

Interviewed by Janine Mitchell at CCAP Likhubula House, Malawi on Saturday 10.06.2023.

Interviewee: Nancy Chirwa

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Likhubula Partnership Committee, Impact of the Partnership in Likhubula

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Hi Janine. I am Nancy, Nancy Chirwa, nee Chirwa, Mrs Llongwe.

I was born in 1972 from the northern part of Malawi. I came here in Mulanje in 2005. By then, I was doing my school at Malawi Institute of Tourism. And then I was given the place for attachment at Likhubula House. When I came to Likhubula House, that's when I came to know about Dunblane. So after my attachments, I went back home and then they called, they called me from Likhubula House, they called me to start working with Likhubula House as a centre manager in 2008. That's when I became the signatory or Dunblane.

When I came to Likhubula House, within the community, there were a lot of challenges mainly with the youth. Because many of the youth that got selected to go to secondary school, they were raised by single parents, mainly their mothers. There are a lot of divorces in Mulanje. So the coming in of Dunblane and steering committee is like an answered prayer to some of us because we're saying, what are we going to do with our youth? If they don't go back to school, if they can't get educated, they'll just continue destroying the mountain, burning charcoal, which is not right. So Dunblane is doing a lot. And we really appreciate what Dunblane is doing within the area and the community. Because they will be able to secure jobs. They will be able to move from here maybe to other areas, like in towns, to be working or doing other things. They can also do business - better business than selling charcoal.

We have Lonjezo. Lonjezo went to Green Malata to do tailoring. And he's a very good tailor in the community.

There is Davey, who is the mechanic. And then we have one lady who is a teacher. She's just upgrading now. Yes. So there is a lot that Dunblane is doing?

When I came here to Likhubula House, as I said that I was on internship. By then, Likhubula House didn't have a restaurant. So what I did, I wrote a proposal to run the kitchen. Because the kitchen was there, but there was they were not using it. They had all the utensils. So I wrote a proposal. When I wrote the proposal the chairman by then was Dr Njazana, said no, Nancy, I think we need to implement it. And they employed me so that I can implement my own proposal. And there that time, we were just open just in the morning for breakfast, and dinner. And yet, we could get clients that will be going up the mountain and then coming down to have lunch, but there was no place where they could get lunch. So I thought of just buying a place and building my own restaurant down there.

That's when, in 2009, I built that restaurant, and I opened it in 2010. And the main aim of the Nancy's Dream Restaurant was to help in the bursary programme as well, and to help the women. Now, I have the Mayanko CBO, which is the women's group which is trying to help the women to be empowered financially. So we are giving loans to them.