

Agricultural Program

- Aims to improve the nutritional status of project orphans and their families.
- Aims to provide a source of potential income for the families.

Nutritional Status

Due to the high and rising cost of basic foods and the impoverished state of families, nutrition becomes an important focus. Meals are infrequent and nutritionally inadequate, resulting in low caloric intake and malnourishment. AIDS victims in particular require adequate intake of specific dietary nutrients in order to resist the depredations of the disease.

Income Generation

The caretakers of the families assisted by the program have little or no income, or prospects of earning due to Malawi's weak economy. As a consequence, they have inadequate resources to purchase food and other life necessities.

Knowledge of Agriculture

Lack of experience and interest in agriculture among urban dwellers has been a factor in the need for training. Instruction is needed in how to grow nutritious food with minimal inputs on small areas of land. Among the youth in particular, agriculture is looked down upon. However, with using modern techniques it can provide a good income which is difficult to find from urban employment.

Our Current Projects

Kitchen Gardens



Urban families generally do not have access to sufficient land for growing crops. However, there are small areas of land near their homes on which small kitchen gardens can be grown. It has been a focus to establish such gardens as a means of providing nutrition and potential income. Through the Diocese of Northern Malawi's agronomist and the Ministry of Agriculture's extension service, the project organized training for care-taking families, orphans and the Mothers Union members. Seeds of adapted productive vegetable varieties have been provided.



The care-taking families and Mothers Union members have been enthusiastic about the programme. Many others have requested seeds, and those who have previously planted are requesting additional seeds and varieties of vegetables. They have been able to consume their harvest while also selling at the open market. Some have sold or donated their produce to our Saturday feeding project for the orphans and guardians.

How you can help....

\$2.00 - one packet of vegetable seed for one family

\$4.00- one avocado or other fruit tree for one family

\$5.00- vegetable seeds and fertilizer for one family



Fruit Trees

Fruit trees are well adapted for urban agriculture as they take up little area, require minimal care once well established, and produce abundant produce of high nutritional value. Not only do they provide vitamins and minerals, but in the case of avocados, which are well adapted to the environment, oils and dietary fibre. Tree crops bear well even through dry seasons and are beyond the reach of wandering livestock. Fruit excess to family needs can be sold in the market and the cash used to purchase other foods. With the assistance of the Diocese agricultural staff, orphan guardians, families and Mothers Union members have been trained in fruit tree planting and management. Numerous fruit trees have been supplied of varieties chosen by the recipients.

Agricultural Training

The project located a 1 acre piece of land belonging to the Ministry of Agriculture near the project offices which the Ministry made available to the project. With the assistance of the Ministry the project has used the site to train senior orphans by having them grow a maize crop for the feeding program.

The potential exists to provide demonstration and training for urban and peri-urban residents in low-input farming, and to develop a nursery to produce fruit trees for sale and for donation to orphan families. A training site would focus on showing recommended farming methods including the use of trees for fertilizer for food crops, fruit, firewood, fencing, medicines, fodder and construction material.

