**BIOGAS ASSESSMENT PROJECT**

**Site ID: 38**

**Date: September 24, 2022**

**Interviewer**: There did this digester originate from?

**Interviewee**: The people that came mentioned that they came from Blantyre.

**Interviewer**: What was the name of the organization?

**Interviewee**: They didn’t tell us.

**Interviewer**: When I came here, I told you I’m coming from Poly. Are you sure, they didn’t tell you who they were, and where they came from?

**Interviewee**: Yeah, they didn’t mention that.

**Interviewer**: Why didn’t you ask?

**Interviewee**: Uh, they did things in a hurry, and they weren’t organized.

**Interviewer**: Okay, how many people from the installation company came?

**Interviewee**: It was three people.

**Interviewer**: Who founded this?

**Interviewee**: They didn’t explain that to us.

**Interviewer**: I think it came from UNDP.

**Interviewee**: Yeah, it could be.

**Interviewer**: When was it built?

**Interviewee**: It was in 2017

**Interviewer**: What month was that?

**Interviewee**: I have forgotten the month.

**Interviewer**: Was your digester commissioned together with the other beneficiaries?

**Interviewee**: Yeah, it was the same month: the digesters were installed here in Mtolongo and Kachere at the same time.

**Interviewer**: I think in Kachere it was in July or August.

**Interviewee**: We did things at the same time; we sourced and prepared feedstock at the same time.

**Interviewer**: Okay, what was your role?

**Interviewee**: I was a chair of the beneficiaries here.

**Interviewer**: Oh, nice! Therefore, you supervised the other beneficiaries.

**Interviewee**: Yeah, I was there leader.

**Interviewer**: Apart from that, what was your other role? For example, you have told me you were responsible for sourcing and preparing feedstock. Apart from this, else did you get involved in?

**Interviewee**: I dug the hole, and I supported in placing the reactor inside the hole. After that, I collected water 3 drums (200Liters) of water, which was added to the manure. Then, I was responsible for mixing the feedstock that we did put in the reactor.

**Interviewer**: How many people dug the hole?

**Interviewee**: I did it myself.

**Interviewer**: It must be some work, I can imagine!

**Interviewee**: Yeah, everything was done in haste. I dug the hole in one day.

**Interviewer**: How many people were involved in collecting and preparing feedstock?

**Interviewee**: That was a tough job. I remember we were stacking fresh cow manure in sack bags, and then transporting it in a wheelbarrow or on a bicycle because we got the manure from people within the community.

**Interviewer**: Like how far from your home?

**Interviewee**: Some were a bit closer and others were far.

**Interviewer**: Did you collect some from your cow house?

**Interviewee**: No.

**Interviewer**: How many bags did you collect?

**Interviewee**: It was more than 15 bags.

**Interviewer**: Did you do this alone? Or, some people wear helping you?

**Interviewee**: I did this with my wife and children.

**Interviewer**: Like how many people?

**Interviewee**: Four people.

**Interviewer**: How was it like you getting cow dung from other people?

**Interviewee**: The people here are not stingy when it comes to sharing cow manure.

**Interviewer**: I have heard some people just don’t allow people to enter their cow houses…

**Interviewee**: Yes, it's true. Some people do not allow a stranger to go into the cows houses. If anything, they just go there themselves and give you the manure. Nevertheless, it’s not the same.

**Interviewer**: Why do people deny other people to access their cow houses?

**Interviewee**: It is because traditional things.

**Interviewer**: Why do they do that, for security reasons?

**Interviewee**: Aah, it’s simply because of meaningless beliefs.

**Interviewer**: How were you selected as a beneficiary?

**Interviewee**: Chief [name redacted] chose me because he had faith in us that we could manage to do the hard work of feeding it – it wasn’t an easy job, so others couldn’t have managed. I’m so dedicated and that’s why he decided to choose me.

**Interviewer**: Are you dedicated?

**Interviewee**: Yeah, and even the installers were surprised by how fast I executed the job, and they were so impressed with the work.

**Interviewer**: Did you know anything about biogas before?

**Interviewee**: No, I didn’t know anything about biogas. I knew about biogas when I was chosen, and then briefed about requirements and its use it by the installers on the

**Interviewer**: You have told me the chief selected you. How did it all happen? In some areas, for example, in the Kachere, it was the community people who chose the beneficiary at a community meeting called by the chiefs. What was the selection process say?

**Interviewee**: It’s the same here. We were called for a community meeting by the chief. Then, he told the people that five people would be chosen as beneficiaries of biogas. So, at the end, I was chosen together with other people, in front of people of the community.

**Interviewer**: So who made the choice? Was it the people or the chief?

**Interviewee**: In this village, we have a chief who is under a senior chief. So, our chief was asked by the senior chief to choose a trustworthy and hardworking person. The same happened with the other beneficiaries. After the beneficiaries were chosen, then the senior chief decided that among the beneficiaries, there should be a leader, and then he chose me as chairperson.

**Interviewer**: What were your expectations?

**Interviewee**: My expectation was that the work I did was going to reap fruits. For example, I would be able to use the digester for cooking. However, after a short time, I realize that we had wasted the energy for nothing. I gained nothing from it, and I lost a lot. I’m saying this because after the installation of the digesters, our names were not included in any other project. They said that the digester were going to last f long and we were going to benefit from them for a very long time, so it was good for others to get other the things too. Sadly, the digesters never worked, and we gained nothing at all…. We were only involved in hard work, but without reward.

**Interviewer**: Which projects were you sidelined from?

**Interviewee**: For example, people received food packages, money and other assorted items when there was hunger, but that time our names were not considered because they said we had already benefited from biogas.

**Interviewer**: Saying you had benefited from biogas….

**Interviewee**: Yeah

**Interviewer**: But, you didn’t get anything from it.

**Interviewee**: You see!

**Interviewer**: It was tough. What did the installers tell you to expect from this?

**Interviewee**: The chiefs told us that before installation we would go for training to learn about the digester, for example, feedstock preparation and all that. But, after a week or so, we saw the installers coming to tell us how we should dig holes and that. When we asked to them about the training, they said we would go for training at some point, but we never went for training.

**Interviewer**: So you dug the hole, and they were like you would go for training after everything, but you didn’t go.

**Interviewee**: yeah, and our Senior Chief was surprised as he was also told that we would go for training before installation. They even told him that we would install the digester according to the training. So, when we started the work the chief didn’t do anything, he just let things go.

**Interviewer**: In your opinion, why do you think the training never happened?

**Interviewee**: I think someone took out the training component for his gain.

**Interviewer**: Okay, okay, I think you have partly, if not fully answered my question. My next question was going to come regardless. What kind of training did you receive?

**Interviewee**: We did not receive any type of training.

**Interviewer**: If you did not receive any type of training, then how were you able to switch it on?

**Interviewee**: After feeding it with the initial feedstock, they came to commission it. When they came, they asked for matchstick and we gave them, and then they lighted the fire. It produced gas, but it was for a very short that you couldn't cook anything on.

**Interviewer**: So what did you learn? Did they tell you how to make feedstock?

**Interviewee**: No, there wasn’t any training on that. They just the said take manure and mix with water. That was all.

**Interviewer**: So there was nothing at all

**Interviewee**: There was no training at all. But, in the beginning, they said we would go for training first. Then after that, we would dig a hole, and at the training you would learn how dig a hole. They also said we would learn how to make feedstock, like what’s the right ratio for mixing feedstock and all that, but that never happened.

**Interviewer**: So, after installation and commissioning of the digester you did not received training. How prepared to run or operate the reactor did you feel you were?

**Interviewee**: They told us we could manage to use it with the information we received. But then how could we use a thing that didn’t work. So, we just abandoned it. Then, they came after some time.

**Interviewer**: Like after how long?

**Interviewee**: I think it was after a month. They came late at 6:45PM this other day saying they weren’t sitting down, and that I should come with them to their car. In the car, they had forms, and they took the four forms saying I was supposed to sign. I asked them what I was I signing for. They responded that their big bosses sent them, it was urgent, and that’s why they even came late. Then, I suggested that we should go to the chief, but they said no because they had already been there. Then, I said okay and signed. Before they went, they just said they were going to bring solar panels.

**Interviewer**: Oh, that was after you told them that the digesters were not working?

**Interviewee**: Yeah, and that’s when they suggested that they should bring solar panels.

**Interviewer**: so, it was like the admitted that they had failed and the solution was to bring solar panels?

**Interviewee**: Yeah (laughs)

**Interviewer**: (laughs) that was tough

**Interviewee**: (laughs) very tough indeed!

**Interviewer**: Do you have papers?

**Interviewee**: No, they didn’t leave me any paper. They took all four papers I signed.

**Interviewer**: Really?

**Interviewee**: I mean it!

**Interviewer**: Let’s go back to the community meeting where you were selected as a beneficiary. You had the right to say no. I mean I’ve seen people selected in such circumstances, and saying no for reasons best know to themselves. Why didn’t you say no? I mean, why did you accept it to be built here?

**Interviewee**: Yes, of course, people do say no sometimes when they are chosen to get something. I didn’t say no because I found it very useful and beneficial. My wife was even happy because she thought she would no longer go to search for firewood or charcoal. Sure, it’s a good thing.

**Interviewer**: How useful and beneficial was it going to be for you?

**Interviewee**: It was all about cooking; I thought with the digester, I would be able to cook everything whether it is nsima, side dish, and warm water for bathing, and all that.

**Interviewer**: How did you meet your energy needs before the intervention?

**Interviewee**: I was using firewood and charcoal.

**Interviewer**: Where do you get firewood?

**Interviewee**: I get it at a very far place.

**Interviewer**: What is it?

**Interviewee**: It’s more like a bush land.

**Interviewer**: What challenges do you face there? Do forest officers not protect it?

**Interviewee**: No, where we get wood is not protected. But, if we travel a little bit further to get firewood that’s where we meet forest officials.

**Interviewer**: If you go at 6:00 in the morning, what time do return home?

**Interviewee**: If we go at 6:00 in the morning, we come back at 11:00AM

**Interviewer**: Oh, that’s some distant. How much is a bag of charcoal?

**Interviewee**: It’s K3000

**Interviewer**: How many bags of charcoal did you use in a month?

**Interviewee**: We used two bags.

**Interviewer**: That’s like K6000 a month. To run a digester, you to need cows, did you have the cow that time?

**Interviewee**: No.

**Interviewer**: So all the cow menu you are using was from other people. Did you pay for the manure? Or, was it for free?

**Interviewee**: Some people were selling me; some good-hearted people were giving me for free.

**Interviewer**: How much was a bag of manure?

**Interviewee**: Some were selling at K500, and others were selling at K1000.

**Interviewer**: How did it work after commissioning?

**Interviewee**: It didn’t work at all... To tell you the truth, I didn’t use it. If I had used it to cook anything, I would have told you… Yes, of course, it produced little fire but it wasn’t enough to cooking anything at all.

**Interviewer**: From the very first day?

**Interviewee**: Yes

**Interviewer**: Some have told me that they cooked nsima once, but you didn’t?

**Interviewee**: To say someone cooked nsima on it here is a lie. No one here ever cooked nsima on it. If people here told you that they used it for nsima on it, they are lying to you. No one ever used it even for boiling water. No one ever used it for cooking. We never used it here! I went to ever house to see how everyone was faring, but I didn’t see digester working.

**Interviewer**: When the installers came, they said you would use the digesters for cooking. So when that happened, what did they say? What did you say?

**Interviewee**: I told them that you have seen that it’s not working, so how are you going to help us. They said we should not worry because they would come with a different solution. Then, after some days, that’s when they came with the papers. Then, I asked them then why they were forcing me to sign papers when the thing was not working. They just said I should not worry, and they would bring solar panels. Then I said okay and signed the papers. Since then they have never come here and haven’t brought the solar system.

**Interviewer**: So you thought it wasn’t worth signing the papers?

**Interviewee**: Yeah, and for me I had problems with signing the papers, and I even told them that signing the papers was dubious, and it was like making fools of us. I did not hide any words from them.

**Interviewer**: What did they say?

**Interviewee**: They didn’t say anything. They don’t like dealing with people who are knowledgeable.

**Interviewer**: That’s something else. How many people did you stay here that time?

**Interviewee**: We were 8 people.

**Interviewer**: So on the first day, it didn`t work? How was the second and third day like?

**Interviewee**: It was like the first day nothing changed. Moreover, the first day was better because if I light up the burners with matchstick, it was producing flame that would not stay for a minute or so. However, on the second day onwards, it wasn’t producing fire at all when lit up. It was zero. Pure zero.

**Interviewer**: Did you feed it after? If yes, how many times?

**Interviewee**: Of course, we fed it for two days, and then we gave up.

**Interviewer**: What were the operation requirements?

**Interviewee**: They acknowledged that the digester was producing very like fire. They said to make it work it would need solar panels to boost it up.

**Interviewer**: (laughs) oh

**Interviewee**: The installers were crooks. They weren’t here to install the digester, but to fill their stomachs and that’s why there was no order.

**Interviewer**: So to make it work, I imagine you needed cow manure together with the so-called solar panels. What else was required?

**Interviewee**: We only needed to mix cow manure with water, and then stir the mixture until the feedstock was somewhat thick. In the process, we were advised to remove trash to avoid blockages.

**Interviewer**: How much did you feed it, and how often?

**Interviewee**: I was collecting one bag (50kgs) of manure. Then, I was removing trash from the manure whilst mixing feedstock until the feedstock was thick and smooth.

**Interviewer**: How much water did you add?

**Interviewee**: I was adding 2 buckets (20 liters) of water to each one bag, and then mix thoroughly until suitable slurry.

**Interviewer**: How did you prepare the feedstock? I mean, did you use a mixer or something?

**Interviewee**: I was mixing the feedstock using hands without any protection in order to break lumps and remove trash until the slurry was suitable… They lied to us that they would give us gloves (laugh)

**Interviewer**: (laughs) Oh, they lied to you that they were going to give you gloves….

**Interviewee**: Yeah, they also lied to us that they would supply us with work suits. And, after those broken promises, I had a feeling that things would not end well.

**Interviewer**: Didn’t you feel that handling cow manure with bare hands was risky to your healthy?

**Interviewee**: Yeah, but we felt like they forced us to work without protection. I mean, they said they would provide gloves but didn’t. Still, they were asking us to work, so could we have said no?

**Interviewer**: Yeah, you still had to work. I mean, if you didn’t work, it would have seemed as if you were unwilling to get the digester. Where did you say you used to get cow manure?

**Interviewee**: That side.

**Interviewer**: How far is it from here?

**Interviewee**: It’s relative far.

**Interviewer**: If you walk or use a bicycle, how long would it take you?

**Interviewee**: It was taking 30 minutes to go and return on a bicycle.

**Interviewer**: This is like an hour walk. Who is responsible for feeding it?

**Interviewer**: I was responsible.

**Interviewer**: Alone?

**Interviewee**: Yeah.

**Interviewer**: You mean no one was supporting you in any way?

**Interviewee**: The women were supporting me in water collection. I was the responsible for feedstock preparation and feeding the reactor.

**Interviewer**: Where did the women get water?

**Interviewee**: It’s not far. We have a borehole there.

**Interviewer**: Where?

**Interviewee**: Behind that tree

**Interviewer**: That’s like 100 meters. Not bad.

**Interviewee**: Yeah, sourcing water wasn’t a problem. So, we were collecting water in the evening, so that we could use it the next day.

**Interviewer**: Oh, okay. Did you soak the manure?

**Interviewee**: No, the manure was always fresh, so we couldn’t do that. We simply collected water in the evening to be effective and lessen the workload. It takes time to get water in the morning as everybody is there.

**Interviewer**: Oh, I see. How did you feel about preparing feedstock and feeding the reactor?

**Interviewee**: It was a tough job. It was very tiresome. It wasn’t easy to feed the reactor. We did the job from morning to late afternoon to fill up the digester bag, so you can see that it was very tough, for sure.

**Interviewer**: How many times did you feed it altogether? I mean, you said it is the first time to start it up with 15 bags and 3 drums of water. After that, you feed it regularly with feedstock not as much as the first time to keep it running, how often were you supposed to feed it?

**Interviewee**: No, no. The installers told us to fill the reactor with huge amount of manure and water, and after that, there was no need to feed it again. And, we did this work in two days.

**Interviewer**: You mean you didn’t feed it again after the initial feed?

**Interviewee**: We didn’t feed it after that. The installers told us to feed it with enough water and feedstock until it was full. So, we did that for two days until the back was full. After that we were done.

**Interviewer**: And you didn’t feed it again after that?

**Interviewee**: We didn’t because they told us to feed it only once. So to feed the reactor again would have compromised it, because it had reached its level. So, if we had feed it after, it would have exploded.

**Interviewer**: So, you mean you only fed it once?

**Interviewee**: I didn’t because it only needs to be fully fed once, and after that it enough and it keeps running on it’ own

**Interviewer**: Some people after feeding it the first time, they also feed it regular maybe with 2 buckets of manure a day or two or even a week…

**Interviewee**: Aaah, they didn’t tell us that. What’s the purpose of feeding it again? If you can feed it again, then it may even explode. I mean, when it’s full it really gets full. You can even stand on the reactor without it being shrunk (laughs)

**Interviewer**: (Laughs) so, they didn't talk about feeding it afterwards?

**Interviewee**: Yeah

**Interviewer**: What were the maintenance requirements?

**Interviewee**: To tell you the truth, they didn’t talk anything about maintenance. They didn’t tell us whom to consult when we had a problem. They didn’t tell us anything. They were doing things without organization; they just cared about their welfare not about us.

**Interviewer**: They didn’t give you their numbers to call them when you had a problem?

**Interviewee**: Nothing. They didn’t give me their number, but they took mine.

**Interviewer**: You didn’t ask them what you were supposed to do when there was a problem?

**Interviewee**: I did, but they only told me that they would know when it’s not working, and then they would be coming.

**Interviewer**: (laughs) how would they know it had a problem?

**Interviewee**: I don't know. They just said they would be coming regularly. That was all. And, I was like, oh, you would be coming, and I stopped because I didn’t want to bother them - they are bosses.

**Interviewer**: Certainly, it didn’t meet your needs…

**Interviewee**: Not at all. It didn’t work at all. Nothing happened.

**Interviewer**: You didn't even cook on it once…

**Interviewee**: Not

**Interviewer**: Porridge?

**Interviewee**: No.

**Interviewer**: What were the challenges?

**Interviewee**: Firstly, it’s the fact that it did not work at all. Secondly, we were sideline from other projects by the chief, so it got us in trouble. The other thing is that people were making fun of us; they were like what have we gained from all the effort. They even blame us for accepting the digester. They said they were clever to not to accept the digesters, but we were dump. They were asking many provocative questions like why did you accept it, and what have you gained from it? They even said that we became fools for accepting the digesters. So, it affected us a lot because laughing stocks to the community. And, that`s why most people just got the digester out of the hole and torn them out of anger (laughs)

**Interviewer**: (laughs) oh

**Interviewee**: Yeah, most people got the bags out because they didn’t benefit anything from it. The beneficiaries wondered how the project implementers gave them useless things like the digesters. People were very angry because they were sidelines from other benefits or community projects for accepting the digester. As a result, most people took out the reactors from the hole and tore them. As for me, I did not take it out; I just left it in the ground.

**Interviewer**: Why were the people making fun of you?

**Interviewee**: The installers told us that would go for training, and that people would not buy charcoal or firewood for cooking. But, they said it’s not easy to start using it because it’s need a lot of work at the beginning. So, some people when they heard they couldn’t manage it. Some people who were even chosen as beneficiaries denied it, because they though the job was too hard. But for us we accepted the challenge, and we expected to benefit. So, when the people saw that digesters weren’t working and that we were being sidelined from projects, they started talking. They were like we had been cheated. They mocked us for not going for training. So, it was a challenge, but we accepted it because such is life.

**Interviewer**: From experience, most community people become more attracted in the project when you talk of training. In your opinion, why is that?

**Interviewee**: [Stays quite for a time]

**Interviewer**: Have you understood me?

**Interviewee**: I have understood you very, very much. You have asked me why community people are attracted to projects that involve training. People become attracted to such projects because people expect to learn things that they don’t know. They also expect that after the training they would be taught to act differently in a way that can benefit their lives. Also, that time, they told us that once we undergo the training, we would be training other people on biogas so that more people would be attracted to it, and eventually adopt it. So, people thought it was interesting to learn the benefits of biogas and teach others to protect the environment. So it was sad that we expected all these things, but it never happened, and that’s why people became angry.

**Interviewer**: So it's not about the training allowance that motivates people?

**Interviewee**: To some it’s that, you know, it takes all kinds to make the world. So, some people associates trained with allowances (money), but some like trainings because they want to learn.

**Interviewer**: You have opened my mind on that. I was failing to understand why community people become more interested in community project once there a training component. I have seen people showing little interest to wishing to be group leaders once you mentioned training….

**Interviewee**: What you are saying is true. What most people think of trainings is money. It’s true.

**Interviewer**: I want to have a clear picture of the fire you got on the day commission. You say you couldn’t cook on the fire because it wasn't strong enough. What kind of fire did you get? Did the flame stay for long but the flames very little? Or, you got strong flames but didn’t stay for long?

**Interviewee**: It was a very weak fire and it stayed for a very short time. And, that’s why they were quick to say they needed solar panels to boost it up (laughs). The fire was very little upon ignition, and in a short time, it was going off. If stayed for long, for 30 minutes, then we would have been using it. But, it was just staying for a very short time. And, that was the same with all other digesters, because I did follow up the other beneficiaries, as I was there chairperson.

**Interviewer**: Did you meet as a group of beneficiaries and talk?

**Interviewee**: No, we didn’t have the energy to do that after all that had happened. It showed that it had no future.

**Interviewer**: so the solar that was coming, was it supposed to be connected to the digester or the solar system was coming as a different entity?

**Interviewee**: I don’t know. The installers talked about it, and I didn’t really discern what they were proposing. I was just listening and nodding to their proposal. So we were only waiting for the solar panels to see whether they would work or not.

**Interviewer**: It didn’t work, and they didn’t give you their numbers. Did you do anything to fix it?

**Interviewee**: No, we didn’t

**Interviewer**: So you just abandoned it?

**Interviewee**: We went to the chief and he told us not to do anything, but wait for the installers, as they communicated that they would come.

**Interviewer**: yeah, so that was one way of not making …

**Interviewee**: Of making the problem bigger.

**Interviewer**: Yeah. Today, if the project installers call you to inquire about the digester, what would you say to them? What is the current state of your digester today?

**Interviewee**: I would tell them vividly that the thing you gave us is not working us, just like you left it. There is nothing.

**Interviewer**: Do you have the equipment?

**Interviewee**: Yes, I have. I have all the equipment. But, my friends removed the bags from the hole.

**Interviewer**: Before the interview, you mentioned the pipes.

**Interviewee**: Oh, some people came, not the installers, and they said they would bring solar panels too, I asked them to see the pipes that were damaged by the sun. And, they saw that.

**Interviewer**: And, what did they say?

**Interviewee**: That they would bring different pipes. You know, it is easier said than done.

**Interviewer**: Oh, okay. You have talked a lot and I’ve talked a lot regarding the digester. When you look back today, how did it reach this stage? And, what do you think you caused it?

**Interviewee**: I think it reached the stage because the project implementers did not have order in the execution of the project. And it looks like it was an organized plan that these things should not work. And if you ask, any beneficiary they would tell you the same. The project implementers did not want us to use the digesters and that’s why they did things anyhow. I mean, if they had trained us and leave their numbers things would have worked. There was need for communication between them and us regarding its functionality. The problem is that they just got our numbers and didn’t leave us their numbers. And when it didn’t work, they lied about the solar system.

**Interviewer**: Do you thing someone would come all the way from Blantyre to give you something he or she knows won’t work?

**Interviewee**: Yeah, it happens. They just wanted money. The only cared about their wellbeing. This project was about them and not us. It had nothing to do with us. We were just pawns.

**Interviewer**: How do you meet your energy needs now?

**Interviewee**: I use firewood and charcoal.

**Interviewer**: How much charcoal do you use in a month?

**Interviewee**: It’s the same like before (2 bags of charcoal)

**Interviewer**: We are going towards the end of the interview. How much did the reactor cost?

**Interviewee**: They didn’t tell me anything about its cost

**Interviewer**: Did they tell you who paid the money?

**Interviewee**: No, they didn’t.

**Interviewer**: Did you contribute anything in kind?

**Interviewee**: I can only think of the equipment we use used for working.

**Interviewer**: What equipment?

**Interviewee**: For example, the buckets and sack bags for carrying cow manure!

**Interviewer**: Some say they cooked nsima with chicken for the installers as a token of appreciation….

**Interviewee**: No, I didn’t do that. I shouldn’t lie to say I gave them something to eat. I would be sinning to God to say I gave them something.

**Interviewer**: Was any masonry work involved? Did you line the hole?

**Interviewee**: No

**Interviewer**: Why not?

**Interviewee**: They didn’t ask us to line the hole.

**Interviewer**: Okay. What special items have to be imported from another country?

**Interviewee**: Yeah, they told us that the digester was from another country.

**Interviewer**: Which country?

**Interviewee**: No, they didn’t specify.

**Interviewer**: When you look back at the digester, you can say it helped you to stop sourcing firewood or save you money… or any of its objectives.

**Interviewee**: Yeah, the same way it was before the digester, was the same way after its installation, and it is the same way now.

**Interviewer**: It only brought shame!

**Interviewee**: It only brought shame on this household! (Laughs)

**Interviewer**: (laughs) it’s sad. We are remaining with 3 questions. What is your opinion of biogas?

**Interviewee**: (laughs heavily) with the experience I had, there is nothing good I can say about biogas. (Laughs). I can only talk bad things about it… Does it have any benefit? No, no (laughs). If it had something good about it, the whole village would have known because I could have spread the message. I remember when you called, I talked with one woman who was also a beneficiary, and she was like you should not go there, you should only stop here (laugh). And, I was like the person just wants to ask few things, and she was like no, no way, they shouldn’t come. Those people cheated us, and shouldn’t cheat us again… We became laughing stocks in the community because of them, and after all this time, why should they come (laughs).

**Interviewer**: Oh, so you can only talk bad about it?

**Interviewee**: And it`s not only me. Every beneficiary would talk bad about it, because no one saw its positive side. But, maybe, biogas itself is good and we think it is bad, because some individuals failed to make them run.

**Interviewer**: What bad things can you say about it?

**Interviewee**: I can only say, I did not use about Biogas, and it did not work. So, that’s the bad thing about it. And on top of it, we became laughing stocks before the community because of it. But, I don't know if it works in other communities with the expertise that was given to them.

**Interviewer**: Do you think training would help?

**Interviewee**: The installers know how these things work, so they should transfer that knowledge to the people to make it work. In our case, things were done in shortcut. They should have had a step-by-step approach on how biogas work and can be maintained, and transfer the skills to us. It’s sad they didn’t do that.

**Interviewer**: What is the future of biogas in Malawi?

**Interviewee**: The basic principle of biogas in Malawi is that people should benefit from it by using it for cooking in their homes, thereby protecting and maintaining the environment. I think that’s what biogas is about that. So, many people would generally have interest in that, and would love to use it. But, if it is implemented as it was in implemented here, I don’t think people would love to adopt it.

**Interviewer**: So you thinking people in a community setting like this are interested in saving the environment?

**Interviewee**: Yeah, and we are big on that. People don’t encourage one another to plant trees, and have woodlots to save the environment.

**Interviewer**: What is the important of trees or the environment to the community?

**Interviewee**: Trees are very important because they bring rain they protect the ground from soil erosion, and it acts as a windshield when there is too much wind etc.

**Interviewer**: I like the way you have articulated it. How did you learn this?

**Interviewee**: (laughs) I went to school

**Interviewer**: (laughs) I see. Last one, if you could have designed your waste or energy intervention, what would you have chosen instead?

**Interviewee**: There are so many alternatives that I would have liked to see. When we go to other communities, we see people using solar energy, so I would like to see this community using that. Solar is good. Then, you can also think of electricity. We would like to see that as well.

**Interviewer**: I have seen a power line.

**Interviewee**: It’s on that side where the maize meal is. It hasn’t reached here.

**Interviewer**: Why have you chosen those?

**Interviewee**: Maybe those things can work. Biogas has failed.

**Interviewer**: Why do you say that?

**Interviewee**: I think you have the expertise to make something work. And, I didn’t have a chat with the other people like we have. The other people seemed in a rush, so I believe this conversation will lead to something good.

**Interviewer**: That was my last question, in close do you have anything to say?

**Interviewee**: I’m very happy you came, and I would like to apologize for not finding me yesterday. It is good today we sat down and have a good conversation, I’m very happy. Thanks.

**Interviewer**: Thanks for the interview. I have learnt a lot from you too.