

*Growing minds - building futures
Promoting hard work - a way to self-support
Caring vulnerable - building better communities*



Hello,

Mpasa the 15th of May 2022

My name is Promise Makawa, I am 24 and the last born in a family of four sons, among them, I am the only one who made it to secondary school and university.



I lost both my parents when I was in Primary, the latest being my mother when I was in standard 5. Life was hard staying with my brother who had no choice but to accommodate me in his family.

Inga (Inga-lill Palm) a Swedish volunteer staying next to my brother's home found me one day reading a book, she asked me what I was reading, and asked me what I want to be? I said I was reading an English book and I want to be a soldier. Many of us in Malawi do not have direction of what we want to achieve, we only know few professionals, we don't



know why should we be what we want. Inga then explained to me what humanity is all about, what it means to help others through working like being doctor, teacher and so on. She gave me an English bible which is existing up to date. This is the first time I saw a caring person coming to me since I lost my mom, it was like heaven has given me another mother. She loved me a lot and I always followed her and I carried her bag. To assist my studies, she also gave me headlamps to use for study at night as we don't have electricity at home just like many of the families here. The bible taught me a lot I also increased my English vocabulary.

In my family, we had so many challenges for instance, no food that means having one meal each day, no breakfast throughout and bad treatment from the guardians. Most Malawian families in rural Malawi especially live this life. To get school material it was also challenge and clothes was the problem I have had no hope that it would be solved. All these challenges strengthen me to work hard so that I get good secondary and later secure a very good job after school. My hard work was paid for I was selected for a national secondary school in Zomba by National examination board in 2013.

Nobody in my family could manage to pay the required MWK 55.000 (at that time 750SEK, today 585SEK) school fees to my new school. As such withdrawing was the only option. Many children withdraw in secondary schools due to financial issues. During this time I started to work for AfroGarden as a part time teacher and translator. Money earned, I used them to buy clothes for me and some food for the family.

We searched for bursaries until we met Ekari Foundation which was supporting education. I underwent both oral and written interviews and I was successful. The director told me that amongst all, I was position one on the part of the oral interview he said my English was good. Ekari promised to pay all required fees my entire time of study.

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New life begun, the late director for Ekari, Elias Makina, liked me a lot, just



like Inga, he could take me with him wherever he was going. Elias turned out to be more close to me that I considered him as my father, yes he was my father. Ekari really paid school fees for my whole secondary. It is not easy to get organizations like this one today as the rate of students passing each year is increasing but the number of supporting organization is decreasing. I got excellent grades in the end of secondary that I got chance to choose University and program to study.

I applied for engineering at MUST, on the day the results for the applications were out, Elias passed away. It was a painful death to me, I put all my hope in him that he will help me finish University, that he will take care of me as his son as he used to, but all went that quick. After his death, Ekari run for a short period then the Executive director from America came and sold everything and closed Ekari.

Then when I was about to start University, I suddenly had a grandmother. Afrogarden had been following everything happening to me. At this stage then Christina the director for Afrogarden finds it important to hold hand. Afrogarden through her helped me to prepare for the university buying note books, they also gave me laptop which I use, internet bundle, also paying for my meals at university. I don't know why, but just like Elias did to me, Christina also made me to be her close companion.



Afrogarden started a "Promise Fund" for my education and some volunteers are also supporting this fund. Thank you Afrogarden!

Now that I have got chance to study program of choice and that I have full support, I would like to work hard so that I get good grades in the end, also become one of the best manufacturing engineers in the country. I am pursuing bachelor of Engineering (Hons) Manufacturing Engineering at Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST). I will start third year this coming June.

Understanding life, be strong enough and responsible for your own life, are something that advises alone can't achieve. I understand and take up responsibilities because of school and I follow advises and decide how should I behave for my own life. All people who have been there for me have help me develop and grow my mind on the right path to get to my dreams, and now am on the way to reach my dreams!

Thank you for everything!

Many greetings from Promise

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