



It's hard to summarise the emotions we have experienced over the last few months. Cyclone Freddy had a devastating impact in Malawi. It was with greatest sadness that we learnt a much loved member of our team in Blantyre passed away during the floods. Our dear maid Bertha and her 14 year old daughter Bridget died in March when their home collapsed during the rains. Bertha was a gift to Medic to Medic. She was 100% trustworthy and took care of us with such love and attention. We miss her greatly. It was under these circumstances that I found myself in Malawi, unplanned at the end of March and where I have been for the last few months. Tragedy unites us and we have shared many tears. Our team has been solidified under these bonds. 1500 people in Malawi died in walls of mud due to Cyclone Freddy. Countless more remain homeless and helpless having had their homes and livelihoods destroyed. Malawi hasn't hit the global conscience and during its recovery has rarely hit the international media. There remains much to do. I wonder when it will get easier for Malawians. This newsletter is dedicated to Bertha and Bridget.

**Tamsin**

## Big Give Christmas Appeal

Thank you to everyone who supported us with the Big Give Christmas campaign during 2022. This year will be the 4<sup>th</sup> year we've taken part. Would you be able to pledge support for Medic to Medic with a minimum donation of £100? Pledges are only paid if we are successful in achieving our target during the online phase in December and will be paid at the end of the year. Make a pledge via this form:

<https://community.biggive.org/s/pledge?campaignId=a056900002RXsu5AAD>

## Medic to Medic Medical Electives in Malawi



We have developed some exciting elective opportunities for international medical students visiting Malawi. Our vision is to provide meaningful and responsive elective placements whilst fundraising sustainably for the Medic to Medic community.



**Bertha Luka**  
August 1988 – March 2023  
*Our friend and colleague,  
greatly missed*

We have partnerships with three hospitals (and more coming) – St Johns Hospital, Mzuzu; Trinity Hospital, Nsanje; Mwaiwathu Hospital, Blantyre.

Elective students will have the opportunity to meet the Medic to Medic community, get involved in teaching (depending on location) and additional initiatives within Malawi. Each student is encouraged to undertake a quality improvement project &

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## Cyclone Freddy – why don't we know?

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/cyclone-freddy-malawi-relief>



*Where Ndala village, Mulanje, Southern region of Malawi, once stood.*

Cyclone Freddy, the longest and strongest tropical cyclone on record caused widespread devastation, including loss of life, homes and livelihoods. It lasted over a month and struck landfall three times. In Malawi at least 1500 died in walls of mud. This was a humanitarian emergency on a global scale that was largely ignored by the international media and didn't hit the global conscience. When we first launched our emergency appeal, when conversations were started, the response was often *"Why don't we know about this?"*.

We've been working with Ndala village on the Malawi / Mozambique border since March 2023. 1 in 4 people in Ndala village died. One woman recalled how she heard an *"unusual"* noise in the evening, ran outside & heard

the sound coming from Mulanje Mountain. She ran inside to scream at her children to run as fast as they could to higher ground. Then she ran through her neighbourhood banging on doors and telling people to leave. Those that didn't want to leave haven't been seen again. She saved many lives that day. And it's hard to imagine that in this community alone, the situation could have been so much worse.

The waters moved boulders (some larger than houses) from Mulanje Mountain which destroyed everything in their path. The boulders have changed the course of the river. Roads, bridges, & electricity infrastructure were all washed away. The community used to produce 1 tonne of rice a year, but the harvest was destroyed in

Thank you to the donors who supported our emergency appeal to support survivors of Cyclone Freddy. Funds used have provided additional student allowances and counselling to our affected community, and small scale humanitarian projects at Ndala village, Mulanje including elderly & antenatal packages, mosquito nets, reproductive health, food relief & education packages. We have also been able to take on 7 Cyclone Freddy survivors at our partner colleges.

a deluge of sludge. They can't farm it now.

They were given plastic sheets to produce shelters. They're currently staying in a field, but the camp will be dismantled soon. The farmer where they're staying wants his field back. He's going through hardships and needs his land to make a living. The chief has gifted an area of land to build new houses, away from the river and away from the mountain, but families who have already been through so much do not have the capital to rebuild.

Malawians are some of the most resilient people in the world. They live in poverty, exposed to infectious diseases and unimaginable hardships and survive....but a house is not optional. Everyone needs a home and this community is running out of time.

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/50-houses-for-cyclone-freddy-survivors-in-ndala>

## Chichewa Language Lessons

Do you want to start learning Chichewa? We will match you with a Medic to Medic student or graduate to learn Chichewa over Zoom. Lessons are £5 each and half the fee is given to the Chichewa tutor, with the remaining going towards general fundraising.

We've also created some medical translation leaflets! Drop us an email for the PDF, and watch / listen to our audio files for pronunciation via our YouTube & / or Spotify channels.



*Edward's house in Phalombe, Southern region, Malawi*

## 2023 Alumni Survey

Each year Medic to Medic carries out an alumni survey to assess the long-term impact of undergraduate scholarship support in our community.

At the time of data collection, we had a community of 186 alumni. *91% of Medic to Medic alumni remain in their country of training (Malawi & Uganda).*

Of those outside their country of training, 56% remain in Africa with postgraduate training being the main reason for leaving. The majority of those outside their country of training are expected to return within the next 5 years. Overall, 4% of graduates are currently working in developed countries.

*“Before Medic-to-Medic life was not that easy. I had no one to support me with tuition fees and upkeep allowance. I was disallowed to write exams due to tuition fees. I lost hope that I would complete my studies. However, after M2M started supporting me, I had no challenges concerning my studies. They were always paying my tuition fees on time and giving me upkeep that would help me to buy basic needs and buy stationery.”*

74% of graduates are employed, 57% of graduates have a driving license, 44% of graduates own a car, and 16% of graduates own a house. Despite only 52% of graduates having children of their own, 77% of graduates are providing school fees to children, with the number of children supported ranging from 1 to 12. These results show the long term impacts of Medic to Medic scholarships.

### Keep Updated!

Follow our blog to keep updated with our latest news and activities:

<https://healthprofessionalmalawi.wordpress.com/>



**Listen to our Podcasts!**  
On Spotify: “Malawi Matters”  
<https://anchor.fm/medic-to-medic>



Since our last newsletter:

**12** new students supported

**29** Graduations

**12** Distributed laptops



## Hurst Essay Competition

### Degree level entries

*“What aspect of Malawi’s health care system is in most need of new investment over the next decade?”*

Total 13 entries received.

1<sup>st</sup> Prize: Casten Chikumbutso (MBBS)

2<sup>nd</sup> Prize: Mercy Msakwiza (Audiology)

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize: Emmanuel Chirwa (Physiotherapy)

### Diploma level

*“In light of the present cholera outbreak, what advice would you give to the Malawian Health Ministry in a) immediate measures to combat the spread of infection and b) what methods/strategies may be able to prevent future epidemics of cholera?”*

Total of 8 entries received.

1<sup>st</sup> Prize: Lameck Kinnahson (Radiographer)

2<sup>nd</sup> Prize: Peter Samuel (Nurse Midwife Technician)

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize: Diana Ligoma (Psychosocial counsellor)

**Thank you to our markers: Helen, Cathy, Samuel and Richard and to Dr Hurst for the continued donations.**

## Carol singing at Christmas

We’re Carol Singing at Pimlico Tube station on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> December – would you like to join us? Get in touch – [info@medictomedic.org.uk](mailto:info@medictomedic.org.uk)





Email: [info@medictomedic.org.uk](mailto:info@medictomedic.org.uk)

For comments, questions and errata regarding this newsletter, please contact the editor at the email address above. Every effort has been made to credit contributors to this newsletter. Where omissions have occurred, please advise and they will be rectified at the earliest possible opportunity.



Medic to Medic



@MedictoMedic



tamsinlillie

[www.medictomedic.org.uk](http://www.medictomedic.org.uk)

Registered UK Charity No. 1149904  
NZ Charity No. CC58085. Malawi CONGOMA  
registration No. C1609/2022

Medic to Medic was founded in 2007 to address the problems of training and retaining medical students in some of the world's poorest countries.

For our first country, we chose Malawi. Like so many sub-Saharan countries, Malawi is desperately short of doctors. It has just two doctors per 100 000 people. The UK has over 230 per 100 000.

Medic to Medic helps by supporting poor but bright students through medical school, who might otherwise drop out. We cover their tuition fees and give them allowances for equipment and books. We can link students to mentors, who provide holistic support.

Our scheme to support medical students has been so successful that we now also support physiotherapists, pharmacists, nurses, mental health workers, clinical officers, optometrists & audiologists in Malawi.

Most of our donors give just £5—20 per month. If you feel you can support a student, please visit [www.medictomedic.org.uk](http://www.medictomedic.org.uk) to set up a direct debit online.

You will be linked with an individual student and receive regular updates from them on their progress. You are welcome to enter into email correspondence with them and many of our students find this very motivating. Please note that although you will be allocated a particular student, our donations are pooled so that no student is disadvantaged if a donor needs to withdraw.

## Future Fundraising

Nominate Medic to Medic to win £1000 through Ecclesiastical. Our charity number is 1149904. <https://www.movementforgood.com/12days/#nominateACharity>



Interested in raising donations through market research?

Email for more info: [info@medictomedic.org.uk](mailto:info@medictomedic.org.uk)



Shopping online? Register with [easyfundraising.co.uk](http://easyfundraising.co.uk). For every online purchase, the retailer will give a small donation to your chosen charity at no extra cost!



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## Medic to Medic Medical Electives in Malawi

will have an opportunity to present this during a webinar of elective projects organised by Medic to Medic annually.

Elective students will be given full visa and medical council application support and will be matched to a Medic to Medic alumnus to act as a coordinator on the ground. We will also provide the opportunity to debrief at the end of the elective placement after arriving home.

To find out more download our leaflet on the resources section of our website or take a look at our Electives presentation on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=piDMyblmbho&t=559s>

- 1 month £1000 / NZ\$2000
- 6 weeks £1500 / NZ\$3000
- 2 months £2000 / NZ\$4000