

# Shine Village Malawi Summer 2018



Reaching hundreds of children across the region



*At the heart of all we do we give opportunities to discover and follow Jesus.*

With rising uncertainty and fear, the need to reach young people with good news is more urgent than ever. As we serve and build relationships, relying on God in all we do, from after-school clubs, to working with the teenage mothers and child headed families, providing bursaries and Early Years education; in all our projects, we have this as our focus. *It's all about Jesus.*

It has taken time to establish this ministry in the community; setting the foundations, building year on year, we have now established a reputation with both primary and secondary school age groups and we have seen huge growth over the past 3 years from 10 young people to 100 and now to 200. Our activities bring challenge and also allow time for fun!

This year's camp event was a three day event which included activities from kid's games worldwide, multi- sports and bible-based resources. 200 young people and children attended from seven villages. Activities like team games, football, netball, sack racing, water racing, and musical chairs brought age groups together with each child having the chance to participate. Sporting activities provide a fantastic opportunity to engage with new young people which then leads to more in depth discussions, with morning devotions providing a safe place to air their concerns. We know that what we are doing is going to have such an impact in the future, as we have made good, long term relationships with these young people. We are grateful that the camp remains true to its original purpose, bringing Gods love and hope to young people who would otherwise not hear this message.

*"This summer was so exciting, as we worked with more young people and facilitated their personal social and educational development and enabled them to gain a voice, influence and a place in society in a period of transition from dependence to independent. The staff team took time to sit and chat with young people about relationships, discussing subjects such as sexual abstinence, which is uncommon in the region. We so desire to see them encounter Jesus as we share the gospel with them. I would love to see a relationship revolution, but a change of behaviour has to come from a changed heart and only Jesus can do that,"* Mercy Sichone- Children's Support Worker



Food plays a very important part in any event and servant hearted staff team catered for the masses and also took time with the younger children, developing their skills. For families without these role models at home, time spent together is key in their development. The older girls, some of whom are mothers themselves are taught to take their responsibilities seriously. We have seen them make good life choices, which we believe is a result of the teaching they have received through Shine over the years. They think more positively about what they want to do in future. They are even able to encourage the younger children to work hard in school and spend time in prayer at the start of the day. During the camp we had children from child-headed families from different villages camping together, sharing life: eating, discussing, praying and simply playing and building relationships.

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## Supporting our young people aged 14 to 17 years

Shine's vision for this age group is to challenge the attitude and behaviours towards sexual activities, to empower them to build their self-confidence, engage them with an alternative and health sex – free lifestyle, to inform them with accurate information about sexual topics and equip them to make health decisions about relationships. The young people that took part attended weekly sessions, giving opportunity for them to build relationships with one another, to explore and make sense of their experiences, plan and take action. During these meetings, different topics were looked at including love, body image, touch and intimacy, healthy relationships, abstinence and confidence building, as well as socials and mentoring sessions for deeper focus discussions. In a society where young people are surrounded by sexual imagery and encouraged to value people on a superficial level for their looks, and where equating sexual abstinence with ignorance or naivety, it is vitally important that we challenge these attitudes and declare the good news as we do so. All the youths were given flyers and verses to remind them that God loves them and that their bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. One of the girls who attended the sessions remarked, "I have gained more knowledge and understanding of what a healthy relationship actually is and a greater value of myself,"

## Sanitary pads and wrist bands

Shine Relief has a holistic approach to development: focusing on the spiritual and emotional needs of the children as well as their education and medical needs. Our success is very much dependent on developing our local young people which is our priority. We are keen to bridge the generational gap and encourage our young people to learn different skills. With such clear needs and great opportunities, teenage mothers in Chilambe were really excited to learn a new talent of sanitary pad making. Last year the New Zealand team brought the materials for pad making; plastic recycled from umbrellas and pieces of fabrics which we used in teaching them how to make their own pads. We started each session with a talk and encouragement from the word of God. The girls were given some pad templates to help them make more at home.



Volunteer, Temwa Zidana, from Zomba, attends Teacher training college in Blantyre and helps with training during in her holidays. She helped this summer and she said,

*"I want to break down the misconception that you have to be under a certain age to be involved in youth work. We want to see young people be youths for Christ so that they are both confident and effective in talking to their peers about their faith."*

Director Suzen Zidana plans the camp and joins youth activities every year and was so excited by what she witnessed this year. She said

*"I am excited not only by what God has done but also with what HE is going to do, Shines dream is to see young people coming through, transformed by Jesus and then going on to transform their churches and communities. We love the idea of young people with little or no experience of Christianity and church, encountering Jesus and coming through with a fresh perspective and living exciting lives."*

For more details on our work in the UK, Malawi and New Zealand please visit [www.shine-relief.org](http://www.shine-relief.org)

Shine Village June 2018 S Zidana | Shine Relief Trust Malawi  
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**Donations from our partners.** Supporters from UK and New Zealand donated new clothes this year, which were given out along with medicine, beans, soya pieces, salt, Vaseline and soap, after the camp. A big thank you to all our supporters for ensuring this camp takes place and for all the donated items we receive for our families, young people and Early Years children

**Opportunities:** Reaching young people in T/A Kuntumanje, it is very exciting and Shine has created numerous opportunities to share faith through activities for young people in areas where they don't have much to do. What we are seeing now is that young people are open to talk and explore questions of meaning and purpose, of life and God, and the church needs to engage work with these young people. Young people need is people to listen, care for them genuinely, and let them know that Jesus came to give them the better way to live.

**Challenges:** With so many young people outside the church and do not know anything about God, faith or Jesus, the needs of young people seem more pronounced now. With over 50% of the population actually aged 15 and under this age group must be targeted in order to impact the community.