

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR A CONSULTANT TO CONDUCT AN ASSESSMENT OF MALAWI'S PROGRESS IN TRANSLATING REGIONAL SRHR COMMITMENTS INTO NATIONAL LAWS, POLICIES, STRATEGIES, PROGRAMMES AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS.

1.0 Background

The Sexuality Education for Transformation Project Phase II (SET 2.0) is a regional initiative being implemented in Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe through the Girls Education Advocacy in the Region (GEAR) Alliance, with the Students and Youth Working on reproductive Health Action Team (SAYWHAT) serving as the lead organisation. The project seeks to address the systemic suppression of young people's sexual health rights and the continued lack of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. Young people in Southern Africa continue to face significant barriers to accessing comprehensive sexuality education and youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) information and services. These challenges are reflected in persistent concerns related to teenage pregnancy, HIV infections, gender-based violence, unsafe abortion, stigma, discrimination and limited access to youth-friendly SRHR services. The project notes that young people's sexual rights continue to be affected by conservative values, harmful social norms and resistance to CSE and SRHR interventions.

The implementation of SET 2.0 is guided by the SADC SRHR Strategy and the East and Southern Africa (ESA) Commitments, which call on countries to strengthen access to CSE and SRHR services for young people. Although the three countries have made commitments to support sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health services, significant gaps remain between regional commitments and their translation into national policies, laws, strategies, programmes and implementation. The SADC region continues to experience gaps in adequate regional legal and accountability mechanisms that are aligned with global and continental standards and responsive to CSE and young people's sexual health rights. Progress in the adoption and implementation of relevant legal, policy and strategic frameworks has been slow, while limited cohesion between policies and laws continues to affect the protection of young people's sexual health rights. These gaps are further compounded by opposition to CSE and the growing influence of anti-rights and anti-CSE movements.

Against this background, Tracking of Regional Frameworks is a central intervention under the policy accountability and advocacy strategy of SET 2.0. The consultant will assess the extent to which selected regional commitments and frameworks have been translated into national laws, policies, strategies, programmes and implementation mechanisms. The consultant will track national progress against relevant regional benchmarks, including SADC SRHR Strategy, Maputo Plan of Action and ESA Commitments and identify areas of alignment, progress, gaps and outstanding actions. The assessment may, for example, examine the extent to which age-appropriate CSE has been incorporated into national education policies

and curricula and whether national provisions and implementation are aligned with relevant regional commitments.

The policy tracking process will generate evidence that can be used by youth-led civil society organisations, policymakers, government institutions and other stakeholders to strengthen advocacy and accountability. The consultants will further develop national policy trackers, evidence-based policy briefs and fact sheets to communicate findings and support targeted advocacy and stakeholder engagement. The intervention is therefore intended to strengthen the capacity of the GEAR Alliance and its partners to hold policymakers and governments accountable for commitments related to the sexual health rights of young people. It will contribute to improved policy implementation, stronger alignment between national and regional frameworks and increased accountability for CSE and SRHR commitments. This is consistent with the overall SET 2.0 goal of strengthening a youth-led movement that promotes the sexual health rights of young people in Southern Africa.

2.0 Objectives of Tracking Regional Frameworks

2.1 Main objective

The main objective is to assess Malawi's progress in translating regional SRHR commitments (SADC SRHR strategy, Maputo Plan of Action and ESA commitments) into national laws, policies, strategies, programmes and implementation actions. The exercise will generate evidence to strengthen policy advocacy, stakeholder engagement and government accountability.

2.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the assignment are to:

- Assess the extent to which SADC SRHR strategy, Maputo and ESA commitments have been incorporated into national laws, policies, strategies, programmes and implementation frameworks.
- Identify progress, gaps, challenges and opportunities in the implementation of regional SRHR commitments at national level.
- Identify priority areas for policy and programme action by governments and other relevant stakeholders.
- Develop a policy tracker to systematically monitor national progress against selected regional commitments.
- Generate evidence-based policy briefs and fact sheets to support advocacy and stakeholder engagement.

3.0 Scope of the Assignment

The scope of the assignment will include the review of relevant regional and national frameworks, assessment of national implementation progress, development of a policy tracker, analysis of findings and preparation of advocacy products. The assignment shall include, but not be limited to, the following tasks:

Stage 1: Inception Phase

In consultation with the Project Management Team, the consultant shall:

- Develop and submit an inception report outlining the consultant's understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, assessment framework, key information sources and detailed work plan.
- Agree with the Project Management Team on the key national policies, laws, strategies, programmes and other documents to be reviewed.

Stage 2: Desk Review and Data Collection Phase

Upon approval of the inception report, methodology and work plan, the consultant shall undertake the following tasks:

- Conduct a comprehensive desk review of relevant regional frameworks, commitments and national laws, policies, strategies, guidelines, curricula, programmes, reports and other relevant documents.
- Where necessary, conduct consultations with relevant government institutions, civil society organisations, youth-led organisations, development partners and other key stakeholders.

Stage 3: Analysis, Reporting and Advocacy Products

The consultant shall:

- Analyse and interpret the findings from the policy review and stakeholder consultations.
- Prepare a report highlighting national progress, gaps and areas requiring further action.
- Develop a policy tracking tool for assessing national alignment and implementation progress.
- Develop an evidence-based policy brief highlighting key findings and recommendations.
- Develop a fact sheet presenting key findings and advocacy messages.
- Present the findings and advocacy products to the Project Management Team and relevant stakeholders for review and feedback.
- Support dissemination of the findings and advocacy products to relevant stakeholders.

4.0 Methodology

The methodology of the assignment will include:

4.1 Mapping of Relevant Policies and Programmes

The consultant will:

- Identify relevant national laws, policies, strategies, guidelines, curricula, programmes, action plans, and implementation frameworks related to SADC SRHR strategy, Maputo Plan of Action and ESA commitments.

4.2 Desk Review

The consultant will undertake a comprehensive review of relevant documents, including but not limited to:

- SADC SRHR Strategy, Maputo plan of action and ESA Commitments

- National laws and policies relating to CSE, SRHR, education, gender, health and young people's rights.
- National strategies, action plans, guidelines, curricula and implementation frameworks.
- Government reports and programme documents.
- Relevant monitoring, evaluation, and accountability reports.
- Reports and publications from civil society organisations, youth-led organisations, and development partners.
- Relevant research and evidence on CSE and SRHR policy implementation.

The desk review will assess the extent to which national frameworks align with selected regional commitments and whether commitments have been translated into practical implementation measures.

4.3 Stakeholder Consultation

The consultant will conduct consultations with relevant stakeholders, including:

- Government ministries, departments, and agencies.
- Policymakers and relevant public institutions.
- Youth-led and civil society organisations.
- Development partners.
- Education and health-sector stakeholders.
- Young people and youth representatives.
- Other relevant stakeholders identified during the assignment.

The consultations will seek to validate findings from the desk review, identify implementation experiences, document progress and challenges, and gather recommendations for strengthening policy implementation and accountability.

5.0 Key Deliverables

The consultant shall be expected to produce the following deliverables:

- I. Inception Report detailing the consultant's understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, assessment framework, information sources and work plan.
- II. Policy Tracker for assessing the status of national implementation of regional SRHR frameworks and commitments.
- III. Draft report and PowerPoint presentation presenting findings on national progress, alignment, implementation gaps, challenges, good practices and opportunities to support dissemination and stakeholder engagement.
- IV. Final Report incorporating comments and recommendations from the Project Management Team and relevant stakeholders.

V. Policy Brief presenting key findings, policy gaps and evidence-based recommendations for advocacy and stakeholder engagement.

VI. Fact Sheet summarising key findings and priority advocacy messages in an accessible format.

6.0 Duration and Timeframe

The assignment is expected to be undertaken and completed within a period of 30 days (September – October 2026) in accordance with the approved work plan.

The consultant will work closely with the Project Management Team throughout the assignment to ensure timely review, validation and finalisation of the deliverables.

7.0 Qualifications and Experience

The consultant or consulting firm should demonstrate the following qualifications and experience:

- A minimum of a Master's degree in Public Policy, Development Studies, Gender Studies, Law, Public Health, Social Sciences, International Development, or any other relevant field.
- At least five (5) years of relevant professional experience in policy analysis, research, advocacy, governance, SRHR, CSE, or related areas.
- Strong knowledge and understanding of regional SRHR frameworks and commitments.
- Demonstrated experience in reviewing and analysing national laws, policies, strategies, programmes, and implementation frameworks.
- Proven experience in conducting policy research and producing evidence-based reports.
- Demonstrated experience in developing policy briefs, fact sheets, advocacy tools, or similar knowledge products.
- Strong analytical, research, communication, and report-writing skills.
- Experience engaging government institutions, civil society organisations, youth-led organisations, development partners, and other stakeholders.
- Good knowledge of the national policy, legal, institutional, and programme context of Malawi.
- Experience working on CSE and/or SRHR issues will be an added advantage.
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and deliver quality outputs within agreed timelines

8.0 Payment Plan

Payment will be made against satisfactory completion and approval of agreed deliverables.

The proposed payment schedule is:

Deliverable	Percentage
Approved Inception Report and agreed workplan	20%
Submission of final report and PowerPoint presentation	50%
Submission and approval of final report, policy tracker, policy brief and fact sheet.	30%
Total	100%

9.0 Application process

Interested consultants/consulting firms are invited to submit a Letter of Expression of Interest of no more than five pages outlining:

- Relevant experience in conducting similar policy tracking, policy analysis, research or advocacy assignments.
- A brief description of the proposed methodology for undertaking the assignment.
- Budget
- Updated Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the proposed consultant.

Applications should be submitted to:

Email: vacancies@cyecemw.org

Cc emelessngolomi10@gmail.com

Deadline: 18th September 2026

Please note that only shortlisted consultants will be invited to submit a full technical and financial proposal.

10.0 Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be assessed based on the following criteria:

Evaluation Criteria	Weight
Academic qualifications and professional credentials	15%
Relevant experience in policy analysis, tracking, research, advocacy, CSE and/or SRHR	25%
Knowledge of regional and national SRHR policy frameworks	20%
Understanding of the assignment and proposed methodology	20%
Experience developing policy and advocacy products	10%
Report writing, analytical, communication, and stakeholder engagement skills	10%
Total	100%

11.0 Other Conditions

- The consultant will work closely with the Project Management Team throughout the assignment.
- All information and documents accessed during the assignment shall be treated as confidential and used solely for the purpose of the assignment.
- All findings shall be evidence-based and supported by credible and verifiable sources.
- The consultant shall maintain objectivity and independence throughout the assessment.
- Any limitations encountered during the assignment shall be clearly documented in the final report.
- All deliverables shall be submitted in editable electronic formats and in accordance with the agreed reporting templates.
- The consultant shall obtain prior approval from the Project Management Team before making substantial changes to the agreed methodology or scope.
- The consultant will be responsible for meeting agreed timelines and maintaining regular communication with the Project Management Team.
- The Project Management Team reserves the right to request reasonable revisions to deliverables where necessary to ensure quality and alignment with the objectives of the assignment.

Expected Contribution of the Assignment

The assignment is expected to generate credible and actionable evidence on the extent to which regional SRHR commitments are being translated into national laws, policies, programmes, and implementation actions.

The policy tracker, tracking report, policy brief, and fact sheet will provide practical evidence for civil society organisations, youth advocates, policymakers, government institutions, and other stakeholders to strengthen policy engagement, advocacy, and accountability.

The findings will contribute to ensuring that regional commitments are translated into meaningful national policies, programmes, and implementation actions that advance the sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescents and young people and strengthen youth-led advocacy within the SET 2.0 project.