

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2019

My Life as MACS Representative in Malawi



Grafiud Tione

"As the MACS' Representative in Malawi, my priority is to make sure that all funds raised in the UK are spent on projects approved by trustees for the intended purpose, in the right manner and at the right time. MACS supports building and training projects concerned with education, health, agriculture, social welfare and church. In most cases these projects are hatched by rural parish communities.

My work is challenging because of the diversity of places and people supported by MACS. I am in contact with people from all walks of life, including both Anglican clergy and lay people throughout nine districts in Central Region and five districts in Southern Region of Malawi.

I would like to give you some examples of my work, starting in the area of education.

MACS has supported the construction of a number of classroom blocks and teachers' houses. Currently a double classroom block and office is being built at both Wato Junior Primary School in Kasungu and Mikanga Primary School in Ntchisi District, both well over 100 km from Lilongwe where I am based. I am not the site manager, but I do make frequent visits in order to make sure that construction is done according to the strictly laid down MACS' building standards.

Mostly these projects are community driven and the challenge sometimes is to ensure that the builders they engage will do a good and honest job. As a MACS' Representative I often have to remind the committee and their builder to adhere to our high standards.



Wato classroom block

Also in the area of education, I am involved with the secondary school bursary scheme. I am responsible for disbursing funds to the schools for the beneficiaries who are identified by the schools' bursary committees. I take group pictures of them each year and the head teachers provide trustees with regular reports on the learners' progress.

MACS is very much involved in the health sector in Malawi. For instance, I have been responsible for overseeing the construction of a maternity ward at Nkasala Health Centre (below), and the maternal waiting home at Lulunga Health Centre. The Lulunga Health Centre is in the remotest area of Malawi and the road to the Centre is bad. Here MACS also funded solar power because the electricity grid has not yet reached Lulunga. All in all it takes up to three days to travel there from Lilongwe and involves me spending two nights in Mangochi District. The good thing is that when visiting such remote projects, I try to combine two or three projects in one trip. Other medical projects range from new and renovated staff houses, hospital wards, incinerators, pit latrines and a laboratory.



In an emergency MACS has funded medical drugs and regularly spends gift list money on linen, beds and other items for the Hospitals and Health

Centres. The beneficiaries normally identify their requirements and, when approved by trustees, I organise delivery in liaison with Administrators, Doctors, Clinical Officers and Pharmacists. I do the payments so that funds are used for the intended purpose. However MACS does not fund the day to day running costs of hospitals and health centres.

As a Christian organisation, MACS also gives assistance to parishes, including support for the work of the Mothers' Union, funding the roofing of churches and helping with the building or maintenance of clergy houses. Projects have included the construction of a ceiling in a clergy house at Magomero, the roofing of the church at Chimwala and the building of a rectory at Phalula, pictured above with Clement Frank



(DUS accountant) and the Rev Alan Kandeya.



Chimwala Church

I have also overseen a number of water projects ranging from the funding of boreholes to the major provision of a new water system with a large concrete tank at Nkope Hill by the lakeshore. This tank provides potable and clean water to the Health Centre, secondary and primary schools and the school for blind and low sighted learners

Being the only MACS Representative in Malawi, I have to carry out all the administration, including close management of the finances. I disburse funds into the individual project committee account or pay directly to the suppliers of, for instance, iron sheets. Funding for projects is done in stages according to progress and I always insist on a financial account, together with receipts, from the community project committee. In turn, I am accountable to the trustees through Eileen Eggington, MACS' Project Officer and Colin Gardner, Treasurer".

Grafiud Tione, January 2019

Eileen writes: "I cannot speak too highly of Grafiud Tione. I am in frequent contact with him via WhatsApp and it is a particular joy to visit projects with him each year and to appreciate his special qualities of good humoured diplomacy and integrity."

GOAT PASS ON SCHEME - supported by the Gift List

MACOBO (Malawi Community-Based Organisation) is a charity that supports social and health care workers in Malosa and villages near St. Luke's Hospital. Community awareness, health and poverty reduction are the key aims for MACOBO. MACS has supported a number of MACOBO education initiatives such as community and school support worker training, especially around health and the prevention of diseases such as HIV and TB which remain a problem. Women and young people are a special focus with teachers, youth and nursery workers receiving training unavailable through the government.



MACS has supported the goat pass-on scheme for some years. Individuals needing support are provided with goats, trained in their care, and contracted to pass the first kid back to MACOBO so others can benefit. Loyce is one such person taking part in the scheme.



Loyce (pictured above) is bringing up three sons unsupported as her husband has migrated for work and not returned. Her MACOBO goat produced two kids, with Loyce sleeping with her in the house to ensure she was not stolen. The expanding goat herd now provides an income for her family. Loyce can now pay school fees, buy uniforms, fertilise her land with manure, sell surplus manure to others, maintain her house and has bought a sewing machine.



Another recipient is Mercy (above), responsible for the care of eight grandchildren.

MAJOR PROJECT - new operating theatre for St Luke's



St Luke's is a busy mission hospital in Malosa offering a full range of medical and surgical services for people living in the vicinity of the hospital and the five health centres for which it is responsible as well as serving the College of Nursing.

Led by two doctors from Holland plus a team of Malawian clinical officers and nurses, it has just over 140 beds and cares for a population up to 140,000, more than 60% of whom are Muslim.

It provides the only surgical facility for the referral population, where the number of procedures increases by 5% each year. Caesarean sections have trebled in the last 30 years, with 300 in 2017. The new block, projected at the time of going to print to cost £175,000, will replace the old, single theatre, built in 1965, with two new operating theatres plus ancillary rooms which will bring the possibility of lives saved.

MACS has committed to fund the building of this new facility and is currently seeking contributions towards the total funds required. Over £100,000 has now been raised from generous donations and a commitment from MACS funds. We now seek a final £75,000 to make this operating theatre block a reality.

In the New Block

- Strict infection control will be achieved through carefully designed routes through the block.
- Instrument sterilisation will be improved.
- Patients will be monitored in a purpose-built recovery room so that immediate post-operative problems can be swiftly addressed.
- Emergencies (such as Caesarean sections), will be accommodated in the second operating theatre when one theatre is in use.
- Staff facilities will be improved, and infection control assisted, by providing male and female changing rooms, showers, and wash basins.
- The existing building can be converted into a Child Nutrition Unit, a vital part of care in a country where 47% of children are stunted. (UNICEF 2010).

The Gift of 40 years, Nelson's story



Nelson was just 17 when he was hit by a car on the main road close to St Luke's in November 1975. His friends carried him to the hospital where Dr Gerard Olijhoek operated on his ruptured spleen. Nelson survived and amongst his carers was one of Dr Olijhoek's colleagues, Dr Helen Cox.

40 years later they met again when Dr Cox visited Nelson's village with a palliative care team from St Luke's. Now in his late 50s, Nelson was seriously ill with cancer but more than grateful for the 40 years of life which the surgery at St Luke's had given him back.

NEW TRUSTEE PROFILE: ADRIAN BROWN



Adrian Brown grew up in Malawi till age 18, living in Lilongwe and Zomba, and has retained an ongoing interest in the country, through Malawi groups in London, and visiting with his family subsequently. As an agricultural officer, his father took the family on frequent journeys to rural Malawi, and, indeed, lived on agricultural research stations in both Malawi and Botswana. Adrian has therefore retained a keen interest in development. He has been a supporter of MACS for a number of years.

Professionally, Adrian's career has spanned operational management roles in Boots, including running the Boots the Chemist stores in London, where he worked to ensure they were part of an integrated system of local healthcare services; and more recently, in fund management, looking after pension fund and charity endowment money. He is also a Trustee of the Archbishop Tenison School Foundation, an inner London state school.

MACS PROJECTS

As our focus is concentrated on the St Luke's Theatre development and on projects that are already underway, we have not been encouraging many new applications.

One exception to this is to fund urgent repairs to the sewer at Malosa Secondary School Girls' hostel.

From the Gift List:

- Blood Pressure machines have been purchased for nurses,
- Head torches have been purchased for medical staff,
- Solar lamps have been purchased and distributed to teachers,
- Funds have been sent to MACOBO to continue the goat pass-on scheme,
- New Form One bursary students have been identified,
- Funds have been distributed to buy primary school books and Teacher Resource packs in Northern Malawi,
- Four bicycles have been purchased and distributed to newly qualified clergy,
- Funds have been allocated to help with training in sustainable land use,
- Mothers' Union groups have been supported.

Solar lights - much appreciated in rural areas.

'The sun king home 60 solar lamps have made our lives change for the better. They are highly efficient solar bulbs especially when there is intensive sun shine.

As you already know, teaching needs much time for preparations. These preparations are mostly done during the night. With the coming of these solar bulbs, we are saving money which we were spending on candles. Candles are not efficient, they produce dim light plus soot which leads to ill health. We are really grateful for this development'.

Robert Chiviya, Deputy Head Teacher, Magomero School

'I would like to inform you that the solar systems you gave us are working properly. I appreciate a job well done. Our teachers are now able to prepare their work even at night, unlike before'.

M.A.Chibwana, Head Teacher, Mikanga Primary School

**Please remember,
THE GIFT LIST IS NOT JUST FOR CHRISTMAS!
Please support our work by buying alternative presents for
birthdays and anniversaries
Available online at www.malawimacs.org**

Want to know how you can support MACS financially?

There are a number of ways in which you can support the work of MACS. Here are a few.

Set up a Standing Order. This regular giving helps trustees with long term planning. You can request for your donation to be allocated to a specific area such as educational bursaries, health care etc. or it can go to General Funds and be allocated wherever there is an area of need. To set up a standing order, go to the website www.malawimacs.org click on 'Donate' and you will find Standing Order mandate form. You can download this, fill it in and post it to the Treasurer, or email a completed form to treasurer@malawimacs.org. If you do not have internet access, please contact the Secretary (address on back page) who will send you the form and details.

You can **make donations online** through our website. Go to 'Donate', then to 'Give Now' and follow the instructions.

You can make a **Bank Transfer** to the following MACS account:
Santander UK plc, Sort Code 09 01 55, Account number: 53606700.
It is helpful if you also let us know by email, letter or telephone that you have done this so that we can acknowledge receipt more easily.

If you are a UK tax payer, you can increase your donation by completing a **Gift Aid** declaration. These can be downloaded from the website or you can ask the Secretary to post one to you.

If you prefer to **send a cheque**, make it payable to The Malawi Association for Christian Support and send it to The Treasurer, 217 Main Road, Hawkwell, Essex, SS5 4EQ.

Organisations such as churches and schools can send **Group Donations** to the Treasurer. Please give a representative's contact details so that we can acknowledge receipt. If you would like a speaker to give a talk on MACS, please ask the Secretary to arrange this.

You can use our **Gift List** which is available on our website and is sent out once a year to supporters who have requested it. Through this means you can direct your donation towards a specific project in Malawi.

In every case, if you wish to have acknowledgement of receipt, it helps us if you let us know you have made a payment.

A further way in which you can support the work of MACS is through a legacy and there will be more information on this in the next newsletter.

At any point you can contact the Secretary (details on the website and on the back page of this newsletter) to discuss matters of giving. **We will be happy to help you to help us!**

SUPPORTERS' DAY

& ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2019

Saturday 28 September

10.30 – 3.30 pm

Monk Room, (Ground Floor), St James the Less, 4 Moreton Street,
Pimlico, London SW1V 2PS

10.30 Informal Eucharist followed by AGM

12.30 lunch

13.30 Afternoon speakers

Please bring your own lunch - we will provide drinks!

Friends and family most welcome!

MACS WHO'S WHO

Chairman: Tony Cox

email: chairman@malawimacs.org

Secretary: Julie Lupton

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

Tel: 01580 291 658 email: info@malawimacs.org

Treasurer: Colin Gardner

217 Main Road, Hawkwell, Essex, SS5 4EQ

Tel: 01268 920 052 email: treasurer@malawimacs.org

Projects: Eileen Eggington

Tel: 01923 822501 email: projectofficer@malawimacs.org

Trustees: Jane Arden, Gillian Barber, Adrian Brown, Tony Cable,

Margaret Campbell, Richard Davies, Brian Griffin, Martin Herrick