



ORANT CHARITIES AFRICA MONTHLY REPORT

**WATER, EDUCATION, AGRICULTURE, AND BUSINESS
PROGRAMS**

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COMPILED BY

GABRIEL KAPANDA

(COUNTRY DIRECTOR)

WATER AND SANITATION PROGRAM



INTRODUCTION

Following the successful water and sanitation program activities implementation in 2021. The water and sanitation program is very excited to begin a new year with even ambitious objectives in line with the program goal of supporting rural communities in the promotion of access to Water and Sanitation. The month of January 2022 was categorized by planning, budgeting, and documentation of 2021 activities progress for the water and sanitation program. Despite this, a few field activities have been conducted in the month and the following milestones have been achieved;

- Water-point repairs and rehabilitations
- Two water point committees were trained

DETAILED NARRATION OF MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

Afridev Pump 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 and rehabilitations of broken Afridev pumps with spares and technical expertise in collaboration with Afridev pump Area Mechanics. Despite OCA support in repairs, water point committees are being encouraged to have a water point fund to support themselves in minor repairs to promote a sense of ownership which is tantamount to the sustainability of their water point. In January 2022, the water program repaired and serviced a total of **19** Afridev pumps.



Borehole repair session during the month

Water Point Committees Training

To ensure community participation in the management of their water points, OCA trains water point committees in Community Based Management (CBM) of water points. This entails training water point committees to conduct minor repairs and sanitation activities of their water points to ensure sustainable access to safe water. During the month the water and sanitation program trained 2 water point committees from Solokoto and Chipumba village. Solokoto and Chipumba boreholes were drilled by OCA in 2021. In each village, a total of 10 water point committee members were trained. In each village, training sessions were also attended by the Chief who is a custodian of by-laws which are important in borehole management. The training sessions were facilitated by OCA staff in collaboration with government extension workers and Afridev pump Area Mechanics.



Left: Area Mechanics demonstrating how a foot valve works during water point committee training in Solokoto, Right: OCA Water Field Assistant demonstrating how to dismantle an Afridev pump

CONCLUSION

As we begin the new year OCA water program wishes to acknowledge the effort of all its stakeholders and donors for the support which made the 2021 program implementation successful. In 2022 the OCA water and sanitation program continues contributing towards sustainable access to water and sanitation for all (SDG 6). In the new year, OCA is getting more ambitious in its implementation of activities with assessing the feasibility for the provision of piped water underway.

AGRICULTURE PROGRAM



Maize in OCA Farm

Introduction

The agriculture program performed several activities during the month of January 2022 in supporting smallholder farmers in the communities of Kasese. 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 and rain-fed farming. Below are activities which were carried out during the reporting period.

Planting

In the month of January, enough rains for planting crops were recorded after waiting for a long time. OCA farm has been planted with different crops namely Maize, Soybeans, Groundnuts and Sunflower. The planted crops are expected to be ready for harvest within the month of April. Meanwhile the planting for this year's growing season has been done late compared to past years due to late onset of planting rains. Smallholder farmers working under rain-fed farming were encouraged to plant early maturity crops.



Double line planted Groundnuts field

Flooding

Despite rains coming late for this year's growing season, the rains have come with a lot of water in rivers and some of the irrigation sites have been affected by floods. The clubs affected are those which are along the long Bua and Kasangadzi river and the names of the clubs affected are Madzimayela, Chigona and Mantchedza. The crops cultivated by these irrigation clubs are tomato and Maize. Flooding of these rivers was due to continuous in surrounding communities.



Irrigation sites being affected with floods

Part of OCA farm was also affected by heavy rains. Runoff especially from Ngala hills eroded away ridges and crops in the OCA farm. The problem was discovered in time and it was controlled by renovating the water drain and rebuilding damaged ridges.



Part of OCA farm affected heavily with high speed running water

Field visit

Madisi cooperative is one of the cooperatives which has received support from OCA to help them in farming activities. During the reporting month, some of the Madisi cooperative farm fields were visited to check on the crop stand. The crop cultivated by cooperative members under cooperative agreement is Sunflower which will be used in value addition. The cooperative has a machine for value addition which is used to process sunflower into cooking oil. Farmers have expectations of a good harvest this year through the support received from OCA since they were able to buy certified seed, fertilizers and chemicals.



Madisi cooperative sunflower field

OCA farm

Several activities took place on OCA farm both on demonstration plots and commercial production areas. The activities were weeding, basal fertilizer application and pesticides application. The households who have been offered land for farming by OCA for commercial farming have also finalized the first weeding and now they are ready for the second weeding. Pesticides were also applied in their crops especially those who are cultivating Soybeans due to high attack of beetles.

Meetings

Meeting with the households working on the OCA farm was conducted. An executive committee was formed and also rules governing the group. Furthermore, the group came up with a name. The name which was suggested by the members themselves is Mwayiwanthu farm club. The plan is to register a cooperative in future. To fully register a cooperative, the group must be trained by the Ministry of Trade and Industry representatives.

Weeding

The success in production of legume crops is in keeping the field free from weeds. Weeds compete with the main crops for light, water and nutrients uptake. Weeds are also breeding grounds for the pests and disease which will affect the main crop and reduce the quality and quantity of the yield. Mwayiwanthu farmers club were advised on the importance of keeping their field free from weeds and all members were encouraged to do the activity in time.



Weeding on soya beans in progress

Manure and fertilizer application

Application of manure and fertilizer in crop production is of more benefits for bumper harvest in Crop production. Maize crop was applied with NPK fertilizer while Soybeans and Groundnuts were inoculated with inoculant (Biological Nitrogen Fixation) for fast growth and good crop stand. Smallholder farming families working on OCA farms were encourage to use inoculant during production process to increase percentage of the harvest.



Maize crop applied Manure and fertilizer

Pests and disease control

Soybean and Maize have been affected by pests which eat leaves of plants hence bringing problems in photosynthesis. Soybean and Maize are highly attacked by beetles and fall army worms respectively. These pests have been controlled in all stages starting with early stages due to the high percentage of damage it causes to the crops. The Pests easily reduce the quantity and quality of the crops to be harvested. Once control of these pests has been missed at early stage, the attack becomes severe at maturity period which hence control measures at early stage is very important.



Maize crop being attacked with Fall armyworm

FEM PROGRESS REPORT

Introduction

The Financial Empowering Microloan program is a program under the Agriculture and business department aimed at uplifting and strengthening small businesses which are run by women. The main goal is to alleviate poverty among women and their families. The program started with one group of 13 and later the group grew to 15. Now another group of 13 members has been formed making a total of 28 women in the program. Below is a narration of the activities implemented in the month of January.

Activities planned and achieved

1. Monitoring visits

In the month of January, monitoring visits were carried out to assess if the loans which were disbursed were used for the intended purpose and how the businesses are faring considering that this is a farming season. From the assessment, it was noted that the women entrepreneurs invested the loans into the businesses and that the businesses are doing quite well as compared to December last year. From the information that was realized, most women had argued to say that businesses start to pick when the rains fall. This is so because the moment rains begin, demand for farm piece works rise hence more people gain employment and earn money which they are now able to spend on commodities offered on the market.

Farming activities have also not affected business progress as we had anticipated. The women entrepreneurs are able to prioritize and manage their time efficiently. According to most of them, they spend the early morning hours at their farms and the rest of the day hours on their businesses. This is a good development because as OCA, we would not want either of these to suffer as it may have a negative impact on their lives and businesses in the near future.

2. Documentation of success stories and challenges

In the year 2021, the women entrepreneurs had set different goals which they had planned to achieve in a given time line.



Maligeta showing off her goats



Edilina standing beside her new deep freezer

Successes documented

From the interviews carried out with the FEM members, it was learnt that through their businesses, some had managed to:

- I. purchase assets for their businesses
- II. purchase of livestock
- III. pay school fees for their children
- IV. boost their businesses to another level
- V. buy farm inputs such as seeds and fertilizers for their farms

These achievements are considered as milestones as the program is really helping the women in our catchment area to break the cycle of poverty.

Table 1 Summary of FEM Members and the achieved goals

FEM Member	Goals Planned and achieved	Cost Price
Rabecca	Goat	15,000
Edilina Jonathan	Refrigerator	250,000
Deborah Mauagule	Goat	15,000
	Soybeans	3,000
Olipa Malizani	Goat	15,000
Maligelita Josaphat	Goat	20,000
	School fees	38,000
Alinet Machisawo	School fees	85,000
Miguel Bright	School fees	30,000
	House Extension	300,000
Mary Mndolo	School fees	25,000
	Pig	15,000
Dorothy Jelao	Goat	20,000
Patricia Simbi	Register Agent SIM card	30,000
	Cement	6,650

a. Challenges

All the women entrepreneurs in the Tikondane FEM group had aspirations to achieve something by the end of 2021. Due to some financial hardships that they were facing in their families, they had failed to do so hence they still had some outstanding goals which are yet to be fulfilled in the year 2022. These financial problems were as a result of the dry spell that we were experiencing at the beginning of this year which caused stagnation of businesses.

Additionally, some women failed to accomplish their dreams because of gender based violence that exists in families. Lonily Lameck happens to be an example of one of the women who has experienced such. Through her business, Lonily had saved some money and had planned to buy iron sheets for her house this January. Apparently, she failed to do so because the husband deceived her and took away all her hard earned money and spent it with his second wife.

3. Weekly VSL meetings four for each group

Now that OCA has two FEM groups, the weekly meetings have also been split into two days per week. Tikondane FEM group members meet on Thursdays while Tiyanjane members agreed to be meeting on Fridays of every week. The meetings are usually scheduled to last for less than an hour so that business productive hours are not put to waste. In the month of January, the FEM program successfully facilitated eight Village Savings and Loans (VSL) meetings (four for each FEM group). The meetings have started on a good note as women who were previously not attending have joined in after seeing how their fellows were benefiting from the same. The formation of the Tiyanjane VSL group was also partly influenced by the Tikondane VSL group. *Picture below Tiyamike FEM members during one of the VSL meetings*



4. Registration of businesses

As a way of ensuring sustainability, OCA plans on registering businesses of some of the women entrepreneurs who are doing well before graduating them. In Malawi, Registration of businesses enhances expansion as it gives business owners access to huge bank loans which are business specific. With this view in mind, in January, we went to the administrator General's office where registration of businesses is done to facilitate the registration of some of the outstanding businesses in the FEM program. In the first phase, five women have been considered to proceed with the process. The names of the women entrepreneurs include; Edilina Joshua, Miguel Bright, Rebecca Maleta, Olipa Malizani and Alinet Machisawo.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

One of the areas of focus for Orant Charities Africa (OCA) is education. The Education program of OCA provides support for impoverished and low-income girls in Malawi through educational encouragement and sponsorship for primary, secondary and university. The month of January 2022, was the beginning of a new academic year for all secondary students and some of the University students. The following are activities which were done;

Malawi School Certificate of Education Exams (MSCE) results

OCA had 26 students from different secondary schools who wrote the 2021 MSCE exams. Among these students 14 have passed and 12 have failed representing a 53.8 % pass rate. From the 12 who have failed, 11 students are from Day schools which is an indication that Day school students are not performing better than boarding students. The OCA education program will continue to encourage students, especially the day school students to work extra hard since they face a lot of challenges as compared to boarding school students. Some of the challenges faced by day school students include; long distance to schools, distractions from household chores, gender based violence, negative cultural practices e.t.c

OCA is pleased to report that some of its students are among the 57.90 % national pass rate for the 2021 MSCE exams in Malawi. However, the 2021 MSCE pass rate is a slight improvement from the 2020 pass rate which was at 41.42 and the 2019 pass rate at 50.42 percent. Yet the 2021 pass rate is 11 percent below than the 2017/2018 pass rate which was at 63.23 percent. This is a significant decline (of pass rates) that threatens to retard the country's strides towards reaching the set policy target of 80 percent pass rate.



2021 MSCE students from Nkhamenya girls secondary school

Orant Ulemu Scholarship program

In the 2022/2023 academic year, OCA received 8 applications and 6 students were initially given the scholarship. Out of 6 successful candidates, five were previously supported by OCA and were all from Nkhamenya girls Secondary School. Out of the planned budget, we discovered that we have a surplus which we can also assist a university student for one semester and we found one student (male) to be supported for one semester.

Orant Ulemu scholarship will therefore support the education of 7 University students (6 females and one male). One student who is in first year will only be supported with tuition for one semester (second semester) because from next semester the Malawi government has promised to provide him with a loan for tuition. The other 6 students will be supported for the whole academic year with tuition. Out of the 6 students; 2 students will be supported with food, accommodation, books and materials

➤ List of students under the Ulemu scholarship

Name of Student	Gender	Name of Program	Course Duration
Mary Chipala	F	Bachelor of Education in Business Studies	4
Bridget Khunga	F	Bachelor of Science in Industrial Laboratory Technology	4
Beauty Mkandawire	F	Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Development	4
Clara Mzumara	F	Bachelor of Arts in Communication & Cultural Studies	4
Esther Maupa	F	Diploma in Agriculture	3
Chikondi Mtanda	F	Bachelor of Science in Agriculture	4
Chifundo Tengani	M	Bachelor of Education(Secondary)	4

Identification of additional secondary school students

OCA is delighted that many of the previous sponsored students have completed schools successfully, and some have gone on to University education. Able students from primary schools are selected to continue their education at District and National boarding or day secondary schools, some of the best schools in the country. The fees, transport and other educational costs are well beyond the reach of their families. This is the reason Orant Charities Africa empowers girls through education.



Lonjezo interacting with some of the additional students into the education program

40 students from 14 different secondary schools across Malawi have been added into the OCA education program. Amongst these students 11 are boys, many boys around the world are caught in a generational cycle of poverty that is very difficult to escape. The choice to sponsor a boy can mean the end of this devastating cycle and the beginning of a new life for him and his family.

Conclusion

OCA sponsorship schemes provide the opportunity for bright, hardworking students to receive secondary and tertiary education and so have the opportunity to reach their potential in life.