

ANNEX 1

PROGRAMME PLAN AND PROGRESS FOR JANUARY TO JUNE, 2014

EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND ANNUAL TARGETS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	RESULTS OF ACTIVITIES <i>For each activity, state the results of the activity</i>	PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING OUTPUTS <i>Status of progress to target contribution to outcome</i>
<p><i>Output 1: At least 70% of Group Villages effectively demanding progressive accessibility and acceptability of basic social services, basic services and good governance especially for women, children, youth and people with disabilities.</i></p> <p>Indicators and Targets: Indicators: ✓ Number of CRCs created and trained on governance and RBA</p>	<p>1.1 Interactive human rights and skills-enhancing education for good governance, the right to development and solidarity based demands</p>	<p>YONECO, CARER, WOLREC, NOYD, IPI, KKYO, CARD, CCJP-Mzuzu, CHRR, BSHDC, DCT.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The refresher training enhanced knowledge and skills and rekindled interest among CRCs in the work of the programme. • Increased knowledge levels and enhanced skills and competencies for iterative assessments and action taking within communities. • Community empowerment as evidenced by an increase in right holder/duty bearer dialogues on various aspects of the right to development, including demands for transparency and accountability in the delivery of safety net programmes. • Improved quality of life for citizens, 	<p>No CRCs were established during the reporting period due to Programme's delayed rollout to Balaka, Blantyre, Dowa and Kasungu districts. However, 19 CRCs were refresher trained in governance, human rights, especially the right to development and RBA in Mwanza and Nkhotakota districts.</p> <p>Not Achieved (establishment and training of CRCs in Balaka, Blantyre, Dowa and Kasungu awaiting identification of IPs)</p> <p>1,575 out of 2,439 CRCs (65%) in 19 districts and 56 out of 61 RLCs (92%) carried out iterative assessments,</p>

<p>Planned: 500 MoV: Progress Reports</p> <p>✓ Number of CRCs dialoguing with duty bearers Baseline: 980 Target: 1,470 MoV: Progress Reports</p> <p>✓ No of cases registered and processed by the district paralegal office. Baseline: 1,504; Annual target: 2,256 Quarterly target: 564 MoV: Progress Reports</p> <p>✓ No of Radio programmes on governance and RtD produced and broadcast. Annual target: 208; half yearly target: 104 MoV: DCP Reports</p>	<p>1.2 Scaled up creation of a critical mass to animate the demanding of good governance, basic social services and basic services</p> <p>1.3 Scaled up and deepened interactive demands on local government service providers</p> <p>1.4 Solidarity based demands for the realization of rights of the most disadvantaged</p>		<p>especially the vulnerable groups who are often side-lined and find themselves on the margins of community priority lists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency, accountability as well as professionalism in service delivery resulting in higher right holder satisfaction levels with service provision. • Improved participation by women and other vulnerable members of society in community decision making and other processes. • Improved school attendance, especially by the girl child, resulting from improved learning environment, mobilisation campaigns and enactment and enforcement of by-laws setting a punishment regime for parents of children who absent themselves from school. The initiative also resulted in the establishment of committees to ensure children remain in school. The committees monitor school enrolment as well as the presence of children of school going age within the villages during school time. 	<p>identified and prioritised their challenges and identified appropriate duty bearers for dialogue. The volunteers then led their communities in dialogues with the duty bearers on various governance and human rights issues, especially the right to development challenges besetting their communities. A good example is a community in TA Phambala, Ntcheu, that persistently engaged the office of the DHO to open Chisowa Health Centre that had been idle for over 4 years after completion of construction works. The dialogue yielded positive results.</p> <p>Approximately 1,158 dialogues were held. As a result of the dialogues the following were achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transparency and accountability in public service delivery; - Professionalism in public service delivery; - Provision of much needed infrastructure such as school blocks, roads, bridges, clinics etc; - Improved food security; - Provision of potable water and improved sanitation facilities, especially for schools; - Improvement in the school environment for the girl child; - Improvements in the health delivery system; and - A better understanding of the duties
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			<p>and responsibilities of various duty bearers.</p> <p>Fully Achieved (Gap: target for CRCs exceeded by 105, while RLCs gap is 5)</p>
1.5 Community and district level paralegal services.	YONECO, CARER, WOLREC, NOYD, IPI, KKYO, CARD, CCJP-Mzuzu, CHRR BSHDC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to justice for the indigent and other vulnerable groups in 19 districts. 	<p>District Paralegal Officers continued to provide free paralegal services in the 19 target districts. A total of 1,294 cases were registered out of which 696 were resolved through mediation and counselling, 428 were referred to appropriate case handling institutions and 170 were pending resolution at the close of the reporting period. Most of the cases handled were on child abuse/exploitation, gender based violence, labour disputes, land grabbing, deceased estate management and other matrimonial disputes. Women, the elderly, prisoners, children and other vulnerable groups constituted over 60 % of the beneficiaries of the service.</p> <p>Some traditional leaders begun to refer cases to the District Paralegal Offices which attested to the growing confidence the traditional structures had in the Rtd projects.</p> <p>The intervention, however, revealed the need for close collaboration between the district offices and Legal Aid department to address complicated cases. Further, collaboration with the Judiciary would also prove relevant in addressing</p>

				<p>increasing allegations of corruption in the justice delivery system.</p> <p>PARTIALLY Achieved (Gap: 1,014 cases)</p>
	<p>1.6 Radio and print media information and education for activity results 1.1 to 1.5.</p>	<p>MICE, CDC, DCT, Capital Radio KKYO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved knowledge levels amongst right holders • Increased media based dialogue between right holders and duty bearers resulting in resolution of community challenges. • Contributed to the achievement of results stated under 1.1 to 1.5 above. 	<p>A total of 75 Radio programmes on governance and human rights, especially the right to development were produced and aired by Capital radio (<i>Mau a Kumudzi – Village views</i>), DCT (<i>Khamalathu – our hard work {persistence}</i>) and <i>Tilondoloze Khamalathu – lets follow up on our hard work</i>, CDC (Mbaliyanga) and KKYO (Titukule Boma Lathu – lets develop our district). The programmes were aired on Capital Radio, MBC radio 1 (DCT), MBC radio 2 (CDC) and Nkhotakota Community Radio (KKYO).</p> <p>The Ministry of Information and Civic Education produced and disseminated</p>

			<p>4,500 copies of a special <i>Mfulu</i> newsletter addressing issues of elections which was distributed through DCP grass root based project implementation partners. The Ministry resorted to the newsletter following a production suspension of <i>Boma Lathu</i> newspaper, which carries the <i>Mfulu</i> supplement, for the first half of the year, due to financial constraints. Copies produced were below the planned monthly production of 10,000 due to high cost of printing a small newsletter.</p> <p>The media projects continued to compliment the grassroots based projects by providing relevant information to the citizenry, bringing out best practices, revealing glaring gaps as well as facilitating interface between communities and duty bearers thereby providing space for dialogue. This contributed towards the creation of a critical mass at the community level.</p> <p>PARTIALLY Achieved (Gap: 29 radio programs for half year – this shortfall was occasioned by delayed commencement of activities as resources were only released to IPs in February, 2014; and 55,500 copies of <i>Mfulu</i> mainly attributable to production suspension of <i>Boma Lathu</i> newspaper which carries the supplement, hence resorting to a special newsletter. Production of <i>Boma Lathu</i> to resume in</p>
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				July, 2014)
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<p>Output 2: <i>At least 70% of Group Villages in 28 districts demanding fair labour practices, and markets and consumer protection especially for women, youth, children and people with disabilities</i></p> <p>Indicators & Targets:</p> <p>✓ Number of CBEs trained as trainers on fair trade, labour and consumer rights.</p> <p>Planned : 128 MoV : Progress Report</p> <p>✓ Number of CRCs trained on fair trade, labour and consumer rights.</p> <p>Planned : 448 MoV : Progress Report</p> <p>✓ No. of CRCs/RLCs reporting identification and resolution of consumer rights issues.</p> <p>Baseline : 980 Target: 1,470 MoV : Progress Report</p> <p>✓ No. of CRCs/RLCs reporting identification</p>	<p>2.1 Scaled up and deepened interactive education on fair trade, labour practices and consumer protection especially for women and the youth</p> <p>2.2 Concerted community sharing of skills to protect the rights of children and other vulnerable groups</p> <p>2.3 Concerted community action for the availability of wealth-creating schemes</p>	<p>YONECO, CARER, WOLREC, CARD, NOYD, IPI, KKYO, CHRR, CCJP-Mzuzu, BSHDC, MICE, CDC, DCT and Capital Radio.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The refresher training enhanced knowledge and skills and rekindled interest among CRC members in the work of the project. Following the refresher training at one CRC in Mwanza, a committee was established and mandated to identify a profitable market for sweet potatoes. • Increased competencies (knowledge and skills levels) for iterative assessments and action taking to promote fair trade, labour and consumer rights. • Community empowerment as evidenced by an increase in the number of communities identifying profitable markets, fighting exploitative trade and labour practices as well as engaging in wealth creation schemes. This has further resulted in improved profitability of small scale farming. • Reduction in child labour, early marriages and increased school enrolment. • Improved quality of life for citizens, especially the vulnerable groups, e.g. women, through participation in wealth creation schemes. • Improved working conditions through provision of protective wear and compliance with labour laws. • Improved financial status of women and other vulnerable groups resulting in a decrease in gender based violence. 	<p>No CBE and CRC training sessions on fair trade, labour and consumer rights took place during the reporting period as the targeted districts of Karonga, Mzimba and Nkhata-Bay plan to hold the training in the next reporting period. Consequently, these districts have not yet started implementing activities under this output. However, 19 CRCs from Mwanza and Nkhotakota districts were refresher trained on the topics.</p> <p>Not Achieved (Gap: for CBE and CRC training is 100% while for CRC refresher training it is 2,407 CRCs in 19 districts)</p> <p>Community sensitisation on fair trade, labour and consumer rights continued.</p> <p>519 CRCs and 19 RLCs mobilized communities to stand up for the protection of children's rights, and to fight against child labour and exploitation. Monitoring exercises in child labour prone areas like Lakes Malawi, Chilwa and Chiuta, agricultural sector and Trading Centres were also intensified. 542 Children (319 boys and 223 girls) were withdrawn from child labour and returned to school.</p> <p>The committees also galvanized employees to demand fair labour practices. The CRCs and RLCs intervened</p>
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<p>and resolution of labour rights issues.</p> <p>Baseline : 980</p> <p>Target: 1,470</p> <p>MoV: Progress Reports</p> <p>✓ No of CRCs reporting identification for fair markets and resolution of exploitative trade practices</p> <p>Baseline : 980</p> <p>Target: 1,470</p> <p>MoV: Progress Reports</p> <p>✓ No. of CRCs/RLCs engaged in IGAs.</p> <p>Baseline : NA</p> <p>Target: 300</p> <p>MoV: Progress Reports</p> <p>✓ No of radio programmes produced and broadcast</p> <p>Planned : 208</p> <p>MoV : Progress Reports</p>				<p>in cases of unfair dismissals and lack of occupational safety and, in the process, upheld the rights of workers.</p> <p>Partially achieved (Gap: 951 for CRCs and 42 for RLCs)</p> <p>624 CRCs and 61 RLCs identified exploitative agricultural produce marketing practices and engaged the appropriate duty bearers, e.g. traditional leaders, to eradicate the practices. The practices included offering ridiculously low prices and barter trade. The committees also advocated for creation of groups such as associations to ensure better and profitable prices through identification of profitable markets for their pooled products using collective bargaining. It also enhanced information sharing for easy market identification leading to reduced reliance on the exploitative middlemen.</p> <p>Fully achieved for RLCs and partially achieved for CRCs (Gap: 846). Increased activity in this area is anticipated during the agriculture marketing season which commences in earnest from July.</p> <p>624 CRCs and 61 RLCs reported taking action to fight consumer exploitation including setting up monitoring</p>
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				<p>committees to champion respect for consumer rights. The committees facilitated the withdrawal of un-assized trading tools and expired products.</p> <p>Fully achieved for RLCs and partially achieved for CRCs (Gap: 846). Increased activity in this area is anticipated during the agriculture marketing season which commences in earnest from July.</p> <p>514 CRCs and 40 RLCs engaged in various income generating activities like Village Savings and Loans Groups (VSLs), bee keeping, fish farming as well as making energy saving stoves for sale.</p> <p>FULLY Achieved (Gap: target exceeded by 254 committees)</p>
	2.4 Radio and print media information and education for activities 2.1 to 2.3	MICE, CDC, DCT and Capital Radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved knowledge levels on fair trade labour and consumer rights • Contributed to the achievement of results stated under 2.1 to 2.3 above. 	<p>Media projects continued to complement grass root based projects in the provision of relevant information and knowledge on fair trade, labour and consumer rights. The media was also used to expose common trade and labour exploitative practices with a view to raising awareness among the citizenry. The media further reported on success stories from communities with a view to providing an opportunity to other communities to draw lessons for replication. The media reports galvanised interest in other communities where such initiatives were not being carried out.</p> <p>See Output 1 for details of media</p>

				productions. PARTIALLY Achieved
<p>OUTPUT 3: <i>Community members facilitating voter education for the right to development and good governance</i></p> <p>Indicator & Target: ✓ No. of people civic educated on elections related issues Target: not defined MoV: Progress reports</p>	3.1 Civic education on elections related issues	YONECO, Mw CARER, WOLREC, NOYD, IPI, KKYO, CARD, CCJP-Mzuzu, CHRR, BSHDC, MICE, CDC, DCT and Capital Radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge on electoral matters • Community empowerment as evidenced by high number of communities identifying electoral challenges and demanding remedial measures, e.g. electoral violence as well as bias in allocation of campaign rally venues, intimidation of voters by traditional leaders calling on their subjects to vote for their preferred candidates and other forms of electoral malpractices. • Social contracts between parliamentary candidates and communities signed in 45 constituencies from across the country. • Reduction in cases of political violence and voter apathy through sensitization. • Partnerships developed with other stakeholders, e.g. OXFAM, NICE, MEC, etc 	<p>Although this output was not funded, CBEs, CRCs and RLCs continued to raise awareness on the 2014 Tripartite Elections in all the 19 districts while media based projects covered the rest of the country. Some CBFs and CRCs facilitated debates on local priorities as well as facilitated signing of social contracts between parliamentary candidates and communities in 45 constituencies from across the country. The volunteers were also vigilant in guarding against lapses and apathy in the process. The volunteers engaged appropriate duty bearers to ensure that the challenges were promptly attended to while at the same time calling on the community members to go and vote for candidates of their choice. Some Volunteers facilitated community participation in Oxfam's "improved access to profitable markets campaign" targeting Presidential and Parliamentary candidates. Working partnerships were also developed at various levels with various stakeholders, e.g. MEC, NICE and other accredited organisations to ensure an issue based electoral process.</p> <p>PARTIALLY Achieved No formal assessment of the output was done following its withdrawal, as reported in the previous report, due to lack of</p>

				funding. In the next reporting period the Programme will focus on holding elected officials accountable.
<p>Output 4: <i>Right to development-centred effective and efficient management, partnership formation and monitoring and evaluation of the Programme.</i></p> <p>Targets:</p> <p>✓ Number of strategic partners facilitating the meeting of demands by DCP supported communities Baseline: 15 Target: 17 MoV: Progress Reports</p> <p>✓ No of people trained or refresher trained in governance, RBA and RBM Baseline: 79 Target: 85 MoV: Progress Reports</p> <p>✓ No of Programme Steering Committee (PSC)</p>	<p>4.1 Form partnerships for programme implementation</p>	<p>PO, IPs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The partnerships and alliances formed at various levels resulted into synergistic outcomes. More results and greater impact were achieved through participation in the DEC and other District Networks/Forums. The participation also unlocked other programmatic opportunities and in some cases, brought in economies of scale. 	<p>The Programme renewed partnerships with 10 grass root and 4 media based projects for another 12 months. All the IPs continued to be members of DEC as well as other district networks, especially the district elections networks largely under the auspices of MEC, MESN and NICE, in their respective districts of operation. The Programme also partnered with OXFAM on its campaign for <i>'improved access to profitable agricultural markets'</i>.</p> <p>Fully Achieved</p>
	<p>4.2 Develop technical, logistical and material capacity for stakeholders (equipment, training, exchange visits, etc)</p>	<p>PO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The refresher discussion on governance, RBA and RBM improved the knowledge levels of district managers and project officers. 	<p>The Programme advertised a call for project proposals targeting 4 additional districts of Kasungu, Dowa, Balaka and Blantyre. Unfortunately the first response was not satisfactory and the call had to be re-advertised.</p> <p>ToT for district managers and project officers on <i>RBA and RBM</i> for Balaka, Blantyre, Dowa and Kasungu districts to be conducted in the next reporting period.</p> <p>The Stakeholders Forum offered an opportunity to revise the Programme's implementation strategy covering elements of RBA and RBM.</p>

<p>meetings</p> <p>Target: 4 MoV: Progress Reports</p> <p>✓ Average % funds absorption rate per year</p> <p>Baseline: 92% Target: 97% MoV: Financial Reports</p>				<p>Partially achieved through a refresher session at SCF (Gap: Officers from Balaka, Blantyre, Dowa and Kasungu IPs)</p> <p>Absorption rate for financial resources during the reporting period stood at 45 percent. Reasons for the low absorption rate have been provided in the main report.</p>
<p>✓ Established and functioning RBA and Rights Based Monitoring and Evaluation system</p> <p>Baseline: None Target: Undefined MoV: Progress Reports</p>	<p>4.3 oversight and inputs from PSC and Stakeholder Consultative Forum</p>	<p>PO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved partnership between grass root and media based projects • Improved understanding and consensus on reporting requirements and format • Improved understanding between the PO and IPs • Improved understanding of the Programme's implementation strategy by IPs 	<p>No PSC meeting was held during the reporting period due to busy electoral schedules for most of the members. Following the elections, there has been a lot of changes in member institutions hence awaiting stabilization of the situation.</p> <p>NOT Achieved</p> <p>A Stakeholder Consultative Forum for District Paralegal Officers and Project Managers from 14 institutions was held. The meeting was attended by 36 (6 female) participants. The forum was aimed at sharing experiences, discussing programme implementation strategy and reporting guidelines and addressing common challenges.</p> <p>Fully Achieved</p>
	<p>4.6 Human rights based and results</p>	<p>PO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring ensured continuous capacity building and helped to keep all 	<p>All IPs monitored project activities in their respective districts. Media based projects</p>

	based monitoring and evaluation		structures, especially weak ones, on their feet.	<p>also took time to get feedback from their audience. For instance, CDC received audience feedback in the form of 1,834 letters and 2,700 SMSs.</p> <p>Partly Achieved</p> <p>Apart from monitoring project implementation IPs also monitored human rights situation especially in hard to reach areas. For instance, CARER and DCT teamed up in Zomba and visited villages on the east coast of lake Chilwa (Chinguma, Lungazi, Ngotangota and Chisoni villages, Traditional Authority Mkumbira) where it was discovered that the area experienced great challenges impacting negatively on the quality of life for the residents. The challenges include: lack of reliable transport, absence of safe and potable water for domestic use, substandard education infrastructure, lack of a reliable health service delivery system, high rate of school dropout, etc. The institutions have teamed up to help identify the required support. Attached as Annex V is a copy of the special report submitted by CARER and DCT following the visit.</p>
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List of institutions and projects supported by DCP IV

Annex III

1. Blantyre Synod Health and Development Commission, *Community Participation and Advocacy for Satisfactory Public Service Delivery* (Chikwawa district);
2. Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace - Mzuzu Diocese, *Community Empowerment on the Right to Development* (Rumphi district);
3. Churches Action in Relief and Development, *Right to Development: A democratic Discussion Forum – Khonde La Tilitonse* (Mulanje District);
4. Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation, *Enhancement of Citizen's Participation in Local Governance and Demand for their Right to Development* (Salima district);
5. Malawi Centre for Advice, Research and Education on Rights, *Ufulu wa Chitukuko* (Nsanje, Mchinji, Zomba, Mzimba and Karonga districts);
6. Nkhotakota Youth Organisation, *Promotion of Citizen Participation in Governance* (Nkhotakota district);
7. Ntchisi Organisation for Youth and Development, *Community Participation in Decentralisation and Local Governance* (Ntchisi district);
8. Women's Legal Resources Centre, *Enhancing the Capacity of Communities to demand the Right to Development* (Mwanza, Neno and Dedza districts);
9. Youth Net and Counselling, *Stimulating Citizen's Power: Mobilising Communities to demand the Right to Development* (Machinga, Ntcheu, Mangochi and Nkhata-Bay districts);
10. Institute for Policy Interaction, *Striving towards the right to development* (Phalombe district);
11. Capital Radio, *Mau a Kumudzi (Rural Voices)*;
12. Centre for Development Communications, *Promotion of a More Democratic Culture in Malawi*;
13. Development Communications Trust, *Ndizathuzomwe III*; and
14. Ministry of Information and Civic Education, *Civic Education on Good Governance and Human Rights*.

SPECIAL REPORT

DCT and Malawi CARER visit to Chinguma (Sombi) and other surrounding villages on the coast of Lake Chirwa in T/A Nkumbira in Zomba District and follow-up activities

23rd to 30th June, 2014

Presented To Democracy Consolidation Programme (DCP)

Presented By Development Communications Trust (DCT) and Malawi CARER

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Date 3rd July, 2014

1.0 General Introduction

This report is the first output of a partnership between Malawi Carer, which is operating on the ground in Zomba and DCT. DCT aims at assisting the communities on the east coast of Lake Chilwa; namely Chinguma, Lungazi, Ngotangota and Chisoni, Traditional Authority Mkumbira in Zomba, to alleviate their suffering caused by non-enjoyment of the right to development in its broadest sense. The back ground to this partnership was a visit to the area by Malawi CARER from 13 to 15 May,2014 which found the quality of life in the area depressing. A partnership was, therefore, hatched with DCT with the objective of exploring the possibility of exposing the challenges faced by the communities through the electronic and print media with a view to drawing the attention of the appropriate duty bearers. Consequently, a special trip was organised for a DCT (Tilondolozze Khamalathu) Producer and the Malawi Carer Zomba district Officer to the communities. Fortunately, the Officer in Charge Zomba Police Station provided a speed boat (with C & D providing fuel) and 4 officers to accompany the team with a view to addressing the security concerns raised by the community through their interaction with Malawi CARER.

The trip was undertaken from 23 to 30 June, 2014. Due to time constraints, the team only visited Chinguma and held discussions with members from surrounding villages of Ngotangota, Lungazi and Chisoni. The discussions, however, revealed that the challenges facing the targeted areas were more or less the same.

This report, therefore, seeks to highlight the challenges identified through our interaction with community members, the root cause of the challenges and initial feedback gotten from various duty bearers that were briefed on the challenges after the visit.

2.0 Brief background

Chinguma, Lungazi, Ngotangota and Chisoni settlement areas are found on the Malawi/Mozambique boarder on the eastern coast of Lake Chilwa in Traditional Authority Mkumbira's area in Zomba district. On the Malawi side, the villages are surrounded by Lake Chilwa to the north, west and south while on the eastern side they share a land boundary with Mozambique. The only land transport to Malawi (Phalombe) from the villages is through Mozambique. Otherwise the villages can only be accessed from Malawi through water transport. Boats take approximately 5 hours to and from Kachulu dock (Zomba) on the Malawi main land. As a result, a return trip is not possible within a day. Hence, the boats sail to and from Chinguma every other day.

The settlements have an estimated population of over 2000 according to 2008 population census for 4 villages. The communities earn their living through fishing and they are a main supplier of fish to Zomba, Phalombe and neighbouring communities in Mozambique.

3.0 Main Challenges Facing the Communities

A number of tools and techniques were used to get the information presented in this report, which included, among others, meetings, one to one interviews, telephone interviews, focus group discussions and observations. The following were identified as the main challenges requiring urgent attention:

3.1 *Lack of affordable and reliable Transport:*

As stated earlier the only direct mode of transport to main land Malawi from Chinguma is privately owned boats. This is due to geographical position of the village. The privately owned boats, by their nature, are very expensive and risky as they are always overcrowded and do not have appropriate safety equipment. One way fare from Kachulu (Zomba main land) to Chinguma is K3,000. A one way trip takes approximately five hours on the lake a situation that makes it difficult for the boat men to return the same day. Consequently, anybody travelling to the main land to access goods and services has to build in accommodation costs into his/her travel budget. Worse still, the boats do not sail to Ngotangota, Lungazi and Chisoni. Travellers from these villages connect from Chinguma to their villages on smaller boats which cost K1,000, K1,500 and K2,000 for Ngotangota, Lungazi and Chisoni, respectively. Malawi Police, Fisheries department, and Zomba District Health Office have speed boats which are offered to members of the public for hire at a cost. A return trip on these hired speed boats to and Chinguma/Kachulu cost approximately K90, 000.00.

As a result of the highlighted transport challenges, public officers from the district council as well as central Government hardly visit the area. The people claimed that the only time such officers visit them is during elections when electoral materials are flown on helicopters to and from the area. Institutions that own speed boats indicated that they sparingly visit the area due to resource constraints as they do not get adequate fuel allocation to cater for the trips.

In view of the prevalent transport challenges government and civil society organisations' officials shun these villages and no development projects are allocated to the area, allegedly because of the challenges that would be posed by their failure to monitor the projects. Government presence is through very low ranked public servants (Teachers, Health Surveillance Assistant) while no NGO operates in the area. The area, therefore, is neglected and

lacks basically all basic social amenities and the citizenry does not enjoy the right to development. Demanding fulfilment of this right is almost impossible because of the non-availability and inaccessibility (transport nightmare) of duty bearers. This situation puts the community at a disadvantage.



The smaller wooden boat behind the DCT producer (in glasses) is the one communities of Ngotangota, Lungazi and Chisoni use, while the big one with red and yellow colours is one of the main

source of transport from Kachulu to Chinguma and it accommodates over 100 people and the other one with blue and white is the Malawi Police Service Marine speed boat

3.2 Lack of security

There is no police presence in the area. The area is serviced by Kachulu Police on the main land and takes approximately 2-3 hours for a Police speed boat to reach the area. These factors have created a loophole that is exploited by criminals. As a result, crime rate in the area is very high. Most of the crimes are perpetrated by Mozambicans who often raid and terrorise the community (commit various crimes). Fishing and Motor Bike hire are the two reliable businesses people engage in to earn a living. The criminals regularly steal motor bikes, cash and other properties from the community at gun point. The criminals also use the weapons to intimidate business people to give them goods and services free of charge. Similar tactics are used to dictate prices of fish leaving i.e. the business people are mostly not allowed to charge a fair price for their goods and services. Common crimes in the area are defilement, rape, theft, robbery, murder, child labour etc.



A teenage boy sharing his real life experience on how his motorbike was stolen at gun point by a Mozambican, leaving him jobless as the motor bike taxi business was his only source of income

As a result of the above factors and the transport challenges explained earlier, all goods and services in the area are extremely expensive.

3.3 Lack of safe/portable water for domestic use

Three years ago Government endorsed safe water as a right to every Malawian. People from Chinguma are yet to enjoy this right as they do not have access to clean, safe, portable water for domestic use. The only borehole in the area, which is no longer working properly and dries up during the dry season, discharges very salty water. As a result people in the area resort to drawing water from shallow wells dug in swamps. The other reliable source of water which is deemed better by the communities and therefore preferred for domestic use is Unembo River which flows from Mozambique into Lake Chirwa. The river is approximately 7 kilometres from Chinguma settlement. The community prefer water from this river because is not salty as compared to water from Lake Chilwa and the borehole found in the area. In Mozambique, the river is a source of water for domestic animals, washing, bathing, etc which pollutes the water. In order to draw relatively clean water people from Chinguma have to do so very early in the morning. As a result of lack of clean safe and portable water, water borne diseases are very prevalent in the area.

Further, women and girls bear the brunt of this problem as they have to walk close to 7 kilometres, mostly in the dark, to get water from Unembo River. Women leave their homes as early as 03:00 hours to draw water from Unembo River. As a result they are exposed to incidents of rape and defilement. Those that cannot bear the distance have to buy the water from young men who have ventured into water selling business. Sale of water from Unembo River is a very lucrative business for young men in the area. A 20 litre bucket of this unsafe water costs MK150 which is not affordable to the majority of the people who are poor. Other vulnerable groups like people with disabilities, those affected by HIV/AIDS, the elderly are in an even worse off situation as they either have to rely on buying water from those that are able to fetch it from Unembo or resort to using water from the swamps. The girl child is the main source of labour for drawing water from Unembo for domestic use. As a result many girls drop out of school as they are too tired to go to school after walking to Unembo and back.



A Group of school going girls who did not go to school as they went to fetch water



Women showing the water they fetch from a shallow well in the swamp for domestic use



Girl child fetching water from a shallow well in the swamp as she cannot go to Unembo River alone

3.4 Lack of appropriate education infrastructure and conducive learning environment

Challenges impeding on the Right to Education by pupils at Chinguma primary school are multi-faceted. Apart from high rate of absenteeism amongst girls caused by their involvement in fetching water as discussed above, enjoyment of the right to education is also impeded by several factors, some of which are as follows:

- (i) Poor infrastructure/Dilapidated condition of school blocks

Chinguma Primary School does not have even a single modern class room block or teacher's house. The school uses dilapidated mud grass-thatched structures as classrooms. Due to inadequacy of the available structures some of the classes learn under trees. On their part, the community built a structure that they initially intended to be a Police Unit which was later converted into a class room block following the police's decline to use it as it was deemed substandard. The structure only accommodates two classes as there are only two rooms inside it and some of the pupils learn in a rented church building near the school while others learn under a tree. In an event where the owners of the church want to use it during the week pupils are forced to learn under trees that are on residential premises because all the school trees are occupied by other classes. During rainy season the school is mostly closed as the classrooms leak heavily making it difficult for the teacher to continue teaching. Classes held under trees are equally affected. At the climax of the rainy season sometimes the school remains closed for periods of up to two or three weeks due to heavy rains.



Chinguma Full Primary School block

Enrolment at the school, as at the date of the visit, stood at (350) pupils. Sanitation facilities at the school are extremely poor and greatly affect female pupils thereby keeping more girls out of school.

(ii) Sub-standard teachers' houses

As stated earlier, the school does not have modern and decent teachers' houses. The Sub-standard teachers' houses that are close to the school leave a lot to be desired and, therefore, most teachers prefer to rent houses far from the school. As a result of this development many teachers report for duties late, which unfortunately, negatively impacts on their performance, hence compromising on the quality of education.



A house of a qualified Head Teacher who has worked over 5 years at Chinguma FP School

Despite all the problems cited above Chinguma Full Primary School has 11 teachers, this is so due to the Open Distance Learning (ODL) Programme. Through this programme, teachers do on the job training for two years then the last six months they go for training at any Teacher Training College. Upon completion of their studies,

the teachers' sign a bond with government to teach in rural areas for five years. Though it is good news that the school has qualified teachers, the high school drop-out rate demotivates the teachers. There are times when a class has less than 10 pupils and at times not even a single pupil especially in senior primary school classes .i.e. from standard 6 to 8. Most of the teachers interviewed indicated that they had or were contemplating asking for transfers to other areas due to the above factors (transport, accommodation, security, cost of living, etc) and the difficulties they face in accessing basic social services. For the teachers, even accessing their salaries is a nightmare as they do so through Banks situated in Zomba town resulting in heavy transport costs which are not covered by the employer.

(iii) Absence of Examination centre

The area has no Malawi Examination Board (MANEB) examination centre. The nearest examination centre for Chinguma, Ngotangota, Chisoni and Lungazi is Chisi primary school on Chisi Island. A pupil from these villages invests a minimum of K10,000.00 to write the Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education Examinations. The money is meant for transport to and from Chisi Primary School (K3,000), accommodation (K1,000 per night and normally pupils stay there for a minimum of 5 days making it K5,000) and the remaining amount is for food. Since most of the residents of the area are poor, many pupils do not write the final examination to qualify for entry into Secondary School. For instance, this year, only 9 pupils (3 girls and 6 boys) from Chinguma Primary school out of a class of 20 managed to source adequate resources to sit for the 2014 Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education Examinations. Government does not provide any financial support to enable the pupils write the exam while MANEB is of the view that Chinguma School does not have the requisite

structures and facilities to qualify as an examination centre. Further, it is argued that it is not economical to establish an examination centre in the area to cater for the few students that write the exam annually.

Consequently, many pupils drop out of school as they realise that their effort will not yield anything as they will not be able to write the PSLCE examinations due to the financial status of their parents.

(iv) Absence of Secondary School in the area

The area does not have a Secondary School where pupils can enrol after finishing their primary school. St Michaels Community Day Secondary School is the nearest and is 5 kilometers from Kachulu dock into the main land. Due to the transport and logistical challenges discussed above, pupils cannot attend the school while operating from home. Unfortunately, most of the parents cannot afford the requisite investment to enable their children attend the school, i.e. monthly rentals for accommodation, food and other appropriate maintenance costs. This development affects mostly the girl child. This is a great set back to intelligent and hardworking pupils, especially girls, as they tend to resign to their fate and drop out of school as they do not see any benefit in pursuing primary education if they will not enter secondary school.

(v) Periodic demand for financial contributions from students

The community raised concern over frequent requests for pupils to bring cash for various school projects and activities which they found exorbitant. Pupils who fail to pay the required amounts were sent back from school. This development forced pupils whose parents could not afford to pay the required amounts to drop out of school. Many parents preferred not to send their children to school as they saw no logic in sending the child to school when they knew that sooner or later the child would drop out due to failure to pay such contributions.

The above challenges negatively impact on enjoyment of the right to education in the area resulting in high school dropout rates and alarmingly high levels of early marriages, especially for girls, not out of choice but circumstances beyond their control.

3.5 *Child Labour*

School going children, as well as young school dropouts, are employed by rich Mozambicans to perform various tasks including working as divers (**popularly known as Bila boys – boys who dive into the lake and hold the fishing net at the bottom**). Chiefs have tried to use their powers to bring to book those doing the malpractice to no avail. Some children are trafficked into Mozambique where they perform various hazardous tasks. Young girls have not been spared as they do various types of piece work with washing clothes for fishermen being the most popular. The girls scramble to wash clothes for fisher men who camp in the area during the day waiting for a night fishing shift. The average charge for washing a pair of trousers is K70.00 while a shirt costs K50.00. Many girls find this task more rewarding than attending school, hence dropping out of school at an early age. Unfortunately, some of the girls end up being abused by the fishermen.



A nine year old girl who was supposed to be in class was captured going to wash clothes for fishermen as early as 8 AM on Wednesday, 25 June, 2014.

3.5 *Absence of a Health care delivery facility*

The area does not have any health delivery facility apart from a locally constructed cholera shelter that is used whenever there is a cholera outbreak in the area, which happens almost annually.



Chinguma cholera shelter, the only health service delivery institution in the area.

The only health worker in the area is a Health Surveillance Assistant. As a result, the community faces a multiplicity of *Challenges that hamper the enjoyment of the* Right to Health by the various demographic groups. Below is a summary of some of the most pressing health challenges:

(i) Lack of Primary Health Care (PHC) Services

Every citizen regardless of his geographical position has a right to access Primary Health Care (PHC) Services as per the policy of the Ministry Of Health. This service is meant to be essential care made accessible, available and affordable to the community at their nearest distance of not more than 7 Kilometers that aim at improving the quality life of the community. Despite this policy position, primary health care services are provided to the community once a month through a Zomba DHO Ambulance boat.

However, at the date of the visit the service had not been provided for three months following the breakdown of the ambulance boat which resulted in putting lives of people at risk as there were a lot of outbreaks in the area such as malaria and fleas (*Msikidzi*). The area has no private clinic where people can access PHC hence the people have no viable alternative resulting in deaths from treatable ailments.

(ii) People living with HIV

As stated above, Health personnel from Zomba DHO conduct monthly visits to provide primary health services to people of this area but the unfortunate part is that ART clinic is not included. The closest health facility that provides the service is Likangala health Center which is on the main land. The transport cost and logistics associated with the trip to the health facility make the service unaffordable for the majority of those that require it. The people are, therefore, compelled by circumstances to get the service from Mozambique where there is a paying health service. However, Malawians access the health services at a higher cost compared to Mozambican citizens. Malawians are charged K3,000 for a ten day dosage. Although ARVs are given free of charge in Malawi people prefer to buy the drug from Mozambique as it is cheaper than travelling to Likangala Health Centre. Unfortunately, the majority cannot afford a one month dose and end up taking the treatment intermittently. The lives of people affected by HIV are therefore in perpetual danger as both diagnosis and treatment services are not readily available.

(iii) Absence of antenatal and postnatal services

While Malawi has reported reduction in the number of maternal and neonatal deaths, such cases are rampant in Chinguma and the surrounding villages due to absence of antenatal and postnatal health services. These cases are, however, not reported due to absence of health care delivery institutions in the

area. The monthly package delivered by the DHO does not cover these services and, even if they did, the timing would still be problematic to the expectant women. Pregnant women in the area give birth with the assistance of traditional birth attendants and have no access to professional antenatal and postnatal services. Those with complications seek assistance at Sedi Health Center in Mozambique where they are charged a minimum of K15,000.00, depending on the service rendered. This charge is beyond the means of the majority of the women in the area. Consequently, child bearing is a very risky undertaking in the area.

4.0 Immediate Achievements.

Following the visit, the producer dialogued with various duty bearers seeking their intervention to alleviate the suffering of the people in Chinguma and the surrounding villages. The following positive results have so far been registered:

(a) security

As stated in the introduction to this report, the Police Officer In -charge for Zomba District provided 4 officers to accompany the team with a view to having a police/community interface meeting in the area. During the interface meeting communities outlined their security challenges and attributed most of them to criminal infiltration by Mozambicans who freely did so in view of the absence of a Police Unit in the area.

Following the discussions, it was concluded that the Community Policing Forum committees established by community was weak. It was resolved that, as a starting point for improving security in the area, elections for a new committee be and were immediately held. Further to that the Police Officers together with Malawi CARER

Paralegal Officer went to Mozambique border post to introduce the new committee to Mozambique Police Officers. The three parties (the new committee, Malawi and Mozambique Police) agreed to work together to reduce crime in the area.



Sub inspector Mwayi Pangani (left), Chairperson of Chinguma community policing forum (Middle) and (far right) Secretary of the newly established community forum.

The new committee, however, needs support in terms of skills and equipment as well as timely response from Kachulu Police whenever they require police support.

(b) Education

- (i) The District Education Manager admitted being aware of the problems faced by communities of the said villages and attributed the office's failure to intervene to transport challenges which impede their monitoring functions. The office promised to allocate a school block and a teacher's house to Chinguma Primary School in the 2014/2015 budget. It was however emphasised that delivery of the project will depend on the community's readiness to work on the project.
- (ii) In his response to the complaint about a multiplicity of financial contributions demanded from pupils, the DEM promised to take action on the issue saying that a child is not supposed to be sent back from school because he or she has failed to pay a certain developmental fee considering the fact that primary school education in the country is for free.

(c) Health

Zomba DHO promised to take immediate action by adding ART clinic to the list of monthly health services rendered to the area in order to address the challenges being encountered by the community.

5.0 Observations

- ✚ All sectors at district level are not willing to allocate projects to this area due to transport problems hence denying the communities right to development.
- ✚ Lack of knowledge among local leaders on how projects are allocated at district level has worsened the situation as the community has failed in its duty to put pressure on relevant duty bearers resulting in the area not benefiting from government projects in the past 50 years.

- ✚ Due to patriarchal issue within the community, women and girls were shy to speak on real issues affecting them as compared to men and boys during the focus group discussions.
- ✚ There is high illiteracy level for both males and females hence resulting into a community which is docile in nature.
- ✚ Past experience has discouraged community members to trust any person or organization which comes with any aim of assisting the community to find solutions to their problems

6.0 Recommendations/ Way- Forward

Above discussion list represents sectors/intervention prioritised by community. To sum up the support required by the community

- (a) Safe and portable water for domestic use
- (b) Provision of regular health services including ART, maternal and primary health care
- (c) Bursaries to allow pupils write PSLCE exams and attend secondary school
- (d) Improved security through establishment of a police unit or provision of regular police patrols
- (e) Reliable transport

STRATEGY

Malawi CARER and DCT are seeking partnerships with institutions with financial capability to address the above challenges. CARER and DCT will work on mobilising the community and linking them up with the appropriate duty

bearers as well as other interested institutions. The duty bearers and interested institutions will provide the required financial and technical resources. The objective of partnership is to improve quality of life of residents of the area.

7.0 Conclusion

The above account represents how frustrated the community in this area are based on their experiences as stated by the community members themselves. According to the community, their citizenship to Malawi is only recognised during election period where they are mobilised to participate in electing political leaders. However when elections are over and the community members have participated, they are no longer recognised as Malawian Citizens, since the community do access most of their social amenities from the neighbouring Mozambique. In view of such sentiments, DCT and Malawi CAREER are in the process of organising a stakeholder meeting, in which the district council and other district level stakeholders will participate to map out how best issues raised by communities could be tackled. However due to limited funds, the meeting is yet to materialise. It is therefore against that background that, two institutions wish to engage other funding partners to implement this important project in the said community.

ANNEX V

SELECTED SUCCESS STORIES

A. GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

1. HOLDING ELECTED DUTY BEARERS ACCOUNTABLE

It is a well-known fact that once voted into power, most elected leaders do not deliver on their political promises. However, this did not deter communities surrounding Lobi CRC in TA Kachere, Dedza, from taking part in the 2014 Tripartite elections which they regarded as a rare opportunity for them to exercise their right to vote their chosen leaders into office. It was also for this reason that CRC members emphasised, during their community sensitization meetings, that unwillingness to vote is one of the reasons that puts people who are non-responsive into power. The sensitization campaigns also emphasised on the qualities of good leaders; roles of elected leaders (the President, MPs and Councillors); and the responsibility of the right holders in holding the elected duty bearers accountable.

As one way of holding the duty bearers accountable to their political promises, CRC members organised public debates involving 5 aspiring MPs and 6 Councillors from the area. Instead of presenting pre-determined promises of what they would deliver once voted into power, the candidates were given a list of the community's development aspirations which they would wish to see delivered once the candidates were voted into power. The aspiring leaders were then given a chance to explain how they were going to make sure that they delivered on the local priorities. The debates were attended by CRC members, community members, traditional leaders, VDC and ADC members as well as other stakeholders.

The aspiring leaders committed that they would strive to deliver on what the communities prioritized once voted into power. The pledge list was signed between the aspiring MPs and representatives of the community, as a social contract, and will be used to hold

the elected parliamentarian and Councillors accountable. The community is determined to use every available strategy to hold the duty bearers accountable to the promises that they made for the progressive development of their area.

2. COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM AN IRRIGATION SCHEME

Kampingo Sibande is one of the TAs in Mzimba District which is blessed with natural resources particularly, a perennial water source. Such is the case due to the presence of Kasito River which passes through five GVHs namely; Kabilanjobvu, Kandau, Kamakhulu, Wakhaliramo and Kajivi. Unfortunately, for a long time, hunger remained a perennial problem for people in the area because they failed to make good use of the river.

The mind-set of community members changed after Kabilanjobvu CRC went through the training on the right to development. In an attempt to attain food security in their area, the CRC mobilized community members to establish Emoneni Irrigation Scheme along Kasito River. The irrigation scheme became a reality with technical support from District Agricultural Development Office. The scheme has 85 members, 55 females and 30 males. Crops grown include beans, maize, tomatoes sweet potatoes and paprika. The scheme has enabled community members to have food throughout the year and earn a living through selling of cash crops.

Considering the rising cost of fertilizer, community members have initiated compost manure making for use on their plots. The community also approached Total Land Care for the construction of a road which connects the community to the main road to facilitate access to the market. The road was constructed and people are able to easily transport their farm produce to various markets.

As a way of appreciating the good work done by this community, Eswazini Extension and Planning Area has scheduled this year's agricultural demonstrations to take place in this area. This will provide an opportunity for farmers to showcase their manure making and modern farming practices. The well-being of community members of the irrigation scheme has greatly improved.

3. A VRC COMES TO THE RESCUE OF A PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED MAN

Mr. Mackson, is a physically challenged person aged 45 who lives in Kango village, GVH Nkhongo, TA Mwansambo, Nkhotakota district. Upon inspecting his household, Kanjiwa CRC members were shocked to note that the toilet he was using was not suitable for his condition. Every time he wanted to use the toilet, he had to be carried to the toilet, which was a very demeaning experience for a man of his age. This also meant that somebody had to always be available to take care of him around the home. Accessing potable water was also a problem since the only available water point in the area was a kilometer away from his house.

Upon noticing these challenges, Kanjiwa CRC, with the support of GVH Nkhongo, convened a meeting with community members. The meeting identified the distance to the nearest water source (a tap supplied by gravity fed water scheme) as a challenge to many people who lived close to Mr. Mackson. The community agreed to seek the support of appropriate institutions to improve access to potable water in the area. They further agreed to mobilise bricks and sand for construction of an appropriate toilet for him.

The CRC dialogued with Water Aid on the two challenges. Water Aid responded positively to both requests. A tap was installed in the area. The community agreed that the tap be installed near Mr. Mackson's house, which was done. A suitable modern pit latrine, which is easy to use without assistance, was also constructed for him.

Mr. Mackson is now a very happy person. His life is more dignified and these two developments have improved his comfort and wellbeing. The work of the CRCs has also gained more credibility and acceptance as community members can directly see the results demonstrated over a person they would rather ignore. Even people within Mr. Mackson's village have access to potable water within their village.

4. COMMUNITY MEMBERS USE MEDIA TO DEMAND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FROM HEALTH WORKERS

For the past two years, communities around Namphungo Health Centre in TA Juma's area in Mulanje district, were subjected to poor and unprofessional health service delivery at the facility. This was as a result of unprofessional behaviour of the Medical Assistant (MA) and other members of staff. Amongst others, the unprofessional conducts were: closing the facility during market days (Mondays and Thursdays) allegedly on suspicion that people visit the facility not out of necessity but merely taking advantage of

their presence at the market; conducting patient consultation in front of other patients instead of a private consultation room; denying patients medical attention in cases of emergencies outside working hours, such as at night; and hosting private functions at the facility. Vulnerable groups, e.g. women and people affected by HIV were the greatest victims of these unprofessional developments. Most of them would either travel to other far off Health facilities or return home and watch their condition deteriorate. The community summarized the behaviour and attitude of the MA and his team as rude, irresponsible and unethical as it continuously put their lives at risk as evidenced by deaths from treatable ailments especially amongst under-five children.

Realizing that the behaviour of the medical personnel at Namphungo Health Centre was a great violation of their right to access health services as well as an infringement on their right to privacy, the communities brought the matter to the attention of relevant duty bearers including senior management at Mulanje District Hospital and the Member of Parliament for the area. Although the matter was escalated to these duty bearers, nothing changed to the disappointment of the right holders.

Consequently, the community decided to engage Capital Radio to cover their plight through *Mau Akumudzi* program. A programme highlighting the plight of the right holders was recorded and broadcast. Immediately after the program was aired, top officials from Mulanje District Hospital together with the legislator for the area, made an emergency visit to the Health Centre where they met representatives of the community and medical personnel including the MA to investigate the matter further. During the interrogations, the MA admitted his misconduct and apologized to his seniors, the parliamentarian and, most importantly, representatives of the right holders. An undertaking was made to address the situation. The conduct of the entire team at the Health facility improved tremendously with the right holders indicating satisfaction with the quality of health service delivery at the facility.

B. FAIR TRADE, LABOUR AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

1. PROMOTING LABOUR RIGHTS FOR COAL MINERS

The review of the minimum wage by the Government at the end of 2013 offered a sigh of relief to most workers whose standards of living have been negatively affected by the high rise in the cost of living. However, despite the revised minimum wage for all

workers, Kaziwiziwi and Mchenga Coal mines in Rumphi district did not comply with the government directive. Despite the revised minimum wages being gazetted in December, 2013, the workers continued to receive old wages, which were based on the old minimum wage, until end February, 2014 thereby depriving them of their right to fair wages.

Touched by the plight of the workers, Kaziwiziwi CRC, held a preliminary meeting with members of the Workers Union during which the Malawi Government Gazette Supplement of 13th December, 2013 was shared with the workers. It was observed from the proceedings of the meeting that the workers were not aware of the revised minimum wages and that their wages were not aligned to the new rates. Following the meeting, representatives of the Workers Union petitioned the District Commissioner and the District Labour Officer to intervene on the issue. In response, the District Commissioner and Labour Officers invited the Mining Companies' Managers and the Mining Department's Regional Officers for a discussion on why the new wage rates were not implemented. Following the meeting, the mining companies adjusted the wages of their workers to MK551.00 per day. The District Commissioner and the District Labour Officer further issued a directive to the mining companies to ensure payment of wage arrears effective date of the Government order. It was also pleasing to note that a week later, the Minister of Energy and Mining visited the Rumphi District Labour Office and appealed to the officers to mount frequent inspections to ensure labour rights in the mining industry were respected.

2. PROMOTION OF CHILD RIGHTS

Cases of child labour and trafficking are a perpetual challenge in most parts of the country, especially in districts which border neighbouring countries. For instance, they have been rampant in Dedza district, particularly during the farming season, when tobacco is processed for marketing. During this season many children are trafficked to Mozambique to work on tobacco estates. Such was the case on the evening of 20th March, 2014 when two unknown men took 15 children aged below 14 years from GVH Kanyezi, TA Chilikumwendo en-route to Mozambique via Njonja, TA Kachere.

Alarmed by this development, community members tipped the CBF for the area and members of Chithasa CRC, who rushed to report the matter to Njonja Police Unit. The CRC members together with the Police went to the suspected border crossing point and mounted a road block. After a while, the two suspected traffickers approached the scene with the 15 children. Upon noticing the road block the men abandoned the children and ran away. The CRCs and the Police took the children to Njonja Police Unit to record their statements before taking them back to their families.

Following this development, the CRCs in liaison with the Police have conducted a series of sensitization meetings condemning the malpractice. The Police has also launched an investigation on the suspected child traffickers.

3. FARMERS IN TA MDUWA, MCHINJI FINALLY BENEFIT FROM MAIZE FARMING

For a long time, people of TA Mduwa in Mchinji district have been growing maize for consumption and as a cash crop. However, no matter how much maize they harvested, their quality of life remained the same because the farmers were not realizing adequate profits from their produce. Consequently, the farmers lived in poverty and did not enjoy their right to development. Following extensive community discussions on the issue facilitated by the local CBF and Tima and Mduco CRCs, it was realised that the root cause of the problem was that they were selling their produce individually at very low prices. Middlemen were buying maize for as little as K30 per kilogram. This compelled the CRCs to mobilise the farmers to form clubs so that they could be selling their farm produce in groups and collectively bargain for better prices. Two groups were formed. The first group comprised 20 people (6 female) while the second group comprised 15 people (5 female). During last year's harvest season the two groups managed to pull together 900 (50) kg bags of maize which they kept and sold during the lean period in the first quarter of 2014 to a business man from Lilongwe at the cost of MK120 per kg thereby realising MK 5,400,000.00

The farmers were happy to realize more profits than ever before. Some bought goats, pigs, iron sheets for their houses and were able to pay school fees for their children, and others obtained start-up capital for small scale businesses. The quality of life for most of the farmers has improved. Following this result, many people have expressed interest to join the groups.

4. COMMUNITY MEMBERS PROTECT CONSUMER RIGHTS

Chinyama market, situated in Traditional Authority Mbuka is one of the biggest trading centres in Mulanje district. People come from as far as Mozambique to do business at this trading centre. Most of the agricultural produce from the surrounding areas find their way to Chinyama market. However, for quite some time, vendors were taking advantage of people's ignorance by among other things, tampering with weighing scales when buying produce.

Realising the negative effects of such unfair trading practices on the well-being of the farmers, Chinyama CRC with the guidance of the CBF for the area reported the matter to the office of Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS). Officials from MBS came to the area and conducted an inspection exercise. 78 un-assized scales were seized and confiscated. Farmers are now happy as they are selling their produce using approved scales thereby improving their earnings. A monitoring mechanism was put in place to deter use of un-assized trading tools.