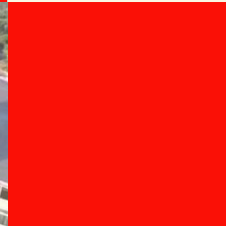
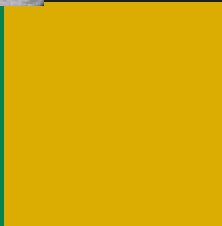
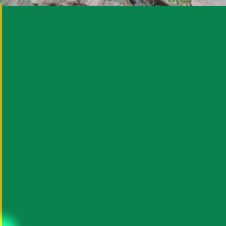
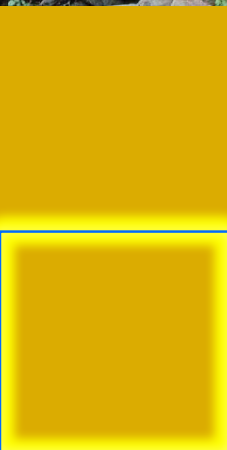
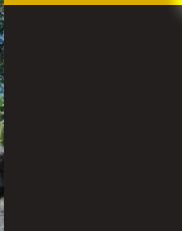
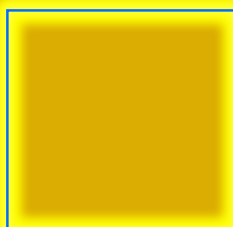
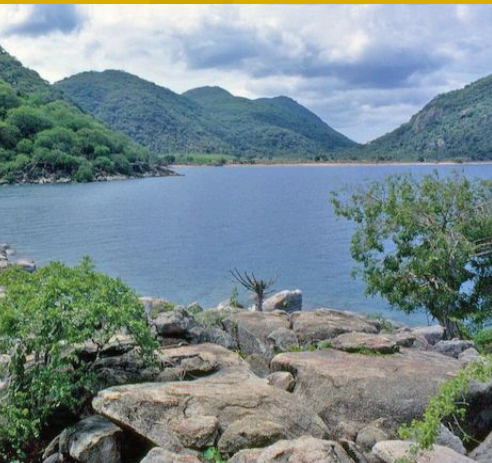


# LAUNCH PROGRAM

## GRAND CHALLENGES MALAWI



### THEME

***Unlocking Strategic Investments  
Through Collaborative Research***

Bingu International Convention Centre (BICC)  
Lilongwe, **30 August 2023**





# INTRODUCTION



## About Grand Challenges Malawi Launch

**TAKULANDIRANI!**

**Welcome to Malawi at the Bingu International  
Convention Centre (BICC)**

The 30th of August 2023 marks an important milestone to launch Grand Challenges Malawi program at Bingu International Convention Centre (BICC), Lilongwe, Malawi. Our goal is to support the most creative scientists in Malawi to collaborate with their partners in Africa and globally, to implement research that fosters innovation in solving the most critical development challenges in Malawi and Africa.

## GOALS/OBJECTIVES:

1. To strengthen the national innovation ecosystem and build capacity and capability of local researchers/ innovators and R&D infrastructure
2. To leverage resources and expertise from public, private and development partners for effective and efficient execution of priority areas of research and innovations
3. To optimise financing of the value chain of research and innovation from ideation, discovery, development, delivery and transition to scale
4. To launch a request for proposal (RFP) to solicit applications from scientists in
5. Malawi to collaborate with their partners in Africa and globally, to implement research that fosters innovation in solving the most critical development challenges.





## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. A request for proposal (RFP) is launched on research that fosters innovation to solve the most critical development challenges in Malawi and Africa;
2. A summary of strategies to support improved R&D and innovation funding towards AU target of 1% R&D funding as a percentage of national GDP;
3. Abroad network of African and global partners established to share ideas and resources to advance R&D and innovation development agenda to promote scientific research excellence and scale and make valuable contributions to society

## BACKGROUND

The Government of Malawi through Science and Technology Fund (S&T Fund) and other funding mechanisms is rebuilding its capacity to fund research and development (R&D) to attain research and innovation excellence. The goal is to enhance transformative innovations for local industrial development in order to improve the well-being of Malawian citizens.

Grand Challenges was established in 2003 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation at World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland to fund ground-breaking scientific research on specific unique health challenges in a country using bold mind ideas and innovative solutions.

Several African countries such as Ethiopia, South Africa, Senegal and Botswana have launched Grand Challenges initiatives. Science for Africa Foundation (SFA) based in Nairobi coordinates national Grand Challenges in Africa to develop innovations on the African continent.

African Union Development Agency - New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD) facilitated a planning workshop in Blantyre from 30th July to 4th August 2023 in preparation for Grand Challenges Malawi Launch.

In partnership with national stakeholders, Science for Africa Foundation (SFA) and AUDA-NEPAD, National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) will launch Grand Challenges on 30th August 2023.







## **GRAND CHALLENGES MALAWI**

Malawi is joining a growing global network to leverage efforts from members of the global Grand Challenges family to support research and innovation. This will broaden collaborations and mutual R&D funding for groundbreaking innovative research projects.

This will lead to development of new products and services as unique solutions, and to develop innovations through research exchanges, best practices and experiences with global and African researchers.

Grand Challenges prioritize funding opportunities to high-level quality ideas by researchers and innovators with exciting groundbreaking innovative research projects.

The emphasis is that research developed in partnership with industries, companies and academic institutions using highly specialized laboratories, innovation hubs and other spaces leads to products, services, knowledge and technology transfer, as well as strengthen the ties between global and African collaborators.

## **KEY ACTIVITIES AND THEMES**

The following activities will be the focus of the Launch of the Grand Challenges Malawi:

1. Official launch of Grand Challenges Malawi by the Minister, Mrs Madalitso Kambauwa Wirima, MP
2. Unveiling of the published Grand Challenge Request for Proposal (RFP)
3. Keynote Address
4. Panel Sessions
5. Innovation Exhibitions



# REMARKS





**Hon. Madalitso Kambauwa Wirima,  
MP**

*Minister of Education,  
Republic of Malawi*

## Minister of Education, Republic of Malawi

**Hon. Madalitso Kambauwa Wirima** is a Human Resource Practitioner with over 8 years of Comprehensive Human Resources and Administration experience including recruitment and retention, conflict resolution, change management, labor Relations and Benefits Administration.

Hon. Madalitso Kambauwa Wirima has proven experience in collaborating with senior management to conduct Human Resources strategic Planning in order to support and further corporate goals. While in the private Sector, she demonstrated experience initiating cost containment strategies resulting in significant savings.

She has excellent ability to address and implement strategic plans for talent acquisition, retention and succession planning.

Lastly, she has proven skills in labor and employment law.





## Secretary for Education

**Ms. Chikondani Mussa** is a visionary leader in Malawi's education sector, she served as the Director of Secondary and Distance Education from 2012, showcasing her commitment to educational advancement. Her diverse career path included roles as Deputy Director of Basic Education, Education Division Manager, and District Education Manager, with a teaching background and experience as Head of Department (Humanities), highlighting her dedication to various educational levels. Chikondano's academic journey culminated in a Master of Education Degree in Policy Planning and Leadership from the University of Malawi in 2009. Her research focused on the role of inspection services in shaping education policy, indicating her dedication to enhancing educational practices and policies.

In recent years, Chikondano led important initiatives including crafting a new reform agenda for secondary education and reviewing and resourcing the secondary school curriculum. Her international engagements as a speaker at conferences and meetings underscore her influence beyond borders. Notably, she presented at the Comparative and International Education Society Conference, sharing insights on the education agenda at the University of Cambridge. Chikondano Mussa's impactful contributions led her to hold the esteemed position of Secretary of Education at the Ministry of



**Ms. Chikondano Mussa**

*Secretary for Education*



Education in Malawi. While she's no longer the Director of Secondary and Distance Education, her transformative leadership and extensive experience position her as a significant figure shaping education in Malawi.



## National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) Board Chairperson

**Prof. Emmanuel Kaunda** is an academic leader and researcher with an impressive background in the higher education sector in Malawi and beyond. With a career spanning 27 years, he has held various senior leadership roles, including Acting Vice Chancellor and first Deputy Vice Chancellor at LUANAR. He's an alumnus of Rhodes University and has gathered extensive experience, particularly in the areas of aquaculture and fisheries. He's currently the Director of the World Bank Africa Centre of Excellence in Aquaculture and Fisheries and serves as the Technical Coordinator of the NEPAD/Southern Africa Network on Biosciences (SANBIO) Fish Node at LUANAR. Professor Kaunda holds influential positions such as the Board Chairperson of the National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST), Chairperson of the Steering Committee for the University of Malawi's delinking process, and Co-Lead of the Top Management Track in the Innovations Scholars Programme (ISP) between Michigan State University (MSU) and Makerere University's College of Agriculture and Environment Science (CAES). He also contributes to the African Centre for Aquatic Research and Education (ACARE) as a board member.

Professor Kaunda's contributions have not gone unnoticed. He's been honored with numerous awards, both



**Prof. Emmanuel Kaunda**

*Board Chairperson - NCST*



locally and internationally, for his exceptional work, including the Robin L Welcomme Fellowship at Michigan State University in 2019, the Impact Research and Science in Africa (IMPRESSA) Award in 2013, and the Aquaculturist of the year title in 2011 from the Aquaculture Association of Southern Africa (AASA). His dedication to research and academia is evident through his extensive publication record in renowned national and international journals within the aquaculture and fisheries field. Furthermore, he's a co-founder of the Kawjo Foundation, a nonprofit organization making a significant positive impact on the lives of fish farmers in the country.





## AUDA-NEPAD Senior Advisor

Prof. Aggrey Ambali currently serves as a Senior Advisor at the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), where he oversees the Office of Science, Technology and Innovation (OSTI). He previously held various positions at the AUDA-NEPAD which have included; Supervisor of the Technical Cooperation and Programme Fund Directorate (TCPF), Director of Policy Alignment and Programme Development and Head of Science Technology and Innovation Hub (NSTIH). Additionally, Prof. Aggrey Ambali coordinated the development of the African Union Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (STISA 2014-2024). To date, Prof. Aggrey Ambali has headed the resource mobilization process and implementation of programs in Health, Education and Science, Technology.

Prof. Aggrey Ambali also served as coordinator of the African Biosciences initiative, as well as the coordinator of Science and Technology for the Southern Africa region. In addition, Prof. Ambali served as a professor of biology at the University of Malawi till 2004 and is a fellow of the African Academy of Sciences. He is currently on several boards and committees, including a member of the Governing Council of the United Nations Technology Bank; Jury president of the L'Oreal UNESCO for Women in Science /Sub-Saharan African Regional Pro-



**Prof. Aggrey Ambali, PhD; FAAS**

*Senior Advisor for the Office of Science, Technology and Innovation (OSTI)*



gramme; Chair of the Board of Trustees of the African Agricultural Technology Trust Foundation (AATF); Board of the Science for Africa Foundation (SFA); and member of the partnership for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PA-SET), as well as Research and Innovation Grants Independent Committee (GITC).

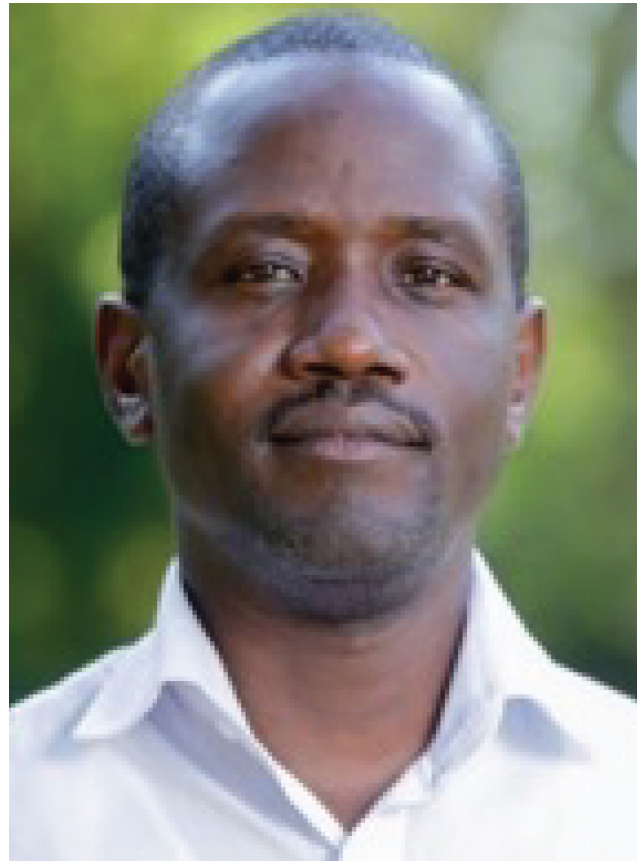
Furthermore, Prof. Aggrey Ambali has coordinated 3 African Union (AU) High Level panel on Science, Technology and Innovation, biotechnology, and emerging technologies. Lastly, Prof. Ambali led the assessment team on the identification of Member States to host the Headquarters of the African Medicines Agency (AMA).



## Science for Africa Foundation Grand Challenges Africa

**Dr. Moses Alobo** is a physician, public health expert and social impact entrepreneur with over 20 years of experience. He leads the Science Innovation Translation and Entrepreneurship team at the Science for Africa Foundation, a science funding and programme development organization based in Africa. Moses supports scientists in designing and conducting locally relevant research proposals, their associated technology transfer, capacity strengthening and policy engagement for the development of critical areas of science in Africa. Moses has experience in implementing health and research programmes in >30 countries in Africa in various fields of science and medicine. For example, he recently led the MNH research priority-setting exercise for African researchers in 2019-20 and co-Chaired the work for the Covid-19 research priorities for Africa. He has had various other appointments as Clinical Research Director at GSK – Africa NCD Open lab, Sub-Saharan Medical Affairs manager at Hoffman La Roche, Clinical Trial Manager at Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative and several board appointments, including at Kenya Medical Research Institute.

Moses studied medicine at the University of Nairobi (Kenya) and later Public Health at the University of Birmingham (UK). He has been awarded the LSHTM Executive Global Health Leadership fellowship 2019, The Archbishop Des-



**Dr. Moses Alobo**

*Head of Programs – SFA Foundation*



mond Tutu African Leadership fellowship in 2014, the EU Contact Point Network for Young African Scientists Fellowship in 2007 and the British Chevening Scholarship in 2005.

His current research interests include research prioritization and health technology assessment techniques.





**Mrs. Gift A. Kadzamira**

*Acting Director General NCST*

## National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST)

Gift A. Kadzamira is the Acting Director General of NCST. Her vision is to unlock the potential of Science, Technology and Innovation for the social economic development of the country through strengthening the STI Governance system; Resource Mobilization; Strengthening the National Innovation System among others. She has vast knowledge and skills in research and innovation management and holds an MSc Degree in Electronic Information Management from the Robert Gordon University; Scotland, a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and Demography from the University of Malawi; Chancellor College. She also studied for a Post-Graduate Diploma in an African Leadership Course in ICT (ALICT) to advance knowledge society development across ministries and organizations. Additionally, she also holds Certificates from the Southern African Research & Innovation Management (SARI-MA) Association in Fundamentals of Research Management, Intellectual Property; Technology Transfer and Commercialization; and Gender in Science, Technology. She has recently earned a Diploma in Innovation, Transformation and Resilience for Sustainable Development from Lund University in Sweden.





## National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST)

**Prof. Kenneth Maleta** is an esteemed figure in the field of Epidemiology and Public Health, holding the position of Professor at the University of Malawi's College of Medicine. With an academic foundation in general medicine and epidemiology, he has established himself as a distinguished expert in his field. His contributions to education and research are highly regarded. Currently serving as a Professor of Public Health and Family Medicine, at the College of Medicine in Malawi. Kenneth Maleta has achieved significant milestones in his career, his journey includes various prominent roles within the University of Malawi's College of Medicine. Notably, he has held positions such as Deputy Chair of the Division of Community Health, Dean for Postgraduate Studies and Research, and Principal for the College of Medicine.

Prof. Maleta's research focus centers on epidemiological research related to the prevention and treatment of undernutrition. His work has particularly concentrated on maternal and childhood undernutrition, with a strong emphasis on food-based interventions. He has also explored aspects of childhood growth and development, body composition,



**Prof. Kenneth Maleta**

*NCST Commissioner*



and the intricate interplay between nutrition and infection. His professional interests extend to HIV, health systems, and medical education, reflecting a comprehensive engagement with public health matters.



## National Council for Science and Technology (NCST)

**Dr. Henderson Chimoyo** is an experienced scientist with a demonstrated history of working in the research industry. Skilled in Sustainable Development, Business Planning, Analytical Skills, Policy Analysis, and Sustainability. Strong consulting professional with a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) focused in Agronomy, Genetics and Plant Breeding from Clemson University.

First Director General of the Commission. Got the secretariat established and put in place the required Human Resources and prerequisite systems and operational procedures.

Currently running a medium scale farming operation at Kanyerere Farm along with consultancy work for various organizations. Consults on a regular basis for the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) CABMACC Project. Currently consulting for Alliance for a Green Revolution for Africa (AGRA) on Early Generation Seed Systems in Malawi. I have just completed putting together a Science Plan (Strategic Plan) for the Department of Agricultural Research under the World Bank funded Agricultural Productivity Programme for Southern Africa (APPSA).

Plant breeding work. Bred several



**Dr. Henderson Chimoyo**

*Former Director General NCST*



disease resistant varieties of tobacco Malawi's number one cash crop. Set up Unilever Seeds (Mw) the first competitor to the National Seed Company of Malawi. This operation played a significant role in the promotion of hybrid seed use (maize and sunflower) by smallholder farmers in Malawi.



# KEY NOTE SPEAKER

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**Ms. Kedest Tesfagiorgis**

*Deputy Director*



**Ms. Kedest Tesfagiorgis** leads the Global Partnerships and Grand Challenges (GPGC) team within the discovery and Transitional Sciences program at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Her career has been rooted in the conviction that as a global community in pursuit of equity, we go faster and further by working together. Since joining the foundation in 2006, she has focused on building inclusive long-term R&D partnerships that addresses the biggest challenges in health and development. Formed in 2019 and further shaped by the experience

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## **Global Partnerships and Grand Challenges, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.**

**- Deputy Director**

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of the COVID-19 pandemic, GPGC supports innovators in low and middle-income countries so they are positioned to lead or play a pivotal role in game changing R&D projects. The underlying rationale for this work is two-fold. First, when scientists in the geographies where most of the foundations work will be implemented have adequate resources, the work gets done faster and better. Second, over the long term, these investments build thriving local R&D ecosystems that will set health and development agendas and drive progress in a sustainable way.

Ms. Kedest leads Grand Challenges, the foundations flagship innovation program launched in 2003. In addition to supporting scientific projects in low and middle-income countries directly, Kedest has helped grow Grand Challenges into a Global network, working with partners across Africa and South Asia to create their own innovation programs.

Kedest sometimes describes her teams work as “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Impact,” and she brings her experience to bear as a co-chair of the DEI effort across the foundation’s Global Health Division. Kedest also spends time on coalition building outside of work, serving on the board of the Africa Diaspora Network & World Reader.



# PANEL DISCUSSION SESSIONS

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**THEME**

***Unlocking Strategic Investments Through Collaborative Research***

## **PANEL DISCUSSION 1**

Prospects for research and innovation development in Africa and lessons learnt from the Grand Challenges National Programs from Ethiopia, Rwanda and South Africa.



**Simon Ndoria**

*Program Officer – Innovation and Entrepreneurship  
SFA Foundation*

**Moderator**



**Dr Shallo Daba**

*Grand Challenges  
National Health  
Innovation Program  
Coordinator – Ethiopia*

**Panel Member**



**Dr. Louis Sibomana**

*NCST  
Coordinator – Grand  
Challenges Rwanda*

**Panel Member**



**Ms. Zoleka Ngcete**

*SAMRC  
Program Manager  
Grand Challenges  
South Africa*

**Panel Member**





## Moderator Panel Discussion 1

For over 15 years, **Simon** has supported innovative start-ups and SMEs in Africa to scale their solutions through both commercial and non-financial commercial pathways. Over the last 4 years he has worked with Grand Challenges Africa where he has spurred Transition to scale & entrepreneurship for science-based ventures in health, agriculture and development. This has entailed facilitating innovative finance, venture capacity development, and innovation ecosystem interventions in Africa. He previously set-up the Innovate for Life Fund, an accelerator for health and WASH innovations, at Amref health Africa. Prior to joining the development sector, Simon was a bank relationship manager handling special funding projects in the Water and Health sectors. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree, a masters in Banking and Finance with post graduate certification in financial analysis and modelling.



**Simon Ndoria**

*Program Officer – Innovation and  
Entrepreneurship  
SFA Foundation*





## Panel Member Panel Discussion 1

**Dr Shallo** is a public health professional and Epidemiologist with more than 25 years of progressive experience leading strategic technical initiatives and serving in senior management positions in the government health sector and closely working in collaboration with international nongovernmental organization and UN agencies. Currently, he is working for the Ministry of health at the position of Senior Grand challenges Ethiopia national Health Innovation program coordinator at Armauer Hansen Research Institute (AHRI).

He began his profession career as health service provider at health center, hospital, and also working at different senior management positions includes CEO for regional referral hospital, Oromia regional HIV/AIDS office head, health bureau deputy head and health Bureau head, Director General for the federal HIV/AIDS prevention and control office.

Over the course of his career, Dr Shallo has substantially contributed to strengthening the health systems and improves maternal, child, TB and HIV control programs performance. In 2016 he has got an award from WHO county offices his best research work on TB and in 2020 from the federal ministry of health for his best health service leadership and contribution to transform the health sector in Ethiopia. He joins AHRI in



**Dr Shallo Daba**

*Grand Challenges  
National Health Innovation Program  
Coordinator – Ethiopia*



2019 as Grand Challenges Ethiopia National Health innovation program coordinator. Since then he has substantially contributed in crating the national health innovation ecosystem through GCE program.



### **Dr. Louis Sibomana**

*Head of Science, Technology  
Development and Outreach  
Department,  
Coordinator Grand Challenges  
Rwanda,*

## **Panel Member Panel Discussion 1**

**Dr. Louis Sibomana** is currently the Head of Department of Science, Technology Development and Outreach at National Council for Science and Technology (NCST), Rwanda, and he is leading the Grand Challenges Rwanda program. Before joining NCST, he was a Senior Lecturer at the College of Science and Technology, University of Rwanda, and served as Head of Electrical and Electronics Engineering Department from 2011 to 2020. He also served as a Core Network Engineer with Rwandatel from 2008 to 2011.

Louis leads the development of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) policy, strategies and regulatory frameworks, and collaborations and partnerships. In addition, Louis is passionate on links between research and socio-economic development. His current research interests include applications of emerging technologies. He is involved in different research projects and has published several research papers both in high level international conferences and peer reviewed journal articles. In these roles, Louis has gained a broad background and experience in ICT applications as well as valuable experience in research, leadership and training.





### **Ms. Zoleka Ngcete**

*Program Manager* – South African  
Medical Research Council (SAMRC)

## **Panel Member** **Panel Discussion 1**

**Ms. Zoleka Ngcete** is Program Manager at the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) where she was previously project manager. Prior to the SAMRC, she served as the Business Development Manager for the Eastern Cape regional office of the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), and before that as the Programme Manager for the South African Malaria Initiative (SAMI), one of the initiatives that currently form part of the Strategic Health Innovation Partnerships (SHIP) portfolio. The initiative brought together a multi-disciplinary research consortium comprising a number of South African research institutions to collaborate on finding new solutions to combat malaria. The portfolio included drug discovery, diagnostics development and vector parasite biology.

Ms. Ngcete has a BSc in Biochemistry and Microbiology, an MSc in Biotechnology from Rhodes University as well as Diplomas in Project Management and Business Management.







**THEME**

***Unlocking Strategic Investments Through Collaborative Research***

## **PANEL DISCUSSION 1**

**Prospects for research and innovation development in Africa and lessons learnt from the Grand Challenges National Programs from Rwanda, South Africa, Botswana and Ethiopia.**

### **Background:**

It is a widely accepted fact that research, science, technology and innovation are critical stimulants to every nation's economic growth and development prospects. Research and innovation development increases a nation's ability to make positive use of natural and environmental resources, reduces the cost of production of goods and services, supports the development of new and appropriate technologies and allows countries to respond quickly to novel opportunities and emergencies in the changing global and health economy (NCST, Investment Plan 2018–2023). Research and innovation development facilitates the generation and production of impactful knowledge, innovations and technologies that facilitate the implementation of interventions that are critical to the attainment of a nation's development plans. In order to ascertain strides in research and innovation, resource and technological investments should be appropriately matched with the scientific outputs. In addition to this, facilitating a multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional approach to the implementation of research, innovations and technologies is of the essence to responding to multi-faceted and multi-dimensional challenges facing the global economy (Malawi National Research Agenda, 2023–2030).

In order to foster research, and innovation initiatives, the Grand Challenges initiatives exist to foster innovations to solve key global challenges as they initially focused on health and development problems<sup>1</sup>. Grand Challenges South Africa was launched in 2014 by the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) and the South African Department of Science and Innovation (DSI). The aim of the South African program is to catalyze innovation in health research within South Africa. Grand Challenges South Africa has touched on new knowledge and interventions of ensuring that all children thrive by reducing fetal growth impairments and

<sup>1</sup> [https://gcgh.grandchallenges.org/sites/default/files/files/grand\\_challenges\\_fact\\_sheet\\_2022.pdf](https://gcgh.grandchallenges.org/sites/default/files/files/grand_challenges_fact_sheet_2022.pdf)



preterm birth, stunted postnatal growth and impaired cognitive development. The Program in South Africa has also provided grants focused on identifying the reducing the burden of resistance to antibacterial agents<sup>2</sup>. The Grand Challenges Botswana was launched in 2021 by the Botswana Innovation Hub to provide funding to local innovators to develop and implement scientific solutions in space applications for agriculture and tourism sectors.<sup>3</sup>

Grand Challenges Ethiopia on the other hand was launched in 2015 by the Ethiopian Ministry of Health to inspire the creation and scale up of innovative ideas that respond to Ethiopia's health-related challenges. Since 2017, a total of 42 seed grants have been supported of which 25 prototypes were completed and developed in their first stage of implementation. The tools that have been developed have unearthed potential solutions to challenges in the health sector by particularly improving maternal and child health<sup>4</sup>. Lastly, Grand Challenges Rwanda was launched in May 2023 and seeks to support creative scientists in Rwanda to implement research that adopts innovation in solving critical development challenges.<sup>5</sup>

At the end of the panel discussion, panelists will be able to answer the following questions:

1. What is the role of research and innovation development in driving African economies?
2. How has Africa leveraged on the Grand Challenges program to solve their societal needs (focus is on the National Grand Challenges Initiatives)?
3. What are some of the possible areas for bilateral and multilateral collaboration on research and innovations to address local challenges in Malawi such as addressing emerging pandemics and drug shortages, for instance?
4. What is the readiness of Malawi in pursuing research and innovation to solve grand challenges?

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2 <https://www.grandchallenges.org/about>

3 <https://www.bih.co.bw/grand-challenges-botswana-launches/>

4 <https://ahri.gov.et/grand-challenges-ethiopia/>

5 <https://www.ncst.gov.rw/news-detail/launch-of-grand-challenges-rwanda>



**THEME**

***Unlocking Strategic Investments Through Collaborative Research***

**PANEL DISCUSSION 2**

Prospects for research and innovation eco-systems development in Malawi.



**Prof. Kenneth Maleta**  
*Commissioner NCST*

**Panel Member**



**Dr. Joseph Nagoli**  
*Director of Knowledge and Learning at the National Planning Commission of Malawi*

**Moderator**



**Fr Dr. Wilfred Sumani**  
*Vice Chancellor  
Catholic University - Malawi*

**Panel Member**



**Ms. Loveness Gondwe**  
*Former Deputy Speaker of Parliament*

**Panel Member**



**Dr. Napoleon Dzombe**  
*Entrepreneur*

**Panel Member**



**Pro. Samson Sajidu**  
*Vice Chancellor  
University of Malawi*

**Panel Member**



**Dr. Tasokwa Kakota Chibowa**  
*Chief of Party - USAID*

**Panel Member**





### Dr. Joseph Nagoli

*Director of Knowledge and Learning  
at the National Planning  
Commission of Malawi*

## Moderator Panel Discussion 2

**Joseph** is the Director of Knowledge and Learning at the National Planning Commission of Malawi responsible for providing leadership on research, Monitoring, Evaluation and capacity building for evidence-based execution of the medium and long-term development plans for Malawi. He holds a PhD in Urban and Rural Development (Anthropology), and an international development MSc in Agriculture, Environment and Development. He has conducted research for over 25 years and published over 40 articles in high impact factor journals and over 5 book chapters on: aquaculture and fisheries, political ecology, natural resource management, livelihoods, gender and social change/transformation.

Before joining National Planning, Joseph was a Senior Scientist and Malawi's Representative for WorldFish, one of the centers of the Consultative Group on Agricultural Research (CGIAR).





## Panel Member Panel Discussion 2

**Dr. Tasokwa Kakota Chibowa** is a Malawian and currently a Chief of Party for the USAID implementing partner, Transforming Higher Education Systems project in Malawi. She is an associate professor in applied mathematics with over 20 years of teaching and conducting applied research in STEM in higher education. Tasokwa has a PhD in Dryland Resource Management obtained from the University of Nairobi, Kenya in 2011, a Master's Degree in curriculum and instruction from Virginia Tech and State University, USA and a Bachelor's Degree in Education (majoring in mathematics and statistics from University of Malawi, Chancellor College). The diverse but complimentary qualification and experience has enabled her to conduct research across sectors. Tasokwa is also a highly experienced expert in internal and external quality assurance for higher education institutions with national, regional and international experience. She has wide knowledge and skills in qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis; baseline and end line evaluations; impact assessments; value chains; designing and implementation of gender analysis and inclusion studies using different gender frameworks and tools including the Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI). She is highly experienced expert in analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data using different statistical packages and synthesizing the findings in a report. She has a formal training in facilitation by the African Women in Agriculture and Research Development (AWARD) International trainers. She has excellent skills in facilitation and communication including preparing and presenting clear



**Dr. Tasokwa Kakota Chibowa**

*Chief of Party - USAID Malawi*



and concise oral and written communication, preparing policy briefs, action plans and guidelines for implementation. She has collaborated with Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) and Association of African Universities (AAU) to facilitate trainings to international and national participants.

She has published a number of scholarly articles in various international journals. She has also contributed a book chapter in Climate Impacts on Agriculture and Natural Resources Sustainability in Africa



**Ms. Loveness Gondwe**

*Former Deputy Speaker  
of Parliament*

## Panel Member

### Panel Discussion 2

**Ms. Loveness Gondwe** is a holder of a Masters Degree in ministry management obtained from Minnesota Graduate School of Theology – USA. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts in Bible and Theology from Global University, Springfield, Missouri – USA.

Since 1999, she has held many portfolios in Malawi some of which include the following: Member of parliament for Mzimba West Constituency from 1999 to 2009; First Deputy speaker of Malawi National Assembly in 2004, Member of Women caucus; Served as Parliamentary service commissioner; Member of parliamentary business committee; Leader of Aford party in parliament; Chairperson of health and population committee;

Between 2004 to 2009 she served in the Pan Africa Parliament in Midrand South Africa as a member; served in the Committee responsible for international relations, conflict, resolution management committee. She was a member of the high-powered delegation team of fact-finding mission on conflict to Mauritania. Currently, she is a president of EMIT Malawi Chapter (organization of women in empowerment). She is still active in politics.







**Dr. Napoleon Dzombe**

*Entrepreneur and Philanthropist*

## Panel Member Panel Discussion 2

He is a Malawian entrepreneur, philanthropist and founder of five social enterprises namely; Mtendere Orphan Village, School of Agriculture for Family Independence, Mtalimanja Holdings, Blessings Hospital and Madalitso Food Plant. Mtendere Orphan Village provides education for the orphaned youth. On the other hand, the School of Agriculture for Family Independence aims at training farmers in sustainable agricultural production systems. Mtalimanja Holdings is a value addition and infrastructure development enterprise which aims at providing on-the-job training for new graduates and solving road infrastructure grand challenges for rural communities. He has been recognized as one of the top influential entrepreneurs in modern history of Malawi.





### Fr Dr. Wilfred Sumani

*Vice Chancellor  
Catholic University – Malawi*

## Panel Member Panel Discussion 2

**Rev. Fr. Dr. Wilfred Sumani** is Acting Vice-Chancellor and Director of Academic Affairs at the Catholic University of Malawi. He obtained his doctorate in ritual hermeneutics in Italy and a Master of Business Administration (Strategic Management) from Daystar University, Kenya. Dr. Sumani is Head of the Social Enterprise Development Unit of the Jesuit Centre for Ecology and Development. He is also the coordinator of the Intellectual Work of the Society of Jesus in Southern Africa. He has published books, book chapters and articles in various journals on various subjects such as entrepreneurship, sustainable development, education and history. In 2022, he pioneered the reverse engineering of a sugarcane juicer, a project implemented in partnership with Lilongwe Technical College. His research interests include entrepreneurship, the circular economy, and higher education systems.





## Panel Member Panel Discussion 2

Since 1st April, 2022, Prof. Samson Sajidu has been the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malawi (UNIMA) providing strategic leadership through a highly competitive vision. He graduated from the University of Malawi with a distinction in the Bachelor of Science Programme. He then went on to pursue an MPhil in Material Chemistry at the University of Cambridge, and finally a PhD in Chemistry at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. Apart from that, Prof. Sajidu has acquired and continues to acquire more knowledge by participating in various relevant academic and professional short courses.

Prof. Sajidu joined the University of Malawi (then Chancellor College) in 2002 as a Lecturer and rose through the ranks to full Professor in 2016. In 2010 Prof. Samson Sajidu, through hard work and determination won the AUTWAS Young Scientist National (Malawi) Award. He has served UNIMA in various capacities such as a deputy head of the Chemistry Department, programme coordinator, Deputy and Dean of the Faculty of Science, Senate representative to UNIMA Council, Vice-Principal, and Acting Principal thereby attaining vast work experience.

Prof. Samson Sajidu is an academic chemist with extensive research and consultancy experience. He has published widely in peer-reviewed journals and as Co-PI and PI, he has managed several research projects attracting huge project funds and grants from different funders such as the African Development Bank (HEST), World



**Prof. SAMSON SAJIDU**  
(BSc Mlw, MPhil Cantab, Ph.D Mlw)

*Vice Chancellor*  
*University of Malawi*



Bank, European Union, NRCM, IPICS and African Union. Prof. Samson Sajidu is currently championing the UNIMA research agenda through a strategic goal on internationalisation by forging collaborative research partnerships with other tertiary institutions within the country, region and abroad. He continues to play a pivotal role in several research outreach activities involving various public and private bodies including within UNIMA by initiating a Secondary School Science Career Talk Programme in the then Faculty of Science, and making pertinent contributions to developmental matters by virtue of being a member of a MERA Board Sub-Committee on Customer and Consumer Forum, and the Secondary School Science Competitions Committee of NCST. Prof. Sajidu has served and continues to serve on various Boards as may be called to duty.



## THEME

## *Unlocking Strategic Investments Through Collaborative Research*

### PANEL DISCUSSION 2

#### **Prospects for research and innovation eco-systems development in Malawi.**

The Malawi national research and ecosystem landscape is currently being guided by the National Science and Technology Policy and the national development plan known as Malawi 2063 First 10-Year Implementation Plan – 2021-2030 (MIP-1). Recently Malawi, launched a National Research Agenda to coordinate research in operationalizing the MIP-1. In this development plan, Malawi aspires to attain a lower middle income status by 2030. MIP-1 has set a new target of gross expenditure on research and development (GERD) to 2% of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2030 if Malawi is to transform into an industrialized exporting economy. The Malawi National Research and Development survey (2019) revealed that the intensity of research has declined at the national level as GERD is estimated at 0.17% of GDP in 2019. There could be many explanations for this decline but among the main challenges is the fact that there is low investment into research and development evidenced by the total expenditure on research estimated at nearly MK14 billion, much lower than the estimated expenditure in 2010 (Grand Challenges Malawi Strategy, 2023). Malawi has a low headcount of research and development personnel per million inhabitants. In 2010, the total R&D personnel was 194 and in 2019 the number had declined to 157 per million inhabitants. These are mostly in both private and public universities and research centres, which are about 34 in total depending on accreditation. Most academic institutions and research centres lack the requisite modern research infrastructure which researchers can utilise to undertake R&D activities.

Shares of R&D expenditure reveals that the R&D system is mostly dominated by higher education at 49.8%, and the bulk of research financing in higher education institutions comes from external financiers. The share of Government institutions' expenditure in R&D follows Higher education at 27.1%. The data shows that Not for Profit institutions share is approximately 18.4% followed by the Business Sector's share at 4.7%.

The Grand Challenges Malawi is therefore a new opportunity that has arisen for Malawi to adopt new innovative thinking in financing critical development challenges. The questions that follow are how ready is Malawi to finance grand research challenges that will transform research and innovation. There are also other upcoming new financing sources. On 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023, the Transforming Higher Education Systems programme was also launched. This initiative will also tackle 13 education based grand challenges. Are there any synergies between these initiatives?

#### **Questions:**

The guiding questions under the national research and innovation eco-system in Malawi can be observed from the following lens.

- How has the academia supported the developments in the National Research and Innovation landscape? What evidence is there?
- Malawians would like to know how synergetic is the GCM in addressing research and innovation challenges? Does it support other existing systems such as THES program?
- Are the national ecosystem players (Business and private sector entrepreneurs, not for profit organisations) willing to support Government in the advancement of research and innovation?
- How can we support research and innovation that can create impact on the economy? What is the role of private universities in research and innovation? How can you relate with Government and other Private Sector companies in doing research?
- What can the Government do to ensure that research findings create a positive impact on the beneficiary communities?





# EXHIBITIONS

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## INNOVATION EXHIBITORS

S/N	Institution	Logos
1	National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST)	
2	Malawi University of Business and Applied Sciences (MUBAS)	
3	University of Malawi (Unima)	
4	Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST)	
5	Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Sciences (LUANAR)	



6	Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KuHES)	 <p>KAMUZU UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES</p>
7	Mzuzu University (Mzuni)	
8	Innovative Power Solutions	 <p>INNOVATIVE POWER SOLUTIONS</p>
9	DEK Engineering	 <p>DEK engineering AND ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS We are the solution in the world of technology</p>





# **PROGRAMME OF EVENTS**







## PROGRAMME

Bingu International Convention Center (BICC), Lilongwe

### DAY 1: Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Defining the theme & Meeting Goals, Keynote Addresses and Speeches

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE
8:00–8:30	Arrival and registration	GCM Secretariat
8:30–8:35	Remarks by the Director of Ceremonies	Catherine Chaweza
8:35–8:40	Welcoming Remarks by NCST	Gift A. Kadzamira
8:40–8:50	Remarks by CEO, SFA	Dr. Moses Alobo
8:50–9:00	Remarks by AUDA-NEPAD	Prof. Aggrey Ambali
9:00–9:15	Key Note Address	Ms. Kedest Tesfagiorgis
9:15–9:18	Remarks by Board Chairperson	Prof. Emmanuel Kaunda
9:18–9:28	Remarks by Secretary for Education	Ms. Chikondano Mussa



9:28–9:40	Official Launch by Minister of Education	Hon. Madalitso Kambauwa Wirima
	Unveiling of GC Malawi supported by entertainment Interlude – Daughter’s Band	Minister Assisted by MC
	Group Photo & Press Interviews	
<b>10: 00–10:20</b>	<b>Health Break</b>	
10: 20–10:30	Defining GCM Themes and Announcement of the GCM Call on Energy	Dr. Henderson Chimoyo
10:30–10:40	Presentation of the Online Grants Management System	Mr. Zackie Kantchowa
10:40–11:20	<b>Panel discussion 1:</b> Prospects for research and innovation development in Africa and lessons learned from the Grand Challenges National Programs – Rwanda, South Africa and Ethiopia	<b>Moderator:</b> Simon Ndoria  <b>Panelists for first session :</b> • Dr Shallo Daba – Ethiopia; • Dr Louis Sibomana – Rwanda • Ms Zoleka Ngcete – South Africa



11:20-12:00	<b>Panel Discussion 2:</b> Prospects for research and innovation ecosystem development in Malawi	<b>Moderator:</b> Dr Joseph Nagoli, National Planning Commission (NPC) <b>Panelists for second session:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prof. Ken Maleta, NCST Commissioner</li> <li>• Prof. Sajidu-VC UNIMA</li> <li>• Fr Dr Wilfred Sumani, Vice Chancellor, CUNIMA</li> <li>• Dr Napoleon Dzombe Entrepreneur</li> <li>• Ms Loveness Gondwe, Former Deputy Speaker of Parliament – Representing the general public</li> <li>• Dr. Tasokwa Chibowa, Chief of Party, THES Program</li> </ul>
12:00-12:10	Closing Remarks and Touring of Innovations	Prof. Emmanuel Kaunda, NCST Board Chairperson
18:00-17:00	Networking Session / Cocktail	GC Partners Interaction with Malawi Researchers

## DAY 2: THURSDAY 31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2023

08:30-09:00	Excursion to Lake Malawi for International visitors	GC Malawi Secretariat
17:00-18:00	Return from Lake Malawi Salima: Livingstonia Beach Hotel	GC Malawi Secretariat

## DAY 3: FRIDAY 1<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023

From 06:00	Departures begin	GC Malawi Secretariat, SFA and AUDA-NEPAD
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# ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

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# GC MALAWI CHAIRPERSON'S LAUNCH MESSAGE



**Kondwani Gondwe**

*Acting Director of Planning,  
Chair of the Committee*



The need to address global as well as national socio-economic challenges has led us to gather here today. In a special way, I welcome you to the Launch of Grand Challenges Malawi (GCM) at the Bingu International Convention Centre (BICC) in Lilongwe, Capital City of Malawi. It has been a long journey to come this far.

The overall theme of the GCM launch is ***“Unlocking strategic investments for collaborative research”***. The GCM will foster an environment that nurtures research and innovation, and interdisciplinary collaboration. It is a platform where ideas will converge, minds will meet, and solutions will be born. By encouraging researchers, scholars, and visionaries to come together, we aspire to create a vibrant innovation ecosystem that not only advances the boundaries of human knowledge but also addresses pressing grand challenges that confront our society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The milestone that has been attained today has provided a new platform and opportunity to fund research and innovation, creation of networks and collaboration to share bold ideas among the participants. During the launch of Grand Challenges Malawi, a series of activi-

ties have been planned including: The official launch of the Grand Challenges Malawi by the Minister of Education; Delivery of the keynote speech; Panel discussions; Signing an MoU between NCST and SFA Foundation; Publishing a Request for proposal (RFP); and Innovation Exhibitions. The Organizing Committee therefore wishes everyone an impactful and memorable launch.

The launch of GCM has been organized by the National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, through Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI), National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and SFA Foundation - Grand Challenges Africa (GCA) and the African Union Development Agency - New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD).

On behalf of the Organising Committee I thank all invited guests from national Grand Challenges and global partners, and also participants from Malawi including development partners. Special thanks are extended to global renowned key speakers, policy-makers, development partners, academia, researchers and industry partners.

My key message to the innovation ecosystem players is ***“let us embrace this new initiative with optimism and determination as we support our researchers to collaborate and innovate, and pave the way for a future that is driven by research and fueled by creativity”***.

Thank you for your unwavering support and for being a part of this transformative journey.



**Kondwani Gondwe**

*Acting Director of Planning,  
Chair of the Committee*



**Prof. Chomora Mikeka**

*Director of Science Technology and Innovation (MOE)*



**Mphatso Phiri**

*Director of Finance and Administration*



**Noleen Bhebhe**

*Program Officer  
AUDA-NEPAD*



**Maria Stella Namyalo**

*Program Officer  
AUDA-NEPAD*



**Simon Ndoria**

*Program Officer - Innovation and Entrepreneurship  
SFA Foundation*



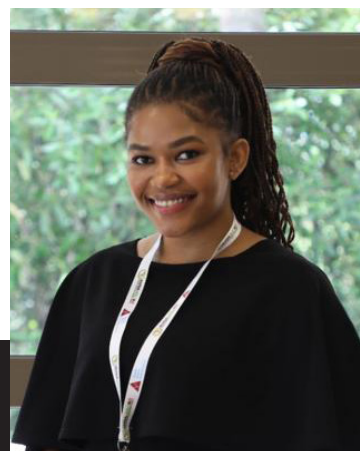
**Catherine Chaweza**

*Chief Information, Education and Communications Services Officer*



**Dr Cecilia Maliwichi-Nyirenda**

*Vice Board Chairperson  
NCST*



**Nqobile Zwane**

*PRO AUDA-NEPAD*





**Yalonda Mwanza**

*Research Officer -  
Health, Social Sciences  
and Humanities*



**Zacheous Kantchowa**

*ICT Officer*



**Davies Mbela**

*Communications  
Officer*



**Dr. Elizabeth Bandason**

*President - Malawi  
Academy of Sciences*



**Thomas Kaluvi**

*Technology Transfer  
Officer*



**Isaac Chingota**

*Chief Technology  
Transfer Officer*



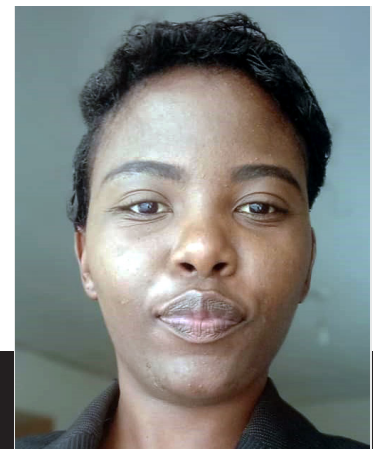
**Yohane Chimbalanga**

*Research Officer -  
Agriculture*



**Dr. Seffren Khumula**

*Financial Accountant*



**Grace Chirwa**

*Research Assistant*





**Ellen Funsani**

*Secretary  
Documentation*



**Hannah Mwenye**

*Communications  
Assistant*



**Fredrick Munthali**

*Chief Engineering,  
Design, Energy and  
Industry*



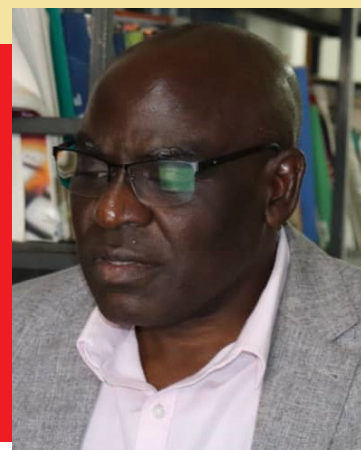
**Eddah Tethani**

*Secretary - Planning*



**Ishmael Nyirenda**

*Chief Registration  
Officer National Council  
for Higher Education*



**Hambani Gausi**

*Chief Documentation  
and Information  
Services Officer*



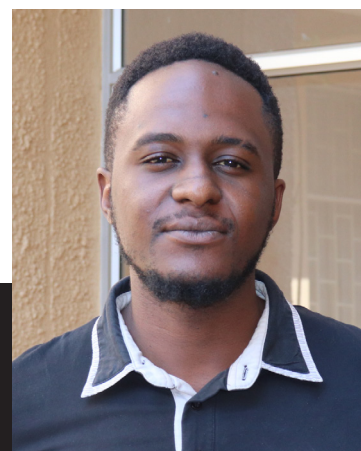
**Tisunge Mwale**

*Procurement Assistant*



**Haswell Luka**

*ICT Assistant*



**Noel Kafuwa**

*Research Assistant*





**Mike Kachedwa**

*Chief Research Services  
Officer - HSSH*



**Lyson Kampira**

*Chief Research Services  
Officer - ANS*



**Josephy Nandewe**

*Assistant Administration  
Officer*



**Lekení Wiyo**

*Communications  
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**Christopher Khunga**

*ICT Assistant*



**Judith Kamunga**

*Research Assistant*



**Dr. MacPherson  
Matewère**

*Senior Science and  
Technology Officer*



**Dr. Takondwa Mwase**

*AUDA-NEPAD  
Consultant*

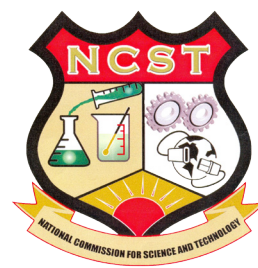


**Prof. Leonard  
Kamwanja**

*CJED National Focal  
Point (Malawi)*

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**AUDA-NEPAD**  
AFRICAN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY



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