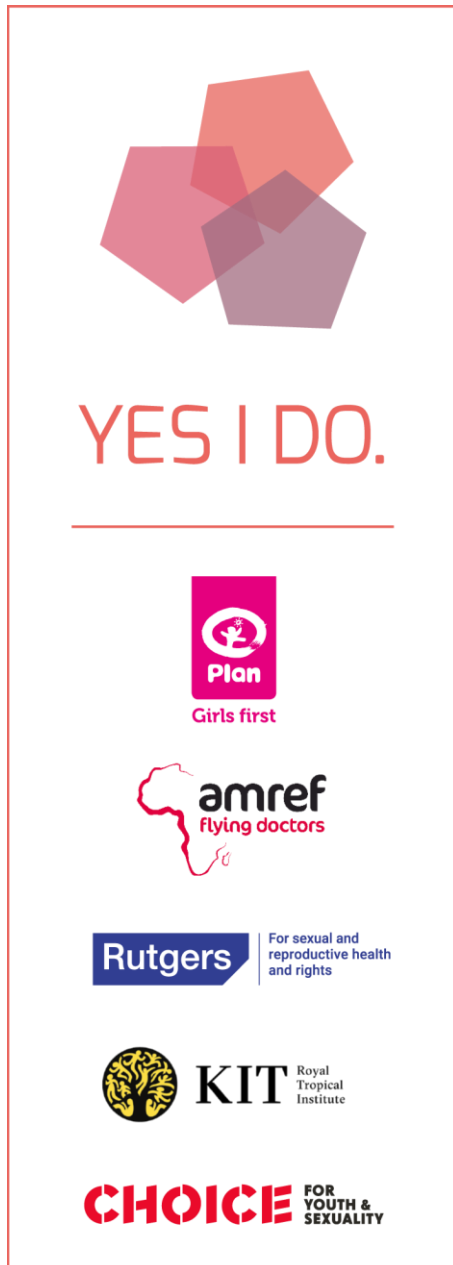


YES I DO. Champions of Change

Towards gender equality in Traditional Authority Liwonde, Machinga: a baseline study



by

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July 2018

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Abbreviations

ADC	Area Development Committee
CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
CHRR	Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation
CoC	Champion of Change
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CYESE	Centre for Youth Empowerment and Civic Education
DPP	Democratic Progressive party
FCoC	Facilitator of Champions of Change
FEDOMA	Federation of Disability Organizations in Malawi
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HIV	Human Immuno-Virus
IDI	In-depth Interview
KII	Key Informant Interview
KIT	Royal Tropical Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PEPFAR	Presidential Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TA	Traditional Authority
UDF	United Democratic Front
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VSL	Village Saving Loan
YID	Yes I Do
YIDA	Yes I Do Alliance
YONECO	Youth Net and Counselling

Executive Summary

1. About the Champions of Change baseline study

It is estimated that the prevalence of child marriage among females aged 18-24 in Traditional Authority (TA) Liwonde in Machinga District is 18% while teenage pregnancy prevalence among females aged 20-24 years is at 63%. The prevailing gender inequality in this area constitutes one of the root causes of child marriage and teenage pregnancy. Plan International will implement the “Champions of Change” (CoC) intervention in order to address gender inequality, as part of the YES I DO (YID) programme. Thirty-two facilitators of Champions of Change (FCoC) will be trained and these will lead girls’ and boys’ groups. Boys and girls aged 14-18 years, called Champions of Change (CoCs), will be members of these groups and they will be discussing issues around gender equality. Creating awareness among community stakeholders such as community leaders and parents will also be part of the intervention. The intervention will be implemented over a 2-year period and follows a curriculum developed by Plan International. This report presents results of the baseline of the operational study on the CoC intervention conducted in 2017. A midline and an end-line study are planned in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

2. Objectives

The main objective of the overall study is to assess the outcomes of the CoC intervention in TA Liwonde. The specific objective are as follows:

- To assess the challenges and opportunities that young people face during the establishment of a youth movement to develop and influence social norms on gender equality and girls’ rights.
- To explore the local context regarding the promotion of and engagement around gender equality and girls’ rights; including community leaders, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and government institutions.
- To assess whether the CoC intervention contributes to a youth-led movement for and changes attitudes regarding gender equality and women’s rights.

3. Methodology

This study was conducted in TA Liwonde in Machinga District. The training of Research Assistants (RAs) lasted for four days, including the pilot. Six RAs were recruited: three females and three males. Fieldwork lasted for 14 days. A mixed-methods approach was used: 358 respondents (34 FCoCs and 324 CoCs) participated in a survey and two In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) with parents, three IDIs with female and three with male CoCs, three Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with FCoCs and four Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with community leaders and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), including Plan Malawi, were conducted. All interviews and FGDs were tape-recorded after obtaining consent. They were transcribed and content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. NVivo software was used to support qualitative data analysis. SPSS was used to analyse quantitative data.

4. Results

Demographic characteristics: Forty-nine percent (49%) of the respondents were females and 51% were males. Most respondents (97%) were aged less than 25 years; 72% were in primary school, 15% in secondary school and 13% were out of school. Most CoCs (94%) were single and 44% of the FCoCs were married. Eleven percent (11%) of the respondents had children with 15% females and 8% males reporting this. In terms of income, 64% had ever received money in the six months preceding the survey: more males (67%) than females (60%) and more FCoCs (88%) than CoCs (61%) reported receiving money. Most income was either from *ganyu* (piecework) /daily labour or from parents.

Boys' attitudes towards girls: Most males (90%) agreed with the statement *"I think I treat girls fairly"* (90%) with all FCoCs agreeing with this statement compared to 89% among CoCs. Most respondents (95%) also agreed with the statement *"I think girls are as important as boys"*; all FCoCs agreed with this statement compared to 94% of the CoCs. Slightly more CoCs (94%) than FCoCs (91%) agreed with the statement *"I believe that men and women should take equal responsibility in household chores"*. Lastly, 97% of the males agreed with the statement *"I feel that boys should support other boys who challenge unfair attitudes towards girls"*.

Perceptions about decision making: Most respondents (77%) agreed with the statement *"I feel that a girl should be able to decide for herself how to use her free time"* with more females (83%) than males (73%) reporting this. Married respondents (86%) were more likely to agree with this statement than single respondents (76%) were. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the respondents agreed with the statement *"I know how to make decisions about my own life"* with all married respondents reporting this compared to 95% of the single respondents. In terms of making decisions about marriage, most respondents (79%) disagreed with the statement that *"it is not for a girl to decide whom she marries"* with more FCoCs (94%) than CoCs (78%), more females (81%) than males (77%) and slightly more Christians (83%) than Muslims (75%) disagreeing with this. While a majority of the survey respondents thought a girl is supposed to make decisions about whom she marries, during the FGDs with FCoCs, participants said that sometimes girls are forced or pressured to get married by parents or peers unlike boys.

Perceptions about age at marriage in the community: Most respondents (65%) agreed with the statement *"I think girls marry too young in the community"*, with more FCoCs (79%) than CoCs (64%) reporting this. The proportion of respondents who reported this increased the higher their educational level. This perception was more common among the Yao (71%) and the Lomwe (70%) than among the Chewa (55%).

Gender differences in saving money: Thirty-nine percent (39%) of the respondents agreed with the statement *I save money* with more males (46%) than females (33%) and slightly more Christians (39%) than Muslims (34%) agreeing with this. The proportion of respondents who saved money increased with age and education. The Chewa (45%) were more likely to report saving money than the Lomwe (39%) and the Yao (34%). More married respondents (68%) agreed with the statement than single respondents (36%).

Availability of opportunities in the community: Fifty-six percent (56%) of the respondents agreed with the statement *"I think boys have more opportunities in the community"* with more males (65%) than females (48%) agreeing with this statement.

Attitudes towards SRH issues: Most respondents (82%) agreed with the statement *“I take care of my sexual health”* with more males (87%) than females (78%), more respondents in secondary (94%) than in primary school (77%); and more married respondents (100%) than single respondents (81%) agreeing with this statement. The proportion of respondents who reported taking care of their sexual health increased with age. Most respondents (89%) agreed with the statement *“I have the confidence to encourage girls to take care of their sexual and reproductive health”*. There were no major differences by gender, religion and tribe. With regard to the statement *“I like my body”*, 98% of the respondents agreed with this statement.

Only 45% of the respondents reported they *“express their opinions about sexual health with a sexual partner”* with more males (52%) than females (40%) saying this. All married respondents expressed their opinions about sexual health with a sexual partner; only 40% of the single respondents reported this and the proportion of respondents expressing their opinions on these issues increased with age. Overall, 48% of the respondents agreed with the statement *“I negotiate condom use during sex to prevent pregnancy or disease”* with more FCoCs (88%) than CoCs (45%), more males (55%) than females (43%) and more secondary (76%) than primary school respondents (36%) reporting this. The proportion of respondents who reported they negotiated condom use also increased with age. Married respondents (96%) were more likely to negotiate condom use compared to single respondents (44%).

Most respondents (90%) agreed with the statement *“It is the girl’s responsibility to prevent pregnancy”* with more CoCs (90%) than FCoCs (82%) and more Christians (92%) than Muslims (88%) agreeing. Ninety percent (90%) of the single respondents agreed with this statement compared with 82% of the married respondents. With regard to the statement *“Girls like it when boys comment on their bodies”*, most respondents (79%) agreed with the statement with more males (88%) than females (70%), more CoCs (80%) than FCoCs (71%) and more Muslims (85%) than Christians (73%) agreeing with this statement and the percentage agreeing increased with age. There were more married respondents (86%) than single respondents (78%) who agreed with the statement.

Most respondents (79%) did not agree with the statement *“I think that homosexual people have equal rights and should be treated with respect”*. More FCoCs (88%) than CoCs (78%) and more Christians (83%) than Muslims (74%) disagreed with this statement. There were more married respondents (96%) who objected to this statement than single respondents (77%).

Sexual violence: Most respondents (85%) agreed with the statement *“Girls wearing less clothing provoke boys”* with more females (86%) than males (83%), more CoCs (87%) than FCoCs (65%) and more respondents in primary (90%) than in secondary school (72%) agreeing with this statement. Single respondents (87%) were more likely to agree with this statement than married respondents (68%). With regard to the statement *“If a girl is unfaithful, it is alright for her husband to beat her”*, 57% of the respondents disagreed with the statement with more males (65%) than females (49%), more respondents in primary (49%) than in secondary school (6%), more CoCs (44%) than FCoCs (6%), more Muslims (43%) than Christians (39%) agreeing with this statement. The proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement decreased with age. Only 9% of the married respondents agreed with this statement compared to 43% of the single respondents. Just more than a third of the respondents (36%) agreed with the statement that *“it is a girl’s fault if she is sexually harassed”* with more females (41%) than males (32%), more CoCs (38%) than FCoCs (15%) and more respondents in primary (41%) than those in secondary school

(23%) agreeing with the statement. Lastly, 55% of the respondents agreed with the statement *“A good woman tolerates violence from her husband or partner in order to keep her family together”* with more males (57%) than females (53%), more CoCs (60%) than FCoCs (9%), more Muslims (57%) than Christians (54%) and more respondents in primary (64%) than those in secondary school (30%) agreeing with this statement. The proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement decreased with age.

Responding to sexual violence: If respondents saw cases of sexual violence, the main ways they would respond to this included talking to the harasser about how bad sexual violence is (50%), telling their parents (36%), reporting to the police (35%), reporting to the chief (30%) and talking to the harassed about why sexual harassment is bad (29%).

Perceptions about safety and violence in the community: Most respondents (84%) *“can identify safety problems for girls in the community”* with more females (86%) than males (81%), more FCoCs (94%) than CoCs (82%) and more respondents in secondary (94%) than in primary school (81%) saying this. Most respondents (91%) knew *“ways to keep themselves safe from violence”*.

Another statement which was read to respondents was *“I think girls are safe in this community”*: 62% of the respondents thought girls were safe in their community with more CoCs (74%) than FCoCs (53%) and more females (77%) than males (66%), respondents in primary (78%) than in secondary school (53%) and more Muslims (75%) than Christians (69%) saying this. Single respondents (74%) were more likely to agree with the statement than married respondents (50%). Most CoCs (92%) agreed with the statement *“I think boys should not use violence in their relationship with others”*. All FCoCs compared to 91% of the CoCs, more Christians (95%) than Muslims (88%) agreed with the statement. The proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement increased with age.

Only 22% of the respondents said that *“a girl should not be hit if she has sexual relationship before marriage, fights with a brother or sister, fights with others in class, doesn’t obey parents, doesn’t complete her homework, doesn’t help with household chores and stays out late”*; with more males (27%) saying this than females (18%). As such, more females said a girl should be hit for any of these compared to boys. A higher proportion of males (29%) than females (22%) said that a boy should not be hit for any of these conditions. More females mentioned that a boy should be hit for all these conditions with an exception of staying out late. Most respondents (70%) disagreed with the statement *“If someone insults a boy, he would be right to defend his honour by hitting that person”* with more males (76%) than females (65%), more FCoCs (88%) than CoCs (69%), more married respondents (91%) than single respondents (69%), more Christians (74%) than Muslims (67%) and more respondents in secondary (94%) than those in primary school (65%) disagreeing with this statement. The proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement increased with age.

Gender stereotypes: Ninety percent (90%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement *“Girls do not need to go to the university”* with more FCoCs (97%) than CoCs (88%), more females (91%) than males (88%) and more respondents in secondary (94%) than in primary school (88%) and more married respondents (96%) than single (88%) respondents disagreeing. However, from the qualitative component it was found that the general expectation in the community is that girls cannot go far with education, because they will get married and their husbands will look after them. With regard to science and sports, 53% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that *“boys are better at science and math than girls”*

with more FCoCs (68%) than CoCs (40%), more females (47%) than males (38%), more Christians (51%) than Muslims (33%) and more respondents in secondary (62%) than those in primary school (37%) disagreeing with this. The proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement increased with age. Married respondents (59%) were more likely to disagree with the statement than single respondents (41%).

Most respondents (69%) also agreed with the statement *“Boys are better at sports than girls”* with more CoCs (73%) than FCoCs (27%), more males (72%) than females (66%), more single respondents (72%) than married respondents (36%), more Muslims (71%) than Christians (68%) and more respondents in primary (77%) than those in secondary school (42%) agreeing with the statement. The proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement decreased with age.

With regard to leadership, most respondents (77%) disagreed with the statement *“Girls and women are not good leaders”*. There were more FCoCs (97%) than CoCs (75%), more Christians (82%) than Muslims (73%), more males (100%) than females (81%), more respondents in secondary (93%) than in primary school (73%) who disagreed with this statement. Married respondents (86%) were more likely to disagree with this statement than single respondents (77%). Most respondents (76%) agreed with the statement *“Wives should obey their husbands”*. There were more CoCs (81%) than FCoCs (32%), more males (86%) than females (66%), slightly more Muslims (79%) than Christians (75%) and more respondents in primary (85%) than in secondary school (47%) who agreed with this statement. The proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement decreased with age. About half of the respondents (51%) disagreed with the statement *“It is wrong when boys behave like girls”*. There were more FCoCs (53%) than CoCs (40%) and more respondents in secondary (59%) than those in primary school (39%) who disagreed with this statement. There were no major differences between males (42%) and females (41%).

Most respondents (79%) agreed with the statement *“Boys need to be tough even if they are young”*. More CoCs (81%) than FCoCs (62%), more males (86%) than females (73%), slightly more Muslims (81%) than Christians (78%) and more respondents in primary (82%) than in secondary school (74%) agreed with this statement. The proportion of respondents who agreed with statement decreased with age. Lastly, most respondents (68%) agreed with the statement that *“boys lose respect if they cry”*. There were more CoCs (72%) than FCoCs (32%), more males (70%) than females (67%), more Muslims (73%) than Christians (65%), more married respondents (69%) than single respondents (55%) and more respondents in primary school (75%) than in secondary school (47%) who agreed with this statement. The proportion of respondents who agreed with this decreased with age.

Perceptions about sex and sexual relationships: Fifty-seven percent (57%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement *“If a girl says no to sex she usually means yes”* with more FCoCs (79%) than CoCs (59%), more females (65%) than males (49%) and more married respondents (73%) than those who were single (56%) disagreeing with this statement. Most respondents (81%) also agreed with the statement *“Most boys do not remain faithful to their girlfriends for long”*. There were slightly more females (83%) than males (80%), more CoCs (82%) than FCoCs (71%) and more respondents in primary school (82%) than in secondary school (77%) agreeing with this statement. Most respondents (68%) also agreed with the statement *“If a boy is unfaithful, it is because his girlfriend did not care of him”*: more males (74%) than females (62%), more CoCs (71%) than FCoCs (59%), more Muslims (78%) than Christians (59%) and more respondents in primary (76%)

than those in secondary school (43%) agreed with this statement. The proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement decreased with age. Lastly, most respondents (87%) agreed with the statement *“Girls always want boys to be romantic”*. There were more males (93%) than females (81%) and slightly more FCoCs (91%) than CoCs (87%) who agreed with this statement. There were no differences between respondents in primary and those in secondary school (for both, 87% agreed that girls always want boys to be romantic).

Discussions about gender equality and girl’s rights: A third of the respondents (34%) *“always talked about gender equality and girls’ rights with girls of their age”* with more females (40%) than males (27%), more FCoCs (68%) than CoCs (30%) and more respondents in secondary (49%) than in primary school (29%) reporting doing this. The proportion of respondents who always did this increased with age. Thirty-six percent (36%) of the respondents reported they *“always talked about gender equality and girls’ rights with boys of their age”* with more males (48%) than females (24%), more FCoCs (59%) than CoCs (34%) and more respondents in secondary (59%) than in primary school (31%) reporting doing this. The proportion of respondents who always did this increased with age. Married respondents (59%) were more likely to do this than single ones (34%).

Sixty-six percent (66%) of the respondents reported they *“never took part in discussions about gender equality and girls rights with adult men”* and there were more females (71%) than males (61%), more CoCs (70%) than FCoCs (32%) and more respondents in primary (75%) than in secondary school (40%) who reported never doing this. The proportion of respondents who never take part in these discussions decreased with age. Fifty-one percent (51%) of the respondents *“never take part in discussions about gender equality and girls’ rights with adult women”* and there were more males (59%) than females (42%) and more CoCs (55%) than FCoCs (9%) who never took part in such discussions. The proportion of respondents who never take part in these discussions with adult women also decreased with age.

Champions of Change: Thirty-two (32) male and female FCoCs have been trained in TA Liwonde. Each FCoC has between eight and 42 members in their group and they meet every weekend. These FCoCs were chosen from existing youth groups: factors such as having the ability to learn and teach others, having interest, having good behaviour, previous attendance of trainings, and one’s educational qualifications were considered when FCoCs were being chosen. FCoCs appreciated the two trainings they already underwent. This training covered a number of issues including gender and gender inequality, rights and communication. Some FCoCs reported that they did not understand some topics such as body confidence; hence, refresher courses were suggested and it was also suggested that the training should cover vocational training courses such as carpentry for income generation. Others suggested that the CoC programme should be extended to other areas.

FCoCs and CoCs explained that in principle all youth attend group meetings, regardless of age (10-19), gender, religion, tribe, disability, socio-economic status, marital status, whether in school or not and whether they have children or not. However, some youth do not attend CoC meetings due to disability, religion (as some religious groups do not condone condom use), being denied by their parents, lack of entertainment (e.g. balls) and some youth were mentioned not to attend because of not financially benefiting from the activity.

The major role of FCoCs, as narrated by the FCoCs themselves, is to meet with their CoCs and discuss with them what they learnt during the training e.g. issues around gender and gender equality, use of contraceptives, the importance of education and they also help youth seek redress when they experience violence. FCoCs are also role models for CoCs. Study participants reported that community leaders can call meetings where they can tell their subjects about the CoC programme. Community members can accept the programme and even establish bylaws on children's rights.

FCoCs suggested that they can help to make changes regarding gender equality and rights by calling for sensitization meetings, including with help from chiefs, where they can inform youth about the programme. They can also bring about change by leading an exemplary life style and having one to one discussions with young people. There were also suggestions that parents and other community members can encourage their children to participate in CoC activities. Community structures such as mother groups were also mentioned as having potential to making changes at community level on gender equality e.g. they discourage dropping out of school and child marriage. NGOs can also play a role on gender equality by encouraging girls to go to school, sponsoring children to go to school and they can also provide further training to FCoCs. Lastly, FCoCs mentioned they experienced the following problems: the lack of sporting activities, parents denying their children to attend CoC activities, FCoCs being looked down upon by fellow youth, long distances being covered by FCoCs, lack of identification/uniform, lack of teaching and learning materials and absenteeism of youth during the CoC meetings.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

This study was aimed at generating baseline data for the CoC programme being implemented in TA Liwonde by Plan Malawi. The study has demonstrated that the CoC programme has great potential in addressing gender and gender inequality issues prevailing in this community. These results generally demonstrate that unlike CoCs, the FCoCs, both male and female, had more accepting attitudes towards gender and gender equality compared to CoCs. This could be because they already underwent two trainings. The CoC programme can become a youth movement which can bring about change in gender equality and rights. However, the implementation of the CoC programme is experiencing a range of problems e.g. the lack of sporting equipment (e.g. balls), non-participation of many youth in CoC activities, the lack of identity cards and other materials and lack of teaching and learning materials. The following recommendations are, therefore, made in order to make the CoC programme more effective and consequently bring about gender equality in this community.

- In this community, there is gross infringement of the rights of children, especially girls. The creation of awareness about gender and gender equality issues should continue to include girls' rights e.g. the right to education and to participate in decision making on issues which concern them.
- There is a need to further build young females' awareness on their rights and self-worth, because it was found that for some of the statements on gender equality, it were especially girls who thought girls are less worth than boys.
- The YID programme should purchase and distribute (foot)balls to all the FCoCs and other entertainment materials as this is expected to improve attendance.
- Plan Malawi should continue to work with FCoCs and traditional leaders to create awareness among community members in TA Liwonde about the CoC programme.

- When selecting FCoCs, attention should be paid to their educational qualifications, age, marital status and their interest in youth activities.
- Plan Malawi, FCoCs, CoCs and influential people at community level should continue to encourage girls and boys to go to school as this has positive influence on gender and gender equality.
- Plan Malawi and the FCoCs themselves should monitor the size of their groups and ensure that when these split, the incoming FCoC should be properly oriented.
- Plan Malawi should consider having younger FCoCs as some of the current FCoCs are much older than their group members.
- There is a need to conduct refresher training for all FCoCs (which is planned for) and new groups might require initial trainings.
- Plan Malawi should continue engaging traditional leaders, parents, teachers and other existing structures at community level on the need for gender equality to prevail/ to be internalised and the need for this youth movement (CoC) which will bring about changes in people's attitudes towards gender equality.
- The programme should consider giving an orientation of the FCoCs on how persons with disability can best be reached. The programme can obtain assistance either from the Federation of Disability Organisations in Malawi (FEDOMA) or the Department of Disability and Elderly Affairs in the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare.

As mentioned earlier, there is evidence that the implementation of the CoC programme has started having an impact on the champions themselves on gender and gender equality issues. The prevailing gender inequality issues contribute significantly towards teenage pregnancy and subsequently child marriage which have long lasting negative impacts on the future of girls. In order to ensure that the CoC is an effective youth led movement to change peoples' attitudes towards gender equality, there is an urgent need to address the challenges being experienced by the programme.

1. Background

In Malawi, child marriage and teenage pregnancy are major problems for young people's sexual and reproductive health (SRH) (Munthali & Zakeyo, 2011). Their rates are high and the problems are mutually reinforcing, leading to school dropouts, health and social problems, particularly among young women (Munthali & Kok, 2016). The YES I DO (YID) programme (2016-2020) is a five-year programme which aims to contribute to enhancing young women's decision making space on whether, when and who to marry and on whether, when and with whom to have children (YIDA, 2016). The programme, funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is implemented in seven countries namely Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Indonesia and Pakistan. The research component of the programme in Malawi focuses on the interlinkages between child marriage and teenage pregnancy. The YID programme is being implemented by a consortium consisting of Plan Netherlands, Amref, Rutgers, Choice for Youth and Sexuality and the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT). In Malawi, the programme is implemented in Traditional Authority (TA) Liwonde in Machinga District. Plan Malawi, Amref Health Africa, the Family Planning Association of Malawi, the Centre for Youth Empowerment and Civic Education (CYESE) and the Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation together implement YID in Machinga.

The Malawi baseline study of the YID programme, conducted in 2016, found a child marriage prevalence of 20% among females aged 18-24 years and a teenage pregnancy prevalence of 64% among females aged 20-24 years in Machinga district (Munthali & Kok, 2016). The study also highlighted the main causes and consequences of both teenage pregnancy and child marriage. Widespread poverty, combined with lack of opportunities, social and cultural norms around gender and youth sexuality were the main causes and consequences including school dropout, further poverty and social exclusion, especially for young girls. Based on the study results, recommendations for the YID intervention strategies were formulated.

One intervention that is about to start in TA Liwonde in Machinga District is the "Champions of Change" (CoC) which focuses on gender inequality which is one of the root causes of child marriage and teenage pregnancy. The CoC intervention focuses on training of 32 facilitators of Champions of Change (FCoCs, 17 female and 15 male youth aged 18-24 years) who will lead girls' and boys' groups, respectively. These groups will consist of boys and girls aged 14-18 years, who are called Champions of Change (CoCs). In these groups, issues around gender equality will be discussed. Awareness meetings with other community stakeholders, such as traditional and religious leaders and parents and caregivers will also be part of the intervention. The intervention will take place over a two-year period and follows a curriculum developed by Plan International (Plan International, 2017). This report presents the results of the baseline study on the CoC intervention which was conducted in TA Liwonde in Machinga District in southern Malawi.

2. Gender inequality in Malawi: a short overview

It has been widely documented that gender norms and roles influence individual's ideas of masculinities and femininities. Gender roles are often stereotypical in nature, which means that they ascribe separate and certain abilities, roles and activities to men and women. They influence every aspect of an individual's life (Saewyc, 2017). The PEPFAR Gender and Adolescent Working group defines gender as "a culturally-

defined set of economic, social, and political roles, responsibilities, rights, entitlements, and obligations associated with being female and male, as well as the power relations between and among women and men, boys and girls, and people with other gender identities” (Pendleton, Mellish & Sapuwa, 2016).

Gender as an identity is a construct that is shaped through the process of socialization. Common socialization agents at the micro level include parents, the wider family, teachers and peers. These interpersonal interactions shape children’s, adolescents’ (and adults’) ideas of what makes women ‘women’ and what makes men ‘men’, which are embedded in hegemonic myths and masculinity (Blum, Mmari,, & Moreau, 2017). This socialization also occurs at the macro and structural level and includes the influence of social institutions that perpetuate certain gender norms. These include the media, schools and religious institutions. For instance, Chponda & Wassermann, 2016 analysed how women were portrayed in verbal text in the junior secondary history textbook in Malawi and found that women were extremely underrepresented with only 6% being female; and those that were represented were goddesses or wives of influential men. They note that “the patriarchal nature and general culture of Malawian society” are mirrored in the textbooks. In addition, structural changes such as globalization and capitalism also play a socialization role (Basu et. al., 2017; Raising, 2004 & Taylor 2006).

These gender roles and accompanying expectations become intensified during the period of adolescence (Basu, Lou, Acharya, & Lundgren, 2017). Tolman et al. (2003) (as cited in Meyer et al. 2017) highlight that research indicates the adverse impact of gender inequalities on health and wellbeing – particularly in the case of adolescent SRH and rights. These have an influence on the construction of sexuality and sexual behaviour (Gupta, 2000), unintended teenage pregnancies (UNFPA, 2013 & KIT 2016) and the likelihood of contracting HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (Turmen, 2003 & Pendleton, Mellish,, & Sapuwa, 2016). The gender and sexuality landscape are shaped by a combination of hegemonic masculinities and heteronormativity which hurt young men and women, both who strive to prescribe to it and those who deviate from it. De Meyer et al. (De Meyer, et al., 2017)), in a multi-country study exploring how gender norms influence young adolescents, found that early adolescence held “stereotypical masculinity norms depicting boys are romantically/sexually active and dominant, and girls are innocent with less (romantic) agency”.

Risky sexual behaviour is shaped by fragile masculinities in Malawian male youth (Izugbara & Undie, 2008). The YID research conducted by KIT, on behalf of the Alliance on child marriage and teenage pregnancy in Malawi, found that gender norms alongside other contextual factors play an integral role in young people’s choices and opportunities with respect to education, jobs, marriage and having children (Munthali & Kok, 2016). These are often inter-linked and influence each other. For instance, teenage pregnancy and child marriage are cited as consequences for dropping out of school but are in many cases also the causes of school drop-out (Munthali & Kok, 2016 & Chalasani et. al., 2012). The 2007 Country Gender Profile of Malawi also documents this and lists research from the 1990s that shows that cultural practices and beliefs function as a constraint to girls’ education. These include “early marriage, pregnancy, participation in initiation ceremonies and marriage patterns (matrilineal)” (White, 2007). Male bias in education access is also highlighted. Although female labour participation is high at 81.2%, as of 2015, only about 15% of the Malawian women have reached the level of secondary education.

Young people show resilience by navigating and challenging gender unequal norms. One study on the influence of gender norms on young adolescents in Ghent, Baltimore, Shanghai, Delhi and Nairobi shows that the consequences of challenging stereotypical gender norms can vary according to the context, but all consist of negative consequences in varying degrees. Young women also negotiate these gender norms in patriarchal contexts; and at times by undertaking a 'patriarchal bargain'. For instance, Scorgie et al. show that South African women engage in dry sex as a means of pursuing a stable relationship, reduce harm and gain greater agency in a relationship (Scorgie, et al., 2009).

The construction of gender identity is culture specific. Hence, structural factors such as the role of customary law and the matrilineal organization of society must be considered in the context of certain regions in Malawi. While much progress has been made in integrating gender equality into constitutional law, it is crucial to acknowledge the important role played by customary law. Maluwa points out the tension between the gender-discriminatory nature of customary laws and the process of adopting gender equal constitutional laws. She concludes that the promise of gender equality can only be realized by tackling the structural power relations that are rooted in patriarchy (Maluwa, 1999). These power relations are to be considered in a historical context in Malawi. Structural changes such as the advent of colonialism and missionaries also changed power dynamics between genders, forcing women *further* into roles of domesticity. This is notable as it was encountered by several matrilineal and/or matrilineal societies, where women have a central position in society. White (2007) notes that irrespective of a matrilineal or patrilineal system, women find themselves in a subordinate position as compared to men since decision-making often is in the hands of the latter¹². In addition, structural adjustment programmes and feminization of poverty have further exacerbated the position of women. Women still lag behind in health, education, economic empowerment and political participation and gender-based violence is still a reality. On the gender inequality index, Malawi ranks 145/159 countries in 2015³.

It is clear that gender norms can be harmful to young men and women and are an obstacle in the fulfilment of their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). It not only affects this realm, but also influences all walks of life for young people throughout their life course. Hence, it is crucial to understand how these norms can be transformed along with the short-term and long-term consequences of transforming them, both for young women *and* men.

3. Hypothesis

The CoC intervention aims to establish a youth-led social movement that challenges social norms and gains society-wide support for gender equality and girls' rights. The hypothesis is that the implementation of this intervention will enhance SRHR of young people; and problems such as child marriage and teenage pregnancy will diminish with time.

¹ They also argue that a patrilineal system could provide a better safety net. Due to matrilineal residence, "men do not feel obliged to make investments as they feel they will not level that village forever. Furthermore. They do not feel they have an obligation to take care of their children, since tradition dictates that the maternal uncle is the one that is supposed to assume that responsibility."

² White et al. 2002 refers to 'Dispossessing the Widow: Gender based Violence in Malawi'.

³ The Gender Inequality Index (GII) is an index for measurement of gender disparity that was introduced in the 2010 Human Development Report 20th anniversary edition by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The ranking can be found:

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>.

4. Objectives

The main objective of this operational study is to assess the outcomes of the CoC intervention, focused on gender equality and girls' rights, in TA Liwonde in Machinga District, Malawi. The specific objective are as follows:

- To assess the challenges and opportunities that young people face during the establishment of a youth movement to develop and influence social norms on gender equality and girls' rights.
- To explore the local context regarding the promotion of and engagement around gender equality and girls' rights; including community leaders, civil society organizations and government institutions.
- To assess whether the CoC intervention contributes to a youth-led movement for and changes attitudes regarding gender equality and women's rights.

5. Methodology

5.1 Type of study

The study contains a base-, mid- and end-line, to be conducted in 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively. The baseline study used a mixed-methods approach. A short questionnaire was administered targeting young females and males aged 15-24 years who are involved in the CoC intervention. In addition, focus group discussions (FGDs), in-depth (IDIs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) with a variety of stakeholders as detailed below were conducted.

5.2 Data collection methods

Both the quantitative and qualitative data collection methods focused on participants' attitudes towards gender (in)equality and girls' rights. The qualitative methods also included people's views on the CoC intervention. The following data collection methods were used:

- Girls' and a boys' questionnaires were administered to FCoCs aged 18-24 and CoCs aged 14-18.
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with young female and male FCoCs on gender, youth sexuality and agency.
- In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) with purposefully selected young female and male CoCs aged 14-24 on gender, youth sexuality and agency.
- IDIs with purposefully selected parents/ caregivers on gender, youth sexuality and agency.
- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with purposefully selected community leaders and Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) representatives.

5.3 Place of study

The study was conducted in TA Liwonde, Machinga District in southern Malawi.

5.4 Study period

Six Research Assistants (RAs) were recruited and three of these were males and the other three were females. The training of RAs for this baseline study started on 13th November 2017 at Annie's Lodge in

Zomba. The training lasted for four days, including the pilot. During the pilot, one FGD with FCoCs was conducted. In addition to this, the questionnaire was administered to five FCoCs. The transcript for the FGD with FCoCs and the five questionnaires which were administered during the pilot were retained and constitute part of the data presented in this report. Fieldwork lasted for 14 days.

5.5 Sample size, sampling and data collection methods

The information, as communicated from Plan Malawi, was that there were 32 FCoCs in TA Liwonde. Each FCoC was supposed to have on average ten CoCs. However, there were some FCoCs who had more than ten CoCs. As far as sampling was concerned, all the FCoCs were interviewed while the CoCs were sampled. In total 34 FCoCs and 324 CoCs participated in the survey. A total of 358 questionnaires were, therefore, administered. Most CoCs were in school; hence, a decision was made to administer questionnaires to school going study participants in the afternoon (after they returned from school). There were also some FCoCs who were in school and it was quite difficult to find and interview their members. One other challenge was that there were some FCoCs who either quit their role as FCoCs or were replaced by someone else. On the qualitative part the following FGDs and interviews were conducted: three FGDs with FCoCs (one with females, one with males and one mixed group), two IDIs with parents, six with CoCs (three with female and three with male participants) and four KIIs with community leaders and NGOs including Plan Malawi, to explain what the CoC programme is all about. The recruitment of young female and male participants to participate in the survey was done with the assistance of FCoCs who work close with them. These FCoCs also helped to identify parents/caregivers, community leaders and NGO staff who were instrumental in the programme.

The questionnaire was administered with the help of a tablet by trained RAs who also conducted the FGDs, IDIs and KIIs. In this study, female and male RAs interviewed young female and male participants, respectively. All discussions and interviews were moderated in local language to ensure maximum participation. All qualitative interviews and FGDs were tape recorded, after having obtained consent from participants.

5.6 Data analysis

During data collection, daily review meetings were held to identify emerging themes, completeness of work and inconsistencies coming out of the work. Descriptive statistics was employed to describe demographical and behavioural/ attitude data from the survey, using SPSS. Interviews and FGDs were digitally recorded, transcribed and independently checked by someone not involved in transcribing. Content analysis of the data was carried out using a comprehensive thematic matrix which was developed based on the topic guides. NVivo 11 software was used to support the analysis of the data.

5.7 Ethical considerations

Issues around gender (in)equality can be socially or culturally sensitive. A variety of approaches were used to ensure that study participants felt comfortable and free to express what they genuinely believed. The research team was trained to listen and observe intently without displaying any judgmental attitude towards information they received from study participants. Participation in the study was voluntary. Before conducting FGDs, interviews and administering questionnaires, consent forms were read, explained and signed for each category of participants. For children aged less than 18, consent was obtained from their parents/caregivers. All respondents received a copy of the consent form. In the case of minors, the parents or guardians received the consent form while minors received the assent form. All interviews and FGDs were conducted in a private and comfortable place for participants.

In order to increase participants' comfort level, young and older and female and male data collectors were recruited to conduct interviews/FGDs with young and older; female and male participants, respectively. Availability of a person with basic skills in child communication and counselling was available but was not required during the study. Data collectors were advised to stop the interview/FGD if the participant(s) were upset. Research assistants were also trained on ethical issues to ensure ethical conduct was clearly understood and implemented during fieldwork. This training focused on getting informed consent, the importance of privacy of study participants and confidentiality of the information obtained from study participants. Access to data was strictly limited to the research team. Audio recordings were all destroyed after data was transcribed and independently checked.

6. Results

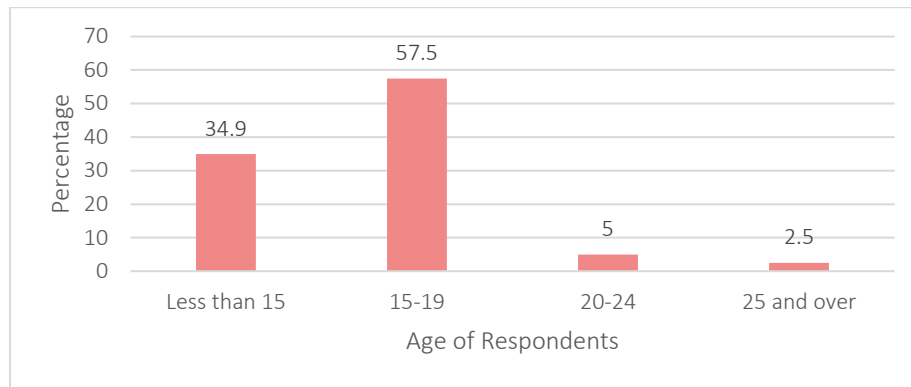
6.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

This section explores the demographic characteristics of the respondents in the survey including the age and sex of respondents, marital status and educational attainment. It also looked at whether the respondents had children.

6.1.1 Age and sex of respondents

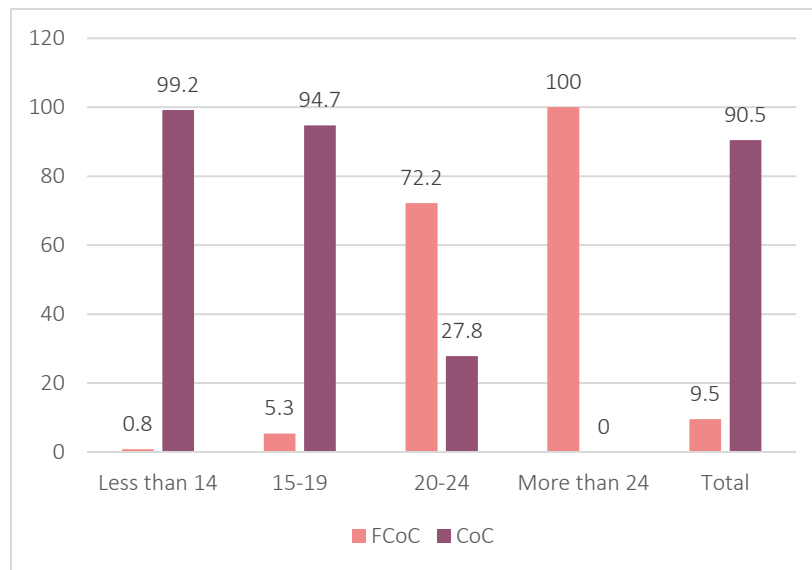
The questionnaire was administered to 358 people: 10% (34) were FCoCs while the rest (324, 90%) were CoCs. Forty-nine percent (49%) of the respondents were females while the remaining 51% were males. Most respondents were aged 15-19 (58%) and this was followed by those aged less than 15 (35%). Only 3% of the respondents were aged 25 or more years as can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Age of respondents (% , N=358)



The proportion of respondents who were FCoCs increased with age: only 1% of those aged less than 15 were FCoCs and this increased to 5% among those aged 15-19 and all those aged more than 24 years old were FCoCs as can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Proportion of respondents who are FCoCs/CoCs by age (N=358)



6.1.2 Educational attainment of respondents

Table 1 shows that 13% of the respondents were not in school at the time of the survey; 72% were in primary school while 15% were in secondary school.

Table 1: Educational attainment of respondents

Educational Level (N)	Type of Respondent		Total (%)
	FCoC (%)	CoC (%)	
Primary school (259)	8.8	79.0	72.3
Secondary school (53)	35.3	12.7	14.8
Not currently in school (46)	55.9	8.3	12.8
Total (358)	100.0	100.0	100.0

More than half of the FCoCs (56%) were not in school while about a third (35%) were in secondary school. Nine percent (9%) of the FCoCs were in primary school. On the other hand, most CoCs (79%) were in primary school while 13% were in secondary school. Eight percent (8%) of the CoCs were actually not in school.

Almost all respondents (99%) who were in school reported that they attended non-residential schools; 0.3% were in boarding school and the remaining 0.3% mentioned other but did not specify. There were 259 respondents who were in primary school: the highest proportion, as can be seen in Figure 3, was in Standard 6 (40%) followed by those in Standard 7 (27%) and then Standard 8 (15%).

Figure 3: Level of education for respondents in primary school (% , N=259)

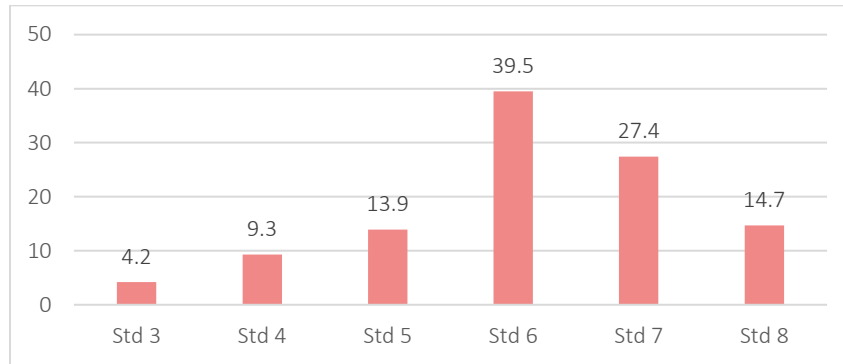
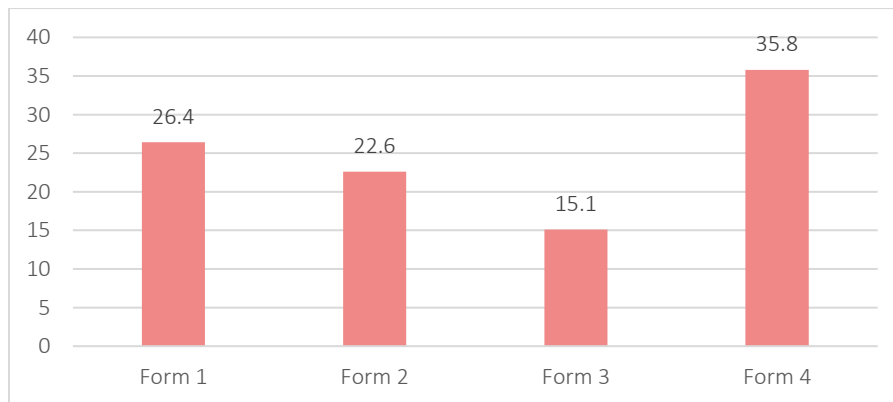


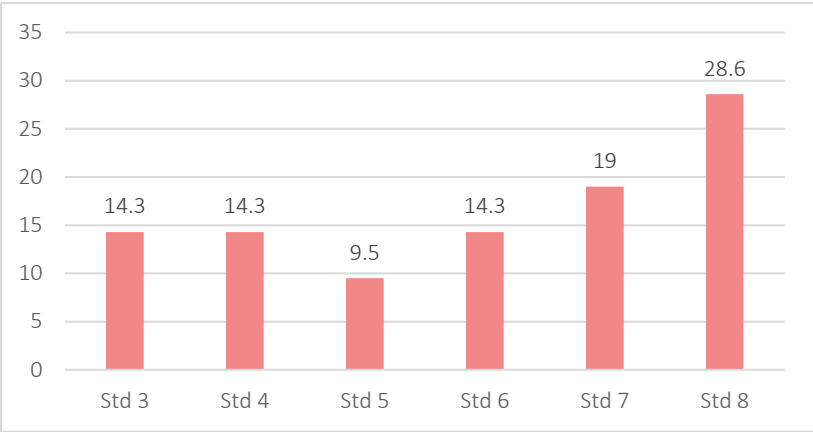
Figure 3 shows that most respondents who were in primary school were in upper primary school (Standard 6-8). Less than a third of the respondents were in lower primary school (Standard 1-5). Figure 4 shows the level of education for those who were in secondary school.

Figure 4: Level of education for those respondents in secondary school (% , N=53)



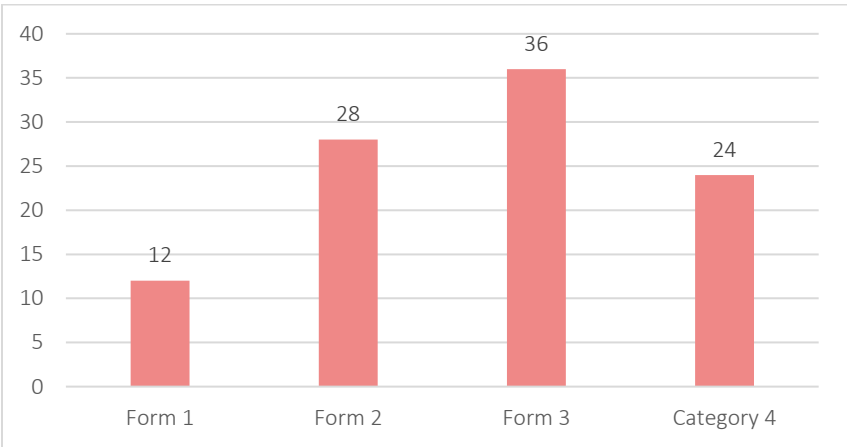
The highest proportion of respondents who were in secondary school was in Form 4 (36%) followed by those in Form 1 (26%) and then Form 2 (23%). Just more than half of the respondents in secondary school were in senior secondary school (Form 3-4). There were also some respondents who were not in school and these were asked the highest level of education they had attained. Most respondents who were not in school at the time of the survey had reached upper primary school (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Highest level of education attained by out of school respondents who went to primary school (% , N=21)



Some out of school respondents reported that they had gone to secondary school and Figure 6 shows the level they attained.

Figure 6: Level of education attained by out of school respondents who went to secondary school (% , N=25)

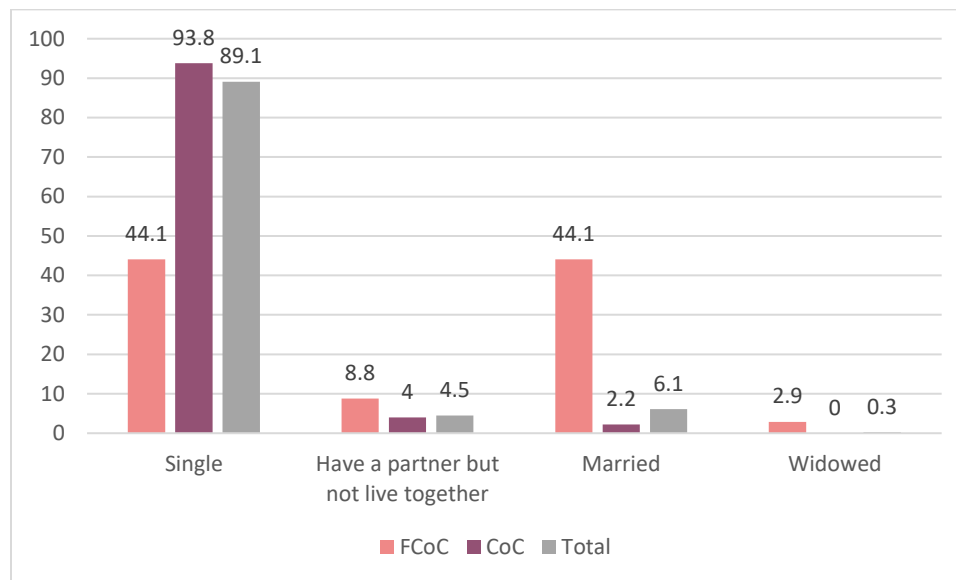


Most respondents who were out of school reported that they had gone up to senior secondary school namely Forms 3 and 4. Just more than a third of the out of school respondents who reported they had gone to secondary school had reached Form 3 and this was seconded by those who went as far as Form 2.

6.1.3 Marital status of respondents

Most respondents (89%) were single: the proportion of CoCs (94%) who reported being single was more than twice that of the FCoC (44%) as can be seen in Figure 7⁴.

Figure 7: Marital status of respondents (% , N=358)



Forty-four percent (44%) of the FCoCs were married while only 2% of the CoCs reported being married. Overall, 6% of the respondents were married and one FCoC was widowed.

6.1.4 Religion and tribe of respondents

Nearly half of the respondents (49.7%) were Christians while the remaining (48.9%) were Muslims. The main tribes in TA Liwonde are Yao (45%), Chewa (31%) and then Lomwe (22%). Other tribes only constituted 0.6% of the sample. There were 1.4% of the respondents who did not indicate their tribe.

6.1.5 Persons respondents lived with

This study also looked at the persons respondents lived with: almost all respondents (99%) reported that they lived with someone with only three respondents (1%) reporting not living with anyone else. Table 2 shows the persons the respondents lived with (multiple answers were possible).

⁴ Please note that the number of FCoCs who participated in the survey was 34, against 324 CoCs. Therefore, throughout this report, the percentages when comparing both groups with each other just provide indications.

Table 2: Persons respondents lived with (N=358)

Persons respondents lived with	Percentage
Mother (290)	81.7
Father (191)	53.8
Grandfather (81)	22.8
Grandmother (21)	5.9
Aunt (21)	5.9
Uncle (15)	4.2
Sister (284)	80.0
Brother (243)	68.5
Girl/boyfriend (2)	0.6
Own children (32)	9.0
Foster parents (3)	0.8
Spouse(20)	5.6
Sister/brother in-law (6)	2.0
Cousin (4)	1.1
Nephew/Niece (12)	3.1
Other (2)	0.2

Most respondents (82%) lived with their mothers and this was followed by sisters (80%), brothers (69%) and then their fathers (54%). Just more than a fifth of the respondents (23%) reported that they lived with their grandfathers while 9% reported that they lived with their children.

6.2 Sources of income for respondents

Sixty-four percent (64%) of the respondents reported that they ever received money as an income or benefits in the six months preceding the survey. The proportion of male respondents (67%) who received an income was higher than among females (60%). More FCoCs (88%) reported receiving an income over the reference period than CoCs (61%). Figure 8 shows the proportion of respondents who reported receiving an income by age.

Figure 8: Proportion of respondents receiving an income by age (N=358)

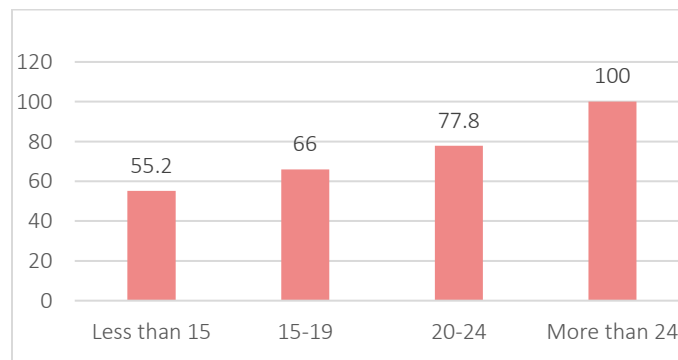
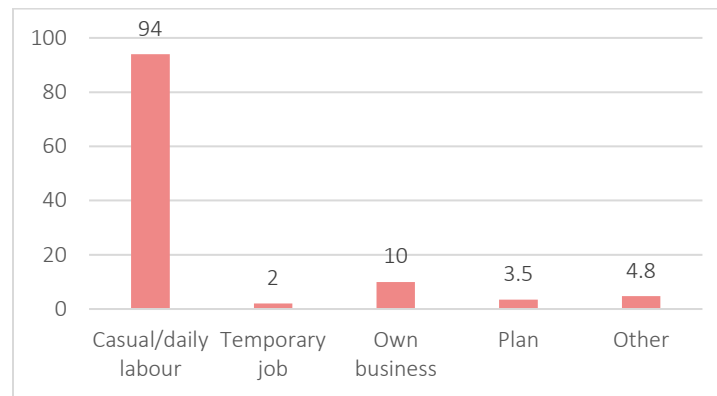


Figure 8 shows that the proportion of respondents who reported receiving an income over the six months period preceding the survey increased with age. Most respondents (66%) who reported receiving an income said it was their own income, 49% said that they got it from the family while 8% mentioned other.

For those who mentioned that they got the income from own sources, most of them reported that they engaged in casual/daily labour as can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Sources of own income (% N=162)



Ten percent (10%) of those who mentioned own income reported they were engaged in their own business while 2% had temporary jobs. Plan Malawi has organized a number of training workshops and meetings around TA Liwonde targeting youth and this is why 4% (seven respondents) of the respondents mentioned Plan as a source of income. For those who mentioned the family as a source of their income, 57% reported that they got it from their mother and this was followed by father (39%) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Members of the family who provided income (N=140)

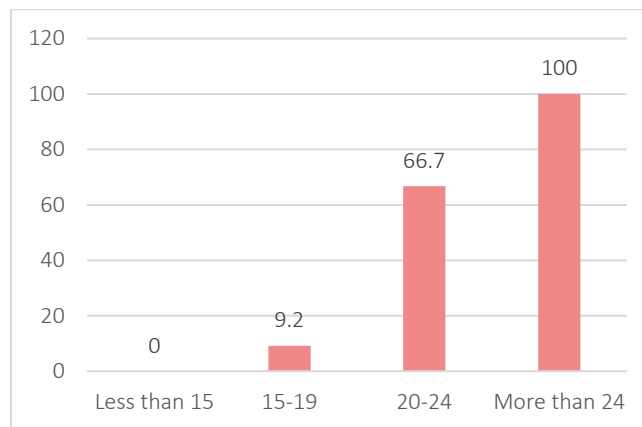
Family member who provided income	Percentage
Mother (64)	57.1
Father (44)	39.3
Aunt (3)	2.7
Sister (2)	1.8
Brother (15)	13.4
Grandmother (5)	4.5
Spouse (4)	3.6
Cousin (1)	0.9
Brother's wife (1)	0.9
Teacher (1)	0.9

Table 3 further shows that brothers (13%) were an important source of income for those who mentioned the family as a source of income. Other sources of income, as can be seen in Table 3, were mentioned by very few respondents (less than 5%).

6.3 Proportion of respondents who had children

Eleven percent (11%) of the respondents reported having children. None of the respondents had more than two children. The proportion of females (15%) who reported having children was higher than males (8%). A higher proportion of FCoCs (59%) reported to have children than CoCs (6%). The proportion of respondents who reported to have children increased with age as can be seen in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Proportion of respondents with children (N=358)



All those aged less than 15 did not have children while all who were aged more than 24 years reported having children. Two third of those aged 20-24 had children.

6.4 Boys' attitudes towards girls

There were three statements which were used to measure boys' attitudes towards girls and these were: (i) I think I treat girls fairly; (ii) I think girls are as important as boys, and (iii) I believe that men and women should take equal responsibility for household chores and childcare. With regard to boys' fair treatment of girls, most respondents (90%) said that *they treated girls fairly* with all FCoCs reporting this compared to 89% of the CoCs (Table 4). All those aged more than 19 years said they treated girls fairly. With regard to religion, there were no differences between Muslims (89%) and Christians (91%) in terms of how fairly boys thought they treated the girls. Those aged 15-19 had the lowest proportion of respondents who said that they treated girls fairly at 89% as can be seen in Table 4. Those who reported that they were Chewas had the highest proportion of respondents who reported that they treated girls fairly at 93% and this was followed by the Yao at 89% and then the Lomwe at 87%. Table 4 also shows that the proportion of respondents in secondary school (96%) who reported that they treated girls fairly was higher than among those in primary school (90%). Lastly, in terms of marital status all respondents who were married reported treating girls fairly while 89% of single respondents said so⁵.

Most respondents (95%) thought that *girls are as important as boys* with only 4% saying girls are not as important (Table 4). There were more FCoCs (100%) than CoCs (94%) and slightly more boys who thought like this (96%) than girls (93%). There were also slightly more Christians (96%) who believed this than Muslims (93%). There were slightly more Lomwes (96%) who thought that girls were as important as boys followed by the Yao and the Chewa both at 94%. Table 4 further shows that the proportion of respondents who were in secondary school who thought that girls are as important as boys was slightly higher at 98% than those in primary school at 94%. Among those who were currently not in school, 96% believed that girls are as important as boys. In terms of marital status, 96% of the married respondents and 94% of the single respondents believed that girls are as important as boys. All those aged more than 19 years of age

⁵ Please note that the number of married respondents was much lower than the number of single respondents. Therefore, comparisons between the two groups only provide indications.

believed that girls are as important as boys followed by those who were aged 15-19 (95%) and the ones aged less than 15 had the lowest proportion at 93% (Table 4).

Respondents were also asked whether they thought men and women should take equal responsibility for household chores and child care: most respondents (94%) said that they thought that *men and women should take equal responsibility for household chores and child care* as can be seen in Table 4 with slightly more CoCs (94%) than FCoCs (91%) reporting this. There were no differences in the proportion of females (94%) and males (93%) who said this. There were also no differences between Muslims (94%) and Christians (94%). In terms of tribe, the Lomwes (96%) had the highest proportion of respondents who thought that men and women should take equal responsibility for household chores and childcare. This was followed by the Yao at (94%) and then the Chewa (93%) as can be seen in Table 4.

Ninety-eight percent (98%) of the respondents with secondary education thought men and women should take equal responsibility for household chores and childcare. This was higher than those with primary education (93%). The proportion of respondents who were not in school who said that men and women should take equal responsibility for household chores and childcare (93%) was just the same as those with primary education (93%). There were also slight variations by marital status: 96% of the married respondents and 93% of the single respondents thought that men and women should take equal responsibility for household chores and childcare. As can be seen in Table 4, all respondents aged more than 19 years thought that men and women should take equal responsibility for household chores and childcare.

Table 4: Boys' attitudes towards girls (%)

Characteristics	I think I treat girls fairly (N=181)				Characteristics	I believe girls are as important as boys (N=358)				I think that men and women should take equal responsibility for household chores and child care (N=358)				
	No	Yes	Not sure	Total		No	Yes	Not sure	Total	No	Yes	Not sure	Total	
Sex of respondent														
Male (181)	6.1	90.1	3.9	100.0	Male (177)	5.6	93.2	1.1	100.0	5.6	94.4	0.0	100.0	
Female (0)	-	-	-	-	Female (181)	2.8	96.1	1.1	100.0	6.1	93.4	0.6	100.0	
Type of respondent														
FCoC (18)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	FCoC (34)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	2.9	91.1	0.0	100.0	
CoC (163)	6.7	89.0	4.3	100.0	CoC (324)	4.6	94.1	1.2	100.0	6.2	93.5	0.3	100.0	
Religion of respondent														
Muslim (91)	8.8	89.0	2.2	100.0	Muslim (175)	6.3	93.1	0.6	100.0	5.7	94.3	0.0	100.0	
Christianity (87)	3.4	90.8	5.7	100.0	Christianity (178)	2.2	96.1	1.7	100.0	5.6	93.8	0.3	100.0	
Age of respondent														
<15 (52)	5.5	90.9	3.6	100.0	<15 (122)	6.4	92.8	0.8	100.0	6.4	93.6	0.0	100.0	
15-19 (116)	7.1	88.5	4.4	100.0	15-19 (209)	3.4	95.1	1.5	100.0	6.3	93.2	0.5	100.0	
20-24 (8)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	20-24 (18)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	
>24 (5)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	>24 (9)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	
Education of respondent														
Primary (135)	7.4	89.6	3.0	100.0	Primary (259)	5.4	93.8	0.8	100.0	6.6	93.1	0.4	100.0	
Secondary (23)	0.0	95.7	4.3	100.0	Secondary (53)	1.9	98.1	0.0	100.0	1.9	98.1	0.0	100.0	
Not currently in school (23)	4.3	87.0	8.7	100.0	Not currently in school (46)	0.0	95.1	4.3	100.0	6.5	93.5	0.0	100.0	
Marital status of respondent														
Single (157)	7.0	88.5	4.5	100.0	Single (319)	4.7	94.4	0.9	100.0	6.3	93.4	0.3	100.0	
Have partner but not live together (11)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	Have a partner but not living together (16)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	

Married (13)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	Married (22)	0.0	95.5	4.5	100.0	4.5	95.5	0.0	100.0
Widowed (0)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Widowed (1)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent													
Yao (82)	8.5	89.0	2.4	100.0	Yao (160)	5.0	94.4	0.6	100.0	6.3	93.8	0.0	100.0
Chewa (55)	3.6	92.7	3.6	100.0	Chewa (110)	4.5	93.6	1.8	100.0	7.3	92.7	0.0	100.0
Lomwe (39)	5.1	87.2	7.7	100.0	Lomwe(80)	2.5	96.3	1.3	100.0	2.5	96.3	1.3	100.0
Other (2)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other (3)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Total	6.1	90.1	3.9	100.0	Total	4.2	94.7	1.1	100.0	5.3	94.1	0.3	100.0

Boys were also asked about the extent to which they felt that boys should support other boys who challenge unfair attitudes towards girls: 97% of the boys agreed with this statement. All FCoCs felt like this while the proportion of CoCs who felt like this was slightly lower at 96% (Table 5). The proportion among Christians who felt like this was higher at 99% than Muslims (95%). The proportion among respondents who felt that boys should support other boys increased with age as can be seen in Table 5. All the Lomwes felt that boys should support other boys who have unfair attitudes towards girls and this was seconded by the Chewa (98%) and then the Yaos (94%). There were no differences among primary school respondents (97%), secondary school respondents (96%) and those currently not in school (96%) in the proportion of those who felt that boys should support fellow boys who challenge unfair attitudes towards girls. Among those not currently in school, the proportion of those who felt like this was higher among those who had been to secondary school (100%) than those who just went to primary school (93%). In terms of marital status, all married respondents felt that boys should support other boys and single respondents had a lower proportion at 96% (Table 5).

Table 5: I feel that boys should support the boys who challenge unfair attitudes towards girls (%)

Characteristics	I feel that boys should support the boys who challenge unfair attitudes towards girls (N=181)			
	No	Yes	Not sure	Total
Sex of respondent				
Female (0)	-	-	-	-
Male (181)	1.7	96.7	1.7	100.0
Type of respondent				
FCoC (18)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
CoC (163)	1.8	96.3	1.8	100.0
Religion of respondent				
Muslim (91)	3.3	94.5	2.2	100.0
Christianity (87)	0.0	98.9	1.1	100.0
Age of respondent				
<15 (52)	0.0	96.4	3.6	100.0
15-19 (116)	2.7	96.5	0.9	100.0
20-24 (8)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
>24 (5)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent				
Primary (135)	1.5	97.0	1.5	100.0
Secondary (23)	4.3	95.7	0.0	100.0
Not currently in school (23)	0.0	95.7	4.3	100.0
Marital status of respondent				
Single (157)	1.9	96.2	1.9	100.0
Have partner but not live together (11)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Married (13)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent				
Yao (82)	3.7	93.9	2.4	100.0
Chewa (55)	0.0	98.2	1.8	100.0
Lomwe (39)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Other (2)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Total	7.1	91.3	1.7	100.0

As can be seen in Table 4, while most respondents (94%) said that men and women should take equal responsibility for household chores and child care, during the FGDs and IDIs study participants said that the community expectations are different: communities do not expect girls to do the same things as boys as narrated during the FGD with female FCoCs.

“A girl cannot work the same way boys do for example, in construction and in making bricks. They say that girls are lazy. We do not have power. Those that have power are men”, (P5, FGD with female FCoCs)

“At home we expect the boy to be the one to make bricks and build a house”, (FGD with female FCoCs)

There are chores which are considered solely for girls and boys are not expected to do them. During an FGD with male FCoCs, participants reported that during school days a boy just wakes up and bath the water boiled by the girl and when the girl finishes she is late and may even be sent back [from school]. Household chores, as argued by FCoCs, take up most of the time for girls in that they will fail to work on assignments or studying. In terms of household chores, there are specific ones which are supposed to be done by girls.

“Girls, draw water, cook, as parent you are relaxed and just wait for the food to be ready and later on you chat. Boys also have their own chores, you can ask them to build you a house and they will do it. You rely on them”, (Female parent)

“No, so they expected and expect that a girl, like on chores that a boy can’t do household chores like dishes, cooking, washing and that’s work to be done by a girl, a girl can’t do the boys work like making bricks, building a house and digging a toilet”, (Male CoC)

One parent said that while boys are not expected to do some household chores such as drawing water, boys will however be asked to do this if their sisters are not there.

6.5 Perceptions about decision making

It is important that girls should make their own decisions on things which concern them. With regard to decision making both male and female respondents were asked whether (i) they believed that a girl should be able to decide for herself over how to use her free time; (ii) they knew how to make decisions about their own life; and (iii) it is not good for a girl to decide when she marries.

Seventy-seven percent (77%) of the respondents reported they believed that a girl should be able to decide for herself over how to use her free time with 16% saying no to this and 7% not being sure (Table 6). The proportion of females (83%) who believed that girls should be able to decide for themselves over how to use their free time was higher than that of males (73%). Muslims had a slightly higher proportion of respondents (79%) who said that a girl should be able to decide on her own than Christians (76%). In terms of tribes, the Yao (79%) had the highest proportion of respondents who reported they believed that a girl should be able to decide for herself how to use her free time followed by the Chewa (76%) and then the Lomwe at 74%. In terms of educational level, those in secondary school (77%) had a slightly higher proportion of respondents than those in primary school (75%) who reported believing that a girl should be able to decide for herself over how to use her free time. Among those not in school, the corresponding proportion, as can be seen in Table 6, was 94%. In terms of marital status, the proportion of respondents

who believed that a girl should be able to decide on her own over how to use her free time was higher among those who were married (86%) as compared to those who were single (76%). In terms of age, all respondents aged over 24 years believed that a girl should be able to decide for herself over how to use her free time. This was followed by those aged 15-19 (81%), 20-24 (78%) and those aged less than 15 years had the lowest proportion (71%).

In terms of making decisions about one's life, 91% of the respondents reported that they knew how to make decisions about their own life with 7.1% saying they did not know as can be seen in Table 6. The proportion of females who reported knowing how to make decisions about their life (93%) was slightly higher than among males (90%). The proportion of Christians (96%) who said this was higher than among Muslims (87%). In terms of educational level, the proportion of those not in school who reported they knew how to make important decisions about their own life was at 98%. This was followed by those in secondary (91%) and those in primary school at 90% as detailed in Table 6. In terms of marital status, all those who were married said that they knew how to make important decisions about their own life. The corresponding proportion among those who were single was at 90% (Table 6).

A girl is supposed to make her own decision in terms of when she marries. Most respondents (79%) disagreed with the statement that *"it is not for a girl to decide when she marries"*: there were more FCoCs (94%) than CoCs (78%) who disagreed with this statement (Table 6). There were also slightly more females (81%) who disagreed with this statement than males (77%). More Christians (83%) than Muslims (75%) disagreed with this statement. It can also be seen in Table 6 that the proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement increased with age with all respondents aged more than 24 years disagreeing with this statement. Those aged less than 15 years had the lowest proportion of respondents (74%) who disagreed with the statement that it is not for a girl to decide when she should get married. The Lomwes had the highest proportion of respondents (84%) who disagreed with the statement and this was followed by Chewas (80%) and then the Yaos (76%). With regard to education, those in secondary school had the highest proportion of respondents who disagreed with the statement and this was followed by those who were currently not in school (87%) and the lowest was among those in primary school at 75% as can be seen in Table 6. Ninety-six percent (96%) of the respondents who were married disagreed with the statement and among those who were single, the percentage stood at 77% as can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Perceptions about decision-making (%)

Characteristics	I believe that a girl should be able to decide for herself how to use her free time (N=358)				I know how to make decisions about my own life (N=358)				It is not for a girl to decide whom she marries (N=358)			
	No	Yes	Not sure	Total	No	Yes	Not sure	Total	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total
Sex of respondent												
Female (177)	13.6	82.5	4.0	100.0	5.1	92.7	2.3	100.0	81.4	2.3	16.4	100.0
Male (181)	18.2	72.9	8.8	100.0	8.8	90.1	1.1	100.0	77.3	3.3	19.3	100.0
Type of respondent												
FCoC (24)	8.8	85.3	5.9	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	94.1	2.9	2.9	100.0
CoC (324)	16.7	76.9	6.5	15.4	7.7	90.4	1.9	100.0	77.8	2.8	19.4	100.0
Religion of respondent												
Muslim (175)	15.4	78.9	5.7	100.0	9.7	86.9	3.4	100.0	74.9	2.31	22.9	100.0
Christianity (178)	16.9	75.8	7.3	100.0	4.5	95.5	0.0	100.0	83.1	3.4	13.5	100.0
Age of respondent												
<15 (122)	23.2	71.2	5.6	100.0	10.4	88.0	1.6	100.0	74.4	3.2	22.4	100.0
15-19 (209)	12.1	80.6	7.3	100.0	5.8	92.2	1.0	100.0	89.6	2.4	17.0	100.0
20-24 (18)	16.7	77.8	5.6	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	88.9	5.6	5.6	100.0
>24 (9)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent												
Primary (259)	18.5	74.9	6.6	100.0	8.9	90.0	1.2	100.0	74.9	2.3	22.8	100.0
Secondary (53)	13.2	77.4	9.4	100.0	3.8	92.5	3.8	100.0	94.3	1.9	3.8	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	4.3	93.5	2.2	100.0	0.0	97.8	2.2	100.0	87.0	6.5	6.5	100.0
Marital status of respondent												
Single (319)	16.9	76.2	6.9	100.0	7.8	90.3	1.9	100.0	77.4	2.8	19.7	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	6.3	93.8	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	93.8	6.3	0.0	100.0
Married (22)	9.1	86.4	4.5	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	95.5	0.0	4.5	100.0
Widowed (1)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent												
Yao (160)	15.6	79.4	5.0	100.0	8.8	88.8	2.4	100.0	75.6	2.5	21.9	100.0
Chewa (110)	16.4	76.4	7.3	100.0	7.3	90.9	1.8	100.0	80.0	2.7	17.3	100.0
Lomwe (80)	17.5	73.8	8.8	100.0	3.8	96.3	0.0	100.0	83.8	3.8	12.5	100.0
Other (3)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0		100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	16.1	77.3	6.5	100.0	7.1	91.3	1.7	100.0	79.3	2.8	17.9	100.0

Nearly a fifth (18%) of the respondents said that it is not for a girl to decide whom she marries. During an FGD with male FCoCs for example participants explained that there are other people who influence a girl to get married and these include parents/guardians and peers.

“Most girls here don’t decide on their own, they are either forced or influenced: ah the way you are now, you should get married, you have grown, this is not the time to buy you soap or clothes, start planning on your own, then they end up married”, (P3, FGD with male FCoCs)

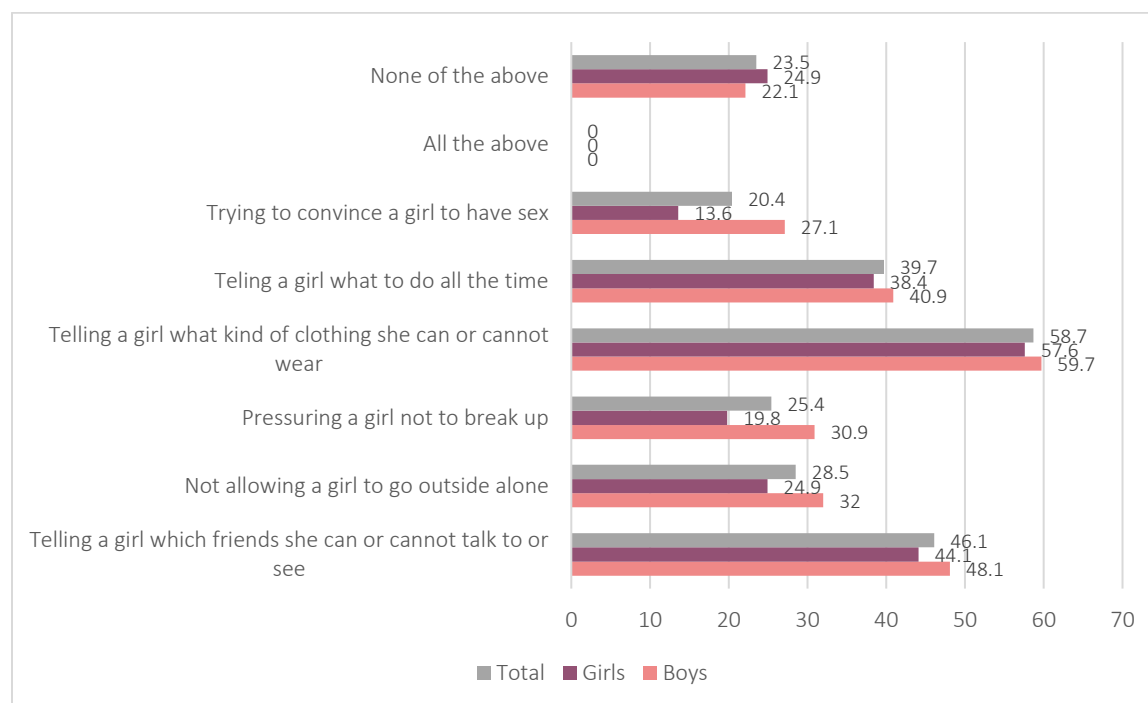
“For me yes, there are some girls here who get married out of peer pressure, that my friend has married a rich man, maybe I should find myself one as well, when they see the way she dresses, they ask how are you looking like this? My husband is in South Africa, and there is another guy there, so they end up seeking those men”, (P2, FGD with male FCoCs)

One female CoC said that boys have the freedom to choose whoever they want to marry, however, girls sometimes experience challenges.

“It is difficult when the parents do not like the person, so it is difficult for them to accept the man. But then for men, because they choose on their own, there aren’t any difficulties”, (Female CoC)

One key informant reported that TA Liwonde is a matrilineal society and the one who makes a decision for girl or boy to get married is the uncle (the brother of the mother) who is the owner of the clan. The father of the children has no role to play in terms of making decisions about the marriage of his children. Decision-making is in some cases also about making a choice of who one can talk to, making a decision to break up a relationship, what to wear, what to do and when to have sex. Respondents were also asked whether a boy is justified to do the things which have been highlighted in Figure 11.

Figure 11: A boy is justified to do the following ... (% N=358)



Most respondents (59%) said that a boy is justified telling a girl what kind of clothing she can or cannot wear and this is followed by those who said that a boy is justified telling a girl which friends she can or cannot talk to or see (46%) and then those who said telling a girl what to do all the time (40%). Twenty percent (20%) of the respondents said that a boy is justified trying to convince a girl to have sex. For all the things listed in Figure 11 there were more boys who mentioned boys were justified to do those things to girls than the girls themselves.

6.6 Perceptions about age at marriage in the community

In Malawi, the legal age of marriage is 18. However, studies have demonstrated that a good proportion of young people get married under the age of 18. During this baseline study, participants were asked if they thought girls in their community marry too young. Overall, Table 7 shows that 65% of the respondents reported that they thought *“girls marry too young in their community”* and there were no differences between males (65%) and females (66%). FCoCs (79%) were more likely to report that girls marry too young compared to CoCs (64%). However, the proportion of Muslims (69%) who said that girls marry too young in their community was higher than Christians (62%). The proportion of respondents in secondary school (83%) who reported girls marrying too young in their communities was much higher than those in primary school (59%). This demonstrates that the likelihood of respondents saying that girls in their community marry too young increases the higher the educational level. In terms of marital status, Table 7 shows that 73% of the married respondents mentioned that girls marry too young in their community and 63% of the single respondents said the same. Table 7 further shows that the proportion of respondents who reported that girls marry too young in their community increased with age until age 20-24 (83%), after which it went down to 67% for those aged over 24 years. The perception that girls marry too young was more common among the Yao (71%) and the Lomwe (70%) than among the Chewa (55%).

In TA Liwonde, the prevalence of teenage pregnancy and child marriage is quite high. During the FGDs with FCoCs, participants reported that in their area there have been initiatives which have been implemented in order to address the problem of child marriage and teenage pregnancy. For example, during an FGD with female FCoCs, participants reported that CYESE and Amref have determined why girls get pregnant and based on this the community came up with bylaws that would address these two problems. While these bylaws are formulated, it seems that they are not effectively implemented.

“In our community these bylaws did not work. Our TA mentioned at one moment one law that required girls that fell pregnant to pay a fine amounting to K25,000.00. None of those under aged girls that fell pregnant paid this fine. So, I think bylaws are never used”, (FGD with female FCoCs)

These bylaws are developed by the communities including the Area Development Committees (ADCs), village heads and parents. In addition to the development and implementation of bylaws, there have also been some NGOs which have supported girls through secondary school and some of these NGOs have even visited primary schools. While the support that the NGOs provide to girls is appreciated, one of the things which came out from an FGD with male and female FCoCs was that there are some boys who do not have enough support and may require support as well. They suggested that these organizations should target both boys and girls in providing their support and gave examples such as FHI2360 which provides support

to both boys and girls in their community. Some participants reported that there have never been any initiatives to bring about changes.

Table 7: Respondents' perception about the statement: I think girls marry too young in my community (%)

Characteristics	I think girls marry too young in this community (N=358)			
	No	Yes	Not sure	Total
Sex of respondent				
Female (177)	29.4	65.5	5.1	100.0
Male (181)	29.8	64.6	5.5	100.0
Type of respondent				
FCoC (34)	20.6	79.4	0.0	100.0
CoC (324)	30.6	63.6	5.9	100.0
Religion of respondent				
Muslim (175)	27.4	68.6	4.0	100.0
Christianity (178)	31.5	61.8	6.7	100.0
Age of respondent				
<15 (122)	40.8	52.0	7.2	100.0
15-19 (209)	24.3	71.4	4.4	100.0
20-24 (18)	11.1	83.3	5.6	100.0
>24 (9)	33.3	66.7	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent				
Primary (259)	34.7	59.1	6.2	100.0
Secondary (53)	15.1	83.0	1.9	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	17.4	78.3	4.3	100.0
Marital status of respondent				
Single (319)	31.3	63.3	5.3	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	12.5	87.5	0.0	100.0
Married (22)	18.2	72.5	9.1	100.0
Widowed (1)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent				
Yao (160)	26.3	70.6	3.1	100.0
Chewa (110)	39.1	54.5	6.4	100.0
Lomwe (80)	21.3	70.0	8.8	100.0
Other (3)	66.7	33.3	0.0	100.0
Total	29.6	65.1	5.3	100.0

6.7 Gender differences in saving money

The statement “I save money” was read to respondents and they were supposed to say either yes, no or not sure. Table 8 shows that 39% of the respondents said that they saved money, 56% said they did not while 5% were not sure (Table 8). More males (46%) saved money than females (33%) and FCoCs saved more than CoCs (85% versus 35%). There were more Christians (39%) than Muslims (34%) who reported that they saved money. Table 8 further shows that there were more secondary school respondents (45%) who saved money than those in primary school (30%). Sixty-seven percent (67%) of those not in school at the time of the study reported that they saved money. With regard to marital status, those who were married (68%) were more likely to report that they saved money than those who were single (36%). Table 8 further shows that the proportion of respondents who reported saving money increased with age with

all those aged above 24 reporting they saved money. With regard to tribe, Table 8 shows that the highest proportion of respondents who saved money was among the Chewas at 44% and this was followed by the Lomwe (39%) and then the Yao (34%).

Table 8: People's perceptions about the statement "I save money" (%)

Characteristics	I save money (N=358)			
	No	Yes	Not sure	Total
Sex of respondent				
Female (177)	62.7	32.8	4.5	100.0
Male (181)	49.2	45.9	5.0	100.0
Type of respondent				
FCoC (34)	14.7	85.3	0.0	100.0
CoC (324)	60.2	34.6	5.2	100.0
Religion of respondent				
Muslim (175)	61.1	34.3	4.6	100.0
Christianity (178)	52.2	42.7	5.1	100.0
Age of respondent				
<15 (122)	68.8	25.6	5.6	100.0
15-19 (209)	52.9	42.2	4.9	100.0
20-24 (18)	27.8	72.2	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent				
Primary (259)	61.0	33.2	5.8	100.0
Secondary (53)	54.7	45.3	0.0	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	28.3	39.4	4.7	100.0
Marital status of respondent				
Single (319)	58.3	36.4	5.3	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	43.8	56.3	0.0	100.0
Married (22)	31.8	68.2	0.0	100.0
Widowed (1)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent				
Yao (160)	60.6	34.4	5.0	100.0
Chewa (110)	51.8	44.5	3.6	100.0
Lomwe (80)	55.0	38.8	6.3	100.0
Other (3)	66.7	33.3	0.0	100.0
Total	55.9	39.4	4.7	100.0

6.8 Availability of opportunities in the community by gender

Fifty-six percent (56%) of the respondents reported that they thought boys had more opportunities in their community: the proportion of FCoCs (59%) who thought like this was slightly higher than that of CoCs (56%). More males (65%) had such thoughts than females (48%). There were slightly more Muslims (59%) than Christians (55%) who thought boys had more opportunities. In terms of tribes, the Yao (60%) had the highest proportion of respondents who thought boys had more opportunities and this was followed more closely by the Chewa (58%) and the lowest was among the Lomwe at 51% (Table 9). In terms of age, those aged 20-24 (67%) had the highest proportion of respondents who had such thoughts compared to respondents aged less than 15 years (57%) and those aged 15-19 (55%). As far as education was concerned, there were no differences between those who were in primary school (58%) and those in secondary school

(59%) who thought boys had more opportunities than girls. The lowest proportion was among those who were not currently in school at 48% (Table 9). In terms of marital status, single respondents had the highest proportion (57%) of those who thought boys had more opportunities as compared to 55% of the married respondents (Table 9).

Table 9: Proportion of respondents who thought boys have more opportunities in this community (%)

Characteristics	I think boys have more opportunities in this community (N=358)			
	No	Yes	Not sure	Total
Sex of respondent				
Female (177)	46.3	47.5	6.2	100.0
Male (181)	27.1	65.2	7.7	100.0
Type of respondent				
FCoC (34)	38.2	58.8	2.9	100.0
CoC (324)	36.4	56.2	7.4	100.0
Religion of respondent				
Muslim (175)	36.6	58.9	4.6	100.0
Christianity (178)	36.0	55.1	9.0	100.0
Age of respondent				
<15 (122)	34.4	56.8	8.8	100.0
15-19 (209)	37.9	55.3	6.8	100.0
20-24 (18)	33.3	66.7	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	44.4	55.6	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent				
Primary (259)	34.4	57.5	8.1	100.0
Secondary (53)	37.7	58.5	3.8	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	47.8	47.8	4.3	100.0
Marital status of respondent				
Single (319)	35.7	57.4	6.9	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	43.8	37.5	18.8	100.0
Married (22)	45.5	54.5	0.0	100.0
Widowed (1)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent				
Yao (160)	36.3	60.0	3.8	100.0
Chewa (110)	30.0	58.2	11.8	100.0
Lomwe (80)	42.5	51.3	6.3	100.0
Other (3)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	36.6	56.4	7.0	100.0

6.9 Attitudes towards sexual and reproductive health

A number of statements on SRH were read to respondents. These respondents were asked if they agreed with the statement or not. The first one was “*I take care of my sexual health*”. Eighty-two percent (82%) of the respondents reported that they took care of their sexual health with 14% saying that they did not (Table 10). More males (87%) reported taking care of their sexual health than females (78%). There were no differences between Muslims (82%) and Christians (83%). In terms of tribe, 85% of the Lomwes reported taking care of their sexual health followed by the Yao (82%) and the Chewa (82%). All those who were not in school reported taking care of their sexual health (100%) and this was followed by those who were in

secondary school (94%) and then those in primary school (77%). In terms of marital status, all those who were married said they took care of their sexual health. Eighty-one percent (81%) of the single respondents said to take care of their sexual health. The proportion of respondents who took care of their sexual health increased with age. All those aged 19 years of age and over reported taking care of their sexual health while only 70% among those aged less than 15 years and 88% among those aged 15-19 reported they did take care of their sexual health (Table 10).

Another statement which was read to the respondents was *"I have confidence to encourage girls to take care of their sexual and reproductive health"*. Most respondents (89%) reported they had confidence to encourage girls to take care of their SRH. There were slightly more males (90%) than females (87%) who reported they had such confidence. There were also slightly more Christians (89%) who reported having confidence than Muslims (87%). Slightly more Lomwes (90%) than Yaos (88%) and Chewas (87%) reported having the confidence to encourage girls to take care of their SRH. All those who were currently out of school reported they had the confidence to encourage girls to take care of their SRH. This was seconded by respondents who were in secondary school at 94% then those in primary school (85%). In terms of marital status, single respondents had the lowest proportion at 87%. The proportion of respondents who reported they had the confidence to encourage girls to take care of their SRH increased with age (Table 10).

A third statement which was read to respondents on SRH was *"I like my body"*: most respondents (98%) said that they liked their body with 2% saying that they did not like it (Table 10). There were no major differences in the proportion of males (98%) and females (99%) who said they liked their body. There were also no differences between Christians (98%) and Muslims (99%). There were also no differences between the Yaos (99%), Lomwes (98%) and Chewas (97%) who reported they liked their bodies. Table 10 also shows that all respondents who were in secondary school and not currently in school said they liked their bodies, unlike those in primary school among whom 2% reported they did not like their bodies. In terms of marital status, all married respondents reported that they liked their bodies. Among those who were single, 2% reported they did not like their bodies. It is mainly those in primary school and those who are single who reported they did not like their bodies (Table 10).

With regard to SRH, the following statement was also read to all respondents: *"I express my opinion about sexual health with a sexual partner"*. Overall, 45% of the respondents reported they expressed their opinion about sexual health with a sexual partner with 48% saying they did not. The remaining respondents either were not sure (0.3%) or there was no response (6%). There were more males (52%) than females (40%) who said they expressed their opinion on sexual health with a sexual partner. In terms of religion, there were no differences between Christians (46%) and Muslims (45%). The Lomwes had the highest proportion of respondents (56%) who said they expressed their opinion about sexual health with a partner compared to Yaos (46%) and Chewas (36%). All those who were not currently in school reported they expressed their opinion about sexual health with a sexual partner and this was followed by those in secondary school (70%) and then those in primary school (32%). Single respondents had the lowest proportion (40%) who expressed their opinion about sexual health with a partner. All those who were married reported expressing themselves on these issues with their sexual partner. Table 10 further shows that the proportion of respondents who were able to express their opinion on sexual health with their partner increased with age.

Table 10: Attitudes towards SRH (%)

Characteristics	I take care of my sexual health (N=358)					I have confidence to encourage girls to take care of their sexual and reproductive health (N=358)					I express opinion about sexual health with a sexual partner (N=358)					I like my body (N=358)		
	No	Yes	Not sure	No Response	Total	No	Yes	Not sure	No Response	Total	No	Yes	Not sure	No Response	Total	No	Yes	Total
Sex of respondent																		
Female (177)	16.9	78.0	2.3	2.8	100.0	10.7	87.0	1.7	0.6	100.0	48.6	40.1	0.6	10.7	100.0	1.1	98.9	100.0
Male (181)	11.0	87.3	1.1	0.6	100.0	8.8	90.1	1.1	0.0	100.0	47.0	51.9	0.0	1.1	100.0	2.2	97.8	100.0
Type of respondent																		
FCoC (34)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	5.9	91.2	0.0	2.9	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
CoC (324)	15.4	80.9	1.9	1.9	100.0	10.8	87.3	1.5	0.0	100.0	52.2	41.4	0.3	6.2	100.0	1.9	98.1	100.0
Religion of respondent																		
Muslim (175)	14.9	82.3	1.7	1.1	100.0	12.0	87.4	0.6	0.6	100.0	46.9	45.1	0.0	8.0	100.0	1.1	98.9	100.0
Christianity (178)	13.5	82.6	1.7	2.2	100.0	7.9	89.3	2.2	0.6	100.0	50.0	45.5	0.6	3.9	100.0	2.2	97.8	100.0
Age of respondent																		
<15 (122)	24.0	70.4	3.2	2.4	100.0	17.6	79.2	2.4	0.8	100.0	72.8	15.2	0.8	11.2	100.0	2.4	97.6	100.0
15-19 (209)	9.7	87.9	1.0	1.5	100.0	6.3	92.7	1.0	0.0	100.0	38.8	57.8	0.0	3.4	100.0	1.5	98.5	100.0
20-24 (18)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
>24 (9)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Education of respondent																		
Primary (259)	18.5	77.2	1.9	2.3	100.0	12.7	85.3	1.5	0.4	100.0	60.6	31.7	0.4	7.3	100.0	2.3	97.7	100.0
Secondary (53)	3.8	94.3	1.9	0.0	100.0	3.8	94.3	1.9	0.0	100.0	26.4	69.8	0.0	3.8	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Marital status of respondent																		
Single (319)	15.4	80.9	1.9	1.9	100.0	11.0	87.1	1.6	0.3	100.0	53.6	39.5	0.3	6.6	100.0	1.9	98.1	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	6.3	93.8	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Married (22)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Widowed (1)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent																		
Yao (160)	15.0	81.9	1.9	1.3	100.0	11.3	88.1	0.6	0.0	100.0	46.9	46.3	0.02.4	6.9	100.0	0.6	99.4	100.0
Chewa (110)	14.5	81.8	1.8	1.8	100.0	9.1	87.3	2.7	0.0	100.0	58.2	35.5	0.9	5.5	100.0	2.7	97.3	100.0
Lomwe (80)	11.3	85.0	1.3	2.5	100.0	8.8	90.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	38.8	56.3	0.0	5.0	100.0	2.5	97.5	100.0
Other (3)	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	33.3	66.7	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Total	14.2	82.4	1.7	1.7	100.0	9.8	88.5	1.4	0.3	100.0	48.4	45.3	0.3	5.9	100.0	1.7	98.3	100.0

As far as SRH is concerned, it is important that young people, both male and female, should be able to negotiate condom use during sex to prevent pregnancy or disease. The following statement was read to respondents *“I negotiate condom use during sex to prevent pregnancy or disease”*: Table 11 shows that 48% of the respondents said that they negotiated condom use during sex to prevent pregnancy or disease with more males reporting this (55%) than females (43%) and more FCoCs than CoCs (88% versus 45%). There were no major differences between Muslims (49%) and Christians (48%) in the proportion of respondents who negotiated condom use. The Lomwes had the highest proportion of respondents (59%) who reported negotiating condom use followed by the Yao (61%) and then the Chewa (36%). In terms of education, the highest proportion of respondents who negotiated condom use was among those who were not currently in school (98%) and they were seconded by those in secondary school (76%) and then primary school (36%). In terms of marital status, 96% of the married respondents reported they negotiated condom use during sex while 44% of the single respondents said the same. Lastly, the proportion of respondents who negotiated condom use increased with age (Table 11).

Table 11: Proportion of respondents who negotiate condom use during sex to prevent pregnancy or disease

Characteristics	I negotiate condom use during sex to prevent pregnancy or disease (N=358)				
	No	Yes	Not sure	No response	Total
Sex of respondent					
Female (177)	46.3	42.9	0.6	10.2	100.0
Male (181)	43.6	55.2	0.0	1.1	100.0
Type of respondent					
FCoC (34)	8.8	88.2	0.0	2.9	100.0
CoC (324)	48.8	45.1	0.3	5.9	100.0
Religion of respondent					
Muslim (175)	42.9	49.1	0.6	7.4	100.0
Christianity (178)	48.3	47.8	0.0	3.5	100.0
Age of respondent					
<15 (122)	71.2	18.4	0.0	10.4	100.0
15-19 (209)	34.5	61.7	0.5	3.4	100.0
20-24 (18)	5.6	94.4	0.0	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent					
Primary (259)	57.1	35.5	0.4	6.9	100.0
Secondary (53)	20.8	75.5	0.0	3.8	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	4.3	95.7	0.0	0.0	100.0
Marital status of respondent					
Single (319)	49.5	43.9	0.3	6.3	100.0
Have partner but not live together(16)	12.5	87.5	0.0	0.0	100.0
Married (22)	4.5	95.5	0.0	0.0	100.0
Widowed (1)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent					
Yao (160)	41.9	51.3	0.6	6.3	100.0
Chewa (110)	59.1	35.5	0.0	5.5	100.0
Lomwe (80)	36.3	58.8	0.0	5.0	100.0
Other (3)	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	45.6	48.4	0.3	5.7	100.0

Lastly, as far as SRH issues were concerned, respondents were also asked the extent to which they agreed with the following statement: *“It is the girls’ responsibility to prevent pregnancy”*. Most respondents (90%) agreed with the statement: the proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement was higher among CoCs (90%) than FCoCs (82%). There was no difference between males (90%) and females (89%). The proportion of Christians (92%) who agreed was slightly higher than that of Muslims (88%). As can be seen in Table 12, more respondents aged 15-19 (94%) agreed with this statement followed by those aged 20-24 (89%) and those aged less than 15 (85%). The lowest proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement (67%) was among those aged more than 24 years. Those in secondary school had the highest proportion of respondents (93%) who agreed with the statement that it is the girl’s responsibility to prevent pregnancy followed by those in primary (90%) and then those who were currently not in school (87%). Ninety percent (90%) of the single respondents and 82% of the married respondents agreed that it is the girls’ responsibility to prevent pregnancy (Table 12). In terms of tribe, the Lomwe had the highest proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement followed by the Chewa (90%) and the Yao (88%).

Table 12: Perceptions about the statement that it is the girls' responsibility to prevent pregnancy (%)

Characteristics	It is the girl's responsibility to prevent pregnancy (N=358)				
	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	No response	Total
Sex of respondent					
Female (177)	9.6	0.6	89.3	0.6	100.0
Male (181)	8.8	1.1	90.1	0.0	100.0
Type of respondent					
FCoC (34)	14.7	2.9	82.4	0.0	100.0
CoC (324)	8.6	0.6	90.4	0.3	100.0
Religion of respondent					
Muslim (175)	12.0	0.0	88.0	0.0	100.0
Christianity (178)	5.6	1.7	92.1	0.6	100.0
Age of respondent					
<15 (122)	12.8	1.6	84.8	0.8	100.0
15-19 (209)	6.3	0.0	93.7	0.0	100.0
20-24 (18)	5.6	5.6	88.9	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	33.3	0.0	66.7	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent					
Primary (259)	9.3	0.8	89.6	0.4	100.0
Secondary (53)	5.7	1.9	92.5	0.0	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	13.0	0.0	87.0	0.0	100.0
Marital status of respondent					
Single (319)	9.1	0.9	89.7	0.3	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Married (22)	18.2	0.0	81.8	0.0	100.0
Widowed (1)	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent					
Yao (160)	11.9	0.0	88.1	0.0	100.0
Chewa (110)	8.2	1.8	90.0	0.0	100.0
Lomwe (80)	3.8	1.3	93.8	1.3	100.0
Other (3)	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Total	8.8	0.8	90.1	0.3	100.0

It is evident from Table 12 that most respondents in the survey said that it is the girls' responsibility to prevent pregnancy. However, during the FGDs with FCoCs there were reported to be mixed community expectations about who is responsible for preventing pregnancy: some said that girls are expected to prevent pregnancy while others said they expected boys to prevent pregnancy. One male CoC had the view that both boys and girls can prevent pregnancy saying:

"... I believe it is for everyone because a girl cannot get pregnant alone, and a man cannot give alone so the role is for both."

During initiation ceremonies especially *litiwo* it is pregnant girls who are initiated; hence it was perceived as girls not really expected to prevent pregnancy.

".... Parents that want their daughter to get into *litiwo* will thus create a situation where even though the boy wants to prevent pregnancy, the girl who listens to her parents will have no interest as she wants to satisfy her parents and go to the ceremony pregnant", (P5, FGD with female FCoCs)

Condoms are used to prevent pregnancy and STIs and, as mentioned during an FGD with male FCoCs, participants said that the decision to use condoms is made by boys and they are the ones who carry condoms. Girls who are found carrying condoms are considered prostitutes as this is not expected of them to do:

"There is a difference, as boys we decide on use of condoms and if a girl says no, she will be told, I will leave you: so they just accept, even when it comes with keeping or carrying the condoms, people expect it is for a boy to do this but if girl is found with one, that will be some story: how are you found with this? And let's say it should fall off her, she will be laughed at and talked about and yet that's ok for boys, they can even carry it and be supported about it", (P5, FGD with male FCoCs)

Biologically, communities expect that a girl will get pregnant and produce grandchildren while boys will be responsible for impregnating these girls. In Machinga, many young men also stop school and go to South Africa to work and when they return they will enter into sexual relationships with girls who eventually drop out of school as narrated by male FCoCs during an FGD. Communities, therefore, in a way expect boys to go to South Africa and look for employment.

"There is a tendency of youth going to South Africa and the boys are forced into paying dowry in advance which means no school for them and the girl they have paid for. Or maybe even if they don't pay dowry, sometimes those boys that go to South Africa, when they come back, they still stop these girls in school and marry them, maybe in standard 8, or form 1 they drop out, looking at where they are coming from, on education there is a difference a bit", (P1, FGD with male FCoCs)

Lastly, respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed with the statement "*Girls like it when boys comment on the shape of their bodies*". Most respondents (79%) agreed with the statement that girls like it when boys comment on the shape of their bodies: there were more males (88%) than females (70%) who agreed with this statement. CoCs (80%) were more likely to agree with this statement than FCoCs (71%). Muslims (85%) were also more likely to agree with this statement compared to Christians (73%). The proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement increased with age up to age 20-24 when the

proportion of those who agreed with the statement was at 83% decreasing to 78% for those aged more than 24 years (Table 13).

There were slightly more respondents (80%) who were currently not in school than those who were in primary school (79%) and those in secondary school (76%) who agreed with this statement. The highest proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement was among married respondents at 86% as compared to single respondents (78%). In terms of tribe, Table 13 shows that the highest proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement was among the Yao (87%) followed by the Chewa and the Lomwe at 74% and 69%, respectively (Table 13).

Table 13: Girls like it when boys comment on the shape of their bodies (%)

	Girls like it when boys comment on the shape of their bodies (N=358)				
Characteristics	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	No Response	Total
Sex of respondent					
Female (177)	24.9	5.1	69.5	0.6	100.0
Male (181)	8.3	3.9	87.8	0.0	100.0
Type of respondent					
FCoC (34)	17.6	11.8	70.6	0.0	100.0
CoC (324)	16.4	3.7	79.6	0.3	100.0
Religion of respondent					
Muslim (175)	12.0	3.4	84.6	0.0	100.0
Christianity (178)	20.8	5.6	73.0	0.6	100.0
Age of respondent					
<15 (122)	21.6	3.2	74.4	0.8	100.0
15-19 (209)	15.0	3.9	81.1	0.0	100.0
20-24 (18)	0.0	16.7	83.3	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	11.1	11.1	77.8	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent					
Primary (259)	17.4	3.1	79.2	0.4	100.0
Secondary (53)	20.8	3.8	75.5	0.0	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	6.5	13.0	80.4	0.0	100.0
Marital status of respondent					
Single (319)	17.2	4.1	78.4	0.3	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	12.5	6.3	81.3	0.0	100.0
Married (22)	4.5	9.1	86.4	0.0	100.0
Widowed (1)	100.0	0.0	0.0		100.0
Tribe of respondent					
Yao (160)	10.0	3.1	86.9	0.0	100.0
Chewa (110)	24.5	1.8	73.6	0.0	100.0
Lomwe (80)	18.8	11.3	68.8	1.3	100.0
Other (3)	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Total	16.5	4.5	78.8	0.3	100.0

6.10 Attitudes towards homosexual people

Table 14 shows that most respondents (79%) did not think that homosexual people have equal rights and should be treated with respect: only 18% of the respondents agreed with the statement “*I think homosexual people have equal rights and should be treated with respect*”. There were no differences between females (79%) and males (79%) who thought like this. There were relatively more Christians (83%) than Muslims (74%) who did not think that homosexual people have equal rights and should be respected. In terms of tribe, the highest proportion of respondents who objected that homosexual people have rights and should be respected was among the Lomwes (85%) followed the Chewa (81%) and the lowest was among the Yao (74%).

In terms of education, there were no major differences among those not currently in school (78%), those in primary (79%) and those in secondary school (77%). In terms of marital status, more married respondents (96%) thought that homosexual people do not have the same rights than among those who were single (77%). Lastly, in terms of age the proportion of respondents who did not think that homosexual people have the same rights was highest among those aged 20-24 followed by those aged less than 15 (81%) then those aged more than 24 years (78%) and then 15-19 at 77% (Table 14).

Table 14: Proportion of respondents who thought that homosexual people have equal rights and should be treated with respect

Characteristics	I think homosexual people should have equal rights and should be treated with respect (N=358)			
	No	Yes	Not sure	Total
Sex of respondent				
Female (177)	79.1	16.4	4.5	100.0
Male (181)	78.5	18.8	2.8	100.0
Type of respondent				
FCoC (34)	88.2	11.8	0.0	100.0
CoC (324)	77.8	18.2	4.0	100.0
Religion of respondent				
Muslim (175)	73.7	21.1	5.1	100.0
Christianity (178)	83.1	14.6	2.2	100.0
Age of respondent				
<15 (122)	80.8	15.2	4.0	100.0
15-19 (209)	76.7	19.4	3.9	100.0
20-24 (18)	88.9	11.1	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	77.8	22.2	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent				
Primary (259)	79.2	17.8	3.1	100.0
Secondary (53)	77.4	17.0	5.7	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	78.3	17.4	4.3	100.0
Marital status of respondent				
Single (319)	77.1	19.1	3.8	100.0
Have partner but not live together(16)	93.8	6.3	0.0	100.0
Married (22)	95.5	0.0	4.5	100.0
Widowed (1)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0

Tribe of respondent				
Yao (160)	73.8	21.9	4.4	100.0
Chewa (110)	80.9	17.3	1.8	100.0
Lomwe (80)	85.0	12.7	5.0	100.0
Other (3)	66.7	33.3	0.0	100.0
Total	78.8	17.6	3.6	100.0

6.11 Sexual violence

Respondents were asked about the extent to which they agreed with the following statements: (i) Girls wearing less clothing provoke boys; (ii) If a girl is unfaithful, it is alright for her husband to beat her; (iii) It is a girl's fault if she is sexually harassed; and A good woman tolerates violence from her husband or partner in order to keep her family together. Table 15 shows that most respondents (85%) agreed with the statement that girls wearing less clothing provoke boys: there were slightly more females who agreed with this statement (86%) than males (83%). More CoCs (87%) agreed with this statement than FCoCs (65%). The proportion of Muslims (86%) who agreed with this statement was slightly higher than that of Christians (83%). In term of age, the proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement decreased with age until age 20-24 when this proportion was at 67% and then it increased to 78% for those aged 24 years and above.

Respondents in primary school (90%) were more likely to agree with the statement that girls wearing less clothing provoke boys than those who were in secondary school (72%) and those who were currently not in school (74%). Table 15 also shows that single respondents had the highest proportion of respondents at 86.5% who agreed with the statement, compared to 68% among respondents who were married. Lastly, the proportion of respondents who were Yao (87%) who agreed with the statement was slightly higher than the Chewa (85%) and then the Lomwe (81%).

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that *"if a girl is unfaithful, it is alright for her husband to beat her"* with more males (65%) than females (49%) disagreeing with this statement. Nearly half of the females (48%) agreed with this statement while only a third of the males (34%) agreed with the statement. The proportion of FCoCs who agreed with the statement was much less at 6% compared to CoCs (44%). More Muslims (43%) than Christians (39%) who agreed with this statement. The proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement decreased with age: 56% of those aged less than 15 agreed with the statement and this went down to 0% among persons aged more than 24 years of age. Nearly half of the respondents in primary school (49%) agreed with the statement that if a girl is unfaithful, it is alright for her husband to beat her and this was followed by those who were currently not in school (24%) and only 6% of those in secondary school agreed with this statement. In terms of marital status, 43% of the single respondents and only 9% of those who were married agreed with this statement. With regard to tribe, 47% of the Chewa agreed with this statement followed by the Yao and the Lomwe at 43% and 29%, respectively (Table 15).

With regard to the statement, *"It is a girl's fault if she is sexually harassed"*, just over a third of the respondents (36%) agreed with the statement: there were more females (41%) than males (32%) who agreed with this statement. More CoCs (38%) than FCoCs (15%) who agreed with this statement. The

proportion of Muslims (37%) who agreed with this statement was slightly higher than that of Christians (35%). The highest proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement was among persons aged less than 15 (41%) followed by those aged 15-19 at 36% and those aged more than 24 years at 33%. None of those aged 20-24 agreed with this statement (Table 15).

Respondents in primary school had the highest proportion of respondents (41%) who agreed with this statement compared to those who were currently not in school (24%) and those who were in secondary school (23%). With regard to marital status, the highest proportion of respondents who agreed with the statement was among those who were single (37%) compared to those who were married at 27% (Table 15). Lastly, there were no major differences in the proportion of the Yao (39%) and the Chewa (37%) who agreed with the statement and the lowest proportion was among the Lomwe at 29% (Table 15).

With regard to sexual violence, respondents were also asked about the extent to which they agreed with the following statement: a good woman tolerates violence from her husband or partner in order to keep her family together. Table 15 shows that 55% of the respondents agreed with the statement that a good woman tolerates violence from her husband or partner in order to keep her family together with more males (57%) agreeing with the statement than girls (53%). Very few FCoCs (9%) agreed with the statement compared to CoCs (60%). There were more Muslims (57%) who agreed with the statement than Christians (53%). As can be seen in Table 15, the proportion of respondents who agreed with the statement decreased with age: while 66% of those aged less than 15 years agreed with the statement only 11% of those aged more than 24 years agreed with this statement.

Table 15 also shows that the proportion of respondents in primary school (64%) who agreed with the statement was higher among those in secondary (30%) and those not currently in school (30%). Single respondents at 58% had the highest proportion who agreed with the statement that a good woman tolerates violence from her husband or partner to keep her family together as compared to those who were married (18%). The Chewa (60%) followed by the Yao (56%) were more likely to agree with the statement than the Lomwe (48%) as can be seen in Table 15.

Table 15: Perceptions about sexual violence (%)

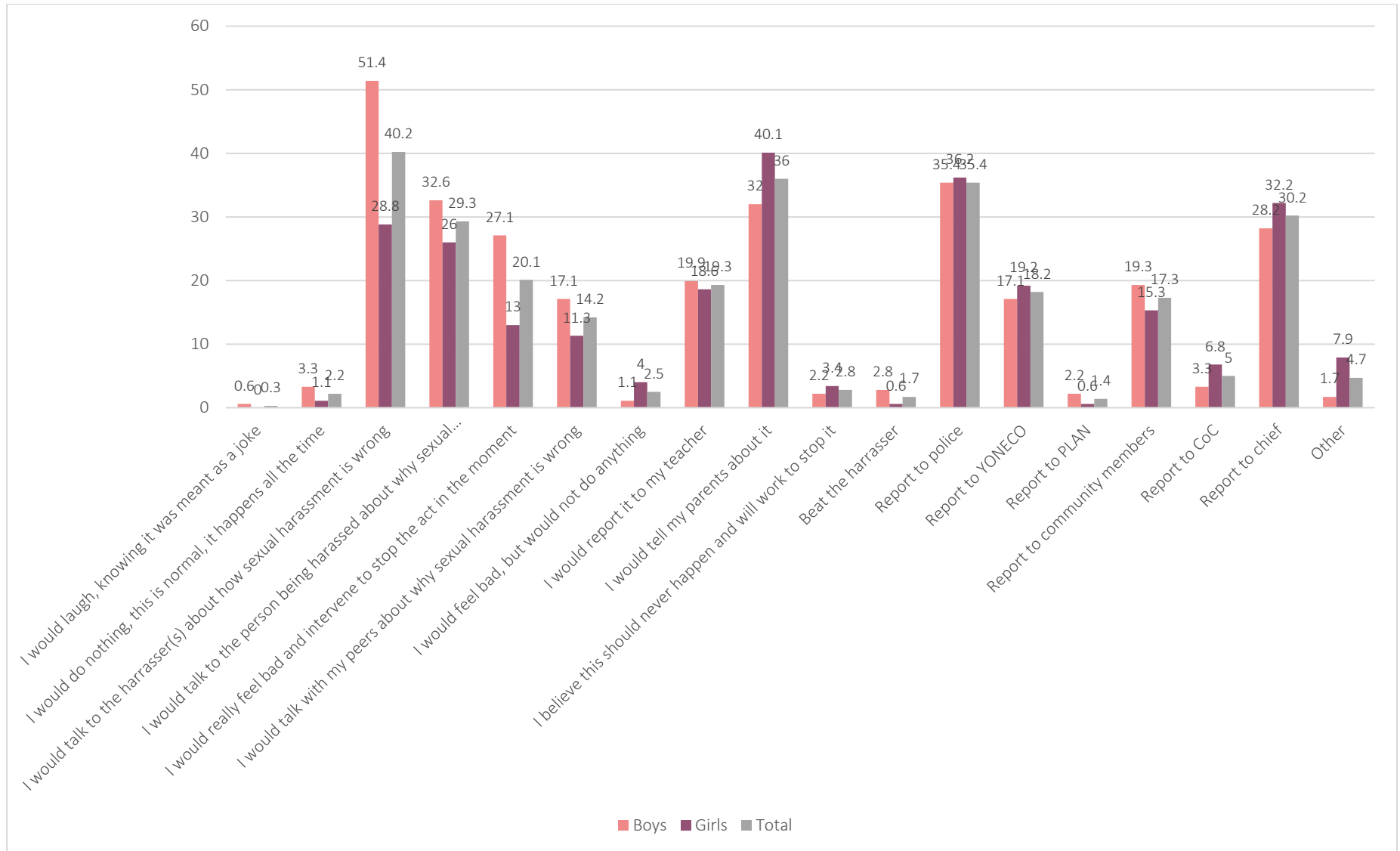
Characteristics	Girls wearing less clothing provoke boys (N=358)				If a girl is unfaithful, it is alright for her husband to beat her (N=358)				It is a girl's fault if she is sexually harassed (N=358)					A good woman tolerates violence from her husband or partner to keep her family (N=358)				
	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	No Response	Total	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total	Disagree
Sex of respondent																		
Female (177)	11.9	1.7	86.4	100.0	48.6	3.4	48.0	100.0	53.7	5.1	40.7	0.6	100.0	65.0	4.0	31.1	100.0	65.0
Male (181)	13.8	2.8	83.4	100.0	65.2	1.1	33.7	100.0	61.3	7.2	31.5	0.0	100.0	75.7	1.7	22.7	100.0	75.7
Type of respondent																		
FCoC (34)	32.4	2.9	64.7	100.0	91.2	2.9	5.9	100.0	76.5	8.8	14.7	0.0	100.0	79.4	11.8	8.8	100.0	79.4
CoC (324)	10.8	2.2	87.0	100.0	53.4	2.2	44.4	100.0	55.6	5.9	38.3	0.3	100.0	38.9	1.5	59.6	100.0	38.9
Religion of respondent																		
Muslim (175)	11.4	2.3	86.3	100.0	54.9	1.7	43.4	100.0	56.0	6.9	37.1	0.0	100.0	41.7	1.1	57.1	100.0	41.7
Christianity (178)	14.6	2.2	83.1	100.0	59.0	2.2	38.8	100.0	58.4	5.6	35.4	0.6	100.0	43.8	2.8	53.4	100.0	43.8
Age of respondent																		
<15 (122)	8.8	0.0	91.2	100.0	40.8	3.2	56.0	100.0	52.8	5.6	40.8	0.8	100.0	32.0	1.6	66.4	100.0	32.0
15-19 (209)	13.6	3.4	83.0	100.0	62.1	1.5	36.4	100.0	57.3	6.3	36.4	0.0	100.0	46.1	1.5	52.4	100.0	46.1
20-24 (18)	27.8	5.6	66.7	100.0	94.4	0.0	5.6	100.0	88.9	11.1	0.0	0.0	100.0	72.2	5.6	22.2	100.0	72.2
>24 (9)	22.2	0.0	77.8	100.0	88.9	11.1	0.0	100.0	66.7	0.0	33.3	0.0	100.0	55.6	33.3	11.1	100.0	55.6
Education of respondent																		
Primary (259)	9.7	0.8	89.6	100.0	48.6	2.3	49.0	100.0	52.9	5.8	40.9	0.4	100.0	34.4	1.5	64.1	100.0	34.4
Secondary (53)	24.5	3.8	71.7	100.0	84.9	0.0	5.5	100.0	71.7	5.7	22.6	0.0	100.0	69.8	0.0	30.2	100.0	69.8
Not currently in school (46)	17.4	8.7	73.9	100.0	71.7	4.3	23.9	100.0	67.4	8.7	23.9	0.0	100.0	58.7	10.9	30.4	100.0	58.7
Marital status of respondent																		
Single (319)	11.0	2.5	86.5	100.0	54.9	1.9	43.3	100.0	56.1	6.6	37.0	0.3	100.0	41.1	1.3	57.7	100.0	41.1
Have partner but not live together (16)	18.8	0.0	81.3	100.0	62.5	0.0	37.5	100.0	68.8	0.0	31.3	0.0	100.0	43.8	6.3	50.0	100.0	43.8
Married (22)	31.8	0.0	68.2	100.0	81.8	9.1	9.1	100.0	68.2	4.5	27.3	0.0	100.0	63.6	18.2	18.2	100.0	63.6
Widowed (1)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0		100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent																		
Yao (160)	10.6	2.5	86.9	100.0	55.6	1.9	42.5	100.0	55.6	5.6	38.8	0.0	100.0	43.1	1.3	55.6	100.0	43.1
Chewa (110)	15.5	0.0	84.5	100.0	50.0	2.7	47.3	100.0	58.2	4.5	37.3	0.0	100.0	37.3	2.7	60.0	100.0	37.3
Lomwe(80)	13.8	5.0	81.3	100.0	70.0	1.3	28.8	100.0	60.0	10.0	28.8	1.3	100.0	50.0	2.5	47.5	100.0	50.0
Other (3)	33.3	0.0	66.7	100.0	33.3	0.0	66.7	100.0	33.3	0.0	66.7	0.0	100.0	33.1	0.0	66.7	100.0	33.1
Total	12.8	2.2	84.9	100.0	57.0	2.2	40.8	100.0	57.2	6.2	36.3	0.3	100.0	42.7	2.5	54.7	100.0	42.7

6.12 Responding to incidences of sexual harassment

Figure 12 shows how respondents would respond when they see cases sexual harassment. Forty percent (40%) of the respondents reported that they would talk to the harasser about how sexual harassment is bad and this was followed by those who reported that they would tell their parents about it (36%), report to the police (35%), report to the chief (30%) and 29% said that they would talk to the harassed about why sexual harassment is wrong.

Other actions which were mentioned by more than 10% of the respondents included feeling bad and intervening to stop the act in the moment (20%), reporting to community members (17%), reporting to YONECO (18%) and then reporting to the teacher (18%). The rest of the actions were not as popular (Figure 12).

Figure 12: How respondents would respond if they saw sexual harassment (% , N=358)



6.13 Perceptions about safety and violence in the community

There were a number of statements which were read to respondents which explored their perceptions about safety and issues of violence within their community. The first of such statements was *"I can identify safety problems for girls in my community"*. Table 16 shows that most respondents (84%) said they could identify safety problems for girls in their community and there were more females (86%) than males (81%) and more FCoCs (94%) than CoCs (82%) who could do this. The proportion of Christians (84%) who reported they could identify safety problems for girls in their community was not different from that of Muslims (83%). The Lomwe had the highest proportion of respondents (86%) who reported they could identify safety problems for girls in their community followed by both the Chewa (84%) and the Yao (83%).

In terms of education level, those in secondary school (94%) had the highest proportion of respondents who said they could identify safety problems for girls in their community and this was seconded by those not currently in school (85%) and the ones in primary had the lowest proportion (81%). The highest proportion of respondents who could identify these safety problems as far as age was concerned was among those aged 20-24 (94%) and this was followed by those aged more than 24 years at 89% and then those aged 15-19 (86%). The lowest proportion of respondents to identify safety problems for girls was among those aged less than 15 at 78% (Table 16).

Another statement on safety and violence in the community respondents were asked about was *"I know ways to keep myself safe from violence"*: as can be seen in Table 16, 91% of the respondents reported they knew how to keep themselves safe from violence and the proportion who said this was slightly higher among CoCs (91%) than among the FCoCs (88%). There were no differences in the proportion of females (91%) and males (91%) who reported this. There were also no differences between Muslims (91%) and Christians (91%). In terms of tribe, there were also no major differences among the three main tribes found in the area namely Chewa (92%), Lomwe (91%) and Yao (91%). The proportion of respondents who reported knowing ways of keeping themselves safe from violence increased with age till age 20-24 (94%), after which it went down to 89% for those aged more than 24 years. In terms of education level, the highest proportion of respondents (94%) who reported knowing ways of keeping themselves safe from violence was among those in secondary school. This was followed by those in primary school at 91%. Those who were currently not in school had the lowest proportion at 87

A third statement on safety in the community which was read to respondents was *"I think girls are safe in this community"*: Table 16 shows that 72% of the respondents thought that girls were safe in their community (Table 16). There were more CoCs (74%) who reported this than FCoCs (53%). More females (77%) than males (66%) said they thought girls were safe in their community. The proportion of Muslims (75%) who reported girls being safe was higher than that of Christians (69%). In terms of age, the proportion of respondents who thought girls were safe decreased with age up to age 20-24, when there was a slight increase from 50% among those aged 20-24 to 56% among those aged more than 24 years. The highest proportion of respondents who reported that girls were safe in their community was 76% among the Chewas followed by Yaos (73%) and then the Lomwes (66%). The highest proportion of respondents who reported that they thought girls were safe was among those who were in primary school (78%) followed by those who were currently not in school (61%). Respondents who were in secondary school had the lowest proportion at 53% who thought girls were safe. Table 16 further shows that the highest proportion

of respondents who reported girls were safe was among those who were single (74%) and the lowest was among respondents who were married (50%).

A far as violence and safety were concerned, the last statement which was read to male respondents only was *“I think that boys should not use violence in their relationship with others”*: 92% of the respondents thought that boys should not use violence in their relationship with others (Table 16). All the FCoCs thought like this, however, the proportion of CoCs who had such thoughts was lower at 91%. The proportion of Muslims who thought boys should not use violence was lower at 88% compared with Christians (95%). Eight percent (8%) of the respondents did not think that boys should never use violence in their relationship with others.

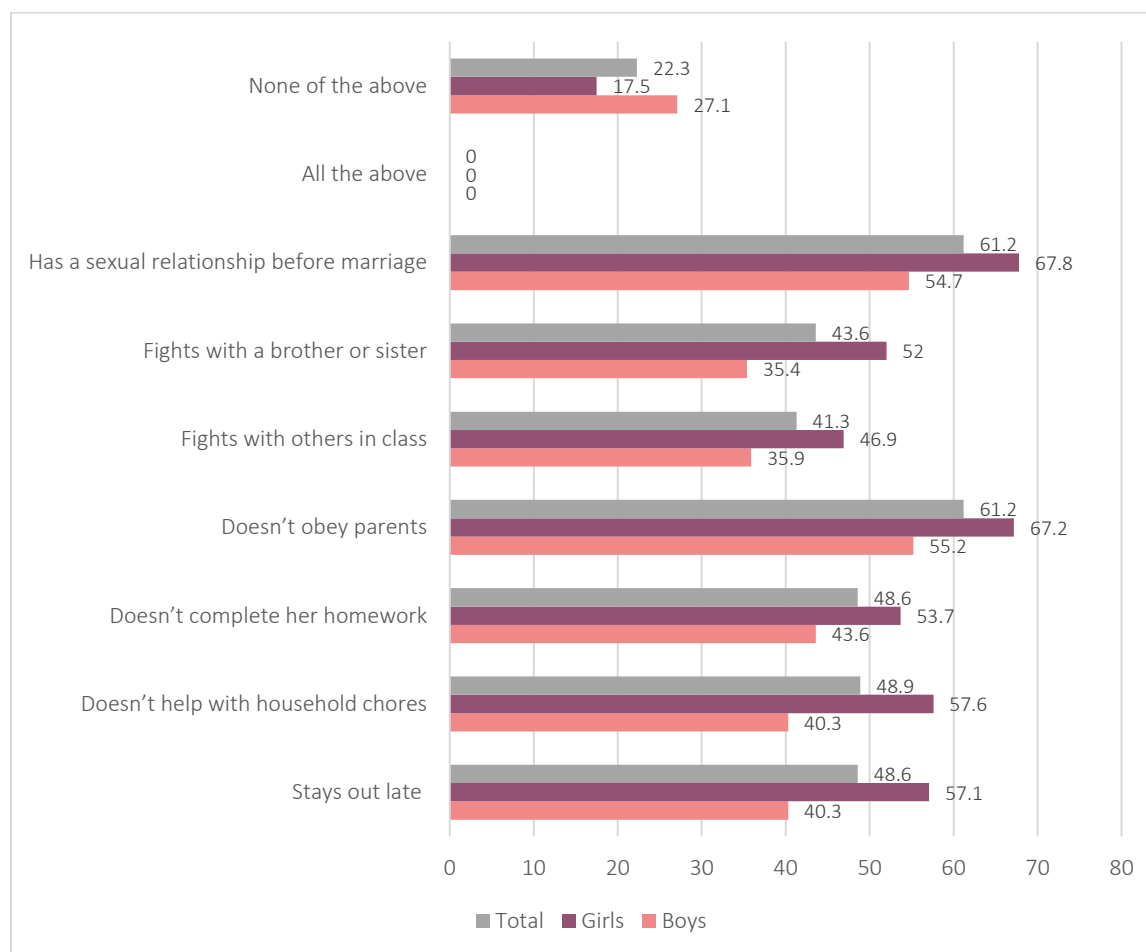
In terms of age, the proportion of respondents who thought boys should never use violence increased with age with all respondents aged more than 19 years reporting this (Table 16). Among the Chewa, 95% of the respondents thought that boys should not use violence and this was followed by the Lomwe (92%) and then the Yao (89%). All respondents (100%) who were currently not in school thought boys should never use violence and this was seconded by those who were in secondary school (91%) and then primary school at 90% (Table 16). Lastly, in terms of marital status all those who were married did not condone the use of violence by boys in relationships. The proportion of single respondents, however, who thought like this, was lower at 90%.

Table 16: Perceptions about safety and violence in the community (%)

Characteristics	I can identify safety problems for girls in my community (N=358)				I know ways to keep myself safe from violence (N=358)				I think girls are safe in this community (N=358)				Characteristics	I think that boys should not use violence in their relationship with others (N=181)			
	No	Yes	Not sure	Total	No	Yes	Not sure	Total	No	Yes	Not sure	Total		No	Yes	Not sure	Total
Sex of respondent																	
Female (177)	11.9	85.9	2.3	100.0	6.2	91.0	2.8	100.0	16.4	77.4	6.2	100.0	Female (0)	-	-	-	
Male (181)	12.7	81.2	6.1	100.0	6.6	91.2	2.2	100.0	24.9	66.3	8.8	100.0	Male (181)	7.7	91.7	0.6	100.0
Type of respondent																	
FCoC (34)	2.9	94.1	2.9	100.0	2.9	88.2	8.8	100.0	32.4	52.9	14.7	100.0	FCoC (18)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
CoC (324)	13.3	82.4	4.3	100.0	6.8	91.4	9.9	100.0	19.4	73.8	6.8	100.0	CoC (163)	8.6	90.8	0.6	100.0
Religion of respondent																	
Muslim (175)	12.6	83.4	4.0	100.0	6.3	91.4	2.3	100.0	18.3	75.4	6.3	100.0	Muslim (91)	11.0	87.9	1.1	100.0
Christianity (178)	12.4	83.7	3.9	100.0	6.7	91.0	2.2	100.0	23.6	69.1	7.3	100.0	Christianity (87)	4.6	95.4	0.0	100.0
Age of respondent																	
<15 (122)	19.2	77.6	3.2	100.0	11.2	88.0	0.8	100.0	14.4	80.0	5.6	100.0	<15 (52)	7.3	90.9	1.8	100.0
15-19 (209)	9.2	85.9	4.9	100.0	3.9	92.7	3.4	100.0	22.3	69.4	8.3	100.0	15-19 (116)	8.8	91.2	0.0	100.0
20-24 (18)	5.6	94.4	0.0	100.0	5.6	94.4	0.0	100.0	44.4	50.0	5.6	100.0	20-24 (8)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
>24(9)	0.0	88.9	11.1	100.0	0.0	88.9	11.1	100.0	22.2	55.6	22.2	100.0	>24(5)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent																	
Primary (259)	14.3	81.1	4.6	100.0	6.9	91.1	1.9	100.0	17.0	77.6	5.4	100.0	Primary (135)	8.9	90.4	0.7	100.0
Secondary (53)	3.8	94.3	1.9	100.0	3.8	94.3	1.9	100.0	34.0	52.8	13.2	100.0	Secondary (23)	8.7	91.3	0.0	100.0
Not currently in school(46)	10.9	84.8	4.3	100.0	6.5	87.0	6.5	100.0	26.1	60.9	13.0	100.0	Not currently in school (23)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Marital status of respondent																	
Single (319)	12.9	83.4	3.8	100.0	6.6	91.5	1.9	100.0	18.0	74.3	6.9	100.0	Single (157)	8.9	90.4	0.6	100.0
Have partner but not live together(16)	6.3	87.5	6.3	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	31.3	56.3	12.5	100.0	Have partner but not live together(11)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Married (22)	9.1	81.9	9.1	100.0	9.1	77.3	13.6	100.0	40.9	50.0	9.1	100.0	Married (13)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Widowed(1)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	Widowed(0)	0.0	0.00	0.0	0.0
Tribe of respondent																	
Yao (160)	11.9	83.1	5.0	100.0	6.9	90.6	2.5	100.0	21.9	72.5	5.6	100.0	Yao (82)	11.0	89.0	0.0	100.0
Chewa (110)	14.5	83.6	1.8	100.0	6.4	91.8	1.8	100.0	19.1	76.4	4.5	100.0	Chewa (55)	3.6	94.5	1.8	100.0
Lomwe (80)	10.0	86.3	3.8	100.0	6.3	91.3	2.5	100.0	22.5	66.3	11.3	100.0	Lomwe (39)	7.7	92.3	0.0	100.0
Other(3)	33.3	33.3	33.3	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	66.7	33.3	100.0	Other(1)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Total	6.4	91.1	2.5	100.0	6.4	91.1	2.5	100.0	20.7	71.8	7.5	100.0	Total	7.1	91.3	1.7	100.0

In addition to the above forms of violence, respondents were also asked whether girls and boys are supposed to be hit when they do the following things as shown in Figure 13.

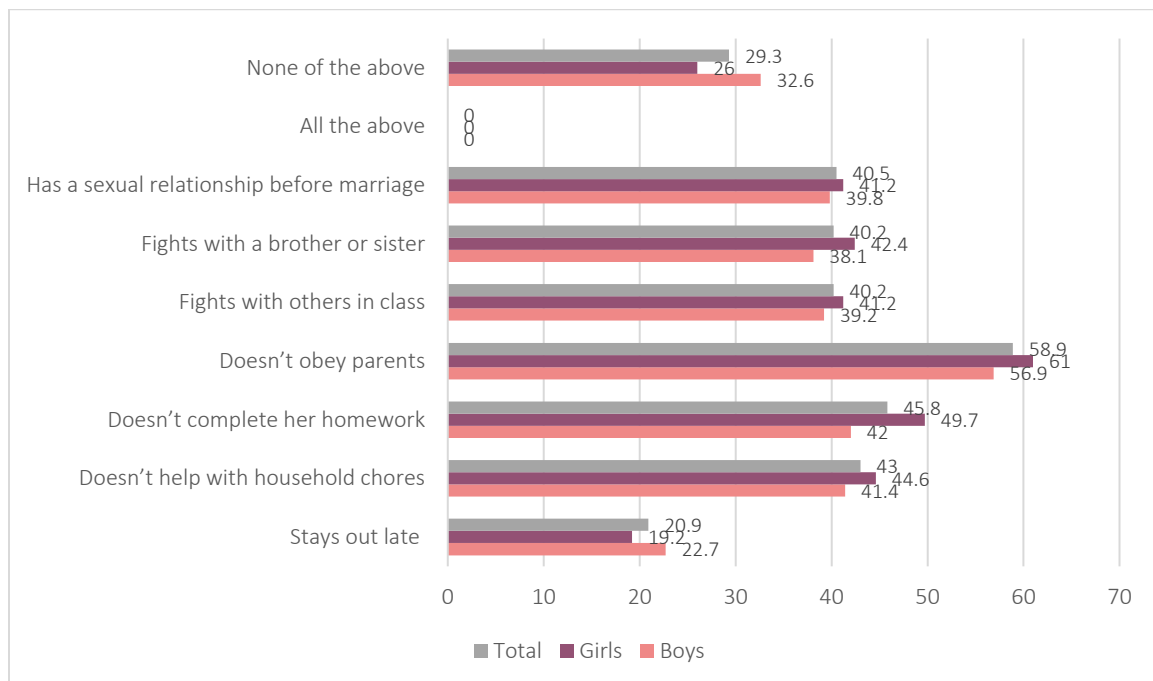
Figure 13: A girl deserves to be hit when she does the following things... (% N=358)



On the things respondents were asked whether a girl should be hit, the highest proportion of respondents said when she has a sexual relationship before marriage (61.2%) or does not obey their parents (61%). This was followed by staying out late (49%), not helping with household chores (49%) and not completing her homework (49%). For all these activities it can be observed that there were more females who mentioned that a girl should be hit when she does any of these things than males: e.g. (i) 69% of the females said that a girl should be hit when she has a sexual relationship before marriage compared to 55% of the males who mentioned this; (ii) 57% of the females said that a girl should be hit when she stays out late compared to 40% of the males who mentioned this. Overall, 22% of the respondents said that a girl should not be hit when she does any of the things in Figure 13: there were more males who (27%) who said this compared to females (18%). In relating to staying out late, during an FGD with male FCoCs, participants said that when girls come of age they are given a curfew on the time they get home for fear that they can engage in “bad behaviours”. Boys on the other hand are not restricted in their movements.

Respondents were also asked whether a boy should be hit when he does the things (Figure 14).

Figure 14: A boy deserves to be hit when he does the following (% , N=358)



Most respondents (59%) said that a boy should be hit when he does not obey his parents and this was followed by those who said that he should be hit when he does not complete his homework (46%) and then those who mentioned when he should be hit when he does not help with household chores (43%). The lowest proportion of respondents mentioned that a boy should be hit when he stays out late (21%). For all the things mentioned in Figure 12, there were more females who mentioned that a boy should be hit when he does those things with an exception of staying out late when there were more males (23%) than females (19%) who said boys should be hit.

In terms of violence, respondents were also asked about the extent to which they agreed with the statement *"If someone insults a boy, he would be right to defend his honour by hitting that person"*. Most respondents (70%) disagreed with this statement and there were more males (76%) who disagreed with this statement compared to females (65%). There were more FCoCs (88%) who disagreed with this statement than CoCs (69%). In terms of religion, more Christians (74%) than Muslims (67%) disagreed with this statement. The proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement increased with age up to age 20-24 when the proportion of those who disagreed was at 94% and decreased to 89% among those aged more than 24 years (Table 17).

Ninety-four percent (94%) of the respondents who were in secondary school disagreed with the statement that if someone insults a boy, he would be right to defend his honour by hitting that person. This was followed by those who were not currently in school at 76% and those in primary school at 65%. Most married respondents (91%) disagreed with the statement that if someone insults a boy, he would be right to defend his honour by hitting that person. This was seconded by those who were single at 69%. The highest proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement was among the Lomwe at 80% and followed by the Yao (68%) and then the Chewa at 66% (Table 17).

Table 17: If someone insults a boy, he would be right to defend his honour by hitting that person (%)

Characteristics	If someone insults a boy, he would be right to defend his honour by hitting that person (N=358)			
	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total
Sex of respondent				
Female (177)	65.0	4.0	31.1	100.0
Male (181)	75.7	1.7	22.7	100.0
Type of respondent				
FCoC (34)	88.2	5.9	5.9	100.0
CoC (3240)	68.5	2.5	29.0	100.0
Religion of respondent				
Muslim (175)	66.9	2.9	30.3	100.0
Christianity (178)	74.2	2.2	23.6	100.0
Age of respondent				
<15 (122)	64.0	0.8	35.2	100.0
15-19 (209)	71.4	3.4	25.2	100.0
20-24 (18)	94.4	5.6	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	88.9	11.1	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent				
Primary (259)	64.5	2.7	32.8	100.0
Secondary (53)	94.3	0.0	5.7	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	76.1	6.5	17.4	100.0
Marital status of respondent				
Single (319)	69.3	1.9	28.8	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	62.5	12.5	25.0	100.0
Married (22)	90.9	9.1	0.0	100.0
Widowed (1)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent				
Yao (160)	68.1	3.1	28.8	100.0
Chewa (110)	66.4	3.6	30.0	100.0
Lomwe (80)	80.0	0.0	20.0	100.00
Other 3)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	70.4	2.8	26.8	100.0

6.14 Gender stereotypes

6.14.1 Perceptions about gender and university education

The following statement was read to the respondents: “Girls do not need to go to the university”: overall, Table 18 shows that 90% of the respondents disagreed with the statement and there were more FCoCs (97%) than CoCs (89%) who disagreed. There were also slightly more females (91%) than males (88%) who disagreed with this statement. There was no difference in the proportion of Christians (90%) and Muslims (89%) who disagreed with this statement. The proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement also increased with age with all respondents aged more than 24 years disagreeing with the statement. The Lomwes had a slightly higher proportion of respondents (91%) who disagreed with the statement than the Chewa (90%) and the Yao (88%). In terms of education, those in primary school had the lowest proportion of respondents (88%) who disagreed with the statement compared to those who were

currently not in school (93%) and those in secondary school (94%). Lastly, those who were married (96%) disagreed more often with this statement than those who were single (88%) (Table 18).

Table 18: Proportion of respondents who said that girls do not need to go to the university

Characteristics	Girls do not need to go to the university (N=358)			
	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total
Sex of respondent				
Female (177)	91.0	1.1	7.9	100.0
Male (181)	88.4	1.1	10.5	100.0
Type of respondent				
FCoC (34)	97.1	2.9	0.0	100.0
CoC (324)	88.9	0.9	10.2	100.0
Religion of respondent				
Muslim (175)	88.6	0.0	11.4	100.0
Christianity (178)	90.4	2.2	7.3	100.0
Age of respondent				
<15 (122)	86.4	1.6	12.0	100.0
15-19 (209)	90.8	0.5	8.7	100.0
20-24 (18)	94.4	5.6	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent				
Primary (259)	88.0	0.8	11.2	100.0
Secondary (53)	94.3	1.9	3.8	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	93.4	2.2	4.3	100.0
Marital status of respondent				
Single (319)	88.7	0.9	10.3	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Married (22)	95.5	4.5	0.0	100.0
Widowed(1)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent				
Yao (160)	88.1	0.0	11.9	100.0
Chewa (110)	90.0	1.8	8.2	100.0
Lomwe (80)	91.3	2.5	6.3	100.0
Other (3)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	89.7	1.1	9.2	100.0

Most respondents, as can be seen in Table 18, disagreed with the statement that girls do not need to go to the university. Only 9% of the respondents agreed with this statement. While most people disagreed with this statement, in the qualitative component of the baseline study participants reported that community expectations are different as far as education is concerned: communities do not really expect a girl to go very far with education and even if these girls are educated, the perception is that they will not find a job; hence it is a waste of time as mentioned during an FGD with female FCoCs. These female FCoCs furthermore explained that there is a perception that women are weak and cannot handle work which requires for example lifting things. A male CoC added that communities also expect girls to drop out of school and the boys will continue with their education and this is, according to the participant, because they have not been sensitized for example by NGOs on the importance of education for girls. Educating girls was also perceived as a waste of money by parents.

“Parents believe teaching girls will just make them lose money, they believe girls are fast and they may get pregnant at school after they have paid a lot of fees and yet a boy can go to school and finish with no problems”, (Male CoC)

On the other hand, boys are expected to finish school and find a job and, as argued by participants in an FGD with males, the boys are expected to provide for the family. While this is the general expectation, namely that boys will continue with school while girls will not, others however expected that both the boys and girls will go to school and have a good future.

“It is what I have explained. [Silence] Let me talk about my own expectation. I expect my girl child to go to school and secure herself and us as her parents a good future”, (Parent)

In terms of education, one key informant gave an example of a school where all girls left school except one who wanted to write examinations but the community discouraged her and, in the end, she found a boyfriend and got pregnant. While she feels remorse, this is what the community expects from girls.

It was further argued that when women get educated they will get married and the wealth will be controlled by husbands; hence girls are not prioritized as far as education is concerned, as they will depend on their husbands for a living. These girls, according to male FCoCs, can even be told by their parents to quit school and they will do so unlike boys. It seems that boys can make their own decisions while on the other hand girls are controlled by their parents as narrated during an FGD with male FCoCs.

“The other thing is that as boys we decide on our own and yet for girls they are controlled by parents, so they may be told you are grown up for school you need to get married”, (FGD with male FCoCs)

6.14.2 Perceptions about boys’ and girls’ performance at science and sports

One of the existing stereotypes is that in general boys are better at math/science as well as sports than girls. Table 19 shows the proportion of respondents who agreed with the statement that (i) boys are better at math and science; and (ii) boys are better at sports than girls. Overall, 43% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that boys are better at math and science than girls: more FCoCs (68%) disagreed with this statement than CoCs (40%). There were also more females (47%) who disagreed with this statement than males (38%). The proportion of respondents who were Christians who disagreed with this statement was higher (51%) compared to Muslims at 33% (Table 19). The proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement increased with age: while only 38% of those aged less than 15 years disagreed with the statement among those aged more than 24 years the proportion disagreeing with the statement was much higher at 67%. Lomwes had the highest proportion (55%) of disagreement with the statement followed by Chewas at 45% and then Yaos at 33% (Table 19).

In terms of education, respondents who were in secondary school (62%) had the highest proportion who disagreed with the statement that boys were better at math and science than girls. This was followed by those not currently in school (52%) and those in primary school at 37%. With regard to marital status, the highest proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement was among those who were married at 59% as compared to those who were single (41%). As can be seen in Table 19, 51% of the respondents agreed with the statement that boys are better at math and science. During the interviews, there was only

one female CoC who reported that a girl is not expected to pass subjects such as maths, as the subject is tough while a boy is expected to pass.

“On school they say a girl is not expected to pass subjects like math because the subject is tough and a boy is expected to pass”, (Female CoC)

In terms of sports, as can be seen in Table 19, most respondents (69%) generally agreed with the statement that boys are better at sports than girls: there were more CoCs (73%) than FCoCs (27%) who agreed with this statement. There were also more males (72%) than females (66%) who agreed with this statement. There were slightly more Muslims (71%) than Christians (68%) who agreed with the statement that boys are better at sports than girls. As can be seen in Table 19, the proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement decreased with age: while 74% of the respondents aged less than 15 years agreed with this statement only 22% of those aged more than 24 years agreed with this statement.

In terms of education, the proportion of those in primary school who agreed with this statement was high at 77% compared to those in secondary school at 42%. The proportion of those who were not currently in school who agreed with this statement was at 54%. As can be seen in Table 19, the highest proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement was among single respondents at 72%, with those who were married having the lowest proportion at 36%. Lastly, the highest proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement was among the Yao (75%) followed by the Chewa (70%) and the Lomwe (36%) (Table 19).

Table 19: Proportion of respondents who agreed that boys are better at math/science and sports than girls

Characteristics	Boys are better at math and science than girls (N=358)				Characteristics	Boys are better at sports than girls (N=358)				
	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total		Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	No response	Total
Sex of respondent										
Female (177)	46.9	6.2	46.9	100.0	Female (177)	31.6	2.3	65.5	0.6	100.0
Male (181)	38.1	7.7	54.1	100.0	Male (180)	23.3	4.4	72.2	0.0	100.0
Type of respondent										
FCoC (34)	67.6	2.9	29.4	100.0	FCoC (34)	64.7	8.8	26.5	0.0	100.0
CoC (324)	39.8	7.4	52.8	100.0	CoC (323)	23.5	2.8	73.4	0.3	100.0
Religion of respondent										
Muslim (177)	33.1	6.3	60.6	100.0	Muslim (175)	25.7	3.4	70.9	0.0	100.0
Christianity (178)	50.6	7.9	41.6	100.0	Christianity (177)	28.2	3.4	67.8	0.8	100.0
Age of respondent										
<15 (122)	38.4	7.2	54.4	100.0	<15 (122)	22.4	2.4	74.4	0.8	100.0
15-19 (209)	42.2	7.3	50.5	100.0	15-19 (208)	25.9	3.4	70.7	0.0	100.0
20-24 (18)	61.1	5.6	33.3	100.0	20-24 (18)	55.6	11.1	33.3	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	66.7	0.0	33.3	100.0	>24 (9)	77.8	0.0	22.2	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent										
Primary (259)	36.7	6.6	56.8	100.0	Primary (258)	19.8	2.7	77.1	0.4	100.0
Secondary (53)	62.3	7.5	30.2	100.0	Secondary (53)	52.8	5.7	41.5	0.0	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	52.2	8.7	39.1	100.0	Not currently in school (46)	41.3	4.3	54.3	0.0	100.0
Marital status of respondent										
Single (319)	41.4	7.2	51.4	100.0	Single (318)	24.5	2.8	72.3	0.3	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	37.5	6.3	56.3	100.0	Have partner but not live together (16)	37.5	12.5	50.0	0.0	100.0
Married (22)	59.1	4.5	36.4	100.0	Married (22)	59.1	4.5	36.4	0.0	100.0
Widowed (1)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	Widowed (1)	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent										
Yao (160)	32.5	6.3	61.3	100.0	Yao (160)	23.1	1.9	75.0	0.0	100.0
Chewa (110)	44.5	5.5	50.0	100.0	Chewa (110)	25.5	4.5	70.0	0.0	100.0
Lomwe (80)	55.0	11.3	33.8	100.0	Lomwe (79)	38.0	3.8	57.0	1.3	100.0
Other (3)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	Other (3)	0.0	33.3	66.7	0.0	100.0
Total	42.5	7.0	50.6	100.0	Total	27.5	3.4	68.9	0.3	100.0

6.14.3 Perceptions about girls' and women's leadership

Respondents were also asked the extent to which they agreed with the following statement: *"Girls and women are not good leaders"*. Table 20 shows that most respondents (77%) disagreed with the statement that girls and women are not good leaders: there were more FCoCs (97%) than CoCs (75%) and more Christians (82%) than Muslims (73%) who disagreed with this statement (Table 20). Table 20 also shows that the proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement increased with age. In terms of education, the highest proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement was among those who were in secondary school (93%) and this was followed by those who were currently not in school (87%) with the least being those in primary school at 73% (Table 20). There were also some differences in the extent to which respondents disagreed with the statement by marital status: the highest proportion of respondents who disagreed with this statement was among those who were married (86%) followed by those who were single (77%). Most respondents who were Lomwes (86%) disagreed with this statement followed by the Chewa at 79% and then the Yaos at 71%. Other than male respondents, 15% of the female respondents agreed that girls and women are not good leaders.

Table 20: Perceptions about girls' and women's leadership (%)

Characteristics	Girls and women are not good leaders (N=358)			
	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total
Sex of respondent				
Male (181)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Female (177)	80.8	4.0	15.3	100.0
Type of respondent				
FCoC (34)	97.1	0.0	2.9	100.0
CoC (324)	75.3	4.9	19.8	100.0
Religion of respondent				
Muslim (175)	72.6	4.0	23.4	100.0
Christianity (178)	81.5	5.1	13.5	100.0
Age of respondent				
<15 (122)	72.0	4.8	23.2	100.0
15-19 (209)	78.2	4.4	17.5	100.0
20-24 (18)	94.4	5.6	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent				
Primary (259)	72.6	5.8	21.6	100.0
Secondary (53)	92.5	0.0	7.5	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	87.0	2.2	10.9	100.0
Marital status of respondent				
Single (319)	76.8	4.1	19.1	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	75.0	12.5	12.5	100.0
Married (22)	86.4	4.5	9.1	100.0
Widowed (1)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent				
Yao (160)	70.6	3.8	25.6	100.0
Chewa (110)	79.1	4.5	16.4	100.0
Lomwe (80)	86.3	6.3	7.5	100.0
Other (3)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	77.4	4.5	18.2	100.0

6.14.4 Wives should obey their husbands

Respondents were also asked about the extent to which they agreed with the following statement: “A wife should always obey her husband”. Overall, 76% of the respondents agreed with the statement that a wife should always obey her husband: there were more CoCs (81%) than FCoCs (32%) who agreed with this statement. A higher proportion of male respondents (86%) agreed with this statement compared to females (66%). The proportion of Muslims (79%) who agreed with this statement was slightly higher than that of Christians (75%). The proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement, as can be seen in Table 21, decreases with age: 83% of the respondents aged less than 15 agreed with this statement and this decreased to 33% among those aged over 24 years of age. The proportion of respondents who were in primary school (85%) who agreed with the statement that a woman should always obey her husband was higher than those who were in secondary school (47%) and those who were currently not in school (59%). With regard to tribe, there were no major differences between the Yao (79%) and the Chewa (78%) but the proportion of Lomwes who agreed with this statement was lower at 71% (Table 21).

Table 21: A wife should always obey her husband (% , N=358)

	A wife should always obey her husband (N=358)			
Characteristics	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total
Sex of respondent				
Female (177)	28.8	5.1	66.1	100.0
Male (181)	10.5	3.3	86.2	100.0
Type of respondent				
FCoC (34)	50.0	17.6	32.4	100.0
CoC (324)	16.4	2.8	80.9	100.0
Religion of respondent				
Muslim (175)	17.1	4.0	78.9	100.0
Christianity (178)	20.8	3.9	75.3	100.0
Age of respondent				
<15 (122)	12.8	4.0	83.2	100.0
15-19 (209)	19.9	3.4	76.7	100.0
20-24 (18)	38.9	16.7	44.4	100.0
>24 (9)	66.7	0.0	33.3	100.0
Education of respondent				
Primary (259)	12.7	1.9	85.3	100.0
Secondary (53)	41.5	11.3	47.2	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	32.6	8.7	58.7	100.0
Marital status of respondent				
Single (319)	17.6	4.1	78.4	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	31.3	6/3	62.5	100.0
Married (22)	36.4	4.5	59.1	100.0
Widowed (1)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent				
Yao (160)	19.4	1.3	79.4	100.0
Chewa (110)	17.3	4.5	78.2	100.0
Lomwe (80)	20.0	8.8	71.3	100.0
Other (3)	33.3	0.0	66.7	100.0
Total	19.6	4.2	76.3	100.0

6.14.4 Other stereotypes

In addition to the above stereotypes, respondents were also asked whether they agreed with the following stereotypes: (i) it is wrong when boys behave like girls, (ii) boys need to be tough even if they are young; and (iii) boys lose respect if they cry. Forty-one percent (41%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that *“it is wrong when boys behave like girls”*: there were more FCoCs (53%) than CoCs (40%) who disagreed with this statement. The proportion of males (42%) who disagreed with this statement was just the same with that of the females (41%). There were slightly more Christian respondents (43%) who reported agreeing with the statement than Muslim respondents at 40% (Table 22). Table 22 also shows that the proportion of respondents who disagreed with the statement increased with age.

The highest proportion of respondents who disagreed with the statement that it is wrong when boys behave like girls was among those in secondary school (59%) and this was followed by those in primary school (39%) and then the lowest was among those who were currently not in school (37%). In terms of marital status, the proportion of respondents who disagreed with the statement that it is wrong when boys behave like girls was 41% for those who were single and 27% for those who were married. Just more than half of the respondents who were Lomwe (54%) reported they disagreed with the statement followed by the Chewa (40%) and then the Yao at 36% (Table 22). At community level, boys are expected to behave and do things differently from the girls including on issues relating to household chores.

“Household chores like bathing children, sweeping and cleaning the surroundings are all for girls. If these chores are done by a boy we say he is a girly, born like a woman. As it is said then, men are clever and women are meek such that, if you saw a boy bathing a child then you’ll see his friends laughing at him saying he is dumb. Men say they have to go out to work in jobs that bring the most benefit to the home. All those other jobs that are considered worthless are for girls”, (P5, FGD with female FCoCs)

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that *“boys need to be tough even if they are young”*: the proportion of respondents who were CoCs (81%) who agreed with this statement was higher than that of FCoCs (62%). The proportion of males who agreed with this statement was also higher at 86% compared to the proportion of females at 73%. Slightly more Muslims (81%) than Christians (78%) agreed with this statement. With regard to age, Table 22 shows that the proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement decreased with age: 81% of the respondents aged less than 15 years agreed with this statement and this went down to 67% among those aged more than 19 years of age. Respondents in primary school agreed more with this statement (82%) than those in secondary school (74%) and those currently not in school (70%).

Lastly, 68% of the respondents agreed with the statement that *“boys lose respect if they cry”*: there were more CoCs (72%) who agreed with this statement than FCoCs (32%). The proportion of females (67%) who agreed with this statement was slightly lower than that of males (70%). There were more Muslims (73%) than Christians (65%) who agreed with this statement. The proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement decreased with age up to age 20-24 where 39% of the respondents agreed with the statement, and this increased to 54% for those aged more than 24 years. Respondents who were in primary school had the highest proportion of respondents (75%) who agreed with this statement than those in secondary school (47%) and those who were currently not in school (54%). In terms of marital status, the proportion

of single respondents who agreed was 69%. However, the proportion of married respondents who agreed with the statement that boys lose respect if they cry was lower at 55%. The highest proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement was among the Yao (74%) and this was followed by the Chewa (71%) and the lowest was among the Lomwe at 33% (Table 22).

Table 22: Perceptions about other gender stereotypes (%)

Characteristics	It is wrong when boys behave like girls (N=358)				Boys need to be tough even if they are young (N=358)				Boys lose respect if they cry (N=358)			
	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total
Sex of respondent												
Male (181)	42.0	5.0	53.0	100.0	23.7	3.4	72.9	100.0	29.4	3.4	67.2	100.0
Female (177)	40.7	6.8	52.5	100.0	11.6	2.8	85.6	100.0	27.1	3.3	69.6	100.0
Type of respondent												
FCoC (34)	52.9	14.7	32.4	100.0	29.4	8.8	61.8	100.0	67.6	0.0	32.4	100.0
CoC (324)	40.1	4.9	54.9	100.0	16.4	2.5	81.2	100.0	24.1	3.7	72.2	100.0
Religion of respondent												
Muslim (175)	40.0	4.6	55.4	100.0	15.4	4.0	80.6	100.0	24.0	2.9	73.1	100.0
Christianity (178)	43.3	6.7	50.0	100.0	20.2	1.7	78.1	100.0	31.5	3.9	64.6	100.0
Age of respondent												
<15 (122)	40.0	4.8	55.2	100.0	17.6	1.6	80.8	100.0	24.0	4.8	71.2	100.0
15-19 (209)	41.7	4.9	53.4	100.0	16.5	3.4	80.1	100.0	27.2	2.9	69.9	100.0
20-24 (18)	44.4	16.7	38.9	100.0	22.2	11.1	66.7	100.0	61.1	0.0	38.9	100.0
>24 (9)	44.4	22.2	33.3	100.0	33.3	0.0	66.7	100.0	44.4	0.0	55.6	100.0
Education of respondent												
Primary (259)	38.6	4.6	56.8	100.0	15.4	2.3	82.2	100.0	21.2	3.5	75.3	100.0
Secondary (53)	58.5	1.9	39.6	100.0	20.8	5.7	73.6	100.0	50.9	1.9	47.2	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	37.0	17.4	45.7	100.0	26.1	4.3	69.6	100.0	41.3	4.3	54.3	100.0
Marital status of respondent												
Single (319)	41.1	4.4	54.5	100.0	76.8	4.1	19.1	100.0	27.0	3.8	69.3	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	62.5	0.0	37.5	100.0	75.0	12.5	12.5	100.0	31.3	0.0	68.8	100.0
Married (22)	27.3	31.8	40.9	100.0	86.4	4.5	9.1	100.0	45.5	0.0	54.5	100.0
Widowed (1)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent												
Yao (160)	36.3	4.4	59.4	100.0	15.6	3.8	80.6	100.0	23.1	2.5	74.4	100.0
Chewa (110)	40.0	6.4	53.6	100.0	17.3	0.0	82.7	100.0	26.4	2.7	70.9	100.0
Lomwe (80)	53.8	7.5	38.8	100.0	22.5	5.0	72.5	100.0	37.5	6.3	56.3	100.0
Other (3)	66.7	0.0	33.3	100.0	33.3	0.0	66.7	100.0	66.7	0.0	33.3	100.0
Total	41.3	5.9	52.8	100.0	17.6	3.1	79.3	100.0	28.2	3.4	68.4	100.0

6.15 Perceptions about sex and sexual relationships

This section looks at respondents' perceptions about sex and sexual relationships. Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed with the following statements: (i) If a girl says no to sex she usually means yes; (ii) boys do not remain faithful to their girlfriends for long; (iii) if a boy is unfaithful, it is because his girlfriend did not care of him; and (iv) girls want boys to be romantic.

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement that *"if a girl says no to sex she usually means yes"*. A higher proportion of FCoCs at 79% disagreed with this statement than CoCs at 55%. The proportion of Christians (59%) who disagreed with this statement was slightly higher than that of Muslims (55%). A higher proportion of females (65%) disagreed with this statement compared to males (49%). In terms of age, respondents aged more than 24 years had the highest proportion of disagreement (78%) with this statement and this was followed by those aged 20-24 (67%) and then those aged less than 15 years (60%). Respondents aged 15-19 had the lowest proportion of disagreement at 53% (Table 23). Most married respondents (73%) disagreed with the statement that if a girl says no to sex she usually means yes, while disagreement among those who were single stood at 56%. In terms of tribe, the Lomwe (68%) had the highest proportion of respondents who disagreed with the statement followed by the Yao at 56% and then the Chewa at 50% (Table 23).

With regard to the statement *"Boys do not remain faithful to their girlfriends for long"* most respondents (81%) agreed with the statement, with slightly more females (82.5%) than males (80%) agreeing with this statement. The proportion of CoCs who agreed with this statement (82%) was higher than that of FCoCs (71%). There were slightly more Muslims (83%) than Christians (80%) who agreed with the statement. Adolescents aged 15-19 had the highest proportion of respondents (84%) who agreed with the statement followed by respondents aged less than 15 years (79%) and then those aged 20-24 (72%). Those aged more than 24 years of age had the lowest proportion of agreement at 67%. Table 23 further shows that respondents who were in primary school (82%) were more likely to agree with the statement compared to those in secondary school (77%). Most respondents (85%) not in school agreed with the statement. Table 23 also shows that single respondents (82%) were more likely to agree with the statement that boys do not remain faithful to their girlfriends for long than persons who were married (68%). With regard to tribe, the Chewa (84%) and the Lomwe (84%) had the highest proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement compared to the Yao (79%).

Most respondents (68%) agreed with the statement *"If a boy is unfaithful, it is because his girlfriend did not care of him"* with more males (74%) than females (62%) agreeing with this statement. There were more CoCs (71%) than FCoCs (41%) who agreed with this statement. The proportion of Muslims who agreed with this statement was much higher at 78% than that of Christians at 59%. As can be seen in Table 23, the proportion of respondents who agreed with this statement decreased with age: while 70% of those who were aged less than 15 years agreed with this statement, only about a third of those who were aged more than 24 years did.

Those in primary school (76%) were more likely to agree with the statement that if a boyfriend is unfaithful it is because his girlfriend did not take care of him than those in secondary school (43%) and those who were not currently in school (54%). In terms of marital status, those who were single had the highest

proportion of respondents (70%) who agreed with the statement compared to those who were married (64%). The Yaos (77%) followed by the Chewas (68%) were more likely to agree with the statement compared to the Lomwes (51%).

Lastly, in this section, most respondents (87%) agreed with the statement that girls always want boys to be romantic and there were more males (93%) who agreed with this statement compared to females (81%). The proportion of FCoCs who agreed with this statement (91%) was slightly higher compared to CoCs (87%). As far as religion is concerned, the proportion of Muslims (89%) who agreed with this statement was slightly higher compared to Christians (86%). All respondents aged 20-24 agreed with this statement and this was followed by those aged less than 15 years (87%) and those aged 15-19 (87%). The lowest proportion as far as age is concerned was among those aged more than 24 years at 78% (Table 23).

There were no differences between respondents in primary school (87%) and those in secondary school (87%) who agreed with the statement that girls always want boys to be romantic. However, the proportion of respondents who were not currently in school was higher at 94%. Ninety-six percent (96%) of those who were married agreed with the statement, compared to 87% of the single respondents (Table 23). Lastly, the Yaos (89%) followed by the Chewa (87%) were more likely to agree with the statement that girls always want boys to be romantic compared to the Lomwes (83%).

Table 23: Perceptions about sex and sexual relationships (%)

Characteristics	If a girl says no to sex she usually means yes (N=358)				Boys do not remain faithful to their girlfriends for long (N=358)					If a boy is unfaithful, it is because his girlfriend did not care of him (N=358)					Girls always want boys to be romantic (N=358)				
	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Total	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	No response	Total	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	No response	Total	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	No response	Total
Sex of respondent																			
Female (177)	65.0	7.3	27.7	100.0	11.3	5.6	82.5	0.6	100.0	33.9	3.4	62.1	0.6	100.0	14.1	4.0	81.4	0.6	100.0
Male (181)	49.2	8.8	42.0	100.0	16.0	3.9	80.1	0.0	100.0	20.4	5.5	74.0	0.0	100.0	3.3	3.3	93.4	0.0	100.0
Type of respondent																			
FCoC (34)	79.4	14.7	5.9	100.0	26.5	2.9	70.6	0.0	100.0	58.8	0.0	41.2	0.0	100.0	8.8	0.0	91.2	0.0	100.0
CoC (324)	54.6	7.4	38.0	100.0	12.3	4.9	82.4	0.3	100.0	23.8	4.9	71.0	0.3	100.0	8.6	4.0	87.0	0.3	100.0
Religion of respondent																			
Muslim (175)	55.4	8.0	36.6	100.0	14.9	5.1	80	0.0	100.0	18.3	4.0	77.7	0.0	100.0	7.4	4.0	88.6	0.0	100.0
Christianity (178)	59.0	6.7	34.3	100.0	11.8	4.5	83.1	0.6	100.0	35.4	5.1	59.0	0.6	100.0	10.1	3.4	86.0	0.6	100.0
Age of respondent																			
<15 (122)	60.0	4.8	35.2	100.0	12.8	7.2	79.2	0.8	100.0	22.4	6.4	70.4	0.8	100.0	7.2	4.8	87.2	0.8	100.0
15-19 (209)	53.4	9.2	37.4	100.0	12.6	3.4	84	0.0	100.0	26.7	3.9	69.4	0.0	100.0	9.7	3.4	86.9	0.0	100.0
20-24 (18)	66.7	11.1	22.2	100.0	22.2	5.6	72.2	0.0	100.0	44.4	0.0	55.6	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	77.8	22.2	0.0	100.0	33.3	0.0	66.7	0.0	100.0	66.7	0.0	33.3	0.0	100.0	22.2	0.0	77.8	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent																			
Primary (259)	51.4	6.9	41.7	100.0	13.1	5.0	81.5	0.4	100.0	19.7	4.2	75.7	0.4	100.0	8.9	4.2	86.5	0.4	100.0
Secondary (53)	81.1	7.5	11.3	100.0	17.0	5.7	77.4	0.0	100.0	49.1	7.5	43.4	0.0	100.0	11.3	1.9	86.8	0.0	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	60.9	15.2	23.9	100.0	13.0	2.2	84.8	0.0	100.0	43.5	2.2	54.3	0.0	100.0	4.3	2.2	93.5	0.0	100.0
Marital status of respondent																			
Single (319)	56.4	7.2	36.4	100.0	12.9	4.7	82.1	0.3	100.0	25.4	4.7	69.6	0.3	100.0	9.1	4.1	86.5	0.3	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	43.8	12.5	43.8	100.0	6.3	12.5	81.3	0.0	100.0	43.8	6.3	50.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Married(22)	72.7	18.2	9.1	100.0	31.8	0.0	68.2	0.0	100.0	36.4	0.0	63.6	0.0	100.0	4.5	0.0	95.5	0.0	100.0
Widowed(1)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent																			
Yao (160)	56.3	9.4	34.4	100.0	15.6	5.0	79.4	0.0	100.0	18.8	4.4	76.9	0.0	100.0	6.9	3.8	89.4	0.0	100.0
Chewa (110)	50.0	3.6	46.4	100.0	12.7	3.6	83.6	0.0	100.0	28.2	3.6	68.2	0.0	100.0	9.1	3.6	87.3	0.0	100.0
Lomwe (80)	67.5	8.8	23.8	100.0	10.0	5.0	83.8	1.3	100.0	42.5	5.0	51.3	1.3	100.0	12.5	3.8	82.5	1.3	100.0
Other (3)	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	33.3	66.7	0.0	100.0	0.0	33.3	66.7	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Total	57.2	7.4	35.4	100.0	13.7	4.7	81.3	0.3	100.0	27.1	4.5	68.2	0.3	100.0	8.7	3.6	87.4	0.3	100.0

In terms of sexual relations, one female CoC said that boys may have many girlfriends and this is not a problem. However, this is not expected of girls.

“When it comes to boys, even if they have several girlfriends that they sleep with it is never much of a problem compared to girls”, (Female CoC)

The girls are also supposed to submit to their boyfriends as narrated below.

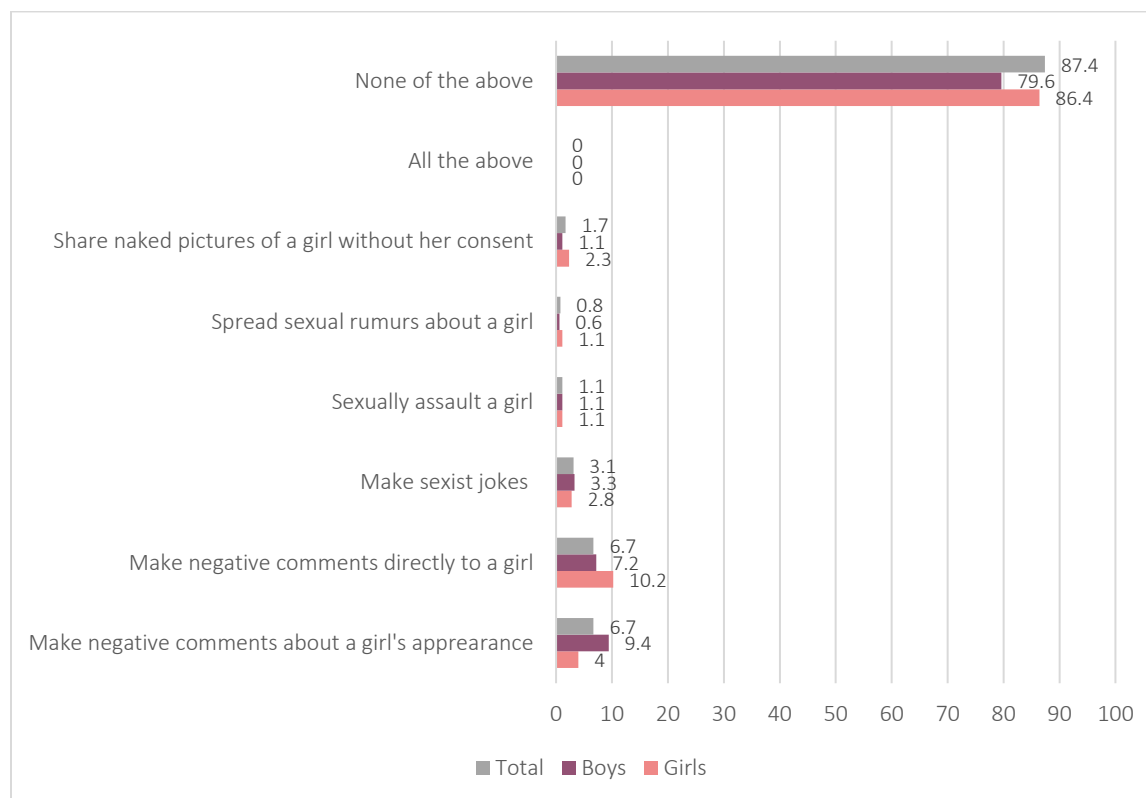
“The girl is supposed to submit to each and every thing that she is told by the boy when they are having sex. They say that girls do not have the chance to make decisions to change the situation.

The girl is expected to give birth to as many children as the man wants”, (FGD with female FCoCs)

In addition to this, female FCoCs said that a girl cannot ask a boy to be her boyfriend for fear of being branded a prostitute. These female FCoCs also said that the perception among boys is that girls who ask boys to be their boyfriends may have STIs and would want to transmit the disease. It was also emphasized during the male FGD that relationships in this community are sexual in nature: it is expected that boys will have sex with their partners and if he does not do it, ‘the friends will insult him and say you are just chatting with her like she is your sister, she will think you are not man enough’.

A number of statements were read to respondents, both males and females, whether it was okay for a boy to do the following things as depicted in Figure 15: send naked pictures of a girl without her consent, spread sexual rumours about a girl, sexually assault a girl, make sexist jokes, make negative comments directly to a girl and make negative comments about a girl’s appearance.

Figure 15: Perceptions about whether it is okay for a boy to do the following (% , N=358)



Most respondents (87%) as can be seen in Figure 15 above, said that it was not okay for a boy to do any of the things listed above: there were more females (86%) than males (80%) who said this. Very few respondents who said it was okay for a boy to do any of the things in Figure 15.

6.16 Discussions about gender equality and girls' rights

In the survey, respondents were asked about the frequency at which they discussed or talked about gender equality and girls' rights either among boys and girls of their age or with adult men and women.

6.16.1 Talking about gender equality and girls' rights with fellow girls/boys of their age

Fifty percent (50%) of the respondents sometimes talk about gender equality and girls' rights with girls of their age: there were more females (40%) than males (27%) who talked about this. The proportion of FCoCs who always talk about these issues with girls was much higher at 68% than that of CoCs (30%). The proportion of FCoCs who never talked about these issues was much lower at 3% compared to the proportion of CoCs (19%). There was no difference between Christians (33%) and Muslims (32%) who always talked about these issues. The proportion of respondents who talked about gender equality and girls' rights with fellow girls increased with age: only 26% of the girls aged less than 15 years always talked about these issues and the proportion increased to 89% among those aged more than 24 years of age. The proportion of respondents who always talked about these issues with girls was highest among those in secondary school at 49% followed by those who were currently not in school (44%) and the lowest proportion was among those in primary school at 29%. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of those who were married (59%) reported to always talk about gender equality and girls' rights with girls of their age, while for single respondents the percentage was 32%. The Yao (37%) followed by the Lomwe (33%) were more likely to always talk about these issues compared to the Chewas (27%).

Respondents were also asked about the frequency at which they talked about gender equality and girls' rights with boys of their age: 44% of the respondents reported that they sometimes talk about gender equality and girls' rights with boys of their age, followed by those who reported they always talked about this at 36% and then those who never talked about this at 20%. There were more females (32%) who never talked about gender equality and girls' rights with boys of their age compared to males (8%). The proportion of FCoCs (6%) who never talked about these issues with boys of their age was much lower compared to that of CoCs (21%). Muslims (22%) were slightly more likely to never to talk about these issues with boys than Christians (18%). The proportion of respondents who reported they always talked about gender equality and girls' rights with boys of their age increased with age: only 25% of the respondents aged less than 15 always talked about this and this increased to 67% among those aged more than 24 years. Respondents with primary education (25%) were more likely to never to talk about gender equality and girls' rights with boys of their age compared to those with secondary school level of education (7.5%). Persons who were married (59%) were more likely to always talk about gender equality and girls' rights with boys than those who were single (34%). Lastly, in terms of tribe, the Yao (41%) had the highest proportion of respondents who always talked about these issues with boys compared to the Lomwe (38%) and the Chewas (29%).

Table 24: I talk about gender equality and girls' rights with girls my age (%)

Characteristics	I talk about gender equality and girls' rights with girls my age (N=358)				I talk about gender equality and girls' rights with boys my age (N=358)				
	Never	Sometimes	Always	Total	Never	Sometimes	Always	No response	Total
Sex of respondent									
Female (177)	6.8	53.1	40.1	100.0	32.2	42.9	24.3	0.0	100.0
Male (181)	26.0	47.0	27.1	100.0	7.7	44.8	47.5	0.0	100.0
Type of respondent									
FCoC (24)	2.9	29.4	67.6	100.0	5.9	35.3	58.8	0.0	100.0
CoC (324)	17.9	52.2	29.9	100.0	21.3	44.8	33.6	0.3	100.0
Religion of respondent									
Muslim (175)	14.9	53.1	32.0	100.0	21.7	40.6	37.7	0.0	100.0
Christianity (178)	18.5	48.3	33.1	100.0	18.0	47.8	33.7	0.6	100.0
Age of respondent									
<15 (122)	23.2	51.2	25.6	100.0	31.1	43.4	24.6	0.6	100.0
15-19 (209)	14.1	51.0	35.0	100.0	14.8	45.0	40.2	0.0	100.0
20-24 (18)	5.6	50.0	44.4	100.0	5.6	44.4	50.0	0.0	100.0
>24 (9)	0.0	11.1	88.9	100.0	11.1	22.2	66.7	0.0	100.0
Education of respondent									
Primary (259)	20.1	51.4	28.6	100.0	24.7	43.6	31.3	0.4	100.0
Secondary (53)	1.9	49.1	49.1	100.0	7.5	34.0	58.5	0.0	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	13.0	43.5	43.5	100.0	6.5	56.5	37.0	0.0	100.0
Marital status of respondent									
Single (319)	17.6	50.8	31.7	100.0	21.3	44.2	34.2	0.3	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	12.5	56.3	28.2	100.0	6.3	56.3	37.5	0.0	100.0
Married (22)	4.5	36.4	59.1	100.0	9.1	31.8	59.1	0.0	100.0
Widowed (1)	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent									
Yao (160)	16.9	46.3	36.9	100.0	20.6	38.8	40.6	0.0	100.0
Chewa (110)	16.4	56.4	27.3	100.0	25.5	45.5	29.1	0.0	100.0
Lomwe (80)	17.5	50.0	32.5	100.0	12.5	50.0	37.5	0.0	100.0
Other (8)	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	12.5	50.0	36.0	0.3	100.0
Total (358)	16.5	50.0	33.5	100.0	19.8	43.9	36.0	0.3	100.0

6.16.2 Talking about gender equality and girls' rights with adult men and women

Respondents were asked about the frequency at which they took part in discussions about gender equality and girls' rights with adult men: overall 66% of the respondents reported never taking part in these discussions with adult men. The proportion of females (71%) who reported never taking part in these discussions with adult men was higher than that of males (61%) as can be seen in Table 25. CoCs (70%) were more likely to report they never took part in these discussions with adult men compared to FCoCs (32%). The proportion of Muslims (65%) who never took part in discussions about gender equality and girls' rights with adult men was slightly lower than that of Christians (69%). The proportion of respondents who never talked about these issues with adult men decreased with age: 80% of the respondents aged less than 15 never took part in these discussions with adult men and this decreased to 62% among those aged 15-19, 44% among those aged 20-24 and then 22% among those aged 24+. Respondents with primary school education (75%) were more likely never to take part in these discussions with adult men compared to those with secondary school level of education (40%). With regard to marital status, single respondents (69%) were more likely not to take part in discussions about gender equality and girls rights with adult men compared to those who were married (32%).

Respondents were also asked about the frequency at which they took part in conversations about gender equality and girls' rights with adult women. Overall, 51% of the respondents reported never taking part in these discussions with adult women with more males (59%) reporting this than females (42%). There were more CoCs (55%) than FCoCs (9%) who reported they never took part in these discussions with adult women. Muslims at 46% were less likely to discuss these issues with adult women compared to Christians (56%). As can be seen in Table 25, the proportion of respondents who reported never taking part in conversations on gender equality and girls rights with adult women decreased with age: while 65% of those aged less than 15 reported never taking part in these conversations with adult women, none of those aged more than 24 years reported this. Table 25 further shows that the proportion of respondents never taking part in discussions about gender equality and girls' rights decreased the higher the educational level. Single respondents (53%) were more likely to report never taking part in discussions about gender equality and girls' rights with adult women compared to married respondents (18%). Lastly, the Chewa (64%) had the highest proportion of respondents who reported never taking part in these discussions with adult women followed by the Lomwe (48%) and then the Yao (44%).

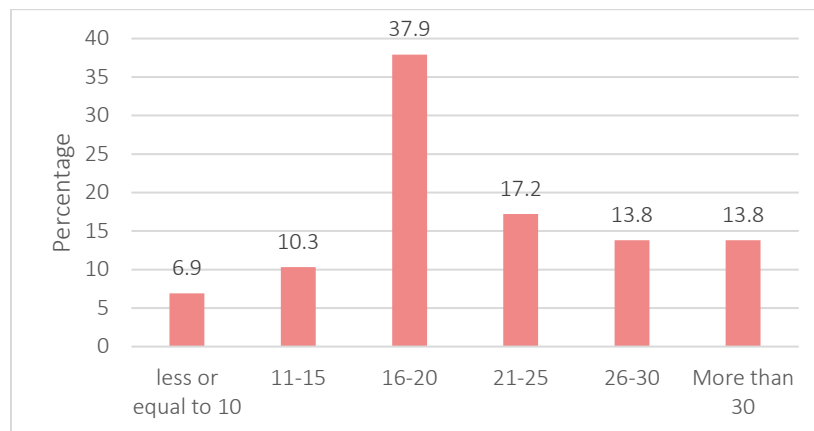
Table 25: Talking about gender equality and girls' rights with adult men and women (%)

Characteristics	I take part in discussions about gender equality and girls' rights with adult men (N=358)				I take part in conversations about gender equality and girls' rights with adult women (N=358)			
	Never	Sometimes	Always	Total	Never	Sometimes	Always	Total
Sex of respondent								
Female (177)	71.2	18.6	10.2	100.0	41.8	34.5	23.7	100.0
Male (181)	61.3	24.5	13.3	100.0	59.1	23.8	17.1	100.0
Type of respondent								
FCoC (24)	32.4	47.1	20.6	100.0	8.8	64.7	26.5	100.0
CoC (324)	69.8	19.4	10.8	100.0	54.9	25.3	19.8	100.0
Religion of respondent								
Muslim (175)	65.1	21.1	13.7	100.0	46.3	27.9	24.0	100.0
Christianity (178)	68.5	21.9	9.6	100.0	56.2	27.5	16.3	100.0
Age of respondent								
<15 (122)	80.3	12.3	7.4	100.0	64.8	20.5	14.8	100.0
15-19 (209)	61.7	25.8	12.4	100.0	47.8	29.7	22.5	100.0
20-24 (18)	44.4	44.4	11.1	100.0	11.1	77.8	11.1	100.0
>24 (9)	22.2	22.2	55.6	100.0	0.0	33.3	66.7	100.0
Education of respondent								
Primary (259)	74.9	16.6	8.5	100.0	60.6	21.9	17.8	100.0
Secondary (53)	39.6	34.0	26.4	100.0	26.4	43.4	30.2	100.0
Not currently in school (46)	47.8	39.1	13.0	100.0	21.7	54.3	23.9	100.0
Marital status of respondent								
Single (319)	68.7	20.7	10.7	100.0	52.7	27.9	19.4	100.0
Have partner but not live together (16)	68.8	18.8	12.5	100.0	56.3	25.0	18.8	100.0
Married (22)	31.8	45.5	22.7	100.0	18.2	50.0	31.8	100.0
Widowed (1)	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Tribe of respondent								
Yao (160)	63.8	21.3	15.0	100.0	43.8	29.4	26.9	100.0
Chewa (110)	78.2	12.7	9.1	100.0	63.6	20.9	15.5	100.0
Lomwe (80)	57.5	33.8	8.8	100.0	47.5	38.8	13.8	100.0
Other (3)	37.5	50.0	12.5	100.0	37.5	37.5	25.0	100.0
Total (358)	66.2	22.1	11.7	100.0	50.6	29.1	20.4	100.0

6.17 The Champions of Change

Plan Malawi has developed the concept of CoC in which some young people in the community are trained to help fellow youth in addressing some of the challenges they are experiencing. An official from Plan Malawi reported that 32 people have been trained in TA Liwonde as FCoCs and these have come up with their own groups of young people which they meet once a week and they discuss issues affecting them. Each FCoC may have between 25 and 30 members (which is more than the earlier communicated number of ten). During the survey, FCoCs were also asked the number of members that they had in their groups and the results are presented in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Number of members per CoC group (% , N=29)



Most FCoCs had less than 30 members and only 7% reported having 10 or less members in their groups. The highest number of members per group was 42 while the lowest was eight. During the FGDs with FCoCs, the number of group members a FCoC is supposed to have varied ranging from 11 to 42 as narrated during an FGD with male FCoCs.

“As the law given, we are required to take up to 35 [participants]. If over that, we should make another group from the original”, (P2, FGD with male FCoCs)

As mentioned during an FGD with FCoCs, if there are too many members the group is supposed to split. During the FGD with female FCoCs, participants said that the number of members per CoC group varies with some having five members while others have up to 30 members. Boys and girls do not belong to the same group: they do not mix as for example narrated during an FGD.

“Men don’t mix with girls during CoC group meetings but when it comes to sporting activities we are not selective on who plays soccer or netball. Girls can play soccer with boys. We are not strict on boys only or girls only because of gender”, (FGD with male and female FCoCs)

“Safe space is a good place where we meet as girls in a way it’s a protected place where no one can disturb us, and the only group that stays there are the only ones belonging to that particular group as we are discussing”, (FGD with male and female FCoCs)

The FCoCs are therefore young men and women who have been trained by Plan and have gone ahead to establish groups of young people aged less than 18 years and they meet each week with girls and boys meeting separately. While CoCs and their FCoCs are supposed to meet separately by sex, it was observed that in some cases this is not observed due to lack of places where meetings can be conducted.

6.17.1 Selection of facilitators of Champions of Change

FCoCs have groups of young people who they meet every week as mentioned above. During the FGDs with FCoCs, participants mentioned several ways on how FCoCs are selected at community level. Before the CoC programme, there were a number of youth clubs in TA Liwonde. Most FCoCs were selected from existing youth clubs.

“So, in every youth club they selected one boy and one girl to go to the training of CoCs. When I went I knew that in my community they chose me because they knew that when I go to the trainings I would be able to come and teach them”, (P4, FGD with female FCoCs)

These FCoCs were chosen from youth clubs based on a number of criteria: having the ability to learn and explain issues, interest in the subject, a demonstration of good behaviour, being present in all or most youth club meetings and they also looked at whether one is going to school or not. If one goes to school, it is difficult for him or her to be selected because the organizers do not want to disturb one’s education. Within these youth clubs, chairpersons play an important role in the selection of participants to attend CoC and other trainings.

“In our youth club, when the chairperson of the club is called by Plan Malawi it is him who is responsible for choosing the names of those to go to Liwonde for the trainings”, (P3, FGD with female FCoCs)

In some cases, it was not only the chairperson on his own who makes decisions on who should attend the training: these issues were discussed by members of youth club. When youth clubs are choosing people to go to trainings, they also look at whether one has attended training or not previously.

“In our youth club, when there is a message for trainings, we gather everyone and we see all those who went to previous trainings and choose those who have not gone to any trainings; as such this was my first time to go the trainings”, (P2, FGD with female FCoCs)

In some cases, members of the youth group also vote in order to select the person who should attend the training. Members of the youth group also look at the training which is being proposed and people are chosen based on whether they qualify for the training (for example educational qualifications) and this is because some trainings require someone to know both English and Chichewa. For courses which require someone to have gone to school and be able to speak English, those who have never went to school are not be selected. A number of FCoCs were selected to attend the CoC training based on their educational qualifications. While a number of FCoCs were chosen from the youth clubs, some were actually chosen by Plan Malawi as narrated during an FGD with female FCoCs.

“[laughing] I was chosen by Plan Malawi from our meetings with them. They saw how active I was in the activities I was involved in. The way I spoke I was able to expand on issues at hand so, they realized that out of the girls that they met here, I was the one who could do well in this project. When these girls were taken for training, I was called late in the night to leave the next morning. I was also called to help these girls in some areas in which they lacked”, (P5, FGD with female FCoCs)

This FCoC had actually attended Village Saving Loan (VSL) training where she performed quite well and because of that, she was identified by Plan Malawi to be trained as FCoC. During an FGD with male FCoCs, participants mentioned that there are some youth who cannot be chosen as FCoCs especially those who are very busy.

Some methods, however, of selecting FCoCs were criticized: one way of selecting FCoCs was that some clubs have a list of people who have gone for training and those who have not yet gone for training. When an opportunity for training comes, people who have not attended any training are the ones who are

selected as explained above. During an FGD with female FCoCs, participants pointed out that such an approach is not good, because the next available candidate may not be educated, cannot even explain issues and may not have an interest in the matter; hence the chairpersons should choose participants who should go for training depending on qualifications, capabilities and interest. There is no need to force people to attend training. Cases were given during the FGDs with FCoCs of girls who attended CoC trainings but did not do anything and had to be replaced. The sending of young people who do not have the skills of attracting group members, as mentioned during an FGD with male FCoCs, was one of the factors which contributed to the decrease in number of CoCs in some groups. There was a suggestion during an FGD with male and female FCoCs that Plan Malawi, which is implementing the project, should just call and choose the people who should be FCoCs and they argued that such an approach would be good as it would minimize the quarrels which prevail in youth groups on making decisions on who should go for training. It was also suggested that Plan should monitor the people it has trained to be FCoCs and assess how they are performing. Some FCoCs have actually quit the programme after being trained.

6.17.2 Training of facilitators of Champions of Change and discussions in the groups

Perceptions about the Champions of Change training

Once the FCoCs are selected using the different channels as explained above, they are supposed to be trained so that they should know what they are supposed to do in their communities. FCoCs reported they learnt quite a lot of things during the two training they already attended. There were some things, however, that they did not understand and they needed more information. During the FGDs, participants reported that they did not understand body confidence and this was despite the fact that some participants in FGDs with female FCoCs said that the teaching was good and that the facilitators were not all that fast. These facilitators used both English and Chichewa and this approach was appreciated as trainees claimed they learnt new English words.

The challenge, however, was that there were differences in understanding of the things which they were being taught as this was dependent on the level of education participants had. Some participants suggested that a refresher course should be conducted to remind FCoCs what they learnt. In the FGD with female FCoCs, participants did not suggest anything else which should be added to the CoC training programme apart from having a refresher courses. In the FGD with male FCoCs one suggestion was that the CoC programme should actually be extended to other areas where there are currently no CoCs or even youth clubs. Participants in the same FGD suggested that the CoC training should also include some elements of vocational training such as carpentry, bricklaying and entrepreneurship. Such courses, as argued by male FCoCs, can be quite helpful to young people as sources of income and it would contribute to ensuring that young people for example do not steal.

At the time of data collection for this baseline study, the CoC programme had just started and some modules had not been covered. For example, during an FGD with male FCoCs, participants reported they were supposed to cover nine modules and that they did not learn module 7; hence the expectation was that they will be called to finish off and cover module 7. These FGD participants explained that they did not know what was contained in this module. Lastly, during the FGD with male and female FCoCs, the participants felt that they had challenges to effectively communicate with parents of the children (group members) they worked with, including responding to some of the questions they had. One participant gave

an example of a situation when orphans do not go to school and when their guardians are confronted by the FCoCs, they tell FCoCs to find the basic necessities that the orphans would require at school. It seems, therefore, that FCoCs did not have much to add to what was being taught, however, communication skills with adult community members could get some more attention.

Things Champions of Change learnt from facilitators of Champions of Change

As mentioned above, FCoCs are supposed to teach/discuss with CoCs a number of issues. By the time this baseline survey was being conducted a few sessions with CoCs conducted by FCoCs had already taken place. Some CoCs reported that they had forgotten what they had learnt. For those who could remember a number of things they learnt, the following were mentioned: (i) the disadvantages of child marriage and where such incidences can be reported; (ii) *body confidence*; (iii) communication; (iv) gender and gender equality; (v) rights including how to recognize infringement of one's rights; and (vi) family planning. When asked about *body confidence* one female CoC explained that this is about one accepting himself or herself how he or she is e.g. if one is dark he or she should just accept this and not start using bleaching creams to change his or her complexion. In terms of gender, CoCs in most cases said that this is about there being no differences between men and women. One female CoC also said that they learnt how to save money:

“We were learning on how we can save money in the village bank (*Bank mu khonde*) [I=Mmhm!] yes so they were explaining to us the advantages and disadvantages that we may meet as we save the money”, (Female CoC)

“We learnt about bee farming, on how we can care for the bees and the things that are needed to attract the bees and the benefit we can find from bee farming”, (Female CoC)

In addition to this, one CoC also said that they also teach each other how to convince those who have dropped out of school to go back to school. The CoC programme has just started and CoCs could not really explain things that they learnt in detail. In terms of things which should be added to the things that they discuss with FCoCs, not much was mentioned. One CoC observed that there are not enough trainers, hence there is a need to address this issue. The meetings which FCoCs have with CoCs take place on Saturdays and Sundays.

Benefits of participating in Champions of Change activities or training

The trainings that CoCs attended were described as beneficial. There were others who could not explain what they benefited. Others, however, mentioned a number of benefits such as helping not to be abused/insulted, not insulting others, knowing when one has been abused and reporting cases of abuse to relevant authorities. During the trainings they also learnt that even if one has a child she can go back to school and one female CoC gave an example of a friend who was convinced to go back to school. Lastly, there have also been some trainings on how to save money through village banks which have proved to be quite beneficial.

“In case of how to save money, the trainings have helped us realize that village banks are a good way as they give us the power to lend money to each other, that we may use for certain projects”, (Female CoC)

Participation in CoC activities has, therefore, made young people aware of their rights to a certain extent, where to report in case of abuse, how to save money and the importance of education.

6.17.3 Groups of people participating in Champions of Change activities

The CoC programme targets young people as mentioned earlier. During FGDs with FCoCs, participants reported that it is mainly youth who take part in this programme. A wide range of youth participate, both males and females. Some FGD participants even mentioned the age of CoCs, for example during an FGD with male and female FCoCs, an age range of 14-18 years was specified with others going down to 10 years.

“... At the time we went for the training, the training requires us to chat with youth from 10 to 18”,
(FGD with male and female FCoCs)

During data collection it was also observed that there were some boys and girl aged less than 10 years who were CoCs. Such very young girls and boys never participated in the study. During the CoC meetings, FCoCs and their CoCs are supposed to discuss issues: however, in some groups members are very young and they view FCoCs as their *aunties* or *elders* and therefore they perceive them as their advisors, not as peers.

People who attend CoC activities were also categorized in terms of school attendance, marital status and whether they have children or not.

“The people that come to my group, I would say come from different groups in our community. For example, we have girls that attend school, we have girls that do not attend school, we even have girls that have children and others that may not have children but they are married but belong to this age range between 10 and 19. These are the ones we meet to discuss with”, (FGD with female FCoCs)

There were also some girls who were pregnant and attend CoC activities. During an FGD with female and male FCoCs, some participants added that even commercial sex workers are involved in the programme in order for them to make informed decisions relating to their work. There was reported to be no discrimination in participation in CoC activities: the youth participate regardless of religion, tribe, marital status or disability.

“We do not discriminate between religions or between tribes: Muslims, Christians, Yao, Lomwe, Chewa, Tumbuka, if we have them in our community, we are able to meet with all of those people”,
(FGD with female FCoCs)

“Like in my group, some youth don’t go to school and some go. In terms of religion, they are different too just like we are here now we have different religions it’s the same with the groups we don’t belong to the same religion, tribe whether Yao, Tumbuka, Chewa or Sena we are not selective on tribe, religion, school, or not school”, (FGD with male and female FCoCs)

Married youth were reported to participate in CoC activities. There were many school going youth who participate in CoC activities and, as mentioned during the FGD with male FCoCs, this is why CoC meetings are held on Saturdays and Sundays. One female CoC reported that even parents and local leaders participate in CoC activities, by for example encouraging youth to participate. The same CoC also said that the majority of the CoCs are girls. There was also a feeling among a few interviewees that those who participate in CoC activities were from well to do families.

“Those that mostly take part in large numbers are those with parents who are well to do and understand what is going on”, (Female CoC)

“It is mostly them that come because their parents easily recognize the benefits such that when they are taught again they encourage their children so that it should help them. But when it’s those who are not well to do, they think that it is better to spend their time doing casual labour [*ganyu*] so that they should find money,” (Female CoC)

6.17.4 Why some young do not participate in Champions of Change activities

Some groups of young people do not participate in the CoC activities. For example, during an FGD with female FCoCs, participants mentioned people with various forms of disability (e.g. people with hearing impairment, visual impairment and albinos) who do not attend such activities because of fear of stigma and discrimination and for those with hearing impairment they may not be able to hear anything during the meetings.

“Like those who have hearing problems, when they go to the group meetings, their friends say ‘*you have hearing problems, what are you going to get from these meetings?*’” (P2, FGD with female FCoCs)

As much as FCoCs would want to involve everyone in their respective communities including persons with disability, some of them did not have the capacity to fully involve persons with disability.

There are also some people who were reported not to attend CoC activities due to religious reasons. For example, participants during an FGD with female FCoCs mentioned that, among other things, girls are taught about using contraceptives during CoC meetings and some religious groups, for example the Roman Catholic Church and Jehovah Witnesses do not allow their members to use them. Participants in an FGD with male and female FCoCs also said that there are some people from some religious groups who do not attend as they do not like associating with others in groups, it is perceived as a waste of time.

There were also some parents who tell their children not to attend CoC activities. This happened especially after hearing that they are being taught SRH issues including contraceptives. One prevailing belief is that a girl who has never given birth is not supposed to use contraceptives as it is believed that such contraceptives dry up the womb and the girl never gives birth. Some FGD participants gave examples of girls who stopped attending CoC activities after being told by their parents not to.

“For the same issue of contraception, one of my members stopped coming because of this issue. Even the parents came to my home to ask me what we are teaching their children. After I explained, they said their child has stopped coming to our meetings”, (P2, FGD with female FCoCs)

There are some youth from rich families, as narrated during an FGD with female FCoCs, who do not attend CoC activities because they may not want to be taught by poor people: these youth from rich families actually look down upon FCoCs as they are their age mates. During an FGD with male FCoCs, participants emphasized that it is mainly poor people who participate in such activities, as those from well to do households do not have any interest to participate saying what will they do in such meetings. There are therefore some conflicts in the data, as earlier on some study participants mentioned that it is mainly young people who come from rich families who participate in CoC activities.

There were also a number of youth who do not go to CoC activities because of lack of entertainment. At the time when there are CoC activities, for example, as narrated by participants in an FGD with male FCoCs, some youth go to video shows. These CoC activities happen on Saturdays and Sundays when there are also many games in the community hence some youth prefer to go and watch games instead of going for CoC activities.

“It is true that there are lot of youth here but not in the champion of change groups, because it happens that on the day of the meeting, some will be found going to video shows just to get some entertainment as we don’t have entertainment equipment. They feel the discussions are not fun to them as compared to [playing foot] ball, that if we had the footballs and *baa*, we would be able to keep them from leaving”, (P1, FGD with male FCoCs)

“In our village, the youth that are taking part are not many because we don’t have resources to attract more youth to be part of the group. Most youth like to play football but we don’t have the balls and [if we are] given the balls we can have more youth participating”, (P3, FGD with female FCoCs)

These participants explained that if they had balls of their own, there would be more youth who would come to the CoC meetings – they do not come as of now because there is nothing which attracts them. The youth who are not registered can be attracted by games such as football. Although quite a good number of youth can register, the numbers of those who attend these meetings are few: one FCoC reported that only nine of her members attended CoC activities and she argued that the numbers of youth participating decreases if balls are not there as narrated during an FGD with female FCoCs.

“As for me my group started with 21 children. But in order for the kids to reach 21, I managed to find a ball somewhere that’s why I had a lot of children and when I teach them for an hour and around 3 pm I would give them the ball to go and play. Unfortunately, in the process the owner of the ball came to get it back and the number of children decreased as I am talking now I am left with 15 children and they are the ones that are courageous enough and are still coming and I realized it is the ball that was attracting the children”, (P1, FGD with female FCoCs)

One of the FCoCs said that in her group they even made a ball from local resources and playing this is attracting many young people. However, they want a ball made from the factory. Some participants in an FGD with male FCoCs also said that paying CoCs would attract them to attend CoC meetings and CoCs, according to the FCoCs, claim that FCoCs get money while CoCs do not get anything. As mentioned during the FGDs with male FCoCs, some parents also have the view that their children who are mere CoCs are just being used.

“So, they are just using you and yet they are the ones getting money when they go there, there is no benefit there”, (P3, FGD with male FCoCs)

During the FGD with male FCoCs it was confirmed that some youth do not attend because they do not benefit financially from their attendance. FCoCs receive some allowance when they go and attend training sessions, but CoCs do not receive anything when they are attending CoC meetings.

“For those aged 16, 17 going above, they don’t come because as my friend said that there is a tendency of saying why should we go there and yet they are the ones who benefited money from it, so why go there, we should learn for free, so those 15 below, maybe they come due to peer pressure or just copying what their friends are doing, like they don’t think about the money issues”, (FGD with male FCoCs)

There are also some people who did not participate because they are aged 19+ and they claim that they already know the things that CoCs deal with; hence they do not have any interest. Other groups who do not attend, according to FGDs with male and female FCoCs, are orphans and this is because they are forced to do household chores and then those who are married in some cases are denied participation in such activities by their spouses. Lastly, other reasons why some youth do not attend CoC activities included that some young people from the community tend to look down upon FCoCs and there is a feeling that there is nothing new that they can learn from them as they are from the same community.

6.17.5 Roles of facilitators of Champions of Change

FGD participants were also asked about the roles of FCoCs: one of the roles, as mentioned by a participant in the FGD with female FCoCs, is to meet and discuss with young people about their life and the need to change some harmful cultural practices. The FCoCs also act as role models for young people who participate in their group activities.

“My role as CoC is to meet different groups of girls and discuss with them about their everyday lives with the purpose of trying to change certain traditions that may be harmful to their lives in this community. I also have to be their role model practicing those things that I teach them. Because if I just teach them without putting them into practice myself then it would be difficult for them to get it. For example, participant number one can give a testimony to when I showed children the Norplant contraceptive method that I use that will be there for five years. They work the same way as any other medicine from the hospital. Just like when any person would react different to another when given certain medicine, that’s the same that can happen with contraceptive methods. So that’s how I try to be a role model to the children I teach”, (P5, FGD with female FCoCs)

CoCs also mentioned that these FCoCs are responsible for discussing issues with them including gender.

“Like our leader in this project of CoC, we have [name], who leads us youth, telling us about gender and other things”, (Male CoC)

The FCoCs actually meet CoCs in safe places where they discuss various issues with young people. During the FGDs, participants were able to explain what safe places are.

“Safe space is a good place where we meet as girls in a way it’s a protected place where no one can disturb us, and the only group that stays there are the only ones belonging to that particular group as we are discussing”, (FGD with male and female FCoCs)

“.... Safe space is a place where youths of champion of change meet and discuss freely without looking who is watching, are there my parents, brothers that will criticize me about what we are discussing here because what we discuss in safe spaces are the things we fail to reach out to our

parents for instance ‘what is having sex [*kunyengana*]?’ which means the parent will chase you away saying that is childish unlike when it’s just us the youth we will be able to discuss freely on the good and bad side hence we are learning about the stories”, (FGD with male and female FCoCs)

During meetings the FCoCs also teach boys and girls other issues including the use of contraceptive methods (e.g. condoms), for youth to accept their bodies and not *kuzijudula*⁶ and issues of gender equality.

“We teach them about gender equality. For example, if a boy is cleaning plates then a girl should clean pots so that there is no difference in job allocations. Therefore, the two will be able to work together”, (P4, FGD with female FCoCs)

The things which were initially thought to be done by girls only such as cooking, fetching water and cleaning, boys are now equally being taught to do these things and support their sisters in the home. FCoCs also reported that they also help fellow youth who experience different forms of violence e.g. one female FCoC gave an example of a case in which a man sexually violated his stepdaughter and even stopped having sex with his wife.

“It came to a point [when] the father even stopped having sexual contact with the wife because the child was still *tight* and more arousing to him”, (P5, FGD with female FCoCs)

This girl who was being sexually violated got pregnant and was helped by her mother to abort and access Norplant so that she should not get pregnant when her stepfather had sex with her. The FCoC reported this case and the man was arrested. During the meetings, FCoCs also tell CoCs what they need to do when they are abused: for example, as narrated during an FGD with male and female FCoCs, participants pointed out that some parents can be violent to their children to the extent of denying them food and it was agreed that CoCs should report to the FCoCs who can take these issues up with their parents.

During the meetings, FCoCs also encourage CoCs to go to school and avoid being involved in activities which can disturb their education, for example being involved in sexual relationships. Since FCoCs encourage their members to work hard in school, this is why meetings are conducted over the weekend.

“We also talk about the same things, they have to work hard in school to have a better future, that’s why we give them full chance to go to school throughout the week and come for the CoC meetings during weekend (P2, FGD with male FCoCs)

The FCoCs also encourage pregnant girls not to abort⁷ but to keep the pregnancy and go back to school after they have delivered. These FCoCs also teach their members about other SRH issues including issues around HIV.

“They also tell us about HIV prevention and what we can do if we have sexual partner and they tell us to use condoms if still in school so that we save our future”, (Male CoC)

⁶ This applies to girls and it means applying make-up to look attractive and beautiful.

⁷ Abortion is illegal in Malawi. If a girl seeks to abort a child, this will be, most of the time, an unsafe abortion.

Lastly, the FCoCs also play different games with the CoCs. While FCoCs would want to play games such as football and netball with their members, the major problem is that most of the CoC groups do not have balls.

6.17.6 Roles of community leaders

There were some CoCs who did not really understand the role of parents and community leaders in CoC activities. Study participants, however, reported that there are various roles which community leaders can play and one of these is to call for meetings where they can tell them about the CoC programme and they can encourage youth to continue with their activities in youth groups. In addition to this, these community leaders can also play the following roles:

“Their role is to tell parents on the behaviour of the children in terms of dressing and how they look. If you are not taking care of your child, he or she may go stray”, (Male CoC)

“They should not allow children to stay in their community if they are absent from school”, (Female CoC)

“They have to accept the initiative and allow us to teach them the message we are teaching”, (Female CoC)

One female CoC also said that these community leaders should also practice what they have been taught and ensure that people’s rights should not be infringed upon:

“They should make sure that in their village this sort of behaviour should not happen such as infringement of rights should not happen if at all they understood the message...”, (Female CoC)

At community level, community leaders also play an important role in the formulation of bylaws as explained by one female CoC.

“They will make sure as they hear the message from the meetings they will understand how issues of gender equality go and similarly for youth rights. The chiefs will use the messages in their laws and will also help monitor progress on those things that we discussed”, (Female CoC)

This girl explained that community members make the and the establishment of such laws should support the messages being given at the CoC meetings and sanctions should be implemented against all those who do not follow the laws. This was at the beginning of the CoC programme and, as detailed above, young people felt that the community leaders have potential to support the implementation of the programme.

6.17.7 Social movements

How Champions of Change can bring about changes regarding gender equality and rights

Both FCoCs and CoCs were asked about the ways how CoCs can make changes regarding gender equality and rights in their communities. One way, as suggested by the FCoCs, the FCoCs can call for meetings where they can inform youth about these issues. One key informant reported that the TCoCs even travelled with the TA and conducted meetings. Holding meetings, as argued by a male CoC, is a good idea because it will be difficult for CoCs to visit every household but they can meet chiefs and organize meetings which can then be attended by people from the community. One female CoC reported that in some communities, they have already started holding meetings.

“We hold meetings and we also reach out to the people to tell them about gender”, (Female CoC)

During these meetings, people in the community are sensitized about gender equality and for example, female FCoCs during an FGD said that these meetings can be held with chiefs and parents. These meetings are conducted with the aim of bringing about change.

“We are supposed to meet different people such as parents, chiefs, religious leaders, and others to enlighten each other on these issues. In the end, we want the bylaws to be enforced. The enforcement should not be one of lenience. What is needed is to be courageous”, (FGD with female FCoCs)

Community members who attend these meetings can be told that they should not differentiate between boys’ and girls’ chores as is the situation currently. Female FCoCs also mentioned that the meetings can be complimented with use of drama on gender issues.

“We can really call for meetings and at these meetings we may use drama performances to relay messages that we have called the meeting for in a way to attract their attention so that they should easily understand it. So, we may make a play concerning gender equality so that they may be able to understand easily”, (FGD with male and female FCoCs)

During these meetings CoCs can also actually share what they learn in CoC meetings including what gender is, what it means being a boy/girl, a boy’s journey and gender roles. People who attend these meetings can then be able to reach out to others with what they have learnt. It is not only the youth who should organize these meetings: the village leaders should also host meetings where, among other things, they can emphasise on the importance of children going to school and those who do not go should be *arrested*. It was argued that there are some parents who do not know about gender and gender equality; hence such meetings can help to address this gap and bring about change.

During the FGD with male FCoCs, participants also mentioned that they can effectively bring about change if, as FCoCs, they can start living an exemplary life which can be followed by CoCs. FCoCs also mentioned that they would want to visit the schools and talk to school children. In some cases, for example during the FGD with male FCoCs, participants said that it is sometimes difficult to get permission to go to schools and get consent to talk to school pupils; hence they suggested that they should be accompanied by some senior officials, for example someone from the health sector, to help get permission.

In addition to holding meetings, one female CoC also added that there can also be one to one discussions.

“Yes, we are many in CoC, so we can just share directions and just share with the people right in their homes, or if the houses are close together, just ask the village head to call for a meeting for us and share the message”, (Female CoC)

Roles of other people in making changes to gender equality and rights

Participants in this study were also asked about the roles of other people (e.g. parents, community members) in the community in order to make changes to gender equality. One issue which came out was that parents themselves can play an important role by encouraging their children to participate in CoC activities and that they should demonstrate good behaviour which their children can emulate.

“Parents can make changes in their own families and it is impossible for other parents to talk to other children on bad behaviour if they also do the same and they should make sure they are exemplary”, (Male CoC)

Other members of the community can also play the same role just like parents by just accepting that youth should go to youth clubs.

“They have to accept the initiative and allow us to teach them the message we are teaching”, (Female CoC)

At community level, there are a number of groups which have been established for specific purposes and these may play a role in terms of making changes to issues around gender equality and rights. For example, study participants mentioned that women’s groups have potential to contribute to making changes to gender equality issues, because of the role they have at community level. For example, these women’s groups discourage school dropout and child marriage. The women’s groups have special interest in the girls.

“They talk to girls and discuss with them on how conduct daily duties and to avoid things”, (Male CoC)

Some CoCs felt that their presence at the community meetings that are conducted by FCoCs/CoCs can be quite supportive as mentioned by a female CoC.

“These ones [women’s groups] can help by standing by our side during meetings so that other people do not look down on us saying we are too young to teach them”, (Female CoC)

Informants were also asked about the roles of NGOs in changing issues relating to gender equality. Some roles of NGOs which were mentioned included encouraging children to go to school so that they can lead independent lives and sponsoring children to go to school as narrated by a male CoC.

“They encourage children to go to school and be independent one day and they should not claim that nobody told them about education. Now these organizations have brought information which was missing and most people are going to school”, (Male CoC)

“Some organizations are helping needy children by sending them to school and sponsoring them with money to help their daily needs”, (Male CoC)

A number of organisations which support education were mentioned and these included CAMFED, Plan and CHRR. One male CoC even added that CAMFED in addition to supporting girls’ education also helps to send children who dropped out of school to go back to school. One suggestion which was made by a female FCoC was that NGOs should also provide trainings which can help capacitate the CoCs to be able to reach out to other people in their communities.

6.17.8 Problems experienced by Champions of Change

There was one parent who said that she did not expect any problems with the CoC programme, arguing that as a community they have accepted the programme and they will work together to ensure that its goals are achieved. The FCoCs and some CoCs, however, mentioned the programme itself experiences a number of problems.

Lack of sporting activities

One of the major problems FCoCs and CoCs mentioned was the general lack of sporting activities and this was mainly because they do not have balls. The only major activity being conducted by FCoCs seems the delivery of lessons as narrated by a female FCoC during an FGD.

“The meetings need to be complemented by other activities for example sporting activities. The children just come to the meetings and by the end of the day they leave without anything else that they benefited apart from the lessons. Having other activities will attract more girls to the meetings”.

Just having meetings, as argued by FCoCs, does not really attract youth to meetings. While there are many youths in the area, most of them do not participate because there is no entertainment; hence they go to watch videos and other sporting activities which take place in the area over the weekend, when the CoC activities are also scheduled. Both FCoCs and CoCs raised this. It is not only balls which were not there: a key informant lamented the absence of other game equipment as well and suggested the need for such equipment to be purchased. The availability of balls will attract many youths.

“I think one way to remedy our problems is according to what number 5 said that we need sporting activities that will help make things interesting. For example, in my youth group we made a ball using a condom and other kinds of wrappers to make into a round shape. When we started playing with that a lot of youths came to join until the ball burst and the children went back to what they were doing before”, (P4, FGD with female FCoCs)

There was a suggestion from the FGD with female FCoCs that they can mobilise resources e.g. renting land to cultivate and sell crops to buy notebooks and balls or they can engage themselves in business such as selling airtime as the place where airtime is sold is very far.

“I would also want to add that we could rent land to cultivate. At the end of the day we would be able to sell and raise money to buy notebooks and footballs”, (FGD with female FCoCs)

During the FGD with male FCoCs, participants also suggested that Plan should participate in their activities and the organization can easily identify problems the FCoCs are experiencing and address them.

Parents refusing their children to participate

Parents also can constitute another barrier to participation of their children in CoC activities: as mentioned earlier some parents discourage or do not allow their children to participate in CoC activities, because their friends, especially the FCoCs, benefit financially while they do not and what is discussed is obscene. When FCoCs attend trainings, they receive some money as allowances or for transport. Whenever there are trainings, youth groups will choose those who have never attended trainings to go there: it seems everyone is supposed to benefit. This is why one male CoC said that if it is just one person benefiting most of them would be let down.

“If it will just be one person receiving things and only him benefiting I think most of us will be let down and this can damage the group”, (Male CoC)

Facilitators of Champions of Change are looked down upon

One of the problems raised by FCoCs is that in some cases they are looked down upon and people do not go to the meetings because they feel that there is nothing important they will learn from them.

“... when we call for meetings we are looked down upon. It would be better to have support from the village headmen so that people should come”, (FGD with male FCoCs)

FCoCs suggested that they need support from village headmen so that many young people should attend and this is because what they say carries more weight. Being a FCoC, in addition to being looked down upon, they can also be insulted by peers outside the group and some FCoCs may even dropout.

Long distances

FCoCs are from different parts of TA Liwonde and there are times when they are supposed to meet. During the FGD with male FCoCs, participants reported that in some cases they have to travel long distances and they do not have bicycles; hence they sometimes arrive late at meetings. The lack of transport also constrained the conduct of exchange visits with fellow FCoCs. This is why they suggested the need to address the problem of transport, for example by giving bicycles to FCoCs as mentioned during FGDs with FCoCs.

Non-availability of some form of identity

FCoCs also reported that they do not have uniforms with which they can easily be identified as FCoCs; hence, the proposal was that they should have uniforms so that people in their community can easily identify them.

“... However, we also do not have uniforms with which we as champions of change are to be identified with. We just go the way we are like this to person's home to work and they may even wonder who we actually are, where we are coming from and what have we gone to their homes for. But if we had a uniform and a proper means of transportation, it would help us as champions of change....”, (FGD with male and female FCoCs)

During the FGD with FCoCs, participants commented that police have uniform and even political parties have colours: hence, there is a need, as argued by FCoCs, for FCoCs (and their group members) to have a uniform.

“Plan should try giving incentives to those that have already joined the groups to encourage others that are not members to start coming to the groups. While on the issue of incentives, champions of change should have T-shirts to get recognition. I sat today at the TA and not even one person could recognize who I was. With these clothes, they will know who we are. You should tell Plan Malawi that we need something to be identified with”, (P3, FGD with female FCoCs)

In order to address the problem of identity the suggestion was that T-shirts should be bought and distributed to FCoCs.

“T-shirts that are written champion of change may be very helpful to show who we are. Sometimes those reflector vests also work as they would serve as a sign of who we are. If that does not work,

we need identity cards to show we have a role that is big to show that we are experts at what we are doing, this is why T-shirts become very important”, (FGD with male and female FCoCs)

Resistance

One of the responsibilities of FCoCs is to ensure that those who dropped out of school due to pregnancy or early marriage should go back to school. One challenge is that some young people resist to terminate early marriages: they would not want to end the marriage as for example narrated by a CoC:

“Like we went, I am just giving an example; we went to some village there and talked to a young couple. We were like we are CoCs we are doing this, those ones said strongly that no matter what you would do our marriage will not end...”

One key informant said that this (youth going back to school) puts a lot of pressure on the school system as the educational structures are in poor state and the teacher-pupil ratio is not all that good. He added that teachers have told him that it is difficult for them to teach children who have dropped out of school and stayed out for some time, as some can easily dropped out again if they fail in class. He also said that poverty is rampant in the communities and while the YID project promotes gender equality, the challenge is that the available scholarships only target girls.

Shortage of trainers

There was only one female CoC who mentioned the shortage of trainers as one of the problems being experienced in the CoC programme.

Lack of teaching and learning materials

It was only during the FGD with male and female FCoCs where participants reported that they lacked teaching materials such as flip charts, notebooks and pens. They mainly teach using songs hence they suggested the provision of teaching materials.

Absenteeism

One of the problems is that there are many cases of absenteeism in CoC activities and this was mentioned by a female CoC. One of the solutions as mentioned by this informant is that they should discuss and agree on the rules stipulating what should be done when a person does not come to the trainings.

“Like now if a member is absent we could tell him to gather sand and place it in that building. They should make several trips so that they should come next time”, (Female CoC)

7. Discussion, conclusions and recommendations

The YID programme aims at contributing to enhancing young women's decision-making space on whether, when and who to marry and on whether, when and with whom to have children (YIDA, 2016). This will be achieved through a wide range of interventions which are being implemented by the YID consortium members. The prevalence of teenage pregnancy and child marriage are quite high in TA Liwonde (Munthali & Kok, 2016). Earlier studies including national surveys have generally found that Machinga District, which is mostly populated by the Yao, is one of the districts with high prevalence of child marriage and teenage pregnancy (National Statistical Office, 2015 & National Statistical Office, 2017). In 2015/16, Machinga had the highest proportion of women aged 15-19 years who had begun child bearing at 41% compared to 29% at national level (National Statistical Office, 2017). This current baseline study has also demonstrated that most respondents (65%) agreed with the statement that in general *"girls marry too young in their community"* and this was particularly high among respondents who described themselves as Yao (71%) and Lomwe (70%) than among the Chewa (55%). Marrying young generally puts young girls at risk of early childbearing and associated birth complications, leads to high school dropout rates among girls and negatively affects their future economic and other opportunities (Population Reference Bureau, 2014). The YID programme also intends to improve decision making among girls so that they are able to make their own decisions about whom to marry and when: this baseline survey on CoCs found that while most respondents reported that girls can make decisions on their own on who to marry, about a fifth of the respondents felt that girls cannot make such decisions on their own. There are a number of other factors, as found in the 2016 YID baseline study, which influence girls to get married including prevailing high poverty levels, pressure to marry from their parents as well as marrying due to peer pressure (Munthali & Kok, 2016).

Since teenage pregnancy is often a precursor to child marriage, it is important that, as recommended in the YID baseline, comprehensive sexuality education including promoting condom use among young people should be implemented in TA Liwonde. One challenge young people experience is their failure to negotiate condom use during sex in order to prevent pregnancy or disease, with only 48% of the respondents reporting being able to negotiate condom use. There were more young females reported not being able to negotiate condom use compared to young males. Other studies have also found that condom use among youth aged 15-24 is low: 49% of the females and 51% of the males reported that they used condoms during premarital sex (Population Reference Bureau, 2014). A 2013 evaluation of youth friendly health services also found that less than half of the sexually active young people reported use of contraceptives during first sex (Health Policy Project, Futures Group, 2015). Even where condoms are used, it should be noted that it is infrequent: e.g. 10% of the youth aged 19-24 reported infrequent condom use in the 12 months prior to the 2013 survey on violence against children and young women and among males it was at 31% (Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, 2015). The failure of young people to negotiate condom use during sex exposes many of them to unwanted pregnancies and STIs.

While sexual partners are supposed to be responsible for preventing pregnancy together, this study has shown that 90% of the respondents agreed with the statement that *"it is a girl's responsibility to prevent pregnancy"*. One method of preventing pregnancy is the use of condoms and during an FGD with male FCoCs, participants said that the decision to use condoms is made by boys. It is also boys who carry

condoms. Girls who are found carrying condoms are considered prostitutes. An earlier study among young people in Dowa District also found that girls who initiate the use of condoms in sexual relationships are sometimes perceived as prostitutes (Munthali & Zakeyo, 2011).

Violence, both sexual and physical, seem to be tolerated in TA Liwonde. A number of conditions in this study were mentioned in which the perpetration of violence against women and girls is allowed. For example, 43% of the respondents said that *“if a girl is unfaithful, it is alright for her husband to beat her”* and 55% of the respondents agreed with the statement that *“a good woman tolerates violence from her husband or partner in order to keep her family together”*. Other studies have also found that this perception is quite common: the 2013 survey on violence against children and young women found that among persons aged 18-24, 41% of the women believed that a woman should tolerate violence to keep the family together and the proportion among men was 40% (Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, 2015). The Malawi Demographic and Health Surveys have generally shown that the violence perpetrated against women and girls is done by their husbands and other intimate partners (National Statistical Office, 2017). Other studies have also found that even when the women are beaten by their husbands, they are advised by their *ankhoswe*⁸ to endure the beatings because that is what marriage is all about (Munthali et al., 2017).

With regard to education, 90% of the respondents were supportive of girls’ education. However, the community expectations are different: girls are mostly expected to get married and that their husbands will take care of them. Other studies, for example in places where *lobola* is paid, show that girls are in some cases advised to get married arguing that *“for girls school is not profitable and it is better (profitable) that they get married for them to get cows or money unlike the boys who should continue with their education because they will assist the parents”* (Munthali et al., 2017). It seems that while most respondents supported girls education, the practice on the ground is different as many girls drop out of school and eventually get married. Contradictions in what people report also apply to household chores: 94% of the respondents reported that they agreed with the statement that *“men and women should take equal responsibility in household chores”*. While most survey respondents reported like this, it is clear from the qualitative component of this and other studies that on the ground the situation is different because women and girls are responsible for doing most household chores: even during school days girls are required to do some household chores before going to school while boys can just wake up and leave for school (Munthali et al., 2017) and this can negatively impact on girls school performance.

This study was aimed at generating baseline data for the CoC programme being implemented in TA Liwonde by Plan Malawi. The study has demonstrated that the CoC programme has great potential in addressing gender and gender inequality issues prevailing in this community. At baseline, the FCoCs had just been oriented and started meetings with CoCs. The results generally demonstrate that unlike CoCs, the FCoCs, both male and female, had more accepting attitudes towards gender and gender equality compared to CoCs: for example a higher proportion of FCoCs than CoCs accepted girls’ participation in decision making processes including accepting girls’ and women’s leadership, were supportive of girls’ education, were against all forms of violence including sexual violence being perpetrated against girls and had better

⁸ Marriage counsellor.

understanding about SRH issues. The FCoCs were more likely as well to discuss gender and gender equality issues with members of the opposite sex as well as adult men and women.

The CoC programme can constitute a good youth movement which can bring about change in gender equality and rights and CoCs suggested that this can be achieved by conducting meetings in the community to create awareness about these issues in conjunction with community leaders. Parents and other members of the community on the other hand should accept the programme and encourage young men and women to actively participate in CoC activities. Currently FCoCs have started conducting discussions with young men and women. However, the implementation of the CoC programme is experiencing a range of problems which should be addressed and these include the lack of sporting equipment (e.g. balls) and other forms of entertainment, some parents denying their children to participate in CoC activities, the lack of identity cards and other materials such as t-shirts, absenteeism among CoCs and lack of teaching and learning materials. In addition, it seems that FCoCs could use more training in communication skills, to be able to reach out to adults in the community.

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are therefore made in order to bring about gender equality in this community:

- In this community there is gross infringement of the rights of children especially girls. The creation of awareness about gender and gender equality issues should continue to include girls' rights e.g. the right to education and to participate in decision making on issues which concern them.
- There is a need to further build young females' awareness on their rights and self-worth, because it was found that for some of the statements on gender equality, it were especially girls who thought girls are less worth than boys.
- Some CoC groups have made balls using local materials while others have borrowed balls or are thinking of innovative ways of how they can find balls to attract young people to attend CoC activities. The YID programme should therefore purchase and distribute (foot) balls to all the CoC groups as this is expected to improve attendance.
- Plan should work very closely with CFCs, health workers and traditional leaders in order to create awareness (e.g. through holding community meetings as well as meetings in schools) among community members in TA Liwonde about why the programme was established and the roles FCoCs and CoCs can play in bringing about gender equality. Traditional leaders and health workers can help the FCoCs in conducting their roles. Support of them and Plan as the leading NGO can assist FCoCs in gaining trust from community members.
- In terms of selecting FCoCs, various approaches are used, including looking at the members of youth clubs and selecting those who have never attended any meetings including training sessions. This baseline has found that some of the people who attended CoC trainings were not interested in this type of activity and have dropped out of the programme. It is suggested that the choice of FCoCs should depend on their educational qualifications, expressed interest in the subject and their general attendance of youth and related activities. Age should also be taken into account. Although CoCs did not mention the age gap between them and FCoCs as a problem, other YID studies in TA Liwonde found that differences in age, and related to this differences in marital status, can hinder

communication between youth. Therefore, selection decisions should be jointly made by Plan and leaders of youth clubs.

- Earlier studies have shown that many girls drop out of school due to pregnancy and child marriage. Many of these girls do not go beyond primary school. This study has shown that the level of educational attainment is a major determinant for acceptability of gender and gender equality among respondents. Plan, FCoCs, CoCs and influential people at community level should continue to encourage girls and boys to go to school as this has positive influence on gender and gender equality.
- While informants said that if the group led by a FCoC becomes too big, it is split, in some cases however, groups were still found to be too big. Plan and the FCoCs themselves should monitor the size of the groups and ensure that when these split, the incoming FCoC should be properly oriented so that he or she knows what is expected of him or her. This was not very clear during the discussions with FCoCs.
- There are some issues which some FCoCs did not understand properly during the training; hence there is a need to conduct refresher training for all FCoCs (which is planned for) and new groups might require initial trainings.
- There are some misunderstandings within the community that FCoCs are financially benefiting from what they are doing (leading their groups). Some parents deny their children to participate because they will not benefit anything from the CoC activities and after all it is only FCoCs who financially benefit. Plan should continue engaging traditional leaders, parents, teachers and other existing structures at community level on the need for gender equality to prevail/to be internalised and the need for this youth movement (CoC) which will bring about changes in people's attitudes towards gender equality.
- There is limited participation of persons with disabilities in the CoC programme for various reasons. FCoCs, as found in this study, do not have the capacity to effectively reach persons with disability e.g. those with hearing and visual impairments. The programme should consider giving an orientation of the FCoCs on how persons with disability can best be reached. The programme can obtain assistance either from the Federation of Disability Organisations in Malawi (FEDOMA) or the Department of Disability and Elderly Affairs in the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare.

As mentioned earlier, there is evidence that the implementation of the CoC programme has started having an impact on the champions themselves on gender and gender equality issues. The prevailing gender inequality issues contribute significantly towards teenage pregnancy and subsequently child marriage which have long lasting negative impacts on the future of girls. In order to ensure that the CoC is an effective youth led movement to change peoples' attitudes towards gender equality, there is an urgent need to address the challenges being experienced by the programme.

8. References

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