

# NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2023

## CYCLONE FREDDY



This is Dowkira village, not far from Blantyre ..... or, rather, **was** Dowkira. A mud slide from the nearby hills, engendered by Cyclone Freddy as it ravaged southern Malawi in March, flattened all 59 houses - there is nothing to see of them now. 14 people died: 16 are still missing, probably buried in the mud. The 135 survivors, including 58 children, are housed in tents nearby, not knowing what their future will be.

Nearby Chilumbwe suffered massive destruction from a rockfall, crashing down at 1am, while people slept. Fifteen households were annihilated. Pastor David, pictured below, tells that he was awakened by a rumbling noise, stepped out of his house in total darkness and plunged into thick hot mud, causing burns to his legs and body. The rocks and mud narrowly missed his house (top right of photograph)



Overall in the country, at least 676 people are known to have died. Many were swept away by the floods with no identification, to be buried in mass graves. Over 430 more are missing. On top of the loss of life and home, many crops have been lost – at the worst possible time for maize, which had just started to grow. It is now too late to re-plant for this season. There will be a critical shortage of food come the hungry season at the end of the year.

Bishop Alinafe Kalemba, bishop of the Diocese of Southern Malawi, says that there is one heartening aspect. There has been tremendous support from neighbours and from people in the central and northern region, who were much less affected by the storm. Villagers have been very open with offers of temporary housing, food, clothes and blankets. Churches and schools have willingly opened up for shelter. The temporary camps were set up very rapidly. In the camp we saw, neighbours brought food for the bereft and wood to construct toilets.

MACS supporters have been enormously generous in response to our appeal. So far, over £13,500 has been sent to the Anglican Council of Malawi, for two main purposes:

1. To assist re-housing and re-equipping those made homeless.
2. To support the planting of fresh crops that will fruit by the end of the year.

# Margaret Parr,

founding member of MACS and former Headmistress of St Michael's Girls' School, Malindi, died peacefully on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

MACS grew out of Margaret's love for Malawi as well as her vision and determination to continue to support people in the country she had worked in. It was Margaret who befriended Grafiud Tione while he was studying in the UK and he has been our representative in Malawi since the beginning 30 years ago. Countless people and organisations in Malawi have benefited and continue to do so from what Margaret started.

In Matthew's gospel, Jesus says: The kingdom of heaven is like yeast, which a woman took and mixed with half a hundredweight of flour till it was all leavened. With the help of others, and with God's blessing, Margaret's vision has continued, like yeast, to grow through the work of MACS.

On Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September, there will be a memorial service of thanksgiving for Margaret's life and work at 2pm in St John's Church, Eastbourne, to which all are welcome.

May she now rest in peace.

## **NEW PROJECTS approved since last newsletter**

**Africycle bikes**, training and repair kit for two ordinands at Leonard Kamungu Theological College

**Emergency appeal** for funds to Anglican Council of Malawi for post- Cyclone Freddy support

**Library furnishing and books** at Chilema Ecumenical Lay Training Centre

**Electrification** of four staff houses at Liwaladzi Health Centre, St Anne's, Nkhotakota.

**Double classroom school blocks with office at:**

- i) St Luke's Liwaladzi FP School (DLM)
- ii) St Michael's Chitenje FP School (DLM)
- iii) St Martin's FP School, Malindi (DUS)
- iv) Matope CDSS (DUS)
- v) M'manga CDSS (DUS)

## Open Air Education



This is education Malawi-style, fine in the dry season, impossible in the rainy season. When the heavens open, children are sent home, and therefore miss out on their teaching.

This is the situation at Mpondas Primary School, which strives to teach 4,576 (sic) pupils. They have 19 classrooms for indoor lessons, which means that **33 classes are taught in the open air every day.**

MACS has a history of supporting primary schools by funding the building of new classrooms. At Mitembo, 21 headmen from nearby villages combined to form their own committee and request funding for a new block from the Diocese of Lake Malawi. This has just recently been completed.

At nearby Kathete, the recent construction of a new classroom block stimulated the local people to raise the funds to build a second block along the same architectural lines - i.e. the cost to MACS of one building stimulated the construction of two!



MACS funded



Self funded

With the help of a very generous recent donation, we plan to finance further classrooms. We work with local village committees, who fund the production of bricks and the supply of stones, sand and water. Supervised by our representative, Grafiud Tione, MACS funds the rest.



The Happy result!

You have received this newsletter because you are registered on our system as a supporter of MACS CIO, Charity no.1188309. You can update your preferences or unsubscribe at [www.malawimacs.org](http://www.malawimacs.org) or by contacting the secretary at [info@malawimacs.org](mailto:info@malawimacs.org)

## MACS Bursaries



Bursary Students at Malosa Secondary School

During their visit in May, trustees met with MACS bursary students, including this group at Malosa Secondary School. Below we hear from four of these students, and what the support of MACS has meant to them. Visiting trustees believe that all four will all go on to achieve their ambitions.

### Lekani

*'I am 16 years old and I started at Malosa Secondary School in 2019. I am in the final Year Form 4. My mother and two brothers live in Namalaka Village, Zomba. They do small scale subsistence farming. I had some problems settling down but had the courage to continue. Covid came and caused disruption but, school for me was a game changer. Then, when I was in Form 3, my father died following a severe asthma attack. I was so shocked and distressed. Life became miserable because my mother did not have the funds to continue paying my school fees. But then I was so happy to hear that I had been awarded a MACS' bursary to continue my schooling. I soon made up for lost time and next month I shall be taking the Form 4 final exams (MSCE). I still miss my father very much, but I am hoping to do well in my exams and gain a place at the College of Medicine in Blantyre to train as a medical surgeon'.*

In January he came 1st out of 273 students in his year. He is a very high achiever and we believe he will go on to become a surgeon.

## **Chifuniro**

*'I am 15 years old and am in Form 2 – my second year at Malosa Secondary School. My mother and five older siblings live in Blantyre. None of them has been able to find work. On 1 June 2022 I lost my father in a car accident. It really affected me because he was the one to encourage me. He always promised he would help me. I lost hope because this school is one of the best in Malawi. I became depressed and was waiting to find out what my mum might be able to do. She asked the school for help, and I was so happy when I heard the news that I had been awarded a MACS' bursary. Although I still feel sad because I miss my father, life is now better knowing I can continue at school. My ambition is to become a nurse'.*

## **Ndazona**

*'I am 13 years old and am in Form 2. My parents are small scale subsistence farmers. I have an older brother who has no work and two sisters in Forms 1 and 4 in a local day secondary school. I achieved 3 'A's and 3 'B's' in the National exams and gained a place at the prestigious Malosa Secondary School. However, my parents couldn't pay the school fees and I feared I would be kicked out. I told my teacher, and he helped my mother complete the form and I was awarded a bursary. I am so thankful to MACS because I do not know what would have become of me if I had not been accepted. My ambition is to become an accountant'.*

## **Chimwemwe**

*I am 17 years old and am in Form 2. I am the 5th of seven children and now I am the only one in school. I became afraid that I could not continue but someone sold a piece of land to pay for my first year. When it came to the second year my mother had no way of meeting the payments. We completed the application form, and I was so relieved to be awarded a MACS' bursary. I always work hard so that I may fulfil my ambition to gain a place at the Polytechnic in Blantyre and study to qualify as an engineer'.*



Chimwemwe, Ndazona, Chifuniro, Lakani

# MACS CIO SUPPORTERS' DAY and

## AGM of MACS (charity no 1025616)

Still on Zoom! Bringing together supporters from all over the UK and well beyond.

Join us on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2023 from 10.30 am to 1 pm.

### The day's programme will include:

- the year's highlights and achievements, including the Project Officer's trip in May
- a presentation by the Treasurer
- an interview with our representative, Grafiud Tione
- an update on the follow-up to Cyclone Freddy

There will be opportunities to talk with other supporters and to consider how to develop the work of the charity.

For joining instructions, please email [info@malawimacs.org](mailto:info@malawimacs.org)

You will then be sent a Zoom link during the week beginning 17th September along with an electronic copy of all the papers required.

## MACS WHO'S WHO

**Patron:** Jane Arden, MBE

**Chairman:** Martin Herrick

email: [chairman@malawimacs.org](mailto:chairman@malawimacs.org)

**Secretary:** Julie Lupton

The Cottage, 72 North Street, Biddenden, Kent, TN27 8AS

Tel: 01580 291 658 email: [info@malawimacs.org](mailto:info@malawimacs.org)

**Treasurer:** Colin Gardner

217 Main Road, Hawkwell, Essex, SS5 4EQ

Tel: 01268 920 052 email: [treasurer@malawimacs.org](mailto:treasurer@malawimacs.org)

**Projects:** Eileen Eggington

Tel: 07771 870424 email: [projectofficer@malawimacs.org](mailto:projectofficer@malawimacs.org)

**Trustees:** Gillian Barber, Adrian Brown, Margaret Campbell, Tony Cox, Richard Davies, Brian Griffin, Janice Price.