

JUNE 2023



Point of Progress
NETWORKING FOR YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT



**GIRLS
GET EQUAL**

NEWSLETTER

INSIDE

About Point Of Progress

GGE Project Summary

Contextual Update

Point of Progress
Spearheads the Battle against
Child Early Forced Marriages
(CEFM)

Education:
A Tool in the Fight
against Child Marriage

Rescued from the
Clutches of Child Marriage

Slow But Sure

Harvesting Success:
The Isaac Chapima Case Study
on CoC Triumph

Unleashing Potential:
Defying the Notion of Disability
as Inability

Group Village Headwomen
Nankhonyo and Mabuka
show how to fight CEFM in Mulanje

Capitalizing on Gulewamkulu
in the fight against CEFM



ABOUT POINT OF PROGRESS

Point of Progress is a local non-governmental organization dedicated to empowering youth and children, enabling them to take meaningful action on the challenges they face and actively contribute to the process of development. The organization also provides a platform for young women and men from diverse backgrounds to come together, share ideas, exchange experiences, and learn from one another in their collective pursuit of a more promising future. Point of Progress is officially registered with the Malawi Government, Council for Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGOMA), and NGO Regulatory Authority (NGORA).

The organization empowers young individuals, particularly women and girls, to initiate programs and shape policies in crucial areas such as child rights, environment/climate change, agriculture, gender, sexuality, health, education, and governance. Through the establishment of community clubs, the organization enhances the leadership skills of children and youth, enabling them to actively engage and contribute to matters directly impacting their daily lives. By promoting, safeguarding, and advancing the rights of children and young people, the organization strives to bolster their influence and broaden their participation in addressing relevant issues.



OUR BELIEF

We believe that the youth of Malawi, if equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills, are a force of change to be reckoned with. We believe that our youths have the energy to create a more powerful and more united Malawi.

MISSION

We empower youths in Malawi by offering access to relevant skills and knowledge that help them make more informed decisions that create better futures for them and their families.

PURPOSE

We exist to create a more united Malawi, one where both men and women are equally active in building a better future for themselves and their communities.

POINT OF DIFFERENCE

Three key factors set us apart from other youth led organizations and clubs

- ✿ Our belief that 'young people' are the key to unlocking the key challenges that keep Malawi behind (dated beliefs / gender disparity / poor education)
- ✿ Our belief that providing youth with relevant knowledge and skills addresses 3 key pillars; Decision making, confidence and leadership, new ideas and innovations which inspire and equip young people to make positive change.
- ✿ Our model methodology

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GIRLS GET EQUAL

SUMMARY



The Girls Get Equal Project (GGE) is a performance-based initiative rooted in evidence, with the primary goal of contributing to the reduction of child marriage rates at both district and national levels in Malawi.

GGE adopts a dual approach to transform discriminatory norms. Firstly, it collaborates with gatekeepers and society as a whole to effect change. Secondly, it empowers Children, Adolescents, and Youth (CAYs) to become catalysts for gender equality and child rights through the Champion of Change (COC) methodology. The project receives funding from NORAD through Plan International-Malawi, while implementation partners include Plan International Malawi, Point of Progress (POP), Centre for Alternatives for Victimised Women and Children (CAVWOC), Churches Action in Relief and Development (CARD), and Creative Centre for Community Mobilization (CRECCOM).

Project Duration: January 2020-December, 2024.

Impact Area: Mulanje (TAs Mabuka, Juma, Nkanda and Njema), Lilongwe (TA Chimutu) and Phalombe (TAs Nkhulambe and Nazombe)

Goal: To contribute to the reduction of child marriage rate at district and national levels in Malawi.

Target Group: This project is targeting, 87041 CAYs (in 189 schools, 102 communities) as direct beneficiaries and 1656 norm setters (chiefs, religious leaders, government officials and initiators) as indirect beneficiaries.

Summary Of Achievements 2020-2023

Number of CAYs reached	69600	53489	The variance will be met in the last half of 2023
Number of out of school children brought into schools	2775	4302	Local structures contributed a lot through self-led go back to school campaigns
Number of CAYs identified as high risk by the project who received other type of support	3780	3780	Psychosocial support provision CAYs increased the numbers
Number of religion leaders, traditional leaders and government officials supporting the work against CEFM	1026	1033	Traditional leaders are supportive to CEFM fight
Number of initiators, matchmakers, AMC who cooperate to stop the practice of CEFM	630	637	Initiators are supportive to CEFM fight
Percentage of boys who express support for girls' education and against CEFM	80	75.6	This is as of 2022. Data for 2023 is yet to be collected
Percentage of youth reporting that the family supports equal opportunities for sons and daughters in education and employment and will not marry their children before they are 18	90	41	This is as of 2022. Data for 2023 is yet to be collected
Number of persons received awareness-raising on issues related to CEFM (gender equality, child's rights and harm of CEFM)	296600	263569	The variance will be met in the last half of 2023

Summary Of Achievements 2020-2023

Percentage of adolescents who are empowered based on self-assessment using empowerment index	80	50.69	This is as of 2022. Data for 2023 is yet to be collected
Number of girls and boys who received training on gender equality, child rights and CEFM (using Champion of Change methodology)	12556	7183	This is as of 2022. Data for 2023 is yet to be collected
Number of CBCP committees/mechanisms that are functional and have a sufficient degree of sustainability	102	66	This is as of 2022. Data for 2023 is yet to be collected
Number of religion leaders, traditional leaders and government officials supporting the work against CEFM	1026	1033	This is as of 2022. Data for 2023 is yet to be collected
Number of CBCPCs that advocate for increased support from the government	60	67	This is as of 2022. Data for 2023 is yet to be collected
Number of official duty bearers/CBCP members trained	901	911	Targeted members have been trained
Number of CAYs who are active in movement towards child rights and gender equality	12556	7183	This is as of 2022. Data for 2023 is yet to be collected

POINT OF PROGRESS' EFFORTS IN FIGHTING THE SCOURGE OF CHILD EARLY FORCED MARRIAGES (CEFM)



Contextual Update

Phalombe and Mulanje, districts situated in the southern region of Malawi, are renowned for their rich Lhomwe cultural heritage. Embedded within this cultural fabric are initiation ceremonies, intended to mark the transition of teenagers into adulthood. However, these ceremonies, which encompass aspects of sexual orientation, have been identified by some as contributing factors to child marriages and adolescent pregnancies in these districts.

In contrast, the central region's Lilongwe district is predominantly inhabited by the Chewa community, whose initiation ceremonies focus on guiding teenagers towards responsible adulthood through the *Gule Wamkulu* rite of passage.

From 2020 to 2023, the global COVID-19 pandemic and devastating cyclones exacerbated an already dire situation, resulting in a significant increase in the number of girls abandoning their education and falling victim to child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM). Poverty serves as the underlying cause for such marriages involving children under the age of 18 in Malawi. Particularly, the districts of Phalombe and Mulanje face the highest child marriage rates, reaching 68% and 62% respectively, as reported by UNICEF in 2019. These distressing figures reflect the alarming national statistics on early marriages in Malawi, where approximately 42% of girls are married before the age of 18, with an additional 9% being married before the age of 15, according to the same UNICEF report. In fact, a 2018 study conducted by Lea Mwambene, a law professor at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa, ranks Malawi as the 11th country with the highest child marriage rate globally.

Despite the legal prohibition of marriage for individuals under the age of 18, child marriage persists in Malawi. This phenomenon is fueled, in part, by the misguided belief that once a girl reaches puberty, she is prepared for marriage.

Many communities in Malawi view child marriage as being in the best interest of girls and their families. Some families consider it a means to improve their economic situation, either through dowry payments made by the groom's family or ongoing support provided by the daughter's husband. For certain girls, marriage may appear as a potential but often unrealized path to escape poverty.

Additionally, child marriage is deeply ingrained in Malawi's traditions and patriarchal cultures, which promote early sexual initiation, marriage, and the subordination of women while stigmatizing adolescent pregnancy. Marriage is seen as a way to protect girls who become pregnant, preserving family honor.

Child marriage profoundly hampers the fulfillment of crucial human rights for girls and women. It directly infringes upon their rights to health, education, freedom from physical, mental, and sexual violence, and the autonomy to enter into marriage only when they are capable and willing to provide their voluntary and complete consent. The detrimental consequences of child marriage become increasingly severe as the age at which girls are married decreases.

Against this backdrop, the Point of Progress (POP) has taken a significant step in challenging discriminatory social norms through their Girls Get Equal project, known as *Zotheka*, in the regions of Lilongwe, Phalombe, and Mulanje. This project focuses on engaging local leaders actively to transform the social norms that perpetuate Child Early Forced Marriages (CEFM). POP conducts regular trainings and awareness sessions, collaborating closely with local leaders. This proactive approach has resulted in a growing number of chiefs joining the movement, actively dissolving marriages and encouraging the return of children to school.

Additionally, POP collaborates closely with district social welfare officers under the project's umbrella, aiming to eradicate forced child marriages and all forms of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Together, they work tirelessly towards creating a society where such harmful practices are eliminated.

EDUCATION: A Tool in the Fight against Child Marriage



Shamim Magambe and Bernadetta Makawa

Education stands as a paramount priority in the holistic growth of young individuals, not solely due to their association with the education system, but because it equips them with the necessary tools to thrive in life. It is through education that young men and women can enhance their personal development, while simultaneously fostering progress within local communities and the entire nation. The provision of high-quality, pertinent, and effectively administered education is intricately intertwined with the holistic advancement of both the individual and the wider society.

Despite the existence of numerous programs and initiatives in the education sector, significant challenges persist that hinder the promotion of universal education and student retention in schools. However, an inspiring transformation has occurred through the empowerment of youth via Champion of Change Clubs (CoCs) and the enlightening of community members about their education rights.

Despite the existence of numerous programs and initiatives in the education sector, significant challenges persist that hinder the promotion of universal education and student retention in schools. Point of Progress has successfully reintegrated 4,302 Children and Youth (CAYs) back into schools, including 2,899 girls, 1,403 boys, 11 girls with disabilities, and 27 boys with disabilities.

Initially, Point of Progress initiated dialogues with communities, education officials, and local leaders to identify gaps in upholding youth rights to education. This process revealed weaknesses in enforcing school attendance and challenges in providing learning materials and fostering self-reliance among students. The dialogue topics addressed the significance of the right to education and facilitated discussions on self-led income-generating activities for self-sponsorship. Subsequently, follow-ups were conducted at the district level to assess the number of students who returned to school and those who achieved self-sponsorship through income generation.

Shamim Magambe (17 years old) and **Bernadetta Makawa** (16 years old) are among the courageous girls who have been reintegrated into Nambiti Primary School in Phalombe. These two girls share a powerful story as they both escaped child marriages in 2021, bravely breaking free from the shackles of child marriages in Mwalala Village.



Bernadetta Makawa

"Our lives have been truly transformed by the CoC modules at Nambiti Primary School. We have not only gained newfound assertiveness and self-confidence but also developed an unwavering determination to pursue our education up to the tertiary level,"

exclaimed Shamim and Bernadeta in unison.

The program's admirable endeavor to reintegrate dropout students back into school encounters a few notable challenges.

Firstly, there is an overwhelming demand from the returning CAYs regarding learning materials and school fees, which often leads to subsequent dropout incidents.

Furthermore, the considerable distances to schools and inadequate learning environments exert additional pressures that contribute to the recurrence of dropout cases.



Shamim Magambe

RESCUED FROM THE CLUTCHES OF CHILD MARRIAGE



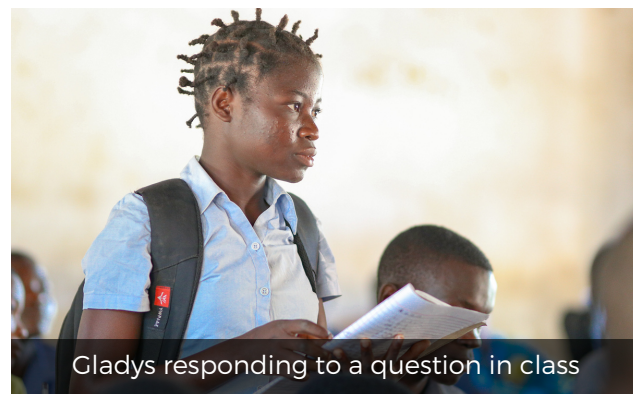
Trapped in the vicious cycle of child marriage, 15-year-old Gladys Manyamba from Phalombe district experienced the devastating consequences of parental negligence and a lack of care. Reflecting on her difficult past, Gladys revealed that her parents divorced when she was very young, leaving her mother struggling to provide for their family of three children. This challenging situation became the catalyst for her unfortunate entanglement in a child marriage. As Gladys assumed the responsibility of caring for her siblings, she faced a myriad of challenges.

"I desperately wanted my siblings to continue their education, but despite my relentless efforts, it seemed impossible to make ends meet."

"During that challenging period, I made the difficult decision to marry a boy who had shown me kindness and support. I was 14 at the time, and he was 17. Within our village, he was regarded as one of the most caring individuals. Trusting him, and believing he would provide for us, I entered into marriage with him."

"However, life took a darker turn as he started subjecting me to abuse. I felt utterly hopeless, abandoned by my parents and devoid of any familial care. Despite my anguish, the community members encouraged me to endure the hardships and stay committed to 'my husband.'"

Through their impactful project, Girls Get Equal, Point Of Progress identified Gladys with the assistance of the Nambiti Child Protection Committee. Taking swift action, Point of Progress facilitated Gladys's return to school in 2020, specifically in standard 8.



“

"I was only 11 years old when my parents got divorced and embarked on new marriages with other partners," recalls Gladys.

"Unfortunately, their new spouses did not feel comfortable having us around."

”

Despite attending school on empty stomachs, they struggled to procure essential learning materials such as books. Daily survival revolved around a meager meal, often limited to once a day. To cope with the dire circumstances, they devised a system where each sibling had to independently source their own food, reconvening only at night to rest. Truly, life presented them with formidable hardships.

"The situation became unbearable, and I felt overwhelmed. My siblings had no inkling of the struggles I was enduring," she recalls with a heavy heart.



They provided her with essential support and ensured that her siblings found ways to reconnect with their parents. To enable Gladys to pursue her education, Point of Progress covered her examination fees and generously supplied her with a school uniform and other necessary items. Remarkably, she excelled among her peers and secured a place in a government secondary school after successfully completing the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examinations. Currently, Gladys has completed her Junior Certificate Examinations (JCE) at Nkhulambe Secondary School and eagerly awaits her outstanding results.

SLOW BUT SURE



Selina Kaponda coming from her class

"Hope seemed lost when I made the heartbreaking decision to drop out of school in standard 8. With the tragic loss of my parents and the inability of my relatives to sustain my basic needs for education, continuing my studies became an insurmountable challenge," Selina reveals with a heavy heart. "It was at this point that the ominous specter of child marriage loomed over me, and at the tender age of 15, I found myself entangled in its grip."

As you journey through the heart of Phalombe in Traditional Authority (T/A) Nkhulambe, the initial impression may be that life scarcely exists. Nazombe, nestled in the midst of these remote lands, greets you with lush vegetation adorning the mountains as you draw closer to the communities. However, this perception quickly transforms once you engage with the remarkable CAYs and local leaders residing here. The true appreciation deepens further upon encountering Selina Kaponda, an exceptional 18-year-old student currently studying in Form 3 at Michesi Community Day Secondary School.

A pivotal moment arose when the Nkhulambe CoC embarked on a comprehensive series of community sensitization campaigns and initiatives aimed at reintegrating out-of-school youth back into the educational system.

These efforts specifically targeted key stakeholders such as the District Social Welfare Office, District Education Office, and local community structures. In addition, the project diligently trained CoCs in diverse methodologies encompassing gender, child rights, and combating Child Early Forced Marriages (CEFM).

Within this context, Selina emerged as a remarkable case that demanded special attention from the Nkhulambe CoC. Despite her parents having previously dismissed the notion of education for her due to having two children at that time, the CoC rallied the support of mother groups, teachers, the school management committee, and the parents' teacher association. Together, they initiated a profound community-wide awareness campaign emphasizing the imperative of keeping children in school.





Selina Kaponda studying

"I was approached by members of the CoCs who emphasized the importance of returning to school and connected me with the head teacher. I heeded their advice and was delighted when my relatives agreed to support my return to education. However, the lack of learning materials and a school uniform posed significant obstacles. Thankfully, Point of Progress swiftly stepped in and provided me with the necessary support, and now I find myself here, attending secondary school," Selina narrates with gratitude.

Selina has progressed to Form 3 at Michesi CDSS, and her academic performance is steadily improving. She receives immense support from her fellow classmates, club members, and teachers.

"I am profoundly thankful to Point of Progress for enlightening us about the importance of girls' agency in education rights and decision-making processes related to Child Early Forced Marriages (CEFM). I fervently hope that my dreams of becoming a nurse will someday materialize," Selina concludes with a radiant smile.

HARVESTING SUCCESS: THE ISAAC CHAPIMA CASE STUDY ON COC TRIUMPH



Isaac Chapima at one of his mentoring sessions

The Girls Get Equal (GGE) program operates with the objective of engaging boys as partners in championing child rights, promoting gender equality, and combating Child Early Forced Marriages (CEFM) through the effective implementation of the Champion of Change (CoC) methodology. This innovative approach empowers girls while involving boys in the identification and transformation of harmful, negative masculinities that perpetuate discrimination and inequality. The CoC methodology facilitates distinct but interconnected paths of growth for both girls and boys. The girls' journey focuses on enhancing self-esteem, promoting awareness of rights, fostering collective empowerment, and facilitating economic independence.

On the other hand, the boys' journey involves unlearning behaviors that contribute to inequality and transforming discriminatory attitudes that sustain power imbalances. Through the CoC modules, members gain insights into how unfair expectations and negative masculinities affect them and discover ways to support girls' rights and promote gender equality. The program fosters collaboration between girls and boys, encouraging open discussions on evolving perspectives regarding gender and social transformation. Together, they work towards finding community-specific solutions. Presently, the GGE program has successfully reached 7,183 active CAYs (3,592 girls and 3,591 boys) who have completed the modules under the CoC methodology. Isaac Chapima, a member of Mapondo CoC in Phalombe, has emerged as one of the notable beneficiaries of this intervention and now serves as a mentor for the club.

"In a society deeply rooted in conservatism and male dominance, I was raised with limited agency over my future and decisions. However, my transformative journey through the CoC modules awakened a resolute commitment within me to champion gender equity and combat gender-based violence. It is imperative for men to raise their voices and actively participate in dismantling oppressive norms. I aspire for the daughters of our community to have the autonomy to shape their own destinies—whether it be choosing their partners or deciding on the number of children they wish to have. Today, I stand firm in my belief, knowing that tomorrow, you too will share this conviction," expressed Isaac, brimming with determination.





Isaac Chapima welding at Nkhulambe Hospital

The Girls Get Equal (GGE) program initially engaged district stakeholders, with a special focus on the District Youth Officers (DYO) and District Social Welfare Officers (DSWO). Collaborating with organizations such as CARD, which provided welding training, as well as CAWVOC and POP, who concentrated on CoC and CEFM training, the program nurtured Mapondo CoC through a comprehensive module-based approach.

In 2020, Isaac enthusiastically joined Mapondo CoC and embarked on a transformative journey as a qualified peer educator and trainer. He has since facilitated numerous sessions, primarily working with his peers in vulnerable communities. Isaac has been instrumental in initiating community awareness meetings, advocating for the inclusion and empowerment of girls.



Reflecting on his personal growth, Isaac shared, "Initially, I held misconceptions that relegated girls to mere domestic roles in the kitchen. However, I have now gained a profound understanding of the immense value in empowering girls. I am proud to have successfully withdrawn and reintegrated 15 girls back into school. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to undergo welding training and secured a contract to rehabilitate Nkhulambe Hospital, which had been ravaged by cyclone Freddy. Through this endeavor, I earned an impressive MK 120,000 per week."



UNLEASHING POTENTIAL: DEFYING THE NOTION OF DISABILITY AS INABILITY



Margret Mlamba



Margret welding a bed at Nkhulambe Hospital

Youth living with disabilities in Malawi encounter significant challenges in exercising their rights to education and participation. They often face discrimination from their peers and the wider community, who attach unjust taboos to disability. Consequently, many are confined to their homes by parents seeking to shield them from such prejudice. However, a transformative shift has occurred through the empowerment of youth and the comprehensive training of community members on inclusivity for youth with disabilities. As a result, 232 youth with disabilities (110 girls and 122 boys) have been welcomed into CoC clubs as part of the Girls Get Equal (GGE) program.

Margaret, a remarkable young woman with a disability, is among the CAYs who have found a place within the CoC methodology. Reflecting on her experience, she shared, "Initially, it was challenging for me to venture out and engage in activities with my friends. However, everything changed when Mapondo conducted a sensitization meeting in our village. I eagerly joined the group, where I learned that disability should never be equated with inability."

Margaret's journey carries additional weight, as she faced the risk of falling into the trap of Child Early Forced Marriage (CEFM) due to her economic constraints. Growing up in an environment where masculinity is defined by men's dominance over women, Margaret experienced the abandonment of the man who impregnated her without providing any support for their child.

"I was utterly devastated when my husband abandoned his responsibilities towards our child. However, a glimmer of hope emerged when I joined Mapondo CoC. Upon completing the CoC modules, I made a resolute decision to advocate for gender equity and combat gender-based violence alongside my fellow girls. Remarkably, I received comprehensive welding training and successfully secured a contract to restore Nkhulambe Hospital, which had been ravaged by Cyclone Freddy. This opportunity has enabled me to earn MK 120,000 per week. With the newfound financial stability, I have managed to purchase 28 iron sheets for my house and cover my child's school fees at the Early Childhood Development Center. No man will ever deceive me into another marriage," concludes Margaret.

The Girls Get Equal (GGE) program initiated its engagement with district stakeholders, notably the District Youth Officers (DYO) and District Social Welfare Officers (DSWO). Collaborating with organizations like CARD, which provided welding training, as well as CAWVOC and POP, which focused on CoC and CEFM training, the program meticulously guided Mapondo CoC through the entirety of the methodologies' modules.

GROUP VILLAGE HEADWOMEN NANKHONYO AND MABUKA SHOW HOW TO FIGHT CEFM IN MULANJE

In a country where the national rate of child marriage stands at a concerning 42%, the repercussions are evident in the high dropout rates among girls. Child marriage and early pregnancies remain the primary factors contributing to this distressing trend. As a result, many young girls find themselves leaving school prematurely, leaving them with limited opportunities to earn a livelihood and making them vulnerable to various forms of gender-based violence.

To address these issues, the Girls Get Equal Project has emerged as a pivotal force in advocating for the support of community influencers, working in collaboration with traditional leaders to nullify child marriages. Notably, the efforts of Group Village Headwomen Nankhonya and Mabuka in Mulanje have yielded inspiring results in the fight against Child Early Forced Marriages (CEFM). GVH Mabuka has successfully facilitated the return of 38 children to school while annulling 20 CEFM marriages within her jurisdiction. Similarly, GVH Nankhonya has played a vital role in reintegrating 32 children into the education system and annulling 21 CEFM cases. These achievements serve as shining examples of progress and resilience in the battle against child marriage.



GVH Nankhonya

"We are determined to ensure that girls in our area are not subjected to Child Early Forced Marriages (CEFM) but rather have the opportunity to pursue education... No child, especially a girl, should be left idle at home, forced into CEFM, or burdened with household chores during school hours," proclaimed the resolute traditional leaders in unison. The Girls Get Equal (GGE) project, recognizing the critical importance of consistent advocacy against CEFM, diligently raises awareness on this pressing issue and advocates for legislative changes.

Point of Progress (POP) has played a pivotal role by providing comprehensive training to traditional leaders on legislative instruments related to CEFM, Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), and Child Rights.

Initially, the traditional leaders encountered resistance from other community and opinion leaders, young couples, and parents, especially in cases where a man had invested in meeting the basic needs of a girl child. However, they overcame these challenges through persistent door-to-door campaigns, engaging mothers' groups, Village Development Committee members, and faith-based leaders. Through lobbying, sensitization efforts, and even annulling CEFM cases, they successfully challenged and condemned norms that perpetuated CEFM.



GVH Mabuka

The inspiring stories of GVH Nankhonya and GVH Mabuka highlight their relentless commitment to the fight against CEFM. To further strengthen this cause, the GGE project will continue to enhance the capacity of traditional leaders, religious leaders, and key stakeholders engaged in combating CEFM. Every village head and group village head has been encouraged to display public messages to solidify the fight against CEFM and conduct independent awareness campaigns, reinforcing the collective resolve to eradicate this harmful practice.

CAPITALIZING ON GULE WAMKULU IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CHILD EARLY FORCED MARRIAGES (CEFM)

Located in Lilongwe district in the central region of Malawi, Traditional Authority Chimutu encompasses a vibrant population of over 500,000. The area predominantly comprises the Chewa community, known for their initiation ceremonies that guide teenagers into responsible adulthood through the revered *Gule Wamkulu* rite of passage. However, this rite of passage has inadvertently contributed to persistently high rates of school dropouts and Child Early Forced Marriages (CEFM) in the region.

A meeting with Senior GVH Mseche defies the perception that *Gule Wamkulu* is intrinsically linked to CEFM and school dropouts. This astute chief has ingeniously harnessed the power of *Gule Wamkulu* to not only encourage CAYs to pursue education but also, significantly, to nullify instances of CEFM. The Girls Get Equal (GGE) project reinforces its unwavering commitment to combatting CEFM by diligently raising awareness and advocating for legislative change. Point of Progress (POP) has provided comprehensive training to traditional leaders on legislative instruments pertaining to CEFM, Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), and Child Rights.

"I aim to dismantle the misconceptions surrounding Gule Wamkulu. I utilize this cultural practice to ensure CAYs are enrolled in school and to abolish CEFM. With the assistance of Gule Wamkulu, I actively discourage children from idling at home or engaging in non-educational activities during school hours. Through this initiative, I have successfully reintegrated 33 children into the education system and annulled 40 CEFM cases," affirms the determined Senior GVH Mseche.

Initially, Senior GVH Mseche encountered resistance from other community and opinion leaders, as well as young couples and parents, particularly in marriages where a man had invested in meeting the basic needs of a girl child. However, he effectively overcame these challenges through persistent door-to-door campaigns, involving mothers' groups, Village Development Committee members, and faith-based leaders. His efforts encompassed lobbying, sensitization endeavors, and even annulling instances of CEFM. The inspiring full story of Senior GVH Mseche can be found by following this link.

The GGE project will continue to empower traditional leaders, religious leaders, and change initiators in their fight against CEFM. Encouragingly, all village heads and group village heads have been urged to publicly display messages to solidify the fight against CEFM and conduct independent awareness campaigns, reinforcing the collective commitment to eradicating this harmful practice.



Gule Wamkulu performance



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