



PARLIAMENT BACKS DOMESTICATION OF AFRICAN DISABILITY PROTOCOL

The Parliamentary Committee on Social and Community Affairs has pledged to support the domestication of the African Disability Protocol (ADP), describing it as an important step towards strengthening the rights and inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Malawi.

Committee Chairperson Hon. Savel Kafwafwa made the commitment during an engagement between Members of Parliament and disability rights stakeholders in Lilongwe. The meeting brought together DAPP Malawi, Women and Girls (WAG) Disability Rights, Sightsavers, the Federation of Disability Organisations in Malawi (FEDOMA) and other partners working to promote disability rights.

"As parliamentarians, we carry a direct responsibility for the laws that determine whether the rights of persons with disabilities in Malawi are real or merely written down," Kafwafwa said.

He noted that Malawi's ratification of the ADP and the enactment of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2024, were important milestones. However, he said Parliament must ensure that national laws and policies are aligned with the country's regional and international commitments.

Kafwafwa also called for an equity-based approach to disability inclusion, recognising that people with different disabilities may require different levels of support to access equal opportunities.

During the engagement, stakeholders presented findings from a policy review led by Dr George Kayange and Dr Enoch Chilemba. Six policy briefs were submitted to Parliament, including recommendations concerning the National Employment and Labour Policy and the National Social Protection Policy.

The review identified several gaps affecting persons with disabilities. These included limited protection for those working in the informal sector, inadequate access to social protection programmes, weak provisions for reasonable accommodation in workplaces and poor disability data systems. It also highlighted the multiple forms of discrimination faced by women with disabilities.

DAPP Malawi representative Lansen Chikopa welcomed Parliament's commitment, describing it as a positive step towards translating disability rights into meaningful action.

"This engagement is about strengthening collaboration with Parliament so that the voices and lived experiences of persons with disabilities shape the country's laws and policies. We are encouraged by the committee's commitment and believe it will accelerate the domestication of the African Disability Protocol," Chikopa said.

The engagement was supported through European Union-funded initiatives promoting the domestication and implementation of the ADP in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The initiatives also seek to strengthen the capacity of organisations of persons with disabilities and civil society groups to influence policy and legislative reforms.

MZUZU COUNCIL CALLS FOR IMPROVED SANITATION AS DAPP SUPPORTS CITY CLEAN-UP



Mzuzu City Council has called on stakeholders and business operators to uphold sanitation standards to keep the city clean and protect the health of residents and customers.

The council made the call during a clean-up exercise conducted with support from Development Aid from People to People (DAPP) Malawi through its Second-Hand Clothes and Shoes Project.

Mzuzu City Council Environmental Health Officer Augustine Gama said maintaining cleanliness should be a shared responsibility among all stakeholders.

"We are calling upon stakeholders and business operators to maintain sanitation standards and ensure that Mzuzu remains clean and healthy," said Gama.

DAPP Wholesale Commercial Manager Angelina Harawa said DAPP Malawi supported the clean-up exercise because good sanitation is essential for businesses serving the public.

"As DAPP, through our Second-Hand Clothes and Shoes Project, we believe that maintaining clean surroundings is important because poor sanitation can expose customers to diseases and negatively affect businesses," said Harawa.

She added that DAPP Malawi remains committed to working with local authorities and communities to promote responsible business practices and cleaner surroundings.

Mzuzu City vendors chairperson Abubakar Omar welcomed the initiative and pledged continued support from vendors.

The exercise demonstrates DAPP Malawi's commitment to complementing local authorities in promoting healthy and sustainable communities.

FROM STAYING AT HOME TO BUILDING A FUTURE THROUGH TAILORING AND FASHION



For Dona Kamanga, 21, and Sibongile Nyirenda, 23, life in Eswazini, a rural community in Mzimba District, once seemed to offer few opportunities. After struggling to achieve the secondary school grades needed to continue their education, both young women remained at home with limited prospects for employment. Their lives changed when they were enrolled at DAPP Mzimba Satellite Centre to study Tailoring and Fashion Designing, with support from Chiesa Valdese through Humana Italia. The training equipped them with practical skills, confidence and a new pathway towards self-reliance.

After graduating, Dona, Sibongile and two other trainees formed a four-member tailoring and fashion designing group and received a start-up toolkit. Sibongile's parents went a step further by providing space at their home for the young women to establish their business.

The impact is already visible. Recently, the group earned MK200, 000, demonstrating that skills training can translate into real economic opportunities.

"Before the training, we stayed home without knowing what we could do. Today, we have skills, customers and an income. We are proud that we can support ourselves," says Sibongile.

Dona adds: "Our parents gave us hope by supporting our business. We want to grow this tailoring shop and inspire other girls in our community."

Chiesa Valdese via Humana Italia is helping turn opportunity into livelihoods, empowering young women and creating lasting benefits for rural communities.

