Baseline Report

Increasing Participatory Governance in Education in Malawi (IPGEM) Project / Onse Ngofunika (Pokweza Maphunziro)

Open Society Foundation
Link Community Development

27th September 2017
Table of Contents

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** ....................................................................................................................... 3

**INTRODUCTION** ................................................................................................................................. 5
  Background to the project ...................................................................................................................... 5
  Situation Analysis .................................................................................................................................. 5
  Baseline Objectives ............................................................................................................................... 5

**METHODOLOGY** .................................................................................................................................... 6
  Data collection team ............................................................................................................................... 6
  Stakeholder Survey ................................................................................................................................. 6
  Focus Group Discussions ...................................................................................................................... 7
  Limitations ................................................................................................................................................ 7
  Ethical Issues .......................................................................................................................................... 8
  Analysis & Triangulation ......................................................................................................................... 8

**FINDINGS** ................................................................................................................................................ 9
  Levels of participation, influence, knowledge, and motivation to engage in school management and the school improvement process .................................................................................................. 9
  Exploring the gap between motivation and participation – the barriers and opportunities to improve levels of engagement ................................................................................................................. 14
  Lessons to inform the Onse project design .......................................................................................... Error! Bookmark not defined.

**CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD** ............................................................................................... 25
  Conclusions .............................................................................................................................................. 25
  Way forward ........................................................................................................................................... 26

**ACRONYM LIST** .................................................................................................................................... 26
  ERROR! Bookmark not defined.

**APPENDICES** ......................................................................................................................................... 27

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Executive Summary

Baseline Report for the *Increasing Participatory Governance in Education in Malawi (IPGEM)* Project conducted prior to the implementation of project interventions.

Link was awarded a grant by the Open Society Foundation for the IPGEM Project in 2016. The overall aim of the project is to increase multi-stakeholder participatory governance and access to information in education in Malawi. This is to be done through a practice-based enquiry to identify stakeholder groups who are ‘marginalised’ from the school improvement cycle, to understand the barriers to their knowledge about school quality and their participation in school improvement activities, and to test interventions to increase their knowledge and participation.

A situation analysis at the project start identified four groups of people who are particularly marginalised from participation in school improvement activities: young people (especially girls, orphans and child heads of household), people living with a disability, people living in extreme poverty, and people living with albinism. These groups were selected as the target beneficiaries for the IPGEM Project.

The aim of the baseline report is to further assess project context at the start, and to provide a baseline to measure progress against. The Baseline Report made the following main findings:

**Pre-intervention levels of participation, influence, knowledge, and motivation of marginalised groups to engage in school management and the school improvement process**: Looking at the four selected marginalised groups, the baseline provides data on their pre-intervention levels of participation, influence, knowledge, and motivation to engage in school management and the school improvement process. It shows that levels of knowledge are especially low among all marginalised groups, while levels of participation, influence and motivation to engage are not high, but vary significantly between the groups. Young people had a particularly low level of participation. 90% of respondents in this group disagreed that they participate regularly in school improvement. This is followed by people living in extreme poverty and those living with a disability, approximately one third of whom disagreed that they have regular participation. Individuals living with albinism appeared to have the highest rate of participation, with less than one third of respondents disagreeing that they have regular participation. However, this baseline notes that the number of respondents in this group is small and the findings for this group therefore have limitations.

The baseline notes a significant gap between the actual levels of engagement and the aspirations for engagement of every marginalised group. While only 40% of respondents agree that they *currently participate* regularly in school management activities, 79% think that “people like me should have a say in how this school is managed”.

**Barriers and opportunities to engagement**: The baseline report analyses the reasons for the disparity between levels of engagement and aspirations for engagement in the school improvement process. The majority of respondents in all of the marginalised groups which were included in the baseline study identified discrimination or negative perceptions about their capacity to contribute to school management as a reason for low levels of knowledge about school quality and participation in school improvement. In addition to the perception barriers, each marginalised group identified challenges specific to their marginalisation factors which limit their participation in school improvement. Young people who are orphaned or child heads of household, and people living in extreme poverty, identified lack of time to participate as a barrier. People living with disabilities face physical barriers which prevent them from travelling to the school to attend
meetings or which limit their participation during the meetings because they are unable to hear or speak in discussions or to read written documents. Fear over physical safety during community meetings is the main barrier to the participation of people with albinism.

The report concludes with recommendations for the way forward for the IPGEM Project. The recommendations for increasing knowledge of the National Education Standards are to use inclusive community meetings, oral communication through radio and drama groups, and written communication, for example through newspapers. The recommendations for facilitating greater and more meaningful involvement of marginalised stakeholders focus on actions to be undertaken by headteachers, Primary Education Advisors, and Village Heads before, during and after the key meetings which are at the centre of the school improvement cycle.
Introduction

Background to the project

*Increasing Participatory Governance in Education in Malawi (IPGEM)* is a practice-based enquiry which aims to facilitate multi-stakeholder participatory governance and access to information in education in Malawi. Its local name is *Onse Ngofunik* (Pokweza Maphunziro), which means “all people are important in school improvement”, to underscore the importance of including marginalised groups in the school improvement cycle. It is also simply referred to as the Onse Project, which is the name used throughout this report. The project, which runs from 2016 to 2018, is implemented by Link Community Development Malawi (Link Malawi) with support from Link Community Development International and funding from the Open Society Foundation.

The Onse project has the following objectives:
1. To raise awareness of the National Education Standards (NES) at school and community level;
2. To build the capacity of headteachers and deputy headteachers to access and use data in the process of improving their schools;
3. To facilitate greater and more meaningful involvement of marginalised children, parents and community members in community meetings, School Review and School Improvement Planning processes.

Through the Onse project Link Malawi will design, test and refine processes and tools to achieve these objectives in all 242 primary schools in Dedza district.

This report summarises the findings of a baseline survey which was conducted prior to the start of the project interventions.

Situation Analysis

A situation analysis was conducted between 12th and 17th November 2016 in order to identify the target groups for the Onse Project. With support from the District Education Office, Link Malawi selected five schools from the rural areas of Dedza which had low community participation and which had scored poorly during the most recent assessment of school performance carried out by the District Education Office. Link staff conducted semi-structured interviews with key informants, including headteachers, deputy headteachers, teachers, school governing body representatives, Village Heads and Primary Education Advisors.

The situation analysis identified four groups of people who are particularly marginalised from participation in school improvement activities: young people (especially girls, orphans and child heads of household), people living with a disability, people living in extreme poverty\(^1\), and people living with albinism.

Baseline Objectives

The specific objectives of the baseline were to:

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\(^1\) For the baseline survey we defined extreme poverty as follows: people who “strongly disagree” or “somewhat disagree” to the statement “My family always has enough food to eat.”
a) measure pre-intervention levels of participation, influence, knowledge, and motivation of marginalised groups to engage in school management and the school improvement process;

b) gather information about barriers and opportunities to improve levels of engagement; and

c) learn lessons which inform the project design to ensure it fits the reality on the ground.

Methodology

The baseline included a survey of 175 stakeholders in the project area and 40 focus group discussions with 540 participants from the identified target groups: young people (especially girls, orphans and child heads of household), people living with a disability, people living in extreme poverty, and people living with albinism.

Data collection team

A team of nine data collectors was drawn from the local Onse Steering Committee and Link Malawi staff. The Steering Committee comprises representatives of civil society organisations, the Dedza District Education Network, the Dedza AIDS Network, and the Dedza District Education Committee.

Training for all the data collectors was held in January 2017. There was a formal training which covered best practice, proper behaviour for the data collectors, sampling criteria, and how to use the survey tools. The training included field testing of the survey tools in two schools, following which there was a final revision of the data collection instruments based on the data collectors’ field experience.

Stakeholder Survey

One-to-one, face-to-face interviews were carried out between 16th January and 3rd February 2017 with 175 individual representatives of the marginalised groups. A probability-based sample was not feasible as a suitable sampling frame for marginalised groups was not available, and the resources were not available to conduct a survey of the scale required to provide a probability-based sample with a high degree of accuracy/precision.

Instead, a purposive sample was conducted. 25 schools were randomly selected from a total of 242 government primary schools, and the headteachers and Village Heads were asked to identify local community members who identify with the four selected marginalisation factors to participate in the survey.

Please note, some respondents identified with more than one marginalisation factor, so the sum of the responses is greater than the total number of respondents.

Questionnaire Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marginalised group</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of total respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young people (girls, orphans, child heads of household)</td>
<td>63 (33, 25, 3)</td>
<td>35% (18%, 14%, 2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Poverty</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albinism</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interviews took place at the local school. Data collectors used a structured questionnaire (Appendix 1) to record responses using a tablet.

**Focus Group Discussions**

40 Focus Group Discussions were conducted between with a total of 540 participants who were grouped according to location and marginalisation factors. Participants were selected through the same purposive sampling technique used for the surveys.

**Focus Group Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of People</th>
<th>Number of Focus Groups (40)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents Living with a disability</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents living in extreme poverty</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People living with albinism</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people (Orphans, Child Headed Households)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Focus groups took place in classrooms at the schools in groups of 6 – 8 participants. One member of the data collection team led each focus group, using a set of questions to guide the discussion (Appendix 2), and made notes under these headings.

The purpose of the focus groups was to uncover more detailed information about the barriers to participation faced by each marginalised group, and the opportunities which exist to improve their participation.

**Limitations**

The main limitation of the purposive sampling approach is that the results apply only to the individuals surveyed, and can’t be taken as representative of the wider population of marginalised people in the project area.

In addition, as identification of marginalised groups relied on information from local key informants, the potential for bias in selection of respondents is acknowledged. In theory, key informants may not have had full knowledge of all potential respondents, although in practice, this is not considered a major issue. In some cases where large numbers of respondents were proposed by Village Heads, the Steering Committee conducted eligibility interviews to confirm which people identified with the selected marginalisation factors.

Only a small number of people with albinism, orphans, and child heads of household were identified and therefore the number of responses from these groups is small. People with albinism were particularly reluctant to come forward to participate because of fears for their safety².

Individuals with complex disabilities, particularly those with limited verbal or written communication, were unable to participate in the baseline research. In some villages, respondents who were both deaf and illiterate were identified. As they were unable to respond to the survey either verbally or in writing they were not included in the baseline research. The use of sign-language interpreters was considered, but most of the identified individuals are not familiar with

formal sign language and instead use an improvised form of communication in daily life which is not sufficiently complex to respond to the baseline questions. It is noted that this group of people would require specific support to participate in school improvement processes and Link Malawi will consider this in future programming.

Some marginalised groups of people thought that they were going to be considered for poverty alleviation interventions such as the Social Cash Transfer run by the Malawian Government and the World Bank. In order to discourage respondents from modifying their responses to fit the criteria for Social Cash Transfer, data collectors clearly explained that the purpose of the research was to inform school improvement rather than poverty alleviation. Many data collectors were also Social Cash Transfer facilitators, which meant they were well informed about both programmes and could provide information and support for poverty alleviation separately from the Onse research. In some instances data collectors triangulated responses regarding poverty levels with respondents’ children, and where conflicting information was received, the family was not counted in the “extreme poverty” category.

Data has not been disaggregated by gender as it was considered that disaggregation into the four target areas was sufficient. In the future, further analysis around gender could be considered.

Despite the limitations stated, the survey provides useful insights into the relevant issues at baseline and a basis for measuring progress.

**Ethical Issues**

The research was undertaken in accord with the principle that participation is voluntary, there is informed consent for participation, and that no harm is caused to participants.

Research participants were made aware of why the research was happening, what would happen with the data and who it would be shared with. The following information was provided to participants:

- The purpose of the research and what it entails;
- Who is undertaking and financing the research including the identity of the researcher;
- An outline of any reasonably foreseeable risks, embarrassment or discomfort;
- A description of the likely impact of the study;
- A description of how the respondent was selected for the study;
- A statement that participation was voluntary and that the respondent was free to withdraw at any time or to decline any particular question;
- Details as to how the findings will be disseminated;
- A description of what confidentiality or anonymity applies; and
- An offer to answer any questions.

**Analysis & Triangulation**

The analysis step included review of the quantitative and qualitative data collected during the fieldwork phase in order to answer the baseline questions.

Information from a range of stakeholders and other sources is brought together (triangulated) to provide a range of perspectives on the baseline questions. Quantitative data was analysed using the Qualtrics survey tool.
Findings

The findings in this section are drawn from the survey results and the focus group discussions.

Levels of participation, influence, knowledge and motivation to engage in school management and the school improvement process

LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION AND INFLUENCE

Findings in this section are taken from the 175 individual stakeholder surveys. 58% of respondents to the stakeholder survey either somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that they “participate regularly in school management activities”, as illustrated in Table 1. For the baseline, school management activities include:

- School Performance Review or School Review;
- School Performance Appraisal Meeting or School Review Feedback Meeting;
- Community Meeting or PTA Meeting;
- School Improvement Plan meeting (developing the plan);
- School Improvement Plan meeting (discussing progress on the plan);
- Meeting about the National Education Standards.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Somewhat agree</td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Somewhat disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey of marginalised groups

Young people had a particularly low level of participation. 57 out of 63 respondents in this group (90%) somewhat or strongly disagreed that they participate regularly. There was no significant difference between girls’ and boys’ participation. 21 out of 25 orphans (84%) strongly or somewhat
disagreed, which is broadly in line with the level of participation of the wider “young people” group. Two out of three child heads of household (66%) “somewhat disagree” that they participate regularly in school management activities, compared to one who “somewhat agrees”.

26 out of 39 disabled people (66%) and 78 out of 125 respondents living in extreme poverty (62%) disagree that they participate regularly in school management activities. Although low, this is a better rate of participation than that experienced by young people, which suggests that youth presents a particular barrier.

Contrary to expectations, respondents with albinism had a higher level of participation than other marginalised groups. Only three out of eleven people with albinism (27%) disagree that they participate regularly in school management activities. This group was expected to have very low levels of participation due to the surge in killings of people with albinism in recent years. Improved policing, community awareness and efforts by community policing groups have begun to counteract this, and as a result in some communities people with albinism feel more able to participate in community gatherings. However, the focus groups revealed that concerns over safety remain a barrier to participation, both in this research and in school meetings. The group included in the survey was very low, and there may therefore be an issue of bias in the survey results due to the greater potential barriers to including this group’s views.

Members of the marginalised groups also felt that they participated less than the wider community. 79% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that “the local community is effectively involved in school management”. This is illustrated in Table 2 below. There were no significant differences between the responses of different marginalised groups. This study does not assess wider community participation in school management, so cannot compare the experiences of marginalised and non-marginalised groups, which is a limitation, but the survey results indicate that respondents perceive that they are less involved than others in their local community.

Table 2

| To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “The local community is effectively involved in school management”. Would you say that you... READ OUT OPTIONS |

---

People’s perceptions of the amount of influence they have on school management decision-making is closely linked to their level of participation. 55% of respondents strongly or somewhat disagree that “I can effectively influence school management decisions” (see Table 3 below) while 58% strongly or somewhat disagree that they participate regularly in school management activities (Table 1). This connection is found in the responses of all marginalised groups.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Somewhat agree</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Somewhat disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>175</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey of marginalised groups

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “I can effectively influence school management decisions”. Would you say that you... READ OUT OPTIONS

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Somewhat agree</td>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Somewhat disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>175</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey of marginalised groups
LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE

As would be expected from low levels of participation, respondents’ levels of knowledge about school management is also low. As Table 4 illustrates, only 36% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that “I have a good knowledge of school management activities”.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Somewhat agree</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Somewhat disagree</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey of marginalised groups

42 out of 125 individuals living in extreme poverty (34%) agree that they have a good knowledge of school management, which is consistent with the average rate of participation across the marginalised groups.

Only 17 out of 63 young people (27%) agreed that they have good knowledge of school management activities. This is the lowest rate of all the marginalised groups surveyed. Of these, one in three child heads of household (33%) and 3 out of 25 orphans (12%) agreed.

12 out of 39 disabled people (30%) agree that they have good knowledge of school management activities, which is slightly lower than the average rate for marginalised groups, suggesting that disability presents additional barriers compared to extreme poverty.

5 out of 11 people with albinism (45%) agree. This is higher than the average, which supports the theory that this group faces less discrimination than in the recent past, but it is still less than half of the group. As noted above, this finding is based on a very low sample.

Knowledge of education rights, responsibilities and entitlements was also very limited. Only 7 out of the total 175 respondents had a good knowledge of the Education Act 2012 which details stakeholders’ rights and responsibilities in school management and education provision, while 6
respondents had heard of the National Education Standards (2015) which set out the minimum standards to which all schools in Malawi must adhere.

Despite a low level of engagement and limited knowledge of how schools should be and are performing, respondents rated the quality of school management relatively highly. As Table 5 shows, 61% of respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that “The quality of school management at this school is good”.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey of marginalised groups

However, levels of satisfaction varied between the groups. While 40 out of 63 young people (63%), 8 out of 11 people with albinism (72%) and 78 out of 125 (62%) people in extreme poverty agreed that school management is “good”, only 17 out of 39 people living with a disability (44%) agreed. This suggests that schools are failing to meet the needs of disabled stakeholders to a greater extent than other marginalised groups.

MOTIVATION TO PARTICIPATE

Despite reporting low levels of participation and influence (see Tables 1 and 3), a majority of respondents from marginalised groups think that they should be involved in school management, as illustrated in Table 6. While only 40% of respondents agree that they currently participate regularly in school management activities, 79% think that “people like me should have a say in how this school is managed”. The focus group discussions and comments during the survey suggest that those who disagreed with the statement usually did so because of a lack of confidence in their own
abilities, discrimination due to their ‘marginalised’ status, or practical barriers connected to marginalisation. This is explored further in the next section.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Somewhat agree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Somewhat disagree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey of marginalised groups

Exploring the gap between motivation and participation – the barriers and opportunities to improve levels of engagement

This section of the report looks more closely at the specific barriers faced by each marginalised group to understand what limits their participation, and examines the positive experiences of group members in order to identify opportunities to improve participation. The findings are drawn from the survey and 40 focus group discussions.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people are particularly keen to be more involved with managing their school. The survey found that 47 out of 63 young people (75%) strongly agreed that “people like me should have a say in how this school is managed”, and another eight (13%) somewhat agreed. 20 out of 25 orphans (80%) and two out of three child heads of household (66%) also strongly agreed with this statement. Table 7 illustrates these findings.

Table 7

Young people response: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “People like me should have a say in how this school is managed” Would you say that you... READ OUT OPTIONS
Box 1 illustrates a number of comments made by young people during the survey about why they should have a say in how their school is managed.

**Box 1**

“If given a chance, I can say something that can improve our school.”

“We should be involved so that our views are taken on board.”

“We feel it is good for us.”

“We have our own views on how the school should be managed.”

“I should have an opportunity to say what I think is not right at this school.”

“We should directly present our problems and we should have a chance to select leaders who can effectively manage the school.”

“I want my opinions to be heard by all concerned stakeholders.”

The focus group discussions support the finding that young people are motivated to have greater involvement in school management in order to improve their school experiences. Responses included a desire to improve the way they are taught, reduce incidents of theft from the school and increase the number of classrooms.

The few young people who disagreed that they should have a say in school management did so because of a lack of confidence connected to their age. Box 2 illustrates the comments made by
young people during the survey about why they do not think they should be involved in school management.

**Box 2**

“I am very young and have nothing to say.”

“I feel I am very young and may not effectively contribute to decision making.”

“We are very much disregarded [by adults] saying that we are children.”

“There is no need to consult children like us, it would not add any value.”

This is supported by the survey results which show that 32 out of 63 young people (50%) strongly disagreed that “other people listen to my views about school management and school improvement” while another 12 (19%) somewhat disagreed. During focus group discussions discrimination against children due to their age and the belief that children cannot contribute effectively were highlighted as barriers to participation.

The focus groups also revealed that some children (particularly those who are orphans and child heads of household) do not have time to participate in school management because they are occupied with household chores. Children with albinism also commented that due to fears for their safety, parents sometimes prevented them from participating in gatherings, in some cases locking them in their houses.

Box 3 illustrates the comments young people made during the survey about what prevents them from expressing their opinions about school improvement.

**Box 3**

“Most of the times management imposes ideas on us, and our views are not listened to.”

“I have never had a chance to say my views.”

“I am not regarded as old enough to influence school management decisions.”

“We are excluded from decision making because they think we are young and poor.”

“We are often disregarded when it comes to school management decisions.”

“Some parents and teachers exclude us in decision making issues saying that we are young and cannot make effective decisions.”

“They never listen to views from us.”

“They look upon us as children who cannot contribute much for the proper management of the school.”
Many people do not listen to me because they consider me as young. Top officials from the education sector seem not to be interested with ideas from young people like myself.

When young people do participate, they may experience negative consequences. One young person commented during the survey: “Sometimes learners get punished when they point out bad things especially about the teachers and school management.”

However, there are examples of young people participating effectively in school management decision-making which can offer lessons for increasing young people’s involvement. The focus groups found that young people felt more able to participate in school management when they were supported and encouraged by siblings and role models in the community. Responses to the survey highlighted the importance of support from peers in school. Some examples of these are given in Box 4 below.

Box 4

“I convinced my friends to meet management over sports equipment and we were able to meet management and discuss with them about our needs.”

“I was seconded by fellow learners when I gave suggestions on school learning materials.”

“My fellow learners do what I instruct them to do as I am also the class monitor. I have seen action being taken on what we tell others to do including our teachers.”

At the other end of the spectrum, one survey respondent commented: “I am too old to participate in these education related issues,” while another said “They always say that it is not my role. They look at me as the oldest person and I cannot bring ideas in meetings.” The marginalisation of older people in the school improvement process should be explored fully in future research.

People Living with a Disability

During the survey 23 out of 39 (59%) of people living with a disability strongly or somewhat agree that “people like me should have a say in how this school is managed”. This contrasts with just 13 people (34%) who agree that they currently participate regularly. Box 5 illustrates comments regarding why people living with a disability should participate in school management which were made during the survey.

Box 5

“People living with disabilities have a say and their ideas should always be taken on board more especially when it comes to infrastructural development as they need ramps. Discrimination of people living with disabilities facilitated school drop-outs so we need to raise awareness of its negative effects.”

“People like me have rights. People like me have ideas which can assist in the improvement of schools.”
"It will increase my happiness and morale."

"Despite being disabled there are certain things we can manage to do. We have knowledge and strength that can assist us to participate."

"Despite my disability, there are things I can do. I can act as a role model to others."

"I will be seen as a role model to others and the learners who will see that a person with disability is able to conduct development matters. It will also encourage my children to attend school."

The focus groups also indicate that people living with disabilities are keen to participate in school management in order to improve the school experiences of children with disabilities because they understand their needs and can advocate for them.

Those who disagree that “people like me should have a say in how this school is managed” did so largely because they face practical barriers to participation or because they and members of the wider community do not think that a ‘disabled’ person can contribute to school management. The focus groups identified discrimination against people with disabilities and a lack of role models in the community as barriers. Box 6 illustrates similar responses which were provided during the survey.

**Box 6**

“"I cannot speak and I don’t think I am capable of participating."

“I am blind and can’t contribute anything.”

“People do not involve me in most of the activities at this school.”

“People do not care about me, so why should I participate in school management activities?”

“I am disabled and school meetings are not relevant for me.”

“I am not sure if I really need to, or if I did, I am not sure people would listen to me.”

Only 14 out of 39 people with a disability had attended at least one school improvement activity.

Of those who had attended, **half (7 out of 14)** were not satisfied with their participation.

“They don’t listen to us when we want to advise them.”

“My participation is very little.”

22 out of 39 people with a disability (56%) strongly disagree that “other people listen to my views about school management and school improvement” and an additional eight (20%) somewhat disagree. Several respondents to the survey provided examples of their views being overlooked (Box 7) and perceived that this is because of discrimination against disabled people.
Box 7

“People do not take my views, for example I raised an issue that most parents are not sending their children to school and suggested ways of overcoming this, but no one took care of my views and advice.”

“They never listen to our ideas, and disabled people are never listened to.”

“If I attend a meeting, my suggestions are not put into consideration.”

“There was a time when I raised an issue but none of the key people took the idea.”

“I do not think people can listen to me because of my disability.”

“We are not influential.”

“I am disregarded.”

When asked to describe the challenges they experience in terms of participation, disabled respondents highlighted practical barriers to access and participation, and discrimination due to their disability, which are found in Box 8 below.

Box 8

“I rarely attend meetings. I am blind and often times I am just home, I can’t walk alone.”

“There is discrimination of people with disabilities.”

“Movement to the school is always a challenge.”

“I have problems walking.”

“I have never been given a chance to air out my views about education because they feel I do not know anything.”

“Because I am disabled, people think that I cannot say anything that can contribute to the improvement of this school”

“It depends on a situation because I am epileptic so when am free from it, people tend to listen to me but when I am epileptic, people tend to ignore me.”

Physical barriers were cited by many focus groups as a reason for lack of participation by those with disabilities. However, some focus groups mentioned that people with disabilities participated in other “important meetings” but not school meetings, which suggests that physical access to meetings can be addressed. One focus group noted their participation in discussions which were arranged about how to make schools more disability-friendly. This indicates that there may be a tendency to limit disabled people’s participation to issues which are concerned with disabilities, and overlook the contributions they can make to school management as a whole.
The positive responses from disabled stakeholders who felt that they can and do contribute to school management offer pointers for improving the inclusion of those with disabilities. The survey responses (Box 9) focused on what happens during school meetings to encourage people with disabilities to participate.

**Box 9**

“**My views are taken into consideration and others respect my suggestions.”**

“Some of the issues discussed are seen to be implemented. We are given opportunity to speak during school meetings."

“We are given chances to speak. The meetings are also conducted during the right time.”

“I am able to follow up on what is taking place at the school since I participated in the planning process. I am also able to know what problems are there at our school.”

The focus groups revealed that when people with disabilities feel included in community activities, such as announcements about school meetings or group efforts to mould bricks for school construction, they feel more able to participate in school management.

**PEOPLE LIVING WITH ALBINISM**

8 out of 11 people with albinism (72%) strongly or somewhat agree that they should participate and the same number feel that they do participate regularly in school management, according to the survey. Many survey respondents and focus group participants commented that they are motivated to improve educational experiences for themselves, their children, or other people with albinism. Box 10 illustrates some of the survey responses.

**Box 10**

“**To influence inclusion of persons with albinism.”**

“So that our issues can be considered.”

“For me to have better services for my condition and education.”

“We can raise issues which can help in the running of the school.”

Good relationships with other parents and good leadership by Group Village Heads were identified by focus groups as factors which supported people with albinism to participate.

However more than a quarter of people with albinism who were surveyed do not participate and do not think they should participate in school management. Responses suggest that while concerns about physical safety have to some extent been addressed, deeper prejudices or fears remain. One survey respondent commented: "**Because of the way I am sometimes I just feel I am not important.”** Focus groups indicated that people with albinism felt discriminated against or “targeted” during gatherings such as school meetings, which encouraged them to stay away, and some children with
albinism spoke about being locked in their home for their own protection. The small number of respondents in this group also suggests that people with albinism did not feel comfortable participating in the research.

PEOPLE LIVING IN EXTREME POVERTY

82% of people living in extreme poverty agree that they should have a say in school management, compared to just 37% who do currently participate. Box 11 provides examples from the survey of why people living in extreme poverty are motivated to participate in school management.

Box 11

“We should directly present our problems and we should have a chance to select leaders who can effectively manage the school.”

“We can raise issues which can help in the running of the school.”

“The school belongs to our community and I am part of that.”

“I would like to be part of the people helping to improve the welfare of our children at this school.”

The focus groups support the survey finding that people living in extreme poverty want to participate in school management in order to improve the school for their own children and the wider community.

The opportunity costs of attending school meetings are one barrier to participation. One survey respondent commented: “I am unable to participate in school activities because I am poor, I spend much of my time doing casual work.” The focus groups also revealed that people living in extreme poverty prioritise attendance at meetings where there will be “handouts” in the form of food, financial aid or other resources.

Lack of confidence and lack of respect from others are more commonly cited as reasons for not participating. Over half of people living in extreme poverty disagree that “other people listen to my views about school management and school improvement”. Box 12 provides some examples.

Box 12

“I have never been given a chance to air my views about education because they feel I do not know anything.”

“They look at us as people who cannot raise issues that can help in the improvement of the schools.”

“I am not sure if it is right for me to speak during meetings.”

“People consider me as a very poor person and therefore cannot listen to me.”

During focus group discussions the main reason that people living in extreme poverty gave for their lack of participation was simply: “we are not invited.”
Status within the community which is not connected to wealth can counteract the negative effects of poverty on participation. For example, although they identify as “extremely poor”, village chiefs, heads and leaders are more likely than other community members to be involved in school management and to feel that it is their right to be involved. This group’s views are represented in Box 13.

**Box 13**

“As a citizen and local village head, I need to be active such that without my participation school management affairs and development cannot operate well.”

“They trust my leadership skills.”

“As a leader I have the responsibility to make sure that people in my village take part in all activities taking place at the school.”

“I have children who go to this school and I am a village headman, thus I deserve to utter a word on how the school is managed.”

“As a Village Head, surely my voice in the aspect of school management is very vital such that I am a cornerstone in school management affairs.”

“I need to be updated fully in order to relay the message to my people.”

“As Group Village Head, I have observed that some of my suggestions are being implemented.”

Education and gender roles may also affect the extent to which people living in extreme poverty feel confident to express their views, although this requires further research. One survey respondent said that participation is challenging “just because I am not educated.” Another commented: “Sometimes I cannot have any say because I have a husband”. In some focus group discussions, women chose to remain silent in the presence of men.

**SUMMARY**

A majority of respondents in all of the marginalised groups which were included in the baseline study identified discrimination or negative perceptions about their capacity to contribute to school management as a reason for low levels of knowledge about school quality and participation in school improvement. Often the result is that members of marginalised groups are simply not invited to participate in school improvement activities. These negative attitudes also frequently meant that members of the marginalised groups were discouraged from participating, either because they internalised the negative perceptions of their abilities and lacked the confidence to pursue participation, or because they had frustrating or demoralising experiences when they did participate. The small number of respondents in each group who were participating actively and had positive experiences with school management identified the supportive attitudes and actions of peers, the wider community and community leaders as enabling factors.

In addition to the perception barriers, each marginalised group identified challenges specific to their marginalisation factors which limit their participation in school improvement.
Young people who are orphaned or child heads of household, and people living in extreme poverty, identified lack of time to participate as a barrier. For many members of these groups, income generating activities and household chores take precedence over attending school meetings, and other meetings which might include a ‘handout’ are prioritised over school meetings.

People living with disabilities face physical barriers which prevent them from travelling to the school to attend meetings or which limit their participation during the meetings because they are unable to hear or speak in discussions or to read written documents. However, as most respondents with disabilities identified other types of meetings they had successfully attended, this suggests that adaptations can be made to overcome the physical barriers.

Fears over physical safety during community meetings is the main barrier to the participation of people with albinism. Despite widespread community sensitisation and improved community policing initiatives, some stakeholders consider participation too risky. The small number of people with albinism who participated in the baseline may also reflect these fears.

Despite these challenges, a majority of respondents in all of the marginalised groups expressed a desire to have greater participation in school management. During focus group discussions they identified the most effective ways to increase their knowledge of school performance and their participation in school improvement.

**Recommendations**

This section draws on the baseline findings and the marginalised groups’ views to make recommendations for how to achieve the Onse Project’s objectives of raising awareness of the National Education Standards and increasing the participation of the target marginalised groups in the school improvement process.

**Raising awareness of the National Education Standards (NES)**

**INFORMATION MEETINGS**

During focus group discussions stakeholders living in extreme poverty, with a disability, and with albinism all identified information meetings at school or in the community as their preferred method of receiving information about the National Education Standards. In order to include the stakeholders from the target marginalised groups in these meetings, it is recommended that the meeting organisers do the following:

- Make it known that everyone is welcome to the meeting and disseminate invitations as widely as possible through the available channels;
- Identify individuals who may be members of the four marginalised groups and issue special invitations or encouragement to them to attend;
- Work with individuals to understand and address mobility barriers using the resources which are available in the community (for example, organising volunteer bicycle taxis);
- If written materials are to be used at the meetings, make these available in formats which are understood by all attendees (including in Chichewa, braille and pictorial forms).

**ORAL COMMUNICATION**
Young people, particularly those who are orphaned or child heads of household, preferred to receive information about the NES through the radio. The focus groups identified local community radio stations (Bembeke, Zodiak) which they listen to regularly as the most effective source of information. People living with a disability also felt strongly that information received through the radio would be useful in instances where they are unable to attend meetings. Given that safety fears around attending community gatherings are identified in the baseline as a key barrier for people living with albinism, it is likely that radio will be able to reach a larger number of individuals in this target group than the community meetings.

Drama groups were also identified by each of the marginalised groups as an effective method for them to receive information. People living with albinism or with a disability particularly recommended this method. This may be because community-based drama groups have been used extensively in rural Dedza to raise awareness of the rights of people living with disabilities and with albinism.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

Stakeholders living in extreme poverty identified newspapers as their second preference for receiving information about the NES. However, other groups did not rate this communication method highly. If written communication is used, it is recommended that the language used should be Chichewa as this is the most widely spoken language in this rural area of Dedza. However, as adult literacy levels are low, written communication in Chichewa should be supplemented with pictorial information. Consideration should also be given to the use of braille for those stakeholders with visual impairments, although it is noted that the equipment to produce braille materials is not readily available in rural Dedza, and is costly.

**Greater and more meaningful involvement in community meetings, School Review, and School Improvement Planning processes**

All school management and school improvement activities, including the official processes of School Review and School Improvement Planning, centre around stakeholders meeting to discuss information and make decisions about the school. The following are recommendations for increasing the number of representatives from the marginalised groups attending these meetings, and for facilitating their meaningful engagement at each stage of the process.

**BEFORE THE MEETING**

- Primary Education Advisors should ensure Headteachers are aware of the rights of marginalised individuals to attend meetings and the fact that they can make a valuable contribution at these meetings;
- Headteachers should ensure that meetings are announced in plenty of time to allow people to make the necessary arrangements to attend, for example scheduling their income generation activities or arranging transport if they have mobility challenges. Announcements should be made through a variety of routes to reach as many people as possible, for example through the Disability Forum;
• Headteachers should ensure that all community members are encouraged to attend the meetings, making a special effort to let people from marginalised groups know that they are welcome, they have a right to attend, and their contributions will be valued;

• Village Heads should ensure that community policing groups are in place to provide protection for people with albinism and other vulnerable groups, and make everyone aware that this is in place;

• Headteachers or meeting organisers prepare handouts for participants who require them (e.g. if it is known that participants with hearing impairment who are literate will attend);

• If appropriate, headteachers should ask for a representative of each marginalised group to gather the views of those who are unable to attend.

DURING THE MEETING

The headteacher or meeting organiser should:

• Ask participants to support one another (or assign volunteers). For example, sighted and literate participants can be asked to read key documents to members of their group who have visual impairments or low literacy; people who are able to use sign language should interpret for sign language users;

• Ensure that representatives of each marginalised group have expressed their views, including representatives of those who are unable to attend. If necessary, allow more time or (sensitively) provide extra encouragement to some groups;

• Give all views equal respect and consideration, and ensure that all participants do the same;

• If numbers are large, organise the meeting into smaller groups for participatory activities. Ensure that groups are mixed and include members of different marginalised groups.

AFTER THE MEETING

• If individuals or groups were unable to attend, make arrangements to share the meeting decisions with them, for example by sending handouts home with a neighbour, making sure a group representative is informed and asked to update the people they represent, or making a follow-up announcement in a relevant format e.g. community radio, youth clubs, notice on the public noticeboard or via the Disability Forum.

Conclusions and Way Forward

Conclusions

The baseline provides data on the pre-intervention levels of participation, influence, knowledge, and motivation of members of the four selected marginalised groups to engage in school management and the school improvement process. It shows that levels of knowledge are especially low among all marginalised groups, while levels of participation, influence and motivation to engage are not high, but vary between the groups. There is a significant gap between the levels of engagement and the aspirations for engagement of every marginalised group.
It is noted that one of the limitations of the baseline report is that it was not possible to include individuals with complex disabilities in the baseline survey due to communications barriers and a lack of resources to overcome these. It is recommended that Link Community Development develops an approach that can include some assessment of how these groups have interacted with the project for the end of project evaluation.

The baseline report analyses the reasons for the disparity between levels of engagement and aspirations for engagement in the school improvement process. The barriers to knowledge and participation and the opportunities to improve levels of engagement also vary depending on the specific experiences and circumstances of each group.

Analysis and reflection on the baseline data presents a number of lessons about the key barriers which must be addressed and the potential opportunities which might be exploited to improve participation for the selected marginalised groups. The report concludes with recommendations for the Onse Project to achieve its objectives.

**Way forward**

The next step in the Onse Project is for Link Malawi to discuss the baseline findings and recommendations with the Onse Steering Committee, and to work with the Committee and other stakeholders, including Primary Education Advisors and headteachers, to design interventions to increase the knowledge and participation in the school improvement process of young people, people living with a disability, people living with albinism, and people living in extreme poverty.

These activities will be implemented over the next year, and a follow-up survey and focus group discussions will be undertaken to assess their impact on levels of knowledge and participation for each marginalised group.
Appendices

Appendix 1: Baseline Survey

I would be very grateful for your participation in a short survey to provide feedback on your understanding of school improvement and your involvement in making decisions about this school.

Your response to the questions below will assist the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), Link Malawi and others to understand what needs to be done so that all members of the community can take part in understanding and improving their schools.

Participation in the survey is voluntary and findings from the survey will not be attributed to individuals, but we do need to make a note of your name so that we can come back and ask you some more questions later.

Confirm understanding and ask for any further clarification required as necessary.

Q1 The data collector to introduce his/her name to the interviewee. My name is _____________ and your name is _____________________________. (This should just be in form of a conversation and the data collector should not write the name at this point but should write after asking question 3.)

Q2 What do you do for a living? (Tick all that apply)
- Subsistence Farmer
- Retailer
- Casual Worker
- Commercial Farmer
- Employed
- Other (please specify)________________________
- None of the above

Q3 Would you describe yourself as... (tick all that apply)
- Primary School Learner at this school
- Parent of a learner at this school
- Orphan
- Child head of household / child carer
- Albino
- Person living with a disability
- Youth

Male  ________
Female  ________

Q4 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “My family always has enough food to eat”
Q5 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I participate regularly in school management activities". Would you say that you...

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q6 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I can effectively influence school management decisions". Would you say that you...

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
Q7 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “The quality of school management at this school is good”. Would you say that you... READ OUT OPTIONS
- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q8 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “The local community is effectively involved in school management”. Would you say that you... READ OUT OPTIONS
- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q9 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I have a good knowledge of school management activities". Would you say that you... READ OUT OPTIONS
- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q10 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "People like me should have a say in how this school is managed" Would you say that you... READ OUT OPTIONS
- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q11 What are the main reasons for selecting your answer to the previous question...?
PROBE FOR ANSWERS AS REQUIRED

Q12 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: “Other people listen to my views about school management and school improvement” Would you say that you... READ OUT OPTIONS
- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q13 What are the main reasons for selecting your answer to the previous question...?
PROBE FOR ANSWERS AS REQUIRED
Q14 Have you participated in any of the following school improvement activities (*Tick all that apply*)
- School Performance Review / School Review
- School Performance Appraisal Meeting / School Review Feedback Meeting
- Community Meeting/ PTA meeting
- School Improvement Plan meeting (developing the plan)
- School Improvement Plan meeting (discussing progress on the plan)
- Meeting about the National Education Standards
- None of the above

Q15 If you have participated in any of the above School Improvement Plan activities, Can you say that you are READ ANSWER OPTIONS
- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Not satisfied
- Don't Know

Q16 What are the main reasons for selecting your answer to the previous question...? PROBE FOR ANSWERS AS REQUIRED

Q17 Have you experienced any challenges with participating in school improvement activities? READ ANSWER OPTIONS
- A lot
- A few
- None at all
- Don't know

Answer If Have you experienced any challenges with participating in school improvement activities... A lot Is Selected Or Have you experienced any challenges with participating in school improvement activities A few Is Selected

Q18 What kind of challenges did you experience...?PROBE FOR ANSWERS AS REQUIRED

Q19 Have there been any negative outcomes from your participation in school improvement activities...? READ ANSWER OPTIONS
- A lot
- A few
- None at all
- Don't know

Answer If Have there been any negative outcomes from your participation in school improvement activities...? READ ANS... A lot Is Selected Or Have there been any
negative outcomes from your participation in school improvement activities...? READ ANS... A few Is Selected

Q20 What are the negative outcomes that you have experienced as a result of your participation in school improvement activities...? PROBE FOR ANSWERS AS REQUIRED

Q21 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I have a good knowledge of the National Education Standards". Would you say that you... READ OUT OPTIONS
- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q22 How have you heard about the National Education Standards...
- At a school meeting
- On the radio
- In the newspaper
- From a friend / neighbour / colleague
- Other – please state
- Never heard

Q23 What are some of the issues addressed by the National Education Standards?

Q24 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I have a good knowledge of the Education Act 2012". Would you say that you... READ OUT OPTIONS
- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q25 How have you heard about the Education Act...
- At a school meeting
- On the radio
- In the newspaper
- From a friend / neighbour / colleague
- Other – please state
- Never heard about the act

Q26 What are some of the issues addressed by the Education Act?

Q27 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I know this school’s strengths and weaknesses" Would you say that you... READ OUT OPTIONS
Strongly agree
Somewhat agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Somewhat disagree
Strongly disagree

If strongly agree or somewhat agree...

Q28 How do you know about this school’s strengths and weaknesses?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Q29 Do you have any other comments you would like to make about your participation in school management decisions and school improvement...? PROBE FOR ANSWERS AS REQUIRED

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

END OF SURVEY THANK PARTICIPANT
Appendix 2: Focus Group Discussion topic guide

IPGEM PROJECT

Stakeholder Focus Group Discussion

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this discussion. We would like to discuss your experiences of participating in school management and improvement activities. These include School Review, SPR, community meetings, SPAM, and school improvement planning.

I humbly request you to be open with your ideas on the following questions. Your responses to the questions will help us to make sure the whole community can participate in school improvement.

NOTE TO FACILITATOR – REMEMBER THE PURPOSE OF A FGD IS FOR THE INTERVIEWEES TO DISCUSS AMONST THEMSELVES. THIS WORKS BEST IF ONE PERSON FACILITATES THE DISCUSSION BY ASKING THE QUESTIONS AND PROMPTING PEOPLE TO CONTRIBUTE IF NEEDED E.G. “THAT’S INTERESTING MRS SYKES, DO YOU AGREE MR MULENGA?”, WHILE ANOTHER PERSON DISCREETLY TAKES NOTES.

Stakeholder Group: Learner, albino, etc.
School:
Names of participants: male / female

Q1 In what ways do you participate in school management or improvement activities?
Prompts – are you involved with the school? How? Do you come to meetings? Do you talk to teachers / SMC / PTA members? Have you participated in School Review? Have you seen an ESRC?

Interviewer notes:

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<th>Positive responses</th>
<th>Negative responses</th>
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Q2 What has made it possible for you to participate in school management and school improvement activities?

Prompts – things that were said or done at home / community / school.

Interviewer notes:

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Q3 What has made it difficult for you to participate in school management and school improvement activities?
Prompts – things that were said or done at home / community / school.

**Interviewer notes:**

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Q4 Would you like to be more involved in school management and school improvement? Why / why not?
Prompts: is school management interesting to you? Do you think people like you should have a say in how the school is run? Would there be any negative outcomes for you if you were more involved?

**Interviewer notes**

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Q5 What would make it easier for you to participate in school management and school improvement?
Prompts– accessibility / time of meetings / language / attitudes / structure of meetings (i.e. smaller group discussions).

**Interviewer notes:**
Q6 What do you know about the National Education Standards?

### Interviewer notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct information / good level of knowledge</th>
<th>Incorrect information / vague / guessing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q7 What challenges have you faced with finding out about the NES?
Prompts – have you heard anything about them at school or in the community? What dissuaded you from finding out more?

Interviewer notes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lack of interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excluded by school / decision-makers / not my place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language / literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings at inappropriate times / conflict with other priorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q8 What would be the best way for you (and others like you) to receive information about the National Education Standards and how this school is performing?
Prompts – meetings, radio, newspaper, poster, cartoon, drama.
Ask for examples of what they have found to be effective.

Interviewer notes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartoons (newspaper, poster, community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q9 Any other comments about your participation / participation of people like you in school management and improvement?

Interviewer notes:
Thank you for your participation.
## Appendix 3: Baseline Survey Centres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Zone</th>
<th>Name of School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thete</td>
<td>Chonde Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katewe</td>
<td>Mafutsa Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boma</td>
<td>Milonde 1 Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalinyeke</td>
<td>Phokera Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tchetsa</td>
<td>Gwengwe Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chitundu</td>
<td>Mdindo Primary School *2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chilanga</td>
<td>Kavumba Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mthandiza</td>
<td>Phaka Primary School *2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chimbija</td>
<td>Kavumba Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bembeke</td>
<td>Chimkombero Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chimwagalu</td>
<td>Madzimaera Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magomero</td>
<td>Chideza Primary School *2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanyenda</td>
<td>Chiwamba Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makota</td>
<td>Machese Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chikololere</td>
<td>Lidzinji Primary School *2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapiri</td>
<td>Msungo Primary School *2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mankhamba</td>
<td>Chinkhumbe Primary School *2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matundu</td>
<td>Kapongwe Primary School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Baseline Survey Photographs

Data Collection for the “Onse” project in progress

People living with albinism were part of the interviewed groups
Focus Group Discussion for the Poverty Stricken Families

Steering Committee and District Education staff during discussion of “Onse” project activities