



JULY, 2023

ORANT CHARITIES AFRICA MONTHLY REPORT



Compiled by:

Gabriel Kapanda

Country Director

Orant Charities Africa,

P/bag 365, Lilongwe

Table of Contents

Healthcare Program	3
Monthly Patients Attendance	4
OCA MOC Updates	5
COVID -19 Situation Updates	6
Reproductive and Family Planning Health	8
Maternal and New-born Health Care	8
Cervical Cancer Control Clinic Report	12
Eye Clinic	12
Malaria Report	13
HIV Testing Services (HTS)	16
Laboratory Services	17
Disease Group Trends	20
Healthcare Finance and Administration	22
Achievements and Challenges	24
Success Highlights	24
Water and Sanitation Program	27
Summary of Monthly Achievements	27
Water point repairs and rehabilitations	28
Community Based Management (CBM) training for Water Point Committees (WPCs)	29
Borehole drilling	29
Community mobilization meeting for promotion of pit latrine slubs	31
Agriculture and Business	32
Agriculture	32
Agriculture Trainings	32
Agro-ecology Progress on OCA farm	33
Irrigation Projects	34
Demonstration plots planting	34
Vegetable production	34
Village Savings and Loans (VSL) training	35
Fertilizer application	35
Pruning and sucker removal	36
Business and Financial Empowerment Microloans (FEM)	36
Microloan Disbursement	37

Monitoring visits	37
Village Savings and loans group formation and training	37
Village savings and loan group meetings.....	38
Education Support Program	39
Library visits	39
Provision of Book Pamphlets to Ngala CDSS	40
OCA Students University selection	41
Orant Ulemu Scholarship	43

Healthcare Program

Executive Summary

Kasese Health Center is in Traditional Authority Chakhaza, Dowa District along M1 road (Kasungu – Lilongwe) in Malawi, Africa. The Health Center is operated by Orant Charities Africa in coordination with the Ministry of Health (MOH). Orant Charities Africa healthcare program assists patients through Kasese Health Center (static clinic) and Mobile Outreach Clinics (MOC) which reaches parts of Kasungu District. The Healthcare program provides curative and preventive health care services to impoverished rural communities. Kasese Health Center operate a busy Outpatients Department (OPD), **10** bed capacity **24** hours children observation ward, and a **7** bed capacity maternity ward, twice a week Antenatal Program, weekly Cervical Cancer Screening and monthly Eye Clinic, Under-Five Clinics (immunization and child growth monitoring) e.t.c. MOC takes the services to hard to reach areas thereby making healthcare accessible. Tropical infectious diseases are common health problems which include: malaria, respiratory disease like pneumonia and bronchitis. However, non-communicable diseases are on the rise for example diabetes and hypertension.

For July 2023 ,the total number of patients seen at the outpatients departments is **2133** (KHC OPD). Out of this number, only **93** patients were seen during weekends and nights and the rest (**2040**) patients were seen during the day on week days. MOC in Kasese catchment areas saw **743**. Kasungu (Bowe) Outreach clinic saw **2931** clients. MOC's total number of patients seen is **3674**. The total number of patients seen in July 2023 is **5807** (Dowa: **2876 (49.5%)** & Kasungu **2931 (50.5%)**).

The Laboratory department tested **2099** for Malaria, out of which **542** were positive, representing a **26%** positivity rate. In Dowa, **1021** patients were tested and **104(10%)** were positive cases; in Kasungu, **1078** patients were tested and **438(41%)** were positive.

The Maternity department admitted **47** mothers and referred **12**. A total of **44** babies were born at the facility and **3** were born in transit (BBAs). Out of **47** babies, **7** had complications (**4** Weight < 2.5 Kgs Prematurity: **1** and Asphyxia: **2**). The total Maternity attendance was **59** (**47** admissions and **12** referrals).

The HTS department tested **190** clients, of which **3** were positive, representing **2%**.

The total number of patients seen at the eye clinic by an outsourced clinician is **30** and **3** were booked for surgery.

The MOC team managed to conduct all **19** scheduled visits in the month representing **100%**

Monthly Patients Attendance

Table 1 below shows monthly patients seen in both Dowa and Kasungu.

Months (2023)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Total
OPD Static	1755	1680	2385	1978	2301	2584	2040	14723
Bowe MOC	2481	3188	3005	3523	4373	4218	2931	23719
Kasese MOC	667	489	803	876	723	864	743	5165
Nights/Holidays	44	46	40	56	58	64	93	401
Total	4947	5403	6233	6433	7455	7730	5807	44008

Table 1: Total monthly patients seen at Dowa and Kasungu (2023).

Figure 1 below shows the total OCA patient attendance in 2023

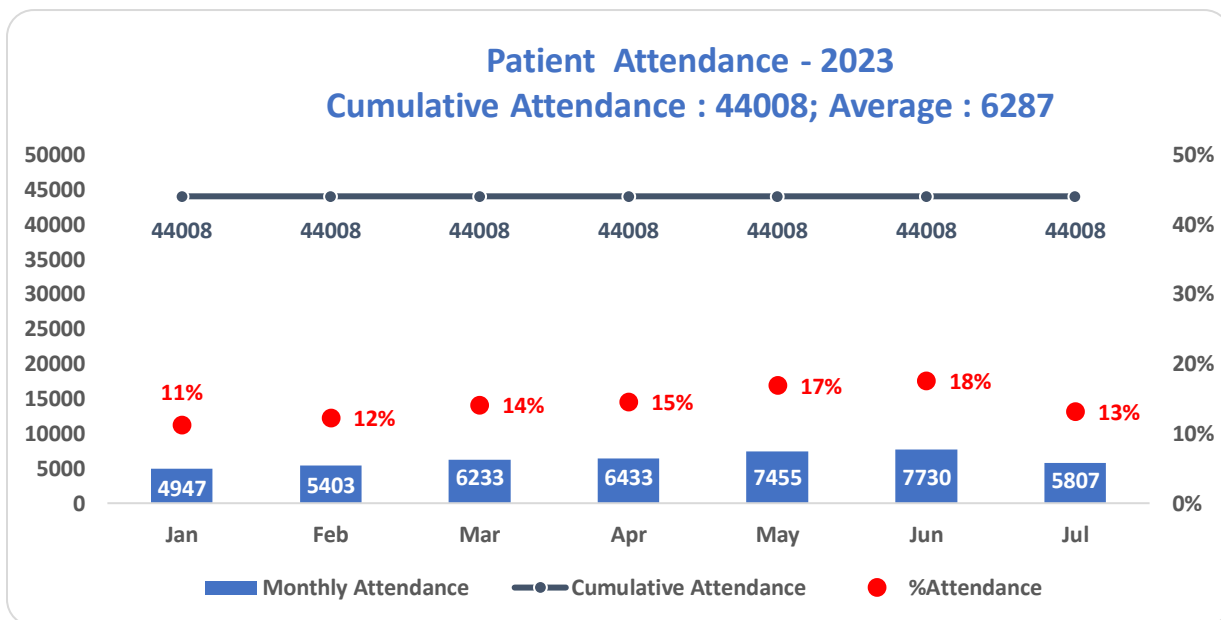


Figure 1: OCA Patient Attendance – 2023.

Figure 2 below shows the cumulative patient attendance for OCA healthcare program in 2023

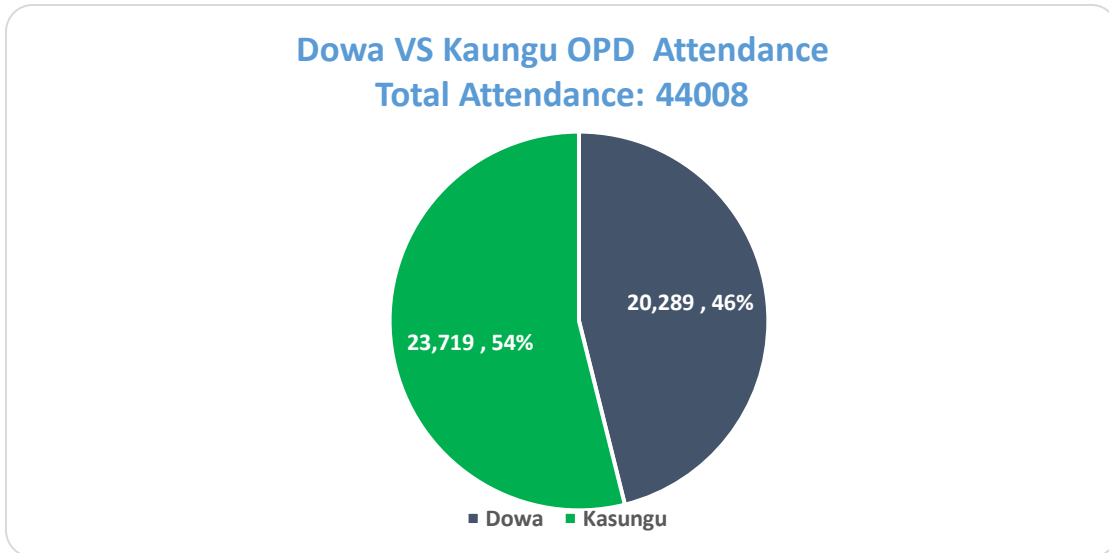


Figure 2: Dowa vs Kasungu (2023).

OCA MOC Updates

Figure 3 below shows the Kasungu patient attendance for July 2023

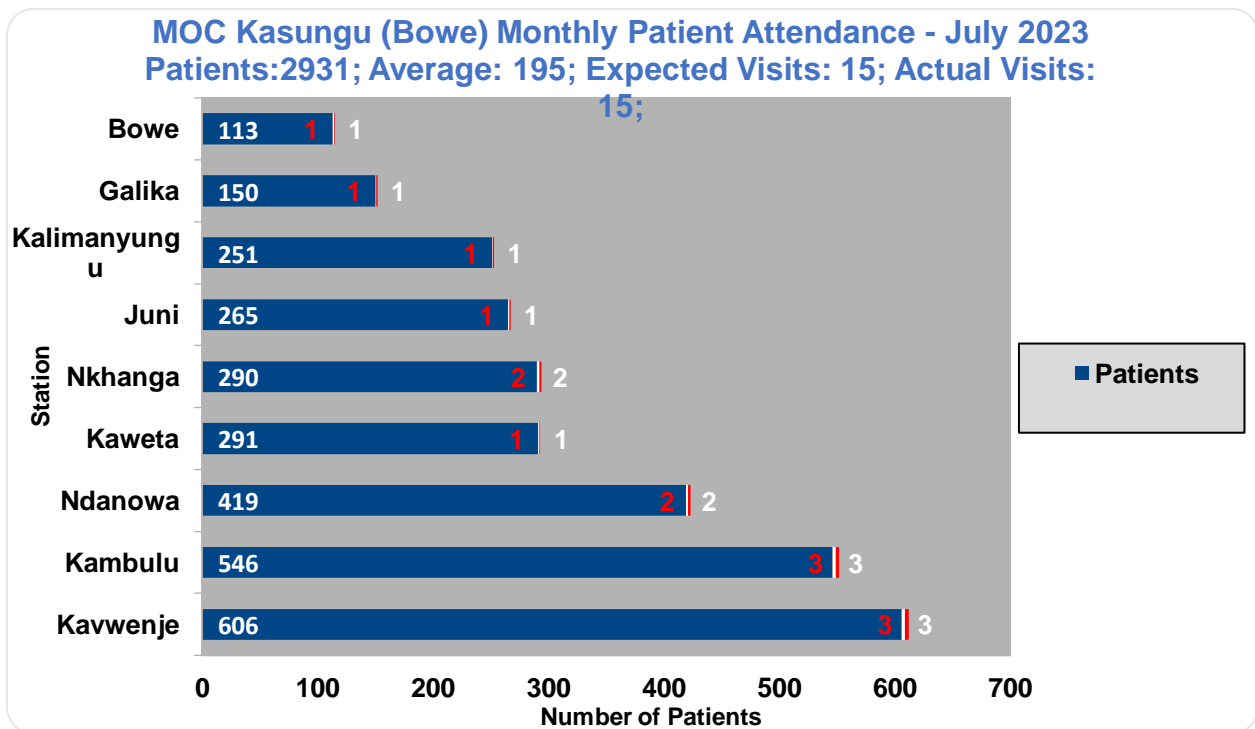


Figure 3: Kasungu Patient Attendance – July 2023.

Figure 4 below shows the Dowa patient attendance for July 2023

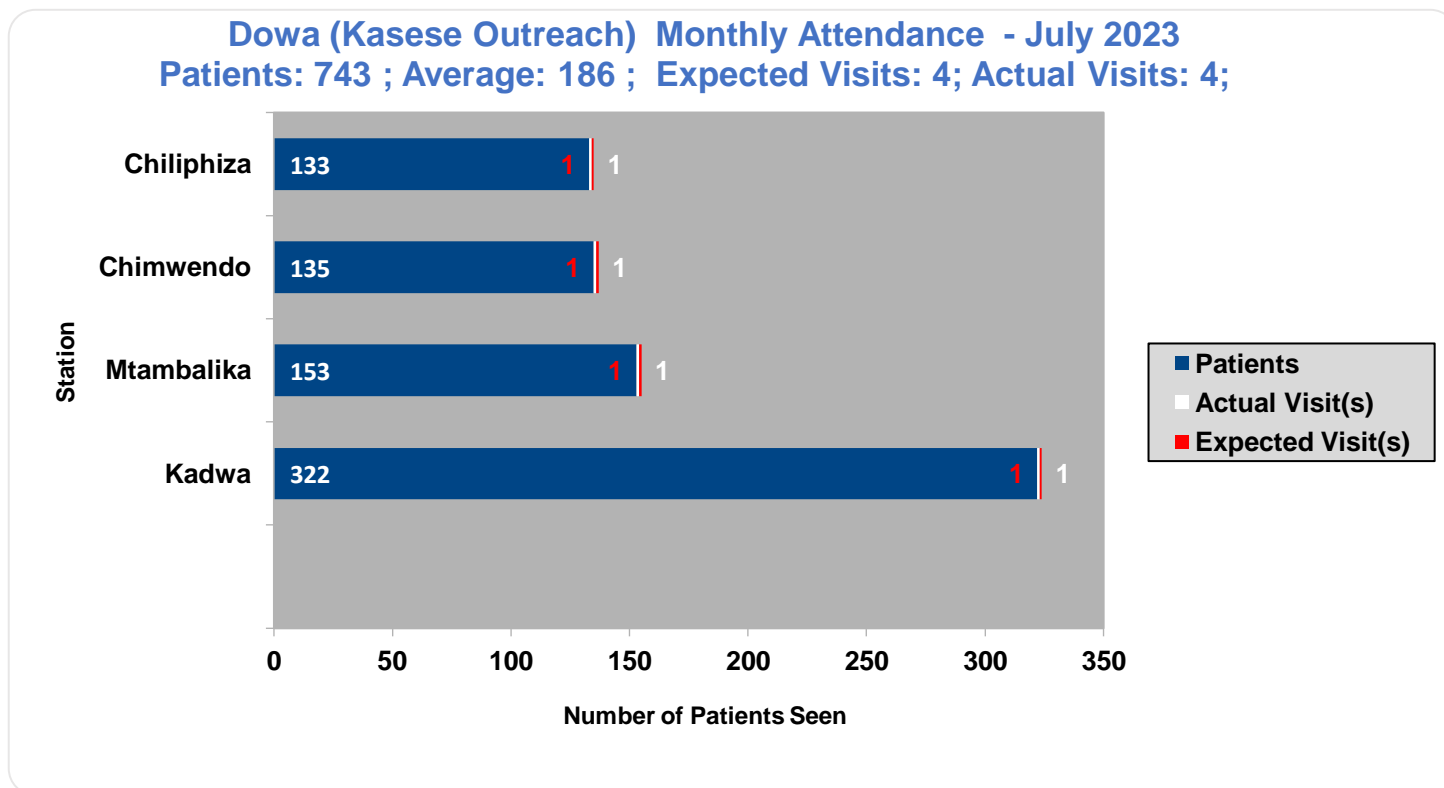


Figure 4: Dowa Patient Attendance – July 2023.

COVID -19 Situation Updates

The COVID-19 situation in the country remains low and in July 2023, **no** test was conducted. The Health Center continues to provide vaccines at the facility.

Cumulative COVID-19 Data – KHC Static.

Table 2 below shows Cumulative COVID-19 Data.

	Staff(OCA/HSA)	Others	Total
July Tests	0	0	0
July Positives	0	0	0

Table 2: COVID-19 Cumulative Data.

COVID 19 Vaccine (Pfizer) – KHC Static.

Table 3 below shows Vaccine Doses Administered in 2023

Dose	Male	Female	Total
1st Dose	0	0	0
2nd Dose	0	0	0
Booster	0	0	0
B/F	539	574	1113
Total	539	574	1113

Table 3: Pfizer Administered at KHC Static (2023)

COVID 19 Vaccine (Johnson & Johnson – J&J) – KHC Static

Table 4 below shows Vaccine Doses Administered in 2023

Vaccine Type	Male	Female	Total
Johnson & Johnson (J & J)	0	0	0
B/F	414	646	1060
Booster	0	0	0
Total	414	646	1060

Table 4: J & J Administered at KHC Static (2023)

COVID-19 Vaccine (Astra-Zeneca) – KHC Static.

Table 5 below shows Vaccine Doses Administered in 2023

Dose	Male	Female	Total
1st Dose	0	0	0
2nd Dose	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0

Table 5: J & J Administered at KHC Static (2023)

COVID 19 Vaccine Status – KHC Static

Table 6 below shows Vaccine Status in July 2023

Vaccine Type	Beginning Balance	End Balance
Pfizer	0	0
J & J	0	0

Table 6: Astra-Zeneca Status at KHC Static (July 2023)

Reproductive and Family Planning Health

Maternal and New-born Health Care

Months	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Total
Admissions	38	44	36	30	28	28	47	251
Referrals	13	8	14	15	13	23	12	98
New Babies	38	44	36	30	28	28	47	251
Alive Babies	38	44	35	29	28	28	46	248
Facility Deliveries	33	36	32	29	25	26	44	225

Table 7: Maternity Data – 2023

Table 9 below shows the Maternity Data of new babies with complications.

Months (2023)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Total
Weight <2500g	2	1	7	3	0	7	4	24
Prematurity	4	7	1	1	1	1	1	16
Asphyxia	1	1	0	1	3	1	2	9
Sepsis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Still Birth Fresh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Still Birth Macerated	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Neonatal Death	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	7	9	9	6	4	9	8	52

Table 8: Newborns with complications – 2023

Figure 5 below shows the total newborns complications for 2023.

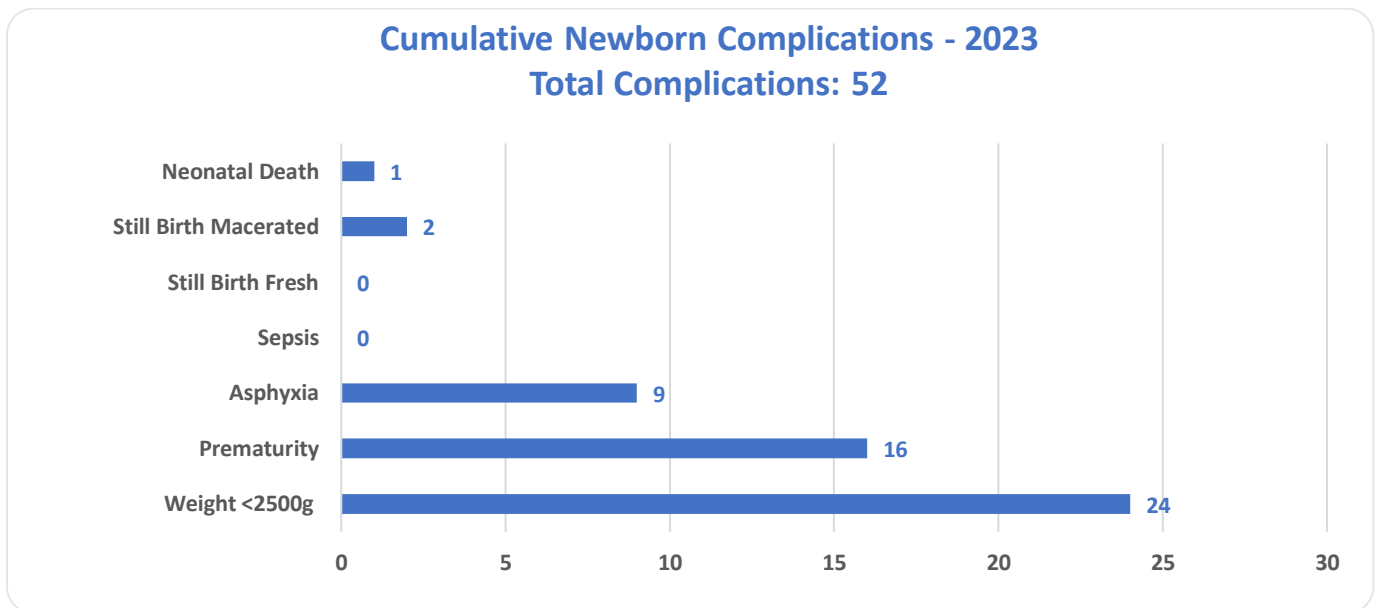


Figure 5: Newborns Complications – 2023

Figure 6 below shows the total monthly Maternity attendance.

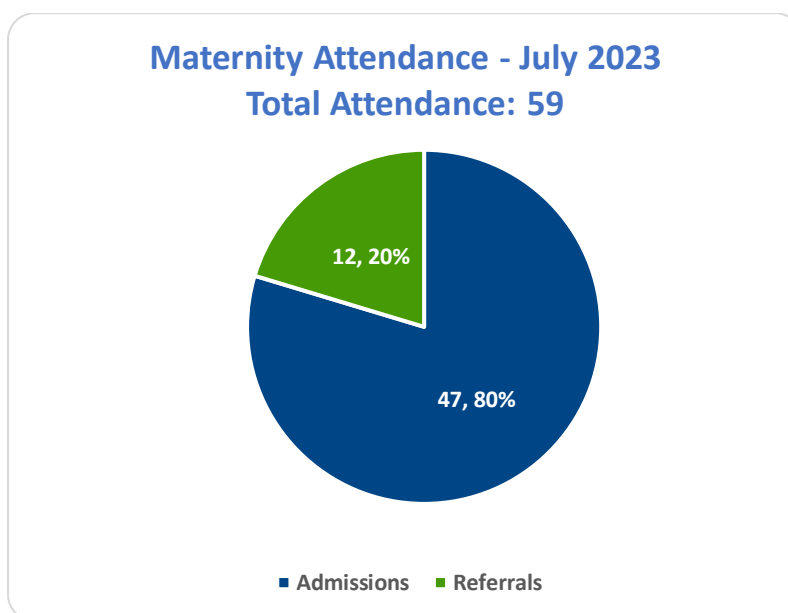


Figure 6: Admissions and Referrals (July 2023)

Table 9 below shows the reason for the referrals

Referral Reason	Referred
AntePartum Haem	2
Obstructed Prolonged Labour	1
Pre-eclampsia	1
Young Primigravida	2
Premature Labour	2
Previous Scar	1
Premature Prolonged Rupture of Membranes (Pre-prom)	1
CPD	2
Total	12

Table 9: Referral Reasons - July 2023

Table 10 below shows ANC attendance.

2023	New ANC Visit	First Trimester
January	69	22
February	53	9
March	50	7
April	38	5
May	78	16
June	69	8
July	78	9

Table 10: ANC Attendance – 2023

Figure 7 below shows 2023 Monthly ANC Visits.

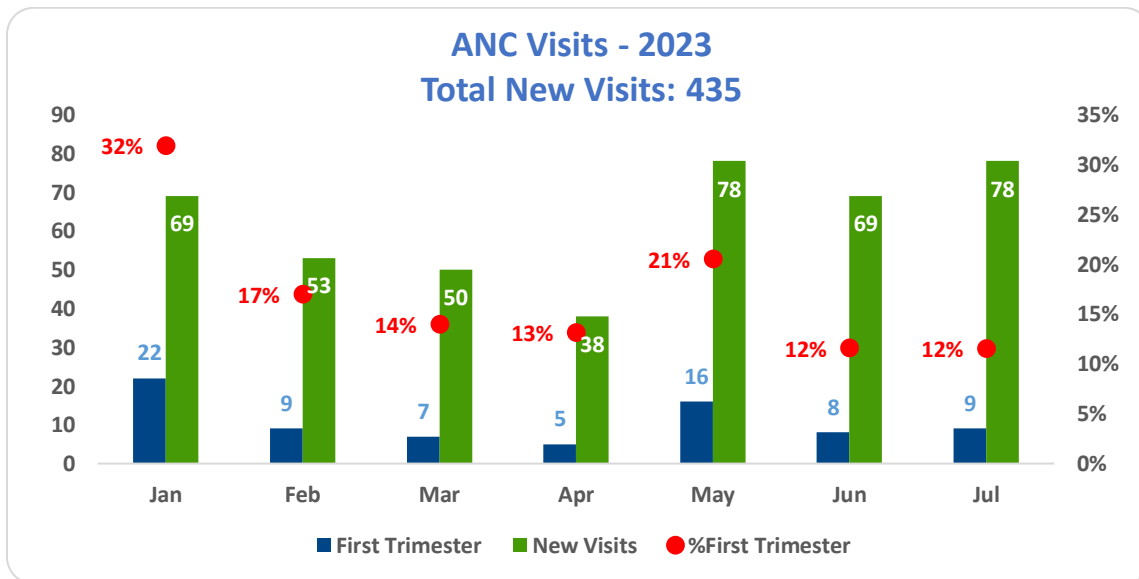


Figure 7: Monthly ANC Visits – 2023

Cervical Cancer Control Clinic Report

Table 11 below shows the 2023 Monthly Cervical Cancer Screening.

Months	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Total	21	30	44	14	0	0	16
VIA Positive	1	3	0	0	0	0	0

Table 11: Monthly Cervical Cancer Screening 2023 Table.

The monthly Cervical Cancer screening remains to be low, there is a need for more community sensitization.

Figure 8 below shows 2023 Cervical Cancer Screenings.

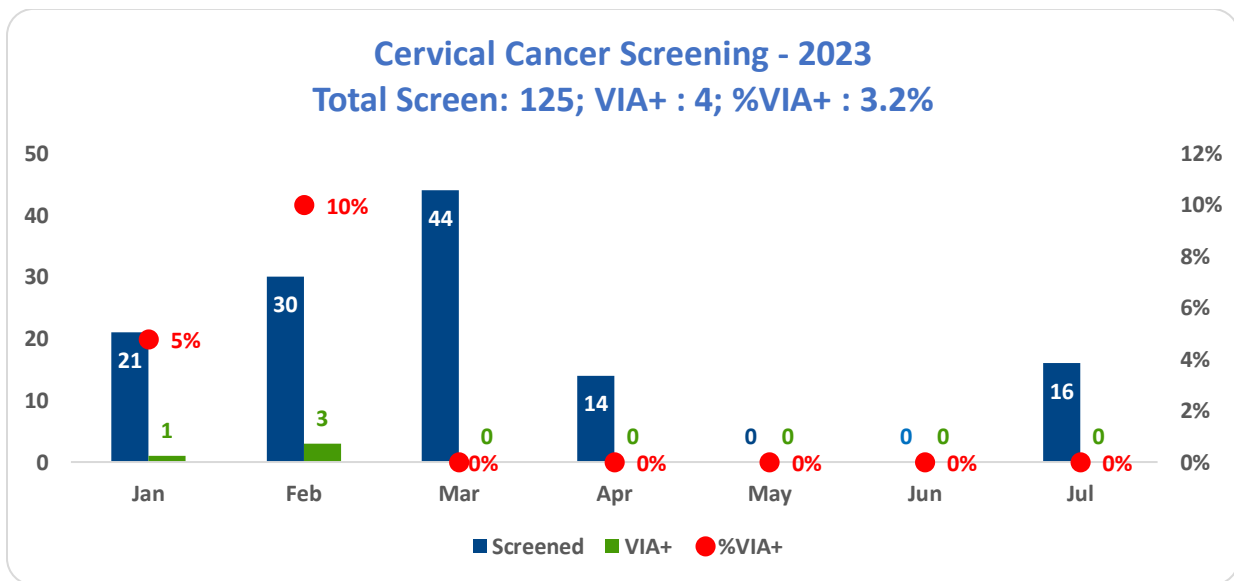


Figure 8: Cervical Cancer Screening - 2023.

Eye Clinic

The outsource eye specialist continues to provide service in Kasese Health Center and operation is done at Kasungu District Hospital.

Table 12 below shows the total number of clients treated for eye infections and those booked for surgery.

Month (2023)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
--------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Eye Infections (Treated)	27	40	49	35	30	39	27
Eye Surgery (Booked)	2	1	7	6	6	9	3
Total Seen	29	41	56	41	36	48	30

Table 12: Monthly Eye Clinic Table - 2023.

Figure 9 below shows the 2023 Monthly Eye Clinics.

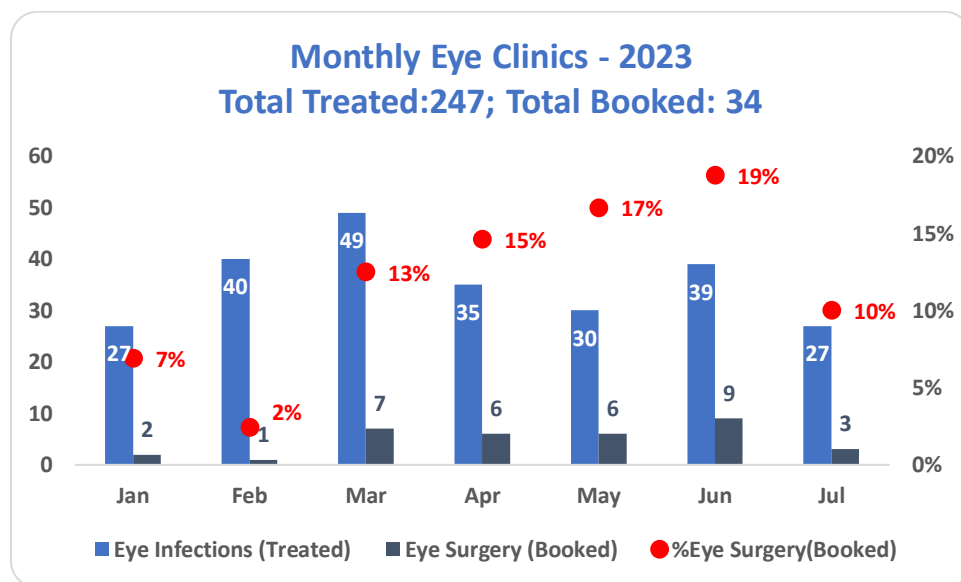


Figure 9 Monthly Eye Clinics - 2023.

Malaria Report

Table 13 below shows Malaria tests for July 2023 (Dowa and Kasungu)

	Total Tested	Positives	Negatives	Positivity Rate
Under 5	702	154	548	22%
5 Years and Over	1397	388	1009	28%
Total	2099	542	1557	26%

Table 13: Total Malaria Tests (July 2023).

Table 14 below shows the total Malaria Cases (MRDT's Positive), LA Issued and Dispensed (OCA Clinics)

2023	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Suspected Malaria Cases	1854	1498	2209	2740	3241	3092	2099
Suspected Cases Tested MRDT	1854	1498	2209	2740	3241	3092	2099
Confirmed Malaria Cases	508	354	635	996	1748	1241	542
New Malaria Cases Registered	508	361	651	996	1778	1245	548
LA Dispensed	503	361	651	995	1748	1245	548
LA Issued	120	600	940	1020	2877	520	150

Table 14: Total Malaria Cases, LA Issued and Dispensed Table.

Figure 10 shows the total OCA Clinics Malaria tests (Dowa, 2023)

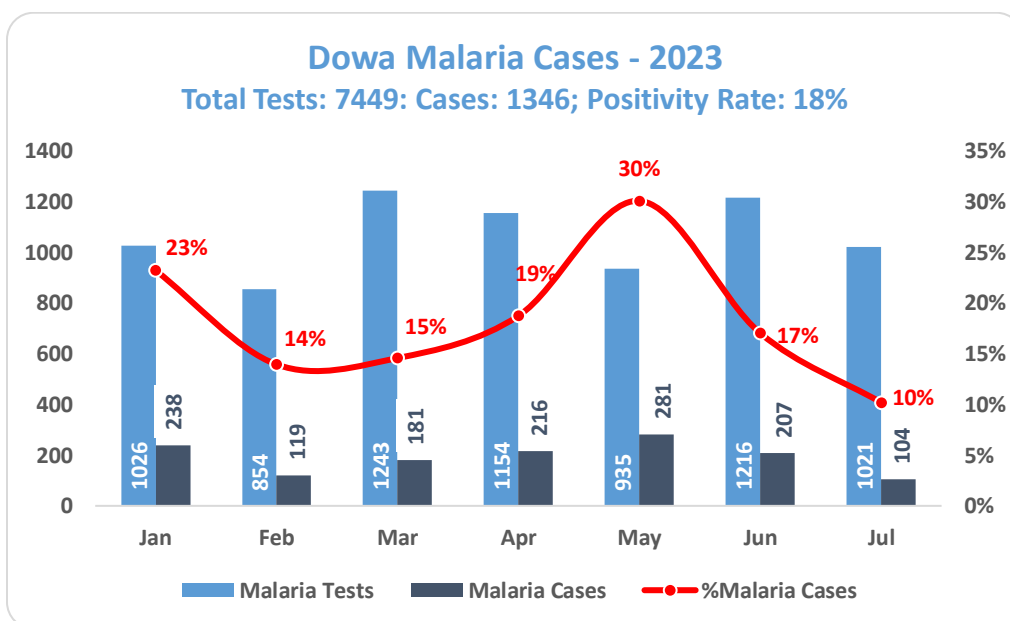


Figure 10: OCA Clinics Malaria tests (Dowa, 2023).

Figure 11 shows the total OCA Clinics Malaria tests (Kasungu, 2023)

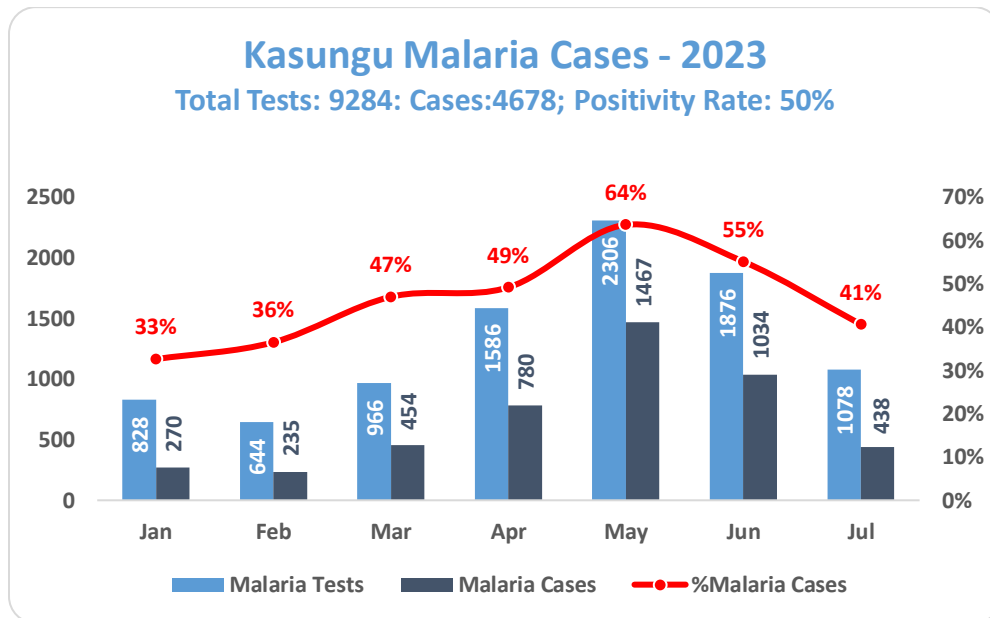


Figure 11: OCA Clinics Malaria tests (Kasungu, 2023).

Figure 12 shows the total OCA Clinics under 5 Years of Malaria tests

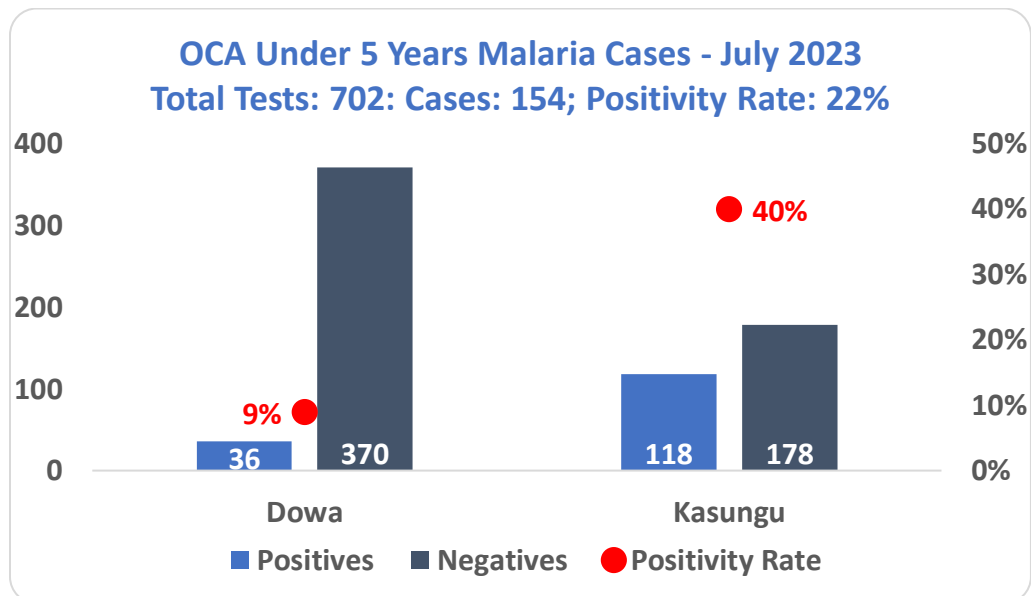


Figure 12: OCA Clinics, Under 5 Years Malaria tests (July 2023).

Figure 13 shows the total OCA Clinics 5 Years and Over Malaria tests

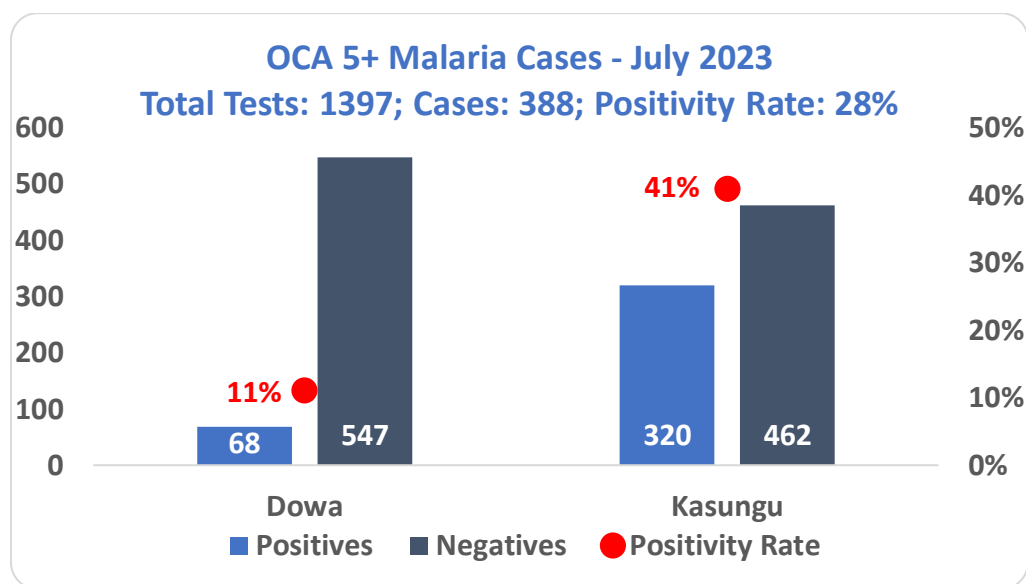


Figure 13: OCA Clinics, 5+ Malaria tests (July 2023).

HIV Testing Services (HTS)

Months	Total Tested	Positives	Positivity Rate
January	193	2	1%
February	154	2	1%
March	215	2	1%
April	169	3	2%
May	202	3	1%
June	193	2	1%
July	190	3	2%

Table 15: HTC Monthly Data 2023

Kasese catchment area positivity rate remains to be low, this could indicate that people adhere to HIV/AIDS preventive measures.

Figure 14 below shows HTS' Monthly Attendance

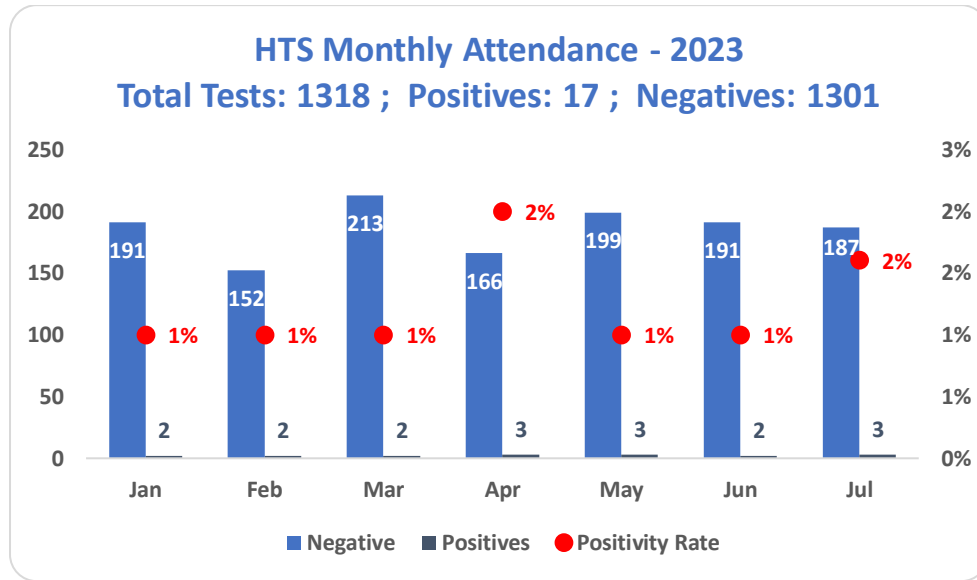


Figure 14: HTS Monthly Tests – 2023

Laboratory Services

Table 16 below shows qualitative Laboratory tests conducted in 2023.

	H. Pyloris		Salmonella		Hep B		HCG		COVID 19	
	Total	Pos	Total	Pos	Total	Pos	Total	Pos	Total	Pos
July	70	16	11	0	2	0	71	35	0	0

Table 16: Qualitative Lab Tests Data Table for OCA Clinics - July 2023.

Figure 15 below shows qualitative lab tests – July 2023

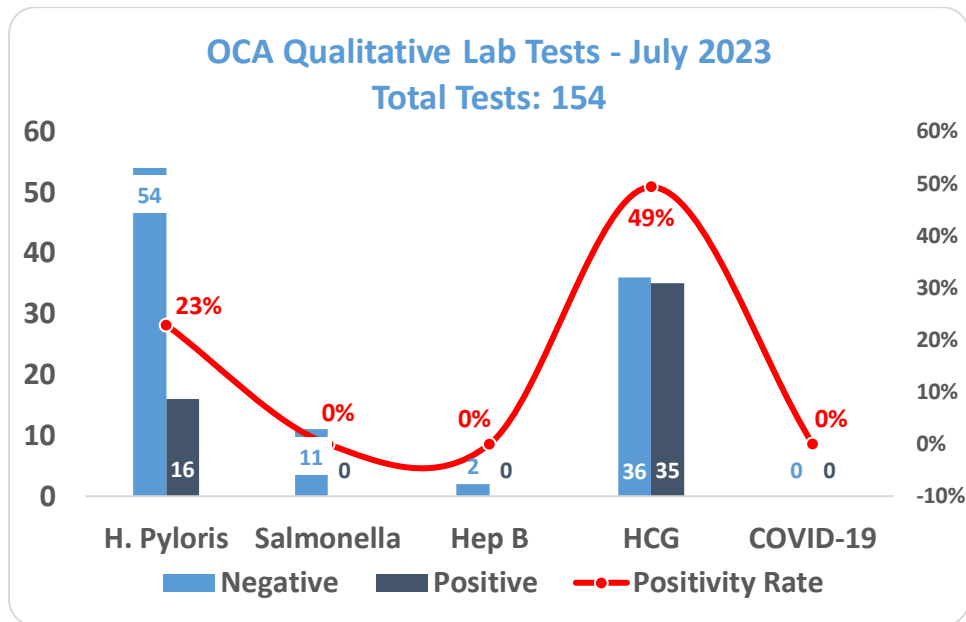


Figure 15: Qualitative Lab Tests – 2023.

Table 17 below shows OCA clinics quantitative Laboratory tests conducted in 2023.

	Glucose	HB	Urinalysis	FBC
Jan	172	192	23	95
Feb	100	137	33	133
Mar	118	110	16	191
Apr	140	60	17	126
May	51	162	21	106
Jun	75	71	11	100
Jul	52	48	4	108
Total	708	780	125	859

Table 17: Quantitative Lab Tests Data Table for OCA Clinics.

Figure 16 shows quantitative lab tests for the year 2023

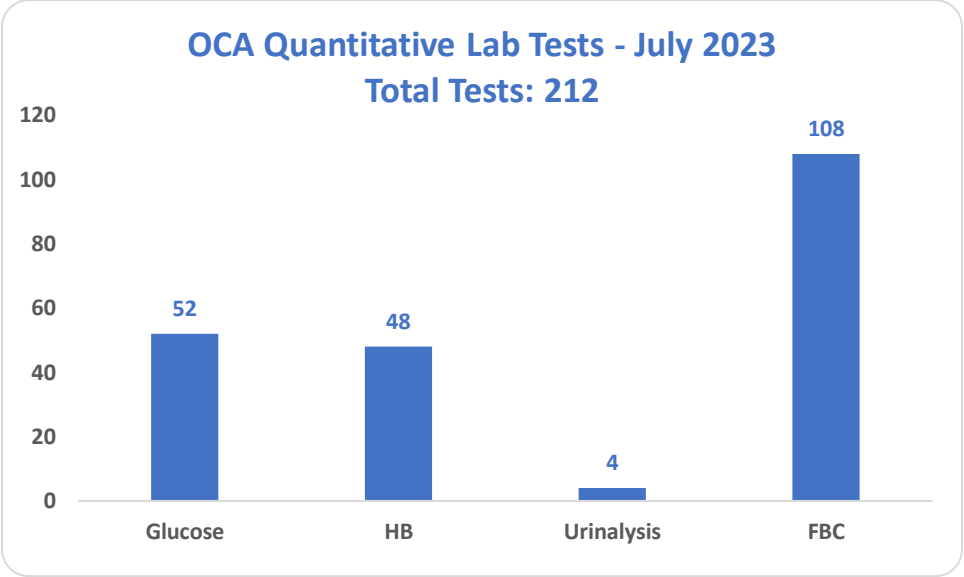


Figure 16: Quantitative Lab Tests – 2023.

Disease Group Trends

Figure 17 below shows Dowa disease occurrences for July 2023

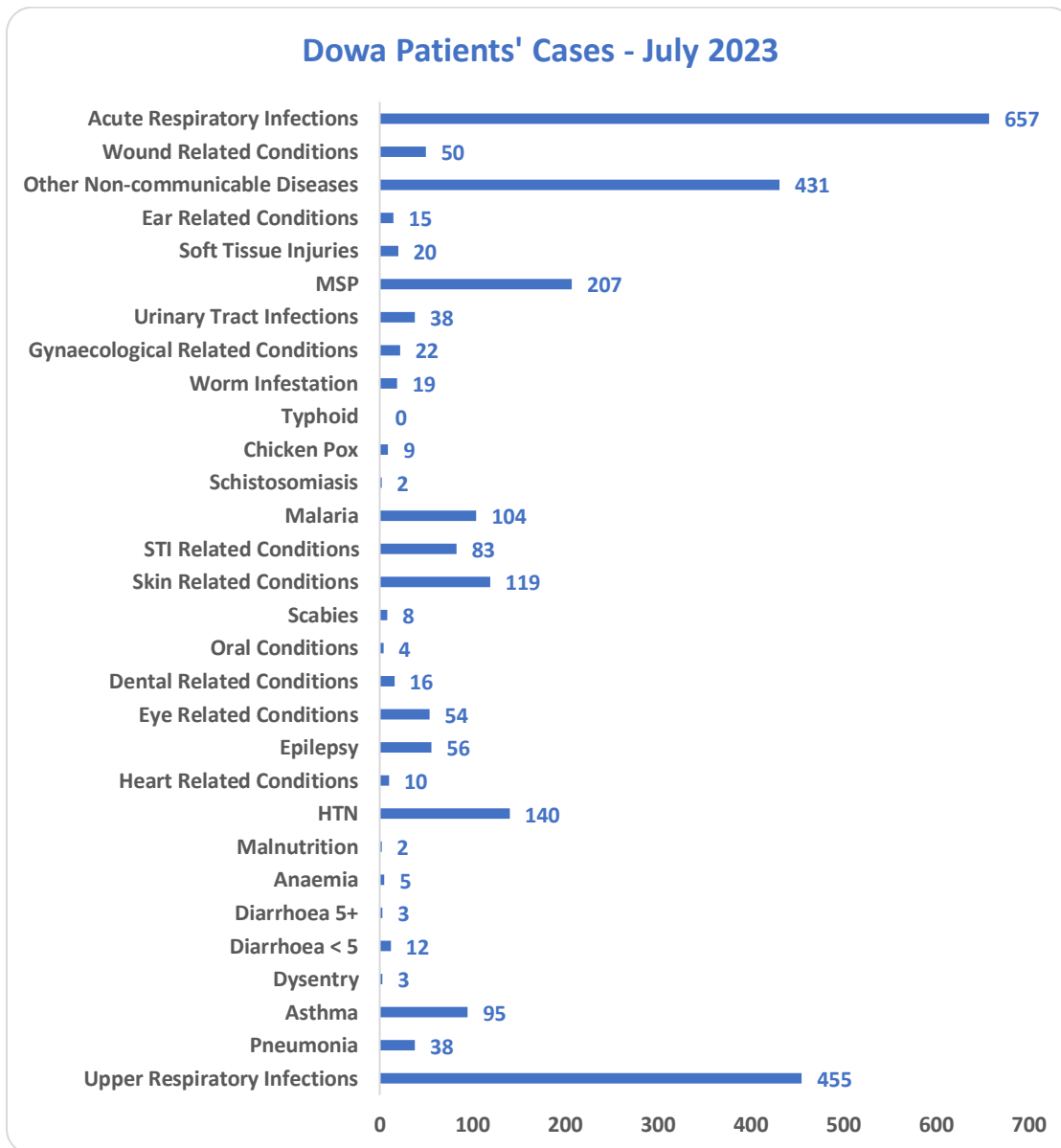


Figure 17: Dowa Disease Occurrences (July 2023).

Figure 18 below shows Kasungu disease occurrences for July 2023.

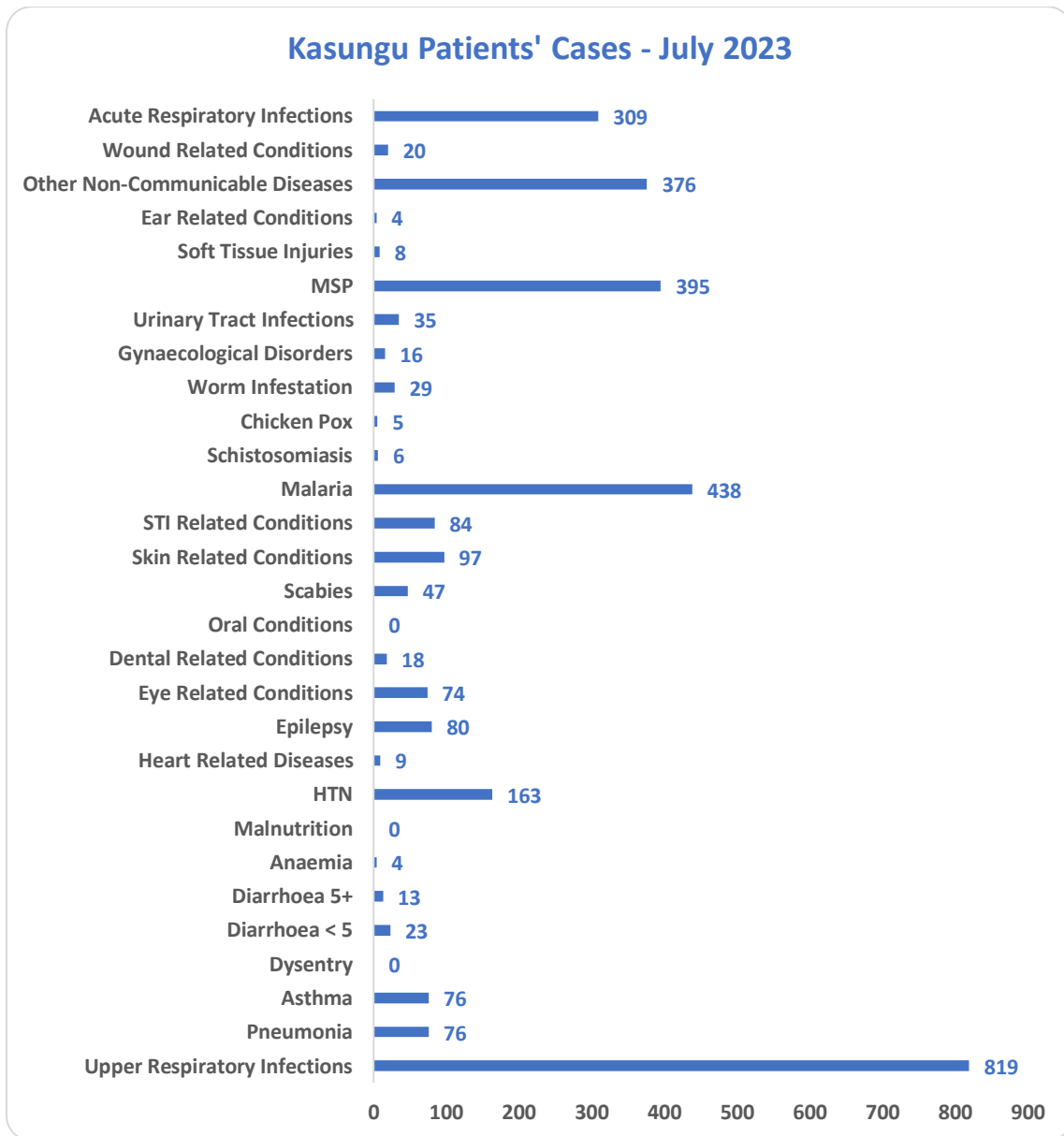


Figure 18: Kasungu Disease Occurrences (July 2023).

Healthcare Finance and Administration

Table 18 shows the clinic finance table for 2023.

2023	Collection	Referrals	Clients	Referral Average Cost
January	MK 2,625,400	MK 276,575	20	MK 13,829
February	MK 2,757,500	MK 307,220	18	MK 17,068
March	MK 3,257,750	MK 343,040	25	MK 13,722
April	MK 3,215,700	MK 527,070	23	MK 22,916
May	MK 3,860,800	MK 348,529	16	MK 21,783
June	MK 4,052,700	MK 582,320	23	MK 25,318
July	MK 3,049,700	MK 307,050	15	MK 20,470

Table 18: Clinic Finances – 2023.

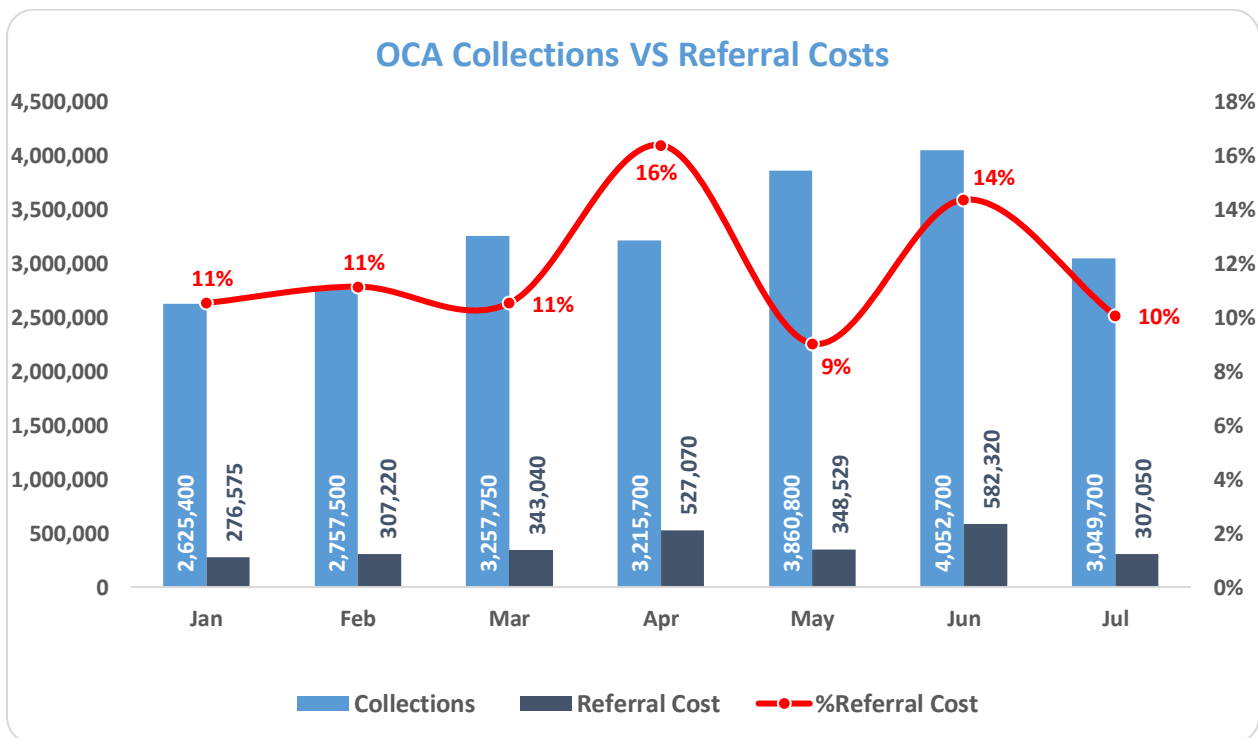


Figure 19: OCA Collections VS Referrals - 2023.

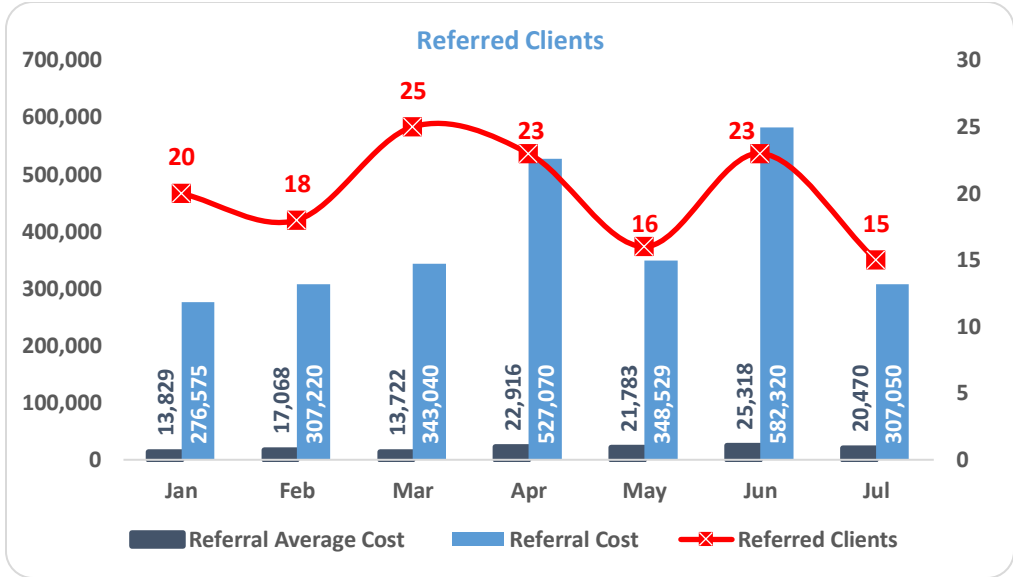


Figure 20: OCA Referred Clients - 2023.

Achievements and Challenges

Success Highlights

- i. Data interpretation.
 - a. Antenatal clinic has seen an increase in new visits probably due to the new “Chitenje” incentive provided at the clinic. However, those who attend in the first trimester remain low.
 - b. As seen from the above graphs 10 and 11, the malaria positivity rate continues to decrease in Kasese and at Kasungu Mobile Outreach Clinic.
- ii. The Health Centre through the village chiefs has nominated a new Health Advisory Committee (HAC), this follows an end of the 3 years’ term limits for the previous committee. The committee is composed of 15 members which include representatives from people with disabilities, youth, women, CBOs and religious organizations within the Kasese Health Centre catchment area. Their role is to advise the Health Centre management on health issues affecting the community.

Appendices

Appendix A: July 2023 MOC Schedule

JULY 2023 OUTREACH CLINIC SCHEDULE					
DATE	DAY	STATION	DISTRICT	ACTIVITY	TIME
1	Saturday	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend
2	Sunday	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend
3	Monday	Nkhanga	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am - 3:00pm
4	Tuesday	Kambulu	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am - 3:00pm
5	Wednesday	Lisito	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am - 3:00pm
6	Thursday	Independence		Independence Day	
7	Friday	Kadwa	Dowa	Outreach clinic	08:00am - 4:00pm
8	Saturday	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend
9	Sunday	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend
10	Monday	Kantomphole	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am - 3:00pm
11	Tuesday	Galika	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am - 3:00pm
12	Wednesday	Bowe	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am - 3:00pm
13	Thursday	Chisuwe	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am - 3:00pm
14	Friday	Mtambalika	Dowa	Outreach clinic	08:00am - 4:00pm
15	Saturday	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend
16	Sunday	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend
17	Monday	Miyowe	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am - 3:00pm

18	Tuesday	Kalimanyungu	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am 3:00pm	-
19	Wednesday	Kavwenje	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am 3:00pm	-
20	Thursday	Ndanowa	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am 3:00pm	-
21	Friday	Chiliphiza	Dowa	Outreach clinic	08:00am 4:00pm	-
22	Saturday	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	
23	Sunday	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	
24	Monday	Kaweta	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am 3:00pm	-
25	Tuesday	Juni	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am 3:00pm	-
26	Wednesday	Lisito	Kasungu	Outreach clinic		
27	Thursday	Kambulu	Kasungu	Outreach clinic	09:00am 3:00pm	-
28	Friday	Chimwendo	Dowa	Outreach clinic	08:00am 4:00pm	-
29	Saturday	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	
30	Sunday	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	Weekend	
31	Monday	Preparation day		Preparation day	Preparation day	

Water and Sanitation Program

Executive Summary

The WASH program has made significant progress in the past six months. July is the first month of the second half of 2023. In the second part of the year the WASH program continues to strides in promoting access to WASH services for the people of Kasese. In line with this overall objective the WASH program has implemented a number of initiatives ranging from pump



repairs, promoting sanitation to drilling of new water wells. Therefore, this report provides an outline of key initiatives conducted in July 2023.

Summary of Monthly Achievements

In June the following milestones were achieved;

- Supported water point repairs (Service/preventive: ; major repairs:;)
- Drilled 2 borehole at Nambola school
- Conducted a combined Community Based Management (CBM) training for 2 new water points from Nambola school and Nambola
- Conducted a community mobilization meeting for latrine construction at Kalikulu
- Attended community mobilization meeting for promotion of pit latrine slubs in Makombwa 1 village

Detailed Narration of Monthly Achievements

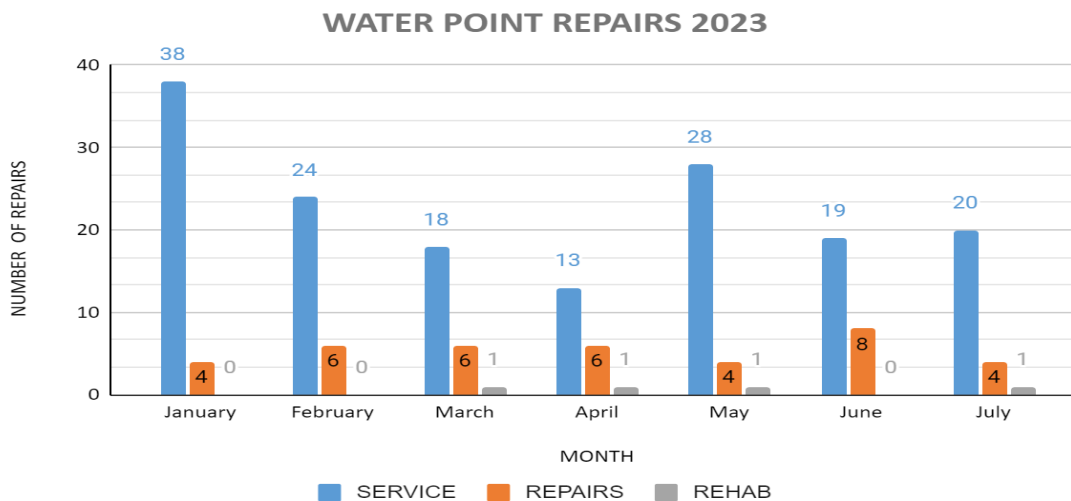
The WASH program carried out the following key activities in July 2023.

Water point repairs and rehabilitations



Area Mechanic repairing the raising main of an Afridev pump in Kasese during the month

In order to improve functionality of water points in Kasese the WASH program conducts water point repairs which include preventive and corrective/major maintenance. In July, the WASH program repaired a total of 25 water points (Service/preventive: 20; major repairs: 4; Rehab: 1). major repairs. During the month, MK 180, 800 has been spent on preventive maintenance, MK 103, 000 has been spent on major repairs and MK 70,000 has been spent on rehabilitation of boreholes. Below is a graph showing the progress of water point maintenances for the WASH program;



Community Based Management (CBM) training for Water Point Committees (WPCs)

To empower communities towards sustainable operation and maintenance of water points the WASH program conducts Community Based Management (CBM) training for new water points drilled by OCA. During the month the WASH program conducted a combined training for Nambola school and Nguluwe new water point committees at Nambola school. The two new water points in Nguluwe and Nambola were drilled in May and June respectively. During the training water point committees were trained in water point sanitation and minor repairs. In total a total of 22 participants attended the training in which each committee had 11 members.



Left - A group discussion session during CBM trained for Madzo and Nguluwe WPC, Right - Classroom session during CBM training Madzo and Nguluwe WPC

Borehole drilling

Newly constructed water point in Ngoma 2 village

In an effort to access potable water for people around Kasese catchment the WASH program drills wells in areas with limited access to water. In July the WASH



program drilled 2 wells at Madzo school and Ngoma 2 village. The borehole at Madzo was drilled with support from Melody's family and this was facilitated by Lynda Baumgartener

while the borehole in Ngoma 2 was drilled with support from Orant Charities US. The borehole at Madzo is expected to serve a population of about 415 learners. Similarly, the borehole in Ngoma is expected to serve a population of about 200 people from Ngoma and chipoyo villages. Before OCA intervention Madzo school had no sources of potable water on campus and learners were traveling to nearby communities to access water. This was an inconvenience for the learners and teachers at the school. Similarly, Ngoma 2 had no source of potable water in the village and people from the village relied on unprotected hand dug wells. So far in 2023 the WASH program has drilled 5 boreholes out the annual target of 16 boreholes.

1. Community mobilization meeting for latrine construction



A section of stakeholders during meeting at Kalikulu school

To ensure community participation and create a sense of ownership OCA conducts community mobilization meetings before constructing latrines at each school. The WASH program conducted a mobilization meeting at Kalikulu which has been earmarked for latrine construction in 2023. Among the

major discussions during the meeting were the roles and responsibilities of OCA and community around Kalikulu school before and after the construction of the latrines. During the meeting it was agreed that the community from Kalikulu will provide bricks, sand and quarrystone during the construction of latrines at the school. On the other hand, OCA will provide all other construction materials and payment for labour during the construction process. It further agreed that the community in collaboration with school management will provide post construction management of the new school latrines. Following the meeting, the school management and members of the school community

were very thankful to OCA for considering them during this year's latrine construction program. Earlier in 2023 girls latrines at Kalikulu school were damaged by rains.

Community mobilization meeting for promotion of pit latrine slabs



Left - Sanitation entrepreneur demonstrating how a pit latrine slab is made during a community mobilization meeting, Right -A cross section of participants during a community mobilization meeting

During the month OCA WASH program was invited to attend a community mobilization meeting for promotion of pit latrine slabs in Makombwa 1 village. The meeting was organized by the sanitation entrepreneur for Makombwa VDC who was recently trained by OCA. Sanitation entrepreneurs are responsible for construction of corbelled latrines and pit latrine slabs in their communities thereby promoting sanitation. The meeting in Makombwa was attended by Chiefs from around the area and VDC members. The aim of the meeting was to demonstrate how pit latrine slabs are casted as well as discuss charges for purchasing with the chiefs before the message about sanitation materials is delivered to communities. During the meeting the WASH program encouraged chiefs to be agents of change in their communities and that they should take a leading role in the promotion of access to sanitation in their communities.

Conclusion

The WASH program is excited with the progress made so far in 2023 in regards to project implementation and articulated in this report. The WASH program is looking forward to more successful part of 2023.

Agriculture and Business

Agriculture

Executive Summary

Malawi's economy depends much on farming and OCA supports smallholder farmers to improve their economic status and reduce hunger problems. OCA's main focus in agriculture is equipping farmers with the knowledge of sustainable farming methods. OCA supports smallholder farmers in both irrigated and rainfed farming through the provision of farm



inputs, microloans, and agriculture expertise. Some of the activities conducted during the reporting month have been explained below;

Agriculture Trainings

Mwayiwathu farm club, which was introduced in 2022 by OCA, participated in training revolving around the following topics: Business and family, decision making, teamwork, record keeping, business planning, goal setting, and market research. The topics will improve the collaboration efforts among family members, keeping accurate records, guiding farmers in defining objectives, creating a comprehensive business plan, being able to define short-term and long-term goals, and skills in market research. The topics under discussion offer valuable insights and skills that complement traditional farming knowledge, resulting in improved farm business management. By investing in these classes, farmers and their families will ultimately contribute to a successful and sustainable agricultural enterprise.



Mwayiwathu club families participating in training

Agro-ecology Progress on OCA farm

As the agro-ecology farm is taking shape on the OCA campus, the planting exercise has begun during the reporting month where plants such as Mangoes, bananas, Pawpaw, Macadamia, and guava just to mention a few have been planted. The planting process seeks to create sustainable and resilient agricultural systems by mimicking natural processes and promoting biodiversity. The key aspect of agroecology is the implementation of effective planting strategies that enhance soil health, conserve resources, and promote the overall health of the ecosystem.



Planting on agro-ecology farm in progress

Irrigation Projects

Demonstration plots planting

As a way of showcasing various agricultural practices and techniques to farmers and the community, demonstrations are considered the most effective way of disseminating the techniques. These demonstration plots provide hands-on learning experiences and help promote the adoption of sustainable and effective farming strategies. The demonstrations have been established with support from OCA partners such as Plant Catalyst and Bayer seed company. The Companies will provide all necessary materials necessary for these demonstrations such as seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. The demonstrations have been mounted in the irrigation clubs of Chigona and Mvungiti irrigation clubs. The demonstrations will inspire positive changes in agricultural practices among smallholder farmers.



Club members participating in planting on a demonstration plot

Vegetable production

Irrigation clubs around our catchment area mostly cultivate Maize and Tomatoes as their cash crops. During the irrigation season of 2023, irrigation farmers were encouraged to practice vegetable farming. Different types of leaf vegetables such as Rape, Chinese, and Mustard have been produced. These vegetables have several importance to the farmers such as improving their economic status and improving human nutrition and health. Currently, farmers are selling these vegetables while other crops such as Maize and Tomatoes have not yet reached this stage hence providing fast cash to the farmers.



A farmer with a happy face harvesting leaf vegetable

Village Savings and Loans (VSL) training

Irrigation clubs of Chigona and Tchale were trained on Village saving loans (VSL) as these clubs have limited access to formal banking services. The VSL in irrigation clubs brings members together so that they can pool their savings and provide loans to each other. The process of promoting irrigation clubs to jump into VSL will help to empower individuals in rural and underserved areas to save money, access credit, and improve their economic well-being. More than 80 members from Chigona and Tchale showed up during the training.

Fertilizer application

Irrigation clubs are working on Maize, Tomatoes, beans, and Irish potatoes where the activity of boosting nutrients was taking place. Irrigation clubs applied manure during the time of crop planting and it has been supplemented with fertilizer to bring more bumper harvest. With the application of manure during crop planting, it has helped since the quantity of fertilizer being applied has been reduced. The farmers were also directed on the recommended fertilizers for each crop and every stage of the plant.



Well fertilized Maize crops at Tchale irrigation club

Pruning and sucker removal

Suckers compete for nutrient and water uptake for the main plant hence removal of suckers is more essential. Sucker removal is done to maximize the efficiency of photosynthesis and minimize the risk of pests and disease. The use of clean and sharp objects during pruning is recommended so that diseases are not transferred and the plant is not injured. By following the recommended pruning and sucker removal processes farmers will be able to get bumper harvest and high-quality crops.

Conclusion

In search of sustainable and effective agricultural practices, the activities undertaken during the reporting month are composed to bring about positive transformation within the community.

Business and Financial Empowerment Microloans (FEM)

Executive Summary

The Financially empowering microloan program works to break the poverty circle in our communities. It continually provides microloans to women entrepreneurs to ably manage their businesses. Follow-ups to individual businesses as well as capacity building classes are also freely given to the women entrepreneurs so that they are well equipped to

effectively and efficiently manage their businesses hence improving livelihoods in the communities. In the month of July, there were a number of activities that were done in ensuring the success of the program. Below is a narrative of the activities conducted;

Microloan Disbursement

A total of MWK 9,580,000 was disbursed to Tikondane and Tiyanjane FEM groups as Microloans for the second loan period. Out of the total, MWK 4,880,000 was given to Tiyanjane and the remaining amount of MWK 4,700,000 was given to Tikondane FEM group. Tikondane did not receive their microloans for the June to November loan period because they are still lagging behind with repayments from the previous loan period.

Monitoring visits

Upon disbursement of microloans, it is necessary to monitor businesses for FEM participants. Monitoring visits to individual businesses for the members were carried out. These visits have helped us in verifying whether the loans have been put to the intended use. Again, we used this opportunity to help the women in making viable investment decisions that are in line with the current market trends.



Alinet Preparing chickens for her "Kanyenya" business

Village Savings and loans group formation and training

The FEM program encourages the groups that it works with to form Village savings and loan (VSL) groups as a way of cultivating a saving culture for the program participants. Following the successes recorded by the FEM program VSL groups, it was deemed

necessary to replicate the idea in other groups in the agriculture and business department.

Chigona and Tchale irrigation clubs were the first irrigation clubs to be trained on savings and investment. The training resulted in formation of VSL groups for each club. It is believed that the VSL groups will not only encourage the program participants to have savings, it will also ensure sustainability of the groups as they will be able to have their own revolving fund to use for continued operations of the club. Pictures below shows the FEM Program Manager facilitating VSL trainings;



Village savings and loan group meetings

The trend of coming together to buy shares in the village banks continues for all the FEM groups in the program. As we are approaching the end of the year, the groups have decided to stop lending out money and start recovering the loans from individuals who are still owing. The women entrepreneurs have also started to make plans on how they are going to use their savings. To achieve this end, the women entrepreneurs are asked to individually come up with a vision tree which will be used to track progress of their savings investments.

Education Support Program

Executive Summary

While primary school education in Malawi is funded by the Government, Secondary education is not. Many of our students cannot afford secondary school and are forced to end their education after primary school, which leaves them with limited career options. Through the OCA Education Sponsorship Program, students can attend secondary school and are given all the tools they need to thrive over the four years. OCA also supports University students through the Orant Ulemu Scholarship.

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

Library visits

The OCA Education program aims to improve the education of local schools within our catchment area. Ngala CDSS is one of the schools which OCA has started working with and we are in the process of improving the school's Library services.

During the reporting period, the education program together with the Librarian from Madisi Secondary school visited Ngala CDSS Library. The Library was visited in order to monitor the progress of the school's Library check out system. Ngala CDSS Library adopted a new check out system from Madisi secondary school Library. It was a great visit, and the check-out system was done in most of the books, only a few books were remaining. The Madisi Librarian was impressed with the work at the Ngala CDSS Library and appreciated them for the great Job they are doing.



Madisi Secondary school Librarian monitoring progress of the check out system at Ngala CDSS Library

In addition to that, The Orant Education program also visited Ngala CDSS to monitor the coming of students at the Library during the holiday. Orant had an agreement with Ngala CDSS to be opening the Library during holidays in order to help the student adopt the reading culture and also to get busy with books instead of getting involved with other activities in the villages that might lead them into dropping out of school. The opening of the Library during the holiday will also help the student to improve in their performance because they have extra time to study.



Ngala CDSS Students checking out books in the Library (right) and studying in a Classroom (left)

The Ngala CDSS Library is open for 2 hours (10am -12pm), three days a week during the holiday. A total of 35 students were registered to have checked out books on the day Orant visited. This is a good start and it shows that a lot of students welcomed the idea of opening the Library during the holiday.

Provision of Book Pamphlets to Ngala CDSS

In the same month, The OCA education program provided the Ngala CDSS with Book Pamphlets. Previously, OCA conducted an assessment at Ngala CDSS and other schools on the factors that affect the performance of students. Shortage of books was one of the factors and it was discovered that Ngala CDSS lacks some “Question and Model Answer Books” which are there to guide students especially during MSCE exam preparation and also to help them come up with good grades.

OCA managed to buy 38 book Pamphlets for Ngala CDSS and these books were for 8 different subjects; Physics, Biology, Geography, History, Agriculture, Life skills, English Literature and Social Development studies.



OCA handing over Book Pamphlets to Ngala CDSS

OCA Students University selection

In the 2022/2023 academic year, OCA had 50 students (All girls) who wrote the MSCE exams and 38 students passed, representing a 76% pass rate. Out of these students, 26 were qualified for University and they applied to different universities. OCA is happy to say that 17 of the 26 students (65 %) have been selected into Universities.

- Below is the list of students, University they have been selected to, and the course to study;

	Name of Student	University Selected	Course to study
1	Lonely Bivot	MUBAS	Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering (Honours)
2	Sinikiwe Tomoka	KUHES	Bachelor of Dental Surgery
3	Tadala Mathado	KUHES	Bachelor of Pharmacy (Honours)
4	Doreen Kapalanga	KUHES	Bachelor of Science in Child Health Nursing
5	Margret Simfukwe	KUHES	Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Midwifery

6	Olivia Chasuluka	KUHES	Bachelor of Science in Adult Health Nursing
7	Anifa Ng'oma	KUHES	Bachelor of Science in Community Health Nursing
8	Prisca Magombo	MUBAS	Bachelor of Arts in Journalism
9	Catherine Chiumia	MUBAS	Bachelor of Commerce in Internal Audit
10	Joyce Lemani	UNIMA	Bachelor of Arts and Media Development
11	Esther Banda	UNIMA	Bachelor of Science
12	Jane Zimba	UNIMA	Bachelor of Science
13	Clara Chawala	UNIMA	Bachelor of Education (Languages)
14	Lexina Ngwira	MUST	Bachelor of Arts in Language, Communication & Culture
15	Uchizi Mughogho	MUST	Bachelor of Science in Computer Systems & Security
16	Prisca Josam	LUANAR	Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Extension
17	Agness Chilongo	Mzuni	Bachelor of Education(Languages)

This is a great achievement to OCA because we now have a total of 33 students who have been selected to University since the program started and in Malawi the competition is always high and for this year (2023) out of the 8,520 students who have been selected to different universities, 3,434 are girls representing 40.3%. Therefore, it is not easy for the 17 OCA students to be among the 40.3%. These students have done very well and this has indeed contributed to the success of the OCA education program.

Orant Ulemu Scholarship

In the same reporting period, the OCA Education program opened applications for Ulemu scholarships for the 2023/ 2024 academic year. In January, 2023 only two students were selected instead of the targeted four because many students did not qualify. From the two students one was withdrawn from the scholarship because he has not been well psychologically, that is why we decided to open the applications again in order to reach the annual target. Another reason was also to give the chance to previously sponsored OCA students who wrote the 2022 MSCE exams since the time the Orant Ulemu applications were opened, the University selection results were not yet out.

The initial plan of the scholarship is to assist students who were previously assisted by Orant in Secondary school. We noted a gap in students' academic life that after graduating secondary school they were failing to progress in the university due to lack of tuition and support. The university loans from the government of Malawi do not meet the needs of all vulnerable students.