

EVERLAND SPECIAL NEEDS CENTRE

MID-YEAR REPORT JULY 2023

Background

The Everland Special Needs Centre is a centre that helps children with different educational needs (disabilities) to attain education. Ever since the Resource Centre opened its doors in February 2022 it has been offering pre-school activities which are aimed at preparing children with diverse educational needs (special needs) and various physical and mental disabilities, to mix well with other children at in the mainstream when transferred there.

The Resource Centre is dedicated to Michael Jackson for his tireless pursuit of healing our world, starting with children, and uniting people through love, compassion and entertainment. His legacy of love will continue to be felt in Malawi by the children with different disabilities who will use and be educated at the centre. The Centre accommodates children from 6 to 16 years old and so far, the centre has 22 children of which 15 are girls and 7 are boys.

The Centre has three qualified teachers, one female teacher and two male teachers. The classes start at 8am, then at 10.30am the children eat porridge provided by the school and afterwards they are dropped to their respective homes by the minibus. The Resource Centre is very important to the children as it helps them to attain equal education as they need extra help with schooling, therefore teachers at the Resource Centre choose suitable ways to help each child learn. The Everland Special Needs Centre has been helpful to families that are in the area of chief Ngolowindo and other surrounding areas.



Everland Special Needs Centre

Update on progress

Impact has increased at Everland Special Needs Centre, as children with hyperactive behaviours are now learning to co-exist with their fellow learners as well as parents and friends back home. Some children are now able to express themselves, read, write, do number work and they can now understand information at school and at home. Some are even making friends and beginning to interact well with adults. In the next academic year a set of three learners will move onto Ngolowindo mainstream Primary School.

What difference are we making?

Raised by her grandmother, Sulaya Chikhandakhanda was born mute and with a hyperactive disorder. Her father died when her mother was pregnant and her mother abandoned her when she was 9 years old, as she got remarried and the husband did not want her with the child due to the disabilities.

“I took over the responsibilities of raising Sulaya on my own, it has not been easy because growing up she was so violent and sometimes she could start screaming for no reason. It was very hard for her to communicate since she cannot speak,” explained Annie Jailosi, Sulaya`s grandmother.

Jailosi came to know about Everland Special Need Centre through a friend and she decided to enrol her. At first it was very hard for her because she had to walk a long distance to drop Sulaya at school, wait for her and take her back home. However now with the bus transport she says, *“I can now do other works as I do not take Sulaya to school and wait for her again as the bus has eased the mobility challenge,”*

Jailosi thanked Starfish Malawi for opening their doors at Everland as now Sulaya is changing for the better. She shared with tears of joy rolling down her cheeks, *“Ever since she started school at the Everland Centre, she is no longer beating up people around her or breaking things. There is improvement in communication as she is able to use sign language and she shows passion for school as she cries whenever she is not going to school.”*



Sulaya one of the students at Everland Resource Centre and her Grandmother.

Humphrey Piringu, is one of the teachers at Everland Special Need Centre. Before being with Everland he was teaching at Msalura primary school (mainstream), where he decided to go back to Teacher Training and learn more about children with disabilities.

“I started working with Everland Special Need Centre in 2021. At first it was so challenging and demanding as it was my first time dealing with children with different educational needs. For instance, I would prepare work to teach for the day but it would turn out different once I got to school because the learners could not cooperate,” explained Piringu.

The story is now different for Piringu as he is now enjoying his job because of the change he is making in the learners. He is able to use inclusion skills that he attained in his training and now things are changing as parents and guardians visit the Centre to ask for guidance with their children who have disabilities.

“There is a need for sensitisation meetings with the communities about children with disabilities for them to know that ‘Disability is not Inability’. Sadly, some parents mistreat children with disabilities regarding them as lesser important. This Centre has brought in positive impacts to children and may God bless Starfish Malawi and the Michael Jackson Legacy for this great work,” said Piringu.



Humphrey Piringu, Teacher at Everland

In conclusion the Centre is making a huge difference as it is helping in facilitating the learning process by providing accessible education to special needs children for free.