



Youth Net and Counselling

YONECO VOICE



Monthly Newsletter

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to Female Inmates at
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About Us

Sustaining institutional growth and independence for social and economic development of the youth, women and children

VISION

A self-reliant, healthy, empowered, resilient, responsible, and inclusive society that respects democratic values and principles.

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 the** impact of climate change; and **conducting** research for evidence-based programming and advocacy.

CORE VALUES

Integrity

Teamwork

Confidentiality

Respect for human dignity

Transparency and Accountability

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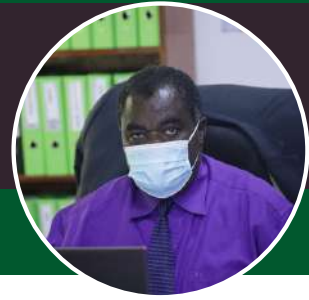
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Our Programmes

- 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.

Executive Director's Note...



Greetings dear reader,

....with MacBain Mkandawire

We are now in the 10th month of the year. Welcome to October, 2022. This is the month in which rural women are put in the forefront of business with various activities that are focused on their empowerment. The month is dedicated to them as we join the global community in commemorating the “17 Days of Activism for the Empowerment of Rural Women Leaders and their Communities from 1-17 October. We all know women play an important role in our societies from building homes, looking after children and the elderly, to looking after the political and economic organization of our society. For this, women need to be honored and respected. As we celebrate the 17 Days campaign, it is important to highlight some key issues that require considerate reflections and actions. Mind you, this should not just be a once off exertion.

Firstly, we start by appreciating the many challenges that women face especially in the rural areas. These challenges are compounded by the fact that there is an uneven balance between genders, as women are treated as inferior or looked down upon due to sociocultural norms and beliefs. However, such trends need to be discontinued and people need to understand that women’s rights are as important as everyone else’s in society and they need to be given the right attention.

Secondly, empowering women to understand that they have the right to demand the necessary conditions to ensure they thrive is something that needs serious reflection. In light of this, women need to understand that they can demand the right to development and in turn, help them move from poverty and improve their living standards. On a third note, women also need the right support so that they have access to adequate food, standard living spaces, and proper protection from all forms of Gender Based Violence (GBV). This needs concerted efforts from all stakeholders starting from the society all the way up to duty bearers.

11 October will be the 10th anniversary of the International Day of the Girl Child (IDG). Through the decade, there have been an improvement in putting more attention on matters to do with the girl child from various stakeholders. Despite this being the case, there still exist gaps in observance of the rights of the girl child and this is evident in the plight that the girl child is facing in this country. The country continues to face increased cases of defilement of young girls.

In such incidences, the most shocking thing well noticeable is that the perpetrators of this crime are usually the very same people who are entrusted with the task of protecting the very same girl child. This is detrimental to the girl child as it impedes their will to realize their full potential as their mental and physical wellbeing is being undermined.

This year, the IDGC will be commemorated under the theme “Our time is now-our rights, our future.” The theme rightly captures the tempers and aspirations of the girl child. This should be a call to action and to ensure that adolescent girls are given the right support to realize their full potential and make a positive impact to the society. It is time that everyone is held accountable to invest into and for the future of adolescent girls’ future that fosters belief and leadership from them.

15 October is Mother’s Day in Malawi and I would like to appreciate all the mothers for the roles they play in the lives of so many people which extends from their homes to the wider society as a whole. On this note, I would like to call on all mothers to continue in the same vein but put emphasis on the fact that children should not be neglected and should be given all the care and support they need.

Last but not least, on 16 October, the global community will be commemorating the World Food Day. The Day will be commemorated on the back drop of a global pandemic and a western war which is also affecting food trends. As the Day is being commemorated in the country under the theme “Leave no one behind,” currently, approximately 2.6 million people are already facing hunger and studies show that further into the year, the figure of those affected could reach over 3.8 million. With these figures, should we be confident that no one will be left behind? Can we confidently say everyone will have a chance to have food? The unsettling truth is that the answers to all these questions are seemingly on the negative which now should have each and every one of us asking ourselves what we should be doing to solve this problem. It is also important that people should focus and look for sustainable ways of producing food throughout the year which will help in curbing the problem.

In addition to this, another solution lies in changing the mindset of Malawians so that we should all migrate from regarding *Nsima* as the only form of food. There are a lot of other healthy and cheap alternatives to *Nsima* that could be substituted for this staple food and it is high time these foods were championed.

Have a fruitful month and remember, now is the time to start planning for the future.



13:38

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YONECO DM Makes a Farewell Speech to Outgoing Students in Balaka

By Patrick Makonde



Insert: Part of the graduating cohort from Devine Private Secondary School in Balaka.

The District Manager (DM) for YONECO in Balaka, Patrick Makonde was invited to make a farewell speech to outgoing Form Four Students at Devine Private Secondary School in Balaka district.

The ceremony was organized with an aim of preparing the outgoing students as they will be transitioning to a next stage in their academic and social life. The students are expected to start their tertiary education in the forthcoming academic year after the release of the 2022 Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) Examination results.

YONECO has been conducting career guidance and life skills sessions with students at the school. The school authorities also acknowledged that the sessions were effective and positively impacted on the students. Thus, the Head Teacher of the school extended an invitation to the DM for YONECO to make a speech in order to motivate and encourage the students.

YONECO targets both in and out of school young people on various issues that have a bearing on their lives including Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), as well as drug and substance abuse among others. Further to this, YONECO awarded four students who performed exceptionally well during their mock examinations.



Call 393 to get information and referrals on HIV and SRHR

FOR FREE

393 YOUTH HELPLINE

YONECO Intensifies Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Sessions in Nkhata Bay

By Doreen Luwe



Insert: Young people interacting with the Hope Kit Tool during the HIV/AIDS session

On 9 September 2022, YONECO organized an HIV/AIDS session with young people from Mng'ona and Mtilirwa villages in the area of Traditional Authority (T/A) Mkumbira in Nkhata Bay district.

The sessions were facilitated using Hope Kit Tool. A total of 42 (25 Males; 17 Females) young people participated in the sessions. YONECO also raised awareness about HIV prevention and the importance of accessing HIV testing Services (HTS) among the youth. The participants were also made aware of various institutions, including YONECO, which provide free HIV self-testing kits.

The sessions are being conducted at a time when Malawi continues to register increased cases of new HIV infections among young people.

YONECO Preaches Youth Socioeconomic Empowerment in Zomba

On 17 September 2022, YONECO engaged young people on the importance of venturing into various income generating activities to ensure that they are financially stable and evade various challenges that are perpetuated by poverty.

The session was held at Zomba Youth Friendly Health Service (YFHS) Corner where the youth were encouraged to exploit various opportunities which they have.

Thus, the youth were advised to consider venturing into agribusiness and utilize the available natural water sources and arable lands within their vicinities.

The session was attended by a group 40 young people (20 males and 20 females).



Insert: Some of the youths during the session at Zomba Youth Friendly Health Service Corner

Youth Development

YONECO Engages Youth on Drug and Substance Abuse in Zomba

By Keston Mulebe



Insert: YONECO Officer Keston Mulebe engaging members of Desire Youth Club during the session

On 18 September, 2022, officers from YONECO's Tithandizane Helpline Services facilitated an awareness session with members of Desire Youth Club from Malonje Village in the area of Traditional Authority (T/A) Malemia in Zomba district.

The session was attended by 17 members (5 boys and 12 girls) of club in a bid to prevent drug and alcohol abuse among young people.

The session focused on the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and how the two vices impact on socioeconomic welfare of young people and the society as a whole.

Further to this, the session's lead facilitator, Keston Mulebe, urged the participants to seek help on various issues that affect them.

The Chairperson for the youth club, Wiseman Wiskiti thanked YONECO for the support it provides to the youth in the area.

The Youth as Change Agents in the Quest for Gender Equality

By Wongani Mfune



Insert: YONECO Officer Wongani Mfune (Standing) during the engagement meeting in Mangochi.

Limited access to information is one of the factors which contribute to increased cases of Gender Based Violence (GBV) at community level. Thus, YONECO has embarked on promoting equal opportunities for both young men and women through the promotion of gender transformation at various levels in Mangochi district.

In this endeavor, YONECO is engaging young people in secondary schools and tertiary institutions within the district with an aim of imparting the youth with knowledge and skills on how they can advocate for equal opportunities for both men and women in their areas.

Further to this, YONECO has also facilitated the establishment of a Youth Hub at Mangochi Technical College. The hub provides safe space for students to learn and share their knowledge and experiences on various issues that affect them including GBV.

Internship Spotlight: Larah Mbewe, Media and Communications Intern



Insert: "This internship will prepare me to face what the industry has to offer" - Mbewe

My name is Larah Mbewe, currently in my final year at The University of Malawi (UNIMA), Pursuing Bachelor of Arts Media for Development.

I joined YONECO on the 29th of August 2022 as an Intern in the Media and Communications Department so that I can gain some knowledge and experience in this field and other fields that are present at YONECO for the next six months of my internship.

In the few weeks that I have been here, I have so far learnt different techniques and approaches to communication. I have learnt how to develop articles for various platforms, be it print and digital publications, social media management such as scheduling posts on Facebook, developing messages for various campaigns, developing concept notes as well as being tasked to take professional pictures during activities and events.

I was also entrusted to support a parenting session at Malonje Village in Zomba where parents were encouraged to develop positive relationship bonds with their children under The Helpline Department. Furthermore, I am learning the basics of website management.

I am very grateful for this opportunity that was granted to me because I am learning a lot and I am fully convinced that by the end of my internship period I will have learnt so much and I will go out to the world ready to face what the industry has to offer.

I would like to urge young people who have finished their undergrad and have not found anything to do yet to try and apply for internships at organizations close to them because this is where they will gain more knowledge and where they will be exposed to what the industry is all about, and to students that are being sent by their schools to do these attachments to not take this for granted but to make proper use of this opportunity.

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Drug & Substance Abuse
Hotline - Call 6600



Livelihood Activities Reducing Child Marriage Incidences

By Grant Dulla



Insert: One of the beneficiary groups that was visited during the follow-up meeting.

Community members from Fowo Village, Traditional Authority (T/A) Namavi in Mangochi district have acknowledged the positive impact which livelihood activities have had on reduction of child marriage incidences in the area.

YONECO trained the targeted community members in financial literacy and business management skills. Further to this, YONECO also introduced small scale commercial farming in the area.

In 2018, YONECO introduced various Income Generating Activities (IGAs) that were aimed at enhancing socioeconomic welfare for needy families whose young children were at the risk of dropping out of school to get married. The initiative was implemented under ‘Marriage; No Child’s Play’ Project that was implemented in the area between 2016 to 2020 with funded by the Dutch government through Simavi.

Thus, a number of girls, young women and parents made their testimonies during a follow up visit which YONECO programmes team conducted in the area.

“Joining one of the VSLA groups that were established in my village was a good decision. The group has greatly helped me to enhance my socioeconomic welfare and I am able to take care of all my children,” explained one community members - Moreen Mlenga.

The project focused on addressing sociocultural and economic factors like Gender Based Violence (GBV) poverty which fuel child marriages in Malawi. Among other interventions, YONECO introduced Village Savings Loans and Associations (VSLAs) which enabled the targeted community members to save and invest into various small scale businesses.

Bidding for Male Involvement in GBV prevention and Response

By Mable Makondetsa



Insert: District Manager for YONECO in Chikwawa, Mable Makondetsa during one of the engagement sessions with men.

On 19 September, YONECO engaged men in various spaces around Chikwawa and Mangochi district to understand the factors that prevent them from participating in activities that are aimed at promoting gender equality and preventing Gender Based Violence (GBV) in their communities.

Most men indicated that they usually feel embarrassed as they are always perceived as people who are only capable of perpetrating violence. However, the men stated that they could also be part of the solution to the problem of gender imbalance and violence.

On the other hand, some men asserted that the government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) only focus on rights of women and children leaving men behind despite the fact that they also face various forms of GBV.



Additionally, the men claimed that they usually opt for divorce or, in the worst-case scenario, suicide because their concerns are not given the necessary attention.

Thus, YONECO sensitized the men on best ways of dealing with GBV, the importance of reporting and seeking help. The men were also made aware of various services which YONECO provide to all people including men and women.



The engagement sessions also focused on gender-related laws and YONECO presented the following statutes; the Gender Equality Act; Marriage Divorce Family Relations Act; as well as Child Care, Protection and Justice Act.

YONECO uses evidence-based interventions in responding to issues that affect the youth, women and children in Malawi.

YONECO Establishes Additional Adult Literacy Learning Centres in Zomba

By Triza Chimasula



Insert: Helpline Field Officer Triza Chimasula (standing) engaging with women during the launch of the adult literacy centers.

As one way of addressing various challenges which adult community members face, YONECO has established two additional Adult Literacy Centers in Zomba district.

The additional adult literacy learning centers have an overall total enrollment of 26 community members who are within the age range of 25-58 years.

Currently, YONECO has intensified awareness campaigns in the targeted areas so that the adults who cannot read and write should utilize the opportunity.

Literacy is very key in the process of addressing the causes of various socioeconomic problems like poverty and Gender Based Violence (GBV) among others.

On 8 September every year, the world commemorates the International Literacy Day. This year, the Day was observed under the theme, ‘Transforming literacy learning spaces.’

As such, many cases go unreported and the survivors are left with various issues including psychosocial and physical injuries to deal with. Thus, the session focused on the dangers of GBV and the importance of reporting such cases.

The group was further equipped with information pertaining to how GBV is manifested, how to support survivors and where to report. YONECO Helpline Counsellors also shared the following toll-free helpline numbers which include; GBV Crisis Line – 5600; Child Helpline – 116 and the Youth Helpline – 393.

Upcoming International Days

11 October 2022

International Day of the Girl Child

13 October 2022

International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction

Women's Group Extends a Helping Hand to Female Inmates at Ntcheu Prison

By Sgt Rhodrick Masina - Research and Gender Officer, Ntcheu Prison Station



Insert: Chairperson of Amayi Lankhulani group giving some of the items they brought to the female inmates.

Female inmates at Ntcheu Prison Station were all in a jovial mood when a group of women known as "Amayi Yankhulani" cheered them on 15th September, 2022.

The group was established by YONECO with the aim of creating a platform for women from diverse backgrounds in the district to learn and share skills as well as experiences in order to enhance each other's socioeconomic welfare.

The visit by Amayi Yankhulani group came as direct response to a request which the station's Research and Gender Officer, Sergeant Rhodrick Masina made on the need for sanitary materials for the female inmates.

This request was made in August this year (2022) when officials from YONECO paid a visit to the female inmates at the station. During the visit, issues of hygiene and general mindset change were also discussed.

The group brought assorted items such as soap, sugar, salt, toothbrushes, shavers, snacks, re-usable sanitary pads, undergarments, and clothes among other things.

The group also shared words of encouragement while interacting with the inmates. They sang and danced together.



In his remarks, the Female Section in Charge, Inspector Farida Chambo expressed her gratitude to YONECO and the Amayi Yankhulani Women's Group for the kind and selfless gesture. Inspector Chambo further stated that such visits are necessary as they motivate inmates.

The Chairperson for Amayi Yankhulani explained that the group cherished the quality time they spent with the inmates. She further pledged continued support to the inmates through the provision of skills and materials.

In his address, the Station Officer for Ntcheu Prison, Superintendent James Kafamtandala who spoke on behalf the Officer in Charge, thanked the group for sharing their time and materials with female inmates at the centre. Superintendent Kafamtandala also acknowledged the partnership which the Station has with YONECO which he described as valuable.





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49 Learners Graduate From YONECO ECD Centres in Zomba

By Happiness Chanunkha



Insert: YONECO DIC Manager Happiness Chanunkha handing over a certificate to one of the learners who graduated into standard 1

A total of 49 boys and girls have graduated from two of YONECO's Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres that are located at Mapale and Chinamwali townships in Zomba.

The graduates are expected to join various primary schools in the forthcoming academic year. Among other things, the centres have equipped the children with numeracy and literacy skills that will enable them to excel in their primary school studies.

Further to this, 54 learners have also passed to the next grade within the designated ECD Centres.

YONECO has a number of ECD Centres in over 10 districts across Malawi. In addition to this, YONECO facilitates the establishment of Community-Based Childcare Centres (CBCC) in rural areas across Malawi.

Intensifies WASH Sessions in Schools

By Enalla Msukwa



Insert: Some of the Learners from Chichiri Secondary School during the session

Children are more vulnerable to diseases that are related to poor sanitation and hygiene due to their inadequate knowledge about Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH).

It is against this background that YONECO conducted a WASH education session at Chichiri Primary school in Blantyre on the 8th of September 2022. The session was aimed at equipping the learners with knowledge on how to prevent various diseases and infections including cholera.

The session was attended by learners who are within the age range of 8 to 13 years. During the session, the facilitators emphasized on personal and environmental hygiene as well sanitation. At the end of the session the learners were also encouraged to remain in school and work towards the realization of their goals.

YONECO Calls for Safety of Children during End of Year School Holidays

By Michael Mwanachawa



Insert: YONECO Project Officer for Nkhata Bay Michael Mwanachawa during the child rights session at Kalambwe Primary School in the district.

YONECO conducted a child rights awareness session at Kalambwe Primary School in Nkhata Bay ahead of a long end of academic year holiday in which learners need protection as they spend most of their time in their communities.

As such, the session was organized to empower the learners to understand critical child rights issues in order to easily detect and evade violence as well as being assertive to report when their rights have been violated. Some children do not report cases of abuse mainly because they are not aware of such vices and they simply perceive such instances as normal.

Thus, YONECO also urged community leaders and other stakeholders who attended the session to do their part in ensuring the safety of children during and after holidays. It was further added that, the family, as a natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members, especially children, should be accorded the necessary support for it to fully shoulder its responsibilities.

In order to ensure that the children are still activate during the holiday, YONECO urged them to frequent its Youth Drop Centre to access recreational materials, attend various sessions on life skills, human rights and health.

YONECO awarded 13 best students with scholastic materials including note books, pens and rulers.

The session was attended by 748 learners of 398 are boys and 350 girls. On the other hand, the function was also graced by the presence of 111 (59 men and 52 women) community members and their leaders as well as other key stakeholders.

Traditional Leader Sanctions Regular Parenting Sessions

By Larah Mbewe



Insert: Village Head Malonje (Standing) addressing some of the women who attended the session.

YONECO Counsellors who facilitated the session shared various toll-free lines that are operated by the Tithandizane National Helpline Services namely; the GBV Crisis Line, 5600; Child Helpline, 116; the Youth Helpline 393 and the Drug and Substance Abuse Hotline.

Village Head Malonje who hails from the area of Traditional Authority (T/A) Malemia in Zomba district has requested YONECO to strategize on having frequent parenting sessions in her area.

The traditional leader made the statement during a Positive Parenting Skills Session which YONECO, through the Tithandizane Helpline Services department, conducted in her area.

The session was organized to support parents to enhance their connections with their children and to promote positive growth and development. Positive parenting skills are critical in preventing juvenile delinquency and other unruly behaviours like drug and alcohol abuse among young people.

Parents were also reminded of their duty to protect and respond to the needs of their children. On this issue, community members echoed the fact that all street connected children have parents or relatives who simply neglected them.

In response to a request which the village head made during the session, YONECO Helpline team facilitated the establishment of two community parenting circles whose facilitators will be elected by the community members themselves.



Insert: Triza Chimasula Field Officer for YONECO in Zomba, taking her turn with the women during the session

Report Gender Based Violence

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Ntcheu ECD Centre Graduates 44 Learners

By Sewenthe Mahwayo



Insert: Some of the learners who graduated from Ntcheu ECD centre.

A total of 48 learners have graduated from YONECO Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centre in Ntcheu to start Standard 1 of their primary school education in the district.

YONECO's ECD Centre in Ntcheu had a total of 125 learners of which 77 boys and girls have also successfully completed the first grade.

The graduation ceremony that was held at the centre on 9 September, 2022 was attended by officials from Ntcheu District Social Welfare Office, community members and a number of business owners from the area.

Child Labour Practices in Mining Industry Fueling School Dropout Rate in Balaka

By Patrick Makonde



Insert: Community stakeholders who took part in the meeting in Balaka district.

The economic prospects that are being projected with the advent of mining activities in Balaka district are being marred by child labour practices that have seen over 400 learners dropping out of school to join the industry between 2019 and 2022.

The heartrending update was made by the Headteacher of Chitimbe Primary School during an engagement meeting which various stakeholders held with officials from the mining industry.

The Headteacher further added that only 6 girls and 3 boys sat for this year's Primary School Leaving Certificate Examinations (PSLCE) at his school as the rest had dropped out of school. During the meeting, the District Manager for YONECO in Balaka, Patrick Makonde, stated that no stone will be left unturned to ensure that those who are involved in the malpractice should face the law.

Mangochi ECD Centre Graduates 13 to Primary School

By Grant Dulla

13 learners (6 boys and 7 girls) graduated from YONECO's Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centre in Mangochi district to enroll in various primary schools in the district. By the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, the centre has a total of 40 learners in various grades.

In her address, the District Manager for YONECO in Mangochi, Funny Chilembo, urged all parents and guardians who attended the closing ceremony to encourage other community members to send their children to the centre. Chilembo explained that the centre focuses on various aspects ranging from imparting the learners with numerical, critical thinking and literacy skills to learning necessary moral values.

The District Manager also urged all community members who attended the ceremony to create communities that are conducive for the growth and development of children.

"As parents, guardians and community members, you need to continuously protect these children from abuse as such vices have long and negative psychological impact on children".

The learners performed a number of activities such as, reciting poems, showcasing literacy and numeracy skills which characterized their journey to the graduation day.

YONECO Embarks on Provision of Child Rights Education in Nsanje

By Jacqueline Holla



Insert: YONECO Project Officer for Nsanje Jacqueline Holla interacting with the children

In a bid to ensure that children are protected from various forms of abuses, YONECO has embarked on educating children about their rights and responsibilities in Nsanje district.

The intervention is mainly being implemented in the area of Village Head Liuwa where many children have dropped out of school due to forced child marriages, child labour, parental neglect and teen pregnancies.

YONECO also publicized various reporting mechanisms that are available in Malawi including the Tithandizane toll-free Child Helpline, Community Victim Support Unit (CVSU), the Department of Social Welfare and the Malawi Police Service.

As YONECO, we firmly believe that children who are aware of their rights and responsibilities are ably understand personal safety boundaries and they are more likely to speak out on issues that affect them.

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YONECO Presents SECTT Study Report at the 2022 National GBV Research Dissemination Conference

By Shadreck Sindiza



Insert: Minister of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare Hon. Dr. Patricia Kaliati visiting YONECO pavilion that was mounted to showcase some of the interventions the organisation is currently doing.

YONECO participated in this year's National Gender Based Violence (GBV) Research Dissemination Conference which was held at Bingu International Convention Centre (BICC) in Lilongwe on 5 September, 2022.

YONECO presented a research study which the organization conducted in tourist destinations, border districts, construction sites as well as in major towns and cities across Malawi. The study is titled 'Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism (SECTT)'. The study was conducted in Zomba, Nkhata Bay, Mulanje, Mchinji, Mangochi, Machinga, Lilongwe and Blantyre.

The SECTT study report was presented by YONECO's Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning Manager - Daniel Chikatentha. In addition to this, YONECO mounted a pavilion inside the conference hall where the Tithandizane Helpline Services Team leader, Mercy Makondetsa, engaged partners and stakeholders on issues pertaining to GBV prevention and response.

The Guest of Honour to the function was the Minister of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare, honourable Dr. Patricia Kaliati.

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YONECO Participates in the 2022 National Public Awareness on Existence and Roles of VSUs

By Mable Makondetsa



Insert: Police Brass Band performing during the National Public Awareness in Chikwawa

YONECO participated in the 2022 National Public Awareness on the Existence and Roles of Victim Support Units (VSUs) event that was held on 20 September at Chikwawa Community Ground.

The Malawi Police Service (MPS) – VSU Department mounted a pavilion where patrons appreciated how the unit operates in Malawi. In addition to this, Chikwawa Police VSU officers also showcased how the department work together with YONECO and other partners in case management.

The activity also doubled as a launch of a newly built Chikwawa Police Victim Support Unit which has been constructed with support from the European Union.

In her remarks, the Commissioner of Police for the Southern Region, Chikondi Chingadza, who was also the Guest of Honour to function, acknowledged the collaboration which exists between the MPS and various organizations in dealing with cases of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Violence against Children (VAC).

The function was spiced up by a number of activities including a football match between Blue Eagles and Chikwawa United.

YONECO Participates in 'Run 4 Reforestation' Marathon in Zomba

By Larah Mbewe



Insert: YONECO staff attending to one of the participant who visited the pavilion

YONECO joined various partners and stakeholders at Chawe Inn on Zomba Plateau where Treeze and other institutions organized a marathon dubbed 'Run 4 Reforestation' on 10 September 2022.

The function was organized to mobilize funds for supporting tree planting activities in the district.

As YONECO, we showcased how we use film to promote afforestation, and other environmental conservation initiatives like the use of energy efficient stoves and climate smart agriculture.



Further to this, YONECO Cultural Troupe also entertained the patrons with various traditional songs that were fused with awareness messages on the importance of preserving trees.



Environmental degradation in Malawi has greatly affected women who travel long distances to fetch water and firewood. The associated challenges which women are currently facing today will be addressed when the trees that were wantonly destroyed are replaced.

YONECO Hosts a High-level Delegation from NCA-DCA and FORUT

By Grant Dulla



Insert: NCA-DCA Country Director Håvard Hovdhaugen (Left) and FORUT Norway Secretary General, Ida Oleanna Hagen (Right)

On Wednesday YONECO office in Mangochi hosted officials from NCA/DCA and FORUT Norway whose aim was to appreciate the progress being made in combating drug and substance abuse in the district. The power to change their own life and this must also work in the field of reducing alcohol and drug consumption.

The visitors travelled to Chiponde area where they had firsthand access to some of the successes that are being registered in the fight against drugs and alcohol abuse. In his remarks, Executive Director of YONECO, MacBain Mkandawire, said more needs to be done in terms of looking at how the young people can be empowered economically in order to give them a platform to actively be involved in social economic development. The visit wound up with a tour of the head office in Zomba where the delegation was oriented on how YONECO operates, with a look at key components such as the IT department the helpline and also the radio.

A couple of young people were able to recall how their lives have been transformed due to the interventions that the Empowering Young People to Fight and Drug and Alcohol Abuse Project has brought.

FORUT Norway Secretary General, Ida Oleanna Hagen, expressed her satisfaction with the impact which is being made through the project.

She further went on to say that for a nation or community to change there is need for every person to play a role in that change.

Hagen also said if the globe is to reach the Sustainable Development Goal of good health for all, there is need that everyone should have



YONECO with funding from Norwegian Church Aid NCA and Dan-Church Aid DCA is running a project called “empowering young people (10-24 years old) to fight drug and alcohol abuse in Mangochi District.

YONECO Recognized



YONECO has been recognized as a game changer during the Trocaire Irish Aid Programme in Malawi at a function that was held on 22 September, 2022 in Lilongwe.

YONECO has been recognized for its contribution towards the realization of various socio-economic development objectives through the implementation of activities that were funded through the programme.

Among other things, were set forth by Trocaire and Irish Aid in the process of strengthening Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response mechanisms including the management of Tithandizane Helpline Service's toll-free GBV Crisis Line.

YONECO, with funding from Trocaire, has also been implementing various interventions that are aimed at strengthening community resilience amidst climate change.



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mwaulere pa 393
kuti mupeze uthenga
okhudza HIV ndi
uchembere
wabwino.**

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YONECO Intensifies WASH Education in the Wake of Cholera Outbreak

By Triza Chimasula



Insert: YONECO Field Officer Triza Chimasula (Standing) during the WASH education sensitization campaign

On 12 September 2022, YONECO Helpline Counsellors conducted sensitization campaigns on prevention of cholera disease in the area of Village Head Thom Allan, Traditional Authority (T/A) Mwambo in Zomba district.

In her remarks, the Shift Supervisor for Tithandizane Helpline Services – Triza Chimasula, explained that her office organized the community sensitization sessions to ensure that community members are able to prevent the disease. Chimasula explained that most community members have inadequate information about cholera prevention hence it may be hard to contain it.

“There are a lot of misconceptions surrounding cholera so much that many people have ended up with a low-risk perception while many others believe that it is hard to prevent the disease”, explained Chimasula.

In his remarks, Village Head Thom Allan urged all men in his area to actively participate in cholera prevention activities. The traditional leader expressed his worry over a tendency by most men in the area whom he said are good at abdicating their responsibilities and expect women to do everything on their behalf.

In his remarks, Village Head Thom Allan urged all men in his area to actively participate in cholera prevention activities. The traditional leader expressed his worry over a tendency by most men in the area whom he said are good at abdicating their responsibilities and expect women to do everything on their behalf.

Zomba is one of the places in Malawi that have been affected by an outbreak of cholera which has spread out to about 10 districts where over 1,400 cases have so far been recorded and the disease has claimed the lives of over 50 people.

YONECO Intensifies SRHR Sessions with Young People in Machinga District

By Jacob Phiri



Insert: YONECO

YONECO has equipped a total of 31 community members with skills on how to raise awareness of mental health issues in Mulanje district.

People with mental health issues do not get the necessary support due to a number of misconceptions which people have at community level. As such, the trained volunteers have been urged to ensure that people with various mental health issues are getting the necessary support.

Further to this, the participants were oriented on case management and how to notice signs of depression as one way of preventing suicide.

YONECO Intensifies Nutrition Education for Expectant and Lactating Women

By Funny Chilembo



Insert: District Manager for Mangochi Funny Chilembo interacting with women at the district hospital

On 19 September 2022, YONECO conducted a Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH) session with a focus on nutrition among expectant women and mothers of children who are below the age of five.

This session that was held at Mangochi District Hospital was aimed at dealing with various health problems that bring about negative health outcomes on MNCH due to undernutrition.

During the session, participants were encouraged to ensure that they are eating balanced meals for the health and wellbeing of their children. Further to this, lactating mothers were also urged to follow advice from health personnel on caring for pregnancy and babies.

The women were encouraged to intensively breastfeed their babies.

YONECO Launches Door-to-Door Cholera Awareness Campaign in Nkhata Bay

In August 2022, the Directorate of Health Services and Social Welfare (DHSS) for Nkhata Bay firstly confirmed a Cholera outbreak around Tukombo Trading Centre in the area of Traditional Authority (T/A) Zilakoma in the district.

By the 20th September, over 660 cases were reported in various parts of the district with at least 17 deaths within the period.

Health authorities cited issues of poor sanitation practices and the use of untreated water from unreliable sources as the causes of outbreak. As such, the ministry of Health and Population called for community awareness raising campaigns in order to contain the disease.

Thus, it is against this background that YONECO has embarked on awareness raising campaigns in various parts of the districts in a quest to contribute towards ending the outbreak. In this undertaking, YONECO is using a door-to-door approach and a total of 126 community members (90 females and 36 males) have been reached with awareness message.

The key messages which YONCO has been sharing community members is on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) whereby people in the targeted areas are being advised to; wash hands before eating, before preparing food, after using the toilet, after changing baby diapers, boil or treat with chlorine drinking water among other things.



Insert: YONECO Project Officer during one of the door-to-door Cholera awareness.

YONECO Conducts Food and Nutrition awareness session

By Larah Mbewe



Insert: Helpline Services Field Officer Triza Chimasula engaging the women during the awareness session

On 24th September 2022, YONECO Helpline Services Department conducted a Food and Nutrition awareness session at Mtewa Viillage in the area of Group Village Head (GVH) Chopi, Traditiinal Authority (T/A) Malemia in Zomba district.

The session was aimed at sensitizing community members on how to enhance nutritional status of children and expectant women as well as lactating mothers.

It has been noted that many community members in Malawi believe that only rich people can afford to have balanced meals. It is against this background that the Tithandizane Helpline Services Department saw the need to properly sensitize community members on how they can ably manage their wellbeing within their means.

The session facilitators further emphasized on the importance of Intensive Breastfeeding (EBF) which is mostly ignored by lactating mothers due to various sociocultural beliefs that are prevalent among various groups of people in the society.

The facilitators also publicized various toll-free lines which the Tithandizane Helpline Services operate in a bid to enhance the rights and welfare of the youth, women and children in Malawi.

The session was attended by 35 community members of which 5 were men and 30 were women.



Youths Urged to Spearhead Cholera Prevention Activities

By Jacob Phiri



Insert: Some of the youths from Ntaja who attended the sensitization session on Cholera

YONECO has appealed to the youth in Machinga district to spearhead Cholera prevention interventions in order to contain the disease which has claimed many lives of people in Malawi since its outbreak in March, 2022.

The plea was made during a sensitization meeting on cholera prevention which YONECO organized for young people at Ntaja Youth Drop-In Centre (DIC). The youth were oriented on how to promote proper waste disposal, handwashing as well as consistent and proper use of latrines.

The session facilitator, Emmanuel Mbewe, further urged the participants to support other community members to have necessary sanitary facilities like pit latrines.

The first case of cholera disease in Machinga district was reported on 2 March 2022. Later on, the Ministry of Health and Population declared a cholera outbreak on 03 March 2022.

Matenda a
kolera afala m'madera ena a
mdziko muno. Onetsetsani kuti
banja lanu ndilotetezedwa
kumatendawa powiritsa
kapena kuthira mankhwala
ophera tidzilombo m'madzi
akumwa.

YONECO Initiates Mental Health Awareness Campaigns in Mulanje

By Thuliwe Mwenefumbo



Insert: YONECO Officer engaging young men in mental health discussions in Mulanje district.

Suicide is a global health concern which is linked to various mental health problems including severe depression.

Just like many districts across Malawi, Mulanje continues to register suicide cases every year and the trend has been on the rise between 2020 and 2022.

Thus, in a bid to prevent such incidences, YONECO has seen the need to intensify mental health awareness campaigns with various groups of people at community level.

It is against this background that YONECO has launched community sensitization campaigns on various mental health issues in Mulanje. In this effort, YONECO has so far reached community members around Chitakale Trading Centre and Nkhonya Village.

Among other topics, the sessions focused on raising awareness about the importance of seeking health care support as well as managing depression, anxiety and stress.



Apart from various economic issues, community members also explained that some harmful cultural beliefs exacerbate mental health problems especially among men who are compelled to persevere despite the hardships they face. It was indicated that men are and boys are expected to be brave and strong.

Thus, the community members asserted that this is the reason why most men do not seek support when they have problems so much that a lot is bottled up inside them until it is a bit late.



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YONECO Introduces Legal Awareness Sessions in Mangochi

By Grant Dulla



Insert: YONECO officers engaging with community members who attended the legal awareness session

On 17 September 2022, YONECO conducted a community legal awareness session at Issa Mponda Village in the area of Traditional Authority (T/A) Mponda in Mangochi district.

The awareness session was aimed at furnishing community members with accurate, and practical legal information in order to help them understand various legal processes and enable them to exercise their legal rights.

YONECO's Paralegal Officer who facilitated the session, Grant Dulla, explained that legal awareness is key in the formation and maintenance of a just society.

Dulla added that citizens who are aware of various legal stances are among other things; more likely to prevent and report cases to authorities, as well as avoid committing crimes.

Mangochi is one of the districts in Malawi where forced child marriages are prevalent. As such, community members were reminded to execute their duties to ensure that children are being protected in the area. Thus, it is against this background that the facilitators further unpacked the various critical contents of Child Care Justice and Protection Act (2010).



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