**Phalombe District**

3 other communities under the chiefs control

In all 4 communities there are 300 households

Elevation: 700m

Time to Zomba. Walk=too far, Cycle=, Bus=2hours

Village observations: Right on the road (the road goes through), very dry, maize was not growing well and looked slightly wilted, there were some chickens. The days we visited it had not rained for a few days and was very hot.

Active Men

Start time: 10:06

Finish time: 11:52

Facilitator: Lucius

Translator: Chaks  
Note Taker: Tadalo

Number of participants: 5

All head of households.

Food availability

February caused deliberation. M1 said he would put 2 dots (medium) but the other men said it was only 1 dot (low food availability.) Food availability in March caused deliberation (between 1 dot or 2 dots) as some foods start to become available like pumpkin but there is still little food. In March, maize is still young so food is still scarce. April is when things start to improve. In June they could even put 4 dots, as there is plenty food. May to October you do not even have to call your children when its meal time (signifying the abundance of food) In November participants notice food issues and by December it is decreasing. In Nov and December the food budget has hiccups

Income activities

They are reliant on farming mostly (in some capacity or another.)

Jun-August people are selling crops they have grown, which gives them an income.

Sept-Nov: Ganyu. There is no need to do ganyu in June and July as they are busy with other incomes.

September to November ganyu is better than in other times as it pays more money and is easier to find. This ganyu provides for the whole family. Given money.

Jan-March ganyu is available but there is less of it. It also pays poorly (compared to Sept-Nov.) Mostly given money. The money does not support the whole family and is just for them.

Price of maize

Increases in August as it is noticeable that food supply is slowly starting to decline. In August people check their food stores to see how much food is left and making sure there is enough maize. By December, food supply is finished and sellers will take advantage of this so raise their prices.

They are self sufficient April – Dec. Emergency months are Jan to March. In these emergency months they have to find ganyu to get money for food. They need emergency interventions to survive (they do ganyu.)

Also grow: sorghum and soya. Can only plant soya when there is enough rains.

Change over the last 5 years

Climate has changed. The rainfall is different and it now “skips.” The rain is erratic. This has changed the food availability. The causes for this were: population growth outing pressure in natural resources.

Food security

Lack of food a problem every year. Sometimes you have to sell household goods like radios to get money for food. In Jan-March, they have less healthy food, fewer kinds of food and may go the whole day without food. In Jan the run out of food and it the hardest month. Can go to sleep without food. Some days it’s not always a whole day and they give juice or cassava to fill the children’s belly’s. All participants had periods where there is no food in the house at the end of December. Sometimes you give juice and cassava to the children as there is no food.

Women and children are most impacted by food insecurity as men can go out and socialise where he is able to eat.

Aid NGO and government

In previous ruling party, when there were food shortages the government would give aid. The new government has not been doing that yet. ADRA, WFP and Gov used to provide food aid.

Climate change and food security

Climate change has negatively impacted climate change. In the past, there were bigger harvests than there are now. They harvest but before the crops reach full maturity as the rains stop. They may lose their crops before they are mature due to erratic rains.

Community groups.

There are community groups. The village is divided, and the others are down by the river, which is far away from this side of the village. They don’t mix with the other part of the village as it is far away. Most of the community groups are at the other side of the village, where they don’t go. In this side of the village there is a village bank. They only really interact with other communities for ganyu. There are farmer groups on the other side of the community.

They rely on family in terms of food. But it depends on how willing the relative is that you are asking. Mostly, they rely on themselves. Family members aren’t able to help as food availability is lower (than in previous years.) People are less willing to share and want to keep food for their own families. Participants say climate change may be the reason why family members can't help each other.

Changes in the community

When the NGO agencies were helping, participants could give more attention to their own gardens (where they grow food.) Now there is no support from the NGO agencies people have to look for ganyu and neglect their gardens. NGO aid not being in the community has made them more self sufficient (only 1 participant said this.) When Ngo aid was in the community they used to help one another more (than they do now.) They shared the food aid amongst others.

UNICEF is still present and give money to a few households. WFP and ADRA last in the community in 2019.

Village bank

The village bank helps with food security. But as the climate has changed and is negatively impacting farming (thus less money or spending money on food), people are not able to pay back the bank. The bank is mainly for women. Men will use their wives and use the village bank that way. Most of the village bank groups are women, as women are from the community and are more trustworthy. Men are not from the village so may be crooks and run off without paying back. The women’s village banks usually last longer than the men’s village banks. Since the NGOs are not in the community anymore, there are more village banks.

Women don’t have the chance to socialise (where men socialise and get food) as they must stay home and look after the children.

The people who received NGO food aid may be viewed negatively. There may be resentment from people who did not receive any aid. Those with aid may boast about having food. Those with food aid may share with their families, but not usually.

Ranking

The ranking did not change between Jan-March and Sept-Nov but it did change when asked to rank again when NGOs were present

Jan to March

Village bank

Ganyu

Family

Friends/socialising

NGO/ Gov joint last

Sept-Nov

Village bank

Ganyu

Family

Friends/socialising

NGO/ Gov joint last

When Aid was present

NGO

Gov

Village bank

Ganyu

Family

Friends

Is the community better or worse without aid.

2 men said better, 3 said worse.

Not having aid is better as people now have to think more about the problem and not rely on the aid. They think and solve the problem now. Before people used to ask for clothes, without thinking how they could do that themselves. They can solve problems and are self-reliant.

Another participant said it makes them self-reliant.

Now everyone is equal without aid, which is an advantage (general agreement on this) Community relations are better now as no one is envious of anyone else.

One said they were better with aid, as they didn’t need to have loans. Now they need loans to buy food.

It is not good aid has gone as they can’t focus on their personal gardens, instead they have to focus on finding and doing ganyu.

**Phalombe Active Women**

Elevation: 700m

Time to Zomba. Walk=too far, Cycle=, Bus=2hours

Start time: 13:11

Finish time: 11:52

Facilitator: Tadalo

Translator: Chaks  
Note Taker: Lucius

Number of participants: 5

W1: Head of household, not married, has children

W2: Household head, Married

W3: Household head, married

W4: Wife, husband is household head, married

W5: Household head, married

W2, W3, W5 all have husbands but they are the breadwinners so they make the decisions.

Rains this year were late

Self-sufficient from April- August. Some said it may be March, but decided on April.

Income generating activities

October, Jan and Feb they do ganyu. There is more ganyu in October as it is land preparation (which is hard work.) In Jan and Feb it is just weeding- this ganyu is to help find food. Ganyu can be paid through cash or food, in all time periods.

In May- June the women have other business activities such as cooking doughnuts. They sell in this time as this is when people have extra cash due to harvest (and selling their crops.) They also sell sunflower seeds and soya beans.

Changes in climate

Nowadays the rains starts late and stops quickly. In the past they had normal rains but now it just comes in the middle months. They think this is due to less trees, burning charcoal and deforestation.

Food security

There are times when there is no food “you shouldn’t even have to ask us that”

Sometimes have no salt or oil. There are times when they go to sleep with no food. They don’t eat in the mornings and will have one or two meals a day. They only have 3 meals a day in May and June. After July, they go back to 0,1 or 2 meals a day. They prioritise children and make porridge for them, but the adults will skip meals.

Sometimes they go and steal mangos from other people’s trees and they use this to make a porridge for the children. They also do ganyu.

Adults are most affected as they sacrifice food so the children can eat. They said men and women are impacted the same but then state the elderly, disabled, orphans, the unmarried, married women and pregnant women are most vulnerable.

What makes the food unavailable?

Erratic rainfall, high populations, lack of land for farming, lack of income generating activities other than farming, small land sizes, selling food that should be kept for eating (as they need cash for emergencies.)

No aid in community.

Groups in community

Village bank

Irrigation clubs

None of the participants are in the irrigation clubs as it is done on selection, it does include women. The irrigation club helps food availability issues. Two are members of the village bank (W4 and W5). W2 was a member but she stopped as the faced difficulty paying back the loans. W1 lefts as the money she was putting in she was not getting back out. They work with other communities- the village banks, development projects and irrigation farming groups include members not from this community.

Family

They cannot rely on family. Ganyu is hard to find, food is not available so your relatives will say they have nothing to give. Everyone is suffering. Prices on the market are high so they could sell the maize there for a good price.

Friends/neighbours

They won’t help for free. They will ask you to do ganyu so money/food is given in exchange.

NGOs

They were here but since the new government they have left. They used to give maize and beans to pregnant/lactating women.

Salvation Army (food), ADRA (food), UNICEF(cash), Save the Children (cash), Agrican(food) . In total 4 or 5, but not any more

Save the Children used to gave one lady (W4) MWK 23,000

NGOs stopped in 2018 (apart from UNICEF)

Government

They still do the School Feeding Programme where they give children porridge

Changes in the community

No aid- No longer have aid so don’t have the energy for ganyu or work. They are not able to pay for things. For example, there is now an admin fee in schools and this is difficult to pay. Before they used to have certain foods and more days where they ate 3 meals a day, now they don’t eat certain foods and they have less meals. The NGO money meant they could start up a new business (for the May-June period.)

Ranking

Jan-March

Village Bank (for those who are in it)

Ganyu

Friends

Government

Family

NGO

Sept-Nov

Business

Village bank (for those in it)

Ganyu

NGO

Friends

Government

Family

Even when the NGOs were here, they would not be first ranking. The NGOs only give out to beneficiaries so they can’t rank it 1st not everyone benefits. People don’t share aid.

W2- When receiving aid, relations weren’t as good due to tensions between those who did/did not receive aid. Things are better now and issues are minimised.

W1 and W3- Back with aid it was better as those with aid used to come and buy doughnuts ect in May and June. Now they cannot.

Even without aid, people don’t help each other

Other notes: Liked the activities, asked us if we knew any NGOs giving loans/help. A new NGO called SAFE where in the village for the first time giving food, playing music (promo event also.) This was not mentioned.

**Phalombe Day 2**

**Less active men (and younger than the other men)**

Start time: 10:02

Finish: 12:04

5 participants

Facilitator: Chaks

Notes: Lucius  
Translating: Tadalo

M1- 21, household head, newly married, no kids

M2- 18, lives with parents, father is head, 5 siblings

M3-22, head, has wife and 1 kid

M4- 32, lives with parents, father is head, one grandkid

M5-24, head, has wife and one child

Feriliser applied in December and Jan. Then weed after the feriliser application in Jan. Add NPK in December as soon as maize is ankle height. Apply second fertiliser in Jan.

Food availability

They still have maize in Dec and Jan. In April “a lake of food”

Price of maize right now (mid Jan) is MWK 200 per kg

Deliberation on self sufficiency April – Nov/Dec. By Dec most start buying maize

Income generating activities

Businesses April to September. Businesses can be agriculture, selling clothes, shoes, buying other people produce to sell.

Ganyu starts in September until March. Travel to Mozambique or stay local. Mozambique ganyu pays better – they are paid in Mozambique currency and it exchanges well. The soil in Mozambique is also easier to farm than in Malawi.

Changes over time

There has been a great change. We used to have a lot of good rains. Now the rain starts late and doesn't fall like it used to. Rain now falls for a few days at a time. We used to have many trees but now not so many. Now the rain is destructive- it comes with wind which is destructive and flooding.

Why the change

Due to deforestation, charcoal burning, bushfires which destroy the trees. Brickmaking as it needs a lot of charcoal.

Food security

Not enough money for food, time when not enough food, skipped meals, no food at all- yes. They prefer to eat in the evenings, so in the mornings we have energy for work. Sometimes they eat only vegetables with no maize. Can go the whole day without eating- they will search for food but can’t find it. Even the children can go the whole day without food and sometimes they get used to it. This happened in February.

Coping

Ganyu, after being in Mozambique for a week they will send money home to the family. They cycle to Mozambique for ganyu and go between October and March. During this period they weed, maintain land. Ganyu also for preparing land and planting for sesame and beans.

Most affected by food insecurity

One participant said the father is most affected as he feels responsible fo feeding the family

Another participant said children and mother. A man is able to go out and socialise and although he may not get food, he is able to socialise, meanwhile the women and children stay home.

The most vulnerable are the elderly, orphans, FHH where the woman is widowed.

Why shortages

Lack of money, selling produce to get money instead of keeping the produce. They have to sell some maize as when they harvest there is only maize, so they sell some maize to buy legumes and vegetables to go along side maize at mealtimes. This means the maize runs out quicker.

NGO/Gov

There is the social cash transfer, where they receive MWK30,000-40,000. People receive different amounts as it depends on the size of the household. It used to be received every months (and is calculated monthly) but it does not get paid monthly now, so you get a lump sum. The homes that received the social cash transfer are homes with needy children or orphans so that they can attend school.

Climate change and food security

Would expect to have food now (Jan.) People planted in November but as the climate has changed, they wont have enough food to last until March (referring to the late rains and later harvest)

Community groups

Youth group

Village Bank

Farmers group ran and sponsored by the 1 Acre Fund

Business help group

Food security group (save maize instead of money)

Village bank

Need to register, anyone can join. There are times when the bank collects money and distributes- need to register at a collection time. Benefits are you can save money and get some interest. Women are allowed to join. No participants are members of the village bank.

Food security group

Anyone can join. You save 5kg of maize and 2000MWK. M3 is a member. Benefits- helps to have food security. If it rains (or lack of) destroy some of your harvest, you still have some food to fall back on. At the end of the year, the food is given back out (the 5kg) when food availability is low. They then replenish at harvest. If a member is struggling another member may allow them to take some maize from the store (from their 5kg.) This means when the member takes the maize they will have less. (For example is member 1 wants to take out 1kg from member 2’s store, member 2 will have 4kg when they take their maize out.) Anyone can join, regardless of age or gender. There are old and young in the group.

Youth group

Under 39 year olds can join. It teaches good life morals & encourages then to go to school. Information about sexual health, HIV/AIDs, STI prevention. The participants are members but it is not as active. Women can join.

1 acre fund- Growing trees and maize in the area. Tree planting. 10 members were selected by the chief which included women.

Why not in food security group?

M2- still lives with parents

M5- New to area so doesn’t know much about the groups

M1- Just got married, is originally from the village. Was living with parents before.

Why not village bank?

M1- If you don’t have a business its not easy for you to join the bank as you may lose property if you cannot pay back.

Working together with other communities

Development programmes, fixing roads, schools and fixing bridge.

Rely on family?

Yes. Some but not all. Note everyone will help. They may have the thing you are asking for but they will not give. The relative may also be in need. There used to be a tighter unity but this has changed over the years as now everyone has problems (in terms of food/cash). There is now individuality- people will focus on their own household.

Friends/neighbours

Some said yes, others no. It depends on how good your friendship is with the person. You have close friends and casual friends, only close friends help you when you’re in trouble. This has changed over time. People used to feed each other and for example, if a child had a play mate, they would feed the other child too but now people only feed their own household. Another said this has not changed so much.

NGOS

1 acre fund- planting trees. It is the inclusive farming programme. In the 3rd year.

Save the Children- food. Around for 5 years.

Red Cross- Food. Been around for over a decade.

They last distributed in 2021 and are still around but they choose the neediest households.

M3- was in the 1 acre fund but is not as active anymore.

Women partake in NGO operations.

NGOs over time

Red cross has changed over time, previously in disasters they came quickly but not they don’t (come as quickly/always come)

Save the Children has also changed. Since the new president all NGOs have changed.

They haven’t completely withdrawn but activities have declined. Since NGOs are less active things have gone “backwards.” For example, families who keep orphans and children in vulnerable homes could send them to school when the NGOs were more active in the community, now it is hard to send them to school. Lots of homes were receiving the cash transfers but they are no longer, this make it harder to be able to send children to school. Lots were going to school but now there's no support. Primary and secondary school aged children are impacted, as now the money is needed for school or they need to go and do ganyu.

Feb- March

Ganyu

Family and friends

Food security group

NGOs

Businesses

Village Bank

Gov

Youth Group

Oct-Dec

Ganyu

Family

Business

Village Bank

NGO

Food security group (this group is used in the lean period specifically)

Gov

Youth group

When the NGOs were more active they would be higher in the rankings, maybe 2nd. When the NGOs started to withdraw, that is when the idea for the food security group came to fill the gap the NGOs had left.

It was better when the NGOs were here. Some have had to quit school, you cannot say its better now if people aren’t going to school.

**Phalombe Day 2**

**Less active women**

Start time: 13:20 (after consent)

Finish: 14:50

Facilitator: Tadalo

Translator: Lucius

Notes: Chaks

W1- 19, husband is head

W2- 24, husband is head, 4 in family

W3- 28, husband is head, 5 in family

W4- 22, husband is head, 4 in family

W5- 42, husband is head, 6 in family

Seasonal calendar

Rain usually in Nov but these years there has been lots of change. You cannot be certain the rains will start in November.

Planting is usually in November but this year it was in January.

Fertiliser is added in December- don’t have enough so they mix the two types and apply just once.

Food availability

Deliberated on 1 or 2 dots for March. In May “could be 4”

Don’t have a lot of food so only have a small amount of space to grow. By September the food is gone.

Other income generating activities

May- start ganyu. They harvest soya beans and sunflower. (look at calendar to see what period of time this is)

None of the participants have businesses.

Changes in the calendar

Now there is climate change and the calendar has indeed changed. Rains in Dec, Jan sometimes in October- this isn’t normal (and is unpredictable.) Rainfall is 4months long but the start and end months are different. In past years, rain falls in all areas but now rain falls in one part and not the other so they are planting at different times. Sometimes there is a lot of rain at once, which means the crops grow to be unhealthy as the nutrients are washed away. We experience a lot of dry spells. Sometimes there is too much sun which burns the maize.

Why changes

Deforestation. “unnecessary cutting of trees”

It is a sign Jesus is coming and we are living at the end of times.

All have been worried, eaten unhealthy foods and skipped food/meals. Some days they will skip meals for up to 4 days in a row. All have gone a whole day without eating food, this sometimes goes on for numerous days. Sometimes they will eat just vegetables with no nsima.

W2 said she has not gone the whole day without eating.

Coping

Ganyu is the most reliable coping mechanism. Both wife and husbands will do ganyu. They will also eat foods that they normally do not eat (the English name is not known, but they are wild vegetables.) Sometimes they would eat mangos if there is no food, but now they are less available.

Most vulnerable

Children. Sometimes they cook a porridge for children so they are able to go school. The disabled, elderly and orphans are most vulnerable.

Why not enough foods

Harvest too little as the land is small so they start feeling hunger in August. Ganyu is underpaid. There is an estate nearby where they can get ganyu but they under pay or do not pay at all. Too many children.

After harvest:

W4- 3 bags of maize

W3- 5 bags of maize

W5- 8 bags of maize

W2- 7 bags of maize

(3 bags is enough for 1 person for 1 year) so do not have enough bags for number of children and people in the house.

Are men or women most impacted?

Some say men others say women.

W2- Men go and do ganyu whilst hungry, whilst women stay at home.

W4- Women are most impacted. Men can have a little cash and hide it in their pockets so when they go out to socialise they can buy food whilst the man is at home suffering.

It depends on the man, some will look for ganyu in far away places for their families.

Aid

Yes but not as often as in the past. They receive food aid. Yesterday they received from the Evangelical group 5kg of peas, 1 50k bag of maize and 5L of cooking oil.

Gov aid- 2019 was the last time they received government aid. They received Ngo aid in June 2021 but since the new government, NGOs have gone.

Oxfam- Gave goats in 2020 to breastfeeding and pregnant women. They give aid and then disappear.

FAO- 2018 in village helping farmers to plant crops according to the climate change (climate smart agriculture) W2 was a beneficiary.

Community groups

Village bank

Youth groups

For village banks, really you need to have a business. Some view the village bank as very important, others do not value it. It can have both negative and positive impacts on business. If you have a business and things are going well, the village bank is the best club and very important. If you do not pay back a loan you may get the property confiscated.

W2- secretary of the village bank. Although the others are not in the village bank, they know how important it is. To some the village bank has supported them and they have been able to start a business/open a shop. However, as businesses are not doing as well due to hunger, the village bank is also not operating as well.

Youth club- life skills, avoid teen pregnancy, STD information

Interacting with other communities

Yes, when NGOs are doing activities.

Rely on family.

We don’t plan to rely on the family as they have their own plans. Some have families who live and work in other parts of Malawi or abroad (South Africa) and they are able to provide support. Over the last 5 years, people do not support relatives as much.

Rely of friends

If a close friend then you will support each other (note to self: the help is both ways) But it depends on the relationship with your friends and how much you trust one another. In the past people shared food more. If you have helped each other previously, indeed you can depend on your friend.

Change in NGOs

When NGOs were present things were better. 1 NGO helped one group, and another Ngo helped another group of people- it meant everyone was receiving aid in some way. They think they change in NGOs is because they want people to start helping themselves and stop relying on aid. Or that NGOs don’t have the money to help them anymore. Women can be beneficiaries of the NGO aid and programmes.

School feeding programmer still occurs but some think the teachers are taking the food and dividing it amongst themselves so the children are not getting any.

NGO phasing out is a negative thing as children have had to drop out of school (mainly orphans.) Without the NGO aid, they can’t concentrate on their own gardens (land/farms) as they have to find ganyu and they can't work energetically in their farms.

Jan-March

Ganyu

Family

Village Bank

NGO

Government

Friends

FAO

Youth Club

September-November

Ganyu

Family

Government

Village Bank

Friends

NGO

FAO and Youth Club

When NGOs were present they would be number 1 or 2 as they gave out food and cash

When NGOs were present relations were better. W2- if she received aid she would with her sister. W1- if you have food you can also ask for items like salt

If you ask family or friends for help, some will ask you to do a ganyu but not all of them will. Some friends will help with no ganyu requested. Sometimes a friends will help you and then say there’s some ganyu they could do if they need more food.

Those not in the village bank don’t have a business. The purpose of the village bank is to give out small loans and pay back with a little interest. You can only pay back with interest if you have a business, otherwise you may need to pay with household items.

**Machinga**

Elevation: 700m

Notes on community: Very tall maize already, soil visibly wet and raining on day 1. Cooler day.

To Zomba. Cycle: 2.5hours, pubic transport: 45-50minutes

**Active Women**

Start time: 10:40

Finish time: 12:35

1. Head, unmarried, 4 members in household, 36
2. Husband is head, married, 8 in family.
3. Head, 6 in family, 57
4. Grandfather is head, is a child in the household, 7 in family, 22.
5. Head, unmarried, 5 in household, 30

Seasonal calendar

Nov-April: Rain. Have showers throughout the year, even in August.

May-Aug: Cold

Sept-Nov: Hot

Plant in Nov and part of December

April- May is harvest

Feriliser in Dec up until Jan.

Land prep starts in May and June as this area always has showers. They put last year's maize stems into the ground so it can decompose and put nutrients back into the ground.

Food availability

Jan – March: low

April-Aug: high

Sept-Dec: medium

Price of maize

Jan-March: high

April-Aug: low

Sept-Nov: medium

Dec: high

Self-sufficient from March until September. Also grow pumpkin, cassava, banana and sweet potatoes which are in high supply in these months.

Income

Nov-Feb people get lots of money from ganyu. If you do business in these months, you will have many customers. After harvest it is hard to get money from businesses as everyone will have food. Those who can do business all year round are better off than the rest of us.

Changes in the calendar

There hasn’t been changes really. It would be the same if they drew up the calendar in 2010. The environment is still intact. The community does not allow deforestation. The community also take part in restoring the environment for example planting trees and making fire breaks. The chief promotes forest restoration by planting even along rivers. The Forest Development and One Acre Fund provide seedlings so they can plant their own trees on their own property so if they want wood they cut down their own tree, not on the mountain. The chief prohibits careless cutting down of trees. You are fined 100,000 for chopping down trees in the mountain, if you are unable to pay, you may be charged and spend 5 years in prison. You can pick dry firewood that is already fallen from the forest.

Food

They worry about food, eat unhealthy food and eat fewer meals/types of food. They may skip breakfast as this is the meal that requires money for bread and sugar, the other meals require foods they can grow themselves.

None of the participants have eaten less food, ran out of food orgone a whole day without eating. They answered no to these questions as they share food or people will invite you to eat with them and give you a meal. They also grow rice, so they can eat that in Jan-Feb if maize is not around.

Because the weather is good here, they have cassava, sweet potato and plantain which they can rely on in Jan-March. They can also rely on ganyu (weeding or in rice fields.) They go to trading centres or wash pots (all are ganyu.)

Most vulnerable

Women and children. Stay home to take care of the children. Elderly, children, the sick, disabled and the poorest are most vulnerable.

What causes food shortages?

If people cannot work, cannot find fertilisers/seeds or cannot do ganyu. After harvesting , some people want healthier foods so they sell some of their maize to buy healthier foods. Land size- most in the village have less than 1 acre

This community has an advantage due to good weather and soil which is good for the crops. P2- harvested 40 bags as she rents some plots too

P4- 13 bags

Aid government

All are beneficiaries of fertiliser subsidies. They also share if someone is not a beneficiary and doesn’t get any fertiliser. Also, the person with the discount coupon may not have the money for the fertiliser so they ask someone with cash to provide the cash. Together they get the fertiliser and then split it.

NGOs

Goal Malawi

Started in 2020. Work against violence against women, encourages going to school and against young marriages. For women only. They also work alongside youth groups. The mentors choose mentees to work with.

(Own note: This was a UNFPA-funded Spotlight Initiative)

Nanisi (not correct spelling)

GBV and gets school dropouts back to school. Chief chooses who should be beneficiaries. Women only. Started in 2020. Also works with youth group.

One Acre Fund- 2015

WFP- can in 2021. 5kg peas, 50kg bag of maize, 5L oil

Government- fertiliser subsidies and social cash transfer. SCT is 40,000 over three months.

Community groups

Circle of Care

Established in 2021. NGO volunteers from the other groups in the community come together and share information. There is an organisation who in the coming months will be working with them to help this group. Circle of Care was set up as most of the NGOs target women and children but left out the elderly even though they have grandchildren to look after. These grandchildren have to go for ganyu to support the household and the ganyu is too strenuous for their size. There are meetings through the chief and you can contribute money to sort out whatever problems there are.

Village Bank

20+ years. Help to start businesses. The village bank also helps people improve their households, for example buying household items and investing in iron rooftops. It helped a lot of people start a business. There are 10 village banks for women and 1 that is mixed. Any one can join but that’s just how it landed.

Community groups also help to maintain the forest.

Women can take part in any group.

Youth group: 20+ years

W1: chair person of Youth Club

W2: no groups. Owns business.

W3: village bank member.

W4: mentee of Goal Malawi and village bank

W5: mentee of Goal Malawi, village bank, youth club member

Most of the community groups are active.

Other communities

They work with other communities on environmental issues, GBV, school drop outs. They also organise drama shows together about issues such as GBV. The leaders of groups will also work together. They will help other communities with paints, food and help when needed.

Rely on family and friends: see earlier notes. They help each other a lot and the Circle of Care encourages people to help the needy.

There have been changes on reliance on family and friends. There is not so much sharing as in the past as they’ve grown together economically. When sharing sometimes a person will ask and other times you can see a person struggling so you offer to help. In the past they could not properly use the land but the NGOs have helped them realise that can benefit from the land more. So now harvests are good, so people can share.

Rankings Jan-Feb

Ganyu

Business

Family and friends

Village Bank

Gov

NGO

Youth/Circle of Care

It is the same in Sept and October

**Machinga**

**Active Men**

Start: 13:37

Finish: (less than 2 hours)

Facilitator: Chaks

Translator: Tadala

Notes: Lucius

1. 5 children, head, 47, married
2. 7 children, head, 68
3. 7 children, head, 75
4. 8 children, head, 63
5. 3 children & 1 dependant, head, 36, married

Rain: Nov-April

Cold: May- July

August-mid November: Hot

Land prep: August-October

Planting: Nov and some of December

Harvest: April-May

Fertiliser and weeding in Nov and Dec

Jan- land maintenance

Food availability

Jan-March: low

March has some pumpkin and green maize but still not enough.

April-medium

May-Aug high

Sept-Oct: medium

Nov-Dec: low

Price of maize

Jan-March and Dec: High

April, Aug-Nov: medium

May-July: low

Self sufficient April- end of October. They start buying in November. It depends on how much they harvest.

Income generating activities

August – Feb: ganyu

April-Nov: businesses such as groceries, sell their produce, sell their livestock

Food calendar

Different now. The rains used to start at the end of September but now it is Nov or Dec. Rains are now late. By now they should have had lots of rain, but now its dry. Usually by now they would have planted rice, but they don’t have enough water to plant yet. The calendar has changed a lot.

Why has it changed?

From what we have heard from experts its climate change from rich countries but in Malawi its deforestation. We’re confused about which one it is. We have air that’s destroying the climate, in abundance compared to the good air. There are more carbon gases.

Food security

Yes to all questions. Spending a whole day without food and sleeping hungry as only getting food the next day. “When I say food, I mean nsima” so without food I mean nsima.

P3- I have a relative whose husband is in South Africa and didn’t eat for 3 days (no food/nsima.) It’s happening.

How do people cope?

Sometimes NGO, Islamic and other religious groups help. They select families and give rice and maize. Sometimes people are called to the mosque for food packages (the organisation is called Zam Zam.)

Ganyu is for maize not for cash although you can also do it for money and then buy the nsima.

Church help: CCP, Zambezi and CCAP

SAFE- 2019

Airtel- for the elderly. They sent them money to their phones in 2019.

WFP- they come and go.

MASAF- food for work in 2019. They maintain roads and get money for it.

Most affected

It varies. Some have educated children so have more income sources or children who work in towns and cities and they send money back. Orphans, elderly, people who marry too young or disabled.

The women are worse off compared to men. She stays at home whereas a man can go to different places (for example trading centres) where they can find food. There’s jealousy between men and women. If a man brings food back to the home this is okay, if a woman brings food home that causes jealousy. (P1) Women won’t bring food home as the husband may ask questions.

It happens a lot here that a man marries, has children and then moves to South Africa then forgets about his wife and children. They probably get new wives.

What causes food shortages?

Land shortages, lots of people, lack of fertiliser, soil degradation due to fertiliser use, late delivery of fertiliser from the subsidiser programme. You may inherit land but if there’s 4 children, you divide is amongst 4 people. Lack of care when harvesting or eating wastefully (too much after harvest so run out). Sometimes women sell maize to vendors who come with cloth, kitchenware, salt etc. and they barter with maize. Initiation ceremonies for young girls require food. These ceremonies require around 1 50kg bag of maize so it is also cultural reasons. Some are lazy- they have land but they do not farm it. Instead, they receive fertiliser subsidies and maize and sell it instead of farming the land.

Government aid only comes when something happens like floods, it does not come in normal times. When rains cause houses to fall the government brought flour and temporary roofing. The government have done this for 2 years when housing damage in 2017-18. NGOs, however, are everpresent.

Climate change and food security

Climate change has impacted food security. Rice farming has been impacted. For example, there is not enough rain to grow rice now, so we use irrigation which is expensive. We used to have two sources of starch but now it seems only 1 source of start (maize) as the rains are too late. This reduces the variety of foods. There are also strange pests (worms.)

Community Groups

Youth Groups- P5 is a chairperson. The youth group encourages helping each other for example: they do ganyu to help orphans and the elderly and fix bridges and houses. They also have farm classes about irrigation. The youth group also grow maize then distribute or sell to help different groups and people.

Mother support group- help orphans and the young girls. Provides masks, uniforms and supervise food distribution.

Village bank- mostly women. It’s voluntary, anyone can join. Women and wives join. The men instruct the women to join.

Male champion- a group for men. Talk about everything and things that affect men. The discuss violence against men and the rape/ abuse of women. P2.

Graveyard digging group- P4 is a member

Pensioners group -they share ideas, welfare support and you can get a loan. P3 and P4 are members.

NGO

IPEC- fishing from dams. Help to build a dam for fish farming.

CCJP- Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace. P1 is a member. It used to be more active but has become less active as its focus is now on politics.

Women can join any group expect Male Champions. Some religious groups may have women only groups.

Groups may be less active because of changes in leadership.

P1: CCJP,

P2:Male Champion

P3:Pensioners

P4: Gravedigger, pensioners

P5: Youth group chair person

Other communities

Can work together for example on road maintenance, tree planting, brick making for schools and youth meetings. For example, yesterday there was a youth meeting about maintaining the hospital.

Rely of family

Yes, we help each other. They can give it for free or loan it. We trust each other- if you loan a bag of maize, you know they will give it back.

P1 (but also everyone agrees)- There are big differences now. Now, you are mindful of you and your children- you think of yourself. We used to work as a community, but the communal aspect is waning. The women we marry are the reason why. When you suggest we share food, they said no. Women are becoming mean, the love is going cold. The women come from a different area and maybe has a different culture on sharing food.

Friends- Yes, they will help you, but they will loan with interest, they will not give for free. We give beers for free. Before people would always help each other and loans with interest would not happen before. Especially between women but also even between families “the love has waxes cold.”

Ranking

The same at all times of year

Ganyu and Village Bank

Business

Pension Group

Family

Religious Groups/Youth Groups

NGO

Friends and government

P1- I think village bank as I can send my wife and can depend on it. Business is not reliable.

Meanwhile some others think ganyu should be 1st

**Day 2 Machinga**

Day the cyclone was coming. Very wet and cold. Hard to hear at times due to the rain on the iron roof.

**Less active women**

Starts time: 11:24

Finish time: 12:57

Facilitator: Tadala

Notes: Lucius

Translate: Chaks

P1: Head, 9 people in household, 24

P2: Head, 4 people in household, 31

P3:Head, 3 people in household, 39

P4: Head, 4 in household, 3 grandchildren, 70+ (not sure of age)

P5:Joined late and did not ask these details

Rain: November to March or April. Sometimes it ends in March other times it ends in April. The rain sometimes starts in October.

Cold: April-July

Hot: Sept-Oct

Land Prep: July-Oct

Plant in Nov

Fertiliser in Dec

Harvest: April and sometimes in May if the person is rich

Weeding: Nov- Dec

Price of maize

October-March: high

April-June: low

July -Sept: medium

Oct-Dec: high

Food availability

Sept-March: low

April-July: high

Aug:medium

Self-sufficient: April to August

Income generating activities

Ganyu: Nov-Feb. Start ganyu in November as they wait for the rain to fall so they can do land preparation and planting.

April to August: Business. Selling rice and any of their other produce, doughnuts, mushrooms are sole in Jan(from the mountains)

Change in the calendar

The weather is different now. Rain used to come in Oct but some years the rains come at the end of November. The rain is fluctuating and this also applies to the hot and cold. The amount of rain is different. Some years theres too much rain.

Causes of climate changing

Trees being depleted due to charcoal burning and other activities.

To all food security questions they answer yes. Including going the whole day without food (not just nsima) Sometimes in the morning and the afternoon they only eat vegetables.

Coping

Ganyu, selling firewood and charcoal (the latter they make themselves)

Who is affected?

Men look for ganyu and if they don’t find any they're equally affected. Women and children are most affected as men can eat outside (the village, at Trading Centres) and pretend they have not eaten meanwhile those at home have to figure out what they can eat. The most vulnerable are the disabled, sick and pregnant.

Factors causing food shortages

Low harvest, large families, don’t have money for fertiliser (so have a low harvest), shortage of labour to help in garden, lack of land and pests.

No one receives aid from NGO or government.

Because of climate change we harvest less nowadays, due to less rainfall. Other years, we have too much rain and the nutrients leach from the soil. Termites also eat produce when there’s lots of rain.

Community groups

Youth club

Must be a youth to join. They encourage you not to marry quickly and to avoid pregnancies. They teach them to be empathetic and helpful. P2 a member

Village bank

Anyone can join. Each group is slightly different, with 3 key differences. For example: Some collect and give out monthly, with the whole payout going to one member, which differs each month. In other banks, people contribute a set amount each month which they withdraw as needed. Finally there’s banks where you contribute where you can. There are many benefits: you can get a lump of money at once, it helps money circulate through the village and you can get a loan/money freely. P2, P4 and P3 are members

Farm group, police community, mother support group, disability committee, nursery school committee, environment committee

Change over years

There has been a change, due to leaderships being less active than in the past. People lose hope if they are not active.

Other communities

Yes we work with other communities. Take the youth group, they can donate items to other communities and brick make together.

Why P1 is not in the village bank?

It is difficult to get the money to use at the village bank.

Rely on family: Some yes. They can help us. But there are others who won’t help you. You can't rely on them all the time. There are times when they won't be willing. They will help now and again.

Change: yes this has changed, people like to help only close relatives like siblings. P4- People may not help the elderly as they do not think of them as important these days.

Rely on friends: Yes. Between friends and family there is a difference. Friends help freely with no strings attached and they do not speak badly of you. These days, friends help more.

NGO

IPEC- help the elderly, 2021

Goal Malawi- family planning and safe motherhood, started 2018. P1, P2 and P3 members

One Acre Fund- loan fertiliser and plant trees (started or finished? 2018)

WFP: Last year they gave the cash equivalent of the 50kg maize, 5L oil and 5k peas due to covid for 3 months. P1 and P2 were beneficiaries and they kept this to themselves (did not share.)

There is no social cash transfer.

Change in NGOs

Yes, last year (but they meant 2020) they received aid from NGOs but this year (they mean 2021) they have received none. A survey was conducted by the NGOs and the NGOs decided the community had enough maize.

Gov- They promised food, but they didn’t give any. In the past, they helped but now there is no aid. They should have given them fertiliser but it was too late, and the maize had already matured. The fertiliser used to come in Nov, but now it is late and its given in Jan.

Ranking

Jan-Feb

Village bank

Ganyu

Family

Business

Friends

NGO

Gov

Sept-Oct

Ganyu

Village bank

Business

Family

Friends

Gov

NGO

If NGOs were still operating it would rank number 2, as not everyone benefits from the NGOs.

Why are people sharing less?

The love of many has waxed cold. People help only their close relatives. Older generations were more empathetic and did communal eating. But no there is no communal eating so no love. It starts with parents and children follow suit.

Groups and time?

Being members of groups takes time, around 1hour30-2hours but we have the time to participate. We are okay to dedicate our time. They work around the schedules of group meetings.

**Machinga Day 2**

**Less active men**

Start:13:19

Finish:

Translator: Tadala

Notes: Chaks

Facilitator: Lucius

P1:Head, 4 occupants, 57, married

P2:Head, 7 occupants, 72,

P3:Head, 5 occupants, 42, married

P4:not the head, 7 occupants, lives with parents, 19

P5:Head, 3 occupants, 26, married

Seasonal calendar

Aug-Oct: hot

May-July: Cold

Nov-March: Rain

Agriculture

July-Nov: land prep

End Nov - Dec: Planting

April-May: Harvest

Price of maize

Dec-march: high

April, September: medium

May-August: Low

Maize is not cheap in March as its not dry yet. Food prices start to increase in September.

Food availability

Nov-March: low

April-Aug: high

Sept-Oct: medium

Income generating activities

Nov-Feb: Ganyu. There is ganyu in Jan/Feb as there are wetland areas.

May-Aug: sell sweet potato, maize, rice, cassava which they have grown themselves

Self sufficient: April-Oct

Changes over the years

Rainfall patterns have changed and the rains start later. Sometimes the rains are early and finish too early.

Why the changes

Deforestation.

P4- but it seems we have plenty of trees.

Other participants- no not as many as we used to.

All food security questions were answered ’yes’ apart from the whole day without food. None of the participants had gone the whole day without food. They will give the children food and nsima, but they will have just porridge.

Coping

Ganyu, growing maize in the wetlands, sell cassava in Jan-Feb (if they have grown these foods) Some depend on charcoal.

Most affected

P4- asks for clarification. The person who has to look for food is affected but in terms of hunger it is the children. The elderly and disabled are most affected as they cannot do ganyu.

What factors cause food shortages?

Lack of fertiliser, owning land in wetlands so you have to add more fertiliser here, not enough land, selling some of the harvest for money, buying unnecessary things (like baskets, floor mats.) P2- people steal. Every year I grow green maize in the wetlands and people steal from it.

None of them receive aid but some in the community receive social cash transfers.

Climate change and food security

Yes climate has changes food security. Dry spells cause premature aging of maize so there are lower yields at harvest.

Community groups

Farming

Livestock

Youth

Village Bank

Forest

P1- VDC member

P2

P3

P4- youth club

P5

Why not in village bank?

It's usually women who participate. P1’s wife is a member.

Benefits of village bank

Can get loan in emergencies, when they share the money you can buy things like livestock which promotes development.

Why not wives in village bank?

P3- People who are not in the bank don’t see the benefit. (P3 is not in the bank and neither is his wife)

Work with other communities

Yes. There is a women’s social group that meet in a buddy system. Road maintenance. There are plans to make a fish pond (with help of NGO)

Rely on family

Yes. Sometimes they will give you food, money or ganyu. “There’s a change similar to that of climate change” Previously people used to help people who were not members of their immediate family (meaning brothers, sisters, parents.) Now only help immediate family

Rely on friends

Yes. “A friends is closer than a brother.” There have been changes. Friendships were better in the past. Before you could stay with them for a month and now it's only 2 days. You cannot stay longer now because of food. If a friend has food, he will give it to you for one or two days but not if you keep asking.

P2- Its very different. Friendships used to be genuine.

NGOs/Aid

The Government Fisheries department visit as they have dams.

There are no NGOs now- we used to before with the last president.

MASAF- left in 2017. Food for work program, P1, P2, P3 and P5 did road maintenance for the food for work.

CADECOM- provide livestock. When they multiple you give some livestock to a neighbour/friend. “pass on” initiative. Left in 2016, P1 was a beneficiary.

People used to benefit a lot from NGOs. There is no difference in community relations now the NGOs have left.

Ranking

Jan- Feb

1. Ganyu, village bank and NGO

The man in village bank said village bank, the elderly man who has NGO help (and cannot do ganyu) said NGO and the rest said ganyu

1. Family
2. Friends
3. Business
4. Gove

All the other participants would put NGO last- apart from the elderly man.

Sept-Oct

Ganyu

Village Bank

Business (they may sell rice)

Family

Friends

NGO and Gov (no NGO at this time)

When NGOs were here it would be number 3, definitely higher than it is now.

**Zomba Day 1**

**Active men**

Elevation: 960m

To Zomba: Walk: 2hours Cycle:1 hour. Motorcycle: 30mins. Minibus:40mins

Start time: 11:23

Finish time: not recorded

Facilitator: Chaks

Notes: Lucius

Translator: Tadala

P1: Head, 24, 3 occupants, married

P2: Head, 48, 11 occupants, Married  
P3: Head, 45, 11 occupants, married

P4:Head, 48, 3 occupants, married

P5: Head, 30, 4 occupants, married

Seasonal calendar

Rain: Start Nov- March

Cold: May-July

Hot: Aug-Oct

Land Prep: May, August to October (In May the maize stems are put into the soil to decompose and put nutrients back into the soil)

Plant: Late Nov- Dec (Usually rains by 24th Nov so they plant then)

Harvest: April -June (maize is not planted at the same time so it is not harvested at the same time)

Fertiliser: Nov, Dec and Jan

Weed: Dec

Price of maize

Certain years maize is more expensive than others.

High: Dec-March

Medium: Aug-Nov

Low: April-July

Food availability

Low: Nov- March

High: April-July

Medium: Aug-Oct

Start buying in Oct/Nov

Self sufficient: April-Sept

Income

Ganyu: Oct-Jan. For land preparation

Business: April-Sept. Sell beans, pigeon peas. This is the farm produce.

Has the calendar changed?

It is different now compared to 5 years ago. We used to begin planting in October even September. But now we plant in Nov, Dec and even Jan. Rainfall has changed. Erratic rains, dry spells for upto a month long cause crops to dry up. Soil is now used to fertiliser, so if fertiliser is not applied, there will be lower yield. A lot of fertiliser is now needed which is hard to get.

Why the change?

Deforestation to make charcoal and bricks. Chemical application to crops is bad for the air and the soil. This air pollution has an impact on the environment. Chemicals also kill insects in the soil which help to aerate the soil.

Food security

All food security questions were answered “yes” except for the “whole day without food.” Participants worry a lot about not having enough food, especially when they have children. Nov-Jan is the worst time for food insecurity.

Coping

Ganyu. Can be food or money, depending on what the person has. Sometimes they go to family and ask for food. You can go to your Mum or sister as she is better at keeping food. Loans don’t happen here between family and friends.

Vulnerable

Sick, chronically ill, old, orphans, people with a small amount of land and big families, landless, those who are lay.

Children and women are the most vulnerable within the household. Children are dependent on someone bringing them food. Some women are dependent on a husband and some are not. Men are not as affected. Men can go searching for ganyu as the household is dependent on him. When you are doing ganyu, you get a meal. If you farm someone's field, they’ll cook lunch for you. Meanwhile the children are hungry.

Why less food?

Low harvest yield, sell some harvest to buy items (like soap), some want to start a business so sell all their produce. If we had a business we would have more money and we wouldn’t need to sell our produce. Harvest destroyed by pests. Not enough fertiliser. Fertiliser comes later. Its Jan and we still haven’t received any, Dry spells mean armyworms come and attack the maize tassels so they do not bare any fruit. Not enough money for pesticides- you may harvest 10 bags but some will be destroyed by pests.

Gov aid

None received here. Some received social cash transfer. WFP were giving them money for work around water conservation.

Climate and food security

Erratic rainfalls impact food security. For examples we planted in Nov after the rains but then there was no rain for a month. It came again in the second month of Dec. We don’t plant at the same time so there are different maize sizes right now due to climate change.

Community groups

Youth group

CBO

Village Bank

Community Police

P1- Chair of youth

None in the village bank

P5 and P2 have wives in the village bank.

P1, P3, P4 wives were in the village bank previously.

Why not in village bank?

You need to have money, otherwise it is hard to join. We don’t have enough income to join the village bank.

Those with wives in the VB. P5 gives his wife money for the VB to buy shares. P2- Wife used to sell second hand clothes so had the money to join the village bank.

The others would join if they had the means to join the village bank. One participant who used to be in the VB used to sell fish and had an income from that, but now he is unable to have enough money to continue with the VB.

Groups for women only?

Yes. Village banks are for women. But if a man wanted to join they wouldn’t be restricted. When the VB were first being set up by extension officers, the groups were made up of mainly women. Women were called but the extension officers. Not one man is in a village bank.

Groups change over time

As chair of the youth group, there’s a difference in the youth group. We used to have counselling session which were more successful in the past as friends and the chief were more supportive.

Benefits to village bank: money is kept amongst ourselves and there is an internal circulation so you can borrow money more easily. When you share money you get interest with the original that is put in to the bank. In an emergency you can get a loan.

CBO members can get a loan

Interact with other communities

Forest maintenance, tree planting, water conservation methods, welfare activities, collecting flour or maize to help other communities during funerals.

Family

Yes you can rely on family. There has been a change. The amount people harvest is different so relatives also don’t have enough food. Economically, money is scarce so you can give money either. Before if a relative had no spare food, they would give you some spare cash. Its harder for relative to give anything as generally, resources are less. Before we had more things to share but now there is not so much.

Friends- same as relatives. Everyone is in problems. You may have a good friendship but there is a lack of resources.

NGO

There are none in the village currently.

WFP post is up in community and can be seen where we are sat – prompted about this.

WFP came and distributed food, put up a sign and disappeared. They helped 2015-2019, they were here only for a 5 year project. All were beneficiaries.

Emmanuel International

Whole year of 2020- Jun 2021.Supervise water breaks, planting trees, preventing soil erosion and digging trenches. Given the money equivalent of 1 bag of maize, oil, beans. 14,000 per household per month. It wasn’t given every month but it would be given if you did work. P1-4 wives were beneficiaries. P5 was a beneficiary.

NGOs leaving

There has been an impact. When NGOs were available there was money in the village. Now businesses are hard to maintain and have no money. When NGOs were here, the village bank membership was higher as people had the capacity to join. WFP- when they distribute. Some would sell their food aid for money for the village bank. The NGOs promoted a balanced diet and now we struggle. Kids would eat porridge form the WFP and would eat 3 times a day.

Everyone shared the food aid, but it was possible to share, although mostly with relations not strangers. E.g a family member may share with another relative.

When the NGOs were here there was more ganyu as people had more money to pay for it. Even when aid was arriving, WFP would pay you to lift the bags out of the truck.

Relations are better now (without aid) as people aren’t jealous of those who received aid. People aren’t struggling and then pointing jealous fingers. People shared more when NGOs were here as there was more food. You knew you would get food each month (so you would share some.)

Ranking

Jan-Feb

Ganyu

Family and friends

Village bank

Bsuiness

NGO

Gov

Other groups

Ranking

Sept-Oct

Ganyu

Business

Family and friends

Village bank

NGO

Gov

Other groups

When NGOs were here they would be number 1 or 2. Another participant: no ganyu is 1st everytime.

**Zomba Day1**

**Active women**

Start time: 14:00 (after consent)

Facilitator: Tadala

Translator: Lucius

Notes: Chaks

P1: Head, 5 in family, 36

P2: Head, 4 in family, 56

P3: Head, 5 in family, 67

P4: HEAD, 6 in family, 53

P5: Head, 8 in family, 47

Rain: Nov-March

Hot:Sept-Oct

Cold:May-July

Planting: Nov

Weeding: Nov

Fertiliser: Dec

Land maintenance: Jan

Harvest: April-June

Land prep: June-October

Price

Oct-march: high

August, Sept, May : Medium

June-July: low

Everyone in April-June has harvested so everyone has maize.

Food availability

Oct-March: low

April, May, June: Medium

June-Aug: high

Self sufficient: may- September

Income generating

Ganyu: Dec-Feb

Business: Dec-Jan: selling doughnuts and baked goods

Jun-Aig: sell own produce.

Changes in the calendar

It would be different if we did this calendar in the past. The rains started in October. By Feb maize would be maturing, there would be no hungry period. But now in Jan and Feb, there’s no maize until March

Why the changes?

We destroyed the vegetation

Charcoal burning, cut trees for timber.

Food security

Yes to all questions except the “all day with out eating”

We have months where we only eat in the evening (in Jan) as we want energy the next morning for farming and school.

Coping

Cook plantains and relish which are eaten together.

Ganyu- this is for money which is for food and to invest in the business. Some women go for sex work.

Most vulnerable

Women and children. Children never ask fathers about food, always the mother. Men can eat in the trading centres. In the village, the elderly, lazy people and those with chronic illness are most vulnerable as they lack the energy to do business, farm and do ganyu.

Why food shortages?

When we harvest we sell some of our maize for things we need if you don’t have a business to generate income. Don’t have fertiliser.

P2- If people have fertiliser they have a high harvest. Maize is also cheaper in the village (they sell to each other at a low price) than in the markets so when we have low yields we have to buy at the market. Sell maize to pay back fertiliser loan, which is with interest.

Aid/gov

No one in the village receives government aid.

CC and FS

Delay in the rain means they have to borrow more and there is a longer hunger period. The changes in weather have brought around windy weather that destroys crops. Dry spells too (destroy crops)

Groups

Village bank- all participants are members

Farm business group (NGO led)

Youth group

Village Bank

Any one from the bank can join. There’s five men in P4s village bank. Benefits: buy household items (large ones), pay for school fees in times of emergency.

4 village banks in total and you can join 2 groups.

Changes

Threes no business now so we don’t have the money to invest in the village bank. You can take a loan and do business but you cant pay back as no business is creating money.

Youth Club

Maintain the elderly's buildings, support the chronically ill and needy students. None of them are members.

Changes. The youth club has gone down, it is not as active.

Other villages

Agri activities, NGO activities for example, plant seedlings, trenches that pools water (to slow flooding and store water) tree maintenance and check dams,

Rely on family

No. Only immediate family (your siblings and her children, you and your children)

This has changes due to democracy. Your child cannot be taken care of someone other than you anymore due to democracy. Kids feel they don’t have to honour parents and children didn’t get the same sharing culture.

Friends

Yes. They can share everything with close friends. Friends help more than close family.

NGOs

There are is only one NGO now. Emmanuel International. They used to get 14,000 a month to do check dams and environmental conservation. Now they supervise them but do not pay so it is like they’re not here at all. They come 3 times a month and started in 2016. Used to give 1 bag of maize, 1L of oil and 5kg of beans. Lactating mothers also received nutritious porridge as well.

Another organisation has come and introduced themselves but has not started any project yet.

They also used to have WorldVision and WFP but Emmanuel International took over their projects. WFP paid WorldVision to distribute.

Social cash transfer is present in the village, 7 people have received it. None of the participants receive it. The amount depends on the household structure (number of children, number of occupants)

Changes due to NGOs leaving

Problems now. People are not going to school, food is hard to find and people are no longer doing business. There is less sharing now, relations were better in the past when NGOs were here. Everyone had money. But now if you go to someone’s house they assume you are begging.

Ranking

Jan-Feb

Village Bank

Business

Ganyu

Friends

Family

Ngo

Gov

(At first they put NGO 2nd, when prompted why they put it second when there are no NGOs in the village they said that even though there’s no NGOs right now, anyday they may come. They have also helped a lot when they have been here. They then move it to 6th but said it used to be ranked 1st)

Sept-Oct

Ganyu

Business

Village bank

Friends

Family

NGO

Government

Farm business group

Formed by the Ministry of Agriculture. Started in 2010 and still going. Loan each other money, dimba farm together and then share the money. The group has now disbanded. They still do their activities but as individuals. They wouldn’t rank it as something they could rely upon.

**Zomba Day 2**

**Inactive Men**

Facilitator: Chaks

Notes: Lucius

Translate: Tadala

Start: 10:37

Finish: 12:20

P1: Head, 3 occupants, 32, married

P2:Head, 7 occupants, 32, married

P3: Head, 7 occupants, 40+ (unsure of his age), married

P4: Head, 4 occupants, 84,married

P5: Head, 7 occupants, 47, married

P3 and P4 illiterate

Seasonal calendar

Rain: Nov-March

Cold: May-July

Hot: Sept-Oct

Begin land preparation in May as they take the maize stalks and bury them in the soil of heap them.

Land prep: May, Aug-Oct

Planting- sometimes end Oct- Dec. This year we planted in November.

Harvest: April – May

Fertiliser: Nov-Dec, this year even in Jan. The fertiliser may be in Jan if the fertiliser is acquired late.

Weeding: Nov-Dec

Price of maize

Dec-Feb- high

March, April, Oct + Nov- medium

May-Aug: low

Food availability

Oct- March: low

May-July: high

April, Aug, Sept: medium

The happy months are May to July the rest of the time theres no food.

P3 and P4- Only a few people are happy May-July. Some would only have one dot for the whole year.

Self sufficient

April to July and a little bit of August. People start buying in August.

P4- Feels strongly about it not being that long. People don’t have food then and there would say they're not self-sufficient for even one month. They harvest and as soon as they harvest the food is gone.

P4- him, his daughters and their grandchildren all use the same piece of land. There's many people who are like that, who don’t have even 1 month of self-sufficiency.

Income generating activities.

Ganyu: Aug-Dec. Weeding, land prep. Most do not have ganyu in Jan and Feb.

March-Sept: businesses selling fruit and green maize. They’re only small businesses

Changes

Yes the pattern of rainfall is very different. Rain used to start in October but this season we had rain in November, then a dry spell in Nov and Dec.

Why

Deforestation, damage to environment, god has decided to change the weather. I hear it is happening in other countries too like in Mozambique.

Food

Yes to all but “whole day.” They eat at lunch times and then not again just to satisfy the hungry feeling but they are not fully satisfied. The do not go a whole day without eating food.

Coping mechanisms

Buy food, ganyu (given money for ganyu)

Sometimes search for ganyu but if they do not find it, they ask a friend. Sometimes people will give you food if they see you are struggling. For example, if they see no smoke leaving from your house they will realise you're not eating and give you a basin on flour. Neighbour and friends do this.

P4- Go and ask neighbours for food.

Most affected

Elderly, those with small land sizes and big families, disabled, chronically ill,

P4- People like me. I have an elderly wife and I have to farm alone. I have a granddaughter who helps cooking and in the house but my wife cannot do anything. We’re affected.

Children and mothers are most affected. As a man you go hunting for ganyu and food. Meanwhile they are sat at home waiting. Even if you don’t find food you’re full on air.

Causes

Key reason they all stressed was land shortages. Lack of fertiliser as land only yields crops with fertiliser. By harvest, you have needs such as school fees so you need to sell some of the maize to pay for that.

P2- I have 7 occupants in my house and we harvest 7 bags. That’s not enough to survive.

Aid

The government bring food for the needy. It’s only 2 people per village. Very few benefit from government food aid.

Some of them benefited from the fertiliser subsidy programme. 1 bag Nov 2021 for 7500. 1 participant received a coupon and 2 others shared with someone with a coupon. The Chief makes them share coupons.

Climate and food security

Soil degradation. We used to grow maize without fertiliser but now you would get nothing (no maize)

Rainfall affecting harvest. Dry spells are causing some maize to age prematurely and others to be too young by the time of harvest. When the rain comes its disastrous, it comes like a war. When the rain falls it takes a long time to rain again.

P3- The dry spells killed by maize. So my maize is empty. I won’t yield much this harvest. This year there will be a lot of hunger. So many accidents that happened due to rain, everywhere you go in the farm there are accidents.

Community groups

Village bank

CBO

Youth Club

Business (NGO led)

Women group (buddy up group)

Village bank

Anyone can join. You need money from time to time to contribute.

P2- I was a member but I dropped out a long time ago. Scarcity of money meant I had to quit. The rest are not members as they don’t have the money needed to join. Their wives are not members either.

Benefits- When you divide money you can buy something useful. It can also be used incase of emergencies and they can get a loan. All of the participants would definitely join if they had the money to do so.

CBO

Members are selected by the chief and there is one person per village. None of them are members. Both men and women can join. They were not sure of the benefits- only members know the benefits.

Youth

Anyone can join. All villages have one and now they have merged into one bigger one that meets in this village. They used to do counselling and dramas. They stopped the drama shows now maybe due to covid. Both men and women can join. Not seen as an important group.

Women group

Only women. They support each other with social welfare. If a woman has lost a family members, the others support them emotionally and by providing food for the funeral. If someone is hospitalised they will visit them in hospital and when they are home. They also gift household items.

Change over the years

Village bank

Men used to be part of the village bank but they dropped out. Now only women are members of the village bank. The main issue is a lack of money. The women will have village bank meetings, but the man is trying to find ganyu or they’re in the field. It's hard for men to get extra money, the men give women the money to go to the village bank (so not enough to have two village bank memberships in one household?)

Work with other communities

The work with the FFA(?) who give them money. Doing trenches, forest maintenance, road maintenance, digging wells and digging graves. They used to be paid for this but not anymore. (Think with is Emmanuel International but it is not clear)

Family help

P5- no. previously yes, but not now.

P1- Things have changed a lot, we used to rely on family but not now.

The change is due to economic downturn. How much you can buy now with a set amount of money is less than in the past (he’s talking about inflation.) We are living in times now.

Probe more as previously they mention they could ask family members in the coping mechanism question.

We're not saying family have completely stopped but the amount of family members willing to help is much less. For example, maize flour would be given for free but right not you’d loan it and have to repay it in the future.

Friends

P5- A friend is more reliable than a relative. All participants agree.

A lack of money now is affecting how we help each other. When you call a friend, they will not pick up the phone because they know you are calling asking for assistance. Sharing is less common now than in the past.

NGO

Emmanuel International

Still come to the village but only to supervise and they do not pay anymore. They got paid in 2020. Dig trenches, tree plant ect. Started in 2016. 2016-18 the project was ran by WorldVision but then it was taken over by Emmanuel International. World Vision were giving maize, peas, beans, porridge and oil in exchange for the work but Emmanuel International were giving money. P2, P4 and P5 were beneficiaries. P3s wife was.

Change in NGOs

Now there are a lot of problems we used to have a little cash in our pockets but now we don’t have this. When we look at this calendar there's a lot of hunger. There are the months they’d support us. The NGOs would support us in September until March. Fields and farms were better when NGOs were here.

When NGOs were here, men were in the village bank. Now they need to fund ganyu and food as they don’t have the support from the NGOs.

Relations were also better before. Everyone had money and lived in peace. A household with money doesn’t have quarrels. Everyone was solving their own problems.

You could share aid with someone who was having a problems. Now they don’t have things to share. We could share before as we had things to share.

Rankings

Same for Jan-Feb and Sept-Oct

Ganyu

Business

Family

Friends

Village bank

Gov and NGO

When NGOs were present they would be ranked number 1. They were even more reliable than ganyu.

Notes: they liked the activities and they have learnt a lot from it.

Zomba Day 2

In active Women

Facilitator: Tadala

Translator: Lucius

Notes: Chaks

Start: 13:22

Finish:14:51

P1: Head, 5 occupants, widow, 63

P2: Heads, 6 occupants, widow, 51

P3: Head, 3 occupants, widow, 69

P4:Head, 3 occupants, divorced, 41

P5:Child in house, single, Mum is the head, 26

P3 and P4 are illiterate. None of the participants were sure of their ages.

Seasonal calendar

Rain: Nov-March

Hot: Aug-Nov

Cold: May-July

Plant End Nov-Dec

Weeding- Dec

Harvest: April-June

Land prep: June-Dec

Fertiliser: Dec-Jan

Maize Prices

By Jan, they’re high but this year it’s only medium.

Sept-March: High

April, July-Aug: Medium

May-June: low

Food availability – difficult to say some harvest a lot, others are on a lot less.

Sept-March: Low

April-Aug: medium

May-June: high

Self sufficient: May-Aug

Income generating activities

Dec-Jan: Ganyu

No one is doing business in this group. They only sell a little bit of maize for money.

Changes over time

Yes, it would be the same. No different. P1-Sometimes would plant in October in the past.

Why changes

Not sure. Climate change. We have destroyed the vegetation. It’s God who’s changes the climate.

Food security questions: all answer yes except the “whole day.” No one has gone the whole day without food.

Coping mechanisms

Ganyu. Ask a friend for help and they eat foods they don’t normally eat(e.g foods similar to cocoa that are found on the riverbank)

Most vulnerable

Children. (Keep in mind they are not married) They won’t go to school/ unable to go as they’re hungry. In the village, widows, elderly, those with no business, those with no husbands. “We’re examples of those who suffer”

If you don’t have a business, you have no money for fertiliser or other things needed. Chronically ill, old and disabled.

Why hunger?

Only harvest a little, lack of fertiliser, fertiliser is washed away in heavy rain, soil is now less fertile, sell some harvest for money for things that you need. You may have a fertiliser coupon but no money to buy the fertiliser with, even with the coupon.

P2, P4 and P5 received coupons.

P1 and P2- had people share their coupons with them

Climate and food security

No, the way we harvest is the same (P3). Then they say there has been changes. Before they had a big harvest. You could sell some of your harvest for fertiliser, hire ganyu and other things that you need plus have enough food for the year.

Groups

Village bank

Women’s group

NGO business group

One Acre Fund (NGO)

Youth Club

Women’s group

They visit and cook for each other when they are ill or in hospital. They will also help if someone’s relative dies and they need help with the funeral. This is women’s only. P2, P3, P4 and P5 are members of the women’s group. There’s been no changes in this group.

Youth club

Help needy. Help thew elderly with land preparation. And assist orphans. Enforces children to go to school. Buy school items for the needy and share awareness on different topics. None of the participants are members. It has changed over time, the youth club is better run now as they know what they’re doing more. None helped by youth club.

Village bank

No one is a member. They can only mention what they hear… You can get a loan, buy fertiliser and pay back in instalments. When you share investments, they can buy whatever is needed or wanted.

Changes

Not running smoothly as people don’t pay loans back. They used to share after 9 months but fail to do that, its nearer to 12 months. People are crooked and don’t pay back loans.

They’re not members as economic income is not okay. They don’t have husbands and businesses to pay back. They would definitely join if they could. They have seen people but roofing on their homes and pay school fees.

Other communities

They can work with other communities. For example, they are building a school block.

Rely on family

No, in the past you could rely on relatives. This has changed as it’s difficult to find money so parents just help their children. Relatives also don’t have food.

Rely on friends.

No. Probed further. Maybe can rely on friends 2 or 3 times a year but not frequently. People don’t have money now so they can't help each other.

P2- I walk to the hospital and back. I have relatives who could help with transport, but they don’t.

P3- in the past parents loved each other. All this has changed due to issues with money.

NGOS

One Acre Fund

Loan fertiliser, soya beans and lamps by paying 5000 insurance. None of the participants are a member. Friends who have joined have farms that look good because of One Acre Fund. Anyone can join. If you’re not careful you have to sell all of your maize to pay back the loan. Pay back loan with interest. No change in this NGO over time.

Fertiliser subsidy.

It is difficult to buy fertiliser now. Sometimes you have to bribe to buy fertiliser.

Changes

Yes, they’re suffering a lot. Were able to buy fertiliser with maize harvest and fertiliser was easier to buy. Things were better with fertiliser coupon. Could buy fertiliser and share it and food with others.

Rankings

Jan-Feb

Ganyu

Family

Friends

Women Support Group

NGO

Gov

Same in Sept

Note: the ladies were reluctant to rank and said none were a great help.

They would join village bank and One Acre Fund if they had the money. There is no problem with the time it takes.