



Summary Table

Partner	LHL International
Report Type	Annual
Partnership Period	January 2021 - December 2025
Reporting Period	Janary- December 2022
Reporting Partner	Paradiso TB Patients Trust

Introduction

Paradiso TB Patients' Trust (PTPT) is a community TB initiative which function as a non-governmental organization existing according to the laws of Malawi. It is located along the M1 road next to St Johns primary school in Lilongwe district. The organization was founded in 2000 and officially registered in 2003 with Malawi Government. Paradiso is led and supported by TB survivors and people living with HIV and those affected by Tuberculosis. It currently runs programs in Tuberculosis (TB) and HIV through the TB Clubs in seven districts namely Lilongwe, Mchinji, Dedza, Dowa, Zomba, Phalombe, and Neno. Paradiso partnered with LHL International who support the organization to carry out TB interventions in the country in the above mentioned districts. In addition to LHL International, Paradiso partnered with Partners in Hope (PIH) medical center in a consultancy mode to implement community tuberculosis project called TB-LON 1 in Chikwawa, Nsanje and Lilongwe districts. Paradiso is also working with Facilitators for community Transformation (FACT) in TB epidemic control project in Dedza and Mchinji districts. This report narrates the activities carried out from January to December 2022.

Progress report

Programmatic

World Stop TB Day

In 2022 world stop TB day commemoration took place on 24th March at Cross roads hotel in Lilongwe. Paradiso took part in these activities, Fred and Thandie plus Paradiso dancing troops were part of this activity. There was also an opportunity to go on radio to explain what Paradiso does in the communities in the fight against TB. The guest of honor at this function was the Minister of Health honorable Khumbize Kandodo Chiponda, also in attendance was the representative from Global Fund and senior management team members from the Ministry of Health. Paradiso dancing troops spiced up this function with their dancing skills.



The guest of honor making a speech on the left and Paradiso dancing troops performing on the right.



Volunteers' training in TB management

Paradiso relies on volunteers in its community TB work. Being lay people, it is very important that the volunteers be trained on tuberculosis management so that they can implement their activities with a solid information base. It is against this background that Paradiso TB Patients Trust organised a training for volunteers in Mchinji district in third quarter 2022. The training involved a total of 70 volunteers (47 females, 23 males) from all TB clubs (10 from each club) in the district as participants. Also present were health experts from Mchinji district hospital as facilitators, the district coordinator and Paradiso secretariat programs team. The volunteers were trained on basic information about TB (aetiology to treatment), how to conduct TB information dissemination, how to screen for presumptive TB cases, referral of presumptive and proper documentation of referral slips as well as community registers, psycho-social support and drug adherence support to the diagnosed patients, contact tracing, and lost to follow up tracing. From a monitoring and evaluation aspect, they were trained on how to use data aggregation and collection forms, monthly activities reporting forms, quarterly reporting forms and how they can send their reports. On income generating activities, volunteers were trained on how to conduct simple baseline survey of profitable businesses, how to manage business transactions, proper records keeping and financial reporting of their I.G.As. The training was a success, volunteers showcased what they learnt through in-house demonstrations and they went back to their bases full of confidence that they will be able to implement with minimum fears. This training took a period of two weeks.



Training pictures



Group photo



Class in session



Group discussion



A volunteer in jacket and IGA manager collaborating during a presentation.



MEETINGS ATTENDED

Zomba Maximum Prison.

Paradiso incorporated Zomba maximum Prison activities in its new (2021-2025) grant and planned to start these activities in 2023 after a break from 2019 due to Covid 19 and negotiations for a new grant. In order to have a clear picture of the current situation on Zomba Prison activities, Paradiso organized a series of consultative meetings with the district health and social services (DHSS) management team, the Prison health secretariat and the Zomba Prison clinic staff respectively in December 2022.

Paradiso staff made a presentation which was basically introducing Paradiso and the projects being implemented, success stories, challenges and the intention to re-introduce prison activities, hence seeking for their (DHSSMT, Prison management) views, advice and consent. The presentation triggered the following questions:

DHSSMT meeting.

- ✧ On nutrition support, why only MDR and not the rest?
- ✧ Any plans to escalate the activities to other prisons within Zomba?
- ✧ How are we going to work with other partners at the prison?

In response, Paradiso said that much as we would like to support as many TB patients as possible, resources may not permit that hence our main focus on MDR patients who happen to be the most severely ill patients that cannot fend for themselves but also the longevity of their treatment. On plans to escalate the activities to other prisons, our response was that currently in our work plan the target is the maximum prison but maybe in future agreements we can add more prisons. On working with stakeholders, we informed the house



that we had already reached out to Elizabeth Glazer Pediatric Aids Foundation (EGPAF) who happens to be the stakeholder working at Zomba prison currently for a meeting to map the way forward on how we can be working together without duplicating efforts. This meeting was tentatively scheduled for the third week of March 2023.

The DHSS management team welcomed Paradiso back to Zomba and in particular The maximum prison. However they advised that it was necessary to meet the prison authorities on the same because they are the custodian of the premise where the interventions will be implemented.

Recommendations

- ✧ There should be proper coordination with the DHSS Prison coordination office.
- ✧ All necessary cadres from the DHSS should be involved in implementation of activities including trainings.
- ✧ Paradiso should organize periodic prison activities review meetings with all relevant stakeholders to showcase progress made.

Prison secretariat meeting

- ✧ They bemoaned Paradiso's silence from 2019 to date, as such they wanted to get assurance that this will never happen again.
- ✧ They requested for more support beyond peer education trainings and mass screenings, they requested financial support in HTS trainings, dissemination of prison policy document.
- ✧ They also requested if there is a possibility in Paradiso's work plan to extend these services to the remaining five prison in Zomba.

In response Paradiso said the silence was due to the advent of Covid 19 which rendered prison facilities hot spot and hence no go zone, but also that Paradiso scaled down it's activities and mostly worked from home during this period. On more support, the response was currently it is not possible to provide that needed support due to limitations in the available budget and by extension it meant that we could not extend the services to other prisons.



Just like the DHSS management team, the Prison secretariat also welcomed Paradiso back to the partnership and emphasized that this time around they want a sound and long partnership.

They informed Paradiso that there is also EGPAF which is supporting tuberculosis activities with funding from Global Fund, however there are some gaps which can be filled by Paradiso. It was agreed that they will call EGPAF to inform them about Paradiso coming back so that we can convene a round table meeting with them for cordial partnership. This meeting was tentatively scheduled for the third week of March 2023. The responsibility to organize the meeting lies with the Prison secretariat.

Recommendations

- ✧ There should be proper coordination of activities
- ✧ Sustainable implementation of activities
- ✧ Paradiso should be part of the Prison health activities partnership virtual group that meets frequently.

Meeting pictures



Group photo with Prison secretariat authorities



Part of the audience of the DHMT meeting in Zomba.



District Review meeting in Phalombe

The district review meeting brought together all stakeholders that work hand in hand with the District Health and Social Service Office (DHSSO), its main aim was to review programs/projects implementations of different stakeholders in the district. Each stakeholder was given a presentation slot to highlight their implementation achievements, challenges and way forward. This meeting took place in August 2022 at Phalombe district council conference hall. Gift Mwenda Paradiso coordinator for the district attended the meeting. He jointly presented with the district TB officer, the presentation included community TB services done by Paradiso volunteers, Covid 19 aspect where Paradiso volunteers were dealing with myths that community members had around Covid 19 versus tuberculosis which led to many community members shunning away from going to the health facilities for fear of being tested for Covid.

Data validation meetings in all implementation districts

In 2022, Paradiso conducted two data validation exercises, however the second one though targeting data from July to December 2022, took place in January 2023. The purposes of these meetings were to validate the data that clubs submitted to the secretariat the whole year with an aim of producing a credible report. The meetings also served as a platform where the secretariat interfaces directly with the volunteers to appreciate how the project is progressing, the gains made, the challenges they are facing and mapping the way forward together. Present in these meetings also were the facility management teams including the in charges, TB focal persons, microscopists and nurses. All 47 TB clubs were visited in both occasions within a period of one week, the secretariat team was divided into three so that one team targeted the south and two teams shared the four central region districts. The major success story of these meetings was the cementation of good working relationship between Paradiso through the TB clubs and the District Health and Social Services(DHSS) office through peripheral health facilities. Paradiso is regarded as one of the best local non governmental organizations from the NTLEP down to the districts because of the way it (Paradiso) values team work in its programming.



SUCCESS STORIES

An increase in TB cases notification.

In 2022, Paradiso managed to report 318 TB cases in all categories compared to 147 in 2021. This was attributed to hard working spirit of our volunteers after a long break due to Covid 19 and the entire Paradiso team. The NTLEP designated a mobile van in all three regions in the country. Taking advantage of this, Paradiso through the Kapiri TB club in Mchinji utilized this diagnostic platform to unearth and refer more presumptive cases. The van was coming to Kapiri every Thursday. Mchinji was selected because according to the NTLEP there were some missing cases in Mchinji, being one of a hot spot district in Malawi.

Co-financing

Paradiso partnered with Partners in Hope Medical center based in Lilongwe in a project called TB-Local Organization Network -1. This project is being implemented in Chikwawa, Nsanje and Lilongwe. A total of 15 health centers were earmarked for this project, 4 in Chikwawa, 5 in Nsanje and 6 Lilongwe. Paradiso formed 15 new TB clubs in these facilities, trained them and started implementation in September 2022. From September to December 939 presumptive cases were found and referred for examinations out of which 96 TB cases were diagnosed and put on treatment in all these facilities combined. Other than these, the volunteers are also doing contact tracing and lost to follow up tracing.

Paradiso also partnered with Facilitators for community Transformation (FACT) in a project called epidemic control being implemented by sputum collection point volunteers in Mchinji and Dedza. In 2022 this project managed to get 36 cases of TB.

Therefore the summary of cases that Paradiso reported in 2022 was $318 + 96 + 36 = 450$.

Nutrition support to MDR Patients

One of the core activities of Paradiso is to provide nutrition support to drug resistant TB patients. Two months in each quarter drug resistant TB patients receive nutrition support. In 2022, a total of 25 patients benefited from this support in all the implementation districts. District coordinators in conjunction with district TB officers or facility TB focal persons distribute food items to patients. The good news is that all the 25 patients we supported in 2022 progressed very well on treatment owing to the availability of food which is an important aspect of TB treatment. 15 of the 25 patients completed their treatment in December 2022 and have since been graduated from the support program. The remaining 10 have been carried over to 2023 to be joined by those that will be diagnosed.



Neno district coordinator handing over food items to an MDR patient who is almost cured and in the last month of treatment.

Focus group discussion

Lobi TB club conducted a focus group discussion with elderly people at Kainga village in fourth quarter 2022. 10 participants (elderly women) were in attendance, the discussion centered around TB information with emphasis on definition, spread, signs and symptoms, prevention and treatment of TB. After the discussion screening was done and two women were deemed presumptive cases. They were referred to Lobi health center where upon examination turned out to be negative. The focus group discussion ended with distribution of groceries including a packet of sugar, salt and soap to each participants courtesy of volunteers' own contributions. The village headman thanked the volunteers for the good job well done and their support to the elderly women.



Elderly people receiving sugar, soap and salt from volunteers.

OVC AND PEN PAL PROJECT.



In 2022 we managed to pay school fees for 28 OVC Students dis aggregated as follows: Tertiary program had 12 students, 5 of them finished their courses and graduated. In Secondary School we had 12 pupils, 6 Sat for Malawi Schools Certificate Education (MSCE) examination and 4 passed while 2 failed. One Student sat for Junior Certificate of Education (JCE) examination and she passed. In Primary School there were 4 pupils.



Paulos Chikoko, Princes Mvula and Tamandani Kasiya, 2022 graduation.

PEN PAL PROJECT.



Pen pal project had 120 children and Paradise through the support from LHL International managed to support these children with exercise books, school fund and examination fees. We had several meetings with them among other things replying to the letters from their Norwegian counterparts as well as health talks on tuberculosis. During these meetings, we prepared them some special meal and refreshments. Ten Pen-pal children sat for the Primary school leaving certificate examinations and passed, currently they



are at various government secondary schools in the country.





Pen pal children replying to letters from their Norwegian pals on 5th November 2022.

Purchase of two new vehicles

Paradiso with support from LHL International purchased two new vehicles, one off road (a Toyota Fortuner) and a saloon (Toyota Corolla Axio). These vehicles replaced the old fleet of vehicles Nissan Caravan and Nissan X trail which were grounded at the garage due to faulty engines. The new vehicles have eased the burden of hiring which used to take a lot of funds from the organization.



Newly purchased vehicles.

Challenges

- ✧ Despite the gains made in the number of TB cases, 2022 was one of the worst years in terms of power outages as such most samples generated by our volunteers went stale due to overstaying in the laboratory.
- ✧ There was also stock outs of reagents and cartilages for gene x pert machines in most facilities which again affected case finding efforts of Paradiso volunteers.



✧ We also faced a number of deaths of our volunteers in the year under review.

