



2018 Annual Report



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Next to Blantyre Youth Centre

From the Board Chairperson's Desk

It is a happy moment for me, again, to present to you our partners, the 2018 Annual Report. I am particularly thrilled with the fact that despite the funding challenges rocking our small organization, we still have been able to register remarkable achievements. All this has been possible because of your support in varied ways. To you PSGR says **'ZIKOMO - THANK YOU'**.

This report highlights the various project activities PSGR has implemented in the 2018 calendar year. The report is our commitment to promote transparency and accountability.

We are happy that in the ending year, government of Malawi appropriated funds into the Trafficking in Persons fund, as provided for by the Trafficking in Persons Act. However, we urge government to be open about this fund and ensure that it is really used to serve the intended purpose. For PSGR, the issue of protection and security for survivors of sex trafficking remains sticky and needs urgent action. This is also well highlighted in the National Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons in Malawi.

I am truly indebted to all the donors and well-wishers for your support without which it was difficult for us to meet our goal. In particular, I want to single out our working partnership with Equality Now, which has blossomed to the benefit of girls and women in Malawi trapped in sex trafficking and forced child marriages. I am equally excited to report that PSGR has entered into partnership with ECPAT International, whose key objective is to end child prostitution and trafficking and Fondation Scelles of France, a partnership aimed at exchanging data and learning from one another.

PSGR's partnership with Coalition Against Prostitution (CAP International) continues to grow. This is a coalition of frontline organizations fighting prostitution and sex trafficking worldwide. For the first time, PSGR will attend CAP Annual General Meeting in Germany this year.

I also would like to acknowledge the dynamism and commitment of my staff and volunteers who work with minimum resources to achieve results. **PSGR's work demands a great deal of personal commitment, patience, passion and honesty.** Without your dynamism, I am always left to imagine how the project activities would have been. I have no proper word to say more than **'thank you'**.

Looking forward, there are a couple of things that we must achieve, individually but also collectively. We need to intensify our resource mobilization drive so as to achieve our goals. We need to run shelter for the survivors of sex trafficking and other vulnerable girls. We need to engage more in advocacy, join hands together with others in our quest to contribute to the targets set in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) clocks 30 good years it was signed. I remind everyone not to be complacent with what we have achieved but we must do more!

I call upon all our partners, sponsors, donors to continue trusting us with resources. Your decisions is key to the realization of dreams – positive dreams for so many people in need! In addition, we enhance our collective role to achieve the Sustainable development Goals and other goals of national, regional and universal significance



1.0 INTRODUCTION

People Serving Girls At Risk (PSGR) is registered under the Trustees Inc. Act as a women's rights organization, specifically working with survivors of sex trafficking, prostituted women girls and women and forced child marriages. PSGR started against a background of increased cases of forced early marriages and trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation. We work in challenging environment with highest levels of poverty, high rates of child marriages

In Malawi, PSGR is a member of M-NAT (Malawi Network Against Trafficking), NGO Gender Coordination Network, NGO Coalition on Child Rights (NGO-CCR) and Civil Society Coalition for Basic Quality Education. Internationally, PSGR is a proud member of the Coalition Against Prostitution International, Girls Not Brides, and recently, ECPAT International.

PSGR has a dedicated Board of Trustees, carefully appointed from within Malawi based on their passion, achievements and contributions in child protection, girls and women empowerment. The Trustees provide the oversight role, fundraising for new programs and projects, ensure that audits are done to account for use of funds, approve organizational policies, etc. PSGR has a secretariat based in Blantyre along Chipatala Avenue headed by an Executive Director. It has 6 full time employees, filling different positions such as the Director, the Programme Manager, Finance Officer, 2 Project Officers, 1 Project Assistant and a Guard. A team of 5 volunteers based at the office and in communities help compliment the efforts of staff in various ways

1.1 MISSION

A frontline organization that works to abolish sex trafficking, child marriages and commercial sexual exploitation of girls and women;

1.2 VISION

A nation in which girls and women live a dignified life free from poverty, exploitation, abuse, violence, and gender discrimination;



We even converge under trees to raise awareness



We confront issues face to face with girls

1.4 PSGR's SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To raise awareness about child marriages, sex trafficking, and commercial sexual exploitation of girls and women;
2. To rehabilitate and reintegrate victims of sexual exploitation and sex trafficking;
3. To develop and undertake programs to respond to crosscutting issues like HIV/AIDS, water & sanitation, and natural disasters aimed to protect rights of girls and women;
4. To develop user-friendly programs aimed at diverting youth from engaging in mischief like alcohol and drug abuse;
5. To research and provide gender desegregated data on cases of sexual violence against girls and young women;

PSGR Staff



Caleb Ng'ombo
Executive Director



Frank Banda
Program Manager



Lydia Mtogo
Justice4Girls Project Officer



Debora Mzeza
Life Planning Facilitator



Samuel Kwakwala
Assistant Project Officer



Wyne Chima
End Child Marriage Officer



Henderson Mhago
Finance Officer



Juliana Magombo
Girls Mentorship Facilitator



Charity Mpekasmbo
SRHR Facilitator



Brenda Kananji
Assistant Project Officer

Contextual Analysis

Contextual Analysis

Malawi is facing a lot of social challenges, among them child marriage, sex trafficking and child prostitution. The 2016 State of the World's Children report by UNICEF ranked Malawi as having the eleventh highest child marriage rate in the world, with nearly 1 in 2 girls married before the age of 18. Only 28% of girls finish the full eight years of primary school and are often forced into early marriages, some as young as 9-10 years old. Between 2010 and 2013, 27,612 girls in primary schools and 4,053 girls in secondary schools in Malawi dropped out because of forced marriage. In addition to this, 14,051 primary school students and 5,597 secondary school students dropped out after becoming pregnant. It is estimated that half of the girls in Malawi will be married by their eighteenth birthday.

At the country level, Malawi has ratified several international treaties and conventions aimed at fighting and prohibiting child marriages including; the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Charter on Rights of the Child, 1999), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1981), the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1990), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Women in Africa (Women's Protocol on Human Rights, 2005) and the African Common Position on the AU Campaign to End Child Marriage in Africa.

In February 2017, the Parliament of Malawi amended the Constitution and raised the age of marriage from 15 (with parental consent) to 18 years old for boys and girls. The President signed the constitutional amendment into law at the end of April 2017. This brought the constitution in line with the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act, which, in February 2015, raised the minimum age of marriage from 15 to 18.

On the other hand, sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of girls and women equally pose a serious threat to the lives and dignity of women and girls. The US TIP Report persistently denote Malawi as both a source and transit country for trafficking in person. Sex trafficking and prostitution are inextricably linked. Without a prostitution market, there would be no profit to be made by traffickers and pimps exploiting women and girls in the trade. Therefore, if we want to effectively deal with sex trafficking, we must also deal with the issue of prostitution.

Research from various countries has consistently found a high prevalence of extreme violence and a negative impacts on the physical and mental health of people in prostitution, both when it comes to individuals identified as victims of trafficking as well as women in prostitution who may not identify or be identified as such. Beyond physical injuries, these effects can include depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

In a legal analysis study commissioned by PSGR with technical support from Equality Now, it was established that Malawi has a number of good laws, including the Republican Constitution and the Trafficking in Persons Act (2015). However, prosecution on cases of sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation still rely on the Penal Code, to the exclusion of these laws. In terms of prostitution, the study revealed that much as the laws are not explicit, generally, **provisions are there 'prohibiting sexual activities for commercial purposes to counteract the illicit trafficking of women, girls and boys for sexual purposes within Malawi and outside'** as highlighted by the *2011 Malawi Law Commission Report on the Development of Trafficking in Persons Legislation 9*

It is also noteworthy to mention that currently there are no shelters or services related to girls and women survivors of sex trafficking or those escaping from commercial sexual exploitation. This is in spite of the Section 45 of Trafficking in Persons Act (2015) which gives power to Minister of Gender to designate any premises to be shelter for the care of and protection of any trafficked person.

2018 Achievements

In 2018 PSGR designed #JusticeForGirls Project under which a number of activities were undertaken. The hashtag was hatched after appreciating the enormous forms of injustice facing girls. In Malawi, and world over, girls are increasingly becoming victims of commercial sexual exploitation, rape/defilement, forced into early marriages. The following activities were undertaken under the #JusticeForGirls

Legal Analysis Study

In March 2018 PSGR with support from Equality Now engaged a human rights lawyer, Mandala Mambulasa to undertake a legal analysis of the laws in Malawi relating to sex trafficking, prostitution and commercial sexual exploitation of women and girls. The aim of the analysis was to explore opportunities on how strategic litigation may be used to protect the rights of women and girls against sex trafficking, prostitution and commercial sexual exploitation using the *Trafficking in Persons Act* and related legislation in Malawi.

A draft report of the study was presented at a validation meeting in Lilongwe later in April where PSGR and EN invited key stakeholders in Malawi implementing programs on trafficking in persons. The stakeholder partners included government; government, the Malawi Human Rights Commission, the Malawi Network Against Trafficking, the Gracia Matchel Trust, Women Lawyers Association, Women and Law in Southern Africa (WILSA) and others. The consultant presented the findings of the study for partners to make their input or just to validate if it reflected the situation on the ground.

Among key findings and recommendations of the study include;

- ♦ Corroboration evidence needs to be repealed and challenged in court of law as it presents a form of discrimination against women. Why is it only that women evidence in court must corroborated, especially in cases of rape, defilement and sexual violence?
- ♦ Appropriation of funds into the Trafficking Fund as provided by the Trafficking in Persons Act. By the end of 2018, Ministry of Homeland Security disclosed government had done the funds appropriation but did not disclose how much. There is therefore need for transparency but also ensuring that funds are put to real trafficking cases;
- ♦ Use of Treaty Monitoring bodies, as Malawi is a signatory to many instruments aimed to protect women and children from different forms of violence;
- ♦ The need for comprehensive judgments on cases of trafficking cases especially by superior courts of record so as to develop jurisprudence which can guide stakeholders in the criminal justice system but also to help lower courts on how to sentence traffickers.
- ♦ Limited awareness on trafficking and the Trafficking in Persons Act by police prosecutors. Given limited funding but that the TIPa is a fairly new law, many law enforcers are not quite familiar with it.



Board Chairperson, Mrs. Margaret Ali officially opening the stakeholder validation workshop



Group photo of the participants who attended the validation workshop

World Day against Trafficking in Persons

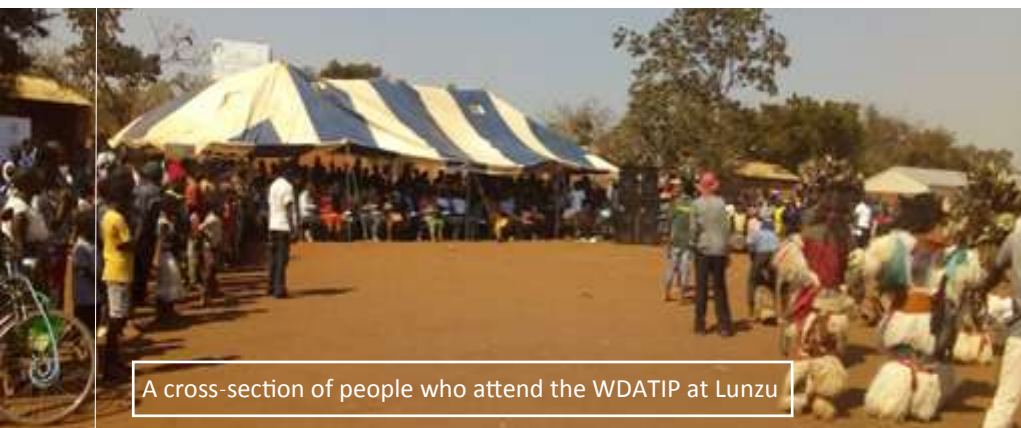
PSGR was privileged to organize local activities in commemorating the World Day against Trafficking in Persons. To commemorate the day, PSGR organized two separate activities. The first was a Press Briefing which was held at Malawi Government Central Office of Information (COI), which brought together local and international journalists from print and electronic media houses in Blantyre. PSGR Board Chairperson, Mrs. Margaret Ali read a prepared speech, which aimed to brief journalists on the extent of trafficking of women and girls in Malawi and internationally. She highlighted challenges facing girls and women in sex trafficking, efforts being done by PSGR and other players to end sex trafficking, etc. She noted that sex trafficking is inextricably linked to prostitution and that there is need to deal with prostitution for any meaningful efforts to be made in ending sex trafficking.

The media briefing made huge headlines in major tabloids, television and radio, which has resulted in increased number of girls and women visiting PSGR to seek counseling and other services.



On Friday, August 3 2018 PSGR organized an pen day commemoration of the World Day against Trafficking in Persons (WDATIP) which took place at Lunzu Catholic Primary School in Blantyre rural. The event started with a march by girls from schools around Lunzu and another group organized by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP). The marchers carried placards with different messages on sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of girls and women, demanding government to eliminate sex trafficking and sexual violence in general.

The event brought together about 1,500 people, including youths and children from surrounding secondary and primary schools, traditional leaders, government officials, civil society organization and the guest of honour was a representative from the Malawi Human Rights commission, Mr. George Mahamba who happens to be a Child Rights Desk Officer at the Blantyre office. A number of activities we done as part of the commemoration, among them; dances, poem recitals, speeches, drama plays, etc. To climax things, one of the girls read and presented a petition to government, which was received by Mr. George Mahamba. The petition asked government to act swiftly in protecting girls and women from sexual exploitation, increase awareness about sex trafficking and ensure girls access justice when they have their rights violated.



2.0 The story of Maggie—*trafficked and abducted from police*

Maggie (not her real name) is a 16 year old girl from a rural village in Neno District which borders Blantyre, Mwanza and Mozambique. In February 2018, Maggie was together with her 14 year old friend, Patricia approached by a strange young man who came on a motorcycle in their village looking for girls to work as child minders in Blantyre. Maggie and Patricia accepted to pick the job, hoping to escape systemic poverty in their village. The girls were taken to the nearby town, where they spent a night before connecting to Blantyre City the next day.

Upon reaching their new home, the girls came face to face with reality when they were handed knives and beer containers to serve imbibers—they were recruited as waiters at a pub. The boss also ordered them to be sleeping with men and all the proceeds were collected by him from the clients. They were victims of modern day slavery called sex trafficking!

The girls were poorly fed, surviving on thick porridge called nsima served with vegetables or just tomato salad everyday. Their accommodation was horrible, 3 girls sleeping on bare floor in a tiny room with no ventilation at all. The boss promised them MK15,000 (20 US Dollars) per month, which was never remitted to them. They were in a fix!



One day, the pub owner went to order more beer. The girls took this opportunity to escape. They literally walked about 15km to Ndirande Police Station where they presented their case. The Officer In-Charge at Ndirande took the girls to Soche Police as a jurisdiction area where the offence was committed. The pub owner was arrested in the subsequent days. The girls were kept at the same police, in an offence awaiting to appear as state witnesses at Blantyre Magistrate Court.

At police, however, the girls were abducted the very day they were supposed to appear in court as state witnesses. The relative of the accused person abducted them in broad-daylight, by taking them to the nearby bush, where he threatened to kill them with a knife if they didn't agree to flee and leave for their respective villages. Fearing for the lives, the girls agreed to leave and the abductor gave them MK10,000 (13 US Dollars) each to use as transport and buy clothes. They left everything at Soche Police Station.

PSGR got this shocking news from social media. We decide to follow with the girls in their villages. We managed to get one. Efforts to trace the second one proved futile, as she was reportedly in Lilongwe. Maggie gave us a detailed account. PSGR took her to hospital for medical assessment and examination, where she was diagnosed with STI and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). She was put on treatment right away.

Since August 2018, Maggie has had several psychosocial counseling sessions on weekly basis with a psychiatrist at Mwaiwathu Pvt Hospital in Blantyre. Since August 2018, Maggie has been taking Fluoxetine drugs as prescribed by her doctors, to fight stress, nightmares and depression. PSGR been providing her family with food supplies and other welfare needs. PSGR has also been taking Maggie to play games in town just to relax her mind.

Currently, the case returned to Blantyre Magistrate Court where the owner of the pub and the young who went to the village to recruit the girls are answering charges of trafficking minor girls, contrary to Section 79 of Child Care, Protection, and Justice Act. We have fingers crossed that the court will mete stiffer sentences. Maximum sentence for child trafficking charge in Child Care, Protection and Justice Act is life imprisonment.

1. Maggie, in gold sweater, posing with PSGR Staff Lydia Mtogo the first day we met her

2. Lying in agony in hospital bed at Queen Elizabeth Central for STI treatment



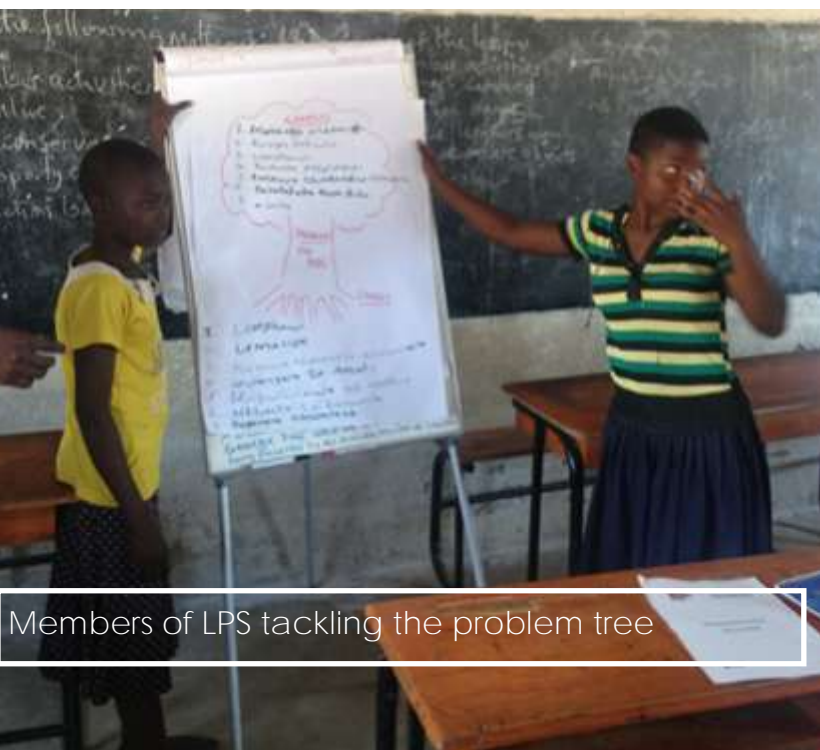
Life planning skills

Every day, children particularly girls come across challenges which threaten and violate their human rights. In the face of reeling poverty, girls face temptations to get married early, engage in transactional sex in order to earn a living, being forced to drop out of school in order to take care of other siblings or worse still sick parents at home, and many more. As that is not enough, girls are vulnerable to rape and defilement, gender discrimination and other forms of abuse. To them, these are the realities of life they have to live with. Our studies have also indicated that these are the girls vulnerable to sex trafficking and prostitution.

The Life planning skills (LPS) education aims to empower boys and girls, both in and out of school with skills, information and education they need in order to overcome these challenges. In the just ended year, PSGR managed to run LPS in 7 primary and 3 secondary schools, reaching out to more than 5,000 girls and boys. LPS topics include assertiveness, preventing pregnancies, goal setting, HIV/AIDS, gender, human rights, sex trafficking, preventing forced early marriages, etc. This far, more girls are now becoming more and more assertive as to demand for respect for their rights.

Life planning skills program is also providing psychosocial counseling to many girls in villages and schools. It is promoting mentorship among girls, especially between those who do well in class and those that have challenges. Mentors are groomed by senior Peer Educators from PSGR and teachers, taking them through the definition of mentorship, who is a mentor/mentee, qualities of a mentor, the dos and don'ts in mentorship, setting goals and targets with a mentee, etc.

PSGR relies on voluntary Peer Educators, usually former member of life planning skills clubs based in the same areas to facilitate LPS education. *One of the challenges of the Life Planning Skills Project is that it has no funding and PSGR relies on individual commitment of Peer Educators. In addition, the other challenge is that it lacks playing materials and equipment like soccer balls, netballs, chess boards, knitting wool, pieces of clothes and other materials.*



Members of LPS tackling the problem tree



Mentors raising awareness on child marriages

Anti-Child Marriage Awareness Campaigns;

Malawi has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world, with approximately 1 in 2 girls married by the age of 18. Child marriage is a barrier to achieving a range of development goals, such as those related to education, justice, empowerment, health, and humanitarian aid. To end child marriage, we ultimately need a transformation of attitudes, mindsets and norms within communities and families.

When a girl drops out of school she is denied her right to education and the ability to develop the skills and knowledge needed to live a healthy, fulfilling life and one where she can earn an income and contribute to her family and community. Girls tend to drop out of school in the preparatory time before marriage or shortly afterwards. Once a girl is out of school, she is more vulnerable to child marriage and early pregnancy.

PSGR intensified community awareness campaigns targeting in and out of school girls to empower them with skills and information to prevent getting married before finishing school. The campaigns targeted parents and guardians too, to enlighten them on their role in sending girls to schools but also remaining vigilant against early marriages. PSGR is aware that ending child marriage will not happen overnight and requires ongoing action by multiple actors. The media, policy-makers and thought-leaders need to sustain and increase their attention on child marriage as a priority issue. New and influential champions from diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise were utilized to help keep the issue on the agenda.



Malawi has one of the highest rates of child marriages in the world, pegged at 42%. PSGR is working hard to reverse this trend by empowering girls with skills and information they need to know to prevent it and stay in school

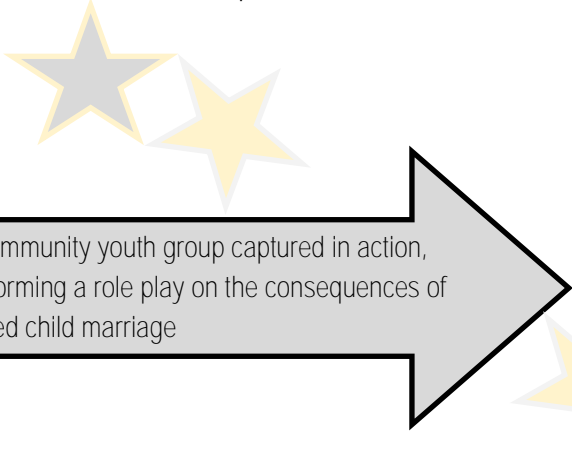
16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence

In partnership with Women Judges Association of Malawi (WOJAM), PSGR organized a community open engagement awareness meeting in Neno District in Mapundi Village. This is a village about 150km from Blantyre and is deep in remote areas. On the other side is Mwanza District which borders Mozambique, making Neno a perfect prey for girl victims of sex trafficking. Recruiters usually go to Neno villages because it has one of the worst levels of poverty in Malawi, high illiteracy rates, increased cases of forced child marriages and the people are less informed about contemporary issues like sex trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation and others.

PSGR started working in this District in May 2018 with a case of 2 underage girls who were recruited from a village to work as babysitters in town. The rest is the usual story, as the girls were engaged in sexual exploitation at a pub in Manje Township. It was through the handling of this case that PSGR was able to identify areas for more programming in Neno.

The 16 Days event was commemorated under the theme *End GBV – End Sex Violence*. Together with its local partners, namely Women Lawyers Association of Malawi (WLAM), Women Judges Association of Malawi (WOJAM), Save the Children Fund of Malawi, Social Welfare Department, District Education Manager, made different presentation on rights of girls and women, what the laws say on harmful cultural practices like child marriages and sex violence, etc. The guest of honour was a female magistrate from Blantyre Magistrate Court who also made a presentation on the role courts in ending sex violence in Malawi.

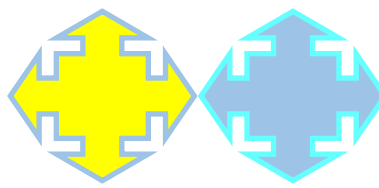
About 950 local people gathered for the function, which was spiced by local traditional dances, poems, speeches and a comedy by a renowned television comedians from Blantyre. In his speech, chief Mapundi commended PSGR for the incredible efforts in following up on the case of the two girls who were recruited from the village. He further requested PSGR to organize and undertake more awareness activities in the village and surrounding areas. Natasha Mbalule, a lawyer from the Women Lawyers Association took participants through the Bill of Rights in the constitution of the Republic of Malawi which talks about dignity of people and in particular rights and freedoms of women to full and equal protection by the law as well as the enactment of legislation to eliminate customs and practices that discriminate against women. Natasha emphasized on protecting women and girls from harmful practices such as sexual abuse, harassment and violence.



A community youth group captured in action, performing a role play on the consequences of forced child marriage



Emerging trends;



There are a few developments that could be shared as emerging trends in sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of girls and women. These are highlighted as follows;

- ◆ There are increasing reports that older experiential prostituted women are recruiting minor girls between 12-18 years as their sex workers. These minors are recruited from rural areas and are usually orphans or other vulnerable girls. The girls are usually orphaned and other vulnerable. This story was also corroborated by a criminal investigation department officer in the Malawi Police Service who revealed that the police have been busting some homes in Blantyre and Mzuzu, among other cities, which are rented and used by commercial sex workers as brothels. In some cases, older commercial sex workers recruit young girls to become sex workers and when the clients pay for the sex, the proceeds go to the older commercial sex workers.

Clearly, this is a fundamental violation of human rights for the minors. Certainly, there are offences for which the older commercial sex workers may be prosecuted including renting or permitting a place to be regularly used for prostitution or promotion of prostitution; procuring another person to become or remain a common prostitute, which is in contravention of the Penal Code section 160B which criminalizes any sexual activity with a child. Furthermore, section 140 of the Penal Code stops procuration

Section 147A of the Penal Code criminalises promotion of prostitution. It states: *Any person who owns, controls, manages, supervises or otherwise keeps, alone or in association with another person, a house or business for prostitution; procures, encourages, induces or otherwise purposely causes another person to become or remain a common prostitute; solicits another person to patronize a prostitute;*

- ◆ Secondly, it is important to acknowledge the emergence of Sex Worker Rights Groups. Lately, the movement for sex workers is growing, advocating for total recognition that prostitution is out of choice and that individuals who do so must be recognized just like any other form of work or paid job.

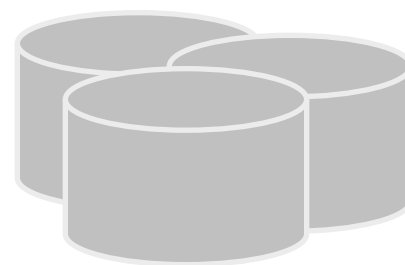
There is need to test the constitution and other laws on what they say on prostitution or sex work. There is also need to join hands with different workers unions to enlighten people on decent work versus exploitation.



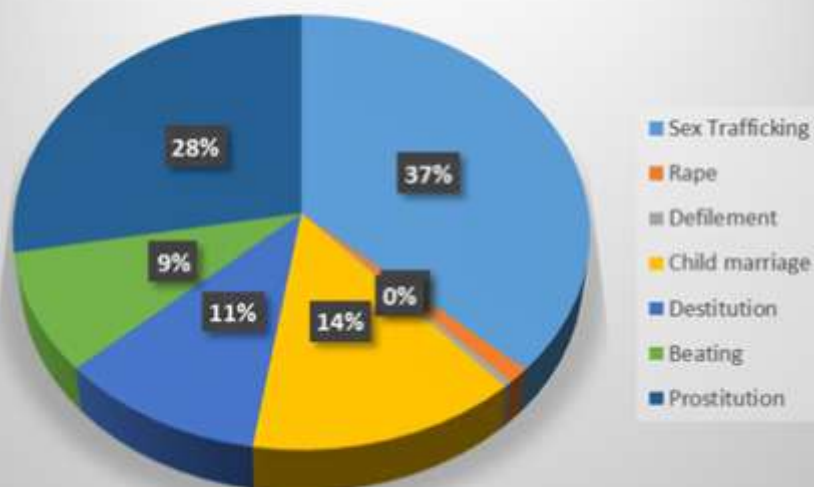
- ◆ Thirdly, with latest developments in technology and globalization, perpetrators are utilizing the social media in various ways to trap their victims. We have seen several adverts on social media platforms like Facebook, Tweeter, WhatsApp and other calling girls to pick different jobs in different areas. Yet we have also seen open billboards placed in market squares and other corners advertising for jobs like in massage parlours, hair salons and sometimes as open as to satisfy 'sugar mummies' or sugar daddies'.

Malawi government enacted The Electronic Transactions Act and Cyber Security Act in 2016 and raise hope, as noted by the National Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, 2017-2022, this legislation has criminalised one of the most common means that is sometimes used by traffickers to lure and recruit unsuspecting would-be victims. It is yet to be applied to a particular case to test its practicality.

Summary of Results in tables and charts



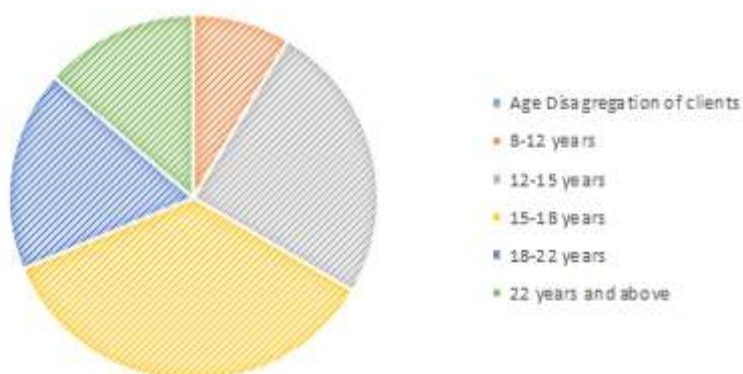
Types of Cases Received



Types of cases received

Sex Trafficking	417
Rape	13
Defilement	5
Child marriage	158
Destitution	121
Beating/ assault	101
Prostitution	315

AGE DISTRIBUTION



Age Disaggregation of victims

8-12 years	97
12-15 years	281
15-18 years	398
18-22 years	201
22 years and above	153

#	Direct Service offered	No. of beneficiaries
1.	Mentorship	980
2.	Psychosocial counseling	722
3.	Decision making on forced marriage	131

The **Life Planning Skills** Project reached out **more than 5,000 girls and boys** in **10 primary and secondary schools** in Blantyre rural. However, there were some **special cases** where beneficiaries had to be **met one on one** to provide **mentorship, psychosocial counseling** and help with **decision making on forced child marriage**.

Newspaper Review

-12

SOCIETY

IN THE COURTROOM

Father gets 14 years for trafficking daughter

JONAS NYASULU
CORRESPONDENT

The Chitipa First Grade Magistrate's Court has sentenced Phingo Ng'ambi, 49, to 14 years imprisonment for trafficking his 14 year-old daughter.

Child trafficking is contrary to Section 14 of Trafficking in Persons Act.

According to Chitipa Police deputy public relations officer Rebecca Kadzamira, the court heard, through State prosecutor Leonard Chabwera, that the man took the girl on September 17 2017 when his wife Stella Sichela, 45, went to Bugulira market in Chitipa for shopping.

"The convict took the girl to a Tanzanian national who took her to Kyera in Tanzania for the purpose of labour," she said.

Kadzamira said the convict's wife reported the matter to Chisenga Police Post in the district which led to the arrest of the convict.

In court, he pleaded not guilty to the charge but failed to defend himself.

The State, therefore, asked the court to give the accused a stiffer penalty, saying such cases are serious in nature and common in border areas.

But in mitigation, Ng'ambi pleaded with the court to exercise leniency with him when passing sentence, saying he is a breadwinner for his family.

Passing sentence, Chitipa First Grade Magistrate, B Ngosi concurred with the

BISHOP WITHMOS
MALAWI NEWS AGENCY

Child trafficking worries Chitipa

Chitipa district labour officer Blackson Mphahle says inter-agency awareness campaign against child labour and child trafficking is contributing to increased cases of the malpractice in the district.

Speaking during a meeting in Tondikoma (T/A), Mphahle said the district has been focusing on house and child labour, saying that the district is also conducting a campaign in Kanyemba where there are some residential zones working.



Mphahle said the district is also conducting a campaign in Kanyemba where there are some residential zones working.

Child prostitution worries Mzuzu

ENALLA MNYENYEMBE
MALAWI NEWS AGENCY

Mzuzu Police Station has expressed concern over the increase in children in and around bars and night clubs in the city's townships for commercial sex.

Speaking in an interview yesterday, Mzuzu Police spokesperson said police launched an campaign on to sensitize the dangers of prostitution.

development police and Social and five girls union, around at the city's January this



contracting HIV, a virus that causes Aids.

Mzuzu North and Mzuzu City social welfare officer Edward Chisungu said he is monitoring the rescued girls. He commended Mzuzu Police Station for the campaign to secure protection of children's rights.

"We reunited the rescued girls with their families and we counselled them. We also advised the girls to go back to school. One of the girls fled from home and is back into prostitution while three others have gone back to school. The other one is yet to go back to school but she is being monitored," said.

According to 2010 United Nations (UN) statistics, 35 million people globally are living with HIV and Aids and 6 300 people are infected with the virus each year.

people such as bar and rest house owners, parents and school children." Tembora said children visiting bars and night clubs are

2 editor's note

Let us end sexual exploitation

thought it only happens elsewhere. I imagined girls being taken away by force by transnational criminal networks, but in my mind's eye those happenings were always far from Malawi.

So I took comfort in the belief that nothing like that could possibly happen in our country, until I met two young girls who had been rescued from prostitution in Blantyre, after being trafficked from Thyolo and Mulanje.

Hearing them narrate their stories was disheartening—forced into commercial sex by women they trusted, women who promised them decent employment, second hand clothes sales and as child

Ending this vice is something that needs concerted efforts—from families that value their girls and communities that protect the rights of girls and communities that are always vigilant against people who come to cheat girls into prostitution.

It is evident that already of children who could be exploited morally and physically, which is the sad state of affairs at the moment. It is a call to action for all of us who are concerned about the future of our country.

With all the failed efforts to escape their ordeal, they seemed to have gotten used to the trade a year on.

I could see through one of the girls' eyes that she was not in the least amused with this rescue mission—she could not bear the thought of going back to the village where almost every one is hard to reach. And that, I think, is the challenge rescuing agents such as People Serving Girls at Risk and the Malawi Network against Trafficking in Persons (MNAAT) on Page 3, are up against.

All those vulnerable girls fall prey to the traffickers who are guaranteed to make huge sums of money by selling them into prostitution. With such a big economic motive, how can sex trafficking be put to a stop?

Malawi fails in securing human trafficking victims

by Faith Kamtamba

Malawi is failing to provide adequate care and support to victims of human trafficking despite adopting the Trafficking in Persons Act of 2013, according to the Malawi Network Against Trafficking in Persons (MNAAT).

MNAAT Advocacy Committee chairperson, Mandimba Zungu, made the sentiments in Lilongwe on the sidelines of training for media practitioners on human trafficking.

Zungu observed that the country still lacks shelters to cater for victims of trafficking in persons, which poses a security threat to the rescued victims.

She said since the enactment of a fund to cater for the implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Act and the National Plan of Action against trafficking in November last year, government has not provided finances for the fund.

"Government must consider allocating K300 million in the 2018/2019 budget for the implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Act and the National Plan of Action against trafficking in persons. What we are lacking at the moment is resources," Zungu said.

She added that in the last



THERE ARE A LOT OF TRAFFICKING CASES—Ngomano



WE NEED PROPER STRUCTURES—Matewere

million was committed to the cause.

"At the moment, we have the trafficking in persons fund but there is no money, that poses a challenge because when we seek resources from donors, how do they support us when our own government is not committed?" she said.

Commenting on the development, Chisomo Chikwanda, Chairperson

Manager, Ireen Ngomano, said there are a lot of cases of trafficking in persons in the country, with many girls being trafficked to work in bars.

Eye of the Child Executive Director, Maxwell Matewere, said there is need for proper structures for victims of human trafficking.

Matewere made reference to fourteen girls that are currently in Iraq after being

trafficked but cannot be repatriated back home because there are no resources for such.

He further said if resources are pumped in for the money can be used to repatriate those that are stranded being trafficked.

"We are aware of girls in Iraq that would want to come back as they are able to tell us some of the reasons why they are there and there are some people who are answering cases of trafficking because of the money they are getting," he said.

"It is very important that resources are provided to make sure that girls can be repatriated to their home countries and that they are able to tell us some of the reasons why they are there and there are some people who are answering cases of trafficking because of the money they are getting," he said.

According to the organisation and the Society Organisation for the Promotion of Finance Minister Gondwe on the Minister made a statement that government funds in the 2018/2019 budget for the implementation of the

At least 14 girls are stranded in Iraq after being trafficked from Malawi.