



EN

THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX

of the Commission Decision amending Commission Decision C(2020)4649 final on the financing of the Annual Action Programme 2020 in favour of the Republic of Malawi

Action Document for Improving Secondary Education in Malawi (ISEM) II

1. Title/basic act/ CRIS number	Improving Secondary Education in Malawi (ISEM) II CRIS number: MW/2020/041-786 financed under the 11 th European Development Fund (EDF)	
2. Zone benefiting from the action/ location	Southern Africa, Malawi The action shall be carried out at the following location: all over Malawi, with a project team based in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Lilongwe.	
3. Programming document	National Indicative Programme 2014-2020 for Malawi	
4. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	<i>Main SDGs:</i> 4 - Quality Education <i>Other significant SDGs:</i> 5 – Gender Equality 6 – Clean water and sanitation 13 – Climate action	
5. Sector of intervention/ thematic area	Focal Sector 3 – Secondary Education and Vocational Education and Training	DEV. Assistance: YES ¹
6. Amounts concerned	Total estimated cost: EUR 55 000 000 Total amount of EDF contribution EUR 55 000 000	
7. Aid modality and implementation modalities	Project Modality Direct management through: - Grants - Procurement Indirect management with the Government of Malawi	
8 a) DAC codes	11320 – Secondary education 11120 – Educational facilities and training 11130 – Teacher training 11110 – Education policy and administrative management	

¹ Official Development Assistance is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective.

b) Main Delivery Channel	EU Delegation/National Authorising Officer			
9. Markers (from CRIS DAC form)²	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
	Aid to environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment ³	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade Development	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and child health	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) thematic flagships	NA			

SUMMARY

The secondary education sub-sector in Malawi faces many challenges. Among these are poor access to quality education and high levels of inequity in the system. As a result, the system continues to exclude the majority of Malawi's youth in the formal education system, particularly the poorest in rural areas and girls. Transition rates from one level of education to the next are very low in Malawi. Of a cohort of 5 million children that entered primary school, only 400 000 make it to secondary school, and about 17 000 to higher education. Despite the implementation of several strategies under the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) (2008-2020) learner outcomes remain very low. A review of the NESP (2017) highlights that little progress has been made in the past decade to address these challenges in a meaningful way.

The EU support to secondary education under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) falls under the focal sector of Secondary Education and Vocational Education and Training. This action will be a continuation of the Improving Secondary Education in Malawi (ISEM) programme which is being implemented from 2015 to 2020.

Specifically, the action will address these challenges identified above through expansion and upgrading of selected schools, also providing the quality resources for teaching and learning. It will also support teacher training (both upgrading of underqualified teachers and continuous professional development) to improve the quality of secondary education, and also support the management of the sub-sector to make it more effective and efficient. Special focus will be given to address gender barriers to access and completion of secondary education; through direct support to students as well other systemic issues. The

² When a marker is flagged as significant/principal objective, the action description should reflect an explicit intent to address the particular theme in the definition of objectives, results, activities and/or indicators (or of the performance / disbursement criteria, in the case of budget support).

³ Please check the Minimum Recommended Criteria for the Gender Marker and the Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker. If gender equality is not targeted, please provide explanation in section 4.5.Mainstreaming.

action will primarily focus on Community day Secondary Schools (CDSSs), which constitute 62% of secondary schools in Malawi, and cater for the rural and most disadvantaged communities in Malawi. The action is aligned to both national and global commitments and strategies on education. Gender equality and environment and climate change protection and disaster preparedness have purposely been mainstreamed in the action in response to the challenges being faced, and also in fulfilment of EU commitments to SDGs 4, 6 and 13. The action is aligned with the EU Gender Action Plan II and the EU Youth action plan for external actions. It will contribute to consequent fulfilment of economic, social and cultural rights, rights of the child, rights of persons with disabilities and gender equality, in line with Malawi's international human rights commitments.

The action will be implemented using direct management - for grants to the Government of Malawi and Technical Assistance to the programme - and indirect management with the Government of Malawi.

1 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

1.1 Context Description

Malawi is one of the world's poorest countries trapped in a low income and low productivity equilibrium with a population of approximately 17.6 million in 2018. The UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) for 2017 ranks Malawi at 171 out of 189 countries, the 3rd lowest in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). Malawi's population growth of 2.9% per year has significant footprint on the environment, creates overstrained education and health systems, a lack of decent work, and high levels of unemployment.

Progress has been made in social and human development over the last decade, along with important economic and structural reforms to sustain economic growth rates but population growth has severely impacted socio-economic progress as public demand for social services, including education, has surpassed the level of investment for sustainable development. The 2018 Education Sector Performance Report (ESPR) indicated that over 700 000 new learners enter the education system every year but the sector is unable to absorb and retain them. Poverty remains widespread with 50% of the population living below the poverty line and 25% in extreme poverty – the majority of ultra-poor households (living on USD 1.90 per day or less) are female- or child-headed households. The economy is largely undiversified and vulnerable to both domestic political and governance shocks and external climate-related natural shocks such as floods and drought. The country's natural resources are not optimally used, or are used in a non-sustainable way. Malawi attracts limited foreign investment, although inflows have increased since 2016. Despite the huge sums of official development assistance (ODA) received, the country's progress remains very slow.

Malawi has a Gender Inequality Index (GII) of 0.619 ranking the country 148 out of 189 in 2017 and a Gender Parity Index (GPI) for secondary education of 0.9, which represents only marginal improvement from 0.85 in 2013⁴. The rates of child marriages and teen pregnancies have affected girls' access and completion of secondary education. 42% of girls are married or in a union before the age of 18, the 12th highest prevalence rate in the world. In turn, the adolescent birth rate is as high as 29% for girls aged 15 to 19 years old⁵. This fact also has a major impact on secondary school dropout rates, which stand at 6.3% for girls compared to 4.1% for boys⁶. Against the 2013 Education Act, Malawi does not enforce compulsory education and, despite basic education being free, there are many hidden costs that inhibit access to education for all. Children living in vulnerable situations, such as children with disabilities and Rastafarian children, have been reported to be particularly vulnerable regarding equal access to education.

Access levels to secondary education remain very low, with a transition rate of 38%, few opportunities for the poor, and an even lower completion rate of 21.9% nationally (24% for boys and 20% for girls). Malawi's education system is one of the least equitable, where 73% of public resources are appropriated by the most educated 10% of the population. This inequity goes further to significant disparities between the urban and rural population, as the urban appropriate 8.4 times more public resources.

With 51% of Malawians being 18 years old or younger according to the 2018 census, it will be crucial to invest in education and skills development in order to accelerate sustainable development and green

⁴ Education Management Information System (2017).

⁵ GEM Gender Report (UNESCO 2019).

⁶ Education Management Information System (2017).

economic growth. Access to secondary education must be expanded to harness the demographic dividend and create a labour force that can meaningfully contribute to the development of the country. Education of new generations on the environment is the most effective way to in the long-term develop an environmental sustainable society and girls and boys can be strong advocates to help trigger behavioural change and adaptation. Education mobilises knowledge and skills and relies on trained professionals to support the transition to a green economy. Furthermore, the youth who complete secondary education and do not proceed to higher education remain unemployed due to lack of necessary skills for the job market. This skills gap needs to be addressed in part by including entrepreneurship and vocational skills development secondary education.

1.2 Policy Framework (Global, EU)

The action is fully in line with the 11th EDF National Indicative Programme for Malawi (NIP 2014-2020) and part of Focal Sector 3 - Secondary Education and Vocational Education and Training focusing on improving equitable access to secondary education, supporting the sub-sector's quality and relevance by both enhancing educational facilities and improving the competencies of teachers, and improving governance and management of the supporting structures both at central and decentralised levels. The action contributes to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as it focuses on the progressive achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 - Quality Education, in particular target 4.1 to 'ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes' and SDG 5 - Gender Equality – 'to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women and girls'. In addition the programme addresses SDG 13 – by facilitating the construction of climate resilient school infrastructure and strengthening environment and climate change education – and SDG 6 – by developing water and sanitation facilities at secondary and vocational schools.

The action is further aligned to the New European Consensus on Development⁷ (Council 2017), notably under the theme People – Human Development and Dignity, particularly in fostering the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of developing countries, with the primary aim of eradicating poverty. It contributes to an important commitment in increasing access to quality education for all by paying particular attention on equal access to girls and children that are living in vulnerable situations. It is also consistent with the new Africa - Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs⁸ (2018), in particular with regard to the priority on 'investing in people by investing in education and skills development for employability'. It is also in thematic coherence with the African Union Roadmap on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investment in Youth (2017) and the final declaration of the 5th African Union (AU) - European Union (EU) summit on Investing in Youth for Accelerated Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development (2017).

The action also responds to the EU Gender Action Plan II⁹ in investment in social and economic rights of girls and their empowerment through education. It directly contributes to objective 13. 'Equal access for girls and women to all levels of quality education and vocational education and training (VET) free from discrimination' Finally, the action is fully in line with the EU Agenda for Change¹⁰, which promotes support to the education sector as a means of building the foundation for inclusive growth.

1.3 Public Policy Analysis of the partner country/region

The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III 2017-2022 (MGDS III) aims to transform Malawi into a productive, competitive and resilient country. Education and Skills Development is one of the priority areas to achieve economic growth and the SDGs. Under this priority, the expected outcomes for secondary education are increased access to equitable secondary education for both boys and girls for improved learner outcomes.

⁷ Joint statement by the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission (OJ C 210, 30.6.2017, p.1).

⁸ COM/2018/ 643 final of 12.9.2018, Communication from the Commission to the European parliament, the European Council and the Council: Communication on a new Africa – Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs: Taking our partnership for investment and jobs to the next level.

⁹ SWD/2015/182 final of 21.9.2015, Joint Staff working document: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020.

¹⁰ COM/2011/637 final of 13.10.2011, Communication from the Commission to the European parliament, the European Council and the Council: Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change.

The Education Act (2012) and the National Education Sector Plan 2008-2020 (NESP) recognise education as a catalyst for socio-economic and sustainable development and place special emphasis on the expansion and improvement of secondary education with a focus on increased female enrolment. The NESP asserts that the education system should be responsive to the social, economic and environmental needs of Malawi, hence their integration in the national curriculum at basic and secondary levels. Preparations for a successor sector plan – National Education Sector Implementation Plan (NESIP) 2020-2030 have started. As little was achieved in implementation of NESP, preliminary consultations on the NESIP are recommending a ‘reforms’ approach to addressing the challenges in education. Already identified is the need for mechanisms to ensure continuity in participation of poor learners and a revision of current governance structures for improved oversight in teacher continuous professional development, quality assurance and performance management.

The National Strategy for Teacher Education and Development (NSTED 2007-2017) aimed to address challenges including the low output of teachers from teacher training institutions and inadequate continuing professional teacher development support for teachers. A review of this strategy recommends use of multiple modes of delivery for pre-service teacher training. The Continuous Professional Development (CPD) policy and framework for teachers aim at improving the quality of teaching and learning. The framework encourages CPD trainings at cluster and school based levels. The cluster system¹¹, though established in 2000, has not been systematically functioning. However, it is key to respond to both decentralisation aspects of schools and improving the quality of delivery of education in schools.

The National Girls’ Education Strategy 2018-2023 (NGES) provides the guiding framework for quality girls’ education informed by gender and human rights perspectives. It also guides programming, resource mobilization, allocation, reporting, and coordination. The National Strategy on Inclusive Education 2017-2021 (NIES) expresses Malawi’s commitment to promoting equitable access to relevant and quality education at all levels for children living in vulnerable situations, including those with disabilities.

The Education Decentralisation Plan (2014) envisages the establishment of functional structures at district, cluster and school level for the improvement of services as a measure of better learning outcomes. A draft roadmap for secondary education decentralisation has been developed to guide the process of decentralising secondary education. It is envisaged that the reform will improve capacity to deliver needs-based quality services, strengthen leadership, effectiveness and efficiency, and also accountability of the system. The decentralisation process will enhance the ‘within-school’ and ‘close-to-school’ governance structures, thus strengthening the quality assurance mechanism. It also foresees the introduction of Secondary School Improvement Plans (SSIP); as a whole school plan to improve learning outcomes and welfare of students, including CPD, human and financial management of resources.

Moreover, Malawi has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, that form a platform for enshrining equal rights to education and skills development for all.

1.4 Stakeholder analysis

The main duty-bearer of the action is the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), which is responsible for primary, secondary, higher education and teacher training. The main partners in the ministry are the Directorates of a) Secondary and Distance Education, b) Education Planning, which includes Education Infrastructure Management Unit (EIMU) Inspectorate and Advisory Services (DIAS), and c) Teacher Education. The Malawi Institute of Education (MIE), under MoEST, has responsibility for all aspects related to national education curricula, and approval of textbooks and other instructional materials. The inclusion of other relevant ministries¹² is important to ensure that ISEM II is comprehensively addressing the challenges.

¹¹ Cluster system brings secondary schools, both public and private, within a close proximity, into groups for exchange, peer support, and sharing of resources available to the schools. The best resourced schools are assigned as cluster leaders.

¹² Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Irrigation Development (WASH Department).

Pre-service teacher training is provided by a number of institutions, namely Domasi College of Education (DCE), Nalikule College of Education (NCE), University of Malawi (Chancellor College and the Polytechnic), Mzuzu University and Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR). However, only Chancellor College and Mzuzu University also offer a one year University Certificate of Education (UCE) programme to non-education graduates in order for them to qualify as teachers. Teacher's union(s) can represent teachers and provide them opportunities for a meaningful participation for example in the policy advocacy and monitoring of the action.

Rights-holder of the action is the whole population in Malawi, particularly children and their families, including children living in vulnerable situation, such as children with disabilities. In order to leave no-one behind and make communities voices heard, local communities and their respective community representatives/leaders will be involved during the implementation in the planning and monitoring process. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), both international and local, will represent rights-holders of the action. They play an active role in improving the education sector in Malawi. ISEM II will have to consider to what extent the grant aided initiatives in ISEM I have been successful, but it is anticipated that a similar mode of delivery will be applied.

Gender focal points/units of indicated duty-bearers (public institutions) will be involved whenever possible.

During the inception phase, a further analysis will be conducted of the stakeholders as duty-bearers (public institutions) and representatives of the rights-holders (CSOs and universities) and right-holders (people). During this analysis the capabilities will be assessed: the capabilities of duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations towards rights-holders (regulations, systems, monitoring mechanisms, etc) and rights-holders' capacities to claim their rights regarding equal access to education (i.e. access to information, language barriers, access to schools/transportation, discrimination, etc).

1.5 Problem analysis/priority areas for support

The context description has portrayed the circumstances that still persist with regard to low participation in secondary education and which perpetuate the inter-generational poverty cycle.

There are three different kinds of secondary schools: conventional (day, boarding and open), private (including grant-aided - religious) and Community Day¹³. About 76% of learners, especially from poor families, learn in CDSSs; which are poorly resourced and whose quality of education is compromised. In addition, the majority of these CDSSs are located in remote areas with few or no amenities, including housing. It is therefore a challenge to attract qualified teachers, particularly females, to serve in these schools. As a result, CDSSs have the lowest completion rates and worst performances in national examinations. The disparity between urban and rural schools in terms of completion is 26%, greater than the gender disparity of 9%. While the average pass rate of a conventional day school, at Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) level, is 73%, CDSS average pass rate is at 49%, giving the CDSS lower opportunities to transition to higher education.

A serious shortage of classrooms forced many children to learn outside in the open air or in compromised structures and many children attending schools have limited access to furniture, as well as teaching and learning materials being in short supply. Inadequate and poor infrastructure is one of the most pressing demands in schools and the biggest contributor to the low transition rate. Students continue to learn in dilapidated classrooms and without any laboratories for sciences or adequate sanitation facilities, especially in CDSSs. This situation is further exacerbated during the rainy seasons causing recurrent and increasing flood events in a country where schools are often used as evacuation sites contributing to education disruption, sometimes for weeks. For this reason, a Disaster Preparedness (DP) for schools is mainstreamed and Crisis Modifiers could be used during implementation. In addition, the long distances from home to school that children experience affect attendance and therefore achievement. Girls are at a greater risk as they are subject to sexual violence on their way to, in and from school. Among 13- to 17-year-old females, the most common location for incidents of sexual abuse was on a road or in school¹⁴. Poor water and sanitation facilities further disproportionately affects girls where the lack of clean water and gender-separated toilets can in the long-run lead to permanent drop-out.

¹³ Secondary education is offered through government conventional, CDSSs and private schools. Government conventional schools have the basic minimum and above of infrastructure and other teaching and learning resources. On the contrary, CDSSs are community owned schools with limited infrastructure and teaching and learning resources.

¹⁴ Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (2014) Violence against Children and Young Women in Malawi.

Addressing environmental health in schools has a positive influence in increasing school attendance, especially of girls.

The quality of secondary education is largely affected by low numbers of qualified teachers. The system has 44% of unqualified teachers, the majority of which (81%) are deployed to CDSSs. The output of existing teacher training institutions (TTIs) is unable to meet the ever-growing demand for qualified teachers in the system. This is because TTIs have not diversified the models of delivery (only face-to-face teacher training). Furthermore, MoEST has challenges to recruit and equitably deploy qualified teachers to both urban and rural areas, particularly female teachers who are already few in the system (23%). The low numbers of female teachers also affect girls' retention and completion rates, especially in rural areas, where female teachers may be the only role models for the girls. The balance between subject content and pedagogical skills in TTIs is not always realised. Although a Continuous Professional Development policy and framework are in place, there have been challenges in delivery of CPD due to poor functionality of the cluster system¹⁵ and availability of resources at school level.

From standard 5, the language of instruction is English. However, proficiency in English has been identified as one of the barriers to students' learning and a reason for low learning achievements in lower secondary school. This mostly affects rural learners who experience great challenges with the English language as their exposure to the language is limited to the classroom.

Transition rates from one level of education to the next are very low in Malawi. Of a cohort of 5 million children that entered primary school, only 400 000 make it to secondary school and about 17 000 to higher education. The reality of 95% not accessing higher education places a huge challenge on secondary education, particularly among girls that are overrepresented, to produce students with knowledge and skills to enable them to earn a living and contribute to national development. While technical and vocational education is offered in the secondary school curriculum, only 12 out of 1 487 schools nationwide are equipped with workshops and equipment to offer the subjects¹⁶ and these are only placed in conventional and grant-aided schools.

Education and skills development have direct linkages to other sectors of the economy such as agriculture, manufacturing and services and green jobs. Education provides the transformative power to create the knowledge and skills needed to support a green economy and plays a critical role to reduce and reverse environmental degradation. Improving education outcomes will result in improved productivity, reduced poverty, decreased environmental degradation and other social benefits. On the other hand, women and girls constitute 70% of the agricultural workforce in Malawi, which in turn impacts girls' attendance and parents' engagement to support girls' education. The strategy will therefore focus on improving equal access and learning outcomes across different levels whilst promoting education of girls.

Secondary education remains highly centralized, with few functions devolved to decentralized levels. As a result, there are high inefficiencies in the system, low participation of community stakeholders, little or no quality assurance on school activities, and mismatch between the school needs and MoEST provisions of financial and human resources.

¹⁵ Cluster system refers to schools within close proximity that form a cluster. The most adequately resourced school becomes cluster leader, and shares its resources with others.

¹⁶ Secondary school curriculum offers 3 TVET subjects: Technical drawing, wood work and metal work.

2 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Risks	Risk level (H/M/L)	Mitigating measures
Education Infrastructure Management Unit (EIMU) may not have the leadership and capacity to coordinate a wide range of infrastructure improvement projects for secondary schools and ensure uniformity in design and construction, including planning and ensuring accessibility for students with disabilities and separate sanitation facilities for boys and girls.	Medium	ISEM II may have to support EIMU through targeted capacity building measures to enhance the leadership and effectiveness of the unit. CSOs will represent rights of different groups of rights-holders, including girls, women, and people, particularly children, living in vulnerable situations.
Assumptions		
EIMU will be open for innovative and gender-sensitive school infrastructure design and construction and apply these to ensure uniformity and agreed minimum standards for all secondary infrastructure projects. This will include climate-proofing school infrastructure to be resilient to the impacts of climate change or re-locating schools to locations that are less vulnerable to extreme weather (moving schools out of flood prone area) in line with disaster Risk Prevention principles. Minimum standards will also ensure accessibility to school buildings and sanitation facilities for persons with disabilities, and separate sanitation facilities for boys and girls. Climate/vulnerability, human rights, disability and gender equality assessments will be conducted during the inception phase. The assessment will include capacity gap analysis of different stakeholders. The proposed actions will develop the capacities of the stakeholders as ‘rights-holders’/people to claim their rights and ‘duty-bearers’/public institutions to meet their obligations.		
Risks	Risk level	Mitigating measures
The teacher training institutions may not be in a position to train the required number of additional teachers needed for the expanded secondary education in the short and medium term.	High	Together with teacher training institutions, develop alternative modes of secondary teacher education that would allow higher output of trained teachers. In the short term, engage TTIs to offer UCE programme to non-education graduates who may be interested to join the teaching profession.
Assumptions		
Government will support the necessary strategies and funding to expand pre-service teacher education and that teacher education institutions are willing to utilise alternative modes of delivery for teacher education. Education on environment and climate change will, for example, be integrated with a focus on addressing country and region-specific issues (e.g. soil conservation and value of water), as well as developing skills in secondary schools through practical and hand-on methods.		
Risks	Risk level	Mitigating measures
Lack of preparedness and capacity constraints at the district, cluster and school levels to take on the decentralised functions.	Medium	Technical Assistance will be provided to build capacity of school governance structures develop SSIPs and effectively manage the resources, as well for cluster advisors to provide quality assurance support to the schools.
Assumptions		
Key stakeholders continue to support the implementation of the decentralisation roadmap and MoEST has the capacity and resilience to make the governance transition.		

Risks	Risk level	Mitigating measures
Budget constraints may make it difficult for government to recruit and retain qualified teachers.	Medium	Support budget analysis to determine absorption capacity of additional teachers, also addressing efficiency of the sector. Policy dialogue with strong emphasis on government's responsibility to recruit available qualified teachers and retain them. Dialogue should include Ministry of Finance and IMF, as they are responsible for determining wage bill ceilings.
Risk of corruption.		Corruption is combatted in a comprehensive way, effective policy solutions, including measures to enhance transparency of procurement process and prevent conflicts of interests as well as measures to ensure enforcement and detection, will be in place.
Assumptions		
There is political will and commitment from government to implement strategic changes in the delivery of secondary education and the government will allocate the necessary funds to recruit the teachers needed for expanded, equitable secondary education, and ensure their timely payment and retention.		

3 LESSONS LEARNT AND COMPLEMENTARITY

3.1 Lessons learnt

This action capitalises on the existing support to the secondary education sub-sector through the ISEM I programme and has taken into consideration the findings of the Mid-Term Review (MTR). It should be noted that while there are many complimentary programmes in the sector, with the exception of the Department for International Development's (DFID) keeping Girls in School, the other programmes are less than 1 year into implementation. Therefore, lessons from both ISEM I and the KGIS programmes have been taken into account for the design and implementation of ISEM II.

Lessons learnt from ISEM I show that there is need to strengthen coordination among EU Delegation, National Authorising Officer (NAO) Support Unit and Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), including regular meetings of the programme steering and technical committees. Similarly, regular communication and collaboration is required between all implementing partners and MoEST for accountability and monitoring of the initiatives. The technical assistance team will facilitate this coordination. There is also need to consider male students for poor families for direct support (bursaries, bicycles, etc).

With challenges of maintenance of public infrastructure, it is important to provide high quality infrastructures, but it is also important to ensure its cost-effectiveness. The current MoEST school designs, as used by ISEM, are very costly and need to be reviewed. Before implementation of the works, it will be important to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the schools, including land ownership and boundaries. The management structure of the contract also needs to be reviewed.

ISEM I provided scholarships for underqualified teachers in the system to upgrade to the minimum qualification of a diploma. The training was tailor-made for ISEM as none of the teacher training institutions have institutionalised open distance learning (ODL). As a result, unit cost of training these teachers were very high. There were also challenges in the sequencing of calendars for the teacher training and the secondary academic calendar, thus affecting learning. Future programmes need to consider supporting TTIs to institutionalise ODL and e-learning, and to ensure learning is not affected by teacher trainings, including CPDs.

Significant funds (from the EU and other partners, including DFID) have been invested to keep girls in school and the main strategy has been provision of bursaries. This has positively impacted on the direct beneficiaries who have been supported to access and complete secondary school. However, there are serious challenges in sustainability of the support beyond projects. Support to girls has also mainly been channelled through civil society and it has been noted to be costly, where administrative costs are higher than actual funds for beneficiaries. Cost effective and sustainable ways of supporting girls and

vulnerable groups need to be explored. The Ministry of Education is also in the process of establishing a National Girls Education Trust, which aims to coordinate all support towards girls' education and also leverage government contribution to the Trust to attract donor or private sector funding.

With the growing investment in secondary education, there is need for closer collaboration of all programmes with MoEST. A MoEST-DP secondary education programme coordination group has been proposed to support a well-functioning secondary education system. It will improve governance, accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in school operations and implementation of projects.

The drive to improve learning outcomes in secondary education has led to a process of reforms in the sub-sector, including the process of decentralisation. This will only be successful with political will and government ownership of the process, including provision of necessary resources (both financial and human resources) to the process.

3.2 Complementarity, synergy and donor coordination

Development partner support to secondary education has significantly increased in recent years. The World Bank's Equity with Quality and Learning at Secondary (EQUALS) programme also aims to increase equitable access to quality secondary education, with a focus on science and mathematics. Similarly, USAID through the Secondary Education Expansion for Development (SEED) project will construct and refurbish 200 secondary schools in rural districts of the country but these have not yet been mapped. These initiatives necessitate coordination, mainly in the selection of districts and a feasible strategy to address the expected teacher gap from the expansion of existing and construction of new schools. Existing coordination structures (technical working and donor coordination groups will strengthen this coordination.

DFID's Keeping Girls in School and the UN Joint Programme on Improving Access and Quality of Education for Girls in Malawi are specifically focused on increasing access and completion of secondary education for girls. The support has led to increase in retention of girls in secondary school. Other emerging programmes such as a Spotlight Initiative have undertaken the construction of girls' hostels as a strategy for protection of girls from sexual violence and other risks such as early pregnancies.

ECHO Disaster Preparedness (DP) and Education in Emergency funds in recent years contributed to integrate DP in schools, reinforcing the involvement of teachers, students and local civil protection committees to become more prepared to face natural hazards such as floods. These programmes included rehabilitation of schools to make them more resilient to rapid onset disasters. However, the 2019 flood (which followed the IDAI cyclone) showed the need to scale up DP support to a larger number of schools.

The ISEM II programme will be further complemented by the EU support to Vocational Education and Training (TVET) under the STEP programme and its follow up intervention 'Zantchito – Skills for Jobs'. This action will focus on increasing the capacity of the TVET sector through expansion and improvement of equitable, safe and gender-balanced vocational education and training. The synergy between the two EU interventions under focal sector 3 can be seen in providing a pathway for students, in particular girls and young women, successfully completing secondary education at CDSSs and then progressing towards relevant and gender-balanced vocational education and training leading to business start-ups, thus contributing to decent jobs, self-employment, economic growth and human development in line with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III (MDGS 2017-2022). The programme will promote the transition to a green economy that is reliant on trained women and men able to tackle major transformations, including globalisation, environmental degradation, food insecurity and climate change.

The ISEM II programme (Improving Secondary Education in Malawi) could also be usefully complemented by the "Capacity building in Vocational Education and Training" Action of the Erasmus+ programme where secondary education schools are interested in cooperating with other VET providers in Malawi, Africa and Europe. Such CBVET projects support for example VET teachers training, definition of new curricula, cooperation with local employers to better adapt training content to their needs.

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

4.1 Overall objective, specific objective(s), expected outputs and indicative activities

The **Overall Objective** (OO) of this action is to provide young people with more equitable opportunities for completing good quality secondary education and development skills.

The action has 3 **Specific Objectives** (SO) addressing areas of: equitable access, quality and relevance, and governance and management of secondary education.

***Specific Objective 1 (SO1)** Promote equitable enrolment to secondary education.*

The following expected outputs will be achieved under SO1:

Expected Output 1.1: Upgraded and expanded secondary school infrastructure, and expanded technical vocational education facilities in secondary schools, including improved access to persons with disabilities, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) facilities and climate resilient infrastructure.

Expected Output 1.2: Increased access to secondary education, particularly for female students and students living in vulnerable situations.

***Specific Objective 2 (SO2)** Improve the quality of secondary education.*

The following expected outputs will be achieved under SO2:

Expected Output 2.1: Targeted schools, including cluster centres, new technical vocational workshops and boarding facilities, are resourced.

Expected Output 2.2: Teachers' pedagogical and technical knowledge and skills are improved including in environment and disaster preparedness, gender equality, human rights and WASH education.

Expected Output 2.3: Increased capacity of government teacher-training institutions to provide distance and e-learning services for teachers.

Expected Output 2.4: Monitoring and evaluation of the new secondary school curriculum is supported.

Expected Output 2.5: English language competency improved for English language teachers and junior secondary school students.

***Specific Objective 3 (SO3)** Improve governance and management of secondary education institutions at central and decentralised levels.*

The following expected outputs will be achieved under SO3:

Expected Output 3.1: Leadership skills of education managers are improved.

Expected Output 3.2: Improved professionalism in secondary education service provision.

Expected Output 3.3: Improved management, accountability and quality of service provision.

Under **expected output 1.1**, the following main activities are envisaged: (i) conduct a needs/impact assessment (including capacity gap analysis regarding human rights, gender equality, disability and climate vulnerability assessment) of the infrastructure works for selected CDSSs in the original 6 ISEM demonstration districts and 6 additional districts; (ii) upgrade selected CDSSs based on the needs identified against an agreed, basic minimum package, taking into consideration classroom blocks, library, ablution blocks, teacher houses, multipurpose hall, laboratories for science teaching, boarding facilities for male and female students, technical education workshops; matron's house, water and power supply, sex-segregated sanitation facilities and maize mill; (iii) construct 24 cluster centre resource rooms across the 12 target districts with preference given to CDSSs against an agreed, basic minimum package of required facilities; and (iv) construct boarding facilities for female students in six district boarding schools identified based on needs, and a matron's house and rehabilitation of existing hostels; and (v) inclusion of a technical vocational facility in each supported secondary school. The total number of supported upgraded, expanded and resilient secondary schools forecast for support is 40.

Under **expected output 1.2**, the following activities are envisaged: provide grant-aided interventions to students, particularly females and students living in vulnerable situations, with a focus on enrolment, retention and completion rates through interventions with proven impact such as bursaries and bicycles support schemes, increased counselling through psychosocial and peer group support and initiatives to

bring back drop-outs. Develop a mechanism for ensuring good public financial management of bursary funds received by schools. The activities to be carried out under the grant procedures will be executed in close collaboration with the district, cluster and school managers, teachers, students and the local communities.

Under **expected output 2.1**, the following main activities are envisaged: (i) procure and distribute textbooks, science kits and teachers' guides for all core subjects and those subjects currently provided in upgraded schools; (ii) procure and distribute furniture for upgraded classrooms, cluster resource centres and boarding facilities; (iii) procure equipment for laboratories and technical workshops in upgraded schools, reference libraries and e-learning resources for cluster centre resource rooms. Activities under this expected output will be supported through a framework contract to determine the specific needs and technical specifications for the envisaged supplies.

Under **expected output 2.2**, the following main activities are envisaged: (i) support the development of a teacher competency framework linked to school and teacher education standards including benchmarking; (ii) support the further operationalisation of the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) framework; (iii) provide further support for the development of subject based CPD materials and other support resources including to facilitate environment, climate change and WASH education; (iv) ensure all support embeds the human rights principles of inclusion and (gender) equality in teaching and learning; (v) support school-based and cluster based CPDs, including the expansion of communities of practice at school, cluster, district and national levels; (vi) provide scholarships to underqualified teachers, prioritising female teachers, to undergo upgrading in teacher education institutions; (vii) provide scholarships to degree holding individuals to pursue a University Certificate in Education (UCE) course to become qualified teachers; and (viii) orient teachers on basic disaster preparedness and education in emergency in line with DODMA recommendations.

Under **expected output 2.3**, the following main activities are envisaged: (i) conduct a feasibility study on the implementation of open and distance learning and e-learning approaches to pre- and in-service teacher education, including benchmarking; (ii) support secondary teacher education institutions to develop and mount open and distance learning and e-learning programmes for pre- and in-service teacher training following the feasibility study; (iii) support teacher education institutions to develop modules and content for selected subjects offered at secondary school level, including minor subjects; (iv) support the teacher education institutions to develop modules on learner centred pedagogy and competency-based teaching and learning methodologies; (v) build capacity of teacher educators on teacher competencies; and (vi) support the introduction of an annual modular University Certificate of Education programme for graduates with general degrees.

Under **expected output 2.4**, the following main activities are envisaged: (i) support systemic monitoring of the implementation of the new secondary school curriculum; (ii) support external evaluation of the implementation of the new secondary school curriculum; and (iii) propose adjustments to the new secondary school curriculum on the basis of Monitoring and Evaluation findings. Curriculum is foreseen to especially strengthen science and mathematics subjects, include traditional courses and integrate new topics such as on environmental aspects and WASH.

Under **expected output 2.5**, the following main activities are envisaged: (i) support MOEST in the development of an English language study skills upgrading course for junior secondary school students, (ii) train teachers to facilitate the English language study skills upgrading, (iii) pilot the English language study skills upgrading course, and (iv) develop assessment systems for English language at junior level.

Under **expected output 3.1**, the following main activities are envisaged: (i) in alignment with the Performance Management Roadmap, support the development of a school leadership competency framework and its application at school level and close-to-school levels; and (ii) support the relevant MoEST directorates (DEP, DIAS, DSDE, DTED) in the roll out of the decentralised performance management system for the secondary education sub-sector in close collaboration with activities carried out under EQUALS. Strengthened MoEST collaboration with environment and related agencies will be sought to support environment and WASH education (e.g. departments and ministries of water, forest, environment, health, etc).

In order to strengthen secondary education service delivery under Specific Objective 3, the following two expected outputs will support the roll out of the Decentralisation Roadmap for Secondary Education.

Under **expected output 3.2**, the following main activities are envisaged: (i) support the introduction and implementation of a decentralised district, cluster and school-based performance management system and data collection for secondary education with regard to monitoring reports for quality assurance; (ii) support the introduction and implementation of a ‘within school’¹⁷ and ‘close to school’¹⁸ quality assurance mechanism and application of processes at school, cluster and district levels; and (iii) build capacity of cluster advisors in line with professional competencies required.

Under **expected output 3.3**, the following main activities are envisaged: (i) support the introduction and implementation of SSIP¹⁹ and reporting modalities for improved accountability at school, cluster and district levels; (ii) support continuous professional development (CPD) for the improvement of head teachers’ leadership and management skills; (iii) strengthen community involvement in school governance and support the establishment and capacity building of Parent Teacher Associations and Board of Governors in line with the Education Act; and (iv) support the establishment of secondary schools as cost centres²⁰ and develop capacity to manage school funds.

4.2 Intervention Logic

The action builds on the experiences and outcomes of ISEM I. The current context of Malawi calls for increased output of young people with some level of education to become productive citizens. By expanding secondary education to provide the youth, including girls and those from rural areas, it will increase their opportunity for higher education and earning capacity. This can only be realised if the education and skills provided are of good quality. Furthermore, a strong and capacitated governance and management structure would be required to support the quality service delivery and provide policy guidance and oversight functions.

The upgrading and expansion of climate proof infrastructure in CDSS will enable the learners in rural communities also access good quality education. Special support, including the boarding facilities, to the girls and other learners in vulnerable situations will also ensure that there is no financial or safety barriers to their accessing secondary education. Boys and girls with special needs will be able to attend and remain enrolled in school despite their different gender roles and specific (protection and support) needs. Academic support will also be provided to achieve meaningful participation and learner achievement. By focusing on rural schools (CDSSs) and girls, ISEM II addresses the equity gap between the rural and urban schools. This will increase access to quality secondary education while making it more equitable.

Moreover, the schools will be provided with adequate teaching and learning materials to support quality learning, and the teachers trained through CPDs to enhance their pedagogical skills. For those teachers who are underqualified, especially female teachers, they will be supported to attain minimum qualifications. Availability of female teachers in the schools also supports retention of girls, particularly those in rural areas, where the female teachers are seen as role models, and assist in mentoring the female learners. Open and distance learning and e-learning will specifically be explored so that the training does not disrupt learning of students in the classrooms. This should lead to an increased level of quality of teaching. The action will benefit Malawi’s youth, particularly girls and students in vulnerable situations, to access and complete quality secondary education.

In addition to this, the schools will have operational budget built around the SSIPs. Through cluster system, the schools will have peer support and advisory services. School and district managers will be held accountable for improved learning environments and learning. This will provide much needed support to governance reforms for improved service delivery, including financing.

ISEM II is anchored on the reforms advanced within the decentralisation policy and set roadmap, and aligned to government’s vision for the sector and its role in development. As the reforms address not only the service delivery but also the accountability mechanisms, it is expected that these will lead to a stronger and more equitable, efficient, well-coordinated secondary education sub-sector. Government’s commitment to implement its policies in an effective and efficient manner will be critical to ensure sustainability of the action. As a result, this will translate into improved participation and completion

¹⁷ ‘Within school’ quality assurance is understood to be done by peers, heads of departments and head teachers.

¹⁸ ‘Close to school’ quality assurance is understood to be done by cluster advisors, SEMAs and PEMAs.

¹⁹ Secondary School Improvement Plans.

²⁰ ‘Cost centre’ allows the school to directly receive funds and manage from Treasury, independent of the Division or District office.

rates, resulting in improved skills and overall learning outcomes. In turn, the education system will thereby be contributing to sustainable development and green economic growth.

4.3 Mainstreaming

A number of cross-cutting issues are at the core of the action, considering its inclusiveness and gender-based objectives, with an effort to leave no one behind. The action will endeavour to mitigate any possible unintended negative human rights impacts that may emerge as a result of the action.

Gender equality and girls' empowerment will not only be mainstreamed into the results areas, activities and indicators but will also be a principal objective of the action. The action will seek to support girls' safe access to and retention in secondary schools through implementation of several strategies targeting the school and communities.

Climate change and environment

are issues pertinent to the education sector and will be integrated in all specific objectives. Issues of water and sanitation will be addressed in all infrastructure projects from gender-perspective, and environmentally friendly and climate resilient design and materials will be used in construction and rehabilitation of schools. Education on the environment and climate change will be integrated in secondary schools and vocational training.

Malawi is highly exposed to rapid and slow onset natural disasters (floods, strong winds, earthquakes). Education on disaster preparedness, especially in relation to climate change hazards, will be integrated in secondary schools and vocational training.

Equality considerations will be pursued especially for students with special educational needs and for people living in vulnerable situations and remote areas to ensure these can access secondary education. All new and rehabilitated school infrastructures will be accessible for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, local communities will be engaged on the right to education for all children.

Good governance and accountability will be addressed through supporting the roadmap for decentralisation of secondary education. This will improve the governance and management capacity at school level, allow for greater exercise of local decision making and improvement in the quality and learning outcomes of secondary education. Policy dialogue will also advocate for gender-responsive budgeting and more equitable spending of public finances in the education sector.

HIV & AIDS: Malawi still has a significant HIV & AIDS problem which will be addressed in this programme through the life skills²¹ course and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)²². The curriculum review will include these subjects and the CPDs will also enhance teacher competency to effectively deliver them.

4.4 Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This action contributes primarily to the progressive achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 – Quality Education, in particular target 4.1 (ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes), target 4.5 (eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to relevant and effective learning outcomes), target 4a (build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all) and target 4c (substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers). The intervention also contributes to SDG 5 on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. In addition, through the programme's development of climate resilient school infrastructure and integration of environment and WASH education, the initiative will address SDG 13 (climate change) and SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation).

²¹ Delivered as a core subject in the secondary education curriculum.

²² To be delivered through grant partners working with the schools under result 1.2.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Financing agreement

In order to implement this action, it is foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

5.2 Indicative implementation period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 4 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 72 months from the date of entry into force of the financing agreement.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

5.3 Implementation of the budget support component

Not applicable.

5.4 Implementation modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures²³.

5.4.1 Grants: (direct management)

Two different grants will be awarded in this Action:

- 1) Grant to achieve result 1.2 'enrolment, retention and completion rates, particularly for female and other students living in vulnerable situations are increased'

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The grants will contribute to achieve result 1.2 'enrolment, retention and completion rates, particularly for female and other students living in vulnerable situations are increased' as participation and performance of students in secondary education will be increased and improved. Social support mechanisms as part of the grant implementation will also help to improve the performance of the target group.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

- local (Malawian) legal entities (civil society, education bodies, private sector companies and associations);
- national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
- international (and inter-governmental organisations).

- 2) Grant to the Government to achieve results 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 & 2.5, 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3

a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The part of the action i) improving quality and relevance of secondary education by providing teaching and learning resources and enhancing teacher pre-service and in-service training and development to deliver the new secondary curriculum (Results 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 & 2.5); (ii) improving governance and management capacity of secondary education institutions of decentralised secondary education service delivery at division, district, cluster and school level (Results 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3); which were implemented through a MAPE will continue in a grant.

In addition, a grant will also cover the implementation of activities under the Specific Objectives 1 to *promote equitable enrolment to secondary education* and Specific Objective 2) *improve the quality of secondary education.*; and specifically of selected activities under Results 1.1, such as Upgraded and

²³ www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

expanded secondary school infrastructure, and expanded technical vocational education facilities in secondary schools, including improved WASH facilities and climate resilient infrastructure and Result 2.1 Targeted schools, cluster centres, new technical vocational workshops, and boarding facilities, are resourced.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

Direct Grant with the Government of Malawi.

(c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the Ministry of Education.

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is foreseen in Article 195 (c) of the Financial Regulation since the Ministry of Education, as holder of the policy, is in a situation of monopoly de jure and de facto to achieve the objectives described to above.

(d) Changes from Direct to Indirect Management

The part of the action under the budgetary envelope reserved for grants may, partially or totally and including where an entity is designated for receiving a grant without a call for proposals, be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: proven regional/ international experience in implementing programmes on improving the quality and the governance of the education sector.

5.4.2 Procurement (direct management)

Procurements under direct management are described in section 4.1, results 1.1, 1.2 and 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3.

The Technical Assistance service tender was launched in the 1st quarter of 2023 under a suspensive clause prior to the adoption of this decision. The current TA is ending in December 2023 and the new TA shall start at the latest in January 2024 in order to continue the implementation of the activities.

5.4.3 Indirect management with the partner country

The parts of this action with the objective of (i) improving quality and relevance of secondary education by providing teaching and learning resources and enhancing teacher pre-service and in-service training and development to deliver the new secondary curriculum (Results 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 & 2.5); (ii) improving governance and management capacity of secondary education institutions of decentralised secondary education service delivery at division, district, cluster and school level (Results 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3); and (iii) providing targeted technical assistance to carry out related activities may be implemented in indirect management with the Government of Malawi (through the NAO Support Unit) according to the following modalities:

The results 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 & 2.5, 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3 are implemented partly in Indirect Management and are complementary to the activities that will be implemented under grants and procurement in Direct Management. The Government of Malawi (through the NAO Support Unit) will act as the contracting authority for the procurement and grant procedures. The Commission will control ex-ante all procurement and grant procedures except in cases where programme estimates are applied, under which the Commission applies ex-ante control for procurement contracts above EUR 100 000 and may apply ex-post control for procurement contracts up to that threshold. The Commission will control ex-ante the grant procedures for all grant contracts.

Payments are executed by the Commission except in cases where programmes estimates are applied, under which payments are executed by the partner country for ordinary operating costs, direct labour and contracts below EUR 300 000 for procurement and for grants.

The financial contribution covers, for an amount of EUR 100 000, the ordinary operating costs incurred under the programme estimates.

The partner country shall apply the Commission's rules on procurement and grants. These rules will be laid down in the financing agreement to be concluded with the partner country.

5.4.4 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

In case of Direct Management with Grants to the Government (point 5.4.1.2. above) (Results 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1., 3.2 and 3.3) or Procurement (point 5.4.2. above) cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, the activities will be implemented in indirect management through an entrusted entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: proven regional/ international experience in implementing programmes on improving the quality and the governance of the education sector.

5.5 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

- a) The Commission decides that natural and legal persons from the following countries having traditional economic, trade or geographical links with neighbouring partner countries shall be eligible for participating in procurement and grant award procedures see Article 22(1)(a) of Annex IV to the ACP-EU partnership Agreement. The supplies originating there shall also be eligible.
- b) The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the markets of the countries concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

5.6 Indicative budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Implementation modalities – cf. section 5.4	
Objective 1 promote equitable enrolment to secondary education	35.150.000
Objective 1 output 1 Upgraded and expanded secondary school infrastructure, and expanded technical vocational education facilities in secondary schools, including improved WASH facilities and climate resilient infrastructure.	
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 5.4.2 (needs assessment works)	750.000
Grant to the Government of Malawi 5.4.1.2 (works)	32.443.628
Expected Output 1.2: Increased access to secondary education, particularly for female students and students living in vulnerable situations, are increased	
Grants (direct management) – cf. section 5.4.1	1.956.372
Objective 2 improve the quality of secondary education and Objective 3 Improved governance and management of secondary education institutions at central and decentralised levels	16.750.000
Expected Output 2.1: Targeted schools, cluster centres, new technical vocational workshops, and boarding facilities, are resourced.	
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 5.4.2 (needs assessment supplies)	200.000
Grant to the Government of Malawi- cf. section 1.2 (supplies)	8.000.000
Expected Output 2.2-2.5 / 3.1-3.3	
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 5.4.2 (TA n°2)	2.226.225
Indirect management with Malawi cf. section 5.4.4 (TA n°1)	1.573.775
Indirect management with Malawi cf. section 5.4.4 (MAPE)	2.921.090
Direct grant with Government of Malawi cf. section 5.4.1	1.828.910
Evaluations cf. section 5.9)	700.000
Audit (cf. section 5.10)	
Communication and visibility (cf. Section 5.11)	400.000
Contingencies	2.000.000
Totals	55.000.000

5.7 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be set up for the programme. The PSC will be composed of the main stakeholders and counterparts of the programme and meet at least bi-annually or more often if needed. The chair of the PSC will be the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and members will include the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and Development (the National Authorising Officer Support Unit), the Ministry of Labour, Skills and Innovation (responsible for TEVET), the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture, the Ministry of Local Government, the Education Infrastructure Management Unit (EIMU), the Department of WASH under Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Irrigation Development, Local Government representative(s), representatives (2) of CSOs and of the grant holders (in rotation) as well as the EU Delegation. The PSC will be responsible for the strategic oversight of implementation, policy guidance and monitoring of the action.

In addition to the PSC and to ensure better coordination and collaboration among the various stakeholders involved in the implementation of the components under direct and indirect management, technical coordination meetings will be held regularly. The technical coordination group will comprise representatives of the relevant directorates from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology involved in the implementation of ISEM II, the NAO Support Unit, the EU Delegation, the Technical Assistance Team (TAT), and grant holders.

A Technical Assistance Team (TAT) will be recruited to assist the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology with the implementation of activities foreseen in direct management and indirect management with the partner country under SOs 2 and 3, results 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1 and 3.2. The TAT will also provide secretarial services for the PSC. In addition to the implementation of tasks for the results under its responsibility, the TAT may support the NAO and the EU Delegation to ensure coherence between the activities. The Ministry should ensure that the necessary human resources are in place prior to this programme in order to assume ownership of the programme and that the planned capacity building exercises can be implemented.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

Gender equality, human rights and rights-based approach expertise will be ensured during the implementation of the action as much as possible. They will also be integrated in relevant capacity building activities and documents (i.e. ToRs, etc) as minimum requirements of expertise.

5.8 Performance and Results monitoring and reporting

The EU Delegation will maintain a key role in monitoring and overview of the action and in following up on reporting by the implementing partners. The monitoring, review and evaluation of sector performance in regard to the Secondary Education sub-sector in Malawi is mainly carried out by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology through the EMIS, which provides annual education statistics. However, this is compromised by lack of reliable and timely data collection for the sub-sector, which is one of the shortcomings and challenges the EQUALS intervention will address through upgrading of ICT enabled systems to support data management at EMIS, digitisation of school level data collection and putting in place a Secondary Teacher Management Information System (STMIS). As such, this action will benefit from better results monitoring once these systems are operationalised. In addition, performance monitoring in line with the logical framework matrix will be carried out both by EU and all other actors. The EU will also ensure that data collected through the in-house monitoring will feed into the final evaluation of the programme.

Any monitoring and evaluation will be gender-sensitive, assess gender equality results and implementation of rights-based approach working method principles (participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency) in terms of implementation of the project and project outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation will be based on indicators that are disaggregated by a minimum sex and age when applicable. In order to monitor development and inequalities data/indicators will be disaggregated even further including disability, location urban/rural, etc, when applicable. Key stakeholders will be involved in the monitoring process.

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (outputs and direct outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the Logframe matrix. SDGs indicators should be taken into account.

Reports shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

5.9 Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, mid-term and final evaluations will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants.

The mid-term evaluation will be carried out for learning purposes, with respect to relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the action.

The final evaluation will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), considering in particular the fact that the action combines three complementary components implemented through different modes of delivery.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least six months in advance of the dates foreseen for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

Evaluation services may be contracted under a framework contract.

5.10 Audit

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

It is foreseen that audit services may be contracted under a framework contract.

5.11 Communication and visibility

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU.

This action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action, to be elaborated at the start of implementation.

For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union.

In terms of legal obligations on communication and visibility, the measures shall be implemented by the Commission, the partner country, contractors, grant beneficiaries and/or entrusted entities. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included in, respectively, the financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

The Communication and Visibility Requirements for European Union External Action (or any succeeding document) shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.

It is foreseen that a contract for communication and visibility may be contracted under a framework contract. The indicated budget of EUR 400 000 shall cover the visibility and communication actions.

APPENDIX - INDICATIVE LOGFRAME MATRIX (FOR PROJECT MODALITY) ²⁴

Overall objective	Intervention Logic	Indicators	Sources of data	Assumptions
Overall objective: impact	Provide young people with more equitable opportunities for completing good quality secondary education and developing skills.	1) Adult literacy rate (% ages 15–24 years old) Disaggregated by sex **EURF 1.7 2) Percentage of population, aged 25 and above, with secondary education (disaggregated by sex) 3) Percentage of population with MSCE that is employed (disaggregated by sex)	1) Human Development Reports 2) World Bank Reports 3) UNESCO UIS on SDGs	
Specific objectives: outcomes	S.O 1: Promote equitable enrolment to secondary education	1.1 Number of students enrolled in secondary schools with support of EU (disaggregated by sex, disability, urban/rural) **EURF 2.7 1.2 Gender Parity Index (GPI) 1.3 Transition rate from primary to secondary school (disaggregated by disability, urban/rural)	1.1 , 1.2, 1.3 EMIS: Malawi Annual Education Statistics	Efforts to enrol more female and other vulnerable students will be reflected in increased and improved opportunities for them in the secondary education system.
	S.O. 2: Improve quality of secondary education	2.1 Pass rate at MSCE (disaggregated by sex) 2.2 Secondary education completion rate (disaggregated by sex) 2.3 Student/Qualified Teacher Ratio (STQR)	2.1, 2.2, 2.3 EMIS: Malawi Annual Education Statistics	Investment in teacher training and secondary school equipment and resources will increase the quality and relevance of secondary education.
	S.O. 3: Improve governance and management of secondary education institutions at central and decentralised levels	3.1 Level of implementation of Road map for decentralisation of secondary education	3.1 MoEST decentralisation progress reports	MoEST will continue to roll out the decentralisation of secondary education to districts, clusters and schools.

²⁴ Indicators aligned with the relevant programming document marked with '*' and indicators aligned to the EU Results Framework with '**'.

	Intervention Logic	Indicators	Sources of data	Assumptions
Outputs for SO 1 - Promote equitable enrolment	1.1 Upgraded and expanded secondary school infrastructure, and expanded technical vocational education facilities in secondary schools, including improved access to students with disabilities, WASH facilities and climate resilient infrastructure	1.1.1 Number of Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS) upgraded and expanded with support of the action 1.1.2 Number of additional resilient spaces created in the targeted schools with support of the action 1.1.3 Number of CDSSs with technical vocational facilities introduced by the action 1.1.4 Number of cluster centre resource rooms constructed 1.1.5 % of pupils enrolled in primary and secondary schools providing drinking water, adequate sanitation, and adequate hygiene services (SDG 4.35)	1.1.1 Construction reports, Annual Education Sector Performance reports 1.1.2 EMIS: Malawi Annual Education Statistics 1.1.3 EMIS: Malawi Annual Education Statistics 1.1.4 Construction reports 1.1.5 EMIS: Malawi Annual Education Statistics	MoEST will follow the selection guideline to identify the most in-need schools for the upgrading and expansion, also in coordination with other DPs involved in infrastructure development
	1.2 Increased access to secondary education, particularly for female students and students living in vulnerable situations.	1.2.1 Number of students supported by the action who have been retained in secondary education (disaggregated by sex, age, disability) 1.2.2 % of students in target schools supported by psychosocial (counselling & guidance) programmes implemented with support of the action	1.2.1, 1.2.2 a) Education Sector Performance System: School reports b) Progress reports by CSOs (grantees)	Female and other students in vulnerable situations are receptive to the incentives and remain in secondary school for the entire secondary education cycle.

	Intervention Logic	Indicators	Sources of data	Assumptions
Outputs for SO 2 - Improved quality of secondary education	2.1 Targeted schools, including cluster centres, new technical and vocational workshops and boarding facilities, are resourced.	2.2.1 Number of CDSS equipped with appropriate furniture, TLMs and equipment with the support of the action 2.2.2 Number of Technical Workshops equipped and functional with support of the action 2.2.3 Number of cluster centres equipped with appropriate materials with support of the action 2.2.4 Number of cluster advisors supported with mobility equipment with support of the action	2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4 a) Provisional Acceptance Certificates of supplies b) DIAS inspection records c) District, cluster & school performance management reports	GoM continues to support maintenance of new equipment and other materials provided to schools.
	2.2 Teachers' pedagogical and technical knowledge and skills are improved including in environment, gender equality, human rights and WASH and Disaster Preparedness education	2.2.1 Status of implementation of Teacher competency framework with the support of the action 2.2.2 Number of under-qualified teachers trained by the action positively assessed related to the training subjects (disaggregated by sex)	2.2.1, 2.2.2 a) DTED performance management reports b) DIAS inspection records	Government continues to support teacher upgrading in accordance with CPD and teacher competency frameworks.
	2.3 Increased capacity of government teacher-training institutions to provide distance and e-learning services for teachers	2.3.1 Status of implementation of Open Distance and e-Learning (OdeL) teacher education programmes	2.3.1 Annual TTIs performance reports	Government supports the necessary strategies and funding to expand pre-service teacher education and TTIs willing to utilise alternative modes of delivery for teacher education.
	2.4 Monitoring and evaluation of the new secondary school curriculum is supported	2.4.1 Status of procedures for termly M&E reports developed by the action 2.4.2 Status of review of implementation of the new curriculum with support of the action	2.4.1, 2.4.2 Malawi Institute of Education (MIE) performance management reports	MIE, MoEST and other key stakeholder collaborate in the monitoring and evaluation of the new secondary school curriculum and agree to adjustment and rationalisation of the curriculum, where necessary.

	Intervention Logic	Indicators	Sources of data	Assumptions
	2.5 English language competency improved for English language teachers and junior secondary school students	2.5.1 Percentage of teachers with increased knowledge in English (disaggregated by sex) 2.5.2 Number of student study circles for English language instituted with support of the action	2.5.1 Pre and post-training assessments 2.5.2 School and cluster reports	MoEST, MIE and other key stakeholder collaborate in the development of a module to improve English language competencies among teachers and students
Outputs for SO 3 – Improve governance and management of secondary education institutions at centralized and decentralized levels	3.1 Leadership skills of education managers are improved.	3.1.1 Status of development of school leadership competency framework with the support of the action 3.1.2 Status of implementation of performance management tool with the support of the action	3.1.1, 3.1.2 a) Programme's own monitoring mechanisms b) DIAS inspection records	Government and key stakeholders continue to support the implementation of the decentralisation roadmap to enhance the management and governance of secondary education service delivery and the appropriate human and financial resources are available.
	3.2 Improved professionalism in secondary education service provision	3.2.1 Percentage of schools that develop within school monitoring reports for quality assurance with the support of the action 3.2.2 Percentage of schools that develop close to school monitoring reports for quality assurance with the support of the action 3.2.3 Number of modules developed for capacity building of cluster advisors with the support of the action	3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3 a) DIAS inspection records b) District, cluster & school performance management reports	
	3.3 Improved management, accountability and quality of service provision	3.3.1 Percentage of head teachers capacitated by the action with demonstrable ²⁵ leadership & management skills (disaggregated by sex)	3.3.1 a) DIAS inspection records b) District, cluster & school performance management reports	

²⁵ The Leadership competency framework to be developed under 3.1 will have a criteria or measurement guideline for leadership and managerial skills. This will be the measure for indicator 3.3.1.