

Stichting Hart voor Malawi

Foundation Heart for Malawi

Voor steun aan charitatieve en educatieve projecten in Afrika
Supporting projects of charity and education in Africa

To: Those concerned

Subject: Dictionaries for Central Africa

Veenendaal/ Blantyre, February 2010

Dear Sir/ Madam,

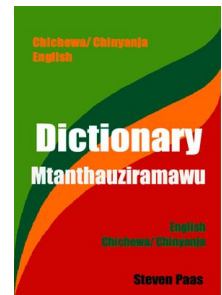
This letter introduces a new development of the Chichewa/ Chinyanja Dictionary Project. We are moving quickly from the first edition of the Dictionary to the improved and extended next edition. The book is continually getting wider recognition, especially at schools and with educational authorities. Besides, there is a growing interest in having the Dictionary available online or in any other electronic form.

At the same time we are continuing the process of improvement, research, and the collection of vocabulary for later editions. Working on the contents of the book and guiding the printing and distribution requires a lot of effort, intellectually, organisationally and financially. The book is an instrument for Africans and expatriates, foreign workers and visitors, students and teachers, and for those who deal with English and Chichewa at a scientific or scholarly level. May it reduce the language barrier between users of English and of Chichewa/ Chinyanja. Let me first give you some information on the background of the Project.

1. A Crisis of Communication

Since 1997 I have been involved in Malawi, as a resident and as a friend at a distance. I taught there at University level for almost a decade and developed a keen interest in various aspects of African societies and cultures. At present from our vantage point in The Netherlands we continue to be active for Malawi. Out of this the Chichewa/ Chinyanja Dictionary Project was born. Why? The English language has acquired an important position in the societies of Central and Southern Africa. However, the vernacular languages have remained indispensable vehicles of communication. For more than 15 million people in Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa, Chinyanja or Chichewa has become the most important language of daily life. The language of the Chewa or Nyanja has gained importance and strength by developments in its written and oral use, and because an increasing number of its speakers have come to discover and emphasise their common linguistic heritage and practice. That is why it has become an intermediary language for all Malawians, and for many people in the whole of Central and Southern Africa.

During my time of residence in Malawi I experienced a crisis of communication, which is caused by the difference between cultures and languages. In general this crisis affects all situations of learning and communication. Of course in schools the crisis is more acute than anywhere else. The communication gap especially affects the poor, the illiterate, the orphans and the sick, because it is bars their social mobility and emancipation. Learners of Chichewa or English were especially handicapped by the absence of Dictionaries in their mother languages. In this situation I have had the opportunity to compile dictionaries, English-Chichewa (EC) and Chichewa-English (CE). Donors helped me to publish and spread them. In the course of time tens of thousands of books have been distributed for free, mainly to secondary school pupils. By January/ February 2009 the two books had run out of stock. They have not been reprinted.



Providing a tool for communication in Chewa/ Nyanja speaking Africa.

*

Kupatsa chida cholimbikitsa kumvetsetsana mu Afrika ya Chichewa/ Chinyanja.

Registration:
Chamber of Commerce
(Kamer van Koophandel) :
no 30212356. Tax Department:
no 27649 viz. sections 32.1-3
and 33.1-4 of the Dutch
'Successiewet'.

Bankdetails:
*Euro account:
Stichting Hart voor Malawi,
Rabobank
Veenendaal, The Netherlands,
no: 1371.89.958.
IBAN:
NL 76 RABO 0137 1899 58.
Indicate: Dictionaries
*Kwacha account:
National Bank of Malawi
Zomba Branch,
S. Paas,
no: 0141035065200
Indicate: Dictionaries

Physical address:
c/o Dr Steven Paas,
Diepenbrockdreef 65,
3906 BH Veenendaal,
The Netherlands

e-mail:
info@chicewadictionary.org

website:
www.chicewadictionary.org

phone:
0031318514424,
0031646335933,
003166335688,
00265993897764

2. The CE-EC Dictionary



We decided to have the separate EC and CE collections combined to one book. In 2009 the CE-EC Dictionary began its history. The first edition has more than 35,000 entries on 730 pages, A5. We printed 15,000 copies. The books went to: (a) the libraries of 3000 primary schools in the Northern, Central en Southern Regions of Malawi through the organisations ACEM and Edukans, (b) pupils teachers and libraries of about 40 secondary schools, and teachers of about 20 primary schools in the districts of Nsanje, Blantyre, Zomba, Mangochi, Nkhotakota, (c) the general public through bookshops, e.g. Kachere, CLAIM, Central Bookshop, Central Africana, Habitat, Mandala, (d) various schools and institutions in Zambia, i.e. in the Eastern

Province and in its capital city Lusaka, through *Werkgroep Zambia* with the assistance of the Dutch Embassy. (e) A quantity of books is in the pipeline of being distributed in the *Access to Education Programme* of Wim en Marjan van den Bos <wvdbos@oikonomosmw.org> The dictionaries will go to pupils, teachers and libraries of four selected schools in Nsanje and Chikwawa and to the libraries of some twenty other schools in that Programme.



3. The next Step

There is a long term Plan for the printing and distribution of at least 100,000 copies of the combined CE-EC Dictionary. The plan is expected to be realised in six phases during five or six years. The first phase, i.e. printing and distribution of 15,000 books of the first edition, has been concluded now. Making a reprint of the first edition is not feasible. There are two reasons. First, there is not enough funding available at present. Secondly, the work in preparation of the second edition has progressed more than expected. That's why the next step will be the printing and distribution of the second edition of the CE-EC Dictionary. Users will find many improvements in the new book, and an addition of more than 100 pages. Funding provided, the printing can start in April 2010.

4. Budget

We have adapted the Budget to the new Plans of (a) printing 15,000 copies of the new edition, of at least 830 pages, (b) making the printed Dictionary available to many schools in Malawi and the Eastern Province of Zambia, (c) transforming the Word file of the collection to a Database, in preparation of making the Dictionary available online on the worldwide web, (d) continuing the processes of research, networking and distribution, including travel.

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|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Jan 2010 Balance* | € 10,410.- | Printing costs | € 65,000.- |
| | | Costs for making a Database | € 5,000.- |
| | | Costs for Distribution | € 3,000.- |
| To be raised | € 65,590.- | Travel, research, networking | € 3,000.- |
| | € 76,000.- | Total | € 76,000.- |

*See Financial Account of Nov/Dec 2009, which can be sent on request

Please consider that no costs are being included for compiling, editing and lay-outing the book, and for organising and leading the Dictionary Project, as these activities have been offered for free, in the interest of the people of Malawi and Zambia. The same is true for the work of the builder of our website and of the auditor of the Project.

5. Financing

We finance the Project, either through direct financial support or through selling the books. This letter is a request for assistance. You can support the realisation of our Project in at least three ways.

- The first way is buying Dictionaries. You can buy locally from a bookshop. They sell at retail prices. If you need larger quantities, you can buy directly from *Foundation Heart for Malawi*, at cost price. Contact us for details on bookshops and on prices and procedures.
- The second way is sponsoring the Project by giving direct financial support. We have to raise an extra € 65,590.- for the next steps.
- The third way of support is propagating the Project. Please send our request to other potential sponsors, recommending the Project to them.

We are ready for your enquiries, and are looking forward to receiving your answer.

With kind regards, on behalf of *Foundation Heart for Malawi*,

Steven Paas

Articles on the Project

Here are some of the older articles on the Dictionary Project, all relating to the situation of 2009.

Please let us know if you want to receive copies.

Mike Lulanga, 'Bridging Language Barrier in Tourism', *The Guardian* 25-29 September 2009

-Steven Paas, 'The latest news on Dictionaries for Chichewa speaking Africa', September/ October 2009

-Idem, 'A History of Chewa/ Nyanja Dictionaries', May 2009 (*Introduction to the CE-EC Dictionary*)

-Idem, 'News on CE-EC Dictionary', 21 May 2009

-Idem, 'Press Release Free Dictionaries', March 2009

-A Chichewa Dictionary for Central Africa, January 2010

In Dutch

-Steven Paas, 'Achtergrond van het Chichewa Woordenboek' (situatie januari 2010)

-Anne Rebel-Lodder, 'Mensen in Malawi zijn minder direct', *Rijnpost* 15 July 2009

http://www.deweekkrant.nl/files/pdfarchief/RP1/20090715/RP1_RP1-1-17_090715_2.pdf

-Maarten Stolk, 'Woordenboek voor Malawi slaat bruggen', *RD* 16 June 2009

<http://www.refdag.nl/artikel/1416603/Woordenboek+voor+Malawi+slaat+bruggen.html>

-Chichewa Woordenboek te zien op Ichthus, De Rijnpost 23-12-2009

<http://www.deweekkrant.nl/pages.php?page=1022435>

-Woordenboek voor Malawi bij de drukker, RD 25-2-2009

<http://www.refdag.nl/artikel/1394091/Woordenboek+voor+Malawi+bij+de+drukker.html>

-Werkgroep Zambia

<http://www.werkgroepzambia.nl/pdf/znb126achterblad.pdf>

-Edukans: Chichewa woordenboek in pakket voor Malawische scholen

<http://www.heelnederlanddeeltuit.nl/>

-Kamus Project, Met woordenboeken hulp bieden in een taalcrisis

<http://kamusproject.org/sw/node/94349>

-Transport4Transport Actie

http://www.transport4transport.nl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46&Itemid=53

Other Links

<http://www.africanbookscollective.com/authors-editors/steven-paas>

<http://nthambazale.com/2009/09/dictionaries-for-schools-in-chichewa-speaking-africa/>

<http://www.24oranges.nl/2009/06/18/dutch-missionary-produces-malawian-dictionary/>

<http://lingamish.com/2008/06/dictionary-dudes/>