

# THE LAUNCH OF WORLD BANK COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT MARKET PLACE

Speech Delivered On The Occasion by

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**The Malawi Network of People Living With HIV/AIDS (MANET+)**

At Lilongwe Hotel On The 30 November 2004

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Honourable Joyce Banda, Minister of Gender, Child Welfare and Community Services

Senior Government Officials, present here

Your Excellency, Ms Christine Kimes, Acting World Bank Country Manager

Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Leaders of Civil Society

Heads and Representatives of the Private Sector

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

We are gathered here today first and foremost to witness the official launch of a remarkable programme dubbed Country Development Market Place whose goal is to support innovators by providing them with access to start-up funding and building partnerships with others so that innovative and creative ideas can become a reality.

The Country Development Market Place (CDM) which in our region groups Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, with special focus on Women and Youth will be an opportunity for us to tease out new ideas and turn those ideas into doable activities and discuss how each one of us can severally and collectively contribute in prevention, care and support efforts.

Launched under the theme ***HIV/AIDS Fight: "Turning Ideas into Action"***, CDM would not have found a more compelling theme than this because it does not only address the issue of information generation and sharing but also challenges us to do something about the condition of our women and youth in light of the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS. If each one of us can play our rightful roles and bring out the very best of our innovative ideas and turn them into action, as a nation to start with, then a grouping of nations - fighting against one of the biggest challenges of our time, we would certainly be making giant strides in the right direction.

I would like at this point to salute those of you who have already started taking action by bringing hope in the lives of others, in a special way, I would like to recognize the involvement

of women and youth in providing the bulk of orphan and vulnerable children's care and home based care to the chronically ill.

On behalf of MANET+ and all actors in civil society including faith-based organizations, private and public sectors, I would like to use this occasion to call upon all actors to proactively use this opportunity to enter into this campaign whose resources, we are informed are readily available. All we need to do is think creatively and come up with brilliant ideas which we must turn into action. And positive action must start with each one of us in our own humble ways. We continue to face a challenge which we must turn into an opportunity. The question we might be asking ourselves is why the competition? Competition brings out the very best. And the very best may not necessarily be the most expensive. Great thinking coupled with low cost action could provide the missing link. CDM would like to provide an opportunity to grass root actors to compete for funding in an *innovative* and *competitive* approach in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

I personally do not have any doubt that if we all show commitment in this battle we shall overcome. Despite the fact that we have conceded enormous losses of our generation, we certainly can spare the next generation from the scourge. In the face of the challenges presented to us by this pandemic, we need to pose that perennial question that was often asked by men and women of will, "***what is it that we should do?***"

The responses to this million dollar question are what will make all the difference. And we must all strive to be part of the response to the question and not wait upon others to find answers for us. This done, let us go a step further by taking positive action basing on our responses to the question. The thing is, we have all in our small ways done something but certainly we can do more and better than this.

At this point, I would like to underscore the fact that we in Malawi have not just asked a theoretical question about what is to be done in the face of the challenge posed by the HIV/AIDS epidemic; we have, as a nation put in place institutions, policies and programmes to respond to this challenge.

Ladies and gentlemen, as has already been said, the theme for Country Development Market Place Campaign is "***Turning Ideas into Action***". This means that we must translate our ideas, commitments into good deeds. The battle against HIV and AIDS requires direct involvement and commitment from everyone of us.

Today as we witness the launch of Country Development Market Place (CDM), we all need to recommit ourselves to do our bit in making the difference in the lives of our women and youth by:

- ⓧ Reviewing and changing our behaviours
- ⓧ Promoting safer sexual practices and other behaviours
- ⓧ Bringing innovative programmes to communities and promoting popular participation
- ⓧ Promoting life skills for young people
- ⓧ Bringing new information to communities and consumers of services
- ⓧ Gaining *quality* financial resources for HIV/AIDS
- ⓧ Exposing problems and controversies including gender based violence
- ⓧ Raising the profile of HIV/AIDS leading to capturing of people's attention and inspiring positive action
- ⓧ Influencing change of policies and laws
- ⓧ Reporting with accuracy on issues relating to the epidemic
- ⓧ Supporting those living infected and affected by HIV/AIDS
- ⓧ Mobilising social action on HIV/AIDS
- ⓧ Promoting the development and implementation of HIV/AIDS work place policies and programmes
- ⓧ Involving people living with HIV in our activities
- ⓧ Exposing limited focus of women and the youth's sexual and reproductive rights, as well as cultural norms and practices that hamper women and youth empowerment in health matters

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, one thing comes out clear in this fight against HIV/AIDS pandemic. It is the fact that we all need to be drawn into the fight, *No spectators*. This then touches on the issue of building **effective partnerships**. Partners work together for a common purpose, and for mutual benefit. I want to call on every body to make this campaign worthwhile by ensuring that from now onwards we make an undying commitment to become involved in this battle more than ever before. Let us make this campaign a symbol of hope and faith that unites us together for a better future which is also in line with the challenge that we are faced with which is "***We have lost this generation, let's not lose the next***".

Last but not least, I would like to thank the World Bank, first of all for conceptualizing the programme at global level, secondly for bringing it to our door-step so that we can all participate and come up with solutions that are tailor-made and home-grown for our communities. We in MANET+ have resolved to make our humble contribution but you are yet to see how.

Thank you all for listening to me.