

SUMMER 2023 JACARANDA UK NEWS



Issue 001 – Jacaranda UK Foundation Newsletter

June 2023

Welcome!

Welcome to our first newsletter! Things have started to move quickly over the last 12 months, and it seemed high time that we start telling all you wonderful people who have supported us over the years, and those who may support us in the future what we've been doing, and telling the stories of the amazing people we are dedicated to helping in Malawi. We're a small charity, usually raising £20-40k per year, but we do a lot and want to do more, and we think we can make an important difference.

As this is our first newsletter, we're going to spend a little bit of time explaining what we do, why we do it, and who we do it for. In subsequent issues we'll highlight specific successes and opportunities.

What do we do?

Jacaranda UK exists to help give AIDS orphans in Malawi and their families a chance at a better life and **break the poverty cycle**. All children deserve access to a good school, clothing, medical care, food and clean water, and we support projects aiming to deliver just that.

But we don't stop there. We also help empower local women in particular so they can support themselves and lift themselves out of poverty.

Our goal: **Break The Cycle**.



What is "The Cycle"?

The Poverty Cycle is a never-ending loop whereby a family and its descendants remain in poverty in perpetuity. Poor parents means children growing up in poverty. Poor children rarely complete their education, and are less likely to get a good job, or any job, so remain poor as adults. Their children grow up poor, and the cycle continues.

Jacaranda UK Foundation wants to **Break The Cycle**.

How can we Break The Cycle?

Two words: **Education**, and **Opportunity**. We want to decouple education from economic status, and provide practical skills training opportunities to young people and to widowed women so they can either get a job or start their own business, allowing them to provide for their family. When parents can provide for their children, the children can stay in school and complete their education, and then get their own jobs, and they **Break The Cycle**.



What does Jacaranda UK do to Break The Cycle?

Teachers' salaries

Our primary fundraising goal is teachers' salaries at the Jacaranda School for Orphans and the Jacaranda Vocational College. The school provides entirely free nursery, primary and secondary education, clothing, food and medical care to over 400 children, 97% of whom have been orphaned by AIDS, and the college provides job-specific training to students can graduate and find employment.

Without teachers, there is no school, and so-called "running costs" are the hardest to raise money for. The school receives no government funding, and relies 100% on donations. We help them pay the teachers so they can keep providing free education to all the children.

The school does not just exist, it excels. 100% of students pass their junior school exams (vs 73% nationally), and >90% pass their secondary school exams annually (vs just 53% nationally). Graduates then go on to college or The Vocational College, **Breaking The Cycle**.



Entrepreneurship trainees visiting their peer's business

Women's entrepreneurship

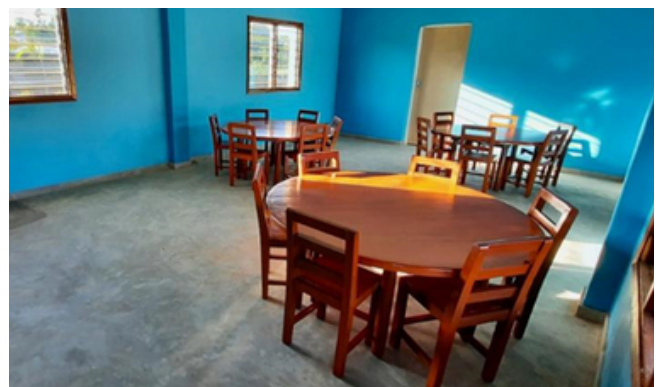
We fund a free 6-week entrepreneurship course for widowed women so they can learn the skills to start their own business and provide for their families. Upon graduation, we provide an interest-free microloan and ongoing mentorship to give the women the best chance of success.

We sent a trainer to the Street Business school in Uganda, and we are expanding the pilot by funding another trainer and a course coordinator so we can meet the huge demand for the course.

This course puts these women on the path to increased self sufficiency and independence, as many are left with no options to generate income after their husband's death. This is key to their children being able to stay in school, graduate and get a job themselves, **Breaking The Cycle**.

Building and refurbishing classrooms

Whenever needed, we fund the construction, repair and/or fitting out of classrooms and also the replacing of old desks, chairs and cabinets and whiteboards with new ones to ensure the highest standard of education is provided to the children, so they pass their exams and go to college, **Breaking The Cycle**.



What else do we do to help the community?



A recently opened library at Namiwawa Primary School in Blantyre. If you look closely at the back you can see Luc, the founder of the program, Executive Director at Jacaranda School for Orphans, and husband of the school's founder.

Building libraries

We support "Luc's Libraries" program that has built and filled 24 libraries all over southern Malawi so far. For about £4,000 we can fund building, supplying and maintaining a library for two years before the local community takes it over entirely.

Communities can apply to Luc's Libraries to have an existing building converted into new library, and the demand is huge! These libraries are used for studying, local literacy programs and reading, and also for meetings and gatherings. Malawi's adult literacy rate is just 67%, and these libraries are a small way to instil reading and literacy at a community level, and provide a safe and well-maintained space for children to come and enjoy books.

Physiotherapy Clinic

Opened in 2018, the Jacaranda Community Physiotherapy and AIDS Counselling Clinic provides vital services free of charge to local families with disabled children, and to those who have contracted HIV.

Before the clinic opened, families had to undertake a long and expensive journey to seek care, but now they have it on their doorstep. Jacaranda UK helps to fund the salaries of the two physiotherapists that work in the clinic, along with the materials they need to do their work effectively.



This is Aubrey, who came to the clinic 10 months ago after an operation for hydrocephalus aged two and a half, unable to crawl, let alone stand or walk. Thanks to twice weekly physiotherapy sessions, Aubrey can now crawl, move from sitting to standing, and walk unaided for 20 metres! His future is so bright, and we can't wait to see what he does with it.



Emergency Appeals

Sometimes it is necessary to respond to an emergency, where the focus has to be less on breaking the cycle, and more on keeping people safe and healthy.

During the COVID-19 pandemic we helped raise funds to make masks, set up hand-sanitising stations, and design and distribute home-school materials.

Earlier this year we had a phenomenal response from our supporters (**thank you!**) after the devastation caused by Cyclone Freddy, which destroyed houses and crops, leaving people homeless, hungry, and at risk of disease.

Who do we do it for?

We do this for the children and families of southern Malawi, especially focusing around Blantyre, the country's second largest city. Malawi is consistently ranked as one of the poorest countries in the world, with one of the highest rates of HIV. The children of Malawi deserve a chance at a better life, and particularly through our partnership with the Jacaranda School for Orphans, we want to help give them that chance.

Jacaranda School for Orphans

Jacaranda School for Orphans was founded in 2002 by Malawian Marie Da Silva in her childhood home in response to the urgent need for a local school.

Over the last 20 years, Marie and her husband Luc have grown the school from one class of a dozen children to over 400 primary and secondary school students, and recently opened nursery, and a Vocational and Technical College so graduates that do not have sufficiently high grades to access tertiary education can develop the skills they need to find employment or start their own business.

Jacaranda is **Malawian founded, Malawian staffed, and Malawian run**. Marie and her team have a deep understanding of and genuine connection with the local community, and whilst at Jacaranda UK Foundation we have significant international development expertise, we are very much guided by Marie and her team as to how we can help.



Here are just a few pictures of the children at Jacaranda School. They are intelligent, talented, resilient, energetic and brimming with potential. Thank you all of you who have helped us help them.

To support Jacaranda UK, head to www.jacarandauk.org and click on the donate button. As we have a generous donor covering our major fundraising costs, **99% of all donations will go to the projects in Malawi.**

Please help us as we keep trying to change lives, transform communities and **Break The Cycle!**

