



Training of netball coaches in Dedza (Reaching Our Goals Project, Comic Relief and the Scottish government)

UP MALAWI NEWSLETTER July and August 2021

Programme Highlights

- **With funding from Comic Relief and the Scottish government and in partnership with Tackle Africa, the Reaching Our Goals project trained 15 netball coaches using a curriculum developed by UP.** The curriculum which combines netball sessions with sessions on life-skills, gender equality and human rights will be delivered by the coaches to 233 of the most marginalised girls and 35 boys aged 15-19 in T/A Tambala, Chauma and Kaphuka in rural Dedza. The sessions will start the first week of September.
- With the support of Penny Appeal, **UP distributed cash through e-payment to 2,555 (734 men and 1,821 women) vulnerable households** in Mulanje district. The objective was to support the government's response to address acute food insecurity among the most vulnerable households in the district by providing cash for food items.
- With funding from USAID through Palladium, **UP trained 60 new soy milk entrepreneurs** (41 in Dedza and 19 in Balaka) and **provided them with 60 soy kits** (each valued at MK120,000). UP also supported **construction of 9 keyline dams at three integrated watershed sites in Dedza** which will help with storing rain water, reducing run off and erosion and increasing ground water table. Finally, **UP distributed 500 mini-drip kits** (300 in Balaka and 200 in Dedza) to support backyard garden establishment. This is a water saving technology which promotes good nutrition in high rainfall areas.
- The ASPIRE programme with funding from the Embassy of Ireland is **promoting small scale irrigation development through construction of irrigation schemes in Dedza.** To ensure sustainability of the intervention, the programme is monitoring the scheme utilization. The monitoring visit focused on irrigated crop management, water management and operation and maintenance of scheme structures (weir, canal network, and night storage reservoirs). One of the schemes visited was Malindima irrigation scheme that covers 22.5ha and out of this 15ha was under potato production while the remaining hectareage will be planted in August as a way of staggering production. The scheme is benefiting 103 farmers (61 man and 42 women). **The ASPIRE programme also facilitated resource mobilization of local construction materials for the Mwasadzu gravity based irrigation system.** This contribution is made by project participants to ensure they take part in all stages of the irrigation development. Their contribution constitutes 20% of the total investment and materials provided include sand, quarry, bricks and labour.
- With funding from Charity: water, **UP rehabilitated 19 water points that are serving 9,839 people** in Dowa district.
- With support from The One Foundation, **UP drilled 8 new boreholes in TA Khwethemule, Thyolo district serving over 2,550 smallholder tea farmers** (1,601 men and 1,949 women). These farmers previously had no access to safe water . **UP under the same project is supporting Thyolo District to develop District Strategic Investment Plan (DSIP) on WASH** to achieve universal access to WASH using District Wide Approach (DWA). The district is currently conducting a survey on WASH (using the mWater platform) targeting the whole district (communities and institutions). The data collected shall be used for the development of the plan.



Cash distributions in Mulanje district (Penny Appeal)

Malindima irrigation scheme ASPIRE (Embassy of Ireland)

Our Merger with Self Help Africa

United Purpose and the Gorta Group announced their formal merger on Thursday 5th August.

This historic event sees UP become part of The Gorta Group, which trades as Self Help Africa. **The combined organisation will invest up to £45 million annually in agriculture, nutrition and enterprise development projects that will support close to 5 million people across 17 countries.**

Lear more about our merger with Self Help Africa [here](#).

Learning, collaboration & influence

Our collaboration with ArtGlo:

With funding from ECHO, UP is working with ArtGlo on dealing with misinformation and busting various myths around COVID-19 vaccination. Our collaboration has been featured in the journal of the Finnish- African society.

Our Team and Operations

Working arrangements:

UP Malawi COVID-19 Taskforce continues to regularly review and update UP's COVID-19 Operating Procedures in line with project risk assessments. The last update was shared on 22nd August. Offices are at 50% capacity with strict cohort working in place and the ban on inter district travel has been lifted.

Safeguarding and Well-being:

In July a psychotherapist hosted a session on health and wellbeing with our team. In August the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Committee reviewed the ToR and Action plan to ramp up efforts to increase reporting of concerns and incidents.

Our team is the driving force behind our successes:

In the spotlight this month: Elizabeth Banda

Elizabeth Banda is the Project Manager for the University of Strathclyde and Scottish Government funded Rural Energy Access through Social Enterprise and Decentralisation (EASE) project. She has been working with United Purpose for the past 4.5 years. Elizabeth joined United



Purpose on 12th December 2016 as the Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator for the Sustainable Off-grid Electrification of Rural Villages (SOGERV) project funded by the Scottish government and later worked as the Acting Project Manager for the same project. On 12th December 2018, she joined the EASE project as the Project Coordinator and has recently been promoted to Project Manager. Elizabeth played a key role in the deployment of UP's first Micro-grid generating and distributing electricity to customers in the rural villages. She has shared learning from her project at both national and international sustainable energy forums and has been able to create opportunities for collaboration. Elizabeth is also a member of UP Malawi Safeguarding Committee and responsible for reporting.

UP is extremely fortunate to have staff members like Elizabeth who are not only pioneering new technologies in Malawi but are also sharing UP experience widely with our partners and others to achieve scalability and influence sector policy.

Stories from the people we work with

Good hygiene practices contribute to improved nutritional status

Informed consent was obtained before recording this story

Before August 2020, the majority of the communities in Traditional Authority (TA) Tambala in Dedza district used to practice open defecation due to lack of toilets in their households. Open defecation exposed the communities to high risk of diseases related to poor sanitation and hygiene.

The home of Margret Jemitala in Chipaza Village in TA Tambala was no exception. *“We had continuous attacks of diseases such as diarrhoea and we used to spend some days at a health care facility almost every month. If it was my husband one day, then the next day were the children or I. This affected our productivity as a family and left us almost destitute,”* says Jemitala.



Margret Phillimoni – washing her hands after using the latrine in her compound

Jemitala's two-year-old boy was undernourished. Jemitala did not know that the undernourishment was also associated with recurrent onsets of diarrhoea and other frequent diseases which impaired her boy's nutritional status.

The Food Nutrition Security Programme (FNSP) funded by GIZ and implemented by UP supported communities in TA Tambala to become open defecation free (ODF) by improving their knowledge, attitudes and practices related to nutrition and hygiene.

Through the use of the community-led total sanitation (CLTS) approach, the project reached to communities members who now understand that open defecation contaminates water sources and facilitates the spread of diarrhoea and other faecal-transmitted diseases.

“We know that because of open defecation, we were drinking contaminated water and eating contaminated food. You can have well prepared food meeting all the dietary requirements, but if the surrounding environment is not clean, then that food is not safe for consumption,” says Jemitala. This is why Jemitala's family decided to stop practicing open defecation and built their own toilet.

The 80-year-old William Kashoni who lives with his wife and two grandchildren in TA Tambala is another community member who have embraced the good hygiene practices promoted by the FNSP programme: *“Having a latrine and handwashing facility is protecting me and my household from diseases such as diarrhoea. It is keeping me healthy and strong to work in my backyard vegetable garden and provide for my grandchildren,”* says Kashoni.

Statistics from the Mayani Health Centre which serves 406 villages in TA Tambala also show a significant reduction in malnourishment cases. *“In August 2020 when we were starting CLTS, there were 345 cases of malnourishment. By January 2021, we had 205 cases and these were largely related to hunger not malnutrition,”* says Rajab Afaki, area environmental health officer for Mayani Health Centre.

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