

MAY, 2025

# ORANT CHARITIES AFRICA MONTHLY PROGRAM REPORT



Compiled by:

**Gabriel Kapanda**

**Country Director**

Orant Charities Africa, P/bag

365, Lilongwe

## Table of Contents

Acronyms & Abbreviations .....	2
Introduction .....	3
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Program.....	3
Summary of Monthly Achievements .....	4
Water Point Operation and Maintenance.....	4
District Coordinating Team Joint Monitoring Field Visit .....	5
Purchase of Water Flow Meters for Kabuluzi Project.....	6
Agriculture and Business Development Programs .....	7
Agriculture Program.....	7
Farm Club Training .....	8
Monitoring Irrigation Clubs and Lead Farmers .....	9
OCA Agroecology Farm Progress .....	10
Harvesting on OCA Farm .....	11
DAECC meeting.....	12
Business Development Program .....	12
Business/ Entrepreneurship Training .....	12
Field Monitoring visit.....	14
Loan Recovery Update – First Loan Period 2025 .....	14
Education Support Program.....	15
School Monitoring Visits .....	16
School Library Visit .....	17
Book Donation Handover to Opulence Malawi .....	17
Energy and Environment Program .....	18
District Environment Sub Committee (DESC) Meeting .....	19
Tree Nursery Preparation and Management Training .....	19
Construction of Village Tree Nursery Fence.....	21

## **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 May, 2025 in our WASH program, Education, Agriculture, Business Development, Energy and Environmental Programs.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Program



## Executive Summary

The OCA WASH program aims to reduce morbidity and mortality caused by WASH-related diseases for the people of Kasese. 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: **32**; Reactive maintenance: **3**)
- DCT Joint Monitoring Field Visit
- Purchase of water meters

## Detailed Narration of Monthly Achievements

The WASH program carried out the following key activities;

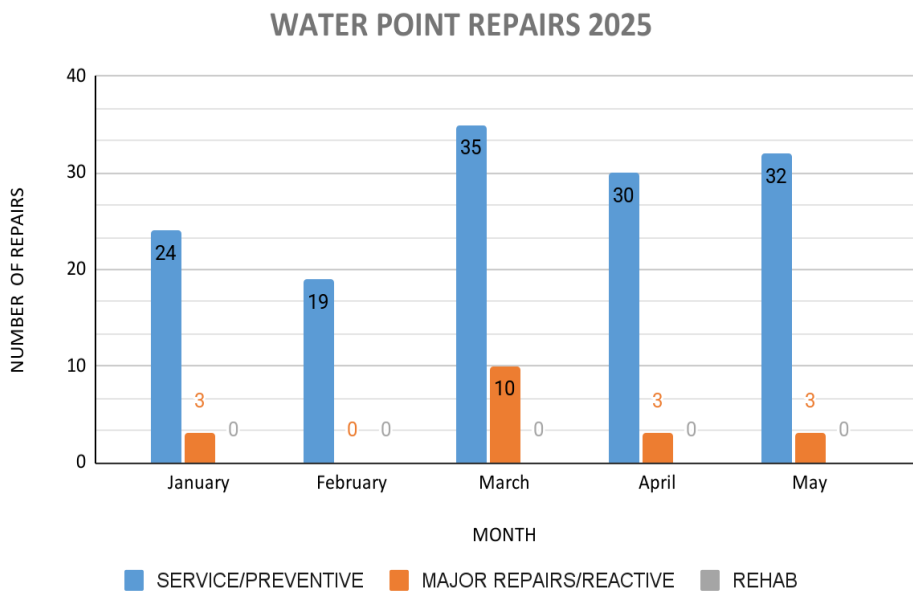
### Water Point Operation and Maintenance



*Preventive maintenance sessions in Nkhandwe and Ngoma 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). AM are local artisans responsible for conducting maintenance of the hand

pumps in the village. 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 **32** preventive and **3** reactive reactive maintenance for hand pumps. Cumulatively, the program has conducted **140** preventive and **19** reactive maintenances. Below is a graph showing the progress of hand pump maintenance in Kasese catchment;



### District Coordinating Team Joint Monitoring Field Visit

To ensure continued stakeholder engagement and accountability, the WASH program works with Dowa WASH District Coordinating Team (DCT). DCT is a technical forum for Dowa District Council which is responsible for monitoring and coordinating WASH initiatives. The DCT is made up of NGOs and Government departments implementing or having a stake in WASH activities in Dowa. The WASH program in coordination with the DCT organized a one-day field visit to the OCA WASH program.





*Delegates during the DCT Joint Field Visit at Kuliyani borehole*

During the visit, DCT members visited Kabuluzi solar piped water project, Borehole Village Savings Loan (VSL) in Kuliyani village, Corbelled latrines in Kawondo village and school latrines at Nambola primary school. DCT members also managed to interact with project participants in all these places visited. Following the visit, members of the DCT expressed gratitude towards the initiatives OCA has achieved in Kasese catchment. Members also acknowledged that OCA initiatives are complimenting government efforts towards attainment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 in Dowa.

### **Purchase of Water Flow Meters for Kabuluzi Project**

To facilitate water usage monitoring and decision making, the WASH program has purchased two water meters for the newly constructed Kabuluzi Piped Water Project. The meters are expected to be installed just after the well and after the tank. The meter at the well is expected to help in monitoring the amount of water being produced by the well or being pumped into the system. Similarly, the meter after the tanks is expected to help monitor the quantity of water being distributed or used by community members from the system. These two parameters are key in decision making in regards to future expansion and regulation of water usage.

## **Conclusion**

The past month has seen steady progress in our WASH initiative, with notable achievements in stakeholder engagement, water point repairs, and the purchase of water flow meters. Community engagement remained a key driver of success, ensuring active participation and ownership of project activities. Going forward, the WASH program will begin borehole drilling and continue repairing hand pumps to ensure sustainability of water points.

## **Agriculture and Business Development Programs**

### **Agriculture Program**



## **Executive Summary**

During the reporting period, a series of key activities were implemented aimed at strengthening sustainable agriculture practices, enhancing farmer capacity and fostering collaboration among stakeholders within the district. These activities were carried out in both irrigation and rainfed farming, including the provision of farm inputs as micro-loans. The following are the details of the activities conducted;



## Farm Club Training

A business training was conducted with Mwayiwathu farm club members which aimed at enhancing their skills in Group dynamics, Marketing strategies and Business planning. The training was part of an ongoing effort to strengthen the capacity of farmers for improved productivity, cooperation and market engagement. The training covered content which included;

- Importance of teamwork and cooperation in farm club
- Roles and responsibilities of group members
- Leadership styles and decision-making processes
- Conflict resolution and communication skills
- Understanding market demand and consumer preferences
- Market targeting
- Value addition
- Business planning
- Risk assessment and mitigation strategies

Several methods were used during the training which include group discussions, team exercises, and questions and answer sessions. Participants expressed appreciation for the practical and participatory nature of the training. Through continued support and application of these concepts, the farm club can achieve stronger unity, increased income and sustainable farming practices.



*Mwayiwathu club members attending to the training*

## Monitoring Irrigation Clubs and Lead Farmers

A Monitoring visit was conducted at Madzimayela irrigation club to assess the progress of ongoing activities within the club which include production of watermelon, tomatoes and beans. Other irrigation clubs such as Mantchedza, Tidalilainu and Mvunguti which are still in the land preparation phase were encouraged to finalise their groundwork in a timely and effective manner. Finalising groundwork timely is essential for early planting which will help in aligning with market windows especially for high value crops and also prevent risks of late-season pests and diseases. Farmers were advised to plough and harrow thoroughly to improve soil tilth and make some proper spacing furrow design and seedbed.



*Irrigation club members practising watermelon and beans production*

Another monitoring activity was done in Lead Farmers (LF) agroecology demonstration plots which were established in their respective areas of work. The plots were established to promote sustainable farming practices and serve as practical learning sites for fellow farmers in the area. Monitoring was done to assess the process of the agroecological practices being implemented, identify challenges and provide on-site technical guidance where necessary. The purpose of these agroecological plots is to demonstrate sustainable farming practices such as organic soil fertility management, intercropping and natural pest's control. The monitoring exercise revealed commendable progress in the implementation of agroecological principles by lead farmers. Their demonstration plots are gradually becoming community learning hubs and are influencing neighbouring farmers to adopt more sustainable farming methods.



*A Lead Farmer practicing agroecology farming system at Kachala section*

## **OCA Agroecology Farm Progress**

The implementation of sustainable farming techniques has significantly improved yields, soil health and income. The farm was integrated with several agroecological practices which include crop diversification whereby there was a mixture of fruits of short- and long-term crops (e.g. papaya and bananas) for early yield (e.g. mangoes and avocado) for later harvests. Another practice which was integrated is organic soil fertility management which involved the use of compost, farmyard manure and mulching to enrich the soil naturally. Currently banana plants have reached peak production with improved bunch sizes and quality. The average yield is recorded at 20 - 25 kgs per bunch which will help in generating steady income and provide food security. The OCA agroecology fruit farm has proven successful with bumper harvest on bananas and other fruit crops also looks promising. This integrated farming system has demonstrated a viable and sustainable pathway for improving livelihoods and restoring the environment.





*High quality bananas from OCA agroecology farm*

## **Harvesting on OCA Farm**

Maize dehusking was done on OCA farm which is a critical step in the post-harvesting process that ensures the maize is properly prepared for shelling, drying and storage. Harvested maize was collected manually and stacked in designated field areas for dehusking. Maize dehusking was also conducted manually with much care by removing husks to prevent kernel damage. Despite poor yields due to insufficient rainfall during the growing season, the maize dehusking process was successfully carried out, yielding clean maize and ready for the next post-harvest stages of shelling.



## **DAECC meeting**

The District Agriculture Extension Coordination Committee (DAECC) held a meeting during the month which aimed at strengthening coordination, discussing upcoming interventions and ensuring alignment with the district's agricultural priorities. The sessions included project presentations by Good Neighbours and OXFAM who expressed their intentions to introduce new development programs targeting irrigation and promoting local food crop production. The district welcomed the projects and provided a platform for these NGOs to introduce their proposed development projects to the district.

## **Business Development Program**

### **Executive Summary**

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, particularly goals one and eight.

### **Activities planned and Implemented**

#### **Business/ Entrepreneurship Training**

In May, a five-day training session was conducted for the Mtambalika 1 and 2 Financial Empowerment Microloan (FEM) groups, focusing on enhancing the capacity of women entrepreneurs in two key areas: bookkeeping and business risk management. The aim was to address persistent challenges faced by group members in accurately tracking sales, expenses, and profits, an essential step toward strengthening their financial decision-making.





*Mtambalika Women Entrepreneurs During A Training Session With Julie Maliro (Co Facilitator)*

Recognizing the evolving threats to small enterprises, including climate-related shocks, inflation, and currency volatility, the training also introduced practical tools and strategies for risk preparedness and mitigation. By equipping participants with both financial literacy and resilience planning, the initiative sought to empower women to safeguard and sustainably grow their businesses in the face of economic and environmental uncertainty. The training was co-facilitated with valuable support from Ms. Julie Maliro, the District Community Development Officer from the Mponela office, whose expertise added depth to the sessions.



*Women entrepreneurs engaging in a Group work sessions*

## Field Monitoring visit



The Business Development program continues to conduct bi-monthly individual and group monitoring visits to FEM members. These visits serve multiple purposes: to track business progress, follow up on loan repayments, and provide ongoing encouragement and mentorship to women entrepreneurs. During the reporting month, a group monitoring meeting was held with Kasese 1 and 2 FEM groups. The session focused on reviewing the progress of their group enterprises and providing technical advice on sustainability strategies.

The groups are currently operating a knitting and crocheting business, which has consistently served as a reliable income stream for their group fund. Building on this stability, they have recently diversified into agribusiness, specifically through the purchase of tobacco for resale at auction floors once market prices improve. Leveraging their group savings, they successfully procured two bales at a total cost of MWK 600,000.

Looking ahead, the group intends to reinvest the proceeds from the tobacco resale into the purchase of maize, demonstrating proactive planning to maintain liquidity and boost the resilience of their group fund. These collective efforts aim to support the efficient graduation of the groups, ensuring that they remain financially independent and self-sustaining beyond the direct support of the program.

## Loan Recovery Update – First Loan Period 2025

May 20th, 2025 marked the end of the first loan repayment cycle for the 2025 Business Development program fiscal year. This repayment deadline applied to FEM groups operating on bi-annual loan periods, specifically **Kachigamba, Sapeya, and Mtambalika 1 and 2.**

As of the end of May, we had successfully recovered **78%** of the total loans disbursed during this cycle. The overall recovery rate demonstrates commendable commitment by the participating groups toward responsible loan usage and timely repayment. Continued follow-ups and monitoring also contributed to sustaining the financial accountability and ensuring that the funds were invested in productive, income-generating ventures aligned with the groups' economic goals.

The total amounts disbursed to each group and amounts repaid by each group during the first loan period were as follows:

Group	Total Loans disbursed (Mwk)	Total amount repaid (Mwk)	Recovery percentage (%)
Kachigamba	4,902,000	4,529,000	92
Sapeya	3,162,000	3,162,000	100
Mtambalika 1	4,779,500	3,291,200	69
Mtambalika 2	3,548,000	1,849,000	52

The Business Development Manager continues to follow up with the groups which are lagging behind to ensure that all loans are recovered within the year.

## Education Support Program

### Executive Summary

The Orant Education program has supported 238 students since its inception in 2017. Currently, we are assisting 76 students, comprising 75 secondary students & one primary student. Additionally, 16 tertiary students are benefiting from the Orant ULEMU scholarship. Our comprehensive support includes tuition fees, educational supplies and living expenses for food and accommodation. Beyond financial aid, the program plays a vital role in monitoring and mentoring the students in their respective schools. By providing this support, we aim to empower underprivileged students with quality education, paving the way for a brighter future.



In May, 2025, the Orant Education program conducted the following activities as part of ongoing efforts to support students through sponsorship and scholarship;

### **School Monitoring Visits**

The Orant Education program conducted 10 secondary school visits to our sponsored students. The purpose of these visits was to monitor their academic progress, provide mentorship and encourage them to strive for excellence. During the visits, we distributed essential educational supplies, including hardcovers, sugar, soap, sanitary pads and more in order to support them in their academic life.

The visits had a profound impact on the students, as they felt seen and supported. Many students expressed their gratitude for the education program's continued investment in their education as well as their well-being.



*Ngala CDSS students carrying their supplies (Left) & St. Chavara Girls Sec.school (Right)*



*Students received their supplies at Kasungu Sec.School (Left) & Chamkango CDSS (Right)*

While some students showed improvement in their academic performance, others still require more additional support to perform well. We remain committed to helping all students to achieve better results through continued support, guidance and mentorship.

### **School Library Visit**

The Orant Education program visited Ngala CDSS library to assess the impact and progress of the library on students. We were pleased to find that many students utilized the library to study, expand their knowledge and eventually finally improve their academic performance. Notably, the library checkout system is working well. Many students' performances have improved because they have more time to borrow the books to read. Students from neighboring secondary schools also have access to the library. This shows the library's crucial role as a valuable resource for students at Ngala CDSS and some students from various institutions as well.



*OCA visit at Ngala CDSS library*

### **Book Donation Handover to Opulence Malawi**

In a significant development, the Orant Education program handed over 274 donated books to Opulence Malawi. These books were initially donated to Orant by Peachtree Tubepoka Legacies. The books will be housed at the community library which Opulence constructed several months ago at Ntanila Primary School. The books will provide significant benefits for the students by providing access to a wide range of information that will support their educational journey. By donating the books to Opulence Malawi, we aim to promote the reading culture, enhance more students' knowledge and foster their critical thinking skills which will result in improving the students' academic performances.





*OCA handing over the books to Opulence's employees*

## **Conclusion**

The Orant Education program ensures that more vulnerable children are reachable in support of education, empowering them to break the cycle of poverty and achieve their full potential in our Kasese catchment area.

## **Energy and Environment Program**



## **Executive Summary**

Energy and Environment program aims to mitigate the risk of climate change through renewable energy and environmental conservation activities around Kasese catchment

area, TA Chakhaza in Dowa. Therefore, in May, 2025 we conducted the following activities:

- 1) District Environment Sub Committee meeting.
- 2) Tree nursery preparation and management training.
- 3) Construction of village tree nursery fence.

The Methodologies used in this report includes; interviews, discussions, and training. The following is a detailed narration of activities done and the outcomes;

### **District Environment Sub Committee (DESC) Meeting**

The meeting was scheduled to present the existence of the Energy and Environment Program, and the Program Manager at Orant Charities Africa to the District Environment Sub Committee, and also presenting a goal and objectives of the program. The district council's technical committee warmly welcomed the Energy and Environment program, and also agreed to support the program with technical support where necessary. Therefore, the Energy and Environment Program Manager presented tree planting and construction of energy efficient cookstoves activities which were welcomed by the technical committee. However, the technical committee recommended the program to consider adding the following in implementing its activities:

- Eucalyptus grandis (Bluegum) should be prioritized on tree planting.
- Implement assisted regeneration activities.
- Promotion of modern kitchen activities.

The meeting was successful as the District Environment Sub Committee (DESC) agreed to work with Orant Charities Africa in all its Energy and Environment activities, and also advised the Energy and Environment program manager to present the program to the District Executive Committee (DEC).

### **Tree Nursery Preparation and Management Training**

Energy and Environment program in collaboration with Agriculture program trained 13 agriculture Lead Farmers (LF), Three OCA ground workers and one OCA Farm Assistant in tree/fruit nursery preparation and management. Agriculture Lead Farmers were trained in both tree and fruit nursery preparation in order to be able to produce their own nurseries in their respective farms.



*E&E Program Manager demonstrating a soil mixture during training*

OCA workers were trained to implement agriculture and tree planting activity by producing their own seedlings at the designated nursery. Outlined below are the advantages of the tree nursery preparation and management training:

- This will help Orant Charities Africa to reach more Lead Farmers. Lead Farmers will also venture into raising seedlings for sale
- Lead farmers will develop a sense of ownership for they will start the tree planting activity at a grassroots level.



*Mr. Chabwana facilitating the training at OCA guest house veranda*



## Construction of Village Tree Nursery Fence



*Village tree nursery fence at Sewule village.*

The program formed village groups for the respective tree planting participants which were later advised to construct a fence for each village which will be used for seed sowing and later will be used as a nursery fence for the village. Therefore, in the month of May, the office was supervising the construction of the village tree nursery fence. The activity was successful as all the designated village groups constructed the tree nursery fence.



*Tree nursery fence at Mbwekete village*

## Conclusion

The Energy and Environment program focused much on preparation and management of tree nursery trainings, village nursery fence construction supervision, and District Environment Subcommittee meetings. The technical support and comments from DESC members will help the sustainability of the program's planned activities. All activities were successfully implemented with support from other program managers, supporting staff and administration.