



## Mphatso's story

Mphatso is 10 years old and lives with his younger sister and grandparents in Malawi. Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world, with over half the population earning less than \$1 per day.

Mphatso's grandparents earn a small amount by working on other people's farms. However, it is not enough to be able to support his education.

### A typical day in Mphatso's life

"I wake up at 6am. First I wash my face. Then I go to work on our farm. Next, I walk to the river to collect water.

I make mats in the afternoon. First I cut the palm leaves from the fields. Then I dry them. Next I cut them into small pieces. Finally, I weave the pieces together. It takes me 6 hours to make one mat!

Every Thursday, I sell the mats at the market. I sell each mat for about 100 *kwecha* (that's 20p). I have to walk to the market. I leave at 7am and arrive by midday.

I don't go to school anymore. My mother died when I was seven, and my father lives in another village with his new wife. There is no one to buy my uniform, books or writing materials.

I envy my friends who go to school. I was eight years old the last time I went, but if I go now without a uniform the teachers chase me away. My friends will be able to read and write and if you don't have these skills, you can't do anything.

Sometimes I have to wait until the evening to eat. My favourite food is *nsima* - a porridge made from corn. Some days there is no food at all."



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