

Update on the context and situation of children

In 2019, UNICEF Country Office (CO) continued its cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Malawi (GoM) within the framework of its new Country Programme (CP) 2019-2023 supporting the implementation of Malawi's Growth and Development Strategy III (MGDS III) aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The strong commitment of the Government towards advancing children's rights and the overall operational environment remained conducive to delivering quality programmes for children with a focus on leaving no child behind. Sub-regional developments, such as the escalation of insurgency in Mozambique, did not have a spill over effect on Malawi. UNICEF Malawi maintained strong partnerships with development partners and was able to mobilize US\$ 53 million, 19 per cent of the required CP needs, to deliver quality services for children.

Malawi's economy remained stable with projected Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 4.6 per cent in 2018/19, a recovery from 2.7 per cent in 2015/16. Despite the impact of cyclone Idai in early 2019 which affected 870,000 people, of which 430,000 children^[1], timely relief efforts coupled with a stable macroeconomic environment and continued foreign investments sustained the country's growth^[2]. The high dependence on rain-fed agriculture and weather-related shocks, however, continue to pose risks to Malawi's economy. Poverty remains widespread affecting 56 per cent of the rural population. Extreme poverty continues to be high, due to food insecurity, low incomes and acute inequalities (a GINI index of 44.7)^[3]. Some 1.06 million people, especially in the southern region of the country, remain food insecure requiring urgent humanitarian assistance during the lean season from October 2019 to March 2020^[4].

The results of Malawi's May 2019 general elections were challenged in the High Court by two opposition political parties and protests have taken place in the capital city of Lilongwe as well as elsewhere in the country. While impacting programme activities, the CO was able to mitigate the situation and implement plans in close collaboration with partners and other United Nations (UN) agencies.

The Population and Housing Census (PHC) from 2018 indicated a significant 35 per cent population increase between 2008 and 2018 (from 13 to 17.6 million) putting a strain on the capacity of the government to provide adequate basic services. This socio-economic situation continues to jeopardise positive outcomes for children.

Many tangible results for children were achieved during the year in partnership with the GoM. The Presidential assent to the National Children's Commission Act marked a significant milestone towards advancing children's rights in Malawi. The Act establishes a National Children's Commission to facilitate multi-sectoral coordination of child-focused programmes, including monitoring of earmarked domestic and development aid allocations. The President of Malawi renewed the country's commitment toward the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on the occasion of the 30th CRC anniversary.

Development partners supported strongly the GoM in response to the impact of cyclone Idai. UNICEF Malawi provided flood relief and recovery assistance to more than one million people, of whom 574,000 were children, who accessed critical health, water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH), education, nutrition and child protection services, in addition to cash top-up transfers. Some 160,000 children were immunised against measles and 150,000 disaster-affected people were reached with key hygiene and safety messages.^[5]

Despite achievements, challenges for the children remain. Malawi's Demographic Health Survey (MDHS) from 2016 puts the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) at 439 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births limiting the prospects of the country to reach the SDG 3 maternal mortality target. The under-five mortality rate (U5MR), infant mortality and neonatal mortality rates were estimated at 63, 42 and 27 deaths per 1,000 live births respectively. One million people in Malawi continue to live with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), disproportionately affecting women (more than 59 per cent) and new HIV infections impacting twice as many young women aged 15-24 years than young men. Some 1.5 million children aged 5 years and above are living with at least one form of disability and an estimated 85,000 are children with albinism.^[6]

Malawi continues to have a high adolescent birth rate of 136 per 1,000 women^[7]. Adolescents girls married early display high morbidity and mortality rates caused by complications from early pregnancy and premature deliveries, which result also in low birth weight of children.

Challenges to birth registration remain due to slow processing of backlogs in health facilities and District Registration Offices (DROs), the absence of birth registration forms in delivery rooms, and poor awareness of delivery room personnel.

The stunting rate in Malawi remains at 37 per cent (MDHS 2016) due to poor nutrition practices. Only 8 per cent of the children in Malawi meet the minimum requirement for an acceptable diet (MDHS 2015/16). Some 2.4 million children, 41 per cent of the total school-going age children, were out of school in 2018 due to socio-cultural reasons, including child

marriage and the impacts of recurrent disasters (PHC 2018).

Violence against children, including gender-based violence (GBV), continues to persist at home, in schools, institutions, and communities. The risk of violence and exploitation is exacerbated in humanitarian contexts, as evidenced during the cyclone Idai response. Malawi's Traditional Practices Survey from July 2019 highlights that child marriage remains prevalent with 9 per cent of the girls being married before the age of 15 and 42 per cent before the age of 18 as compared to boys (1 and 6 per cent respectively). Marriage below the age of 15 is particularly widespread in the southern region where more girls than boys take part in a range of initiation rituals.

[1] Real time evaluation of UNICEF's response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe, 2019

[2] Africa Economic Outlook, Africa Development Bank, 2019

[3] Ibid

[4] Malawi [Integrated Food Security Phase Classification](#) (IPC), August 2019

[5] Real time evaluation of UNICEF's response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe, 2019

[6] Population and Housing Census (PHC), 2018

[7] MoH (2015) National Youth Friendly Health Services Strategy 2015-2020

Major contributions and drivers of results

In 2019, UNICEF Malawi continued to support tangible outcomes for children in advocating for an improved legislative and normative framework, supporting technically the GoM in delivering on policy implementation, strengthening the capacities of sector professionals and delivering critical health, nutrition, education, child protection and WASH services, while working with communities and families to strengthen their awareness on child and adolescents' rights. In doing so, the CO continued to forge strong partnerships with communities, private sector and development partners, while also seeking innovative ways to do business and deliver programmes.

During the year, advocacy on sustainable vaccine financing, supported by budget analysis, contributed to a 71 per cent increase of the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) budget. In 2019, Malawi introduced the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination for nine-year-old and adolescent girls and 233,000 girls were vaccinated, with strong communication for behaviour change (C4BC) activities contributing to the high HPV uptake. Technical support was provided to strengthen vaccine procurement and cold chain supply management. Cold chain equipment was installed in 106 health facilities and solar system improvements for cold rooms are ongoing in health facilities in all 28 districts. A 93 per cent national coverage of DPT3 vaccine was reached. Community and facility-based child health care services were provided to 783,000 under five (U5) children in 13 target districts, and 262,000 children were treated for malaria. Flexible service delivery models, such as peer support, mentor mothers and teen clubs, supported sexual and reproductive health (SRH) messaging and outreach to adolescents. Support to paediatric HIV services contributed to achieving greater coverage and treatment standing at 72 and 78 per cent respectively. Evidence collection identified gaps in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) services and contributed to policy and programme adjustments that can lead to the elimination of MTCT. Approximately 76 per cent of HIV-exposed infants in all 28 districts were tested within two months of birth and 98 per cent of the pregnant women attending antenatal care were tested for an HIV and knew their result, with those found positive immediately started on treatment. The country achieved an U5 birth registration rate of 22 per cent, an increase from 10 per cent in 2018. Over 300,000 children U5 had their births registered and a unique ID assigned.

With support from the European Union (EU) and the German Government, and in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UNICEF Malawi nutrition programmes expanded to 17 districts and contributed to improved quality of children's diets through increased adoption of optimal nutrition practices and behaviours. Engaging local traditional authorities and comprehensive mapping of Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) interventions allowed quality nutrition services to reach the most remote households. Strengthened capacity of district councils to implement SUN activities ensured improved quality of complementary feeding for some 254,000 children aged 6-23 months. An Early Childhood Development (ECD) Sector Analysis informed the development on an ECD Programme which was rolled out, in partnership with the World Bank (WB), to all 28 districts of the country providing services to close to two million children U5 (an estimated 48 per cent of the child population within this age group). UNICEF Malawi provided technical and financial support to the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW) in developing a Positive Gender Socialisation Training Pack

promoting positive parenting practices and gender equality in ECD service delivery. A Super Dad's Campaign was launched reaching more than four million people with key messages on responsive and positive male parenting, and more than 400,000 families were trained on positive parenting practices. With support from USAID, UNICEF Switzerland and local civil society organizations (CSOs), some 30,000 children aged 6-59 months admitted with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) were treated and discharged with 93 per cent cure rates in compliance with SPHERE standards and due to continuous availability of Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) supplies. Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) services was delivered out of 728 health facilities contributing to a 99 per cent national coverage and their quality was ensured through training of more than 1,039 health professionals. Vitamin A supplementation reached 82 per cent coverage boosting the immunity of 1.6 million children aged 6-59 months old.

Opportunities for Malawian children to participate in and complete education improved significantly during the year facilitated by strengthened coordination, adequate financing, implementation of the secondary school tuition waiver and employment of additional teachers. UNICEF Malawi co-lead various technical groups, including the Education Sector Joint Fund contributing close to US\$ 20 million to the sector. The CO was instrumental in supporting the implementation of the Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) programme by mobilising key development partners, such as USAID, DFID, UNAIDS, ActionAid, Engender Health, and Grassroots Soccer. Some 6,090 vulnerable adolescents (6,000 girls and 90 boys) benefitted from the AGYW programme and received basic literacy and numeracy training through the Functional Literacy Programme (FLP) implemented in nine districts and, in partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO). 300 additional vulnerable adolescent girls benefitted from vocational and entrepreneurship programmes. The FLP was institutionalized with full ownership of the government and the first national functional literacy curriculum was developed.

Evidence generated by UNICEF Malawi guided the development of key sector-specific policy and development partner programming at both national and district level. The Education Sector Analysis was completed and informed the development of the National Education Sector Strategy (2020-2030) with key recommendations focusing on affordable cost of secondary education, learning outcomes and linking secondary education with skill development. A review of free primary education was also initiated. To further boost quality education, an assessment of the implementation of the National Teacher Education Strategy was completed with key recommendations focusing on reinforcing the continuous professional development of teachers, especially women, and including persons with disability in the teachers' workforce.

A readmission policy for girls who dropped out from school due to teenage pregnancy, early marriage and GBV was introduced and 600 girls were readmitted to complete secondary education.

In 2019, over 110,000 additional children were enrolled in primary education boosting the number to 5.3 million with a slight improvement of the gender parity index (from 1 to 1.02). Within the framework of the Malawi Education Sector Improvement Project (MESIP) supported by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the WB and the Government of Norway, UNICEF Malawi contributed to improved access to primary education, including by supporting the construction of 158 new primary schools. Despite these efforts, the primary school dropout rate doubled (from 3.2 to 6 per cent in 2019), further affected by the impact of the cyclone Idai and negative social norms, such as early child marriage.

The secondary enrolment rate continued to be low, making the prospects of Malawi reaching SDG 4 secondary education targets by 2030 unlikely. With USAID support, UNICEF Malawi worked on improving access to secondary education by constructing some additional 250 secondary schools. The CO leveraged WB and EU support to secondary education through the implementation of the EUR 36 million "Improving Secondary Education in Malawi" programme and the US\$ 100 million "Equity and Quality Learning at Secondary (EQUALS)" programme led by the WB.

Child participation was also boosted by strengthening basic journalism skills and empowering 172 children (106 girls and 66 boys) to engage with duty bearers and report on child rights. The Government of Norway supported Joint Programme for Girls Education (JPGE) empowered students to participate in school decision making processes and strengthened accountability and management of primary and secondary schools, with 1,000 school-based councils established in 11 UNICEF Malawi supported districts. Some additional 200 youth-led organizations were registered with the National Youth Council. The CO also partnered with Plan International to host the 2019 Generation Unlimited Youth Challenge in Malawi.

In 2019, UNICEF Malawi continued to work on ensuring that girls and boys grow-up in resilient, inclusive and child-friendly communities supported by systems that provide an equitable chance in life.

During the year, UNICEF Malawi produced robust evidence on the size, composition, equity and efficiency of public spending in sectors and programmes benefiting children. This evidence was synthesized into budget briefs which were used to engage the Ministry of Finance (MoF), social sector ministries and local authorities, and advocate for increased budget allocations for children. Evidence of this successful advocacy is the increase of 71 per cent in the EPI programme budget and the 61 per cent increase in the government's contribution towards the national Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP). Further support to the SCTP included an improved targeting using a Unified Beneficiary Register, allowing an

increase in the number of beneficiaries of the programme from 276,000 in 2018 to 294,000 in 2019, while the number of children in households receiving cash assistance increased from 431,700 to 622,323. Towards making the SCTP more shock-responsive, the MoGCDSW, with support from UNICEF Malawi, successfully piloted the SCTP's vertical expansion to deliver hunger season support on top of regular cash transfers. Evidence from the 'SCTP payment bank model' alongside a Cost-Efficiency Analysis supported the development of National Payment Solution for Social Protection and technical support was provided for the finalisation of the implementation plan and monitoring and evaluation framework of Malawi's National Social Support Programme II (MNSSP II).

In 2019, the GoM with technical and financial support from UNICEF Malawi finalised the development of the National Sanitation and Hygiene Strategy (2018-2023) introducing important paradigm shifts to address sector priorities, including through sanitation marketing, while also recognizing the importance of scaling up Menstrual Hygiene Health (MHH).

The analysis of public financing for child protection provided robust evidence for strategic engagement with Malawi's Parliament and led to the passing of a Parliamentary motion prioritising children's issues in all Parliamentary sittings. With support from the EU and in partnership with MoGCDSW, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women, UNICEF Malawi initiated the Spotlight initiative, a flagship programme aiming to end violence against women and girls. The CO supports cross-sectoral action with targeted C4BC messaging, capacity building of police workforce and providing scholarships for girls. Strengthened child protection action saw improved reporting on violence against children, with over 37,000 new cases of violence against girls (18,810), boys (13,237) and women (5,364) reported in 2019. One Stop Centres (OSC) were established in 7 districts, including Lilongwe, providing essential services to more than 1,200 survivors and victims of violence. A Social Workers' Bill was passed, a National Association of Social Workers was registered, and the Social Welfare Policy was launched. UNICEF Malawi supported the evaluation of the Child Protection District implementation plans and community policing forums were also strengthened. Some 234 children were reintegrated from child care institutions into a family environment with support from the District Social Welfare Offices and partners.

During the year, UNICEF Malawi maintained a high level of preparedness for emergency response demonstrated through the swift response to the impact of cyclone Idai through timely provision of a package of comprehensive health, WASH, education and child protection services to more than 600,000 people (including 329,030 children). Some 46,000 children under 59 months were immunized for measles. With support from CERF, USAID and UNICEF Switzerland, one million US children were screened for acute malnutrition, close to 9,000 children were admitted for SAM treatment and 95.8 per cent of them successfully recovered. Distribution of education materials allowed 76,000 students to continue their learning. UNICEF Malawi implemented innovative models of cost-effective resilient WASH services with a focus on green technologies and introduced solar-powered water networks reducing women and adolescents' girls WASH-related burden. The WASH emergency response transitioned to recovery through the rehabilitation and construction of water facilities and upgrading of solar-powered reticulated water schemes, with tap stands located close to households, schools and health centres allowing access to safe water for about 94,000 people. Some 304 additional communities were certified as open defecation free and 59,300 displaced people gained access to sanitation through the construction of emergency sanitation facilities. To enhance hygiene and sanitation practices, 674,820 disaster-affected people were reached with hygiene messages.

A child-centred National Risk Management plan addressing child protection risks in emergencies was developed. 106,000 children in emergency-affected districts received access to psychosocial support, socialisation, play and learning through Children's Corners and 7,084 people were reached by GBV prevention and response services through Police Victim Support Units, Community Victim Support Units, CSO awareness-raising initiatives, and District Social Welfare offices.

UNICEF Malawi reached over 204,000 flood-affected people aged 10 years and above with integrated messages to reinforce positive behaviours on staying safe. Some 98 per cent of the people living in camps were reached with at least one C4BC intervention that included posters, leaflets, drama, music, counselling, health talks, and radio. Innovations were also used to support relief efforts through real-time data collection, including with drones and satellite imagery.

Recurrent emergencies saw five sporadic cholera outbreaks. All 24 cases were reported to the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP). UNICEF Malawi emergency coordination was initiated within few hours of the case identification and response was provided within 24 hours, thus the outbreaks were contained in less than one week. Despite the impact of cyclone Idai, cholera cases have dropped to 24 cases as compared to 940 cases during the same period in the previous year.

To successfully deliver its programmes in support of children, UNICEF Malawi forged strong partnerships with the GoM, including the Parliament and key line Ministries, more than 15 major development partners, private sector and CSOs as well as with children and young people themselves. In addition to strong advocacy on child rights, such efforts generated close to US\$ 53 million in support of vital interventions securing access to quality child support services in both development and humanitarian situation.

Robust evidence generation and evaluation of CO interventions, including through Regional Office financial contributions,

supported advocacy, programme design and implementation. More than 15 studies and 3 evaluations allowed the refinement of the Education, Child Protection and WASH Strategies and informed UNICEF's humanitarian response. In 2019, UNICEF Malawi supported the National Statistical Office (NSO) to initiate the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) and supported the maintenance of the Malawi Social Economic Database (MASEDA) monitoring SDGs and national priorities' implementation.

Media coverage, donor visibility and visits, and stakeholder engagement contributed to the realisation of UNICEF's Malawi's programmatic goals in 2019. Some 170 positive media stories (including 24 in international media) were produced to reflect the programme and operational successes and to document UNICEF Malawi's emergency response. Focused messaging on children's rights through national media, online channels and events reached about 9 million people in Malawi. The new UNICEF Malawi website provides a better online experience for audiences and acts as a knowledge centre for partners and the public. The number of social media followers increased to 36,000 (14,000 Facebook, 20,600 Tweeter, 2,000 Instagram) exceeding the initial annual target of 33,000. Various radio and television programmes advocated for child rights and reached 2.5 million people. Additionally, 35,336 U-Reporters were recruited during the year.

In 2019, UNICEF Malawi maintained a high standard of its programme and operational implementation and effectiveness. The CO strengthened its governance systems and streamlined business work processes to create an agile and flexible work environment. An Annual Risk Assessment identified 22 risk areas and relevant mitigation measures were implemented by the end of the year. More than 46 per cent of the internal audit recommendations were closed as well as 100 per cent of the ESARO peer review remarks. Operations provided strong support to the emergency response, including setting up a field emergency-coordination office in Blantyre equipped with internet and other connectivity. Statutory office committees and related Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were revised to reduce meeting time and simplify work processes. A Developmental Evaluation assessed the success and informed adjustment in the CO's innovative way of doing business through matrix management implemented from the start of the current CP. A cabling project to stabilize the Local Area Network (LAN) was completed. The Enterprise Content Management (ECM) was successfully launched and collaboration sites established. The CO also implemented the Budget Formulation Tool (BFT). All these initiatives have strengthened the collaboration within the office and resulted in more efficient and effective programme implementation.

An integrated Direct Cash Transfer (DCT) tracking system was established to closely monitor and track disbursements and liquidation of disbursed funds to partners. As a result, the DCTs exceeding six months reduced from 23 instances at the beginning of the year to 4 at the end of the year. The average duration of recruitment was 61 days and the percentage ratio on both geographical diversity and gender parity was 35-65 and 46-54 respectively. UNICEF Malawi deployed 18 staff to strengthen the response to cyclone Idai. Staff capacity was strengthened through individual and group training and 24 staff members improved their knowledge on gender mainstreaming in programming.

Goods and services worth US\$ 14.5 million were procured, including US\$ 10.9 million as programme supplies, 90 per cent of which were distributed to beneficiaries. The total value of construction contracts was US\$ 2 million of which US\$ 575,000 were fully completed and handed over to counterparts. The CO, in partnership with the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), contributed to the strengthening of Malawi's national supply chain system by supporting forecasting, the implementation of the Cold Chain Equipment Optimization Platform and leveraging US\$ 21.6 million for procurement of services, supplies and equipment.

UNICEF Malawi mobilized US\$ 53 million in 2019, representing 80 per cent of the planned annual budget, and achieved a 98 per cent utilization rate for regular resources and 93 per cent for other resources. Key development partners of UNICEF Malawi were the Norway and German governments (KfW, BMZ, GIZ), USAID, GAVI, EU, UNOCHA, Education Cannot Wait, DFID, Irish Aid, and UNICEF National Committees. A grant from the Chinese Development Cooperation represents the first engagement with the Chinese Government for UNICEF Malawi. In addition, UNICEF Malawi mobilized US\$ 10 million out of US\$ 15 million appeal in response to cyclone Idai. In support of resource mobilization activities, the CO hosted 15 donor and media visits.

Lessons Learned and Innovations

Key lessons learned for the CO in 2019 were derived from the application of innovative approaches informing programme implementation, the emergency response to cyclone Idai providing valuable insights for strengthened preparedness, and from the implementation of an innovative change management process reinforcing the impact of UNICEF Malawi programming on child wellbeing.

To strengthen the implementation, effectiveness and focus of UNICEF Malawi programmes, innovative approaches like real-time data collection, geo-information and satellite imagery were used to inform programme design. The RapidPro-based

Nutrition Commodities Tracking System was scaled up nationally. U-Report, a free mobile-based opinion polling service, collects regularly perspectives from more than 180,000 young Malawians. The platform was also used to strengthen emergency awareness and preparedness. Some 60,000 early warning messages were issued during the year reaching all U-Reporters and their families in flood-prone areas. The Child Protection Information Management (CPIM) was migrated to the RapidPro platform and, following a pilot phase, was scaled up nationally and is now successfully used by the Police, the National Child Justice Forum, and the MoGCDSW. Collected data are organised and analysed into a common infrastructure under the 4P2C data platform developed during the year (<https://malawi.4p2c.org/portal/home/>). Several proofs of concept and applications of the 4P2C platform were tested during the year, including provision of information on geographic accessibility to health facilities, a cholera response mapping, monitoring of latrines construction, mapping of social protection financial service providers, study of the river Shire for flood predictability and use of data for cyclone Idai flood response. Statistical modelling was used to develop a continuous epidemiological platform to predict disease outbreak.

One of the most successful innovations fully deployed and used in programmes and emergency response was UNICEF Malawi's drone for good programme implemented in partnership with Malawi's Ministry of Transport and with support from GLOBHE (Sweden), NextWing (USA), Wingcopter (Germany), and UAVAid (UK). The first Africa Data and Drone Academy (ADDA) was established in 2019 in collaboration with the Malawi University of Science and Technology and the first cohort of students is expected to graduate in March 2020. The CO is also working with the Department of Disaster Management Affairs to integrate drones into emergency responses.

Innovative ideas in the field of renewable energy and sustainability were explored through a joint UNDP-UNICEF Malawi energy needs assessment on the use of sustainable energy services in health facilities. The CO established a Green Team to promote energy efficiency and reduce waste and carbon footprint from UNICEF Malawi's operations and programmes.

As evidenced from the cyclone Idai evaluation, UNICEF Malawi provided significant support to the government-led response and early recovery efforts, especially in areas of strengthened emergency coordination (including through clusters), critical service delivery, prevention of "double disasters", such as cholera outbreaks, and implementing Prevention from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (PSEA) initiatives. UNICEF Malawi's willingness to advance significant reserve funding to kick-start the response, disaster preparedness and in-country, regional and global surge mechanisms helped to fill critical capacity gaps and deliver life-saving services. While the CO response was assessed as timely and delivered with quality, some important gaps were identified particularly in regard to the need for a structured and strategic transition from relief to recovery through agile programme restructuring and investments, heightened attention to programmes addressing the need of vulnerable groups, such as children with disability, women and girls, and strengthened accountability to affected populations in the post-disaster phase and strengthened information management and monitoring for further improved preparedness and anticipatory programming. The lesson learned from the cyclone Idai response will be built in the continuation of the CP implementation, including through strengthened preparedness action.

With the start of the new CP in 2019, UNICEF Malawi embarked on a transformative change management process seeking to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the CO programme in delivering comprehensive, holistic and impactful results for children meeting all children's needs. The change management process included implementation of the CP based on a lifecycle approach, an application of a new matrix management approach to human resource management and stimulating cross-sectoral collaboration through introduction of design thinking and issue-based task teams for agile problem definition and solution. Lessons learned from the first year of the change management process implementation revealed a more coherent approach to programming, where the complex needs of the child were put at the centre of programme design, thus ensuring a strengthened and integrated delivery of a range of quality services (such as health, nutrition, WASH, child protection and education services) benefiting the single child and her/his family. Implementation of matrix management contributed to strengthened staff capacities, including the acquiring of new, more agile skills (prioritisation, upward and cross-sectional management) and broadening of the technical expertise. Design thinking was actively used in the office to identify innovative approaches to programming. Several agile teams were created and tasked to develop a vision on ECD, Adolescents, Disability, Strengthening Local Governance and Resilience Building and Climate Change. Challenges identified were mostly linked with the acceptance and fast adoption of the change management initiatives with an uneven adoption rate amongst staff members. The CO continuously invested efforts to support staff during the change management journey including through confidential 'empathy' sessions.

In looking forward UNICEF Malawi will strive to incorporate lessons learned into refined programming for delivering strong results to children in Malawi. Focus on innovations will continue to be a priority for the CO to identify user-friendly, accessible and cost-effective ways to address children needs, including through strengthened data collection and monitoring. The CO will continue to improve its preparedness and will invest more efforts to strengthen the humanitarian and development nexus, including through strengthened involvement of communities and building local level partnerships. The CO will boost the engagement and partnership with adolescents and involve them as agents of change and promoters of children's rights in their communities. UNICEF Malawi will continue to experiment with flexible approaches to organising work processes and delivering CP results in seeking greater coherence and stronger impact of programmes on children's wellbeing.

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