



# MEL Newsletter

Summer 2015

Dear All supporters,

This will be my last newsletter before I head out to Malawi, next month, once more without a team, but with 2 volunteers and about £14,000, thanks to your generosity.

We're very aware that our outdated distribution lists mean some of you have been receiving multiple copies of previous newsletters. That's now been rectified, we hope, so if you're still receiving too many of these, or want us to remove you from the distribution list altogether, please get in touch by emailing [admin@MalawiEducationLink.co.uk](mailto:admin@MalawiEducationLink.co.uk) which will find its way to our technical team!

## Fundraising

Now that we don't do the bulk of our fundraising through school based team efforts, we've investigated other sources: Sheila & Campbell's work on The Big Give campaign for Mtetezga community generated £3570; our MEL Quiz raised almost £420; our loyal monthly donors give a total of £2520 per year; bequests have totalled £165 in recent months. Additionally, sponsors pay in varying amounts to cover the fees and extra costs for those children and adults they are supporting through specialist schooling and colleges.

May I remind you about The Giving Machine? Some of you are already committed supporters, earning us £198.17 absolutely painlessly for donors, in the last 5 months. All you have to do is sign up on [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk) and it'll even remind you when you've started shopping online with a retailer who donates to us!! Many thanks to those who already boost our funds that way.

Trustee Sheila McLelland is also going to be looking at trusts and funds that might contribute to elements of our work, and we're investigating methods of crowdfunding, too. Any ideas, suggestions, gratefully received!

## Projects

### Chivumu and Mtetezga villages

The Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) for our area asked that we build a classroom block each at Chivumu and Mtetezga villages. Both are remote, many kilometres from tar roads. We've built in Chivumu before:



Replacing what passed for a classroom block previously:-



The community has now made the bricks, collected the sand, and with an increase in the number of children on roll, desperately needs more classroom space.

## Mtetezga

Mtetezga, in Lupachi Zone, has been the focus of Sheila & Campbell's fundraising, and what they've achieved will fund, we hope, the completion of their classroom block. Additional funds will be raised for, hopefully, latrines and a teacher's house, in due course. Given the remote location of this village, and Moffat's (our building supervisor) commitment to other projects in January / February, no photos are available at this time.

## Sponsorship

Candidates are carefully vetted, monitored, with feedback given to their sponsors.

For younger children, this takes the form of reports from me and from their schools (Nkhotakota School for the Blind and Bandawe School for the Deaf). Their (grand)parents come to see me at least three times per year, to give this information and collect funds. I'm also in touch with the schools concerned. It's always very moving to see how a child who was potentially a burden become independent, lively, confident, a source of pleasure and pride to their family.

Young adults, often our ex-sponsored students from Dwasulu Secondary School, are helped to find appropriate courses at local colleges. I then find them a sponsor, often with similar interest, and we establish a relationship, so that sponsors are kept informed of progress, learning, and how this is benefiting not only the student, but also their extended family: in a country with no welfare state, someone with the qualifications to find a good job will be benefiting many more people than just his immediate family! Again, I monitor progress, foster good communication, manage the funds. Given poor quality of college websites, Malawi's email and phone systems, that is fraught with difficulties... but we usually get there!

If you'd like to sponsor someone, do get in touch!

## Ngala Clinic Borehole

Ted's work continues! The old borehole collapsed as it was being excavated, so he's committed himself and his own funding to digging a new one! He'll be in Ngala for 3 weeks, supervising that and making sure that all the pipework, storage and plumbing will be complete for the clinic and its workers to benefit from a reliable, hygienic, running water system.

## Thank you!

As I'm regularly told by the Primary Education Advisors, teachers, clinic staff, parents, pupils, students, we are the *ONLY* organisation providing regular support to this impoverished area, communities who desperately want to help themselves, but lack the resources, funds to do so. I'm always asked to pass on their thanks to you all. Please help us continue in this work!

Thanks as always for all your support, and stay in touch,

Caroline