



### Dear Friend,

We thank God for a truly exciting time for Hope Missions these past few months, it is amazing how quickly time passes. There is much to report including the addition of new team members, some real break-through in our ministry to the chiefs and fantastic testimonies of how lives are being changed.

The nursery schools continue to grow and each year their impact increases. We thank God that we are now able to employ two teachers and a caregiver at each school and we are really seeing the impact of this on the quality of the teaching and the way the children are learning. We are also seeing the benefits of the feeding programme on the health and wellbeing of all the children.

In this newsletter we are focusing on the ministries relating to women empowerment that have been taking place over the last few months. It is encouraging to see the women grow and how this results in positive change in their families and communities. We thank you all for your prayers and support.

*Annie Mkandawire* (Project Director)

### Women's business: tea and clothes

The middle part of 2009 has seen a big focus on the work we do with the women in our village communities and there are some very encouraging developments to share.

In April this year, 10 of the ladies from Kayabwa who had previously benefited from the adult literacy programmes, tailoring workshops and business training opened a tea shop in the local trading centre. Having begun trading by selling clothes made with their newly learned skills they found that the income was somewhat sporadic and dependent upon the fluctuating wealth of other individuals in the area. As a result they determined to combine the selling of clothes with a favourite low-cost pastime for many Malawians: drinking tea.

The shop is now trading very successfully and the ladies are finding that diversifying their business has helped to



provide a more regular income for them and their families. This enables many of them to afford the fees to send their children to school to give them a brighter future.

A second tailoring workshop has been running in the Kayabwa area with a further 10 ladies being taught by Stella, Hope Missions' tailoring tutor, along with ladies who graduated from the first class. It is encouraging to see the skills being passed on and how other families are now beginning to benefit from the initial training.

In April this year, Tim and Barbra Almond visited the community in Kayabwa to train a group of 25 ladies in basic first aid care where there is no doctor. This initiative, sponsored by Starfish Malawi, has already begun to have a great impact and it is encouraging to see that the skills learned by the initial group are already being passed on to other ladies in the surrounding communities. A big thank you goes to Starfish Malawi for their support.







## Good news from the nursery schools

During the harvest period in May this year Hope Missions was able to harvest eighteen 50kg bags of maize and seventeen

50kg bags of groundnuts from the agricultural projects undertaken in the Kayabwa area. This was a good harvest and means that thanks to last year's inputs we will not need to separately purchase either maize or groundnuts for the nursery school feeding programmes for this year.

The feeding programme has led to a great reduction in malnutrition amongst the children and families are reporting lower incidences of sickness. Thank you to all of you who support this initiative.

We are also delighted to be able to report on the return to work of Elita Yobo. Elita was one of the first nursery school teachers employed by Hope Missions but she was sadly struck with a case of cerebral

malaria in mid-2008 and was left with severe brain damage. As a team we have continued to pray for and visit her, and slowly but surely we have seen God answer our prayers for healing and the brain damage now seems to be fully reversed. We are excited to have her back with us and we thank all of you who have prayed for her and her family over this last year.



## Agriculture

During this recent period Chris and Annie were able to visit a project of the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM) in Chikwawa, southern Malawi. Chikwawa is a typically dry and difficult to farm region but, by using irrigation techniques and crop rotation, EAM have helped the local residents to develop lush and rich crops even in the dry season.

We hope to send Chris to Chikwawa for a longer period together with some of the chiefs from our target communities so that they may learn the techniques and implement them in their own villages. This is a great opportunity for strengthening our relationship with the chiefs in our target communities and demonstrating to them that good harvests are possible with hard work and without dependence upon expensive chemical fertilizers.



## New Faces

Earlier this year Hope Missions welcomed Annie Juma to its ever growing team. Annie is now assisting us in the central office overseeing our administration as well as keeping our financial books and records in good order. Having a full time administrator is a real answer to prayer and we look forward to reaping the benefits of her professionalism and hard work.

We also welcome Enida Yasini and Esther Chikoja to our team. Esther has been associated with Hope Missions on an informal basis since it began but joined the team more formally earlier this year. She is focusing on the women's ministries and outreach to local community leaders. Enida joined us in March and is working closely with the women in the Kayabwa region. We know these fine ladies will be a valuable asset to Hope Missions and the communities in which we work.

## Prayer Requests...

For physical and spiritual protection both for chief Chapsinja who was recently appointed as the interim traditional authority (T/A) for the Masula region. He is facing opposition for his decision to follow Christ and his appointment to T/A is not universally popular.

For the local ladies as they continue to pursue their businesses and that they would also grow deeper in their relationship with God.

For Chris and the chiefs as they seek to learn from the EAM agricultural project and to pursue successful farming practices in the local villages.

For continuing funding and finances to enable us to meet the needs of our target communities.

## Supporting Us...

If you are encouraged by what you read and wish to support our work more closely then please contact either Annie, Alex or Sara:

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