

Top Women

GAULPHINE NYIRENDA

Gaulphine Nyirenda is the Managing Director of Maneno Enterprises which was founded in 1998. The company has 16 members of staff and is into publishing, selling teaching and learning material. She has a Diploma in Education, majoring in Maths and Science, Diploma in Entrepreneur Management and another in Book Selling Management and Consolidation. She started small, selling doughnuts which she was supplying to PTC and Kandodo shops, after getting a loan of MK12, 000 from SEDOM. Today, she is an agent for Mallory International Ltd, Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press. She has also jointly published with Oxford and Cambridge University Press recommended and used secondary school textbooks by the Ministry of Education in the following subjects: English, Mathematics, Agriculture, Religious and Moral Education. Under her successful management, the company is a recommended outlet by the Ministry of Education for textbook revolving fund and is working on projects from World Bank, CHAM, University of Malawi, Domasi TTC and Mzuzu University. She has contributed a lot to the education sector in Malawi, and has helped to change the mindset of most Malawians, to develop a reading culture from an early stage of life. Her personal efforts to develop the education sector have opened gateways to brighter and healthier future for Malawi. The book industry in Malawi is male-dominated but Nyirenda has proved her ability and sense of professionalism and business acumen.



MISSIE KANJADZA

Born on March 13, 1953, Kanjadza has a 28 year old career with the Ministry of Education having taught in various primary schools in the country. She retired in 1999 and ventured into chicken farming, using her pension money. She later started a family business, Mzuzu Auctioneers and Estate Agents. The agent stores few used household items in addition to selling of day old chicks and chicken feeds. Due to her hard work and determination, Kanjadza is the sole agent and distributor of Charles Stewart day old chicks in the entire northern region. Central Poultry also appointed her as their agent for CP feeds. Success was not easy to come as there was so much competition within such a small segment of the market. Several individuals opened up their shops around town and sold feeds at a relatively cheaper price. As a result of the quality of feeds and chickens that she sells, she has managed to maintain her clientele base and even wooed new customers in the face of such a stiff competition. Apart from business, she dedicates most of her time to charity work. She has paid for several needy children from primary school level to secondary school and most of them are self sufficient and are bread winners in their homes. She has supported a lot of orphans and every year during Christmas, she feeds over 500 Orphans in her home village, Dedza. Kanjadza also teaches needy and widowed women, new and modernized ways and best practices of doing business. She also helps them with setting up their business. She is married to Henderson Kanjadza currently Manager for Mzuzu Auction Floors and they have seven children.



MATILDA KATOPOLA

At 37, Katopola is the first female ever Clerk of Parliament in the history of Malawi, a position she has held since 2006. She holds a Masters Degree in International Law and various qualifications and credentials in international security studies, legislative drafting, gender issues, change management and corruption strategies. Katopola was also the first woman to serve on the executive board of the Malawi Law Society. She has also worked as Assistant Chief Parliamentary Draftsperson, Chief State Attorney, Legal Aid Attorney in the Ministry of Justice, Assistant Chief Law Reform Officer at the Malawi Law Commission, Senior Programme Officer for Parliamentary Committee at the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs. Katopola has been key in supporting various programmes supporting women in and outside parliament. Among others, she facilitated gender mainstreaming efforts in parliament. She also engineered development partner's efforts to support the birth of the Gender NGO Network. Katopola has had a tough ride in Parliament, to the extent that some male MP's threatened to beat her as a result of working hard to ensure transparency and professionalism in the affairs of the National Assembly. She encourages women to develop a reading culture to sharpen intellectual capacity. She owes every single success to God. She is married with two children.



CECILIA KADZAMIRA

She was the official hostess for the first President Ngwazi Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda. She has a unique personality and led a life so different from other women. She picked no bones with anyone regardless of their status. Ms Kadzamira spent at least 30 years with President Banda until his death in 1997. Her position as constant companion and official hostess made her more or less Malawi's First Lady. She amassed enormous political power in her own right as Chairperson of Chitukuko Cha Amayi m'Malawi (CCAM). The CCAM group, whose name translates as "Development of Women in Malawi," served the admirable task of helping women become involved in the development of Malawi. She is a living legend who continues to retain her dignity, though she might be forgotten by many, by continuing to live a life worth emulating. She has inspired a lot of women in religious, social, political and economic cycles.