

Where are they now?

Maria Chirwa

Maria comes from one of the very poor family in Chintheche Community (Nkhatabay District in Northern Malawi). Maria first joined a CITW camp in 2005 when she was 13 and was in grade 7. She was selected as Children in the Wilderness camper during the years when we were only recruiting children who were orphans and were coming from marginally poor families in the local catchment area. Maria came from a family of two daughters living with a helpless mother.



Whilst waiting for her chance to go to college and pursue a career in teaching, Maria worked as an assistant laboratory technician at her former Secondary School (Bandawe Secondary School).

Maria's mother used to fetch firewood and sell them in small bundles on one of the main roads in the community. She was lucky to get Mk200 (ZAR 10) a day. At CITW camps, Maria found and felt some relief. She had found caring and loving mentors. She used to ask many questions about how she could make her future brighter. At the end of camp she felt empowered and confident that she could pursue the future she wanted. At the end of camp she was awarded as a King Fisher Award for the love of water sports and being determined to 'catch' what she wanted.

Maria went through her Secondary School course with a sponsorship from the Rosemary Pencil Foundation (USA). Maria passed Secondary School with flying colours. She is currently in College – year two pursuing Teaching Career. She would like to come back into her home community and assist in reducing the shortage of teachers in local schools.

Maria is really a role model to so many girls, not only on the CITW Malawi programme but to every girl who comes from a background similar to hers. She has a strong heart and good determination to accomplish what she wants to achieve.

Her aspiration is to become an expert in Environmental Education. She would like to become a young woman with a voice of change who can assist in protecting the environment.