



The Project

The Malawi Project is a unique partnership between Rogue Running, an Austin, Texas-based community of athletes, and African runners. This year, the Malawi Project aspires to give six talented, but underprivileged, Malawian distance runners the opportunity to participate in the AT&T Austin Marathon in February 2008. For each one of those athletes, this will be their first chance to run a United States road race – a dream shared by thousands of African runners.

Over the last six months, the Malawi Project has provided high-quality running clothes to 60 Malawian athletes, and, through a partnership with Fila, donated 25 pairs of new running shoes, the first new pair of running shoes ever for many of the recipients. Rogue is currently working with the Malawi national Athletics Association to establish a long-term partnership that will strengthen ties and build long-term relationships between American and African runners.

Project Background

Like other Africans, most Malawian runners begin running as children – to travel to and from school, fetch water from the well, or play soccer (usually with balls made from plastic bags). As adults, many run to cover the long distances necessary to provide for their families.

Malawi is the 11th poorest country in the world. Mulanje District in the southern part of the country, a mountainous area where many of Malawi's top runners live and train, is one of the poorest of the country's 29 districts.

Like 85% of Malawi's population of 12 million, most of Malawi's elite runners work as subsistence farmers. This means that they have no other job than farming; what food they grow, they use to feed their families. And no employment, just as in the US, simply means no income. Some runners have managed to be among the 5% of Malawians to make it through secondary school, but due to the high cost of university education, none of the Malawi Project recipients has yet advanced that far.

Most Malawian runners – even those at the elite level – do not have the necessities that US runners take for granted – like clean water, good nutrition, running shoes, or training advice. They also do not have access to recruiters or sponsors, as do some African athletes in countries like Kenya or Ethiopia.

That's why for these runners the opportunity to compete in the US is the chance of a lifetime. It's a chance to compete for prize money that can provide for their families, buy medicine for sick relatives, to pay school fees for children -- perhaps, even, to purchase a few luxuries, like a bed or a radio.



It's a chance to make valuable contacts – and meet other runners from around the world, creating connections that will allow them to improve their own lives and those of their families.

What You Can Do, And Why You Should Do It

Please donate to support the hopes of these Malawian runners as they prepare for the Austin AT&T Marathon. Do it because they inspire you. Support them because you know what it's like to achieve a dream. Help out because of what running means to you – and for how good it feels to give an athlete without chances the hope for a better future.

The Runners

Many of the Malawi Project runners live in rural areas. The Mulanje Runners Club is a unique local club that helps get younger runners involved with the sport, providing guidance, support and group training runs. Experienced runners Francis Khanje, Teresa Master and Nancy Matanda (see bios below) help to lead this group, mentoring younger runners and providing advice. Francis Khanje offers informal coaching for the MRC. He lives seven miles from the tea estate where the training group meets; usually he covers that distance on foot.

Bios

Four runners have currently been identified to compete in the AT&T Austin Marathon. Two more will be chosen based on funding levels. You can help us give two more the opportunity of the lifetime!

Francis Khanje

Francis Khanje is one of the most well-known and popular athletes in Mulanje district. The 24-year-old long distance specialist has a marathon personal best of 2:22 and consistently runs sub-30:00 10ks. He has had the opportunity to travel to Helsinki, Finland and Seoul, South Korea to compete. He has run the Porter's Race, which is Malawi's grueling (and steeper) answer to the Pikes Peak Marathon, on numerous occasions.

He trains with the Mulanje running club. Because he lives 7 miles from where the training group meets and does not have a car or bike, he travels on foot to training. He is married and has two children.

Nancy Matanda

Nancy Matanda is 20 years old and has been running since she was a child. She currently holds the national marathon record of 3:07 from the 2006 Nico Marathon, set



on a hot, hilly course. She believes she could run well under three hours if given enough time to train.

This year, Nancy finished 2nd in the Porter's Race, two minutes behind Teresa Master.

Nancy lives in Mulanje. She has completed secondary school, and she supports 15 family members. She is not married and does not have any children.

Teresa Master

Teresa Master is 18 years old and heralded as one of Malawi's rising young stars. In 2005, she was 4th in the IAAF World Youth Championships' 1500m race with a time of 4:37.10. Also in 2005, she won the 3000m in 9:50 at Southern Africa Youth Championships in 2005 in S. Africa. She was the Southern Africa Developing Countries (SADC) junior champion in 2006. This year, she won the Porter's Race, breaking her record set last year by more than 5 minutes.

Teresa currently lives in Mulanje.

Henry Moyo

Henry Moyo is a 28-year-old police officer from Zomba district in Malawi.

He currently holds the Malawi marathon record and is one of Malawi's most well-traveled and consistent runners. His marathon PR is 2:17.

In 2006, he placed 5th in the punishing 56-k Two Oceans Marathon, in S. Africa, which draws some of the best distance runners from around the world.

Who Can I Contact to Find Out More?

To find out more about this project, visit www.roguerunning.com/malawiproject

Or contact Ruth England, Director of Training at Rogue, at ruth@roguerunning.com