

MALAWI CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS – (MCTU)



YOUTH POLICY

DRAFT - MARCH, 2019

MALAWI CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS

P.O BOX 1271, Lilongwe

MALAWI

FOREWORD

This MCTU draft Youth policy is a result of the MCTU Constitutional amendment to include the Youth structure and a series of workshops and broad consultation with affiliated trade unions under the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions, global union federations and other youth organisations concerned with the youth and their development and indeed the youth themselves. Although the policy defines "YOUTH" as those between ages 18-35 years, the definition is quite flexible bearing in mind the variety of parameters that could be used in categorizing the youth.

Malawi Congress of Trade Unions recognizes that youths are a rich array of skills, experiences, capacities, lifestyles and indeed problems. In this regard, youth represent a vast human resource potential for trade unions which if properly prepared and tapped, can contribute positively to the growth, vibrancy, relevancy and sustainability of trade unions including their personal and national development. If neglected, youth will be a missed opportunity, considering the aging population of Trade Union leadership currently.

The promulgation of this youth policy is therefore a symbol of commitment by the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions to the importance of youth development in the overall trade union and national development agenda.

A number of issues impinge on the youths' contribution to trade union development, sustainability as well as to national development. Low youth membership and participation in trade unions, low numbers of youth members in unions, lack of youth data, absence of youths in negotiations, insufficient skills and knowledge on how to handle trade union issues, few youth union leaders, high illiteracy rate, unemployment, under-employment, a high population growth rate, exploitation by adults, substance abuse, poverty and the HIV and AIDS pandemic are some of such issues affecting the youth that this policy proposes to address. In this regard, the pinnacle of this Policy is **Empowerment of the youth in achieving decent work and trade union sustainability**. It therefore follows that youth cannot expect trade unions to diligently undertake programmes to empower them when they are busy doing the opposite – abusing themselves through alcohol and drug abuse. Therefore, in order to get maximum benefits from the implementation of this youth Policy, it is expected that youth as important stakeholders in the implementation of this policy would also develop and promote an appropriate mind-set and the necessary self-discipline that goes with it. Specifically, this policy therefore, aims at empowering the youth to deal with the decent work deficits that affects them in respect of social, cultural, economic and political challenges they meet in their everyday working lives.

The document provides broad guidelines from which programmes, projects and services can be developed to facilitate meaningful participation and involvement of the youth in the overall trade union development efforts. These programmes will also respond to youth's needs, concerns and problems. It is the hope of the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions that this document will provide guidelines to all MCTU affiliates, social partners and stakeholders in our endeavour to build strong, vibrant and sustainable trade unions in Malawi.

Luther Mambala.
MCTU PRESIDENT

PREFACE

This Youth policy is coming at a time when Malawi Congress of Trade Unions has placed Youth Development and Empowerment among the Key Priority Areas in line with its constitution and also as stipulated in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III. The inclusion of Youth Development and Empowerment among the government development priorities has raised the profile of the youth sector- a scenario that has attracted more development partners and stakeholders to direct their resources and efforts towards addressing youth issues. This is an unparalleled opportunity for youth development in trade unions in Malawi as more and more youth opportunities in employment both in formal and in the informal economy gets created an avenue of union growth for the youths is possible..

This youth policy therefore provides for the establishment and functional youth committee within MCTU and all its affiliated trade unions.

The Youth policy has twelve main thematic areas of : Organizing and recruitment, Education and training, Youth Representation, Occupational Health and Safety, Skills and Entrepreneurship,, Resource mobilization, Decent work for youth, ,Collective Bargaining, lobbying and advocacy, Youth and technological advancement, climate change and green jobs, HIV and AIDS and other non-communicable diseases.

This Youth Policy is a call to action for MCTU and its affiliates to take Youth issues as part of its priorities in defending and protecting the rights and interest of workers in Malawi and a call for close collaboration amongst affiliates and all relevant partners and stakeholders.

I would therefore like to thank all partners and union members that took part in the formulation of this policy and urge them to utilize it to its maximum.

Denis Kalekeni
Secretary General

LINKAGES WITH OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES AND LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

- This policy has been informed by the following:
- The Republic Constitution of Malawi
- The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III
- SATTUC Youth Policy initiatives
- SADC Youth and gender initiatives
- The National Youth Policy for Malawi
- ILO Core Conventions
- The Gender Equality act and national Gender policy
- The Malawi Decent Work Country Programme
- The Sustainable Development Goals
- The MCTU Constitution
- The MCTU HIV and AIDS and Gender Policy

Draft MCTU YOUTH POLICY PRIORITY AREAS

1. PRIORITY AREA 1.ORGANISING AND RECRUITING

The policy aims at lobbying the Malawi Congress of Trade unions to conduct baseline surveys that will show the total number of the youth, their age and gender both at confederation as well as affiliate level. It shall also lobby for youth involvement in organizing and recruiting fellow youth.

A youth desk officer shall be recruited to coordinate the works of the youth and to spearhead youth organizing. The policy shall also ensure the creation of a strong network with the youth in tertiary Institutions and other likeminded youth groups and organizations.

2. PRIORITY AREA 2.EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The policy shall help in lobbying MCTU to organize regular trainings for the youth for both old and newly recruited members to fully understand issues bordering not only on labour but also the economy of the country. It shall further lobby for the establishment of Training of trainers specifically for the youth and review the educational materials.

The policy shall lobby for MCTU's collaboration with tertiary education institutions to offer labour related programs.

3. PRIORITY AREA 3.REPRESENTATION

The policy shall lobby for a baseline to establish youth representation in trade unions decision making bodies. It shall lobby for a reserved seat in the main executive for a youth that will guarantee that the youth are incorporated in the main executive. The youth shall be encouraged to take up leadership positions in trade unions by training potential leaders on trade unionism and leadership skills. The policy shall also lobby for the establishment of youth committees in all MCTU affiliates and ensure that adequate resources are allocated to youth activities in the unions. Youth Representation shall be at **30%** in all union structures and activities.

4. PRIORITY AREA 4.OCCUPATION HEALTH AND SAFETY

The policy aims at ensuring that the youth work in decent environment where their safety and health is not compromised. It shall ensure that employers conform to international standards of the Occupation Safety and Health, and that risk assessment for some jobs is done. It shall lobby for training on OHS among for the youth.

5. PRIORITY AREA 5.GENDER AND YOUTH

The policy shall lobby for gender perspectives to be integrated in all the youth programs. An affirmative action of 50-50 representation in all youth activities and structures shall be campaigned for.

6. PRIORITY AREA 6.PRIOSKILLS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The policy shall lobby for provision of entrepreneurship trainings for the youth. This shall assist the youth to acquire and use their skills to be able to have an alternative source of income specifically for those who are not self-employed.

7. PRIORITY AREA 7 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND ALLOCATION

The policy aims at ensuring that the youth are financially sustainable through income generating activities and the establishment of cooperatives that shall benefit individual members as well as the whole youth department. An allocation of **10%** from the budget to youth activities at both confederation and affiliate level.

8. PRIORITY AREA 8.DECENT WORK FOR THE YOUTH

The policy aims at ensuring that the youth have decent jobs. It aims at campaigning for the ratification as well as enforcement of all ratified conventions, protocols and laws on decent job. It shall lobby with MCTU to conduct trainings and sensitization programs for the youth to make them aware of their rights at workplaces.

9. PRIORITY AREA 9.COLLECTIVE BURGAINING

The policy shall lobby for audits of CBAs and shall seek to ensure youth representation in the processes.

10.PRIORITY AREA 10 YOUTH AND TECHNOLOGY

The policy shall encourage the use of technology among the youth realizing that it is one of the most convenient tools for communication.

11.PRIORITY AREA 11.CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ENVIRONMENT-THE FUTURE OF JOBS.

Realizing the impact of climate change on the world of work, the youth appreciate the threat that the change has posed on employment. The policy therefore intends to ensure that the youth take a role in conserving the environment to mitigate the impact of climate change.

12. PRIORITY AREA 12. HIV and AIDS

No youth shall be discriminated against on the basis of his or her HIV status. There shall be equal involvement of all the youth without forcing anyone to reveal their status.

There shall be mainstreaming of HIV and AIDS education in all the youth programs. The policy shall further ensure that the youth have easy access of HIV and AIDS information and materials, medication and reproductive health services in work places.

Implementation Plan

This policy will include an implementation plan drawn by youth committee members that will be monitored and evaluated periodically.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The execution of this Youth Policy requires a comprehensive and effective monitoring and evaluation system with appropriate and efficient feedback mechanisms. This requires undertaking monitoring and evaluation functions at all levels including gathering information at all union levels. In this connection, this policy provides for the putting in place of mechanisms to carry out internal self-monitoring and evaluation of youth programmes over a determined period. The process of policy evaluation could be done by external or independent evaluators and this will be a five-yearly activity. The monitoring and evaluation plan have been put together with the implementation plan and are presented together separately as an accompanying document to the policy.