



**WILDLIFE AND NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION
AND
REHABILITATION TRUST
(WNR CRT - CC)**

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE - 21ST SEPTEMBER, 2019.

CLIMATE ACTION FOR PEACE

SEPTEMBER, 2019.

NARRATIVE REPORT ON THE WNCRT – CC WORLD PEACE DAY COMMEMORATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

On Saturday, 21st September 2019, WNCRT-CC in Malawi joined the rest of the Global Community in commemorating this year's International Day of Peace. The CC has an environmental concern about poor management of plastic wastes in Malawi fueled by lack of proper regulatory policies amidst the influx of plastic products especially juices whereby the cost of production is lesser than that of environmental damages. The common practice for managing plastic wastes is open burning which contributes a lot of Carbon dioxide into the atmosphere which is one of the major greenhouse gases causing global warming and in turn bringing about climate change.

The CC commemorated the day through various activities conducted in Lilongwe under sub theme: “Sustainable Plastic Waste Management – Better Malawi – Better World”. Some of the activities included environmental awareness meetings and focus group discussions.

2.0 ACTIVITIES

WNCRT – CC members are known to be the Ambassadors of Positive Climate Change and on this day they committed themselves to conduct the following activities using locally available resources.

2.1. Environmental Awareness Campaign

The CC conducted an environmental education and awareness meeting with the people from Chiseka Community near Mitundu Trading Center where the following topics were covered;

- The Concept of Climate Change, Causes and Effects.
- Environmental impacts of open burning of Plastic Wastes.
- Sustainable Plastic Waste Management Practices – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.
- The role of the community in environmental conservation, protection and management.



Madalitso Mwaungulu speaking at the Environmental Education and Awareness Meeting in Mitundu – Lilongwe.

The participants were civic educated on human activities that contribute to climate change which include deforestation, open burning of wastes products which include plastics and unsustainable farming practices. They were helped to understand the negative impacts of climate change on the natural environment as well as on the social and economic welfare of human kind. The need to join hands in minimizing generation of plastic wastes, as well as protecting, conserving and managing the environmental resources was greatly emphasized from individual, household and community levels. Some of the major comments from the participants included the call for effective afforestation programs in the area during the coming of the rainy season as well as the need to engage with traditional leaders from different societies in the efforts to conserve the environment so that local level decisions should be considering sustainable environmental

conservation practices. They also commended proper waste disposal mechanisms in market places and communities as a means of controlling open burning practices.

2.2. Focus Group Discussion

The Focus Group Discussion took place in Kamowa Village, in the Area of Traditional Authority Chingala in Lilongwe District. The Topic of discussion was *‘The Role of the Local Community in Sustainable Management to Plastic Waste’*, Community members lamented the lack of access to renewable sources of energy and the decline of forest resources as the major reason that push them to using plastic bottles as a source of energy for cooking. They admitted that they do send children to nearby markets to collect plastic bottles in bags to be used their homes for cooking. The byproducts of such combustions in their kitchens are detrimental to human health especially women whereby prolonged exposure is one of the risk factors for respiratory diseases.

They also highlighted that due to lack of proper waste disposal facilities in their local markets, shop owners are fond of conducting open burning of plastic wastes which contributes a lot of harmful gases into the atmosphere. Another point of concern during the discussion was lack of proper policies by the government to control the market especially the companies and business people involved in the production and selling of plastic bottled products. They said if the market is well regulated and environmental issues are incorporated in packaging plans of their products, the problem of poor management of plastic wastes especially bottles would be checked.

The following were the concluding points for the discussions;

- The need for the provision of access to renewable energy sources such as solar power.
- The need to introduce afforestation programs in the area especially at household levels, as trees help in cleaning up the environment.
- The need for proper waste disposal facilities in local markets.
- The need to engage policy makers and business people for policy reformation to ensure a balance between economic and environmental goals.



Grace Chilongo and Emmanuel Phiri facilitating the Focus Group Discussion in Kamowa Village-Lilongwe.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

With availability of financial resources in the future, the CC commends to implement afforestation programs in some of the communities within Lilongwe to help curb the effects of climate change as trees act as carbon sinks. There is also a need to extend the environmental education and awareness meetings to larger sections of the society to help citizens make informed decisions about climate change issues. In conclusion, this years' International Day of Peace has been a success for the CC being the first time to participate and the CC appreciates tireless mutual and technical support from URI Southern Africa and the entire URL family. May peace prevail on Earth.