

Q2 2021 Report



**RAYS
HOPE**

Transformative Education

A message from our Executive Director

It is common for a founder and Executive Director of a growing organization to wear many hats. One day I wore the Human Resource Management hat. I do this every week. It is the day I look at team issues and explore ways to resolve them. I go through queued job applications, meet potential employees, and review personnel files.

On this day, I met Mussa Kalumeya. One of our tutors, who was seeking full-time employment with us, after receiving a recommendation from my team.

A simple-looking young man, but he shocked me. So articulate.

He used the monthly stipends to finance his higher education. Unbelievable! These kids make \$40 a month by spending 2 hours a day with us for 4 days a week. He blew my mind! Then he said, "I do not care if I will give him a job or not – he only wanted to say thank you!"

I choked...

I thought about thousands of youths who are let down by the system.

Let me help you understand the situation. In 2019/20 academic year, 43,444 high-school graduates could not get into higher education institution despite successful graduation.

This is the reason we designed our program around the youth. Every day we tutor over 800 students from public schools through our afterschool initiatives so that they can perform better academically.

We recruit godly youths like Mussa. We train them in tutoring, disciple them through our discipleship program and let them tutor students in primary schools. We still have a 95% completion rate in our program.

We also know that we cannot reach every student. Therefore, we started the teacher training program. The Ministry of Education has approved us to expand to Dedza district. This is the sixth district, and we are excited! Now we train 2,679 teachers in 229 primary schools serving 259,318 students.

Kindly note that Mussa will join our team soon as a full-time employee.

I hope you have some minutes to appreciate the progress we have made in the past quarter.

Thank you so much partners and the friends of Rays of Hope for your untiring support.

God bless you!



Willie Mpasuka
Executive Director





About Us

Our mission is to transform Malawi by equipping teachers and educate children in public schools.

We exist to nurture children and youth with abilities essential for life management, academic excellence, spiritual development to become competent leaders. We use a transformative education model to build teachers' capacity, support learners, and provide financial inclusion solutions to youth for a productive life.

Our vision is that every child and youth access transformative education.

Our Approach & Goals



Academic Innovation

Train
3,000
teachers in 6 education districts to reduce technical gaps

Run after-school programs across 10 primary schools in Blantyre district and work with
850
students

Maintain
95%
primary school completion rate among the 10 targeted primary schools in Blantyre.



Academic Inclusion

Support
250
secondary school students with bursaries that will guarantee access to secondary school education in various schools in Blantyre.

Run coaching and mentoring activities with
200
secondary schools on our bursary program to remove the non-financial barriers to access secondary school education. Activities include Sexual and Reproductive Health, entrepreneurship, and leadership.



Economic Integration

Reach out to
70
young people with activities meant to increase their ability to engage in economic activities through entrepreneurship training and soft loans.



RAYS OF HOPE — ACADEMY —



Deconstruct
the Narrative –
resources for the
poor!



Reconstruct
the Narrative
– innovate
and create!



Anchor
the Narrative
– mentors for
life!



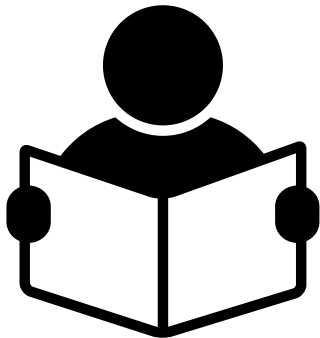
Showcase
the Narrative –
life-time
opportunities!

Rays of Hope Academy is a fee-paying secondary school that enables income generation for Rays of Hope Ministries. Our Academy is poised to nurture young and raw talent through an education that is built on meaningful innovation and sincere integrity.

One of the pillars of the Rays of Hope Academy is to deconstruct the narrative. This pillar commits to bring resources to the poor – it is the only way their stories can truly change. True to this pillar, the Academy has secured 10 new scholarships from Rays of Hope partners and friends. The cost to educate a single student a year is \$500; to that end, \$5,000 is in the bag for deserving students to be in school. We are eternally grateful to God for the gift of partners, and friends who believe in our mission to provide resources to those who truly need them.

On another note, the Rays of Hope Academy's inaugural class will take the tenth-grade national standardized examinations this year. We kindly request your prayers as our students prepare for the examinations.

Milestones



712 students back to our after-school initiative

In Quarter 1, we shared with you that our After-school Initiative reached out to 600 students. On a good day, that is low. We are happy that we are getting back to our normal numbers. The program now has 712 students back. The increase is due to the fact that COVID-19 caseload was low and many restrictions were suspended. Though the third-wave is looming, we hope that the situation will not change again.



341 after-school clubs formed and functional!

We keep growing our after-school clubs. So far, in partnership with Save the Children, CARE Malawi and other partners, we have 341 clubs. They are in Blantyre, Zomba, Mchinji, and Ntchisi districts.



2,679 Teachers trained in literacy, numeracy, and the management of large classes.

In 2021, we planned to train 3,000 teachers through our teacher network model. It is an approach that establishes communities of practice among teachers. So far, we have trained 2,679 teachers in literacy and numeracy skills, and inclusive teaching approaches.



3 students get into the University!

In the past academic year, we had 24 students in our Form 4/12th grade/O' Level final class. Out of these 24 students, 23 passed the national standardized examinations, and one failed. Out of the 23, three have made it to the university.

10 new sponsorships secured!



We are grateful to God for His provisions. In this quarter, we have secured 10 scholarships that will allow students from poor backgrounds to access our high quality education

Quarterly Progress

Program Update - Workbooks & Handbooks Approved!

The second quarter was an exciting one. All the activities from our three main programs and the Academy were in full swing without the fear of the pandemic because the caseload was really low. We implemented our activities in five (5) education districts – Blantyre Urban, Blantyre Rural, Ntchisi, Zomba, and Mchinji. These activities included teacher training, tutoring, provision of bursaries, youth leadership activities, and the operation of our Rays of Hope Academy.

Our workbooks and handbooks are finally reviewed and approved by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology! The process took longer. Immediately after the development of the books, local schools and teachers clearly embraced the concept and were able to review them. They piloted the resources, found them helpful, and implemented them in a few schools as supplementary materials.

We engaged the Malawi College of Distance and Education (MCDE) to repackage them to fit the remote prerequisite. Our workbooks and handbooks were, then taken to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) for further reviewal and approval. We hosted the team for a number of days and approved them later on. This means that we can walk in any school and place our resources potentially reach over 3 million students.



Ministry of Education in Malawi notices our Teacher Training Program!



We were visited by the Ministry of Education's Director for Teacher Education and Development

Rays of Hope's teacher training program is being noticed by the Ministry of Education in Malawi. It operates in 5 out of 34 districts. The initiative aims at improving in-service teachers' skills so that students can get quality education. In total, we are working with 2,679 teachers from 229 primary schools and the impact is encouraging.

In Zomba, through the teacher training initiative, reading comprehension in standard 4 has increased from 49.5% to 67.8% in 57 primary schools.

In Blantyre Urban education district, we focussed on schools that were not performing very well. With a recommendation from the Ministry of Education, we have been working with 40 primary schools since 2018. Our goal was that these schools should exceed the 60% pass rate in the standardized examinations. In 2021, 31 out of 40 schools scored over 72%.

In Blantyre Rural, where the program is fairly new, we are working with 590 teachers from 30 primary schools. In the past quarter, we have been tracking the use of 'critical thinking' methodologies. Using our classroom observation tool, 30 schools scored above 70% in following the classroom lesson delivery checklist.

In Ntchisi and Mchinji, we trained 612 teachers in teaching and learning using locally available resources (TALULAR). The training targeted 400 teachers and trickled down to an extra 272 teachers. In total, 100 schools benefited from the training.

Partnership with Feed the Hungry Continues

Rays of Hope have been in a partnership with Feed the Hungry. It is an international organization with a heavy local presence here in Malawi through J-Life Ministries. We started working together in 2012 - they provide foodstuff to our afterschool centers.

When COVID-19 hit, all the provisions were stopped because borders were closed and affected the movement of goods. This means that our students had fewer options for food; they skipped lots of meals. Though schools resumed, the government banned communal meals to avoid the spread of the virus. We could not do anything because we had no stock.

Last month, we got a call from Feed the Hungry informing us that they now have enough stock to supply us. A couple of weeks ago we received 138 boxes of foodstuff to feed our students. This means that over 800 students will be able to access lunch meals every school day! We are always indebted to our partner, Feed the Hungry for the untiring support they give us.



Events & Conferences



Rays of Hope plans to participate in the Future Summit organized by the Segal Family Foundation. The 2021 Future Summit will gather an ecosystem focusing on positive social change across all of Africa. Our intention is to create a space for a vibrant community to spark new ideas and engage in provocative conversations.



Our Executive Director, **Willie Mpasuka**, served as a mentor with the Praxis Academy, an off-shoot of the Praxislabs. Praxis is a creative engine for redemptive entrepreneurship, supporting founders, funders, and innovators motivated by their faith to love their neighbors and renew culture. He spoke on **Theological Imagination for Education** on July 12 & 13 from 12 pm - 4 pm EDT.

Challenges

- We lost time due to COVID-19 and that affected the speed of our implementation.
- The uncertainty of COVID-19 has affected our plans to hire key staff.

Areas of Need

- We need a second eye on our teacher skill strengthening scale-up strategy

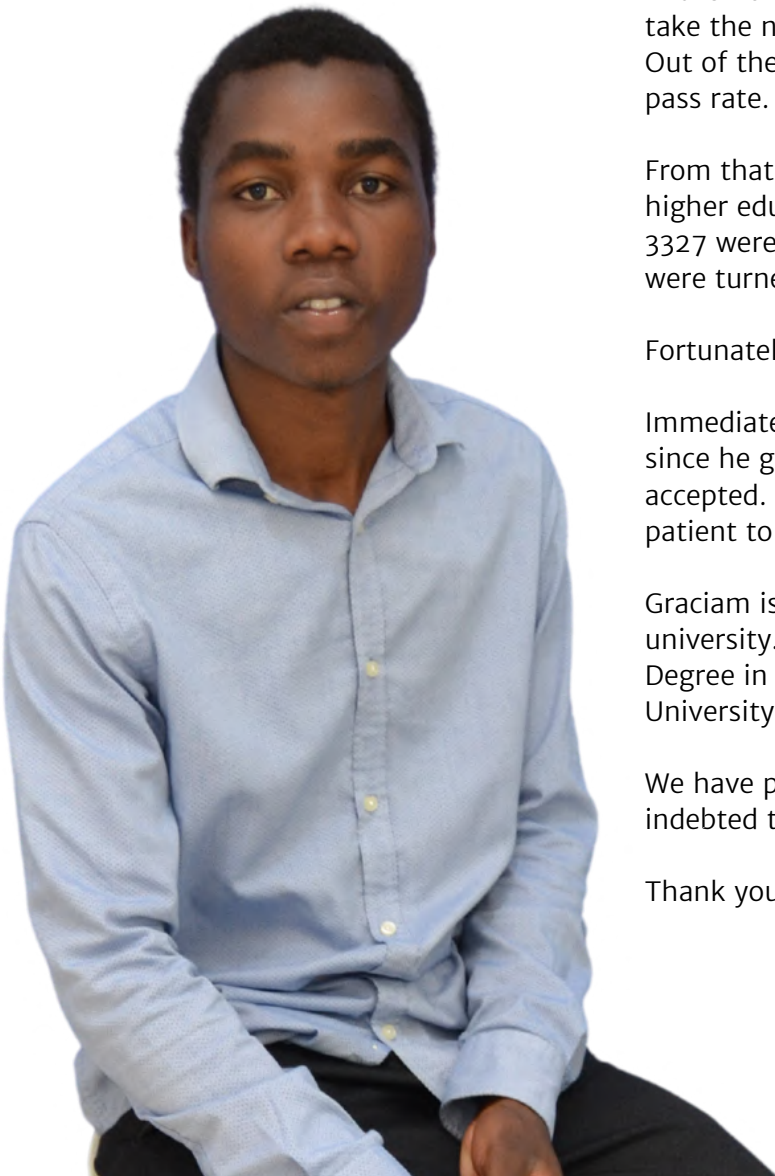
7 miles' daily walk to school

In the earlier pages of this report, we made an announcement that three (3) students were accepted into various University of Malawi academic programs. It is possible you think three (3) is not a big number. I agree. However, you will appreciate our celebration when you understand the context.

Data shows that only 8% of students in secondary school make a jump into higher education. It is the same narrative even the past year. Sad. Graciam Pindamo made the jump. It calls for a party!

He was raised by a single mum and sadly lost her to Tuberculosis at the age of 10. The death rendered him homeless and took him to a distant relation's home, where life became bearable. He walked 7 miles daily to get to school in his push to get into higher education. He lost hope. Luckily, his mum's sister committed to raising him despite her poverty.

In 2017, while in grade 10, we enrolled Graciam in our scholarship program. A huge relief for his guardian.



In the 2019/20 Academic year, 92,867 students, enrolled to take the national standardized examinations for grade 12. Out of these students, 46,771 passed, representing a 50.3% pass rate.

From that number, 24,745 met qualifications to access higher education in the University of Malawi; however, only 3327 were accepted, representing 7.1%. 21,418 students were turned away.

Fortunately, Graciam made the cut!

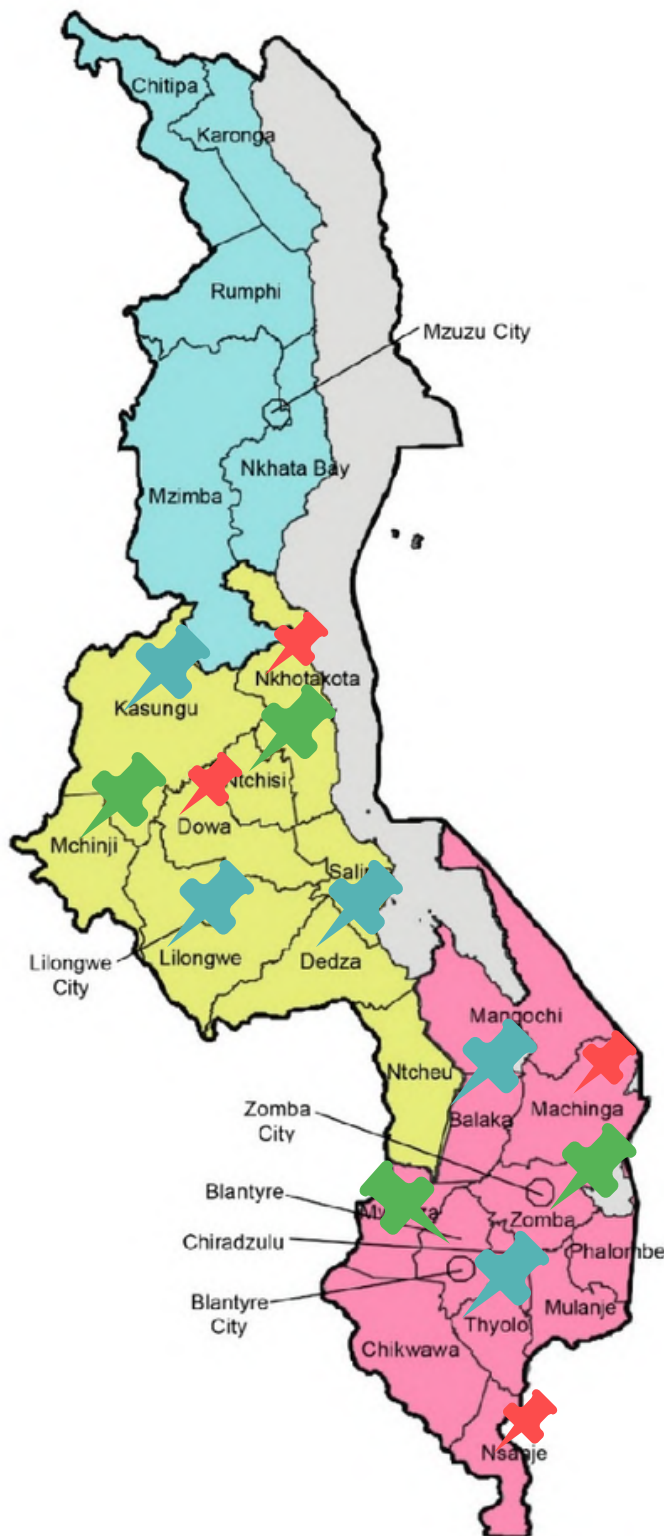
Immediately, he reached out to Rays of Hope for support, since he got a partial scholarship from the University. We accepted. We are excited to be part of his narrative, and patient to see what God has in store for him.

Graciam is 21 years old, the first in his family to reach university. He was selected to pursue a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Water Resource and Management at Mzuzu University.

We have plenty of stories like Graciam's and we are indebted to the generosity of our supporters.

Thank you, and may God bless your vocations.

Teacher Training Scale Plan



Current Presence

- Ntchisi
- Mchinji
- Blantyre
- Zomba

3-year expansion

- Kasungu
- Lilongwe
- Dedza
- Balaka
- Thyolo

5-year expansion

- Nkhotakota
- Dowa
- Machinga
- Nsanje

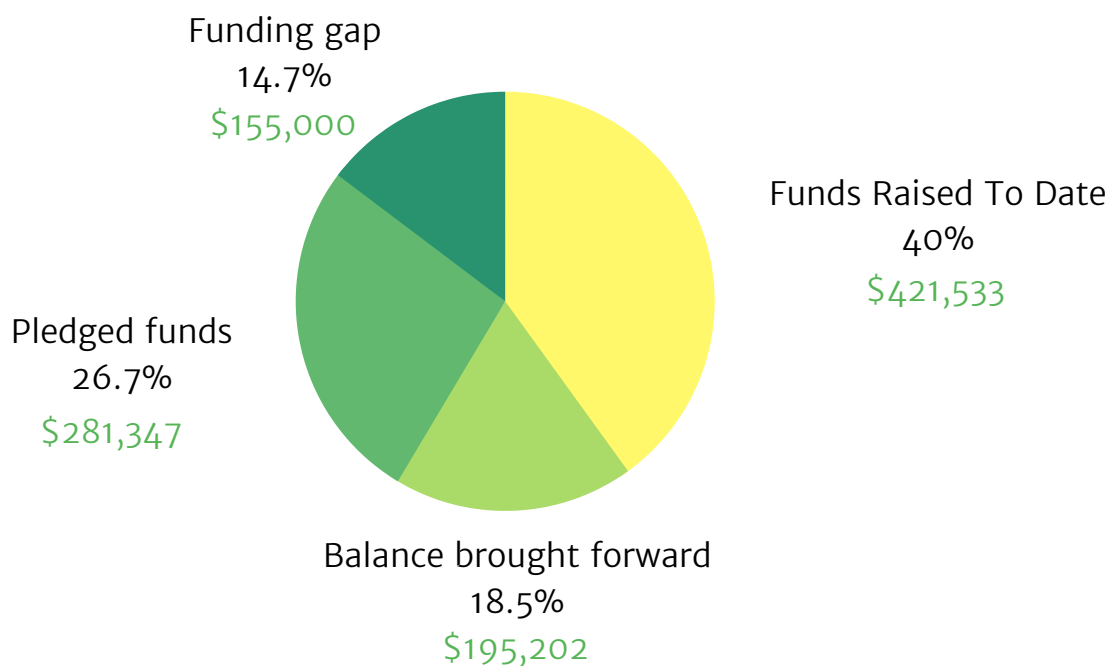
Key Statistics

- Malawi has 74,474 teachers in 5,770 primary schools, educating 5,419,637 students.
- It costs us \$3 a year to serve a student through the teachers we train.
- By the 2026, we plan to train 12,000 teachers
- By 2026, we will reach 1.2 million students in public schools.

Financial Update

Covid-19 disruptions have significantly affected program delivery and hiring processes for new staff. However, we anticipate significant increases in expenditure in the next two quarters driven by capital expenses and new staff hires. We are in the process of reviewing our budget to make necessary adjustments that reflect the current situation.

How we're tracking towards our budget of US\$1,053,083



Year To Date Expenditure

Budget Line	Annual Amount Budgeted	Expenditure To Date
Programs	363,763	94,268
Personnel	285,666	86,919
Operation	116,247	19,403
Capital	223,347	10,000
Capacity Building	22,720	22,720
Academy	41,340	11,506
Totals	1,053,083	222,096



Connect With Us



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