

Malawi Cross Party Group Meeting
Wednesday 18th November 2020
6 - 7.30pm (UK time)

MSPs in attendance

- Liam McArthur MSP (Chair)
- Alasdair Allan MSP
- Alexander Stewart MSP
- Claire Baker MSP
- Maureen Watt MSP

Others in attendance

- Alan Laverock
- Amiton Ngwira
- Andrea Batchelor
- Andrew Mbuliro
- Anna Johnston
- Bernard Mphepo
- Brenda Mwale
- Brian Kerr
- Carol Finlay
- Charity Hara
- Chawa Oluwadamilola
- Christian Chikalimba
- Christina Moyo
- Craig Docking
- Daniel Cosgrove
- David Hope-Jones
- David Sirmequa
- Edward Msiska
- Elizabeth Kacheche
- Gemma Conley-Smith
- Gift Mkwanda
- Heather Cubie
- Hendricks Nkhata
- Ivy Nkando tambala
- Jane Salmonson
- Jennie Chinembiri
- Joanne Chigwenembe
- Joyce Juma-Phiri
- Kelvin Chinguwo
- Kevin Schenk
- Kondwani Chirombo
- Lisa Banda
- Louis Masanje
- Luisa Brown
- Luke Makuluni Mwale
- Marah Lindiwe Sulu
- Memory Lungu
- Moira Dunworth
- Mphatso Sapangwa
- Mtameni Kachusa
- Mwayiwawo Chitsamba
- Noel Banda
- Paul Shaw
- Precious Mtuwa
- Ruth Maluwa
- Simplex Chingota
- Stuart Brown
- Temwani kaponda
- Timothy Munthali
- Towera Kamanga
- Tracy Morse
- Victoria Milanzi
- Victoria Yurwe

Apologies

- Alison Johnstone MSP
- Kenneth Gibson MSP
- Linda Fabiani MSP
- Ben Wilson

On 18th November 2020, the Malawi CPG was held via Zoom, with a focus on Malawi's youth voice on climate change activism. A recording of the meeting is available on [YouTube](#). Please click any of the headings below (highlighted in blue) to navigate to the respective section of the video.

MINUTES:

[Welcome, introductions and Minutes of last meeting](#)

[Liam McArthur MSP](#)

The meeting was chaired by Liam McArthur MSP, who welcomed attendees and introduced the themes of the meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Edward Msiska and seconded by Heather Cubie.

Malawi Youth Climate Leaders:

President of Malawi's climate challenge for Scotland

[Video address](#)

Addressing the AGM of the Scotland Malawi Partnership (SMP) on October 3rd, the President of Malawi, **President Lazarus Chakwera** set out three very positive 'challenges' for Scotland, the third of which was to: *"ignite a movement of climate change activists amongst our peoples, to capture the imagination of Malawian youths."* A segment of his address was played, in which he said:

"I am aware that Scotland is preparing to host the 26th UN climate change conference in November 2021. You can count on Malawi's full participation ... I believe the time has come to escalate the sense of urgency among our people regarding the threats to our indispensable relationship with nature. For that reason, I am eager to see this partnership between us become an example to the world of two nations approaching climate change with the sense of urgency, and in the spirit of collaboration, commensurate with the existential threat this truly is."

Introducing the Malawi Youth Climate Leaders

[Hendricks Nkhata](#)

Hendricks Nkhata, Project Coordinator at the Malawi Scotland Partnership (MaSP), gave some background on MaSP and the 2050 Group's [Malawi Climate Leaders Project](#), which started in 2018 and is due to complete its first phase in March 2021. He then introduced the next two speakers, who talked about their work on the project.

Temwani Kaponda

Temwani Kaponda is a student at the University of Malawi studying Electronics and Computer Engineering. Having grown up on a farm, Temwani has experienced the impacts of climate change directly, and has been passionate about the environment from an early age. She is based in the Rumphu District and became a Climate Leader in 2019 and has been working with a particular interest in energy sources and waste management. She started by mobilising many of the young people in her community, primarily by approaching the existing youth clubs, and then carried out a survey to assess the local community's knowledge of proper waste management. She has since followed this up with advocacy work to educate people on proper waste management, as well as offering other services like removing waste so it can be used for composting. Research is currently being done on treatment of non-biodegradable waste. Another element of her work is countering the issue of depleting natural resources, which has resulted in the planting of 2,500 trees between December and March. Temwani thanked the Scottish Government and 2050 Climate Group for their support and, if given the opportunity to speak at COP26, she would discuss capacity building for youths in Malawi, financial resources and the importance of technology.

Edward Msiska

Edward Msiska is Co-Founder and Director of [Youth Action for Success and Development](#) based in Lilongwe. Some of the key environmental issues his community faces are deforestation, poor waste

management and pollution, and he is implementing innovative solutions to address these. This includes making briquettes from paper and agriculture waste as an alternative cooking fuel in order to reduce overdependence on wood charcoal and firewood, and using this opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of proper waste management. Another project involves championing the use of organic fertiliser. Using an advanced formula to produce organic fertiliser that can be used by the community, this encourages more young people into agriculture, who would otherwise venture into other, more environmentally harmful fields of work due to the prohibitively high cost of inorganic fertiliser. Edward is also part of a tree planting project to combat and raise awareness of deforestation. Edward thanked the Scottish Government and praised the advocacy work that MaSP is doing, which allows young people to see the changes they want actually carried out.

Q&A and open discussion

All participants

These presentations were followed by a Q&A and open discussion.

Q. David Hope-Jones asked if there could be a useful conversation with the Government of Malawi about possible changes to the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) to see if they could support a shift to organic fertiliser?

A. Edward's group liaised with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining to see if they could gain support for their initiative. After a successful demonstration of its effectiveness and efficiency, the Ministry is investigating the formula and looking at possible funders, but is not looking to replace the existing Malawi Government programme.

Q. Heather Cubie asked if there is a need for support in management of clinical waste, and if volunteers from the Scottish Global Health Collaborative could help with this?

A. The chemicals often contained in medical waste can be very harmful to the community, so support in disposing of this would be very beneficial.

Q. Paul Shaw asked about possible solutions to combat plastic waste.

A. Temwani is looking into eco-friendly bricks and believes that more research is needed regarding which plastics are more sustainable and how they can be treated after use in order to reduce harm to the environment.

Dr Tracy Morse from the University of Strathclyde said she was inspired by the work being done by the youth of Malawi and promoted [Washted](#) and the [Mzuzu University Smart Centre](#) for their community level work on waste management, sanitation and hygiene. She also encouraged MaSP to link up with the Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM) as they have a lot of experienced community coordinators. With specific regards to plastics, she recommended linking up with the Trust Group in Blantyre, who are doing work to recycle plastics that are not usually perceived as recyclable.

Q. Stuart Brown asked about the level of awareness among the Malawian youth of climate change issues.

A. Hendricks explained that the knowledge is there, as people are directly impacted by climate change and can see its effects. However, more capacity is needed in order to effect changes.

Edward discussed some of the actions being taken to educate young people on climate change and emphasised the importance of doing so.

Temwani advised that, while many people are aware of climate change, they have simply accepted this as a part of their life and are not aware of the actions they can take to help fight it, so there are a lot of gaps still to fill.

Q. Carol Finlay asked if the success of ‘The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind’ had influenced the use of wind turbines in Malawi?

A. There is low technology transfer to locals on wind turbines despite the huge publicity of that project.

Review of Scottish Government’s International Development Policy:

Update from consultation

David Hope-Jones

The SMP invited anyone involved in the Malawi-Scotland bilateral relationship to share their views on the Scottish Government’s International Development Review, and David summarised the results of this. He then suggested some points for the CPG to submit to the Scottish Government for consideration. His full presentation can be found here [David’s slides to be hyperlinked].

Claire Baker MSP, who is part of the [Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee](#), explained that the Committee has written to Jenny Gilruth MSP to ask for more detail on the International Development Review, and the Minister’s response can be found [here](#). The Minister is also due to give evidence in the Committee meeting scheduled for the 3rd of December.

Open Discussion

All participants

Professor Heather Cubie felt that the strengths of the 2016 Strategy must not be forgotten, as this was recognised as having been innovative and unique, and very positive for Scotland’s international standing despite a small budget. It would be beneficial, rather than looking at what should be changed, to look at what already works and should stay the same.

David summarised the role that the SMP is playing in COP26, with plans to amplify Malawi’s voice. A [planning meeting](#) was held on the 5th of November, and the SMP intends to hold these on an ongoing monthly basis.

Upcoming SMP events

David Hope-Jones

David briefed participants on upcoming SMP events:

- 28th November - [Scotland-Malawi Book Launch: ‘Politics, Christianity and Society in Malawi’](#)
- 14th December - [SMP Roundtable meeting with new British High Commissioner: H.E. David Beer](#)

Close

Liam McArthur MSP

Liam thanked everyone for their enthusiastic participation, with particular thanks to the three speakers for talking so passionately about their work and the leadership role they are providing within their communities. The next CPG is tentatively scheduled for the 27th of January, but this will be fully confirmed at a later date.