



CIVIL SOCIETY EDUCATION COALITION

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS MADE IN INCREASING GIRLS' EDUCATION ACCESS

...with focus on readmission policy and other related policies

FINAL STUDY REPORT, JUNE 2014

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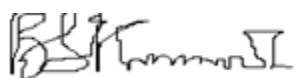
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Acknowledgements

The Civil Society Education Coalition is grateful to African Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA) for the financial support towards this study. The coalition cherishes the partnership that exists with CSEF in promoting access to quality education in Malawi.

The coalition is also grateful to the consultant, Dagrous Msiska whose guidance and technical expertise has given shape to this study.



Benedicto Kondowe

Executive director

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED

ADC	:	Area Development Committee
ADRA	:	Adventist Relief Agency
AIDS	:	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
CADECOM	:	Catholic Development Commission
CAMFED	:	Campaign for Female Education
CBCCC	:	Community Based Child Care Centre
CBO	:	Community Based Organization
CCJP	:	Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace
CFS	:	Child Friendly Schools
CISE	:	Community Initiative for Social Enhancement
CLEAR	:	Child Labour Elimination Actions for Real Change
CRECOM	:	Creative Centre for Community Mobilization
CSEC	:	Civil Society Education Coalition
CSO	:	Civil Society Organization
DEM	:	District Education Manager
DEMIS	:	District Education Management Information System
DEN	:	District Education Network
EFA	:	Education for All
EMIS	:	Education Management Information System
ESIP	:	Education Sector Improvement Plan
FAWEMA	:	Forum for African Women Educationalists in Malawi
FPE	:	Free Primary Education
GABLE	:	Girls' Attainment in Basic and Literacy Education
GoM	:	Government of Malawi
HIV	:	Human Immunity Virus
M&E	:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	:	Millennium Development Goal
MGDS	:	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MOEST	:	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NESP	:	National Education Strategic Plan
NGO	:	Non Governmental Organization
PEA	:	Primary Education Advisor
PIF	:	Policy Investment Framework
PSLCE	:	Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education
PTA	:	Parent-Teacher Association
SMC	:	School Management Committee
TDC	:	Teacher Development Centre
TLC	:	Total Land care
UN	:	United Nations
UNGEI	:	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative

UNICEF	:	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	:	Universal Primary Education
WALA	:	Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement
YECE	:	Youth Empowerment and Civic Education
YONECO	:	Youth Network and Counseling

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction and Background

This study on assessing progress made in increasing girls' education access was commissioned by Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC) in May 2014. The purpose of the study was to measure progress made in increasing girl's access to education with focus on readmission policy and other related policies. The study information would be used in providing evidence in respect of the status in relation to girls' access to education in order to inform not only future interventions but also to influence best practices, incentives and strategies. The study findings will guide CSEC to take the necessary direction in design and implementing of its activities. The findings will also be used by education stakeholders and most importantly, Ministry of Education and other government departments to inform their policies and subsector interventions.

1.2 Study Methodology

The study was conducted in six educational districts, namely: Mzimba North (Bwengu, Erukweni, and Ekwendeni zones), Nkhatabay (St. Maria Gorret, Mpamba, Mwaya and Chihami zones), Mchinji (Boma, Ludzi, Kamwendo and Pinda zones), Dedza (Chimbiya and Bembeke zones), Machinga (Boma, St. Theresa, Namandanje and Puteya zones) and Mwanza (Futsa, Chidoole and Mphande zones). The sample consisted of all government and mission primary schools in the target districts that have girls. A total of 368 respondents provided the required information comprising 37 teachers and head teachers, 107 out of school and readmitted girls, 7 Members of District Education Networks, 7 DEM Office staff, 11 PEAs, 82 Members of PTA/SMC and 77 Members of Mother Groups. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches using questionnaires, key informant interview guides, focus group discussion guides, checklists, case studies and literature review among others. Quantitative data from the study was analyzed using SPSS and Microsoft Excel to generate graphs, tables and charts used to present frequencies, trends and distribution of the findings from the six districts. Qualitative data from key informant interviews and focus group discussions was manually processed and coded to generate concurrent themes, conclusions and generalizations used to interpret and explain the study findings in greater detail. Secondary Data from the review of documents related to the study including reports, policies and internet searches occurred simultaneously and iterative with data collection, interpretation and report writing

1.3 Summary of Findings

The study established that access to education for girls in all the target districts is generally not a problem. The major challenge is keeping girls in school which results in high girls dropout counts than boys. Pregnancy is a major cause of most girls interviewed dropping out of school. Vulnerable girls from poor resource households, orphans and those with disabilities are at particular risk of dropping out of school. Often, parents cannot afford the direct and indirect costs, such as school books, clothing, shoes and uniforms to facilitate

their children's schooling. Many full primary schools and secondary school are located far away from homes, a factor that affects many girls transition from one level to another. Lack access to secure and separate latrines for boys and girls also discourages adolescent girls from attending school.

The study further established that in the face of the challenge of keeping girls in school, the readmission policy is not effectively implemented. Only 49% of the girls who left school had been re-admitted in all the six districts. Besides, most girls still dropped out of school even after their readmission. This is largely attributed to lack of documented guidelines and procedures for readmission, negative attitudes towards teenage mothers, socio-economic constraints, early marriages and ex-pregnant girls' fear to return to the same schools. These barriers, coupled with poverty and unprofessional teacher conduct for example - create high levels of out-of-school girls and present barriers to effective implementation of the readmission policy and other policies related to increasing girls' education access.

1.4 Recommendations and way forward

Based on the findings from the study, respondents suggested the following recommendations: (a) formulation of the readmission policy and other related education policies implementation guidelines; (b) publicizing of the readmission policy to all stakeholders; (c) implementation of the readmission policy through transfer of girls especially mothers to other schools (d) keeping pregnancy records for monitoring readmission policy impact on pregnancy, sex education, reproductive health and pregnancy prevention education, (d) counseling and further research to investigate the issue from another perspective; (e) Strengthening coordination, networking and collaboration among various players involved in readmission of out of school girls through the District Education Network as well as (f) building the capacity of existing grassroots structures such as ADC, SMC, PTA, Mother Groups and CBOs to monitor implementation of readmission of out of school girls. (g) Teachers professional development is needed to facilitate effective implementation of readmission policy and finally (h) supporting initiatives such as community managed bursaries to support meeting needs related to girls schooling

2 INTRODUCTION

This report documents the progress made in increasing girls' education access in six educational districts, namely: Mzimba, Nkhatabay, Mchinji, Dedza, Machinga and Mwanza districts. CSEC commissioned the study to unveil district specific level of awareness of the readmission policy among community members and out of school girls, extent to which the readmission policy and other related policies have increased girls' access to education, actors and mechanisms that are currently utilized to enhance the effective implementation of the readmission policy, barriers to the effective implementation of readmission for out of school girls and key challenges and gaps of the readmission policy. The report outlines the background to the study, the methodology that was employed, study findings and recommendations for action.

2.1 Background to the Study

The right to education is one of the human rights entrenched in a number of international, regional and local human rights instruments. The right to education for the girl child is key because it gives way to the protection of other rights. Malawi ratified the United Nations Charter on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the global Education for All (EFA) commitment and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). EFA goals 2 and 5 demand that by 2015 countries should have their children, particularly girls and those belonging to ethnic minorities, access and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality with no gender disparities at both primary and secondary levels. The MDGs 2 and 3 also echo the same issues of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and elimination of gender disparity in education.

There is no doubt that significant progress has been made at policy level to enhance girls' education access, completion and achievement in the country. Within the framework of the Free Primary Education (FPE) policy, Government, Development Partners, Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs), the private sector and community members have used various innovations to promote equitable access to and achievement in basic education including national campaigns like the Girls' Attainment in Basic and Literacy Education (GABLE), Girls Scholarships, Mother Groups support, and Child Friendly Schools (CFS) concepts.

2.2 The Problem

Irrespective of the efforts made, statistics show that though there has been steady progress on improving gender parity in enrolment at primary and secondary school levels, the pace at which gains are being made is slower than expected and the situation is still not encouraging in senior primary and on transition to secondary school. A Girls Education Mapping study (2010) supported by UNICEF in 12 districts, established a number of factors which influence access and retention of girls in schools at various levels including the following: 1. At household and interpersonal levels, educational level of parents matters. Some parents believe that an improved livelihood is not associated with education. Other households involve girls in more chores than boys. Poverty at household level makes the direct costs of schooling too expensive for many families. Poor families may either fail to

enroll their children into schools or may enroll them late and may even withdraw them prematurely from primary schools. Poor households also often push their daughters into early marriages. 2. At community level traditional and cultural beliefs like initiation rites push girls into early marriages, thereby dropping from school. In most communities, girls education is not valued as important compared to that of boys. This is because it is often assumed that girls tend to get married and do not provide support to their families. 3. At school level - various factors affect girls' education at school level. For instance, girls of adolescent age usually miss some school days when they are having menses due to unavailability of sanitary facilities that offer privacy. In some cases, late enrolment makes girls to feel uncomfortable to stay in the same class with younger children. In addition, shortage of female teachers especially in rural areas, deprive girls of role models to be emulated. In other cases, girls are harassed by men (including their peers and teachers) on their way to and from school. Lack of knowledge on reporting structures for this type of abuse often means perpetrators are not brought to book. Lastly, food insecurity and malnutrition forces children to come to school hungry and malnourished and as such do not concentrate hence losing interest.

2.3 Global Initiatives to enhance Girls' Education Access

The right to education is one of the human rights entrenched in a number of global development and human rights instruments. The right to education for the girl child is key because it gives way to the protection of other rights. Malawi ratified the United Nations Charter on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the global Education for All (EFA) commitment and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) among other instruments that puts children and education at the centre of the human rights based approach to development.

2.3.1 United Nations Girls' Education Initiative

The goal of UN programming for and support of girls' education is to ensure the fulfillment of the right to a quality education by each member of the largest single group of children denied this right—girls. In April 2000, at the Dakar World Education Forum, the United Nations Secretary- General, Kofi Annan, launched the UN Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). 13 UN entities, led by UNICEF, have agreed to work together on this 10-year initiative to help governments meet their commitments to ensure a quality education for all girls everywhere. The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) is a partnership that embraces the United Nations system, governments, donor countries, non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector, and communities and families; it works at global, regional and country levels. Its goal is to narrow the gender gap in primary and secondary education and to ensure that all children complete primary schooling, with girls and boys having equal access to all levels of education. Since its inception, UNGEI has been working to give an additional push to the Millennium Development Goals 2 and 3 and to advance the EFA goals.

2.3.2 Education for All (EFA) Declaration and Education Fast Track Initiative

During the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990), delegates comprising governments, development agencies, civil society and non-government organizations adopted the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA). Since then, EFA has remained a global movement aiming to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015. The EFA goals also contribute to the global pursuit of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially MDG 2 on universal primary education and MDG 3 on gender equality in education, by 2015. A Fast Track Initiative was set up to implement the EFA movement, aiming at "accelerating progress towards quality universal primary education".

*The six goals established in The Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: **Meeting Our Collective Commitments** are:*

- *Goal 1: Expand early childhood care and education*
- *Goal 2: Provide free and compulsory primary education for all*
- *Goal 3: Promote learning and life skills for young people and adults*
- *Goal 4: Increase adult literacy by 50 percent*
- *Goal 5: Achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015*
- *Goal 6: Improve the quality of education*

In 2000, ten years later, the international community met again at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal to take stock of the fact that many countries were far from achieving the goals established at the World Conference on Education for All in 1990. Delegates agreed on the Dakar Framework for Action which re-affirmed their commitment to achieving Education for All by the year 2015, and identified six key measurable education goals which aim to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015. The EFA goals, particularly Goals 2 and 5, call for achieving equal participation of girls and boys in education and gender equality ensuring that educational equality exists between boys and girls.

2.3.3 United Nations Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015)

The Millennium Declaration, therefore, represents wider and more authoritative consensus with quantitative and qualitative objectives that both support and promote girls' education. The Declaration puts the goals related to poverty and development in the context of rights based approaches, and, very clearly, makes reaching people the centerpiece of its vision. Girls' education needs to be addressed in a broader context that acknowledges the need to fight against hunger, rural poverty or other barriers

Related to Girls' Education, the Millennium Development Goals sets the following targets:

- a. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling*
- b. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education not later than 2015*

to gender equity. The Millennium Development Goals on education and gender equality reinforce previous international agreements most notably the Education for All Conference in 1990, and the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000.

2.4 Local Policy and Development Framework and Girls' Education

Despite the overwhelming global commitments and strategies to ensure universal access to education for all children, there is broad consensus that global goals and targets be understood in country specific situations and national strategies designed for each country specific context. In Malawi, various policy frameworks and development instruments are well positioned to support commitments to girls' education but the challenge is that they are lacking in quality of implementation and monitoring. Examples include, the Readmission Policy 2006, Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II (2011-2016), Free Primary Education (FPE) Policy 1994, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology's Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) for the period from 2000 to 2015.

2.4.1 MGDS II (2011-2016) and Ministry of Education PIF (2000 - 2015)

Malawi's macro and micro socio-economic policy plans recognize the vital role of equitable provision of basic education to development. Since independence in 1964, Malawi has used various strategies to promote gender parity in primary education which culminated in the introduction of the Free Primary Education (FPE) policy in 1994. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology's Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) for the period from 2000 to 2015 and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II) clearly state that high priority would be given to the gender imbalance and inequity in the education system at all levels. Both the PIF and MGDS II recognize the need for enhancing girls' education through appropriate policies and practices. The PIF identifies and addresses seven main educational challenges facing girls in Malawi in the areas of access, equity, quality, relevance and finance at all three levels of the country's education system

2.4.2 The Readmission Policy

Despite the various forms of initiatives implemented in the country by the Government of Malawi and development partners to improve the provision of girls' education there has still been unequal participation and access of girls and boys to schooling because of various reasons one of them being a policy, which required girls who got pregnant to leave school. The policy and practice of expulsion of pregnant school girls was changed in 1993 and revised in 2006. The readmission policy was introduced to promote

...with focus on the readmission policy and ot

Revised re-admission process guidelines for students who withdraw on pregnancy grounds:

- a. *The students should apply for re-admission to the Division with details of current contact address, through their respective head teachers who should in turn forward the application to the Division.*
- b. *The Division should immediately approve the re-admission in writing and communicate to the school with a copy to the parents/guardians.*
- c. *The re-admitted students should report for classes at the beginning of the academic year*
- d. *Once the students have reported for classes, they should be counseled on expected behaviour and stigma.*

gender equity and the advancement of girls in education. However, due to variances in culture, a single approach to the readmission policy implementation would not be effective to all. There is need to understand the specific cultural issues that affect girls education in various locations of the country to bring corresponding change programs to those locations.

2.5 Civil Society Education Coalition and Girls Education Access

Civil Society Education Coalition (CSEC) is one of the key partners government relies upon to facilitate implementation of the MDGs and national priorities pertaining to Education for All (EFA) Goals in the country. CSEC is an alliance of presently 81 diverse independent and voluntary organizations (Non Governmental Organizations, Community based organizations, trade unions, faith based Organizations etc), which promote basic Quality Education in Malawi. The major strategic activities for the Coalition include; government budget tracking, Research on educational issues, Advocacy campaigns and lobbying, community Mobilization and sensitization. The aim of CSEC is to achieve measurable change in the quality education for all through supporting and influencing the implementation and monitoring of government education policies, strategies and plans. The Coalition is particularly interested in how the government of Malawi promotes access, quality and relevance of basic education to all boys and girls, the youth and adults through in line with the international commitments around EFA goals and MDGs. In addition CSEC follows the implementation of local policies and strategies particularly the Vision 2020, the Education Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II).

2.6 Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to assess the progress made in increasing girls' access to education by focusing on readmission policy and other related policies. The major aim of this study was to examine the extent to which girls were returning to school. The study also investigated teachers', community members' and girls' awareness of the re-admission policy, their opinions of it and whether schools implemented it. The study findings will be used by CSEC and other education stakeholders and most importantly, Ministry of Education and other government departments to inform their policies and subsector interventions.

2.7 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study were:

- a. To assess the level of awareness of the readmission policy among community members and out of school girls
- b. To determine the extent to which the readmission policy and other related policies have increased girls' access to education
- c. To identify actors and mechanisms that are currently utilized to enhance the effective implementation of the readmission policy

- d. To identify barriers to the effective implementation of readmission for out of school girls
- e. To assess key challenges and gaps of the readmission policy and make recommendations for action

3 STUDY METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed methods design where both qualitative and quantitative approaches were involved. The quantitative component helped to generate statistical data that was used to measure the magnitude of the issues uncovered in the study. The qualitative data gave an in-depth understanding of the issues by explaining and describing them. The methodology included defining the target population, sampling, choosing data collection tools, the data collection process, analysis and report writing. Each of these elements is described in detail in the next paragraphs.

3.1 Target Population, Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The study was conducted in six target educational districts of Mzimba, Nkhatabay, Mchinji, Dedza, Machinga and Mwanza. The study targeted teachers, civil society organizations working on girls' education, educational authorities, school management committees, out of school and readmitted girls from the target districts. From each district, a number of zones were selected and in each zone a total of 5 primary schools were randomly selected. At each selected school, out of school and readmitted girls were purposefully selected for interviews. Out of school girls were identified through head teachers and community members. Purposive sampling technique was also used to select mother groups, district education managers, PEAs, community based organizations, civil society organizations, and SMC members to participate in the study. The distribution of the sampled groups is displayed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Details of the study sample

CONSULTATION LEVEL	TARGET GROUP	NATION	MZIMBA	NKHATABAY	MCHINJI	DEDZA	MACHINGA	MWANZA	TOTAL
1. CSEC NATIONAL OFFICE	Board of Trustees	1							1
	Executive Director	1							1
	Programme Officer	1							1
2. DISTRICT STAKEHOLDERS	DEN Members		1	1	1	2	1	1	7
	DEM's Office		1	1	1	2	1	1	7
	District Social Welfare Office		1	1	1	2	1	1	7
3. IMPACT AREA (COMMUNITY)	Zone Education Staff - PEAs		1	1	3	1	4	2	11
	Teachers		8	2	6	2	9	10	37
	SMC/PTA Members		2	13	13	3	34	17	82
	Community Leaders		4	9	4	1	3	4	25
	Mother Groups, CBOs, FBOs		18	11	7	16	12	13	77
Out of school & readmitted girls		19	15	27	12	18	16	107	

4. NATIONAL	Ministry of Education	1							1
	ACTIONAID	1							1
	UNICEF	1							1
	FAWEMA	1							1
GRAND TOTAL		7	54	50	63	41	83	65	368

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

To ensure a systematic data collection process, all research assistants underwent a full one-day training session which included briefing on the data collection tools and procedures for data collection. An emphasis was also made on observance of ethical issues governing the study. The data collection tools were pre-tested in one of the schools in Kasungu to check on their validity and reliability. After the pre-testing, the tools were revised accordingly. The pre-test helped the research assistants to familiarize themselves with the tools and the data collection process.

The data collection team was split into three groups representing north (Mzimba and Nkhatabay), Centre (Dedza and Mchinji) and South (Machinga and Mwanza). Each team had a team leader and four to five research assistants. Each team member had a set of questionnaires for the various categories of respondents ranging. The team leaders were individuals with teaching and community development background and practical experience in conducting surveys. The team leader was in-charge of providing the necessary logistical support, paying courtesy calls to all district, zone, school and community authorities as well as managing the quality aspect of the data collection processes.

3.3 Data collection Instruments

A number of tools were used to collect the study. These included review of literature, questionnaires, interview guides, focus group discussion guides and district, zone and schools checklist.

3.3.1 Literature Review

Review and analysis of existing policies, reports and plans formed one of the main sources of data for the study. Some of the documents that were consulted included Final EMIS 2013 report, DEMIS data, National Gender Policy, NESP, EFA and other relevant documents. The study of the various literatures was guided by a pre-designed matrix to ensure consistence in data capturing. The matrix comprised of various issues related to girls' education which the study focused on. The complete list of documents reviewed is annexed to this report.

3.3.2 Questionnaires

The quantitative component of the study employed structured questionnaires to collect data from the respondents. Two sets of questionnaires were developed with both closed and open ended questions. The structured questionnaires were administered to education

stakeholders at district, zone and community levels. Each of the questionnaires is annexed to the report. Interviews were also conducted with selected respondents such as PEAs, District Education Managers, teachers, girls, boys, organizations dealing with girls' education and school management committee members.

3.3.3 Focus Group Discussions

A group of community members, including mother groups, school management committees, child protection committees and parent teacher associations from selected schools and surrounding communities were involved in focus group discussions. A facilitation guide was used in these discussions. The facilitator and the note taker used a notebook to record the discussions which were later manually processed to draw conclusions and generalizations used to explain the study findings.

3.3.4 Checklists

Checklists were developed for each district, zone and school under the study. The checklists were used to collect preliminary quantitative data about the districts, zones and schools respectively. The information in the completed checklists was used to determine the sampling frame for each district, or zone or school.

3.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation of Findings

Data collected through individual interviews and FGDs was coded to establish insights, beliefs and knowledge levels on specific issues relating to the study. Analysis of qualitative data was done immediately after the field work. Data collected through questionnaires was entered into a computer and analyzed using SPSS/Microsoft Excel. Statistics on various indicators on a range of variables were established by using frequencies, multiple response tables and cross-tabulations. Tables, charts and graphs were used to present trends, patterns and relationships of the findings. Data from different sources was triangulated to generate clear meaning and understanding of the findings.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in consideration of all the necessary ethical issues. Prior to the field work, a letter of consent was obtained from CSEC and submitted to the relevant educational authorities in the districts to allow the data collection in the schools involved. Data collectors had a consent form to read out to the respondents before the commencement of the interview and recording of responses.

3.6 Study Data Limitations

The following were some of the major events and limitations encountered in the course of the study that could affect the quality of the information presented in this report:

3.6.1 DEMIS Data Limitations

The District Education Management Information System (DEMIS) captures data for school dropouts but does not capture data for readmissions. This situation makes it difficult to

draw generalizations on the effectiveness of implementation of readmission policy for the districts. The zones and schools also do not keep proper records on readmission of out of school girls and this resulted in relying on anecdotal information. Efforts were made to triangulate information from various sources.

3.6.2 2014 PSLCE Examinations

Most of the field activities were carried out around the same time as the 2014 PSLCE Examinations were in progress. As a result, most girls and teachers were engaged with the examination processes and were not available to participate in the study. Efforts were made to wait for the girls to finish the examinations before being interviewed.

3.6.3 2014 General/Tripartite Elections

The field activities were carried out around the same period as the 2014 tripartite elections and the standoff that ensued thereafter. Most education stakeholders at district, zone and school levels i.e. PEAs and Teachers were involved in the electoral process in various capacities. Efforts were made to purposively identify comparable other respondents such as Assistant Coordinators and other available teachers to participate in the study and meet the study sampling requirements.

3.6.4 Reluctance of Some Stakeholders to be Interviewed

Some stakeholders in the target districts were reluctant to participate in the study demanding a formal introductory letter from Government despite being presented a letter from CSEC. Other participants demanded allowances to participate in the study. In such cases, alternative participants outside the prepared sampling plan were purposively identified for interviews instead.

3.6.5 Sensitivity of the Study

Some of the respondents, especially dropouts, refused to be interviewed as they thought they were being followed up. Some parents insisted on listening to the interviews with their daughters for fear of being accused of being the ones promoting the girls' dropout. Efforts were made to convince such parents to allow the interviews progress in required level of privacy

4 GENERAL STUDY FINDINGS

4.1 Girls Access to Education

The study established that access to education for girls in all target districts is generally not a problem. A total of 380, 635 girls were enrolled in the 2013/14 school year in 1,071 primary schools in all the 6 districts. In general, all districts registered a higher or equal girls enrollment rates as boys as shown in table 2 below:

Table 2: School enrollment and girls' enrollment rate in 6 districts

District	2013/2014 Enrollment				
	No. Primary schools	Total Enrollment	Boys	Girls	% Girls
Machinga	156	166,292	82,203	84,089	50.6%
Dedza	237	200,836	100,195	100,641	50.1%
Mwanza	44	34,210	17,134	17,076	49.9%
Mchinji	194	154,899	77,788	77,111	49.8%
Mzimba North	256	125,009	63,028	61,981	49.6%
Nkhatabay	184	80,917	41,287	39,630	49.0%
Total	1,071	762,163	381,635	380,528	49.9%

Table 2 above shows that Dedza and Machinga districts' gross enrolment for girls is higher than that of boys at 50.1% and 50.6% respectively. The lowest gross enrollment for girls was observed in Nkhatabay district with 39,630 against boys' enrollment of 41,287 representing 49%. Mzimba North, Mchinji and Mwanza districts registered nearly equal gross enrollments between girls and boys.

4.2 Extent of Girls Dropping Out Of School

The study established that the major challenge is the retention of girls in school which results in high number of girls dropping out of school. During the 2012/2013 school year, the 6 districts registered a total of 38,660 dropouts with 20,892 girls representing 54% of the total dropout count. School dropout rates are higher for girls than boys in all districts as shown in the table 3 below:

Table 3: School enrollment and dropouts

District	2013/2014 Enrollment				2012/13 Drop outs			
	Total	Boys	Girls	% Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	% Girls
Mzimba North	125,009	63,028	61,981	49.6%	3,250	1,279	1,971	61%
Machinga	166,292	82,203	84,089	50.6%	12,304	5,454	6,850	56%
Nkhatabay	80,917	41,287	39,630	49.0%	2,052	920	1,132	55%
Mchinji	154,899	77,788	77,111	49.8%	8,009	3,775	4,234	53%
Mwanza	34,210	17,134	17,076	49.9%	1,818	873	945	52%

Dedza	200,836	100,195	100,641	50.1%	11,227	5,467	5,760	51%
Total	762,163	381,635	380,528	49.9%	38,660	17,768	20,892	54%

Table 6 above shows that Mzimba North education district had the highest net girls' dropout at 61%. Machinga district had the highest count of girls dropping out of school with 6,850 girls representing 56% of the total dropouts. Nkhatabay district registered a total of 2,052 dropouts with 1,132 girls representing 55% of the total dropouts. Mchinji district registered 8,009 dropouts with 4,134 girls representing 52% of the dropouts. Dedza district registered 11,227 dropouts with 5,760 girls representing 51% of the total dropouts. Mwanza district had 945 girls dropping out of school at 52% of the total dropouts

4.2.1 Reasons for Girls Dropping Out Of School

Girls falling pregnant is the major cause of dropping out of school among most girls interviewed during the study. Vulnerable girls, orphans and those with disabilities are at particular risk of dropping out of school. Often, parents cannot afford the direct and indirect costs, such as school books and uniforms of their children's schooling. Many schools are located far away from homes, a factor that deters some girls from schooling. Lack of access to safe water and separate sanitation facilities (latrines) for boys and girls also discourages adolescent girls from attending school. These barriers, coupled with other obstacles – poverty, domestic and other family responsibilities for example - create high levels of out-of-school girls as depicted in the chart below;

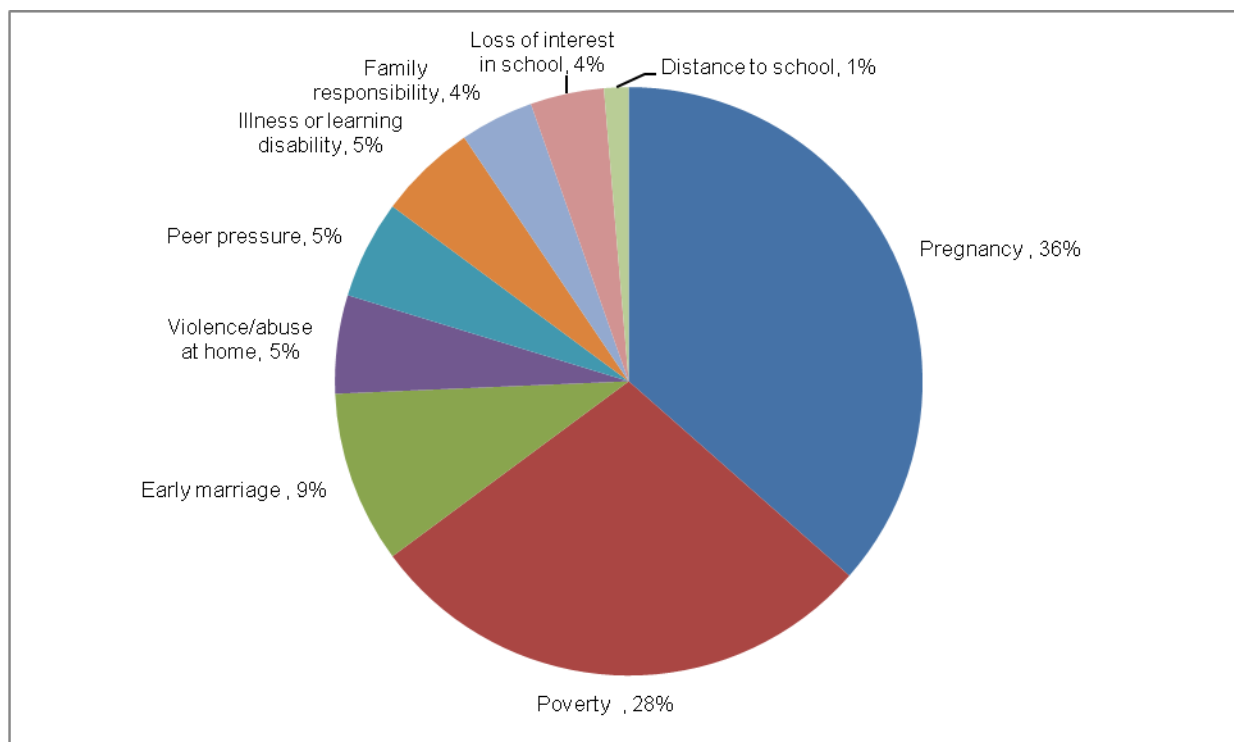


Figure 1: Reasons for girls dropping out of school

Figure 1 above shows that the majority of the girls interviewed dropped out of school due to pregnancy (36%), poverty (28%) and early or forced marriages (9%). Some of the reasons cited include domestic violence or abuse, peer pressure, learning disabilities, family responsibility and simply loss of interest in school. Only 1% dropped out due to distance to school.

4.3 Factors Negatively Affecting Girls' Education Access

Various issues affect girls' access to education. At household and community level poverty is a main factor undermining girls' right to education. School charges and additional costs such as clothing and books reinforce the challenge. When poor families cannot afford to educate all their children, it is often their daughters who have to stay home until they get married. Further to this, household chores often affect girls' opportunities to learn and thrive, by taking away valuable time that they could spend on their education. At school level, infrastructure deficits often hamper girls' school attendance and achievements. Many girls are also facing sexual and physical abuse from teachers and peers in school. Table 4 below outlines factors that affect girls' education access in the target districts.

Table 4: Factors affecting girls' education access

DISTRICT	FACTORS AFFECTING GIRLS' EDUCATION ACCESS
MZIMBA NORTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child labour and/or employment in tobacco farms, shops or homes - Forced marriages. Parents betroth girls to well-to-do men to alleviate their own poverty

DISTRICT	FACTORS AFFECTING GIRLS' EDUCATION ACCESS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long distance to schools especially secondary schools - Poor teaching, learning and sanitation facilities - Child bonding in tobacco estates in order to pay off parents debts
NKHATA-BAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural attitudes and practices with differentiated child rearing between boys and girls - Child labour i.e. household chores, domestic and paid employment in towns and trading centres - Casual sexual affairs – resulting in pregnancy and early marriage - Parents overburdening girls with households and other family responsibilities - Teachers resistance to readmitting girls who fall pregnant for fear of affecting other learners with immoral behaviours
MCHINJI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prostitution and Casual sex in trading centres causing pregnancy and early marriages - Child labour and/or employment in farms, shops and homes - Pregnancies and early marriages - Other family responsibilities - High adult illiteracy and lack of role models – parents do not appreciate the benefits of education
DEDZA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harmful cultural practices i.e. alcoholism, girls' initiation ceremonies and polygamy - Early and forced marriages. Parents force girls to get married to teachers and other well to do men - Peer pressure. Girls envy others who are married and seem to be doing well - Child labour. Most girls are employed as housemaids in working and business class homes - Social activities i.e. market days which take girls away from school to sell merchandize - Unprofessional teacher behaviors i.e. teacher-pupil relationships, stigmatizing and discrimination
MACHINGA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harmful cultural practices i.e. girls' initiation ceremonies, polygamy - Early and forced marriages. Parents force girls to marry early - Prostitution and casual sexual activities at trading centres which lead to pregnancies among girls - Lack of parental encouragement due to gender stereotyping and differentiated child rearing where parental preference is for boys'

DISTRICT	FACTORS AFFECTING GIRLS' EDUCATION ACCESS
	education than girls
MWANZA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poverty i.e. mostly subsistence farming, charcoal burning and cross-border trading resulting into lack of parental support - girls abandon school due to lack of basic school materials - High adult illiteracy and lack of appreciation of the benefits of education among parents and community - Parental resistance to readmission of girls who fall pregnant for fear of recurrence of the immoral behaviours - Rampant sexual activity fuelled by the construction of the VALE/MOTA ENGIL railway line in the area

4.4 Implementation of Readmission Policy

The study established that there is slow progress to the implementation of the readmission policy in all districts with only 49 percent of out of school girls interviewed during the study being readmitted into school as shown in figure 2 below:

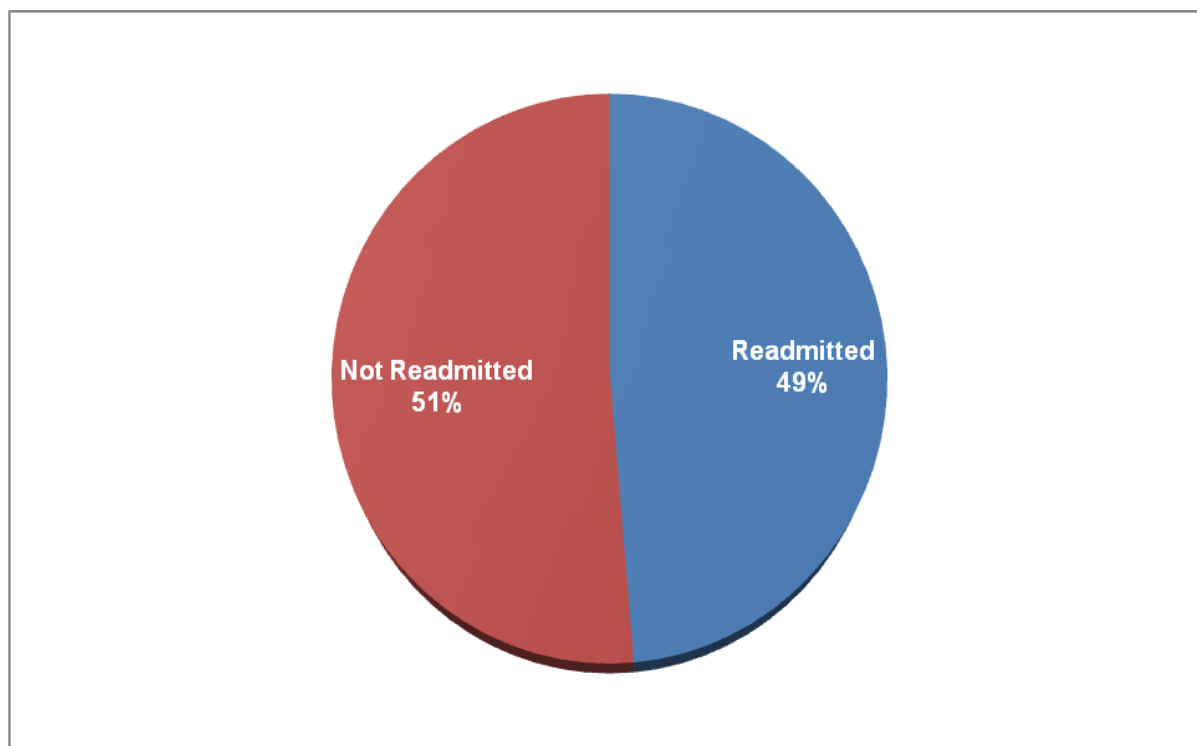


Figure 2: Implementation of readmission policy

Further analysis of the study findings shows that while 78% of the girls who dropped out due to pregnancy were readmitted, there are challenges to facilitate readmission of girls who drop out of school due to other reasons as shown in table 2 below:

Table 5: Level of girls' readmission by reason for dropping out of school

Reason for Dropout	Readmission rate
❖ Pregnancy	78%
❖ Poverty	52%
❖ Family responsibility	33%
❖ Early marriage	29%
❖ Violence/abuse at home	25%
Total	49%

4.4.1 Ease of Readmission by Reason for Dropping Out of School

Readmission of a rural girl child into school in most parts of the districts under the study is still a challenge in the face of culture that promotes male dominance, lack of conducive school environment for girls, and also poverty. The study established that there are some situations that out of school girls are able to be readmitted into school but others not as shown in chart below.

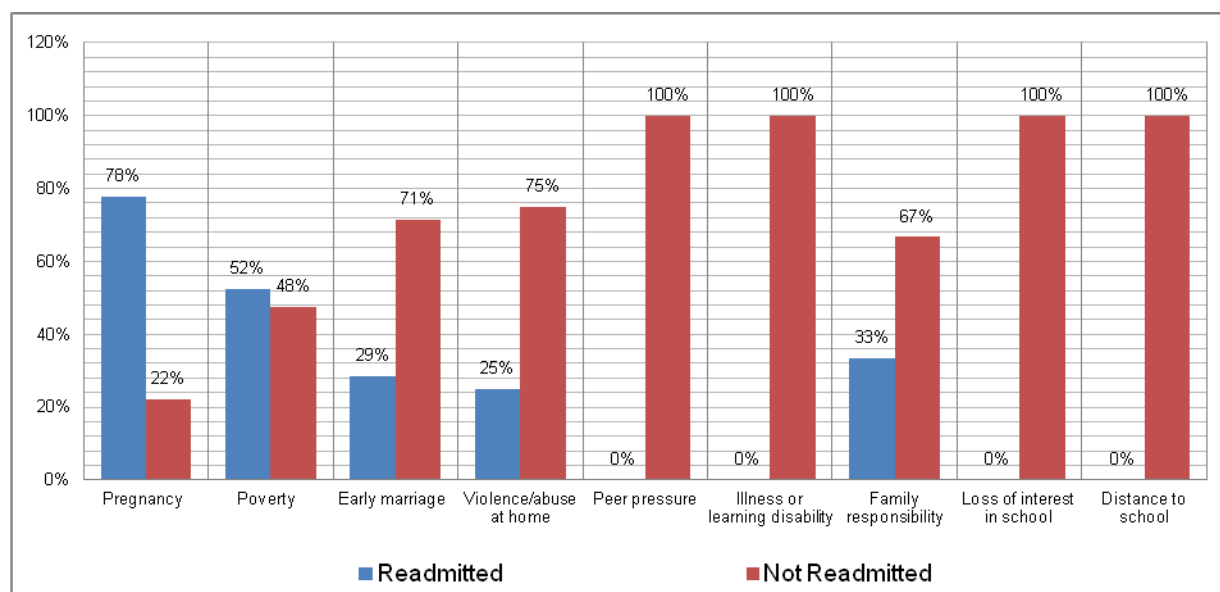


Figure 3: Ease of readmission by reason for dropping out of school

Figure 2 above shows that the majority of girls who drop out of school as a result of pregnancy (78%) and poverty (52%) are likely to return to school after their situation is addressed. However, the likelihoods of readmission diminish when girls drop out of school as a result of marriage (29%), violence at home (25%) and family responsibility (33%). Similarly, none of the girls interviewed who dropped out of school due to peer pressure, illness or learning disability, loss of interest and distance to school were readmitted in school.

4.4.2 Level of Awareness of Readmission Policy and Guidelines

The study shows that there is significant level of awareness of the readmission policy among girls and other stakeholders. However, the understanding of the readmission guidelines varies significantly as shown in figure 3 below

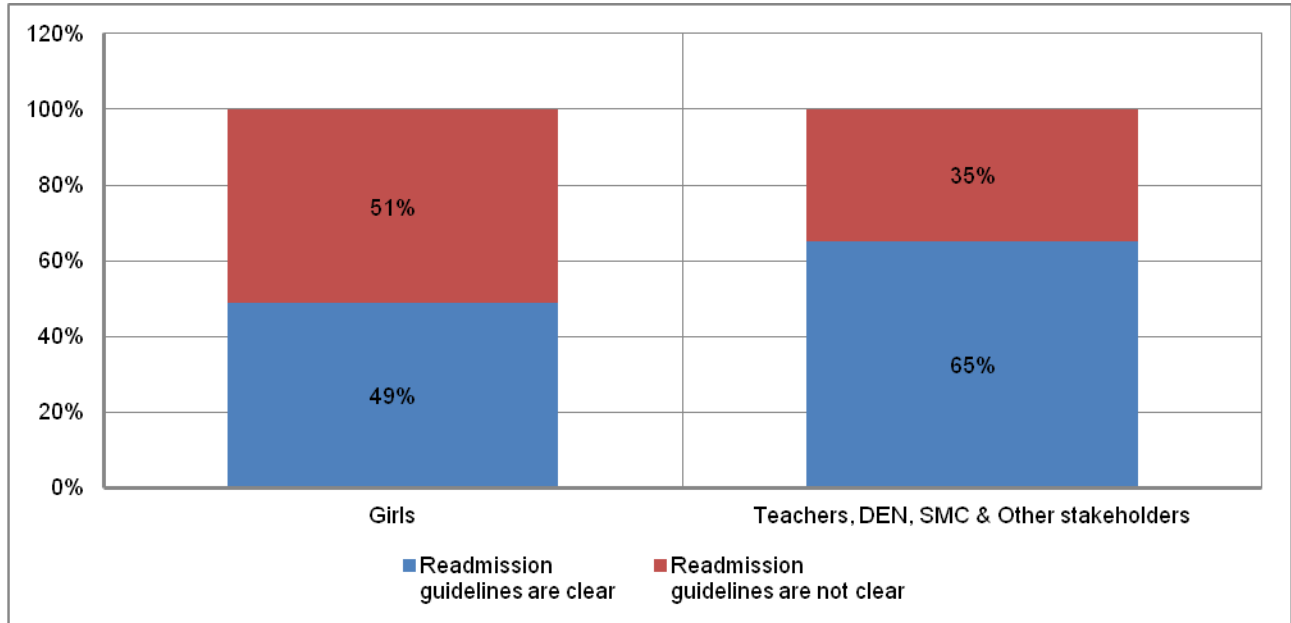


Figure 4: Level of awareness of readmission guidelines

Figure 3 above shows that the majority of the stakeholders involved in facilitation of girls' education access are aware and clear of the readmission policy guidelines (65%). Discussions and interviews in the field showed that, most teachers were aware of the policy, but had no copy as a reference/backup document. Many had heard about it by word of mouth from the PEA. Consequently there are some misconceptions about the policy. The figure also show that the awareness level among girls is relatively low with only 49% of the girls interviewed expressing clear understanding of the readmission policy guidelines.

4.4.3 Readmission Facilitation

The study established that depending on the reasons reading to girls dropping out of school, the major facilitators for readmission vary as shown in figure below:

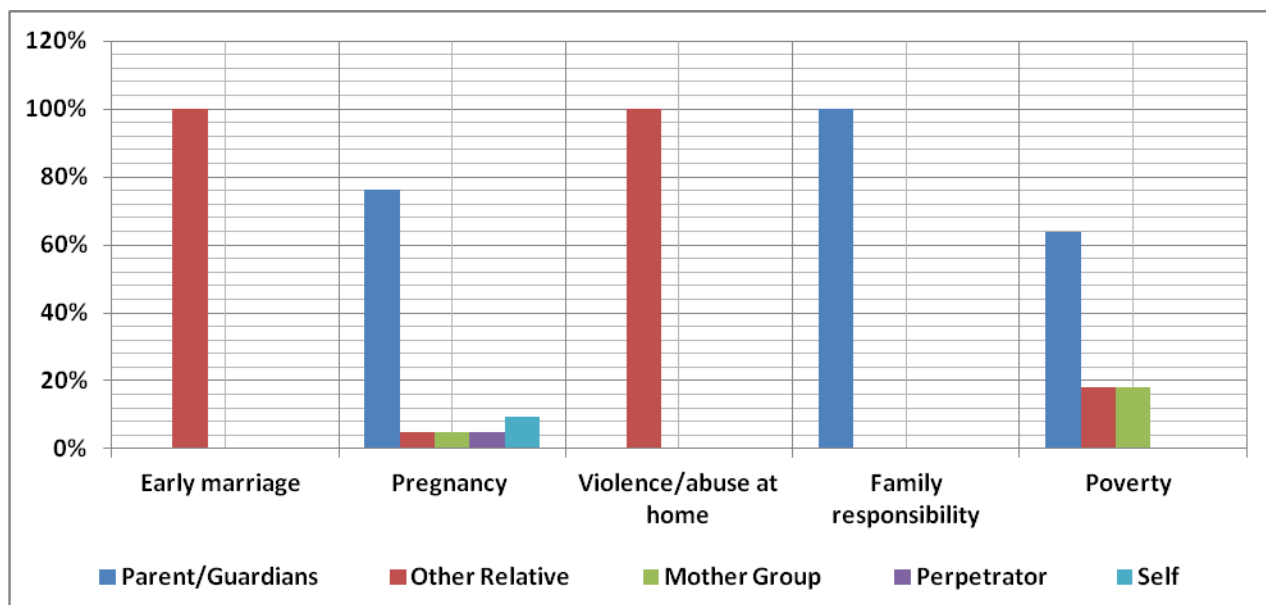


Figure 5: Facilitation of readmission against reason for dropping out

Figure 4 above shows that parents are highly likely to facilitate girls' readmission in school after the girls drop out as a result of pregnancy, family responsibility and poverty when the situation is resolved. However, the chart also shows that where violence/abuse at home and early or forced marriage is involved, parents are unlikely to facilitate the girls' readmission. This is basically because in these instances, parents/guardians may be involved or the perpetrators of abuse and/or forced marriage and are unlikely to resolve the situation without third party involvement.

4.4.4 Actors and Mechanisms Utilized to Enhance Girls Education Access

In all districts, there are ongoing initiatives to enhance the effective implementation of the readmission policy. The study found that some of the initiatives especially by District Based NGOs and some local NGOs tend to be localized per Traditional Authority (T/A) or education zone while others by International NGOs or their Consortiums are widespread covering a larger geographical scope and reach up to the entire district in some instances. Most people who were interviewed expressed knowledge of initiatives on enhancing girls' education access in their community. CAMFED, YONECO, ACTIONAID and UNICEF are the most common actors operating in almost all the target districts promoting children's rights and girls' education. Mchinji and Dedza districts have the highest concentration of Civil Society Organizations working on girls' education access. Mzimba North has the least number of Civil Society Organizations promoting girls' education. Government departments including DEM and District Social Welfare Offices are providing technical support to the development partners in all districts. There are District Education Networks in all target districts providing coordination of civic society actions towards girls' education access. The most common mechanisms used include building the capacity of local committees, CBOs and Groups such as SMC/PTA Committees, Youth/Girls Clubs, Mother Groups to promote girls education. Bursaries and scholarships to girls, household economic

empowerment to support girls' education, role models and construction of teaching, learning and sanitary facilities are also some of the mechanism employed by the various organizations working on enhancing girls' education access in the target districts.

Table 6: Actors and mechanisms utilized to enhance girls education access

ORGANIZATIONS	INITIATIVES TO ENHANCE GIRLS EDUCATION ACCESS	MZIMBA NORTH NKHATA	RAY	MCHINJI	DEDZA MWANZ	MACHIN G.A
LIVINGSTONIA SYNOD	– Conducting research, analysis and advocacy on girls education	✓	✓			
ACTIONAID	– Facilitating partnerships and networks to provide care and support to vulnerable children at community level – Community managed bursaries – Girls clubs – Construction of female teachers houses – School rights sensitization	✓	✓	✓	✓	
PLAN	– Media programmes on children's rights – Training village committees i.e. SMC, PTA – School water, sanitation and hygiene facilities	✓	✓			
UNICEF	– School water, sanitation and hygiene facilities – Media/Radio program, N'zotheka on Zodiak		✓		✓	✓
YONECO	– Counseling and guidance of learners i.e. school assembly talks, open days (sports, performances) – Vocational and life skills education		✓	✓		✓
UNICEF	– Facilitates child friendly schools – Provision of school water and sanitation facilities		✓			
TEMWA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	– Supports early childhood development centres; community-based child care centres; and special needs education for challenged children and Girls' education		✓			
RIPPLE AFRICA	– Supports pre-schools by paying teachers' salaries, building classroom blocks, providing learning and teaching materials.		✓			
CAMFED	– Providing bursaries to underprivileged girls			✓	✓	✓
LINK FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	– Strengthening Mother Groups, SMC, PTA and Female Teacher Networks – Facilitating training for teachers, community school groups (Mother Groups, SMC, PTA and village leaders) to address specific needs of girls' education				✓	

YECE	– Child rights sensitization, civic education and peer education				✓		
WALA	– Microenterprise development for poor resource households to support girls education needs					✓	
ADRA	– Microenterprise development and education bursaries – Water, sanitation and hygiene					✓	✓
FAWEMA	– Enhancing capacity of Mother groups, SMCs and PTAs – Ensuring gender responsive school improvement plans – Bursary support for adolescent girls – Strengthening partnerships and networks for girls' education			✓	✓	✓	✓
RED CROSS	– Providing bursaries to underprivileged girls					✓	
MARY'S MEALS	– School feeding programs					✓	

4.4.5 Barriers to Effective Implementation of Readmission of Out of School Girls

A number of factors play a role in hindering readmission of girls in school after dropping out hence presenting barriers to effective implementation of readmission policy and other related education policies. The barriers range from policy formulation and implementation, school level processes, household situation as well as community level attitudes, beliefs and practices towards girls and appreciation of the benefits of education. Besides, the readmission policy is not fully understood by most teachers and stakeholders at grassroots level. Discussions in the field showed that, most teachers were aware of the readmission policy, but had no copy for reference. Many had heard about it by word of mouth from the PEA but none had read it themselves. This could be due to the fact that the circular on the readmission policy was made in 1993 which is more than 21 years ago although the revised readmission policy procedures were circulated in 2006. Table 7 below summarizes some of the key barriers to effective implementation of the readmission policy at policy, school, community and household levels:

Table 7: Policy, School, Household and Community level barriers to girls' readmission

BARRIER LEVEL	BARRIERS TO READMISSION OF OUT OF SCHOOL GIRLS
POLICY LEVEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lack of clarity of readmission policy and its guidelines among stakeholders – Inadequate enforcement of child labour, marriage age and other laws – Lack of enforcement of compulsory education policies – Free primary education policy not being fully implemented i.e. school

	funds and other charges affect girls access to education
SCHOOL LEVEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Distance to schools especially full primary and secondary schools affecting transition from one level to another – Stigma and discriminatory practices against pregnant girls and young mothers by teachers and other learners in schools – Inadequate basic services in schools (e.g. separate, clean latrines for boys and girls) – Low female teacher numbers in remote areas to motivate young girls in school
COMMUNITY LEVEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – High adult illiteracy level and lack of appreciation of benefits of education – Lack of girls personal security and safety from sexual harassment/abuse from men – Limited roles for girls and women in community development – Gender and cultural stereotype and differential treatment of girls/women than – Early marriage and glorification of “motherhood” – Domestic violence, harassment and child abuse – Cultural practices i.e. initiation ceremonies, alcoholism, polygamy and child marriages – Men viewed as breadwinners
HOUSEHOLD LEVEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Direct costs of schooling i.e. school fund, clothing, school books and supplies – Indirect costs of schooling and other family responsibility i.e. domestic/girls' work, fetching wood and water, market activity, illness and disabilities – Poverty and low status for women – Parental lack of appreciation of benefits of school
INDIVIDUAL LEARNER LEVEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Peer pressure and indulgence in immoral behavior at early age – Lack of appreciation of the benefits of education against temporary pleasures – Limited understanding (misconception) of rights and responsibilities – Fear, shyness and resistance to readmission – Loss of interest in school

5 DISTRICT SPECIFIC FINDINGS

5.1 Mzimba (North) District

Mzimba district is administratively divided into 3 Education districts comprising Mzimba South, Mzuzu City and Mzimba North. Mzimba North has 13 educational zones with 125,009 pupils enrolled in 256 primary schools in the 2013/14 school calendar. Mzimba North has 13 educational zones with 125,009 pupils (50% girls) enrolled in 256 primary schools in the 2013/14 school calendar. The study focused on Ekwendeni, Erukweni and Bwengu Zones.

5.1.1 School Dropouts

During the 2012/13 calendar, Mzimba North district registered 3,250 dropouts with 1,971 girls representing 61% of the dropouts.

5.1.2 Key Issues Affecting Girls' Education

Girls' access to education in the district is affected by a range of issues including child labour or employment, pregnancies and early marriages, long distance to school, poor sanitation facilities and other family responsibilities.

5.1.3 Key Actors in the District and Common Strategies

Key actors in ensuring girls access to education in the district are Plan and Livingstonia Synod - Church and Society Programme.

5.1.4 Areas of Support/Improvement

There are a number of things that need improvement if girls' education access is to be enhanced in Mzimba north especially focusing on the readmission policy.

- ❖ Support printing and distribution of readmission policy guidelines and other relevant educational policies. Each TDC in the district should have a copy of the readmission policy and its guidelines
- ❖ Support advocacy for marriage age revision and stiff punishment of perpetrators of sexual violence and those who marry and/or impregnate under aged girls to deter others

CASE STUDY: Maria Manda

Age: 16, Class: 7, Reason for dropping out:
Domestic Violence and Forced Marriage

Born in 1998, Maria Manda dropped out of school in 2012 due to domestic violence and undue pressure from her parents to get married at the age of 14 at Erukweni Primary School in Erukweni Zone in Mzimba District. Due to her persistence to continue schooling against her parents' wishes, Maria was forced out of school and stayed at home for two years while practically taking over family responsibilities.

After noticing her plight, Maria's uncle pleaded with her parents and Erukweni Primary School management to allow her to return to school. Eventually, Maria returned to school at the beginning of the 2013/14 school year, two years after dropping out.

Now at 16 years and in standard 7, Maria is an ambitious girl and desires to complete her primary school education and proceed to secondary and later train as a nurse.

However, Maria faces a mass of daunting challenges ahead including overcoming apparent stigma and discrimination in school by both her co-learners and teachers due to her age compared to her peers. Maria also has to overcome the persistent pressure from her parents to get married.

- ❖ Support construction of girls hostels in CDSS to reduce incidences of self-boarding which are a recipe for most pregnancies among school going girls
- ❖ Advocacy for enforcement of child labour laws to stop employment of under-aged girls as domestic workers for the working class in towns and cities
- ❖ Support training of SMC/PTA members to act as counselors for in and out of school girls
- ❖ Support DEN to enhance stakeholder collaboration on readmission of out of school girls

5.2 Nkhata-Bay District

Nkhatabay district has 12 education zones with a total enrollment of 80,917 pupils in 184 primary schools in the 2013/14 school calendar. The study focused on 5 zones namely; Kavuzi, Mpamba, Chihami 1, St. Maria Goleti and Mwaya Zones.

5.2.1 Extent of School Dropouts

The dropout rate is rate is relatively lower in the district. During the 2012/13 calendar, the district registered 2,052 dropouts with 1,132 girls representing 55% of the total dropouts.

5.2.2 Key Issues Affecting Girls' Education

Girls' access to education in the district is affected by; gender stereotyping i.e. differentiated child rearing between boys and girls; child labour or employment, pregnancies and other family responsibilities.

5.2.3 Key Actors in the District and Common Strategies

Key actors in ensuring girls access to education in the district include: YONECO, Anglican Diocese, FAWEMA, TEMWA Community Development, RIPPLE Africa and Livingstonia Synod Church and Society Programme. These work in collaboration with government departments such as the Social Welfare Department which facilitates parental education through mass adult literacy classes as well as linking vulnerable children including girls to other organizations that provide such support.

- ❖ YONECO facilitates counseling and guidance of learners especially girls on benefits of education as well as community mobilization and sensitization
- ❖ TEMWA Community Development Organization forges connections between the youth in Nkhatabay and Bristol through its schools engagement programme
- ❖ RIPPLE Africa supports eight pre-school groups (CBCCCs), five primary schools and provides a secondary school scholarship scheme and runs a community library in and around Mwaya Community in the district
- ❖ FAWEMA supports role models and girl clubs

CASE STUDY: Sekereni Banda

Age: 14, Class: 5, Reason for dropping out:
Sickness

Born in 2000, Sekereni is a standard 5 girl at St. Maria Goleti Primary School in Nkhata-Bay District. Maria is raised by a single mother after the passing of her father while she was still an infant. Sekereni struggles with frequent illness which keeps her out of school.

Besides her health condition, Sekereni comes from a resource poor household with her mother not engaging in any meaningful economic activity. Subsequently, Sekereni is subjected to undue amount of domestic work at home.

Sekereni was forced out of school at the age of 8 due to her frequent illness while in standard 3 and returned a year later. However, over the past 3 years, Sekereni has frequently dropped out of school whenever her health is down and returns to school when better.

Sekereni is a brilliant girl, who despite her unstable health condition forcing her to drop out of school frequently; she always comes among the top 5 of her class. Her desire is to complete her education and train as a Chef.

Sekereni draws her inspiration from the role models who visit her school and talk to girls about the benefits of education.

5.2.4 Challenges and Barriers to effective implementation of readmission

The key barrier to effective implementation of the readmission policy in Nkhatabay district is the lack of clarity of the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in facilitating readmission of out of school girls. All stakeholders interviewed including teachers and PEAs have not seen or read the policy and/or its guidelines. Besides, most primary schools in the district are under-resourced and under-staffed, creating extremely challenging teaching and learning conditions for teachers and pupils alike especially girls. For instance in Mwaya zone, Mwaya Primary School has just seven government teachers for over 900 pupils, which makes a student to teacher ratio of 131:1. Other schools such as Mazembe have only five government teachers, and Kazando has only three. It is absolutely essential that government provides teaching staff in these schools by providing additional teachers to reduce classroom sizes

5.2.5 Areas of Support/Improvement

There are a number of areas that need support or improvement in order to enhance girls' education access in Nkhatabay District.

- ❖ Support improvement of teaching, learning and supporting facilities i.e. classrooms, desks and sanitation facilities
- ❖ Support printing and distribution of readmission policy guidelines and other relevant educational policies in local languages
- ❖ Support advocacy for construction of teachers' houses especially in remote areas of the district to attract female teachers
- ❖ Support lobby efforts for government to deploy teachers to remote schools in the district to reduce classroom sizes
- ❖ Support introduction of inter and intra-school competitions and prizes to motivate learners especially girls
- ❖ Support implementation of school feeding and nutrition programs to attract children especially girls to school
- ❖ Support training of SMC/PTA members to act as counselors for in and out of school girls
- ❖ Enhancing capacity of the District Education Network (DEN) to facilitate stakeholder collaboration on readmission of out of school girls

5.3 Mchinji District

Mchinji district has 13 educational zones with 161,976 pupils enrolled in 194 primary schools in the 2013/14 school calendar. The study focused on 4 randomly selected education zones in the district namely; Mchinji Boma, Ludzi, Kamwendo and Pinda Zones.

5.3.1 Extent of School Dropouts

During the 2012/13 school calendar year, the district registered 8,009 dropouts with 4,134 girls representing 52% of the dropouts.

5.3.2 Key Issues Affecting Girls' Education

Girls' access to education in the district is affected by; prostitution, child labour, pregnancies and early marriages, long distance to school, poor sanitation facilities and other family responsibilities.

5.3.3 Key Actors in the District and Common Strategies

Key actors in ensuring girls access to education in the district include: YONECO, TLC, CRECOM and Save the Children implement the CLEAR Project, CISE, CARD, NICE, Youth Alive, CADECOM, World Vision, FAWEMA, CAMFED and ACTIONAID.

- ❖ CAMFED provides out of school girls with school supplies to facilitate their readmission
- ❖ YONECO provides out of school youth including girls with life and vocational skills to empower them
- ❖ Save the Children and CADECOM provide savings schemes to economically empower households to keep girls in school
- ❖ Total Land Care (TLC) facilitates sustainable farming practices to ensure food security
- ❖ ACTIONAID is facilitating construction of female teachers houses and girls' clubs in schools

CASE STUDY: Mwaiwao Tembo

Age: 15, Class: Standard 6; Reason for Dropout: Pregnancy

Mwaiwao is an ambitious girl born in 1999. Her path to a dream future was cut short in 2011 when she became pregnant at the age of 12 while in standard 6 at Mzula Primary School in Mchinji district.

Mwaiwao concealed her pregnancy until it was too late for her to access vital maternal healthcare services including vaccinations. Consequently, Mwaiwao's newborn daughter died three days after being born at Mchinji District Hospital. Mwaiwao's mother painfully recalls every moment of the simultaneous tragic loss of her daughter's academic prospect and her grandchild.

Mwaiwao's mother tried her best to seek support from authorities to have her daughter's perpetrator punished but this did not materialize.

Mwaiwao went back to Mzula Primary school in the 2013/2014 academic year with the support of CISE, a local District Based Organization that works closely with the District Social Welfare Office to promote rights of children including access to education.

Mwaiwao bemoans lack of resources to facilitate her desire for schooling after her readmission as well as apparent stigma and discrimination among her co-learners and teachers.

Mwaiwao urges girls who dropped out of school due to pregnancy or other issues to return to school to realize their dreams.

5.3.4 Challenges and Barriers to Effective Implementation of Readmission

There are a number of barriers to effective implementation of the readmission of out of school girls in Mchinji district.

- ❖ The readmission policy is not clearly understood by stakeholders in the district. All stakeholders interviewed including teachers and PEAs have not seen or read the policy and/or its guidelines.
- ❖ Some parents resist readmission of girls who drop-out-of school due to pregnancy. Preference is given to marriage for such girls due to socioeconomic challenges (high gross poverty levels).
- ❖ Girls who fall pregnant face stigma and discrimination when they return to school. They are generally older than their peers and hence risk being mocked and called all sorts of names by both their co-learners and teachers.

5.4 Dedza District

Dedza district has 19 educational zones and 237 primary schools with 213,086 pupils' enrollment in the 2013/14 school year. There are 2,055 primary school teachers and 705 are female teachers (34%). The study focused on Bembeke and Chimbiya Zones.

5.4.1 Extent Of School Dropout

During the 2012/13 school year, the district registered 11,227 dropouts with 5,760 girls representing 51.3% of the total dropouts. Reasons for girls dropping out of school include family responsibility, pregnancies, marriages, long distance to school, poor learning facilities and violence.

5.4.2 Key Issues Affecting Girls Education

Some of the key issues affecting girls' education access in the district are harmful cultural attitudes, behaviours and practices such as alcoholism, girls' initiation ceremonies and polygamy which are catalyst for pregnancies as well as early and forced marriages among school going girls. Market days also take girls away from school with most girls selling merchandize during school days including alcohol on market

CASE STUDY: Anna Chitukula
Age: 19; **Class:** Standard 8/Form 1; **Reason for drop out:** School Fees

Anna Chitukula had beaten all odds in her community to complete primary school education at Kalilombe Primary School in Bembeke Zone at the age of 17 while many of her peers dropped out earlier due to pregnancies and forced marriages. Anna's ambition to pursue her secondary school education failed to materialize when her mother could not afford her cost of schooling including school fees, clothing and self boarding.

Anna's mother, Rhoda Chitukula who is also Village Headman Chinyamula, is a single mother and bemoans girls' challenge of transitioning from Primary School to Secondary School in the area. The nearest Community Day Secondary School is 12 km away posing significant risks to girls to commute the distance or find self boarding facilities close to the school. As she painfully watches her daughter spend the 2013/14 year out of school, she is working hard to generate resources to have her daughter back in school in the next academic year.

Meanwhile, Anna is an active member of Ndife Amodzi Youth Club in the area encouraging other girls to stay in school. She is hopeful that someday she will accomplish her dream of attaining secondary school education and later training as a teacher to help other girls attain their

days. Domestic violence, poor parenting skills and unprofessional teacher behaviors such as teacher-pupil relationships and excessive beer drinking are also widespread in the district and consequently affecting girls' access to education.

5.4.3 Key Actors in the District and Common Strategies

The main actors in ensuring girls' access to education in the district include: Concern Universal, Department of Social Welfare, WFP, TFAC, CAMFED, ACTIONAID, YECE, UNICEF, WOLREC, RAC, Link for Community Development (LCD) and Miriam Foundation who utilize various strategies.

- ❖ CAMFED provides girls with full scholarships including school supplies to facilitate their admission into secondary school (Form 1).
- ❖ ACTIONAID promoting rights based approaches to education i.e. 10 education rights.
- ❖ DEM's Office through the gender coordinating office facilitates formation of female teachers' network in the district to act as role models to girls. The office also ensures that every primary school in the district has a female teacher.
- ❖ Link for Community Development is strengthening local school structures including School Management Committees, Parent Teacher Associations and Mother Groups which in turn act as catalysts for counseling, identification and readmission of out of school girls

5.4.4 Challenges and Barriers to Effective Implementation of Readmission

There are a number of key challenges to effective implementation of the readmission policy in Dedza district including the following:

- ❖ Readmission policy and other related education policies are not fully understood by stakeholders. All stakeholders interviewed including teachers and PEAs have not seen or read the policy and/or its guidelines.
- ❖ Inadequate enforcement of policies on child labour, alcohol consumption, marriage-age, domestic violence and parental responsibilities among others
- ❖ Poor learning processes with unprofessional teachers who perpetrate teacher - pupil relationships, stigma and discrimination of girl/teen mothers
- ❖ Poor learning environment including lack of teaching and learning resources i.e. desks as well as basic sanitary facilities for adolescent girls
- ❖ Distance to schools especially secondary schools affecting girls' transition from primary to secondary school
- ❖ There are many grownup girls in lower classes which creates stigma and discrimination among their peers
- ❖ High adult illiteracy and lack of appreciation of benefits of education among parents and community
- ❖ Lack of role models to motivate girls to stay in school

5.4.5 Areas of Support/Improvement

The following are the areas needing support or improvement in order to enhance girls' education access in Dedza district:

- ❖ Support printing and distribution of readmission policy guidelines and other relevant educational policies in local languages
- ❖ Support advocacy for marriage age revision and stiff punishments for perpetrators of sexual violence and those who marry and/or impregnate under aged girls to deter others
- ❖ Advocacy and support for construction of girls hostels in CDSS to reduce incidences of self-boarding which are a recipe for most pregnancies among school going girls
- ❖ Advocacy and support for improvement of teaching, learning and supporting facilities i.e. classrooms, desks and sanitation facilities
- ❖ Advocacy and support for enforcement of child labour laws to stop employment of under-aged girls as domestic workers for the working class at the boma
- ❖ Support introduction of competitions and prizes to motivate learners especially girls
- ❖ Support implementation of school feeding and nutrition programs to attract children especially girls to school
- ❖ Enhancing capacity of the District Education Network (DEN) to facilitate stakeholder collaboration on readmission of out of school girls
- ❖ Support implementation of mass adult literacy classes and parenting skills to enable parents appreciate the benefits of education

5.5 Mwanza District

Mwanza district has 4 education zones with 34,210 pupils enrolled in 44 primary schools in the 2013/14 school calendar. The study focused on all the four education zones in the district namely; Mphande, Chidoole, Futsa and Thambani.

5.5.1 Extent of School Dropouts

Mwanza experiences a high rate of dropout among girls. In 2012/13 school year, Mwanza registered 1,818 pupils dropping out of school; with 945 girls representing 52% of the total dropouts. This is particularly so in remote areas as well as in areas with bustling economic activity. Such activities that were cited during the study are the construction of the VALE/MOTA ENGIL railway line and cross border trading that have fuelled promiscuous behavior in the affected communities. The victims of all these practices are girls who end up being impregnated and dropping out of school.

5.5.2 Key Issues Affecting Girls Education

Key issues affecting girls' access to education in the district are poverty (people in the district are mostly dependent on subsistence farming, charcoal burning and cross-border trading), high adult illiteracy and their lack of appreciation of the benefits of education.

5.5.3 Key Actors in the District and Common Strategies

Key actors in ensuring girls' education access and implementation of the readmission policy in the district include; Department of Social Welfare, CAMFED, Red Cross, DEN and Mary's Meals. Some of the common strategies employed by these organizations in ensuring girls access to education especially focusing on readmission include the following:

- ❖ CAMFED provides girls with full scholarships including school supplies to facilitate their admission into secondary school (Form 1).
- ❖ Mary's Meals provides food to primary school children through school feeding programs
- ❖ Department of Social Welfare provides counseling to girls and vulnerable children
- ❖ Mother Groups sensitize communities on the benefits of girls education

5.5.4 Challenges and Barriers to Effective Implementation of Readmission

Key barriers to effective implementation of the readmission policy in Mwanza district are:

CASE STUDY: Mercy Charles
Age: 13, Class: Standard 3, Reason for dropping out: Pregnancy

Mercy Charles lost both her parents at the age of 3. Mercy and her two other siblings are being cared for by Gladys, their elder sister, who is also a school dropout.

Born in 2001, Mercy got pregnant at the age of 11 while in standard 3 at Tchetsa Primary School in Futsa Zone in Mwanza district. Mercy, like most vulnerable girls in the area, was a victim of the rampant sexual activity emanating from the construction of the VALE-MOTA ENGIL railway line which passes through the area.

When Mercy miscarried barely a few months into her pregnancy, Tchetsa Mother Group facilitated her readmission to school.

Mercy is currently back on her path to achieve her dream of becoming a nurse. However, Mercy faces a bleak future embroidered in poverty and lack of basic resources to facilitate her schooling.

- ❖ The readmission policy is not well understood among stakeholders. All stakeholders interviewed including teachers and PEAs have not seen or read the policy and/or its guidelines.
- ❖ Socioeconomic barriers with the majority of inhabitants being subsistence farmers leading to abject poverty and failure by parents to support girls school needs
- ❖ Lack of records to assess and determine the extent of progress on readmission of out of school girls
- ❖ Rampant sexual activity fuelled by the construction of the VALE/MOTA ENGIL railway line in the area

5.5.5 Areas of Support/Improvement

The following are the areas needing support or improvement in order to enhance girls' education access in the district:

- ❖ Support advocacy for sociological redress (apart from environmental and other economic compensation) by development projects such as the VALE-MOTA ENGIL railway line Project which fuels immorality, pregnancies and school dropout among girls
- ❖ Support advocacy for marriage age revision and stiff punishment of perpetrators of sexual violence and those who marry and/or impregnate under-aged girls to deter others
- ❖ Enhance capacity of the District Education Network (DEN) to facilitate stakeholder collaboration on readmission of out of school girls
- ❖ Support printing and distribution of readmission policy guidelines and other relevant educational policies in local languages

5.6 Machinga District

Machinga district has 12 education zones with 164,523 learners enrolled in 156 primary schools in the 2013/14 school calendar. The study focused on 4 education zones in the district namely; Machinga Boma, Namandanje, Puteya and St. Theresa Zones.

5.6.1 Extent of School Dropout

The prevalence of girls dropping out of school in the district is high. In 2012/13 school year, 12,304 pupils dropped out of school with 6,850 girls representing 56% of the total dropouts.

5.6.2 Key Issues Affecting Girls Education

Key issues affecting girls' access to education in the districts are bustling economic activities in the district (i.e. Liwonde Area) which promote prostitution. School aged girls in the district are also subjected to significant family responsibilities such as looking after their siblings, working in the fields, or simply selling merchandise. There are also harmful cultural practices which fuel early marriages and pregnancies as many girls dropout of school soon after undergoing initiation. There were many cases of girls that were re-admitted in school several times but still ended up getting married. Parental negative attitudes towards girls' education and their lack of support also lead to some girls dropping out of school for no valid reasons. There were many instances that were encountered during the study of girls that have dropped out of school yet they stay within a short distance to schools and their parents did not seem concerned at all.

5.6.3 Key Actors in the District and Common Strategies

Key actors facilitating girls' education access in the district include; WALA, NICE, CCJP, Youth Impact, ACTIONAID, CAMFED, ADRA and YONECO. These work in collaboration with Government departments such as District Social Welfare and DEM's Office for technical support.

5.6.4 Challenges and Barriers to Effective Implementation of Readmission

The study established the following barriers to effective implementation of the readmission policy in the district:

- ❖ Lack of coordination among stakeholders working on girls education in the district

CASE STUDY: Patricia Rajabu
Age: 18, Class: Standard 8, Reason for Dropout: Pregnancy

When Patricia stopped attending classes without her parents' knowledge, her co-learners reported her. After quizzing her, Patricia confessed being pregnant and was withdrawn from school.

Patricia's parents later approached school authorities at Namandanje Primary School to allow her sit for the 2014 Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education (PSLCE) Examinations. Patricia was then allowed to sit for her PSLCE Examinations while expectant.

Patricia is determined to return to school after delivering her baby in 4 months time. Patricia's ambition is to attain a Bachelor's Degree. However, Patricia reckons that a number of challenges stand between her and her dream bachelor's degree including the pregnancy and her family's poverty situation.

- ❖ Lack of records on the progress of implementation of readmission policy at all levels i.e. school, zone and district
- ❖ High pupil teacher ratio and low teacher motivation. Machinga has 164,523 learners in its schools against 1,533 qualified teachers thereby creating a higher teacher pupil ratio of 1 teacher to 107 learners. Teachers also complained about lack of motivation due to delayed monthly salaries, delayed promotion of long serving teachers, long overdue arrears and poor housing conditions among others.
- ❖ Inadequate classroom blocks and lack of special needs education teachers in almost all schools in the district, were also presented as some of the challenges affecting effective implementation of readmission and other related education policies in the district

5.6.5 Areas Requiring Support/Improvement

The following are the areas needing support or improvement in order to enhance girls' education access in Machinga district.

- ❖ Support printing and distribution of readmission policy guidelines and other related policies in local languages
- ❖ Enhancing capacity of the District Education Network (DEN) to facilitate stakeholder collaboration on readmission of out of school girls
- ❖ Strengthening information capturing, storage and sharing at all levels including primary school, zone and district level on implementation of readmission policy
- ❖ Stakeholders in the district including teachers suggested that re-admitted girls should be given incentives or material support. Many out of school girls in all the zones visited cited lack of materials as reason they fail to go to school.
- ❖ Support implementation of mass adult literacy classes and parenting skills to enable parents appreciate the benefits of education
- ❖ Support advocacy for abolition or modification of cultural practices and beliefs such as girls' initiation to address root causes that force girls to drop out of school in the first instance so that problems faced in re-admission can be solved

6 CONCLUSIONS

The right to education is one of the human rights entrenched in a number of international, regional and local human rights instruments. The right to education for girls is key because it gives way to the protection of other rights. Solving girls' education access problems does not only address the education sector problems but also the very essence of socioeconomic development of the country. Investment in education for has been acknowledged consistently as being a single and most powerful vehicle of self-advancement and fulfillment of developmental outcomes for present and future generations of children and the most important determinants of national development, with positive implications for all other measures of progress.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology's Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) for the period from 2000 to 2015 and the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II) clearly state that high priority would be given to the gender imbalance and inequity in the education system at all levels. Both the PIF and MGDSII recognize the need for enhancing girls' education through appropriate policies and practices. The PIF identifies and addresses seven main educational challenges facing girls in Malawi in the areas of access, equity, quality, relevance, management, planning and finance at all three levels of the education system. Nevertheless, the main challenge has been to put policies into practice in the school management, learning environment and implementation. Furthermore, deliberate efforts need to be put in place to move away from paying lip-service to girls' education issues and begin to act at all levels from the policy makers all the way to the teacher in the classroom. There is no doubt; therefore, that significant progress has been made at policy level to enhance girls' education access, completion and achievement in the country including the implementation of the readmission policy, however, while a lot of efforts have concentrated at primary level, there is need to come up with realistic and practical strategies for transition between various levels of education for girls

The progress towards implementation of readmission of out of school girls in certain areas is remarkable as presented in the cases narrated in this report. However more attention is focused on symptoms of the problems in respect to why girls drop out of school than addressing the root causes of the problem when implementing the readmission policy. For instance, most girls still drop out of school even after readmission. This is because the real causes for their dropping out of school in the first instance are not adequately addressed. Most of the causes are rooted in the socialization processes of the girl-child in Malawi's varied cultural settings. As such, these issues may be beyond the sphere of influence of the readmission policy and other education policies alone; there is need for holistic and culturally appropriate approaches to empower communities to take charge and take responsibility for girls' education.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

7.1 Recommendations

The recommendations from the study are presented to give suggestions for overcoming the barriers to Girls' Education relating to access, retention, readmission, completion and achievement at various levels. It must be understood however that to accelerate girls' education demands more than a technical response. It requires political and fiscal commitments applied to technical solutions that have been shown to make a difference in the particular context.

7.1.1 Increase girls' education opportunities

The study shows that there are many reasons why girls do not fulfill their fundamental right to quality education. Barriers to education for girls exist in terms of access, quality, relevance and achievement and these are often inter-related. As such, approaching girls' education as purely an access issue – i.e. about how many girls are enrolling in school, is incomplete. Access, quality, relevance and achievement are inextricably linked. There is little point to a girl enrolling in school or being readmitted if she is going to drop out soon after that because of the poor quality of education she is receiving. It is therefore imperative that holistic approaches are pursued to ensure girls' access, retention and achievement in schools.

7.1.2 Address school conditions affecting girls achievement

The study shows that various factors affect girls' education at school level. Adolescent girls usually miss some school days due to unavailability of sanitary facilities that offer privacy during their menstrual periods. In addition, shortage of female teachers especially in rural areas, deprive girls of role models. Most often, girls are harassed, teased and stigmatized by their peers and teachers in school especially after falling pregnant or giving birth.

7.1.3 Address household conditions that affect girls education

The study shows that parents and guardians are likely to support readmission of out of school girls if challenges leading to dropping out of school such as pregnancy and poverty are addressed. However, educational level of parents matters. Some parents believe that an improved livelihood is not associated with education. Other households involve girls in more chores than boys. Poverty at household level makes the direct costs of schooling too expensive for many families. Poor families may either fail to enroll their children into schools or may enroll them late and may even withdraw them prematurely from primary schools. Poor households also often push their daughters into early marriages as a way of alleviating their own poverty. Lastly, food insecurity and malnutrition forces children to go to school hungry and malnourished and as such do not concentrate hence losing interest in education. As such, interventions focused on empowering households to support girls' education needs are inevitably important

7.1.4 Address community level conditions that affect girls access to school

The community social fabric is an important ingredient in ensuring girls' education access. At community level traditional and cultural beliefs like initiation rites sexualize girls and idolize men thereby pushing girls into early marriages, pregnancies and untimely dropping from school. In most communities, girls education is not valued as important compared to that of boys. This is because it is often assumed that girls tend to get married and do not provide support to their families. As such, involving community leaders and their constituents through community-wide interventions to ensure that there are holistic and culturally appropriate approaches to empower communities to take charge and take responsibility for girls' education including school management, learning environment improvement and monitoring of girls education is paramount.

7.1.5 Ensure effective implementation of readmission of out of school girls

The study established that most teachers and education stakeholders were aware of the readmission policy, but had no copy of the policy guidelines for reference. Many had heard about the policy and the guidelines by word of mouth from the PEA but none had read it by themselves. This could be due to the fact that the circular on the readmission policy was made in 1993 which is more than 21 years ago although the revised readmission policy procedures were circulated in 2006.

7.2 Way Forward

In order to ensure that the study findings and ensuing recommendations are used by CSEC and other education stakeholders to inform policies and subsector interventions, the following suggestions should be considered:

7.2.1 Increasing girls' education opportunities

In order to increase girls' education access, attainment and achievement, the following actions should be undertaken or reenergized in the target districts:

- Sensitize parents, teachers and the wider community on the importance of readmitting out of school girls and motivation of those in school not to drop out.
- Intensify adult literacy classes targeting illiterate parents especially in Dedza, Machinga and Mchinji districts to appreciate the benefits of education especially girls.
- Facilitate community dialogue to sensitize parents that every child, including girls, has a right to education as well as encourage and motivate parents to send girls to school
- Make the school environment conducive for girls through improvement to teaching, learning and sanitation facilities
- Provide orientation training for newly formed Mother Groups, School Management Committees and ongoing training for existing groups on a range of themes including adolescence counseling, resource mobilization and ways of supporting orphaned and other vulnerable girls

- Support advocacy and lobbying efforts towards increasing girls' marriage age and stiff punishments for men who impregnate as well as parents who marry off under-aged girls
- Enhance capacity of District Education Networks (DEN) to act as a platform to raise awareness of the importance of girls' education and the need to focus on the quality of education among district education staff and other organizations working in relation to education in both districts
- In collaboration with district education officials, provide in-service training for head-teachers, teachers, community school groups (Mother Groups, SMC, PTA and Community leaders) to address specific needs of the schools, focused on girls' education, literacy and numeracy, teaching methodologies, school governance and leadership
- Continue working in partnership with the MoEST at national level through Basic Education Technical Working Groups and play a key part in informing policy in relation to girls' education.
- Support mentoring and counseling for girls through Girls' Clubs. These school-based clubs provide an interactive forum for girls to build their confidence, share information on subjects such as HIV/AIDS, and receive academic support
- Abolish school fund and introduce IGAs for schools to cover the cost of maintenance and others covered under school fund. Malawi's revised Education Act (2012) says that provision of primary education in government schools shall be free of tuition to all. However, school fund and other costs bar children from attaining their right to free primary education.
- There is need to consider moving with speed to enforce implementation of the compulsory education law. EFA goals 2 and 5 demand that by 2015 countries should have their children, particularly girls and those belonging to ethnic minorities, access and complete free and compulsory primary education....
- CSOs should use district education plan and the school improvement grant/plan to ensure a coordinated support on educational development at community level.

7.2.2 Girl's retention in school

The study shows that most girls drop out of school even after readmission. It is therefore important to ensure girls' retention in school is achieved to curb dropouts even after readmission through the following actions:

- Sensitize parents and communities not to overburden girls with household and other family responsibilities including selling merchandize especially in Dedza where girls are forced to sell beer during market days
- Engage community leaders to modify harmful cultural practices such as initiation ceremonies and to use the initiation ceremonies to bring good aspects about girls' education

- Advocate for posting of female teachers in all the schools to act as role models for girls and support Female Teacher Networks in all districts and zones
- Support girls with school materials to encourage them stay in school and ensuring that needy students benefit from the national bursary programs and other community managed bursary programs
- Hold community sensitization campaigns to address the practice of forcing girls to get married when they are still young.

7.2.3 School Conditions affecting girls achievement

In order to address challenges that affect girls at school level, the following actions should be taken into consideration:

- Support communities to upgrade junior primary schools to full primary schools especially in Mchinji district to shorten distances to schools
- Lobby for support towards improvement of teaching, learning and sanitation facilities including classroom blocks, desks and chairs, latrines and water facilities
- Train teachers on how to handle and respect readmitted girls in school without perpetrating their stigmatization and discrimination which is easily imitated by other learners
- School Improvement Plans/Grants (SIP) should include issues of girls' access, retention, performance, completion and achievement.
- Facilitate School Performance Reviews led by district officials with support from CSOs/DEN to assess improvement in areas of school leadership and management as well as child-friendliness and inclusion

7.2.4 Addressing household conditions that affect girls education

The study shows that parents and guardians are likely to support readmission of out of school girls if challenges leading to dropping out of school such as pregnancy and poverty are addressed. It is important, therefore, to target parents/guardians through the following interventions:

- ❖ Supporting microenterprises to resource poor households
- ❖ Support community based child care centres (CBCCC) to provide day care services to children whose mothers return to school
- ❖ Providing bursaries to support girls with school materials to encourage them stay in school
- ❖ Sensitize parents and guardians not to overburden girls with household and other family responsibilities including selling merchandize especially in Dedza where girls are forced to sell beer during market days

7.2.5 Addressing community level conditions that affect girls access to school

The study shows that traditional and cultural beliefs like initiation rites push girls into early marriages, thereby dropping from school. Girls education is not valued as important

compared to that of boys in most communities. As such, the following community level interventions are recommended:

- Ensure that all schools have functional Mother Groups, School Management Committees and PTAs to support community wide campaigns to stop parents from allowing girls' indulgence in sexual relationships.
- Facilitate collaboration between Mother Groups, Female Teacher Networks and other school community groups, such as School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations with the aim of increasing community involvement in schools.
- Involve traditional leaders to modify cultural practices that sexualize girls and idolize men such as initiation ceremonies. These can be used as platforms for propagating girls education
- Enforce bye-laws to curb child labour, child bonding and betrothal as brides to well to do men
- Deploy female teachers to rural areas

7.2.6 Ensuring effective implementation of readmission of out of school girls

The study established that most teachers and education stakeholders were aware of the readmission policy, but had no copy of the policy guidelines for reference. Many had heard about the policy and the guidelines by word of mouth from the PEA but none had read it by themselves. This could be due to the fact that the circular on the readmission policy was made in 1993 which is more than 21 years ago although the revised readmission policy procedures were circulated in 2006. As such, the following actions are recommended to ensure effective implementation of the readmission policy and other related education policies to ensure girls access to education:

- Popularize the readmission policy and its guidelines to ensure that all TDCs and schools have a copy and ensure that all education institutions are familiar with the re-admission policy and this should be monitored to check how schools are doing in re- admitting out of school girls
- Sensitize all teachers on the teachers' code of conduct to avoid perpetrating stigmatizing and discrimination of girl mothers which is easily replicated by other learners
- Support Female Teacher Networks and Mother Groups in conducting exchange visits between zones as a means of sharing ideas and best practices
- Build capacity of school and community based structures i.e. Mother Groups, Female Teacher Networks, School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations on how to enhance readmission of out of school girls and monitor them to ensure their retention.

8 STRATEGIES FOR PURSUING THE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Build Partnership towards Girls' Education

Partnerships are at the very heart of CSEC's action and are where its strength lies. CSEC is not an agency, but rather a network and also certainly not the ONLY network that is working for the cause of girls' education and gender equality in the sector. Girls' education is already on the agenda of many of CSEC's partners who work in isolation. At national, district and community levels CSEC should support member organizations to make achieving gender parity and equality in education a priority. Through forming a strong partnership, agencies that could have been working separately and often times in isolation, are brought together for a common cause under the CSEC banner and make concerted efforts for effective intervention on more formal platforms. In other words, CSEC as a coalition of multiple stakeholders with their respective comparative advantages and vast experiences, is able to bring strategic influence on government policies and programs not only on girls' education, but also policies on inclusive education, early childhood education, school improvement, education financing (budget allocation), education sector plan evaluation and EFA assessments in ensuring that government meets its commitments in these areas.

8.2 Pursue Collective Advocacy for Girls' Education

Advocacy (mostly at the policy level) is the other keyword which has made CSEC unique and become a strong force in the girls' education movement. It would certainly difficult to attribute any progress made towards achieving the EFA Goals (especially Goal 5) and MDGs 2 and 3 specifically to CSEC as an independent initiative, especially since CSEC is a partnership composed of a number of different organizations and networks, but all working towards achieving a common goal: gender equality in education. However, CSEC should be able to take advantage of its unique structure to advocate for advancing girls' right to education and gender equality in education with a collective voice and help maximize the contributions of the individual agencies through the district education networks and all countrywide structures. A collective voice will carry weight compared to just having a few isolated agencies advocating for the girls' education cause. A collective voice will also help avoid unnecessarily misunderstanding and confusion on gender equality issues in education which can be complex and value-laden. CSEC's collective advocacy for policy change and gender-responsive environment in education will lead to increased awareness among key stakeholders, enhancing synergy among stakeholders regarding approaches and initiatives for girls/education, which in turn, led to the development of gender mainstreaming and analysis tools and guidelines for planning, assessment and reviews.

8.3 Build Capacity towards Girls' Education

Capacity Building is a potent tool that leads to genuine empowerment of CSEC members to meaningfully promote girls' education in their respective impact areas. Capacity building

efforts should focus on strengthening District Education Networks (DEN) to act as a platform to raise profile of girls' education among district education stakeholders. Collaboration should be strengthened with MoEST to build capacity for pre-service teachers, in-service teachers, community-based schools governance groups (Mother Groups, SMC, PTA and Community leaders) to address specific needs of girls' education, teaching methodologies, school governance and leadership. Orientation training should also be provided to newly formed Mother Groups on a range of themes including adolescence counseling and ways of supporting young mothers, orphaned and other vulnerable girls to return and stay in school.

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APPENDICES

I. STUDY TOOLS

A. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

- a. Describe the prevalence of out of school girls in the area?
- b. What are the reasons for girls dropping out of school?
- c. What is your group/committee doing to ensure that girls stay in school?
- d. What challenges are encountered in your committee/group efforts to keep girls in school?
- e. What challenges are encountered in your group/committee's efforts to ensure readmission of out of school girls?
- f. Which organizations do you work with to readmit out of school girls this areas?
- g. What could you recommend to be done to increase girls' access to education in the area?

B. COMMUNITY LEADERS INTERVIEW GUIDE

- a. Describe the prevalence of out of school girls in the area?
- b. What are the reasons for girls dropping out of school in the area?
- c. What are you doing in your capacity as community leader to ensure that girls stay in school?
- d. What challenges do you encountered in your efforts to keep girls in school in your area?
- e. What challenges are encountered in your efforts to ensure readmission of out of school girls?
- f. Which organizations do you work with to readmit out of school girls in your area?
- g. What could you recommend to be done to increase girls' access to education in the area?

C. NATIONAL LEVEL KEY INFORMANTS INETRVIEW GUIDE

Context and Relevance

- a. What challenges related to girls education access is your organization focusing to address in the country?
- b. Which other partners, stakeholders or communities does your organization work with on girls' education access and related issues in the country?
- c. How does your organization promote readmission of out of school girls? What initiatives, incentives and innovations are being supported by your organization to promote readmission of out of school girls?
- d. Has your organization worked (either directly or indirectly) with CSEC in addressing girls' access to education particularly focusing on the readmission policy? If yes, please explain? If not, why?

Partnerships and Collaboration

- a. What is the capacity of your organization to continue supporting interventions directed at promoting girls' education access particularly focusing on the readmission of out of school girls over time?

- b. Does your organization support any other interventions, partners or communities within these districts in promoting girls' access to education? (Mzimba, Nkhatabay, Mchinji, Dedza, Machinga and Mwanza)
- c. If yes to 2.2 (a) what are the types of interventions implemented in the target districts?
(b) Who are your organization's partners/stakeholders in the interventions?

Recommendations and Way Forward

- a. What main areas of improvement do you think are needed if readmission of out of school girls is to be enhanced in the country?
- b. How could/does your organization support these improvements to enhance readmission of out of school girls in the country?

D. CSEC BOARD AND STAFF INTERVIEW GUIDE

Project Design and Strategic Orientation

- a. What strategic approaches does CSEC employ to increase girls' education access?
- b. What are the key interventions or activities initiated under each of these approaches?
- c. In which of these themes, pillars, or approaches does the current CSEF project fall?

Project Context, Relevance and Design

- a. What challenges related to girls' education was this project set to address in the target districts?
- b. How relevant were these needs to the goals of CSEC at the time of Project inception?
- c. To what extent are the needs still relevant and appropriate now?
- d. In what ways is the Project linked and aligned to community and government priorities as stated in the National Education and Development Plans and Priorities?

Beneficiary Targeting, Participation and Capacity

- a. Why was the project implemented in these particular districts (Mchinji, Dedza, Mzimba, Nkhatabay, Machinga and Mwanza) and not anywhere else?
- b. What has been the target communities' level of decision-making in the planning and implementation of the project activities?
- c. How adequate is the support to partners involved in the project activities (DBOs, CBOs, FBOs) particularly with regards to capacity building?
- d. How does the support affect in a positive way the communities' capacity to provide readmission support services to out of school girls?
- e. What is the capacity of the communities to influence the services educational institutions provide to girls to ensure their readmission and retention?

Efficiency and Effectiveness (Value for Money)

- a. What are the most significant changes in knowledge or practices in relation to readmission of out of school girls that can be attributed to the implementation of the Project?

- b. What are the most significant changes in the practices of duty bearers (i.e. community leaders, teachers etc.) in relation to readmission of out of school girls' that can be attributed to the Project?
- c. What are the unintended results of the Project?
- d. If a different approach was used in delivery of the Project, what could have been achieved?
- e. How would you rate the overall costs of the Project compared to the number of target beneficiaries reached?

Program Management and External Coordination

- a. How has CSEC effectively managed the Project? (Planning, staffing levels, resource management, targeting, partnership management, monitoring and evaluation etc.)
- b. How is the Project linked to government as primary duty bearer in the catchment areas such as the office of the DEM?
- c. How has the implementation of the project stimulated relations with other service providers in any significant way i.e. NGOs, FBOs, DBOs, CBOS, CSOs?
- d. Have the relations developed under this Project in turn had an effect on the readmission of out of school girls?
- e. Which organizations are the major Partners in the Project in each district (name, what they do, where they operate, type of organization e.g. Govt. LNGO, INGO, CBO etc.)?

Sustainability

- a. How does CSEC or Project Partners ensure that readmission policy and/or guidelines are made available to stakeholders and target communities?
- b. What level of capacity building has been achieved among DBOs, CBOs, School Management Committees, Mother Groups, Teachers and Parents in the Project Districts?
- c. What measures are in place for the benefits from the project implementation to continue when the project funding comes to an end?

Impact, Key Gaps, Challenges and Recommendations

- a. What has been the impact of the Project in readmission efforts of out of school girls in the target districts?
- b. What major factors have facilitated any of the project achievements to date?
- c. What measures are being taken to harness the facilitating factors mentioned above?
- d. What major factors have impeded the project achievements to date?
- e. What measures are being taken to minimize the impacts of the impeding factors mentioned above?
- f. How has the level of funding for the project interventions impacted on the achievements?

- g. What are your recommendations in order for the Project to achieve meaningful impact in ensuring readmission and overall girls education access?
- h. What are your recommendations in general for the country to ensuring readmission of out of school girls and overall girls' education access?

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE - GIRLS

Introduction and Consent Form

My name is _____ from MAJESTIC SOLUTIONS, an independent research firm, facilitating on behalf of Civil Society Education Coalition an assessment on the progress made in increasing girls' access to education with focus on readmission policy and other related policies. You have been randomly selected to participate in this survey so that you could provide information that will be used to make the assessment. All the information that you provide through this interview will be confidential and only used for the purpose of this exercise.

I, therefore, would like to seek your consent to proceed with the interview.

YES [] NO []

INTERVIEWED BY: _____ DATE: ____/____/____
[DD/MM/YYYY]

CHECKED BY: _____ DATE: ____/____/____ [DD/MM/YYYY]

Identification Information

1 DISTRICT PROFILE INFORMATION		
1.4 District Name	Mzimba	01
	Nkhata-Bay	02
	Mchinji	03
	Dedza	04
	Machinga	05
	Mwanza	06
1.5 Education Zone Name		
1.6 Traditional Authority Name		
1.7 Group Village Head Name		
1.8 Village Name		
1.9 Distance to nearest primary school	School Name	Distance (Km)
1.10 Distance to nearest secondary school	School Name	Distance (Km)

1.11 Distance to tertiary institution/ school	School Name	Distance (Km)
2 RESPONDENTS CHARACTERISTICS		
2.4 Name		
2.5 Age (Year of birth)		
2.6 Occupation		

Survey Questions

Survey Question	Response (write, circle or tick)	Skip Instructions
3 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION		
3.4 Have you ever-attended school?	Yes	1
	No	2 → 4.4
3.5 What is the highest level of schooling you completed? (CIRCLE HIGHEST SCHOOL LEVEL)	Primary	1
	Secondary	2
	Tertiary	3
3.6 What class/form/grade/year did you complete at this school.....?	Class/Form/year etc	
3.7 How old were you when you left school?	Age in years	
3.8 Are you currently attending regular school? Full-time or part-time?	Yes	1
	No	2 → 4.4
3.9 How many more years of education do you expect to complete?	Education in years	
3.10 Is the school that you attend(ed) a government or private institution?	Government	1
	Private	2
3.11 Is it run by a particular religion or religious group?	Yes	1
	No	2
3.12 Is the school that you attend(ed) for... PLEASE READ OUT	Boys and girls?	1
	Only girls)?	2
4 OUT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES		
4.4 Have you ever worked for pay?	Yes	1
	No	2 → 4.7
4.5 What type of work do (did) you do? PROBE		
4.6 How old were you when you started working for pay?	Age in years	
4.7 Are you currently working for pay?	Yes	1
	No	2 → 4.10
4.8 About how many hours a week do you work?	Hours	

Survey Question	Response (write, circle or tick)	Skip Instructions
4.9 How much do (did) you earn in a Month?	MK_____ /month	
4.10 Are you looking for work?	Yes	1
	No	2
		5
4.11 What type of work are you looking for?	Domestic work	1
	Casual Work	2
	Shop attendant	3
	Other (Specify	4
5 CHALLENGES, BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF READMISSION POLICY		
5.4 What are the reasons you dropped out of school? <i>(Please rank each option on a scale of 1 to 5; 1 being most important)</i>	01 Early marriage	
	02 Pregnancy	
	03 Violence in school	
	04 Violence/abuse at home	
	05 Domestic Work/Child labour	
	06 Migration	
	07 Poverty	
	08 HIV and AIDS and health issues	
	09 Distance to school	
	10 Other (Specify)	
5.5 Were you readmitted into school after you dropped out?	Yes	1
	No	2
		→ 5.8
5.6 In which year were you readmitted into school after you dropped out?	Readmission year	
5.7 Who facilitated your readmission into school after you dropped out?	01 Parents	
	02 Other Relatives (specify)	
	03 Traditional Leader	

Survey Question	Response (write, circle or tick)	Skip Instructions
(please check all that apply)	04 Religious Leader 05 Local CBO (Name) 06 Local NGO (Name) 07 International NGO (Name) 08 Other (specify)	
5.8 What are the main factors that keep/kept you from seeking readmission after you dropped out of school? <i>(Please rank each option on a scale of 1 to 5; 1 being most important)</i>	01 Marriage or pregnancy 02 Stigma and discrimination 03 Migration 04 Attitudes and practices 05 Violence at school 06 Distance to school 07 Cost of education 08 Health-related issues 09 Child labour (domestic, casual) 10 Other (Specify)	
6 INFORMATION, KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF READMISSION POLICY AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL POLICIES		
6.4 What information do you have about the policy on readmission of out of school girls? <i>(Please check one that best apply)</i>	01 A lot of information 02 Some information 03 Little information 04 No information	
6.5 If you selected, a lot or some information, how did you receive the information? <i>(Please check all that apply)</i>	01 Career talk 02 Media i.e. Newspapers, Radio 03 School announcements 04 Other (please specify):	

Survey Question	Response (write, circle or tick)		Skip Instructions
6.6 Are/Were the procedures for application for readmission clearly laid out to you	Yes	1	→ 7
	No	2	
6.7 Please explain why you think the readmission procedures were/are not clear to you?			
7 ACTORS AND MECHANISMS CURRENTLY UTILISED TO ENHANCE THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE READMISSION POLICY			
7.4 What are the common strategies utilised by authorities and organizations to enhance the effective implementation of the readmission of out of school girls in your area?			
(Please indicate: 1 - often; 2 - sometimes; 3 - never; 0 - I don't know)			
7.4.1	Through PTA /SMC initiatives		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4.2	Sensitization and Promotion of re-admission policy amongst community members		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4.3	Through Mother Groups		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4.4	Sensitization of learners		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4.5	Counseling and guidance of learners		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4.6	Explanation of readmission policy during school assembly talks		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4.7	Home visits to discuss with parents/guardians		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4.8	Involvement of traditional leaders		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4.9	Incentives for returning girls (e.g. school materials, uniform)		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4.10	Use of role models, career talks etc.		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.4.11	Performances (dances, drama, role-plays, poems, songs, sports)		<input type="checkbox"/>

Survey Question	Response (write, circle or tick)	Skip Instructions	
7.4.12 Announcements in religious gatherings	<input type="checkbox"/>		
7.4.13 Others (please specify):	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7.5 Which government departments or other organizations are active in enhancing the effective implementation of readmission out of school girls in your area?			
Organization Name	Type	Types of Organizations	
		Government Department/Agency	1
		International NGO - INGO	2
		Local NGO – NGO/CSO	3
		Community Based Organization – CBO	4
		Faith Based Organization - FBO	5
		Civil Society Network	6
		Other (please specify)	7
7.6 Which of these organizations helped to facilitate your readmission?			
7.7 Which of the following types of interventions would enhance readmission of out of school girls in schools? <i>(Please indicate 1 - very important; 2 - somewhat important; 3 - not important; 0 - I don't know)</i>			
7.7.1	Incentives, i.e. scholarships, subsidies, food, school supplies, uniforms for girls		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.7.2	Microenterprise programmes for poor households		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.7.3	School feeding programmes		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.7.4	Child-care programmes for siblings, children (Community Based Child Care Centres)		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.7.5	Parent /guardian/caregiver education (adult literacy)		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.7.6	Media programmes and motivational material (posters, story books		<input type="checkbox"/>

Survey Question	Response (write, circle or tick)	Skip Instructio ns
etc.)		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.7.7 Endorsement of girls' education by religious and other leaders		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.7.8 Training village committees, parent-teacher associations		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.7.9 "Back to school" campaigns to encourage out of school girls		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.7.10 Other (Please specify)		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.8 What should be done at policy level to ensure readmission and retention of out of school girls? (Please rank each option on a scale of 1 to 5; 1 being highest priority)		
7.8.1 Advocacy for implementation of compulsory education laws		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.8.2 Advocacy for implementation of labour laws (child labour)		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.8.3 Advocacy for girls re-admission to schools after pregnancy, marriage		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.8.4 Advocacy for support to child-friendly, gender-sensitive schools		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.8.5 Advocacy to eliminate corporal punishment and violence in schools		<input type="checkbox"/>
7.8.6 Other (Please specify)		<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Closure, Comments and Suggestions: Please provide any other comments on the issues that we have discuss that would enable us to make a fair assessment of the progress made in increasing girls' access to education by the organization/district/zone/area/community		

II. LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEWED

Table 8: List of key national, district and community stakeholders interviewed

CONSULTATION LEVEL			NAME	TITLE/ROLE	ORGANIZATION
NATIONAL		1.	Dr. Joseph Chimombo	Director of Basic Education	MOEST
		2.	Mrs. Julie Juma	Programme Coordinator	ACTIONAID
		3.	Ms. Clara Chindime		UNICEF
		4.	Mr. Wales Chigwenembe	Projects Officer	FAWEMA
CSEC NATIONAL OFFICE		5.	Mrs. Hendrina Givah	Board of Trustees Member	FAWEMA/CSEC
		6.	Mr. Benedicto Kondowe	Executive Director	CSEC
		7.	Ms. Brenda Kawerama	Program Officer	CSEC
DISTRICT STAKEHOLDERS	Mzimba North	8.	Bridget Mvula		DEM's Office
		9.	Margret Hara		DEN
	Nkhata-Bay	10.	George Pande	Project Officer	YONECO/DEN
		11.	Beatrice Chirwa	Data Officer	DEM's Office
		12.	Albert Winga	Program Officer	ACTIONAID/DEN
		13.	Benjamin Kapuchi	Social Welfare Officer	District Social Welfare
		14.	Mac Divex Kadya	Gender Coordinator	DEM's Office
		15.	Catherine Bunya	Gender Coordinator	DEM's Office
	Dedza	16.	Harold Magagula	Child Protection Officer	District Social Welfare
		17.	Maxwell Mawera	Asst. Project Coordinator	YECE/DEN
	Mchinji	18.	B. Chikadza	SHN & Gender Coordinator	DEM's Office
		19.	Andrew Mwanza	Executive Director	CISE/DEN
	Machinga	20.	Bertha Mijoya	Dist. Social Welfare Officer	DSWO
		21.	M.J.J. Namaheya	Coordinating PEA	DEM
		22.	L. Makayika	Project Officer	Youth Impact/DEN
	Mwanza	23.	Dorothy P. Ngwenyama	SHN & Gender Coordinator	DEM's Office
		24.	Maggie Asamu	Dist. Social Welfare Officer	DSWO
		25.	J. Rukunya	District Education Network	DEN

CONSULTATION LEVEL			NAME	TITLE/ROLE	ORGANIZATION
IMPACT AREA (COMMUNITY LEVEL)	Mzimba	26.	Samson Kanyimbo	Assistant Coordinator	Enukweni TDC
		27.	Rachel Mziya	Assistant Coordinator	Bwengu TDC
	Dedza	28.	Cecilia Kulemeka	Head Teacher	Kalilombe F.P. School
		29.	Dorothy Nsanda	Teacher	Kalilombe F.P. School
	Mchinji	30.	Lenox J. Mbalani	PEA	Ludzi TDC
		31.	Blessed M. Chikhadze	PEA	Kamwendo TDC
		32.	Emmanuel Msambiro	PEA	Pinda TDC
		33.	Elizabeth Banda	Teacher	Pinda F.P. School
		34.	Cecilia Zayambika	Teacher	Pinda F.P. School
		35.	Judith Chimzere	Teacher	Misale CDSS
		36.	Martha Chimbatata	Teacher	Kamwendo Model Primary School
		37.	Emmanuel Selemani	Teacher	Kamwendo Model Primary School
		38.	Louis Zulu	Teacher	Ludzi Girls Primary School
		39.	Sister Ganizani	Matron	Ludzi Girls Primary School
	Mwanza	40.	E. Matewere	PEA	Futsa Zone
		41.	Wyson Misi	Assistant PEA	Mphande Zone
		42.	Leonard Thangata	Head Teacher	Chikudzu F.P. School
		43.	Samson Chikadza	Teacher	Kanjedza F.P. School
		44.	Tinenenji Fredrick	Teacher	Kanjedza F.P. School
		45.	Panganani Magalasi	Teacher	Futsa Primary School
46.		T.J. Phiri	Teacher	Futsa Primary School	
47.		Elizabeth Kagundu	Teacher	Thambani Mission Primary School	
48.		Pilirani Katsinje	Teacher		
49.		M. Chalema	Teacher	Mphande F.P. School	
50.		Felistas Mukhupa	Teacher	Mphande F.P. School	

CONSULTATION LEVEL		NAME	TITLE/ROLE	ORGANIZATION
Machin ga	51.	Foster Chigudu	Teacher	Mwanza Catholic
	52.	Heather Kalino	PEA	Machinga Boma TDC
	53.	Bonface Molande	PEA	St. Theresa TDC
	54.	M. Jumbe	PEA	Puteya TDC
	55.	Rose Makina	PEA	Namandanje TDC
	56.	Gilbert Katanga	Deputy Head Teacher	Machinga LEA School
	57.	Grant Mukasho	Head Teacher	
	58.	Priscilla Masi	Teacher	St. Theresa
	59.	M.C. Namakhwa	Teacher	St. Theresa
	60.	P. Chidawati	Teacher	Puteya Primary School
	61.	R. Tembo	Teacher	Puteya Primary School
	62.	Mrs. Namaona	Teacher	Liwonde LEA School
	63.	Meria Anastazio	Teacher	Namandanje FP School
	64.	Thokozani Nanthambwe	Teacher	Namandanje FP School

III. DETAILS OF GIRLS IN CASE STUDIES

DISTRICT	GIRL'S NAME	AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW	YEAR/AGE DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL	REASON FOR DROP OUT	CLASS DROPPED OUT	CURRENT CLASS	SCHOOL NAME	EDUCATION ZONE
MZIMBA	Maria Manda	16	14	Forced marriage	5	7	Enukweni Primary School	Enukweni
NKHATA-BAY	Sekerani Banda	14	13	Sickness	5	5	St. Maria Goleti	St. Maria Goleti
MCHINJI	Mwaiwao Tembo	15	12	Pregnancy	6	6	Mzula Primary School	Mchinji Boma
DEDZA	Anna Chitukula	17	17	Lack of school and boarding fees	8	Not in school	Kalilombe Primary School	Bembeke
MWANZA	Mercy Charles	13	11	Pregnancy	3	3	Tchetsa Primary School	Tchetsa
MACHINGA	Patricia Rajabu	18	16	Pregnancy	8	8	Namandanje Primary School	Namandanje

IV. OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation Area	Goal of the Recommendation	Actions to be undertaken	Timeframe
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Recommendation Area	Goal of the Recommendation	Actions to be undertaken	Timeframe
Girls' education access, attainment and achievement	Ensure that girls access, attain and achieve quality and relevant education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support advocacy for stiff punishment to deter men who impregnate girls and parents who marry off under-aged girls - Support mentoring and counseling for girls through Girls' Clubs in schools - Abolish school fund and support schools to introduce IGAs to cover the costs covered under school fund - Lobby and enforce implementation of the compulsory education law. 	Short, medium and long term
Girl's retention in school	Ensure that girls who have been readmitted stay in school by monitoring their progress, achievement and completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide in-service training for head-teachers, teachers, community school groups to address specific needs of girls' education, school governance and leadership - Support girls with school materials to encourage them stay in school - Ensure needy children benefit from the national bursary scheme 	Short, medium and long term
Address school conditions affecting girls achievement	Ensure that the school environment is friendly and gender sensitive through ongoing improvement to teaching, learning and sanitation facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide orientation training for newly formed Mother Groups, SMCs/PTA - Target pre-service teachers in TTCs with skills to address specific needs of girls' education - Support communities to upgrade junior primary schools to full primary schools - Lobby for support towards improvement of teaching, learning and sanitation facilities in schools 	Medium and long term
Address household conditions that	Ensure that household chores and other constraints that take girls' time away from school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensitize parents not to overburden girls with household chores - Support microenterprises to resource poor households 	Medium and long term

Recommendation Area	Goal of the Recommendation	Actions to be undertaken	Timeframe
affect girls education	are addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure bursaries support girls from resource poor households with school materials - Support community based child care centers (CBCCC) to provide day care services to children whose mothers return to school 	
Address community level conditions that affect girls access to school	Support communities to modify cultural beliefs and practices that put adolescent girls at risk of pregnancy and early marriages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sensitize parents, teachers and wider community on all children's right to education - Involve traditional leaders to modify cultural practices that sexualize girls - Lobby for enforcement of laws to curb child labor, child bonding and betrothal of girls as brides - Support deployment of female teachers to rural areas 	Short, medium and long term
Ensure effective implementation of readmission of out of school girls	Ensure that the readmission policy and other related education policies implementation guidelines are available to all stakeholders including community members in local languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All TDCs should have a copy of the readmission policy and its guidelines - Monitor how schools are performing in re-admitting out of school girls - Sensitize all teachers on the code of conduct to avoid perpetrating stigma and discrimination of girl mothers - Support Female Teacher Networks and Mother Groups - Support printing and distribution of copies of the readmission policy guidelines in local languages at community level 	Short, medium and long term