



NEWSLETTER MARCH 2014

Smile Malawi was registered as a charity in England and Wales in 2004 and as an NGO in Malawi in June 2006. The main objective is to provide a home for orphaned and vulnerable children. The first Smile Malawi Children's Centre opened in November 2006 and now gives a home to 39 children who were jointly identified by Malawi Social Services and Smile Malawi from Blantyre and the local villages. The charity also helps the local community of Khumbanyiwa with a developing outreach programme, primarily targeting the children and local school.

It is now ten years since Smile Malawi founder Elspeth Baecke first went to Malawi at Easter 2004. She has just returned again and the visit was filled with lots of reflection on the progress we have made. But, most of all, the visit was filled with children and this newsletter, written at Johannesburg airport on her way back to UK, is dedicated to the wonderful children that we have given a home to and raised in the last 7 years. Some were as young as 4 when they first came to us while others were 12 and are now young men and women. Here is 19 year old Brian with Gift, who is 15, both looking very smart and grown up.



But we have taken many more children over the years and are now a big family of 39 children. In December 2013, 3 orphans were given a home and, most recently, Elspeth took in 4 new orphans from the villages nearby. This is 2 year old Happiness with 19 year old Funny, who has been with us for 5 years and passed her first big secondary school exams last year.

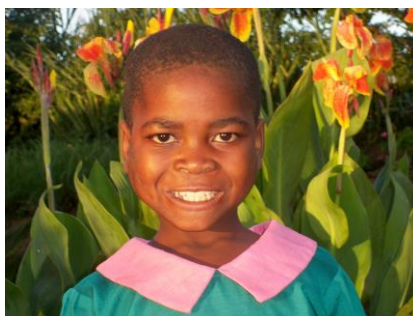


Happiness's mother had just passed away leaving two little girls with no-one to care for them. Their father passed away some years ago and the family are too poor to feed more children. Funny was a great help in settling all

the new children especially as Elspeth was running the home without the matron, who had gone to Zimbabwe on holiday! Happiness and her sister Carolin (below), who is 5 years old, came from nearby Machemba village.



Then there was 8 year old Tadala, who came from a local village called Juma. She was one of 4 children but her remaining relatives could only cope with 3 of the extra children. Poor Tadala was left so she came to live with us and, although it's sad to split the family up, she can still see her family regularly.



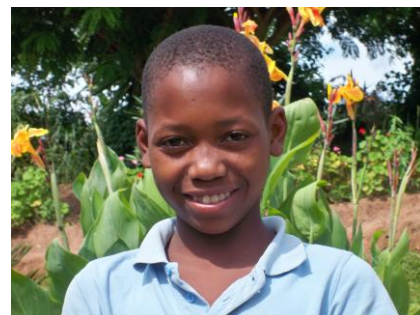
In December 2013, 2 brothers came to live with us from a village near Mount Mulange, where they were being cared for by their grandmother. This is John who is 6 years old.



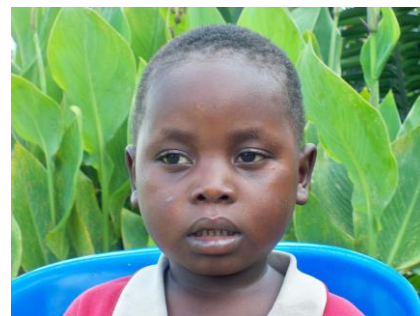
And this is his little brother Chisomo who didn't want to smile for the camera!



As well as the brothers, 11 year old Lucy also came in December from the same village. Her mother was dying when we visited so she found a home with us and is very happy and settled.



The last story is of 4 year old Wilson. He only arrived last week and was suffering from malaria. Elspeth took him to hospital where he was also diagnosed with pneumonia, so he was admitted and has made a complete recovery. We saved his life as he would have died in the village!



If you would like to help with the running costs of the Children's Centre please visit our website or send a cheque to the address below.