

Country	Malawi
Author	Chimwemwe Songelani
Email	songelani1@gmail.com
Date	Nevenber, 2021
Area of Work	Nsanje and Salima
Related Sub Outcome	Increased local structures involvement in budget analysis to demand, implement and monitor key MGDS III priorities and their supporting policy priorities. Increased capacity to hold duty beares accountable and responsive.
Partner Organisation	Malawi Economic Justice Network
Project ID	861016
Short description of the intervention	<p>IM Swedish Development Partner in colligation with MEJN conducted a monitoring visit in Salima District specifically at Ndindi ADC's vicinities. Ndindi ADC is located to the Southern part of Salima District and its one of the three ADCs MEJN is piloting its social accountability project that aims at enhancing compliance and responsiveness by duty bearers in the implementation of the MGDS III for development results and outcomes which will translate into improved better service for Malawi and societal change at large.</p> <p>The monitoring visist intended to capture impact stories the project has stimulated since its inception and appreciates the bottlesnecks project stakeholders are encountering in the pathway of achievining key results of the project.</p> <p>More than ten members of ADC members participated in the activity and made concrete contributions to achieve the purpose of the visitation. Various impact stories emerged during the deliberations, and below section briefly describes one of the success stories captured.</p>
Name of person(s) portrayed in the story	<p>1) Esther Muthali- Ndindi ADC Secretary, 3) Oswald Banda-Ndindi ADC chairperson</p> <p>2) Jackson Zibu-Ndindi Ward Councilor 4) Thomasi Mwangopilu- MEJN Chapter Chairperson (Salima District)</p>

Disclaimer: Views expressed in this story do not necessarily represent those of MEJN, its funders, agents or sponsors.

SUCCESS STORY

EMPOWERING LOCAL STRUCTURES TO EFFECTIVELY EXECUTE THEIR ROLES AND ENGAGE DUTY BEARERS ON DEVELOPMENTAL MATTERS: CASE STUDY OF NDINDI ADC IN SALIMA DISTRICT

In Salima South, the rights holders are now sleeping with their eyes wide open. They are saying no to impunity. Generally speaking, the citizens' participation in economic and social issues, even in matters that directly affecting the common people, has previously been the preserve of those in the status of power, with participative decision making remaining a long standing off-limits.

This anomaly served as a loophole for MPs to exploit rights holders' ignorance by abusing their trust and misusing Constituency Development Fund with impunity.

This situation has been bound to change in Salima South specifically within areas where Ndindi ADC operates. The past year of implementing a social accountability project has seen improvement of local structure's level of understanding of pertinent issues affect them directly at a virtue of performing their oversight roles in development matters.

Malawi Economic Justice Network (MEJN) through a social accountability project that aims at enhancing compliance and responsiveness by duty bearers in the implementation of the MGDS III for development results and outcomes which will translate into improved better service for Malawi and societal change at large, has taken the lead in stimulation of citizenry and local structures' understanding of their roles and responsibilities in enhancing social accountability in development affairs.

Through funding from IM Swedish Development Partner, MEJN has facilitated awareness on analysis and monitoring of public funds expenditure and capacitated local structures to work hand-in-hand with their duty bearers in planning and implementation of development projects.

Over years prior to the intervention, it had been a challenging call for Ndindi Area Development Committee (ADC) to perform according to its mandate due to lack of oversight skills in the course of executing their prescribed roles and responsibilities in developmental affairs. Coordination and Cordial relationship between ADC members and Member of Parliament (MP) on developmental matters were also problematic. The trend resulted into retarding of the development in the area.

Attesting to the matter, Esther Munthali, Ndindi ADC secretary says *"I used to believe that an MP had sole right to plan and choose whatever he wanted to do with the Constituency Development Fund. Through MEJN's capacity building on budget analysis and monitoring, I am now able to know the full amount of money that is available. As ADC secretary, I am also involved in decision making on that money is spent and conduct development meetings with our MP"*.

In her further remarks, Munthali stated that, *"As ADC members, we used to be afraid to meet duty bearers to deliberate on developmental affairs, and prior to MEJN's interventions, we had no opportunity to meet our member of parliament. But after MEJN empowered us on our obligations, we are able to bring our duty bearers on board to discuss development issues. And there has been a cordial relationship between duty bearers and development committees"*

Though it was unfriendly in the past, the relations between communities and the MP have steadily improved as political figures were having a hard time to be sort of supervised by local actors and held accountable for public funds utilisation.

In order to enhance transparency and accountability in budget processes, NDINDI ADC members were also capacitated in budget analysis and they have started taking an interest in following up the implementation of the Council budgets.

According to Ndindi ADC Chair, Oswald Banda, *"For the first time, Ndindi ADC has also carried out the mapping exercises of all development projects that have been funded from the 2020/21 Council budgets particularly from Consitiuncy Development Fund (CDF)". "Ndindi ADC members are able to effectively participate and influence the making of rules that govern their area and clear mechanism for them to engage with their elected representative either on a regular basis or around emerging policy issues"* He adds.

Furthermore, Capacity building of the ADC on their mandatory roles has however, not just benefited the committee to be vibrant but also shaken up out MP to start respecting community members and follow right procedures when using public funds.

Councilor for Ndindi Ward, Jackson Zibu, added that the interventions MEJN has been undertaking in the area has provided an opportunity for the rights holders and duty bearers to exchange views on development. *" The communities also got the chance to ask questions and get instant answers from duty bearers, paving way for lasting solutions"* Zibu said.

The chairperson of MEJN Chapter in Salima District, Thomas Mwangopilu says the people of Salima South, well aware of the Consitiuncy Development Fund details and are motivated to remain close to their leaders so that they monitor the expenditure. He adds, knowledge enhancement on the importance of social and economic inclusion boosted local structures, thus sucessfully instilling and moulding a new culture of participative planning, which shall eventually bring about sustainable development

With capacity building training on oversight roles and responsibilities in public resources management and budget analysis and monitoring, Ndindi ADC members are able to engage duty bearers on developmental affairs, participate in decision making stages of project cycles, solving most of the challenges communities encounter and also able to be recognised as development custodians in their operational areas. The initiative has also made local authorities in the area to be more transparent in public resourse management.

The activity in pictorial highlight: Monitoring Visist in Salima District.



Ndindi ADC Secretary, Esther Munthali, giving her sentiments on the impact the project has made since its inception in the area.



Jackson Zibu, Ndindi Ward Councilor expresses how the project has enhanced his capacity in executing mandatory roles and responsibilities



"Ndindi ADC members are able to effectively participate and influence the making of rules that govern their area and clear mechanism for them to engage with their elected representative either on a regular basis or around emerging policy issues"

Osward Banda, Ndindi ADC Chaiperson expresses.



Ndindi ADC members with MEJN and IM officials



Thomas Mwangupilu, MEJN Chairperson giving his remarks during monitoring visit at Ndindi ADC



Ndindi ADC members during monitoring visit

Note that the pictures have been captured with the knowledge and permission of the holder/s. All the pictures have been captured by Chimwemwe Songelani