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CCJP CALLS UPON GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE LIVELIHOOD OF RESETTLED MALAWIANS

By Prince Henderson

Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) of the Episcopal Conference of Malawi recently launched a report on land displacement, involuntary resettlement and compensation practices in the Mining Sector. Opening the workshop at Crossroads Hotel in Lilongwe, CCJP's National Secretary, Chris Chisoni said the launch of the report is aimed at ensuring that all people of Malawi benefit from the commercialisation of natural resources.

Legal and policy framework

Chisoni said that this report project seeks to ensure that people affected by mining activities are adequately compensated and resettled through the enactment and establishment of effective and responsive legal and policy framework.

While presenting a paper during the launch, CCJP's Project Officer, Success Sikwese said that the report is there to address key issues related to inadequate legal guarantees for participation, benefit sharing

and dispute resolution.

"Malawi ought to adopt the best practices in line with our neighbouring countries that



Chris Chisoni, CCJP National Secretary

have ensured that there is granting of mineral rights, expropriation of property, compulsory acquisition, public participation, consultation and information" said Sikwese.

"Mozambican land law, for in-

stance, stipulates procedures for investors when applying for the right to use land, when the land is occupied by customary right holders. In this way, the law takes into account people's livelihoods and it does not require customary right holders to register, a provision which saves them money and includes a participatory process right at the land securing stage," he added.

Role of Government

CCJP, through the report, has challenged government to ensure that in all cases of displacement and resettlement the livelihoods of affected people are restored.

The report recommends that government should constitutionally guarantee the preservation of socio-cultural rights through security of tenure and recognition of customary rights.

CCJP is implementing the Transparency Initiative With Our Natural Resources II (TI-WONE II) project in Karonga and Mzuzu dioceses with funding from the Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

ECM Trains Formators On Child Protection

By Prince Henderson, ECM Communications Officer

In a bid to strengthened the capacity of the Catholic Church in Malawi in dealing with issues of child abuse, the Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM) through the Catholic Development Commission in Malawi (CADECOM) and Education Commission recently organized a two-day workshop for Catholic formators and Vocational directors on child protection issues.

The workshop took place at Thondwe Pastoral Centre in Zomba. It follows the approval of the Child Protection Policy for the Catholic Church by Bishops in Malawi during their plenary assembly of June 2014.

Child Protection

At the workshop, ECM's Child Protection Officer, Chimwemwe Phiri, said the Church has a crucial role of protecting children so that they grow holistically in a safe environment, where they are protected from all kinds of abuses within and outside the Church structures.

Phiri acknowledged the existence of some forms of child abuses by the clergy, religious and the laity, and stressed that there is no way the Church can seat back and ignore the reality.

It is against this background that ECM organized this workshop to advance issues of child protection with Formators and Vocation Directors in an effort to lobby for inclusion of child protection issues in formation houses.

"How do we feel when children are hurt? Are there situations in our daily ministry where we feel we could have done better to preserve children's future?" wondered Phiri as he urged participants to take a critical look at the problem and devise better mechanisms of addressing the challenges at hand.

Creating a safe environment

The Education Secretary for ECM, Brother Pascal Ntuwana assured participants that Catholic bishops in the country are committed to protecting the rights of a child and this is the reason why they approved the policy, which is aimed at safe guarding the life of a child.

"This workshop is a platform for the formators and Vocational Directors to ensure that they incorporate issues of child protection in their respective programs at their formation houses and institutions," he said.



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"The Child protection policy is in line with the Gospel values of our Lord, 'Let the children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs' Mark 10:13-15),"he said.

Breaking the culture of silence

Fr. Frank Chingale, Dean of Studies at Kachebere Major Seminary, commended the ECM for taking an initiative to protect

children from any forms of abuse, saying this is a breakthrough for the Church as she addresses the existing silence on child abuses.

"As sisters, priests and religious men and women in the church, I feel it is high time we supported this initiative," he said.

Funded by Trocaire, the workshop drew participants from several formation houses in the country.

Zomba Diocese And Reggio Calabria Partner in Illiteracy Reduction

By Fr Steve Likhutchu, Communications Secretary - Zomba Diocese

The Catholic Diocese of Zomba has called upon citizens in the country to take education as a priority in order to increase chances of developing the nation to greater heights. The administrator for Zomba Diocese, most Rev, Fr. Henry Kaleso, made these remarks during a hand-over ceremony of St Augustine Junior primary school in St. Therese Parish in Machinga Dis-



trict.

Government – Church partnership in education

"Education is a key for the development of a human person and for a nation. That's why I call upon everybody not to lag behind when it comes to basic education but to take it as a priority," said Kaleso.

He also called upon the Malawi Government to support Diocesan efforts to develop the country through reduction of illiteracy levels among the people.

"We are happy as a diocese to serve humanity holistically especially by looking at areas such as education. Reducing illiteracy among the people opens doors for development. This is why we are calling upon the Government to partner with the Church in prioritizing education in the country" Kaleso said.

Beneficiaries must demonstrate ownership

The diocesan administrator thanked

those who worked hard to realize the project in the area.

"I am very grateful to Archbishop Thomas Luke Msusa of Blantyre Archdiocese, for initiating this project. Zomba Diocese also thanks our donors partners from Reggio Calabria, South of Italy, for making our dream come true," he added.

The District Education Manager for Machinga, Mr. Enoch Chumachao, assured the diocese that the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology will continue to do its best to supply learning materials and to provide teachers for the school.

He called upon the local community to take care of the beautiful school and to demonstrate ownership.

"We accept this gift from Zomba Diocese and REgio Calabria. As Government we are ready to do our part by providing essential learning materials, teachers and even payment for the teachers," he said.

Role of chiefs

On behalf of the beneficiaries, Traditional Authority Sitola assured the diocese, donor partners and Government that chiefs in the area would show their appreciation to the Diocese by taking their responsibility in caring for the school and improving it in any way suggested by the authorities.

Zomba Diocese has over 70 primary schools some, of which are boarding schools. This is the second school that donors from Reggio Calabria in Italy have given to Malawi They also funded another school project at Chikala Hills in the same district, in Lingoni Parish.

The donor partners support Zomba Diocese under the project called Un Sogno Sotto il Baobab (the dream under Baobab tree). Ms Silvia Balduzzi, Mr. Angelo Balduzzi and Fr. Vincenzo Troletti take the leading

ACWECA Takes Up The Challenge To Serve People With Love

Sr. Eneless Chimbali, SBVM.



Almost 200 religious superiors from the Association of the Congregation of Women in Eastern and Central Africa (ACWECA) gathered in Lusaka – Zambia to discuss how best they can live the theme that Pope Francis has given them, 'Go, do not be afraid, and serve.'

Commissioned to love

Inspired by the Gospel passage of John 17, the Sisters noted that their mission was to bring Jesus Christ who is the Truth and Love to the world. Therefore, "Each country has been commissioned implement the theme given them by Pope Francis between 2014 to 2017.

Religious Life in the footsteps of Pope Francis

At the assembly, Sr Margaret Aringo, chairperson of the regional body, challenged the Sisters to watch their life style and avoid being influenced by secularism.

Sr. Margaret Aringo also called upon the superiors to take up the challenge, think outside the box, and look beyond the charism and spirituality of each congregation.

The Sisters also discussed their role as Women Religious in this region of Africa and pledged to commit themselves to taking up the role of shaping the face of Africa with love and passion.

The religious superiors came from Kenya, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan and Republic of Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia. Fifteen out of the 29 Women religious congregations in Malawi attended the conference.

ECM Responds To Unfair Criticisms Of The 18th AMECEA Plenary Communiqué On Family

The Secretary General of Episcopal Conference of Malawi (ECM), Rev. Fr George Buleya, has found it necessary to respond to what he referred to as ‘unfair criticism’ against the 18th AMECEA Plenary’s Communiqué, which condemned same sex unions and other deviations that go against human nature and natural law.

An article in the AMECEA 2014 communiqué’ focused on “The Family as the Nucleus of Life”. Addressing the reality of homosexuality, the bishops said:

“We affirm the institution of marriage as an indissoluble union of love between a man and a woman open to procreation and denounce any attempt to redefine this institution.” Based on this teaching, the article went on to call for respect, protection and promotion of family life, which is the nucleus of life and society.

The bishops went further by stating as follows:

“We strongly condemn same sex unions and other deviations that go against human nature and natural law,” said the bishops and added by saying, “We urge for the protection and defense of the family at all costs as that is the beginning and pillar of human life and society...” sad the AMECEA bishops.

Engaging with people through media

In his press statement, Fr Buleya has said that it is not within the tradition of the Catholic Church in Malawi to engage people in the media over misrepresentations of the Church's doctrine.

“However, it was necessary in this case because of the gravity of the accusation and its potentiality of misleading and confusing people”, he said.

A full text of the response can be found on the official website of the Episcopal Conference of Malawi, www.ecmmw.org

AWRIM Take Initiative To Empower Nuns With Financial Management Skills

Under the African Sisters Education Collaboration (ASEC) and Sisters Leadership Development Initiative (SLDI), the Association of Women in Religious Institutes of Malawi (AWRIM) recently conducted a finance management workshop aimed at building the capacity of the Sisters who are managing finances in various projects.

According to the Secretary General for AWRIM, Sr Eneless Chimballi, the training workshop was responding to the needs of AWRIM, in line with the objectives of the association’s strategic plan of the period 2014 - 2018.

The workshop attracted sisters who are bursars and financial administrators in various projects such as hospitals, health centre, schools and managing income generating activities of the Congregations.



Using Computer laboratory

Commenting on the workshop, Sr Barbara Bima who is administrator of Kankao Clinic in Balaka, Mangochi Diocese, said that she noted that many Sisters followed the training with great enthusiasm and commitment.

“The training took place in our state-of-the-art computer laboratory with 20 desktops and internet connections. The internet connection worked properly during the entire period of the training with excellent

connection and speed,” she said.

Participants used several search engines like Google to do research and acquire more knowledge. Sr Bima thanked the facilitators for giving them adequate materials and making their presentations available to the participants.

Participants receive laptop computers

One participant, Sr Bernadette Densani, of the Sisters of Charity of Ottawa, commended the ASEC and SLDI for the donation of laptop computers, which she said, has come at the right time.

“I am very excited to receive this donation, and I believe that my friends are also excited that we have acquired these laptops during this training. When I was coming here, I never thought of receiving a laptop. It will certainly help me to use the skills

that I have learnt and to discharge my duties more effectively,” she said.

The AEC-SLDI Project

The project aims at equipping nuns with skills and knowledge in accounting, quick books or digital calculation and grant writing among others.

According to one of the facilitators who came from Kenya, Mr. Patrick Wanyanga, the accounting training covered topics such as basic accounting principles, budgeting, producing financial statements and balance sheet.

“In most cases these nuns work as Bursars and Administrators, yet they do not know how to prepare proper budgets. We have equipped them with skills that will help them in budgeting and budgetary controls,” said Mr Wanyanga

ECM CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES - SEPTEMBER 2014

Date	Activity	Venue	Members to Attend
9th September	Mixed Commission Meeting	Catholic Secretariat	Bishops in the Mixed Commission
10th September	Executive Board Meeting	Catholic Secretariat	Bishops in the Executive Board
10th September	Seminary Board Meeting	Catholic Secretariat	Bishops in the Seminary Board
11th September	Extraordinary Preparatory Meeting for <i>Ad limina</i> Visit	Catholic Secretariat	All Bishops

**The Episcopal Conference of Malawi
is committed to "making the Word of God
known, pondered and preserved
in the hearts of the faithful."**



September is Bible month for the Catholic Community in Malawi. The Bible, God's word, is source of nourishment and spiritual growth. Its importance in our daily lives obliges us to know and fully appreciate it. We need to costantly and consistently read the bible



**Booklets for Bible Lessons
are available at the Catholic Secretariat,
Pastoral Department and in all Catholic Bookshops
in the Country**