

**THE CHURCH AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:  
A MODEL FOR THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN  
CHURCH IN MALAWI**

**THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF  
THEOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY IN  
THE FACULTY OF HUMAN AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES,  
UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL, PIETERMARITZBURG**

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**NOVEMBER 2003**

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## DEDICATION

I humbly dedicate this work to my parents Mzee Gilbert Stephen Msuku and Elina Mkorongo, a prayerful and loving couple whom I admire. They have always motivated and encouraged me towards attaining higher education in my life.

## DECLARATION

This research (unless where specifically stated) is my original work. It has not been submitted to any other university for assessment or for any other purpose. As such, I therefore submit it for the first time to the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, in partial fulfillment of the Masters Degree in Theology and Development.



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4/5/04

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADMARC	Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation
AAG	Area Action Group
ARP	Agricultural Rehabilitation Program
AACC	All African Conference of Churches
CLAIM	Christian Literature Association of Malawi
CBPPT	Capacity Building Project for Program Transition
COFOPRO	Community Forestry and Wood Energy Program
DDC	District Development Committee
DMD	Department of Mission and Development
ELDP	Evangelical Lutheran Development Program
ELCM	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi
ELDS	Evangelical Lutheran Development Service
EPA	Extension Planning
ERP	Environmental Rehabilitation Program
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSP	Food Security Project
FRELIMO	Freedom Liberation Movement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICDP	Integrated Community Development Program
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MCC	Malawi Council of Churches
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PMD	Planning and Monitoring Document
PLA	Participatory Learning Approach
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
RENAMO	National Resistance Movement
TOT	Trainer of Trainers



# CHAPTER ONE

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Problem in Brief

In Malawi, soil erosion is probably the most important factor in the decline in agricultural productivity. To make things worse, the economy of the country relies on agriculture. Furthermore, there is an increase in the high rate of deforestation mainly due to human activities. Deforestation is on an increase rate of 2.4% for the past 10 years.<sup>1</sup>

According to the World Bank, the country's impressive economic performance under the structural adjustment program, including a 4.4% annual increase in GDP in 1998-1999, has largely been negated by the depletion of soils, forests and other natural resources.<sup>2</sup> There was a rapid expansion of agriculture from the mid 1970s to the late 1980s. This caused extensive deforestation in the sense of unsustainable cutting of trees for tobacco curing, fuel and construction.

Few people know about issues of nature, while more and more people, due to increasing urbanization, are experiencing an increasingly remote and superficial relationship with the earth and nature in general. Following this development and despite an increasing level of information,<sup>3</sup> many people in Malawi lack the fundamental insights and skills needed for managing the basic conditions for life on earth. In other words, most of our rural people are eco-illiterates.

Another area of concern is the misunderstanding or misinterpretation of development in terms of environmental reform. Many people understand the term 'development' in terms of human progress. In this case, the assumption is that "humanity has priority and power over all else in creation, that humans have a right to exploit the environment. This attitude

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unep.org/aeo/139.htm> (2003/06/27) p 1 of 3.

<sup>2</sup> Evangelical Lutheran Development Program: Integrated Community Development Program in Malawi. *A Planning and Monitoring Document* (2001-2003) p4

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.eco-net.dk/English/Essay4.htm>. P1 of 5

has in no mean way derived from a misinterpretation of the biblical image of human beings as the crown of creation"<sup>4</sup> Such a development ignores the integral relationship between human life and the environment.

In addition to this, there is a Biblical belief that nature is seen as inferior to people, and that they can control it. This has indeed brought a lack of respect for the sacredness of the environment. In most Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Malawi (ELCM) there has been an emphasis on the gospel for human salvation which is supported by the "belief in the second coming of Christ which will usher in God's total reign."<sup>5</sup>

## **1.2 The Motivation and relevance of the study**

During my interaction with my lecturer, Dr Steve de Gruchy, who presented some lectures during the Church and Development seminars in 2002, I began to have an interest in the need for the Church's contribution towards solving the earth crisis. Alongside this, I began to question why the Church should be concerned with the earth crisis, what its motivating factors are, and what educational program could be put in place that people may follow in the process of environmental protection. I was also motivated by the lectures in the Transforming Christian Education seminars from 2003 in which I learnt more about Paul Freire's dialogical model of education that makes use of the conscientization method.

Furthermore, I was compelled to investigate such an issue because of my understanding of the Church as the people in mission. Within this perspective is Jesus' challenge to us to be the salt of the earth (Matt 5:13). Ultimately, this message reminds the Church that its Ministry, programs, buildings, and our very life as a community should make a difference in the world. Furthermore, as a pastor in this Church, I have a feeling that the Church should not be silent about the earth crisis problems as indicated above. I see the need to formulate an education strategy by utilizing the local theologies and indigenous

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<sup>4</sup> Daneel, M.L. "African Christianity and Environmental Reform: Zimbabwe Case Study" in Phiri I.A. Ross K.A. and Cox J.L.(eds) *The Role of Christianity in Development, Peace and Reconstruction: Southern Perspectives* (Nairobi: All African Conference of Churches, 1996) p.215.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.mcc.org/respub/occasioal/135html> (2003/06/27) p1of3

knowledge within congregations that will assist the Church in the promotion of environmental education. This will in turn help its members to work towards achieving sustainable environmental development.

The study is relevant for the following reasons: Firstly, it provides an opportunity to become aware about the environmental crisis, its root causes and how the Church has responded to the crisis.

Secondly, it provides an opportunity to reflect on and understand profoundly the Church's involvement in the sustainable protection and rehabilitation of the earth crisis. This arises from the experience that the Church has a holistic approach towards human life and the well being of the living earth. In addition, it provides a way to assess the biblical understanding of ecological and environmental issues. In this case, it is the members' local theological understanding about God and the environment that motivates them toward environmental protection. Thirdly, it is hoped that the research can serve as a means of leading members of the Church and the community at large to a greater awareness of the necessity of their contributions to social and environmental justice within the earth crisis. In turn, members of the Church and the community can be transformed and be led to a process of self-actualization and finally be empowered to enhance the spirit of involvement in the rehabilitation of the earth.

Members of the community ought to realize that the mission of the Church is two-fold. They are called to preach but also to render services to the needy and displaced, as well as to care for the natural resources on earth. In this case, the educational strategy will be of vital assistance to the community in the process of becoming aware and hence being empowered, as well as developing the capacity to deal with environmental issues.

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

This study aims at formulating and promoting an educational strategy that can enable the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi to engage critically and constructively in dealing with the earth crisis. Besides this, it also seeks to examine the causes and effects of this crisis and to clearly identify the motives behind the Church's concern as well as its

contribution in responding to the earth crisis. The strategy will assist every person with opportunities to develop the awareness and acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed towards solving the earth crisis.

#### **1.4 The focus and limitations of the study**

The specific and special focus of this research is Zomba district in the Southern Region of Malawi. Nevertheless, I hope that the whole ELCM, and other Churches will eventually use the research's findings.

#### **1.5 Methodology and sources used**

This research is the product of personal reflection and a keen interest in promoting an environmental awareness strategy that can help the Church and its members to engage with the earth crisis.

The study draws on both oral and written sources. The oral sources involve consultations and dialogue with the rural people visited in the Zomba district. The study makes use of the dialogical model of education as it allowed participation between the researcher and the community. The method offered transparency and mutual communication as a way to acquire information from the subjects.

Also, I organized a Bible study group. This was a way to uncover the theologies and indigenous knowledge of rural people as the basis for their involvement in environmental protection.

Both primary and secondary sources from the University of Natal library and from the Internet were consulted. I reviewed relevant documents such as Planning and Monitoring Documents (PMD) for the Church in Malawi for some of the projects, annual reports for the period in review, monthly progress reports and any document bearing information about the Church's involvement in environmental issues.

The study is organized as follows: this introductory chapter identifies the objectives, scope and limitations of the research, and also includes an introductory survey of the country; chapter two examines the environmental crisis in the global context and in

Malawi; chapter three examines the theological vision of the Church's concern about the environment and the factors enhancing the Church's response to the crisis of the earth particularly environmental degradation; chapter four is a description of a pilot study for the Environmental Educational Program; and chapter five promotes a strategy for the Evangelical Lutheran Church/Development Program (ELCM/ELDP) to carry out an educational program.

### **1.6 Problems encountered**

The major problem encountered in this research was that participants in the Bible study always arrived late. Another factor was that the intended number of 25 participants was available on the first day of the Bible study. However, on the second and third day the number dropped, but it was again up to 25 on the last day of our discussion.

### **1.7 Introductory survey of Malawi**

Malawi, known in colonial times as Nyasaland, is a landlocked country bordering Tanzania in the North, Zambia in the West and Mozambique in the West and South. Its lack of mineral resources and the absence of any substantial industrial base has led to its dependence on agriculture which has become ever more precarious as an increasingly expanding population has taken its ecological toll.<sup>6</sup>

Malawi lies between 9 and 17 degrees south. It covers 119, 140sq. km., of which 20% is water. Its topography is immensely varied, from the rift valley floor almost at sea level to mountains up to 3000m. So there are wide ranges in climate, vegetation and economic activities.<sup>7</sup>

Malawi is divided into three administrative regions: Northern, with 5 districts; Central with 9 districts; and Southern with 12 districts. It has approximately 10 million people and the majority, about 60%, are young men and women below 30 years of age. Since independence in 1964, the population growth rate has been approximately 3.3% per

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.news.bbc.co.uk/2/h/Africa/country-profiles/1068913.stm>

<sup>7</sup> Evangelical Lutheran Development Program: Integrated Community Development Program, Malawi, 2001-2003, *Planning and Monitoring Document*: (November 2000) p.4.



annum. 85% of the population is *rural*. Malawi is one of the most densely populated countries in sub-Saharan Africa with an average of about 80 people per square kilometer. The 1998 Human Development Index placed Malawi as 157<sup>th</sup> out of 173 countries in the world, reflecting its very low level of development. Rural poverty is the most pressing general problem faced by Malawi policy makers, Churches and NGOs. Economic activity is dominated by subsistence agriculture.<sup>8</sup>

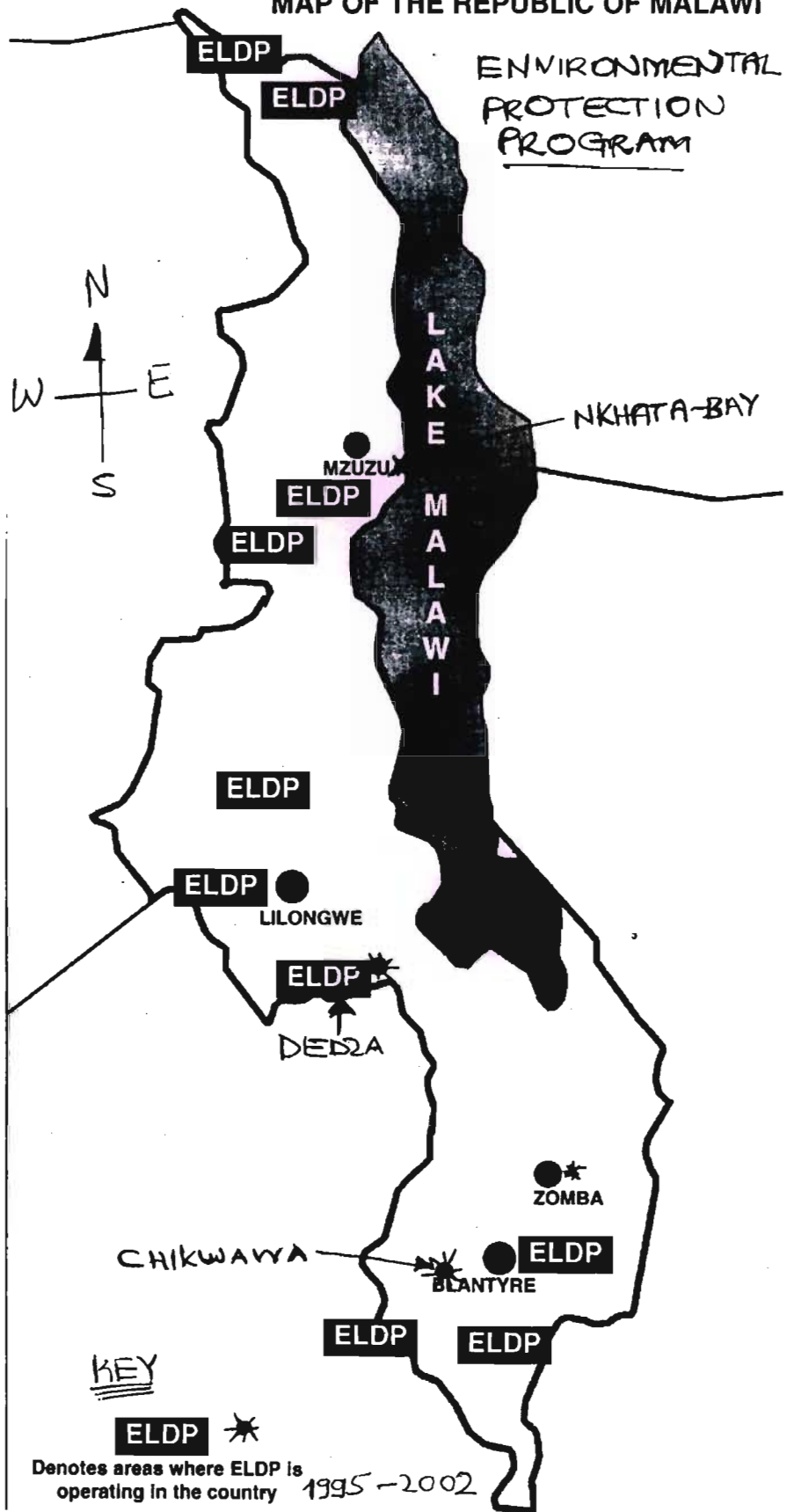
When the civil war broke out in neighboring Mozambique in the late 1970s, Malawi began experiencing another source of population pressure especially around the borders of the country. By the late 1980s, Malawi hosted about one million refugees. The high population pressure within the already populated areas resulted in rapid environmental degradation.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p5

MAP OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROGRAM



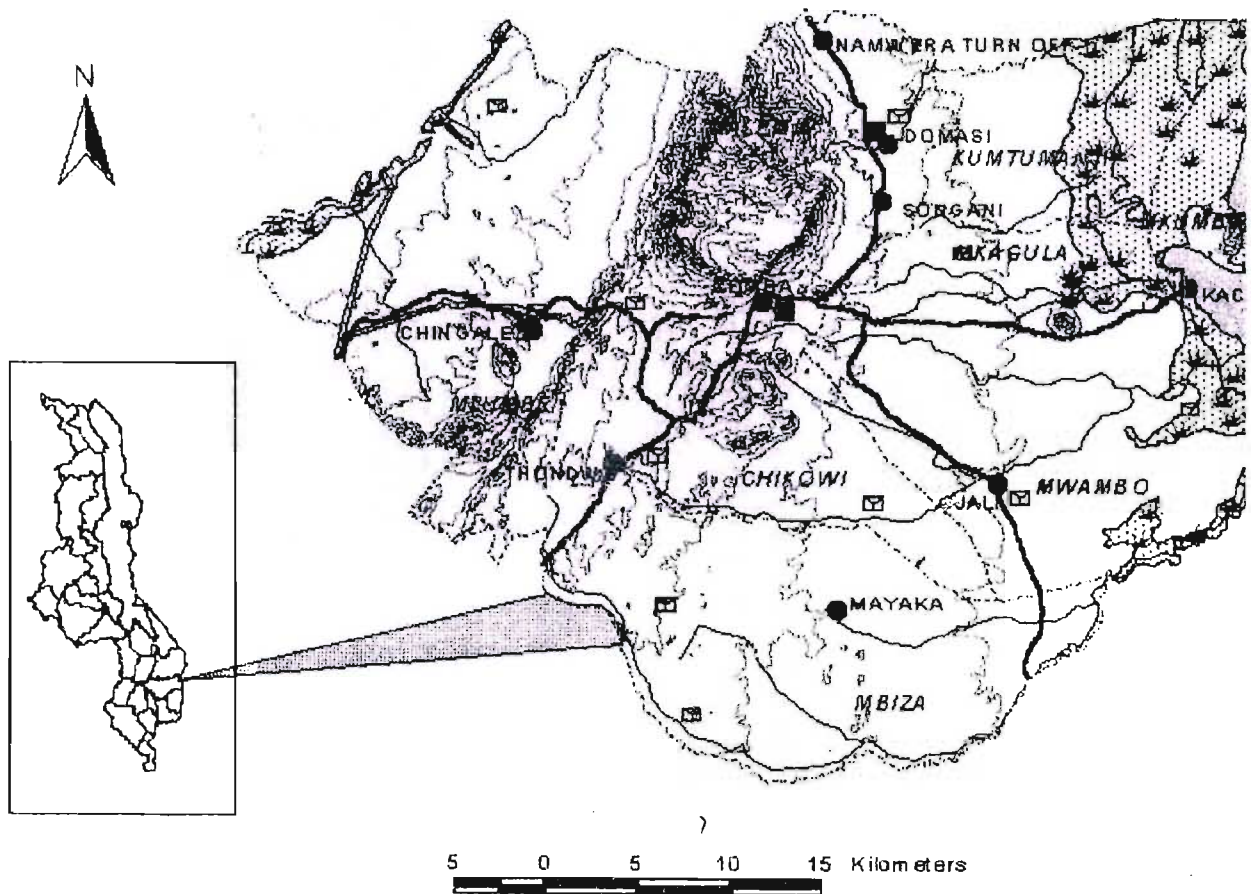
KEY

ELDP \*

Denotes areas where ELDP is operating in the country 1995-2002

**Figure 2 Map of Zomba District that shows the location of Mwambanaji village where the Bible study group was formed. This village is one of the ELDP impact areas for environmental protection activities. On the map, Mwambanaji is identified with letter 'M' and is shadowed with a colored mark. Chapter three of this study gives detailed Bible study group discussions.**

Map 1 : ZOMBA DISTRICT





## CHAPTER TWO

### THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS AND THE NEED FOR THE CHURCH TO RESPOND

#### 2. Introduction

In this chapter, I intend to clarify what the earth crisis is all about. This will be dealt with by showing the global environmental context and then focusing on Malawi. The chapter will also briefly show examples of the environmental crisis, analysis of its root causes and finally how the Church has responded to the crisis.

#### 2.1 Environmental Crisis

##### 2.1.1. Global

There is an increasing awareness everywhere of a growing ecological crisis. This is noted by the concerns of many Church Assemblies about the environment. When in 1990, the Eighth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) met in Curitiba, Brazil, the participants said:

We hear cries from creation as a chorus of anguish. The future of the earth is threatened. In all regions of the world we observe the destruction of the environment. The rain forests are being destroyed in Asia and Africa. There are alarming estimates about the rate of the extinction of the species.<sup>9</sup>

Judging from the concern shown above, planet earth is seen to have become an endangered habitat. It is evident to everyone that the environment in which we live is becoming more and more hostile to human degradation. Also, a great challenge facing humanity is that of development, which results in the improvement of human life while maintaining the availability and quality of the resource base: the environment. Although the degradation of the environment through the development process was already a matter of concern several decades ago, it was then still possible to be concerned about the

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<sup>9</sup> J.C. Chakanza "A Concern for Creation: Ecological Crisis in Malawi" in Fualta Moyo and Martin Ott.(eds). *Christianity and the Environment. Care for what you have been given.* (Limbe: CLAIM, 2002) p.47.

need to “meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, it is noted that industrialized and developing countries contribute to the damage done to their environment and to the decline in their natural resources. It is also estimated in some countries that the total cost of soil erosion, and urban pollution and congestion, amounts to more than 5% of national income. For instance, in Bangkok, Thailand health costs resulting from air pollution are estimated at 2.8% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per year.<sup>11</sup> In addition, in industrialized countries, the environmental problems arise from inconsiderate use of the environment to promote self-centred development.

Today, it is seen that the ability to meet human needs has been seriously compromised within the same generation, manifested, for example by a population which is expanding to unsustainable levels, deforestation that leads to lack of timber, poles and fuel wood. In addition, an experience of drought and soil depletion have resulted in persistent famine. Echoing the above points, I draw from the World Commission on Environment and Development *Our Common Future*:

Each year another 6 million hectares of productive dry land turns into worthless desert. Over three decades this would amount into an area roughly as large as Saudi Arabia. More than 11 million hectares of forests are destroyed yearly, and this, over three decades would equal an area about the size of India and much of this forest is converted to low-grade farmland unable to support the farmers who settle it.<sup>12</sup>

Economic activity is one of the issues in the global crisis that is seen to have multiplied to create “a \$13 trillion world economy, and this could grow five-or tenfold in the coming half century. Such figures reflect and presage profound impacts upon the biosphere, as the world invests in houses, transport, farms, and industries.”<sup>13</sup> In this situation, I see that the raw material from forests, soils, seas and waterways are being displaced by economic growth.

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<sup>10</sup> The Lutheran World Federation. Brunt Report. *Environmental Guidelines for Program Implementation*. (Geneva, March, 1997) p.5.

<sup>11</sup> The World Bank. *National Environmental Strategies: Learning from Experience* (Washington, DC, The World Bank, 1995) p.vii

<sup>12</sup> World Commission on Environment and Development. *Our Common Future*.p.2.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p.4.

Furthermore, economic growth has new technologies end product referred as new technology, and in turn, it also has a negative impact on the environment. This can be supported by the comment:

While this technology offers the potential for slowing the dangerously rapid consumption of finite resources, it also entails high risks, including new forms of pollution and the introduction to the planet of new variations of life forms that could change evolutionary pathways.<sup>14</sup>

In view of the above comment, I regard technological knowledge and culture as the context in which machines and systems have been invented, manufactured and installed. Furthermore, such technology by the industries in the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) rely mostly on environmental resources and in turn create all forms of dangerous pollution, which are hazard to human life.

Beside technology offering pollution, it also has other effects. This is seen in Jesse N. K. Mugambi's article "Emissions Trading as an Aspect of Toxic Waste Dumping."

Technology divides more than it unites unless it operates in conditions where self-development of societies can flourish...the ontological roots of solidarity are common humanity, mutual occupancy of one planet and identical destiny.<sup>15</sup>

In line with the views expressed above, it is learnt that the emission trading by industrialized nations create discriminatory assumptions. Also, it is seen that some nations suffer less pollution than others. Furthermore, nations involved in such business constitute less than 20% of the world's population and yet cause most of the industrialized pollution globally. Africa, Asia and Southern America are examples of regions suitable for dumping wastes by the nations in the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).<sup>16</sup> In addition, it is noted that, OECD nations have benefited from trading at the expense of the suffering countries.

In OECD countries, acid precipitation kills forests and lakes. It also damages the artistic and architectural heritage of nations. The burning of fossil fuels puts into the atmosphere carbon dioxide, which in turn causes gradual global warming.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p5

<sup>15</sup> Jesse N. K. Mugambi, "Emissions Trading as an Aspect of Toxic Waste Dumping" in Steve de Gruchy (ed). *Bulletin for Contextual Theology in Africa. Double Issues in partnership with the SACC: Church, Environment and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Volume 8, No 2 and Volume 8, No3, (April and August 2002. p.80.*

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p.80.

In view of the above discussion, the causes of the global environmental crisis is understood be industrial pollution from the affluent nations. One of the symptoms of this crisis is the global warming. It is attributed to the “disproportionate exploitation of natural resources for industrial production to satisfy the consumerist tendencies in the affluent nations.”<sup>17</sup>

### **2.1.2 The Environmental crisis and its root cause in Malawi**

In the previous Sub Chapter, I discussed environmental crisis from a global perspective. It is seen that the world’s environmental conditions are deteriorating at an alarming rate. This is due to changes in human activities initiated by inappropriate economic activities and rapidly changing demographic and socio-economic patterns.

Furthermore, it has been recognized that, while environmental degradation affects all human beings, it does not do so equally:

There is a growing recognition that the victims of environmental degradation are also victims of social-economic injustice. These include various groups of marginalized people on the economic periphery, i.e. indigenous peoples, environmental refugees, women, children, the poor and workers in mines.<sup>18</sup>

Echoing the comment above, I see that while the environmental problems facing the industrialized countries result mainly from wrong practices of development, the environmental problems of the third world countries, and in particular Malawi are due mainly to underdevelopment, which is the inability to take full advantage of the community’s manpower potential and available resources. In addition, it should also be known that factors leading to environmental degradation in industrialized countries have effects on the third world countries and Malawi as far as it is concerned in this chapter.

Drawing from *The LWF Environmental Guidelines*, for example:

The dynamics between fast growing communities and their surrounding natural resources are much more direct than in the industrialized North. Living off the land is the common experience of hundreds of millions of rural people in the South. Crop farming, tree exploitation, livestock

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p.84.

<sup>18</sup> “The Land is crying for Justice. A Discussion on Christianity and Environmental Justice in South Africa.” in Steve de Gruchy (ed). *Bulletin for Contextual Theology in Africa*, Volume 8, No 2 and Volume 8, No 3, (April and August 2002.) p.104

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keeping, hunting, fishing and wild-plant gathering all depend on continuing well cared-for stock of natural resources.<sup>19</sup>

Malawi is seen to be in a similar situation. The very economic survival of its rural people depends on the existence of the natural resources.

Malawi currently faces severe environmental challenges. The population is increasing but the resource base on which it depends for its livelihood is fixed. For example, the environmental degradation in the country is mainly caused by rapid agricultural expansion. This includes the depletion of soils and other natural resources. This is mainly due to the country's economy, which is agro-based. In turn, this has "exacerbated the problem of natural resource-degradation in that new land is continually being opened up to meet the demands of an increasing population whose growth rate is amongst the highest in the region."<sup>20</sup>

*The 1994 National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP)* in Malawi listed its key environmental concerns as follows: soil erosion as the major environmental problem, deforestation, depletion of water resources, threat to biodiversity and fisheries resources, high population growth, pollution and climatic change.<sup>21</sup> I see them as priority environmental concerns, which the country has to address. Nevertheless, these problems affect some parts of the country more than others, but at least one or more of them affects every part of the country.

### 2.1.3 Factors enhancing causes for the environmental problems

There are many factors that lead to the cause of environmental crisis in Malawi. Here I begin with the main pressing factors that consequently bring effects of deforestation, soil erosion, water resources, and threat to fish resources, human habitat and air pollution.

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<sup>19</sup> The Lutheran World Federation. *Environmental Guidelines for Program Implementation*. First Version. (Geneva, March 1997) p.2.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.sdn.org.mw/undp/Undpmlw/infokit/env.htm> (2003/09/24) p1 of 2.

<sup>21</sup> Zomba District Environmental Action Plan (Zomba District Assembly, 2001) p.1.



### 2.1.3.1 Rapid population growth

As I indicated in sub chapter 2.3, the country's high population growth has resulted in tremendous pressure on the available land. For example, the high population growth rate combined with limited supply of arable land has generated very small holding sizes. It is also seen that "more than half of the population of Malawi cultivates plots of less than one hectare in size. Small holding sizes have serious consequences on land degradation."<sup>22</sup> In this regard, farmers fail in meeting their nutritional requirements and hence they do not achieve proper crop diversification.

In addition, it should be noted that the "inability to make provisions for rapid urban population growth often results in adequate urban waste management, air pollution, a shortage of supplies of clean water, land degradation and congestion."<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, it is also seen that natural forests have been depleted at a very fast rate. In this regard, this requires households to extend production on to marginal or unsuitable land where productivity is inherently low and risk of crop failure becomes high.<sup>24</sup>

### 2.1.3.2 Rural Poverty

Poverty is a well-known problem in Malawi. "Most of the poor are in the smallholder sector with typical smallholdings. The factors that lead to low incomes are similar to those that promote unsustainable land use and practices."<sup>25</sup> It should be noted that increasing rural poverty is closely related to degradation of the productive resource base upon which the majority of the rural population depends for their livelihoods. And in turn, the increase has progressively reduced per capita land availability forcing fallow periods to be either shortened or abandoned, limiting opportunities for crop rotation. Such rural per capita poverty has adverse consequences:

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<sup>22</sup> J.C. Chakanza. "A Concern for Creation: Ecological Crisis in Malawi" in (eds) Fulata Moyo and Martin Ott. *Christianity and the Environment. Care for what you have been given.* (Limbe: CLAIM, 2002) p.53.

<sup>23</sup> *The World Bank. National Environmental Strategies: Learning from Experience.* (Washington DC: The World Bank) p.12

<sup>24</sup> Government of Malawi. *Forest Activities in Support of Rehabilitation of Areas Affected by Refugees Mission Report.* (United Kingdom: Natural Resources Institute, November 1994) p.7.

<sup>25</sup> J.C. Chakanza. "A Concern for creation: Ecological Crisis in Malawi" in (eds) Fulata Moyo and Martin Ott *Christianity and the Environment. Care for what you have been given.* (Limbe: CLAIM, 2002) p.54.

It is the poor that are usually the first to suffer the consequences of the environmental degradation, and poverty on its own can have a negative impact on the environment. When other alternatives break down, poor people are often forced to use the land and water in ways that threaten the productivity of these vital resources in future.<sup>26</sup>

Drawing from the consequences above, we see the poor in Malawi living at subsistence levels and as a result they encroach on forests and wetlands. In turn, this results in deforestation and soil erosion as mentioned before.

### **2.1.3.3 Illiteracy and lack of environmental awareness**

As I indicated in sub chapter 1.1 the majority still lack a sufficient understanding of environmental issues to enable them to relate problems of poor agricultural yields, water scarcity, drought and other similar environmental problems to the way they use the natural resources. Instead of a scientific explanation of natural problems, “many people still attribute these environmental problems to the supernatural.”<sup>27</sup>

Drawing from the interview above, it is learnt that people appease rainmakers with gifts to persuade them to release the rain they have held up. This is still a common occurrence in the Karonga district in the northern region, and the Chikwawa and Nsanje districts in the southern regions<sup>28</sup> of the country in times of drought. Where imported religions have done away with such superstition, the responsibility is shifted to God. Commitment to environmental conservation also calls for a degree of public spirit that does not seem to be common.

### **2.1.3.4 The impact of refugees**

Between 1988 and 1989, refugees from Mozambique started to flock into Malawi to settle. Such immigration required a lot attention to basic necessities that also affected the social, economic and environmental status of the country. This influx of refugees into the country was caused by the war of terror at that time in Mozambique between the ruling Freedom Liberation Movement for Mozambique (FRELIMO) and the National

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<sup>26</sup> The World Bank. *National Environmental Strategies: Learning from Experience*.p.17.

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Mrs Elube Duri, Adult Literacy Instructor at Mwambananji Village in Zomba on 5 August 2003.

<sup>28</sup> See Map of Malawi on p.7.

Résistance for Mozambique (RENAMO). “Over 992 000 refugees lived in Malawi in camps that were situated in 12 districts. And the presence of such a proportion of 10% of the population, posed a big strain on the already fragile environment. Refugees needed land to build their temporal shelters, food, water, firewood and health services.”<sup>29</sup>

Firewood for the camps did not solely come from the surrounding areas. Most of it was transported from fairly well managed forest reserves within Malawi. The impact on the environment by the unknown number of refugees could be significant, not so much because of firewood collection but also for the intensified use of land for food production.

Furthermore, there was still a problem with the refugees’ participation in tree planting. The fact that their stay in Malawi was temporary also meant that the incentive to plant trees in an area they did not consider to be their home was non-existent. Of course, in some settlements, they did plant trees but only to uproot them when they moved across the border to Mozambique. In some settlements where the seeds were left, the trees planted during that time can still be seen.<sup>30</sup>

The four pressing factors indicated in sub chapters 2.1.3.1 to 2.1.3.4 above, have had tremendous negative consequences and effects on some key environmental issues outlined below.

### **Deforestation**

Deforestation in the country has been caused due to several factors. The first one is tobacco-curing process. As tobacco is a being the cash crop, farmers have no alternative but to use firewood to cure their tobacco, which is the main source of their income.<sup>31</sup> The second reason for deforestation is due to the high demand of fuel wood for cooking, heating, brick making, and construction.

The situation in Malawi is such that for people who live closest to the land, the issue is survival, not conservation. In addition, the refugees who settled in the country for eight

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<sup>29</sup> The Evangelical Lutheran Development Program, *Annual Report (1977)* p.9.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Mr K Muonda, ELDP Projects Officer in Zomba, 5 August, 2003

<sup>31</sup> Evangelical Lutheran Development Program. *Integrated Community Development Program, Malawi (2001-2003)* pp4-5.



years required firewood for cooking their food, for poles that assisted them in the construction of their shelters as well as for a source of income. Many calculations have been carried out to assess the impact on deforestation. “It has been estimated that in one year 1 million refugees required 1.1 million cubic meters of firewood. Clearly, after eight years, there has been acute deforestation.”<sup>32</sup>

Apart from the above causes, in Malawi the demand for electricity is very high and the supply is limited and electricity is therefore costly. Very few can afford electricity; as a result, they focus on the use of charcoal or firewood for cooking. Due to this demand for charcoal and firewood, many people resort to the unsustainable cutting of trees for fast money in the cities of Lilongwe, Blantyre, Zomba and Mzuzu. The demand for firewood, also adds to the burden on women who spend a lot of time and energy on fuel collection for domestic consumption as well as for selling along the main roads of Malawi and elsewhere in the local markets.

### **Soil erosion**

As I indicated in Chapter 1.1, Malawi depends on agriculture for its economic input. The rapid agricultural expansion amongst farmers leads to the causes of soil erosion. Also, this is caused by wrong agricultural practices in some rural parts of the country. It is noted that in a number of areas, that steep slopes are cultivated, resulting in rapid run off, and hence massive soil loss. J.C.Chakanza in his article “A Concern for Creation: Ecological Crisis in Malawi” says:

These areas include the Shire Highlands and escarpments above the Lower Shire. Excessive gullyng typifies the *makande* soils of the Lower Shire Valley and on the Phalombe Plain. Cultivation methods by largely subsistence smallholder farmers are not suitable. The soils have become poor because of late clearing of gardens whereby the grass is not buried in the soil to act as manure but is burnt. Cultivation near riverbanks is a sure means of promoting soil erosion. As the torrential rains come, they sweep away all the loose soil and bring it into the swollen rivers.<sup>33</sup>

As a conclusion, this sub chapter has revealed the status of the environmental crisis globally as well as locally. It has also shown and analyzed some pressing factors and root

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<sup>32</sup> Evangelical Lutheran Development Program, *Annual Report* (1997) p9

<sup>33</sup> J.C. Chakanza. “A Concern for Creation: Ecological Crisis in Malawi” in Fulata Moyo and Martin Ott (eds) in *Christianity and the Environment. Care for what you have been given.*(Limbe. CLAIM, 2002) 52

causes of the environmental crisis in Malawi. Beside this, it is noted that, “the environment is humankind’s last resource for survival. All the materials thing that make life comfortable on earth come from the environment.”<sup>34</sup>

To be precise, the benefits of the environment in the form of renewable and non-renewable resources such as trees, soil and water, are all fruits of the earth’s goodness to human kind. It is therefore important for the Church to consider the need to protect and conserve the environment. In this way, the rate of degradation could be reduced. The response of the Church towards the environmental crisis is to be raised in the section that follows.

## **2.2 Response of the Church towards environmental crisis**

This Sub Chapter will show the reasons as to why the Church should be concerned about the earth’s environmental degradation The Church that is God’s instrument has to be responsible in rehabilitating the earth as it has a call to preach to human beings as well as to serve God’s Creation. The Church advocates for a continued responsibility that implies service and not dominion. And it is for this reason that, the Church through the ELDP has responded to environmental degradation through the environmental protection activities in the country.

### **2.2.1 Motivating factors for the Church’s concern about the earth**

#### **Recognition of God the Creator**

The Church is concerned about the earth because of its recognition of God as the creator of the planet on which its members live. The Church is aware of the fact that the community’s social and economic struggles in development ought to begin with the acceptance that the earth on which all activities take place belongs to God. Any plans or approaches taken must recognize the God-given potential and vocation for each person.

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<sup>34</sup> Chris Tham, “The Response of the Church to Environmental Degradation: Some Insights from India” in Steve de Gruchy (ed) *Bulletin For Contextual Theology in Africa. Double Issue in Partnership with the SACC: Church, Environment and the World Summit on Sustainable Development(WSSD Volume 8, No 2 and Volume 8, No 3, (April and August, 2002) p.92.*

Furthermore, any project has to be implemented out of the recognition of God as the owner of the planet earth. This can be supported by the comment:

A Christian understanding of social struggles and development must begin with an affirmation that this is God's earth, and that all we seek to do in, with and to it, should be done out of this recognition. This means that all human life, and all living things, including the earth and its bounty, is a gift from God and is to be cherished, respected and enjoyed, and any right to private property must be circumscribed by this recognition of God's fundamental ownership of all things.<sup>35</sup>

In this situation, the Church has to promote this recognition by offering conservation and rehabilitation strategies in order to reduce the problems of the environmental degradation on the planet. This recognition urges members of the Church to be responsible in the proper utilization of the resources of earth.

### **Holistic mission**

The second reason for the Church's concern about the environment is that it has a holistic mission that needs to be rendered. The Church includes all the baptized people, the followers of Christ, the New People of God<sup>36</sup> and those who receive the true word of God and partake of Holy Communion. In this case, the Church is understood to have been called not only to preach but also to render services to the needy and displaced as well as to care for the natural resources on earth.

It should be noted that members of the Church must cooperate with God the Creator in rendering their service on earth. Since God has given each person gifts, skills and talents, these have to be utilized to improve the quality of life and the environment on earth. Therefore, it is every Church member's responsibility to carry out his or her duty to take care of the environment and the earth.

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<sup>35</sup> "This is God's Earth. Adopted by SACC & Church Representatives on 19 June 2002 in preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development" in Steve de Gruchy (ed). *Bulletin for Contextual Theology in Africa. Double Issue in partnership with the SACC: Church, Environment and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Volume 8, No 2 and Volume 8, No 3, (April and August, 2002) p.101.*

<sup>36</sup> Ddungu, Adrian, K. "Environmental protection: Church Responsibility" in Agbasiere, Joseph and Zabajungu, B.K. (eds) *Church Contribution to Integral development.* (Eldoret, Kenya: AMECEA Gaba Publications, 1989) p.237.

It is interesting to note that “the world together with those who dwell on it, belongs to the Lord”<sup>37</sup> In line with this fact, sermons in the Church should not only focus on the people who dwell on it, but should also deal with issues that concern the environment. Thus, it is clear that the Church’s concern about the environment is a God-given creative mission. Furthermore, Christ commissioned all his followers to become “the salt” and “the light of the world.” (Matthews 5:13-14). In this case, if every Christian could begin by protecting and developing his or her immediate environment, and if every Christian community, starting from the smallest unit upwards, could make improvement of the environment a priority, much would be achieved, and in a short time.<sup>38</sup>

Also, it should be noted that the Church wishes to apply Christian principles to all activities. In this regard, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi through her development arm, the ELDP has shown a keen interest in environmental issues. It really practices what it preaches about serving human beings spiritually, socially and economically. This can be supported by the statement below:

Christian principles regarding environmental issues have developed from a fundamental biblical understanding that God has placed human beings on earth, among all living creatures, with a duty to take good care of what has been given to them. God’s creation is seen as a whole, as having specific integrity that must be respected, wherever stewardship over creation is exercised.<sup>39</sup>

### **Raising awareness of the importance of the environment**

The third reason why the Church is concerned about the earth is because it sees itself as a place for disseminating information about the importance of the environment. It can use the pulpit to let its members learn more about environmental degradation and ways of protecting the earth. Furthermore, the Church has the task to make the community aware of the need for an ecological conversion. For example:

We have adopted and defended the notion of a stewardship that allows for an aggressive domination of the earth community. As keepers of the land we have to learn that we do not own

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<sup>37</sup> Mudau, Zwodangani. “Biblical and Theological Aspects of Ecology” in Steve de Gruchy. (ed) *Bulletin for Contextual Theology in Africa. Bulletin for Contextual Theology in Africa. Double Issue in Partnership with the SACC: Church, Environment and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Volume 8, No 2 and Volume 8, No 3, (April and August, 2002) p. 14.*

<sup>38</sup> Ddungu, Adrian, K. “Environmental Protection: Church Responsibility” in Agbasiere, Joseph T. and Zabajungu, B.K. (eds) *Church Contribution to Integral Development.* (Eldoret, Kenya: AMECEA Gaba, 1989) p 237.

<sup>39</sup> *The Lutheran World Federation/Department of World Service. Environmental Guidelines for the Program implementation.* (Geneva, March 1997) p.4.



the land, that we cannot use and abuse the land for our own purposes. We have usurped the authority of God and put ourselves as the center of creation. We have regarded the created order as being there for the benefit of humans only.<sup>40</sup>

In line with this comment, the Church should preach for the need to undergo an ecological conversion. The Church should make its members aware that the environmental issue is not a concern only for the natural sciences but also for every one. There is a need, therefore, for African theologians to create awareness in the community that each individual's responsibility towards the earth that implies and requires service.

The Church should really be concerned about the earth because it is the source upon which human beings and all creatures depend for their living. It should be realized that living things are not on an island but are surrounded by many factors called the environment. Also, it should be born in our mind that the whole of nature must be understood as sacred because it derives its being from the Supreme Being who is the Creator. In this regard, nature as a whole ought to be loved, revered and responsibly taken care of, not only out of reverence for its Creator but also for its own sake as a living reality.

Before further discussing what the Church should do in protecting the environment, it is important to know what the environment is, and what it is made up of. "In simple terms, environment means the factors that surround and affect a place and whatever is there."<sup>41</sup> It is also important for the Church to let its members know that most of the environmental factors are interrelated and interdependent, such that a change in one of them consequently results in a change in all of the others. With this in mind, the community would be in a position to contribute towards protecting the environment.

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<sup>40</sup> "The Land is Crying for Justice. A discussion document on Christianity and environmental justice in South Africa" in Steve de Gruchy. (ed) *Bulletin for Contextual Theology in Africa. Double Issue in Partnership with the SACC: Church, Environment and the World Summit On Sustainable Development (WSSD) Volume 8, No 2 and Volume 8, No 3, (April and August, 2002) p.107.*

<sup>41</sup> Karungi, Byaruhanga, T.A. "The Church's Role in environmental Protection" in Agbasiere, Joseph T. and Zabajungu B.K. (eds) *Church Contribution to Integral Development.* (Eldoret, Kenya: AMECEA Gaba Publication)

### **The Church as Community and Individuals called for Life and Hope on Earth**

The fourth reason is that the individuals and the community that are part of the Church are called by God to care for the natural resources just as they are responsible for themselves. Furthermore, they are called to live in a harmony with the environment faced with ecological destruction and social injustice. This goes in line with the statement below:

The Church, being made up of this community of believers, is called to respond to these real life experiences of human injustice towards others and the earth in ways that speak of this life and hope. Our faith in God is the basis for Christian action in the world.<sup>42</sup>

It should be known that every single person is created in the image of God<sup>43</sup> and because he/she is called, and has the abilities and gifts that once well utilised can contribute to the protection of the environment.

### **The act of maintaining the relationship with God the Creator**

The fifth reason is that the Church offers a reconciliatory role. It reconciles and maintains the broken relationship with God. It is this reconciliation that helps us acknowledge God's character, glory, and honour as the owner of creation. Reconciliation in this case is the restoration of relationships. This is supported by the comment:

Reconciliation has at least four dimensions: spiritual dimension, that is, reconciliation with God; the psychological dimension which involves the reconciliation with oneself; the social dimension, the reconciliation with others and the ecological dimension which involves our relationship with nature. There is always interdependency between God, self, others and nature.<sup>44</sup>

In line with the comment above, I see that the Church could bring its members and community back to a focus on the environment by including sermons that have ecological dimensions. In addition, through leadership seminars, women's groups and Church Assemblies, the message for the need for environmental protection could be delivered. In this way, reconciliation with the environment can be achieved.

The Church as an asset, which is the body of Christ, assists in bringing human beings towards the place of complete reconciliation with God and complete reconciliation with

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<sup>42</sup> <http://www.webofcreation.org/education/articles/belize-pt4.htm>. (23/06/2003) p 6 of 16.

<sup>43</sup> Genesis 1: 28 God created man and a woman in His own image. He later on told them to subdue and take control of nature.

<sup>44</sup> Fulata Moyo, "The Sovereign God as Possessor of Creation. Psalms 24:1-10" in Fulata Moyo Martin Ott. (eds) *Christianity and Environment. Care for what you have been given*. (Limbe: CLAIM, 2002) p.39.

their fellows and their environments. In this case, several activities that produce this reconciliation include the whole range of spiritual, social, and physical ministries. Such ministries would include evangelism, teaching for literacy, community health, community development and relief. The statement supports the Church as an asset:

God does call different individuals and organisations to minister with emphasis on one or more specific areas of development of mission. However, that emphasis is to be seen as an essential part of unified mission, not as better or more important than other facets of ministry.<sup>45</sup>

It is read from Genesis 1-3 and Psalms 104 that God's intention for humankind is to live in harmonious relationship with creation. Furthermore, the vocation of human beings is to walk with God while gently tending God's wonderful, strong, fragile and enduring creation. The human relationship with God is concurrently seen with the right relationship with God as well as the relationship with the creation in terms of land, water, mountains, plants and animals.

### **The notion of being Stewards of God**

The sixth reason is that the Church with its members is called to faithful stewardship. In this regard, members become partners in His continuing creation activity. It is also understood that Christian stewardship is rooted in the Scriptures and flows from caring for all of creation. Furthermore, Christian stewardship is doing the Creator's will in caring for the earth and striving to preserve and restore the integrity, stability and beauty of the created order.<sup>46</sup>

Community members ought to realize that they are called to care for nature and hence, have to discover that all that has been placed on earth is God's and they are just stewards. Furthermore, members have the desire to enlighten each other and use their God given talents for the sake of the whole issue of creation, which includes a wonderful relationship between God the Creator, a person and his/her environment.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Samuel Vinay and Sugden Chris. *The Church in Response to Human Need* (Michigan, Grand Rapids, 1987) p.237.

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.brethren.org/ac/ac-statements/91/Creation.htm> (7/3/2003) p8of14.

<sup>47</sup> I came to learn more of this relationship during the Current issues in Theology in the May 2002 Block release week. My lecturer Dr Steve de Gruchy puts it clear that, such a relationship has a Vertical and

### **Rendering an advocacy role**

The seventh reason is that the Church has to render an advocacy role. It would be unfair if it is silent when the environment is suffering. The environment cannot speak. For example, the land is crying for justice. Improper use of agricultural practices as well as rapid agricultural expansion has led to environmental degradation. In this regard, the Church should intervene. This could be done by offering sermons that will sensitize people to the proper utilization of the environment and the need to change attitudes towards environment.<sup>48</sup>

### **The Notion of Freedom in Participation of environmental activities**

The eighth reason is that the Church with its members is able to participate in the environmental protection activities due to having acquired God given freedom. From a biblical point of view, I see people to have fully involved themselves in their own activities as a matter of fulfilling God given freedom to us through Jesus Christ. I see God to have invested His authority through Christ in the Church to empower people for freedom to participate in their own activities.<sup>49</sup>

It should be noted that freedom is a vital component of transformation. We should all know that through history, as people have struggled to change their societies using what is on the ground, they have seen their goal in terms of freedom from subservience and slavery.

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Horizontal aspects. The relationship with God and a person is a vertical one, whilst a relationship between a person and a fellow person is known as a Horizontal one.

<sup>48</sup> Samuel, Vinay and Sugden, Chris (eds) *The Church in Response to Human needs* (Michigan: Grand Rapid, 1987) p43. Also, read John 8:36 where by Jesus tells his followers that "if then the Son sets you free you will indeed be free" Furthermore, Late President Nyerere underscores this: "Freedom from Colonialism and the cumulating of Western-style wealth. It is more important to us to be human than to be merry rich."

<sup>49</sup> "Freedom, Christ has set us free! Stand then as free people, and do not allow yourself slaves" (Galatians 5:1)



### **2.2.2 Conclusion**

This sub chapter has shown the Church's concern about the earth's ecological deterioration. It has also put forward how responsible the Church is in rehabilitating the earth as far as the holistic ministry is concerned. It has been called to preach to human beings as well as to serve God's creation on earth. It is for this reason that the Church ought to come up with an environmental educational program as a response to God's call to care for human beings as well as for natural resources.

### **2.3 Environmental education in the Evangelical Lutheran Church**

The ELCM/ELDP is actively involved in an environmental protection program that covers five main projects: afforestation; agro forestry and fruit propagation, production of fuel efficiency stoves; soil and water conservation; and poultry and guinea fowl production. The main purpose of this component is to improve environmentally degraded land through reduction of the agricultural workload and of the loss of forest resources and reducing the time and energy that the women spend on fuel wood collection.

Based on the activities rendered by the ELDP above, I also see the need to incorporate an education program that would assist in the environmental protection campaign.

#### **2.3.1 Meaning of Education**

Education is regarded as a guiding tool that directs and brings awareness, transforms and creates new insights for learners about their life. The key issue in this understanding is the notion of values.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, I see that education on its own can just be an island without inhabitants. Therefore, in this situation, education is meant for individuals and society aiming at transformation and conservation.

Even though the ELCM/ELDP has implemented environmental activities, environmental illiteracy in Malawi is still widespread at grassroots level. Churches seem to have “no

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<sup>50</sup> I am indebted to Rev Raymond Khumalo's Lecture Notes in the Transforming Christian Education Course. (May, 2003)

established forums to impart environmental education. In some cases the clergy is environmentally illiterate just as its lay counterpart.”<sup>51</sup> In view of this concern, the education to be formulated should be for all in the Church and the society as a whole.

Sub chapters 2.1 and 2.2 have clearly portrayed some causes of environmental degradation and the call for the Church to respond to such degradation. They have “challenged Christians to commit themselves to make life on earth meaningful and worthy of celebration just like the Lord’s Supper.”<sup>52</sup> It is noted that members of the community, who are also Christians, ought “to understand that they are part and parcel of the existence of the environment.”<sup>53</sup>

Based on the facts above, Christians have to be fully involved in the formulation of the educational program as well as in its implementation. This practical involvement will be shown in chapter 3.

### **Environmental education**

Environmental education has been defined in the *National Environmental Action Policy* (NEAP) as “the process of recognizing values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the interrelatedness among man, his culture and his biophysical surroundings”<sup>54</sup> In this strategy, environmental education goes beyond just understanding and appreciation. It includes developing the necessary skills and attitudes and bringing about the behavior change which will ensure that human interaction with the environment is not only beneficial to humans, but also preserves the harmony of the ecosystem.

The formulation of an educational program will be of vital importance for the Church and the society at large in Malawi whose objectives have been outlined below: The immediate objectives of the prepared educational plan are:

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<sup>51</sup> Gitau, Samson. K. *The Environmental Crisis A Challenge for African Christianity* (Nairobi, Acton Publishers, 2000) p.86.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid,p81

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 81.

<sup>54</sup> Zomba District State of Environmental Report. Malawi. (2001) p.86.

- a) To create up-to-date information on the state of environmental awareness and capacity for a non-formal environmental education in the country and to organize appropriate responses.
- b) To stimulate the creation of opportunities for individuals and communities to develop and use analytical skills to analyze their environmental situation and decide to take appropriate action on it.
- c) To provide communities, social groups and individuals with opportunities to be actively involved at all levels in working towards resolution of environmental problems.

### **2.3.2. Conclusion**

The sub chapter has introduced education as one of the strategies that can assist in the environmental protection and conservation activities as already promoted by the ELDP. And the purpose of this education is for social transformation on environmental issues so that the community can have a positive approach towards natural resources. Finally, for the education process to be meaningful, Christians have to be fully engaged in the formulation of the educational program itself as well as in its implementation. Also, it will be noted in chapter 3 that as the formulation process begins by utilization of their own skills, assets and endogenous knowledge and the dialogical method in the Bible study, a sense of responsibility, identity and care would be achieved.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE BIBLE STUDY GROUP AND THEOLOGICAL INSIGHTS

#### 3. Introduction

In the previous chapter we have seen the status of the environment from a global perspective and later from the perspective of Malawi. We have learnt some causes of such environmental degradation and the need for the Church's response towards it. As a way of responding to such degradation, this chapter intends to show ways that will assist in developing up with an educational program. It will include the formulation of a Bible study group.

#### Reasons for using the Bible study method

As an ELDP environmental protection project, I felt it necessary to use Bible study that is based on the Christian principles that have developed from the fundamental biblical understanding that God has placed human beings on earth, among all creatures with a purpose and duty to care for what has been given to them.

The Bible study group will assess what the Bible teaches about humans with the rest of creation and how best this could be interpreted for Christians and the community at large. With this understanding, my colleagues at the Zomba ELCM office and some members were eager to participate.

#### 3.1 Bible Study and the educational program

##### Description of the Pilot Study

##### 3.1.1 Meeting at the Evangelical Lutheran Church Zomba Parish Office

Prior to the scheduled first meeting in Zomba, on 15 July I had an appointment with the ELDP Projects Coordinator, Mr Fransis Ngopola in Blantyre at the ELDP operations office, which is approximately 68 Kms south of Zomba. The purpose of the meeting was to get permission to go to any ELDP impact area in Zomba to conduct my research on environmental education. After a brief discussion, I was finally granted permission.

Along side this, he advised me to go to Mwambananji village, which was easy to reach, as it was one of the project areas for environmental protection.

With that permission, then on 18 July in 2003 I had an appointment with the Parish pastor for ELCM Zomba, Isaac Siyani, and the Projects Officer for ELDP Zomba, Mr I. Muonda, at the Parish office. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possibility of organizing a Bible study group within one of the ELDP implementing areas. Also, it was important to brief them on what my research was all about. This would in turn enable them to understand and hence render some contribution towards it. I told them that my entry point towards tapping information would be through Bible studies.

Furthermore, the intention of making a Bible study group, as I briefed them, was to work with it so as to acquire knowledge about the environment. As it has been indicated in sub chapter 2.2, environmental theology ought to be a Church oriented activity. With this view, I continued that the theology in it involves assessment of what the Bible teaches on humans relations with the rest of creation and how best this could be interpreted for Christians to reflect on.

Beside the issue of Bible study, I also briefed them on how to approach the participants for successful research. I told them about the dialogical method that I was interested in. I said that the method requires mutual respect, understanding, patience and humility with one another in the course of discussion. Though participants are poor, they still have knowledge to offer in the formulation of environmental education. Finally, I closed the briefing stressing the importance of not dominating discussion during the course of doing Bible study itself. The intention is to engage fully with the community members of Mwambananji who are participants in the environmental protection activities.

After a lengthy briefing in the office, they agreed with my suggestion and hence a group of 25 men and women was short-listed. It was furthermore agreed to do the study at Mwambananji village,<sup>55</sup> approximately 10km away from the Church's office.

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<sup>55</sup> See Map of Zomba district on page 8 for location of Mwambananji village in the district.



The Project Officer facilitated in communicating with the village headwoman about the Bible study group. It was agreed that this was to take place in the village near one of the woodlots. The first session of the Bible study was to take place in the Kachipama ELCM Church building. The next session was to take place after a visit on some of the environmental activities. It was felt important to have the feel of the natural resources and for easy reference.

Mwambananji village was chosen, as it is not far from where the Zomba ELCM/ELDP office is. Furthermore, it was chosen because of its involvement in the environmental protection activities as facilitated by the ELDP. It was furthermore agreed that the next briefing meeting at the office should include four extra members.

On 20 July, we convened a second briefing meeting at the office, which included the two ELDP facilitators, the adult literacy instructor and a form four student of Eleventh Avenue Private Secondary who also comes from Mwambananji village. The reason for the meeting was to brief them on the approach of the Bible study. I told them not to be dominant during the discussion. The most important thing was for us to acquire knowledge from the participants. We would be there just to render facilitation.

### **The Bible study group**

The group has the representation of those already involved in environmental activities. In it there is representation of those responsible for environmental problems. Also, there are some people within the group whom I regard as service providers as well as having relevant information about the environment. These are: the adult literacy instructor for Mwambananji village who was trained by ELDP, the Parish Pastor, the Projects Officer, the two Development Facilitators of ELDP and one secondary school student of Eleventh Avenue school that also comes from Mwambananji village, as well as a member of the Kachipama ELCM congregation.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> See figure 3 on page 32 photo for bible study in procession at Mwambananji in Zomba.



**Figure 3 shows part of the Youth group that was also interested in the Bible study.**

The above picture indicates part of the members of Kachipama congregation. It is also part of the community that is involved in the environmental protection activities as facilitated by the Evangelical Lutheran Development Program (ELDP). Some of the activities are, afforestation, fuel efficiency clay stoves, agroforestry and fruit production, and soil and water conservation.

### **3.1.2 Bible study at Kachipama ELCM congregation chapel**

On Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July, the intended Bible study on environmental issues was announced to the congregation. It was to be facilitated by Rev A. Msuku who is studying in South Africa. All the discussions were to be conducted in Chichewa the local language. According to Charles Mulilima, who later reported to me:

Members of the congregations are furious and amazed at hearing what you intend to do, mixing Bible study with environmental issues. In addition, you have departed from the teachings of our Saviour Jesus Christ. The Rev is mad with education. Instead of winning converts for Jesus Christ and safeguarding them against eternal hellfire, he wants to deal with the environment. If he has money, let him buy maize and distribute it to us.<sup>57</sup>

I was not shocked upon hearing such remarks. I was also told that the comments came from someone who is not even involved in the ELDP activities. In addition, as I indicated in the introduction, very few people know very little about environmental issues. They feel that issues dealing with environment are earthly and governmental affairs under the Ministries concerned.

### **3.1.3 First Session of Bible Study on 22 July 2003**

It was on Tuesday 22 July 2003 at 9.45am that 25 members of the group met in the chapel at Kachipama congregation.<sup>58</sup> I introduced the topic: the need to formulate an environmental education strategy as one way of protecting and conserving the environment. Also, I explained the importance of using the Bible. This is because it has theological insights that touch on humanity and the environment. Therefore its utilization would teach Christians know that either they have applied or ought to apply these insights that touch on humanity and the environment.

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<sup>57</sup> Interview with Charles Mulilima, ELCM Security Guard for the Parish Office as well as Kachipama congregation secretary on 21 July, 2003.

<sup>58</sup> See page 69 for list of participants.



### **The steward model**

I began by introducing a text from Psalm 24:1: “The Earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.” The aim was to instill a sense of ownership of the earth as belonging to God. For us we have a role to offer on earth as God’s stewards.

However, Mrs Agness Malemia raised a concern about ownership. She said, “In our villages, it seems it does not appear as if the earth belongs to God. Instead, it belongs to village headmen and chiefs who always wish to take control of the resources for their own benefit. Also, it belongs to some service providers whose development activities do not benefit local communities, but rather enrich themselves.”

Rev Isaac Siyani raised a point that in the steward model, the earth does not belong to humans, rather it belongs to God. Concurring with this, Mrs Liza Biliwita said, “God has entrusted this earth into the hands of people so as to take care of it on God’s behalf, but it will eventually be returned to its owner.” Miss Mercy Asan pointed out that, “as stewards we have power, but it is not power to be used as lords over the earth, but as trustees of the earth. But how can we be sure that now we use the power correctly?” Rev Isaac Siyani said, “a responsible use of power would require God’s assistance.”

After a lengthy discussion on this text, it was concluded that, the creation belongs to God Himself, but they have been entrusted to care for the earth and its natural resources and to keep and use it within communities. Furthermore, it was also learnt that even though stewards have power, but it does not mean that it ought to be used as managers or kings over the earth. In addition, what is needed here is a just and sustained use of power, an urgent effort to match power with responsibility. Also, as stewards, they ought to exercise their trusteeship over the earth together with God.

### **Destructive human attitudes**

On the same day, I introduced a second text from Genesis 1:26-28 and Genesis 2:4b-20. These texts contain the creations account. After having read and introduced the story to them, a concern was raised by Mr Michael Laison who is also a primary school teacher. He said that the issue of power seems to be misinterpreted by many people, as in v26 “They will have power over the fish, the birds, and animals...” and in v28 “Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control” v28.

Echoing his comment, Mrs Tereza Kathumba said that it looks as if that the texts have mandated us to have priority and have power over all in creation. After creating all, finally God made human beings in His own image v26. This alone shows God to vest power in them to rule and subdue the earth. Many in turn have misunderstood this. People feel that because they have priority and power over creation, they have the right to exploit the environment.

Furthermore, the issue of having many children is a way of encouraging high population growth. Mrs Ronney Mpelembe highlighted that in spite of the bearing of many children as urged in verse v28, we still ought to continue practising family planning in as far as our high population rate is concerned in Malawi.

In addition, and in line with v26 about the issue of taking control, Mrs Elube Duri asked a question: “Why is it that many people seem to cut down trees and in accumulation, acquire large hectares of land for agricultural purposes and hence claim all this as belonging to themselves?” I responded to her by saying that many people tend to accumulate property for themselves because they believe that the earth is there to serve them. Perhaps this mistaken attitude is influenced by the teaching that human beings were created ‘in the image of God’ Gen1: 28. This teaching leads humans to see themselves as the crown of creation because the rest of creation was made around them as read in Gen 2: 4-17.

### **3.1.4 Second session of Bible study on 25 July 2003.**

The next session of the Bible study was on Saturday 25 July 2003. This time we met at one of the woodlots of the Mwambanaji club under the mango trees. Attendance dropped from 25 to 16. I discovered that, being Saturday, it was market day. The market was approximately 6 Kilometers away from Mwambanaji village, and most people had gone shopping. Also, the group secretary told me that some felt the Bible study for environment would not help them to be saved. In addition, environmental issues mixed with Bible study was a new approach towards their understanding of nature.

#### **Human Beings and their behaviour as the source of environmental crisis**

On this day, the text was from Genesis 3:9-18 After two members read them respectively and my textual analysis, Mrs Tereza Kathumba asked a question: “Why is God pronouncing punishment on the snake, woman and later on the man as seen from vs.14-17) Mrs Joyce Mulera said that it was due to disobedience caused by them. Furthermore, Mr James Mataya said: “we learn from the text that when God questioned them, they all defended themselves.”

I added by saying that this disobedience, rebellion and rejection of responsibility by Adam and Eve resulted in tragic consequences. We see that humanity was alienated from itself, from God and from nature. Instead of being responsible and safeguarding the nature, they caused harm to it. Rev Isaac Siyani added by saying: “It should be remembered that before the incident, there was a proper connectedness of all that was created. And punishment befalls them because they were interconnected in their living together and let each other down.” I added that we have also noted in Gen 3:9-18 the interconnectedness between humans on the one hand and animals and the earth on the other.

We finally concluded that, we have seen clearly from the text that the earth is always affected by human behaviour. The earth is therefore like a neighbour and a cordial relationship between human beings and the earth would lead to God giving His blessings.

Our task therefore is to make sure we establish good relations with the natural resources on earth. The way the environment will respond to human needs depends very much on human behaviour itself.

### **The suffering and salvation of creation**

On the same day after lunch break, we resumed our Bible study with a New Testament text, Romans 8:19-30. I introduced the text though it was a little bit difficult to be easily followed by members. At the beginning they struggled to integrate the message especially on how the environment is suffering and ultimately to be saved by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, by the end of the discussion, they were able to capture its meaning.

One member wanted a clarification on vs19 that says: “All creation waits with eager longing for God to reveal his sons.” Elube answered that creation feels or cries for a complete justice. It feels that human beings have tampered with it for their greedy purposes; therefore Jesus’ coming would rescue creation from over exploitation. Mr Zulu added that creation is subjected to care and destruction. The coming of Jesus Christ would rescue it from destruction. This therefore simply implies our continued efforts in protecting and conserving it. Miss Ruth Kungade was amazed at vs22 that says “All of creation groans with pain, like the pain of childbirth. But it is not just creation alone that groans;” Mr James Mataya suggested once more that the earth is crying for justice. It seeks someone to speak for it. I added that the earth requires our continued advocacy role in order for it to be saved.

To sum up, the text above includes a vision of the future redemption that would be needed by us. From this text, we learn about the suffering that we as Christians experience that bears witness to God’s presence and hence acquiring of God’ salvation in that suffering. The text does not necessarily refer to human suffering but also the creation that suffers degradation. In addition, although we have caused creation to suffer by our misuse or abuse of natural resources so much that it is groaning, there is still hope that God’s plan will not be frustrated at all. Finally, creation itself will be saved in Christ through our repentance.

### 3.1.5 Third Session of Bible study on 30 July 2003

#### **Gender balance and sensitivity**

The third day of the Bible study session was on Wednesday 30 July. It was held at the same woodlot place in Mwambananji village. Unlike on Saturday, attendance went up to 20. This could be that it was in the middle of the week. Also, I was told that members began to enjoy the Bible study for they learnt and realized its purpose to be the basis for the formulation of environmental education.

The texts of the day were from Genesis 1:26a and Galatians 3:26-28. Mrs Elube Duri the adult literacy instructor proposed these two texts. She explained in advance the reasons for her choice, which provoked the male participants. She said: “Pastor, we are in problems here in Mwambananji club. These male participants always tend to sideline and undermine us in the decision making process, and once a woman is late for any kind of meeting, we are confronted by very bad remarks. When a man comes late or is absent in a meeting it is quite as if nothing has taken place.” She was joined by Lepha Likaya: “Look, but when it comes to fetching for firewood, they need our attention yet they spend more time drinking than working in the homestead.”

As a facilitator, I intervened and agreed to proceed with the Bible readings. Mrs Elubi raised a point by posing a question: “Why did God create man and woman in his own image? Mr James Mataya responded: “So that what ever they do should be similar and in line with God’s purpose.” Mr Zulu added: “The stress here is the vocation of man and woman, created in the image of God who have received the mission to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth” Rev Siyani concluded by saying, “ human being here refers to both male and female who are in a joint venture to care for the creation.” The mission here has no discriminatory intentions. In other words the human being is put in charge of all things. This in turn, shows that even its stewardship role on the resources has no discrimination.



Coming to Galatians 3:26-28, Mrs Elube Duri was in the forefront clarifying the text. She used the example given in v28 of no difference between “Jews nor Gentiles” to refer to promoting unity between males and females as they work towards environmental protection. This text nearly brought confusion in the Bible study group as men who were present were provoked by Mrs Elube for her openness. Most of the women participants were a bit quite. I think it is because of the culture that also seems to suppress them. They are quiet as it is internalized that women should not talk much when men are available.

Mrs Renni Rijuni added by saying that: “We suffer discrimination in most societies and our presence has always been taken for granted as not to be fit to deliver our talents and gifts. On the contrary, we undertake the main role in agricultural activities. But pastor, look at the way men dominate in the control over the resources.” Mrs Elube came in with no point. She said: “Let us see if really agricultural service provision by the Government have been properly targeted toward us, you may find that they have targeted men, is this in line with Gen1: 26a and Galatians 3:26-28? We really need education to enlighten us so that our participation in the environment is a fair one.”

I summed up the discussion first by cooling down the anger of some men towards Mrs Elube. After all understood the points that had been raised, we agreed to confess our mistakes and balance responsibility by involving women in policy planning, decision making and implementation. In line with both texts, we reminded each other of the joint tasks to keep and care for the environment. We also reminded each other of the revelation that women are the most important users of the environment but are also the main victims of its management.

### **3.1.6 The Fourth session of Bible study on 6 August 2003**

#### **Creation as a parable of God’s grace**

All the participants attended the last session. The reasons could be that they wanted to see what I was to offer at the end. Usually there are a lot of expectations from the facilitators in the projects in this village. In addition, it was the first time to have Bible study with them on issues of the environment.



I finally introduced the topic of Christ in creation. Matthew 6: 25-34 became an interesting topic because it mentions Jesus who is not mentioned in the creation stories in Genesis as far as members understanding of the creation story is concerned. Charles Mulilima asked: “How do we incorporate Jesus in the creation story, because he is not seen in the creation activity itself?” Mr James Mataya answered in a doubting way: “I feel that Jesus appears in creation when he uses such animals, water and trees to refer to gifts of creation. These creatures do not worry about tomorrow” Mrs Mercy Asani added, “I think the creatures show God’s continued grace in the creatures” Concurring with Asani, Miss Judith Banda student at the Eleventh Avenue Private secondary school but a member of the Bible study said: “In vs26 and 30 we see Jesus telling us about God offering care on the birds of air and clothing the grass of the field. This indicates God’s grace on creation through Christ Jesus.” Rev Isaac Siyani added: “God’s concern over creation; grass, birds and wild flowers is seen in his caring act. God’s grace through Jesus, in turn, calls us to be less worried or rather become destructive over creation.”

To sum up, we all learn from God’s grace in Jesus in the beauty of creation. We also learn of the caring act that is engulfed by his love and grace. We learn that God in Christ is the giver of life to all living things. We also learn of a good relationship between God, Jesus and creation itself. We are therefore urged to have a better and more sustaining relationship with our God in Christ with us and in turn ourselves with creation.

### **3.2 Evaluation**

The educational program to be formulated has been the result of a dialogical coordinated effort with participants that met in the Bible study group for four times in different respective places of the Mwambananji village.

#### **Key issues**

Members saw the importance of recognizing the key principles of education as starting from where the learners are and going from the known to the unknown. They also put forward the importance for those involved in non-formal environmental education to be concerned at all times about the state of environmental awareness, which may therefore

have to be assessed regularly, and possibly included in the state of the environment reports.

They furthermore mentioned that the majority still lacks a sufficient understanding of environmental issues to enable them to relate problems of poor agricultural yields, deforestation, drought and other similar environmental problems to the way they use the natural resources. Instead of a scientific explanation of natural phenomena, many people still attribute these environmental problems to the supernatural.

They highlighted that the majority of the population, living in poverty under constant threat of food insecurity, are so concerned with basic survival matters that they do not have much room to be concerned about environmental issues such as deforestation, soil degradation destruction of wetlands and similar issues that seem to suggest a check on their survival efforts.

They also hinted that they were then able to relate God's message of creation and their usage of natural resources. In addition, they were concerned about people who find it hard to relate problems of drought, poor agricultural yields, water scarcity, and so on, to the way they use the natural resources. For they claim that these problems seem to arise from acts of God or nature, beyond people's control.

### **3.3 Conclusion**

The Bible study on all the four days, from the Church at Kachipama to the woodlot under the mango tree revealed the following key issues of environmental, theological and educational concerns:

First, it has revealed the importance of recognizing God as the owner of creation and that the members ought to be aware of the fact that the community's social and economic struggles in development ought to begin with the acceptance that the earth on which all activities take place belongs to God. Any plans or any approaches in the promotion of

educational programs taken are to recognize the God given potential and vocation for each person.

Second, it has revealed the notion of stewardship to be practiced amongst members. Community members are called to faithful stewardship. In this regard, they become partners in His continuing creation activity. Members have been entrusted to keep and care for natural resources.

Third, it has shown that there is an interconnectedness and interdependence between the earth and us. In this regard, it is important to offer an integral approach to the protection and conservation of the natural resources. Everything, (animals, land, soil, water, trees) is connected and depends on each other. In addition, it has made members aware that exploitation of any of these leads to degradation of the other.

Fourth, it revealed that the current environmental issue is the way human beings ought to relate to the environment. Also, it indicates that the environmental crisis is a moral and a spiritual crisis. It is not a material crisis. In this situation, therefore, there is a need for spiritual solutions. We need repentance and a transformation of the human mind so that human beings can begin to see themselves as partners with the earth.

Fifth, it has also shown that the mistaken belief that humans are the most important of all creatures and that the rest of creation must serve them, has ultimately led to the degradation of the environment. Therefore there is a need to change or correct this belief of power over creation as a way of exploitation to see it but rather as a way of keeping and caring for the resources.

Sixth, it has also revealed that the land and its natural resources entrusted to us by God does not only belong to the present community, but belong to the coming generations for whom the land is held in trust and whose needs we should not compromise. In other words, there is need for a sustainable approach towards the environment.

Seventh, it has portrayed the need to undergo an ecological conversion. Community members have been viewed as both perpetrators and victims of environmental destruction. In this regard, a transformation process is urgently required so that members are aware of this conversion.

Eighth, it has shown the need to balance participation of both men and women in all activities. However, concern has been noted regarding women playing the major role in agricultural activities, which in turn leads to an increased rate of poverty and oppression of them. And yet, they are mostly sidelined in many issues regarding development. In view of this, there is need to integrate gender concerns in environmental policy planning, decision-making and implementation at all levels. This however, calls for a lot of education and training, to develop the sensitivity and skills required to enable integration to take place.

Finally, it was discussed that there is no supernatural contribution as to the cause of environmental degradation, but rather it is due to human lack of responsibility in caring for the natural resources, which is totally against God's purpose for creation.

In addition, the information received from Bible study and discussions have a variety of formats: there is public awareness, the instillation of sense ownership and responsibility to care for the creation, a notion of being called by God to care and a notion of being stewards of creation and God being the owner of creation. There was a realization that the land is crying for justice.

It was important to use the dialogical Bible study method, which involved the notion of environmental educational that has drawn members' greater participation in the learning and development process.





**Figure 4. Shows part of the Mwambananji Bible study that is in procession.**

## CHAPTER FOUR

### KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

#### 4. Introduction

In chapter three, we have seen some critical observations that were made in regard to the conception of God, humanity and nature. It was also noted that the main concern of the Bible study as a whole was to discern insights on how the community and the Biblical traditions view the environment, and thereby assist them in improving their relationship with nature. Drawing from previous findings as above, this chapter therefore intends to show key issues that will assist in coming up with an educational strategy. First it begins by defining a general understanding of education, which offers in turn another clarification of the intended environmental education. It will also portray the theory of education used in transforming the society towards protection and conservation of the environment. The strategy will be based on the three main issues of environmental concerns, theological insights and educational principles.

#### 4.1 Educational issues for considerations

##### 4.1.1 Meaning of education

Education is regarded as a guiding tool that directs and brings awareness, transforms and builds learners new insights in their life. In addition, education is already a development process as it enables people towards being free from oppressive attitudes. This concurs with Amartya Sen as he defines development as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. Furthermore, he rates development as the removal of major sources of unfreedom such as poverty, poor economic opportunities and systematic social deprivation and neglect of public facilities.<sup>59</sup>

It is important to put into consideration the fact that education enables the community to be conscientized. This results in putting them in the position of discovering their own

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<sup>59</sup> Sen, Amartya. *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor Books, 1999) p3.



capacities, assets and gifts that are available within their communities and not from outside.<sup>60</sup> In this regard, the communities concerned in the environmental education would be able to understand their situations and in turn be in a position to provide possible solutions towards environmental problems.

The key issue in this understanding is the notion of values.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, education is perceived as something that on its own can just be an island without inhabitants. Therefore in this situation, education is meant for individuals and society aimed at transformation and conservation.

In this strategy, environmental education goes beyond just understanding and appreciation. It includes developing the skills and attitudes and bringing about the behavior change. In addition, it should be taken into consideration that environmental education ought to be a team effort. Every one can make a difference by leading the way and setting an example for others to follow.

#### **4.1.2. Dialogical empowering model of education**

According to Paulo Freire, dialogical models, these are practices of opposing theories of cultural action that have a notion of communication within the community. In it, these actions and reflections are simultaneously perceived.<sup>62</sup> In this regard, participants in environmental education are the subjects of transformation and have a sense of ownership as well as being liberated.

Furthermore, the dialogical model has elements of mutual love, faith, trust, hope and respect as the foundation of the dialogical process itself. The other important point to take into consideration is to side with the marginalized, oppressed and the poor. These become the key participants in the development of the pedagogy. Also, it should be born in mind

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<sup>60</sup> Kretzmann, John P and Mcknight, John, L. *Building Communities from Inside Out. A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets* (ACTA Publications, Chicago, 1993) pp8-9

<sup>61</sup> I am in debted to the Lecturer notes by Rev Raymond Khumalo for Transforming Christian Education Course.

<sup>62</sup> Paul, Freire. *Pedagogue of the Oppressed* (London: Penguin Books, 1970) p106

that there should be the promotion of dialogue in this education. In this way, there shall be an achievement of humanization as opposed to dehumanization.<sup>63</sup>

In addition, the way to use the dialogical model of education is at the same time empowering. In this method, I see the involvement of people as the center of focus and they will eventually have the capacity for the transformation of their own community. In the dialogical and empowering model, there shall be no chance of imposition by others on the rest of the Church and society at large. By the use of dialogical model and in the empowering method, members in the community become the subject of the education itself and are in a position to decide which of their experiences from them could be used as a starting point of the education.

Also, my experience is that dialogue in this process leads to a source of liberation for both the poor and the rich. Besides this experience, I see an ultimate aim at the end that will free humanity as whole. At last, humanization becomes the center of attraction in the society as a whole as far as dialogical education is concerned. This is in line with Paulo Freire's comments:

Humanization as the vision, in a context of dehumanization. Humanization as the people's vocation. Liberation needs an instrument for humanization-the pedagogy of the oppressed, a pedagogy forged with, not for, the oppressed in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity.<sup>64</sup>

Echoing Freire's comment, as a facilitator in the environmental education, my vision is towards liberating the marginalized, poor and oppressed. In other words, I am interested in humanizing them in the course of transmitting knowledge about God the Creator and His kingdom. Finally, using the empowering dialogical education would be the best tool in that it will keep both members and the one teaching better engaged. Also, it would not be a simple exchange of ideas to be consumed by the discussants. I therefore would encourage this method as it carries out the notion of two-way traffic. It uses the teacher-student debate.

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p.30.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, p.30

### 4.1.3 Focus and approach of education

The implementation of education requires subjects, those in facilitation and praxis that refers to the community. For example, the purpose is to focus on the community in which participation would be required. The purpose of this education responds to the Church and environmental concerns as already indicated in chapter 2. In this regard, the environmental education should start from where people are, and go out to others. In addition, this places people at the center of the development process. In turn, it recognizes that human well-being is the final goal of development.<sup>65</sup> It should be noted that dialogue has its focus on praxis. In this situation, it is education and people that are its praxis. I also draw from Moores idea in *Teaching from the Heart*, that education has a purpose of leading people to know the world on the one hand, and to participate in it on the other hand. It also leads people into encounters with the world, subject to subject.<sup>66</sup>

Echoing the above comment, it is seen that such encounters should begin by listening to the poor and oppressed whose voices may be the hardest to hear. In addition, education ought to start from where people are and then later go out from their community. This is practically illustrated by the Mwambananji village Bible study group as indicated in chapter three.

In addition, it is important to have an action focus when dealing this education.<sup>67</sup> In it there should be practical actions to reduce the environmental impact. “Action and learning are seen as happening together, where environment in action is one of the best ways to learn.”<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Monaheng, Tsitso. “Community Development and Empowerment” in De Beer, F. and Swanepoel, H. *Introduction to Development Studies*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) p125

<sup>66</sup> Moore, M. *Teaching From the Heart* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press) p181.

<sup>67</sup> I am indebted to Rev Reymond Khumalo’s Lecture notes in the Transforming Christian Education Course.

<sup>68</sup> Part of the Bible study discussion with Mr I. Muonda, ELDP Project’s officer in Zomba August 2003.

## **4.2 Theological issues for considerations**

### **4.2.1 The Exercise of dominion over Creation**

One of the most important key issues that the community should bear in mind and put to proper use as they implement the environmental education strategy is the commission by God to human beings to have dominion over creation. As indicated earlier, in the introductory part, many people have misunderstood this. Indeed, it is perceived that “humanity has been given a clear commission by God to exercise dominion over the rest of creation, this is far from the aggressive domination and exploitation that human beings have so far exercised on nature and on one another.”<sup>69</sup> In view of this, the community should therefore understand that the divine command as referred to here shows that there is a special role and responsibility by the community towards the environment.

In addition, based on the above, the community ought to be made aware of two educational key issues: First, the realization of the fact that they stand together with nature as fellow-suffers in this world of pain and sorrow in case they do not relate with nature responsibly. Second, they need to know that they stand together with God as co-operators in his plan to perfect and complete creation.

### **4.2.2 The recognition of God the Creator**

It is very important for the community, as they are involved in the environmental education, to recognize that whatever they plan, decide and implement, their activities should be done in recognition of God as the owner of creation. This concurs with Samsom Gitau’s comment in *The Environmental Crisis*. According to Psalms 24:1, God is said to have placed human beings in the world so that they may look after it, but not as owners because, “the earth and all that is in it belongs to God.”<sup>70</sup> In view of this, the community in its environmental activities should realize that God has entrusted the earth and all natural resources to them to care for, keep and use.

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<sup>69</sup> Gitau, Samson. K. *The Environmental Crisis. A Challenge for African Christianity* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2000) p88.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, p.63.

In addition, as the community recognizes the earth's belonging to God and that it is He who sustains and ultimately restores it, they are challenged to respond in the light of this consideration. This can be done in the following ways:

We CONFESS that we as human beings have not always allowed the earth and its creatures to flourish. We have all too often abused and brought death to the land. We confess that we, especially as churches, have often been indifferent to environmental degradation..  
We ACKNOWLEDGE our responsibility, especially as churches, to keep the land and to care for it as the land cares for us  
We COMMIT ourselves, especially as churches to promote relationships that enhance and do not undermine sustainable communities.<sup>71</sup>

Drawing from the above, communities should therefore commit themselves to resist all forms of environmental degradation such as deforestation and soil erosion, promoting tree planting and soil conservation practices. In this way, they would be performing a stewardship role as a way of recognizing God as the creator of earth.

### **4.3 Environmental issues for considerations**

#### **4.3.1 Sustainable use of the environment**

It should be taken into consideration that environmental education has to go with the recognition of the value of the local knowledge, practices and perceptions in enhancing sustainability. This is in line with the definition of environmental education as indicated in sub chapter 2.3.1

Within the perspective of sustainable environment, the community should adopt the sustainable development method that coordinates the relationship between social economy and natural ecology. The communities have to focus on sustainable use of the environment bearing in mind that the present generation should meet its needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their. However, this can only be promoted through a long-term plan.

While this is a step towards ecological responsibility, it is also important to instill a sense of knowledge of the problems of the concept of sustainable environmental development.

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<sup>71</sup>“The Earth Belongs to God: Some Africa Perspectives on the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) 2002” in (ed) Steve de Gruchy, *Bulletin For Contextual Theology in Africa Double Issue in partnership with the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)* p.112



This is supported by a concern of a member in the group: “Most principles of sustainable development are appropriate goals for policy. Yet, in continuing to focus on development we will continue to degrade, destroy, and exploit the earth and people for their own purpose in the system.”<sup>72</sup>

Members of the community should offer mutual commitment to the poor and marginalized within the areas. Such a commitment, at the same time, is also offered to the earth itself. The reason is that, the future of the poor is solely dependent upon the future of the planet earth. In the course of promoting sustainable environment in development arena, Christians have to live a sustaining life in communities that bears right relations, equity and justice. I may put it as a two-way traffic in that, in the context of sustaining the earth, we are in the situation of being sustained by the earth in turn. This is supported by the comment below:

We cannot therefore support the dominant vision of sustainable communities that undermines both the earth and the poor. Our commitment is to sustainable communities that live and develop by caring for, nurturing and sustaining the people of the earth and the earth which belongs to God, and which God has given us for sustenance. This is the vision that has sustained the people of God for centuries in many and diverse circumstances. It is the vision that grows out of obedience to the God of life.<sup>73</sup>

Such involvement of the Christians in environmental issues is a typical stewardship responsibility. Furthermore, such stewardship of the living and inorganic systems of the earth should be implemented in such a way that it maintains sustainability for present and future generations. This calls for human responsibility that demands a growing awareness.

#### **4.3.2 Conscientization of the Community on the importance of the environment**

There is a great need to make the community aware of the role played by the environment in daily life. In Malawi, the development of human society depends on its interaction with the environment. As already stated earlier on, development is seen as people’s

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<sup>72</sup> Discussions held on 4 August, 2003 with Mr James Namalenga, a primary school teacher, as well as member in the Bible study group in Zomba

<sup>73</sup> “This is Gods Earth: Adopted by SACC and Church Representatives on 19 June 2002 in preparation for The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)” in (ed) Steve de Gruchy, *Bulletin For Contextual Theology in Africa Double Issue in partnership with the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)* p.102.



increasing ability to understand, adapt to and appropriately transform the environment for the satisfaction of their own and their community's needs. At the primitive stages, with limited understanding of the environment, people should utilize available skills, gifts and assets to achieve a better and sustainable interaction with the environment in simple ways. In such a way, they would be able to meet their basic needs on a day-to-day basis.

In addition, the Church is expected to "have the potential to conscientize their respective adherents on matters pertaining to environment. The Church should be involved because it is a social institution concerned for the welfare of its faithful, who are affected by environmental degradation."<sup>74</sup> It has also been noted that the more the community grows to understand the environment and develop as well as mobilize the available skills, assets and technology to take advantage of it, the more their society develops.

In addition, drawing from Monty J. Roodt in *Reconstruction, Development and People*, it is perceived that once the community is made aware of the contradictions in their lives, it changes from being passive "objects to active subjects, critically aware and able to transform their environment in militant and creative ways."<sup>75</sup> However, one member commented: "Ironically, the more society develops and becomes better equipped to take advantage of the environment, the greater becomes its capacity to destroy the environment."<sup>76</sup>

The majority of Malawi's population still relies mainly on their traditional indigenous knowledge to interact with the environment. The traditional knowledge and technology are generally environment friendly, manifesting much reverence for nature, and therefore not as destructive of the environment. For instance, the use of fuel-efficient clay stoves, simple agroforestry activities, rearing of poultry, guinea fowl and goats, and soil and

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<sup>74</sup> Gitau, Samsom. K. "The Environmental Crisis. A Challenge For African Christianity" in J.N.K.Mugambi (ed) *African Christianity Series (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2000)* p.96.

<sup>75</sup> Roodt, Monty. J. "Participatory development": A jargon concept" in (eds) Jan K. Coetzee and Johann Graaff in *Reconstruction, Development and People (Johannesburg:International Thomson Publishing Company, 1996)* p315

<sup>76</sup> Concerned raised by Mrs Grace Kanthiti on 6 August 2003 during discussion on environmental education at Mwambananji village in Zomba.

water conservation activities by the ELDP have really assisted the local communities economically and they are environmentally friendly.

### **4.3.3 Promotion of behavior change**

From a biblical point of view, it is conceived that human beings are the controller of the natural resources. In view of this, people have mistakenly misunderstood and taken themselves as most important of all creatures and decided that the rest of creation must serve them. This has ultimately led to the degradation of the environment.

Therefore, there is a need to change or correct such belief of power over creation as a way of exploitation but rather as a way of keeping and caring for the resources. In addition, communities should change their attitudes and hence “should have responsible dominion over all creation.”<sup>77</sup>

### **4.3.4 Community participation in environmental education**

In order to acquire better results in the environmental educational program, there should be mutual participation by the community itself. This is supported by the comments:

It is by participating actively in community development activities that people can reap the fruits of development. So, community development is based on community projects. Residents must participate in defining the content of these projects (they must determine their own needs). Participation also implies some form of organization.<sup>78</sup>

In line with the above comment, this participation can be achieved only if the community has acquired a sense of ownership of the project itself. In regard to this educational program, the use of a dialogical model through the Bible study as indicated in chapter 3, provides evidence of acquisition of ownership of the program. Members understood the basis for the need to respond to environmental degradation and in turn, showed interest and the will to forge ahead in participating in and implementing the environmental education program. In addition, members of the community who participated in the Bible study sought to address the felt needs of the community. They found it interesting to see

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<sup>77</sup> Gitau, Samson, K. “Environmental Crisis. A Challenge For African Christianity” in J.N.K. Mugambi (ed) *African Christianity Series* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2000) p.96.

<sup>78</sup> Monaheng, Tsitso. “Community Development and Empowerment” in De Beer, F. and Swanepoel, H. *Introduction to Development Studies*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) p128.

themselves and not the government or any other agency working towards achieving the goal.

#### **4.3.5 Promotion of the relationship between humanity and nature**

It has been discovered during Bible study that there is a strong relationship between humanity and nature. It should be known that they are all within the creation plan. In this case, communities have to be aware of this interrelationship. There is interdependence between the health of a person and that of planet earth. Members have to promote this relationship by being environmentally friendly. This is referred to as “Eco-psychology”. It is a new concept trying to integrate ecology and psychology, and to investigate the psychological, philosophical, cultural and spiritual roots of the human/nature relationship.<sup>79</sup> I see this relationship as creating identical both by the planet earth as well as by the human person. In view of this, if there is an external ecological crisis, it will also reflect a human internal crisis because human awareness is involved in its creation as well as its cure. Finally, the community has to be enlightened that the global and individual human problems cannot be solved without respecting this relationship.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

The chapter has discussed three key issues or considerations in the formulation and implementation of the environmental educational strategy. These are in the form of educational principles, theological insights, and environmental concerns. A proper integral consideration of the key issues would contribute to the formulation of the strategy that will assist in combating the environmental crisis problem.

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<sup>79</sup> [http://www.eco.net.dk/ENGLISH?Essay/Essay-4htm\(2003/06/24\)p. 2 of 5.](http://www.eco.net.dk/ENGLISH?Essay/Essay-4htm(2003/06/24)p.2of5)

## CHAPTER FIVE

### STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

#### 5. Introduction

This chapter outlines the actual strategies that the Church ought to follow when implementing the educational program in Malawi. Apart from the ELDP as an arm of the Church that is already involved in the environmental activities, some ELCM individuals within the youth and women groups will also implement the educational activities.

#### 5.1. Possible strategies for implementation

Chapters two to four have discussed what the environmental crisis is all about with its causes, and the theological insights pertaining to the Church's response. In addition, some biblical norms on how humans should relate with God, fellow beings and nature have also been discussed. Finally, the need for a dialogical way to disseminate such key environmental and educational issues to the whole community for the protection and conservation measures of the environment has also been raised. Based on the above, I feel it is important to put forward some strategies that will enable the Church to respond to the environmental crisis effectively.

#### 5.1.1 The Church as an agent in the environmental protection program

The entry point for this education ought to be the Church. It is because it is where the community gather for the purpose of worship as well as conducting various kinds of societal meetings. In this regard, it becomes easy for members to learn as well as to disseminate information. Furthermore, from a Christian perspective, I am convinced that through Christ, God has established his Church to be his agent or 'watchdog' in the world. In addition, the Church as a place of worship can serve as an effective channel for environmental education and action apart from the mobilization of people for spiritual salvation.

To compliment the fact raised above, it will be necessary to begin with the Church. It should be noted that within the Church, there are levels of members that the education would target.

- **Focus on the clergy of the ELCM and other denominations**

From pastoral experience, it is easy for the pastors to influence people who listen to them on every worship day and other occasions when they propagate the word of God. In one of the ELCM Pastor's Retreat given a chance, I could render a refresher topic on 'sermon transformation focusing on the environment'. In brief, it is necessary to urge the pastors that their sermons in some cases should preach about environment. For instance messages regarding environmental degradation could be included, such as preaching against the cutting down of trees unsustainably, or preaching for the need to conserve soil and water. Their sermons ought to include awareness about the recognition of God as the owner of creation and that individuals are stewards of the entire creation.

To sum up, there shall be an emphasis on evolving an ecological theology to the pastors that in turn would empower individuals and communities to conserve a balanced use of natural resources and, furthermore, bring about a better quality life for all. The clergy would utilise the pulpit as elaborated below.

- **The use of the pulpit**

Within the emphasis of the pastors, I feel that the mechanism of using the pulpit itself can serve the purpose for sending out this information. I regard the pulpit as a major channel through which the Church can organise people to apply any strategy. Here, it can be used to conscientize and mobilise members towards involvement in environmental issues. I feel that utilisation of the pulpit is of vital importance for it can become the central oral medium for conveying the information on environmental degradation as well as various protective measures.



- **Utilisation of Church forums**

The ELCM has various forums where members meet and discuss social and spiritual matters. In the first place, it is important to submit this document to the office of the Bishop so that in turn the Church Council can approve its usage in the various ELCM forums. Such forums are the Congregational and Parish Councils, as well as the Parish and Church Assemblies. All these forums meet once or twice a year depending on what has been stipulated in the ELCM Constitution. In this situation, I would use such opportunities in order to disseminate information about the program.

- **Focus on the ELCM Bible School**

As one of the Bible school lecturers, I would use this opportunity to share with my fellow members of staff and the Principal the possibility of incorporating this program in the curriculum. The Bible school is for evangelists, social workers, youth and women leaders that are picked from all ELCM parishes through the country. It will therefore be of great importance to render such education and in turn they can also deliver information to others in their respective parishes.

### **5.1.2. Organising several copies of this document**

The thesis itself is a source of educational information. Therefore it is very important to make several copies. This could only be done on request with the help of the ELDP environmental protection project. Copies of the document ought to be distributed as follows:

- To the ELDP head office in Lilongwe. It is necessary to submit a copy to them because they are the implementing arm of the ELCM.
- To the ELCM head office in Lilongwe. As already indicated above, it is also necessary that the office of the Bishop is aware of the new plans for the implementation of the environmental educational program.
- To all ELCM Parish Pastors and centres. As indicated earlier on, pastors are of vital importance in as far as information sharing is concerned. Their opinion carries weight and it is easy for them to influence people who listen to them on

every worship day and other occasions when they propagate the word of God. By having a copy of the education information, they become equipped for the task itself.

- To the Malawi Council of Churches (MCC). As a mother body of all Christian denominations in the country, it is important that the information reaches them just as it begins to be utilised by her member Churches.
- To the Council for Nongovernmental Organisation. Other NGO's would receive this document through the mother body office.
- To the National Library Service of Malawi head office in Lilongwe. They would be able to locate further copies in their various libraries in the three regions of Malawi.

### **5.1.3. Formation of youth action theatre within the community**

This group would involve itself in performing plays and dances whose objectives would be community level involvement in the public awareness of the environmental degradation as well as its protection measures. The group would perform drama in line with the message portrayed in the educational program itself. The plays would focus on mobilising local creativity as well as giving a strong voice to local feelings about the environment from which shelter and food is acquired. Apart from performance in drama, the group ought to offer songs and dances that are in line with the content of the strategy. This group could be supported by the ELDP at the beginning of the work as there would be a great need for moving from one district to the other until such a time that other districts have formed their own theatre groups.

### **5.1.4. Utilisation of the Church magazine and calendar**

There is a quarterly and a yearly publication of the ELCM Church magazine and almanac or 'calendar (Mlozo)'<sup>80</sup>. In this regard, I would include some extracts of this document in the magazine about some environmental problems as well as theological insights that motivate the need for a response. In the Church calendar, it is necessary to also include

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<sup>80</sup> Mlozo is a vernacular Chichewa language referring to a small booklet used by the ELCM. It contains Biblical texts for daily Bible studies and Sunday worship service.

some biblical texts to be utilised either for Bible study on mid weekdays and also or during worship services.

#### **5.1.5 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)**

Another strategy that I would like to use is that of Asset Based Community Development. This is an expression of ‘bottom up’ development or ‘grass roots development’ or development “from within.” I regard this approach as encouraging the efforts of people in the spirit of self help development using their own local knowledge and resources.<sup>81</sup> In addition, their skills can be effectively employed for the cause of environmental protection and sustainable development. In order to offer solutions to such degradation problems as indicated above, the Church should promote the Asset Based Approach for its educational strategy to be successful. This approach has the following characteristics: it starts with what the community has rather than what it lacks, it builds upon the problem solving capabilities of local people, associations and institutions, and it seeks always to build relationships between and amongst individuals, associations and institutions for the good of the community.<sup>82</sup> In view of this approach, the environmental education will start with the local people themselves. Their local knowledge becomes the basis for disseminating the information.

The non-formal environmental education and community training arising out of this strategy should be of the type that utilizes the three kinds of assets as mentioned above in the community: such as: the individuals, associations and the institutions. In this case, the Church should achieve and promote education that is people-centered geared to satisfying the people’s needs in order to raise the quality of their lives through participation and improved environmental educational practices. It should encourage the full participation of all concerned at every stage of the program: development, implementation and evaluation. The approach instills and hence creates a sense of ownership and responsibility for the environment among individuals and communities.

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<sup>81</sup> Mammo, T. *The Paradox of Africa’s poverty* (Lawrenceville: The Red Sea Press, inc. 1999) p173.

<sup>82</sup> Kretzmann, J.P. and Mcknight, J.L. *Building Communities from the Inside Out* (Chicago: ACTA, 1993) p.18.

### **5.1.6 Networking with the role players in the environmental activities**

By promoting the fact that members of the community are the main actors of the educational program, in addition it should be understood that the ELDP ought to play a facilitator role. In this case, ELDP has to relate with the local institutions and government services because it is the only way to get into an impact area for implementation of the program. These local institutions ought to be captured; hence, it is through such relationships that the ELDP would be able to start to implement this program.

In line with the above, it is well known that in any community of displaced people, there exists a number of experienced men and women, who could well be called upon to offer their skills for the environmental work to be undertaken. The need for skilled people is greatest in the initial stage of an emergency. It is for this reason that the ELDP as an implementer of this strategy has to relate with other institutions for technical and organizational potential in the communities.<sup>83</sup>

Furthermore, it is seen that every district in the country has local institutions that are concerned with developmental issues. Each village forms a Village Action Group, which is the smallest development units at grassroots level. The village headman is the chairperson of the VAG and is the contact person between government departments, NGO's and development initiatives that have to be taken at village level. In each village there could be several committees, such as water, natural resources health and others. All these committees choose their chairpersons and committee members.

The Area Action Group (AAG) consists of the village headmen/group village headmen in a big area headed by the traditional authority, mostly in the form of the chief. The District Development Committee (DDC) consists of traditional leaders, Members of Parliament and the District Commissioner, who is the chairperson of the committee. This committee guides the District Executive Committee on policy issues and monitors the

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<sup>83</sup> *The Lutheran World Federation/Department for World Service. Environmental Guidelines for Program Implementation (Geneva, March 1997) p26.*

implementation of development activities in the district. At district level, the District Executive Committee is the technical arm of the District Development Committee.<sup>84</sup>

The ELDP will therefore implement its program in various Extension Planning Areas (EPA)<sup>85</sup> as demarcated by the government. In order to reach all the farmers in an area the EPA is again divided into sections. In the project sites, the ELDP will have to use its project officers who are the day-to-day co-coordinators of activities. The project will have to run along the extension planning areas of agricultural extension services working in two or three EPA's in each district.

### **5.1.7 Development of environmental educational centers**

These centers can be established in ELCM parishes. Here there ought to be an exhibition of some environmental information as extracted from this document. The exhibits can range from a poster on some sheets of paper or a bulletin board around the Parish office and some established chapels in towns and cities. Also, there could be a field demonstration of a specific activity such as reforestation or soil conservation techniques. Such centers could be sited within the congregational chapels. In addition, such centers could also be utilized for civic education, meetings and seminars in regard to environmental educational issues for the community.

### **5.1.8 The use of Participatory Learning Action**

The strategy for this environmental education and community training should be implemented by the use of Participatory Learning Action (PLA). This methodology does not only promote people-centred, active learning, drawing from endogenous knowledge, skills and experiences, but also leads on to action so that the new awareness, knowledge and skills are put to use for beneficial change.

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<sup>84</sup> Interview with Mr K. Muonda, Projects Officer ELDP on 4 August 2003 in Zomba.

<sup>85</sup> Extension Planning Area is an area covering all activities within a confined place under the leadership of a development officer in the government sector



The PLA methodology refers to the same techniques used in Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) but draws greater attention to the action component rather than the assessment and evaluation. Moreover, it can be comfortably used to refer to activities carried out also in urban areas.

#### **5.1.9 Utilization of special events**

The Church should use education as part of special events or campaigns, such as annual tree-planting days, wildlife weeks, and anti-litter campaigns. Such events can provide the impetus for further educational efforts that can dramatically increase people's awareness of environmental issues. Special events are very effective for concentrating efforts on a single topic. They can attract speakers, inspire rallies that attract media attention, and motivate schools to address selected issues. What is more, the sense of importance and occasion of an event does wonders for enlisting people's participation in the event.

#### **5.1.10 Promotion of Training of Trainers**

With the assistance of the ELDP Project Officers, the Church should identify capable youths and elderly people who could be trained in matters of the environment. This could be in a seminar for two weeks. In turn, the Church and the community would recognize them as Trainer of Trainers (TOT). Their role could be recognized during special Church meetings, Women and Youth Assemblies of different respective parishes of ELCM and in certain times of every year, they should be put in the programs in order to teach lessons about environments.

#### **5.1.11 The way forward**

The Church should continue promoting this environmental educational program: as it will produce environmentally responsible community members in their everyday life. This is because it aims at fostering awareness and providing the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to protect the environment.

The ELDP should continue to approach the communities in an integral approach so as to meet its goals of poverty alleviation. It should furthermore encourage a sustainable approach so that when it phases out from the areas implementing the projects, the main actors of the projects should be able to continue with the work of disseminating knowledge about the environment.

The ELDP should continue collaborating and dialogue fully with all levels of the communities in the course of implementing the strategy. Environmental problems have no bounds; therefore, solutions to such problems would still require an integrative approach. Furthermore, the ELDP should capture indigenous knowledge that will provide a treasure trove of environmental information on which adapted, new resource management plans could be based.

Finally, further studies need to be carried out with emphasis on the religious significance in regard to nature. Environmental problems as indicated in Chapter two and part of chapter four, call for equal recognition just like the political and economic dimensions as experienced in Malawi.

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<http://www.eco.net.dk/ENGLISH/Essay/Essay-4.htm>

## **Participants of Bible study Group at Mwambananji village in Zomba**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>OCCUPATION</b>
1. Mrs Lepha Likaya	Mwambananji Club
2. Mrs Ronnie Mpelembe	Mwambananji Club
3. MissFelia Chilima	Mwambananji Club
4. Mrs Dorothy Msoma	Mwambananji Club
5. Mrs Agnes Malemia	Mwambananji Club
6. Miss Mercy Asani	Mwambananji Club
7. Mrs Liza Biliwita	Mwambananji Club
8. Miss Joyce Mulera	Mwambanaji Club
9. Ev Peter Naitha	Zomba Parish ELCM
10. Mrs Elube Duri	Adult literature Instructor
11. Mr John Zulu	ELDP Development Facilitator
12. Mr James Mataya	ELDP Development Facilitator
13. Mrs.Emey Laison	Mwambananji Club
14. Rev Isaac Siyani	Parish Pastor – Zomba ELCM
15. Mrs Renny Lijuni	Mwambananji Club
16. MrsTereza kathumba	Mwambananji Club
17. Mr Giribart Msoma	Mwambananji Club
18. Mr James Namulenga	Primary School Teacher
19. Mr Charles Mulilima	Mwambananji Club

20. Mr Peterson Maziya	Mwambananji Club
21. Mr Benson Bonongwe	Mwambananji Club
22. Mr Gift Tawakali	Youth Member ELCM
23. Miss Judith Banda	Youth Member ELCM
24. Miss Ruth Kungade	Youth Member ELCM
25. Mr I. Muonda	ELDP Projects Officer Zomba