



Shoe Incentive Programs

Trees, Grades and Even Roads

Early in its development the Malawi Project sought a different course for its aid programs to Africa. It would chart a course where people were taught to fish, rather than a plan to deliver fish to their door. Programs began to spring up in agriculture, education, medicine, and sustainable living. One of these programs would use shoes for community improvement. While many groups were delivering shoes to the poor, the Malawi Project sought to employ poor villagers to develop incentive programs that would improve their lives. In a land where few ever own a new pair of shoes, the program was designed for them to receive a pair of brand new shoes for work performed, lives changed, and environment improved.

Shoes for Trees

Shipments of new shoes, often totaling 17,000 pair per trailer were available. The Malawi Project, and the groups in Malawi through which it works, made arrangements with the Malawi government to receive tree seedlings free





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of charge from federal, forest nurseries. In turn the people in the villages planted the seedlings, and cared for them during their early period of development. At the end of a year the Malawi Project donated shoes as payment for work. Over a million seedlings have been planted through the Shoes for Trees program.

Shoes for Grades

Shoes have been used to encourage school children to raise their grades, attendance and attitude. In a land where most children go barefoot, school districts have been chosen for the Shoes for Grades program. The children are challenged to improve in all three areas,



and at the end of the school year they receive new shoes. They spend an entire year working to improve in order to receive a brand new pair of shoes at the end of the school year. A community-wide ceremony marks the occasion, and children are recognized and rewarded with new shoes for their improvement.

Shoes for Roads

A remote village in the central region found itself unable to move commodities to and from the main highway because of the lack of an adequate road. Assistance from the federal government seemed out of the question, so a program was instituted where shoes were donated to the village people who assisted in the construction of a road. At its completion villagers were able to travel down a new road, many of them walking with new shoes acquired in the Shoes for Roads program.



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