

ON SITE ... OHP Centre Goats

Our goats are a key feature —18 does and 2 stud bucks. We have 3 staff members caring for them full time, and their milk over the years has contributed to the health and survival of many vulnerable babies. We issued 6 male kids to staff and others to improve stock quality and size in various areas. Sadly, we lost 2 male kids to first-time kidders in April, one of which had an irregular presentation, but she survived, leaving another 7 pregnant, due to kid within the next few weeks. Hoping for females!



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Reforestation & Moringa

Moringa is still our main crop, but it's a challenge to harvest, weed, and prune several thousand trees as well as producing all sorts of tree seedlings in our tree nursery with so few staff. So we brought in some help. While our guys prune the trees to bush them out, others are weeding, irrigating and top dressing alongside.

A new tree nursery had been constructed and contained seedlings mostly of mtangatanga and acacia—both trees to grow for fuel. Some had been issued to a local school and we're keen to extend this programme and distribute all seedlings before we start moving into the dry season.

Staff

Staff have been working well, but we quickly realised that we needed to take on several new members—Nastanzio joined our security team, and Fages has become our new Field Worker. She's quite special, an older lady who speaks English and loves paperwork! She's responsible for running the "people projects"—milk & phala distribution, hosting the Elderlies Luncheons and community assessments—particularly keeping in touch with, and supporting, the older folk and vulnerable women and children.

We produced a "Procedures Manual" covering every aspect of our work in Malawi—a helpful reference document so staff are fully informed about our core values, standards and expectations regarding good leadership, community involvement and projects.

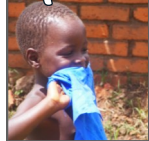
Site maintenance



Vehicles—Following a generous specific donation, we were able to buy another motor-trike, ideal for carrying building supplies, goat forage, tools, equipment, etc, and it's already been used as an emergency ambulance to carry a sick lady to medical help—her family were desperately trying to take her to hospital on a pushbike but she was too weak, so we were able to help. She recovered well.

We try to set a good example of care in this chaotic society, so site maintenance is a constant challenge in the war against termites, climate damage, and shoddy materials. We repaired the storeroom roof, replaced electrics, checked our solar installation, repaired water pumps, and repainted the exteriors of the houses. To improve security, we had metal door protectors made and fitted to outer doors with stout padlocks, and replaced security lights.

Open Hand - giving



We're always so grateful for all the goods that are donated by our supporters in the UK—we distributed over 300 pairs of glasses, beautiful knitted blankets and gorgeous little jumpers for the youngsters ready for the upcoming winter season.

Additionally, we were able to help in funding hospital transport/treatment, emergency dental work, clothing & food, maize for school children, sleeping mats for the frail and elderly, bike repairs for community workers, funeral costs, plastic paper for roof replacement, house repair, and we even replaced a wheel on a wheelchair to give mobility back to a disabled user!

Thank you!
for your
support

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Pure and genuine religion...
means caring for orphans
and widows in their distress.

Jas 1:27

May 2018



Aid Africa

the amazing work goes on

A report by Lynda Mills

Scorpions scurrying across the floor, crispy cockroaches in the sink—it was good to be back in Malawi, despite the heat, humidity, and lack of electricity. But within hours the challenges began—people were hungry, students had been thrown out of school for lack of fees or uniforms, water boreholes had broken down.... *Where to start?*

By the end of the trip we had repaired 7 borehole pumps, restoring clean, safe water to about 10,000 people. We'd built 2 Community Centres to house Nursery Schools and civic events, we'd provided maize, soya meals and soap to 200 vulnerable families to get them through to the next maize harvest. We'd enabled teens to take their exams by providing term fees, issued business loans, and funded emergency hospital treatment/transport—but life is tough in the rural areas



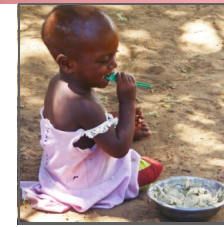
COMMUNITY ...

Food Programme - March 2018

When we arrived, we found many people hungry, so we bought in 5 tonnes of maize—enough for 20,000 meals—plus 800 packs of soya meals and 400 bars of soap. Our staff prepared a list of 200 vulnerable households and we provided the basic food to keep about 750 hungry people fed till the next harvest.



Milk & Phala Programmes



Providing goats' milk to orphaned, AIDS-affected & malnourished babies has been a niche project for many years. There are few alternatives to feeding infants on flour & water if no breast milk is available.

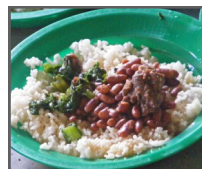
Supplying milk is a vitally important programme, but at this time of the year, it's always a major challenge to provide enough because milk yields are low due to goats' pregnancies. We had to carefully review our lists again, sorting the most vulnerable babies and moving others onto phala if old enough and in need—and we also provided formula powder for Sundays to those at nutritional risk.

We still have 3 points of distribution, daily from our Centre, and Phodogoma & Namata Villages, where phala (fortified porridge) is also served to 45 children.



Elderlies' Luncheons

For years we've been inviting vulnerable older folk to site each fortnight for a nutritious, delicious, and much appreciated meal.



It's now a well polished event, our guests come to site from early morning, eager to be there. Their names are ticked off the list, they sit and chat with 30 or so of their generation, hands are washed, a drink given and after prayer, the meal is served—usually rice, goat meat, and veg. The great part is they get to socialise, dance and sing.

It also gives us the opportunity to show respect, and honour them with our attention, time and resources.



COMMUNITY ... Water

Borehole repairs



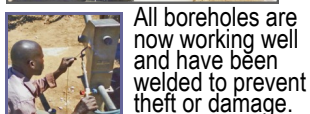
During this trip we repaired 7 boreholes around the area, providing clean, safe water locally to 1678 households—about 10,000 people. All pumps had broken down last year leaving the women having to walk up to a mile then carry each bucket back to their family. With so much water needed by the whole family for cooking, personal hygiene, laundry—it could take her most of each day.



Boreholes repaired this trip:

Bilison, Kamoto,
Liphala, Mwande
Msikita 1 & 2,
& Nchange Villages

Our thanks to Wilmslow Wells for Africa for working in partnership with us, funding these repairs.



All boreholes are now working well and have been welded to prevent theft or damage.

IGA'S (Income Generating Activities)

We funded 10 small businesses. Each was assessed from a basic business proposal, expanded to consider viability and recommend alternatives, discussed, and issued with an individual Loan Agreement accompanying the funds. Businesses included selling 2nd-hand clothing, buying and selling dried fish/tomatoes, rice, beans, and providing raw materials for carpentry and sleeping-mat manufacture. Loans are designed to be repaid over 5 months—before the economy falters in the hunger period, and each was encouraged to diversify into pigs or something else to carry capital through till next year when finances move again with the maize harvest.

Education Sponsorship

We currently have 55 students sponsored in 3 local secondary schools—term 3 fees were paid in April and all exam expenses were paid last December ready for final exams in June 2018. We also covered the closing costs of many students whose families had managed to keep them in school up to that point, but couldn't pay the last term's fees or boarding, so the child would have been excluded from their final exams. We anticipate increasing the number of sponsored children in September, depending on school reports and each student's commitment to work hard. You can sponsor a child's education for £45pa.

Community Affairs - Senior Chief

3 weeks into our trip we welcomed the Senior Chief on site, along with our Village Head Bilison. The SC is the highest ranking individual in our area. She's a lovely lady, probably about 40, with little education, but a keen supporter of OHP. She acknowledged gratefully the help received by the community in food, hospital transport and school fees, etc.

They shared about their local challenges, especially difficulties with the recent maize harvest—many will suffer because of the drought in some areas and crop destruction by army worms, a voracious pest, apparently without solution. Even the SC was hungry. In conversation I asked what she'd had to eat that day—just okra for lunch, and would have just veg leaves with her nsima (thick boiled maize) that night.

Community Centres - previously built

We checked on the two Community Centres built in previous years to make sure they were in good condition and functioning well, as we were considering building more to the same plan.

We were pleased with what we found at both Mtikhe and Msikita Villages, the Community Centres (2015 & 2016) were still looking good, inside and out, and being well used—by the Nursery Schools weekday mornings, providing the venues for extra study for exams in the afternoons, and health checks and other meetings throughout the month. The central hub of each village — real success stories!



Community Centre at Msikita—built 2016
They've planted mustard behind the Centre for food for the Nursery School, selling the surplus for the kids' other needs. They've planted trees, and the well we dug is still providing the whole area with clean water.



COMMUNITY CENTRES

Liphala Village Nursery School



This School has been operating for 3 years—under a tree—with 4 voluntary teachers, and 52 children on the roll from 4 villages. A committee takes responsibility and runs the school and each child receives a highly anticipated porridge breakfast each morning. Obviously meeting under a tree is unsatisfactory in the rainy season and they hoped for help to build a classroom. Several years ago, the community made & burnt 5000 bricks for this purpose, but the project stalled as they couldn't provide any further materials.

During 2015 & 2016 several Nursery Schools in other areas were in similar circumstances and requested help to build a classroom. However, on assessment, we decided that a larger, multi-purpose building would be more appropriate to each community's needs and so with the help of local villagers, we constructed a Community Centre in each location. We decided to use the same plan here at Liphala Village. As their contribution, villagers excavated and carried river sand to site, and we used the bricks they'd made in the foundation, buying in good quality smaller ones for the main build.



During March the ground was cleared, building teams hired, foundations dug, corners raised, doors & frames made, metal windows welded, roof timbers sliced, walls built & plastered, porch established, iron roof positioned, floor laid, blackboards plastered & skimmed, exterior skirting and pointing done, then all was lime-washed, painted, glazed, and finished in April, 6 weeks later.



Namata Village Nursery School



Namata Village Nursery School began in 2012, sometimes they could meet in a church building, but when unavailable, under a tree. There are 5 teachers, (2 men & 3 women), 126 children on the roll from 3 villages and an active, enthusiastic school committee who had approached us for help with a classroom. This is a remote area, with poor roads, but they would gladly carry river sand to site, if we would help provide a better learning environment for their children.



A piece of land had been allocated by the Chief, close to her house for security—and the building began.

As we left it was nearing completion, awaiting floor, doors & finishing.



Namata Community Centre — almost finished....

