

Help Malawi 2016: an update from Joshua Orphan and Community Care



News from Joshua Orphan and Community Care

We've been putting together our plans for 2016 and thought you would appreciate an update about what we've got planned. Over the next 12 months, we hope to be working with communities in Chilaweni to set up new community-based childcare centres – these are much in demand by families to provide pre-school education and vital nutrition for the 2-6 age group. We're also currently assessing local infrastructure needs and have identified several villages where a new bridge or borehole would make a huge difference to daily life.

Joshua's Help Malawi 2016 appeal



Malawi is experiencing huge food shortages at the moment. The harvest in 2015 was very poor – many villages had to replant after the devastating floods in January 2015 and then there was drought. Joshua's projects are struggling to cope with the increased level of demand. Attendance at our community-based childcare centres has increased by 40% over the last 12 months and requests for secondary school sponsorship have also risen. Our current level of funding is struggling to keep with the level of demand and we desperately need a boost to our income to be able to help more families. Our Help Malawi 2016 appeal is to raise awareness of this situation and raise the extra funds we need.

More information about the Help Malawi 2016 appeal is on our website and we have a separate appeal page at

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/helpmalawi2016>. If you are able to help, then please get in touch more for more information.

Increased demand for Kitty Clubs

Kitty Clubs are our respite sessions for elderly carers. For many reasons, these grandmothers and grandfathers have taken on huge responsibilities later in life and are often bringing up orphaned grandchildren by themselves. Kitty Clubs are a chance for them to catch up, enjoy a meal together and share their problems. We are very grateful to the Evan Cornish Foundation who are supporting some of the Kitty Clubs this year. There is demand for us to run more Kitty Clubs – and more frequently, particularly in light of the current food shortages. Elderly people have a tough time in Malawi – there is virtually no social safety net to support them, and many have to carry on back-breaking work to support their families.

Theresa's story...

Theresa is 78 years old. She is the sole carer for 6 grandchildren aged between 6-8 years old. Their supply of maize ran out last November. After that, Theresa thought they would have to survive on mangoes and water. Her only solace is that her grandchildren are part of a feeding programme at their primary school in Chigumukiri. Theresa comes to Joshua's Kitty Club sessions but these currently only run about once a month. Our Help Malawi 2016 appeal is needed so we can help the many families like Theresa's who we are meeting on a daily basis in our work.



To find out more about our 2016 plans and projects, please get in touch. We can also provide a speaker for your church, Rotary club or community groups on Kitty Clubs, education or any other aspect of our work in Malawi. Contact Sarah by email heather@joshuainmalawi.org.uk or phone 01438 217082.

Plans for new community-based childcare centres in Chilaweni

These centres are the cornerstone of our work, and how Joshua began nearly 20 years ago. We have set up 19 of these centres over the years and currently run 10. The others have been passed on to other organisations to manage – or the communities themselves. These centres provide pre-school education for children, as well as a nutritious daily meal – usually of Likuni Phala, a fortified porridge. For many children, this is the only meal they get.



The centres also provide a focal point for parents and carers. The centres host our mobile health clinic and provide health education workshops for carers. Our field officers oversee the centres, supported by volunteer caregivers – usually women from the villages. We provide training and support for them. Over the last year, we started work in a new area – Chilaweni. This is a cluster of 9 villages with high levels of poverty and little infrastructure. There is high demand for community-based childcare centres – there are many female-headed or child-headed households which tend to have higher levels of poverty. We have been holding planning meetings with some of the parents, carers and community leaders in Chilaweni to work out how childcare centres could be set up in their villages. In some cases, we have premises already identified and volunteers raring to go – all that is needed is to supply equipment, educational resources and start to turn these into vibrant and fun places for the children in these villages.

For more information about our centres, please contact Sarah (heather@joshuainmalawi.org.uk). We are also looking for sponsorship for some of our centres to help with equipment and training.



A word from Joseph – our field officer in Pensulo

As a grassroots organisation with deep roots in our communities, JOCC Field Officers are people who have grown up in the villages our projects serve and most live there to this day. They are the eyes and ears on the ground, ensuring all projects are community driven based on real need. They are troopers - they walk sometimes 5 hours in a day, from home to a project, to the office and back to home. Come rain or shine, they put in the work and help us to get results. Joseph (on the right) is one of our field officers. He volunteered with Joshua during his time at school and at the Pensulo health clinic after he left education. Joseph is now one of our field officers, working with 6 villages in the Pensulo area to develop projects. As a trained team leader, he also works with some of the visiting volunteer teams who help on our projects each year. Joseph has written an article about his work with Joshua – available on our blog. Find the link on our website www.joshuainmalawi.org.uk.