


**THE NCHIMA TRUST**
*A Source of help for  
the people of Malawi*


## Who are we?

<b>Nchima Trust</b>	Pronounced 'Encheema', the trust was founded in 1962 by the Gardiner family.
<b>Principal activities</b>	Education, community projects and disaster recovery
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Malawians who have no other means to meet their goals or potential
<b>Regulatory oversight</b>	The Charity Commission for England and Wales <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission</a>
<b>Malawi The warm heart of Africa</b>	A landlocked country famed for its lake, landscape and friendly people.



## What do we do?

The Nchima Trust is a UK registered charity whose primary aim is provide help to underprivileged people in Malawi. Education and training remain the cornerstone of the Trust's work. Beneficiaries are selected through local chiefs and committees based on need and potential: all would otherwise be unable to continue with their training without the support from the Trust.

As well as education, the trust runs development projects in some of the most underprivileged communities in the country. Most recently, this work has focussed on a novel approach to manual tilling of agricultural land in order to reduce erosion and maximise water retention in the soil.

The Trust responds to natural disasters when necessary. It generally focuses on the recovery phase after immediate danger to life or limb has past, hence the Trust frequently arrives on the scene as other agencies are withdrawing.

For those who have visited in the past , we hope that this newsletter stirs wonderful memories of Malawi and Malawians. For others, I hope it helps to provide an understanding of the current work of the Nchima Trust.

For further information or to donate, please see our contacts details at the end of this newsletter.

## The Malawi Committee

The Trust continues to rely very heavily upon its local volunteers for its activities and would not be able to function effectively without their enthusiasm, foresight and dedication. Frank, Rosena, James and Diekens adopt specific roles within Malawi whilst Robin Broadhead and Dennis Davidson provide strategic support where necessary. In the UK, Jose Quinn works tirelessly in her management of the board, the accounts and the regulatory obligations of the charity.

## Message board – a selection of correspondence relating to our activities this year.



### Deep bed farming

Here's a message from one of our partner charities called Tiyeni ('Let's go!' in Chichewa). Its agricultural principles directly challenge a widely promoted message that minimal tilling was important to maximise yield. In December 2021, the Ministry of Agriculture acknowledged the advantages of deep bed farming. Here is a response to the news from one of Tiyeni's founders:

Tiyeni's Deep-Bed Farming methodology is now officially recognised for its efficacy by the Malawian government, which is a major step towards our being able to roll it out to a much wider audience. In my eyes, the original 40 farmers at Chinyama are starting to resemble the mustard seed from which a mighty tree should grow; may we see birds from all over southern Malawi come and perch in its branches. What a miracle that would be!

### Tertiary Education (Message from Eunice Kholowa)

Firstly, I would like to thank you all for all the support invested in me. Finally, I have graduated with a credit in information systems. May you continue supporting others as you have done with me. This is how I looked on my graduation day (7 Sept 2022).

Secondly, I want to update you on the project I mentioned in my previous email. I have managed to buy school uniforms and shoes for those three kids whose parents did not believe in sending them to school. Am glad to tell you that they have learnt for just a term, but they have made it all to standard 2. A certain Nchima beneficiary called Owen contributed too on the school uniform of one kid.



### Secondary School Education

(A very generous couple donated £300 as part of their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. They asked to sponsor a girl through secondary school. Here is the response from Josie, our admin lead)

Dear Mr and Mrs D.

I hope you are both well and enjoyed your 60th wedding anniversary. Rosena, a volunteer in Malawi has identified a suitable student and we propose to use your funding for her education.

Her name is Veronica John aged 14 and she is starting her first year at Mulanje Mission CDSS. Fees are approx £40 per year and her education will last for four years. At the start of every term Veronica will also receive our toiletries/stationary pack. The toiletries consist of 1 bar of bathing soap, 4 bars washing soap, 1 tube of toothpaste and for the girls hygiene pads. The stationary consists of 10 exercise books 2 pens and 1 pencil per term. The toiletries cost approx £10 per term bringing her annual funding to £70 per year x 4 years = £270. There are no charges for the stationary as they are bought with a legacy NT received a few years ago the donor stipulating it was to be used for exercise books pens and pencils for secondary students.

You will see in one of the photos Veronica is holding her bag of toiletries and stationary.

I will keep you updated on Veronica's progress in the coming years.



## Floods were very marked at the start of the year, and primarily affected the most underprivileged communities

2022 has been a tough year for many Malawians but the Nchima Trust still has a great deal to celebrate, not least the incredible support from our donors whose generosity allows the work to continue.

In late January, Cyclone Ana hit the Southern region, including the old capital city of Blantyre. Bricks made from dried mud simply dissolved like sugar cubes, houses collapsed and crops and belongings were washed away.



In March, cyclone Gumbo struck. Chikwawa district was amongst the worst affected areas. This particularly fierce storm destroyed homes, crops and a great deal of the fragile infrastructure. The Nchima volunteers sourced and distributed maize flour, beans, plastic sheeting (for use as tents or rain covers) cooking oil and seeds as part of the relief effort.



## Reflections from Corinna, our most recently appointed board member, following her trip to Malawi

Malawi trip October 2022

Whilst it is sub-zero here in the UK just before Christmas, a small packet of tea from the Nchima Tea Estate in my kitchen cupboard reminds me of my recent trip to Malawi. The Nchima Trust was chaired by my late mother for many years, so I am delighted to be involved and to witness what an impact the Trust is having on the lives of so many Malawians. When I heard that Jeannette Heikens, a highly experienced and energetic Nchima board member, was planning a visit to support the local team in Malawi I saw this as a great chance to follow and learn.

“The warm heart of Africa” is indeed a well-earned nickname for Malawi. What struck me most during the trip was the resourcefulness, the kindness and welcome we received from the people who we met, despite the considerable challenges that many are facing currently. There is a Forex crisis which means a petrol crisis. Where there is a tanker delivery people race to queue for hours, taking cans and even plastic bottles. A food crisis affects rural communities in particular. The harvest was poor, initially because of drought, and later due to storms which destroyed acres of crops. There is a deforestation crisis as well. The landscape is clearly being systematically denuded of trees as the imperative of finding firewood to cook on is a daily challenge. But, despite all the difficulties, smiles and generosity abound.

I arrived with a suitcase full of laptops sourced by Alastair, and some beautifully knitted jerseys which had been donated in the UK for distribution at orphanages. I spent a week being driven by Jeannette (fearless in the traffic chaos) visiting students at Comboni Technical College, at the College of Medicine (now Kamuzu University of Health Sciences), and at Secondary Schools where we handed out parcels of essential items and Rosena paid the fees for the term.



Hand knitted woollies



Community nursery built by NT



Rosena and I at a secondary school



Tertiary students

The highlight of my visit was meeting the Malawi Team; Rosena, James and Frank are a huge asset to the Trust in Malawi. Energetic and dedicated, they know all of the student beneficiaries personally, and are a regular point of contact and source of support. It struck me that the Trust has a really robust structure with the local committee able to move quickly to help where it is needed: this was particularly demonstrated by the Flood Relief measures after Storms Ana and Gumbo.

We visited the Tiyeni agriculture project in Chinyama (a 2 hour drive down a dirt track) and were met by singing and dancing. The Trust has been involved with this community for about 25 years and they were thrilled to see Jeannette, it was really moving. The harvest this year again looks poor because of drought, but the hope is that the contouring, deep digging and the structure of the beds, with mini dams built along the ridges, will mean that the soil erosion is reduced and the water will be captured. The local elders generously gave us a meal of Nsima, or maize porridge, to thank us for the visit.

I left feeling that the Trust is making a real difference. It is not just that the fees and allowances are giving access to opportunity for students, but the requirement for them to write progress reports means that there is a chance to celebrate successes and address any problems as they arise. The plan to encourage the many alumni and current beneficiaries to connect and support each other is clearly a good idea- graduate jobs are hard to find.

Finally, I feel the next challenge is finding a route to alternative energy sources. I hope that we will be able to explore the opportunities that solar energy offers in the communities where the Trust is involved. Reducing the daily challenge of sourcing firewood would surely improve the lives of Malawians, particularly the women on whom much of this burden falls.

The Nchima Trust aims to be a “Source of hope for the people of Malawi”. This visit showed me that, in an environment where hope is really needed, the Trust is doing so well, and we are lucky to enjoy such brilliant local support backed up by the invaluable skill of Josie Quinn in the UK.

# Chairman's notes

The Trust currently supports 250 school pupils, 27 students at various technical colleges and a further 84 at University and Medical School. We are honoured to have the support of Medulawi (Netherlands) and Passo Fundo (Germany), both partner charities of Nchima who have been equally dedicated to the educational cause in Malawi. We are also very lucky to have a strong team on the ground in Malawi and robust and dedicated administration in the UK. There are many challenges in what we do but we have survived 60 years and so here's to the next 60.



## How to help:

Please pass on this news letter to friends and family  
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You can donate by

1. **Electronic transfer (internet banking)**
2. **Cheque or**
3. **Credit Card or PayPal through the Nchima Trust Website (Credit Card option is available at the bottom left of the PayPal page to which you will be directed.)**

### TRUSTEES

Josie Quinn (Honorary Secretary)  
Philippa Hayes  
Jeannette Heikens  
Matthew Scarborough  
Alastair Scarborough (Chairman)  
(44 7768 35 65 79)

### By ELECTRONIC TRANSFER (Internet Banking):

**From the UK** - Transfer to The Nchima Trust:

Sort Code 30-98-63 and Account Number 00 89 89 88

### MALAWI REPRESENTATIVES

Frank Mkhumba  
Rosena Kazembe  
James Kambawiri  
Diekens Binali (sebatical 2023)  
Dr Robin Broadhead  
Dennis Davidson

### International Banking Details:

BIC/SWIFT: LOYDGB21332, IBAN:- GB98 Loyd 3098 6300 8989 88

### By CHEQUE:

Send cheques made out to **The Nchima Trust** to:

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For UK taxpayers, please don't forget to fill out a gift aid form:

[www.nchimatrust.org/charity/Home/GiftAidForm/tabid/82/Default.aspx](http://www.nchimatrust.org/charity/Home/GiftAidForm/tabid/82/Default.aspx)