













About for Equality

For Equality (FE) is a Pan-African women's rights organisation working to accelerate progress toward attaining gender equality. The organisation is vision is toward a genderequal and just Africa. Every day, women and girls around the world face violence and discrimination. Sexual exploitation, violence, harmful cultural practices, and systemic inequalities violate their human rights and prevent them from reaching their potential. For equality sees these gender inequalities as threats to the actualization of empowering girls and women and seeks to strengthen the individual and collective agency of pan-African women to dismantle systems of oppression and attain gender equality. Under Social and Gender Justice, For Equality advocates for access to Sexual Reproductive Health and (SRHR), including accountability for SRHR Financing, access to safe abortion, and ending sexual violence against women and girls; through policy review and advisement, awareness raising, movement building, and campaigning. Under Economic Justice and Rights, For Equality advocates for feminist alternatives in response to the impact of neoliberal macroeconomic policies, decent work, and debt justice through knowledge production, coalition collaboration, movement building. For Equality's, approach focuses on convening and connecting, knowledge production, dissemination and campaigning, movement building, capacity strengthening.

Learn more about For Equality through the following channels: www.forequalityafrica.org info@forequalityafrica.org +944 833 989 (0) 265







Editorial

Welcome to For Equality's bi-annual newsletter 2024 edition, where we continue to showcase the diverse efforts carried out by For equality through young women, towards attaining gender equality in Malawi. Across our thematic areas, we strive to amplify voices, challenge inequalities, and advocate for the rights of women and marginalised communities. As the world undergoes significant transitions in political, economic, climate, digital and other major sectors, we remain committed to our mission to dismantle systems of oppression that perpetuate patriarchy and disproportionately affect women.

In this issue, we highlight the work that For Equality has done from January to June 2024 in movement building, by capacitating young people, especially young women, with knowledge and skills to advocate for their rights. Our major achievements include collaboration for revitalization of the movement for access to safe abortion in Malawi with various stakeholders, turning FE thematic areas discourse into consumable knowledge and facilitating the production of 9 research papers by young women trained under the Young Scholars Fellowship program. Additionally, For Equality is proud to announce an addition to its thematic areas. where we will now expand our advocacy to climate justice in order to address the systemic inequalities triggered by climate change. From our grassroots movement building to policy advocacy at national level, we are excited to share stories that inspire and provoke action.

We believe that every action counts, including your engagement with our work. Let us stand in solidarity, break boundaries and push the movement forward towards a gender equal and just Africa.



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The International Human Rights Law declares the right to health as; "the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard health..." the Universal Declaration of Human Rights further articulates that health is part of the right to the adequate standard of living for every individual (World Medical Association). Malawi however, faces a significant challenge with attainment of this human right, as women and girls remain chained to the colonial laws that

deny bodily autonomy and integrity.

Over the last few years, Malawi had progressively marked an increase in the number of unsafe abortions. Lilongwe and 2022 Blantyre alone recorded 11,246 cases, an addition of 5,391 from 2021 and 4,092 from 2022 (African Population & Health Research Center, 2023). Post T.O.P Bill, efforts to revitalize initiatives against mortality high maternal as result of unsafe а

abortions have been carried out sparsely by some organisations while other have pursued advocacy for the right to healthcare and

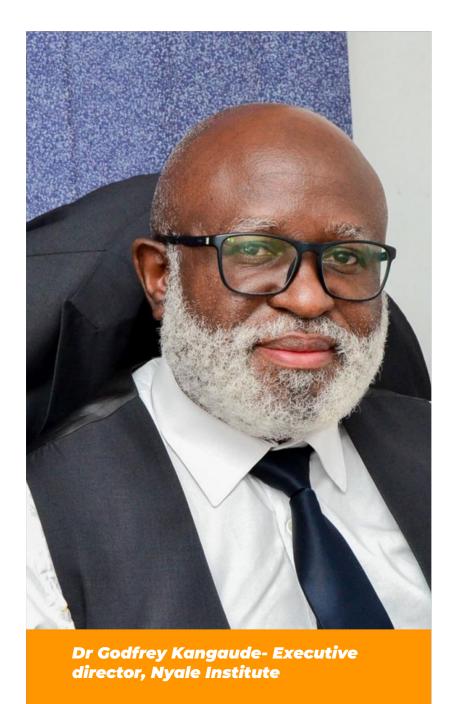
In 2022 Lilongwe and Blantyre alone recorded 11,246 cases, an addition of 5,391 from 2021 and 4,092 from 2022 (African Population & Health Research Center, 2023).

full enjoyment of sexual reproductive health rights. Following this background, Nyale institute embarked on the strategic litigation route, through the case of a minor who conceived as a result of sexual assault, in order to lawfully

interpret grounds of 'the preservation of life' that warrant access to safe and legal abortions. For Equality in partnership with Center for Reproductive Rights, the only international institution advocating for reproductive rights using

the law, joined Nyale in support of the litigation towards increasing grounds of advocacy for access to safe termination of pregnancy.

For Equality, as a feminist movement builder has taken up the role select capacitate to organisations youth from Blantyre and Chiradzulu, in a training trainers approach, with the knowledge and understanding of existing policies and legal frameworks that uphold sexual reproductive health rights in Malawi. Equality is also equipping members of these youth organisations on how the youth can get actively involved in carrying out advocacy initiatives towards the promotion of SRHR and the support of the ongoing case by Nyale institute. Additionally, communications efforts towards the cause for public input and support are also being carried out, to publicise the policies and laws that safeguard







FIRST OF IT'S KIND! MALAWI FORMS ITS FIRST SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS COUNTRY COHORT

Over the past few years, the sexual reproductive health rights movement in Malawi has made significant progress, marked by the adoption of progressive laws and policies such as the Gender Equality act, the National male engagement strategy, the change in the age of consent to 18, an increase in the health budget up to %12, only %3 shy of the Maputo protocol commitments, renovated victim support units, conversation on comprehensive sexual education curriculum and many other developments.

For Equality, through is partnership with ARASA is privileged to be one of the members of the first country SRHR cohort,

convened by ARASA through the Bodily Autonomy and Integrity (BAI) consortium. The BAI consortium has 5 key pillars; Safe abortion, HIV prevention, Universal Health Coverage, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) and SRHR for all especially Key populations. The cohort was formed and launched durina National SRHR the cohort creation meeting held under the theme "Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Movement Building in Malawi." The meeting was aimed at creating a collaborative space for actors in these fields to work as a collective towards promoting human rights, influencing national policy and flagging opportunities for advocacy.



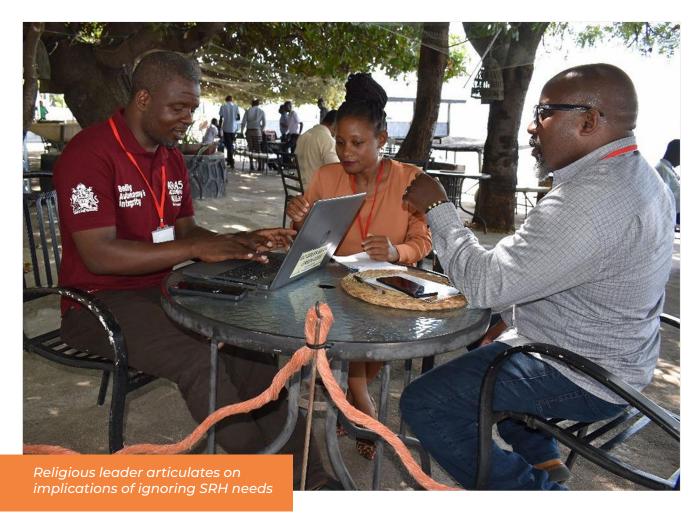
Stakeholders from diverse backgrounds including medicine, policy making and community mobilization discuss best practices in SRHR advocacy

parliamentarians, researchers, legal practitioners, medical professionals, traditional leaders, religious leaders, journalists and representatives from key populations.

Ms Thuthukile Mbatha, regional the advocacy coordinator for ARASA shared that the institution plans to leverage on the from diverse expertise its various stakeholders supporting the BAI project. The current members are

practices and curate more strategies to advance bodily autonomy integrity. and Through this platform, Equality plans champion youth voices on SRHR including access to comprehensive healthcare, and innovative ways of addressing the knowledge gap and restrictive policies. The diverse nature members of this cohort offers the opportunity holistically to address hindrances to SRHR in an intersectional manner, leaving no one behind.

Safe On Abortion. the National Coordinator of the Religious Leaders Network for Choice shared that the network was born from extensive and effective capacity building on the intersection between the church and sexual reproductive health rights and that indeed everyone has a role to play. It was mentioned that one of the key strengths of the network is the availability of religious people ready to write and produce objective research on the intersection between SRHR and religion. The religious plurality of the Malawian society makes it difficult to have an objective religious teaching of SRHR, as shown in the T.O.P bill deliberations whereby different religious leaders agreed on different grounds in the Bill and could not reach an agreement on



which grounds to support hence each religious faction had 1 or 2 or 3 of grounds which they were supporting. This can be tapped into as an opportunity for the production of objective research. A few publications and advocacy materials have been produced.

In a progressive close, best practices were shared amongst the stakeholders on how best we may advance SRHR in Malawi and these include; the use of statistics to portray impact; continued conversation on the subject matter; key ambassadors in strategic positions; effecting signed

international standards and commitments; effective policy development; intersectional

representation in the development of policy content and a need to localise and domesticate and ratifications acts without donor dependency. For Equality further shared on the need to deformalize the topic of safe abortions, to separate it from just mere statistics and show the lived experiences of human beings as communications way breaking stereotypes and creating empathy around the subject matter.

The formation of this cohort is catalytic for the SRHR movement in Malawi as it presentsgreatopportunities such as the end duplicated efforts. wider reach and innovative and intersectional interventions as there is a wealth of knowledge and experience to tap from. Additionally, harmonised efforts from various sectors will bring us closer to mitigating some of the major obstacles in the realisation of SRHR and influence need-based resource allocation and disbursement



GRADUATE ADVOCATES!

For Equality is proud to have hosted the Young Scholars Fellowship program that produced 9 young feminist researchers, adding the body of knowledge on Economic Justice and Rights in Malawi. From January 2023, a competitive process identified 10 young Malawian feminists who scholarly underwent а bootcamp on feminism in Malawi and the tents of feminist research.

EconomicJusticeandRights is a fairly underpopulated field in the advocacy space in Malawi. While a majority has been exposed to economic empowerment, few efforts, especially by young women have been

made on extensive analysis of our macroeconomic frameworks that in turn lead to economic injustice. While several economic empowerment efforts have been fairly fruitful, such as the social security program; National Economic Empowerment Fund (NEEF), little attention has been paid to the larger systems that speak to the economy. For example with NEEF there are limitations such as provision for collateral, which only a limited number of women may have full access to, or devaluation of the kwacha which leads to inflation and compromises business profits and many other barriers. Another systemic

problem that causes economic injustice is the high unpaid care work being done by women in the country, work which does not contribute to the gross domestic product, yet the economy cannot Similarly, stand without. public budgeting and loans acquisition which does not centre immediate basic developmental needs of citizens is equally an outstanding issue in our governance systems.

The young scholars carried out their research under three main thematic areas namely; Austerity & Gender responsive public debt management, Progressive budgeting for Human

WANTWA MWAMLIMA STAFF REPORTER

Malawi Human Rights Commission executive secretary Habiba Osman has hailed new research on feminist macroeconomics, saying it is key to ensuring evidence-based policies that foster gender equality in the country.

She was speaking in Lilongwe on Thursday when For Equality, a non-governmental organisation, graduated nine scholars who have completed an intensive training programme on feminist macroeconomics.

The scholars developed some research papers addressing

Feminist macroeconomics advocacy key—MHR(

challenges prevalent in Malawi. Osman said evidence-based

research should be used to guide duty-bearers and policymakers as

they come up with policies that support gender equality. "When you look at microeconomic activities, women are not as active. So, policymakers must ensure they are promoting good labour practices and allowing women to access labour," she said. In his remarks, director

of technical services in the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare Dalitso Chikwembani hailed the scholars' pieces of literature, saying they complement efforts towards realising gender equality in the

country. He said: "Feminist macroeconomics is an important discipline in the quest to achieve gender equality and women empowerment."

The scholars are expected to

publish their research papers as advocacy tools to influence policies that address the lived realities of women and girls. .



A cross-section of the scholars

and Care Economy and Decent Work. 9 scholars graduated on the 1st of March 2024, at the Malawi school of government. Present the at event were representatives from government keyline ministries such as Labor, Lands Finance, Trade. and Gender, Community Development and social welfare with Mr Dalitso Chikwembeni.the Director of Technical services from the Ministry of Gender,

Rights and social welfare filling in as guest of honour. In his remarks, he stated; "Let me appeal to all government MDAs, representatives NGOs, CSOs, the private sector and all stakeholders gathered here continued collaboration supporting our graduating scholars for better opportunities. Most importantly, let us create a conducive environment where their effort and knowledge can flourish»

Also gracing the event

were diverse stakeholders working in the economic justice sector including from Oxfam, Christian Aid and Malawi Human Rights for Commission. Habiba Osman, one of the keynote speakers also extended gratitude to For Equality, for investing in young feminists and knowledge production as capacity allows the youth actively participate the socio-economic on scene.





Tabitha Tiffany Phiri, one of the young scholars fellowship graduates, shared her inspiring feminist journey. Raised in urban Lilongwe, she was surrounded by women who had leadership and independence; defying social norms and shaping her perspectives on gender equality. Tabitha's grandmother pioneered



land and property ownership and was the first woman to build her own house in her village. "My mother had a successful career with a 5-9 job and held positions in decisionmaking spaces. My aunts, were career-driven too, women. In our household, was treated equally brother," alongside my shared Tabitha. Additionally, attended all-girls and secondary primary schools, where she did not experience gender bias. The women in her life served as role models, making life seem equal and fair.

2015 marked the beginning Tabitha's passionate pursuit for gender equality when she visited her home village after completing her Malawi School Certificate of Education. She spent an extended amount of time subsistence performing tasks including the incredibly tiring chore of collecting biomass fuels and there was neither time for leisure or enjoyment nor adequate rest. Tabitha further noticed that other couldn>t catch airls schoolwork or on their participate in incomegenerating activities. Whilst cooking, women or girls often coughed vigorously due to the immense smoke from open fires and most young girls including Tabitha suffered burns from the fires. This experience made her realise that access to energy was gendered and highlighted the extent of unequal gender relations and that women in the rural areas faced severe energy poverty.

"After six weeks in the village, I returned to my parents" home, leaving my fellow girls in energy poverty. I felt a deep sense of guilt for enjoying modern and safe energy while they

"After six weeks in the village, I returned to my parents home, leaving my fellow girls in energy poverty. I felt a deep sense of guilt for enjoying modern and safe energy while they continued to struggle. This fueled my determination to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Development Studies, aiming to become a development practitioner and help my community."

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Upon the attainment of her degree, Tabitha found that her reach was limited and only managed to participate in a few advocacy initiatives with some local and

international organisations. She then learned of For Equality's Young Scholars Fellowship program through a colleague who had previously participated in a similar program and shared her transformative experience and the impactful research she had conducted with the support of the fellowship. Tabitha was especially motivated to apply for YSF due to the strong emphasis on feminist research and its commitment to fostering genderequalityineconomic policies. The opportunity delve deeply feminist macroeconomics and emerging feminist alternatives. resonated



OVERCOMING THROUGH FEMINIST MACROECONOMICS

deeply with her passion for gender iustice and sustainable development.

Tabitha's application into the fellowship was successful and she perceived it as an opportunity to make a more meaningful impact. With the resources and support provided by the fellowship, she conducted research women_s access to on renewable energy. She aimed to gather accurate data and facts to inform new policies and budget formulations that would accommodative and be inclusive to women.

"I am advocating for the girls who did not have the same opportunities I did, striving to meaningful change in

energy access and gender equality." (Appearing in an air bubble)

When asked on the impact of the fellowship, Tabitha shared that the program has been transformative professionally and personally. Her understanding of genderresponsive policies has been deepened and she has been equipped with advanced research skills. She further learned the importance of intersectional feminist perspectives in economic analysis, the power of research and evidencebased advocacy, and significance the of collaboration in advancina social bring about justice. She hopes that her research paper

will create a ripple effect, impacting young women advance to interests the in energy sector. Furthermore, she is proud to have contributed to the economic iustice body of knowledge in Malawi, which currently has limited research.

Amplifying young women's voices like Tabitha's is key to FE's mission and vision!





Through the For Equality Platform, Tabitha believes her work will play a role influencing policy and shaping sustainable development, she is further empowered to advocate for policies that are inclusive to women's participation and economic trade in activities create to fair labour markets for women. Through fellowship, the Tabitha was motivated to advance her studies further and is currently pursuing postgraduate studies Trade and Gender.

Like Tabitha, For Equality

thrives to impact many young women towards building a mass movement young feminists believes Malawi. FE in equipping women with the skills and knowledge to be able to advocate for themselves on issues that affect their lives. The 9 research papers produced from the Young Scholars Fellowship serve to address various economic sectors in Malawi toward encouraging inclusive policies, feminist alternatives to the economy as well as highlighting other critical intersectional areas





17,000+ people reached with educative, insightful and informative messages through the response's newest publication; Mudzi Wathu Animated series

17,000+ people reached with educative, insightful and informative messages through the response's newest publication; Mudzi Wathu Animated series (appearing in a sticker).

Language is one of the most important tools for advancing advocacy. Language fosters understanding, builds community and inspires action. For Equality in the spirit of diversity introduced Mudzi the Wathu series this year, an educational tool aimed to inform and call people to action on Gender and Economic discourse issues that affect our rights and lives.

Mudzi Wathu is a concise and brief channel of understanding FE's grounds for advocacy through relatable narrations and strives to create mass awareness of Gender & Social Justice and Economic Justice & Rights discourse, leaving no one behind. With the use of Chichewa, FE has engaged and impacted a wider audience by tapping into personal experiences that the average Malawian encounters. Wathu translates to "Our Community/ Village/ Society" and as the world evolves into a global village, FE recognizes the need for innovative approaches to achieving gender equality as digitalisation is at the centre of development.

Despite Malawi lagging behind with only a %24 internet penetration rate (Kemp 2023), over %50 of the country's population consists of people aged below 35 years old (OECD 2018) and FE has managed to reach over 20,000+ people across social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter and TikTok. Additionally. the broadcasted series is on story club radio, a community radio present in the central and southern regions of Malawi with a listenership of 100,000+ and on Timveni Television, a local Tv station with a viewership of 1,000,000+.

THE RESPONSE MACRO-ECONOMICS ALLIANCE-MALAWI

Through Mudzi Wathu series, FE managed to introducethetopicsofDebt. Neoliberalism, Carework, Austerity, Safe Abortion, Sexual Harassment. Male and Engagement Health financing and Accountability.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

SPOTLIGHT

WANGIWE JOANNA KAMBUZI

In the fast changing world, For Equality, building on its value of innovation, strives to tap into emerging trends and leverage technology to achieve its advocacy work. We continue to be inspired by young women such as Wangiwe Kambuzi who have taken up the digital space and are creating room for young women to participate, thrive, create and lead in technology.

Mzuzu E-Hub is among the leading business development and digital technology institutions under in Malawi. Not only is it the Young Women led, but it Social has significantly advanced digital skills training for hundreds of young women in Malawi.

Wanqiwe is а communication practitioner and business development professional. Through her passion towards youth and

community development, she founded Mzuzu E-Hub currently

working as the Managing Director. She was recognized as one of 2019s Meaningful Business 100 successfully

combining profit and purpose to help achieve the UN SDGs. SASA/Global Startup Awards 2019 Female Role Model of the year Malawi and

awardee

2018 Community Builder

Impact Incubator Malawi. She supported the 2019 Youth Decide Malawi Campaign as

Youth Manifesto Champion and was one of Malawi's youth delegates at the 2019 Model





African Union and the World Youth Forum. She is a SEED BDS Advisor. Miller Center Accelerator Program-Cohort 24 Alumni, African Women Entrepreneurship Cooperative (AWEC) Cohort 3 alumni. #DOTYOUTH Street Team-Girls in ICT 2022 Alumni and Segal Family Foundation 22/2021 African Visionary Fellow. Wangiwe brings a pool of knowledge and expertise in organizational development from both corporate and development sectors towards enhancing socio-economic development.

Areas of Expertise:
Communication and
Engagement, Business
Development, Project
Management,
Events planning and
management, Digital

Marketing, Resource mobilization i.e., proposal development, strategy development; Facilitation.

Thanks a lot for having me featured in this newsletter.

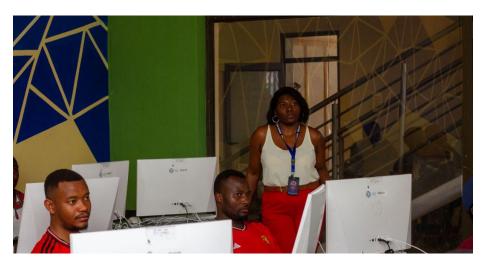
What would you describe as effective women's leadership?

One of the core aspects of effective women's leadership is authenticitybeing genuine and knowing and being yourself, whilst understanding your style of leading. Self-awareness is setting the pace for what are you really great at and what you are not, getting feedback towards amplifying your strengths whilst improving on your weaknesses. Furthermore, the beauty of showing up, taking up spaces and being present wholly.

As a woman in leadership, you should master the art of building meaningful connections professionally and personally. And more than anything, explore your potential to the fullest and commit towards achieving your highest level of capabilities.

May you share with us a bit of your personal journey as a woman leader?

My personal journey has





been a roller coaster ride But some things being certain, I have grown from being lesser aware of my leadership potential to understanding my level of influence in society-it's called change leadership. From childhood, I was always eager to be on the frontline-never at the back. little did I know that the experiences would little contribute to what I have become now. Professionally, went from being Customer Care Consultant the in one of leading mobile communications companies in Malawi to leading one of most amazing and dynamic social enterprises- Mzuzu E-Hub with very strong foundations of leadership developmentthroughYouth to Youth Empowerment Network as the Northern Region Coordinator. Commonwealth **Business** Women Malawi Chapter as the Head of National Leadership Group, Executive member of the Commonwealth Alliance for Young Entrepreneurs in Southern Africa and many more.

Personally, I have grown from being a doubtful person to a passionate leader. I live by a set of core values that contribute to my self-leadership, I enjoy building meaningful relationships with peers

for my continued learning and exploration, I set my goals and align them to my professional prospects and I exercise self-control in diverse situations. Overall, I am Bold, I am Confident and I am Self Aware.

For Equality believes in women's leadership and works towards fostering those attitudes amonast young women. In our current socio-political environment. would it be valuable to have more young women in leadership roles? What aualities thev would bring?

We absolutely need to amplify the presence young women in leadership in Malawi and some of the key interventions we need to be more intentional about is engaging women in diverse conversations, providina eaual opportunities different sectors which is one of the key initiatives we champion at Mzuzu E-Hub especially in the socio-economic sphere to enhance their self-reliance, address diverse inequalities, supporting health and wellness and leadership development through mentorship and coaching programs.

Women in leadership have demonstrated strong

critical thinking, better problem solving, women empowering fellow women and amplified financial gains especially within an organizational setting. A great example, personally leading the Mzuzu E-Hub has strongly contributed towards organizational development especially resource mobilization and fundraising as most partners are now more than ever much more intentional in supporting women in leadership.

What can be done differently to better prepare young women in Malawi for leadership?

We need more leadership development programs for airls and women in Malawi- that can add value to a mindset shift and misconceptions on being a leader as a woman. Through mentorship and coaching, girls and women can learn and network with women that have been there and built vast experience and the exposure can contribute towards improved awareness, confidence and interest to become more. We are living in an exciting time whereby we have role models in different sectors and their availability can be pushed towards a greater good for others to gain the exposure and be inspired



at different levels of their personal and professional journey.

Which policies can we leverage on to promote young women's participation and leadership?

Malawi as a country and organisations working in different sectors should adopt and implement Gender inclusive



from the digital space to advance our advocacy for both gender and economic justice?

opportunities for women

to progress and advance,

inclusion of mentoring or

sponsorship programs to

elevatewomenandadvance

their career prospects, set

diversity and inclusion goals

and strategies. Through our

initiatives, we began to learn

and understand some of the

challenges that contribute

towards reduced women's

participation in different

One of the key lessons that I appreciate about the digital space is the ongoing increase in efforts towards engaging women improving and their diverse participation in initiatives. As Enterprise Support Organisations in Malawi, we foster inclusive program design implementation including investment support and champion equal opportunities for all. Most of these ESOs are women led, which is exciting and there is a ton of opportunities being channeled to women for women to build and strengthen their leadership development.

For every step we are taking as women in leadership now, the next women in leadership will find the path easier as they have diverse women to look up to just as we are currently doing. Intergenerational learning should be strongly leveraged and utilized in our societies.

MEET

THE FOR EQUALITY TEAM

For Equality has continued to grow through various transitions, including the endorsement of a new board and new team members to further strengthen our advocacy work. Meet the team;



Tadala Boti Head of Programs/ Interim Executive Director



Yamikani Sonkhani Head of Finance and Adminstration



Mervis Kamanga Gender & Social Justice Lead



Zaithwa Kateka Communications, Campaigns & Engagements officer



Alex kambicho



Shadreck Kilembe Finance and Administration Officer



Chisomo Chibwana Climate Justice Officer



Joan Ching'amba Economic Justice & Rights Officer



Violet Kamwendo Banda Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning Officer

BOARD MEMBERS



Margret Tendai Mwale, (Board Chair) Social Worker. Psychosocial Counselor



Faith Adams
Development
Practitioner & Gender
Activist



Theodora Talumba Mkali, Senior Lecturer; Catholic University of Malawi



Lucky Likogwe,



Wezzie Mtonga Kamphale, Development & Humanitarian Professional



Nyatuwe Emma Phiri, Social Worker & Human Rights Specialist



Brian Munyao Longwe, Information & Communication Technology Expert.



Alinafe Gama, Gender & Diversity Advisor



Tadala Chizimba, Feminist Movement Builder & Advocacy professional



We demand accountability for key populations health financing to facilitate diverse programming that responds to individual needs!































SPONSE ETTER

forequalityafrica.org

Our Communications Line: +265 989 833 944 Our Safeguarding Line: +265 881 012 165