PAPER PRESENTED AT THE GOVERNANCE MEETING IN EDINBURGH ON 5 MARCH 2015

LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN MALAWI- MY EXPERIENCE

Following on from my last attendance of local Governance Forum in November 2014 lI hereby submit a short paper on my experience in local governance in Malawi in the month of February 2015.

During the gap of 10 years on no Local Government to year 2014, the national assembly changed the local government act to include themselves that is Members of Parliament to be full council members with voting rights in the local assembly while as before there were ex-official members with no voting rights.

With the coming of councillors there has been conflict of interest. There is an instance where a Council meeting was held at the same time Parliament was in session in February 2015. As a result MP could not attend the council meeting. There were attempts to stop the council meeting and to declare it illegal since MPs were not present. The councillors made a bold decision to continue with the meeting after noting that the notice of the meeting was circulated to all members and also at the start of the meeting a quorum was reached.

It is my plea that the members present on the meeting should assist lobbying the Government for change in this public policy to its original state to promote true decentralisation between the Central and Local Government so that MPs revert to ex-oficial membership

On a positive note all Councillors in Blantyre we were sent for two days training in Mulanje to learn on public policy formulation which was very insightful conducted by Prof. Blessings Chinsinga a lecturer at Chancellor College in Zomba and has equipped councillors with tools on how to create, follow through and monitor public policy to ensure effectiveness.

Fellow colleagues showed interest to be trained on project proposal writing. So any assistance in this area will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you

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