



Abba's Rest Orphans

supporting

Care and Share Malawi



Newsletter 20 – May 2024

If you know of any supporter not receiving this newsletter, please inform us at: info@abbasrest.org

“Our team in Malawi have their ‘finger on the pulse’ of local need and respond when they can.” (comment by Trustee Muriel after her visit in August 2023)

We now take you on a six-month journey through some activities of the [Care & Share](#) team at Chiringa (staff, trustees and volunteers) to give you an insight to what [Abba's Rest](#) achieves and the care we take in using your contributions.



DECEMBER: Thanks to **gifts** bought by a supporter via our website, four houses received plastic sheeting (for between grass layers on the roof to keep rain out), two received blankets & sleeping mats and two received solar lights; all the beneficiaries care for orphans.

DECEMBER: The volunteers in our team are the link between Care&Share and the orphans and their carers in the different villages - they assist without payment. They asked for bikes to make it easier to get around, so we funded **nine bikes**, totalling £800, for the six volunteers and the three trustees; the bike serial numbers are all duly logged.



The C&S trustees reported the smiles and happy faces when they announced the decision. The handover was attended by **Loveness Kungsiya of the Phalombe District Social Welfare office** - she told the volunteers to take good care of the bikes and commented that C&S is recognized as the most active organisation in supporting orphans and elderlies. Also attending was **Kennedy Chiwere of Chiringa Police** - he reminded the volunteers that the bikes belong to C&S and that any loss could lead to charges at the police station. [Zodiac News](#) reported the handover.

DECEMBER: Two elderlies from our impact areas (one from Chigwirigwidi and another from Nthowa), both of whom take care of orphans in their homes, asked for food, as they had finished the portion they received in November. The Care and Share team was “worried seeing them going to bed on empty stomach” while waiting for this month's distribution, so decided, with our blessing, to assist them.

JANUARY (30th): We paid the new term's **fees** for 28 students at Michesi Secondary School (£350) and 17 students at Chiringa Day Secondary School (£210). Secondary education is not free in Malawi, though it is a long-term aim of their government.

The **Abba's Rest AGM** will be held on Zoom on Tuesday 9th July at 11 am - **please email us** at info@abbasrest.org if you wish the link to enable you to log in.

Contact details: [email](mailto:info@abbasrest.org) info@abbasrest.org or [phone](tel:01292.264939) 01292.264939
or [write](#) to Trustee Muriel Wilson, 28 Bellevue Crescent, Ayr, KA7 2DR

A/c details for standing orders: Abbas Rest Orphans, 20-29-24 (Barclays), a/c no 80050482
- please put your name in as the reference.



JANUARY (4th): Maize was distributed to about 70 orphans and orphan carers. Social Welfare officer Stanley Gundeni attended and has appealed to the beneficiaries to use the support wisely to alleviate hunger. The Chiringa team takes care that what they give out is used as it is intended.



JANUARY (24th): George, the trustee pictured, wrote: “**A lot of families in Malawi** in this month are going to bed on empty stomachs, forcing a lot of families to look for assistance; today we were saddened to see these orphans: Zitha Nyawala 13 years is in Standard 7 and Mike Nyawala 11 years is in Standard 4 and an elderly woman by the name Esnart Nazombwe aged 67....we couldn't resist but to assist them with the much needed food.”

FEBRUARY (1st): C&S reported: “Today we gave **maize** to the 45 students at Michesi [*in blue uniforms*] and Chiringa [*in white*].”



In 2022, thanks to a supporter, we provided **menstrual health kits** (pads, soap and underwear) to 60 adolescent girls so that they would not miss one week per month. One of their teachers said: “after receiving pads, we have seen a change such that all the girls that received the kits come to the class even during their menstruation time”. We are hoping to find funds to keep this help going.



FEBRUARY: After noting faded paintwork last August, we funded **freshening-up of the Care&Share buildings**, so they chose blue paint and re-did the lettering on the main building (total cost: £250).

FEBRUARY: The **Memezi CBCC** (Community-Based Childcare Centre) was established by Abba's Rest in 2008 and is pre-school (ages 3 to 5) with 195 youngsters (waving to you in this image from a video), of whom 167 are single parent and 28 are zero parent.



At Abba's Rest, we decided we should return to supplying **likuni phala**, the nutritious 'porridge' which Mary's Meals organises for so many other locations. The C&S team report: “We used to supply likuni phala 220kg per term but due to the budget issues we haven't done so and the CBCC committee has been asking for a long time.” and “the delicious Likuni phala will help in preventing malnutrition among the children”. The cost is about £300 per term. The Centre is outwith the six villages which we serve. Its roof, since the 2023 Cyclone Freddy, needs 4 iron sheets and 6 timbers, but we need to direct our limited funds to the existing needs in Chiringa.



FEBRUARY: Trustees Fagess, James and George (Timothy was sick), with co-ordinator Blessings, agreed that **in 2024 we do not spend money on fertilizer but spend more on maize**, writing “because of climate change, no-one is going to harvest as expected so it’s better we have more food than fertilizer”.

Their meeting, which opened and closed with a prayer, also (i) proposed buying school uniforms or ordinary clothes for primary school orphans to help motivate them (many primary children attend school in rags or old clothes), (ii) mentioned the annual licence renewal for the FBO (Faith Based Organisation), and (iii) expressed interest in Eco-San toilets if offered.

MARCH: Serving **likuni phala** at Memezi CBCC (though many children were absent that day) - we will soon add a video of the likuni phala being prepared to the website.



MARCH - APRIL: the major item in our budget is **buying maize after the harvest, treating it and storing it** for the ‘hunger months’ at the end of the year - the Kirsi Poole House has a large store room where the supply is kept under double locks, requiring the presence of two trustees to open it, as we saw on our August visit. Last spring, in 2023, maize purchases cost about £6,500. This spring, with larger purchases and higher prices, it has cost £10,500.

The photos show (i) the maize being delivered, (ii) treating it and (iii) the (reusable) bags which allow more maize to be packed safely in the store room.



APRIL: The C&S trustees reported the state of emergency declared across 23 of Malawi’s 28 districts as a result of this year’s poor harvests. Also, they discussed training someone to sew school uniforms, and arranging vocational training for, initially, two orphans who pass their MSCE exams.



APRIL: We paid the new term’s fees for 45 students (£600), and boarding fees for 4 students (£16).

Your Scottish Trustees are Muriel Wilson, Malcolm McNeil, Colin Naismith and Ian Dickson -
Colin has undertaken to maintain the supporters’ list and handle Gift Aid matters.

MAY: C&S distributed 60 blankets, 60 sleeping mats, 10 exercise books, 5 writing pens to 60 primary school orphans. Also, the 45 students at Michesi and Chiringa CDSS received 10 notebooks each and 5 writing pens. The **distribution meeting** was attended by Social Welfare officers, Media, CBO Network Chair and Vice, and volunteers and chiefs. Each student (primary as well as secondary) signs the office sheets so that a proper record is kept and a copy is forwarded to us in Scotland.



The Zodiac (*Malawi news agency*) Online Facebook page reported the distribution, saying that Care and Share (C&S), plans to start signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with beneficiaries of social support programmes to ensure that only deserving communities are benefiting, and that its programme coordinator, Blessings Chikopa, told Zodiac Online today that those who drop out of school deliberately to get married should be asked to refund the money.

MAY: George reported that “Two **thieves** entered our compound last night at the rear of the main house but luckily enough the watchmen were alert - they escaped without stealing anything.” We have thanked the two watchmen, Andrew & Cedric.

MAY: Our C&S trustees met the **parents/guardians** of student beneficiaries to discuss with them about their children’s progress - a regular part of their monitoring of students.



Part of the primary school group came for **measurements for school uniforms**.



MAY: On the very morning we were finishing this newsletter, we received photos of the local tailor making the primary uniforms, working in our compound to keep her on our job. We will add a video of this to the website



Message from trustee Muriel Wilson

What impresses me very much about the work that our team in Malawi is undertaking is the considered and careful planning of how the funds are to be spent. It must be very hard to prioritise the beneficiaries because the need is so great.

However the Trustees, Blessings and the volunteers make excellent decisions and within the restrictions of their budget, many are benefiting - whether it be from an emergency supply of maize to keep starvation at bay, or a bicycle to enable a speedier journey to the outlying villages where we offer help, or uniforms, notebooks and pens for schoolchildren, or blankets and sleeping mats for people at home.

And remember, all this is possible due to YOUR generosity! THANK YOU for your ongoing, faithful donations!

However there is so much more we could do! Costs are soaring but unfortunately our income isn’t keeping up. Any ideas for increasing our income, fundraising etc., DO let us know!

