

Umoyo wa Thanzi (UTHA), *Health for Life*, is a collaborative, multidisciplinary, reproductive health research program based in rural Malawi. We aim to understand factors associated with diminished health among individuals living in this region, and to develop clinical and community-based interventions to respond to health needs.

UTHA partners

Ohio State University
Child Legacy International
University of Malawi
Baylor College of Medicine

2008 Child Legacy International begins working in Malawi. Over the next 6 years, a comprehensive health facility is built, fully powered by solar and wind.

2012 Baylor College of Medicine and Ohio State faculty visit Child Legacy and initiate discussions about establishing a health research program at the site.

2013 Ohio State faculty and graduate students begin working in Malawi, funded by Ohio State grants. We conduct qualitative research about contraceptive decision making, and the relationship between scarcity and sexual risk behaviors. The nascent research team supports a comprehensive geo-coded census of Child Legacy's catchment area, home to more than 20,000 people. We make plans for a comprehensive baseline survey.



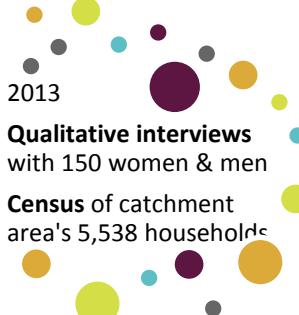
2014 The research team administers a baseline survey, the **Cohort Survey's Wave 1**, to a cluster-randomized cohort of 1,030 women and 442 men.



We conduct a **cervical cancer educational intervention** in CLI catchment area community.

UTHA's presence in the national research landscape is established when the research team presents posters and talks at the Malawi College of Medicine Annual Research Dissemination Day in Lilongwe.





The capacity of our research team continues to grow. Researchers on site include clinical and non-clinical staff with expertise in project management, community-based interviewing, cervical exams, HIV testing and counseling, data entry, specimen collection, and laboratory diagnostics. The on-site laboratory at Child Legacy International is built and furnished with necessary equipment including refrigerator, incubator, microscope, centrifuge, micropipettors and consumables; laboratory staff is hired and trained; standard operating procedures for individual laboratory assays, safety precautions, disposal of hazardous waste, and quality control are established. Tracking mechanisms are put in place for identifying, storing and transporting samples and for returning the results to research participants

2015 Bwenzi La Thanzi, a clinic-based study of the relationship between female genital schistosomiasis, HIV, and infertility, is launched. Protocols are developed and implemented to recruit participants, collect biological samples, process, transport and test for HIV, HSV-2, syphilis, trichomoniasis, bacterial vaginosis, chlamydia, gonorrhea, HPV, and pregnancy.

A second clinic based study to **evaluating the accuracy of a low cost diagnostic test for susceptible and drug resistant TB** will launch in the spring.

We prepare for **Cohort Wave 2**, in which we will collect biological samples from existing UTHA cohort participants, test these samples in in-country laboratories, and establish the community prevalence of STIs and other infectious diseases.

