

June Edition

from the Starfish UK & Malawi Teams.

In the UK, we are coming out of our third lockdown. For many, this is a very difficult and lonely time, and we want our supporters to know that our thoughts and prayers are with you and your families.

Thank you for your continued support of Starfish Malawi. Without your donations and prayers, our work would not be possible. We thank God every day for what He is doing in Malawi and here with us in the UK.

We want to share the following stories with you this month

Enabling the word and love of God to be heard and felt



Starfish believe that it is important to enable both children and adults to have the opportunity to hear about God and His love for them, both through His word and His love in action. We are highlighting these points through this month's topics.

1. Bible Explorer - taking the word of God into 52 schools

Bible Explorer is an education programme aimed at providing understanding of the Bible in a timeline sequence of both Old and New Testaments. The Bible Explorer team provide weekly lessons to 7,500 children, as part of Bible Knowledge or religious studies in primary schools. Bible Explorer focuses much on the quality of delivering lessons through accurate hand signs and clear communication of Bible stories in Standards 5 and 6 in local primary schools in the Salima area of Malawi, with the objective of bringing God's Kingdom into the lives of children. It is for all faiths.

We have had some great responses from the children and teachers



Dave Jana, the headteacher at Kaphatenga School commented on how the Bible Explorer Programme has benefited his school.

"The learners have changed their behaviour and attitude. The Bible Explorer lessons have also assisted learners in the prevention of COVID - 19 because learners were using measures of COVID – 19, like wearing of face mask, during the presentation of the lessons properly."

Shamima Anafi, a Muslim in standard 6 at Chimweta School, said,

"Bible Explorer helped me to know Bible Stories. There was misunderstanding with my friends about the Bible but now I understand it because of Bible Explorer and I started following the stories. I like the story of Jesus that when he was a little boy, he went missing for three days and later his parents found him in the temple with the religious leaders. Jesus was asking them questions and listening to them."





Christina Bwanali, is a standard 6 learner at Salima L.E.A. She says,

“Bible Explorer helped me to respect my aunt. At first, I was a troublesome girl because of our neighbour who taught me bad behaviours but now am a changed girl and my aunt is my witness. Now am also able to attend Church Services. At School, I was not able to respect my teachers but now am a good child”

For more information about the Bible Explorer project, please view [Bible Explorer — Starfish Malawi](#)

2. A 4-year-old boy was so moved by the Starfish Malawi Day of Prayer, that he raised funds for his linked school!



Esther Barnes, our UK Schools Linking Co-ordinator has told us the story:

On Monday the 26th April, I had the privilege of going to Sissinghurst Primary to meet an extraordinary little boy, Dylan, who is only 4 years old. His school had taken part in the day of prayer on 25th February 2021, and he had decided he wanted to raise money for Starfish Malawi and his linked school, Boma.

He decided to walk and raise money through sponsorship. When I arrived at the school that Monday morning, his grand total was £1,400! That is amazing! I was honoured to present him with a certificate and personally thank him from all of us at Starfish for his brilliant fundraising efforts. The money raised will go towards purchasing much needed Tippy Taps and soap to help stop the spread of the coronavirus in Boma school.

If you feel challenged by this story, why not sign up for our Bewl Water Walk on the 19th June and raise money for the work happening in Malawi. If a 4-year-old boy can do it, then we all can!

Thank you, Dylan for inspiring us!

To register to walk with us at Bewl, please view [Bewl Water Sponsored Walk — Starfish Malawi](#)

3. Pastors Libraries – Providing resources for pastors to teach their church families about God.



The Starfish resource libraries were established in 2009 following our work with local church leaders. Over the years the libraries have helped in providing books that cover theology, church leadership, preaching resources and secondary school curriculum textbooks for our sponsored students to help them excel in their studies. Apart from our main central library in Salima, we now have nine other smaller libraries in villages across the Salima area.

Many pastors and leaders have not gone through formal Bible school, so the resources are a boost to local leaders who visit the libraries, as they have resources to refer to and to deepen their spiritual understanding, enabling them to teach their church family. We are pleased to report that the membership numbers have almost doubled from 74 in 2019 to 141 in 2020 and we are confident that as more satellite libraries are established in 2021 that the membership and pastors supported will increase further.

We are so grateful to Chris Moffett at Sovereign World Trust as they have supported this project for many years, supplying more books each year so that the stocks can be updated. As we write this newsletter, they have just supplied another consignment of books for the main library. Two cubic metres of books have been categorised and packed and are now loaded on our container ready for shipment to Malawi.

They have also been able to include some Bibles thanks to St Stephen's Church, Tonbridge. We are so thankful for this.

For information about the work of the libraries, please view [Resource Libraries — Starfish Malawi](#)

4. **Showing God's love in action by supplying blankets, clothes, uniforms**

Over many years Starfish have been able to supply donated clothing, beautifully knitted blankets and donated school uniforms to many families. This is so much appreciated by those who receive them and it is another way that we can bless these people and show God's love to them.



A recent story has come to us which we wanted to share with you.

The girl you see here is five and half years old. She is vulnerable and lives with her mother, the one receiving the clothes. The girl is paralysed on the left hand side, as well as in the leg. Her grandmother appreciated the gift of clothes to her granddaughter.

This could not have been possible without donations from our supporters.

Each year we are able to send out many boxes of blankets that have been knitted by dedicated ladies. They are so beautiful in design and colours and are so useful to the families in the communities, to provide warmth at night when it can be rather cold. We are so grateful to the many hands who have contributed to hundreds of blankets and hand-made quilts over the years.

Here are gifts from Gillingham URC. Lorna Bailey is showing Maggie Mitchell and Bridget Jackson the great work of their sewing groups.



Thank you - are these really for us??

Blanket and quilts distribution

5. Update on our COVID - 19 response in Malawi



The **vaccine awareness** campaign has started. Starfish has partnered with the local task force from the health authority and have used some of the funds donated by supporters to help the authority roll out the programme. So far, 10 village areas have been told about the importance of having the vaccine. Some of those attending, including some community leaders, have now accepted the vaccination which is so good to hear. This programme will cover the Salima area and it is hoped that through this proactive programme

that more people will agree to be vaccinated and become more protected against Covid.

Starfish Malawi has also just donated **2 oxygen concentrators** to Salima District Hospital (SDH) - the bequest comes in the time of the COVID -19 pandemic when the hospital has admitted 30 patients since 2020.

The senior Nursing officer for SDH, Yanjane Mawunda, said, *"the oxygen concentrators will help in oxygen supplementation to COVID -19 patients."*

Despite having received other oxygen concentrators from different donors the hospital still has need for more in preparation against further increase in infection.

"The more oxygen concentrators the hospital receives the more they will be able to give to other surrounding health care centers in the community so that they receive oxygen treatment while waiting to be brought to the districts main hospital" she said.

The hospital has so far received 10 oxygen concentrators and appreciates Starfish Malawi for the assistance.



Salima District officers posing with received items



Salima District Hospital, maintenance officer