



KHAMALATHU WOMENS GROUP
PRESENTS:

Kusintha kwa nyengo, Kusintha kwa Ifeyo



CHASE

2022

The interviews in the village
took place under the singular
tree with adequate shade.

1



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About the Authors:

Khamalathu Women's Group is an independent group of researchers and artists based in Blantyre, Malawi. This report was co-written by the group following their research in Chikwawa and compiled with support from CHASE-funded PhD student, Effie Makepeace. For further information and if you know of further research opportunities that require a research group in Malawi, please reach out to Khamalathu Women's Group.

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Note: This document has been translated into both English and Chichewa, as seen alongside one another.

In some instances, minor lighting and editorial adjustments have been made for child protection and presentation of the final images to be exhibited with permission by the Khamalathu Women's Group researchers. All original images and this report will be circulated with the community that took part in the research.

Table of Contents

01

Overview

02

Research Methods,
Approach and
Experience

03

Personal Reflections

04

Cyclone Ana

05

Stories of Chikwawa

06

Conclusion

Overview



Khamalathu Women's Group pose in Chikwawa just after they get off the bus.
(Back row) Left to right: Chrissie, Laina, Prisca, Gladys, Rhoda, Calo, Felistas.
(Front row) Left to right: Gloria, Chrissie, Esmie

Mawu Oyamba

Ife ndife a Khamalathu Women's Group limene liri mu nzinda wa Blantyre. Tinayamba kugwira ntchito limodzi mu chaka cha 2007 mu NGO yotchedwa Girls Empowerment Network. Mu chaka cha 2008, tinayitanidwa ku gulu la Nanzikambe Arts limene linkapangisa ma wekishopu a zitsudzo sabata lilironse. Ankapangisa ma wekishopu amenewa anali Effie Makepeace ndi Dipo Katimba. Kwa zaka zinayi tinali tikupita ku ma wekishopu amenewa. Ena mwa ife tinayamba kugwira tchito ngati opanga zisudzo ndi mabungwe osiyanasiyana komanso mmagulu a zitsudzo. Mu chaka cha 2017 tinayambisa gulu lathu lotchedwa Khamalathu Women's Group kuti tikhale oyima patokha, kupitiliza tchito yomwe tinayiyamba komanso kufuna kugwilitsa ntchito luso lathu kuthandiza ena.

Introduction

We are the Khamalathu Women's Group and we come from Blantyre Malawi. We started working together through a local NGO, Girls Empowerment Network in 2007. We were contacted by Nanzikambe Arts 2008 and through them started doing weekly drama workshops with Effie Makepeace and Dipo Katimba. That project lasted for four years. After that ended some of us went on to work as performers in different organisations and theatre groups. In 2017 we decided to start our own group 'Khamalathu Women's Group' to be independent, to continue the work we had started and to use our skills to help others.

Njira Zofufuzira

Pakali pano tikumapanga zitsudzo tokha, komanso tikuphunzisa ena luso lakapangidwe ka zisudzo monga mmene ifenso tinaphunzilira. Pakali pano timathanso kupanga kafukufuku kufuna kuziwa bwino zinthu zosiyanasiyana. Effie Makepeace anathiphunzisa kapangidwe ka kafukufuku mu nthawi imene ankapanga Kafukufuku wake wokhuzana ndi school yake ya maphunziro a PhD. Ife timamuthandiza kupanga kafukufuku. Dr. akshay khanna aku India anabwera mu nthawi imene tinali ndi Effie Makepeace kuzatiphunzisa ife zambiri zokhuza mmene tingapangila kafukufuku kafukufuku. Tinaphunzira njira zosiyanasiyana zakapangidwe ka kafukufuku. Tinaphunzira mmene tingagwilisile ntchito zisudzo ngati njira ina yopangila kafukufuku. Tikamapanga kafukufuku timagwilisanso ntchito njira zina monga kuyang'ana mwachidwi – tikamafunsa mafunso timakhala omvesera mwatcheru. Ngati mbali imodzi ya school ya PhD tinanena kale ija timafuna kugwira ntchito ndi magulu a azimayi achichepele ngati ife kuwathandiza kuzindikila za mphamvu zomwe ali nazo mu miyoyo yawo. Koma chifukwa chakubwera kwa Covid -19 zitatathe kutero.

Research Methods

When we meet we mainly do plays and theatre ourselves and facilitate workshops for other groups. Recently we have also started doing research. This started through assisting as co-researchers with Effie's PhD. As part of that, we were visited by Dr. akshay khanna from India who trained us in various research methods, which taught us a lot about research. We learnt traditional methods and our own ways of doing things – practically and theoretically. As part of the PhD project we explored a lot about different kinds of power and how you can use theatre methods to conduct research. When we are doing research we use our own methods like 'kuyang'ana mwachidwi' – when we are with someone, or interviewing them we look with special attention, using all our senses, observing them closely. As part of the PhD we had planned to use this methodology to go and work with other groups of young women ourselves to help them explore power in their lives, but unfortunately due to Covid-19 the plans were cancelled.

Experience

Mu chaka cha 2021, kumaoneka kuti anthu samafuna kwenikweni kupita kuchipatala malingana ndi mulili wa Covid -19. A Wellcome Trust anatipeza ife kuti tipange kafukufuku malingana ndi nchitidwe umenewu. Tinapita mmadera osiyanasiyana a nzinda wa Blantyre kufufuza za zomwe anthu amakhulupilira zokhuzana ndi Covid-19. Pa zomwe tinapeza, tinapanga zisudzo zosiyanasiyana nkuzijambula ngati ma film. Kuzera mu zisudzo zimenezi, timafotokozera anthu kuti sakuyenera kuopa kupita kuchipatala. Njira zathu zongoyenda kupita malo osiyanasiyana kucheza ndi anthu zinatithandiza kuziwa zifukwa zenizeni zomwe anthu amaopera kupita kuchipatala. Titaziwa zifukwa zenizeni zomwe anthu amaopera kupita kuchipatala zinatipasa kuthekera kupanga zisudzo zokhuza zifukwazi bwinobwino. Izi zinachitika mulili wa Covid uli pachiyindeyinde ndipo zomwe tinavumbulusa zokhuza zifukwa zomwe zimapangisa anthu kupita kuchipatalazi, zinathandiza ogwira ntchito kuchipatala kuzindikila zokhuza mantha omwe anthu anali nawo. Anthu anali omasuka kutiwuza ife za mantha awo malingana ndi njira za kafukufuku zomwe ife tinagwilitsa ntchito. Enanso amapanga Kafukufuku koma si anthu onse omwe anali omasuka kunena za mantha awo kwa iwo.

In 2021, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting public wariness about attending routine hospital appointments and seeking healthcare among the public, we were asked by Malawi Wellcome Trust to conduct some research. We went to different communities in Blantyre and asked them about beliefs and rumours related to COVID-19 which might impact health-seeking behaviour. The results of this research were developed into dramatised video clips for social media to explain to people that it is still safe to go to the hospital. The project and our methods of walking through communities, informally talking to people really helped us to understand why people weren't going to the hospital and to develop videos which targeted people's fears. This research happened in the middle of the Covid crisis so we were able to find the key information that the health professionals needed. Our research approach was different, with the skills we used, we were able to get the information that was difficult for others to get as people were very open with us.

Approach

Tinakambilana nkhani zokhuza kusintha kwa nyengo. Titakambilana tinaziwa kuti nkhani imeneyi ikukhuza mayiko onse kuphatikizanso dziko la Malawi. Tinagwilizana kupanga kafukufuku pa nkhani imeneyi.

Tinagwilizana kupita ku Chikwawa malingana ndi kuti kumeneku, nkhani zokhuza kusefukila kwa madzi zimachitika pafupipafupi. Tinaganiza zocheza ndi amayi a kudera kumeneku malingana ndikuti tinaona kuti nkhani imeneyi ikuwakhuzwa kwambili komanso timaziwa kuti amayi ambili akhoza kumasuka naye kuti zomwe akukumana nazo.

Bungwe la CHASE Climate Justice Network linatithandiza ndi ndalama zomwe zinapangisa kuthekera kuti tithe kupita ku Chikwawa kukapanga kafukufuku wathu mu Duwa ndi Maperera.

Tinafika kwa mfumu kuti atiuze a mayi oyenelera kuti tikumane nawo. Koma tisanafike kwa amfumu, ambili anali ndi chidwi kuti akumane naye malingana ndikuti anali ndi chiyembekezo kuti tabwera ndi zolandilisa. Koma atazindikila kuti sitinabwele ndicholinga chopeleka zinthu anatilondolera kwa mfumu. A mfumu anatilandira ndi nsangala ndipo anatikumaniza ndi azimaye amane vuto losefukila kwa madzi limawakhuzwa kwambili. Tinakhala awiri awiri kucheza. Timapanga kafukufuku ameneyi mokhala ngati tikungocheza mmene tinapangila kafukufuku wathu wokhuzana ndi mantha a anthu kupita kuchipatala malingana ndi mulili wa Covid -19. Titakumana ndi amayi pamuzi pa kwawo pamenepa tinakhala pansi, kucheza, kuphika zakudya limodzi, ena anabwelesa mango kuti tidye tikucheza.

We wanted to continue to use our research skills for this climate change project. We discussed together how we noticed the climate changing in Malawi and other countries and how we wanted to do something. Because we live in town, we are not affected daily by this issue but we wanted to find those people who are facing this directly.

We chose to go to Chikwawa District because there has been a lot of flooding there in recent years. We wanted to speak to women because they will be more free with us to share about what they have experienced and these issues primarily affected women and children. On a practical level, we also knew we would find them at home and they would be available to talk to us.

After getting the funding from the CHASE Climate Justice Network, we went to conduct interviews in villages Duwa and Maperera. First, we met the chief of the village to guide us to the right women to speak to. This was difficult because everyone wanted to talk to us, believing we would have something like aid to give them. When they realised this wasn't our role, they directed us to the chief. The chief welcomed us warmly and directed us to some women she knew had been affected by this issue. We went in pairs to conduct the interviews. We took the same relaxed approach we had with the COVID-19 project. When we met the women, we sat down with them for the whole day, chatting with them about their lives and history. Some of us helped them prepare food, and some of them cooked for us, or gave us mangoes. During this time, others from the village would come and join in or listen to the stories.

Khamalathu Women's Group

Malingaliro Ena Omwe Anatikhuza

Pulojekiti imeneyi inatikhuza ndithu. Chifukwa nkhani zomwe zinatuluka zili apo, koma zimaonekelathu kuti mu mudzi tinafikamu munali umphawi wa nkhaninkhani ndipo anthu anali ndi njala. Zinatikhuza kuti tinalibe kanthu koti tikanatha kuwapasa anthu. Nkhani zawo za momwe kusefukila kwa madzi kunayika miyoyo yawo pamavuto zinali zomvetisa chisoni. Anafotokoza za chakudya chomwe akudya chosakhala bwino. Zinali zokhuza kwambili. Anafotokoza za mmene madzi ochuluka amafikila, tinali okhuzidwa ndi mantha komanso chisoni. Amayi ena anali kutuluka misonzi pamene amalongosola za zimenezi. Tinamva chisoni chachikulu. Nkhani zomwe amayiwa amanena zinali zowona chifukwa zambili timazona ndi maso athu. Mitengo kulibe, kumatentha zedi, chakudya mmakomo munalibe, Mitengo yomwe imaonekako inali ying'onoying'ono kwambili yoti siyimathandiza kanthu. Nkhani zawo zinawonesa poyera kuti nkhani yosintha kwa nyengo ndikutha kwa mitengo si nkhani yophweka. Malingana ndi umphawi palibe chachikulu chomwe anthu angapange mma midzi kuti ateteze za chilengedwe mmadera awo.

Zimenezi zinatipangisa kuzindikira za mmene anthu mu dziko la Malawi amavutikila malingana ndi kuonongeka kwa chilengedwe.

Nthawi zambili sitizindikila chifukwa timakhala mmatawuni koma pano mvula ikamagwa mu nzinda wa Blantyre, timaganiza za mmene anthu ena ku Chikwawa akuvutikila chifukwa cha kusefukila kwa madzi. Pano tikuzindikila bwino lomwe kufunikila kwa mitengo. Ena mwa ife tatengapo mbali podzala mitengo mmalo osiyanasiyana pafupi ndi momwe timakhala. Chifuniro chilipo chofuna kusiya kugwilisa ntchito Makala koma kusowa njira yina ya mmene tingamaphikile chokudya chathu kukutilepheletsa kutero. Magetsi siwodlalilika kwenikweni komanso ndiwokwera ntengo. Mma mmidzi tinayendamo tinaonanso kuti anthu ake akudaliranso kugulisa Makala kuti apeze chakudya cha siku ndi siku. Inde pali njira zina koma zikuoneka kuti pazatenga nthawi kuti dziko la Malawi lisiye kudalira Makala.

Personal Reflections

This project affected us a lot, not just because of the stories that came, but it was a very poor village, and it was clear that people were hungry. We felt bad that we didn't have anything to share with them. Their stories were also very sad, about how they have been affected by flooding. The crops they can grow and the food they are able to eat is not like ours in town. The way they explained to us about what has happened, we felt like it had also happened to us, and imagined how it would feel. When they explained how the water comes, how it feels and sounds, we were imagining how it would sound and feel to be there in that situation, it was scary and saddening. Some of the women were emotional or confused when recalling these traumatic events and we felt bad for asking them to tell us about them. The stories we heard from the women were verified by what we saw for ourselves, no trees on the mountains, the air and water scorching hot, no food in people's homes. The few trees we did see growing were too small to provide much protection. The stories show how complex the issue is. Climate change and deforestation are a deadly mix, but poor communities do not have the resources to make other choices and to protect their environments.

From that time we are much more aware of how environmental destruction affects people in Malawi. Because a lot of time we don't see these effects because we live in town but now we know that it affects everyone.

Now when it rains in Blantyre and we hear it on our roofs, we think of the women in Chikwawa and how it will be affecting them. Now we are aware of how important trees are, recently we have had heavy rains and the houses that are safe are those where there are trees – some of us have bought trees and planted them in our gardens. We would have wanted to stop using charcoal to cook but we don't have any other option^[1] – electricity is unreliable and expensive, and even in the villages we went to where people were affected by climate change – they rely on the cutting of trees for charcoal for their livelihoods. We know there are other options but it is really difficult to see a future in Malawi where people will stop using charcoal for a long time.

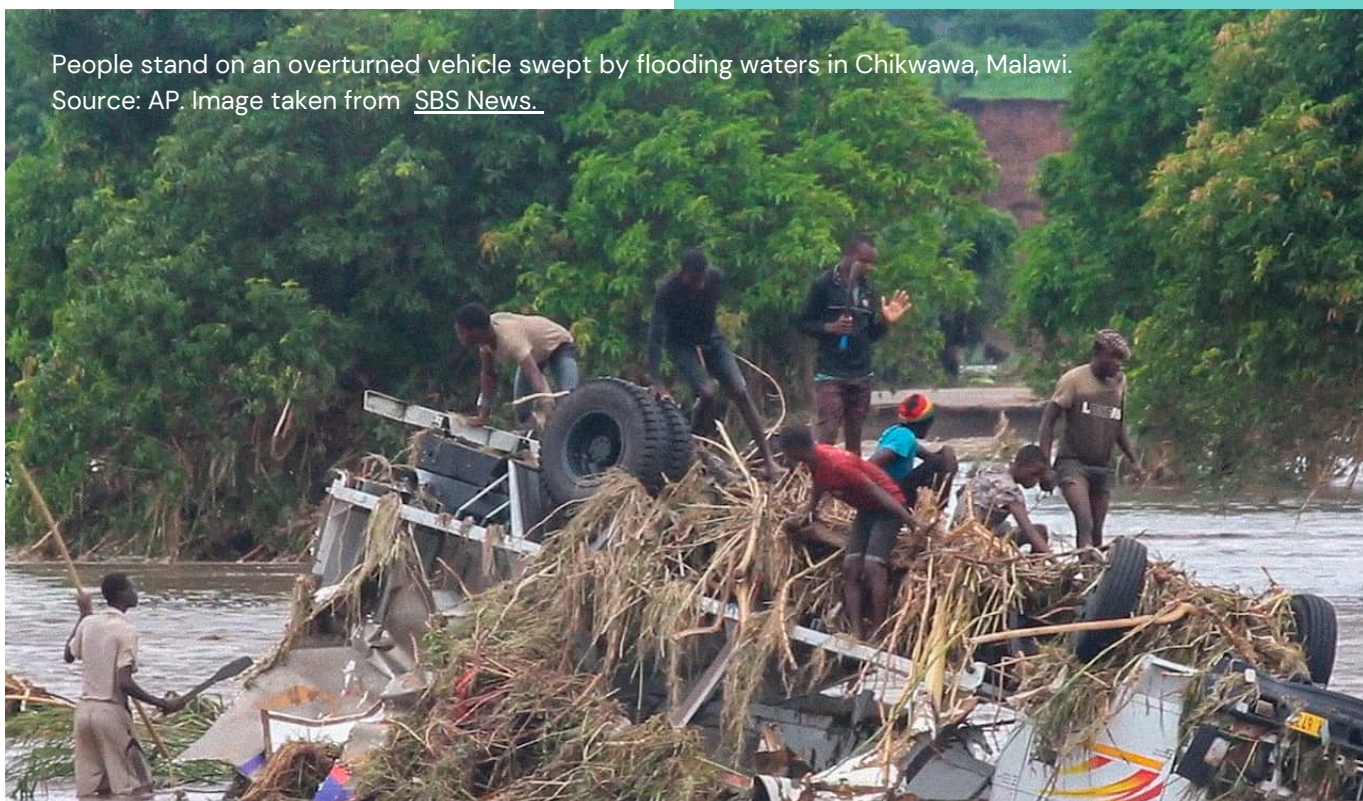
Cyclone Ana ku Malawi

Munyengo ino takumana ndi kuchuluka kwa madzi osefukila. Kunabwera ija amati Cyclone Ana – mitengo ndi nyumba zinakokoloka, sukulu kuyimisiidwa mpaka a president a dziko analengeza kuti zinthu sizili bwino. Magetsi anathema dziko lonse ndipo kunali mvula yochuluka. Madera osiyanasiyana, nyumba zinagwa ndikupha anthu, ena anamwalira malingana ndi kukokoloka ndi madzi. Ife a Khamalathu zinatikhuzanso. Abale anthu anasokonezeka ndi kuchuluka kwa madzi. Nyumba zawo zinagwa. Ifenso mu town momwe tikukhala, malate a nyumba zathu anapita ndi mphepo. Mbewu kumunda zinakokoloka moti sitikuziwa kuti tidya chani mu chaka chimenechi. Anthu ena alibe pokhala malingana ndikuti nyumba zawo zinagwa. Tikuziwa ndithu kuti midzi yak u chikwawa komwe tinapanga kafukufuku zinthu sizili bwino. Kufuna kulumikizana nawo kulipo koma alibe lanya loti titha kuyimbilana. Chachikulu ndichoti mbewu zinakokoloka. Chakudya chikhala chovuta. Anthu ena aunjikana nyumba imodzi malingana ndikugwa kwa nyumba zawo. Pakali pano tikukambilana zomwe tingathe kuchita kuti tithandize amayi omwe tinakumana nawo pa nthawi imene timapanga kafukufuku wathu.

Cyclone Ana in Malawi

Recently we had a lot of storms in Malawi – Cyclone Ana – trees were uprooted, houses were swept away, the schools were all closed and the president announced a National Disaster. We had a national blackout, electricity shortages and nonstop rain. This was everywhere, not just the storm affected areas. People drowned and some people died in their houses after they fell down. Amongst us in Khamalathu, our families in the villages were affected, with buildings falling down and our houses in town were also damaged, the roof sheets flying off. Some of our crops have been affected so we don't know what we will eat for the rest of the year. Some people are still displaced from their houses. In the villages where we did our research we know this has really affected them, but it is difficult to contact them because most of them don't have phones. The main effect is all the fields are flooded so they won't be able to eat the crops they have planted, and some are displaced or now hosting people who have been displaced. We are currently making plans about what we as a group can do to help the women we met in the villages.

People stand on an overturned vehicle swept by flooding waters in Chikwawa, Malawi.
Source: AP. Image taken from [SBS News](#).



Stories of Chikwawa

1

Mayi Alice Josefe

Interviewed by Esmie Kadzombe
and Prisca Phiri

2

Chrissy Seselediwa

Interviewed by Gladys Thenford
and Gloria Njiwa Mwale

3

Mayi Njolomole

Interviewed by Felistas Kamloni
and Rhoda Malefula

4

Mayi Mwandida Benjamin

Mayi Mwandida Benjamin
interviewed by Chrissie Magalasi
and Laina Saize

5

Mayi Chanazi

Mayi Chanazi interviewed by
Chrissie Sinyalo and Calo Mvalo



Khamalathu Women's Group members Esmie, Prisca and Felistas pose for a picture with Mayi Alice Josefe



Esmie, Prisca and Mayi Josefe seated chatting after they had finished their interview

Kulila Komanso Kuvutika

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Moyo ndiwovuta masiku ano.

Mayi Alice Josefe (65) kucheza ndi Esmie Kadzombe ndi Prisca Phiri.

Mu chaka cha 2015, nyumba yanga inagwa malingana ndikuchuluka kwa madzi osekukila. Nthawi imeneyi ndimasamala zizukulu zanga. Onse anamwalira. Zimenezi zimandikhuza kwambili ndipo ndimakanika kulongosola bwinobwino za mmene zinakhalira. Mvula imaononga zinthu. Ndimakanika kuyiwala za nthawi imeneyi chifukwa ndimangowona ngati zikuchita chitikabe.

Kusintha kwa nyengo kwabwelesa mavuto ochuluka. Palibe chomwe ndingachite, mwina ndidzale mitengo koma aah palibe chomwe ndingapange. Ndikudikila kuti zipatso zikhawimwe kuti mwina nkutenga mbewu zake nkudzala zina. Pano ndizosakhwima. Sitinakololenso zochuluka. Pakhomo chakudya palibe, komanso chithandizo palibe. Kupeza ndalamanso nkovuta.

Ana akungotuluka ziwengo, matupi a anthu akusintha ndipo kukutulukila matenda osiyanasiyana. Kwabwera mpweya woyipa umene wasintha zinthu. Sizinali chonchi kale. Pano moyo ukuwawa.

Ife tikuziwa kuti zonsezi ndi Napolo. Napolo ndi chinjoka chachikulu chomwe chimakhala kumapili. Chimasonkhanisa mvula. Chikamabwera timamvera phokoso langati anthu akululutila kapena pena ngati akuyimba ng'oma. Tikamva zimenezi, nafe timayimba ng'oma kufuna kuziwisana kuti madzi ochuluka akubwera. Madzi ochuluka amabwera nkugwetsa nyumba zina.

Grief and Struggle

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Life is very hard now.

Mayi Alice Josefe (65) interviewed by Esmie Kadzombe and Prisca Phiri.

My house fell down in 2015 in the storms. At that time I was caring for some of my small grandchildren and they were all drowned or crushed by the house. I find it hard to talk about it properly now, because this has deeply affected me. The rains are so destructive. I find it hard to forget that time and I feel like it keeps happening, again and again.

Life is very hard now. I don't have any way to get any of it back. I can't do anything, maybe plant trees but I can't do anything. I am waiting for my trees to fruit, so I can take the seeds and grow more. Now the seeds are not strong because the harvests are not good. I don't have food at home, or any kind of help. I find it difficult to find any money.

The change in climate has also affected other things like different illness, children having ziwengo, people's bodies are changing, illnesses are changing. There has been a bad air which has changed these things, it's not like before, this life is very painful.

We say it is because of Napolo, a giant snake who lives in the mountains and makes way for the rain which builds up behind its fat body. When it is coming there is a sound like people ululating or beating a drum to come from up there down to below. When this happens people also beat drums to warn others that the water is coming. The water comes up to the houses and knocks some of them down.



Khamalathu researchers Gloria and Gladys with Chrissy seated after they finished the interview, eating potatoes and chimanga.

Kulima mu Mchenga

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Nthaka inaguga.

Chrissy Seselediwa (66) kucheza ndi Gladys Thenford ndi Gloria Njiwa Mwale

Mu chaka cha 2015 kusefukila kwa madzi kunachitika kwambili. Madzi amabwera kuchokera kumapili chifukwa mitengo inathamo. Izi zinabwelesa umphawi wazaoneni. Anthu nyumba zawo zinagwa ndiponso ziweto zinakokoloka ndi madzi. Chimanga chathu chinakokoloka. Nyumba zathu pano zimangokhala ngati makola a ziweto. Tilibe zovala zabwino. Moyo suli ngati mmene unalili bwino kale mma 1980, 1990. Pano zinthu sizikuyenda bwino.

Kale timakhala ndi zokolola zochuluka. Moyo unali bwino. Timalima chimanga, mbatata, nyemba ndi zina zotero bwinobwino. Pano sizikuthekanso. Kusefukila kwa madzi kunakokolola nthaka. Mwambili masiku ano muli nchenga okhaokha. Chimanga sichikukulanso bwino moteromo. Izi zapangisa moyo kukhala owawa. Pano malimidwe angokhala achisawawa. Chakudya chikuvuta ndipo kawirikawiri timangodya kamodzi pa tsiku.

Ana anga anamwalira. Pano ndimangokhala ndi zizukulu. Ndikusamala zizukulu. Onse akukhala ndi ine mu nyumba ya udzu. Chakudya choti ndiwadyese ndiliba chokwanila. Ndikuvutika. Koma sindingapite kwinakulikonse. Pano ndi pakwathu sindingachokepo.

Farming on Sand

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The soil had changed.

Chrissy Seselediwa (66) interviewed by Gladys Thenford and Gloria Njiwa Mwale

In 2015 the floods came a lot. They came down from the mountains because there are no trees left. The water came to the village and it brought a lot of poverty. People had nice houses but they fell down, and we had a lot of livestock, but they went in the water along with our maize stores. It's just so many problems. Our houses now are like places animals would live, we don't have proper clothes and in the mountains all the trees are finished. It is very different to how it was in the past, like in the 1980s, 1990s, but now things aren't going well.

In the past we harvested a lot of different things like maize, beans, potatoes, koche, but now after the flooding, the soil has changed and we can't farm like we did in the past. Now it is full of sand and so the maize doesn't grow properly. This means life has become much more difficult because we are subsistence farmers. We are no longer able to plan and plant properly, now it just has to be anyhow, whatever works. We are sometimes able to grow rice, but maize is a problem now, and we rely on maize. We used to just plant and eat easily, but now we can't. Food is so scarce we eat once a day.

My children have died and so I am caring for my grandchildren. They sleep with me in my house with a thatched roof and I don't have enough to feed them. I am struggling here but I don't want to move, I don't want to leave my home.



Khamalathu researchers Felistas and Rhoda pose with Mayi Njomole



Chitowe being sorted which can be eaten like ndiwo or cooked like groundnuts. The Khamalathu researchers also tried chitowe, which is not often eaten in town.

Makala ndi Zochitikachitika Zowononga

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Chilengedwe chinaongokeka.

Mayi Njolomole kucheza ndi Felistas Kamloni ndi Rhoda Malefula.

Makolo anga anabwera kuchokera ku Mulanje kuzakhazikika pano kale kwambili. Ndikukhulupilira kuti ndili ndi zaka 90. Kusintha kwa nyengo kwabweretsa mavuto ochuluka monga matenda osiyanasiyana monga kuthamanga kwa magari, BP angakhale ndi ana omwe akudwala BP masiku ano. Kukutentha kwambili. Kale sikumatentha chonchi.

Mu nyengo yosefukila madzi, chakudywa chimakhala chovuta kupeza. Chimanga chimakhala kuti chakokoloka. Anthu amasowa pogona chifukwa nyumba zimakhala kuti zagwa. Ena amagona mmakalasi ophunzililamo, ena mmatchalichi chifukwa malo amenewa amangidwa molimbilako komanso ali malo abwinoko woti pena madzi osefukila samafikako mochuluka. Timathandizana. Madzi akasefukila kuno ku Chikwawa, timapita kukhala ndi anthu ku Nsanje. Madzi akachuluka ku Nsanje amabwera kuzakhala ndi ife kuno ku Chikwawa. Timatero mpaka madzi achepe ndithu kuti nkumanganso nyumba pomwe zinagwa.

Charcoal and Cycles of Destruction

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The environment is destroyed.

Mayi Njolomole interviewed by Felistas Kamloni and Rhoda Malefula.

My parents moved to this area from Mulanje a long time back, I think I am around 90 years old. The change in climate is causing a lot of problems for us including different illnesses coming, for example, illnesses like blood pressure are going up, evening among young children. The sun, the sun is getting hotter, it was not like that before.

When the flooding comes food is scarce because the maize gets washed away, then we don't have enough food. People also are without homes, other houses have fallen down with the rains so they don't have anywhere to stay. Others are sleeping in schools, or churches which are built a bit stronger and the water also doesn't reach there. We help each other, if the rains are bad that year in Chikwawa we go and take shelter in Nsanje, and if the rains are back in Nsanje, they come to Chikwawa and receive help. We help each other until the rains recede and then come back and start building again.

Anthu akudula mitengo kupanga Makala koterotikuononga chilengedwe. Komanso timadula mitengo kuti tidyese ziweto. Timalima mmapiri chifukwa malo oti tilime palibepo. Nde timadula mitengo kuti tilimepo chimanga. Zonsezi zimapangisa kuti madzi asefukile. Inde ndi vuto koma nanga tingatani. Ineyo chonchi ndimasamalilidwa ndi zizukulu zanga zimene zimadula mitengo, kupanga Makala nkumagulisa.

People are mainly cutting trees to burn charcoal so the environment is destroyed. But we also cut trees to farm or for livestock. We don't have space to farm so we go all the way up to the mountains and cut trees to plant our maize, which has an impact on the water. It means when the rains come, it comes straight down, like a big river, it becomes like a lake. It's a big problem but we can't stop. Even some of my grandchildren are involved in the charcoal burning business, they stopped school to get involved and support the family. I survive on the money they give me through the charcoal burning.



Livestock of Chikwawa residents. The cows have to walk a long way to look for water and grass in Chikwawa.



Interviewee Mayi Benjamin seated with another woman and children from the village during her interview with Laina and Chrissie. During the interviews other people passing by would join in, or children would gather to listen.

Popanda Chiyembekezo

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Sindikuonapo tsogolo.

Mayi Mwandida Benjamin kucheza ndi Chrissie Magalasi ndi Laina Saize.

Ine ndili ndi zaka 30. Muno si mmudzi mwakwathu. Ndinabwera chifukwa cha banja. Amuna anga sagwira ntchito. Tili ndi mwana mmodzi. Sindiziwa kwenikweni zokhuza kusintha kwa nyengo. Koma kuno ndawona zinthu zina ndi zina. Madzi amabwera ochuluka. Ndimabeleka mwana wanga kuopa angapite ndi madzi. Sitifuna kulima chifukwa timaziwa kuti madzi amakokolora zonse. Tinali ndi ziweto momga nkhuku, nkumba komanso ndimasunga chakudya koma zonse zinapita ndi madzi. Sindifunanso kusunga ziweto. Ndikukhulupilira kuti kuchuluka kwa madzi kukuchitika chifukwa chodula mitengo. Pano tikuvutika. Tikungodya mbatata. Sindikuona tsogolo labwino kuno. Ndipo sindikufuna kukhalanso ndi mwana wina chifukwa ndikuziwa angazavutike

A Sense of Hopelessness

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I don't see a good future.

Mayi Mwandida Benjamin interviewed by Chrissie Magalasi and Laina Saize.

I am 30 and I am not from this village. I came here when I married my husband. My husband doesn't have a job so he just stays at home. We have one child only. I don't know much about climate change beyond what I have experienced here. The water comes from above, and it floods up to the houses. When this happens I strap my child to my back otherwise he will get washed away or drown, that's how strong it is. It is difficult for us to farm because the floodwaters also reach the fields, destroying everything. We had livestock. I used to have chickens and pigs and stores of food but they all got washed away. Now we are too scared to try again with the livestock. I think the floods have something to do with cutting trees. Now we are struggling to eat every day, we are surviving on potatoes. I don't clearly see a good future for us here, and I don't want to have another child because I don't see a good future for them.



(From left to right) Mayi Chanazi and Khamalathu researchers Calo and Chrissie during the interview. Mayi Chanazi is describing how the landscape used to look, and pointing to where there used to be trees.

Zikhulupiliro ndi Kusintha kwa Nyengo

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Sitingapeze ntendere.

Mayi Chanazi kucheza ndi Chrissie Sinyalo ndi Calo Mvalo.

Zinthu zambili zinasintha pofanizila ndi nthawi yomwe ndinali mwana. Pano kukutentha kwambili. Mvula ikubwera yochepa nthawi zina yowonjeza muyezo. Mbewu sizikukula bwino. Timakolola zochuluka kale. Pano mbewu zikungowuma ndi dzuwa. Tinasiya kudya mokwanila. Timangodya nsima madzulo wokha basi. Kukutentha kwambili masiku ano chifukwa choti mitengo yonse inadulidwa. Matupi athu amangokhala owuma. Olo umwe madzi ludzu silimatha. Kukuwotcha ndipo ntendere tilibe.

Timakhulupilira kuti chinjoka chachikulu ku phiri chikayamba kuyimba ng’oma, madzi ochuluka amabwera. Koma si onse amene amakhulupilira zimenezi. Madzi akabwera amakokolola chilichonse. Ukakhala posakhala bwino nawenso utha kukoloka. Vuto ndiloti anthu anadula mitengo yonse. Izi zimapangisa kuti madzi azithamanga kwambili. Madzi samalowa pansi chifukwa choti palibepo zomera. Pakanakha zomera bwezi mavuto amenewa kulibe.

Koma angakhale pali mavuto onsewa, ife sitingachoke pano chifukwa pamalo pano tinapazolowera. Anthu sangasiye kudula mitengo chifukwa ndi mmene timapezera zofuna zathu za siku ndi siku popanga Makala kugulisa ndikupeza makobili.

Beliefs and Climate Change

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We can't find peace.

Mayi Chanazi interviewed by Chrissie Sinyalo and Calo Mvalo.

Things have changed a lot since the time I was a child. It is now very hot and rain is coming less, but also sometimes it comes a lot, too much. Our seeds don't germinate anymore. The way we are harvesting now compared to before is very different. Before it was a lot, but now we hardly harvest anything. We plant it and then the sun comes and withers it, burns it. Because of this we don't eat in the afternoon, because we don't have enough food. In the evening we eat nsima. It is so hot here even the wind is hot – this is because all the trees have been cut, there is no shade. Even our bodies feel dry, when we drink water it feels like we are still thirsty. It's too hot – we can't find peace.

We believe that when the rain comes, the big snake in the mountain starts to beat a drum, and then the water comes. Not everyone believes this. When the water comes it will take everything, trees, livestock, fences, upsetting everything, and if you are there running, you will also be taken. The problem is that people are cutting trees. Because there are no trees now, when the water comes it is very heavy and fast. It doesn't soak into the ground, it runs along the top, because the land is degraded. It runs along ruining our belongings, ruining everything. If it had been that the rain was sinking in, we would have food but now they don't have anything because they are not able to farm properly.

Despite all this we don't want to move, we are used to this place. We also can't stop cutting trees because they cut the trees to rebuild after the rains and people also cut them to sell them to buy food, or to burn for charcoal to buy food. So it is also helping us.

Thank you.



CHASE

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