

**Scottish Government International Development Programme
Mid-Year Report**

Notes for Completion:

- Please note, with the exception of the cover page, this report will be published.
- To ensure compliance with GDPR, refrain from using any personal or identifying information unless you have obtained consent from the data subject and are content for this to be made public.
- Answer all questions in the template provided, noting the word limits.
- Include all relevant information in the reporting template – hyperlinks and annexes will not be accepted as part of the report.
- Ensure answers are clear, concise and in plain English. Explain acronyms and avoid using jargon.

<p>Supporting Documentation</p> <p><i>Check box to confirm key documents have been submitted with this report</i></p>	<p>Logical Framework, which reflects any changes in this reporting period.</p> <p>Budget</p> <p>Case study</p> <p>Risk register</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X</p>
<p>As the project manager responsible for the completion of this report, I hereby confirm the information included is accurate and complies with the notes for completion.</p>		
<p>Scotland-based Project Manager: [redacted]</p>	<p>Signature: [redacted]</p>	

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1. General project information		
1.1	Project reference Number	MAL/18/09-SS
1.2	Name of organisation	Sense Scotland
1.3	Lead partner(s) organisation	Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Synod of Livingstonia Education Department
1.4	Project title	Promoting Equal Access to Education in Malawi Northern Region (PEATEMA North)
1.5	Reporting period	From: 01/04/2019 To: 30/09/2019
1.6	Reporting year	2
1.7	Project start date	01/10/2018
1.8	Project end date	31/03/2023
1.9	Total project budget*	£1,331,043
1.10	Total funding from Scottish Government*	£1,239,488
1.11	Provide a brief description of the project's aims, highlighting which of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) your project is working towards? (200 words)	<p>This community empowered inclusive education project in the Northern Region of Malawi aims to address ingrained and inherited negative attitudes towards disability, improve access to a quality education and enable all children to reach their full potential regardless of any additional needs.</p> <p>The project is working in 493 schools across 40 educational zones in Chitipa, Karonga and Nkhata Bay to support the provision of a relevant education for learners in both primary and secondary schools. We work with influential community leaders, mainstream teachers, parents, government structures, local government officials and the children themselves to promote equal access to education for all children, to give them a future of their own choosing that only an education can bring.</p> <p>The project takes a holistic approach to tackling the obstacles identified locally which hinder access to education for children with additional needs. These can be attitudinal, at home, school or the wider community and they can be physical, with challenges to get to school or easily access classrooms and toilet blocks.</p>

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		The project works directly towards supporting three SDGs: 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality) and 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and indirectly 1 (No Poverty) and 3 (Good Health and Well Being).
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2. Project progress and results

Please use this section to give an update on the progress the project has made during this reporting period.

2.1 Provide an update on the progress your project has made during this reporting period. Use this space to update us on what has gone well and any challenges you have experienced, detailing how you have overcome these. (Max 350 words)

A key achievement during this reporting period has been meetings with the Area Development Committees (ADCs) in each District with an emphasis on lobby and advocacy for disability mainstreaming in development planning and local interventions to benefit all children and people with disabilities. These are the grassroots local government development actors who can strongly influence local behaviour. The immediate result, following meetings and training under Community Awareness Training (CAT), has been the promise to take an active role through the adoption and implementation of their individual Action Plans. In these Plans, the Chiefs together with the ADC chairpersons and members promised to mobilise their communities not only for educational inclusion but also to participate in development planning agendas and the formulation of by laws in their respective villages to prevent, protect and control the abuse and/or neglect of children and people with disabilities.

During this reporting period CAT reached 555 (male 423 and female 132) new beneficiaries, the two-day Teacher Awareness and Communication Training (TACT) reached 785 (male 539 and female 246) and the five-day INSET reached 206 (male 158 and female 48). The popularity of the training, particularly for teachers is shown by the interest in the INSET training which is held during school holidays to ensure schools can release their teaching staff for the five days of consecutively structured teaching model.

Beneficiary Review meetings in all Districts reached 787 people (male 564 and female 223) brought forward stories and examples across all beneficiary groups of positive changes of attitude and behaviour, from which local trends are emerging.

Political instability with prolonged demonstrations by Human Rights Defenders Coalition caused the closure of project offices to ensure staff safety and rescheduling of activities.

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	<p>Unexpected problems in opening a new local project bank account. The bank in Malawi repeatedly gave wrong information which led to transfers being returned twice to the UK and delays of over 4 weeks which necessitated a postponement in implementing planned activities.</p>
2.2	<p>Have you experienced any delays to planned activities? Provide full details including what action is being taken to bring activities back on track.(Max 350 words)</p> <p>The challenges noted above have impacted on planned activities, particularly due to the nature of the project design and implementation through a tried and tested successional and holistic approach. For example, parent support groups cannot be set up until children with additional needs have been identified and Family Awareness and Communication Training (FACT) has been undertaken. Peer educators cannot be identified and training until FACT and TACT have been undertaken.</p> <p>In the four months of the political demonstrations, the project offices have had to close for 120 working hours or 15 working days. The highest number of closures was in July, with 64 working hours lost.</p> <p>The delays in receiving funds, both from the problems with the new local bank account set up and delays in transferring has also impacted on what activities could be undertaken. The impact of grant funding only being released to Sense Scotland after commencement of the next reporting period has led to an inevitable delay in transfer to our in-country partners. Partners work to tight margins and project activities are scaled back until funds are transferred and received, This has had a knock-on effect, particularly given both the political demonstrations (actual and those announced but postponed) and the long school holiday where availability of community members is lessened.</p> <p>We are realistic about what the project can do to limit the time lost due to the ongoing political demonstrations, with the key importance of both staff and potential beneficiary safety. Field activities are planned on a quarterly basis but we continue to be flexible should planned activities coincide with new dates for protests.</p> <p>New systems are in place internally to ensure prompt notification of payments made to Sense Scotland by Scottish Government, and subsequent transfer of project funds to ensure there is minimum delay to planned implementation.</p>
2.3	<p>Are you on track to meet your year-end milestones? Give details of any areas that are behind, and how you plan to overcome this. (Max 350 words)</p> <p>The project is currently off-track at this mid-year point on FACT training which, as noted above has an impact on the development of Parent Support Groups, Peer Educators and Zonal Education Coordinators (ZECs), all scheduled for this second year of the project.</p> <p>The identification of children with additional needs is followed by FACT and delays caused by both political protests in July and late receipt of funding meant that this had to be postponed until after the school holidays finished.</p>

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To get the project back on track to meet end of year milestones, the following strategies have been put in place.

- Greater clustering of similar activities targeting the same beneficiaries to reduce travel time;
- The project is utilising the office of the Special Needs Coordinators in the respective District Education Manager's offices. They now often accompanying project staff, especially the district education coordinators together with the specialist SNE teachers based in the zones and schools. The project's strategy here is two-fold: to utilise this structure as Trainer of Trainers (TOTs) in the next phase to increase beneficiary reach and as a long-term approach to local sustainability;
- The Primary Education Advisers and area coordinators are getting more involved in inclusive education and the project team expect them to become future TOTs;
- During the next six months the project will fully utilise the ZECs whose identification pending the completion of FACT training with parents. The role of the ZECs has been designed to support the training of the community members through CAT and together with the parents, at local level.

With these strategies in place the project is confident that it can meet our year-end milestones.

3. Partnerships and collaboration

This section allows you to discuss how partnership working is progressing on the project, as well as wider collaboration and sharing of learning.

3.1

Provide an update on how partnership working has gone during this reporting period. Let us know about any highlights, challenges or changes to roles and responsibilities. (Max 350 words)

This reporting period has seen continued development of the partnership, particularly following the sudden departure of the previous Education Director (ED) in January 2019. The temporary appointment of an ED, both a lay person and experienced project manager, was seen as very progressive and motivational to the many partners the Synod works with. This appointment was made permanent at the Annual General Synod meeting in August 2019. This has reduced some of the workload of the local project co-ordinator and significantly contributed to the development of Synod-wide policies and procedures which previously were department focussed. This professionalisation of internal policies which whilst previously in place, now rely less on trust but more firmly on strict referral and elevation procedures. This is particularly evident in the increased understanding and systems around potential safeguarding issues and fraud, with constant sensitisation at all CCAP engagements, whether project focussed, church attendees, school children or youth groups.

In September 2019 Sense Scotland trustees took the decision to withdraw from the Piper Group partnership with Enable. This led to the abrupt departure

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	<p>of the Scottish Project Manager which had a resulting impact on financial monitoring and a delay in sending interim top up funds to the in country team. The new lead person is [redacted], Director of Internal Affairs, Sense Scotland.</p> <p>As mentioned previously, delays in the transfer of project funds from Sense Scotland to CCAP have impacted on planned activities and reaching mid-year milestones. New systems have been mutually developed by both partners to address this, with greater forward planning and improved internal communications within the finance department and wider Sense Scotland.</p>	
3.2	<p>Have any international visits to the project taken place in this period? Give details including key activities and outputs of these visits.</p> <p>[redacted], Sense Scotland’s Malawi Project Co-ordinator visited the project which was timed to coincide with a quarterly staff review meeting in Karonga for all SNE staff. This covered updates from all District Project Coordinators; budget updates; activity planning for quarter 3; data collection training on the new Scottish Government funded tablets; monitoring and evaluation; potential academic research project; safeguarding and new across-the-board policies within CCAP; on-going challenges and learning and facilitation (Karen) on collecting and developing case studies and a UK perspective on project photographs.</p> <p>Attended Beneficiary Review meetings in Chitipa, Karonga and Nkhata Bay, hearing feedback from a range of project beneficiaries, their stories, challenges and ideas for going forward and the impact of local conditions on project activities and outcomes.</p> <p>Budget revision and planning with project staff in Mzuzu, working on actions to potentially mitigate exchange rate losses, the impact of political protests, budget revisions, the impact of delayed funding on project milestones, reporting schedules and developing new systems to improve cash flow options for field activities.</p> <p>Meetings with senior Synod management regarding staffing issues and their development of new policies and procedures for greater transparency and accountability.</p>	
Date of visit	Key achievements / outputs of visit	Follow-up actions
13/07/19 – 24/07/19	<p>Greater understanding of local variations on outcomes from beneficiary review meetings</p> <p>Developing systems to reduce delays in transfer of project funds</p>	<p>On-going monitoring and case studies</p> <p>Monitor district-level action plans over next 6 months</p> <p>Cumulative calculation of hours and days lost</p>

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	Impact of political protests on project activities	due to temporary closures of project offices
	Budget planning	Monthly budget reporting including exchange rate gains/losses
<p>4. Safeguarding and fraud</p> <p>Please ensure you complete questions 4.1 and 4.2 even if you have no incidents to report.</p>		
4.1	<p>Have there been any incidents, relating to the Grant or the Project, in the last reporting period which contravene your safeguarding policy?</p> <p>No incidents have been reported during this reporting period. Along with greater awareness of CCAPs “no tolerance” policy, the project has put in place systems to track safeguarding issues and has a named lead person for the project team.</p>	
4.2	<p>Have there been any incidents in the last reporting period of financial mismanagement or fraud, relating to the Grant or the Project?</p> <p>There have been no incidences of financial mismanagement or fraud relating to the Grant or project during this reporting period.</p>	
4.3	<p>Have these incidents been reported to relevant authorities, and if so, to whom?</p> <p>N/A</p>	
4.4	<p>Describe what action has been taken, and highlight any lessons learned.</p> <p>An update to the attempted fraud of non-Grant funds in early 2019: at their Annual General Meeting in August 2019 the Synod leadership officially, and for the first-time, excommunicated the former ED. The Board’s decision regarding the Treasurer who enabled the potential fraud to take place based on trust instead of following financial signatory limits, has been referred to the bi-annual General Assembly in August 2020.</p> <p>All internal policies have been revised, with clear referral systems and, for the first time, have been adopted across the Synod as a whole. Prior to this, policies and procedures were department-led.</p>	

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5. Risk assessment			
5.1	<p>Have any issues materialised during this reporting period? If so, how were they addressed?</p> <p><i>Please refer to risk assessment provided at application stage.</i></p>		
Assumption	Risk	Action taken	Was this included in the Risk Assessment Table in your application?
Stable economic within Malawi and beyond	<p>Exchange rate fluctuations, long and short-term post Brexit economic uncertainty</p> <p>Ongoing political protests becoming increasingly violent at times.</p>	<p>On-going monitoring of local exchange rates and cumulative gains/losses to manage budget. Rates varied between MKW 888 to MKW 966. Current losses of over £6,000 since April 2019. Tweaks to budget to reflect losses.</p> <p>Not affecting Chitipa or Nkhata Bay directly, but offices closed in Mzuzu and Karonga whenever new demonstrations are announced for staff security.</p>	<p align="center">Yes</p> <p align="center">No. (Protests began in June 2019)</p>
Internal governance of CCAP Synod of Livingstonia remains stable	Negative national and local media coverage	<p>Attempted fraud by former Education Director led to his dismissal and excommunication at bi-annual General Synod Meeting (August 2019). CCAP praised for transparency in dealing with incident.</p>	Yes in the broadest sense, rather than specifics relating to an individual's action
6. Financial information			
<p>This section will be reviewed alongside your mid-year budget spreadsheet, which must be included with this report.</p>			
6.1	<p>Explain any variances to planned expenditure in this period. (Max 350 words)</p>		

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	<p>We had expected to have carried out a number of FACT workshops by the end of this reporting period and the subsequent activities which this allows, including setting up parent support groups, peer educators and ZECs. Due to delayed receipt of funding, the impact of the on-going political demonstrations and the long school holidays this had to be put back until schools reopened and families were available to attend the workshops.</p> <p>Our strategy to get back on track with end of year milestones has been developed to utilise other government actors to help with implementation, within the current remaining budget.</p>
6.2	<p>At this stage, does your projected expenditure look to be on track? If not, outline the reasons why, and what plans are in place to bring spending back on track. If you are requesting changes to your budget at this stage, outline them below. (Max 350 words)</p> <p>The projected expenditure is not on track due to delays in implementing the first level of project activities with the FACT training. These follow in a sequential order and therefore we are currently showing an underspend on output budget lines.</p> <p>As noted above, we expect our strategy to get back on track with implementation will bring our expenditure back on track by year end.</p> <p>We are not asking for changes to our budget at this reporting period.</p>
6.3	<p>Do you have a proposal for how you would like to utilise any of your ring-fenced underspend, excluding any currency gains? (Max 350 words)</p> <p>We do not expect to have any underspend and, if the exchange rates continue to fluctuate, we do not expect to make currency gains.</p>
<p>7. Any other information</p> <p>Use this section to tell us any other relevant information regarding your project. (Max 350 words)</p>	
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