



Date: January 23, 2020

NEWSLETTER Q4-19

Friends of the Beter Malawi Foundation,

A lot has happened in the last quarter of 2019. Erik went to Malawi with 3 ladies from International School Eindhoven (ISE). In this newsletter a short report of their experiences.

We also sent 325 gifts to Malawi for free this last quarter. More on that later.

The good news is that we have an enthusiastic addition to our board. Marleen is pleased to introduce herself in this newsletter.

International School Eindhoven (ISE)

We came back in the Netherlands a few months ago. We have had time to let our beautiful trip sink in and reflect. We feel honored that we have been given this opportunity and that Erik has shown us what Beter Malawi is committed to. How fantastic to see these projects with your own eyes.

Our preparations started a few months ago. Via Erik we received information about the school. The teachers had formulated specific requests for help. We used this to draw up a plan with the ultimate aim of reducing school absenteeism. We had decided to focus on the first four standards and in particular on offering the English sounds. Fortunately we received a lot of help at our school, both with help with the preparation of the materials and with financial help to make this trip possible.

Once we arrived at the Namilongo Primary school we found, through our observations, that the teachers' request for help needed to be worked out a little deeper. We soon noticed that the children copy everything from the teachers without understanding what is being said. We also discovered how difficult teaching can be with limited resources. We were impressed by the enthusiastic teachers and it was inspiring for us to see how they try to make the best of it every day.



We have had to change our plans a bit and have focused primarily on offering dynamic workshops to teachers during classes and after school. In this way the teachers got an idea how to offer curriculum in which most children are involved in the lessons. It was good to see that they recognized the added value of this and we hope to have inspired them and that it will be used in the near future.

We have only been in Malawi for two weeks and have been able to see and do a lot. We have redesigned the library and provided the classrooms with educational posters. In addition, we have hung wooden stars with English letter combinations to make the outside walls more child-friendly and to stimulate the concept of "outdoor learning". The classrooms are quite small and there are many students in a class. This allows the space to be used effectively.

This has been an inspiring journey for all of us that has changed our lives. Thanks Beter Malawi and thanks Erik for this fantastic opportunity.

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Project 'Books'



In line with the great developments that ISE has brought, we have once again succeeded in taking an extra step and have been sending more books to Malawi.

Read to Grow Foundation has again given us 4 boxes with 325 educational books. Thanks to Wigo Sleutjes and Thomas Braun from DHL Expres Eindhoven, the books were sent to Nkanda Primary School completely free of charge. Thank you very much on behalf of us and the students of Nkanda!

Marleen IJsseldijk

My name is Marleen IJsseldijk, I am 21 years old and graduated as a business economist last summer. I currently work as a financial at DS Smith. In my free time I like to go out with my girlfriends, play sports, watch series and travel.

After graduating, I went to Malawi for 6 weeks in October to do volunteer work in a community. Together with the local volunteers, I helped make the community a little better. The project is mainly concerned with helping the weak. This concerns extremely poor people, older people, people with disabilities or people with a disabled family member. In addition, attention is also paid to education and income-generating projects. Activities I did for example were: Washing clothes, doing the dishes, getting water, working on the land, making a new floor, making a chalkboard, digging a waste pit, helping in kindergartens and helping with the school project of the Beter Malawi Foundation.



I had a special and wonderful time there. A very beautiful experience. During my stay in Malawi I met Erik van Happen. He was there with his own organization to help the community. I was very impressed with what he did with the organization. When I was back in the Netherlands, I informed the board that I wanted to be part of the organization. So now I am on the board and I mainly focus on the educational projects and I am also taking over the Schoolfee project from Kim van Happen.

The Better Malawi Team
Erik, Dick, Marleen and Manon