



SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

As we enter 2026, Open Arms has lots of news to share with you from both Malawi and the UK. We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter

Transition to Community-Based Care

At the end of last year, Open Arms reached a major milestone by fully transitioning from temporary residential care to supporting all babies and children within their own families and home communities.

Following the successful move to community-based care in Blantyre, Mangochi also completed this transition, with all remaining children from the Infant Home reintegrated back into their families. These children are now being supported at home alongside their caregivers, and all new referrals to Open Arms can receive support from birth without being separated from their families. Today, we are supporting 70 children and their families through our Community-Based Care programme.

Before the children returned home, guardians and staff took part in a week-long training led by Social Welfare, focusing on child care and development to ensure families were fully prepared to support their children.

This is a huge step forward as Open Arms aims to see all children growing up with the love of a family.



Training with guardians and staff



Returning home to family

Triplets

When triplets Janet, Jessica and Jaqueline were born, providing enough milk for three tiny babies was extremely challenging for their mother. Before long, the girls became malnourished and faced serious health risks.

Thankfully, they were referred to Open Arms by Social Welfare. They were provided with supplementary nutrition and support, to help them regain their strength - while remaining in the loving care of their mother.

Today the girls are healthy, thriving and surrounded by family. Open Arms not only helps to save lives, it also keeps families together!



Jaqueline, Janet and Jessica with their mum

Graduation Programme extended to 50 families

Last year, Open Arms piloted a new Graduation Programme with 25 families. This programme provides families with resources and training in farming to help them become self-sufficient by growing enough to eat and generating an income from selling any surplus.

Due to the success of the programme, which saw 260% more maize being grown, this programme has now been extended to 50 families across both Blantyre and Mangochi. All the families caring for children reintegrated from Mangochi Infant Home have now been placed on this programme.

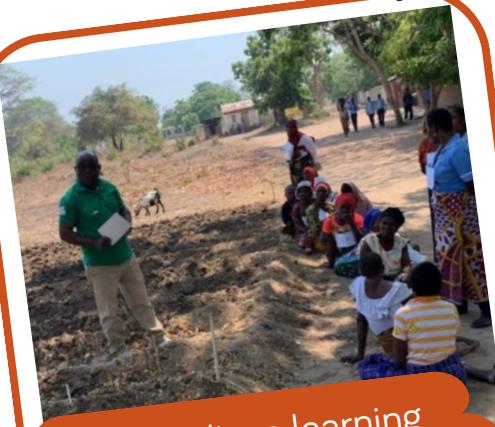
Over the past couple of months, Patrick and Nelson, Open Arms' Agriculture Officers, have been busy delivering seeds, fertiliser and pesticides to families and supporting them through the planting season, to help them gain maximum crop outputs.

The programme lasts three years and is about more than just farming. It teaches families new skills, builds confidence, and helps them become stronger and more independent, so they can support themselves and help others in their community too.

We look forward to bringing you news on the harvests in a few months time!



Japhet's family receiving seeds and fertiliser



Guardians learning farming techniques

George Watson's College Visit to Malawi

Last term the team in Malawi were delighted to welcome staff and students from George Watson's College.

Open Arms is incredibly grateful for our long term partnership with the Watson Malawi Partnership and George Watson's College, and the team were delighted to share with them how their support is making an impact in Malawi.



Students learning more from the team

International Day of Education 24th January

Did you know:

- Only 45% of children in Malawi complete their primary education.
- Only 11% of children who live in the poorest areas complete their primary education.
- 40% of children need to repeat their first year at primary school, indicating lack of readiness to start school.
- Only 15% of children in Malawi complete their secondary education.
- Only 2% of children who live in the poorest areas complete their secondary education.
- 66 per cent of 3 to 4-year olds are not attending early childhood education.

(UNICEF Education Report 2022)

How you can join Open Arms in supporting education in Malawi

Open Arms supports nine community-led nursery schools in rural villages, giving young children a safe place to learn, play, and enjoy a hot, healthy meal each day. Having a nutritious meal helps children concentrate, encourages them to come to school, and plays an important role in preventing hunger and malnutrition.

In these areas, many children struggle at school, with 40% needing to repeat their first year of primary school and only 2% likely to complete their education. By supporting children in their early years, we can greatly improve their chances of doing well when they start school.

Would your school like to help support one of our nursery schools? It costs about £95 a year to educate and feed one child, and over 600 children across our nine schools need this support. Your fundraising can give children a better start in life and a brighter future. Why not tie in some fundraising with International School Meals Day on 12th March?

Please get in contact for more information on how you can support a school at suzie@openarmsmalawi.org



Amazing Fundraising

- At Christmas, Queen Elizabeth Grammar School Juniors held their annual Carol Service to raise funds for Open Arms Malawi.
- Arundel C of E Primary School made Open Arms Malawi their charity of the year, and Year 6 pupils raised money through a cake sale, a non-uniform day and a raffle.
- Long term partners at Lancing College raised funds in their annual sponsored walk for Malawi at the beginning of last term.
- School of Play held a Christmas carol concert.

Thank you for your wonderful fundraising!

Thank You!



Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter and your support. We are always keen to build strong, mutually beneficial partnerships with schools. Please take a look at the Primary and Secondary resources available on our website, as well as our ready-to-use assemblies. Depending on your location, we would also be happy to visit your school and share more about the work of Open Arms Malawi.

We are also keen to spread the word about Open Arms Malawi through our origami lotus flower packs. If your school, or a group you know, would be interested in taking part, please get in touch.

Dates for Your Diary

24th January

International Day of Education

12th March

International School Meals Day

7th April

World Health Day

Can you help us support more children?

Download our fundraising pack for schools [here](#)



Thank you for supporting Open Arms Malawi

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