

## PARTNER PLAN

# Linus Malu - Malawi June 2019

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Dear Friends in Scotland,

Greetings from Mzuzu, Malawi. Thank you very much for your prayers and support. We are in post-election mood in Malawi. National elections were held on 21<sup>st</sup> May with new leaders emerging at the national and local levels. Please, remember the people of Malawi in your prayers during this post-election time.

Late last year we completed our booklet on gender based violence (GBV) in northern Malawi. We printed few copies, but soon an electronic copy of the booklet will be on the website of the Church and Society Programme. The booklet documents the state of GBV in northern Malawi, and what the Church and Society Programme has done to combat GBV in Malawi. We hope that policy makers will implement some of the recommendations. The preponderance of opinion of those interviewed is that GBV in northern Malawi is massive, and that concerted efforts are needed to successfully combat it. The report also shows that 51 percent of 836 persons interviewed have experienced GBV.



In December 2018, we received a team from Church of Scotland at the Legal Department. The team arrived in Mzuzu on 8<sup>th</sup> December and departed on 11<sup>th</sup> December. During the visit, the team helped the legal team with its capacity building problems, and discussed the welfare of staff/challenges of the Department.

On 17<sup>th</sup> December, I travelled out of Malawi through South Africa to Australia for my annual leave, and to spend Christmas with my family. I returned in February.



We marked the International Women's Day on 8<sup>th</sup> March with a photo exhibition and a radio programme at the Voice of Livingstonia, which is owned by the Synod of Livingstonia. The photo exhibition took place at Shoprite, Mzuzu. The theme of the photo exhibition is: "Women and Economic Development of Mzuzu". We exhibited about 48 photographs, depicting the contributions of women to the economy of Mzuzu. The main idea of event is to highlight and promote the contributions of women to the economic development of Mzuzu.

In March, we had a training programme for our Village Savings and Loan (VSL) Association members. The Group was formed in late 2018 to promote savings/ business culture amongst some victims of gender based violence in Mzuzu. The women were taught the following: business management, economic right, women's right, book keeping, and the concept of VSL. In May, we

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disbursed money to members of the Group as loans, which will be repaid with ten percent interest within eight months. The objective of the project is to support victims of GBV to establish sustainable business ventures. The project is supported by the Church of Scotland.



We received visitors from the Presbytery of Annandale & Eskdale in April this year. The Group comprised of four youths and their leaders (Donna and Ruth). The team arrived Malawi on 7<sup>th</sup> and departed on 17<sup>th</sup> April. The team spent some time with the Legal Department/ the Church and Society Programme, and visited some projects and communities that are of interest to them.



Our project that assists girls that have high risk of being victims of early marriage to continue their education is progressing relatively well. The aim of the project is to assist girls who do not have parents or relatives (who will pay their school fees), to resist the pressure to marry early, and remain in school. We have eight girls who are benefiting or about to benefit from the programme. The project which started in 2017 is being supported by the Church of Scotland.



We have received authorisation to work with inmates in Mzuzu prison. Hopefully, the project will take off this year. Our main target is to help pre-trial detainees secure bail and have their cases speedily heard. We will seek to facilitate access to justice for inmates of the Mzuzu prison, and hopefully, other prisons in northern Malawi, by linking them to appropriate government institutions, such as the Office of the DPP and the Legal Aid Bureau. The project staff will also process applications for bail/release for pre-trial detainees when appropriate, and assist inmates in various other ways that create access to justice and protect human rights.

The Legal Department published the first edition of its newsletter in September, 2018. The second edition is coming later in the year.

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

1. For a successful democratic/electoral process in Malawi.
2. For the numerous victims of gender based violence in Malawi.
3. For all our clients at Church and Society Programme who do not have access to justice, that the government will provide more mechanisms for them to access justice.

With thanks, and best wishes,

Linus