



BUILDING IMPACT

2021





PARTNERSHIP IMPACT

Together buildOn and SCB are breaking the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by providing solar lighting and Adult Literacy Classes in the places that need them most—communities where children and teachers struggle in dark classrooms, and where many adults, especially women, have never had the opportunity to attend school. This work has never been more crucial. Globally, there are 59 million primary school aged children who are out of school. Without proper, well-lit classrooms more children will drop out of school or simply never enroll. SCB and buildOn partnered to add solar panels to nine schools in rural Malawian communities, allowing children and teachers to better utilize these rooms on dark, rainy days or in the evenings for additional studying and preparation. In addition to installing solar panels on these nine schools, SCB funded nine Adult Literacy Programs which will begin in 2022 and give women and men in these communities the opportunity to learn to basic skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic that will help to lift them and their families out of poverty.

Thank you, SCB, for your commitment to educating and empowering communities around the world!

IMPACT IN MALAWI



SCHOOLS WITH SOLAR

- 1 Chang'ombe**
Students Enrolled: 441
Girls Enrolled: 204
Grade Levels: 8
Teachers: 8
- 2 Chintchinda**
Students Enrolled: 791
Girls Enrolled: 412
Grade Levels: 8
Teachers: 7
- 3 Chilinda**
Students Enrolled: 630
Girls Enrolled: 339
Grade Levels: 8
Teachers: 11
- 4 Mphowe**
Students Enrolled: 1,345
Girls Enrolled: 667
Grade Levels: 8
Teachers: 13
- 5 Kachule**
Students Enrolled: 521
Girls Enrolled: 281
Grade Levels: 6
Teachers: 4
- 6 Ndatuwa**
Students Enrolled: 317
Girls Enrolled: 168
Grade Levels: 4
Teachers: 3
- 7 Chiwinga**
Students Enrolled: 632
Girls Enrolled: 317
Grade Levels: 8
Teachers: 7
- 8 Chalaula**
Students Enrolled: 150
Girls Enrolled: 109
Grade Levels: 8
Teachers: 3
- 9 Makungwa**
Students Enrolled: 761
Girls Enrolled: 403
Grade Levels: 8
Teachers: 6

THE FOUNDATION FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Chang'ombe, Malawi



For decades, children in Chang'ombe have struggled to learn in crumbling, dilapidated structures that lacked proper walls or desks. Students sat on the floor and classes were often cancelled when it rained because the water would come in the classrooms and get them wet. Additionally, due to its remote location, the school and the community at large never had access to electricity, and the absence of this valuable resource created numerous obstacles for the children. Studying during the day often wasn't possible because most of the children's time was either spent learning in class or helping their parents with domestic chores. At night, they could not effectively study either, due to the poor sources of light available in their homes. Without electricity, most of the children's homes used small flashlights or candles to see at night and both options presented their own challenges. The flashlights needed their batteries replaced frequently, which many families could not afford, and the candles didn't give off much light or last very long. These obstacles left the learners with very little time to study, resulting in poor scores on their examinations. Bernadette Mwale, age 16, speaks to the challenges she and her classmates have faced. *"In Expressive Arts, I never scored above 50%. My score has always been lower, therefore I needed more time to study especially at night in order to improve. However, having no light both at home and at school, my studying time was still limited and I failed to improve my score and grade,"* says Bernadette, who is currently in the seventh grade and dreams of being a teacher when she grows up. Concurring with Bernadette are her three classmates: Silvia Bondo, Yamikani Phiri and Francisco Tambala, who all lamented that their grades in various subjects have never been good due to limited studying time. *"Studying only during the day time wasn't enough. In fact, night time studies are more effective than day time studies. However, night studies here were not possible because we lacked proper lighting,"* says 13-year-old Yamikani, who hopes to be a police officer when he graduates.

Circumstances in Chang'ombe finally began to change in October 2021 when the community partnered with buildOn to construct a new school block. Today, not only do the children attending this school have quality classrooms and desks to learn at, thanks to the partnership of SCB, they also have solar power. *"The*



Solar-powered electricity in the classrooms

electricity has enabled me to have extra study periods at night," says Bernadette. "My daily study time begins at 6pm and ends at 10pm. I am glad to say that with such a rigorous night study, I have now improved my examination scores and grades. The subject which I used to score below 50% in, I now score above 60% in! I am grateful to buildOn and SCB for giving us the electricity." Bernadette and her friends added that teachers will also write notes on the chalkboard in advance during the night so that the students can copy them the following morning when they arrive in class, something all four students found to be very helpful.

"Having solar power has caused a lot of motivation for our learners in attending classes," says Head Teacher, Tryness Bondo. "We have noticed a reduction in absenteeism in learners ever since we started using the new school block with electricity. At the same time, parents are now more eager to send their children to this school. We have even received transferred students from nearby schools because they admire their fellows who can study at night. We have also already observed a change in the performance of learners in weekend tests. Without a doubt, this is a reflection of their ability to study at night. All learners from this

area live in houses that do not have electricity, and most parents cannot afford a flashlight for their children to study at home. Having electricity is expected to help in improving learners' performance at national exams as well. We thank buildOn and SCB for this development."

Beyond giving learners the opportunity to study at night, the solar power at the school has also enabled teachers to be able to plan their lessons in the evenings. Tryness adds that, *"With the light, we can easily write lesson plans and fill in student records, even at night."* Previously teachers had problems allocating time for planning during the day because teaching was usually prioritized during these hours. *"This is now history because if you have limited time during the daytime hours one can easily utilize the night," says Tryness. "At the same time the solar is helping us to teach and conduct at night which will help us to complete the syllabus on time. In the past we had challenges to complete the syllabus in some classes because teaching time was limited. However, such challenges will now be of the past because we will be able to conduct extra classes in case a teacher did not manage to teach everything during the day time."*

Miss Zion Bvulumende is also a teacher in Chango'mbe and believes the new solar electricity in her school will greatly help her to perform her job. *"With the installation of electricity, we can easily organize staff meetings at night*



Tryness Bondo and Zion Bvulumende in front of the new buildOn school

especially when we have very tight schedules during the day hours or in cases where some emergencies have arisen at night, we can easily organize the meetings instantly and make a decision at night. At the same time electricity has also helped in minimizing cases of theft at the school, unlike in the past when the school was in total darkness. Electricity will also simplify the process of teaching and learning because, for example, we will be able to use a computer to show a video explaining a science experiment we are conducting. In the past, most concepts were just explained theoretically and it was difficult for most learners to grasp the content. We can also use these same audio visual methods to easily show a video featuring a role model or expert in a field that can motivate learners without that person physically visiting the students at the school. Honestly, the electricity installed at the school will have a great impact on the community.”



Students in Chang'ombe used to learn on the floor



Teachers use the electricity to charge their mobile phones, which are used for educational videos



Yamikani Phiri, Francisco Tambala, Silvia Bondo and Bernadette Mwale in front of the new school



CHANGING THE FACE OF EDUCATION

Chalaula, Malawi

To the people of Chalaula, having a real school in their community has been a long-time dream. Before 2016, their children used to travel long distances to reach nearby schools, as there were no proper school blocks in their community. Chalaula partnered with buildOn to construct their first school block in 2017. This school marked the start of an increase in both student enrollment and student attendance. According to Chalaula Primary School's Head Teacher, Beaton Kamanga, when the first block was completed it was a major source of inspiration for the students and they started realizing that education was a real possibility in

their community. In 2018, a second buildOn school block was built, and a third was added in 2020. This year, a fourth school block was constructed, including solar electricity funded by SCB. Because of these developments, the government will provide additional teachers, and Chalaula will be upgraded to a full primary school offering all eight grade levels.

"We expect a lot of positive changes with this development here at Chalaula school," says Beaton, who is also the longest serving teacher at the school. *"We used to not have the ability to offer grades five through eight, but all of this is history. I am happy that all classes will be inside with proper shelter and because these new classrooms have solar power, we are now able to use devices like phones when teaching. Also, the students will be able to study during the evening hours which is a huge boost to the learners and we are expecting good performances come next year. More learners now have a chance to find education from within our community, compared to the past when they had to travel long distances to attend a school nearby that offered the upper grade level classes. We thank buildOn and SCB so much for changing the face and story of the Chalaula school to its present status."*



Head Teacher, Beaton Kamanga

Concurring with her Head Teacher is fourth grade student, Deborah Kamanga. Deborah, who loves math and whose career aspiration is to become a teacher, believes that this new block has greatly aided her and her peers in their pursuit of an education. *"We used to see our friends in grades five through eight walking long distances to get to school, but now when I enter grade five next year I will be so happy to be one of those students who will benefit from this new block," says Deborah. "For me, studying only during the day time wasn't enough. However, night studies here were not possible (in the past) because we lacked proper lighting but now with the solar electricity, we are able to study during the evening hours. We thank buildOn and SCB for this tremendous development here at Chalaula."*



Electric panel on the new school



Having electricity has greatly improved the learning conditions for children in Chalaula

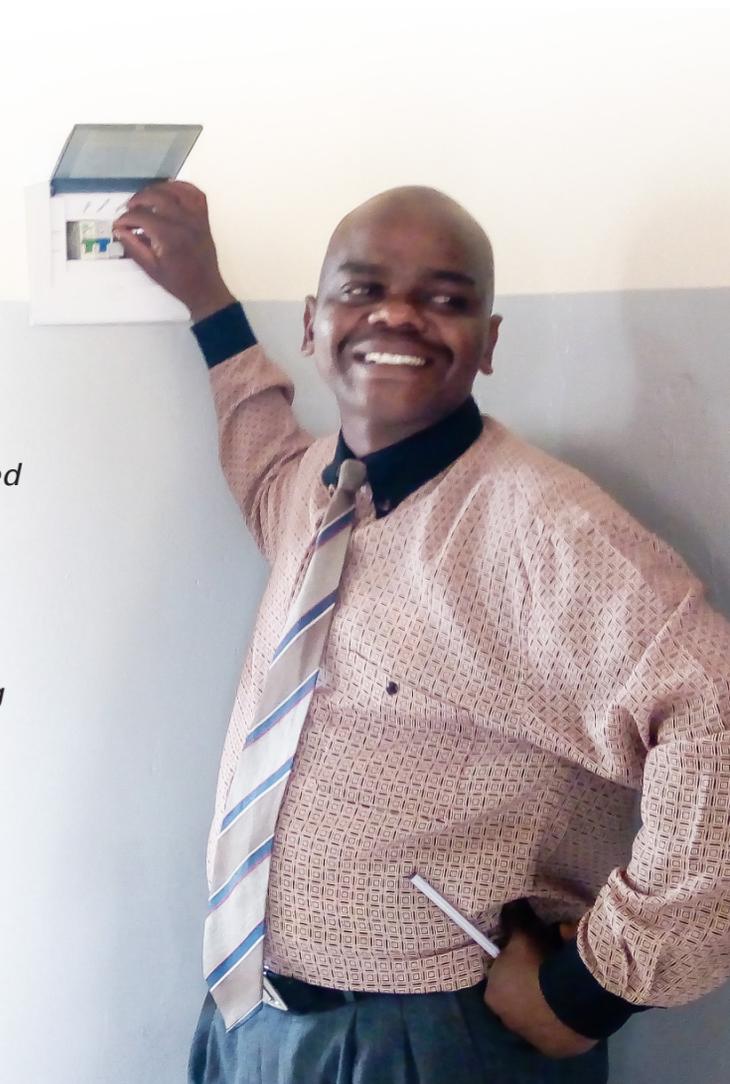
IMPROVING TEST SCORES

Chintchinda, Malawi



Chintchinda Primary School is located about 80 kilometers east of the city of Kasungu and educates students from first to eighth grade. The school was opened in 1995 by the Malawian government who, at the time, was campaigning to create educational spaces in rural areas. From 1995 to 2020, the school has been utilizing old, unsafe, dilapidated classrooms. Before collaborating with buildOn, Chintchinda Primary School operated out of four classrooms with an enrollment of 649 students. This pupil-to-classroom ratio (162 per classroom) was far beyond the government's suggested ratio of 60 students per classroom and heavily impacted students' ability to follow their lessons.

Due to the school's lack of permanent classrooms teachers often held classes under trees or in temporary shelters, which culminated in a drop in students' grades. *"Before buildOn, the situation was not good. Classrooms were few and some children were learning outside. Here, concentration was low due to distractions and disturbances. In rainy and stormy weather, classes sometimes ended abruptly. This affected the teaching and learning process as learners were forced to stop class before the end of the period. Such circumstances contributed to dwindling student performance in class and examinations,"* says, Headteacher, Peter Phiri.



The community first partnered with buildOn to construct a school block in 2020, and an additional block was built in 2021 to further increase the number of students learning in proper classrooms. With the completion of these two buildOn blocks, the pupil-to-classroom ratio has been reduced from 162 learners per classroom to 81 learners per classroom representing a reduction rate of 50%. In addition, the new school block was equipped with solar power thanks to the partnership of SCB.

With the installation of electricity, the students of Chintchinda are now able to study at night thereby boosting their performance in class and on their exams. *“For instance, during this year’s grade seven zonal entrance examinations, which were taken by 163 grade six learners from eight schools, the first Chintchinda student got position number 14; up from position number 30 in last year’s same examination,” says Peter. “This improvement is not only attributed to the reduced class sizes, but also to the solar electricity which learners used to study at night as they were preparing for these exams.”* Additionally, the installation of solar electricity at the school has ignited the interest of many adult community members who are excited for the upcoming Adult Literacy Program, also funded by SCB.

Having access to electricity has also made it possible for the teachers of Chintchinda to prepare lesson plans at night and charge their mobile phones, which are sometimes used for instruction in class. *“Both students and teachers are very grateful to buildOn and SCB for the wonderful gift of this school block and the solar electricity,”* exclaims Peter.



Installing solar panels on the school



The new school in Chintchinda equipped with solar electricity

TRANSFORMING CLASSROOMS

Kachule, Malawi



Prior to the start of its partnership with buildOn in 2016, the community of Kachule had only small temporary classrooms made from mud and thatched grass, and the students who couldn't fit in these classrooms were left to learn outside under the trees. After the completion of the first school block that year, student enrollment increased from 200 students to 301 students and attendance also began to improve. While teachers and administrators were thrilled with the high numbers of students enrolling, they also quickly realized that more classroom space was needed. buildOn partnered with the community to build a second school block in 2017, and a third block in 2020, further increasing the enrollment to 493 students. In 2021, a fourth school block was added and the school was finally able to offer all eight grade levels in proper classrooms, instead of having grades seven and eight learning in a nearby church or under the trees. Perhaps one of the most important benefits that came with this new school block was the solar electricity installed by SCB.

Today, Kachule School is a full primary school with a total enrollment of 521 students (283 girls and 238 boys) and six teachers. According to Head Teacher, Billy Kaputa, all classes will now be learning in real classrooms and both enrollment and attendance are expected to increase. *“We are happy and at a loss for words with the coming of this development at our school in Kachule,” says Billy. “Back then we used to have two classes (grades 7 and 8) learning outside under a tree, but now with the coming of this buildOn classroom block it will help us to host grade 7 and 8 in a proper shelter with good infrastructure. The installation of solar electricity together with this block is a plus for us since back then we used to travel to nearby trading center’s to charge our mobile phones that we use day by day to get information to teach the children and for communication purposes. On the other hand, the children will also benefit a lot from it because they will be able to continue their studies during the evening hours and even at night, hence allowing more time for them now to concentrate on their books. We are hopeful that come next year this will yield something big here at Kachule.”*

One of the children to benefit from this new school with solar power is sixth grade student, Dingile Ngalande. Dingile dreams of becoming a teacher when she is older and believes that her buildOn school block will help her to achieve this dream. *“This new block has helped us in many ways,” says Dingile. “We are comfortably learning inside classroom blocks with well-fixed boards, while sitting on desks. There will be no more walking long distances and now with the solar electricity, we are able to study during the evening hours.”*



Head Teacher Billy Kaputa and student Dingile Ngalande in front of the new school



The new classrooms in Kachule complete with solar panels

ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM

In buildOn schools around the globe, our Adult Literacy Classes teach women and men literacy and numeracy through the lens of health, enterprise, and relevant life skills. Taught in the evenings, in the same schools their children attend by day, the Adult Literacy Program gives parents and grandparents the education they need to build a better life for themselves and their families.

In 2022, nine Adult Literacy Programs funded by SCB will begin in the same communities where solar panels were installed: Chalaula, Chang'ombe, Chilinda, Chintchinda, Chiwinga, Kachule, Makungwa, Mphowe and Ndatuwa. The solar power SCB installed in these nine schools will play a key role in making these classes possible. Lacking electricity, and busy with work and household tasks during the day, most adults wouldn't have the opportunity to learn without safe, well-lit classrooms to study in during the evenings. buildOn Malawi Country Director, McDonald Chiputula, states that community members are already excited and eager to sign up for classes when they begin in March 2022.

Thanks to your support, hundreds of women and men will have the chance to learn next year, many for the first time. The skills they gain will help to better their lives, their families and their communities.



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NEVER
GIVE UP

