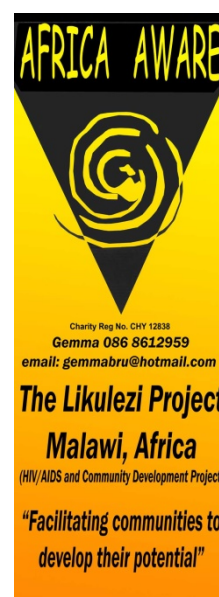


# The Likulezi Letter 2023



## Calamity upon Calamity!

. The year began well with the Project in full swing after the restrictions of Covid.....all 4 Programmes back in action .However we were soon struck down ! It happened in March through the impact of flooding, due to cyclone Freddie which affected our area badly with houses and more importantly crops destroyed just before harvesting time ... and therein was the real tragedy! Homes can be rebuilt as it's a matter of waiting for the dry season to make bricks and burn them and collect grasses for the roofs...an arduous job in itself but nothing in comparison to facing months of Hunger. And so it happened that 2023 was NOT a good year for Malawi and therefore not for us!, and because we are now into 2024 as I write our letter...the prospect for 2024 is not looking..

Surprisingly, the project continued its work, though restricted since Hunger was rife and our volunteers suffering .Though loathe to speak of more bad news...but yes, our Likulezi family suffered the loss of 2 of its most committed and long term staff...having been part of this family for more than 25 years and one of them since the seed of the project was planted way back in 1992. Although well used to deaths over the years the project people were grossly impacted by these 2..one being our beloved Treasurer and the other our most loyal kind Liason officer....both positions difficult to replace easily.

As mentioned at the start of our letter, 2024 does not look good....no that is too mild, in fact the situation is harrowing as there is now DROUGHT...can you believe this?! The crops already withered...it should be the Rainy season...but no rain in January, rain in February...but alas too late to save the harvest.

Unless some international aid is forthcoming there will be starvation. Let us not lose hope, but how the people will cope again this year will test their resilience and endurance .These qualities are the key to survival and those have been in abundance in a community who go with the flow through struggles and strife and never losing the hope that tomorrow is another day...a better day!

Eliza with her destroyed crops



Regina's collapsed house



## The GOOD NEWS



1. Having worked alone for many years Likulezi now joins in partnership in the district to keep alive awareness of the dangers of HIV/AIDS, cholera, T.B., Malaria, gender based violence, and now covid which all impact this area.....with the means of our Drama Group .
2. Likulezi project led the District commemoration on World Aids day in December .
- 3 Once again we managed to assist all the registered orphans/vulnerables with Agricultural inputs, uniforms, secondary school and college fees.
4. The Main Library and 2 outreach libraries continued to be stocked as well as possible, though one of the libraries suffered the loss of many books in the flooding.
5. The Tree Nursery continued its work of nurturing tree seedlings and giving them to the surrounding villages.
6. HIV infected people continued to be supported and visits made to those critically ill, and those diagnosed counselled.
7. The community centre managed to conduct Literacy classes and to hold the “Likulezi Olympics” for the village children.

## The BAD NEWS



1. The Cyclones early in the year brought misery to most families....crops were washed away and houses demolished, schools closed, roads impassable, bridges down and tragically there were some deaths.
2. Many of the project activities were affected for some time during the flooding.
3. There was a drop out of school with girls who became pregnant as a result of their search for food.
4. There was a rise of new HIV infected cases due to a lack of vigilance in behaviour.
5. Home based care volunteers were much hampered due to a need of spare parts for their bicycles
6. The project suffered the loss of 7 volunteers/staff due to various sickness's, including the loss of two of our most prominent and loyal staff members.
7. Although we look into 2024 with trepidation ( because of the drought), we are too small an organisation to help with the impending food crisis and so we hope that the international NGO's will not let us down. The welfare of Likulezi is tied into the vagaries of the weather since all our volunteers are dependent on their harvest to survive....and we dependant on them for Likulezi to survive.!



After the flood



HIV support group



Drama group at awareness campaign



schoolgirls in the Library



The Likulezi Olympics



The Tree Nursery



Our beloved treasurer "Mwiwe" RIP



## ***Zikomo Kwambiri***

Once again we would like to send a big" ZIKOMO KWAMBiRI" ( a big thank you) to all our steadfast Donors/Sponsors and Wellwishers without whom there would be no LIKULEZI, Suffice to say that we have survived again.! Although the people of our Project/ Community are in constant survival mode, there is never a shortage of laughter through all the struggles and strife..... this place remains a place of song and laughter.....it is everywhere and it comes to you from across the plains and through the gaps in the great mountain, it is in the air you breathe and seeps through all the tragedies. We are surely in the warm heart of Africa here.

Any donations are gratefully received via [www.africaaware.net](http://www.africaaware.net) or via [www.globalgiving.org](http://www.globalgiving.org).( under "Plant a seed for tomorrow for an Orphan child" )

We especially need donations for the Orphan Programme as costs of school fees have risen in the last 2 years again.!

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