



# Friends of Sick Children in Malawi

FOSCiM registered charity number 1140578  
FOSC registered charity number (Malawi) C647/2013

Establishing and developing sustainable paediatrics for the 50% of Malawians who are children



## WELCOME TO OUR SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER & UPDATE



**Malawi has the fourth highest percentage of people living in extreme poverty in the World. That's more than two-thirds of the population, almost all of whom rely on precarious, small-scale farming for their livelihoods and survival.**

**In 2025 \*98.6p of every £1\* received by FOSCiM from donors was applied for the frontline needs in Malawi. Very few charities can claim that sort of outcome for their donors.**



It is helpful to have an appreciation of the national context in which 'we' operate in Malawi.

Malawi's public finances are not in good shape with public debt exceeding 90% of GDP, one consequence of which is that the Government needs to attract new IMF support. Inflation runs at over 20% and lack of foreign currency makes imported supplies of essentials such as fuel unpredictable. A weak national currency exacerbates an already fragile situation.

In January the USA and Malawi signed a new 5 year \$936 million bilateral health Memorandum Of Understanding to combat infectious diseases and strengthen local systems. This means direct government-to-government funding rather than through the NGO networks. **How this will benefit hospital budgets, and particularly paediatrics, remains to be seen.**

Increases in healthcare headcount for our wards are needed but there is little sign that this will be forthcoming. We have little choice but to watch from the sidelines of the public healthcare sector and react however we can to best protect the progress made in Paediatrics this millennium and maintain as much momentum as possible.

With **your greatly valued support**, our medical and related colleagues continue to do their utmost to meet all the challenges put before them as they continue the drive to develop *sustainable* paediatric healthcare and improve the life chances of the children of Malawi. **THANK YOU!**

## Joe's Mulanje challenge



Following the lead feature in our Autumn 2025 newsletter, supporters rallied to not only make sure that Joe reached her target of £50,000 to equip the Children's Accident & Emergency Department with much needed resuscitation trolleys/beds, but exceeded it.

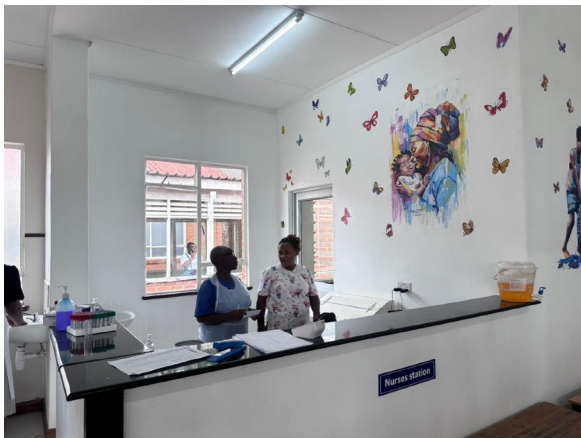
The final total is a fantastic **£55,230**.

First of all a huge **THANK YOU** to all those who responded so generously.

**Eight** resuscitation trolleys/beds have been purchased and are ready to leave the UK for Malawi.

## The Paediatric Special Care Ward ('PSCW')

The newly renovated and refurbished Paediatric Special Care Ward is fully functional again. What a fantastically positive difference from what I witnessed late in late 2024. This is the first time ever that I have seen the facility empty – remember that the 40 beds are always full and in the rainy seasonal can be full x 3!!! Love the wall murals.



Nurses Station



Part of the Ward



Registrar team ready for action



HDU section back in action

# The Building Blocks

It is worth remembering at this point that the building blocks that make up the foundations of developing sustainable paediatrics in Malawi are:

## 1. EDUCATION AND PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT IN PAEDIATRICS

- Funding for nursing and direct patient handling and service delivery skills.
- Funding for Doctors and related professionals.

Financial support for those in training and stipends for those whose Government pay is below even basic living levels.

## 2. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Whilst the demands for paediatric healthcare continue to grow, Government investment does not keep pace so the need for funding for paediatric facilities and equipment has to come from elsewhere, i.e. our incredible supporters.

The costs of medical equipment, necessarily sourced from outside Malawi, plus the safe transportation costs to Malawi, mean that donor money does not go as far as it would if, for example, we were operating in Europe.

On the current 'needs' shopping list are the following for which we need funds:

- |                                       |                             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Reagents for the laboratory         | Open ended funds need       |
| • Infusion pumps                      | They cost about £750 each   |
| • Vital signs monitors                | They cost about £2,000 each |
| • Drugs – to augment the State supply | Open ended funds need       |
| • Portable monitors                   | They cost about £4,400 each |
| • Defibrillators                      | They cost about £7,500 each |
| • Portable suction machine            | They cost about £1,200      |

*All costs are estimates.*

### Portable X-Ray Machine

Many child patients are just too ill to be taken to the main adult hospital radiography department for their X-Rays. The answer would be to have a portable X-Ray machine. The challenge is that one of these costs as much as **£50,000+/\$ 65,000** plus secure transport from supplier to hospital to fund on top.

**Your help with any of these current needs would be greatly valued and appreciated. See donation details on the final page. For your help in other ways please email me.**

## Sea Containers

Our **final sea container** arrived with all its 'goodies'. In a change from the normal images of piles of boxes I thought it might amuse you to see two big Malawian men cradling armfuls of teddies!!! This is Wilson and Gilbert from the orthopaedic workshop team having received not only some orthopaedic items but also 200 teddies courtesy of Teddies for Tragedies. Each young child receiving a home chair for tots or a wheelchair will receive a teddy.

Sad to report however that our oldest contributor, who we featured in last Autumn's newsletter, a one woman knitting factory, 96 years old **Heather Francis** of **Worcester** has passed away. We have of course extended our sympathies to her son Martin.



## Collaboration with the QECH Orthopaedic Workshop

The **2025 Christmas Appeal** exceeded expectations and was one of our most successful ever. The total financial value of responses was **£27,600** which has funded 80 wheelchairs, 74 home chairs plus orthotics, transport and shoes; as well as Registrar stipends and other facilities and equipment. **Thank you so much to all those who responded to the Appeal.**

To date 1,614 children have been assessed and fitted with wheelchairs. Funds for 127 more are in hand, bringing the total **wheelchairs you have funded to 1,741.**

In addition, 1,446 very young children have been assessed and fitted with home chairs and we have funds for 141 more, making a **total of 1,587 home chairs.**

**This means that to date you have helped us to help 3,328 children with their mobility.**

**Thank you!**

We also help fund orthotic devices, buy shoes for those without but needed for orthotic devices to work, and fund transport to the hospital workshop for those without the financial means.

We take the work out of the city to rural communities.



Pictured here is a Workshop outreach visit in Zomba District assessing children with mobility issues.



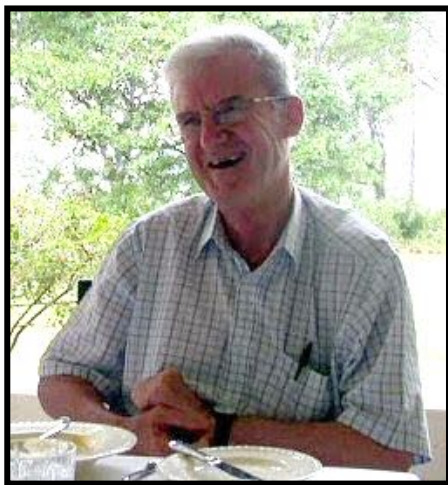
## Registrars - stipends

As many of our followers are now aware, the State hospitals in Malawi have had to find funds to augment the meagre rations from the State for newly qualified medics (registrars) without whom it would be very difficult if not impossible to fully function. These stipends work out at about £110 per month per person.

We are continuing to try to build funds in anticipation of the same problem existing this coming Autumn. If this is something that you would like to contribute to please let me know and donate as below.

## In Memoriam

We must end by marking the passing of two pioneers in children's health.



**Professor Robin Broadhead**, the Founding Head of Paediatrics under the College of Medicine and the second Principal of the College of Medicine, passed away earlier this month. He was a distinguished paediatrician and educator who played a pivotal role in child health in Malawi and the training of doctors. Professor Broadhead's life and work are inseparable from the history and growth of modern medical education in Malawi. As one of the pioneering academics involved in establishing the country's first medical school, he played a central role in creating a system that enabled Malawian students to train as doctors locally. an achievement of lasting national significance.

**Professor Jillian Mann** built one of the largest paediatric oncology units in the UK which she led for 30 years before retiring in 2002. She established a world-famous, multi-professional team to help organise, shape and drastically improve children's cancer treatment and care. Jill was a regular donor to Friends of Sick Children in Malawi and we recently learned of her passing when we received a **generous legacy** from her estate. Given her life's work we will use this donation to support children with cancer in Malawi.



## In Conclusion

It is **YOUR** support that makes possible all the developments that you read about in our newsletters. We are proud to say that nearly 99% of every donation received in 2025 was available for use 'at the frontline' for the healthcare of Malawi's children. How many charities can make that boast?

If you would like to discuss how you might help with **any** of our funding or other needs, challenges and issues, please simply email me or Joe for a 'chat' at:

[gordon@foscim.org](mailto:gordon@foscim.org)

or

[joelangton@doctors.org.uk](mailto:joelangton@doctors.org.uk)

### To make a donation

**Bank-to-bank** is the best way to optimise how much of your donation reaches us.

#### **UK - FOSCiM bank details:**

Account name: Friends of Sick Children in Malawi  
Bank sort code: 40 – 11 – 04  
Bank account: 21612069

#### **Malawi - FOSC bank details:**

Bank: National Bank of Malawi  
Swift Code(BIC):NBMAMWMWXXX  
IBAN / Account:358328 Bank code: 002  
Branch name: Chichiri branch  
Reference: FOSC GBP AC

Bank to bank donations (or donating by cheque) are **free** of charge, but **only in the UK**.

**IMPORTANT** ~ Donors who are also UK taxpayers should donate through FOSCiM (rather than FOSC) so that 25% Gift Aid can be added to their donations courtesy of HM Government.

You can donate using **PayPal** or via our **JustGiving** pages but **please note** that they both deduct charges from your donations.

**JustGiving** pages <https://www.justgiving.com/friendsofsickchildreninmalawi>

**And finally, on behalf of everyone involved in supporting the establishment and development of sustainable paediatric healthcare in Malawi, a very big thank you and please keep supporting us to whatever extent and in whatever way you feel able.**

Sincerely

*Gordon*

#### **Gordon Cowie MBE**

Founder and Chair of Trustees  
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#### **Social media addresses**

Instagram: @foscmalawi  
Twitter: @of\_fosc  
Facebook: Friends of Sick Children Malawi

*If in future you would prefer not to receive our newsletter or any other communications, please advise us at the email address above*