



"Celebrating Life: A Cultural Festival for Mental Health" ***16-17th November 2024***

Pamoza Social Enterprise is thrilled to announce an innovative initiative that harnesses the power of local culture to address mental health challenges and promote community well-being in Northern Malawi.



"Celebrating Life: A Cultural Festival for Mental Health" is a groundbreaking event that aims to create a safe and inclusive space for dialogue, exchange, and healing through the vibrant expressions of dance, music, theater, yoga and other art forms. With a particular focus on gender-based violence, this festival seeks to raise awareness, challenge stigmas, and empower communities to break the cycle of silence and abuse.

At the heart of this festival lies the Mlowe Community Center, a pioneering project established by Pamoza Social Enterprise. This center serves as a beacon of resilience, fostering employment opportunities, promoting well-being, reducing gender-based violence, and advocating for environmental conservation. Through the universal language of art, the festival will facilitate powerful messages and meaningful exchanges, catalyzing positive change within the village and paving the way for a better quality of life for the residents of the community and Malawi as a whole.

Investors have a unique opportunity to be part of this transformative initiative. By supporting "Celebrating Life: A Cultural Festival for Mental Health," you will not only contribute to the healing and empowerment of communities but also demonstrate your commitment to fostering sustainable development and promoting mental health awareness.

The festival will take place in the picturesque setting of the Mlowe Community Center, easily accessible by a 3-hour drive from Mzuzu, 45 minute drive from Livingstonia and 30 minute drive from Chitimba.

Join us in celebrating life, embracing diversity, and fostering a more inclusive and resilient society. Together we can create a lasting impact and inspire positive change through the power of art and community engagement.

Context

Malawi, a small country on the border of central and southern Africa, is ranked the eighth poorest country in the world. Many vulnerable groups in Malawi, such as women and youth, do not have access to learning skills needed to earn sustainable incomes. Reliance on wood for construction and cooking leads to significant deforestation and other environmental degradation that exacerbates poverty, vulnerability and general lack of social well-being. Malawi is negatively impacted by cyclones that come from the Indian Ocean across the border with Mozambique such as the devastating March 2023 Cyclone Freddy that led to declaration of a national disaster. Deplorable living conditions further contribute to a fragile health situation including high rates of cholera and cervical cancer and to having the 13th HIV ranking in the world.

Malawi also has a high rate of gender-based violence (GBV) that is directly linked to the problems of poverty, health issues, and disasters. Today, 40% of married women in Malawi suffer from domestic violence. There is also a low awareness of mental health issues, resulting in problems of stigma, suicidal risks (especially among youth) and a low well-being among the communities.

The northern region of Malawi, where the festival will take place, suffers from geographic isolation, deforestation, increased cyclone and flood impacts from climate change, poor resource management, significant poverty, and a 23% unemployment rate especially among young adults. Such factors contribute to vulnerability, mental health challenges, and violence within the community. We wish, through our project, to use different forms of arts to convey messages about mental health so that people become aware of different problems and solution approaches and then can make better-informed decisions that lead to reductions in mental health problems and gender-based violence.

Pamoza community center – Northern Malawi

Since 2019, Pamoza Social Enterprise has been conducting assessments and working together with various partners to provide such vulnerable groups with prioritized needs, including professional training courses on environmentally and socially sustainable livelihood, entrepreneurship, and life skills so that they can create and sell needed products and services, open and manage businesses, and better care for their families and their overall communities in the short-term and the longer-term.

The Pamoza Social Enterprise - Three Pillar Approach

As a not-for profit social enterprise, Pamoza takes a holistic approach to positive social impact and sustainable community improvement. In our three pillar approach, success is not measured financially but through such impacts in three areas :

Training & Employment



- Training in livelihood, entrepreneurship, and life skills for identified vulnerable youth resulting in improved financial and family stability for the community
- Employment for the community in growing and selling bamboo, in the restaurant and juice bar, and in



the forthcoming Pamoza shop to sell goods and services produced in trainings and by trainees

Environment

- Training focused on producing sustainably (e.g., recycled art & reusing plastic and other materials, beekeeping and use of bamboo to reduce dependence on cutting trees for wood)
- Bamboo planting to reduce reliance on wood, reduce soil erosion, sequester carbon to help mitigate climate change, and reduce fuel use for sourcing materials for furniture production



Social Well-Being

- An arts center for traditional music and dance classes, festivals and performances
- Community gatherings to bring people together to enjoy and share ideas
- Mental health psychological trainings on issues such as stigmatization and gender based violence



Our Community Project in Northern Malawi

After four years of working in the southern region of Malawi, Pamoza decided to shift its focus to a new project in Mlowe village in the northern part of the country.

In 2023, Pamoza rehabilitated an abandoned maize mill provided by the local traditional authority to be the community livelihoods skills training and arts center for people from Mlowe and neighboring communities.

Starting in 2024, Pamoza plans to initiate:

- Livelihood skills training for identified vulnerable youth and women in: creating art and decorative jewelry using recycled materials and beads, tailoring and design, hair styling and salon management, bamboo growing and furniture construction, soap making, and beekeeping
- Bamboo farming in partnership with a local farmer association to grow and sell the bamboo
- A restaurant and juice bar for enjoyment by trainees, trainers, and the local community
- A local music, dance, art festival for the community
- The Pamoza Shop for selling goods and services produced by Pamoza and its trainees



We wish, through our project, to demonstrate the relevance of having an intervention model integrating these three pillars, employment, environment and well-being, to strengthen community resilience.

Festival concept

“Celebrating life : a cultural festival for mental health” has an aim of promoting and preserving the local culture of northern Malawi and to raise awareness through art on mental health challenges, as stigma, suicidal risk and vulnerability with a focus on gender based violence (GBV).

As the month of November is dedicated to the 16 days period of activism for GBV in Malawi, Pamoza Social Enterprise chose this month to bring awareness on this topic through a cultural festival, as reducing GBV and improving mental health fall under the social well-being pillar of the three pillar approach.

As art is also an integral component of Pamoza’s approach to addressing various other topics such as employment and environmental conservation, we have chosen to launch the activities to be conducted at the community center in Mlowe with this art festival for mental health.

The festival is intended for the local community as well as all people who would like to come to enjoy, learn and participate in the festival. Its aim is to create a cultural event to bring people together to exchange and learn about crucial topics of our society as well as to enjoy and appreciate art. As it is a new festival, we plan for it to only be for the two days of 16-17 November and have free admission with entrants encouraged to give donations for Pamoza projects.

There will be a camping site where festival attendees can pay to sleep in tents; venues for workshops on mental health and for movies and short theater plays on GBV; a shaded space for cultural dances such as well-known Malawi Northern Region traditional dances the Malipenga and Mbotosha during the day and Vimbuza at night; and a stage for music and poetry artists to perform, which we will aim to include at least one well-known Malawian singer. All the local performers will have a workshop on mental health prior to the event, for them to understand and to create performances (songs, dances etc.) related to these topics.

Bars and restaurants will be run by members of the local community with affordable prices. Stalls will be stocked with items made by the staff and students of Pamoza Social Enterprise for sale. And yoga sessions for improved well-being will be available for attendees.

Fundraising is planned to be done through an evening music event at venues to be announced in Lilongwe and Mzuzu in September and October 2024. These events will raise money for the festival while helping to promote it. There will also be a one-day hike to the waterfall, the lake shore trail, and other beautiful sites around Mlowe that will be organized to raise funds from area tourists. We welcome additional fundraising activity ideas.

Partnership is desired for organizing and implementing a festival that can best benefit attendees and the local community. Current partners of Pamoza include Teveta Malawi with employment skills training support; Caring hands with mental health workshop support; Artmalawi with waste management support; and Adventure of Colby with hike organization support.

Additional partners are sought to help and contribute in any way deemed suitable for them.

Festival activities and plan

First day – 16 th November	Activity	details	where
11am-noon	Opening of the festival	Welcoming the participants and visitors	Main venue of the festival – the Pamoza community center, Mlowe
Noon-1pm	Opening speech	TA of Mlowe, Pamoza director, organizers of the festival and a guest of honor	The Pamoza community center, Mlowe
1pm-5pm	Mbotosha dance	Several Mbotosha dance from the region, performed by women only	In Mlowe village, behind the community center
1pm-2pm	Workshop on mental health 1	In parallel to the dances workshops and shows will be held	In Pamoza community center
2pm-3pm	Theatre show on GBV		In Pamoza community center
3pm-4pm	Workshop on mental health 1	For those who missed the first session	In Pamoza community center
4pm-5pm	Theatre play on GBV		In Pamoza community center
5pm-6pm	Presentation of Pamoza community center and projection of a movie on GBV		In Pamoza community center
6pm-9pm	Music shows		Main stage
9pm-12am	Vimbuza dance		In Mlowe village, behind the community center
second day – 17 th November	Activity	details	where
6:30-7:30am	Yoga session for adults	An easy yoga class for discovery	In Pamoza community center
8am-8:30am	Yoga session for kids	An easy yoga class for discovery	In Pamoza community center
9am-2pm	Malipenga dance	Several Malipenfa dance from the region, performed by men only	In Mlowe village, behind the community center
9am-10am	Workshop on mental health 2		In Pamoza community center
10am-11am	Theatre show on GBV		In Pamoza community center
11am-12pm	Workshop on mental health 2	For those who missed the first session	In Pamoza community center
2pm	Speech for the closer of the festival	TA of Mlowe, Pamoza director and organizers of the festival	In Pamoza community center

Bars and restaurants, as well as stands for art craft will be open during the 2 days of the festival.

Festival Budget

Description	Price per unit in USD	Quantity	Object	Total USD
Accommodation for known malawian musician (not from Mlowe) for 1 night	40	6	room	\$ 240
Transportation and food for local artists (music and theatre artist) not from Mlowe for 1 day	50	12	artist	\$ 600
Accommodation for local theatre artists (not from Mlowe) for 1 night	10	6	room	\$ 60
Fees for performers from Mlowe (food and drinks) for 1 days	10	50	artist	\$ 500
Fees for volunteers (food and drinks) for 2 days	20	20	volunteer	\$ 400
Sound equipment and lights per day	300	2	day	\$ 600
Stage hire 10m x 10m	500	1	day	\$ 500
Construction of traditional huts - festival's venues	30	4	hut	\$ 120
Amount for food for restaurant per day	400	2	day	\$ 800
Amount for drinks for the bar per day	1000	2	day	\$ 2 000
Posters printing	10	100	poster	\$ 1 000
Amount for Advertisement	200	1	aount	\$ 200
Total Final		\$ -		\$ 7 020

Founders of the festival

These initiatives in Mlowe are being led and guided by:



Peace KALUA, social entrepreneur from Malawi, graduate in microfinance, entrepreneurship, social sciences and economics; founder and director of Pamoza Social Enterprise. Following his work as an entrepreneur in South Africa and Malawi, he has provided vocational training for livelihood skills in craft making to vulnerable young people in Malawi since 2013. After launching Pamoza Social Enterprise in 2019, Peace initiated the development leadership team, membership, partnerships, and resulting activities to support vulnerable people in communities during the COVID-19 crisis. Peace has a passion and dedicated commitment to empowering vulnerable and disadvantaged young, elderly and disabled people and the communities in which they live to better provide for themselves.



Dr. Bob ALEXANDER, Integrated environmental science and social science PhD focusing on community-based resource management and sustainable development, consultant for integrated participatory community development, risk management and sustainable livelihoods; co-director of Pamoza. Bob is a researcher, trainer, and consultant with over 25 years of practical experience focused on promoting sustainable livelihoods and access to basic social services as well as integrating biophysical and socio-economic elements of participatory risk management, strengthening and development of community resilience. In addition to his work contributing to the development of the social enterprise Pamoza, his work in Malawi has focused on risk communication and community engagement for building resilience, as director of the 'Tikonzekere Arts Contests: Communicating Flood Vulnerability Reduction Good Practices through the Arts in Malawi' and content producer for the 'Konza Kapansi' radio program on permaculture and sustainability good practices.



Dr. Annabelle JACCARD, clinical psychologist and art therapist, PhD in psychopathology and psychoanalysis, researcher and manager of humanitarian programs in mental health and psychosocial support in Africa. Following a thesis on the issue of hatred in Islamist radicalization, Annabelle is involved in humanitarian actions with international NGOs: Action Against Hunger, Red Cross and Doctors without Borders, as project manager in mental health and psychosocial support in different countries in Africa, including Malawi; It was in Malawi that she became acquainted with the social enterprise Pamoza through their actions, and decided to become involved as an advisor on mental health issues.

For more information and for partnership please contact:

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Thank you!

