

EARLY YEARS END OF YEAR REPORT 2019



SHINE RELIEF TRUST



Core programme of Early Childhood Development (ECDs) in Malawi covers children from birth to eight years in order to promote their survival, growth, stimulation and development. Community Based Childrens Centres (CBCCs) are designed to promote the holistic development of children according to Zomba District Council Child Protection District Implementation Plan. Shine Relief Trust (SRT) is one of the partners working in Zomba District.

One of SRT goals is to raise the standard of childcare, healthcare and education across the villages of Kuntumanji. In T/A Kuntumanji there are only 22 ECD's operating and most of the teachers are not trained.

OBJECTIVE

To provide food and nutritional support to the under-five in order to promote the children's survival, growth, stimulation and development.

To provide child-friendly activities as every child has a right to an environment for play and development.

To provide learning opportunities to support a child's pre-school educational needs.

Shine Relief provides training to the teachers to improve the care for the children in the community. Supplies such as food, allowances, teaching materials, resources such as kitchen items, books and toys are provided through Child Sponsorship.

Focus areas

1. Child Development
2. Feeding programme
3. Training and support
4. Graduation to primary school

EARLY YEARS END OF YEAR REPORT 2019

1. Child development

➤ Physical development

The 2-3 year olds attempt to kick a large ball. The 4-5 year olds are able to bounce a ball confidently. We have seen children climbing onto adult chairs confidently, turning around and sitting on it. We have also seen that most children are able to climb on a slide without being helped by an adult. The 4-5 year olds are able to eat skilfully with a spoon and are able to dress and undress alone, but they face difficulties with shoelaces.

➤ Emotional and Social Development

Most of the kids are able to show sensitivity to others, for example, when their friend is hurt, they are able to say sorry. They are also able to choose their own friends. We have seen the children understanding the needs of others and the need to share and take turn.

The 2-3 year olds try to work out what is right and what is wrong in the behaviours. The 4-5 year olds understand the rules of their culture, for example the usual way to greet someone. We have also seen that they instinctively help other children when they are distressed. To encourage the development of caring for the living things, knowledge and understanding of the natural world around them, the children have been taught on how to take care of the animals and feed them. We talked to them about the goats and the chicken that are around Shine centre and how every morning they see Mr Damiano and Mr Chitseko fetch grass and water for the livestock to feed on. We encouraged them to get some of the feed and give to the animals as a way of taking care of the animals.

We have used bottle tops of different colours. Firstly we use the same colours and same number then we rearrange them with different colour but same number. This is to see if the children are able to recognise that the same number of bottle tops remain the same even though they have been rearranged differently. We have encouraged the use of models as well as drawing and painting.

We have provided the children with plenty of opportunities for exercises and taught the children how to dress and undress themselves in preparation for school games lessons.

We have encouraged the children to read books together and have displayed the children's work around the hall- this gives them a feeling of pride

We have also encouraged the children independence when going to the toilet and washing hands after visiting the toilet and before eating any food



EARLY YEARS END OF YEAR REPORT 2019

We have tried not to rush to help when children are finding an activity difficult; we allow them time to master new skills, offering praise and encouragement.

We have set clear boundaries for their behaviour, and always explain these to children.

We help the children stay safe through a basic understanding of health and safety. During the summer rainy seasons and mango season there are a lot of flies. Simple practices such as covering their food when they are not eating are taught.

2. Feeding program

We feed the early years children Likuni Phala each day. In a quarter we serve 8,160 plates of Likuni Phala to all early years across all three centres.

Lukuni Phala served ensures children receive the right nutrients and attracts many to school. Children often arrive with an empty stomach and without this food they would not focus well in class. A good diet is important for their bodies to grow healthy and our youngest children need a lot of help in this area. We are really pleased to see the children more alert after eating Lukuni Phala.



3. Teacher support

Shine delivered 12 sessions of training on how to handle HIV/AIDS cases, behaviour management and lesson planning. This training gives teachers the tools to help plan and to check they are following their lesson plan when teaching the children. Teachers understand the reason behind teaching and about forming a good bond with the children. Health and safety issues are addressed so teachers understand the need for clean and safe spaces for the children and for themselves.

12 teachers at Shine centre, seven at Chilambe 2 and a further three at Chiyembekezo received further training to enable them to carry out observations. They also looked at toy making using our traditional materials and different games for the children. The teachers learnt how to involve the children in making a whole range of different sounds and encouraged experimentation with music. Guidance was given so that teachers have a better understanding of interactions needed with children living with HIV/AIDS and how to take care of their needs. Support is offered through counselling.

Teachers visit the office when they are facing challenges in their homes and with each other. We have seen spiritual growth and teachers have become mature in handling issues around them. Many now come for bible study on Saturdays at the centre – this has really helped them a lot.



EARLY YEARS END OF YEAR REPORT 2019

Teacher support given comes in the form of allowances, fertilizer and maize. It goes a long way to help teachers from isolated villages care for their families, pay school and medical fees and to buy soap to wash their uniforms and clothes. We have seen greater commitment because of the support we are giving them.



4. Graduation to primary school

This year our graduation was held on 25th July 2019 and 21 children from Shine centre, 10 children from Chilambe 2 and 40 children from Chiyembekezo were affirmed and celebrated in their graduation to Mwanje and Nsondole primary schools. Altogether they were 71 children in all the three centres which Shine supports. It was a colourful ceremony where parents came to cheer their children, give presents and see the activities that their children had been involved and enjoy a special performance on the day. The graduating children did very well - counting numbers, reciting the alphabet, giving an introduction and mentioning different colours. These are the basics taught in all primary schools, therefore we know that our children are well prepared for their first experience in a larger classroom which will help them to settle in quickly.



Acknowledgments

Without our kind sponsors we would not be able to support the centres across the region and train the numbers of teachers we have supported this year. We are thankful to God for you and your continued sacrifice on behalf of our children here in Malawi.

We are grateful to Marieke Bos for providing the curriculum which is used in all our groups. It was developed for rural African settings and is working very well in our centres here in Zomba. The teachers enjoy using the programme and the resources given. The children soak in each lesson as it is presented to them in so many interactive ways.