



MALAWI

Accelerating Girls Education: Focusing on Access, Retention and Learning

Context

Educating girls has enormous social and economic returns and has been identified as a primary means toward national development on all fronts in Malawi.

Indeed, one of the strategic objectives of the government underlines the need to **increase access to and completion of inclusive quality primary and secondary education**, where only 49% of girls finish their primary education.

It also wants to improve access to informal and formal learning for out of school adolescent girls and young women. Education is also integral to **improved health and nutrition as it enables greater access to information and knowledge** and reduces early marriage and childbearing.

Our solution

In this context, UNICEF will give a **voice and prioritize girls** in the education system. The girls will receive specific adjustments, such as **small study groups, remedial lessons, or revision sessions** that will increase the quality of their learning.

Cross-disciplinary skills will also be put in place such as **leadership and negotiation skills or public speaking**.

Girls will also be able to express themselves through thematic conferences on the issues they encounter, and will be **involved in the life of their school**, by influencing School Management Committees.



UNICEF key actions



- The project will be located in Kasungu, Nsanje, Phalombe and Machinga and will reach at least 50,000 adolescent girls from 100 schools
- Together with local authorities and schools UNICEF will develop: girls study circles, remedial lessons, girls life skills boot camp, annual girls conferences, girl for girl groups at school
- Particular attention will be paid to menstrual hygiene management, which is still a factor in the exclusion of girls from school. Girls will no longer be stigmatized, miss school during their period and will have the same opportunities as boys

Story from the field

When her father suddenly died in 2007, Esmie Mwenyekaka lost hope for a better future. All of a sudden, life turned upside down. Esmie had to leave the comfort of town and embrace village life at M'balula. **The village community pressurized her to marry early as a solution to her poverty.**

"There were a lot of men who came looking for girls to marry. When things reached unbearable levels, I ran away from my father's village and sought refuge at my aunt's home. **I received help from UNICEF and was able to reintegrate school,** even though I had missed a few months. This was the turning point in my life. From that moment, everything flowed well, life became easier, and I knew better things were coming."

Esmie is now a role model in her community and is often used as an example to educate other girls on the importance of remaining in school.



Financing examples

50,000 €

542 girls receive improved learning outcomes through peer support and remedial classes

300,000 €

2,931 girls learn transferable skills (coaching, negotiation, public speaking) and improve their skills in technology, science, engineering and mathematics

925,000 €

Safe rooms will be established in 100 schools. They will be equipped with sanitary pads, towels, pain killers, water and soap benefiting 9,000 girls over 5 years



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