EVALUATION REPORT

Assessment of Potential Uses of Processes and Products from the project
'Tikonzekere Arts Contests: Communicating Flood Vulnerability Reduction Good Practices through the Arts in Malawi'

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December 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

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CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
DCCMS	Government of Malawi Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services
DoDMA	Government of Malawi Department of Disaster Management Affairs
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EWS	Early Warning System
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
JCC	Jacaranda Cultural Centre
KII	Key Informant Interview
MRCS	Malawi Red Cross Society
MUST	Malawi University of Science and Technology
RCV	Red Cross Volunteer
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VPM	Vilipanganga Poetry Movement

Executive Summary

Contest Design and Implementation

The 'Tikonzekere Arts Contests: Communicating Flood Vulnerability Reduction Good Practices Through the Arts in Malawi' project was conducted in Malawi in 2019. It aimed to foster dialogue and promote effective disaster risk reduction practices through artistic expression. This initiative emerged in the wake of Cyclone Idai, emphasizing the need for community engagement in flood vulnerability reduction.

The contests employed a hybrid participatory and top-down dialogue communication approach, integrating local insights with guidance from the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA). Design and implementation of the contests involved extensive partnership collaboration, particularly with DoDMA, UNDP, the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS), and various local organizations. Initially planned for all regions of Malawi to maximize participation, the contests encouraged diverse submissions, particularly from flood-prone areas. A structured timeline was established, with a focus on simplicity and accessibility in arts categories, including songs, poems, short stories, films, and drawings or paintings.

Despite delays due to election-related disruptions and logistical challenges such as a limited promotion budget, the first-time nature of the contests, and access issues in rural areas, the project successfully attracted over 100 entries across its various categories. Most submissions came from Blantyre and Lilongwe, with poetry and short stories being the most popular categories.

A multi-criteria screening process was implemented, involving judges specializing in artistic quality, message content, and communication effectiveness. Entrants received constructive feedback aimed at improving their submissions and reducing misinformation about disaster risk practices.

Selected semi-finalists showcased their entries at a Blantyre event, which aimed to further engage communities in discussions about good practices through the event and media promotion of it and the related good practices messages. A similarly promoted finals event was held at the Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST), where three finalists from each category were announced. The event featured performances by popular artist Piksy, who contributed to enhancing community interest and attendance.

Key prizes for finalists included professional audio, video, and framing production of their entries, enabling high-quality presentations of their work. These products were later showcased at various events, including the International Day for Disaster Reduction and the Lake of Stars Festival. The dissemination of these materials aimed to promote ongoing community engagement and education regarding disaster preparedness and risk reduction through broader community use in future trainings and exhibitions.

Evaluation Objectives and Methodology

The evaluation was originally planned for 2020 but was postponed to late 2023 due to COVID-19 restrictions and subsequent obstacles. It aimed to extract lessons learned from the

Tikonzekere project and provide recommendations for its modification and replication. Systematically assessment was done to determine the relevance and effectiveness of using arts and contests to promote good practices for reducing vulnerability in Malawi. Key objectives included evaluating the appropriateness of arts for communication, the effectiveness of contest promotion and organization, and the utilization of created products. The evaluation also identified facilitating and constraining factors, offering insights to enhance future projects' relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability in fostering community engagement and disaster preparedness.

The evaluation was framed within a Theory of Change, emphasizing that the impact on decision-making and behavior change cannot be measured in isolation due to the influence of various factors on community motivation and action. The focus was on ensuring that the messages disseminated through the contests were accurate, relevant, and well-received for discussion by target audiences. Key activities included coordinating with contest directors and the Malawi Red Cross Society to determine focus group locations, identify key informants, and design appropriate questions.

Focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted across three districts: Chikwawa (Traditional Authorities Makwhira, Mlilima, and Lundu), Blantyre (Chilomoni township), and Zomba (Jali area). Locations in each district were selected for their vulnerability to flooding and their previous engagement with flood preparedness initiatives. The focus groups aimed to gather diverse perspectives on the impacts of cyclones and floods, incorporating representatives from various demographics.

In Chikwawa, participants highlighted increased rainfall, deforestation, and economic hardship as significant challenges exacerbating flood impacts. They reported that overpopulation and poor land use led to inadequate housing and increased vulnerability. In Chilomoni, the focus was on the direct effects of deforestation and economic struggles following Cyclone Freddy, emphasizing the loss of property and human life. The Jali community echoed similar concerns, particularly regarding changing rain patterns and environmental degradation affecting agricultural practices.

While differences existed across locations, a common thread emerged regarding the perceived increase in rainfall intensity and its associated impacts, including crop damage, housing destruction, and economic challenges. The focus groups collectively emphasized the urgent need for improved flood preparedness and community engagement.

Both FGDs and key informant interviews (KIIs) utilized a structured approach, starting with comfort-building questions and quantitative responses to foster discussion. An independent facilitator was trained to conduct the FGDs, ensuring accurate translation and engagement. Key informants were selected to provide a balanced view, representing media, arts communities, and NGOs involved in disaster risk communication. The evaluation also included a film night showcasing contest entries to stimulate discussion.

The evaluation faced several constraints, primarily time and resource limitations, which restricted the number of focus groups and the breadth of key informant interviews.

Additionally, the reliance on participants' memories posed challenges, especially given the four-year gap since the contests. However, most questions were designed to minimize memory bias, focusing on perceptions of the processes and potential improvements for future contests.

Moreover, while the findings are not generalizable to the entire country due to the limited number of locations, they provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the Tikonzekere initiative. Verbal and written translation challenges were acknowledged, but triangulation methods were employed to enhance the reliability of the data.

Conclusions from Results and Discussion
High Effectiveness of Arts
The consensus among key informants and focus group participants indicates that arts effectively communicate important messages at both household and community levels. The cultural and linguistic relevance of artistic expressions enhances understanding and retention, making arts-based communication particularly effective. Engaging community members through entertainment allows for improved message impact, as the entertaining nature of the arts captures and retains attention better than traditional methods.

Historically, arts have been employed in Malawi for behavior change, laying a robust foundation for their continued relevance. The ability of arts to simplify complex information into relatable narratives is vital, especially regarding disaster preparedness. Furthermore, arts foster community participation and interaction, creating spaces for collective learning and strengthening social bonds.

Youth engagement emerges as a crucial element in this process, as younger populations can disseminate messages within their communities. The report emphasizes the importance of adapting arts to current media trends, utilizing platforms like community radio and visual and social media to maximize outreach.

Relevance of Arts Contests
Arts contests are identified as innovative tools for fostering community engagement and promoting disaster preparedness. The contests generate excitement, particularly among youth, and successfully address existing knowledge gaps regarding disaster preparedness. The competitive nature of these contests encourages participation, blending entertainment with education to potentially foster cultural shifts toward positive behavioral changes.

The design and implementation of arts contests should consider the specific issues being addressed and the target audience. While there is enthusiasm for these contests, ongoing evaluation is needed to assess their real-world impact on behavior change. Inclusivity in participation is essential, with diverse art forms ensuring accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

Localized promotion of contests is crucial for maximizing reach and effectiveness. Economic challenges faced by some community members necessitate that messages are tailored to

address the socio-economic realities of various groups. This consideration ensures that communication remains relevant and impactful.

Relevance and Appropriateness of Messages
The messages disseminated through these arts contests were deemed highly relevant and suitable for the context of flood preparedness. Participants across various locations reported that the flood impact messages resonate with their community experiences. Engaging in discussions about these impacts is considered vital for education and collective problem-solving, enhancing community awareness of vulnerabilities.

Local appropriateness of good practices is crucial. Participants acknowledged the relevance of messages regarding flood vulnerability reduction, recognizing their importance for informed decision-making and local action. Urban participants tended to suggest strategies focused on adaptability, such as obtaining weather advisories, while rural participants emphasized immediate environmental practices. This distinction highlights the necessity for context-specific, adaptable solutions that consider local challenges, including resource shortages and economic constraints.

The emphasis on collective decision-making reinforces the value of community discussions in addressing flood vulnerability. Continuous engagement and reminders about the messages are seen as essential for ensuring retention and encouraging actionable responses.

Effectiveness of Contest Promotion
The report highlights the necessity for strategic promotional approaches to effectively reach target audiences across diverse socio-economic contexts. Although key informants were generally aware of the contests, focus group participants indicated minimal awareness, emphasizing the need for improved promotional strategies.

To enhance engagement, the promotion of contests should utilize a diverse mix of methods, such as community radio, local events, and collaborations with community leaders. Engaging specific disaster-prone communities, including schools and local government officials, is also critical. Given the limited access to technology in rural areas, traditional media, particularly community radio, should be prioritized.

Local artists play a significant role in enhancing relatability and fostering community ownership of the contests. Extended promotional periods are recommended to ensure broader coverage and deeper engagement, particularly among youth. Partnerships with influential organizations can strengthen promotional efforts and increase awareness.

Communication strategies must be tailored to different demographics and regions. By differentiating between categories of participants, the contests can broaden engagement and foster inclusivity.

Effectiveness of Contest Organization
The organization of arts contests is viewed as a key factor in their success as tools for promoting disaster preparedness. While key informants expressed general satisfaction with

how the contests were organized, there remains room for improvement, particularly in community engagement and targeting.

A systematic approach to contest organization is essential. Clear rules, expert judging, and comprehensive guidelines in these contests improve the quality of entries while incorporating often overlooked psychological and cultural considerations. Cross-sectoral collaboration involving government, humanitarian organizations, and local stakeholders is crucial for enhancing information dissemination and community ownership.

The inclusion of diverse artistic forms such as songs, poems, stories, films, and visual arts has enriched the messaging, and there is potential to incorporate more interactive elements, such as theater and action dances, to boost engagement further. Additionally, fostering empowerment and inclusivity within the contests encourages participation from a wide range of community members, including marginalized groups. Messaging from the contests could be improved by targeting the most at-risk communities with message-reinforcing workshops and gatherings.

Sustained community engagement through regular contests is vital for reinforcing messages and promoting long-term behavior change. Respondents emphasized that repeating contests could strengthen community resilience, particularly in the context of increasing disaster frequency and severity. Resource allocation and timing should align with seasonal risks to maximize the effectiveness of messaging.

Opinions on whether to integrate contests into disaster preparedness training or keep them as standalone events vary. Integration could enhance resource efficiency, message coherence, training engagement, and impact evaluation while maintaining independence might support unbiased messaging. Future contests should be designed flexibly, allowing adaptation to specific community needs and ensuring that messages are contextually relevant.

Effectiveness of Contest Products and Prizes
The materials produced from contests, such as videos, audio recordings, and visual art, hold significant potential for raising awareness of disaster preparedness. Key informants and focus group participants expressed strong agreement on the relevance and value of these materials in promoting essential messages. Their versatility allows for enhancing overall outreach through use across various platforms such as community events, schools, and media channels.

Successful dissemination of these products hinges on tailored community engagement strategies that involve local authorities and organizations. These materials serve not only as promotional tools but also as effective training resources that facilitate discussions around disaster risk reduction through creative formats.

Integrating these materials into educational settings is crucial, as they can be adapted for younger audiences and repackaged for schools to enhance awareness. The need for accessible communication materials is particularly underscored by past challenges faced during events

like Cyclone Freddy, highlighting the importance of pre-existing knowledge within communities.

Engaging local artists and contest finalists in outreach initiatives can significantly enhance message dissemination and community participation. Customization of materials for different contexts ensures effective communication, while visual elements like videos and posters can improve message delivery.

Conclusion

The findings underscore the importance of strategic planning, community involvement, and ongoing engagement in the effective organization and promotion of arts contests. By leveraging diverse artistic expressions and fostering collaboration among stakeholders, these contests can significantly enhance disaster preparedness and community resilience in Malawi. And focus group participants were strongly in favor of their communities participating in such contests and discussing and sharing the messages from the contests with people they know.

Recommendations

The report provides a full list of recommendations aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of these contests, their promotion, organization, and the utilization of resulting materials. Key themes among such recommendations include:

Enhancing Effectiveness of Arts in Communicating Disaster Preparedness

Utilizing a diverse range of artistic forms such as songs, poems, stories, films, and visual arts ensures that messages resonate with different demographics and preferences. This variety not only enhances accessibility for community members, including those with disabilities, but also strengthens the overall messaging.

Further, integrating arts into popular media channels, especially community radio, social media, and television, can significantly widen the reach of disaster preparedness messages. Collaboration with local artists is also essential, as it fosters community ownership and makes the contests more relatable. To maintain engagement, the report advocates for the incorporation of humor and entertainment within educational materials, transforming learning into an enjoyable experience.

The report emphasizes the importance of continuous learning through arts. Rather than being one-off events, arts contests should be positioned as ongoing educational opportunities. This approach can reinforce key messages over time, ensuring sustained community awareness and involvement. Additionally, establishing channels for feedback on the effectiveness of arts-based messaging is crucial for ongoing adaptation and improvement.

Promoting Arts Contests Effectively

The report recommends a decentralized approach, organizing contests at district levels to better address local issues. Engaging community leaders and educational institutions in promotional efforts can also amplify outreach. A diverse mix of promotional methods that utilize community radio, social media, and face-to-face engagements should be employed to maximize visibility.

The report underscores the importance of leveraging local artists for promotions, as their involvement can attract community attention and foster excitement around the contests. Furthermore, extending the promotion period allows for deeper engagement with communities and builds anticipation for the contests.

Organizing Arts Contests

Effective organization of arts contests requires sustained community engagement and customized approaches that cater to the unique cultural contexts of different communities. The report advocates for comprehensive guidelines that include psychological and cultural aspects, ensuring that contests are relevant and impactful. By broadening stakeholder involvement, including diverse perspectives in the organizing committee, the contests can benefit from collective ownership.

The incorporation of diverse art genres and interactive formats is recommended to enrich the messaging and encourage active participation. Additionally, integrating arts contests with existing disaster preparedness training programs can enhance the efficiency of resource use and reinforce messaging across platforms.

Utilizing Resulting Materials for Flood Vulnerability Reduction

Ensuring accessibility and availability to materials produced from such arts contests is paramount. They should be disseminated widely through collaboration with local authorities and various media channels. Multi-channel distribution - including community radio, television, and social media - can enhance the reach and engagement of disaster preparedness messages.

Tailored community events that showcase contest materials are essential for local engagement. The involvement of NGOs and local stakeholders in organizing these events can leverage existing networks for broader outreach. Furthermore, integrating contest materials into educational curricula can enhance understanding and retention among younger audiences.

To foster ongoing community interactions, the report suggests organizing follow-up visits and discussions to reinforce key messages and encourage dialogue. Utilizing insights from past disasters, such as Cyclone Freddy, can guide the adaptation of preparedness messaging and the proactive sharing of materials before future events.

Engaging contest finalists as change agents is another key recommendation, as their continued involvement can promote awareness and community participation in disaster preparedness initiatives. Moreover, customizing products for diverse settings ensures that messages resonate with specific audiences, enhancing the overall effectiveness of communication efforts.

Conclusion

By implementing the outlined recommendations, stakeholders can enhance the effectiveness of these contests, ensuring that they not only raise awareness but also facilitate meaningful

behavior change in vulnerable communities. The integration of arts into disaster risk management strategies is a crucial step toward fostering resilience and reducing vulnerability in the face of increasing disaster risks in Malawi.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Malawi faces multiple hazards in both rural and urban areas. These include floods, heavy storms, drought, and dry spells. Between 1974 and 2019 more than 25 million people were affected by these hazards which are becoming more frequent, intense, and unpredictable. One of the reasons why the pattern and nature of the disasters that follow these hazards are becoming more and more destructive is lack of engagement of the affected communities to talk about how they can adapt to climate change and otherwise what they can do to make themselves less vulnerable to damages and losses from disaster events.

From June through November 2019, a project called 'Tikonzekere Arts Contests: Communicating Flood Vulnerability Reduction Good Practices through the Arts in Malawi' (Tikonzekere) was directed by Rural Livelihood Risk Management Consulting, Society for Education Initiative, and Sustainable Development Initiative in partnership with the Government of Malawi Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA), UNDP, the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS), Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST), YONECO, Conservation Music Malawi, Music Crossroads Malawi, Dikamawoko Arts, Story Ink Africa, Vilipanganga Poetry Movement, Gold Mountain Media, Jacaranda Cultural Centre, and Kwa Haraba Art Gallery and Cafe. The primary communication objective of Tikonzekere was to inspire people through the processes and products of these contests, media coverage, related events, and subsequent uses of contest materials in exhibitions and disaster preparedness trainings to talk about, make decisions, and take appropriate actions to help them and their families to have fewer negative consequences during future heavy rains and floods.

An evaluation was planned for early 2020 to determine what was learned from how Tikonzekere was conducted and how such processes and products can be used to influence people to prepare better for the next big cyclone. Due to various problems that arose primarily due to restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the evaluation was not conducted then. But since an even more destructive cyclone transpired in Malawi in 2023, since the lead director of Tikonzekere had returned temporarily to Malawi, and since there has been demand for publication of the results of what was learned, it was conducted in October and November 2023.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

As stated above, this evaluation was conducted to determine lessons learned from what was done in Tikonzekere and relevant recommendations for potential modification and replication. The scope of work is a systematic and objective assessment of the contests themselves and of what could be done to improve this type of communication project to improve uptake of good practices to reduce vulnerability to risks in Malawi. The evaluation focuses specifically on but is not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Relevance and appropriateness of arts – assess the relevance and appropriateness of using arts to communicate and encourage household and community level adoption of good practices to reduce vulnerability in Malawi

2. Relevance and appropriateness of such arts contests - assess the relevance and appropriateness of specifically using this type of arts contests to communicate and encourage household and community level adoption of good practices to reduce vulnerability in Malawi

3. Effectiveness of contests promotion – assess whether the promotion of the contests was able to reach target audiences and determine how to better do such promotion if similar such contests are to be replicated

4. Effectiveness of organization of contests processes – assess whether what was included in the messages was relevant and appropriate, assess whether what was done in the activities encouraged target audiences to discuss and consider them, and determine how to better organize such messaging if similar such contests are to be replicated

5. Effectiveness of utilization of contests products – assess whether the communication products created by the project have been utilized in ways to best spread appropriate messages to target audiences and determine how to better utilize existing products and any future such products if similar such contests are to be replicated

6. Lessons learned and recommendations - identification of facilitating and constraining factors in implementation and the areas where the design, process, and implementation of the project can be improved to make its impacts more relevant, appropriate, effective, and sustainable

3. THE CONTESTS: DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

A conceptual framework for a hybrid dialogue approach to optimize disaster risk reduction good practices communication had been developed by project co-director Dr. Bob Alexander based on review of relevant literature and related projects elsewhere. Project design involved developing a structure based on what was possible for implementation to best optimize following this conceptual framework given the conditions and constraints.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

The Community-Engaged Risk Communication Conceptual Framework is adapted from the preparedness process framework of Paton, McClure, and Burgelt (2006). The framework emphasizes:

- Developing a communication approach that utilizes a mix of communication tools that optimize across:
  - accuracy of the risk messages and risk reduction good practices messages in the content of the communication products
  - relevance in the local context and feelings of empowered ownership of these messages and what to do with them in the processes of developing and disseminating them through local engagement
- Using this approach to work with people to overcome the constraints that prevent them from adopting risk reduction good practices:
  - the types of critical awareness and risk perception constraints that may be preventing them from being sufficiently motivated to change behaviors
  - the types of efficacy constraints that may be preventing them from intending to change behaviors even if they are motivated to do so
  - any other local obstacles that may be inhibiting them from changing even if they have the motivation and intention to do so
- Replicating the approach based on lessons learned on what best added value to overcome these constraints
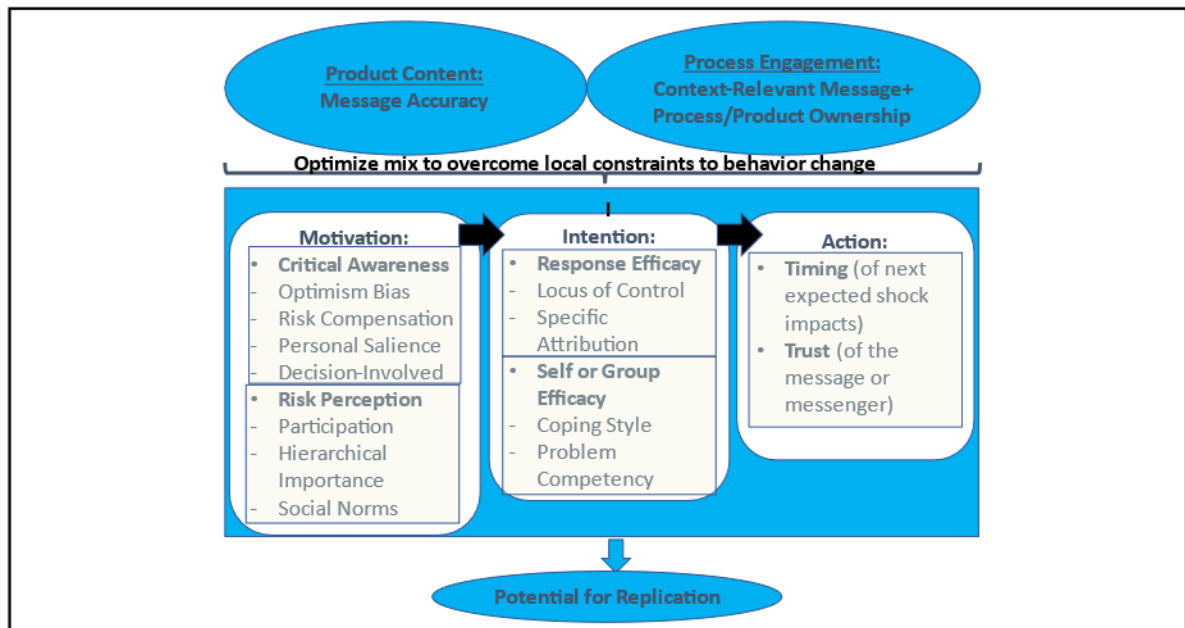
Figure 1: Community-Engaged Risk Communication Framework (Adapted from Paton & Johnston (2006) *Disaster Resilience: An Integrated Approach Figure 7.1* by B. Alexander with input from J.C. Gaillard, Ilan Kelman, Briony Towers, Bruno Haghebaert, Marla Petal, Rob Greaney, Doug Paton, Alice McSherry, Joan Bastide, Charlotte Floors, & Kirby Clark)

The dominant approach to increase disaster risk awareness has been through top-down creation of materials that can be spread through print and broadcast media such as brochures, posters, and radio and television public service announcements (Save the Children, 2015). In places with limited literacy like Malawi, a common such approach is for government, UN, and NGO projects to hire recording artists to write and record songs based on top-down information that these projects give to them. These songs are then used in music videos on television, on national and community radio stations, at community events, and in traveling roadshows that broadcast the song through speakers on moving vehicles. Similar approaches use commissioned poetry, theater, and other arts in the same way.

Research has shown that such approaches can lead to increases in disaster risk awareness but that encouraging actual changes in behavior to adopt good practices to reduce disaster risk is a much more complicated process that can be improved with information sharing through social interaction (Becker et. al, 2013; Paton, 2003; Solberg, 2010). These findings are all consistent with frameworks for social and behavioral change communication such as the Protective Action Decision Model (Lindell and Perry, 2012), the socio-cognitive model of disaster preparedness (Paton, 2003), symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969), and Protection Motivation Theory (Birkholz, 2014; Tasantab et. al, 2022). Further studies emphasize the importance of what others in a person's social network think about risks and preparedness in the information that they receive and the actions that they take (Wood et. al, 2011; Bubeck et al., 2013; Lara et al., 2010; Lo, 2013; Van der Linden, 2015).

Another criticism of such traditional media materials is that they are designed to be as simple and straightforward as possible for the broadest audience possible. So they can be misunderstood or ignored by parts of the population whose contexts or conditions are different from what is conveyed in these messages (Save the Children, 2015, Paton, 2003).

Participatory communication approaches provide socially interactive ways for messages to be tailored to address these different contexts and conditions so that people can assess their specific situation and decide how best to implement appropriate good practices (Bier, 2001; Martens et. al, 2009; Terpstra et. al, 2009; Kellens et. al, 2013). But, while participatory communication can have such benefits, it can also be more harmful than helpful. As evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic, the absence of effective guidance or vetting mechanisms on the creation and dissemination of messaging can contribute to misinformation developing and spreading (Clemente-Suarez et. al, 2022). Cognitive biases, emotional responses, and social influence can encourage individuals to share and believe false information while group cohesion and identity can strengthen acceptance of such misinformation within and across community networks. And, as opposed to the songs and other arts commissioned by agencies to convey their exact messages, participatory creation of art for risk reduction with no guidance on the risks and good risk reduction practices potentially leads to potentially vague and misleading messages.

The IPCC accordingly has encouraged using communication approaches that both inform people about the risks and engage stakeholders in identification of solutions that address their specific framings of those risks (IPCC, 2012; Haer et. al, 2016). As traditional top-down media campaigns alone are not enough to effectively encourage local good practices adoption and participatory approaches alone can lead to confused messaging that isn't helpful, they should be combined (Becker et. al, 2013).
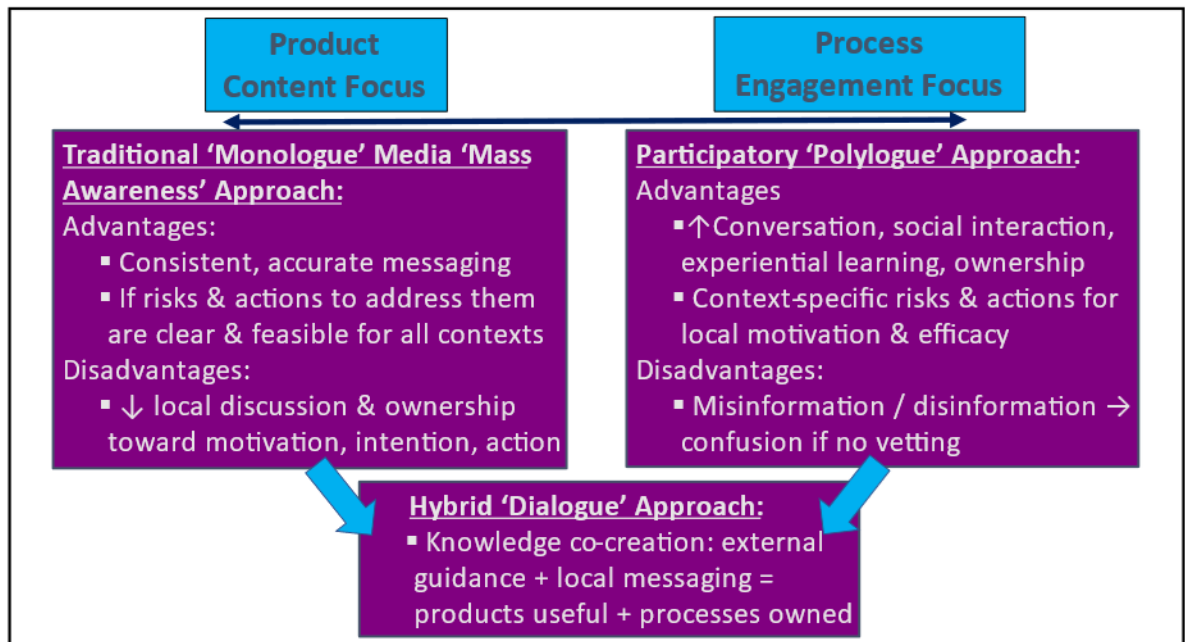
Figure 2: Risk Reduction Good Practices Communication Approaches Comparison

Top-down communication approaches can aim for mass awareness by helping to address gaps in general critical awareness and risk perceptions and to communicate the basic ideas of general risk reduction good practices while participatory communication approaches can aim to encourage people in different contexts to refine these general messages so that they can be discussed and acted upon locally. Hybrid approaches aim to do this by optimally combining guidance from the organizing stakeholders with flexibility for modification to best fit the local context. One example of such a hybrid approach is interactive theater events in which the introduction and opening dialogue among actors frames the messaging according to agreed-upon general good practices but then interactive dialogue and discussion with audience members allows the messaging to be tailored to what will be best understood and most likely to be acted upon locally. Another example is what was done in this project: arts contests in which some form of workshop or other guidance of the relevant risks and types of general good practices to address them is provided to the public who then discuss what would be most helpful in their context and work with local artists to create art pieces that can be used for further discussion thereafter.

3.2 Pre-implementation Partnership Agreements

Planning for the contests commenced shortly after the heavy rains and flooding from Cyclone Idai in March 2019. The concept note and proposal were shared with the Government of Malawi Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) in a meeting in early May 2019. The directors of Tikonzekere initially proposed that:

- The contests would use a hybrid communication approach that encourages people at household and community level to engage in better informed discussion about personally salient risks from floods and cyclones and what good practices they can use to reduce them based on involvement with and exposure to artist-created materials that synthesize guidance from DoDMA approved good practices with their own locally relevant insights

- The contests would focus on Southern Malawi as the region most negatively affected by Cyclone Idai and other recent flooding and cyclone events, with message and art creation guidance workshops held in prioritized hotspot areas of Southern Malawi

- Engagement of people in rural areas will be encouraged through partnership with Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS), YONECO's community radio network, and others working in rural areas and through the call for submissions emphasizing that people with limited resources can enter because entries would be judged on artistic quality but not on production quality (e.g., recordings on phones judged equally with those done in studios)

- Although many other prominent art forms in Malawi were considered, the contest arts categories would be limited to songs, poems, short stories, short videos, and photos because these initial contests should be simple, because each of these can effectively communicate such messages, and because we had established relationships with judges for artistic technical quality for them

- Such judging for each arts category would be across three criteria: the artistic technical quality from the above judges and accuracy of messages on flood and cyclone vulnerability reduction good practices and communication effectiveness by approved specialists by the partners

- Judges will be encouraged to provide feedback to all entrants with selected semi-finalists given the opportunity to use this feedback to develop, improve, and re-submit their entries to help optimize messaging and communication effectiveness of final products

- In addition to media coverage and interviews throughout the processes from beginning to end, there would be well-promoted semi-finals and finals events using the competition as the basis for promotion and discussion of the good practices that would culminate in use of the products in events to commemorate International Day for Disaster Reduction in October

- In addition to cash prizes, profiling in national media, and exposure through showcasing in contest-related events, finalists in each category would receive professional production of their entries according to agreed-upon specifications of contest partners (e.g., printing and framing for photographs; audio and video recording for songs, poems, short stories, and short videos) so that they could be showcased through media outlets, public events, and other means of sharing and using them by partners to promote more effective flood and heavy rains risk reduction discussion, decision-making, and action

- Although the contests would be ideally open to submissions in any language, judging limitations dictate allowing entries only in English and/or Chichewa and funding limitations can dictate whether the audio production for finalists can be done in additional languages beyond these two
- The organizations of the directors of Tikonzekere would cover the costs of their roles for the duration of the project, but funding would be needed to cover the prizes, promotion, and organization for the contests and related events

DoDMA was enthusiastic about this approach to messaging and agreed to partnering in the process of providing input to make the project more effective, in development of the products for dissemination, in helping to engage other partners, and in determination of how to further develop future contests based on lessons learned subject to the following modifications:
- These initial contests need to be for all of Malawi rather than just the Southern Malawi region due to a concern that limiting it to only Southern Malawi is too exclusive and will result in loss of potential key materials and enthusiasm of potential entrants from other parts of the country
- Future contests after this one could be targeted with such a regional focus and possibly with sponsorship of participation of at-risk communities, youth, older people, and areas with less access to information
- Drawing should be added as a separate arts category for those who prefer making and engaging with visual arts other than photography

Referral by DoDMA to UNDP led to submission of a revised proposal that incorporated these changes. UNDP agreed to fund the proposed budget for prizes, promotion, and contest organization of about nine million Malawi Kwacha (~US$12,000 at that time) and to complement DoDMA's aforementioned roles, including. The final partnership arrangements included:
- Directors: Rural Livelihood Risk Management Consulting [RLRMC] (co-director Dr. Bob Alexander), Sustainable Development Initiative [SDI] (co-director Maynard Nyirenda), Society for Education Initiative [SEI] (co-director Paul Sezzie)
- Financial support and overall guidance per above: DoDMA and UNDP
- Message content, contest promotion, and evaluation support partner: MRCS
- Contest promotion and audio recording partner: YONECO
- Contest promotion and video recording partner: Dikamawoko Arts
- Contest promotion partners: Conservation Arts Malawi, Gold Mountain Media, Music Crossroads Academy, Story Ink Africa, Vilipanganga Poetry Movement
- Contest promotion and event hosting partners: Jacaranda Cultural Centre, Kwa Haraba Art Gallery & Café, Malawi University of Science & Technology (MUST)

3.3   Implementation

Disruptions after the May 2019 elections caused initial delays and a much shorter time period for entrants to create and submit entries than had been envisioned. But, given the tight time constraint to complete all that had been agreed, Tikonzekere proceeded with the following implementation milestones (explained in a promotional video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=jzyW052CAGY&t=3s):

- **Media briefing launch:** When much of the election disruption subsided in June, a national media briefing was held to explain key concepts, messages, and processes and to launch the contests nationwide
- **Media Promotion:** Subsequent promotion included print media articles and advertisements, broadcast media appearances by Tikonzere directors, announcements in supermarkets and other strategic locations and events, and print flyers and posters and social media promoted posts with relevant contacts and information
- **Judge Promotion:** Judges for the technical artistic skills component also served as contest promoters through their various social networks. These judges included renowned songwriters and musicians Code Sangala, Wyndham Chechamba, and Waliko Makhala for the song contest, the Vilipanganga Poetry Movement vice president Paul Sezzie for the poetry contest, Story Ink Africa director Ekari Mbvundula for the story contest, renowned filmmakers Shemu Joyah and Taddja Nkhonjera for the short film contest, and director of Art House Africa Elson Kambalu for the drawing/painting contest. The photography contest was originally announced with Sam Banda heading the judging and promotion but was subsequently dropped due to a lack of interest among entrants
- **Guidance Notes:** The limited budget and DoDMA's stipulation that this initial set of contests be nationwide rather than focused on hotspot areas precluded conducting the proposed workshops to optimize top-down and participatory benefits. Instead, a written guidance notes document on appropriate flood vulnerability reduction good practices messaging and how to effectively communicate them through the arts were created by the contest directors in collaboration with DoDMA, UNDP, and MRCS (Annex B). It included simplified key messages on what to do as such good practices excerpted from the DoDMA 2014 Malawi National Disaster Risk Management Communication Strategy, 2013 Disaster Risk Management Handbook, and 2018 Malawi Institute of Education Disaster Risk Management: A Sourcebook for Primary Schools. And it was made available in both English and Chichewa to all potential contest entrants along with the Call for Submissions that explained the technical artistic skill, message content, and communication effectiveness judging criteria, rounds of judging and events, submission rules, and prizes (Annex C). Though limited in their reach to those who could read in these languages and who could access them either online or via printed copies through partner organizations and locations, these guidance notes aimed to achieve the hybrid communication model balance between discouraging misinformation in messaging while encouraging inclusion of accurate elements of messaging that entrants and those with whom they spoke about potential solutions thought were most important in local contexts
- **Submission:** The original 19 July submission deadline in the Call for Submissions was extended until 31 July due to expressed concerns that many people did not hear about the contests in time to discuss and create quality entries. Despite the extension, expressed factors preventing high numbers of submissions included this being the first such contest ever conducted in Malawi, delays in promotion, continued difficulties associated with the election, access difficulties in rural areas, and misunderstandings regarding the technical quality requirements in the short video and song categories. In all, over 100 entries were received. As expected, given the different time and resources needed to produce the different types of arts, the highest number of submissions were in

the poetry and short story categories and the lowest number was in the short video category. And, although there were submissions from all three regions and most districts of the country, the majority of entrants were from either Blantyre or Lilongwe.

- **Screening & Feedback:** Initial screening with equal weights given to scores by the aforementioned technical artistic skills judges, the message content judges (from DoDMA), and the communication effectiveness judges (from UNDP Communications) resulted in feedback given to entrants on what was deemed good or in need of improvement. This aimed to help further reduce spread of misinformation

- **Semi-finals event:** Arrangements were made for selected semi-finalists to perform their entries at a semi-finals event in Blantyre after improving their entries based on the feedback they received. This event and its promotion through media sources were designed to encourage those who did and those who did not attend to get engaged in the good practices messages and further promote discussion of them among their friends and communities

- **Finals event:** The semi-finals event concluded with announcement of three finalists in each arts category who would present their entry again at a finals event held at MUST to further promote the messages and announce the winners. To help promote attendance and interest, popular recording artist Piksy was engaged to also perform, including a song he wrote using the Tikonzekere guidance notes

- **Professional Production:** To encourage productive use of the final messaging products by partners and others in subsequent exhibitions, online, and in disaster preparedness trainings, the key prize for 15 entrants (three finalists from each category) awarded in addition to cash was professional production of the entries: framing for drawings/paintings and professional audio and video recording for songs, poems, stories, and short films (accessible in playlists at www.youtube.com/@tikonzekereartscontest454/playlists)

- **Use of Products:** These final products were presented at the finals event, the 2019 International Day for Disaster Reduction event in Ntaja, and the Lake of Stars Festival and then given to partners at the end of 2019 for their use as they deem most appropriate

4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Theory of Change for the contests in the agreed-upon project proposal stated that the impact on decision-making and behavior change of dialogue created by the processes and products of these contests is not measurable in isolation because of the various other factors that affect people's prioritization for motivation, intention, and action. Accordingly, evaluation focused on ensuring that messages from the contest were accurate, relevant to, and embraced by target audiences through the contests and associated showcasing and dissemination of its products. Lessons learned and recommendations were derived regarding how such processes and products can add value to other risk communication efforts and be replicated and/or upscaled for better messaging and reach in subsequent contests. Evaluation activities began with coordinating with the contests' directors and representatives of the Malawi Red Cross Society what should be asked to derive these lessons learned and recommendations, who should be interviewed as key informants, and where Focus Group Discussions should be done.

4.1 Focus Group Discussion Location Characteristics

These discussions resulted in a decision to balance focus group discussions across locations in three districts heavily impacted by recent flooding and at high risk of future flood impacts with the majority of six groups from rural villages in Chikwawa District balanced by insights from four groups from the urban township of Chilomoni in Blantyre and two groups from a peri-urban village in the Jali area outside Zomba town. A list of the breakdown of the 96 FGD participants across these locations is provided in Annex A.

For Chikwawa, coordination with Malawi Red Cross Society Director of Programmes and Development Prisca Chisala resulted in Chikwawa District Commissioner Nakari Kabowa making arrangements with the Chikwawa DoDMA office to determine the best locations and groups together. To get a representative sample of input across locations most negatively affected by recent cyclones (e.g., Idai, Ana, Freddy) with contextually-appropriate disaggregation by genders, ages, and roles, they arranged one focus group of eight people each with women and young men in Livunzu E.P.A. village in Traditional Authority Makwhira, one focus group each with men and Village Civil Protection Committee members in Medrum village in Traditional Authority Mlilima, and one focus group each with local leaders and young women in Kanseche village in Traditional Authority Lundu.

FGD participants in Chikwawa identified the following regarding how cyclones and floods are stronger and impacting families in this area worse in the past few years than they were before:
- Increased rainfall and floods: heavier rains, higher water levels, and lack of protective trees contribute to severe flooding, impacting crops, livestock, education, and overall well-being
- Overpopulation and land use issues: overpopulation leads to inadequate space for cultivation, resulting in people building near rivers, clearing trees for land and income, and disregarding rules and suggestions meant to protect them
- Deforestation impacts: excessive tree cutting for charcoal and housing has led to soil erosion, collapsed houses, damaged roads, and disrupted education with indirect effects such as crop losses exacerbating problems despite reforestation efforts

- Relocation: forced relocation has resulted from exacerbation of flood impacts due to soil-filled rivers, bare land due to cattle feeding, and areas having been cleared along the river

The Chilomoni township of Blantyre was selected for focus groups because of reports and concerns about increased damages in townships such as Chilomoni in Blantyre from Cyclone Freddy in 2023 and the expressed interest to participate and learn from this type of activity by the leaders of local NGO Dzuka Chilomoni. Dzuka Chilomoni leaders selected four focus groups from Zambia village. This area is at the base of Mount Michiru where significant deforestation and other factors have combined with increased rainfall to result in ever-increasing destruction and damages to homes and other property during periods of heavy rains. To get a representative sample of input, they decided to have three groups of eight people each of mixed men and women and one group of eight women.

FGD participants in Chilomoni identified the following regarding how cyclones and floods are stronger and impacting families in this area worse in the past few years than they were before:
- Impact of deforestation: once-protected areas with trees alongside rivers have been affected – houses collapse, crops and property are lost, and economic activities are disrupted due to heavier rains and a lack of care for trees and grass
- Economic hardship: loss of property, crops, and weak housing contribute to economic hardship – rebuilding is challenging due to the bad economy, resulting in a continuous cycle of misery
- Human loss and displacement: careless tree cutting, weak housing, and heavy rains leads to loss of lives, property, hunger, disrupted education, and constant movement to avoid housing problems
- Post-Cyclone Freddy impact: the aftermath of Cyclone Freddy in 2023 left the community rebuilding hurriedly, facing challenged in constructing strong houses and restoring normalcy

Repo village in Jali, Zomba was selected because of its continued interest in such discussions after five of the videos of finalists' entries from the Tikonzekere Arts Contests were shot there with many villagers participating in the videos. It was originally selected for this because people there have previously received flood preparedness training and have experienced displacement and significant negative impacts from previous floods. The village chief and community engagement officer decided that arranging both focus groups to have a mix of women and men across age groups would be appropriate.

FGD participants in Jali identified the following regarding how cyclones and floods are stronger and impacting families in this area worse in the past few years than they were before:
- Changing Rain Patterns: Shifts in damaged farming and housing, with the inability to afford resources for building strong houses, especially due to high cement prices
- Environmental Degradation: Careless cutting of trees and grasses, coupled with soil degradation, worsens impacts of cyclones in houses, property, and farming while the bad economy hinders recovery efforts

According to these responses, there are some differences across the three districts and types of settlements in perceived causes and impacts of deforestation, reasons for ongoing housing problems, and impacts of economic challenges. But people in all three areas perceive experiencing increased rainfall intensity and flooding leading to various problems like damaged crops, collapsed houses, and disrupted education; increased impacts of deforestation on soil erosion, housing, agriculture, and overall community well-being; and overall loss of lives, property, and displacement.

4.2 Focus Group Discussion and Key Informant Interview Methodology

For both the FGDs and KIIs, a few initial questions were asked to get those answering to feel comfortable and to understand the process. This included fun questions to get them acclimated with using the Likert Scale that was used on many questions:

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

For these questions, the quantitative responses were only used as means to triangulate and encourage the qualitative responses on why they felt a particular way. For the FGDs, this process also served as an engaging way to get everyone involved in the discussion by providing explanations to help guide a selected group member to place a marker on the number upon which they all eventually agreed.

For the focus groups that were determined as described above, an independent facilitator who had not been involved in the contests was trained in the use of these instruments and then translated them and all materials for the FGDs into the Chichewa language and conducted the FGDs with the arranged groups. Key informants were selected based on getting desirable balance between representatives of relevant members of the print and broadcast media, those who were involved or could be involved as potential contributors and influencers in the arts community, and those who were involved or could be involved as potential NGO and national and international agency users of processes and products from such types of disaster risk communication projects among those who were available during the time allotted for the evaluation. Explanations of the contests' objectives and processes and samples of the contests' finalist drawings and videos for songs, poems, stories, and films were provided for both the key informants and the focus groups. A film night during which all of the videos from the contests were shown to everyone also helped to encourage discussion in Jali.

The English versions of the questions for the FGDs and KIIs are provided in Annex D. Through an iterative process with those contributing to developing and refining the questions, the questions sought to gain understanding regarding how those who answered them perceive:

- How cyclones and floods and their impacts are changing (only asked to focus groups in FGD question 3 as described above)

- Relevance of the types of impacts and good practices messages to address them included in the contest guidance notes, entries, and products (only asked to focus groups in FGD question 6)
- Arts as a risk and good practices communication tool (KII questions 1, 2, and 10; FGD questions 1 and 2)
- Arts contests as a risk and good practices communications tool (KII question 5; FGD question 5)
- Effectiveness of promotion of the contests and messages (KII questions 3, 4, 11, and 12; FGD questions 4, 5, and 7)
- Effectiveness of how contests were organized (KII questions 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12; FGD questions 5 and 7)
- Effectiveness of how the contest products were disseminated and used (KII question 7 and FGD question 8)

4.3   Evaluation Constraints and Limitations

- The time and resources available for the evaluation only allowed 30 days inclusive of instrument development, FGD scheduling and field visits, KIIs, and report writing and revision. This prohibited more detailed investigation and analysis of perceptions of the contests with more focus groups in more locations and limited inclusion of key informants to those who were available during the allotted time for these interviews. More time also could have allowed obtaining additional insights from those who entered the contests and those who didn't enter the contests regarding what might encourage more people to do so and how they otherwise could have been promoted and coordinated better
- Since only a limited number of villages and townships were visited, findings of the study cannot be used to make general conclusions about perceptions of such contest processes and products everywhere in the country. The study is sufficient, however, to indicate relative strengths, limitations, and considerations for replication
- Information obtained should be viewed with an understanding of its dependence on perceptions, opinions, memory, and feelings of the respondents. One drawback of the need to wait four years before conducting this evaluation is that some memories of what people remembered from what transpired in the contests themselves may have faded. But most of the questions were deliberately written to minimize this dependency on memory by explaining and showing what was done and focusing on how such processes could be modified for replication. And one unintended result of the four-year wait was the perception of increased urgency for addressing increasingly negative flood impacts
- In a process that required progressive building from one element of the discussion to the next, focus group participation was crucial. All but one of the focus groups were well constructed with enough consistently participating beneficiaries. The one that had a wandering participant and the two with a relative lack of diversity of participants were considered as less indicative in the analysis
- Verbal and written translation provides possibilities for errors in understanding and analysis, especially since some English words and concepts do not have exact Chichewa translations. When possible, triangulation in questioning and approach within and across sources attempted to overcome such problems

5.   FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As described in the methodology section, Likert scales were used for many questions to triangulate responses and encourage qualitative discussion of reasons why they selected that quantitative response. For those questions that employed Likert scales, the following analysis provides the average score and a summary of the rationale provided.

5.1   Relevance and Appropriateness of Arts

To gauge the relevance and appropriateness of using arts to communicate and encourage household and community level adoption of good practices to reduce vulnerability in Malawi, key informants and focus group participants were asked to recall examples of different art forms being used to communicate social and behavior change messages. Key informants were then asked whether arts can be used to effectively communicate risks and good practices and get people to take appropriate action at the household and community level generally in Malawi while focus group participants were asked whether such uses could be effective for doing so in the areas where they live.

Likert score summary:

Key informants average	4.9375	All 'strongly agree' except 1 'agree'
FGDs Rural (Chikwawa)	4.917	All 'strongly agree' except 1 split between 'agree' & 'strongly agree'
FGDs Urban (Chilomoni)	5	All 'strongly agree'
FGDs Peri-urban (Jali)	5	All 'strongly agree'

The reasons key informants gave for overwhelmingly agreeing were:
- Ease of communication: Arts, including drama, videos, and music, are considered the easiest platforms for communication - adding beats, drums, or instruments in the background attracts people, making messages more engaging and encouraging conversations
- Historical use: Malawi has a history of using arts for behavior change messaging – music, drama, radio plays, and even posters in hospitals have played roles in communicating social causes - however, traditional approaches like radio jingles and dramas have become less effective due to oversaturation, leading to desensitization among the audience
- Cultural relevance and grassroots understanding: Effectiveness depends on whether the arts resonate with the grassroots level in terms of language and cultural context - avoiding a patronizing tone and tailoring messages to the preferences of different communities are keys to success
- Simplification of complex messages: Arts simplify complex messages and make them interactive and exciting - the success of using arts in HIV/AIDS campaigns in Malawi was cited as an example of impactful communication
- Expression and identify: Arts allow people to express themselves freely, and different age groups appreciate various forms of art - understanding the identity and preferences of each community is crucial for effective messaging
- Attraction and entertainment: Arts attract people more effectively than traditional messages - entertainment value ensures that people are both entertained and informed, enhancing message retention

- Linguistic accessibility: Arts are effective because they communicate directly to people in their local language - given the high illiteracy rate, using arts, especially in local languages and through music, ensures better understanding and retention of messages
- Preferences and humor: People have diverse preferences, but they are universally drawn to messages that provide humor or convey things in a lighter manner – so, using arts in various formats increases the chances of reaching a broader audience
- Versatility: Arts provide versatility by allowing for both quick direct messaging and slow planned messaging
- Adaptation to current media consumption trends: People in Malawi listen to radio as an information and entertainment source - community radio has proven to be an especially effective platform for ensuring widespread awareness through arts such as songs, poems, and radio plays in villages where people listen throughout the day
- Catchiness for memory retention: Arts can contribute to better community engagement when they have catchy elements such as in songs or poems - catchy melodies can be a powerful tool for teaching and memory retention and can ensure that messages are played widely in various settings.
- Engaging the younger population: Given the youthful demographic in Malawi, engaging the youth through arts is crucial - if the youth are involved, the messages can easily spread to the entire population
- Realistic depiction in arts/drama: Realistic portrayal of situations or habits in arts and drama enhances the effectiveness of messages toward people easily correcting problematic behaviors

Overall, the focus group participants in all locations overwhelmingly agreed that the cultural and linguistic relevance of arts, especially through community radio, make them very important for spreading messages and facilitating community discussions about topics such as understanding and preparedness for floods and cyclones. Specific insights from the three locations included:

Chikwawa (rural):
- Communication medium: Emphasis on the effectiveness of arts events, radio, dramas, and dances in spreading messages quickly
- Preparedness and decision-making: The arts contribute to people's preparedness and good decisions by providing information in advance such as in tree planting and building check dams
- Learning through arts: People learn and follow practices through arts examples, such as building strong houses and preparing for disasters like floods and cyclones
- Language and local relevance: Arts allow communication in the local language, making it more accessible and shareable within the community

Chilomoni (urban):
- Community interaction: Arts facilitate community discussions in a way that fosters communal advice and learning
- Learning from experience: Arts can help people to understand, prepare, and mitigate damages from future events by reflecting on the impacts of recent events

• Roles of audio and video: Radio is crucial for conveying messages, and TV and short videos can provide visual information for the messages that aids in understanding and preparation

Jali (peri-urban):

• Provides helpful information: Arts provide easily accessible practical information for daily life such as maintaining hygiene and for being prepared and reducing problems like cholera and floods

• Applied use of diverse art forms: using diverse forms of arts such as songs, dramas, and drawings can aid in understanding and preparedness, such as how health advisors have used dramas for advising on health-related issues

5.2 Relevance and Appropriateness of Such Arts Contests for Risk and Good Practices Communication

To assess the relevance and appropriateness of specifically using this type of arts contests to communicate and encourage household and community level adoption of good practices to reduce vulnerability in Malawi, key informants and focus groups received explanations of the processes and messages involved in the Tikonzekere Arts Contests and saw examples of finalists' drawings and clips of song, poem, story, and film videos and then were asked to answer through Likert scale response discussion whether such types of arts contests could be effective at the local level in Malawi.

Likert score summary:

Key informants average	4.5625	All 'strongly agree' except 3 'agree' & 2 'neither agree nor disagree' (explained below)
FGDs Rural (Chikwawa)	4.5833	All 'strongly agree' except 1 split between 'strongly agree' & 'agree' and 1 'neither agree nor disagree' (explained below)
FGDs Urban (Chilomoni)	5	All 'strongly agree'
FGDs Peri-urban (Jali)	5	All 'strongly agree'

Relevant themes among the reasons key informants gave for their responses were:
• Community engagement and conversation: Strong agreement that arts contests effectively engage communities through an original and effective approach for social mobilization, encouraging dialogue and making individuals feel part of the process - contest participation fosters discussions about disaster preparedness, with community members actively involved in spreading messages
• Excitement: Strong agreement that the contests generate excitement, especially among students and audiences who find traditional communication methods boring
• Addressing information gaps: Arts contests effectively address information gaps on disaster preparedness
• Competitive nature enhances interest: Strong agreement that the competitive nature of arts contests makes disaster preparedness messaging more interesting - the contests provide an engaging platform that combines entertainment with developmental concepts, potentially leading to a cultural shift and positive change

- Effective communication channels: Strong agreement that contests, through mediums like music, effectively communicate disaster preparedness messages, reaching audiences through accessible and entertaining means. The contests serve as platforms for participants to delve deeper into the subject, facilitating knowledge sharing.
- Suitability: the type of issue and target audience should determine the suitability of arts contests
- Reasons for 'neither agree nor disagree' responses:
  - Real world impacts have yet to be seen - such contests have potential impact but the effectiveness of such contests in reducing the impact of disasters is seen as contingent on the actual behavioral changes occurring within communities
  - Similar contests in the country focus on personal benefits for winners rather than wider messaging impact
  - Recommendation for a continuation or expansion of efforts and collaboration with influencers for a more significant impact

These KII responses collectively underscore the potential of arts contests in disaster preparedness messaging, with a call for ongoing engagement, inclusivity, and strategic enhancements to maximize impact and community involvement.

Overall, the focus group participants in all locations strongly agreed that such types of arts contests can be helpful in communicating messages, facilitating understanding, and encouraging preparedness while emphasizing that community engagement, involvement of community leaders, and utilization of local events would help toward effective communication. Specific insights from the three locations included:

Chikwawa (rural):
- Effectiveness: Such contests can be helpful toward getting people to discuss solutions to address locally relevant problems like protecting soil and using chlorine
- Community engagement: To attract more people from this location to participate, better engage community radio stations, organize events in these communities, and involve some famous artists who will attract people to pay attention
- Challenges: The one concern expressed by one of the groups in Chikwawa was related to potential challenges for blind and deaf individuals to be able to access information through certain arts – but this was determined to be potentially overcome by utilizing a diversity of arts forms and communication methods

Chilomoni (urban):
- Effectiveness: Consistent strong agreement that such contests can be helpful in conveying important messages and encouraging preparedness, especially with
- Suggestions: Promotion of messages and contests needs to be increased and done locally to maximize their impact, including involvement of local chiefs

Jali (peri-urban):
- Effectiveness: Consistent strong agreement that the processes of such contests and arts help in learning and understanding preparedness measures and that the songs and other

art products that result from them can be used to broadcast and then spread messages to neighbors effectively

- Challenges: Some of the messages might be difficult for some people to embrace due to economic challenges at the time that they see or hear them (e.g., lack of money to buy items like rolls of plastic for emergency shelter)

5.3 Relevance and Appropriateness of Messages Included in Contests Guidance Notes, Entries, and Products

To assess whether what was included in the messages was relevant and appropriate, the objective was to determine how adversely affected and at-risk people felt about the flood impacts and flood vulnerability reduction good practices messages upon which the contests focused. So, this question was only asked to focus group participants.

Likert score summary for the flood impacts included:

FGDs Rural (Chikwawa)	4.917	All 'strongly agree' except 1 split between 'strongly agree' & 'agree'
FGDs Urban (Chilomoni)	4.875	All 'strongly agree' except 1 split between 'strongly agree' & 'agree'
FGDs Peri-urban (Jali)	5	All 'strongly agree'

Likert score summary for the flood vulnerability reduction good practices messages included:

FGDs Rural (Chikwawa)	4.833	All 'strongly agree' except 1 'agree'
FGDs Urban (Chilomoni)	4.5	All 'strongly agree' except 1 'neither agree nor disagree' (explained below)
FGDs Peri-urban (Jali)	5	All 'strongly agree'

Overall, participants from the three locations expressed strong agreement on the correctness and relevance of the mentioned impacts and the importance of discussing such negative impacts for education, understanding, collective problem-solving, and preparedness for potential challenges. They likewise all expressed strong agreement on the included messages being locally relevant, accurate, and important for discussion, group decision-making, and spreading to others facing similar challenges. Groups in all three locations mentioned challenges in implementing some of these good practices (e.g., Chikwawa groups lacking trees, plastic sheets, and food; Chilomoni groups lacking money for cement and lacking land due to overpopulation). Specific insights from each of the three locations include:

Chikwawa (rural):
- Impact appropriateness and relevance locally: Strong agreement that the negative impacts discussed are those currently and recently faced in the community, that such problems are worsening each year, and that discussing these impacts helps community members to be more aware and helps them and the Village Civil Protection Committee (VCPC) to develop preventive measures and reduce problems
- Message appropriateness and relevance locally: Strong agreement that all the messages provided in the contests are accurate, worth considering and adopting, and engaging for people locally and that following their guidance on actions to take can

contribute to reducing negative flood impacts – they did not suggest any messages to be added

- Specific messages noted: tree planting, building stronger houses, hygiene and measures to prevent water-borne diseases, addressing issues related to land use, and responding to warning and evacuation messages
- Challenges: Although there are challenges for implementing some of the actions in these messages (e.g., lack of trees, plastic sheets for houses, and food), they want to discuss them and determine what can be done locally

Chilomoni (urban):
- Impact appropriateness and relevance locally: Strong agreement that the mentioned impacts are correct and worth discussing in groups to help people understand them, prepare, and protect themselves and mentioned that reducing such flood losses is important because replacing what's lost is now especially difficult due to the bad economy
- Message appropriateness and relevance locally: Consistent strong agreement that the discussed messages are accurate, help spread ideas, enable people to assess the safety of their surroundings, and are worth discussing in groups to decide on locally appropriate and feasible actions
- Specific messages noted: moving to upland areas, planting fruit and other trees, sustainable tree cutting practices, building stronger houses, and not farming along the river in ways that lead to loss of crops and cattle
- Suggested additions: Messages for getting weather advisories from people in upland areas and monitoring weather conditions before sand extraction
- Challenges: While the contests were seen as encouraging communities to discuss and determine how to implement what can be most helpful depending on their specific challenges and needs, one group in Chilomoni remained concerned enough about challenges like unaffordability of cement, limited land due to overpopulation, and economic constraints on protecting the environment to neither agree nor disagree with the statement that the messages are accurate and worth discussing

Jali (peri-urban):
- Impact appropriateness and relevance locally: Strong agreement that the mentioned impacts are locally accurate and that discussing them is crucial for collectively determining solutions to reduce negative consequences
- Message appropriateness and relevance locally: Strong agreement that all mentioned messages are locally accurate and valuable for future preparation
- Specific messages noted: keeping emergency resources and implementing drainage systems
- Challenges: as people tend to forget messages, they suggested continuous reminders through organized clubs, gatherings, and groups to reinforce these messages

5.4 Effectiveness of Contests Promotion

To assess whether the promotion of the contests were able to reach target audiences and determine how to better do such promotion if similar such contests are to be replicated, a separate Likert score question wasn't asked. Instead, key informants and focus group

members were asked whether they had heard about the contests and what they thought could have been done to better promote them. Additional insights were gleaned from responses to questions pertaining to how these contests could have been more effective and how any future such contests should be conducted.

Of 16 key informants, 13 said that they knew about the contests at the time they were conducted, 1 said that he only had vague knowledge about the events at that time from partner organizations, and two from Chikwawa said that they had not heard about the contests at all. All of those who mentioned knowing about them said that they heard about them through word-of-mouth from people they knew, but some also mentioned having heard about them through radio, television, newspaper ads and articles, social media, printed posters, and the exhibition booth at the International Day for Disaster Reduction event.

Themes of suggestions from key informants regarding promotion effectiveness included:
• Community engagement and reach to address how the contests only reached certain segments of the population (e.g., those with access to radios and literacy):
  - Target groups should be specified with target disaster-prone area communities, schools, and colleges and their local government officials becoming active participants in the promotion of the contests to maximize their reach and impact
  - Take advantage of contests generating excitement, especially among students and audiences who find traditional communication methods boring, by customizing messages and involving local artists to maximize engagement and enhance the relatability of messages, fostering a stronger sense of attachment and motivation to act within local communities
  - Consider decentralizing contests by district, allowing different messages and problems to be discussed in different areas
  - Consider improving social mobilization by focusing more on accountability, transparency, and improvements in communities rather than on monetary prizes
• Time constraints and engaging stakeholders:
  - Tight schedules were perceived to hinder effective promotion
  - Targeting youth was good
  - More time should be scheduled to allow wider coverage and directly engaging communities, schools, colleges, and churches with possible educational components such as school competitions to reach a broader audience
  - Engage media owners to ensure adequate profiling and build anticipation through effective communication
  - Consider six months of advertising across various platforms and exploration of different arts genres for promotion
• Media promotion:
  - As it can effectively promote contests and reach local audiences who may be less accessible by other means, emphasize the importance of community radio particularly in rural areas where people actively listen
  - Create more mass awareness through platforms like radio, TV, and newspapers to complement other efforts to reach a broader audience
• National technical committees: Partnership and awareness should be channeled through national technical committees on Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate

Change Adaptation (CCA) to promote initiatives at a broader level - ensure that the committees connect people and garner support for the contests for widespread impact

- Strategic partner selection: Develop a strategy involving credible and trusted partners with influence and existing constituencies, including the Ministry of Arts and Culture and various associations and groups related to music, theatre, and poetry –
- Tailor communication channels to different areas and groups:
  - Understand how different groups (e.g., youth) consume information in different areas
  - Social media is effective even in rural areas and especially among the youth
  - In urban areas, prioritize sharing through statuses and shared posts on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to exponentially increase reach
  - In rural areas, also leverage community leaders, schools, and the education system
  - Utilize a variety of channels including regular and community radio to reach diverse audiences
- Considerations for different categories of artists:
  - Consider categorizing participants with separate contest categories for professionals and amateurs and for groups such as schools and community groups, providing different types of coaching and capacity building as appropriate
  - Consider directly involving artists in the communities in which they live to develop art based on interactions with the community as conduits for fostering a collaborative and participatory process
- Information dissemination:
  - A good job was done ensuring that contestants communicate from an informed perspective, but improve information dissemination to get more participation and message spread
  - Ensure clarity about content submission methods and make them accessible and affordable to encourage widespread participation
- Inclusivity through various arts categories: Continue to incorporate diverse categories of arts to attract a broad range of participants, thereby contributing to the effective dissemination of disaster preparedness messages

In the focus groups, very few focus group participants had heard of the contests at the time they were being conducted: only 4 of 48 in Chikwawa (all through community radio or TVET radio), none in Chilomoni, and none in Jali prior to commencement of the videos being shot there after the contests had concluded. In all three locations, focus groups stressed the importance of using a diverse mix of promotional activities to engage local communities such as through radio to reach a wide audience, community gatherings and events, involvement of local representatives, and meetings with chiefs and community leaders who can spread messages and encourage community discussions.

Specific themes suggested by focus groups from the different locations for promotion to optimize community engagement and involvement included:

Chikwawa (rural):
- As these areas are remote with limited access to the internet, TV, and radio, engage and involve the community, especially the youth, through diverse promotion methods

- Traditional media should focus on community radio but can involve the telecommunications networks and can also use social media for some youth
- Involve local artists and contest participants in events and encourage their participation in the contests
- In communities, use megaphones (especially in marketplaces), meetings with chiefs, local posters and road signs, and door-to-door campaigns with community volunteers
- Can also host gatherings and events featuring songs, other arts, and debates followed by entertaining games at places like football matches
- Promotion to youth was especially appreciated with hope that involvement of youth and their parents in such contests could contribute to better understanding and communication of helpful messages and reduction of youth-related challenges related to evacuation such as missed school and early marriages

Chilomoni (urban):
- Use radio due to its wide reach and encourage those reached through radio and TV to spread the message to others without such access
- Engage community leaders like chiefs, counselors, representatives, and nurses to promote contests and encourage community discussion and involvement through local gatherings and events, broadcasts through car-mounted speakers, and megaphones
- Create groups to disseminate messages through songs, theater, and drama presentations in different communities

Jali (peri-urban):
- Share via media using radio, newspapers, and videos and by posting in locations such as churches, hospitals, and schools
- Involve hospitals and disaster risk management committees
- Do community engagement with door-to-door campaigns, car-mounted speaker broadcasts, gatherings to show videos and discuss, and involving the chiefs to share information with the community
- Distribute information through schools via the primary education advisor
- Form groups or clubs to discuss, create, and spread messages

5.5   Effectiveness of Contests Organization

To assess whether what was done in the processes of the contests encouraged target audiences to discuss and consider the messages and determine how to better organize such messaging if similar such contests are to be replicated, questions for focus groups were designed to elicit the previous responses regarding local appropriateness of the messages and such contests and how to promote future contests there. As such, all responses regarding effectiveness of organization of the contests came from three questions asked only to key informants.

Likert score summary for KIIs on whether contests were organized well to meet objectives:

Key informants average	3.8125	12 agree (10 'agree', 2 'strongly agree'), 3 'neither agree nor disagree', 1 'disagree'

Respondents generally thought that the contests were organized well but could have been improved with sustained community engagement and targeted approaches, especially in disaster-prone areas, based on the unique needs of different regions and communities through increased funding and time available for the contests. Additional themes that complemented these ideas were:

- Research, guidelines, and judging:
  - The contests were commended for the systematic approach combining good research, relevant guidelines and messages, clear rules and deadlines, and judging panels with expertise in their respective fields and clear rubrics for judging resulted in well-articulated entries and effective judgment
  - Specific appreciation was given for addressing often overlooked psychological and cultural aspects of disaster risk management
- Cross-sectoral collaboration and stakeholder involvement:
  - Engagement of DoDMA, UNDP, MRCS, MUST, and other intellectuals and experts from different fields toward creation of the suggested messages and guidance notes, judging, feedback, and overall implementation was seen as significantly positive and worth building upon
  - Involvement of national authorities was good, but information dissemination would be more effective if done through events and other methods of sharing at the district and local levels
  - Beyond the organizing committee for these contests that was commended, suggestions were made to have a broader committee with more stakeholders to ensure collective ownership from senior officials and heads of humanitarian organizations toward easier funding and overall success
- Diverse art forms:
  - Allowing for songs, poems, stories, films, and drawings/paintings provided a rich and varied portrayal of messages and should be continued
  - Consider adding theater and action dances and possibly challenges to integrate actions in them related to the messages
- Empowerment and inclusivity:
  - Encouraging creative engagement and collaborative thinking and discussion rather than simply conveying information was appreciated and should be continued to further include people and empower them in the processes of creating art for communication and discussion
  - Utilizing arts contests was commended for inclusively encouraging participation of students, illiterate people, and people with disabilities
  - Blending encouragement of discussion by participants with their communities and networks with media engagement leading up to events facilitated collective involvement through engagement and discussions among people with different perspectives should be continued and enhanced
  - This could be improved through using a more targeted approach, engaging influential people in communities, utilizing more innovative social media and other engagement techniques, and incorporating people's experiences with recent events like Cyclone Freddy (e.g., making the messages more relatable through speeches and human interest stories from affected individuals and vulnerable communities)

- Artist motivation and reach:
  - The contests' validation and empowerment of individuals with raw talent to become champions and agents of change in disaster communication was commended
  - Motivation for artists was good but more artists and people could be reached through a bigger budget, involving communities directly and especially those in hotspot areas, and organizing contests over an extended period
- Community engagement: One over-arching concern was the lack of targeting of at-risk communities who could most benefit from this messaging. Workshops were recommended for engaging people in such communities in determining messages that were appropriate for their contexts and conditions and generating enthusiasm for spreading these messages and potentially implementing related measures. Observations were made that the FGDs and film showings that were done as part of the evaluation may have worked better for communicating messages at local levels than the contests themselves. This engagement and reinforcement through workshops and gatherings should be considered regarding how to use these processes and products in the future
- Organize toward desired impacts: Some of those who responded 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'disagree' mentioned the initiative's helpful potential but recommended determination of target groups, more stakeholder involvement and community engagement, more airtime in radio and TV broadcasts, streaming events for wider accessibility, and reinforcement of messages by repeating the initiative regularly to achieve better impacts of processes and products

This last point was addressed through discussion of whether contests should be done as a recurring set of processes and events rather than only doing it one time. Per the following Likert score summary, respondents strongly advocated for the recurrence of such arts contests, underscoring the importance of sustained efforts, consistency, and varied approaches to continually engage communities in disaster preparedness due to belief that repetition of the contests would contribute to long-term behavior change and increased disaster resilience.

Likert score summary:

Key informants average	4.9375	All 'strongly agree' except 1 'agree'

Key concerns mentioned were:
- 'Mphini yobwereza kuwala' (the more you dig the line for the tattoo, the deeper it gets'):
  - As change in community mindset is gradual and requires ongoing efforts, initiatives such as these contests should recur consistently and annually
  - Repetition of consistent messages is essential for actions to be learned in ways that become new habits, so contests should be combined with regular training such as conducting evacuation simulations like how fire drills are done
  - Such annual recurring contests with proper funding, message dissemination, and feedback on how to improve messaging should be more effective than a single call for message development, sharpening local skills, and creating champions of disaster risk reduction good practices over time

- The increased frequency and severity of cyclones necessitates frequent recurrent messaging for effective vulnerability reduction
- Build on previous contests:
  - Ensure that contests evolve based on experiences, feedback, and lessons learned
  - Create case studies and showcase success stories to ensure enthusiasm for continued involvement and improvement in subsequent contests while motivating participants who didn't win to continue their efforts
- Timing:
  - Align contests and related message sharing with seasonal needs such as with more frequent messaging before the rainy season
  - Engage people both before and after disasters to both encourage preparedness and provide a positive means of venting and communication during recovery
  - Use recurring contests with different messages on what's needed for disaster risk reduction at different times to align with when such actions will be needed
  - Different contests with different messages could be conducted twice a year or quarterly for emphasis on the messages important at different times of the year
- Diversify approaches:
  - Explore different models for community engagement and active participation based on lessons learned to ensure that contests remain dynamic and engaging
  - Introduce different themes each year to keep participants active, engaged, and looking forward to submitting and discussing ideas each year

Such responses about how to optimize repetition of messages so that they would be retained and implemented continued when key informants were asked to comment on whether they thought that any future such contests should be organized as separate communication interventions like this one was conducted rather than as an integrated part of disaster preparedness trainings for community groups and schools. Opinions varied with some emphasizing the benefits of focusing on contextualization of contests run separately while others stressed the importance of integration into established training programs for a more comprehensive and impactful approach. Key considerations included resource constraints, habit formation, and the need for diverse and connected communication strategies.

Likert score summary:

Key informants average	2.0625	10 disagree (6 strongly, 4 disagree); only 1 'agree'; 5 'neither agree nor disagree'

Common themes that 'agree' in favor of keeping contests separate were:
- Unbiased messaging: Contests that are conducted independently of specific programs might have less biased messaging

Common themes that 'disagree' in favor of integrating contests into disaster preparedness training were:
- Habit formation and reinforcement: Integration into disaster preparedness training could be more effective for repetition and lasting impact than standalone contests at the community level

- Resource constraints: Organizing contests separately may be more resource-intensive and unsustainable than integrating them into disaster preparedness training programs that can facilitate resource mobilization to ensure a reach to cover necessary information comprehensively, integrate the messages and entries from artists into new training materials, and allow the contests to contribute to continuous choices in building resilience
- Integrated communication approaches: Incorporating messages and communication of such contests into an integrated disaster preparedness training approach can help avoid siloed approaches with discrete interventions and potentially contradictory or confusing messages, can enhance communication skills among participants for addressing risks effectively, and can ensure a match between messages and training toward eventual behavioral change
- Contextualization: By connecting the contests to disaster preparedness training, the process could become complicated but doing so could better allow for catering to the unique characteristics of different communities and for using the contest processes and materials to focus on specific preparedness good practices that could be most useful in those communities

Common themes among those that 'neither agree nor disagree' and focus on flexibility in considering both:
- Type of disaster: Either or both approaches could work for the types of disasters that are already covered in disaster preparedness training such as cyclones and floods
- Community need: They should be organized according to the specifics of what is most needed by target communities and in ways that avoid information overload and confusion for participants
- Focus on the objective: The key factor is the effectiveness of the plan for getting messages discussed by the people

5.6   Effectiveness of Utilization of Contests Prizes as Products

To assess whether the communication products created by the project have been utilized in ways to best spread appropriate messages to target audiences and determine how to better utilize existing products and any future such products if similar such contests are to be replicated, the Likert scale statement given to evaluate used of produced materials from the contests was worded a bit differently for the key informants than for the focus groups. Key informants were asked to comment on whether they generally thought the products from these contests could be used in preparedness trainings for communities/households, public events/fairs, schools, community gatherings, or other venues or via the media for discussing appropriate actions to reduce cyclone and flood impacts. Focus groups were asked to comment on whether people specifically where they live would be interested to see the images or videos or hear the recordings that were created in these contests through such events or broadcasts and would be encouraged by them to discuss appropriate actions to reduce cyclone and flood impacts.

Likert score summary:

Key informant average	4.9375	All 'strongly agree' except 1 'agree'
FGDs Rural (Chikwawa)	4.8333	All 'strongly agree' except 1 'agree'
FGDs Urban (Chilomoni)	5	All 'strongly agree'
FGDs Peri-urban (Jali)	5	All 'strongly agree'

Themes that emerged from key informant responses were:

- Relevance and value: These products and the messages in them remain relevant and valuable assets for awareness creation and discussions on disaster risk reduction good practices through use by partners, communities, and private sector organizations involved in disaster management and should be accessible and available to them so that their messages can effectively reach communities whether by communities themselves or in trainings
- Media outreach: Videos, audio recordings, written materials, and visual art pieces from the contests can be effectively disseminated through various media channels, including incorporating them into community radio, radio, TV, and social media spots and programs
- Community engagement strategies: Products can be used effectively in community events and gatherings, driven by tailored research on the community's existing structures and preferences and engagement of local authorities, DoDMA, UNDP, MRCS, DCCMS, NGOs, civil society organizations, community-based organizations, religious institutions, and other partners, especially in flood-prone areas
- Use in trainings: Materials can be used for training in schools, churches, markets, and community gatherings with emphasis on promoting discussions, using songs, poems, stories, drawings, and videos to convey messages effectively such as through use as icebreakers or as prompts to enhance understanding and engagement and to elicit community and civil protection committee responses to them
- Application in events: Collaboration with government departments and contests partners should enable widespread promotion in conferences and events such as loss and damage symposiums, clean/renewable energy campaigns, and community gatherings
- Integration into education: The products can be used in schools both in the curriculum and as awareness tools such as by mainstreaming the materials, repackaging them for schools, and creating child-friendly content from them for younger age groups
- Post Cyclone Freddy highlighted needs: Communication challenges during the cyclone showed the need for communities to already possess information about disaster preparedness before events happen, so materials such as these should be made accessible to everyone with local authorities involved in their distribution
- Engagement of artists for outreach:
  - Together with showcasing the physical audio and visual products from the contests in events addressing such topics as disaster preparedness, psychosocial issues, and environmental management, artists themselves should be involved in these activities to help increase engagement and spread of the messages
  - Contest finalists should be empowered to be agents of change beyond the contests and be engaged in a sustained effort to spread messages such as through collaborating with social media influencers for broader reach
- Customization: Consider customizing the various products to best fit how they can be used for many different settings and channels, including creating documentaries about the processes that can raise awareness about good practices through media dissemination

All three focus group locations highlighted how visual elements like videos, drawings, and posters are important for effective communication; the importance of involving local leaders such as chiefs in organizing events and sharing materials with communities; and the potential roles of schools and churches as venues for posting materials, showing videos, and

organizing events for spreading messages. Specific suggested dissemination and sharing methods by focus groups from the different locations were:

Chikwawa (rural):
- Sharing: Use community radio, theater presentations, community megaphones, and tandem events with football games
- Dissemination: Various settings can include schools, churches, hospitals, community gatherings, door-to-door campaigns, and social media platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook
- Training: Materials can be combined with assistance and training on how to implement the suggested actions

Chilomoni (urban):
- Sharing: Show videos on TV and place posters made from drawings in various public places
- Dissemination:
  - Hold gatherings with dramas from stories, videos, poems, songs, and visual arts to spread the messages and then regular visits with people to remind them
  - Involve ministries, churches, and schools
  - Organize events to share materials in schools and funeral ceremonies

Jali (peri-urban):
- Sharing: Use videos, songs, poems, and drawings to visually communicate and promote understanding
- Dissemination:
  - Display posters made from drawings in schools, churches, and public spaces
  - Involve chiefs in organizing events and sharing materials with people through schools, churches, focus group discussions, and video nights

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Relevance and Appropriateness of Arts

The results and discussion underline the importance of employing arts as a strategic tool for effective communication and community engagement in Malawi, particularly in contexts related to encouraging good practices for vulnerability reduction and disaster preparedness. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- **High Effectiveness of Arts:** The overwhelming consensus among key informants and focus group participants indicates that arts are a highly effective medium for communicating social and behavior change messages at both household and community levels in Malawi

- **Cultural and Linguistic Relevance:** The success of arts-based communication is strongly tied to cultural relevance and the use of local languages, enhancing understanding and retention of important messages

- **Engagement Through Entertainment:** Arts attract audiences more effectively than traditional communication methods, as their entertaining nature helps to engage and retain the attention of community members, thereby improving message impact

- **Historical Context:** The historical use of arts in Malawi for behavior change has laid a foundation for their continued effectiveness, although oversaturation of certain formats necessitates innovation and adaptation

- **Simplification of Complex Messages:** Arts are adept at simplifying complex information, making it more accessible and engaging for diverse audiences, which is crucial for topics related to disaster preparedness and health practices

- **Community Participation and Interaction:** Arts facilitate community discussions and interactions, fostering a sense of collective learning and shared experience that strengthens communal bonds

- **Youth Engagement is Crucial:** Engaging younger populations through arts is essential, as their involvement can help disseminate messages throughout the community, leveraging their influence

- **Adaptation to Media Trends:** The integration of arts with current media consumption trends, particularly through community radio and visual platforms, enhances the dissemination and retention of messages

- **Diverse Art Forms Enhance Understanding:** Utilizing a variety of art forms such as songs, poems, stories, films/dramas, and visual arts allows for broader outreach and the ability to address different learning styles within the community

- **Realistic Representation:** The use of realistic scenarios in arts helps people identify and rectify problematic behaviors, making the messages more relatable and actionable

6.2 Relevance and Appropriateness of Such Arts Contests for Risk and Good Practices Communication

The results and discussion emphasize the potential of arts contests as innovative tools for effective communication and community engagement in promoting disaster preparedness in Malawi, while also identifying areas for improvement and further development. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- **High Potential for Community Engagement:** Arts contests are seen as effective tools for engaging communities and fostering dialogue on disaster preparedness, encouraging active participation and ownership of the messages

- Excitement and Interest Generation: The contests generate excitement, particularly among youth, making them a compelling alternative to traditional communication methods, which are often perceived as boring
- Addressing Information Gaps: These contests successfully address existing gaps in knowledge regarding disaster preparedness, making complex information more accessible and relatable
- Competitive Nature Enhances Engagement: The competitive aspect of arts contests increases interest in disaster preparedness messages, blending entertainment with education and potentially fostering cultural shifts toward positive behavioral changes
- Effective Communication Channels: Arts contests utilize various mediums, such as written, audio, and visual arts, to effectively communicate important messages, facilitating deeper understanding and knowledge sharing within communities
- Contextual Suitability: The relevance of arts contests is contingent upon the specific issues being addressed and the target audience, necessitating careful consideration in their design and implementation
- Need for Demonstrated Impact: While there is enthusiasm for arts contests, concerns remain about their real-world impact on behavior change, suggesting a need for ongoing evaluation and adaptation of strategies
- Inclusivity in Participation: Using diverse art forms and communication methods can help overcome barriers to participation to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities
- Localized Promotion and Involvement: Successful implementation requires local promotion of contests and messages, involving community leaders and utilizing local events to maximize reach and impact
- Economic Challenges: Some participants may struggle to embrace preparedness messages due to economic constraints, highlighting the importance of tailoring messages to consider the socio-economic realities of communities

6.3   Relevance and Appropriateness of Messages Included in Contests Guidance Notes, Entries, and Products

The results and discussion reflect strong agreement with the relevance and appropriate of the contest messages while also highlighting areas for improvement and the importance of local context in implementing effective flood preparedness practices. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- High Relevance of Flood Impact Messages: Focus group participants across all locations strongly agreed that the flood impacts discussed were relevant and accurately reflected the experiences of their communities
- Importance of Discussion for Awareness: Engaging in discussions about negative flood impacts is viewed as essential for education, collective problem-solving, and preparedness, helping communities to become more aware of their vulnerabilities
- Local Appropriateness of Good Practices:
  - Participants recognized the relevance and accuracy of the contest messages about flood vulnerability reduction practices, seeing them as critical for group decision-making and local action
  - The messages about good practices were considered engaging and worthy of adoption, with participants not suggesting additional messages in some areas

- Urban groups proposed the inclusion of additional messages related to getting weather advisories from people in upland areas and monitoring weather conditions before sand extraction
- Rural participants tended to focus more on environmental practices that could be implemented immediately while urban participants tended to focus more on adaptability in strategies due to population pressures
- Each location identified specific local challenges, such as resource shortages and economic constraints, that impact the ability to implement recommended practices, highlighting the need for discussion of context-specific adaptable and affordable solutions

- **Collective Decision-Making Value:** The emphasis on group discussions of context-specific solutions underscores the importance of collaborative approaches in addressing flood vulnerability and implementing effective practices

- **Need for Continuous Engagement:** Suggestions for continuous reminders and discussions about the messages indicate that participants feel reinforcement is necessary to ensure retention and action on the information provided

6.4   Effectiveness of Contests Promotion

The results and discussion highlight the need for strategic and multifaceted promotional approaches to ensure that contests effectively reach and engage target audiences, particularly in varying socio-economic contexts across different regions. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- **Limited Awareness of Contests:** While most key informants were aware of the contests, focus group participants reported minimal awareness, indicating a need for more effective promotional strategies

- **Diverse Promotion Strategies Needed:** The promotion of future contests should incorporate a diverse mix of methods, including community radio, local events, and engagement with community leaders to maximize reach and effectiveness

- **Targeted Community Engagement:** Engaging specific target disaster-prone communities through groups such as schools and through local government officials should help promote contests effectively

- **Use of Traditional Media:** Emphasis on community radio is crucial for reaching local audiences effectively, particularly in rural areas where access to the internet and television is limited

- **Involvement of Local Artists:** Collaborating with local artists can enhance relatability and engagement, making the contests more appealing to the community and fostering a sense of ownership

- **Need for Extended Promotion Time:** More time should be allocated for promotion to ensure broader coverage and deeper community engagement, including educational components that reach youth

- **Partnership with Influential Organizations:** Partnering with an increased number of credible organizations and committees related to disaster risk management can bolster promotional efforts and enhance awareness

- **Tailored Communication Channels:** Communication strategies should be tailored to different demographics and regions, utilizing platforms like social media in urban areas while focusing on community leaders in rural settings

- Inclusivity of Participants: Continuing to incorporate diverse categories of arts while differentiating between categories of participants can broaden engagement and foster community participation
- Improved Information Dissemination: Improving accessibility to guidance and submission information can encourage wider participation and engagement in contests
- Community-Driven Motivation: Emphasizing community improvements rather than monetary prizes might enhance the motivation of people in communities to participate and engage with the contests and their messages

6.5 Effectiveness of Organization of Contests

The results and discussion highlight the potential for such arts contests to serve as effective tools for promoting disaster preparedness, emphasizing the need for careful planning, community involvement, and ongoing engagement to maximize their impact. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- General Satisfaction with Organization: Key informants expressed a moderate agreement that the contests were organized effectively to meet their objectives, though there is room for improvement in community engagement and targeted approaches
- Importance of Systematic Approaches: The contests and the quality of entries benefited from clear rules, expert judging and feedback, and well-researched guidelines and messages, including recognition of often overlooked psychological and cultural aspects
- Need for Cross-Sectoral Collaboration: The involvement of various stakeholders, including government and humanitarian organizations, was viewed positively, but broader stakeholder engagement at local levels could enhance information dissemination and ownership
- Diverse Art Forms Enhance Engagement: The inclusion of multiple artistic forms (songs, poems, stories, films, visual arts) enriched the messaging and should be continued with consideration of further incorporating theater, action dances, and interactive elements to further enhance engagement
- Focus on Empowerment and Inclusivity: The contests were appreciated for encouraging creative participation among diverse groups, including students and marginalized individuals
- Sustained Community Engagement Needed: Respondents indicated that ongoing community engagement and regular contests would help reinforce messages and promote long-term behavior change regarding disaster preparedness and that reinforcement through workshops and gatherings could significantly help with messaging in hotspot at-risk communities
- Repetition for Impact: There was a strong belief that recurring contests could strengthen community resilience and contribute to the formation of new habits, particularly considering increasing disaster frequency and severity
- Resource Allocation and Timing: Effective organization requires adequate funding and timing that aligns with seasonal disaster risks and actions, emphasizing the need for timely messaging before critical periods
- Integration vs. Separation of Contests:
  - Opinions were divided on whether contests should be integrated into disaster preparedness training or remain standalone

-   Integration could enhance resource efficiency, message coherence, training engagement, and impact evaluation, while independence might promote more unbiased messaging

-   **Flexibility Based on Community Needs:** Future contests should be designed based on the specific needs of communities, allowing for flexibility in approach and ensuring that messaging aligns with local contexts

6.6   Effectiveness of Utilization of Contests Prizes as Products

These results and discussion emphasize the importance of leveraging such creative communication products to foster awareness and engagement in disaster preparedness efforts, highlighting the need for tailored approaches and community involvement. The following conclusions can be drawn:

-   **High Agreement on Relevance:** Both key informants and focus group participants strongly agreed on the relevance and value of the contest-produced materials for promoting disaster preparedness messages

-   **Versatile Use of Products:** The materials created can be effectively utilized across various platforms, including community events, schools, and media, to enhance awareness of disaster risk reduction practices

-   **Media Outreach Potential:** There is significant potential for disseminating videos, audio recordings, and visual art through diverse media channels, including community radio, social media, and television

-   **Community Engagement Importance:** Successful implementation of these products requires tailored community engagement strategies, involving local authorities and organizations to maximize reach and impact

-   **Effective Training Resource:** The materials can serve as valuable resources in training sessions, facilitating discussions and understanding through creative formats like songs, poems, stories/dramas, videos, and drawings/paintings

-   **Integration in Educational Settings:** The products can be integrated into school curricula, repackaged for younger audiences, and utilized in various educational settings to raise awareness about disaster preparedness

-   **Proactive Preparedness:** The need for accessible communication materials such as these was underscored, particularly considering challenges faced during Cyclone Freddy, emphasizing the importance of pre-existing knowledge in communities

-   **Engagement of Artists:** Involving contest finalists and artists in outreach initiatives can enhance message dissemination and encourage community participation in disaster preparedness activities

-   **Customization for Different Contexts:** There is a need to customize materials for various settings and audiences to ensure effective communication and engagement

-   **Focus on Visual Elements:** Some respondents thought that visual communication tools, such as videos and posters, are crucial for effective message delivery and should be prioritized in dissemination efforts

-   **Diverse Dissemination Strategies:** Specific strategies for sharing materials varied by location, highlighting the importance of adapting approaches to local contexts, such as using community radio, public gatherings, and schools.

-   **Involvement of Local Leaders:** Engaging local leaders, such as chiefs, is vital for organizing events and sharing materials effectively within communities

6.7   Interest in Participating in Such Contests in the Future

As part of concluding focus group discussions, participants were asked if people in their communities would want to participate and discuss such messages if such contests were held again. As can be seen from the following Likert score summary, participants consistently agreed that people would be eager to participate:

FGDs Rural (Chikwawa)	4.9167	All 'strongly agree' except 1 split between 'strongly agree' & 'agree'
FGDs Urban (Chilomoni)	5	All 'strongly agree'
FGDs Peri-urban (Jali)	5	All 'strongly agree'

Their comments further concluded that such participation in these contests would involve them effectively discussing and sharing the contest messages with others in their communities and networks.

7.   RECOMMENDATIONS

The following emanated as recommendations regarding communication of disaster risks and good practices to reduce them and regarding utilization of arts and such types of contests to do so:

7.1   Recommendations to Enhance Effectiveness of Arts for Communicating Good Practices in Disaster Preparedness and Vulnerability Reduction in Malawi

- Leverage Diverse Art Forms: Utilize a variety of artistic forms such as songs, poems, stories/drama, films, and visual arts to engage different demographics, cater to varying preferences within communities, and ensure accessibility of the contests and their messages to different community members, including those with disabilities
- Enhance Media Integration:
  - Incorporate arts into popular media channels for different demographics like community radio, television, digital platforms, and others deemed appropriate to maximizing outreach and accessibility of messages about disaster preparedness and risk reduction
  - Collaborate with community radio stations and other local media to promote contests and disseminate messages effectively, ensuring wider reach and participation
- Culturally Tailored Messaging:
  - Ensure that artistic messages resonate with local cultures to make them more relevant and actionable for participants by using appropriate language and themes, avoiding patronizing tones, and tailoring content to the community's specific context and issues
  - Consider the economic realities of communities when designing messages and resources, ensuring that recommendations can be adapted for feasible implementation by all community members
- Engage Local Artists: Collaborate with local artists and community members in creating and disseminating content, fostering ownership and relevance while enhancing community participation
- Utilize Humor and Entertainment: Incorporate humor and entertainment into messages to enhance engagement and retention, making learning about disaster preparedness more enjoyable and memorable
- Focus on Youth Engagement: Develop targeted programs that engage young people through arts, as their involvement can facilitate the broader dissemination of messages across generations
- Interactive Learning Opportunities: Create interactive events that combine arts with community discussions, allowing for shared learning experiences and deeper understanding of disaster preparedness practices
- Incorporate Real-life Scenarios: Use realistic portrayals of disaster situations in dramas and arts to provide relatable examples, helping communities visualize appropriate responses to emergencies
- Focus on Practical Information: Ensure that the arts not only entertain but also provide practical information that can be easily applied to everyday life, such as hygiene practices and disaster preparedness measures
- Promote Continuous Learning:

- Utilize arts as a means for ongoing education, not just one-time events, to reinforce messages and practices over time, ensuring community members are consistently informed and engaged
- Work closely with local government and NGOs to integrate arts contests into broader disaster preparedness strategies and initiatives
- Evaluate and Share Lessons and Success Stories:
  - Establish channels for community feedback on the effectiveness of arts-based messaging and contests, allowing for ongoing adaptation and improvement of strategies to ensure that they meet local needs
  - Although assessing real-world impact of such arts contests on community behavior and disaster preparedness in isolation is difficult as stated in the Theory of Change, determine whether there are ways to better do so that can provide findings to refine contests approaches (e.g., if contests are integrated into projects that provide inputs and training for real-world impact, they could be assessed in terms of their contributions to overall project impacts)
  - Create and disseminate case studies or success stories that highlight effective uses of arts in behavior change, serving as examples for other communities to follow
- Promote Sustainability: Secure ongoing funding and support for arts contests to ensure their longevity and ability to evolve based on community needs and feedback

7.2 Recommendations to Enhance the Effectiveness of Promotion of Such Arts Contests in Malawi:

- Decentralize Contests: Consider organizing contests at the district level, allowing for localized discussions and the addressing of specific community issues, enhancing relevance and participation
- Targeted Engagement: Focus on specific communities in disaster-prone areas and involvement of their schools and local government officials and community leaders in promotional efforts to maximize reach and relevance
- Engage Educational Institutions: Involve schools and universities in the promotion process through competitions, presentations, and outreach initiatives that can create excitement and involvement.
- Engagement of Community Leaders: Actively involve community leaders (chiefs, counselors, health workers) in promotional activities to leverage their influence and reach within communities
- Diversify Promotion Methods:
  - Determine a coherent marketing strategy to integrate the most beneficial channels and utilize a mix of promotional activities tailored to local contexts, including community radio, traditional media, social media, and face-to-face engagements to ensure comprehensive coverage
  - Emphasize community radio as a primary channel for promotion, particularly in rural areas
  - Explore partnerships with local radio stations to broadcast messages widely
- Leverage Local Artists: Involve local artists in promotion efforts to enhance relatability and excitement around contests through their participation helping to attract community attention and foster local engagement

- Increase Time for Promotion: Allow for an extended promotion period (e.g., six months) to build anticipation and provide adequate coverage, engaging communities directly through schools, colleges, and local events
- Encourage Peer Dissemination: Utilize word-of-mouth and peer networks by encouraging those reached through media to spread the message to others who may lack access to those platforms
- Develop Information Dissemination Strategies: Ensure clear communication about contest participation methods and requirements, making them accessible and affordable to encourage widespread involvement
- Utilize Diverse Communication Channels: Tailor communication strategies to different demographic groups, recognizing how youth and other segments consume information (e.g., effective use of WhatsApp, Facebook, and local community meetings)
- Incorporate Local Events: Organize local events that showcase arts and facilitate discussions about contests, using them as platforms for promoting participation and awareness
- Utilize Informal Networks: Engage community volunteers for door-to-door campaigns, utilizing megaphones, and organizing gatherings to raise awareness and excitement about the contests
- Address Inclusivity in Promotion: Ensure promotion efforts are inclusive, targeting various marginalized demographic groups (e.g., people with disabilities, people from remote areas) and incorporating diverse art forms to attract a broad range of participants
- Monitor and Evaluate Promotion Efforts: Regularly assess the effectiveness of promotion strategies and adjust based on feedback and community engagement outcomes to enhance future initiatives

7.3   Recommendations to Enhance the Effectiveness of Organization of Such Arts Contests in Malawi:

- Innovative Promotion Strategies
  - Utilize Multiple Channels: Promote contests through a variety of channels (social media, community radio, events) to maximize outreach and participation
  - Involve Community Leaders: Engage community leaders to help disseminate information and encourage participation through trusted local networks.
- Enhance Community Engagement
  - Sustained Engagement: Implement ongoing community engagement strategies to foster discussions and maintain interest before, during, and after contests
  - Targeted Approaches: Customize contests to address the unique needs and cultural contexts of different communities, particularly in disaster-prone areas with workshops and gatherings to encourage messaging and adoption of context-relevant practices
- Strengthen Research and Guidelines
  - Comprehensive Guidelines: Continue to use a systematic approach for creating guidelines and judging criteria that incorporate psychological and cultural aspects of disaster risk management
  - Feedback Mechanisms: Establish clear channels for feedback from participants to refine future contests

- **Broaden Stakeholder Involvement**
  - Diverse Committee Formation: Create a broader organizing committee that includes more stakeholders from various sectors to foster collective ownership and ensure diverse perspectives
  - Local Level Engagement: Enhance information dissemination through local events and community engagements to boost visibility and participation
- **Diversify Art Forms**
  - Incorporate More Genres: Continue to allow various art forms and consider adding others as deemed locally appropriate to enrich the messaging
  - Interactive Formats: Explore incorporating challenges and interactive elements that encourage active participation and discussion
- **Foster Empowerment and Inclusivity**
  - Collaborative Processes: Encourage collaborative art creation and discussions to empower participants, especially marginalized groups, fostering a sense of ownership
  - Community Involvement: Actively involve community members and local artists in the creative processes, making the contests more relatable
- **Increase Artist Motivation and Reach**
  - Expanded Budgeting: Allocate larger budgets to engage a broader audience, particularly in disaster-prone areas, and allow for extended contest timelines
  - Recognition Programs: Establish recognition initiatives for participants to validate their efforts and encourage continued involvement in disaster communication
- **Plan for Recurring Contests**
  - Annual Contests: Establish the contests as recurring events to reinforce messages and promote long-term behavior change within communities
  - Seasonal Alignment: Schedule contests to align with seasonal needs and disaster preparedness cycles, ensuring relevance and timely messaging
- **Leverage Past Experiences**
  - Learn from Previous Contests: Use feedback and case studies from past contests to inform improvements and adapt strategies for future initiatives
  - Showcase Success Stories: Highlight successful past entries and experiences to motivate participants and foster a sense of community achievement
- **Integrate Training with Contests**
  - Training Program Integration: Consider integrating contests into existing disaster preparedness training programs to enhance habit formation and ensure resource efficiency
  - Comprehensive Messaging: Use contests to complement training materials and reinforce messaging consistently across different platforms
- **Maintain Flexible Approaches**
  - Contextual Adaptation: Adapt contest organization based on the specific needs of target communities and the types of disasters they face
  - Evaluate Objectives: Focus on ensuring that the organization of contests aligns with the overall objective of effective message dissemination and community engagement
- **Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation**
  - Regular Assessments: Conduct regular evaluations of contest processes and outcomes to identify areas for improvement and adapt strategies accordingly

7.4   Recommendations to Enhance the Effectiveness of Utilizing Resulting Arts Contests Materials for Spreading Flood Vulnerability Reduction Messages

- Ensure Accessibility and Availability

  - Dissemination Channels: Make contest-produced materials widely accessible to partners, communities, and private sector organizations involved in disaster management to facilitate effective messaging
  - Local Authority Engagement: Collaborate with local authorities to ensure the distribution and accessibility of materials, especially in disaster-prone areas
- Leverage Media Outreach
  - Multi-Channel Distribution: Utilize various media platforms such as community radio, television, social media, and print media to disseminate videos, audio recordings, and visual art pieces created in the contests
  - Integrate into Existing Programs: Incorporate these materials into existing community radio programs and public events to reach broader audiences
- Enhance Community Engagement Strategies
  - Tailored Community Events: Organize community events and gatherings to promote the products, ensuring that local preferences and structures are considered
  - Involvement of Local Stakeholders: Engage NGOs, civil society organizations, and religious institutions in organizing and promoting events to leverage their networks
- Utilize Materials in Training and Education
  - Curriculum Integration: Use contest materials in schools and community training sessions, employing songs, poems, stories, videos, and visual arts to enhance understanding and engagement
  - Icebreakers and Discussion Prompts: Incorporate materials as discussion prompts or icebreakers during training to facilitate deeper engagement and responses
- Promote Products at Events
  - Collaborative Promotion: Partner with government departments and organizations to showcase materials at conferences, symposiums, and community events related to disaster management and the underlying messages
  - Thematic Events: Organize thematic events that align with disaster preparedness and community resilience, featuring contest products prominently
- Create Child-Friendly Content
  - Adapt Materials for Children: Repackage existing materials to create age-appropriate content for schools, making it easier for younger audiences to engage with the messages
- Engagement of Contest Artists
  - Empower Finalists: Encourage contest finalists to act as change agents by engaging them in ongoing outreach efforts and events to spread awareness of disaster preparedness

- Collaboration with Influencers: Work with social media influencers and community leaders to enhance the reach of the messages, particularly among youth and online communities
- Customize Products for Diverse Settings
- Tailored Dissemination: Customize contest products to fit various community settings and engagement channels, ensuring they resonate with specific audiences
- Documentary Creation: Consider producing documentaries or visual stories that highlight the creative process and underlying messages to further raise awareness
- Utilize Visual Elements
- Prominent Visual Displays: Leverage visual materials like posters and drawings by displaying them in schools, churches, and public spaces to reinforce key messages
- Community-Based Events: Organize events that incorporate visual arts, such as community theater or public viewings of contest videos, to engage audiences actively
- Foster Regular Community Interactions
- Continuous Engagement: Organize follow-up visits and discussions to reinforce messages and encourage ongoing dialogue within communities
- Community Mobilization: Use local events, such as football games or cultural gatherings, to incorporate messages into enjoyable activities that promote community participation
- Capitalize on Post-Cyclone Insights
- Proactive Communication: Utilize the insights gained from past disasters (e.g., Cyclone Freddy) to enhance preparedness messaging and ensure that materials are shared proactively before future events
- Feedback and Adaptation
- Continuous Improvement: Gather feedback from community members regarding the effectiveness of the products and their dissemination methods to refine future strategies and enhance relevance

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LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Media
1. Mr. Waliko Makhala (also Artist & Artistic Quality Judge) – MBC Radio & TV chief editor, producer, & presenter; columnist in Daily Times & Banker Magazine; performing & recording artist
2. Mr. Matthews Malata – Association of Environmental Journalists president
3. Mr. Yankho Seunda (also Artist) – Times TV & Radio Presenter; Poet & host of Vilipanganga Poetry Movement (VPM) poetry nights

Partner Representatives
1. Mr. Elias Gaveta – Conservation Arts (nonprofit organization) executive director
2. Ms. Tanja Hendriks –2019 Government of Malawi Dept DoDMA research intern in Chikwawa District & research affiliate at Faculty of Law Chancellor College University of Malawi; 2023 associated researcher with the DoDMA national level office and the Center for Social Research at the University of Malawi
3. Mr. Chisomo Njewa – 2019 Sowing the Seeds of Love – Malawi (NGO) project manager (including community engagement in Repo Village, Jali, Zomba) & video producer/director for contests partner Dikamawoko Arts; 2023 Ama Omse Mpata Umodzi – Malawi [All Children Same Chance] project manager
4. Mr. Isaac Tchuwa – Head of Earth Sciences Department at Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST) Ndata School of Climate and Earth Sciences and professor in its Disaster Risk Management program
5. Ms. Constance Thyangathyanga (also Artist) – 2019 Jacaranda Cultural Centre deputy director; actress
6. Mr. Felix Washon – Malawi Red Cross Society Communications Specialist

Artists, Artist Representatives, & Artistic Quality Judges
1. Mr. Elson Kambalu – director of Art House Africa in Lilongwe; visual artist
2. Ms. Ekari Mbvundula – director of Story Ink Africa; author and editor
3. Mr. Taddja Nkhonjera (also Partner Representative) – founder & director of Dikamawoko Arts; screenwriter, poet, actor, stage director, ethnomusicologist, author, movie director, and film production trainer
4. Mr. Wisdom Phanga – owner-director of Five 79 Promotions; artist manager (e.g., for Piksy who performed at the finals event)

Potential Users of Products
1. Mr. Samson Dickson – Malawi Red Cross Volunteer in Medrum village in Traditional Authority Mlilima
2. Mr. Geoffrey Mwanapwa – Community Development Assistant for Chikwawa District Traditional Authority Makwhira
3. Mr. Julius Ngoma – National Coordinator for the Malawi Civil Society Network on Climate Change (CISONECC)

Focus Group Discussion members (96 total)

        8 women in Livunzu EPA, T/A Makwhira, Chikwawa

        8 youth men in Livunzu EPA, T/A Makwhira, Chikwawa

        8 VCPC members in Medrum Village, T/A Mlilima, Chikwawa

        8 men in Medrum Village, T/A Mlilima, Chikwawa

        8 Youth women in Kanseche Village, T/A Lundu, Chikwawa

        8 VCPC members in Kanseche Village, T/A Lundu, Chikwawa

        8 mixed gender adults in Zambia, Chilomoni, Blantyre

        8 women in Zambia, Chilomoni, Blantyre

        8 mixed gender adults in Zambia, Chilomoni, Blantyre

        8 mixed gender youth in Zambia, Chilomoni, Blantyre

        8 mixed age & gender in 1st focus group in Repo Village, Jali, Zomba

        8 mixed age & gender in 2nd focus group in Repo Village, Jali, Zomba

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR CONTEST ENTRANTS (English version)

Malawi faces multiple hazards in both rural and urban areas. These include floods, heavy storms, drought and dry spells. Between 1974 and 2019 more than 25 million people have been affected by these hazards which are becoming more frequent, intense and unpredictable. One of the reasons why the pattern and nature of the disasters that follow these hazards are becoming more and more destructive is lack of engagement of the affected communities to talk about how they can adapt to climate change and otherwise what they can do to make themselves less vulnerable to damages and losses from disaster events.

The Tikonzekere Arts Contests is a new tool created in 2019 that aims at engaging people in Malawi to discuss problems that they face because of such disasters through artistic creations that they and others create and share. In this year's initial version of the contests, the theme is "***Communicating Flood Vulnerability Reduction Good Practices through Arts in Malawi***" and the arts that will be used are songwriting, poetry, storytelling, short video creation, photography and drawing. So the 2019 Tikonzekere Arts Contests are focusing on communicating through songs, poems, stories, short videos, photos and drawing what households and communities can do to help reduce their flood vulnerability individually or collectively themselves.

These guidance notes provide background material about what can be done at household and village or township level in Malawi to try to do so and some ideas about how you might want to try to communicate these messages to people with your contest entry. Before discussing some good practices that individual communities and households can do, let's start with a shared understanding of what reducing vulnerability to destructive flood events means:

Destructive Flood Events	Rain and regular small flood events themselves are not bad for people. Think of them like a pair of scissors. Scissors can be helpful as a resource for cutting things but can also be hazardous to you if you get cut by them. Similarly, rains and regular flooding help people in many ways. But when rains and floods become so strong that they cause damages or losses to vulnerable people's property or health or even loss of lives, these destructive floods are a problem needing to be reduced
Flood Risk	Risk is the potential negative consequences of something happening. Negative consequences only happen when some type of hazard combines with people being vulnerable to such destruction from it, such as the risk of the negative consequences of a boy falling on the pair of scissors. So flood risk is the combination of heavy rains and floods becoming so strong that they become potentially destructive for those people who live in areas and in conditions that make them vulnerable to suffering damages and losses during and after them
Flood Vulnerability	The boy with scissors is more vulnerable to being injured if he is running wildly down stairs with them uncovered than if he is walking on flat ground with them in a carrying case. Similarly for flood vulnerability, certain conditions make some people suffer worse damages or losses even in the same flood or heavy rain event. For example, children, the elderly, and the disabled are more vulnerable during such events. Some things people do also make them and

	others more vulnerable
Flood Preparedness	Being prepared means being ready to do something to reduce vulnerability to negative effects *during* and *after* an event, such as having a first aid kit or access to a doctor if the boy falls on the scissors. Flood preparedness actions involve getting ready to respond *during* and *after* floods or heavy rains so that negative effects will be less
Flood Mitigation	Mitigating means taking action *before* an event happens to reduce risk, such as teaching the boy not to run with scissors or always keeping them in a protective case. Flood mitigation actions are taken *before* floods or heavy rains to reduce potential negative effects of floods and heavy rains

Source: Adapted by the author from the 2018 DoDMA *Malawi National Training Manual on Disaster Risk Management*, 2014 DoDMA *Malawi National Disaster Risk Management Communication Strategy*, 2018 Malawi Institute of Education *Disaster Risk Management: A Sourcebook for Primary Schools*, & 2013 DoDMA *Disaster Risk Management Handbook*

Local level township or village civil protection committees have some responsibilities for helping households in their areas to be less vulnerable to suffering damages and losses from destructive heavy rains and floods through such flood preparedness and flood mitigation:

Local Level Civil Protection Committee Preparedness & Mitigation Responsibilities:

o Identify appropriate flood mitigation projects and produce village-based mitigation plans, potential funding priorities for them, and resources available for these projects (including community mobilization to undertake prioritized flood mitigation activities and monitoring mitigation activities implemented by communities, government, or NGOs)
o Periodically assess changes in key problems and risks among vulnerable village households (including mitigating and reporting practices which could contribute to local households having problems when heavy rains and floods occur)
o Support enforcement of regulations related to environmental management
o Identify possible evacuation and temporary shelter sites
o Monitor information on what types of conditions contribute to household risks from different levels of floods and heavy rains, communicate findings to communities, sensitize people on relevant preparedness and mitigation activities, and strengthen local capacity to address such conditions
o Facilitate community awareness on flood warnings and actions to be undertaken
o Identify land and conditions for those people for whom resettlement is suggested
o Stock village relief items with security at distribution and storage sites (where possible)

Source: Excerpted from the 2018 DoDMA *Malawi National Training Manual on Disaster Risk Management*

The government and these committees have important roles in reducing flood risk. But flood vulnerability reduction is everyone's responsibility. So the *Tikonzekere Arts Contests* is focused on communicating what households and communities can do to help reduce their flood vulnerability individually or collectively themselves. We hope that you can use as inspiration what you understand based on what you've learned from these committees, others working where you live, or the direct experiences of people you know about actions you can take to best reduce negative flood impacts for yourself and others. And, to help stimulate such creative ideas in you, we've summarized points from a few documents that discuss flood vulnerability reduction good practice communication in Malawi.

Issues & Related Messages for Flood Vulnerability Reduction Communication

Issue 1: People who live in flood-prone areas choose not to follow government advice to relocate or government building codes and standards to avoid negative flood impacts
Communication Objective: to provide adequate and correct information to households, communities, and local leaders, governments, and construction workers that motivate people to relocate or to improve housing and infrastructure standards, maintenance, and usage
Messages:
▪ Avoid settling in swamp or river bank areas and constructing houses from mud or unburnt bricks
▪ Move upland to avoid destructive floods [Anthu asamukire malo a kumtunda kuti tipewe ngozi za madzi odza mwadzidzidzi]
▪ It's possible to move upland but still do farming in your fields in the flood-prone areas [Ndi zotheka kusamukira kumtunda ndi kulima minda yomwe ili mmadera osefukira madzi]
▪ Encourage people to follow building code guidelines and to build houses with concrete or stabilized blocks and on high ground, elevated areas, or on raised house foundations/homesteads and toilets with concrete slabs of sufficient size and quality
▪ Construct household storm water drains and community check dams, embankments/dykes, storm drains, and canals
▪ Develop a community waste management system and organize regular activities to clear drainage canals so that rain water will drain effectively
▪ Buy financial insurance for personal buildings & property and community property & infrastructure
▪ It's everyone's responsibility to save lives when floods occur [Ndi udindo wa aliyense kuthandiza kupulumutsa moyo pamene madzi asefukira]

Issue 2: Inadequate knowledge of waterborne disease outbreaks that arise after flooding
Communication Objective: To motivate individuals, households and communities in the uptake behaviors that help them prevent water-borne diseases
Messages:
▪ Putting chlorine or water-guard in water for household use will help prevent cholera outbreaks [Titsire kolorini kapena water-guard m'madzi ogwiritsa ntchito pakhomo kuti tipewe Kolera]
▪ General hygiene and drinking clean water helps prevent cholera / waterborne diseases [Ukhondo ndi kumwa madzi osamalidwa bwino kumatiteteza ku matenda otsegula mmimba monga a Kolera]
▪ Wash your hands with soap always after using the toilet, after changing a baby's diapers, before eating, and before feeding a child [Tisambe mmanja ndi sopo nthawi zonse tikachoka kuchimbudzi, tikatha kusintha thewera la mwana, tisanadye chakudya chiri chonse, kapena tisanadyetse mwana]

Issue 3: People's lack of relevant weather information and preparedness and evacuation plans and negative perceptions towards inaccurate weather warning information from climate change and meteorological services
Communication Objective: to promote positive attitudes and behaviors towards effective preparedness actions and useful climate change and meteorological services information
Messages:
▪ Don't disregard information about potential heavy rains and floods from the government local leaders and weather experts because this information can help people to avoid negative effects [Tisanyozere uthenga wokamba za kusintha kwa nyengo kuchokera ku boma, atsogoleri akudela kwanu ndi akatswiri a zanyengo, kuti tipewe zotsatira za ngozi zogwa mwadzidzidzi]

▪ As soon as you hear that your area is likely to be flooded, move quickly to upland areas to save lives and property [Mukamva uthenga wa madzi osefukira, samukirani msanga ku malo okwera kuti mupulumutse moyo ndi katundu]

▪ Use climate change information and information about what is happening with the weather to help plan and act to improve everyday living conditions [Tigwiritse ntchito uthenga wa zanyengo mmoyo wanu tsiku ndi tsiku]

▪ Find out what rivers and streams flood in your area, the frequency of occurrence of floods, how fast such floods occur, and how high they usually rise

▪ Know the flood early warning system in your area (if none exists, recommend to the appropriate authority for the creation of one and participate in giving early warning messages to neighbors)

▪ Encourage a culture of safety including watching out for rapidly rising water and developing household evacuation plans of how and where to evacuate, contingency plans for what to do in different situations, identified and trained community members as first responders with community boats, and public awareness and education on good practices to reduce negative flood impacts, including education on good food usage, first aid, water, sanitation, and hygiene practices and childhood education about what should be done before and during heavy rain and floods

▪ Be prepared with a survival kit (containing a battery-operated radio, flashlight, emergency cooking equipment, candles, matches, and first aid kit) and stockpiled water and food such as with community granaries and cereals stored in bags for easy carrying during evacuation

▪ Encourage a culture of saving money for emergencies and a community bank with community financial resources able to be mobilized for early action and response when destructive floods occur

Issue 4: Poor management of catchment areas, poor farming practices, and deforestation

Communication Objective: to motivate people to use and promote appropriate agriculture, forestry, and resource management practices in water catchment areas to reduce negative flood impacts

Messages:

▪ Plant trees and care for the environment so that the trees and the soil can better hold rainwater and reduce negative effects of floods [Dzalani mitengo ndikusamala chilengedwe kuti muchepetse kuchuluka ndi kuopsa kwa madzi osefukira]

▪ Implement initiatives to increase tree and vegetation cover (e.g., plant trees and elephant grass and avoid cutting trees or reeds along river banks, plant vetiver grass on farming lands to reduce soil erosion, encourage crop cover through agro-forestry, and create community woodlots/forests)

▪ Farming close to river banks increases the chance of losing your crops, agricultural tools, and other property during flood events [Kulima m'mbali mwa mtsinje kumawonjezera katundu yemwe angatayike madzi osefukira akafika]

▪ Encourage and use good land management practices and create and enforce by-laws against bad practices (such as cutting trees; farming on river banks, steep slopes, and hills; moulding bricks along river banks; and overgrazing and bush fires)

▪ Raise livestock or pets such as ducks that can survive floods

Source: Excerpted from DoDMA 2014 *Malawi National Disaster Risk Management Communication Strategy* & 2013 *Disaster Risk Management Handbook*; 2018 Malawi Institute of Education *Disaster Risk Management: A Sourcebook for Primary Schools*

How You Can Craft These Messages into Effective Conversation Starters

From the above suggested messages, your own experiences, and news of recent events, we hope you have great ideas for accurate and relevant messages to include in your contest entry. But research shows that people have reasons why they do things the way that they do them and aren't likely to enthusiastically decide to change based on just a list of messages. They may be encouraged by more creative messages to engage in discussion and decision-making. This often involves a logical progression of steps in which they first get motivated to try a new way of doing things, then decide they have the intention to try it, and then finally take the action of trying it. For each of these steps, there are factors that can prevent them from progressing toward taking action and ways of communicating messages that might help to overcome them. The following notes provide background on processes involved in how communicating about good practices can encourage such discussion and action.

Factors to Overcome in Communicating Vulnerability Reduction Good Practices

Motivation: People generally don't change their behavior unless they are motivated by a belief that there are potentially significant negative consequences of continuing to behave the way they have already been behaving. For this to occur, they must be aware that the risk is real for them and perceive that the risk is sufficient enough that changing behavior is worth considering.

▪ **Critical awareness:** As people are often already generally aware of the risks that they face, messages that only tell them about these risks can fail to motivate them for various reasons. They may understand that people in their situation face that risk but believe that there are some reasons why it won't negatively affect them or their loved ones significantly. This includes believing that flood protection dykes or other structures or actions will adequately protect them from negative effects. It also includes believing that livelihood, service access, or other benefits of not changing outweigh the potential flood event negative consequences. To overcome these factors, messages can depict criteria by which some people are more likely to experience negative flood effects than others.

▪ **Risk perception:** If they are critically aware of considerable potential negative effects on their loved ones, they still may not be motivated due to various factors. Maybe they don't believe that the potential negative effects are important enough to fix relative to all else that they need to spend time and money on fixing. Maybe changing this behavior is not acceptable to discuss or do in the local culture. Or maybe they don't actively participate in decision-making that would be required to change this behavior. To overcome such factors, messages can encourage discussion participation, ways of acceptably discussing what might be considered taboo if done in other ways, or why these potential negative effects are likely to be relatively high in the ranking of importance to address.

Intention: If people's critical awareness and perception of the risk are sufficient to be motivated to change behavior, they still may not intend to change because they don't think that they can do anything to effectively reduce the risk that they perceive. For them to have the intention to change behavior, they must believe that there are actions that can be taken that will reduce the negative effects and that they as an individual or group is capable of effectively taking such actions.

▪ **Response Efficacy:** Many people think that the power to take effective action for reducing the risks that they face lies with the government, the church, elders, or some other powers. So, although they are motivated to have the risk reduced, they prefer to wait for those others to take action. Even if they believe that they could make a decision about what to do themselves, maybe they don't have enough information about what is causing potential negative flood effects and what actions could be taken that they believe would actually help reduce them. Messages

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depicting underlying problems and specifically what can be done by households or communities to reduce these problems can help.

▪ **Self or Group Efficacy:** They may believe that a helpful action could be taken but that they as individuals or groups don't have needed knowledge or ability to do it. Messages showing how people with locally available materials and knowledge could take the recommended action can be helpful.

Action: Finally, even if people have the motivation and the intention to change their behavior, there are still some reasons why they may not change that are specific to the people's location and culture. Reasons can include people simply delaying action because they are not ready to do what they have decided to do until a later time. There also may be something specific about the message about recommended actions to take or whoever is giving it to them that makes them want to wait for clarification from a trusted source about when or how to take such actions.

Source: Excerpted from 2015 Alexander et al Integrated Disaster Risk Management

Finally, for your contest entry to effectively communicate in a way that engages people into wanting to embrace the messages that you're giving them, some suggestions from the Red Cross:

Key Ingredients for Effective Risk Communication
1) Well-crafted messages
a) Use everyday simple language: For entries using words, avoid using complex terms in favor of using the type of words that your target audience would use to talk about these things themselves
b) Promote effective action: Research shows that people are more motivated by positive examples than by fear. Provide positive imagery of recommended behavior and do so in a way that encourages people to solve their problems. If you do use words or images for something that has gone wrong, make sure that this is clearly indicated as what can be addressed through recommended actions so that your message inspires people rather than makes them feel more helpless. Make the messages specific with accurate examples of what can be done broken into small manageable steps.
c) Be clear & consistent: Say such things as what the hazards are (visualizing heavy rains and floods), what damage they do (depicting expected negative effects at home, at work, at school, or elsewhere - physically, economically, communally, or otherwise), how they have affected them previously, when such problems are expected to take place; what your target audience can do before, during, and/or after heavy rain and flood events to improve the situation and reduce these negative effects; how complicated &/or costly doing such things is; and what they need to do or have to begin
2) Powerful imagery: Even for people who read and write well, effective imagery in pictures, actions, or words often helps people to remember well. When people are able to visualize what's happening through effective imagery of the effectiveness of flood vulnerability reduction actions, they are much more likely to be motivated than when they read a list of what they're being told to do.
3) An engaging and compelling tone:
a) Be engaging: Reducing flood vulnerability often involves people thinking about things that they would rather not think about. So effective communication materials need to be engaging, attractive, interactive, and possibly also fun, humorous, surprising, or musical so that the message is better embraced and remembered than a written 'to do' list would be.
b) Be compelling: People tend to like to do what they think others are doing. So it can help to draw attention to what some people are already doing rather than what people are not doing. As

people like to have role models to help them believe that change can be done and is worth trying, showing what others are doing in good practice examples provides them with role models to follow.

4) Adapted to best fit the audience: Try to understand how your target audience might think about the local flood and heavy rain conditions that they actually face, the related vulnerability reduction practices that are locally possible for them, and local experiences with these conditions and practices. Then use the three ingredients above to communicate this with them in the type of language and/or images most likely to motivate them to remember and communicate these messages with others.

Source: Excerpted from the 2011 IFRC *Public Awareness and Public Education for Disaster Risk Reduction: A Guide*

Based on the above suggestions, please see the Call for Submissions for the specific storytelling, poetry, songwriting, video, or photo contest that you wish to enter. Based on those instructions, create and submit one or more original entries that effectively communicates one or more of the previously mentioned messages or other messages that you believe are important about what people can do to help reduce potential losses or damages from destructive heavy rains and flooding. We look forward to your entries and hope you enjoy creating them while contributing to a culture of safer living with heavy rains and floods in which more people happily embrace saying *tikonzekere*!

CONTESTS CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS (English version)

What is this contest?

The songwriting, poetry, storytelling, short video, photography, and drawing contest components of the Tikonzekere Arts Contests: Communicating Flood Vulnerability Reduction Good Practices through Arts in Malawi ('the contest') encourage:

- Both amateur and professional songwriters, poets, storytellers, video creators, photographers, and drawing artists to have the exposure of having their contest entries presented, judged by a prestigious panel of judges, and appreciated in public contest events, in the media, and in related materials after the event plus to win great prizes as well

- People to be inspired by these contest entries to talk about and take actions that will help them and their families to have less negative consequences during future heavy rains and floods

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Judging

▪ **Criteria:** Three criteria that each account for one-third of the total score will be used for judging in each of the contest categories to determine which entries are selected in each round of the contest:

- Technical: How well-crafted is the entry in its art form? (see below for separate explanations of this for songwriting, poetry, storytelling, short video, photography, and drawing)

- Content: How well does the entry incorporate key messages about what people can do to reduce negative effects of heavy rains and flooding?

- Communication Effectiveness: How likely is the entry to be embraced by those who see/hear it as something to think about and share with others?

▪ **Round One (initial screening):** Entries will be initially screened by a committee formed by the contest organizers. The Contest Entrants of entries selected as semi-finalists will be informed using the contact information on the cover pages and invited to share their selected entry at the semi-finals judging event.

▪ **Round Two (semi-finals):** From the semi-finalists that share their entries at the semi-finals events (described below for each contest category), three entries will be selected as finalists to be shared and judged at the finals event. Though entries will be shared at both the semi-finals and finals events, judging will be based on the above criteria for the entries themselves and not based on any aspect of performance during the sharing of them.

▪ **Round Three (finals):** Selected finalist entries will be shared at a special event of the Blantyre Arts Festival during the dates of 4-6 October, 2019 at a time to be announced. From these three finalists, the first place, second place, and third place positions will be determined by the judges. These finalist entries will also be shared later in October at events for the International Day for Disaster Reduction (date to be determined).

▪ Semi-finalists, finalists, and winners will be announced as described above. Contest entrants are responsible for providing up-to-date and accurate contact information. Contest organizers are not responsible for entrants' non-receipt of any emails or phone calls for any reason, including but not limited to phone, network, server, or email malfunctions.

▪ Contest organizers will use their best efforts to notify semi-finalists as early as possible before the semi-finals event but will not be held responsible for any unforeseen delays.

▪ By entering the contest, the entrant agrees to accept the decisions of contest organizers and judges.

General Rules for All Contest Categories: The contests are free to enter. By entering, contest entrants agree to all of the rules stated below.

▪ **Cover page:**

- To ensure judging objectivity, the name and contact information for any of the entrants must not be included anywhere in the submitted videos or on the pages of the submitted song lyrics, poems, stories, photos, or drawings themselves. Any violation of this rule will result in the submitted contest entry being disqualified.

- A cover page must be provided for each submitted entry that includes each of the following: (1) Full name of the Contest Entrant, (2) Full names of any additional co-creators of the entry, (3) Contest Entrant contact phone number (and email address if available), and (4) Title of submitted entry. For entries to the photography and drawing contests, the cover page should also include: (5) A one or two sentence written explanation of how this photo or drawing demonstrates a good practice that helps to reduce people's potential losses from floods or heavy rains.

- Entries may have multiple co-creators, but only one name should be written as the Contest Entrant on the cover page. Full names of all additional co-creators must be listed on the cover page.

▪ **Number of entries:** Each entrant may submit a maximum of three (3) entries to each of the contest categories. If any entrant submits more than three entries to any of the categories, the organizers of that category will only accept the first three entries that they open from that contest entrant. Entrants can have entries that are semi-finalists and finalists in more than one category but can only have one entry that qualifies as a finalist in any one category. If any entrant has more than one entry selected as a finalist in one of the categories, the entry with the highest judging score will proceed as a finalist and the entry or entries with lower judging score will be replaced with the next highest judging score as finalist.

▪ **Originality:** All entries submitted must be original creations by the submitting Contest Entrant and any co-creators. By submitting an entry to the contest, the contest entrant is confirming that no parts of the submitted entry are owned or have been created by anyone other than the Contest Entrant and any co-creators. Semi-finalists may be required to sign a legal document confirming that the entry is original. Failure to sign this document or provision of false information may result in disqualification and an alternate semi-finalist being selected.

▪ **Undistributed:** Entries must not have been previously published or professionally distributed.

▪ **Language:** Due to judging limitations, only English and/or Chichewa will be accepted for the singing in songs, speaking in videos, and writing for the song lyrics, poems, stories, and explanations for the photos and drawings.

▪ **Eligibility:** The contest is not open to any of the organizers or judges but is otherwise open to all amateur and professional songwriters, poets, storytellers, video creators, photographers, and drawing artists of all ages living anywhere. But contest entrants shall be required to physically represent their entry at the semi-finals events (in Lilongwe for the storytelling contest and in Blantyre for the songwriting, poetry, short video, photography, and drawing contest) and at the finals event at the Blantyre Arts Festival if selected.

▪ **Deadline:** Contest entries for each contest category must be submitted by 5:00pm 19 July, 2019. Late entries will not be accepted. Contest organizers reserve the right to extend this deadline for any reason.

▪ **Ownership:** Entrants retain ownership of their submitted entries. Contest organizers and sponsors will not have ownership of any entered entries. By entering, entrants are granting permission for contest organizers and sponsors to use the creators' names and entries for any purposes related to the contest or dissemination in materials thereafter without compensation.

Specific Rules and Judging Procedures for Individual Contest Categories: The contests are free to enter. By entering, contest entrants agree to all of the rules and judging procedures stated below.

Songwriting: The songwriting contest is headed by Waliko Makhala (0888 522500 or walikomak@gmail.com), Code Sangala (0999 558844 or sangalacode@gmail.com), and barefoot bob (0992 934286 or bfootbob@hotmail.com). Please contact them with any questions.
▪ **Length:** Each song should be no more than five (5) minutes in length.
▪ **How to submit:** Each submitted song must include both an .mp3 recording and a lyrics document with cover page and should be submitted as:
- **Email Entries:** should be sent as email attachments with the submitted lyrics and cover pages as either Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) documents or as .pdf files to tikonzekereartscontest@gmail.com OR
- **Hand-delivered Entries:** should be with a CD of song recordings and printed lyrics and cover pages and placed in the labeled contest entry box either at KwaHaraba Art Gallery and Café (behind Phekani House, opposite Chibisa House [NICO/Pep Store] along Glyn Jones Road in Blantyre) or at Jacaranda Cultural Center (Top Mandala, Kaoisiung Road – opposite CFAO)
▪ **Technical Judging:** As mentioned above, one of the three criteria for judging songs is technical skill in songwriting. Production, recording quality, vocal, and performance quality will not be judged. Only aspects of the craft of songwriting will be considered (e.g., creativity, originality, melody, rhythm and musical catchiness, lyrical hook and chorus catchiness, structure, overall likeability).
▪ **Round One:** The initial screening will result in 10-15 songs being chosen as semi-finalists.
▪ **Round Two (semi-finals):** Selected songs will be performed by the writer/s at Jacaranda Cultural Center on 4 August, 2019.

Poetry: The poetry contest is headed by Paul Sezzie (0999 797642 / 0883 956565 or paulsezzie33@gmail.com). Please contact him with any questions.
▪ **Length:** Each poem should not have more than 40 lines or more than 500 total words.
▪ **How to submit:** Each submitted poem must include both the poem itself on a separate page and a cover page and should be submitted as:
- **Email Entries:** should be sent as as email attachments as either Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) documents or as .pdf files to tikonzekereartscontest@gmail.com OR
- **Hand-delivered Entries:** should be printed poems and cover pages in an envelope placed in the labeled contest entry box either at KwaHaraba Art Gallery and Café (behind Phekani House, opposite Chibisa House [NICO/Pep Store] along Glyn Jones Road in Blantyre) or at Jacaranda Cultural Center (Top Mandala, Kaoisiung Road – opposite CFAO)
▪ **Technical Judging:** As mentioned above, one of the three criteria for judging poems is technical skill in poetry. Performance of the poem at events will not be judged. Only aspects of the craft of poetry will be considered (e.g., creativity, originality, imagery, figurative language, overall likeability).
▪ **Round One:** The initial screening will result in approximately 10-15 poems being chosen as semi-finalists.
▪ **Round Two (semi-finals):** Selected poems will be read by the poet or poets at the semi-finals event at a special session of the Vilipanganga Poetry Movement Wednesday night poetry sessions at Kwa Haraba Art Gallery & Café in Blantyre on 7 August, 2019 starting at 6:00pm.

Storytelling: The storytelling contest is headed by Ekari Mbvundula at Story Ink Africa (0997 760751, 0883 184830, or storytellingmw@gmail.com). Please contact her with any questions.
▪ **Length:** Each story should not have more than 1,000 total words.
▪ **How to submit:** Each entry must include both the story itself and a cover page and should be submitted as:
- **Email Entries:** should be sent as email attachments as either Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) documents or as .pdf files to tikonzekereartscontest@gmail.com OR

- Hand-delivered Entries: should be printed stories and cover pages in an envelope placed in the labeled contest entry box either at KwaHaraba Art Gallery and Café (behind Phekani House, opposite Chibisa House [NICO/Pep Store] along Glyn Jones Road in Blantyre) or at Jacaranda Cultural Center (Top Mandala, Kaoisiung Road – opposite CFAO)

▪ **Technical Judging:** As mentioned above, one of the three criteria for judging storytelling is technical skill. Performance of the story at events will not be judged. Only aspects of the craft of storytelling will be considered (e.g., creativity and originality of the story, imagery, figurative language, overall likeability).

▪ **Round One:** The initial screening will result in approximately 10 stories being chosen as semi-finalists.

▪ **Round Two (semi-finals):** Selected stories will be read by the author or authors at a special component of the Story Ink Africa Fiction Festival at Bambino School in Lilongwe on a date to be announced soon.

Short Video: The video contest is headed by Shemu Joyah (0888 856010 or csjoyah@gmail.com) and barefoot bob (0992 934286 or bfootbob@hotmail.com). Please contact them with any questions.

▪ **Length:** Each video should be no less than three (3) and no more than seven (7) minutes in length.

▪ **How to submit:** Each submitted video must include both the video itself and a cover page and should be submitted as:

- Email Entries: should be sent as email attachments with the submitted video in .mp4, .mov, .mpg1, .mpg2, or .wmv format and the cover page as either a Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) document or .pdf file to tikonzekereartscontest@gmail.com OR

- Hand-delivered Entries: should be videos on a DVD or flash drive with cover pages in an envelope placed in the labeled contest entry box either at KwaHaraba Art Gallery and Café (behind Phekani House, opposite Chibisa House [NICO/Pep Store] along Glyn Jones Road in Blantyre) or at Jacaranda Cultural Center (Top Mandala, Kaoisiung Road – opposite CFAO)

▪ **Technical Judging:** As mentioned above, one of the three criteria for judging videos is technical skill in creating videos. But quality of the camera used and other aspects unrelated to the craft of video creation will not be judged. Videos taken with a mobile phone will be judged equally with those taken with expensive cameras. Only aspects of the craft of video creation will be considered (e.g., creativity and originality of story line, camera work, editing, sound quality, effectiveness of any music used, quality of narration and interviews, overall likeability).

▪ **Round One:** The initial screening will result in 10-15 videos being chosen as semi-finalists.

▪ **Round Two (semi-finals):** Selected videos will be shown and represented by the creators at the semi-finals event at Jacaranda Cultural Center in Blantyre on 11 August, 2019.

Photography: The photography contest is headed by Sam Banda Jr. (0999 341448 or bandasamjnr@gmail.com). Please contact him with any questions.

▪ **How to submit:** Each submitted photo must include both the photo itself and a cover page and should be submitted as:

- Email Entries: should be sent as email attachments with the photo as a .jpg or .png image file and the cover page as either a Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) document or .pdf file to tikonzekereartscontest@gmail.com OR

- Hand-delivered Entries: should be printed photos and cover pages in an envelope placed in the labeled contest entry box either at KwaHaraba Art Gallery and Café (behind Phekani House, opposite Chibisa House [NICO/Pep Store] along Glyn Jones Road in Blantyre) or at Jacaranda Cultural Center (Top Mandala, Kaoisiung Road – opposite CFAO)

▪ **Technical Judging:** As mentioned above, one of the three criteria for judging photos is technical skill in photography. But framing, quality of the camera used, and other aspects unrelated to the craft of

photography will not be judged. Photos taken with a mobile phone will be judged equally with those taken with expensive cameras. Only aspects of the craft of photography will be considered (e.g., creativity, originality, overall likeability).

▪ **Round One:** The initial screening will result in approximately 25 photos being chosen as semi-finalists.

▪ **Round Two (semi-finals):** Selected photos will be displayed and represented by the photographers at the semi-finals event at Jacaranda Cultural Center in Blantyre on 11 August, 2019.

Drawing: The drawing contest is headed by Elson Kambalu (0999 855806 or ekambalu@yahoo.co.uk). Please contact him with any questions.

▪ **How to submit:** Each submitted drawing must include both the drawing itself and a cover page and should be submitted as:

- **Email Entries:** should be sent as email attachments with a photo of the drawing as a .jpg or .png image file and the cover page as either a Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) document or .pdf file to tikonzekereartscontest@gmail.com (please note that artists whose drawings are selected as semi-finalists based on the submitted photo of the drawing must submit the original drawing so that it can be used for the contest and by contest partners thereafter) OR

- **Hand-delivered Entries:** should be original copies of drawings and cover pages in an envelope placed in the labeled contest entry box either at KwaHaraba Art Gallery and Café (behind Phekani House, opposite Chibisa House [NICO/Pep Store] along Glyn Jones Road in Blantyre) or at Jacaranda Cultural Center (Top Mandala, Kaoisiung Road – opposite CFAO)

▪ **Technical Judging:** As mentioned above, one of the three criteria for judging drawing is technical skill in drawing. Framing and other aspects unrelated to the craft of drawing will not be judged. Only aspects of the craft of drawing will be considered (e.g., creativity, originality, overall likeability).

▪ **Round One:** The initial screening will result in approximately 25 drawings being chosen as semi-finalists.

▪ **Round Two (semi-finals):** Selected drawings will be displayed and represented by the artists at the semi-finals event at Jacaranda Cultural Center in Blantyre on 4 August, 2019.

Prizes

▪ Finalists in each contest category will share 300,000MK in prize money (1st place: 150,000MK, 2nd place: 100,000MK, 3rd place: 50,000MK).

▪ The three finalists will receive in-kind prizes awarded equally and profiling of their success in national media, publication of their entries, showcasing and final judging at the Blantyre Arts Festival, and professional production of their entries for post-contest showcasing and dissemination.

▪ If there are multiple co-creators of a winning entry, the prize for that entry will be awarded to the person whose name is listed as the Contest Entrant on the cover page. Division of the prize among co-creators is the responsibility of the co-creators and not the responsibility of the contest organizers.

▪ There will be no funding for transportation to or accommodation for songwriting, poetry, short video, photography, or drawing semi-finalists to share their entries at the semi-finals events in Blantyre, for storytelling semi-finalists to share their entries at the semi-finals event in Lilongwe, or for finalists to share their entries at the Blantyre Arts Festival in October.

▪ There will be no transfer or substitution of prizes unless determined appropriate by the contest organizers. By entering the contest, entrants agree that contest organizers and sponsors are not responsible for any problems with prizes after they have been awarded.

Focus Group Discussion Guide
&
Focus Group Discussion & Key Informant Interview Questions

Evaluation for the 2019 Tikonzekere Arts Contests: Communicating Flood Vulnerability Reduction Good Practices through the Arts in Malawi Focus Group Discussion Guide

Day before: See FGD location/s: get feel for how to arrange seats (will there be chairs or sit on the ground?) and whether there are walls (or floor space) to put flipchart & separate pages

Pre-FGD Arrangements
- Ensure semi-circle of chairs or other arrangement that's comfortable for participants
- Place for flipchart paper (with tape and pens arranged)
- Prepare flipchart agenda page and post in separate place; prepare other flipchart pages
- Arrange videos on laptop in order that they will be shown (Q: what do about promo in English? Translate over top of it? Or don't show and just explain [too boring?]?)
- Prepare attendance sheet (name, gender, age, any official role/title in community?)
- Markers and tape for name tags (and extra tape ready)
- Q: translate powerpoint of background, Guidance Notes, and Calls for Submissions (as can't have them read through them)? Or how explain key points?

Agenda

Time (mins)	Item	Materials Needed
20	Introduction & Initial Questions	Attendance sheet; name tags / markers Water FGD guide Agenda on flipchart Processes keywords flipchart page
20	Watch representative videos to get idea of what done in Tikonzekere	Laptop to show videos Problems/messages flipchart pages
60	Questions & discussion	Flipchart: Qs & Likert scales
10	Wrap-up	Snacks Discussion of the way forward

Introduction – 20 minutes
- Attendance sheet & name tags (tape and markers) & give water to each – while doing attendance sheet and name tags, ask Q1 to each person [sing 'Napolo']
- Opening prayer, then introduce selves and ask the participants to also introduce themselves (name tags help)
- Explain purpose and duration of FGD
- In 2019 after Cyclone Idai, there was a nationwide arts contests designed to get people talking about actions that could be taken to help reduce the problems that people would have in the next big cyclones and floods
- Now that Cyclone Freddy has passed and flood and cyclone season is coming again, people want to know whether what was done with those arts contests might be interesting to people who live in the most affected areas such as here
- So we're going to show you some videos, explain what was done, and ask you to discuss what you think about what was done and what could be done better
- The whole activity will take less than two hours and should hopefully be enjoyable and interesting for you – go through the agenda on the flipchart page

- Explain that participation in the FGD does not imply that they will receive support – the purpose is to inform future communication projects that will hopefully help them and others better understand what to do to reduce flood and cyclone vulnerability
- Ask for people's consent to participate and permission to take notes and record or if they have any questions
- Ground rules? (everyone has a right to speak, please try not to interrupt one another, there is no correct or incorrect answer, telling us what you think we want to hear won't help us or anyone – so it's best to just say whatever you truly think; anything shared should be kept confidential [i.e., anything shared by a particular person should not be identified as having been said by that person])
- Ask initial fun questions to get people to laugh and relax with Likert scale to demonstrate procedure (take turns being the one to lead; others guide that person; it's OK to disagree and give differing ideas; eventually agree to move on even if some opinions are different) [e.g., it is very hot here today; men in this village think women should wear their natural hair rather than weaves and extensions]
- Ask Q2 as initial real pre-Tikonzekere question
- Show flipchart page of milestones/processes keywords with translated explanations

Videos & Messages- 20 minutes:
- Show promo video – Facilitator summarize in Chichewa over top [3 minutes]
- Show flipchart pages of the key problem categories and suggested messages
- Show compilation video of videos (no translation summary needed – explain this is 8 minutes of short clips from 12 videos that total almost 2 hours) & compilation video of finalist drawings [only 3:10-4:30] (Facilitator summarize in Chichewa over it)
- Repeat objectives of this discussion today:
  - We want to learn how to do things better than how they were done that first time
  - So, we can't just ask people who were involved the first time
  - We want to understand from you how you think such types of communication could be done better for what you think is important for you, your family, and neighbors
  - We want to do it in a group rather than as individuals so that you can discuss with each other what you each think and decide together on a group response – it's OK if there is some disagreement as long as you're honestly sharing what you think

Do Questions 3-8 using flipchart pages [60 minutes]
- For Likert questions 3, 5, 6a, 6b, 7, & 8, a different person from the group each time leads the group and puts the sticky note under the number the group guides him/her to
- Takes notes of all of the reasons/suggestions given in the discussion as facilitated by the guiding questions for each question
- Distribute snacks/drink before question 7 or otherwise when feels best for momentum

Wrap-up [20 minutes]:
- Ask people if they have any questions or final comments for us
- Explain the next steps and be sure to manage expectations by repeating that there will be no assistance/support provided – the objective is to improve communication of good practices to reduce cyclone and flood impacts for them and others in the future
  - Closing prayer & thank everyone for their time

Evaluation for the 2019 Tikonzekere Arts Contests: Communicating Flood Vulnerability
Reduction Good Practices through the Arts in Malawi
Focus Group Discussion Questions

Q1: [facilitator ask people individually – each person can give more than one answer] What types of messages about reducing the negative impacts of floods and cyclones have you seen or heard in the past 5 years?

1	Songs or poems	2	Radio dramas or messages
3	People came to talk to us	4	Theater presentations and activities
5	Other: _____		

Q2: People in this area where we live think that using the arts (e.g., songs, poems, radio dramas, theatre, images) to communicate messages about problems that people face in their homes and communities (e.g., cyclones/floods, cholera, hygiene practices, etc) and how to reduce those problems can help people here to better discuss and take actions to reduce those problems

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

If disagree, why not? If agree, can they provide some examples of any such uses of the arts that contributed to people changing how they do things so that they would have reduced negative impacts?:

_____

Q3: Cyclones and floods are stronger and impacting families in this area where we live worse in the past few years than they were before

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

Why or why not? If agree, how are impacts different?:

_____

Q4: [ask people individually] Did you know about the Tikonzekere Arts Contests in 2019? (how many yes / how many no)

For any who say yes, how did you hear about them? (take note of how many people say any of the answers below – people can give more than one answer)

Radio	TV	Newspaper ad	Newspaper article	People mentioned

Social Media   Printed posters   Supermarket Announcement
Other:_____

For any who say no, how could they have been organized or promoted better to get more people here to know about them? _____

Q5: People in this area where we live think such types of arts contests are a good way to get people talking about the types of problems that they can face in their homes and communities and the types of actions they can take to reduce them

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

[listen for / encourage people to explain: If agree, how could these contests have been improved/modified to be more effective here? If disagree, what could be done instead that could better encourage people to do things that they can do to reduce these problems themselves without needing outside assistance or money?]:

_____

Q6: People in this area where we live would think that the messages in these Tikonzekere Arts Contests about:

    a)   the types of negative impacts they can face are accurate and worth discussing

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

Why or why not?

_____

    b)   the types of things people can do to reduce those negative impacts are accurate and worth discussing

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

Why or why not? (Are there any that aren't relevant there? any that should be added?)

_____

Q7: [Explain idea of such contests being done in local areas where people live with guidance and an open discussion for interested people about what actions can be taken by families to reduce the problems they face during and after floods and cyclones and guidance on skills in the different types of arts] If this were done here, people here would probably want to participate in the contests and get others here talking more about the types of things they can do differently to reduce such problems

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

If agree, why & how should they be conducted? If disagree, why not?

_____

Q8: [Explain idea of the products from such contests being showcased and exhibited at public events such as fairs, school events, and village/community meetings or on the radio or TV] People where we live would be interested to see the images or videos or hear the recordings that were created in these contests through such events or broadcasts and would be encouraged by them to discuss appropriate actions to reduce cyclone and flood impacts

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

If so, what would be the best way for them to be used to that people here would see and hear them? If not, why not?

_____

Evaluation for the 2019 Tikonzekere Arts Contests: Communicating Flood Vulnerability Reduction Good Practices through the Arts in Malawi Key Informant Interview Questions

Name:
Organization/Title/Role in 2019 Tikonzekere:

Q1: Can you think of any example of a communication message using the arts (song, poem, radio message, theater group – whether about cyclone preparedness, COVID, cholera, hygiene practices, or anything else) that contributed to people changing how they do things so that they would have reduced negative impacts? (yes / no) If so, what was it?

_____

Q2: I think the arts can be used to effectively communicate risks and good practices and get people to take appropriate action at the household and community level in Malawi

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

Why or why not?:

_____

Q3: Did you know about the Tikonzekere Arts Contests in 2019? (yes / no)

Q4: If so, how did you hear about them? (circle all that apply)
Radio   TV   Newspaper ad   Newspaper article   People mentioned
   Social Media   Printed posters   Supermarket Ad   Other:_____

Q5: I think such types of arts contests are a good way to communicate the types of problems people can face and the types of actions they can take to reduce them at the household and community level in Malawi

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

If so, how could these contests be improved/modified to be more effective? If not, what could be done instead that could better encourage people to do things that they can do to reduce these problems themselves without needing outside assistance or money?:

_____

Q6: I think these contests were organized well to encourage discussion and action of good practices to reduce cyclone and flood impacts

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

Why or why not?:

_____

Q7: I think the products from these contests can be used in preparedness trainings for communities/households, public events/fairs, schools, community gatherings or other venues for discussing appropriate actions to reduce cyclone and flood impacts

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

If so, why, how, and by whom? If not, why not?

_____

Q8: I think arts contests such as this should be done as a recurring set of processes and events rather than only doing it one time

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

Why or why not?

_____

Q9: I think arts contests such as this should be organized as separate communication interventions rather than as an integrated part of disaster preparedness trainings for community groups and schools

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither A or D	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

Why or why not?:

_____

Q10: Refer back to the example you gave in Q1. What was better about how that one was done (organized, recorded, communicated, etc) than those in Tikonzkere?

_____

Q11: Overall, do you have any additional comments about what you especially liked about how Tikonzekere was organized?

_____

Q12: Overall, do you have any additional comments about what you think could be done differently using the arts and/or such contests to better promote effective communication, decision-making, and action for household and community flood and cyclone vulnerability reduction?

_____

Selected Photos from the Contests, Related Events, & the Evaluation

Image 1. FGD with group of women and evaluation facilitator in Chilomoni, Blanture

Image 2. FGD with group of women and evaluation facilitator in Kanseche, T/A Lundu, Chikwawa

Image 3. Village Video Night Using Contests' Videos in Repo Village, Jali, Zomba

Image 4. Village Video Exhibition Using Contests' Videos in Ntaja, Machinga District

Image 5. Finalists from the Story and Poetry Contest at the Semi-Finals Event

Image 6. A Finalist Recording Audio for Her Story at the YONECO Recording Studio

Image 7. Some of the Audience at One of the Semi-Finals Events

Image 8. Some of the Press Coverage of the Media Briefing to Launch the Contests

Image 9. One of the Posters to Promote the Contests