

Inside this Edition

- ◆ AAM hands over Katete CDSS to Govt
- ◆ Police; Gender Ministry shot in the arm
- ◆ Coalition lobbies for increased ECD support.
- ◆ AAM ups gear on CSP V
- ◆ Male MPs for more women in parliament
- ◆ Empowered Y+members in fight against stigma and discrimination



Kasakula CDSS learners were all smiles at the school donation

AAM hands over Katete CDSS to Govt.

ActionAid Malawi (AAM) on 18th December, 2017 officially handed over to Malawi Government Katete Community Day Secondary School (CDSS) worth K97 million in Ntchisi District. AAM constructed the school in partnership with Kasakula Education Network with funding from NORAD under the project; "Promoting Quality Education through Progressive Domestic Resource Mobilisation"

Speaking during the handover ceremony at Katete CDSS in Traditional Authority Kasakula in the district, AAM Programme Coordinator for Ntchisi, Chimwemwe Fabiano, said AAM decided to construct the school to promote access to secondary education for the children, especially girls in T/A Kasakula.

"Prior to construction of Katete CDSS, there was only one secondary school against ten full primary schools in Chikho Zone in T/A Kasakula, with a total enrolment of 7128 learners. This denied learners their fundamental right to education. Thus, we hope the additional CDSS will help children, especially girls go further with their education," she said.

Receiving the donation on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Central East Education

Division Manager, Billy Banda, thanked AAM for the kind gesture towards improving education standards in the district.

"Access and equity is one of the goals in the current National Education Strategic Plan. This is why we are pleased to received this magnificent school which ActionAid constructed here in T/A Kasakula," he said. He called upon learners to work hard in class and take good care of the school.



Above is part of the school which was donated by AAM

Coalition lobbies parliamentarians for increased ECD support

The Early Childhood Development (ECD) Coalition in Malawi has asked members of parliament to take the ECD programme as one of priority areas for more investment for the future.

The call was made on 8th December in Lilongwe when opening a two-day ECD training workshop the Coalition organized for parliamentarians from the Social and Community Affairs Committee with financial support from World Vision Malawi and Southern Africa Parliamentary Support Trust.

ECD Coalition Chairperson, Jaynet Kuyeli, said members of parliament have a key role to play to improve the ECD services and hoped the training had stimulated the legislators' motivation to advance increased investment in the ECD programme in the country.

"We hope that following the training, we now have champions among parliamentarians who will advance calls for quality and accessible ECD services in the country. The parliamentarians also got equipped in budget and expenditure tracking skills which, we hope, will enable them pay special priority towards increasing budgetary allocation towards the ECD programme," she said.

Kuyeli thanked the Government for adopt-



Jaynet Kuyeli giving opening remarks during the meeting

ing the ECD policy, saying the document will go a long way in providing guidance in the implementation of ECD programme in the country.

One of the participants, who is also the vice chairperson of parliamentary committee on Budget and Finance, John Chikalimba, said it is high time government started investing in ECD programme, saying the area is critical to laying a foundation for the country's bright future.

"Honestly, the current budgetary allocation of MK600 million towards the ECD is too little as compared the importance of the programme in the country. As parliamentarians, we will make sure that during next mid-term budget review meeting, we discuss need to increase budgetary allocation towards ECD," he said.



Some of the members of parliament who attended the meeting pose with Coalition members

Police; Gender Ministry Shot in the Arm



AAM Executive Director Grace, Malera (L) ,symbolically presenting the bicycles to Police

ActionAid Malawi (AAM) on Monday, 22nd January, donated 148 Mountain Bicycles to Malawi Police Service (MPS) and Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare. Out of these, 126 bicycles went to (MPS) while Gender Ministry got 22.

Purchased with funding from UNICEF under the 'Safe Schools' project, the bicycles are expected to ease transport challenges that police officers in lower police formations and child protection workers face when following up on child violence cases in the project's impact districts of Machinga, Dedza, Lilongwe, Mzimba and NkhataBay.

Speaking during the handover ceremony in Lilongwe, AAM Executive Director, Grace Malera, said AAM decided to purchase the bikes following the recent project evaluation exercise that showed limited mobility among police units and child protection workers as the major challenge facing project implementation.

"We, therefore, hope this donation will go a long in easing mobility challenges among the police units and child protection workers so that they effectively respond to cases of violence that children face in schools and communities," she said.

Speaking after receiving the donation on behalf of MPS, Assistant Superintendent Alexander Ngwala thanked AAM for the donation, saying the bicycles will be important in raising community awareness and strengthening referral pathways in the fight against children in schools.

"As Police, we are championing One School One Police Officer campaign. However, we have been having challenges to implement the campaign due to lack of mobility among most of the police, especially those working in the communities.



Gender Min. Rep receives donation from Malera

AAM ups gear on CSP V



AAM Head of Programmes and Policy Peter Pangani (Right) explaining to Board of Directors the progress CSP V development

On 4th December, 2017, AAM Secretariat took the development of Country Strategy Paper (CSP) V to a Board of Director's Reference Committee for further enrichment. Making a presentation, AAM Head of Programmes and Policy Peter Pangani highlighted, among others, the journey to CSP V, Strength, Weakness Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis, the structure, programmes and priority areas. He said that the zero draft CSP has

already under-gone regional, national and staff consultations, which included the (SWOT). Pangani also informed the meeting that AAM set-up a core drafting team of staff members drawn from thematic areas to spearhead the process. Reflecting on the development of CSP V, Board of Directors remarked that there is need to expedite the finalization of the CSP V so that it is launched within the first quarter of 2018.

Male MPs for more female parliamentary representation

In December, 2017 AAM, Centre for Civil Society Strengthening (CCSS) and other gender-focused civil society organisations organized a lobbying meeting with members of parliament to garner their support towards an affirmative action towards increased women parliamentary and local government representation. Specifically, the meeting dwelt much on the proposed 28 new constituencies to be represented by female parliamentarians. The meeting got overwhelming support from male parliamentarians. The meeting was part of the activities under the 50:50 Campaign Programme AAM and CCSS are implementing with financial support from Royal Norwegian Embassy. Below are some of the photos captured during the event.



Key-note Speaker, Henry Chingaipe, setting a tone for discussion



AAM Executive Director, Grace Malera, stressing a point in her presentation



A cross section of parliamentarians who attended the meeting



Lilongwe City Central Parliamentarian, Hon. David Bisnowaty, committing his support to the affirmative action towards increasing women parliamentary representation



Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, Dr. Esmie Kainja offering closing remarks during the meeting



Members of women parliamentary caucus led by chairperson, Hon. Jessie Kabwila, dance to acknowledge overwhelming support from male parliamentarians.

Empowered Y+ members in Ntchisi take strides against stigma and discrimination



Some of the Malomo Y+members in Ntchisi have all reasons to smile against HIV-related stigma and discrimination

Young women and girls living with HIV and Aids in T/A Chilooko and Kalumo in Ntchisi District are winning the fight against stigma and discrimination. With support from ActionAid Malawi through the Ntchisi Local Rights Programme, more young women are coming in the open about their status and are now taking stigma and discrimination head on. Chairperson of youth living with HIV, also known as Y+ members, Terresa Chiziwiko, says when the movement started in 2014, it got lukewarm support. “However, thanks to vigorous sensitization campaigns, more young women are joining the initiative,” said Chiziwiko. She said, currently, they are about 179 members in T/A Chilooko and Kalumo alone. Chiziwiko said the financial support they got from AAM in 2017 enabled them to conduct trainings in Anti-retroviral treatment (ART) adherence and disclosure, conduct awareness campaigns as well as monitoring and evaluation.

“As a group, we also receive cases from non members and we make sure that we follow up on such cases,” she said. She added the group has so handled 16 cases bordering on stigma and discrimination.



Y+members in a jovial mood after a monitoring session by AAM staff

AAM, Media for improved collaboration

ActionAid Malawi (AAM) and the members of the media fraternity have agreed to foster closer collaborations in the best interest of the poor communities in the country. The two parties cemented the relationship on Wednesday, 31st January, during the orientation workshop AAM organized at its offices for the Lilongwe-based journalists.

Speaking during the meeting AAM Executive Director, Executive Malera, said the media has an important role to play in holding Non-Governmental Organisations accountable, hence the need for the two parties to sustain engagement.

“As ActionAid Malawi, we get a lot of funding in the name of communities we serve. As such, we will need your support important that that such resources impact on the poor and marginalized communities,” she said. Malera assured the media of AAM’s availability to provide information on various interventions AAM is conducting in the country.

Touching on the 2018 plans, Malera informed the media of the 50:50 campaign programme which AAM is managing in partnership with Centre for Civil Society Strengthening (CCSS), saying the two organisations will also rely on the role of the media to contribute to the success of the women during the 2019 parliamentary



AAM Executive Director, Grace Malera, flanked by AAM Head of Communications, Tiwonge Kumwenda, addressing journalists

and local government elections.

“Let me also inform you that ActionAid Malawi will be launching the Country Strategy Paper Five in the next two months. The upcoming CSP is replacing the CSP Four which expired in December, 2017. As such we will also need to support to ensure that the new CSP reaches many Malawians,” she.

During the workshop, various AAM managers led by the Head

of Programmes and Policy, made presentations on ActionAid Malawi and its various thematic areas that included, Women Rights, Education and Youth, Governance, Climate Change and Resilience and Global Fund.

Reflecting on the meeting, journalist from Capital Radio, Joseph Mazizi, described as an eye opener, saying they would take time to follow up and report on some of the AAM success stories presented during interaction



A cross section of journalists who attended the orientation workshop