



# The Government of Malawi

The Ministry of Gender, Children,  
Disability and Social Welfare

# National Social Welfare Policy

Promoting Social Inclusion and Human Dignity

**Disclaimer**

UNICEF Malawi supported the design and printing of this publication. The information and views contained herein are those of the Malawi Government and Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare and do not necessarily represent the views of UNICEF.

---

© The Government of Malawi - The Ministry of  
Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare

September 2018

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in retrieval systems or transmitted, by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without permission.

Please contact:

The Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and  
Social Welfare  
Capital Hill, City Centre  
Private Bag 330  
Lilongwe 3.

Tel: +265 (0)1 770 411

Fax: +265 (0)1 770 826

Email: [info@gender.gov.mw](mailto:info@gender.gov.mw)



# The Government of Malawi

The Ministry of Gender, Children,  
Disability and Social Welfare

# National Social Welfare Policy

Promoting Social Inclusion  
and Human Dignity

---

---

# Foreword

Malawi faces a number of social problems which range from destitution, matrimonial disputes, child custody, property grabbing, child delinquency, child prostitution, drug and alcohol abuse, and mental health among others. The problems are aggravated by poverty, socio-cultural beliefs and practices, human trafficking, Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). The aim of the policy is, therefore, to address the existing social problems by creating a conducive environment for service delivery at the local and national levels. The Ministry will ensure that the service delivery system of psycho-social support, linking the destitute to assistance, rehabilitation of child and adult offenders and drug abusers, survivors of abuse and rehabilitation of perpetrators are well coordinated in order to reduce further suffering.

I, therefore, call upon all relevant government departments, civil society organizations, community-based organizations and ordinary Malawians to support my Ministry in the implementation of the policy in order to achieve an equitable and people-centred social welfare services delivery.



---

**Hon. Dr. Jean A.N. Kalilani**  
*Minister of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare*

---

# Preface



The National Social Welfare Policy is the culmination of consultative efforts with various stakeholders and partners involved in the provision of social welfare services for the vulnerable and marginalized groups of people in Malawi. The Policy consolidates government efforts to improve the delivery of appropriate social welfare services in an integrated and coordinated manner. The aim is to ensure that all Malawians enjoy human dignity and social wellbeing in line with the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi.

The National Social Welfare Policy is aligned to the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II (MGDS II), Constitution of Malawi, and regional and international human rights instruments such as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children (ACRWC), Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The focus of the Policy is to contribute to poverty reduction by helping the marginalized to attain self-reliance and participate in the social and economic development of the country.

The implementation of the National Social Welfare Policy will be facilitated by the political will, availability of partners working in the social welfare sector, commitment of development partners through strategic partnership and proposal development, existence of vibrant structures and legislation. The efficient and effective implementation of the policy will, however, require adequate financial and human resources.

The Ministry is, therefore, appealing to all the stakeholders to embrace the policy and work with the government to promote the national development agenda. Let us join hands to have a better Malawi, where no one is left behind and the ambitious sustainable development goals are attained.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Esmie Kainja', written in a cursive style.

---

**Dr. Esmie Kainja**  
Principal Secretary

*Minister of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare*

---

# Table of Contents

Foreword .....	ii
Preface .....	iii
Acronyms .....	v
Glossary of Terms .....	vi
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background .....	2
1.1.1 Historical Context and Current Status .....	2
1.1.2 Linkages with other Policies and Legislations .....	2
1.1.3 Problem Statement .....	4
1.1.4 Scope, Magnitude and Evolution of the Problem .....	5
1.1.5 Existing Responses to the Problem .....	6
1.1.6 Rationale of the Policy .....	7
<b>2. Broad Policy Directions .....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 Guiding Principles .....	9
2.2 Policy Goal .....	9
2.3 Policy Objectives .....	9
2.4 Desired Outcomes .....	10
2.5 Policy Priority Areas .....	10
2.5.1 Coordination of Social Welfare Services .....	10
2.5.2 Regulation of Social Welfare Services .....	10
2.5.3 Resources for Social Welfare Services .....	11
2.5.4 Information, Communication and Advocacy .....	12
2.5.5 Human Resource Capacity for Social Work .....	12

---

<b>3. Implementation Arrangement</b> .....	<b>14</b>
3.1 Institutional Arrangements .....	15
3.2 Roles of Stakeholders in the Implementation of the Policy .....	15
<b>4. Monitoring and Evaluation</b> .....	<b>18</b>
4.1 Implementation Plan .....	19
4.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan .....	19
4.3 Review of the Policy .....	19

---

# Acronyms

<b>ACRWC</b>	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children
<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisation
<b>CPW</b>	Child Protection Worker
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CRC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>DHS</b>	Demographic Health Survey
<b>DSW</b>	Department of Social Welfare
<b>ECD</b>	Early Childhood Development
<b>FBOs</b>	Faith Based Organisations
<b>GoM</b>	Government of Malawi
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
<b>HRIS</b>	Human Resource Information System
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>IHS</b>	Integrated Household Survey
<b>JSSP</b>	Joint Sector Strategic Plan
<b>MDHS</b>	Malawi Demographic Health Survey
<b>MGDS</b>	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
<b>MICS</b>	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
<b>NLGFC</b>	National Local Government Finance Committee
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>OVC</b>	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
<b>SADC</b>	Southern Africa Development Community
<b>SWG</b>	Sector Working Group
<b>TWG</b>	Technical Working Group
<b>WMS</b>	Welfare Monitoring Survey



---

# Glossary of Terms

## **Destitute**

A condition of impoverishment where one has no food, money and other necessities of life. It is a situation of extreme poverty without the means to live.

## **Disability**

Significant limitations: physical, social or mental that hinder normal functioning in areas of self-care, social, interpersonal and communication skills, use of available resources, self-direction, learning, work, leisure, health and personal safety.

## **Equity and Equality**

As a principle to promote equitable distribution of resources and equality of opportunities for the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of people such as children, women, persons with disability, young offenders, the elderly and chronically ill.

## **Family**

The primary social unit which provides care, nurturing and socialization for its members. It provides its members with physical, economic, emotional, social, cultural and spiritual security and protection.

## **Human dignity**

A principle to encourage the provision of social welfare services based on respect for human rights and values as enshrined in the national and international human rights instruments.

## **Marginalization**

Refers to a situation where some sections of the population are considered less important and do not participate in the decision-making process, such as children, women and persons with disability.

## **Means-test**

A way of assessing one's ability to meet basic needs for survival or capacity to protect themselves against natural calamities before rendering assistance.

## **One Stop Centre**

A system of providing services to survivors of violence and abuse in an integrated and holistic manner involving health and social workers, the police, judiciary and civil society organizations.

## **People-centred**

Focusing on the developmental needs and welfare of the concerned vulnerable populations.

## **Probation services**

Part of the criminal justice system to protect the public, promote community safety, prevent crime and rehabilitate the offenders. Probation officers work closely with the courts.

---

## **Protection services**

A set of services provided by the government and/or Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to protect the vulnerable groups from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect.

## **Psychosocial support**

Provision of services to enhance the social, emotional and psychological functioning of an individual experiencing serious problems of trauma or stress.

## **Public assistance**

Measures were taken by the government and non-governmental organizations to render temporary financial and material assistance and psychosocial support to individuals or families in a crisis.

## **Rehabilitation services**

Specialized services to restore normal living when one is unable to do so due to reasons beyond control such as disability and illness among others.

## **Re-integration services**

Specialized services to reunite those separated from normal living back with their families, communities and mainstream society.

## **Social justice**

The ideal condition in which all members of a society have the same basic rights, security, opportunities, obligations and social benefits.

## **Social legislation**

Laws aimed at promoting the social functioning of individuals and groups and protecting their rights.

## **Social problem**

A condition of social dysfunction of individuals, families or communities which affects their capacity to meet their needs or realize their values and perform their functions in society.

## **Social protection**

Policies which ensure that all people have basic economic and social necessities during periods of disasters and other unforeseen difficult circumstances.

## **Social Work**

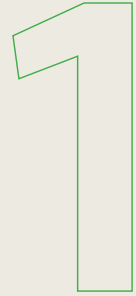
Professional services of a social worker aimed at the promotion of the social functioning of individuals, families, groups and communities.

## **Substance abuse**

The term includes the misuse and abuse of legal substances such as alcohol and illicit drugs.

## **Vulnerability**

Specific groups of people with needs and problems that require to be addressed for them to meet the basic necessities of life such as food, shelter and education.



# Introduction

The National Social Welfare Policy is the government commitment to protect the rights and welfare of vulnerable individuals, families and communities. The goal of the policy is to contribute to the promotion of access to social justice and improved wellbeing of the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of people through an integrated, well-coordinated and regulated social welfare services delivery system. The policy will be implemented in a collaborative partnership between government, civil society and the private sector through the rights-based approach where the vulnerable groups are not used as objects for charity.

---

## 1.1 Background

### 1.1.1 Historical Context and Current Status

Malawi had no specific policy to guide the implementation of social welfare services. The first social welfare policy direction in Malawi was in the form of the 1965 Cabinet Paper which articulated the country's commitment to addressing the plight of vulnerable groups of people. Thereafter, social welfare services have been guided by issue-based policies and broad national policy frameworks such as the Statement of Development Policies from 1971 to 1980 and 1987 to 1996, the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 1997 -2001 and most recently the MGDS I and II; 2006-2011 and 2012-2016 respectively.

The 1987-1996 development policy emphasised on the use of community-based approaches to support those suffering and most at risk of serious deprivation, including the ones experiencing problems of social adjustment.

The Child Care, Protection and Justice Act No. 22 of 2010 has articulated some of the roles of social welfare in relation to children in need of care and protection and children in conflict with the law. The National Social Welfare Policy, therefore, establishes a comprehensive framework for responding to situations that put the vulnerable groups of people in the society at risk of deprivation.

The social welfare functions encompass interventions for care and protection by the provision of psychosocial support and counselling to children, women, men and other vulnerable groups. Various approaches are used by service providers in the provision of services. The approaches are diverse and include promotion, development, prevention, rehabilitation, protection, aftercare of mental patients and the continuum of care. The current approach to social welfare significantly emphasizes uplifting vulnerable individuals to lead peaceful and productive lives.

### 1.1.2 Linkages with other Policies and Legislations

The National Social Welfare Policy is inspired by and developed in the context of existing national policies and laws; and regional and international instruments and protocols. Malawi ratified a number of instruments to uphold and promote the rights of people especially the marginalized populations. The national laws include the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi, the Child Care, Protection and Justice Act No. 22 of 2010, the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act of 2006 and the regional and international instruments like the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children (ACRWC,1990), the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development (2008), Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR,1948), Convention on the

---

Rights of the Child (CRC,1989), the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW,1979); and the Livingstone Call for Action on Social Protection (2006).

The National Social Welfare Policy is linked to and will make direct reference to the following Policies:

### **The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II (MGDS II)**

The MGDS II is the overarching strategic framework guiding the planning and implementation of public services in Malawi. Social welfare services are primarily aligned to the thematic areas of Social Development, Social Support, Disaster Risk Management and Improved Governance with the corresponding reference to the other thematic areas.

### **The National Social Support Policy**

The National Social Support Policy promotes the design of social protection programmes to address the effects of economic shocks, disasters and other social calamities on specific vulnerable groups. The policy provides direction in the implementation of the programmes of assistance for the ultra-poor, the chronically-ill, persons with disability, the elderly, orphans and other vulnerable children; and reduction of risks associated with unemployment, displacement and marginalization. The National Social Welfare Policy will put in place mechanisms for the identification and linking of the vulnerable groups to the various social support programmes.

### **The National Policy on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities**

The policy promotes the rights of persons with disabilities to fully participate in the social and economic development of the country that affects their lives. The Social Welfare policy will support the promotion and protection of the rights of people with disabilities.

### **The National Policy for Older Persons**

The policy facilitates the promotion of rights and welfare of elderly persons. The social welfare policy will ensure that the elderly are effectively targeted with different social protection programmes.

### **The National Gender Policy**

The policy underlines the need to articulate issues of equity and equality in the provision of support to girls and boys, women and men. The social welfare policy will ensure that social justice prevails amongst all groups of people including the vulnerable.

### **The National Policy for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)**

The policy provides the framework for the interventions for the care, protection and support of children in difficult circumstances. The social welfare policy will ensure that the vulnerable children are fully protected to enjoy their full rights.

---

### **The National Policy on Early Childhood Development (ECD)**

The policy promotes the establishment and implementation of programmes for holistic growth and development of children including early learning. The social welfare policy aims at preventing child neglect and abuse during the early years of child growth and development.

### **The National Education Policy**

The policy promotes access to basic education by all children through the universal primary education. The social welfare policy will ensure that all children enjoy their rights including the right to education.

### **The National HIV and AIDS Policy**

The policy promotes the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups such as orphans, persons with disabilities, widows and widowers. Home Based Care and support to orphans and vulnerable children are some of the major components of the impact mitigation response in the policy. The social welfare policy will ensure the enforcement of the responses.

### **The National Youth Policy**

The policy sets a parameter for the participation of youth in social and development activities of the country. The Social Welfare policy will ensure that vulnerable youths are empowered to actively participate and benefit from the national development programmes.

## **1.1.3 Problem Statement**

Since attaining independence, Malawi continues to face many challenges to provide social welfare services to the vulnerable populations. The country's poverty levels remain pervasive and according to the latest available estimates, poverty headcount is at 50.7 per cent (Integrated Household Survey - IHS 3, 2012). Income inequality and the population of the ultra poor have worsened with the latter increasing from 22 per cent in 2005 to 25 per cent in 2012. Although remarkable progress has been registered, the country's mortality figures still remain among the highest in the world. Infant and child mortality rates are at 66 and 112 per 1000 live births respectively. In essence, out of 100 children that are born, 11 die before they reach their fifth birthday. Maternal mortality rate stands at 675 deaths per 100,000 live births (Malawi Demographic Health Survey - MDHS, 2010). Other social indicators also show that the country has challenges of food and nutrition insecurity at the household level, high illiteracy rates, high school dropout rates, unemployment, high HIV prevalence rate, gender inequalities and overcrowding in squatter settlements, among others.

---

Additionally, the country is facing a growing problem of children living and working in the streets and in child-headed households without adequate care, support and guidance. Currently over 6,000 children are under institutional care, 68 per cent of girls and 62 per cent of boys either do not enrol in school or exit the education system before the age of twelve. Only 5 per cent of people with a disability receive social welfare support; nearly 24 per cent of children with a disability do not attend school and 41 per cent of women in Malawi experience physical or sexual violence and about 2.4 million children live in violent homes, witnessing domestic violence. Property grabbing continues to be a major problem for children and widowed women but few receive legal assistance. The majority of children and families affected by HIV and AIDS are still not being reached by impact mitigation programmes.

There are also increasing problems of crime, divorce, child neglect and abandonment, child marriages, drug and substance abuse, child labour, prostitution, domestic violence, destitution, increased number of orphans and humanitarian crises. Much as the government is making efforts to provide social welfare services, the programmes are inequitable, ad-hoc and underfunded requiring a coherent policy environment. The situation is excavated by rapid population growth.

### **1.1.4 Scope, Magnitude and Evolution Of The Problem**

Social welfare is vital in facilitating access to social services by the vulnerable and the disadvantaged individuals, families and communities. The delivery of social welfare services in Malawi is however hampered by the following challenges:

#### **Limited Human Resource Capacity**

Social welfare services are provided by a cadre of professionally trained practitioners known as social workers or social welfare officers. Currently, the social welfare sector in Malawi does not have adequate human resource capacities to effectively deliver quality services. Furthermore, the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) as a coordinating body is also grossly understaffed and requires urgent training and recruitment of staff for deployment to fill the existing human resource capacity gaps.

The staff return in the Ministry responsible for Social Welfare shows that there are less than 200 officers posted in the 28 administrative districts of the country. Of these, less than 20 officers have a graduate qualification, and among these officers, some have graduate qualifications in areas other than social work. The officers largely rely on the job training and experience. Previously there were no institutions offering social work training in Malawi at a graduate level since Magomero College only offered certificate courses. A number of institutions have however started offering diploma and degree courses in social work but require appropriate accreditation to meet the expected standards and quality of training.

---

## **Programme Fragmentation and Poor Coordination**

Although the Ministry responsible for Social Welfare through the DSW is responsible for the coordination of social welfare services in Malawi, the services are fragmented and spread across government ministries and departments with no proper coordination mechanisms and clear policy guidelines. For instance, issues of care and support for persons with disability and the elderly, disaster and relief, and social protection are implemented by different ministries and departments. Further, some of the departments do not have staff to implement the activities at the district and community levels. The situation creates implementation challenges in coordination, communication and resource allocation.

## **Lack of Regulatory Framework for Social Welfare Practice and Services**

The provision of social welfare services is a human rights issue, guided by social work; a profession that deals with human lives. While some legislation exists, social welfare in Malawi is not adequately regulated and lacks comprehensive policy and legal framework to ensure efficient service delivery. There is no statutory provision or body to certify, control and oversee the work of social workers as is the case with other professions such as medicine, teaching and law. As a result, personnel without relevant pre-requisite qualifications are engaged as social workers. The situation undermines the quality of services and is not in line with the internationally recognized professional practices, ethics and standards.

## **Inadequate Resource Allocation**

Government funding for social welfare services has consistently been inadequate for the past two to three decades. Most aspects of social welfare are perceived as activities of charity that do not significantly contribute to economic development. The perception subjects the vulnerable groups such as children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and the destitute poor to exploitation and begging to undermine the principle of human dignity as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi and international human rights instruments.

### **1.1.5 Existing Responses to the Problem**

The MGDS II outlines key social welfare interventions in the thematic areas of Social Development, Social Support and Disaster Risk Management. Among others, the government is implementing social protection programmes such as the Social Cash Transfer, Farm Input Subsidy, Public Works and Malata Subsidy just to mention a few. The DSW plays a pivotal role in promoting the active participation of vulnerable groups of people such as orphans and vulnerable children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and very poor households to the social protection programmes. Further, the Department coordinates the implementation of programmes of assistance such as education support, in-kind donations, school feeding and provision of assistance during times of disasters.



---

To enhance coordination of programme planning and implementation, the government adopted and institutionalized the sector working groups. The DSW is responsible for the Social Welfare Technical Working Group (TWG) which brings together various stakeholders in the social welfare sector. In this regard, the government with support from development partners has embarked on various capacity building initiatives for Ministry staff and other service providers including placement of frontline staff at the community level to strengthen the social welfare workforce to effectively address the emerging social problems. In addition, the Government has also adopted a case management approach for supporting vulnerable children and families.

### **1.1.6 Rationale of the Policy**

Social welfare services cover a wide range of interventions that aim at alleviating the suffering endured by the individuals whose lives are adversely affected by external shocks and risks like poverty, unemployment, violence, abuse, delinquency, destitution, deprivation, marginalization, disease, social exclusion, HIV and AIDS and other social, economic and environmental events beyond their control.

The social welfare sector plays a pivotal role in responding to the challenges. The delivery of social welfare services is however marred by poor coordination among the stakeholders, lack of a regulatory framework for the practice, discontinued service delivery and inadequate resources. Furthermore, social welfare services are fragmented in various government ministries and departments.

The stated challenges require concerted efforts to ensure that everyone lives a dignified life. The National Social Welfare Policy, therefore, provides guidance to improve coordination, regulation and capacity in the delivery of social welfare services in Malawi.

# 2

## Broad Policy Directions

---

## 2.1 Guiding Principles

Social welfare values are embedded in social work ethics, human rights and governance principles underpinned by the following:

- 
- Non-discrimination
  - Human dignity
  - Equity and equality
  - Transparency and accountability
  - Participation
  - Professional commitment
  - Professional integrity
- 

## 2.2 Policy Goal

The goal of the National Social Welfare Policy is to contribute to the promotion of access to social justice and improved wellbeing of the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of people, using an integrated, well-coordinated and regulated social welfare services delivery system.

## 2.3 Policy Objectives

The aim of the policy is to achieve the following objectives:

- 
1. To strengthen coordination and collaboration among all the stakeholders providing social welfare services at all the levels
  2. To facilitate the enactment of relevant social legislation, guidelines and standards that promote compliance in the delivery of social welfare services
  3. To mobilize adequate resources for the provision of social welfare services
  4. To promote evidence-based programming using research results and information sharing among social welfare service providers and stakeholders
  5. To build the capacity of social workers at all the levels for effective and efficient delivery of quality social welfare services
  6. To promote good governance and accountability systems at national, district and community levels
-

---

## 2.4 Desired Outcomes .....

1.	Well coordinated social welfare services delivery system
2.	Well regulated social welfare sector
3.	Improved allocation of resources for effective delivery of social welfare services
4.	Quality, timely and harmonised collection, sharing and utilization of information on social welfare
5.	Enhanced capacity of social welfare workforce

## 2.5 Policy Priority Areas .....

The policy has five priority areas namely: Coordination of social welfare services; regulation of social welfare services; resources for social welfare services; information, communication and advocacy; and human resource capacity for social work.

### 2.5.1 Coordination of Social Welfare Services

The priority area focuses on structures and mechanisms that facilitate coordination in the provision of social welfare services at national, district and community levels using the Sector Working Group (SWG) and Joint Sector Strategic Plan (JSSP). It also focuses on building and strengthening partnerships among service providers at all the levels.

The major issues affecting coordination in the provision of social welfare services are the existence of parallel structures, weak partnerships, erratic joint planning, supervision and monitoring of activities. The result is fragmentation and duplication of efforts in the provision of social welfare services and weakening of already existing coordination structures.

#### Policy Statement

The policy will ensure that proper mechanisms are put in place at all the levels to enhance coordination among service providers.

### 2.5.2 Regulation of Social Welfare Services

Internationally, social welfare is a field which is regulated in terms of registration and practice. It requires regulations and proper guidelines for the effective service delivery. In Malawi, some legislation, guidelines and minimum standards for regulating the provision of social welfare services exist but are not properly enforced.

---

The issue with social welfare regulation is that the available guidelines do not cover all the required aspects. Some aspects are still unregulated resulting in minimal or no compliance to acceptable standards. The absence of legislation on social welfare and regulatory mechanisms to guide social work practice in Malawi makes the situation even worse.

### **Policy Statements**

The policy will ensure that:

- 
- Mechanisms are established to regulate social welfare services in the country; and
  - Adherence to all social welfare-related legislation and human rights instruments to protect and safeguard the welfare and interests of vulnerable groups is enhanced.
- 

## **2.5.3 Resources for Social Welfare Services**

The priority area covers financing and infrastructure which are crucial to the delivery of social welfare services. As a sector that deals with vulnerable people who may not adequately support themselves, it requires a lot of financial resources and adequate infrastructure to enable social workers to effectively facilitate the provision of the services to the beneficiaries. In this regard, the Ministry will continuously lobby Treasury for increased budgetary allocation and continued joint planning with development partners.

The delivery of social welfare services is highly compromised by limited financial resources and inadequate and inappropriate infrastructure. The DSW and many institutions under its mandate do not have purposefully built infrastructure like for provision of effective social welfare services. The result is inefficient and substandard service delivery for some deserving vulnerable groups who do not access the required social welfare services. The absence of appropriate targeting criteria or means-test compromises the selection of beneficiaries for assistance as it makes the screening process porous thereby targeting the undeserving beneficiaries.

### **Policy Statements**

The policy will ensure that:

- 
- Adequate technical and financial support is provided for the delivery of social welfare services;
  - Enhanced accountability and transparency among partners providing social welfare services; and
  - Adequate and relevant infrastructure is provided for social welfare services.
-

---

## 2.5.4 Information, Communication and Advocacy

The priority area focuses on information and communication which are critical to the advancement of social welfare services in Malawi. The priority area also highlights the need for proper management, sharing and utilization of information using various communication channels and platforms. Emphasis will be on advocacy for social welfare programmes which are critical in raising the profile and visibility of its services as a professional field.

The absence of a coherent and harmonized system for information management in Social Welfare has affected the quality of planning and programming in the sector. There is no formal platform for information sharing among the service providers, dissemination of information to the public and no clear strategy for advocacy for social welfare services. There are also limited provisions for feedback in the communication system.

### Policy Statements

The policy will ensure that:

- 
- Extensive use of existing structures and channels of communication to support social welfare services are improved and promoted; and
  - Proper systems are in place for the generation, retrieval and utilization of data on social welfare.
- 

## 2.5.5 Human Resource Capacity for Social Work

The priority area covers the capacity development of staff in the Ministry responsible for Social Welfare, Local Authorities, Civil Society Organizations and communities to effectively and efficiently deliver social welfare services. The capacity of staff needs to be developed and their numbers increased. As a sector that relies heavily on volunteers, the capacity of communities to participate in the delivery of social welfare services also needs to be developed.

Delivery of social welfare services is greatly compromised by the small number of workers, high staff turnover, low capacity levels and limited participation of the communities. Furthermore, the Ministry responsible for social welfare delivery in the country does not have an adequate number of social workers. Efforts will, therefore, be made to train and recruit more social workers at all levels. The Ministry has already embarked on professional training with the introduction of the degree programme in social work at Magomero College in collaboration with the University of Malawi, Chancellor College. Linkages will also be intensified with other institutions of higher learning for continuing education and professional development.

---

## **Policy Statements**

The policy will ensure:

- 
- Availability of qualified and adequate officers in all social welfare establishments;
  - Social welfare services are established at all the relevant institutions such as diplomatic missions, state residences, hospitals, colleges, schools and prisons, among others; and
  - Greater community participation in the provision of social welfare services.
-

# 3

## Implementation Arrangement



---

## 3.1 Institutional Arrangements .....

The implementation of the National Social Welfare Policy will be coordinated by the Ministry responsible for Social Welfare working in collaboration with other stakeholders to ensure an integrated and holistic approach to the delivery of the social welfare services.

## 3.2 Roles of Stakeholders in the Implementation of the Policy .....

The roles of different stakeholders in the implementation of the policy will be as follows:

### **Line Ministries**

Line ministries will articulate their role in the implementation of the Policy and ensure adequate resource allocation to social welfare services within their jurisdiction, adherence to standards, personnel capacity development, dissemination and sharing of information with the stakeholders in consultation with the coordinating Ministry.

### **Ministry responsible for Social Welfare**

The Ministry responsible for social welfare shall coordinate the implementation of the policy. Chaired by the Director of Social Welfare, the Social Welfare TWG shall provide technical advice and guidance. The TWG will coordinate the operations of all the stakeholders in the sector. Specifically, the role of the Ministry shall be to:

- 
- Chair and provide secretariat services to the Social Welfare TWG
  - Coordinate the development and oversee the implementation of social welfare programmes
  - Take a leading role in the development and review of policies and legislation that provide direction to the stakeholders implementing social welfare services
  - Plan, recruit, train and deploy social workers and other service providers
  - Promote social welfare professionalism in collaboration with the social welfare regulatory body
  - Provide technical support and capacity building to the stakeholders implementing social welfare programmes
  - Establish and manage systems for social welfare information management, monitoring and evaluation
  - Mobilize resources for the implementation of social welfare programmes
-

---

### **Ministry Responsible for Finance**

The Ministry will ensure that the social welfare sector is provided with adequate funds for the effective implementation of the policy through annual budgetary allocations. The adequate resources allocation will enable the Ministry responsible for Social Welfare and other line ministries to effectively support the provision of the social welfare services.

### **Ministry Responsible for Local Government and Rural Development**

The Ministry will ensure that social welfare issues are prioritized across all the implementation structures in line with decentralization. The National Local Government Finance Committee (NLGFC) will, therefore, ensure that adequate resources are allocated and properly used for social welfare services in the District Council annual budgets.

### **Ministry Responsible for Labour and Man Power Development**

The Ministry will ensure that labour policies and laws favour both children and adults especially in the mitigation of child labour.

### **Ministry Responsible for Economic Planning and Development**

The Ministry will ensure that social welfare services are prioritized in the country's overarching development strategies for meaningful participation and inclusion of vulnerable people in the development agenda. The act will ensure that vulnerable people are not just passive recipients of assistance but are active participants in the socio-economic development agenda of the country.

### **Ministry Responsible for Nutrition, HIV and AIDS**

The Ministry will ensure that the nutrition needs of vulnerable groups including the affected by HIV and AIDS are adequately addressed for them to lead a productive and healthy life.

### **Department Responsible for Human Resource Management and Development**

The department will ensure that adequate personnel is available for the effective delivery of social welfare services.

### **Department Responsible for Disaster Risk Management**

In liaison with the other stakeholders, the department will ensure that people made vulnerable due to disasters are adequately assisted to reduce suffering and build their resilience.

### **National Statistical Office (NSO)**

NSO will carry out specialized surveys to provide up to date information on vulnerable groups for purposes of improving decision making, programming and service delivery.

---

### **Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)**

The NGOs will complement government efforts in the provision of social welfare services; advocate for the promotion of social welfare programmes; mobilize resources for social welfare programmes and raise awareness on the available social welfare services.

### **Malawi Human Rights Commission**

The Malawi Human Rights Commission in collaboration with the other human rights bodies will promote human rights, identify and investigate human rights abuses, bring those responsible for the violation of human rights to justice and facilitate the adherence to the provision of national and international human rights instruments in the provision of social welfare services.

### **Development Partners**

Development partners will support the implementation of the social welfare policy through the provision of financial and technical support for the promotion of social welfare services.

### **Local Councils**

Implementation of the Policy will follow the decentralized structure where the primary responsibility of local councils will be to facilitate the effective and efficient implementation of social welfare services through proper planning, coordination and monitoring. Within the local council, the District Social Welfare TWG under the District Executive Committee will oversee the implementation of all the activities. As a coordinating agency, the District Social Welfare Office will chair and provide secretariat services for the TWG to ensure the creation of an enabling environment and facilitate adherence to the standards.

### **The Community**

The role of the community will be to establish and strengthen community structures; mobilise local resources to support social welfare service delivery; identify their needs and ensure that social welfare programmes are responsive to the needs and link the beneficiaries with the agencies which provide formal social welfare services including community-based organisations.

# 4

## Monitoring and Evaluation

---

## 4.1 Implementation Plan .....

The implementation of the policy will be championed by the Ministry responsible for social welfare services working closely with the other Government Ministries and Departments, Development Partners, NGOs and relevant stakeholders. The detailed Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation plans are attached to the policy.

## 4.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan .....

The National Social Welfare Policy implementation requires a robust integrated and effective monitoring system. The system will involve undertaking monitoring and evaluation functions at all the levels which call for data collection and information at macro, sectoral and grassroots levels. The Ministry responsible for Social Welfare through its Planning and Research Department will coordinate and lead the monitoring and evaluation process and ensure timely reporting and dissemination of results. Reports will be published annually. All the stakeholders will be required to report periodically to the Social Welfare TWG. The M&E system shall use the following sources of information as a baseline:

- 
- Integrated Household Survey (IHS)
  - Welfare Monitoring Survey (WMS)
  - Demographic Health Survey (DHS)
  - Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)
- 

## 4.3 Review of the Policy .....

The policy will be reviewed periodically as and when necessary.

---

**PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK**



---

**[www.gender.gov.mw](http://www.gender.gov.mw)**

© The Government of Malawi  
The Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare

September 2018



**The Government  
of Malawi**

The Ministry of Gender, Children,  
Disability and Social Welfare

**unicef**   
for every child