



END OF PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

FOR

NYASHISIHI COMMUNITY ENDING CHILD MARRIAGES PROJECT

SUBMITTED TO

CHONGWE CHILD DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CCDA)

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Acronyms

CRC-Convention on the Rights of a Child.

CCDA-Chongwe Child Development Agency.

CM- Child Marriages

FDG's- Focus Group Discussion.

GBV- Gender Based Violence.

KII-Key Informant Interviews.

SPSS- Statistical Package for Social Science.

SRHR- Sexual Reproductive Health Rights

OSC-One Stop Centre.

Acknowledgement

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Executive summary

Child marriage (CM) is a severe violation of human rights and results in significant threats to children's immediate and long-term wellbeing. It mostly affects girls, curtails their education, harm their health and sharply restricts their potential to excel in life as it marks the end to their education. It further perpetuates intergenerational poverty and gender inequality. It is driven by a number of factors that includes, poverty, negative social norms, negative traditional practices, gender inequality, limited access to education and Sexual Reproductive Health among others. Chongwe Child Development Agency (CCDA) implemented a six months project whose aim was to create an enabling environment for the growth and development of the girl child by influencing social change and practice as well as build a strong support base for the prevention of child marriages. It sort to achieve this through a number of strategies, that included construction of a school to promote access to education and ensure children especially adolescent girls remains in school. The project further strengthen capacity of children in life skills and Sexual Reproductive Health to ensure improved skills in decision making and service seeking for self- protection. This integrated project further strengthened capacities of communities to prevent and respond to child marriages as well as empowered economically at risk households and those rescued from child marriages in order to prevent negative coping mechanisms by marrying off their children.

Evaluation Approach

This study was conducted in Nyashishi community. It sort to measure its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and prospects for outcomes. This study used descriptive research design. It involved information collection through household interviews through administering of questionnaires to randomly sampled households. non-experimental methodology that was built on the concept of "triangulation" which involved use of multiple sources of information to gather quantitative, qualitative information as well as direct observations. Quantitative data was collected through household survey using an adapted questionnaire that reached out to 79 households. Descriptive statistics and content analysis were used in analyzing quantitative and qualitative data respectively.

Study Findings according to evaluation criteria.

Evaluation Assessment Overview

		Not achieved	Slightly achieved	Moderately Achieved	Largely achieved	Fully achieved
CRITERIA	FEEDBACK					
A						
RELEVANCE	Overall, the survey established that, the project design and implementation approaches were relevant to Chongwe district and the targeted community in particular as the interventions addressed the real community needs, priorities and rights of both boys and girls. It addressed the needs at individual, family, community, societal and policy level. Communities and stakeholders were highly involved with a bottom-up approach in the design and implementation of the project. The project was designed in line with district priorities of multiple stakeholders. It project implored key strategies that were relevant as they supported strengthening of systems to protect children, facilitated community led action to prevent and respond to CM and counteracted social norms that impacts on girls protection from marriages.					

EFFECTIVENESS	<p>The interventions of this project have proved to be effective in improving the situation of children in the targeted community related to access to education within its short space of implementation. It has further provided relevant changes and progress in amplifying the need to protect children especially girls from child marriages by firstly enhancing their skills and knowledge on the problem and strengthening support systems to ensure a protective environment. It was however constrained of time impacting on its abilities to achieve some of the changes especially those that require time such as behavioural change.</p>
EFFICIENCY	<p>The project was delivered on schedule especially for the activities related to construction of the 1 x 3 classroom block. The delivery of the construction element of the project was cost effective due to timely implementation, resulting in effective use of resources both human and financial. The project was also able to implement capacity building and awareness activities on child protection, life skills, dialogues on the need to address the issues affecting children including protection from child marriages, exposure to other forms of violence and abuse alongside other activities.</p>
OUTCOME PROSPECTS	<p>With the expansion of the school, enrolment is likely to increase and retention and progression, as it will also transition into a secondary school thereby achieving the objective as per design of this project. It is contributing to creating demand for access to and utilization of protection services as evidenced by some of the cases that were referred to the One Stop Centre for further support. The project further strengthened abilities of at risk caregivers and girls of getting married with relevant skills to prevent child marriages. Strengthening economic opportunities for at risk families to child marriages is likely to counteract negative coping strategies such as child marriages.</p>
SUSTAINABILITY & INCLUSION	<p>The study found that the collaboration with government actors at both district and local level that interact with local structures was and would continue to be a critical approach to continue with the interventions. The project demonstrated that it was gender inclusive as it effectively engaged men, women, boys and girls based on their needs and barriers to effective participation.</p>

Other key findings

The evaluation found that that project had made significant progress towards changing perception of individuals on early marriages. There was an increase on the disagreement on the perception that marrying off a girl offers protection with 75% disagreeing compared to 39% at baseline. Similarly 1% and 17% strongly disagreed at end line and baseline respectively. A total of 27% agreed as compared to 24% at end line. This may be reflective of the fact that there has been some increased awareness on the topic of early and forced marriages at community level. Similarly a greater number of individuals (96 % reaffirmed the fact that marrying off girls below the age of 18 years should stop as compared to only 50% at baseline. Similarly, 26% believed that marrying my daughter before she turns 18 allows caregivers or parents to secure their financial status as compared to only 5% at end line.

The project contributed to increasing awareness on dangers of child marriages within the target community and surrounding areas. Asked on their knowledge, if any activities and/or collective discussions about ending marriage of people under 18 were taking place in their community, 77% said yes, while 6% said no. Asked whether they ever participated in or attended these activities or discussions, 67% said yes while 32% said no. This is in comparison to only 46% who said yes and baseline while only 36% mentioned that they had participated. Communities also felt that the trend was decreasing (61%), 20% felt it had increased, 13% did not know and 6% felt it remained the same.

The study found that community child protection committees had benefited from capacity building efforts to better protect children from child marriages and other forms of violence thereby enhancing their functionality. This is because the committee had been formed and supported with the trainings that have resulted to their ability to report and make referrals for some cases on sexual abuse as well as children themselves being able to seek services from them.

The project is likely to increase access to education, promote progression and retention. All respondents (100%) mentioned that they were happy with the construction of the new 1x3 classroom block at Nyashishi School. Asked on what made them happy about the construction of the classroom block, 46% mentioned that the school would increase access to education, 53% reduction in the distance covered by children to access secondary education, and 1% creating employment to teachers.

Lessons learnt

- Investing in efforts to strengthen coordination among stakeholders as well as making relevant linkages with and informal child protection providers is key to improving access to protection services for children.
- Building consensus on the need for social change to protect children especially girls from child marriages needs multiple support.
- Implementation projects that have short turnaround time requires well-coordinated efforts with both internal and external stakeholders. The construction component of the project was implemented in record time due to consistent monitoring, communication and community engagement which facilitated for timely implementation.
- The delivery of the construction element of the project was cost effective due to timely implementation, resulting in effective use of resources both human and financial.
- Presence of an effective school and community partnership that is built on a common understanding and vision is critical to sustaining efforts to improve the learning environment for children that also promotes their participation on issues that affect them.

Challenges

- The project time frame was limited do effectively sustain results and may have compromised the quality of certain activities.
- The project faced the challenge of poor agreed focus of actions for other project components such as delivery of economic empowerment at local level. This lack of co-operation and common understanding on the vision for development for the school and the community has an impact on sustaining some of the initiatives that this project has been able to do with the school and surrounding communities. Similarly, efforts to strengthen child participation remain weak within the school despite efforts to enhance child participation.

- The child protection committee, though has a lot of potential to enhance access to protection services for boys and girls, their capacity remain limited due to limited support that has been provided to them this far. This is clear from the lack of a clear plan of action to respond to some child protection issues as well as guidance on meetings regularly to review their work.

Recommendation(s)

- Build on existing efforts within the broader CCDA programing to broaden interventions that were supported. This would include, ongoing capacity building for children and caregivers on child protection and other social norms change efforts on ending child marriages. There is need therefore so source for other funding streams if available to build on the initiatives that this project started to promote long term sustainable changes.
- There should be on going sensitization on child marriages and other forms of violence to ensure sustained efforts for social behavior change on child marriages and overall protection of children especially girls from marriages.
- Strengthen school community partnerships by facilitating a common understanding on the vision for developing the school and community so as enhance sustenance of interventions.
- Child participation efforts need to be strengthened by ensuring that the school has a clear plan of action to ensure children are part and parcel of the school governance structures as well as being provided with sustained efforts to learn and voice out on issues that affect them.
- There should be on going capacity building and mentorship of the community child protection committee. This should include supporting the group with additional trainings/ mentorship from on- going programing. This should also ensure that follow ups are being made to the group in order keep it vibrant going forward.

Overall, the project was well designed and presents opportunities for further achievement of results both in the short and long term. The project has further demonstrated ability and potential for scalability owing to its value proposition for promoting the wellbeing and protection of children especially girls who are mostly impacted by child marriages.

1.0 Introduction and Background

Child marriages which mostly affects girls violates their rights, curtails their education, harm their health and sharply restricts their potential to excel in life as it marks the end to their education. Child marriage can be defined “as any formal or informal union between a child under the age of 18 and an adult or another child”¹. It is a major child protection issue in Zambia and Chongwe is no exception. The Committee on Rights of a Child, established under the CRC in its concluding observations on the combined second to fourth periodic reports of Zambia noted that despite the Marriage Act providing for 21 years as the marriageable age, child marriages were still persistent². An estimated one in seven (15%) female adolescents (15-19 years) are married (or in union) compared to only 1% of their male counterparts³. It is a violation of human rights and reinforces gender inequality especially that majority of victims are girls. It perpetuates intergenerational poverty and gender inequality. Poverty, is a key driver to escalating cases of early and forced marriages as caregivers resort to negative coping mechanisms of marrying off girls as a way to reduce the financial burden and saving resources as they would no longer have to provide for them. Gender inequality, cultural norms and traditions, limited access to education, economic opportunities, and Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) information and services all contribute to child marriages. Additionally, power that men and boys have over girls and women, continues to undermine value and respect for women and girls escalating cases of gender based violence especially early and forced marriages among other factors.

ChildFund Zambia and its Local partners including Chongwe Child Development Agency (CCDA) in its vision, mission and core values underscores the need to curb violation of children’s rights in all forms and child marriages are no exception. CCDA therefore implemented an integrated project in Chainda community of Chongwe district whose overall goal was to create an enabling environment for the growth and development of the girl child by influencing social change and practice as well as build a strong support base for the prevention of child marriages. To achieve this goal, it built capacity to adolescent girls at risk of child marriage in sexual reproductive health skills, strengthened capacities of families and primary caregivers to prevent child marriages and created opportunities for survival as opposed to child marriage as a coping mechanism to address economic needs of families. The project further sort to revitalize the role of the community structures in preventing child marriage and strengthen local leadership and abilities of institutions to support girls at risk of child marriages. It promoted access to education as a means to delay children especially girls from getting married early. Specific activities implemented to achieve the above objectives included, training girls in life skills and Sexual Reproductive Health Rights, child protection trainings for children and community structures, facilitating linkages to referral systems ,awareness raising , school construction and economic empowerment to at risk families and survivors of child marriages.

In order to measure the achievements of this project Child Fund Zambia and CCDA commissioned a short-term evaluation to determine the projects effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability and it ability to effect intended change. It further assessed the project

¹ Child Protection” United Nations Children’s Fund, 2020 , <http://www.unicef.org/protection/child> marriage.

² UNCRC, CRC/C/ZMB/CO/2-4 Para 23

³ Zambia Demographic Health Survey, 2018

ability to address key cross cutting issues such as gender, inclusion and environment. This report provides relevant information on the evaluation of this project. It provides the purpose and objectives of the study, the methodology undertaken for data collection that details research instruments, sample size, desk review and data analysis. It further presents findings and their analysis, lessons learnt, conclusion and recommendations for future programing.

2.0 Purpose of the evaluation

The project sought to measure immediate direct achievements that CCDA and Child Fund had control of, its effectiveness and sustainability in the last 6 months of implementation. It further measured immediate direct outcomes, established lessons learnt and provide recommendation to improve the situation in targeted communities and surrounding areas.

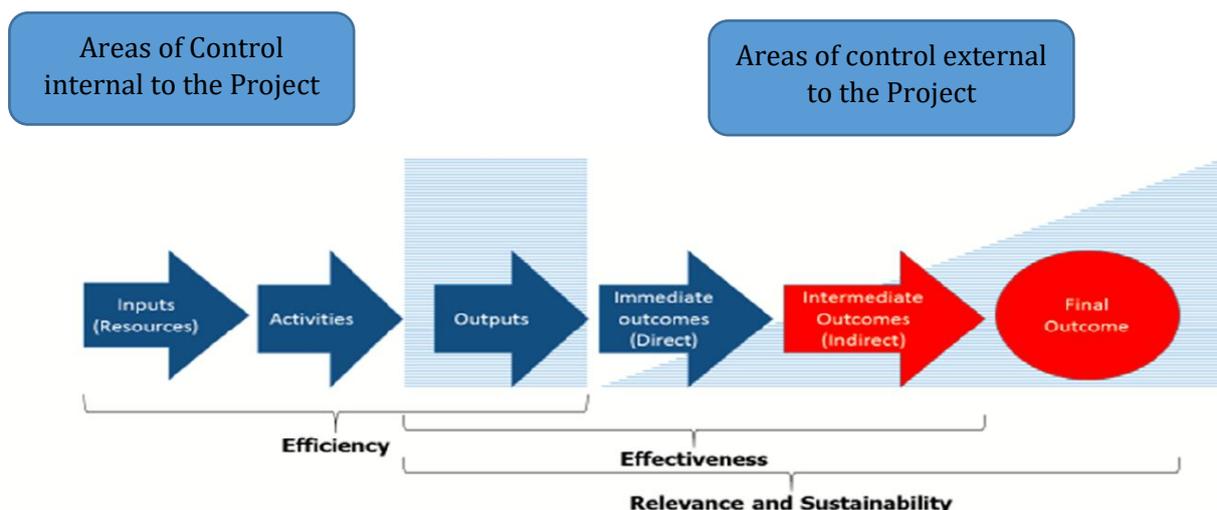
2.1 Specific Objectives

This short-term evaluation particularly aimed at achieving the following:

- Reviewing start-up stakeholder meetings to show extent of effectiveness and outcome of the meetings and their target groups.
- Assess to what extent the trainings for community members and youths were relevant in relation to project implementation.
- Assess knowledge levels in trainings conducted amongst community members and youths.
- Measure extent of participation of parents in activities aimed at ending child marriages.
- Assessing knowledge levels on activities aimed at ending early child marriages.
- Assessing to what extent and how effective awareness campaign messages have been towards ending early child marriages.
- Assess the extent to which issues of gender equality, social inclusion, and equity, have been taken into consideration.
- Assessing improved economic livelihood amongst community members.
- Assessing of completion of construction of 1 x 3 (specifically access and the valued added to improving the situation of children including protection from child marriages).

2.2 Evaluation criteria

This evaluation Utilized the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/ Development Assistance (OECD/DAC) evaluation criteria to answer the core evaluation questions. This is based on making assessment on efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and sustainability. The evaluation made an assessment on the core components of the project as per results chain in order to answer the evaluation questions. The evaluation explored both internal aspects with control of the project as well as those external as illustrated in the figure and table below:



Adapted from Basic Model: Lontoc (2006) Managing for Results, Managers of Results, Asian Institute of Management

Figure 1. Evaluation framework.

This evaluation therefore, has explored the key actions that may have contributed or affected **relevance and sustainability** based on the key enablers (outputs, immediate outcomes e.t.c), efficiency (inputs, activities and outputs including the time for delivery), and effectiveness focused on outputs and outcomes. It has provided guidance to ensure it is reflective of the core values, needs, right's and wellbeing of the people this intervention sought to target and address their needs.

Table 1. Evaluation criteria

Criteria	Review Questions
Relevance	To what extent the operations and objectives of the ending child marriage approach consistent with beneficiaries' need, government, and donors' requirements? Were activities in line with project objectives in meeting requirements? Were the approaches, activities and strategies used relevant to achieve intended outcomes of the project?
Efficiency	Overall, were the resources used efficiently while carrying out interventions? Were the resources used to its best to carry out planned activities successfully. Were the resources such as staff and project duration sufficient to carry out all planned activities?
Effectiveness	Did the inputs achieve the intended immediate results in terms of outputs and outcomes as in the project plan? To what extent were the interventions' objectives achieved?
Output	How many participants were trained, # of planned trainings/meetings carried out. Completion of construction activities
Outcome Prospects	Are there any outcomes that are apparent such as improved knowledge on dangers and effects of early child marriages, improved incomes? etc.

Exit and sustainability	<p>How is the project ensuring sustainable impact for beneficiaries after project phasing out? Continuity of improved knowledge on effects of early child marriages. Community awareness programs, activities that have been designed to curb early child marriages.</p> <p>What is the level of ownership of the project by target groups and will it continue after the end of external support?</p> <p>How far is the project embedded in local structures? Local structures at district and community level such as community action groups help in sustainability of projects as they will always be there.</p>
Cross-cutting Issues	
Coordination, Gender, and Environment.	<p>To what extent has the Project mainstreamed gender issues in its implementation processes and child protection issues? Male and female participation in household decision making for example.</p> <p>Have environmental constraints and opportunities been considered adequately in the project design?</p> <p>Are good environmental practices followed in project implementation.</p>

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Study design

This study used descriptive research design. It involved information collection through household interviews through administering of questionnaires to randomly sampled households. It further used a non-experimental methodology that was built on the concept of “triangulation” which involved use of multiple sources of information to gather quantitative, qualitative information as well as direct observations. Primary data was collected through, household interviews, Focus Group Discussions(FDGs) and Key Informant Interviews(KIIs) while secondary data was collected through reviewing of various documents that included activity reports, proposal documents and other reports. The target area was Nyashishi of Chainda community.

Quantitative data was collected through a household survey based on a calculated sample using a sample calculator with the intention of attaining a confidence level of 95% and 5% margin of error with a target proportion of 5%. Using this method, a total of 72 households were sampled, however, the survey was administered to 79 households to address the issue of non-responses.

Quantitative data was collected using an adapted questionnaire that was used for the baseline. The questionnaire was programmed on hand held mobile devices using the KOBO collect platform that supported the data collection and part on the analysis. Part of data sets were later exported to excel and SPSS for further analysis.

Qualitative data was collected using interview guides with key informants who included CCDA and Child Fund staff, relevant government and other stakeholders both at district and community level. Qualitative data was also collected through FGDs that included various age categories of children and youths as shown below:

3.1.1 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

The following were the focus group discussion and Key informants were data was collected from during this endline survey.

Table 2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Category	Method	Planned	Number reached
Girls (10 to 14 years), (15 to 18 years)	Focus Group discussion	2	1 group (10 to 14 years) 1 group (15 to 18 years)
Boys 10 to 18	Focus Group Discussion	1	1
Young men (19 to 24 years)	Focus Group discussion	1	1
Young women (19 to 24 years)	Focus Group discussion	2	1
Child Protection Committee	Focus Group Discussion	1	1
Households	Interview using the household questionnaire	70 to 80 households heads	79

3.1.2 Key informant Interviews (KIIs)-District level

Table 3 .Key informant Interviews (KIIs)-District level

Institution/ Individuals	Target	Actual interviewed
Department of Community Development	1	0
Department of Social Welfare	1	1
One stop Centre or Victim Support Unit(VSU)	2	1
World Vision or Good Neighbors	1	0
Department of Chiefs and Traditional Affairs	1	1
Ministry of Health (Focal point Adolescent health)	1	1
Ministry of Education	1	1
CCDA	2	2
ChildFund Country office staff	2	2
Total	12	9

3.1.3 Key informant Interviews (KIIs)-Community level

Table 4. Key informant Interviews (KIIs)-Community level

Institution/ Individuals	Target	Actual interviewed
Health facility staff	1	1
School administrator	1	1
Teacher overseeing the activities of children at Nyashishi school.	1	1
Traditional leaders (Headmen/women)	2	2
Total	5	5

2.2 Data analysis

Descriptive statistics and content analysis were used in analyzing quantitative and qualitative data respectively. Quantitative data from household interviews was collected using the Kobo platform that was cleaned by detecting any possible errors or inconsistencies for correction before uploading and exporting the files to SPSS and excel for further analysis and to generate relevant graphs and other visual presentations.

Qualitative data was collected from key informants, focus group discussants who included adults as well as children. Data from both key informants and focus group discussions was transcribed and analyzed through content analysis and in line with initial data collected from the baseline in order to draw comparisons with the end of project evaluation.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

The team ensured that ethical principles and safeguarding were followed throughout the entire study process from data collection to analysis and report compilation. Child safeguarding policies were read and signed before embarking on this assignment by the entire study team. This involved firstly orientation of the data collectors on child safeguarding and participant to ensure appropriate behaviors towards children and other participants. Emphasis was placed on ensuring (1) confidentiality of participants, (2) voluntary participation (3) obtaining informed consent and reporting of results that is useful and appropriate to the intended audience. An information sheet was developed and attached to the cover of the data collection tools which contained the objectives of the study and benefits of participating in the evaluation study which were given or read out to the study respondents before they were requested either to participate or not in the study. Further, respondents were also assured that none of their personal details or other identifiers would be included during the analysis and subsequent presentation of the findings.

3.4 Study Limitations

Although the project was well designed and the baseline study having used tools that provided for benchmarking of where the project started from, the time of implementation was limited to attribute the major changes seen at endline as some of the interventions were delivered almost at the end of the project.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Household demographic characteristics

4.1.1 Gender of respondent and household head

A total of 79 households were interviewed during the endline of which 46%(36) were male while 54%(43) were female. Of those interviewed 82%(65) were head of households, while 18%(14) were not. Forty-five percent (45%) were headed by male adult (18-45 years), 39% by female adult (18-59), 9% by male elderly (over 60), 4% by male child (under 18), and 3% by female elderly (over 60) as shown by the table below:

Table 5. Head of household

Who is the head of your household?	Frequency	Percentage
Male adult (18-59)	35	45
Female adult (18-59)	31	39
Male elderly (over 60)	7	9
Male child (under 18)	3	4
Female elderly (over 60)	2	3
Total	78	100

4.1.2 Household size

Data showed that the average number of individuals per household was 6 while the median was 5. Further data showed that 52%(41) of the households had 1-5 individuals, 39%(31) had 6-10 individuals, 5%(4) had 11-15 individuals and 4%(3) had 16-20 individuals. The average of 6 members per household tallies with the CSO (2010) findings of 6 members per household and ZDHS 2018 findings of 5 members per household.

Table 6. Household size

Number of individuals in the household	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 individuals	41	52
6-10 individuals	31	39
11-15 individuals	4	5
16-20 individuals	3	4
Total	79	100

4.1.3 Number of children in the households

The minimum number for both boys and girls within a household was one (1). The maximum number of boys within a household was 12 in the age range 7-10 years, while the maximum number for girls within a household was five (5) in the age range 15-18 years. The data shows that boys and girls in various age categories exist within the households that were interviewed.

Table 7. Number of children in the households

Category	Number of children	Frequency(number of households)	Percentage
Boys 0-6 years	1 boy	23	62
	2 boys	11	30
	3 boys	2	5
	4 boys	1	3

Boys 7-10 years	1 boy	19	68
	2 boys	6	21
	4 boys	1	4
	9 boys	1	4
	12 boys	1	4
Boys 11-14 years	1 boy	20	71
	2 boys	6	21
	3 boys	1	4
	5 boys	1	4
Boys 15-18 years	1 boy	10	63
	2 boys	5	31
	3 boys	1	6
Girls 0-6 years	1 girl	19	76
	2 girls	6	24
Girls 7-10 years	1 girl	17	70
	2 girls	4	17
	3 girls	3	13
Girls 11-14 years	1 girl	11	46
	2 girls	5	21
	3 girls	8	33
Girls 15-18 years	1 girl	17	68
	2 girls	4	16
	3 girls	2	8
	5 girls	2	8

4.1.4 Marital status

Of those interviewed, 68% were married, 20% single, 8% widowed and 4% divorced or separated as shown by the table below:

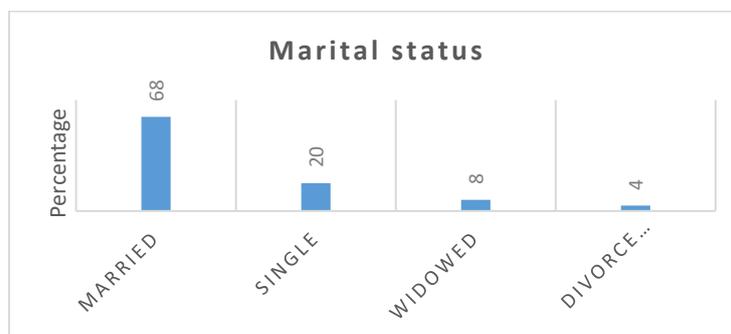


Figure 2. Marital status

4.1.5 Level of education

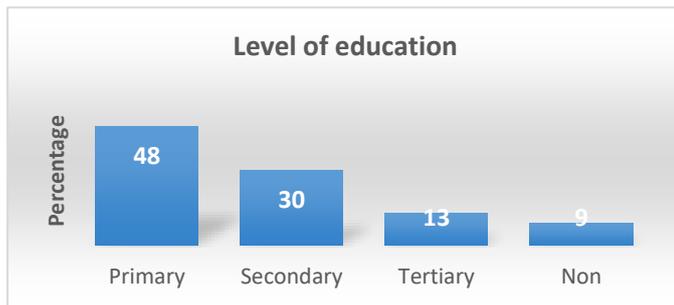


Figure 3 level of education

Although household education level entails ability to make decisions that are protective of children on age of first marriage majority of household respondents had attained education at primary level at 48%, 30% secondary, 13% tertiary with 9% not having attended any form of formal education.

4.1.6 Source of livelihood

4.1.6.1 Occupation and primary source of income

4.1.6.1.2 Occupation of household head

In terms of occupation, 46%(23) were dependent on farming, 32%(16) self-employed, 14%(7) were farm workers and 8%(4) were in formal employment.

4.1.6.1.2 Main source of income

Main source of incomes was mainly crop sales 46% and selling of assets at 12%. Other sources of income included salaried employment, savings, agricultural waged labor, gifts from local family/relatives, sale of livestock and animal product, social cash transfer, sale of food aid (food vouchers or parcels) and informal credits (from shops, friends) as shown in the chart below:

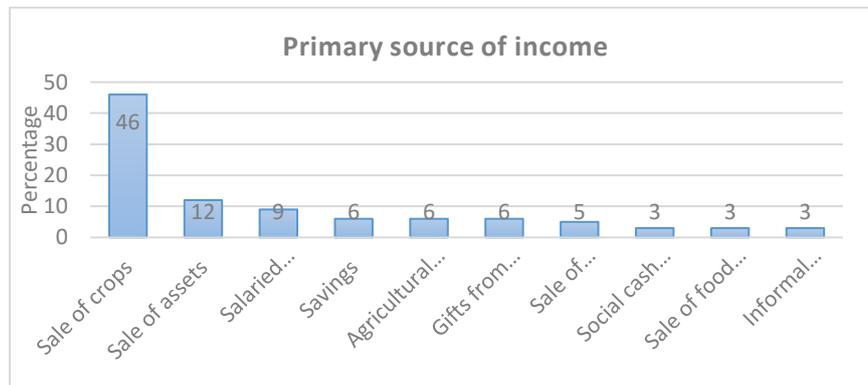


Figure 4. Primary source of income

4.1.7 Average household income

The average income was ZMW1507, while the median income was ZMW1000. The data further showed that 52%(41) of the household had income from ZMW50-1000, 27%(21) had ZMW1001-2000; 13%(10) had ZMW2001-3000; 5%(4) had ZMW3001-4000; 3%(2) had ZMW4001-5000; and 1%(1) had ZMW5001-6000.

Table 8. Average household income(ZMW)

Average income in ZMW	Frequency	Percentage
50-1000	41	52
1001-2000	21	27
2001-3000	10	13
3001-4000	4	5
4001-5000	2	3
5001-6000	1	1
Total	79	100

4.1.8 Early Child Marriages (ECM) within the study community

4.8.1 Drivers of early marriages and age at first marriage

4.8.1.1 Drivers of early marriages

Key drivers for child marriages include, poor economic prospects leading to negative coping strategies to marry off children among caregivers, negative social norms such as puberty that signals girls readiness for marriage among others including long distances to school.

“Long distance to school when one needs to start grade 8 discourages or would lead to one stopping school and the only option is to get married”. Focus group discussants-Girls 15-18 years

“Parents force children to get married because of poverty”. Focus group discussants-Girls 15-18 years

4.8.1.2 Age at first marriage

Data showed that the youngest got married at 15 years, while the oldest got married at 40 years. The average age at first marriage was 22 years, while the median was at 21 years. Further, data showed that 11%(6) were married between 15-17 years; 35%(19) between 18-20 years; 37%(20) between 21-25 years; 9%(5) between 26-30 years; 6%(3) between 31-35 years and 2%(1) between 36-40 years. The data shows that most of the respondents were married between the ages of 15-25. However, 11%(6) respondents married before 18 years which is an indication that early marriages are still being practiced in the community.

Table 9. : Age at first marriage

Age at first marriage	Frequency	Percentage
15-17 years	6	11
18-20 years	19	35
21-25 years	20	37
26-30 years	5	9
31-35 years	3	6
36-40 years	1	2
Total	54	100

Asked whether, they were happy when they first got married, 71% mentioned that they were happy, while 29% mentioned that they were not happy. Data also show that six were married as children between 15-17 years. Asked whether, they were happy when they first got married,

66.7%(4) said yes, while 33.7%(2) said no as shown below. Reasons for not being happy included, experience of domestic violence and economic stress. It would be interesting to learn more about what made those married as children to happy during their first marriage despite being underage.

Table 10: Whether happy when first married

Age of the child	Where you happy when you first got married?	
	Yes	No
15 years	1	0
16 years	3	1
17 years	0	1
Total	4	2

4.1.9 Age at first pregnancy

The youngest first got pregnant at 15 years, while the oldest first got pregnant at 35 years. The average age at first pregnancy was 21, while the median was 21. This finding is consistent with other relevant evidence for example the Zambia Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS, 2018) indicated a high percentage of adolescents who had begun childbearing which ranged from 6% among those aged 15 years to 53% among those aged 19 years. Teenage pregnancy especially in rural communities signifies marriage as it is often seen as a shame to have a child out of wedlock and is thus a key driver to child marriage⁴.

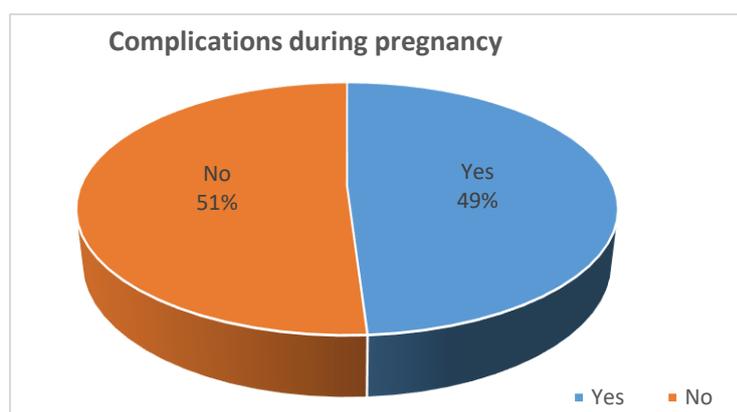
Table 11. Age at first pregnancy

Age at first pregnancy	Frequency	Percentage
15-17 years	5	17
18-20 years	9	31
21-25 years	13	45
26-30 years	1	3
31-35 years	1	3
Total	29	100

Asked whether the faced complications during childbirth 51% said yes, as compared to 47% at baseline while 49% said no. Similarly, respondents from key informants and focus group discussants including Ministry of Health (MoH) consistently noted that maternal complications are common among adolescent expected mothers.

⁴ Network of CSO on ending Child Marriages in Zambia(2020). A loose network of CSO that have joined forces to address the problem. Child Fund Zambia is a member of the Network.

Table 12. Complications during pregnancy



“Maternal complications, school dropouts, risks to young infants being at risk of malnutrition due to poor care and support that often characterize adolescent young mothers”

KII-Health facility staff at community level

4.1.10 Right age to get married

The minimum recommended age for marriage was 17 years, while the maximum was 35 years. The average age was 25, while the median was 25. Further, data show that 1%(1) recommended 15-17 years as the right age for marriage; 70%(55) recommended 18-25 years; 23%(18) recommended 26-30 years; and 6%(5) recommended 31-35 years. Most of the respondent recommended that the age of marriage should be between 18-30 years, citing maturity to make informed decision as the major reason.

Table 13. Right age to get married

Recommended age for one to get married	Frequency	Percentage
15-17 years	1	1
18-25 years	55	70
26-30 years	18	23
31-35 years	5	6
Total	79	100

Asked why they mentioned the age they recommended, 93% mentioned that this is the period when children are mature and able to make to decisions, 4% mentioned that this a stage when children have completed school(educated) and 3% mentioned that this is the period when children are financially stable. Although 25 years, was seen as a good age for marriages, experience of witnessing of children especially girls being married before 18 years is common in the community.

4.1.11 Existence of early marriages

Asked whether they had witnessed a girl getting married below the age of 18 years in the community, 63% said yes while 37% said no. Asked whether they had witnessed a boy getting married below the age of 18 years in the community, 44% said yes while 56% said no while at baseline 64% and 36% said yes and no respectively. From the baseline and endline results, it is seen that early marriages are still being practiced in the community.

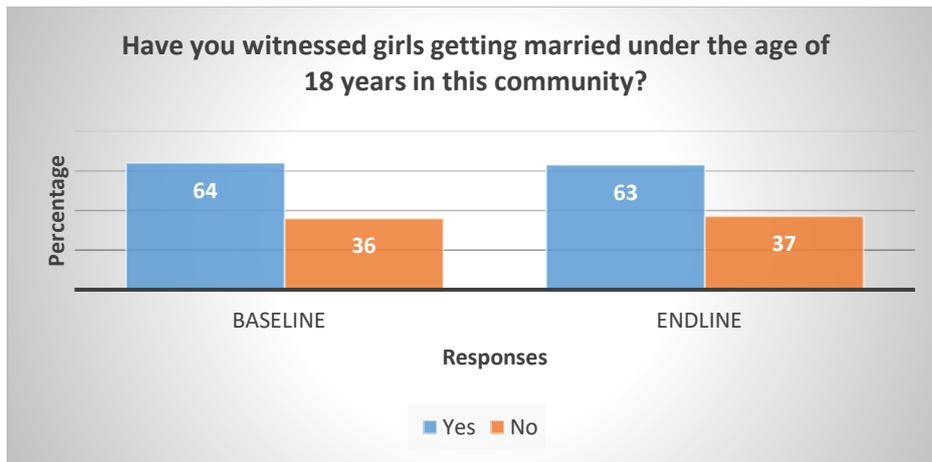


Figure 5. Witnessing girls getting married

Asked whether the practice of marrying girls before 18 has increased, decreased or remained about the same in your community since last year, 61% mentioned that it decreased, 20% increased, 13% I don't know and 6% remained the same. The picture the data is giving may call for further investigations with particular individuals about why they provided a particular response. Of interest, maybe those that feel the practice has increased or has remained the same.

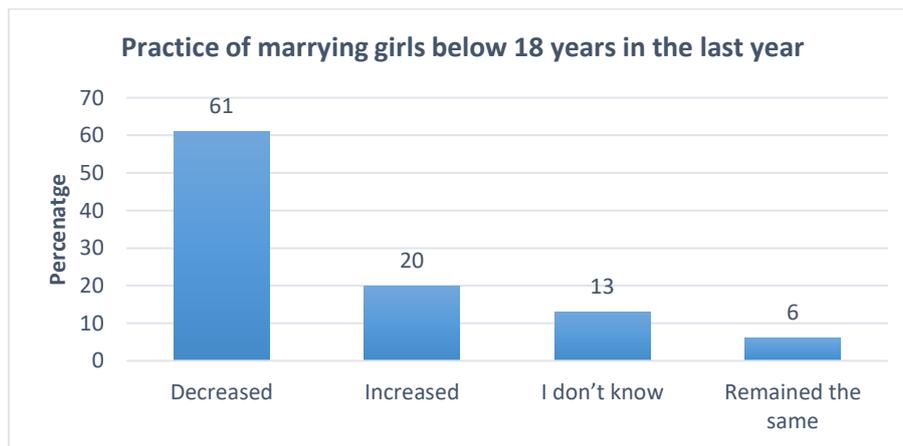


Figure 6. Marrying girls before 18 years

4.1.12 Age at which childhood end

The minimum age mentioned at which childhood ends was 10, while the maximum was 30. Data showed that 14%(11) believe that childhood ends between 10-17 years; 72%(57) mentioned 18-20 years; 10%(8) mentioned 21-25 years; and 4%(3) mentioned 26-30 years. The majority of the respondents believe that between 18-30 years is the age when childhood ends.

Table 14 Age at which childhood end

Age at which does childhood end	Frequency	Percentage
10-17 years	11	14
18-20 years	57	72
21-25 years	8	10
26-30 years	3	4

Total	79	100
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Asked why they stated the minimum age they mentioned, 88% said that this is the age at which children can take responsibilities, 6%, this is the age when children are educated, and 6% this is according to the law. Although a similar question was not asked at baseline, this 88% response to understanding time at which childhood ends provides progress in the knowledge levels of communities on childhood and rights including some of the legal provisions as stated by 6% of respondents. There is still need for more work to sensitize community members are the right age at which childhood ends as this may be a source of harm for children if this is not clear by the majority.

4.1.13 Marrying off children below the age of 18

There were various responses regarding marrying off children below the age of 18. Twenty four percent (24%) agreed that marriage offers protection to a girl while 75% disagreed. Forty nine percent (49%) agreed that seizing the opportunity of a good marriage is more important than continuing a child's education, while 48% disagreed.

Table 15. Marrying off children below the age of 18

Statement	Percentage			
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Marriage offers protection to a girl	24	0	75	1
Education provides protection to a girl	95	0	4	1
Seizing the opportunity of a good marriage is more important than continuing a child's education.	49	0	48	3
Physical changes in appearance is a sign that a girl is ready for marriage	4	0	92	4
A girl under 18 is more fertile than a girl above 18	35	0	62	3
Marrying girls under 18 ensures purity (virginity/chastity) on their wedding day	16	0	81	3
Marrying children under 18 can sometimes be a means getting worthy or helps to sort out problems such as paying back debt.	8	0	90	2
Marrying children under 18 can sometimes be a means to settle alliances.	8	0	86	6
Marrying children under 18 can sometimes be a means to manage disputes.	5	0	89	6
The younger and less educated the child is, the cheaper the dowry / bride wealth.	11	0	85	4
Marrying my daughter before she turns 18 allows me to secure her financial status	5	0	91	4
Girls over 18 who are not married are a burden to their families.	12	0	84	4
Marrying before 18 is required by our religion.	0	0	99	1
Marrying off girls if has gotten pregnant out of wedlock is better than letting them bring shame to the family.	19	0	80	1
Most adolescent girls marry before the age of 18.	35	0	62	3
Marrying persons under 18 is a form of violence	96	1	3	0
Marrying persons under 18 in my community should stop	96	1	3	0

I would like to live in a community where girls below 18 do not have to marry	92	1	7	0
Most people in my community approve of marrying any one before they turn 18.	29	0	69	1
Marrying of a person even below the age of 18 is a source of pride.	0	13	87	0
Marrying girls below 18 is positively affecting girls and women in my community.	51	0	49	0
Marrying boys below 18 is positively affecting boys and men in my community.	48	30	52	0
Child marriage is an important issue in my community that needs to be addressed.	92	0	7	1

There was an increase on the disagreement on the perception that marrying off a girl offers protection with 75% disagreeing compared to 39% at baseline. Similarly 1% and 17% strongly disagreed at end line and baseline respectively. A total of 27% agreed as compared to 24% at end line. This may be reflective of the fact that there has been some increased awareness on the topic of early and forced marriages at community level. Similarly a greater at 96 % reaffirmed the fact that marrying off girls below the age of 18 years should stop as compared to only 50% at baseline.

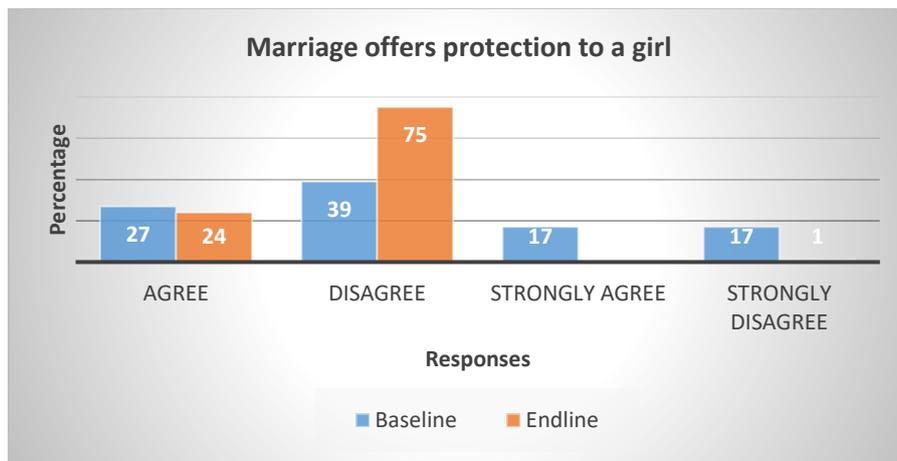


Figure 8: Marriage offers protection to a girl

On the other hand, when asked whether girls slightly over 18 years who are not married were a burden to their families, 34% agreed at baseline against only 12% at end line. Those who disagreed were 37% at baseline versus 84% at end line.

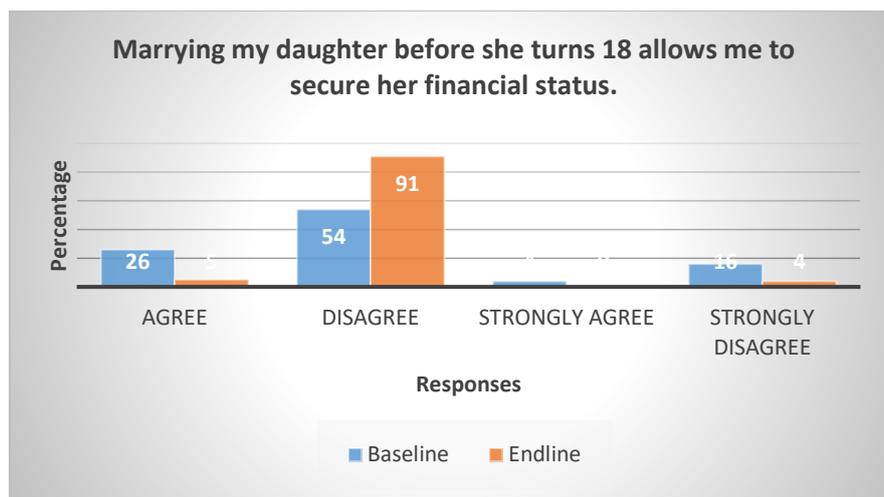


Figure 7. Figure 9: Marrying daughter before turning 18

Asked on whether seizing the opportunity of a good marriage is more important than continuing a child's education, none of the respondents agreed to this assertion as compared to 19% at baseline. Similarly asked whether they would marry a girl below the age of 18 years, 6% said yes while 94% said no owing to negative consequences of child marriages.

The study also showed that the lower the household income the more respondents held the assertion that marriage offers protection to girls. Twenty four percent (24%) of respondents agreed to the assertion that marriage offers protection, 76% disagreed. The evaluation further, noticed that 13 out of 19 (68%) participants who agreed to the assertion that marriage offers protection for girls fall in the lowest average household income of 50-1000 Zambian Kwacha.

Table 16: Level of income versus perception on marriage

Average income in ZMW	Marriage offers protection to a girl			Total
	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
50-1000	13	27	1	41
1001-2000	4	17	0	21
2001-3000	1	9	0	10
3001-4000	0	4	0	4
4001-5000	1	1	0	2
5001-6000	0	1	0	1
Total	19(24%)	59(75%)	1(1%)	79

The study also showed level of education corresponding to an assertion that marriage offers protection for girls. For example 24% of the of the respondents with no education and those up to secondary agreed to the assertion that marriage offers protection to girls.

Table 17: Level of education versus perceptions on marriage

Average level of education.	Marriage offers protection to a girl			Total
	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Non	3	4	0	7
Primary	12	25	1	38
Secondary	4	20	0	24

Tertiary	0	10	0	10
Total	19(24%)	59(75%)	1(1%)	79

This is an indication that the people interviewed knew the value of educating a girl child.

Table 18: Gender versus perceptions on education

Gender respondent	Education offers protection to a girl			Total
	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Male	42	0	0	43
Female	32	3	1	36
Total	94%	4%	2%	100.0%

4.1.14 Consequences of child marriages.

Poverty and Gender Based Violence (GBV) were highest at 46% while other consequences were similarly recognized. These findings were consistent with other sources from KIIs and FGDs including children recognition of some of the consequences as a positive result as this could also deter caregivers and children to engage in this vice.

“Young girls suffer in marriages. They do all the work including finding food while the man just stays at home worsening the poverty situation and suffering”. Focus group discussants-Boys

“The consequences are enormous, when girls marry early, the cycle of poverty continue in their families, issues of gender-based violence continue and eventually divorce rates remain very high”, . KII-ChildFund

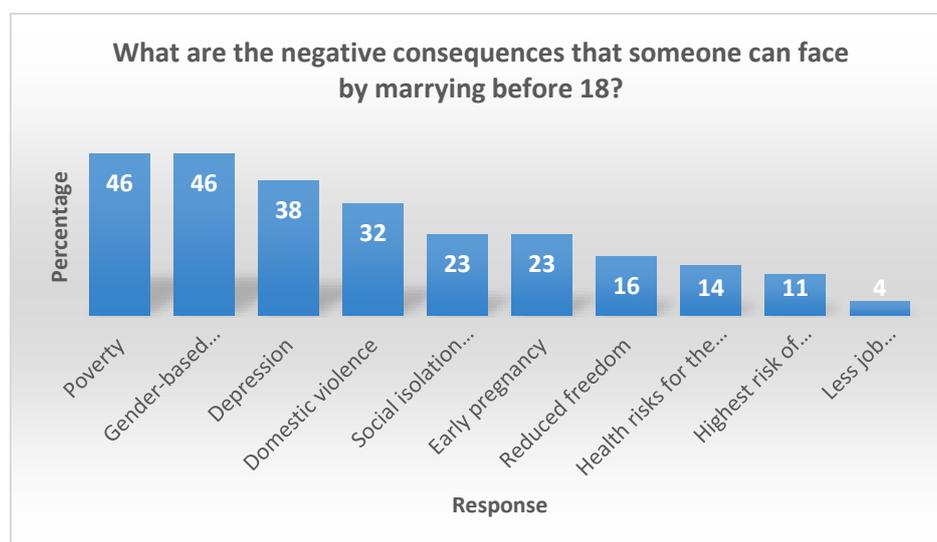


Figure 8. Negative consequences of early marriages

4.1.15 Decisions on marrying off children

4.1.15.1 Individuals consulted

Asked whether they ever talk with other members from their household about when to marry their children, 55 %(39) said yes, while 45%(32) said no. This is an indication that when marrying off children people may consult or not consult at all.

Table 14: Individuals consulted

Have you ever talked with other members from your household about when to marry your children?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	39	55
No	32	45
Total	71	100

Decision making power on when and to whom to marry is critical to deciding the future of the person to get into a union with. Girls often do not have this power but there are decided upon. The survey reviewed that 32% consult with elderly relatives, 27% with extended family, 23% with spouses with 16% consulting with other caregivers while only 2% consult with the girls themselves. This could be attributed to cultural reasons as elderly members of the family are held in high esteem and often make most of the key decisions within families. However, the limited consultation in decision for the girls puts them at a higher risk of getting into marriage that they would not find satisfaction in and lowers their self-esteem.

Table 19. Individual spoken to

Who did you speak with about marrying off your children?	Frequency	Percentage
Elderly relatives (e.g. grandparents)	14	32
Extended family (aunt, cousin, uncle, etc.)	12	27
Spouse	10	23
Other parents or caregivers in the household	7	16
Daughters	1	2
Total	44	100

4.1.15.2 Disagreement regarding marrying daughters and sons

The table below shows that families agree or disagree when marrying of their daughters or sons. For example, 40% mentioned that they disagreed when marrying of daughters, while 38% mentioned that they disagreed when marrying of sons.

Table 20. Disagreement regarding marrying daughters and sons.

Question	Percentage		
	Yes	No	I don't know
Has your household also ever faced disagreement between different members regarding when to marry your daughters/female household members?	40	54	6
Has your household also ever faced disagreement between different members regarding when to marry your sons/male household members?	38	54	8

4.1.15.3 Persons against marrying of daughters/sons

Similarly, households have had differences on decision making on their daughter marriage mainly from by themselves (61%), extended families (17%), elderly relatives (15%) and by spouses 7%. On their sons by themselves (48%), extended families (12%), elderly relatives (28%) and by spouses 12%. The differences in opinion often arise on dowry, character of would be bride and age for getting married.

Table 21. Persons against marrying of daughters/sons

Question	Percentage			
	Myself	Extended family (aunt, cousin, uncle, etc.)	Elderly relatives (e.g. grandparents)	Spouse or other parents or caregivers in the household
Who tends to be against marrying daughters/female household members before they turn 18?	61	17	15	7
Who tends to be against marrying sons/male household members before they turn 18?	48	12	28	12

4.1.16 Community members marrying their daughters before turning 18

Asked whether they knew of any family or parent in your community who decided not to marry their daughter before 18 despite receiving good marriage proposals, 51% said yes while 48% said no.

Asked whether they would publicly support someone who has decided not to marry their daughter/female household member before 18 despite receiving a good marriage proposal, 80% said yes while 6% said no.

Asked if they would support their married daughter/female household member or daughter-in-law if she decided to go back to school or to participate in an out-of-school life skills program or any other income generating activities, 95% said yes.

The data show that people are aware about early marriages in the community, would support someone that decides not to marry their daughter early and would support married daughters or in-laws to venture into income generating activities or go back to school.

Table 18: Community members marrying their daughters before turning 18.

Question	Percentage		
	Yes	No	I don't know
Do you know any family or parent in your community who decided not to marry their daughter before 18 despite receiving good marriage proposals?	51	48	1
Would you publicly support someone who has decided not to marry their daughter/female household member before 18 despite receiving a good marriage proposal?	80	6	14
Would you support your married daughter/female household member or daughter-in-law if she decided to go back to school or to participate in an out-of-school life skills program or any other income generating activities?	95	0	5

4.1.17 Seeking opinions before marrying off children

Asked whether the sought opinion or advice about when to marry their children, 63% said yes, while 37% said no. This data shows that the household members can decide whether to seek for an opinion or not when marrying of their children.

Table 22. Seeking opinions before marrying off children

Is there anyone you talk to in order to get their opinion or advice about when to marry your children?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	44	63
No	26	37
Total	70	100

Asked who these people were in relation to them, 30% said his/her mother, while 18% said his/her father. Also consulted are uncles, brothers, aunts, neighbors and sisters. The data show that the most consulted people are mothers and fathers.

Table 23. Who are these people in relation to you

Who are these people in relation to you?	Frequency	Percentage
His/Her Mother	22	30
His/Her Father	13	18
His/Her Uncle	9	12
His/Her Brother	8	11
His/Her Aunt	8	11
His/Her Neighbor	7	10
His/Her Sister	6	8
Total	73	100

Asked how much the opinion of those consulted influenced their decision on when to marry their children, 61% said a lot, 14% a little, while 3% said not at all. The data shows that the majority of respondents (97%) that consult listen to advice while a small percentage does not take advice at all.

Table 24. Opinion influencing decision on when to marry children

How much does the opinion of these relations influence your decision on when to marry your children?	Frequency	Percentage
A lot	43	61
I don't know	15	21
A little	10	14
Not at all	2	3
Total	70	100

Asked whether they thought those consulted thought they should marry their daughters/female household members before she turns 18 years, 3% said yes, while 79% said no. The assertion from the 3% who agreed is evidence that some community members still believe in early marriages.

Table 25. Perceptions of people consulted on marrying children

Do you think that any of the above thinks you should marry your daughters/female household members before she turns 18?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	2	3
No	57	79
I don't	13	18
Total	72	100

4.1.18 Sources of information on child marriages

When households were asked whether they had seen, heard or read anything promoting the elimination of marriage of children under 18 years, 81% said yes, 13% no, while 6% said I don't know. Asked on their knowledge, if any activities and/or collective discussions about ending marriage of people under 18 were taking place in their community, 77% said yes, while 6% said no. Asked whether they ever participated in or attended these activities or discussions, 67% said yes while 32% said no. Asked whether they are still participating or attending, 54% said yes while 46% said no. Asked whether they intended to participate or attend in the future, 89% said yes, 6% said no and 5% said I don't know.

Table 26. Sources of information on child marriages

Question	Percentage		
	Yes	No	I don't know
In the past 3 months, have you seen, heard or read anything promoting the elimination of marriage of children under 18?	81	13	6
To your knowledge, are any activities and/or collective discussions about ending marriage of people under 18 taking place at the moment in your community?	77	6	16
Have you ever participated in or attended these activities or discussions?	67	32	1
Are you still participating or attending?	54	46	0
Do you intend to participate or attend in the future?	89	6	5

On the sources of information, radio was the highest at 44%, followed by information shared by NGO or social workers at 34%. Although theatre for development through drama was consistently also sighted as a key source for learning, only 5% had gotten information from this source of information. Other sources included, television (28%), from community members including the child protection formed (11%).

Table 27. Where information was seen, heard or read.

Where did you see, hear, or read anything promoting eliminating marriages of children under 18?	Frequency	Percentage
Radio	35	44
Social worker/NGOs	27	34
TV	22	28
Community/religious leaders	16	20
Other community member	9	11
Social media	9	11
Other household member	5	6
Drama	4	5
I don't know	1	1

A critical source of information cited among community members was the outreach that the community had benefited from through community drama and by multi-sectoral stakeholders that included staff from the One Stop Centre(OSC), social welfare and other members of the district child protection committee that focused on available reporting mechanisms and referral points including the use of the toll free child helpline (116) and 933 for GBV.

A notable outcome was established on a case that was reported by a child to a member of the newly established community child protection committee, a situation that points to the fact that children had begun to identify other sources of support if harmed. Similarly, such efforts are helping to increase demand for service seeking and improved referral as demonstrated in the quotes below.

"I supported a child who approached me who had been faced with an attempted sexual abuse by her uncle for help. I made a referral to the One Stop Centre who provided the relevant support through counselling".

*“This project is helping to enhance **reporting of cases as well as referrals** of cases as community members from Chainda community have been able to call the center. It is further promoting effective referrals for other support services that we are not offering”.*

KII-One Stop Centre.

Overall, there is a better understanding on dangers of child marriages and the need to address the problem within the community going by the general responses provided by survey participants.

4.2 Gender Based Violence (GBV), gender roles and household decision-making

4.2.1 Gender Based Violence (GBV)

Generally, the majority of respondent did not believe on most negative GBV norms and values. However, some few respondents still believed in some of the GBV negative social norms as shown in the table below:

Table 28. Hitting or beating his wife

In your opinion, is a husband justified in hitting or beating his wife:	Percentage		
	Yes	No	I don't
If she goes out without telling him?	5	91	4
If she neglects the children?	6	89	5
If she argues with him?	9	87	4
If she refuses to have sex with him?	6	88	6
If she burns the food?	0	99	1

4.2.2 Gender roles

From the table below over half (55%) and 52% believe that women's role is to generally take care of the home and being a mother or wife respectively. This is clear indication that gender stereotypes still exist in the community. Ninety-six (96%) of the respondents did not agree that boys should be given preference above girls when it comes to education. However, few individuals (3%) believed in educating boys than girls. Most of the respondents (98%) indicated that both boys and girls should be given equal opportunities when it comes to being educated. Most of the respondents (95%) disagreed to use of violence to settle disagreements.

Table 29. Gender roles

Statement	Percentage			
	Agree	Strongly agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A woman's most important role is to take care of the home, the children and cook for the family.	55	0	44	1
A son's education is more important than a daughter's education if financial resources are scarce.	0	3	96	1

A woman's main role is to be a wife and mother.	52	0	48	0
Girls and boys should have the same opportunities for education.	94	4	2	0
Physical violence (such as hitting, beating, slapping, etc.) is sometimes the only way to solve a disagreement.	4	0	95	1

4.2.3 Household decision-making.

Asked a question on who in your household usually made decisions regarding visiting your family and friends, 47% mentioned that decisions are made Jointly(myself and husband/ wife), 28% myself, 14% spouse (husband/wife) and 11% I don't know. Decisions on healthcare expenses are made by 47% joint (myself and husband/ wife), 26% myself, 16% spouse (husband/wife), 9% I don't know and 2% other household members (e.g. parents/ in-laws). Decisions regarding large purchases are made by 47% joint (myself and husband/ wife), 23% myself, 19% spouse (husband/wife), 9% I don't know and 2% other household members (e.g. parents/ in-laws). Data show that generally, decisions are made jointly, but there are times when decisions are made by some respective individuals.

Table 30: Household decision-making

Who in your household usually make decisions regarding:	Percentage				
	Joint (myself and husband / wife)	Myself	Spouse (husband/wife)	Other household members (e.g. parents/ in-laws)	I don't know
Visiting your family and friends?	47	28	14	0	11
Healthcare expenses for yourself?	47	26	16	2	9
Making large household purchases?	47	23	19	2	9

4.3 Improving access to education

4.3.1 Community feedback on efforts to improve access to education

Access to education can be a key strategy to ensuring that children especially girls remain in school and delay to get into a union in form of marriage or retain to school if they get pregnant. The communities expressed gratitude to the incorporation of the construction of classroom block as a key value add to address child marriages. This is because by ensuring that most girls remain in school, there will be delay on the time to get married, but also gain relevant social skills on protecting themselves from child marriages and other forms of violence.

"The construction of the classroom will improve the wellbeing of children; reduce long distances to school which increases their vulnerability to abuse". Other efforts such as life skills will enhance their ability to navigate challenges for example, peer pressure and prevent teenage pregnancies". KII-Ministry of Education at district level.

"This construction of the school will lessen the problem of dropping out of school and absenteeism. Last year some pupils missed exams due to heavy rains which they could not pass through as Chainda is far from here". Focus group discussants-Boys.

"The project has long term prospects that will improve child wellbeing as opposed to other efforts of just talking without offering real solutions". KII-Ministry of Health.

All respondents (100%) mentioned that they were happy with the construction of the new 1x3 classroom block at Nyashishi School. Asked on what made them happy about the construction of the classroom block, 46% mentioned that the school would increase access to education, 53% reduction in the distance covered by children to access secondary education, and 1% creating employment to teachers. Similarly, the three (3) above quotes from respondents demonstrate that the project was relevant as it addressed the needs of children, communities and government as shown in the bar chart below.

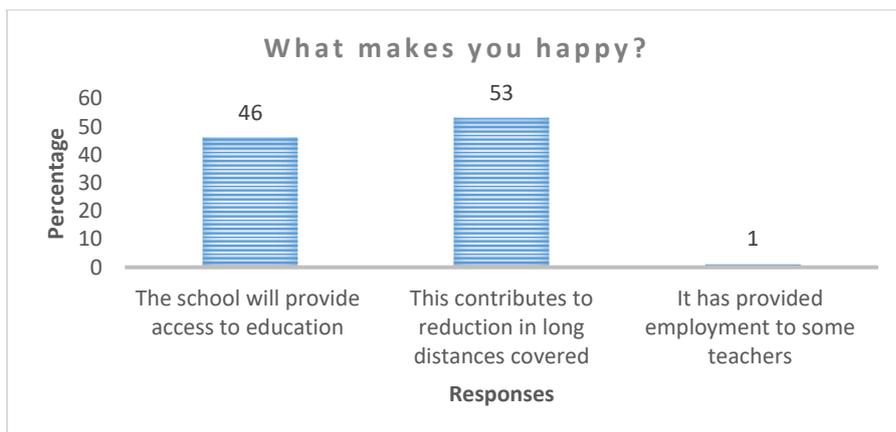


Figure 9. What makes you happy

5.0 Findings based on the Evaluation criteria

As earlier highlighted, this end of project evaluation focused on assessing the key evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness (including outputs and prospects for outcomes) and sustainability. It further assessed cross cutting issues of gender, inclusion and environmental sustainability.

5.1 Relevance

Overall, the survey established that, **the project design and implementation approaches were relevant to Chongwe district and the targeted community in particular as the interventions addressed the real community needs, priorities and rights of both boys and girls.** It addressed the needs at individual, family, community, societal and policy level. The project was designed in line with district priorities of multiple stakeholders such as education, health, social welfare and other existing coordination mechanisms such as the district child protection committee.

Chongwe district is 60% rural with cases of child marriages being common as demonstrated by the findings based on experience of having seen cases of child marriages especially among girls. The project was important at the individual level of the girls and boys as it provided them with the opportunity to gain knowledge on dangers of child marriages, avenues for reporting and to get appropriate support as needed. This is notwithstanding the negative consequences it has at the individual level of the child, including poor young mother maternal and newborn health outcomes among others as well as families and community level negative outcomes.

"The girls themselves are now more informed and have learnt to value education as in the case of Mimi (Not real name) who is now planning to get into school. She was impregnated and married at age 14. She was divorced after having a baby and went into smoking and drinking due to depression. She was part of the training when the project commenced early this year".
KII-Child Fund.

Although at the time of this survey , the class roomed was not in use to determine improvement in space, the expansion of the class room will reduce congestion in class, improve the learning environment and may contribute It further supported the protected environment of children from child marriages by promoting economic empowerment of caregivers to navigate economic challenges and avoid negative coping strategies on marrying off girls early. It added a lot of value to the needs of communities and children to have access to education that promotes a protective environment by enhancing children social skills to counteract problems including violence and abuse. The community does not have a secondary school as such most of the girls go up to grade seven or nine and drop out to get married.

This project has been appreciated as very relevant as it fits well with the development plans of communities and district level stakeholders within the areas of access to education, protection from early and forced marriages, including promotion of gender equality and tackling root causes of early and forced marriages. It further promoted access to and utilization of sexual reproductive health rights including protection from violence among children and adolescents. On the other hand, it fits well with the national strategy on ending child marriages (2018 to 2021) and other subsequent related actions⁵ that emphasizes the need for multi-sectoral approach to reduce children's vulnerability to marriage and other forms of violence as evidenced through its involvement of various stakeholders.

"Fits with our plans to increase uptake for GBV services and strengthening of referral systems as we have relied on Child Fund to promote effective referrals including in some cases were they have supported us with transport to follow up cases". KII-One stop Centre.

"The literacy levels are low and projects like this are helpful in educating our communities and protecting children against infringement on their rights". KII-Department of Social Welfare.

The survey found that despite the major setback of this project being very short(implemented over a six months period), its integrated approach provides an opportunity for Chongwe Child Development Agency (CCDA) to draw key lessons of designing and implementing low cost, but

⁵ Related actions related to this includes the National Violence Prevention and Response Plan (2021 to 2025) among others.

efficient projects that can promote child and youth development that eliminates the root causes of poverty including gender equality in line with its mission. This approach address multiple root causes of child marriages that include poverty by building in an economic empowerment component, gender inequality by engaging with traditional leaders to address negative social norms, skills building among children especially girls on dangers on child marriages and promotion of access to education to delay their engagement in the vice.

Overall, the design of the project was good and relevant to the needs and entitlement of children as right holders despite its short time frame. Noted planned efforts in this regard include the dialogue sessions held at district level with key decision makers. The project implored key strategies that were relevant as their supported strengthening of systems to protect children, facilitated community led action to prevent and respond to CM and counteracted social norms that impacts on girls protection from marriages. This promoted rights based approaches by providing a platform of children who are not often heard to express their views and opinions on issues affecting them while on the other hand promoting accountability among duty bearers to meet their obligation. Some of the asks from children were critical to key policy and legal reforms that aimed at enhancing realization of child rights.

“During the dialogue meeting with the District Administration, the children raised concerns about the enactment of the code bill to enhance the realization of children’s rights. Other included the deployment of teachers to Nyashishi as there are only four (4) teachers against a pupil population of 850. Construction of the classroom block and sending teachers would ensure that more children are being attended to and will promote quality education and encourage more children to go back to school”. KII-ChildFund

*“The caregivers were made aware of their role in child rights which they appreciated. Voices of children are being heard, for example, the children held a dialogue meeting with the traditional leaders in which they raised their concerns about indiscriminate selling of land and the rampant growing of marijuana in the area that impact on children”.
KII CCDA field level staff*

5.2 Efficiency

The project was delivered on schedule especially for the activities related to construction of the 1 x 3 classroom block. The delivery of the construction element of the project was cost effective due to timely implementation, resulting in effective use of resources both human and financial. The aspect of ensuring that a CCDA member of staff was fully assigned to the project promoted efficiency in the maximization of resources and time to deliver the project while it also added a lot of value to mobilizing communities to participate and get a better understanding of the project and the need commit to its full delivery. The project was also able to implement capacity building and awareness activities on child protection, life skills, dialogues on the need to address the issues affecting children including protection from child marriages, exposure to other forms of violence and abuse alongside other activities.

Although all the activities were implemented according to the planned timeframe, scope and budget, capacity building activities needed on going follow ups to ensure consistency in the delivery of key messages if sustained changes are to be seen. Considering that behavioral

change actions takes time to achieve it is important that these activities are incorporated into ongoing CCDA programming.

A review of the overall project report and activity specific reports found time allocated to the delivery of some of the trainings were insufficient. For example, an activity that was meant to strengthen capacity of community child protection committee only took a day yet it was important for this structure to get a better understanding on key concepts and ideas on best ways of delivering protection interventions at community level. Similarly key quality standards were missing, such pre and post assessment to measure immediate changes in knowledge levels on specific issues covered within the trainings.

It was difficult for most children to grasp the concepts during the training due to limited time. Some children did not attend the training consistently because of competing demands such as attending church and performing other chores at household level. There was time constraints as the training were conducted during the weekends" KII-CCDA .

Overall the project was efficient as resources both financial, human and materials were used according to plan within the stated duration of the project. The project further made some savings on project inputs such as 250 bags of cement from the planned for and procured 900 bags, of which the remainder could be channeled to other development needs of the school. This was achieved because of the allocation of a dedicated staff who provided day to day monitoring of the project.

5.3 Effectiveness

The interventions of this project have proved to be effective in improving the situation of children in the targeted community related to access to education within its short space of implementation. It has further provided relevant changes and progress in amplifying the need to protect children especially girls from child marriages by firstly enhancing their skills and knowledge on the problem and strengthening support systems to ensure a protective environment.

The first objective of **"To reduce early marriage by 15 percent in 10 villages of Chainda community of Chongwe district"** could not be measured as the duration of the project was not feasible to achieve such as objective. It however, facilitated strengthened community responsive systems to prevent and protect children especially girls from early marriages and other forms of violence and abuse.

The level of effectiveness can however be improved by strengthening ongoing programming and follow up and provide support as needed to the key interventions implemented within this project by CCDA and its partners.

The project collaborated well with all the relevant stakeholders that lead to increased support and complementarity in the delivery of interventions by the project for instance strengthening ability of service providers to reach out to communities with key messages and community beginning to reach out for such services such as those for child protection. The use of the media was noted as a key strategy that worked effectively. Use of the radio was able to reach out to more people who expressed satisfaction on the efforts that the project undertook.

5.4 Prospects for outcomes

With the expansion of the school, enrolment is likely to increase and more children will remain in school, as it will also transition into a secondary school thereby achieving the objective as per design of this project. Government deployed three (3) newly recruited teachers to the school, which previously was not the case as only volunteer teachers filled the gap of having four (4) teachers against 850 learners.

It is contributing to creating demand for access to and utilization of protection services as evidenced by some of the cases that were referred to the One Stop Centre for further support. There was also evidence of peer to peer learning that would promote better protection of children.

Outreach and community dialogues has been instrumental to ensuring community support on reporting. The numbers being reached are however low compared to the need for services. Similarly, linkages have been established with the key community child protection actors with formal service providers such as the One Stop Centre staff that is leading to improved referrals. The quotes below demonstrates some of the key immediate outcomes being observed.

*"It is helping to enhance **reporting of cases as well as referrals** of cases as community members from Chainda have been able to call the center. It is further promoting effective referrals for other support services that we are not offering".*

KII-WILDAF /One Stop Centre

"Training of young people leading to improved social skills on access to and utilization of SRH services including those to protect them from sexual abuse".

KII-Ministry of Education.

Although at the time of this assessment, economic empowerment initiatives had just been delivered, there is potential for effective results. The inclusion of this component would address the needs of at risk families and girls of getting married and those that are survivors provided an opportunity for improved economic prospects. This would lead to counteracting negative coping strategies such as marrying off girls for economic gains.

"Parents have been made aware about child protection issues for children. Some caregivers have ventured into mobile money services (community members are able to access money within the community). Caregivers are growing vegetables and keeping chickens and goats". The youth are running a butchery, and have grown vegetables and onions for sale.

KII-CCDA

5.5 Key project outputs

The following were the key outputs planned for in this project and their achievements.

Figure 10. Key project outputs

Objective/Result area according to project design.	Activity	Number / Planned	Achieved	Remarks/ Progress summary
1. To reduce Early Marriage by 15 percent in 10 villages of Chainda Community of Chongwe district	1.1 Baseline survey.	1	1	Was conducted and has been used to establish any key progress made towards for the indicators. This brought 15 various stakeholders at district level.
	Stakeholders' startup meeting.	1	1	Broad stakeholders together and provided an opportunity to promote stakeholder by in and ownership. 15 stakeholders reached.
	1.2 Training youth in Sexual Health Reproduction (SRH) education and life skills.	120	120	A total 60 males and 60 females aged between 16 and 24 years reached. The youths have since formed a youth committee comprising 30 youth separated as 15 males and 15 females that seeks to help other young people in issue of sexual reproductive health education and life skills contributing to increasing coverage for SRHR services at community level.
	1.3 Train children in Sexual Health Reproduction (SRH) education and life skills of different age categories.	120	120	A total of 60 males and 60 females drawn from Grades 5 to 7 aged between 12 and 15 years were trained in Sexual reproductive Health and Life skills. The training aimed at enabling youths to acquire knowledge, skills values, attitudes and skills to develop and sustain positive behaviors. Although the training has been appreciated by the children, there have been no further follow up actions at local level to sustain on going learning and fostering of child participation on the core issues covered.
	1.4 Awareness campaigns on dangers of early marriage.	1	2	Awareness sessions took advantage of key moments such as day of an African child and school open days to reach out to both caregivers and children. Drama was used to share key messages. The use of drama was appreciated as a best practice as it attracted

				a lot of community members and set out key messages that they could resonate with as it reflected on real experiences.
	1.5 Media engagement on early marriage prevention (Chongwe Radio).	2	1	Two radio programs were held and involved community actors such as PTAs, survivors of violence and other leaders. It supported awareness raising on key messages on child marriages.
	1.6 Strengthen district and community structures for Child Protection.	2	2	At community level a refresher meeting was held with CCPC members focused on the role of the structure and the need for reporting and referrals.
	1.7 Provision of start-up capital to identified households.	15	15	Identified households were first oriented on financial literacy and supported with startup capital of ZWK 3 033.81.
	1.8 Training of youths in advocacy.	30	30	The purpose of the training was to equip youth with necessary skills to enable them conduct deliberate advocacy aimed at achieving desired change.
	1.9 Conduct advocacy with district and national decision makers.	1	1	The children and youths were first oriented on basic advocacy skills and later dialogued with key decision makers at district level.
	10.0 Conduct community dialogues with traditional leaders on child marriages.	1	1	30 youths engaged with 7 traditional leaders focused on local issues that were affecting them including child marriages to solicit for support.
2.0 Elevate Nyashishi Community School in Chongwe District from Primary School to Junior Secondary status by January 2023.	2.1 Community mobilization	Several	done	This was ongoing and facilitated the timely completion of the project.
	2.2 Procurement of relevant materials	Several	done	Was done and facilitated full completion of the structure and supporting materials such as desks.
	2.3 School construction	1	1	The 1 X 3 classroom has been completed and is disability friend as it is fitted with ramps. Desks have also been procured.
	2.4 Project Monitoring	4	4	Done.
	2.5 Project hand over	1	1	Done. Measures to sustain the structure put in place.

5.6 Exit and sustainability

As evidenced in FGDs and key informant interviews, stakeholders, were actively engaged from the onset of the project. This was a critical step to ensure buy in and ongoing support during project implementation and beyond. On the other hand, CCDA is well networked and has strong relationship with key government departments at local level and will therefore continue to engage with them for ongoing support to the interventions.

The study found that the collaboration with government actors at both district and local level that interact with local structures was and would continue to be a critical approach to continue with the interventions. The linkages established (including ability to report via mobile) between actors such as the OSC and communities are likely to continue to foster positive results that complement with each other through referrals that will continue to protect children beyond this project. This further demonstrates that child protection services both formal and informal will remain accessible to children and community members.

Capacity building is another critical aspect of the project, which would translate into sustained change as children, caregivers including traditional leaders benefited from these efforts and are likely to continue. The project is likely to be sustained, especially if CCDA build on immediate efforts that have been done within this project to its ongoing interventions within the community.

Although a number of sustainability efforts were built into the project, challenges at local level on the improving access to education of the project were identified. The partnership among the school authorities, the community and the learners remain weak as these stakeholders lack a common vision for continuous development of the school.

While construction component of the project has been appreciated, the economic empowerment of caregivers seem not to have sat well with the school management as they felt left out in decision making on who needed to benefit.

On the other hand, child participation within the school remains weak as child led clubs that should be promoting ongoing learning for trainings on life skills are not supported and thus are inactive. Although a committee for children was formed ongoing support and mentorship was lacking. Without this ongoing support and the school putting all relevant measures to support participation of children including in other extra curricula activities, initial efforts to strengthen skills of boys and girls would most likely be lost . The fact that parents, caregivers and traditional leaders have fully been engaged on addressing child marriages provides an opportunity for continuity. This is demonstrated by the finding that 81% had heard or read information on , elimination of marriage of children under 18 years.

5.7 Coordination

The project was implemented with various stakeholders who included government line ministries and departments (community development and social welfare, health, education, home affairs, agriculture, District Commissioner), One Stop Centre, civil society organizations and community leaders (church, traditional, civic). The weekly scheduled meetings were well attended by stakeholders. During the startup meetings, roles and responsibilities were discussed and each stakeholder knew what was expected of them. The District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) assigned the buildings officer to oversee the construction of the 1x3 classroom block. Similarly, Chongwe Child Development Agency (CCDA) assigned a project officer to oversee the construction of the 1x3 classroom block on a day to day basis.

During construction of the classroom block, males dug the foundation, while the females cooked food for males. Some youth (males) were co-opted as helpers and therefore saw the completion of the classroom block to the end. Both males and females participated in all project activities, which included trainings and dialogue sessions among others.

5.8 Gender and inclusion

Although both men, boys, women and girls actively participated in the project activities based on their socially constructed roles and responsibilities, measures to transform negative gender norms and values remain a challenge and the project had limited interventions focused on transforming these negative social norms. The project considered all relevant disadvantaged groups as the construction of the 1 X 3 factored in the inclusion of ramps to ensure easy access to children living with disabilities. There was no evidence however on deliberate efforts to include aspects of other children living with disabilities or their caregivers in the activities that the project implemented. Overall, the project was gender sensitive as its activities were cognizant of the different needs of boys, men, women and girls.

5.9 Environment

There were no major environmental threats caused by the project. The 1x3 classroom block was constructed away from the road reserve. Siting the classroom block against the direction of the wind ensured that it acts a windbreak. Further, the classroom block was sited away from the borehole to avoid negative impact on the water source.

6.0 Challenges

The following are some of the challenges faced during the implementation of this project:

1. The fact that the project was short, pressed pressure on project staff and stakeholders to deliver according to time, may have impacted on the quality of delivery of other project elements such as capacity building (i.e trainings) and on community engagement for social behavior change that often requires a bit more time to institute and sustain change.
2. The project experienced challenges on common understanding to get effective support from the school authorities on the economic empowerment component of the project as well as sustaining efforts to improve knowledge and skills for children to protect themselves. The lack of common understanding on the development trajectory may have negative impact on sustaining project intervention.
3. While strides were taken to promote the participation of children as the primary group impacted by the problems it sought to address, efforts to sustain their participation might have been missed as evidenced by the lack of active child led clubs that needs mentorship from the school management and CCDA.
4. Although the established child protection committee has been able to support preventative interventions such as outreach to wider communities as well as being able to report cases as well referrals, their capacity remains limited. The group has no clear plan of action to respond to some child protection issues as well as guidance on meetings regularly to review their work.

7.0 Lessons Learnt

The following are some of the key lessons learnt during implementation of this project:

1. Investing in efforts to strengthen coordination among stakeholders as well as making relevant linkages between formal and informal child protection systems as this helps to promote prevention, reporting and referral efforts that can support the protection and wellbeing of children. This is evidenced by the finding on how community outreach with

involvement of formal service providers resulted in some cases being reported directly as well as referrals experienced during project implementation and beyond.

2. Building consensus on the need for social change to protect children especially girls from child marriages needs multiple support. The incorporation of skills building in advocacy to ensure issues identified by children are brought to the attention of key actors with influence and power to institute change such as district level policy implementers/makers as well as traditional leaders helped in gaining support for change. Issues raised by children included too many gambling machines in the community, indiscriminate selling of land, and growing of illicit drugs such as marijuana. As a result, of the dialogue sessions, people running gambling machines were told not to set up their businesses near the schools, indiscriminate selling of land by parents as well growing of marijuana were stopped.

3. Implementation of projects that have short turnaround time requires well-coordinated efforts with both internal and external stakeholders. The construction component of the project was implemented in record time due to consistent monitoring, communication and community engagement, which facilitated for timely implementation.

4. The delivery of the construction element of the project was cost effective due to timely implementation, resulting in effective use of resources both human and financial. The aspect of ensuring that a CCDA member of staff was fully assigned to the project promoted efficiency in the maximization of resources and time to deliver the project while it also added a lot of value to mobilizing communities to participate and get a better understanding of the project and the need to commit to its full delivery.

5. Presence of an effective school and community partnership that is built on a common understanding and vision is critical to sustaining efforts to improve the learning environment for children that also promotes their participation on issues that affect them.

8.0 Recommendations

1. The project was well designed and demonstrated its ability to make relevant changes in the protection and well-being of children despite its short space of time. **It is therefore recommended that future projects especially those that also focuses on changing negative social norms and practices should be designed with a slightly longer duration as changing attitudes take time.**

2. Having a common understanding on the roles and responsibilities on the project between the community and school authorities may impact on the ability of the project to yield positive results on some other components such as economic empowerment of caregivers. This is because there is some misunderstanding between the school and communities on who should benefit notwithstanding that this element was brought on board to empower at risk families and girls not to engage on negative coping mechanism manifested in child marriages. **Therefore, there is need to invest in efforts that strengthens school and community partnership in order to have a common vision for developing the community as well as the school.**

3. Child participation efforts need to be strengthened by ensuring that the school has a clear plan of action to ensure children are part and parcel of the school governance structures as well as being provided with sustained efforts to learn and voice out on issues that affect them.

4. There should be on going capacity building and mentorship of the community child protection committee. This should include supporting the group with additional trainings from

ongoing programming that should also ensure that follow ups are being made to the group in order keep it vibrant going forward.

9.0 Conclusion

In terms of relevance, survey established that, the project design and implementation approaches were relevant to Chongwe district and the targeted community in particular as the interventions addressed the real community needs, priorities and rights of both boys and girls. It addressed the needs at individual, family, community, societal and policy level. The project was designed in line with district priorities of multiple stakeholders such as education, health, social welfare and other existing coordination mechanisms such as the district child protection committee.

The project was efficient. It was delivered on schedule especially for the activities related to construction of the 1 x 3 classroom block. The project has been appreciated by all the relevant stakeholders as it will contribute to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of rights of children both in the medium and long term. The project was also able to implement capacity building and awareness activities on child protection, life skills, dialogues on the need to address the issues affecting children including protection from child marriages, exposure to other forms of violence and abuse alongside other activities. Although all the activities were implemented according to the planned timeframe, scope and budget, capacity building activities needed on going follow ups to ensure consistency in the delivery of key messages if sustained changes are to be seen.

The interventions of this project have proved to be effective in improving the situation of children in the targeted community related to access to education within its short space of implementation. It has further provided relevant changes and progress in amplifying the need to protect children especially girls from child marriages by firstly enhancing their skills and knowledge on the problem and strengthening support systems to ensure a protective environment.

With the expansion of the school, enrolment is likely to increase and more children will remain in school, as it will also transition into a secondary school thereby achieving the objective as per design of this project. Outreach and community dialogues has been instrumental to ensuring community support on reporting.

10.0 References

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UNCRC, CRC/C/ZMB/CO/2-4 Para 23

National Violence Prevention and Response Plan (2021 to 2025)

Network on Ending Child Marriages in Zambia Strategy (2020 to 2025)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland (2014) Results Based Management.

Zambia Statistical Agency (2018) Zambia Demographic Health Survey

10. Annexes

Evaluation Tools	
Household questionnaire	 ECM Household Questionnaire.docx
FGD for children	 FGD for G7 and or out of school.docx
FGD guide for key informants	 FGD-ECM for all groups.docx
FGD Households who received start-up capital	 FGD-HH who recieved capital.doc:
FGD Structures to protect children	 FGD-Support structures to Protect
Kobo dataset	 Kobo generated report.docx
Excel dataset	 Ending Child Marriage V2.xlsx

SPSS dataset	https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=112a008fbc&attid=0.1&permmsgid=msg-f:1744727521688351960&th=1836846fe014f4d8&view=att&disp=safe&realattid=f_l8dw4cwe0
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