

Temwa Bursary Scheme Annual Report for 2024/25 Academic year

Bursary Scheme Project Summary

This report shares progress made under the Bursary Scheme during the 2024/2025 academic year, which opened on 16th September 2024, and closed on 26th July 2025. The main objective of the Temwa Secondary School Bursary Scheme is to contribute towards improved access to secondary education among children from disadvantaged households across Nkhata Bay North. The Scheme supports 25 students every academic year, out of which 24 are assisted with funding from the Nick Webber Trust and 1 student is supported by an individual donor. The students are from 4 secondary schools (Chipunga, Chikwina, Usisya, Mzgola) located across Nkhata Bay North. The Academic Year started with recruitment of 8 new students (6 female, 2 male) to replace students that graduated in the previous academic year.

Basic and Secondary Education in Malawi

Basic Education in Malawi is divided into three stages - ECD, Primary school, and Secondary school – under the supervision of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education. Students are expected to undergo 3 years of pre-school, 8 years of primary school, and 4 years of secondary school. After completing secondary education, students may qualify to pursue professional careers in various institutions of higher learning depending on their qualifications.

While enrolment is relatively high in primary schools, it is significantly lower in secondary schools. According to a UNICEF report (2023), only 47.2% of eligible primary students transitioned to secondary schools in 2023. Poor retention rate of students is another major challenge affecting secondary education in Malawi, particularly for children from the poorest households. Out of 23% of children who complete Junior secondary education nationally, only 3% come from the poorest households that are mostly located in rural areas. Most students, especially in rural areas, struggle to pay tuition fees and cover other basic requirements such as compulsory school uniforms, writing materials, and examination fees. These education-related costs are a major barrier to access secondary education among many students in the area. Through the Bursary Scheme, Temwa makes it possible for select students from particularly disadvantaged households to go to secondary school.

Activities and Support provided

PAYMENT OF SCHOOL FEES AND MATERIAL SUPPORT

Activity implementation did not go as planned between September and December 2024, due to non-availability of funds during the period, though Temwa was able to provide beneficiaries with some basic resources such as stationery and sanitary pads. Temwa asked schools to provide students with school uniforms prepared by school hired tailors and to pay examinations fees for 11 students that were supposed to sit for JCE and MSCE with a promise to the schools that they would be refunded.

Figure 1 Shows 5 Beneficiaries from Chipunga CDSS at the beginning of the school year, September 2024



However, one school (Chikwina CDSS) did not honour the promise, and as a result, a Form 4 student from Chikwina, Chimwemwe Kaira, was unable to sit for Malawi school certificate of Education in July 2025 (MSCE).

In January, funding was received from the Nick Webber Trust and Temwa was able to make all the necessary payments for all items and bills for all its beneficiaries between January and May 2025. The payments included tuition fees, boarding fees, and a refund of examination fees, all of which were paid in full for the whole academic year. Temwa was also able to buy and support beneficiaries with stationery (exercise books, pens, mathematical sets and rulers), bags, sanitary pads, school uniforms and shoes.

In May 2025, 16 female bursary beneficiaries were supported with supplementary sanitary kits which among other things, contained reusable pads and soap. The sanitary kits were donated by Grace Pads through the initiative of Pauline Webber. With the donated reusable pads, female bursary beneficiaries will be able to maintain their menstrual hygiene throughout the next academic year without the need to provide them with extra pads.



Figure 2 above: Students from Chipunga CDSS showcasing sanitary kits donated by Grace Pads,



Figure 3 to the left: Temwa Volunteer Esther Mwalwimba orienting students on how to use sanitary pads

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE VISITS

During the academic year, school performance visits were conducted January and May 2025 – a third visit will take place in September 2025, once examination results for the 3rd term are released. The January visits were conducted to assess and review performance of students who took exams the month earlier. Out of 24 beneficiaries who sat for end-of-term examinations in December, 19 passed the government-recommended pass mark, and 13 managed to surpass their own target pass mark (the minimum being 55%). The April visits confirmed that 21 out of the 25 beneficiary students passed the recently taken exams. Only 10 out of 25 students met their target scores for maths, with most students attributing their low scores to poor coverage of the Topics during their lessons. The project officer was able to engage with the headteachers and one the headteachers 'Chawezi Banda' from Chikwina CDSS, revealed that the school had a shortage of mathematics teachers, which slowed down the coverage of topics in class.

The School visits also provided an opportunity for the projects officer to interact and motivate students to work hard in class to achieve their goals in life, and also an opportunity for students to share their day-to-day experiences, discuss their school performance, share their aspirations, and support one another. During the visits, it was learnt that two former bursary beneficiaries were selected to two prestigious universities. Daniel Mkandawire from Usisya CDSS was selected to pursue a Bachelor of Biological Sciences at the University of

Malawi (UNIMA). Veronica Thera from Chipunga CDSS, who in 2024 was selected to pursue a Diploma in Tourism at the Malawi Institute of Tourism, was this year selected to pursue a degree programme at the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Temwa's Education projects officer assisted Daniel Mkandawire to apply for scholarships and bursary support from a number of institutions. So far none of the institutions has yet responded but the Malawi team remains hopeful that a positive response may come in August.

NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS (J.C.E/M.S.C.E)

Secondary school education in Malawi is divided into Junior and Senior sections. The Junior section is composed of 2 classes - Form 1 and Form 2, while the Senior section is composed of Form 3 and Form 4. For a student to transition from Junior to Senior sections, Form 2 students have to pass the Malawi Junior Certificate of Education Examinations (JCE) administered in 3rd term of each academic year. In the senior section, students in Form 4 have sit for the Malawi School Leaving Certificate of Education Examinations (MSCE). This year, 7 Temwa Bursary beneficiaries sat for JCE, while 3 sat for MSCE. The 3 who sat for MSCE are expected to graduate from secondary school having passed the examinations. While those that sat for JCE are expected transition to senior section (form 3) if they pass the examination. This means that Temwa is expected to recruit 3 new bursary beneficiaries to replace the students who sat for MSCE for the 2025/26 Academic Year.

LIBRARY SUPPORT



During the reporting period, the Temwa community library continued to provide of fiction and non-fiction books as well as newspapers to the community. The total visits to the Library between January and July reached 2,446 (1,039 Female and 1,436 Male). Bursary students from Usisya CDSS were also encouraged to visit the library to study and borrow curriculum texts and other books. The photo to the left shows students making the most of the Library facilities to study.

CHALLENGES TEMWA FACED AND RESPONSE

As mentioned above, there were cash flow issues at the beginning of the School Year, which meant that many materials and fees could not be paid for by Temwa until the beginning of 2026. To avoid similar challenges for 2025/6, Temwa is submitting the narrative report for 2024/5 and the planned budget for 2025/6 in late August.

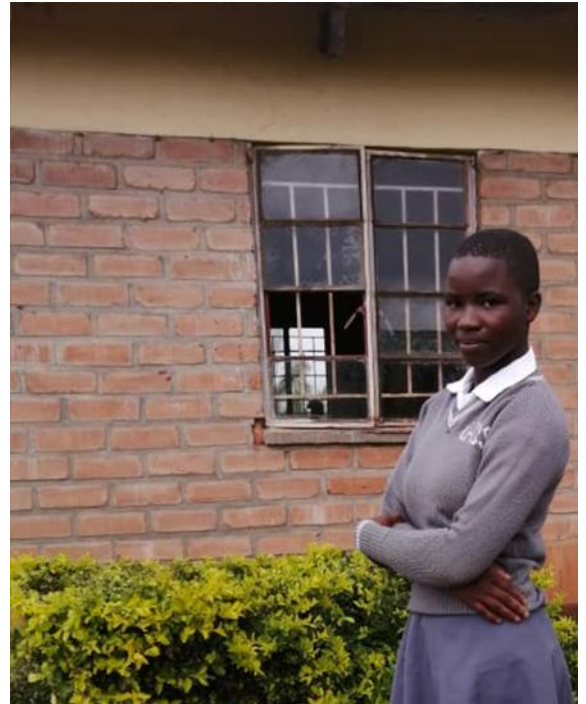
Inflation was another threat faced by the scheme. In April 2025, schools raised their tuition fees from K30/35,000 to K40/45,000. Fortunately, Temwa paid the fees for the entire academic year in January 2025, hence the rise in fee costs does not affect this year's budget. Temwa is expected to start paying the new costs in the 2025/2026 Academic year.

SUCCESS STORIES

MEET WONGANI MLENGA, A FORM 3 BURSARY BENEFICIARY AT CHIPUNGA CDSS

Wongani Mlenga (pictured right) is a Form 3 student at Chipunga CDSS. Wongani comes from a single parent household where she lives with 3 of her siblings in Kayuni village (Chigwere VDC). Her Family's main source of income is subsistence farming. Wongani and her siblings often work together with their mother on their family land where they grow maize, vegetables and tomatoes. The maize they grow is meant for household consumption while vegetable and tomatoes are for both consumption and selling. However, due to limited land, labour and financial capital, the family do not produce enough food for themselves or to generate income.

During holidays and weekends, Wongani and her younger siblings are expected to help their mother in her farming activities. However, she and her siblings are often at school contributing only a limited time to support food production at home. Besides that, their family hardly manages to buy farm inputs like hybrid seeds, and fertilizers which also contribute to low farm produce and food insecurity.



Before being recruited on to the Bursary Scheme, Wongani says *'I used to walk long distances (approximately 8 kilometres) to and from school. Sometimes I would go to class on an empty stomach because of lack of food at home. Besides that I used to have limited time for studying at home due to farm work, household chores and poor source of lighting. After joining the Temwa Bursary Scheme, my academic life has changed for the better. The scheme supports me with boarding, tuition fees and other resources such as writing materials. This has helped to improve my concentration on school work. I no longer go to class on empty stomach because food is provided to us in our Hostel. I am really grateful to Temwa and its donors for giving me an opportunity so that I can realize my dreams.'*

STANLEY'S JOURNEY – FROM STRUGGLES TO HOPE



In the village of Amzizumi lives 22-year-old Stanley Nyirenda (pictured left at Usisya CDSS in September 2024), a young man whose determination is as strong as his dream of becoming a doctor. Life has not been easy for Stanley. After losing his mother, he lived with his elder sister for a while. But when she got married, he found himself living alone, learning to manage the challenges of independence far earlier than most. With eight siblings, support comes mainly from his fourth-born brother, who provides him with food, and from his sister's small business of selling Mandasi. Still, daily survival takes a cost. Cooking, cleaning, and managing the household alone consume time he wishes he could spend studying.

Stanley's academic journey faced a major obstacle when he couldn't find the money to pay school fees. That was when he met a staff member from Temwa, who offered him the opportunity to join the Bursary Scheme. With school fees and materials paid for by Temwa, Stanley was able to repeat his exams to improve his previous score in the MANEB examinations. With Temwa's support, he used the community library and gained access to books,

computers, and past exam papers. The dream is clear in his mind. This year, he aims for better grades, a place in medical school, and a future where he can help others as a doctor.

Stanley knows he is not alone in this journey. He has seen Temwa transform lives in his community, helping countless young people finish secondary school. For him, this is more than about personal success - it's about lifting others along the way. *"I sincerely thank Temwa for the support it provides, not only to bursary beneficiaries but also through its other development initiatives. We are deeply grateful and say thank you."* He said. With his resilience, the community's encouragement, and Temwa's ongoing support, Stanley's story is one of turning hardship into hope, proof that when opportunity meets determination, dreams can take flight.

Student Allocation for 2024-2025 Academic Year.

To the right is a table summarizing the number of male and female students and the numbers in each Form.

Overleaf is a list of the individual students currently benefiting from the Bursary Scheme. The students are distributed across four schools in Nkhata Bay North: Chipunga, Chikwina, Mzgora and Usisya.

School	Category	%	N
Community Day Secondary Schools	Female	60%	14
	Male	40%	10
	Form 1	8%	2
	Form 2	44%	11
	Form 3	32%	8
	Form 4	12%	3
	Total		25

Thank you

Temwa and the beneficiary students are very grateful for the unwavering support that the Nick Webber Trust provides through the Bursary Scheme. With your support, children are getting access to secondary school education in Nkhata Bay North that would not be possible due to challenging family circumstances and financial hardship. We are excited to see the potential of many students going onto technical colleges, and 2 being offered places at prestigious universities. Thank you for helping transform their lives.



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Student Beneficiary Table

	Name	Gender	School	Class	Situation
1	Lidia Kamanga	F	Usisya CDSS	2	Parents separated, lives with grandmother
2	Alinafe Kaonga	F	Usisya CDSS	3	Parents divorced, lives with mother who survives by selling bananas
3	Kondwani Nkhwazi	M	Usisya CDSS	4	Lives with elderly grandparents, has lost his parents
4	Stanley Nyirenda	F	Usisya CDSS	4	Lost his mother
5	Precious Tchuwa	M	Usisya CDSS	3	Father is mentally disabled, mother has remarried and abandoned him
6	Vinjero Nyirenda (New)	F	Usisya CDSS	1	Stays with her grandfather and 4 other children. Parents passed away.
7	Esnart Minthasi	M	Usisya CDSS	2	Father in prison
8	Wongani Mlenga	F	Chipunga Secondary School	3	Single mother
9	Kondwani Kaunda	F	Chipunga Secondary School	3	Orphan living with unemployed grandparents
10	Pius Mkwandawire	M	Chipunga Secondary School	2	Abandoned by parents who have separated and lives alone
11	Mwawi Mfuno	F	Chipunga Secondary School	2	Lives with parents and 6 younger siblings. Parents income too low.
12	Edson Msiska	M	Chipunga Secondary School	2	Lost both parents, he works in farms to pay for his basic needs.
13	Edna Gama	F	Chipunga Secondary School	2	Lost her father, lives with impoverished mother
14	Khumbo Nyasulu	M	Chipunga Secondary School	3	Orphan
15	Chisomo Kaunda	F	Chipunga Secondary School	3	Orphan
16	Elius Mwale	M	Mzgora CDSS	2	Parents divorced
17	Kondwani Mhango	M	Mzgora CDSS	2	Orphan
18	Veriah Mhango	F	Mzgora CDSS	4	Lives with her grandparents who cannot afford school fees. Parents divorced, mother remarried.
19	Eder Kabaghe	F	Mzgora CDSS	3	Lives with single mother
20	Chimwemwe Kaira	F	Chikwina CDSS	4	Has both parents but they cannot afford basic necessities
21	Raphael Moyo	F	Chikwina CDSS	3	Lost both parents and lives with grandmother
22	Dorica Manda	F	Chikwina CDSS	2	Lost both parents
23	Misheck Mhone	M	Chikwina CDSS	2	Lost his father and lives with unemployed mother who cannot afford school fees
24	Hastings Kasambala	M	Chikwina CDSS	2	Lost both parents
25	Gladys Manda	F	Chikwina CDSS	2	Abandoned by father, lives with grandparents