

## STATEMENT ON ACTIONS IN ADDRESSING LOSSES AND DAMAGES DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Malawi is a disaster-prone country with common hazards such as floods, heavy rains, strong winds, earthquakes and disease and pest outbreaks, among others. These Climate and disaster shocks have increased in frequency, intensity, and magnitude over the past years hence having devastating impacts on lives and sustainable livelihoods of the most rural and urban communities. Most of the Districts in Malawi are very vulnerable as they are from time to time affected by extreme weather events. People in these Districts experience recurring economic and non-economic losses and damages (loss of resources, goods, and services) because of climate change, further pushing households into ultra-poverty, chronic food insecurity, desperation, and displaced to other areas. The recent extreme weather events such as tropical cyclone Idai (2019), Ana, Gombe (2022), and the 2015-2016 droughts had the greatest adverse effects in the Southern Region Districts. For instance, in 2019, the tropical cyclone Idai -induced economic loss and damage led to US\$ 220.2 million, where the damage was valued at US\$ 157.7 million, with heavy effects felt in the social sector (60%), followed by the infrastructure sector (23%) and the productive sector (17%). The impact of the recently cyclone Freddy is yet to be determined.

As stakeholders in the climate change and disaster risk management sector;

**We commend** all Government institutions including the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS) and various stakeholders that played a major role in the dissemination of early warnings about Tropical Cyclone Freddy that hit the Southern Region of Malawi from Saturday; 11<sup>th</sup> March to Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2023. It is these early warnings that play a vital role in reducing impacts in times of disasters.

**We recognize** the private citizens, Malawi Government, the SADC region, development partners, civil society, politicians, the church and the private sectors for the provision of technical, financial and human resources to support all the people affected by the cyclone in all the 15 affected councils, namely; Balaka, Blantyre City, Blantyre District, Chikwawa, Chiradzulu, Machinga, Mangochi, Mulanje, Mwanza, Neno, Nsanje, Phalombe, Thyolo, Zomba City and Zomba. It is this selflessness, unity and coordination that will contribute to Malawi's attainment of sustainable development and achievement of Malawi Vision 2063.

**We lament** the climate induced loss and damage that has led to displacement of over half a million people; death of 511 people with 1332 registered injuries. Currently, 577 camps have been set to accommodate the displaced people. Of all the public infrastructure, the road infrastructure is the worst affected followed by schools and health facilities. It goes without foreshadowing the food insecurity that will emanate from the washing away of over 119, 000 hectares of crop fields; the loss in human capital from the disruption of schools in the Southern region; and the uprooting of people's livelihood.

**We are appalled** that despite all efforts by CSOs to lobby the Government to enact the Disaster Risk Management Bill to allow for, among others, a paradigm shift from disaster response to a more comprehensive disaster risk management which involves investments in disaster risk reduction to reduce the great losses incurred to such disasters, years have passed with no Bill in sight. It is with concern that the State President in the SONA did not elaborate on the status of the draft bill, neither

did he share the government's plans and timeline pertaining to the enactment of the draft bill in his report to Parliament on Operation Tigwirane Manja.

**We are concerned** with the lack of sense of urgency and bureaucracy in Government and the international community in making decisions to address devastating impact of cyclones and other climate hazards. In this regard, we are concerned that after 27 years of CoP, global leaders still fail to honour promises made at previous conference of party meetings to the united nations framework convention on climate change. For instance, the 100 Billion promised during CoP is yet to be delivered.

**We are concerned** with the lack of cooperation and collaboration between and among Government, Development Partners, CSOs and local communities due to the bureaucracies.

**We are concerned** with the lack of implementation of Up-to-date preparedness in disaster Policies As much as cyclones could be unavoidable, we can manage to put in place policy and legal frameworks that can help with preparedness, response and recovery among others. The government takes long to put in place relevant legislation and policies. For instance, the DRM Bill has taken over 10years without enactment. We are further concerned with delays in acting on Climate change and meteorological Bill.

We, therefore, present the following recommendations in relation to addressing climate induced loss and damage and reducing Malawi's vulnerability to disasters;

- ❖ Government of Malawi should put in place the DRM bill acted. The DRM act should put in place resources where action is.
- ❖ Government to be accountable for the mechanism that are already in place such as the carbon levy.
- ❖ The Government should be proactive than reactive for example allocation of more funds to preparedness i.e. capacity building, early warning systems and building of house models and safe havens as evacuations centers instead of using schools which disturbs education.
- ❖ Government should impose tax and subsidies in a way that drives decarbonization for instance by applying carbon taxes and cutting support for fossil fuels
- ❖ Government should fund research and development in innovation to boost greener technology and infrastructure
- ❖ Government should demand compensation on loss and damage from global north through UNFCCC mechanisms baring in mind the increase in amount of climate induced losses and damages from recent events such as cyclones
- ❖ The government should fund research and development in innovation to address knowledge in vulnerable countries and communities for preparedness.

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