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ANNEX 5

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of the Republic of Malawi for 2022

Action Document for the Malawi Cooperation Facility

ANNUAL PLAN

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and action plan in the sense of Article 23.2 of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	Malawi Cooperation Facility CRIS number: NDICI AFRICA/2022/043-243 OPSYS ref.: ACT-60665 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe).
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The Action shall be carried out in Malawi.
4. Programming document	Multiannual Indicative Programme for Malawi 2021-2027
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	The Action falls under the Support Measures of the MIP 2021-2027 for Malawi and contributes to its objectives and results in a transversal manner.
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Not applicable
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: 17 (partnerships for the goals) Other significant SDGs: 1 (end poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 4 (quality education), 7 (clean energy), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 9 (infrastructure), 13 (climate action), 15 (life on land), 16 (justice).
8 a) DAC code(s)	151 - Government and civil society (55 %) 220 - Communications (25 %) 430 - Other Multisector (20 %)

8 b) Main Delivery Channel @	Recipient government - 12000, Multilateral organisations - 40000, Private sector institutions - 60000			
9. Involvement of multilateral partners	No			
10. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
11. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	12. Internal markers and Tags:	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective
Digitalisation @ Tags: digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship digital skills/literacy digital services		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Connectivity @		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Tags: transport people2people energy digital connectivity		<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Migration @ (methodology for tagging under development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities (methodology for marker and tagging under development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
13. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): BGUE-B2022-14.020122-C1-INTPA Total estimated cost: EUR 9 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 9 000 000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
14. Type of financing	Direct management through Procurement and Grants Indirect management with the entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.4.4			

1.2 Summary of the Action

The Action aims to strengthen the strategic partnership between Malawi and the EU, by providing the EU a flexible instrument to enhance the effectiveness, impact, coherence and visibility of EU cooperation in Malawi. The Action will support and accompany EU's interventions in a transversal manner, thus contributing to all priority areas, specific objectives and expected results of the MIP for Malawi on the basis of demand.

The Action has three specific objectives: (i) ensure the effective delivery of impactful EU's intervention, (ii) improve policy coherence and aid effectiveness, and (iii) enhance strategic communication of the EU's action. It will be implemented through procurement, and possibly through grant(s) and/or contribution agreement(s).

By its transversal nature, the Action will contribute to the progressive achievement of several SDG, in particular SDG17 (partnerships for the goals), and SDG1 (no poverty), as well as the other more sectoral SDG identified in the MIP (SDG 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 16). It will also foster the coordination among donors, in particular among the Team Europe.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

Malawi's development has stagnated for the past 20 years, with only minimal and precarious improvements in health and education indicators but going backwards on poverty and growth. The High Court annulled the 2019 presidential elections due to a high number of irregularities, and the re-run in June 2020 saw the opposition take over. The new administration has so far shown higher commitment to the rule of law and human rights, and its drive on anti-corruption is reflected in the

increased budget allocations for the governance institutions. It also aims at lifting off the country's development, though it remains hesitant to invest its political capital in overhauling damaging policies of subsidies and market interventions. A weakened public administration remains a weight on its aspirations of economic transformation in a context of good governance. In addition, the previous administration has left the country with sizeable debt, some of which was misreported, and the COVID pandemic hit the economy hard, putting the country in a dire macro-economic situation. While the present government's policy views certainly tally with the EU's interests and priorities, the political and economic environment constitutes at this point a serious challenge to government's capacities to effectively implement the needed reforms and produce lasting results.

Furthermore the Government launched in January 2021 its long-term national development plan, Malawi 2063 that aims at transforming Malawi into a wealthy and self-reliant industrialised upper middle-income country by 2063. It also launched in November 2021, the Malawi 2063 first 10-year Implementation Plan (MIP-1, 2021-2030) which outlines priority objectives and interventions with the aim to move Malawi into the lower middle-income category by 2030, and meeting most of the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda.

In line with Malawi 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan, the MIP for Malawi 2021-2027 intends to support a green and resilient economic transformation, in view of creating decent jobs, based on sound democratic and economic governance systems and on empowered human capital. This three-pronged overall objective of the MIP, rolled out in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath, responds to the need for a strong economic recovery in an inclusive and sustainable way. This translates into the three priorities of (1) green and resilient economic transformation, (2) democratic and economic governance and (3) human development and social inclusion.

The proposed Action aims to support and accompany EU intervention in a transversal manner, thus contributing to all priority areas, specific objectives and expected results of the MIP for Malawi on an *ad hoc* basis. By enhancing the effectiveness, impact and visibility of EU's action in Malawi, the Action will nurture the longstanding partnership between the EU and Malawi, and facilitate the implementation of structural reforms and programmes for the transformation of the country, based on the national development strategy, Malawi 2063.

As such, the Action is well aligned with EU's interests and priorities at global level, defined by a range of overarching agreements and policy documents, such as the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy, the European Consensus on development, the European Green Deal, the EU Gender Action Plan III and the Joint Communication Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa.

2.2 Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis:

- Insufficient coherence, integration and complementarity between the actions of the partner country, the EU and other key partners to foster transformative reforms and development programmes, including for mainstreaming of key cross-cutting issues, in particular gender equality and empowerment of women and girls as well as environmental protection and climate change.
- Low level of awareness and understanding by the general public, government officials and other key stakeholders of the activities of the EU in Malawi, its values and interests, as well as the benefits of a stronger partnership between the EU and Malawi.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the Action:

The main stakeholders of the Action comprise key governmental entities, in particular the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, the National Planning Commission and the National Statistical Office of Malawi, as part of the Action aims at strengthening policy coherence and aid effectiveness.

Other key stakeholders include the EU Member States, their cooperation agencies, governmental entities (lines ministries and parastatals) and other development partners, such as the UN agencies, CSOs, academia, and the private sector who will be associated, wherever relevant, to the activities of the Action, including for stronger political and policy dialogue and coordinated programme implementation.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective of this Action is to strengthen the strategic partnership between Malawi and the EU.

The Specific Objectives of this Action are to:

- **SO1:** Ensure the effective delivery of impactful EU intervention
- **SO2:** Improve policy coherence and aid effectiveness
- **SO3:** Enhance EU's strategic communication

The Outputs to be delivered by this Action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives are:

- **Output 1.1:** EU's interventions are appropriately identified, formulated, implemented, monitored and evaluated
- **Output 2.1:** Effective policy dialogue and coordination are ensured
- **Output 2.2:** Sound monitoring and evaluation systems are operational
- **Output 3.1:** Awareness of EU's action and the benefits of a stronger EU-Malawi partnership is enhanced.

3.2 Indicative Activities

The main activities supported by this Action will be the following (not exhaustive list):

Activities related to Output 1.1: EU's interventions are properly identified, formulated, implemented, monitored and evaluated

- On demand support at any stage of the project cycle related to: project identification, formulation, implementation and follow-up activities. This may entail for instance feasibility and technical studies, surveys, assessments, analytical and diagnostic studies, as well as monitoring, audits and evaluation of programmes and policies, whenever they cannot be financed out of the project itself or where it is appropriate to combine a number of audit/evaluation efforts of related interventions. More specifically, support will be provided for technical assistance to ensure proper mainstreaming of key cross-cutting issues, in particular gender equality and empowerment of women and girls as well as environmental protection and climate change.

Activities related to Output 2.1: Effective policy dialogue and coordination are ensured

- Organisation of conferences, seminars and workshops for structured policy dialogue and coordination among all key stakeholders (central and local government and development partners, including CSOs, think-tank organisations, the private sector); technical assistance to facilitate coordination meetings or working groups; *ad hoc* studies and reviews for evidence-based policy dialogue; institutional capacity building and trainings.

Activities related to Output 2.2: Sound monitoring and evaluation systems are operational

- Contribution to the establishment of an interoperable data repository platform, aiming to aggregate data tracking development progress from the existing management information systems of Ministries, Department and Agencies of Malawi, thereby contributing to support a harmonised national monitoring and evaluation system; contribution to the development of an information management system for cooperation aid data; contribution for institutional capacity building of the National Statistics Office for improved data collection, analysis and dissemination, including in relation to gender data.

Activities related to Output 3.1: Awareness of EU's action and the benefits of a stronger EU-Malawi partnership is enhanced

- Communication and public diplomacy activities, that may cover, inter alia, the organisation of a public campaign, with the objective of measurably increasing the profile, awareness, understanding and approval of the EU's partnership with the country; the organisation of other events and awareness raising campaigns, with a focus on gender related events (e.g. 16 days of activism, Women's rights day...). Other activities include political communication, e.g. for Global Gateway and Team Europe initiatives; as well as actions aiming at strengthening networks and long-term relationships with key target audiences and partners (e.g. youth, students, academics, think tanks, CSOs, business, creative industries), including leveraging existing EU programmes. It will also entail supporting activities to ensure sound media relations and media monitoring and the production of audio-visual and social media material; publications and studies, including for issues related to trade and European economic diplomacy; the participation of Malawian officials and other stakeholders to key conferences and events of mutual interest and trainings.

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

- Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening

The EIA (Environment Impact Assessment) screening classified the Action as Category C (no need for further assessment), *as per* the nature of the Action.

- Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening

The Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening concluded that this Action is no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this Action is labelled as G1. This implies that gender equality is expected to be a significant objective of the Action.

Other cross-cutting issues (Human Rights, Democracy, Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience, Disaster Risk Reduction)

This Action will provide the means to ensure that all cross-cutting issues are properly mainstreamed in EU intervention and beyond (e.g. human rights, democracy, disaster risk reduction, conflict sensibility, peace and resilience). Likewise all specific activities to be funded under this cooperation facility will be screened to ensure that cross cutting issues are duly considered or integrated.

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this Action is labelled as D1. This implies that disability is expected to be a significant objective of the Action.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
Risks related to the external environment	Impact of COVID-19 pandemic and the potential continued fall-out	Medium	Medium	Since the beginning of the pandemic, the partner country, the EU and the development partners have learned to adapt to the new context by using digital tools and relaying more on local expertise. It is expected that the impact on traveling and physical engagement will decrease over the implementation of the Action. However, if not, the Action will follow previous interventions and use digital tools to compensate for lack of physical travel.
Risks related to planning, processes and systems	Low quality and delays of procured technical assistance and services	Low	Medium	Terms of reference will be prepared thoroughly and assignments will be monitored continuously. Sound planning will ensure the smooth implementation of activities and, when needed, seeking alternative solutions.
Risks related to people and the organisation	Capacity gap of government entities to engage fully in policy dialogue and drive change	Medium	High	Dialogue with key government entities at all levels will be strengthened and, where appropriate, support to institutional capacity building will be considered.

Lessons Learnt

Lessons learnt show that a cooperation facility can be very valuable for specific needs related to project identification, implementation and evaluation, strategic capacity development, policy and political dialogue, as well as communication and visibility.

To mitigate any potential risks of the Action, including those mentioned above, the following actions will be actively taken into account in all activities to be funded by the cooperation facility:

- Elaborate for any type of intervention a comprehensive and sound planning well in advance
- Define precisely the project's stakeholders, scope, quality baseline, deliverables, milestones, success criteria and requirements, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders
- Foster accountability, by communicating clearly expectations and monitor closely progress
- Anticipate risks and include risk modifiers where relevant.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this Action is to support the EU-Malawi partnership. It will enable the EU to deliver on the three interrelated specific objectives, namely: (SO1) to ensure the effective delivery of impactful EU's intervention, (SO2) to improve policy coherence and aid effectiveness, and (SO3) to enhance strategic communication of EU's action. The desired results (output 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, and 3.1) will be achieved through the implementation of a range of activities that will complement each other, as well as through a sound risk management, based on lessons learnt. Furthermore, as per the own nature of the cooperation facility, the Action will provide the means to ensure that all key cross-cutting issues are properly mainstreamed in EU's intervention and beyond, as well as to promote structured and informed SDG-related policy dialogue.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

Given the nature of this Action, there is no Logical Framework Matrix.

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

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

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this Action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 54 months from the date of where a financing agreement is concluded. This duration is justified because the Action provides funding to non-programmable activities, as per its nature.

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

4.3 Budget Support

N/A

4.4 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 measures¹.

4.4.1 Direct Management (Grants)

The grant will contribute to achieve the SO2: *Improve the coherence, integration and complementarity between the actions of the partner country, the EU and other key partners*. More particularly, it will support the activities related to Output 2.1: *Effective policy dialogue and coordination are ensured*.

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, a grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the National Planning Commission (NPC). In line with Article 195 c) of the Financial Regulation, a direct grant is justified because this entity is a public body vested with

¹ 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.

a *de jure* monopoly to *inter alia* “oversee the implementation of long-term national vision and strategies and the medium development plans”, “identify and commission research” and “engage relevant individuals and institutions in all sectors of the economy in the conduct of its functions”. As such, the NPC is the only duly mandated entity capable to implement the foreseen activities and deliver the specific objective and related output. As the foreseen activities under SO2 are embedded in the operational activities of the entity and because no other financing partner has been identified at this stage, the grant is expected to be financed in full.

4.4.2 Direct Management (Prize(s))

N/A

4.4.3 Direct Management (Procurement)

Activities related to outputs 1.1, 2.1 and 3.1 will be implemented through procurements.

Subject	Type	Indicative number of contracts	Indicative trimester of launch of the procedure
Short/medium term TA	Services	8-10	Throughout the 36 months
Strategic Communication/public diplomacy	Services	1	Second quarter of 2022

The call for tender related to the service contract for strategic communication and public diplomacy, planned under output 3.1, will be launched with a suspension clause before the adoption of this Financing Decision. The indicative date for the launch of this call is 1 May 2022. It is justified because this would allow for a smooth transition with the ongoing communication contract, as well as to ensure proper communication and visibility activities of EU’s action as of the second quarter of 2023, when most of the activities funded under the NDICI are expected to kick-off.

Similarly, a call for tender related to the service contract for technical assistance to facilitate the Donor Coordination Group in Agriculture and Food Security, planned under output 2.1, will be launched with a suspensive clause before the adoption of this Financing Decision. The indicative date for the launch of this procedure is 15 May 2022. It is justified because this would allow for a smooth transition with the ongoing technical assistance, which is due to end in September 2022, and thus avoid any disruption in the functioning of the Group as well as support the chairmanship of the coordination Group by the EU starting on 1 July 2022.

4.4.4 Indirect Management with an international organisation

A part of this Action may be implemented in indirect management with one or more international organisation(s), which will be selected by the Commission’s services using the following criteria:

- (i) Specific sector/thematic expertise bringing added value and in line with aid effectiveness principles.
- (ii) Capacity in terms of human resources, organisational set-up to efficiently manage the project, collect data, analyse it and report on results.
- (iii) Implementing partner(s) with proven track record of sound donor coordination and with alignment in terms of their universal agendas and EU interests.

The implementation by the entity(ies) entails the activities related to output 2.2.

If negotiations with the above-mentioned entity(ies) fail, part of this action may be implemented in direct management in accordance with the implementation modalities identified in section 4.4.3 (procurement).

4.4.5 Changes from indirect to direct management mode due to exceptional circumstances

As described in section 4.4.4, in case the preferred modality (indirect management with an international organisation(s)) cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, an alternative implementation modality (procurement in direct management) will be used.

4.5 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.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this Action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.6 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (in EUR)
Output 1.1: <i>EU's interventions are properly identified, formulated, implemented, monitored and evaluated</i> - Procurement (direct management)	1 300 000
Output 2.1: <i>Effective policy dialogue and coordination are ensured</i> - Direct grant (direct management) - Procurement (direct management)	1 700 000 (1 000 000) (700 000)
Output 2.2: <i>Sound monitoring and evaluation systems are operational</i> - Indirect management with international organisation(s)	3 300 000
Output 3.1: <i>Awareness of EU's action and the benefits of a stronger EU-Malawi partnership is enhanced</i> - Procurement (direct management)	2 500 000
Evaluation and Audit (cf. 5.2 & 5.3)	100 000
Contingencies	100 000
Total	9 000 000

4.7 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The Action will be organised based on the type of activities:

For procurements under output 1.1, 2.1 and 3.1, the EUD in Malawi will be responsible for the planning and implementation of activities, which shall be flexible, demand-driven, and carefully

aligned to the MIP for Malawi and related thematic areas of cooperation. Each specific contracts will define the implementation arrangements and governance structures.

For the grant contract under 2.1 and each of the contribution agreements under output 2.2, a project steering committee shall be established to oversee and ensure the smooth implementation of activities. Each steering committees shall indicatively meet twice a year, and include the key stakeholders of the project.

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.

5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

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.

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).

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, an ex-post evaluation may be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants, contracted by the Commission. Such evaluation would be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the innovative aspects of some intended activities.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 1 month in advance of the dates envisaged 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 following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments

5.3 Audit and Verifications

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 audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

Regional and global strategic communication and public diplomacy funds will be managed from headquarters.

At country level, action documents for specific sector programmes are no longer required to include a provision for communication actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

To that end, Delegations will first develop short strategic communication and public diplomacy plans that reflect the objectives of the Delegation as a whole in this domain, initially covering the period up to the Mid-Term Review (MTR). The plans will be endorsed by a coordination mechanism comprised of the EEAS, DG INTPA, DG NEAR and FPI, and will be reviewed, modified and extended as appropriate as part of the MTR process.

The EU Delegation in Malawi has the following overall strategic objectives:

- Establish and/or strengthen relationships with key identified target groups as our target audiences for public diplomacy through targeted actions
- Build on the Team Europe initiatives to showcase strong EU positions and impact on topics of strategic interest in the country
- Raise awareness and build capacity of media and other public diplomacy actors on environmental issues.

While formulating a renewed comprehensive strategic communication and public diplomacy strategy, the EU Delegation and the other Team Europe members are striving to position Team Europe as a strategic partner on trade and economic matters, a pioneer in sustainable growth, skills development and jobs and a global leader and partner for progress on governance and human rights. At the same time, given its obligations the EU Delegation ensures sound communication on its decisions and activities to EU citizens and other interested parties.

Going forward, the EU Delegation has identified the following as priority target audiences: students and academics, youth, politicians, think tanks, local/ religious leaders, media and influencers, development partners, civil society organisations.

The communication work, adequately tailored to the audiences, will focus on explaining and informing (what the EU does and why), engaging (how is the partnership with EU making a positive difference by transforming ordinary lives and strengthening Malawi's development), and facilitating participation (ensure voices are heard). Where relevant, campaigns targeting a wider public will also be organised on topics addressed by specific development projects, with the overall aim to increase awareness and understanding of EU policies and actions in the country.

Foreseen initiatives (partnerships or channels) per target group are summarised as follows:

Target	Justification	Initiatives
Young People, Students and Academics	Next generations of leaders	- Young Leaders Initiatives (e.g. Young European Ambassador)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local youth conferences in the lead up to or after big youth conferences like the AU-EU Summit, EDDs and the like. - Various youth engagement activities like logo drawing competitions, social media quizzes on Europe Day and other important days, etc. - Regular youth engagement events in collaboration with Government, other development partners and CSOs and support and/or capacity building for Youth organisation - Long term engagement of EU Alumni (EDD alumni, Erasmus and other EU scholars) - Regular participation in College fairs - Development of academia working groups, conferences and Seminars - Students' debates on various relevant thematic areas
Politicians, think tanks, local leaders, religious leaders	Political and Decision Makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular political dialogue meetings with the Government of Malawi - Regular consultation and engagement to collaborate on EU funded projects - Training series of seminars on relevant policy areas
Media & Influencers	Multipliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Media trainings/tours/briefings & partnerships - Initiatives supporting media freedom and for Malawi, implementation of the Access to Information Law - Initiatives tackling disinformation & information manipulation - Foster "Friends of Europe" networks (e.g. Alumni groups, journalists associations and other groups that could help share the EU messages and agendas to other wider audiences)
Development and implementation partners	Aid effectiveness and synergy effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued consultation processes - Joint field monitoring visits as Team Europe and also with other development partners
Civil Society Organisations	Advocacy, source of information, role in holding government accountable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular civil society engagement and exchanges - Support to civil society organisations through various instruments

To this end a service contract for strategic communication and public diplomacy may be concluded (cf. section 4.4.3).

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

An Intervention (also generally called project/programme) is the operational entity associated to a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Interventions are the most effective (hence optimal) entities for the operational follow-up by the Commission of its external development operations. As such, Interventions constitute the base unit for managing operational implementations, assessing performance, monitoring, evaluation, internal and external communication, reporting and aggregation.

Primary Interventions are those contracts or groups of contracts bearing reportable results and respecting the following business rule: 'a given contract can only contribute to one primary intervention and not more than one'. An individual contract that does not produce direct reportable results and cannot be logically grouped with other result reportable contracts is considered a 'support entity'. The addition of all primary interventions and support entities is equivalent to the full development portfolio of the Institution.

The present Action identifies as

Action level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action
Group of actions level		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of actions	Actions reference (CRIS#/OPSYS#):
Contract level		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Single Contract 2	
	(...)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Group of contracts 1	