



RCA Missionary Update

from the McAuleys

Linda and Larry McAuley have served in RCA missions since 1981. Fifteen of those years were in pioneer church planting and community development in Kenya. Since 1998 they have worked in Malawi and Mozambique with the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, the Reformed Church in Mozambique, and Save Orphans Ministries as consultants in community and organizational development. Each of these partners carries out holistic and transformational development through evangelism, adult literacy, HIV/AIDS prevention, orphan care, food and financial security, restoration of the environment, social justice, disaster response, and diaconal development. They work with a total of about 20,000 participants, which results in an impact on the lives of about 100,000 people.

Malawi facts:

- Population: 11,906,850
- Size: 118,480 square kilometers (slightly smaller than Pennsylvania)
- Major religions: 55 percent Protestant, 20 percent Catholic, 20 percent Muslim, 3 percent indigenous beliefs, 2 percent other



MINISTRY

Community and Organizational Development

PARTNER

Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Save Orphans Ministries, the Reformed Church in Mozambique, and Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

LOCATION

Malawi and Mozambique

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Dear Friends,

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End of year and end of term are times for testing. We've been involved in tests, too. Some of them we've administered. Some we've taken. Here's a test for you!

1. How might you keep corn safe from insects, rodents, and spoilage? You are only allowed to use materials found in your own yard.
2. Where might you look for principles of leadership that could revolutionize the way people lead in their communities, homes, and marketplace?
3. What disease is decimating families in many parts of Africa? What steps would you use to curb its spread? How would you relate this message to the gospel?
4. How might you encourage somebody in a rural African village to focus on what his or her community *has* instead of just what they *don't* have?

These questions give you a little peek into some of the things we've been exploring in recent weeks with our partners and the communities where they work. Our partners in Malawi and Mozambique are the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Nkhoma Synod (CCAP/NS); Reformed Church in

Mozambique, Mphatso Synod (IRM/MS); Save Orphans Ministries (SOM); and the Christian Entrepreneurs Association of Malawi (CHREAM).

Some weeks back, Linda spent several days with Community Development Facilitators (CDFs) in their annual refresher course. The CDFs are challenged with new ideas and biblical perspectives to take to the 8,000 women with whom they work. These women learn, among other things, how to preserve their stored grain using all local materials (35 percent of grain stored in Africa is lost to spoilage, insects, and rodents).



This improved traditional grain store is able to keep grain bug-free and safe for six months or more

CDFs explore ways to lead that reflect the lordship of Jesus Christ. They learn technical things like how to grow mushrooms to enable women in villages to earn extra money for family needs. These women are gaining confidence in teaching others about the abundant life that is ours when we trust Jesus for now and for always.

Larry and Linda met with other teammates to explore ways of integrating HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention

training in all aspects of our work—literacy, agriculture, small business growth, health, and organizational capacity building. We thought long and hard about the impact of AIDS and how we must encourage our partners to address this in biblical terms. The most poignant part of that training was a video in which children told their stories. It was excruciating to hear the sadness in their voices as they told of abuse because of being HIV positive or orphaned by AIDS. And yet, in spite of their condition, many of them expressed hope for the future. How many more must suffer before adults begin to make the changes that will prevent the spread of this dreaded disease?

Larry is also consulting with partners and modeling techniques of interviewing villagers that help them to think seriously about resources God has put in their villages. One simple technique asks folks to draw a map that illustrates what their community has (schools, churches, rivers, fields, trees, springs, wells, people, clans, clubs, etc.) and then to discuss how these resources work together to address food security, gender equity, justice, and improving health, income, and education. It's fun to watch the lights come on as people discover that God has indeed blessed them!

As you face tests in your life, how do you approach them? Do you look for answers in how-to books?



A man in Songha Village explains the village resource map he's just drawn

Or ask advisors or friends? How often do you consult the wisdom of God in serious study of His Word? This past year has tested you in many ways. Have you found God's grace sufficient for each of those tests? Thank God for what He is patiently teaching you through good times and bad!

As you spend time in prayer in the coming weeks, please remember to pray for:

- CCAP/NS, as they hire new staff to reach deeper into communities and into the truth of God's Word to help communities live God-honoring lives.
- IRM/MS, as they go through continued times of severe testing but also see God's hand of blessing on their work. They need to hire eight staff soon. Pray that God will raise up committed Christians who are passionate to see people and communities transformed and reflecting the image of God.
- SOM, as they evaluate the last five years of their work with orphans and communities and think, plan, and pray for the next five years.
- CHREAM, as, one by one, Christian business people in Lilongwe learn to save, plan, and grow their businesses to be good stewards of the gifts and opportunities God has given them to change their communities.

Thanks for joining us in praying and giving as we join hands with our African sisters and brothers as they face tests and grow in faith!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry & Linda". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Larry and Linda McAuley