

APRIL, 2025

ORANT CHARITIES AFRICA MONTHLY PROGRAM REPORT



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Acronyms & Abbreviations

ADC	-	Area Development Committee
AM	-	Area Mechanic
AEDO	-	Agricultural Extension Development Officer
CBM	-	Community Based Management
CDSS	-	Community Day Secondary School
CONGOMA	-	Council for Non-Governmental Organizations in Malawi
EDO	-	Environmental District Officer
FDGs	-	Focus Group Discussions
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
TA	-	Traditional Authority
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 governing institutions. OCA serves in Malawi through Healthcare and implementing other development programs such as Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Education, Agriculture, Business Development, Energy and Environment. This monthly report outlines milestones from the month of April, 2025 in our WASH program, Education, Agriculture, Business Development, Energy and Environmental Programs;

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Program



Water well repairs in progress

Executive Summary

The WASH Program is undergoing a shift towards more sustainable practices in terms of borehole maintenance, and more notably shifting from only drilling boreholes to designing and implementing piped water projects as well. The Strategic Objectives of the Program includes;

1. Design, construct, and maintain WASH infrastructure

2. Promote sanitation and hygiene in communities and institutions

3. Involve new sustainability and educational practices in programs

In April, 2025, the program conducted several activities aligned with these strategic objectives. Therefore, this report outlines the monthly progress, beginning with a summary and then a detailed description of accomplishments.

Summary of Monthly Achievements

The following milestones were achieved during the month;

- Water point maintenance (Service/preventive: 30; Reactive maintenance: 3)
- Review Meeting with Sanitation Entrepreneurs
- Review Meeting with Area Mechanics
- Quarterly Assessment of Kabuluza Piped Water Project

Detailed Narration of Monthly Achievements

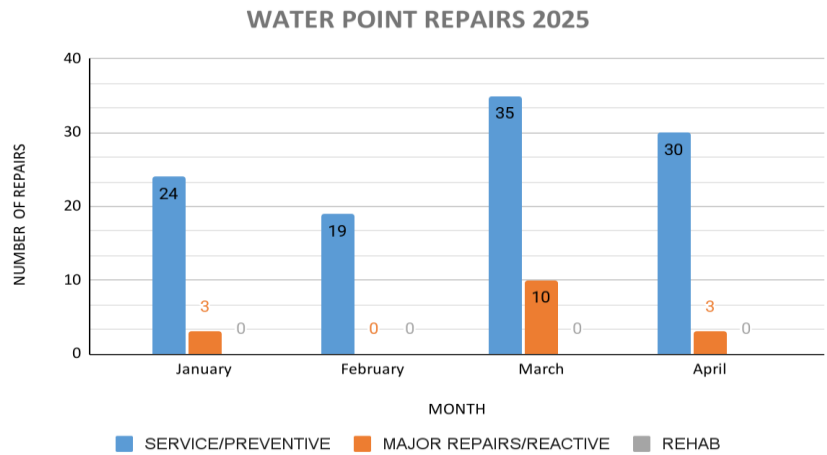
The WASH program carried out the following key activities in the month;

Water Point Operation and Maintenance



Preventive maintenance sessions in Chapuwala and Samba village (Left to Right) during the month

To ensure the sustainability of water points in the Kasese catchment, the OCA WASH program conducts reactive and preventive maintenance of Afridev hand pumps. In these initiatives the program works with Area Mechanics (AM) and Water Point Committees (WPCs). The AM are responsible for supporting local artisan responsible for conducting maintenance of the hand pumps. On the other hand, WPCs are representatives of community members and responsible for mobilizing resources for maintenance of hand pumps. WPCs are also responsible for maintaining good hygiene practices at the hand pump. This month, the program supported **30** preventive and **3** reactive reactive maintenance for hand pumps. Cumulatively, the program has conducted **108** preventive and **16** reactive maintenance. Below is a graph showing the progress of hand pump maintenance in Kasese catchment;



Quarterly Assessment of Kabuluzi Solar Powered Piped Water Supply System

To ensure effective management of the newly constructed Kabuluzi Solar Powered Piped Water Supply System, the WASH program conducts Quarterly Assessments (QAs). The QAs are participatory in nature thus involving different stakeholders of the system such as Chiefs, management committee members and other relevant stakeholders. The QAs entails a review of the technical, social, economic, institutional and environmental

assessment of the whole system. Field Observations and Focus Group Discussions are used to assess the system.

In the first quarter of 2025, the QA revealed that on the technical side the system was functioning well. The results indicated that water users were able to get water all times of the day without any challenges. The assessment further revealed that only one point out of the seven required replacement of faucet which was broken. This was replaced using the funds mobilized by the community.

On the social aspect, community members acknowledged the significant impact of the system in the reduction of diarrhea diseases and reducing distance covered by community members especially women in search for potable water. The community members were also satisfied with the quality of water delivered by the system. During the meeting it was discovered that some community members were being exempted from contributing water tariff due to their social status such as the elderly and child headed households. This is a wonderful initiative as it ensures that no one is left behind in the access safe water. The system is currently supplying water to 196 households.

Economically, community members are expected to contribute MK1,000 (\$0.57) per household per month to cover maintenance of the system and other related expenses. It was revealed that the system Water Users Association (WUA) has managed to raise MK 469, 000 (\$270) which is currently being kept in WUA bank account.

The assessment revealed that on the institutional side, the system is performing relatively well. The WUA committee has managed to meet more than three times in the last quarter. Currently, the WUA has all the 10 members active who are responsible for day-to-day management of the system. During the assessment Chiefs and other community leaders' performance was on average rated 7.5 out 10 in mobilizing their communities to contribute towards maintenance and other activities related to the water supply system. This rating was conducted by WUA committee members. Similarly, Chiefs also rated

WUA committee members at 8 out of 10 when it comes to management of the newly constructed water supply system.

On the environmental side, there is still a lot to be done to conserve the environment. The members agreed to leverage initiatives by the OCA Energy and Environmental program such as planting of trees and using Nkhuni pang'ono stoves to ensure environmental sustainability.



Quarterly review meeting for Kabuluzi Piped Water Project

Review Meeting with Area Mechanics (AMs)

Area Mechanics (AMs) are among the key stakeholders in the OCA WASH program. Area Mechanics are local artisans responsible for the maintenance of water points especially Afridev pumps on behalf of the water point committees (WPCs). The WASH program works with the AMs when conducting pump repairs and preventive maintenance.

To ensure continued AM engagement, information sharing, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) within the maintenance project, the WASH program conducts review meetings with 5 Area Mechanics from Kasese catchment. The key agenda for the meeting this month was to review progress and share reports for the first quarter of 2025. During the meeting AMs submitted data for reactive and preventive

maintenance in their respective catchment areas. AMs also shared data on functionality of hand pumps in Kasese catchment. The following were some of the key outcomes of the meeting;

AM Performance Data in Kasese catchment					
Name of AM	No. of Water Points on Preventive	No. of Functional boreholes	Total No. of boreholes in AM catchment	% of Water Points on Preventive	% Functional
Mfakose	58	113	120	48%	94%
Solofina	43	51	53	81%	96%
Bertha	30	49	51	59%	96%
Ester	24	74	75	32%	99%
Thumba	27	64	65	42%	98%
Total/Average	182	351	364	50%	96%

The table above shows performance of Area Mechanics in operation and maintenance of Afridev hand pumps in Kasese catchment area for the first quarter of 2025.

The data indicates a good overall performance of AMs with average borehole functionality rate at 96% and adoption of preventive maintenance at 50% which is slightly lower than the annual average of 55%. There are still issues in the adoption of preventive measures in areas supervised by AM Ester and Thumba. This anomaly is related to the existence of saline boreholes in these areas hence people do not see the need to conduct preventive maintenance for the borehole which does not produce water of good quality.



A section of participants during review meeting with Area Mechanics

Review Meeting with Sanitation Entrepreneurs



A group photo of participants after a review meeting for Sanitation Entrepreneurs

The WASH program implements all its initiatives in collaboration with different stakeholders. One of the key stakeholders in the promotion of sanitation are Sanitation Entrepreneurs or sometimes referred to as Sanitation promoters. Sanitation Entrepreneurs are responsible for the construction of durable low-cost Corbelled latrines and Pit latrine slabs for community members at an agreed price. During the review it was revealed that only 4 corbelled pit latrines were constructed in the first quarter of the year. Similarly, only 3 slabs were constructed in the same period. This low adoption rate of corbelled latrines and slabs was attributed to the rainy season and the lean period in

which it is difficult to construct latrines and people have low financial capacity as compared to other periods of the year. As a way forward Sanitation Entrepreneurs have agreed a target of 100 for both Corbelled and Slabs to be constructed in 2025. Sanitation Entrepreneurs also revised prices for pit latrine slabs. This price adjusted was affected due to increase in the cost cement and other slab construction materials as follows:

PRICES OF PIT LATRINE SLABS & LABOUR CORBELLED LATRINES (EFFECTIVE 1st APRIL 2025)		
Type of slab/ Service	Old Price (MK)	New Price (MK)
Dome-shaped	10,000.00	12,000.00
Flat and round	12,000.00	16,000.00
Flat and triangular	15,000.00	18,000.00
Corbelled latrine construction (Labour)	5,000.00	10,000.00

Table above shows price adjustments for services provided by Sanitation Entrepreneurs in Kasese catchment area

Conclusion

The month of April marks the beginning of the second quarter of 2025. So far in the year the WASH program has made significant progress in water point committee training, stakeholder coordination and hand pump operation and maintenance. The program is excited with the onset of the second quarter of 2025.

Agriculture and Business Development Programs

Agriculture Program



Executive Summary

The Mission of the Agriculture program is to sustainably bolster Malawi's agricultural capacity by providing loans, educating farmers, investing in farming equipment and infrastructure, and improving access to markets. The program has the following strategic objectives;

1. Increase focus on education, business, and entrepreneurship through an improved connection to the Business Development Program
2. Audit core programs and improve relationships with key stakeholders for more sustainable programming.
3. Invest in the development of Malawian agriculture through cooperatives, increased storage capacity, value-adding activities, machinery, and by developing Orant's own capacities.
4. Develop permaculture on campus and in the community and act as center of education and sustainability

OCA supports smallholder farmers in both irrigation and rainfed farming through the provision of farm inputs microloans and agriculture expertise. The OCA Agriculture program responds to the following Sustainable Development Goals (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. The activities conducted in April are presented as follows;

Agricultural Field Day

On 25th April 2025, a successful field day was conducted in the Mphamba section of Madisi Extension Planning Area (EPA). The event aimed to promote sustainable farming practices particularly agroecology and high yield maize varieties suitable for the local environment. The field day served as an interactive learning platform for farmers and agriculture stakeholders.

The event attracted an impressive turnout of over 407 participants including local farmers, agricultural extension officers, community leaders and representatives from private sector partners such as Bayer, Seed-Co and Opulence Malawi. The high level of participation demonstrates the growing interest in sustainable and improved crop production in the catchment area. The key objective of the field day was to raise awareness on agroecology farming practices as a sustainable farming method.

The activities involved during the field day include field tours showcasing agroecological farm using compost, crop rotation and intercropping techniques. Other seed companies such as Bayer and Seed-Co demonstrated improved maize varieties including drought tolerant and early maturity types. Through the field day, farmers gained practical knowledge on implementing agroecology to boost productivity while preserving the environment. Many farmers expressed a desire to adopt these practices.



Farmers attending to field day

VSL Training with Farm Club

A Village Savings and Loan (VSL) training was conducted with a second cohort of Mwayiwathu farm club members. The objective of the training was to build the financial literacy and savings capacity of smallholder farmers through the establishment of a village bank group. The training aligns with broader efforts to promote financial inclusion and self-reliance among farming communities. The objective of the training include:

- To equip members with knowledge and skills on how to form, manage and sustain a VSL group
- To improve members' abilities to save regularly, access small loans and manage group funds transparently.

A total of 15 farm club members participated in the training whereby members showed high levels of interest, actively engaging in discussion and exercises. The training opened members' minds on better ways of managing money and supporting one another financially. Through the training, Mwayiwathu club members successfully formed a VSL group and agreed to begin weekly savings meetings.



Farm club members being trained on VSL

ADC meeting

The Agriculture program held a meeting with the Chakhaza Area Development Committee (ADC) to provide the updates on ongoing agriculture projects being implemented in the area. The meeting aimed to strengthen collaboration, ensure transparency and gather community input for the successful delivery of agricultural programs. OCA updated ADC members on the following areas;

- Agroecology farming practice
- Irrigation farming
- Farm club program
- Strengthening Cooperatives
- Food relief program

The Chakhaza ADC expressed appreciation for the ongoing agricultural projects and their alignment with community needs. The meeting successfully reinforced the importance of partnership between OCA and Chakhaza ADC in achieving sustainable agricultural development. The ADC committed to supporting community mobilization and ensuring that OCA programs reach the intended beneficiaries effectively.



Meeting with Chakhaza ADC members

Irrigation clubs Progress

In response to changing climatic conditions and the need to enhance agricultural productivity, the 2025 irrigation farming has commenced. The irrigation season began with land preparation activities across most clubs while Madzimayela has taken the lead in the current season by starting watermelon production. Madzimayela started the irrigation works in the month of March and it is at an advanced stage. Irrigation offers a reliable water supply, reducing dependence on rainfall and mitigating risks associated with water scarcity during critical stages of crop growth. Crop selection for irrigation farming has been carefully planned to maximize productivity, profitability and resource use efficiency. The 2025 irrigation farming season has begun on a promising note with Madzimayela leading in production and other clubs making steady progress in land preparation. The season holds strong potential for high productivity across all participating clubs.



Madzimayela irrigation club working on watermelon production

Business Development Program

Executive Summary

The Business Development Program continues to offer a beacon of light to the women entrepreneurs around the Kasese catchment area by offering microloans and business management mentorship and support. The Mission of the program is *to empower local entrepreneurs, especially women by offering fair and accessible business loans, expanding financial literacy, and promoting community saving culture through VSL groups*. The Strategic Objectives of the program are;

1. Expand Business Development program educational offerings
2. Begin offering medium-sized business loans
3. Develop VSLs through collaborative programming
4. Expand FEM program and continue to offer microloans and business support
5. Expand access and education for Digital Financial Services

Through the Business Development program, OCA consistently empowers women entrepreneurs by providing microloans, business development support, and digital

financial literacy training. These initiatives play a crucial role in breaking the cycles of poverty that persist within our communities. As a result of these program activities, numerous lives have been transformed, contributing significantly to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly goals number One and Eight.

Activities planned and Implemented

Establishment and training of Village Savings and Loan Groups

In an effort to ensure longevity and sustainability of initiatives, the Business Development program continues to expand its Village Savings and Loan Groups (VSL) education offerings to other programs. In the reporting month, VSL training was conducted for the newly recruited members of Mwaiwathu farmers club. The objective of the training program was to foster a saving culture among members. Additionally, VSL meetings have reported to enhance group cohesion as the members meet frequently to make deposits.

Recognizing that harvest season is approaching, it was deemed necessary to train the members. This will help them to start developing both group and personal savings plans. After the training session, it was decided by the members to start a VSL club specifically for farmers clubs. The Mwaiwathu farmers club will consist of 15 members in total and is expected to be meeting on Fridays at the designated Kasese premises. As a way of commending their efforts, the Business Development program will give them startup VSL booklets. These booklets will reinforce the importance of structured financial practices and provide them with essential tools to manage their savings effectively.



Mwaiwathu farmers' club members during VSL training session

Monitoring Visits

In the month, several group meetings and visits to women entrepreneurs' businesses were conducted. These meetings play a crucial role in assessing business progress, offering mentorship, and ensuring loan repayments.

A group monitoring meeting was organized for the Mtambalika 1 and 2 FEM groups due to declining attendance and participation. The objective of the visit was to identify the reasons for low engagement and develop solutions to encourage member attendance. Through discussions with the women entrepreneurs, it was discovered that personality clashes and disagreements had caused some members to boycott meetings. Fortunately, these issues have now been resolved, paving the way for improved participation.

Individual monitoring visits were carried out to FEM members and Medium-Sized Loan (MSL) recipients to assess their business performance. Given current market conditions, business growth has been slow. However, it is worth noting that the inflation rate has slightly decreased by 0.2 percentage points, from 30.7% to 30.5%. If this trend continues, it could offer a more favorable environment for businesses. The reduction in inflation may be partly attributed to the approaching harvest season, as farmers begin selling their agricultural produce, increasing the circulation of money in local economies.



Lester (L) and Stella (R) , some of the FEM members on their business posts

In Conclusion, the various initiatives undertaken by the business development this reporting month demonstrate OCA's commitment to empowering women entrepreneurs and fostering sustainable economic growth within communities. Through the establishment of VSL groups, Program monitoring visits and the ongoing activities of the VSL groups continue to strengthen community resilience, collaboration, and the sustainability of business initiatives.

Education Support Program

Executive Summary

The Orant Education Program contributes to SDG 4 of Quality Education and also number 5 of Gender Equality. Currently the Education Program is undergoing a gradual



shift in funding towards local schools on top of the support of individual students. The Program Mission Statement is *to support and empower local underprivileged students and schools by supporting primary, secondary and tertiary students with tuition, supplies, and mentoring needs, and investing in local schools and their teachers.* The following are

the Strategic Objectives of the Education Program;

1. Strengthen local schools and educational institutions and prepare for Orant Library and Community Center
2. Continue secondary school sponsor program
3. Strengthen tertiary education support

The OCA education program is dedicated to promoting equal educational opportunities for all vulnerable children. By developing the Kasese catchment area through targeted initiatives, we've enhanced educational outcomes for students, parents and schools. The Education program contributes to improving high literacy rates in the district. In April, 2025, we implemented a range of activities that reached many students, furthering our mission to improve education in our communities as follows;

Visit to Ngala Secondary School

The OCA Education program, led by the Executive Director, Country Director and Board Members from OCUS, visited Ngala CDSS to tour the library. We were thrilled to engage with teachers about their educational initiatives and assess the library's operations. The visit also included an inspection of the laboratory facilities. This tour was invaluable, as

it enabled us to identify areas where support is needed, paving the way for potential interventions to enhance the school's educational quality.



OCA visit at Ngala CDSS library (Left) & Laboratory room (Right)

Collaboration with Opulence Malawi

The Orant Education program met with Opulence Malawi at their office in Madisi to discuss book sharing opportunities. The meeting aimed to explore ways for both organizations to collaborate on distributing books donated to Orant by Peachtree Tubepoka Legacies. These non-curriculum books are designed for secondary students to use as reference and expand their knowledge. Given our partnership and Opulence's community library at Ntanila primary school in Madisi, we planned a book-sharing initiative to benefit both organizations.



OCA having a meeting with Opulence Malawi

Meeting Area Development Committee



The Orant education program held a sensitization meeting with the Chakhaza B Area Development Committee (ADC). This awareness initiative aimed to introduce ADC members to Orant's programs and showcase their impact in local communities. The meeting was a success, fostering a productive exchange of experience and highlights the positive difference Orant's initiatives have made.

Meeting With Parents



Meeting with parents in progress

The Orant Education program convened a review meeting with parents and students; fostering a strong collaboration with parents and students to enhance students' educational experiences. We encourage parents to actively support their children's studies, ensuring they reap the benefit of education. The review meeting was attended by 66 participants. We also covered student's performances, behaviors and strategies to further improve the education program. Everyone participated and we were able to share one's views and opinions.



Review meeting with parents and students at OCA veranda

School Monitoring Visits



OCA mentoring students at Lilongwe Girls

The Education program also toured 3 secondary schools; St. Peter's Secondary School, Dowa Secondary School and Lilongwe Girls Secondary School. During the reporting period, we monitored our sponsored students during the term break. We provided mentorship to the students to encourage them to put extra effort academically and maintain good behavior at their specific schools.



OCA having a good time with Dowa sec.school (Left) & St. Peter's Sec School (Right)

Handover Ceremony for Kabuluzi Renovated Classroom

Orant hosted an opening ceremony for a renovated school block at Kabuluzi primary school. The event marked the culmination of the Orant education program's renovation efforts, providing students with a significantly improved learning environment. This initiative followed a school assessment that identified the need for a safe and conducive classroom. The students were overjoyed to start using the new block, enhancing their learning experience and they have been more motivated with the new block.



Opening ceremony for a renovated school block at Kabuluzi primary school

Conclusion

Above are the activities implemented by the education program in April, 2025. Throughout the month, the education program successfully achieved its key objectives, ensuring that education is accessible and beneficial to every child in our Kasese catchment area.

Energy and Environment Program

Executive Summary

Energy and Environment program is one of the programs at Orant Charities Africa with an aim of limiting the risk of climate change by introducing renewable energy and environmental conservation activities around Kasese catchment area, TA Chakhaza in Dowa. The Program Mission Statement is *to mitigate the effects of climate change and promote an environmentally-friendly, sustainable, and independent Malawi by investing in renewable energy, conducting local research, advocating for the environment, educating communities, and developing partnerships*. The Strategic Objectives of the program includes;

1. Develop program leadership
2. Oversee expansion of solar infrastructure in Malawi
3. Ensure protection and representation of the environment
4. Research and educate on sustainable alternative methods of agriculture and water Management

Energy and Environment program conducted the following environmental conservation activities around Kasese catchment area, TA Chakhaza in Dowa;

Meeting with Ngara Forest Plantation Manager

The meeting was planned to inform the existence of the Energy and Environment Program, to Ngara Forest Plantation Manager, and also present afforestation activities that Orant Charities Africa through the new program will be implementing. The manager warmly welcomed the Energy and Environment program and the planned activities which involved supporting the program where necessary. Therefore, the energy and Environment Program Manager requested the plantation officer to support the training of tree planting participants on nursery preparation. The plantation manager was quick to highlight species of trees that Orant can consider for afforestation around its catchment as follows:

- Eucalyptus grandis (Bluegum)
- Senna siamea (Kecha wa milimo)
- Senna spectabilis (Kecha wa maluwa)

- Afzelia quanzensis (Msambafumu)
- Khaya anthotheca (M'bawa)

The meeting was successful as the Ngara plantation manager agreed to work in partnership with Orant Charities Africa on afforestation activities.

Verification of Registered Afforestation Participants

As planned for this year, GVH M'biya remains a target for Energy and Environment activities which led the office to conduct a climate change awareness campaign. The aim was to let the community understand their contribution to climate change and possible mitigation measures they can take in order to fight against the impact of climate change which has affected the area in many different ways including agricultural yield. The awareness campaign was conducted for all the 11 villages under GVH M'biya which led to 161 community members registering to participate in the afforestation activity to be implemented by Orant Charities Africa. However, only 79 registered participants were able to fulfil the requirements to qualify for the afforestation activity as addressed by the energy and environment program in order to have a sustainable activity. Outlined below are the requirements to qualify for the activity:

- Availability of Land resource
- Construct a nursery fence
- Be a community member within the pilot villages.



Village Headman Mbwekete posing aside his nursery fence

Presenting the Program to the ADC

The program was presented to ADC with an aim of letting the committee understand what the program is all about and the state in which the program is running its activities

so far. This will help the program to receive full community support as the ADC is the gatekeeper for all the developments around the catchment the program is being implemented. The ADC supported the initiative of registering our availability which led them to ask more questions about the program for clarifications which were responded to during the meeting. However, the ADC also requested Orant Charities Africa if there can be a chance of extending OCA activities to other areas within Chakhaza B boundary.



EEPM presents the program to ADC

Training Tree Planting Participants on Nursery Preparation

After conducting the participants verification activities, all the qualified participants had to undergo nursery preparation training. Therefore, with support from Ngara Forest Plantation Manager the identified participants were trained on the aforementioned topic. The training involved tree nursery preparation and management at Nambola primary school and M'biya catholic church to cover for all the villages.



Participants attending the training at GVH M'biya

Conclusion and Recommendations

Energy and Environment program focused much on afforestation activities in April, 2025 by meeting Ngara forest plantation manager to discuss burning afforestation issues and approach, and creating a good rapport with government agents for technical support, verifying registered afforestation participants, and training qualifying participants on tree nursery preparation and management. Furthermore, the program was also presented to the Area development Committee (ADC) for recognition and support in the targeted area which helps in fostering sustainability of energy and environment activities. All in all, all activities were successfully implemented with support from other program managers, supporting staff and administration. Therefore, the program requires the organization structure to keep supporting all its activities in order to contribute to the success of its activities which will support the goal and mission of the organization.