

The Catholic Church in Malawi is planning to pass these messages through a proper advocacy approach, including having meetings with responsible government ministries, to make a video documentary on climate change, to organise press conferences on climate change, and to take different stakeholders to visit CMDRR project sites where issues of climate change are addressed. Also in Zambia, Caritas Zambia has included CMDRR advocacy in their 2009-2010 programme.

DRR in practice: adaptation measures

Some DRR activities which are promoted by Cadecom in Malawi are the production of drought resistant crops (such as sorghum, cassave, sweet potatoe), the introduction of small-scale irrigation for 'winter cropping' (food production in dry season) and the improvement of natural water sources and the sinking of boreholes for drinking water. Other activities are the improvement of soil management practices to reduce run off and erosion, the creation of seed and food banks to ensure safe-keeping of harvested produce and food security and income generation activities for poor families affected by HIV / AIDS. The construction of flood protection structures (e.g. with bushes) near bigger rivers aims at reducing risk from flooding and is also part of the DRR activities of Cadecom.



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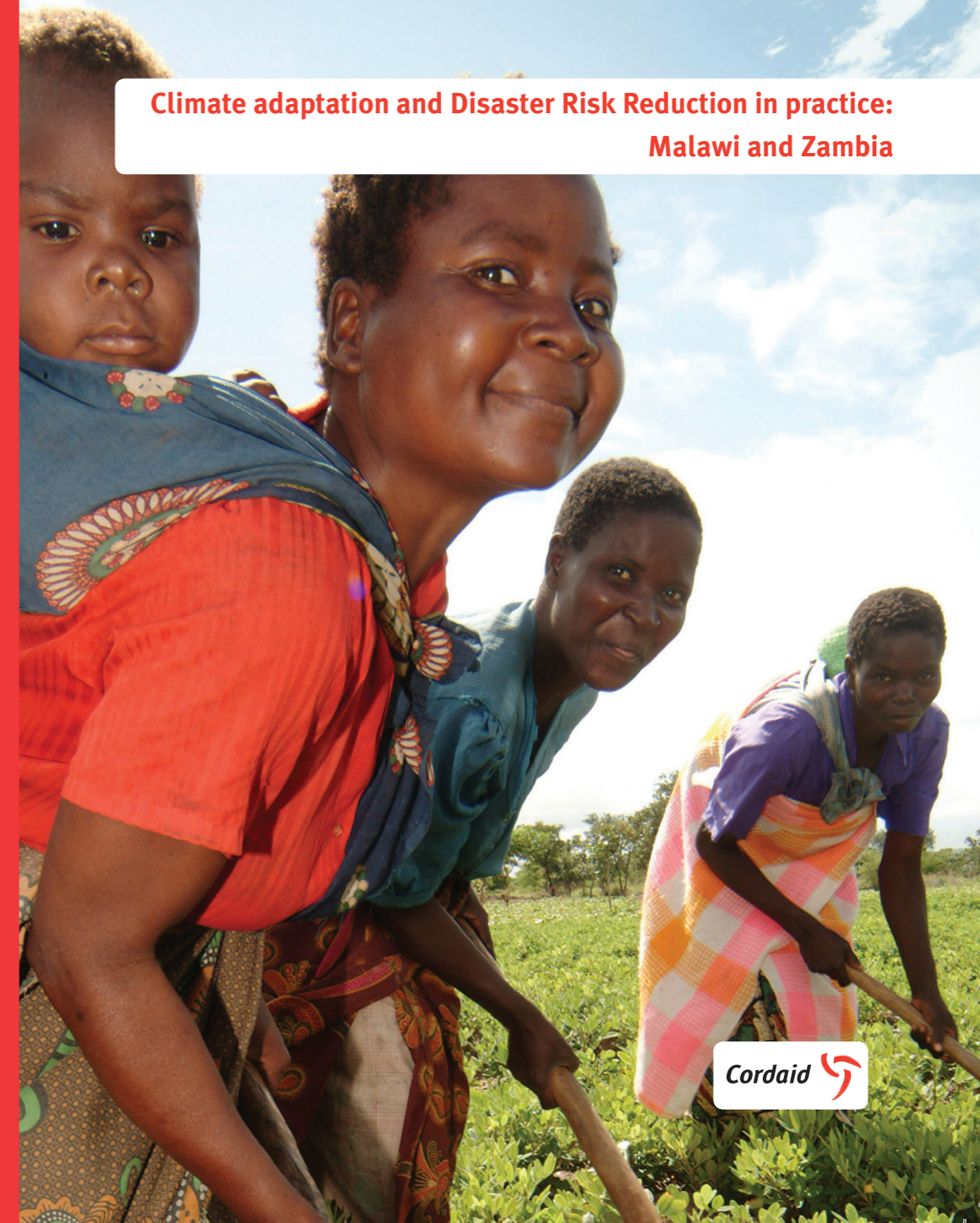
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**Climate adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction in practice:
Malawi and Zambia**



Climate adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction in practice Malawi and Zambia

In Malawi and Zambia the largest part of the population is dependent on rain fed agricultural production and/or on businesses related to agriculture. Over the last 10 years frequent emergency situations caused by natural hazards like drought and floods, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, have hampered the development process. Therefore, CORDAID introduced the Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction approach to the local partner organisations. In Malawi the CMDRR programme started in 2004, leading to an improved capacity of targeted communities to reduce the impact of natural hazards by the end of 2007. In Zambia staff training started in 2006, and a CMDRR programme starts in 2009.

Background

Malawi and Zambia are countries in Southern Africa. Malawi has a population of about 13 million people. A large part of the country is prone to droughts. The southern part of Malawi is also prone to flooding. Zambia has 12 million inhabitants. The southern part of the country is more prone to natural hazards like droughts and floods than the northern part.

For a large part of the population in both countries, for whom small-scale agricultural production is their main livelihood system, unreliable climatic conditions caused by climate change (such as long periods of droughts, or too heavy rainfall) and ineffective agricultural practices continue to negatively affect their food security situation. This has also been compounded by the HIV/AIDS crisis; poorly managed responses to HIV/AIDS have contributed to people's vulnerability at household level, limiting their coping capacity.

In both countries, events relating to climate change are happening more frequently nowadays than some 30 or 50 years ago. Every year since 2000 drought and floods have continuously taken turns in destroying the livelihood options of the rural poor whose livelihood depend on a normally predictable rainfall pattern. For example, in Malawi in 2007/2008 there were dry spells, floods and army worms (crop pest); from 2003 till 2007 there were dry spells, in 2001 and in 2002 drought hit the whole of Malawi, affecting the food security very badly; also in 1996 and 1997 floods and droughts hit.

The above mentioned changes in climate patterns have a negative impact on the health and nutrition status of people and the agricultural production (e.g. drought periods force communities to eat wild foods and to harvest premature crops thereby reducing their harvest). Also livestock is affected; animals can be washed away by flush floods (due to heavy rains), lack of water dehydrates them and some even die, and when disasters strike animals are sold at a very cheap price thus further reducing the number of livestock in some communities. There are also negative effects of climate change on drinking water. Drought causes the lowering of water tables in the affected areas, streams and wells dry out which causes reduced availability of drinking water for both people and livestock. The lack of water leads to water borne diseases, further aggravated by unprotected water sources.

As both in Malawi and in Zambia most people depend on agricultural production for their livelihood, climate change affects their livelihood negatively; this also results in people from rural communities travelling to cities to look for employment. Getting involved into risky behaviour to earn money could cause an increase in HIV/AIDS infected people.

The Cordaid approach

In both Malawi and Zambia, Cordaid is contributing to longer-term development programmes and to emergency aid & rehabilitation programmes of the Catholic development organisations Caritas Zambia and Cadecom, Catholic Development Commission in Malawi.

As from 2004, in Malawi the approach of Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) was introduced, which led to the now practised 'Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction' (CMDRR) approach.

The main disasters faced by the local communities in Malawi are: droughts and floods (related to climate change), and the HIV/AIDS pandemic (related to poverty and gender inequality). The 'Disaster Risk Reduction' (DRR) programme in Malawi focuses on reducing the risks for those disasters, by working on Climate Change Adaptation and Poverty Reduction.

The goal of the Cadecom DRR programme which ran in the period 2005 – 2007 in all seven dioceses (Mzuzu, Lilongwe, Dedza, Mangochi, Zomba, Blantyre, Chikwawa) and all regions of Malawi was to contribute towards reducing the impact of disasters through increased livelihood resilience and improved disaster risk reduction in rural communities. The main results of this programme were that staff and communities were trained on the CMDRR approach; that communities themselves have successfully implemented several DRR activities; and that Cadecom has produced a TV documentary and a booklet on CMDRR Best Practices for information sharing and advocacy purposes.

For the period 2008–2010, Cordaid and Cadecom together with the two other Catholic Development Commissions in Malawi (Health, and Justice & Peace) developed a broader Disaster Risk Reduction programme, based on the best practices of the 2005–2007 programme and scaling up the most useful CMDRR practices. This programme also is being implemented at a national scale.

Also in Zambia the CMDRR approach is introduced. In 2006 two staff from Caritas Zambia, a national Cordaid partner, were trained on CMDRR. The staff subsequently trained other staff on this approach. In 2008 a CMDRR programme is developed and starts in 2009; activities include DRR training for communities, doing disaster risk assessments, and developing and implementing DRR action plans.

In brief, the CMDRR approach includes activities to reduce and/or mitigate natural hazards and disasters, to reduce people's vulnerability, and to increase people's capacity to cope with the effects of possible hazards and disasters. Also emergency relief and rehabilitation activities can be included, if those are needed.

Working together

In Malawi, Cadecom being a national organisation has intensively promoted the Disaster Risk Reduction programme and approach across Malawi. The Government also has shown a positive response to climate change, as in February 2008 the State President launched the 'National Adaptation Program of Action' (NAPA) document.

This is aimed at addressing the negative effects of climate change. Important DRR advocacy messages as formulated by Cadecom are that Climate change is real in Malawi; that Malawi needs funding to implement strategies that are well spelt out in the NAPA document; and that all actors need to unite to deal with the effects of climate change.

