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# ORANT CHARITIES AFRICA

## DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM MONTHLY 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 |
| FEM     | - | Financial Empowerment Microloan                      |
| JCE     | - | Junior Certificate of Education                      |
| KFC     | - | Kasese Farmers Cooperative                           |
| 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 governing institutions. OCA serves in Malawi through Healthcare and implementing other development programs such as Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Education, Agriculture and Business Development. This monthly report outlines milestones from the month of November 2024 in our WASH program, Education, Agriculture and Business Development;

## Water and Sanitation Program



### Executive Summary

The OCA WASH program aims to reduce morbidity and mortality caused by WASH-related diseases for the people of Kaseke. This goal is achieved through the provision of WASH infrastructure and extension services. The WASH program implementation mainly focuses on water supply, operation and maintenance of WASH infrastructure, advocating for sanitation in communities and schools, and collaborating with stakeholders. This month, the program conducted several activities aligned with these

key implementation areas. 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;

- Water point maintenance (Service/preventive: 17; Reactive maintenance: 4 )
- Borehole drilling in Levi and Kachigamba villages
- Kabuluzi Water Users's Association (WUA) Training
- Distribution of school sanitation materials in Tchale zone (11 schools)
- Completion of Kabuluzi Solar Powered Piped Water Construction Project
- Community-Based Management (CBM) training for Saka Water Point Committee (WPC)

### Detailed Narration of Monthly Achievements

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

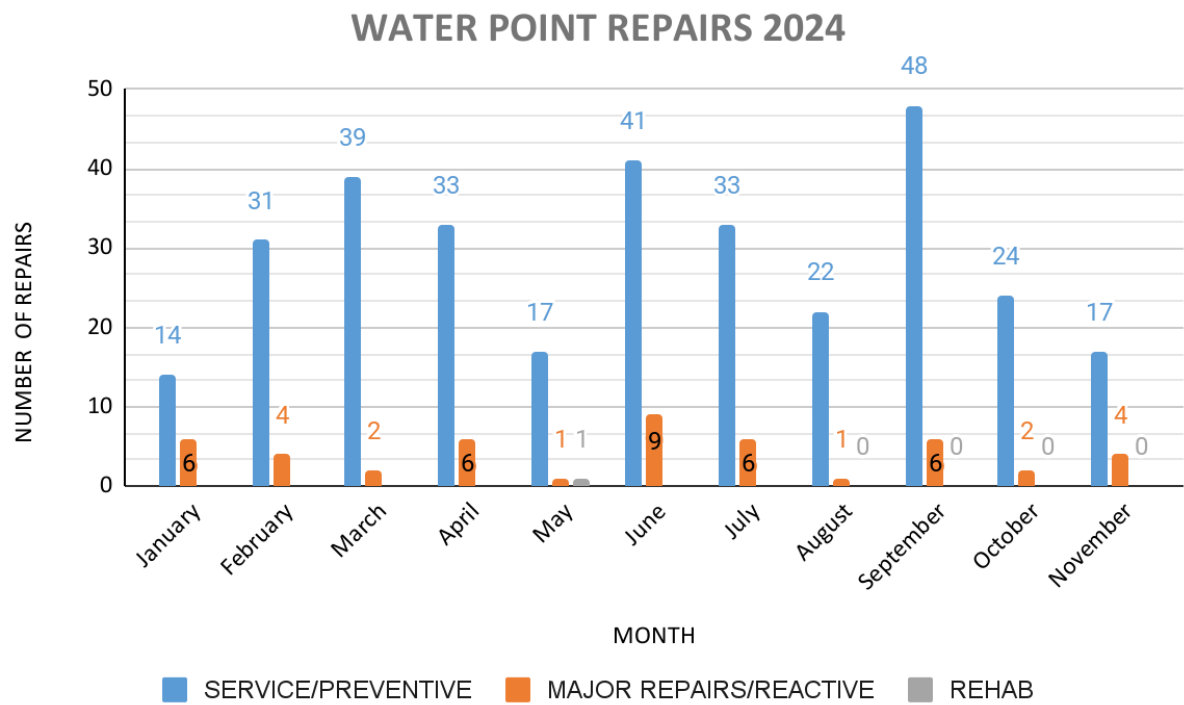
#### Water Point Operation and Maintenance



*Left to Right - A dismantled Afridev pump during a repair session in Madzo village, Assembled Afridev pump after repair session in Madzi village during the month.*

To ensure the sustainability of water points in the Kasese catchment, the OCA WASH program conducts repairs and maintenance of water points. This month, the program supported **17** preventive and **4** reactive maintenance for water points. In total, **21** boreholes were maintained in November. From January to November 2024, the WASH program has conducted **47** reactive maintenance of water points out of an annual target of **58** representing **81%**. This data indicates that the program is on track to reduce the need for major reactive maintenance. Similarly, the program has conducted **303** preventive maintenance of water points out of an annual target of **320**, representing

**107%** progress. This means the program surpassed the annual preventive maintenance target before the year's end. 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 2 boreholes in Levi and Kachigamba villages. Before this intervention, the people from Levi village were accessing water from a hand dug well. The people from Kachigamba were accessing water from neighbouring villages. The new borehole in Levi village is expected to supply water to 200 people. Similarly, the borehole in Kachigamba is also expected to supply water to approximately 200 people. So far in 2024, the program has drilled 10 boreholes, wrapping the annual target for borehole drilling.





*Apron construction for Kachigamba borehole during the month*

## **Completion of Kabuluzi Solar Powered Piped Water Project**



*Left top - A water point under construction at Kabuluzi school, Right top - A tank stand at Mandevu village during the construction phase of the project.*

Orant Charities Africa (OCA) with support from Orant Charities United States (OCUS) has constructed a solar powered piped water project for Kabuluzi school and surrounding communities. The project is aimed at improving access to water for the people of Kabuluzi, thus improving the health, education and economic status. The project further aimed at empowering women and girls by reducing the time, effort and avoiding gender related abuse associated with requirements for water collection in distant places. The construction of this project began in October and was completed in November 2024. In this project, OCA has installed and constructed a network of 7 water points, an elevated tank, solar panels, and a solar powered submersible pump. Through this network the OCA is supplying water to Kabuluzi school and 7 other villages. In the process, this project is supplying potable water to approximately 2000 people thereby reducing the risk of

water related diseases such as Cholera, Diarrhoea, Dysentery and Typhoid fever. This new piped project is expected to be officially launched in December 2024.

## **Kabuluzi Water Users' Association Training**



*A class room session during WUA training for Kabuluzi project*

To ensure that the community from Kabuluzi are able to sustainably manage their newly constructed piped water project, the OCA organized a Water Users' training. Water Users Association is a committee selected by communities to manage piped water projects on their behalf. During the training, ten members of the WUA were trained in solar piped water scheme management. The training focused on community mobilization, operation and maintenance, tariff collection, and management, and other community dynamics. The training was facilitated through a collaborative effort between OCA and government extension workers.



## Community-Based Management training for Saka Water Point Committee (WPC)



*Left - A group discussion during CBM training for Saka WPC, Right - A practical session during CBM training for Saka WPC during the month*

To enhance the capacity of Water Point Committees (WPCs) to manage their water points, the OCA WASH program conducts Community-Based Management (CBM) training. During these training sessions, WPC members learn to perform minor repairs on Afridev pumps, implement good household sanitation and hygiene practices, understand community dynamics, and how to mobilize and manage funds for borehole maintenance. The WASH program trained 1 WPCs for the Saka borehole which was drilled in October 2024. Saka borehole is currently servicing a population of about 200 people from Saka village. A total of 10 WPC members have been trained in Saka village. Among these members 6 are women while 4 were men. So far in 2024, the WASH program has trained 14 new WPCs. The WASH program plans to train 2 WPCs in December 2024 to wrap up the annual target for WPCs training.

## Distribution of school sanitation materials



*Students and a teacher from Tchale secondary school receiving sanitation materials donated by OCA*

Last month, the WASH program began the distribution of sanitation and hygiene materials to schools around the Katalima Education Zone. This month, the program has distributed sanitation materials to 11 schools from the Tchale zone. The schools who have benefitted from this project have received mops, cleaning brushes, squeezers, hand washing buckets and cleaning buckets were distributed to the schools. The materials are expected to facilitate the adoption of good hygiene practices such as hand washing thereby reducing the occurrence of WASH diseases such as Cholera and diarrhoea.

### **Conclusion**

With one month to go before the end of the year, the WASH program is satisfied with the significant progress made in program implementation. The program is excited with the new month of December 2024. The month of December promises to be another exciting adventure, especially with the official launch of the highly anticipated Kabuluza solar powered piped water project.

# Agriculture and Business Development Programs

## Agriculture Program

### Executive Summary

Malawi's economy relies much on farming and OCA supports smallholder farmers to improve their economic status and reduce hunger problems. Its main focus in farming is equipping farmers with the knowledge of sustainable methods of farming. 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 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 during the reporting month have been explained below;

### Agriculture Cooperative Training

The Kasese Farmers Cooperative (KFC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade and with generous support From Orant Charities Africa (OCA), organized a comprehensive cooperative member education training program. This initiative aimed to empower cooperative members with knowledge and skills to enhance governance, productivity and market access, fostering economic resilience and sustainable growth. The training brought experts from the ministry of Trade to address critical aspects of cooperative development and sustainable farming practices.

The cooperative members were trained on overview of cooperative principles and their relevance, roles and responsibility of members and leaders, effective governance for sustainable operations, importance of budgeting and financial planning, transparency



and accountability in record-keeping and basics of cooperative financial reports. The training was attended by 30 members of KFC (15 women and 15 men).

The cooperative member education training facilitated by the Ministry of Trade is a significant milestone in empowering KFC members. The program provided valuable insights and practical tools for improving cooperative performance, governance and agricultural productivity. Continued collaboration with the ministry and other stakeholders is the key to sustaining economic growth through cooperative efforts. This training is a prerequisite for any group to register as a cooperative.



*KFC members attending cooperative member education training*

### **Disbursement of Farm Inputs Micro-loan to KFC**

OCA has taken a significant step in empowering farmers of KFC by providing them with microloans for the purchase of essential farm inputs. This initiative is part of OCA's broader mission to enhance agricultural productivity, improve livelihoods and promote sustainable farming practices. The support of loan to KFC will help to address financial barriers faced by smallholder farmers in finding quality farm inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. The loan will benefit 30 farmers from the surrounding catchment area and all of whom are members of the Kasese Farmers Cooperative.

A formal loan agreement has been signed between OCA and KFC. This document outlines the loan purpose, repayment schedule and responsibilities of both parties. The borrower also agrees to pay a principal interest rate of 3% per annum.

OCA's microloan initiative for the KFC has been an important step in addressing the challenges faced by smallholder farmers in accessing farm inputs. The program has demonstrated considerable potential in improving productivity, incomes and the overall

well being of cooperative members. With proper collaboration, OCA is well-positioned to drive sustainable agricultural development in the Kasese catchment area and beyond.



*KFC sharing certified seed to members for rainfed farming*

### **Irrigation Clubs Loan Repayment**

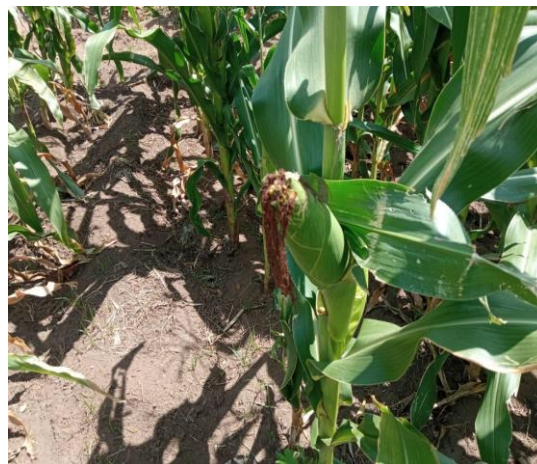
OCA provided microloans to irrigation clubs for crop production in the form of farm inputs such as seed, fertilizers and pesticides. These loans were issued to support crop production activities in irrigation farming by ensuring that farmers have access to the necessary resources during the production process. Following the harvest and sales of their crops from irrigation clubs such as Madzimayela, Chigona and Tidalilainu, the repayment process has commenced. Access to quality farm inputs provided by OCA contributed to higher crop yields and better-quality produce, enhancing the income levels of farmers.

### **Harvesting and Marketing of Irrigation Crops**

The irrigation clubs which were established to promote efficient water use in farming, have successfully cultivated and marketed maize crops. This initiative demonstrates how irrigation farming can enhance productivity and income for smallholder farmers. The clubs of Chigona and Madzimayela conducted harvesting and marketing at the peak of maize ripeness to ensure maximum sweetness and quality from the market. The Majority of fresh maize were sold in local markets such as Madisi, Bua, Chinkhoma and Mponela where demand was high, this enabled farmers to sell their produce at competitive prices. The members of the irrigation clubs earned immediate income from the sale of fresh maize hence improving their financial well-being.



The harvesting and selling of fresh ripe maize have demonstrated significant economic benefits to irrigation club members. This initiative has created a reliable food security and income source for club members.



*Matured maize crop ready for marketing*

### **Monitoring of OCA Farm Club**

The farm club which consists of smallholder farmers is part of an initiative designed to promote sustainable agriculture practices, increase productivity and improve income for smallholder farmers. During the report month, monitoring activity was conducted to observe farm operations especially land preparation. During the monitoring period, farmers were advised on proper ridge alignment, ridge spacing and proper ridges for maize, soya and groundnuts. The regular visits help in providing vital support to farmers and helping them in improving their performance.

### **Conclusion**

The training for the Agricultural Cooperative in Kasese is important as it will help the members have an understanding of the cooperative and be formally registered as cooperative. In future the cooperative will be a hub of agricultural developments in Kasese.

## 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. By equipping the women entrepreneurs with financial resources and business skills, the program aims to promote business success and growth. This ultimately contributes to OCAs core mission of inspiring communities and improving livelihoods.



In November, a number of activities were designed to enhance the women's preparedness in addressing business challenges and build resilience. hence contributing to the women's economic well-being through creation of sustainable income streams.

### Verification and Selection of Women Entrepreneurs

The business development program embarked on a verification exercise aimed at selecting the women entrepreneurs to be in the fifth cohort of the microloan initiative. In the previous month, we had shortlisted 35 women entrepreneurs from a pool of 66 applicants who had expressed interest to be part of the FEM program which is currently managed under the umbrella program of Business Development. As part of due diligence, door to door visits to individual applicants were done to validate the information presented to OCA through the application forms.



From the 35 applications, we have managed to select 15 women entrepreneurs who will be supported with microloans for the next three years. The cohort comprises women entrepreneurs in 15 different trades. The program strives to get women entrepreneurs that are engaged in different trades so that women in the same program should not be competing against each other.



*Interviewing applicants during verification exercise*

## **Orientation Meeting with Sapeya FEM Group**

An orientation meeting with the newly established FEM group was conducted to brief the women entrepreneurs on the program modalities. The meeting was held at OCA premises in Kasese which served as a central location for the gathering. The meeting was essential in that they needed to understand all the loan processes before filling in the loan forms as a way of showing commitment to be part of the program. The loan processes include; loan repayment schedules, disbursement and repayment methods. By virtue of them coming to OCA premises also served as a sign of commitment and willingness to be long time members of the FEM program. The meeting also helped in laying a foundation for enhancing collaboration and communication hence ensuring success of the program.



*New Sapeya FEM group members during a briefing session*



## Account Opening for FEM Members



As a way of encouraging use of digital banking services in the local communities we serve, it is advisable that they open bank accounts. These bank accounts are meant for microloan disbursements hence its compulsory for each and every member of the FEM program to open a bank account. For those that already have bank accounts, they are encouraged to be using them so that they are always active. For the FEM program, we collaborate with Centenary bank to open the bank accounts for the women

entrepreneurs as it is convenient for most of the FEM clients. During the reporting month, a total of 15 accounts were opened for all the new women entrepreneurs.

## Feedback Sessions with FEM Groups

In wrapping up the loan repayment periods, review meetings with all the FEM groups were conducted. The aim of the meetings were to analyze the repayment loan periods; December, 2023 to October, 24 and June to November 2024, identify the challenges and gather feedback on how to improve the program . The most recurrent issues that affected the women entrepreneurs during the loan periods were the hyperinflation that has resulted in increase for commodities on the market and consumer spending patterns. The drought that affected agricultural yield had also impacted the businesses by limiting the availability of inputs and revenue streams for many businesses, specifically for those relying on the agricultural value chain. Hence experiencing difficulties in repaying the loans.

It was noted that those that had longer periods of repayment had commended that this gave them a chance of getting a high amount at once which enabled them to make significant investments and boost their businesses. However, the longer repayment period exposed them to a greater economic uncertainty increasing their risks of defaulting. For the remaining groups of Kachigamba and Mtambalika, they had requested that their loan amounts be increased so that they may be cushioned from the effects of currency depreciation.



Kasese (top left and right) and Kachigamba (Bottom) FEM groups reviewing the loan periods



## Conclusion

Adding new FEM groups in the Business Development Program is a sign of growth for the program. It means more women are being reached with support thereby boosting their business acumen and in turn improving their lives economically. The Business Development program will continue monitoring the women entrepreneurs in the coming months.



# Education Support Program

## Executive Summary

OCA works with local communities, schools, and families to establish a multi-level support structure for children on their educational journey, in accordance with our mission and basic beliefs. For students who cannot afford to attend school, OCA offers tuition assistance as well as various forms of help. The majority of typical households in Malawi cannot afford to send their children to secondary school, which disproportionately affects girls. OCA helps underprivileged students attend school and finish their education in this situation.

The following were the activities which were carried out by the education program in the month of November, 2024;

### School Monitoring Visits

The Education Support Program at Orant aims to provide financial (tuition & materials) assistance and mentorship to students in Malawi, ensuring that they have the resources they need to succeed in their education. Along with helping children with school fees, materials, and other educational needs, the program also provides mentoring through frequent mentorship sessions and monitoring visits. Here are photos of some of the students Orant visited throughout the reporting period;



*Students from Dzenza (left) and Kasungu (right) secondary schools being visited by OCA*



*Students from Nkhamenya girls(left) and Loyola (right) carrying supplies given by OCA*

Sponsored students from 7 secondary schools; Nkhamenya, Kasungu, Loyola, Dzenza, Likuni, Lilongwe and Chayamba were visited in November 2024 to assess their progress and discuss any issues they might be having. Students also received mentoring and counseling, which promoted both their academic achievement and personal growth. During this time, 28 students received assistance with their school fees and supplies. Students have been able to stay in school because of this help, which has decreased the dropout rate and given them the freedom to concentrate on their academics.

## **Graduation Ceremony**



In the same reporting period OCA had one student under the Orant Ulemu scholarship program who graduated from university. Chrispine Kaferapanjira graduated with a diploma in Pharmacy from the Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHEs). His graduation marks a significant milestone, not only for him but also for Orant as it demonstrates the success of our scholarship program. Chrispine's life has been significantly impacted by the scholarship program. The scholarship has given him the opportunity to attend college, which has created a wealth of chances for both professional and personal development. He is now in a position to make a constructive contribution to both the community and the nation. His accomplishments will also serve as a source of motivation for other disadvantaged students, proving that higher education is possible with the right help.

Since we started the Orant Ulemu scholarship program in 2022, Chrispine is the first student to graduate. Last year, another University student graduated but he was not from

the Orant Ulemu scholarship program. Currently OCA has 7 students in University under the Ulemu scholarship program and is in the process of finalizing the selection of the third cohort.

### **Donation of Books**

The OCA education program continues to support schools in its area. In the reporting month, we have supported 6 primary schools from the Tchale zone with supplementary English books. A total of **160** books were distributed to Mambala , Chilinkholi , Nambola , Madzo, Chandawe, and Kamongo primary schools. The goal of distributing these books is to help students develop a love of reading at an early age, to help them discover new things, to help them become more proficient readers and speakers of English, and to help schools grow so they have a variety of books for instruction.



Mambala (left) and Madzo (right) primary school students with books given by OCA

Additionally, the education program has also distributed supplementary academic books (English, Science, Biology and Mathematics) to 4 secondary schools in the catchment area. The secondary schools include; Madisi, Natola, Tchale and Ngala and they received a total of **263** books. These supplementary books offer a solution to the limitations of textbook learning. By diversifying the learning materials, educators can accommodate different learning styles and promote deeper understanding.





*OCA donating books to Ngala (left) and Natola (right) Community Day Secondary Schools*



*OCA donating books to Madisi sec. school (left) and Tchale CDSS (right)*

The books were donated through the library school monitors, and OCA is working with the schools to maintain the initiative. There are at least two library monitors in charge of the books at each school. The goal is to be able to keep an eye on how these books are being utilized and preserved so that future generations can benefit from them as well.

## **Selection of New Secondary Students**

In the 2023/2024 academic year 29 students have graduated from secondary school, therefore the OCA education program has added 10 new secondary school students in the academic year 2024/2025. There were a total of 42 requests for secondary sponsorship and 21 students were shortlisted. From the 21 students, 10 students have been identified to be given sponsorship from the OCA education program. All the 10 students are in form one and 9 come from Kasese catchment Area, only one is from outside the catchment area (Florida Mussa). This is so because the student is very needy and her parents are

struggling to support her. These students will be supported with tuition and support and throughout their secondary school education.



*Some of the newly selected students from Chavara (left) and Dowa (right) secondary schools*

Below are the details of the 10 selected secondary students;

|   | <b>Name</b>          | <b>Sex</b> | <b>Sec. School</b> | <b>Village</b> |
|---|----------------------|------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Jacqueline Heneliko  | F          | Dowa               | Kachigamba     |
| 2 | Mirriam M. Kanyerere | F          | Dowa               | Namkumba       |
| 3 | Faith Tiyanjana      | F          | St. Chavara        | Makombwa       |
| 4 | Madalitso Fred       | M          | Dowa               | Solo           |
| 5 | Florida Mussa        | F          | Likuni girls       | Lumbadzi       |
| 6 | Hopeman Phiri        | M          | Dowa               | Madisi         |
| 7 | Joyce Wiscot         | F          | Madisi             | Chidzankhwa wa |
| 8 | Tiyamike Gondivale   | F          | Natola             | Chikwangula    |



|    |                 |   |        |                |
|----|-----------------|---|--------|----------------|
| 9  | Damiyano Kaison | M | Natola | Katundu        |
| 10 | Simeon Bezage   | M | Natola | Nyagara Estate |

## Renovations at Kabuluzi Primary School

The OCA education program is renovating a school block at Kabuluzi primary school with the aim of improving learning conditions and also enhancing infrastructure. As part of our mission to improve educational facilities in the Kasese catchment area, we are renovating a school block (which has 2 class rooms) at Kabuluzi Primary School. The school has been dealing with outdated infrastructure, and has been damaged with termites. The renovation project, which began in November, aims to address these issues and give students a more conducive learning environment. The renovation includes structural repairs, such as flooring and roofing, as well as putting in breeze blocks to provide lighting through the windows and improving classroom spaces to accommodate more students. Also, to treat the whole school for termites; both on the ground and on the roofs.



We have included important stakeholders like the school administration, local authorities, teachers, and the community who have provided some materials such as sand, bricks and casual labour. These stakeholders are also involved in monitoring the renovation progress through feedback sessions and meetings. The project management team regularly visits the site to observe work progress and quality; these visits are scheduled every week and include a

walk-through of the site to ensure work is proceeding as planned.

With a lot of work finished and some still in process, the refurbishment project is moving along nicely. Termites' treatment and plastering has been completed on both the interior and exterior walls, damaged walls have been replaced, and windows have been added to increase ventilation. Work is now being done on the veranda and inside flooring. In the upcoming weeks, new iron and timber sheets for lighting will be installed. After that, the black boards and walls will be painted to complete the project. The following are pictures of Kabuluzi primary school block renovation;



*Putting of breeze blocks and Interior wall plastering in progress*



*Exterior wall plastering*

During the renovation, several challenges have been encountered, but effective solutions have been implemented to ensure the project remains on track. Due to supply chain disruptions, some building materials were delayed, impacting the timeline. In addition, there were some issues with labor availability from the community during peak planting season since the community is also helping in providing water, sand and bricks, and also breaking the old floor.

## **Conclusion**

The Education Support Program has made significant progress in assisting students in Malawi, helping them access education and realize their potential. However, continued support and adaptation are required to overcome the challenges faced by these students and ensure that they can achieve long-term success. With sustained efforts and collaboration, we can continue to make a meaningful impact on the educational outcomes for students in Malawi.