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2018/19 Child Protection Budget Brief

Investing in Child Protection

Building Inclusive, Productive and Resilient Communities in Malawi

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for every child

Key messages and recommendations

- 1** Investing in child protection is fundamental to achieving inclusive, resilient and sustainable development as outlined in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III (MGDS III), but child protection programmes are largely invisible and under-funded.

Recommendation: Each Ministry, Department and Agency (MDA) responsible for child protection related interventions should have clear goals, targets and identifiable budget allocations in their Program Based Budgets (PBB) to ensure every child lives in a safe and protective environment.
- 2** At MK100 (US\$0.14) per child per year, total visible budget allocations to child protection are insufficient to effectively deliver quality and sustainable child protection services to all children in Malawi.

Recommendation: Budget ceilings for relevant MDAs and allocations to child protection specific programmes should be informed by cost estimates in relevant sector and child-focused national plans such as the National Plan of Action for Vulnerable Children.
- 3** Most Local Authorities (LAs) do not have specific budget lines for child protection.

Recommendation: Each LA is encouraged to have a sub-program on 'child protection and development' possibly under the 'gender sector' budget line for other recurrent transactions (ORT) channelled through the National Local Governance Finance Committee (NLGFC).
- 4** Visible child protection budget lines at national level are not sufficiently broken down to enable stakeholders to calculate exactly how much is the Government allocating to various elements of a national child protection system such as response and preventative services, coordination, data and statistics, regulation, compliance and development of a professional child protection workforce.

Recommendation: The Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW), being the lead MDA on child protection, should ensure that there are clear budget lines for prevention, response, coordination and other supportive services in its PBB.
- 5** Limited understanding of child protection by planners and budget makers perpetuates poor articulation of key child protection issues within PBBs of relevant MDAs.

Recommendation: MoGCDSW, with support from development partners, should facilitate awareness raising and targeted capacity development of all relevant MDAs on how to effectively plan and budget for child protection, including the development of targets and indicators in PBBs.
- 6** The majority of child protection programmes in Malawi are funded by donors, mainly through off-budget means.

Recommendation: MoGCDSW should work with development partners to make an investment case to use in lobbying the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development to increase its allocation to child protection, preferably through a high-level and multi-sectoral coordination structure.

PART 1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This budget brief assesses the extent to which national budgets have prioritized child protection over the past six years. The analysis leading to this budget brief is based on a study that was conducted in 2017 and 2018 to examine levels and trends in Government allocation to child protection between 2012 and 2018. Data collection included review of policy and budget documents as well as interviews with key informants. Respondents were drawn from the MoGCDSW, Malawi Police Service, Malawi Human Rights Commission, National Registration Bureau, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Judiciary and National Local Government Finance Committee.

Box 1: What is a “Child Protection System”?

A child protection system is a coordinated, harmonized and systematic approach to protecting children from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. This system is made up of several components which include laws, policies, standards, regulations and guidelines; human resources; service delivery structures and processes within the continuum of care; as well as accountability mechanisms, such as monitoring, evaluation and complaints procedures. The system should have the capacity – in terms of human resources, financing and infrastructure to fulfil its mandate. The starting point for a child protection system is community child-rearing practices, and processes of care. A child protection system must be flexible enough to respond to emerging issues as they arise such as migration, urbanization, unstable political contexts, deteriorating economic indicators and conflict. A rights-based child protection system is accountable and also supposed to be child and family friendly, providing a continuum of protection services from prevention to impact mitigation (UNICEF Malawi, 2011).

1.2 What is child protection?

“Child protection” refers to the prevention and response to violence, exploitation and abuse of children, including emotional, physical and sexual violence, trafficking of children, child labour, child marriage and neglect of children. Child protection also involves reaching out to children who are at risk of abuse and vulnerable to specific threats, such as those that do not have family care, living or working on the streets, in institutional care, or in conflict with the law.¹

¹ UNICEF, (2014), Ending Violence against Children: Six Strategies for Action, New York, UNICEF.

1.3 Why invest in child protection?

Investing in child protection is not only a legal and moral obligation, it is also smart economics. Children that are healthy, safe and protected often perform better in school and are more likely to contribute to the socio-economic development of a country.

Violence against children has short, medium and long-term economic costs that are borne by the child, the community and the country as a whole. Several studies have shown that the direct and indirect economic costs of child abuse across health, social welfare and criminal justice systems are significant.² For example, a World Bank (2011) study found that aggregate life time social and economic costs of child marriage can be as high as 27% of Malawi’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP).³ Child marriage affects the emotional, physical and psychological wellbeing of the child. It also contributes to high fertility, exacerbating the problem of rapid population growth by pushing girls into an early reproductive role.⁴

² A 2015 UNICEF study in Ghana estimated the annual cost of child abuse at US\$319 million. Direct costs constituted welfare, medical and law enforcement. Indirect costs related to the incarceration of offenders who were abused as children. Life-long costs were linked to chronic illnesses and loss of productivity/earning capacity experienced by victims of child abuse.

³ Chaaban J. & Cunningham W., (2011), Measuring the Economic Gain of Investing in Girls- The Girl Effect Dividend [Policy Research Working Paper 5753], New York, World Bank

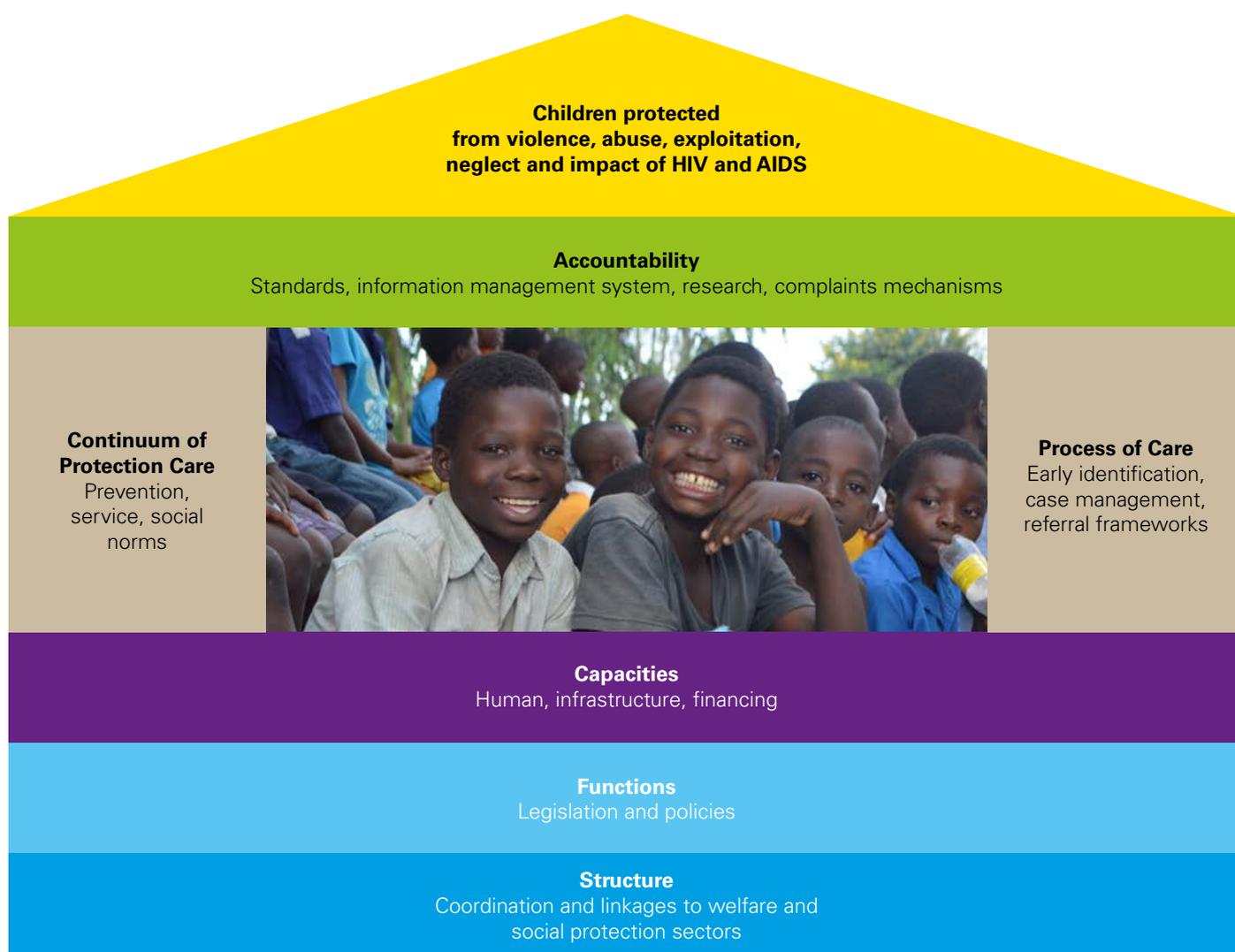
⁴ At 42%, Malawi has one of the highest prevalence rates of child marriage, which is higher than the sub-Saharan Africa average of 37%.

In addition to upholding human dignity and protecting rights enshrined in the national Constitution, investing in child protection is foundational to reducing negative – often lifelong – impacts on the well-being of children. Neuro-scientific explanations and empirical evidence clearly indicates the association of violence with negative outcomes related to physical and mental health, risky behaviors, victimization and perpetration of violence, and poor learning outcomes.⁵

⁵ Government of Malawi, (2014), Violence against Children and Young Women in Malawi, Findings from a National Survey 2013 (VACS).

Investing in child protection is not only a legal and moral obligation, it is also smart economics.

The Malawi Child Protection System



Source: Malawi Child Protection Strategy 2012-2016, UNICEF 2012.

PART 2 CHILD PROTECTION IN MALAWI

2.1 Child protection situation analysis

Although the Government of Malawi (GoM) has made steady progress to ensure that all children live in a safe and protective environment, there remains significant work to be done. High rates of violence against children persist, from early childhood through into adolescence. As highlighted in the Malawi Violence against Children Survey (VACS) Report (2013), about 42% of females and 66% of males experience physical violence. At the same time about 21% of females and 14% of males experience sexual violence in childhood. Violence is commonly inflicted on children by their parents and carers in the name of discipline, with around 70% of children aged 2 to 4 years old experiencing violent discipline.

Box 2: Violence against children statistics

- 71% of children aged 3 to 4 years old have experienced violent discipline, with 6% experiencing severe physical punishment
- 34% of children under the age of 5 are living with a mother who is a victim of intimate partner violence
- 46% of girls are married before 18 and 9% before 15
- 42% of females and 66% of males experienced physical violence in their childhood

Sources: VACS (2013) and MDHS (2015)



VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IS PREVENTABLE

#ENDviolence against children in Malawi

The Government of Malawi has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and committed to take 'all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to prevent and respond to all forms of physical or mental violence, maltreatment, abuse, neglect and exploitation affecting children'.



Sadly, violence is a familiar face in the lives of children and adolescents in Malawi

The majority of children in Malawi aged 2-4 years experience violent discipline.



71.4%



47.5%¹

Almost half of children under 2 years old in Malawi experience violent discipline.

Over one-third of children under 4 years old are living with a mother experiencing intimate partner violence.



33.7%²

A RENEWED CALL TO ACTION FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF MALAWI AND ALL MALAWIANS TO:

-  **Speak up** about the all-too-familiar faces of childhood violence
-  **Acknowledge** the extent of violence against children and its devastating impacts on individuals, communities and ultimately the country
-  **Intensify** efforts to end violence against children

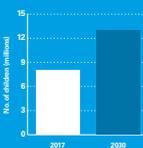


GIRLS & BOYS IN MALAWI EXPERIENCE VIOLENCE ACROSS ALL STAGES OF CHILDHOOD, in diverse settings, and often at the hands of the trusted individuals with whom they interact on a daily basis.

8 million is the number of children below 18 years estimated to live in Malawi, constituting 47% of the total population.



47%



The number of children in Malawi is expected to increase to over **13 million by 2030**

1- UNICEF A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents, 2017.
2- MICS Survey of 2014.
3- Source: <http://www.nso.malawi.mw/indicators/population-projections>, MAF0115473, Population projections for Malawi (2017-2030)

Everyone has a responsibility to protect children.

Learn more at: www.unicef.org/endviolence

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Source: UNICEF Malawi, 2017

Nearly one out of every two girls are married before 18. As elsewhere, the drivers of child marriage are economic, political and social - including poverty, socio-economic status of girls and women, cultural and religious values and peer pressure. Early pregnancies are also rife. About one in three girls will have borne a child by age 18.⁶

Over a third of children under the age five are living with a mother who is a victim of intimate partner violence and one-third of children (aged 13 to 17 years) witness violence in the home.⁷ Violence against women and children is in many cases intertwined. Violence which affects women is also likely to negatively impact on their children. Much of this violence has clear gendered distinctions, driven by gender inequalities and norms in communities and schools.

⁶ Malawi Demographic Health Survey (MDHS), 2015/16 and VACS 2013.

⁷ Government of Malawi & UNICEF (2014), Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), Lilongwe.

2.2 Child protection policy and strategic frameworks

The GoM has several laws, policies and strategies related to child protection (Box 3). Unfortunately, most legal and policy commitments have not been accompanied by allocation of adequate resources to ensure their full implementation. The yawning gap between the making of policies and their full implementation has been echoed by the Committee on the Rights of Child⁸. However, the MGDS III (2017-2022) recognizes that investing in child protection is key to achieving inclusive, resilient and sustainable development in Malawi.

⁸ In the concluding observations on the combined third to fifth periodic reports in 2017, the Committee made specific recommendations to the Government of Malawi regarding allocation of resources to ensure fulfillment of children's rights.

Box 3: Selected child protection related legislation, policies and plans

- Child Care, Protection and Justice Act (CCPJA) (2010)
- National Registration Act (2010)
- Gender Equality Act (2013)
- Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act (2015)
- Trafficking in Persons Act (2015)
- National Plan of Action for Vulnerable Children (2015-2019)
- National Plan of Action to Combat Gender Based Violence (2016-2021)
- National Strategy to End Child Marriage (2018)
- National Child Policy (finalized 2017, pending Cabinet approval)

2.3 Child protection institutional framework

The MoGCDSW is the lead Ministry on child protection issues. It is also the secretariat for the Children, Youth, Gender and Sports Sector Working Group which coordinate national plans on children. The Ministry also facilitated the establishment of a technical working group (TWG) on Child Affairs. The TWG meet quarterly to discuss several child-wellbeing related issues including planning and coordination of child protection interventions. Due to under resourcing, the MoGCDSW is unable to fully coordinate child protection programmes throughout the country. There is also a gap with respect to an overarching national high-level multi-sectoral coordinating body for children's issues responsible for providing policy guidance to Government and promoting children's rights at a higher level. At sub-national level, the Government has put in place child protection committees, coordinated by District Social Welfare Officers. Often these officers operate without a budget. District Social Welfare Officers are supported by child protection workers at Traditional Authority level, most of whom work on a voluntary basis.



Key Takeaways

- **The Government should ensure that the development of child protection policies and plans is backed by resource allocation in Government budgets. Lack of financial, human and technical resources has been cited by several stakeholders as the main reason for the slow implementation of child protection policies and plans.**
- **There is a need to dedicate resources to child protection data and information systems to inform planning and budgeting. Without timely, relevant and disaggregated child protection data and statistics, it is difficult to effectively plan and budget for child protection.**
- **The Government should establish a multi-sectoral coordination mechanism for policy guidance, decision making and tracking of resource allocation with respect to the various components of the Malawi child protection system.**

PART 3 GOVERNMENT INVESTMENTS IN CHILD PROTECTION

3.1 Child protection budget analysis methodology

The child protection budget analysis study, which informed this budget brief, entailed several steps. The first step was the establishment of a conceptual framework on what should be counted as child protection. A key aspect of this step was to list all possible child protection interventions which should find expression in Government budgets and mapping out potential harms to children. The analysis applied a child protection systems approach in identifying all the various elements which should work together to ensure children live in a protective environment. The second step was to map out all MDAs responsible for a given component of the Malawi Child Protection system. The next step involved linking of harms to children and possible child protection interventions to specific MDAs with a mandate to deliver on a specific aspect of a child protection system. This is shown in Annex 1 at the end. Fourth, based on the above information, a line by line review of PBBs for each of the selected MDAs was conducted to identify direct and indirect child protection budget lines. The budget lines were tagged and data was entered into an Excel spreadsheet.

Working definitions for direct and indirect budget lines were developed. Direct budget lines were defined as those that are almost and or wholly aimed at prevention and response to abuse, neglect and other forms of violence against children. Indirect budgets were defined as those lines that only contribute to the attainment of child protection objectives, but have other non-child protection objectives. The next step was

to apportion specific components of indirect budgets to child protection. The logic for this was that simply adding direct and indirect budget lines was tantamount to exaggerating budget allocations to child protection.

Unfortunately, attempts to apportion indirect budgets to get exact figures on how much the Government is spending on child protection was unsuccessful. The exercise proved difficult due to lack of data required to apportion budgets to child protection such as service utilization, cases handled by different MDAs, staff deployment plans and latest data on demand for child protection services. Therefore direct (visible budget lines which are exclusively for child protection) and indirect budget lines were analysed independently to measure size, trends, allocative efficiency and composition of budgets using a child protection lens. Visible budget lines were used as the proxy indicator of Government's true commitment to child protection. Annex 2 provide a list of both direct and indirect child protection-related budgets. Additional analysis was carried out to measure size of spending in relation to total Government budget, total ministerial budget and Gross Domestic Product (GDP).



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3.2 Visibility of child protection in Government budgets

Child protection is largely invisible in PBBs of all relevant MDAs. A detailed review of PBBs of all mapped out MDAs with some child protection responsibilities⁹ (listed in Annex I), shows that only two have identifiable child protection budget lines: MoGCDSW and the Judiciary. The MoGCDSW is the lead agency for child protection. The “protection of women and children” is at the core of its mandate. Within the MoGCDSW, two direct budget lines on child protection were identified: “Primary Child Protection Services” and “Probation and Rehabilitation Services.” Under the Judiciary, the “Child Justice Court” was identified as the only visible child protection-related budget line. This is a specialized Magistrates Court that serves children in conflict with the law and in need of care and protection. Established under Section 132 of the Child Care, Protection and Justice Act of 2010, the Child Justice Court is subordinate to the High Court.

The invisibility of child protection is evidenced by its poor articulation in PBBs. There are several pertinent child protection issues in Malawi that have not been mentioned at all in the PBBs for the MoGCDSW for the past two years. These include child marriage, children living or working on the streets, and children without appropriate care. Given the high incidence of attacks on children living with albinism, one would have also

expected such issues to be highlighted in PBBs for the Malawi Police Service and the Malawi Human Rights Commission.

Subsequently, there are no specific targets and performance indicators on several pertinent child protection issues in Malawi in PBBs of most MDAs. In the financial year 2017/18, the only child protection-related indicators in the PBB were on child participation and child rights systems.¹⁰ Although not specific to child protection, another related indicator on the “number of people oriented on how to promote child friendly initiatives at district level” was included in financial year 2018/19. Poor articulation of child protection in the PBBs of MDAs is partly because the matter is not well understood by some planners and budget makers. The Ministry of Labour, Youth, Sports and Manpower Development should, however, be commended for including a target to combat child labour. Unfortunately, there is no identifiable budget line item to back this target.

Overall, available evidence seems to suggest a huge gap between the development of policies, plans and their expression in Government budgets. If not budgeted for, then most child protection commitments will remain empty promises, with key elements of the Malawi child protection system remaining underfunded. The situation is also worsened by the reality that very little has been done to make a strong case for increased investments in child protection.

⁹ MDAs whose budgets were reviewed include the MoGCDSW, Malawi Police Service, Malawi Human Rights Commission, National Registration Bureau, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Judiciary and National Local Government Finance Committee.

¹⁰ The indicator is “number of districts with strengthened child participation systems and number of districts with functional child rights systems.”

Key Takeaway

- **Considering that child protection issues are not well articulated in PBBs, each MDA with child protection responsibilities should deliberately formulate targets and performance indicators on child protection matters relevant to them.**

3.3 How much is the Government of Malawi spending on child protection?

In financial year 2018/19, a total budget of MK993 million was identifiable as child protection specific, up from MK820 million in 2017/18 (Figure 1). This constitutes about 21% increase in nominal terms and 9% in real terms. The visible child protection share of the total budget is equivalent to 0.068% of the 2018/19 total Government budget and about 0.017% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Malawi. The total allocation translates to approximately MK100 (US\$0.14) per child per year. The visible allocation to child protection is about 180 times smaller than the MK183 billion allocated to payment of interest on debt in financial year 2018/19.

Some resources that could be used for child protection are probably hidden in several indirect budget lines in various MDAs. After a thorough review of the 2018/19 PBB, about 17 indirect budget lines, with a cumulative total budget of MK26 billion, were found which could possibly contribute to child protection, up from MK27 billion in 2017/18. Due to lack of data, it is not clear what is the exact amount that could be apportioned to child protection from the total indirect budgets. These indirect budget lines are listed in Annex 2. Examples include “human rights promotion and protection” under the Malawi Human Rights Commission; “Community mobilization and capacity building” under the Ministry of Civic Education, Culture and Community Development; and “National Registration & ID” under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

In nearly all the 10 Districts Council Budgets reviewed for financial year 2017, none had a child protection specific budget line, despite the global trend towards fiscal decentralization. Due to the very small size of budget especially to the MoGCDSW, it is difficult for the Ministry to further sub-divide allocations amongst all districts. It is also not clear how much (if any) of the resources towards the “Gender sector” (MK420 million) channelled to District Councils via the National Local Government Finance Committee are for child protection.

Figure 1: Visible Child Protection Budgets in MK millions

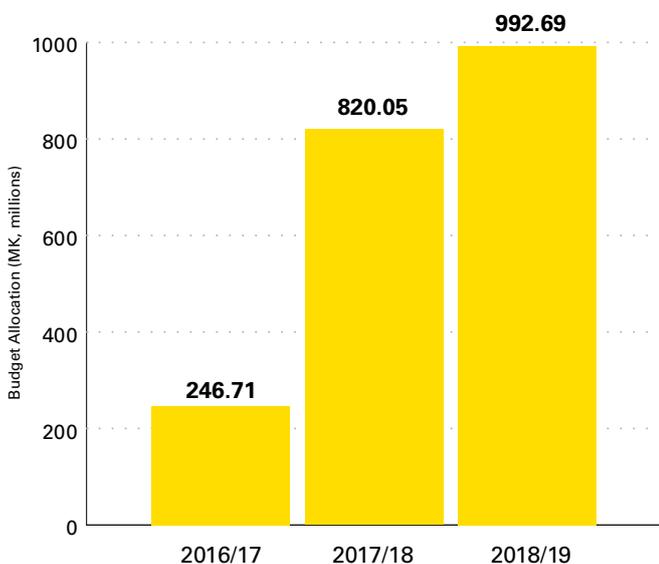
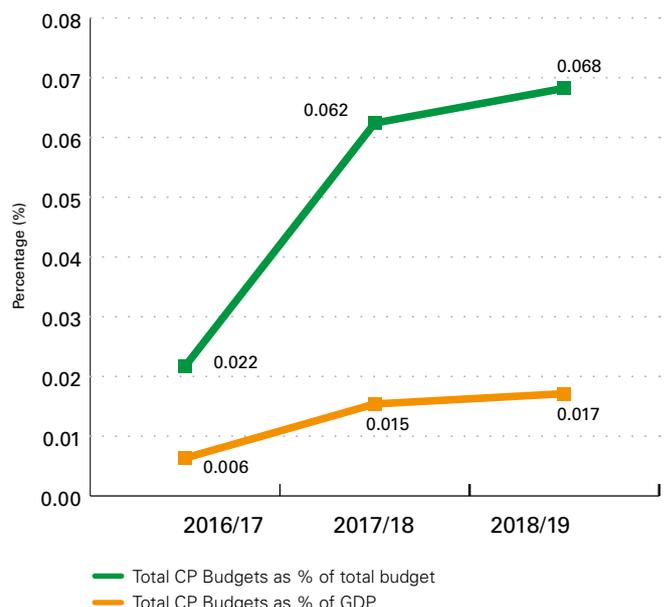


Figure 2: Visible Child Protection Budgets as a % of Total Budget and GDP



Source: UNICEF, based on data from PBBs

Based on the size of visible child protection budgets, the Government is allocating insufficient resources to address existing child protection concerns in Malawi.

It is however encouraging to note that despite limited resources, the Government has initiated a number of key child protection interventions, which, subject to availability of resources, can be taken to national scale. These include One-Stop Centres, Police Victim Support Units, Children’s Corners, Child Justice Courts, and the Child Protection Management Information System.

Child protection ranks among the lowest as a share of the budget for the MoGCDSW.

In the 2018/19 financial year, visible child protection budget lines amounted to less than 5% of the MoGCDSW’s budget. This was a major decline from the previous year when it was 16% of the budget (Figure 3). However, it is important to note that in absolute terms, visible child protection budgets have trended upwards in recent years. Primary child protection services account for the largest increase, having leaped from MK112 million in 2016/17 to MK842 million in 2018/19. This amounts to slightly over 500% increase in nominal terms, and 35% over a three-year period. The huge increase in the budget for ‘Management and Administration’ is mainly because of a huge donor injection of about MK11 billion for the coordination of the Social Cash Transfer Program (SCTP).

Budget allocations to child protection reflect low expenditure ceilings to “social development” ministries such as the MoGCDSW.

The total budget for the MoGCDSW has barely increased since 2015 in both nominal and real terms. The nominal increase of the ministerial vote from MK4.5 billion in 2017/18 to MK15 billion in 2018/19 is almost exclusively driven by donors as mentioned above (Figure 4). The Government’s share of the MoGCDSW budget is approximately MK4.4 billion, down from MK4.5 billion in financial year 2017/18.

Key Takeaways

- **There is need to make an investment case for the Government of Malawi to increase spending on child protection.**
- **Budget ceilings for MDAs, such as MoGCDSW, and allocations to child protection related programs should be informed by cost estimates in relevant sector and child focused plans such as National Plan of Action for Vulnerable Children.**

Figure 3: Program composition of MoGCDSW Budget in MK Millions

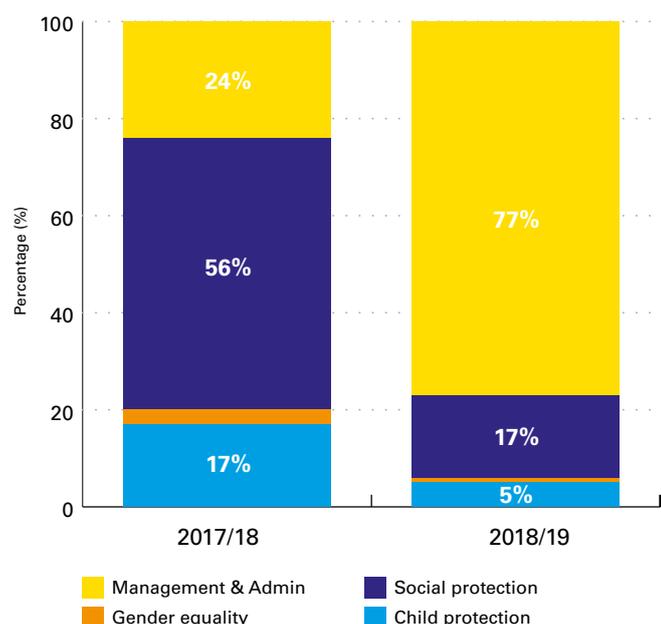
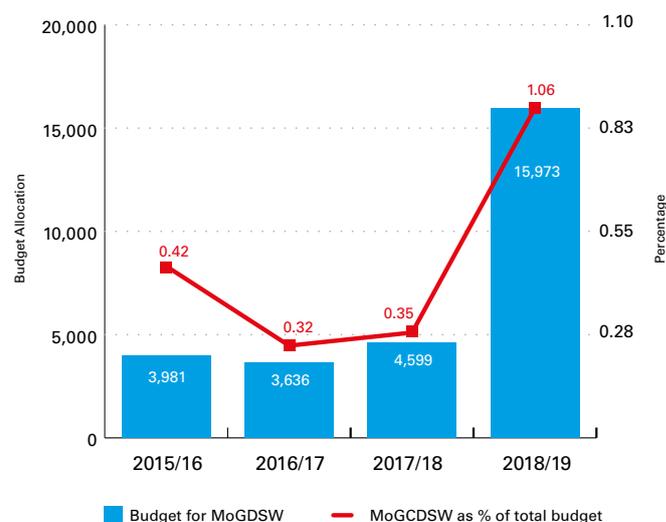


Figure 4: Trends in Budget Allocations to MoGCDSW in MK millions



Source: UNICEF, based on data from Draft 2018/19 PBB

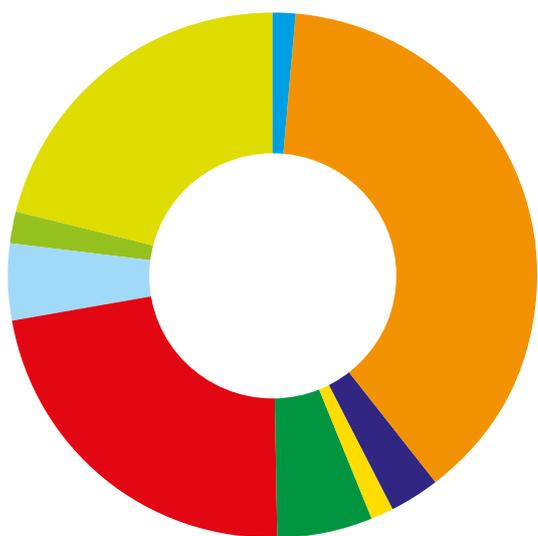
Source: UNICEF, based on data from PBBs and Appropriation Bills

3.4 Composition of child protection budgets

There is limited disaggregation of both direct and indirect child protection budgets, which makes it difficult to analyse the composition of allocations. This also prevents assessment of the equity of child protection investments. For example, it is impossible to measure how much of the budget transferred to the “Gender sector” via the National Local Governance Finance Committee (NLGFC) goes to support child protection. The budget narrative only shows that part of this budget will be used for “social welfare services.” Child protection services such as case management are usually described as such.

Travel and office supplies consume the majority of the budget line on “child development and protection” (Programme 99, under MoGCDSW). In financial year 2018/19, nearly two thirds (62%) of the budget for the above-mentioned programme was allocated for internal and external travel and office supplies, which has remained stable over the two previous years (Figure 5). This means that there are very limited resources available for services and activities that have a direct impact on children at risk of – or harmed by – violence, including child protection case management, Children’s Corners and specialised aftercare and support.

Figure 5: Composition of Programme 99 ‘Child Development and Protection’ under MoGCDSW (2018/19)



External travel	1.53%
Internal travel	38.17%
Other goods and services	2.95%
Technical services	1.31%
Salaries and allowances	5.83%
Office supplies	22.51%
Maintenance of assets	4.80%
Other	1.96%
Aquisition of fixed assets	20.93%



© UNICEF/Pirozzi

Source: UNICEF, based on 2018/19 Draft PBB

Visible child protection budget lines are predominately for recurrent costs, with a very small fraction allocated to vitally-needed capital spending on child protection services. In financial year 2018/19, around 90% of all visible child protection budgets were allocated to recurrent costs. The impact of this is that crucial and long-term investments to support children at risk such as the establishment of safe houses as prescribed in the Child Care, Justice and Protection Act (CCJPA) of 2010 and reformatory centers have been neglected.

The Child Affairs Department within the MoGCDSW is also under-staffed. The low budget for salaries (6%) for Programme 99 on “Child Development and Protection” under MoGCDSW (2018/19) is reflective of under-staffing within the Child Affairs and Social Welfare Directorates, which have key responsibilities on child protection. In 2017, the Child Affairs Directorate, operated with less than 5 staff members at headquarter level. There is also a general shortage of social workers in Malawi. At the frontline level, Child Protection Workers (essentially para-social workers) deliver services to children and families. Out of a total of 800 Child Protection Workers, only 300 are on payroll. It is crucial the Government of Malawi includes these workers

on the public payroll. At the same time, there is need to scale up professional training and deployment of social workers at all levels of Government.

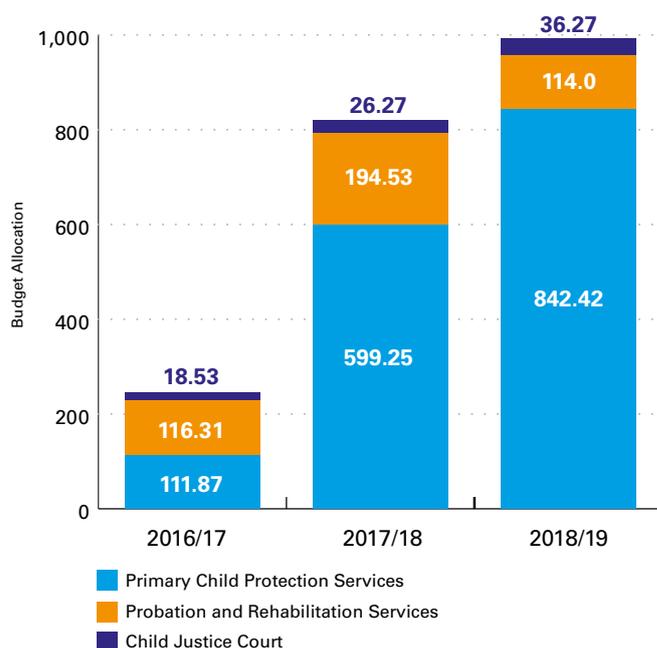
Lack of disaggregation of visible child protection budget lines makes it difficult to know the exact budget allocation to prevention, coordination and other child protection services within the continuum of care. However, the three budget lines read like they are all for response services. This finding corroborates with other studies. A Child Protection Resource Mapping Exercise conducted by the MoGCDSW in 2015, supported by UNICEF, showed that 82% of available resources were for response services, with the remainder going to prevention, coordination, data and information systems.

Budget allocations to Child Justice Courts have grown over time, although insufficient. Between financial years 2016/17 and 2018/19, budget allocations to Child Justice Courts increased by around 40% in nominal terms, from MK26 million to MK36 million and 23% in real terms. The low allocation of resources to the Child Justice Court (as well as other Magistrates’ Courts) is a major factor limiting access to justice and effective response to child-related cases in Malawi.

Figure 6: Composition of Child Protection Budgets by Economic Classification in MK millions



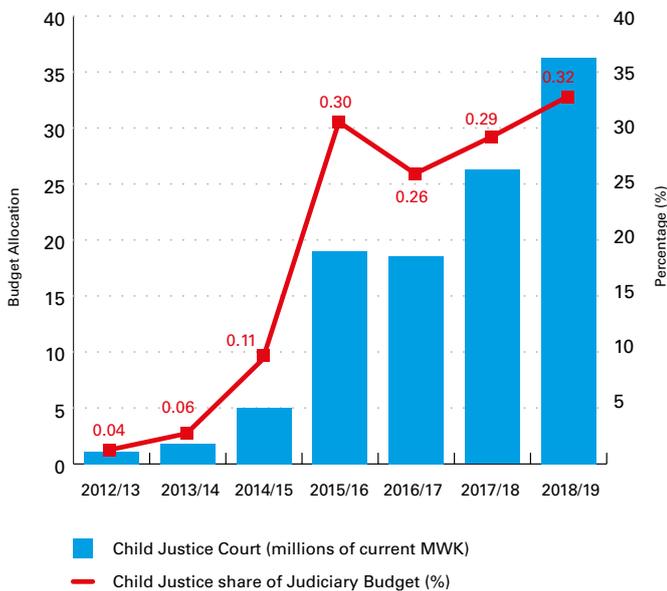
Figure 7: Trends in Visible Budget Allocations to Child Protection in MK Millions



Source: UNICEF, based on Draft 2018/19 PBB

Source: UNICEF, based on data from PBB

Figure 8: Child Justice Court Budget in MK Millions



Source: UNICEF, based on data from PBBs

Key Takeaway

- The Government should prioritize the professionalization of the social service workforce and recruitment of social workers as well as inclusion of the remaining 500 volunteer child protection workers on its payroll.

3.5 Budget Execution

Budget execution challenges have been observed in the implementation of some child protection budgets. Among the issues include delayed disbursements of funds to MDAs due to cash flow problems, protracted procurement and budget cuts. Inevitably, poor budget execution potentially leads to inefficient spending.

Inefficiencies in public spending on child protection also arise from the poor allocation mix. As indicated earlier, spending has been skewed towards recurrent costs, with the majority going to internal travel, office costs and very little left for development activities. For over four years now, capital budget for the Ministry has been very little and for the same projects (Chilwa Reformatory Centre and Mpemba Girls Hostels), ranging between MK50 million and MK150 million. These projects need to be completed so that the Government can start other critical development projects. Additionally, unless the Government ensures programme and geographic equity in allocations, it is difficult to deliver sustainable child protection services to all children in Malawi.

Key Takeaways

- The Government, especially MoGCDSW, should rebalance the composition of child protection budgets, with the aim of committing more resources to program activities and essential capital projects rather than recurrent transactions.
- The Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development should investigate alleged budget execution challenges to determine the extent of the problem and subsequently devise ways to address the same.

PART 4 FINANCING CHILD PROTECTION

4.1 Overall fiscal situation in Malawi

The Government of Malawi is operating under a limited resource envelope amidst huge financing needs across all sectors – including education, health and social welfare.

To illustrate this point, the Government entered the second half of financial year 2017/18 with virtually no fiscal space to increase spending in both social and economic sectors due to underperformance of revenues and grants by about 19%. The Government had projected that revenues and grants in the first half of the financial year 2017/18 would total MK587 billion, but only MK474 billion was collected. Government revenue alone was projected at MK478 billion but the mid-year turnout was MK434 billion, meaning an underperformance by 9.1% (MK44 billion).

Recently, the Government had to reduce its proposed total budget for 2018/19 from MK1.5 trillion tabled before Parliament to MK1.45 trillion due to fiscal space challenges.

Total revenues and grants for 2018/19 financial year are estimated at MK1.26 trillion. This is only 12% higher than the revised estimate of MK1.13 trillion for the 2017/18 financial year. Performance of tax revenue in 2018/19 will likely remain the same as the previous financial year.

To finance the deficit, estimated at 3.8% of GDP in 2018/19, the Government has resorted to domestic borrowing.

While foreign borrowing has declined by 56.3% from 2017/18, domestic borrowing is projected to increase by 473.6% from MK31 billion in 2017/18 (revised estimate) to MK176 billion in 2018/19. Interest on debt payments is projected at MK183 billion in the 2018/19 budget (of which MK168 billion is interest on domestic debt). Interest payments alone are absorbing 11.6% of the national budget.

On-budget support to the Government, including to child protection, has decreased since 2014, following the public finance management scandal that came to light in 2013.

Consequently, several development partners have shifted a significant share of their budgets to off-budget mechanisms. Recent reports however show that there is significant progress by the Government to improve public finance management.

4.2 How is child protection financed in Malawi?

Given overall revenue situation, there is limited fiscal space for the Government to increase spending on child protection. Given fiscal space constraints, ramping up investments in child protection can only be realistically achieved by reprioritizing budget allocations to ensure the various components of the national child protection system are funded from both domestic and international resources. As indicated earlier, the low fiscal space to child protection also mirrors low budget allocations to MoGCDSW.

Most child protection interventions are funded by development partners, including UNICEF. In financial year 2017/18 alone, UNICEF and Plan International alone budgeted a total of MK2.6 billion for child protection, which is nearly 2.5 times larger than what was budgeted for by the Government. A Child Protection Resource Mapping¹¹ undertaken by MoGCDSW in 2015 also showed that about 90% of child protection resources are financed by development partners through off-budget means.¹² However, due to lack of data and weak coordination, it is difficult to capture all NGO and donor funding to this area.

¹¹ UNICEF, 2015.

¹² The mapping analyzed information from 37 organizations. Of these, 14 were Government Ministries and Departments, 15 Local NGOs, 5 International NGOs and 3 FBOs.

Key Takeaways

- **Given fiscal space constraints, the Government must focus on achieving greater value for money including through improved multi-sectoral coordination and better prioritization of resources.**
- **MoGCDSW should call upon all child-focused organizations to register their budgets with the Aid Management Platform in the Ministry of Finance in order to strengthen national systems and provide a more complete picture of external funding.**
- **There should also be efforts to rally development partners to increase funding to child protection.**

Annex 1: List of Ministries, Departments and Agencies responsible for specific elements of a national child protection system

Name Of Mda	Key mandate	Expected child protection responsibilities
Judiciary	To promote and uphold the rule of law, democracy and human rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Child Justice Forum (NCJF) Child Justice Courts Interpretation and application of child protection and other laws relating to children
Ministry of Local Government	To promote and accelerate local governance and participatory democracy thereby attaining social economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination/oversight of sub-national level child protection services Prevention and response to children living and working on the streets
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	To provide quality and relevant education to the Malawian Nation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School wide initiatives (such as Safe School programme) to end violence against children in school settings Implementation of education policies, plans and programmes on child protection Teacher training and discipline related to child protection Awareness/sensitization among communities on child protection issues Assist with case management
Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare	To promote social economic empowerment and protection of women and children using community and welfare approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Protection policy development and implementation Oversight of subnational child protection interventions Professionalization of the social welfare workforce Evidence generation on key child protection issues Monitoring delivery of child protection services and enforcement of standards and good practices Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS) Coordinate national case management services, Children's Corners and Community Victim Support Units (CVSUs) Sensitization and community mobilization campaigns to end violence against children and child marriage Targeted support to children and families at risk Adoption Alternative Care Children in Institutions
Ministry of Home Affairs	To provide safety and security for all persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birth registration and strengthening of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System (CRVS) General safety and security of children Safe migration programs Combat child trafficking
Malawi Police Service	Protection of public safety and rights of all persons in Malawi.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation and prosecution of child abuse, child neglect and sexual and gender-based violence Raising awareness about violence against women and children Police Victim Support Units (PVSUs) One School One Police Officer (OSOPO) initiative
Ministry of Justice And Constitutional Affairs	To contribute to socio-economic development and achieve justice, peace and security in the country in collaboration with justice stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, reform and operationalize child protection laws and regulations Harmonisation of child-related laws in line with national constitution and international laws Implement protocols to provide care and support to child victims and increase access to child-friendly justice
Malawi Human Rights Commission	Lead the protection and promotion of human rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National child rights accountability mechanisms Investigate specific abuses Promote implementation of child protection laws Protect rights of children at risk
Ministry of Health	Ensure improved health and well-being of all citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement clinical guidelines on child maltreatment and sexual violence and exploitation Invest in improved post rape care for girls and boys Injury surveillance systems Parent and caregiver support services Adolescent friendly sexual and reproductive health services

Annex 2: List of child protection related budget Lines in MK millions

Ministry, Department or Agency	Child Protection (CP) related sub-program	2017/18 Revised		2018/19 Estimate	
		Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect
Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability & Social Welfare	Primary Child Protection Services	599.25		842.42	
	Probation and Rehabilitation Services	194.53		114.00	
	Disability Mainstreaming		51.08		50.26
	Social Cash Transfer		1,353.24		1,550.50
	Gender Mainstreaming		4.81		12.00
	Gender Based Violence		15.66		18.00
	ECD		616.44		669.73
The Judiciary	Child Justice Court	26.27		36.27	
Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security	National Registration & ID		10,257.10		870.53
Malawi Human Rights Commission	Human Rights Promotion		274.70		303.40
	Human Rights Protection		10.94		176.15
Ministry of Justice & Constitutional Affairs	Human Rights Support		94.43		52.52
National Local Government Finance Committee	Gender sector		420.00		420.00
Ministry of Labour, Youth, Sports & Manpower Development	Employment & Labour Relations Services (Child Labour related)		590.10		5,477.58
Ministry of ICT	Information & Civic Education		258.66		203.61
Local Development Fund	Social Cash Transfer (SCT)		7,335.38		12,845.16
Ministry of Local Government & Rural Development	Chiefs Administration		31.24		34.85
Ministry of Civic Education, Culture & Community Development	Community Mobilisation and Capacity Building		190.75		389.16
	Expansion of Community based Rehab Program		46.81		-
Ministry of Education, Science & Tech Development	Cross-cutting Activities		490.66		3,673.87
Total CP Related Budget		820.05	22,042.00	992.69	26,747.32

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