



PAMOZA



Malawi

Pamoza International
P.O. Box 23804
Philadelphia, PA 19143

www.pamoza.org
(215) 796-3223
info@pamoza.org

Pamoza News

September - December 2016

“It Used to Be a Death Trap”



In June 2016, a truck packed with more than 60 people made its way across the bridge into Zowe. Unfortunately, the truck did not make it. It fell off the bridge and many people were injured.

Not long after, Pamoza began constructing a new bridge (pictured above). A problem for many years, the previous wooden bridge would flood during the rainy season making it difficult for pedestrians and cars to cross. Even in the dry season, large

vehicles and trucks struggled due to the weakness of the wood used to construct the bridge. It became common practice to pray before crossing.

“It used to be a death trap,” remarked Richard, a community member and one of the builders who worked on the improved bridge. **“We’re so happy to have this new bridge because so many cars couldn’t get through in the past. This is much better for the community.”**

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Change Makers

Pamoza's work in Malawi is possible because of the many partners who support our projects by praying, volunteering, raising money, or raising awareness. We appreciate you! The *Change Makers* feature of our newsletter highlights one of our partners and how they support Pamoza International.

For the past several years, Pamoza has benefited from *Christmas in July*, a 20-year old project of Saint Anastasia Church in Newtown Square, PA. Each summer, the church erects artificial Christmas trees with simple ornaments labeled with the name of a charity and a gift they need, valued at \$5 to \$25. Church members take as many ornaments off the tree as they want, buy the gifts requested, and bring them back to place under the tree throughout July. The gifts are delivered in August.

Through the Christmas in July Giving Tree, Pamoza has received much-needed over-the-counter medicine, vitamins, musical instruments, first-aid supplies, as well as monetary donations to purchase Bibles translated into the local language, fertilizer for village farms, desks for primary schools, and tuition assistance for secondary education.

The beauty of the program is it benefits charities during a time of year when typically, donations almost completely dry up. From the church's

perspective, it is also a time of year when members seem to have more time and resources than at Christmastime.

At Saint Anastasia, the program has grown from the efforts of just a few moms and their kids, to church-wide support. Now, some senior citizens and young Girl Scouts collect Christmas cards and help make ornaments, a businesswoman types labels saying what the charities need, 6th-grade confirmation candidates carry the gifts each week in July from under the trees, and adult volunteers deliver them. It is a community effort.

Want to start your own Christmas in July Giving Tree? E-mail us at info@pamoza.org or call us at (215) 796-3223. We can share ideas, tips, and resources.

Are you a Pamoza Change Maker? Tell us your story.



“It used to be a death trap”...Continued from page 1)

The bridge project did not happen overnight. It was first identified as a need two years ago after Pamoza took a team of 20 people to Malawi. Dana Swieson, a member of the team, recalls crossing the bridge. **“I remember it was narrow and the driver had to go very slowly.”** It was a scary experience for the team.

Fortunately, with support from people like you and key partners including Springton Lake Presbyterian Church and St. Anastasia School, we raised enough funds to hire a local contractor to construct the improved concrete bridge

But it gets better because here's where the impact of your support compounds. To celebrate the opening of the new bridge, Pamoza invited a top level government official for an inauguration ceremony.

Not only did the official, Mr. Chirwa, see the bridge, he was also able to hear community members speak about the projects *they* have started and sustained. Mr. Chirwa applauded the work of the people. **“The spirit of collaboration you have in this community is powerful and other communities should learn from it,”** he said. It was a proud moment for Pamoza staff. During his visit, he committed to help Zowe upgrade the clinic and to bring in more government services.

So, not only did your financial support and prayers help build a bridge to meet an immediate need, they also opened doors for future development supported by influential people in the region. Now we plan to do some road repair around the bridge to prevent excessive erosion and flooding. We also have an exciting water project ahead. Stay tuned....

Program Updates

Christian Outreach

We are working on strengthening marriages. In rural Malawi, interaction between husband and wife is more influenced by culture than it is by the Bible. So in August, we took 10 couples on a marriage retreat. The couples were so encouraged by the information



Ten married couples attended the marriage retreat

they learned, they plan to offer pre-marital counseling to youth and to start women's, men's, and youth ministries in their own communities.

Education

School was on recess in July and August but we managed to purchase 20 desks for Kahelele school. The desks were made locally by students at Mzuzu Technical College, a trade school. Community members in Zowe constructed a dining shelter for the students at their primary school. The shelter (pictured below) will also serve as a community hall, a much-needed resource. The hall will be completed if we are able to raise additional funds.



Entrepreneurship

After months of planning, we were able to offer a business training to aspiring and current entrepreneurs in the community. The week-long training benefited 24 people and focused on how to plan for a business, market research, how to keep basic financial records, and more. It was a very successful training and now those trained will be starting savings groups as a way of getting capital to implement their business ideas.

Medical Services

We are excited that the 11 health educators we trained have already visited nearly 400 households, educating families about health and sanitation practices. As a result, we are already seeing improvements in hygiene such as the increase in pit latrines in the community. We also started offering weekly HIV testing and counseling. That service is much needed because the HIV infection rate in Malawi is still above 10%.



Since 2005, Pamoza has been bringing clinicians to the Zowe clinic to treat illnesses. This year, clinicians will also provide confidential HIV testing and treatment every week

Agriculture & Food Security

Unfortunately the rain patterns this year really affected crops. The four communities we support fell short of producing enough food for the breakfast program. As a result, we will be supplementing school breakfast for the second school term (Jan—Mar) which is when most people begin to run out of food. Our plan for the future is to start a farm at each school which will be managed by students and teachers. Produce from the school farms can be sold for income or can supplement breakfast.

First Time in Africa!

We just have to give a BIG shout out to Maya Stallings, our college intern, who traveled with us to Malawi this year. It was her first time in Africa and she did an amazing job! Maya was in Malawi one month with our Executive Director, Temwa Wright. Here's what she had to say about her trip:



Maya (in green) with friends she made in Malawi

What was your favorite part?

I loved meeting the people, especially the Pamoza staff and their families. I still keep in touch with many of the friends I made.

What was the hardest part?

Being in a completely different environment. I was exposed to a new level of poverty that you don't see here in America. Also not having a lot of contact with my family and trying to learn the different languages in Malawi was tough.

What was your favorite memory?

When my friend, Chimango, and I biked to Euthini, a trading center not far from Zowe. We hung out there with our friends Evans and Emmanuel, had sodas, and danced. We had so much fun!

How did the trip change you?

I now know for certain I want to be a medical missionary. The trip also made the world a much smaller place and has made poverty more tangible to me. I really want to make the world a better place and visiting Malawi showed me I can.



Get Ready to Double the Blessing

It's almost that time of year! We are getting ready for our annual Double-the-Blessings Challenge. From November 1—December 31, every donation you give will be matched dollar for dollar thanks to support from some of our generous donors.

Funds from the campaign will support our big projects which include expanding the clinic and starting adult literacy classes. You can donate at www.pamoza.org or send a check to P.O. Box 23804, Philadelphia, PA 19143.

Thanks for your support!

Prayer Corner

We welcome your prayers for the people of Malawi and for Pamoza's programs and services. We specifically ask that you pray for:

- The people we serve. Pray that their hearts will be transformed.
- That the men (and some women) struggling with alcoholism will find purpose in life and break away from their addiction.
- Please pray that the married couples who attended the marriage retreat will be models in their community and will help others with their marriages.
- Our partnerships both within and outside of Malawi.
- Our Board, our staff, our volunteers, and the many people who sacrifice their time, money, and energy for Pamoza.
- A successful school year for all the students we support.
- That we will have a successful Double-the-Blessings Campaign to support our biggest projects this year.

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