



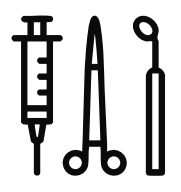
# PROTECTING SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN MALAWI

## The Issue

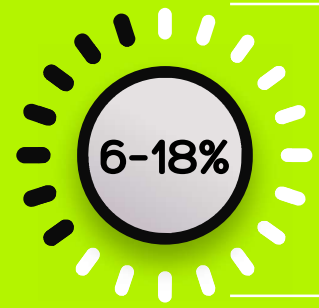
A 14-year-old survivor of rape was denied a safe abortion at a public health facility and told to continue the pregnancy –despite existing legal provisions. She only accessed care after further intervention.

**This is not an isolated case.** It reflects a broader system failure where survivors are denied lawful, life-saving care.

### Key Facts



**141,000** abortions occur annually in Malawi, most of which are unsafe



of maternal deaths are linked to unsafe abortion



**875** Sexual and Gender -Based Violence (SGBV) cases were reported in 2025 alone

**MWK326**

**MILLION**

is spent annually on post-abortion care





## What the Law Already Provides

- The Gender Equality Act allows access to services for survivors of sexual violence
- The Penal Code recognizes preservation of life—including mental health
- Public institutions have a duty to ensure access to care

The challenge is not the law—it is implementation.



## The Gap

- Lack of **clear clinical guidelines**
- Limited **training for health workers**
- Weak **accountability systems**
- Persistent **stigma and uncertainty**

## Why This Matters

- Protects **children and survivors from further trauma**
- Prevents **avoidable maternal deaths**
- Strengthens **public trust in government systems**
- Upholds Malawi's **human rights commitments**



## What Needs to Happen



1. **Clarify and Operationalize the Law**
  - Issue clear Ministry of Health guidelines for cases of sexual violence
1. **Train Health Workers**
  - Nationwide training on legal obligations and survivor-centered care
1. **Strengthen Accountability**
  - Monitor and address denial of lawful services
1. **Integrate Mental Health**
  - Recognize trauma as a valid ground for care
  - Provide counseling alongside clinical services



## Your Role as a Parliamentarian

- Support a **targeted legal and policy review** to remove ambiguity
- Advocate for **clear implementation guidelines**
- Champion **oversight and accountability mechanisms**
- Raise this issue within relevant committees



## Key Message

**No child should be forced to carry the burden of rape due to system failure.** Protecting life must include protecting **mental health, dignity, and access to care.**



## Call to Action

This is a moment for leadership.

By championing clarity, accountability, and survivor-centered care, Parliament can ensure that Malawi's laws **protect the most vulnerable—not fail them.**

**"Silence in law is not neutrality—it is neglect."**

