



NEWSLETTER

Saving lives, strengthening families
and securing brighter futures.

With your help, over the past year:

- ◆ 80 high risk babies now have the nutrition and support they need to remain safely at home and thrive with their families.
- ◆ Nearly 300 people from 51 households are now growing enough maize to sustain their families for the year ahead, and are moving closer to a life beyond extreme poverty.

Thanks to your support, babies who might once have spent their earliest years in institutional care are now growing up healthy and loved at home from birth. Families in extreme poverty are now harvesting their own food and planning for their futures. And as a result, whole communities are more resilient!

This is not just about reaching more vulnerable babies, but about working with the families and communities that surround them to create lasting change.

Inside, you'll discover how, and the difference this is making for children like James and his family.

- ◆ Over 600 children received preschool education and nutritious school meals, fuelling their minds, bodies and potential for a brighter future.

Thank you for your invaluable support!

James' Story

Just days after he was born in early 2024, James' world was turned upside down. His mum suddenly passed away, leaving James orphaned and extremely vulnerable in the very first weeks of his life.

Thankfully, James' aunt immediately stepped in to care for him, taking him in alongside her own two teenage children. But with only a small income from selling shoes at the local market, his aunt simply could not afford the infant formula James urgently needed to survive and grow.

Without intervention, James' future - like that of so many vulnerable babies referred to Open Arms - was at serious risk.

Saving Lives: The Community-Based Care Programme

Shortly after James was referred to us by Social Welfare, he was enrolled in the Community-Based Care Programme.

The team provided regular home visits, close health monitoring and a consistent supply of infant formula, fortified porridge flour and other essential items. With this support in place, coupled with the love and security of his own family, James' health began to improve rapidly. He started to gain weight, grow stronger and meet his developmental milestones.

Today, James is an active, adventurous and curious little boy. He loves playing with his cousins and friends and is well known for his sociable nature and bright smile - a remarkable transformation from such a fragile beginning.



James at 8 weeks old



The Open Arms team check in on James and his cousins (who often look after James when their mother is at work) and deliver a supply of formula milk and other essentials.

The Community-Based Care Programme has grown from supporting just three babies in 2023 to nearly 80 today - giving orphaned and vulnerable children the chance to stay in the arms of family from day one, with the nutrition, monitoring and essentials they need to survive and thrive.

With your help, we can reach 100 children by the end of 2026 - so more babies like James don't face their earliest days without the care and support they urgently need.



6-month old James with his elder cousin



“Every child deserves a family. That's not just our belief - it's government policy, and it's backed by international law.”

Patrick, Open Arms' Graduation Officer

“When you grow your own food, you’re respected. You’re not waiting for a handout. You’re providing for your family.”

Anthony, Open Arms’ Reintegration Officer

Strengthening Families: The Graduation Programme

While ensuring James’ immediate health was critical, Open Arms also works to address the root causes of poverty, so families can thrive independently in the long term.

In 2024, James’ aunt took part in a year long trial of the Graduation Programme, a sustainable agriculture initiative that supports families to build long term self reliance. With quality farming inputs, expert training and hands on coaching, she moved from owning no land to having a hectare plot and farming for the first time.

Despite a challenging period of drought, that first season led to a plentiful harvest of 7.5 bags of maize - around 375kg. This crop has already helped improve household food security and reduce pressure on their limited income.



James and his aunt receive their supply of maize seeds and fertilisers.

Building on these learnings, the family is now enrolled in the full three year Graduation Programme and is well into their first year - with their next harvest approaching. With growing confidence and experience, they’re working to increase their maize yield, before introducing soya beans and groundnuts over the remaining two years - improving nutrition and creating new opportunities to generate a stable income.

This is a vital step towards self sufficiency and a future free from extreme poverty.

Help us do more this year

With your support, we can reach more children, lift more families out of poverty, welcome more young learners into classrooms, raise the quality of early education, and strengthen foster care across Malawi.

[Click to donate](#)

Securing Futures: Early Years Education

There is yet another milestone in James’ journey. Thanks to your support, he is now attending a local nursery school.

Early years education gives James a safe, nurturing environment where he can learn, play and develop essential social and cognitive skills. Combined with improved nutrition and a more secure home life, this foundation significantly improves his opportunities for the future.



James – looking smart for nursery school!

James’ family is one of 51 households on the Graduation Programme who are being empowered with the knowledge, skills and resources to grow more food and a wider variety of crops. This helps them reduce hunger, improve health, earn an income and learn to manage their money - building resilient livelihoods, and long term independence.

“We’re not just supporting a child – we’re supporting a whole ecosystem.”

Anthony, Open Arms’ Reintegration Officer

A Brighter Tomorrow

James’ story shows the difference a whole network of support can make. Every child’s journey begins with the immediate, lifesaving support they need, before extending to strengthen the people and systems around them - so children are not only safe today, but can grow up to achieve their full potential for a brighter tomorrow.



James and his aunt

From urgent care to life-changing learning and new opportunities, Open Arms walks alongside entire families so they can move forward with confidence and independence.

Because of you, children like James and their families aren’t just surviving - they’re thriving.

Thank you for helping to build brighter futures in Malawi!



Going the extra mile: our fundraising heroes

Thank you for all the energy, creativity and determination you've shared this year! Whether attending an Open Arms event, taking on a physical challenge or leading your own initiative in your local communities, every pound you've raised has added up to something extraordinary and is directly helping to build brighter futures in Malawi.



Stronger together: partnerships that make a difference

We're incredibly grateful to every workplace, school, church and community group who partnered with us this year. Your efforts have done more than raise funds - they've helped grow awareness, bring people together, and strengthen support for those who need it most in Malawi.

If your team, school or group would like to join us, we'd love to hear from you! Please get in touch or visit our website to find out more.



How are you inspired to help?

Phone: 01423 530129

Online: www.openarmsmalawi.org

Post: Send your cheque to
Open Arms Malawi, Community House,
46-50 East Parade, Harrogate, HG1 5LT

Click to donate, view our current events and find out other ways you can support