Supporting the CHILD DEVELOPMENT Study

Get involved in this pioneering project that uses artificial intelligence to create early-warning systems that can save lives and boost the future of children and youths in Malawi.

QUOTA: PUBLIC HEALTH

→ Enable the use of real-time data within the Ministry of Health of Malawi
→ Support the Ministry in setting up a Wearable Health Unit and two taskforces
→ Create taskforces for Early Warning Systems and for Health Centers Rapid Response

Fig. 1: Donor fund quotas in CHF

MOTIVATION

Can you imagine how the future in Malawi would look if real-time data could help prevent thousands of childhood deaths caused by malaria, diarrhea, anemia, pneumonia, and other diseases?

In this groundbreaking project, one of the first to use artificial intelligence in the developing world to enable real-time program design and evaluation, our research team aims to increase the volume of data collection about child and youth health conditions. This data, processed through machine learning algorithms and feeding early-warning systems with the help of artificial intelligence, could empower community health workers to detect health problems at an early stage – especially when it comes to epidemics – and to implement immediate and preventive measures to address them.

Detecting diseases early on is just one of the many short-term benefits this project brings about. The ability to evaluate government and international organizations’ programs in real-time enables scaling up what works based on rigorous evidence, ensuring scarce resources are efficiently put to use. Eventually, this infrastructure could even allow programs to be customized to each village, maximizing the access to the basic opportunities with the highest returns to each child.

Given the strong partnership already in place with the College of Medicine of the University of Malawi, UNICEF Malawi, and the Ministry of Health and Planning of Malawi, real-time data will enable the design and implementation of evidence-based programs by Malawi’s public health system, making informed decisions, cutting corners, and drastically improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of public health services.

The data collection, which specifically examines the mental and physical health of Malawian children and youth living in poverty, will be held across 180 villages, involving over 6,000 households. The most significant potential of this project lies in the sustainable and scalable interventions that digital health technology brings. Empowering government and health workers thanks to machine learning and artificial intelligence will boost children’s and youth’s future opportunities.
DONOR FUND FOR PUBLIC HEALTH COLLABORATION

The Child Development Study aims to accompany the development of an entire generation of children and youth in Malawi. The project is divided into six phases of three years each. 3.2 Mio CHF is budgeted for the initial phase; UNICEF Switzerland and Liechtenstein and UNICEF Malawi have already committed to 1.7 Mio CHF. We have four donor quotas for the open budgetary needs, and your organization could support one or more of them. These quotas will be branded after your institution (if desired) and will also grant you a seat on the project’s Advisory Board. Learn more: www.ccwd.uzh.ch/cds

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