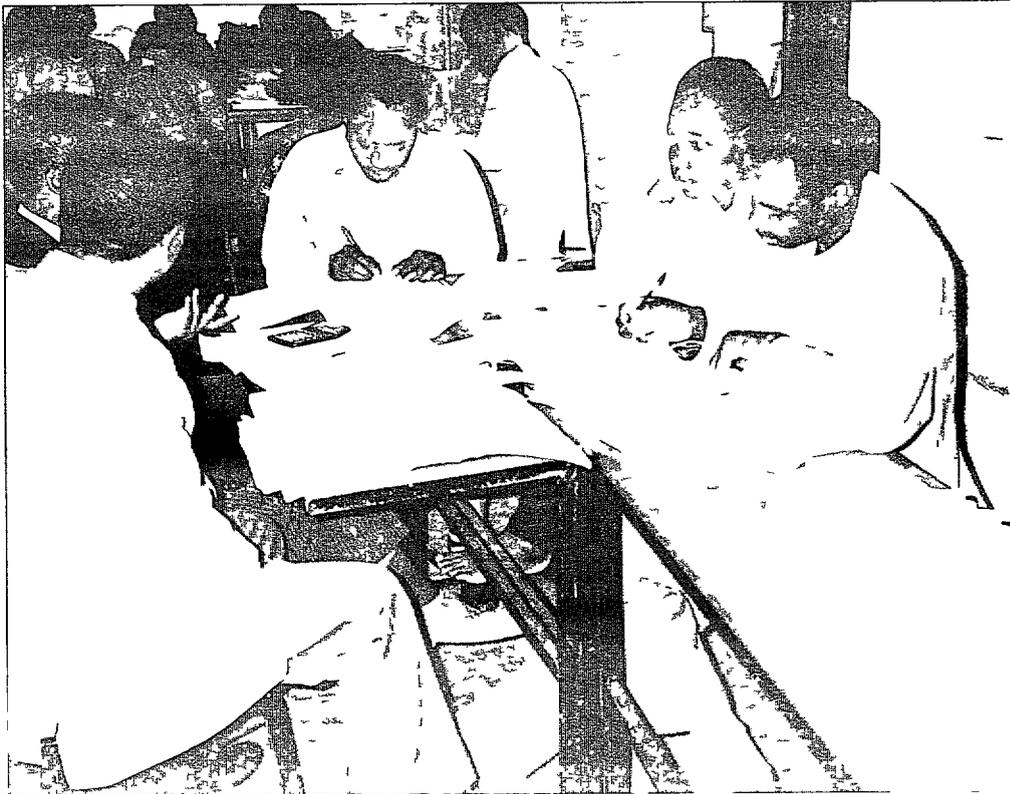


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CHILD AID

# Field Worker Training

GABLE SMC  
A Government of Malawi Project  
Funded by USAID  
Contracted to  
Creative Associates International, Inc

GABLE is a Government of Malawi program supported by funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). GABLE is an acronym for Girls Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education and is designed to support Government of Malawi efforts to address constraints to girls' educational attainment.

A major component of Malawi's GABLE program is the Social Mobilization Campaign (SMC). The major objective of the SMC is to develop, test, and implement a national campaign to change attitudes about the importance of girls' primary education. The SMC is funded by USAID and contracted to Creative Associates International, Inc.

For further information on GABLE SMC reports and materials contact

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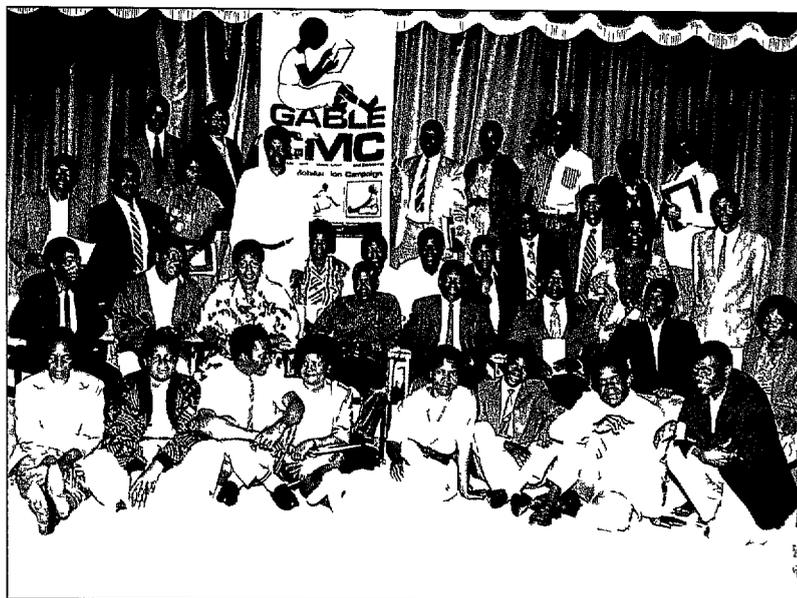




# Introduction

The success of the GABLE Social Mobilization Campaign was directly linked to a participatory, action-oriented field methodology that was implemented in every district throughout Malawi

As part of a Government of Malawi program, GABLE SMC worked closely with two government ministries—the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ministry of Women, Youth, and Community Services (MWYCS). Field officers from each of the ministries were trained to effectively facilitate and administer GABLE SMC activities. Starting at the project design stage, GABLE SMC sought to link itself to human resource infrastructures that would provide sustainability and continuity to their efforts.



Each of the two key ministries involved with GABLE SMC had a cadre of people already in place at the district-level to work in partnership with schools and/or communities. The MOE had a District Education Officer (DEO) and a number of Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) designated to support the needs of primary schools, and the MWYCS had a District Community Development Officer (DCDO) and a number of Community Development Assistants (CDAs) assigned to facilitate and monitor the development initiatives of the various communities within a district. In addition, both ministries had officers at the regional-level who were responsible for facilitating and monitoring the activities of the district officers.



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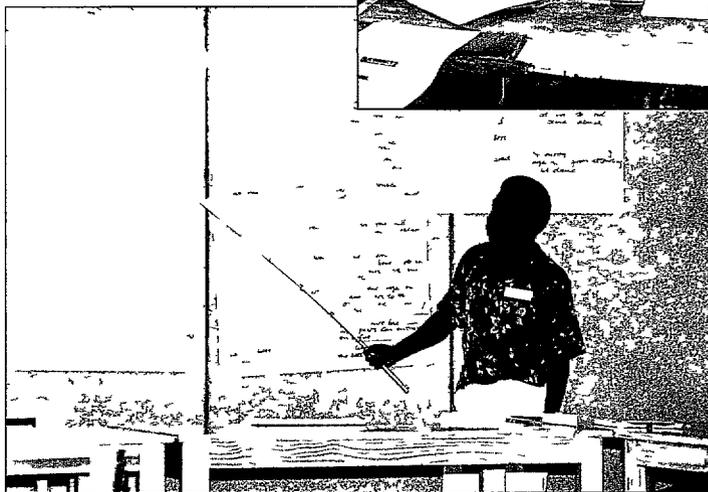
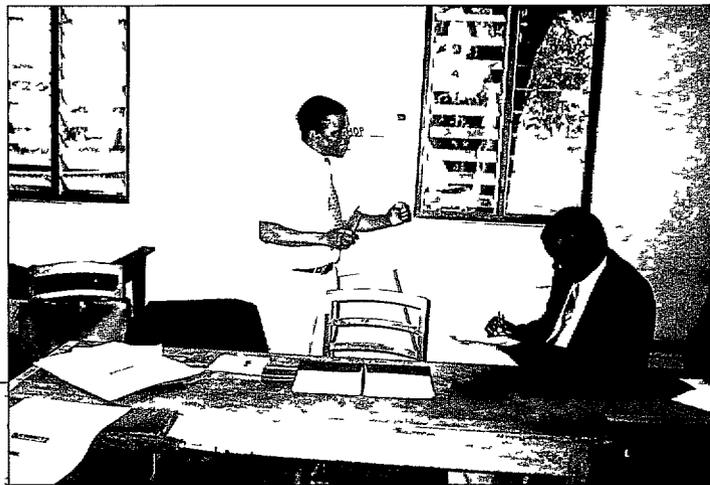
Since the key concerns of GABLE SMC dealt with both home- and school-based issues, as well as community members and school personnel, it was imperative that the responsible field workers in each of those sectors (school and community) work closely together. GABLE SMC provided a forum whereby PEAs and CDAs could work cooperatively and collaboratively in support of girls' primary education. Prior to GABLE SMC efforts, the officials from these two ministries saw their work as separate and clearly defined within one sector.

As a result of GABLE SMC's joint ministry strategy, CDAs are now welcomed in the schools serving the communities in which they work and PEAs are finding it increasingly more comfortable to approach community members as "one of them."





GABLE SMC provided training for all district officers from both ministries (MOE and MWYCS). The training took place in a workshop environment that provided the opportunity for GABLE SMC staff to introduce the field workers to the project and familiarize them with its components, affiliations, goals, and methodology. It is this knowledge that served as the basis for the field workers' ongoing collaboration with the project.





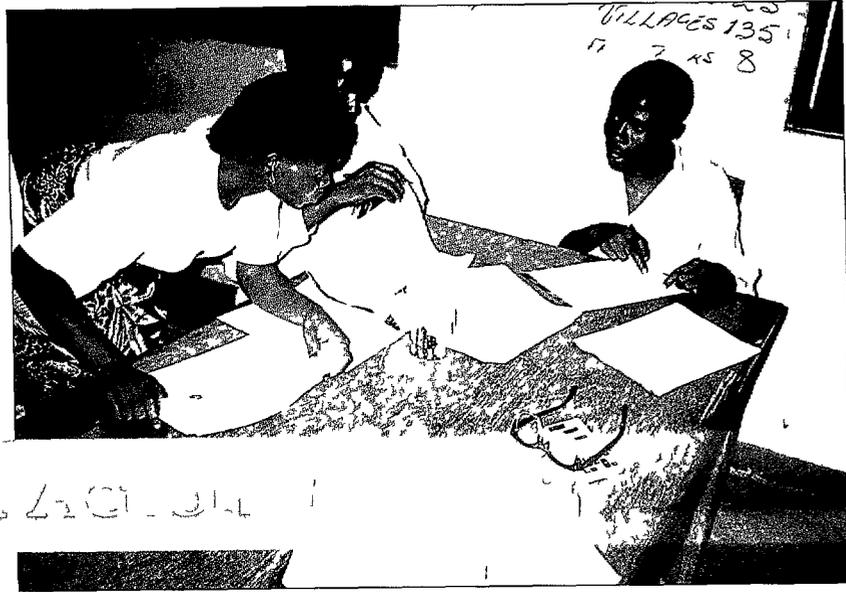
In addition, the field workers were trained on how to plan their work schedules together with their counterparts from the other ministry and how to tackle the various obstacles inherent with working at the community-level. One of the major concerns was limited resources for mobility. Diverse strategies to tackle such obstacles found CDAs and PEAs sharing government provided motorcycles, using bicycles, walking, taking advantage of monthly trips to schools to deliver teachers' pay, etc.



GABLE SMC alleviated the transportation difficulties faced by the Government of Malawi's field workers by providing motorcycles to Government Assistants in the pilot district. This helped the project to better assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the use of motorcycles and provided the inroad for exploring a variety of other transportation options.

In nearly every district, GABLE SMC assisted in making existing government motorcycles roadworthy and available for use by the field workers and encouraged the use of transportation allocations for the purchase of bicycles. With limited resources, the Government of Malawi has found it difficult to alleviate the transportation difficulties faced by its ministry field workers. However, commitment to their job and sympathetic assistance in helping them explore a variety of options went a long way in keeping everyone mobile and willing to carry out their responsibilities.



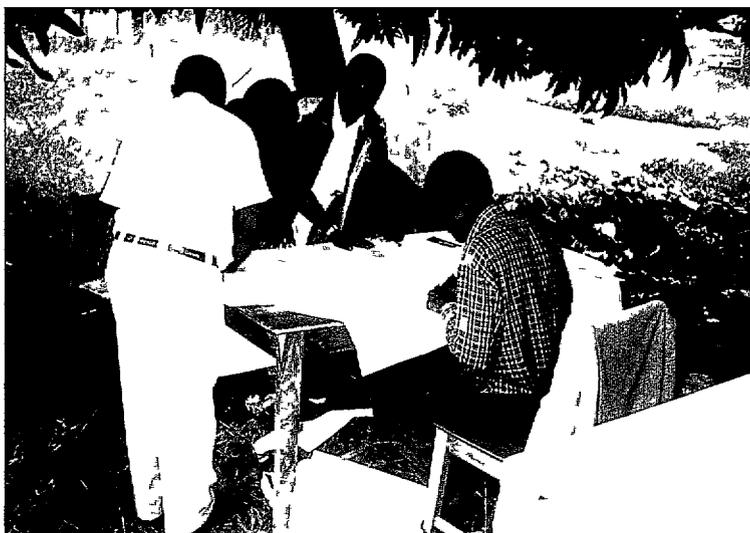


No GABLE SMC training workshop was complete without the development of a plan of action

CDAs, with their counterpart PEAs, developed a detailed plan of how they were going to proceed with GABLE SMC activities within their joint work areas. Details, key to every plan of action, included target group, type of activity, objective of the activity, location of activity, number of participants, facilitator(s), date and time, required resources, and budget. Every plan of action became a schedule of activities and a guideline to achieve change.

To ensure sustainability of their efforts, field workers were encouraged to incorporate no-cost activities, along with project funded activities, into their plans of action. A comprehensive plan of action began with informal visits to communities and schools to talk with teachers, pupils, and community members about the issues surrounding girls' education and to arrange for more formal meetings and workshops. Structured workshops were the only activities that took place at the community-level that were fully funded by the SMC project office.





Activities were also scheduled that would take place after the more formal workshop training. These activities were, once again, no-cost activities that involved follow-up meetings, monitoring village-based activities, and providing incentives for increased enrollment and retention of girls in primary schools.

District-level field workers were encouraged to be transparent with their plans of action. An approved plan was filed with the SMC project office, as well as district, regional, and ministry headquarters. Having these plans available in each of the offices enabled supervisory officials to plan their monitoring visits and helped to ensure that scheduled activities would not be sidelined due to unexpected events or circumstances.



According to their plans of action, CDAs and PEAs facilitated workshops for local leaders, primary school committees, and teachers. They scheduled focus group discussions to actively involve as many members of the communities as possible, and “special” target groups, such as initiation counselors and religion instructors, were identified for workshop training.



## FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS



The number of formal workshops planned and conducted by CDAs and PEAs throughout Malawi, in support of GABLE SMC objectives, are quite impressive. Nine hundred fifty-three workshops were conducted for 26,379 local leaders, 17,754 school committee members were trained in 648 different workshops, and 21,393 teachers were trained in 792 workshops.



The CDAs and PEAs in each district, along with their district supervisor (DCDO and DEO), chose a GABLE SMC desk officer for each sector's district office. It was these two desk officers who were responsible for helping the project office disburse and reconcile funds for all funded activities. Funds were disbursed on a monthly basis and full reconciliation took place before the next month's financial support requests were distributed. This helped to ensure that scheduled workshops were being implemented and that funds were used appropriately.



Due to the disparity in banking facilities in each district, it was impossible to establish one method of funding disbursement that would be appropriate for all. Instead, GABLE SMC worked closely with the desk officers from each district, the project banking institution, and district-level banking authorities to establish the best method district by district. Field workers were briefed on the system put in place for their district at their training workshop. This helped to facilitate the implementation of everyone's plan of action.



The training of district-level field workers resulted in a motivated, skilled cadre of knowledgeable, action-oriented facilitators of change. All training workshops were succeeded by follow-up meetings designed to allow the field workers and GABLE SMC project office staff to review progress to date, voice concerns,

