



CLIMATE JUSTICE FOR MALAWI

Securing Climate Financing for the Global South





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Executive summary

This report seeks to highlight why climate financing needs to be scaled up and given to Malawi and other countries in the Global South right now. Climate financing and aid are important factors in climate justice for reparations from the Global North. In this report, we outline select challenges climate change inflicts on Malawi, and explain how these challenges contribute to greater food insecurity. Through interviews with 29 young Malawian farmers and other stakeholders, the authors found some of the ways in which climate change is impacting agriculture and how farmers attempt to adapt to the changing climate. The lack of knowledge on climate change exacerbates the need to mitigate and adapt to the heavy cyclones, droughts, and unpredictable weather conditions that yearly ruin thousands of hectares of crops and cause increased food insecurity. Malawi's debt stands in the way of its ability to adapt to climate change. Today, different tools such as aid and funds are used to finance climate change adaptation and mitigation. Currently, these tools are insufficient in dealing with the severe effects climate change has on Malawi. We present some of the issues we have discovered with the climate financing system today, and solutions for going forward.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NORWAY

- Norway must follow existing commitments on doubling climate financing by 2026.
 - These funds need to be allocated from outside of the aid budget consisting of a minimum 1 % of the gross national income (GNI), and not be given as loans.
- Norway must advocate for debt relief internationally.
 - Norway must work for the implementation of a comprehensive, coherent, and fair debt workout mechanism for countries facing a debt crisis. This must hold both private and bilateral lenders accountable for providing substantial debt relief.
- Climate financing provided by Norway through climate funds or other channels needs to be easily accessible to governments and local organisations in countries impacted by climate change.
- Norwegian aid policies must prioritise sustainable food systems and food sovereignty, and other policies must not undermine or impede on these priorities.
- Gender equality needs to be considered through all areas of development policies to ensure cohesive and comprehensive policies.
- Norwegian development policies must be co-created with civil society, both in Norway and in Malawi.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MALAWI

- The agriculture sector needs to be a priority for climate financing, with a particular focus on the following areas:
 - The Malawian government needs to train and employ more extension workers in order to assist local farmers.
 - The government must make a clear action plan to increase the participation and inclusion of rural farmers' voices in climate change discussions and political processes.
 - Agricultural and climate change policies must be accessible for local farmers. Translation and interpretation must be made available so that farmers can gain knowledge about these policies.
 - Government and aid-partners need to design and implement interventions together with Malawian civil society that support gender-equitable climate-smart agriculture.
- The government must incorporate gender analyses when developing measures and strategies that mitigate the consequences of climate change.



Introduction

Farmers in Malawi are standing at the forefront of the climate crisis, a crisis that is causing increased food insecurity and poverty. This report seeks to highlight the urgent need for climate financing, by demonstrating some of the ways in which climate change affects farmers in Malawi as well as the country as a whole.

This report aims to examine some of the ways climate change has affected the economy and agricultural sector of Malawi, through interviews with farmers and other stakeholders. Through this report we highlight perspectives that are of particular importance to small-scale farmers facing climate change. Our findings outline the current situation in Malawi, which is shaped by increasing food insecurity, more frequent natural disasters caused by climate change, as well as economic crises. Norway, an important bilateral donor to Malawi, has capitalised greatly off the climate crisis in

an unjust economic system.

Data for our research was gathered through 15 in-depth interviews with 29 young farmers within the districts of Lilongwe and Dowa. These small-scale farmers are all currently living in food insecurity. We asked a range of questions within the thematic areas of climate change, gender, food security, market access, and aid. We met with the young farmers in their youth clubs, and we conducted additional interviews with academic and civil society actors both in Malawi and in Norway to increase our understanding of the broader context of climate justice, food security, and the economic situation of Malawi. For the sake of privacy, the interviewees are anonymised and pseudonyms are used in their stead. The scope of the interviews is limited due to time and resources.



However, this report relies on secondary data to make up for some of these limitations, such as policy documents from the Malawian and Norwegian governments, as well as reports from UN organisations and the World Bank.

This report calls for Norwegian stakeholders to be at the forefront in the struggle for increased climate financing and climate justice, and to allocate these funds from outside the aid budget. Norwegian aid is meant to increase development in Malawi and other countries. This effort will be severely undermined if climate financing is not provided. Funding for loss and damage, adaptation, and mitigation is crucial as climate resilience increases food security. We have created policy recommendations to demand both Norwegian and Malawian policy makers to take the issues outlined in this report into account and combat climate injustice.

Background

Located in southeastern Africa, Malawi is a land-locked country and home to Lake Malawi, one of the African Great Lakes. The country achieved full independence from British rule in 1964. The post-colonial government consisted of a one-party system until 1993, when the populace voted for a multi-party democratic system. In 2021, the country had an estimated population of 19.88 million (World Bank, 2022). The country relies on subsistence rain-fed farming, with agriculture being the backbone of the economy, accounting for almost 30 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (World Bank, 2020). 80% of the population of Malawi are smallholder farmers.

Currently, 20% of the population in Malawi is facing high levels of acute food insecurity. This number is expected to increase due to recurrent climate shocks and natural disasters. The war in Ukraine has also led to an increase in non-food inflation by 20.5% in 2022 (World Bank, 2022), which resulted in the Malawian central bank announcing the devaluation of the Malawian Kwacha against the US dollar by 25% in May 2022. Additionally, Malawi has suffered a foreign exchange currency shortage impacting the tobacco industry. 60 percent of the foreign exchange earnings stems from this industry.

Malawi is dependent on loans and aid. In 2021, Malawi received 43,4 million USD in aid from Norway, both from bilateral agreement as well as through other projects (Norad, 2021). These funds include funds within agriculture, and amount to an important, yet inadequate contribution to resolving Malawi's substantial challenges. .

Food insecurity is exacerbated by international debt. In order to understand this situation today, it is important to look at the history of debt. In the 1990s, creditor governments through the IMF and World Bank launched the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative with the promise of reducing debts. In 2000, Malawi entered the HIPC initiative. As a condition to qualify for debt relief, the IMF and World Bank pushed the Malawian government to privatise, end agricultural subsidies, and to sell off its grain reserve in order to reduce government deficits, as they were seen as a 'distortion of trade' (Debt Justice). This, combined with drought and the removal of support for farmers, caused a severe food crisis where thousands died. HIPC has also had consequences for Malawi's food sovereignty since.

The climate crisis has consequences for the debt situation. Adapting to climate change has caused Malawi to take on more debt. The December 2021 Debt Sustainability Analysis indicates that

Climate justice addresses the just division, and equitable distribution of the burdens of climate change and the responsibility of dealing with climate change. The countries with the lowest levels of carbon emissions are the ones most affected by climate change. While countries in the Global North, like Norway, have contributed to climate change and continue to capitalise off of the crisis. Climate justice calls for fairness of policy and practice responses to address climate change and its consequences.

Malawi's external and public debt are both at high risk of debt distress and that the debt is unsustainable. The emerging impacts of the climate shocks in Malawi, where government spending continues to widen the fiscal deficit, will most likely cause further pressure on the government's fiscal consolidation plans, leading to further economic distress.

For a long time, Norway has provided aid to Malawi. Through implementing novel approaches, research and innovation by working with small scale farmers, Norwegian aid has had a focus on strengthening local food systems. In November 2022, the Norwegian government launched a new strategy that aims to promote food security and sustainable agriculture within the aid budget. However, Norway has yet to create a coherent plan to achieve these lofty goals.

Rather, national and international energy and trade policies undermine these goals, while the aid sector aims to alleviate the consequences the selfsame policies have on countries such as Malawi.

The Malawian economy is deeply impacted by inflation and debt, creating a demanding situation. Climate change is already causing reduced agricultural output in Malawi, subsequently impacting Malawi's agricultural-based economy and its GDP. There is a need to build up climate resilience and respond effectively to the cyclones that have damaged vital infrastructure, including power plants, bridges, and roads. With a limited state budget, also due to requirements imposed by lenders such as the IMF, implementing these and other policies has proved to be challenging. Additionally, the fact that cost of fertiliser, cooking oil, and gas has increased rapidly in 2022, has also impacted small-scale farmers.





Climate change is an undeniable reality. It has impacted a large number of farmers in Malawi. The rain has grown unpredictable, disrupting crops, and this has resulted in poor produce, forcing farmers to sell the food at a reduced price.

- Alinafe Stafford

I encourage putting women in higher positions. Women are a driving force, and are the ones that make things happen on the ground. A fellow woman understands how women in remote areas struggle with agriculture and can effectively convey their concerns.

- Eric E. Kapalamula





Climate change is having a significant impact on our generation because rains arrive later, harming agricultural growth. In addition, climate change has contributed to the erosion of our fertile soils, causing us to yield less than we used to. This also increases our reliance on chemical fertilisers.

- Colleta Wyson



As a farmer, I'm struggling to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change because I do not have access to the right information. The farming I, and most farmers in my area do, is based on the knowledge passed on from our forefathers.

- Simedi Malama

The Impact of Climate Change

While in Malawi, we interviewed young farmers about their experiences with climate change, particularly focusing on how it has impacted them and their ability to farm. The farmers called attention to food insecurity caused by climate change as the most pressing issue, not only for individuals but for the country as a whole. All of the farmers that were interviewed for this report, expressed that they had been impacted by climate change. The level of knowledge and adaptation measures varied from farmer to farmer, but the need to adapt did not. These findings showcase how urgent climate action is needed and also emphasise the importance of increased climate financing.

The agricultural industry of Malawi is threatened by the effects of climate change, which also threatens the livelihoods of millions. A report by the IPC Chronic Food Insecurity indicates that nearly 5.4 million Malawians living in rural and secondary urban areas face moderate to severe chronic food insecurity due to abject poverty and recurring natural disasters. An additional 4.4 million people face mild food insecurity.

Following our interviews with farmers in Dowa, we sought to understand why Malawi still encounters food insecurity despite the fact that smallholder farmers account for 80% of the Malawian population. The farmers plainly said that climate change is the primary cause.

Weather patterns have changed drastically throughout the years, disrupting rainfall patterns and the agricultural season. As Malawi's small-scale agriculture is mostly rain-fed, it relies heavily on the rain for crop production. In the past, the majority of Malawian farmers would sow their crops at the beginning of the summer rainy season (normally the end of November or early December) and harvest them at the beginning of the winter dry season (April and May). As the weather patterns have changed and become more unpredictable, farmers experience more uncertainty as to when to sow. This, in turn, creates further uncertainty for the

livelihood of farmers as well as for the availability of food for the rest of the country. Now the rains come late and stop early, making it difficult for the crops to grow, resulting in food insecurity.

The rain isn't falling as it used to. The agriculture calendar has changed, making it more difficult to forecast when to plant.
- *Pemphero*, a 22-year-old farmer

Food Insecurity in Malawi

According to FAO (2008), food security requires a state in which "all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life". Failure to achieve these requirements indicates food insecurity. In Malawi, a family's food security is oftentimes defined as the ability to afford three meals a day.

Access to markets

While Malawi and other countries in the Global South struggle with exploitative trade deals and restrictions imposed by more powerful countries and the WTO, farmers face other challenges that hinder food security. Such challenges include the role of vendors and central government.

The lack of unions and collective farming leave individual farmers vulnerable to exploitative practices. Vendors are able to exert significant power over farmers by making them feel forced to sell their crops at a low price out of fear that their produce will rot unless they comply.

There are also other structural barriers that prevent small-scale farmers from gaining access to markets. One such example is access to export licences. Daniel, a farmer, explained how he smuggled onions to Tanzania and other crops to South Africa, because exporting the crops through proper channels and routes requires licences which take a long time to acquire - and are sometimes not given. He claimed that officials are keeping the poor poor by denying them these licences. The lack of collective bargaining and the difficulty of acquiring export licences reflect the deeply rooted issues of global financial inequality and exploitation in the current economic system.

Natural disasters

Malawi is particularly vulnerable to natural disasters, which have increased in number and intensity over the past decades. The past two years have been especially challenging, as the country was hit by cyclones Ana and Gombe in 2022, and again by Cyclone Freddy in early 2023.

Cyclone Freddy has caused over 2 million farmers in Malawi to lose their crops and livestock and over 200,000 hectares of crop fields have been destroyed, in addition to displacing over half a million Malawians and killing more than 500 people (Reliefweb, 2023; Mphaka, 2023). The cyclone has caused significant material damages to infrastructure, washing away houses and damaging roads, bridges and schools. Extreme weather events will become both more frequent and damaging as global warming increases (IPCC, 2023).

Soil health

Climate change is one of the leading causes of soil erosion in Malawi. Over the years, most of the vegetation cover has been removed, leaving the soil more vulnerable to natural disasters such as floods. Heavy rainfall and floods washes away fertile soil, causing erosion. Alleviating this issue is central in efforts to increase food security in a changing climate, as climate-resilient farming depends on fertile soil.

Eroded soil also increases the need for chemical fertilisers. A study done by Public Health Nutrition 2016 revealed that 90% of Malawian farmers use chemical fertilisers for crop production. Farmers told us that soil quality has deteriorated, leading to a decrease in yields.

Most of the farmers we interviewed were not aware of climate-resilient farming practices that increase soil fertility. Examples include the usage of manure, as well as other climate-smart agriculture technologies that can be utilised in place of chemical fertilisers. As a result of an industrial food system where large agribusiness companies hold the power, chemical fertilisers have

doubled in price in Malawi the last year and become too expensive for small-scale farmers to afford. And as fertile soil continues to erode, the need for organic manure and other climate-resilient farming practices become even more crucial for Malawi's agricultural sector. Additionally, as climate change has exacerbated the degradation of fertile soil, the Global North must also be held responsible for Malawi's damaged soil. Climate justice for Malawi thus entails countries such as Norway being held responsible for this degradation, and for paying up for soil restoration.

Deforestation

Afforestation and reforestation are oftentimes portrayed as the most important measure for mitigating climate change in Malawian politics. Tree planting has been a mainstay in both government and international donors' projects for decades, with millions of trees having been planted as a result.

However, the results of these projects have not lived up to their promise as they do not take into account the root causes of deforestation. Neither the Malawian government nor international donors tend to follow up with funding for trees that have been planted. Additionally, projects and policies do not take into account the primary reason that deforestation occurs in the first place: the unjust economic system.

Energy poverty is also a vital factor in why deforestation continues. The lack of electricity in both rural and urban areas leave people with few other options than using charcoal as the main energy source for cooking. For afforestation efforts to be successful, the focus should therefore also be on promoting access to renewable energy and building

resilient infrastructure.

Deforestation and energy poverty are gendered issues in Malawi. Women are the ones who have to make sure the household has food and energy, and charcoal serves as both income and as a critical energy source. When droughts, floods, or bad soil ruin crops, charcoal can serve as an alternative income source. These issues show the need for coherent work within climate adaptation and reflects the importance of gender-inclusive policies.



Gender and climate change

Women play a key role in agriculture, producing 70 percent of food that is consumed locally, yet only a third of farm holdings in Malawi are held by women, due to restrictive legislation and cultural norms (Vincent, 2017). Gender roles leave women without the space to make decisions and influence their own lives. Women are also disadvantaged when it comes to access to farm inputs and loans to expand their businesses.

Women in Malawi also tend to be time-poor. In addition to working in the field,

they are also largely responsible for much of the country's unpaid labour, such as housework, child-rearing, and fetching water.

Men are more often in control of cash crops while women are left to tend to the food crops. In most parts of the country, markets for cash crops are few and far between. Sometimes, a farmer can spend the whole day selling his produce. Cultural norms often encourage men to travel to the markets while the woman takes care of the home and the children.

When the effects of climate change hit the fields, creating food insecurity and poverty, young women are pushed further into early marriages and prostitution to ensure that their household is fed. "When homes are hit by hunger, girls are married off in return for financial support and sometimes venture into prostitution with hope of finding money for food", a professor

explained. Women are thus left vulnerable to gender-based violence. This also demonstrates how gender equality is a crucial aspect of climate justice.

The government must design programs that support gender-equitable smart agricultural interventions, securing women's empowerment, and that their voices are heard in building resilient agricultural systems in Malawi.

I went to get a loan at one of the money lending institutions to invest in my farming business but they denied me because I'm not married, they claimed that I don't have financial security. I felt discouraged and humiliated.
- *Martha*, a single female farmer





Access to knowledge about climate change

Knowledge about climate change and farming does not reach the people most vulnerable to climate change, particularly in rural areas. Farmers experience soil infertility, increase in crop diseases, and prolonged dry seasons, but many do not know how to adapt to these changes. Most of the farmers we interviewed receive information about climate change through the radio, while a few use the internet, government newspapers, or receive information from farm advisors. These channels are limited and provide insufficient information. Only four of the twenty seven farmers asked, reported on some knowledge of farmers' rights and agricultural policies. Almost all of the farmers asked, had no or very little contact with agricultural extension workers.

The role of the Agricultural Extension Development Coordinator (AEDC) is to provide guidance to farmers through

Agricultural Extension Development Officers (AEDO), in their Extension Planning Area (EPA), under the Ministry of Agriculture. The extension workers are thus responsible for implementing government policies in practice, as well as advising the farmers on best farming practices to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

However, most areas are underserved. Currently, close to one thousand workers serve close to one million farmers. This means that one extension worker is expected to serve between 2,500 and 3,000 farmers (Chavula, 2020). We recommend that agricultural and climate change policies should be accessible and interpreted or translated into national and local languages to local farmers. Additionally, increasing the number of extension workers is important for ensuring farmers' access to information about climate change and adaptation.

Coherent and comprehensive climate financing

Climate financing in Malawi must prioritise agricultural projects. Currently, many projects are funded by aid and international donors. Implementing projects of climate adaptation and mitigation might look similar to donor-driven aid projects.

Future projects funded by climate financing could face the same challenges as current aid projects, such as fragmentation. Aid fragmentation occurs when there are too many donors involved in too many sectors. Many countries provide aid to Malawi, and several are involved in financing projects within the agricultural sector.

In 2021 alone, there were 56 different registered projects funded, either in full or in part, by Norway. Nine of these projects were within the agricultural sector (Norad, 2021). With a large number of projects, often in the same area, there is a significant risk of projects undermining each other. The implementation of agricultural projects must ensure a low degree of aid fragmentation in order for climate

adaptation to be effective, regardless of whether the project is financed through aid or through climate funds.

A field officer of agriculture in Dowa explained that “there are some areas that have been beneficiaries of different projects for more than five years and yet you find that households in the area are still not economically empowered and food insecure”. For project funding and aid in general to be efficient, there thus needs to be more coordination among aid actors with regards to which projects are implemented and where.

Climate financing directed towards agriculture is key for small-scale farmers to adapt to climate change and to be able to produce food. For this to take place, clear accounts of what different agricultural projects are implementing, and how, must be available. Where there is significant overlap, projects may be giving different information to the same farmers about how to adapt to climate change. This can, in worst-case scenarios, cause decreased resilience to climate change.



Climate Financing

The challenges we have presented in the previous chapter are complex and broad, and calls for multiple interventions across different sectors. However, the most urgent action to combat climate change and attain climate justice for Malawi is climate financing and debt relief. This will help the country to invest in resilient agriculture, which in return will boost its economy. Through existing projects, we have seen farmers adapt by using methods that are increasing their production while facing climate change. For climate financing to be effective, issues of debt and access to climate funds need to be addressed. At the same time, climate financing needs to be directed toward climate resilient infrastructure, not just short-term relief.

As with many other countries, corruption is a challenge in Malawi. However, as the effects of climate change and the subsequent food insecurity is severe, this is not a sufficient reason to deny the country climate financing. The Anti-Corruption Bureau of Malawi does important work to investigate and prevent corruption in public and private bodies. According to a U4 Anti-corruption Resource Centers report Corruption and Climate Finance (2020), appropriate and effective anti-corruption tools and strategies must be developed to ensure the efficacy of targeted climate financing. There is also a need for more research on corruption undermining climate goals as to better prevent it.

The Green Climate Fund

A climate fund is a pool of money set aside for issues related to climate change. The money in a fund is often invested and professionally managed in order to generate returns for its investors. There have been several climate funds established in the past years as a means of climate financing, with the Green Climate Fund being one of the largest.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is the operating entity of the Financial Mechanism under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate

If a storm hits Malawi, it will wash away the roads. If Europe experiences similar issues maybe five people will die.

Here, hundreds will die.

- *Professor Chifundo*, a scholar in the field of agriculture

Climate finance is an important tool in achieving climate justice. It refers to local, national or transnational financing — drawn from public, private and alternative sources — that seeks to support mitigation and adaptation actions that will address climate change in impacted countries in the Global South (UNFCCC). It can be provided through funds, as donations or through aid. Climate financing is an important tool in helping countries rebuild and repair infrastructure, the capacity of national agencies' disaster management, and boost countries' ability to respond rapidly to climate-related disasters. Climate financing also contributes to achieving climate justice, as richer countries have to bear the brunt of the financial burden of paying for loss and damage and adaptation.

Change (UNFCCC) to assist countries in the global South in adaptation and mitigation practices to counter climate change. Despite this, national organisations in Malawi struggle to access these funds. DAPP Malawi (Development Aid From People to People), a Malawian NGO, applied for GCF in 2018. As of March 2023, they are yet to receive any funds.

Moreover, the GCF has been criticised for many years for not providing accessible financing (World Resources Institute, 2021).

The requirements and bureaucracy surrounding the GCF make it difficult for local organisations to access these funds. The World Food Programme, FAO and other international organisations, are the only organisations in Malawi that can access GCF. This issue must be addressed so that national organisations have the same access to GCF. Civil society in Malawi must play an essential role in the implementation of climate adaptation and mitigation.



Debt Crisis

Malawi is being forced to borrow money to adapt to a crisis it did not create. When Cyclone Ana hit Malawi in 2022, there was severe infrastructural damage. The country lost about a third of its power and repairing the damage was not within Malawi's budget. The result was more debt. This is one of many examples of how the climate crisis is fuelling the debt crisis. Climate threats result in borrowing more in order to address climate change impacts.

This increased debt burden is also a direct effect of failed climate finance commitments from countries in the Global North. The December 2021 Debt Sustainability Analysis indicates that Malawi's external and public debts are both at high risk of debt distress and that the debt is unsustainable. One reason Malawi took so long to get debt relief in the early 2000s was due to the strict conditions for getting debt cancellation. These strict conditions also resulted in increased food insecurity and worsened conditions for farmers.

The Minister of Finance presented Malawi's economic situation during The National Youth Conference on the State of Government and Youth Development in September 2022, where he showed that 7.7% of GDP is expected to be financed by borrowing. This is increasingly reducing fiscal space for development spending. He highlighted that part of the reason behind Malawi's poor policy implementation is that such a high amount of Malawi's revenue is going to external debt service. Poor policy implementation was found to be one of the key drivers behind Malawi's food insecurity crisis, along with flooding and poverty as the other two. Debt is

therefore causing increased food insecurity in Malawi, and measures must be taken to alleviate this challenge.

Malawi's Rising Debt Crisis

Rising domestic financing and borrowing from regional development banks on a non-concessional basis have significantly increased Malawi's public debt from 32% of its GDP in 2013 to 55% in 2020. Malawi's total external debt stood at \$3.64 billion at the end of March 2022. Its foreign loans include \$254 million from the Export-Import Bank of China, \$1.57 billion from the World Bank and the IMF, and \$460.7 million from the African Export-Import Bank, according to Finance Ministry data. In 2021 31.1% of Malawi's total revenue went to external debt service. 72% of this debt is owed to private actors, while 20% is owed to multilateral organisations (Debt Justice, 2022).

Debt Relief

Unsustainable debt leaves Malawi with no real option for developing infrastructure or the energy sector. As our findings showed, deforestation and better infrastructure to enable market access are two key issues Malawian smallholders are facing. Both of these issues require debt cancellation.

Reducing debt payments allow countries to increase their social expenditure and infrastructure investments (Global Action for Debt Cancellation, 2021). This is becoming increasingly important as the number of climate disasters increases. Countries in the Global North are considered creditor countries in relation to debt.

These same countries have, through decades of expanding their fossil fuel industries and increasing carbon emissions, exploiting natural resources, and colonialism, accumulated a huge climate and social debt to the countries in the Global South.

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Source: Eurodad. 2021. *The Climate Emergency: What's debt got to do with it?*
adapted from SLUG - Nettverk for rettferdig gjeldspolitik (n.d.)

Today, these same rich countries fail to deliver the system-changing solutions that are needed, including immediate debt cancellation by all lenders for all countries in need. Many of the private creditors from the North are banks or international corporations and not governments directly. However, it is the responsibility of governments to monitor or regulate the businesses and banks in their own countries. Many of these governments influence the development in countries like Malawi through aid, and funds should not be given without comprehensive consideration of the financial situation.

Debt itself and also the conditions given by the IMF have proven to cause more damage and uphold the economic system which continues to contribute to the climate crisis, food insecurity, and inequality.

Financing for adaptation and mitigation must be accessible for those who need it. It must also be given as gift based financing, it is countries in the Global North who are responsible for the climate crisis continue to capitalise and must be held responsible without finding new ways of capitalising off countries in the Global South.



Conclusion

Millions of Malawians, mostly farmers, are facing acute food insecurity. Droughts, increasingly frequent deadly cyclones, and changing weather patterns shape the agriculture of Malawi. Due to climate change, lack of access to knowledge, and difficult economic conditions, farmers have little to no agency in changing their situation of food insecurity. Households struggle with affording basic necessities and farm inputs. Climate change exacerbates gender equality and vice versa.

Small-scale farmers of Malawi and other low-income countries in the Global South are facing destruction and increasingly harsh living conditions. Malawi struggles with high inflation, lack of foreign currency, and heavy debt which all make policy implementation difficult. The country is stuck in a vicious circle of debt and climate crises.

Climate financing is crucial in achieving climate justice. Countries in the Global North have profited from a system that has contributed to climate catastrophes in the Global South, and are therefore obligated to pay for loss and damage, and for climate adaptation. For climate justice to be achieved, climate financing needs to come from outside of existing aid budgets. Climate financing through funds, first of all, needs to be easily accessible.

In the case of Malawi, the agriculture sector is extremely exposed to climate change, which in the past years has contributed to an increase in food insecurity. That is why the agriculture sector should be a priority for climate financing. Norwegian aid policies must prioritise both food security and food sovereignty, and other policies cannot undermine these priorities.

In short, achieving climate justice for Malawi requires coherent and comprehensive policies that take all the aforementioned aspects into consideration. Sufficient climate financing in combination with substantial debt relief is an important tool to decrease food insecurity and make climate justice a reality.



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The organisations behind the report

Point of Progress is a Malawian non-governmental organisation, committed to empowering the youth, women, and children to act on issues that affect their lives and play an active role in the development process. Point of Progress' programmes focus on agriculture, climate change and the environment, economic empowerment, gender, and youth participation, sexual and reproductive health, and education.

Spire is a Norwegian environmental and development youth organisation that works for a fair and sustainable distribution of the world's resources. Spire works cross-politically on global issues related to climate and the environment, international trade, sustainable urban development, and food security. The organisation strives to increase knowledge and engagement on these global issues among the youth.

Point of Progress and **Spire** have been partners since 2005. Currently, the two organisations are implementing the **Solidarity Exchange for the Environment and Development (SEED)** programme, a youth exchange program supported by NOREC. The programme aims to promote climate justice awareness among the youth in relation to agriculture, gender, and youth participation in Malawi and Norway. This report was written by the 2022/2023 SEED exchange participants.

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- Grace, Cari Anna, Fedness, and Katinka



