

Image: Takondwa, Secondary School Student

MOBILITY'S ROLE IN ACCELERATING EDUCATION

Partnership Impact in Malawi 2026

WORLD BICYCLE RELIEF®

Traverse Bay Sunrise Rotary Club

Warm Hearts FOUNDATION

MEET TAKONDWA

Every school day used to begin with uncertainty for 16-year-old Takondwa, a student at Mtonda Community Day Secondary School (CDSS) in Malawi. Living four kilometers from school, the long walk meant leaving home as early as 6:00 a.m. Yet despite her efforts, she often arrived late, missing the first lessons of the day.



In October 2025, Takondwa received a Buffalo bicycle through the World Bicycle Relief partnership. What began as a solution to the challenge of distance has become a catalyst for opportunity—not only for Takondwa, but for her entire family.

Distance was my main hurdle in pursuing education," Takondwa recalls. "It affected my punctuality, participation, and performance. Thanks to the Buffalo-Rotary partnership, I got the bicycle and mobility's no longer an issue."

Today, her daily commute takes just one hour instead of three, giving her valuable time to study after school and help with household chores. Arriving at school on time means she no longer misses lessons and can fully participate in class.

The bicycle has also eased a significant financial burden on her family. Before receiving the bicycle, Takondwa's parents could only afford to pay for transport on Mondays and Fridays, spending approximately 24,000 Malawian kwacha (USD $13.84) each month. During the rest of the week, she had no choice but to walk.



As she looks toward the future, she hopes more students facing the same barriers will have the opportunity she received.

"I really appreciate the World Bicycle Relief partnership for the bicycle, and I plead with them to continue with the project so that more students struggling with distance can be reached."

With a bicycle, attendance has improved, academic performance strengthened, household expenses reduced, and Takondwa's dreams are within closer reach.

Her story is a powerful reminder that when mobility barriers are removed, young people gain the freedom to learn, thrive, and build a future on their terms.

MEET NELSON



For 14-year-old Nelson, every day once began with a long, exhausting walk to school. Living more than three kilometers from his secondary school, he spent nearly two hours traveling each way on foot. By the time he reached the classroom, he was already tired, making it difficult to concentrate and fully engage in lessons.

In 2025, Nelson received a Buffalo bicycle through the World Bicycle Relief partnership. What seemed like a simple change in transportation quickly transformed how he learns, contributes at home, and supports his family's future.

Today, Nelson's commute takes just one hour, allowing him to arrive at school early, energized, and ready to participate.

"The coming of bicycles has changed our lives because we are participating in all lessons," Nelson says.

The extra time and energy have made a noticeable difference in his education. Instead of arriving exhausted, Nelson is alert in class, participates in school activities, and has more time to study both at school and at home. His improved concentration and consistent attendance have contributed to stronger academic performance and renewed confidence in his future.

But the bicycle's impact doesn't end when the school day is over.

On weekends, Nelson uses the bicycle to transport vegetables from his family's garden to the market, helping generate income while saving his family approximately 20,000 Malawian kwacha (USD $11.54) each month in transportation costs. The bicycle also makes everyday household responsibilities faster and easier. Tasks such as fetching water, collecting firewood, and traveling to the maize mill—once time-consuming and physically demanding—can now be completed much more efficiently.

The Buffalo bicycle has become a shared family asset. Nelson's parents and relatives use it to attend social gatherings on weekends, while neighbors borrow it when transportation is urgently needed, extending its benefits throughout the community.

When asked what he values most about the bicycle, Nelson shares: "The Buffalo bicycle is durable, fast, and flexible."

Nelson's story illustrates that when students gain reliable mobility, the benefits travel well beyond education—improving household resilience, supporting livelihoods, and opening pathways to brighter futures for entire families.

IMPACT

Thank you for being a vital part of this journey to mobilize students and communities to thrive through the Power of Bicycles!

Since 2017, more than 31,000 students are reaching school faster and empowered to create their own futures with a Buffalo bicycle in Malawi.

When students have tools that meet their needs and have access to education and other essential services, they can break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

Together, we are making incredible strides in mobilizing students in Mangochi with sustainable bicycles, school ownership, and local mechanics that will revolutionize their access to education.



Image: Secondary students with their Buffalo bicycles in Malawi

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