

Malawi Visions Newsletter January 2022



Merry Christmas from the TLIP kids at Khwamba



Click on photo for their song!

Happy New Year!

This newsletter begins with an, alas belated, Christmas Card from Khwamba.

Please click on it!

Two years have now passed with COVID-19 preventing travel to Malawi. But our programs have been active, at home and in Malawi, to benefit our children there.

One highlight of this year was our 2nd Jazz Night Benefit, raising funds for our programs. The dedication of every member of our team in preparing for, and hosting it was amazing !

We unite in prayer for the pandemic to end, and a year of good health and peace for us all!

Paul

Milcas Report



Libraries: *“Library activities continue in all the centers. Children read books in the libraries with the help of secondary school students and graduates who are on holiday.*

*Monitoring of libraries continued. A general observation in all the libraries was that cleanliness is being practiced and the books are well taken care of, and the registers are being used too. **It was noted that mostly the early and middle reading books were read by***

***children in all the centers.** The feedback from children was that these books have become easy to read since they have developed simple English vocabulary.*

Libraries continue to build the reading culture among children in all MOH centers.”

Solar Lighting: *“Solar power continues to support our children and the communities as a whole. Children in the centers continue to come to the centers to study and do their school work during the night using the solar light generated from the solar power projects provided by Malawi Visions.*

Cleaning of the panels was done in the 5 centers except Katondo due to lack of a ladder there. Arrangements are being made to provide a ladder to do the cleaning at Katondo, as soon as possible.”

Laptop Classes: *“Classes are continuing both at Matapila and Khwamba. Computer students are now able to apply the basic computer skills in Word, Excel, Power Point and Internet Explorer. They are also now able to open and check emails, which are possible through cellular communications.”*

Milcas Report

Irrigation : “Monitoring of irrigation projects continues at Chimwang’ombe and Matapila. Fixing of the pipes and adding new long line of valves was done at Chimwang’ombe. This will extend the irrigated area and make the watering and cultivating of more crops very effective. At Chimwang’ombe and Matapila various crops are growing well including tomatoes, mustard, Chinese cabbage, corn and peppers in addition to fruits such as pears, oranges, papaya, bananas and guavas, all which help feeding the children at the centers.”



Frank and Peter doing plumbing at Chimwang’ombe



Vegetables thriving at Chimwang’ombe garden

TLIP: “Teen mentors conducted home visits, visiting their children at their respective homes. The main goal was to meet the parents together with their children so that they should help in encouraging them on both school and good behaviors.

As part of initiating leadership skills, teen mentors were given chance to lead in devotions and the leaders continued with the rotational leadership among them on weekly basis. The one leading in a week is responsible for the whole team in signing the time book, making sure that everyone dresses well and ensuring that there is discipline among teams. At the end of the week, the leader of the week is responsible to write a report on how the programs were conducted in that week.

Milcas Report



Teen mentors

The occasion was also used to check on the personal plans and visions that the leaders had written at the start of the program to see if they are following and working towards them. On spiritual development, they continued to learn and memorize the word of God and the passage for reflection and memory was Psalm 23:1-6.

The teen mentors have made tremendous improvement on presentation and the spoken English. They have also taken the program seriously and dress presentably and are always clean and in neat clothes. The leaders have kept good records of their weekly engagements with the teen mentors including mentorship discussion areas.

English speaking remains compulsory for every teen mentor and the leaders. Anyone who speaks Chichewa when programs are in session is given a necklace upon which is written "Chichewa speaker"!

Milca

New Years Eve at Khwamba



New Year's Eve praying and singing

Normally in the towns people gather in their churches for the entire night praying and singing songs of rejoicing. But for the villages where they don't have light, they may celebrate till 8 PM or so when there is moonlight. With solar powered lights at Khwamba, they were able to gather for the whole night.

The event was organized by the Khwamba evangelism team, comprised of high school children and college students. People surrounding the Khwamba community gathered on New Year's Eve to pray for rains, personal issues, and all the programs at the Khwamba center and the others MOH centers. The word of Scripture was also preached.

Milca

Our 2021 Shipment Has (finally) Arrived !



**Unloading 3 crates at MoH
in Lilongwe**



Our 3 crates the U.S. left on July 7,
scheduled to arrive August 10.



Crates were released by MRA and
delivered to MOH November 12



Shipment 2021

Solar Panels and panel frames
Treadle sewing Machines (6)
4,000 Books
500 Bibles
Children's chairs
Steel book shelves
Skirts & shorts
Light Fixtures & LED Bulbs
Drum Kits (2)
Baby clothes (Valley Pres, AZ)
2 Skeletons and science kits



The Arrival of the Chairs



Kids so happy for more chairs !

Sometimes we are surprised to learn that some particular things make a great difference!



In Malawian village schools, the children sit on the floor.



We do the best we can to build sturdy benches for

the kids in our enrichment classes.

But when last year we shipped 24 “children's chairs” that had been donated by the Newark Christian School, they were thrilled to each have their own chair to sit on!



When (the last) 30 more donated chairs arrived in this year's shipment, the kids rushed to help unload them!

Pure JOY !

"The great swing set has finally rested"



Going strong in 2019

Daniel sent the adjacent photo the other day:

"After serving the children of Chimwang'ombe for 12 years, it has finally rested . . . the great swing set"

On my first trip to Malawi in 2009, the project a few of us undertook was to build 2 swing sets: one at Katondo and the other at Chimwang'ombe. Two more followed the next year at Matapila and Khwamba. We constructed them from the hardest wood, it seemed, known to man: blue gum! With lots of local community help, the swings were completed!



December 2021



Building swings in 2009

“The great swing set cont’d



We quickly learned that the kids in remote villages had never seen swings, and at first they just sat upon them!

But . . with a little instruction, that quickly changed!



Learning to “swing”



That first feeling!

Soon word spread, and children appeared from all directions!



... Anticipation



“crowd control “ in 2009

Swings became an avenue for children, with so difficult lives, to experience moments of childhood joy! Something different. And not just “kiddie swings”, but large enough for the older kids as well. To experience “different”, and in so doing the beginning of what Malawi Visions seeks to accomplish.

A Challenge

Handmade swings took a full day to build, and blue gum wood has become difficult to find in Malawi. We will draw up plans for swings to be built, this time, from 50mm (2 inch) steel pipe, and obtain estimates from a welding shop we’ve used in Lilongwe. Swings for all 6 centers. Hopefully other churches will join with us to fund new **“Great Swing Sets”** for our orphan children!

Digital News



Watching **"The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind"** at Khwamba

The kids at the centers love videos, and crowds gather at the opportunity to view educational, entertaining, and Christian subjects. Several years ago we shipped 2 flat screen monitors. Flat screens have much lower power requirement than older screens and can be driven by laptop computers at our centersm, both powered by the solar electricity we generate.



Before a vital cable was found, groups crowded together to view a laptop screen!

Monitor stands were included in last year's shipment and will improve viewing by raising the flat screen and making it portable!



Followup: Collaboration is Powerful !

In our last newsletter we reported partnering with **Valley Presbyterian Church, Paradise Valley, AZ** in our 2021 shipment.



Happy Nursery Babies!

**Catherine (holding baby) and caregivers
receiving baby clothes**

Carmel Courtright, concerned the crisis nursery was dangerously low on baby clothes, with generous donations from her church shipped 4 large boxes to us in time to be included in our annual shipment. Our Denise, Sue, and Carolyn repacked them in vacuum bags to slide into our almost-filled crates.



What a good feeling to work together!

TLIP News: Center Directors observe Khwamba TLIP

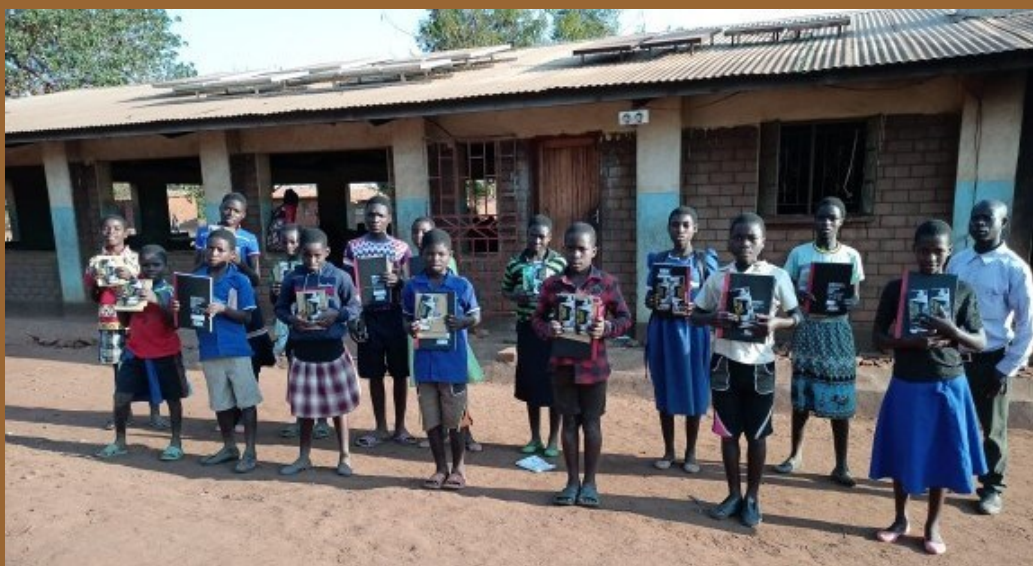


In August, directors of the MOH centers gathered at Khwamba to learn about and observe, the TLIP pilot program that has been operating there for the past year and a half. Behind the COVID masks, from the left, are Felix, Jimmy, Gladys, Dominic, and Joseph. Richard is on the far right.

From Daniel: *"The August meeting was a learning visit for all the center supervisors to hear what Felix is doing at Khwamba. They were briefed by the various teams running the center programs including the evangelism team, the TLIP team including leaders and mentors, and the resulting personal development taking place in lives through testimonies of teen mentors and others. Many questions about Felix's programs were answered, including how when even if he is away, everyone knows what to do. And how the children at Khwamba are so well disciplined.*

There was much discussion anticipating the initiation of the second TLIP at Matapila, including selection of teen mentors and leaders, their "salaries", and ongoing operations."

*In follow-up, in **December** three members of the Khwamba TLIP team traveled to Matapila to provide further training. January will be a final trip to Matapila to train the teen mentors that have been selected. Continuation of this excellent coordination will be instrumental as TLIP is extended to additional centers. "*



TLIP “stars” awarded for best performance and good behavior

”In September, at the end of 2021’s Term 2, an awards ceremony was conducted for the outstanding performers. The primary school children were assessed in academic performance (English, Mathematics and Sciences), behavior change, spiritual development and time management. Special awards were given to those who were in position 1, 2 and 3 as “stars”. The “TLIP Stars” were given hard cover notebooks and mathematical sets. In addition, all the participating children who passed the final term examinations received a pen and 2 exercise books.

Review meetings were also held with leaders and teen mentors, reflecting on what has happened in the course of time: what went well and what needs improvement. This was to help make recommendations for the January 2022 start of the 2nd TLIP at Matapila. The key successes registered so far include the improved academic performance by both teen mentors and primary school children, and the good behaviors shown by the participating children. “

Malawi schools operate on 3 terms

Term 1: January thru March

Term 2: April thru July

Term 3: September thru December

Milca



Sefias receiving her award from Milca



Some of the TLIP students and Std 7 graduates at Khwamba

On December 26, a graduation ceremony was held for the 40 children completing Standard 7. This was the second class completing Standard 7 since TLIP began in 2020, and also the first class to have been in TLIP for 2 years. (Standards 6 and 7). Chiefs, teachers from public schools, and parents were invited to attend and participate in the program..

Upon Standard 7 completion, the students are in Standard 8, which in Malawi is a year of review and preparation for the all important national exams, which qualify them to go to high school. How they perform on the exams also determines the quality of the secondary school they qualify for. Many of last year's graduating class, who were only in TLIP for one year, were selected to good secondary schools. We expect even better results for this class, when they take the exam at the end of this year.



PROGRAM FOR THE CLOSING CEREMONY OF KHWAMBA TLIP AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
8:00-9:00	Welcoming of invited guests, the whole audience takes sits in the center pavilion	All team mentors and leaders
9:00-9:05	Closing prayer	Eliza Chidongo
9:05-9:15	Introductions and welcoming speech	Felix Khurige
9:15-9:30	TLIP Choir	Team mentors and leaders
9:30-10:00	Program overview	Milica Moyo
10:00-10:15	Reading of false names by old	Eliza Chidongo
10:15-10:30	Did 5 results presentation	Felix Khurige
10:30-10:45	Did 5 play	Felix Khurige
10:45-11:00	Did 5 results presentation	Milica Moyo
11:00-11:15	Kids press briefing, discussion based on things that affect their lives and the impact of covid 19 on their education	Felix Khurige
11:15-11:30	Presentation of Std 7 results	Chaili Daniel and Katon Gresha
11:30-11:45	Forward activity by Std 7 class	Milica Moyo, Daniel Moyo and Felix Khurige
11:45-12:00	Gifts presentation to the class of the year	
12:00-12:30	Breakdown from: Representative from parents Representative from chiefs Representative from teachers from government schools Felix Khurige (center manager) Daniel Moyo (Programs Manager/MOH)	
12:30-12:35	Closing prayer	Eliza Chidongo
12:35	Lunch	

Malawi Education passes through levels: primary, secondary(high school), and university/college level. Primary school acts as a foundation where one has to work hard to proceed with the other levels. It is not automatic, most of the time, for one to move on to secondary school as there are different factors which determine one`s performance.

When kids get to standard 8, which is the final grade at primary level, they write National Examinations through the board which administers exams in Malawi called Malawi Examination Board (MANEB). The results of these exams qualifies one to be selected to secondary school. But there at least 4 categories of secondary schools to which kids may be selected, based upon their National Exam grade.

National Secondary Schools

Kids selected to these Secondary Schools are considered the first class, the most intelligent ones. At these schools there are people from different regions of Malawi, and the schools have the best educational facilities: libraries, laboratories and best qualified teachers.

Conventional Secondary Schools

These secondary schools similar facilities as National Secondary Schools only that kids at these schools come from the same district. They are also full boarding schools.

Community Day Secondary Schools

At these schools, kids operate from their homes and if the schools are far away from them they find themselves rooms to rent from people near the school. At these schools there are typically inadequate learning materials. At some schools there are no libraries and the teachers are less than adequate.

Private Schools

These are privately owned by persons or organizations, and not the government. These are attended by kids who did not qualify via their grades on the exams and/or their parents have opted to send them to private schools. These schools have all the resources but they are expensive compared to government schools. An example of this kind of high school is the one where Mavuto, Milca's husband is Principal.

Secondary School and TLIP

This brings us to the question of why TLIP is important to the kids in our communities?

TLIP is helping kids in our communities to have a better background in their education so that they can have a chance to be selected to National Secondary Schools. Normally what challenges most kids in the communities is the availability of resources for them to acquire good and quality education. TLIP is helping kids have access to English books, libraries, science equipment, and availability of mentors who help in coaching them via special attention. TLIP is helping orphans and vulnerable kids in the remote villages have the same access of education with kids in the towns and cities. Our goal is to produce more kids which will go as far as National Secondary school.

At the same time TLIP is also supporting the mentors already in Community Day Secondary schools with mentorship skills.

Milca

TLIP and Library Needs

As 3 classrooms are added to each of our one-room libraries in creating learning centers, there is an ongoing need for **classroom equipment**, specifically



Large library tables
at which groups of children can work



Steel library shelving
to hold our increasing collections of books



Blackboards
classroom size (4 foot x 6 foot)



Classroom Chairs
Children's size

In the past, we have obtained these items as donations from schools and companies, but we may have to purchase them as our needs grow.

If anyone is aware of surplus school or office items please let us know.

Malawi Visions 2022 Calendars

We, again this year, printed MV calendars early enough to include in the shipment for our friends in Malawi. Group members wrapped them beautifully in Christmas paper, with individual tags cut from Christmas cards. Upon arrival of our crates Daniel and Milca distributed them, capturing each moment with a photo. In the interest of better connecting our team here with the names and faces there, I've included those photos of each calendar recipient with their first name and location—no titles.

(in some cases older photos were necessary)



Dorica - Office



Daniel - Office



Andrew - Office



Flora - Office

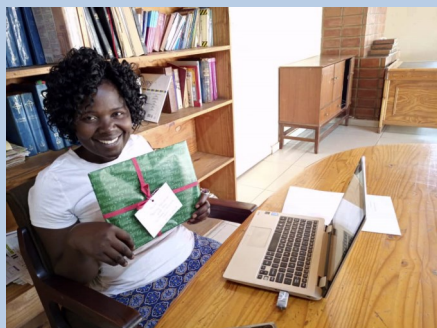


Richard - Office



Kondwani - Office

Malawi Visions 2022 Calendars



Milca - Office



Catherine -Nursery



Felix - Khwamba



Dominic - Matapila



Gladys
Chimwang'ombe



Jimmy -Selengo



Joseph—Mponela



Innocent— Matapila

Our other friends



Peter Sahane



Frank Mahle

BENEFIT CONCERT
hope for orphan children in Malawi, Africa

Nov 20
7:30 PM

Chris DeVito Quintet TICKETS: MalawiVisions.com/benefit

AN EVENING OF
Jazz

The Benefit

*hope for orphan children
in Malawi, Africa*

MALAWI *Visions*

BENEFIT CONCERT

photo:
Jesse Michalski
AN EVENING OF
Jazz

Nov 20 | 7:30 PM

**CHRIS DEVITO
QUINTET**

CHRIS DEVITO - piano
DANIELLE ILLARIO - vocals
GREG GRISPART - sax, clarinet
DAVE KINGSNORTH - double bass
GREG SUNDEL - drums

LIBERTY CORNER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
45 Church Street, Liberty Corner, NJ

TICKETS
malawivisions.com/benefit
\$40 advance; \$45 door

DONATIONS GREATLY WELCOMED

Malawi Visions once again produced a Jazz Benefit Concert, featuring the Chris DeVito Quintet.

Our purpose was to raise funds to support our programs to improve the lives of 6,000 orphan children in Malawi, Africa. With 133 attendees, it was a tremendous success!

It was awesome to watch the outpouring of effort by all of our MV Team members as we transformed LCPC's Douglas Hall into a jazz club motif.

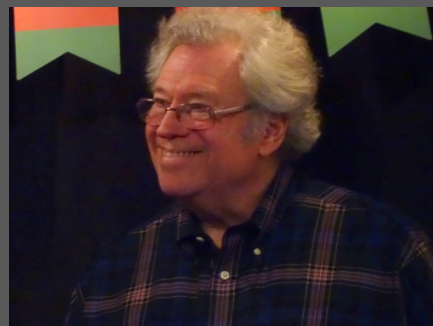
For a taste of the concert click on the adjacent poster

Very Special Thanks



Planning and Organization

Elaine DeVito
Carolyn Stewart



Production and Music

Chris DeVito



The Benefit Night



Our team did an excellent job transforming our church's Douglas Hall into a "jazz club" motif!



BENEFIT CONCERT

hope for orphan children in Malawi, Africa

Nov 20

7:30 PM

Chris DeVito Quintet TICKETS: MalawiVisions.com/benefit

AN EVENING OF

Jazz

The Benefit



The MV Jazz Benefit raised funds for our programs improving the lives of 6,000 orphan children in Malawi





The Benefit

The Artists



Chris DeVito
Piano



Danielle Illario
Vocals



Greg Grispart
Sax, Clarinet



Dave Kingsnorth
Double Bass



Greg Sundel
Drums

The Speakers



Paul Sigmund
Director Malawi Visions



Virginia DeBerry
Founder, New Brunswick Jazz Project



Rev. Barnabas Sprinkle
Lead Pastor LCPC

BENEFIT CONCERT
hope for orphan children in Malawi, Africa
AN EVENING OF
Jazz
Nov 20
7:30 PM
Chris DeVito Quintet TICKETS: [MalawiVisions.com/benefit](https://www.malawivisions.com/benefit)

Behind the Scenes





Preparations

It took the great efforts of many to prepare for this event



BENEFIT CONCERT

hope for orphan children in Malawi, Africa

AN EVENING OF

Jazz

Nov 20
7:30 PM

Chris DeVito Quintet TICKETS: MalawiVisions.com/benefit

Public Relations

Click below to view our public relations links

hope for orphan children
in Malawi, Africa

MALAWI *Visions*

BENEFIT CONCERT

AN EVENING OF
Jazz

NOV 20 | 7:30 PM

**CHRIS DEVITO
QUINTET**

CHRIS DEVITO - piano
DANIELLE ILLARIO - vocals
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\$40 advance; \$45 door

DONATIONS GREATLY WELCOMED



Performing Artists

Chris DeVito

Danielle Illario



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TLIP Program Transforms the Life of Boniface

By Milca Kathontha



Boniface Banda

Boniface Banda is 13 years old and from Ching'ambe village near Khwamba Center. He is the second born in a family of 3 children; all boys. Boniface is in Standard 6 at Bwevu Primary School. His ambition is to become a soldier after he finishes school. He joined Ministry of Hope programs when he was in standard 1 because his parents are vulnerable, and he is part of the Teen Life Internship Program (TLIP) at Khwamba.

Every morning Boniface's mother wakes up and walks a distance of about 11 kilometers to sell firewood in Mponela and back. She uses the money to buy food and needs for the family, yet the family still oftentimes lacks basic needs including food. Because Boniface's parents divorced several years ago, his mother has been raising the children single handedly, complicating his vulnerability.



Boniface at home with his mother and younger brother

Boniface joined the Malawi Visions Program last year while he was in Standard 5. Before the program began, Boniface's performance at school was not good. From standard 1 to 4 he had never been in the top 20 students in his grade. Things turned around when he became part of TLIP at Khwamba: he has become one of the stars TLIP has produced. He is now able to speak and write English well, and his behavior has changed a lot for good. Above all, he is now always in position 1 in his class since standard 5. During the personal interview, Boniface told Milca that the time he spends at the center with his mentors has helped him change his behavior. He said that since the program started he has been seeing things from a different view point.

TLIP Program Transforms the Life of Boniface, cont



"The love I receive at the center, my interaction with my mentors and motivational talks by people who have gone to high school and college are some of the things that have made me start focusing much on my education. I want to change my family. I will build a house for my mother; my mother will drink tea one day and people in my village will learn from my history", Boniface said during our chat.

From the time Boniface started school he had never been motivated that he can do something in life. The coming of TLIP with mentorship programs started him thinking that he can make it and that good grades in school are not only for people who come from well-to-do families. His behavior has also changed at home; he offers a helping hand to his mother when she is drying the firewood ready for market. He always makes sure that he does not miss church, which was not like that before. Through the lessons he gets in the program, Bible verses have contributed a lot to his spiritual life.

His mother is also happy with the program and that her son is among the lucky children at the center to benefit from TLIP. She is very grateful to Malawi Visions and said a prayer to me praying for us that God should guide all what Malawi Visions is doing at Khwamba. During my visit Boniface's mother said *"I call myself lucky to see my son being transformed and that he is now different from other children in my village."*



The TLIP model is life changing, particularly to kids who have no one to lean on, and also helps traumatized children to come back to their senses as they speak out their mind to their mentors. Boniface is a living testimony of what TLIP is doing for kids in the Khwamba community.

Milca presenting gifts of pens and hard-covers to Boniface for outstanding class performance

Milca

MoH-Malawi Board Members Visit Matapila



On October 28, 3 members of the MOH-Malawi Board, led by Board Chairman Rizine Mzikamanda visited the Matapila Center. Accompanying Mr. Mzikamanda were board members Mrs. Grace Kamba, and Mr. Chaguluka. They had the opportunity to visit the Malawi Visions computer class while in session, led by Innocent Chaona. Chairman Rizine interacted with each student and also enjoyed his time during VBS and irrigation garden tours.

Students stated how the program has prepared them for college as well as increasing their chances to make it to college as they receive coaching for college application. Four students have secured places at universities.

The group toured the new library and learning center construction, and the irrigation facility there. Plans to visit Khwamba Center in the near future are in place.



Board Members Visit, cont



MOH Board Chairman Rizine
Mzikamanda

[Click on photo to hear interview](#)

The following day Daniel interviewed Mr. Mzikamanda and recorded his comments. It was so encouraging to hear of the Board coming to Matapila to experience the activities, and our Malawi Visions operations. It was particularly an honor that, as Chief Justice of Malawi, the most senior judge in Malawi, Rizine Mzikamanda made time for this landmark visit!



Malawi Visions **in the Community**

Malawi Visions' primary activities are its projects in Africa, developing solar and agricultural infrastructure, libraries and educational enrichment for orphan children. But as a "family" we're also interested in programs in which our members are involved. Our Denise



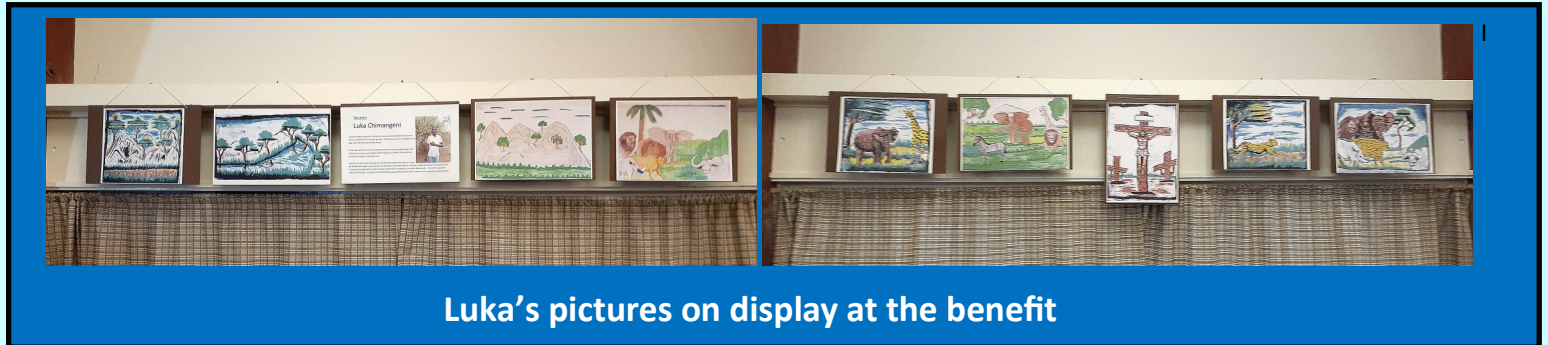
Before



After

Follow-up on Luka, the young artist

In our July 2021 newsletter we told the story of Luka, a young man from Matapila with exceptional artistic talent. During the jazz benefit we had displayed photos taken by Daniel of some of Luke's artwork, and several of his works were sold.




The Artist

Luka Chimangeni

Luka Chimangeni was born in 2000 but does not remember the date or the month. He went to school up to grade 6. This family comes from Matapila Village, near the Ministry of Hope center.

Lukas stays with his mother. His father died when Luka was only 6 years old. The family survives on subsistence farming and casual labor. They live in a two-bedroom grass thatched house.

Lukas has no formal art training, and started drawing pictures while in school. He stated that he gets inspiration for his artwork through Bible stories, thinking, as well as nature. He draws pictures of nature including animals, the mountains and forests, real people, as well as Bible stories. He sells his artwork at K200 (25 £) each, but hopes to find a breakthrough and make more sales so that he can support his mother better.



**Luka this month at the
Matapila library**

Luka, having dropped out of school several years ago, now receiving extra encouragement has been inspired to return back to school, particularly through the efforts of Jimmy Kuthyola, MoH's Selengo director. New clothing and school supplies were provided Luka and he is excited and happy to be back in school. The funds received for his artwork will be sent him and will be a welcome provision as well as encouragement to continue his artwork .

Khwamba Expansion Completed !



The MV Khwamba Learning Center with new library (on the right side)

The expansion of the MV learning center at Khwamba, adding a much larger library so that the previous, and outgrown, library room could be used as a learning center 3rd classroom, is now complete! But this could not have been so without the completion of a brick-lined spillway. During the rains, drainage becomes a problem at Khwamba, and would have undermined the new addition. Thanks to Daniel's engineering and architectural skills, that issue has been resolved and the books can now be transferred, just in time for the beginning of a new term of TLIP !



Click to see the trench during the rains



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