**Community Energy Scotland input – 2 minute presentation**

CES and CEM are a good example of a Malawi Scotland partnership where there is close working as sister organizations. Together we delivered the Community Energy Development Programme (CEDP) from 2012 – 2014 which remains a strong model for community initiated and managed renewable energy projects. The CEPD portfolio had 46 projects in12 communities in 12 different districts across all regions of Malawi with 20,439 people benefiting. CEDP has modestly supported the country’s push for improved cookstoves nationwide by setting up producer groups selling over 350 cookstoves.  A total of 9 solar lantern social enterprises were set up by CBOs that sold 465 solar lanterns. All CBOs had generated income by 6 months and patterns in energy expenditure validated users paying for electricity and generating savings from solar lantern adoption. For educational attainment, the overall trend is that exam performance is very gradually improving in CEDP-targeted schools and that lighting does make a difference to teacher’s job satisfaction.

The photos show some of the improvements this programme brought to a number of communities, including energy for water pumping and storage, for schools and enabling energy efficient cookstoves.

CEM has continued to develop this good work and together CEM and CES are now implementing an 80KW Solar Micro Grid Project to power 4 offgrid villages in Mchinji which will provide electricity for households, the local schools, farmers’ irrigation pumps, clinics and help to stimulate the growth of local businesses. The capital element of this project is funded by UNDP and a grant from the Climate Justice Innovation Fund is supporting the development of capacity in the community to develop a sustainable business model for maintaining and growing the grid into the future.

Through a European funded PITCHES project we also are scoping the possibility of hydrogen powered systems for isolated communities in Malawi.

We aim to grow our partnership from strength to strength and want to build on the good work we have done, to reach other communities with such community driven solutions. We are aware that decentralized energy is among the key priorities of government and that the Government of Malawi is actively considering restructuring of the Rural Electrification Fund to also support other offgrid decentralized solutions other than just the grid and we would support this approach.

We see this Fund as key strategy to sustaining installations in offgrid community establishments. For example, sustainability of installations in rural health clinics is hugely compromised especially on maintenance and replacement of components like batteries. When a facility (like health post) is connected to the grid, the government provides the utility costs but there are problems with ongoing repairs, such as the replacement of a battery on a solar installation. Experiences from elsewhere, are that the REF is the one used to maintain such RE installations in offgrid communities.

We urge the Government to accelerate the implementation of the National Energy Policy (NEP) which, as we understand, is still in draft form and yet has exciting plans. The Policy gives us hope that Malawi will accelerate the access to clean energy for most of its citizens. At CES, through the collaborative partnerships we have with CEM and other partners, we are available to provide support to see Malawi’s exciting plans come to fruition.