

# A Village-Based Orphan Care Project

## 2021 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER



**malawi  
children's  
village**

### PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

**Moni Achimwene (Hello, Friends),**

Soccer was a daily pastime for my friends and I growing up in the township of Balaka, Malawi. We would occasionally compete against other teams, and these games were rewarding, regardless of the final score, as they challenged us to try hard and work together. Ultimately, they drew us closer to each other. While it was not a truly organized “team” by western standards, I am reminded of the saying that TEAM stands for “Together Each Achieves More.” This was true on the dirt soccer pitch in Balaka, and it is true for MCV today.

MCV’s “core program” was built around resident volunteers selected by the Chief in each village to support their community’s orphans and vulnerable children, along with the extended families that took them in. The staff at MCV partner with these village volunteers to provide support with nutrition, healthcare, education, social services, amidst other services. Today the core program supports 3,200+ orphans and remains the central purpose of MCV, outlasting the normal lifespan of NGO’s because of this unique, culturally integrated team approach.

Since its inception 24 years ago, MCV’s impact has grown as new initiatives were implemented, including Gracious Secondary School, a special needs clinic, a school-to-school program, irrigation /agricultural program, technical training options, a Women’s Empowerment program, amidst other programs / projects, including several sponsored by Rotary Clubs. International friends are also members of the MCV team and have provided technical knowledge, advice, equipment, and financial resources to bring concepts to life.

In recapping key aspects of the last year, Felix Chirombo, executive director of MCV, highlighted that the needs of families caring for orphans grew significantly during the pandemic, primarily from lost income that caused greater food insecurity. MCV’s team could not stop their work, rather they established safe ways to check in with families to sustain services, including distributing facemasks made by the sewing project, and provided additional access to healthcare and food. When the nation’s schools were required to close for roughly six months, construction gradually resumed on duplexes for MCV’s Gracious Secondary School faculty. This long-awaited advancement of a dream provided the teachers, and community, with reassurance that MCV remained focused beyond the pandemic, providing hope for a brighter future.

Coach Vince Lombardi said, “Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work...” Those MCV serves rely on the village Chiefs, volunteers, MCV staff and each of us to make individual commitments that are greater than could be achieved individually. Thank you for accepting the opportunity to join the MCV team. Together we are and will continue to make an impact in the lives of those MCV serves. - James Miller, Board President



James' soccer 'team' as a child in Balaka.

# LIFE AS AN MCV VOLUNTEER

By Niya Amadu



Niya Amadu is a village volunteer for Michesi village. She is aged 33 and has been volunteering since 2013. She is married and has three children. She says that she enjoys working as a volunteer for MCV because that's one way how she serves her community. For her, volunteering is a way of life, and it defines her. She makes sure that all school-aged children who are OVC (Orphaned and Vulnerable Children) are going to school. She reports to MCV any needs that they may have. She also makes sure that all sick OVC receive proper medical care through MCV.

In Michesi village there are two children who attended the Cerebral Palsy Clinic at MCV who are now able to walk on their own. This is one of her success stories. One OCV graduated at the university in 2021, while one is still attending university at Chancellor College.

She says she has developed a bond with the entire village and stakeholders working within her village and this makes her work easier. She says my goal in life is to inspire others to give back in any way they can to uplift their communities.

**If you are interested in supporting Niya and our other village volunteers in their efforts to improve the lives of orphaned and vulnerable children in their villages, please consider a contribution to MCV.**

## Irrigation Program Update

By: Felix Semu

The irrigation program as of the first season of 2021 has more than 522 farmers with 37 irrigation sites. The project has managed to distribute irrigation technologies and supplies from March-June. 57% of our farmers have received irrigation supplies that have been purchased. The remaining 31% are in

the category of sustainability and were helped with other issues. Thanks to Seneca Falls Rotary, Clifton Springs Rotary, Mark and Matt Turner for their valuable contributions in 2021 agricultural program. The 2021 irrigation season has been one of the successful seasons. The harvest has been good to over 85% of our farmers.



Felix gifting a solar panel to a local farmer which will allow him to cultivate a larger area with less resources.

**Exciting update: A NEW GRANT PROJECT!** The Rotary Club of Kansas City Plaza, USA, and the Rotary Club of Limbe, Malawi have partnered with MCV on a Rotary Foundation Grant to fund the purchase of treadle pumps to provide 400-500 farmers with increased irrigation! The grant will also provide farmers with training in soil preservation and seed and fertilizer.

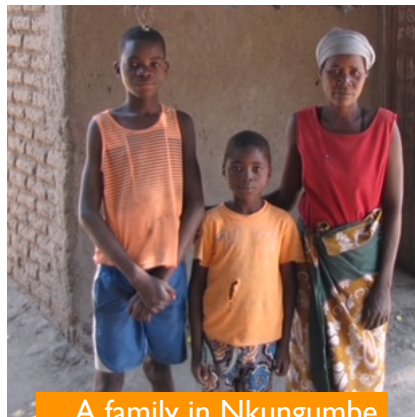
## VILLAGE PROFILE: NKUNGUMBE

By Vincent Sisya, MCV  
Deputy Director

*MCV's mission is to support orphans and vulnerable children in 39 villages in southwest Malawi. This is a profile of one of those villages, Nkungumbe.*

Nkungumbe is one of the villages in the MCV catchment area. It is located centrally in the MCV catchment Area. The village volunteers for the village are Veronica Mphalu and Alice Mdeza. I chatted with Veronica who sheds more light about the village. Nkungumbe village has the population of over 1600 and about 480 households. The village has 130 orphans and vulnerable children and 5 children with special needs that are supported by MCV. These OVC are housed in 62 households. 113 of these OVC are school going. The people in this village earn their living mostly by doing subsistence farming and fishing. A few people are employed in the tourism industry. Although the village has piped water and electricity grid passing through it, the village is connected to none of these. Therefore the common problem of all the villagers is lack of tap water and electricity. The water table of the village is far away as such the village does not benefit from the MCV

Irrigation program. When asked to highlight the major benefit that the village has benefited from MCV, she mentioned education. Currently the village has two students who are at university and they hope that when they graduate they will uplift their village.



A family in Nkungumbe Village



## STUDENT PROFILE: LELENI LIFE

'Leleni, 18, comes from Bolera Village. She is in form two at Gracious Secondary school. Despite her birth deformity, Leleni is a motivation to others because of her determination, courage and hardworking attitude. Because of family poverty, life would have been harder if not for MCV coming to her rescue for her education and wellbeing of everyday life. In our impoverished country, life is very hard for people with such conditions and it is an amazement to many people in her community seeing her progressing in her studies.' -Vincent, MCV Deputy Director

**How MCV has changed her life:** 'I feel blessed and honored to be part of MCV beneficiaries, I could not imagine how life would have been for me if it was not for MCV. My friends and people in community used to discourage me but I have an inner drive which pushes me to work hard. I feel like people with my conditions can do better and become citizens who can valuably contribute to the nation. Our culture does not believe much in education, they feel like it's a waste of time but I have to prove them that harmful culture can be broken. MCV is a very big incentive for my career. They cover for my school fees, school supplies, transportation and my health status.

I would like to be a nurse. I look at nurses as people who can change the world for better because I see how they treat me with my conditions. I would love to repay back the favor to others. It is my wish that MCV keeps on sponsoring my education.' ~Leleni

## A CAREGIVER'S STORY: PATUMA

Patuma Awali aged 62, is the guardian for her grandson Godfrey Benito. They come from Mauwa Village.

'Godfrey Benito is 17 years. He has a condition where most joints are stiff and do not bend. He only stays in an upright position or sleeping position. He moves with someone pushing him on a rolling cart. He goes to school and has just written the primary school leaving examination and he is waiting for results. Patuma says her life changed a lot. She is restricted in doing other things because she has to take care of Benito. She has received huge support from MCV; a house built by MCV and also provided with a pushcart, stander and walking stick for Benito. She is ready to share her experiences with others supporting children with special needs. Her main worry is that Benito cannot continue with secondary school education because he needs special care.' -Patuma as interpreted by Catherine, Village Coordinator.



Patuma pictured with Benito

A note from Mary Pomeroy, PT,: 'Being a guardian of a child with special needs is challenging and rewarding, as Patuma has discovered. She has been remarkable making sure that Benito's needs are met and getting him to school. He cannot sit in school but uses a wooden stander and special desk made for him. He struggles with holding a pencil but has adapted his skills; he is often the top in his class. He is bright and waiting for an opportunity to further his education. Patuma is doing her best to have Benito follow his dreams. The Guardians are part of the core mission for MCV with their continual care for orphans.'

# MCV'S SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM: MALAWIANS PROVIDING SERVICE TO MALAWIANS

By Mary Pomeroy

Malawians providing service to Malawians is the foundation of The Special Needs program. The Special Needs Program has evolved over the past 13 years, managing the concerns and needs of these children within the 39 villages of MCV. MCV originated to take care of babies who became orphans, having lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS. Many of these orphans developed special needs as they were born early or had poor nutrition for healthy development. With a decrease in HIV/AIDS, most orphaned or vulnerable children and young adults with special needs now face motor challenges secondary to malaria (fever causing injury to the brain), snake bites (often losing a limb), burns affecting joint motion and poor nutrition or dehydration affecting overall growth.

Each year the Special Needs program has developed because the Malawians take care of one another. As a pediatric Physical Therapist, my work each year is to listen to the staff for the Special Needs Program. Catherine one of the Village Outreach Coordinators, keeps the program running each day, week and month of the year. Vincent, the Deputy Director, oversees the program.

The carpentry section of the Vocational Training center at MCV builds wheelchairs, walkers, adapted wooden chairs and standers for children with motor impairments. A physiotherapist (Physical Therapist) comes for a morning each week for a Cerebral Palsy Clinic at MCV, where an average of 12 clients are evaluated and treated. This means there are 50 physiotherapy treatments/month or 600 visits/year. In 2008, I evaluated/treated 9 babies. When I look at the big picture, over 6,600 babies, children or young adults have been serviced by the Special Needs Program since its inception.

The Special Needs Program is now self-sufficient within the MCV program. Malawians are self-reliant and resilient, so this program is now run completely by Malawians. Thanks to all of the donations that help keep this program viable.

**Over the past 13 years, the program has touched the lives of over 6,600 children!**



Rafick, a child who has benefited from the Special Needs program, and his mother.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

By Ruth Nighswander and Teresa Curran, MCV bookkeeper

It never ceases to amaze me that MCV donors step up to the plate no matter what: Covid, no Covid, Delta variant, etc.

Our secondary teachers are very appreciative to have teacher housing with the 8th duplex to be completed before the rainy season begins in December. Students are back in school with masks and hand washing stations. Thank you, Thank you!!!

### Financial Report July 2020-June 2021

**Total Donations:** \$310,307

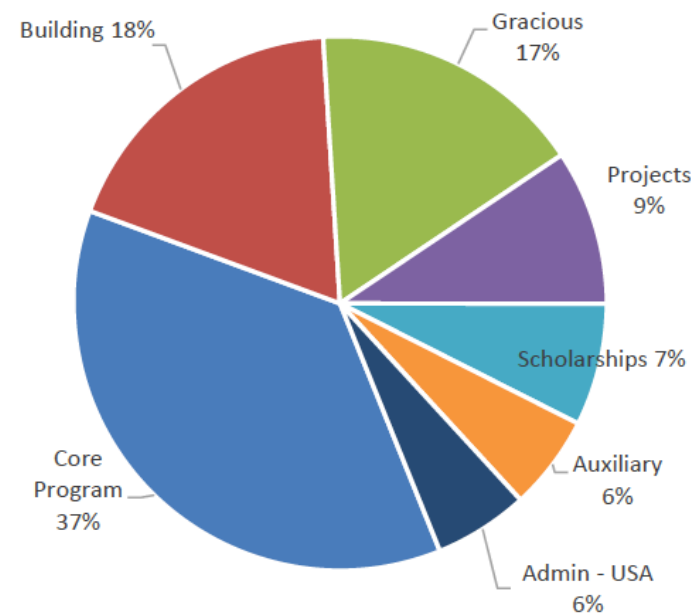
#### Expenditures:

—Core Program	\$103,309
—Building	\$51,661
—Gracious	\$46,748
—Projects	\$26,430
—Scholarships	\$20,870
—Auxiliary	\$16,086
—Admin-USA	\$16,120

**Total Expenses:** \$281,224

**Pending Distribution:** \$29,083

#### Expenditures for Year Ended June 2021



**Reminder:** "Donating stock saves on taxes". Email [info@malawichildrensillage.org](mailto:info@malawichildrensillage.org) for more information.

MCV Foundation board members pay all of their own expenses.

## Reflections of Board Members: The Nighswanders

When Ruth and I started with the Malawi Children's Village many years ago we never anticipated that more than 20 years later, in the 39 villages in the catchment areas, over 10,000 orphans and vulnerable children would be beneficiaries of Malawi Children's Village. Being an infant orphan because your mother had died of HIV was life-threatening. Not only have the orphans survived, but 20 years later they've come back as clinical nurses, school teachers, agriculture specialists. The program had a very modest but audacious goal. "Make sure that orphans and vulnerable children have the same opportunities as those in stable village families". Over the years with program additions, such as bed nets for under 5 year olds, irrigation schemes, support to the primary schools in the area, the building of Gracious Secondary School and the development of clean water schemes... all have made a tremendous impact. It could not have been done without building partnerships. Engineers without Borders, Open Arms a high end residential nursery for infants (stepped in after our own nursery burnt down), partnerships with International Rotary and individual Rotary Clubs are a few examples. However, most important has been all of you who have been generous and supportive over the years. Malawi children and staff, the Malawi Board of Trustees, plus all of us on the US Foundation Board thank you so very much. Zikomo!



### Donors and Friends:

Thanks to generous donations, this year alone we were able to support:

- 3200+ orphans
- 1458 households that cared for orphans
- 176 special needs children and their families
- 2678 students with school scholarships
- 7 teaching duplexes built and ready for Gracious Teachers
- 2000 masks made for COVID

MCV's success has been thanks to donors like you. You sustain the projects at MCV. Please donate today and help us continue to serve the orphans and vulnerable children of Mangochi.

**Thank you. Zikomo**

Donations may be made at [www.malawichildrensivillage.org](http://www.malawichildrensivillage.org) OR by filling out and submitting the form below.

*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:

\$500  \$100  \$50 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation Preference:

Wherever funds are most needed.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to:

Malawi Children's Village Foundation, Inc.

Mail this form and donations to:

Malawi Children's Village Foundation

PO Box 240547

Anchorage, AK 99524-0547

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

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Suffix: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*Malawi Children's Village Foundation, Inc. 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. MCV's Tax ID Number is 16-1526805. Thank you for your support. Zikomo!*



PO Box 240547

Anchorage, Alaska 99524-0547

[www.malawichildrensivillage.org](http://www.malawichildrensivillage.org)

Please send changes in your address to [info@malawichildrensivillage.org](mailto:info@malawichildrensivillage.org)

### What does your investment in MCV really mean?

Here are a few examples of what can be accomplished with your support...

- \$18 can buy a blanket to keep as many as three children warm
- \$32 can pay for enough maize to feed a family for an entire month
- \$100 can purchase anti-malarial medicine for 100 orphans
- \$280 can send an orphan to secondary school for a year
- \$300 can pay for a new roof for a family housing one or more orphans
- \$1000 can build a home for a family caring for orphans

## 2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS Malawi Children's Village Foundation, Inc.

**James Miller** **Elizabeth Usovicz** **Ruth Nighswander**  
*President* *Vice President* *Treasurer*  
Kansas City, MO Kansas City, MO Anchorage, AK

**Mary Pomeroy** **Madeline Turner**  
*Secretary* *Vice President of Communications*  
Anchorage, AK Helena, MT

**Linda Kalilani**, Apex, NC  
**Caroline Matkorn**, Madison, WI  
**Wezzie Muntali**, Anchorage, AK  
**Tom Nighswander**, Anchorage, AK

### THE MISSION OF MALAWI CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

MCV is a village-based orphan care project that provides health, social, and educational resources in 39 villages along the southwest shore of Lake Malawi.

#### Supportive Services

- MCV contracts with Mehboob Clinic to provide free healthcare to orphans and their caregivers
- Irrigation projects help provide food security in the villages
- The MCV Malaria Prevention Project distributes insecticide treated bed-nets to households with young children
- The MCV Fieldwork team visits villages regularly to monitor orphans and provide assistance to their caregivers
- Two village volunteers in each village keep MCV aware of orphans' needs and encourage caretakers to take proper care of orphans

#### Educational Services

- MCV's Gracious Secondary School educates paying students and sponsored orphans in grades 9 - 12
- The MCV Vocational School trains paying students and sponsored orphans in trades such as brick laying, carpentry, mechanics, and sewing
- MCV's School-to-School program supports government run primary schools
- Open Arms Mangochi cares for sick or malnourished infants
- Together! ACT Now uses theater to spread the message about HIV/AIDS

#### Partner Organization Services