



FOMA's donation:  
£1,500

## FOMA & Aid Africa/Open Hand Projects



**Msikita Village**  
353 Households  
approx. 1,500 people

### Reconstruction after Cyclones February to April 2022

Tropical Cyclone Ana roared through southern Malawi from Monday 24th January, bringing strong winds and heavy rains. Malawi declared a national disaster as more than 30 people died, 800,000 were affected, with infrastructure and power supplies significantly damaged.

In our area—one of the worst affected—many homes and outbuildings were destroyed, and crops flattened in the fields, mainly by the winds, but flooding of the lower areas was significant too.

Being in situ, we were able to distribute plastic sheeting and water containers, providing the most effective help immediately, but then there was a great need for community reconstruction—so with FOMA's support, we set to work.....



April 2022

One of the badly hit areas was Msikita Village. Here, back in 2016 FOMA funded a **Community Centre** which has proved to be the central hub of the village ever since.

However, Cyclone Ana ripped through this area in January, then Cyclone Gombe mid-March, causing wide-spread flooding that deposited tons of sand and debris from higher areas, filling the Centre with mud, cracking the flooring and weakening the roof.

This weather pattern was unprecedented, the Centre had always been the place of refuge in previous storms but this time it sadly became another victim, much to the distress of the villagers.

So, with FOMA's support, we've renovated the building, raising the floor and corresponding roof level, replacing timbers and recycling the iron sheets. As soon as it's fully dried it will again be the popular, fully functioning heart of the village.



February 2022

*Left: Msikita Community Centre in February, after Cyclone Ana—seriously weakened and declared unsafe.*

*But worse was to come—Cyclone Gombe battered it again six weeks later, flooding the whole area and depositing vast amounts of debris. At this time the roof was off awaiting the delivery of the timbers and our building team couldn't access the area because of the dangerous travelling conditions, so the work was put on hold .....*

*However as soon as they could, they were back, the carpenter prepared the trusses, the builders filled in the eaves, the roofers re-laid the iron sheets, the painters spruced the whole thing up. However, it will still take a while for the building to completely dry out, and the nursery school who use it daily are very eager to return.....*



March 2022

*Above: Community Centre in mid-March, after Gombe. The khonde (porch) had disappeared beneath sand and mud as the whole area's ground level had risen.*



March 2022

*Below: Msikita's delighted Chief and some of the Centre's younger enthusiastic patrons*



April 2022



April 2022

The community intend to construct a "contour band" in front of the Centre—raised to divert any future floodwater away.



## Msikita Village—Public Toilet

Another area of deep local concern following the cyclones was the destruction of household toilets and the fear of disease as a result of poor sanitation. There were so many collapsed units in this region, but as most were in low-lying areas, it was decided that a more secure, public facility would be preferable, one that would withstand future weather events and continue to serve the community for decades to come.

The work began in March. An extra-deep pit (4m) was dug and brick-lined despite the water level following Cyclone Ana. Volunteers baled the water out, but the area was so wet, the lower work was done under water with an appropriately altered cement ratio.



*Left: Building up the pit lining.*

*Below—preparing the concrete slab.....*



The concrete slab was constructed and finished just before Cyclone Gombe hit the area.

*Left: the walls were built, plastered and pointed. The doors were fitted, floors laid, and the whole building was finished and handed over to the community in April.*

It's expected that 40 households will use this facility, about 150 people, plus all the children in the nursery school. It's recognised and appreciated as a valuable community asset that will continue to serve this village for many years to come.



*Left: the finished building*

*Below, The Chief of Msikita Village admires the public toilet, he's delighted, and very proud of the new facility.....*





## 20 Household toilets



*Above: Fanny's collapsed toilet is a personal tragedy*



Individual toilets in the rural areas are separate buildings housing pit latrines, but are vulnerable to extreme weather—hundreds were destroyed in this area during the cyclones as the shelters collapsed and the pits filled with debris.

So we began identifying some of the most vulnerable households—those containing the frail, ill or any particularly at risk. Needy families from 9 villages were identified as in particular need. They'd all lost their toilets during the cyclones, leaving them little option than to use open fields as they weren't strong enough to dig pits or provide shelters.

The important and urgent part of these toilets is the pit—the shelters are valuable for dignity and privacy of course, but the hope of many of the beneficiaries would be to eventually replace with a brick structure if possible.

Pits are dug first, 3m deep, then covered with a layer of sturdy bamboo, plastic sheeting to protect from termites, and finally, mud. The shelters are finished in grass supplied by the beneficiary, protected by plastic sheeting over a framework of bamboo.

Twenty units were built, and it's expected that these toilets will serve for several years—until the pit fills.

*Below left: Fibe is elderly, HIV+, and lives with her sister Rose, & 5 others.*

*Margret, elderly, from Nansanya Village, lives in her household of 6*



*Joyce and her husband live in Bilison village. They're elderly, AIDS-affected, and care for their grandson.*

**These are just some of the 20 toilets built after the cyclones, funded by FOMA.**

Because this is such an important and life enhancing project, we've gone ahead and constructed 30 more.....

## Thank you

Thanks to FOMA, over 100 people were delighted—and relieved—to have their toilets replaced, providing them with privacy & dignity, while reducing the health risks associated with the many challenges of poor sanitation.



*Estery has 6 children*

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