

# Improving Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in the Sister Martha Health Center in Mangochi, Malawi

A REPORT FOR PROVIDENCE: NOVEMBER 1, 2022—MAY 31, 2023

Catholic Relief Services is deeply grateful for your generous support of water, sanitation and hygiene improvements at health facilities in Malawi. With your compassion, CRS and our local partner constructed or repaired critical water and hygiene infrastructure at the Sister Martha Health Center in the Mangochi district.



Your gift improved care for patients like Daliya at the Sister Martha Health Center. Photo by CRS staff

## YOUR IMPACT

Daliya Yahaya cannot hide her excitement over new developments at the Sister Martha Health Center. “The place looks marvelous due to a number of structures constructed to improve health, sanitation and hygiene,” she says.

Daliya lives in Namwera Village and has been coming to the health center to deliver her children since it opened. The center, however, lacked showers for women who had just given birth, which was a source of embarrassment.

Thanks to your generosity, the center now has a place for mothers to bathe immediately after giving birth. “The beauty of the shower rooms and toilets have restored dignity to all mothers who patronize the health center,” says Daliya.

Daliya is just one of many people served by the Sister Martha Health Center in Namwera. The center is located about 30 miles from Mangochi District Hospital, and serves the surrounding communities so people do not have to travel long distances to access health care. With your support, we have made significant water, sanitation and hygiene improvements at the center.

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*“Before this intervention, we were in a hopeless situation, as women could travel a mile to fetch water after they had just delivered their babies. Toilets were in a dilapidated state, and the place was unfriendly to people with disabilities. We did not know where to turn. Today, water has become accessible throughout the health facility. There are modern bathrooms with showers, toilets, a placenta pit, incinerators and rubbish dump. Dignity of motherhood has been restored. We shall live to cherish this timely support. Sister Martha Health Center is now a place of hope, not destitution. More pregnant women will be coming to deliver their babies here, promoting safe motherhood.” —Mr. Chipondeponde, overseer of the Sister Martha Health Center*

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

In December 2022, CRS partnered with the Mangochi Diocese Catholic Health Commission to improve water, sanitation and hygiene at Sister Martha Health Center in Namwera in the Mangochi district.

Activities included constructing a maternity shower facility, pit latrine, placenta pit, ash pit and incinerator, and rehabilitating latrines, bathrooms, maternity wing shower facilities, and plumbing, sinks and toilets. We also constructed a water tank and stand. These structures are improving water, sanitation and hygiene at the health center.

CRS had two main project objectives for the Sister Martha Health Center:

- Provide the center with access to clean water and water storage.
- Improve hygiene practices through new or repaired sanitation facilities.



The Sister Martha Health Center now has better water and hygiene infrastructure. Photo by CRS staff

## PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

### IMPROVED ACCESS TO WATER

With your support, CRS constructed and repaired water supply infrastructure to improve access to water for center staff and the community members it serves. The center currently serves 16,754 people from 10 villages around the area of Namwera in the Mangochi district.

### IMPROVED HYGIENE AND SANITATION

The project improved hygiene and sanitation at the health center by building and repairing hygiene and sanitation infrastructure. For example, we built a new three-room shower facility and rehabilitated two existing shower rooms that had fallen into disrepair—one in the labor ward and one in the postnatal ward. We also built a new two-room latrine that is accessible to people with disabilities and repaired a three-room latrine and three shower rooms.

Table 1 shows the water, hygiene and sanitation infrastructure improvements supported by the project.

INFRASTRUCTURE	REPAIRED OR INSTALLED
1,000-gallon water tank	1 newly installed
20-foot tank stand	1 newly installed
Pit latrines	1 newly installed
Flush toilets	2 renovated and 1 newly installed
Wash basins	11 renovated
Shower facilities	2 renovated and 1 newly installed
Medical waste and placenta pit	1 renovated
Incinerator	1 newly installed
Ash pit	1 newly installed

TABLE 1

## CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Heavy rain during cyclone Freddy flooded latrine structures, causing delays in construction. Last-minute changes in partner project administration staff also caused delays in key logistical activities. With some programming delayed, costs changed during implementation due to inflation, which led to a significant reduction in the scope of work.

Despite these challenges, the project has demonstrated that water, sanitation and hygiene initiatives are crucial for improving health services in the diocese and for the greater good of communities, so we recommend replicating such projects in other hospitals.



Latrine structure before the cyclone, left, and after, right. Photos by CRS staff

## THANK YOU

Thank you for your generous support of the Sister Martha Heath Center in Malawi. Your gift improved its water supply and sanitation and hygiene infrastructure—and promoted better health for an entire community. The people of the Diocese of Mangochi are grateful for your support.

## BEFORE AND AFTER PHOTOS

Below is a selection of photos demonstrating the impact your gift made possible. Photos by CRS staff.



Old and new bathrooms.

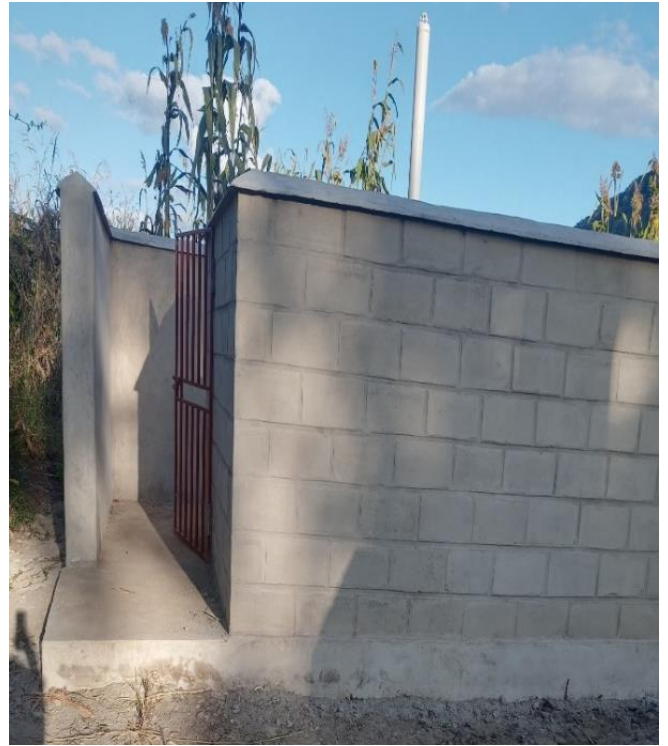


Old and new incinerator





Old and new ash pit.



New water tank and stand.



Newly constructed latrines.

