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Grabowski News from Malawi



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Praise God for:

- 8,600 young people in Mozambique who have made a commitment to abstinence to prevent HIV/AIDS
- New staff for our malaria prevention program. We have hired a coordinator, assistant coordinator, four field supervisors and 21 community facilitators
- Safe travel back to the US and time with family and friends

Please pray for:

- Youth in Mozambique to make healthy, Biblical choices that lead to life rather than HIV/AIDS
- Our malaria prevention program staff as they start new malaria prevention programs in the rural areas of Malawi
- A healthy pregnancy and healthy baby

Preventing HIV/AIDS through healthy activities for youth

Ferrao Jonas is a teenager living in a remote corner of Mozambique. In his small village, Golongozi, few teens have the opportunity to attend school or find jobs. Opportunities for entertainment are almost nonexistent. On weekends, teens can choose between hanging out at a local "bar" or attending church. Drinking alcohol is a risky behavior that often leads to sexual activity among youth in Mozambique. With an HIV prevalence rate of 16.6%, sexually active youth are at great risk of contracting AIDS. One in six adults in Mozambique already has AIDS.

We are reaching out to youth like Ferrao with HIV/AIDS prevention education. Through weekly youth group meetings, we provide health education and Bible study materials that teach youth how to prevent HIV/AIDS and what the Bible says about how we should live our lives.

In addition to education and



Ferrao Jonas in the soy bean field his HIV/AIDS prevention youth group farms together.

potato and soya seed and rent a small field. At harvest they will sell their crop. The money they earn will be used to buy seeds for next year, buy fabric for choir uniforms and help them to provide assistance to the sick in their church.

Ferrao is excited about his future. He is just one of 8,600 youth in Mozambique who have chosen to commit to abstinence through our program. He feels supported by the other members of his youth group and excited about the chance to earn money and help his community through his group's garden.

Bible study, we also organize healthy activities for youth to participate in. Ferrao's group meets to play soccer and act out dramas. They have also organized themselves into a choir to sing at their local church. Our most recent project is helping youth start small businesses. A small loan and business training assists youth to start a small business where they can learn business skills, keep busy and earn money for their families. Ferrao's youth group received a loan of about \$80. This allowed them to purchase



An HIV/AIDS prevention youth group in the potato field they farm together.

potato and soya seed and rent a small field. At harvest they will sell their crop. The money they earn will be used to buy seeds for next year, buy fabric for choir uniforms and help them to provide assistance to the sick in their church.



HIV/AIDS prevention youth group members enjoy fun and safe activities like soccer.

Please pray for the Mozambique HIV prevention program as we expand to new areas and develop relationships with new groups of youth.

Back in the USA

We praise God for safe travel from Malawi back to North America!

We are now in Michigan staying with Christa's parents. We are keeping up with our work in Malawi and Mozambique by e-mail and preparing for the birth of our baby. Christa is also finishing her last graduate school course.

We will be available to share about our work in Malawi and Mozambique from May 8-July 7. Many of you are already on our schedule and we are looking forward to seeing you soon! If you would still like to set up a time for us to visit your church, school or small

group, please contact Holly Bechiri in our Grand Rapids, MI office for more details (bechirih@crcna.org or (616)224-5875).

We plan to travel back to Malawi in August and stay for one more year of work. God willing, we plan to be back in Michigan in fall 2009 for Phil to start graduate school at Michigan State University in East Lansing. He hopes to study for a master's degree in community development, agriculture and natural resource management. We love our work in Malawi and feel God calling us to get more training in development.



We are back in Michigan now, enjoying time with family and friends.

Preventing malaria in rural Malawi

The Malaria Communities Program is officially under way! We praise God for this oppor-

tunity in February and March, including a project coordinator, assistant coordinator, field supervisors and community facilitators.



Phil with our newly hired malaria prevention program coordinators and supervisors.

Just before we left Malawi we spent 7 days training the new malaria staff on how to design effective programs that encourage people to change behaviors related to malaria.

Pregnant women and young children are most vulnerable to malaria infection and death. We are encouraging pregnant women and young children to sleep under mosquito nets and get treatment early when they suspect they have malaria.

Part of encouraging people to change their behavior is

understanding what they already know and believe about malaria. Before we start our education program, we are spending time interviewing local people to understand what they know and don't know about malaria and what resources they need to be able to prevent malaria.

Please pray for this new program and our new staff as we begin teaching village people in Malawi how they can prevent and treat malaria.

Malaria staff interview a local woman to understand what she knows and believes about malaria.



Malaria staff interview a local woman to understand what she knows and believes about malaria.