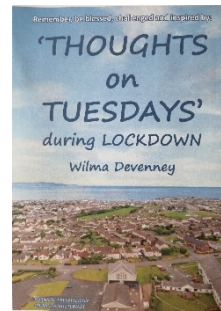


Thousands are protected - Thanks to Wilma

At the end of October 2020, the Chronicle reported on the printing of a Booklet **'Thoughts on Tuesdays' during lockdown by Wilma Devenney**; 1000 copies were available with a suggested donation of £5 per booklet. The funds raised were to help the people of Zomba in Malawi cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding in Zomba was to be targeted through the Zomba Action Project (ZAP) which Wilma has supported since its initiation in 2003.



Four months later all the copies are now in circulation, benefitting the readers with the challenging and inspirational content therein. Equally important, **£5,400** has been raised to address the urgent COVID-19 needs in Zomba. This funding came at a very good time as there was a huge increase in the cases of COVID-19 in Malawi in December, when sadly, the very infectious South African variant was carried to the country by Malawians returning home or visiting their families.

The ZAP Committee in Zomba identified specific needs in the Zomba area. The committee has directed most of the £5400 assistance to the thousands of adults and children who couldn't afford to buy masks, soap or sanitising liquid; as well as supplying buckets and basins. This has also helped to increase awareness of the need for people to do all they can to prevent the spread of the virus. Running water, washing facilities and buying a mask or sanitising liquid are readily accessible to us; that is not the situation for the majority of Malawians.



Children who were sent home from school because they had no masks have now received a ZAP mask and are back in school. Special Needs children were provided with masks. Community organisations have been able to raise awareness of the need to socially distance in their daily life and to make use of soap and containers for hand washing. The most vulnerable, including elderly prisoners, have been given masks.

Teamwork maximises Outcome

The donations made through Wilma for this booklet, facilitated by ZAP, have made a tremendous contribution in Zomba. People there are so very thankful for the support they have received. The ZAP volunteers in Zomba have worked tirelessly to ensure that the grants are used effectively.

One example of this is a small church group, which made masks locally on sewing machines that had been sent earlier by ZAP in a container. A enthusiastic team, including young people who are unable to get employment, was recruited and trained to work making the masks. Members were happy to be able to contribute to the health of their community during this COVID-19 crisis. This has been a significant event in their lives.



This wonderful joint effort by author Wilma Devenney, donors mainly in the Causeway Coast & Glens area and volunteers in Zomba has helped thousands of people in a small city many miles away in Malawi by reducing the spread of COVID-19. Thankfully the number of new cases is now reducing and, hopefully this will continue, all helped by donations to 'Thoughts on Tuesdays' during Lockdown. Congratulations and thanks to Wilma Devenney and all involved with its production and circulation.

ZAP continues to support various projects in development, health and education in Zomba and you can share in this link by donating through Zomba Action Project Facebook page, sending a cheque to ZAP c/o Cloonavin Building, COLERAINE BT52 1EY or contacting Joyce McMullan Mob:07803165299 for more information.