

This is a letter to all of those who have donated money to the school project in the village of Mwanani near Livingstonia. Karin and I have just gotten back from visiting the area and have taken some pictures.



The area near the school is quite beautiful. However, getting building materials into this area is challenging. The muddy roads are strewn with boulders and full of gullies, and are really meant more for use by donkeys.

This is a village quite near the school.

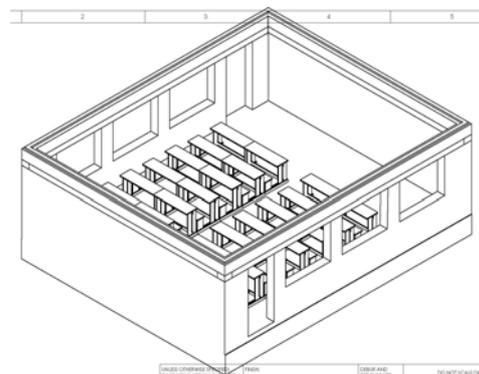
Although building the school got off to a slow start the pace gradually picked up. The walls are at a height of 11 courses of brick. The materials have been delivered and the roof trusses have been cut.

We will have 6 windows which are 150 by 120 cm in size. The reason for the large size is to insure enough light. There is no electricity – only sunshine. Just before we left Malawi we discovered that we could also get transparent roof panels which could replace some of the tin sheets. We bought four of these. By chance we met an Englishman who is helping to develop low cost solar power in Malawi. He says that for \$200 it would be possible to get a complete package including batteries that would light the school. This would allow it to be used in the evenings too.

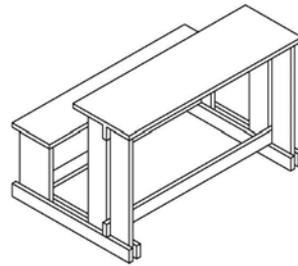


Here is a drawing of the school. When the walls and roof are in place, the floor will get a final layer of concrete which will make it smooth. The inner walls will be covered with a light coloured plaster.

A row of pine trees have been planted which surround the school.



The carpenter has now received the lumber necessary to build the desks shown here. They are quite simple, but should do the job. The desks will have different heights to accommodate legs of different length. There will be 24 desks with 2 children per desk.



There will also be a desk for the teacher.

Further plans once we get more funding: a blackboard, windows with glass, doors with locks, build a pit latrine, connect with the water pipes nearby and possibly get the aforementioned solar panels.

The chief intends to build a simple house for the teacher – probably with earth floor and grass roof. In the long term we wish to send supplies for the running of the school.

Here are some of the neighborhood kids who are curious about everything we are doing.



While in Livingstonia we spoke to the matron at the University who told us that only 50% of the children in her home village actually went to primary school. Even though the government pays for primary school education in Malawi the schools are often located far from the village and the parents tend to keep the smaller children at home. In our minds, this re-confirmed the value of the project.

I think that we can confidently say that the money which all of you have donated has been well spent. With a project like this there is always the fear that something will go wrong and that contributions from family members and friends will be wasted. Well, that scary part is over.

Thanks to all of you,

Bruce and Karin