

## The Scuffle for Climate Justice

### *Case Study of GVH Khungubwe*

Climate Change has become a harsh reality in Malawi as seen by the severe adverse impacts that have changed the lives of many. Throughout the year, people continue to suffer from floods, droughts and pests that deter people from enjoying their human rights. The absence of structures to report climate injustices makes it even hard to address the climate crisis whilst also making progress towards equity and the protection and realisation of human rights.

George Zuze from GVH Khungubwe lamented: “Climate change has affected realization of our human rights. Our right to food, shelter and even to send our children to school have all been greatly affected. Worse of all is our failure to voice out the challenges we face and get assistance.”

As one way of empowering communities to identify and implement solutions to the climate challenges that they face and promote their human rights, CISONNECC with support from the Scottish Government and SCIAF through Trocaire has been implementing the Climate Challenge Programme Malawi (CCPM) – Climate Justice Advocacy Project (CJAP). The project aims at ensuring that the Malawi Government puts in place an enabling environment to support implementation of community led climate change adaptation actions.

Khungubwe is one of the villages under T/A Ngowe situated in Chikwawa District facing the hardships of climate change. It experiences erratic rainfalls, droughts and strange pests and diseases as a result of climate change. For a people in a remote area, the ability to access quick and worthwhile assistance in the wake of climate related disasters has thus far proven to be a problem as there was lack of a collective voice.

The coming in of the Climate Challenge Programme Malawi has since helped to set up and train community structures to act as a bridge between the people and Government through NGOs. With support from Circle for Integrated Community Development (CICOD) GVH Khungubwe now has a Village and Civil Protection Committee (VCPC) and Village Natural Resources Management Committee (VNRMC) that have been trained to advocate for climate justice, lead in the protection of the environment as well as pass on information to responsible authorities when climate injustices occur.



*Mercy Chirambo, CADECOM, speaking during a Climate Justice training workshop that community representatives from GVH Khungubwe also attended*

“The setting up of the VCPC has really changed things for the better. There is smooth flow of information to the Disaster Risk Management Officers (DRMOs) which are able to assist when disasters strike” says Specilloi Bojesi, chairperson of Lead Farmers in GVH Khungubwe. Bojesi further expressed how their training as lead farmers has empowered them to report challenges they face to extension workers who give reports to Non-Governmental Organizations as well as Government.



*Specilloi Bojesi, Lead Farmer, at his field which he manages using the skills attained from his training as one of the farmers in GVH Khungubwe*

Mr Zuze echoed Bojesi's views and added that the VNRMC is responsible for managing resources with particular focus on the initiatives meant to help people of GVH Khungubwe adapt to and mitigate climate change. The VNRMC mobilises people to take part in the tree planting initiatives, irrigation schemes among other interventions that are being done to curb the negative impacts of climate change. Together with the VNRMC, the VCPC ensures that these initiatives are well taken care of by working in unison with chiefs to set up by-laws against any practices that may lead to environmental degradation. The VCPC also works to link the people and DRMOs post natural disasters.

The setting up of these committees has not only transformed but also improved the peoples coordination and cooperation in the implementation of climate change interventions which is in line with Malawi Government's call to work in unison to end the impacts of climate change at all levels.