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*Chairman's 2023 Report*

Since my visit to Malawi last September/October, Malawi again was hit by another cyclone, called Freddy.

The Malawi Government declared a state of emergency as nearly a million people in 20 districts were affected by the floods and torrential rains that started earlier in March. Livelihoods, crops and homes have been destroyed by the effects of Cyclone Freddy.

The high winds and heavy rains caused widespread flooding and mud slides which resulted in at least 300+ deaths and damage to infrastructure. Many farmers have lost their livestock which they have relied on to earn a sustainable income.

Many of the areas across the affected districts remain inaccessible, making it difficult for the councils to conduct rapid assessments to establish the total number of people affected by the cyclone. The only data available is on displaced people living in the camps that have been established.

This cyclone has come close on the heels of Cyclone Ana which struck Malawi last year causing great damage and loss of crops. This was followed by a severe drought and then an outbreak of cholera which took over 2000 lives, and now this latest cyclone has brought poor Malawi to its knees. I was in Malawi last September and saw for myself the effects of Cyclone Ana and the drought that follows and the effect it had on our projects there. The media in Malawi are reporting that as many as 3.7 million Malawians could be facing starvation due to the effects of the cyclone.

A disaster appeal by Seedsowers, was launched and to date £4080.00 has been raised and sent to our people in Malawi for the provision of emergency food for

Special points of interest:

- Chairmans Report
- Cyclone Relief
- Aquabox Consignment
- Stephen Carr
- Soap Making
- New Borehole at Lundu

## *Chairman's Report - continued*

the people affected in the areas where we have been working.

George has also been working with the charity Aquabox to distribute water filters which they have supplied to help purify the contaminated water. The value of the water filters supplied is £6700.00.

Sadly, our planned projects have been brought to a standstill due to the contamination of our boreholes by the ingress of sewage as a result of the excess flooding. Our existing boreholes will have to be purged by using compressed air. The cost being approximately £670.00 per borehole.

It has been suggested by George that we concentrate on rehabilitating our deep drilled boreholes. There are 12 such boreholes in the areas where we are working, namely, Chillaweni, Mulanje, Thylo, Machinjiri and Lundu. The cost of doing this is approximately £7600.00. These boreholes serve some 1500 households.

On the bright side we have been granted £1500.00 to complete the deep drilled borehole at Lundu by the charity Christian Africa Relief Trust (CART). They also have promised a further £5000.00 at the end of the year for the two schools we highlighted in our last newsletter and which I visited last year.

Funding is required for the two health clinic shelters at Makwete and Fikani in Mulanje. These are to facilitate the health visitors when checking the health of the under five children in these villages. At the moment they are seen in the open and in the rainy season they cannot operate. The cost is approximately £3540.00.

The 10 shallow boreholes in the Anglican Project has yet to be started. The delay is because of the urgency of rehabilitating the contaminated boreholes.

On Friday 2nd June, Stephen Carr, one of our trustees in Malawi, passed away and the funeral will be at his Zomba home on Wednesday 7th June. He was 94. Stephen's wife passed away last year in the UK and sadly because of medical reasons he could not go to her funeral. One of his adopted sons was due to come to Malawi to live with Stephen. Unfortunately, his son caught pneumonia and died within two days, so a double blow.

## *Cyclone Relief*

In our last newsletter we gave funding to the Lundu Early Childhood Development Centre (ECDC). This assistance towards the establishment of a nursery school was in the form of food items and seed for the community garden which they were establishing to help supplement the 50 children who are between the ages of 3 and 5 years old. The school is locally supported by the community contribution of MK300 per month from parents (or a cup of maize flour).

On that visit last year we advised them to come up with an Income Generating Activity using the community garden for which we gave seeds to initiate the project. During Cyclone Freddy the whole area was flooding destroying all the crops making it very difficult for the parents to feed their children with nutritious food. Seedsowers has provided them with sugar, plates, cups and toys. Agnes, one of our Malawi trustees, with her team are going to help provide the parents with self sustenance initiatives knowledge.



*Lundu ECDC Committee receiving relief aid from George Mkoko of Seedsowers*



*The 110 elderly villagers of Tyyolo district receiving Cyclone Freddy relief aid from George Mkoko of Seedsowers, (in the foreground).*

*Left– The repair of an elderly couple's house by Seedsowers which was damaged by the Cyclone.*

## *Cyclone Relief– Continued*

Part of the Cyclone Relief was the rehabilitation of the Community Based Child Care Centre (CBCC) at Lumbe TA Chigaru, where we provided the cement required for the reconstruction. The villagers themselves providing the sand, aggregate and labour.



*Lumbe CBCC committee receiving the cement required for the repairs from our Coordinator, George Mkoko*

*Left — Damaged CBCC building*

## *Cyclone Relief– Soap Making Project by Agnes Mkoko*

This report was compiled by Agnes Mkoko, a Seedsowers trustee, about the Soap Making Initiative as part of the Cyclone Relief.

Three women were trained in the Soap making project and these women including myself, went to train some women in Blantyre rural. This place is very remote rural area, where some women were also affected by the Cyclone Freddy and they are running a Nursery School run by themselves.

George the SEED SOWERS MALAWI coordinator asked us to go and assist these rural women in this area.

I am happy to report that it was a worthwhile trip to this group of women, as they showed interest in their learning. After some few days they phoned me to inform me that they have started making their own Soap for sale which is very encouraging indeed. This group was given some starter pack to continue with their Soap making and they are doing it, another encouraging part was their chief and their VDC ( Village Development Community member) were also there to encourage the women and they told us that they will see that the Project grows and after selling their Soap they will be sharing the money so that at the end each member can also be making her own sales.

My future plans is to go back and train them with other skills like sewing, knitting and cookery lessons especially with Nutrition classes as they are dealing with the small children. Like teaching them how to make Soya milk, Bean balls etc as they grow these crops in their area, but don't know other uses of these crops. They asked for watering cans and a Water Pump for watering their crops as they have a rivet nearby which swept away their crops during the floods.

I am retired but not yet very tired, I will do as the Holy Spirit leads, and where I cannot manage to go these other members of our Training team would go and assist.

May I take this opportunity to thank SEED SOWERS TRUST for the commendable work they are doing here in Malawi of assist people like these. I hope you will continue doing so to other groups too, as we are also thinking of resuming the PRISON MINISTRY which we stopped due to COVID 19. But we are ready to resume when funds becomes available.

May the Lord bless you the SEED SOWERS TRUST MEMBERS abundantly.

Prepared by: Agnes F. Mkoko

## *Cyclone Relief– Soap Making - Continued*



*Agnes Mkoko(left) with the trainers showing the finished product*



*Soap making in progress*



*All the participants in the Soap Making Project*



*The soap now being set in the moulds*

## *Aquabox Water Filters*

The Charity Aquabox has again come to the rescue in supplying £6700 worth of water filters for the victims of Cyclone Freddy which struck Malawi in March this year. These filters were distributed by the Seed-sowers coordinator in Malawi, George Mkoko, to the victims of the Cyclone.

These filters are very necessary as so many water points and boreholes were contaminated by sewage by the flooding caused by Cyclone Freddy. These filters are also necessary to prevent another outbreak of cholera as happened after Cyclone Ana, which claimed over 2000 lives last year.



*Aquabox consignment of water filters ready for distribution*



*Left– Delivery of Aquabox Filter Kit to a community to purify contaminated water after the Cyclone flooding*



*Right– Aquabox Filter Kit being demonstrated to members of the village community*

## *New Afridev Borehole for Lundu*

The women of this area of Lundu have to walk 3 to 4 kilometres crossing a stream on the way to the nearest water source. The other major problem is that during the rainy season the stream becomes impassable due to flooding. As a result they have to use the contaminated river water for drinking with all ramifications of water borne diseases.

The area has muddy soil which makes it difficult to walk or drive through during the rainy season.



*The commissioning of the new Afridev borehole at Lundu by George Mkoko of Seedsowers (extreme right).*



*One very pleased lady pumping water from the new borehole. This borehole was enabled by funding from the sponsor Christian Africa Relief Trust (CART)*



*Left- Drilling in progress at Lundu for the installation of the new pump*

## *Obituary - Stephen Carr CBE*

On Friday 2nd June, Stephen Carr, one of our trustees in Malawi, passed away and the funeral was at his Zomba home on Wednesday 7th June. He was 94.

Stephen's wife, Ann, passed away last year in the UK and sadly, because of medical reasons he was unable to fly home to the UK to attend her funeral. One of his adopted sons was due to come to Malawi to live with Stephen. Unfortunately, his son caught pneumonia and died within two days, so a double blow.

Stephen and his wife, Anne, gained agricultural degrees at Wye College in Kent and shortly afterwards moved to Africa after they were married as CMS missionaries.

While in Africa Stephen introduced the growing of tea and coffee to smallholder subsistence farmers in the various countries of Africa. Later he was seconded to the World Bank and advised various African countries ministries on agricultural matters. He also briefed the UK government. He was awarded a CBE for his services to Africa and the UK.

We were blessed to have had Stephen as a trustee in Malawi where we benefited from his wide experience.

At one time Stephen worked with the Sue Ryder Foundation in Malawi.

He wrote many books on agriculture like 'Down to Earth' as well as his autobiography 'Surprised by Laughter'.



*Mike Ansell of Seedsowers with Stephen Carr in September 2022*

## *Acknowledgments*

Seedsowers wish to acknowledge the current donors for their support in 2022 and 2023, allowing the work in Malawi to continue. They are as follows:-

- The RORA Fellowship
- Ashburton Steelworks
- Pennywell Farm
- Teignflex, Heathfield
- Christian African Relief Trust (CART)
- Malawi Association for Christian Support (MACS)
- Aquabox
- The many supporters who have supported us through the years

## *News From 'Agape'* by Rev. Fletcher Kaiya– Trustee

The young men and boys at Agape are doing well while some are still struggling after quitting school.

**Christopher** will finish in the first quarter of 2024 at the Malawi Polytechnic now renamed MUBAS (Malawi University of Business and Applied Sciences). He will graduate with a degree in Industrial Engineering. He has done extremely well taking into account the nature of the course he is taking. The College sometimes allocates particular courses to students who have passed well. Others who, in their opinion, have not done very well are given the option of choice. Christopher was allocated a course.

**Theresa Banda** is at Mzuzu University commonly called MZUNI. She is pursuing a course of Education Science. Theresa is asthmatic and this has hampered her studies to a degree. However, she has worked very hard and she will also graduate next year in 2024.

**James Zululu** is still wants to do Driving lessons but right now he is working for a friend who has a small business selling phone units. He says, either he gets a driving licence or secure enough funds to do what he is doing now but on his own behalf. He thinks people are making money through it because the market is all over the country. He is at present not supported by Seed-sowers Trust

**Grace Zululu** graduated valedictorian at African Bible College. She says she has not landed on her dream employment yet, but she is temporarily doing something with another organization.

**Bestina** has just finished a course of a Diploma in Nutrition and Food Security. She is yet to graduate. After her O level education she went to help Malla and Sam Kalwale at their lodge, doing catering and house keeping. She did very well in both and now has decided to go this course. Bestina is a natural hard worker and very faithful young lady. Right now she has opened her own Saloon for ladies hair styles and she is managing okay. She is waiting to graduate and join job hunters. I think she will be able to do well.

**Caddie**, was in Zambia where he got training from an American Institution. He graduated with a degree in biblical studies. He came back but could not find a job. He went to Mzuzu where his sister stays. He could not find any work there either. Malla helped him to secure a temporary job at the African Bible College in Lilongwe where, if he does well, he can continue. Caddie speaks very good English and he is very impressive. I do not know about his PR which I think needs improvement.



*Christopher*



*Theresa Banda*

## Seed Sowers Trust

Hill House Cottage,  
Oaklands Road,  
Buckfastleigh,  
Devon, TQ11 0BL

Phone: 01364 642206  
Email: [seedsowers2000@gmail.com](mailto:seedsowers2000@gmail.com)

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CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1084847  
COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 4123874  
WEBSITE: [WWW.SEEDSOWERSTRUST.ORG](http://WWW.SEEDSOWERSTRUST.ORG)

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### Helping the Poor to Help Themselves



**Seed Sowers Trust**

*Seed Sowers Trust is a UK based charity founded in 1994 under the name of Malawi Mission. Its vision is to reach out to the poor and help facilitate them to help themselves. It also has at its heart the desire to propagate the Gospel of Christ and wherever possible support the indigenous churches to enable this.*

*The charity has been involved in water and sanitation programmes in Africa as well as food growing projects. It is currently working with local NGO's in Africa on Orphan projects, water projects, and farming projects.*

*It has supplied over 2000 Bibles in Chichewa to congregations of the rural churches in Malawi.*

This is our 29th year of working amongst the needy in Malawi. In that time a lot has been achieved and is still being achieved by the team out there and here at home. This could not have been done without your generous support. May you all have a blessed summer. Thank you again for your ongoing support.

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