

Your sponsorship number is 1369092

Mr Bim Sandhu
THE SANTON GROUP
56 Grange Road
London
W5 5BX

14 March 2013

Dear Mr Sandhu,

Thank you so much for your sponsorship of Binalison Chikampha. I am delighted to welcome you to our annual update from our Mndolera project in Malawi. The project is in one of the poorest areas in Malawi, close to Lilongwe, the capital city. Thanks to your support we work tirelessly to protect children from exploitation and abuse, and keep children in a loving family environment, where every child belongs.

We have had an incredibly successful year and I, like the rest of my team in Malawi, feel proud of the achievements that have taken place in the Mndolera community. We have made tremendous progress in reducing the number of children living without parental care and ensuring that those who are living in alternative family care, especially children living with grandparents, have a better life.

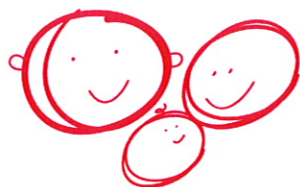
In this year's update, I'd like to introduce you to the wider work of EveryChild. Thanks to your support we are able to reach out to some of the world's most vulnerable children, as well as support children in Malawi.

I have enclosed this year's project update which outlines our achievements, as well as some stories from the children whose lives you're changing. I hope you enjoy reading it and thank you so much for your commitment to our work.

Yours sincerely,



Brussels Mughogho
Country Director, EveryChild Malawi



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Keeping families together

The Mndolera Project **Malawi.**



Through your support we protect many vulnerable children who would otherwise face an uncertain future. Thank you.

A warm welcome to another update from our Mndolera project in Malawi. Thanks to your support, we have achieved so much. Here are some highlights:

- Our children's corners supported 4,285 children, enabling them to participate in various activities after school and at the weekends.
- A new pilot scheme was launched to provide vocational skills to 15 teenagers through mushroom production.
- Child rights clubs provided support to 274 children, ensuring children understand their rights, helping them to feel empowered.

Read on to discover how your support is helping communities in the Mndolera Project.

**Annual Update
2013**

Mushroom production

Practical support for vulnerable children.

Last year, our Mndolera project launched a new pilot scheme to support older vulnerable children living without parents or at risk of losing parental care. The aim of the initiative was to help them overcome challenges in their lives, and provide practical support.

The challenges these children faced varied greatly, ranging from the death of a parent, breakdown of families due to divorce and migration, leading to children dropping out of school. When children are faced with such difficulties in life, many feel helpless. Girls in this predicament can end up getting married and drop out of school, while boys could end up on the destructive path of alcohol and drug abuse. This is worsened by the fact that most of these children have no parents to care for them. Pressure to provide a home income and care for younger siblings' forces children into dangerous behaviours.

As a result, we developed this initiative to support this vulnerable group.

Fifteen teenagers were selected to take part; six boys and three girls without parental care and three boys and three girls at risk of losing parental care.

After several group meetings, mushroom production was selected because of its market potential and low competition. Another reason was because of its sustainability; most of the materials are locally found, such as agricultural waste and a regular supply of spawns, the mushroom seed.

The group were trained in mushroom production for five days, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to learn a new vocation. Working together, the group constructed the mushroom shed, pictured below. They have all worked incredibly hard to learn a new skill and understand the different stages of production until the mushrooms are ready for harvesting. EveryChild also arranged a learning exchange visit to a nearby mushroom plantation, building on the foundations of the training.

"I have seen a lot of changes in the behaviour of these children since they started this project. Working closely with the group, two boys and one girl decided to go back to school after counselling and raising awareness about the importance of education." Grace, EveryChild, community development worker.



The mushroom shed, constructed by the group.

Vocational skills

Promoting self reliance.

The group continue to perfect their technique and are already reaping the fruits of their labour. They have raised enough income to buy essential goods to supplement the household income. The next harvest looks promising and the group are going from strength to strength, selling produce at the local markets.

This is a great initiative, enabling vulnerable teenagers to learn a new skill in life when continuing with

further education isn't a viable option. Equipped with a new vocation, these children are on a journey to self-reliance and independence, helping to shape their own future.

Thanks to your support, children like Rose, pictured below, are provided with practical solutions, helping to grow in self-confidence and learn vital life skills to support the rest of her life. Thank you for making this possible.

"After dropping out of school my friends encouraged me to get married but it didn't feel right for me. Other children in my village also left school. With the support from our community and EveryChild a group was formed. I am happy that I am a member of the group as I get to learn a new vocation in mushroom production. I also learn vital life skills, such as decision making and building my self esteem."
Rose, 16



Children's corner's

The building blocks of a community.

Children's corners are places in communities where children aged between six to 17 meet after school or at the weekend. There are 30 children's corners in Mndolera and these have proved to be a great formula to engage all members of the community, especially children. Read on to find out how children's corners are the building blocks for a better community.

Children receive psychosocial support and life skills training to help them overcome challenges they face. They are vital in boosting confidence, enabling children to become active members of their community. Children can choose from a range of activities including memory work, used when children have lost a parent or family member, and tree of life, enabling children to better understand their family history, culture and extended family.

EveryChild's approach is holistic. Children are encouraged to express their feelings through play, craft work and interactive activities. The whole community is involved and children take part in games and dances, and traditional crafts are kept alive, such as mat weaving, knitting and pottery. The children interact with community members-teachers, traditional leaders and health workers, among others. In doing so they have exposure to different skills. Children are educated about children's rights and develop practical life skills. All of these activities provide great psychosocial support and bring the community together.



Thanks to your support, communities have seen a reduction in early childhood marriage. There has been an increase in school attendance and improved behaviour reported. Children who have returned to school have been supported with school materials and school fees, essential for children without parental care to remain in school. All of these achievements are a great reflection of the success of children's corners to provide children with a safe and caring family environment, despite facing hardships in life.

"Before the formation of children's corners in our community, children did not have anything to do. Many children used to marry while they were still young. Now children are learning life skills which help them to make informed decisions. Even when they encounter problems at home or at school, they have learnt that challenges can be overcome."
Mathews, children's corner volunteer.

The importance of a caregiver

A day in the life of Benson.

Benson is 28 and lives with his parents. He is a caregiver and volunteers at one of our community-based childcare centres in Mndolera. The centres provide early childhood education and a safe haven to children under-five. All the centres are staffed by volunteers and EveryChild trained caregivers. This included early childhood development to ensure the children are fully benefiting from the centres. Benson shares his experience as an EveryChild caregiver.

What motivates you to volunteer as a caregiver?

I volunteer because I want to support my community. I am passionate that every child should go to school. When I was growing up we didn't have these centres. Thankfully I was able to complete my secondary education but my friends weren't so fortunate. I don't want this to be repeated again in my community.

Have you received any training as a caregiver?

I attended a 13 day course that was arranged by EveryChild. The training covered important elements in early childhood development, such as key milestones of a child's development, and how to make a lesson plan. I've learnt about different play techniques and how to make play materials from locally available resources. Most importantly, I understand that early stimulation, playing and interacting with children in groups helps prepare children for primary education.



Tell us about a typical day at the centre.

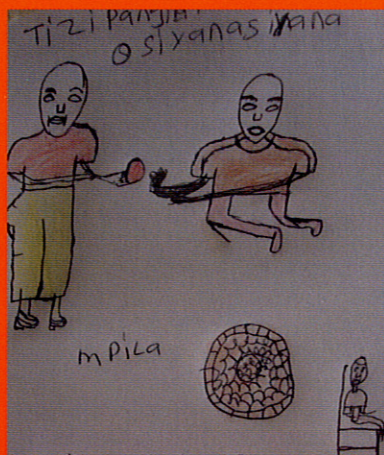
I wake up early in the morning and make sure I arrive at the centre before the children. The volunteers and I have a planning meeting. We then share out responsibilities for the day, arrange learning areas and organise play materials so we're all ready for when the children arrive. On arrival, the children are greeted with songs and asked what they saw on the way to the centre. After that we take the children to class and divide them according to their age and learning needs. The children enjoy a range of activities both indoors and outside. At the centre the children also enjoy a nutritious bowl of porridge. After this it's time for the children to go home and I tidy and prepare everything for the next day. I work at the centre five days a week and enjoy what I do.

Child friendly area

Children show and tell through drawings.

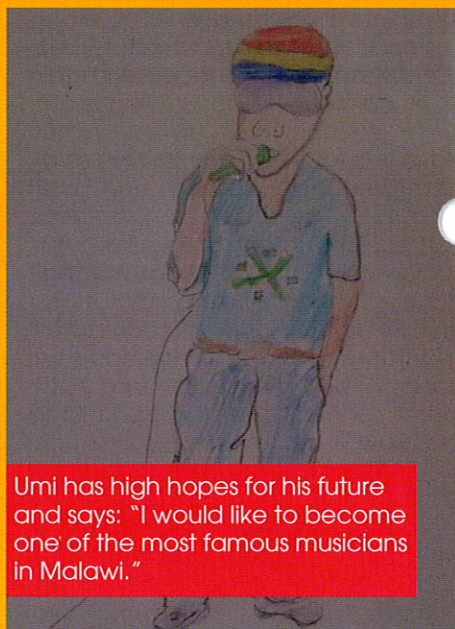
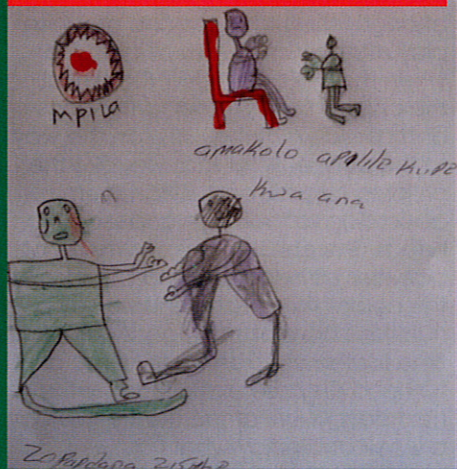


James enjoys the play materials that have been provided at the children's corner. He says: "I like playing football with my friends."



This drawing is by David who says: "I like going to school and love to sit on a chair in the front row so that I can listen carefully to the teacher."

EveryChild's parenting classes have shown parents that discipline does not mean violence. Jere shares: "My parents no longer beat me. I now enjoy school."



Umi has high hopes for his future and says: "I would like to become one of the most famous musicians in Malawi."

Emily's story

Back home with her parents.

Emily, 16, pictured second left, was sent to live with her grandparents at a time when her parents were struggling to provide food. Hear Emily's story and how with your support, she has been able to return to the family home.

Emily is the second child in a family of five. She has three sisters and one brother. Her parents sent her away to live with her grandparents when food was scarce as they felt they were unable to provide for their daughter.

When her grandfather passed away, Emily continued to live with her grandmother to keep her company, who struggled to provide the adequate care and guidance that children need. Emily became disruptive and started missing school, just to be with her friends.

Noticing that other parents were doing the same and sending away their children to live with grandparents or other relatives in the same community, EveryChild intervened. Meetings were

organised to explain the importance of children growing up with their biological parents. Emily's father attended one of these meetings and decided to bring Emily home.

"We are happy to have Emily home. Raising our children is our responsibility as parents and we should not run away from it by shielding ourselves with poverty. It is our duty to provide guidance and counselling to our children, rather than leaving them in the hands of grandparents, who also need our support."

Lazaro, Emily's father

EveryChild continues to work hard, ensuring that Emily and her parents stay together as a family. EveryChild has provided fertiliser and seeds so more food can be produced. Thanks to your support, Emily has returned home to her family and is back in school, currently in class six. Emily now has the adequate care and support she needs and is home.



Emily, pictured second left, with her parents and younger sister.



Global focus: Snapshot of EveryChild's work

All around the world, we work to keep families together, keep vulnerable children safe, and get children back with a safe and caring family, wherever we can. As an EveryChild sponsor, you not only support children in Malawi but also other children we work with globally. Your support has made a remarkable difference to thousands of children's lives and we'd like to tell you!

- In India we helped 120 children to once again have a childhood by leaving employment, where they were vulnerable and exploited.
- In Kenya, 100 girls were reunited with their families; we helped them to leave a life of working on the street, or struggling to earn a living on huge rubbish dumps, and to return to their homes.
- Growing up in residential care can be detrimental to a child's development. In Georgia we supported almost 200 children to move from large scale institutions into small family-like homes and found foster care placements for over 270 children.
- In Russia we offer the country's only respite care service for children with disabilities. 97 children, and their parents, enjoy a much-needed break thanks to this unique service.

As you can see we're having an impact on children globally but there is still so much more to do. At least 24 million children still live without parental care across the world—without mothers and fathers to look after them, these children are exposed to violence, exploitation and abuse. With your continued support, we will fight hard to protect these children. Thank you for supporting the Mndolera project in Malawi, where we will continue to build on the foundations of our work, ensuring that children in Malawi and around the world have a happy childhood. Thank you for your support as an EveryChild sponsor.

If you would like to learn more about our online service to email the child you sponsor, please contact the Sponsorship team at childsponsorship@everychild.org.uk or call 020 7749 2480 and they will be happy to help.

Thank you from all the team in Malawi!

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