

# BETHEL GIRLS' ACADEMY

Supporting Girls' Education in Malawi: An Update from The Kerusso Trust



## Our Mission

The Kerusso Trust partners with J-Life Ministries in Malawi to support girls' education through a sponsorship programme at Bethel Girls' Academy, a Christian secondary school on the edge of Blantyre.

Investing in girls' education changes lives and brings long-term benefits: educated girls are more likely to secure employment, marry later, raise healthier children and encourage them to continue in education, and help lift their families and communities out of poverty. It is said in Malawi that when you educate a girl, you educate a community.

We provide bursaries for girls whose families cannot afford school fees, ensuring they don't miss out on this critical stage of education. Secondary school is not free in Malawi, and for many girls, especially for those from remote, rural areas, boarding at school is the only way to continue in education. Boarding isn't a luxury or only for the elite. It is the preferred option for many families, given the challenges that many face in continuing their schooling.

We thank God for every girl whose life is being changed. Together, we are giving girls in Malawi an opportunity for secondary education and the chance of a better future. Your support and prayers are making it possible.

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## Bethel Girls' Academy: A Vision for Excellence

Bethel Girls' Academy was established by J-Life Ministries in 2022 on their Camp Bethel site, on the edge of Blantyre City. It is situated in a beautiful and peaceful setting overlooking Chilingani Mountain, also home to the J-Life offices and training room, staff accommodation, and The Kerusso Resource Centre and library.



*The newest classroom at Bethel Girls' Academy (left), constructed in 2024*

The school started with just 5 girls but within weeks enrolment had risen to 21. In its second year, there were 60 girls, and now in its third year it has grown to 102 students. The J-Life Board of Trustees has continued to develop the school, this year adding a science lab, staffroom, and headteacher's and deputy headteacher's offices. Thanks to a generous gift from a Kerusso Trust supporter, we were also able to fund a much-needed additional building, which is currently used as a classroom.

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to girls through quality education  
with Christian values.”**

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The school's motto is "Modelling Excellence." Its aim is to provide a high-quality education in a caring, Christian environment, helping girls grow academically, socially, and spiritually. J-Life's vision is "to bring positive transformation to girls through quality education with Christian values."



Pastoral care is a key part of the school's foundation and ethos. A weekly Chapel hour is led by J-Life staff, and a local pastor serves as school chaplain. Though girls of all faiths are welcome, the school seeks to nurture Christian discipleship and spiritual growth through the teaching and example of its teachers and the J-Life Ministries team living at Camp Bethel.



Led by headteacher Rev. Henry Chibwana, a long-time J-Life volunteer trainer on the Learn2Serve programme, the school now has ten fully qualified teachers, a school matron, catering staff, and security guards.

## Our focus: Offering Bursaries

In 2024–2025, the Kerusso Trust is sponsoring 22 girls at Bethel Girls' Academy. These students come from extremely disadvantaged backgrounds, including from the remote, rural villages of Blantyre Rural West, as well as urban projects like Courageous Kids, which supports children rescued from life on the streets.

Girls are selected for sponsorship based on financial need, personal motivation, and academic potential. Many come from families where the father has died or is absent, and the mother, often a subsistence farmer, supports the family with very limited income. Some are orphans from the Courageous Kids project.

Most of the girls are boarders, allowing them to study in a structured, safe environment with access to good nutritional meals, homework time, and pastoral support. Without this, many would be at risk of dropping out due to long daily walking distances to school, lack of electricity and light to study by, domestic responsibilities, early marriage, or pregnancy. A few are day pupils from the local villages of Chigwaja and Sigerege near to Camp Bethel.

Our Malawian partner, J-Life Ministries, works with local community leaders and pastors to identify the girls in greatest need of financial support. The Kerusso Trust covers boarding and tuition fees, school uniform and exam fees.



*Some of the 22 girls sponsored through The Kerusso Trust's bursary programme in 2024-25*

## Looking Ahead



*Nutritious meals, supervised study with electric light, no lengthy walks into school from remote areas, pastoral support and health care – all benefits of boarding which encourage exam success.*

As Bethel Girls' Academy grows, J-Life Ministries hopes the school will eventually reach a point of financial sustainability, able to generate income to support its own operations, invest in further capital development projects at the school, and in the longer-term help fund their core bible training ministries.

We plan to continue sponsoring girls, especially from Blantyre Rural West, where J-Life is actively involved in community development through programmes like Learn2Serve for church leaders, Learn2Serve4Chiefs, and local Community Children's Bible clubs. As new sponsors come on board, we will expand the number of bursaries we can offer.

## Please join us in prayer

- Give thanks for Bethel Girl's Academy, for the way God has wonderfully blessed the growth and development of the school.
- Praise God for the growth of The Kerusso Trust's bursary scheme.
- Give thanks for the new classroom and school facilities.
- Praise God that all sponsored girls passed their 2024 public exams.
- Pray for the school leadership—the School's Director Praise Ijalasi, headteacher Rev Henry Chibwana, and staff.
- Pray for wisdom for the J-Life Board as they guide the school's future development.
- Pray for the careful selection of new bursary students for 2025.
- Ask God to help the girls make the most of their education.
- Pray for the spiritual growth of the girls.
- Pray for continued academic success in the year ahead.
- Pray for funds for J-Life to continue expanding the school, for additional boarding facilities to increase the school's capacity.