

November 2023 to January 2024

Although this period is traditionally given over to winding down for the holiday period, Christmas and New Year have been busy for CharChar as we gear up for 2024. To this end, we have been working closely with Emmanuel University and diversifying our literacy inputs in the primary sector in Malawi. We have managed to increase our welcomed inputs into this government primary Demonstration School such that we now have volunteer teachers in each of Standards 1, 2, 3 with part-time support to Standard 4. The critical inputs have come from donor funding enabling us to maintain Thandiwe, Florence, and Constance together with Andrew Mchisa, our Senior Education Officer.

In other news from the field, Thandiwe, one of our Literacy Specialist Teachers, got married in December! The entire CharChar team wishes her and her new groom every happiness!



Our reputation for low-cost, practical solutions to the very real challenges of teaching in primary schools in Malawi has enabled us to be privileged to share our experiences and knowledge of foundational literacy instructional practices with the **Strengthening Teacher Education and Practice (STEP)** activity in Malawi. STEP is a consortium of partners who work together to support the improvement of foundational literacy instruction through interventions and resources provided to public and private teacher training institutions.

Through this partnership, CharChar has been able to also utilise the Demonstration School to develop teaching and learning materials to share with teacher educators and student teachers all over Malawi, now and in the future. Part of our work is to ensure that there are physical and online materials available in every Teacher Training College. For this reason, we would like to develop additional video content that demonstrates how evidence-based, child-friendly teaching methods can be implemented in the Malawian large class context.

According to the UNICEF published, Malawi Education Fact sheet 2022 *"The primary completion rate in Malawi is 33 per cent, indicating that two-thirds of the children of primary school completion age did not complete primary education. The differences are notable by various background characteristics."*

https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/2022Malawi_Factsheet_InDesign-FINAL-2.pdf



Andrew ensures every learner succeeds!



Our Senior Field Officer, Andrew Mchisa, has grown in capacity and responsibility, focussing on running the programme and taking the lead on project management.



Florence, assessing a Standard 2 learner.

The good news is that back at the demonstration school with fun and engaging lessons, our Literacy Specialist Teachers (LSTs) have increased learning outcomes in foundational literacy and improved the chances of completing primary education for 350 current learners. Through regular classroom-based coaching from Andrew and supported by CharChar materials and low or no-cost locally made resources, these young children are starting the New Year off on a very positive note!

With your continued support, we will be able to impact even more disadvantaged children and teachers in Malawi. It would be beneficial to the learners to have literacy support for a further full academic year (3rd project year) in order for the majority of the children to have three years of foundational literacy support. Ideally, we would train a fourth teacher and employ a project manager locally. However, this will depend on our ability to source the right person and funding for the role, and an additional volunteer teacher. This will also enable us to maximise the connection between the STEP programme and another major programme in literacy taking place nationally, which may also wish to use this demonstration school for development of teacher CPD materials.

We hope you will join the CharChar family, and through your kind donations, help us to improve teaching and learning in Malawian primary schools. Your support can make a lasting impact on the lives of these children and their future prospects.

Operations Director
Andrew White