

Project Number #MW96854

Project Name Tiyamike Women Empowerment

Vision of the project

This project seeks to demonstrate the love of God through empowering women and girls from low-income families with sewing skills to increase their capacity to better provide for themselves and their families.

Project background

Girls in Malawi are often not given the chance to finish their schooling due to financial constraints. As a result, many women lack the education to acquire skills to adequately generate income to provide for their families. They rely heavily on the husband as a source of financial income. This is a problem when the husband dies, leaves the family, or struggles to find employment. Many women are left feeling powerless as they struggle to feed and school their children. Others affected are pastors' wives, who due to the calling of their husband, they are required to find additional income to supplement the small salary of the husband.

Participants are selected in consultation with pastors, church leaders, ministry leaders, and missionaries so that only the neediest individuals are chosen to participate. These include widows, large families without employment, HIV sufferers, single mothers, teenage mothers as a result of abuse, orphans, as well as pastors' wives.

-

Students participate in a 9-month program, attending class two mornings/afternoons a week. Students learn basic tailoring and small business skills. Classes begin with prayer, Bible reading and short study.

Twenty girls and women are expected to graduate from our program each year with a sewing machine, armed with tailoring and small business skills so they can begin their own businesses. The women are also given the opportunity to return to receive work for which they are paid per item. The products sewn by the women are then sold in our shop to supplement running costs of the Tiyamike Ministry.

We also expect to see these girls and women growing in their relationship with God or knowing Him for the first time (if they entered the program not knowing Him), and blessing others with the skills and opportunities that God has given them.

Progress

During this period saw the start of another new group - the 'Mapiko' group - a group of past graduates who are volunteering their time to teach girls how to sew their own reusable sanitary pads out of locally available materials. We were also pleased to be able to offer help to widows begging on the street.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have closed classes for the time being at Tiyamike and reduced staff hours. The Tiyamike team and all our learners and graduates have been working hard sewing cotton masks for their friends, neighbours, and hospitals. In the context of poverty where self-isolation is difficult, we believe that the use of masks along with education on the care of the masks, hand washing hygiene, and avoidance of crowds will help reduce the spread of coronavirus now that it has arrived in Malawi.

Due to the connection with the Malawi Ministry of Health, Tiyamike Sewing was listed as one of the approved places to have masks made and we were recognized as adhering to WHO standards. As a result, we have had many enquiries to have masks made. So far more than 1000 masks have been sewn by our women providing them with much needed income and at the same time making a great contribution to the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in Malawi. These masks were ordered by companies and organisations for distribution as well as for the SIM Malawi partner church, the AEC. More masks are in production as we speak. With the help of some funding from SIM, we were able to purchase fabric to be made into 100 cotton PPE gowns for the local hospital as they are desperately in need of PPE.

Several infographics have also been produced to help the women understand how they can look after themselves and others in light of COVID-19 and also been used by the local hospitals and other NGOs in Malawi.

Story time

Lanesi, referred to us by another Christian organisation Dochas Trust from Scotland, has been learning with Tiyamike since sept 2019. She is a young single mum with one child from the Nsanje village area (about 4hrs away from Blantyre where Tiyamike is located). Due to COVID-19, she has been unable to return to Blantyre to complete her classes but has been busy making reusable masks to help others in her community against the virus. Read more about her story from Dochas Trust.



Dochas Education Trust

Thursday at 5:47 pm · 🌐

Lanesi is one of the young women sponsored through [Dochas Education Trust](#) to attend the sewing school at [Tiyamike Sewing Malawi](#). Because of Covid 19 and lockdown she is currently back home in Nsanje. She has received sufficient training to now be able to sew clothes which she sells. With the money she receives she is able to help support herself and her family. She is also sewing face masks. Once restrictions are lifted she will return to Blantyre to complete her course. After that she plans returning to Nsanje to build her dressmaking business.

She says that many people think that ladies in Nsanje can contribute nothing to the community but for her it is now a different story. She would also like to teach other girls to use sewing machines and [Dochas Education Trust](#) hopes that she will be involved in delivering classes in The Hub once that is built. Lanesi wishes to thank everyone who donated to support her time in Blantyre.



Prayer requests

1. Please continue to be in prayer for the Tiyamike Team and the women as they continue to be a shining light in their communities in their fight against COVID-19 and offering the hope of Jesus to others.
2. Continue to pray for Malawi in their fight against COVID-19 for good leadership and a well-coordinated effort by all involved
3. Pray for the team that they will walk closely with Jesus and honour him in all that they do.
4. Pray for each of the widows that they will have enough to eat and warm and dry homes to sleep in night.
5. Pray for funding as we continue to grow.
6. Pray for wisdom for myself as I continue to lead the team.