

University of Malawi



**CENTRE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH
CHANCELLOR COLLEGE**



**CENTRE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH STRATEGIC PLAN
2019-2021**

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Abbreviations

CERT	Centre for Educational Research and Training
CLS	Centre for Language Studies
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Centre for Social Research
DPO	Disabled Peoples Organisation
DU	Documentation Unit
EHP	Essential Health Package
GoM	Government of Malawi
HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
HSSP	Health Sector Strategic Plan
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MJSS	Malawi Journal of Social Science
NAREC	Natural Resources and Environmental Centre
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
NCST	National Commission for Science and Technology
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSO	National Statistical Office
NTDs	Neglected Tropical Diseases
RMNCH	Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIMA	University of Malawi
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Associations

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Centre for Social Research (CSR) is in the Faculty of Social Science at Chancellor College, a constituent college of the University of Malawi (UNIMA). It is overseen by a Board whose membership comprises of heads of departments in the Faculty of Social Science namely Political and Administrative Studies, Economics, History, Population Studies, Psychology and Sociology. The Directors of the Centre for Educational Research and Training (CERT), Natural Resources and Environmental Centre (NAREC) and the Centre for Language Studies (CLS) that are all at Chancellor College and the Director General of the National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) are also members of the Board. The Dean of the Faculty of Social Science chairs the CSR Board of Directors. The Director of the CSR reports to the Principal of Chancellor College through the Dean of the Faculty of Social Science. The CSR is funded by UNIMA and the financial resources it generates through research, training and consultancies. The CSR is governed by University rules and regulations and enjoys a high degree of institutional and financial autonomy.

For more than 40 years, the Centre has provided leadership in research and consultancies in the social sciences in Malawi and the region covering a wide range of issues including poverty; food security and nutrition; structural adjustment and social policies; housing, water supply and sanitation; natural resources management; climate change; democracy and governance; disability and development; gender; and the socio-cultural and economic aspects of public health.. These issues have also been highlighted in the third Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS III). The MGDS III also highlights the various interventions that will be implemented in order to address these challenges and the need for evidence based decision-making. The CSR's experience and skills acquired over the years will continue being relevant and contribute towards addressing these challenges by generating evidence to inform policy and programming. The development of this CSR strategic plan spanning the period 2019-2021 aims at contributing to the achievement of the goals of the MGDS III through the generation of evidence to inform the development of policies and programs.

1.2 Mandate of CSR

In 1971, the UNIMA Senate established the Institute of Social Research and its mandate was to conduct interdisciplinary and problem-solving research, organise conferences and seminars and develop local teaching materials. In 1979, following discussions between the Government of Malawi (GoM), the UNIMA and UNICEF, the Institute changed its name to CSR. Its focus became narrower as its primary objectives were to appraise, monitor and evaluate UNICEF-funded projects in Malawi and to organise seminars and workshops for GoM personnel engaged in planning, data collection and analysis and project evaluation. By early 1990s, the CSR started providing similar services to the private sector and non-government organisations (NGOs). Following an institutional review in late 1990s, the mandate of the CSR expanded from merely evaluating projects to conducting applied and basic research. The objectives of CSR is as follows:

- (a) To undertake applied social science research in order to generate robust evidence on pressing development problems facing the country and channel this evidence to policy makers and planners.
- (b) To promote scholarship, policy dialogue and exchange of knowledge within the realm of social sciences through organizing local and regional conferences, seminars and workshops.
- (c) To engage in critical social science research that challenges the status quo through and by systematically connecting research endeavours into local, national and international contexts.
- (d) To carry out research that is relevant to and/or rooted in local communities compiling, disseminating and publishing the results in national, regional and international outlets besides policy briefs, fact sheets and working papers.
- (e) To mount specialized short training courses related to social science research intended primarily towards raising awareness of epistemological, methodological and practical issues targeting early career as well as more senior staff in academia, local and central government agencies, voluntary and independent organisations.

1.3 CSR's achievements

Since 1979, the CSR has produced more than 500 research and consultancy reports covering CSR's research thematic areas namely (i) poverty and sustainable livelihoods; (ii) the socio-economic and cultural aspects of public health; (iii) democracy and governance; and (iv) gender, youth and disability. Over this period, the CSR has established working relationships with various GoM ministries and departments, parastatal organisations, NGOs, the private sector and development partners. It has also established working relationships with research institutions and universities outside Malawi. It has worked with its partners in the development and implementation of projects. Over the past 5 years, the CSR staff have produced over 25 peer-reviewed journal papers and book chapters. This small number of publications has been partly caused by the limited of CSR staff to publish. This Strategic Plan, among other things, aims to address this short fall. The list of research and consultancy reports and publications produced by CSR staff is available on the CSR website (www.csr.mw).

The CSR and its staff are routinely called upon to be members of various GoM technical and working committees or groups in line with CSR's pivotal position as a social science research centre. Globally, the CSR is also widely recognised as a host for research affiliates from Africa, Europe and the North America. Over the last 5 years, the CSR has hosted more than 10 research affiliates from different parts of the world mainly the UK and USA. In 2012, the CSR successfully introduced an internship programme targeting Malawians with at least a Master's degree with support from the NCST. This has been replaced by the Junior Research Fellow (JRF) programme that the CSR is currently implementing as an approach to recruitment of staff on permanent basis after they have demonstrated their capacity to work as researchers. The CSR has also been a prime trainer of enumerators who are then routinely hired by other research institutions, NGOs, the public sector and individuals such as foreign students and researchers.

Since CSR is in the Faculty of Social Science, over the years a number of academics from departments in the faculty have been and continue to be involved in CSR's work. Further, CSR members of staff are actively engaged in teaching and supervision of undergraduate and postgraduate students. In 2014 the CSR developed a short course on proposal development and this was first offered in April 2015 at Annies Lodge in Zomba where 37 participants attended. The course was again offered in 2017 and 2018 and plans are underway to deliver other courses including research methods and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

The CSR organizes workshops and conferences to disseminate its work mainly linked to particular research projects. Over the period 2012 and 2018, the CSR has worked very closely with the Faculty of Social Science and organized the annual social science conferences. In November 2014 the CSR and the Faculty of Social Science organised the Afrinead conference that attracted more than 150 delegates from all over the world. The CSR has also successfully held in-house seminars since 2014 and has played a key role in organizing monthly seminars for the Faculty of Social Science.

Through its research and consultancies and its involvement in technical committees, the CSR has had a significant impact on policy development and the design of interventions. It has participated actively in the development of project proposals that Malawi and other countries in the region have submitted to multilateral funding agencies. The CSR conducts both qualitative and quantitative surveys. Initially it used paper-based questionnaires in order to collect data. However, since 2015 it started using tablets when collecting quantitative data and has since built the capacity of staff in the programming of tablets for collecting quantitative data. It has since purchased an adequate number of tablets for this purpose.

Lastly, since the CSR was established in 1979 it never had its own premises. Between 1999 and 2015 it was accommodated by the University of Malawi central administration offices in Zomba. However, in 2015 the management of Chancellor College allocated a house in Nandolo Residential Area to CSR. This house was renovated and CSR management including the finance office relocated to Nandolo in October 2015. By the end of 2017 the CSR had completed the construction of a new office block with 11 offices and two conference rooms. This extended CSR strategic plan aims to build on the history of CSR's successes in generating relevant evidence for policy and program development and outlines activities that will be implemented to ensure that CSR has the capacity to effectively contribute to the achievement of the development goals of the University of Malawi and the GoM.

1.4 CSR's SWOT analysis

The challenges facing Malawi are enormous and these are outlined in the MGDS III and other sector strategic plans such as the Health Sector Strategic Plan II (HSSP II). The 2012-2016 strategic plan for CSR identified 3 priority research areas for CSR and these were poverty and sustainable livelihoods, the social cultural aspects of public health and democracy and governance. Most of the work of the CSR during the implementation of the 2012-2016 strategic plan focused on two areas namely the social and cultural dimensions of public health and poverty and sustainable livelihoods. While acknowledging that CSR plays an important role in the generation of evidence and informing policy and programming, its major challenge, as an

academic institution, has been that a significant proportion of its studies have been driven by its clients. The Centre has not done well in building a theoretically based understanding of development.

The dissemination of research findings has been limited to those studies with adequate funding for the dissemination of results. The CSR jointly organises the annual social sciences conferences with the Faculty of Social Science but these conferences have not been held consistently hence limiting the fora for CSR and staff members of the Faculty of Social Science to effectively disseminate the results of their studies. As a way of disseminating research results, the 2012-2016 CSR strategic plan emphasized on the production of policy briefs. The production of these policy briefs has, however, been very limited having produced only one or two of them over the last 5 years. While the CSR has produced more than 400 reports, it has been observed that many of CSR study reports are difficult to obtain even from CSR's Documentation Unit. The lack of appropriately trained personnel, the critical shortage of books and journals and the lack of financial resources to transform the Documentation Unit into a 21st century library have contributed significantly to the limited visibility of CSR's work.

While the mandate of CSR is, among others, to offer short courses in areas where its staff have expertise such as poverty analysis, proposal development, social science research methods and data analysis, this has not been fully implemented as the only course which has been developed and offered has been on proposal development. The design, marketing and delivery of short-term professional courses have also been affected by shortage of staff including the lack of a full time training coordinator. The 2012-2016 CSR strategic plan recommended that CSR staff members should be more engaged in academic work and that they should be encouraged to publish their work. This is another area where the CSR and its staff continue not doing well largely because of critical lack of writing skills and time constraints. The availability of the Malawi Journal of Social Science (MJSS) provides an opportunity for CSR staff as well as other members of the Faculty of Social Science to publish. However, the MJSS has not been published for the past 5 years and this is one of the factors that has forced some staff members to prefer publishing in journals published abroad.

The CSR staff participates in teaching both undergraduate and postgraduate students including supervision. However, the CSR's research programme has not really influenced content of teaching programs at Chancellor College because study results have not influenced the design of new courses. This in a way has resulted into a disjoint between research and teaching and this needs to be addressed. The CSR is headed by a Director and the Deputy Director heads research and training. There are 4 Research Fellows (RFs), 4 JRFs, 1 Systems Analyst and 10 clerical and technical staff. All RFs have PhDs with an exception of one who is pursuing his PhD now. The JRFs possess MAs in the fields of public health, social work and economics. This staff complement is inadequate to adequately make CSR fulfil its mandate and vision. This strategic plan suggests interventions that would ensure that CSR is able to fulfil its mandate including ensuring that all the JRFs are trained at PhD.

Table 1 below summaries the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) for CSR.

Table 1: CSR's SWOT analysis	
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong relationship with the Faculty of Social Science and its Departments. 2. Qualified staff at MA and PhD level to carry out research and consultancies and publish. 3. CSR's national and international track record of conducting research and consultancies. 4. Availability of basic equipment (e.g. tablets, computers and vehicles) for research. 5. Established working relationships with GoM, NGOs, private sector, development partners and other Universities in Malawi, Africa and abroad. 6. Availability of good internet facilities. 7. Availability of adequate office space and conference facilities. 8. Availability of GoM subvention to support permanent staff at CSR. 9. CSR's capacity for mobilization of resources. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inadequate highly qualified research staff. 2. Inadequate funding for research and outreach activities. 3. Limited mentoring of junior staff. 4. Inadequate skills for proposal development. 5. Inadequate publishing record among CSR staff due to limited writing skills. 6. Inconsistent publication of the MJSS. 7. Dormant research groups within the CSR. 8. Limited involvement of students in research and consultancies. 9. Limited access to refereed journals. 10. Absence of postgraduate programmes offered by CSR. 11. Lack of an effective performance appraisal system for staff. 12. Lack of funds for training CSR staff at PhD level. 13. Protracted college procurement procedures. 14. Lack of funding for training CSR's clerical and technical staff.
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High demand for evidence to inform policy and programming at all levels. 2. Availability of development partners at national and international level to support research. 3. Supportive GoM policies and legislation. 4. Support from Chancellor College management. 5. Political will for the conduct of research. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overdependence on GoM subvention. 2. High competition for research funds and consultancies due to an increase in number of research and consultancy institutions. 3. Inadequate knowledge about funding agencies. 4. Shortage of human resources. 5. High cost of internet connectivity.

2. Core values of the CSR

The core values of the CSR are as follows:

- ***Excellence***: We are committed to serving our clients by delivering consistently high quality research, consultancies, short courses and outreach activities.
- ***Professionalism***: We set the highest standards for the work that we do grounded in the belief of the trinity of proficiency, competency and reliability coupled with dedication to duty and team excellence.
- ***Leadership***: We take leadership in striving for scholarship that changes lives of ordinary people through policy and deepening understanding of the underlying dynamics of society in the 21st century.
- ***Innovation***: We dedicate ourselves to delivery of new ideas and collaboration across disciplines through research, scholarship and outreach activities.
- ***Integrity***: We act in an honest, fair and ethical manner that fosters a culture of trust and manifests itself in all our activities and decision-making processes.
- ***Teamwork***: We strive to create interdisciplinary, synergistic and collegial relationships characterized by honesty, partnership and flexibility.
- ***Accountability***: We are committed to ensuring academic, pragmatic and fiscal integrity and value for money through prudent management of resources that are entrusted to us in the course of our work.

3. Goal, mission and strategic focus

3.1 Goal

The goal of this Plan is to build the capacity of CSR so that it is capable of designing and implementing high-quality programmes of research, outreach and training.

3.2 Vision

A leading centre of excellence on social science research and capacity building for scholarship and public policy engagement in Malawi and sub-Saharan Africa.

3.3 Mission

Promotes and conducts cutting-edge academic and applied social science research and capacity building for knowledge generation and public policy development in partnership with the local and international institutions.

3.3 Objectives of the strategic plan

The objectives of the CSR strategic plan are:

- (a) To develop and implement a programme of research in the social sciences aimed at deepening understanding of major development issues in Malawi.
- (b) To strengthen CSR's outreach and dissemination programme, with a view to maximising the impact of the Centre's research on development, stimulating public policy dialogue on development issues and supporting the research process.
- (c) To develop a programme of short-term training courses, aimed at meeting development practitioners' needs for training in research-related skills, and improve research-teaching linkages; and
- (d) To build CSR's long-term institutional capacity to deliver high quality programmes of research, outreach and training.

3.4 CSR's strategic plan

This strategic plan aims at building the capacity of the CSR and its staff to effectively fulfil its mandate in research, outreach and training activities. The plan, therefore, sets forth CSR's research agenda and details the interventions that will transform the CSR into a Centre of Excellence in social sciences research and having the ability to better generate evidence for policy and programme development.

3.4.1 CSR's research programme

The 2012-2016 CSR strategic plan focused on 3 thematic research programmes, namely: (i) poverty and sustainable livelihoods; (ii) democracy and governance; and (iii) the socio-cultural and economic aspects of public health. During the implementation of the 2012-2016 CSR strategic plan a new thematic research programme has emerged and this is the youth, gender and disability research programme. The selection and development of the 4 priority areas for the CSR's research programme takes into account issues of their importance at national level and also as guided by the MGDS III and the capacity of the CSR and other members of staff in the Faculty of Social Science to undertake research in these areas.

3.4.1.1 Poverty and sustainable livelihoods

Poverty in Malawi is widespread: 51.5% of the population is poor with more people in rural areas being poor at 59.5% than in urban areas at 17.7%. The prevalence of poverty has remained at this rate over the last decade or so as demonstrated by surveys such as the Integrated Household Survey conducted by the National Statistical Office (NSO). Malawi ranks as one of the poorest countries in the world. Fighting poverty remains at

the centre of Malawi's development agenda. The MGDS III, a medium term development agenda for Malawi, has the overall goal of reducing poverty.

The GoM implements the national social support programme whose overall agenda is to alleviate poverty through the implementation of public works programmes, school meals programmes, the farm input subsidy programme and the Malawi social cash transfer programme. In addition to this, the GoM together with NGOs are also implementing village savings and loans programmes in order to alleviate poverty. The evaluation of these programmes has demonstrated that they have contributed to the reduction of poverty in the geographical areas where they are implemented. The challenge with all these programmes, however, is that geographical coverage is small hence limited impact on the alleviation of poverty.

With this background, CSR has identified some research gaps within poverty and public policy that it will focus on during the implementation of this Plan. In this research programme, the CSR will, among other things, explore adaptive strategies including shock responsive social protection interventions that lead to sustainable livelihoods at national, district, household and individual levels, design and management of macro-economic reforms, corruption, rent seeking and mismanagement of natural resources, budgetary transparency and corruption and accumulation and technical development. In addition to these, the CSR will also aim at providing independent estimates of poverty in Malawi taking into consideration Malawians' view of the poverty line. The CSR also believes that it is necessary to focus more attention on the sociological dimensions of poverty such as social structures and social organisation.

3.4.1.2 Democracy and governance

In 1993 Malawi adopted a multiparty system of government and in 1994 a Constitution covering the Bill of Rights and set institutions meant to provide checks and balances. The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi provides for separation of powers among the executive, legislature and judiciary. It also provides for institutions such as the Law Commission, the Ombudsman and Human Rights Commission to act as conduits that can be used to protect Malawians. Further, the Constitution obligates GoM to provide a decent living to Malawians. In line with this, the Government has developed the MGDS III that recognizes that social and economic progress depends on good governance and that functioning democracy ensures good governance. Likewise, development and implementation of people-oriented policies are dependent on the quality of democracy and governance.

Over the period of the extended CSR Strategic Plan, CSR's work on democracy and governance will focus on whether democracy is functioning the way it was envisaged when the Constitution was framed, aid and democracy, comparison of democracy to other forms government, civil service and public sector reforms, codes of practice for politics, ethnicity, capacity building for democracy, corruption and graft, political power and decentralization, role of traditional institutions, the architecture of the modern Malawi state, public policy analysis and political economy of development. The CSR will also conduct public opinion surveys covering the functioning of democracy;

performance of government and constitutional bodies; and the impact of these on individual, household and community livelihoods.

3.4.1.3 Socio-economic and cultural dimensions of public health

Malawi has some of the worst health and social indicators in the world: maternal mortality ratio is estimated at 439 deaths per 100,000 live births, under five mortality rate at 63 per 1,000 live births and infant mortality rate at 42 deaths per 1,000 live births. For the first time in over two decades, the prevalence of stunting among under five children is at 37% from around 50%. HIV prevalence is still high at 8.8%. Other communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and malaria are still a challenge. Malawi is also experiencing a high burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The HSSP for Malawi (2017-2022) has included the following in the Essential Health Package (EHP): RMNCH, vaccine preventable diseases, malaria, IMCI, NTDs, TB, NCDs, oral health, HIV and STIs and nutrition.

Over the period of implementing the extended CSR strategic plan, the focus will be on people's perceptions and uptake of EHP interventions including barriers to the uptake of these interventions. Other areas of focus will include health financing, impacts of task shifting on service delivery and impacts of decentralization on service delivery. The results will be used to inform development of policies and interventions that will contribute to the achievement of the health and related goals of the HSSP and the MGDS. CSR has a strong comparative advantage in research on the social and cultural dimensions of public health as exemplified by the huge number of studies of this nature that it has conducted and the expertise that is available.

3.4.1.4 Youth, Gender and Disability

This thematic pillar serves to a great extent as a prism for dealing with issues that affect marginalized, vulnerable and minority sections of the society in order to ensure that nobody is left behind in development processes and endeavors as espoused in the sustainable development goals.

3.4.2 Outreach activities

Over the period of the strategic plan, the CSR will stimulate wider public policy dialogue by initiating and facilitating debate and discussion with academia, policy makers, civil society and donors through conducting dissemination workshops. This component of the strategic plan will include public policy dialogue sessions, dissemination of results workshops, CSR in-house seminars, monthly Faculty of Social Science seminars and annual social conferences.

3.4.2.1 Public policy dialogue

The CSR will periodically mount public policy dialogue sessions on important development issues in Malawi and the region. Each year, the CSR will schedule at least

one such major event, commission papers for this purpose and inviting key officials from Government, the private sector, NGOs and key development agencies to participate in the event.

3.4.2.2 Working papers series

The CSR will introduce *working paper series* in 2019 and this will be the main route through which CSR study reports from its research program will be disseminated to key stakeholders including GoM ministries and departments, development partners and NGOs. These *working papers* will be turned into journal articles primarily for the MJSS and other local journals within the country. The *working papers* will thus perform a key function within the research community, contributing to international literature, providing a point of reference for future research, and earning points for academic staff promotion, while also providing potential teaching material. CSR will also produce policy briefs based on its studies and these will target government ministries, NGOs, UN and donor agencies. CSR brochures, policy briefs, study reports and abstracts of working papers will be available on the CSR website www.csr.cc.ac.mw.

3.4.2.3 Introduction of seminar series and annual conferences

One of the mandates of the CSR is to hold seminars and organise workshops where its staff and staff from the wider Faculty of Social Science can present their research results. The CSR introduced its in-house seminar series in 2014 where staff and affiliates present their study findings. The CSR will continue having these monthly seminars over the two-year period of this extended Plan. The CSR was also instrumental in the introduction of the monthly Faculty of Social Science seminars in 2014. The CSR will continue playing a role in the organization of these seminars and its staff and affiliates will regularly make presentations at these seminars. Every year the CSR will work with the Faculty of Social Science in organizing annual conferences for social scientists in Malawi that will attract presentations from a wide range of professionals within the social sciences. These annual conferences will be held in conjunction with the NCST and other institutions.

3.4.3 Strengthening training programs

This extended Plan aims at transforming the CSR into an academic institution where its staff will publish and inform teaching programs in the Faculty of Social Science at Chancellor College. Over the period of this Plan, the CSR will design and implement short-term professional training programs aimed at meeting the needs of government and development practitioners in research and related skills. The strategy further suggests ways of enhancing the linkages between CSR's research and teaching in the social sciences.

3.4.3.1 Introduction of the disability studies program

The GoM recognises the different challenges that persons with disabilities in Malawi experience. A number of structures have been established whose responsibilities are to ensure that persons with disabilities fully enjoy their rights. These structures include the

Malawi Council for the Handicapped, Malawi Against Physical Disabilities and the Department of Disability and Elderly Affairs in the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare.

Significant progress has been made in creating a favourable policy and legislative environment for implementing disability interventions in Malawi. However, there is lack of capacity in various organisations to develop and implement interventions to effectively address the problems being experienced by persons with disabilities. This is because people working in the disability sector do not have professional qualifications in disability and related studies as they have been trained on the job. The CSR will develop and implement a disability studies program at undergraduate level in 2019 and this will be offered starting from 2020. The target for this program will be people working with the line ministry, other government ministries, DPOs and CSOs. There is capacity in the Faculty of Social Science to run this program and where necessary guest lecturers will be invited from other countries preferably Ireland, Norway and South Africa to teach some specialised courses. CSR has steady partnerships with universities from these countries.

3.4.3.2 Short-term professional training

The CSR recognises that there is lack of capacity to develop project/research proposals, design and implement social science research, analyse quantitative and qualitative data and designing and implementing project monitoring and evaluation systems among government and NGO staff. Offering training to staff in GoM ministries and departments and NGOs in these fields is an important way of strengthening their capacity to act as effective development practitioners. Because of its long experience in social science research, the Centre has a strong comparative advantage in providing such training. The following courses will be offered by CSR with support from members of staff from the Faculty of Social Science.

- ***Proposal development:*** In 2014 the CSR developed a comprehensive course on proposal development and this has been offered thrice over the last 5 years. The course will be offered again in 2019 and that the plan is to offer the course at regional level in 2020. Over 60 participants have attended this training programme. It targets GoM ministries and departments, NGOs, academicians and any interested individuals.
- ***Introduction to social science research methods:*** The CSR is a centre of excellence in conducting social science research in Malawi. The course will explore various aspects of social science research including proposal writing, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, survey design, sampling, questionnaire design and management of fieldwork. While staff at CSR has the capacity to offer this course, members of staff in the Faculty of Social Science will also participate in delivering the course.
- ***Introduction to data analysis and report writing:*** CSR uses SPSS for data entry and analysis. A lot of quantitative data is collected by NGOs and government departments. However, they do not have the capacity to analyse such data; hence,

this course will build capacity of personnel working for government and NGOs to undertake analysis of data using software such as SPSS and NVIVO. The course will include data coding, data entry, data cleaning and use of SPSS for data analysis and NVIVO to support analysis of qualitative data.

- ***Monitoring and evaluation:*** One of the CSR's mandate is to evaluate programme being implemented by GoM and NGOs. The CSR has done this work since it was established in 1979. It has acquired skills in monitoring and evaluation and it will start offering this course in 2019. The course will target all stakeholders who are involved in the implementation of intervention programmes at all levels.

In order to effectively deliver short courses, the Deputy Director of the CSR will coordinate the development and delivery of short courses and where need arises s/he will arrange for strengthening the capacity of the CSR and faculty staff to deliver the short courses. A brochure will be prepared annually to market the programme.

3.4.3.4 Research-teaching linkages

The CSR staff will continue to teach and supervise students in the Faculty of Social Science at Chancellor College in a Department where they fit most. The CSR has staff with expertise in research methods, development studies, nutrition, anthropology, political science, economics, public administration, sociology, social work and public health. It is estimated that the CSR staff will spend 20% of their time teaching and 80% doing research, training and outreach activities. As a way of promoting research and teaching linkages, teaching staff from the Faculty will also be involved in proposed research programmes. University staff and students will also be encouraged to utilize CSR's DU.

3.4.4 Capacity building

This component of the strategy is a set of capacity-building measures, designed to ensure the long-term sustainability of the steps to be taken in research, outreach and training. The strategy proposes investments in human resource at CSR, completing the second phase of a purpose built office complex to house various programmes in the CSR, and the development and strengthening of partnerships with other institutions both in Malawi and abroad.

3.4.4.1 Human resources

There are two positions of RFs that are vacant at CSR following the retirement of CSR staff and these will be filled in 2019. One of the CSR Research Fellows is pursuing his PhD while the rest have PhDs. The 4 JRFs have masters' degrees in various fields including economics, social work and public health. Over the two-year period of implementing the extended CSR strategic plan, at least 2 of the JRFs will start pursuing their PhDs.

Some senior staff at CSR lack skills in and advanced quantitative data analysis such as regression analysis using packages like SPSS, STATA and R. Arrangements will be made for CSR staff to attend short-term training courses to address this gap. Staff will also be capacitated to analyse qualitative data using software programmes such as NVIVO.

In addition to this the CSR also has 9 CTS staff including an accountant, an accounts assistant, a secretary, IT Technician, documentarist, chief executive officer and a messenger. The CSR will support its support staff to upgrade their skills in order to serve the growing needs of CSR and its working partners. The Deputy Director will develop a comprehensive training program that will be aimed at addressing the prevailing capacity constraints.

3.4.4.2 Documentation services

The CSR has a Documentation Unit (DU) that is still accommodated at the University of Malawi Central Administration Offices. The CSR's priority over the next two years is to construct a state of the art DU within the CSR office complex so that staff from CSR students and staff from the Faculty of Social Science can easily access it. This new DU building will have access to internet facilities. The CSR will work very closely with Chancellor College library in order to ensure that it has access to electronic journals. The CSR will subscribe to international journals. There is an extremely small number of books in CSR's DU and this is a serious constraint to the development of research at the Centre and the wider Faculty of Social Science. In this Strategic Plan, the CSR plans to expand the Unit's collections, particularly in areas related to CSR's main areas of research interest.

The CSR has conducted more than 500 studies over the last 40 years. Most reports on these studies are not well documented and stocked: hence, CSR will embark on the process of reconstituting the full collection of CSR studies by obtaining copies of missing study reports from other libraries in country as well as outside. The focus will be getting reports of the studies conducted over the last 5 years. A computerised cataloguing system was initiated during the implementation of the CSR's strategic plan 2012-2016 but this will be further strengthened in order to improve management of the Unit's collection and the search for materials by users from all parts of the world since this will be linked to CSR's website.

3.4.4.3 ICT services including data storage

In order to meet the IT requirements for a modern research centre, the CSR will purchase new laptops for its Research Fellows and this will be linked to a LAN to ease file and print sharing. CSR already has a server for backing up data and documents. This is currently at Chancellor College and there are plans to transfer this to CSR once there is a room identified to accommodate this. A heavy-duty printer will be purchased and connected to the LAN. The CSR has installed a wireless internet but it is not stable. Over the period of implementing this plan, the aim will be to have discussions with the internet provider to improve services and ensure that the service is stable. CSR will also

continuously purchase and up-to-date required software including SPSS, STATA, EPI Info for Data Analysis and NVIVO for analyzing qualitative data and SAGE for financial accounting.

3.4.4.4 Transport

The CSR has a fleet of field vehicles that is aged. With the volume of research activities that is anticipated, 2 new field research vehicles (4X4s) will be purchased.

3.4.4.5 Completion of the construction of an office complex for CSR

The CSR had its offices at the University Office Central Administration Buildings. However, in 2015 the CSR moved to its new premises in Nandolo Residential Area. As mentioned earlier, the only Unit that is still located at the University of Malawi central administration offices is the DU. The CSR will prioritise the construction of the building that will house the DU. Once this is done, the CSR will construct 2 conference rooms, a restaurant and extend the administration building to include an accounts office. The construction of these new buildings will ensure that they are friendly to persons with disabilities.

3.4.4.6 Institutional linkages

The CSR has been involved in research projects with partners from across the globe and this approach has proved an effective way of exchanging research experience as well as competence building through peer review and customized training. The CSR will strengthen co-operation with universities and research institutions in Africa and overseas through promotion of collaborative research in its four priority areas. With the construction of the new office complex, the CSR will strengthen its visiting research fellows' and research affiliation programmes.

5. Implementation of the Strategic Plan

5.1 The CSR's role and responsibility

The CSR Director will have overall responsibility of implementing the extended CSR strategic plan. The Deputy Director of the CSR will be responsible for implementing the CSR's research and training program and s/he will report to the Director on progress being made in the implementation of the research and training component of the extended Plan. The CSR will recruit an Outreach and Publications Coordinator who will be responsible for outreach and dissemination activities including marketing while the training coordinator will coordinate the development and implementation of short courses. Each research programme at CSR will have a Coordinator/Lead who will work with fellows in his /her field including staff from the Faculty of Social Science to develop proposals, look for funding, and implement research programmes. The Board through the Dean of the Faculty of Social Science will oversee the implementation of the CSR strategic plan and will report to the Principal of Chancellor College.

5.2 The role of the Faculty of Social Science

The CSR is a research arm of the Faculty of Social Science. While there are key members of staff at CSR to implement the CSR research program, it will also rely heavily on members of the Faculty of Social Science in the implementation of the Plan. Faculty members will play an important role in the development of proposals in the 4 priority research areas, carry out research and write of research reports and papers for publication. They will also participate in the design and implementation of short courses. The Faculty will hold monthly seminars and annual social science research conferences and the CSR will contribute towards these events by providing requisite logistics and presentation of papers.

5.3 Other stakeholders

As has been the case previously the desire of the CSR is that its research should influence policy and program development through making available research evidence. The provision of such evidence will ultimately contribute towards the achievement of some of the goals of the MGDS III. The CSR will ensure that key stakeholders participate in the implementation of the Plan. For the CSR Research Program, CSR will work very closely with the NCST to ensure that its studies are in line with national priorities and are approved for implementation by appropriate IRBs. The CSR will also work closely with NCST when organizing national social science research conferences.

Key stakeholders that CSR will work with in the implementation of this Plan include Government ministries and departments; CSOs; private sector organizations and development partners. The coordinators of the CSR's Research Programs will further identify other key stakeholders that will work with CSR. CSR will also work with the media in order to effectively disseminate its work. The CSR also acknowledges that it has weak capacity in certain areas such as writing of papers for publication and development of research proposals. The collaborative projects that the CSR will be engaged in will contribute significantly towards the development of capacity within CSR to be able to write proposals and publish.

5.4 Implementation schedule

The implementation of the extended CSR Strategic Plan starts in March 2019 and ends in February 2021. It is a 2-year strategic plan. A number of activities will be implemented and are presented in a simplified log frame as contained in Annex 1. Under each objective, there is a list of activities that will be implemented in order to achieve that particular objective. The timeframe, person(s) responsible, indicators and major assumptions for implementing each of the activities has also been shown in the log frame. Two of the major assumptions for successful implementation of the Plan are availability of appropriately trained human resource and funding.

6. Monitoring and evaluation of the Plan

The CSR Board meets twice every year to discuss the progress CSR is making in the implementation of CSR's strategic plan among other issues. The Director of the CSR will present to the Board progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan at all Board meetings, the challenges it is experiencing and get guidance from the board members on how these challenges can best be addressed. The Director will compile annual reports with inputs from sectional heads that will be presented to the Board and once approved it will be submitted to the Principal. The CSR will also share the annual report with its funding agencies to ensure transparency and accountability. In December 2020, the CSR will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the extended CSR Strategic Plan. This evaluation will inform the development of the successor CSR strategic plan.

7. Costing and funding of the strategic plan

The total cost of implementing this Plan is estimated at US\$3,383,200. Most of the funds will be spent on implementing Objectives 1 (US\$1,950,000) and 6 (US\$1,206,000) as shown in Annex 2. The major sources of funding for implementing the extended Plan will be GoM subvention mainly for salaries and from research and consultancies.

Annex 1: Results framework

Activities	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Responsibility	2018				2019				Assumption		
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
<i>Objective 1: To develop and implement a programme of research in the social sciences aimed at deepening understanding of major development issues in Malawi.</i>														
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and implement studies on (i) poverty and sustainable livelihoods; (ii) social and cultural aspects of public health; (iii) democracy and governance; and (iv) gender, youth and disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No. of proposals developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposal documents.• Annual CSR Reports.• Grants contracts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deputy Director.• All Research Fellows.• FSS staff.	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adequate HR.• Well trained staff.• Availability of funding.		
<i>Objective 2: To strengthen CSR’s outreach and dissemination programme, with a view to maximising the impact of the Centre’s research on development, stimulating public policy dialogue on development issues and supporting the research process.</i>														
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hold monthly in-house seminars.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No. of in-house seminars held.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual CSR report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deputy Director	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Availability of CSR staff.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hold monthly FSS seminars.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No. of FSS monthly seminars held.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual CSR report.• Dean of Social Science records.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deputy Director.	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Availability of presenters.		

Activities	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Responsibility	2018				2019				Assumption
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
• Hold annual social science conferences.	• No. of papers presented.	• CSR Annual report. • FSS records. • Conference proceedings.	• Deputy Director.			xx				xx		• Availability of funding. • Submission of abstracts.
• Hold an international social science conference.	• No. of papers presented.	• CSR annual report. • FSS records. • Conference proceedings.	• Deputy Director.							xx		• Availability of funding. • Submission of abstracts.
• Attend and present papers at international conferences.	• No. of CSR staff attending international conferences. • No of papers presented at international conferences.	• CSR annual report. • Conference proceedings.	• Deputy Director.	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	• Availability of funding.
• Hold public policy dialogues.	Public policy dialogues held.	• CSR annual report. Newspaper reports.	Deputy Director.				xx				xx	• Availability of funding. • Availability of discussion papers.
• Produce working paper series.	• No. of working paper series published.	• CSR annual report	• All Research Fellows	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	• Availability of time for production of working papers.
• Produce Policy Briefs	• No. of Policy briefs produces	• CSR annual report	• All Research Fellows	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	• Availability of Funds.

Activities	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Responsibility	2018				2019				Assumption
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
												<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of research reports. • Availability of skills.
• Publish papers in refereed journals.	• No. of papers produced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSR annual report. • Print outs of published papers. 	• All research fellows.	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of writing skills.
• Update CSR brochure	• CSR brochure produced	• CSR annual report	• Director.				xx					• Availability of funds
• Create and sustain a CSR website.	• CSR website created.	• A functional CSR website.	• Director	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	• Availability of information for website.
<i>Objective 4: To develop a programme of short-term training courses, aimed at meeting development practitioners' needs for training in research-related skills, and improve research-teaching linkages.</i>												
• Develop and run a disability studies programme.	• Curriculum developed, approved and being implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of course material. • CSR annual report. 	• Deputy Director			xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of funds. • Staffing. • Approval of the course by UNIMA.
• Offer the short course on proposal development.	• No. of course participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of course materials. • CSR annual report. 	• Deputy Director			xx				xx		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing. • Availability of applicants.

Activities	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Responsibility	2018				2019				Assumption
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
• Offer short course on monitoring and evaluation.	• Course developed. • No. of participants.	• Availability of curriculum	• Deputy Director	xx	xx	xx				xx		• Availability of funds • Staffing.
• Develop and run social science research short course.	• Course outline developed. • No. of participants.	• Availability of course materials, • CSR annual report.	• Deputy Director	xx		xx				xx		• Availability of applicants. • Staffing.
• Develop and run data analysis short course	• Course outline developed.	• Availability of course materials.	• Deputy Director		xx	xx						Availability of funds Staffing
Objective 4: To build CSR's long-term institutional capacity to deliver high quality of research, outreach and training												
• Training of staff at PhD level	• No. of staff trained	• Admission letters. • CSR annual report	• Deputy Director					xx	xx	xx	xx	• Availability of funds • Willingness of staff
• Short-term trainings for RFs in SPSS, Stata and advanced quantitative and qualitative data analysis.	• No. of staff trained	• CSR annual report	• Deputy Director					xx	xx	xx	xx	• Availability of funds
• Purchase new laptops for all RFs.	• No. of laptops purchased.	• CSR stores reports. • CSR annual report	• Director			xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	• Availability of funds
• Install LAN for file and print sharing	• LAN installed	• CSR annual report	• Director			xx	xx					• Availability of funds.

Activities	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Responsibility	2018				2019				Assumption
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
• Purchase heavy duty printer	• Heavy duty printer purchased	• CSR annual report	• Director					xx	xx			• Availability of funds
• Purchase up to date software for data analysis and accounting.	• No. of software purchased	• CSR annual report	• Director					xx	xx			• Availability of funds
• Purchase of field vehicles	• No. of vehicles purchased	• CSR annual report	• Director									• Availability of funds
• Complete the construction of CSR office complex.	• Office complex constructed	• CSR annual report	• Director									• Availability of funds
• Establish links with other institutions and donor agencies	• Links established	• CSR annual report	• Director	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	• Availability of funds. • Availability of potential partners.

Annex 3: Budget for the CSR Strategic Plan 2012-2015 (US\$)

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 2</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Objective 1: To undertake applied social science research in order to generate robust evidence on pressing development problems facing the country and channel this evidence to policy makers and planners.</i>			
• Develop and implement studies on poverty and sustainable livelihoods.	250,000	250,000	500,000
• Develop and implement studies on Democracy and governance.	150,000	350,000	450,000
• Develop and implement studies on social and cultural dimensions of public health.	350,000	400,000	750,000
• Develop and implement studies on youth, gender and disability.	100,000	150,000	250,000
Total Objective 1	850,000	1,150,000	1,950,000
<i>Objective 2: To strengthen CSR's outreach and dissemination programme, with a view to maximising the impact of the Centre's research on development, stimulating public policy dialogue on development issues and supporting the research process.</i>			
• Hold a public policy dialogue session.	10,000	12,000	22,000
• Edit and print working papers	3,000	3,000	6,000
• Hold monthly CSR in-house seminars			
• 2.3: Conduct annual dissemination conference	47,000.00		
• 2.4: Coordinate Faculty monthly seminar series	9,960.00		
• 2.5: Upgrade Documentation Unit ¹	17,800.00		
• 2.6: Produce annual report	4,000.00		
• 2.7: Produce and update CSR brochure	500.00		
• 2.8: Produce policy briefs	22,400.00		
• 2.9: Produce abstracts of reports and working papers	0.00		
• 2.10: Create a CSR website on CHANCO website	0.00		
• 2.11: Host CSR brochure, policy briefs, abstracts and public data on CSR website	0.00		
Total Objective 2	1,151,700		
<i>Objective 3: To develop a programme of short-term training courses, aimed at meeting development practitioners' needs for training in research-related skills, and improve research-teaching linkages.</i>			
3.1: Develop and run a disability studies program	548,000.00		
3.2: Develop and run a poverty analysis module under the MDS and PhD in development studies	50,000.00		
3.3: Develop and run poverty analysis and sustainable livelihoods short course	10,000.00		
3.4: Develop and run social science research short course	10,000.00		
3.5: Develop and run data analysis short course	10,000.00		
Total Objective 3	628,000.00		
<i>Objective 4: To build CSR's long-term institutional capacity to deliver high Outreach and training. quality programmes of research</i>			
4.1: Recruitment of volunteers			0.00

¹ Upgrading will constitute purchase of 3 computers, subscription to relevant Journals, photocopier, printer

4.2: Training of staff at PhD level	60,000.00
4.3: Short term training for RFs in SPSS, Stata and advanced quantitative and qualitative data analysis	104,900.00
4.4: Purchase new computers for computer lab and professional staff	56,000.00
4.5: Training of support staff (secretary, accounts assistant, IT Technician, Documentalist)	50,000.00
4.6: Install LAN for file and print sharing	25,000.00
4.7: Purchase of a backup server for data and document storage	5,000.00
4.8: Purchase of a heavy duty dot matrix printer	2,000.00
4.9: Purchase of a copy printer	8,000.00
4.8: Install wireless internet	15,000.00
4.9: Purchase up to date software for data analysis and accounting	4,800.00
4.10: Purchase of field vehicles	480,000.00
4.11: Construct a purpose build office complex	2,000,000.00
4.12: Establish links with other institutions and donor agencies	0.0
Total Objective 4	2,752,700.00
Grand Total	4,690,400.00