

Landirani School Partnerships
Supporting orphans in Malawi
Registered charity 1113786



Umodzi - unity



Link Newsletter April 2009

What a successful and extremely rewarding trip!

We were very warmly greeted at all the link schools and spent a day in each, meeting the Heads, teachers, children and village chiefs. As it was the Easter holiday only standard 8 children were actually at school, doing extra classes in preparation for their school leaving exam. If successful most can only hope to attend secondary school through sponsorship (details of how to sponsor a child can be obtained through the Landirani Trust, a very worthwhile cause! Maybe this is something Link schools would like to think about in the future.

The wonderful packs of photographs, letters, drawings and information you prepared for your link school were all received with gratitude and genuine interest. We presented the packs to each school and talked about what we all hope to gain from the partnerships. They were all fascinated with the information on homes that you sent and after each presentation we took several children into nearby villages where they drew pictures of typical Malawi village homes. We shall pass these on to you in due course. Each school had previously been given a disposable camera to take photographs before we arrived and these were proudly handed over to us, some schools even giving a detailed list of each photograph taken.

We gave each school a selection of exercise books, pencils, pens and we also gave out teachers packs containing items we thought would be useful such as rulers, rubbers, pencils sharpeners, maths sets etc. Post-it notes proved to be of great interest and had never been seen before! We managed to source a manufacturer who will be making the metal cabinets for each school. These will be delivered to schools shortly.

In most schools we were treated to a delicious lunch of locally grown warm pumpkin before being formally thanked for our visit and gifts. All schools sent best wishes and thanks to their Link schools and look forward to building up a happy and long lasting friendship with their English partners.

Nyani was a popular character with both children and adults.



He came to visit each of the Link schools and the local village where the children were doing drawings of homes. He enjoyed finding out more about life in Malawi and particularly liked eating the pumpkins! He is looking forward to sharing his experiences with your school.

Chikhutu Primary School, linked with Maple Infants School



The Headteacher at Chikhutu was so excited to see us and is extremely enthusiastic about the partnership. He presented us with beautiful gifts for Maple Infants which we shall bring to you with your pack. We discovered that the word Chikhutu means 'big ear', this should cause you some amusement when you see one of your gifts! There are only 7 teachers including the head and they are all male. Lack of decent teacher's houses makes it difficult for most schools to attract female teachers. We enjoyed looking around the school and the secondary school next door. It was really interesting to meet Emolesia Phiri, a girl being sponsored by the Landirani Trust. Our visit ended with a game of 'duck, duck, goose' which we adapted to 'goat, goat, chicken' with a group of children. We were treated to boiled ground nuts before we left, they were delicious!

Namanyanga Primary School, linked with Coombe Hill Infant School



It was lovely returning to Namanyanga School as we had spent time there with the volunteer group last year, decorating classrooms and helping to build a fence around the vegetable garden. We received a great welcome from the staff and children and after our presentation we were shown around the local village, even being invited inside a house. It was very touching to see an almost completely bare wall apart from two tiny shoes, each one hanging on a nail in the wall! We met Tina who is the subject of a book beautifully illustrated by one of this years volunteer, Adam Newton, and were then presented with several pumpkins and some very large bags of beans! The Headteacher is very excited as a company called Project4africa are planning to build two new school blocks this year which will be a huge improvement to the school and will give more children the chance of a better education.

Masiye Primary School, linked with St Matthews Primary School



After spending several days decorating the pre school on our first volunteer trip two years ago it was very good to return to Masiye and see the changes there. The third school block is now finished and two more teachers' houses are being built, this should encourage more female teachers and we actually met one who was starting at the school after Easter. We were invited to look around one of the teachers a house which was very impressive. As The Landirani Trust have made such a difference to the lives of the children at Masiye, visitors are

always very welcome and many children turned up to see us! We spent an enjoyable time playing games and the children performed a dance for us. We met a girl called Ednas Chadzuka who would love to have an English pen friend.

Chibwata Primary School, linked with Tolworth Infant School



Chibwata school now has a new Headteacher but we were particularly impressed with a teacher called Anderson Banda who is so enthusiastic about everything! He is very proud of a pupil called Amose Levisoni who is an exceptionally good runner and after winning the District competition is now competing at National level (in bare feet). Despite poor buildings the school does have one female teacher and at the moment is lucky to have eight student teachers. The pupils we met were extremely polite and one girl made an excellent speech at the end of our presentation. At the moment the school has no water but despite the obvious poverty we were impressed by the Landirani Local Committee which is working hard to help improve the lives of the children.

M'bang'ombe Primary School, linked with Long Ditton Infant School



What a difference! We hardly recognised M'bang'ombe as it has five new school blocks plus a head's office and staffroom, all beautifully painted inside and out! These have been provided by DFID (Dept For International Development). The lovely Headteacher is so excited and proudly showed us round. It was good to see the vegetable garden flourishing (last years volunteer group worked hard building a fence around it and doing a lot of digging). They have also planted a small field of 1,000 Acacia trees as part of the Landirani Reforestation Project. We talked to standard 8 children and played them the recording made of their wonderful singing last year. A very moving experience!

New Links

Chitsime Primary School, linked with The Mall Preparatory School



While the volunteer group spent several days painting classrooms and renovating wells in the nearby villages, we spent time talking to the Head, deputy and some of the teachers at Chitsime, gathering information about the school and community. The Headteacher, Wenster E Kamulira, was very welcoming and proudly showed us around his school. He was so appreciative of the help given by Landirani and is very much looking forward to forming a link with an English school. We love the school motto, 'It never fails unless you stop trying'.

Chikuyakuti Primary School, link to be advised



The second week of the volunteer trip was at Chikuyakuti School and again was spent decorating and gathering information for a future school partnership. The head teacher, Christone Mandowa Nkhoma was very enthusiastic about being shown how to use a paintbrush and worked alongside volunteers painting the classrooms. Some local builders renovated two classroom windows, as the builder of this building had not used enough cement and all the blocks had fallen out. One block, hitting a child on the shoulder and narrowly avoiding a tragic event.

Fundraising

One of the major problems that all the schools have besides the obvious buildings and resources, is access to clean water. Some have boreholes, but these are sometimes broken. We would like to install a 'rainwater harvester' which is a very large water butt with a tap on the base. It is attached to the school building, catching rainwater and providing clean water directly at the school. These cost £350 to install and if you can raise this amount by the end of the Summer Term, we can get it put in place before the rains come in November.

Next Link visit October 2009

We hope that we will have one of our Link school teachers visit Malawi this October and she will be taking out skipping ropes and teaching skipping games. The focus for this trip will be '**games**'. With the Summer Term ahead of us, I am sure you will be able to take photos of games children play in your school, which you can share with your link school. You will receive more details on this, but may like to keep it in mind.

It was a huge privilege to visit these schools, all of them doing their very best to provide a decent education for their children despite poverty and a serious lack of resources. The school partnerships mean a great deal to them, people in the western world taking an interest and showing they care. It means a lot! Thank you for caring and for your continued interest and support.

Eileen Speak
School Partnership Co-ordinator

Zikomo kwambiri
'Thank you very much'