



## October Edition

from the Starfish UK & Malawi Teams.

This month we focus on our Secondary School Student Sponsorship Programme. This has had a real impact on the lives of many students since the programme began 20 years ago.

This month we would like to share the following stories with you.



### Why are we doing this?

Primary School Education in Malawi - <http://starfishmalawi.com/education-in-malawi> is funded by the government.

However Secondary School education is fee-paying only.

So, for those families with barely enough money for food to survive, paying school fees is clearly out of the question.



## Students at the annual students' meeting

In the academic year 2023-2024, we had 164 students in different secondary schools.

This year 26 sponsored students took their final exams and only one failed. Ten got scores high enough to apply for university and a further four, high enough for teacher training college.

It is encouraging that there has been a significant increase in the exam pass rates of our sponsored students.

31 of our former students are now currently at University, College or in Vocational Training.

All Students who have achieved a University placement must apply for a Government Grant for their fees. Starfish is unable to pay University fees. However, we do pay for transport and give pocket money for all students.

Frequently we are asked to pay accommodation and food costs for our university students who have obtained a Government Grant. Each request is carefully considered. Accommodation and food is expensive. We have known circumstances where all the parents are able to provide is a bag of maize and nothing more. The Team in Salima makes enquiries as to the validity of the claims made.

Each year we are pleased to see some of our students graduate from universities and colleges and go on to work in government departments, become teachers or join an NGO.



***Students receiving mosquito nets.***

We can say a lot about the programme, but it is so much better to read actual testimonies from students, like the following ones,

**Clement Mussa** was selected to Chipoka secondary school.

However, he lives with his single mother who struggles to take care of her children. He saw his dreams getting shattered as his mother honestly told him that no matter how much she may try, she may not manage to raise the school fees and all other things he needed to be in school.

This is when Starfish intervened to save his future.

Starfish helped him with school fees and other related needs such as transport and pocket money, dictionaries, mosquito nets and many more, from form 1 to 4. After writing his final exams, he was selected to Malawi University of Science and Technology to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Immunology.

***“I will be forever grateful to Starfish for the great work done for me, I and my family are thankful.”***

Said Clement.



***Clement with his mother***

*We received a lovely letter of appreciation from Lonjezo Stayford a former student, after he heard of the death of his sponsor Val Michaux.*

*“I’m truly at a loss for words. Hearing about Val’s passing has left me devastated. Val meant so much to me and her presence in my life was truly invaluable. I can’t begin to describe the impact she had on shaping who I am today.”*

*“Val’s absence leaves a void that seems insurmountable right now. The weight of this loss is compounded by the realization that her support was not just a simple gesture – it was the bedrock upon which my education and future stood. The thought of my single mother trying to navigate this without Val’s assistance is overwhelming.”*

*“May her soul rest in eternal peace. Val’s kindness, generosity and unwavering support will hold a special place in my heart. I am grateful for the moments I shared with her, the wisdom she imparted and the care she showed…….And I vow not to forget her. She was not just a sponsor to me but a comforting presence, a pillar of strength and a friend akin to a mother figure.”*



It is not only the students who are impacted by the programme. We received this supportive testimony from **Widris Banda**, Head Teacher at Chipoka Secondary School,



*“I am glad to express my heartfelt gratitude to Starfish and its esteemed sponsors for generously sponsoring 51 students at our school.*

*We are grateful as a school because you are the only organisation that sponsors such a large number of students.*

*Your contribution is vital in shaping the future of these students as they cannot succeed without the generosity of supporters like you.*

*You can be sure that we are doing our best to help them use this opportunity correctly, study hard and stay focussed in order for them to achieve their future goals or dreams.”*

For more information about this programme, please visit <https://starfishmalawi.com/student-sponsorship>

If you would like to become a sponsor to help some of the 47 students who do not have one at present, then all the information and contact details are on this page.

**Thank You.**

## Upcoming Events

### Concert for Starfish Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 6pm

We are delighted that the Beckenham Concert Band will be performing an evening of easy to listen to music to support the work of Starfish at Unity Church Orpington. We would love to see you there.

**A Concert**  
given by  
**The Beckenham Concert Band**  
in support of  
**Starfish Malawi**  
at  
**unitychurch**  
Rye Crescent, Orpington BR5 4NH.  
**6pm Saturday 16th November 2024**  
An evening of music for easy listening  
**Come and join us**  
**Tickets £10 at the door**  
For more information about Starfish Malawi please visit our webpage -  
[www.starfishmalawi.com](http://www.starfishmalawi.com) or Email - [admin@starfishmalawi.com](mailto:admin@starfishmalawi.com)

For more information about Starfish Malawi  
please visit our webpage  
[www.starfishmalawi.com](http://www.starfishmalawi.com)