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# ORANT CHARITIES AFRICA MONTHLY REPORT



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# Water and Sanitation Program

## Introduction

In February the WASH program focused on stakeholder coordination and program review. Several activities have been conducted during the month in line with the program's overall objective of improving access to access to WASH services in the Kasese catchment. In this reporting period the following milestone has been achieved;

- Supported water point repairs (Service/preventive: 24; Repairs: 6; Rehabilitated: 0)
- Conducted water point committee training for Mshangula
- Conducted review Meeting with Area Mechanics
- Conducted ADC meeting for Chakhadza B
- Conducted review meeting with Chiefs from the OCA WASH committee

## Detailed Narration of Monthly Activities

The WASH program carried out the following key activities in February 2023.

### Water point repairs and rehabilitations



*Pump repair session at Mimba water point during the month*

To ensure sustainable access to safe water within the Kasese catchment, water point repair is among the key intervention for the OCA WASH program. In February, the WASH program repaired a total of **30** water points (Service/preventive: **24**; Repairs: **6**;

Rehabilitations: 0). So far in 2023 the WASH program has conducted **10** major repairs out of the annual targeted 50 major repairs (20%). Similarly, **62** preventive maintenances out of the annual targeted 300 (20%) have been conducted. In 2023 the WASH program aims to conduct more preventive maintenance subsequently reducing the number of major repairs which are relatively costly. Currently, on average OCA is spending **MK66,633.00** (approx. \$65) for spare parts on each major water point repair. Similarly, each preventive maintenance costs around **K10,128.00** (approx. \$10) in terms of spare parts every 3 months. The cost for spare parts during preventive maintenance is covered by the community/ Water Point Committees (WPC) while OCA covers major repairs. Therefore, in a year WPCs can spend around **MK60,512.00** (\$60) for preventive maintenance; K40,512 for spare parts and K20,000 for Area Mechanic's (AM) labour charge.

### **Water point committee training**

In February, the WASH program trained **1** Water point Committee (WPC) from **Mshangula** villages. The borehole in Msangula village was drilled late in December 2022. Cumulatively, in 2023 the WASH program has trained a total of 3 WPCs out of the annual target of 21 WPCs. The training was held in Mshangula village. During the training 10 water point committee members were trained in Community Based Management of Afridev pumps. The committee is expected to be carrying out minor repairs and services of their water point. Furthermore, the water point committee will also be responsible for promoting sanitation and fundraising maintenance funds for their water point.

### **Review Meeting with Afridev pump Area Mechanics**



*Participants during the review meeting with AMs at Kasese guesthouse*

In February, the WASH program organized a review meeting with 5 Area Mechanics working in TA Chakhadza. Area Mechanics support the WASH program in conducting repairs for water points in the community. The meeting was organized with aim of reviewing progress for water point repairs for 2022 as well as formulating strategies for 2023 water point repairs. During the review meeting, it was agreed that in the past year WASH program has performed well in water point repairs. It was observed that the WASH needs to improve in terms of recording costs for repairs which can assist in determining the value of the support OCA is providing in water point repairs. During the meeting the following resolutions were made;

- AMs should intensify preventive maintenance in their catchment
- AMs are supposed to be sending water point repair reports by the 30<sup>th</sup> of each month to the WASH field assistant
- OCA will continue supporting AMs with tools and other resources
- OCA will continue monitoring and building capacity AMs and water point committees
- OCA should intensify the sensitization campaign on water point management in communities around Kasese

### **Review Meeting with Chakhadza ADC**

To promote stakeholder engagement and coordination the WASH program works with development committees both at the community and district levels. During the month the WASH program attended Area Development Committee (ADC) meeting for TA Chakhadza B. Among the major agendas during the meeting was the review of the OCA WASH program progress in 2022 and plans for 2023. In attendance during the meeting were Chiefs, Village Development Committees (VDCs) representatives and Ward Councilors. Following the presentations and discussions members of the ADC were thankful for the initiatives OCA conducted in the Kasese catchment such as borehole drilling, water point repairs and construction of school latrines. The members of the ADC asked OCA to consider extending its initiatives to other areas outside the Kasese health centre to include other people who were facing similar challenges to the people of Kasese.



*Participants during the ADC meeting for TA Chakhaza B*

### **Review Meeting with Chiefs from WASH Committee**

Apart from ADCs, the WASH program also works with Chiefs from around the Kasese catchment in the allocation and mobilization of communities towards the WASH program. During the month the WASH program met with members of the Chief's WASH committee to review the WASH program progress for 2022. The meeting was also used as a platform to strategize WASH program initiatives for 2023. The Chiefs were satisfied



with the WASH program progress for 2022. The Chiefs asked OCA to consider training local entrepreneurs in corbelled latrines which are durable hence promoting sanitation in the communities around Kasese.

*The Participants during the review meeting with Chiefs*

In summary, February was a productive month for the WASH program. The WASH program registered some key achievements in stakeholder coordination and capacity building of WPCs. Similarly, major milestones were also achieved in water point repairs. Therefore, the WASH program is looking forward to month of March which promises to be another exciting month in project implementation due to the impending mission visit for OCA-US members.

# Agriculture and Business

## Agriculture

### Introduction

Farming is one of the important activities which builds the economy of Malawi. Smallholder farmers depend on farming to improve their economic status and feed their families. OCA supports smallholder farmers by equipping them with knowledge of farming as a business. The activities are done in both irrigation and rainfed



farming through the provision of farm inputs as micro-loans and agriculture expertise. The activities conducted during the reporting month have been explained below;

### Food relief Distribution

Insufficient food among smallholder farmers in the communities of Kasese, BOMFA, and Bowe parish has been critical in the year 2023 due to poor rains faced during the growing season of 2021-2022. Most smallholder farmers in Malawi depend on rainfed farming for food production but for the last year, the country was affected by the short rain season which resulted in poor harvests. Due to food shortage challenges, OCA has supported 5300 households with Maize for food. These households were from areas of Kasese, BOMFA and Bowe parish. The program targeted those people with disability challenges, old people, pregnant mothers, orphans, cancer and school going children. The total number of beneficiaries in this year has increased compared to last year. Total of 250 bags of Maize have been kept in the stores which will be used to the clinic for the pregnant mothers during time of giving birth.



*Distribution of Maize at Kasese*

## **Dam construction**

OCA farm is being affected with heavy runoff of water every year which destroys crops and soils by washing away top soils and creating gullies. This has prompted the idea of creating dams which will help in storage of water hence reducing speed of water runoff. The selection process for the dam construction site is by natural selection whereby one site has been already identified and dam constructed. There is plan to construct more dams through natural selection so that more water is controlled and kept in the farm which can be used for different activities such as irrigating crops, fish farming, and raising the water table. Around the dam has been planned to plant different types of plants such as bamboo, bananas and vertiver grass which will serve other purposes such as firewood, food, mulching, and strengthening the dam boundaries.



*Dam constructed in OCA farm*



## **OCA Farm**

The rains as they are going to an end, crops have already ripened and just waiting to get dry for harvesting. The cultivation on OCA farm during production period was divided into the demonstration, Mwayiwathu farm club and OCA commercial production. The main aim of demonstration is to train farmers in different farming technologies which can boost their farming capacity. The demonstration farming which is done in partnership with different organization have planned to conduct field day before time of harvesting. The field day is expected to be done early of April and it will target more than 400 farmers. Some important items required during field day such as posters have already been landed in.



*Mounting of posters on demonstration plots*

## **Irrigation clubs**

After the flooding of the irrigation sites where OCA does its work with smallholder farmers, irrigation farming was closed waiting for the rains to end so that irrigation farming could resume. So far the rainy season is going to an end hence the irrigation farming for 2023 has started taking its shape. Members in irrigation clubs of Kasangadzi, Ndalusa and Madula have already started the work. The activities being done so far are land clearing and ploughing. The crops which have been planned to be cultivated are Irish potatoes, beans, tomatoes, maize, vegetables and onion. Smallholder farmers have been advised to start irrigation farming immediately after rainy season so that they can face little challenges of food shortage and income in their homes through cover crops produced in irrigation farming.

# Business and Financial Empowerment Microloans

## Introduction

In an attempt to create a self-sustaining community, the Financially empowering microloan continues to provide business microloans to women around the catchment area. The program also offers supplementary capacity building classes to support the women to efficiently manage their businesses. The women entrepreneurs supported by the program are involved in different trades. In ensuring program success, a number of activities were implemented in the month of February as narrated below;

## Activities Planned and achieved

### Monitoring visit



Individual businesses were visited in an attempt to monitor sales and proceeds realised in the reporting month. From the monitoring visits conducted, total profits amounting to MWK859,550 were recorded for 24 individual businesses. From this amount, the highest had realised MWK 80,000 and the lowest got MWK 15,000. The amount recorded was a bit lower as compared to what was raised in January.

This is so because the month of February is usually a mid-month for the lean period whereby things are tough for most people as they struggle to make ends meet. Hence affecting the purchase pattern for businesses.

Meeting with Tikondane and Tiyanjane FEM members was also conducted to map the way forward on how to manage the group projects. From the meeting, it was agreed that the women should further divide themselves into smaller teams for easy manageability. One team should be responsible for the knitting project, the other team will be making soap and the remaining members will be responsible for marketing of the products. Revenues generated will be shared among members and some will be kept as a group fund to help them in future.



### Loan recovery

February was the first month of repayment for the December loan period. Percentages recorded were; 61% for [Tikondane](#), 50% for [Tiyanjane](#) and 78% for [Takondwa](#). The total repayment percentage for all group for the month was 63%. The percentages were slightly lower than expected because some of members had encountered some setbacks that rendered them to fail to make their monthly instalment. some of the setback were, the Cholera outbreak and loss of business assets due to bad weather and farming activities that required spending more than they had anticipated.



*Edilina's collapsed brick Oven and damaged scones*

## **Weekly VS&L meetings**

As per norm, the business women continued to gather for their village savings weekly meetings. It was quite interesting to note that Tiyanjane members have also organised themselves to use this forum to register deposits made towards loan repayment. The members had decided to start this practice so that they keep track of who is lagging behind in terms of repayments and encourage each other to settle their loans in good time.

## **Education Support Program**



### **Introduction**

The basic goal of OCA education program is to support a child and the family in order to break the cycle of poverty, and help them to be self-dependent individuals throughout their life. This goal is usually in support of all the children, despite of their religion, race, ethnic background or gender. OCA ensures that students are not only getting benefits of education but all round development from activities such as mentorship. OCA

Sponsorship as an educational fund helps students to progress well in life and support their education throughout.

The following were the activities which were conducted by OCA education program in the month of February, 2023.

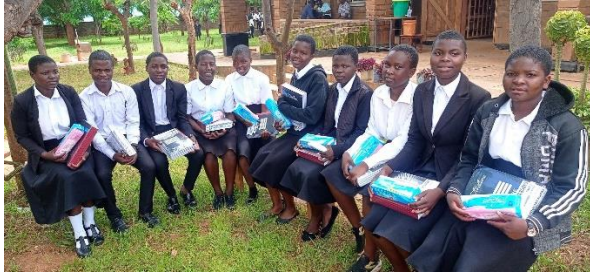
### **School Visits**

During the reporting period, the education program visited students in their respective schools. The aim of the visits was for monitoring the academic performance of student, encourage them to work extra hard and to provide them with material support. The following **13** schools were visited; Madisi, Natola, St peters, Tchawale, Dowa, Kasungu, Loyola, Chayamba, St.Chavara, Lilongwe girls, Nkhamenya girls, Likuni girls and Dzenza secondary schools.

The education program checked the progress reports of the students for the previous term (first term). The reports showed that most of the students are performing well in their studies and that there is need for improvement on some students. OCA education program encouraged all the students to keep on working extra hard in order to excel and achieve their goals. We know that successfully supporting students means investing in all aspects of their life, providing both financial and social support, and working to change the context of their exclusion. OCA not only pays school fees, but provides other essentials, such as uniforms, books, sanitary protection e.t.c.



Madisi(left) and Dowa(right) Secondary school students



Tchawale(left) and Natola (right)Secondary school students

A total of **96** students from the 13 schools received material support from OCA education program. The support which was given to these students includes; hardcovers, pens, pencils, washing and bathing soap, body lotion, tooth brush, tooth paste and sanitary pads. The school materials are given to the students in order to keep them in school and also to help them do better in class because their basic needs are met. OCA is committed to empower girls and to removing any barriers that prevent full participation of girls in their life. The students showed gratitude for the good work OCA is doing to them and they promise to work hard in class and achieve their goals.



Students from St. chavara (left) and Dzenza Secondary school (right)

## Students and Donor correspondence

In the same reporting month, the OCA education program received letters from **93** students from different schools. These letters are from students to their specific donors since the students are from three different sponsor groups; Geoshack sponsorship, Individual donor sponsorship and OCA sponsorship.



Lilongwe Girls students writing letters to their donors

Students are encouraged to communicate with their sponsors through letters frequently (once a term) because hearing from sponsors is very meaningful to them; it boosts their self-esteem and builds a life- changing relationship. And for the sponsors, communication is an important aspect of their sponsorship.

### **Follow up on drop out student**

OCA education program also had a follow up visit for one sponsored student (Faith Antony) who dropped out of school in form One at Dowa secondary school.



Faith dropped out at the beginning of this term due to pregnancy and unfortunately, she lost the pregnancy. When Orant visited her at home, Faith said that she was still interested in school and is ready to go back to school and continue her studies.

OCA education program made arrangements for the student and she is now back to school. She has promised to work extra hard and not to be in close contact with anything that will disrupt her education again. OCA provided her with some school materials and will continue to monitor the student and make sure that she progresses in life.