

# An holistic approach to HIV and AIDS in Malawi

Malawi **direct** funding target: £300,000

Fourteen per cent of Malawi's population lives with HIV and AIDS. Yet few receive the support and care they need. Growing food or earning a living become impossible for people affected by illness, or for carers. Using an holistic approach, Oxfam works with communities helping them with every aspect of their lives: to grow more food, to earn more, to have health care and treatment, and promotes prevention education.



Communal vegetable garden, Chiradzulu District.  
Photo: Thoko Bemal/Oxfam

## The Project

This is the fourth year of an ongoing project, working in Chiradzulu District, the poorest region in Malawi, with very high incidence of HIV and AIDS. Through this successful project we have established village AIDS committees, youth clubs, childcare centres, and home-based carers, through which activities are co-ordinated. We have trained people in labour-saving food cultivation, and set up communal gardens and livestock-rearing projects to help increase incomes. This year, we will continue to build upon all of this work to help thousands more families affected by HIV and AIDS.

### Project aims

To enable vulnerable people in communities affected by HIV and AIDS to grow more food, to earn more, to have health care and treatment, and to promote prevention education with young people

- to reduce people's susceptibility to HIV infection through increased knowledge and improve health through increased availability of medical care, support, and anti-retroviral drugs
- to ensure that vulnerable households have enough food, and to improve nutrition to reduce secondary infections of those living with HIV and AIDS



Bicycle ambulance with home-care volunteers, Chiradzulu District.  
Photo: Oxfam

- to increase people's ability to earn an income to pay for their basic needs and to give vulnerable young adults the opportunity of vocational training.

Supporters, communities, local partners and Oxfam – working together to change lives

## Background



Condoms are distributed as part of AIDS prevention education work.  
Photo: Jane Beesley/Oxfam

In Malawi, one of the world's poorest countries and one of the hardest hit by HIV and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, seventy thousand people die every year of AIDS-related

illnesses. An estimated 850,000 children have been orphaned since the epidemic began.

State health services are overwhelmed and cannot provide adequate treatment. Health facilities are insufficient and there is a shortage of drugs. Lack of health care is made worse by the increasing illness and death of healthcare professionals from HIV and AIDS.

Orphaned children and young adults, and elderly people are left to support their families and to care for those who fall ill. This can result in young people working to grow food and look after homes instead of

studying or doing paid work. If there is not enough food grown, and no money available to buy it, the threat of starvation is very real. And for those living with HIV, poor nutrition can hasten progression of their illness to AIDS.

Oxfam works with the Malawian government and partner organisations to support families affected by HIV and AIDS through training of home-based carers and others; promoting awareness of the epidemic and prevention education; making it possible for people to grow more food, have good nutrition, learn new skills and to make a living.

## The Plan

### Activities:

#### Growing more food:

- provide seeds and planting material for 3,726 households
- in 81 villages, train 300 people and provide materials for 'agroforestry' – growing trees/shrubs which improve soil alongside crops, increasing yields without expensive fertilisers
- provide training for 100 households and equipment for improved irrigation for 20 community gardens
- provide training, advice, and stock of fish for 30 fish ponds to further develop community fish-farming
- provide seeds, and training in nutrition, diet, and management of vegetable gardens to 810 home-based carers and/or members of village AIDS committees in 81 villages.

#### HIV and AIDS awareness:

- equip and reorganise 60 youth clubs to run efficiently, providing a channel for HIV and AIDS awareness-raising and education
- train 162 young people as 'peer educators'.

#### Health care:

- run refresher courses for 200 community-based health care workers
- provide 20 bicycle ambulances
- provide 81 health-care kits
- organise HIV and AIDS education training for 162 village leaders/traditional birth attendants
- continue training for 30 HIV-testing counsellors
- provide training and equipment for childcare workers and those involved

in the organisation of the community childcare centres to help them monitor children's growth.

#### Earning a living:

- provide training and capital to small income projects to help people to make a living (selling surplus vegetables and fish, home-baked produce, and second-hand clothing).
- give vocational skills training to 60 vulnerable young adults, allowing them the chance to earn money.

## The Impact

### Achievements so far

In the last three years, our work has had significant impact. More than 800 households and 300 AIDS committees are now trained in labour-saving methods of growing more food, and nearly 1,000 people have trained in fish-farming and/or have received livestock. Training has been given to 750 home-based carers; childcare centres and youth clubs set up in 30 communities; and lobbying work carried out for more readily-available anti-retroviral drugs.

### As a result of the project:

- vulnerable households will be able to grow and/or buy more food
- people will have adequate protein in their diet from fish reared in ponds

- people living with HIV and AIDS will have medication and support, improved health and longer, more productive lives
- susceptibility to HIV infection will be reduced through increased knowledge and behavioural change
- training of childcare staff will ensure good development and monitoring of orphans and vulnerable children
- with cash income from trading, people will be able to pay for household necessities: medical costs, clothing, and hygiene and cleaning supplies
- people will have money to buy valuable assets, such as livestock.

### Who will benefit?

More than 7,000 households will continue to benefit directly, more than 65 per cent of them

women and children. Indirectly, about 15,000 people.

### Monitoring and evaluation

Oxfam's Programme Officer and the partner organisations will monitor the project through monthly visits to partners and communities; review meetings, and six-monthly field visits.

### Sustainability

Support will continue through the Village AIDS Committees. Government ministries, especially departments of Agriculture; Community Development; Social Welfare; Youth; Health; and the District Assembly, will continue involvement.

## The People



### Growing more

"[In the last project] Oxfam gave me a goat which has produced 18 kids. I sold 11 of them to pay for school fees for my children.

With Oxfam's help I have trained to learn more about cultivation and farming, this has helped me grow more on my land."

Beatrice Ekiwa, Tambala village, Mulanje  
Photo: Carlo Heathcote/Oxfam



### Healthier and happier

"The support and help from the volunteer carers, and the extra food I can now grow for my son gives me more time and energy. His condition has really improved - he's healthier and happier.

Mary, Mulange, Mary and her son preparing food.  
Photo: Jane Beesley/Oxfam



### Self-reliance

"With Oxfam's support, we have been able to run effective prevention education work and have trained vulnerable children in vocational skills so they can be self-reliant in the future."

Swiden S. Zuze, The Chiradzulu District Youth Officer.  
Photo: Steve Kuliyaizi/Oxfam



John Nyirenda, Project Manager, Malawi  
Photo: Oxfam

### The Partners

Partners include: Ministry of Agriculture; Community Development Department; Ministry of Health; Department of Social Welfare; Department of Youth; National association for people living with HIV in Malawi; and the Center for Alternatives for Victimized Women and Children.

## About **direct**

By supporting **direct projects** you're joining a global network of supporters, local people and partner organisations, all working with Oxfam to end poverty and suffering for good. From helping whole communities to protect themselves against disaster, to working with national governments to transform a country's schools, to helping individual families to earn a living, all **direct projects** offer you the chance to change lives.

### Our commitment to you:

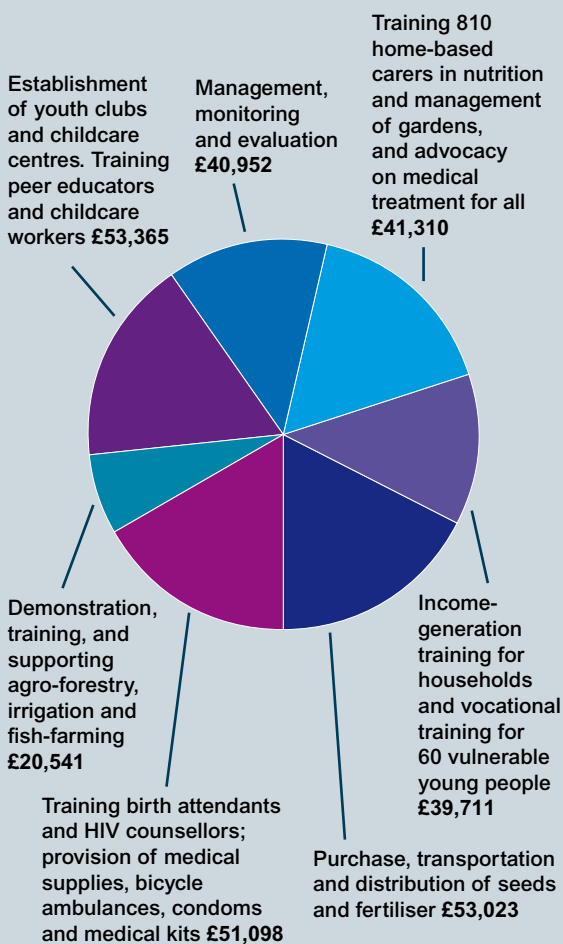
- One hundred per cent of your money is invested in your chosen project
- You'll receive 6 and 12 month progress reports on your project
- Email alerts when new information is posted on the website
- A dedicated account manager to answer questions and keep you informed.

### Other countries needing your support:

Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Honduras, India, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritania, Nepal, Philippines, Sudan, Tanzania, Viet Nam, West Africa regional, Zambia.

## The Budget

Total £300,000



## Malawi: country profile



Population	13.5 million
Life expectancy at birth (2000-05)	45 years
Development 164th (of 177) on the HDI <sup>1</sup>	
GDP per capita (UK GDP \$33,238)	\$646
Percentage of population living on less than \$1 a day:	42%
Percentage of population living on less than \$2 a day:	76%
Percentage of population under-nourished:	34%
HIV/AIDS prevalence (% of ages 15-49):	14%

Source: UNDP Human Development Report 2006

<sup>1</sup>The UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite measure of life expectancy, education and standard of living.

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