

MWAYI FOUNDATION FOR THE ELDERLY (MFE)

Background

Worldwide, the population is ageing and Malawi is not exception. Today 2/3s of the world's older population live in developing countries and research shows that by 2050, one in five of the world's population (over 2 billion people) will be over the age of 60.

2014	2030	2050
868 million old people 12% of total world's population	1.3 billion 16% of total world's population	2.03 billion 21% of total world's population

Source. Help Age International.

Currently, Malawi has been listed on the ten worst countries to grow old in the world, a report by Help Age International.

The 2008 Population and Housing Census showed that 4 percent of the Malawi population comprised of people aged over 65 years old. Although in percentage terms this may seem small, in reality it is 530,996 of older people out of the 13.1 million people counted. We are not talking about faceless numbers here, these are real people.

Given that 80 percent of Malawians live in rural areas and rely on subsistence farming, most of these people may not even have a pension look forward to at the middle of the month. This is further exasperated by the inconvenient truth that as we grow older we may not even be able to carry out all the activities required for daily independent life. Chronic diseases also are fast becoming the largest killers in the developing world and they impact older people disproportionately.

Recent research has shown that the elderly in Malawi used to depend on the economic and social support of their children and community. With increased social-economic difficulties and changing family ties in Malawi dynamics and migration, children fail to look after their ageing parents. Similarly, communities are failing to provide for the needs of the elderly leaving older people increasingly vulnerable.

The plight of the elderly is worsening with the direct and indirect effects of HIV and AIDS. This pandemic has taken a toll on the lives of young people of working age groups. The results has been large numbers of orphans under the care of grandparents who are economically not equipped to provide support and care for their own needs, let alone for the grandchildren in their care.

Older people are particularly vulnerable during conflicts and natural disasters but aid is not always age friendly. Therefore, despite all the knowledge about the existing problems that old people face, Malawi still does not have a formal social support program for the elderly. It is also

important to note that most of the today's organizations target women and children, as such there is very little for the elderly and older people are not usually the face of charity campaigns. In fact, older people often go ignored and uncared by governments and Non-Governmental organizations alike.

We see older people as an asset to their families and communities, making a contribution that is often not recognized, but older people play a fundamental role in our society today. Across the country millions of the families would not survive without the contribution of older people. They do care for the orphaned grandchildren, providing much needed house hold income and most of all much needed wisdom. The most vulnerable amongst the elderly are the poor and the disadvantaged ones living in rural Malawi, who are deemed as silent recipients of aid by public policy, but Malawi does not have a sound and a comprehensive social protection program tailored fit for the elderly. Hence, the foundation of Mwayi Foundation for the Elderly to help in the care, protection and support of the elderly.

We would like to ensure that the voice of older people is heard and to challenge the stereotype that labels older people as a burden and we would like also to reach and support the most vulnerable older people as we also recognize that later life can be a time of increased vulnerability.

MFE VISION

Our vision is to have a nation where people experience happy and fulfilling golden years.

MFE MISSION

Our mission is to improve the welfare of older people by improving their livelihood through increased access to basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing and healthcare.

MFE GOAL

Our goal is to improve the welfare of the elderly in Malawi.

MFE OBJECTIVES

Our objectives are:

- a) To improve the welfare of the elderly
- b) To improve old people's health and living conditions
- c) To increase awareness of their rights to reduce discrimination
- d) To increase knowledge on rights of elderly
- e) To reduce poverty levels among older people.

PROJECT AREA

The intended area is nationwide but pilot areas for this project are Blantyre, Mulanje, Thyolo, Phalombe and Balaka districts.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

1. Providing medical care by having a medical doctor visiting the elderly once a week and conducting referrals of the elderly people for other services if needed.
2. Providing basic needs such as food, blankets and clothing
3. Provide guidance and counselling to the elderly on issues relating to old age and also their personal problems
4. Holding awareness and civic education programs in the communities on the disadvantages of discrimination on elderly
5. Providing education support to the elderly about their rights
6. Supporting those who can manage small scale businesses to improve their lives
7. Conducting cooking lessons to promote healthy eating
8. Conducting exercise programs once a week, individual and group exercise as well initiating afternoon programs that the elderly can be teaching the young ones in the communities like culture, values and morals of the society, thereby bringing a sense of value in the elderly
9. Help them form groups in the communities to reminisce about their past
10. Building care homes to accommodate and look after the homeless elderly people
11. Visiting the elderly people in their homes weekly to promote welfare.

LOCATION

Mwayi Foundation for the Elderly offices is located at Kameza near Injena filling station along the M1 road.

Currently, we have 8 employees and 2 volunteers as follows;

Executive Director	1
Finance Officer	1
HR and administrative officer	1
Project Officer	1
Clinical Officer	1
Office Assistant	1

Currently we do not have funding but intends to seek funds from international organizations like HelpAge International. We will also be doing fundraising activities like big walks, sports events, lobbying with government and private sector and dinner and dances in order to raise funds for the organization.