



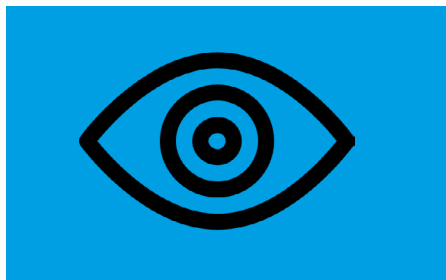
# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

**Together for the  
Better**

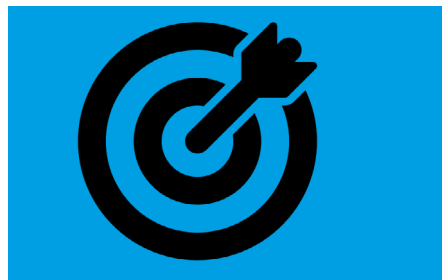


## Get to know us

Youth Initiative for Community Development (YICOD) is a local organisation established in response to the growing need for community-driven solutions to challenges facing children, young people and women in Dedza district. YICOD was born from a deep desire to empower marginalized communities in Malawi. Our journey began with a small group of passionate young people committed to creating meaningful change. Over the years, this seed of dedication has grown into a vibrant organization that leverages partnerships, innovation, and community-led solutions to address pressing challenges.



To become a self-reliant organization with a diversified resource base, driving the improved socio-economic status of women, youth, and vulnerable groups across Malawi



To serve as a catalyst for community change through effective partnerships, strategic networking, program management, and the establishment of sustainable social enterprises.



1. Equality and Non-Discrimination
2. Transparency and Accountability
3. Dignity
4. Integrity
5. Partnerships

## Our 2025 Funding Partners



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**SAFEGUARDING**

YICOD is committed to safeguarding the rights, safety, and wellbeing of children and all people. We recognize that safeguarding is a shared responsibility and is a core part of our mission. We uphold high standards and work to strengthen our own safeguarding measures



# Acronmys & Abbreviations

<b>ADC</b>	<b>: Area Development Committee</b>
<b>CVSU</b>	<b>: Community Victim Support Unit</b>
<b>DEC</b>	<b>: District Executive Committee</b>
<b>GBV</b>	<b>: Gender-Based Violence</b>
<b>GVH</b>	<b>: Group Village Head</b>
<b>MDAs</b>	<b>: Ministries, Departments and Agencies</b>
<b>NYCOM</b>	<b>: National Youth Council of Malawi</b>
<b>OFSP</b>	<b>: Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potatoes</b>
<b>RMNCHAN</b>	<b>: Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health +Nutrition</b>
<b>SLG</b>	<b>: Savings and Loan Groups</b>
<b>SRHR</b>	<b>: Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights</b>
<b>T/A</b>	<b>: Traditional Authority</b>
<b>TWG</b>	<b>: Technical Working Group</b>
<b>VDC</b>	<b>: Village Development Committee</b>
<b>YFHS</b>	<b>: Youth Friendly Health Services</b>
<b>YICOD</b>	<b>: Youth Initiative for Community Development</b>

## Chairperson's Remarks



I am pleased to present our 2025 Annual Report highlighting some of the key achievements of Youth Initiative for Community Development (YICOD). This comes at a time when changing climate conditions are changing, socio-economic challenges, and a high rate of unemployment among young people in the country.

In the year 2025, the organization continued engaging in new partners and initiating expansion drive. It has been the focus of the organization to ensure implementing all the interventions outlined in its strategic plan while at the same time learning from emerging issues which positively and negatively affected the organization.

I am indebted to the dedication of the members of the communities, staff and fellow board members for the good collaboration in ensuring that the organisation continues to deliver to the expectations of a lot of individuals and groups. Thank you for your support and dedication to these vital initiatives. Our main objective for now is to continue sustaining the trust of the current development partners and also help to bring new partnership to ensure that the organization remains relevant while complementing government efforts.

I wish to reiterate the fact that YICOD Board of Trustees will continue playing its role of providing oversight and policy direction to the organization in order for YICOD to remain a trusted partner by government, development partners and rightsholders.

With heartfelt gratitude, I would like to acknowledge the steadfast commitment of our donors and development partners. Both institutional and private, you are partners who, in the most fundamental sense, enable our work. In particular, attached with the support so kindly funded by IM Swedish Development Partner, Tilitonse Foundation, The Hilden Charitable Fund, Hlanganisa Community Fund for Gender and Social Justice and The Commonwealth Foundation and other partners' trust is a humbling responsibility we are determined to fulfil and we shall remain grateful.

The milestones in this report represents the progress we have made together (you as our partners) with an unyielding commitment to making our communities a better place to live.

Thank you for your continued stand with YICOD in pursuit of its mission and vision to create a better place for children, young people, women and persons with disabilities to reach their full potential and improve their livelihoods.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Hasten Mjoni Mwale

## Word from Executive Director



**Greetings!** On behalf of the management and staff of YICOD, I would like to welcome you to the 2025 Annual Report. Despite global economic challenges and competing development and humanitarian needs, we remain confident that the milestones in our 2023–2027 Strategic Plan are on track.

Our organisation experienced growth with the addition of new staff members, supported by our partners who continue to support our strategic objectives and advance our mission of serving as a catalyst for community change through effective partnerships, strategic networking, program management, and the establishment of sustainable social enterprises.

We also had the extraordinary honour of welcoming Gabriella Fredriksson, IM Swedish Development Partner's New Secretary General and her team at YICOD office and impact area. Their visit powerfully affirms the impact YICOD is making in transforming the lives of young people and women. It was a celebration of the resilience, brilliance, and ambition of the communities we serve.

I would like to sincerely thank our community leaders, council stakeholders and rightholders for their tireless and invaluable support throughout the year. We believe that through this collaborative and collective action, we will achieve even greater milestones for our communities.

During 2025, we implemented several advocacy, community-led initiatives and institutional strengthening interventions, including: Empowering young people and women to become economically self-reliant, supporting communities in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Growing agency of children, young people, girls and women in challenging norms, behaviours, and practices that predispose them to gender-based violence and other forms of oppression. Amplifying the voices of young people together with our partners in Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health +Nutrition (RMNCHAN) budget and policy processes. Empowering girls in schools through menstrual hygiene solutions.

I am also pleased to report that we have achieved some quick wins across our three pillars and their 16 expected outcomes. I extend my gratitude to all our partners and stakeholders for their support, which has made this journey successful so far, and I am optimistic about the future.

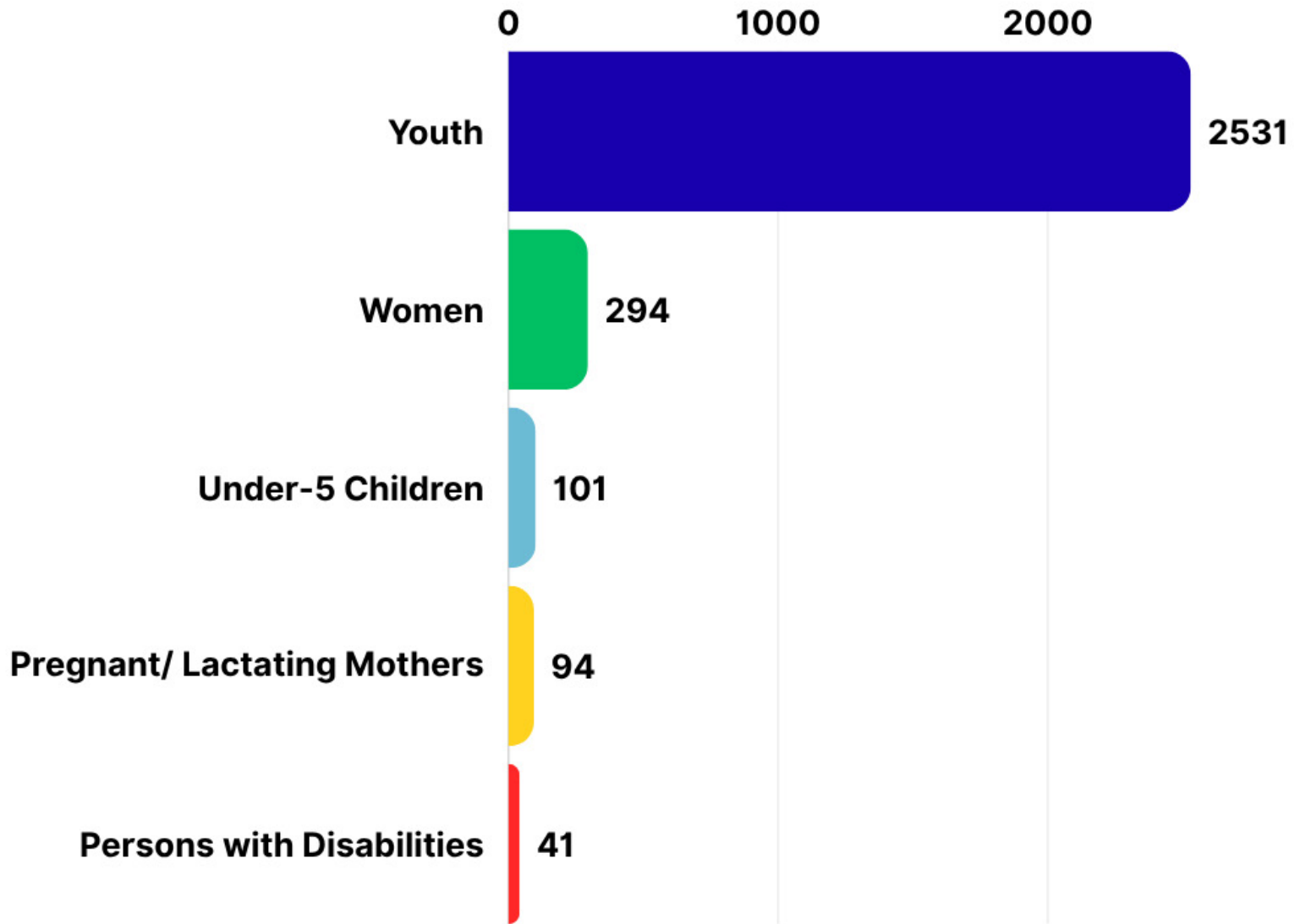
None of this would be possible without our incredible team and dedicated Board of Trustees, whose unwavering commitment continues to drive our mission forward. Their vision, hard work, and passion for children, young people, girls, women, persons with disabilities and the communities at large are the foundation of our success.

For greater results, we must continue to work together and ensure unity among all stakeholders. Community-led interventions are key to improving livelihoods, sustainability and meaningful transformation. Eyetu! Mphamvu ku anthu!

Thank you for being part of this journey.

*With gratitude,*  
Andrew Bwanali

# Lives Impacted : 2025



## Pillar 1: Organisational Capacity Development

In 2025, YICOD received organisational strengthening support from some of its funding partners in order to strengthen its capacity in program management for growth and development. The support included coaching, mentoring, training and recruitment of staff members who possess expertise in human resource management, knowledge management and communications, partnership and resource mobilisation, as well as finance management.

The technical assistance provided through coaching, guidance, mentoring and training on finance management, program delivery and safeguarding has helped YICOD improve in finance management practices, program delivery and reinforced YICOD's commitment to ensuring the safety, dignity and rights of all individuals engaged in its programs.

With the availability of the human resource personnel, YICOD has made some improvements in terms of operational efficiency and effectiveness, staff welfare and the general workforce and workplace standards.

In addition to the above, YICOD's visibility and communication elevating its work, has been enhanced

and knowledge generated from its interventions is collected, stored, and shared both within the organisation and with stakeholders. Furthermore, YICOD's efforts to mobilise additional resources for both program delivery and institutional growth have been accelerated.

Some policies have been developed in order to define the organisational rules, methods and documentation standards governing the distribution of shared costs across all YICOD projects and departments, which also includes a charter that clarifies the Board's role and responsibilities, and provides guidance on governance standards. These policies have been developed to ensure that YICOD adheres to required standards and best practices.

Lastly, YICOD strengthened its corporate governance framework and principles guiding the Board. As a result, the Board of Trustees oversight role and strategic direction tremendously improved. Board meetings were held on time and as planned, supported by our funding partners.



One of the capacity building on financial management for YICOD staff

## Pillar 2.2.2: Improved access to SRHR and HIV/AIDS services

**Y**ICOD in partnership with Phalombe Youth Arms Organisation and All for Youth, has been strengthening the capacity of youth leaders from the Malawi Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child Adolescent Health plus Nutrition (SRMNCAH+N) Youth Platform to effectively advocate for policy and budget change while demanding transparency and accountability in SRMNCAH+N service delivery. This in turn ensured that young people have better access to youth-friendly health services that address their specific health needs and increased SRHR budget allocation at national and district levels.

YICOD and its partners facilitated and provided a platform for young people to engage with Malawi Parliament especially Chairpersons of various committees such as health, nutrition and HIV management, Finance, Youth Caucus, among others and also Directors of various MDAs to advocate for more resources allocated to Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health +Nutrition (RMNCHAN).

Through capacity-building initiatives, 55 young people increasingly engaged duty bearers and influenced health governance processes in the communities where they were advocating for increased SRHR financing by participating in the Health Finance Technical Working Group and facilitating council-level discussions on Youth-Friendly Health Services (YFHS) which has improved youth inclusion in health programming.

These young people also transferred the knowledge gained to other 87 youth leaders in their communities who are also monitoring and tracking SRHR budgets and policy processes.

Furthermore, the capacity building on Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys (PETS) and budget analysis enabled youth leaders to conduct a budget analysis for 2025/2026 national budget and produced a report which was used as a tool for an engagement. ([Find Report here](#))

Furthermore, there is an increase of young people in the participation and engagement in national and local policy processes and budgets. This is evident by the recently organised Youth Focused Pre-Budget Consultation for the 2026-2027 National Budget by NYCOM where among the 10 key priority recommendations included strengthening financing for youth coordination and delivery Institutions, and increase funding for Youth-Friendly Health Services. In addition, four members of the SRHR platform were appointed into NYCOM Board and one selected into the youth core advisory panel for National Planning Commission.

YICOD and its partners, disseminated a position paper to duty bearers about realities that young people are facing and demanded a call to action ([Read here](#))



Former Parliamentary Committee on Health Chairperson Matthews Ngwale speaking during one of the engagements



An engagement of young people led by YICOD underway at the Parliament Building

## Pillar 2.2.5 : Reduced cases of GBV

In a bid to reduce the number of GBV cases and ensure that the rights of women and girls are known, safeguarded, and protected, YICOD implemented several interventions within the communities, involving various stakeholders.

Four GBV awareness campaigns were conducted in the area of Traditional Authority Kachere, where YICOD is currently implementing its interventions. This was done in collaboration with different stakeholders, such as the police, the social welfare office, and the gender department of Dedza District Council.

55 women, including those with disabilities, were trained in defensive strategies to protect themselves from perpetrators of GBV. Among these, twelve managed to cascade the knowledge to about 41 fellow women and girls in their communities.

In collaboration with other community leaders, our community paralegals registered 15 GBV cases of which 14 were resolved at community level while one case was referred to Dedza Police for further action.

These community paralegals were trained to assist Community Victim Support Units (CVSUs) in raising awareness about GBV, as well as in resolving cases and making referrals. The community paralegals have been critical in disseminating messages about the dangers of GBV and also helping in resolving matters.

To ensure collaborative efforts in the fight against GBV, 34 community leaders, including traditional and religious leaders, were trained on how to handle cases of GBV and to explore referral pathways designed to assist survivors in obtaining help and justice.



Community paralegals



Community leaders being oriented on GBV



Women and girls being equipped with defensive techniques



GBV Awareness campaign at Fosa Ground

## Pillar 2.2.7 : Improved access and inclusive quality education for children, boys and girls

To ensure that girls do not miss classes and drop-out from school due to limited menstrual hygiene resources in primary schools, YICOD procured and distributed seven sewing machines and start-up materials that are used to make reusable sanitary pads. This initiative is expected to benefit about 4,800 school-going girls and 50 mothers by providing tailoring machines for production of reusable sanitary pads & promote access to menstrual hygiene management services hence improving school attendance and reduce school dropout.

The few selected schools that benefited from this support are from Boma and Kanyenda education zones in Dedza District.

The start-up materials included 5 meters of plain cotton material, 5 meters of fleece material, 5 meters of

waterproof material, needles, threads, pressing buttons, sewing machine oil, and razor blades for each school.

Before the distribution of materials, YICOD also trained 53 mother group members from the mentioned schools on how to operate the machines and sew sanitary pads.

Additionally, through community gatherings conducted throughout 2025, YICOD continued to raise awareness on the dangers of violating children's rights such as early marriages and unintended pregnancies, urging parents and community leaders to ensure that all children go to school.

The organisation also emphasized the need to rescue girls who have been married off and ensure they return to school.



*The Headteacher for Mlunduni Primary School (Left) and YICOD's Executive Director (right) during the handover ceremony of the sewing machine and start-up materials*

# Pillar 2. 2.8 : Improved income, food and nutrition security

YICOD directly reached out to 300 people (230 women and 70 young people) with food systems transformation interventions. The interventions aimed at food security improvement, climate change resilience building and economic empowerment of the rights holders, ultimately improving their livelihoods.

1200 packets (10g each) of vegetable seeds of tomato, rape, mustard and Amaranthus were distributed to 300 women and youth which allowed them to establish vegetable gardens at the back of their yards for food and nutrition security and economic empowerment.

With this intervention, the rightsholders were able to access vegetables for home consumption, making them food secure and dietary diverse; and they were also able to sale the surplus vegetables to increase their household income, making them economically empowered.

It has also been learnt that over 90% of the rightsholders' average monthly income increased from MK50,000.00 before the on-set of the intervention, to MK100, 000.00 after a year of implementing the intervention.

Futhermore, A total of 150 women and youth were supported with 450 bundlesof drought tolerant

and Vitamin A bio-fortified Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP) vines of Royal Choice and Kaphulira varieties. These were multiplied in fields or back yard gardens so that they could be sold to other farmers during winter cropping as an income generating activity or planted on a large scale for food and nutrition security improvement and economic empowerment

YICOD also supported nine women and three youth groups with 12 drip irrigation kits with an aim of easing them from the labour intensiveness of using watering cans as an irrigation method, as well as increasing water efficiency by use of the drip irrigation kits, in the production of the vegetables.

In this food transformative drive, YICOD also supported 12 rightsholders with 60 goats with each getting 4 female goats (Does) and 1 male goat (Buck). The distribution was done on a pass-on mechanism where the first rightsholders recipients passed on the first goats' off-springs to the second right holder recipient on the receiving line.



A Rightsholder selling vegetables which she cultivated with support from YICOD



Tomatoes cultivated with support from YICOD



Women preparing snacks made from locally available resources



Nutrition Officer from Dedza district council commenting on the food & snacks prepared by women



IM Swedish Delegation appreciating OFSP vines multiplication garden



Goat distribution exercise in progress

## Steven leaps into a small business, Bringing Joy to His Family

In previous years, a 24-year-old youth Steven Yohane, a member of the Tikondane Youth Club, struggled to generate income as he was solely depending on subsistence farming to feed his family.

This situation left his family with little hope for an improvement in their livelihood.

However, after his youth club received vegetable seeds from YICOD in mid-2025, he cultivated tomatoes and invested the profits through their Savings and Loan Group (SLG).

“We learned through the training that YICOD conducted that we should be investing money through SLGs. After some time, once we receive our shares from the investment, we need to invest that into a small business that will help us sustain income for our families,” says Steven from Mkhoma Wanthu 2 Village in the Traditional Authority Kachere in Dedza district.

From the Savings and Loan Group, Steven earned about Mk300,000.00, part of which he used to start a fish-selling business and also to buy a pig.

“I’m now selling fish; I started this business about three months ago. I go to Mozambique to buy fish and sell it here in our area. As you can see, I also bought a pig, which I know will eventually multiply and help improve my family’s welfare,” he added.

In addition to these ventures, Steven is currently purchasing beans from farmers with the intention of storing them and selling them when the commodity becomes scarce in the market in the next six months.

He also notes that various trainings, such as business management and financial literacy, have opened his eyes to think beyond mere consumption.

Today, Steven says he is happy and proud of the improvements in his livelihood, reflecting on the progress he has made from his past to the present.

**Watch and listen to his story [Here](#)**



*Steven laying his fish, ready to start selling*



*A piglet which Steven bought*

## Kuyeneza aims big, commends YICOD for the interventions

A 53-year-old woman, Kuyeneza Nefitali, from Group Village Fosa in the Traditional Authority Kachere of Dedza District, has explained how YICOD's interventions have positively impacted her life.

Kuyeneza, a mother of four, states that through the vegetable garden she established with YICOD's support, she has grown vegetables twice and saved some of the income generated from vegetable sales to start a business baking and selling local banana cakes, known as zigumu, at the local market.

"I learned how to make zigumu a long time ago. However, I lacked the capital to start the business. Thanks to YICOD for the support. After selling vegetables, I bought the materials needed, and now I am generating income for my family's survival," she said.

She further mentioned that through the profits from the vegetables and her banana cakes, she purchased a piglet for MK65,000.00 (about US\$37) and intends to expand her livestock farming business along with other agricultural activities.

"I want to make this livestock farming grow. Extension workers tell us that it's profitable. I want to one day construct a modern house here using the proceeds of my work," she added.

Kuyeneza is among 230 women who received vegetable seeds in 2025 through an intervention that YICOD, with support from IM Swedish Development Partner, implemented under three Group Village Heads in T/A Kachere, Dedza District.

The initiative aims to improve nutrition, empower rights holders economically, and strengthen their resilience against climate change. Alongside these women, 70 young people, totalling 300 rights holders, received vegetable seeds, including Amaranthus, Mustard, Rape, and Tomatoes.

This means that not only Kuyeneza's household but also 299 other households have established backyard gardens, increasing access to food diversity and income in many households across the area.

**Watch and listen to her story [HERE](#)**



*Kuyeneza is looking after her garden for the first time before harvesting the maturing vegetables*



*Kuyeneza standing beside her pigsty*

## Pillar 2. 2.9 : Improved resilience to climate change and disasters

In 2025, under climate change adaptation and mitigation, YICOD aimed to link natural resource management to the food systems ultimately equipping the rightsholders with skills and knowledge in adapting and mitigating to the effects of climate change. Through trainings on making and use of energy saving stoves and manure (compost and Mbeya manure) YICOD reached out to 60 women and youth a who cascaded the trainings to the rest of the 300 targeted rights holders.

As a result of the trainings, the rightsholders in their households made 49 energy saving stoves and 89 pits of compost manure and 312 bags of Mbeya manure. The manure made was applied to the backyard vegetable gardens and other crops like maize during the rain fed cropping season. The manure improved crop production that increased food availability and household income.

As also established through monitoring exercises, the rightsholders echoed that the energy saving stoves had improved their cooking efficiency, reduced time of cooking as well as amount of wood used.



Women practicing how to make mbeya manure during one of the trainings in the area of GVH Kachere



A cooking stove that uses less firewood with three places where one could be using for cooking



Women learning how to make composite manure



Vegetable garden using mini-drip irrigation kits

# ‘Organic fertilisers are the game-changer, Tipha makwacha chaka chino’, says Maneri Mlangeni from T/A Kachere



Additionally, Maneri and other women received Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato vines, which they multiplied and shared under a seed revolving scheme for planting in their fields.

Maneri believes she will earn a lot of money this year after selling the sweet potatoes she planted on about an acre of land. “The cracks on these ridges give me hope. Look at what I have uprooted here! In three to four weeks, these sweet potatoes will be bigger and mature, ready for sale and consumption. Thank you, YICOD, for the support.

*Maneri showing her maize which she applied organic manure*

Communities from Traditional Authority Kachere in Dedza District have expressed their hope of harvesting a bumper yield this year thanks to the organic fertilizers they created with technical support from YICOD.

One of the women, Maneri Mlangeni, stated that after being trained on how to make mbeya manure, her family embraced the practice and produced about 10 bags weighing 40 kilograms, which they applied to their maize.

Maneri is optimistic as the harvest season approaches, noting that her family’s maize fields look very promising. “Look at these; I am happy that this maize has grown to these sizes. We are hoping to harvest more this year,” she said while happily pointing at the maize.

With the minimal resources required for manure, she is confident of a bumper maize yield this year. She has encouraged others to start using the manure, which has proven to be efficient and effective.

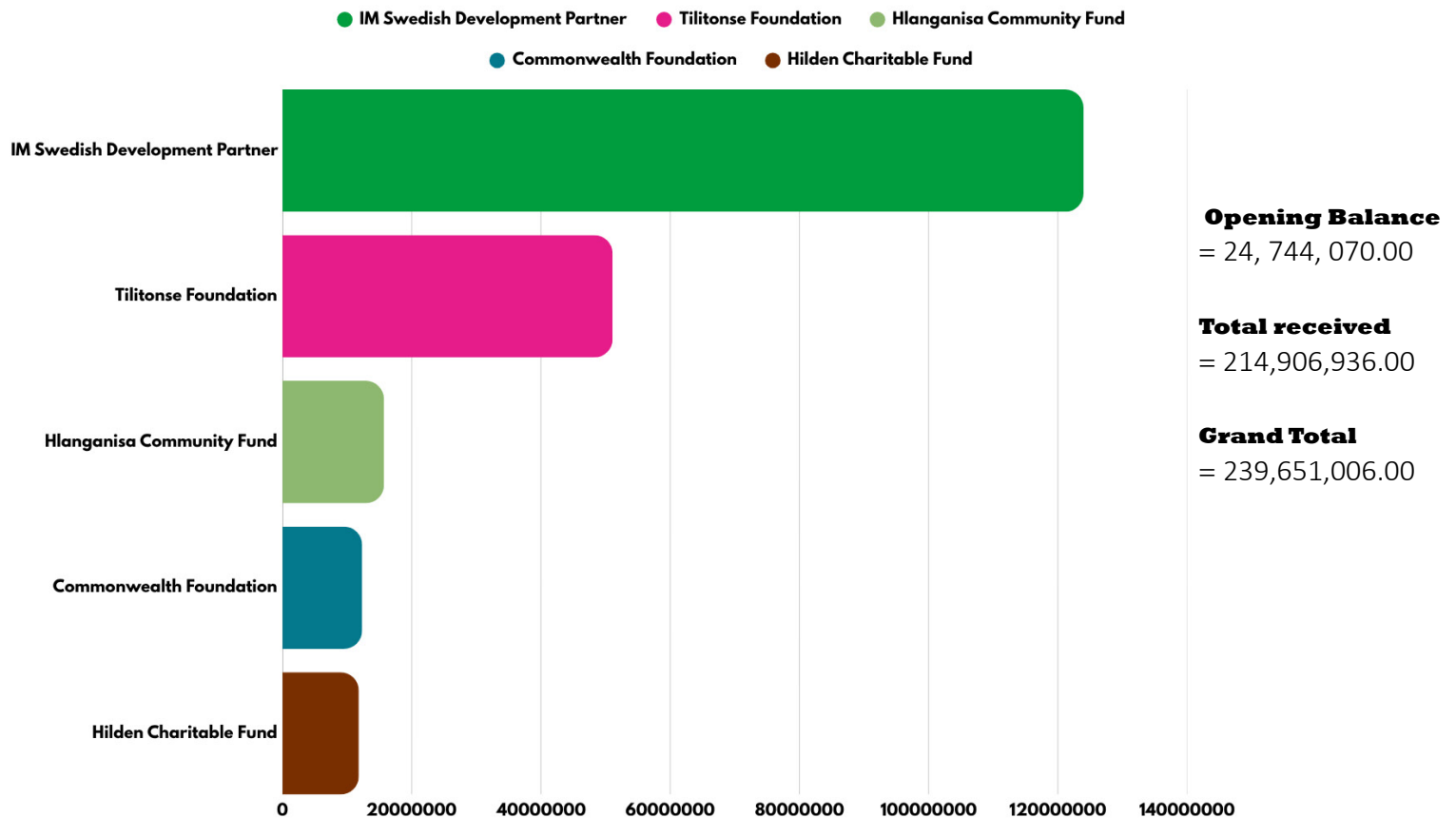
“In our women’s group, after multiplying the vines, we shared them, and each member planted them on her piece of land. Look here at where I planted mine! With these good rains, the future looks promising. Tipha makwacha chaka chino (We will make a lot of money this year),” she said.



*Maneri showing her yet to be matured sweet potatoes which she hopes to harvest in May 2026*

# 2025 Financial Review

## 2025 INCOME (MWK)



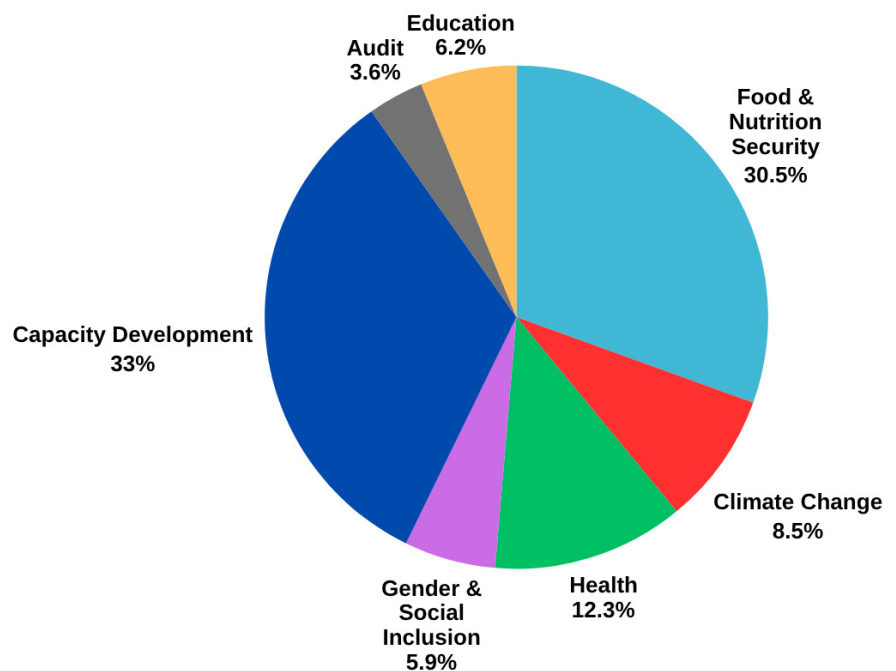
## Total Expenditures (MWK)

**Personnel Costs**  
= 63,032,458.00

**Overheads/Administrative**  
= 9,608,261.00

**Direct Costs**  
= 140,474,583.00

## Expenditure breakdown per thematic area





200 metres from Dedza CCAP  
heading towards Mchisu CDSS



Info@yicodmalawi.org



[www.yicodmalawi.org](http://www.yicodmalawi.org)

**Together for the Better**

