

Update from boNGO Malawi – December 2011

EARLY YEARS - UMODZI CHILDCARE CENTER AND MANGO CHILDCARE CENTER

Umodzi Childcare Center continues being a great model and training facility. The teachers and management are actively involved in the training program at the **Mango Childcare Center**. Once a week two **Umodzi** teachers together with a boNGO director are visiting **Mango**, supervising the classes, team-teaching and supporting the teachers in planning and evaluating their work. Once a month a training workshop is held, to implement new topic, produce materials and build the team.

The **Mango** teachers are catching up very quickly, as **Umodzi Childcare Center** provides a model that gives the teachers inspiration and encouragement.



During a Training Workshop: The teachers are painting wooden blocks and puzzles which they are going to use with the children.

In the beginning of December **Mango Center** held an Open Day before closing for the Christmas Holidays. This was the first time parents and community members had the chance to witness the child-centered teaching at the school and enjoy the many things the children have learnt over the last months, since the opening in September 2011.



Umodzi and Mango teachers team-teaching during morning assembly at the Mango Childcare Center.

The interest and support from the community was touching. The group village headman held a capturing speech encouraging everyone to recognize the tremendous development and take ownership and responsibility.

There is still a long way to go for the **Mango Center** to operate on the same quality level like the **Umodzi School**; however the involvement of the local community and the dedication of teachers and management are very strong, providing a good foundation for the developments.

It's amazing to witness what is possible!



The parents and community leaders observing how the children are learning in little groups and are actively taking part in the lesson.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS – HAPPY CLASSROOMS PROJECT

boNGO is now extending its work to the primary school level. Good preschool education is essential though the following eight years of primary school are equally important for the child's development.

A typical primary school class has more than 150 children in one dark and bare classroom. The kids are taught by one teacher, who has hardly any resources and little chance to attend to the individual children.

boNGO's **Happy Classrooms Project** is focusing on creating a more joyful and creative learning and teaching environment at the primary schools. boNGO is employing local painters to decorate the bare classrooms with educational paintings (number lines, the alphabet, games...) that allow children to have visual support while learning and enable teachers to enrich their teaching methods.

80 classrooms have been painted, mainly sponsored by local companies. Many more schools are waiting to benefit from this great project.



A colourful primary school classroom, full of visual stimulation and learning support for the children and teachers.

YOUTH – CLUB ACTIVITIES AND LIBRARIES

Through the Model Childcare Centers we are also reaching and engaging the local youth - primary school level and above.

Many young girls and boys have little access and encouragement to engage in youth activities, and so are more likely to get involved in the abuse of alcohol and drugs and early sexual relationships.

Youth clubs meetings at the **Mango** and **Umodzi Childcare Centers** enable the young girls and boys to share and interact through a variety of activities - discussions, games, sports and studying – and be part of and take responsibility in the development of their community.



The youth group at Umodzi during a book review and discussion session.

NGO LEVEL – TRAINING AND CONSULTATION SERVICE

boNGO is more and more recognized for its great working approach. Over the last months a local NGO that works with community preschools, has asked boNGO for assistance in training their field staff, the people who work with the communities and link NGO management and grassroots.



There are many childcare centers and NGOs that can benefit and learn from boNGO's participatory working approach.

What started as a basic training, giving the field officers the chance to see how boNGO runs its projects and work at the ground, turned out to be much more of a consultancy service. In order for the grassroots projects to be more efficient and sustainable the whole working approach of the organization, its vision and management, has to be considered.

boNGO's management and grassroots are closely linked, the directors are working directly with the grassroots. This allows understanding, a direct flow of information and strong communication between all parties involved. An exemplary model – which many other NGOs could learn from!

YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED AND MUCH APPRECIATED!

Running of a Model Childcare Center \$ 500 per month

Allowances for 8 teachers and a guard	\$ 320
Daily meal for 80 children	\$ 130
Resources (chalk, exercise books...)	\$ 50

Painting of one Happy Classroom \$275

Contacts and more details on: www.bongoworldwide.org

**HAPPY CHRISTMAS
AND
A JOYOUS NEW YEAR!**

