

## URBAN RESEARCH & ADVOCACY CENTRE (URAC)

### Women Livelihood Support Project report

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### Introduction

Women Livelihood support project is one of the projects implemented by URAC in Chilumba. The main goal of the project is to support women's livelihood through agriculture and mainstreaming family planning, through three specific objectives; 1, improving capacity of the women in agriculture; 2, improving nutrition status of the under-five and their mothers and 3, increasing access to information on family planning matters among beneficiary women.

The project started with a group of ten (10) women. So far, four sub-projects have been initiated; fruit tree project, chicken project, and Savings and Loans project. Each of the three projects has been successful.



*A photograph of fruit trees for a WLSP beneficiary*

## Fruit trees project



Despite the hot weather in Chilumba, fruit trees are doing great. Out of fifteen fruit trees issued to each beneficiary, at least nine trees have

survived. In order to ensure that the trees survive the hot weather, beneficiaries have been advised to make a hole around each tree and fill the hole with cassava residuals, water the tree and fill the soil. This is done to preserve moisture for the growth of the tree.

## Chicken project



*A photograph of two chickens for a WLSP beneficiary*

At first each beneficiary was given two chickens; a hen and a cock. An additional 3 chicken were given. Giving by instalment was to avoid the risk of loss of chickens in case on a diseases outbreak. The project is also the most successful, as chicken are now laying eggs. Some beneficiaries have chicks from the eggs they obtain, while others are making money by selling eggs. Others eat eggs as relish. Some community members buy eggs from the beneficiaries and use local chickens to hatch the

eggs, thus they have chickens from the chicken project. The women were trained to make chicken feed. As such they make feed (layers mash), for their chicken. However, they face some challenges to buy some ingredients because they don't have enough money. As such the feed they make is of low quality and hence low egg production. The money earned from business from Savings and Loans is used to support other family needs. URAC recently bought more high quality feeds as further support.



## Women Savings and Loans project

Beneficiaries meet every Monday to conduct group savings. With a MK200, 000 initial capital, given by URAC organization under the financial support from Malawi Freunde Rotternburg e.V. of Germany, the saving group has made tremendous interests. For instance, the saving value is now at **MK671, 571. 00**. The project has also resulted to the birth of another project; pig farming project, in which three weaners, 2 barrows and 1 sow were bought from small contributions made by the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries agreed to sell the barrows in December and a sow will be kept as an investment capital.

*A photograph of pigs for the WLSP demonstration group*



### **The new groups**

In order to reach the target of 30 women as per project design, an additional 20 women were recruited. The project finally has six groups from six villages have been formed. Each group comprises of 5 women members. Those who were in the demonstration group are now regarded as teachers to train new members in their respective village groups. The new village groups are making village savings in their respective meeting places and they are doing great. They have received chickens which they keep in one place. Each group has been assigned a day to clean the chicken house and feed the chicken. Every Wednesday all members from the six groups meet to hold discussions on problems they experience over the week and how to resolve them. Currently, there is an arrangement that they make additional chicken feed (growers), as part of practices on what they learnt from URAC. Some raw materials have been bought already to serve the same purpose.