

Learning by Ear – Climate Change

Episode 09

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Editing: Johannes Beck

CHARACTERS:

Scene 1:

- MR GITAKI – ENVIRONMENT MINISTER (61)
- MRS CHRISTINE KIMASI – RENEWABLE ENERGY INVESTOR (50)
- LORNA (16)
- CAROL (14)
- JOSHUA (15)
- ALEX (15)

Scene 2:

- ALEX (15)
- JOSHUA (15)
- CAROL (14)
- LORNA (16)
-

Scene 3:

- MR GITAKI – ENVIRONMENT MINISTER (61)
- MR KAPOOR – NATIONAL POWER BOARD (60)
- MRS CHRISTINE KIMASI – RENEWABLE ENERGY INVESTOR (50)
- LORNA (16)
- CAROL (14)
- JOSHUA (15)
- ALEX (15)

Intro:

Welcome to Learning by Ear and Episode Nine of our radio drama about climate change. The Minister for the Environment steps in to help the Task Force. Will the National Power Board be ready to negotiate to avoid contributing to the climate change?

Find out more as we listen to today's episode!

4. MR GITAKI: Good morning to all of you, ah, I don't think we've met.

5. MRS KIMASI: I'm Christine Kimasi. I'm a renewable energy investor. I'm working with the Task Force to come up with some sustainable energy solutions.

6. MR GIATKI: That's marvellous, and exactly the kind of person we need on board - a business person!

7. MRS KIMASI: Well, actually I have the Task Force to thank. I'm just here to get the financing and backing.

8. MR GITAKI: So, what are the options for Dhowville, in your opinion?

9. MRS KIMASI: Well, we have three options – biogas, hydro and wind power.

10. MR GITAKI: Mmm, wind power – I was recently at a conference in Egypt discussing the potential of wind power in Africa.

11. LORNA: In Egypt? Do they use wind power there?

12. MR GITAKI: Yes, Egypt has one of the largest wind farms in Africa. It's in the Sahara Desert – and they've used a particular design of wind turbine that can cope with very high temperatures and a very dry environment. Obviously extremely useful in North Africa.

13. CAROL: But how does it work?

14. MRS KIMASI: The great thing about wind power is that it is clean, renewable and has very low greenhouse gas emissions.

15. CAROL: So, can we set it up in Dhowville?

16. MRS KIMASI: It's possible, although there isn't enough wind here to get the whole country or even a city running purely on wind power.

17. MR GITAKI: We also have to consider whether the town would agree to having large wind turbines. They can be quite an eyesore.

18. MRS KIMASI: And that's before you consider the cost of investment to build the big turbines. Investors might not be so happy to invest if they don't think the town could keep them maintained.

19. JOSHUA: But I imagine that once all the turbines have been built, wind power must be very cheap, isn't it?

20. MRS KIMASI: Yes, Joshua, it is cheap, because once you have the wind turbines, you don't need any fuel. It's just wind that powers them. It's finding the right location with enough wind that might be tricky.

21. MR GITAKI: Ok, next move – a meeting with the National Power Board to battle this out.

22. MRS KIMASI: Yes, of course. I've already begun talks with some investors who'd be keen to pitch in some money.

23. MR GITAKI: And I've spoken to Mr Kapoor of the Power Board. He has agreed to meet me tomorrow morning. I told him I'd have a few advisors with me. That's you lot.

24. CAROL: So, we finally get to meet them.

25. MR GITAKI: Ok, let's meet tomorrow at 10 am.

26. ALL: Thanks, Sir, see you tomorrow.

SFX: (SCRAPING CHAIRS)

Scene Two: Just outside Dhowville

SFX ATMO: CITY NOISES

27. JOSHUA: Alex, where are you taking us?

28. ALEX: I like Mrs Kimasi's idea of wind power and I know exactly the spot where they could put the turbines.

29. CAROL: Really? Where?

30. ALEX: That's what I'm going to show you.

SFX: **SLUM AREA**
CHICKENS/PEOPLE/MUSIC

31. JOSHUA: Hey, there's my house. Are you taking us to the forest out of town up on the hill?

32. ALEX: Yeah, exactly – just beyond the slum up there. It's the perfect place for the wind turbines.

33. CAROL: You are joking, Alex?

34. ALEX: No, of course not. It's definitely the windiest place in Dhowville.

35. LORNA: But, Alex, that would mean cutting down the entire forest. That would be a crime and totally against everything we are doing to halt climate change!

36. ALEX: What do you mean?

36. CAROL: Trees are vital, imperative. They are so important for stabilising the climate.

37. JOSHUA: Yeah, Carol's right. Trees and plants help remove carbon dioxide gas from the air. They store it in their leaves, in the wood and in their roots.

38. CAROL: So, when trees and plants are cut down or destroyed, this stored carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere where it contributes to climate change.

39. JOSHUA: That's true. I read that deforestation contributes to about twenty per cent of the carbon emissions that cause climate change. There are huge emissions from trees being cut down in countries like Brazil, Argentina and Indonesia.

40. ALEX: Jeess, Josh, I had no idea!

41. JOSHUA: Our tropical rainforests in Africa play a big role in absorbing the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere from the burning of fossil fuels. We need them!

- 42. LORNA:** I guess you could say jungles and forests are like climate buffer zones.
- 43. CAROL:** Alex, think of all the animal species that live in the forest. They'd all die! And the plants that...
- 44. ALEX:** Ok, stop! I just assumed that forests were there for us to use as firewood, or to chop down so that we can grow our own crops.
- 45. LORNA:** No! That's why people are so worried about losing the Amazon or the Congo Forest. These woodlands are so precious and once destroyed they are difficult or even almost impossible to get back.

46. ALEX: Right, I had no idea. But can you re-forest areas?

47. CAROL: Yes, you can recapture carbon by reforesting cleared land. The new forests then take carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it again in the trees and the soil.

48. JOSHUA: But, then, Carol, there are problems – look at the forest up there – loads of different trees, different plants and species living there.

49. CAROL: What's wrong with that?

50. JOSHUA: Well, when you reforest using just one type of tree, the other vegetation is prevented from growing back and you get a monoculture. I guess, like farmers growing fields of maize.

51. CAROL: Oh, so you mean you then have to treat the forest like a farmer would his field, using pesticides, and fertilizer.

52. JOSHUA: Exactly, and then, if the trees are hit by a disease, the whole forest can be wiped out. You don't get that rich, natural biodiversity by planting monocultures with pines or eucalyptus.

53. ALEX: But that sounds like it could be worse than deforestation.

54. JOSHUA: No, it's not. But it's like every solution we look at to halt climate change. There are always some disadvantages. You just have to choose the solution with the least. Come on, let's go. I'm being eaten alive by all these mosquitoes! **(swotting mosquitoes)**

Scene Three: Dhowville Local Government Office

SFX ATMO: OFFICE RECEPTION

55. MR GITAKI: **(walking & talking)** It's very good of you to come to this meeting, Mr Kapoor.

SFX: LIFE DOORS OPENING & CLOSING

SFX ATMO: INSIDE LIFT

56. MR GITAKI: You know, the government is determined to get more of the population connected to the power grid. It's my job to try and see if we can do it in a renewable way.

57. MR KAPOOR: Of course, Sir, but you know we have to do what makes good business sense too and...

SFX: LEFT BELL & DOORS OPEN

58. MR GITAKI: **(Walking & Talking)** ...which is why I've asked a renewable energy investor to the meeting along with some of my advisors.

SFX: (OPENING DOOR)

- 59. MR GITAKI:** Here they are! Everyone I'd like to introduce Mr Kapoor of the National Power Board. Mr Kapoor, this is Christine Kimasi who is a renewable energy expert and investor, and this is my Task Force of advisors – Lorna, Carol, Alex and Joshua. You might have heard of them.
- 60. MR KAPOOR:** Yes, these youngsters are trying their best to stop our project! What the hell are they doing at this meeting?
- 61. MR GITAKI:** Well, as I said, renewable energy is the future of the country and these young people have grasped this concept.
- 62. MRS KIMASI:** It can also mean good business for you, and for me.

63. MR KAPOOR: Well, I haven't got much time so let's get down to it as quickly as possible. I don't normally waste my time on young people who are disruptive.

65. CAROL: Ok! Right, Sir. These are the three options we think could work in Dhowville. They are very clean with very low greenhouse gas emissions. We want to prevent the new power plant contributing unnecessarily to climate change. Climate change is the main issue for us here in Africa...

END OF EPISODE 9

Outro:

And that's all from Learning by Ear for today. Join us next time for the final episode when we find out if the National Power Board will switch to a renewable energy solution and join the battle to halt climate change. Or are they going to stick to using dirty bunker fuel?

This series about climate change is written by Victoria Averill.

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Goodbye for now and thanks for listening!