

Women farmers seek more inclusion in climate change fight

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Women farmers in the country have cried foul over what they call failure by government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to involve them in the implementation of climate change resilience and capacity building programmes.

Coalition of Women Farmers in Malawi (Cowfam) senior member Mary Namalomba emphasised that as climate change becomes a harsh reality in many parts of the world, it is imperative that government should actively engage and involve women farmers in the implementation of climate change programmes.

She made the remarks in an interview in Lilongwe on Thursday when she briefed journalists on the status of the

National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process.

"Women farmers face obstacles in adapting to climate change. Their rights and access to land, credit, inputs [such as improved seed and fertilisers], agricultural training and other information do not always reflect their vital role as farmers, and often providers of nutrition in the family.

"Women farmers play a vital role in agricultural production. Yet, they are the least engaged and involved in the implementation of programmes aimed at building the capacity of the farmers against effects of climate change," she said.

Civil Society Network on Climate Change (Cisonecc) national coordinator Julius Ng'oma acknowledged the discrepancies, saying the organisation has since developed plans to ensure women



PHOTOGRAPH: WATIPASO MZUNGU

Namalomba (L) addressing the journalists as Ng'oma looks on

farmers are always involved in the implementation of various interventions.

On the other hand, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) programme

analyst on climate change, Sothini Nyirenda, challenged government to domesticate international agreements and protocols if Malawi is to win the battle against climate change.

Speaking last Monday during activities to mark the commemoration of the 2017 World Environment Day/Cleaner Cooking Energy Open Day, Minister of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining Bright Msaka said government remains committed to domesticating and localising treaties and protocols, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Msaka also said that Malawi is committed to the Paris Agreement, which President Peter Mutharika signed in September 2016 in New York, United States of America. ■