

Friends of BOAT Spring 2021

Charcoal briquettes drying on corrugated tin structure at Kulika Training Centre, Lutisi

Chairman's Message

Last autumn, and with the COVID-19 Pandemic raging, we reluctantly decided to cancel our spring 2021 six week intensive, fully residential, BOAT training course in Institutional Management, Business Planning and Communications based at Bicton College. Our view then was that it was likely to take some months before normal international travel was fully restored, particularly from Africa, and we wanted to avoid raising the hopes of candidates only for them to be dashed at the last minute. Sadly our decision has proved to be the correct one.

However, In the meantime, we have been developing plans for greater in-country training delivery starting with our partners in Kenya and Uganda, so there is much to occupy us. A BOAT position paper was circulated at the end of 2020 and first draft training proposals have been received which are being further discussed and refined.

We continue to be indebted to our active supporters and sponsors (see footnote) which make our BOAT development programmes possible. I wish you all, and particularly our African friends, good health and stay safe.

David Wendover (Chairman)



Brian Peace

We were much saddened by the death of Brian Peace last October who was a towering figure in the southwest agricultural industry. Brian was an original Trustee of BOAT and both he and his late wife Jen remained good friends and supporters of our Trust throughout their lives. We extend our deepest condolences to their family.

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Chris Finney

We are very sad to report the untimely death of Chris Finney after a short illness. Chris became a BOAT Trustee in June 2013 after a lifetime working in the tropics as an agricultural and water resources economist with particular experience in irrigation planning and analysis in most of the developing world's major irrigation regions including South and Southeast Asia, the Nile Basin, Central Asia and China, as well as in Sub-Saharan Africa. BOAT will miss his expertise and advice greatly. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife and family.

Charcoal Briquettes at Kulika Training Centre, Lutisi

In May 2019 Amen Emmanuel, a BOAT alumnus and now manager at Lutisi, worked with refugees at Rhino refugee camp in North-eastern Uganda. Here he ran a Creative Capacity Building workshop to identify some of the challenges faced by the refugees and to consider possible solutions.

One of these problems was the shortage of fuel for cooking. A subsequent 2-week workshop, involving some of the refugees and volunteers from

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Locally produced tool used to make briquettes

The Trustees would like to thank Vapormatic for producing this newsletter and to thank all its sponsors for their generous help.



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Mark Phiri, 2013 Alumnus on BOAT Institutional Management and Business Planning Course

The BOAT course on Institutional Management and Business Planning (International) is designed to enhance the skills of people employed at management level in institutions and organisations involved in training and extension in aspects of agriculture and rural development. In selecting candidates, particular attention is given to those who will be able not only to apply their newly acquired skills and knowledge but also to pass these skills on to others. Mark Phiri, from Malawi, was an alumnus in 2013. This is his story.

In 1996 Mark graduated from the Natural Resources College, in Malawi, with a credit-level Certificate in Agriculture and Natural Resources and joined the Ministry of Agriculture as a field assistant. After two years he moved on to an IFAD-funded project as a business-development assistant and then, in 2000, to Lujeri Tea estates as a trainee divisional manager. During his 6 years at Lujeri he studied for, and obtained, a Certificate in Tea Production. This willingness to study, and keenness to progress, is reflected in the fact that, after leaving Lujeri in 2006, and during spells of employment with the Salvation Army (agriculture and marketing manager), S.O.A.P (counterpart to programme manager), and the Catholic Relief Agency (agriculture technologies co-ordinator) Mark was awarded certificates in Enabling Rural Innovation and in Seed Systems Assessment.

In 2011 Mark joined Alpha Milling as poultry learning centre manager, tasked with establishing the centre and developing the training programme, for both technical staff and smallholder farmers.

From here Mark moved on to become broiler operations manager for a large commercial farming operation.

It was this combination of an obvious ability, and a willingness to pass his skills and knowledge on to others, that convinced BOAT that Mark would be an ideal candidate for the 2013 course. Since returning to Malawi Mark has been involved with internationally-funded Agriculture and Technical skills Development programmes, acting as a facilitator for several workshops and putting together successful funding applications to international organisations such as USAID, the Lottery Fund and the German Government's development arm (GIZ). As a development worker with Progressio (formerly CIIR) he has developed curricula, and delivered skills training in enterprise management and environmental management to over 100 Technical officers and, through them, to over 5000 practitioners. Sadly, Progressio has now ceased to operate. Mark is now working with Africanparks to develop beekeeping and honey production schemes for communities bordering the Majete reserve in southern Malawi.

Mark is clearly a testament to the effectiveness of the BOAT course. He is keen to continue to be a BOAT ambassador in Africa and says that "the fundraising done to support the training of agricultural managers in Africa is making a significant contribution to social and economic development". We could not have said it better ourselves!



Top: Mark Phiri. Top Middle: Honey processing house at Namitsempha. Bottom Middle: Honey comb from top bar hive. Bottom: Poultry house designed for smallholder poultry farmers by Mark Phiri at AMDF Training Farm

Charcoal Briquettes continued

11 countries, was hosted at Lutisi, under the auspices of the International Development Innovation Initiative. This workshop led to the design of a locally produced tool to manufacture charcoal briquettes, and of a technique for converting maize cobs, and other crop residues, into charcoal. Some 90% of Ugandans use charcoal (which is scarce) or firewood as a source of fuel for cooking. The development of this technology has three immediate benefits: it reduces the incidence

of smoke-inhalation, thus reducing lung disease; it leads to reduced deforestation; it provides entrepreneurial producers (often rural women) with a sustainable income.

Following further development work, in mid-2020 Kulika applied for, and were successful in achieving, an award from GlobalGiving, a website that supports philanthropic donations and allows on-line giving via <http://goto-gg/49050>. (donations are always welcome!)

Using funds raised thus far, Kulika have launched a training programme to train an initial 200 women (and benefitting up to 5000 in the local community), but the project has the potential to be rolled out across the country. This is yet another example of how Kulika invites local communities to identify problems and then collaborates with them in developing appropriate solutions.

Thank you to everyone who has given donations via the website.

Going forward donations can also be made via VirginMoneyGiving, please visit their website to make a donation, regular or one off at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charities/boatagtrust> this is secure and gift aid will be collected by them on our behalf or donations can be made via the BOAT website.



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