



# Malawi Early Literacy News

M.E.L.T. - A Literacy Project of Northern New York

Fall 2022

Volume 5

**“Education is a human right with immense power to transform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development.”**  
~Kofi Annan



Library adorned for the Grand Opening



Sam Chirwa and Heather White (Directors)



Gathered ready for the ceremony - Annie Ghambi, Rodwell Sichinga, Mayor Chirwa, Rev. Harawa, Rev. Dr. Andrew Long, Heather White, Sam Chirwa, Carol Stevens, and Moses Mtambo

## M.E.L.T. Central Library Grand Opening

August 14, 2022

Three years in the making and Opening Day is here! The red carpet is laid, the beautiful blue ribbon is ready to cut, the building and grounds are decorated in splendor! Andy Burns, Rev. Dr. Andrew Long, Carol Stevens, and I carry in our hearts the many groups, families, and individuals that made this day possible. We are humbled by their generosity and feel blessed to represent them.

This ceremony includes speakers from both MELT teams, community leaders, Reverends, and Annie Ghambi, our Resource Teacher. My message to the Malawi team, teachers, leaders, and neighbors is this: “M.E.L.T. USA proudly hands this library, these books, and materials over to your care. Use them to build the strongest community you can. We will be here to support you but never forget this is your program, your hopes, and your dreams.”

The ceremony concluded with a children’s choir performance, and plenty of singing, dancing, cookies, and Fanta! We did it!

Heather White



MELT Ribbon cutting



Rodwell and Annie meet with Masambiro Mhone at the MELT Central Library.



A happy children's choir receives books after their performance.





MELT vocabulary poster lessons were reviewed - each teacher received a set of 9.



MELT Library ready for the workshop complete with tote bags of teacher materials.



Books published 2020-2 were reviewed with teachers.

## Teacher Training Sessions

It was wonderful meeting with teacher groups face to face after almost three years. We greeted old friends, strengthened relationships, and forged new acquaintances. There was a lot to cover; the excitement was present in the room each day! We ended each session with a teacher survey. These help the US team to design new materials and clarify any confusion. "The facilitators gave different techniques that assist the learners to develop reading skills. The pictures given depict the local environment and assist the learners in gaining new skills." McDonald Chirwa, Mzimba Primary School.



Andy Burns prepares materials.



Carol Stevens models using the Bloom Taxonomy leveled questioning technique.



Teachers use the Simple Words Kit Curriculum they requested in 2019!



Friends reunite after 2 years- Masambiro Mhone & Carol.



Teachers are busy learning new curriculum.

# Capital Campaign Update

The M.E.L.T. Capital Campaign has raised \$74,500.00 of the \$83,000.00 goal.

These photos of the MELT Central Library taken in August 2022 depict the various uses of this magnificent building!



*Porch greeting area*



*The Director's office*



*Book storage & meeting space*

## Future Plans -

We will complete the 50-title library with 25 book titles to date including trainings in these publications. Teacher meetings will continue and the building will be open one afternoon a week for neighborhood children to come and read.

Both the Malawi and US teams are humbled by the groups, families, and individuals who supported this campaign. Thank you for believing in the power of literacy!



*Kitchen*



*Building the donor wall*



*Building the blackboard*



*For the kitchen - teacher meeting supplies*



*Chairs and Tables*

*Book shelf to feature new books.*



*Teacher planning desk area.*

## A Special Project M.E.L.T. USA & M.E.L.T. Malawi Give Thanks

A few weeks before departure the 2022 team received numerous donations that we earmarked for a "special project" to be determined once we arrived in Malawi. Upon hearing the teachers' intent to use the library space for ongoing professional development and collaboration, our project became very clear.

We were able to provide a large bookcase, many folding tables & chairs, a file cabinet, a desk area for planning, office necessities, plates, cups, and a tea pot. A cup of tea is culturally important at meetings.

The teachers thank you for this and do not take your kindness for granted. Items that seem simple to us are revered by the teachers in Malawi as very special indeed. We were able to see firsthand the pride they have in the space and all that has been provided for their ongoing meetings and professional development.

We departed the M.E.L.T. Central Library with confidence and joy for the warm, well-equipped professional space for the teachers.

## School Visits August 2022

School visits are great fun, but they also give our team valuable information. This includes seeing first-hand our books & materials in use, an opportunity to do a bit of co-teaching, hearing from Head Teachers (like our principals) how the school benefits from M.E.L.T., and clear up confusions. We are always impressed with the organization and record keeping in the Head Teacher's office, by the passion the teachers have who teach using what little they have, and by the children.

It is important to remember that we work with some of the most rural schools in Northern Malawi traveling long distances out in the bush, serving those who have the least. M.E.L.T. is making a difference in the education of thousands of young children each year.

Carol Stevens had fun recording the children saying the ABC's- they loved hearing themselves on her phone.



Rodwell Sichinga and Andy Burns in a classroom.

Heather White co-teaching with Annie Ghambi at Mbowe School



Children greet us calling "mzungu-mzungu" meaning someone with white skin.



Freedom Chawinga using one of the new vocabulary charts provided by M.E.L.T.



Rev. Dr. Andrew Long with children gathered around.



## Never Underestimate the Power of Your Kindness

M.E.L.T. honors our volunteers and donors. We appreciate the books that have been sponsored by families, individuals, and numerous groups. Chianna Gray led a crayon campaign at her small business, collecting hundreds of boxes of crayons. In March M.E.L.T. held its first Pulled Pork Take Out dinner led by the talented Cindy-Hall Swan, with Board members working to package the meals. We served hundreds of meals, raising funds that support our ongoing projects. Our Board and volunteers help to assemble curriculum kits bound for the teachers we serve in Malawi. In the words of our Resource Teacher, Annie Ghambi, "We do not take any act of kindness you give us for granted. May God bless you."



Photos from left to right: Chianna Gray & her daughter, Estelle Jones presented Board members Heather White & Patricia Constable with over 200 boxes of crayons.

Katrina Cox works with Board Member Carolyn Osborne assembling curriculum.

Volunteers Ann VanSlyke & Lu Green assemble ABC kits.

Board member Barb Eldridge works assembling lesson kits.

# Books- Books- Books!

**25 titles of the 50 title goal - please consider sponsoring the next title!**

M.E.L.T. is making great strides towards the goal of publishing 50 book titles complete with Teaching Points before and after reading. These points give teachers strategies to use that deepen the students use of English.

During the August Trip, a complete inventory was taken of the new M.E.L.T. Central Library and the two satellite libraries. Numbers are in!

**MELT Central Library** – 9,000 books & 45 Big Books used as Read Alouds

**Mzimba Satellite Library** - 1,105 books

**Chivumu Satellite Library** - 1,200 books

That is 11,305 culturally appropriate books designed about life in Malawi for children learning to read in Malawi!



*Rodwell Sichinga unloads books from the MELT1.*



*MELT books published to date.*



*Carol counts books.*



*Andy Burns carried 1,000's of books.*



## Crane Cargo Shipment

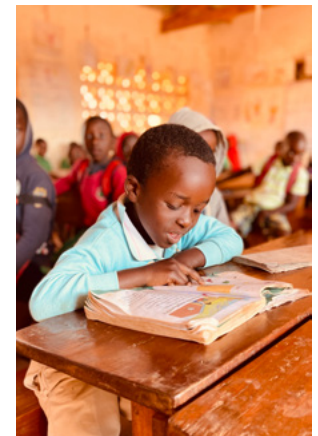
M.E.L.T. will have a major shipment to Malawi departing the U.S. onboard a Crane Cargo ship on November 30, 2022. After four long months making its way to Lilongwe, it will be received by the MELT Malawi team and trucked to the MELT Central Library, a six hour drive to the Northern region. This shipment will include over 1,000 new books as well as other educational materials!

## The Need to Read & Write in English

English is the official language of Malawi. Most children enter primary school speaking Chichewa and/or Tumbuka, the two most common native languages in Northern Malawi.

Beginning in Standard 1 students participate in an English class daily. The M.E.L.T. materials and books support this instruction.

By Standard 5-8 ALL subjects are taught and tested in English. Learning to read and write English is a critical skill for academic success.



*Standard 2 children at Chipambo School.*

# Spotlight- Our Dedicated Resource Teachers

M.E.L.T. thanks our Resource Teachers Annie Ghambi (from Mbowe School) and Rodwell Sichinga (from Chipambo School) for their good work. They help to facilitate teacher meetings and meet with any teacher who may have a follow-up question about curriculum or materials they have received from M.E.L.T. They are feet on the ground in Malawi!



*A group of teachers attending the grand opening of the library.*

## Faces of the children M.E.L.T. serves

M.E.L.T. provides culturally responsible books to hundreds of children each month!



## Become a Member

**Do you recall a favorite book from childhood? Help us get books in the hands of children who have none.**

Having a strong membership allows us to plan ahead. We can print materials and purchase supplies when there are sales - making your donation go further.

Please consider becoming an individual or group member today!

**Make checks payable to "MELT" and mail to:**

Heather White, MELT Chairperson  
424 Paddock Street  
Watertown, NY 13601



## M.E.L.T. Community Based Organization, Mzuzu, Malawi

- Hon. Sam Chirwa - Director
- Rodwell Sichinga - Resource Teacher
- Ms. Annie Ghambi - Secretary
- Mr. Moses Mtambo - Treasurer
- Isaiah Waloyi - Property Maintenance

## M.E.L.T. - USA

- Heather White - Captain
- Carol Stevens - Secretary, Author, Reading Specialist
- Carolyn Osborne- Treasurer, Graphic Design
- Andy Burns - Photographer, Graphic Design, I.T.
- Patti Constable - Author, Reading Specialist
- Joanne Lavarney - Author, Reading Specialist
- Barbara Eldridge - Author, Reading Specialist
- Margot McGorman - Editor
- Peyton Hnyla - Reading Specialist

**Renew your membership today!** **Membership - M.E.L.T.**  
[MalawiEarlyLiteracy.org](http://MalawiEarlyLiteracy.org)  
*Your membership supports our ongoing work!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Level:**

\$50+ **ABC Level**

\$150+ **Book Level**

\$500+ **Library Level**

Knowing every donation is welcome, no matter its size, please accept my donation of \_\_\_\_\_.

Please contact me for volunteer opportunities!

Payment Method  Cash  Check  Please Bill Me