

Dear Friends

March 2015

Malawi has been in the news again as the legal age to marry has been raised to 18 years old. According to the Malawi Government, half of all girls in Malawi are married by the age of 18. This new law will serve to protect young girls who are given away in their early teens by families who see them as another mouth to feed. By marrying off their daughters as young as possible, the parents are trying their best to survive. It is a heart breaking reality and we hope this new law will help focus efforts to give teenage girls more options in terms of education and employment.

The Trust has 3 areas of focus and this month we are highlighting Happy Faces, a 'six and under' stay and play group serving local families in Malingunde. Parents stay with their child to learn the different ways in which children can learn through play activities. The sessions educate the parents as well as the children. The team also visit these families in their homes with health and parenting lessons.

The HF team is led by Janet who is helped by Rhodess, plus two of our interns Fanny and Lonely. Janet *'we are currently serving 26 families through our 2 HF sessions. We have 6 families on the waiting list. We are teaching the new mum's how to interact with their children and they are learning.'*

Recently children have been learning to count, recognise letters and shapes. The team have been teaching some adult literacy too, as the mums could not help their children in these activities. The following testimonies highlight the quality work that your support enables the team to do.

Lonely *'My recent highlight is a mum called Joyce who has just learnt to read and write with our help. Also Theresa had no knowledge of contraception, she is now using it and very happy.'*

Brenda *'I was on my way to get a family planning injection from the clinic. I went, but then turned away thinking 'I want to have more than 4 children'. As I have started at HF I have realised that I was wrong. Firstly to hide from my husband and if I have more children I will not have enough time to show my love to them and care for them properly.'*

Norah *'Before starting HF things were very hard for me. I was very lonely and was blaming myself a lot. Now that I have started and made some friends I feel free'*

Fanny *'This is a very difficult time of year for HF mums. They are very busy as food is scarce, so they try to find work in the fields everyday. We are doing our best to encourage them'*

Lucy *'I was not able to read and write, so I was worried about coming to HF. Now I am killing 2 birds with 1 stone as my child is learning and so am I. I am full of praise!'*

On behalf of the whole Dalitso Trust team thank you for sharing this journey with us.

Tom and Ali

Tom & Ali, Directors

Dalitso Trust, 147 Middleton Hall Rd, Birmingham, B30 1AP T: 07851 110297 DalitsoTrust.org Charity No 1090274



Story Circle



Learning to recognise shapes and numbers



Outdoor Play



Happy Faces slide time