Key messages and recommendations

1. Children with disabilities (CwDs) in Malawi disproportionately suffer deprivations in key areas of child wellbeing especially education, protection and health, which require attention in local and national budgets.

   **Recommendation:** The Government should ensure that all relevant ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) - especially in education, health, security and social welfare sectors - mainstream disability in their Program Based Budgets (PBB) by coming up with clear program targets and budget lines on disability.

2. Disability budgets lines, which are entirely funded by the Government, have modestly trended upwards since FY2016/17, although allocations remain insufficient to meet financial needs.

   **Recommendation:** The Government is encouraged to leverage sector resources, in line with the mainstreaming strategy, to ensure children with disabilities have equal access to essential services.

3. There are recurrent reports of attacks on persons with albinism, but there are significant delays in investigations and prosecution of perpetrators partly due to limited resources available to the Police and Judiciary.

   **Recommendation:** There is a pressing need to allocate sufficient resources to the Police and Courts for timely investigations and conclusion of cases.

4. Budget allocations to disability focused institutions are mainly for personal emoluments (PE), with very little resources left for programs and much-needed assistive devices and disability-friendly infrastructures.

   **Recommendation:** The Government should review the composition of disability budgets to ensure balance between PE, other recurrent transactions (ORT) and capital costs for effective delivery of essential services to people with disabilities, especially children.

5. Effective planning and budgeting on disability is constrained by lack of comprehensive and timely data and statistics.

   **Recommendation:** Key national surveys such as Integrated Household Survey (IHS) and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) as well as sector specific management information systems (education, health, social protection etc.) should include sections on disability.

6. Given the limited fiscal space, some crucial disability structures are significantly under-funded.

   **Recommendation:** The Government is encouraged to fund the Disability Trust Fund and the National Coordinating Committee on Disability Issues (NACCODI) and to support civil society organizations of persons with disabilities complementing Government efforts.
This budget brief analyses the extent to which the 2018/19 National Budget of Malawi addresses the needs of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), especially children. The brief aims to generate evidence on size, composition and equity of public spending on children, using a life cycle approach. In developing this budget brief, UNICEF was inspired by the ‘leave no one behind’ narrative of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Budget Brief makes a case for the Government to increase budgetary allocations to the benefit of persons with disabilities, and to improve quality of spending, with a focus on children so that they may have an equal chance in life.

Considering that disability is a cross cutting issue, the brief analysed budgets of several MDAs, although only three have identifiable budget lines. The three are Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW) (Vote 320), Kachere Rehabilitation Centre (Vote 275) and Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA) (Vote 275). Key social sector MDAs such as Ministry of Education Science and Technology (Vote 250) and Health (Vote 310) did not have clearly visible disability budget lines. The analysis in this budget brief spans from financial year (FY) 2016/17 to FY2018/19. Accordingly, FY2016/17 is used as the base fiscal year, unless otherwise specified.

Prevalence of disability in Malawi stands at 3% amongst children, against 5.6% in adults. Amongst the adult population, the highest prevalence rates in disability is in the Central Region (6.1%), followed by the Southern Region (5.5%) and lastly Northern Region (4.7%). Majority of PwDs live in rural areas. The common forms of disability are visual and walking impairments. Likelihood of disability increases with age. Indeed, while prevalence of disability in children aged 2-4 years is 3.1%, it grows to 3.2% amongst people aged 5-17, and to 5% in people aged 20-24 years.

Malawi ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which provides the international policy framework on disability, in 2009. The Government also developed several laws and policies to promote, fulfil and protect rights of PwDs. These include the National Constitution, National Policy on Equalization of Opportunities

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for Persons with Disabilities (2006), Disability Act (2012), Child Care, Protection and Justice Act (2010), National Youth Policy and the National Sports Policy. The Disability Act (2012) incorporates provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the CRPD. A new disability bill is being drafted to take into consideration emerging issues such as attacks on people with albinism. Despite availability of all the above policy commitments, several reports have shown that children with disabilities continue to experience significant deprivations in sanitation, education, health and child protection.

Disability is a cross-cutting priority area in the third Malawi

The policy envisions to promote disabled persons’ rights, freedom of choice and equal opportunities; to adapt the environment to their needs; and above all to encourage society to positively change its attitude towards PwDs and assist them in assuming full responsibility as active members of society.

Table 1
MGDS III Outcomes and Strategies for PwDs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved welfare and health status for the elderly, persons with disability and albinism</td>
<td>• Facilitating the implementation of enabling and inclusive mechanisms within small and medium enterprises (SMEs); • Promoting employment and decent work for persons with disabilities and albinism; and • Increasing access to health services and social assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved coordination and equitable access to social services among the elderly, persons with disabilities and albinism</td>
<td>• Facilitating the inclusion of the elderly, persons with disabilities and albinism in social support programs; and • Improving capacity to effectively undertake and coordinate elderly and disability programmes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhanced mainstreaming of disability issues across sectors.</td>
<td>• Promoting inclusion of needs of persons with disability in sectoral policies, laws and programs</td>
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Source: MGDS III

Although the National Policy on Equalisation of Opportunities for PwDs outlines roles and responsibilities of...
various stakeholders, evidence on the ground shows limited progress in mainstreaming of disability by MDAs. A key indicator of this is absence of disability related targets and budget lines amongst program based budgets for many MDAs. There are several barriers to effective disability mainstreaming in different sectors which include financial and capacity challenges, limited technical capacity in disability matters and lack of timely and comprehensive data.

Children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to social and economic exclusion with girls disproportionately affected. The challenges faced by CwDs in Malawi include lack of access to basic services (i.e. accessible information, communication difficulties or socio-cultural), and to skills-development and employment opportunities. Lack of access to essential services has lifelong impacts on the survival, protection and development of CwDs. Box 2 highlights some of the challenges faced by PwDs in Malawi across different sectors.

**BOX 2 Challenges Faced by PwDs in Accessing Basic Services in Malawi**

**Education:** Shortage or lack of assistive devices and other inclusive education facilities; discrimination, long distances to school and inappropriate Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities in schools.

**Health:** Long distances to health centers; shortage or lack of medicines; shortage of health staff and negative attitudes from health staff and failure to respect/recognize the (reproductive) health needs of PwDs.

**Financial services:** Lack of skills and discrimination were the main factors constraining PwDs from securing employment opportunities, whereas lack of capital and discrimination were main access challenges in business activities.

**Political participation:** General apathy arising from the general lack of dialogue on PwDs’ concerns, discrimination, perceived corruption and security concerns.

Source: Draft Report on Access to services by PwDs in Malawi: UNDP

In recent years, CwDs - especially those with albinism - have experienced all kinds of discrimination, isolation and physical attacks. This is partly because of social norms and traditional beliefs. Several cases of attacks on people with albinism, including murder, have been reported over the past few years. Unfortunately, due to limited human and financial resources, there are significant delays in investigation and prosecution of cases. For instance, between 2012 and 2018, about 148 cases of attacks on people with albinism were recorded. Out of these, only 48 have been closed (with court judgements) while 22 cases are still with courts. A total of 47 cases are still under investigations while 15 cases are with the Director of Public Prosecution for perusal and prosecution.

**Key Takeaways**

- Despite existence of supportive laws and policies, many children with disabilities are deprived of essential services such as education, health and protection than other children.
- Although the GoM has shown commitment to improving the welfare of PwDs in Malawi there is limited mainstreaming of disability by MDAs.
- There are delays in investigations and prosecution of cases on attacks of people with albinism partly due to limited human and financial resources available to the Police.
PART 3  SIZE OF SPENDING ON DISABILITY

A total of MK1.36 billion was allocated to disability-focused institutions in FY2018/19, which is 18.6% nominally up from MK1.15 billion allocated in FY2017/18. In real terms, budget allocations to disability went up by 6.8% (Figure 1). The increase in allocations is a reflection of Government’s commitment to improving the welfare of PwDs in Malawi. Budget allocations to disability-focused institutions have averaged 0.1% of the total budget since FY2016/17 as shown in Figure 2. As a share of GDP, allocations to disability have averaged 0.03% over the period FY2016/17-2018/19 (Figure 2).

Although increasing, allocations to disability issues are significantly lower than financial needs. As indicated earlier, children with disabilities face multiple and overlapping deprivations. These include attacks on children with albinism, limited access to education and health services as well as assistive devices given that the majority of resources are for personnel emoluments (PE). Work on disability mainstreaming is very minimal in various sectors. Except for the three MDAs discussed above, the rest are silent about disability.

Key Takeaways

- Budget allocations to disability have modestly increased in real terms if compared to the previous year, but are insufficient to meet huge financial needs.

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5 This figure only includes resources from Treasury Appropriation. It does not include Own Generated Resources by Kachere and MACOHA.
PART 4 COMPOSITION OF THE BUDGET FOR DISABILITY

Majority of disability resources (about 60%) are allocated to MACOHA. The total disability budget is the sum-total of allocations for Disability Headquarters under the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW), Kachere Rehabilitation Centre and MACOHA. In FY2018/19, the Disability Headquarters was allocated MK313 million, of which MK50 million will be for disability mainstreaming (Program 71.03). The Disability Headquarters got the second largest share (23.1%), with Kachere getting the least (16.2%) as shown in Figure 3. No other MDAs had an identifiable budget line on disability issues. In FY 2018/19, ten District Councils had identifiable budget lines on Disability Mainstreaming (Program 71.03) totaling MK5.9 million. These are Chitipa (MK1.2 million), Dedza (MK0.31 million), Kasungu (MK0.83 million), Lilongwe (MK0.1 million), Machinga (MK0.7 million), Mangochi (MK0.63 million), Mulanje (MK1.4 million), Machinga (MK0.2 million), Mtcheu (MK0.2 million), Phalombe (MK0.1 million) and Thyolo (MK0.22 million). The total allocation to Disability by District Councils is less than 0.5% of the total disability budget.

In FY2018/19, MACOHA was allocated a total of MK826 million, which is 22% nominally higher than MK676 million allocated in the previous year. In real terms, allocations to MACOHA have gone up by 10.1%. As a share of total disability budget, allocations to MACOHA have increased from 54.2% in FY2016/17 to 60.7% in the current financial year (Figure 5).

Compared to the previous financial year, the budget allocation to disability headquarters (MK313 million) under the MoGCDSW has gone down by 2.9% in real terms, although it is 78% nominally higher than MK291 million allocation in FY2017/18 (Figure 6). Allocations to the headquarters include Disability Mainstreaming (Program 71.03) which was allocated MK50.2 million in the current financial year. This allocation is 1.6% nominally lower than MK51 million allocated in FY2017/18. As a share of the total disability budget, allocations to Disability Headquarters went down from 34.1% in FY2016/17 to 23.1% in the current financial year (Figure 7).

In real terms, allocations to MACOHA have gone up by 10.1%.
Figure 4: Trends in Allocations to MACOHA (in nominal and real MK millions, base fiscal year is FY2016/17)

Source: PBBs for Subvented Organizations (FY2017/18 to 2018/19)

Figure 5: Allocations to MACOHA % Total Disability Budget

Source: PBBs for Subvented Organizations (FY2017/18 to 2018/19)

Figure 6: Budget for Disability Headquarters (in nominal and real MK Millions, base fiscal year is 2016/17)

Source: PBBs (FY2017/18 to 2018/19)

Figure 7: Budget for Disability Headquarters as a % of Total Disability Budget

Source: PBBs (FY2017/18 to 2018/19)
**Figure 8** Trends in Allocations to Kachere (in nominal and real MK Millions, base fiscal year is 2016/17)

Source: PBBs for Subvented Organizations (FY2017/18 to 2018/19)

**Figure 9** Allocations to Kachere % of Total Disability Budget

Source: PBBs for Subvented Organizations (FY2017/18 to 2018/19)

**Figure 10** Trends in Composition of Allocations to Kachere

Source: Government Budget Estimates (FY2016/17 to 2018/19)
Budget allocations to Kachere Rehabilitation Centre have increased by 10.1% in real terms in FY2018/19 and 22% in nominal terms compared to the previous year. In FY2018/19, Kachere was allocated a total of MK220 million, which is 22.2% nominally up from MK180 million allocated in the previous year. Allocations to Kachere have been going up since FY2016/17 (Figure 8). As a share of total disability budget, allocations to Kachere have increased from 11.7% in FY2016/17 to 16.2% in the current fiscal year (Figure 9). In FY2018/19, Kachere also expects to internally generate MK360 million up from MK256 million in the previous financial year. If own generated resources are considered, the total FY2018/19 budget for Kachere amounts to MK580 million, which is 33% nominally higher than MK436 million in the previous financial year.

The total disability budget is entirely recurrent, with majority of resources earmarked for personnel emoluments (PE). The entire FY2018/19 disability budget of MK1.54 billion6 is for recurrent programs (Figure 10). In FY2018/19, 70% (MK469 million) of the MK678 million allocated to rehabilitative services (Program 1) under MACOHA is for PE. If we are to include Program 20 (Management and Administration), the budget share of PE goes up to 75%, leaving only 19% for ORT and 6% for development purposes (Figure 11). This means very minimal resources are left to purchase the much-needed assistive devices for PwDs and for infrastructure creation. Disability-friendly infrastructural needs in the country remain significant. For example, there has been little progress on the expansion of MACOHA Lilongwe Vocational Training Centre because no capital budget has been allocated since FY2017/18.

Lack of comprehensive disability statistics has been identified as one of the major barriers to effective planning and budgeting for children with disabilities. There is hardly any disaggregated information on demographics and deprivations faced by children with disabilities. Recent national surveys such as the Integrated Household Survey (IHS) do not delve deep into disability issues. Program data collected in sectors such as health, water and social protection does not also adequately capture issues affecting children with disabilities.

Disability-friendly infrastructural needs in the country remain significant.

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6 This figure includes Own Generated Resources by MACOHA and Kachere which are additional resources to Treasury appropriation. Hence, the difference between the total disability budget of MK1.36 billion presented in Section 3.
PART 5  FINANCING
DISABILITY

The disability sector is largely Government-funded, with contributions from development partners not identifiable because they are mostly off-budget. Unlike other areas, there is virtually no on-budget support to government for disability. Any possible support is probably through sectoral funds such as education and health. Given limited public revenue, it is crucial for disability-focused MDAs to strive to achieve value for money from the allocated resources. This could be done, for instance, by prioritising resources to low-cost-but-high-impact disability interventions such as inclusive education and community rehabilitation. The Government may also have to consider leveraging resources in other sectors such as health, social protection and education to reach out to children with disabilities. This will entail mobilising resources for disability related interventions and services through ongoing sectoral initiatives, including when applying for international public resources.

The Disability Trust Fund is one avenue that could be used for mobilizing resources to finance disability programs. The Disability Act (2012) recommended the establishment of the Disability Trust Fund to support the implementation of disability programmes and services. Unfortunately, the Fund has largely been not operational due to limited contributions from public and private stakeholders. As a result, crucial disability structures are under-funded. These include the National Coordinating Committee on Disability Issues (NACCODI) as well as civil society organizations complementing Government efforts on disability.

Key Takeaways

⊙ The Disability ‘sector’ largely depends on Government for financing. Given limited fiscal space, there is room for development partners to also contribute, including through other sectoral funding (health, education, social protection etc).

⊙ The Disability Trust Fund is a potentially promising tool for mobilizing domestic and international, as well as public and private resources, to support disability mainstreaming efforts in Malawi.

⊙ Crucial Disability focused institutions are largely under-funded, or not funded at all from central government resources.

Glossary of terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gross Domestic Product (GDP)</td>
<td>Total value of goods and services produced by a country in a given year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nominal change</td>
<td>Changes in budget allocations which do not factor in inflation.</td>
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<td>Other Recurrent Transactions (ORT)</td>
<td>Budget for day to day items such as office supplies, fuel, utilities, routine maintenance and other operations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personnel Emoluments (PE)</td>
<td>Salaries, wages, allowances and other staff entitlements.</td>
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<td>Real change</td>
<td>Changes in budget after adjusting for inflation.</td>
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<td>Fiscal space</td>
<td>The budgetary room that allows a Government to provide resources for public purposes without undermining fiscal sustainability.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vote</td>
<td>The main segment into which the national budget is divided for the appropriation of money to different Ministries, Departments or Agencies.</td>
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Leaving No One Behind

Ensuring Children with Disabilities in Malawi Have an Equal Chance in Life