



Churches Action in
Relief and Development

CARD
actalliance

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Picture: Ginny Sam—a project participant in Balaka district

Our Work

In this edition of our newsletter, we are delighted to present a comprehensive overview of the exciting activities we have undertaken between January and June 2025.



Picture: PWS&D Programs Coordinator Kristen Winters (left) with Felesta Kamwendo (right) a project participant in Balaka district



Picture: PWS&D Programs Coordinator Kristen Winters with CARD staff and the community during monitoring visit in Balaka district

NSANJE, CHIKWAWA, NENO DISTRICTS

Sand dams project

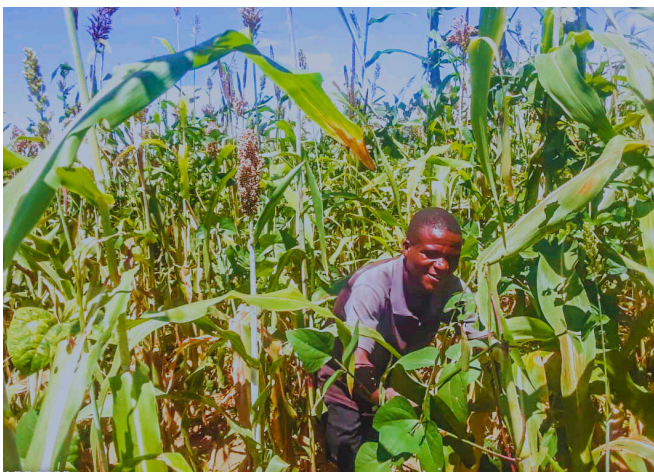
With funding from Sand Dams Worldwide Foundation, we constructed one sand dam making a total of 6 sand dams constructed in Nsanje, Chikwawa and Neno districts.

SAND DAM PROJECT NURTURING SMALLHOLDER FARMERS- HOW RAPHAEL THOLE IS BUILDING RESILIENCE.

In Group Village Headman Thomas, Traditional Authority Chapananga in Chikwawa District, a quiet revolution is taking root, led by none other than 32-year-old farmer and father of two, Raphael Thole.

Determined to create a better life for his wife and children who are aged 4 and 2, Raphael is rising above the daily challenges of smallholder farming with resilience, hope and new found knowledge. His inspiring transformation began in 2024 when he joined a lead farmer training program on conservation agriculture, under the Building Water and Food Security of Farmers in Southern Malawi project, popularly known as the Sand Dams project.

This initiative, supported by Sand Dams Worldwide, equipped Raphael and fellow participants with practical training on critical techniques such as preparing Mbeya manure, intercropping, mixed cropping and constructing box ridges. In addition to training, the program distributed early-maturing seeds of sorghum, millet, beans and cowpeas.



Picture: Raphael Thole in his field

Wasting no time, Raphael applied his new knowledge by preparing Mbeya manure and planting cowpeas in his garden. He established two separate plots, one for cowpeas and another for mixed cropping, to compare the outcomes.

Key Component:

Providing water and food security to farmers in Southern Region of Malawi



Picture: Raphael Thole in his field

His proactive, hands-on approach is helping him identify the most effective farming strategies for his land.

Even in the face of a prolonged dry spell early in the rainy season, Raphael remains hopeful. He credits his optimism to the effective conservation agriculture practices he now uses.

"The training was a great cause for change in my planting field," he says proudly, noting how the Mbeya manure helped retain soil moisture and improve fertility despite difficult weather conditions.

Raphael Thole's influence extends beyond his farm as he actively participates in community efforts to promote environmental sustainability, including sand dam construction and tree planting. His dedication to innovation and sustainable agriculture has made him a respected role model in Chikwawa.



Picture: Raphael Thole planting trees with fellow community members

Key component:

Address the root causes of adolescent pregnancies through empowering faith and community leaders as community gate keepers to play an active role in addressing teenage pregnancies and child marriages

NSANJE AND CHIKWAWA DISTRICTS

A Faith-Based Approach to Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights

With funding from Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE) in partnership with Norwegian Church Aid and Dan Church Aid (NCA-DCA)

A PLEDGE BROKEN, A LIFE RESTORED: FAITH & COMMUNITY LEADERS RESCUE ELISA

"I just wanted to escape hunger; we often went days without food. I thought marriage was my only way out."

Elisa shared eyes welling with tears.

Her mother, Lucy, echoed the hardship. *"There were nights Elisa went to bed on an empty stomach. Sometimes we only ate once a day just a pot of porridge if we were lucky."*

In Nsanje, in a village near the Mozambique border, 16-year-old Elisa (not her real name) quietly handed her mother a folded chitenje containing K30,000 and no words. In her culture, that gesture said everything.

It was luphatho, a traditional marriage pledge that signals the start of a marriage union. For Elisa's family, caught in the grip of extreme poverty, the offer felt like a lifeline.

The man proposing marriage was in his late 20s and had just recently returned from South Africa and seen by some in the village as arare opportunity. But Elisa was only in seventh grade, still a child with dreams not yet lived.



Lucy dries a chitenje, a prized token often exchanged in child marriage practices in Nsanje

Pastor Charles George, secretary of Nsanje Faith Leaders Network publicly condemned child marriage, urging the community to prioritize girls' education over harmful traditions, a message that strongly resonated with many.

"We complain that outsiders take our jobs," he said passionately. "But we send our daughters into marriage for a bale of sugar instead of sending them to school for a certificate. That must stop." Pastor Charles said.

The effort is part of the Faith-Based Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Project, with support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy through NCA-DCA Malawi.

The project empowers faith and traditional leaders to challenge harmful practices like child marriage and promote girls' rights. So far, 10 girls have been rescued in Nsanje alone.

Elisa now lives safely with relatives and she is now back in school.



Community members engaged in an awareness meeting to end child marriages

Local faith leaders and child protection workers intervened quickly to stop Elisa's early marriage. The marriage was canceled and the man was warned of legal consequences. Elisa's mother, initially supportive of the marriage, changed her mind after learning about the risks.

As poverty and tradition continue to threaten the futures of many girls in rural Malawi, Elisa's story stands as a reminder: with faith, courage and community, transformation is possible

Key components:

Increased crop production and diversification among farmer groups to meet the quality and quantity requirements of off-takers.
Enhanced access to markets for farmers

Building Community Resilience through Agriculture Commercialization and Agro-ecological Approaches

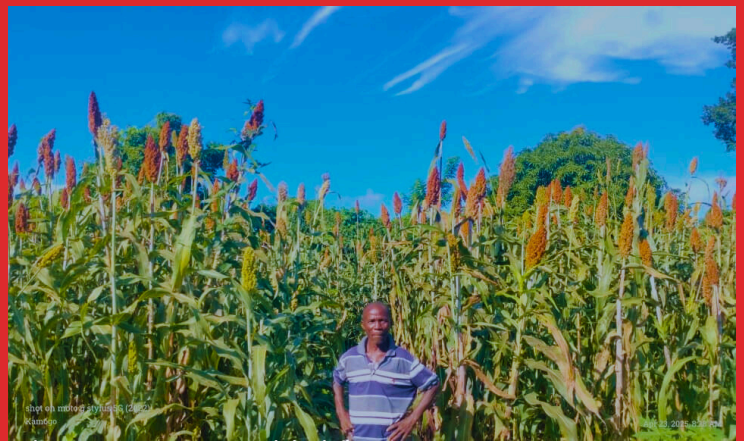
With funding from Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) through Norwegian Church Aid-Dan Church Aid (NCA/DCA) Joint Country Programme

JACOB'S SORGHUM SUCCESS: A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY WITH CHIBUKU COMPANY

In the heart of Nsanje district, a new chapter of hope and prosperity is unfolding for Jacob Clemence Charlie, a 57-year-old father of seven from SGVH Jimu, T/A Ndamera. Through a powerful partnership with Chibuku Company and the Building Community Resilience through Agricultural Commercialization and Agro-ecological Approaches project, Jacob has embraced a life-changing opportunity in contract farming.

As part of the initiative, Jacob received quality red sorghum seed from Chibuku Company, along with a guaranteed market for his harvest. Determined to make the most of this chance, Jacob dedicated himself to nurturing his crop. With hard work and favorable conditions, his sorghum flourished.

Now in the harvest season, Jacob is preparing to sell his produce to Chibuku and is optimistic about a significant boost in income.



Picture: Jacob Clemence Charlie in his field

Jacob recalls past struggles when farmers relied on poor-performing local seed varieties.

"We used to lack proper seed for sorghum and every year we were at the mercy of inconsistent rainfall patterns," he explains. "But this project changed everything. We received plenty of quality seed and our harvest has improved significantly."

As Jacob and his fellow farmers prepare to bring their crops to the market, this initiative stands as a shining example of how contract farming can empower rural communities, promote climate resilience and drive local economic growth.

Through the project, farmers like Jacob are not just surviving but they are thriving.

"The partnership has brought new hope to me and my family, the success of this red sorghum crop promises to increase our household income, improve food security and help us better withstand climate and market challenges. I am grateful for the opportunity to get quality seed and have a secure market for my produce. This partnership is not just transforming my life, it's inspiring others to pursue similar opportunities." Jacob shared.



Picture: Sorghum in Jacob Clemence Charlie field

NSANJE DISTRICT

Malawi Drought Response (ECHO-Project)

Key Components:

- Food security
- Nutrition support
- Safeguarding
- Rapid crisis response

With support from the European Union through CARE Malawi, we implemented a six-month emergency project assisting 1,760 El Niño-affected households in Traditional Authority Ndamera and Tengani. The project included a three-month cash transfer (MK92,500/month per household) and prioritized vulnerable groups such as pregnant and lactating women, children under five, the elderly, persons with disabilities and child-headed households. Women also participated in nutrition sessions to promote healthy eating. The project was delivered in collaboration with EAGLES, CADECOM, Njira Impact, Self Help Africa, Save the Children and YONECO.

HOPE AMIDST HARDSHIP—MARY DAIMONI'S STORY.

For Mary Daimoni, a 25-year-old single mother from Group Village Dick, Traditional Authority Ndamera, life has been an uphill battle. As a person with disability, farming is nearly impossible for her, making it difficult to provide for her 7-year-old daughter.

The recent El Niño-induced drought made things even worse, leaving many families, Mary's included, without food. At times, they went to bed hungry.

"The money that I have received will help me to get food. Our communities are facing acute hunger and life is not easy now. Farming is difficult for me and this cash assistance has come at the right time. I am forever grateful." Mary expressed.

Like many others in her community, Mary has often relied on well-wishers for food. In some instances, her young daughter has had to do piecemeal work to help them survive.



Picture: Mary Daimoni during the cash transfer

But hope arrived through the ECHO HIP Drought Response Project, a life-saving initiative funded by the European Union through CARE. The project provided Mary with MK92,500 each month for six months—support that she says has restored her hope.

"This assistance will help me and my daughter survive. For the first time in a long time, I feel hopeful." Mary shared with visible relief.

Thanks to the ECHO HIP project, thousands of households in Nsanje have received much-needed support. With continued collaboration and compassion, this initiative is not just providing aid, it's rebuilding lives.



Picture: Mary Daimoni during the cash transfer

Building resilient Livelihoods

With funding from Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe

Key components:

Improved short-term food security for vulnerable households through the adoption of resilient food crops.

Improved livelihoods of vulnerable households through increased access to water, information and technologies that enhance resilience.

Local communities, local institutions and local actors are empowered and equipped to proactively plan and implement anticipatory actions.

FROM FIREWOOD TO FARMING: RUTH FATCH'S JOURNEY TO RESILIENCE

"I want to be self-reliant and ensure my children don't face the same struggles we did," Ruth Fatch shared.

At 37 years old, Ruth is a woman on a mission. A resident of Nyamizinga Village in Nsanje District, Ruth lives with her husband and four sons. Like many in her community, she once struggled to provide the basics, food, school fees and household needs.

Before joining the Building Resilient Livelihoods Project, Ruth relied on casual labor and firewood sales to survive. She often woke up at 4 a.m. to collect firewood in surrounding forests, risking harassment and confiscation by forestry officials. On bad days, the family went to bed on an empty stomach.



Picture: Ruth showing her seeds

Her farmland offered little hope. ***"I used to harvest only half a bag of maize because I could not afford hybrid seeds. It was tough and we lived in constant poverty."*** Ruth said.



Picture: Ruth in her vegetable garden

That cycle began to break when Ruth became a participant in the Building Resilient Livelihoods project. She received 2kg of millet and 2kg of sorghum hybrid seeds. Despite a prolonged dry spell during the 2024/2025 growing season, Ruth harvested ten 50kg bags, six of sorghum and four of millet.

This harvest marked a turning point. She saved some millet for household consumption, sold part of the sorghum and used the proceeds to pay school fees for her two secondary school children. She also invested in five chickens for poultry farming, a flock that has now grown to 40.

In January, Ruth borrowed K10,000 from her Village Savings and Loans (VSL) group to rent a quarter-acre plot for winter farming. She planted maize and vegetables seed received from the project and began drip irrigation farming.

Ruth's ambitions remain high. She plans to complete her house, construct boys' quarters for letting out, buy a water pump and diversify her income further.

Ruth's story is one of determination, transformation and hope. With the right support and her unwavering drive, she is proving that change is possible, even in the face of hardships.

MULANJE, DOWA AND MCHINJI DISTRICTS

Agroecology for Community Transformation and Integrated Value Chain Enterprise (ACTIVE)

With funding from Bread for the World.

Key Component

Increased income levels for the participating households and increased employment opportunities through development of producer/cooperative groups.

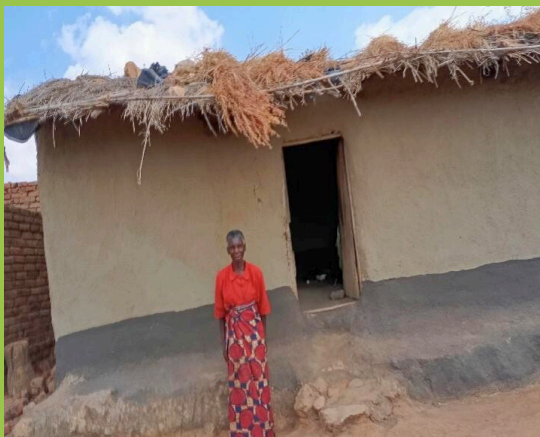
FROM STRUGGLE TO STRENGTH: ANESS MALAMBA'S INSPIRING JOURNEY WITH ACTIVE

"I am so grateful to CARD, my life has changed. I have moved from living in a grass thatched house to a brick house with iron sheets. I have also improved my crop yields from 4 bags to 10 bags by using Mbeya fertilizer and pig manure." Aness says

In Group Village Headman Mkuziwaduka, in Traditional Authority Mponela in Dowa District, a powerful story of transformation is unfolding. At 64 years old, Aness Malamba, a widow, a grandmother and a person with disability, has emerged as a beacon of resilience and hope.

Aness lives with her two granddaughters, aged 9 and 12. Her life took a remarkable turn when she became the very first beneficiary of the project. Through the program, she received two pigs, a sow and a boar. That single gift became the seed of change.

The sow gave birth to eight piglets. With careful planning, Aness sold the boar and four piglets, earning MK700,000. She used the money to buy 12 iron sheets, mold bricks and hire labor to build a proper house. Today, she proudly lives in a three-by-four metre home made of burnt bricks with iron sheet roofing, complete with two bedrooms, a sitting room and a storage room.



Picture: Aness in front of her old house



Picture: Aness in front of her new house

Before joining the project, Aness struggled to find work. Her disability led many to overlook her capabilities, making it difficult to provide for her grandchildren. But today, her farm speaks for her. In the 2025 rain season, she harvested ten 50kg bags of maize, a personal record and a milestone she never imagined.

"I was struggling to feed my grandchildren. As a woman with disability, people did not think I could work. Now, I concentrate on my field and I'm proud to say this year's harvest is a miracle. I have never had so much food. I'm truly grateful to CARD for the support,"
she shares with a smile.

Aness's success showcases how sustainable agriculture and empowerment can bring lasting change, not only to individuals, but to entire communities.

ZOMBA, PHALOMBE, MACHINGA DISTRICT

Community Led Planning and Management for Biodiversity Protection and Resilient Communities in the Catchment Area of Lake Chilwa

With funding from Jersey Overseas Aid Foundation (JOA) in partnership with Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) and Trocaire Malawi.

Key component

Vulnerable and marginalized groups are empowered to manage the Lake Chilwa Basin and improve their livelihoods in harmony with the environment

A LIFE-CHANGING GIFT: WINESI SOKO'S JOURNEY TO SELF-RELIANCE

"I do not know how to express my joy. Receiving these goats is a dream come true for me and my family, these goats will help me raise money for school fees and ease the burden of buying the expensive fertilizer. I plan to use their dung to make organic manure for my crops." Winesi Soko from Group Village Headman Songolo, T/A Mposa, Machinga district shared, overwhelmed with gratitude.

For Winesi a 33-year-old mother of five, receiving goats through a community development initiative is more than just livestock, it is a dream come true. Living with the challenge of being unable to hear or speak, Winesi has often struggled to access essential services and sustain her family. But with this support, she sees a brighter future ahead.

"I have never been included in development programs as a result, I have suffered from poverty due to lack of information and social exclusion. I sincerely appreciate the JOA project team for ensuring that people living with disabilities are part of this initiative. Today marks the fulfillment of a long-held wish, my ultimate goal is to secure a decent house that will provide safety for my children and manure for my farm." Winesi shared or my children and manure for my farm." Winesi shared.

Two of her five children are currently in secondary school and paying their school fees (K80,000 per term), has been a constant challenge.



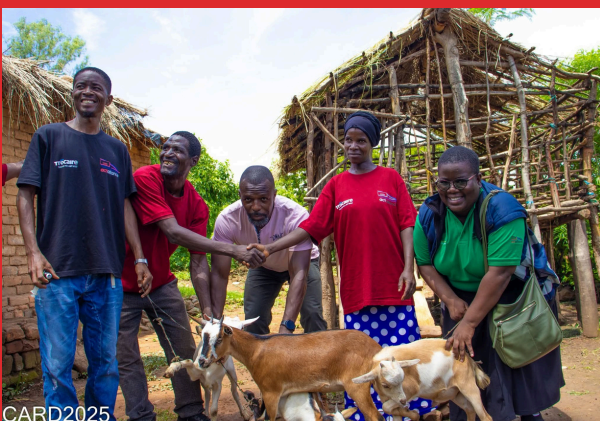
CARD2025

Picture: Winesi showing the goats she received through goat pass on

Winesi relies on piecemeal work to make ends meet, but she now believes that the goats will change her family's financial situation for the better.

The goats were provided to Winesi as part of a pass-on initiative, where the first beneficiary of the program transfers a portion of their livestock to another community member once the animals have multiplied. This approach ensures sustainability and strengthens community resilience over time.

"When CARD identified me as a project participant, my heart was filled with joy. I was not expecting it, but now I know this project will help sustain my family. I will take good care of these goats and pass on five to another family when they multiply." She shared



CARD2025

Picture: Winesi receiving her goats

We are implementing the project in partnership with Trocaire and supported by Jersey Overseas Aid (JOA) and Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) among others, focusing on the inclusion of people with disabilities by ensuring a 5% representation in every community structure, strengthening community resilience and restoring biodiversity in the Lake Chilwa catchment area.



MACHINGA DISTRICT

Key components:

People living in poverty particularly women & youth have adopted agro-ecological approaches

Seed multiplication for neglected & underutilized species is promoted in the communities

Rehabilitating Eco-systems for Enhanced Agriculture Productivity

With funding from Irish Civil Society Program (ICSP) through Trocaire

GENERATING INCOME WITH NEGLECTED AND UNDERUTILISED SPECIES (NUS) SEEDS: A CASE STORY OF RHODA JAMES.

"From just one acre of velvet beans, I expect at least 20 bags, that's over MK1.5 million. Velvet beans are more profitable than any crop I have grown, no fertilizer, little labor. With the money, I will buy maize and easily pay my children's school fees. CARD thank you for providing neglected and under utilised species (NUS) seeds." Rhoda James shared with a smile on her face.

Although velvet beans are now seen as a less important crop by many farmers in Machinga despite once being widely grown and valued across the district and southern Malawi. Rhoda James holds a different view. Hailing from Group Village Head Mtamila under Traditional Authority Mposa, Rhoda believes the crop still holds great value. After a successful harvest in the 2024/25 season, she expects to earn a substantial income from her velvet beans.

Rhoda is a participant in the Rehabilitation of Ecosystem for Enhanced Agricultural Productivity (REAP) Project. Like many others in the project, she received seeds of various neglected and under utilised species (NUS) such as velvet beans, sorghum, bambara nuts and sesame. In addition to her usual crops like maize and rice, this year she decided to focus more on NUS crops, following the advice and support she received from CARD.



Picture: Rhoda James in her field where she grew velvet beans

As part of efforts to promote neglected and under utilised species (NUS), through the REAP Project, we distributed a variety of NUS seeds to over 800 beneficiaries in Traditional Authorities Chamba and Mposa, where the project is being implemented. Despite prolonged dry spells that affected the area, many of these crops have performed well, significantly contributing to the food and nutrition security of households.

To ensure long-term access to quality NUS seeds, the project also established community-managed seed systems. Beyond enhancing food and nutrition security, NUS play a crucial role in preserving genetic diversity and upholding cultural and traditional values, offering strong support to local communities. Their resilience to climate change further underscores their importance.

The five-year REAP project, is set to run until December 2027.



Picture: Rhoda James in her field where she grew velvet beans

BALAKA DISTRICT

Enhance Climate Resilience for Improved Income and Food Security (ECRIF) project

With funding from Canadian Food Grains Bank (CFGB) through Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D).

Key components:

Increase crop yields and agricultural productivity through climate resilient practices.

Increase income through adaptation to climate change (small scale irrigation farming) resulting in improved economic resilience.

Promote the adoption of climate resilient agricultural practices (Mulching, intercropping, manure application) resulting in improved farming practices.

FROM BARE SOIL TO BUMPER HARVESTS: HOW CLIMATE-SMART FARMING EMPOWERED MOSES CHAMBA TO THRIVE

In the heart of Balaka district, Group Village Nkaya, Chambo Village, 28-year-old Moses Chamba's story stands as a powerful testimony of how the right support can transform lives. The Enhancing Climate Resilience for Improved Income and Food Security (ECRIF) project has turned Moses's farming journey into a path of opportunity and progress.

Chamba recalls how difficult farming used to be before CARD's intervention.

"When CARD came here in 2024, they gave us resources and trained us in new farming techniques. That support has helped us. Before, we were farming without any real direction, just doing what we knew. But ever since CARD introduced us to mulching, manure application, mixed cropping and the use of box ridges to improve soil conservation and moisture retention, everything has changed. My crops are flourishing." Moses shared, his voice filled with pride and gratitude.

Looking ahead, Moses hopes that more young people will follow suit and embrace farming as a viable and rewarding career.

CARD continues to work tirelessly in Balaka and beyond, equipping farmers with the tools and knowledge they need to adapt to climate change, improve productivity and build food-secure communities.

Moses Chamba's story is more than personal success; it's a call to action for others to invest in agriculture, adopt innovation and grow a better future.



CARD2025

Picture: Moses Chamba showing his tomato harvest

This year alone, I harvested 32 bags of maize and earned K500,000.00 from tomato farming. With that, I have bought 20 iron sheets for my house and even secured almost 2 acres of land to expand my farm, achievements I once thought were out of reach. Thank you, CARD, for transforming my life, I hope the youth will appreciate what CARD is doing because with proper farming, we can have good yields and change our lives," With a proud smile, Moses shared.

El-Nino Emergency Response Project

With funding from Canadian Food Grains Bank (CFGB) through Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D)

Key components:

Increased immediate consumption of nutritious food by households affected by humanitarian crisis.

Increased participation of women and marginalized groups in gender-responsive humanitarian action.

Increased access to nutritious food for women, men, girls, and boys affected by humanitarian crises – food assistance.

HOPE RESTORED: A MOTHER'S JOURNEY FROM HUNGER TO STABILITY- ELNINO RESPONSE

For 33-year-old Sigere Medison, a mother of four from Sub-Traditional Authority Phimbi in Balaka District, life took a harsh turn when the El Niño weather phenomenon hit her community. What followed was a period of immense struggle, where even a single meal a day became a luxury.

"El Niño left a devastating effect on our lives. Life was difficult. We used to eat only once a day and sometimes we would go to bed without food. Being a mother of four, with two children under the age of five, it was not easy for me." Sigere Medison shared.

Sigere painfully remembers how the food crisis affected her children, particularly their education. Her three school-going children were forced to miss classes, with her eldest son, just nine years old, opting to take on piecework in a desperate attempt to find food for the family. ***"It broke my heart, but there was nothing else I could do,"*** she says.



Picture: Sigere (left) receiving money from CARD Executive Director Melton Luhanga (right)



Picture: Sigere showing off the money she received

Relief came in November 2024, when the El Nino emergency response cash transfer initiative was launched with support from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and Presbyterian World Service and Development. Sigere was one of the 1,700 vulnerable households selected in Sub-Traditional Authority Phimbi to receive monthly cash transfers of MK90,000.00 for five months.

"Since November, life has been smooth. My family has been able to eat throughout the day. I am forever grateful," Sigere shared with a smile.

She used the money wisely, buying essential food items like maize, cooking oil, beans, relish and porridge flour. But Sigere did not stop there, demonstrating resilience and foresight, she also invested part of the funds into her local Village Savings and Loans group. This has empowered her to pay part-time school fees for her children, ensuring that they don't miss out on their education again.

Sigere's story is a testament to how timely humanitarian support can restore dignity, hope and opportunity. Sigere and many others are beginning to rebuild their lives one step and one lesson at a time.

Improving Food security and income by strengthening Potato and Orange Fleshed Sweet potato (OFSP) Value chains in Southern Africa.

With funding from Action on Poverty through Self Help Africa.

Key components:

Increased availability and access to low cost, high quality seed and planting material of orange fleshed sweet potato varieties with market –preferred traits.

Increased productivity of OFSP among smallholder farmers.

Reduced postharvest losses and promote value addition along OFSP value chains.

Increase rural household incomes by integrating farmers among OFSP value chains.

ALESI MADEYA SEES A BRIGHTER FUTURE THROUGH ORANGE-FLESHED SWEET POTATO FARMING

Alesi Madeya, a 50-year-old single mother of three and caretaker of her grandson, recalls the difficult days before receiving technical support. For years, she struggled to make ends meet, relying on small-scale farming with limited knowledge and resources. But everything began to change when the project introduced her to the potential of orange-fleshed sweet potato (OFSP) cultivation, not just as a crop, but as a pathway to food security and financial independence.

“Life has always been tough for our family. Feeding everyone throughout the year was a constant struggle there were times we went to bed hungry because I simply had no food. In 2025, the maize crop failed and I could not harvest enough. I feared it would be yet another year of hardship.” Alesi recalls.

Alesi’s life is filled with hope in 2025, as she stands on the brink of a dramatic transformation. In March, she and her eldest son planted (OFSP) on a half-acre plot where maize had previously failed. Despite the challenge of farming far from both a river and a borehole, Madeya has been diligently carrying water in pails to irrigate her field. she has adopted improved OFSP production techniques and the results are clear. Her crop is growing well, showing signs of a healthy and promising yield. ***“This year will be my best year,”*** Alesi added.



Picture: Alesi in her field

Alesi is expected to harvest 20 bags of OFSP from her land and if she sells it at MK25,000 per bag, Madeya is expected to realize MK500,000. Madeya plans to extend the land for OFSP production, purchase farm inputs such as hoes ready for small scale irrigation of OFSP and buy maize so that her household should be food secured.

Through the Village Savings and Loan (VSL) component of the project, which is also being promoted in the area, Madeya has the opportunity to regularly save money. With the anticipated increase in income from the project's support, she expects to save at least MK2,000 during each VSL meeting.

“I would like to thank CARD and Self Help Africa for the interventions they are introducing in our area, my life and that of my children will improve and many farmers who are adopting the practices promoted by the project will also see positive changes.” Alesi shared with gratitude.

Humanitarian Crisis Response Project (HCRP)

With funding from Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH)

Key components:

Improved food security at household level.

Reduced impacts of climate related disaster on farming households.

Increased awareness and understanding of Locally Led Anticipatory Action (LLAA) principles among community members, local leaders and stakeholders.

Strengthened local capacity to anticipate and respond to climate shocks and disasters.

Foster a safe space that ensures/ improves safeguarding and protection during project implementation.

A HARVEST OF HOPE: A NEW BEGINNING FOR THE KASONYA FAMILY AFTER CYCLONE FREDDY

When Cyclone Freddy tore through Balaka District, it left behind a trail of devastation flattened homes, ruined crops and shattered dreams. In Group Village Headman Naweta, within Sub-Traditional Authority Phimbi, the impact was severe. Among the hardest hit was Noel Kasonya, a father of three whose world turned upside down overnight.

With his home destroyed and his fields washed away, Noel faced an uncertain future. ***“We had nothing, no shelter, no food, no seed to plant, just despair.”*** he recalls.

But in the darkest hour, a spark of hope arrived. Noel was selected to receive emergency agricultural support. It may have seemed small to some: 2 kilograms of maize seed. But to Noel and his family, it was the lifeline they desperately needed.

Fueled by determination and armed with the knowledge provided through HCRP, Noel planted the seed on his modest quarter-acre plot. Despite facing a prolonged drought, the outcome was nothing short of extraordinary.

This season, the Kasonya family harvested 15 bags of shelled maize—five times more than their pre-cyclone yield. The abundant harvest brought more than just food. It restored dignity, reignited hope and planted the seeds of self-reliance.



Picture: Noel's harvest

“We were left with nothing after the cyclone, but now, we are full of hope. We have enough food and we have saved some seed for the next planting season.”
Noel says with a bright, proud smile.

The Kasonya family's story is more than just a tale of survival. It's a powerful reminder of how targeted support, delivered at the right time, can spark a transformation that reaches far beyond the individual.

Life has changed for the Kasonyas. Noel's children—who once missed school because of hunger—now attend regularly, well-fed and ready to learn. The fear of the future has been replaced by the promise of tomorrow.

Through compassion, resilience and community-driven solutions, a single bag of seed became a harvest of hope.



Picture: Noel's harvest



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