

September Newsletter



UNDP Visit at Kudembe and Mthembanji Microgrid sites under the EASE Project

HIGHLIGHTS

By Kate Hartley-Louis, Country Director

- The GIZ funded FNSP Project organized a Sports for Development and Peace (SDP) training which was hosted by Tackle Africa. The training targeted 10 facilitator coaches from the Reaching Our Goals (ROG) project, FNSP staff and government officials from Sports and Gender. The training equipped coaches with knowledge and skills on how to deliver nutrition messages to adolescent girls and boys using netball as a delivery tool. A total of 36 (13 Men & 23 women) attended the training.
- Under the GIZ funded EnDev Commercial Project, over 2,000 Chitetezo Mbaula stoves have been delivered to distributing agents this month following the successful engagement of private transporters in the value chain; thereby reducing costs and enhancing sustainability.
- The Embassy of Ireland visited the Sustainable Production, Economic growth, Accountability and Resilience (SPEAR) project. The team, led by the Deputy Head of Mission Mark Montgomery and three other technical members, were impressed by: the organisation and cohesion of the communities, groups and cooperatives; the strong relationship with the District Council; and the partnerships with private sector actors for increased access to markets.

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Chisemphere Primary School in Kasungu, one of the schools rehabilitated by SHA/UP

- With funding from UNICEF, under the SHASHA project, SHA/UP has installed disability friendly latrine facilities and changing rooms for menstrual hygiene management in 15 schools in Chikwawa (1), Kasungu (6), Salima (5) and Dedza (3). The initiative is expected to reduce absenteeism of girls on their menstruation days and of learners with disabilities. 6,511 girls are now accessing latrines with changing rooms that are also accessible by learners with physical disabilities.
- Two group handwashing facilities have also been installed at Chimembe Primary School and Chibvumbe Primary School in Blantyre. The handwashing facilities aim to improve good hygiene practices and encourage handwashing with soap amidst COVID 19 and high rates of Cholera in the country.



The power generation unit at Kudembe site in Dedza under the EASE project

- The EASE project funded by the Scottish Government, hosted United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) and African Mini-grids Project Technical Advisory Committee (AMP) at Kudembe and Mthembanji sites in Dedza district. They appreciated the work by SHA/UP on the rural off-grid electrification sector. Kudembe and Mthembanji Microgrid sites are expected to benefit from the UNDP-supported, Global Environment Facility (GEF)-financed Africa Mini-grids Program (AMP) which will pilot productive use of energy equipment at the two sites and provide business model recommendations to AMP.
- Two SHA/UP safeguarding committee members attended a three-week intensive training organized by United Edge, a UK based organization and a social enterprise, that works with civil society around the world to support the global movement for justice. The Transformative Safeguarding course is designed for people working in social change spanning humanitarian work to community development and the environment. The course attracted participants from 60 different countries from around the world.
- Our Action on Poverty funded project team participated in the commemoration of the international literacy day which was graced by the Deputy Minister of Gender and Community Development, Agnes Mkusankhoma. One of the community bakeries supported by the project from Mpilisi EPA showcased OFSP blended products (orange fleshed sweet potatoes buns and doughnuts) at the ceremony. The bakery group was established to economically empower women and to provide a market for local farmers who produce the highly nutritious crop.



The Deputy Minister of Gender Honourable Agnes Mkusankhoma appreciating the display by Tiyanjane Bakery in Balaka

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OPERATIONS

SHA/UP Malawi welcomes Amy Frost as the Country Director whilst Kate proceeds on maternity leave in November.

Amy brings a wealth of experience from her three years in Malawi as CD for Last Mile Health as well as working in numerous other countries in Africa with organisations such as Concern Worldwide, GOAL and Save the Children.

RESEARCH & LEARNING

With funding from the Embassy of Ireland and GIZ EnDev, UP/SHA is conducting a research study to gather and analyse household experiences of using the Zipolopolo FAST stove as an alternative to charcoal which is one of the primary drivers of deforestation in Malawi. The Zipolopolo FAST is locally manufactured and not significantly more expensive than existing charcoal stoves, and uses renewably sourced, biomass pellets. 100 participants are engaged in the study (93% women) from two areas of Lilongwe.

The preliminary findings show that in terms of user experience, the vast majority of households found the stove to be cleaner, faster, easier to use, less smoky, more reliable and safer than using charcoal, giving it an average rating of 4.7 out of 5.

"My neighbours are envious when they see me very relaxed while they are always busy cooking, yet when I start cooking, I am always the first to finish" said Vella Chitukwi from Senti.

In the second phase of the study, the project set up fuel selling agents in the pursuit of fostering a sustainable fuel supply chain and test willingness to pay for the fuel.

Amy has a range of leadership, finance, humanitarian and programme technical experience, and she has already very quickly become acquainted with the team, our operations and programmes. Please feel free to reach out to Amy on amy.frost@united-purpose.org

Initial findings suggest that the purchase price of the fuel is too high, and as such the project has made alterations to the pricing and distribution quantities. A full report will be released upon completion of the study.



One of the project participant cooking nsima using the Zipolopolo stove

Our team is the driving force behind our success

Eric Nyekanyeka is the Marketing Officer for EnDev Commercial Project based in Blantyre. He has worked with SHA/UP for five years, he joined on 22 May 2017. Eric's main roles and responsibilities are Planning and implementing sales activities for cleaner cookstoves, developing marketing campaign plans designing artworks, supporting procurement of branded marketing materials, data management and preparing donor reports.

"It's been quite a wonderful experience towards shaping my current professional skills. Interactions with local people has helped me advance community engagement skills," He says.

He enjoys the interactions with communities, offering solutions to beneficiaries. He also enjoys the friendly work environment. He plans to pursue a Masters in Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing .



Eric Nyekanyeka, SHA/UP Marketing Officer for EnDev Commercial Project

STORIES FROM THE PEOPLE WE WORK WITH: VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOANS IMPROVING LIVES OF RURAL PEOPLE IN DEDZA



Anefa Sandifolo serving her customers in her tea room

Anefa Sandifolo is 36-years old and lives in the rural village of Nachikunga, in Dedza District. She is married with three children, one is in secondary school and two are in primary school.

Anefa is one among many women in 317 groups supported through Village Savings and Loans (VSL) interventions established under the 2018 Embassy of Ireland ASPIRE programme. With the aim of helping households mitigate climatic shocks and improve resilience, VSLs interventions were introduced as an economic empowerment tool targeting 3,464 households (1,425 male-headed and 2,039 female-headed) households.

Before joining her VSL group she relied on temporary employment (piece-work) in other people's gardens as a source of income. Her husband, a subsistence farmer also struggled to support the household due to erratic yields. On average they harvested 11 bags of maize a year, which only lasted them seven months.

"My involvement in piece work was a disgrace to me as I was sometimes given maize husks as payment instead of money or maize grain. I also engaged my children in the piece work even during school times which compromised their studies," recalls Anefa.

Her life changed when she joined a VSL group in 2018 during the ASPIRE programme.

During disbursement of VSL proceeds, she received MK73,000, MK159,000 and MK190,000 in the programme years of 2019, 2020 and 2021 respectively. This was a radical change to her annual income, which was on average K45,000 (44.41 Euros) a year.

With these proceeds she bought 2 pigs at MK50,000 (49.3 Euros) each in 2019 and a cow at MK150,000 (148.0 Euros) in 2021. The pigs produced 11 piglets of which she sold 6 for a sum of MK220,000 and then she invested the money into a local bakery and tea room business.

The monthly income from her new business brought in an average of K300,000 gross (296 Euros) a week. With the proceeds, she bought residential land and 1 hectare of land for crop production. Using the same business proceeds, she supported her husband with MK200,000 to start his business of buying and selling farm produce.

"Our household now has enough food and money, enabling us to invest in other business ventures. We are even able to employ others to support these businesses. "From this experience, we now have a vision, can strategically plan, and face the future with hope and optimism." she beams

Anefa has invested in several agricultural cooperatives and has employed people to support running her bakery and tearoom. Together with her family, they plan on constructing a decent house with burned bricks, iron sheets and a cement floor. They also plan on buying an oxcart to transport farm produce as well hire out to the community, another business venture.

Building on the gains from ASPIRE, SHA/UP is implementing a bridging programme, the Sustainable Production, Economic Growth, Accountability and Resilience (SPEAR) now targeting 500 vulnerable households to benefit from VSL interventions that provide access to micro-loans, insurance schemes and savings and business investment.

STORIES FROM THE PEOPLE WE WORK WITH: FROM SHALLOW WELLS TO SAFE WATER- THE CASE OF DALIRENI



Dalireni carries the water he drew from the rehabilitated borehole

At the center of Chiponda woodland is Nalunga Community Day Secondary School (CDSS), in Dowa district, Malawi. Most students like Dalireni Mangani, are "self-boarding" students; students who rent rooms near their schools rather than travel the long and difficult distances between school and home every day.

As a "self-boarder" Dalireni 19, eased one challenge of travelling between school and home, however, he soon faced another challenge of having to travel miles to get clean and safe water. "For us to get water, we would go to the surrounding villages before or after classes and this would take us at least an hour to do, taking away time for studying,".

The borehole at the school had not been functional since Dalireni was in form two. Shallow wells, often contaminated, had been the main and closest water source for two years. Though tiring, he had no choice but to make the mile-long journey to fetch water every morning.

Under the DI-WASH charity: water funded project, SHA/UP rehabilitated the borehole at Nalunga CDSS by installing a new pumping system, which improved access and quality of water supply for students.

Borehole rehabilitation is one of many interventions that SHA/UP is supporting communities with to increase equitable access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation and hygiene.

Now in form four and with a contagious smile, Dalireni tells a different story about his life and studies. "Unlike in 2020, where I spent my study time fetching water, the functioning borehole has made a big impact on us, giving us more time towards our education. I had time to prepare adequately for the National Examinations this year and I am optimistic that I will do better."



Dalireni drawing water from the rehabilitated borehole

Mr Siyeni Chiwala is the deputy Head Teacher from Nalunga CDSS. He adds to say that most learners are now punctual for classes which also translates to better performance.

"In the past, students were often late for the morning classes since they had to go fetch water first in the morning. I can confidently say that their class performance has improved because the students now have their own water source within the school premises and are therefore no longer late for classes. We had high student turn up during the morning make up classes for the Form Two and Form Four classes as we prepared for the National Examinations and we are hopeful that our performance this year at national level will improve," Chiwala explains.

GET IN TOUCH:

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