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CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL
SO MUST BE OUR SOLUTIONS

#fundOurFuture!



National
Launch of
Climate
Justice
Campaign
Launch



FUND OUR
FUTURE

Newsletter

September 2023 _____



Pamela Kuwali
Executive Director

September has been an engaging month for ActionAid Malawi. Our new climate justice campaign, titled: **“Fund Our Future”** has been our major engagement. After attending the global launch early September, in Kenya, ActionAid Malawi took the campaign to a national and district level.

Together with smallholder farmers, women, youth, climate activists and the media, we have spearheaded a campaign with a call on banks and corporates to shift from funding fossils fuel and industrial agriculture to environment friendly energy sources and agroecology.

For Malawi, a shift from Affordable Input Program (AIP) to agroecology is a must. Apart from destroying the soil, the AIP has proved to be a drain on the country’s limited resources and gravy train for the corrupt few.

The month also saw ActionAid Malawi generating evidence on the impact of austerity measures and public debt on the delivery of gender-responsive public services, especially in Education and Health Sectors. The voices of individual women and youth bearing the brunt of austerity and public debt will go a long way in enriching our economic justice campaign in the country.

As ActionAid Malawi, the month also marked exactly five years in implementing our Country Strategy Paper V: Action for Social Justice. The CSP V evaluation process is currently underway and its report will inform the development of CSP VI.

Enjoy the read!



On 13th September, 2023, all roads led to the BICC, Lilongwe where ActionAid Malawi launched the Climate Justice Campaign dubbed: “Fund Our Future” with a rallying call on Malawi to shift from industrial agriculture to agroecology.

Graced by the Minister of Natural Resources and Climate Change, Honourable Michael Usi, the launch’s highlight was the presentation of a groundbreaking report titled: “Finance Flows” on how banks are fuelling climate crisis in the global south.

The report, among others, notes that since the Paris Agreement in 2016, banks have provided 20 times more financing to fossil fuels and industrial agriculture activities in the Global South than Global North governments have provided as climate finance to countries on the front lines of the climate crisis.

ActionAid Malawi Vice Board Chairperson, Reverend Towera Masiku, said in response to report findings, the “Fund Our Future” campaign is mobilizing the youth, young women and climate change activists, social movements and collectives in the country to call for disinvestment in fossils fuel and industrial agriculture including Affordable Input Program (AIP) and promote the use of climate friendly energy sources and agricultural practices.



Honorable Usi speaking

Honourable Michael Usi hailed ActionAid for launching a campaign based on evidence in the report. He said government would continue engaging ActionAid and other non-state actors in addressing the effects of climate change in the country and call for international financial institutions and corporate to invest more resources towards resilience and adaptation and mitigation.

The “Fund Our Future” campaign launch in Malawi comes months after the country was hit by the longest lasting cyclone on record- Cyclone Freddy which claimed over 1000 lives, displaced 563,771 and destroyed over 220,000 farmers’ fields and crops, and infrastructure across the southern Malawi.

Nsanje, Mzimba embrace “Fund Our Future” campaign



Nsanje - Climate Justice Campaign Launch



Mzimba - Climate Justice Campaign Launch

Business came to a stand still in Nsanje and Mzimba on 20th September, 2023 as ActionAid Malawi, and local partners, youth, women, and those living on the frontline of climate crisis took to the streets in a solidarity march for climate justice under the “Fund Our Future” banner.

Other campaign launch activities included caravan road shows, radio programs and performances to raise awareness about the increasing devastation of climate change and the call for the district councils to play their part in mitigating the risks of climate change.

In Nsanje, Kuchene Women Forum leader, Mary Namalomba, called for increased transparency and accountability in the climate change related interventions in the district. She said the district council should be forthcoming in sharing its budgets and plans on climate change interventions in the district and ensure that women and youth take a leading role on the interventions.

After the launch, ActionAid Malawi's local partners presented the "Finance Flows" report to the two district councils.

Story of change on agroecology:

Cecilia Kabwemba is a member of Coalition of Women Farmers (COWFA) under Kuchene Women Forum, a partner to ActionAid Malawi. She is one of the smallholder farmers affected by climate-induced disaster which affected her yields and family livelihood.

However, in 2018, Kabwemba and other smallholder farmers under COWFA were supported with a training in agroecology by Kuchene Women Forum. The training, among others, equipped her and others in Bokasi manure making. Bokasi is an organic type of manure that requires a mixture of cow dung, ashes, dark soil and maize dusks.

Since acquiring knowledge in agroecology, Kabwemba has been realizing more yields from her field, a development that has addressed food insufficiency at her household level.

"I now longer need chemical fertilizers for my crop. I like applying organic manure because apart of leading to higher yields, organic manure enriches the soil which I will need to use for years to come. All smallholder farmers under COWFA are now applying organic manure because we know the chemical fertilizer is hazardous to the environment. My appeal to government is to ensure that agroecology is fully supported and upscaled in the country," says Kabwemba.



Kabwemba with fellow smallholder farmers in crop field



Kabwemba making her remarks during the launch of climate justice campaign in Nsanje

Malawians decry Public debt, Austerity Impact on their Livelihood

Public Debt, Austerity Measures drives public services out of reach in Malawi
In August, to September, ActionAid Malawi staff went around some districts of Malawi to appreciate the human side of austerity and how debt is restricting government budgets, especially the impact that public sector wage cuts have on health and education. We captured some voices from frontline workers and service users in education and health facilities and hereby share the voices:



Mchinji Service delivery

1



“For a poor country like Malawi to have such debts is regressive to effective service delivery in the public sector. Actually, I believe that the fact government cannot construct additional infrastructure such as staff houses and toilets could be due to the fact that most of the resources are going towards servicing such debts. There is need for government to stop borrowing unnecessarily and also broaden its revenue generation base within the country to ensure that it has adequate resources to finance the health sector”. Kitty Njazi, Nurse, Chindebvu Rural Health Centre, Dedza.

Kitty Njazi - Nurse at Chindebvu Rural Health Centre

2



“We want to bring to government’s attention that its limited investment in key sectors such as education is precipitating privatization of essential services whose prices are beyond the majority poor. Austerity is killing our future” “Secondly, we are also appealing to international financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF to prescribe conditionalities that are in the best interest of the poor people in Malawi. They should focus more on people rather than profits.” Eneless Hudson, a member of Young Urban Women in Mchinji. (Photo)

Eneless Hudson - Young Urban Women

3



Tiwonge Nyemba - Luanar Student

“I failed to a secure accommodation at campus due to high demand from other students and was forced to look for accommodation outside the campus. Fortunately, I found one some five kilometers from the college. However, instead of concentrating on my studies, I spend most of the hours looking for food as the college does not provide food for students. Those who have money buy from a privately owned cafeteria and it costs about K2000 per meal, something I cannot afford,” says Tiwonge Nyemba, Student at Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

4



Thokozani Chiotcha - Midwife Nurse

“I believe Malawi government is not doing enough to invest in the health sector, especially its workforce including frontline health workers. My salary is not satisfactory enough and as a nurse, I need continuous training in my work, but that is rarely happening. All we keep hearing is that government does not have resources to train us,” laments Thokozani Chiotcha, nurse and midwife technician at Mangochi District Hospital.

Value Women Work Project re-energizes for next phase

In September, the Valuing Women Work (VWW) conducted its review meeting in Mponela, Dowa. The meeting brought together all young women leaders from across the country to discuss how to sustain the economic justice campaign momentum. Some of the interventions implemented so far under the phase include; a community dialogue session in Mchinji, and a national fair share which brought together local and international feminist organisations, gender activists, young women, academia and the media. The project has since outlined activities such as media orientations, radio debates, a community awareness on the impact of austerity and public debt in the delivery of public services in the country and propose policy alternations that places well-being over profits .



Hub leaders discussing the progress of the project during the review meeting at Mponela

SADC CSOs recommit to good governance in the region

On 13th and 14th September, civil society organisations from across southern Africa met online and parallel gatherings across six different locations (Johannesburg, Dodoma, Harare, Lilongwe, Lusaka, and Maputo) to assess the progress of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in implementing its 10-year strategy, the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-30.

Co-convened by 14 regionally-focused organisations, the event focused on the importance of socially accountable public resource management in the region's development. The theme of this year's dialogue is Accelerating SADC's Development through the Socially Accountable Generation and Use of Public Resources.

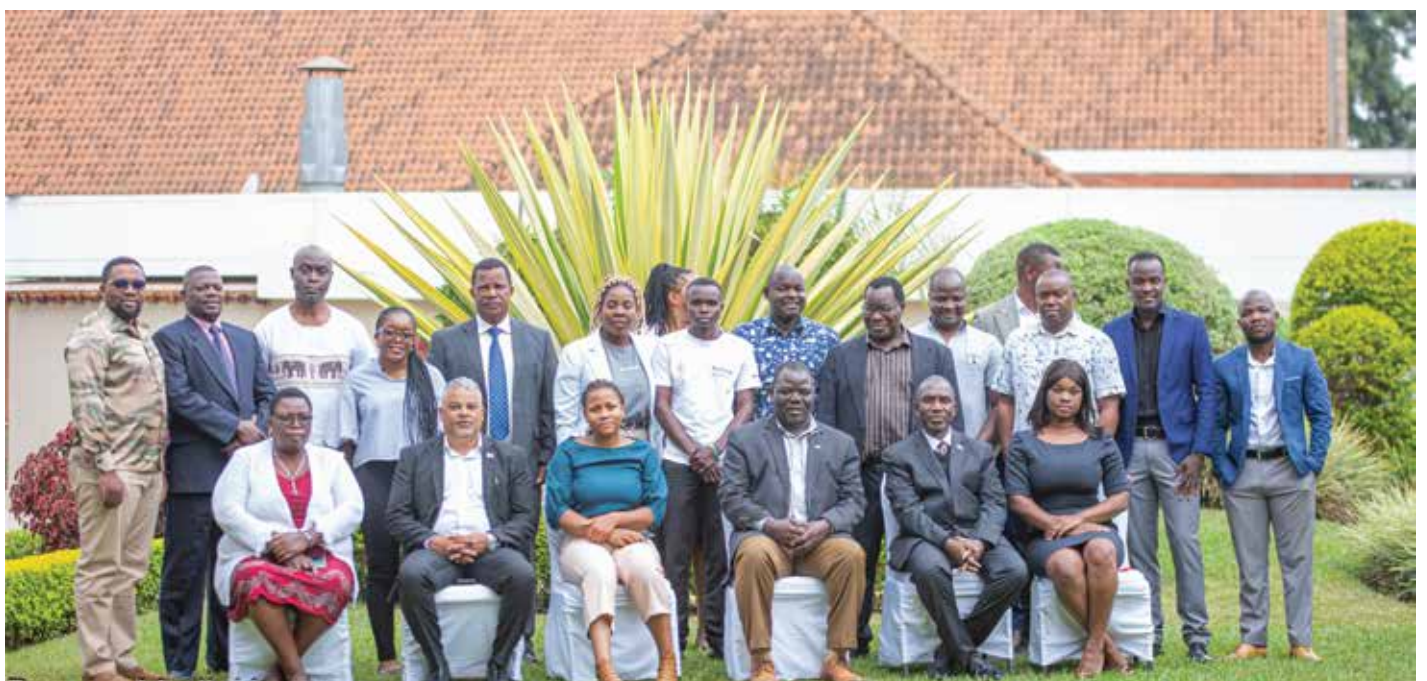
Participants reviewed how SADC member states have worked toward strengthening accountability in the generation and management of public resources to ensure delivery of effective public services. The dialogue also provided recommendations on advancing the implementation of the RISDP's regional and national plans.

During the dialogue, Highway Africa, in collaboration with the Partnership for Social Accountability (PSA) Alliance, honoured veteran journalist Bright Kumwenda from Nation Publications Limited (NPL) for his outstanding investigative reporting on social accountability issues in Malawi.

The award was presented by ActionAid Malawi executive director Pamela Kuwali. Kuwali congratulated Kumwenda and expressed her excitement that the region acknowledges Malawi's contribution to the promotion of social accountability issues.

In his response, Kumwenda expressed humility in receiving the recognition and credited it to the collaborative efforts by NPL team and PSA Project strategic partners who played vital roles in constructing the award-winning story.

Kumwenda received the award for his investigative story on the exploitation of women by casual workers engaged by the Smallholder Fertiliser Revolving Fund of Malawi, who coerced them into having sex in exchange for subsidized fertilizer under the Affordable Inputs Programme.



Governance stakeholders that participated in meeting



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FRONT COVER:
Dr Michael Usi-
Climate Justice
Campaign Launch

PHOTO:
Ekari Faria

BACK IMAGE:
Audience from
Climate Justice
Campaign Launch

PHOTO:
Ekari Faria

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