

UNICEF Evaluation Management Response Template

Evaluation Title: Mid-Term Evaluation of the United Nations Joint Programme on Girls Education (JPGE)-III

Approved and signed by:

Shadrack Omol, Representative, UNICEF Malawi

Region: Eastern and Southern Africa Region (ESAR)

Office: Malawi Country Office

Evaluation Year: 2023

Person-In-Charge for Follow-up to Management Response: Mussarrat Youssuf, Chief of REKM

Overall Response to the Evaluation:

The Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the United Nations Joint Programme on Girls Education (JPGE)-III has been received well and endorsed by the UN partners and the Ministry of Education due to its quality, rigour, and consultative process. The independent evaluation report provides insights and learning from the programme implementation to inform its on-going programme and the upcoming end-line evaluation. The evaluation was implemented in a participatory manner where all key stakeholders at the country level: the Government of Malawi, UN partners, Implementing Partners, Civil Society Organisations (CSO), and key UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP were involved closely throughout the evaluation process. Feedback on evaluation findings and recommendations was considered when finalizing the report.

Planned Use of Evaluation: The evaluation findings will be used to provide an evidence-based foundation for programme improvement. It will be used to document lessons learned, and offer recommendations for actionable adjustments to interventions, informing the remaining intervention period and guiding future interventions with similar goals and scope. The MTE provides a solid foundation to prepare for the end-line evaluation by offering some key insights and the lessons learnt and shall be used to inform the process.

UNICEF Evaluation Management Response Templates *who will edit the Management Response in the EMR Tracker*

RECOMMENDATIONS and ACTIONS:

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 1: KPI and outcome indicators should properly operationalise all dimensions of the programme objective and intended results.

Management Response: Agree

If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:

Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
1. Review KPI outcome level indicators to improve alignment with programme objectives and measure intended results.	JPGE Coordinator and UNICEF/WFP/ UNFPA	Fortune Maduma Abigail Simkoko Daniel Svanlund Evanca Kazembe	May 31 st , 2024	Underway	Consultation among all the JPGE M&E leads and other relevant programme teams to review the KPIs and align with objectives and intended results to ensure a smooth and quality end programme evaluation with a list of agreed indicators.	Revised list of indicators for the end programme evaluation
2. Consider incorporating nonstandard indicators with a qualitative dimension to better assess the quality of change and enable more specific monitoring and programme	JPGE Coordinator and UNICEF/WFP/ UNFPA	Fortune Maduma Abigail Simkoko Daniel Svanlund Evanca Kazembe	May 31 st , 2024	Underway	Consultation among all the JPGE M&E leads and other relevant programme team members to define and add complementary qualitative indicators for key dimensions of JPGE drawing on primary data collection from intervention schools.	Revised list of indicators for the end programme evaluation

steering based on results.						
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 2: Some indicators lack clear definitions, resulting in varied interpretations among stakeholders. Operationalise and define all dimensions of indicators (<i>Relevant for exit strategy / handover to governmental partner</i>).						
Management Response: Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
3. Revise the indicator reference manual to include agreed definitions of all dimensions of the KPI and outcome indicators with data collection methods, tools and milestones to allow for unified monitoring.	JPGE Coordinator and UNICEF/WFP/ UNFPA	Fortune Maduma Abigail Simkoko Daniel Svanlund Evince Kazembe	May 31 st , 2024	Underway	Consultation among JPGE M&E Leads to review the indicator reference manual with all stakeholders and finalise it.	Definition of indicators Revised monitoring framework with details of data collection methods, tools and milestones.
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 3: Enhance monitoring practices by adopting a results-based perspective, moving beyond mere reporting of the number of persons reached. Integrate data from all three UN agencies into one joint monitoring process to be able to identify gaps and facilitate evidence-based programme steering (<i>Relevant for exit strategy / handover to governmental partner</i>).						
Management Response: Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed	Actions taken	Supporting documents

				Cancelled		
4. Consider introducing a joint results-based monitoring system which all three implementing UN agencies contribute to.	JPGE Coordinator and UNICEF/WFP/ UNFPA	Fortune Maduma Abigail Simkoko Daniel Svanlund Evince Kazembe	May 31 st , 2024	Not started	Develop a joint results-based monitoring system and template	Results-based monitoring Template
5. Explore and implement mechanisms to prevent double counting of beneficiaries at the intervention schools.	JPGE Coordinator and UNICEF/WFP/ UNFPA	Fortune Maduma Abigail Simkoko Daniel Svanlund Evince Kazembe	June 30 th , 2024	Not started	M&E Leads to review and improve the monitoring framework	Revised monitoring framework
6. Strengthen results-based monitoring across all relevant level (school, district and EMIS level).	JPGE Coordinator and UNICEF/WFP/ UNFPA	Fortune Maduma Abigail Simkoko Daniel Svanlund Evince Kazembe	June 30 th , 2024	Not started	Orientation sessions with data officers across all relevant levels	Revised monitoring framework
7. Increase number of coordination as well as M&E meetings across agencies to foster harmonised implementation and Monitoring.	JPGE Coordinator and UNICEF/WFP/ UNFPA	Fortune Maduma Abigail Simkoko Daniel Svanlund Evince Kazembe	June 30 th , 2024	Not started	Increased frequency of coordination meetings as well as joint monitoring visits among WFP, UNFPA and UNICEF M&E officers.	Meeting minutes and field visit reports

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 4: Encourage the promotion of school and community gardens, to be integrated into school lessons and serve as pilot gardens for replication by learners at home.						
Management Response: Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
8. Implement more school gardens at targeted schools.	WFP	Sandra Kamvazina Programme Policy Officer School Meals	October 31 st , 2024	underway	Activities have been added and supported by the district councils (Mangochi, Salima, Dedza and Kasungu)	Project reports
9. Integrate school gardens into classes.	WFP	Sandra Kamvazina Programme Policy Officer School Meals	October 31 st , 2024	underway	Agriculture lessons are part of the primary school curriculum	Project reports with the agriculture lessons
10. Encourage learners to implement home gardens and bring vegetables and fruit to school to be added to the school meals.	WFP	Sandra Kamvazina Programme Policy Officer School Meals	October 31 st , 2024	Not yet started	This will be included in project closure processes. Community contribution will be part of the sustainability plan.	Project reports.
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 5: During the remaining project period, prioritise the establishment / rehabilitation of proper WASH infrastructure in all schools ensuring easy access to water and providing facilities such as latrines and change rooms wherever needed.						
Management Response: Partially agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: To achieve this requires funding outside of the JPGE programme.						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started	Actions taken	Supporting documents

				Underway Completed Cancelled		
11. Rehabilitate WASH infrastructures in all schools including latrines, boreholes, changerooms and provision of soap stocks.	UNICEF	Simon Molendijk, Chief EADP	December 30 th , 2024	Not yet started	Will be included in new funding proposals	Funding proposals
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 6: There is still sensitivity around SRHR topics at schools, as indicated by reports of "illegal" provision of contraceptives on school premises by district health workers and the fact that teenage pregnancies yet occur. It is imperative to intensify efforts to address the root causes of these issues.						
Management Response: Partially Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons: There is no provision of Contraceptives in schools. Only information is provided in the schools and other commodities and outreach / mobile services are provided in the communities surrounding clustered outside the school. This is not a sensitivity issue but a policy issue by MoE. However, SRHR topics are still sensitive in nature.						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
12. Support low-threshold services, such as mobile clinics, and intensify to ensure easy access to information and	UNFPA	Cecilia Alfandika A and Y Specialist	October 31 st , 2024	Underway/ Continued	The programme is increasing number of outreach clinics. Mobile vans are being used with Community Based Distributing youth Agents in door to door to provide services.	Programme reports

contraceptives when needed.						
13. Intensify capacity building and awareness raising (learners, teachers, and surrounding communities) to address persistent detrimental beliefs around SRHR and family planning.	UNFPA	Cecilia Alfandika A and Y Specialist	October 31st, 2024	Underway/ Continued	Continued capacity building activities on comprehensive sexual education (CSE) for teachers, learners, and communities	Programme reports
14. Conduct Training of Trainers (ToT) for health facilities, including mentorship, to strengthen multiplication efforts. Emphasise technical cooperation over financial cooperation for sustainability, prioritising the development of capacitated individuals.	UNFPA	Cecilia Alfandika A and Y Specialist	October 31 st , 2024	Underway/ Continued	Working with <i>Banja La Mtsogolo</i> to conduct training of trainers for health workers. The health workers are also being mentored in 59 health facilities in all JPGE supported districts to provide quality services.	Programme Reports Training report

15. Ensure inclusivity by considering the needs of people with special needs in the districts. Adapt informative documents targeting them to be barrier-free and provide disability-friendly facilities.	UNICEF	Simon Molendijk, Chief EADP	January 2025	Not yet started	This will be done after the current programme terminates in October. UNICEF will put this in its new programme proposal post JPGE with the government of Malawi.	Post JPGE-III programme proposal
16. Foster the delivery of the Break the Silence package.	UNFPA	Cecilia Alfandika A and Y Specialist	October 31 st , 2024	Underway/ Continued	Weekly sessions focusing on young people living with HIV are being conducted in Dedza and Mangochi through facilitators.	Programme Reports
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 7: Enhance the impact of the alternative learning component among out-of-school children and support stakeholders through increased awareness of mother groups, parents, and the broader community.						
Management Response: Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
17. Increase awareness of the component by targeted campaigns for mother groups, parents, and the	UNFPA	Cecilia	October 31 st , 2024	Underway	Activities are being held under Parent Child (Sexuality) Communication as one of the strategies to include parents' participation instead of formal campaigns.	Programme reports

broader community.						
18. Leverage on existing community-based and NGO-driven alternative learning programs to share knowledge and experiences, fostering a seamless transition and sustainability beyond the project period.	UNICEF	Simon Molendijk, Chief EADP	October 31 st , 2024	Completed	Partnered with NGOs for alternative learning (such as the Story Workshop Trust and Development Communication Trust).	Programme reports
19. Organise training sessions for mother groups, parents, and other supporting stakeholders to familiarize them with the alternative learning approach, its objectives, and strategies for continued support beyond the project duration.	UNICEF	Simon Molendijk, Chief EADP	January 31 st , 2025	Not started	This will be done after the current programme terminates in October. UNICEF will put this in its new programme proposal post JPGE with the Government of Malawi.	Post JPGE-III programme proposal

Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 8: Sustainability / Phasing out: Identify and engage potential partners to continue key interventions after the project lifespan.						
Management Response: Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
20. Conduct a stakeholder analysis to identify organisations and entities interested and capable of continuing key interventions.	JPGE Coordinator and UNICEF/WFP/ UNFPA	Fortune Maduma Abigail Simkoko Daniel Svanlund Evince Kazembe	October 31 st , 2024	Not started	Stakeholders' workshop to assess the continuation of interventions with a focus on the sustainability aspect	Workshop report
21. Establish a communication plan with clear timelines for informing schools about the program's future minimizing disruptions in the middle of a school year or term.	JPGE Coordinator and UNICEF/WFP/ UNFPA	Fortune Maduma Abigail Simkoko Daniel Svanlund Evince Kazembe	October 31 st , 2024	Not started	Conduct awareness meeting schools JPGE Coordinator	Communication plan document

22. Develop a phased exit strategy that considers the academic calendar and avoids disruptions.	JPGE Coordinator and UNICEF/ WFP/ UNFPA	Fortune Maduma Abigail Simkoko Daniel Svanlund Evince Kazembe	October 31 st , 2024	Not started	Conduct a workshop with all stakeholders to develop an adequate exit strategy	Exit strategy document
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 9: Sustainability / Phasing out- Build governmental capacities and ownership to further support and finance crucial programme interventions, thereby ensuring scalability and sustainability						
Management Response: Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
23. Prioritise capacity building for government officials, ensuring comprehensive awareness of the programme and enhancing national coordination to address challenges posed by staff turnover.	JPGE Coordinator and UNICEF/ WFP/ UNFPA	Fortune Maduma Abigail Simkoko Daniel Svanlund Evince Kazembe	October 31 st , 2024	Not started	Conduct trainings for government officials	Project report

24. Organise a review meeting with all stakeholders to jointly discuss challenges and plan the programme interventions' future trajectory.	JPGE Coordinator	Fortune Maduma	October 31 st , 2024	Not started	Conduct review meeting	Meeting report
Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 10: Sustainability / Phasing out – Government of Malawi to allocate sufficient funds and ensure adequate structures for a continuation and maintenance of key components, particularly the health and the school feeding components.						
Management Response: (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree): Agree						
If recommendation is rejected or partially accepted, report reasons:						
Actions planned	Responsible Office	Responsible Person	Expected completion date	Implementation stage: Not started Underway Completed Cancelled	Actions taken	Supporting documents
25. Invest efforts into the completion of the ongoing value-for-money study to identify the optimal school feeding approach for Malawi.	Ministry of Education (MoE)	Albert Saka	June 30 th , 2024	Completed	The Value for Money (VfM) study was completed in 2023, waiting for endorsement from Management.	Final draft of the VfM study
26. Invest efforts into the completion of the ongoing value-for-money study to identify the optimal school feeding	Ministry of Education (MoE)	Albert Saka	April 1 st , 2024	Completed	The Government of Malawi has increased the school feeding and health components allocation from MK 200 million to MK 900 million between 2023/2024 to 2024/2025	Budget statement

approach for Malawi.						
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