

June 2021 Sustained Grantee Spotlight: Grandmother Project

RIPPLE Africa's work on the Changu Changu Moto cookstove project in Malawi continues – and it is changing the lives of women who have borne the burden of gathering wood, tending fires, and cooking meals for many. Its effects also extend to their children and grandchildren in lifechanging ways.

Among those deeply impacted by this profound change to the use of a cookstove are Lydia and Catherine. RIPPLE Africa recently shared their stories.

LYDIA

Not only do Changu Changu Moto fuel-efficient cookstoves reduce the amount of wood used, thereby protecting forests, but they are also safer. Use of the stoves has reduced burns by over 60 percent in Nkhata Bay District.

Lydia cares for eight children including her grandson, James. James spoke with Oswald, one of RIPPLE Africa's fuel-efficient cookstove managers.

"I love that my grandma has a Changu Changu Moto," James said. "I am 7 years old and have epilepsy. I fell in to a traditional three-stone fire when I had a seizure. I now have burns over my body."

"Our neighbors didn't understand why it was so important to have a fuel-efficient cookstove," Lydia said. "It doesn't just save time collecting wood but the fire is contained and the pots stable. Sadly, it took this accident for my neighbors to understand how important they are. I have been using my cookstove for three years. This (James' accident) is why I will never cook on a traditional three-stone fire again."

CATHERINE

It is rainy season in Malawi which adds an additional challenge to RIPPLE Africa's team in reaching some of the more remote villages. They visited with Catherine, who was busy cooking with her mother-in-law.

"I am preparing dinner for 15 people, including my children, husband, and in-laws, but this cookstove cooks quicker, which saves me time," she said. "I am only using a few sticks but able to cook meat. It saves wood too, which means I spend less time collecting wood. We are also happy to have this cookstove because it reduces accidents. The fire is contained, the pots safely balanced on top, and the bricks at the front help keep the ash and embers in. I do not worry if my children come into the kitchen when I am cooking."

