

YONECO VOICE

YONECO Voice Monthly Newsletter

January 2022

Vol.11

Issue 01



Executive Director's Note

Page 3

**YONECO Hosts Parliamentary
Women's Caucus**

Page 13

**YONECO Participates in Interna-
tional Human Rights Day**

Page 15

About Us...

Youth Net and Counselling

Managing organizational rapid growth and success for youth, women and children development.

VISION

A self-reliant, healthy and resilient society that respects human rights and democratic values.

MISSION

We are a non-governmental organization that is committed to empowering the youth, women and children; promoting good health, human rights and democracy; adapting and mitigating effects of climate change; and conducting research for evidence-based programming and advocacy.

CORE VALUES

Integrity

Teamwork

Confidentiality

Respect for human dignity

Transparency and Accountability

Contents

The Executive Director’s Corner 3

Reaping the Benefits of Group Business Ventures.....6

Enhancing Welfare of Youth through Economic Empowerment..... 7

YONECO Facilitates Community Dialogue Sessions on GBV.....9

YONECO Supports Children’s Retreat to Chawe Inn.....10

YONECO ED Condemns Mob Justice.....11

‘Report TIP Cases’ - YONECO ED Urges Communities.....11

YONECO Hosts Parliamentary Women’s Caucus.....13

YONECO During 2021 16 Days of Activism against GBV.....14

YONECO Participates in International Human Rights Day.....15

The Power of Capital Injection to VSL Groups.....17

Production Team

Editor:
Wilson Mkandawire

Production Team:
Alinafe Nyasulu
Mabuchi Chunga.

Layout and Design:
Wilson Mkandawire

Photography:
Wilson Mkandawire
Lemani Makina

Contributors:
Patrick Makonde
Funny Chilembo
Charles Mbeba
Julius Mbewe
Blessings Sabao

Media Manager:
Benson Nkhoma Somba

Executive Director:
MacBain Mkandawire

Our Programmes

- Youth Development
- Enhancing Child Protection and Development
- Women Empowerment and Gender Equality
- Governance and Human Rights
- Media, Collaboration, Networking and Coordinating
- Climate Change and Disaster Management
- Promoting Good Health, Sanitation and Wellbeing
- Research Monitoring, Evaluation, Documentation and Learning



The Executive Director's Note...with *MacBain Mkandawire*

Greetings and a Happy New Year to all readers, supporters and funders of YONECO. We would like to welcome you into the year 2022. If you have made it this far, you should be grateful as 2021 was very eventful but also painful. Therefore, it is important that we should begin this new year with work that will make the year more memorable and meaningful. We do hope that we have learnt enough lessons in 2021 that will be used in 2022. 2021 was quite a challenging year and in terms of child protection, it was even the worst. We saw over 2, 000 children being defiled and around 2, 200 others being married off way before their 18th birthday. These figures only represent the cases that were reported through YONECO and this means the national figures are too big for all of us to be comfortable.

As YONECO, we are shocked that some funny posts have been circulating on social media like 'Girls who were born in 2004 are adults now and YONECO should put its hands off'. As YONECO, we believe that the fight against child abuse and violence is a big task and everyone's responsibility. We were, however, proud that there has been association of YONECO in child protection. We were proud that we protected these children who were born in 2004 until they transitioned into adulthood. We just want to assure the nation that we are committed and will continue protecting and serving the youth women and children. We are therefore banking on your support to have this properly done. Bravo YONECO Board, management and staff for such a 'protective brand for children in Malawi'.

As the year begins, we want to urge you all to reflect on the plans you had in 2021 and see what you accomplished. Several questions need to be asked and answered if we are going to make progress. What have we planned to do? What are the goals that we want to achieve? There are twelve months ahead of us and how do we intend to do with the time? One key challenge is that often times, we come up with new year resolutions but sadly, the resolutions are broken along the way. Why does this happen? Can we reflect seriously and ensure that the resolutions are not broken along the way? If we have plans fair and square but if we do not, then there is a problem. It might be that we will waste the time we have and come January next year will be complaining that we are not seeing any growth. On that note also take some time to reflect on the just ended year. Were you able to accomplish what you had set out to accomplish? If the answer is no, what is the reason you failed to do what you planned, are there any lessons you learned as a result of failure and going forward how do you intend to use your failures to your benefit. Having reflected on this, it is important to set a vision and ensure that you are committed to it.

There is need to have a long term plan and also a short term plan. Plan out each month as clearly as possible which should give you a map for the year. Ensure that you are committed to achieving those plans when you implement them.

There are several times that we take success as a miracle. There will never be success by chance, you need to plan and work for it. For this to happen, as Jack Caifield says, “You need to take 100% responsibility for the changes to take place the way you want”. You need to be disciplined, focused and engaged. You need to manage your time well. There are some of us who graduated from the ‘Graduate School of Blaming’. We continue blaming each other. In homes, parents are blaming children and children are blaming parents. It is not surprising because we are all graduates of school of blaming and we blame everyone except ourselves. Can we spend time and take total responsibility of our actions, thoughts, beliefs and results? The challenge is that as you continue to blame others, you do not learn. As Malawians, let us learn to own our mistakes and move forward. We have erred and we need some changes to make progress.

Recently, YONECO had a visit from the members of the Malawi Parliamentary Women’s Caucus and the Speaker of Parliament Rte. Honourable Gotani Hara was in attendance. In her remarks, she asked YONECO to consider working with different groups including the National Economic Empowerment Fund (NEEF). Well, one message for our political leaders is; ‘please help the government to depoliticize the NEEF issues. It was not surprising therefore that recently we had young people pressing on NEEF offices to move forward. Well, YONECO has a new Strategic Plan for 2022 – 2032. We welcome you to the new thoughts and operations in the next few years. Financial independence is one critical aspect that we need to work on.

Finally, we still have COVID-19 in our midst and we now have different variants of the disease. It is important that everyone works hard to ensure that we are not contributing to its further spread. By this, I mean we should religiously follow the preventive measures. Let us make sure that we are masking up, we are not gathering in large crowds without any form of protection, we are observing social distance and we are also frequently sanitizing. Let us also remember that COVID-19 Vaccine is offering a lifeline therefore I would urge you to get the jab.

Have a fruitful month and happy new year to you all.





Tithandizane National Helpline Services



**Toll-Free
Line**

CHILD HELPLINE

Let the child speak

Call

116



For FREE

to report any form of
child abuse.

help@tithandizanehelpline.org

Confidential
24 hours
Service



Reaping The Benefits Of Group Business Ventures



Picture insert: Group members during one of the market days with their rice.

YONECO, with financial support from Egmont Trust is implementing the Investing for the Impact of HIV and AIDS among Young People Project, in STA Tsikulamowa Ntcheu district. Through the project a total of 9 youth support groups were established. As one way of economically empowering them, the project provided start-up capital to 5 youth support groups namely, Chisomo, Tiyanjane, Tigwirizane and Tinyade. This was done following a business management training where all the 5 groups came up with group business plans which included plans on selling rice, owning a bakery, selling maize, owning a butchery and making soap.

Taking advantage of the festive season upon receiving their MK500,000.00, Chisomo Support Group purchased 10 bags (70kgs each) of rice. Together with transportation costs, the group spent MK300,000.00 while the remaining MK200,000.00 they ordered ground nuts which they are grinding and making ground nuts powder.

Out of 10 bags, they managed to sell 4 bags and realized MK400,000.00. It is anticipated that after selling 10 bags they will realize close to MK1,000,000.00. The group plan to order

more bags of rice to realize more profits so that they can share among club members. This will provide a boost to venture into other businesses. Already some members have started benefiting as one of the club members has ventured into the business of selling cloth wrappers and has managed to buy 4 She-goats. Further to this, she has also received a He-goat as her IGA.

“There is power in group business ventures since records are well documented and kept and roles shared equally among club members hence one has space to do her own business as well. Skills are also identified and shared and this has also helped us to find more customers since some have good communication skills and are able to attract more customers. I recommend the idea of group business ventures because even capital cannot be squandered anyhow” said Chimangeni Soko, a club member.

Chisomo Youth Club is in GVH Senzani and has 17 members, out of which 6 are males and 11 are females.

Enhancing Welfare of The Youth Through Economic Empowerment Interventions



Picture insert: Bright Masusu posing on his bike.

Economic empowerment is very key in reducing various challenges which the youth and women face in rural and remote parts of Malawi. Among other things, financial problems further expose the youth to various problems like unintended teen pregnancies, child marriages as well as HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). On the other hand, poverty also exposes women to various forms of Gender Based Violence (GBV).

As YONECO, we are very excited that our livelihood interventions in Ntcheu district are now taking shape. A number of women and young people in the district are now benefitting greatly from Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA), goat pass on programme and other agribusiness activities which we introduced last year.

Jones Gwaza (Not real name) aged 19, hails from village headman Senzani, GVH Senzani, STA Tsikulamowa, Ntcheu district. Jones was born HIV positive and when her mother disclosed that he is HIV positive it was not easy to accept and he blamed his parents for infecting him. Unfortunately, his father died when he was so young.

“Before investing for the impact of HIV and AIDS project which YONECO is implementing in the area, I had no hope as I dropped out of school in form 1 since my mother could not afford to pay my school fees. In 2019, I was approached by my best friend that YONECO has established youth support groups and I did not hesitate to join since I knew that I will get support from my club members in accepting my HIV status” Said Jones.

After joining the group, he had no money to buy shares but when he attended the first session at their club on ‘Ways of Finding Money’ he managed to do some piece work of farming and with the money realized, he bought some

shares and accessed a loan amounting to MK10,000.00. With his little capital, he started a small business it slowly grew after the capital injection as he accessed MK50,000.00 and started buying 50 litres per day. Through the profits which he was making and saving he managed to buy his own motorbike at MK280,000.00 in the month of November, 2021. Immediately he stopped doing the risky business of selling petrol.

On average, his motorbike business is able to make MK15,000.00 per week. Bright has started saving some money and has plans to buy another motorbike so that he can employ another youth which means he will be making MK30,000.00 per week. In future he has plans to buy a vehicle (Sienta) since his passion for business is on transport.

“Am very optimistic that in five years to come I will buy a vehicle so that my dreams of becoming a big transporter should come true. This will happen because I keep my money through phone and am not used to sneak around with girls,” stated Bright.

“Being a peer educator am also able to do peer education to my customers on SRH&R and the importance of HTS and ART adherence once tested HIV positive. Considering that I once defaulted from ART and when we hear that there is a defaulter in our community my fellow peer educator’s/expert clients are able to use my motorbike for home visits. So far, 6 youth defaulters have been visited and are now adhering to ART,” Jones said proudly.

Bright further said that although he is the last born, his family is now relying on him as he is able to provide the daily basic needs, paying school fees for his two brothers who are in secondary school among others. He also said he will never leave the group since he has benefited a lot through the sessions which they are doing on life skills, SRH&R and business management.

“I had no hope but now I can see that my future is bright. People are now calling me a witch because of my success but I know the secret of my success. Soon after buying this motorbike 6 male peers who are HIV positive approached me to join the club and I advised them to join the club. “My advice to my fellow youth is that they should not be shy because of their HIV status let them join the support groups access loans and venture into different businesses”.



Toll-Free Line



For FREE
Smart Choices
for Young People.

Private & Confidential
24 hours

www.withouthorizonshelpline.org



YONECO Facilitates Community Dialogue Sessions on GBV



Picture insert: Teenage girls and adolescents during one of the meetings in Dedza district.

In a bid to contribute towards ending Gender Based Violence (#GBV) in Malawi, YONECO with support from Trocaire, conducted community dialogue sessions which attracted men, women and the youth in Machinga, Balaka, Ntcheu and Dedza district.

The sessions enabled men and women to open up and list down various forms of GBV they face in their communities.

The issues that were raised include sexual violence as well as psychological, physical and economic abuse. Both men and women, with support from their community

leaders developed some action plans that are aimed at addressing various root causes of GBV at community level.

The community members also identified the problem of forced child marriage as one of the factors that

are contributing to increased cases of GBV and violation of girls' rights in their areas.

"This is a great initiative as we do not come together as men and women to discuss various issues that affect us. As a community leader, I will work tirelessly to ensure that the action plans we have developed are being implemented," said Group Village



Picture insert: Community members during the dialogue sessions.

Head Nyombe from the area of Traditional Authority Kaphuka in Dedza district.

In total, 1,030 community members

(640 females and 390 males) attended the sessions which also attracted members of various community structures like Area Development Committees (ADCs), Village Development Committees (VDC), Community Action Groups (CAGs) among others.

UPCOMING HOLIDAYS

1 JANUARY

New Year's Day

15 JANUARY

John Chilembwe Day

DID YOU KNOW?

You can talk to a counsellor at a click of a few buttons

Chat with the Zimbabwean National Helpline anytime, anytime. Simply log on to www.zimnathelpline.org and click that 'with us' to talk to counsellors on any issue in 3 simple steps.

- 118 for Child Helpline
- 2800 for GBV Crisis Helpline
- 8000 for Drug and Substance Abuse Helpline
- 888 for SAHRC Youth Helpline. **It's FREE!**

Counsellors are available online 24 hours every day

For Telephone counselling call:

118 for Child Helpline

2800 for GBV Crisis Helpline

8000 for Drug and Substance Abuse Helpline

888 for SAHRC Youth Helpline. **It's FREE!**

You can also participate in the protection of the youth, women, and children, as well as the safeguarding of human rights by reporting all forms of abuse and violence.

Visit www.zimnathelpline.org to learn more.

www.zimnathelpline.org | www.zimnathelpline.org | www.zimnathelpline.org | www.zimnathelpline.org

Like & Follow us

YONECO Supports Children’s Retreat to Chawe Inn



Picture insert: Chawe Inn staff giving a brief history of the hotel to some of the children.

On 30 December 2021, YONECO supported 30 vulnerable children who frequent its Youth-Drop-in-Centre at Kazembe Township in Zomba City to have a retreat at Zomba mountain. The group comprised of children who were withdrawn from the streets, orphans and others from vulnerable households.

The retreat was organized to help the children celebrate and refresh during the festive holiday and to create an alternative platform for learning and sharing necessary life skills.

Among other interesting places around the mountain, the children visited William’s Falls, Sunbird Chawe Inn and Mulunguzi Dam. At Chawe Hotel, the children learnt how the establishment operates and the various services that are available for both children and adults. Members of staff from the Southern Region Water Board also welcomed the children at Mulunguzi Dam which supplies water to the residents of Zomba city. The children learnt how

the dam is managed and the processes that are involved to treat the water before being supplied to the users.

The children also had time to learn and interact with some youth officers from YONECO on leadership, group dynamics, life skills, gender equality and the dangers of drug and substance abuse among other things.



Insert: The kids at Mulunguzi Dam.

YONECO ED Condemns Mob Justice



Picture insert: YONECO Executive Director during the interface meeting in Phalombe.

The Executive Director of YONECO, MacBain Mkandawire urged community members around the area of Traditional Authority (TA) Nkhulambe in Phalombe district to desist from mob justice. Mkandawire said this during an interface meeting with community and religious leaders that was held today at Nkhulambe in the district.

Apart from traditional, community and religious leaders, the meeting was also graced by the presence of Phalombe District Labour Officer and representatives from Phalombe District Social Welfare Office and Malawi Police Service.

The remark was made when community members expressed their disappointment with the way law enforcement agencies handle reported cases of human trafficking. The interface meeting was held with support from NCA-DCA Joint Country Programme with the aim of arresting the problem of Trafficking in Persons (TIP) which is prevalent in the area.



Picture insert: Some of the participants during the meeting.

‘Report TIP Cases’ – YONECO ED Urges Communities.

The Executive Director of YONECO, MacBain Mkandawire, urged traditional and community leaders from the area of Traditional Authority (T/A) Nazombe in Phalombe district to encourage community members to report all cases of human rights abuse including Trafficking in Persons (TIP).

Phalombe is one of the districts in Malawi which register a lot of TIP cases and the meeting is aimed at strengthening community interventions in order to deal with the vice.

MacBain Mkandawire made these remarks in an interface meeting that was held on 8 December, 2021 at Chiringa in the district.



116
CHILD HELPLINE



5600
GBV CRISIS
LINE



393
YOUTH
HELPLINE



6600
DRUG &
SUBSTANCE ABUS
HOTLINE

TITHANDIZANE NATIONAL HELPLINE SERVICES.



Free and confidential service.

OTHER SERVICES

- ✓ Telephone Counselling.
- ✓ Face to Face counselling
- ✓ Social Rehabilitation.
- ✓ Case Management.
- ✓ Safe Places for survivors of GBV and VAWC.

YONECO Hosts Parliamentary Women’s Caucus



Picture insert: Speaker of Parliament Hon. Gotani Hara with YONECO Board Chair Prof. Dixie Maluwa Banda.

On 15 December, 2021 YONECO hosted the Malawi Parliamentary Women’s Caucus at the organization’s Head Office in Zomba. The members of parliament toured various departments which included YONECO Helpline Services Call Centre, YONECO FM studios as well YONECO ICT Section to appreciate how the institution operates in fulfilling its mandate of serving the interest of the youth, women and children.

The group also visited one of YONECO’s impact areas in the area of Traditional Authority Mlumbe in Zomba district where the parliamentarians interacted with a number of community members who are benefiting from various interventions which YONECO is implementing in the area.

Executive Director of YONECO called on the members of the Parliamentary Women’s Caucus to support the depoliticization of the National Economic Empowerment Fund Limited (NEEF) so that it should benefit all young people in Malawi regardless of their political affiliation, home of origin or any other related factors.

The group, which was led by Honorable Grace Kwelepeta is comprised of, among other notable members, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Honourable Catherine Gotani Hara. The visit was also

graced by the presence of YONECO Board Chairperson Professor Dixie Maluwa Banda, Zomba District Youth Officer and other government officials.



Picture insert: The Parliamentarians posing for a group photo with YONECO Executive Director and Board Chair.



Picture insert: Mr. William Nyoni, Deputy District Manager for YONECO briefing the members.

YONECO During 2021 16 Days of Activism against GBV



Picture insert: District Manager for YONECO in Mangochi explaining what YONECO does during the event.

During the 16 Days of Activism against GBV Campaign which runs from 25 November to 10 December, YONECO conducted a number of activities throughout the period. Among other activities, YONECO conducted community engagement meetings and awareness campaigns in order to contribute towards ending the problem of GBV in Malawi.



Further to this, YONECO also supported various joint commemoration events at national level and in a number of districts namely; Dedza, Chikwawa, Mangochi, Zomba, Machinga and Mangochi.

In 2021, Malawi joined the rest of the world in observing the 16 Days of Activism against GBV under a localized theme 'Orange Malawi: End Violence against Women and Girls, Act Now!'



YONECO Participates in International Human Rights Day



Picture insert: Guest of honor Hon. Titus Mvalo appreciating YONECO interventions.

YONECO took part in the International Human Rights Day commemoration which took place at Nkolimbo ground in Ntcheu district. The world celebrates Human Rights Day to raise awareness about the inalienable rights that everyone is entitled to as a human being. The day also celebrates the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations. This year, the International Human Rights Day was celebrated under the theme: Reducing Inequalities, Advancing Human Rights.

Guest of honour at the function was Minister of Justice Hon. Titus Mvalo. Other notable guests include The Ombudsman and Commissioner of the Malawi Human Rights Commission, Grace Malera; Ms. Habiba Osman, Executive Secretary of the Malawi Human Rights Commission; UN Resident Coordinator Rudolf Schwenk; EU Ambassador and Head of Delegation and Inkosi Gomani V of the Maseko Ngoni of Ntcheu among others.

During the event, YONECO mounted a pavilion where a number of interventions were

showcased, some of which included the Tithandizane Helpline Services toll-free lines which are reporting mechanism for various human rights abuses.



Above and below: YONECO staff during the function.



YFM



The real Voice of The Youth,
Women And Children

Tune in & listen

Zomba - 103.8 MHz

Blantyre - 101.6 MHz

Lilongwe - 97.5 MHz

Mzuzu - 103.9 MHz

Chitipa & Karonga 89.3 Mhz

Thyolo - 104.6 MHz

www.yonecofm.com



TITHANDIZANE NATIONAL HELPLINE SERVICES

Child Helpline - Call 116

GBV Crisis Line - Call 5600

Drug & Substance Abuse

Hotline - Call 6600

Youth Helpline - Call 393

Call for free



www.tithandizanehelpline.org

The Power Of Capital Injection To VSL Groups



Picture insert: Lucy Mtambo serving a customer at his place of business

Lucy Mtambo aged 26 lives in Kabambe village, GVH Chikhasu, STA Tsikulamowa, Ntcheu district. She is married and has three children. Before investing for the impact of HIV and AIDS project, Lucy could not do any business due to lack of capital. Life was not easy for her to take care of three children considering that the husband is just a mere farmer. This heavily affected her as, at times, she could not adhere to her ART treatment due to lack of nutrition support.

“I was one of the participants during financial literacy and VSL training, and soon after the training I facilitated the establishment of Tikondane Youth VSL where members were able to buy shares, loan each other and engage in small scale businesses. With the skills gained on good ways of finding money to buy shares, I used to do casual work even though the money I was realizing was not enough as I had to spend more on meeting daily basic needs at my home. I was doing a business of selling doughnuts of which I could sell MK2,000 per day. Thanks to YONECO for providing us with capital injection from which I managed to loan MK50,000.00 and I invested in the business of selling chips.

This business is going on well since on daily basis am able to make a profit of MK6,000.00. My life is no longer the same since I started this business and I am able to adhere to my ART treatment as I no longer lack food at my house; and all my children are healthy” explained Lucy.

Through the profits which am making, I have managed to mould 10,000 bricks and next year I have planned to construct a descent house. In addition, I am also able to pay for school fees for my first born child who is in form one at Likudzi CDSS. Capital injection is ideal since, with the economic hardships, it is very difficult for us to find capital and venture in big business. My future plan is to open a restaurant as I have realized that the food business has no season She added.

Youth Net and Counselling with financial support from Egmond Trust is implementing investing for the impact of HIV and AIDS among young people in STA Tsikulaowa, Ntcheu District.





Managing Organizational Rapid Growth and
Success for Youth, Women and Children
Development.



YONECO CULTURAL TROUPE

Experts in: **Community Mobilization**

Advocacy

SBCC

For bookings

Contact:

The Executive Director or The Station Manager

Yoneco FM

P.O Box 471

Zomba, Malawi.

Tel: 01 525 764 - 01 526 199

Mobile: +265 888 919 623

Email: stationmanager@yoneco.org



www.yoneco.org

Report any form of **child abuse** by sending a letter to
The Manager Tlhandizane Helpline Services Private Bag 116

For Free!!

The Manager Tlhandizane Helpline Private Bag 116

About Private Bag 116
 Private bag 116 is a free postal mailing service for reporting any case of child abuse and neglect.

Tlhandizane National Helpline Services

Youth Helpline
CALL 393
 For FREE
 Smart choices for young people

Drug & Substance Abuse Helpline
CALL 6600
 For FREE
 to seek support on drug & substance abuse

Child Helpline
CALL 116
 For FREE
 to report any form of Child Abuse

CVU Crisis Line
CALL 5600
 For FREE
 to report any form of Gender Based Violence

Other Services
For & Capital

Send:
 drughelpline@tlhandizane.gov.sz
 helpline@tlhandizane.gov.sz
 www.tlhandizane.gov.sz

116 For Free!!