



Norwegian Embassy



END LINE PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

PROMOTING PARTICIPATORY AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN LIKOMA AND RUMPHI DISTRICTS

*Funded by:
Tilitonse Foundation*

*With Funds from
The European Union and Royal Norwegian Embassy*

*Project Implemented by
Find Your Feet*

05 June 2020

DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of Find your Feet and Church and Society Programme of the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CCAP	Church of Central African Presbytery, Synod of Livingstonia.
ADC	Area Development Committee
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CDSS	Community Day Secondary School
COVID -19	Corona Virus Disease -19
CSO	Civil Society Network
CSP	Church and Society Programme
DDF	District Development Fund
DPD	Director of Planning and Development
ESCOM	Electricity Company of Malawi
FYF	Find Your Feet
GVH	Group Village Head
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
KII	Key Informant Interview
LDF	Local Development Fund
LGAP	Local Government Accountability and Performance
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGS III	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III
MPs	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NICE	National Initiative for Civic Education
PET	Public Budget Tracking and Expenditure
RBA	Rights Based Approach
SNA	Social Network Analysis:
TA	Traditional Authority
VDCs	Village Development Committee
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank Find Your Feet and Church and Society Project Team members for their programmatic insights as well as extensive support to the logistics and coordination of the evaluation. Special acknowledgements to Chimwemwe Soko (Executive Director – FYF, Melina Mtonga (Programme Manager – FYF, Mphatso Nyemera – Finance and Administration Manager (FYF), Happy Mhango (Project M&E –Church and Society), Fanny Chumbi (Project Officer, Church and Society). We also thank various groups of people and organisations we interacted with during data collection both in Rumphi and Likoma.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Find Your Feet in partnership with Church and Society Programme received funding from Tilitonse Foundation (**Euros 99,293.00** for a period of 13 months (1st February, 2019-28th February, 2020).) to implement a project on *“Promoting participatory and inclusive development in Likoma and Rumphi Districts”*. The project ran from February, 2019 – February 2020. The overall goal of the project was to contribute to improved and sustained quality public service delivery in Likoma and Rumphi Districts. The purpose of the project was to empower local structures to actively and meaningfully monitor and track public locally generated and development resources at local government level in the target districts by 2020.

At the end of the project period, Find Your Feet commissioned an evaluation to assess the extent to which the project and its interventions had achieved its goal and objectives. The evaluation was also commissioned to determine how the project has contributed to the goal and objectives of the grant partner and Tilitonse Foundation. The evaluation was qualitative in nature and employed multiple methods in participatory approach. Among others, the study employed secondary literature review, social network analysis, key informant interviews and community workshops. The tools used for each of the methods were developed, presented during inception meeting and approved by FYF and CSP before use. The evaluation methods responded to the 9 main evaluation questions that were developed based on objectives of the project and study.

The evaluation established the following findings

Project relevance: Right holders and duty bearers demonstrated a high level of appreciation for the project which addressed their needs. The general views are that the project activities were well designed to facilitate increased levels of awareness and acquisition of knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems. Duty Bearers were of the view that the project activities helped in increasing their knowledge on prudent use of public resources i.e. Local Development Fund (LDF), Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and District Development Fund (DDF) and improving their capacity to discharge duties effectively. The project promoted key elements of a Rights Based Approach such as: Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, Transparency, Human dignity, Empowerment and Rule of Law. The project was in line with the vision and mission of FYF, CSP, Tilitonse Foundation and some key Government of Malawi laws/policies and international human rights commitments.

Project effectiveness: In the period of one year (February, 2019 – February 2020), the project has achieved good results in terms of implementation of the planned activities and substantive achievements on results. Output 1: Increased local government structures’ knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems: 100% local structures including ADCs, VDCs, Accountability Clubs, Youth Clubs, Women Forums, Star Circle were trained in local governance systems, public resources: DDF, CDF, LDF and Decentralization. Media was engaged to develop documentaries and air out Chitukuko program. Output 2: Informed local government structures engage the local councils on prudent use of public resources i.e. LDF, CDF and DDFs: 9 engagement sessions were held in Rumphi and 4 in Likoma. The project managed to access CDF and DDF guidelines from the councils and translated into local languages. 400 guidelines were reprinted and distributed to the communities. However, the project did not manage to obtain

Council meeting minutes and expenditure reports for distribution to right holders. Output 3: Elected local government structures have improved capacity to discharge their duties effectively: 8 Councillors and 3 District Council Officials in Rumphi and 2 Councillors and 3 District Council Officials in Likoma were trained in Public Budget Tracking and Expenditure (PET), Rights Based Approach (RBA), Human Rights, Advocacy and Lobbying and guidelines on DDF, CDF and LDF.

Project efficiency: The budget and expenditure summary shows that management of resources was prudent as expenditures were within the budget lines as shown in table 2. Over expenditures were there but mostly not exceeding 10% which enabled the project to fulfill most of its planned activities. Working with groups was more cost efficient than individual in terms of costs containment.

Project impact: The project has demonstrated three key changes that include: 1) increased local government structures' knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems demonstrated by improved awareness, transparency and accountability; improved local leadership and responsiveness and increased social networks. 2) improved rights holders' engagement with the local councils on prudent use of public resources i.e. LDF, CDF and DDFs demonstrated by increased community action and increased inclusiveness. 3) improved elected local government structures capacity to discharge their duties effectively demonstrated by increased engagement and responsiveness of duty bearers to rights holders.

Project sustainability: The project has created robust social networks in both districts which are fundamental in propelling the success stories beyond the current areas of implementation. The networks have mutual trusts and able to collectively work together for a common purpose.

Data collected and analysed during the course of this evaluation lead the evaluation team to conclude that the project on: *"Promoting participatory and inclusive development in Likoma and Rumphi Districts"* funded by Tilitonse Foundation has contributed to improved and sustained quality public service delivery in Likoma and Rumphi Districts. This is evidenced by acceptance on the same by district duty bearers who are responsive to the demands of rights holders and are also inclusive by allowing all categories of grassroots to take active role in the development of their communities.

The project was implemented in selected TAs and has made tangible impact at that local level which may not be visible at district level. There is need to upscale and outscale the project to more local structures within the TA and also cover more TAs in a district whose collective action will trigger significant change on the delivery of public services at District Councils. The scaling up will create wider social networks at district levels that will have a greater influence on the functionality of duty bearers at district level.

1. INTRODUCTION

Find Your Feet (FYF) is a local NGO founded in 1960 and dedicated to working with poor, rural communities to create lasting solutions to poverty. Find Your Feet started working in Malawi in 2004. FYF Vision is 'A world in which everyone has the right to build a future free from hunger and poverty.' The Mission is 'to mobilise local knowledge and skills, and promote ownership and use of natural resources by poor rural communities in finding sustainable solutions to hunger, poverty and discrimination.

CSP is an advocacy and civic education arm of the CCAP Synod of Livingstonia on human rights, governance, democracy, peace building and other crosscutting issues like HIV and AIDS and gender. Since its establishment in 1999, CSP has implemented a number of local and national advocacy and civic education programmes using existing grassroots structures and a horde of networks that it has established with like-minded organisations, including the Malawi Government.

Find Your Feet in partnership with Church and Society Programme (CSP) received funding from Tilitonse Foundation (**Euros 99,293.00** for a period of 13 months (1st February, 2019-28th February, 2020).) to implement a project on *“Promoting participatory and inclusive development in Likoma and Rumphi Districts”*. The project ran from February, 2019 – February 2020. The overall goal of the project was to contribute to improved and sustained quality public service delivery in Likoma and Rumphi Districts. The purpose of the project was to empower local structures to actively and meaningfully monitor and track public locally generated and development resources at local government level in the target districts by 2020. The project had the following Outputs: **Output 1:** Increased local government structures' knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems; **Output 2:** Informed local government structures engage the local councils on prudent use of public resources i.e. LDF, CDF and DDFs and **Output 3:** Elected local government structures have improved capacity to discharge their duties effectively.

2. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

2.1. Objectives of the evaluation

The Final Evaluation was primarily intended to assess the extent to which the project and its interventions had achieved its goal and objectives. The evaluation was also commissioned to determine how the project has contributed to the goal and objectives of the grant partner and Tilitonse Foundation. Specifically, the final evaluation was intended:

- a. To independently verify (and supplement where necessary) record of achievement as reported through Annual Reports and defined in the project's log frame.
- b. To assess the extent to which the project performed and was good value for money, which includes;
 - How well the project met its objectives;
 - How well the project applied value for money principles of effectiveness, economy, efficiency and equity in relation to delivery of its outcome;

What has happened because of Tilitonse Foundation's funding that wouldn't have otherwise happened;
How well the project aligns with grant partner's and Tilitonse Foundation's goals and objectives

- c. Assess how the project has contributed to the achievement of Tilitonse Foundation goal, objectives and result areas, and the national priorities as reflected in key national goals, policies and other instruments
- d. Assess the likelihood of project and its activities to continue at national, district and community levels beyond the support received in the period of intervention.
- e. Draw lessons learnt – What lessons have been learnt so far which can be applied in the similar interventions on governance
- f. Appraise the project partnership approach (including management structures, communications and relationships).

2.2. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation investigated effectiveness, relevance, sustainability, efficiency and impact of the project. The evaluation addressed the following key aspects under each aspect:

Relevance measured the extent to which the project activities suited to the needs and priorities of the rights holders and the donors.

Effectiveness measured the extent to which the activities achieved the purpose, or whether this can be expected to happen on the basis of the outputs.

Efficiency measured the project's outputs in comparison to its inputs and project management.

Sustainability measured whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after funding has been withdrawn.

Impact measured the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1. Evaluation design and approach

The evaluation employed mixed method design, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods in participatory approach. Among others, the study employed secondary literature review, social network analysis, key informant interviews and community workshops. The tools used for each of the methods were developed, presented during inception meeting and approved by FYF and CSP before use. The evaluation methods responded to the 9 main evaluation questions that were developed based on objectives of the project and study as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Main evaluation questions.

1.	To what extent were the project activities suited to the needs and priorities of the rights holders and the donor? <i>Tilitonse - strengthened active citizen participation, voice and demand for accountability; and local governance</i> <i>How do local partners and communities perceive the program?</i> <i>How do they see the program as similar or different from other development efforts?</i>
2.	To what extent have the project activities achieved the intended purpose? <i>What evidence exists that the project has contributed to improved and sustained quality public service delivery in Likoma and Rumphi Districts?</i> <i>Level of engagement between rights holders and duty bearers</i> <i>Information on LDF, CDF, DDF made public</i> <i>Community members and their structures included, actively and meaningfully participate in decision making on public resources</i> <i>Levels of accountability of Government and public employees</i>
3.	What evidence exists that the project has empowered local structures to meaningfully and actively monitor and track public and locally generated and development resources at local government plan in the target districts? <i>Vulnerable groups that are actively and meaningfully participating in local governance structures decision making processes</i> <i>Local structures actively involved in monitoring and tracking resources</i>
4.	What strategies were put in place to increase local government structures' knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems? <i>Local structures trained in public expenditure tracking, human rights, good governance and advocacy and lobbying.</i> <i>Media organizations involved in governance projects.</i>
5.	To what extent has the project informed local government structures to engage the local councils on prudent use of public resources i.e. LDF, CDF and DDFs. <i>Engagement sessions between local structures and local council. Reports printed and distributed</i>
6.	What strategies were put in place for the elected local government structures to have improved capacity to discharge their duties effectively? <i>Elected members trained</i> <i>Media slots in print and electronic</i>
7.	What is the likelihood of continuation and sustainability of project outcomes and benefits after completion of the project? <i>Exit strategies and approaches to phase out</i> <i>Emerging issues requiring further attention</i> <i>Key factors that will require attention</i> <i>Capacities strengthening at the individual and organizational level</i> <i>Lessons that have emerged?</i> <i>Recommendations for similar support in future</i>

8. What evidence exists that individuals and organizations involved in the program have increased local leadership, as defined by improvements in confidence, credibility, and mutual trust?
 - Confidence: Local partners have the capacity and drive to catalyze development in their communities.*
 - Credibility: Local partners have respect and recognition to lead change in their communities.*
 - Mutual trust: Local partners have bonds with each other that encourage future collaboration.*
 9. What evidence exists that the communities in which the program operates have increased action, as defined by improvements in collective action, social capital, and inclusiveness?
 - Collective action: Communities have desire and momentum to work together on shared goals.*
 - Social capital: Relationships and social structures support action for community development.*
 - Inclusiveness: Community development is driven by a broad base of community members, including women and marginalized groups.*
- Active citizenship, Local Governance, Economic Governance and Rule of Law*

3.2. Secondary literature review

The team reviewed several literatures relevant to the project including project proposal, project results framework, governance study reports, national policy documents, FYF, CSP and Tilitonse visions and missions, project annual report, progress reports. The review provided information that was required for the development of the evaluation matrix, which informed the whole methodological processes of the evaluation including development of inception report. In addition, the review provided quantitative and qualitative secondary data and information that was used to address some objectives of the assignment.

3.3. Development of a detailed evaluation framework

Based on the project proposal, project results framework the team developed a detailed evaluation matrix which informed the whole process of evaluation. The framework illustrates what information is needed and how, where. The framework file is attached as annexes.

3.4. Development of an inception report

An inception report was produced and study initiation took off in form of meeting with FYF and CSP project team. Among other things the meeting aimed at reaching a common understanding of the terms of reference, the expectations during the assignment and the methodology that was proposed to ensure its adequacy to meet the expected results of the study. In addition, the meeting also aimed at agreeing on which key stakeholders and partners to include in the sample.

3.5. Recruitment of data enumerators

The evaluation involved 3 data enumerators (2 females and 1 male) and the consultant who supervised the enumerators and led facilitation of community workshops. The enumerators were selected from the pull that the consultant already has from previous assignments. Those selected have Bachelor's degrees from Mzuzu University and Chancellor College and performed similar tasks before. The team was trained before field collection. The training covered the importance and objectives of the study, conducting surveys, completion of study instruments, ethics and pre-testing. All field tools pretested during the training. Changes were incorporated into the tools before actual field work.

3.6. Field data collection methods

The team collected field data in all the two districts of Rumphi and Likoma. Field work was planned for 31st March – 4th April 2020 in Rumphi and 7th to 11th April 2020 in Likoma spending 3-4 days in each area. This included engagement with the project team (M&E Coordinator) as well as other community members and local authorities. Field work was conducted in the local language, Tumbuka. The methods of the field work included.

Key Informant Interviews (in-person data collection): The team conducted KII with project team (M&E Coordinator); in Rumphi Key informant interviews were conducted with Phoka ADC chairperson, Counsellor, GVH, Director of Planning and Development (DPD), District Civil Society Network Chairperson and District Social Welfare Officer. In the introduction to the participants, the research team also delivered messages of COVID 19 pandemic including the preventive measures such as regular washing hands with soaps, wearing masks and keeping physical distance.



Figure 1: Photo showing researcher interviewing Councillor

Physical data collection was affected in Likoma due to *COVID -19 pandemic* as study team could not travel to Likoma due to quarantine measures that Likoma and Chizumulu put in place. Instead KII were conducted through phone (virtual data collection) from 14th to 17th April 2020 after waiting in anticipation of the situation getting better. The KII covered Director of Dzuka Likoma, ADC chairperson in Likoma, ADC chairperson in Chizumulu, Councilor in Likoma, NICE representative, representative of Likoma Community Radio, Director of Planning and Development (DPD) and Community Development Officer. This presented limitations to the completeness of the dataset, as researchers could not visit and observe the sites independently. In addition, most KIIs were conducted in a shorter time period by phone (<60 minutes) than in person (>90 minutes). However, the evaluation team determined that there was sufficient data available to continue with the completion of the evaluation.

Social Network Analysis: As part of the key informant interviews, researchers collected data for a basic social network analysis (SNA) to understand who the project team interacted with in the design and implementation of their projects. SNA is a way of thinking about social systems that focuses attention on relationships among actors in a system. SNA was selected as a research tool for this evaluation according to the interest in understanding the extent to which mutual trust and social capital was developed as a result of the project. Our simple analysis resulted in a set of ego networks that showed the characteristics of the individuals involved and their relationship with the project team members.



Figure 4: A researcher facilitating small group discussion during community workshop

Table 2: Summary of data collection methods and target audience

District	Key informants	Social network analysis	Community workshop
Likoma	Dzuka Likoma Councillor ADC chairperson in Likoma ADC chairperson in Chizumulu NICE Likoma Community Radio DPD Community Development Officer	Dzuka Likoma ADC chairperson in Likoma VDC chairperson in Chizumulu NICE Likoma Community Radio DPD Community Development Officer	Women forum – 12 members Star Circle – 15 members
Rumphi	ADC chairperson Councillor GVH DPD District Civil Society Network Chairperson District Social Welfare Officer	ADC chairperson Councillor GVH DPD District Civil Society Network Chairperson District Social Welfare Officer	Youth Group – 15 members Accountability club – 25 members

3.7. Data quality control

The evaluation team maintained the highest level of data quality throughout the study. Data collected were critically assessed during and after the collection process to ensure high quality. These assessments included:

- Training of research assistants on ethics and methods of data collection including best possible quality data collection and measures to minimize non-sampling errors
- Open ended questions in the tools to allow more probing to ascertain the appropriateness/relevance and consistency of answers and elaboration of answers
- Close supervision of the work of the data collectors
- Review meetings every evening reflecting on the processes
- Regular feedback sessions by supervisors and offering of solutions to bottlenecks

3.8. Data management and analysis

Qualitative data were recorded and transcribed and analysed using thematic and content analysis in excel computer package. The themes were based on the main research questions. The evaluation team completed note-taking sheets for all key informant interviews, SNAs, and community workshops for team review. Across a series of extended meetings, the team reviewed each site's data jointly. The team shared reflections related to the evaluation questions, identified common themes, and compared and contrasted site examples to one another. In the final joint analysis session, the team reviewed each evaluation question and generated overall conclusions based on supporting data from each site. During these sessions data from the secondary review, and other sources was integrated into the analysis in order to triangulate findings and strengthen the conclusions and recommendations

4.. EVALUATION FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents findings according to main evaluation criterion developed by OECD/DAC focusing on five criteria: relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; impact and sustainability.

4.1. Project Relevance

Relevance was defined as the extent to which the project was suited to the needs and priorities of the rights holders and the donors.

Community perception on the project: Right holders and duty bearers demonstrated a high level of appreciation for the project which addressed the need of lack of awareness and knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems. The general views are that the project activities were well designed which facilitated increased levels of awareness and acquisition of knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems. Duty bearers including Council secretariat and Councillors expressed satisfaction that the project activities helped in increasing their knowledge on prudent use of public resources i.e. LDF, CDF and DDFs and improving their capacity to discharge duties effectively. The project also demonstrated high level of transparency and accountability because it disclosed the implementation period and the amount

of resources that were committed for the project. To the community this was unique and enough motivation for the communities to champion transparency and accountability. The project addressed the needs that had long existed in the community, but had not been met by other organisations or development activities. The approach was bottom up because the project simply provided insights and the right holders took up the matters with duty bearers without being instructed on what to claim.

Skills and knowledge empowerment: Right holders, duty bearers and Civil Society confirmed that the project has improved levels of skills and knowledge of right holders and duty bearers on guidelines for use and access to government resources such as LDF, DDF and CDF. The project provided information on how government institutions work, public resources tracking, advocacy and lobbying, knowledge on human rights especially the right to development and good governance (that promote transparency and accountability on public resources and participation of right holders on decision making and community development). Media houses were used as outlets and sources of information on monitoring programs and sensitization campaigns.

With the skills and knowledge gained, the project has empowered right holders to demand transparency and accountability from duty bearers. This is so because the roles and responsibilities of local structures including ADC, VDCs, Accountability Clubs and Women Forums (initiated by the project), Youth Clubs, Star Circle, Councillors have been strengthened and empowered to become active citizens. Right holders were not aware of how development projects funded by public resources are initiated and expenditures managed. The knowledge has helped in narrowing the gap between the right holders and duty bearers and has also improved levels of transparency and accountability on public resources as right holders are able to actively and meaningfully monitor and track these resources at local level. Duty bearers are now able to disclose public resource envelop and plan development projects jointly with right holders, while before the project, demand for accountability from the grassroots was not there which led to misuse of the same resources and benefiting few individuals.

Even a 2006 Afrobarometer study, which analysed citizens' expectations with regard to the responsiveness and accountability of elected leaders in Malawi, concluded that most Malawians know their MPs and are aware that they can hold their elected officials accountable by exercising their right to vote (Afrobarometer -Institute for Social Research 2006). At the same time, the study showed that Malawians relationships to their elected representatives were strongly marked by "the big man syndrome" or the politics of patronage.

Participation and accountability: In response to the project objective (*to contribute to improved and sustained quality public service delivery and to empower local structures to actively and meaningfully monitor and track public locally generated and development resources at local government level*) the following local structures in Likoma 3 ADCs, 9 VDC, 15 youth clubs and 3 social accountability clubs as well as 1 ADC, 3 VDCs, 6 youth clubs and 3 SACs in Rumphi have been empowered to actively and meaningfully monitor and track public locally generated and development resources at local government level. Furthermore, the project has enhanced vertical accountability of the council and elected duty bearers to right holders. The duty bearers are now responsive to the demands of the right holders.

Right Based Approach: The design of the project was Rights Based Approach because the approach has made the rights holders to know their rights, practices which affect their lives and to claim their rights. The project has promoted participation of right holders to actively and meaningfully monitor and track public locally generated and development resources at local government. In Likoma, 75 members of ADC, 81 members of VDC, 297 members of youth clubs, 68 members of SAC; while in Rumphi 35 members of ADC, 60 members of VDC, 195 members of youth clubs and 98 members of SAC are actively and meaningfully monitoring and tracking public resources. On accountability, the project has promoted district councils in Likoma and Rumphi, 8 Councillors in Rumphi and 2 Councillors in Likoma to value accountability of public resources. The project promoted non-discrimination evidenced by inclusion of different categories of right holders such as the youth, women, people with disabilities in various structures. The project has promoted transparency in handling public resources at all levels. The project has empowered the right holders with the right information to demand their rights, transparency and accountability of public resources from duty bearers.

Alignment with partner and Tilitonse Foundation priorities: Most importantly to the vision of FYF-is the promotion of human rights, ending poverty among citizens and the promotion transparency and accountability among duty bearers. CSP focuses on promotion of good governance, access to justice, equality and empowerment. The project worked to promote participatory and inclusive development which is a critical aspect of good governance through knowledge transfer on public expenditure tracking and local government systems, prudent use of public resources and capacity building for duty bearers to discharge their duties effectively. The right holders and duty bearers have engaged in different ways demanding transparency and accountability of public resources, which has enhanced good governance among duty bearers.

The Local Governance and Development call was premised at: strengthened partnerships and networks on governance; increased role of the media to mobilize citizens to engage duty bearers in demanding accountable, responsive and inclusive governance; and Strengthened sharing and knowledge management platform and improved learning in Governance. The project worked to strengthen partnerships and networks on governance. In addition to working in a consortium of two partners i.e. FYF and CSP, the project worked with MALGA, NICE Trust and CSO networks. The project used media outlets to reach out to the rights holders and duty bearers. There is a growing and emerging culture of transparency and accountability in the two areas and responsiveness of duty bearers has also increased. The project also provided a good learning platform and adventure i.e. working in a consortium, working with different stakeholders and the numerous knowledge and information products that the project used and distributed.

Alignment with government development agenda: The project was aligned to key Government of Malawi laws/policies and international human rights commitments. The Government has embarked on various democratic and public sector reforms in order to improve public service delivery, reduce poverty levels, fight corruption and promote inclusive and sustainable development. The Government of Malawi is committed to ensuring that the reforms transform the lives of people, empower the citizens and promote sustainable development in line with its national laws and policies and international commitments. The Malawian Constitution has often been described as very strong in its human-rights guarantees. The Bill of Rights included in the Constitution, according to the International Bar Association, explicitly protects “the rights to life,

dignity, equality and the right to freedom of conscience, belief, thought and religion and to academic freedom.”

The Malawi Vision 2020 envisaged that by 2020 Malawi will be secure, democratically mature, environmentally sustainable, self-reliant with equal opportunities for and active participation by all by having social services, vibrant cultural values. The Government recognises that successful implementation of development strategies depends on good governance in both public and private institutions. This is the reason the MGDS III emphasises on good governance to pursue the best possible processes for making policy decisions through consultative practices, accountability, service quality protocols, good working relationships and coordination. Further, The National Decentralisation Policy of 1998 cites the promotion of “accountability and good governance” as one of four central objectives of the reforms.

4.2. Project Effectiveness

Project effectiveness measured the extent to which the activities achieved the project purpose, or whether this can be expected to happen on the basis of the outputs.

The Overall goal of the project was to contribute to improved and sustained quality public service delivery in Likoma and Rumphi Districts. The Purpose was to empower local structures to actively and meaningfully monitor and track public locally generated and development resources at local government level in the target districts by 2020. The project outputs were: Output 1: Increased local government structures’ knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems: Output 2: Informed local government structures engage the local councils on prudent use of public resources i.e. LDF, CDF and DDFs and Output 3: Elected local government structures have improved capacity to discharge their duties effectively

Key activities implemented included; theatre for change performances on human rights, public expenditure tracking, advocacy and lobbying; establishing and training accountability clubs; training local governance structures and village tribunals in governance systems; identifying and orienting youth groups; production and distribution of IEC materials; scorecard assessments on the adherence to the minimum standards; community engagement meetings with ADC’s & VDC’s; dialogue/ interface meetings with District Council; media campaigns, training Councillors in budget tracking and expenditure guidelines on District Development Fund, (DDF) Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and Local Development Fund (LDF).

In the period of one year (February, 2019 – February 2020), the project has achieved good results in terms of implementation of the planned activities and substantive achievements on outcomes and outputs. **Annex 1** shows level of achievement of results in the implementation of the project.

Output 1: Increased local government structures’ knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems: Six trainings were conducted on local governance systems, public resources: DDF, CDF, LDF and Decentralization involving the following in Likoma: 3 SACs (women forum of 38 members, Star Circle of 20 members, Chizumulu club of 10 members); youth clubs of 298 members; 3 ADCs of 75 members and 9 VDCs of 81 members. In Rumphi the

trainings involved 3 SACs of 98 members; 6 youth clubs of 195 members, 1 ADC and 6 VDCs of 60 members.

Zodiac was engaged in development of a documentary in Likoma, Likoma Community Radio continued to air out Chitukuko program. Times, Zodiac, Nation Publications, Voice of Livingstonia supported awareness raising in Rumphi through interface with key people and the programmes featured in media.

Output 2: Informed local government structures engage the local councils on prudent use of public resources i.e. LDF, CDF and DDFs: 9 engagement sessions were held at Phoka (on iron sheets, bridges, road construction, school teachers, cash transfer programme, school drinking behaviours, and 3 in Likoma (on police vehicle, ESCOM fuel and beach toilets). The project managed to access CDF and DDF guidelines from the councils and translated into local languages. 400 guidelines were reprinted and distributed to the communities. However, District Councils failed to share council minutes, financial reports and council reports.

Output 3: Elected local government structures have improved capacity to discharge their duties effectively: 8 Councillors and 3 District Council Officials in Rumphi and 2 Councillors and 3 District Council Officials in Likoma were trained in Public Budget Tracking and Expenditure (PET), Rights Based Approach (RBA), Human Rights, Advocacy and Lobbying and guidelines on DDF, CDF and LDF.

District Councils in Likoma and Rumphi are 100% committed to improving the quality of public service delivery. However, they observed that if the interventions can reach out to more sections of the districts and together they have a voice, delivery of quality public service will be sustainable. The pointers to achieving greater results in short to medium term include the acceptance of the project by the communities and district councils, awareness and capacity building, ability to demand transparency and accountability of public resources, follow ups on projects with elected duty bearers, right holders deciding how to manage funds, improved engagement between right holders and duty bearers, right holders ability to question duty bearers, increased involvement and participation of the youth in local government structures.

The project developed a result framework detailing the intervention logic, indicators, baseline and anticipated results in progressive years. Following up on the indicators, the FYF and CSP conducted one monitoring visit in Rumphi and Likoma to assess progress of work and provide feedback to local structures. FYF/CSP in collaboration with the councilors managed to visit all the VDCs and Youth clubs in Likoma district with the aim of refreshing them on their roles and relationship with MP, councilor, ADC, VDC and the community members. The visits helped to identify gaps and challenges the structures face in delivering their duties effectively.

The project conducted 6 planning and review meetings (3 in each district) with accountability clubs and ADC representatives. The meetings helped the local structures to assess themselves on how they are delivering their duties and production of work plans. In collaboration with LGAP and NICE, FYF and CSP conducted a meeting to identify other organizations working in Likoma district with the aim of formulating a civil society organization's network. The meetings revealed the challenges, risks and uncertainties that the organizations meet and how to overcome them during implementation of projects. This led to formulation of CSOs network in Likoma District.

Tilitonse Foundation and FYF/CSP also had a Field Day on 12th December 2019 in T/A Kachulu. This was part of a learning field visit that was led by the Foundation. While it was a monitoring visit by Tilitonse Foundation, the briefing session provided a valuable and critical feedback to FYF/CSP that helped in project implementation especially success stories documentation. This included the need to build the capacity of community structures and field staff in knowledge management.

4.3. Project Efficiency

Efficiency was described in terms of the project's outputs in comparison to its inputs and project management.

The project was implemented by a consortium of FYF and CSP where roles for each partner were clearly defined. The consortium also benefited from the presence of other CSOs in the districts who also supported other activities on behalf of the consortium members. The costs of consortium members moving from Mzuzu to Rumphi and Likoma were reduced in such circumstances. Again, with the defined roles, the arrangement was cost effective as it allowed few members to be involved in field visits based on the activity assigned to the partner. This enabled partners to conduct several activities in the areas. The project activities did not overlap with other projects because there were no similar interventions in the areas as such the activity implementation depended 100% on the project costs. The consortium demonstrated high levels of transparency and accountability to the community by disclosing the project costs, showing that they were also accountable to the citizens.

The budget and expenditure summary shows that management of resources was prudent as expenditures were within the budget lines as shown in table 2. Over expenditures were there but mostly not exceeding 25%, the Tilitonse Foundation general rule of over expenditure which enabled the project to fulfill most of its planned activities. Over expenditures were experienced because implementation of activities was affected by the varying prices. In cases of hard to reach areas, prices of items were slightly above the budget. Sometimes, staff were asked to make another requisition or overspent and claim the over expenditure later. Working with groups was more cost efficient than individual in terms of costs containment.

Table 3: Budget and expenditure summary

Budget line	Budget		Expenditure		Utilization
	MK	EURO	MK	EURO	Percent
Output 1: Increased local government structures' knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems					
Conduct theatre for change performance on human rights, public expenditure tracking, advocacy and lobbying	1,334,000.00	1,616.97	1,351,125.00	1,637.73	101%
Establish training accountability clubs in the districts	5,380,000.00	6,521.21	5,902,651.93	7,154.73	110%
Train local governance structures	4,450,000.00	5,393.94	4,402,354.58	5,336.19	99%

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Output 2: Informed local government structures engage the local councils on prudent use of public resources i.e. LDF, CDF and DDFs

Identify and orient youth groups	1,015,000.00	1,230.30	1,072,050.00	1,299.45	106%
Produce and distribute IEC materials	5,999,000.00	7,271.52	6,772,105.09	8,208.61	113%
Translate and print in local languages minimum local government standard in financial management	1,645,000.00	1,993.94	1,588,440.00	1,925.38	97%
Conduct scorecard assessments on the adherence to the minimum standards	792,000.00	960.00	757,800.00	918.55	96%
Conduct community engagement meetings with ADC's & VDC's)	1,511,000.00	1,831.52	1,725,205.38	2,091.16	114%
Conduct dialogue / interface meetings with District Council	975,000.00	1,181.82	936,000.00	1,134.55	96%
Facilitate reprinting and distribution of council reports (Audit & project reports, Council minutes)	2,025,000.00	2,454.55	139,505.75	169.10	7%

Output 3: Elected local government structures have improved capacity to discharge their duties effectively

Conduct media campaigns (Field tours & sponsored community radio programs)	3,152,000.00	3,820.61	3,162,633.26	3,833.49	100%
Train Councillors in budget tracking and expenditure guidelines on DDF, CDF and LDF	5,130,000.00	6,218.18	5,043,800.00	6,113.70	98%

4.4. Project Impact

Impact assessed the positive and negative changes produced by the project intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

Output 1: Increased local government structures' knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems:

Improved awareness, transparency and accountability: The right holders had no knowledge on transparency and accountability of duty bearers on public resources such as LDF, DDF and CDF. The project has opened up the rights holders who are now able to demand transparency

and accountability of the same resources. Grassroots were misinformed by political party officials that developments going to the areas are initiated by ruling parties yet they were supported by public resources. The grassroots are now aware of how development projects supported by public resources should be initiated, implemented and expenditures managed and made public to citizens. The project has increased local government structures knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems. In Likoma, the project involved 3 ADCs of 75 members, 9 VDCs of 81 members, 3 TAs. In Rumphi the project involved 1 ADC of 35 members, 3 VDCs of 30 members, 3 GVHs and 1 TA. The project also reached out to community structures including 3 SACs of 68 members (38 women forum, 20 Star Circle and 10 Chizumulu accountability club), 15 youth clubs of 297 members in Likoma while in Rumphi the project reached out to 6 youth clubs of 195 members and 3 SACs of 98 members.

The project has informed local government and community structures that authority holders such as MPs, Governors and Councillors have to plan, implement and account for community development in conjunction with the citizens. MPs and Councillors tendency was to only engage community members that belong to their parties in champion community developments. They lacked political inclusiveness in the community development and did not allow to be held accountable. Citizens are now aware that any community development proposed by those in authority must come from citizens through the local government structures (ADC, VDC), Councillors, MPs, Council and Parliament and back to the community through same channel. Members of Parliament need to get reports from council to parliament and from parliament to council. *Members said: We have fully found out that government funds for community development were being stolen, and now we know how to follow the matter up. Previously, we did not know there was fund for development. we did not know how CDF, LDF, DDF were working, but this project has helped us understand and know how they are supposed to work. Secondly, In the past, we were not signing after getting Mtukula pakhomo funds (cash social transfer), but now we know that it's a public facility that needs transparency and accountability as such we sign. Other deserving beneficiaries who were omitted (in Rumphi district, Kettie Mhango, and Tryness Msiska of GVH Kanjuli) because someone included his relatives have been included and are also benefiting after demanding the same from Community Development Assistant.*

Improved local leadership and responsiveness: The project has enhanced local leadership skills as defined by confidence, credibility and mutual trust. On confidence, it was observed that local structures are better able to identify needs, plan and manage development activities in their community and they have a drive to catalyse development with participation of all community members. Local structures demonstrated pride in their accomplishments to date. They readily offered future plans and next steps for their projects and for tackling other challenges in their communities. In some cases, they discussed how they have extended the reach of their intervention, for example, by forming additional women's groups such as VSLA, or by asking those who received training to share the learning with others. On credibility, it was observed that local structures now have respect and recognition to lead change in their communities because they are now transparent, accountable and responsive to the demands of the right holders. On mutual trust, it was observed that local structures now are responsive and have bonds with grassroots that encourage sustainable collaboration. The local structures are now more responsive and opened up to take more community responsibilities.

Increased social networks: A wide range of actors were involved in the implementation of the project. These networks were established by people within the local community and from district. Individuals from local structures and local government were most frequently cited. Government participants at the district were included in all the areas. Individual citizens were also included as important actors involved in the project. The project has contributed to establishing new social networks and strengthened existing social networks that are good for support action for community development. For example, in the District Councils the project worked closely with Directors of Planning and Development (DPD) who because of the project, created new networks with Councillors, ADC and VDC chairpersons, GVHs, TAs, Likoma Community Radio and Dzuka Likoma (in Likoma), NICE in Likoma, FYF and CSP in Likoma. The project strengthened the DPDs existing networks with FYF and CSP in Rumphi, District Civil Society Network because of the regular project meetings. At community level the key structures were ADCs which created

new networks with Youth Clubs, Star Cycle in Likoma, Accountability Club/Women Forum, Media, Church members while strengthening the existing networks with MP, Councillor, TA Kachulu, GVHs, VDCs, schools, churches and community police.

Output 2: Informed local government structures engage the local councils on prudent use of public resources i.e. LDF, CDF and DDFs

Increased community action: The project has improved increased action as defined by collective action, social capital and inclusiveness. On collective action, communities have the desire and momentum to work together on shared goals and are all responsible in handling community resources. Once the groups successfully completed one public demand, they appeared to gain momentum to look for other issues and solve other challenges. The project has empowered the grassroots to demand accountability of public resources from duty bearers. *For example, at Phoka the Accountability Club of 40 members and youth club of 40 members managed to claim back iron sheets from Traditional Authority that were meant for public market but the Chief diverted them for his personal use. Again at Phoka, the local structures demanded transparency and accountability from ruling party District Governor who was initiating construction of unreliable bridges in the name of the party developing in the area without the knowledge of VDC, ADC and Councillor yet the resources were from CDF. Rights holders at Phoka led by social accountability clubs of 98 members, youth clubs of 195 members, ADC of 35 members and VDCs of 60 members demanded compensation for loss of assets during construction of Njakwa-Livinstonia road and the demand was honoured. In Likoma, the local structures demanded accountability from ESCOM on how the fuel for generators that power the district was used after sensing some misappropriation. The social accountability clubs comprising of Star Circle of 20 members, women forum of 38 members also took to task Police Office after observing that the police vehicle was regularly found in beer drinking places.*

Three accountability clubs of 98 members in Rumphi conducted a social audit exercise with School Management Committee (SMC) of Mwanani School after the school funds were mismanaged. The perpetrators were taken to Livingstonia Police Unit which resulted in recovering part of the school resources. Citizens were enlightened that school management committees are entrusted with the responsibility to work together on issues affecting a particular school. At Mwanani, Mahuwi and Junju Primary schools as well Junju CDSS, teachers were held accountable for beer drinking behaviour during teaching hours which affected performance of learners yet the teachers receive salaries from public resources. Since then, the behaviour of teachers has changed for the better. The Accountability clubs at Phoka engaged Phoka Coffee Growers Cooperative for mismanagement of funds and part of the funds were recovered

The local structures are now able to take those who sexually abuse the minors to police, the structures have put corruption involving police with community offenders on check because the police are now afraid of the local structures. For example, at Phoka the local structures have managed to return 18 minors from marriage. The local structures now plan community developments, implement and account for resources together. They demand transparency and

accountability from local and district duty bearers together. The unity of purpose has been fundamental in shaping the advocacy and behaviour change towards active citizenship.

Increased inclusiveness: The project promoted inclusiveness by involving women and men in accountability clubs (38 women, 30 men in Likoma), youth groups (297 youth in Likoma and 195 in Rumphi) and other vulnerable groups (2 females with disabilities in Rumphi and Likoma) to champion accountability of resources. The project has empowered the right holders with the right skills to champion inclusive community development while respecting human dignity and within the laws of Malawi. The local government and community structures are now inclusive allowing different groups of citizens to actively and meaningfully participate in decision making, tracking public expenditures and getting to know local government systems. Women have been very instrumental in driving most of the local structures such as SACs. Youth were not considered in any decision making structures and development activities. The awareness raised by the project on inclusivity has enabled the ADCs and VDCs to allow the youth participate in decision making meetings and some youth now have positions in the structures. The youth are becoming more responsible and reliable than before. People with disabilities and other vulnerable groups are incorporated in various community structures to meaningfully take part in development of the areas. For example, one Accountability Club at Vunguvungu in Rumphi has one active female member with physical disability. Likoma ADC had no representative of people with disability, but after awareness and training, a person with disability was coopted into the committee. However, the elderly and chronically ill are not included in most of the development issues of the areas.

Output 3: Elected local government structures have improved capacity to discharge their duties effectively

Increased engagement and responsiveness of duty bearers: The project has informed local government structures, elected duty bearers and local councils to engage on prudent use of public resources such as LDF, CDF and DDF. This was achieved through interface meetings with various duty bearers such as District Councils, Police, District Education Division, District Community Development, District Youth Office, District Health Office, Social Welfare, Department of Water, Chiefs and Media. The engagements created strong social networks that helped in building collective action, mutual trust and inclusiveness in planning and utilisation of public resources. *For example, the Councilor at Phoka said, I never wanted to be engaged with the grassroots because I had no resources to meet their demands. Most of the development initiatives were led by MP and ruling party District Governor who were controlling CDF, and were even bypassing me. But now with the social network we have created, I am more responsive to the citizens and as a team, we plan and execute development projects together, we follow public resources that are for the area with the MP and Council. This has made me not popular with the MP because he feels I am championing the transparency and accountability against him and the ruling party.*

The awareness raised by the project on inclusivity has enabled the District Councils to allow the youth participate in decision making meetings. For example, *in Rumphi, 5 youth representatives from Phoka were invited by the Director of Planning and Development at the District Council to participate in the development of District Annual Plans and 19 youth were selected from the area for skills development training at Mbulunji Community Technical College.*

4.5. Project Sustainability

Sustainability was concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after funding has been withdrawn.

The project has created robust social networks in both districts which are fundamental in propelling the success stories beyond the current areas of implementation. The networks have mutual trusts and able to collectively work together for a common purpose.

The elected duty bearers, local government structures and local leaders at community level who are key duty bearers are responsive and willing to work more with the right holders. The collective action is important in implementation of advocacy and lobbying intervention.

The awareness and capacity building has made communities to be actively involved in community development because they now understanding their roles and responsibilities. Communities know how to track finances, tools to be used in tracking, trained on how to work together, know how to avoid confrontation among stakeholders

Transparency and accountability at all levels have motivated right holders to do more in order to champion tangible developments in the communities.

6. CONCLUSION AND LESSIONS LEARNT

6.1. Conclusion

Data collected and analysed during the course of this evaluation lead the evaluation team to conclude that the project on: *"Promoting participatory and inclusive development in Likoma and Rumphi Districts"* funded by Tilitonse Foundation has contributed to improved and sustained quality public service delivery in Likoma and Rumphi Districts. This is evidenced by acceptance on the same by district duty bearers who are responsive to the demands of rights holders and are also inclusive by allowing all categories of grassroots to take active role in the development of their communities.

The project has empowered local structures such as ADC, VDC, Accountability Clubs/Women Forum, Youth Clubs/Start Cycle to actively and meaningfully monitor and track public locally generated and development resources at local level. Mismanagement and misallocation of public resources is not common these days. Right holders are able to know and follow up the amount of money released for developmental projects such as construction of bridges. Previously, they were not informed. In the past, people who were not deserving benefited from it. Right holders have learnt their roles and responsibilities in local development initiatives, have already begun undertaking the works on their own, are well informed of the duties and responsibilities of citizens, chiefs, ward councillors and Members of Parliament so much so that it is easy to criticize the malpractices.

The project has increased local government structures' knowledge on public expenditure tracking and local government systems. This has informed local government structures to engage the local

councils on prudent use of public resources such as LDF, CDF and DDFs and; has improved capacity of elected local government structures to discharge their duties effectively.

6.2. Lessons learnt

Through this project, it can be observed that sustainability of projects become clear when all relevant sectors/actors have accepted the intervention and are involved at every stage of implementation. This project has created good social networks in all districts which have the potential to continue supporting the interventions.

It is clear that lack of knowledge on active citizenship, local governance and rule of law have the potential to retard development in rural areas. Most communities have not been exposed to active citizenship, local governance and rule of law which has contributed to retardation of developments. This is the reason why elected and council duty bearers take advantage of ignorance to misappropriate public resources such as CDF, DDF and LDF.

By demonstrating transparency and accountability, the project made FYF and CSP to be trusted by the community on the promotion of participation and inclusive development. FYF and CSP demonstrated the spirit of “it begins with you” which helped in improving the relationship with the community.

Presence of media houses and use of theater for transformation in advocacy and lobbying projects are pivotal in accelerating message delivery, reach and uptake because they attract more people at the same time. The media houses and theater for transformation assisted with rapid transmission of information. Their presence made the interface meeting go well.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The project managed to build capacity of Councillors and District Councils Officials but not Members of Parliament. MP influence allocation of community projects using public or personal resources and have proved not to cooperate with right holders on transparency and accountability of public resources. It has proved to engage them at constituency or district levels in order to raise awareness on good governance. Through Tilitonse, it may be possible to engage them at national level through breakfast or meal meetings in Lilongwe.

The project was implemented in selected TAs and has made tangible impact at that local level which may not be visible at district level. There is need to upscale and outscale the project to more local structures within the TA and also cover more TAs in a district whose collective action will trigger significant change on the delivery of public services at District Councils. The scaling up will create wider social networks at district levels that will have a greater influence on the functionality of duty bearers at district level.

Presence of media houses and use of theater for transformation in advocacy and lobbying projects must be prioritised. However, there was a concern that much as the role of media was appreciated,

some content of the information that they disseminated was not correct, therefore, they are advised to cross check facts before concluding.

Duty bearers such as MPs, Councillors, ADC and VDC have a role to work with right holders by showing commitment towards developments taking place in their communities. They should initiate development of by-laws to guide implementation of community developments, they should motivate and mobilize right holders to participate in development activities and government money should not be kept and controlled by a political figure of any party.

There was strong evidence of women's participation and leadership in the project, as well as affecting gender equity and other gender issues. It was less clear the extent to which the project was engaging new and unheard voices in development, including those of other marginalized groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities, and the extreme poor. At the same time, communities highlighted that meaningful inclusion of women and marginalized groups is important in advancing local capacity and development.

Much as there is evidence of inclusion, incorporate an inclusion lens in support to project design and implementation. Engaging a more diverse group in monitoring of project progress may aid in this effort. A quick systems thinking approach may be used during monitoring in order to meaningfully engage and remind communities on the need for inclusiveness.

Much as the local structures demonstrated capacity to demand transparency and accountability of public resources, the evidence generated is not systematic to warrant policy shift. As appropriate, the project must include efforts and tools to assess community capacity in future monitoring and evaluation efforts.

The projects must also focus on policy shift. For example, in the field work sample (ending the practice of girls' early marriage, reclaiming iron sheets from TA, community development initiated by party governors) appeared to be very successful in generating community support for implementing policy changes, as well as building consensus to address the root causes of the problems. It may be useful to develop by laws/guidelines to safeguard these at local level.

Local structures did not commonly discuss many current or desired activities to network and share practices yet there are robust social networks that have naturally developed because of the project. This was surprising to the evaluation team, as networking among members is often a feature of advocacy projects. Furthermore, it is very common culturally that when neighboring communities hear about a successful activity, they take the initiative to visit and seek to replicate the activity, but this never happened. There may be a role for local structures or its partners to support sharing and replicating successful approaches to community-led development, in order to achieve a wider effect. In addition, the FYF and CSP team may further extend their effects by joining with other partners who are advancing community-led development in advocacy initiatives.

In alignment with the program's M&E system, the data collected and analyzed for this evaluation demonstrated good evidence that community capacity is increasing at the local level, in terms of leadership. Moreover, it was plausible that the project intervention was contributing to these community-level changes. There was a logical pathway between the project interventions and the

underlying drivers of community capacity as identified by local community members. New tools introduced through this evaluation, specifically the social network analysis and community capacity workshops, were feasible to implement and well received in the local setting. Tilitonse Foundation may support capacity building of partners on Systems Thinking approach to development in order to enhance project sustainability.

REPORT ANNEXES

Annex 1: Achievement of results framework