

KUFUNGATILA

(Providing Wings of Comfort)



**NEWSLETTER VOLUME 1 / ISSUE 1
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*NOVOC exists to promote,
assist and empower
individuals and organisations
involved with the care and
support of orphans and
vulnerable children so as to
create and increase services
and thereby improve their
quality of life.*

WORDS OF WELCOME

Welcome to the first issue of NOVOC newsletter. As informed and effective advocates, local and international non-governmental organizations, CBOs, FBOs and individuals have had a role in shaping the work of Network of Organizations for Vulnerable and Orphaned Children in Malawi. Participation by NGOs, both local and international is crucial not only at the project level but also at the policy level. Village organizations and other community-based groups, academic institutions, and foundations are also integral to NOVOC's efforts.

This quarterly newsletter aims to build on this foundation with information, news, and views from the sub-network members and its NGO partners. We look forward to receiving your suggestions for future issues. Let us know the kinds of questions about NOVOC's work you need answered. For our part, we would be very interested in hearing about your efforts to protect the orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) at the country level, including best practices and lessons learned.

If you are reading a paper copy of this newsletter and have internet access, please visit NOVOC's home page at **www.novocmalawi.org**. There you will find a wide range of information about the NOVOC and its projects.

C Q NYIRENDA
National Coordinator



INTRODUCTION: NOVOC



NOVOC is the Network of Organizations of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Malawi.

We envision a world where Malawi OVC population are provided with adequate holistic support and care to effectively integrate them into the economically productive segment of the population. We exist to promote, assist, and empower individuals and organizations involved with the care and support of orphans and vulnerable children so as to create and increase services and thereby improve their quality of life.

OUR FOCUS

Our Members are community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, individuals, local and international NGOs that deal with OVC service provision.

“Children in difficult situations are the reason we exist.”

C Q NYIRENDA, National Coordinator

JOIN US

ABOUT THE MEMBERSHIP

NOVOC offers the opportunities to interested people and institutions to register as members of the organization and participate in the noble cause of ensuring that the rights and welfare of children are upheld.

Membership fee:

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| International | MWK 10,000 |
| Local | MWK 5,000 |
| CBO | MWK 2,000 |

Fill in the membership form and send it to NOVOC Malawi together with your subscription fee as per the type of membership applied for.

Let us come together in the advocacy for child rights and welfare for betterment of the future of our children.

Join us by registering as a member!
www.novocmalawi.org

OUR PARTNERS

→ Stop Aids Now! (SAN) and NOVOC are partnering in a Psychosocial Support project that seeks to scale up Psychosocial Support Services for OVC in Malawi through Linking and Learning. SAN through NOVOC is also strengthening the Social Cash Transfer Scheme (SCT) in Chitipa district. A whole new project that tries to strengthen the Social Cash Transfer Scheme in Malawi. The project is implemented hand-in-hand with district and national government, the implementers of the SCT scheme.

→ Cordaid and NOVOC from 2009 to 2011 has been implementing a project on women empowerment to support OVCs in Malawi.

→ Raising Malawi Trust: NOVOC with financial support from Raising Trust is implementing a Strengthening CBO/FBOs Capacity for OVC care and support. The overall goal of this project is to improve the quality of life of 4,000 OVC through strengthening community level initiatives by 2010.

→ Unicef and NOVOC developed a project on strengthening the capacity of service providers in rolling out the Journey of Life to improve psychosocial support projects.

→ Oxfam: Joint Oxfam Programme in Malawi and NOVOC want to achieve improved sustainable livelihoods for poor and vulnerable groups in the context of HIV/AIDS by 2011. They have been supporting the NOVOC advocacy project on increased access to quality education by OVCs.

→ World Vision entered in an agreement with NOVOC to carry out a three-year project from 2009 to March 2011 on increased capacity of stakeholders (CBO, FBOs, NGOs and government) to effectively provide holistic care (psychosocial support, care and protection) to orphans and vulnerable children.

→ Volunteer Service Organization Oversees: VSO and NOVOC from 2009 to 2010 have been implementing a project on women's empowerment to support OVCs in Malawi.

Malawi has over 1,000,000 orphans (UNICEF, 2005) and faces a huge challenge in responding to the increasing number of Orphans and Vulnerable Children. NOVOC needs your assistance in providing care to these children country wide.

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HOPELESSNESS EPILEPTIC BOY FINDS HOPE THROUGH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY



Limbani Chinangwa 11 years old is an epileptic double orphan living in Nlapa village. (Pictured above before habitat, pictured below after habitat.)



➔ NOVOC is a member of NGO coalition that brings about all child protection agents to advocate for the best interest of children in Malawi.

➔ Upcoming new project Fountain of Life that will aim at strengthening the capacity of OVC service providers to effectively respond to the rape crisis in Malawi.

➔ NOVOC are partnering with Habitat For Humanity to provide and advocate for secure shelter for OVCs in Malawi.



The iron sheet roofed house does not only provide shelter to Limbani and his relatives but also brings water closer to the house during rainy season. As Ellen lamented, "We are very thankful to Habitat Imagine." For more on this story visit NOVOC website (www.novocmalawi.org).

To help many OVCs like Limbani access good shelter, we need your help.

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IMPORTANT HIGHLIGHTS

1. Psycho-Social Support

30 facilitators from different CBOS went through the training of Journey of Life conducted by NOVOC. The Journey of Life is an advocacy tool that has helped change some traditions that were harmful to children's positive development. For example, Samva community has a strong "Nyau" culture and there were times when children were being initiated during school times. Children could miss schools and sometimes even exams. After the Journey of Life training, chiefs who attended the training, conducted by NOVOC, called for an awareness meeting to their fellow chiefs who then agreed not to do the practice during school periods but to target holidays. The Traditional Authority of this area T/A Chiseka has asked the chiefs who attended the training to sensitize all the area chiefs on this matter.



2. Building Capacity for community empowerment.

➔ NOVOC provided a few CBOS in Chitipa, Kasungu, Mchiji, Zomba and Salima with farm inputs. As a result, a community bursary scheme has been established.



A follow-up was done in Kasungu in two CBOS where VSLA members were given farm inputs on loan to produce more foods for the households. 43 members who benefited from this programme managed to harvest more than 20 bags 50 kgs each and have given back 2 bags to the CBO which will be used for community OVC bursary support.

➔ Village Savings and Loan Association has been used as a tool of alleviating poverty in Malawi. NOVOC strengthened the capacity of CBOS in the Districts of Kasungu, Mchinji, Salima, Chitipa, Phalombe, Zomba, Mulanje, Nsanje and Chikwawa to establish VSLA. Following the impact of VSLA OVC have got shelter, food and clothing and they are accessing education. A CBO in Chitipa has 22 VSLAs with 595 members. These VSLAs have managed to save MK15, 796,673, since it started two years ago. 272 OVCs are directly benefiting from this programme since their guardians are members of these VSLAs.

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3. Social Cash Transfer

NOVOC assisted in improving data management and implementation capacity of 1 District to deliver social cash transfers in order to increase the productive capacity of poor and vulnerable households. As a result, a computer was donated by NOVOC secretariat to the District Assembly and they also facilitated in designing and installing a database in order to effectively manage the information on social cash transfer.

4. Symposium

For the past 3 years, 7 Malawian NGOs have been working together in a joint Linking and Learning Project with the overarching goal from the GoM's National Plan of Action for OVC that seeks to contribute to the facilitation of support for care, protection and development of OVC in a coordinated manner in order to provide them with an environment in which they realize their full rights and potentials.



The participants pose for a photo with VIP seated from left, Doortj'e Hart from Stop AIDS Now! Netherlands, CQ Nyirenda (NOVOC Director) Louise Van (Director Stop AIDS Now! Netherlands Deputy Minister Hon. Catherine Gotani, Rodgers Newa, Director Ceyca and Victoria Keelan (NOVOC Board member and Managing Director Raising Malawi Trust) and other participants.

In September 2010, seven partners in Malawi in conjunction with STOP AIDS NOW! Netherlands organized a symposium with a purpose to speak for change in the provision of services to orphans and other vulnerable children in Malawi based on the lessons from the implementation of the Psychosocial, Lobbying and Advocacy projects through linking and learning.

The symposium was opened by the deputy minister from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Community Development who called stakeholders to uphold the rights of the vulnerable children. The meeting was also graced by the Director of STOP AIDS NOW! Netherlands Louise Van Deth who registered her appreciation on the work of the seven partners that are addressing the plight of Malawian OVC.

In the efforts of disseminating the experiences, successes and challenges encountered by different service providers in meeting the needs of OVC, NOVOC produced a magazine and a documentary that featured a story of 10-year-old Khetase Daniel, a mother of four years. She is the one who prepares food for the family, prepare her brothers for school, and making sure the surrounding of their makeshift house like structure are kept clean all the times.

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This documentary was aired before the Minister's speech made the participant reflect on how children like Khetase in the documentary are missing education opportunities as they take care of their siblings. It was a moving story that pushed the Director of Raising Malawi to volunteer to help that family in order to ensure that Khetase enjoy the rights to education like any other child. For more on this documentary visit our website on www.novocmalawi.org.

5. Networking

NOVOC has established eight district networks within the country.

6. Advocacy

Increased access to quality education for OVCs.



Blind children walk to their dormitories from Chifundo Primary school in Salima



In the effort of addressing OVC access to quality education, NOVOC has been advocating for the waiver of user fees on OVC in public primary schools.

NOVOC has also been lobbying the government to allocate more funds towards OVC education in the government budget. Early this year NOVOC presented their petition to the Ministry of Finance during the budget consultation. NOVOC has been doing this to influence government and other players to promote national programmes, practices and strategies that respond adequately to OVC needs. In particular, we believe that funds should be allocated in the Malawi national budget to provide for OVC education support, through bursaries and waiving user fees for OVCs. As a result, many districts now deal directly with OVC access to education. For example, Kasungu District Assembly allocated from its revenue collection MK500, 000 to OVC bursary support in 2010.

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children studying under trees

7. NGO Coalition

In May of this year, NOVOC joined the NGO Coalition on Child Rights, a coalition of existing and willing registered coalitions that work on child rights and related aspects. It works towards strengthening collaboration and increasing effectiveness among NGOs on child rights interventions in Malawi. In order to take the recently passed Child Protection and Justice bill Act to the community, a coalition through UNICEF was formed. The coalition consisted of networks that are working towards ensuring that rights of people are protected. NOVOC among other coalition members attended a three-day training on child rights in Mangochi. The trainers are expected to educate more trainers at the District level.

8. Fundraising

Voluntary service oversees through their Small Grant Fund, funded an advocacy project in NOVOC in the aim of scaling up the advocacy initiative on waiver of user fees on OVC in Malawi.

9. Other Activities

Strategic Plan workshop was held in September 2010 where NOVOC developed a five-year plan for the organization. The plan is expected to run from January 2011 to Dec 2015.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Develop and disseminate an advocacy toolkit to be used by NOVOC sub-network members to lobby the schools on waiver of user fees.
- ➔ Strengthening CBO capacities for livelihood development through training and purchase for farm inputs.
- ➔ More resource mobilization for our networks.

NOVOC AT A GLANCE

New Staff

Joyce Somba joined us in June as the Finance Manager.



CONTACT US

NOVOC

PO Box 1266
Lilongwe
Malawi, Central Africa

Phone

+ 265 1 920 013
or + 265 99 9252720
(National Coordinator)

Email

info@novocmalawi.org

Web

www.novocmalawi.org

Newsletter Design

Vuong Tong and Daniela Kriva

