

A YEAR IN MALAWI

SUMMARY REPORT 2011

Plan is campaigning against child labour and trafficking



About Malawi

One of the poorest countries in the world, Malawi faces many challenges, ranging from chronic food insecurity to the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

Plan has been running projects in Malawi since 1994 and is currently working in 95 communities. We work in partnership with the government, NGOs, children's and youth groups, as well as community organisations.

Problems affecting the children of Malawi

- Limited opportunities for children's learning and development
- Poor standards of healthcare
- Many parents live in extreme poverty



Giving answers in a Plan support school.

PLAN'S PRIORITIES IN MALAWI

1 Providing schools that nurture children

- Improving access to education through new buildings, furniture and learning materials
- Training, motivating and supporting teachers

2 Ensuring the survival of mothers and children

- Expanding water and sanitation projects
- Improving access to basic health services
- Promoting good hygiene

3 Reducing the impact of HIV and AIDS

- Providing support to people with HIV and AIDS
- Improving access to information on sexual health
- Increasing awareness of the risks of HIV and AIDS

4 Improving household economic security

- Educating farmers on modern farming methods
- Providing irrigation systems to ensure food is available all year round
- Equipping families with enterprise development and business management training

5 Helping children realise their rights

- Strengthening child protection structures and children's rights awareness
- Campaigning against child labour and child trafficking

By being a child sponsor, you have directly supported projects like the ones below. Your ongoing support sustains our long-term development work which impacts the lives of children, their families and communities for generations to come.

Together we are making an invaluable difference to the lives of people in in Malawi.

To learn more about Plan's work in in Malawi visit:

www.plan.org.au/ourwork/southernafrika/malawi



Girls pumping water from a clean water source.

CASE STUDY: QUALITY LEARNING SUPPORT

Free primary education was introduced into Malawi in the mid-1990s. Unfortunately the grand aim to get all of Malawi's children learning has foundered due to lack of funding and support.

Following the introduction of free education, admission rates to primary schools soared but dropped again because conditions in schools remain deplorable. Now there is an urgent need to improve the learning environment and address challenges such as student drop-out and class overcrowding.

Primary school classes in Malawi typically have over a hundred pupils for every teacher. Classes are often mixed ages, and it is not uncommon for secondary school age children to attend primary schools, as they may have started schooling late. In many cases, teachers have become demoralised due to poor salaries, poor housing, and lack of teaching and learning materials.

A class issue

Baula Primary School is situated in Mtwalo, in Malawi's Northern region. It has 760 pupils, of which 345 are boys and 415 are girls. The school facilities are basic and, typically for this poor area of rural Malawi, do not match the needs of the population.

Up until recently, classes were conducted in dusty rooms with scant furniture or books. "Many children were demotivated to come to school just because of the dusty classrooms without chairs," says Mr Nzima, the headteacher. "As a result, pupils' performance was compromised and absenteeism increased."

A clean slate

It is heartening what a difference some simple additions can make. Early this year, Plan supported the school by providing 80 school desks with built-in seating, two teachers' desks and two chairs. The project fully furnished two of the school's classrooms and stocked them with exercise books.

New motivation

"Learning was so difficult for me in the past," says 16-year-old pupil Gladys. "I had a negative attitude because whenever I thought of school, I saw myself uncomfortably sitting on dusty floors."

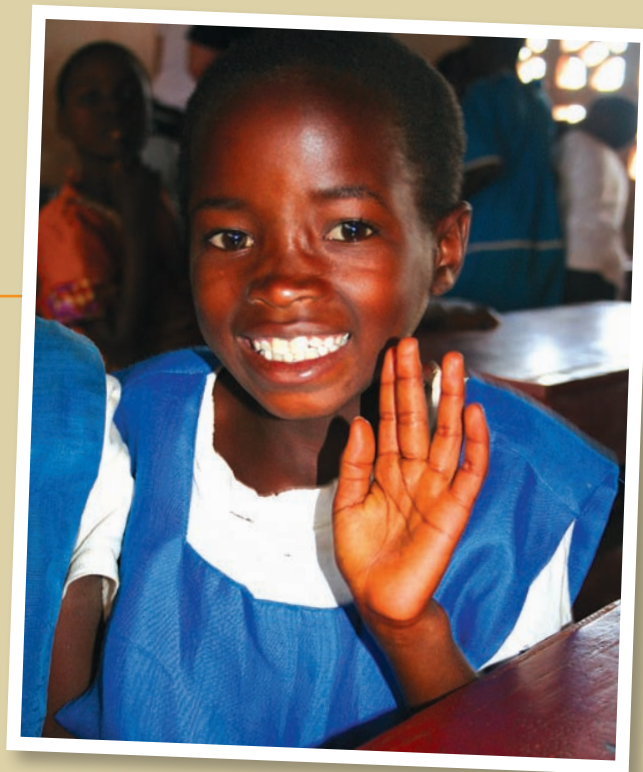
New classroom environments improve children's concentration and participation as well as motivating teachers to deliver the best classes they can. "I thank Plan very much for the school supplies project for I can now comfortably sit and write at a desk," says Gladys.

The pupils at Baula are keen on sports and the school's teachers believe strongly in the benefits of team activities. So Plan provided football and netball equipment to the young children. The equipment is expected to improve performance on the pitch – and morale in the classroom.

Of course, providing school equipment isn't the be-all and end-all of Plan's education work in Malawi. We also work to increase community appreciation for the value of education, improve teacher's performance and involve parents in the life of the school. However, hardware like desks and chairs are a very necessary first step – and with Plan's support, Baula Primary School has made it.

Some names have been changed for child protection and privacy reasons.

"I thank Plan very much for the school supplies project for I can now comfortably sit and write at a desk"



Girl in Plan supported class.

HIGHLIGHTS IN 2010

- Tackled preventable diseases by widening child immunisation coverage to 91% in Plan areas
- Helped more children to go to school. Primary school enrolment has reached 87% in Plan areas
- Trained 14,000 young people in life skills education as a response to high levels of unemployment
- Helped almost 10,000 children to withdraw from work on tobacco farms