



Happy Classrooms



BEFORE



AFTER

**Creating a print-rich environment for pupils,
and providing teachers with durable teaching aids.**



About **Happy Classrooms** :

There is an alarming situation in Malawi's primary schools. It is almost impossible for a teacher to pass on knowledge to children in a bare classroom with 100 or more pupils, and without proper teaching materials. Teaching is limited to oral learning and repetition. Pupils in such an environment are often unable to follow the lesson. This is especially a problem in the early grades when reading, writing and basic math are being taught - the essential pre-requisites for every person's future studies.

Finding a comprehensive, long-term solution to this ongoing problem is a huge task. boNGO's ambition is different. Our goal is to bring immediate, concrete changes to ease challenging situations for both teachers and pupils. The **Happy Classrooms** Program!

The approach is simple – creating a print-rich environment for pupils, and providing teachers with durable teaching aids. We do that through painting classroom walls with syllabus-related print-rich items. To date, our wall paintings have been designed for Std. 1, 2 3, and 4, with the help of Malawian teachers and other professionals from the education sector. The **Happy Classroom's** print-rich environment is a handy tool for teachers who, together with pupils, can develop individual lesson plans based on the material. And pupils themselves use the painted walls during break times for self-study, peer teaching and playing games.

From 2011 to 2018 boNGO has transformed over 1,600 classrooms in Blantyre, Chikwawa, Chiradzulu, Lilongwe, Mangochi, Mulanje, Nkhotakota, Nsanje, Phalombe, Zomba District and other parts of Malawi with the support of various organizations, companies and individuals. Costs associated with the **Happy Classrooms** typically run USD 450 - 750, depending on distance and maintenance needs.

The feedback from teachers, pupils and other stakeholders has been very positive. Furthermore, official statistics indicate that passing rates in the **Happy Classrooms** improve by about 30 %. That is an amazing result! boNGO's goal is to transform 10,000 more classrooms into **Happy Classrooms** during the next 10 years.

Benefits of the **Happy Classrooms** :

- Classroom structures improved and maintained before the painting process
- Pupils learn in an inspirational print-rich environment; concentration is enhanced and learning is made fun
- Improved enrollment, attendance, discipline and responsibility for the classroom
- Passing rates improve by about 30%
- Self-studying and peer teaching is encouraged
- Teachers have access to quality teaching materials that allow a broader variety of teaching methods
- The print-rich items are a durable teaching resource (typically lasting up to 10 years)
- Less time spent on production of hand-made teaching charts
- Schools cut costs on production of hand-made teaching materials by about 50%
- Classrooms also used by other beneficiaries such as Adult Literacy Classes, etc.

Phases of the **Happy Classrooms** :

- Identification of funding partners and selection of primary schools (*carried out by boNGO and relevant stakeholders*)
- Initial meetings with the District Education Manager, Primary Education Advisor, Head-teachers, School Management Committees, Parents' & Teachers' Committees, Village Development Committees, Mothers' Groups and Traditional Authorities. Introduction of the **Happy Classrooms** program and sharing of responsibilities among these stakeholders (*carried out by boNGO and relevant stakeholders*)
- Wall preparation – walls cleaned with water and soap, holes filled and/or plastered (*carried out by primary schools*)
- Painting the **Happy Classrooms** - about 6 days per class (*carried out by boNGO painters*)
- Training teachers in use of walls for lessons and distribution of Teachers' Guide (*carried out by boNGO*)
- Monitoring and evaluation (*carried out by boNGO and other relevant stakeholders*)



**ordinary Malawian
classrooms
look ugly and bare**





Happy Classrooms
are inspirational
and child-friendly



painting **Happy Classrooms** is
fast - effective - durable - innovative - low-cost





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**boNGO is a non-profit organization established in 2007
with the aim of raising the standards of education in Malawi.**