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## **Global Health Experts Unveil Findings of New Report on the Impact of Trump's GGR on Malawians**

*The Report Comes After a Fact-Finding Mission by CHANGE Researchers in Malawi*

**Washington, D.C.** -- Moments ago, CHANGE (the Center for Health and Gender Equity) released a new report titled, *A Powerful Force: U.S. Global Health Assistance and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Malawi*, which details the impacts of U.S. global health assistance policies, including the expansion of the Global Gag Rule under the Trump administration, funding decisions, and programmatic shifts on the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of Malawians.

The report comes following a fact-finding trip and investigation in Malawi last year, conducted by CHANGE researchers. Its primary evidence provides both an assessment and a critical reminder of U.S. commitments to the global SRHR agenda, and includes documentation of challenges faced by LGBTQI+ Malawians to access HIV services through U.S. global health services.

**SEE THE REPORT HERE:** [http://www.genderhealth.org/media\\_and\\_publications/publications/](http://www.genderhealth.org/media_and_publications/publications/)

*A Powerful Force: U.S. Global Health Assistance and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Malawi* includes:

- Specific recommendations to improve U.S. global health assistance so that it is a powerful force for good in Malawi and throughout the world;
- An analysis on the role of U.S. global health assistance and civil society in upholding sexual well-being and promoting the positive aspects of sexual health;
- For the first time, CHANGE documents the impact of climate change and sexual wellbeing on SRHR;
- The successes and challenges associated with implementing U.S. global health assistance programs in-country and documents the local political and cultural factors that shape program implementation.
- An interview with Her Excellency, Joyce Banda, former President of Malawi.

### **Some of CHANGE's topline findings include:**

- Devastating impacts of the Global Gag Rule on local law, clinics, coalitions, research, and people living across rural areas. Interviewees lamented a lack of ability to provide feedback to the U.S. Government about the impact of the policy.
- Three years into the implementation of Trump's expanded Global Gag Rule, U.S. government officials and prime partners are still not providing accurate and complete guidance to their partners regarding policy implementation and compliance.
- Severe inequity in service delivery. U.S. global health assistance supports private clinics that charge some women for antenatal services if a partner is not with them.
- Female sex workers told CHANGE researchers that USG-funded drop-in centers only provide external condoms that smell strongly of chemicals and are prone to breakage.
- Overwhelmingly, interviewees spoke positively about the PEPFAR DREAMS partnership in Malawi. This includes organizations who take U.S. government funding, those who do not, and DREAMS beneficiaries. DREAMS was described as bringing every service together that an adolescent girl or young woman needs. There are also success stories of the DREAMS Innovation Challenge (DREAMS-IC) Fund, though funding has since ended.

- Until climate change mitigation efforts are assimilated into the U.S.' global health assistance framework, reactionary U.S. humanitarian assistance will be required to address the immediate needs of communities in Malawi.

Earlier today, CHANGE announced the findings of the report alongside Brian Ligomeka, the Executive Director of the Centre for Solutions Journalism (CSJ), and Emma Kaliya, a human rights and gender and women's rights activist and Director of the Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre (MHRRC), at a panel at the Kaiser Family Foundation in Washington, D.C.

"It's no secret that the current administration has a neo-colonial global health agenda that prioritizes power and control over support and security for people who need it the most" **said Serra Sippel, President of CHANGE.** "As it stands, the siloed structure of global health assistance from the U.S. hinders the ability for Malawians to get their health needs met. The United States government is failing to live up to its promises to progress sexual and reproductive health and gender equality with destructive policies like the expanded Global Gag Rule, and it is quite literally costing lives. We hope that with evidence-based recommendations to the U.S. government, like the ones detailed in this report, the government in turn can take action toward strengthening its global health assistance."

***For interviews with Serra Sippel, President of CHANGE, Emma Kaliya, Malawi-based Director of the Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre, or Brian Ligomeka, Malawi-based Executive Director of the Centre for Solutions Journalism (CSJ), please contact Madison Donzis at [madison@unbendablemedia.com](mailto:madison@unbendablemedia.com).***

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**CHANGE** (the Center for Health and Gender Equity) is a U.S.-based nongovernmental organization that promotes sexual and reproductive health and rights as a means to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, by shaping the public's conversation, elevating women's voices, and influencing U.S. and global policies. We are guided by our vision of a world that respects, protects, and honors sexual and reproductive rights for all. Our work is grounded in and driven by a human rights framework at the intersection of multiple sectors including women's rights, human rights, family planning, maternal health, HIV and AIDS, and gender-based violence.