

MALAWI CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

A VILLAGE-BASED ORPHAN CARE PROJECT

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2010



Dear Donors and Friends,

For many of the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa, the word Ubuntu summarizes an entire philosophy of life. Loosely translated, we would say "We are, because you are". It expresses a belief in the interconnectedness of things, and that our inner potential is actualized only in relationship with others. Being exposed to this way of life is one of the blessings of spending time at Malawi Children's Village.

We hope that those of you who have generously donated to this village-based orphan care project over the years understand that Malawians

include you in this blessing as well. The orphans and their caretakers draw hope from the knowledge that people they will never meet are willing to provide for their welfare.

Your donations provide support for more than 3,500 orphans. This includes thousands of free visits to the MCV clinic; bednets that have reduced malaria cases and deaths in young children by 70%; AIDS education to protect children's health; school supplies and uniforms, and in some cases even school buildings, so that every child has a chance to attend primary school; tuition stipends so that orphans can attend secondary school,

an investment they have returned by making outstanding grades and graduation rates; equipment and consultation to establish much-needed irrigation and agriculture projects; and the list could go on.

An orphan who graduated some years ago and is now a teacher recently sent a note saying: "Thank you for giving me a chance at life. I pray that God gives you more than you have given me." That message is meant for all of you who have donated to MCV. You see, he is because you are. UBUNTU.

Tsalini Bwino,

Tom Vitaglione, Board President

AN EXTRAORDINARY MAN

By Nicki Kennedy

By American standards Stanford Mangoni is a small man. He's shorter than me (I'm 5'6") by several inches and walks with a pronounced limp that makes him seem even shorter than he is. He wears his hair shaved closely to his skin, both on his chin and on his pate. It's difficult to tell for sure how old Stanford is. His face is fairly smooth, but his eyes tell you with a sparkle in their depths, that he's been around for a while. If you were to see Stanford walking down the road, you would probably take no note of him; just a lame old man trundling along the way. If you were to see him walking

down the road, you would have no idea how extraordinary a man he truly is.

Stanford is a village volunteer at MCV. As we sit together at my table, sipping cold water, Stanford tells me about his



Stanford with board members Don Gray and Tom Nighswander

life and about his involvement with the Malawi Children's Village. His English is quite good; spoken in warm tones, with a clipped, precise pronunciation. Stanford is a carver, and I imagine that he works much the way he speaks: precisely, and with thought and heart. He is quick to laugh, and equally quick to become sober as the need arises. He thinks before he speaks and you can see his brain working all the time.

When asked about himself, Stanford is unassuming and brief. He lives in Chipoka village, about four kilometers from MCV, with his wife (a farmer) and five children. If it were up to him, he would stop right there. He would not tell you that he currently has five additional children living with him.

[Continued inside...](#)

“An Extraordinary Man” Continued...

While he may be concise when speaking about himself and his family, he becomes very animated when I ask him about MCV. He has been working for MCV since it began in 1997. He saw Mr. Sibale and other staff visiting the villages and was curious what they were about. Shortly thereafter, the village chief approached him about working for the Malawi Children’s Village. Mr. Sibale had asked the chiefs to choose people in their villages who showed great strength of character, morals, and dedication. Stanford jumped at the opportunity, and thirteen years later he is still as passionate as when he began.

A village volunteer for MCV has many responsibilities. They are each a part of the human net, linked hand to hand, that covers our 37 village catchment area. They are responsible for all the orphans, from birth to secondary school age, in their villages. They speak with guardians and encourage them to “accept total care” for the orphans: send them to school, take them to the clinic when they are ill, and ensure that they are well fed. Volunteers provide food, mosquito nets, uniforms, and arrange for scholarships to Gracious Secondary School. Monthly they report to MCV, bringing with them birth and death reports from their villages, as well as “social reports” from the youth regarding their general well-being. Volunteers raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and emphasize the importance of attending school and taking advantage of all educational opportunities.

Stanford does all these things and more. “I see being a village volunteer as a way to support the future. To be a volunteer is like evangelism, it is our job to be so kind to everyone. We try to encourage the youth.” At first people were resistant to the ideas that MCV brought to their villages. They ignored Stanford’s messages and disregarded his information and invitations. Over time, though, the chief and village elders became strong advocates and began to work together. Stanford smiles over his cup as he talks about this time “Cooperation is key. If you want to teach an old dog new tricks you must be very strong. You must be persistent to tell them the goodness of schooling.” These days Stanford says that he has seen the value of education increase in the villages. “Now when people see me coming, they try to hide if they haven’t been sending their children to school. They are ashamed. I tell them that everything in our society depends on schools, so please encourage your children to go to school.” As he speaks I can envision him catching out people as they try to slip quietly behind their huts, and earnestly and vehemently reminding them of their duty as guardians. There can be no doubt of his effectiveness, and the 150 orphans under his care are receiving the best that he can give them.

When asked what he feels is the best thing that MCV has done or is currently doing, he takes a big breath. I get my pen ready, and prepare to quickly scrawl the lengthy dissertation that I’m sure is coming. To my surprise, he is succinct. “The best thing



Stanford, a skillful carver, works on a Bao game board

about MCV is that it does so much. There is the school, the HIV/AIDS support, the clinic, the technical college, the crops and fish that they raise. MCV fills many needs. It has brought people together. Now, when you go around Mangochi district you see people, and chat. You know each other because of MCV.”

As our time comes to a pleasant end, I find myself filled with as many questions as when I began. I want to know more about his life, his history, and his dreams. Smiling, I put those questions aside for another day. We finish our water, and make promises to visit one another. As he walks away I lean my head on the doorframe and watch his diminutive form make his way out the circle drive. It isn’t long before he is stopped by one of an ensuing parade of people who know him: an extraordinary man, indeed.

– Nicki Kennedy, is volunteering as a teacher at Gracious. She is also writing regularly on the MCV blog. Visit www.malawichildrensvillage.org/blog to read more stories by Nicki and others.



Village volunteers receive per-diem for training on MCV's campus

The Village Volunteer Model:

Stanford is one of many extraordinary village volunteers that make village based orphan care possible. In 1997, village headmen from 37 surrounding villages met under a mango tree with MCV executive director Chakunja Sibale and cofounder Kevin Denny and agreed to select two volunteers from their village. Like Stanford, many of the volunteers have now been with the project for over 13 years.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CHAKUNJA SIBALE'S 2010 ANNUAL REPORT

In addition to the work done by the village volunteers and field workers in the villages, MCV's many projects continue to provide access to education, health services, and food security to orphans, vulnerable children and their care givers.



Ellaton Siyabu, orphan and 2010 Gracious graduate, hopes to attend university next year

Gracious Students Excel Again:

As reported in last year's newsletter, MCV's Gracious Secondary School's first graduating class took the Malawi National Certificate Exams last fall. The results came in this spring, and we are pleased to announce that Gracious had the second best scores in the district with 96% passing. This compares with a national passing rate of 53%.

A number of students did exceptionally well on their exams, and

are eligible to continue their studies at the university level. Thanks to generous donors, recent graduates Catherine Malinda and Felix Semu have joined other sponsored students in university. Catherine is at Chilangoma Teacher Training College, and Felix at the University of Malawi, Bunda College of Agriculture. Several other recent orphan or vulnerable children graduates are hoping to attend university or technical school, but are awaiting donor support.

Nasenga Primary School Opens:

MCV's School to School program continues to increase educational opportunities in the Mangochi area. This year's biggest news is the completion of Nasenga Primary:

The Nasenga village committee's desire and organization started the project. MCV coordinated the effort and disbursement of funds; parents in the community made bricks. Funds came from St. Mary's Episcopal



Ruth Nighswander meets with the village committee and government official

Church and Denali Montessori in Anchorage, and Solace International, another NGO that has often partnered with MCV. Local government officials approved the buildings and provided teachers. There are now 200 students!

Nasenga Primary has students from grades one through four, and plans to expand to a full primary school. The community is very proud of the school that will serve many young pupils who were unable to walk to distant schools.

Fighting Njala: January and February are too often known as Njala (hunger time) in Malawi. For the villages close to Lake Malawi, this should not be a problem. But with no pumps, PVC pipes or petro, Malawi has only one crop a year, the success of which is completely dependent on the rain at the right time, in the right amount and the right length. It is hit or miss.

This can be solved by some simple technology that was introduced several years ago by MCV former board member Jerry Turner. Irrigation projects were only marginally successful, but Jerry did not give up hope. With new infrastructure for support in place, he returned this last summer and revitalized this effort.

Dyson Magombo, another successful orphan from MCV, who recently graduated in irrigation studies from the Agriculture College in Lilongwe, has been employed to lead the project.



James Mwan'gamba shows visitors an irrigation scheme

One large project at Mitawa Village is on the Namingundi River. Sixteen families are involved and have been provided with three new treadle pumps. They have taken off growing tomatoes, rape, cabbage, and Chinese cabbage. No petro is involved, just leg power that most anyone can handle. The pumps will pump water a distance of 150 feet.

A new method of building waterways in the gardens is being used instead of

using bricks and cement. Water is moved around by digging earthen channels which are lined with plastic sheeting obtained locally. It is very cheap and can be relocated wherever necessary. It is being adopted by new and established irrigation projects.

The Turner Foundation donated fifty money-maker treadle pumps, complete with all the necessary hoses, to the MCV Irrigation Project. A New York Rotary Club is donating several new gasoline pumps which are in the process of being shipped to Malawi. They now have a salinity meter for sampling saline water which is a problem in the area. Transits have been used to measure elevations and a three and six inch drill is being used to measure groundwater levels down to 20 ft. These are presently scattered around in different places at MCV. With irrigation in place, three crops can be grown a year.

TREASURER'S REPORT: YEAR END 2010

By Mike Horne

It has been more challenging in 2010 than past years since we are still in a declining world economy. At the 2009 fall meeting, the Board took stock of our resources and estimated a donation amount that we felt was obtainable. As in past years, we voted to continue our high school scholarship support of approx. 100 orphans from the 37 villages that make up the catchment area of MCV support. School support was more costly this year, as a change in the Malawi School calendar resulted in four terms of tuition instead of three.

As 2010 comes to an end, the Board is happy to announce that for 2010 we were able to support the orphans through high school scholarships, as well as MCV and its components, to the full amount we had estimated.

As always, we thank our past donors who have been very loyal to MCV, as well as new donors who have heard about the good work of MCV Malawi and give generously with their limited funds. Just today I tuned into public radio in Anchorage to catch the tail end of a travel program which was interviewing a couple, who with their family had spent a week at MCV in 2009. They spoke warmly of MCV and the Malawi people, truly the warm heart of Africa.

I would like to thank all the donors for 2010, including those that gave from their pocket, and those that had the chance to visit Malawi and MCV and give their time.

Net Asset Beginning (12/1/09) \$2,735

Revenue Gains 2010	
Contributions	\$180,736
Checking Account	\$1,985
Interest/Fees	-\$80

Total \$182,641

Supporting Services	
Admin Fees	\$3,116
Bank Fees	\$95
Tax Preparation	\$835
Newsletter	\$2,500
Office	\$450

Total Supporting Services \$6,996

Program Services	
Grants	\$125,988
Designated Funds	\$25,308
Orphan School Tuition	\$26,664

Total Program Services \$177,960

Total Expenses \$184,956

Net assets ending (12/1/10)** \$420

As you know we do one major fund raiser per year from December through January. In late November we sent the December monthly support funds to MCV staff. This is the final payment for the year. The ending balance shown on the financial statements is merely a reflection of the funds available for the start of the following year based on our funds December 1st and does not include funds donated in December which will be used for supporting MCV for the following year.

2010 VILLAGE ORPHAN SURVEY

By Mary Pomeroy

The 2010 Village orphan survey was conducted this summer to see if MCV has been succeeding in its attempt to offer orphans similar opportunities for health, education and overall development, as non-orphans. I coordinated this survey working with MCV field workers Catherine and Florence. Driving over marginal roads we avoided chickens, goats, women with buckets of water on their heads and children scurrying off to school. Upon arriving at the designated tree or person's hut, the village volunteers generally had already gathered the orphans and their caregivers and were happily sitting and waiting with the ever present smile of all Malawians.

We worked tirelessly for three weeks, and Catherine and Florence surveyed 12 more villages after I left. Data on caregivers, age, school status, weight and arm measurement, and current needs were gathered. While we are still evaluating the data, I wanted to share the following initial numbers: There are 3,521 orphaned children (18 years or younger) in the 37 villages of MCV's catchment area living in a total of 1,568 households. That's an average of 2.1 orphans per household compared with 5 to 6 per household found on surveys in 1996 and 1997.

Of the total households (9,787) within the 37 villages, 16% of them are households with orphans. As the survey was conducted, it was apparent that orphans still have many needs that must be addressed.



Together! ACT Now, a separate NGO partnering with MCV, continued to educate villagers about HIV/AIDS with several theater performances in 2010.



Eunice Dzikiti, an orphan sponsored by MCV, graduated from university in 2009 and now teaches at Gracious

Donors and Friends: Thanks to your dedication over the past several years, some of the earliest supported orphans have now entered the professional workforce as teachers, clinical officers, & agricultural extension workers.

Being an orphan in a subsistence culture not only makes you a second class citizen, but can threaten your very existence. Had it not been for you, Eunice Dzikiti would have had few options when her father died of HIV/AIDS.

“After my dad died I did not know what to do. I do not know what I would have done without MCV. I wanted to go on to school but there was no chance without money.”

Please help other orphans thrive as Eunice has by making a gift today.

Thank you, Zikomo.

MCV Board of Directors

Donations may be made online at www.malawichildrensvillage.org/donate OR by filling out and submitting the form below with your check.

Malawi Children’s Village provides a continuum of services for the immediate needs and the future opportunities of orphans and other vulnerable children, their families and villages of Mangochi, MW, focusing on current and emerging concerns including but not limited to: HIV/AIDS and malaria care and prevention, food security and educational attainment.

YES! I want to make a real difference in the life of an orphaned child.

Enclosed please find my gift of:

_____ \$30 _____ \$50 _____ \$85
 _____ \$150 _____ \$300 _____ \$500
 Other (\$ _____)

Designation preference, if any:

_____ Wherever funds are most needed.
 _____ Gracious Secondary School
 _____ Other (Please fill in: _____)

Mail this form and donations to:

Alaska Community Foundation
 Malawi Children’s Village Foundation Fund
 400 L Street, Suite 100, Anchorage, AK 99501

Please make checks payable to:

Malawi Children’s Village Foundation, Inc.

Please provide us with the following information: Dr. / Mr. / Ms. / Mrs. (please circle)

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Suffix: _____
 Mailing Address: _____
 City/Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

May we send updates showing how your donation is making a difference? Yes / No (please circle)

Malawi Children’s Village is a designated 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization incorporated in the State of New York. As such, your donation is tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. For your records, MCV’s Tax ID Number is 16-1526805. Thank you for your generous support. Zikomo!