

JULY 2024

Empowering women in Malawi

Praise the Lord! We are thrilled to announce our newest project in Malawi.

Joella Reitsma, Grants Manager with EIC writes to tell us about this project.



In June 2024, Emmanuel International Canada began implementing a 4-year Global Affairs Canada-funded project called *Titukule Azimai* (translated locally to mean “Empower Women”) in Malawi. The goal of the project is to enhance gender equality and women’s empowerment of women and girl survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). In Malawi, 50.7% of

the population lives below the poverty line, of which 25% live in extreme poverty. SGBV is a serious development challenge and is compounded by education, health and human rights barriers that prevent women and girls from fully engaging in community activities.

Emmanuel International Malawi held in-depth conversations with community

members (particularly women), local partners, and government officials in order to design this project. The first component of the project includes economically supporting women survivors through village savings and loans (VSL) groups so they have increased access to capital to support their families. Specifically, this means providing training, initial investments and connections to the broader market for women to sell their products/produce.

The second component of the project involves increasing the capacity of service providers and community leaders to provide effective support systems for women survivors. Practically, this means providing educational opportunities for community members (especially traditional religious leaders) and government decision-makers on addressing social norms that perpetuate SGBV. It also includes designing and instituting a digital referral system to replace the current paper filing system so that there will be an accurate way to report and follow-up on cases of SGBV. Due to poor referral systems, physical and sexual abuse in the community is frequent and usually not reported (sexual violence is normalised). The project will be carried out in three districts in Malawi with some of the highest rates of poverty: Machina, Phalombe and Mulanje.

On a recent kick-off trip, project team leader Joella Reitsma, with Kristy Nowell from El Canada, met with the experienced team to plan for the next four years. Arthur Kamoto, Project Manager Malawi, took Joella and Kristy to visit a model village from the completed Spotlight project in the rural community of Chija village, TA Kawinga, in Machinga. Emmanuel International Malawi had supported



Joella, Arthur and Kristy

several VSL groups and provided training for community members on SGBV. The village members warmly welcomed us with joyful singing, dancing, and clapping. We heard incredible testimonies about how the project had changed their lives.

One woman showed us her thriving new business, which had allowed her to build a brick home with a separate kitchen for her family. A man shared how he had learned to respect and care for his wife and now spreads this message to other men in his community.

Our experiences, views and interactions were both beautiful and a sobering reminder of the reality of extreme poverty in Malawi. Tiny brick huts line the red dirt roads as barefoot children dance and play around them. The streets are lined by hundreds of men, women and children working hard to earn their daily wage selling peanuts, bananas, charcoal or hand-crafted souvenirs or paintings. The further you travel from the city centres, the sight of a car becomes rare as daily life activities are tackled by bicycles and by foot. Small boys to older men can be seen walking down the mountainside with large logs to chop and sell on the



side of the road. Beauty can be found everywhere.

As Christians, we are part of this beautiful global community. Jesus reminded us in Matthew 25:40 “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me”. Our response as Christians is foundational to how we approach poverty in places across the globe like Malawi. We are ALL created in the image of God and worthy of dignity. We are called to address violations of human dignity, which includes addressing issues like gender-based violence. Working together we are motivated by this calling to seek flourishing lives and communities worldwide.

This Project is undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through Global Affairs Canada.

Canada 

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Our main bank account is with CAF, which is an ethical bank for charities that offers us online banking with substantially reduced fees. Our NatWest account is still open, however it is much more beneficial for us when you use our CAF account. If you are a regular supporter of EIUK and are still using the NatWest account for your gifts, changing your giving over to our CAF account would be much appreciated.



The banking details are:
Account holder: Emmanuel International Ltd
Bank: CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME 19 4JQ
Sort code: 40-52-40
Account no: 00033722

Gift Aid

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post the completed form to EIUK, Forum House, Stirling Road, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 7DN or scan and email to info@eiuk.org.uk.

Thank you so much for increasing your gifts to EI in this way!

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Praying for our board members

The Evangelical Alliance defines Trustees as "Trustees are the people in charge of a charity. They play a vital role, volunteering their time and working together to make important decisions about the charity's work. They may be called trustees, the board, the management committee, governors, directors or something else."

We are very thankful for our EIUK Board of Trustees: Clive Tydeman (Chair), Lucy Harding, Bernard Lane, John Raby, Andy Sharpe and Alison Smailes. They are overseeing and guiding the work of EIUK on a volunteer basis. They bring a range of skills to the board! We would appreciate your continued prayer for them as they meet regularly.

We are, of course, continually seeking those with the necessary skills and experience to join our small, committed group of trustees. These skills may specifically be in the medical/health field, marketing and advertising, church engagement, fundraising and grant applications and recruitment. We would love you to pray with us as we seek to develop the breadth of skills on the board.