**Highlights**

- With funding from the Embassy of Ireland and GIZ/BMZ, UP through our Scaling UP Nutrition (SUN) programme has trained health workers in all 34 health centres in Dedza on COVID-19 case management and Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) and Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) in the context of COVID-19.

- With additional funding from the Embassy of Ireland through UNICEF, UP has expanded the Emergency Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Preparedness and Response project at Emergency Treatment Units (ETUs) to two further ETUs in Karonga and Mangochi ensuring that 7 ETUs and surrounding communities have adequate WASH services. To date in Blantyre, Mwanza, Lilongwe, Mzuzu, and Mchinji hospitals we have installed 31 emergency latrines and hand washing stations with soap; installed water tanks in 4 ETUs and increased knowledge and awareness about COVID-19 through community radio jingles and mobile vans reaching over 1,400,000 people.

- Combining national and community radio, mobile van PA systems and SMS, over 10,000 million people across 18 districts are being reached with COVID-19 prevention messages on a weekly basis.

- 20,000 copies of the FUKO newspaper (a newspaper in Chichewa distributed in rural areas for free) was published on 2nd May (promoting the importance of good nutrition practices to boost immunity during the COVID-19 outbreak).

- Under our University of Strathclyde and Scottish Government funded Rural Energy Access through Social Enterprise and Decentralisation (EASE) project we developed a COVID-19 safe plan to recommence work on the distribution grid. Switch-on is planned for June.

**The Situation**

Malawi is in a declared State of Disaster. As of 19th May there are 71 confirmed cases of COVID-19; three deaths, 27 recoveries and 1973 samples tested.

The injunction against a 21-day lockdown still stands pending review by the Supreme Court meanwhile campaigning ahead of the election re-run planned for July continues.

The Emergency Appeal to support UN and NGO contributions towards the national COVID-19 response, launched on 4 May, has been revised upwards to US$140 million from US$139.2 million.

**Our Team and Operations**

**Hygiene Heroes:** Our Mulanje office (below) was voted ‘UP’s Hygiene Hero Office’ for their work promoting hygiene measures. This included ensuring IEC materials were displayed, multiple hand washing stations installed and a COVID-19 presentation shared with all visitors through a short film they produced.

**Focal Points:** UP has been advocating as part of the INGO Humanitarian Sub-committee for the identification of District Focal Points to strengthen existing coordination mechanisms at district level and to assist in bridging communication gaps between district and national levels. Selected UP staff are acting in this capacity in Dedza, Dowa, Balaka, Chiradzulu, Mulanje and Thyolo. The UN Resident Coordinator’s office, Humanitarian Country Team and clusters have so far welcomed this initiative in order to strengthen the existing humanitarian framework in the context of COVID-19.

**Resources:** Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidance was developed by UP in line with the Ministry of Health standards (30th April). This details two standards based on the principle of ‘rationale use:’ 1. staff working in ETUs or health centres irrespective of their contact with patients and 2. staff working with communities either in direct contact (training) or indirect (such as through public service announcements).

For more information contact: UP Malawi Country Director (Acting): Kate.Hartley-Louis@united-purpose.org
Our Programmes

Programme highlights from the last two weeks across our four strategic pillars are as follows:

Livelihoods and food security
- Our Palladium funded (via USAID) AgDiv project procured and distributed 74 handwashing buckets, 370 soaps, 60 gloves, 77 soy milk promotion posters and 34 COVID-19 awareness posters to all soy milk producers in Dedza and Balaka. This means soy milk producers can continue selling their produce to clients while raising awareness and adhering to precautionary measures.
- Under our UK Aid funded Promoting Sustainable Partnerships for Empowered Resilience Programme (PROSPER), winter seeds (maize, beans, onions, tomatoes and leaf vegetable) were distributed to 1,500 households in Mangochi whilst 2,000 are being distributed this week in Balaka to build the resilience of target communities through food security and income generation.

WASH and healthier lives
- With additional funding from UNICEF through the Embassy of Ireland we have expanded our Emergency WASH Preparedness for COVID-19 project to Karonga and Mangochi. Working with District Councils, we are now supporting 7 ETUs located at district hospitals to ensure they have adequate WASH services. To date, we have: installed 31 emergency latrines and hand washing stations with soap; installed water tanks in 4 ETUs; enhanced DHO capacity to respond to COVID-19; and increased knowledge on COVID-19 through community radio jingles and mobile vans reaching over 1,400,000 people.
- With funding from Charity: water, through our Dowa WASH Program (DI-WASH), we rehabilitated 5 non-functional boreholes; trained 686 health workers (377 men & 309 women); supported COVID-19 hygiene awareness campaigns through PA systems and radio (Zodiak, Times and MBC Radio) with a reach of 14.5 million people. We distributed WASH supplies (400 hand washing buckets, 10,155 soap and 12 buckets of chlorine) to Mponela Police Station, Dowa District Health Office and Mponela AIDS Information and Counseling Centre (MAICC) to improve their capacity to prevent and control COVID-19.
- Our Embassy of Ireland and BMZ/GIZ nutrition programme has trained health workers in all 34 health centres in Dedza on COVID19 case management and IYCF/CMAM and rebranded our billboards and signpost to disseminate COVID-19 messages. In Balaka with support from the Embassy of Ireland, 101 promoters and 26 Area Nutrition Coordinating Committee members in Balaka were trained in COVID-19 Prevention and distributed 68 buckets and 136 tablets of soap to all 5 heath centres.
- The second edition of FUKO newspaper (in Chichewa distributed in rural areas nationwide for free) was published on 2nd May (20,000 copies) promoting the importance of good nutrition practices to boost immunity during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Sustainable energy
- Under our University of Strathclyde and Scottish Government funded Rural Energy Access through Social Enterprise and Decentralisation (EASE) project we developed a COVID-19 safe plan to recommence work on the distribution grid. In preparation for switch on (June), we have developed Standard Operating Procedures for micro-grid operation, including training of site agents.
- Our Irish Aid funded Accelerating Commercial and Community Energy Supply Sustainability (ACCESS) project has been remote working with LUANAR and the Polytechnic to develop a research opportunity for Masters students to support our study into ethanol briquettes as an alternative to charcoal in urban areas; applications are now open to eligible students.
- With support from the Livelihoods Fund COVID-19 preparedness and response activities began in Machinga and Zomba Districts. This comes in addition to the new project that we will be launching in September 2020, which will provide access to improved cookstoves for 60,000 households for 10 years, as well as the repair of 200 boreholes.
- Through our EnDev Commercial project (GIZ) we continue to develop our Social Behaviour Change Campaign for the Chitetezo Mbaula, which will be rolled-out once COVID-19 restrictions ease. This includes sponsorship of the Zokonda Amai radio programme, to increase awareness about the stove.

Gender equality
- Our Comic Relief funded girls empowerment project (Girls INSPIRED) uses netball to inspire girls to reach their full potential through leadership and life skills. Practice has been suspended, however, the 270 girls (aged 10-18) have been reached through UP’s Dedza COVID-19 awareness campaigns. In collaboration with the Embassy of Ireland funded ASPIRE Project, Girls INSPIRED has trained 50 Health Care Workers at Kaphuka and Tsoyo Health Centres in Dedza on COVID-19 Prevention. Two of the trained health workers are Master Trainers within the Girls INSPIRED Project.