



ORANT CHARITIES AFRICA MONTHLY REPORT

WATER, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE, AND BUSINESS

PROGRAMS

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COMPILED BY

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WATER AND SANITATION PROGRAM

Introduction

In April, the water program set several objectives in line with the program goal of supporting rural communities in the promotion of access to Water and Sanitation;

- Waterpoint repairs
- School WASH review meeting
- Meeting with Ngala piped water scheme committee
- Meeting with Kasese market committees
- Distribution of handwashing facilities in schools
- Ngala piped water preliminary survey

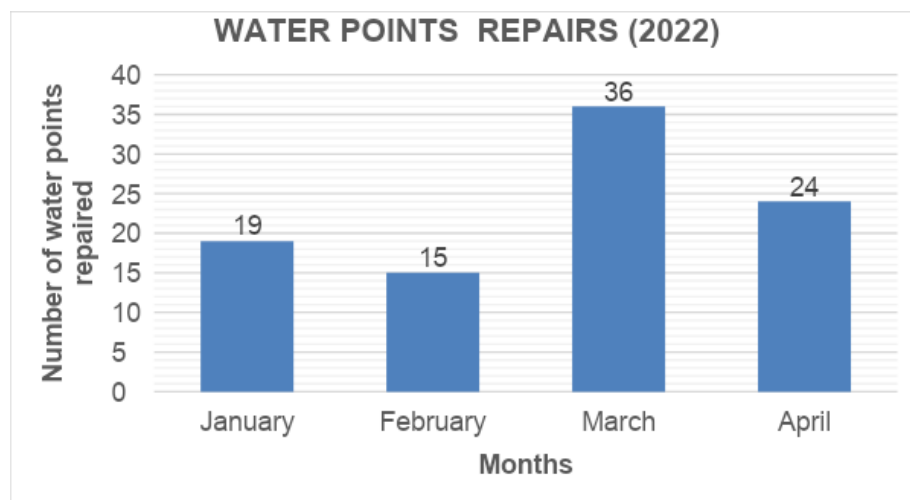


Waterpoint repairs and rehabilitations

To ensure sustainable functionality of water points and access to safe water within the OCA catchment. The water and sanitation program supports repairs, services, and rehabilitation of broken Afridev pumps with spares and technical expertise in collaboration with Afridev pump Area Mechanics. In



April 2022, the water program repaired and serviced **24** boreholes (Service: **14**; Repairs: **10**).



A graph showing the number of repairs conducted between January to April 2022

School WASH Review Meeting

In line with UN Sustainable Development Goal number 4, OCA promotes quality education which is also a right for every child. OCA water and sanitation program promote WASH in schools thereby improving the learning environment and health of school children which is tantamount to quality education. During the month OCA water program conducted a school WASH review meeting for **12** primary schools from the Katalima education zone. The meeting was held at Katalima Teachers Development Center (TDC). The meeting was attended by the Primary Education Advisor (PEA), School Health and Nutrition (SHN) Coordinator, Senior Health Surveillance Assistant (SHSA), Head teachers, and SHN teachers from 12 schools in the Katalima Education zone. In total, the meeting was attended by **29** participants. The meeting aimed to review, plan and sensitize school WASH stakeholders on OCA WASH interventions.

The following items made the agenda of the meeting; OCA borehole drilling, school latrine construction, water point repairs, and revamping school sanitation clubs. Following the PEA and teachers recommended OCA efforts towards improvement of WASH in schools. The following were recorded as WASH issues that require immediate attention in schools;

- Insufficient availability of handwashing buckets
- Insufficient availability of cleaning materials such as buckets, mops, brushes, and squeezers.
- Training of water points committees for a borehole in schools.
- Revamping of school sanitation clubs



[A cross-section of participants during the school WASH review meeting at Katalima TDC](#)

Meeting with Kasese Market committee

In 2022 the water and sanitation program is assessing the feasibility of constructing latrines in market centers to promote sanitation. In this effort, the water and sanitation program met with the Kasese Market committee to evaluate the need for latrines at the Kasese trading center. Following the meeting, it was revealed that the Kasese market has a private latrine for both women and men. It was further revealed that the latrines were not in use due to the pricing of latrines and people prefer to use latrines in neighboring homes than the market latrine. The market committee asked OCA to still consider constructing new latrines at the market or at least buy the existing latrines from the private owner on their behalf. Following the discussions, the following recommendations were made;

- The water program should make further inquiries on the proposals made by the market committee.
- The market committee should discuss the possibility of latrine construction with other members of the Kasese market.



Members of Kasese market committee during a meeting with OCA water program staff

Ngala piped water project preliminary survey and Meeting with Ngala piped water scheme committee

In 2022, the water program made plans to assess the feasibility of rehabilitating the Ngala piped water scheme to support people around Kasese with piped water. Using a checklist, a survey was conducted in 53 out of 62 taps in Ngala piped water scheme to acquire information on the status of the scheme which will further help in the decision on whether to proceed with the rehabilitation project or not. In addition to the survey, a meeting with the Ngala piped scheme committee was conducted to obtain more information on the scheme. Following the survey and the meeting the following facts were established;

- There are management issues within the scheme at both the committee level and government level.
- The survey revealed that only 30% (16 out 53) of the taps surveyed are functional and able to produce water frequently.
- Poor plumbing in the scheme's pipe network is also among the major issues contributing to the non-functionality of most taps in the scheme.



One of the taps in Ngala piped water scheme during the preliminary survey

Distribution of handwashing buckets in schools



Left - A time to celebrate after receiving hand washing buckets at Madzo primary school; **Right** – A learner from Madzo demonstrating handwashing with new handwashing buckets

To promote good hygiene in two schools where OCA recently constructed latrines donated hand washing buckets. The hand washing buckets were donated to Chilinkholi and Madzo where latrines were constructed in 2020 and 2021 respectively. During this exercise, three buckets were donated to each school.

Meeting with Chiefs from the OCA water committee

To ensure community representation and participation in water program decisions the water program works with the water committee for the Kasese catchment. The committee is made of



to

5 Chiefs from the Kasese catchment. During the month the water program met with the Chief's water committee strategize on 2022 borehole drilling and other WASH intervention in the Kasese catchment. During the meeting, the Chiefs proposed a list of villages to be considered for borehole

drilling by the water program in 2022. The Chiefs also made a further proposal on schools to be considered for the latrine construction.

Program Data Management

In collaboration with the data office, the water and sanitation have upgraded the database of OCA water meter readings database. Similarly, the water program is also working towards the development of borehole spare inventory to track the purchase and use of boreholes by the department.

CONCLUSION

The just-ended month of April was very productive despite the water program failing to conduct DCT meetings and DCT Joint field monitoring. The water program is very optimistic for the upcoming months, in which the borehole drilling exercise for 2022 will begin.

AGRICULTURE PROGRAM



Introduction

For the month of April 2022, the agriculture program performed several activities in supporting smallholder farmers in the communities. The activities were aimed at empowering the local farmers to live independent lives by having enough food and improved economic levels in their homes through irrigation farming. Other activities such as meetings and postharvest handling of crops at OCA farm were done. Below are details of activities which were carried out during the reporting period.

Harvesting of Crops

The Rainy season of 2021 to 2022 was punctuated by late rains which affected the planting dates of the crops hence farmers were worried of poor harvest. Despite worries by farmers around our community, the planting process was done around mid-January and currently harvesting of Maize, Soya and groundnuts is in progress. Farmers who cultivated on OCA farm are in process of harvesting their crops although there will be decline in harvest quantities due to the short rain season which resulted in crops not getting matured properly. Currently uprooting, slushing and digging of Soya, maize and groundnuts is in progress for further drying.



Harvesting in progress

Postharvest handling of the crops was another activity which was done to minimize losses which come due to poor handling of harvest. Postharvest handling includes all processes which are done during cooling, cleaning, sorting and packaging. During these stages harvesting has to be done with special care to avoid damages which include cutting, crushing and bruising which reduces quality of the crop. Harvested crops have to be well dried before taking it to storage facilities to avoid rotting. Farmers at OCA farm were trained on how they

can properly harvest groundnuts and soya to avoid losses which can occur due to poor harvesting processes.



Groundnuts placed on sunlight for further drying

Sowing

Irrigation clubs of Chigona and Kasangadzi were involved in sowing of tomato seeds which mostly give good and quality planting materials. In farming, smallholder farmers are always reminded that quality is profitability hence good quality seedlings are important. In tomato production to produce high quality fruit, it starts with a good nursery. Sowing of tomato seeds is regarded as the most important stage which has to be done with great care because poor seedlings result in poor performance on the main field. Activity of sowing was conducted at Chigona and Kasangadzi irrigation clubs where tomato is being cultivated. Smallholder farmers were advised to apply manure before sowing to improve soil fertility. The most preferred method of sowing was the line method whereby seeds were sown on lines drawn on the bed spaced at 10cm apart. Sowing in lines is advantageous as it reduces problems of high density of seeds which results in production of poor seedlings.

Transplanting

Good and healthy seeds/seedlings are planted/transplanted for better harvest in tomato production. Tomato seeds can be planted directly or sown to be transplanted whereby it can be ready for transplanting after 3 to 6 weeks from the day of sowing depending on the variety. In tomato production, it is mostly advisable to go through the sowing process for better results. The good seedling for transplanting has to undergo the process of hardening off which is done by reducing the volume of water application. The advantages of transplanting the seedlings include good and healthy plant seedlings that can be selected to be planted in the main field and the planting distance is more even than sowing directly in the field. Madzimayela and Matchedza irrigation club members were involved in the process of transplanting the tomato seeds and the club members were reminded of proper spacing and watering intervals for tomato production to avoid plant stress. Madzimayela and Matchedza Club members were also taught about the best time for transplanting the seedlings. The club was encouraged to do transplanting during afternoon hours or cloudy days to reduce the transplanting shock.



Transplanting of tomato seedlings in process

Manure and Fertilizer application

As most of the soils in our communities have lost their quality in terms of nutrient content due to continuous cultivation, addition of Manure and fertilizer is being done to boost the nutrient content. Madzimayela and Matchedza irrigation clubs are cultivating tomato crops and they applied manure and fertilizer. Tomato crops require high application of organic and inorganic fertilizer. Organic fertilizers were applied during the time of land preparation which will show much of their results during the second year of production. In tomato crop fertilizer is being applied atleast twice (basal and top dressing). Madzimayela and Matchedza irrigation clubs which were involved in top dressing fertilizer and D-compound fertilizer . With the power of manure which was applied, the rate of the fertilizer was reduced which has reduced the cost of the production for these crops. These applied fertilizers are of high importance to the plants as it adds a lot of nitrogen to the soils which facilitates fruiting and vegetative growth of the plants.



Healthy tomato plants well top dressed

Pests and disease control

Tomato plants during the early stage are mostly attacked by different pests and disease which has to be treated accordingly at early stage to maintain a good crop stand which will give good yields. Clubs of Madzimayela and Matchedza were involved in application of chemicals to reduce damage which can be caused by some pest and disease. Pests and

disease reduce quality and quantity of produce on the crops hence prevention or control is extremely important. For the control of pests and disease attacking the crops, synthetic chemicals were applied and the club members were directed on right dosage rate per acre, right time of applying and right way of spraying the chemicals. The best time for the control of pest and disease is during early in the morning or evening hours as stomata are open for chemical penetration.

Meetings

As the rainy season has just ended, it is a good time for farmers to start making manure for next season. OCA agriculture manager attended Area Stakeholder Panel (ASP) meeting where manure making was discussed. Sensitization meetings were also planned which will begin in the coming months so that farmers can start making manure in good time while materials for manure making are vastly available. This will help farmers to make a lot of manure for their farms. The types of manure to be highly promoted are Bokash, Liquid, pit, wood frame, Chimato, Chinese and Mbeya manure.

Challenges on OCA farm

As harvesting is in progress on OCA farm, groundnuts have been affected with foot and collar rot which is caused by fungus. This problem is caused by high temperature and low moisture in the soil. There is a big area being affected with this problem which will affect harvest percentage. The groundnuts affected with foot and collar rot disease develop white substances around the pods and the groundnuts inside the pods get rotten.



Heap of affected groundnuts with foot and collar rot

FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT MICROLOANS (FEM)

Introduction

FEM program continues to provide microloans and skill building lessons for women entrepreneurs managing businesses within the Kasese catchment area. The main goal of the program is to support women in our community who are stuck in a cycle of poverty. In the month of April, the FEM program had conducted a series of activities which contributed towards the achievement of its goal. Below is a narration of the activities.

Business/ Entrepreneurship Training with Tiyanjane FEM members

Capacity building is one of the fundamental areas of prioritization in the FEM program as it helps the women entrepreneurs to acquire knowledge that will remain with them for the rest of their lives and this knowledge may be transferable to their offsprings in the future. Having seen the impacts of inflation on the businesses, it was deemed necessary to train the Tiyanjane FEM group in risk management and marketing strategies to ensure preparedness and instill good marketing strategies that may help them combat such situations. ZOE empowers and Small and Medium Enterprises Development Institute (SMEDI) were engaged to assist in the five-day training that took place at OCA premises in Kasese.



FEM Members doing a refresher during a recap session

Monitoring Visits

“Season” is a terminology commonly used in Malawi to refer to a period after harvesting of crops grown from rain fed agriculture. The ‘Season’ normally starts in April and goes through June depending on when the crops were planted. During this period, a lot of people especially those living in rural areas have enough money (mostly generated from sales of crops) to spend on needs and luxuries as compared to lean periods. Due to the dry spell the country experienced in the just ended rainy season, maturity of agriculture produce has also been affected. April is the common month that people start selling their produce, however, people have not yet started selling their produce.

This delay has affected businesses as most business owners were anticipating that the moment the season starts; their businesses will bloom again thereby cushioning them from the aftermaths of inflation the country is currently experiencing. As it stands now, the inflation is at 15.7% in April of 2022, from 14.1% recorded in mid-March.

From the monitoring visits that were carried out during the month of April, it was learnt that during the same period in the year 2021, businesses were at their peak as people had money

raised through sales of soybean, tobacco, groundnuts etc. As it stands now, the women entrepreneurs are still finding it hard to maintain their lifestyle and at the same time be able to repay their loans. It was also noted during the monitoring visits that due to financial huddles the businesses are undergoing, some of the women entrepreneurs like Ireen, Dorothy, Maligelita, Gloria, Deborah and Maness had switched businesses to other businesses that seem viable at the moment as a coping mechanism. The change however is temporary until the market stabilizes. This is an acceptable business practice as it shows that the women entrepreneurs are learning to diversify or be innovative in order to survive on the market.

Village Savings and Loans (VS & L) meetings

In the month of April, the VS&L meetings were conducted on a weekly basis for both Tikondane and Tiyanjane FEM groups as scheduled. The VS& L continues to be a backup investment plan for the businesses knowing that the women have a second option for keeping money and at the same time generating their own interests. With the tough times, the weekly deposits are not as they used to be as the women entrepreneurs barely have money to save at the moment. Since the meetings have become habitual, the women shared market experiences and some coping mechanisms which may help their businesses to grow and be able to settle their loans.



Tiyanjane FEM members banking their shares

Loan Repayment

In the month of April, loans amounting to MWK 523,000 and MWK 214,500 were collected from Tikondane and Tiyanjane FEM groups respectively. The failure to repay their loans is justified by the current inflation rates recorded by the country and the after effects of the dry spell we experienced during the rainy season causing a delay in the harvest season.

Loan number	NAME	Loan Amount	3 rd Instalment to be paid	Actual amount paid	Trans ID
P-02	ALINET MACHISAWO	250,000.00	62,500.00	62,500.00	CI220512.0839.I56217
P-03	RABECCA YOHANE	250,000.00	62,500.00	30,000.00	CI220503.0756.I65879
P-04	MARY MNDOLO	150,000.00	37,500.00	-	
P-17	MALIGELITA JOSOFATI	170,000.00	42,500.00	42,500.00	CI220510.1515.H14485
P-19	PATRICIA SIMBI	250,000.00	62,500.00	40,000.00	C1220429.0717.I90270
P-09	EDILINA JONATHAN	250,000.00	62,500.00	62,500.00	CI220422.1804.I30440
P-15	GLORIA CHIDZANJA	250,000.00	62,500.00	60,000.00	CI220416.0927.D96912
P-07	DOROTHY JELAO	200,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	CI220415.0711.H0720
P-28	LIZINETI THOKOZANI	100,000.00	25,000.00	34,000.00	CI220512.0843.I56670
P-08	DEBORAH MAUAGULE	100,000.00	25,000.00	14,000.00	CI220416.1546.D30944
P-01	OLIPA MALIZANI	50,000.00	12,500.00	12,500.00	CI220415.0710.H02611
P-14	MARY LEVISON	250,000.00	62,500.00	50,000.00	CI220415.0711.I02720
P-18	RACHEAL PHIRI	100,000.00	25,000.00	-	
P-16	MIGUEL BRIGHT	300,000.00	75,000.00	55,000.00	CI220420.0953.HI6651
P-06	LONILY LAMECK	80,000.00	20,000.00	10,000.00	CI220419.1559.G54333
		2,750,000.00	687,500.00	523,000.00	

Tikondane Loan repayment Schedule

Loan number	NAME	Loan Amount	2nd Instalment to be paid	Actual Amount Paid	Trans ID
P-05	TAMALE KACHINGWE	150,000.00	37,500.00	-	
P-10	MALITA BANDA	250,000.00	62,500.00	31,000.00	PP220413.1816.H321411
P-11	PATRICIA BANDA	125,000.00	31,250.00	31,000.00	CI220422.1804.I30440
P-12	IREEN HENDELESONI	100,000.00	25,000.00	-	

P-13	STELLA KALIMBAKATHA	100,000.0 0		25,000.00	25,000.00	CI220413.1824.H324 11
P-16	NDAZIONA TESHAR MCHONJO	250,000.0 0		62,500.00	44,500.00	PP220507.2028.D173 12
P-22	EDITTA MTSITSA	150,000.0 0		37,500.00	-	
P-23	MANESS NKHOMA	100,000.0 0		25,000.00	29,000.00	CI220413.1743.I832 24
P-24	GLADYS CHIODZALO	70,000.00		17,500.00	8,000.00	CI220413.1897.H440 48
P-25	SOFELETI MANJAWIRA	100,000.0 0		25,000.00	12,000.00	
P-26	DOROTHY MAKUTA	100,000.0 0		25,000.00	10,000.00	
P-27	EMILY DAMBULENI	300,000.0 0		75,000.00	24,000.00	PP220414.0717.H459 94
			1,795,00 0.00	448,750.0 0	21450.00	

Tiyanjane Loan repayment Schedule

EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

Introduction

In keeping with our mission and core values, OCA partners with local communities, schools, and families to create a multi-level support system for students on their education journey. Both students and families play a role in the success of the education program. Families should make school a priority for their child. OCA works with schools to provide academic, mentoring, and career counseling to students. In supporting the education of girls in Malawi, OCA conducted the following activities in the month of April, 2022

School Visits

The OCA education program visited sponsored students in their respective schools. The schools which were visited include: Madisi, Chayamba, Dowa, Tchawale and Natola secondary schools. The aim of the visits was to monitor students' academic performance and encourage them to work extra hard. In addition to that, the visited students were also given school bags by OCA. The school bags are given to the students because the school does not provide them and the students cannot afford on their own because they come from poor families and they need the school bags to carry books every day.



Students from Natola CDSS (left) and Madisi Sec. school (right) carrying their school bags



Dowa Sec. school students and Chayamba Sec. school students posing with their school bags



A picture of Tchawale CDSS students after receiving school bags from OCA

To successfully support students, they should be provided with both tuition, school materials and also social support. OCA not only pays school fees, but provides other essentials, such as uniforms, books, sanitary protection e.t.c.

Identification of new students

In the month of April, 2022 new students were identified into the education program. The education program is split into two types of sponsorship; Geoshack and OCA sponsorship. The new students were identified under OCA sponsorship. This means that each student has an individual donor who will be supporting their education through Orant Charities Africa. Two students from Lilongwe girls Secondary School were identified and they are all in form three. They will be sponsored for two academic years (until form 4). These students have been struggling to pay school fees since form one, their parents are small- holder farmers who cannot afford to pay for their childrens' education.

With these additional two students, Orant is now sponsoring **135** students from various schools across Malawi of which **6** students are under "Orant Ulemu scholarship".



OCA new students from Lilongwe girls Secondary school; Nelia James (left) and Veronica Chisale (right)

Conclusion

A lack of access to quality education is a huge problem in Malawi. Many children have to walk for up to two hours to reach the closest school. Thousands don't complete their primary education, let alone secondary and without an education they struggle to break out of the cycle of poverty.