

Poverty and famine

When William was 14, a terrible famine struck Malawi. Famine is when there is not enough food for people to eat. It was so disastrous that people were starving to death or developing serious illnesses from lack of nutrition. Many people started to develop kwashiorkor, a condition where a lack of nutrients causes the body to swell. The famine was caused by a poor crop growth. Many of the people in Malawi relied on the growth of maize crops to earn a living. When the maize didn't grow, they had nothing to sell and nothing to eat. William's family were surviving on a small handful of floury porridge (called nsima) each for the whole day. People wandered the streets, begging for a small amount of food at every house because they were so desperately hungry. The deprived family had no money, so William's father could not pay his school fees. Sadly, William was no longer allowed to go to school with his friends.