

# SCHOOL OF LAW, ECONOMICS AND GOVERNMENT NEWSLETTER



Volume 5 | Issue 1 | January – June 2026

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## FOREWORD



Dear Readers,

I am delighted to present this edition of our School newsletter, covering the first half of 2026. Turning these pages, I am reminded of the remarkable energy, innovation, and commitment to societal impact that continue to define the School of Law, Economics, and Government, from research and teaching to public engagement and student life.

This period has been marked by outstanding achievements across our academic community. We celebrate our students' leadership and engagement, from Law Enforcement students hosting a thought-provoking symposium on "Tackling Crime in the 21st Century," to the Department of Politics and Government hosting a public lecture on development, aid, and self-reliance, featuring distinguished scholar Professor Dan Banik from the University of Oslo. We take pride in the Department of Economics securing a USD 140,000 Mastercard Foundation research grant to conduct the Malawi Country Case Study for the Secondary Education in Africa Phase II report, demonstrating our growing capacity to influence education policy at the highest levels.

Our academic members have continued to excel, with the School's Academic Staff Excellence Awards recognizing outstanding contributions across research, publication, and scholarly engagement.

I am particularly proud that four of the nine awards were claimed by our colleagues in the Department of Economics, reflecting the depth of research excellence across our School. We have also celebrated the successful PhD defences of Dr. Christopher Magomelo, Dr. Villant Ndasowa, and Dr. Alphonso Chikuni, alongside the graduation of new PhDs, including Dr. Susan Mtuwa and Dr. Carol Khunga, who are making important contributions to public administration scholarship.

As Executive Dean, I am immensely proud of what we have accomplished together. I invite you to read on with pride, and I thank every member of our School for making these achievements possible.

*Professor Happy Kayuni*

Executive Dean

School of Law, Economics and Government

## EDITORIAL TEAM



Prof. Gowokani Chijere Chirwa



Emmillian Mtekateka



Samantha Soyiyo



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Norah Mwase



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Rejoice Mpinganjira



Eric Dinga

## HEADS OF DEPARTMENT



Professor Gowokani Chijere  
Chirwa  
ECONOMICS



Dr. Ngcimezile Mbano-Mweso  
PUBLIC LAW AND CLINICAL  
LEGAL EDUCATION



Professor Michael Chasukwa  
POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT



Dr. Tiyesere Mercy Chikapa  
MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP



Dr. Bernadette Wangisa  
Malunga  
PRIVATE LAW

## UNIMA LEADERSHIP



Professor Samson Sajidu  
VICE CHANCELLOR

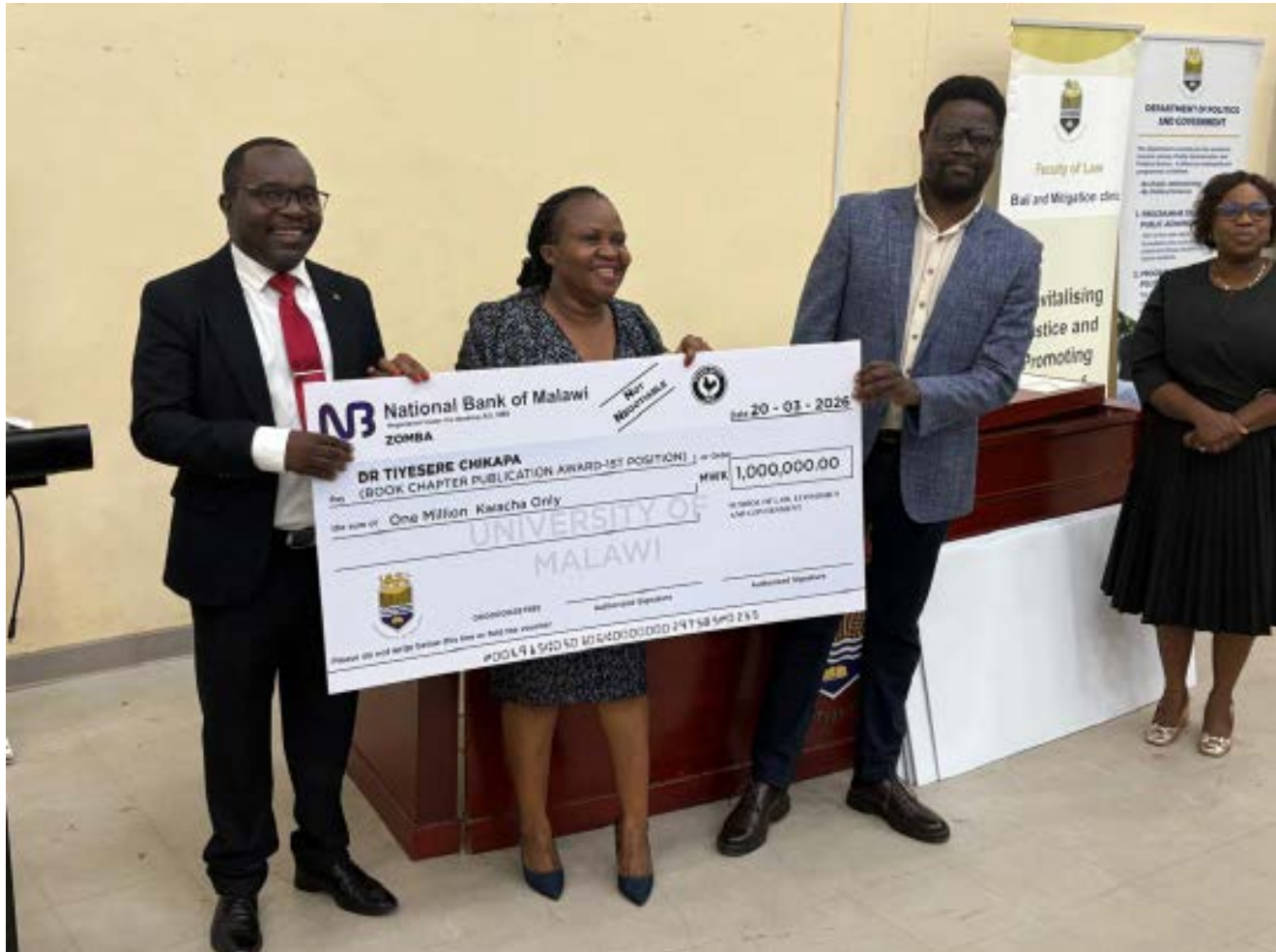


Dr. Sunduzwayo Madise  
DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR



Mr. Martin Matululu  
REGISTRAR

## School of Law, Economics and Government Honours Outstanding Academic Staff



*Dr. Chikapa (middle), one of the awardees poses for a photo with the Dean (left) after receiving the award*

The School of Law, Economics and Government at the University of Malawi recognised eight members of academic staff for their exceptional achievements during the 2025 Annual Academic Staff Excellence Awards.

Held on 20 March 2026 at the Wadonda Lecture Theatre, the ceremony brought together academic staff, students and invited guests to celebrate excellence in research, publication and scholarly contribution. Speaking at the event, Executive Dean Professor Happy Kayuni underscored the importance of research excellence in enhancing the University's reputation and global standing.

"Research publications are vital in strengthening the University's profile. They play a significant role in improving our global ranking, as research output is one of the key indicators used in assessing and ranking universities," he said.

**"Research publications are vital in strengthening the University's profile. They play a significant role in improving our global ranking..."**

The award recipients were Professor Louis Dzimbiri, Dr. Tiyesere Chikapa, Ms. Maureen Kapanga, DR. Martin Mwale, Professor Gowokani Chijere Chirwa, Mr. Edward Leman, Dr. Ngcimezile Mbano-Mweso and Dr. Farai Chigaru.

Awards were presented across several categories, including Best Book

Publication, Best Journal Publication, Resource Mobilisation and Rising Star, recognising outstanding contributions across a range of academic disciplines.

Guest of Honour Dr Maurice Monjerezi, Director of Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Studies at the University of Malawi, congratulated the award recipients and encouraged them to continue producing impactful research that advances knowledge and contributes to Malawi's national development.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES DEPARTMENT

### HRM STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN STRENGTHENING STUDENTS' LEADERSHIP THROUGH COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION



*Society leaders within SLEG*

On 4th March 2026, the Executive Dean of School of Law, Economics and Government, Professor Happy Kayuni, convened a meeting with student leaders representing various societies within the School. The gathering brought together leaders from across the School with the shared objective of strengthening students' leadership, promoting collaboration, and enhancing communication between students and the academic community.

In his address, Professor Kayuni emphasized that effective student leadership plays a significant role in shaping a positive academic environment. He encouraged student leaders to work together regardless of the societies they represent, highlighting that unity, responsibility, and mutual respect are essential in advancing the interests and welfare of all students within the School of Law, Economics and Government.

A major focus of the meeting was the importance of maintaining clear and effective communication channels between students and lecturers. Professor Kayuni stressed that student leaders serve as a vital link between the student body and the School's administration. He urged leaders to communicate students' concerns, ideas, and suggestions professionally while ensuring that information from the School is accurately and promptly shared with students. According to the Dean, open communication fosters trust, mini-

mizes misunderstandings, and creates a conducive environment for learning and academic success.

Professor Kayuni also encouraged student leaders to uphold integrity, accountability, and inclusiveness in their leadership roles. He reminded them that leadership is not merely a position of authority but a responsibility to serve fellow students with dedication, transparency, and commitment.

"leadership is not merely a position of authority but a responsibility to serve fellow students with dedication, transparency, and commitment."

and commitment.

The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment from both the School's leadership and student representatives to continue working together in promoting effective governance, stronger student engagement, and a vibrant academic community. The discussions reaffirmed the School's dedication to empowering student leaders and ensuring that every student's voice is heard through constructive dialogue and collaboration.

### LMS Department Conducts Forensic Document Examination Training



21 June 2026 4:43 pm

*Participants pose for a group photo after the training*

On 20-June 2026, the LMS Department conducted a two-day training program in Forensic Document Examination, bringing together participants from the Department of Immigration, the Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA), the Malawi Police Service (MPS), university students, and forensic enthusiasts.

The training was facilitated by Counsel Rashiedah Laika Winesi and Miss Memory Ligowe, while Fortune Nkungula, Thom Nkhwazi, and Imtyaaz Robert coordinated the event.

Over the course of the program, participants engaged in intensive practical and theoretical sessions covering key aspects of forensic document examination. Topics included the

fundamentals of forensic document examination, advanced handwriting analysis, signature verification, and techniques for detecting alterations and manipulations in computer-generated documents.

The training enhanced participants' understanding of forensic document analysis and highlighted its critical role in supporting criminal investigations, preventing document fraud, and strengthening the administration of justice.

It also provided a valuable platform for knowledge sharing and collaboration among professionals, students, and practitioners from various institutions committed to advancing forensic science and law enforcement in Malawi.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT STUDENTS INTRA SOCIETY DEBATE



*Official poster for the Law Enforcement Students Intra-Society Debate*

On 8th March 2026, Law Enforcement students held the finals of their intra-society debate competition, bringing together students from first, second, third, and fourth year cohorts to compete against each other.

The competition provided a platform for students to enhance their public speaking, critical thinking, research, and argumentation skills while engaging in constructive academic discussions. Students demonstrated confidence and knowledge as they presented and defended their viewpoints on various topics.

After a competitive series of debates, the third-year students emerged

victorious, showcasing exceptional preparation, teamwork, and debating skills. The event highlighted the importance of academic engagement beyond the classroom and strengthened interaction among students across different year levels.



*Law enforcement students celebrate their debate victory*

## HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STUDENTS BEGIN DRAFTING THE HRM SOCIETY CONSTITUTION



*HRM students working on the draft constitution for their society*

On 7 April 2026, students from the Human Resource Management (HRM) programme took a significant step towards establishing the Human Resource Management Society by commencing the

drafting of its constitution. A team of student representatives worked collaboratively to develop a governing document that will provide the framework for the society's operations, leadership, and future activities.

The constitution will serve as the cornerstone of the society by outlining its vision, objectives, membership requirements, governance structure, and procedures for decision-making. It will also define the rights and responsibilities of members, the roles and duties of office bearers, and the principles that will guide the society's operations.

By establishing clear rules and standards, the constitution will promote accountability, transparency, fairness, and effective governance. The drafting process provided students with valuable opportunities to engage in collaborative decision-making and democratic participation.

Through consultations and discussions, students shared ideas and developed a document that reflects the collective aspirations and interests of the HRM student community. In addition to strengthening society's ins-

titutional foundation, the exercise enabled students to develop essential professional competencies, including leadership, teamwork, communication, negotiation, critical thinking, and governance skills. Once finalized and formally adopted, the constitution will provide a solid foundation for the Human Resource Management Society, guiding its

activities and supporting its mission of promoting academic excellence, professional development, networking, and personal growth among HRM students. The initiative reflects the programme's commitment to fostering student leadership and preparing graduates who are equipped to contribute effectively to organizations and society.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT STUDENTS HELD A GAME NIGHT



*Students engaging in Go during the Game Night*

On 6th April 2026, law enforcement students hosted a Game Night as an interactive student engagement activity aimed at providing a platform for students to relax, connect, and relieve academic stress experienced throughout the semester.

"The event brought students together through fun and engaging activities, fostering social interaction and strengthening relationships among members of society"

The event brought students together through fun and engaging activities, fostering social interaction and strengthening relationships among members of society. Beyond promoting student well-being, the Game Night also served as a fundraising initiative to support upcoming society activities, including the symposium and finale dinner.

The event was a success, highlighting the importance of balancing academic responsibilities with opportunities for social engagement and community building.

## Law Enforcement Students Host 2025/2026 Symposium on Tackling Crime in the 21st Century



*Law enforcement students, staff, and guests at the 2026 Symposium*

On 11 April 2026, Law Enforcement students hosted the 2025/2026 Law Enforcement Symposium, bringing together key stakeholders, including officials from the Financial Intelligence Authority and TNM, to engage in critical discussions on contemporary crime challenges.

Held under the theme "**Tackling Crime in the 21st Century: Strategies and Solutions**," the symposium provided a platform for students, professionals, and invited guests to examine innovative approaches to addressing the evolving nature of crime in modern society.

The discussions explored the role of emerging technologies, including predictive analytics and artificial intelligence-driven surveillance, in strengthening crime prevention, detection, and response mechanisms.

Participants further examined community-based crime prevention approaches, cybercrime defense strategies, and cross-border intelligence-sharing frameworks aimed at enhancing collaboration among stakeholders.

The symposium highlighted the transformation of cri-

minal activities beyond traditional physical spaces, noting the growing influence of digital networks, sophisticated criminal syndicates, rapid urbanization, economic changes, and technological advancement on modern crime patterns. The event underscored the need for stronger

partnerships between law enforcement agencies, private sector actors, and communities in developing innovative, sustainable, and collaborative solutions to effectively address the complex security challenges of the 21st century

## BUILDING FUTURE PROFESSIONALS THROUGH THE EXECUTIVE DEAN'S TROPHY

The executive Dean's Trophy brought together students from the Human Resource Management (HRM) and Law Enforcement programs in a vibrant display of teamwork, sportsmanship, and unity. Students participated in a variety of sporting disciplines, including football, netball, basketball, volleyball, athletics, and other competitive games, creating an atmosphere that celebrated both talent and friendship

across programs within the School of Law, Economics and Government (LEG).

Beyond the excitement of competition, Dean's Trophy served as an important platform for personal and professional development. Participation in sports enables students to develop leadership, teamwork, discipline, resilience, communication, and problem-solving skills, qualities



*Team members pose for a group photo at the Dean's trophy Sports competition*

that are highly valued in today's workplace. Whether on the football pitch, basketball court, or netball field, students learned the importance of collaboration, strategic thinking, and working towards a common goal, all of which are essential in their future careers.

For Human Resource Management students, the games reinforced the value of effective teamwork, conflict resolution, motivation, and people management. Similarly, Law Enforcement students strengthened attributes such as discipline, physical fitness, integrity, quick decision-making, and leadership under pressure, competencies that are fundamental in policing and other security-related professions. The interactions

between students from different academic programs also promoted networking, mutual respect, and cultural understanding, preparing them to work effectively in diverse professional environments.

The Dean's Trophy demonstrated that sports are more than just recreation; they are a powerful tool for nurturing well-rounded graduates. By combining academic excellence with extracurricular participation, the School of Law, Economics and Government continues to equip its students with the confidence, character, and interpersonal skills needed to succeed both during their university journey and in their future careers.

## POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT

### Department of Politics and Government Orients Students for Attachments

The Department of Politics and Government and its sister department, the Department of Leadership and Management Studies, jointly conducted an attachment orientation programme on 30 May 2026 in Wadonda Lecture Theatre to prepare students for their industrial attachments.

The orientation brought together students, faculty members and representatives from government institutions to provide practical guidance on professional conduct, workplace expectations and public service procedures. The programme forms an important part of the University's commitment to ensuring that students are adequately prepared to tran



*A speaker delivering remarks*

sition from academic learning to professional practice.

Opening the event, Head of the Department of Politics and Government, Professor Michael Chasukwa, welcomed participants and outlined the objectives of the attachment programme. He emphasized the importance of industrial attachment as an opportunity for students to apply classroom knowledge in real-world settings, gain practical experience and develop professional competencies required in today's workplace.

The programme was further enriched by remarks from the Dean of the School of Law, Economics and Government, Professor Happy Kayuni, and Mr. Lackson Lipenga, Deputy Director in the Office of the President and Cabinet. Both speakers encouraged students to approach their at-

tachments with professionalism, discipline and a commitment to learning.

A series of presentations provided students with practical knowledge to support their attachment experience. Professor Chasukwa guided students through attachment guidelines and assessment tools, while Mr. Felix Linje, Deputy Director of Human Resource Planning in the Department of Human Resource Management and Development (DHRMD), introduced participants to public service rules and procedures.

Students also benefited from a session on office etiquette, professional dressing and workplace communication delivered by Ms. Linda Balala, Chief Human Resource Management Officer in the Ministry of Local Government, Culture and Unity. The session emphasized the importance of professionalism, respect and effective communication in fostering positive workplace relationships. And lastly a session by the Head of Leadership and Management Studies who tackled on sexual harassment at a workplace.

The successful orientation programme reaffirmed the commitment of the Departments of Politics and Government and Leadership and Management Studies to producing graduates who are not only academically competent but also equipped with the practical skills, ethical values and professional attitudes required in the workplace.



*Students participating in the Attachment Orientation Program in Wadonda LT*

## Strengthening Doctoral Education through International Academic Collaboration

Professor Happy Kayuni served as a Visiting Professor at the University of Addis Ababa's Centre for Sustainable Development from 4 to 15 April 2026 under the NORHED II partnership hosted by the University of Malawi's Department of Politics and Government. During the visit, Professor Kayuni delivered a doctoral-level course in the PhD in Sustainable Development programme and provided academic supervision and mentorship to doctoral candidates.

The visit strengthened academic collaboration

between the two institutions while contributing to doctoral training and research capacity development in sustainable development. It also reaffirmed the University of Malawi's commitment to international partnerships that enhance teaching, research excellence, and knowledge exchange across Africa.



*Prof. Kayuni during his visit at University of Addis Ababa*

## Department of Politics and Government Holds Annual Academic Writing Workshop for Postgraduate Students

On the 15th of May, the Department of Politics and Government hosted its annual Academic Writing Workshop in the Economics One Lecture Room.



*Monjerezi delivers opening remarks*

The event brought together postgraduate students from the Master of Public Administration and Management, Master of Arts in Development Studies, Master of Arts in Political Science, PhD in Development Studies, and PhD in Public Administration programmes.

The workshop, a key fixture on the department's postgraduate calendar, is designed to strengthen students' research and academic writing skills. These competencies are essential for

the successful completion of research projects, while also enhancing students' professional and analytical capabilities beyond academia.

The Guest of Honour was the Director of Research, Innovation and Publications, Associate Professor Maurice Monjerezi. In his opening remarks, he underscored the importance of aca-

ademic writing and research skills in both academic and professional settings. He noted that the knowledge and competencies gained through such workshops extend beyond postgraduate studies and remain valuable throughout students' careers.

"The workshop provided participants with a valuable platform to enhance their research capacity, engage with experienced academics, and acquire practical skills that will contribute to their success as scholars and practitioners."

Associate Professor Monjerezi commended the Department of Politics and Government for its continued commitment to supporting postgraduate

students through initiatives that promote academic excellence, research productivity, and professional development.

The workshop provided participants with a valuable platform to enhance their research capacity, engage with experienced academics, and acquire practical skills that will contribute to their success as scholars and practitioners.

## Professor Kayuni Challenges Emerging Leaders to Harness Civic Technology for Better Governance



*Prof. Kayuni making a presentation*

On 30 March 2026, Professor Happy Kayuni delivered a presentation titled "Civic Tech, Open Government and Participatory Development" during the Emerging Public Leaders Malawi Public Service Fellowship Programme at Kambiri Beach Resort, Salima. The presentation explored the paradox of rapid technological advancement amid declining public trust in institutions. Drawing on Afrobarometer data, Professor

Kayuni highlighted governance challenges, including corruption, low public trust, and the digital divide, data privacy concerns, and misinformation. He urged participants to use technology as a tool for inclusive governance rather than an end in itself. The session concluded with a practical challenge for participants to identify one concrete action to promote open government within 30 days.

## Department of Politics and Government Hosts Public Lecture on Development, Aid and Self-Reliance

The Politics and Government Department hosted a public lecture on 12 May 2026, bringing together students and faculty members for a thought-provoking discussion on development, foreign aid and the role of technology in national progress.

Held at Lecture Theatre 1, the lecture, titled "Elusive Development and Aid," was delivered by distinguished development scholar Prof. Dan Banik from the University of Oslo. The event attracted a large audience comprising PAS Society members and students from various academic disciplines.

Opening the event, Head of the Department of Politics and Government, Prof. Chasukwa, welcomed participants and highlighted the importance of such academic engagements in broadening students' perspectives on contemporary development challenges.

In his presentation, Prof. Banik challenged students to think critically about Malawi's development trajectory, emphasizing the importance of self-reliance and strategic engagement with international partners. He argued that while foreign aid can play a role in development, countries must develop



*Prof. Dan Banik delivers a lecture on development, aid and self-reliance*



*Prof. Dan Banik (left) poses for a photo with a student after the lecture*

the capacity to negotiate effectively and pursue sustainable solutions that align with national priorities.

The lecture also explored the growing influence of artificial intelligence (AI) and the need for its responsible use. Prof. Banik encouraged students to embrace emerging technologies as tools for learning, innovation and national development while remaining mindful of ethical considerations. Addressing the students directly, he underscored the value of critical thinking, informed debate and active civic participation in shaping development outcomes. He urged young people to become engaged citizens capable of contributing innovative ideas and solutions to national challenges.

The lecture was followed by an interactive question-and-answer session, during which students raised a wide range of issues relating to development policy, foreign aid, technological advancement and academic growth. Prof. Banik's responses sparked further discussion and provided participants with valuable insights into the complexities of development in the modern world.

The public lecture reaffirmed the Department of Politics and Government's commitment to fostering critical engagement with contemporary policy issues and providing students with opportunities to learn from leading scholars and practitioners from around the world.

## Strengthening Access to Justice through University – Civil Society Partnerships

**W**hat does accountability mean when citizens have no reliable way to communicate with their local councils?

This is the question that has driven Kohnemie M'meta, a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Politics and Government at the University of Malawi, to explore innovative ways of strengthening citizen participation and government accountability.

In Malawi, citizen engagement with local government institutions remains a challenge. Structural barriers, declining trust in public institutions, civic apathy and the spread of misinformation have made it difficult for communities to effectively participate in governance processes. As citizen engagement declines, local institutions receive less feedback and scrutiny, weakening accountability and limiting citizens' influence over decisions that directly affect their lives.

Motivated by these realities and a desire to contribute practical solutions, M'meta developed Mzinda OpenGov, a CivicTech and community storytelling initiative aimed at making governance information more accessible and encouraging active citizen participation.



*M'meta engaging in a panel discussion*

Drawing inspiration from former United States President John F. Kennedy's famous call to action—"Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country"—the initiative seeks to empower citizens through platforms that are already familiar and accessible to them. Mzinda OpenGov combines digital tools such as WhatsApp channels, SMS and USSD services to share information on local government services, civic rights and opportunities for public participation. Beyond technology, the initiative recognizes the power of storytelling and local culture in promoting civic engagement.

Through podcasts, radio programmes, videos, theatre performances, poetry and other creative forms of expression produced in local languages, particularly Chichewa, the initiative aims to reach citizens in meaningful and relatable ways. Plans also include partnerships with community radio stations, broadcasters and newsrooms to expand outreach and ensure that governance information reaches communities wherever they gather and interact.

The initiative is currently participating in the Accountability Lab East and Southern Africa (ALESA) Digital Governance Incubator programme and is preparing for its first pilot implementation in Zomba District.



*The Mzinda OpenGov team*

M'meta has also been sharing lessons from the initiative on regional and international platforms. In March 2026, she participated in the Civic Leadership, Engagement, Accountability and Rights (CLEAR) Bootcamp in Nairobi, Kenya, where she spoke at the Africa Regional Forum on "Reclaiming the Democratic Promise." During the forum, she contributed to

discussions on digital resilience and accountability as Malawi navigates its transition towards digital development.

In May 2026, she travelled to Johannesburg, South Africa, for the Building for Accountability Bootcamp, where she co-presented on Human-Centred Design for CivicTech alongside fellow Digital Governance Incubator participant Masiyiwa Munashe. Their presentation showcased the Mzinda OpenGov approach to civic innovation and citizen engagement before an audience of civic technology practitioners and innovators from across Eastern and Southern Africa.

As Mzinda OpenGov prepares to move from concept to implementation, M'meta remains guided by a simple but powerful belief: that the communities most often overlooked by governance systems are often the ones with the most valuable perspectives to offer.

Her work reflects the Department of Politics and Government's commitment to advancing innovative solutions to governance challenges while empowering citizens to actively participate in shaping their communities and their country's future.



*Kohnemie M'meta at the Accountability Bootcamp in SA*

## PAS Society Commemorates Martyr's Day with Public Lecture on Sacrifice and Nation Building

The Political and Administrative Studies (PAS) Society, in collaboration with the Lost History Foundation, commemorated Martyr's Day through a public lecture held on 3 March 2026 at Wadonda Lecture Theatre. The event brought together students, academic staff and invited guests to reflect on Malawi's history and the enduring significance of sacrifice in the country's development.

Held under the theme "Interrogating Martyrdom: Patterns of Sacrifice in Malawi's History," the lecture aimed to promote historical awareness, civic engagement and critical reflection among members of the university community.

The keynote presentation was delivered by Kamunkhwa Conleith Sellenje, Executive Director of the Lost History Foundation, who provided a

compelling examination of martyrdom in Malawi's political history.

Drawing on historical events surrounding the 1959 State of Emergency, Sellenje highlighted the sacrifices made by Malawians who resisted colonial oppression and fought for justice, equality and self-determination.

He reminded participants that Malawi's independence was achieved through the courage, resilience and collective efforts of individuals who were willing to sacrifice their freedoms—and in some cases, their lives—for a better future. He further challenged students to view martyrdom not only as a historical concept but also as a continuing call to protect democracy, uphold justice and contribute positively to national development.

The event provided an important platform for students to connect histo-



*Official poster for the public lecture*

rich experiences with present-day political realities. Participants gained a deeper appreciation of the significance of Martyr's Day, while also strengthening their understanding of civic responsibility, democratic values and active citizenship.

For students in the Department of Politics and Government, the lecture complemented classroom learning in political history, governance and public administration by offering practical insights into the historical foundations of Malawi's democratic journey.

The successful event underscored the importance of preserving historical memory and fostering informed civic engagement among young people. The PAS Society and the Lost History Foundation were commended for organizing a meaningful programme that encouraged critical thinking and reflection on the sacrifices that shaped Malawi's nationhood.

As Malawi continues to navigate contemporary governance and development challenges, the lessons of its martyrs remain a powerful reminder that freedom, democracy and national unity must be continually safeguarded by each generation.



*Mr. Nuka, a student, addresses attendees during the lecture*

## Department Strengthens Team Spirit Through Team-Building Retreat



*Department staff engaging in the team-building retreat*

On 9 February 2026, members of the Department of Politics and Government conducted a team-building retreat aimed at strengthening collaboration, communication, and collegiality among staff members. The activity provided an opportunity for faculty and support staff to interact outside the formal work environment, reflect on departmental goals, and reinforce their shared commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and community engagement. The retreat fostered team cohesion and renewed enthusiasm for advancing the Department's mission throughout the year.

## Successful PhD Defense by candidates in the Department of Politics and Government

**D**r. Christopher Julio Magomelo successfully defended his PhD in Public Administration. Dr Magomelo was working on a thesis titled "Beyond the Rhetoric: An Analysis of the Effect of Decentralization on Local Development in Malawi."

**D**r. Villant Janna Ndasowa successfully defended her PhD in Public Administration. Dr Ndasowa was working on a thesis titled "The Efficacy of Sustainable Development Goals Implementation through Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility in Organizations."

**D**r. Alphonso Chikuni successfully defended his PhD in Public Administration. Dr Chikuni was working on a thesis titled "The Procurement-Corruption Nexus in Malawi's Construction Industry: A Governance Enquiry."



*Dr. Christopher Julio Magomelo*



*Dr. Villant Janna Ndasowa*



*Dr. Alphonso Chikuni*

## New PhDs Produced by the Department of Politics and Government

**D**r. Susan Anne Mtuwa graduated with a PhD in Public Administration. Her thesis was, "The Politicisation of Public Appointments and Promotions in Malawi: A Political Economy Analysis"

**D**r. Carol Khunga graduated with a PhD in Public Administration. Her thesis was, "Performance contract and service delivery in Malawi's Parastatals: The Case of Lilongwe Water Board"



*Dr. Susan Anne Mtuwa*



*Dr. Carol Khunga*

## ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT

### Economics HoD Inaugurated as a Founding Fellow of The Academy of Sciences (TAS)



*Founding Fellows of TAS at the inauguration ceremony at BICC*

Prof. Gowokani Chijere Chirwa, a Professor of Economics and HoD, was inaugurated as one of the Founding Fellows of The Academy of Sciences (TAS). The inauguration ceremony took place on 18 February 2026 at the Bingu International Convention Centre (BICC) in Lilongwe and was presided over by the Ministry of Education. The event was coloured by the presence of distinguished academic leaders and members of the scientific community.

The Academy of Sciences (TAS) brings together leading researchers and scholars dedicated to promoting scientific excellence and providing evidence-based guidance to advance science, technology, and innovation for national development in Malawi.

This prestigious recognition reflects Prof. Chirwa's outstanding contribution to research, academic leadership, and mentorship. In addition to him, other Unima fellows include Dr Levis Eneya, Associate Professor Chomora Mikeka, Dr Stephen Wandale, and Dr Paul Macheso. The academy also signed a MoU with the Scottish Academy, the Royal Society of Edinburgh, making the first such MoU in Africa.



*Prof. Chijere Chirwa (middle) receives his certificate as a founding fellow of TAS*

### High-Level Engagement with World Bank- Malawi Economic Monitor Launch



*Jakob Engel, World Bank Senior Economist, presents the Malawi Economic Monitor*

On the 19th March 2026, the Department of Economics successfully hosted the launch of the 22nd edition of the Malawi Economic Monitor (MEM), themed "Getting Reforms Right", with a special focus on reversing Malawi's export decline.

The Malawi Economic Monitor was presented by Jakob Engel, Senior Economist, and Efreem Chilima, Senior Private Sector Specialist, from the World Bank Group, who unpacked key economic challenges facing Malawi, including subdued growth, high inflation, and declining exports, while highlighting reforms needed to support recovery and long-term growth.

The event also featured an engaging plenary discussion moderated by Ms Norah Mwase, with expert contributions from Prof. Happy Kayuni, Dr Cyprian Kambiri, and Dr Esmie Kanyumbu, who provided diverse insights on policy direction and economic transformation.

**"Malawi's economic turnaround will not happen by chance; it will be driven by bold reforms, informed dialogue, and decisive action."**

Bringing together academia, policy-makers, and students, the session fostered meaningful dialogue on how Malawi can strengthen its economic future through informed policy and collective action. The message was clear: Malawi's economic turnaround will not happen by chance; it will be driven by bold reforms, informed dialogue, and decisive action.



From left: Dr Kanyumbu, Prof. Kayuni, Dr. Kambiri (Panelists) and Ms. Mwase (Moderator)



Attendees at the Malawi Economic Monitor launch

## Dr Bangara Chikadza meets the European Union Ambassador to Malawi



H.E. Daniel Aristi Gaztelumendito, EU Ambassador to MW (right) and Dr. Chikadza

On the 2nd June, 2026, Dr Bertha Bangara Chikadza, Lecturer in Macroeconomics in the DoE and President of the Economics Association of Malawi (ECAMA), met with the European Union Ambassador to Malawi, H.E. Daniel Aristi Gaztelumendito, to discuss the state of the Malawian economy and explore how development financing can be more effectively aligned with the country's economic recovery and transformation agenda.

The discussions focused on the evolving role of development finance in supporting sustainable and inclusive growth. While acknowledging the European Union's long-standing contribution to Malawi's development efforts, Dr Chikadza emphasised that the current economic realities require us to rethink how much funding is provided, where it is directed, and how it is deployed, as well as the need for development financing to increasingly support productive sectors and long-term economic transforma-

tion.

Among the key priorities highlighted were productivity-enhancing agriculture, energy infrastructure that supports production and industrial growth, export-oriented industrialisation and value addition, and strategic investments in the Agriculture, Tourism, Mining, and Manufacturing (ATMM) sectors. Particular emphasis was placed on tourism, given its strong multiplier effects across the economy, as well as the largely untapped potential of the mining and manufacturing sectors to contribute to economic growth, exports, and employment creation.

The discussions also underscored the importance of strengthening governance systems, enhancing implementation capacity, and investing in youth, innovation, and productivity as pathways to harnessing Malawi's demographic dividend and fostering sustainable development.

## Economists or Educators? DoE Continues To Empower Its Members of Staff

On 30th March, 2026, the Department of Economics delivered a Refresher Session on University Teaching. The session was designed around key things that matter most to empower members of staff and foster innovative, inclusive and exceptional practices within the department.

The HoD, Dr Gowokani Chirwa, delivered a session on being an economics teacher, highlighting commitment to lifelong learning, technical skills up-gradation and building a portfolio of active research. Mr Paul Chiwaya from the Department of Education unpacked practical approaches to effective teaching and how students can be assessed effectively.

Dr Elizabeth. Kamchedzera from the Department of Education delivered on inclusive university teaching, a reminder that excellence in education means including all students, regardless of their background, abilities or disabilities.

The rest of the session continued with incredible contributions from Prof Levison Chiwaula, who sharply highlighted real leadership challenges and encouraged professional conduct among members of staff, anchored on core ethical values of UNIMA; Mr Timothy Mdolo from the Finance Department, who clarified on university financial procedures, an often overlooked but critical aspect of academic operations. And Dr Winford



*Prof. Chiwaula making a presentation on leadership challenges*



*DOE staff during the refresher session*

Masanjala, who delivered a compelling session on strategies for keeping economics students motivated, reframed economics from an “abstract” to an integral component of student lives.

The DoE organised this refresher training as a continuous process of improving the role of lecturers in effective learning, at the same time reflecting UNIMA's commitment to an effective, conducive and sustained teaching and learning environment.

## Dr Bangara Chikadza Invited to Speak at the 2026 India-Africa Forum Summit in India

**D**r Bertha Bangara Chikadza, Senior Lecturer in Macroeconomics in the Department of Economics, was invited to speak at the India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS)-IV Track II Conference held in New Delhi, India, on 22 May 2026. The conference was jointly organised by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, and the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) under the theme "Shared Futures, Shared Strength: Expanding India-Africa Partnership."



Dr Chikadza was scheduled to contribute to discussions on the overarching theme "IA SPIRIT: India-Africa Strategic Partnership for Innovation, Resilience, and Inclusive Transformation," with a focus on Session 3: "Drivers of Growth: Trade, Investment, and Connectivity."

Although the summit was subsequently postponed, the visit provided an opportunity for meaningful engagement with leading policymakers and development practitioners. Notably, Dr Chikadza held discussions with the immediate past President of the African Development Bank, Dr Akinwumi Adesina, on innovative approaches to leveraging pension funds for investments in healthcare, housing, and other services that improve the welfare of retirees.

The discussions also explored lessons from India's experience in digital health systems, healthcare financing, telemedicine, and diaspora financing as potential pathways for strengthening health infrastructure and advancing inclusive development across Africa.

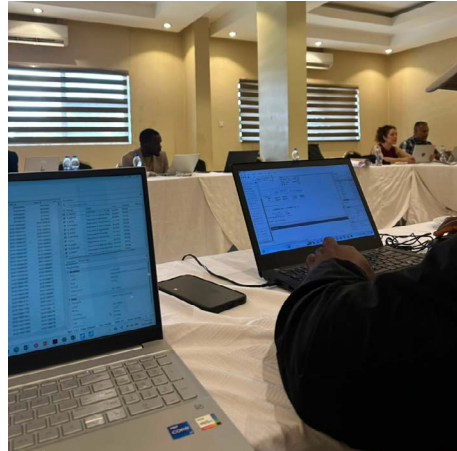
The Department of Economics congratulates Dr Chikadza on representing the University and contributing to important international conversations on economic development and Africa's growth agenda.

*Dr. Akinwumi Adesina (left) poses for a photo with Dr. Chikadza*

## Staff Members Complete Intensive Training on Multidimensional Poverty Analysis



*Ms. Mwase (right) at the training*



*Participants in session*

Prof. Gowokani Chirwa and Ms. Norah Mwase from the Department of Economics (DoE) participated in an advanced training on Multidimensional Poverty Analysis delivered by OPHI - Oxford University, from 11th to 22nd May 2026.

The two-week training was co-hosted by the National Statistics Office, Oxford Poverty and the SADC Secretariat, and graciously facilitated by Juliana Finkelstein and Agathe Randrianarisoa.

The training brought together representatives from the Ministry of Finance, the National Statistical Office of Malawi, the University of Malawi and the National Planning Commission.

sion of Malawi to deepen Malawi's expertise in multidimensional poverty analysis and advance locally-led, evidence-driven decision making. Over the ten days, participants gained practical knowledge and skills in computation and analysis of the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), as well as its application in policy design and evaluation.

The knowledge gained through this training further enhances the Department's ability to conduct high-quality research on poverty, inequality, and human development; support government institutions and development partners in designing and evaluating poverty reduction policies; and equip students with analytical tools that are increasingly relevant in practice.

## "What if Malawi's biggest economic problem is not a lack of ideas, but a lack of implementation?" Asks Dr Bertha Bangara Chikadza

On 3rd June 2026, Dr Bertha Bangara Chikadza, Senior Lecturer in Macroeconomics in the Department of Economics, presented her reflections on Malawi's National Economic Recovery Plan

(NERP), emphasizing that Malawi does not suffer from a shortage of plans, but rather a shortage of delivery systems. She noted that the NERP correctly identifies the challenges holding the economy back; however, economic



*Dr. Chikadza presenting on the National Economic Recovery Plan*



*Participants during the presentation*

recovery will depend on answering one critical question: how exactly are we going to do it?

In her presentation, she advanced practical policy considerations and solutions on food security, fiscal consolidation, foreign exchange management, mining, health financing, and infrastructure funding, drawing on comparative examples from countries that have successfully implemented similar reforms.

## DOE Secures a \$140,000 Mastercard Foundation Research Grant



*DoE and CERT team at the Mastercard Foundation SEA II briefing*

The University of Malawi, through the Department of Economics (DoE) and the Centre for Educational Research and Training (CERT), has secured a grant from the Mastercard Foundation to undertake the Malawi Country Case Study for the Secondary Education

in Africa Phase II (SEA II) Signature Report, scheduled for launch in 2026. The study is valued at USD 140,129.89, and it aims to provide an updated, evidence-based assessment of secondary education in Malawi. It will track progress since the 2020 SEA report while examining the effects of COVID-19, economic pressures, climate shocks, and the increasing role of digitisation and artificial intelligence.

The research will analyze trends in access, quality, equity, and transitions from secondary education to employment, including alternative pathways for out-of-school youth, disaggregated by gender, location, disability, and income. It will also assess progress across SEA II's six priority areas: transitions to work, system resilience, skills for life, teachers, inclusion and alternative pathways, and technology/AI. In addition, the study will identify key areas of innovation within Malawi's secondary education sector and explore the political economy factors underpinning these developments. Stakeholder mapping and engagement will be central, ensuring meaningful input from policymakers, educators, civil society, and young people.

The study is co-led by Prof. Gowokani Chijere Chirwa (DoE) and Ms Esme Kadzamira (CERT), supported by a multidisciplinary team from the University of Malawi. The project is currently in its inception phase, with an inception report and validation meeting with the Mastercard Foundation scheduled shortly.

## DOE HoD engages in high-level discussions with the British High Commissioner to Malawi

On Tuesday, 9 June, 2026, Prof. Gowokani Chijere Chirwa, Head of the Economics Department, was among the academics who participated in high-level discussions with the British High Commissioner to Malawi, Leigh Stubblefield.

The engagement highlighted the important role of academia in driving national development through independent, research-based insights that inform policy and contribute to shaping Malawi's growth agenda. This meeting underscores the Department of Economics' commitment to advancing impactful research, strengthening strategic partnerships and bridging the gap between academia and real-world policy solutions.

The HoD has consecutively attended similar engagements with the British Commissioner to Malawi in the last three years, signifying the commission's recognition of the important role that the DOE plays in the country.



*Prof. Chirwa (Second from left) with Leigh Stubblefield (Fourth from left), and other academics*

## Dr Bangara Chikadza presents at the IMF–World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington, DC

Dr Bertha Bangara-Chikadza, a Senior Lecturer in Macroeconomics, made an impactful presentation at the IMF–World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington, D.C. She presented her paper, "Rethinking Debt Sustainability: A Debtor Perspective," Dr. Chikadza offered a critical and timely analysis of the Low-Income Country Debt Sustainability Framework (LIC-DSF), highlighting structural biases, limited debtor representation, and gaps in addressing climate risks and development realities.

Her work calls for a more inclusive, transparent, and growth-compatible framework, one that meaningfully incorporates debtor perspectives and aligns debt sustainability with long-term development and resilience.



*Dr. Chikadza presents virtually at the IMF–World Bank spring meetings, Washington, D.C*

## Inside the Ben Kalua Seminar Series

On the 7th January, 2026, Dr Martina Mchenga, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Cape Town (UCT), and Miss Pemphero Mphamba, Health Economics Research Fellow at the

Health Economics Policy Unit (HEPU) under Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHeS), presented a paper on "Catastrophic Health Expenditure and Child Multidimensional Poverty".

On the 11th February 2026, Dr Daniel Maggio, Assistant Professor at Rutgers University, USA, shared research insights from their paper on "Lean Season Price Risk and Transfer Investment" during the Ben Kalua Seminar Series at the DoE.

The paper sought to understand how cash transfers and/or nutritional programming help households' smooth consumption. Results indicated that where the lean (pre-harvest)

season price risk had a significant impact on well-being, households that were more able to smooth consumption were those that received larger transfers than those that received smaller transfers.

The households were to smooth consumption across a severe lean season, and the effects seemed largely driven by increases in production.



On the 18th February, 2026, Mr Edward Leman (DoE's Lecturer), Mr John Magombo (Policy Expert), and Mr Lucius Cassim (DoE's Lecturer) shared their research insights on the topic "Exchange Rate Shocks and Household Welfare".

On Wednesday, 25th February, 2026, Ms Sylvia David Kachola and Mr Gladson Chipala (DoE's MA students) shared research insights on the topic "Shock after shock: How climate and economic stressors shape health in Malawi".

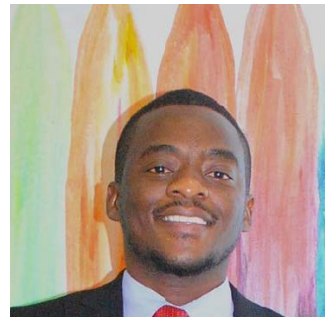
## DoE claims 4 out of 9 awards during the SLEG Academic Staff Awards



*Dr. Mwale*



*Prof. Chirwa*



*Dr. Chigaru*



*Mr. Leman*

On the 20th March 2026, the DoE claimed 4 out of 9 awards during the School of Law, Economics and Government 2025 Annual Academic Staff Excellence Awards ceremony.

The awardees were:

1. Dr Martin Mwale, position 1 in the category of Journal Publication
2. Professor Gowokani Chijere Chirwa, position 2 in the category of Journal Publication
3. Mr Edward Leman, position 3 in the category of Journal Publication
4. Dr Farai Chigaru, in the category of Rising Star

The Department of Economics continues to take great pride in the achievements of these distinguished staff members, whose dedication to research, teaching, and community engagement continues to elevate the department's reputation both locally and beyond. Their success not only reflects individual brilliance but also highlights the strength of a collaborative academic environment that nurtures excellence and inspires the next generation of economists.

## Student Dean's List Awards

On the 12th of March, 2026, 20 Economics students from years 1 to 4 doing Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Development Economics were awarded certi-

ificates for being on the Executive Dean's List in the 2025/2026 academic year.

The students received their certificates at the Vice Chancellor's Excellence Awards and Exe-

cutive Dean's List Awards Ceremony in the Great Hall.

## DOE at Shifting the Power Inter-University Debate

Fourth-year Economics students Eric Dinga and Bright Chifwenche were among the members of Team UNIMA who took part in the Shifting the Power Inter-University Debates, representing the University of Malawi in a competitive series of debates involving several universities.

The debates were organised by MISA Malawi Chapter through Tilitonse Foundation's Shifting the Power Program with support from Comic Relief and the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), also known as UKAid.

Throughout the competition, the team de-

monstrated strong preparation and persuasive argumentation. In the opening round, Team UNIMA secured a convincing win against the Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST), advancing to the next stage.

They continued their impressive run in the semi-finals, where they defeated Mzuzu University to book a place in the final. Although the final round did not end in UNIMA's favour, the team's journey in the debates reflected determination, teamwork, and the ability to engage thoughtfully with complex issues. Eric Dinga and Bright Chifwenche played an important role in this journey, showcasing the intellectual curiosity and confidence that students from

the Economics Department bring to platforms beyond the lecture room.

To celebrate their contribution to the debate, on the 9th of March, 2026, the Head of Economics Department, Dr Gowokani Chijere Chirwa, had a great time with the UNIMA Debate team and the UNIMA Economic Society's President and Vice President. Talking over lunch at T&D Conference Centre and Restaurant, the HoD commended the Chirunga Debaters for the excellent performance throughout the Tilitonse Foundation's Shifting the Power Inter-university debates.

## DOE Alumni Excellence



Ms. Ngwakutemwa Sibale

### DoE First Media Intern earns a scholarship

DoE's alumni and first media intern, Ngwakutemwa Sibale, was awarded the Mandela Institute for Development Studies-MINDS Africa scholarship to pursue an honors degree in Economics at the University of Cape Town

## DOE's Alumni selected as a postdoctoral fellow at University of Michigan

One of DoE's bright alumni, Lonjezo Sithole, was selected as a Rackham Predoctoral Fellow at the University of Michigan, USA. This prestigious fellowship is awarded by the Rackham Graduate School at the University of Michigan to support outstanding doctoral students completing dissertations that are unusually creative, ambitious, and impactful.

Sithole did both his BA and MA Economics at UNIMA before proceeding to the University of Edinburgh in the UK, where he obtained his MSc Econometrics degree. Currently, he is a PhD Candidate in Economics at the University of Michigan.

At UNIMA, Sithole was President of the Students Union (now known as Students Representative Council - SRC).

## DOE's Alumni awarded for highest overall performance

Mr Vitumbiko Kayuni, a DoE alumnus, was awarded "The Student who achieved the highest overall performance in Honours in the field of Applied Development Economics" at the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa.

Mr Kayuni studied a Bachelor of Arts in Development Economics at the University of Malawi DoE before joining the University of Witwatersrand for an Honours Degree in Applied Development Economics.

Mr. Vitumbiko Kayuni



## DOE Graduates another PhD Student



The DOE celebrates Dr David Madalitso Luhanga who was awarded a PhD in Economics, during the University of Malawi (UNIMA) 1st 2026 Congregation of the Graduation, which was held in the Great Hall on 29th April, 2026.

His thesis, "The Effect of Sugarcane Industry Privatisation on Farmer Productivity, Income, and Resilience in Dwangwa, Malawi," was supervised by Professor Levison Chiwaula, Associate Professor Patrick Kambewa and Associate Professor Spy Munthali, and makes an important contribution to ongoing discussions around agricultural transformation, rural livelihoods, and economic policy in Malawi.

The Department, commends Dr Luhanga for this outstanding accomplishment and are confident that his work will continue to inform research, policy, and practice.

## DOE Graduates MA Students

On the 29th April 2026, DoE proudly celebrated a remarkable milestone for our 26 graduates who have successfully earned their Master of Arts (MA) in Economics, during the University of Malawi (UNIMA) 1st 2026 Congregation of the Graduation, which was held in the Great Hall today.

The milestone reflected not only academic excellence but also resilience,

discipline, and a strong commitment to their field of study. Over the course of the programme, these graduates have engaged with complex economic issues, applied rigorous analytical tools, and developed research that speaks to both local and global challenges. Their work reflects the depth and quality of training within the Department.

## 2026 UNIMA Economics symposium

On the 24th of April 2026, our economics students successfully hosted the 2026 UNIMA Economics Symposium at Malawi Sun Hotel in Blantyre. The symposium was held under the theme, "Empowering Malawi's Youth to Accelerate National Prosperity: Strategic Investments, Entrepreneurship and The Digital Economy".

Mr James Kenani ( Economics Association of Malawi - ECAMA ) and Mr Austin Mbotwa ( Standard Bank Malawi )

Opening the discussion, Mr James Kenani reflected on the potential of Malawi's youth dividend, which he stressed would only materialise if it is matched with critical thinking, digital literacy, and entrepreneurship. He further emphasised the need to embrace the employer, not employee mindset, as key to becoming innovators.

improved the graduating class to pursue good financial management habits that will help them to manage income, plan expenses, and protect their wealth for long-term stability and success.



*Final year Economics students engage in a panel discussion*

The symposium brought together students, academics and industry leaders for a day of powerful conversations, insightful reflections and meaningful engagement on Malawi's economic future.

The event featured inspiring keynote speeches and discussions from distinguished experts, including Mr Andrew Nyirenda (Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA)), Mr Ekari Chauluka (Zamara Pensions),

Mr Andrew Nyirenda highlighted the need to embrace the digital space not as consumers, but as creators and innovators, by exploiting digital spaces like social media to create income streams that would provide just as good or even more than traditional employment structures.

Speaking on values and skills, Mr Ekari Chauluka challenged participants to embrace and exercise humility, honesty, empathy, responsibility, courage, and patience.

Mr Austin Mbotwa shared how to manage personal finance, using the curriculum built in the recently launched Standard Bank of Malawi's Financial Fitness Academy (FFA). He



Ms. Ngulube making closing remarks. In student Innovations, Eric Dinga and Trinity Banda presented research papers on the energy poverty and child nutrition nexus (published in Scientific African, Elsevier) and "Effects of telecommunication access and usage on economic welfare of RuralH households in Malawi" respectively.

The day was enriched by an engaging panel discussion, interactive Q&A sessions, networking opportunities and certificate presentations recognising the hard work and dedication of the organising committee.

Ms Bertha Ngulube, a lecturer in economics, gave her remarks on behalf of the Economics Department. She commended the class's hard work and resilience that took them this far and further urged them to never stop learning, and not to look at the degree as the end, but rather a toolkit. The 2026 UNIMA Economics Symposium was a key reminder that building Malawi's future will require visionary leaders, innovative policy thinking, and resilience to transform today's challenges into tomorrow's opportunities.

## UNIMA ECONOMICS SOCIETY CROWNED CHAMPIONS OF THE 2026 SLEG EXECUTIVE DEAN'S TROPHY

Friday, 8th May, 2026, was a moment of great joy in the Unima Economics Society as they were crowned champions of the 2026 School of Law, Economics and Government (SLEG) Executive Dean's Trophy. The Dean's Trophy is an annual sports competition in SLEG, founded by the School's Executive Dean, Professor Happy Kayuni, with the aim of fostering not only sportsmanship but also the spirit of community.

Competitive against the UNIMA Students Law Society, Political and Administrative Studies (PAS) Society, and Law Enforcement Society, UNIMA Economics Society took 1st position in 4 of 11 categories (Football, Volleyball, Chess and Men's Relay), 2nd position in 4 of 11 categories (Basketball, Women's Relay, Men's Sprint race and Women's Sprint race), 3rd position in 2 of 11 categories (Netball and Bawo) and closing out only in Checkers.

This excellent performance is a testament to the fact that the Department of Economics not only provides a conducive environment for excellence in academics but also in extracurricular activities including sports and games.



## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LAW & CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION & DEPARTMENT OF PRIVATE LAW

### GENDER JUSTICE CLINIC

#### Clinic Training Session



*Dr. Mweso and Miss Chikondi Banda lead the training session on gender law and survivor support.*

The semester's advocacy work began within the clinic itself on 2 April 2026, both new recruits and returning members gathered for a clinic-wide training session designed to ground everyone in a shared understanding of the Clinic's mission and to sharpen the practical skills members rely on during outreach programs and street clinic activities.

Rather than a one-off orientation, the session functioned as a refresher for old members and a foundation for newcomers alike, ensuring the Clinic speaks with one voice when it engages the public.

The training was themed "Understanding Gender Laws and How Best to Provide Support to Survivors," and brought together two of the Clinic's most trusted voices. Miss Chikondi Banda, the Clinic's current president, explained the protections set out under the Gender Equality Act and other relevant legislation, walking members through what equality before the law actually means in practice and how to explain it clearly to communities who may never have read the Act themselves.

Dr Mweso, the Clinic's Patron, followed with a session on social justice, focusing on trauma-informed, survivor-centered approaches to support work in the field.

Members left the session better equipped to translate legal language into everyday guidance, and better prepared to hold space for survivors with empathy rather than procedure alone.

## Marching for Minds: The Clinic Joins the Mental Health Walk



*Clinic members march with placards at the EMPOWERMIND mental health awareness walk.*

Gender justice and mental health are rarely spoken about in the same breath, yet the Clinic sees them as deeply connected, this is because survivors of gender-based injustice often carry an invisible mental health burden long after the visible harm has passed. That conviction brought the Clinic out onto the streets on 3 March 2026, joining a mental health walk organized by EMPOWERMIND, an organization dedicated to advancing mental health awareness.

Clinic members walked alongside fellow students carrying placards and singing along to songs written for the occasion. Chants and lyrics carried messages of destigmatisation, encouraging onlookers and participants alike to check in on their own mental well-being and on the people around them. The atmosphere blended celebration with advocacy: a reminder that raising awareness doesn't have to be solemn to be serious.

## Give to Gain: Marking International Women's Day Online

On 8th March, the world marked International Women's Day, and the Clinic marked it in the space where most of its peers already spend their time, social media. Rather than a single physical event, the Clinic ran a coordinated online campaign built around this year's global theme, "Give to Gain," pushing out messages about women's rights across its social media pages.

The campaign's central message was simple but pointed: Investment in women is investment in everyone. As the Clinic put it in its posts, when society supports women's education, health, and economic empowerment, it sets off a ripple effect of growth and development from which entire communities ultimately benefit.

By taking the campaign online, the Clinic was able to reach members, alumni, and the wider public well beyond the university gates, which is proof that advocacy doesn't need a physical crowd to make an impact.



*The Clinic's International Women's Day graphic*

## Law Departments Celebrate Academic Excellence among Law Students

The Department of Public Law and Clinical Legal Education, and the Private Law Department, in collaboration with the Students' Law Society (SLS), successfully hosted the 2026 Heads' List Awards on 16 April 2026 to recognize students who attained outstanding academic performance during the 2025/2026 academic year.

The ceremony honored 29 students from the Bachelor of Laws (Honors) and Diploma in Law programs who earned places on the Heads' List through exceptional academic achievement. The event also recognized students who distinguished themselves in advocacy by presenting trophies to winners of the 2025 (5th Edition) Ritz Moot Court Competition.

The ceremony was graced by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Sunduzwayo Madise, the Executive Dean of the School of Law, Economics

and Government, Professor Happy Kayuni, SLEG School Administrator, Mrs. Mkandawire, the Head of Department—Public Law and CLE, Dr. Mweso academic staff, and Counsel Chisomo Nyemba-Governor, who served as the Guest of Honor. In her keynote address, she reminded students that "excellence is not an event but a habit," encouraging them to pursue consistency, discipline, and continuous improvement in their academic journey. Meanwhile, the Students Law Society President, Harry Gift Chiwoza, and UNIMA's Deputy Vice Chancellor, Dr. Madise, agreed in separate speeches that such awards are motivational in nature.

The annual Heads' List Awards continue to promote a culture of academic excellence by recognizing high-performing students while inspiring others to strive for future recognition through sustained hard work and commitment.

## CHAMPIONING ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN CLIMATE ACTION ACTIVITIES

Empower Young Mind (EYM), a Climate Justice and Disability Rights Organization, is currently implementing a project on "Championing active participation of youth and children with disabilities in climate action activities." EYM collaborated with the Environmental Justice and Sustainability Clinic, the Disability Rights Clinic, and the Child Rights Clinic, all under the Department of Public Law and Clinical Legal Education, for

a two-day workshop. The collaboration began with an interface with Civil Society Organizations on the first day and concluded with another interface with youth with disabilities on the following day.



*Participants pose for a group photo after the workshop*

The capacity building with civil society organizations (CSOs) highlighted the urgent need for meaningful inclusion of children and youth with disabilities in climate action and broader development processes. Mr. Issac Mkandawire opened the session by emphasizing the importance of youth participation. At the same time, the Youth Coordinator stressed that young people, including disability influencers, have the capacity to drive change if they are actively involved not only in dialogue but also in decision-making and implementation.

The interface with youth with disabilities and legal clinics provided a platform for participants to explore the intersection of disability rights, child rights, and environmental justice within the context of climate change. Each clinic presented its key focus areas, highlighting how climate change disproportionately affects persons with disabilities and the need for inclusive legal and policy responses. Students

with disabilities shared lived experiences, noting challenges such as lack of timely access to emergency information for those with audio-visual impairments, limited accessibility, and denial of reasonable accommodation. Discussions further revealed that barriers to meaningful participation largely stem from entrenched biases, poverty, and systemic exclusion from decision-making spaces.

The session also generated practical recommendations, including strengthening government involvement in regulating environmental practices such as deforestation, investing in innovation, and learning from effective agricultural and environmental strategies in other countries. Participants called for increased advocacy, encouraging youth with disabilities to actively claim their right to be heard and to lead climate action initiatives.

The importance of environmental stewardship, including tree planting and sustainable practices, was emphasised, alongside the need to address attitudinal barriers and promote awareness that “disability is not inability.” The session concluded with a strong call to action for youth to move beyond passive engagement and take a leading role in shaping inclusive climate responses, while ensuring that their voices contribute meaningfully to national development and environmental protection efforts.

## PLCLE department welcomes academic staff members on study leave



*Pictured with the Heads of Departments, Mr Jere & Dr. Makanje*

Earlier this year, the Department of Public Law and Clinical Legal Education welcomed two academic members of staff from study leave. The two, Gift Dorothy Makanje and Misheck Saidi Jere, completed their respective studies late last year. Dr Makanje completed her doctoral studies at the University of Durham in the United Kingdom. Mr Jere, on the other hand, completed a Master of Laws with distinction at the University of Essex, also in the United Kingdom.

On the 30th of April, this year, the Heads of the Public Law and Private Law departments, Dr Mweso and Dr Malunga, formally welcomed the members at a luncheon at Kefi Hotel in Zomba. During the Luncheon, the two departmental heads expressed their pride at the achievements of the two staff members.

The 4 also discussed the lessons that the two returning staff members had learnt during their time away on leave, which they thought could be usefully replicated by the two law departments to enhance learning outcomes.

## Law, Integrity, and the Digital Frontier: The 2026 UNIMA Law Symposium in Review

On the 8th of May 2026, the corridors of legal academia met the pulse of professional practice at the Malawi Sun Hotel in Blantyre, as the University of Malawi's Department of Law hosted the 2026 UNIMA Law Symposium. Organised by the outgoing LLB Honours Class of 2026, under the auspices of the UNIMA Students Law Society, the event marked the culmination of four years of rigorous academic formation and the beginning of a new chapter for Malawi's newest legal minds.

The symposium drew together an impressive cross-section of Malawi's legal and professional landscape, judges, senior advocates, tax and revenue officials, academics, government officials, and students, all convened under one theme that proved both urgent and prescient: "Building a Resilient Legal Economy: The Future of Corporate and Commercial Law in Malawi."

### A Theme Whose Time Had Come

From the very outset, it was clear that the theme had resonated deeply with all in attendance. The event's guest of honour, Honourable Justice Etness Chanza Kumwenda, set a powerful and reflective tone in her keynote address, commending the graduating class for selecting a theme she described as both timely and highly sensitive.



*Final year law students take a group photo with guests*

ample of the evolving nature of commerce. Legal advocates and academics further enriched the discourse, drawing on both domestic jurisprudence and regional comparative perspectives to map the contours of a more resilient legal economy.

Justice Kumwenda observed that the theme arrived at a particularly critical juncture, a moment when the entire world, not just Malawi, was grappling with unresolved tensions on the taxation front, and when rapid global digitalisation was outpacing the legal frameworks designed to govern it. She underscored the urgent need for the law to evolve alongside digital transformation, stressing that emerging technologies, digital commerce, and cross-border transactions were creating regulatory gaps that Malawi's legal community could not afford to ignore.

Her address ignited robust engagement among panelists and attendees alike. The Tax Audit Manager from the Malawi Revenue Authority's Blantyre office lent a practitioner's lens to the fiscal dimension of the theme, illuminating the complexities of tax administration in an increasingly digitalised economy and the challenges of keeping revenue law aligned with evolving commercial realities. Particularly, he spoke on the new Electronic Invoice System, the new way MRA introduced to collect Value Added Tax. This served as a practical example of the evolving nature of commerce.

### A Call to Integrity and Service

Beyond the intellectual rigour of the symposium's discussions, Justice Kumwenda's remarks carried a deeply personal charge to the graduating class. She implored the Class of 2026 to enter the profession as lawyers of unimpeachable integrity, practitioners who would uphold the rule of law not merely as a professional obligation, but as a personal commitment.

In a moment that drew particular attention from those present, the Honourable Justice extended an open invitation to those among the graduating class who harboured aspirations for the bench, encouraging them to consider a future in the judiciary. It was a gesture that underscored the significance of the occasion: not merely a farewell, but an induction of the next generation into the full breadth of possibilities that the legal profession in Malawi holds.

### A Celebration of Milestones

The event was also a moment of gratitude and reflection. The Department of Law, led by its distinguished academic staff, bid farewell to a class that has left its mark on the institution's intellectual and social life. The Cocktail Dinner that followed on the following day, the 9th of May, 2026, provided a warm and collegial atmosphere in which students, lecturers, practitioners, and guests could connect, celebrate, and forge the kinds of relationships that will sustain careers and friendships for years to come.

The Committee extends its sincere appreciation to KD Freeman and Associates, the Malawi Revenue Authority, and Singano Purshotam Law Consultants, our esteemed sponsors whose support was instrumental in bringing this event to life. Their investment in the next generation of legal practitioners is a testament to the kind of partnership between academia and the profession that events such as this are designed to cultivate.

### Looking Ahead

The 2026 UNIMA Law Symposium was more than a tradition honoured; it was a conversation started. The questions raised about digitalisation, taxation, corporate governance, and the integrity of Malawi's legal economy will not be resolved in a single afternoon. But they were asked with clarity, passion, and purpose by a generation of lawyers who are now ready to go out and answer them.

The LLB Honours Class of 2026 leaves the University of Malawi not only with degrees, but with a mandate: to build, with integrity and innovation, the resilient legal economy that Malawi deserves.

"She implored the Class of 2026 to enter the profession as lawyers of unimpeachable integrity, practitioners who would uphold the rule of law not merely as a professional obligation, but as a personal commitment."

## The Disability Rights Clinic Hosts an Academic Symposium on Assistive Technologies for a Dignified Life for Persons with Disabilities

On the 4th of June 2026, the Disability Rights Clinic, together with FEDOMA and SAFOD, collaborated to host a symposium on World Assistive Technology Day. The theme governing the symposium was “Assistive Technologies for a Dignified Life.” The symposium was held to bring various stakeholders together to raise awareness of the significance of assistive technology in advancing human rights and to critically evaluate Malawi’s legal framework.

The presentation, titled “Legal and Policy Gaps Affecting Access to Assistive Technology,” was prepared by the University of Malawi Disability Rights Clinic. The presentation highlighted the vital role these technologies play in promoting independence, education, social inclusion, and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. The discussion was grounded in international frameworks, specifically the obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the African Disability Protocol, and the World Health Organization’s Global Cooperation on Assistive Technology framework.

In evaluating Malawi’s specific legal and regulatory landscape, the presentation acknowledged the Persons with Disabilities Act and the National Disability Policy 2025, both of which identify assistive technology as a priority area. While Malawi was commended for impactful fiscal measures, such as removing import duties and domestic taxes on these products, several significant weaknesses were identified.

These gaps included the lack of explicit legal guarantees for a user’s choice of device, the absence of public procurement accessibility standards, and the failure to integrate assistive technology into the primary healthcare system or to set measurable implementation targets. Ultimately, the presentation recommended attaching assistive technology to the right to mobility as a legal right, securing dedicated budgetary allocations, and leveraging tax incentives to foster local manufacturing.



*Participants at the Disability Rights Clinic Academic Symposium*

## The UNIMA Disability Rights Clinic Facilitates a Workshop for the Review of Selected National Policies for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Malawi under the RAD-P Project



*Participants and facilitators pose for a group photo after the workshop*



*Albert Kuthemba-Mwale, Loveness Kumwenda and Dr. Enoch Chilemba*

From 7–10 April 2026, the Disability Rights Clinic under the Department of Public Law and Clinical Legal Education, as led by its Patron Dr. Enoch Chilemba and assisted by two executive committee members, Albert Kuthemba-Mwale and Loveness Kumwenda, facilitated a workshop on Policy Review and Advocacy Training.

The workshop was held at the Lifestyle Boutique Hotel in Lilongwe and focused on selected national policies for disability inclusion. Organized by Sightsavers, the workshop forms part of the ongoing Realization of the Africa Disability Rights Protocol (ADP) in Malawi Project.

Participating Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) gained practical skills in policy and legal analysis, the development of effective policy briefs and key messages, and strengthened strategic advocacy approaches. This initiative represents a meaningful step toward advancing evidence-based advocacy and promoting disability-inclusive policy reform in Malawi.

The Clinic's participation in this important Milestone also reflects the University of Malawi's commitment towards community outreach services, as it is one of its core functions.

## Celebrating Student Leadership: Ms. Joana Chiongo-la Appointed UNIMA Senator

The Departments of Private Law and Public Law & Clinical Legal Education proudly congratulate third-year law student Ms. Joana Chingola on her appointment as a Senator of the University Of Malawi (UNIMA).

This appointment is a significant achievement and an important opportunity to contribute to the governance and development of the University. We wish Ms. Chingola every success as she takes on this important role and represents the student community.



*Ms. Joana Chiongo-la*

## New PhD and Senior Lecturer in PLCLE

Dr. Gift Makenje was awarded a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by the University of Durham, UK. In her doctoral thesis, "Countering Harmful Cultural Practices

Through Criminal Law? A Critical Study Based on Fieldwork in African Communities," she used empirical methods to examine the role of criminal law in addressing harmful cultural practices (HCPs) in African communities.

Her study confirmed the law's limited but useful impact, highlighted enforcement challenges, and suggested ways to strengthen the criminal response, including consideration of the role of traditional leaders, the value of criminalizing malum in se in HCPs, and provided suggestions regarding the treatment of adult women involved in HCPs. Besides this huge milestone, Dr Makenje was also promoted to Senior Lecturer this year!

## A New Executive Takes the Reins



The semester closed with a moment of renewal, where on the 22nd of April 2026, the Clinic held its annual elections to choose the executive committee that will steer the organization through the 2026/2027 academic year.

Elections are more than a formality for the Clinic, they are a chance for the membership to shape the organization's direction, reaffirm its priorities, and bring in fresh energy and ideas.

The incoming executive inherits a semester's worth of momentum: a trained and confident membership, new community partnerships forged through outreach, and a growing digital voice, and now carries the responsibility of building on all three.

"Elections are more than a formality for the Clinic, they are a chance for the membership to shape the organization's direction, reaffirm its possibilities, and bring in fresh energy and ideas"

*The clinic's new executive*

## 2026 JAN–JUNE PUBLICATIONS

### DEPARTMENT OF LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT STUDIES

1. **Chikapa, T.M.** (2026) The Public Employer as an architect of gender and class inequalities in Malawi's teaching career, *Malawi Journal of Social Sciences*, 25(1): 54-69

### DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

1. Dumenu, W.K., Mbwele, G.G., & Darr, D. (2026). Addressing (in)formality: The perspective of baobab entrepreneurs. *Forest Policy and Economics*, 185, 103740.
2. Banda, L.G., **Chirwa, G.C.**, & **Chasukwa, M.** (2026). Policy Effectiveness, Climate Change, and Agricultural Production: A Panel ARDL Study of Africa and Asia. In *Africa's External Engagement* (pp. 139–168).
3. **Pondani, E.** (2026). Searching for Purpose Beyond Displacement—A Review of More to Life than a Refugee Camp: A Congolese Refugee's Quest for a Purpose and Better Life. *Journal of Refugee Studies*.
4. Crack, A.M., **Chasukwa, M.**, **Manja, L.P.**, Bunya, C., Chikoya, C., Kamulete, C., Katoleza, E., Mawera, M., & Saka, H. (2026). The Role of Participatory Translation in Improving Communication and Engagement at the Local Level in NGO Projects: Evidence from Malawi. *European Journal of Development Research*.
5. Chen, N., Grady, C., **Dulani, B.**, Masumbu, M., Chiona, B., Bowers, J., & Winters, M.S. (2025). Public Service Provision and the Virtuous Circle: Evidence from Malawi. *Studies in Comparative International Development*.
6. Romero-Prieto, J., **Dulani, B.**, Masquelier, B., Tlhajoane, M., Helleringer, S., Banda, J., & Reniers, G. (2026). Estimates of Under-Five Mortality from a Mobile Phone Survey During the COVID-19 Outbreak: An Observational Study Comparing Three Instruments in Malawi. *Demography*, 63(2), 617–641.

### DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

1. **Mwale, M. L.**, & Ricker-Gilbert, J. (2026). What's Hers Isn't Mine: Gender-Differentiated Tenure Security, Agricultural Investments, and Productivity in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 74(2), 607-637.
2. **Yusufu, E. G.**, **Bangara, B. C.**, & Banda, L. G. (2025). When the cure leaks: corruption, health spending, and health outcomes in Malawi. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 13, 1715969.
3. Magreta, R., Botha, R., Marchetta, F., Mgonezulu, W., **Mwale, M. L.**, & Tione, G. (2026). Exploring Gender Gaps in Technology Adoption and Agricultural Productivity: insights from Male and Female Plot Managers in Malawi. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 1–24.
4. **Mwale, M.**, **Zingwe, D.**, **Malenga, E.**, **Kamanga, M.**, & **Dinga, E.** (2026). Powering growth or stunting futures? Energy poverty and long-term child nutrition in Malawi. *Scientific African*, e03290.
5. **Nguluwe, B.**, & **Chigaru, F.** (2026). The paradox of strong institutions: when better governance intensifies public debt's drag on economic growth in Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) in Africa. *Research in Globalization*, 12, 100348.
6. **Kamanga, M. K.**, & **Mwale, M. L.** (2026). Kinship Matters: When Farm Input Subsidies Help—or Harm—Children. *Agricultural Economics*, 57(2), e70107.
7. Folias, L. E., Wayagi, E. O., Msodoka, F. A., Mambosasa, M., & **Kachola, S. D.** (2026). Does poverty and food security play a role in the usage of sustainable agricultural practices? A bivariate probit analysis. *Cogent Food & Agriculture*, 12(1).
8. Kaphamtengo, A., **Mwandama, R.**, **Chipala, G. A.**, & Dunga, S. H. (2026). Trade openness and manufacturing-led industrialisation in small economies: evidence from Malawi. *Cogent Economics & Finance*, 14(1).
9. **Mwandama, R.**, Nkhoma, S., Rahaman, M., Chombo, C., & **Chipala, G. A.** (2026). From fertility intentions to contraceptive behaviour: evidence among women with children in Malawi [Original Research]. *Frontiers in Reproductive Health*, Volume 8 - 2026.
10. Crack, A. M., **Chasukwa, M.**, **Manja, L. P.**, Bunya, C., Chikoya, C., Kamulete, C., Katoleza, E., Mawera, M., & Saka, H. (2026). The Role of Participatory Translation in Improving Communication and Engagement at the Local Level in NGO Projects: Evidence from Malawi. *The European Journal of Development Research*.
11. Banda, L. G., **Chirwa, G. C.**, & **Chasukwa, M.** (2026). Policy Effectiveness, Climate Change, and Agricultural Production: A Panel ARDL Study of Africa and Asia. In A. Dubey & H. Solomon (Eds.), *Africa's External Engagement: Challenges and Opportunities* (pp. 139-168). Springer Nature Singapore.

## 2026 JAN-JUNE PUBLICATIONS (CONT...)

12. Nyirenda, G., Chirwa, G. C., & Mazalale, J. (2021). Correlates of Multidimensional Child Poverty in Malawi. In *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Social Problems* (pp. 1-19). Springer Nature Switzerland.
13. Namakhwa, D., Tchereni, B. H. M., Masanjala, W., Kuchande, S. L., Namakhwa, C. D., & Mgomezulu, W. R. (2026). Modelling the earnings of mobile money agencies in rural and semi-urban Malawi using panel data approaches. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 13, 102911.
14. Moodley, F., Bangara, B. C., & Lawrence, B. (2026). Macroeconomic Determinants of BRICS Property Market Returns: A Regime-Switching Approach. *Finance, Accounting and Business Analysis (FABA)*, 8(1), 174-189.
15. Moodley, F., Mashao, T., Bangara Chikadza, B., Mothibi, L., & Choga, I. (2026). Macroeconomic Conditions and Exchange Rate Misalignment: A Comparative Analysis of Malawi and South Africa. *Journal of Accounting and Management*, 16, 253-271.
16. Mwase, N., Nyawira, L., Mbuthia, B., Ondoua, T. K., Tolani, M., Banda, T., Gikonyo, S., Murerwa, J., Mwangangi, M., Barasa, E., & Maritim, B. (2026). Assessment of strategic health purchasing arrangements in Malawi. *SSM - Health Systems*, 7, 100255.

### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LAW AND CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION

1. N Mbano-Mweso 'No Climate Justice without Gender Justice: Examining Policy of Climate and Gender Justice from an Intersectional Lens in Malawi' in Eklavya Vasudev, Marie-Sophie Keller and Siddharth Peter de Souza (eds), *No Climate Justice without Gender Justice* (Cambridge University press, 2026) 85-105.

# SCHOOL OF LAW, ECONOMICS & GOVERNMENT NEWSLETTER VOLUME 5 ISSUE 1



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