**CONSTITUTION**

**FOR LILONGWE CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORK**

**A GROUPING OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN LILONGWE DISTRICT**

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# CONSTITUTION FOR LILONGWE CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORK.

**ARTICLE 1: NAME**

The name of the forum shall be **Lilongwe Civil Society network** and this constitution shall be known as **Lilongwe Civil Society Network Constitution.**

**ARTICLE 2: ADDRESS**

The address for service shall be that of the network Coordinator elected through voting, but letters should be delivered to Lilongwe District Assembly, P.O Box

93, Lilongwe.

**ARTICLE 3: AREA OF OPERATION**

The network shall operate within the boundaries of Lilongwe District.

**ARTICLE 4: DECLARATION**

This constitution shall be deemed to have had effect from the date it is discussed and approved by forum affiliate members and anything done in purportedly exercise of any of the provisions of the constitution there under shall be deemed to have been lawfully done.

**ARTICLE 5: LEGAL STANDING**

The network derives its mandate under section 32 of the Republic of Malawi Constitution as amended, modified or replaced from time to time.

**ARTICLE 6: INTERPRETATION**

In this constitution, unless the context otherwise requires:

**Network** means Lilongwe Civil Society organizations.

**NGO** means non-governmental Organization

**Coordinating team** means those NGO’s elected under section 12 to undertake such functions of the coordinating team as provided for under section 8 of the constitution.

**Coordinator** means a Nongovernmental Organization mandated to be Chairperson at each given time.

Member means an organization qualified under this constitution to be a member.

**ARTICLE 7: OVERALL GOAL**

To contribute towards district and national development of Malawi through sustainable coordination and building of partnerships among CSOs development initiatives in Lilongwe.

**ARTICLE 8: OBJECTIVES**

* Creates a forum for sharing best practice experiences and other work related issues provided to all CSOs.
* Enhances collaboration and partnerships between the Civil Society and Lilongwe District Council
* Advocates for increased implementation of public policies and practices in Lilongwe district council
* Advocates for increased and timely budgetary allocations from the Central Government to Lilongwe district council
* Promotes mutual understanding amongst CSOs by providing direction and recommendations for implementation of programs to avoid duplication of efforts and curbing competition among CSOs.
* Monitors and promotes financial accountability among CSOs and government entities.

**ARTICLE 9: ACTIVITIES**

* Appraising and recommending to DEC, CSO’s working in Lilongwe District.
* Mobilising and disbursement of Information Education Communication (IEC) materials.
* Developing joint development project proposals for funding
* Build the capacity of civil societies in programme delivery through trainings and provision of relevant information.
* Facilitating Organisation exchange visits for learning.
* Provide advisory services to CSOs and various government line ministries in various areas requiring special expertise.
* Consolidating result oriented financial and narrative reports from various CSOs and reporting to the Council on behalf of all CSOs.
* Sharing of case studies and best practices and produce a newsletter annually for the network.
* Establish and maintain a database for all CSO’s in the district.
* Have a website where people can see about the network.
* Conducting result based advocacy work i.e. campaigns, press releases, policy formulation or critique.
* Organising open days to show case NGO interventions in the district. This is to be networked with Ministry and companies to allow future opportunities to work together.
* National/Local Budget analysis, and public expenditure tracking system

**ARTICLE 10: NETWORK POSITIONS**

1. There shall be a District Executive Committee comprised of not less than three members and not exceeding five(Chairperson and Vice, Secretary and Vice, Treasurer) which shall have the following functions:

a) To transact the business of LICSONet in between AGMs

b) To generally supervise and provide guidance to LICSONet including receiving and vetting of reports.

c) To facilitate disciplinary functions and make recommendations to the council.

d) To act as signatories to the bank account of LICSONet.

e) The executive members shall have powers to constitute and dissolve when required i.e. fund raising committee.

f) Creating and conferring duties and functions of the following sub groups, (Thematic based, Specialised based and Geo based)

g) To manage payment of subscription fee and ensure that payments have been made on time by member NGOs.

h) The Executive Committee is mandated to speak on behalf of LICSONet.

**ARTICLE 11: MEETINGS**

* Ordinary meetings- the forum shall hold quarterly meeting, thus once every three months.
* Executive Meetings- the executive members shall hold meetings on monthly basis
* Annual general meeting- There shall be Annual general meeting once every year.
* Extra Ordinary meetings- Members through the Executive Committee may call for an extra ordinary meeting if need arise.
* The quorum of any meeting shall be formed by the presence at the beginning of the meeting of any sitting at least half plus one of the members.

**ARTICLE 12: MEMBERSHIP**

1. Without prejudice to any other provisions (in this constitution) any CSO shall qualify to be a member provided:
   1. It is permanently working in the district.
   2. Has a mid or long term project in the district
   3. Midterm shall cover a period of one to two years and long term shall be more than two years.
   4. Has paid the membership fee of MK 30,000 per annum.
2. For purposes of this section CSO shall be
   1. Any organization registered as an NGO with CONGOMA
   2. Projects under international agreements with the Government of Malawi
   3. Any grouping community, church, labour, Trade Union, etc.

**ARTICLE 13: DISCIPLINE**

* + 1. **Disciplinary Procedures**
* Members will be notified of a disciplinary issue through the official letter from the network.
* Members will be expected to respond to the letter within 5 workings days.
* Disciplinary hearing meeting shall commence after the member has responded.
* The disciplinary process will be dealt with initially as an internal (LICSONet) matter and thereafter referred to the District Council if the need arises.
  + 1. **Issues Requiring Disciplinary Actions**
* Non-payment of subscription fee
* Failure to renew and register with NGO board.
* Failure to attend two consecutive meeting
* Failure to meaningfully participate in LICSONet activities as stipulated in Article 9.
* Speaking on behalf of LICSONet without approval from the Executive Committee
  + 1. **Penalties**
* Written warning to the member
* Penalty fee of MK 10,000 to deposited into LICSONet Account
* Six months suspension for the member from LICSONet
* If the above interventions have been exhausted and /or the matter is of gross nature, a member will be expelled from the network.

**ARTICLE 14: TENURE OF OFFICE**

* The tenure of office shall be for two years.
* The members may be re-elected to serve in their respective capacities a maximum of two consecutive terms.
* Member organizations shall have to sign an agreement form for proof of commitment to LICSONet for the period the member is part of the executive committee.

**ARTICLE 15: ELECTIONS**

* There shallbe elections of the District Executive Committee once every two years at an annual general meeting comprised of not less than two thirds of the members and the elections shall be presided over by a member from the District Assembly.
* Every member shall be elected through a secret ballot.

**ARTICLE 16: FINANCES**

The forum shall be mandated to source and have its own funds and proper rules shall be made by the executive committee regarding the management.

**ARTICLE 17: AMENDMENTS**

* This constitution shall only be amended at the Annual General Meeting and only by two third majority of the members present
* Proposal of amendments to the constitution shall be submitted in writing to the Chairperson through the Secretary at least 14 days before the Annual General meeting.
* The proposal shall be included in the agenda of the Annual General meeting.

**DECLARATION**

We, the undersigned, hereby agree that the content of this Network constitution is a true reflection of our aspirations and objectives, and will strive to safeguard and achieve the intended goals

Signed: Chairperson

Date

Witness For: The District Commissioner

Date: