

TIYENDE PAMODZI *Let's Walk Together*
GIRLS SECONDARY SCHOOL MALAWI
P.O. Box 80, Dedza, Malawi



From: Task Force Tiyende Pamodzi Girls Secondary School, Malawi
Nazareth Foundation Malawi, the Netherlands
GF Goeldner Foundation, Germany

To: Donors and prospective donors of Tiyende Pamodzi Girls
Secondary School

Date: March 12th, 2020

SUBJECT: Update March 2021
TIYENDE PAMODZI GIRLS SECONDARY SCHOOL



Dear all,

THE SCHOOL HAS OPENED !!!

We are very happy to inform you that our school has now officially started lessons for 50 female Form 1 students. On January 6th, 2021 the government posted the list of the Form 1 students they had selected for our Tiyende Pamodzi Girls Secondary School. From the 50 students for our Form 1, 30 students were selected by the government according to our Memorandum of Understanding. The selected girls are mostly from Mganja and some are from Chigodi, a remote village about 25 kilometres from Mganja.

It was up to us to select the remaining 20 students according to the vision for our school. We invited all the prospective students for an entrance exam that was held on January 18th, 2021. Together with the headteacher and the deputy head teacher we selected 20 students based on the results of their entrance exam, the place where they live and their commitment. Several young mothers with children were in the selection. Some of the girls were so happy when finding their names on the list that they were dancing and singing in front of the administration block!



Covid-19 situation and teachers' strike

On November 25th, 2020 the Ministry of Education informed the public that because of fraudulent Form 4 exams they had to be written again in January. This meant that the opening for Form 1 of every school had to be postponed until February 1st, 2021. In January Covid-19 cases in Malawi were increasing rapidly. Because of this the government decided that schools should be closed. This meant another postponement for the opening of our school. Opening was foreseen on February 22nd 2021. The day before the expected opening we cleaned the classroom and the offices and prepared everything for the teachers and the students. We handed over the keys to the headteacher. On the same evening however, the Teachers Union of Malawi (TUM) announced a nationwide strike to fight for better Covid-19 preventative measures for the teachers. It took more than two weeks to resolve this fight with the government. TUM called off the strike on Tuesday March 9, 2021. On which day our students could finally take their place in our classroom.



Teachers

Our 5 teachers were appointed by the Ministry of Education. We received their names On December 25th, 2020. A few days later the appointed headteacher, Mrs. Josephine Kanjala (formerly stationed at Mchinji Secondary School) and deputy head teacher Mr. Ellias Yona (formerly Mtakatika Secondary School), came for a visit. We showed them the school and talked about the way forward. Mr. Yona was the first to move into one of the staff houses with his family, Mrs. Kanjala following a few days later. A third teacher, Mr. Gwizima, found temporarily housing at the Primary School. The two other teachers, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Mtambalika, were not able to find good houses for their families in Mganja. Waiting for more staff houses to be built they will rent rooms and commute to see their families in the weekends.

The teachers had their first meeting on February 1st, 2021. They discussed division of tasks, opening of a bank account for the school fees, and made all the other necessary arrangements for opening the school on their side. They invited us for a meeting with Task Force members. We had three successful meetings with them in the beginning of February. We discussed the vision of our school, rules and regulations and topics like the school uniform, but we also shared ideas about the vocational training and other extra curricular activities. In our second meeting each teacher planted a mango tree on the school grounds. We are now in the process of making a site plan for the 7,9 hectares of school grounds together, thinking about how to use the land for reforestation, agricultural purposes, playground and hostels in the future. The five teachers are all experienced teachers and are already becoming a good team, dedicated to the vision of our school: to assist girls in having a better future for themselves and their (future) families.



Headteacher Mrs. Kanjala and deputy Mr. Yona



The team of teachers planting mango trees

Furniture

On November 19, 2020 we transported the furniture that came by container from the Netherlands in 2018 from Nazareth to the school. A week later we worked a whole day with the people who assist us at Nazareth to clean the classrooms and the teachers offices and the furniture for one classroom. After putting the freshly cleaned chairs and tables in the classroom it looked like new and very beautiful. Every visitor is amazed and wants to have their picture made while sitting on these wonderful second hand desks from a school in the Netherlands.



Vocational training

In January we were allowed to submit a project proposal for vocational training at our school with a Dutch organisation. Our proposal was accepted. This means we have funding for tailoring and agricultural courses in our extra curriculum including courses for our teachers, 25 sewing machines and a fence near our borehole for agriculture. During the Covid-19 closure all our teachers went on a 2-day intensive permaculture course. They are now able to teach our students agricultural techniques that are cheaper and better suited to the climate and will give them an outlook on better and more nourishing crops. A training in tailoring will follow.



Teachers on Permaculture Training at Permaculture Paradise



Institute

Construction

The block of two staff houses was finished and handed over to the Task Force on December 21st, 2020 by the contractor. The chairperson of the Mganja Village Development Committee was also present.

The Task Force has regular meetings with the contractor on site. The performance of our contractor is still very satisfactory, both in quality of the work done, as in communication and time management. In December we started construction of Block 2 and Block 3 of classrooms (meaning 4 classrooms in total). As per order by the Ministry of Education we also started the construction of more toilets.



Handover of staff houses



Staff house occupied by deputy head



Meeting at the school grounds



Foundation block 3



Excavation for toilets



Block 2 going up from ringbeam



Inspection block 3



Toilets at ground level



Block 3 window and door frames

Tree planting and erosion prevention

In December the rains came heavily. Because the site of our school is on a slope the grounds around the newly constructed buildings suffered from erosion. Together with our people from Nazareth we worked 2 days to plant against erosion (vertiva, lemon grass and lawn grass).

The Group Village Headman, together with the chair of the Village Development Committee, organised that people from each village belonging to Mganja came to plant mahogany trees all around the 1,2 km long boundary of the school grounds during the first 2 weeks of February.





Planting lemon grass, lawn and vertiva



Against erosion



A few weeks later it already looks green, no erosion any more

Solar system and SoPowerful

The solar system for the school that will be installed by the Spanish organisation Eki Fundacion has been shipped to Malawi. Waiting for arrival and installation (uncertain because of the Covid-19 pandemic) the school is without electricity at present. We hope installation of the system will be possible in April.

A visitor of Nazareth, the founder of the Dutch organisation SoPowerful, donated two temporary solar systems for the houses of the teachers. Now they have lights and are able to charge their phones and the school laptop. The organisation SoPowerful has also taken note of our need of a water tank and solar pump system. They came to assess the situation and at present are weighing their possibilities of assisting the school.

Containers with material for the school

On top of the furniture we received in 2018 by container, beginning of March 2021 two more containers arrived at Nazareth. A friend of our project from the Netherlands sent us lots of second hand furniture and educational materials (like beamers, 2 computers, a copier and paper) from an abandoned Dutch school.



Gift

Our borehole is functioning well and giving lots of water. All construction work is being done with this water, carried on the head by a group of women from the borehole to the site. The borehole will be used for agricultural purposes soon too. However, the borehole is quite far from the school buildings. Because of this our contractor advised to try to get a borehole nearer to the school for the water tank system that we are planning for the future. The existing borehole would need too many meters of cable.

To our surprise and happiness we received a letter from our contractor in which he donates the drilling of the second borehole. It will be drilled within the next few weeks. This means that, when we have a problem with one borehole, we always have the other one for water. The school and staff houses will not be without water now at any time. We are very grateful for this gift.

Fundraising

On December 17th, 2020 we started fundraising with international organisations within Malawi. We visited the offices of UNICEF, PLAN International, UNFPA, VSO, EU in Malawi and Save the Children. We left letters and project plans. As soon as the Covid-19 situation is stable again we will make follow up visits.

At present we may have an outlook on funding of block 4 of classrooms. We can use these classrooms for our vocational training (tailoring room), as a temporary science room and for storage of the furniture for the near future, when each year another 100 girls will enter the school.

We are now in need of funding for more staff houses urgently. We will also raise funds for hostels for the girls coming from far who are looking for a place to stay near the school.

In name of the Task Force, of Nazareth, the Nazareth Foundation, the Goeldner Foundation and all the girls and people benefiting from this school project, I express our heartfelt gratefulness for your assistance. Thank you all very, very much. Together we are making this dream come true.

Kind regards,

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