

Welcome to the fall 2023 Makupo Development Group News Update.  
Thank you to Makupo's generous supporters and volunteers.  
Please add our email address to your address book so that you are sure to receive these Makupo -  
Moni Abwenzi Updates. Thanks again for all your support!



## Moni Abwenzi

### Fall 2023



### **Regrouping after a difficult year**

The Chilanga Health Centre has faced a difficult year after the death of Mike, its clinical officer. We had hoped that the government would assign a replacement by the spring, but bureaucracies in Malawi move slowly, as they do here! In spite of the delay, however, the Health Centre's Board of Directors and staff have done a remarkable job not only in maintaining existing programs, but in launching new initiatives.

### **A house for the new clinical officer is nearing completion**

The house that Mike lived in was in poor condition prompting us to build a new three-bedroom house, which is nearly ready for the new officer.



## Infrastructure improvements

The septic system has been updated, and the Health Centre now has two flush toilets and a shower room. The solar system is in place and working well. The whole centre has been repainted, and minor repairs made.



## Nutrition program

In conjunction with the Kasungu Hospital, the Chilanga Health Centre nutritionist and two assistants visited six groups of villages in the Health Centre's catchment area. In addition to holding workshops, they conducted a nutritional assessment of all of the children in these villages. Twelve children were found to be undernourished and referred to the Kasungu Hospital. The nutrition team also requested funding for a community garden to supply the Health Centre and local villagers; MDG has agreed to fund this project.





## Village Health Workers

This amazing group of volunteers received new bikes and repairs to existing ones to facilitate their travel to local villages. They are also working more closely with the Health Centre's staff and Board of Directors.

## Famine relief

The drought in Malawi and the rising cost of food continues to make life in the rural areas very fragile. MDG provided basic foodstuffs to villages served by the Health Centre.



## Vanier Nursing Exchange



Again this year, eight Vanier College nursing students spent their final internship in Malawi and were able to offer three weeks of free health care to local villages, seeing more than 200 patients a day. This program also offers Malawian nursing students an opportunity to visit Canada and Vanier is hoping they will arrive in the new year; plans for a fall arrival were delayed as the Canadian consulate is very slow in issuing visitor visas.

### **The Health Centre's growing network**

We have worked closely in the past with nearby St. Andrews Hospital, which now has a feeding program funded by UNICEF. We are hopeful that UNICEF will soon visit the Chilanga Health Centre and possibly establish a similar program to follow up on the excellent work of our nutrition staff.

A documentary about the Vanier Nursing Exchange has been produced and will be premiered in the auditorium at Vanier on November 23 at 4:00. Everyone is welcome.

Recently, the Nkhoma Mission Hospital Eye Department visited the Health Centre and assessed the eyesight of all children and adults at the Centre, including all students at the nearby school for the blind. Glasses were provided for those in need. This was a direct benefit of the Health Centre's integration into the government health system and incurred no direct costs for the Centre.



We are thrilled to announce that we have a new Board member. Chrissy Mitchell first travelled to Malawi as a student in the Vanier Nursing Exchange. Years later, as a teacher in the nursing program at Vanier, she returned to Malawi as part of the same program. Welcome, Chrissy.

### **Ongoing needs**

The government has taken over responsibility for paying staff salaries and supplies of some basic drugs, but they do not provide even the most basic tools for the Health Centre. This is where MDG's support is so essential. Your donations pay for medications not provided by government, basic supplies such as soap and cleaning products, transportation of supplies and employees (and

occasionally patients), palliative care training, infrastructure repairs, outreach activities and much more. Thank you for your ongoing support!  
Visit our website at [www.makupo.org](http://www.makupo.org) to learn more about our work.

## DONATE

**E-transfer:** [hicksm@vaniercollege.qc.ca](mailto:hicksm@vaniercollege.qc.ca)

**Personal cheque:** Makupo Development Group, 160 Hébert, St-Laurent, QC H4N 2K5

**PayPal:** Visit our website at [www.makupo.org](http://www.makupo.org) and follow the DONATE link.

## ***Zikomo***

*For generous contributions from the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Social Justice Fund (OPSEU), Vanier College, Association des retraitées et des retraités de la FNEEQ (AREF), MIC Sisters (Sister Missionaries of Immaculate Conception), EKM Architecture, Engaging Networks, K2 Foundation, Royal West Academy, Raymond James Ltd, and Norton Rose Fulbright Canada.*