

CISONECC INTERNAL REVIEW AND PLANNING MEETING REPORT



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Civil Society Network on Climate Change (CISONECC)

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The Secretariat is also grateful to its staff for the commitment and support rendered in the planning processes and their availability and participation during the retreat.

ACRONYMS

AGM	Annual General Meeting
CARD	Churches Action in Relief and Development
CICOD	Circle for Integrated Community Development
CC	Climate Change
CCPM	Climate Challenge Programme Malawi
CHANCO	Chancellor College
CISONECC	Civil Society Network on Climate Change
CJAP	Climate Justice Advocacy Project
CJREP	Climate Justice Renewable Energy Project
CONGOMA	Council for Non-Governmental Organization
COP	Conference of Parties
DoEA	Department of Environmental Affairs
DoDMA	Department of Disaster Management Affairs
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EAD	Environmental Affairs Department
EC	European Commission
GCF	Green Climate Fund
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PA	Paris Agreement
PACJA	Pan African Climate Justice Alliance
REDD+	Reduction of Emission from Deforestation and Degradation+
RRP	Resource Rights Programme
SF	Sendai Framework
T/A	Traditional Authority
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
YONECO	Youth Net and Counselling

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Civil Society Network on Climate Change (CISONECC), under the Climate Challenge Programme Malawi is implementing a Climate Justice Advocacy Project (CJAP) which aims to contribute to the delivery of the Government of Malawi's strategic policy priorities on international climate change and international development, by enabling local communities in Malawi to undertake direct action to adapt to climate change, and supporting them in building resilience to the impact of extreme weather events, whilst simultaneously raising awareness of human rights in relation to climate change. The CJAP is implemented with support from Irish Aid through Trocaire Malawi.

From 30th to 31st January 2020, Civil Society Network on Climate Change organized a two-day Staff retreat at Kabumba Hotel, in Salima. The retreat was aimed at developing consolidated work plan for the year 2020 for various projects that CISONECC is implementing and also acted as a platform where members of staff were reoriented on various working CISONECC policies and strategies. The retreat also served as a refresher moment for members of staff to interact, reevaluate and strengthen team work capacities.

2.0 WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS

2.1 Opening Session

During the opening, the National Coordinator, Mr. Julius Ng'oma, requested a volunteer to open with a prayer, after which he requested the first moderator to take position. The first moderator, Mr. Felix Nyirenda, welcomed the staff members to the meeting and requested the National Coordinator to give opening remarks for the meeting.

2.2.1 Opening Remarks

The Coordinator stated that he was pleased to see all the members of staff at the meeting which was aimed at reviewing some of the work that the Secretariat is undertaking. The meeting also aimed at building the team as well as developing consolidated work plan for the year 2020. Mr. Ng'oma welcomed all the staff members and specifically the new staff to the institution, highlighting that the meeting also served as a platform to orient them on some of the work that the organization is undertaking but also help them understand CISONNECC better so that they can integrate themselves into the organization easily.

Julius continued by expressing that the internal review meeting was an extension of the meeting that was held in December, 2019 which was held at the organization's offices because the funds for the meeting were not yet in. He also stated that the meeting would have a session of focusing on the existing policies and plans, as well as shaping the roadmap for the year. He mentioned that the development of a harmonized work plan is essential because activities of the organization require to be coordinated. The meeting was also another opportunity for the staff to be re-oriented on the CISONNECC policies and strategies. The second part of the meeting was for team building, where the staff members would interact outside the office, with games and other team building activities.

With the remarks, Julius, opened the meeting and also requested all participants to interact with one another, and to participate actively, and not let anyone's 'newness' be a barrier for the objectives of the meeting.

2.2 Know Your Network

Julius delivered a presentation on 'know your network'. Mr. Felix Nyirenda was still the moderator for this session. Julius started by highlighting that the presentation on 'know your network' is one of the most essential presentations for all CISONNECC meetings as it highlights what CISONNECC is, therefore giving, specifically, the new members an opportunity to know more about the organisation and what it does.

The presentation profiled CISONNECC in terms of its vision, mission and objectives. It further touched on institutional credibility by highlighting that CISONNECC is registered with the Government of Malawi under the Trustees Incorporation Act, CONGOMA, and NGO Board.

Julius further indicated that the organisation was founded to address the compelling need for a coordinated approach to climate change and disaster risk management in Malawi. CISONNECC creates

a platform for all stakeholder; CSOs, Media, Academia to get involved in the management of climate change by fostering their engagement in policies processes and also informing government strategies.

Julius further shared that CISONNECC also undertakes advocacy in such strategic areas as: policy research and advocacy; capacity building and information management; public awareness and education; and networking, coordination and collaboration. Julius added that currently, the network has about 65 members inclusive of International Non-Governmental Organizations, Local Non-Governmental Organizations, Faith based organizations, networks and associations working on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management.

The Coordinator further introduced the five thematic working groups which are: Adaptation, Loss and Damage and Agriculture; Mitigation and REDD+; Shared Vision and Agreements; Capacity building as well as Finance and Cross-cutting issues working group. These thematic groups guide the secretariat on different policy positions based on their TORs.

On CISONNECC governance, the Coordinator indicated that the network has a Board of Trustees that is elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to give overall strategic direction on various CISONNECC operations. The current Board is comprised of five individual members which include; Miss Sophie Makoloma, Mr. Mahara Nyirenda, Mrs. Joanna Kaphiri-Nkhoma, T/A Kwataine (outgoing) and Mrs Fumakazi Munthali (outgoing). Miss Sophie Makoloma is the current Chairperson. Dr. Kamdonyo and Prof. Blessings Chinsinga are the incoming Board members.

The Coordinator also introduced CISONNECC secretariat staff members and their positions. He further introduced the various internal committees that assist in managing day to day operations at the secretariat and these are:

On funding, Julius indicated that CISONNECC is currently implementing projects with financial support from; Irish Aid through Trocaire; Scottish Government through Trocaire and SCIAF; EU Project through Trocaire and Insu-Resilience MAPS Project through CARE Germany and CARE Malawi.

The organisation has a website, social media platforms and various materials that are used for organization branding. Julius added that by following some laid procedures, an organization can become either a full member, an associate member or an honorary member of the network.

Finally, the presenter shared that the network is in a number of partnerships and networks within Malawi and internationally. Examples include its affiliation with networks/associations like the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), the Southern Voices on Adaptation and the Global NDRR.

❖ Plenary

i. Violet

- Commended Julius for an elaborate and enlightening presentation
- Urged all members to follow CISONNECC on Twitter and like the CISONNECC Facebook page.
- Enquired for elaboration on the roles of CISONNECC in PACJA

Response: There is one representation at PACJA for each region of the seven African regions. Each region has the representation and CISONNECC represents the southern

region. Members that are part and parcel of PACJA are given the responsibilities and CISON ECC belongs to the Finance and resource mobilization committee of the Board

2.3 Presentation on overview and work plan for Resource Rights Project

The next presentation was on the overview and work plan for the RRP-CA Project. Miss Violet Mfuné moderated this session and Mr. Kondwani Mubisa delivered the presentation. Kondwani started by highlighting that the RRP-CA Project started in 2017 and will end in 2021 and is implemented with support from Irish Aid through Trocaire. The programme is implemented by a consortium of partners which includes; CISON ECC, CICOD, Area 55, CADECOM Dedza, CADECOM Mangochi and CADECOM Chikwawa. Mr. Mubisa also said that the project is being implemented in Mangochi, Dedza and Chikwawa.

According to Mubisa, the RRP-CA Project was developed to address a number of advocacy issues including; disconnection between new policies and its relevant supportive legislation; pending drafted bills; inadequate policy implementation; corruption and disputes over land resources; weak connections among newly adopted resilience policies; inadequate sectoral financing to enhance resilience; gender disparities in resilience sector and also exclusion of the vulnerable groups of people.

Kondwani indicated that the goal of the RRP-CA Project is “equitable access to and use of Resources” while the vision is ‘empowered and resilient communities in Malawi that live a dignified and fuller life in the face of climate change by year 2021’. According to Mubisa, CISON ECC is contributing to one advocacy outcome which is to ensure that relevant Policies in Malawi and internationally are responsive and supportive to poor farmers' right to access and management of natural resources and their resilience to climate shocks strengthened. However, Kondwani further presented the objectives of the programme as follows:

- i. Enhancement of Climate Change (CC), Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Food and nutrition bills by 2021
- ii. CC, DRM and Agriculture Policies and International Investments, Paris Agreement (PA), Sendai Framework (SF) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are implemented and monitored through participatory process by 2021.
- iii. Equitable and timely implementation and monitoring of CC, DRM and Agriculture Policies by 2021.

In the last part of the presentation, the presenter highlighted the activities lined up for the year 2020 and shared the proposed work plan. He indicated that there are four main activities in 2020 which directly contribute to the achievement of the first and second objectives. The work plan is as presented in the table below.

❖ Plenary

- i. Ruth wanted to understand the meaning of weak nexus among the existing policies
Response: The baseline data showed that there was poor connection among the resilience policies hence this was taken as a critical issue that needed to be addressed by the project.
- ii. Isaac wanted to find out the available monitoring tools for the project.
Response: The project has simple elements of M&E where milestones are tracked.
- iii. Ruth further inquired on the category of resources being target by the project.
- **Response:** Implementing Partners identified and define their own resources such as Water, Land etc. in terms of access and rights in their targeted implementation areas. The project would then advance equitable access to such resources in the area. Basically the project is looking at sustainable use of all natural resources but target areas would priorities specific resources that the project would focus on.

2.4 Presentation on overview and work plan for CCPM-CJA Project

This presentation was delivered by Violet Mfuné and Claire Malata moderated the session. In her presentation, Violet indicated that the CCPM-CJA Project is supported by Scottish Government through Trocaire and SCIAF. The project is implemented in 17 group Village Headmen in Chikhwawa, Balaka, Machinga and Zomba. The project is implemented by partners including Eagles, CICOD, CARD, CADECOM Chikhwawa, CADECOM Zomba and CADECOM Mangochi. Miss Mfuné shared that CCPM's is to improve resilience to current and future climate change by developing & implementing community led adaptation strategies & measures that will improve agricultural production and rural livelihoods across the food-water-energy nexus. However, the goal of CCPM-CJAP is to support Malawi Government to put in place enabling environment to support implementation of community-led climate change adaptation actions. She further shared the project's advocacy outcomes, objectives and some of the notable successes that project has registered so far. The following are some of the successes that the presenter shared;

- Trained CCPM Programme partners on budget and policy tracking
- Training on participatory M & E of government plans, strategies, processes and policies
- Documentation of knowledge, attitudes, practices and climate injustices
- Documentation on Climate Change Adaptation Funding Processes (availability and Access)
- Orientation of Duty Bearers on Climate Justice and Orientation of duty bearers and Interface on climate injustices at district level
- Awareness on the Climate Change Fund to stakeholder and inputs from the stakeholders
- Interfacing with Parliamentarians on Climate change management with a community-led touch
- Malawi has been awarded funding for the finalization of the NAP.
- CSOs engaged Government through EAD and Parliament to include stakeholder inputs (CSOs, Academia, Communities)

On the part of challenges, Miss Mfunne highlighted that the project has so far faced the following main challenges;

- Timelines for Government processes Vs CCPM Funds transfers
- Limited understanding on the roles of the CCPM
- Late feedback from Partners
- Duty bearers are non-responsive

Miss Violet concluded by sharing the work plan for CCPM-CJA Project for the year 2020.

Table 2: Work plan for CCPM-CJA Project 2020

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE	MONTH
Interface meetings with relevant ministries and Government Committees (Taskforce/NTCCC) on the Dev processes related to the NCCMF	CISONECC	Apr – Jun, 2020
Sensitization and awareness raising on Climate Change and climate justice at National and subnational levels	CADECOM & CISONECC	Jan – June, 2020
Sensitization, awareness, input development workshops on the NAP development processes to the project participants	CISONECC	Jan – June, 2020
Support District and local community members to engage with the relevant ministries and government committees (NAP Core team/NTCCC) on the NAP development process and share their inputs into the NAP process	CISONECC	April – sept, 2020
Interface meetings with district and national level structures on the recommendations from the policy and budget reviews and outcomes of the documentation of Climate change injustices	CADECOM & CISONECC	July – Sept, 2020
Support District and local community members to engage with the relevant ministries and government committees (NAP Core team/NTCCC) on the NAP development	CISONECC	April – sept, 2020

process and share their inputs into the NAP process		
Interface meetings with district and national level structures on the recommendations from the policy and budget reviews and outcomes of the documentation of Climate change injustices	CADECOM & CISONECC	July – Sept, 2020

❖ **Plenary**

- iv. Ruth wanted to understand how long the CCPM-CJA Project has been running and how long CISONECC through the project seek to influence the policies.
Response: 2020 is the third year of implementing the project and under this programme, CISONECC intends to influence the policies up to 2021. However, influencing resilience policies remains one of CISONECC’s primary roles before and beyond the CCPM-CJAP.
- v. Isaac wanted to find out if the CCPM-CJA Project has a policy tracking tool for monitoring purposes.
Response: The project has simple elements of M&E and there has been trainings conducted on policy tracking especially using such approaches as the Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME).
- vi. Ruth further inquired on how CISONECC addresses the problem of lack of awareness by partners on roles played by CISONECC under the programme.
 - **Response:** CISONECC has on a number of instances organized engagements where presentations have been delivered on the roles of CISONECC especially on implementing the advocacy component of the project.

2.5 Presentation on the overview of the incoming projects

The National Coordinator also delivered another presentation on the overview of CISONECC incoming projects. Kondwani Mubisa was the moderator of this session. Julius kicked off his presentation by updating members that the network will be implementing a new project which seeks to promote sustainable management of protected areas in Malawi. The project will be implemented with financial support from the European Commission (EC). This project is scheduled to roll out starting February 2020 to and is going to be implemented up to 2022. The project will be implemented in three areas namely Kasungu National park, Lengwe National Park and Mwabvi Game Reserve. The project will be delivered through a consortium approach where a number of partners will be playing various roles. He stated that the consortium comprises partners like CARD, CICOD, YONECO and Trocaire.

Julius further highlighted that the main role of CISONNECC in this project is to lead on National level advocacy around policies focusing on preserving natural resources around the three protected areas. The network will also be working with communities to address the issues of climate change more especially focusing on sensitizing the community on the importance of preserving the national parks. The project is targeting women, children, men and people living with disabilities in 38 villages.

On progress made so far, the National Coordinator explained that there are still some outstanding activities that CISONNECC and other implementing partners are still working on to finalize other activities of the project. For instance, he cited that there is need to develop a baseline for the project, formulate objectives and also consider what policies should be target under this project.

Apart from the EC Project, Julius shared that there is another project in the offing. The project is called the Insu-Resilience MAPS project. According to the presenter, this project targets farmers and other stakeholders involved in Agriculture to come up with a backup plan as regards to climate change effects through using insurance weather related firms and companies. This project is new in Malawi and the network will be the first to implement the project in Malawi. It should be noted that the network started working on this project in 2015 when the government of Malawi failed to pass the disaster risk management policy. Through this project the Network will consider and work very closely with other NGOs more especially to empower and improve their capacity on how best these CSO can relate with insurance companies that is both locally and internationally in spearheading climate resilience through insurance schemes. Mr. Ng'oma also indicated that through this project, CISONNECC envisages that if the farmers involved in the project are able to cover their crops, it could be a perfect way of climate-proofing the livelihood of rural vulnerable local smallholder farmers to devastating impacts of climate change. CISONNECC will therefore be responsible to facilitate and create a conducive platform for such discussions with other CSO and the key stakeholders.

In addition, under the Insu-resilience MAPS Project, CISONNECC will also be advising the government of Malawi on how best the government could get policies relating to climate change both local and international policies. The network will emphasize very much in building knowledge hub for government officials and other CSOs on issues concerning crop insurance and climate change. The project is for 2 years starting from January 2020 to May 2021. The project will be implemented with support from the German Government through Care German and Care Malawi.

2.6 Consolidation of work plans for all projects

The network has more than one project currently under implementation hence there was need of coming up with a consolidated work plan to effectively carry out activities related to the projects in 2020 for a successful desired impact and change. Most of the activities that the Network is implementing are field based and workshops and there was need for harmonized work plan for all projects to address the hustles of planning and to enhance value for money. The following activities were planned starting from the month of February to December 2020.

2.7 Orientation to CISONNECC Policies and Strategies

Julius Ng'oma delivered a number of presentations on CISONNECC Policies and strategies to staff members. Proceedings in this session was moderated by Mrs. Ruth Likambale. Presentations on CISONNECC Policies and Strategies served as policy refreshers for old staff and was more of an orientation session to CISONNECC Policies for the new staff

2.7.1 Staff Terms and Conditions

The following were the highlights from the presentation made by Mr. Julius Ng'oma on Staff Terms and Conditions:

- Performance monitoring and appraisal to all employees shall be done from time to time;
- Staff Members are entitled to leave as follows; Managers 24 days, Technical staff 20 days, Skilled Laborers 18 days and Laborers 15 days.
- Female staffs are entitled to 90 days for every three years for maternity leave whereas Male staffs shall be entitled to 10 days paternity leave upon a spouse giving birth or during conception.
- Staff are eligible to get their 50 per cent salary advance after the 15th day of a particular month and not before the 15th day.
- On disciplinary action procedures, employees shall be warned in three steps; Verbal warning
- (a warning by the supervisor), Written warning (a supervisor writes his or her junior of his/her performance or any misconduct for improvement giving time frame for improved performance in the process and lastly, a supervisor will write the junior to suspend/dismiss them in the absence of any improvement in performance or conduct)

At the end of the presentation, Julius urged all staff members to go through the Staff Terms and Conditions for a detailed understanding of the provisions in the document.

2.7.2 Code of Conduct and Operational Guidelines

The following were the highlights from the presentation made by Mr. Julius Ng'oma on Code of Conduct and Operational Guidelines:

❖ Functions of the Ethics Committee;

CISONNECC has an Ethics Committee that is responsible for a number of ethics related issues including;

- Facilitating in management of conflicts among the members,
- Handling complaints from members and other stakeholders and recommending action
- Recommending any changes to the code to the General Assembly.
- Inquiring on any reported or observed contravention of the provision in the Code of Conduct and Constitution
- Recommending any rules, regulations or by-laws to the adopted by the General Assembly;
- Recommending to the General Assembly any actions appropriate in enforcement of the code.

- Receiving and hearing complaints from Members and other stakeholders and recommending action.

❖ **Roles of the secretariat:**

CISONECC has a Secretariat Office which is responsible for a number of things. These include;

- Implementation of all the Board decisions
- Manage and deliver services such as training, coordination, information dissemination, advocacy and other services
- Develop internal procedures and systems
- Advise the Board in respect of policy and practice
- Build Strategies
- Preparation of reports and submitting to the Board; and
- Negotiating with Donors on behalf of CISONECC.

❖ **CISONECC Financial matters**

- **Sources of funds**

- CISONECC has a number of ways in which the organization sources funds. Some of which include, membership subscription, donor funding, consultancy fees and legacies

- **Financial Controls**

- Annual Audits
- Transparency and accountability

- **Financial year**

- CISONECC financial year starts in January and ends in December

● **Roles of the members:**

- To perform awarded jobs and assignments for the Network;
- To uphold the code of conduct in all their dealings with CISONECC
- To safeguard all intellectual and other properties of the Network.

2.7.3 Constitution

The National Coordinator also delivered a presentation highlighting important matters covered in CISONECC Constitution. In his presentation, Julius touched on the following;

- CISONECC Constitution is a document that guides the Secretariat in their operations as a registered NGO.
- The organization can sue or be sued by the law in their operations. This means all undertakings of the organization should be done in accordance to its objectives.
- CISONECC always holds the Annual General Meeting once in a Financial Year; to make decisions on some pertinent matters.
- CISONECC provides three main categories of membership:
 - ✓ **Full Members** - These are NGO's registered and accepted by the Board to become full members;

- ✓ **Associate Members** - This category does not require any nomination to become members of CISONECC, but as long as they have capacity; and
 - ✓ **Honorary Members** - This category is nominated by the same members to become members of CISONECC.
- To become a full member, an organisation is required complete an application form and provide at least one organisation which is a member of CISONECC to serve as referee. CISONECC then reviews the membership applications and then pass the application through the Board and the AGM for approval and endorsement.
 - Members of CISONECC have the Rights and obligations to attend CISONECC meetings and right to have access to information from CISONECC Secretariat.
 - An organisation can cease to be a member of CISONECC by non-existence i.e. the NGO is no longer in operation and when they have stopped paying their membership subscription fees to CISONECC.
 - Membership subscription fee for members is MK50,000 per annum.
 - Disciplinary Committee and Operational Guidelines are there to act as a bridge in resolving issues between the Board and Secretariat and between the Secretariat and the Board.
 - The Board of Trustees has the power to access documentations and other required information at any time from CISONECC and asset management.
 - The secretariat is responsible in executing the Board of Trustees decisions on a daily basis. The National Coordinator is responsible to the Board of Trustees and giving reports to the Board on internal control procedures and accounts for CISONECC.

2.7.4 Fraud Policy

The moderator, Ruth Likambale, invited Mr. Felix Nyirenda to deliver a presentation CISONECC Fraud Policy. In his presentation, Mr. Nyirenda touched on the following;

- CISONECC operates under the 'zero principle' to any aspect of operation/transaction that constitutes fraud.
- CISONECC staff were encouraged to report any acts of fraud to relevant supervisors and authorities.
- Employees were urged to go into clean transactions on behalf of the organisation.
- No abuse of CISONECC resources by any staff members, such an act attracts both disciplinary and legal implications.
- No member of staff is supposed to give or disclose information related to CISONECC without the consent of the National Coordinator;
- No unauthorized access to assets for CISONECC without the permission of the National Coordinator.

In closing, Mr. Nyirenda encouraged all members of staff to go through the document in details for a better understanding.

2.7.5 Finance Manual

Felix Nyirenda delivered another presentation on Finance Manual. This presentation was made to appraise members of staff on some financial procedures to ensure consistency on financial reporting as well as to adhere to the objective of the finance manual. The following were highlights from the presentation.

- ❖ Cash and Bank Management
 - All bank accounts opened should bear CISONECC name and financial matters must be handled by Finance and Administration Office;
 - No cash payments should be issued when paying for goods and services.
 - When withdrawing any payment in excess of MK500, 000.00 for an activity, the project officer or budget holder should be accompanied by a Finance personnel.
- ❖ Payment of Salaries
 - Employees' salaries should be paid direct to their accounts.
 - Donor harmonized rates will be used according to the stipulations on project contractual agreement.
- ❖ Planning and Financial Reporting
 - Donor reports must be submitted every 3rd day of prior reporting month, whereas CISONECC reports must be submitted every 10th day of prior reporting month.
- ❖ Fixed Assets
 - CISONECC through its Finance and Administration department should maintain a Fixed Asset Register for all the assets for proper asset management
 - Fixed Asset Register must be updated regularly upon new acquisitions and disposal of assets for CISONECC.
- ❖ Procurement of Service
 - The Procurement Committee should always make sure that any amount below MK100, 000.00 its approval will be done without the Procurement Officer but in accordance with Procurement Manual procedures.
- ❖ Plenary
 - i. Mr. Julius Ng'oma sought clarification on what a Ledger is for the benefit of the rest of staff members
Response: A ledger is a form of a document in which transactions are recorded.

2.8 Know Your Committees

The other session of presentations was on 'know your committees.' This session was moderated by Lumbani Nyangulu.

2.8.1 Social Welfare

Miss Jaqueline Thawale delivered a presentation on the TORs of the Social Welfare Committee. The presentation focused on the formulation, purpose and functions of the social welfare committee. It

was shared that the committee was introduced in July 2019 with an aim of promoting and supporting CISONNECC's staff welfare. Membership to social welfare is compulsory for every employee with a monthly membership fee of K5000 which is deducted from salaries. The committee is comprised of three members; the Chairperson (Felix Nyirenda), the Treasurer (Kondwani Mubisa) and the Secretary (Jacqueline Thawale). With three members in the committee, the committee facilitates social welfare activities e.g. in case of death of a staff's close relative and birthdays. Specifically, the welfare committee supports staff as follows:

- Sickness of a staff- K10,000
- Death of a close relative- K10,000
- Wedding of staff- K20,000

The committee has face to face meetings once every fortnight. Online meetings can also be initiated from time to time. Miss Thawale also stated that the committee also prepares quarterly reports which are submitted to the National Coordinator.

❖ Plenary

- Ruth wanted to know if membership to the social welfare committee is mandatory
Response: The membership is mandatory therefore all members of staff at CISONNECC are by default members of the social welfare.
- Ruth inquired on whether members pay directly or the contribution is deducted from the salary.
Response: Monthly contribution is deducted from the salary

2.8.2 HIV and AIDS

Mr. Lumbani Nyangulu, the moderator of the session invited Miss Violet Mfunne to deliver a presentation on HIV and AIDS policy. She opened the presentation by stating that sickness is retrogressive to development and is therefore an issue that requires special attention. The presenter proceeded to say that CISONNECC acknowledges that differentiated treatment of employees based on their HIV status is not moral and is unethical hence the development of the policy. Violet indicated that the goal of the policy is to ensure that CISONNECC's programmes and the workplace environment promotes socially acceptable space for persons living with HIV and AIDS for their meaningful contribution towards attaining a climate resilient Malawi. She further said that the main objective of the policy is to promote meaningful participation for all including people living with HIV and AIDS.

Miss Mfunne further explained that the policy has some guiding principles such as; employees will not be discriminated because of HIV and AIDS, CISONNECC employees will all be linked to HIV and AIDS education and awareness training for the benefit of all, confidentiality of the status of the employee shall be exercised by the Organization and disciplinary action shall be taken to anyone disclosing the status of the other without his or her consent.

Lastly she encouraged all members to go through the policy for further understanding.

2.8.3 Sexual Harassment

Miss Mfunne also presented the Sexual Harassment Policy. Her presentation focused much on the policy rationale, definitions, goal and objectives of the Policy. The presentation started by emphasizing that CISONNECC has zero tolerance for sexual harassment and that the policy was developed to create a safe work environment for all staff members. Defining important terms, the presentation also focused on the three types of sexual harassment. These are: physical, verbal and non-verbal harassment. It was also shared that in a situation where sexual harassment has taken place, the situation is handled using the following procedure:

- The harassed person lodges a complaint with the focal person
- The focal person will record the complaint.
- Focal person shall discuss the issue with involved parties and report to the National Coordinator within 14 days of the complaint being lodged.
- Disciplinary action will follow in the form of verbal warning, suspension or dismissal
- Should the harassed want to seek legal redress, they have the right to sue the harasser and seek justice in the court of law.

The presenter stressed that at CISONNECC, cases of sexual harassment are always treated with confidentiality and any act of divulging information about a case of harassment to other irrelevant parties shall attract disciplinary action by management

2.8.4 The Procurement Policy

The presentation on the procurement was co-presented by Violet Mfunne and Felix Nyirenda. The presentation kicked off with a focus on the procurement committee. It was shared that the committee provides for four members to lead it but had only three members at the time. With three people forming the quorum, the committee meets fortnightly and prepares quarterly reports for the National Coordinator. Some of the duties of the committee include reviewing and approving quotes, and providing guidance and recommendation on all procurement work on behalf of the organization. Other key highlights from the presentation include;

- Members of the committee should not be a signatory of any CISONNECC account
- Finance person shall act as an advisor in the committee
- Members of the committee shall not source quotations at any point.
- For any procurement involving any amount above K100,000.00, the committee needs to sit down and decide on the quotes

The procurement is linked to other documents that guide finance management in the organization e.g. the finance manual and the fraud policy. Members present, were then encouraged to go through the procurement policy at their convenient time, focusing on the procedures that are followed when making a payment. In brief, the procedure provides that budget holders and the office assistant are the ones eligible to source quotations which are handed over to the committee. Referring to available guidelines, the committee then decides on one quote, to which the supplier is issued with an LPO to initiate the process of procuring from that supplier.

Plenary

- i. Julius wanted to know from the presenters on some of the challenges that the procurement committee faces.

Response: Quotations being sourced by members of the committee, Signatories being part of the committee and the committee not clear when to engage experts.

- ii. Julius further wanted to understand the linkage between the procurement policy and other policies such as the Finance Manual and Fraud Policy?

Response: Both the Finance Manual and the Fraud Policy to some extent guides the procurement processes.

- iii. Julius further inquired to understand the most critical issues in the procurement policy that all members are supposed to know?

Response: One of the most critical issue in the procurement manual is the procedure that needs to be followed when procuring items

- iv. Julius also sought a brief clarification regarding the process of procuring items at CISONNECC for the benefit of all members of staff

Response: Budget holders present the budget to the procurement committee where it is reviewed. If the item is more than k100, 000, 3 quotations are requested and submitted to the committee where they are reviewed and the committee provides recommendation on which quote is attractive depending on the resources and needs of the organisation at the time.

2.8.5 Disability Policy

The presentation on Disability Policy was delivered by Mr. Felix Nyirenda. He kick-started the presentation by indicating that the Policy was developed with reference to international guidelines. The policy was created with an aim of making CISONNECC a safe environment for every individual regardless of their physical situation. The rationale of the policy is that individuals with physical and mental disability have historically faced discrimination which results in denied benefits. CISONNECC, through this policy is committed to providing an inclusive environment for all its employees regardless of physical status.

The policy cuts across all CISONNECC structures including CISONNECC members, Secretariat Staff, Partners and even program beneficiaries. The presenter also shared some definitions around the topic of disability and urged staff members who fall under any form of disability to notify management to ensure that they are included in all operations of the organization.

❖ Plenary

- i. Ruth Likambale shared that World Health Organisation (WHO) had recently placed Infertility as a disorder and therefore might need to be included in the disability policy.

2.8.6 Editorial Committee TORs

These presentations were presented by Miss Violet Mfunu. The presenter started the presentation by stating that the committee provides guidance and quality control on all publications being done by the organization. She cited that the committee is also responsible for reviewing and editing all publications and also developing templates on all publications. The presenter also indicated that the committee

also has three members and it meets fortnightly and prepares quarterly report for submission to the National Coordinator.

❖ Plenary

- i. Julius Ng'oma asked to know the qualifications of members of the Editorial Committee.
Response: The TORs do not express what it takes for someone to be in the Committee
- ii. Julius also wanted to know if the committee has any plans to still go back to its original composition of four members.
Response: Recommendations were note made that the committee should go back to its original composition but it is a good question which needs to be considered.
- iii. Isaac Chawinga wanted to find out if the policy has theory of change?
Response: CISON ECC has theory of change through its advocacy strategy but not necessarily in the editorial policy
- iv. Julius wanted to know if there are any plans of producing a Newsletter in the year 2020.
Response: The Editorial Committee does not have any plans on such but it is something that needs to be reconsidered.

2.8.6 Gender Policy

This session was again presented by the Focal Person for Gender, Miss Violet Mfuno. The presenter started the presentation by defining important terms like gender, gender equity and gender discrimination. She then concluded her presentation by focusing on the principles guiding the implementation of the policy. These include:

- Ensuring equal opportunities for both genders
- Ensure gender sensitivity in all organizations' operations
- 50% gender inclusion in management and the board of trustees

❖ Plenary

- i. The plenary session basically subjected the Gender Policy to a litmus test. Members reflected on an incident that occurred during one of the outdoor team building activity. The incident was about some male members expressing displeasure when some female members declined to get into the water for a team building activity. The issue was brought up as the presenter had cited the incident as a good example of gender insensitivity. However, the other members, mostly male, held a different view as they saw the female's reluctance to get into the water as an act that defeated the sole objective of the team building programme. An interesting debate ensued as members of both views failed to appreciate each other's point of views. Finally, the issue was deserted as members reached a conclusion that the incident happened partly because of a breakdown of communication.

2.8.7 ICT Policy

This session was presented by Mr. Kondwani Mubisa the ICT Focal Person. He started by indicating that the policy was developed in 2019 and covers the period between 2019 - 2024. It was developed to solve challenges that the organization was meeting regarding the use and maintenance of ICT

related assets. Some of the problems that necessitated the development of the policy include; absence of proper inventory for ICT assets, absence of a Focal Person mandated to handle ICT related issues within CISONTECC Secretariat Office, negligence and absence of guidelines in the use of ICT gadgets. The rest of the presentation was an extensive presentation that covered sub-policies that are contained in the policy.

❖ Plenary

- i. Isaac Chawinga wanted to know if the organization's website has a database for online survey
Response: There is no database for online surveys but this has been noted and will be taken into consideration
- ii. What are the most challenging things in implementing the policy
Response: Willingness of staff members to take care of the ICT gadgets and lack of following procedures related to ICT policy are the main challenging issues so far.
- iii. Where does one register when given an ICT gadget
Response: Registration of gadgets is handled by the ICT Focal Person who just keeps the inventory record for tracking purposes. However, all assets are registered in the finance and Administration Office.

3.0 OVERALL WORKSHOP OBSERVATIONS

The following things were observed during the workshop

- Each member actively participated in all activities outlined in the Programme
- Members felt relaxed and enjoyed their time outside work
- The team stuck together and displayed a cooperative behavior throughout the program despite some isolated cases where there was need for some effort to keep the team together
- All members delivered on their various tasks assigned to them prior, during and after the programme.

4.0 CHALLENGES

While the programme was generally a success, there were still a few challenges faced. However, these challenges did not have debilitating effects on the proceedings of the programme. Some of the challenges included;

1. The programme started behindhand due to late arrival as the driver did not make it in time. There was also a case of a compromised bridge close to Kabumba Hotel due to heavy rains.
2. Difficulties in keeping the team together especially during team building activities
3. Some members opted out of some activities on personal reasons.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The staff retreat was a success. The team was able to develop a consolidated work plan for various project activities. Members also had a rich orientation to CISONTECC objectives and policies through a number of presentations that were made. Moreover, the retreat provided a platform where members interacted and enhanced teamwork spirit.

6.0 CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Kondwani Mubisa who was moderating the closing session thanked all members for their active participation throughout the programme and finally invited the National Coordinator to make closing remarks.

Mr. In his remarks, Mr. Ng'oma thank the members for the presentations and for participating actively throughout the session. He further expressed hope that the programme was beneficial to all members especially the new staff as it largely provided an opportunity to share some of the important information regarding CISONNECC as an organisation. He closed but expressing hope that the interaction during the retreat provided a leeway for enhanced interpersonal relationships and that at the same time members will always observe professionalism at work and in terms of communication.

7.0 APPENDICES

7.1 Photos



Julius Ng'oma delivering a presentation on CISONNECC Policies



Violet Mfune presenting the overview of the Climate Challenge Programme Malawi



Members heading to Kabumba Hotel on foot due to a broken bridge



Part of the members listening to a presentation on 'know your network'



Members listening to a presentation on the overview of the Resource Rights Programme – Climate Advocacy Project



Julius Ng'oma responding to one of the questions raised during the presentation on CISONNECC Policies



Miss Violet Mfune providing input during the development of a consolidated plan for all projects



Group photo for CISONECC staff at the review workshop