

**REVIEW
OF
MALAWI NETWORK OF PEOPLE LIVING
WITH HIV/AIDS (MANET+)**

December 2001 to January 2002

REPORT

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List of Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
APSO	Agency for Personal Service Overseas
ARVs	Anti-Retroviral Drugs
BoD	Board of Directors
BoT	Board of Trustees
CBO	Community Based Organization
DfID	Department for International Development
ED	Executive Director
EO	Executive Officer
ES	Executive Secretary
GIPA	Greater Involvement of People Living with and Affected by HIV/AIDS
HBC	Home-Based Care
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRD	Human Resource Development
KASO	Kanengo AIDS Support Organization
MAICCMponela	AIDS Information and Counselling Centre
MANASO	Malawi Network of AIDS Service Organizations
MANET+	Malawi Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS
NAC	National AIDS Commission
NAPHAM	National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS in Malawi
NEC	National Executive Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PLWHA	People Living with and/or Affected HIV/AIDS
REC	Regional Executive Committee
SAT	Southern Africa AIDS Training Programme
SGs	Support Groups
SMARTSpecific	Measurable Attainable Replicable and Time bound
SSO	Senior Specialist Overseas
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNAIDS	The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VSO	Voluntary Services Overseas
YAPHAC	Youth and People Living with AIDS Centre

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Zikomo Kwambiri.

1. INTRODUCTION

This document is a report of the review of the mandate, core business, roles and functions of Malawi Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (MANET+). The organization is going through a process of repositioning and restructuring with the objective of becoming more professional, effective and efficient.

After four full years of operation, the programme of MANET+ is being reviewed in order to get a sense of progress being made and to inform strategic decisions about its future. The organization was established with a view to strengthening HIV positive individuals and working with and through local Support Groups (Organizations) in their provision of high quality support and capacity-building services. MANET+ has been supported in the recent period by three donor agencies namely Umoyo Network, UNV Support to People Living with HIV/AIDS project and National AIDS Commission. Previous support came from UNAIDS, SAT, and UNDP.

The organization recently recruited a Programme Officer (Advocacy), a Finance & Administration Officer, and Driver/Office Assistant staff operating out from a fully furnished office facility located in the Nurses & Midwives Council of Malawi Building in Lilongwe City Centre. The governance and management (leadership) of MANET+ and key professional positions have brought the organization into a transition period presenting opportunities for creating a learning organization through a change process.

Many stakeholders of MANET+ have challenged the professionalism and effectiveness of the organization. This prompted the BoT, management and NEC of the organization to ask hard questions about the mandate, roles and functions of MANET+.

The review was done with the financial assistance from Umoyo Network aiming at generating recommendations that would provide input on what the mandate and structure of MANET+ should be like so as to: -

- Reduce the duplication of roles
- Reduce the dragging of decision making
- Reduce tensions and conflicts of interests
- Reduce the proliferation of the number of levels of decision making
- Reorient the organization's direction
- Create a new vision, focus and strategy

2. REVIEW PROCESS

a). Aim

After nearly 6 full years of operation, MANET+ is being reviewed to get a sense of its impact to date; to inform strategic decisions about its future; to learn lessons for improving the programme; to identify changes necessary to be made in its governance, management and overall structure.

b). Methodology

Mr. Hestern Banda of Salephera Consulting conducted the review with experience in providing Organizational Development and Management services. The National Coordinator, Mr. Victor Kamanga, in consultation with the BoT and the NEC, drew up the ToR for the Review. The Review Consultant worked for twenty days meeting members, BoT, NEC members, donors and other key stakeholders guided by a questionnaire before presenting preliminary findings and working through various options for the future the BoT, NEC, Secretariat staff and REC members.

The process included briefing sessions between the National Coordinator, his senior staff and the principal consultant, a detailed desk study, SWOT Analysis and consultations with trustees, NEC members, Secretariat staff and key stakeholders and partners of MANET+. Review tools were developed and used for consultation workshops and meetings with the BoT, the NEC, REC, leaders representing key partner agencies, donor representatives and selected individuals including government officials.

A questionnaire administered through electronic mail, postal mail and telephone was also used to obtain input from other people that associate with MANET+ but could not be reached in person or were unable to attend scheduled meetings or workshops.

Following a presentation of the results by the consultant on day one of a two-day workshop in Lilongwe, a working session of the BoT, NEC, Regional Committees, Secretariat staff and partner representatives made decisions on the basis of the approved recommendations contained in this report.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

The objectives of the mandate review were set in the terms of reference as follows:

- a) Redefine and clarify the mandate, functional roles, responsibilities and decision making processes of MANET+ and its various stakeholders, namely: BoT, NEC, MANET+ members and the Secretariat.
- b) Re-examine the terms of the NEC and propose appropriate names or alternative body if deemed necessary.
- c) Review the Constitution and bylaws of MANET+ and make recommendations for improvement in the areas of mandate, functions and roles of BoT, NEC, MANET+ members and Secretariat.

4. THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world, with appalling and declining economic and social indicators. In particular, education levels are amongst the lowest in the world, which is a major contributing factor leading to a very limited human resource pool – a characteristic that directly impacts on capacity-building work. The country has a very young NGO sector, faced with many internal challenges but simultaneously presented with a number of opportunities as regards its role in shaping the future of Malawi. Donor influence has historically been a major factor for consideration when analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the NGO sector, and there is much current debate around the nature of truly autonomous local NGOs. Without effective local providers of capacity-building services, the NGO sector in Malawi will be severely constrained in its development.

In addition to the above, organizations working on HIV/AIDS face special challenges including high attrition rates, leadership succession problems, weak capacities in management and accountability to their constituencies and donors, inadequate planning and minimum capabilities in implementing activities for achieving their objectives and supporting their members.

5. BACKGROUND OF MANET+

MANET+ is a legally registered NGO. The organization has an organization structure that includes the BoT and the NEC, the Secretariat and RECs, the member SGs and individual members. MANET+ is guided by its Constitution and its policies and procedures.

MANET+ was born on April 16 1997, as an umbrella body for PLWHA SGs. Its Constitution states: **"The major aim of MANET+ is to promote effective networking amongst Associations, Support Groups of PLWHAs and their collaborators."** (*See annex 3 for more information on MANET+*)

There are thirty-one member SGs across the nation – 7 in the South, 11 in the Centre and 13 in the North. MANET+ was, until mid-2001, housed in the NAC offices, previously the National AIDS Control Programme.

MANET+ is based on the principle of volunteerism - SGs encouraged in self-help and self-reliance in their activities. MANET+ seeks donor funding from a variety of sources, notably: (*See annex 2*)

- UNV Support for People Living with HIV/AIDS Project and UNDP
- UNAIDS
- USAID through Save the Children (US)/UMOYO Network
- NAC
- SAT
- UNICEF
- ActionAid.

Also mentioned as sponsors and financiers of different MANET+ activities in the last four years include the following agencies:

ProTest Project (through Napham & KASO); Trocare; DfID; Water for People; SC (US); Christian Aid; Mchima Trust; MACRO; FAO; JICA; CHSU; World Medical Fund, AJWS, POLICY Project, VSO, APSO and Peace Corp.

MANET+ has a NEC of 14 people, which nominates a BoT. This NEC should meet at least every 3 months (Constitutionally) currently under the leadership of Mrs. Gloria Jere. The NEC is said to be responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes, through the Secretariat. It has elected a six-person committee to steer the work of MANET+; this committee is supposed to meet bi-monthly.

While there is no provision under the Constitution for the RECs, these were elected upon the realization for the need to increase the sense of ownership and participation by all the network's membership.

Mr. Victor Kamanga participated in the formation of MANET+ and its Secretariat, which he currently heads, as National Co-ordinator. The original Secretariat team was small; including a National Co-ordinator, Secretary and Office Orderly. In 2000, an Accounts Clerk was appointed.

6. OBJECTIVES OF MANET+

There are five objectives, under the Constitution. These are summarized as follows:

- a. Facilitate free flow of information between PLWHA SGs and collaborators;
- b. Promote harmonious networking amongst PLWHA SGs;
- c. Push for representation of PLWHAs on national policy-making bodies;
- d. Solicit support for SGs from various sources;
- e. Advocate for rights and freedoms of PLWHAs.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT OF MANET+

The Code of Conduct describes the "web of solidarity" amongst SGs as having a more specific aim than the "networking" objective, namely:

"Fight against stigma, prejudice and the further spread of HIV and ... create a safer and enabling environment for PLWHAs and the communities at large."

"By joining hands together ... SGs shall ... create a strong voice that can be heard and not ignored".

(Perhaps these goals would give MANET+ a stronger vision??)

The General Responsibilities of Member SGs are laid down in the Code of Conduct as summarized below:

- a. Guard against abuse of rights and freedoms of PLWHAs;
- b. Help break down the barriers of fear, isolation, hopelessness, discrimination and ignorance about the HIV/AIDS pandemic;
- c. Through public testimonies help put a human face on the epidemic;
- d. Help halt further spread of AIDS by disseminating information, positive living attitudes, advocacy against discrimination, organizing home-based care.
- e. Strengthen capacity of communities to discuss the HIV/AIDS epidemic by "coming out open" in public about their HIV positive sero status, to help break the denial and silence and help fight stigma and discrimination.

Privileges of Member SGs are summarized below:

- a. Access to information on HIV/AIDS related concerns;
- b. Eligible to attend training for capacity development;
- c. Enjoy publicity campaigns by MANET+.

8. MEMBERSHIP OF MANET+

Membership is open to all HIV/AIDS related SGs and any individual living with HIV/AIDS and/or those individuals affected and actively participating in the fight against HIV/AIDS. An average SG has 20 members, with an Executive Committee of 9 - 12 people. There tends to be more adults than young people, and more women than men in the SG membership. "Star" (best managed, most effective) SGs are:

- ✓ Likulezi Project, Phalombe
- ✓ Mponela AIDS Information and Counselling Centre, Mponela
- ✓ Katete AIDS Project, Mzimba.

9. GENERAL ACTIVITIES OF SGs

- a. Group Therapy
- b. Public HIV/AIDS Education Outreach Campaigns (to increase HIV/AIDS awareness and action)
- c. Counselling
- d. Home Based Care
- e. Orphan Care
- f. IGAs
- g. Welfare Fund

Other activities include:

Drug Revolving Fund; High Risk Group Initiative; links with BLM, Public Health Centers, Public & Private Hospitals; forming a Secretariat and using a Centre; Rapid HIV voluntary counselling and testing; promoting girl participation; loan revolving fund scheme; blood bank; widows association, etc.

10. ANALYSIS OF SGs' MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

a. Common Features:

- Catchment areas are usually too large for SGs to manage;
- A lack of direction;
- Conflicts and lack of trust amongst members;
- Serious inadequacy of resources.

Training could enhance their capacity to manage better. Areas that can benefit from capacity building support include the following:

- Record-keeping (keeping records on: HBC patients; finances; condom distribution; counselling; activities of Group; numbers attending meetings; Club activities.)
- Supervision skills (some co-coordinators distance themselves from members)
- Negotiating for resources (huge disparity here – MAICC well provided for, while YAPHAC at Ntchisi has no funding at all - *yet they claim to have distributed 565,000 boxes of 100 condoms last year!*)
- Promoting services and public speaking
- Style of working - away from relief-type operations to: advocacy; promoting public testimonies, positive living, etc.
- Specific training in the main activities (General Activities of SGs, #s. a. – g. above)

b. Issues Emerging from SG Activities

- Many members are illiterate and so cannot benefit from workshops in English;
- Some secular messages conflict with those of faith-based groups;
- Confidentiality problems arise when linking rapid HIV testing with hospital and counselling;
- NAPHAM Blantyre is on brink of collapse; (????)
- SGs should negotiate for funding from donors according to their wishes, not those of the donors. (????)

11. SGs' VIEW OF MANET+ AS A "UMBRELLA/MOTHER INSTITUTION"

a). NAPHAM/MANET+/MANASO

- ❖ The differing functions of the three organizations are not clear (*to anyone!*)
- ❖ There is an idea to have NAC oversee the three organizations. However, other members think that Umoyo Network should facilitate the coordination among these organizations.
- ❖ MANET+ should work more closely with NAPHAM.

b). National Executive Committee of MANET+

- Time for fresh elections; SGs should attend elections.
- Should follow up on Regional Executive Committees.
- Produce information leaflet describing the work of MANET+ for all SGs.
- Should monitor SG activities, and support them.
- Should treat SG members as adults, not like young people.
- Should not tamper with funds intended for SGs.
- NEC should not monopolize training, or make false promises.
- Should encourage SGs to go direct to donors without needing MANET+ as a channel.
- Should organize for SGs to visit each other.

- Give legal advice/representation in cases of discrimination, or even violence.
- Keep SGs updated on current thinking and initiatives in the fight against AIDS.

12. PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Previous recommendations for improvement have come from board meetings and from consultants' reports. Below are some of the major ones:

a). Meeting of Board of Trustees (November 2001)

The Board needs to call for the following:

- ✓ A redefinition of the role of MANET+;
- ✓ A review of its structures;
- ✓ A revision of its Constitution
- ✓ Undertaking of a strategic review or reorientation

The BoT is also demanding greater accountability, transparency and greater creativity from management. On this point, the BoT desires that there be a publicity campaign to promote MANET+. Some Board members are also asking how far SGs are involved in the running of MANET+.

b). Project Report by Barry Hickey (APSO - SSO Specialist Adviser)

Major issues to be remedied:

- ✓ No reliable or regular source of funding;
- ✓ No efficient accounting system.

The report echoes the appeal to the NEC to call for elections – the current one having overstayed. It also demands a halt to elitism, and to the inequitable allocation of places for training.

However, the report put forward the following positive suggestions:

- ✓ MANET+ should prepare for a fund-raising role.
- ✓ A credible and tight accounting system should be set up.
- ✓ The services of an SSO could be called on to assist with the Constitution.
- ✓ UMOYO Network has given a positive indication that they could assist with funding (*perhaps through National HIV/AIDS Advocacy Project, submission made in November 2001*).

13. RESULTS OF THE DECEMBER 2001-JANUARY 2002 REVIEW

a). Current Situation

The Secretariat is responsible for day-to-day implementation of the organization's policies. Capacity and delegation issues in the Secretariat are affecting how MANET+ is achieving its decision-making, time management and prioritization of its work. Human resource sustainability is weak due to illnesses, high attrition rate of its members and staff turnover.

The organization needs to be clear about what it exists for and does. It is difficult to establish what impact the organization is making. This is particularly so because there is no effective monitoring and evaluation system in place to help measure impacts and results.

For the organization to be effective, it needs to do the following:

- ❖ "Get its ark together" to get funding to do more advocacy work
- ❖ Do advocacy work at national and international levels on issues of stigmatization, drugs, giving information to National AIDS Commission (NAC), giving testimonies, giving people encouragement to talk at all levels including communities and offices
- ❖ Manage funds properly
- ❖ Communicate and share information with members, SGs, donors and all stakeholders
- ❖ Be proactive in planning to work on proposals with donors

To enable MANET+ perform well, there is need to improve its:

- ❖ Narrative and Financial reporting
- ❖ Financial systems
- ❖ Office systems, procedures and practices

There is also need to review and improve its governance so that the board meets and provides adequate professional support to the Secretariat while not interfering with management.

MANET+ partners and donors are indicating that future financial support is expected to substantially increase upon submission by MANET+ of a reasonable proposal of a project that can be clearly carried out with demonstrated capacity of the organization. MANET+ is seen to have potential to mobilize funds if it can become stronger and show capacity to use the money and account for it.

b). Management and Governance Perspectives

Perceptions by many stakeholders of MANET+ indicate that the organization's Secretariat is weak and that it cannot successfully negotiate on behalf of the MANET+ membership because of its limited mandate and capacity. This prompted management to commission a consultancy to review the roles and responsibilities of the BoT, the NEC and the Secretariat. Several workshops and meetings at different levels convened in the last few years in order for the members to provide input on what they wanted the mandate and structure of MANET+ to be, and help reduce the duplication of roles; the dragging of decision making; the tensions and conflicts of interests and the proliferation of the number of levels of decision making.

From various reports of studies and consultancies on MANET+, efforts have been made to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. Growing dissatisfaction of donors with the MANET+ Secretariat necessitated the studies that recommended restructuring and repositioning of the Secretariat. Some of these recommendations were implemented while others never received any attention.

Despite all these studies, an urgent need was felt to review the roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat to make it more visible, efficient and effective.

c). The Problem

There are unclear and overlapping functions of the Secretariat, the BoT and the NEC. The Constitution says the BoT and NEC are governing bodies responsible for the implementation of policies through the Secretariat.

Decision-making is slow, as virtually all the matters have to be referred to the BoT and NEC that are expected to meet at least twice and quarterly a year, respectively. BoT meetings are poorly attended and, hence, constitutional quorums rarely achieved resulting in the decision-making process deferred. The same issues that are discussed by the BoT are sometimes referred to the NEC. An issue from the Secretariat has sometimes to pass through both governance bodies before a decision is passed. The layers involved are too many and the process of decision-making and subsequent implementation of change is tedious and cumbersome and unnecessarily too long for efficiency. The roles in the Constitution, though defined, are not very well adhered to. This results in various issues being discussed repeatedly at various levels. It is not clear exactly which issues should be referred to the BoT and which ones to the NEC.

This whole process makes donors; Government and others view the MANET+ Secretariat as being weak, inefficient and invisible.

14. ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Using a SWOT ANALYSIS technique, the MANET+ Secretariat and stakeholders came up with the following understanding of its performance:

a). Strengths

- Strong support and network foundation
- Enthusiasm and commitment of Secretariat, some members and volunteers
- Willingness to learn and improve
- Growing capacity to manage and monitor funding from donors
- Dedicated staff with positive attitude and influence
- Practices of the organization allow for forums for exchange of ideas, experiences and resources
- Good and adequate office facilities
- MANET+ regarded as one of the few HIV/AIDS agencies with potential to become effective and professional

b). Weaknesses

- Organization structure is not effective
- **MANET+** Secretariat is 100% donor dependent, and hence unsustainable and unhealthy in this advent of donor fatigue and lack of donor confidence.
- The positioning of the Secretariat – maneuvering in an arena full of tension, conflicting interests and mutual dependency, moving too close to one stakeholder and attracting complaints from others
- A Strategic Plan does not exist
- MANET+ does not have SMART objectives and measurable indicators
- The decision making process is slow and cumbersome with too many layers in the hierarchy
- There is insufficient initiative and coordination of HIV/AIDS programme activities by the MANET+ Secretariat.
- There is little feedback from the Secretariat to members and SGs of MANET+
- Ill-defined criteria to assess effectiveness and efficiency of the coordinating and facilitating role of the Secretariat in the absence of clear and measurable outputs
- Uneasy relationship with members and some partners of MANET+. Some differences exist in the perception of the roles and functions of the Secretariat staff by both Secretariat staff and some BoT and NEC members
- Too high expectations from partners, donors and members on what the Secretariat should do within a limited mandate and with limited capacity and resources.
- Failure to meet deadlines for submission of reports to donors and other stakeholders

c). Opportunities

- The goodwill of donors to support HIV/AIDS work in Malawi
- Greater involvement of MANET+ in HIV/AIDS committees and programmes
- The govt. policies and support and commitment to support HIV/AIDS organizations working in Malawi including MANET+
- Establishing good relations with govt., donors and other (international) development actors
- National AIDS Commission support available
- Potential for advocacy and policy influence in Malawi.

d). Threats

- Donor fatigue
- Lack of clear strategy and direction
- Absence of formal agreements between donors and MANET+ causing financial uncertainties (some contracts or their extensions not yet signed)
- Strong reduction in future of international donor funding (need to come to future strategic agreements with donors; need for future financial sustainability drive)
- High attrition rate
- Dedicated and skilled individuals are leaving due to various reasons (*e.g. accounting staff have had high turnover in MANET+ recently*)

15. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

In view of the SWOT and the stakeholder analyses that were done in the past and as part of this review, the major challenges for MANET+ are:

- To resolve the MANET+ mandate issue and move to a transparent and operationally efficient organization structure
- Not being clear on mission, vision and strategy
- To start moving on the path to more organizational sustainability including management systems, HRD plans/policies, management style and support to members
- Financially (more variety in sources of funding; more balance sheet management)
- Improving cost-efficiency and effectiveness of overall MANET+ operations
- Capacity building of staff and members and SGs
- Representation (who represents the organization, where and with what mandate)
- MANET+ image (perceptions)
- Need for reinforcing ethics, quality and standards in support & service delivery by MANET+
- Capacity of the Secretariat to effectively fulfill its implementation and management roles
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities of various organs of MANET+
- Secretariat's role in providing technical assistance, coordination, capacity building, control of resources, supervision, advice
- Dragging of decision making
- Accountability of MANET+ to its constituency and donors
- How MANET+ will take on board other players in the same field of work such as NAPHAM and MANASO
- Conflict and dispute resolution in the organization

16. CRITICAL ISSUES

- Secretariat to clarify its identity
- Revision of the instruments of governance (constitution)
- Redefine functions of the BoT and the NEC
- Do more of advocacy, lobbying and policy influence
- Need to develop strategies to help the organization get focused bearing in mind the limited capacity of the Secretariat
- Need for well-attended regular meetings of the governance bodies
- Reliable and consistent long-term funding
- Planning human resources for succession, effective delegation (creating a slack to cover for medical absence of staff and members)

17. IDENTITIES AND MISSION OF MANET+

The current mission statement of MANET+ says, *“to promote effective networking amongst the member support groups and collaborators with the view of maximizing the potential of their efforts”*.

The organization does not articulate its vision and core values in its key documents. A strategic plan does not exist. Therefore, there also does not exist any outlined strategic objectives for the organization. Hence, a strategic plan needs to be developed promptly.

In the recommendation section of this report, ideas generated during the review have been presented including the development of the organization's *mission statement, vision elements and core values*. These need to be reflected in a strategic plan of MANET+.

a). The Secretariat (Roles of Management)

It is clearly understood by the Secretariat and its governance that the management functions of MANET+ include the following:

- Policy implementation (execution)
- Mobilization of resources
- Control of resources (stewardship)
- Service delivery
- Quality control and standards
- Accountability
- Networking
- Reporting and Communication
- Planning
- Coordination
- Budgeting
- Leadership
- Human Resource Management and Development
- Lobbying and advocacy (influencing)

It is understood that some of the functions above are also NEC functions. The current situation and practice in MANET+ as an organization is that the Secretariat does not have full authority to make decisions and be innovative. This is because there is a perception that the responsibility for implementation is with the BoT and the NEC. This causes delays and confusion as to whose jurisdiction certain decisions and actions are, thereby making the organization ineffective.

b.) Expected Roles

Members and other stakeholders expect MANET+ Secretariat to:

- Be a central office for administration & financial issues on behalf of the members and SGs.
- Improving communication and feedback in the network at all levels (e.g. through newsletters, telephone, e-mails and reports)
- Ensuring continuity of MANET+ representation at different official functions
- Maintaining a human resource and member database
- Raising awareness on issues of concern for people living with HIV/AIDS
- Building capacity in financial accounting
- Identification and recruitment of staff (key)
- Communicating developments to members through letters, telecommunication and meetings
- Promoting learning/growth of staff & members through sharing of information and exchange programme
- Interpretation of data and information systems
- Lobbying government and on behalf of members

18. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM DEC. 2001-JAN. 2002 MANET+ REVIEW

a). Desired Structure

In every organization, there are two organs of accountability and responsibility. These are Governance and Management - pillars of the organization. They work together to see that the organization is effective. They have to be supportive and complementary. In view of the problems and challenges that MANET+ is experiencing due to the inappropriateness of the current structure, it is recommended that the organization structure of MANET+ should comprise the following:

- **General Assembly** (*Composed of all associating members and proprietors*)
- **Board of Trustees** (*Already provided for in the current constitution*)
- **Board of Directors** (*with its own committees – if and as necessary*)
- **Secretariat** (*may have technical advisory committees*)
- **Regional Committees** (*Composed of members in each Region*).

For MANET+ to be more professional and effective, there must be a change in the structure of the organization. Greater authority must be given to the Secretariat in order for it to make management decisions in a timely manner. The hierarchy needs to be reduced and roles clearly defined for the different organs of the organization.

b). General Assembly

i. Membership

As a membership organization, it is proper to have a General Assembly comprising all members as defined in the constitution. The General Assembly shall have the following functions and powers:

ii. Functions of the General Assembly

- ❖ Be the supreme body of MANET+
- ❖ Safeguard and review the functions and mission, vision, and goals of MANET+
- ❖ Receive and approve statutory statements, reports of Chair of BoD, financial reports and plans for action from the BoD
- ❖ Appoint BoT of MANET+ as appropriate according to the Constitution
- ❖ Regulate its own proceedings
- ❖ Approve the appointment of financial auditors of MANET+
- ❖ Elect a BoD and make necessary amendments to the Constitution as and when required
- ❖ Dissolve the organization in accordance with constitutional stipulations
- ❖ Delegate specific powers to the BoD for the smooth operation of MANET+
- ❖ Ratify decisions taken by the BoD in the expertise of the delegated power

iii. Meetings of the General Assembly

- ❖ The General Assembly shall meet at least once a year
- ❖ The venue of the General Assembly shall be at any location in Malawi
- ❖ Except as otherwise provided in the case of dissolution of MANET+ or the Amendment of the Constitution, notice of not less than 120 (one hundred and twenty) days before the date of the general meeting shall be given to every member of as well as a request for additional agenda items from members
- ❖ Amended agenda incorporating proposals reviewed from members shall be sent to every member of MANET+ 90 days before the date of the general meeting as well as the audited financial statement
- ❖ Special general meetings of the General Assembly shall be convened at the request of the BoD or 25% of members of MANET+
- ❖ The quorum for any General Assembly including its special meeting shall constitute 35% of paid up members except as otherwise provided for by the articles in the Constitution on Amendment and Dissolution respectively.

c). Board of Trustees

i. Membership

- ❖ The BoT shall consist of five (5) members who shall be elected by the General Assembly for a period of three (3) years
- ❖ A Trustee shall be eligible for re-election for a further one more term of three years at the expiration of her or his term of office
- ❖ The BoD for the “unexpired” portion of the term shall fill any vacancy arising among members of the BoT
- ❖ Trustees shall be persons of integrity who are neither bankrupt nor have a criminal record

ii. Functions of the Board of Trustees

- a. All land, buildings and other immovable property and all investments and securities shall be vested in the BoT
- b. Income received from property vested in the BoT shall be paid by the Trustees to the Treasurer

- c. Trustees shall assist in raising funds for MANET+
- d. The BoT will take responsibility of building the profile of MANET+ and will take a lead in the building of an endowment fund to guarantee the long-term sustainability and permanence of MANET+
- e. In the event of dissolution, the BoT shall dispose of the assets of MANET+ remaining after discharge of liabilities. In disposing of the assets of MANET+, the BoT shall transfer those assets to bodies and organizations in existence in Malawi whose vision and objectives are similar to the vision and objectives of MANET+.

Members of MANET+ should maintain the ownership and may choose a BoT that will oversee the assets of the organization as custodians.

d). Board of Directors

i. Membership

It is recommended that MANET+ should have a BoD. The board members shall be professionals in various fields including health, management, finance, legal, policy issues and analysis clergy. Nomination of qualified people in to the right positions within the MANET+ structure should be done using a set of agreed selection criteria. This should be the responsibility of a BoD selection committee. Members must be women and men of integrity with commitment to serve on a voluntary basis. They must be appointed on the basis of their individual profiles and contributions they will make to MANET+.

Selection criteria need to be developed that will govern the appointment of BoD members.

The Secretariat needs to be empowered and given authority to make professional decisions and take initiative for making MANET+ an effective organization.

Technical Committees should be allowed to contribute according to the expertise that the Secretariat requires from them.

ii. Functions of the Board of Directors

The BoD shall have the responsibility and accountability for the organization and will have the following job products:

1. Linkage to the ownership: The BoD shall act in trusteeship for “ownership” and serve as the legitimizing connection between this base and the organization.
2. Explicit governing policies: The values and perspectives of the whole organization are encompassed by the board’s enunciation of broad policies, properly categorized, in an explicit manner. The BoD shall have written governing policies that concern:
 - Ends (what benefits, which needs, what cost)
 - Administrative constraints (prudence and ethical limitations binding upon the staff)
 - Governance process (how the board carries out its task)
 - Executive linkage (passing of power and measurement of its use)
3. Assurance of executive performance (through control and evaluation of the ED) although the BoD is not responsible for the performance of staff, it must ensure that staff meet the criteria it has set. In this way its accountability for that performance is fulfilled.

iii. Board of Directors Holism

A holistic BoD is a single organizational position and shall officially behave as one. Consequently, the BoD officers shall exist to help the BoD do its job, not as powers unto themselves. Each member of the BoD is an equal to the Executive Secretary (ES) but collectively the BoD is the boss of the ES. The ES is an employee of the BoD and is accountable to it and is evaluated by it.

The chairperson of the BoD is responsible for the integrity of the board process.

The secretary of the BoD is responsible for the integrity of the board documents

These job descriptions serve the wholeness of governance. They do not interfere with unitary delegation to the Executive Officer (EO) of the organization. The chairperson is not responsible for the functioning of the organization, or for the quality of the EO. The chairperson is responsible for the functioning of the BoD, which ordinarily proves to be a job enough!

Since the chair's job product is the integrity of the board process, the selection of a chair should be based on the ability to achieve that output. The chair's job requires skilled handling of the group process, an ability to fairly but firmly lead a group to confront and even to welcome its diversity and to adhere to agreed-upon rules for board conduct.

The BoD shall take great care in choosing its chairperson who can develop the leadership that may lie dormant in the group. Rather than fostering a heavy-handed discipline, the good chair incites the board to generate all the rules it needs out of its own wisdom. The chair should merely call forth the board's own statements of discipline when needed, as if he or she has no choice but to deal with the group the way the group itself has decreed.

iv. ***Officers of Board of Directors***

Officers of the BoD are in the service of the Board. As such they are bound by BoD wishes and by its limits of authority. The officers may meet as a group with the ED for purposes of preparing agenda and other pre-board work (as defined by its policy on the committee process), but they may not act in place of the BoD, except as it specifically delegates.

Chairperson: The chairperson is to assure the integrity of the BoD process including the effectiveness of meetings and the BoD adherence to its own rules. The chair's succession, in cases of temporary absence of the chairperson, the term "chair" shall be construed to apply in due turn to this succession of officers. The chairperson of BoD has to:

- ❖ Lead the BoD
- ❖ Be available for consultations by the ED
- ❖ Preside over the meetings of BoD
- ❖ Encourage all members of the BoD to participate in the board meetings and functions
- ❖ Provide support to the Secretariat through the ED
- ❖ Represent and be the spokes person for the organization

Vice-Chairperson: The vice chairperson will act in the absence of the chairperson. The vice chairperson will also monitor the consistent operation of the monitoring system.

Treasurer: The Treasurer is to perform duties in connection with the finances of the organization as may be required by the BoD. Duties of the Treasurer will neither lessen nor add to the ED's accountability to (and only to) BoD policies on fiscal conditions and budgeting.

Secretary: The Secretary, by affixing his or her signature, shall attest formally to the legitimacy of the BoD documents. The Secretary is also responsible for reporting on and noting any inconsistencies of BoD actions.

BoD members may be either nominated or selected, according to the dictates of the Constitution of MANET+. They may delegate responsibility to others, including staff, but must accept ultimate responsibility for governance over all aspects of MANET+. This should include responsibility for:

- Safeguarding the vision, integrity, objectives and policies of the organization
- Ensuring high standards of planning, operation, administration, evaluation and reporting in MANET+
- Ensuring that statutory obligations are met
- Ensuring that adequate resources are available to MANET+ for all aspects of its work and administration
- Ensuring that resources available to MANET+ are used for their intended purpose and are properly accounted for.

v. Committees of the Board of Directors

Committees of the BoD are *to help get the board's job done, not to help with the staff's job*. They are established to aid the process of governance, not management. This simple rule safeguards the BoD-ED accountability relationship. Like the BoD officers, committees should be established consonant with due care for minimalism, preservation and the ED's role and holism. MANET+ shall have no more committees than absolutely needed; shall neither compromise the clear accountability linkage between the BoD and the ED; nor disturb the BoD wholeness in any way possible.

Committees shall serve a useful function, but the propitious path is to start with *no* committees and add them only when clearly needed. Even then the choice to establish BoD committees, no matter how intelligently made, is not simply a decision about ideal structure. There are no "right" right committees to have, no list of correct subdivisions for getting a job done. Subdividing the BoD to get the job done is the personal preference of BoD members at the time. A particular mixture of persons may work better or worse in subgroups, depending on their personal characteristics. None of the common committees is indispensable; there is no committee the BoD must have.

BoD committees shall work at board level. With respect to policy-making, the best contribution a committee can make is to prepare truly board-level policy issues for board deliberation. With respect to the non-policy-making aspects of a board's job (for example linkage to ownership or fundraising), committees may deal with details, but not in areas that have been delegated to staff.

vi. BoD Committee Principles for MANET+

The BoD may from time to time, establish committees to help carry out its responsibilities. To preserve board holism, committees will be used sparingly, only when other methods have been deemed inadequate. Committees shall be used so as to minimally interfere with the wholeness of the board's job.

- a. BoD committees may not speak or act for the BoD except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Such authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the ED.
- b. BoD committees are to help the BoD do its job, not to help the staff do its job. Committees will assist the board chiefly by preparing policy alternatives and implications for BoD deliberation. BoD committees are not to be created by the BoD to advise staff.
- c. If a BoD committee is used to monitor organizational performance in a given area, the same committee will not have helped the BoD create policy in the same area. This is to prevent committee identification with organizational parts rather than the whole.
- d. BoD committees cannot exercise authority over staff and in keeping with the BoD's focus on the future; BoD committees will ordinarily have direct dealings with current staff operations. Further, the BoD will not impede its direct delegation to the ED by requiring approval of a BoD committee before an executive action.

vii. Basis of Participation on Board of Directors

Members of BoD shall work in a voluntary and unpaid capacity but may nonetheless receive reimbursement of expenses incurred.

e). SECRETARIAT (MANAGEMENT OF MANET+)

i. Management Practices

The management practices of MANET+ shall be of high standard and aim to strengthen institutional capacity and sustainability. Management in MANET+ shall include established procedures for:

- The maximum utilization and development of the human resource skills and capacities possessed by the organization, whether by BoT/BoD members, paid staff, volunteers or beneficiaries and based on the principle of equal opportunities and gender equity;
- The planning and effective management of activities, projects and programmes;
- Accountability and transparency;

- Continuous monitoring and review of activities, projects and programmes
- Regular and rigorous evaluations of activities, projects and programmes carried out with the participation of beneficiaries wherever possible, and of the functioning and impact of MANET+ as a whole.

ii. The Executive Director

By definition, the Executive Director of MANET+ shall be the top-most single person through whom all upwardly accumulating accountability flows. The Deputy Executive Director, one step below the ED, might be a single funnel, but not the topmost. Regardless of titles, the top most position is *de facto* the Executive Director. If the top paid executive must get the approval of the board chair or is seen as being supervised by the chair, then the board chair is really the ED.

Except for a few unique BoD functions, staff performs almost all organizational activities. The ED is accountable to for all the parts coming together in an acceptable whole. The BoD is, therefore, able to govern by dealing conceptually only with the whole and personally only with the ED. The ED is the BoD's bridge to the staff, a role more distinct than merely lead staff member. A powerfully designed ED position is a key to BoD excellence. It enables the BoD to avoid the intricacies and short-term focus of staff management and to work exclusively on the holistic, long-term focus of governance.

Being held accountable to the full BoD, performance is a distinct characteristic of the ED function. The accountability derives from the accumulation of responsibilities in the staff. In describing the executive's job, the BoD's job and the relationship between board and non-ED staff, upward accumulation of responsibility is a key phenomenon.

To facilitate optimum effectiveness, the BoD shall recognize the BoD's responsibility as being generally confined to establishing topmost policies, leaving implementation and subsidiary policy development to the ED.

All BoD authority delegated to staff is delegated through the ED, so that all authority and accountability of staff can be phrased – insofar as the BoD is concerned – as authority and accountability of the ED.

iii. BoD Members and the ED are Colleagues

The relationship between the ED and any *individual* BoD member is collegial, not hierarchical. As the ED is accountable only to the full BoD, as members of the BoD have no authority individually over the Ed, whereas the ED and BoD members are equals. This relationship of supportive peers is true for the ED and BoD chairperson as well. They *are* not hierarchically related, because to be so would shift the ED function to the chairperson.

iv. In MANET+:

- The ED shall be authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions and develop all activities that are true to the BoD's policies. The BoD may, by extending its policies, "un-delegate" areas of the ED's authority, but will respect the ED's choices so long as the delegation continues. This should not prevent the BoD from obtaining information about activities in the delegated areas.
- Only the BoD, by majority vote, has authority over the ED. A BoD member or committee may request information but if such request, in the ED's judgment, requires a material amount of staff time, it may be refused.
- The ED may not perform, allow or cause to perform any act which is unlawful, insufficient to meet commonly accepted business and professional ethics in violation of funding source requirements or regulatory bodies or contrary to explicit BoD constraints on executive authority.

f). FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR MANET+

The financial management practices of MANET+ should be of high standard and aim at strengthening institutional capacity and sustainability. In managing its financial affairs MANET+ shall:

- When negotiating with "funders" on grants and/or contracts, ensure that the terms and conditions of funding agreements and the procedures and timetable for reporting are mutually acceptable;
- Only pursue or accept grants or contracts that:
 - ❖ Shall be fully consistent with the mission and objectives of MANET+ and do not cause its identity, integrity, methods and activities to be distorted, subverted, or corrupted;
 - ❖ Shall not compromise the independence of MANET+
 - ❖ Shall not place more responsibility on MANET+ than the organization can manage;
- Seek to avoid dependence on single, narrow or insecure sources of funding or contracts. Whenever possible MANET+ income bases shall be broad and orientated to long-term sustainability. Other means of achieving such sustainability shall include developing and capitalizing upon the specialist expertise and skills of MANET+
- Ensure that the own-fundraising efforts of MANET+ shall not undermine the viability and sustainability of its member units and other organizations
- In preparing budgets and costings, ensure that the full organizational and administrative costs are recognized and included and adequate resources obtained to meet them
- Have adequate and appropriate procedures for financial review and monitoring
- Ensure that funds provided to the organisation are always used for their intended purpose.

g). STRATEGIES, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

It is recommended from this review that MANET+ Secretariat should develop strategies, objectives and activities with indicators for monitoring. This can be done internally within the organization with the support of a facilitator. The strategies and objectives should be in line with the organization's vision, mission and values.

h). STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The organization does not have a strategic plan. One needs to be developed soon. In doing this, the following elements must be added:

- i. Identity of MANET+
- ii. Mission Statement of MANET+
- iii. Vision Elements of MANET+ (*The picture of the desired future of MANET+*)
- iv. Core Values
- v. Strategies and Objectives

i). RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSTITUTION REVIEW

1). Legal Review

The Constitution and bylaws of MANET+ are legal documents. It is recommended that legal counsel should review any substantive changes. It is best that legal counsels not write bylaws, but only review the board's product. Attorneys are qualified to opine on the legality and risk exposure of bylaws, but are not qualified to determine how the board wishes to be.

The following are some of the areas that need to be reviewed in the MANET+ constitution:

2). Definitions of:

a. Full Membership

- Adhering to the values of MANET+

b. Application for Membership

- Submitted application by individuals
- Appraisal by membership committee

c. Associate Membership

Associate Membership needs to be defined in the light of the MANET+ code of ethics and core values and not necessarily on the HIV status of the individual making the application.

3). Other Changes

- a. Governance – to include BoT (*Already provided for in the current constitution*) and Board of Directors (*New*)
- b. Replace the NEC with BoD
- c. Change title of National Coordinator to Executive Director with the mandate of making executive decisions and may consult the board as and when necessary.

j). WAY FORWARD RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members, BoT and NEC should discuss the mandate review report and bring input from their constituencies to a workshop for approval of recommendations presented in this report
2. Revise the Constitution and bylaws
3. Develop Code of Ethics
4. Develop Gender Policy
5. MANET+ must start using findings and advice from consultancies in order to effect the necessary changes. (*It is felt that MANET+ has not used the recommendations from previous consultancies and studies*).
6. BoT/BoD training and exposure must be developed to achieve knowledgeable and effective boards. This will ensure that the board members only deal with MANET+ direction, major policy and constitutional matters.
7. The Boards and all other governance and management organs of MANET+ have to be gender sensitive through mandatory minimum numbers of women and men in representation.
8. All governance and management structures of MANET+ should include both HIV positive and negative individuals that are professionals from different organizations.
9. There is need for an organization development process to take MANET+ through various stages towards becoming a more professional and effective agency. There has to be a workshop on understanding organizational change including things like culture, values and attitudes.
10. Capacity building should be in the context of human resource sustainability and succession plan in view of the high attrition rate of staff and members of MANET+.
11. Define job descriptions for the various positions in the Secretariat
12. Put a Performance Management System in place
13. Consider seconding a technical advisor to assist the Secretariat, e.g. an experienced UNV.

MANET+ should focus on making progress in the following areas for which donor and partner support is pledged for the organization:

- ❖ Improving administrative and financial systems
- ❖ Addressing staff needs and staff development
- ❖ Strengthening of logistical support
- ❖ Developing advocacy and negotiation skills
- ❖ Development of HIV/AIDS advocacy proposal
- ❖ Meeting and Training for governance and management organs
- ❖ Campaigns for ARVs for all its members
- ❖ Challenging donors and government on issues of concern for PLWHAs
- ❖ Providing direct support to network members

REFERENCES

1. Advocacy Skills Training Workshop Report (George Kampango, MANET+, October 8-12 2001)
2. BoT Meeting Minutes (November 2001)
3. Enhancing Management Skills in Member Support Groups of MANET+. (Charles Chidothi, Franciwell Phiri, Doreen Sanje)
4. MANET+ Background Information
5. MANET+ Code of Conduct
6. MANET+ Conditions of Service
7. MANET+ Constitution
8. MANET+ Organogram
9. MANET+ Service Contract for Employees
10. MANET+ Draft Policies and Procedures (May 2001)
11. Minutes of National Executive Committee Meeting (April 1-2, 1998)
12. National HIV/AIDS Advocacy Project Proposal Submitted to Umoyo Network (November 15, 2001)
13. PLWA Survey Report (Victor Kamanga, NUNV/MANET+, June 1998)
14. Project Report for MANET+ (Barry M. Hickey of APSO-SSO)
15. Report on the Joint Consultative Meeting of MANET+ Board of Trustees and National Executive Committee (July 30-31)
16. Revised Constitution of the Network of African People Living with HIV/AIDS (November 2001)

ANNEX 1

MANET+ MANDATE REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Malawi Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (MANET+) is in the process of reviewing its mandate, core business, roles and functions of its governance and management structures.

The process for this review involves consultation with stakeholders who are now requested to give their input into the review.

We would like to have your responses to the following questions:

1. What is your organization's relationship with MANET+ and how can you describe it?
2. From your knowledge of the organization, what does MANET+ do well?
3. What are the things if done well can improve the effectiveness of MANET+?
4. What do you consider to be MANET+'s the major
 - a. Strengths?
 - b. Weakness?
 - c. Opportunities?
 - d. Threats?
5. What do you consider to be the major issues and or challenges that MANET+ faces?
6. What impact is the organization having in Malawi in addressing issues of people living with HIV/AIDS?
7. How can MANET+ increase its impact, image and profile in Malawi?
8. How do you think MANET+ is performing in terms of its advocacy and influence work on policy?
9. Please comment on the current organogram of MANET+ and make your recommendations for an effective structure?
10. How would you describe the level of accountability of MANET+ to its constituency and donors?
11. What level and kind of support is your organization giving and plans to give to MANET+ in future?
12. Do you have any concerns in your relationship with MANET+? How can these be addressed?
13. What are your expectations from MANET+ in relation to the following:
 - Its work
 - Its governance
 - Organization structure
 - Relationships with its members, support groups and other stakeholders including government, other NGOs in similar work and donors
 - The Secretariat
14. What should MANET+ do to be more professional and effective?
15. Any other information and feedback you would like to give?

Thank you very much for your input. The results of the review will be available in a report that the National Coordinator of MANET+ will make available to you.

ANNEX 2

LIST OF DONORS THAT HAVE SUPPORTED MANET+

N0.	DONOR	TIME	Amount	ACTIVITY
1.	UNAIDS	1998 - 2000	\$57,000	Network Formation/Secretariat
2.	SAT	1998 - 2000	\$46,000	Network Formation/Institutional Support
3.	UNDP	1999	\$36,333	Training/Community Mobilization
4.	UNV	1999	\$5,000	Provision of NUNV Provision of office space Provision of second hand computer Enhancing Management Skills in Support Groups/Office Space
5.	NAC	1997 - 2001	-	Office space/Technical assistance
6.	UMOYO	2001 to-date	\$86,000	Institutional Capacity Strengthening/Advocacy
7.	JICA	1999	-	Motorcycles to EKAM Support Group
8.	OXFAM	2001	£700	NGO Management Course
9.	VSO	2001	£1000	IGA to KASO; Volunteer to MANET+
10.	AJWS	2001	\$26,000	Support to Support Groups, including Salima AIDS Supp. Organization
11.	DFID	1999	-	Support to KASO (Workshops for People with Disabilities)
12.	APSO	2001	-	Volunteers to MANET+ Secretariat Support to KASO (HBC Supplies)
13.	UNFPA	2001 -	\$350,000	Establishment of a National VCT Project
14.	POLICY Project	2001		Provided facilitator & Advocacy Skills training to MANET+ and collaborators

ANNEX 3

INFORMATION ABOUT MANET+

The Malawi Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS, (MANET+) came into being on April 16,1997. Founded and run by People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs) who identify the serious need to harmonize their activities, MANET+ forms a web of solidarity of associations as support groups of HIV positive persons and the affected.

As a coordinating and facilitating umbrella body, MANET+ is built upon democratic values with a view to ensure an even and effective utilization of score resources for all members support groups and associations in order to derive maximum output.

GOAL

The major goal (aim) of MANET+ is to promote effective networking amongst associations, support groups of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs) and their collaborators.

OBJECTIVES

- 1 To facilitate the free flow of information between PLWHA support groups and all collaborators and donors in the field of HIV/AIDS.
- 2 To initiate and promote harmonious and effective networking amongst different support groups and all other players in the HIV/AIDS field both locally and internationally.
- 3 To advocate for greater understanding of and support for those infected and most directly affected by the epidemic by encouraging open discussion and coming out public through various mass media.
- 4 To ensure representation and participation of PLWHAs in all national policy bodies regarding HIV/AIDS.
- 5 To advocate for greater respect and protection of the rights and freedoms of People living with HIV/AIDS in all spheres of human treatment whether socially, religiously, ethically, potentially and legally.

ACTIVITIES OF THE NETWORK

- 1 Organizing or coordinating activities like big walks, memorial ceremonies for those lost to AIDS, campaigning for support to helpless orphan.
- 2 Planning and organizing regional and national meetings/conference for PLWHAs.
- 3 Collection and dissemination of information on associations or support groups, collaborators and donors.
- 4 Carrying out Support Groups needs assessment surveys and facilitating necessary Interventions e.g. training programs, project development.
- 5 Publication of newsletters and magazines and any relevant information Education and Communication materials.
- 6 Assisting in the development of basic monitoring and evaluation strategies and Tools for Support Group and associations.
- 7 Planning and convening donor/Support Group and association.
- 8 Planning and organizing radio talks to providing a living voice to AIDS that will not only help to break the silence and secrecy about HIV/AIDS, but will also strengthen community's capacity to discuss the epidemic to clear away the lingering illusions about HIV/AIDS.
- 9 Establishment of a readily accessible data bank of information regarding PLWHAs, collaborators and donors, and any relevant HIV/AIDS related issues.

ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

- ◆ Managed to formulate a constitution and a code of conduct
- ◆ Managed to mobilize public, government and donor support and funding.
- ◆ Managed to set up a full time functional Secretariat with staff, office space and resources.
- ◆ Managed to win recognition from various institutions. These include high profile organizations and personalities such that we have secured a representation in higher-level strategy planning bodies, e.g. the UN working group, National AIDS Control Program, Strategic Planning Unit, (SPU) and UNV Support to People Living with HIV/AIDS and the Project Advisory Group (PAG) among others.
- ◆ Managed to establish legal/official recognition.
- ◆ Managed to coordinate and organize the local observance of the international AIDS Candlelight Memorial and Mobilization (May 1998) which was attended by many high profile figures and organizations including the Minister of Health and Population of the government of Malawi.

Major activities done so far have included:

1. Conducted national PLWHA/AIDS support group surveys in June 1998
2. Newsletter publication
3. Participation in Strategic Planning Unit (SPU) community conversation for consensus building of HIV/AIDS issues.
4. Collaboration with UNV support to people living with HIV/AIDS
5. Conducted three regional training sessions in leadership and management for member support groups to address management gaps in the months of March and April 1999.
6. Established regional MANET+ committees

MEMBERSHIP

- 1 Membership is voluntary and open to all interested PLWHAs support groups or associations in the country. These categories of membership, who have the right to vote at Annual General Meetings, are referred to as the Regular membership.
- 2 Membership is open to all individual PLWHAs who wish to be members of the network but aren't necessarily members of any Support Group or association. This Category of membership is referred to as Affiliate Membership.
- 3 Membership is open to all individual well wishers or benefactors, not necessarily people living with HIV/AIDS themselves and all organizations local or international, who wish to render support to the cause of MANET+ in the fight against AIDS. This category of membership shall be referred to as Associate membership.

HOW TO CONTACT AND FIND US

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