



Cross International

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PROJECT 0260

KONDANANI ORPHANAGE

— Malawi, Africa —



I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you.

John 14:18

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Project Synopsis

Project

Feed more than 130 orphans and abandoned babies at Kondanani Children's Village — a Christ-centered orphanage that cares for children from birth until they are fully grown, educated and ready to launch out on their own.

Purpose

To maximize the health and vitality of orphans by meeting their growing nutritional needs during their years at Kondanani so that they become healthy, productive young adults. By ensuring that the children are well fed throughout their childhood and teen years, Cross International is building a healthy foundation for strong bodies and keen minds.

Cost

\$26,400 annually — just **\$2,200** per month.

Location

Malawi, Africa

Goals

1. Purchase high-quality infant formula for the babies who are admitted to the clinic, where they will remain until medically stable and moved into the Caring Hands Infant Home.
2. Provide nutritious food to the growing children so that each child has all of the nutrients essential to healthy growth and development.
3. Sustain the orphans' ongoing well-being throughout their years at Kondanani by ensuring a constant supply of food — a vital foundation for maximum health.



Highlights

- The name Kondanani means “love one another” in the Chichewa language.
- Only babies below the age of 6 months are admitted, making this a unique orphanage in Malawi.
- Infants are accepted in the clinic to assess their health and treat any medical needs.
- When they are medically stable, infants are moved from the clinic to the infant home, where they will live until age three with a “mother” in charge, two nannies, and local volunteer helpers.
- From age three through their remaining years at Kondanani, families of 12 “siblings” — grouped by age — live in individual houses.
- The same house mother stays with them until they are fully grown, moving at times to different houses on the property, a plan geared to better meet the children's and older teenagers' unique developmental needs.
- Regardless of the high cost of food everywhere in Malawi, this is one need that will always exist and must be fully met. Food is basic to life!



Statement of Need

Snapshot of Malawi:

Malawi — known as “the warm heart of Africa” — is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. The vast majority of its 12.6 million people lives in rural areas and relies on subsistence farming. But the food supply is unreliable; and the country regularly suffers from severe drought to widespread flooding, putting it in constant need of major food aid. Life expectancy for both men and women is only 40 years. The infant mortality rate (10%) and the child malnutrition rate (49%) are among the highest in Africa.



AIDS is a devastating problem, with an estimated one million orphans left in its wake; and that number continues to climb steadily. Children are considered orphaned when they lose their mother. Most of the time, the father disappears, if he was ever a part of the family in the first place. Babies and little ones are left in their village, but all too often they die simply because there is not enough money to buy milk or food. Poverty-stricken villagers are barely able to sustain their own children, let alone bring in orphans and provide for them as well.

Throw-away babies

It is unthinkable how many thousands of diseased, starving orphans and vulnerable babies in Malawi die because there is no one who can care for them. The fortunate ones are those whose desperate, sometimes dying, mothers discard them — often in plastic bags — along the roadside, in garbage areas or at the doorstep of churches and organizations such as Kondanani Children’s Villages, hoping that someone will give them refuge.

When a baby is on the brink of starving to death, there IS only one real need... for life-sustaining food! Everything else pales by comparison. Without a plentiful supply of milk and nutrient-dense food, babies and toddlers will suffer from a wide array of malnutrition-related disorders, some of which are irreversible and can keep a youngster from ever developing into a normal, healthy adult.

How much is enough?

Malawi already depends on major, international food aid to keep its population from starving during recurring famines and floods. Without adequate local food markets, Kondanani — like the rest of the country — must import the infant formula and most of the food for the orphans... at a very high cost.

Corners can be cut and funds stretched in some areas, but definitely not in the quantity or quality of the food these growing children need. How much is enough? The goal is not to feed the children just enough to barely get by, but to give them all that they need in order to thrive. “Enough” is when a baby falls peacefully asleep after a full bottle of nourishing milk... week after week. “Enough” is when an active toddler’s energy lasts all day long. “Enough” is when a growing child is able to concentrate and learn, and her happy demeanor is evidence of vibrant health.



Project Description

Annie's Story

The story of Kondanani Children's Villages cannot be told without telling Annie's story, because she not only founded Kondanani, but continues to personify the love of Christ to all who know her. "Kondanani" means "love one another" in the Chichewa language, a fitting name for this wonderful place!

As a child, Annie Chikhwaza — born and raised in the Netherlands — always wanted to help the vulnerable and suffering. After completing nursing and Bible school, she went to South Africa where she worked tirelessly to help the needy. Twenty-seven years later, Annie married Lewis Chikhwaza, a Malawian Pentecostal pastor whose wife had died several years earlier. They moved "home" to Malawi in 1993.



With deep sensitivity for the downtrodden, Annie began helping the poor women in the nearby villages, using her creativity and energy to organize income-producing projects. She was heartbroken over the plight of defenseless AIDS orphans, and determined to do something to help them, too.

But trouble was brewing. Annie's Malawian stepchildren deeply resented her.

Believing that their father's wife had a great deal of money, the stepchildren began stealing from Annie. Things got worse... much worse! When her jealous stepchildren spread lies about Annie, the very villagers that she had helped brutally beat her. Lewis and Annie were flown in secret to South Africa, where she recovered for months. During the long ordeal, Annie's faith remained strong.

Against the advice of well-meaning friends, Lewis and Annie returned to Malawi to face his children and the possibility of renewed hostility. But this time, with forgiveness in her heart, Annie experienced victory and protection. Once again, she began ministering to the needy, asking God to direct her focus.

Called to care for the orphans

In May 1998, while holding an orphan baby in her arms, Annie heard the Holy Spirit whisper, "This is where you are to begin." God's call to care for orphaned and abandoned babies was unmistakable. She founded Kondanani Children's Village — a comprehensive orphanage that only accepts infants younger than six months; but cares for them until they are fully grown, educated and ready to leave the nest.

"We don't keep children... we love and care for children"

Kondanani motto



Each new infant that comes to Kondanani is nurtured to health in a fully-equipped clinic, and then moved to an infant home, where babies live until age three with a “mother” in charge, two nannies, and local volunteers. Toddlers from age three to six live as a family in groups of 10-12 in their own house, with the same house mother. At age six, the entire “family” moves to another residential area on the property where the children will begin school. Each orphan household will stay together as a family — with their “mother” — moving one or two times during their growing-up years... not unlike “normal” families. And finally, when fully prepared to care for themselves, they will leave as real and loving a home as any biological family enjoys.



Annie Chikhwaza and the mommies at Kondanani ask for our help to “bring up 130 children, with more to come. Not just bring them up, but see them become men and women who are stable in every way, love God and are well-educated.”

“Feed My lambs...”

As the number of orphans continues to grow, so have the needs of the orphanage, including one of the most important of all: more food for the children. Cross International cares very much that these children are well fed. With the faithful support of caring Christians, we will be able to provide \$2,200 each month toward the total cost of feeding the babies and growing children at Kondanani.

There are twelve months in each year, and Cross International wants to be sure these innocent children are given abundant food three times a day, every day of every month, for the entire year! It is difficult for American Christians to really grasp the enormity of the problem among the children of Malawi. We live in a nation where childhood obesity is a major epidemic. But for the babies and children at Kondanani, there is little risk of having too much. The important thing is that they have enough!

Annie says that her aim is to provide a genuine home and family life to the children who grow up at Kondanani. When their high school or university education is complete and they are ready to “leave home”, it is Annie’s prayer that they not only leave as well-educated young adults, but “feeling they have had a wonderful childhood... and knowing Jesus Christ as Lord.”



- A gift of \$26,400 will feed all 130 orphans for an entire year!
- A gift of \$2,200 will feed 130 orphans every day for one month.
- A gift of \$211.20 will feed one orphan for an entire year

Pure religion is defined in the Bible as looking after the orphans... in their distress...

James 1:26

Our Promise to You!

100 percent of the proceeds of this appeal will be used for this project. In the rare event that we receive more than needed to fund this project, additional gifts will be used for other urgent needs for the poor.