

MALAWI'S THIRD REPUBLIC AND THE BETRAYAL OF THE GIRL CHILD

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THE FLAMES OF CHANGE



- 2019 presidential elections & the nullification (High Court & Supreme Court)
- Protests against impunity & corruption
- **Reforms & the change... that died!**
 - Journalists exposing corruption & those holding dissident views targeted
 - Attorney General: snooping on those with dissident views



GENDER EQUALITY & CHILD PROTECTION: A SONA OF TOKENISM



President Chakwera’s 2020 State of the Nation Address

“As the world forges ahead into the future, we cannot afford to leave any child behind”

- Ending poverty and committing to “our Tonse [Alliance] cause of Gender Equality”, implementing required gender quotas, localising gender laws (SDGs)
- Too Large a Step to Take: Gender & child protection disregarded in subsequent SONAs (2021 & 2022)
- 4 female ministers (17%); 30% in 2022 against 40% (more deputies)

WHERE IS THE GIRL-CHILD?

Corruption: “Malawi is a criminal enterprise”, e.g. Vice President

2022 SONA (By President Chakwera)

2020-2021 Budget Statement: **No mention of girl child/child protection**

Investments in child protection remain very low (0.02%).

What our Leaders can not commit or do...
Worrying reports of CSE increasing

MALAWI: THE WARM HEART OF...



Increasing reports of girls being raped

- A man repeatedly raped a 15 year-old girl child, infecting her with HIV. Granted bail (no measures taken on his engagement with under-aged girls) (30/06/2022)
- 30-year-old man raped a 10-year-old girl & infected her with HIV (2020).
- 12 men gang-raped a child
- **AFORD** (Alliance for Democracy): One of the parties in the ruling coalition appointed a suspected child rapist on bail to its NEC

Every week, the news is the same

RISING COST OF LIVING: RESCUED & DUMPED



Captioned “Sex Workers” by one of the leading media houses in Malawi



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

“Malawi’s fearsome chief” ([McNeish](#) 2016)

- A feminist giving patriarchy the boot
- A champion in the fight for rights of the girl-child
- **3rd Feb. 2022 SONA:** Fighting child marriage (11,729 children), without zooming in on the girl-child
- Budget Allocation: Low investment in child protection remains worrying

There is hope... activism is not dead: Young feminists and social justice activists



- Martha Chizuma (Anti-Corruption Bureau Director, ex-Ombudsman)
- Grace Malera (Ombudsman)
- Colleen Zamba (Secretary to the President)
- Catherine Gotani Hara (Speaker of the National Assembly)

