

November 2007

Dear Friends,

Greetings from Malawi! It has been a wonderful first year for Goods for Good (GFG) and an amazing four months in the field. We have seen, first-hand, the positive impact of our work on the lives of thousands of vulnerable children and have gained a deeper understanding of the challenges that they and their communities face.

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world. Famine, inadequate healthcare and high rates of HIV/AIDS have contributed to the rapidly growing orphan population, estimated at approximately 1.5 million. There are few resources for these children and they struggle to obtain basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter and education.



St. Mathias Primary School students receiving donated school supplies from Goods for Good. Photo: Melissa Kushner, 2007

Living and working in the midst of devastating poverty, we often feel overwhelmed by the hardships that our friends and neighbors in Malawi confront on a daily basis. But the unfailing commitment of our local partners, the dedication of our staff and the smiles on the faces of these beautiful children remind us that there is good reason to be hopeful. Everyday, we see that it is possible to make a difference, and with the support of friends like you, we are continuing to make progress out of excess!

GOODS ON THE MOVE

Over the past four months, GFG has shipped 3.5 tons of essential goods and supplies to over 6,000 Malawian children. The first shipment was delivered just after we arrived in July, and the goods just keep coming!

So far, we have received hundreds of pounds of much-needed clothing from The Children's Place, over a ton of fabric from Star Garments, 600 tote bags from Sanofi-Aventis, hundreds of Leap Pads from Leap Frog, and

assorted school supplies from the third grade class of the Abraham Joshua Heschel School. In the coming weeks, we look forward to the arrival of even more clothing from The Children's Place and 35,000 pens from Johnson & Johnson, Sanofi-Aventis and Pfizer.

Through our partnerships with St. Mary's Rehabilitation Center, Tiyambe Nawo community center, and under-resourced schools across Malawi, we are able to ensure that all of these supplies will reach the children who need them most.

OUR GOODS MAKE THE GRADE

Goods for Good is about more than shipping and delivering supplies. In addition to developing GFG's programs, my husband Jeremy Kaplan and I are also teaching part-time at St. Mathias Primary School, one of the many under-resourced schools in the area. As the school's head teacher, Mr. Banda, told us, "Goods for Good is not just providing supplies and moving on. The organization's leaders are here everyday, teaching the students and working with the teachers to make sure everything is put to its best use."

In July, GFG coordinated a Teacher Training Seminar at St. Mathias to help teachers use donated supplies to improve the learning environment and encourage teacher and student creativity. The program was facilitated by visiting primary school teachers from the USA, Melissa Benton and Leora Klein. Melissa told us, "We really came to appreciate the Goods for Good philosophy of not only providing necessary supplies, but empowering local people to help themselves and improve their communities." Following the seminar, GFG provided St. Mathias with the wide variety of classroom supplies needed to put the training into action.

In addition to providing teacher training, we are also committed to distributing supplies to students at under-resourced schools. While tutoring our Standard 8 class for their national exam, Jeremy and I noticed that many students lacked the supplies needed to prepare for the test. We soon realized that this was a problem for students across the region. In response, GFG provided pens and notebooks to the Standard 8 class, and in the coming months, we will distribute an additional 35,000 pens to primary and secondary school students in our area.

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITIES

From the beginning, Goods for Good has recognized that we have a lot to learn. As part of our effort to provide the best support to impoverished and orphaned children, GFG continues to research the effectiveness of various childcare programs in the countries that we serve.

In Malawi, our research suggests that communities and Community Based Organizations (CBOs), rather than orphanages, might provide the best option for the majority of orphaned children, but these organizations are severely under-resourced and over-extended. In response to these findings, Goods for Good has turned its attention to building partnerships with established CBOs to support their important work and provide our goods and services to the children who need them most.

After considerable fieldwork, we are happy to report that GFG has identified our first CBO partner, Tiyambe Nawo ("Let's Start"). Tiyambe Nawo is an exemplary community based organization staffed entirely by volunteers and currently caring for hundreds of vulnerable children in their community. As the village chief told me, "This organization is a model of innovation and dedication in our community. When children have nothing, they come to Tiyambe Nawo and know they will find help"

Beginning in November, Goods for Good will provide regular contributions of clothing educational materials, and health and hygiene products to Tiyambe Nawo. We will also facilitate a caregiver-training program for the CBO's volunteers in partnership with the Malawi government. These contributions will allow Tiyambe Nawo to focus its energy and resources on providing improved care for the children.

LOOKING AHEAD

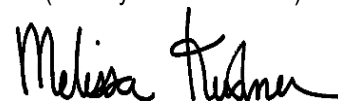
As you can see, the past year has been an exciting time for Goods for Good! We have accomplished so much but we still have lots more to do.

CHECK OUT OUR BLOG!
READ WEEKLY UPDATES FROM MALAWI AND
SEE PHOTOS OF OUR WORK IN ACTION AT:
WWW.GOODSFORGODINTERNATIONAL.ORG

In the coming months, we plan to establish an office in Malawi and continue to expand our collaboration with local organizations and of course, communities. We are also building on the success of our Pens and Pads for Progress initiative in Liberia by exploring additional, targeted programs to improve the lives of Liberian children.

Most importantly, we hope to provide even more goods to children who need them. Through the generosity of our donors, we have identified tons of resources in the US that are desperately needed in Malawi and Liberia but **we need your help to deliver them!** Every child deserves these things and together we can work to ensure that all of the children we serve have a healthy, safe childhood and a bright future.

On behalf of the thousands of children who benefit from our work, Zikomo Kwambiri (thank you in Chichewa)!



Melissa Kushner
Founder and President