

# IF WE CHANGE ONE LIFE, WE CHANGE MANY LIVES

FEB 2018

## SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM

### MALAWI CHILDREN'S VILLAGE



**A DREAM. 10 YEARS LATER.** As a pediatric physical therapist, I am eagerly looking forward to my husbands' and my return to Malawi to the children and families that I have come to know.

The SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM is now part of the core program within Malawi Children's Village (MCV), aligning with its' mission to provide a continuum of services for orphans and other vulnerable children in 39 villages. It had been collaborating with Together! Act Now ([www.togetheractnow.org](http://www.togetheractnow.org)), which continues to be a partner with MCV. Together! Act Now continues its educational programs through theatre and school reconstruction.

### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT 2008-2018

The Special Needs Program has developed 3 program areas:

1. **Village-Based Care:** There are about 100 families being followed at this time. Catherine, the Outreach Coordinator from MCV for this program, continues to travel to the 39 villages to check on current families who have babies or young children with special needs. She also addresses new concerns that have been brought up by the village volunteer. Each village has 2 volunteers. Often MCV's Deputy Director, Vincent Sisya, accompanies Catherine.



2. **Equipment/Wheelchair Workshop:** Equipment needed for these children is now made at the Vocational Programs at MCV, which include Carpentry, Welding and Sewing. Repairs and modifications are continuous. Ramps and adapted bathing areas are also installed for families or at schools where children are attending. More than 55 wheelchairs, 100 walkers and 200 chairs or standers have been built.



3. **CP (Cerebral Palsy) Clinic:** MCV now has a weekly CP Clinic. Previously, donated money was provided to the families to spend a day traveling to go to the CP Clinic at Mangochi Hospital to get the care they needed for their children. The "physio" (Physical Therapist) from Mangochi Hospital now comes to MCV. The "waiting room" is under the trees.



## ONGOING PROJECTS AND SUCCESSES

- ❖ **School Attendance and Vocational Training:** Now at least 12 children are in school because of wheelchairs or walkers providing independent mobility. Adaptive equipment in the classrooms allows children with special needs to learn.



Nettie's Sewing Program is providing Vocational Training for Grace, a teenager



who experiences spina bifida. In Grace's early years, she was only able

to crawl and was not going to school. This program recommended surgery, provided her with a wheelchair and a walker. She felt too old to return to school. The Sewing Vocational program is offering her training to learn a life skill.

- ❖ **Hearing and Vision Challenges:** There are three children who have now been assessed through other programs for vision and hearing impairments. Hearing aids have been provided for 2 students. Tuition has been given to all 3 children to attend special schools for children who have hearing and vision impairments. They had dropped out of school, failing, as they couldn't hear the teachers or read the books. Word has it they are almost at the top of their classes now!



- ❖ **CP Clinic and Wheelchair Workshop:** More than 1,000 visits were made to the clinic this past year. "Save The Children" has contacted MCV with potential interest in having some of their wheelchairs made at MCV.

## WHAT I'VE LEARNED

**Opportunities are possibilities.** If we change one life, we change many lives. Thanks to MCV and my donors for providing the opportunities for the children with special needs and their families. The relationship that has evolved over the last 10 years between the Special Needs Program and MCV has provided training and learning for one child, one family, one community, which in turn has changed many lives. Zikomo or Thank you!

## Options for your Donations

- ❖ Tricycle (wheelchair with 3<sup>rd</sup> wheel out front): \$165.00
- ❖ Wheelchair: \$125.00
- ❖ Standing frame or Walker: \$26.00
- ❖ Adapted chair: \$29.00

**Donations are Tax Deductible**

[www.malawichildrensillage.org](http://www.malawichildrensillage.org) Designate for Special Needs Program

or Write Check: MCV Special Needs Program.

Send to :

Mary Pomeroy

Note: We leave March 23-April 16, 2018

10420 Lone Tree Dr

Money can be donated at any time! THANKS!!

Anchorage, AK 99507



