



INSIDE HOPE

SPRING 2012

THIS ISSUE:

THE WARM HEART OF AFRICA



Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world. This skinny strip of land has nearly 600,000 children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. But there's a reason that Malawi is nicknamed 'The Warm Heart of Africa'. HOPEHIV has been working there for seven years and, though the enormous challenges of everyday life are obvious, so is the desire among communities to take care of their most vulnerable children and the strong culture of volunteering that enables this desire to become a reality.

In this edition of INSIDE HOPE, we profile two of our partners in Malawi, Active Youth in Development (AYIDO) and Malawi Presbyterian Church, and ask you to Raise the Roof for three Early Childhood Development Centres in the rural district of Bilira.

ACCESS ALL > AREAS

Most of Malawi's orphans live in remote rural areas with very little infrastructure, making it too difficult and expensive for many NGOs to reach them. HOPEHIV has found a low cost, replicable way of doing it: by using the congregations and buildings of the Malawi Presbyterian Church, the country's largest denomination with 1.3 million members and 1.3 million potential volunteers.



RAISE THE ROOF

Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres are a core component of our project with Malawi Presbyterian Church (see pages 3 to 5). Orphans and vulnerable children under seven participate in fun and educational activities, while their parents and guardians go out to work and make sure the family has enough to eat.

The centres are based in existing church/community huts like the one in the picture, some of which are in dire need of repair.

We're looking for £6,000 to put new roofs on three ECD centres to protect the children from the sun, wind and rain. Whether you can spare £6, £60 or £600, please fill in the form on the back or donate online at www.hopehiv.org/donate (please select 'INSIDE HOPE' in the 'How did you hear about us?' box).

Any donations received in excess of our £6,000 target will be used to fund the whole of HOPEHIV's work.



Bilira is poor and remote, even for Malawi. No other NGOs are working in the 13 villages that Malawi Presbyterian Church has chosen for the HOPEHIV project.

It's a difficult location but fortunately our model is proven: Bilira is the second roll-out of a three year programme which we piloted in Domasi from 2007 to 2010. The project takes a four-pronged approach to improving the lives of orphans and vulnerable children. Volunteers set up and run Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres for under sevens and 'Children's Corners' for seven to 18 year olds. Orphan guardians and volunteers are trained in enterprise and

helped to access small revolving loans. The same training is offered to older orphans in conjunction with a carpentry, welding or tailoring course and start-up materials.

The aim of the ECD centres is to prepare children for primary school. In order to do so they need to tackle one of the biggest problems facing Malawi's poorest children: hunger. The centres provide a simple midday meal of porridge, giving the kids the energy to learn and grow - stunted children are often turned away from primary school. To avoid the pitfall of many feeding programmes - if funding stops, food stops - **the project helps parents' committees run community gardens and trains volunteers in enterprise and money management so they can produce and purchase food in a sustainable way.** The centres also free up parents and guardians to work in their fields and run their businesses, helping them to put food on the table at home.

2007 TO 2010 PILOT IN 10 VILLAGES IN DOMASI

The three year project cost £40,000 and:

- > Set up Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres for 500 under sevens using church buildings and 38 trained volunteers
- > Used the same centres as 'Children's Corners' to provide emotional and social support to 270 seven to 18 year olds
- > Offered enterprise training to 38 volunteers and 47 orphan guardians who care for 245 children, then provided small loans to help them start up small businesses
- > Offered the same training to 39 orphaned teenagers and vulnerable young people but adding in vocational training (tailoring, carpentry or welding) to set them up in a trade

ONE GUARDIAN IN DOMASI SAID THE CHANGE IS RADICAL: SHE IS NOW ABLE TO GIVE HER CHILDREN BREAKFAST.

When **HOPEHIV** ran an impact assessment of the project in 2010, we saw that the Children's Corners needed help to improve the emotional support they were providing. We were already funding successful Salvation Army kids clubs in Malawi which offered counselling, home visits, help with school, and links with other community support services. In 2010 **HOPEHIV** paid for Malawi Presbyterian Church to visit

the Salvation Army and learn techniques such as the 'me bag' and 'tree of life', which help children talk about the events that have shaped their lives. On our latest visit to the project in March 2012 we saw that the Children's Corners are doing their job: the one in **Sanjani has already succeeded in getting 10 children back into school, in spite of the fact that its roof has collapsed!**

We're delighted to see our project with Malawi Presbyterian Church being replicated. The pilot in Domasi was successfully handed over to the community in 2010 and is still running without our support. As the project in Bilira matures, we would love to consider rolling the model out to more communities if funding allows - the need, but also our potential to meet it, is enormous.

One of the successes of the Domasi project was the improved health of children at the ECD centres. This was not just as a result of better food but because the buildings were repaired: the kids became less susceptible to the coughs and flu that wear them down. The renovations also served as a concrete example of a community changing its attitudes to orphans and vulnerable children.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR £6,000 TO PUT NEW ROOFS ON THREE ECD CENTRES IN BILIRA.

At Sanjani, the volunteers have made bricks and are ready to build now the rainy season is over. If you can help with the roof, please fill in the form on the back or donate online at www.hopehiv.org/donate (please select 'INSIDE HOPE' in the 'How did you hear about us?' box).

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ACTIVE YOUTH IN DEVELOPMENT: THE NAME SAYS IT ALL

When you think of a community volunteer, a teenager probably wouldn't spring to mind. But in Blantyre's Ndirande township, where unemployment is at 57% and 17% of 10 to 30 year olds are HIV+, teenagers are the ones stepping up and working to create a better future for the younger children. Active Youth in Development (AYIDO) has partnered with **HOPEHIV** since 2009 to develop a programme that uses youth volunteers to reduce abuse and neglect, tackle unemployment and offer meaningful hope for the future.

AYIDO runs 16 kids clubs reaching 1,500 orphans and vulnerable children aged 10 to 18. The clubs meet weekly, led by trained 14 to 18 year old volunteers, and are targeted at children who don't go to school as well as those who do. The clubs pull in members through sport. They then teach them about their rights, helping them to stand up for themselves and others. Through **HOPEHIV**, AYIDO has learned emotional support techniques from Malawi Presbyterian Church (see previous page – they learned from another **HOPEHIV** partner, the Salvation Army). **So far, 30 volunteer community workers (all aged 20 to 25 themselves) have been trained to help kids crushed by grief and stigma to regain their self-confidence.** As well as working at the

clubs, the volunteers make home visits to the most vulnerable households to provide extra support and work alongside guardians to resolve issues.

The other main part of the AYIDO project is vocational and entrepreneurship training for older orphans. So far, 45 young people have been through six month training courses aimed at teaching them a trade: a local course and technical qualification in carpentry, tailoring or welding plus the nous to run a successful small business (the model used is provided by **HOPEHIV's** partner SAIE to teach enterprise skills to people with low levels of literacy). Working in business incubator groups, **all 45 trainees are now able to meet their own basic needs and support their family members.** Many are attending evening classes to complete primary or secondary education and are paying school fees for their younger brothers and sisters.

On a wider level, AYIDO is helping to change community attitudes and the stigma of orphanhood. When we visited last year, the local chief said that the project was making a big difference to how older orphans behaved: **several of the project beneficiaries had been thieves or prostitutes and the project had given them**

decent, alternative ways of making a living.

Many of the vocational trainees we spoke to said that their guardians or extended families were now treating them with respect because they have important assets such as sewing machines or welding kits and make a significant financial contribution. The child rights message promoted by the kids clubs is also being heard: more and more orphans and vulnerable children are being registered for school.

A SMALL LOCAL ORGANISATION LIKE AYIDO CAN WORK RIGHT AT THE HEART OF A CHALLENGING PLACE LIKE NDIRANDE.

AYIDO has got the passion to mobilise young volunteers and, with **HOPEHIV's** technical input and knowledge exchange, they are building a programme that demonstrates to everyone on a variety of levels that orphans and vulnerable children are, simply, worth caring for.

WE SEE HOPE IN MACDONALD

Macdonald was orphaned when he was eight years old. As the youngest in a family of nine, he could easily have missed out on education altogether but he managed to stay in school and went on to do a business degree and social development qualification. Macdonald could have moved out of the slums and secured a high-paying job but his passion is to motivate local young people to be self-reliant. He founded AYIDO in 2001 when he was 18 and is still running it today. Many of the young people who have joined him have similar stories and want to change the future for the children growing up around them in the toughest of circumstances.



RAISE THE ROOF – AND PROTECT SMALL CHILDREN FROM THE SUN AND RAIN

I'd like to contribute £ _____ towards a new roof for three ECD centres in Malawi.

I would like to pay by cheque (please make cheques payable to **HOPEHIV**) card (see below)

You can pay by Visa/Mastercard/CAF as follows:

Card number

Start date / Expiry date /

Issue number (if relevant) Security code (Last 3 digits on reverse of card)

Card holder's name: _____

Signature: _____

Any donations received in excess of our £6,000 target will be used to fund the whole of **HOPEHIV**'s work.

Title: Mr / Mrs / Miss / Other (please state) _____

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Daytime Tel: _____

Email: _____

I am happy to receive information about **HOPEHIV**'s work by email and I understand that I can unsubscribe at any time at info@hopehiv.org. I am particularly interested in **HOPEHIV**'s activities and ideas in the UK for: [please tick as appropriate]

Schools

Churches

Companies

Everyone else!

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Using Gift Aid you can make your donation worth more. For every pound you give to us we currently get an extra 25p from the Inland Revenue. Just sign here, it's that simple. To qualify for the Gift Aid you must pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains tax at least equal to the amount we will claim in the tax year.

"Please treat all donations I make on or after the date of this declaration as Gift Aid donations until I notify you otherwise."

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Tax reclaimed will be used to fund the whole of **HOPEHIV**'s work.

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