

“Towards Creating a Safe Future”: An Assessment of the Causes of Flooding in Nsanje District, Lower Shire Malawi

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Abstract : The environment is a combination of two things: resources and hazards. One of the hazards that is a result of environmental changes is the occurrence of flooding. Floods are one of the disasters that are highly feared by people because they have a huge impact on the human population and their environment. In recent years, flooding disasters in the Nsanje district are increasing in both frequency and magnitude. This study aims to understand the root causes of this phenomenon. To understand the causes of flooding, this study focused on the case of TA Ndamera in the Nsanje district, southern Malawi. People in the Nsanje district face disruption in their day-to-day life because of floods that affect their communities. When floods happen, people lose their property, land, livestock, and even lives. The study was carried out in order to have a better understanding of the root causes of floods. The findings of this study may help the government and other development agencies to put in place mitigation measures that will make Nsanje District resilient to the occurrence of future flood hazards. Data was collected from the area of TA Ndamera in order to assess the causes of flooding in the district. Interviews, transect walks, and researcher observation was done to appreciate the topography of the district and evaluate other factors that are making the people become vulnerable to the impacts of flooding in the district. It was found that flooding in the district is mainly caused by heavy rainfall in the upper shire, settlements along river banks, deforestation, and the topography of the district in general. The research study ends by providing recommendation strategies that need to be put in place to increase the resilience of the communities to future flood hazards. The research recommends the development of indigenous knowledge systems to alert people of incoming floods, construction of evacuation centers to ease pressure on schools, savings, and insurance schemes, construction of dykes, desilting rivers, and afforestation.

Keywords : disaster causes, mitigation, safety measures, Nsanje Malawi

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