

Improving Water, Sanitation and Hygiene at the Kankao Health Center

A REPORT FOR PROVIDENCE: MAY 2023–NOVEMBER 2023



Your gift provided the Kankao Health Center with sinks to promote hand-washing and better hygiene. Photo by CRS staff

YOUR IMPACT

Catholic Relief Services is deeply grateful for your support of efforts to improve access to water, sanitation and hygiene at health centers in Malawi. Unsafe care causes more deaths globally than lack of care. Thanks to your support, the Kankao Health Center in Balaka, Malawi, can provide safer care.

Fatima Chande is from the village of Kankao. Her son, who has a disability, receives care at the health center. Before the water, sanitation and hygiene improvements, she faced challenges taking her son to the toilet. But now she is grateful that the toilets are more accessible for people with disabilities.

The health center's accountant, Mr. Njanji, is also grateful for the improved water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. He says a lack of adequate water, sanitation and hygiene facilities was a major challenge for the health center in the past. Staff struggled with limited access to clean water, which affected their ability to provide quality health care services. With the new facilities, he is

relieved and appreciates the positive impact they will have on the health center and the wider community. Providing clean water and improved sanitation not only enhances health care services, but also contributes to the prevention of waterborne diseases like cholera. Mr. Njanji says the new incinerator, ash pit and medical waste pit will also help safely manage hospital waste and protect the community and environment.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In May 2023, CRS partnered with the Mangochi Diocese Catholic Health Commission to improve water, sanitation and hygiene at Kankao Health Center in the Balaka district. Our goals were to provide the center with reliable water storage and improve hygiene practices through new or repaired sanitation facilities.

Your generosity enabled us to repair or construct a water tank and stand, toilets, showers, sinks, waste pit, ash pit and incinerator. These facilities are ready for use and are improving water, sanitation and hygiene at the center.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

IMPROVED ACCESS TO WATER

Kankao Health Center did not have a water source on its premises, so it was essential to provide a reliable water storage unit to ensure uninterrupted water supply. This expansion of water services not only improves the quality of health care, but also

reduces the need for patients to travel long distances to fetch water. The water reservoir is enhancing overall efficiency, effectiveness and accessibility of health care services, benefiting the center and the community it serves.

IMPROVED HYGIENE AND SANITATION

CRS constructed a waste management area including an incinerator, medical waste pit and ash pit. The incinerator will help minimize the environmental impact of waste disposal by reducing the need for landfill space and preventing the release of harmful pollutants into the air and water. Similarly, an ash pit provides a designated area for the disposal of incinerated waste, ensuring that ashes are properly contained and managed. This helps to maintain a clean and organized environment at the health center, reducing the risk of cross-contamination and promoting overall hygiene. A medical waste pit offers a hygienic and proper disposal method for waste, ensuring that potentially infectious materials are contained and disposed of safely and reducing the risk of infections and contamination.

Hand-washing facilities were also installed throughout the health center so health care workers, patients and visitors can maintain proper hand hygiene, reducing the transmission of pathogens and improving overall health outcomes. Installing accessible toilets makes certain that people with disabilities have equal access to sanitary facilities, promoting inclusivity and dignity for all patients and visitors, enhancing their overall experience, and ensuring that specific needs are met.

Table 1 shows all the improvements for water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure supported by the project. See annex for photos.

INFRASTRUCTURE	EXISTING BEFORE	REPAIRED/NEWLY INSTALLED	NEW TOTAL
20-foot water tank stand	1	1 newly installed	2
2,500-gallon water tank	1	1 newly installed	2
Flush toilets	6	3 disability-friendly, newly installed	9
Wash basins	0	11 newly installed	11
Medical waste pit	0	1 newly installed	1
Incinerator	1	1 newly installed	1
Ash pit	0	1 newly installed	1

TABLE 1

THANK YOU

Thanks to the compassionate generosity of Providence, the Kankao Health Center now has access to clean water and improved sanitation and hygiene infrastructure to ensure better health care. We are grateful for your continued dedication to promoting dignified health services for our most vulnerable sisters and brothers around the world.

ANNEX: BEFORE AND AFTER PHOTOS



The old incinerator, left, and newly installed incinerator, right. Photo credit CRS staff



A pit that was used for disposing ash, left, and newly installed ash pit, right. Photo credit CRS staff



A toilet that was not accessible to people with disabilities, left, and new more accessible toilet, right. Photo credit CRS staff



An old water reservoir and newly installed reservoir. Photo credit CRS staff



Sinks were installed in all wards. Photo credit CRS staff



A newly constructed medical waste pit. Photo credit CRS staff

