

**PLAN INTERNATIONAL
(Malawi Office)**

*"Good Governance and Social mobilization Project"
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END OF PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

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It is sincerely hoped that this evaluation report contains minimal misinterpretations of facts and concepts. Should there be any errors, it is the sole responsibility of the Evaluation Team and not Plan Malawi.

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Acronyms

ADC	-	Area Development Committee
AEC	-	Area Executive Committee
AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CCCD - A	-	Child Centred Community Development Approach
CDF	-	Community Development Facilitator
CDM	-	Centre for Development Management
CDO	-	Community Development Outline
CPO	-	Country Programme Outline
DA	-	District Assembly
DACC	-	District AIDS Coordinating Committee
DEC	-	District Executive Committee
DCASC -	-	District Child Assembly Steering Committee
DCPC	-	District Child Protection Committees
DLO	-	District Labour Officer
DSWO	-	District Social Welfare Officer
EPA	-	Extension Planning Area
ET	-	Evaluation Team
FGD	-	Focus Group Discussions
GVH	-	Group Village Headman
HIV	-	Human Immune Virus
IEC	-	Information Education Communication
IGA	-	Income Generating Activity
KII	-	Key Informant Interview
KU	-	Kasungu
LL	-	Lilongwe
MPRS - P	-	Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
MGDS	-	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MZ	-	Mzuzu
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization
PU	-	Programme Unit
PUM	-	Programme Unit Manager
ROC	-	Rights of the Child
SRH	-	Sexual Reproductive Health
TA	-	Traditional Authority
TOT	-	Training of Trainers
UNICEF -	United Nations Children's Education Fund	
VH	-	Village Headperson
VDC	-	Village Development Committee

Executive Summary

Plan Malawi received funding from NORAD through Plan Norway for the implementation of the Good Governance and Social Mobilization Project. The long-term development goal of the project is to strengthen the capacity of local governance structures to manage development through participatory means, contributing towards the national goal of implementing the decentralization policy and fulfilling people's right to participate in their own development. Children and women's participation were pivotal to this project hence the project aimed at integrating issues of child rights and gender in order to create space for participation of the marginalized groups of the Malawi society namely: Children and women and girls as a special population group. The project was implemented within Plan's Country Programme Outline of Child Rights, Gender and Community Empowerment (CPO 21), perpetuating the implementation that was previously covered under the old CPO of "Education, Advocacy & Community Empowerment". As the project ended in December, 2006, Plan Malawi contracted the Centre for Development to evaluate the project. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess progress made in the project, identify main lessons learnt and make recommendations to guide future programme planning and implementation. Specific objectives of the evaluation were to:

1. Assess progress towards attaining the project's objectives and outcomes.
2. Examine the documents as well as the reports and conduct interviews as appropriate to ascertain the extent to which project objectives were fulfilled.
3. Determine the project's weak points in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and determine the contributing factors if any.
4. Establish if the project has led to participation and empowerment of women and children at community level.
5. Determine whether sufficient linkage mechanisms on child protection have been developed at community level.
6. Assess the impact of the project activities and the extent of community participation in development activities by gender and age?.
7. Make recommendations as to how to improve project performance in terms of effectiveness and efficiency in achieving impact on both capacity and targeted communities.
8. Describe the main lessons that have emerged in terms of efforts to secure sustainability and knowledge transfer.
9. Propose areas requiring more efforts in future programmes.

The findings presented in the report show that the project has had mixed success. There has been mixed success because some interventions have been very successful in one PU and not so in another PU. For example, paralegals have been successful in Kasungu but not so in Lilongwe and none were even trained in Mzuzu. Partnerships have also worked better in Kasungu than in Lilongwe, where they are just developing, while they have not been successful in Mzuzu. Community development structures seem to be more successful across all PUs, although their functionality also differs between PUs and between communities. Just like community development structures, child rights clubs and committees are more successful across all the PUs. In terms of comparing between interventions, formation and capacity building of community development structures and the promotion of child rights initiatives were more successful interventions than learning and community managed projects.

The evaluation team has noted that there were a number of factors that may have negatively affected the implementation of the project. Some of these factors, such as the

project having no single fulltime coordinators at national and PU level relate to project design, while a majority of them, such as inadequate linkages with other CPOs, limited partnerships and lack of monitoring relate to implementation weaknesses. In addition, we have noted that in general there have been significant variations in terms of the level of effort into and out of the project by the 3 PUs. Often the level of effort into and out of the project has depended on the interest the CDF has on the project and the issues of children, not on whether CDFs will be held accountable to the performance of the project through an appraisal system.

Based on the findings and discussions presented in the report, the evaluation team makes the following recommendations.

Programme design and organization

1. Designate a specific National Project Coordinator/Adviser to be based at Plan Malawi head office to oversee all technical and administrative aspects of the programme. In line with this recommendation, designate project specific CDFs, who are at higher rank than the current CDFs, to be CPO21 Coordinators as is the case with the other 4 CPOs.
2. Reallocate the learning and education community managed support components of CPO 21 to CPO 20 that deals with education and community infrastructure related projects. This will address the prevailing overlap between certain aspects of the two CPOs and it will enable CPO 21 to focus more on capacity building and governance components.
3. There is also need to streamline the number of committees being formed or supported or being strengthened to be more effective and avoid duplication, work overload and problems of monitoring. Also facilitate district and community level consensus plus a conceptual model of how various committees should relate to each other
4. An HR strategy should be developed to attract, stimulate, and monitor performance of CDFs in their work. This is in view of the realization that there have been significant variations in terms of the level of effort into and out of the project by CDFs in the 3 PUs. Often the level of effort into and out of the project has depended on the interest the CDF has on the project and the issues of children, not on whether CDFs will be held accountable to the performance of the project through an appraisal system.
5. Some of the problems faced during project implementation were as a result of late disbursement of funds to facilitate community level processes. The ET therefore recommends that the finance department needs to put in place sufficient mechanisms to ensure that they support programs more efficiently other than frustrate them. Cases of funds being disbursed in bits for one activity need to be avoided wherever possible. This leads to people failing to achieve planned schedules. One vivid example is how the practice affected CDO development activities.

Targeting and scaling up of interventions

6. The project should align "the community" with recommended structures in the decentralization process. This is especially so in view of the project goal to strengthen the capacity of local governance structures to manage development through participatory means. Running development structures that do not conform to the standards as defined by the decentralization framework defeats the very goal of the CPO 21 programme.
7. For the Child Rights Clubs, the project should develop a more effective strategy that would facilitate involvement of all school children and all teachers, as opposed to limiting participation to club members and patrons. Since rights of the child education and skills training is an axis for all youth groups (adolescent reproductive health, youth friendly health services, post test clubs, edzi toto clubs, etc), deliberate mobilization systems should be set up to woo out of school youths to benefit from the services
8. Except for Kasungu, we advise that no scaling up should be done at the moment for the Lilongwe and Mzuzu PUs. Instead the 2 PUs should consolidate their project within the existing areas. In Kasungu, it is possible to scale out to the whole district, as long as staff numbers are increased.

Partnerships and Stakeholder Participation

9. Strengthen stakeholder participation by: Defining and clarifying stakeholders to be involved, their roles and what is expected of them in the project. For Mzuzu, the PU needs to renegotiate the partnerships with key line ministries and the DA. For Lilongwe, the PU needs to continue building the partnerships, which have been initiated, while for Kasungu, there is need for the PU to sustain what they are doing and continue monitoring the partnerships so far created.
10. In general, all the PUs need to be always involving the district assemblies of the relevant districts to ensure sustainability of the project and conformity to the CPO 21 goal of strengthening the capacity of local governance structures within the framework of decentralization policy. The DA is an established and recognized entry point for communities to access other development needs, which may not be addressed through the project but are relevant to the success of the project. Where the DAs are weak, Plan Malawi should endeavour to contribute towards building their capacities to be more effective other than circumventing them under the pretext of capacity limitations.

Implementation Capacity and Participatory Development Planning Training of stakeholders

11. The project needs to invest more on staff and stakeholder development in the areas of participatory planning to strengthen and sharpen implementation capacity in terms of: quantity (numbers of both technical and administrative staff), quality (through professional development processes), deployment and placement (ensuring staff are located where they are required as per Plan Malawi policy; defining staff roles and responsibilities properly, monitoring their performance regularly in a participatory manner and building/strengthening partnerships with other service providers. This will require 'bravery' on the part of Plan Malawi to move to institutional support with the view of transferring the 'power centre' from the PUM to the DA. To do that, additional expert advice is advisable.
12. The project should ensure that trainings done for communities and extension workers at community level are monitored properly. To enable this happen, all training programmes should end with clear action plans for implementing the knowledge gained. In addition, training programmes should be designed in a way that they involve all relevant extension workers in the impact areas, to cater for the problem of high staff over. For CPO 21 type of intervention, Community Development Officers are more relevant but other extension workers could be considered so long they have working knowledge of issues of the CPO i.e. Community Participation and Governance Issues as well as integration of Gender and Child Rights. Simply following existing training manuals alone would not be adequate as they were not necessarily designed with a wider scope of rights based programming in mind and may be outdated.
13. An elaborate quality control system clearly spelling out quality control standards is imperative to achieve optimum results from project interventions at all levels. For example, there is need to develop clear and accessible guidelines that spell out minimum requirements in training duration, qualifications of trainers and training methods to guide selection of trainers and quality of training delivery for district and community level training to ensure maximum impact. Close monitoring of training delivery and other interventions is a must at all levels. (A) A future focus should be on how to facilitate scale up by documenting a process tool kit to guide training and implementation. (B) Also create a district level data base of all trained people so that they could be used as resources within or across districts

Development of community development outlines (CDOs)

14. Due to the importance of the process of developing CDOs, we suggest that the process should be continued and strengthened to make it more participatory and empowering. Efforts should be made to approach the process from a more people centred perspective, focusing more on using it as a learning and problem solving tool for generating people's commitment to solving their own development challenges and not just an opportunity to extract information. Wherever possible, use of consultants should be limited to training key AEC staff that will later on facilitate the process to ensure sustainability and ownership. Subsequent improvements to the CDO development process should be approached through the annual review process at community and district level, which needs to be institutionalized.

15. We also recommend that the process should be changed from development of community development outlines to "village action plan" so that it is consistent with the district development planning system and the long term CPO 21 goal of strengthening the capacity of local governance structures to manage development within the decentralization policy framework. This will make integration of its recommendations into the District Development Plan more feasible and practical. Instead of Plan coming up with its own development plans and a separate process, it is advisable that Plan should use the same generic process of VAP development led by District Assemblies. The role of Plan in such a case would be to strengthen the process so that it reflects important aspects of CCCD including children's participation and rights. In new project impact areas, ensure that training of extension workers on participatory planning and development is followed immediately by actual village planning process, without long gaps in between.

Rights of the Child (ROC) Initiatives

16. Provide for adequate linkages between school-based activities and the community based institutions during implementation of project activities. In addition there is need to establish adequate and clear linkages between community, district and national level children's activities and forums
17. For Mzuzu, we urgently recommend that the PU should facilitate the strengthening of the District Child Protection Committee as a starting point for rebuilding partnerships. This should be done in liaison with the District Assembly. Since Mzimba is a very large district geographically, there is a possibility to have a sub committee administered around Mzuzu or Ekwendeni (Mzimba North). Precedence is there e.g. at DACC, M'belwa District Assembly has a working committee for Mzimba North. The same model could be adopted for the DCPC.
18. The project should put in place sufficient mechanisms, in addition to the Day of the African Child commemoration, to involve pupils, teachers and communities who are not members of the ROC committees and clubs.
19. The project should revisit training of paralegals and community resource persons and focus on building capacity for civic educators, who should now pay an all round type of role focusing on rights of children and women etc. This calls for the need for compiling process tools to guide the civic educators. There would also be value in networking the paralegals/community resource persons to ensure learning and capacity building.
20. There is need for the project to strategically involve the education Ministry at all levels, and specifically at divisional and district education manager level, so that rights to education can be sustained through institutionalization of child rights clubs in schools and integration of child rights issues in the training curriculum for teachers and the mainstream school syllabus.

Gender and development

21. The project should conduct a gender analysis for all PUs, based on lessons learnt from an assessment that was done in Kasungu PU. The analysis should be the basis for all gender-based planning and advocacy.
22. Plan Malawi should step-up efforts for building staff capacity in gender analysis, mainstreaming and advocacy.

Children's Parliament

23. The Children's Parliament should be linked with the formal government decision making (executive, judiciary and the legislature) through a provision in the child protection bill or by creating a provision in the constitution, through the ongoing constitutional review process. In addition there is need to establish its linkage with local level initiatives, including the decentralization structures, through establishing child rights local authority by-laws or regulations.
24. Develop a forum for graduated child parliamentarians and link it with the young leaders' networks available in the country to broaden opportunities for dialogue and advocacy on child rights issues.
25. Facilitate enactment of legislation to institutionalize the Children's Parliament as a legal entity of government.

26. Roll-out and decentralize the Children's Parliament to district assemblies and community level and ensure that children who are in the National Children's Parliament are representatives selected from the institutions below.

Monitoring and evaluation

27. The project needs to be clear on how monitoring of the project implementation will be done: who will do what and how progress will be measured. There is need to establish a monitoring and evaluation framework that is robust and able to capture outcomes of the project. The PPM should be improved by integrating impact indicators in addition to the process indicators that are currently being used?
28. The project should also have regular planning and review meetings so that PUs are able to interact with each other and with their advisers on a sustained basis. It is not possible for one national adviser of rights and one training coordinator to supervise and support all PUs and CDF individually.
29. Baseline studies should precede project design and implementation so that M & E is based on objectively verifiable indicators that are measurable.

CONCLUSION

While we conclude that the project is relevant and should be supported further, we advise that there is need for more effective partnerships to be developed with stakeholders, more transparency and accountability and revision of project coordination arrangements to ensure that the project has specific, adequate and well trained staff at PU level, that can be held accountable to the children of Malawi. It is generally expected that because Plan Malawi is child centred organization, it should have core staff for child rights projects like the one under review other than relying on part time staff like in the case of CPO 21 Coordinators.

1. Introduction

1.1 *Project Summary Background*

Plan Malawi with funding from NORAD received through Plan Norway for the implementation of the Good Governance and Social Mobilisation Project. The long-term development goal of the project is to strengthen the capacity of local governance structures to manage development through participatory means, contributing towards the national goal of implementing the decentralisation policy and fulfilling people's right to participate in their own development. The project was implemented within Plan's Country Programme Outline of Child Rights, Gender and Community Empowerment (CPO 21) even though initial activities were commenced in previous CPO of *Education, Advocacy & community Empowerment*. The objectives of the Governance and Social Mobilisation project were as follows:

- To increase knowledge and skills of communities to manage development
- To increase the participation of all groups of the community in decision making, planning and implementation of development projects
- To increase projects sustainability and access to benefits
- To promote the participation of women and accord them increased access and control of projects resources administered within Plan areas
- To integrate child rights and child participation programming
- To integrate all stakeholders including women and children in programme implementation

Strengthening local governance and improved knowledge on rights directly contributes to improved capacity of the community to demand services from duty bearers, which leads to improved service delivery for poverty reduction and economic growth, the main pillars of national development policy in Malawi. The project was expected to increase knowledge and skills of communities to plan and manage development, increase knowledge of the rights of the child amongst children themselves and the community at large, thereby increasing the likelihood that communities would demand development that is based on Plan Malawi child centered development. Furthermore the project aimed to empower local communities to identify development challenges and priorities, and devise ways and means of solving those challenges in a gender sensitive, child friendly and participatory way.

The project had targeted community development committees who were expected to reach out to various community-based stakeholders involved in facilitating community development that promotes the well-being of children. Further the project targeted community-based government and non-governmental organizations, who are partners to Plan Malawi. Specifically, the project targeted DECs, AECs, DAs and other decentralized institutions that facilitate development at local authority level.

The project had either supported the formation or the functioning of these structures and in turn used them to advocate for the integration of the CCCD approach in the development planning system at district assembly level. The project targeted to reach 30 communities in Mzuzu, 31 in Kasungu and 17 in Lilongwe, a total of 78 communities which covered all the communities where Plan Malawi worked before opening the Mulanje PU. In this case the "community" as defined by Plan Malawi is equivalent to the area under the jurisdiction of the Group Village Headperson (GVH).

The programme was planned to be implemented within the framework of the Malawi Government on child protection as guided by the Ministry of Gender and Child Development, one of the key project partners for Plan Malawi. The National Plan of Action developed in 1992 after the ratification of the CRC played a significant role in informing the design of the program.

1.2 Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess progress made in the project, identify main lessons learnt and make recommendations to guide future programme planning and implementation. Specific objectives were to:

1. Assess progress towards attaining the project's objectives and outcomes.
2. Examine the documents as well as the reports and conduct interviews as appropriate to ascertain the extent to which project objectives were fulfilled.
3. Determine the project's weak points in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and determine the contributing factors if any.
4. Establish if the project has led to participation and empowerment of women at community level.
5. Determine whether sufficient linkage mechanisms on child protection have been developed at community level.
6. Assess the impact of the project activities and the extent of community participation in development activities by gender.
7. Make recommendations as to how to improve project performance in terms of effectiveness and efficiency in achieving impact on both capacity and targeted communities.
8. Describe the main lessons that have emerged in terms of efforts to secure sustainability and knowledge transfer.
9. Propose areas requiring more efforts in future programmes.

1.3 Evaluation Methodology

1.3.1 Planning meetings

To ensure smooth implementation of the evaluation process, planning meetings were held between Plan Malawi and CDM to thrash out the following issues:

- Discussed who to target for interviews. These included partner organizations, community groups and individuals that facilitated and benefited from the project
- Developed study instruments: the study checklist and physical progress check forms. These were duly checked and endorsed by Plan Malawi
- Agreed on field logistics: study sites identification, mobilization of respondents, and field guidance.

1.3.2 Data collection tools

The evaluation adopted a participatory approach in which all key stakeholders participated right from the planning stage.

- Briefing meetings by Plan Malawi were held with the two evaluators. At country level, meetings were held with the Country Director, the Programme support Manager, Child Rights Adviser, the Training Manager, the Grants Manager, all Programme Unit Managers and the Training Coordinator
- Following the initial meetings, the consultants developed an evaluation framework and a physical progress data capturing table, which are attached in annexes. The framework guided all the evaluation while the physical progress data table was used to collect quantitative data on progress made by the project. The table was filled by the CDFs for CPO 21.
- We then reviewed programme documents which were obtained through the Child Rights Adviser and the Training Coordinator. The document review provided us with insights into the project, its relationships with Plan Malawi's Country Programme Outline, and also how it aligns with national policy and other relevant policy frameworks.
- At each Programme Unit, we held briefing meetings with the PUM and the CDF coordinating CPO 21 before proceeding to the field. The purpose of starting with a briefing meeting was to get acquainted with project activities at PU level, clarify the purpose of the evaluation and plan for field trips.

After briefing, the team then proceeded to the field where a number of participatory data collection methods were used to collect data for the evaluation. The following data collection tools and methods were employed in the evaluation to collect qualitative data at field level:

- Key informant interviews: This method was used to capture information especially from project staff and project implementation partners.
- Focus group discussions (FGDs): This method was employed to capture information especially from project beneficiaries and committee leaders at community level.
- Semi structured checklist: This tool was used as a reference document during key informant interviews and focus group discussions. FGDs were held with Village Child Rights Committees, ROC Clubs, VDCs and ADCs
- Literature review: Literature on the project was studied to understand its design and implementation. The documents at field level included monthly reports, CDOs etc.

1.3.3 Sampling frame

A purposeful sampling method was employed during the evaluation, specifically targeting those who benefited from the project in one way or another or participated in facilitating implementation of the project. Villages were selected randomly across the impact areas, ensuring a representative geographical coverage of the sites. In each programme unit, we visited at least two communities within the project area to observe and relate to what was discussed with various groups of respondents. To ensure quality and consistency, Plan Malawi staff guided the field team in the three districts, mobilizing respondents as well as assisting with village meeting protocol.

At community level, there were focus group discussions with beneficiaries and project committees. Key informant interviews were also held with local leaders, members of area executive committees, teachers and partners that collaborated with Plan International in the project. Where possible, we conducted separate discussions with men and women, boys and girls. Annex 2 is a list of people consulted and focus group discussions conducted.

1.3.4 Study challenges

While we largely consider the evaluation exercise a success, the main challenge of the study was that it coincided with the visit to Malawi of the Chief Executive of Plan International, Tom Miller. As expected of such a high profile visit, most PUMs were busy preparing for the visit of the chief executive and as such it was difficult to get in depth discussions and feedback with PUMs as they were busy running errands. However CPO 21 Coordinators and some CDFs were readily available and provided all the support we required. In addition, it took time for the consultants to get physical progress data from the Plan Malawi data base at PU level. And when we got the data, it was mostly incomplete and inadequate. The staff concerned indicated that their data bases could not provide some of the information required and yet the data sheet was designed based on the original CPO 21 project document. Despite the above constraints, we confirm that findings presented have not been fiercely affected, and that what we have presented represents our best possible judgment.

2. Programme Context

2.1 Overview of Plan International

Plan is an international development organization that implements child centred development programs aim at enabling children to realize their full potential in societies that respect people's rights and dignity. Plan has worked in Malawi since 1995. While programming is based on long term commitments to children living within a particular geographical location within an administrative subdivision, Plan Malawi also has interventions that have a wider reach, covering entire districts as well as the entire country. Currently, Plan implements integrated programs in Mzimba, Kasungu Lilongwe and Mulanje districts.

Plan is committed to rights based programming where the best interest of the child takes centre stage. Through its Child Centred Community Development (CCCD) framework, Plan has conceptual tools that enable programming to be based on high standards such as Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) and Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). CCCD is a rights-based approach in which children, families and communities are able to meet children's needs and safeguard their rights through their active participation in the development process at all levels. Child Centred community development Approach (CCDA) is the framework that guides all programming work for Plan Malawi.

In Malawi, Plan has committed itself to contribute to the realization of the child potential by scaling up child protection activities in partnership with local authorities, line ministries and other non-governmental organizations. According to a recent review of child protection programmes, Plan Malawi aims to enable community organizations to promote children's rights, prevent child rights violations and assist children affected by exploitation, abuse, trafficking and general neglect.

2.2 Programme Profile

The Country Strategic Plan (2005-2009) for Plan Malawi has identified a number of challenges that negatively impact of children's well-being. These include limited opportunities of survival, inadequate legal framework for child protection, limited children's participation in the development and decision making processes and poor enabling environment for advocacy of children's issues. To address the above issues and in order to promote the well being of children, Plan Malawi has developed 5 strategic programmes namely¹:

- Improved Mother and Child Health, which aims to facilitate and contribute to an effective and efficient public health system to support child survival in Malawi.
- Mitigating the effects of HIV and AIDS with the aim of reducing the negative impacts that HIV and AIDS has on the survival of children, their families and the community structures that promote the rights of children.
- Sustainable Livelihoods, which aims to build households and children's livelihoods so that they are in a position to support their children and the children rights to food is not violated.
- Quality education, where Plan aims to support the establishment of an effective formal and informal education system to meet children's rights to good quality education

¹ Plan Malawi, 2005: Country Strategic Plan

- Gender, Child Rights & Community Empowerment where Plan aims to work with partners to ensure public accountability in relation to implementation of programmes, especially the national Programme of Action on the rights of the Child.

Although these interventions are identified and implemented as separate Country Programme Outlines (CPOs), they are closely interlinked.

2.3 Summary of implementation environment – key issues

This section of the report presents brief description of key issues that characterized the environment in which the project was implemented. These are presented here because they might have played (positive/negative) roles in achievement of the project objectives.

Firstly, as has already been reported, the project was implemented within central and northern regions of the country. Project activities within the Lilongwe PU were therefore implemented within a matrilineal society whereas project activities in Kasungu and Mzuzu PUs were implemented within a patrilineal marriage system. These are traditional marriage systems that determine access and control to landed property and hereditary political authority. In patrilineal societies, women move and settle in the paternal villages of their husbands upon marriage while in matrilineal societies, men move to and settle in the paternal villages of their wives. These systems have various impacts on the way development is managed and implemented in the respective PUs. In the patrilineal system, for example, men are very powerful and often dominate decision making, while in the other system, women have more say than men. Within the matrilineal system children belong to the mother's lineage while the opposite is true for patrilineal societies of North Kasungu and the rest of the northern region. Experience elsewhere also shows that in matrilineal societies, men are reluctant to invest in the development of their households and communities because they are not sure whether they would stay for long. These attitudes and practices may have direct and indirect impacts on development programmes.

Lilongwe PU is a peri-urban setting which has weakened the strength of a collective society and limits child care and upbringing responsibilities to the immediate family members. Secondly, it is important to note that issues of rights, participation, democracy, good governance and accountability are quite new in Malawi and not many understand them, including those that promote them. Malawi only attained its multiparty system of government in 1994; a year earlier also saw the approval of a new Republican Constitution that enshrined a Bill of Rights. Before then, advocating for human rights issues was viewed by government as subversion. Within the spectrum of human rights, the rights of a child are more likely to be less known and appreciated than the rights of adults. More so, because of the underlying misconception and negative feelings amongst the society that democracy has brought irresponsibility amongst the youth and children. And also because generally, the Malawi society expects children only to take orders with little say as they are considered not fully developed to make meaningful contributions or any challenge to adult thought as this is otherwise considered insubordination or rudeness

Thirdly, issues of poverty also come into play. How do you promote children's rights to education, where children have no food to eat, no clothes to wear and no place to sleep? How do female headed households living in ultra-poverty access services for their children? The gender dimension of poverty means that girl children are forced into early marriages, especially so in the patrilineal communities where lobola is paid and used to generate assets and income for the family.

Fourthly, the project was implemented within the decentralization programme. During the period of implementation, DAs did not have elected Councilors, which legally means that there were no ultimate decision makers at the district level. Although the District Commissioner continues to run the affairs of DAs on a day to day basis, his jurisdiction is limited. For example, according to the Local Government Act, only a fully constituted DA has the mandate to make bylaws for DAs. At community level, elected councilors

were instrumental in facilitating development work. Furthermore, presence of Councilors at community level facilitates people's participation and representation in the development process. When Councilors are in position, they facilitate formation of VDCs, AECs and ADCs and link them to development partners. Presence of Councilors would therefore have led to more effective and efficient utilization of resources, as Plan would not have been involved in establishing new committees but rather in building the capacity of existing ones to manage development programmes. The absence of elected members of the DA has also affected the process of integrating the project approaches, objectives and activities into the whole district development planning system.

Lastly, but not least concerns factors internal to Plan Malawi. First of these is the inadequate linkages between the various programmes, especially during implementation. We have noted that there are no obvious linkages between CPO 21 and others. For example, CPO 21 facilitated the formulation of Village Development Outlines, which outline plans from VDCs and have projects that should essentially be funded by other CPOs. But this is not obvious in areas where we visited. Planning meetings are not consistent and projects are developed in isolation of each other. In fact, when people are developing projects they need to relate them with other CPOs in line with the CDOs. Second of these is the decentralization of Plan itself. About 3 years ago, Plan Malawi decided to decentralize and relocate CDFs to live with the communities and *"be a part of it"*. Although it was not our mandate to comment on Plan Malawi's operational systems, we have noted that quite a number of staff members are not living with the community, despite in some cases, housing being provided. The explanation is that they want to be "connected" and be online. For CDFs coordinating CPO21, the question is: which communities should they relocate to since they provide oversight to CPO 21 and act as CDFs at the same time? This also points to the challenges that Plan Malawi decentralization process is facing.

The last internal issue is the fiscal decentralization of Plan resources. The financial system for Plan Malawi is now centralized, perhaps for good reasons. But as a result, often disbursements come late, are uncoordinated and sometimes not related to planned activities. This has negatively affected planning, implementation and monitoring of the project activities and more importantly it compromises accountability, timeliness of execution of activities and partnerships with other players.

3. Evaluation results and findings

3.1 Relevance of the project

Assessment of project relevance concerns whether the results, purpose and overall objectives of the project are in line with the needs of and aspirations of the beneficiaries as reflected in the policy framework. Based on literature available and the consultations with communities, the ET concludes that the Good Governance and Social mobilization project is very relevant as it directly addresses the needs and policies of the Malawi Government, Plan International and more importantly the district assemblies, communities, families and individual children. Evidence of the project relevance is presented in the following narrative.

3.1.1 Relevance to the Malawi Government

The project has contributed to the implementation of the aspirations of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, including a number of national policies, particularly the national Plan of Action on Child Rights, the National Decentralization Policy (1997), National Gender Policy, (2000) which all aim at reducing poverty and ensuring active participation of the disadvantaged groups, including children, in national development. The project was particularly relevant to the MPRSP, which had six pillars one of which was promoting good governance, transparency and accountability. By strengthening community level institutions, ensuring that they are democratically elected, the project helped to promote effective mechanisms for service delivery at community level. In addition to addressing government policies issues on children, decentralization and empowerment, the project is important to Plan globally and in Malawi as indicated in Plan Malawi country strategy.

The Good Governance and Social Mobilization Project is in line with the main thrusts of both the just-ended Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy and the recently-approved Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS), which have identified good governance as priority

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3.1.2 Relevance to the District assemblies and relevant sector ministries and departments

Under the current government policy of decentralization, district assemblies are the centre for development planning, coordination and implementation. The project has been very useful to the district because of the following reasons:

- The project has paved way for revamping and in some cases establishing local development committees, which are part of the DA planning processes. The structures are supporting improved service delivery to the communities by sector ministries, the DA itself and other NGOs.
- Capacity building of AECs has contributed to capacity building of the DAs in terms of participatory development, thereby anchoring the decentralization process.
- Children rights are now being seen as development issues and this fact increased collaboration between individual sectors dealing with child protection issues.
- The project has enabled the Police to enhance its capacity in dealing with child rights abuses in the communities. As such, the existing partnerships with police establishments need to be strengthened while new ones established because

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cases of child rights abuse are on the increase. Together, Plan Malawi and the police are on a regular basis dealing with abuse issues like early marriages, forced marriages, child beatings etc.

3.1.3 Relevance to the needs of communities and children

For a long time, children's participation in development planning in Malawi has been the domain of government and NGOs. Forums for children to air out their views have not been a common phenomenon in Malawi. It is for this reason that the ET views the project as very relevant to the children of Malawi:

- The Children's Parliament has opened "political space" for children to participate in national development by airing out their views on issues that affect the nation, particularly those that affect children.
- The various structures created at community and district level have also helped to promote children's participation in development; by getting them involved in identification of their needs and incorporating them into community level action plans.
- Improved awareness on the rights of the child amongst children themselves and the community in general has been very important because it has enabled pupils, especially girls, to return to school after pregnancy. Further the awareness campaign seems to have some potential to facilitate change or modification of cultural practices that predispose the children and the community in general to HIV infection.

Overall, the ET concludes that this project, regardless of what and how much has been achieved on the ground, is very important as it has potential to create space for improving children's participation in development and integration of the rights of the child in overall development planning and management.

3.2 Project design, implementation and monitoring

3.2.1 Project design and implementation

Assessment of design, implementation and monitoring is an important element of project evaluation as it helps to explain inherent factors that might have contributed to the success or failure of a project being assessed or its components.

Using a SW (strengths and weakness) framework, the ET has noted that a key strength of the project is that it has focused on building partnerships with local authorities and community level players, including children themselves, in planning and implementing its activities. This approach is important as it creates ownership and sustainability of project interventions. Secondly, the project has implemented interventions at policy and implementation level. This has allowed the project to get "real issues" from its experience at implementation to feed into the policy debate through forums like the Children's Parliament. Thirdly, the project has been designed and implemented following decentralization structures. This approach is important because it is sustainable and allows for synergy with other development programmes at local level.

Despite the above strengths, there are challenges that have emanated from programme design, implementation and monitoring. The project did not have fulltime CPO 21 Coordinators at PU level. Although we appreciate that facilitating child centred programs is a vital part of the responsibilities for all Plan staff, CPO 21 as a project still required coordination oversight at PU level. This has proved problematic, because as all CDFs are at the same rank, it is difficult for the CDFs acting as CPO 21 Coordinators to supervise

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their colleagues. Again because each CDF has their own specific geographical areas where they facilitate implementation of all CPOs, it is practically impossible for those coordinating CPO 21 to divide themselves equitably between the other CPOs and CPO-21 coordination role. Often they align themselves more as as CDFs, while compromising their CPO coordination role, because that is where they are largely recognized and held accountable. As a result, CPO 21 has suffered significantly at PU coordination level compared to the other CPOs with full time coordinators.

Secondly, the project has not *adequately and comprehensively linked* community-based child protection structures to the school-based child rights clubs and then to the national level forums like the Children's Parliament. There is limited evidence of flow of information and issues from the community to district and the national level decision making systems. This is possibly why there are now proposals to institutionalise the Children's Parliament through legislation. Thirdly, the ET has identified that there are inadequate linkages between CPO 21 and other CPOs. When communities are empowered, they demand services, and because CPO 21 did not have a strong component of infrastructure, it was noted that such communities did not get adequate support from other CPOs. The problem was exacerbated by limited collaboration between CDFs.

We have also noted that *too many committees are either being formed, or supported or proposed to be formed*. Within a community, there would be a child protection committee, a VDC, a school committee, a paralegal committee, a parents teachers association, child clubs (in schools), despite other committees for other CPOs and organisations. Often the roles of these committees are very similar and we have noted that the project has in some cases facilitated the formation or worked with all of them. At district level, the ET has problems with the set-up of the District Child Protection Committees (DCPC), which are almost the same size as the District Executive Committees. Experience with the District AIDS Coordinating Committee (DACCs) is that they also started as big-size committees, but they could not be sustained despite HIV and AIDS programmes being well resourced. The DACCs have now been streamlined to small committees of 5-8 key members. As if these committees are not enough, it is being proposed that when the Children Parliament is being decentralised and institutionalised, a Child Protection District Child Assembly Steering Committee (DCASC) will be formed. The current proposal does not refer to the existing District Child Protection Committee. It is apparent that some streamlining of roles and membership of committees needs to be done at all levels to make them more functional and sustainable. Additionally, linkages need to be set up and strengthened between and among different levels of committees to enhance learning and effectiveness.

3.2.2 Monitoring and evaluation

Lastly, but not the least, the project seemed to put very little emphasis on monitoring. Although Plan Malawi has a PPM system for monitoring project implementation, the ET has noted that the system focuses more on monitoring inputs (resources) and immediate outputs (whether activities have been done). The system does not adequately capture results of the activities (outcomes) and the changes these results are creating in the communities (impacts). The indicators the system uses are mostly input and output-based (-no. of sessions, no. of events, no. of communities, no. of initiatives). Very few or no outcome and impact indicators (e.g. no of cases of child rights violations reported, no of perpetrators convicted from the impact area, no. of children coming back to school etc) are used in the system. It is further noted that the system is not adequately being used by staff despite training. Some monitoring of outcomes has been incorporated into the PPM but people do not complete these sections of the data base. There is need for more supervision to enforce enhanced standards in adhering to requirements of the PPM. Overall, the PPM mechanism is a useful tool for project

monitoring and evaluation so long its efficacy to capture outcomes and impacts is enhanced to improve learning and action during project implementation. Further commitment to translation of lessons from the system into implementable actions would significantly benefit project effectiveness and efficiency.

There was no baseline study conducted to guide either the project design or the implementation and monitoring of the project. Programme planning and review meetings are irregular and we did not get any project specific review meetings or reporting formats. All stakeholders interviewed complained of lack of monitoring and following-up of plans. The project did not have a baseline study to set benchmarks for measuring progress against targets. The project agreement document had set some physical output-based targets on the four key project interventions, but it did not set any targets in terms impact i.e. improving knowledge, attitudes and practices on the rights of the child amongst the community. This makes it difficult for one to measure improvement in the knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding the rights of children.

3.3 Project effectiveness

Effectiveness describes how well the results achieved have furthered the achievement of the project purpose and objectives. In this particular case, we are going to assess and present how well various interventions have worked or not worked and how they have in turn contributed to the achievement of the project objective of strengthening the capacity of local governance structures to manage development through participatory means and the recognition of children's rights in development.

3.3.1 Learning & Education related interventions

The project has used a number of information, education and communication materials to disseminate messages on participatory development and children's rights. In Kasungu, we found bill boards with messages of the rights of children. We also found that in all PUs, the project has used the Day of the African Child to mobilize stakeholders on children's rights. Furthermore, the project has facilitated district level Children's Forums for Advocacy (Kasungu), as a mechanism for ensuring that children's views are considered in district level decision making. The project distributed some books on the rights of children to schools.

The ET views are that while there is a lot of potential for impact, the project has not adequately prioritized and implemented the IEC component. The schools, VDCs and clubs that we met all were unanimous in reporting that the IEC materials are inadequate and particularly books were said to be inappropriate for young children. They indicated that they preferred more handy and user friendly IEC materials like posters and flyers other than the small books that were distributed by the project. Furthermore we noted that the project had promised to construct community halls (Mzuzu PU) which could have been used as learning resource centers but this was not done, leading to communities being frustrated. We have also noted that with proper planning and coordination, activities related to learning and education could actually be implemented better within the CPO-20 which deals with quality education. Apparently, this may have been caused by the previous planning where Child rights and education were in one CPO.

3.3.2 Community empowerment and Community Managed Project Support

3.3.2.1 Capacity building of local development structures

Effective structures that are able to plan development programmes at district and community level are a major requirement for a functional decentralisation process. The project has formed and in some cases revamped development structures at community level in almost all Programme Units, although the degree to which these are functioning varies between PUs. In all the areas that we visited, communities appreciate the role the project has done to revamp area and village development committees. Community mobilization meetings and training were the major tools used to achieve this success. Their active involvement in the process of developing CDOs meant further enhancing their role in planning and decision making processes that enabled realisation of some of their development needs.

The ET has been impressed with progress and how effective the process has been in Kasungu district. Most functioning amongst these are the Village Development Committees, which operate at group village level and area executive committees, which operate at traditional or sub-traditional authority level. Apart from Kasungu, the ET has noted that ADCs are not as active as VDCs. VDCs seem more active because they are busier by nature at operational level, doing planning and monitoring ongoing projects. This is unlike ADCs which largely operate as planning platforms when projects are submitted by various VDCs. The project has oriented these structures in development concepts like planning, gender; rights based approaches, community empowerment. To

ensure long-term sustainability, a training manual has also been developed jointly with the relevant line ministries and district assemblies. This is a very important project impact as it has enabled more extension workers to use the manual, even beyond the project period and also beyond Plan international impact areas. The view of the ET is that most significant outputs and impacts have been observed in support towards mobilizing communities, revamping community structures and providing them with required skills for planning and managing development. Care should however be taken to streamline committees where there are too many of them as stated earlier in the report

3.3.2.2 Participatory Development Planning Training of stakeholders

Through the project, Plan International has trained extension workers from government and other service providers in child rights, CCCDA and participatory development management. The results are that almost all AECs have been revamped, although they still need follow-up support in terms of monitoring. More importantly, the project has trained local communities on how to identify problems in their communities, writing proposals on how to address them and when supported, how to implement and monitor such projects.

3.3.2.3 Development of community development outlines

In addition to training extension workers, the project has supported a participatory development planning process at community level, which has resulted in communities developing their own "Community Development Outlines" (CDOs). The CDO as popularly referred to, is a village development plan (representing a cluster of villages) that outlines community problems and suggested projects to address them. The CDO comprises development priorities from a number of villages that fall under the jurisdiction of the Group Village Headperson. The VDC is responsible for implementation and monitoring of the CDO. In some cases one CDO applies to more than one VDC.

Development of CDOs for all communities² was an important and strong component of the project. While the importance of a Village Development Plans cannot be overemphasized, the ET felt that although this process has been initiated and has generally started well, it is too early to conclude that it is bearing fruits. It needs more time to mature, to be monitored and supported for it to be appreciated by the community. Furthermore it needs more technical and supervisory support from Plan Malawi. The process is still embryonic. Our preliminary concerns are that the development of CDOs started very late to the extent that Programme Managers had to rush the activity just to complete it. In cases like in Mzimba, briefing of AECs members who were facilitating CDO development, took only 3 hours while the actual community process lasted for 4 days. Similar processes in Mchinji and other districts by the District Assemblies have taken about a month to plan and another month for implementation. We are also concerned that there are indications that resources for the exercise were very limited to the extent that some communities who participated were not even provided with food and refreshments, despite traveling long distances and working almost all day. As a result, their participation reduced significantly during the third and fourth day, resulting in most final work being done by AECs members themselves. In such cases it is difficult for the ET to conclude that adequate empowerment of local communities is achieved to contribute to project commitment and sustainability.

We are also concerned that the initial project design was made in a way that the training of extension workers on participatory development would immediately feed

² A community as defined by the project comprises one or more VDCs.

into the CDO development process as should be the normal practice. During the actual implementation this was not the case as there was a long gap between the training of extension workers and the CDO development exercise. In any case had the two processes been done together earlier in the project, we could have been able to assess the impacts and adoption of the CDO development process. We also note with concern over use of terms "community development outline" vis-à-vis the decentralization term "village development plan". On the onset, the word outline is passive and does not entail engaging the community to participate. This was quite evident on the ground in that the process of CDO development places more emphasis on production of the product (the CDO as an outline of development priorities) and not the process from which participation as a right and empowerment are realized. Respondents in the study actually confirmed that the CDO development exercises were in most cases rushed and extremely hectic³ for participants to catch up with the little time allocated to the exercises. The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary⁴ defines an outline as a passive word that gives a description of the main events or points about something. The same dictionary defines a plan as a set of things to do in order to achieve something, especially one that has been considered in detail in advance. We believe that the latter advances decentralization and Plan Malawi objectives more comprehensively than the former.

3.3.3 Rights of the Child (ROC) Initiatives

Promotion of the rights of children was a strong component of the project. The project used three broad approaches to promote the rights of the child and protect children from rights violations.

The first one was a school-based approach, which mobilizes pupils into Rights of the Children clubs (popularly known as "ROC" clubs). The school based approach introduced the "rights of the child" clubs in schools. Each club had a patron and a matron that acted as overseers of the club on behalf of the school. Both the patron and the matron were teachers from the respective school and were nominated by the head-teacher. In some cases, the number of pupils that could belong to the club was limited while in most cases it was unlimited. In the schools we visited the range of number of pupils belonging to the club was from 10 to 50. In all cases, the numbers of pupils in the "ROC" clubs was less than 10% of total enrollment. The main activities these clubs perform are edutainment⁵ activities that teach other pupils their rights. Members of the clubs are taught child rights, their responsibilities and other life skills. In some cases, especially in Lilongwe we noted that some clubs have implemented outreach activities into the communities. The ET is generally happy with the school-based approach and the progress made but we have also noted the following weaknesses: firstly, while knowledge on child rights is needed for all teachers and pupils, we saw limited participation of teachers other than those who are patrons and matrons. In addition, the number of pupils that belong to ROC clubs as compared to the total enrolment is too low. Secondly, we have noted that the project did not put in place sufficient mechanisms, apart from the day of the Day of the African Child and the National Day of Education commemoration, to involve pupils who are not members of the clubs. Thirdly, there has been a tendency that when exchange visits are arranged not all club members

³ At Nkhamenya, members of the ADC including TA Kaluluma indicated that villagers were sometimes detained from early morning to late afternoon on empty stomachs to complete the exercises on schedule. As a result, many participants simply chose to abscond the exercises, especially during the final days while a few leaders remained to finalise the CDOs

⁴ 6th Edition of the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary⁴

⁵ Edutainment activities is a term representing education and entertainment activities

are involved, and at times the same members are involved all the time. The pupils reported frustration because of this.

The second approach has been a community-based approach where the project has facilitated the establishment of child protection committees in the community with the responsibility of promoting the rights of the children, protecting those whose rights have been violated, handling such cases and where possible, reporting to authorities. In some cases the project has trained paralegal officers at community level. While in Kasungu these have been very useful, they have not been as active in Lilongwe district. At the time of the evaluation, no paralegals had been trained in the Mzuzu PU. In general, apart from Kasungu, where the paralegals have generally been very effective, the community-based approach has not worked to the levels expected.

The third one has been a district-based approach, which has mainly focused on coordination of child protection issues, handling of inter-district issues and referral and advocacy work on child rights. The project has facilitated formation of very active multi-stakeholder district child protection committees (DCPC) in two PUs of Kasungu and Mzuzu, where the ET has been impressed with the level of facilitation by Plan officials, which has improved coordination with DA and other players on child rights. Apart from the large size of the District Child Protection Committees (DCPC), which has been raised earlier, the ET is happy with progress and effectiveness of this approach, especially in Kasungu and Lilongwe, where the DCPC are very active, have defined terms of reference and plans of work and comprise key stakeholders like the Malawi Police, Judiciary, District Labour and Social Welfare Officers.

3.3.4 Gender and Development

One of the specific objectives of the project was to strengthen participation of women in development in the impact areas. This was to be achieved through building capacities of local structures in gender analysis and mainstreaming, through increased involvement of women and girls in decision making positions and also in participatory community development processes. The evaluation therefore looked at three proxies for gender mainstreaming: 1) gender training as a capacity building initiative, 2) women and girls' representation and participation and 3) gender action planning.

In the area of gender training, we have found out that quite a number of activities related to creating gender awareness have been implemented. These have culminated into the inclusion of a gender and development training module in the "Community Leaders Training Manual for Community Development Workers", a manual which was developed to serve as a working guide for extension workers in the Ministry of Women and Child Development and other stakeholders.

We have found that in terms of representation and participation, the project has made significant inroads in that men and women are almost equally represented in many committees, with women forming about 40% of membership of committees. Perhaps most importantly we have noted that most development committees entrust women to manage project resources as treasurers, as traditionally women are more trusted than men. However, we have noted that the committees that we met have not adequately involved women in top decision making positions like those of the chairperson. Discussions with members of staff and key informants however revealed a positive direction. Strategically, what is more impressive is that young girls are taking up leadership positions in the ROC clubs, which is a good indicator of better things to come for future women. A key example is that Children's Parliament Speaker and Clerk of Parliament are girls. In addition, girls represent 50% of the total number of members of the Children's Parliament. Exposing girls on their rights addresses their strategic gender

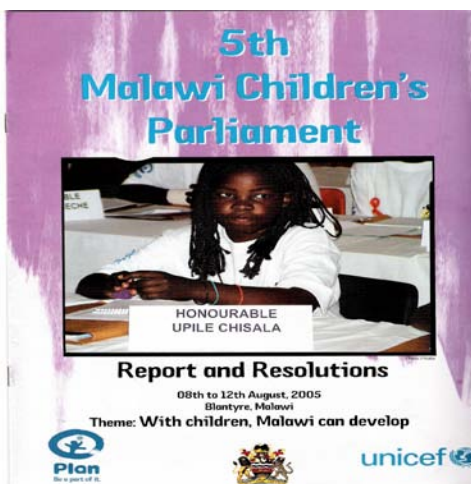
needs and may significantly contribute to improved educational attainment. Perhaps this explains why in the majority of schools the ET visited; enrollment is higher for girls than for boys.

The project planned to develop gender action plans, but none of the PUs has managed to achieve this. This might have been due to the fact that gender training has mainly focused on raising awareness, not on gender analysis (how to identify gender issues) and gender mainstreaming (how to include gender issues in development planning and management). We however need to commend the Kasungu PU for conducting a very gender-sensitive assessment of issues that affect children rights in their impact area. We have not been able to assess the gender sensitivity of the trainers that the project has used, which might have explained the narrow focus of the gender trainings done. We have noted that within all the project areas, there are strong culturally determined violations of women's and girls' rights and that without a comprehensive gender analysis this may not been adequately addressed.

3.3.5 Children's Parliament

Perhaps one of the most successful children events that has been supported by Plan Malawi is the Children's Parliament. Initiated in 2001, the Child Parliament is now an acknowledged children's forum at national level and their annual sessions attract a lot of interest amongst those that strive for children's rights, participation and empowerment (*Ministry of Women and Child Development*).

The Malawi Children's Parliament is jointly supported by Plan Malawi and UNICEF. It aims to realize the potential of children in decision making through institutionalization of their involvement in the highest legislative and policy making processes. Since its initiation, five sessions have been held and these have significantly contributed to creating political space for the involvement of children in national development policy debate.



At operational level, the Government of Malawi through the Ministry of Women and Child Development makes financial requests to both Plan Malawi and UNICEF who together respond with financial support towards the activities of the forum. Due to lack of collaboration between the funding partners, the system has not been effective enough, leading to ignoring some aspects of the requests or double funding for similar activities. As such, the ET recommends that Plan Malawi and UNICEF engage in formal collaboration through an MOU on the programmes they support related to the Children's Parliament to ensure effective delivery of project goals. Some of such activities include funding the Child Parliament sittings, Day of the African Child, UBR etc.

The ET commends the Ministry, Plan Malawi and UNICEF for spearheading this important innovation. We however agree with the Ministry assessment that the following challenges still remain: firstly, there is no proper linkages with the formal government decision making (executive, judiciary and the legislature); secondly, the inadequate

linkages with local level initiatives, including the decentralization structures; thirdly the absence of a forum for graduated children parliamentarians and lastly the lack of legislation to institutionalize the Children's Parliament as a legal entity of government. Once these issues are sorted out, not only will the Children's Parliament be useful to the development of children but it will also attain sustainability.

3.3.6 Partnerships with relevant stakeholders

Building relationships and partnerships between various players to enhance the rights of children is a major guiding principle for Programme implementation in Plan Malawi. In order to determine how partnerships have contributed to the achievement of project objectives, we have examined how effective partnerships have been at three levels: the national level, the district level and the community level.

At national level, the project has worked very closely with the Ministry of Women and Child Development, which is the custodian of child related policies in the country. It is well documented that the Ministry has serious capacity problems resulting from poor financing and lack of staff. Collaborating with Plan Malawi therefore has helped the Ministry to fulfill some of its mandates. Through the project, and of course including other Plan Malawi activities, the project has also strengthened its partnership with UNICEF Malawi. The formulation of the National Registration Bill, which is currently in Parliament, is a clear manifestation of the fruits of this partnership. The partnership with the Ministry will play a key role in sustaining project activities.

Partnerships at district level are more critical in view of decentralization. In the project being evaluated, the degree to which PUs have negotiated and facilitated *partnerships with district and community level stakeholders* has played a major role on the success or failure of project interventions. In Lilongwe and Kasungu district, there has been strong and functional partnerships with the District Assembly, especially District Social Welfare Officers, District Labor Office, the Malawi Police Services and the Judiciary. For example, the formation of community level structures in Kasungu was sub granted to the DA and regular monitoring meetings were held to ensure the objective of the agreements were fulfilled and also to ensure transparency and accountability. In Lilongwe, an agreement has been reached with the Lilongwe Police Station to roll out its community policing (with a focus on child protection) to the PU. A funding of MK2 Million has already been disbursed to the Malawi Police to roll out the initiative. In Mzuzu, partnerships were established, but could not be sustained because of problems of accountability, poor communication and generally weak collaboration between stakeholders. For example, an attempt was made to use one of the partners to implement a project activity but the partner did not account for the resources properly, hence the arrangement was abrogated by Plan Malawi in the interest of accountability. It was also clear that collaborative efforts with other partners were frustrated by the geographical challenges of Mzimba district, the largest in the country. It has the oldest and most elaborate local government history in Malawi. This is facilitated by their traditions through the chieftaincy structure which is the most unique in the country. For example, while other districts have a three tier traditional chieftaincy hierarchical structure of Village Head, Group Village Head and Traditional Authority in that order of seniority, Mzimba district has a 4 tier structure, namely: Village Head, Group Village Head, Inkosana and Traditional authority. As such, VDC structures can not easily be formed or facilitated due to village politics of power and partners can not be easily mobilized to undertake projects due to the vastness of the district and limited human resources. It is clear therefore that the geographical and political challenges facing Mzimba district are both entry as well as impeding factors that need to be adequately analyzed in designing the implementation approaches for Mzimba district e.g. at DACC.

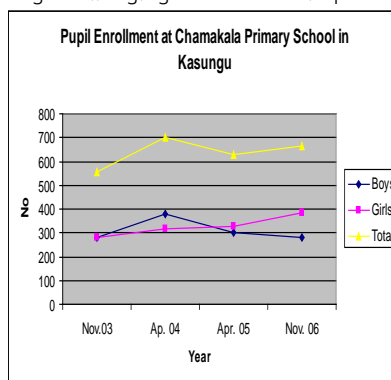
M'mbelwa district assembly has two working committees for Mzimba North and Mzimba South. The same model could be adopted for this project.

At community level the project has worked fairly well with extension workers from other agencies, especially government ministries and departments. A unique feature of the Kasungu-PU is that it has built a strong partnership with traditional leaders, to the extent that one of them, TA Kaluluma, is a *paralegal*. In Malawi, traditionally people respect traditional leaders more than elected leaders, as such a project that has the buy-in from traditional leaders is bound to be successful. Questions however arise as to whether the TAs role as a chief would not conflict with that of a paralegal (the case of being a prosecutor and judge at the same time). Clear guidance needs to be sought to establish whether a person in a position of a chief can ably play the role of a paralegal.

It is also evident that Plan Malawi activities to enhance realization of child rights at community level suffered an enforcement gap which has been ably filled by the partnership arrangements with Malawi Police Service. Lilongwe Model Police confirmed that their community policing programme has enhanced reporting and case handling related to child rights violations. Community policing structures have linked very strongly with other child rights committees to speed up cases. In Kasungu, the courts are now able to handle an average of 8 child rights violation related cases each month because of the effectiveness of the partnership with Malawi Police Service. The ET would however wish that more formal partnership agreements be entered into with the police establishments to enhance commitment and resource sharing to achieve more strides in enforcement of child rights violations. One example of such a partnership is the one that has been entered into recently in February 2007 (outside the project period) between Plan Malawi and Lilongwe Model Police Station.

3.4 Impact assessment

Impact evaluation involves assessing whether the project has made any positive changes in the lives and practises of the community, based on the problems that the project planned to address. The ET has found it very challenging to measure impact of the project, especially that it is implemented as part of a large PU Programme, which has four other intervention areas. Further, it was difficult to empirically ascertain the impact of this project, considering that there was no baseline study conducted before the project begun in 2003 and that this evaluation was qualitative. Therefore we used proxy qualitative indicators to measure or point-out potential impacts of the project. Given the above argument, our considered view is that the project has made impacts, especially in Lilongwe and Kasungu, although some of the impacts may be due to other Plan Malawi projects. The analysis below presents evidence of our claims.



One obvious impact of the project is the availability of functioning community based development and rights structures in the impact areas. These have been articulated in preceding sections of this report. The ET was told by members of Kasungu and Lilongwe District Executive Committees that development programmes are more effective in Plan impact areas than in non-impact areas due to availability of functional community structures.

A potential impact of the project is improved enrollment of both boys and girls at primary schools which have ROC clubs and where the Village Child Rights Committees are active. The Rights of the Child clubs have been integrated into primary schools list of clubs as shown in the picture. All head teachers interviewed during the evaluation reported increases in enrollment as a result of 1) girls who were pregnant returning to school 2) boys and girls who went into marriage at early ages returning to school upon realization of their rights to education and 3) more teachers and parents being aware of the rights of the child thereby creating a conducive environment for teaching and learning which motivates pupils to remain in school. While we are short of categorically concluding that the trend is due to the project, we think other factors remaining constant, the project has made a significant contribution.

MRS. GONDOLOSI -MRS. JERE	MR. MTALIMANJA -MRS. JERE	MR. KAMENI
SOCIAL WELFARE AIDS	TOTO CLUB	GIRL GUIDE
-MRS. MTAMBO -MRS. JERE -MR. MTALIMANJA -MRS. SELEMANI	-MRS. MATEWERE -MR. KALUSA -MRS. MPHANTE -MR. ZITCHOKA -MR. SELEMANI	-MRS. NDHLAMINI -MRS. MITUNGWI -MRS. MATEWERE
CONDOLANCE	RIGHTS OF A CHILD	TRADITIONAL DANCE
-MRS. MOYO -MRS. MITUNGWI -MR. SELEMANI -MRS. CHIKADZA	-MRS. KAMWELA -MR. MTALIMANJA A.	-MRS. MATEWERE -MR. KALUSA -MRS. NAPHIYO
DISCIPLINE	BIBLE CLUB	
-MR. CHIKADZA -MRS. CHINOKO -MRS. MNYIMBIRI -MRS. KAMANGIRA	-MRS. MTAMBO -MRS. SELEMANI -MR. CHIKADZA	
SANITATION	WILD LIFE	
-MR. SELEMANI -MR. KALUSA	-MRS. NGAMILA -MR. MTALIMANJA	

Interviews held with various other players have indicated that there has also been an increased number of reported cases of child rights violations. The ET is not absolutely clear whether the increase is

as a result of increasing number of cases of rights violations or it is as a result of increased knowledge on the rights of the child. In whatever case, it is important to appreciate that people are able to report cases of violations of the rights of the child and are demanding justice to be done, done in a timely way. In Kasungu, paralegals trained by the project had followed-up and rescued a girl child who was abducted into Zambia, as she was coming from school, where she was forced into a marriage. The girl is now back at school. In Lilongwe, in TA Njewā, a number of girls who got impregnated have returned to school.

Partnerships that have been developed are also an impact as they were not there before. In Lilongwe and Kasungu, the child protection committees at district level have established and have been pivotal in coordinating child protection issues in the district. Perhaps the most important impact is the increased knowledge of children's rights amongst children themselves, their parents, service providers and the community in general. All stakeholders interviewed have understanding of the rights of the child, which to us is the first step towards adopting the CCCDA.

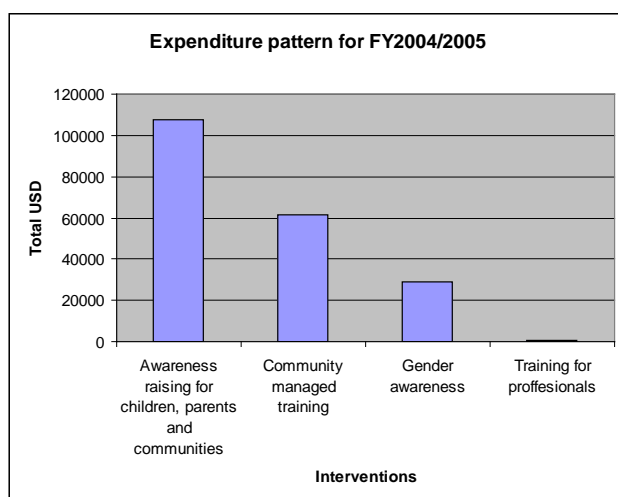
At national, according to the Ministry of Women and Child Development⁶, the Child Parliament has so far involved 300 children. In addition to deliberating on national issues, the children were also exposed to life skills education and capacity building. In addition the Ministry reports that the Children's parliament has provided a democratic forum for identifying children's representatives in both national and international fora, it is a mouth piece for children and has provided a nursery ward for future leaders.

⁶ Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2007: Malawi Child Parliament, The Revitalization Note

In terms of gender, there are also signs that there may be impacts of the project. The number of women in committees is about 40%, women are holding key positions in some cases and that strategically girls are taking leadership roles in clubs and nationally in the Children's Parliament.

3.5 Efficiency

Assessment of efficiency concerns the relationship between the results and means i.e. whether the process of transforming the means into results has been cost-effective or worthwhile. The project total budget was 547826. The NORAD contribution amounted to 493,043, with the remaining funds sourced from Plan Malawi core funding. As of December, 06, the project had spent a total of 523,703. The actual amount of funding released by NORAD is actually 477,775.69. Of the total expenditure by December 06, the amount of 238,491, representing 46% was actually spent in financial year 2006.



This expenditure pattern shows that the project only peaked up during the final year of its implementation, perhaps explaining or justifying why the ET finding that major activities of the project had been delayed and rushed during the final year. Could also be that most of the high cost interventions like the policy lobby events were done towards the end of the project. When a sample of the year July 2004 to June 2005 is used, results show that most of the funding went to awareness raising on rights of children for children, communities and parents, seconded by community managed training, gender awareness and professional training. This may explain why there are more positive developments in ROC initiatives and the community capacity building areas and not in the other areas, including gender analysis mainstreaming.

3.6 Sustainability

The ET understood sustainability as the degree to which or the likelihood that the impacts of the project as described above, will continue to accrue to the beneficiaries after the external support provided by Plan Malawi comes to an end. We have noted that there are signs that the above benefits may continue, but we are also quick to point out that it may be too early to provide conclusive judgments on sustainability. Firstly, we have noted that the policy environment is very supportive of the project and in general Plan Malawi programmes. The evaluation has found out that donor, Malawi Government and district level programmes are all in support of the project. This means that in the short to medium term, project activities can be linked to other programmes and donors at assembly level, thereby sustaining project activities. The conducive policy and

programme environment is being galvanized by a strong partnership that has been built between the project and other players. Together, they promote sustainability of the project.

The various committees and clubs that have been formed and supported by the project have created a community-based institutional landscape that has potential to live longer than the project, especially if capacity building and monitoring is strengthened. Furthermore aligning these institutions with the decentralization programme has enabled synergy between project activities and those of the district assembly and line ministries. The volunteers and committees that the project has established and trained are available to the community fulltime. These trainers and educators, resources permitting, will continue to disseminate and implement project activities on behalf of their community, even after Plan Malawi exits. Establishment of school ROC clubs and creating interests on child rights amongst children enhances sustainability as children are able to know their rights and claim them when violated. Strong partnerships that have been established between the project and district level authorities means that even without Plan International, some project activities, especially those that focus on promotion of child rights can be continued, albeit at a lower level.



There are also issues that could threaten sustainability of the project. These are: 1) the tendency to initiate project activities without adequate monitoring of progress thereafter, like the picture to the right which shows a standing Plan Malawi supported community school structure whose roof was blown off some 4-5 years ago in Lilongwe and had not yet been attended to by the time of the consultancy 2) tendency to promise projects without fulfilling them, 3) lack of cohesion between CPOs. For Mzuzu-PU there are two additional threats i.e. 1) poor transparency and accountability during project implementation, like in the case of the abrogated contractual agreement with a partner after noting misuse of financial resources, and 2) poor collaboration with key stakeholders like the DA. According to our own judgment, the level of risk of unsustainability is highest in Mzuzu, seconded by Lilongwe and it is least in Kasungu.

While decentralization structures seem to be effective in a number of places, there is strong evidence of some VDCs that were trained by Plan Malawi but remain non functional to-date. This is a clear threat to the sustainability of the project. The most probable reason contributing to the situation is poor quality training provided. During the study, we established that some VDCs were trained only for 3 day periods covering too many topics, not fitting the assimilation capacity of most participants. Additionally, quality control guidelines for selecting trainers are inadequate. Evidence of capacity needs assessments prior to conducting any training is absent. It is not clear therefore to what extent the training addressed the needs of participants as such needs vary from place to place. The ET learnt that in many cases, the qualification for VDC trainers is a person's mere involvement as an AEC member, not necessarily evidence of training skills. As a result, most of the training adopted information giving approaches other than transformative or attitude building approaches. It is therefore our considered view that

training offered by the project is to an extent too short to achieve serious change in performance of the structures. Improvements need to be made to the design of training programmes if the committees are to achieve sustainable change in their attitudes and perceptions of people regarding child rights and their responsibilities. A clear quality control regime must be integrated in the system to improve quality of training provided at various levels.

3.7 Summary effectiveness

The ET developed a matrix scoring form using the following evaluation criteria: Relevance, project design, effectiveness; efficiency; sustainability; partnerships; RBAs; community structures; child rights; gender mainstreaming; community participation; monitoring and evaluation; transparency and accountability and project coordination. The objective of the exercise was to present an overall picture of how the project has fared in all the PUs. Each criterion was given a total score of 5 and each of the 11 evaluation team members were asked to score for each PU, on each of the 14 criteria. All criteria were assumed to be of equal importance (weight). The average on each score by each criteria and PU is presented below.

Table 1: Summary evaluation of effectiveness by PU by criteria

To gauge effectiveness of the CPO 21, the ET conducted a rapid assessment of the PUs based on a set evaluation criteria of 14 factors and a score of 1-5, with 1 representing poor effectiveness and 5 representing the most effectiveness. Eleven members of the ET came up with the following scores independently.

Criteria	SCORES		
	Lilongwe PU	Kasungu PU	Mzuzu PU
1. Relevance	5	5	5
2. Project design	3	3	3
3. Effectiveness	2	4	1
4. Efficiency	3	4	1
5. Sustainability	2	5	1
6. Partnerships	4	5	1
7. RBAs	4	4	3
8. Community development structures	4	5	2
9. Child rights and their structures	4	5	2
10. Gender analysis and mainstreaming	2	3	2
11. Community participation	3	5	3
12. Monitoring and evaluation	3	5	1
13. Transparency and accountability	3	4	0
14. Project coordination	3	5	1
Total (of 70 total scores)	42	57	26
As %	60%	81%	37%

The ET therefore concludes that the project was more effective in Kasungu, followed by Lilongwe and was least effective in Mzuzu. On average, the percent score is 59%. The main sections of the report, lessons learnt and recommendation sections provide an

⁷ The poor score in Mzuzu is largely a result of the abrogated partnership agreement with the Social Welfare Department to manage project resources intended to fund training of village structures after Plan Malawi noted financial misuse. It was also reported that selection of trainers for training of VDCs from AECs was not very transparent since AEC members were in some instances not chosen on merit and in some cases CDFs were not consulted on the process. It was indicated that the Training Coordinator did the selection.

overview of the causes of the variations, what needs to be done for the project to be more effective.

It should however be noted that although the evaluation tool used provided some insight into effectiveness of the project at PU level, it could have been even more interesting if it was tried with the different project participants as well such as Plan staff, DA staff, ADC, AEC, VDC, etc). This attempt was however not implemented by the ET after considering that the other potential participants would not have been able to provide a comparative analysis between PUs since they did not participate in the assessment exercise and their knowledge was largely limited to their respective districts. Being a PRA tool, it is important finally to state that findings from the tool are not based on empirical evidence but largely on ET members' perceptions and hence remain subjective to some extent.

4 Eleven Key Lessons Learnt

The ET was asked to document lessons learnt during the project that would be used to guide future implementation of the project. The following are some of the lessons that we have distilled from the evaluation.

Lesson 1: We have learnt that proper project set-up plays an important role in effective implementation and monitoring of projects. In the case of CPO 21, it had two national coordinators and at PU level, it only had delegated CDFs to coordinate it while the other 4 CPOs had full time coordinators besides the CDFs. This complicated implementation and monitoring. The delegated CDFs at each PU had dual roles as CDFs as well as overall CPO 21 coordination at community level. This meant double workload apart from new supervision challenges.

Lesson 2: We have noted that practical partnerships with key stakeholders lead to effective implementation of the project. In Kasungu where the PU had subcontracted VDC and ADC formation and training activities to the District Assembly, there has been more stakeholder collaboration and more impacts at community level. In Lilongwe where partnerships are being worked on now, the project direction seems very promising. Stakeholder buy-in and more especially, institutional support partnerships facilitate project implementation and coordination. Strong partnerships can only be achieved when people are committed, when there is an effective interaction between the parties and when that partnership is monitored and followed-up with formal checks and balances through contractual agreements.

Lesson 3: A key lesson learnt is that when a programme with a number of projects is being implemented, it is important that various components are properly integrated. In the case of the project under review, we have noted that lack of proper linkages between CPOs has resulted in some promises not being met and some activities not being implemented. For example, some education related infrastructural activities that emanated from CPO 21 would have been better implemented if the linkages between CPO 21 and CPO 20 were more elaborate

Lesson 4: We have also noted that forums that enable children to air out their views and influence decisions are possibly the strongest methods for empowering children. But these need to link with formal decision making systems like district assemblies, parliament for such forums to be more effective.

Lesson 5: We have learnt that community processes that aim to achieve empowerment of people take some time to take shape. It is therefore advisable not to rush things, be patient and make sure that community mobilization is supported by capacity building.

Lesson 6: A key lesson learnt is that we should avoid promises to the communities. Not even when we are sure we are going to implement them. We have found that where promises were made and not implemented the communities are very frustrated.

Lesson 7: We have also noted that working closely with local structures and building their capacity to implement various activities is a very strategic activity which needs to be optimized. We have noted that in Kasungu, emphasis on working with local structures and traditional leaders was very strong and led to more coordinated

activities and project impacts. In addition, we have learnt that the structures so supported should work together.

Lesson 8: Although not very new, we have learnt that monitoring of project activities is very important for effective project implementation. In the project under review, there limited emphasis on monitoring as evidenced from lack of a baseline, no midterm valuation, no common indicators and inadequate planning and review meetings.

Lessons 9: Transparency and accountability are important elements of project implementation and partnership building, especially when dealing with stakeholders at district and community levels. Transparency can best be achieved by planning, implementing activities and monitoring them together, sharing challenges and discussing ways of resolving them together. In some cases, these elements were missing in the project.

Lessons 10: For community-based projects, it is important to work closely and support decentralization structures as this enables quick buy-in from district assemblies.

Lesson 11: Quality control measures are important to achievement of success in programme delivery at various levels. For example, to achieve optimum results in knowledge and performance of individuals and committees from training interventions, there is need to develop clear guidelines spelling out minimum requirements in training duration, qualifications of trainers and training methods, especially those that are held on a large scale aimed to achieve change in attitudes and performance.

5 Summary and conclusion

In summary the ET concludes that the project is very relevant as it tackles very important issues at community and district level. The project is also consistent with national policy and has potential to contribute to the goals and objectives of the National Technical Working Group on Child Protection which is being coordinated by the Ministry of Gender and Child Development of which Plan Malawi is a member.

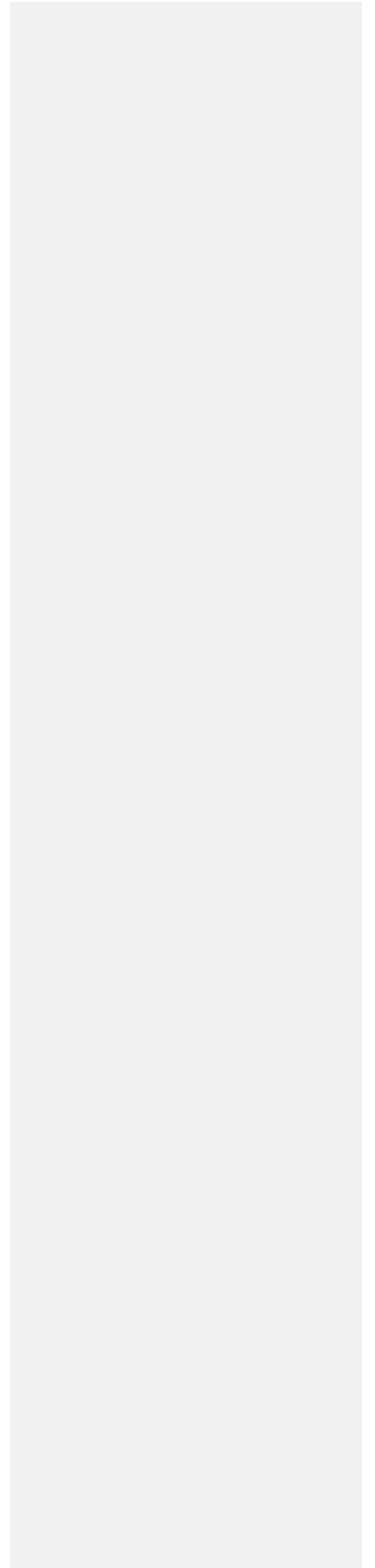
The findings presented in the report show that the project has had mixed success. There has been mixed success because some interventions have been very successful in one PU and not so in another PU. For example, paralegals have been successful in Kasungu but not so in Lilongwe and none were even trained in Mzuzu. Partnerships have also worked better in Kasungu than in Lilongwe, where they are just developing, while they have not been successful in Mzuzu. The success of partnerships between Mzuzu PU and M'mbelwa⁸ DA are especially challenged by the geographical set up of Mzimba district where the DA seems to be divided into Mzimba north and Mzimba south and yet overall authority rests with the District Commissioner at Mzimba boma. The District Commissioner alluded to this complication and it remains one of the long standing issues that tends to affect development work in Mzimba district. Community development structures seem to be more successful across all PUs, although their functionality also differs between PUs and between communities. Just like community development structures, child rights clubs and committees are more successful across all the PUs. In terms of comparing between interventions, formation and capacity building of community development structures and the promotion of child rights initiatives were more successful interventions than learning and community managed projects.

The evaluation has also noted that there were a number of factors that may have negatively affected the implementation of the project. Some of these factors, such as the project having no fulltime coordinators at PU level relate to project design, while a majority of them, such as inadequate linkages with other CPOs, limited partnerships and lack of monitoring relate to implementation weaknesses. In addition, we have noted that in general there have been significant variations in terms of the level of effort into and out of the project by the 3 PUs. Often the level of effort into and out of the project has depended on the interest the CDF has on the project and the issues of children, not on whether CDFs will be held accountable to the performance of the project through an appraisal system.

While we conclude that the project is relevant and should be supported further, we advise that there is need for more effective partnerships to be developed with stakeholders, more transparency and accountability and revision of project coordination arrangements to ensure that the project has specific, adequate and well trained staff at PU level, that can be held accountable to the children of Malawi. It is generally expected that because Plan Malawi is a child centred organization, it should have core staff for child rights projects like the one under review.

⁸ M'mbelwa is the name used to refer to Mzimba DA. The name is derived from that of the most powerful Paramount Chief M'mbelwa of the district.

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6 Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussions presented in the report, the evaluation team makes the following recommendations.

Programme design and organization

1. Designate a specific National Project Coordinator/Adviser to be based at Plan Malawi head office to oversee all technical and administrative aspects of the programme. In line with this recommendation, designate project specific CDFs, who are at higher rank than the current CDFs, to be CPO21 Coordinators as is the case with the other 4 CPOs.
2. Reallocate the learning and education community managed support components of CPO 21 to CPO 20 that deals with education and community infrastructure related projects. This will address the prevailing overlap between certain aspects of the two CPOs and it will enable CPO 21 to focus more on capacity building and governance components.
3. There is also need to streamline the number of committees being formed or supported or being strengthened to be more effective and avoid duplication, work overload and problems of monitoring. Also facilitate district and community level consensus plus a conceptual model of how various committees should relate to each other
4. An HR strategy should be developed to attract, stimulate, and monitor performance of CDFs in their work. This is in view of the realization that there have been significant variations in terms of the level of effort into and out of the project by CDFs in the 3 PUs. Often the level of effort into and out of the project has depended on the interest the CDF has on the project and the issues of children, not on whether CDFs will be held accountable to the performance of the project through an appraisal system.
5. Some of the problems faced during project implementation were as a result of late disbursement of funds to facilitate community level processes. The ET therefore recommends that the finance department needs to put in place sufficient mechanisms to ensure that they support programs more efficiently other than frustrate them. Cases of funds being disbursed in bits for one activity need to be avoided wherever possible. This leads to people failing to achieve planned schedules. One vivid example is how the practice affected CDO development activities.

Targeting and scaling up of interventions

6. The project should align "the community" with recommended structures in the decentralization process. This is especially so in view of the project goal to strengthen the capacity of local governance structures to manage development through participatory means. Running development structures that do not conform to the standards as defined by the decentralization framework defeats the very goal of the CPO 21 programme.
7. For the Child Rights Clubs, the project should develop a more effective strategy that would facilitate involvement of all school children and all teachers, as opposed to limiting participation to club members and patrons. Since rights of the child education and skills training is an axis for all youth groups (adolescent reproductive health, youth friendly health services, post test clubs, edzi toto clubs, etc), deliberate mobilization systems should be set up to woo out of school youths to benefit from the services
8. Except for Kasungu, we advise that no scaling up should be done at the moment for the Lilongwe and Mzuzu PUs. Instead the 2 PUs should consolidate their project within the existing areas. In Kasungu, it is possible to scale out to the whole district, as long as staff numbers are increased.

Partnerships and Stakeholder Participation

9. Strengthen stakeholder participation by: Defining and clarifying stakeholders to be involved, their roles and what is expected of them in the project. For Mzuzu, the PU needs to renegotiate the partnerships with key line ministries and the DA. For Lilongwe, the PU needs to continue building the partnerships, which have been initiated, while for Kasungu, there is need for the PU to sustain what they are doing and continue monitoring the partnerships so far created.
10. In general, all the PUs need to be always involving the district assemblies of the relevant districts to ensure sustainability of the project and conformity to the CPO 21 goal of strengthening the capacity of local governance structures within the framework of decentralization policy. The DA is an established and recognized entry point for communities to access other development needs, which may not be addressed through the project but are relevant to the success of the project. Where the DAs are weak, Plan Malawi should endeavour to contribute towards building their capacities to be more effective other than circumventing them under the pretext of capacity limitations.

Implementation Capacity and Participatory Development Planning Training of stakeholders

11. The project needs to invest more on staff and stakeholder development in the areas of participatory planning to strengthen and sharpen implementation capacity in terms of: quantity (numbers of both technical and administrative staff), quality (through professional development processes), deployment and placement (ensuring staff are located where they are required as per Plan Malawi policy; defining staff roles and responsibilities properly, monitoring their performance regularly in a participatory manner and building/strengthening partnerships with other service providers. This will require 'bravery' on the part of Plan Malawi to move to institutional support with the view of transferring the 'power centre' from the PUM to the DA. To do that, additional expert advice is advisable.
12. The project should ensure that trainings done for communities and extension workers at community level are monitored properly. To enable this happen, all training programmes should end with clear action plans for implementing the knowledge gained. In addition, training programmes should be designed in a way that they involve all relevant extension workers in the impact areas, to cater for the problem of high staff over. For CPO 21 type of intervention, Community Development Officers are more relevant but other extension workers could be considered so long they have working knowledge of issues of the CPO i.e. Community Participation and Governance Issues as well as integration of Gender and Child Rights. Simply following existing training manuals alone would not be adequate as they were not necessarily designed with a wider scope of rights based programming in mind and may be outdated.
13. An elaborate quality control system clearly spelling out quality control standards is imperative to achieve optimum results from project interventions at all levels. For example, there is need to develop clear and accessible guidelines that spell out minimum

requirements in training duration, qualifications of trainers and training methods to guide selection of trainers and quality of training delivery for district and community level training to ensure maximum impact. Close monitoring of training delivery and other interventions is a must at all levels. (A) A future focus should be on how to facilitate scale up by documenting a process tool kit to guide training and implementation. (B) Also create a district level data base of all trained people so that they could be used as resources within or across districts

Development of community development outlines (CDOs)

14. Due to the importance of the process of developing CDOs, we suggest that the process should be continued and strengthened to make it more participatory and empowering. Efforts should be made to approach the process from a more people centred perspective, focusing more on using it as a learning and problem solving tool for generating people's commitment to solving their own development challenges and not just an opportunity to extract information. Wherever possible, use of consultants should be limited to training key AEC staff that will later on facilitate the process to ensure sustainability and ownership. Subsequent improvements to the CDO development process should be approached through the annual review process at community and district level, which needs to be institutionalized.
15. We also recommend that the process should be changed from development of community development outlines to "village action plan" so that it is consistent with the district development planning system and the long term CPO 21 goal of strengthening the capacity of local governance structures to manage development within the decentralization policy framework. This will make integration of its recommendations into the District Development Plan more feasible and practical. Instead of Plan coming up with its own development plans and a separate process, it is advisable that Plan should use the same generic process of VAP development led by District Assemblies. The role of Plan in such a case would be to strengthen the process so that it reflects important aspects of CCCD including children's participation and rights. In new project impact areas, ensure that training of extension workers on participatory planning and development is followed immediately by actual village planning process, without long gaps in between.

Rights of the Child (ROC) Initiatives

16. Provide for adequate linkages between school-based activities and the community based institutions during implementation of project activities. In addition there is need to establish adequate and clear linkages between community, district and national level children's activities and forums
17. For Mzuzu, we urgently recommend that the PU should facilitate the strengthening of the District Child Protection Committee as a starting point for rebuilding partnerships. This should be done in liaison with the District Assembly. Since Mzimba is a very large district geographically, there is a possibility to have a sub committee administered around Mzuzu or Ekwendeni (Mzimba North). Precedence is there e.g. at DACC, M'ibelwa District Assembly has a working committee for Mzimba North. The same model could be adopted for the DCPC.
18. The project should put in place sufficient mechanisms, in addition to the Day of the African Child commemoration, to involve pupils, teachers and communities who are not members of the ROC committees and clubs.
19. The project should revisit training of paralegals and community resource persons and focus on building capacity for civic educators, who should now pay an all round type of role focusing on rights of children and women etc. This calls for the need for compiling process tools to guide the civic educators. There would also be value in networking the paralegals/community resource persons to ensure learning and capacity building.
20. There is need for the project to strategically involve the education Ministry at all levels, and specifically at divisional and district education manager level, so that rights to education can be sustained through institutionalization of child rights clubs in schools and integration of child rights issues in the training curriculum for teachers and the mainstream school syllabus.

Gender and development

21. The project should conduct a gender analysis for all PUs, based on lessons learnt from an assessment that was done in Kasungu PU. The analysis should be the basis for all gender-based planning and advocacy.
22. Plan Malawi should step-up efforts for building staff capacity in gender analysis, mainstreaming and advocacy.

Children's Parliament

23. The Children's Parliament should be linked with the formal government decision making (executive, judiciary and the legislature) **In what way, be specific.** In addition there is need to establish its linkage with local level initiatives, including the decentralization structures
24. Develop a forum for graduated child parliamentarians and link it with the young leaders' networks available in the country to broaden opportunities for dialogue and advocacy on child rights issues.
25. Facilitate enactment of legislation to institutionalize the Children's Parliament as a legal entity of government.
26. Roll-out and decentralize the Children's Parliament to district assemblies and community level and ensure that children who are in the National Children's Parliament are representatives selected from the institutions below.

Monitoring and evaluation

27. The project needs to be clear on how monitoring of the project implementation will be done: who will do what and how progress will be measured. There is need to establish a monitoring and evaluation framework that is robust and able to capture outcomes of the project. The PPM should be improved by integrating impact indicators in addition to the process indicators that are currently being used?
28. The project should also have regular planning and review meetings so that PUs are able to interact with each other and with their advisers on a sustained basis. It is not possible for one national adviser of rights and one training coordinator to supervise and support all PUs and CDF individually.
29. Baseline studies should precede project design and implementation so that M & E is based on objectively verifiable indicators that are measurable.

7 Annexes

Annex 1: Physical progress and achievements

Indicators	Planned targets	Achievements at Evaluation			
		LL-PU	KU-PU	MZ-PU	Total
No of communities reached	LL=17 KU=31 MZ=30 (NORAD Application Form)	19	31	30	78
Total project beneficiaries	48000 (176530 established Plan sponsored households) plus 30702 non-Plan families. (NORAD Application Form)	7592		All were reached	
Participation in DDC meetings	Regular	Regular		Monthly	

Field worker handbook on RBAs					
Learning and Education					
Number of school libraries supported	3, 1 in each PU	0	Conducted in other CPOs	0	0
Amount of materials supported to libraries				0	0
Number of Community Adult Education training established	4 in yr1-2004 8 in yr-2, 2005 and 12 for the whole period.	0		0	
Number of Adult Literacy courses conducted				0	
Number of participants (by gender) attending these courses				0	
Number of children events organized	3 and 3 children's project, 2005	6		6	9
Number of children (by gender) attending these events				-	
No of multipurpose community centres established	3	0		0	0
Community Managed Project Support			Conducted in other CPOs		
No of Community development Committees formed	70. (NORAD Application Form) 60%% will be exposed to good governance training	19		19	46 22 out of 46 were trained.
Number of Community Managed projects	9, one each PU	3		3	0
Project trainings organized	80% of 78 communities will have attended trainings (NORAD Application Form)	19 communities trained		19 communities	22
Number of participants in these courses (by gender)					640
Number of PDMT trainings conducted (ToT)	70 field staff -30 from partners and 40 from Plan trained in PDMT-yr1-2004				
Number of participants attending (ToT) by gender	30 community members. (NORAD Application Form)				
No of book-keepers employed	9, three per district				

Number of financial management trainings for CMP projects done	At least 6 project mgt teams-yr2				
Number of participants attending the above courses (by gender)					
Number of supervision visits to CMPs					
Exchange visits	3 visits supporting 30 people 10 from each PU				
Bikes	70, 2 per CDC				30
Community Development Outline (CDO)					
No of DAs oriented in CCCD	3	1	1		1
Number of communities /villages trained in CDO		19	32		30
Number of community members trained in CDO (by Gender)			1600		1350(750)
Number of CDOs produced	80% of 78, 45 in yr1-2004 (NORAD Application Form)		32	30	62
Number of districts which have Integrated CDOs and DPS	3	1	1		1
Project Management Handbook for community interest groups	1	0	0		
Gender and Development					
Number of gender trainings conducted for staff	3, one in each district	0		1	
Number of staff (by gender) trained in gender		0			
Number of gender trainings conducted for communities		0			
Gender field tours	1	0			
Number of community members attending gender training (by gender)		0			
Number of gender plans developed by communities		0	15	30	
Number of community gender awareness meetings		0	15	30	
Rights of Child Initiatives					

Number of meetings on ROC awareness		19	4	16	
Number of participants attending ROC awareness meetings (by gender)		All communities in the PU	14 communities		
Number of staff trained in child protection and Right of children (ROC)			14 plan 20 partners	4	
Number of children parliament organized			3 for Kasungu		3 between 2003 and 2007, 1 in 2007
Number of children attending the parliament (by gender)			6	3(2f)	493 (300 before 2007 and 193 for the 2007 Parliament)
Number of children projects established on ROC		6	5	1	
Number of field visits on child protection best practices conducted					
Number of child protection structures at country level					
Number of paralegals trained (by gender)		11	5 ladies 9 men	6	

Annex 2: List of stakeholders interviewed

NAME	POSITION	LOCATION
Lilian Okwirry	Country Director	Country Office Plan
Frances Hagan	Programme Support Manager	Country Office Plan
Martin Nkhuna	Rights of the Child Advisor	Country Office Plan
Mrs. Gumulira	DSWO	DCs Office
William Kampale	Manager	Lilongwe- PU
Wilfred Finyani	CDF	Lilongwe- PU
Njewa VDC	Members	Njewa-LL
Mrs. Kapila	Headmistress	Njewa Primary School-LL
ROC-Club	Members	Muzu Primary School-LL
George Mponda	CPC Member	Muzu-LL
Zey Malombodza	CDF	Mthyoka-LL
Kayinga Webster	Training Coordinator	Country Office Plan
Mr Kamanga	Headmaster	Matika primary School-LL
Mthyoka VDC	Members	Mthyoka-LL
Mphanza VDC	Members	Mphanza-LL
ROC	Members	Gumulira-LL
Floud Thimba	Paralegal	Gumulira-LL
Amosi Shadreck	Paralegal	Lilongwe
Felison Kathewela	Paralegal	Lilongwe
Gift Mzembe	Sub Inspector	LL Model Police
Patricia Njawi	Sub Inspector	LL Model Police
Malanso Mwasinga	Child Rights Protection Officer	LL Model Police
Henry Balamu	DLO	Lilongwe
Nkhan'genkhu VDC	Members	Kasungu
Boni VDC	Members	Kasungu
Kaluluma ADC	Members	TA Kaluluma-Kasungu
Rex Chapota	Grants Manager	Country Office Plan
Sam Sande	Manager	Kasungu-PU
Grace Masanya	CDF	Kasungu-PU
M.C Soko	Headmaster	Chamakala Primary School
Chawezi Mkandawire	Deputy Headmistress	Chamakala Primary School
Yamikani Hara	Chairman School Committee	Chinjilwavi Primary School
Geofrey Soko	Paralegal	T A Kaluluma
Mr Kalikokha	Paralegal	T A Kaluluma
Y L Chiwanda	DSWO	Kasungu
Mr Banda	DA	Kasungu
Mr Topsy Kachere	ACDO	Kasungu
J Biwi	Sub Inspector	Nkhamenya Police-Kasungu
M Mahaka	Detective Sergeant	Nkhamenya Police-Kasungu
Esther Chirwa	Manager	Mzuzu-PU
Dennis Kasambara	CDF	Mzuzu-PU
Atusaye Isuwu	CDF	Mzuzu-PU
Vincent Zgazi	Sponsorship Coordinator	Mzuzu-PU
Zakeyo Banda	SWA	DSUJO-Mzuzu
Mr Haji Mvula	DCDO	Mzuzu
Mrs. Jane Mkandawire	DSWO	Mzuzu
Mr T G Matupi	Health Facilitators	Emsizini
Mr Joel Kalinga	Health Facilitator	Emsizini
Malivenji ADC	Members	Malivenji-Mzuzu
Andrew Masisi	CDF	Emsizini

Annex 3: Evaluation Framework

Evaluation issue	Information required and guiding questions to be asked	Sources of information
<p>Relevance of the project-how does the project address the needs of stakeholders?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at national • at district level • at community level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the project contribute to the strategic objectives of Plan Malawi and to the overall national development? • How well the project addressed the key issues or problems expressed in the Good Governance and Social Mobilization project design. • Have the government, districts and communities found the project useful? • Has the project ideals been integrated into the core mandate of the District Assemblies? • Has the programme been successful in impacting upon the work of the District Assemblies? • To what extent has the project contributed towards the vision of the National Technical working Group on Child Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pan Malawi Strategic Documents • Interviews with Management, DAs • MPRSP/MGDS • District Development Plans for LL, KU and MZ
<p>Project design, monitoring and evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the project designed? Was the structure clear? Were the roles clear? What impacts did the project organisation have on project implementation? • What were the implementation arrangements? Were they adequate? Were all stakeholders identified and their needs taken into consideration? • How was the monitoring and evaluation systems designed? Are the indicators clear? Are they gender sensitive? How do beneficiaries participate in monitoring activities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project monitoring system-progress reports, field reports, baseline studies • Project staff and communities
<p>Effectiveness: to what extent has (or is likely to be) the project purpose has been achieved and to what extent is the achievement a result to the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the project achieved its planned objectives? • Has the project been able to meet its physical targets? Why or why not? • How well has each objective been achieved? (Assess effectiveness of methods, tools and processes by each objective). • To what extent has the project collaborated with district and local stakeholders in its methods? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project monitoring system-progress reports, field reports, baseline studies
<p>Efficiency: does the quantity and quality of resulting of the project justify the quality and quantity of the means used for achieving them?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you compare the investment with the outputs achieved in the project? • To what extent has the project used the least possible resources to achieve the required quality of outputs/outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSM, Plan staff, FGDs, KII • Project monitoring system-progress reports, field reports, baseline studies
<p>Sustainability: What has happened (or is likely) to the positive effects of the project after external funding has come (or will come to an end)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent will the impact of the project continue after the project has ended? • What mechanism will be put in place to ensure financial, institutional and environmental sustainability? • What is the quality of the community-based participation, including the need to focus on gender issues? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan Staff, FGDs, KII • Field visits, photos etc
<p>Impact: The systematic analysis of the changes in people's lives (children, families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has happened or is why to happen as a consequence of the project? • What changes has the project created amongst children, households and communities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan Staff, FGDs, KII • Field visits, photos etc

and communities) brought about by the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has been the impact within the communities and beyond regarding the objectives of the project? • Have duty-bearers become more accountable to people's right to participate in their own development? • Has their increased capacity and participation led to increased benefits from development, including public services? • How are beneficiaries utilising services by the project? Are they participating in O&M? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project monitoring system-progress reports, field reports, baseline studies
Strengths and weaknesses of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the major strengths, weakness, opportunities (that may not have adequately used) of the project? USE SWOT • How could the project maximize its opportunities and strengths to minimise weakness and threats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan Staff, FGDs, KII • Field visits, photos etc • Project monitoring system-progress reports, field reports, baseline studies
Rights-based approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have there been any trainings in RBAs at district and community? • Do the communities understand their rights to development? • Have they initiated their own development? Have they ever demanded services on their own? Have they established any community-based development structures? • What has been the impacts of these trainings? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan Staff, community members, local committees
Community participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have there been any trainings in RBAs at district and community? • Do the communities understand their rights to development? • Have they initiated their own development? Have they ever demanded services on their own? • Have they established any community-based development structures? What has been the impacts of these trainings? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan Staff, FGDs, KII • Field visits, photos etc • Project monitoring system-progress reports, field reports, baseline studies
Decentralisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the project been successful towards contributing to the national goal of implementing the decentralization policy • How is the project working with ADCs, VDCs, District Assemblies? • Is the project itself well decentralised? Who, when and how are project plans developed? How do local people participate in the above? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Management, DAs • MPRSP/MGDS • District Development Plans for LL, KU and MZ
Gender analysis and mainstreaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the project led to increased participation and empowerment of women at community level? What is the evidence? Are there any specific strategies and affirmative actions on gender mainstreaming and women empowerment? • How well is the project take into consideration facilitating the participation of excluded groups? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies, interviews with committee members, women and girl children
Child rights and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there sufficient mechanisms on child protection at district and community level? • How is the project working with the District Social Welfare Officer/Labour Officer? Traditional Authorities, the Malawi Police? Are there community policing structures in the communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with DSWOs, DLO, TAs, GVH, VH, Community Policing Staff/Volunteers,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well Plan Malawi is adopting the CCCD approach and Rights Based Programming • What has been the impact of the Children's Parliament towards the attainment of the objectives of this project? • Was the project successful in facilitating the participation of the communities and children in issues that affect them 	<p>Malawi Police. Get number of cases if possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who attended the Children's parliament
Lessons learnt for future programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the main lessons (either what made things work or not work) and what emerged in terms of efforts to secure sustainability and knowledge transfer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Team Members. Team Meetings. Disengagement Meeting.
Areas requiring more efforts in future programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What areas should be improved in future regarding this project? • Which aspects of the project be continued or discontinued, if so what aspects and what changes need to be made? • Which ones should be adjusted and how? What are the implications on project design? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Team Members. Team Meetings. Disengagement Meeting.
Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What recommendations should be made on how to improve project performance? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Team Members. Team Meetings. Disengagement Meeting.

Annex 4: Itinerary for the Evaluation Team

Activity	Location	Dates
Contract award, negotiation and due diligence	Lilongwe	January 2007
Orientation of Research Assistants	CDM	Tuesday 6/02/2007
Lilongwe – Field Work	Lilongwe	Wednesday 7/02 – Friday, 9/02/2007
Kasungu – Field Work	Kasungu	Sunday 11/02 – Wednesday 14/02/2007
Mzuzu – Field Work	Mzuzu	Thursday 15/02 – Saturday 18/02/2007
Report writing	Lilongwe	19 th to 28 th February 2007

Annex 5: Terms of reference

Final Evaluation of the Good Governance and Social Mobilisation Project

GAD MUJ11011 // NORAD project number GLO-04/290-5 MUJ1-00/010

Duration January 2003-December 2006

BACKGROUND

Plan Malawi received funding from NORAD for the implementation of the Good Governance and Social Mobilisation Project. This project started in 2003. The long-term development goal of the project is to strengthen the capacity of local governance structures to manage development through participatory means, contributing towards the national goal of implementing the decentralisation policy and fulfilling people's right to participate in their own development.

The project therefore seeks to empower local communities to identify development problems and devise ways and means of solving those problems. It is the aim of the project to increase the participation by all groups of the community in decision-making, planning and implementation of development projects. More so, through the integration of gender sensitive tools, the project aimed to promote the participation of women and accord

them increased participation in local governance. The project also aimed to promote children's rights through the creation of child protection structures at community level and promote their participation in local and national decision making processes.

Planned Activities

The following activities were planned to be implemented in Plan impact areas in Lilongwe, Kasungu and Mzuzu in the course of the project:

- 1. Learning & Education related interventions**
 - School Libraries - supplies to quasi learning centres
 - Community Adult Education Training
 - Adult Literacy Courses
 - Children's Events
- 2. Community Managed Project Support**
 - Community Managed Project Training for communities
 - Participatory Development Management Training (TOT)
 - Financial Management Training for Community Managed(CMP) Projects
 - Financial and Project Management Handbook for CIGs doing CMPs
 - Monitor Community Project Implementation
- 3. Community Development Outline (CDO) Development**
 - Train communities in preparation of CDOs in line with CSP
 - Produce Community Development Outlines for each community in all Pus
 - Negotiate Programme Unit CDO integration into District Development Plans
- 4. Gender and Development**
 - Conduct Gender awareness & Gender analysis training for staff & partners
 - Conduct Gender awareness Training for Communities
 - Preparation of community specific gender policy/strategy & action plan
 - Gender Plans of Action follow up and sharing in communities

5. Rights of the Child (ROC) Initiatives

- ROC Awareness
- Children's Parliament
- Train staff in Child Participation & ROC
- Facilitate establishment of at least 3 Children's Projects -ROC practice e.g. recreational
- Field Visit to best practices on Child participation
- Establishment of child protection structures at community level
- Training of paralegals

OBJECTIVES OF THE GOVERNANCE AND SOCIAL MOBILISATION PROJECT

The governance and social mobilisation project had a total budget of US 547,826 over a period of four years. It was implemented within Plan's Country Programme Outline of Child Rights, Gender and Community Empowerment (CPO 12). The objectives of the Governance and Social Mobilisation project were as follows:

- To increase knowledge and skills of communities to manage development
- To increase the participation of all groups of the community in decision making, planning and implementation of development projects
- To increase projects sustainability and access to benefits
- To promote the participation of women and accord them increased access and control of projects resources administered within Plan areas
- To integrate child rights child participation programming
- To integrate all stakeholders including women and children in programme implementation

The programme was being implemented within the framework of the Malawi government on child protection. This is being guided by the National Technical Working Group on Child Protection which is being coordinated by the Ministry of Gender and Child Development of which Plan Malawi is a member. Other members of this Committee include Government Departments dealing with issues related to children, NGOs working on children's rights and cooperating partners that include UNICEF, World Vision and Save the Children US.

WHY IS THE EVALUATION NEEDED?

After implementation of these activities for a period of four years, Plan Malawi would like to engage an external consultant to carry out an evaluation of the programme implemented in three Plan Programme units of Lilongwe, Kasungu and Mzuzu with the support of the Country office. The evaluation should focus on the process of project implementation, impact, gender mainstreaming and in particular the participation of the community in planning, identification of projects, decision-making, project implementation and monitoring.

Specifically the evaluation is necessary to answer the following questions:

- How well is Plan Malawi is adopting the CCCD approach and Rights Based Programming
- Was the project successful in facilitating the participation of the communities and children in issues that affect them?
- How well is the project take into consideration facilitating the participation of excluded groups?
- What has been the impact of the Children's Parliament towards the attainment of the objectives of this project?
- What has been the impact within the communities and beyond regarding the objectives of the project?
- Have duty-bearers become more accountable to people's right to participate in their own development?
- Has their increased capacity and participation led to increased benefits from development, including public services?

- What have been the problems and constraints encountered in the project?
- What lessons can we draw from the implementation of this project?
- Have the government, districts and communities found the project useful?
- Should aspects of the project be continued, if so what aspects and what changes need to be made?
- Will the impact of the project be sustained after the project has finished?
- Has the project ideals been integrated into the core mandate of the District Assemblies?
- Has the programme been successful in impacting upon the work of the District Assemblies?
- To what extent has the project contributed towards the vision of the National Technical working Group on Child Protection
- Has the project been successful towards contributing to the national goal of implementing the decentralization policy

WHO SHALL USE THE EVALUATION REPORT?

Plan Malawi and its partners will use the information, which will contribute to the implementation of other on-going Plan programmes under the Child Rights, Gender and Community Empowerment Programme. Partners involved in Plan programmes including district level staff and communities will use the evaluation to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of Plan strategies which will assist in their activity and program design.

SCOPE OF WORK

The consultant will work independently and with the Programme Support Manager of Plan Malawi or her representative and other beneficiaries and stakeholders in the project.

The consultant will carry out the following functions:

1. Assess progress towards attaining the projects objectives and outcomes.
2. Examine the documents as well as the reports and conduct interviews as appropriate to ascertain the extent to which project objectives were fulfilled.
3. Determine the projects weak points in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and determine the contributing factors if any.
4. Establish if the project has led to participation and empowerment of women at community level.
5. Determine whether sufficient linkage mechanisms on child protection have been developed at community level.
6. Assess the impact of the project activities and the extent of community participation in development activities by gender.
7. Make recommendations as to how to improve project performance in terms of effectiveness and efficiency in achieving impact on both capacity and targeted communities.
8. Describe the main lessons that have emerged in terms of efforts to secure sustainability and knowledge transfer.
9. Propose areas requiring more efforts in future programmes.

DATA GATHERING

The consultants should use participatory methods of data gathering. Consultants will:

1. Review project documents (including Grant Application Document, Project Outlines on the Project in all Programme Units, Project Reports, publications and any other documents related to the projects implemented with NORAD Grant).
2. Collect new information through participatory fieldwork: interviewing staff and partners that have collaborated with Plan on the Project.
3. Visits to project sites.

4. Collection of info from target group through focus group discussions/interviews with children, women, CMP members or any other group.

EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team shall be composed of at least two individuals. The team leader should have relevant qualifications and should have experience in community development, human rights and governance issues. In addition the team leader should have experience in leading evaluation teams in comparative activity areas.

DELIVERABLES

The consultant shall provide Plan Malawi a complete draft of the report for review and comment. Following the submission of the draft report, a joint review meeting between Plan and other stakeholders will be held to discuss the draft report. The report shall follow the format as follows:

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction
 - a. Purpose of the Evaluation
 - b. Background
 - c. Evaluation methodology
3. Evaluation Findings
 - a. Project Relevance
 - b. Efficiency
 - c. Effectiveness
 - d. Impact of the Project
 - i. Learning and Education Related Interventions
 - ii. Community Managed Project Support
 - iii. Gender and Community Development
 - iv. Rights of the Child Initiatives
 1. Child Parliament
 2. Child Protection
 3. ROC Awareness
 - e. Sustainability
4. Lessons Learnt
5. Conclusions
6. Recommendations
7. Annexes
 - a. Terms of Reference
 - b. Project Performance Matrices
 - c. Itinerary for the Evaluation Team
 - d. List of Persons Consulted
 - e. Literature and Recommendations

By the end of the exercise, the Consultants shall submit five hard copies and an electronic copy on CR-ROM Microsoft Word of the Report to Plan Malawi.

PERFORMANCE PERIOD

The exercise shall be carried over a period of four weeks. The Consultants are expected to commence work during the last week of October 2006.

LOGISTICS

The consultant will be responsible for arranging all the logistics to the exercise. All related costs must be included in the bid.

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN THE APPLICATION

The Following information should be included in Bids:

Company Profile and/or Curriculum Vitae

Detailed Proposed Evaluation Strategy and Methodology

Detailed proposed work plan

Proposed financial implications for the review (including travel and any other costs)

Traceable references and their contact details

Annex 6: Bibliography

Plan Malawi – *Community Child Protection Programme: Review of Progress and Recommendations (January 2007)*

Plan Malawi – *Country Programme Outline 21 (2006-2010)*

NORAD - *Department for Civil Society and Private Sector Development: Application form for various applicant organizations (2004)*

Plan Malawi – *Country Strategic Plan (May 2005)*

Plan Malawi – *Programme Review (June 2005)*

Plan Malawi – *Operational Plan for FY07*

Plan Malawi - *Grants Tracking System: Grants Expenditure Detail – Gad Number: MWI1011 Community Governance and Social Mobilization*