

Kitchen Table Charities Trust

mobilising

the

Children of Malawi

(7 cases: cum 1 -7 of 30)

If life for the average, 'healthy' Malawian child is poor then life for those with severe mobility problems can be dire.

The consequences for the child and its family can be many and debilitating.

The Government of Malawi does not provide mobility aids.

Even if they could find them, most families would not be able to afford a mobility aid for their child.

Without a mobility aid the child cannot go to school and will have a very limited social life.

If the child cannot go to school, in most cases this restricts both parents from working therefore impacting the family income needed just to survive.

Without a mobility aid, like a wheelchair, parents and guardians carry the child on their backs. As the child grows the weight causes back problems for the adults....and so the above negative cycle continues.

The prosthetics workshop at the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, Blantyre, Malawi has been developed to make wheelchairs each to meet the specific needs of those children fortunate enough to receive charitable funds to meet the cost.

Kitchen Table Charities Trust is a big supporter of this initiative and the following case stories are a result of their generous help.

[Family reactions at end.]



Yamikani is 15 years old and comes from Mponda Village, T/A Thomas in Thyolo District, Malawi where he lives with his parents. He has never been to school.

He has cerebral palsy caused by birth asphyxia. He is incontinent but has good range of motion. He has good sensation and has had no pressure sores. The range of motion in all joints is good. He used to crawl in the absence of any mobility and sitting aids.

A wheelchair would mean a new life with his friends and a chance to go to school. Vital body support will also be provided as he is at risk of developing secondary complications like contractures.

He is now well fitted with a wheelchair designed for his needs with appropriate pressure relieving cushion and a lap tray to provide him with good sitting posture and comfort.

Victor is nearly 9 years old and lives in Malora Village, T/A Kapeni in Blantyre, Malawi with his parents who have been carrying him to school and other places.

He has cerebral palsy due to birth asphyxia, is spastic and has limited range of motion in all joints. He cannot stand or walk. He is able to control both bowel and bladder and has had no pressure sores and has good level of sensation.

Victor needs a wheelchair for mobility to school, to play with his friends, and go to church and other places. The wheelchair will also relieve his family members from carrying him and be free from pain from carrying him.

He is now fitted with an appropriate child's wheelchair with a pressure relieving cushion to prevent him from getting pressure sores and also for comfort. A lateral support helps him to sit in the midline as he leans much to the left.





Shanif is 9 years old and comes from Samati Village, T/A Abudu in Balaka District, Malawi and previous to this gift had never seen or used a wheelchair.

Shanif was born with a bone problem not noticed until two weeks after birth when his brother accidentally stepped on him and one of his ribs fractured. He has osteoporosis resulting in fragile porous bones due to lack of calcium. He feels pain on the chest when touched. He has a weak trunk and has had increased difficulty breathing. He is not incontinent but has limited range of motion in most of the joints. He has good level of sensation and has had no pressure sores.

Before having the wheelchair, Shanif was always at risk of injury as his bones are weak and any force on him could cause a fracture. He was rarely able to play with friends.

Shellif is paraplegic, cause unknown. He lives in Mwamadi Village T/A Mthiramanja in Thyolo District, Malawi with his granny.

His mother noticed that her child had a problem at six months of age. He was not able to sit as expected of every child in normal development. At hospital it was confirmed he had a problem without tracing its cause and was referred for physiotherapy. The child has been raised by his grandma. He has delayed developmental milestones. He cannot sit without support for more than 20 minutes. He is not incontinent but has good range of motion. He has good level of sensation and has had no pressure sores. He had to stop going to school due to lack of mobility aid.

Now a wheelchair gives him mobility so he can go to school, chat with his friends and body support and prevent risks of developing secondary complications like contractures.





Benjamin comes from Bester Village, T/ A Kuntaja in Blantyre, Malawi. He is 8 years old. He used to go to school until his parents could no longer carry him to school due to his increased weight and the distance of over 1 km to school.

He has cerebral palsy due to premature birth. He has poor neck and trunk control such that he cannot sit independently. He is incontinent and his level of sensation is reduced. He has had no pressure sores and has full range of motion on all joints.

A wheelchair has provided him with mobility to school, church and other places but also provides him with good postural support and at the same time relieving his parents from carrying him. His mum feels that now she will be able to work for much needed family income and her boy will be chatting with his friends and going to school with them.

Gift is 13 years old and comes from Kunthembe Village, T/A Chigalu in Blantyre, Malawi where he stays with his parents. He likes chatting with friends and tries to participate in many games such as football that he plays with his hands.

He was born without any problem and was able to walk and attend school until 12th February, 2018 when he was involved in a Road Traffic Accident (RTA). On examination, the X-rays showed multiple fractures on the left lower limbs and also his spine. This has left him unable to stand and walk hence the need of the wheelchair for mobility to school and other places. He is able to manage his bowel and bladder and he has good level of sensation and has had no pressure sores.

His parents are very relieved that they will not have to carry him anymore. Also they would never have been able to buy a wheelchair for him.





Cynthia was born on 29th June, 2010. She lives in Namagoya Village, T/A Nanseta in Thyolo District, Malawi with her parents. She is a schoolgirl. Her parents carry her to and from the school. She is a happy child and has lots of friends who keep her company.

She has cerebral palsy secondary to delayed birth and she is quadriplegic meaning all extremities are affected. She has delayed developmental milestones such that she is not able to crawl and cannot sit without support. She is incontinent. She has good range of motion in all significant joints.

She is fitted with an appropriate children's wheelchair with a pressure relieving cushion to

accommodate pelvis and thighs and adjustable backrest to accommodate the spine.

The messages to Kitchen Table Charities Trust from all the families are very similar and can be summarised as follows:

- They were all genuinely overwhelmed to hear that their child would be assessed, fitted and supplied with a wheelchair through the generosity of KTCT.
- None of them imagined that they would ever receive such a precious gift and they certainly would never have been able to afford one and the future looked bleak.
- They all wanted their very grateful thanks to be conveyed to the people who made this possible and at the same time many of them in various ways invoked "God's blessing" on them and offered prayers.

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