

# Scotland Malawi Partnership donates K14m for flood recovery

BY DUNCAN MLANJIRA

THE Scotland Malawi Partnership in conjunction with the Beit Trust, have donated over K14 million (£20,000) to support flood recovery and rehabilitation in Malawi.

According to Scotland Malawi Partnership (SMP) website, Trustees of the Beit Trust donated the money in May to assist with community recovery, rehabilitation and preparedness work after the floods that hit Malawi.

The website says: "The SMP and our partners in Malawi, the Malawi Scotland Partnership (MaSP), approached our members and partners in Malawi inviting communities affected by the floods to apply for 'micro grants' of between K700,000 (£1,000) and K2.5 million (£3,000).

"The SMP in turn dispersed these funds in a timely, effective and transparent manner; ensuring projects that offer the greatest impact were supported and that all projects work within agreed Scotland-Malawi 'Partnership Principles'.

"The Scotland Malawi Partnership did so making no charge, ensuring every penny went directly to the communities in Malawi affected by the floods. All costs and bank charges were accepted by the SMP," the website reports.

The money has gone to eight community projects and it is estimated that more than 10,000 people will directly benefit from these micro-grants and over 40,000 will indirectly benefit.

The projects include rebuilding a community bridge that is in bad shape at Goliyo in Ndirande that affects pupils of Blantyre Girls Primary School.

Six houses destroyed in the floods in Likhubula, Mulanje will be rebuilt and another project is to improve food security through winter cropping and a community food bank at Utale and Utale 2 in Balaka, Malawi's last leprosy community.

Other projects are repairing teachers' houses, reinstating classrooms, fixing school roofs, and repairing damaged school toilets in Njale; training communities on new flood resilient 'earth-bag' houses and build ten new homes; training local communities how to build more flood-resistant homes and then work together to rebuild eight houses using these techniques; supporting food security for 700 households in Chiradzulu and restocking health centres with essential medication and equipment lost in the flood.

"The Beit Trustees were saddened that seasonal flooding did so much damage this year to one of their favourite countries," the website quotes secretary to the Beit Trustees, Major General Angus Ramsay.

"They hope that their restoration grant, rapidly and wisely deployed through the good offices of the Scottish Malawi Partnership, may bring more warmth and cheer back to many of the southern inhabitants of the Warm Heart of Africa"



SORRY STATE—Some of Blantyre Girls pupils crossing the damaged bridge.—File picture

David Hope-Jones, SMP principal officer said: "We are delighted to have helped facilitate this donation to support flood recovery and rehabilitation work in Malawi.

"By working through pre-existing community-to-community links with Malawi we can offer astonishing impact with even relatively modest funds. All of this is done through partnership — a dignified two-way partnerships," he is quoted as saying.

Namalimwe ward Councillor Gertrude Chirambo said she was very humbled that her proposal for the rehabilitation of the bridge

at Goliyo in Ndirande has been considered.

"I visited Scotland in November last year where I briefed the SMP some of the projects that needed to be rehabilitated including the broken bridge close to Blantyre Girls Primary School," she said.

"I don't take the funding for granted because there were so many requests that were forwarded to Scotland by other councillors but I suppose we were considered knowing this bridge affects girls' access to education.

"Rehabilitation works will start as soon as possible and we will make sure we will build a strong bridge

that will be sustainable," she said.

According to SMP website, the applicants that were not successful but were eligible are now being promoted with the hope of finding further donors who could support this work.

It says the Girls Go for Health group at Coatbridge High School has pledged to fund all of the livelihoods project in Mulanje; Kilmarnock Special School and the Additional Support Needs Department at Bell Baxter Cluster have pledged to raise between £850 and £1,000 to help construct modern disaster-resistant houses for those with disabilities and their guardians in Nsanje.