwera, to address the burden of malnutrition. Last year some 29,008 children under the age of 5 were admitted and treated for severe acute malnutrition (SAM). Of them, 26,047 successfully recovered, representing a 92 per cent recovery rate. While stunting (low height for age) declined slightly, from 37 per cent to 35 per cent, the level of stunting remains above the SDG target. Stunting was higher in boys (39 per cent) than girls (32 per cent).

In collaboration with the health ministry, UNICEF worked to continue health and nutritional services, ensuring more than 85 per cent of children 6 – 59 months

received vitamin A supplementation through either routine health checks or during health campaigns. Child health days were also supported in 19 districts reaching more than 1.8 million children 6-59 months with vitamin A.

In 2021, attendance at early childhood development (ECD) programmes was low at 34 per cent. Attendance was much more likely among children from the richest (51 per cent) than the poorest households (21 per cent).

Also, as part of the community-based interventions, 1.4 million parents and caregivers were reached through multimedia platforms. Additional, 164,735 parents and caregivers were reached online with information on positive parenting through an ECD multimedia campaign titled “Mmera Mpoyamba” – (Translation: Early Moments Matter) which contributed to improved care practices provided to children under-5. The launch of a year-long ECD campaign by President Chakwera strengthened integration of ECD services among policy makers, local leaders and various caregivers.

Major Achievements



Birth registration among under-five children increased from **9 per cent in 2020 to 41 per cent in 2021.**



In 2021, some **740,357 children under-five** had **increased access to** maternal, infant, and young child nutrition services, leading to improved quality of diets. Some **29,008 children** under-five were admitted and **treated for Severe Acute Malnutrition**, with a **92 per cent recovery rate.**



A total of **164,735 parents and caregivers** were reached online with information on positive parenting through the **ECD multimedia campaign** titled “Mmera Mpoyamba.



A feature story

Saving Newborn Lives

Left to right: A mother holds her newborn baby at the health centre.

A young mother visits her baby at the nursery. Her baby was born prematurely but is making good progress

One of the nurse midwives attends to a baby in the nursery

© UNICEF Malawi/2021/
HD Plus

Patricia Mattias is confident her newborn daughter Samila will soon be discharged from the critical care ward, after being born with low birth weight and jaundice. She attributes her optimism to the quality care her baby has received from the nurses.

“They have helped me and my baby a lot,” says Mattias. “My baby was born very small, but she is becoming stronger every day and her weight is increasing. It means I’ll be able to take her home soon.”

Since her child was born at Dedza District Hospital weighing just one kg, Mattias has been going to the hospital nursery to breastfeed on-demand as advised by the nurses. The nurses also update mothers every day on their baby’s progress. Providing regular feedback to mothers is designed to improve the quality of health care for mothers and newborns at Dedza.

Godwinss Mwanjera is a nurse-midwife with nine years of experience working in newborn and maternal health, and is the officer in charge at the nursery ward. He says that in the past, the hospital experienced many cases of mothers with babies in the nursery leaving the health facility before they should have.

He attributes a lack of constant feedback from staff on the progress of their child as a contributing factor.



“We decided to address the feedback problem by developing in feeding chart. This requires health workers to inform mothers on the daily assessments of their baby every day. This strategy is working,” says Godwins, “When mothers are given constant feedback they are motivated to stay in the hospital and watch their child’s journey as their condition improves.”

Quality health care for every mother and baby is key to saving newborn lives. UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA are implementing a health-systems-strengthening programme called ‘Umoyo Wathu’, aimed at halving maternal and newborn deaths, and stillbirths in health facilities.

The programme is funded by the UK’s Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office and has built on successes achieved elsewhere under UNICEF and WHO efforts focused on maternal and newborn health.

Since the project commenced, Dedza has made significant progress on improving care through a number of interventions.

Godwins explains, “Babies in the nursery are supposed to be monitored for vital signs at least four times a day. Previously this was challenging because we didn’t have a clinician in the nursery and only four nurses. To overcome this problem, the hospital management gave us two



clinicians and two additional nurses. This is essential in achieving our goal to reduce newborn deaths.”

An average of 15 to 16 babies are admitted to the nursery every day, where easy access to adequate hospital equipment plays a critical role in ensuring babies receive the quality care they need.

“All the equipment in the nursery is labelled and well organized to make it easy for nurses to work effectively. We also do regular routine maintenance checks and share what we observe with the maintenance team for their timely assistance.”

The hospital also introduced a case audit chart which is used to track and audit cases if and when a baby dies, and scrutinize how the baby was treated. Health workers also support each other with advice on how to manage various cases.

Child survival is one of UNICEF’s key advocacy priorities in Malawi and across the world. Investing in health care systems is key to making sure that no parent experiences the heartbreak of watching their child suffer or die.

UNICEF Malawi health specialist Jacqueline Chinkonde says improving health care is fundamental in reducing maternal and newborn deaths. He said it was important to achieve national outcomes on maternal and newborn care, as well as health related Sustainable Development Goal targets.

“UNICEF is supporting health workers with capacity building, support supervision and mentorships to make improved quality of care a reality,” says Chinkonde.

The work is being done under the Maternal and Newborn Quality of Care Learning Programme with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The programme is currently being implemented in Mzimba South, Rumphi, Kasungu, Ntchisi, Nsanje and Chikwawa.

At Dedza District Hospital, six health workers have received mentorship training. According to Godwins, the mentorship training has been beneficial as they have seen an improvement in the management of conditions such as hypoxia and hypothermia. Health workers were also taught how to manage sepsis, premature babies and danger signs.

“This programme has had a great impact on our work. It has boosted our confidence on how to manage cases. It has also increased trust between health workers and patients. They are trusting us to take care of their newborns and provide them with the right information. There is a good relationship with health workers and patients, which makes us proud.”



Programme Pillars

Pillar Two

School-aged children

Every child in Malawi has the right to go to school and learn, regardless of who they are, where they live or how much their family earns.

Left: A Kids in Need of Desks (KIND) Fund Scholarship recipient at Salima Secondary School

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Atlas
Media

UNICEF's pillar on school-aged children aims to ensure that girls and boys acquire basic literacy and numeracy, and the life skills they need to be successful. At the same time, UNICEF works to ensure that school children are safe from exploitation, harmful social norms and violence, while benefiting from integrated social services. However, in 2021, the primary school completion rate in Malawi was 33 per cent, indicating two-thirds children did not complete their primary education. Of children who did not complete, 45 per cent were girls. Completion rates in upper and lower secondary school are 23 and 15 per cent respectively, with the lowest recorded completion rates in the poorest households (11 per cent). Only 19 per cent of children aged 7-14 years have foundational reading skills while only 13 per cent have foundational numeracy skills.

Lackluster educational outcomes were partly driven by COVID-19-related school closures and teachers' strikes, which continued to have significant impact. To ensure the continuity of learning and to minimize the impact of closures, distance learning programmes that began in 2020 continued in 2021. UNICEF continued its support to the government's efforts to safely reopen schools through the provisions of clean water as well as health and hygiene materials. Despite the pandemic, about 3.9 million children (56 per cent girls) accessed emergency and non-emergency education services through various UNICEF-supported interventions. Out of these, 435,445 children (217,673 girls) in 10 target districts completed a safe school's empowerment and active citizenship training to protect themselves from violence.

Right: A learner in class at Mbayani Primary School in Blantyre. It is one of the most populated schools in the city

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Simwaka

In 2021, about 3,430 adolescent girls, who are often denied schooling, completed secondary education through direct support from UNICEF. Special attention was given to access quality education for girls and children with disabilities through Joint Programme for Girls Education and Spotlight Initiatives. More than 8,740 vulnerable adolescent girls were enrolled in secondary schools through UNICEF scholarship funding, who would otherwise not be able to complete secondary education. In addition, at least 5,500 adolescents (88 per cent female) completed functional literacy programming and an additional 10,000 youth (40 per cent girls) participated in skills development, economic empowerment, and transferable skills training. A total of 2,150 schools received iron folic acid supplementation to adolescent girls thereby reducing the likelihood of anemia in adolescent girls.

UNICEF supported the government to create a conducive learning environment for children by recruiting 3,270 auxiliary teachers and providing classroom size tents and school supplies. UNICEF also

distributed 60,000 desks which has contributed to improved participation of around two million learners (60 per cent girls) in primary schools. UNICEF supported a series of training of 9,595 primary and secondary school teachers from eight target districts to deliver child-centered and gender-responsive lessons and psychological first aid.

In 2021, UNICEF supported the government to develop and establish key evidence-based strategic policies and plans. For example, UNICEF provided financial and technical support to draft the National Teacher Policy aimed at strengthening teacher development and management, establish the Teacher's Council of Malawi, complete the Early Childhood Education curriculum and syllabus, and developed the National Youth Policy and Youth Investment Plan. UNICEF also supported the Ministry of Education to develop a foundational literacy and numeracy package for upper primary and initiated its roll out through training of 146 (55 females) teachers and primary education advisors.

Major Achievements



Despite the pandemic, about **3.9 million children** (56 per cent girls) **accessed emergency and non-emergency education** services through different UNICEF-supported interventions.



More than **8,740 vulnerable adolescent girls** were enrolled in secondary schools through UNICEF scholarship funding.



Some 3,270 auxiliary teachers were recruited, classroom size tents and school supplies and 60,000 desks were distributed contributing to improved participation of around **2 million learners** (60 per cent females) in primary schools.



A feature story

Leaving no one behind: Reaching remote areas with desks



Left to right: All smiles from children receiving the desks on the beach in Nkhatabay.

School desks ready to be offloaded from the truck and loaded to the boats at Nkhatabay Port

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Corporate
Media

On a sunny morning, a massive freightliner truck is parked outside Raiply Factory in Mzimba district, ready to be loaded with desks. These desks are destined for remote areas along Lake Malawi in Nkhatabay district. After the three-hour truck journey to Nkhatabay port, the desks will be loaded onto boats and delivered to the selected schools.

The district education manager for Nkhatabay, Mr Muhabi Chivunga, is delighted with the news of the desk delivery, considering the challenges primary schools experience when it comes to the shortage of desks.

“Nkhatabay has got some of the hardest terrain, which makes mobility very difficult. But this time around, we are blessed because UNICEF is delivering desks to hard-to-reach areas along the lake using boats,” he says.

“It’s an exciting development because it resolves most of the problems we used to have. Children will be able to sit and learn without worrying about dirtying their clothes, and it will provide dignity for girls as they find it challenging to stand up or sit down in class. With the desks, children will be motivated to study more after class, instead of going home early to do chores,” he adds.

About 50 per cent of school children in Malawi do not have a desk or chair, creating an environment that is not conducive for learning not only for pupils but also teachers. The desks being delivered by UNICEF were made possible by the Kids in Need of Desks (KIND) Fund, an initiative founded by US TV host Lawrence O’Donnell and UNICEF USA.



In Nkhatabay, the desks were delivered at Chisangwe, Sanje and Toto primary schools, which are among the worst hit in the district in regards to shortage of desks.

On arrival at Chisangwe, Sanje and Toto, the communities were relieved to see desks being offloaded to the lakeshore before being carried to the schools. The arrival of desks also brought hope that many learners would stay in school.

Julius Mkandawire, a headteacher at Chisangwe Primary school, can't contain his excitement. He thinks the delivery will help the learners during exams. He also believes the desks will improve the children's posture in class.

"Previously, we would borrow desks from secondary schools in the area during the examination period. It was a long

and tough walk for students to borrow and return these desks, especially with our terrain. We have the Lake and lots of mountains. Most times, learners were unable to return the desks, and this strained the relationship between them and other schools," he explains.

"Now children can sit comfortably, as compared to when they sat on the floor and would get tired quickly and become less interested in paying attention in class. This would result in low pass rates because they are less enthusiastic about school."

Since 2013, UNICEF and the KIND Fund have provided 300,000 desks to over 1,200 schools across Malawi. These desks have benefitted approximately 938,812 learners, a significant step towards the mission to keep children in school.



Programme Pillars

Pillar Three

Child-friendly, inclusive and resilient communities

Boys and girls have the right to lead safe, productive and fulfilling lives by growing up in resilient, inclusive and child-friendly communities.

Left: Children washing their hands at an innovative handwashing facility at Mchoka Primary School in Salima installed with support from UNICEF Malawi and funding from UNICEF Germany

©UNICEF Malawi/2021/
Gumulira

In 2021, UNICEF worked with the government and partners to empower communities to practise positive social behaviours and prepare for economic shocks, climate change and the implications of COVID-19. UNICEF signed an agreement with the government on implementing the Child Friendly Communities Initiative in Chikwawa and Nsanje Districts in support of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The initiative aims to tackle deep-rooted challenges that severely impact child wellbeing, depriving children of their rights, through community engagement and youth participation.

The rate of child marriage in Malawi remains very high as 38 per cent of girls are married before they turn 18. To combat the situation, UNICEF supported the development of key messages on ending child marriage to three million people. UNICEF also supported young people, faith leaders and traditional leaders to work in harmonized ways to end child marriages, reaching 91,534 community members. Furthermore, UNICEF sponsored the signing of a “Call to action to end child marriage in Malawi”; the outcome of a roundtable discussion held with the Ministry of Finance and other stakeholders to advocate for increased child protection budgets.

Right: A mother collecting money from a social cash transfer pay point in Balaka

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Homeline
Media

High rates of violence against women and children in Malawi is deeply concerning as 35,000 new cases of violence (16,359 girls; 10,518 boys; 8,439 women) were reported through UNICEF-supported services. In 2021, 82 per cent of all Malawian children aged 1-14 years were subjected to some form of violent discipline. UNICEF's investment in SMS reporting systems for the Malawi Police Service has established a reliable way for police to track changes in trends and frequency of reports of violence. UNICEF also continues to provide technical and financial assistance to collect administrative data through Rapid Pro for police, judiciary, and social welfare, as well as One Stop centres. Additionally, more than 4,500 people have been reached with gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response services.

Last year, some 13,364 (6019 male, 7,345 female) accessed psychological first aid from service providers trained across Malawi. The Child Helpline and GBV Crisis Line have received more than 4,700 calls.

In 2021, UNICEF supported the government's Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP), reaching 619,295 children (312,770 girls and 306,525 boys) with cash payments, helping them and their families to meet their basic needs and pay their school fees. The SCTP also provided COVID-19 top-ups to all SCTP beneficiary households, although transfers were delayed by the pandemic. UNICEF also helped strengthen the SCTP by designing an electronic payment system that will reduce fiduciary risks and improve effectiveness of the programme. Furthermore, UNICEF supported the COVID-19 Urban Cash Intervention

that reached more than half a million individuals who were classified as informal workers and/or poor, across four major cities. A key part of this support was the creation of a Call Centre for COVID-19 Urban Cash Intervention which received over 7,352 calls (39 per cent women) seeking support, clarifications or reporting misdeeds, significantly enhancing transparency and accountability. The call centre also sent out 4.2 million text messages, about social protection and payments information, as it transitioned into a permanent feature of the social protection system.

Some 88 per cent of Malawians used improved water sources against the SDG target of 100 per cent. However, high levels of water source e-coli contamination (60.2 per cent) were reported.

On sanitation, 46 per cent of the household members in Malawi used basic sanitation facilities while almost 7 per cent continued to practice open defecation. Through strategic engagement at the sector level, in 2021, UNICEF led the agenda on sector financing (including climate financing) as well as Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programming. UNICEF explored innovative and sustainable ways of financing the urban sanitation services through a blended partnership with the World Bank in Lilongwe. UNICEF also continued scaling up climate resilient WASH services in institutions and communities as well as supporting sector policy and financing strategies. In terms of service delivery, 89,450 people in institutions and communities gained access to basic water services through construction of solar powered water schemes and 62,018 people gained access to basic sanitation services.



Major Achievements



Some **89,450 people** gained access to **basic water** services through construction of solar powered water schemes and 62,018 people gained access to basic sanitation services.



Last year, some **13,364** (6019 male, 7,345 female) people accessed **psychological first aid** from service providers trained across Malawi. The Child Helpline and GBV Crisis Line have received more than 4,700 calls.



The government's Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP), supported by UNICEF, reached **619,295 ultra poor children** with small cash payments, providing food and enabling school attendance.

A feature story

Improving the Lives of Children and Communities with Safe Water



Left to right: Nancy washing her face using safe water from a tap

NgambiJoyce Khuleya and her neighbour Esther Alumenda getting water for their household use

The Headteacher Mr. Dziko quenching his thirst during a class break

© UNICEF Malawi/2021/Ngambi

It is break time, and Nancy is busy cooling herself down with cool water on this hot day in Chikwawa district. According to the day's weather forecast, Chikwawa would experience a maximum temperature of 43 degrees celsius (109 fahrenheit).

Because these kinds of temperatures are the norm for the lower shire district, the 3,450 learners at Bereu Primary School are grateful for having four water points in the school campus.

For the past five years that Nancy, a student at the school, has been coming here, she could only drink from a borehole that the learners shared with the surrounding community.

"The challenge was that we were struggling to fill even just a bottle of water from the borehole as there used to be more people from the nearby villages coming to fetch water from the same source, which has a weak flow," says Nancy, 13 years old and in Standard 6.

"Most of the time, I was going back to class still thirsty, hoping to try again during the second break, but the community members would still want us to queue up on the line to fill our bottles of water," she added.

Because of the lack of water at the school, UNICEF Malawi helped install a new piped water system, with support from UNICEF Switzerland, which has brought much-needed relief and improvement in the lives of the people living in the Bereu area.

The project is one of several shared by UNICEF Malawi and UNICEF Switzerland to improve access to safely managed water in several communities and schools. It has saved a lot of time for learners and people from surrounding communities, who would ordinarily have to walk long distances to fetch water.

Joyce Khuleya is one of the community members benefiting from the project and does not hide her excitement through her contagious smile throughout the interview.



“When we heard from the headteacher that UNICEF is bringing safe water here. I never believed him as I could not remember the last time I used or drank water from a tap. For the 14 years that I have stayed in this village, I had never washed or cooked with water from a tap,” said Joyce.

She says the water that used to come from boreholes was often contaminated and children frequently suffered from cholera. Getting them treated at a distant Chikwawa District Hospital took much of their time.

As she stays close to the school, which has water points with eight taps, it is now easier for Joyce to fetch water more than six times just in the morning instead of spending over three hours to fetch a 20 litres bucket of water before the UNICEF intervention.

James Dziko, the deputy headteacher at Bereu Primary School, expresses his excitement and appreciation for UNICEF’s support.

“Having close to 3,500 learners using one borehole was a nightmare. Our district is very hot. As you can see today, the temperature is over 43 degrees. Imagine how learners were struggling,” says Dziko.

“We now have families coming from as far as two kilometers just to access this safe water. Thanks to UNICEF and its partners, we have even planted bananas and flowers around the school because we are able to get water nearby.”



Humanitarian action

In 2021, an estimated nine million Malawians – half of them children – required humanitarian support as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and extreme weather events.

Additionally, about 1.5 million people were not able to meet their annual food requirements.

Left: A health worker administers AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine at Guzani Village in Kasungu District, Central Malawi

© UNICEF Malawi/2020/
Thokochikondi

The pandemic continued to put UNICEF to the test as the virus indiscriminately impacted populations, livelihoods, and the socio-economic situation of the country. Malawi experienced three COVID-19 waves in 2021 and recorded 68,391 positive cases and 2,175 deaths. To address the situation, UNICEF Malawi leveraged a real time evaluation of the 2020 COVID response and adapted management priorities to ensure continuity of essential services, and, at the same time, continued to implement pandemic preparedness, prevention and response efforts.

UNICEF supported the development and roll out of a national vaccination plan that had covered 6.2 per cent of the targeted 11 million people by the year's end. UNICEF has been a partner of choice for the government, providing support with procurement and delivery of 2.8 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility, a major international effort to inoculate people living in developing countries against coronavirus. UNICEF worked with local civil society organizations, local government, as well

as youth-led and faith-based organizations to support training and social mobilization activities with 410,000 participating in community engagement actions. As part of engagement in COVID-19 prevention and vaccine uptake, UNICEF strengthened collaboration with partners in 15 districts, with integrated social and behaviour change interventions reaching over 10 million people.

In total, UNICEF-supported humanitarian interventions last year reached more than seven million people including some one million primary school going children, 120,000 children aged 6 to 59 months and 73,000 children aged 0 to 23 months. In total, 12,041 (5,840 boys, 6,201 girls) children in humanitarian situations were admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM).

Right: UNICEF Malawi Vaccines Specialist Steve Macheso inspects the vaccines store room with the Senior Disease Control Surveillance Assistant Andrew Mbingwani at Chikande Health Centre in Ntcheu.

©UNICEF/2021/AMOS
GUMULIRA

UNICEF provided water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies to 105 households (525 people) displaced by localized flooding in the northern region, preventing outbreaks of water-borne diseases. Preparedness and prepositioning of essential WASH supplies helped UNICEF to quickly respond to the COVID-19 outbreak within the COVID-19 restriction. UNICEF also supported the construction of latrines and installed handwashing facilities in three schools that hosted people displaced by floods, thus ensuring access to good sanitation

in flood-affected schools. UNICEF trained officials of the Department of Disaster Management Affairs in six districts, helping some 500 civil protection committees better prepare themselves for natural disasters.

Major Achievements



UNICEF procured and delivered some **2.8 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines** through the COVAX Facility.



As part of engagement in COVID-19 prevention and vaccine uptake, UNICEF strengthened collaboration with partners in **15 districts**, with integrated social and behaviour change interventions reaching over **10 million people**.



UNICEF built capacity at the Department of Disaster Management Affairs, helping **train some 500 civil protection committees** better prepare themselves for natural disasters.



A feature story

COVID-19 Vaccines on wheels



Left to right: Egrita gets her COVID-19 vaccine, right at home in Kasungui, central Malawi, thanks to a UNICEF supported COVID-19 express vaccination campaign

Happy people, finally vaccinated as the COVID-19 express vaccination van makes its way across the country

©UNICEF Malawi/2021/
Chikondi Egrita

Egrita Phiri is returning from her maize field when she hears music and information about COVID-19 vaccinations being blasted out from a van.

The mother of seven, who lives in Boyole Village, 25km north of Kasungu district in Central Malawi, then waves down the van, known as the COVID Express, which is stocked with vaccines, under a mango tree by her house.

“There is no better time to protect myself,” she says. “With this, I don’t have to endure long travels in the sun or pay for transport to get vaccinated.”

Community health workers write down her background information in a register, while more villagers arrive to get vaccinated. In the next few hours, 15 people are vaccinated against the virus, before the van, supported by UNICEF Malawi and Kamuzu College of Health Sciences, departs for its next stop.

UNICEF is also supporting safe storage and distribution of the vaccines acquired by the Malawi Government through the through the COVAX Facility backed by the World Health Organisation.

“My family and I are now protected from current and future COVID-19 waves. Surely, I wouldn’t have been vaccinated if the van had not come close to home,” Egrita says, who is married to the village chief, and got the AstraZeneca jab.

“No one is safe until we all get vaccinated.”

Her husband got the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine at Kasungu District Hospital.

The couple first heard of the COVID-19 vaccination on the radio in 2021 when Malawi’s President Lazarus Chakwera publicly got his first shot, kick-starting the nationwide campaign.



“That showed me the vaccine was safe, but it wasn’t easily accessible,” she says.

She said the fact that more than 2,000 Malawians died of the virus, including two ministers and four lawmakers, strengthened her resolve to get vaccinated.

The third and deadliest coronavirus wave forced the government to turn a presidential palace and a stadium into emergency hospitals, as regular hospitals had been filled up.

“COVID-19 doesn’t choose, so my husband and I did well to protect ourselves. I have been hearing health workers on the radio saying most of those hospitalised or dying from the virus are those who shun the vaccine. I need to be healthy to take care of my family, crops and the community,” she explains.

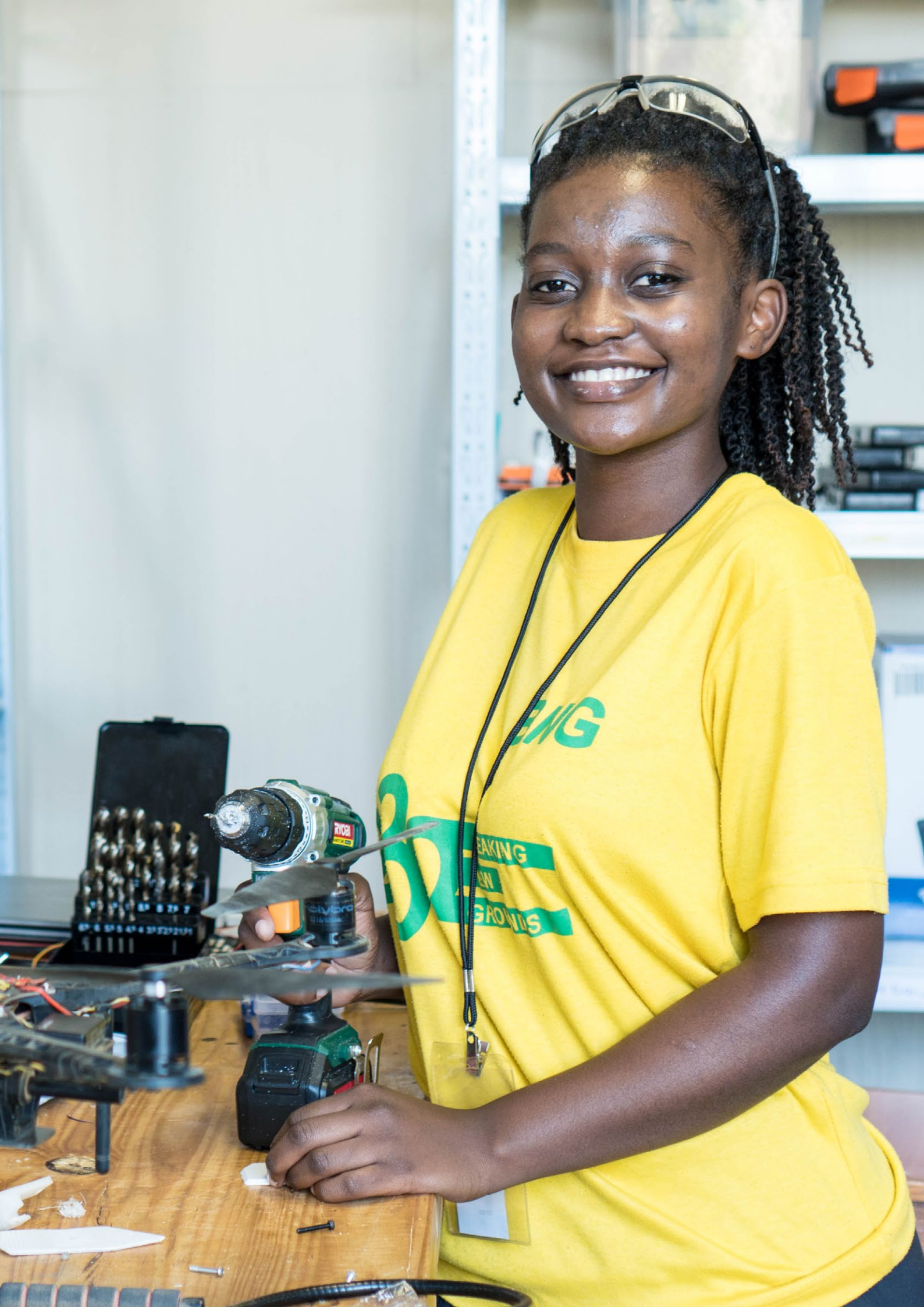
Tackling misinformation

Joseph Chitsime, coordinator of the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) in Kasungu, is excited that the mobile teams have helped clear doses that would have expired on New Year’s eve.

The team vaccinates in a day the count they once did in eight days, he says.

“Before we rolled out the Vaccination Express in late 2021, we were lucky if 40 people came to get vaccinated in all our health facilities. Now our four teams vaccinate 250 to 300 a day,” explains Chitsime.

The express vaccination team includes health promoters who spread accurate messages about the vaccine, Health Surveillance Assistants (HSAs) who go door-to-door and stop in strategic places to vaccinate those who are willing and community leaders who mobilise their people.”



Innovation

Matching today's challenges with tomorrow's solutions

To respond to the humanitarian needs of children, UNICEF implemented a number of innovative solutions in 2021, mostly addressing COVID-19, focused particularly on health and youth engagement in the country.

Left: Memory Sidira,
An African Drone and
Data Academy student
in class

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Mvula

In 2021, UNICEF implemented a number of innovative solutions to respond to the humanitarian and development needs of children. Under these solutions UNICEF is providing avenues for young Malawians, in particular, to participate in human-centered, high-impact work, empowering them to speak up, acquire skills, and solve issues facing their communities.

UNICEF continued to support the African Drone and Data Academy to equip youth with advanced technical skills to fly and use drones for innovative applications and promote better life opportunities for graduating students. In 2021, 89 students

graduated from the Academy, 55 of them women. Since its inception, more than 300 young Malawians (60 per cent female) have completed drone and data technology training. At the same time, UNICEF continues to use drones to strengthen health supply chains, transporting vital supplies to healthcare facilities and remote communities in the Kasungu district.

The Intelligent Community Health Information System (ICHIS), which aims to improve access to and use of community-based data through an integrated digital platform, was piloted in Kasungu in 2021, initially involving about

Right: Third cohort African Drone and Data Academy students in a class session

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2021/Mvula

210 health surveillance assistants. The iCHIS facilitates information exchange and enables real-time monitoring across primary and community health systems, which help service providers, managers, and policymakers at the primary health facility, district, and national levels, make informed decisions.

About 400 child protection officers, 68 police officers, and 50 judicial officers in all 28 districts are providing near-to-real-time reports on some 34,000 new cases of violence against children through the Child Protection Management Information System (CPIMS). Consequently, the RapidPro-powered mobile reporting tool, accompanied by a data visualization dashboard, facilitated UNICEF-supported services for child survivors of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect.

In the meantime, a ground truthing mission in north and south Rukuru, and a human-centered design workshop, were carried out to inform the development of the Climate Change Flood Modelling initiative. Using remote sensors and satellite imagery, the predictive and early warning information will strengthen community and government resilience, and ability to prepare for and respond to flood disasters.

Major Achievements



Using the Child Protection Management Information System, some **400 child protection officers, 68 police officers, and 50 judicial officers** are providing near-to-real-time reports.



A total of **89 students** (55 female, 64 Malawians) graduated from the African Drone and Data Academy. Since its inception, more than **300 young Malawians** (60 per cent female) have **completed drone and data technologies training** at the academy.



The Intelligent Community Health Information System (iCHIS), which aims to improve access to and use of community-based data through an integrated digital platform, was piloted in Kasungu in 2021, initially involving about **210 health surveillance assistants**.



A feature story

Leaving my technology footprint across Africa - Mtambo's African Drone and Data Academy experience

Left to right: UNICEF Malawi country representative, Rudolf Schwenk with ADDA cohort three students

Alexander with graduating students from ADDA's third cohort.

© UNICEF Malawi/2021

Alexander Mtambo was one of the first students to attend the African Drone and Data Academy (ADDA) and one of the academy's first two national instructors. As a member of the academy's innovation team he teaches a curriculum designed by Virginia Tech University and presents courses in creating, testing, and flying drones.

Mtambo has a passion for the potential drones provide when it comes to enhancing agricultural output. Despite agriculture accounting for Malawi's 42 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) and 81 per cent of its export profits, the sector lacks modern, innovative mechanization. He says the utilization of drone data and imagery in agriculture will improve efficiency, minimize wastage, and raise yields, improving Malawi's GDP.

"I joined the academy when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. We discontinued all in-person classes in favour of online learning. It was difficult to be away from the more experienced instructors who were coaching me. Being coached and mentored online was not easy, but I quickly adapted and soon was able to teach with confidence," says Mtambo.

"Being an instructor is very demanding. In addition to daily ADDA project management, I set up and teach laboratory

sessions on aeronautics, mechatronics, and other subjects. This is hard, but it is preparing our team to take over the academy after Virginia Tech leaves."

"We have resumed classes and are now teaching in-person and online classes simultaneously. This is difficult because the coursework is rigorous, with short breaks in between the cohorts. The short breaks are because of the high demand for the skills that we offer at the academy. We get over 100 applications every cohort and have space for only 20."

So far, Mtambo has participated in training 370 students from 23 African countries in drone, data, and entrepreneurship. He says the most rewarding element of his job has been seeing students with no prior flying experience assemble drones, control and fly them, and obtain their Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) certification.

Influencing the youth of Africa

"Young people growing up in a world that is rapidly changing. The advent of new technology is altering our way of life and necessitating the acquisition of skills to



assist young people to survive and prosper in this new world. Through the training that we provide at the ADDA, young people gain job-specific skills which are scarce but critical in Africa. We help them become innovators who can launch their own drone and data companies, as well as prepare them to fill jobs that would otherwise be done by foreigners.”

“Being a national instructor at the ADDA means I’m positively affecting the youth throughout Africa and leaving a technological and economic footprint.”

ADDA students fly drones for a variety of commercial and charitable organizations. Others have launched their own drone businesses, offering services that would normally be offered by “experts” from the west.

In addition to being an instructor at the ADDA, Mtambo owns his own drone firm. When the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions were implemented, his drone company teamed up with another local firm, HD Plus Creations, to photograph World Bank road development projects in five districts across Malawi. “The images that we provided were fantastic. While in Europe, the World Bank project managers were able to use them to gain a solid idea of the progress that had been accomplished and address technical issues and difficulties,” he adds.

Mtambo was also involved in drone training for lecturers at the Lilongwe University of Agriculture (LUANAR). “The lecturer’s training was extremely rewarding because of the trickledown effect that it will have. The lecturers will pass on their new skills to their students,” he adds. In addition, he worked with the Liverpool Welcome Trust on a Malaria project and with PRIDE, an agriculture organization, where he provided drone imagery to aid in the development of irrigation systems.

“In the next five years, I would like to see drone, data and entrepreneurship curriculum incorporated into primary, secondary and university studies. The African Drone and Data Academy is an example that this can be done successfully and benefit Malawi and Africa.”

By investing in the ADDA, UNICEF Malawi and its partners are investing in Africa’s youth. The skills gained from the academy will help them develop solutions that fit their local context, which is often very complex and challenging.

UNICEF Malawi and its partners are supporting the government to explore the adoption of ADDA as a technical college for vocational training, as well as including ADDA course material into some of the degree programmes at the university level.



Gender Mainstreaming in UNICEF

Girls have the right to reach their full potential. That is why promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is central to UNICEF's work.

Left: Caregivers with their children and care-group members in rural Lilongwe. They are beneficiaries of the Scaling-Up-Nutrition Programme being implemented by UNICEF and the Government of Malawi with funding from KFW.

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/HD Plus

Girls have every right to be safe and seize opportunities, enabling them to reach their full potential. That's why promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is central to UNICEF's work. The country office's gender action plan has identified five adolescent priority areas: adolescent nutrition pregnancy care; HIV and human papillomavirus prevention; girls' secondary education and skills development, dignified menstrual hygiene management; prevention and response to gender-based violence; and ending child marriage.

But despite efforts to protect young women from harmful social norms, a sobering 38 per cent of Malawian girls are married before they turn 18 (MICS 2019/20). In 2021, UNICEF responded by delivering integrated messages on COVID-19 prevention and ending child marriage to some three million people. UNICEF also continued to work with Nkhoma Synod Youth and children's

ministry to supplement efforts to end child marriages and ensure that faith leaders are not officiating marriages that involve persons under 18. In addition, UNICEF supported efforts for young people, faith leaders and traditional leaders to work in harmonized ways to end child marriages, reaching 91,534 community members.

At the same time, gender-based violence (GBV) remains a major concern. Last year some 35,000 new cases of violence – 16,359 and 8,439 impacting girls and women respectively – were reported through UNICEF-supported services. The Child Helpline and GBV Crisis Line received more than 4,700 calls. In 2021, UNICEF worked to empower girls and deconstruct negative masculinity behaviours among boys with 435,445 children (217,673 girls) completing a safe school's transformation training, improving confidence and protection skills. UNICEF's investment in SMS reporting systems for the police also established a reliable way

Right: 16-year-old Patuma Gerald by the lakeside in Nkhotakota district

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Homeline
Media

for police to track the frequency of reports of violence. UNICEF has led protection efforts for children left vulnerable during the pandemic, advocating consistently for protection measures to be an integral part of the government's pandemic response.

Under a UN joint programme (UNICEF UNFA and WFP) on education, 224,895 children (114,758 girls) last year accessed special educational services. The programme addressed barriers to learning with integrated interventions including provision of gender-sensitive WASH facilities, health and nutrition support as well as learning materials. At the same time, 8,742 vulnerable out-of-school girls received scholarships to complete secondary education under the various scholarships with support from UNICEF, the Spotlight Initiative and the Kids in Need of a Desk project. To improve learning, a girls' empowerment initiative was developed, providing additional

mentoring and coaching to adolescent girls receiving scholarships. As a result, nearly 3,430 girls were expected to complete secondary education last year. When it came to menstrual hygiene, UNICEF promoted WASH in schools to ensure girls didn't drop out. Some 28,608 girls in 68 schools were provided with gender-responsive WASH facilities and services, including re-usable sanitary pads.

UNICEF Malawi has made progress targeting adolescents living with HIV. At the same time, young mothers aged between 10-24 years and their male partners (16,318 female and 6,255 male) were last year reached with skills and knowledge on HIV prevention, antiretroviral therapy and identification of adolescents who need HIV testing, prevention of mother-to-child transmission, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and other youth-friendly services and improved links to health care.

Major Achievements



Some **91,534 community members were reached** by UNICEF-supported efforts that helped young people, faith leaders and traditional leaders to end child marriage in harmonized ways.



UNICEF worked to empower girls and deconstruct negative masculinity behaviours among boys with **435,445 children (217,673 girls) completing safe school's transformation training**, improving confidence and protection skills.



Young mothers and their male partners (16,318 female and 6,255 male) were reached with skills and knowledge on HIV prevention, antiretroviral therapy and identification of adolescents who need HIV testing.



A feature story

A teen mother finally goes back to school

Right: Enifa and her daughter

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Nyirenda

Seventeen year old Enifa vividly remembers when she walked back to Mlale Primary School, south of Lilongwe City, for the first time after spending two years as a child bride.

Having dropped out at the age of 14 to give birth, Enifa recalls: “I couldn’t wait to get back to class and revive my dream to become a doctor, but I didn’t know how my peers would welcome me. The last time they saw me, I was a little girl but pregnant.”

The teenager delivered a baby girl in 2017, months after marrying her 19-year-old boyfriend —four years short of Malawi’s marriageable age of 18.

“We agreed to marry, but I didn’t tell my parents. I escaped empty-handed in the night, walking on my toes like a cat because I wanted to be free. However, it was a big mistake,” she says.

Enifa left the marriage after a distressing two years of life in poverty. The couple lacked basics such as food and soap, she says. Together, the two used to wake up early to work for low pay in neighbouring crop fields while their peers walked to school.

“Besides, I had no say on family affairs. My ex-husband used to beat me and

kicked me out of the house for asking about things that would affect me,” she says.

Enifa has since returned to school following advice from members of a mothers’ group and headteacher Rose Gwande. The mothers group, made up of women from the community who encourage girls to stay in school, visited the couple’s home in Khomani Village on the outskirts of Lilongwe, Malawi’s capital.

“I feel lucky that the headteacher visited me twice and said the same thing the mothers’ group said to me, that I was too young to marry. My ex-husband only let me go when they threatened to report the matter to the police.”

But Enifa’s education was delayed further when she found herself out of school again in 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic led to school closures. “It was a huge disturbance just when I had settled down and started catching up.”

In Malawi, teenage pregnancies and child marriages spiked during the pandemic, as young people waited for schools to reopen.



The Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare estimates that almost 13,000 pregnancies and 40,000 marriages occurred within six months.

The lengthy shutdown left Enifa under pressure to remarry “I wish schools remained open with strict coronavirus preventive measures. After wasting two years, I couldn’t bear another delay. Some people started pestering me to reunite with my ex-husband, saying I was wasting my best years in school,” she explains.

Enifa now knows marriage can wait. “I will marry when I am old enough. My ex-husband and I don’t talk anymore. He doesn’t support the child. I am better off in school.”

School dropout rates are also high with nearly half of all girls in Malawi married by the age of 18 while a third of those aged 15-19 have begun childbearing, accounting for a quarter of all pregnancies (Malawi Demographic Health Survey 2016). A third of all new HIV infections in 2018 were among young people aged 15-24.

With support from the Swedish Government, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, UNAIDS and the Malawian government, are delivering an integrated package of sexual and reproductive health

services, HIV-sensitive interventions and programming on prevention of sexual and gender-based violence.

This joint programme is being implemented in areas with high levels of teenage pregnancy, HIV, sexual and gender-based violence.

UNICEF is also supporting the government to train social welfare officers and community child protectors to swiftly handle cases of child abuse, rights violations and exploitation.

Bridget Mwale, assistant social welfare officer in Lilongwe, says the push to keep girls in school will flop unless parents take full responsibility as primary caregivers.

“The high rates of early pregnancy and marriage, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, show the need to sensitise parents and community leaders to take child protection seriously and make laws work. Following the case management training, cases once concealed are being detected and handled faster than before,” she says.



Communicate to Advocate

Driving Change for Children

In 2021, UNICEF communicated to drive change for children in Malawi through coordinated, consistent and an integrated public advocacy and communications approach.

Left: Children pose for a group photo after a successful World Children's Day workshop in Phalombe

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Atlas
Media

UNICEF organized major advocacy events and initiatives involving the highest-level decision-makers and influencers, including President Lazarus Chakwera, children and youth. In response to the global pandemic, UNICEF successfully organized a historic event marking the first arrival of COVID-19 vaccines in the country and throughout 2021 consistently advocated to address vaccine hesitancy and build vaccine confidence within Malawi through various channels. UNICEF launched a year-long early childhood development (ECD) campaign together with the government to promote positive parenting and responsive caregiving, and to advocate for investments on ECD. As part of the yearly

World Children's Day celebration, UNICEF together with the government organized child-led consultation and interaction meetings with children and duty bearers. The government has identified this as a model activity to increase children's participation in decision-making processes as part of the 2020 pledge made by President Chakwera to children in Malawi. This was captured in the "[Voices of Children in Malawi](#)". UNICEF also officially appointed three Youth Advocates who worked with UNICEF to push forward advocacy agendas with youth perspectives on climate change, the digital divide and mental health issues.

Right: Patience Mboma discussing child rights issues with others at World Children's Day workshop.

© UNICEFMalawi/2021

UNICEF's proactive media outreach generated 141 national and international news stories, mentioning UNICEF in prestigious outlets including Voice of America, NBCTV and Der Spiegel. UNICEF also produced the Monthly Communication Newsletter, with stories featured often picked up by local media. UNICEF partnered with the Malawi Institute of Journalism to promote responsible reporting on children, resulting in 577 journalism students being trained to tell children's stories in an ethical manner. UNICEF also partnered with iHub Media to implement quality and quantitative media monitoring and analysis of stories and conversations that relate to children's issues, which will inform UNICEF's work on strengthening voices of children.

UNICEF engaged partners and donors through virtual engagement, roundtable discussion, production of contents, contributing to the office's resource mobilization goals.

In 2021, UNICEF recruited about 13,355 new U-Reporters bringing the total to

240,346. The young U-reporters were actively engaged and empowered through 21 SMS polls and alerts on COVID-19 response mechanisms, child protection, climate change, health and nutrition, sexual and gender-based violence, water, sanitation and hygiene, and youth engagement. The results have been shared with UNICEF programme, partners and stakeholders and stakeholders to inform our work.

UNICEF last year actively promoted communicating as one UN in Malawi through proactive collaboration with the UN sister agencies. UNICEF continued to play an active role in the United Nations Communications Group and collaborated in various joint activities, including COVID-19 response to raise the profile of United Nations activities and promoting a coherent and united image.

As a result, UNICEF reached more than 55 million people, offline and online, with key messages, and engaged almost one million people on children-related issues.

Major Achievements



UNICEF's proactive **media outreach generated 141 national and international news stories** on the situation of children and UNICEF's work in Malawi. This included Voice of America, NBC and Der Spiegel.



UNICEF partnered with the Malawi Institute of Journalism to promote responsible reporting on children, resulting in **577 journalism students trained** to tell children's stories in an ethical manner.



UNICEF reached over **55 million people**, offline and online, with key messages, and **engaged around one million people** on child-related issues.



A feature story

Voices of Children in Malawi: A blog by UNICEF Youth Advocate, Zakaat Zambo



Left to right: Zakaat
Sambo at the workshop
in Karonga

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Malawi/2021/Atlas
Media

November 20 is World Children's Day, a Global Day of Action for children, by children.

The adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is commemorated on this day. In anticipation of World Children's Day 2021, UNICEF Malawi and the Ministry of Gender, Community Development, and Social Welfare held a children's workshop in each of Malawi's three regions: north, central, and southern

The goal of the children's workshops was to assist children and the youth to understand their rights, listen to their concerns, and explore solutions to those concerns. The workshops also offered them the opportunity to have a question and answer session with child rights duty bearers.

I attended the southern region workshop that took place in Phalombe on 28-29 October 2021. My first observation was children were represented from all walks of life. Participants were drawn from primary and secondary schools, children, adolescents and young adults, girls, boys, those with disabilities and out of school youths.

The first day was an interactive session in which the children's awareness of their

rights and responsibilities was assessed through a variety of entertaining games. The children discussed their rights to life, protection, health, the environment and safety. Efforts were made to talk about what the various rights mean to them and how they experience them daily. This session was followed by a discussion on the Presidential Pledges that were made on World Children's Day 2020 commemorations.

I was surprised the children understood the pledges and were able to link them to campaign promises made during the 2019/2020 election campaign. They were also able to link the pledges to their rights. The first day left me with the impression that the youth of Malawi are intelligent, know what they want for the future but have no opportunities to interact with those in power to hold them accountable.

I also felt that children are very observant and know when they are not being treated right. The discussion on child rights was full of examples of incidents where child rights were not respected. I noted that children do not always trust adults. At



times, they also don't report child rights incidents to teachers, parents, and the police because they feel that these officials cannot help them.

On the second day children were split into groups where they discussed and prepared a presentation on their right to health, education, participation, child protection/child trafficking, child abuse, climate change, impact of COVID-19 and child marriages.. They prepared presentations and questions for duty bearers. During the afternoon, various Phalombe council member representatives, a traditional and faith leader joined the workshop. They came for a question and answer session. The major issues raised during this session were: the need for more schools and health facilities in the district; the rise in incidence of sexual harassment; child marriage and child trafficking cases in the district and the notable lack of skilled child protection workers.

My observations of the workshops are these: there is a gap in information sharing between the district and different leadership structures at the community level and with children. Some of the issues raised by children are either already resolved or the council and different community structures are working on

resolving them. However, children do not know this.

For instance, the children know that each village has a mother's group but they do not know what their mandate is and do not trust them. Children are also not aware of the bursary opportunities that the council offers to children who need school fees, they do not know where to report child rights violations and they do not know that the government has enacted laws to protect them. The workshop was a good information exchange opportunity.

I also observed that children are very aware of the challenges they face, and they are not afraid to demand for answers and explanations from community leaders.

I would recommend that these workshops should be scaled up to reach children in other districts in Malawi.



Research, Evaluation and Knowledge Management

In 2021, UNICEF continued to strengthen programming by generating evidence designed to inform and improve interventions, ultimately helping to improve the lives of children in Malawi.

Left: A child playing with a drum during a class session at Paiwe Community Based Childcare Centre in Dedza

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/HD Plus

UNICEF's research, evaluation and knowledge management efforts were trailblazing in 2021. UNICEF Malawi piloted a groundbreaking 'fusion' approach for research dissemination and participatory learning by mixing the power of evidence with the ingenuity of performing arts, adding the enthusiasm of youth to the work through a landmark partnership with the University of Malawi (UNIMA). It's the first time the UNICEF office has used art-forms to disseminate key messages from UNICEF-led research reports with 210 students participating as artists, ushers, organizers and audience. Another instrumental partnership with the National Planning Commission was geared

toward the development of the National Research Agenda, in support of the Malawi Vision 2063. This groundbreaking work is Malawi's first-ever national research agenda, providing a wide-ranging evidence-base to assist achieving SDGs and ensuring sustainable growth.

Earlier last year, UNICEF Malawi emerged as a leader on evaluative evidence as it was the only country in the region that undertook a "real-time evaluation" of its own response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our innovative initiatives such as UNICEF LEaRNS (Learning from Evaluation and Research Note Series), Learning Café – talk series' and production of appealing

Below: tU-Reporter Kelvin Posiyano and UNICEF Youth Advocate Lisa Banda at a meet and greet at the UNICEF Malawi Country Office

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Malawi/2021/Atlas
Media

knowledge products such as the overview of key child deprivations in Malawi, videos and posters strengthened knowledge management and enhanced dissemination and use of knowledge by UNICEF programmes, partners and young people. To build capacity, communications skills sessions and resources were delivered to

staff, implementing partners and public sector institutions. Throughout last year, UNICEF also continued to strengthen programming by generating quality evidence and managing knowledge that informed and improved interventions to improve the lives of Malawian children.

Major Achievements



UNICEF **pioneered and piloted a multipronged 'fusion' approach for participatory learning** and dissemination in partnership with UNIMA, centered on youth engagement and connecting youth with researchers, policy makers and children.



The country office formed a **strategic partnership** with the National Planning Commission to support the development of the National Research Agenda.



UNICEF developed **smart knowledge products** and platforms such as UNICEF LEaRNS (Learning from Evaluation and Research Note series), Learning Café, videos and posters.



A feature story

Linking the power of evidence, ingenuity of arts and exuberance of youth



Left to right: Students participating at the research dissemination and learning workshop at UNIMA.

© UNICEFMalawi/2021

Hello, I am the Great Hall at University of Malawi (UNIMA). I have seen many beautiful events over the past few decades. Today, Dec. 17, 2021, I am bellowing with music, claps and cheers but for a totally different reason that I had ever witnessed. Today, UNICEF has supported my children arrange a research dissemination and learning workshop to test an innovative model of participatory learning and knowledge sharing here at UNIMA. With the passing years, my furniture and equipment has withered due to lack of funds, yet my affection and hospitality has grown. I am touched to see honourable guests from the government, NGOs, other universities and UNICEF sitting in my lap today. Instead of going to a nice hotel at the top of Zomba hills, UNICEF chose me to host this. I am elated and all ears to the powerpoint presentations. Don't tell anyone, but I take good, long naps during these workshops and am looking forward to some today.

I am the old Great Hall at UNIMA, the biggest in capacity among all the universities. I have seen countless of such research dissemination workshops. But wait, what does all this cheer and roaring mean? Isn't research supposed to be a serious business, and dissemination a solemn affair? This one looks very different. I see my children, beautiful young girls and boys running around

handling the entire affair. They are the organizers, ushers, presenters and artists leading this workshop. Who is this standing at the door looking unsure if she is in the right place? Probably surprised like me with this 'different' workshop. Good, I see her led politely to a seat by a student and another one giving her a copy of the programme. Let me have a peek at the programme too. Lo and behold! it is full of 'unconventional', strange entries! What is UNICEF doing? How come they have drama, songs, dances and comedy as part of a serious research dissemination and learning workshop?

My walls and ceiling, the old windows and doors, even some broken lights and wobbly furniture, everything suddenly is more awake. I see the audience, hundreds of young people, being gripped by the first performance based on the research on Traditional Harmful Practices in Malawi. My children are using traditional Malawian dances to explain and portray the incidence and impact of harmful practices. These talented young people never seem to amaze me. One after another, they use UNICEF research such as the Situation Analysis of Children with Disabilities, studies on cash transfers and COVID-19 issues to explain and portray pain and suffering caused due to challenges and issues captured in these studies and share smiles and laughter while indicating



solutions and way forward given through the recommendations. The young have turned into old, wise and astute. I am so moved. My walls are numb with pain portrayed so impactfully by these young artists – the pain of young girls and boys falling prey to harmful traditional practices and affected by disability issues. Did I just see people wiping their eyes on findings shared from UNICEF led studies? Did I see research touching hearts instead of only tinkering with minds? Wow, this is the essence of research. This is the light of knowledge that transforms vision and kindles change.

Wait, the mood is changing with the song depicting the benefits of cash transfers for children captured in UNICEF led studies. I am holding myself tight not to spin with the energy that is throwing everyone else on their feet. I cannot believe my eyes. Not only the young ones, but the Vice Chancellor, Deans and Professors are dancing with the powerful verses, “we made it to the top from the bottom.” The old have turned into young, enjoying wholeheartedly with child-like joy and unadulterated happiness, becoming an integral part of the insights that they usually keep at a distance. The cheerful mood is further augmented when the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Study on COVID-19 vaccine roll-out in Malawi is portrayed through a comedy

skit. Smiling inwardly, I think, “can research dissemination be so fun? The day ends with a video of the RealTime Evaluation of COVID-19, my, oh my, I don’t want it to end. I look around. The audience wants more.

UNICEF, what an incredible dissemination this has been, what a groundbreaking model your ‘Fusion approach’ is – mixing the power of evidence with the creativity of arts; linking the youthful energy with the wisdom of researchers, policymakers and civil society; building bridges among those who need to meet more; making the old young and the young wiser and more experienced. UNICEF, now that you have piloted this, don’t forget to share and use this more. I, the old Great Hall at UNIMA, want to feel young again. I seek to see this happening more and look forward to embracing you again. Come, visit me soon.

* Authored by: Mussarrat Youssuf, Chief, Research, Evaluation and Knowledge Management Section, UNICEF Malawi



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Operations Effectiveness

The operations function ensures the effective and efficient achievement of organizational results for children by enabling programmes through management excellence approaches and the optimization of organizational resource.

Left: UNICEF Malawi Child Protection Specialist Malla Mabona hands over a recreational kit to Malawi Children's Corner in Machinga. UNICEF supports the Government to train children's corner facilitators and provides recreational materials for the children

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Chikondi

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021, UNICEF Malawi's efforts around Operations Effectiveness were largely successful, as the result of careful management in the areas of administration, finance, human resources, ICT, supply and logistics, quality assurance and security, all of which led to efficient and effective programme delivery, ultimately producing positive outcomes for children.

In 2021, US\$ 55.8 million worth of goods and services were procured and contracted by the country office. About US\$ 10.5 million was for COVID-19 supplies and equipment. As the "supply chain coordinator" for the UN country team's joint COVID-19 response, UNICEF also continued to play a leading role in national product quantification and forecasting, procurement, logistics and coordination of the response through the "supply portal".

With staff continuing to work from home, UNICEF's administration and ICT teams worked tirelessly to provide the necessary internet connectivity for out-of-office locations. ICT also completed the implementation of new wired LAN and wireless LAN services following the rollout of a new cloud-based infrastructure management system, which includes cloud printing services. Additionally, to prepare for staff to return to the office, the administration unit ensured that safety measures and guidelines were put in place, limiting possible indoor exposure to COVID-19.

To strengthen internal controls and streamline work processes, teams also worked to implement the Digitalizing Operations initiative, successfully setting up the FACE Form management module, enabling partners and service providers to submit invoices electronically. At the same time, the finance unit effectively managed limited resources. Business

Right: An airport cargo preparing to load a palette containing 119,040 doses of COVID-19 vaccines procured with support from the UK Government via the COVAX facility

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Moving
Minds

transactions processed by UNICEF Global Shared Services Centre were monitored for timely and accurate recording. Year-end account closure activities were conducted successfully, and all required annexes were completed.

The implementation of effective internal controls and risk management procedures, including improved ERM and eGRC systems, enabled UNICEF managers to make informed, prudent decisions. UNICEF Malawi’s Governance Statutory Committees followed policies and standard operating procedures as it monitored implementation of management priorities, ensuring accountability and proper risk management.

The human resources unit demonstrated a commitment to staff wellbeing during the pandemic, holding regular “care sessions” with employees, effectively managing issues regarding teleworking

and virtual onboarding. HR also arranged counselling sessions for staff when it came to bereavement and mental health. The adoption of virtual education initiatives enabled the continuation of staff learning and development as the completion rate for mandatory training came in at 100 per cent and all staff completed their 2021 performance evaluation reviews.

The country office security team last year intensified safety monitoring and security measures regarding UNICEF personnel and infrastructure, mitigating the risk of security incidents that could negatively impact staff and affect the normal function of the office. The office also took necessary steps to ensure the functionality of two “business continuity plan” locations, and provided the necessary support for flexible working arrangements, such as working from home.

Major Achievements



US\$55.8 million worth of goods and services were procured and contracted to deliver results for children.



With staff continuing to work from home, UNICEF’s administration and ICT teams worked tirelessly to provide the necessary **connectivity** for out-of-office locations.



To strengthen internal controls and streamline work processes, UNICEF implemented the **Digitalizing Operations** initiative, successfully setting up the FACE Form management module.



A feature story

From Copenhagen to Lilongwe and beyond - Delivering COVID-19 vaccines to the last mile

Left to right: UNICEF Chief of Health standing beside a palette of COVID-19 vaccines procured with support from the British Government

UNICEF Malawi Chief of Health, Malawi's Minister of Health Khumbize Chiponda, Acting British High Commissioner Fiona Ritchie and Secretary for Health Dr Charles Mwansambo receiving COVID-19 vaccine shipment at Kamuzu International Airport in Lilongwe

© UNICEF Malawi/2021/
Moving Minds

Around 2 pm on a Saturday afternoon, a plane carrying COVID-19 vaccine doses lands at Kamuzu International Airport in Lilongwe. Malawi's Minister of Health Khumbize Kandodo Chiponda and other senior government officials, Acting British High Commissioner Fiona Ritchie and UNICEF Malawi's chief of health are on the tarmac to receive this latest consignment delivered from the UK Government through the COVAX Facility.

At the time this consignment arrived in late 2021, only about 261,000 people had been fully vaccinated. The need is apparent.

"We are excited to receive yet another consignment of COVID 19 vaccines. This is timely," said Minister Chiponda.

The devil is in the details

About 30 kilometres away from the airport, at the country's national vaccine store, Mphatso Mtenje's day is about to get busy. Mtenje is the cold chain manager. He makes sure all vaccines are stored and delivered safely to their destinations once they arrive in Malawi. As the vaccines are being transported to the vaccine store for onward distribution, Mphatso and his team are ready with distribution instructions. Their goal is to dispatch the vaccines to public hospitals and health

centres that Saturday night so that early Monday morning eligible Malawians can get their jab.

"When the vaccines arrive, I check the documents to confirm that what we are receiving is indeed the consignment we are expecting. After that, I verify that the vaccines have arrived safely, at optimum temperature," explains Mtenje.

There is a lot happening in the vaccine store. Mtenje and his team are in the cold room unpacking, sorting, counting, confirming vaccines for Malawi's 28 districts and repacking them safely in the cold boxes which have been conditioned in advance.

"We use the cold boxes to transport small shipments at the right temperature, in this case between the range of two and 8 degrees celsius. The temperature must be just right to safeguard the potency of the vaccines. UNICEF helps us to achieve this by procuring and installing cold rooms at the national vaccine store and refrigerators for the districts, including solar-powered refrigerators in remote health facilities that are not connected to the power grid," says Mtenje.





The cold rooms and refrigerators have been procured with funding from GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance. As more vaccines arrive from the US, UK and French governments, through COVAX, Mtenje's routine is the same. He and his team ensure the doses allocated to each district are transported safely and quickly across Malawi.

Through the COVAX Facility, UNICEF is working with manufacturers and partners on the procurement of COVID-19 vaccine doses, as well as managing freight, logistics and storage. Every week thousands of COVID-19 doses are being transported from manufactures and from UNICEF's warehouse in Copenhagen to countries in need. UNICEF chief of health Damte says this work is important for children. "COVID-19 has disrupted essential services, including children's education. It is important to work together to end the pandemic and give children the education, healthcare and protection they need consistently."

To the last mile

At Nthenje Health Centre, Golden Chizungu, a health surveillance assistant is pleased with the number of people showing up to get the vaccine. He says things were slow in the beginning because there was a lot of misinformation

surrounding the virus and the vaccines.

"We engaged the communities about the pandemic, and the efficacy of the vaccine and more people started coming. After we ran out of vaccines in June, many people were worried about when they would get the next dose. Now that we have received another consignment, the turn-up is much better than before with some returning for their second dose and others getting the first dose," explains Chizungu.

Maggie Nyamulani used to work for a family of five in Lilongwe. She cooked, cleaned and managed other chores commuting from her home three kilometres away. When COVID-19 hit, she was laid off as her daily commute put her and her employer at risk of COVID-19. This job was Nyamulani's only source of income, so life has been tough.

"I just got the vaccine, and I encourage others to get it. As more people get the vaccine, our lives can return to normal so that I can get back to work and take care of my children," says Nyamulani.



Partnerships

Building strategic partnerships is a critical component of UNICEF's work. Partnerships bring like minded organizations together, combining know-how and resources, to deliver the best possible results for children.

Left: A caregiver screening a child of malnutrition as part of the interventions in the Scaling-Up-Nutrition project being implemented with support from KFW

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Malawi/2021/HD Plus

In 2021, UNICEF collaborated with stakeholders ranging from government bodies at both national and district level, research institutions, universities, and both national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and UN agencies to provide health, HIV, nutrition and early childhood development services. These partnerships were instrumental in ensuring continuity of services, especially in the context of COVID-19. The country office worked with a total of 85 implementing partners last year, of which 59 were government partners and 26 were civil society partners.

A total of US\$ 46,464,925 was raised for programme implementation in 2021 from the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO), the Irish Embassy, the Royal Norwegian Embassy, KFW, the Japanese Embassy, USAID and the Global Fund to Fight HIV and AIDS.

A collaboration between UNICEF and the World Bank, to scale up fecal sludge management (FSM) services in Lilongwe, was a key highlight for the water, sanitation and hygiene section in 2021. By providing technical and financial assistance, UNICEF helped manage the Bank's US\$19 million investment in FSM and leveraged a new US\$45 million investment. The collaboration is a model for FSM and can now be replicated in other urban areas in Malawi.

UNICEF continued its partnership with the German and Irish Governments, the European Union and World Bank, to strengthen government capacity to ensure effective implementation of the Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP), by drafting a five-year SCTP strategic plan.

UNICEF and the German Agency for International Cooperation also worked

together to support a pilot for the enhanced harmonized payment solution for SCTP. In the meantime, under Malawi's child protection cluster, 34 partner agencies were mobilized to support the implementation of the COVID-19 response plan focusing mainly on mental health and psychosocial support, and ending child marriages.

In partnership with the World Bank, European Union, FCDO, USAID, Royal Norwegian Embassy and others, UNICEF co-chaired the Education Services Joint Fund and Ministry of Education Technical Working Group. UNICEF also initiated

a partnership with USAID to ensure that schools constructed through the Secondary Education Empowerment for Development programme were equipped with furniture to ensure a conducive learning environment for children.

Partnerships with the private sector, such as the work done with the British company, ARM through UNICEF UK, have played a pivotal role in advancing innovation initiatives, particularly through in-kind, in-kind or low-cost collaborations.

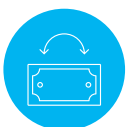
Major Achievements



Last year, UNICEF worked with a total of **85 implementing partners**, of which **59 were government partners** and **26 were civil society partners**.



A UNICEF and the World Bank collaboration to **scale up fecal sludge management services** in Lilongwe, was a key highlight in 2021.



UNICEF continued its partnership with German and Irish governments, the European Union and World Bank, to strengthen government capacity, ensuring effective implementation of the **Social Cash Transfer Programme**.

Delivering as one United Nations

Below: Six-year-old Retisha Kachenjela washes her hands at Chimiko Village in Thyolo. Her family receives support from Afikepo, Afikepo, a United Nations Joint Programme on nutrition being implemented by FAO and UNICEF with funding from the European Union.

© UNICEF
Malawi/2021/Chikondi

UNICEF remains committed to partnering with other United Nations (UN) agencies and the Malawi Government to deliver results for children and women. In 2021, UNICEF participated in ten joint programmes covering a variety of sectors that are significant in contributing to country's development initiatives. These programmes account for 53 per cent of the total funding for joint programmes implemented in 2021.

The Together for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), was pivotal in Malawi achieving key targets on HIV treatment for children, adolescents, and adults living with HIV. The European Union-funded Spotlight Initiative strengthened legal literacy on sexual gender-based violence, sexual reproductive health and rights, and child marriage among 1,100 key community leaders.

Over 223,000 learners in primary schools supported by the Norwegian-funded

Joint Programme for Girls Education have benefitted from various interventions such as the provision of school meals, improved delivery and quality of education, protection services, life skills, and comprehensive adolescent sexual reproductive health education.

Other joint programmes included the National Registration and Identification System project funded by UNDP USA; the Umoyo Wathu Health Systems Strengthening project funded by the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office; the United National Multi-Partner Trust on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Promoting Sustainable Partnerships for Empowered Resilience; Social Protection for the SDGs in Malawi; the Unified Budget, Results, and Accountability Framework, and Strengthening Malawi's Financing Architecture at National and Local Level. UNICEF also partnered with other UN agencies to support Malawi's COVID-19 response with financial assistance from the SDG Acceleration Fund.



A feature story

Scholarships and hostels bring hope for school girls in Malawi



Left to right: Aisha on the bike she uses to ease her commute to school

Aisha with the headteacher and deputy headteacher at the hostels constructed with support from the Spotlight Initiative

© UNICEF Malawi/2022/ Tembo

To make it to school on time, Aisha Mussa* had to get up long before dawn. She would complete her chores, fix herself a simple breakfast and then walk for hours in the dark.

“Because my school was so far away, I had to get up very early in the morning,” she says. “But I was determined to complete my education, so I had no choice but to walk.”

Walking long distances to school is just one of the barriers facing secondary school girls in Malawi. But if they stay at home, they risk gender-based violence and being forced into early marriages.

While Aisha was determined to continue attending the Puteya Community Day Secondary School (CDSS) in the eastern district of Machinga, her parents lacked the money they needed to pay for her school fees and exams costs.

“I had no money to pay for my Standard 8 exam fees. The guy I started seeing offered to pay. But before my results came out, I realized I was expecting a child. Then I found out I passed my exams. I felt so hurt.”

It was about this time Aisha learned about the Spotlight Initiative. Being implemented by UNICEF and UNDP, UNFPA and UN Women, the 500 million euro global initiative provides scholarships to girls and is designed to protect them from gender-based violence, including harmful social norms.

In Malawi, the multi-year initiative, funded by the European Union, aims to have a significant impact in the lives of women and girls in six districts across the country.

Say Aisha: “My family could no longer afford to pay school fees and my mother went to explain my situation to the headteacher. He told her that I would qualify for a Spotlight scholarship. This is what has been supporting me to date.”

“I felt so good to receive a scholarship. It would’ve been a real struggle to find the money for school fees.”

As the first child in her family to go to secondary school, Aisha was very excited. The scholarship provided her with a schoolbag, shoes, uniforms, exercise books, and sanitary pads.



Even better, it is expected that Aisha will take a spot at a new hostel being built at her school with funding from Spotlight, meaning she will no longer have to walk there from home.

“I am looking forward to moving into the hostels because I live very far from school. When you’re staying in a hostel, your focus is on school and learning. You don’t have to worry about doing house chores. My focus will simply be on learning.”

Dyton Chitseko, head teacher at CDSS, says the hostel will accommodate about 96 female students and will go a long way to protect girls and keep them in school.

“The issue of distance makes the children vulnerable and puts them at risk of experiencing violence and sexual harassment as they walk to and from school, particularly the girls,” says Chitseko.

“We expect the hostel will create a safe space for students and give them more time for learning and improving their grades.”

He said having girls stay on campus was also likely to contribute to a reduction of teen pregnancies.

So far, hostels are under construction at Puteya, Mpatsa and Magoti secondary schools in Machinga and Nsanje Districts. Furthermore, 364 girls benefit from Spotlight scholarship in the six districts.

Simon Jan Molendijk, UNICEF Malawi chief of education and adolescents, said some 31 per cent of girls in Malawi’s rural areas have a child by the time they turn 18.

“To reverse this trend, Spotlight is investing in scholarships for girls. At the same time, we are establishing girls-only hostels and toilets. We believe these changes will reduce school dropout rates and promote better educational and health outcomes for girls,” says Molendijk.

*Aisha Mussa is not her real name.

Major Donors

The major development partners we worked with in 2021 were:



From
the People of Japan



Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

In addition to funds received, UNICEF Malawi also received support from its National Committees:

USA

UK

Germany

Ireland

Finland

Norway

Spain

Switzerland

Hong Kong

Luxembourg

Korea

Sweden

France

Acknowledgements

Below: Students playing football at Mpondamwala School in Lilongwe District, Malawi May 14 2021

© UNICEF2020EDWARD
KABUYE_5735.JPG

UNICEF's work is funded entirely through the voluntary support of millions of people around the world and our partners in government, civil society and the private sector. Voluntary contributions enable UNICEF to deliver on its mandate to protect children's rights, to help meet their basic needs, and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.

We want to thank all our partners for their generous support which has enabled us to respond quickly to the humanitarian and development needs of children in Malawi in 2021.

A special acknowledgment goes out to the European Union, the Government of Japan, the Government of Ireland, the Government of Germany KFW, the Global Partnership for Education, Education Cannot Wait, the Royal Norwegian Embassy, the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, USAID, Gavi the Vaccine Alliance, the Global Fund and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency for helping UNICEF continue to give children the education, clean water, health care, nutrition, protection - and childhoods they deserve.

UNICEF also appreciates and acknowledges the role of NGO partners, international organizations and sister UN agencies, whose partnerships have been critical to help us support the Government of Malawi and achieve results for children and women in Malawi.





Caregivers with their children in T/A Nkukula in Dowa district. The women are beneficiaries of the Scaling-Up-Nutrition Programme being implemented by UNICEF and the Government of Malawi with funding from KFW.

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Budget Overview

In 2021, UNICEF Malawi allocated and utilized a total of about US\$ 57.1 million from various development partners to achieve the planned results for children in Malawi. Most of the funds allocated and utilized were funded by various development partners through Other Resources Regular (ORR) funding type, representing 66 per cent of the total funds.

Figure 1
Allocation and Utilization by funding type (in US\$ million)

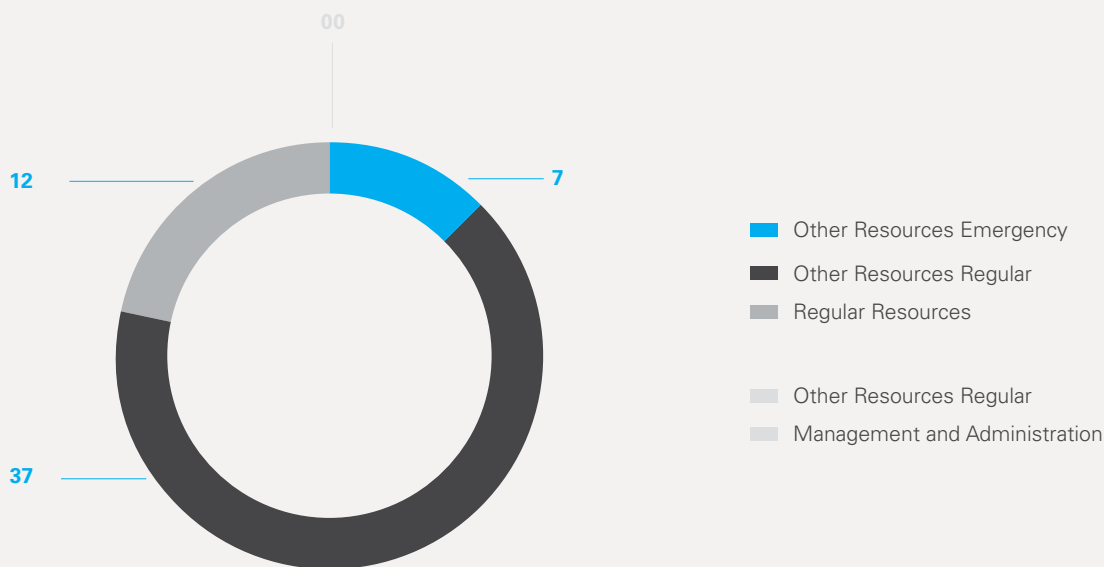
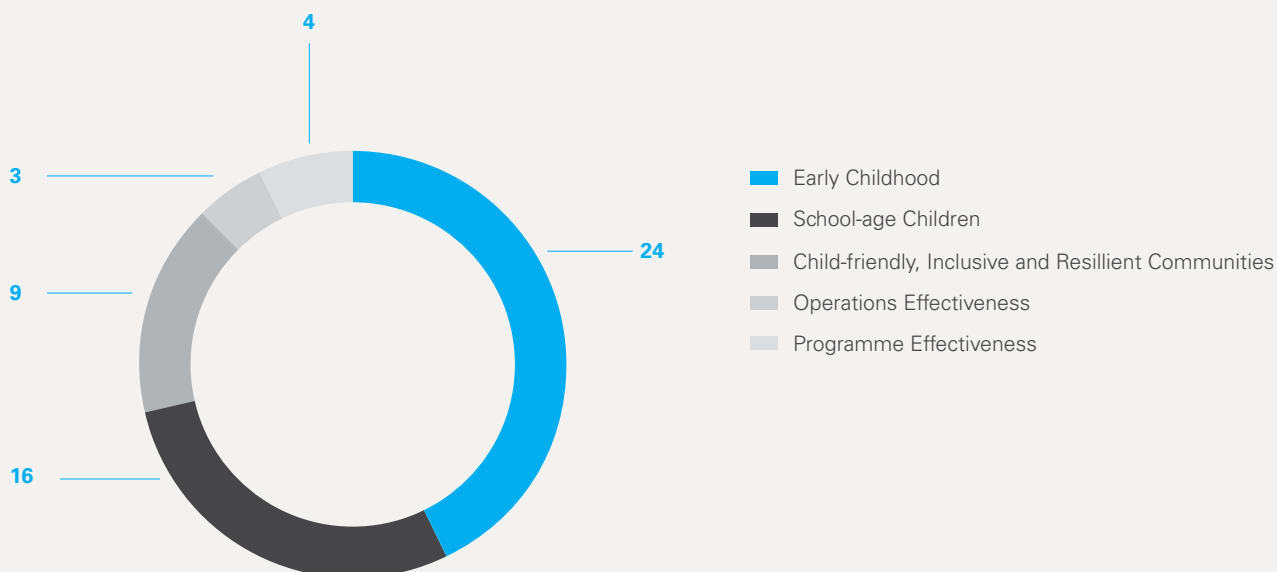


Figure 2
Utilization by pillar/Outcome (in US\$ million)
The utilization per various programmatic goals:



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