



# 2017 *Annual Report*

“If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.”

-African Proverb



# GRATITUDE

One of the great leaders in Africa, Kofi Annan, once said in a speech, “Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family.”. I am always reminded of and inspired with this great quote because of its ability to instill in me the thirst for knowledge and the passion to share that knowledge with others. It really helped me to work hard at school and to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in Education from Mzuzu University in Malawi in 2014. After teaching in secondary schools for nearly three years, I decided to quit and join EKARI as Youth Programs Coordinator. I am satisfied working with EKARI and I must say I’m greatly honoured to be accorded this great opportunity. It is, and will always be, great to be part of a highly motivated and hardworking team, selflessly and cohesively working for the common good. Currently I am overseeing our Sponsor a Student and Complementary Youth Programs. I am excited to work with the youth and use my education and experiences to positively influence their lives.



EKARI, through its impactful work in Phalombe, is surely managing to break the cycle of extreme poverty by providing quality, comprehensive, and long term education support for the youth so that they should become self-sufficient in future; and vocational training for adults in the communities so that they should become empowered. EKARI is applauded in Phalombe because of its relevant and quality programs that it is delivering in the district. It’s imperative to note that EKARI is the only NGO out of 49 NGOs working in Phalombe which has taken bold steps to fight against the dependency syndrome (where people rely on NGOs and government rather than themselves). There is a Chinese proverb which says “Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.” Through empowerment and life skills trainings conducted by EKARI, people in the communities are now able to recognize that hand outs are temporary remedies for their problems, but knowledge is powerful and will help them get empowered for a lifetime.

The EKARI team in Phalombe, Malawi and Seattle, USA sincerely thanks you for your continued support. EKARI’s programs are growing and impacting so many because of your immense support!

## **CHRISTOPHER LOTI**

*YOUTH PROGRAMS COORDINATOR, MALAWI*

### *our vision*

Thriving youth and communities, free to determine their own future.

### *our mission*

Building knowledge and skills in youth and communities - in Phalombe, Malawi - so that they can lift themselves out of extreme poverty.

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## Complementary Youth Programs

*A comprehensive set of programs designed to support youth outside of the classroom as they progress from high school to employment. Each program builds upon the others. In the absence of one program, the others are not as effective. Our end goal is for youth to secure employment and gain lifelong learning skills.*



### TUTORING PROGRAM

We have transformed this program to include small group study sessions. Previously, classes were lecture style with time for questions and answers. Now, small groups discuss a problem, find a proposed solution, present their findings to the entire class, and finally come up with the best solution together with their teacher. The goal is not only to improve our youth beneficiaries' exam results, but more so to expand their critical thinking and problem solving skills.

### 3 MEALS A DAY PROGRAM

We continue to follow Malawi's Six Food Groups, provide three nutritious meals a day to youth participating in our programs, and supply supplemental food to improve our students' poor school diets.

### MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

We continue to provide access to mentors as well as to goal setting and critical thinking sessions. In addition, for the 2017-18 school year, EKARI partnered with at least one teacher at each of the high schools that our youth beneficiaries attend. In addition to serving as mentors, the teachers serve as liaisons between EKARI and our beneficiaries by providing updates about the challenges and accomplishments of our beneficiaries. Moreover, we now also host an annual meeting involving our beneficiaries' guardians and EKARI's Student Board in order to better involve the guardians in their children's education and to solicit feedback regarding how we can improve our programs.



### LIBRARY PROGRAM

This program has evolved since its inception in 2010 when we provided only high school textbooks. Our library now also includes college textbooks, exam study guides, dictionaries, and fiction books. We are currently adding high school textbooks to meet Malawi's revised high school curriculum.

## *Complementary Youth Programs (cont.)*



### **MEDICAL FUND**

This fund is available to all students who require care at a hospital. We continue to provide mosquito bed nets and access to annual dental and eye check-ups and treatment.

### **HEALTH EDUCATION & HIV/AIDS PROGRAM**

Linguni Hope for the Youth Organization continues to spread awareness about HIV/AIDS to 25 partner primary schools in Phalombe as well as to our youth beneficiaries. This year, we visited a local hospital where our beneficiaries gained practical knowledge with regard to nutrition and reproductive health.



### **COMPUTER PROGRAM**

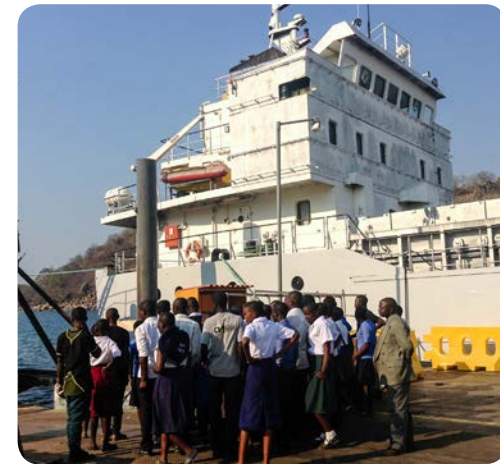
This program continues to prepare high school graduates for college and future employment by providing them with access to computer skills training. We also loan laptops to our beneficiaries during their higher education.

### **HIGHER EDUCATION PREP PROGRAM**

We continue to partner with the University of Michigan's College of Engineering to help prepare high school seniors for their year-end exams. In addition, our field staff guides our high school graduates through the higher education application process. The average time for a graduate to gain acceptance is now only 6 months; reduced from 1 or 2 years in the past.

### **APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**

The job market in Malawi is dismal. Therefore, we realize the importance of increasing graduates' cover letter, resume writing, interview, and networking skills. We are also working to form more partnerships with organizations willing to allow our beneficiaries to complete an internship.



### **EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIP PROGRAM**

This year we returned to Lake Malawi! Our beneficiaries enjoyed the beach, learned to detect a fish's age at the Malawi Fisheries Department, gained knowledge about types of ships at Malawi Shipping Industries, and visited Marine University.



# Community Programs

*EKARI's impact does not stop with youth, but rather extends into the communities where the youth we support live. We provide access to adult literacy, Village Savings and Loan, business management, and agriculture training as well as infrastructure improvements.*



## ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM

We celebrated our third year of successful adult literacy classes in June with a graduation ceremony for our first English graduates! We hosted five native language classes and six English classes in 2017.



## COMMUNITY SPACES PROGRAM

We completed construction of our second youth home in July! The project employed 32 people. Our female beneficiaries used the home for the first time during this past August holiday. The home supports students' studies by providing them with access to nutrition, sanitation, tutoring and mentoring programs, and electricity for homework--all of which they can't access without EKARI.



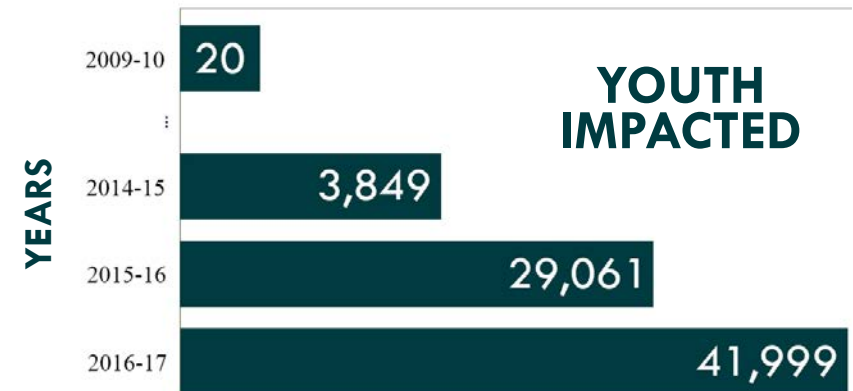
## SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS PROGRAM

We now work with 13 community groups providing them with agriculture, Village Savings and Loan (VSL), and business management training as well as continuous monitoring! Jacqueline, our new Entrepreneurship Coordinator, will provide guidance to VSL group members regarding business plans, market research, and profit/loss statements. Several members of existing VSL groups are already thriving after starting small businesses per her guidance and are now able to provide basic needs for their families. In addition, we are ecstatic to announce our official collaboration with The Face-to-Face Project who is undertaking the 2-year Victory (kitchen) Garden Campaign in the Phalombe District. Kitchen gardens are small gardens located near the home that provide nutritious food year round. See our Looking Ahead section for more about recent changes to this program.

# SPONSOR A STUDENT & SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS



This year six students started their higher education! We also celebrated the graduation of six students from higher education and 13 from high school. Our senior students achieved a 100% pass rate for the 3rd year in a row; all qualified for university! We started supporting six new students for the 2017-18 school year.



## Malawi Field Office

*Welcome to our new staff  
members!*



## CHRISTOPHER LOTI

*Youth Programs Coordinator*

See the Gratitude section.

## JACQUELINE CHULU

*Entrepreneurship Coordinator*

Jacqueline has a degree in Agricultural Education from the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources and field experience working with small business groups. Her duties include monitoring existing small community agriculture and livestock business groups as well as supporting new entrepreneurs as they develop and grow. She will use her expertise and passion to help our beneficiaries and our surrounding community to become more independent and confident in their abilities.

## STOREY

*Office Administrator*

Storey worked with the construction team who built our community building in Phalombe in 2014. Our field office team came to appreciate Storey's hard work ethic and reliability. When construction was complete, Storey offered his grounds-keeping and maintenance services to EKARI even though we were only able to pay him a very small stipend at the time. Starting July 1, 2016, EKARI was able to hire Storey for part-time employment. Storey's dedication and desire to learn more led us to hire Storey full-time on July 1, 2017 as our Office Administrator!

# MALAWI



**67** Percentage of Malawi's 18 million people between the ages of 0-24

**9** Malawi has the 9th highest prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in the world

**83** Percentage of population living in rural areas dependent upon agriculture/subsistence farming and lacking access to small business loans

**65.8** Malawi's literacy rate compared to 99% for the US

**11** Number of years of schooling a Malawian child can expect to receive compared to 16 years in the US

**30,000** Jobs created by the formal sector against a projection of required 300,000 jobs

**1** The Malawi government, the largest employer in Malawi, froze all external recruitment as part of its 2015 civil service reforms exacerbating the unemployment rate

*Phalombe, Malawi,  
Africa*

Malawi ranks among the world's most densely populated and least developed countries. Many Malawians live in extreme poverty—below the poverty line and without access to basic services. In 2017, living days without power (hydroelectric) and water—even in Malawian cities—became the norm. Low rainfalls due to climate change in past years is a contributing factor.



# IMPACT Youth

## 2016-2017 school year

(September 2016 - July 2017)



### STUDENT COMPLETION RATE

100% (6 of 6 students completed higher education)

100% (13 of 13 high school seniors passed final exam)

### EFFECTIVENESS RATING

(calculated based on progression, retention, completion and employment rates)



### YOUTH EMPLOYMENT RATE

(\*see Looking Ahead section for information regarding our new Youth Entrepreneurship Program)

50%\* 3 graduates obtained jobs  
3 in search of employment

In 2017...

# 41,999

## YOUTH IMPACTED

(Extra space in our community building classrooms allows us to open several of our programs to youth from the entire Phalombe community.)

### EKARI SPONSORED

12 Apprenticeship Program

20 Higher Education

13 Passed Exam; participated in transition year activities

25 High School

### COMMUNITY

44 Tutoring Program

15 Computer Program

480 Final Exam Prep

41,390 HIV/AIDS Awareness (Primary Schools)

65 BED NETS PROVIDED

OVER 7500 MEALS SERVED



OVER 200 TEXTBOOKS LOANED

OVER 40 STUDENTS VISITED THE DENTIST

30

HIGHER EDUCATION APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED



200 COMPUTER TRAINING HOURS LOGGED PER STUDENT



# IMPACT *Community*



**72**

community members employed part-time through EKARI's programs

**4**

farming demonstration plots started

**5**

renewed from previous year



**25**

community members learned to cook nutritiously through cooking classes using a variety of foods from their kitchen gardens

**5**

existing cooperatives sustained



**60**

members received regular agriculture and business monitoring



**175**

adults learned to read and write in native language

**118**

adults learned to read and write in English



**4**

Village Saving & Loan (VSL) Groups formed

**80**

members received VSL, business management & agriculture training, as well as regular monitoring

**40**

members started their own small businesses so far after borrowing funds from their VSL!

**1**

kitchen garden chair facilitator team formed and trained



over  
**150**

kitchen gardens created so far!

# IMPACT *Stories*

*This year we are celebrating independence! Through EKARI's programs we provide not only access to a classroom education, but also an introduction to the lifelong learning skills necessary for youth and communities to lift themselves out of extreme poverty. The beneficiaries pictured here, with support from EKARI, are now self-sufficient or are taking the steps necessary to be able to rely on themselves.*



## MARGRET

Margret's children withdrew from school because she could not pay tuition. Rather than depend on handouts, Margret took part in EKARI's training sessions where she gained the skills required to become independent. She was an inaugural member of her community's Village Savings and Loan group. She used her savings to purchase resources to start irrigation farming. Margret's children are now back in school. Her goal is to support them until they graduate from high school!

## RAPHAEL

Raphael's mother borrowed large sums of money and fell into debt when trying to pay for her children's tuition. She was not able to support Raphael beyond his junior year in high school. With EKARI's support, Raphael graduated from high school, earned his teaching certificate, and became a primary school teacher. His passion for education drove him to want to achieve more. He is currently studying for his Bachelor of Education. His desire to support himself and his family drove him to find an internship with Mulanje Opportunity Bank in Malawi, where he works during school holidays. Raphael understands the importance of self-reliance and is on his way to becoming independent!



## DICKSON

With EKARI's support, Dickson graduated from college with a Diploma in Nutrition and Livelihood Security and completed an internship. When his internship ended, Dickson was not offered a job. Rather than depend on EKARI for further support, he knocked on the doors of many organizations to submit his resume. With his self-sufficient mindset, Dickson did not give up when it took him over a year to find a job. He now works as a field supervisor with a Phalombe nonprofit focusing on nutrition!

## JACQUELINE

Jacqueline was unemployed before participating in financial and business management training through EKARI. In September, she borrowed \$8.50 from her Village Savings and Loan group to start a small business of making and selling brooms. She paid back the loan plus interest in one month. Profits from her business have improved her standard of living because she is able to purchase goods to support her family's basic needs. She plans to expand her business to become even more self-reliant.





# FINANCIALS\*

## PROGRAM/FUND INVESTMENTS\*\*

### United States

	2015-16	2016-17
Sponsor a Student Program	\$37,350	\$27,510***
Scholarship Program	\$4,800	\$2,000***
Complementary Youth Programs	\$32,930	\$34,755
Community Programs	\$25,900	\$63,412****
Malawi Field Office Operations	\$18,504	\$19,725
Monitoring & Evaluation	\$1,687	\$4,630*****

### Germany

	2016-17
Sponsor a Student Program	\$3,888
Scholarship Program	\$650
Complementary Youth Programs	\$6,165
Community Programs	\$45
Malawi Field Office Operations	\$1,190

\*Reported by fiscal year ending June 30 \*\*Funds wired to Malawi \*\*\*Less invested than previous year because utilized reserve funding \*\*\*\*Construction of youth home included \*\*\*\*\*2 trips/year (1 to U.S., 1 to Malawi)

## INCOME U.S.



### CONTRIBUTIONS BY TYPE

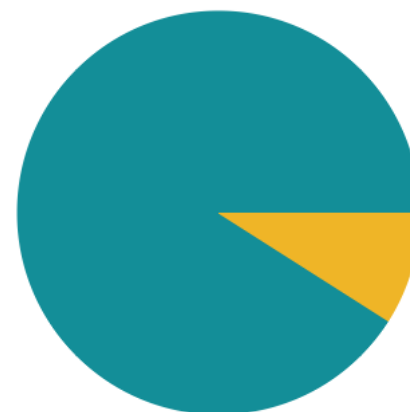
- Individual - 67%
- Corporate - 2%
- Corporate Match - 14%
- Grant - 12%
- Foundation - 5%

2016-17 INCOME - \$151,221.97

2015-16 INCOME - \$191,185.94

TOTAL 2016-17 INCOME (U.S. & GERMANY) - \$168,013

## EXPENSE U.S.



### EXPENSES/INVESTMENTS

- Programs - 91%
- Operating Costs - 9%
- Fundraising - 0%

2016-17 EXPENSE/INVESTMENT - \$166,219.01

2015-16 EXPENSE/INVESTMENT - \$135,223.72

# HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Join our EKARI team! There are many ways to get involved beyond making a donation. Visit our website for more information.

## VOLUNTEER

Contribute your time. You can apply your job skills and passions to exciting volunteer opportunities in the U.S. and Malawi!

## FUNDRAISE

Don't let fundraising scare you. It is simple and fun! Let us show you how. Children can organize a lemonade stand and contribute proceeds to EKARI. Include EKARI in your wedding registry. Host a house party in your own home. Notify us about matching programs with your employer.

## NEWSLETTER

Learn more about our work and become aware of how your actions locally can directly affect communities around the world, including EKARI beneficiaries, by signing up for our monthly e-mail updates.

## FOLLOW US

Want to hear about Magdalena's accomplishments at school, Febbie's new small business venture, or recent information about our Computer Program? Stay engaged on our social media pages listed below and share the news with friends and family!

[www.ekarifoundation.org](http://www.ekarifoundation.org)  
[facebook.com/ekarifoundation](https://facebook.com/ekarifoundation)  
[twitter.com/ekarifoundation](https://twitter.com/ekarifoundation)  
[youtube.com/user/ekarifoundation](https://youtube.com/user/ekarifoundation)  
[instagram.com/ekarifoundation](https://instagram.com/ekarifoundation)  
or @ekarifoundation (use with app)  
[linkedin.com/company/ekari-foundation](https://linkedin.com/company/ekari-foundation)



# LOOKING AHEAD

Our team in Malawi, led by co-founder Elias Makina, sees that the time is right to extend the depth and breadth of our innovative program model. "The need is overwhelming", says Elias "as more and more students and families understand the importance of an education". To support this growth - with a continued focus on quality over quantity - we have added additional paid staff in Malawi, bringing our Malawi team to five staff members, all of whom are Malawi nationals. For the past eight years, EKARI has been mainly a volunteer organization on the US side. To be sustainable, we plan to add a paid Development and Communications Manager in 2018 in Seattle to increase visibility and expand fundraising to meet our program goals.

We are ready to launch our Youth Entrepreneurship Program in 2018! A large proportion of youth who graduate from universities in Malawi are unable to find employment, including many EKARI beneficiaries. We have finalized a 14 week training course and created a partnership with a local bank in order to youth to access loans.

We are moving into phase two of our Sustainable Livelihoods Program. We started the program in 2015 with the vision of providing financial and vocational training to small business cooperatives. Over the past three years, through continuous monitoring and evaluation, we have found that our beneficiaries prefer to commence businesses of their own when first getting started. We have found that Village Saving and Loan (VSL) training in conjunction with Business Management training, giving individuals within VSL groups the ability to start their own businesses, to be the most impactful and what we will focus on moving forward. In the future, we plan to educate and encourage the groups to conduct businesses as cooperatives. We have already formed a partnership with a reputable microfinance institution in the area so that the groups will have access to loans for their group businesses.

As we increase the scope of our work, EKARI will always be the grassroots, community-based organization that our supporters have grown to love; an organization who puts our beneficiary's needs first and allows them a voice in the development of EKARI's programs.





Photography by EKARI field staff and Jennifer Crane  
Design by Laura Heilstedt

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