



SHINE
RELIEF TRUST

NEWSLETTER

Seven Years In Malawi

Shine Relief Trust recently celebrated SEVEN years of work in Malawi. Working closely with the Area Development Committee, we have improved the community's access to essential nutrition, education, healthcare and shelter.

In July we visited the project, meeting the community groups who have been touched by Shine - from the children at the Early Years who receive daily food and education at the Community Based Organisations (CBOs) to child-headed families living in the nearby villages, and students on Shine Bursary Scheme. Our first residential home, built to provide support for children who are at risk, was officially opened by the village leader and the District Commissioner.



Registered charity no 1168456

07762243302

info@shine-relief.org

shine-relief.org

Raising funds - impacting lives



As part of our Shine a Light Campaign this year to support the growing work at Shine Village, we held a number of events including a walk to Spurn lighthouse in the UK, followed by an event in Malawi, walking to the top of Zomba Mountain with staff and children from two primary schools. Pupils aged between 8 and 12 joined the New Zealand team and Chilambe Chief to climb to the summit. During the walk, I met up with 12 year old Stephan who lives near the Nsondole CBO. His mother, disabled at birth by polio, is unable to walk. She relies heavily on Stephan to do most of the household tasks. Now he is attending Nsondole Primary School and doing very well, although he rarely has time to play with his friends due to the amount of farming and chores he has to do at home. The Zomba Mountain walk was something he never imagined he would be able to participate in, having never left his village. It was a joy to walk with him, watching his response to the beauty around him.

The walk - which took almost two hours from the starting point - was a challenge. Despite having walked 5km to the start of the walk, the children enjoyed every moment. We walked together through the higher paths entering into a clearing made by wood cutters. Here we saw girls raising heavy log piles onto their heads and walking back down the steep path. They were very slight, walked barefoot and looked like they had little to sustain them. This is a typical sight in Malawi: children doing grueling work to pay for their school fees. At the summit you can see the whole of the Zomba region and beyond. You can even see the lake and the vast Mulanji mountain far off in the distance. We were able to see so many land marks and could point out where the children lived.





Shine Relief Trust teams from the UK, New Zealand and Malawi joined together to celebrate the opening of our first residential home and work together to support discipleship at Shine Village.

First-timers in Africa, Andrew (a farmer and member of Connect Church Timaru New Zealand) and Janine (Early Years teacher and member of the same church), travelled together with Lynley, Dawn and Ben. They spent two weeks with Shine Relief Malawi, working with children and team members at Shine After-school group, the three Early Years centres, children and members at Shine Assembly, and Mchengawedi Assemblies of God Church. Serving alongside the team, they witnessed first-hand the challenges facing the women in particular. Local clinics, schools and hospitals are all in desperate need of essential basics.

We found that the primary schools at Nsondole and Mwunmaje were poorly resourced. During our meeting with the head teachers and form teachers, we gave out reading materials to help boost their resources. At Mwunmaje Primary School Year One pupils were in large classes of approx. 120, with 170 pupils at Nsondole primary school. The only way of communicating with the children was by writing on badly-damaged chalkboards.

A three-hour visit to Liwonde hospital maternity wing gave the team opportunity to come alongside many women and share God's love. Many were very young mothers in recovery with their tiny babies wrapped inside their clothing; some mothers were holding their babies while others lay with empty arms, often two to a bed, without blankets and clothes for their little ones. Donations of clothing were given out and prayers spoken over mothers, babies, and the nurses. The team later shared how this was the most challenging day of the entire trip and yet the glory of God was seen in such a profound way, leaving a lasting impression of God's love.





Child labour in the 21st century

During my trip to Malawi in August 2017, I met a group of children; the eldest must have only been about ten years old. While one boy held onto a long stick which he used to control his cattle, another carried a large, dusty bag on his head. The youngest boy carried a child-sized hoe on his back.

I wondered about this child's future. Having met with a group of parents during our Early Years graduation and finding that only eight out of 30 had finished primary school, I imagined his parents would have a similar story. Families in this area have little hope of an education. Reflecting on my recent visit to the local school to visit some of Shine's Early Years children, there was little motivation to remain in school: their overcrowded classroom with children aged from 5 to 8 years meant that many would not get the support needed and would get left behind.

The challenges facing children in this community are so great and so it is very important that we celebrate each step taken towards seeing children's potential realised. I am thrilled to see for myself the impact of Shine Relief on the ground. I visited Shine's After School group which is our most recent project at Shine Village centre. Funds raised by Shine New Zealand supporters have enabled the team to supply the children with Malawian curriculum text books, alongside other reading books donated back in 2015. Through these and other resources provided, we are addressing the need for extra tuition in the area. Headed by Anthony Zidana and Pastor Lino, this group is becoming very popular as it is free to all. We are beginning to see the children grow in confidence - and they even help their siblings and parents!



The Grand Opening

We dedicated Shine Village Children's Home! The Grand Opening, with church leaders from the community and Village heads, followed the service with speeches and of course the cutting of the official red ribbon, which was led by Group Village Headwoman Kumbarani. The District Commissioner thanked God for the work of Shine Relief, after a tour around the home, stating how this was the first of its kind in Zomba region and went on to thank the partners from around the world who have made this possible.



Child Protection Training In preparation for the start of our residential programme, grandmothers were included in the Child Protection training taking place at Shine Village; empowering the community is key to safeguarding the most vulnerable children.

Please pray for these precious ladies, pictured on the right in the blue t-shirts, along with Pastor Lino, the Chief and our team of staff and volunteers who will form a network of prayer and safeguarding across the area.

Shine Early Years

Every day during term-time, Shine Early Years provides support for over 200 children under the age of five at Shine Village (Nsondole CBO and at Chilambe CBO). During my recent trip, I met with the teachers who ran their groups at each site and attended their training sessions at Shine Village. Nsondole CBO teachers, Mercy and Lucy, manage a class of 70 children. Some of the children have older siblings who have attended in previous years.

Shine support for vulnerable families

One such family who sent their children - now aged eight and twelve - live a 20-minute walk away. Four year-old Emily carries her nephew Memory home on her back each day. Aged three, he is quite small for his age but still a heavy load for his sister to carry. The shoes passed down to her from her sister help, even though they are still a bit too big.

I met with the two children one lunch time after school. I found them with Mum and their youngest sibling who was less than six months old. She told me how her eldest daughter had left her son with her and left home to find work. Looking after her grandson as well as her own children has put strain on her. The support given through Shine over the years has helped the family by enabling them to set up a small business. Her two older children attend the local primary school which we visited during our stay in Malawi. It was good to see them in school but the class size was reaching 200.

Support given to their local CBO has enabled the teachers to access training and now their time with the children and their families is more constructive. The teachers report issues to Shine who are able to advise and act when needed. Sadly one of the children from this CBO recently died after being stung by bees in his village. Mercy was able to go and stay with his mother, as is the custom. The community greatly values this support during times of crisis.



After School

Shine's After School group, which is our most recent project at Shine Village centre, seeks to motivate and support families in our area. Malawian curriculum text books are now available to children visiting the centre, and teachers support children with extra tuition. The group is free to all; 45 children currently attend and more are joining. Children are gaining confidence and they now help the younger children in the Early Years groups.

In a region where just 4% of children enrol in secondary school and only 34% of the secondary school teachers are qualified, educating children remains one of the greatest challenges. The cost of tuition fees is too high so the support available at Shine Village and through Shine Bursary is opening doors for many children and students, some of whom are now able to attend college! We appreciate the regular support we receive which helps plan for the future of our children and students. As children graduate from primary school and secondary school funds increase. Please consider supporting our fundraising efforts - get in touch and share your

Emily Update

Looking at Emily in the vibrant setting of the Early Years group, it was hard to imagine her as the child we had previously met, sleeping on a maize sack with her brothers and sisters. Now dressed in a pretty cardigan and dress, Emily looked so happy, we just didn't recognise her.

Surrounded by other children, together singing "Old McDonald had a farm" she was soaking in the atmosphere as her little nephew attempted to copy the older children with his little hands clapping. We could see the impact this group is having as the teachers grow and the children learn together with space to explore as little children. Sitting with their own reading book and playing with toys helps them to discover more about the world and about the God who loves them.

We are so thankful to everyone who gives to Shine, making it possible for this work in the community to continue week after week, as more mothers bring their children to learn rather than keeping them at home to help with the chores.



Bursary Adventure

During our recent visit, Lynley and I travelled to Mikolongwe Vocational Training School in Blantyre to meet our two college students - the first of our young people to move onto college. Gaining grades good enough to secure a college place is very difficult; we were thrilled to hear these boys had progressed through secondary school. The college year began in January and now these young people are half way through their first year. So far, the report of their progress has been exemplary.

While we were in the area, we toured Stephanos Foundation Technical College facilities and discussed future placements for young people. Meeting with the primary school head teacher and childcare co-ordinator, together with tours of the children's home complex, gave the team insight into the development needed at Shine Village site. With extensive income generating projects which now include a tailor's shop and various livestock projects, the visit was inspiring.

Other visits during our trip included Namingazi farm which is 15 km outside Zomba. This was to see Farming God's Way / Maluwa Program which focuses on farmers who have the capacity and potential to be an example for others in the fields of food security, sustainable farming techniques, livestock farming, crop rotation, healthy diet and healthy relationships. The purpose of the farm is to reach the surrounding area and to help with knowledge about sustainable agriculture and animal husbandry and to reach people with the Gospel. There is already a training centre on the farm with classrooms, sleeping facilities, kitchen, fields, vegetable garden, nursery and more. The farmers from the outreach programme can also train on the farm. We sampled Maluwa jam, juice, coffee, sweet chili sauce and chutney.

Developing our land at Shine Village through Foundations for Farming will play a big part in the sustainability of Shine projects.





Thank You!

for all the wonderful gifts and resources donated to Shine Assembly by Timaru Connect Church, Grand Union Vineyard and Jubilee Church



Please continue to keep Agnes in your prayers as she has now arrived in China and will quickly need to settle in before her studies start. She was a valued member of our team supporting the Early Years programme at Shine Village and across the area and so she will be greatly missed by everyone.

Praise & Prayer

The great commission given to church: to go out and preach good news! Malawi's people are very friendly and open-hearted however, there is a great need for the gospel to be preached and for the church to be empowered to disciple the communities which still live oppressed by traditional beliefs and superstitions. During the 30-year dictatorship that ruled the country until 1994, thousands of people 'disappeared' and today 85% of the rural population lives in poverty, surviving on less than one US dollar a day. Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world. Shine operates in an area highly-influenced by the Yao people who have long embraced Islam as their religion since it was first introduced to them by Arabs during the slave trade in the early 1800s. Nowadays, to be Yao is to be Muslim. Malawi has the highest percentage of Muslims in southern Africa, and, according to Operation Mobilisation, less than 1% of the Yao population claims to be Christian.

"Thoko Suya and women of Berachah International Assembly Blantyre held a conference at Shine Assembly which saw 28 women visit for the first time. 97 people attended an outdoor service in Labani village with 44 people wanted to know Jesus and 8 people gave their lives to Christ after outreach ministry in Mkojo Village. God has given us grace to baptize seven people, and three people who weren't coming to church came last Sunday. We thank God for all he is doing to our church, we can foresee a tremendous growth: classes which were difficult to stabilize, e.g. children and new converts/disciples, are now gathering in good numbers." Pastor Lino

"I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to God."

Philippians 1:3-6 NLT

T-Shirts

NEW – Shine Tees available for Christmas!
Designed especially for Shine Relief, these t-shirts celebrate Hull speak and Hull Culture!
Just £14 each

Available for a limited time proceeds go directly to help support Shine's work in Malawi.

To place an order call Shine office 01482 506333/ 01482 328196, order online at [etsy.com/uk/shop/shinetees](https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/shinetees) (delivery charge £3*) or pop into the Jubilee Church, Hull.



*allow for printing, Christmas postage and delivery times for your area!