



UPDATE August 11

Dear Friends,

Malawi is in a new season of political accountability, public demonstrations against the President and the UN is hosting talks between government and civil society groups. Peaceful demonstrations are an important part of Malawi's democratic growth, as for the first time people feel able to air their political concerns publicly. The UK and other donors have stopped giving the Malawi Government money directly, which means there is rising inflation and currency devaluation. The Forex shortage means there is little fuel in the country, so life's a challenge! The Trusts website is now 6 months old and continues to develop, keep up to date at www.dalitsotrust.org



Healthy Families Creating Healthy Villages

Hi, the political tensions have not stopped us and Malingunde has been peaceful. We continue to evaluate the 3 methods we use and are nearer to deciding about the approaches that best fit this part of Malawi.

Community CHE

When we arrived in Mbanga, the people couldn't tell us their problems as they were overwhelmed by them. We've since trained them to find the root of their difficulties, they've given us their 5 top concerns and we've worked together to find solutions.

Clean Water the village has raised £60 needed by the government to drill a bore hole. This is excellent news showing the village is starting to develop trust and work together. They chose this as their top priority to stop diarrhoea in their families.

Lack of toilets The village had 10 toilets; they now have 40 – all by their own hand.

Most people cannot read or write 15 adults are attending Rhodess' literacy classes. Research shows their children are more likely to attend school.

Belief in ancestral spirits creates fear Richard from a neighbouring village has been welcomed to start a church.

The Chief stopped children going to school He's changed his mind after seeing the benefit of learning through CHE, now he promotes school.



Rhodess Home Visit

CHE is about transformation and what a wonderful sight to see. Initially we were threatened with violence, not to bring education but we felt God prompt us to persevere! This was a village of fear, disease and ignorance – they have courageously traded this for trust, peace, faith and education. We are now too much excited for what the future holds!

In **Ndumira** we have challenges! CHE only uses local resources and does not pay people. Behind our back, the committee have been telling CHE's (health visitors) that they will get paid. We are talking through this problem; the committee have done a bad thing to us. We see progress and Magani's testimony is encouraging; *"I was despised in my community because I spent too much of my time drinking beer/smoking which brought shortage of food in my family. My family did not respect me because I*

could not provide family needs. By being trained as a CHE, I manage my time well, stopped drinking/smoking and provide every day needs to my family - they can now respect me. I am proud and people are coming to me for a help of advice spiritually and physically. I am working with my neighbours, sharing with them what I have learned from CHE."



Thanks to our friends in Birmingham who raised money for a new motorbike! What a blessing, it has scratched us exactly where we were itching.

Family CHE

Family CHE leads to community CHE and we now see that this is happening with two of the four families we are working with. It is very difficult to have courage to share knowledge in our culture, it means you give away some power and control which is a risk. The families Thamisoni working with Patison and Chimutu family working with Cecil are inviting their neighbours.

Chippo.



Pioneering Education Play and Parenting Skills

Dalitso Play – Ali & Rhodess

September heralds the new format of Happy Faces. Thirteen 5 year olds will spend once a week taking part in more focussed activities to prepare them for the beginning of school. This is so important for 2 main reasons. Firstly, on their first day of school they are likely to be sharing their teacher with around 79 other children, so the essential 1-1 needed at this age is distinctly lacking. Secondly, in a recent UNICEF press release it was stated that only between 15-30% of children in

Malawi are able to access 'early child development' programmes like nurseries etc. Happy Faces meets a current need, but goes one step further by equipping and supporting families as they seek to prepare their children for school and a healthy life. The sessions for the younger children will continue as before. These are being boosted by Rhodess as she is now teaching CHE lessons during her weekly home visits to the Happy Faces families.



Decorating & roleplay; see the pretend baby

A thank you to Katie for helping to decorate the room! Below are 3 encouraging testimonies since our last update;

'I am not involved with play sessions at Happy Faces even though I have 6 children. I have been learning through the health lessons Rhodess is teaching in my village. My mind is now open; we have never used a toilet before, but now we have built one and are using it! We had suffered diarrhoea for so long, but now we can prevent it, thank you' Dorothy.

'I am proudly saying my Grandson is starting Primary School soon as he is able to write his numbers and letters. He gained these skills from Happy Faces, so I am happy!' Annie.

'Malaria was troubling our family and I was putting them in danger, now I know how to prevent and treat it too' Ketilina.



Room Decorating



Mentoring and Equipping Local Leaders

Dalitso Leaders - Medson

The 3 Follow Me courses are due to graduate in September and we are expecting about 40 leaders to achieve their certificates. Medson's worked hard and done lots of home visits to encourage these rural leaders.

FM4 has been translated and almost at the printers. The first 2 courses have been re-edited and group work added. The team is committed to continually seeking to improve the quality of our work. Happy Faces and Follow Me visit people at home. It is vital to help people transfer the knowledge from the sessions to their home situation. It also reinforces how importantly we view them as individuals and want to encourage them to succeed. Progress in rural life is often met with resistance from neighbours and extended family, so constant encouragement is needed.

Visitors

Thank you to Brian and Val, Nick and Dan and Mark and Laura. It's great to have a resource of people willing to serve, invest in the team and the work in Malingunde – thank you!



Mark teaching FM

Books

If you'd like to understand poverty and different ways of working cross culturally the following link has some great book recommendations; we

have enjoyed reading 'Lets Restore our Land' by D. Fountain.

www.chenetwork.org/reading.php

Highlights/Challenges

'When the team meet challenges they have the passion and vision to see solutions and to keep trying' Tom

'To write a new pre-school curriculum from scratch, using as few factory produced resources (to maintain cultural authenticity) in a foreign language has certainly been a challenge but I am excited at the prospect of starting a new season in the life of Happy Faces' Ali

Thank you

- 1) Transformation in Mbanga and Ndumira
- 2) Everyone's hard worked is being blessed and bearing long lasting fruit.

Requests

- 3) Malawi would remain peaceful as it develops its democracy
- 4) Protection for the whole team and especially the team's health in Malingunde



story time and more role play with pretend babies

Tom and Alison

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