



MALAWI ASSOCIATION FOR CHRISTIAN SUPPORT

www.malawimacs.org

Charity No: 1025616

NEWSLETTER

July 2008

MOBILE HEALTH In Northern Malawi people can be many miles away from the nearest health centre or hospital. Fr James Chifisi asked the Bishop if he could arrange for him to hold clinics in two remote areas. A surprising request from an already busy archdeacon but, because of his twenty years as a Senior Medical Assistant prior to ordination in 1980, Fr Chifisi had become acutely aware of the medical needs of people in places he visited.

Fr Chifisi and a patient

MACS responded to a request for support by funding a Mobile Clinic for twelve months. Fr Chifisi, who lives and works in Mzuzu, travels each month in a diocesan vehicle for three hours over the 80 miles to Kabua and four hours to Kugoza. He spends a night in both places. Clinics are held in the church buildings and approximately 200 patients attend in each place. The most common illnesses are malaria, respiratory infections and rheumatic pains.

When Fr Chifisi thinks it necessary, he advises patients to go and be tested for HIV. Drugs are bought from a pharmacy in Mzuzu and cost approximately £200 a month. He says the clinics are helping people in isolated rural areas and passed on his sincere thanks to MACS.



NEW! LEAFLET: What MACS does

The leaflet distributed with this Newsletter gives an overview of how MACS works to respond to requests from people in Malawi. It would be great if recipients of the Newsletter could **share the leaflet** with as many people as possible. More copies, including bulk orders for special meetings, are available from the Secretary, Sally Huband.

See contact details on back page.

PROJECTS SUPPORTED

A wide range of projects have been supported since the last Newsletter, most of which included a considerable self-help contribution from local people. Some buildings were renovations, and some new:

- Teachers' houses at Mtengeza, Chikusa, Mpinganjira and Nansenga,
- School classrooms at Salima, Msomba, Chimera and Magomero
- Clergy houses at Kadovu, Mangochi and a catechist's house Kolombidzo



St Barnabas church, Kayoyo, refurbished for its centenary

- Churches, which serve as community centres throughout the week, at Mpapa, Senga Bay, Nthonda, Mtsiro, Bua, Luidzi, Machinga Kayoyo
- Mattresses, bed linen, uniforms for assistant staff and cleaners at hospitals and health centres
- Electricity meters for staff houses at St Luke's Hospital
- Infection control equipment for St Martin's Hospital and lakeshore Health Centres to bring them up to the standard for additional Government funding
- 3 Caesarian instrument packs and drugs for St Martin's Hospital
- Re-building of the dam at Malosa after it had been washed away by floods; the cost was shared with the Diocese of Birmingham
- Improvements to accommodation at Chilema Lay Training Centre

THANKS! On behalf of the many hundreds of people in Malawi connected with these projects, MACS would like to say a most sincere 'thank you' to all those who have contributed to make them possible.

CHRISTMAS GIFT LIST Very many thanks to all those who used the MACS Gift List 2007 to raise a magnificent **£6,449** for projects of their choice in Malawi. This was extremely encouraging for all concerned and has provided:

bursaries for secondary school boarders (fees are £34 per term); long life mosquito nets; books for student nurses, food for orphans, tools for skills training, adult literacy support, seed funds for small scale income generation, permaculture training, seedlings for firewood trees, iron roofing sheets, protection against termites, and water treadle pumps.

A similar Gift List will be available in September.

MOTHERS' UNION WORKSHOPS

Participants in the first workshop



Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS was the title of four workshops organised this year by the Mothers' Union and funded by MACS. The first was held over five days at Kaphiridzinja, where twenty MU Archdeaconry leaders from the five archdeaconries and four MU

diocesan executive members participated. These workshops are an effective way of spreading ideas and good practice. Mrs Agnes Mkoko is the full-time MU Worker in the Diocese of Upper Shire. Here are some extracts from her report:

"The workshop was officially opened by the Diocesan Secretary, Mr Msosa, who encouraged the participants to share and also to go back and impart the knowledge to others. These days there are many deaths among child-bearing women. He asked them to lead others on family planning issues. They need to plan on how many children they would like to have, and also not to be ashamed to talk to their husbands about family planning. He also encouraged them, as leaders, to be the first ones to go and be tested –VCT (Voluntary Counselling and Testing for HIV) to know their status. Participants learned about preventing infection by wearing gloves when caring for the sick and washing the dead. It was important to teach adolescents about Reproductive Health. Other topics included Leadership Skills, Qualities of a good leader, Gender Based Violence in relation to Reproduction, Human Trafficking, Women Empowerment and Time Management.

We were privileged to have Mr Tambuli to speak to us. This man is HIV positive but goes round telling people that he is infected and he talks about Status, that he is HIV positive and well because of taking ARV (Anti retroviral) drugs. Participants were very much encouraged by Mr Tambuli. Most of them said they would go for Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT).

Mr Tambuli



Other workshops were done in Balaka, Mangochi West and Mangochi East Archdeaconries and another was organised for the St Monica women, where sixty-eight members participated, this was at Liwonde M'manga. The workshops will continue with the priests and their wives and some married couples and in the remaining archdeaconries.

May I take this opportunity to thank MACS for assisting us financially, we don't take this for granted, and may God bless you abundantly. Yours in the family, A.F.Mkoko

A MACS SPONSORED VISIT

Eleven travellers set off on 29th June for a two week visit to Malawi. The purpose of the visit was to meet with people connected with some of the projects supported by MACS and to learn from them. Also to do some practical work at Mkope Health Centre and to visit the Unit for Blind Children at the school there. Ages ranged from fifteen to seventy-five and everyone returned in one piece.



Molly wields a brush

Some comments from those who took part:



David & Christopher improving a bed

"This was a super trip which has made me love Malawi even more. Visiting the MACS projects enabled me to meet the people and enjoy their hospitality, enthusiasm and ingenuity. The whole group have been a joy to be with."

"The visit was a chance to learn more about Malawi and, more importantly, what needs to be done in the future."

“Thank you very much for this fantastic opportunity. It has proved very helpful and put a lot of things in perspective for me. Thanks for ensuring I was well looked after and for all your planning.”

CENTRAL REGION

The programme included visits to Nkhotakota in the Central Region, where, amongst other things, MACS has provided St Anne’s Hospital with drugs and a replacement telephone switchboard - the previous one was destroyed by lightning - and repairs to a classroom at Linga Primary school.

Nearby at Chididi there is an active group of people providing care for 150 orphans where MACS has funded a kitchen and hall.



Orphans at Chididi

SCHOOLS Susan Fox and Hilary Hegarty, both of whom have experience in education, spent time alongside teachers at Mkope primary school, as well as visiting other schools – some of their comments: Primary education is free but all secondary education has to be paid for, including examinations. Classes are large, generally 60-90. In the class we taught there were about 80 children. Teaching resources were non-existent, as were pencils and exercise books. Teaching was by rote. Children were keen, interested and focused on the work.



Mkope class of 80 children

At Mkope Community Secondary school there was the same desire to learn. Classes were smaller and there were desks and chairs. The syllabus seemed to be wide and included agriculture and ‘citizenship’ in its broadest sense. There was the same lack of books and resources. Text books were kept locked in the small staff room and we were told there was an average of 4 text-books for the entire class. The itinerary also included time with people at Malindi, visiting St Martin’s Hospital, the primary school, workshop and St Michael’s Girls’ Secondary School. Chilema Ecumenical Lay Training Centre was a base for visiting Malosa Secondary School, St Luke’s Hospital and Zomba. Time at KuNgoni Cultural Centre at Mua provided an understanding of the history and culture of people in Malawi and two nights at Mvuu Game Park were unforgettable.

VISITS IN 2009 For the energetic a 450 mile bike ride around the Southern Region in May-June to raise funds for projects in Malawi. The trip will last 14 days, 10 of which will be cycling. Approximate cost £800 for flight and accommodation – in addition people are asked to raise £1,500 each for MACS. For more details contact Rachel Eaton mrsracheleaton@googlemail.com Tel: 01189 814 287. For the others a two week visit similar to the one this year is being planned for June/July next year. Contact Eileen Eggington 43 High Street, Northwood, Middlesex, HA6 1EB eggington@uwclub.net Tel: 01923 822 501 for more information.

MKOPE UNIT FOR THE BLIND



MACS continues to support the Unit for the Blind attached to Mkope Primary School with a termly grant. Trustees who visited this year were pleased to find that conditions at the Unit have improved.

Pupil with the only Braille typewriter

There is now a second specialist teacher looking after the 17 boys and 3 girls, with a possible 2 new girls from nearby villages. They were impressed to find pupils from the school, both sighted and blind, enthusiastically embracing permaculture. The local Committee for the Unit, which includes representatives from the local Education Office, parish, school and Diocese, meets monthly and meticulous accounts are being kept. There is an ongoing need for specialist equipment and resources.

ST MICHAEL’S TANK

The replacement water tank for St Michael’s Girls Secondary School at Malindi funded by MACS at £17,423, is almost complete.

The new water tank for St Michael’s Secondary School



A shortage of cement in Malawi delayed progress. Note the strong reinforcing and the lake in the distance from which the water is pumped up to the tank. The contractor, clearly taking a pride in his work, reported: *“The timber was arranged vertically to add beauty to the tank walls.”*

HIV/AIDS

MACOBO (Malosa Community Based Organisation) continues its good work with over 70 volunteers providing regular support in 22 villages.

Volunteers and their T-shirts

MACS has assisted by funding bicycles, training courses and equipment. Henry Chikakuda, one of the leaders, says they are working hard to improve the diet of PLWHAs (People Living With AIDS) - essential for people taking anti retroviral drugs. This is being done through developing community gardens being done through developing community gardens. Amazingly 3,420 bags of maize have been produced in these community gardens. Because of this large crop, food is also being given to people suffering from TB, the elderly and to 8 orphan care centres.



We have problems! *We have problems in the UK with rising costs but spare a thought for people in Malawi, one of the poorest countries in the world – last year a 50Kg bag of fertiliser cost £18, this year £36. Here a 50kg bag of general fertiliser costs £19.*

OTHER WAYS There are other ways of supporting MACS in addition to financial contributions. Do you know of any charities, trustees of grant-making bodies, companies who might be able to help in some way? Would you be interested in serving as a trustee? Please contact Richard Barton or Sally Huband (details on the back page) for more information.

ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday 13th September, 10.30am-3.30pm



at St Saviour's Hall, St George's Square, SW1V 3QW
Go to Pimlico Station and take the right-hand exit when leaving.

This will be an interesting meeting. In addition to the brief formal AGM and Eucharist, there will be opportunity to hear from **Mr Grafiud Tione, MACS Representative in Malawi**, who will be with us throughout the day.

There will also be a DVD of the July visit to Malawi sponsored by MACS. Do come and bring your friends. *Please bring your own lunch – drinks provided.*

KEEPING IN TOUCH AND FUNDING

Six trustees have visited Malawi this year, at no expense to the charity. With this experience, and with ongoing information received from Malawi, trustees are able to keep in touch with immediate needs.

Continued...

When sending donations, it is helpful if these are given to the General Fund. If you wish your donation to support a special category, please indicate from the following: *education, health, HIV/AIDS, orphans and community projects, food security, churches and clergy housing, women's projects, emergencies.*

- **Legacies** - if you would like to support people in Malawi by donating to MACS through a legacy, please ask the Treasurer to send you a form
- **Website** - donations can be made securely via www.macs.org.uk
- **Ebay** buying and selling can raise funds for MACS – details on the website or email us on malawimacs@gmail.com
- **Shopping on the web** – can provide 2-12% to MACS at no cost to you if you go through our website at <http://buy.at/malawimacs>
- **Banker's Orders** help the Treasurer – please consider arranging one if you have not already done so
- **Gift Aid** - if you are a taxpayer, 28% is added to your donation – a single GA declaration covers all subsequent donations

Low overheads Costs in the UK for resource materials, newsletter, postage and auditing are low at 3% of income. In Malawi they are 4%, covering travelling and other costs of the MACS Representative, who has responsibility for monitoring and reporting on projects.

WHO'S WHO

- Patron:** Bishop Donald Arden CBE
- Chairman:** Richard Barton, Sweech Cottage, Preston Lane, Preston, Canterbury CT3 1EY Tel: 01227 728 310 e-mail: richardgbarton@yahoo.co.uk
- Secretary:** Sally Huband 2 Ashurst Cottages, Plumpton, Lewes, BN7 3AP Tel: 01273 890 155 e-mail: sally.huband@tinyworld.co.uk
- Treasurer:** Colin Gardner, 83 High Street, Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 7EJ Tel: 01268 774 337 Fax: 01268 774 339 email: colin@cjgardner.co.uk
- Projects:** Margaret Parr 15 Summer Court, Wellcombe Close, Eastbourne BN20 7XW Tel/Fax: 01323 727 611 e-mail: mparr@fish.co.uk
- Trustees:** Jane Arden, Bazil Arden, Richard Barton, Rachel Eaton, Anthea Griggs, Bridget le Huray, Christine Matthews