

HIGH FIVE CLUB

changing lives in Africa, £5 at a time

Children's Feeding & Conservation Programme, Malawi



Background

As one of the poorest countries in the world many Malawians struggle to meet even their most basic needs, including access to nutritious food. Of about two million people currently hungry in Malawi, children, the elderly, and those living with HIV/AIDS, are amongst the hardest hit – with many young children orphaned or vulnerable due to the AIDS epidemic and as a result suffering from severe acute malnutrition. This not only effects the most vulnerable of people in Malawi but

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has a significant knock on effect to wildlife, who are poached and their habitats destroyed in people's desperate attempts to survive.

Back in 2013 we together supported a food security initiative in Malawi spearheaded by an inspiring local community member called Brown Munthali. Brown and his wife have dedicated their lives on a voluntary basis (which is rare in Africa) to try to help alleviate poverty in the community where they live in the north of Malawi through a community self-help group they have set up called **Happy Faith Based Organisation**.

One of their initiatives is a community nursery school set up to serve the youngest children in Brown's community, called *Happy Jill Mama's Care*. This provides nursery preschool education and day care for up to 150 children. Brown and his wife have also opened up their home to care for 30 of these children, all of whom have been orphaned (both parents or one) by the AIDS epidemic. Without their care, these children would



be on the streets or placed with extended family members where drink and *chamba* (marijuana) abuse is known to be an issue, along with increased vulnerability to sexual abuse and being kept away from school to do work around the house or in the fields.

Happy Faith Based Organisation rely solely on community-spirited people in this impoverished rural community giving small contributions on an ad hoc basis (when they have something to spare) towards the running of the school and the costs of looking after the orphans. One of the biggest challenges faced is feeding these orphaned children and this is a real strain on Brown and his family's own resources. Another issue is providing for the healthcare needs of these children, with many becoming ill through contracting malaria regularly.

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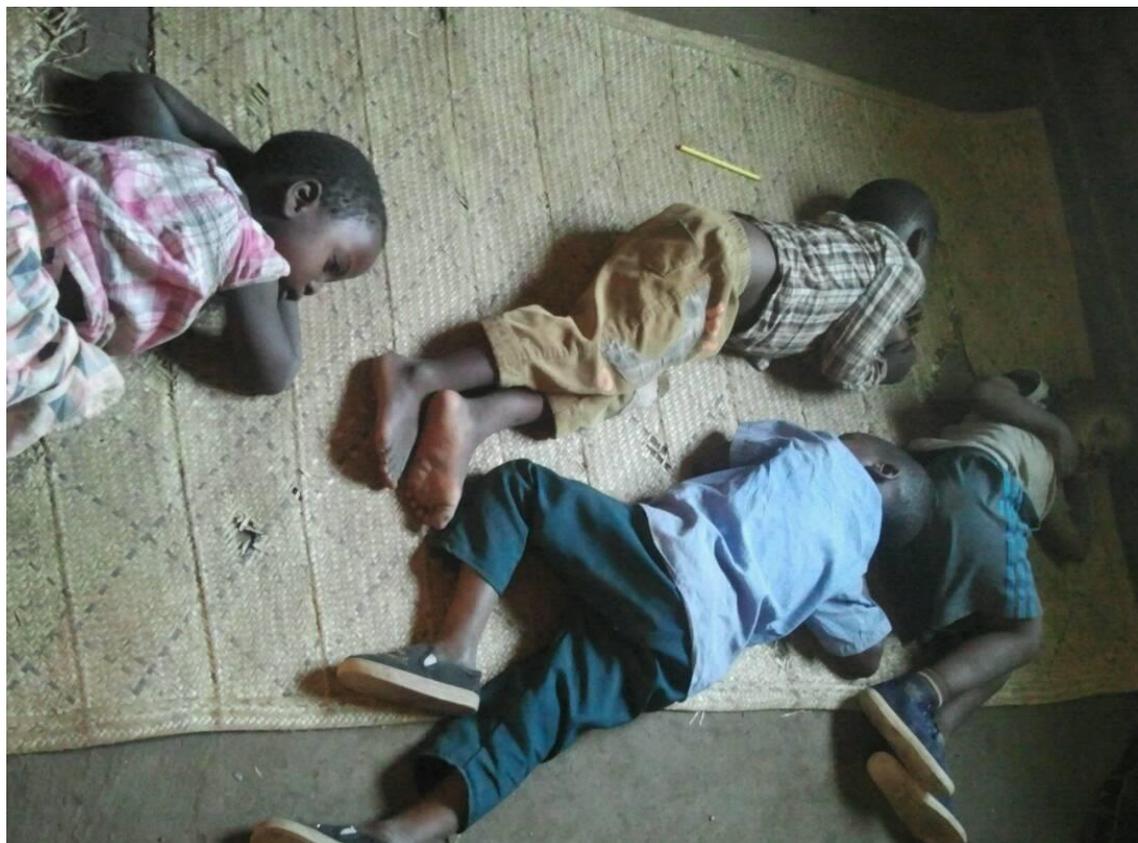


High Five Club Support:

Throughout 2019 we have joined hands together to provide a monthly food budget to the Happy Faith Based Organisation to purchase provisions locally to feed the 30 orphaned children in Brown's care. Some community members, when they can afford, contribute to the feeding programme by providing the funds to pay a small allowance to 2 people to cook the children's meals each day. Others collect fallen firewood to cook the food. **The annual food budget we have provided to secure the**

provisions to provide nutritious meals for the children each day is £1,826. Imagine, food all year round for 30 children at just £60 per child – how our money makes an impact in rural Africa.

We additionally gifted £50 to supply mosquito nets for the children (who currently sleep on grass mats on the floor) so that all of the orphaned children under Brown's care have some level of protection at night against contracting malaria.



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At the request of the teachers at the school we were also thrilled to facilitate a short break for the school's new Hajimac Chitimba Wildlife Club, which comprises 40 children including all 30 orphans. High Five Club provided **£430 to fund the fuel and food provisions for the trip** to enable them to undertake a 3-day visit to Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve and Nyika National Park to see wildlife and learn from game scouts about wildlife conservation issues in Malawi. For all youngsters this was their first ever holiday. Community members provided the vehicles to transport the children and the Malawi Department of National Parks and Wildlife provided free accommodation and game scout services commenting that it was the first time children from such an impoverished community had visited these protected areas. This visit has really helped to promote a respect for wildlife in the community (as the children reported back on their visit to the wider community) and already the local Chiefs (traditional leaders) have implemented initiatives that conserve trees in their area and protect wildlife. A win-win result for both people and wildlife! We look forward to seeing what this fledgling Wildlife Club achieves in the future for conservation.



We plan, funds allowing, continuing our support of the Happy Faith Based Organisation moving forwards to develop a range of poverty reducing initiatives in this community together. The needs are enormous but together we can make a difference to the lives of people in Children's this community.

For more information contact Cheryl@highfiveclub.co.uk