

# Building trust for community development success

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/emergenza-sanitaria-incendio-ospedale-e-covid19>

**A**ndiamo Youth Cooperative Trust (AYCT) was founded in the Balaka district in 1978. Since then, AYCT has reached various milestones, including a mother and child health hospital that supplements Balaka District Hospital services. This year was an extremely challenging one for AYCT- Balaka District Hospital closed for some months due to an accidental fire- causing a rapid increase in demand for all health services from the surrounding 270+ Balaka villages. Alessandro Machetti, Programs Coordinator- stated that “this year we really excelled our Andiamo Comfort Community Hospital targets. We reached over 2,000 births in the first 9 months of the year, even while adjusting and ensuring staff and patient safety from covid-19 pandemic risks. It seemed impossible, especially after the hospital fire and Andiamo street kids home accidental fire as well. The thing that kept us going was the trust and commitment we also experienced from the local government authorities, our community in Balaka, and our partners-including the Social Impact Incubator”.

The need to build trust has been clearly emphasised as a core pillar for equitable community engagement



Cesarean section at Andiamo Comfort Community Hospital

by the Social Impact Incubator program over the past 4 years in Malawi. The Balaka community was able to continue fearlessly seeking healthcare- despite covid-19, and this was in-part made possible because of AYCT’s long-standing history of working together with Balaka Township towards a common good. Marchetti comments that the need for all services has grown in 2020. AYCT’s educational offering includes over 1200 students who access their nursery school, high school, vocational college, and street kids home. AYCT is also eager to continue to explore further community development synergies. The SII-Accelerate program pro-



Trust: A key social emotional learning tool used to teach people the process of decision making



Andiamo Secondary school students Form 2, in one of their morning classes

vided this opportunity- particularly with fellow graduate organisation Trust Psychosocial Support (Trust PSS). Sylvia Namakhwa- executive director of Trust PSS is a psychosocial counsel-

ling and mental health intervention practitioner who has turned her passion into action. Namakhwa was motivated by the culture of silence and victim blame that is practiced

pression. Mental Health issues also manifest as low productivity in the workplace, schools, to mention a few.” She also notes that, “without trust-building, those who would otherwise be empowered to seek help will remain silently in danger”. Namakhwa has recently launched the ‘Care for your Mind’ program on mental health awareness that airs on Luntha Television- Malawi, every Monday at 5 pm- which explores a variety of mental wellness themes and signposted services.

Like AYCT, CAWVOC, CEWAG, Zayane Creations, and several other SII Network actors- Trust PSS is a part of the drive against gender-based violence and requires us all to say #enough. The SII Network also calls for improved support for the victims of any gender-based violence or inequities to transition victims into survivors who can thrive again.

in Malawian society, as well as the results of mental health issues that go unaddressed. “Mental health interventions are critical development agenda services but are not as recognised or appreciated despite visible indications of the danger of postponing efforts to address psychosocial needs. The results we often see include crimes, early marriages, prostitution, homelessness, aggression, and especially silent de-

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