

Smile Malawi



NEWSLETTER APRIL 2015

The first Smile Malawi Children's Centre opened in November 2006 and now gives a home to 37 children who were jointly identified by Malawi Social Services and Smile Malawi from Blantyre and the local villages. The charity also helps the local community of Khumbanyiwa with a developing outreach programme, primarily targeting the children and local school.

In January 2015, Malawi experienced some of the most prolonged and heavy rains ever known resulting in severe flooding and damage to homes and crops. Smile Malawi raised a special appeal to help the orphanage staff whose village houses had lost walls and founder Elspeth Baecke's recent trip was dominated with organising relief for those most affected. The first thing was to buy some bricks – these are made by villagers in other areas and are relatively cheap so she bought 35000 of them!



The older boys helped (that's George above) and then accompanied Elspeth as she visited each house and agreed the help we could give. The first one belongs to Violet, one of the carers, and it had been almost destroyed.



Our builder made rapid progress and the walls were almost rebuilt in one week and the house will now be

completed by Violet's husband. Next was Gerald & Gift Weja's house which had lost 2 main walls. The couple both work for us and have been part of the orphanage from the beginning.



Weja started to rebuild the walls himself over the Easter holiday and again made good progress. It was very encouraging to see action straight away meaning that their children will soon have a bedroom again.



We are helping 18 staff families altogether and everyone sends thanks to our supporters who generously helped. If you would like to see more, please email Elspeth for a copy of the agreed plan. We also received a special donation from the Community Overseas Aid Project in Lynstead, Kent who requested that we try to help the flooded areas as well. Elspeth had seen the devastation in the southern Shire valley, about 70 km south of Blantyre, in the UK news so she set off to the District Commissioner's office in Chikwawa, initially with 200 blankets. The disaster co-ordinator there asked her to take them to the remote village of Tizola near Nchalo, where the people had lost everything and were camping in a church and tents. She found a well organised camp with 204 families who had been forgotten about and had received virtually no aid. The children were all hungry so she

organised a further 2 trips taking 1.5 tonnes of food, soap, salt and sugar. The people were so surprised when she arrived and even more so when she sent the big boys the second time with 20 sacks of food! They were so happy and the children were all fed.



We will stay in touch with these people as they try to rebuild their lives and our matron is going to take them more food and crop seedlings next time. Our older boys were pleased to assist with this aid and reported back to their friends at the orphanage where all our own children are healthy and thriving. There is a new video of them singing on the Smile Malawi facebook page.

If you would like to help with the running costs of the Children's Centre please visit our website or send a cheque to the address below.