

# HANDS AT WORK IN AFRICA

## MCHENEKE COMMUNITY

### MALAWI

In 2009, Pastor James, seeing the devastation that years of the HIV/AIDS epidemic had left on his community, gathered with a few church members to help the most vulnerable in the community of Mcheneke. These servant-hearted individuals began visiting the sick, the dying and the most vulnerable children in this large rural area that borders Mozambique and is home to a large number of refugees. Shortly after, Pastor James met Hands at Work leaders, who shared their vision of partnering with local organisations who were already caring for people in their communities. In 2011, the Umodzi Community Based Organisation (CBO) in Mcheneke was born. Within a few months, community members from seven local churches volunteered their time and energy to care for their community as Care Workers. With the support of Hands at Work, these local Care Workers were equipped to care for the most vulnerable children.

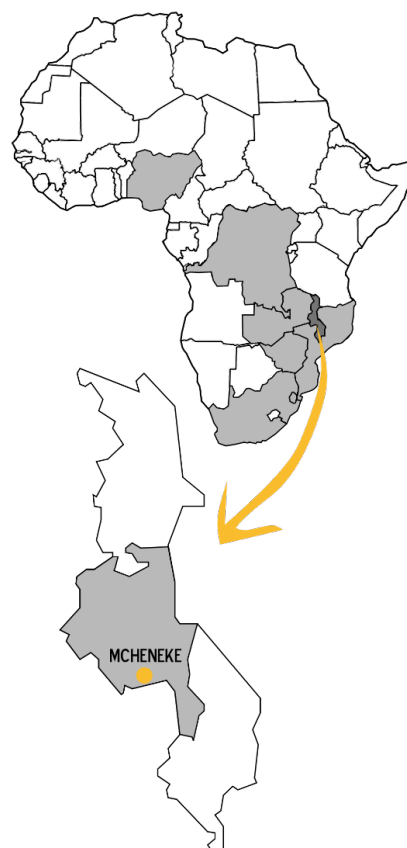
The Umodzi CBO, meaning 'We are together', began with a few individuals answering God's call to serve their community. Today, 15 Care Workers have been mobilised to care for the most vulnerable children, bringing God's hope and love to the brokenness and trauma that many people in this large community carry. Holy Home Visits are foundational to caring holistically as it allows the Care Workers to build strong relationships with the children and their families, thus enabling them to support each child's physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Through Holy Home Visits, Care Workers are able to assess each child's needs and make a plan for how they can most effectively care for the children.

In addition to visiting children in their homes, Care Workers from the Umodzi CBO provide 103 children with a hot, nutritious meal daily and support with their education and basic health care. When children come to the Life Centre to receive a meal, they find a supportive, healthy environment that provides holistic care and support.

Recently, the physical construction of the Life Centre in Mcheneke Community, including new toilets, a kitchen and a simple caretaker's house, was completed. Having a Life Centre provides a safe and welcoming environment for the children to come to eat and play.

The Life Centre is not only for the children, but is also a place for Relationship Groups for Care Workers, Primary Caregivers, children and members of the local church where they can share their challenges, hear God's word and pray together.

The prayer is that as the Umodzi CBO continues to grow and develop, they will continue to be a source of light and hope for the wider community.



Children Currently Supported **103**  
 Number of Care Workers **15**  
 Coordinator Name **Laines**  
 Distance from Local Office **26km**  
 Basic Services Started In **2012**