



GRANTS COMMITTEE REPORT LUANAR PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

FOM continues to support Professor Tim Gondwe's poultry project to improve flocks and nutrition of rural farmers. Because of prior support, the 500 egg incubator is hatching at 82.3 percent. A new grant of \$1485 will be utilized to make an old 1400 egg incubator operational, and to resume the old Bunda community project.

Team from Banda Rural Poultry Project meeting with women in Mchinji



Learning how to vaccinate a day old baby chick

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PEACE CORPS-MALAWI PARTNERSHIP

SOLID Groups Impacting Communities

Sustainable Opportunities for Leadership In Development (SOLID) is a program developed by Peace Corps Volunteers that aims to train-up Malawian individuals so they can become leaders in their own communities through volunteering. The SOLID program has ten mandatory sessions that trainees must complete before graduating. During these lessons, Peace Corps Volunteers teach the attendees about community development, needs assessments, priority ranking, project design, income-generating activities and collection of data. After graduating from the program, it is expected that they will work together to solve the challenges they see in their communities and country. In this way, SOLID encourages sustainable projects and Malawian ownership. Some graduates go on to become leaders in their own SOLID groups. Although the program is fairly new in Malawi, already 644 people have graduated from SOLID. Environment Volunteer, Corey Sugerik, helped strengthen the income generating activities of the Chigotayo SOLID group by building an oven for baking. Extra funds were used to paint a blackboard for further training and to construct a fence for a demonstration permagarden and tree nursery.



Friends Of Malawi transferred \$2490.47 for APCD Volunteer projects for 2017. Thirty four Volunteers have utilized the fund. Ten projects were completed in the Environment Sector, fourteen in the Education Sector with fourteen in the Health Sector.

GIRLS CLUB CAREER EXPLORATION TRIP

Education Volunteer Nikolai Reitz and his counterpart went with 19 girls from Namalamba Secondary School to visit Limbe Police Station, Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital and the College of Medicine. The goal was to introduce the girls to careers as police officers, nurses and doctors. Seventy-five percent of the girls had never been to town before, even though it is less than 45 minutes away by minibus.

KAMEME GIRLS CAMP SEED ACTIVITY

APCD funds were utilized by a current Environment Volunteer to help girls in Chilinda Primary School (Bembe-Rumpi area) identify and understand major environmental issues in Malawi, understand the impacts that deforestation has on Malawi's forest and food security, and equip them with the skills for making a basket cooker and learning three fuel-efficient cooking methods. At the camp, the girls learned that they can use less fuel, less money and less time using basket cookers and fuel-efficient cooking methods. This extra time can be used to study.

MSOKONEZI COMMERCIAL GARDEN PROJECT

After noticing that only greens, tomatoes and onions were being grown in the community, a current Environment Volunteer got APCD funds to have the community build a commercial garden in order to address nutrition, food insecurity, and lack of funds in the area. Using the funds, community members purchased seeds and the Volunteer used the creation of the garden to demonstrate permagarden techniques that local farmers could apply.



GO STUDENTS CLUB

Education Volunteer Alexandra McCollister received funding for a "Go Students" Club at Mitundu Secondary School. The program teaches students about sexual and reproductive health, especially HIV/AIDS prevention. Thirty students were able to participate in the 24 sessions.

MPIRI HEALTH CENTER

For World Malaria Month, a Health Volunteer and her counterpart implemented a number of malaria projects in Machinga. One project was visiting households in the surrounding villages to take pictures of families who were using their bed nets correctly. Those photos were displayed on a Wall of Fame at the local health center. Families who were not hanging their bed nets correctly were taught the best way to hang the nets. The Volunteer plans to do a follow up visit after three months in order to see if the families are still hanging the nets correctly. Funds were used for printing the photos and buying materials to create the Wall of Fame. A second project utilized funds for soap, needles, thread and buckets to complete bed net care and repair sessions at five clinics in the area. This provided mothers an opportunity to wash and fix holes in their nets. The project was followed with 40 secondary school girls to help increase their knowledge of malaria, transmission, prevention and treatment. Those who participated were given a certificate at the end of the sessions.



GLOW Workshop in Chipoka (Salima)

Health Volunteer Katlyn Saley and her counterpart hosted a two day workshop focusing on a wide variety of female empowerment topics for 35 secondary school girls. The girls received information on self-esteem, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, abuse, healthy sexual choices and women's rights. APCD funds were used for food, writing materials and a small salary for the cooks.

VILLAGE X PARTNERSHIP

LIKOSWE VILLAGE GOAT HERD

Because of persistent problems caused by poverty, Likoswe residents have very low incomes and very limited diets. Both are connected. Without money, residents cannot eat a healthy mix of proteins, oils, vitamins/minerals and carbohydrates. Lack of money also leads to lack of education, health care and farming supplies. Thus, people are driven into more poverty. Friends Of Malawi provided \$2000 to complement the \$100 raised by locals to purchase a herd of 35 goats. Community members will breed the goats over time to expand the herd and share billygoats throughout the community. Livestock is a driver of increased income in rural communities and mature goats fetch good money on the open market. The project helped 738 people and 187 households.



SIYABU VILLAGE NURSERY SCHOOL

Siyabu Village had a persistent problem involving early education. Parents in Siyabu work long days on remote farms, making it difficult for them to supervise and educate their young children. Consequently, children receive very little formal education before the age of five. With \$100 raised by locals and a \$2000 grant from Friends Of Malawi, Siyabu constructed a small nursery school that serves as a day-care and pre-school education facility. This safe, educational environment for children helped 512 people and 104 households.

MZUZU UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

In December 2015, the library at Mzuzu University was gutted by fire. The entire structure and about 50,000 books, furniture, technology and equipment were lost. Friends of Malawi and others have aided in the recovery. Pledges in cash and in kind have raised \$1.9 million (K1.4 billion) to greatly improve restocking the library. So far, about 40,000 books have been received. However, the Malawian section has been difficult to restock and sources are difficult to find.

BANDA BOLA FOUNDATION

When he was fourteen years old, Keni Banda moved to the United States. He played soccer and coached professionally, including NCAA collegiate women's soccer at the University of Massachusetts. He founded Banda Bola foundation in 2010 and started the Chituka Village Project to bring social changes to his home near the lake in Malawi.

The area is very underdeveloped because of government corruption, loss of natural resources to foreign corporations and limited access to education. Over the years, Keni has provided sports equipment, health aids and educational materials. This year 64 local teachers, sports coaches, social workers and volunteers from 33 organizations participated in a program of activities focusing on gender equity, child rights, and democratic conflict resolution. There were many inspirational speeches to encourage participants in their future endeavors. At the end of the training week, participants embraced the importance of Self-Directed Learning and will try to incorporate the concepts learned into their teaching practices. An estimate is that 4346 children (2129 girls and 2217 boys) will benefit immediately from the program. It is anticipated that a lot of the boys and girls will become Banda Bola Foundation volunteers and they will be able to transfer their newly acquired knowledge to other children, so that the impact will be multiplied for years to come.

(Adapted from an article by JK Cho who participated in the program. Coaches Across Continents)

TOURISM

Cable TV network CNN has rated Malawi in the top 26 amazing places to visit for tourists who want to visit Africa. It rates the Nyika Plateau National Park as number 10, Mulanje Mountain as number 14 and Lake Malawi number 26. It does not mention that Americans now need a visa to visit Malawi. A visa from Washington, D.C. will cost \$100. Getting the same visa at the airport in Malawi will cost more. In either case, if you plan to spend more than 30 days, you will have to go to an immigration office and pay an additional fee.

CELEBRITIES VISIT MALAWI

Pop music star Rihanna visited schools, not as a celebrity, but as founder of the Clara Lionel Foundation and global ambassador for the Global Partnership for Education. Her main goal was to persuade world leaders to commit \$3.1 billion to the Global Partnership for Education so it could continue working in programs around the world. Funds will help GPE bring education to more than 870 million children in 89 countries between 2018 and 2020.

Rihanna taught math in an elementary school in Mzuzu where she was amazed that they were using music as a learning tool for teaching math. She also visited Lilongwe Girls Secondary School where she spoke to students.

In June, Prince Harry spent three weeks working alongside volunteers, veterinarians and experts in one of the largest and most significant elephant translocations in conservation history. The project aimed to move elephant herds from Majete and Liwonde parks to restock Nkhosakota so that both populations of elephants can continue to grow. Prince Harry said, “There has to be a balance between the numbers of animals, and the available habitat. Just how nature intended it. In this case, African Parks, in partnership with the Malawian government, have re-established a safe area for elephants to be moved back to..... If the re-balance doesn’t take place, human-wildlife conflict will increase and elephants will degrade their habitat. We are then back to having to consider the worst—reducing herds by culling.”

Because of poaching, habitat loss and increase in human population, African wildlife is being decimated. Protecting thriving herds has become essential in stabilizing nature.

On July 11th, Madonna attended the opening of the Mercy James Centre of Paediatric Surgery and Intensive Care at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre. The new hospital was funded by her charity Raising Malawi because she was inspired to assist the hospital when she went to adopt Mercy who was ill with malaria. The facility has 56 beds, three surgical theaters, an intensive care unit, a high dependency unit, 46 main wards and a recovery ward. It is estimated that 700 surgeries will be conducted annually.

Speaking briefly, Mercy said that she was honored to have the facility named for her. Four of Madonna’s six children were adopted from Malawi. David Banda, her first adopted Malawian, accompanied Madonna and Mercy.

Believing that early education is the foundation of learning, tennis star Roger Federer opened his 81st preschool in Malawi. His foundation has programs in Switzerland, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi, all with the hope of changing the lives of one million children by the year of 2018.

Camp STEAM

In August, Malawi hosted the third Women in Science (WiSci) Girls STEAM Camp designed to expand science, technology, engineering, arts, design and mathematics. For two weeks 100 high school girls from Liberia, Rwanda, Tanzania, United States and Malawi were encouraged to work hard, be open-minded and learn from one another. Among the speakers were former First Lady of Malawi, Gertrude Mutharika, Captain Yolanda Ndala-Kaunda, Malawi's first female airline captain, Vice Principal of the University of Science and Technology, Dr. Address Malata, former American astronaut Leland Melvin, and Halima Twabi who founded Malawi Girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEAM). William Kamkwamba who wrote *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* told the girls that challenges will strengthen them and not to give up.

US Ambassador to Malawi, Virginia Palmer, advised the young women not to be afraid of failure and unavoidable adversity, that the important thing is to get up and try again. She said, "Have integrity; always tell the truth and stand up for something, dress and behave for the job you want, you don't always have to lead from the front; there is power in letting other people lead sometimes, never doubt your power is to make a difference." The 2017 WiSci Girls STEAM Camp is a program of the US Department of State implemented by World Learning and the UN Foundation's Girl Up Campaign along with private partners like Google and Intel.

US \$4.6 MILLION FOR FOOD ASSISTANCE

The US government has provided about K3.3 billion to assist Malawians in need of humanitarian food assistance. In February 2017, it was reported that 6.7 million Malawians would need assistance to avoid hunger through March 2017. This amount brings the US government's total contribution to the 2016-17 Food Insecurity Response Plan to \$126 million. Funds will be distributed through the United Nations World Food Program. Of the \$4.6 million, \$2.5 million will be used to transport and distribute ten 800 metric tons of maize from the Malawian Government's Strategic Grain Reserves and \$2.1 million will be for education funding to fill a critical gap in Malawi's school feeding program.

DROP IN BREASTFEEDING

During August worldwide Breastfeeding Week, the Ministry of Health noted statistics in the Malawi Demographic Health Survey conducted in 2016. The results showed that breastfeeding in Malawi has dropped 10 percent from 71 percent to 61 percent. This puts Malawi behind other African countries. Nutritionist Ulunji Mezewa noted the significant impact that a drop in breastfeeding has on child survival. Health experts believe that this decline contributes to the high number of babies dying before reaching 28 days. Factors contributing to the drop include: more women working, the availability of other babies' milk on the market and the idea that breastfeeding is an old-fashioned practice.

AFRICAN SISTER

by Fae Linn 73-75*

My African sister you walk so tall;
You're not afraid your load will fall,
You care not for liberation
Never knowing a vacation.

Will my child live or die?
What will happen when the stream is dry?
Will the maize do well this year?
Hunger is a constant fear.

Would I manage to be so clean
If I carried my water from a distant stream?
Yet you know serenity
Very rarely felt by me.

You can suffer with much grace.
Hiding sorrow in a tranquil face
Could I ever learn from you
Just to accept when life is cruel?

When the favors all are measured
Who will have the greatest treasure;
Me, with riches I can touch
Or you who don't have very much?

*(Written in 1976 after completing two years of Peace Corps service in Malawi and recently published in the *Mountain Meadows Community Magazine*, Volume III, Issue 1.)

PEACE CORPS MUSEUM

A non-profit organization has been created to establish a national Museum of Peace Corps Experience to educate people about Peace Corps and to preserve its legacy. The mission is to inspire connection with the world by sharing the Peace Corps experience of living in different cultures. The museum will consider accepting art, artifacts, handicrafts, utensils, furniture, clothing, stories, images, photographs and memories. For information about the museum, depositing items or making a financial donation, go to:

www.museumofthepeacecorpsexperience.org or contact peacecorpsmuseum@gmail.com

AMBASSADOR SAYS KEEP GIRLS IN SCHOOL

United States Ambassador to Malawi, Virginia Palmer, says “It is the responsibility of all to keep girls in school and that it can be a solution to the prevention of HIV in the country. So many girls drop out of school before completing secondary school, it is a threat to the country”. Too many Malawian youth are vulnerable to HIV and AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, teen pregnancies, child marriages and other harmful practices. Minister of Health Peter Kumpalume noted that the HIV situation is shocking. Despite numerous HIV intervention programs offered by both the government and other agencies, adolescent girls get infected by older partners and then they in turn infect young partners when they marry.

Palmer noted that if girls remain in school, there is an eight percent reduction in the rate of HIV infection. Therefore, the US government is facilitating \$90 million to go to the construction of girls secondary schools across the country. At a symposium on “Coordination of Adolescent and Youth Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and HIV Programmes in Malawi” she said, “We want children to complete every level of education so that they can delay marriage, delay sexual debut, graduate and be successful. I believe if Malawi can keep all its children and adolescent girls in secondary [school] and be a model for Africa, this will help in reducing their risks to HIV infection.”

DIRECT FUNDING TO MINISTRY OF HEALTH STOPPED

Because of a bad record on the use of funds previously provided by American institutions, the United States government will no longer provide funds directly to the Ministry of Health. An audit revealed that civil servants and other Malawians defrauded the government of K2.5 billion of the funds that the US government’s Center for Disease Control gave to fight HIV and AIDs. The Auditor General has ordered the Ministry of Health to refund K875 million to the CDC. Between 2013 and 2015 the final looted sum is K925.9 million. Sixty three officers were asked to account for the misuse of funds. Ten officers have not responded. The US Embassy staff has called upon the government to take decisive disciplinary action against the employees involved.

For FOM Financial Report go to: www.friendsofmalawi.org

UNDERVALUED, OVERDUE: HANDCARTS AND FOOD SECURITY

by Arnold P. Wendroff 67-69

In Malawi, most families are subsistence farmers and the major food producers. Most have nothing but human muscle power for performing their domestic, agricultural and marketing activities. Their food security depends on their agricultural prowess and ability to transport their harvest. Subsistence farmers have simple implements: a hoe, a machete, brush hook, sickle and watering can. Except for an occasional bicycle, the major way of getting goods to market is by headloading which limits the size of the load and consumes lots of time and energy. Headloading is a fundamental impediment to both rural and urban Malawian quality of life, as well as to their agricultural and general economic productivity. The lack of wheeled transport on their farmlands means that all their water, firewood, farm inputs and harvested crops are transported on their heads!

The only form of wheeled transport suited to the needs and the purses of Malawi's subsistence farming sector and poor city dwellers is some form of lightweight two wheeled handcart. Since 1989, I've been demonstrating them and advocating for their assessment, adoption and commercialization to a variety of Ministries and NGOs all to no avail. From my perspective, it is not possible for Malawi to develop in any meaningful way, let alone join the ranks of the industrial nations, when the bulk of domestic and agricultural transport is via headloading.

There is a major anachronism evident along most Malawian roads where the majority of traffic consists of headloading pedestrians, often chattering on their cell phones. The collective failure to recognize the lack of wheeled transport as an issue is a sad commentary on the development community, including the Peace Corps.

(For more information about handcarts contact Arnold at mercurywendroff@mindspring.com)



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ZIKOMO, THANKS, YEWO!

Friends Of Malawi wishes to thank friends and donors for their support. Funds go to support the grants program, the website and the Friends Of Malawi Newsletter. To donate and be on the mailing list, contact FOM Treasurer:

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