

Malawi

Update on the context and situation of children

Malawi remains one of the least developed countries in the world, ranking 174 out of 189 countries in terms of Human Development Index (UNDP, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted the country, lowering its economic growth prospects and taking a heavy toll on human capital.

GDP growth was forecasted at 2.2 per cent in 2021 and 3 per cent in 2022 (IMF, 2021), which means a decline in GDP per capita growth for 2021 and a slight growth for 2022, given a population growth rate of 2.7 per cent (World Bank, 2020). The economic situation has been negatively affected by the devaluation of the Kwacha, the rise in inflation and the heightened debt pressures.

Poverty remains high, with about 50.7 per cent of the population living below the national poverty line in 2019/20, a slight decline from 51.5 per cent in 2016/17, and ultra-poverty has slightly increased. Furthermore, 60.7 per cent children are multidimensionally poor.

Malawi continued to be an active participant in the international human rights system in 2021. In addition to being chair of the UN Least Developed Countries Group and Chair of the SADC, Malawi was elected to be a member of the Human Rights Council and commenced this role in 2021.

Malawi underwent its Universal Periodic Review in November 2020 and the government adopted several child rights related recommendations. In 2021 the Government paid attention to the need for a coordinated multi-stakeholder approach to ending Child Marriage.

In December, the National Statistical Office (NSO) released the Multiple Cluster Indicator Survey (MICS 2019/20) results. This helped the country to assess the status of persisting gaps in children's rights.

In the area of **child and maternal health**, some slight improvements in child mortality were recorded despite still falling short of SDG targets. Neonatal mortality rate declined from 35 (DHS 2015/6) to 26 deaths per 1,000 live births (MICS 2019/20).

Malawi remains a **high HIV burden country** despite strides in the prevention and treatment response which has seen national prevalence decline from 9.4 per cent (2015/16) to 8.9 per cent (2020/21, MPHIA).

Marriages before the age of 18 remain a stark reality for many young girls in Malawi despite the proportion of women age 20-24 first married or in union before age 18 declined from 42 per cent (DHS 2015/6) to 38 per cent (MICS 2019/20), compared to only 7 per cent for men.

In the area of **nutrition**, the results showed that stunting slightly declined from 37.1 per cent to 35.1 per cent, still above the SDG target. Stunting was higher in boys (39 per cent) than girls (32 per cent).

Slightly more than 10% of children age 5-17 years were in **child labour**, down from 38 per cent in 2015. About one fifth of children in child labour worked under hazardous conditions. The problem is more pronounced in rural compared to urban areas.

Among children under 5 years, 67 per cent had their **birth registered**, up from 34 per cent while 22 per cent had a birth certificate. Birth registration was directly correlated with the level of education of the mother.

The MICS results also showed that about 1 in 10 of children age 2-17 years were reported to have at least one **functional difficulty**.

Eighty-two percent of all children aged 1-14 years were subjected to at least some form of **violent discipline** with little variation across locations, education of mother, wealth quintile and sex of the child.

On access to **WASH** services, 88 per cent of the population use improved water sources against the SDG target of 100 per cent. High levels of water contamination with e-coli at water source (60.2 per cent) were reported. On sanitation, 46 per cent of the household members in Malawi are using basic sanitation facilities and 6.7 per cent practice open defecation.

Attendance to **early childhood education** (ECE) programmes was low (34 per cent). Attendance to ECE was much more likely among children from the richest (51 per cent) than the poorest households (21 per cent).

Despite high attendance (93 per cent), completion rate for **primary** is only 33 per cent, with huge disparities between richest households (67 per cent) and poorest households (11 per cent). **Lower secondary school** completion rate is low (23 per cent), especially for children living in poorest households (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. This paints a picture of extreme learning poverty, resulting in poor human capital gains that compromise economic development.

In 2021, **COVID-19** continued to be a considerable programming factor with indiscriminate impacts on populations, livelihoods, and the socio-economic situation. Malawi experienced three COVID-19 waves in 2021 and recorded 72,135 positive cases and 2,343 deaths. The country also had highest weekly positivity rate (41 per cent) recorded at the peak of the 4th wave in December 2021. Case fatality rate has been above global and regional average for most part of the year in the range of 2.6 – 2.9 per cent, reaching 3.15 per cent at the end of 2021. To address this situation, UNICEF supported the development and roll out of vaccination plan that has reached 6.2 per cent coverage of the targeted 11 million population above 18 years.

The Mental Health and Psycho-social support (MHPSS) taskforce annual workplan was developed in 2021 by a cross sectoral task team co-led by Ministry of Gender Social Welfare and Ministry of Health. Approximately 34,000 people benefitted from MHPSS services (54 per cent children).

An estimated 9 million people (51 per cent children) needed humanitarian support due to COVID-19 pandemic impacts and climate related shocks. Additionally, about 1.5 million people were not able to meet their annual food requirements. With support from the UN, the government developed a contingency plan for potential movement of 15,000 people from northern Mozambique due to increasing violence.

With support from the UN, the government developed a Socio-Economic Recovery Plan (SERP 2021-2023) in 2021 to support recovery from the impact of COVID-19.

Major contributions and drivers of results

Similar to 2020, UNICEF Malawi adapted its 2021 annual management priorities to ensure continuity of essential services while maintaining the COVID-19 pandemic preparedness, prevention and response. Following a comprehensive programme review undertaken in 2020, key programmatic and management adjustments were effected in 2021. These included strategic shifts seeking to accelerate results for children: from service delivery to system strengthening, modeling for scale up and strengthened engagement in agendas lagging behind (e.g. climate change, early childhood education, inclusive education and child marriage). This strengthened UNICEF's contribution to the

government's development agenda as well as to the UN priorities for 2021.

Among the 2021 management priorities, the office fully met 83 per cent of the annual indicator targets. Key results achieved included more than four fifths of staff reporting that they felt respected by their colleagues (84 per cent) and 86 per cent feeling safe to raise their concerns with management; surpassing the annual target for COVID-19 vaccine doses procured via the COVAX facility by 100 per cent; three major ECD advocacy events; 12 engagements with donors contributing to resource mobilization; as well as supporting the development of National Youth Policy and its Investment Plan. UNICEF Malawi continued with its change management journey supported by the second phase of the Developmental Evaluation.

On the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the main focus was on ensuring access to vaccination. UNICEF has been a major partner in the national COVID-19 response through its support on procurement and delivery of 2,8 million doses of vaccines through the COVAX facility. As a result, 1,6 million vaccine doses had been administered by mid-December, with 643,709 people being fully vaccinated and 596,932 more people receiving at least the first dose. UNICEF also prioritized support to essential cold-chain systems, risk communication and community engagement, leveraging the HIV EID/VL POC testing platform for COVID-19 testing and establishing effective monitoring and evaluation systems for vaccine roll-out contributing to 6.2 per cent coverage of the targeted 11 million population above 18 years. Partnership with faith leaders has helped to engage 100,000 people within communities of faith for prevention, vaccine uptake and the secondary impacts of child marriages and teenage pregnancies.

In the area of maternal and child health, institutional delivery remained high (92 per cent) despite some slight decrease during the early days of the pandemic. The skilled birth rate in the target districts is also high at 96.1 per cent Post Natal Care visits in the first 48hrs for both the newborn and the mother stands at 68 per cent against the target of 65 per cent. These achievements were facilitated by the recent institution of Quality Improvement Teams at all levels of the health delivery system as well district health systems strengthening initiatives such as district leadership training. Several strategies were used to improve quality of care in targeted districts, including collaborative approaches on knowledge and data sharing, skills improvement through mentorships and supervision, and support for the creation and sustenance of quality improvement measures. UNICEF contributed to efforts in strengthening community health systems, including information systems. A major contributor to improved routine vaccination was the development of an urban immunization strategy.

Malawi has achieved its treatment and viral suppression targets among children aged 0-14 years and adults living with HIV. Epidemic control was achieved in 2020 with impressive 92 per cent, 95 per cent and 94 per cent results across the treatment cascade (Malawi Population based HIV Impact Assessment, 2020/21). The majority of children living with HIV who are on treatment were switched to optimized treatment regimens to reduce adverse side-effects and boost viral suppression. However, disruption of the global supply chain system due to the COVID-19 pandemic created severe delays of 9-12 months for some of the medicines.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, UNICEF supported the operationalization of Standard Operating Procedures to ensure the continuity of essential health and nutrition services in the context of COVID-19. As a result, over 85 per cent of children 6 – 59 months received Vitamin A supplementation (VAS) through either routine or campaign approaches. A total of 433,467 (70 per cent) children 6-59 months received routine VAS following expansion of health facilities providing services from 20 per cent to 50 per cent. Child Health Days were supported in 19 districts reaching over 1,8 million children 6-59 months with VAS.

UNICEF provided technical and financial support for the launch of the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) 3.0 strategy by the President as part of facilitating a conducive nutrition strategic framework to address the triple burden of malnutrition.

A total of 29,008 children (52 per cent girls) with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) were admitted and treated through Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) programme representing 66.3 per cent. The lives of 26,047 girls and boys under the age of five were saved after successfully recovering from SAM after being treated in the CMAM program, representing a 92 per cent recovery rate.

In 2021, through support to 414,093 care givers and 238,564 pregnant and lactating mothers, 740,357 children under five had increased access to maternal, infant, and young child nutrition services. This led to improved quality of diets (for example, minimum dietary diversity increased from 30.4 per cent to 39.3 per cent).

As part of the community-based interventions, 1.4 million parents and caregivers were reached through multimedia platforms. A further 164,735 online audiences were engaged with information on positive parenting through the ECD multimedia campaign content titled “*Mmera Mpoyamba*” contributing to improved care practices among caregivers of children between 0-5 years. The launch of a year long ECD campaign and Day of African Child commemoration by the President strengthened integration and profiling of importance of ECD services among policy makers, local leaders and various caregivers. A total of 4.9 million primary caregivers in targeted districts have enhanced their childcare and feeding practices through infant and young child feeding education and counselling received through different platforms including home visiting and community radios, and 3-2-1 digital platform.

With funding from the European Union and UNICEF USA, UNICEF Malawi supported the Ministry of Education (MoE) to provide 8,742 vulnerable out-of-school girls with scholarships to complete secondary education in safe schools. A total of 467 secondary school teachers were trained in gender responsive teaching methodologies.

UNICEF Malawi financially and technically supported the government with the development of the National Teacher Policy that advocates for decentralized and equitable deployment of teachers, rural allowances, and the retention of teachers which awaits final approval by the Office of the President and Cabinet; establishment of the Teachers’ Council of Malawi, a professional regulatory body for teacher performance and accountability; completion of the ECD curriculum and syllabus; development of the National Youth Policy and Youth Investment Plan; upgrading and piloting the web-based EMIS system with an offline feature; as well as the development of a national learning assessment framework.

UNICEF initiated engagement with the newly established directorates of Open and Distance E-Learning and Science Technology and Innovation to support a feasibility assessment of the digital education landscape in Malawi in line with GIGA and reimagining education initiatives. Furthermore, the MoE organized a Joint Sector Review meeting to assess progress made in 2021.

UNICEF supported MoE to develop equity-focused district education plans, aligned to the 2020 National Education Sector Investment Plan. The Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy for Malawi is in place with a section on education to help reduce impact of disasters on learning. Through long-term collaboration with private companies such as Mozagua, China Gansu and Sawa Group, climate-resilient water schemes were completed with huge benefits to learners and their communities.

In collaboration with the Department of School Health and Nutrition and the Department of Nutrition and HIV/AIDS, 256,959 school-aged adolescent girls (223,554 in school and 33,405 out of school) received Iron Folic Acid supplementation reducing their susceptibility to anemia. An additional 435,445 children (217,673 girls) in ten targeted districts were empowered to protect themselves from violence and demand protection services and have completed a Safe School’s Empowerment Transformation and Active Citizenship training.

Over a million community members and leaders were reached with back-to-school messages including keeping girls in school. Despite the impact of COVID-19, 3,908,999 children (56 per cent girls)

accessed emergency and non-emergency education services through different UNICEF-supported interventions. Over 1 million children (49 per cent girls) had direct access to COVID-19 emergency response interventions in 2021 which included distribution of ECD kits, provision of chalk boards and recruitment of auxiliary teachers.

UNICEF Malawi supported government to decongest classrooms through the recruitment of 3,270 auxiliary teachers and provision of classroom size tents and movable chalk boards. The procurement and distribution of 60,000 desks has contributed to improved learning environment and classroom participation of approximately 2 million learners (60 per cent females) in primary schools. Furthermore, 15,500 (43 per cent female) out of school adolescents accessed functional literacy, numeracy, economic empowerment and transferable skills trainings.

UNICEF is leading on key sector strategic areas like SDG6 sector financing, climate resilient WASH and sanitation marketing. Strategic engagement with government is underway to create an enabling environment with focus on four strategic initiatives which will be finalized in 2022: (1) Development of WASH Climate Resilient Financing Strategy and Programmatic Framework (2) Revision of the (1995) Water Works Act; (3) support for the participation of Government in COP26 and (4) support for revision of the hydrological water quality mapping (Groundwater Atlas). UNICEF supported the government in developing a Climate Resilient WASH financing strategy. This will help in leveraging the required resources to bring Malawi back on track towards SDG 6 targets.

Evidence generation based on work at grassroot level and the convening capacity of UNICEF have been critical to actively engage different sector stakeholders including the establishment of innovative partnerships with International Financing Institutions which led to leveraging important resources for the sector. As a result a total 27,724 people (13,585 M, 14,139 F) accessed basic sanitation services, 24,037 (11,778M and 12,259F) through market-based sanitation in three districts, while 3,687 (1,807M, 1,880F) through desludging services. In the COVID-19 response, UNICEF supported the Northern Region Water Board (NRWB) to procure and install 283 prepaid water meters at communal water kiosks in low-income urban areas. Additionally, 24,739 people gained access to water through the construction of eight new solar powered water schemes. Capacity building is on-going to ensure sustainability and awareness about the Water User Association approach being promoted.

UNICEF supported the government's decentralization agenda, a main driver for quality service delivery in social sectors most impactful for children. In Public Finance Management, the national and local government authorities' capacity to properly budget and account for funds through the program-based budget was strengthened and Government's capacity to cost, budget for and supply vaccines was strengthened through the preparation of a costing and a supply management tool. UNICEF Malawi also supported the International Monetary Fund in defining conditionalities for the upcoming extended credit facility in health and education sector. Analytical and logistical support was provided to Malawi's Parliament during the budget cycle, generating improvements in the budget oversight function. Furthermore, Civil Society Organisations were supported to produce the new Open Budget Survey. UNICEF Malawi signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with Chikwawa and Nsanje District Councils on implementing the Child Friendly Communities Initiative.

UNICEF supported humanitarian interventions reached more than 7 million people including over a million primary school going children, 120,000 children aged 6 to 59 months and 73,000 children aged 0 to 23 months. UNICEF strengthened capacity building of the Department of Disaster Management Affairs through training of District Civil Protection Committees in six of the 28 districts thereby enabling 500 civil protection committees (CPC) to be better prepared to address the needs of people affected by disasters.

In improving emergency response and building resilience, UNICEF Malawi has upgraded the skills of 330 government and Malawi Red Cross staff who are essential in COVID-19 prevention and also

provided surveillance during emergencies. Civil protection committees at community level were provided with information and skills to effectively use available predictive and early warning data in the flood prone areas of Chikwawa and Nsanje.

UNICEF Malawi supported the COVID-19 cash response reaching over half a million individuals in rural and urban areas. The support in designing an enhanced electronic payment modality called ‘Harmonized Payment Solution’ helped to promote timely and regular transfers and to reduce fiduciary risk leading to key Social Cash Transfer Programme donors (Irish Aid, WB, KFW, EU) deciding to support scale-up of electronic payments for SCTP, following endorsement of the solution by Government. Additionally, over 7,352 calls (39 per cent women) were received at the Call Centre for COVID-19 Urban Cash Intervention, significantly enhancing transparency and accountability. The call center broadcasted 4,2 million SMSs to selected beneficiaries, providing awareness messages and payment notifications.

UNICEF supported case management data verification and quality assurance. UNICEF continues to provide technical and financial assistance to collect administrative data through Rapid Pro for police, judiciary, and social welfare, as well as for select One Stop Centers. Additionally, over 4,500 people have been reached with Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response services. Total of 13,364 (6019M, 7345F) accessed Psychological First Aid from service providers trained across Malawi. The Child Helpline and GBV Crisis Line have received over 4,700 calls.

The office piloted a pioneering multipronged approach for research dissemination through a partnership with University of Malawi engaging with young people, faculty, researchers, policy makers and UN partners. Using a unique approach, UNICEF Malawi used art-based forum created by young people to disseminate key messages from UNICEF-led research reports with over 80 students leading the workshop and hundreds of others participating. Also, our ground-breaking work on knowledge management through smart and appealing knowledge products and platforms such as the UNICEF Learning from Evaluation and Research Note (LEARN) series, Learning Café, Knowledge Bridge and use of videos and posters contributed to breaking silos and nurturing a sharing and learning culture within UNICEF and among partners aimed at enhancing the use of evidence by key stakeholders.

The MOU with the National Planning Commission (NPC) in 2021 positioned UNICEF Malawi to influence child-sensitive development planning through capacity building of NPC and government staff in child rights programming and child sensitive budgeting. UNICEF not only contributed to the development of the first Malawi 10-year implementation plan but is also supporting the development of the first national research agenda in the country.

UNICEF Malawi organized major advocacy events and initiatives involving the highest-level decision-makers and influencers, including the President of Malawi, children and youth. As a result, the office reached over 55 million offline and online audiences with key messages and engaged almost one million people in children related issues. The office's proactive media outreach generated 141 positive, child-focused national and international news coverage, including the Voice of America, NBC and Der Spiegel, mentioning UNICEF. The country office gained about 51,815 new digital followers and had about 90 per cent new visitors on its website. The office also promoted communicating as one UN in Malawi through proactive collaboration with the UN Communications Group.

UN Collaboration and Other Partnerships

UNICEF collaborated with various stakeholders such as government line ministries at both national and district level, research institutions, universities, and both national and international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) and UN agencies to provide health, HIV, nutrition and ECD services. These partnerships were instrumental in ensuring continuity of services, especially in the context of COVID-19. The country office worked with 59 government and 26 civil society partners

and had contingency programme documents signed in advance with five NGO partners, enabling speedy provision of life saving supplies to affected people.

UNICEF Malawi is a member of the Education Development Partners Group. UNICEF co-chairs the Education Services Joint Fund and Ministry of Education Technical Working Groups including Basic Education, Quality Research and Standards with membership from the World Bank, European Union, FCDO, USAID, Royal Norwegian Embassy and others. To strengthen coordination in secondary education expansion, UNICEF also initiated a partnership with USAID to ensure that schools constructed through their Secondary Education Empowerment for Development programme are equipped with furniture.

The partnership between UNICEF and the World Bank to scale up fecal sludge management (FSM) services in Lilongwe has been one of the key highlights for the WASH programme in 2021. Through its technical and financial assistance, UNICEF helped to de-risk the main World Bank investment for FSM worth \$19 million and leveraged a new investment worth \$45 million. This work is largely influencing the development of a clear institutional set-up for FSM in Lilongwe, which can be replicated in other urban areas in Malawi. It is estimated that, so far, 5,000 people indirectly benefitted from leveraging resources.

Furthermore, UNICEF continued to partner with German and Irish Government, the European Union and World Bank to strengthen government capacity for effective implementation of the Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP), and ILO on drafting five-year SCTP strategic plan. UNICEF and GIZ partnered to support the finalization and piloting the enhanced Harmonized Payment Solution for SCTP. Through the protection cluster, 34 partners were mobilized to support the implementation of the COVID-19 response plan focusing mainly on Mental Health and Psycho Social Support and ending child marriages.

Partnerships with private sector (e.g. ARM through UNICEF UK), particularly through in-kind, in-kind or low-cost collaborations, have played a pivotal role in moving the needle from proof-of-concept to small-scale success of innovation initiatives.

In 2021, UNICEF Malawi continued to contribute to eight UN joint programmes. The Spotlight Initiative (EU funded) contributed to strengthening legal literacy on Sexual and Gender Based Violence, Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), and child marriage. Other joint programmes included Joint Programme on Girls Education (Norway funded); Promoting Sustainable Partnerships for Empowered Resilience; KULIMA/AFIKEPO on food security and nutrition (EC funded); National Registration & Identification System project (UNDP); Together for SRHR and HIV and gender-based violence services (SIDA funded); Social Protection for the SDGs in Malawi and Strengthening Malawi's Financing Architecture at National and Local Level (SDG fund). UNICEF also partnered with other UN entities to activate the UN Network for Scaling Up Nutrition.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

Against the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF Malawi scaled up efforts to explore adaptive programming and innovative approaches including remote monitoring of programmes and joint resource mobilization aimed at sustaining continuity of essential services while dealing with the COVID-19 preparedness, response and recovery. Through our internal pillar coordination and structure, based on the life-cycle approach, UNICEF Malawi continued to jointly mobilize resources through ongoing UN partnerships and donor coordination, within the framework of the country office resource mobilization strategy and recently established a resource mobilization task force. Together with other UN entities, UNICEF Malawi has also tapped into SDG acceleration funds.

COVID-19 resources were used as a strategic opportunity to leverage investment in strengthening routine systems and programmes including immunization, oxygen supply, newborn care and infection, prevention and control services in health facilities.

In the WASH sector, the main lessons were around the definition of different financing solutions to bring the country back on track for the achievement of SDG6. The UNICEF SDG costing tool revealed the huge financial resources required to meet the sector goals, providing a lesson that the sector requires to work on different financial solutions to make timely progress each year.

Lessons learnt from the evaluation of UNICEF's work on cash transfer programming in emergencies have led to increased advocacy efforts with a focus on harmonized e-payments, the improvement of targeting mechanisms and coordination across the humanitarian-development nexus. Greater efforts were made to build Government's capacity, including at district level, for instance by supporting the development and roll-out of an innovative tool enabling Malawi's national social protection system to be horizontally expanded for the first time. The collaboration with UN sister agencies on cash transfers in emergencies has also been improved, including with a Joint UNICEF-WFP Annual Workplan and a joint position paper on Shock-Sensitive Social Protection (forthcoming).

UNICEF's direct engagement on the COVID-19 cash response included the establishment of a call centre for grievance and redress mechanisms and monitoring activities. This emergency call centre is now being transitioned into a permanent national structure with added functionalities and the capacity to provide support to development programmes.

The use of innovative and pioneering approaches by integrating art-forms into research dissemination strengthened participatory learning among youth and academia. Over 80 students directly participated and hundreds of others attended the research dissemination workshop. During the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle(Drones) summative evaluation and developmental evaluation, the participatory and consultative processes involving all programmes and key stakeholders proved instrumental to promote involvement, ownership and responsiveness as well as development of relevant and user-friendly knowledge products.

The real time evaluation of the COVID-19 response identified the engagement of UNICEF's supply section in the support and facilitation of the global supply portal to stakeholders in Malawi as a good practice. This mechanism will benefit the aid community and government bodies in the event of a global threats that challenges the availability of supplies. An additional lesson stems from the diversification of supplies through local procurement; consolidating relations with local producers and suppliers will be key in future situations of shortage of global supplies.

Although UNICEF got overwhelming positive media coverage, there were always reputational risks. UNICEF's increasingly visible role in the COVID-19 response and delivery of vaccines posed such risks with shipping challenges being attributed to UNICEF. UNICEF responded swiftly and in an agile manner with public statements, responses, and proactive communication with Government and Development Partners.

The summative evaluation of the impact of using drones on health and other outcomes recommended that when advocating and fundraising for and designing innovation initiatives, UNICEF must adopt a child-centred and problem-first approach, in other words, what humanitarian or development challenge we want to solve to improve the well-being of children, rather than a technology-first, solution-driven method. With this mindset shift, the office decided to integrate drones and data technologies into relevant multi-sectoral programmes (e.g. health supply chain, and aerial mapping for disaster planning and response). A further useful recommendation was that UNICEF should design and undertake projects that promote the continuation and scale-up of drones, while conducting studies on its cost effectiveness and sustainability. These programmes must specifically have deliverables on data, transparency and cost analysis across all aspects of production, use, implementation, adoption,

integration and post-project effects or impacts.

The key lessons learnt from the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health evaluation on the Quality of Care Project in five high burden districts is the value of deploying Quality Improvement Teams within the health facilities combined with the use of score cards, which enabled feedback mechanisms within communities to raise their concerns and inputs on their health service experiences.

UNICEF Malawi has tested, scaled and adopted several high-impact innovations in 2021 in close collaboration with young people. Some of the key achievements on the innovation front included the Intelligent Community Health Information System, and the work through the African Drone and Data Academy which has equipped 440 young people from 25 African countries with 21st century skills.

UNICEF Malawi is currently supporting the Ministry of Education with internet connectivity to promote its readiness to use digital technologies to ensure learning in line with the global initiative of reimagining education. Digital solutions also contribute to strategies aimed to increase girls' access to secondary education through open, distance education and electronic learning.

The country office reviewed its disability programming in 2021. Starting with work planning for 2022. The office reflected that whilst work is being done on inclusive education, there is further room to prioritize disability focused interventions, capacity strengthening of implementing partners on disability disaggregated data collection as well as establishing strong partnerships with disability oriented organizations.