

# PROJECT PROPOSAL

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Date: 30/07/2019

Name of Village/Region: Dowa District, Malawi

Project Title: GREEN UHURU: Environmental Friendly Community & E-Waste Entrepreneurship

To: ICCM, Malawi

## Executive Summary

Malawi is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to Climate Change, and this is pushing people further into poverty and women are suffering most, according to different reports of Oxfam Intermon Malawi published during the last years.

The country is heavily dependent on its natural resources – soils for agriculture, water, fisheries from lakes and fuel wood from forests. The Shire River is of great economic importance to Malawi, generating more than 98% of Malawi's electricity, supporting the fishing industry, and providing freshwater for irrigation and domestic and industrial uses. The Upper, Middle and Lower Shire River basins are important areas for the production of crops and for the preservation and conservation of forests and wildlife. However, the Lower Shire Valley is vulnerable to floods and droughts. Extensive land use, including the cutting down of trees, 50% of forests vanished in the last forty years, has resulted in severe land degradation and soil erosion, leading to siltation of the Shire River and its tributaries, seriously affecting hydro-electric power generation, human health and fisheries.

Malawi government recognizes that Global Climate Change has serious implications for the country, and counts with a "National Climate Change Investment Plan", but Malawi cannot effectively address climate change adaptation and mitigation due to inadequate financial resources and other practical reasons.

The 29 per cent of people in Malawi live in extreme poverty, and infant mortality is estimated at 134 per thousand. With these high levels of poverty and mortality, appears that Climate Change is not priority for many people, while the goal is to survive day by day, but the quid is that are the causes of Climate Change that are increasing the levels of poverty and mortality.

Nevertheless, the awareness of these problems is rising around the people in Malawi, and especially between the youth. They understand that those two issues, climate change and poverty, should be addressed together. They are seeing how the environment is changing and how the different climatic events are making life more complicated for all. For that reason, different groups are appearing to start organizing themselves to work on different areas like permaculture, forestation or renewable energies among many others.

We find people here are energetic and ambitious, and are looking to make a change for their country and their communities, but many times there is lack of spaces, tools and financial support to start and develop innovative ideas.

**The main objective** of Green Uhuru is to provide services in the community and give a second life for the abundant waste produced in the country. As one of these services, all from recycled materials, we produce fuel briquettes, with a minimum impact for the environment.

**The relative objective** is to educate, and raise awareness about deforestation and other environmental challenges affecting Malawi, and promote healthy and sustainable livelihoods.

**The secondary objective** is to develop a sustainable business for the organization, with different jobs opportunities for the community members. Diversify our organization producing and selling other products as homemade peanut butter, eco-bricks and eco-paving tiles in order to sustain the organization and reach more people.

Until now, the Organization has been working in Lilongwe first, and after in Dzaleka Refugee Camp, with a stable group of people leaded by the chair person Dieudonne Mudekuza.

The group owns a small workshop sited inside of the camp where the briquettes production is made, and a shop at the market, but the space and conditions are still not good enough for the big demand we have, and the needs of the community.

To have a more decent and bigger workshop we are seeking for funds, that after the benefits of the selling, we will be able to sustain ourselves. We also need to improve our tools and machinery, in order to increase the production, ensure the safety of our workers and implement a good recycling and collecting system.

There are also other products that can be made by plastic waste and other materials, and we also have the knowledge and the skills, so is the next step to diversify our organization and business project.

The aim of the project is to strengthen the group through a stable business and community development plan, where the group works as a horizontal organization and invest the benefits in the community through different projects.

The first step of the project is started in 2018, when the project started to run, and until now it has been running and progressing.

The second step has been to open our own shop and workshop in Dzaleka Market. In this place we are visible to the big public, and we can sell our products with a stable schedule. To complete this process and renovate completely the space we are looking for an investment and a partner to give more economical stability to the project.

The third step will be to increase the production of fuel briquettes, and other upcycled products and implement a long term collection and recycling system in Dzaleka and the surrounding villages in Dowa District.

### Community Background

Dowa District is found in Malawi Central Region. The organization specifically is found in Dzaleka Refugee Camp, home to 38.000 refugees and asylum seekers, mainly coming from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Somalia (among others). Is less than 50 kilometers from Lilongwe, Malawi's capital, between hills that line towards the town of Dowa, surrounded by other small communities like Lilambwe, Chilombo, Mtanda, Besera, Kakowa and Mengwe.

The languages spoken in the different communities are Chichewa and English. Inside of Dzaleka, there is a compendium of languages: Swahili, English, French, Chichewa and others.

The people lives mainly from agriculture, so they completely depend of the natural resources and are more vulnerable to Climate Change. In the last few years the consequences of Climate Change have become more and more evident, with floods, droughts and the scarcity of materials like fuel wood, so the people in the villages are more concerned about all the issues and they are open to alternative solutions.

In Dzaleka the opportunities to earn money are even more limited, and this push people to illegal business and other risky activities and practices. The government of Malawi is very restrictive with the refugees so the life inside of the camp become like a prison sometimes.

## Development

The organization has been working for more than one year now, in which the group members has been organizing themselves, learning and improving the products though different activities and partnerships.

We have been producing and selling briquettes, among other products like peanut butter in Dzaleka Refugee Camp and in the surrounding villages with a really good acceptance, and more demand than products we can offer.

Another action area has been the demonstrations, workshops and trainings. We collaborate with volunteers from DAPP Dowa Teachers Training College, and we delivered different courses and demonstrations for the students. Our two main actions in the last months has been a series of workshops with youth from the community and a three days training at Dzaleka R. C.



From left to right: Demonstration at Dzaleka, production of briquettes and workshop with the youth from the communities.

With the Environmental Youth Club (DAPP), we have been working with young women and men from the communities around Dowa District about fire briquettes, and environmental issues. We started with a visit from them, and a demonstration in our workshop, and then with different visits and courses at the Youth Club.

More than 25 people from different villages and Dzaleka, have benefit from this training, and now they are able to produce their own briquettes, and understand the reasons why and the benefits of this alternative method. Also, they are now organizing different demonstrations in their own villages, as a part of the training, to share their knowledge and skills with as many people as possible.

One of the last big actions we had was in the month of June with a training of three days at Dzaleka Community Hall for 50 people living in the camp. This training of three days was divided in theory and practice, and we were able to succeed graduating 42 people in the last day, after a great demonstration for around 200 people. We practiced different ways of making briquettes, and we created a big expectation in the camp, giving to know our work.



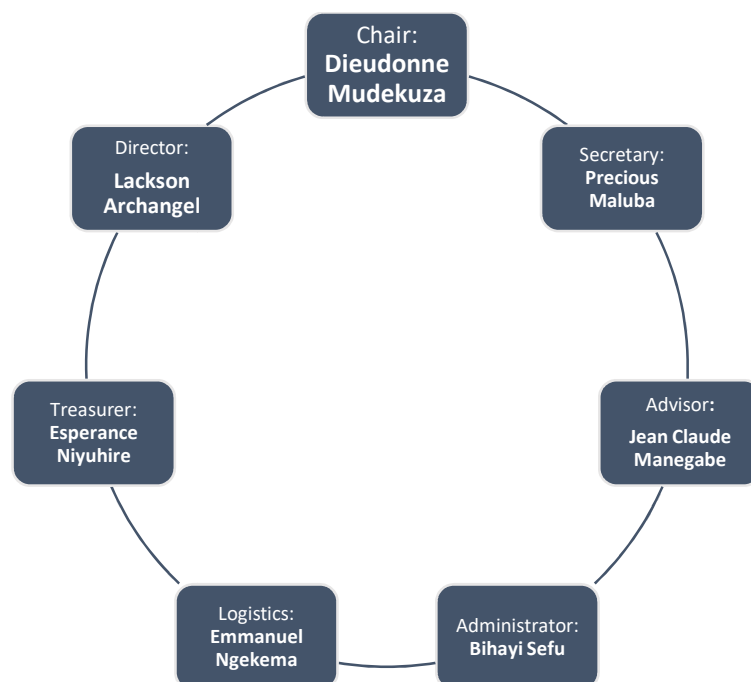
After the training, many graduated women from the training are joining the organization and are now working together with us, what brings great motivation and expectations to the entire group.

Finally, the last of our big actions, in the month of June was another course and demonstration. In this occasion we assisted to a Teachers Training for pre-school teachers, where behind the title “Community’s actions for environmental issues”, we delivered a briquettes course and a workshop for 40 people from 8 different villages, including teachers, staff members and chiefs.

This month of July we also opened our own shop to the public at Dzaleka Market, in a great location, and where we also produce our peanut butter. At the same time we started some marketing actions to give to know to the people our organization and our products.



### The organization



## Objectives

1. Have a sustainable organization, where we can provide services and create different jobs opportunities, especially for women producing and selling fire briquettes, peanut butter and other products from recycled materials.
2. Organize periodical vocational trainings, workshops and demonstrations to raise awareness in the community about issues as deforestation, and give knowledge and skills to young and elder people. At the same time, promote entrepreneurship projects in the community.
3. Promote Community Development, through a good recycling and waste collection system, giving a second life to different organic materials, and keep the community clean.
4. Improve the sanitation and health conditions of women and kids especially through two lines: The first the health benefits of our briquettes compared with the wood charcoal in terms of smoke; and the second with a good waste management system.
5. Fight Climate Change, and stop deforestation and soil degradations in the area where we live.

## Beneficiaries

The Direct beneficiaries of the project are the 25 women and men members of Green Uhuru organization in the first place, and in the second place all the consumers of our fire briquettes and peanut butter. Our main targets are the women, because are the most touched and affected by the scarcity of charcoal in the camp, and are the ones spending most of the time cooking. Also, direct beneficiaries are all the people who receive any kind of course, training, or workshop from us, that until now we count more than 300 people.

Indirect beneficiaries are all the villages and communities in Dowa District and Dzaleka Refugee Camp, because of the spreading chain of briquettes demonstrations, and also for the multiple benefits in the local environment, and nevertheless the improvements in health.

### Sustainability Plan

For the sustainability of the project, we have a business plan, based on our experience selling and distributing our products in the community.

About our materials, the organic waste, one of our main ingredients, is always available, and it will be available in the future, while agriculture is one of the main sustain here. We also know how to find it, and we can collect for a small price.

The demand of fuel for cooking is also stable, and because most of the people depend on charcoal to cook, the briquettes are a product that will be consumed every day at least for the next 10 – 20 years.

Our organization is well founded, and our committed members are all living in Dzaleka Refugee Camp, even we work as well with the Malawian communities. That means, the board is also stable, and it will stay here for a long period of time so they will be able to keep running the activities and the production.

Based also in our experience, we can confirm the interest of the people in our products and training, that are getting every day more known around our area, so we have already different requests of training for the future, and our collaborations with other organizations and schools are strong.

Finally, as a secure key for our organization we have our products diversification. With the peanut butter that we produce and sell in our shop and other products that will be incorporate we ensure the income generation for a long term.



To ICCM Malawi:

Our main goal is to make a contribution to the community through environmental and recycling programs. This is done by providing services and the fuel briquettes we sell to cover a need in the community, and also the trainings and workshops we deliver regularly.

To reach more people, and focus on targeting all the women and youth in the surrounding areas we need to be stronger and implement new products and services. In order to do that, we need to renovate our shop and workshop, to increase the production and the impact we make in the local environment.

PLAN AND SERVICES NEEDED:

- Carpentry: Re building of the drying area for briquettes at our workshop.
- Tools for recycling and collecting materials: Shovels, wheelbarrows, oil drum.
- Press machine for briquettes.
- Furniture for shop, workshop and office: Dispensary, benches, tables, chairs and shelves.
- Electricity maintenance.
- Building: Separate areas and laboratory.
- Paint inside.
- Building: Exterior roof (protection).
- Water access and toilet.
- Uniforms for workers.

We would be really grateful if you could contribute with us providing our services to the communities inside and outside of the camp, creating job opportunities and protecting our local environment.

Apart from this, we can discuss further about creating a partnership or learning from your experience.

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