

**ORANT CHARITIES AFRICA
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM MONTHLY
REPORT**



Compiled by:

Gabriel Kapanda

Country Director

Orant Charities Africa, P/bag

365, Lilongwe

www.orantcharitiesafrica.org

Table of Contents

Acronyms & Abbreviations.....	2
Introduction	3
Water and Sanitation Program.....	3
Water point Repairs and Rehabilitations	4
Borehole Drilling and Construction	5
Community-Based Management (CBM) training.....	7
Agriculture and Business.....	8
Agriculture Program.....	8
Training on leadership and group dynamics	8
Agroecology farm	9
Lead farmers Meeting	10
Basal dressing fertilizer application	10
Irrigation club Review meeting	11
Transplanting of Tomato seedlings	11
Business and Financial Empowerment Microloans (FEM).....	13
Training Sessions for Mtambalika FEM groups	13
Group Monitoring meetings	14
Village Savings and Loan groups training.....	15
Loan Disbursement	15
Umodzi Village Business Manual (UBVM) Printing and Distribution	16
Education Support Program.....	17
School visit	17
Student and donor correspondence	18
Expulsion of OCA student	19
Ngala CDSS library visit	19
Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) Exams	20
OCA Students University selection.....	20

Acronyms & Abbreviations

ADC	-	Area Development Committee
AM	-	Area Mechanic
CBM	-	Community Based Management
CDSS	-	Community Day Secondary School
CONGOMA	-	Council for Non-Governmental Organizations in Malawi
DCT	-	District Coordination Team
EPA	-	Extension Planning Area
FEM	-	Financial Empowerment Microloan
JCE	-	Junior Certificate of Education
MSCE	-	Malawi School Certificate of Education
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization
NGORA	-	Non-Governmental Organization Regulatory Authority
OCA	-	Orant Charities Africa
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
VSL	-	Village Savings and Loans
WASH	-	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
WPC	-	Water Point Committees

Introduction

Orant Charities Africa (OCA) is a non-governmental organization serving in rural communities of Malawi. It was registered as an NGO in Malawi in 2014. OCA is registered under the Trustees Act and also with both NGORA and CONGOMA regulatory authorities. OCA serves in Malawi through healthcare and implementing other development programs. It operates in the following thematic areas; Healthcare, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Education, Agriculture, Business Development, and Energy and Environment. This monthly report outlines milestones from the month of July 2024 in our WASH program, Education, Agriculture and Business Development;

Water and Sanitation Program

Executive Summary

The WASH program aims to reduce morbidity and mortality of WASH-related diseases for the people of Kasese. This goal is achieved through the provision of WASH infrastructure and extension services. OCA WASH program mainly focuses on Water supply, operation and maintenance of WASH infrastructure, advocating for sanitation in communities and schools, and collaborating with stakeholders. In July, the program conducted several activities aligned with these key implementation areas. Therefore, this report outlines the monthly progress, beginning with a summary, followed by a detailed description of accomplishments.



Summary of Monthly Achievements

The following milestones were achieved during the month;

- Water point repairs (Service/preventive: **33**; major maintenance: **6**)

- Conducted **2** Community-Based Management (CBM) training for the Kadango and Chilemba Water Point Committee (WPCs)
- Borehole Village Savings Loans (VSLs) training for Mzimuwakana and Kuliyani

Detailed Narration of Monthly Achievements

The WASH program carried out the following key activities in the month;

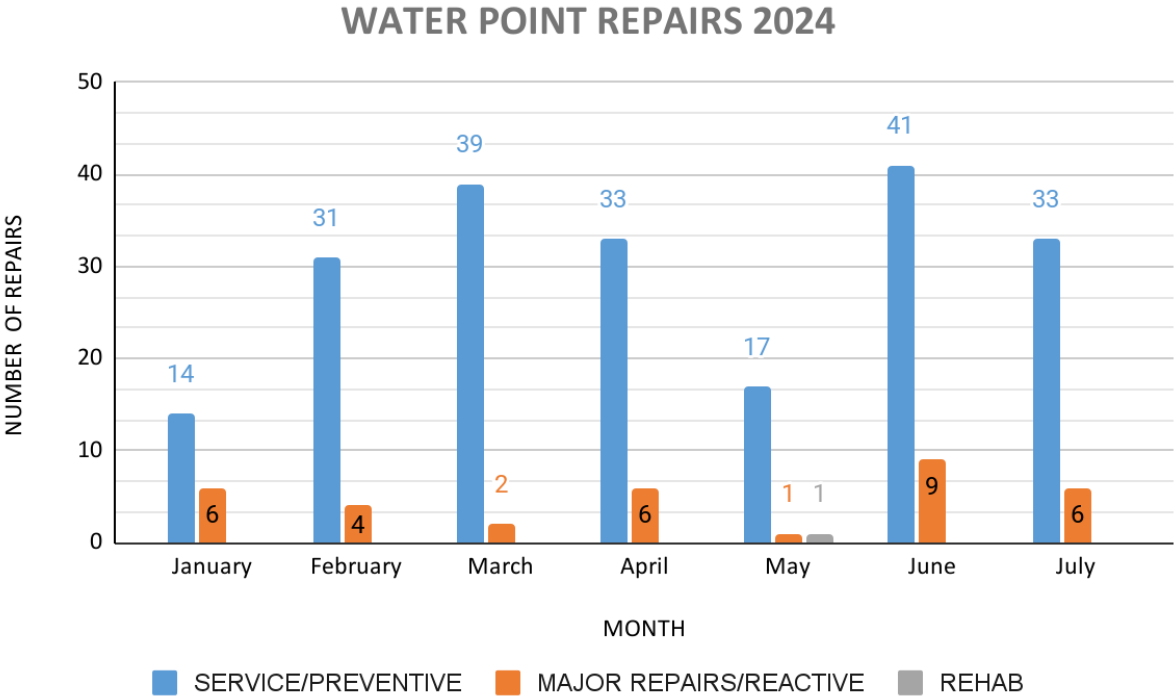
Water point Repairs and Rehabilitations



Left - Preventive maintenance session for Vulayakata borehole, Right - Preventive maintenance session for Kasinja borehole during the month

To maintain access to potable water, the WASH program conducts water point maintenance activities. This month, the program supported **33** preventive and **6** reactive maintenance activities for water points, thus a total of **39** repairs. From January to July 2024, the WASH program has conducted **34** reactive maintenance of water points out of an annual target of **58**, achieving **59%** of the target. This data indicates that the program is on track to reduce the need for major reactive maintenance. Additionally, the program has conducted **209** preventive maintenance of water points out of an annual target of **300**, representing **70%** progress. This is a significant improvement compared to the **160** preventive maintenance activities conducted during the same period in 2023, which accounted for approximately **53%**. This improvement can be attributed to the hand pump maintenance tools (bicycles, receipt books, spanners) donated to Area Mechanics (AMs) and ongoing water point maintenance community sensitization campaigns. Below

is a graph showing the progress of water point maintenance services in the Kasese catchment.



Borehole Drilling and Construction

To improve access to potable water, the WASH program drills new boreholes in areas with limited water access. This month, the program drilled two boreholes in the villages of Chilemba and Mfungulu. Previously, these communities relied on unprotected hand-dug wells for their water. The new borehole in Chilemba now serves 34 households, while the one in Mfungulu serves 27 households. In 2024, the program has drilled a total of 4 boreholes out of its annual target of 10.



Left - New borehole in Mfungulu village before commissioning, Right- Construction of Aprons for the newly constructed borehole in Chilemba village during the month.

1. Borehole Village Savings Loans (VSLs) Training



Left - Participants during a borehole VSL training for Kuliyani WPC, Right - Participants during the VSL training for Mzimuwakana WPC

To ensure the continued availability of funds for water point maintenance, OCA has launched a borehole Village Savings and Loans (VSL) pilot project. This initiative encourages WPC to loan out excess funds from water point fees with interest to community members. The goal is to grow the capital available at each WPC for future maintenance activities. Additionally, the VSLs help improve the economic status of community members by providing access to small loans. However, caution is important when selecting people to access loans from these borehole VSLs to avoid defaulters who can make the whole thing collapse. Currently, two VSLs, Mzimuwakana and Kuliyani, have been trained. The plan is to train at least five water point committees by the end of

the year. This project is being implemented in coordination with the Business Development program.

Community-Based Management (CBM) training



Left -A practical session during a CBM training for Kadango WPC during the month, Right - Classroom session during CBM training for Chilemba WPC

To enhance the capacity of Water Point Committees (WPCs) in managing their water points, the OCA WASH program conducts Community-Based Management (CBM) training. During these training, WPC members learn to perform minor repairs on Afridev pumps, implement household sanitation and hygiene practices, understand community dynamics, mobilize and manage funds for borehole maintenance. In the past month, the WASH program trained two WPCs from the Chilemba and Kadango boreholes. These WPCs are associated with new boreholes drilled in 2024. Each training session was attended by 11 WPC members, including the Chief of each village.

Conclusion

In summary, this report has reviewed the WASH program's implementation progress, challenges, and achievements for July 2024. This month, the program made significant strides in borehole drilling, repairs, training of Water Point Committees (WPCs), establishing borehole Village Savings and Loans (VSLs), and planning piped water projects. Moving forward, the WASH program will continue focusing on borehole drilling, latrine construction, and the piped water project as key interventions.

Agriculture and Business

Agriculture Program

Executive Summary

Agriculture program responds to the following SDGs; SDG1- End poverty, SDG2 which is dedicated to ending hunger, improving food security and nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture, SDG 8 of Decent work and Economic growth. 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 in equipping them with



knowledge on commercial farming. The activities are done in both irrigation and rainfed farming through provision of farm inputs as microloans and agriculture expertise. Some of the activities conducted during the reporting month have been explained below;

Training on leadership and group dynamics

Irrigation clubs of Chigona, Tchale, Madzimayela and Kambalani were trained on leadership and group dynamics which aimed at enhancing leadership skills of club members and improving the overall group dynamics to foster better collaboration, decision making and productivity. The club members were equipped with leadership skills such as the importance of role modeling, tools and techniques for effective decision making, and building trust, integrity and accountability. Participants engaged in conflict resolution simulations, where they practiced applying the strategies discussed. They also developed action plans for improving team management in their own work environments. Participants appreciated the interactive nature of the training and the practical applications of the concepts discussed. The role-playing exercises and case

studies were highlighted as particularly beneficial in understanding leadership and group dynamics in a real-world context.



Club members attending the training

Agroecology farm

At the OCA Agroecology farm, the cabbages are showing strong progress, with robust, healthy leaves that exhibit no signs of nutrient deficiency or significant pest damage. The heads are starting to form, and growth is consistent across the field. Both the cabbage and carrot crops were planted in well-prepared beds enriched with organic compost to enhance soil fertility and structure. The farm employs crop rotation and intercropping to maintain soil health and minimize pest and disease pressure. Organic fertilizers, including compost and Mbeya, were applied to supply essential nutrients. Additionally, chicken manure was used to promote leaf growth in the cabbages, while the carrots received a balanced nutrient regime to support root development without an excess of nitrogen, which can lead to forked roots.



Cabbage plants from OCA agroecology farm

Lead farmers Meeting

Through the meetings with lead farmers (LF) to discuss sustainable farming practices, the concept of forming a VSL group was discussed and accepted by the majority of them. The initiative aims to empower LF by providing them with a sustainable financial model that supports savings, access to credit, and investment in agricultural activities. The meeting successfully introduced the concept of VSL group to the lead farmers, who showed interest and commitment to moving forward with the initiative. By empowering LF with financial tools and knowledge, the village bank model has the potential to significantly enhance agricultural productivity and economic resilience in rural communities.



Lead farmers attending VSL meeting

Basal dressing fertilizer application

Tidalilainu Irrigation Club is currently cultivating maize and participated in the application of basal dressing fertilizer during the reporting period. The main goal of applying basal dressing is to provide the soil with essential nutrients, particularly nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, which are crucial for the early growth stages of crops. Making sure these nutrients are available from the beginning supports the development of strong root systems and overall plant health. Although challenges are present, the effectiveness of this practice can be significantly improved through proper timing, application methods, and farmer education.



Basal dressing fertilizer application

Irrigation club Review meeting

The Chigona Irrigation Club review meeting was organized to assess the progress of current irrigation projects, address challenges encountered by the clubs, and explore potential solutions and strategies for improvement. During the meeting, club members were introduced to recommended operational procedures, including the signing of land agreements with landowners and loan agreements with OCA. The discussion also focused on strengthening collaboration among members and ensuring alignment with OCA's overarching project objectives. Emphasis was placed on the importance of ongoing collaboration and communication, with a reminder to remain committed to the shared goal of enhancing agricultural productivity through efficient irrigation practices.



Review meeting with Chigona irrigation club

Transplanting of Tomato seedlings

The objective of transplanting tomato seedlings was to ensure the healthy establishment of the plants, which is vital for achieving optimal growth and high yields. The Mvunguti

Irrigation Club participated in the transplanting process, which was successful, with most seedlings establishing well in the field and showing minimal signs of wilting or transplant shock. The hardening-off process was effective in preparing the seedlings for the transition. Proper preparation, including soil management, careful seedling selection, and hardening off, played a crucial role in minimizing transplant shock and promoting healthy plant growth. Looking ahead, consistent care and monitoring were emphasized as essential to achieving a successful tomato crop with high yields.



Transplanting of Tomato seedlings

Business and Financial Empowerment Microloans (FEM)

Executive Summary

The Business development through its FEM program strives to contribute to the reduction of rural poverty by providing microloans and financial literacy to women entrepreneurs. The aim is to boost existing local businesses and create employment for other women so that they can ably provide for their families. The efforts are directed towards the attainment of sustainable development goals (SDGs) specifically goal number 5 and 8. The program is also contributing to pillar number 2 of the Malawi vision 63 agenda on industrialization specifically on increased access to affordable finance thus OCA loans are interest free in nature.



Currently, the program supports 68 women entrepreneurs around Kasese, Mtambalika and Kachigamba market. In the month of July, the FEM program had planned and conducted a series of activities as narrated below;

Activities planned and achieved

Training Sessions for Mtambalika FEM groups

In attempts to build the capacity of the women entrepreneurs, the Business Development continues to support women entrepreneurs in the program with business opportunities. A training was organized specifically for the Mtambalika FEM groups. The training centered around market research whereby we narrowed down to the four Ps (Product, Promotion, Price and Place) of the marketing mix. The training was done in collaboration with the Agriculture office in Mponera. It was a three day training which took place at Mtambalika and the total number of participants trained was 27.



Members during group discussions and presentations during on of the Mtambalika training sessions

Group Monitoring meetings

In an effort to foster collaborative efforts among FEM members, group monitoring meetings with supervision are organized. During these platforms, women entrepreneurs share the challenges they are facing as a group and propose solutions that can help them in forging ahead. In July, two group monitoring meetings were facilitated for Mtambalika and Kachigamba. It was deemed necessary to do so as many women had stopped attending the usual VSL meeting which is a requirement. The most common challenge recorded was backbiting among members hence members failure to turn up for group events. It was resolved that members found to continue on such behaviors will be disciplined so as to maintain group cohesion. We also used the platform to distribute OCA wrappers (Zitenje). These wrappers may be worn as uniforms when they are attending meetings at the same time, improving OCAs visibility in the catchment area and beyond.



Kachigamba (L) and Mtambalika (R) FEM groups

Village Savings and Loan groups training

To ensure sustainability of the programs, OCA through the business program has extended the VSL training to the Health care and WASH programs. The VSL groups have been deemed as a tool pertinent in instilling a saving culture among individuals. In healthcare, the program is specifically targeting the antenatal clinic participants. The aim of the initiative is to support expectant mothers in planning the future of their unborn babies. Upon orienting and training the expectant couples, the groups were divided in different cohorts depending on the pregnancy stage (Trimesters) they are in.



In the WASH program on the other hand, the training was targeting water point committees (WPCs). The purpose of the initiative is to support WPCs in maintaining a Borehole fund which can help them in paying for Repairs and maintenance of their borehole. Again, the fund, if well sustained, may be used to plan and support other future community initiatives. During the month, the Business development program in collaboration with the WASH program managed to train Kuliyani and Mzimuwakana WPCs.



Mzimuwakana and Kuliyani WPCs during VSL orientation

Loan Disbursement

The program managed to disburse microloans to three of its FEM groups that had completed repayment of the first loan period. During the July phase, loans amounting to MWK 4,295,000, MWK 1,920,000 and MWK 2,500,000 were disbursed to Takondwa, Tithandizane and Tamandani FEM groups respectively. The total amount of loans

disbursed for the period was MWK 8,715,000 and the total number of women who had received loans was 41.

Umodzi Village Business Manual (UBVM) Printing and Distribution

In attempts to expand the Program's educational offerings, the BD program continues to produce copies of the manual and distribute them to our various stakeholders. In July, 30 extra copies of the manual were printed and 10 others have been given to the agriculture office through the agribusiness department. The copies given to the Agribusiness office are meant to be reshared to the stakeholders they work with.

Education Support Program



Executive Summary

In Malawi, there is a serious shortage of high-quality education, especially in rural areas. There are numerous obstacles that prevent students from finishing their education, such as the high rate of child marriage, inadequate government support, and difficult access to educational resources. Because of this, a large number of children in Malawi end up trapped in a cycle of low life, poverty, and restricted access to high-quality education. As such OCA tries to address these and other problems. OCA seeks to increase children's and youth's access to high-quality education, providing them with the tools and resources they need to achieve their goals, enhance their quality of life, and eventually aid in Malawi's national development. The Orant Education Program contributes to SDG 4 of Quality Education and also SDG number 5 of Gender Equality.

The education provided by OCA extends beyond just enrolling students. It is about giving students the chance to finish all levels of education and gain the knowledge and skills needed to compete in the job market. It also involves giving them the social-emotional and life skills they need to navigate and adapt to a changing world, make decisions for their own lives, and give back to their communities and the wider community. The month of July was the month in which students were closing for the 2023/2024 academic year. The activities carried out by the education program in this month included the following;

School visit

The education program visited Tchale Community Day Secondary School (CDSS) to conduct a verification of needs assessment of the school survey which was conducted



earlier this year. Amongst the four secondary schools where the survey was conducted, Tchale CDSS had to be revisited for further clarity on some information.

It was discovered that Tchale CDSS had no energy source except the car battery they charge to light up two classrooms so that students are able to study during the night. In addition to that, the school does not have a library and also a

laboratory. They teach science subjects theoretically and whenever they want to learn practical lessons or during national exams they go to other schools like Madisi secondary school. This is the biggest challenge at the school as most students with passion for science drop out or transfer to other schools so that they are able to learn science subjects properly.

Orant will continue to strengthen existing partnerships and enter into partnership with the schools and be able to help the students at large.



Kabuluzi primary school was also visited for further evaluation. According to the data analysis which was conducted, Kabuluzi primary school scored the least in terms of the condition of things which were looked on in the survey. The things included; infrastructure, students and office materials etc. Therefore, OCA is still working with the school to identify gaps for possible interventions that may help students succeed academically.

Student and donor correspondence

In the same month, the education program visited Natola, Nkhamenya, St. Chavara, Likuni and Dowa secondary schools for collection of letters. Since students are encouraged to correspond with their donors, the letters were written by the students to be sent to their donors. The students are always happy when they communicate with their donors because it creates a relationship that changes their lives and raises their self-esteem. A total of 14 letters were collected from all the 5 schools.

Expulsion of OCA student

One OCA sponsored student has been expelled from school because she went out of school boundaries without getting permission from the school. The student narrated to have gone out of the campus to buy some food and writing materials. This was the second time for the student to go out of school without permission. Therefore, the school made a decision to not keep her at the school and expel her.

Orant will give this student a last chance by placing her in another school and will make sure that she abides by the rules given by Orant and also the school. Her mother will also be involved so that they both understand what it means to get a scholarship and also the good intention Orant has towards the student. Additionally, the student will be monitored closely so that she does not continue with this behavior.

Ngala CDSS library visit

OCA visited the Ngala CDSS library to assess its progress since the term (3rd term) was closing. The goal of going to the library is to keep an eye on its development and have a discussion about how to make it better so that students are utilizing it to its full potential.

It was observed throughout the visit that the library is getting better. For instance, the library has introduced new policies that include fines for misplaced or broken books. This will incentivize students to take good care of the library's books and follow its guidelines when using it. Furthermore, more students are using the books that Orant gave the school. This indicates that the books are highly valuable and greatly assist the students.



OCA with Ngala CDSS librarians (left) and students checking out books in the library (right)

The OCA education program was grateful to the Ngala CDSS librarians for their excellent work and for maintaining the library, particularly the books, throughout the school year. Students were also urged to visit the library during the 7 weeks holiday they have. The

library will be open for 4 hours, 3 days in a week (Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays). This will help them to focus on their education and not get carried away with things that can lead them to drop out of school.



OCA sensitizing students to be coming to the library during the holiday

Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) Exams

In July 2024, OCA students took the MSCE exams. This year, OCA is supporting 95 secondary school students, 29 of whom have taken the MSCE exams. They attend the following schools: Madisi (1 student), Tchawale (6 students), Natola (4 students), Target(1 students), Ngala (1 student), Malosa(1 student), Nkhatabay boys (1 student), Likuni (5 students), and Nkhamenya (9 students). OCA is expecting good results from these students because of their hard work and excellent performance.



OCA MSCE students

OCA Students University selection

All 20 students (4 boys and 16 females) who took the MSCE exams during the 2023/2024 school year passed, accounting for a 100% pass rate. Eighteen of these students met the

requirements to attend college, and they submitted applications to several colleges. With great pleasure, OCA announces that 14 (2 boys and 16 girls) out of 18 students (77.7%) have been accepted into universities.

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

	NAME	SEX	SECONDARY SCHOOL	UNIVERSITY SELECTED	COURSE
1	Jonathan Chikaonda	M	Chaminade	KUHES	Bachelor of Biomedical science
2	Misozi Phiri	F	Ludzi	UNIMA	Bachelor of Arts in Humanities
3	Mike Fanuel	M	Madisi	MZUNI	Bachelor of Culinary Arts
4	Loveness Kamwendo	F	Nkhamenya	MZUNI	Bachelor of Hospitality Management
5	Rabecca Kathumba	F	Nkhamenya	KUHES	Bachelor of science in Nursing and Midwifery
6	Nelia James	F	LL Girls	UNIMA	Bachelor of Education (Languages)
7	Eunice Mndzinga	F	Nkhamenya	KUHES	Bachelor of science in Nursing and Midwifery
8	Elizabeth Shaba	F	Nkhamenya	KUHES	Bachelor of science in Nursing and Midwifery
9	Tiyamike Kayesa	F	Nkhamenya	UNIMA	Bachelor of Education in social studies
10	Chimwemwe Phiri	F	Nkhamenya	UNIMA	Bachelor of Arts in Humanities
11	Wongani Chisale	F	LL Girls	UNIMA	Bachelor of Human Resource Management
12	Getrude Kamatenda	F	Nkhamenya	KUHES	Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honors)
13	Lexina Nkhata	F	Nkhamenya	KUHES	Bachelor of science in Nursing and midwifery

14	Margret Chiziwa	F	Nkhamenya	KUHES	Bachelor of Physiotherapy(Honor s)
----	--------------------	---	-----------	-------	--

This is a huge accomplishment for OCA because in Malawi there is a huge competition for students to be accepted into universities. Currently, OCA has 47 students who were selected into public universities.

Conclusion

OCA will work with the mother of the expelled student to see how best she can be assisted to finish her studies. It is within our goals to see students excel and not drop out of school. We are also encouraged by the number of OCA students who have made it to the University. This means that the students were indeed working hard and thankful for the support they received. The good thing is that there is the *Orant Ulemu Scholarship* for university students which supports education at university level.