

End of Assignment (MEAL) Report

ICR Facility Technical Assistance to the Employer's Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM)



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Implemented by



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End of assignment (MEAL) Report

Introduction

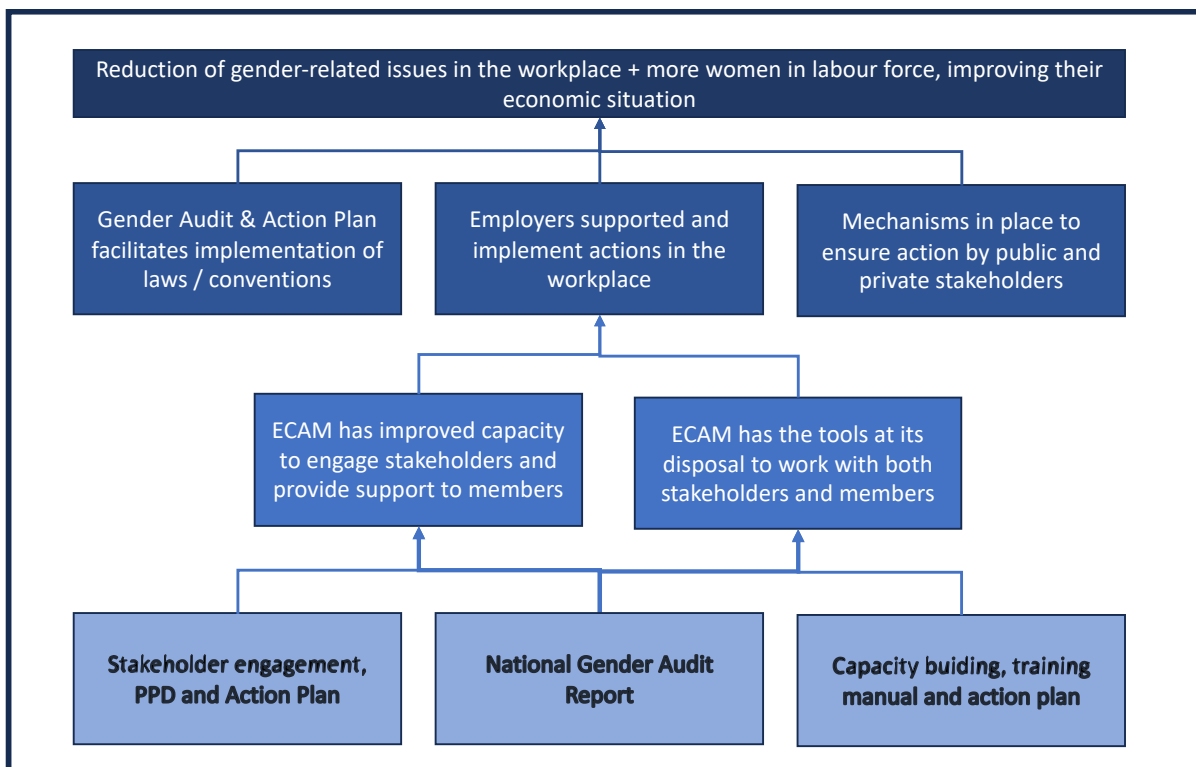
ICE, through the British Council was commissioned to provide technical assistance to ECAM via the following activities:

1. Undertake a Gender Audit
2. Engage public and private stakeholders to secure agreement on, and commitment to deliver, the key actions that need to take place at policy and industry level to address gender issues and promote gender equality in the workplace.
3. Increase the capacity of ECAM staff in supporting their member businesses to address gender issues at their workplace.

The intervention was requested by the Employers' Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM) in order to support their work with members, partners and policy makers in a bid to address gender equality issues in the workplace. One of the critical events that contributed to requesting the intervention was the need for Malawi to respond to the International Labour Conference regarding cases of gender violence and harassment. ECAM were concerned with understanding the extent to which gender-related discrimination, harassment and violence is taking place in the workplace. This evidence could not be used to identify key gaps for managing gender issues in the workplace, thereby enabling ECAM to support their members in addressing them, but could also support the engagement of ECAM with other stakeholders in Malawi to support changes in the business environment that will facilitate the increase in equality and the elimination of gender-based harassment and violence in the workplace.

An overview of the programme logic is provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Overview of the programme logic



Overview of Delivery

The implementation of the project followed the initial workplan fairly closely in terms of the activities. Each step is briefly described below and commentary provided where necessary.

Inception phase. The inception phase was implemented remotely. Following a series of meetings that included the British Council, ECAM and ICE, expectations were aligned and a detailed work plan developed and discussed with the counterparts. The inception report was then developed, including a description of the methodology to be employed, a preliminary list of papers and reports to be consulted and an outline of the final report. The work plan was provided as an annex to the report. Associated output delivered: Inception Report.

Desk review. Based on the initial set of references provided by the Terms of Reference and subsequent literature search carried out by the ICE team, data was drawn together for the report. In addition to reports, existing statistics were identified, international reports and rankings of Malawi on relevant indicators, relevant laws were reviewed to identify provisions and articles of specific interest to our discussion, and policy and programme documents were reviewed. The activity was implemented as envisaged, but rather than having a one-time focus, the process continued to be integrated into subsequent stages in order to complement the primary research as it unfolded. The desk review report was therefore not delivered as a separate report, but was incorporated in a transversal fashion, into the National Gender Audit.

Initial Mission to Malawi. It was decided to carry out an initial mission to Malawi end October/beginning November. The key objectives of the Mission were as follows: (i) to engage key stakeholders, both in Lilongwe and Blantyre, with a view to raising their awareness of the project and getting their interest and support for subsequent phases of the project; (ii) to use the opportunity to gather first hand data through the discussions with participants in the formal Information sessions as well as one-to-one interviews with key informants from a number of both private and public sector organisations; (iii) to meet with key representatives of ECAM in order to plan the implementation of the rest of the project in greater detail, to discuss the training needs in advance of the preparation of the Training Manual and Training Sessions; and (v) to plan in greater detail the implementation of the surveys as part of the data gathering process. The opportunity was also taken to meet with the EU Delegation in Country. Meeting with the local team of ICE consultants also took place to prepare the ground for the further implementation of the project. Following the mission, a mission report was prepared that included a preliminary review of the literature together with the initial findings of a series of KII and two data gathering sessions during the two information events. Associated output delivered: a detailed Mission Report was prepared, including a technical component, after the mission. This deliverable was not initially envisaged by the project.

National Gender Audit. ICE then conducted a nationwide gender audit, employing the following methodology. Associated output delivered: National Audit Report.

- **Legal & Policy Inventory.** An analysis of legal and policy provisions was undertaken in order to facilitate understanding of the regulatory and policy environment that has an impact on gender issues in the workplace. A concise inventory of legal and policy provisions was prepared. This was based on a review of legal documents, policy papers and any other related documentation that were considered relevant to gender equality in the workplace. In the case of general documents (such as the Employment Act), the document was reviewed to determine the degree of gender responsiveness; in the case of documents that specifically target gender equality (such as the Gender Equality Act), the objective was to extract the specific elements relevant to this study.
- **Literature Review.** Policy and Strategy documents, grey literature and other relevant reports, examples and case studies of company policies, as well as programmes and interventions were identified and reviewed for their contribution to our understanding of the current situation in Malawi.
- **International Reports and Indices.** As part of the review, relevant international indices and reports were reviewed and incorporated into the overview of the national context for this Gender Audit. Specific reports consulted were the WEF Gender Gap Report, the 8th CEDAW Report, as well as the most recent edition of the Women Business & the Law report.
- **Statistical data.** National statistics are an important source of basic data in order to provide a context for the research, but good quality, sex-disaggregated statistical data was largely unavailable in Malawi.
- **Stakeholder Mapping.** An initial stakeholder list was developed by identifying key players from an analysis of the overall ecosystem, existing reports and inputs from ECAM. From this point onwards, a snowball method was used to identify any additional stakeholders, while engaging with individuals participating in the Information Sessions and Key Informant Interviews.
- **Primary Data Collection.** The purpose of the primary data collection was to supplement or update information and insights

that we were able to extract from existing secondary sources. Overall, primary data was obtained via the following means: information sessions/FGD with public and private sector representatives, key informant interviews with representatives of stakeholder organisations as well as experts in their own right; a survey directed at HR professionals in organisations; a survey aimed at owners or directors of micro and small enterprises, and a survey directed at employed individuals.

- **Analysis and preparation** of draft national gender audit. The first draft of the national gender audit was prepared and discussed with ECAM and the British Council. An abbreviated version, covering predominantly the conclusions and preliminary recommendations of the report, was produced and shared with stakeholders participating in the PPD event.
- **Validation and finalisation** of the draft national gender audit. The results of the report were disseminated and discussed with stakeholders from both the public and private sector during the PPD event, the capacity building and the dissemination event. Following the implementation of these events and a review of all comments and suggestions received, the final version of the national gender audit was prepared and submitted.

Capacity Building. Three key actions were included in the capacity building: an initial needs assessment, the design of the capacity building workshop and associated materials followed by the implementation of the workshop, and the development of a Handbook that ECAM and its partners can use to support awareness raising, capacity building and implementation of gender audits. Associated output delivered: Capacity building Workshop; Manual with supporting materials, action plan.

- **Needs assessment.** The needs assessment drew information from two sources: the initial discussions with the British Council and ECAM during the inception phase and a number of discussions held with ECAM staff during the first mission. This provided a better understanding of the needs and aspirations of ECAM as well as the resources potentially available for participating in the capacity building event. Due to the limited number of internal staff, it was agreed that the capacity building would draw in representatives from potential partner organisations that could be involved in supporting ECAM in the implementation of future activities.
- **Workshop design and preparation of support materials.** The overall workshop objectives and subsequent design were shared with the British Council and ECAM in order to ensure that the workshop would meet expectations. Then the sessions were designed to combine presentations and expert input with a high level of participant interaction via exercises and simulations. Support materials for the implementation of the workshop, including PowerPoint presentations for each session were developed.
- **Workshop delivery.** The participants were identified via discussions with the British Council and ECAM, with ECAM taking charge of the invitation process, based on suggested emails prepared by the ICE team. The workshop was team-taught by Dinah Bennett and Yolanda Gibb, covering a day and a half on 10th and 11th May 2023. 21 participants were involved in the workshop.
- **Preparation of Manual.** Following delivery of the workshop, the ICE team reviewed the sessions and developed a detailed manual that will enable others to implement some or all of the sessions in a flexible manner, depending on their target audience and the objectives they wish to achieve.
- **Action Plan.** An action plan was prepared focusing on how ECAM can develop partnerships to implement awareness raising, capacity building and other actions to improve gender equality and eliminate gender-based violence in the workplace.

PPD event. A PPD event was held as part of the second mission in May 2023. Objectives and an agenda for the event were prepared by the ICE team in advance for discussion and agreement in principle reached with the British Council and ECAM. Originally the event was planned to be a combination of dissemination of key results and group discussions, with a view to developing an action plan. Due to the mission week coinciding with an ILO mission involving many of the same public sector stakeholders, this part of the project was pivoted, with the result that the following activities took place. Associated output delivered: PPT workshop, dissemination event, action plan.

- **Individual briefing with the ILO.** The ICE team briefed ILO members at a separate meeting on Monday 9th May, providing an overview of the research objectives, implementation, findings and preliminary recommendations, and responding to questions. This meeting was also attended by representatives from the British Council and from ECAM.
- **Participation in the ILO event.** The ICE team, together with representatives of the British Council and ECAM participated in the event that ILO had organised to kick-start their week in country, focusing on eliminating gender-based violence in the workplace, and on the ratification of the ILO Convention C-190.
- **Organisation of a workshop focused PPD event.** This event was organised for the afternoon of 10th May, and was to

be attended by a group of around a dozen representatives from the public and private sector in order to focus on the development of an action plan.

- **Dissemination event.** Instead of combining the dissemination with the PPD workshop, a separate dissemination event was held on 12th May and was attended by 21 participants. The results of the findings were presented and discussed.

Two meetings with the EU Delegation, one during the first mission and one during the second mission in order to keep them apprised of the purpose of the intervention and its progress were organised.

Ensuring Safeguarding

Ensuring safeguarding throughout the project was considered crucial for the well-being and protection of individuals involved. ICE reviewed the Safeguarding Strategy and Safeguarding Policy of the British Council and also has its own Safeguarding Policy, which is communicated to all staff members and contracted consultants. ICE team members have CPD in safeguarding and ICE has published and adheres to research ethics guidelines.

Applying safeguarding principles to the implementation of field research was of the utmost importance to ensure the protection and well-being of participants in focus groups and respondents in interviews. Overall, the implementation of safeguarding in field research prioritised the safety of participants, while also adhering to ethical guidelines and legal requirements. Prior to beginning the research, discussed with the local implementation partner any potential risks that participants might be exposed to during the process, and possible measures to mitigate these risks. These included ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of participants, obtaining informed consent, and ensuring that we minimise any potential physical or emotional harm. The research undertaken was not invasive, making it relatively low risk. Working with a local researcher helped to ensure that we were able to take into consideration the needs of the local context.

Field researchers were experienced and had an existing relationship with the local research company. They had previously undergone a selection process and their credentials were verified, including their understanding of and commitment to safeguarding principles. Furthermore, as part of the briefing of the research team prior to deployment in the field, we covered key safeguarding issues, such as ethical conduct, informed consent, and dealing with sensitive information.

During field research, strict protocols were followed to protect the privacy of participants and to ensure informed consent. This included providing a concise explanation of the purpose of the research and ensuring their understanding before obtaining their consent. Confidentiality and data protection measures included the anonymization of data and secure storage and transmission of sensitive information. Monitoring field researchers carried out by the local research partner enabled us to ensure compliance with safeguarding protocols. No concerns or breaches ensued, although designated channels were available to raise concerns, with clear procedures for follow-up and resolution.

Ensuring equality, diversity, and inclusion

ICE has an EDI policy which is updated regularly, and to which team members adhere. ICE also reviewed the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Equality Policy of the British Council and were aware of and committed to adhering to its provisions. ICE pays attention to recruiting a team that is as diverse and inclusive as possible, representing different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, and team were selected based on merit and expertise. During the briefing prior to deployment in the field, the research team was made aware of issues related to equity, diversity, and inclusion, including unconscious bias, cultural competence, and intersectionality.

The methodologies and tools were selected to minimize biases and ensure that data reflected sector diversity as much as possible (this was achieved via the sampling strategy). During data collection, we considered factors such as language barriers, cultural sensitivities, and accessibility requirements. For example, the questionnaire for employees was translated into Chichewa, and the realisation that online surveys would not provide the required results led to pivoting to face-to-face and telephone surveys completed with enumerator assistance. Throughout the implementation of the assignment, including the organisation of events, we were inclusive in their promotion, and collected data as per the requirements of the British Council M&E practices to track the degree of diversity and inclusion achieved.

Ensuring information management and data protection

We reviewed the Data protection code for partners and suppliers published by the British Council and were aware of and committed to adhering to its provisions. ICE has a data security and privacy policy, which is communicated to all staff and contracted consultants.

Given the nature of the assignment, which involves collecting data from both men and women, it was particularly important to ensure the privacy and security of informants. Part of this is dealt with in our Safeguarding Policy, including the clear communication of the objectives of the research and the use to which the data will be put prior to obtaining informed consent. In addition, data was used exclusively for the purposes of this research and data was anonymised at the earliest opportunity. We only collected data that was necessary for the purposes of the research.

The data is held securely by ICE and will not be transferred or disclosed to third parties without the express consent of the data owner, preferably in writing. Although data was obtained in Malawi it was transferred to Spain and the United Kingdom, the place of work of the international members of the team. Anonymised and aggregated data was transferred to the British Council. No data breaches, complaints or external requests to access data were encountered during the implementation of the intervention. On termination or expiry of this Order Contract, ICE shall, except to the extent it is required to retain a copy by law, stop processing the Personal Data and return and/or destroy it at the request of the British Council. Data associated with this project is governed by UK or EU Data protection laws, as applicable.

Communication

Key highlights of promotion during the project include:

- Raising awareness of the intervention early on in the project by organizing information sessions for public and private stakeholders in Lilongwe and Blantyre
- <https://mccconnellinternationalfoundation.org/> supported awareness raising of questionnaires.
- Facebook coverage of the project, particularly in combination with the ads and boosting, created awareness of the project although it did not result in sufficient numbers completing the questionnaire
- Press and photos during the week of 9th May created additional materials for promotion

Promotion of the intervention results should now continue, as ECAM also gears up to initiate the task force and the capacity building partnership. Key suggestions for promotion going forward include:

- Participation of ECAM in national conferences and events (such as the upcoming one in July) will help promote the work and the findings and raise the profile of ECAM in this space.
- ECAM should publish the final report on their website
- ECAM should republish the blog article by the ICR Facility on their website, newspapers and other online platforms. <https://www.icr-facility.eu/malawi-takes-action-on-sexual-harassment-and-inequality-in-the-workplace>
- ICE will post precis of findings on social media with a note to contact ECAM if interested to conduct a gender audit in their business. ECAM to follow up appropriate responses
- ICR Facility and ECAM should share progress and celebrate companies who are taking positive action such as conducting Gender audits, dealing with harassment in companies and the planned set-up of 'Helpline' for reporting cases and for those seeking advice.
- The publication of the report by ICR Facility will make it easier for the Gender Audit to be disseminated in Malawi and for the wider sharing of the approach, methodology and findings.

Issues and Challenges

Issues with online surveys. The difficulties in obtaining responses to the online surveys was the major hurdle that occurred during the implementation of the programme. The use of social media to encourage responses to questionnaires proved not to be effective. Despite garnering 1,500 likes, only 29 responses to three questionnaires were received. As a result, the project had to pivot to recruiting a research consultancy, Kadale in order to ensure questionnaires would be completed (See also lessons learned below). Further details of this issue and its resolution are provided below.

The survey for HR professionals was launched online via Google Forms, with ECAM encouraging their direct members to complete the form, and requesting the Associations that form part of the ECAM membership to disseminate it further to their companies. In addition, the snowball method was used to identify additional organisations that might support the dissemination of the survey. Generally, organisations were asked to send a covering email, encouraging their members to complete it. The survey was to be made available in two formats: a link to an online survey which the respondent could use and a document attached to the email, which could be completed and mailed back. However, despite several attempts to increase the profile of the survey among ECAM members and encourage them to complete the form, only 4 responses were received. To achieve a better return, it was subsequently decided to pivot to a telephone survey, using the membership list provided by ECAM, including around 250 companies. Following the training of the telephone survey team, the interviews were carried out between 1st and 6th March 2023 inclusive. Despite official letters from ECAM explaining the purpose of the survey and concerted efforts by our team on the ground to reach the appropriate respondents, only 28 responses were finally received. This represented just slightly more than 10% of the ECAM direct membership. Given the limited number of large companies in Malawi, and the fact that KII had already been carried out with some of the larger companies, it was decided that 28 responses was adequate for the purposes of this study, which is seeking to gain insights rather than to undertake a fully representative study.

Given the very large number of micro and very small enterprises, it was decided to add a second enterprise survey, with the objective of targeting 150 micro and small enterprises, covering six districts of Malawi: Mzimba and Mzuzu, Mchinji and Lilongwe, as well as Thyolo and Blantyre, incorporating both urban and rural respondents. The aim was to reach employers and smaller businesses from a range of locations (urban, peri-urban and rural) and find businesses operating in a range of sectors, such as manufacturing/processing, trading, retail, service, transport and farming. The inclusion of districts such as Mzimba, Mchinji and Thyolo enabled us to interview more agriculturally focused enterprises, including commercial farms/estates, traders and transporters. Given the objective of the study, the survey targeted a greater proportion of women owned enterprises than would be statistically representative in terms of business ownership. The research instrument was administered face-to-face through a 15-minute interview. Data was directly collected to tablets used by the enumerators on-site. Enumerators were trained in advance and deployed during the week of 27th February 2023. Work was checked by the supervisor of each team on a daily basis. At the end of the week, the data was reviewed, cleaned, resulting in 150 valid responses ready for analysis. This was a more effective approach to data gathering.

The survey of employees was administered separately in order to avoid potential contamination of results had it been routed through management or the HR departments of companies. The individual survey was aimed at employed individuals to understand whether they had witnessed or been subjected to some form of harassment, discrimination or abuse in the workplace. This questionnaire focused on their experience and the resulting consequences, how they reacted and how any issues were resolved. The survey included questions to ascertain their opinion of policies and actions at their place of work. This survey was initially made available online. Dissemination was principally via social media, particularly Facebook, with several ads placed in order to boost the posts and maximise the potential reach of the information. Links were provided to enable completion of the questionnaire directly online via Google Forms. To reach a wider range of potential respondents, the questionnaire was also promoted in Chichewa and a local language version of the questionnaire provided. Despite repeated and intensive promotion of the survey, and well over 1.500 likes and reactions to the social media posts, only 21 completed surveys were received. To boost the response rate, the survey was administered via face-to-face interviews. This survey covered the same six districts of Malawi: Mzimba and Mzuzu, Mchinji and Lilongwe, as well as Thyolo and Blantyre, incorporating both urban and rural respondents. The goal was to achieve 400 completed questionnaires, 496 useable responses were obtained. Again, given the focus of this intervention, the survey targeted a larger proportion of women, with the objective of achieving a 70:30 balance in favour of women. The final split of the sample was 73% in favour of women. The research instrument was administered face-to-face through a 15-minute interview. Data was directly collected to tablets used by the enumerators on-site. Enumerators were trained in advance and deployed during the week of 27th February 2023. In practice this provided the results needed.

Limited participation in the PPD event. Although the agenda for the event had been drawn up well in advance, and a detailed list of desired participants established and invited, in the end only six public sector stakeholders participated, with the private sector representatives dropping out at the last minute. With the dissemination event planned for the end of the week, participants did not have the benefit of the presentation on the findings and recommendations. A second contributing factor was the fact that travel and accommodation costs for participants from Blantyre could not be covered. Given the fact that the PPD workshop was an event for

which the participation of a relatively small number of specific individuals or organizational representatives were sought for their potential contributions to the action plan, it might be more appropriate to consider them as resource persons who are giving their time and expertise free of charge and at least compensate them for their travel costs and accommodation costs if they are coming from further afield. In addition, in some cases, approaching the most senior individual in the organization to support the initiative from a more strategic point of view. Here, they may agree to sponsor the participation of their employee. A combination of these strategies might help to ensure the participation at the desired level. Overall, although the engagement of those who participated was excellent, it was not possible to produce an action plan that had the buy-in of the major parties, though a tentative action plan was subsequently produced by the ICE team and discussed with the British Council and ECAM. This should serve to kick-start a further round of stakeholder meetings and the creation of a task force with a focus on improving the business environment.

Lessons learned

The importance of the correct branding of the intervention via the endorsement of the right stakeholder organisations was highlighted as a way of contributing to the effectiveness of the implementation. While the intervention is owned by the organisation that has requested it – and in the case of Malawi, the network and brand of ECAM was very helpful on a number of occasions – it may be necessary to reinforce this for some of the activities. This may include the ICR Facility (with its funders and implementing partners). It should also include the relevant national stakeholders, public or private, that can co-sign invitations or letters to participate in primary research activities as well as promote the initiative to different target segments. In the case of this specific interventions, a more proactive approach to this might have helped to increase participation at the PPD event and allay potential anxieties of respondents participating in the surveys. Taking the time to identify these stakeholders early in the life of the project and agreeing their potential role in the process could improve implementation effectiveness in this regard.

In-country interventions are very resource intensive for the requesting organisation and it is important to be cognizant of any resource constraints or other priorities competing for attention. ECAM was supporting an ILO mission during the week of the second ICE mission and in practice this stretched their resources to their limits. Despite the benefits accruing from having these two events coincide, partners receiving TA should, if possible, schedule visits independently in order that the full capacity can be focused on work in hand

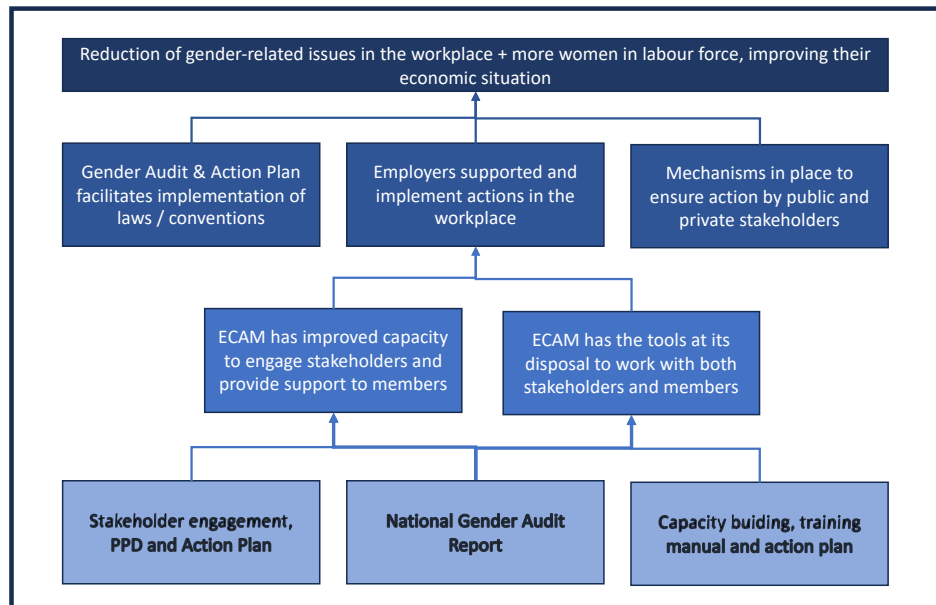
Other in-country events may compete for the attention of the stakeholders targeted for engagement. Participation in the PPD event was lower than anticipated, with private sector participants calling off at the last moment, and no substitutes available. This may in part have been because of clash the with ILO mission. It may also have been influenced by the fact that ECAM may have been overstretched due to dealing with the ILO mission, reducing the amount of time available for participant recruitment. The final action plans for the task force and the capacity building partnership could not be co-created with stakeholders during the week of the mission, as originally envisaged. Instead, the plans have been developed by the ICE team, based on the reports, the PPD event, the capacity building event, and discussions with ECAM team members. These have been viewed and discussed by the British Council and ECAM, but need to be endorsed by a wider stakeholder group if they are to be implemented effectively.

Gain stakeholder buy-in as early as possible. The importance of gaining buy-in of the stakeholders was highlighted by the fact that several individuals who attended the initial information sessions returned to follow up during the week of the mission.

Project closure

All three lines of action were completed. The National Gender Audit Report was prepared using the proposed methodology and subsequently used as the basis to inform other activities and documents. The capacity building event trained key resources at ECAM as well as a number of potential partner organisations, and the subsequent manual and associated materials built on the National Gender Audit Report findings and the experience of delivering the capacity building. Stakeholder engagement began with the initial information sessions and was carried through for the PPD workshop and action plan. However, as highlighted elsewhere in this report, the preliminary action plan for stakeholders was developed with the involvement of a limited number of stakeholders and therefore requires finalisation and endorsement after the end of the intervention.

Taken together, these three outputs have enabled ECAM to improve its capacity to both engage with stakeholders focused on improving the business environment to support greater gender equality and eliminate gender-based violence in the workplace; and to provide support to its membership base (and industry more generally) to enable the introduction, implementation and monitoring of actions to make the workplace more gender responsive. Part of the intervention has included the provision of customised tools, including the Gender Audit and supporting presentation, the Capacity Building Manual and supporting materials, and the consolidation of networks via the activities of the intervention.



In terms of specific outcomes, the intervention has contributed to the following:

- The provision of additional evidence to support the need for the more effective implementation of the existing legal, regulatory and policy framework as well as highlighting the need for specific improvements and additional ratifications, together with awareness raising activities and stakeholder engagement to motivate action;
- The provision of support to employers through the dissemination event to increase awareness and particularly through the capacity building workshop, which has improved individual’s understanding of the issues as well as their capacity to take action, in their own companies and as part of the ECAM network. Participation in the workshop was a first sign of commitment to this issue, participants outlined ideas of how they would take this back to their organisations. Time will tell what is subsequently implemented and with what result.
- The creation of a designated task force, or the explicit addition of gender responsiveness in the workplace to the mandate of an existing organisation still needs to be created, and is one of ECAM’s priorities as part of the action plan. The preparation has been done, but time will be needed to establish the mechanism and make it work.

The intervention was formally closed on 11th July 2023, with a meeting of the British Council, ECAM and ICE. The meeting discussed the final set of deliverables, with some minor adjustments discussed where appropriate. The team celebrated the successful implementation of the project and discussed the next steps for action beyond the project. ECAM confirmed that the project has provided effective support to the organisation and has achieved what was needed for ECAM to continue with its work in this space.

Feedback from partner requesting TA

Feedback was received in the form of the quote below from George Khaki, CEO, ECAM.

“The Employers’ Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM) has been working with the Investment Climate Reform Facility (ICR Facility) since March 2023. ECAM put in its Business Agenda as one of its priorities addressing gender equality specifically through a Gender Audit in order to know what issues exist in the world of work in respect of equality. ECAM also had the hope that the results of the Gender Audit would help it influence policy and legislative changes.

ECAM was connected to the ICR Facility through the British Council Malawi. ECAM made an application to ICR Facility and ECAM went through an assessment process which helped us to understand what the ICR Facility is able to provide and also helped the ICR to understand our exact needs.

The Gender Audit has since been completed with the technical and financial assistance of the ICR Facility whose results were recently disseminated. ECAM has also benefitted from this exercise through capacity building (training). The Gender Audit is very important to ECAM because in the first instance it enables us to have evidence-based responses to Gender issues that exist in Malawi. Secondly the training will help us assist our members and organisations in coming up with policies and practices that promote equality in the workplace. This will also help us to lobby for the ratification of ILO Convention No.190 on Violence and Harassment whilst at the same time ensuring that our local laws are updated to reflect the current thinking in Gender equality.

Overall ECAM believes addressing these issues will not only improve the business environment and boost productivity but that we will also contribute to the socio-economic growth of Malawi where Gender is acknowledged to be one the challenges we must tackle as envisioned in the Malawi 2063 Vision.

Next steps

The conclusions and recommendations of the National Gender Audit Report are taken further in the Action Plans developed for the proposed task force to address improvements in the business environment and for the proposed partnership for supporting business in its efforts to improve gender equality and eliminate gender-based violence in the workplace. They are also linked to the job description for the gender focal point at ECAM.

The key recommendations from the National Gender Audit report were divided into the following clusters (i) the need to accompany legal and regulatory changes with commitment, capacity and resources; (ii) the need to review the currently ending policy cycle and create a future-proof action plan based on recent evidence, including the Gender Audit report; (iii) and the need to consciously and actively address socio-cultural issues that continue to shape education and career choices of girls and women. In addition, the following implications for the role of ECAM were highlighted:

Related to their role in supporting the private sector to improve gender equality and eliminate gender-based violence in the workplace:

- Raise awareness of the business community, highlighting the benefits of eliminating gender discrimination and gender-based violence against women as well as the costs of not doing so and increase awareness among the private sector of the legal and policy environment for improving gender equality and eliminating gender-based discrimination, harassment and violence.
- Collaborate with other organisations (public sector, international organisations and businesses) to not only raise awareness but to provide examples of best practice and role models. Acknowledge examples of good practice among Malawian companies and find ways of effectively disseminating these practices to the business community. One way to ensure that more companies develop practices to ensure they are more gender-responsive may be the development of awards that recognises good practice.
- Collaborate with larger companies that are willing to share their expertise and work with the association members to reach the micro and smaller businesses. Mobilise the private sector in order to ensure their participation in the development and implementation of actions required from government and policy makers to create a business environment that facilitates gender-responsive actions by companies.
- Collaborate with other actors in the ecosystem to implement actions to support business: gender audits, training, mentoring and/or advisory services to build understanding and capacity in enterprises
- Develop, in collaboration with other ecosystem players, capacity building services for companies. This may include working with specific segments, such as HR professionals, line managers, lawyers, among others. Other targets could be CEOs and board members.
- Develop the community of practice, building on the group of participants trained during the ICR intervention, bringing in local gender specialists and other key resource people to cascade further training, audits, and advisory services.
- Organise and promote a help desk to provide support to the business community

Related to their role in supporting the improvement of the business environment:

- Organise and promote a help desk to provide support to the business community
- capture the needs of business for support in implementing the policies, processes and actions within their companies in order to foster gender equality and eliminate gender-based violence in the workplace
- leverage ECAM's network to bring together a suitable group to spearhead a call for action following the initial engagement that has formed part of the current ICR intervention.
- In collaboration with other ecosystem players, offer both gender audits and capacity building to others wishing to carry out a gender audit. Ensure that such an offer is tailored to different sized companies including micro and small enterprises.

Project Team

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Annexes

Annex I. Final list of participants engaged

Consolidated list: information sessions (November 2022), KII (November 2022), PPD (May 2023), Capacity building (May 2023), Dissemination (May 2023). Note that where an organisation is mentioned more than once, this means that multiple individuals participated.

Table 1: Final list of participants engaged

Organisation	Stakeholder info session	KII	PPD	CB	Dissem.
Bata Shoe Company				Yes	Yes
Bata Shoe Company				Yes	Yes
Bata Shoe Company (Malawi) Ltd	Yes				
Blantyre Labour Office	Yes				
Central East African Railways (CEAR)				Yes	Yes
Central East African Railways (CEAR)				Yes	
Christian Health association of MW					Yes
Dalitso Farm NASME				Yes	Yes
Deputy Director, Malawi Congress of Trade Unions	Yes				
DHRMD					Yes
ECAM			Yes	Yes	
ECAM				Yes	
ESCOM				Yes	
EU Delegation Malawi		Yes			
Family Health Services (formerly PSI Malawi)		Yes			
Family Health Services (formerly PSI Malawi)		Yes			
FDH Financial Holdings Ltd				Yes	
FDH Financial Holdings Ltd				Yes	
Human Rights Commission	Yes				
Illovo Sugar Malawi		Yes			
Illovo Sugar Malawi		Yes			
ILO					Yes
Independent Consultant				Yes	
International Labour Office (ILO) Malawi	Yes				
Kadale Consultant Ltd					Yes
Kelfoods	Yes				
Kelfoods	Yes				
Malawi Broadcasting Corporation					Yes

Malawi College of Accountancy					Yes
Malawi Human Rights Commission			Yes		
Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre				Yes	Yes
Malawi Investment Centre					Yes
Malawi University of Business and Applied Sciences (Blantyre)		Yes			
MCTU				Yes	
MCTU			Yes		
MHRC	Yes				
Ministry of Gender	Yes		Yes		
Ministry of Gender Community Development and Social Welfare				Yes	Yes
Ministry of Labour				Yes	Yes
Ministry of Labour			Yes		
Ministry of Labour	Yes				
Ministry of Labour				Yes	Yes
MyBucks Banking Corp		Yes			
NASFAM					Yes
NASFAM					Yes
NASHE "National Association for Small Medium Enterprise				Yes	
National Association of Business Women (NABW)				Yes	Yes
NGO - GEN				Yes	Yes
NGO - GEN				Yes	Yes
RAB Processors Ltd	Yes				
Salima Sugar Company Ltd		Yes			
Seed Co Malawi				Yes	Yes
Teveta			Yes		
TEVETA	Yes				
TOTAL	12	8	6	21	21

Annex II. Literature

Policies & Regulations

The Gender Equality Act (2013)

Constitution of the Government of Malawi 06.03.2006

EU Gender Action Plan III (2021-2025) Country Level Implementation Plan

Government of Malawi (2014) National Plan of Action to Combat Gender Based Violence in Malawi – 2014-2020

Malawi's Vision (2020) – Malawi 2063: An inclusively wealthy and self-reliant nation. National Planning Commission

The National Gender Policy of the Republic of Malawi, Second Edition (2015)

Malawi Employment Act No. 6 of 2000 & Amendment of 2021

https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=112666&p_count=32&p_classification=01

Malawi Human Rights Commission (2021) Sexual Harassment Workplace Policy, First Edition

ILO C190 Violence and harassment Convention 2019

https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C190

ILO C111 Convention concerning discrimination in respect of employment and occupation, 1958

Grey Literature & Reports

Chilipunde RL, Msukwa T & Tiwana P (2019) Challenges female artisans face in the Malawian construction industry

Chikapa TM (2017) Gender Regime and policies in Malawi – A literature Review, 6th Business & Management Conference, Geneva

Danish Trade Union Development Agency (2022) Labour Market Profile Malawi 2022/2023

Forsythe L, Kaitano V & Martin A (2010) Gender and Diversity Audit Malawi

Galafa B & Msiska (2021) How gender norms contribute to gender-based violence in the workplace in Malawi, ALIGN - Advancing learning and innovation on gender norms

HSRC (2021) Strengthening Gender and Inclusivity in the National System of Science, Technology and

Innovation (STI) engaging 100% of Malawi's human development potential for sustainable socioeconomic development

ICR (2021) Business Environment reforms to promote equal opportunities for women in the labour market – Evidence from ACP Countries

Joint CEDAW Malawi Civil Society Report (2015) Compiled by Women and Law in Southern Africa

Research & Education Trust Malawi (WLSA-Malawi) and Faculty of Law, Chancellor College, University of Malawi for Malawi CSOs.

Lovell E (2021) Gender Equality, social inclusion and resilience in Malawi, Building Resilience and Adapting to Climate Change in

Malawi (BRACC) knowledge and policy hub (

Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs (2022) Annual Economic Report

Spotlight Malawi (2020) Annual Narrative Programme Report

Spotlight Malawi (2019) Annual Narrative Progress Report

TEVETA (n.d.) Female Participation in Formal TEVET Training Programmes

UN Women (2020) Republic of Malawi Country Gender Profile

UN Women, ESARO & UNDP (2018) Factors driving the Gender Gap in Agricultural Productivity: Malawi

UN Women (n.d.) Malawi National Gender Statistics Assessment

World Bank Group (2021) Country Private Sector Diagnostic – Creating markets in Malawi. The Road to Recovery – Turning crisis into economic opportunity

Cases & Examples

Elubie Chienda (2017) Mainstreaming Gender Equality in ESCOM

Malawi Institute of Journalism Radio (n.d.) Gender workplace policy

Spotlight initiative <https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/search/site/malawi>

Scotland-Malawi (2014) The Malawi Gender Equality Act – A Teaching Guide

Tetra Tech International Development Tithetse Nkhanza: Malawi Violence against women and girls prevention and response programme (2018-2021) Consult

<https://intdev.tetratecheurope.com/projects/tithetse-nkhanza-malawi/> for resources

Uniterra (n.d.) Preventing gender-based harassment and discrimination in the workplace: A case study

USAID (n.d.) EGENCO: Engendering utilities partner profile in Malawi

Potential Multiplier Organisations & Social Media Channels

Chamber for Small And Medium Business Associations (to try to reach smaller companies that may not be members of ECAM and associations):

<https://www.facebook.com/ChamberforsmallandmediumbusinessAssociations/>

In similar vein, the Small & Medium Enterprises Association

[https://www.facebook.com/people/Small-and-Medium-Enterprises-](https://www.facebook.com/people/Small-and-Medium-Enterprises-AssociationSMEA/100068619966759/)

[AssociationSMEA/100068619966759/](https://www.facebook.com/people/Small-and-Medium-Enterprises-AssociationSMEA/100068619966759/)

HR Society of Malawi (to reach HR professionals that may be interested in our research):

<https://www.facebook.com/hrsocietyofmalawi/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/human-resource-society-of-malawi->

85934b181/?originalSubdomain=mw

To reach the agricultural sector, the National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM): <https://www.nasfam.org/>

Women's Organisations

National Association of Business Women (www.nabw.org) Contactsbandabarbara@gmail.com /

limbanazom@gmail.com. Tel: 0884814681 / 0882250809

<https://www.facebook.com/people/National-Association-Of-Business-Women-NABWMalawi/>

100064032041715/

Malawi Voice (to raise awareness of the research and potentially recruit interested parties)

<https://www.facebook.com/MalawiVoiceFanPage/>

Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry

<https://www.mccci.org/services/ppd.html>

Annex III. Final project schedule

