

July 2022-June 2023

# Primary Health Care Impact Report



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# 1. Introduction

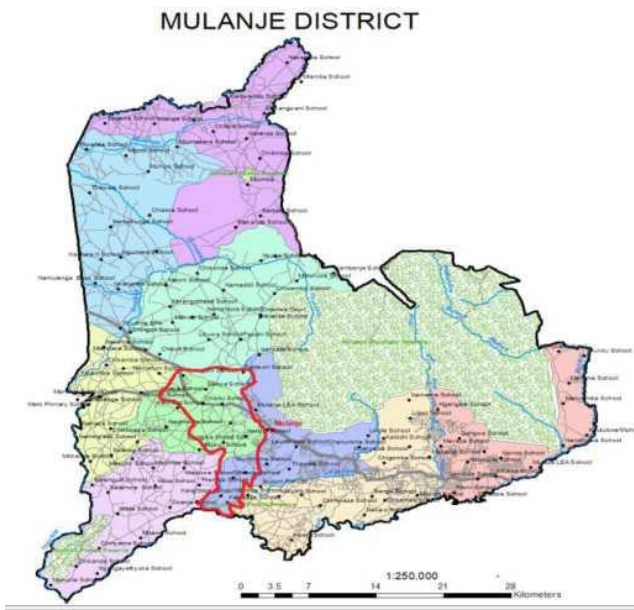
Mulanje Mission Hospital is committed to providing quality health care and public health programmes in our catchment area and to all who seek our care. In the year July 2022 to June 2023, the Primary Health Care department continued to offer integrated public health services in its main focus areas of intervention. This report gives a summary of all programmes, highlighting the activities, achievements and challenges.

These programmes are only possible with support from many partners and individuals, as seen in the below table.

## Partners July 2022- June 2023

<i>Partner</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Partner</i>	<i>Country</i>
<b>St Andrews and St Georges West Church</b>	UK	<b>Presbyterian World Service &amp; Development</b>	Canada
<b>Stockbridge Church</b>	UK	<b>Presbyterian Church of the USA</b>	USA
<b>The Good Little Company</b>	UK	<b>DHL Logistics</b>	Malawi
<b>Fane Valley</b>	UK	<b>Blacksburg Presbyterian Church</b>	USA
<b>EMMS International</b>	UK	<b>Stichting Steun Malawi</b>	Netherlands
<b>The Church of Scotland</b>	UK	<b>Stichting Nieuwe Waarde</b>	Netherlands
<b>Action Renewables</b>	UK	<b>English Reformed Church</b>	Netherlands
<b>Whiteabbey Presbyterian Church</b>	UK	<b>Greenpop</b>	South Africa
<b>BleuBird</b>	UK	<b>Moyo/Ansbach für Malawi</b>	Germany
<b>Ardbarron Trust</b>	UK	<b>Christian Blind Mission</b>	Germany
<b>Maja Foundation</b>	Netherlands	<b>Verburg Charity Foundation</b>	Netherlands
<b>Camellia Foundatoin</b>	UK	<b>Individual donors</b>	

## 2. Catchment area and its context



**Map of Mulanje District with MMH catchment area in red**

Mulanje Mission catchment area has a total of 72 villages and a population of about 100.000.

Mulanje is one of the poorest areas in the world with a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS. 80% of the people in our area are small-scale farmers and it is the most densely populated district in Malawi (DHS, 2018). There is a high prevalence of teenage pregnancy: 31% of Malawian women aged 20-24 years delivered before the age of 18.

Mulanje district area was severely hit by Cyclone Freddy in February 2023. This is resulting in phase 3 (Crisis) food insecurity in the area projected for October 2023 – March 2024. (GoM Acute Food insecurity analysis 2023). Economic circumstances are very difficult currently.

## 3. Summary of programmes

### 3.1 Prison Health

Mulanje Prison was designed to keep 200 prisoners but currently has about 785 inmates, both male and female. At the prison a room is used weekly for clinics, attended by a nurse, a clinical officer, an HIV provider and a pharmacist. During a recent mass screening common diseases and conditions that were found were scabies (7.6%), malnourishment (3%) and sexually transmitted infections (2.4%).

The main challenge at the prison is congestion and with that an ongoing risk of diseases prevalent in crowded conditions, such as scabies, COVID-19 and tuberculosis.



**Prison mass screening**

## 3.2 Sustainable Livelihoods

The sustainable livelihoods programme aims to uplift the general living conditions in the catchment area. Using the Model Village Approach, rural communities are engaged in conservation agriculture and are empowered to develop sustainable sources of income. Examples of activities are agroforestry, beekeeping and honey production, soil and water conservation, riverbank protection and the development of small-scale irrigation schemes.

Most of the work was carried out in 9 model villages in the catchment area, also twenty primary schools and their teachers are supported through the Primary School Agricultural Network. Activities in primary schools include gardening, introduction of livestock and expansion of environmental conservation and tree planting. We believe that a new generation needs the skills to farm productively and sustainably in a changing environment.

One of the highlights this year was the good income of the The Village Savings and Loans Associations during this year; almost 60 million Malawi Kwacha was contributed from 52 VSL groups with a membership of 1,258, equating to approximately 58,782 US\$ in savings reinvested or used for household needs. Likewise, the irrigation schemes, three in full use during this period, generated 12 million Malawi Kwacha for farmers.

When assessing after Cyclone Freddy it was obvious that forested areas were in much better shape than denuded places. This year also saw a start of more work with energy-efficient cookstoves. This is important as using wood for cooking is a major driver of deforestation. Over a thousand ChanguChangu Mbaula (energy-efficient cookstoves) were constructed laying the foundation for many more in the coming year. Each stove is GPS-located and photographed. A plantation was established using commercial tree species on Mulanje Mission, to protect the natural forest and increase income opportunities for the Mission.

The major challenge this past year was the washing away of trees along the Ruo River banks and other sites during Cyclone Freddy in March 2023. Freddy also destroyed the crops of people in the catchment area, emphasizing even more the need for climate change-resistant farming. For more information, see the SL report on our website.



***Mwanamvula irrigation scheme from the sky***

## Activities

## Achievements

Enhance farmer-to-farmer extension activities	32 Lead Farmers and 30 para-vets trained
Mounting of demonstration plots of various technologies	2,627 follower farmers trained and mentored by the Lead Farmers
Train Farmers on Conservation Agriculture practices	2,088 Farmers Trained
Train Farmers on Backyard Gardening	3,893 Backyard Gardens Established
Train Farmers on Crop Diversification, Food Budgeting and Integrated Pest Management	1846 Farmers Trained
Livestock productivity	75 Young Goats Passed-on and 138 goat stables constructed
Village Savings and Loans Groups active	1258 Active members saving 58,654,382.00 MK (55.178 USD)
Irrigation schemes	6 schemes in operation thus far, covering 50ha
Bee Keeping	150 Bee Hives Procured & Distributed
Scaling up soil and water conservation practices	143 Marker ridges constructed
	146ha under Water Harvesting Technologies
Energy Saving Cook Stove Production	1003 Community members trained and 703 cook stoves constructed in 7 villages
Agroforest and afforestation	33,400 trees planted 6ha conserved through natural regeneration



*Lead farmers receiving their diplomas with visitors from Fane Valley*

### 3.3 Orphans and Vulnerable Children

We aim to help and transform the lives of orphans and vulnerable children by taking them out of extreme poverty and help prevent neglect, abuse and exploitation. All OVCs are being taken care of by relatives or community members within their communities

Orphans and their guardians are taking part in sustainable livelihood programmes to improve their nutritional and economic status.

All orphans of school-going ages are provided with schooling support for primary, secondary school or vocational skills training. All are screened every quarter for adverse childhood experiences and psychosocial volunteers meet with the orphans every month to assess for any form of abuse.

Due to economic challenges, we have had to make the difficult decision to stop supporting orphans from outside the catchment area. Formula milk has more than doubled in price over the past year.



***Graduation of OVC students in vocational skills at the technical college***

#### ***Uniforms distributed amongst girls going to secondary school***





*Meet this young boy, an OVC in our programme who needed intense counselling and mentoring from our social worker and community nurse on the importance of going to school and help with his TV addiction. His school attendance has greatly improved.*

Activities	Number
Total orphans in the programme	490
Fortified porridge distributed	14,800 kg
Formula milk distributed to babies	1,364 tins
Under five children supported in the program	77
Primary School support	388
Secondary school support	30
Vocational skills training	17
Training of Orphans in beekeeping	30
Distribution of goats	19 goats
Volunteers trained in psychosocial support	30
Training in life skills, sexual reproductive health and gender-based violence	50



### 3.4 Maternal, neonatal and child health

We are committed to protecting and advocating for the health, well-being and rights of women, children and adolescent girls. This programme contributes to reducing child and maternal mortality and morbidity through high-quality maternal, neonatal and child health services, raising awareness and expanding knowledge around sexual reproductive health amongst community members, and sustaining the activities of community structures with several volunteer groups.



*Supervising the Community Based Distribution Agents of family planning methods*

The supply chain of the government has been severely affected by the economic instability of the country and resulted in an extra financial load for the hospital. Due to forex shortages in the country, some essential medicines and contraceptives were not available countrywide.

Activities	Achievements
ANC visits in the first trimester	25%
Deliveries attended by professional birth attendants	2414
Caesarean section rate	24%
Infection rate after caesarean section	0.4%
Nr. and % of neonatal deaths occurred, all audited	28 (1,2%)
Nr. % of maternal deaths occurred, all audited	2 (0.07%)
Nr and % of babies born with birth asphyxia	115 (4.8%)
Clinic days provided for immunization, growth monitoring, ANC and FP	228 clinic days
Number of volunteers actively disseminating information on MNCH	580 (10 per village)
Health education sessions conducted	66 community leaders
Volunteers who are trained in recognizing malnutrition in children	76 volunteers



***Above: Village chiefs receiving a health education session concerning the importance of maternal, neonatal and child health***

***Below: Young mother at the Kangaroo Mother Care unit with her premature baby***



### 3.5 Teenage Pregnancy Prevention

Within this programme the aim is to work towards reducing HIV infection among adolescent girls and boys, reducing teenage pregnancy among adolescent girls and enhancing access to sexual reproductive health services and rights information. To reach this, proven successful strategies are implemented to prevent adolescent pregnancy including community programs to improve social development, responsible sexual behavior education, and improved contraceptive counseling and delivery.

A major restraint in this programme is that funding has not been consistent and as a result, we haven't been able to roll out all activities that were planned.

Activities	Achievements
Number of comprehensive education sessions	11 (550 participants)
Training of girls in vocational skills	30 girls
Back to (secondary) school	60 girls
Number of condom outlets established	5
Number of condoms distributed amongst youth	4,936
Teenage pregnancy rate	577 girls (24%)
Number of youths seen in the hospital	5,679



*Back-to-school program for adolescent girl that dropped out of school*



***Above: peer mentors trained in mentorship training  
Below: Responsible sexual behavior education sessions in secondary school***



### 3.6 Malaria Vector Control

Since the introduction of the Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) programme in 2012, this has been executed yearly. Hand in hand with other malaria intervention programmes like the promotion of bednets, early testing and treatment for malaria, IRS has proved to be very successful.

The main restraint in this programme is that IRS is very effective but also expensive. Due to funding constraints, MMH, therefore, sprayed in fewer villages than before, possibly also resulting in the increase of under-five deaths from zero in the previous 4 years to two this year. Both children came from villages that were outside the IRS area.



Employed spray operators are being trained on spraying technics, human and environmental safety and documentation of data collection tools.

Activities	Achievements
Number of villages sprayed	15
Number of people reached	12.767
Under 5 deaths	2
Parasitemia% of resp. intervention area versus non-intervention area	1,5% <> 5,75%

### 3.7 Water, sanitation and infection prevention

Safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene are crucial to human health and well-being. It is not only a prerequisite to health but contributes to livelihoods, school attendance and dignity and helps to create resilient communities living in healthy environments.



**A borehole being drilled**

One of the villages that we supplied

with a borehole is Salamba village, it is located at the very far end of the catchment area, 20 kilometers from the facility. The village has a total population of 1.351 with 327 households. The drilled borehole was received with excitement by the villagers as it reduced their burden of accessing potable water. They used to collect water from the nearby river previously.

Activities	Achievements
<b>Borehole maintenance</b>	47 boreholes
<b>Borehole drilling</b>	3 boreholes
<b>Construction of toilets</b>	575 toilets (ongoing)

### 3.8 Palliative Care

Palliative care improves the quality of life of patients and their families who are facing challenges associated with life-threatening illnesses, whether physical, psychological, social, or spiritual. This programme meets the needs of poor families in hard-to-reach, rural Malawi, needing palliative care. It offers a holistic approach, providing pain relief and treatment of symptoms alongside social and spiritual support to ill patients with life-limiting illness and their families.

75% of all palliative care patients are HIV positive. As seen in the below figure, more than half of the patients (58%) have a condition called Kaposi Sarcoma (KS), which is a cancer that is seen in HIV disease. Free chemotherapy is available within the programme.

Many patients were negatively affected by Cyclone Freddy in terms of accommodation as houses, toilets and kitchens collapsed. Many of them also lost a big part of their crops and are therefore prone to malnutrition.

**Activities****Achievements**

<b>Registered patients</b>	187
<b>Newly registered patients</b>	37
<b>Average contact per patient/year</b>	9.7
<b>Number of patients needing nutritional support</b>	75
<b>Number of patients receiving morphine for pain relief</b>	112 (60%)
<b>Essential supplies (such as blankets and basins) were distributed to the neediest, after Cyclone Freddy</b>	15



**A very vulnerable palliative care patient receiving support after Cyclone Freddy**

### 3.8 HIV/AIDS and TB

The impact of HIV/AIDS in Malawi is big, and especially so in Mulanje. As Mulanje Mission Hospital we join the 95-95-95 set of goals made by the United Nation's programme on HIV/AIDS. The goal is that 95% of people who are HIV infected will be diagnosed, 95% of people who are diagnosed will be on antiretroviral treatment and 95% of those who receive antiretrovirals will be virally suppressed.

The major challenge is to test 95% of our population. There is still stigma on HIV and AIDS and therefore people are reluctant to get tested. Also, the retention in care is still unacceptably low with after one year only 70% in our care.

Activities	Achievements
HIV tested at MMH	17.844
HIV tested positive	282 (1.6%)
HIV patients on treatment	6546
% of new positives linked to care	93%
% 12 months retention in care	70%
% HIV patients with well-suppressed viral load	3230/ 3382 (96%)
HIV patients started on TB treatment	97 (1.5%)
Total patients started on TB treatment	100



**TB officer with a woman who needed follow-up and contact tracing following testing positive for tuberculosis. She was identified and successfully started on treatment.**



### 3.9 Non-Communicable Diseases

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, asthma and epilepsy. In Malawi, NCDs are increasingly contributing to the burden of disease, they are now the second leading cause of death in adults after HIV/AIDS in Malawi. Control of the disease is a major player in the prevention of complications and NCD clinic is therefore of great value.

The major challenge is compliance with medical treatment and lifestyle advices, Patients find it a real challenge to come to the hospital frequently and to stick to a healthy diet.

**Data non-communicable diseases clinic**

<b>Patients in the NCD clinic with hypertension</b>	2.166 persons
<b>Well-controlled hypertension</b>	780 (36%)
<b>Patients with diabetes type 1</b>	24
<b>Patients with diabetes type 2</b>	197
<b>Well-controlled diabetes</b>	104 (47%)
<b>Epilepsy patients</b>	150
<b>Asthma patients</b>	346



**NCD volunteers making an educational video on healthy diet**

### 3.10 Cervical Cancer Screening

Early detection is a major player in preventing cervical cancer. It is the most common malignancy in women in Malawi. This can be done with Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid (VIA). During VIA, a dilution of white vinegar is applied to the cervix. The health care provider then looks for abnormalities on the cervix, which will turn white when exposed to vinegar and can be treated with thermocoagulation during the same appointment.

Once cervical cancer is suspected, VIA is not possible and a sample for histology should be taken. The cost of this is sometimes prohibitive to patients, in which case the hospital sponsors.

#### Data from VIA screening

<b>Screening with VIA done</b>	3.602 women
<b>VIA positive</b>	68 (1.9%)
<b>Suspected cervical cancer</b>	78 (2.2%)

### 3.11 Relief response to Cyclone Freddy victims

Mulanje is one of the most severely hit districts by Cyclone Freddy. In response to this, MMH has supported 7 internally displaced persons (IDP) camps. The total population for the three camps was 1500. As a response emergency relief aid was set up for affected families in crisis shelter locations. Malawi. Basic support was given in all camps in the form of food support, replacement of necessities, hygienic measures and medical care. Preventive measures were taken to prevent malaria by IRS and gender-based violence by training committee members in the camps on safeguarding.

The biggest challenge was that most IDP had difficulties to erect their homes again resulting into a long stay into the camps.

#### Activities carried out in all 7 camps

#### Achievements

<b>Food support for all IDP</b>	Maize flour, fortified porridge flour, soya pieces, cooking oil, salt
<b>Provision of utensils</b>	Plastic plates, spoons, sharing spoons, plastic buckets, plastic basins for all IDP
<b>Free medical care in camps and hardest-hit villages</b>	A nurse, clinician, Environmental Health, HTS Counsellor and Social worker were visiting the camps.
<b>Ensure cholera preparedness and hygiene improvement</b>	7 Temporary latrines Health hygiene education Distribution of chlorine for water treatment Soap for all IDP
<b>Prevention of malaria and distribution of blankets to 350 vulnerable persons</b>	Spraying of all rooms in the camps, mosquito nets and blankets

<b>Entertainment for the children</b>	Balls and dolls for all children
<b>Sanitary pads for women</b>	200 packets of sanitary pads
<b>Seeds for planting</b>	460 families
<b>Provision of livestock</b>	45 most hard-hit families have received 2 goats
<b>Construction of pit latrines</b>	95 latrines so far, >1000 underway before December 2023
<b>Construction of borehole</b>	1 borehole



*People affected by Cyclone Freddy receiving food items*