

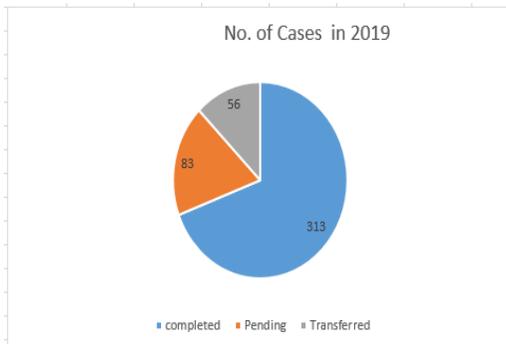
PARTNERPLAN

Linus Malu - Malawi March 2020

Head of Legal Department & Access to Justice Programme Manager
CCAP Synod of Livingstonia
Church & Society Programme
PO Box 112
Mzuzu, Malawi

Dear Friends,

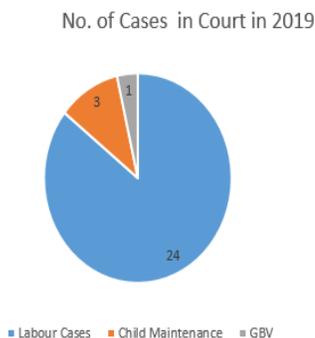
Greetings from Mzuzu, Malawi. I am back in Malawi after my deputation visits and annual leave. I returned to a relatively peaceful Malawi after the constitutional court ruled that the disputed presidential election held in May 2019 is null and void. The court further ordered that a new presidential election be held within 150 days from the day of the judgment. Subject to presidential assent, the Malawi Electoral Commission has fixed the date for the new election for May 19, 2020. Please, continue to remember the people of Malawi in your prayers during this democratic process.



Late last year we completed our booklet on trafficking in persons in northern Malawi. The booklet documents the state of trafficking persons in northern Malawi, and what the Church and Society Programme has done to combat trafficking in persons in the country. We hope that policy makers will implement some of the recommendations. The preponderance of opinion of those interviewed is that human trafficking occurs in different forms in northern Malawi, and that some of the major causes are the high rate of poverty in the country, the high rate of unemployment, and lack of

awareness on the dangers of illegal overseas travel and inadequate policing of the borders.

2019 was a busy year at the Legal Department of the Church and Society Programme. We received a total of four hundred and fifty two cases in our office in Mzuzu on the following issues:



gender based violence, employment disputes, criminal cases, land disputes and tort. We were able to settle three hundred and thirteen of these cases in our office through mediation. However, eighty three of these cases are still pending, meaning that they are either stalled or that mediation is on-going. Also, we referred fifty six of the cases to the court. We refer cases to court in three ways: we file the application in court on behalf of the complainant, or we can send it to a lawyer in town who will file it in court on a pro bono basis, or we send it to the Legal Aid Bureau in Mzuzu.

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In 2019 we filed twenty eight cases in the court in Mzuzu on behalf of some of our clients. These cases arose when mediation failed. We select cases to file to court based on two criteria. When we think the petitioner has a compelling case and there is a clear legal/human right issue to be addressed. We also select cases to deal with certain issues that are becoming social problems. By sending several cases to court for such problems we hope to discourage abuses of such rights or to address the social problem. The majority of the cases we filed in court in 2019 were employment matters or employer/employee relationship. We have noticed that there is high rate of violation of the Employment Act by employers of labour. Twenty-four cases were filed in court. We also filed two child maintenance cases last year and one gender-based violence case. Most of the gender-based violence cases were settled through mediation.



Our women empowerment programme is doing well, though some of the recipients of our loans are finding it difficult to pay. The group was formed in late 2018 to promote savings, business, and work cultures amongst some victims of gender-based violence in Mzuzu. The women were taught the following: business management, economic rights, women's rights, book keeping, and the concept of VSL. In May, 2019 we disbursed some money to members of the group as a loan, which will be repaid with ten percent interest within eight months. As at February, 2020, out of the MK1, 705,000,00 disbursed and interest, we have recovered, MK1,117,000.00. We still have an outstanding balance of MK588, 000 in the first batch disbursed in May, 2019. The project is supported by Church of Scotland with funds from St Colm's.

In November, 2019, I visited the Presbyteries of Duns and Annadale & Eskdale for deputation. I visited Canonbie, Annan, Dumfries, Lockerbie, Carlisle, East Riggs, Ruthwell, Berwick, Duns, Eyemouth, Coldstream, Gavinton, Fogo and Coldingham. I met different persons and groups and discussed our work in Malawi. Thank you immensely for welcoming me to your homes, churches and other places. Thank you also for your time, and for giving me the opportunities to speak to you. Thank you for taking me around different historical places. I am also very grateful for your donations, kind words and prayers. May God bless you and provide for you. I will only be able to publish one picture from each presbytery out of the many I took during my visit.

Thank you very much for your prayers. In the following weeks, please pray for us on the following points:

- For a successful May 2020 presidential election in Malawi.
- For the CCAP, Synod of Livingstonia: for God's grace and direction in all its activities, programmes and evangelism.
- For victims of gender-based violence in Malawi.
- For all our clients of Church and Society Programme who do not have access to justice, that the government will provide more mechanisms for them to access justice.

Sincerely
Linus

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