



PAMOZA

Pamoza News

Jan. - Mar. 2014

Help During the Hungry Season



Women in Zowe community waiting for maize (corn) to be distributed



Malawi

Pamoza International empowers people to work together (*pamoza*) to alleviate poverty and suffering through Christian outreach, health care, education, entrepreneurship, and food security.

In Malawi, people refer to the months of January through March as the “hungry period”—the period when people have depleted their food reserves from the previous harvest but the current crop is not yet ready. Food rationing is the typical response; Malawians simply eat less. When rationing is not enough, neighbors barter for food. Still, not much can be done when the weather has been uncooperative and the harvest inadequate.

That was the situation for 2013. In the communities Pamoza International serves, 40% of the farmers harvested very little due to dry spells. It was evident that many households would suffer if no action was taken. Thanks to many supporters, Pamoza was able to

raise \$13,000 to purchase maize to distribute during the hungry period. In less than two months, **Pamoza distributed 63,000 pounds of maize and assisted more than 500 households in the community.**

The impact was significant. In the words of community members:

“Pamoza saved my family with maize”
-Whiteman Chimaliro, 72 years old.

“God bless you for all your great works. We may fail to say thank you but God can not.” -Timothy Gondwe, 25 years old.

Visit www.pamoza.org/food-relief to find out more about how Pamoza helped to alleviate starvation in our communities.

Still Going Strong—The Amazing Students at Russell Elementary

Since October 2013 Russell School has been on a mission.

Their goal: raise \$6,000 to feed 600 students breakfasts at Zowe Primary School in Malawi, Africa (\$10 feeds a child breakfast for an entire year.)

Why? Because Zowe Community did not grow enough corn to support their school's breakfast program due to a severe drought in the area. As a result, many children were at risk of suffering from malnutrition.

Russell Elementary School has raised nearly \$3,000 by selling bags



Russell students model their Mission for Malawi bracelets.

of popcorn, Mission for Malawi bracelets; and "Happy Grams" for Valentine's Day.

The students kicked off Mission for Malawi by making and signing a banner with both the United States and the Malawian flags to symbolize the partnership between the two schools.

Russell students have also been learning about Malawian culture. Every month, Temwa Wright, Pamoza's Executive Director, goes to the school to teach the students about life in Malawi.



They've learned some Tumbuka (the language spoken in Northern Malawi), songs from the country,

seen some art work, and even tried some Malawian activities. Mission for Malawi has provided students an opportunity to learn about another culture.

Now, with only \$3,000 more to raise, Russell students are kicking it up a notch by hosting the **Mission for Malawi Walk**, which will be held on **Tuesday, May 6th** during the children's lunch period. The event will provide students an opportunity to experience similar activities to the children in Zowe, including carrying water on their head, babies on their backs, and making their own soccer balls. Russell's final fundraiser will be their annual lemonade stand from May 12 through May 30. A perfect refreshment after a great walk!

To support Mission for Malawi, contact us at info@pamoza.org or (215) 796-3223.

Are You Hungry for Change?

Hungry4Change is an event that challenges middle and high school students to give up food for two days while praying for, learning about, and raising money towards the needs of children in Malawi.

H4C allows young people to experience true hunger and learn powerful lessons of compassion for those who live with hunger every day. By gaining a deeper awareness of the needs in our world, youth realize they can play a vital role in making a difference.

This year's Hungry4Change partners included:

- Downingtown UMC
- Exton UMC
- Hopewell UMC
- Springton Lake PCA
- Thorndale UMC

In addition to raising funds for specific projects in Malawi, youth also volunteered at local food cupboards. Springton Lake Presbyterian Church raised \$4,000 towards the cost of constructing a new bridge in Zowe.

The UMC churches raised \$4,300 for the School Breakfast Program—enough to support 430 students!



To host an H4C event or to learn more, contact info@pamoza.org or visit www.pamoza.org/are-you-hungry-for-change.

Speaking Up for Girls' Education

Growing up as a girl in Malawi is a challenge. Few girls complete school and most end up married at an early age. The pressure on impoverished families to find some financial relief makes a bride price most appealing. The financial benefit is not merely the payment from the husband; it is also the fact that the husband will take upon himself the financial burden of providing for their daughter. Poverty coupled with cultural expectations leads to many early marriages and few educated girls. To address this

trend, Pamoza has been speaking up about this issue and has started a special scholarship fund to assist girls like [Martha Nyirenda](#) (page 5).



Pamoza's Executive Director (center) joined a panel of speakers at the Girls Rising film screening hosted by the Hamels Foundation.

According to the World Bank, a girl with an extra year of education can earn 20% more as an adult. That's a significant investment considering it can cost as little as \$100 a year to send a girl to community high school in Malawi (cost increases for higher quality schools). In addition to school fees, Pamoza also works to improve education through school materials, solar electricity, infrastructure improvements, and attracting & retaining good teachers.

Program Updates

Christian Outreach

Pamoza continues to host prayer meetings and Bible studies in the community. There is a deep desire to learn about Christ, but limited Bible study resources, which Pamoza is working to acquire.

Entrepreneurship

Tilipo (which means "we are here") is a group of women living with HIV/AIDS who received a micro loan from Pamoza to purchase 200 chickens to start a poultry business.



A member of Tilipo feeds the chickens

Education

Pamoza installed solar lights at Mchingasanya Primary School, which enable students to study at night. Zowe Primary School (another school Pamoza assists) received desks to sit 40 students, thanks to a donation from St. Anastasia School in Newtown Square. Pamoza has continued to sponsor three students in high school and two students in college.

Medical Services

During the rainy season (Dec.—April), cases of malaria surge, but thankfully, Pamoza has been able to purchase enough medicine to treat the sick. The doctor continues to visit and treat nearly 60 people every week except when the roads are flooded, as often occurs during the rainy season.

Agriculture & Food Security

We thank God for adequate rains. Judging on preliminary conditions of the crop, the community is going to have a good harvest this year. Crops are already looking healthier than this time last year. Pamoza continues supporting dimba farming (farming along the riverbeds), community farms, and chicken farms as ways of increasing food production.



Maize growing at Zowe Community Farm

Why I Recycle for Pamoza: An Interview with Bryan Bohn



On March 16, 2014, Pamoza interviewed Bryan Bohn, one of our biggest recyclers. We found out why he recycles for Pamoza and why you should too.

How did you start recycling?

I heard about it at my church and learned that money from the recycling benefits children in Malawi. The next day, I spoke to my co-workers at the Lower Merion School District and they began giving me old cell phones and ink cartridges for recycling. They liked that it was for a good cause. Everyone wants to help kids.

What's New at Pamoza?

Pamoza is now on Twitter. You can follow us [@Pamoza_INTL](https://twitter.com/Pamoza_INTL) or like us on Facebook.

School Partnership Program—If you are involved with a school and would like to learn about Malawian culture and/or engage in a service learning project, please contact us at info@pamoza.org. We love working with schools!

Malawi Night 2014—Get ready to experience Malawian culture like never before. We are planning a bigger, better, and more interactive Malawi Night to take place in October 2014. You don't want to miss it. More details coming soon.

Why should others participate?

Because in 1 John 3:18, it says "let us not love in word or tongue, but in deed and truth" so if we are able to help in any way, we should. And recycling is one of the easiest ways to help. It doesn't cost anything.

Are there any challenges to recycling?

The biggest challenge is getting people to keep it in mind—to remember to bring in their phones and ink cartridges. It's easy for people to just throw these items away if recycling is not on their mind.

Is there anything you would change?

Nothing at all. You guys are doing a good job. Keep up the good work.

To find out more about Pamoza's recycling program or to get involved, please contact recycling@pamoza.org.

Do you shop on Amazon? If so, check out smile.amazon.com and select Pamoza International as the organization you want to support. Amazon Smile offers you the same products you find on Amazon, but with the added benefit of supporting your favorite charity.

Shop at AmazonSmile
and Amazon will make
a donation to:

Pamoza
International

Get started

amazon smile

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:

- People to experience the love of Christ through Pamoza's work.
- Abundant harvest in May and June. Pray that the people will have enough food.
- The presidential elections in May. Pray for a good and honest leader for Malawi.
- Russell Elementary School and our other school partners (St. Anastasia School & Fugett Middle School). Pray that the students will be transformed by the work they are doing for others.
- Adequate resources for all our work.
- Sustainable & successful business ventures in the community
- Church partners and individual supporters. Pray that they will be blessed.





"I wish to participate in creating employment in a nation where unemployment, poverty, and inflation are all too high."

Martha Nyirenda

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*Together transforming
the lives of children and
families in Malawi.*

Meet Martha Nyirenda

Determined to Succeed

It would be crushing to anyone's spirit.

Imagine. You live in a country where resources are limited, but you yearn for an education. And as a woman, your options are limited: go to school or get married. Yet school requires money, and your family has very little. Your community is encouraging you to choose marriage. You are only in high school. What do you do?

That was Martha Nyirenda's situation.

All her life Martha worked hard in school. She successfully finished primary school (which is free in Malawi) and went on to secondary school (which is not free). It took her 2.5 hours to walk each way to school but she kept up her studies. She was set to get into college. All seemed well until her family encountered financial hardship; they could no longer support her school fees. Faced with this challenge, Martha was pulled out of school and only one option remained: marriage. The pressure from the community was strong and the financial benefits of a bride price very appealing.

But Martha was not interested. She spoke about her situation to anyone who would listen. She was determined to return to school. When Pamoza supporters learned of Martha's predicament, they agreed to pay her school fees, lifting the burden off her family. Martha successfully finished high school, went on to Mzuzu Technical College for accounting, and is now currently working full time at Farmer's World. Not only is she able to support herself, she also helps with school fees for her siblings.

Martha's ultimate career plan is to start a poultry business. She has written a business plan and hopes to find resources to start her business soon. She sees her current job as a temporary step in her future career as a business woman. With her business plan in hand, Martha is well on her way to success.

Her spirit is no longer crushed.