



FINAL REPORT

Gender Equality in Education Project (GEEP)

***Lessons Learnt in Malawi
Mentoring Process and Practice
2006-2008***

September 2008

Abbreviations

AAM	Action Aid International Malawi
AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
CEF	Commonwealth Education Fund
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSCQBE	Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
EFA	Education For All
FAWEMA	Forum for African Women Educationists in Malawi
GABLE	Girls Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education
GEEP	Gender Equality in Education Project
HIV	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus
MANEB	Malawi National Examination Board
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MGDS	Malawi Growth Development Strategy
MWCD	Ministry of Women and Child Development
NSO	National Statistical Office
PODCAM	Parents of Disabled Children Association of Malawi
SAFE	Student Alliance for Female Education
SIP	School Implementation Plan
TWR	Trans World Radio
YONECO	Youth Network for Counseling

Acknowledgements

Documenting of country level Commonwealth Education Fund – Gender Equality in Education Project (CEF GEEP), is one of the expected outputs of the project itself, which was designed to strengthen interventions by Civil Society Education Coalitions to adopt gender sensitive approaches in their programs as well as developing strategies to address inequalities and disparities in the education system. In Malawi the project was managed through Action Aid International Malawi (AAIM) with overall support from the Commonwealth Education Fund in UK. The project used the Mentoring approach as an innovative approach to gender mainstreaming.

Action Aid International Malawi acknowledges the work done and relationships built amongst all those who were involved from the inception to the final conclusion of Gender Equality in Education Project (GEEP). In particular special tribute is paid to the following CEF GEEP Partners in Malawi: CSCQBE, CCAP Synod of Livingstonia, FAWEMA, TWR, PODCAM and YONECO for their commitment and role towards promotion of quality education and advocating for gender equality in education. Their written and verbal inputs, to the documentation process is highly valued as this contributed in the shaping up of this report.

The inputs by the Gender Mentor, Esnath Kalyati to clarify technical issues and the overall coordination variously by Clara Ndovie the CEF Coordinator and Julie Juma, Education Theme Coordinator at Action Aid Malawi are acknowledged.

Special recognition and gratitude are extended to Esther Mede, the consultant, for documenting a comprehensive and a well thought out report.

The overall technical and financial support through CEF GEEP Management in UK, is greatly appreciated, particularly the GEEP Project Manager, Oley Dibba-Wadda and Sheila Aikman for respectively giving direction to the process and the final review of the documentation.

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	Page	4
1.1	The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) -----		4
1.2	The Gender Equality in Education Project (GEEP) -----		4
1.3	CEF/GEEP in Malawi -----		5
2.0	Objectives of this Country-Specific Final Report	Page	5
3.0	Background	Page	5
3.1	Mentoring in the Global Context -----		5
3.2	Gender Equality in the Global Context -----		6
3.3	Education in Malawi -----		7
4.0	Issues Addressed By GEEP	Page	8
5.0	Malawi's CEF/GEEP Process: Review of Project Activities	Page	9
5.1	Preparatory Stage -----		9
5.2	Implementation Strategies -----		10
5.3	Partnerships/Coalitions/Alliances -----		10
6.0	Assessment of Malawi's CEF/GEEP Mentoring Process	Page	11
6.1	Successes and Achievements -----		11
6.1.1	Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education ---		12
6.1.2	Parents of Disabled Children of Malawi -----		12
6.1.3	Trans World Radio -----		13
6.1.4	CCAP Synod of Livingstonia -----		13
6.1.5	Forum for African Women Educationists in Malawi ---		14
6.1.6	Youth Network for Counseling -----		15
6.2	Challenges -----		15
6.3	Lessons Learnt -----		16
6.4	Best Practices -----		17
6.5	Partner Experiences in Mainstreaming Gender -----		18
6.6	Role and Contribution to Education Sector Policy Reform, especially Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) -----		18
6.7	Experience in Facilitating the Achievement of MDG 3 and --- EFA Goal 5		20
7.0	Recommendations	Page	22
8.0	References	Page	23
9.0	Appendices	Page	23
	A: CEF/GEEP Key Performance Outputs -----		24
	B: Case Study: Contribution by the Malawi Government to Promotion of Girls' Education -----		25
	C: List of People /Partners Visited-----		26

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF)

The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF), initiated in 2002, is a DFID funded programme to 16 low income Commonwealth Countries, jointly managed by Action Aid UK, Oxfam GB, and Save the Children UK. CEF aimed at supporting and strengthening capacities of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) through education coalitions to participate in the formulation of national education policies and influence decisions to ensure quality and equality in education, as well as playing an advocacy role. Such coalitions became partners in the CEF programme.

1.2 The Gender Equality in Education Project (GEEP)

Right from its inception, CEF wanted to ensure that the in-country projects ultimately contributed to the achievement of the Education for All and MDG Goals in Education vis-à-vis the MDG 2 and 3. The mid-term review and evaluation of CEF carried out in 2005 indicated a need to vigorously bring out and address gender issues in its programme, hence the Gender Equality in Education (GEEP). In 2007, the CEF UK at the Commonwealth Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Action Aid offices that are CEF lead agencies in Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya and Malawi, to manage the implementation of the Commonwealth Education Fund Gender Equality in Education Project (CEF/GEEP), under a CEF Gender Project Manager working from Oxfam Head office. GEEP was a pilot project within CEF but independently designed to ensure effective mainstreaming of gender in all CEF activities, address transformation of imbalances of power between women and men, lobby for good quality gender equitable policies, budgets and practices. Implementation of GEEP in the four countries was through civil society education coalitions specifically CEF partners.

A Gender Mentor was contracted in each country to provide appropriate mentoring support and advice to CEF partners, and national education coalitions. Mentoring had been identified as one of the approaches to be used in the GEEP for effective gender mainstreaming. This approach is innovative as it addresses both organizations and institutions including individuals, by enabling self development within their own work environment. In Malawi, a fifteen month consultancy for a Gender Mentor ran from April 2007 to June 2008. The Gender Mentor facilitated and advised CEF partners to ensure inclusion of gender issues in their programs and analysis of the budget process in order to influence and strengthen gender budgeting. However, the CEF/GEEP project was extended to August, 2008 to allow for documentation of successes, challenges and lessons learnt for sharing beyond the CEF/GEEP project.

The project is overseen by the Gender Advisory Group which meets every six months. The project also reports to the CEF UK Management Committee. The project aims at supporting mainly the Civil Society Organizations in the area of Education with special emphasis on gender responsive planning, programming and budgeting.

The selection of Malawi, Ghana, Kenya and Bangladesh was based on: demand to participate from country coordinators / partners, commitment to work on gender issues, existing analysis of gender situation in-country, working relationship between the CEF and Government on gender issues, willingness of CEF to share lessons learnt and existing work on innovative approaches to gender equality in education. Such approaches included gender mainstreaming, gender budget monitoring, working with education and HIV and AIDS and addressing serious issues of poor

quality and inequality in education. Documentation and dissemination of the Mentoring process and practice would be completed by August 2008.

1.3 CEF/GEEP in Malawi

Implementation of the CEF/GEEP project through Mentoring was a process - support approach that enabled Malawi to focus on the theme:

***“Gender Budget Monitoring and Tracking
in the Education Sector within the National Budget”***

CEF/GEEP worked through the Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education (CSCQBE) Secretariat towards engendering the instruments used for tracking budget allocations and expenditures, among other activities like capacity building in gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and monitoring. The Coalition is one of the six CEF partners in Malawi the others being: FAWEMA, Trans World Radio, CCAP Synod of Livingstonia, PODCAM and YONECO (2007). Three key government Ministries of Finance, Women and Child Development and Education Science and Technology became indirect partners by nature of their gender involvement in the project.

2.0 Objectives of this Country-Specific Final Report

1. To document successes, challenges, lessons learnt and best practices of the CEF/GEEP in Malawi for shared learning;
2. To document Malawi’s partner experiences in mainstreaming gender into their programs;
3. To document CEF/GEEP’s role and contribution to gender-based policy dialogue within Malawi’s education sector, especially toward building the capacity of civil society and government in gender budgeting;
4. To document CEF/GEEP Malawi’s experience in facilitating the achievement of MDG Goal 3 and EFA Goal 5 in particular, as well as the MDG and EFA overall goals; and
5. To document and compile recommendations for organizations aspiring to adopt the CEF/GEEP approach and methodology.

The key deliverable of this documentation process is a final narrative report on the work of CEF/GEEP in Malawi. The report seeks to assess the extent to which the project contributed to sustainable processes, management systems and partnerships that show promise in contributing to the attainment of the EFA and MDG goals within the country, particularly as they relate to gender equality. It is anticipated that this assessment will be of interest to project managers, advocates, donors and policymakers committed to greater gender equality within education systems.

3.0 Background

3.1 Mentoring in the Global Context

The word Mentoring has its origins from a Greek mythology when King Odysseus entrusted his son, Telemachus, to a trusted and faithful friend called Mentor, before he embarked on his

famous journey to fight in the Trojan War. The King was absent for almost ten years, and Mentor was responsible for the son's growth and development.

Mentoring has for some time been associated with a mentor being a role model, as someone to look upon. Today mentoring has progressively been used by organisations for management development, human resource development, systems management and individual development. It is all about learning and growth basically adding skills development or culture change, whose spectrum is from trainer-directed to learner-directed. The style of the mentor leans more towards learner directed. The Director of the European Mentoring Centre, has summarized the role of the mentor as follows: "The role of the mentor is to help develop the individual's or a group's potential, capability, judgment and wisdom."

OXFAM GB is one of the organisations that have adopted mentoring as a process for helping someone develop in their current job and also for the future. Accordingly, mentoring is characterized by:

- Focusing on the overall development and aspirations of the learner
- The relationship being professional and also personal to some extent.
- Learners sharing whatever critical issues impact their success
- Being a long- term relationship between mentor and the learner
- The employee's manager is not necessarily a critical partner in the mentoring process but can help by creating a conducive environment for the mentor and learner, e.g. a three way occasional meeting of mentor, learner and manager can prove to be a valuable contribution in terms of personal and organisational development.

Given such background, CEF GEEP in its work with civil society education partners and coalitions, has its thrust in using mentoring as a new approach to mainstreaming of gender in all their programs and projects. This entails working and learning together between the mentor and partners. In addition to mainstreaming gender, GEEP Malawi is also focusing on monitoring and tracking national education budget allocations and expenditures by ensuring that budgets are gender responsive, even at the implementation level.

3.2 Gender Equality in the Global Context

Equality is a concept that has been enshrined in nations' constitutions as one of the fundamental human rights issues, as such gender equality has also become important globally, with the realization that development efforts and achievements are increased by including women and men, girls and boys in a country's development strategy. Gender equality has progressively been recognized and considered as a principle of national policy where state and governments are obliged to ensure full participation of women and girls on the basis of equality with men and boys especially on access of available opportunities. Principles of non-discrimination, affirmative actions, respect for the dignity of women and girls among others are efforts directed towards equity and equality.

However documented research has shown that such efforts through international pronouncements and local instruments advocating for non discrimination and observance of human rights, are continuously being affected by extensive discrimination and inequalities experienced especially by women and girls. The Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals advocating for universal education and gender equality and empowerment, has set time bound targets for the achievement of the goals. In response to these goals, the

establishment of the Commonwealth Education Fund working, with Civil Society Education Coalitions, was one way of ensuring quality education. Therefore GEEP was designed as an initiative to respond to and promote the above mentioned ideals.

3.3 Education in Malawi

The Constitution of Malawi enshrines education as a basic human right and the Government further recognizes education as one of the main drivers towards poverty reduction which is an overarching development policy with the ultimate goal of poverty eradication.

Historically, formal education in Malawi was the domain of missionaries and school attendance was generally limited to those children whose parents had attended mission schools and later on as education facilities expanded, to those who could afford paying school fees. Therefore the numbers that attended school were very few and preference for education was for boys against a negligible number of girls. Boys were deemed to be the bread winners and custodians of family and community traditions hence some formal schooling was necessary for them. Illiteracy levels were generally high and the trend has continued, in that women and girls' literacy rates are much lower than those for boys and men. In the 1990s male literacy increased slightly from 66% to 67% while female literacy decreased dramatically from 44% to 33%.

During the 1990s there had been global recognition that economic growth cannot be achieved without investing heavily into the social sector and that the benefits would trickle down towards poverty alleviation, hence the slogans '*economic growth/poverty reduction with a human face*'? A number of developing countries embarked on programs supported by Social Action Funds and social dimension to economic growth was included into countries' Development Plans as a policy measure. Education as the main catalyst to poverty eradication saw countries abolishing school fees initially at the primary school level.

In Malawi a phased out free primary education for Std 1-4 was introduced between 1990 and 1993 and access to primary education increased. By 1994 Government made primary education from Std 1-8 free, but not compulsory. Enrolment rose dramatically from 1.9 million to over 3 million with a steady increase in girls enrolling in primary school, over the last ten years.¹

Enrolment at the lower primary school level is at par between boys and girls at 50/50, literally achieving gender parity at that level. Other efforts to increase girls enrolment and retention were put in place like the 5 year Girls Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE) project.

Table on Net Enrolment Rates for Girls and Boys aged 6 to 13 ¹

	<u>Male%</u>	<u>Female%</u>
Malawi	77.0	78.0
Southern Region	75.9	76.9
Central Region	75.3	77.7
Northern Region	86.0	86.3
Rural	76.0	78.0
Urban	83.4	82.2

This pattern has been changing due to drop out rates at upper primary school level, Std 5 – 8 which are particularly higher for girls than for boys. There are a number of contributing factors that make girls discontinue schooling, like early marriages, pregnancies, sexual abuse and

¹ Source: NSO. 1998 Malawi Integrated Household Survey

economic exploitation by teachers and older men. This translates to fewer numbers of girls proceeding to secondary and tertiary levels of education. Hence by 2005 Malawi like many other developing countries was not able to meet the gender parity as required by the EFA and MDGs. Anticipating this situation, CEF was established and from 2002 to 2008 supported the 16 poor commonwealth countries with interventions aimed at addressing the education issues and gender gaps identified during the Dakar Conference on Education and the UN Millennium Summit both of which culminated in having universal primary education and gender equality and empowerment being included into goals for EFA and MDGs 2 and 3. GEEP came in midway to strengthen such interventions especially in building capacities of partners through gender mainstreaming.

4.0 Issues Addressed by GEEP

The following were some of the issues identified and addressed in the implementation of GEEP:

- a) Girls' disadvantaged position and limited access to and completion of basic education, consistent lower pass rates for girls compared to those of boys, need for a coherent gender analysis to establish the linkage between the context, the nature of inequalities and other related problems in order to inform project and program development.
- b) The need for CEF partners to systematically carry out gender analysis, gender training, capacity building and networking in their workplaces to avoid focusing on one gender at the expense of the other, promote gender equality and redress gender inequalities and
- c) Removing discriminatory laws, customs, practices and other deep-seated barriers could promote equality of opportunity for both sexes and achievement of equity/equality.

GEEP also aimed at demystifying the gender concepts and terminology by making gender analysis an on-going process to ensure transformation of imbalances of power between women and men. The mentoring approach helped to strengthen interventions to ensure they become part of a wider gender sensitive approaches and strategies to improve equity and equality in education for girls and boys. The approach also helped to emphasize the importance of monitoring and tracking budget allocations and expenditures in the education sector, especially at basic primary school levels.

GEEP, therefore, focused on capacity building and lobby for good quality gender equitable policies, budgets and practices in the partner organizations by using a Mentoring Approach. Mentoring was intended to provide a consistent long term process support to partners to mainstream gender through out their structures and ways of working, to develop and implement good quality gender equitable strategies and plans, carry out high quality monitoring and evaluation on gender equality in education and to document the process and outcomes in order to facilitate learning, sharing, enthusiasm and confidence on gender issues among staff.

The Mentor was not meant to provide answers, or follow through with implementation or set the agenda but to help staff develop capacity to gender mainstream, analyze and develop action plans to redress gender inequalities, monitor and evaluate activities and document gender equality approaches and outcomes by themselves. In the process, the CEF partners were expected to learn and input the knowledge into adoption of good practice and ensure sustainability. The Mentor acts as a catalyst and driver for change in the way an organization and its staff do think- through, plan and implement their work. The Mentor capacitates partners and staff through sustained 'one to one' support, group gender training and discussions. The choice

of a seasoned Mentor with appropriate qualifications and experience in gender/education helped break barriers to access to critical information and hence the Mentor was an asset to the implementation process.

5.0 Malawi's CEF/GEEP Process: Review of Project Activities

5.1 Preparatory Stage

The CEF Project Manager and the CEF Country Coordinator held initial briefing meetings with the Gender Mentor. The Mentor developed an Activity Plan based on the TORs and submitted to the Country Coordinator at Action Aid Malawi. The Mentor's initial activity focus included i) analysis of tools used by the Coalition for monitoring the national budget in the education sector to assess gender sensitivity, ii) undertaking familiarization field visits to CEF partners and iii) examining partners action plans for gender responsiveness. Consultations were held with heads of organizations and program staff.

Findings from the initial probing led to training in a) Gender to facilitate gender mainstreaming and b) Gender Budgeting and Monitoring for knowledge and skills in processing and producing Gender Responsive Budgets. The gender mentor reviewed CEF partners' Work Plans for gender incorporation and these were later used to provide "hands-on" experience during training to illustrate gender mainstreaming and as entry point into gender budgeting.

The five day August 2007 Workshop organized by the Mentor for CEF partners included District Education Networks and representatives from both central and district levels of Government revealed, that although the level of awareness among participants of the gender concerns as they relate to inequalities and discriminatory practices was good, expressions of fear when expressing their expectations, included feelings that "gender brings tension, gender is tokenism to a few women, practicability of gender seen as being elusive, existence of gender in the home and that gender equals women".

The Mentor also reviewed and analyzed the Coalition's Budget Monitoring Report 2006- 2007 and made observations that indicated the gaps in addressing gender issues in budget allocation and sent the comments to CSCQBE for their action. The main challenge was practical application of knowledge gained by partners in ensuring that gender issues, particularly the needs of girls are addressed in their programs.

The Mentor also took advantage of the fact that the Ministries of Finance and Women and Child Development had already exposed planners in government to gender budgeting training and the onus remained with sectors themselves to produce gender sensitive budgets. According to the Ministry of Finance, Education as a Sector has had increased budget allocation just like other social sectors. In addition, the allocation also covers the Universities and the Malawi National Examination Board (MANEB).

The Mentor's quick examination of 2007 -2008 national education budget showed that the Ministry of Education included gender in its activities and the Gender Unit in the Ministry of Education had an allocation for 2006/2007 financial year and a projection of MK1,900,000.00 for 2007/2008. It was suggested that coordination of gender budgeting in Education should be done by an officer in the Planning Section of the Ministry and that the Ministry of Women and

Children should provide technical support, especially those who have undergone mentoring process. The Ministry of Finance invests the HIPIC funds on pro-poor activities like Basic Education and each year, the Ministry of Education like all other Ministries is given a ceiling in the national budget and is left to make decisions on allocations.

5.2 Implementation Strategies

The Mentor adopted a range of strategies to facilitate the building up of the capacity and competency of partners and coalitions and these included:

- Literature Review: Review of relevant documents on CEF and GEEP, revisiting the MDG s on universal education and gender equality and the Empowerment of Women, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS),
- Group Mentoring Training: Group mentoring on Gender mainstreaming and budgeting, Gender training on needs assessment
- Briefings, Discussions and Consultative Meetings: Partner policy briefings, discussions/meetings with CEF partners at all levels, discussions with CSO s and government officials, regular monitoring calls, E-mails and visits, suggestions and advice, sharing of mentoring experience across GEEP, use of Mentoring as a capacity building tool, integration of strategies to promote equality into CEF work
- Monitoring Questionnaires and Visits: Questionnaires were sent to all those who had participated in the gender mainstreaming and gender budget and monitoring training to assess application of knowledge and skills learned and whether participants' understanding of gender issues in education had improved. CEF partners and other stakeholders were visited occasionally to follow up on progress.
- Reports: CEF UK and country office end of program reports, discussions with CEF Coordinators and staff, use of Media both paper and radio.
- Media: Published articles, advocacy messages

5.3 Partnerships/Coalitions/Alliances

The project worked closely with the six CEF partners that included gender- focused / women's and pro-girl education organizations like Forum for African Women Educationists in Malawi (FAWEMA), Coalitions like the Civil Society Coalition for Basic Education (CSCQBE) and District Education Networks, Trans World Radio (TWR), Parents of Disabled Children Association of Malawi (PODCAM), Youth Network and Counseling (YONECO) and CCAP Synod of Livingstonia. Consultations for building Alliances were also made with CIDA, Government Ministries of Finance, Women and Child Development and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (planning department – budget section). The Ministry of Education requested to give all 6 divisional managers an opportunity to be trained in gender analysis, gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting.

6.0 Assessment of Malawi's CEF/GEEP Mentoring Process

The GEEP Mentoring Process stimulated a lot of interest among the CEF partners because of the positive changes that the approach has introduced in the way implementers do things. However, some challenges have been encountered. The CEF partners appear ready to address gender equality in the design, planning, budgeting and implementation of the education for all. CEF partners have revisited their plans to include gender equality issues and these are also included in their monitoring and reporting exercises. Partners' outputs are consistently showing improved understanding of gender ideas and concepts. More implementers in CEF partner projects are involved in Gender responsive budgeting processes in their workplaces. Partners are actively looking for opportunities to use the mentoring approach in their own work.

Although the concept of gender budgeting is just being introduced, those that have gone through the CEF/GEEP Mentoring process are effectively marketing it. The problem of staff turnover may affect internalization and continuity in the CEF/GEEP initiatives. Monitoring and tracking of new ideas is said to be weak in government hence intensifying the mentoring approach in the area of gender responsive budgeting would facilitate internalization of the process. The success of the Mentoring process will be registered when more implementers engage in analysis of Development Plans of their districts as was observed in the CEF/GEEP project of the CCAP Synod, where gender issues affecting girls and boys are being articulated through "social groups" within Schools Improvement Plans. The Ministry of Finance was confident that the Mentoring process will be applied to the 2009/2010 budgeting.

6.1 Successes and Achievements²

- Gender issues affecting boys and girls are being addressed in the Schools Improvement Plans (SIPs)
- District Education Managers, District Education Networks at community levels and partners have provided inputs to the budget monitoring tools which were developed by the CSCQBE's Secretariat
- The Ministry of Finance made available the guidelines on Preparation of Draft Estimates of the Current and Re-current Budget for FY 2008-2009 for gender responsiveness. The Mentor facilitated a Forum at which all CEF partners reviewed and incorporated comments into the Guidelines. The engendered guidelines were then submitted by the AAM Country Director to the Ministry of Finance for endorsement.
- A forum for continued and sustained dialogue has been accepted by Government involving representative members of the Coalition. The gender mentor, the CEF Coordinator and the Government itself. The dialogue started at the beginning of 2008.
- The Media, through the Trans World Radio (TWR) has articulated and integrated gender issues in education in most of their radio programmes. The Mentor has indicated to producers areas requiring improvement.

Some verifiable achievements and successes have been registered by the CEF/GEEP partners involved in the mentoring approaches. A brief account of each CEF partner's / coalition's account of their experiences with the process and what they are already using the approach in their current work and plans is given below.

² Annual Strategic Activity Work Plan, April 2007 – June 2008 by Esnath J. Kalyati, Mentor for Malawi

6.1.1 Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education (CSCQBE)

- CSCQBE as a CEF/GEEP member has seriously interfaced with the Ministry of Education to understand their needs and present these to the Ministry of Finance. CSCQBE conducted a workshop on “coalition building” for its members who are also working with the CEF/GEEP and this helped members understand “what a coalition is” and their roles in the coalition. Through GEEP group mentoring trainings and mentoring visits, alliances have been established with government sectors at various levels whose interest in working for the achievement of gender equality in EFA has been re-kindled. CSCQBE has also formed strong partnerships with Government Ministries of Finance, Education and Women and Children in advocating for gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and gender budget monitoring and tracking in education at national and district levels. A Gender Budgeting Initiative Launch by CSCQBE involved Ministries and Members of Parliament who signed commitments to support the initiative. The GEEP Mentor was requested to comment on the questionnaire that facilitated the commitment by MP s. There is therefore close collaboration and consensus among Ministries and the Civil Society regarding the need for gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting, monitoring and tracking. There is therefore need for seriousness in pursuing this.
- The Ministry of Education has broadened the Bursary Scheme for scholarships to target girls. CSCQBE would like to follow up disbursement of funds from the Ministry to Assemblies and District Education offices by having the District Education Managers monitor and track use of funds allocated by Treasury. Most of the CEF partners’ efforts are focusing on gender and in particular the girl child and the issue of who benefits from the resources allocated to education at various levels and they have been doing this through the mentoring process.
- District Education Networks have been oriented using simplified, user friendly versions of MDGs and are well vest with the goals. District Education Networks under CSCQBE are playing a monitoring role to follow up on use of funds at District level. There is also need to have political leaders especially Members of Parliament understand and appreciate the MDG s to facilitate their commitment to the achievement of these goals as well as those of EFA and in the process be able to support the mentoring process on gender.. CSCQBE would like to lobby for a review of the entry point into the Legislative Assembly in terms of education qualifications that could facilitate comprehension of national and global issues like MDG s and EFA.
- CSCQBE November 2007 publication on “Education For All: Progress, Problems and the Way Forward” has been disseminated to educate/inform people where Malawi stands in the effort to achieve EFA goals. CSCQBE has plans to come up with an “Education Manifesto” to help political aspirants focus on education and pursue the related issues. Such publications would have to be housed in an information center for easy access by the public. The proposed initiatives will require a strong coordinating team in the CSCQBE Secretariat. The Mentoring process could exert great impact in facilitating the organization’s initiatives by enabling mentors to access discussion forums in order to bring out issues and influence formation of informed decisions.

6.1.2 Parents of Disabled Children of Malawi (PODCAM)

- PODCAM observed that most messages on gender and HIV/AIDS are disability unfriendly and illiteracy among parents is a factor that needs to be overcome. Mentoring is said to have helped bring gender issues to the fore front like: (i) Over protection of the girl child-with disability hinder her development, (ii) improved dialogue between spouses has increased male cooperation and support for disadvantaged children, (iii) improved skills and

techniques for supporting the child with disability, (iv) improved advocacy has resulted in increase in the number of girls going to school, (v) improvement in disaggregation of data by gender, (vi) hands-on experience in gender mainstreaming, and (vii) sharing of experiences among branches among other benefits. The Mentoring approach is being applied to other projects and this has facilitated internalization of the mentoring process among programme staff. PODCAM would like to have a Gender and HIV/AIDS policy for the organization and by applying mentoring process, target the District Education Networks and the District Education Managers to advocate for representation of boys and girls with disabilities. Some facilitators of the Youth Clubs in the organization will be trained and exposed to the mentoring approach to facilitate provision of a platform for the children to articulate their problems.

- Teachers of children with disabilities have been trying to setup a Resource Centre. Progress has however been hampered by lack of adequate knowledge about where to access materials for disabled children, inadequate supply of educational materials and insufficient advocacy for action. The Mentoring process should be able to support this effort by giving guidance.

6.1.3 Trans World Radio (TWR)

- TWR indicated that good interpersonal relationship between the Mentor and the Mentored was found to be essential for effective mentoring. The Mentoring process also strengthened sharing of information with PODCAM on issues relating to children with disabilities. The issues informed the radio programs of TWR. The Programme Officer implementing CEF in TWR working together with the gender mentor wrote an article on “The Role of the Radio in Promoting Gender Equality” for publication in a Development in Practice Newsletter by the Programme Resource Centre, at OXFAM GB.

6.1.4 CCAP Synod of Livingstonia

- The Synod wanted to address and correct the gender imbalances that exist due to patriarchal-based differences that assign roles and responsibilities in the community and to defend the theology of equality as one of the core beliefs of the church. Community projects were introduced to mentor members of the various Social Groups to focus on gender analysis, gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting as they formulated the School Implementation Plans (SIPs). Communities are empowered to demand redress of the inequalities. GEEP through SIPs helped to shed more light on gender issues and illustrate how cultural norms/morals can negatively affect girls and the need to protect the girl child.
- The Synod has been analyzing District Education Plans and found that most of these plans did not mention gender except the 2008-2011 Plan for Nkhata Bay District that looked at enrolment in relation to gender. The Synod pointed out inequalities in power, influence, privileges and participation in the society, allocation of national resources to education, special distribution of education resources including female teachers and other inequalities. Influencing the District Education Committees is being taken seriously through meetings like that of 27th August, 2008 aimed at bringing out gender and related education issues.
- The Community Mobilization for Basic Education Project of the CCAP Synod applied the Mentoring approach to the process of preparing School Improvement Projects through the 8 ”Social Groups” (Parents /Teachers Associations, men, women, girls, boys, chiefs, teachers, School Management Committees) of the community. Girls, women and disadvantaged groups (those with disabilities and the elderly) have been given a chance to raise issues and problems affecting them. Social Contracts as a monitoring tool give roles and responsibilities

and help to identify who is benefiting and who is on board in the preparation of the SIP s in the community. By-Laws are prepared to govern achievements on issues.

- In the SIP process of the Synod project, a Rights Based Approach is used by the mentored CEF implementers and communities identify issues/problems like early marriages, lack of women representation in committees, abused girl pupils by teachers and suggest solutions. The Mentoring process is said to have strengthened the implementation of the SIP s and the focus on gender. Outcomes have included increased enrollment of girls, improvement in retention of girls in school, number of pupils entering early marriages has reduced, rare pregnancies in project schools, inclusive representation in committees reflecting improved value attached to girls and women. These outcomes illustrate an effort to achieve Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) on Basic/Primary Education.
- There has been a steady improvement in pupil retention in the CEF/GEEP schools. In Kalowe Zone enrolment in 2006 was 4,988 of which 2,554 were boys and 2,434 girls. In 2007 enrolment rose to 5,282 of which 2,698 were boys and 2, 584 girls. Girls' enrolment was 49% of the total enrolment.
- In Chisenga zone during the year 2006 enrolment was 3,137 but in November 2006 enrolment rose to 3,419 and by November 2007 enrolment rose to 3515. Girls' enrolment and retention has steadily grown to 48.2% of the total enrolment. 1,694 girls were in school in November 2007 out of a total enrolment of 3,515.³
- It is strongly felt that communities' appreciation for gender equality and quality education has resulted in a shared vision and new values being embraced. Creation of opportunities for girls will result in their access to higher education and involvement in decision making. Gender Responsive Budgeting, monitoring and tracking will continue in the Synod and the Mentoring process will facilitate integration of leaders in the SIP process and internalization of the value of education.
- The problem of child abuse in the districts not covered under CEF/GEEP project needs to be addressed and termination of funds was a limiting factor and training on gender had to be slowed down. The Synod would like to expand gender related projects to new areas/ districts although it may be difficult to reach and work in some of the needy areas due to poor terrain.
- The Synod plans to a) partner with organizations like FAWEMA to share lessons learnt regarding gender mainstreaming and girls education, in particular regarding application of the Mentoring process to strengthen capacities in the organization, and b) train "Mother Groups" to facilitate modification or elimination of cultural aspects that disadvantage women and girls in the catchments areas.

6.1.5 Forum for African Women Educationists in Malawi (FAWEMA)

- FAWEMA noted that gender mainstreaming using mentoring process is a good attribute for strengthening organizational capacities in addressing girls' education. The process has helped FAWEMA "to view projects with gender lens and strengthened staff capacity in gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting and monitoring"
- Student Alliance for Female Education (SAFE) and girls' clubs like TUSEME and girls' camps were further strengthened especially when the mentor together with the Gender Project Manager (GPM) and the CEF Coordinator visited the CEF funded SAFE club and participated in the programme of that day. The three acted as role models to the girls and encouraged the girls, who were being empowered through the clubs, to continue addressing their own educational needs, challenge gender stereotypes, negative cultural norms and

³ Community Mobilization for Quality Basic Education Project in Kalowe and Chisenga Education Zones in Chitipa District: Final Project Report Jan,2006 –Dec,2007

inequalities in schools, while motivating them to stay in schools. Thus such process of mentoring is progressively helping FAWEMA to refocus on girls' retention and other gender related issues in education.

6.1.6 Youth Network for Counseling (YONECO)

- In some partner organizations, issues discussed during CEF/GEEP were being addressed in other projects. Advocacy on issues of girls in domestic employment has enabled such girls be allowed to attend school while in employment. Teen mothers are using Drop-in Centers to leave their children in order to have an opportunity to get education. Community support has been instrumental to mobilization of girls. There is need to reach out to more women and girls who are now demanding to be literate. YONECO is working with Population Council to develop a program to facilitate expansion to new areas and the project will adopt the Mentoring system. Role Modeling and Mentoring by professional / experienced women will be used to create an environment for interaction with girls in-and-out of school to help them appreciate what it takes to achieve high goals and encourage continued access to education for better life.

6.2 Challenges

- **Concept of Mentoring:** The application of the concept of Mentoring as a process was new to both the partners and mentors. Again, CEF partners had been implementing the CEF project since 2003 and had already formulated work plans. It was therefore not easy to catch- on the concept immediately. Most CEF partners felt that time allocated to GEEP was short. A longer project life time would have helped the mentoring process input into CEF projects more in skills e.g. in disaggregating of data. This would have also ensured mentoring of a critical mass of personnel in CEF projects that would continue building capacity in the organizations through the process.
- **Governance Issues around the Budget:** The major problem has been differences of timing of: a) preparation of the national budget by Treasury and monitoring and tracking by CSCQBE in relation to b) the cycle of budget formulation by the Ministry of Education to enable CSCQBE in-put into the process.
- **Policy Review:** CSCQBE has been seeking clarification of governance policies related to education but their involvement in policy review is limited. There is need for CSCQBE to be officially represented in the Education Review Committee and they are currently lobbying for this.
- **Coordination of Gender Mainstreaming, Gender Budgeting, Monitoring and Tracking in Education:** At present coordination of gender related initiatives is weak. In order to take gender on board in development, there is need to create and locate in the Ministry of Women and Child Development a Coordination Mechanism with multi /diverse representation of partners to guide and push for action gender related issues in government. The present focus on budgets in the education sector could be an entry point for such coordination.
- **Mainstreaming and Gender Responsive Budgeting:** A stakeholder analysis was carried out on each CEF partner and their action plans for April 2007 –June 2008, to assess their capacities and competencies in gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting in their programs. The analysis revealed that “most staff had not received gender training and for those that were trained, the levels were limited to mere sensitization and partial awareness

training”.⁴ Only few people (4) among those consulted had been trained in gender analysis and programming, but not mainstreaming. Gaps in the Action Plans of partners included lack of clear gender dimensions, knowledge and skills in gender analysis, programming and mainstreaming. Gender Budgeting was a new area and most partners had not yet been exposed to the concept. Some program activities did not show indicators linking objectives and outcomes and their impact on girls and boys. Partners did not seem to understand the processes involved in gendered programs for ensuring equality in education among girls and boys.

- **Children with Special Needs:** The monitoring exercise showed that budget allocation for services for girls and boys with special needs had been declining over years. The identified needs included:
 - a) Mainstreaming of innovative CSO approaches to educating marginalized children, with particular emphasis on targeting girls as part of an overall strategy for improving gender equality in education. CEF through PODCAM, has targeted parents/guardians whose shortcomings (e.g. limited knowledge) regarding respect for “Children’s Rights” may not facilitate the expected change. On the other hand this was a deliberate intervention to initially target parents for a deeper understanding of the needs of children with disabilities.
 - b) Integration of effective Advocacy on gender equitable education using the Mentoring approach by CEF partners would largely require skills to facilitate internalization of learning, documenting and dissemination through the GEEP activities. This calls for uninterrupted resource support over a period of time (preferably 3 years)
- **Crosscutting Issues:** Monitoring of resource allocation in relation to gender concerns and needs at all levels of development needed to take into account other cross-cutting issues like HIV and AIDS, Child Rights and disaggregating of data by gender. This may entail reviewing the monitoring questionnaires on resource allocation to include the above mentioned areas.
- **Sustainability:** The Mentoring process needed to increase the number of people trained in each partner organization to build a critical mass of individuals to facilitate internalization and ensure sustainability in order to have a multiplier effect.
- **Supporting Statistical Data:** There has been limited use of numerical data to qualify and support the success story of the Mentoring process. CEF Partners needed to provide quantitative data to support their achievements and the Malawi success story regarding the Mentoring Process. However, time could have been a limiting factor to expect quantitative impact measurements considering the short life span of GEEP.
- **Feedback from Beneficiaries:** Lack of instant feedback from listeners / beneficiaries as indicated by TWR could have been largely due to the short life span of the GEEP project that limited the opportunity to present the issues clearly by radio before asking for public opinion.

6.3 Lessons Learnt

Formation of Partnerships

Strong partnerships formed during the Mentoring process especially those between GEEP Partners and the three Government Ministries of Finance, Education, and Women and Child Development, if nurtured could lead to better tracking of government expenditure on education for all, if based on analysis of gendered decisions and implications.

⁴ CEF –Gender Equality in Education Project, May 2007 Monthly Report, page 4. (Esnath Kalyati)

Multiplier Effect and Internalization of the Mentoring Process

Formation of effective partnerships with networks like the Coalition with 67 members composed of NGO s, FBO s and CSO s, all tracking down use of resources that are allocated to the Education sector could have a multiplier effect that would facilitate internalization of the Mentoring process with time.

Complementing Linkages between CEF/GEEP Partners

A productive way of utilizing the diverse knowledge and skills available in the partner organizations like data collected by PODCAM being utilized by Trans World Radio for advocating for resource allocation to address the needs of children with disabilities. Annual Forums of all former CEF/GEEP partners could be organized to share progress on the impact the Mentoring process is having among those mentored and on the grass-root beneficiaries through the various projects. There was improved networking among CEF partners throughout the period of implementation of the GEEP.

Hands-on Experience for Ensuring the Process of Learning

Having partners use education documents and contents that need engendering to identify and be familiar with gender ideas, concepts and issues, which should be reader friendly and easy to use. Getting feed-back was also found to be useful.

Level of Knowledge, Experience and Credibility of Mentors

Choice and suitability of both the Mentor and CEF target groups at different levels for enhanced appreciation of the Mentoring process, effective application of information and timely in-putting of complementing interventions to support processes e.g. budget tracking with the Ministries of Finance and Education at different levels using the developed M&E Framework and effective use of other supporting tools like Teleconferences and personal relationships have all been crucial to the successful completion of the mentoring.

Useful and Timely Reinforcing Interventions

Timely interventions / mechanisms to support mentors like the “GEEP team meeting” of September 2007 that addressed the Mentors’ need to understand the concept of mentoring. This forum availed an opportunity for sharing experiences for purposes of learning and growth. The June 2008 meeting brought together mentors to review and reflect on work done during the project life and how the mentor managed the process.

6.4 Best Practices

Personal visits and follow-up by phone calls contributed to high rate of acceptance by CEF partners for participation. Bi-weekly teleconferences and regular e-mail communications arranged between the Gender Project Manager and the Mentor enhanced progress during the implementation of the GEEP.

The Mentoring process gives its beneficiaries an opportunity to contribute towards their development. The Mentor walks together with the mentees while taking on board his/her input.

“CEF/GEEP staff must be commended for this approach”. (TWR)

The CEF/GEEP Mentoring process has attracted increased participation of girls in some women/girl focused partner projects like FAWEMA. Enrolment figures have progressively been reported as increasing in the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia participating schools.

Collaboration between the Mentor and Government Ministries facilitated participation of government representatives, like District Assembly Planners and other district personnel, in GEEP training activities.

6.5 Partner Experiences in Mainstreaming Gender

Results of pre-group mentor training questionnaire prepared by the Mentor revealed that most of proposed participants, who included District Education Managers (DEMs) and District Education Networks (DENs), needed more knowledge and skills in gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting and monitoring. Existing gender awareness and responsiveness among partners was therefore enhanced through a two-day on Gender Analysis and Mainstreaming and a three-day Gender Budgeting and Monitoring group mentor sessions. The Mentor reviewed a number of documents in preparation for the group mentoring sessions.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) indicated that several officers in the Ministry have skills in gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting and that some of these officers have been oriented to mentoring through the GEEP. The Ministry's Desk Officer for Gender Mainstreaming represents the Ministry in review processes of national policies. Currently, the Ministry of Finance has a desk officer for gender issues in addition to being a desk officer for other sectors. The officer works with Sector Ministries to focus on gender budgetary allocations to ensure that these are gender responsive.

The MWCD is also taking the lead in Public Sector training to prepare for future gender sensitive budget tracking. Government planning officers from seven sectors absorbing more than 50% of the national budget (Ministries of Labour, Agriculture, Education, Health, MWCD, Economic Planning) are at present being trained in gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting. The training will also target personnel from the Civil Society. The Ministry's focus is on Capacity Building and Follow-up activities. It was felt that involvement of a Mentor in the planning process would help identify project / training entry points for application of the mentoring approach. The MWCD would like to build their own capacity on Mentoring through training to facilitate representation in various policy review processes. However, MWCD will draw-on people that have been exposed to the mentoring process as resource persons.

The MWCD is also reviewing the concept of Gender Focal Points in order to refocus priority areas for training and make Guidelines on gender mainstreaming sector specific to take into account variations sector needs. The potential of using the Mentoring processes to re-focus on issues relating to girl's education will be explored by building on lessons learnt from past initiatives like, Girls Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE), implemented in mid 80s.

6.6 Role and Contribution to Education Sector Policy Reform, especially Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB)

The CSCQBE Secretariat in collaboration with its member organizations has since its inception engaged with Government in producing Budget Monitoring Reports in the Education sector following budget presentations in Parliament. The reports analyze resource allocation in the education sector. Investing in the education sector has proved to be the key to efforts in poverty reduction and development. Government has created a conducive environment regarding awareness for gender budgeting by having at least a planner in sector ministries exposed to training in Gender Responsive Budgets (GRB).

The Ministry of Finance took the lead in a Discussion Forum to review the Guidelines to the Preparation of Draft Budget Estimates for their gender responsiveness. Present at the Forum were representatives from Ministries of Education, Women and Child Development and Finance itself, FAWEMA and NGO Gender Coordination Network.

The Ministry of Women and Children has provided coordination in government while CSCQBE has been coordinating the Civil Society contribution to tracking of budget allocations and expenditures in the education sector.

The Mentor also used questionnaires to seek the views of District Education Managers and District Education Networks and Partners to discuss application of knowledge and skills acquired at the Gender Mainstreaming and gender budgeting workshop in order to address the specific and different needs of girls and boys

In 2007, CSCQBE engaged consultants to review all educational policies in the Ministry of Education, compile a summary of the contents for easy reference, identify gaps and review the extent to which the civil society has influences policy formulation and implementation, highlight civil society's gaps in policy engagement and make recommendations. There is a Consultancy to review the draft Education Act and the Law Commission is currently doing so. The review will identify gaps and make reference to where Malawi is with regard to meeting the EFA goals and MDG. The CEF/GEEP Mentoring process could support the Civil Society to in-put into this process through organized forums to disseminate the findings, raise awareness on important issues and get suggestions regarding an appropriate course of action. Access by stakeholders to education policy review processes on EFA and MDG s is desired by many CEF/GEEP partners and government acknowledges this need. However, the Mentoring process could facilitate consultations and dialogue among all parties concerned to bring out issues and possible solutions relating to the achievement of the stated education goals.

The Ministry of Education pointed out that review of the National Education Sector Plan is in the final stages and inclusion to lobbying for gender mainstreaming and increased gender budget allocation would not be possible. The Ministry has however made allocations through Cost Centers for capacity building in gender mainstreaming for district level teachers and at Teachers Training Colleges. It would be useful to strengthen the Gender Unit in the Ministry of Education by ensuring budgetary allocation. This would be the desk to push the gender ideas using the mentoring process. Secondary School Desk officers and individuals at various levels who in the past have been exposed to gender mainstreaming, gender budget monitoring & tracking could be mobilized for re-orientation / training in the Mentoring Process.

CSCQBE structure at district level i.e.: District Education Networks (DENs), with direction from CSCQBE partners, could continue focusing on analysis of budget allocation at Assembly level and Budget monitoring at district level would be useful in creating information for advocacy on the need to increase funding in the education budget.

The CSCQBE through a network of some of its members track down use of resources allocated to the education sector through half year spot checks at District Assembly level and through selected District Education Managers. In this way, the service deliverers themselves shoulder the responsibility of accountability and transparency.

Other entry points were suggested for the internationalization of the Mentoring Process such as at recruitment time. The Human Resource personnel in the Ministry would be sensitized to include Mentoring in the job descriptions of some employees at Division and District Education levels. Malawi could also consider having a strategy for building on experiences from the GABLE social mobilization project that targeted girls and produced positive results in the districts that were involved.

6.7 Experience in Facilitating the Achievement of MDG 3 and EFA Goal 5

A November 2007 study commissioned by CSCQBE on “EFA in Malawi: Progress, Problems and the Way Forward” has established that a great deal of success has been achieved in that “many more children have set their feet to school and with limited resources the country has increased the coverage of her education systems.” However, “despite the enormous efforts to put considerable resources into the Education Sector, the attainment of the various targets is nowhere near realization.”⁵

Malawi, through the activities of the CSCQBE, has been advocating for increased resource allocation and investment to the education sector and intends to continue supporting work on gender monitoring and tracking by engaging appropriate Ministries of Finance and Education. The 2006/07 budget monitoring and tracking exercise results presented to government indicates that allocation to education had gone up MK17.6 billion excluding expenditure for Universities.

This presented an increase of 6.2 %from 2005/06 Total allocation for education including Universities was MK24.2 billion making 14%of the total budget. The allocation to the education sector was 4.7% of the GDP which was a positive development. However, allocation to primary education is still a challenge. Tertiary education received the highest increase from 800 Million in the 2003/04 budget to 4.4billion in the 2005/06 budget.⁶ The Coalition was reviewing the 2007/08 budget content with the view of raising issues with the Parliamentary Committee on Education. Some of the identified issues were scheduled for discussions with Members of Parliament.

The Coalition would like to partner with the Malawi Economic Justice Network which has a broader focus on financing education to initiate macro-economic debates on aid and debt issues. CEF is working with the coalition to monitor how debt cancellation is impacting on gender equality in education financing and to advocate for reduced domestic debt. The Coalition has been holding meetings, panel discussions, press -debates with policy makers, donors and communities on government’s response to gender equality in education and the quality/type of investment being put into education.⁷

The effort to provide free primary education is appreciation by Malawians but the gap in the transition from Primary to Secondary schools has been worrying. The issue has been the extent to which primary education provides employable skills i.e. the quality of primary education requires urgent attention. The Debt Cancellation has not yet responded to this need. Multiple problems of infrastructure, teaching and learning materials and gender and HIV and AIDS require investment into education.

⁵ Education For All: Progress, Problems and the Way Forward, November 2007, by CSCQBE-Malawi.

⁶ 2007 CEF Malawi Program Quarter Two (April-June), Wongani Taulo - CEF Coordinator

⁷ CEF – Gender Equality in Education Project, page 3

The CSCQBE conducted an analysis of 2006/07 budget monitoring and tracking exercise and shared the report with various stakeholders and recommendations have since been drawn and shared with the Ministry of Education. CSCQBE has also presented recommendations or overview of the 2007/08 budget to consultants for gender budget monitoring. Education financing is still an issue requiring negotiations and lobbying by all stakeholders committed to improving the quality of education. The following has been the trend in budget allocation to education:

<u>Financial Year</u>	<u>% Allocation of the National Budget</u>
2004/2005	10%
2005/2006	12%
2006/2007	11%
2007/2008	14%
2008/2009	12.5%

Malawi there for is not yet meeting the 26% budgetary allocation of the national budget recommended internationally. Government needs to demonstrate progression in this direction. Based on the 2005/06 and 2006/07 budget monitoring reports, the Gender Mentor conducted a capacity assessment exercise for the Coalition and relevant Ministries to identify capacity needs.

This led to the carrying out of a Gender Budgeting and Mainstreaming Training from 6th to 10th August 2008 for District Assembly Planning Officers and other district level personnel with a total of 18 group mentees. Use of the gender mainstreaming and budgeting gave partners hands-on experience in gender analysis and mainstreaming of gender into their development plans and activities.

CEF is supporting Mid Term review of EFA and MDG that is supposed to be comprehensive and collaborative. A Concept note to facilitate donor funding has been prepared with in put from various organization. This is another opportunity for application of the GEEP Mentoring approach by the target groups to advocate for increased education financing.

Sustainability of the Mentoring process could be possible through i) use of the reviewed Guidelines, from the Ministry of Finance, on Preparations of Current and Recurrent Draft Budget Estimates that have been made to be gender responsive through the mentoring which involved the Ministries of Women and Child Development, Education and Finance itself and selected GEEP partners. ii) entry at end of budget implementation through analysis using the Guidelines. The monitoring guidelines/tools could be applied now to the 2008 / 09 budget before implementation to establish the extent of gender related allocation or the 2007/08 at the end of budget implementation through analysis using the framework. The challenge, however, is the current gap of the source of push for the Mentoring process to support gender mainstreaming and gender budget monitoring and tracking in the public sector.

A former CEF/GEEP partner organization has prepared a project proposal to address the MDG 3 and this has received preliminary donor funding approval. Skills acquired through GEEP have helped the organization to focus on issues of education.

Regular Mentoring visits should focus on a) gender issues, b) how the Civil Society can work together with government and c) effective contribute towards achieving of the national goals of gender equality and quality education through monitoring and tracking of educational budget allocations and expenditures paying special attention on girls' education.

7.0 Recommendations

1. In order to achieve the broader outcomes of gender equality and quality in education, the Ministry of Education i) should aggressively use the reviewed Budget Guidelines from Treasury and the comprehensive CEF/GEEP monitoring tool/questionnaire to ensure production of gender sensitive education budgets, and ii) use results from budget monitoring and tracking to highlight, in strong terms, advocacy for more resource allocation to the education sector.
2. The Ministry of Women and Children should have a Desk Officer that can closely work with Treasury and other sector Ministries to ensure that i) Planning of Sector Budgets has a Gender focus ii) Treasury engendered Budget Guidelines are applied and iii) End-of-Budget Implementation Analysis takes place using the CEF/GEEP Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.
3. A Coordination Mechanism and Technical Working Group should be created and located in the Ministry of Women and Children to give policy direction to issues relating to gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting, monitoring and tracking while closely working with Ministries of Finance and Education, Eventually, other Ministries could be brought into the Mechanism.
4. A CEF/GEEP Project-Phase Two could be considered to a) consolidate the gains that have been made in Gender Budgeting, Monitoring and Tracking through the Mentoring Process, b) support Gender mainstreaming and Advocacy on Gender issues using the mentoring approach, c) facilitate formation of Partnerships among CEF/GEEP projects and with government institutions in the Mentoring Process so as to build a critical mass of people for continued mentoring, and d) document lessons learnt and best practices for sharing and replication.
5. At country level, after the GEEP project life, the Mentoring process should still be supported through frequent follow up by a CEF Mentor, allocated more time and have proper documentation of successes and experiences for sharing by organizations as tangible results from the entire CEF/GEEP project. Action Aid International Malawi could consider building in the mentoring approach into its programmes with the relevant partners.
6. CSCQBE, as a network should have a Mentor to help build the capacity of the partners and in this way utilize the strength of its members to address issues relating to quality and equality in education for parity between girls and boys. While at the same time promoting achievements of EFA and MDG s. CSCQBE must play a coordinating role while partners implement through the mentoring process in order to facilitate effective participation in the budget analysis. Budget Analysis will then impart skills to partners who later can effectively contribute to budget formulation, implementation and monitoring at District Assembly level and community levels of resource allocation.
7. The Mentoring Process should be applied to institutions as well as projects in order to cover other sectors apart from education. This will facilitate Malawi's holistic and continued support for initiatives that involve girls' participation in problem solving and advocacy for equity in education in order to develop their whole potential.

8. Initiatives / interventions like Student Alliances, Drop-in Centers for teen mothers, clubs and camps for girls could be used as entry points for the Mentoring process to enhance focus on girls' education and intensify advocacy strategies for equal opportunities at all levels in the education system while challenging inequalities in budget allocations. However, a study should document the various experiences for purposes of building on them during planning.

8.0 References

Kalyati Esnath, Commonwealth Education Fund Gender Equality in Education Project (CEF/GEEP), Monthly Reports (April 2007 –August 2008)

CSCQBE, Education For All in Malawi: Progress, Problems and the Way Forward, November 2007.

CEF Partners, Responses to Questionnaire on Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Budgeting, GEEP 2007.

CCAP Synod of Livingstonia, Final Project Report, January 2006–December 2007.

Tomlinson K, Guide to the CEF/GEEP Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, July 2007

Beyond Access, Contribution to Equals Newsletter, No: 20.

9.0 Appendices

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Appendix A: | List of Key Process Outputs of Malawi's CEF/GEEP |
| Appendix B: | Case Study: Contribution by the Malawi Government to the Promotion of Girls Education |
| Appendix C: | List of People and Organisations Visited |

List of Malawi CEF/GEEP Key Performance Outputs

- Pre-group mentoring session questionnaire (to help focus on the needs of participants/mentees in the area of Gender Mainstreaming, Gender Budgeting and Monitoring).
- Two gender mainstreaming group mentoring sessions were carried out
- A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
- Mentor Monthly Reports and Work Plans
- CEF Quarterly country Reports
- Training Reports on Gender Mainstreaming and Budgeting
- Mentoring as a capacity building tool developed
- GPM Quarterly and Final Reports, project documents,
- Partner Work Plans and Reports
- Budget Monitoring Reports
- Briefing document and Media Reports
- Discussions with MP s, district and school officials, parents and community members
- Newspaper article for Equals Newspaper, radio phone-ins, (Media Activities)
- Newsletter and GEEP Evaluation Reports
- Discussions with CEF constituent agencies
- Campaign materials
- Case studies
- Presentation of papers, Conference and Workshop Reports
- 4 country evaluation reports
- UK final reports
- CEF/GEEP Review and Reflective Meeting Report
- CEF/GEEP end of project report
- The Mid-Term Report
- The GPM visit report for action points
- The CEF End of Project Evaluation Johannesburg meeting notes.

**Contribution by the Malawi Government to the
Promotion of Girls Education
-- A Case Study --**

In 1993 the Government of Malawi introduced the Re-Admission Policy, through the Ministry of Education, realizing the high drop out rates among girls in the upper primary schools and secondary schools, due to pregnancy. At that time the implementation of the Policy was a challenge as there were no clear guidelines for the actual re-admission process. Although the Policy has now been revised and endorsed by Government by 2006, Ms. Choice Nyirenda braved against all odds to ensure that she returned to finish her primary school in 1993 a year after her baby was born. Below is the story by Choice herself.

“I, Choice Mchenga, now Mrs. Choice Nyirenda, managed to go back to school in 1993 a year after giving birth to a baby girl, the very same year the re-admission policy was introduced. I passed the Primary School Leaving Examinations and was selected to one of the National Secondary Schools where I also did very well and was further selected to Chancellor College, a constituency college of the University of Malawi. In 2002 I graduated with a Bachelor of Education Degree. I am now working at the Ministry of Education Headquarters as an Education Officer in the Gender Unit.

The Government has assisted me greatly by introducing this policy, because without it I would have been a “nobody”. I am now a “somebody, an education officer”. I am able to support my parents who had rejected me after I dropped out of school. I have also supported my two brothers with their education, one of whom is a primary school teacher in our home district and the other is a hospital assistant.”

Choice stated that she experienced rejection from her parents and close relations, even the local community shunned her. Worse still, the man responsible for her pregnancy had refused to marry her. Choice is determined to help and encourage girls to concentrate and remain in school until they finish, because she is convinced that it is only a good sound education that will help them to be self reliant as well as contribute to the development of their country.

The recently revised “Re-Admission Policy” has clearly stated guidelines which have been widely disseminated to schools and District Assemblies. A good number of teen mothers are going back to school because of this policy. The challenge for the Government and its co-operating partners is to be proactive and put in place mechanisms that will facilitate absorption of the numbers of returning students as well as set counseling facilities to help curb the increased incidences of pregnancies in schools.

Gender mentors have a crucial role to work together with people like Choice to help deal with institutional and community attitudes that discourage and prevent girls from continuing with their education despite the causal factors and the consequences.

Choice has told her story at many educational events, including the 2007 commemoration of the National Education Day, which was supported by Action Aid International Malawi. An article entitled : “**Choice Nyirenda : an example to emulate**” appeared in one of the widely distributed Malawi’s local papers, the Weekend Nation 4-5 August 2007 on page 6.

Appendix: C

List of People and Organisations Visited

Date	Time	Activity	Remarks
Tuesday 19/08/08	4: 00p.m	Meeting with Ministry of Education, Principal Budget Officer Grace Banda	Plans to increase Access and involvement in planning /review processes for the purposes of mentoring partners.
Wednesday 20/08/08	9:00am	Depart for Zomba	Arrive in Zomba at 1:00 pm
	2:00pm–4:00pm	Meeting with YONECO, Executive Director, MacBain Mkandawire, and Michael Gondwe, Program Coordinator	Explore existing opportunities for sustainability and internalizing the Mentoring process.
	4:30pm	Depart for Blantyre	Arrive in Blantyre at 6:30pm
	7:00pm-9:00pm	Meeting with PODCAM, Program Officers: Enock Mithi and Hanneck Mdoka	Suggestion on Way Forward regarding use of Mentoring process in Advocacy work
	Night in Blantyre		
Thursday 21/08/08	9:30 am	Travel back to Lilongwe.	Arrive in Lilongwe, 2:00pm
Friday 22/08/08	9:00 – 10:00am	Meeting with Ministry of Women and Child Development, Principal Gender Officer, Joseph Kazima	Discussion on way forward regarding Ministries coordinating and collaborating role.
Monday 25/08/08	09:00–10:00am	Meeting with Ministry of Finance, Assistant Budget Director, Emma Mabvumbe	Insight on future support plans for the mentoring process.
	10:00-11:00am	Meeting with CSCQBE Executive Director, Anthony Kondowe	Verify and validate information on planned work, progress update and future of the Mentoring process.
	11:00–12:00am	Meeting with Transworld Radio, Producer and Program Officer, Madalitso Ziba	Verify information on planned advocacy work on children with special needs.
	2:00pm	Travel to Mzuzu	Night in Mzuzu

Tuesday 26/08/08	08:30-10:30am 11:00am	Meeting with CCAP Livingstonia Synod, Moderator and Education Secretary, Rev. Dr. Mezuwa Banda, Vincent Sichinga, M&E Officer and Ms. Gausi, Gender Officer Travel back to Lilongwe	Way forward regarding use of mentoring process for gender mainstreaming.
Wednesday 27/08/08	2:00 – 3:00pm	Meeting with FAWEMA, Esther Msowoya, National Coordinator	Way forward regarding use of Mentoring process in future programmes.
	4:00 pm	Meeting at Action Aid (Education Theme Leader, CEF Coordinator and GEEP Mentor) Julie Juma, Clara Ndovie and Esnath Kalyati	Debriefing