



REPORT ON OUR ORGANIZATION'S INITIAL PARTICIPATION AND PRESENTATION IN THE TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) MEETING ON GENDER IN ZOMBA DISTRICT

FROM: The Management of UVGI-Malawi

TO : Dr. Hala Ghoson, UVGI Board of Directors

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Date of Reporting: 6th May, 2025

ACTIVITY NAME	Meeting of the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Gender
DATE OF ACTIVITY	23 rd April 2025
TIME	9:00 AM (CAT)
VENUE	Zomba District Water Development Office Conference Hall

INTRODUCTION

On 23rd April 2025, the UVGI-Malawi volunteers attended for the first time a meeting of the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Gender. This is a forum that facilitates dialogue amongst the Race Gender Class (RGC), development partners and civil society in regard to the formulation of gender-related policies, laws and strategies, for harmonization and aid-effectiveness. And during this meeting, the UVGI volunteers had an opportunity of making a presentation to the members on activities/interventions that it is implementing in Zomba. The meeting was held in the Conference Hall of Zomba District Water Development Office from 9 o'clock AM (Central African Time).



The audience listening attentively to the presentation by a UVGI Volunteer

Being an organization that implements Gender-Based Violence (GBV) interventions in our catchment area, the Gender Policy directs that we join this body—the Technical Working Group on Gender—in order for the policy holder (that is the Gender Office) and the whole team of technical experts in the gender sector—to have a better knowledge of our organization and all our current developmental programmes. The gender technical experts were particularly very much interested to know what interventions we are implementing with regard to “gender”, which part(s) of Zomba District we are implementing them, and what impact are the interventions making in the community. The mandate of this body is to assess all gender related programmes whether they are in line with the policy or not, and where there seem to be some shortfalls, they provide technical advice to the implementing organization/partner. And

after the presentation, the members generally expressed their happiness with the impact of the Feeding Programme and Health programmes which UVGI is implementing in GVH Liti and the members further urged the UVGI volunteers to carry on with their interventions.

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE

To enhance networking and collaboration with and among the gender technical experts in the districts for possible greater impact of all relevant programme interventions in the district.

DETAILS OF THE ACTIVITY

The District Gender Officer, being the Secretariat of the Technical Working Group on Gender at district level, welcomed all participants (including us from UVGI) to the meeting. He informed the members that he has called the meeting with the aim of giving an opportunity to a new implementing partner by the name of United Voices for Global Impact (UVGI) to making its presentation of who they are, the organization's legal status, what programmes the organization is implementing (then single out the gender-related interventions), and where we are implanting them etc.

Time for our presentation:

Introduction to the presentation: Who are we?



A UVGI-Malawi volunteer making the presentation as stakeholders are listening attentively

The United Voices for Global Impact (UVGI) is a non-profit organization established in 2024 with the aim of fighting poverty by empowering underserved and marginalized Communities, transforming lives worldwide and making a Positive Impact.

Vision:

A prosperous world for present and future generations where every individual life in dignity, enjoys their human rights, and has equal opportunity to thrive and achieve their fullest potential.

Core Values:

1. Integrity

At UVGI, we uphold the highest standards of integrity.

2. Compassion

Compassion is at the heart of UVGI. We are dedicated to take action to relieve suffering and to understanding and addressing the needs of those we serve, providing support and care with empathy and respect.

3. Sustainability

UVGI is committed to sustainability, striving to implement and promote practices that protect the environment, support long-term social and economic growth.

4. Collaboration

Collaboration is fundamental to UVGI. We believe in the power of working together with diverse partners, communities, and stakeholders to achieve shared goals and amplify our impact.

5. Community

Community is at the core of UVGI. We are dedicated to building strong, supportive networks, empowering individuals, and nurturing a collective sense of responsibility and belonging to enact meaningful and lasting change.

Our Goal

Is to implement sustainable programs aimed at ending poverty and inequalities in order to achieve social justice for the people living in poverty.

Our Belief

At United Voices for Global Impact we uphold the principle that all human lives are sacred and inherently dignified and we firmly believe in the inherent worth of every individual regardless of their socioeconomic status, geographical location, ethnicity or cultural background, affirming their entitlement to basic rights and freedoms to survive and thrive.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

For us to achieve our goals and objectives we believe that we must work closely with the affected communities, engage in a productive dialogue whilst respecting their perspectives and challenging them to recognize the problems and together develop actions for change

- We listen to voices
- We identify the problem
- We address the issue
- We learn from each other and grow together
- We provide our expertise
- We educate and train community members
- We impact lives

We believe that sustainable development can only be achieved when everyone is included, and the rights of all, especially the poor, marginalized, and particularly women and girls, are realized.



A fully-packed audience at the Technical Working Group on Gender Meeting held on 23/04/2025

The Pathway of Change for this to happen will involve:

1. **Empowerment:** Poor and excluded people, especially women and girls, are empowered to be the primary agents of change. This involves building their capacity, confidence, and resilience to overcome barriers and challenges.
2. **Alliances:** Civil society organisations are mobilised and strengthened to act as allies. They provide support, resources, and advocacy to amplify the voices of the poor and underserved.
3. **Partnerships:** Constructive engagement with government and its structures at all levels. This involves dialogue, collaboration, and mutual accountability to ensure that policies and practices are pro-poor and inclusive.
4. **Advocacy and policy change:** Citizens, particularly the poor and marginalized claim rights by advocating for policy change in favour of their needs. They will also influence policy through purposeful individual and collective action. This will be conducted by holding governments and powerful institutions including organisations accountable at local, national even international level.
5. **Claiming Rights:** The poor and excluded people claim new rights and exercise their power. This involves collective action, advocacy, and negotiation to influence laws, policies, and practices.
6. **Gender Equality:** Women and girls gain power and exercise it. This involves challenging and changing gender norms, promoting women's leadership, and ensuring gender equality in all aspects of life.

OUR PRIORITIES 2025–2030

Strategic Priority 1: Promote the empowerment of women and girls to challenge laws, policies and practices that pre-dispose them to exploitation, gender-based violence and denial of means of production and markets.

Strategic Priority 2: Build the resilience of people living in poverty to overcome climate induced shocks, secure their livelihoods and enhance their preparedness.

Strategic priority 3: Improve the quality of public education to be responsive, equitable and inclusive for the needs of girls, poor and vulnerable children.

Strategic priority 4: Improve the health well-being of vulnerable people.

Strategic priority 5: Improve access to potable water, sanitation and hygiene.

UVGI'S CURRENT PROGRAMMES

Current programmes are focusing on:

- Empowering Women and Girls to Reach Their Full Potential
- Promoting Health and Well-Being through Prevention and Advocacy
- Mentoring the Youth through skills development and livelihoods and support them to take leadership roles and contribute positively to national development.
- Supporting Humanitarian Efforts to communities affected by the devastating impacts of disasters.
- Supporting initiatives aimed at ensuring that the girl child receives a quality public education.
- Fighting Human Trafficking a growing problem across the globe emanating from poverty and effects of climate change
- Promoting the rights of women and the girl child.
- Promoting gender equality in all its initiatives.

***NOTE:** That we are not implementing all these programmes at once. Actually, we are systematically introducing one programme after another until all are tackled.*

OUR CATCHMENT

Currently, we are focusing on implementing our programmes in GVH Liti, Traditional Authority (T/A) Nkagula.

SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR OUR PROGRAMMES

Currently, we do not have stable funding for any of our programmes. However, we have been able and we're still able to carry out our activities through:

- Contributions from the Board Members of the UVGI.
- Very little support from our partners and well-wishers.

IMPACT/SUCCESSES OF OUR INTERVENTIONS

- We have laid the foundation of the organization and its programmes' implementation. We have volunteers that are working for UVGI.
- We have added another CBCC and this has brought the total number of children who are now benefitting from our “**Nourish-to-Flourish**” (Feeding) Programme to **120**.
- 50 women-survivors of gender-based violence have are now operating small-scale businesses and conducting village savings and loans.
- Community of GVH Liti has planted 2,000 tree seedlings in the last 2 years.
- An environmental conservation club has been established at Sakata Primary School to raise awareness on and lead their peers in preserving the environment.

- 5 traditional leaders, 25 youths, 10 village development committee members and 50 women have been properly trained in Gender Base Violence.



Some of the learners at Sakata Primary School holding a tree seedling each ready for planting, 18/02/2025

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

In the course of our implementation of the interventions, we encountered the following challenges:

- Inadequate financial resources.
- Weather interruption / rainfall disturbing the campaign meetings and the Community Diagnosis Exercise.



A women empowerment workshop against GBV held in Mtima Village – in October 2024

CONCLUSION: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence is Real in Zomba

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is real in Zomba District where cases of such nature are now being reported. Some are even being reported on social media.

According to a certain survey which was quoted by Titukulane Project in 2021, Zomba is among the leading districts of SGBV in Malawi. And what is so disheartening is that about 34% of women aged between 15- and 49-years experienced violence at the age of 15 years; and 21% of the same age range had experienced violence in their lifetime.

And Zomba, being one of the districts with high population of women and youth—according to the Malawi Housing and Population Census of 2018, there is need for more effort through different interventions, but also through collaboration and networking in order for the fight against SGBV and any other forms of violence to be won.

We should take serious note of the fact that there are more women and youth than men in Zomba, and yet they have limited power in leadership and participation in decision-making. Actually, the Socio-Economic Profile (SEP) for Zomba 2017-2022 highlights this fact that low participation of women and youth in leadership and decision-making is one of the key gender issues affecting the women and youth in our district. We certainly need to do more in this area.

END OF REPORT