

TEAM Girl Malawi

Endline Evaluation Summary

2018-2023



LINK
EDUCATION

Girls'
Education
Challenge



TEAM Girl Malawi Endline Evaluation summary – how did we do?

The UK Aid funded TEAM Girl Malawi project (TEAM) supported 6,300, previously out of school, young people to complete two years of Complementary Basic Education (CBE), also known as non-formal or accelerated education. Girls' Clubs educated them about their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and improved their life skills and social and emotional learning (SEL). TEAM also delivered vocational and financial literacy training.

Participants are now able to read, write, and can understand and apply arithmetic. They have become more confident about making the right decisions for their lives and more resilient to withstand change. Most are earning an income.

The project was designed, delivered and adapted with national and local government staff, communities and primary schools to directly strengthen the government's CBE programme, expand it to meet the needs of marginalised children, including those with disabilities, and ensure graduates have the skills to lead safe, productive and independent lives.

Three Districts



Mchinji, Dedza, Lilongwe

Five Partners

THEATRE
FOR A CHANGE



Supreme



Malawi
Ministry of
Education



105 community-based
learning centres



Who are the TEAM participants?



5,250 girls



1,050 boys



10-19 years old



13% have a disability



25% pregnant/
young mothers



20% married



100% have never been to
school/dropped out

Other project numbers



366 facilitators trained in gender responsive and inclusive methods



2,990 stakeholders trained in child protection



437 headteachers trained in running a safe and inclusive primary school



4,789 girls trained in SRHR and SEL



1,378 young people trained in vocational/ entrepreneurship skills



216 facilitators trained in participatory SRHR curriculum and child protection



18 CBE facilitators became auxiliary teachers



One model for an inclusive CBE with Girls' Clubs and relevant curriculum



One report shared with government on '10-steps to an Inclusive CBE'

Impact for learners



77% can now read and write compared to national average of 13% ¹



77% can now use and understand arithmetic



74% of learners have stronger lifeskills (SEL and SRHR)



99% of girls agreed they would report abuse if they saw it or if they experienced it



88% of girls 'agreed a lot' that their participation in TEAM had improved their future

Impact for communities



94% of households 'agreed a lot' that their child's participation had improved their future



86% of households 'agreed a lot' that the CBE programme will have lasting positive impacts in the community

A national interactive radio drama and community listening clubs helped transform community attitudes and build local support and action for girls' rights to education and freedom from gender based violence.

National impact

- Supports government's focus on foundational literacy and numeracy, commitment to provide 12 years of education, and to reach the most marginalised. ²
- Delivers 'Great Buys' and 'Promising Buys' as listed in World Bank's Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel framework³
- Demonstrates benefits of a twin-track approach – makes primary schools and non-formal structures more inclusive whilst supporting individuals.

¹ Ministry of Education, Malawi

² UNESCO'S RAPID framework

³ Cost-effective Approaches to Improve Global Learning – What does Recent Evidence Tell Us are "Smart Buys" for Improving Learning in Low- and Middle-income Countries?, World Bank, 2003

TEAM Highlights



Teaching and Learning

CBE consisted of two years of education in literacy (local language and English), numeracy and livelihoods. Flexible classes were delivered by local facilitators at a time and place convenient to the learners. Learning Centre Management Committees and Mother Group members provided childcare for young mothers.

Needs of the learners were central, for example learners with disabilities received individual Education Plans, and the curriculum included relevant examples for learners to use in their daily lives. Teaching was targeted at the right level using appropriate language and engaging methods. Facilitators received regular training and mentoring from qualified teachers and district education officers, and structured teaching guides and materials.

According to the Endline Evaluation, all facilitators had integrated gender and inclusive responsive methodologies into their teaching, and reported that they now understood that everyone had a right to education no matter their gender.



“ I am able to read and write with support from the TEAM project. Thanks to the teachers who believed in me that any learner can do it despite any form of disability. I want to be a teacher when I finish school.”
[CBE graduate].”

Wellbeing



93%

of girls reported that barriers to learning had been tackled

74%

improved their lifeskills (sexual reproductive health , self-esteem and self-confidence)

“Ensuring girls are safe and protected increases their wellbeing, participation and learning outcomes, especially for girls who face multiple barriers, such as poverty, disability or other marginalisation factors. Protecting girls and providing them with lifeskills and SRHR is key to tackle barriers to education such as unintended pregnancies and early marriages.”

[Page 11, Final Reflections, GEC]

Once a week teachers delivered lifeskills classes in Girls' Clubs through participatory and drama-based approaches, building social emotional skills and knowledge in sexual reproductive health and rights. Learners grew in resilience and self-confidence. These classes were fun, using role-play, songs and games.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

98%

of girls agree that they know where to report abuse

94%

of girls believe they would be supported if they reported abuse

“Many young people in the community are now able to read and write and girls are now depending on themselves because of the soap, shoe, and milk making skills. Communities are aware of safeguarding issues. There is good parental support to learners that have transitioned to primary school.”

[CBE Facilitator]

Increased awareness of rights, multiple reporting pathways, strengthened district-based mechanisms, and regular psychosocial counselling and follow up ensured vulnerable young people were safe and supported. Community-based ‘Radio Listening Clubs’ linked to a nationally broadcast interactive radio drama provided a dedicated space for parents and care-givers to learn, share their thoughts, and take a more proactive role in child protection.



Beyond CBE

After two years of CBE and Girls' Clubs, participants could choose from three pathways:



Primary school (Standard 5) for those under 16 years old.



Vocational training – sewing, barbering and business management skills



Entrepreneurship training – financial & business skills, and the ability to join village savings and loan groups (over 18 years old)

1,262

transitioned to primary schools

1,115

transitioned to vocational training

1,902

transitioned to entrepreneurship skills

“We learnt sewing skills after we finished CBE. We formulated a group of eight girls and we are able to continue with sewing ...We sew different things that we learnt during our training like pads, bags, dresses, and we sell them to the people in the village and make money to buy other things.”
[CBE graduate]



Inclusion

The TEAM project embedded inclusion throughout its design, with a specific strategy to support learners with disabilities. For example, the vocational training added a day of inclusive education in its programme which was led by a government Special Needs Education teacher; learners were given Individual Education Plans so specific needs could be met at CBE and Girls' Clubs; the facilitator training guides included sections on how to meet the needs of all learners; and partnership with local disabled people's organisations ensured the appropriate support was put in place.



“Among the things I do when I come to this centre is to listen, support and observe conduct of our [teachers] as they work with children. I want our area to develop and, as a leader, I admire other areas whose children are advancing in education and not facing any abuse [enabling them to succeed in education].”

[Traditional leader]

529

Learners provided with assistive devices

324

Individual Education Plans for learners with specific needs



Community and government engagement increased sustainability



Girls and MoE officials found the most valuable [activities] to be reading, writing and numeracy at CBE, vocational training and life skills. MoE officials felt that TEAM was a model worth following. One district official suggested that their own budget would be better spent “to emulate Link.” Another official reported that learning about effective resource allocation “is a continuous process we can learn from TEAM

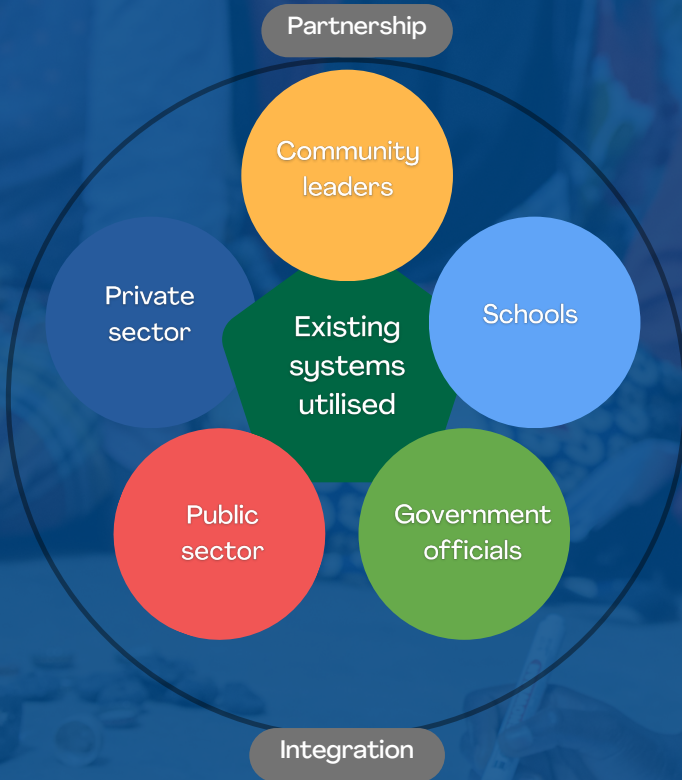
[External Evaluation Endline report]

Community members selected, encouraged and protected participants; chose, renovated and managed the learning centres; and became active primary school management committee members.

Communities and government officers at local and national level provided input to the design, delivery, monitoring and adaptation ensuring project relevance and that successes are sustained.

Ministry of Education (MoE) officials were familiar with the project and indicated the ministry is interested in scaling up CBE across Malawi. Close partnership with government ministries and involvement in Technical Working Groups at national level positioned TEAM Girl Malawi to influence relevant CBE policy at national level including through organising the first CBE Conference in Malawi.

Did TEAM offer value for money?



According to the GEC Fund Manager, the project offered good value for money. Project activities were relevant, with a strong focus on equity, particularly CBE. Highly marginalised girls were selected through working closely with communities and ensuring girls with disabilities were included. The project had strong findings, including improved community attitudes, and demonstrated good efficiencies and adaptive management.

TEAM Girl Malawi utilised existing systems and structures at community and national levels, working closely with community leaders, schools and government officials to maximise the impact and deliver a quality and inclusive education for marginalised girls. The project also built linkages with other public and private sectors – such as health, labour, sports, gender, agriculture – to create sustainable solutions that addressed the multiple barriers to learning faced by marginalised girls. Religious and cultural factors affecting education and communities were also considered, e.g. market days and prayer days. During the Endline Evaluation these integration systems were seen to have achieved strong value for money.

The drivers of success



Partnerships: worked alongside national education programmes, district education and welfare officers, primary schools, disability organisations, mother groups, village leaders and local businesses to holistically support learners. e.g. facilitators and community members conducted home follow-ups on absenteeism and mapped possible solutions; disability organisations and government departments conducted assessments and developed support networks.



Community-driven: built on community knowledge and vision to identify participants and networks; community-managed learning centres ensured spaces were safe, appropriate and accessible; utilising community resources kept costs low; child-care provided by mother groups enabled young mothers or carers to attend; community messaging promoted value of education and child protection.



Safety and protection: comprehensive community-led safeguarding systems involved girls, boys, parents, husbands, facilitators, schools, village leaders and district teams ensuring learners felt safe and supported.



Adaptive and flexible: an enabling, inclusive environment ensured all participants succeeded e.g. differentiated learning plans for children with disabilities; facilitator guides that focused on inclusion and relevance; class times negotiated around learners' other responsibilities; and continuous listening to challenges, reflection and responding to needs.



Value for money: worked within existing systems and structures at all levels including government, civil society, and community-based; established innovative linkages for more efficient delivery such as between informal community structures and the District Social Welfare Office/ Child Protection Officers; and used data to drive evidence-based adaptive management.



Building agency: strengthened foundational learning and self-esteem, decision-making and business skills supporting learners to choose their next steps; nurtured motivation by recognising learners' own visions and abilities whilst offering safe pathways.

Recommendations on delivering quality education projects for marginalised girls



Identify specific barriers and challenges that girls face in accessing and completing quality education in different contexts, and design interventions that address these.



Engage with local communities, especially parents, teachers, and religious and traditional leaders, to raise awareness and support for girls' education and to challenge harmful social norms and practices that limit their opportunities.



Collaborate with other stakeholders - governments, civil society organisations, private sector, media, donors - to leverage resources, expertise, and influence to create an enabling environment for girls' education.



Monitor and evaluate the impact and cost-effectiveness of the programme and use the evidence to inform decision-making, advocacy, and scaling-up of successful practices.



www.linkeducation.org.uk



@LinkEducationUK



@LinkEducationInt

Harold Kuombola - Country Director Malawi
Email - h.kuombola@linkedmalawi.org

© 2024 Link Education International