

June 2020 Sustained Grantee Spotlight: Ripple Africa

COVID-19 update

As Ripple Africa continues its work in Malawi, its community connections have proven to be an important factor in spreading information that can help save lives. Ripple Africa's US and UK teams were scheduled to be in Malawi May – July, but that effort has been delayed due to the pandemic. But that has not stopped the organization from ramping up efforts to help Malawians living in rural locations during this time. There are only 25 ventilators in the entire country of Malawi, and rural medical facilities are already under-staffed and lacking in basic equipment and medicine, even in the best of times.



To help families stay safe, Ripple Africa is working to repair broken boreholes, which residents rely on for water for drinking, cooking and – now critically, for washing. Ripple Africa is also providing buckets and soap to marketplaces and other communal areas and distributing leaflets with important information about COVID-19 symptoms and steps Malawians can take to reduce the risk of contracting the virus, including washing hands for 20 seconds, practicing physical distancing and more.

Earlier this year, Dining for Women celebrated an exciting milestone in its work on behalf of women and girls around the world: the creation of its 500th chapter. To commemorate and celebrate this effort, DFW partnered with Ripple Africa to plant 500 trees in Malawi in the Nkhotakota and Mzimba Districts, where deforestation has occurred because of the need for wood for cooking. This project helps offset carbon emissions and minimize climate change, even as Ripple Africa's Changu Changu Moto cookstoves help reduce the need for firewood.

Since 2019, farmers and community members who have been involved in the tree planting project have been very receptive and eager to receive and start using the fuel-efficient Changu Changu Moto cookstoves. Project staff have been recruited, including two managers and three coordinators, for the two districts where the project is operating. Community volunteers have been trained and brick molds have been purchased for use in both districts. As of February 2020, the team had registered the 6,000 households who will benefit from the sustained grant and recorded their details so the project outcomes can be monitored effectively.

In Mzimba District, 920 householders have built their Changu Changu Motos with the help of the community volunteers.

Malawi experienced heavy rain in late 2019 and early 2020. This delayed the brick molding process since the bricks used to make the Changu Changu Moto cookstoves are dried in the sun rather than in a kiln. Most of the households in the Nkhotakota District have now made their bricks, so the process of cookstove construction should move ahead quickly.

As this sustained grant moves into its second and third years, Ripple Africa hopes to begin cooking competitions, showcasing the Changu Changu Moto versus the three-stone fire to generate interest and enthusiasm among potential new households who will join the project during that time.