

COVER

Songbook for Primary School Children in Malawi

Davie Kaambankadzanja | Marc Wagner

This booklet is the result of a successful cross-cultural collaboration. A variety of individuals and institutions both in Malawi and in Switzerland, have contributed their knowledge and enthusiasm to the fact that these children's songs (collected by Davie Kaambankadzanja) are now for the first time available in printed form and prepared for use in teacher training and teaching.

In addition, the songs, in its current expression, were professionally recorded in the studio under the artistic direction of Ben Michael Mankhamba and therefore documented for future generations.

The audio files of the songs can be downloaded for free on the Internet at the following address: **www.ttip-malawi.ch**

The following people were involved in the implementation of the project:

Songbook

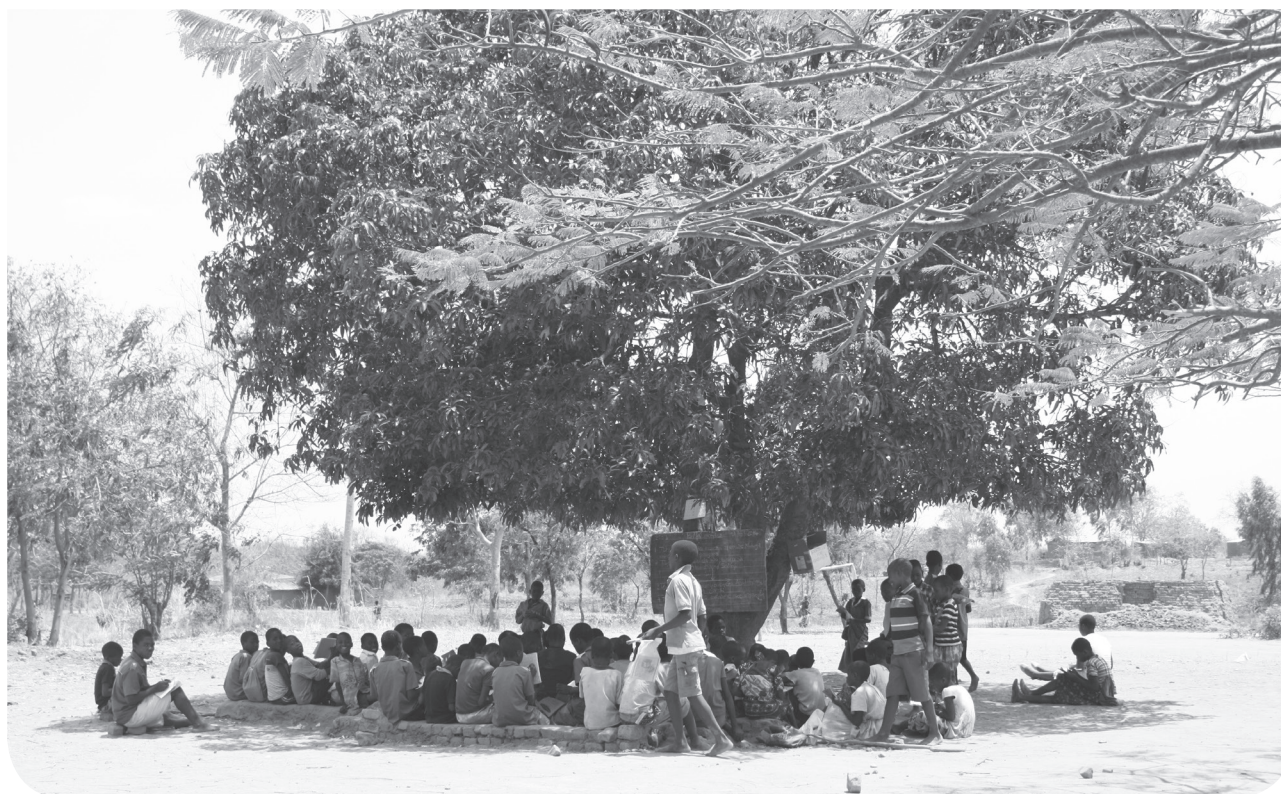
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Many thanks to the following people who have contributed to the success of this project with their valuable commitment and their support:

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Foreword

by Andreas Jungen and Ben Michael Mankhamba

It was in 2012 when me and my wife planned a trip to Malawi where we wanted to meet our new partners at the Machinga TTC. Some lecturers of instrumental training at our college asked us if we could collect Malawian children songs and bring books and recorded samples back to Switzerland. We kindly agreed not knowing that this project could not be completed successfully. In Malawi we soon learned that there were no Malawian children songs transcribed or recorded yet. No books in the few bookshops, no CDs or tapes on the markets. But we did not want to go back to Switzerland with empty hands. So we asked our friendly staff at the hotel to sing some songs for us which we recorded with our smartphones. Like this we heard for the first time songs like Pamchenga or Bilimankhwe.

A friend of us from the Machinga TTC then gave us an important hint. He knew a specialist at the Malawi Institute of Education in Domasi. There we met Davie Kaambankadzanja who showed us a copy of his songbook in which he had collected 24 children songs. Unfortunately he had never had the possibility to print his work. But together we made out a plan – and here is the result of our cooperation.

Within the program T.T.I.P. Malawi-Switzerland, Marc Wagner, lecturer for instrumental training at the IVP NMS in Berne, Switzerland, has spent a month in Malawi where he recorded a selection of the children songs with the help of students of the Machinga TTC and Malawian musicians. He then transcribed the songs and wrote them down with notes. The Songbook has been printed in Blantyre, the songs can be downloaded for free from our website.

We are proud to offer this songbook and the recorded songs to the childrens and teachers in Malawi. May they be used for teaching and learning. And we hope that this contribution to the conservation of the National Heritage of Malawi will be appreciated.

I am glad to have contributed my musical knowledge into this project which I believe aims at promoting and preserving the endangered children's music culture. Malawi is very rich in children's cultural songs and dances. Unfortunately these have not been recorded, preserved and promoted and their histories not kept and are slowly dying out.

This project will greatly help in promoting and preserving this endangered music culture mainly because it is also theoretically written down so that anyone who reads music can easily sing or play them worldwide. The media, mostly radio stations will now have no excuse of not playing them because they will have them now.

Learned upcoming musicians will be inspired to play and sing these songs. Old traditional musicians in the villages will also be encouraged to remember more of these old songs hence pass them on to the younger generations.

Musically Yours
Ben Michael Mankhamba

21th of June 2015

Introduction

by Davie Kaambankadzanja



Malawi is one of the few countries in Africa, whose transcribed music has not been exposed worldwide thereby creating an impression that there is little or no music at all in Malawi. This is mainly due to the fact that very little has been documented about Malawian music. The few books on Malawian music simply have the words of the song written and it is assumed people know the music. The truth is that Malawi has a rich musical culture. This book has been written as a way of demonstrating this. Some familiar songs tapped from the vast Malawian children's songs have been transcribed the way they are sung, giving opportunities to those who can read the music to appreciate them as much as Malawian children do.

A songbook for primary school children in Malawi is an attempt to break the drought on Malawian music literature and is a way of preserving the songs which the author noted were changing to such an extent that if they are not transcribed, it is likely that they would become unrecognizable. Completely different tunes will emerge out of these tunes. This book therefore will act as a point of reference in future as to how the songs have been sung over the years.

The book contains twelve songs that have been sung in primary schools over the years throughout the country. There was no specific reason for their choice, except that these were songs commonly sung at Domasi Government Primary School, the nearest school from the institution the author works. The songs were collected from the school and transcribed.

The author selected just a few songs from some types of songs depicted in the Malawian Primary School Music syllabus. These types of songs are canon, story-telling, game songs, religious, and lullaby.

Canon songs are characterized by different groups starting at different times and points in the song, and they go round and round. A maximum of four groups is ideal. Common canon songs included in the book are: *Tsopano Tatha Kuphunzira* and *Timayenda Go*.

Children enjoy stories and in the olden days it was a common scenario to find children surrounding a fire at night listening to stories told by elderly people. Most of the stories involved singing. Such practices are gradually dying out, and therefore the author saw it necessary to include some story-telling songs which have ended into primary schools. Songs such as *Bilimankhwe*, *Galuyu Ngwandani* and *Kwiyo Kwiyo* are some examples of story-telling songs found in this book.

Children in Malawi, just like any other children throughout the world, enjoy playing games. It was therefore necessary to include some game songs commonly performed in schools as well as after school, either for facilitating teaching and learning, such as *Pamchenga*, or just for enjoyment of the games, such as *Nzama*.

Malawi is a religious country. It has, not surprisingly, a number of religious songs commonly sang in schools. One other contributing factor is the historical background of education in Malawi, which was initially introduced by the Christian missionaries, and religious songs were therefore part of the education system. There are still many primary schools today owned by Christian missionaries. One religious song has been included in this book: *Kumtengo Wamoyo*.

Bilimankhwe



Bilimankhwe

Bilimankhwe is the vernacular name for chameleon. This is a story telling song which depicts a conversation between chameleon and curious children who want to know why chameleon has protruding eyes. The song advises children to be sympathetic, and therefore not hostile to chameleons. One day, a group of children were on their way to school when they saw Bilimankhwe slowly making his way across the road.

They stopped and began to laugh at his huge, bulging eyes and asked him: «Bilimankhwe, why are your eyes bulging like that?» Bilimankhwe turned his head slightly and fixed his gaze on them. «Do not laugh at me, children. I have lost my whole family. I have been crying, mourning for the deaths of my relatives. This is what has led to the swelling of my eyes».

Vimbuza

C Am

Bi li ma_nkhwe bi li ma_nkhwe ma soa na tu pa ni nji?
do do ti so do do ti so do do do ti so la mi

kwa tu ma li ro msa ma se
do ti do do do ti do do
la so la la la so la la
mi re mi mi mi re mi mi

Dm⁶ Am G 1. C 2. C

i ne ndza cho
so la so mi

ke a na i nu kwa ye ra mbe mbe mbe mbe
do do ti so fa mi fa so fa mi mi
la la so mi re do re mi re do do
mi mi re do ti la ti do ti so so

G C G C

ka do mu tsa re mu ma nge
so so la so mi do

i ne ndza cho ka pa mdzi pa no mu tsa re mo ma nge pa mdzi pa
so la do so fa so so so so so so la do so fa so so so
so so la so mi re mi mi mi mi do do re do la so do do do do

Em C Am G 1. C C

i ne ndza cho
so la so mi

no ta o na ni pa kho mo pa nga pa pa ye ra mbe mbe mbe mbe
do do do do so so so so so so so la so mi mi fa so fa mi do
mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi do do re mi re do do
do la ti do ti so

Changa

Mbotosya G

1.

Cha nga a Cha nga Cha nga
do do so do do do do do

Cha nga nya ma nso
mi mi mi fa mi
do do do re do
so so so la so

2.

ku mthi ra mche re kwe ne kwe ne
mi mi mi re do re re re re

nso
mi
do
so

wa ko ma cha nga
fa fa fa fa fa
do do do do do
la la la la la

1.

nsi nji ro ku mthi ra
re do la mi mi mi

wa nki ra nki ra ra
la la do la do
ti ti do ti do do
so so so so so so



Changa is the Chichewa name for bushbaby. A bushbaby is a nocturnal animal with huge eyes, and gets its English name because at night, it makes a loud noise that sounds like a baby crying. This song is somewhat a joke since few people in Malawi will eat changa. In the song, someone is encouraging people to eat Changa meat, and she goes on to explain how best to prepare it. The person says adding salt makes the meat good, but it is even more delicious if you add groundnut flour, which is even ridiculous, since it is strange to add groundnut flour to meat in Malawi.

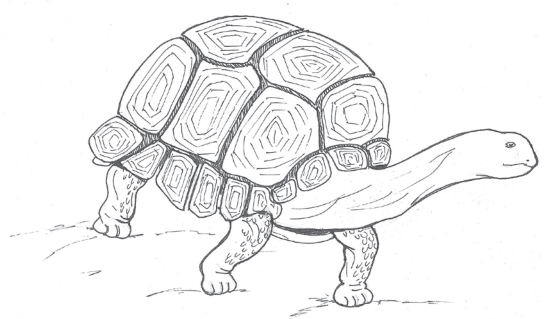


Fulu Chigoba Pamsana

One of the reptiles that are becoming scarce these days are tortoises. Although this is the case, Malawi has so many tales and folklores where tortoises are depicted and as such, it will be difficult to totally forget the reptile. The Malawian vernacular name for tortoise is Fulu and the shell on its back is called chigoba. So the song talks about the tortoise with the shell on its back. This is a game song where children sing the song while in a circle squatting. They move slowly following the beat of the song with one person leading and the rest responding.

Vimbuza

Call	Response		C
	G	D	G
fu lu so so	chi go so so mi mi do do	ba pa msa na so so la fa mi mi fa re do do do so	chi go ba fu lu so so so so mi mi mi do do do
R	C		R
G	D	G	Em D
chi go ba pa msa na so so so so la fa mi mi mi mi fa re do do do do re so	chi go ba ma de so so so mi do mi mi mi do do do	li ya ya ma de la la la so mi	
G	C	R	C
G	Em	D	G
li ya ya ma de do do do mi do	li ya ya ma de la la la so mi	li ya ya fu lu do do do so so	



Fulu

Galuyu Ngwandani

Calypso

C F C

Ga lu yu ngwa nda ni ma te ma te mba ti mche ke
mi so mi so so so do la so so so mi mi re
 do mi do mi mi mi so fa mi mi mi do do ti

6 Am C 1.

pa ni mba nga ti wa dya ma te mba ma te mba
do do re mi mi mi re mi mi mi do do do
 la la ti do do do ti do do do so so so

People in Malawi depend mostly on fish for their food. Lake Malawi and many other rivers provide wide a variety of small fish. You can often find many of these fish that have been caught placed out on the shores to dry in the sun. One of the people's favourite kinds of fish is called matemba. This song humorously tells the story of galu, or dog, which has eaten matemba. The dog has taken the matemba while people were

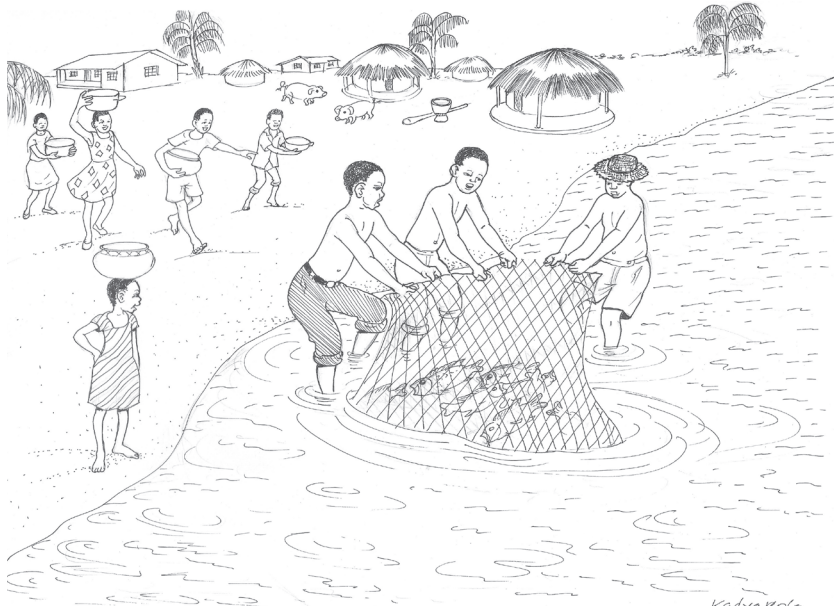
not paying attention. Now they are thinking of what to do with the dog. Some suggest out of anger that they should dissect galu to get back the fish from its abdomen, for it is surely an insult to let tasty fish be eaten by adog. This is a song typically sung by young children.



Kadyakolo

Vimbuza

Lake Malawi is the third largest lake in Africa. People that live by its shores often earn their living by fishing, using dug out canoes and large fishing nets. Kadyakolo is one of the many species of fish living in Lake Malawi. This song is usually sang while men are pulling nets from the lake. They sing about kadyakolo in the hope that they will find some in the net they are pulling. Many people in Malawi like to eat the entire fish, including the head, tail and sometimes bones. In the song, kadyakolo is being described as having a delicious head, but bitter intestines.



Vimbuza

F

Ka dya ko lo
do mi do__ re

nso mba yo ko ma eh
mi re mi mi re mi
do la do do la do

Gm F

i ma ko ma pa mi mba
re re re do do do la

i ma ko ma ku mu tu eh pa mi mba
fa fa fa mi fa fa__ mi fa mi mi re
re re re do re re__ do re do do la
la

1. 2. Dm F

wa eh

ku wa__ wa eh ku wa__ wa eh wa eh
mi mi__ re mi mi mi re mi re mi
do do__ la do do do__ la do la do
so so so

Claves Pattern:

Kumtengo Wamoyo

The Christian missionary influence in Malawian education system is deep-rooted because western education was first brought to Malawi by the missionaries before the government took control. But even after taking control the government has always worked in collaboration with the Christian missionaries in the management of schools.



Kumtengo wamoyo which translates at the tree of life, is one of the songs sung at Sunday schools and got its way into the classrooms. It is a Christmas song talking about the nativity story of Jesus Christ.

Calypso

C F C C

Ku mte ngo ku mte ngo ku mte ngo ku mte ngo
 mi so so mi so so mi so so mi so so

ku mte ngo wa mo yo ku
 la do do ti la so la
 mi fa fa mi re do mi

F C Em Am

ku li Ye su Ye su wa ba dwa
 mi mi mi re mi re do do do

mte ngo wa mo yo
 do do ti la so so so fa so fa mi mi mi
 fa fa mi re do do do do ti do ti la la la

G C F G C

wa ba dwa wa ba dwa ku li Ye su Ye su wa ba dw ku mte ngo wa mo yo
 re re re mi mi mi mi mi mi re mi re do do do do re re do ti do

fa fa fa so so so so so so fa so fa mi mi mi mi fa fa so fa mi
 ti ti ti do do do do do do ti do ti do do do do ti ti do ti so

Kwiyo Kwiyo

This is a traditional wedding song. It is a simple tune and children sing it on other occasions as well. People bring various gifts to a wedding celebration including flour to use for making nsima, (a thick porridge-like substance which is a staple food in Malawi), money, potatoes maize and even living chickens. Kwiyo kwiyo is the cooing sound of a chicken. People dance and sing this song while guests offer the gifts they have brought. The words of the song encourage people to give generously, even if the chicken they have brought is very small.



Game Song

* * * * * * *

D Bm A D Bm A D

Kwi yo kwi yo kwi yo kwi yo
la so la so la so la so

gwi ra ni ka nga che pe gwi ra ni gwi ra ni ka nga che pe gwi ra
la la la la so mi so mi mi mi mi mi mi so fa so fa mi mi
mi mi mi mi re do re do do do do do do mi re mi re do do
do do do do ti so ti so so so so so so do ti do ti so so

* * * *

Bm A D

ka ya nkan khu ku
do do re mi do

ni gwi ra ni ka nga che pe gwi ra
mi la la la la so mi so mi mi
do mi mi mi mi re do re do do
so do do do do ti so ti so so

* * * *

Bm A D

ka ya nkan khu ku
do do re mi do

ni gwi ra ni ka nga che pe gwi ra ni
mi mi mi mi so fa so fa mi mi mi
do do do do mi re mi re do do do
so so so so do ti do ti so so so

* = Handclap

Nzama

Nzama is a type of peas commonly grown in rural areas of Malawi. The song talks about this type of peas, saying that it is delicious with a little salt. People are therefore invited to taste it. Children sing this song for entertainment at school or at home when they are playing. They line up in a circle and dance moving sideways while holding their knees.

Game Song

Call 1 **Response**

Eb/Bb **Bb** **N.C.** **Bb**

Nza ma nza ma ye re re re re nza ma
 la so la so do do ti so fa so mi do
 la la so mi re mi do

Call 2

Eb/Bb **Bb**

nza ma ku ko ma

Call 3

Eb/Bb **Bb**

a ka thi ra mche re

Call 4

Eb/Bb **Bb**

si zu ku tu a



Pamchenga

After school, children like to play in the sand since it is free of rocks and dangerous animals like snakes and scorpions. In the song, children are asking each other to read the vowels they have written in the sand. They write the vowels of the alphabet in the sand, recalling what they learnt during the day at school. This song has even been brought into classroom by teachers to help the young children to learn the vowel sounds.



Game Song

Pa mche nga u__ yu
do do do so__ so

pa mche nga ti ma te re po se we ra po se we ra
la la la so so mi re do mi re do do mi re do
mi mi mi do do do ti do mi re do
do do do ti la so fa mi so fa mi

- D D D D

nda ni u__ yu nda ni u__ yu nda ni u__ yu nda ni u__ yu
mi re do la__ so mi re do so__ so mi re do la__ so mi re do so__ so

A - a E - e I - i O - o
mi do mi do mi do mi do

D D Bm A G A D

nda ni - pa mche nga
mi re do do do do

U - u pa mche nga ti ma te re po se we ra
mi do la la la so so mi re do mi re do
mi mi mi do do do ti do mi re do
do do do ti la so fa mi so fa mi

Tambala Walira

Tambala is the cock or rooster. The bird is very significant in Malawi. In the rural areas it is used as a time-keeper, especially at night. During the day people use the position of the sun to tell rough estimates of time. It is common for someone to say, «I will meet you when the sun gets to...» and point with the arm to a position on the horizon. Many people refer to the cock crows when talking about the time very early in the morning because there is no sun. Kugwira tambala pakamwa is a proverb which literally translates, «to hold the cock's mouth», meaning someone has left very early, even before the first cock Tambala was

also a very important political symbol when Malawi gained its independence from the British Government in 1964. Tambala was used as the sign of a «new day», the down of a new nation. Tambala Walira is a song by Michael Fred Sauka, the composer of the Malawi National Anthem. In the song, he talks about a cock which crows early in the morning waking people to go to work in their fields. He also talks about laziness which retards the development of any nation. The song teaches that hard work and sweat will bring freedom.

Call **Response** **Marching Song**

G Bm Am D G C D G

Tam ba la wa li ra ko ko li ri ko o dzu ka ni tha ma ngi ra ni ku tchu to za nu
do so do mi so so fa mi re do ti so do do do mi la la la re so do do ti do

C **R**

G Bm Am D G C D G

u le si ndi mda ni wo kwa za dzi ko o kha ma la chi swe na lo ti tsa ti re
do so do mi so so fa mi re do ti so do do mi la la re so do do ti do

C **R** **C** **R** **C**

G C Am D Bm Em C D G

a a a a non ngo no ngo e e e e we fu we fu thu ku ta la nu la gu la u fu lu
mi re do ti la la la la fa mi re do ti ti ti ti so fa mi re do la do re do ti do



Timayenda Go!

The majority of school Children in Malawi, especially those who live in the rural areas cannot afford shoes. In such areas, owning a pair of shoes is something of a status symbol. Usually children who own shoes are regarded as well to do and are therefore admired by those who cannot afford a pair. The song depicts the fortunate few who have shoes and are proud of them. The children say, «go! go! go!» as they walk, imitating the sound that their shoes make.



Marching Song

G C D G

go do go re go mi

ti ma ye nda go
do do re ti do
so so la fa so
mi mi fa re mi

G C D G

ndi nsa pa to zo le mbe dwa
mi mi re re mi mi re re
go so do do so go so do
fa la mi

Canon:

G

1. 2. 3. 4.

go go go ti ma ye nda go ndi nsa pa to zo le mbe dwa go go go
do re mi do do re ti do mi mi re re mi mi re re so so do

«Singing and dancing are ways of expressing one's emotions. Give learners frequent opportunity to sing and dance.»

Mary Chirwa

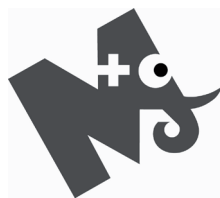
Department of Teacher Education and Development (DTED)

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

«Teaching and learning is supposed to be exciting and joyful. This can be achieved through among other things use of songs which our parents, grandparents used to sing in the society.»

Mike Msakatiza

Principal Machinga TTC



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Teaching Training Improvement Partnership Malawi – Switzerland

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