

NATIONAL YOUTH

Manifesto



2019-2024



MESSAGE FROM THE TEAM LEADER

I am privileged to present this collective voice of aspirations of the Malawian youth to various stakeholders and duty bearers as well as the general public. With over 60 percent of Malawi's population being young people, it is evident that almost all social and economic ills facing Malawi today have a disproportionate burden of incidence on the youth. Having listened to young people across Malawi, I cannot escape the conclusion that young people are tired and angry with the country's state of underdevelopment and the apparent lack of strategic direction. A Majority of youth are frustrated by widespread poverty, lack of decent jobs and limited education and economic opportunities. Young farmers are frustrated with poor market prices for their produce, exorbitant costs of production and inconsistent government policies on agricultural marketing. As youths in the southern region and elsewhere grapple with landlessness, many others across the country are stepping out of formal education at secondary and tertiary levels due to inability to meet the necessary costs to stay in school and pursue their studies. Youth with albinism are on the run for their lives as abductions and killings continue unabated. Blatant corruption combined with a significantly high degree of political impunity are not only holding back economic progress but are also creating divisions in society and fuelling a distrust of democracy. Elections are increasingly being viewed as 'kutaya nthawi' (waste of time), as the country's political gains have not translated into any meaningful development and economic gains that improve standards of living for the majority of the people. Development indicators for our country are the worst for a country not at war.

This state of affairs is of serious concern to the youth and calls for organized national response by all stakeholders led by a capable political leadership.

This Manifesto, therefore, thrives on the conviction that the 2019 electoral cycle provides a golden opportunity for the Malawian youth, to come together to reflect on the country's current state of underdevelopment and drive their aspirations through organized engagement. Malawian youth have an opportunity to mobilize and organize themselves as a political constituency to influence actions that will address their plight. Through this Manifesto, young people are proactively advancing undivided positions on various policy issues of national development and will advocate for implementation while also opening national conversation on other sticky policy and governance issues. This manifesto is an inclusive youth development agenda and represents their demands in a social-contract with the next Government to be elected on May 21, 2019, throughout their term of office.

I'm convinced that the next crop of elected officials and policy-makers will see merit in regular and robust engagement and feedback about how citizens experience and evaluate the process and outcomes of governance and service delivery. The Manifesto, therefore, is an 'entry point' for youth to meaningfully express their aspirations and take subsequent citizen action to ensure responsive, accountable and inclusive governance and service delivery.

In conclusion, I would like to invite all Malawians, political stakeholders and development partners to engage and support this youth development agenda. Most importantly, I call upon all Malawian youth to the dutiful mission of holding the next government (2019-2024) accountable to the latter, in order to begin giving our democracy a meaning. For this reason, the Youth Decide Campaign urges all Malawians to elect competent and transformative leaders at all levels during the election of 21st May, 2019. As a campaign, we are determined to provide responsible leadership in advancing the realization of the aspirations outlined in this Youth Manifesto.

Charles Kajolweka

Team Leader
Youth-Decide Campaign.



PREFACE

A consortium of civil society Youth-NGOs in Malawi comprising Youth and Society (YAS), Network for Youth Development (NfYD), Young Politicians Union (YPU), MHUB, and YONECO, is championing the Youth-Decide Campaign (YDC). The main thrust of the Campaign is to stimulate positive energies and participation of Malawian youth in shaping the country's development and governance agenda through the 2019 electoral cycle and beyond. One of its main objectives is to facilitate the development and implementation of a vibrant and inclusive 'Youth Development Agenda' for Malawi through the 2019 electoral cycle, hence this National Youth Manifesto.

This Youth Manifesto for the period 2019 to 2024 is a consolidated statement of the governance and development aspirations and demands of young people in Malawi. The inputs for this manifesto were generated through a consultative and participatory process that was run by the Youth Decide Campaign.

Through this manifesto, the youth of Malawi express their aspirations and demands in various policy and programmatic domains including education; health; youth employment and vocational training; environment and climate change; mining and energy; sports, culture and arts; youth living with disabilities; youth leadership in politics and civic life; business entrepreneurship; ICT and infrastructure development; water and sanitation; and corruption. The aspirations and demands were voiced by young people and representatives of young people and stakeholders through regional workshops that were held in Mzuzu for the northern region, Kasungu for the central region, Zomba for eastern region and Mulanje for the southern region. Each regional workshop drew participants from the districts of the region and they comprised of representatives of organisations working on various aspects of youth development, District Youth Officers (DYO), media, independent individuals and political party representatives. The input was consolidated by the consortium members of the Youth Decide Campaign with the technical support of the Institute for Policy Research & Social Empowerment (IPRSE) and the Democracy Works Foundation (DWF).

The Youth Decide Campaign is grateful to the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), DanChurchAid, and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) for financially supporting the development of this Manifesto. For technical and logistical support, the Youth Decide Campaign acknowledges the contributions of the IPRSE and DWF. For their inputs and active engagement, the YDC would like to thank its 'Youth Manifesto Champions', all the organisations and individuals who contributed to the process. Above all, the Campaign is grateful to the Youth and Society (YAS) for its inspiring coordination and leadership in development of this Manifesto.



PREAMBLE

We, the young people of Malawi, male and female, from all regions, of different cultures and beliefs, diverse backgrounds, from rural and urban areas, with varying needs, abilities and challenges, representing a broad constituency, and taking a non-partisan position;

Inspired by the possibility of achieving inclusive, accountable and responsive governance and socio-economic transformation in our country;

Recognizing the serious social, economic and political challenges facing young people in Malawi;

Noting the absence of an organized national youth agenda to guide the involvement and participation of young people in national development;

Acknowledging the pivotal role that young people must play in the development of our country;

Holding firmly the conviction that the present and future development of our nation is our responsibility;

Exercising our inalienable rights of participation in civic and political life of our country;

Affirming our commitment to shape the development of our country;

Do hereby present our aspirations for democratic governance and socio-economic transformation in Malawi as policy and programmatic demands for youth development and youth contribution to the national development aspirations.

**PART I: PRIORITY POLICY
AND PROGRAMMATIC DEMANDS FOR THE PERIOD 2019-2024**

**NATIONAL
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MANIFESTO**

ISSUE 1

Access to Youth Employment
and Vocational Training



1.1 Job Creation and remuneration

Unemployment in Malawi is estimated at 9.3 per cent. However, for the youth the rate is much higher at about 15.2 per cent. Only 18 per cent of the youth are self-employed, a proxy indicator that a significant proportion of the youth work in the informal sector where government support and attention is inadequate. 82 per cent of the youth aged between 15 and 29 are neither employed nor are they actively seeking work. Youth unemployment is a phenomenon of both urban and rural areas and aggravates poverty. Youth urban poverty is estimated at 50 per cent. The figures should be staggering for the young people in rural areas. Hence, there is urgent need for job creation programmes both in the public and private sectors to absorb young people into the formal working sector, and to support their initiatives in the informal sector. Employment opportunities especially in the public service can be created by reducing retirement age and flushing out people who got employment using fake credentials. We, therefore, demand as follows:

- Create 500,000 jobs for youth per year translating into 2,500,000 jobs by 2024.
- Government to introduce 10% 'Business Contract Quota' for youth entrepreneurs in order to support young entrepreneurs in the informal sector so that they can generate new job opportunities for themselves and fellow youth.
- Review and redesign a Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDEF) and provide 25 Billion Kwacha loan facility to support business start-ups by young people and provide 'business husbandry' support for growth of the enterprises; by year 2021.

- Audit the qualifications of people employed in the public sector in order to flush out those who acquired employment using fake credentials.
- Revise the minimum wage to MK 120,000 by the year 2021.
- Revise the zero rated Pay As You Earn (PAYE) tax band from MK 35,000 to MK 150,000 by the year 2021.

1.2 Access and Relevance of Vocational Training

Malawian youth lack skills that can help them develop livelihoods and contribute to socioeconomic development of the country. There is significant shortage of skilled workers and technicians in Malawi which indicates that the vocational training system is not producing enough graduates to meet current and future labour market demands. The minimum qualification of Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) to enroll in technical colleges, excludes many young people especially in the rural areas, who have the potential to contribute to development. The available training is, in some cases, not aligned to the needs of the job market. The number of TEVET facilities is far too low to absorb the demand for access to technical and vocational skills development among young people. On the other hand, most graduates of the technical colleges find it difficult to take off with their own outfits mainly because of inability to access capital and equipment for their trades.

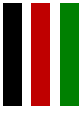
We, therefore, demand as follows:

- Abolish the requirement of minimum qualification for enrolment in technical colleges by 2020.
- Introduce skills training in technical colleges relevant to the job market including such trades as sanitation entrepreneurship, landscaping, value addition to primary products and irrigation technology by the year 2024.
- Provide start-up business loans and equipment for technical college graduates.
- Introduce young adult education programme for out of school youth so they can acquire a minimum of a secondary school education.

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ISSUE 2

Agribusiness
and entrepreneurship



2.1. Entrepreneurial support

Youth unemployment looms large in the country because both the public and private sectors are unable to generate enough jobs to absorb young people that are graduating every year from secondary and tertiary education institutions. Consequently, many young people are economically dependent or live in poverty and do not make significant contributions to the economy despite their educational qualifications and healthy bodies. While many would like to venture into sustainable businesses, they are confounded by lack of entrepreneurial skills and business knowledge as the education curricula is biased towards preparing future employees rather than entrepreneurs. Those who venture into business are unable to survive or grow due to inadequate policy and programmatic support for start-ups in a hostile macroeconomic environment characterised by high interest rates which make access to business finance and capital almost impossible for young people. Furthermore, the formal business sector especially in commerce and trade is dominated by [non-indigenous] Malawians who have privileged access to formal and informal systems of support. This situation has the potential of generating class animosity and xenophobic tensions among poor and less privileged young Malawians. While there have been initiatives to support youth entrepreneurship before, such as the Youth Enterprise Development Fund, the initiatives have always been captured by partisan interests resulting in such efforts benefiting only a selected few that are politically connected and in unsustainability of the initiatives as political rather than business logic determines the modus operandi.



There is a mismatch in terms of relevance between the content of the school curriculum and needs of the country. There is limited emphasis on entrepreneurship and skills development that would increase youth employability. The minimal access to internet and ICT services in schools also affect quality of education especially considering the current global technological advancement and trends.

We, therefore, demand the provision of entrepreneurial support to youth as follows:

- Review and revamp business development services provided by Small and Medium Enterprises Development Institute (SMEDI) with tailored programmes for young people; by the year 2020.
- Introduce a Youth Economic Empowerment Programme (YEPP) that should support capacity development of businesses of young people; by the year 2020.
- Introduce deliberate measures in procurement for the public sector at central and local government levels to promote youth owned businesses; by the year 2021.
- Develop a Research & Development program for young people to support development of local technologies for dealing with local problems and develop a policy on innovation and inventions by young people by the year 2024.

2.2. Youth and Agriculture

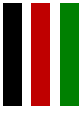
The dominant perceptions among youth is that agriculture (production) is an occupation mostly for the illiterate. The fact that most agriculture in this country is very traditional, relying on the use of a hoe, is repulsive to many young people who regard working the land with such tools and implements as punitive labour not fit for those with some minimum levels of education. Neither do many youth, especially the educated, regard agriculture as a business area worthy investing time and energy in. This is mostly the case because every year they are saturated with stories of the dysfunctional agriculture markets that rip off farmers and incompetent government that is unable to enforce minimum produce prices. Despite the pleasant assertions in the Export Development Strategy of the country, there is very little work on the ground on providing information on export markets, and ad hoc export bans on crops by government reinforce the perception of risk that prevents investment and dedication of youth. We, therefore, demand that Government and its partners should make agriculture and agribusiness attractive to youth by doing the following:

- Government must introduce the provision of farm equipment and machinery to attract the youth to take agriculture as a business; by the year 2024.
- Carry out corporate reforms for ADMARC by introducing farmers' representatives in the Board and empowering it financially through annual budget reviews to enable it to purchase farm produce and defend minimum prices on the market; by the year 2021.
- Encourage value-addition initiatives to enable farmers realize more revenue and significant profit margins by the year 2024
- Develop export markets information system by the year 2021.

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ISSUE 3

Land Acquisition
and Utilization



3.1. Access to land

Ordinarily, the youth acquire land through traditional inheritance systems in which family land under customary law is sub-divided and given to the younger generation as they come of age. However, land scarcity is a significant problem due to population pressures. There is not enough land for inheritance by all the youth. Access to land by youth is worsened by Government's courting of potential local and international investors by offering them land acquired from smallholder farmers for large-scale farming. In such transactions, the youth are reduced to the status of mere workers on the farms. The deals are dominated by local chiefs and government officials with some involvement of parents while the youth are sidelined despite being the future of this country. Land problems that were caused by the colonial land tenure patterns and ownership, have been inherited by successive governments since independence, hence promoting alienation of land from indigenous Malawians and the smallholder farmers. This has led to land wrangles in the tea and coffee growing districts of Thyolo and Mulanje.

We, therefore, demand as follows:

- No land must be sold to foreigners under any circumstances; by year 2020.
- Convert all freehold land to leasehold to avoid perpetual ownership and cater for landless young people; by the year 2021.
- Amend the Land Act to include youth representation in all land committees; by the year 2021.
- Government must prioritise access of land for housing for all and young people.
- Through relevant Local Government Councils, Government must identify and allocate land for youth centres.

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ISSUE 4

Quality, Accessible
and Relevant Education



4.1. Quality of Primary Education

The introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 1994 has resulted in a trade-off between increased access to education and low quality of education. This is because FPE policy has not been matched with corresponding investment in infrastructure and number of qualified teachers. For instance, between 2004 and 2013, enrolment increased by 45 per cent yet the number of classrooms rose only by 12 per cent. Thus, many pupils learn in temporary, make-shift structures or under trees, making teaching impossible during rainy season. The gains of increased primary school access also get eroded with the high Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) which averages 71:1 against a national intermediate target of 60:1. In early grades, the ratio averages 130:1. There is shortage of qualified teachers to meet the recommended PTR, thereby affecting the quality of teaching and learners' outcomes. As of 2017, there were 71, 161 primary school teachers. To reach the recommended PTR of 60:1, it implies government needs to employ an additional 13, 500 teachers, all things being equal.

Quality of teaching is also associated with levels of satisfaction and motivation of teachers which are affected by school location, remoteness and decent housing. Most qualified teachers are unwilling to work in rural and remote areas due to lack of decent housing and other amenities including electricity, piped water, hospitals,



and banks among other services. In 2017, only 17, 063 teachers were in permanent housing entailing a gap of 76 per cent. Most of the teachers are unhappy with their placement mostly due to lack of housing near or within school premises. This also leads to high rates of teacher absenteeism, depriving pupils of adequate contact time.

We, therefore, put forward the following demands:

- No child should be learning under a tree or in a make-shift structure by 2022.
- Recruit adequate and qualified teachers for primary education by 2022.
- Improve the welfare of teachers so they are retained and they devote themselves to the profession, and the profession attracts more young Malawians, by 2021.
- Enforce and adhere to the recommended intermediate Teacher/Pupil ratio of 60:1 by 2022.
- Provide decent housing to at least 60 per cent of all teachers by 2024.

4.2. Access and Quality of Secondary Education

Completion of all stages of education by all young people is critical for Malawi to achieve socio economic development and industrial growth. However, transition to secondary education still remains a daunting challenge as only 38 percent proceed to secondary education. The pace of investment in secondary school infrastructure does not correspond with the increased number of primary school leavers requiring secondary education. By 2017, there were 6, 065 primary schools against the 1105 public secondary schools (i.e. 5, 073, 721 primary school learners against 372, 885 learners in secondary schools). There is still need for huge improvements in terms of available space against demand.

Quality of secondary education is also affected by inadequate infrastructure and facilities such as classrooms, laboratories and libraries especially in rural areas; long distances to schools leading to poor learners' performance, drop outs and sexual abuse of girls; limited access to bursaries for needy students leading to students dropping out; shortage of qualified teachers and inadequate teaching and learning materials. About 84 per cent of the public secondary schools are community day secondary schools (CDSS), providing secondary education to the largest proportion of school going youth. However, these schools are mostly under-resourced, do not have science laboratories and libraries, they have inadequate teaching and learning materials due to limited funding and endure acute shortage of qualified teachers compared to the conventional secondary schools. The recent abolition of the Text book Revolving Fund (TRF) will affect the availability of text books in schools, particularly in CDSSs that are already under funded. In 2016/2017, out of 11,289 teachers in public secondary schools, 4 337 were unqualified. Most of them were trained for primary school teaching. The number of unqualified teachers is high in CDSS where the majority of young people of school age access secondary education. The working conditions for teachers are generally poor affecting the motivation to teach. The salaries are low and the hardship allowance that was supposed to be given to teachers in remote and rural areas is not effectively implemented resulting in the rightful deserving teachers in the rural areas not being paid the hardship allowances. There is poor tracking of teachers after they get transferred resulting in teachers in urban areas benefiting from the scheme. Only 29 percent of the teachers (4, 192) have access to decent housing. Lack of decent housing for teachers is one of the reasons most teachers refuse placement in rural secondary schools. This, in turn, perpetuates the practice of hiring primary school teachers (who are more willing to work in such conditions), to teach in secondary schools. The curriculum is not relevant to the needs of the country, instead it is geared towards white collar jobs, only. It does not promote skills development, innovation and creativity, the necessary factors to increase the youth's employability. The frequent curriculum changes for secondary education further affects quality of tuition as government has a long time lag before making relevant text books available. We therefore, demand as follows:

- Construct more secondary schools to double the available space by 2024.
- Upgrade all CDSSs to the right standard. All secondary schools must have standard infrastructure and facilities including science laboratories, library and a set minimum number of qualified teachers per school.
- Stop the deployment of primary school teachers to teach in CDSSs by 2022.
- Invest in upgrading and training of adequate teachers specifically for the secondary education level.
- Provide decent housing to at least 60 per cent of all teachers, especially in rural areas, by 2024
- The hardship allowance payment scheme for teachers posted in remote and rural areas should be redesigned by end of the year 2019.
- Increase funding for bursary schemes and improve the beneficiary identification mechanism to support more pupils in secondary schools.
- Institutionalize secondary education curriculum review at 10 year intervals.
- Strengthen continuous professional development programmes for teachers to keep up to date with new knowledge and methods.

4.3. Access to Tertiary Education

Demand for university education is increasing but the capacity of public and private universities is very low. Currently, access to public universities is at only 9 per cent of those students who qualify. The current district-based quota system that government applies when selecting students to public universities is discriminatory and assaults the principle of academic merit that should be the core consideration in selecting students to universities. In practice, the system also favours students from conventional schools (43per cent) and private schools (33per cent) who have access to better infrastructure, learning and teaching materials as well as qualified teachers as opposed to 14per cent of students from CDSS that are mostly under resourced and yet majority of students access secondary education through these schools. The majority rural and poor youth cannot afford the exorbitant fees in the available private universities. There have been a number of reports highlighting the plight of needy students who fail to enrol in public universities or find themselves unable to continue with their education due to lack of fees and upkeep resources. This is exacerbated by the inconsistent provision of loans by the Higher Education Students Loans and Grants Board (HESLGB). The Open and Distance Learning (ODL) approach to expanding access to university education is still in its infancy stage. Low information and communications technology [ICT] infrastructure and investment, poor perception of ODL and little diversification of instructional materials are some of the factors affecting effectiveness of ODL. We, therefore, put forward the following demands:

• No student should fail to access university education because of lack of fees by the year 2020.

- Government should engage in in Public Private Partnerships to construct additional universities and increase access to all deserving students by the year 2024.
- Implement measures to increase access to education in public universities from 9 per cent to 25 per cent by the year 2024.
- Abolish district quota system for selecting students to public universities by December 2019.
- Install ICT teaching and learning facilities in public universities to allow on-line tuition by the year 2024.

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ISSUE 5

Youth and the
Anti-Corruption Drive



Serious and organised corruption in Malawi is pervasive and poses a major threat to Malawi's development. It is recognized as part of a social behaviour that started flourishing after the transition to multiparty democracy in 1994. Politicians and senior public officials routinely abuse their entrusted power for personal and political gain, often colluding with businesses and criminal syndicates in the process. The 2013 Cashgate scandal – in which networks of politicians and public officials colluded with local businesses to steal public funds – is estimated to have cost the Malawian taxpayer £35m in direct losses, and triggered the withdrawal of all donor budget support to Malawi. Again, the recent corruption scandals involving various public institutions including ESCOM, ADMARC, MERA, Malawi Police Service, Immigration, TEVETA, Water Boards, and local councils among others, are manifestations of entrenched and organised corruption.

Corruption and lack of accountability affects the youth development agenda mainly through opportunity costs. Resources for present investment in education, healthcare, long term economic growth and other public services are diverted to fund current lifestyles of individuals at the expense of a sustainable socio-economic future for the country. Corruption harms poor people more than others because they rely on public schools, public health facilities, etc., where the quality and quantity of services are sub-optimal as resources are siphoned away through corrupt deals among government bureaucrats, politicians and some real or pseudo private sector entities. The resources are wasted and benefit the few greedy people and leaders at the expense of the young generation.

The ACB has established anti-corruption clubs across the country with the purpose of involving citizens, including the youth in the fight against corruption, but the impact of these clubs has not been significant. The fight against the malfeasance is marred by a myriad of obstacles including low levels of operational independence in view of high levels of political interference especially in investigating and prosecuting corruption; inadequate funding of operations partly because of genuine resource constraints but also a perceived motivation to stifle the bureau's oversight work by the political executive; several institutional and



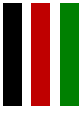
legal requirements that collectively undermine effectiveness; and staff and institutional capacity gaps. The fight against corruption by the ACB amounts to efforts aimed at exciting donors to the government and tackling political opponents of the incumbent government while fresh looting goes on as political and bureaucratic elites take their turns to feed off the state through appropriation of public funds for private gain. The youth, therefore, demand decisive action to deal with corruption for now and the future to free resources for national development. Specifically, we demand as follows:

- De-link the appointment of the ACB from the presidency and insulate the operations of the Bureau from political interference; by the year 2020.
- Remove presidential immunity from criminal prosecution while in office to allow the rule of law take precedence.
- Recover all stolen public money and assets from corrupt and fraudulent individuals and organisations; by year 2024.
- Review the schedule of penalties provided in the Corrupt Practices Act to enhance them and make them severe so that they acquire the deterrence effect; by the year 2020.
- Operationalize implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy.
- Provide political leadership in the implementation of Open Contracting - publishing and using open, accessible and timely information on government contracting to engage citizens and businesses in identifying and fixing problems.
- Promote the establishment and operationalization of sector implementing agencies to manage open contracting in all sectors including the construction sector.
- Engage and involve the youth in new and innovative ways of fighting corruption; by the year 2020.
- Review curricula of formal education at all levels to include topics on good citizenship, ethics and integrity to start changing attitudes and mind-sets about corruption at a tender age.

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ISSUE 6

Youth Leadership
in Politics and Civic Life



6.1. Institutional framework for youth development agenda

There is institutional and organizational pluralism in championing the youth development agenda. For instance, stakeholders that support and coordinate implementation of youth programmes include the Ministry of Labour, Youth, Sports and Manpower Development (MoLYSMD), Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training (TEVETA), the National Youth Council of Malawi (NYCOM), among others. With multiple organisations come coordination problems, half-hearted implementation of programmes and truncated accountability for suboptimal results. For instance, the minimal implementation of the National Youth Policy (2013) that has now expired with very marginal implementation of what government had committed to undertake in the 5-year period. Capacity challenges in terms of inadequate numbers of staff within the structures mandated to champion the youth development agenda also affect implementation of the set activities. Currently, the NYCOM does not have the capacity to implement the youth policy. There are no regional and district structures that should have been taking youth issues to the grassroots youth clubs and vice versa. Currently, the District Youth Officers (DYO) report directly to the Director in the Ministry of Youth. The NYCOM operates directly under the Minister of Youth and is therefore vulnerable to political manipulation. Further, NYCOM is a membership based organisation and limits participation of ordinary/individual youth.

In view of the foregoing, we demand as follows:

- Abolish the NYCOM and replace it with a National Youth Commission with a mandate to provide strategic direction and coordination of youth development activities; by the year 2021.
- Optimize resource allocation for the implementation of youth development agenda to 15 per cent of the national budget; by the year 2020.
- Operationalise the National Youth Service as stipulated in the National Youth Policy (2013); by the year 2022.
- Review and update the National Youth Policy; by the year 2020.



6.2. Youth in politics and civic life

Although Malawi is experiencing a youth bulge, it is unlikely that the country will reap demographic dividends. This is the case because there is a much laid back approach to youth development especially for leadership roles in politics and civic life. Except for increased numbers of young people registered to vote in the 2019 tripartite elections (54per cent), there is an increasing indifference to politics as a career among young people. By and large, politics is seen as an arena for those who are unable to make it big in other spheres of life. Furthermore, there is a growing spirit of selfish individualism that militates against engagement in collective action, civic life and community consciousness; and persistent negative attitudes, doubt and distrust of the potentiality and capacity of youth to take up challenging roles in politics and civic life. Across the political divide, young people are not deliberately and consciously being groomed for political leadership at various levels thereby perpetuating a perception that political and civic life are preserves of older people and retirees.

In view of the structural, institutional and sociological challenges that confound the meaningful participation of young people in politics and civic life, we demand as follows:

- Introduce a Training Program on transformative and inter-generational leadership for young people focussing on politics and civic life. The programme should be run by the National Youth Commission which will replace the current National Youth Council; by the year 2023.
- Government should ensure that the content of civic education balances rights and duties of citizens to instil a civic consciousness and dutiful patriotism so that young people grow into more active and responsible citizens; by the year 2024.
- Implement affirmative action measures and guidelines to ensure involvement of youth in governance structures at community, district and national levels; by the year 2020.
- Political parties should create deliberate spaces and opportunities for youth participation to train them for leadership roles; by the year 2020.
- Political parties should adopt and implement measures that make the participation of young women in party politics safe and prevents sexual abuse; by the year 2020.
- Amend the Local Government Act to recognise youth as an interest group to be represented by a nominated councillor in each local government council by the year 2021.

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ISSUE 7

Mining
and Energy



7.1. Mining

Malawi is endowed with high value natural resources that could support socio-economic transformation of the country. However, the country is unlikely to benefit from its high value natural resources because of a weak policy, legal and institutional framework for natural resource governance. The legislation of the 1980s is archaic for a modern mining sector that should be the crucible for national development. Among other things, it condones loss of revenue to the state through under-declaration of taxable revenue and transfer mispricing; artisanal and small scale mining are left unregulated; Government's ability and willingness to bring order to the sector and maximise revenues from the resources for Malawi's development are undercut by badly negotiated contracts with companies and inability to deploy effective monitoring due to lack of skilled personnel. The revenues that accrue to Government from mining projects are far too low and are managed with questionable prudence and a lack of accountability.

We, therefore, demand the following corrective measures to improve natural resource governance to benefit Malawi's development:

- Impose a moratorium on the exploration and exploitation of natural resources (minerals, oil and gas) until such a time when the public sector has enough skilled personnel to engage with companies and manage the resources for the developmental benefit of this country; by the year 2020.
- Introduce a skills development programme through which bright young people will be awarded scholarships by the Government of Malawi to study relevant subjects and disciplines at undergraduate and postgraduate levels to develop a pool of knowledgeable and skilled human resources to work in the field of natural resource exploration and exploitation (minerals, oil and gas) and engage with resource companies at parity of technical knowledge; by the year 2020.
- Strictly implement the Mines and Minerals Act of 2019.
- For all natural resource exploitation projects, institute a new law to require a progressive joint venture arrangement between the resource companies and the state; by the year 2021.

- Government should publish information on the process and award of licenses for the exploration of oil on Lake Malawi by the year 2019.
- Adopt and implement the principles of natural resource governance as expounded by the Africa Mining Vision of the African Union to ensure that our high value natural resources are worked out for the developmental benefit of the country by the year 2024.

7.2. Energy (Electricity)

Access to electricity in Malawi is very low, estimated to be between 9 per cent and 12 per cent. There is a significant urban bias in access to electricity as only an estimated 5 per cent of rural population have access to the national grid despite implementing the Malawi Rural Electrification Programme (MAREP) for over two decades, compared to 46 per cent of urban population with access to electricity. Again, the majority of the 9-12 percent access is for industry. For domestic and household use access is estimated at 1-2 percent. The national rate of access is far below the SADC average of 35 per cent. Currently, Malawi has installed capacity to generate 363MW of which 346MW is hydro and 17 MW is solar. However, the supply of electricity has not kept up with demand since early 2000 with the situation worsening from 2005. The key problems confounding the electricity sector include inadequate generation capacity, tariff setting methodology which precludes private investors and squeezes consumers and deeply entrenched corruption and intentional mismanagement at the relevant state bodies.

The electricity sub sector is central to industrial growth and development, upscaling of living standards in the rural areas as well as prevention of environmental degradation arising from use of biomass energy for cooking and other chores at household level. The national aspiration is to increase the national rate of access to electricity to 30 per cent by 2030 through new grid and off grid connections.

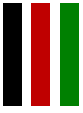
Cognisant of the problems in the electricity subsector and aware of the potential and centrality of electricity in long term socio-economic transformation, we demand of Government as follows:

- Design and execute corporate reforms to cut off intrusive political interference in the work of ESCOM, MERA and EGENCO to stem off persistent politically induced failures in their financial management, human resource management and especially procurement functions; by the year 2020.
- Commission and implement a long term Integrated Resource Planning framework for the electricity sector with cross-party support to ensure implementation across government terms as electricity projects tend to have long gestation periods; by the year 2024.
- Institute transparency and accountability mechanisms for the Malawi Rural Electricity Programme (MAREP) which currently operates with a degree of opaqueness that facilitates abuse and corruption; by the year 2019.
- Invest in alternative renewable energy especially wind and solar energy to supplement hydro power by the year 2024

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ISSUE 8

ICT & Infrastructure
Development



8.1 Limited Access to the Internet

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the most important aspect for linking the youth to the globalizing world. ICT is crucial in all spheres of life, be it in education, health, agriculture, business and many other sectors affecting the youth. Malawi still faces daunting access challenges and utilization of ICT amongst its young people. The connectivity challenge is the most critical barrier for the diffusion of ICT in Malawi. A study by the Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA) in 2014, found that of the 1,420 urban dwellers, only 29.4 per cent had access to the internet compared to only 3.4 per cent of the 10,580 rural dwellers. Internet connections are expensive and extremely slow because Malawi is not connected with fiber cable. The price of bandwidth has gone down from \$3000 in per megabit in 2011 to \$300 per megabit in 2018 but the cost of Internet access keeps going up. The large proportion of the internet connectivity, is based on satellite services. Consequently, the majority of the youth, especially in the rural areas, do not have access to ICT.

- Reduce tariffs on ICT equipment and internet connection; by the year 2022;
- Introduce ICT lessons in all primary and secondary schools, and in teacher education institutions, by the year 2021.
- Every child of school going age should have access to computers by the year 2024.

8.2. Inadequate Infrastructure for ICT

The limited accessibility and usage of the internet is exacerbated by inadequate availability of ICT infrastructure. The Malawi government has constructed tele-centres across the country. However, most of these tele-centres are yet to be equipped with ICT equipment. The other challenge is that network towers



for mobile connection are erected by private investors who choose according to business sense where to erect them. Government does not invest in network towers. Consequently, many rural areas do not have mobile phone or internet connectivity. Inadequacy in the mobile connectivity in most rural areas, has serious ramifications on the development of the youth in Malawi. Yet MACRA, the national regulator of ICT in Malawi, has a vision to ensure that there is universal access and usage of ICT services across the whole country. It is therefore, most important for MACRA, to ensure that all areas in Malawi have internet connectivity.

In addition to fibre cable and network towers, the tele-centres will greatly benefit from an investment in technology in line with the recently approved Africa Space Policy. The African Union has recently approved Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA 2024) which aims at using science, technology and innovation to respond to the continent's priorities. The AU recognizes that space science and technology constitute an important enabler for the implementation of STISA 2024 and Agenda 2063.

Evidence shows that technology holds great potential to meet significant needs in developing countries like Malawi. Specifically, satellite-based remote sensing, communication and navigation capabilities can provide valuable services in education, agriculture, business, health and other sectors affecting the youth. In the spirit of moving with technological advancement, MACRA should consider embracing technology to enhance communication in rural areas. Through satellites, rural youth can access vital information on education, agriculture, business and so on. We, therefore, demand development of ICT infrastructure as follows:

- Fast track operationalization of tele-centres across the country; by the year 2021.
- MACRA should use levies on the communications industry to support ICT infrastructure in every secondary school; by the year 2022.
- MACRA should ensure that all areas in Malawi have network coverage; by the year 2024.
- MACRA should seriously start to invest in technology to improve communication and cheap internet connectivity in the rural areas especially in schools; by the year 2024.
- Every young person should have access to internet connection by the year 2024
- Fast track the introduction of fibre cable for faster internet connectivity; by the year 2020

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ISSUE 9

Youth
with Disability



9.1. Participation of youth with disabilities

Youth with disabilities have the right to special care and the right to equal and effective access to education, training, health care services, economic empowerment, sports, cultural and recreational activities. The National Statistics Office (NSO) of Malawi, estimates a prevalence of childhood (<18 years) disability of 2.4 per cent. By these estimates, the most common type of disability was listed as hearing impairment (23 per cent), followed by visual impairment (16.9 per cent), reduced mobility (15.8 per cent) and speaking difficulties (9.3 per cent). The Malawi constitution enshrines the principle of non-discrimination while the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) focuses on the right of children and youth with disabilities to education. Despite all the legislation and instruments, youth with disabilities face numerous forms of discrimination, violence and social exclusion. There are obstacles that negatively affect the full integration of youth with disabilities into society. Major challenges include lack of skills development programmes through vocational training, lack of economic empowerment programmes for youth with disability. In addition, some employment opportunities are not open to some types of disabilities and that in some cases youth with disabilities do not meet the entry requirements. There is also no enforcement of disability friendly infrastructure and spaces as well as lack of suitable aides for youth with disabilities. We, therefore, demand as follows:

- Establish a Disability Trust Fund as stipulated in the Disability Act (2012).
- Introduce skills development support programme for youth with disabilities; by the year 2024.
- Government should introduce an affirmative action mechanism to guarantee jobs for skilled youth with disabilities by the year 2020.
- Enhance enforcement of infrastructure standards to ensure that they are disability friendly by the year 2020.
- Government through its appropriate agencies must provide appropriate aides to all youth with disabilities to enable them live a normal life by the year 2021.

9.2. Conducive and supportive environment for students with disabilities

The Malawi Disability Act (2012) demands and ensures inclusive education at all levels of education. This aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 4 which aims at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. Records show that enrolment of students with special needs had increased from 120, 000 in 2016 to 145,000 in 2017. These students face a lot of challenges at school to the extent that most of them hardly proceed with their studies. There is lack of enforcement of policies on facilities and special units in administration of education facilities to address the welfare of students with special needs. Apart from inadequate specialised staff, students with special needs also travel long distances from their homes to access the few specialised schools. In addition, there are no guidelines on representation of guardians of pupils with special needs in parents and teacher associations (PTAs) or school management committees (SMCs). Although the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology collects information on the number of students with disabilities attending school each year, the figures are provided by teachers, the majority of whom have never received training or guidelines for identifying children with disabilities.

In accordance with the outlined challenges, we put forward the following policy demands:

- Each primary and secondary school should have a resource centre for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties ; by the year 2024.
- Ensure adequate specialized teaching staff and materials/facilities for persons with special needs at all schools; by the year 2024.
- Train teachers in methods for inclusive teaching and for working with children with different disabilities; by the year 2024.
- The guidelines for setting up PTAs and SMCs should ensure that the inclusion of guardians of children with special needs is mandatory by the year 2021.

9.3. Rights and security of youth with albinism

Youth with Albinism are victims of ritual murders. Among the 165 cases of abductions, killings and exhumations of the remains of people living with albinism (PWA), recorded since 2014, a good number of them have affected youth and children. The attacks show that conventional ways of providing human security by the state to its citizens are not working effectively for PWA. The violations are symptomatic of failures in the governance of security at community, district and national levels, depriving youth with albinism of the opportunity to continue attending school. A lot of young people are also finding it difficult to attend school especially during the hot season due to the vulnerability of their skin to the scorching heat as most of them cannot afford protective sun cream.

We, therefore, demand as follows:

- 
- End the abductions and killings of persons with albinism by December 2019.
 - Health facilities and other public institutions such as schools must provide free sun protection cream and sunglasses to youth with albinism; by the year 2019.
 - Start implementing the National Action Plan to facilitate effective and coordinated implementation of all national albinism and related programmes and activities; by the year 2019.
 - Develop and institutionalise a community- based security mechanism and protocol that will increase the level of protection for PWA in their families and communities and therefore enhance and safeguard their abilities to enjoy the right to life, freedom of movement and right to education among many others; by the end of year 2019.
 - Build capacity and strengthen community level structures (community police committee, child protection committee) and social support systems as the first level protection mechanism; by the year 2021.
 - Provide protection for all children with albinism that are school going by December 2019.

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ISSUE 10

Physical violence and
Sexual abuse of young women



Violence against women and girls (VAWG) remains a serious challenge in the country. Young women and girls are often amongst the most marginalized and vulnerable. One-third of women have ever experienced physical violence since age 15 and an estimated 21.8 per cent of young adult women experienced sexual abuse prior to age 18. VAWG puts the young women and girls at risk of contracting STIs and HIV, dropping out of school and early pregnancies leading to forced early marriages. In addition, poverty and harmful cultural practices also lead to forced early marriages that put girls at risk of early childbearing and birth complications, prevents them from completing school, and limits their economic opportunities. VAWG destroys self-esteem, leads to higher rates of mental distress; and alcohol and substance abuse, amongst survivors.

VAWG also occurs in schools where the girls are supposed to feel safe. While teachers have a key role in preventing and responding to VAWG in schools, some of them are perpetrators of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation of girls. However, the offending teachers are often simply transferred from one school to another. Young women in tertiary education institutions are also reported to experience sexual harassment perpetuated by those in authority. Most of these cases go unreported either for fear of reprisals or due to limited knowledge of redress mechanism.

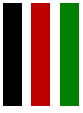
At community level, most of the VAWG cases are handled by the cultural gate keepers. In such setups, the perpetrators are not given stiff penalties, if at all. The predominant social norms tend to tolerate sexual abuse and places the blame on the young women and girls when it occurs. This discourages them from reporting. There is still limited knowledge about legislation and policies that safeguard the women and girls from abuse and violence due to limited dissemination. We, therefore, put across the following demands for action:

- Make schools safe and friendly for girls by the year 2024.
- Introduce viable mechanism which women and girls can use safely to report abuse especially when the offence is carried out by people in authority; by the year 2024.
- End Child marriages and enforce the minimum age for marriage.
- Institute mobile courts for VAWG cases to speed up delivery of justice; by the year 2021.
- Review the law to introduce stiff punishment for perpetrators of VAWG.
- Harmonize all laws on gender-based violence for improved enforcement and sectoral coordination; by the year 2024.
- Implement a comprehensive and coordinated awareness campaign on GBV related laws, policies and redress mechanism targeting the youth and community level duty-bearers by the year 2022.

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ISSUE 11

Accessible
Health Services



11.1. Accessible Youth Friendly Health Services

Malawi's large youthful population presents an opportunity to achieve great economic and political change if proper investments are made in key areas including the health sector. Despite efforts to improve provision of Youth Friendly Health Services (YFHS) and Sexual and Reproductive Health Services (SRHS), Youth still face a number of challenges that threaten their lives. HIV incidence is high with 35 per cent of the new HIV infections occurring among young people of ages 15–24 in 2016. Teenage fertility is high rising from 25.6 in 2010 to 29.0 in 2015. Youth of age group 15–19 years of age have the highest unmet need for contraception among sexually active women of reproductive age, with access estimated at 30 per cent. There is limited commitment by government to fund the sector using own resources. Funding for the youth targeted services is highly dependent on donors affecting chances of sustainability should the donors withdraw or reduce their support.

Youth face a number of obstacles to access Family Planning (FP) and SRH services including long distances to centres providing YFHS and high transport costs; unfriendly attitude of the health services providers; breach of confidentiality mostly by community health workers; and limited access to SRH information and counselling services leading to misconceptions about contraception. The youth are not engaged to talk about SRH with the elders; some health providers decline to assist youth because they are too young and/or unmarried. We, therefore, put forward the following policy demands:

- Gradually increase funding allocation to provision of YFHS and SRHS using own government resources and regulate the donor driven intervention targeting the youth by the year 2020.
- Increase number of community based youth clubs where health providers could offer FP counseling, education, and commodities by the year 2022.
- Establish a Youth Health Friendly Corner/ Youth specific room at every health facility for provision of FP and SRH services by the year 2024.
- Train and mentor more community health workers in YFHS provision by the year 2024
- Deploy adequate YFHS service providers especially to rural and remote areas by the year 2024.
- Increase access to age appropriate SRH information and commodities by the youth in schools by the year 2024.

11.2. Drug and substance abuse

According to the Malawi Government reports, more than 50% of the drug and alcohol related cases that come before the courts involve young people. In 2010, hospital records at Zomba Mental Hospital show that of the 1890 admissions received, 269 cases were a result of cannabis and alcohol and involved youth. Media reports indicate that Malawi is a safe gateway for drug smugglers and mostly involve young people. Youth in colleges and secondary schools are reported to use cough syrup containing codeine for pleasure, which is freely accessible from pharmacies. The situation arises from poor law enforcement and limited programmes addressing drug and substance abuse. Cheap drugs and alcohol are readily available on the open market and easily accessible to the youth. The poor regulation of the pharmaceutical sector makes it easier for the youth to buy restricted medicine “off the counter” without prescription. If left unchecked, substance abuse will reach epidemic levels soon and affect socioeconomic development outcomes in the long term.

In view of this, we demand the following:

- Implement a comprehensive programme that will raise awareness, make access to drugs difficult and prevent drug and substance abuse among the youth by the year 2021.
- Enforce the implementation of the recently passed Pharmacy and Medicines Regulatory Authority Bill that in part will regulate the selling of restricted medicines by the year 2019.
- Enforce regulatory laws on use of illegal drugs and substances by the year 2019.
- Enforce regulation of the liquor selling to young people as stipulated in the Liquor Act and the National Alcohol Policy by the year 2019.

11.3 Access to mental health services

Drug and alcohol abuse are serious problems among the youth leading to various mental health problems. Malawi, like most Lower Middle Income Countries (LMICs), has limited resources allocated to mental health whose services are mainly found in urban areas despite the largest proportion of the population living in rural areas. Malawi has 0.3 per cent mental health facilities including the main referral facility in Zomba. The operations of Zomba Mental Hospital are affected by limited funding which is currently estimated at 1 per cent of the national budget, unavailability of drugs and inadequate trained personnel. Furthermore, there are inadequate counselling services and lack of rehabilitation centres across the country.

In view of the foregoing, we put forward the following policy demands.

- 
- Train and recruit more mental healthcare personnel by the year 2024.
 - Integrate mental health into primary health care and YFHS provision by the year 2024.
 - Every health facility should have a counsellor to provide psychosocial therapy and support to the young people by the year 2024.
 - Increase funding towards mental health services by the year 2020.
 - Construct more rehabilitation centres by the year 2024.

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ISSUE 12

Environment
and Climate Change



12.1. Environmental degradation and fragile livelihoods

Climate change and environmental degradation are serious development challenges in the country especially for young people as they threaten economic growth and long term prosperity because our economy is land-based and dependent on rainfall. Soil erosion, erratic and inadequate rains are increasingly affecting the duration and sufficiency of the agricultural season. Consequently, livelihoods of an already vulnerable population with more than 50 per cent living below the poverty line are affected as 90 per cent are dependent on rain-fed agriculture, of whom up to 60 per cent are food insecure on a year round basis. The impact of climate change is felt through agriculture and food security problems; diminished capacity to generate hydro-electricity due to siltation and low water levels; and increasing frequency of extreme weather events such as floods and droughts.

Laxity in regulation of industrial logging is causing massive deforestation, in addition to wanton cutting of trees for different purposes. Activities that exacerbate climate change and environmental degradation have a long time lag. Thus, young people of today are the ones that will suffer the consequences of the damaging activities carried out now, in future. However, the youth are on the margins of any efforts to mitigate climate change and help people adapt despite the National Youth Policy recognizing young people as agents of change and of sustainable development.

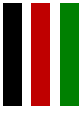
We, therefore, demand as follows:

- Introduce a youth-run community-based, public works programme of catchment management and restoration to promote community and ecosystem resilience.
- Abolish the requirement of minimum qualification for enrolment in technical colleges by 2021.
- Support youth organizations to run innovative programmes that encourage environmental sustainability and climate change mitigation (green entrepreneurship) such as waste reduction and recycling by the year 2021.
- Government should relocate to high ground villages that are in low lying locations in flood-prone areas and support them to re-settle and develop new approaches to livelihoods by the year 2022.
- Map areas of mass production of wood charcoal and introduce economic empowerment initiatives in those areas to replace charcoal production while enforcing decisively all relevant forestry laws by the year 2024.
- Reduce dependency on biomass energy for cooking by promoting the use of clean energy for cooking especially gas stoves and briquettes made from waste, among other technologies by the year 2024.
- Strengthen tree planting and reforestation programmes by 2020.
- Enforce laws and regulations on logging and cutting down of trees by 2020.

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ISSUE 13

Access to
clean potable water



13.1. Access to Water

The problem of access to safe water is prevalent in both urban and rural areas in Malawi but it is acute in the rural areas where water infrastructure is under-developed, water points are still far apart beyond the minimum standards in terms of distance between households and water points, and many water sources especially boreholes are dysfunctional. Overall, 12.7 per cent of the population lack access to improved water sources; 69 per cent have no access to treated, safe drinking water; more than 2.4 million people in rural areas do not have access to a safe water source and 47.7 per cent of rural population have to travel for 30 minutes or more to obtain their drinking water. Longitudinal studies have consistently shown that girls/young women are the most affected by water problems because of the predominance of cultural practices that reinforce the view that ensuring availability of water at household is the responsibility of women and girls. Difficulties in accessing potable water means that the girl child in the rural areas is often late for school as she has to fetch water for the household, does not sleep enough and so doses off and cannot concentrate during lessons and has hardly free time for home work and other social development activities. Problems with access to potable water in the rural areas reinforce gender inequalities against girls.

Rural water supply in Malawi is mainly through boreholes, supplemented by gravity-fed system i.e. a water supply sourced from an upland river, stream or spring and transports water by pipework to tap stands near homes. Although the number of water points have increased over the years, the boreholes do not last long before they dry and up to 40 per cent are non-functional because of poor workmanship while up to 27 per cent of gravity fed systems are functional at any point in time. There is weak governance structures for water points and very low technical and financial performance of water point committees. Furthermore, politicians frequently undermine the water management committees by wanting to play the role of a benevolent patron instead of encouraging community collective action to deal with water problems, sustainably.

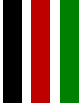
In view of these problems, we demand as follows:

- 
- Government should fast track the devolution of the water sector to District Councils and develop an operational and management strategy that will ensure that water points are functional all the time by the year 2021.
 - Develop governance rules and practices that cushion water point committees from political interference or capture so that the committees are able to pursue their collective action mandates without the disincentives that come from politicians who constantly see water as an electoral campaign issue and its provision as an act of benevolent patrimonialism; by the year 2021.
 - Spearhead integrated water resource management to ensure that all other aspects or behaviors that are detrimental to sustainable water supply are being addressed by the year 2024.
 - Institutionalize funding for rural water supply in the District Councils to be managed professionally, free from political interference by the year 2020.

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ISSUE 14

Sports,
Culture and Arts



14.1. Sports

Physical education, sports and recreation are important to the total wellbeing of young people especially general body fitness, healthy mind, personal discipline as well as leisure. However, sports infrastructure and services are grossly inadequate across the country. Furthermore, there are no sports development programs for youth in and out of school. In most schools, sports has been reduced to traditional soccer and netball while volleyball, basketball, lawn tennis, athletics and others are not given the attention they deserve. At a lot of schools, sports fields either do not exist or are not well taken care of.

In view of these problems, we demand as follows:

- Government must invest in sports development at all levels (local, district and national level) and particularly at learning institutions; by the year 2024.
- Every school must have minimum, basic, functional sports facilities and equipment for all the learners to develop their talents and live healthy lives; by the year 2024.
- Introduce various sports disciplines and competitions at all levels of education to enhance talent identification, nurturing and development; by the year 2024.
- Establish youth centres in all districts with sports and recreational facilities, libraries and information centres by the year 2024.



14.2. Youth and Culture

Culture provides important social and economic benefits. Identifying with a particular culture gives young people a sense of belonging, heritage and ancestral identity. Through culture, the youth can have access to social networks which provide support and shared values and aspirations. Malawian youth are brought up within various social and cultural contexts with various beliefs, customs, and norms and practices that impact on their lives. However, Malawi is facing a serious lack of inter-generational transfer of cultural values due to increasing uptake of western values and lack of cultural lessons in the formal education system. Today's youth are ignorant of Malawian cultures and face the risk of losing cultural identities while the ignorance fuels intolerance and stereotyping. There is no mechanism to curate the country's heritage as a way of passing on tradition and knowledge to new generations. The lack of museums in strategic places deprives the youth of valuable knowledge of their cultural, historical and socioeconomic backgrounds. Despite having the Department of Culture, there are no known cultural programmes except highly politicised ethnic gatherings. However, within the framework of human rights, there are many harmful cultural practices that perpetuate the subjugation of women to men, young people to elders and inhumane and degrading treatment of women and children.

We, therefore, demand as follows:

- Construct and stock one cultural centre/ museum per region (north, centre, south and east) for the development, documentation, preservation and dissemination of culture; by the year 2023.
- Introduce cultural studies in primary and secondary schools focusing on the cultures of the people of Malawi to encourage tolerance and promote diversity.
- Abolish by law all cultural practices that amount to infringement on people's human rights.

14.3. Creative Arts

Creative arts give the youth opportunities to explore, build on and record their own creative and imaginative ideas. Furthermore, creative arts have the potential to empower young people economically.

However, deficient school curricula and poor teacher training have contributed to the failure of educational institutions to provide their students the appropriate skills to make them employable. Currently, there is no effort to recognize artistic talent and skills among youths and hence the youth do not consider the arts as an economically relevant venture. There are also fears that the creative arts done by the youth can easily be copied and used elsewhere. This is due to lack of enforcement of the intellectual property rights. In addition, there are no spaces for the youth to showcase their talent.

We, therefore, put forward the following policy demands for the promotion of creative arts:

- Establishment of an Arts Council which shall have the mandate to promote and regulate all arts and cultural displays and performance; by the year 2020.
- Re-introduce arts and craft as a subject in primary schools and in teacher education institutions.
- Introduce a mechanism through which creative works by young people are recognised and protected by patent by the year 2024.
- Support arts (drama, music, dance and others) competitions to assist in talent identification, nurturing and development; by the year 2024.
- Support artists with entrepreneurial skills and start-up loans by the year 2021.

NATIONAL YOUTH MANIFESTO

PART II: STATEMENT ON COLLECTIVE ACTION



15.0 The Role of the Consortium

In order to coordinate the advancement of the Youth Agenda, the consortium will engage and involve all key stakeholders in preparing the implementation plan for this Manifesto. The consortium will build the capacity and empower the Youth Champions to lobby and advocate for the Youth Agenda at all levels along the governance structures of the country. The consortium will also ensure that government, civil society, private sector, religious and traditional leaders, and the citizenry, are actively engaged and involved in the advancement of the Youth Agenda. Active involvement of the media will increase the visibility of the need and relevance of the National Youth Manifesto.

To support the implementation of demands under section 11 (Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship), the Youth Decide campaign commits to carry out a business profiling exercise in all districts to identify youth-owned enterprises. Similarly, in support of the implementation of the demand on youth participation in politics and civic life, the Youth Decide Campaign will carry out a mapping exercise that will identify the spaces in which youth can actively and effectively participate.

16.0. The Role of Political Parties, Political Candidates, and duty-bearers in Authority

We recognize that the success of this manifesto largely depends on concerted effort and action of all stakeholders. Political parties and aspirants to political offices are urged to incorporate the manifesto into their electoral manifestos. Parties should ensure that individuals vying for elected positions are conversant with the Youth Agenda. Parties should also nominate and support young aspirants to compete for elected positions. All individuals with positions of power are encouraged to adopt and support the implementation of the Youth Agenda, and support young people as they take up challenging positions of leadership at various levels of governance.

17.0. The Role of Government

The government that will be formed after the elections in May 2019, is key to the success of the Youth Agenda. We, therefore, expect the government to adopt and respond in action to the demands presented in this manifesto and create an environment conducive for youth development. We expect the government to effectively implement policies and laws for youth development through sustained dialogue and systematic collaboration with the National Planning Commission. We, the youth of Malawi, will diligently and persistently lobby and advocate for the realisation of the Youth Agenda.

18.0. The Role of the Youth

The success of this Youth Manifesto largely counts on a highly organized and united youth voice and agency in demanding accountable governance from duty bearers. Every youth has dutiful responsibility of advocating for implementation of the aspirations of the youth carried in this Manifesto. Holding elected officials and policymakers accountable is a collective responsibility of every youth.

Conclusion

This manifesto is a consolidated statement of the aspirations of the youth of Malawi. We call upon all stakeholders to actively participate in the implementation of the Youth Agenda which we verily believe to be an investment into the future of the country that will be characterized by more democratic governance, socio economic transformation and sustainable development.



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	Area Development Committee
AYC	African Youth Charter
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDSS	Community Day Secondary School
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CRPD	Convention on Rights of People with Disability
DEC	District Executive Committee
DYO	District Youth Officer
FPE	Free Primary Education
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GII	Gender Inequality Index)
HESLGB	Higher Education Student Loan and Grants Board
JCE	Junior Certificate of Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPRSE	Institute for Policy Research and Social Empowerment
MDGS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MoLYSMD	Ministry of Labour, Youth, Sports and Manpower Development
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate of Education
NYFD	Network for Youth Development
NYCOM	National Youth Council of Malawi
NYM	National Youth Manifesto
NYP	National Youth Policy
NYS	National Youth Service
NSO	National Statistics Officer
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual, Reproductive Health, and Rights
TEVETA	Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training
YAS	Youth and Society
YDC	Youth Decide Campaign
YFHS	Youth Friendly Health Services
YPU	Young Politicians Union
YONECO	Youth Net and Counselling
VDC	Village Development Committee
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WPAY	World Program of Action for Youth

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NATIONAL YOUTH MANIFESTO 2019 - 2024