RCRP-2 distributes MK21 billion to local authorities

The Regional Climate Resilience Program (RCRP-2) has disbursed MK21 billion to district councils through the Performance-Based Grants (PBGs) mechanism.

The Minister of Local Government, Unity, and Culture, Hon. Richard Chimwendo, disclosed this in Salima during the awards presentation for the district-level infrastructure funds.

“Today, we are disbursing MK53 billion to all district councils from which, RCRP-2, a government of Malawi project aimed at improving resilience to water-related climate shocks in Malawi, has distributed MK21 billion,” he said.

The remaining MK32 billion is coming from another World Bank-funded project, Governance to Enable Service Delivery (GESD).

The PBGs are distributed using the Local Authorities Performance Assessment (LAPA), a system designed to assess district councils' performance in several areas.

“The reason the ministry introduced the incentivised local authorities’ performance was to ensure that they are strategically positioned to deliver high-quality services to the general public,” he said.

Added the minister: “All donors who want to disburse funds to the district councils should know that they will use the LAPA”.

According to the 2023/2024 LAPA results, top-performing councils are Neno, Dowa and Nkhotakota, and they received 1,821,043,643, 494,229,027 and 1,152,887,891, respectively.

The other councils in the top five of the fifth round of the LAPA are Salima and Machinga, in that order.

“Six bottom councils, Likoma, Lilongwe, Mulanje, Mchinji, Karonga and Chitipa must perform better. This must be taken as a warning,” cautioned Chimwendo.

Twenty district councils, including Blantyre, Chiradzulu, Chikwawa, Likoma, Lilongwe and Rumphi, have achieved clean audits.

“Attaining unqualified audit reports is no mean achievement in accounting. Let me implore you to maintain clean audits. For those who have not achieved this, we need to work hard and aim to accomplish the goal of serving rural Malawians.

“Let me mention also Phalombe and Nkhatokota for sustained clean audits for the past four years. This is no mean achievement, and other councils must learn from these two,” said the minister.

An ecstatic District Commissioner, Rosemary Nawasha says the award has made Neno feel recognised and rewarded for the hard work.

“This is how committed every department in the district is. We are so excited and fulfilled. It means we are capable, and this is a motivation in itself. We have been energised to do more,” she said.

She stated that the money received will be used on a number of developmental projects currently underway in the district.

“Particularly, we will use the RCRP-2 funds to rehabilitate the district library, as it was destroyed by a cyclone, as well as the construction of a school block at Nkhande Primary School, as it was also heavily destroyed by stormy rains.

“We are completing a health post that is already being constructed by adding other components that were not there. We will also construct a school block and a teacher's house,” said the district commissioner,” she said.