

UN VOLUNTEERS DONATES MK 50.000 TO ORPHANS DUE TO AIDS.

Orphans at Salima AIDS Support Organisation (SASO) will receive the money in order to celebrate Christmas the 25.December by the lakeside.



children at SASO

As a way of celebrating the International Year of Volunteers 2001, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) in Malawi decided to give 3% of their monthly living allowance for orphans. As SASO is one of the few organizations supporting orphans in the community and a UNV is already working there, it was decided that the money should go to this organization in order to support their good work.

SASO have registered 1600 orphans due to AIDS. In the District of Salima more than 9,000 orphans are registered.

SASO's Orphan Care Coordinator, Nedson Timbenao, who has been with the organization since it was founded in 1994, says:

“Every Saturday SASO serves nutritious food, as well as teach children about HIV/AIDS. 375 of the orphans come on a monthly basis. We know how important it is to bring some joy and good memories into the lives of these deprived children and we are very thankful to the UNV's that they have given us the opportunity to invite the children to the lake for Christmas”. The UNV's will work hand in hand with the SASO volunteers in order to make this event a successful one.

On Saturday the 15th of December at 10 am at SASO the UNDP Resident Representative Zahra Nuru will handover the check on behalf of the UNV's.

The Christmas party itself will be on December 25th from 10 o'clock at the lakeshore close to the Agricultural Development Department.

SASO (Salima HIV/AIDS Support Organisation) is a community-based organization located along the road to Senga-Bay at the Old Salima District Hospital premises in the Salima District. Ms. Catherine Phiri –the 2000 UN Race Against Poverty Award Winner, founded the organisation in 1994. SASO was formed to strengthen the fight against HIV/AIDS using Awareness, Home Based Care, Orphan Care, and Counselling as its four corner stones.

Since 1994 SASO has been working tirelessly campaigning against the HIV-epidemic in schools, as well as to out of school youths, in remote and urban areas influencing behaviour change. The organization uses bicycles as its means of transportation during these out-reach activities while covering distances of 20-35km.

The Organisation also conducts counselling and provides confidential HIV testing free of charge.

SASO currently has 1600 registered orphans. Every Saturday about 125 children gather at the SASO Office for spiritual lessons, HIV/AIDS information, music, physical education and a nutritious meal. All in all 387 children are registered for the Saturday meetings. In Salima District more than 9000 orphans are registered. SASO can be reached through tel. 262 821 or email salima_saso@yahoo.com for more information

The pictures attached are from the Saturdays where orphans meet at SASO. This project is supported by UNICEF through CESTAS.