

## CTI Supports Women's Enterprises In Malawi

We often hear of food and medical aid being offloaded from the back of a truck into the hands of people in dire need. What almost never hits the headlines is this kind of story out of Malawi and Wisconsin. The Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) purchased 25 CTI Omega grinders and had them delivered to companion churches in Malawi. Diane Kauffman, who coordinates the Companion Congregation Program for the synod, helped formulate a program within Malawi in which 30 women's cooperatives, each receiving a CTI grinder, process highly nutritious food for distribution to orphaned youth at area feeding centers. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Malawi (ELCM) has placed a very high priority on organizing and developing successful women's enterprise groups at the village level in order to: elevate the role of women in their societies, make women more effective in combating hunger, and recognizing women as a point of introduction of new ideas and techniques to the communities.



The added importance of women's groups in villages is their connection to the feeding centers. In many of these villages, peanut butter is the primary food produced because the Omega grinder can produce relatively large quantities of product. Ground, roasted soy was also a significant part of their production. Both peanut butter and roasted soy bean flour are packaged and sold in 250 gram jars (see photo); or, in the case of the feeding sites, carried home by the children.

At these feeding sites, orphaned children come three times a week to be fed. Over 6,000 orphans under the age of five are fed three times every week! Not only are thousands of children saved from starvation and death, but this program is self-sustaining, no longer depending upon outside help to continue. A small investment, along with caring people, have produced permanent life-saving results.



Here is Diane Kauffman's ground-level perspective on the project, "The last two years in Malawi have seen good harvests due to favorable weather conditions and a good government fertilizer/seed program. This has given the country a breathing space to focus on food security, rather than food intervention. The same is true for the efforts of the ELCM, which has recently received 25 Omega

VI Grinders. These grinders will be part of their food security efforts. We anticipate that the grinders will be used by varying groups around the country: HIV/Aids support groups, schools, the Madisi Training Center, women's groups, and the church's feeding centers, which focus on children under age five, at risk of malnutrition. The primary use of the grinders will be for making peanut butter. Without a grinder, making peanut butter is a very labor intensive project and is expensive to purchase. With the grinder, even kids can participate."

The program has been so successful that the ELCM is targeting to introduce an additional 15 grinders in the near future so that every outreach point will have their own grinder.

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