



# PRESS RELEASE

Lilongwe 18 May 2011

## **Government of Malawi and EU agree on Gender and HIV/ AIDS Programme**

**The European Union (EU) and the Government of Malawi have signed today a new gender and HIV/AIDS programme for EUR 12 million to be implemented in partnership with UNFPA. This new programme aims to contribute towards gender equality and equity improvement.**

The objective of the Programme is to improve gender equality and promote equity as human rights issues and as a means towards reduction of HIV/AIDS and poverty.

It is expected that the new programme will strengthen the institutional framework for gender related issues including the Ministry of Gender, Child Development and Community Development, civil society and private actors working towards the achievement of gender equality and equity. Further more, the programme will enhance capacity of the National Aids Commission in gender mainstreaming.

Economic, social and legal empowerment is needed in order to achieve real impact on the ground and to be able to improve equality and equity. This will be done through "edutainment" in gender equality; training of law enforcers, Police Victim Support Units and civil society participation in gender related laws and rights. The socio-cultural practices impacting on the link between gender and HIV/AIDS will also be taken into account. Understanding of these practices needs to be increased and used for behavioural change interventions in HIV/ AIDS. An inventory of existing knowledge will be developed and used to mobilize communities for positive behavioural and attitudinal change.

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