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April - June 2006, Quarterly Report

MALAWI TEACHER TRAINING ACTIVITY (MTTA)



July 31, 2006

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AIR	American Institutes for Research
DEM	District Education Manager
HIV	Human Immune Virus
IEQ	Improving Education Quality
KRA	Key Result Area
MESA	Malawi Education Support Activity
MBC	Malawi Broadcasting Corporation
MIE	Malawi Institute of Education
MTTA	Malawi Teacher Training Activity
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PCAR	Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform
PEA	Primary Education Advisor
QUEST	Quality Education Supporting Teachers
SMC-EQ	School Management Committee-Education Quality
SC/US	Save the Children U.S.
TA	Technical Assistance
TALULAR	Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources
TDCs	Teacher Development Centres
TTC	Teacher Training College
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Malawi Teacher Training Activity (MTTA)
April – June 2006 Quarterly Technical Report

1.0 PREAMBLE

Project Title: Malawi Teacher Training Activity (MTTA)

Contractor: American Institutes for Research

Award No: GS 10F-0112J Order No: 690-M-04-00260-00

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2.0 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Government of Malawi is faced with a declining quality of teaching and learning in its primary schools. Since it began its policy of free primary education in 1994, the Government has seen enrollment skyrocket from 1.9 million to 2.9 million pupils. It has not been possible to provide trained teachers for the overcrowded classrooms both at primary and secondary school levels. As a result, teachers who are not adequately qualified for their jobs now teach many pupils. Although the MOE has worked laboriously to provide pre-service and in-service training to teachers, the training has only met a part of the need.

Malawi Teacher Training Activity (MTTA) is a three-year initiative funded by USAID/Malawi in collaboration with the Malawi Government in response to the need to improve the quality of education in Malawi. AIR in its lead role implementing the MTTA will contribute towards improving the quality of education in Malawi through the improvement of the professional skills of primary school teachers at the pre-service and in-service levels. MTTA is jointly implemented with Save the Children (U.S), Malawi Institute of Education (MIE), and Miske Witt and Associates.

In four target districts (Kasungu, Machinga, Mzimba South and Phalombe: See Figure 1.), MTTA will strengthen teachers' content knowledge in mathematics, science and English by building on AIR's other initiative in Malawi, Malawi Education Support Activity (MESA), which includes in-service training on pupil-centered, gender-fair, and active-learning teaching methods.

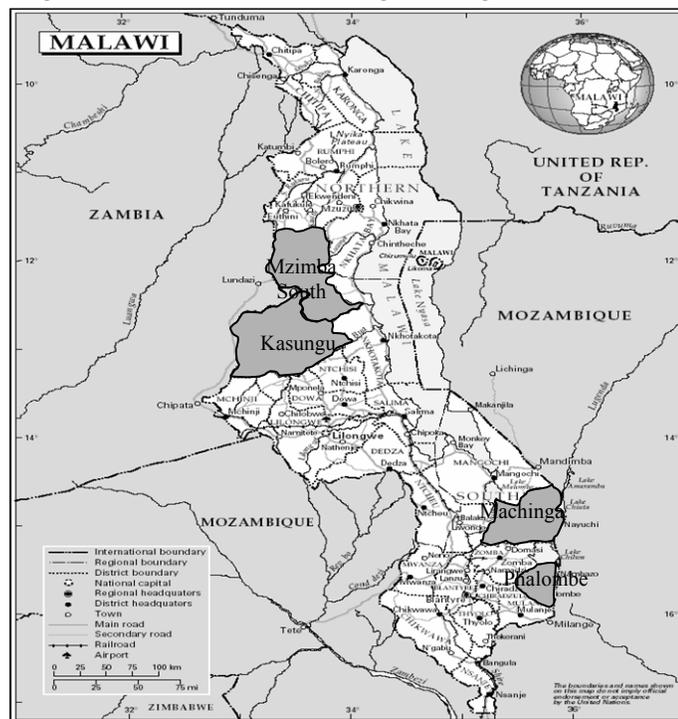


Figure 1: Map of Malawi showing MTTA's impact districts

By the end of Year 3, MTTA will:

- Train approximately 6,300 teachers in every primary school in each target district;
- Develop and disseminate learning resources to every teacher and school; and
- Train more than 800 head teachers, approximately 50 PEAs, and 300 mentor teachers to support these classroom teachers through field- based supervision.

Continuing to support In-service training, MTTA will also:

- Train 8,000 teachers in the Life Skills for HIV/AIDS Education curriculum as part of the pre-service training in the Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs).
- Introduced as one of the innovative strategies, the use of DVD technology to produce an effective tool for interactive teaching and build capacity within the TTCs that will be accessed and sustainable after MTTA is completed. The creation of a DVD with best practice teaching models and supporting resources is an effective tool for interactive teacher training for both HIV/AIDS and Civic Education.
- Improve school effectiveness through the provision of new resources such as books and radios at the Teacher Development Centers (TDCs), and learning materials and DVD players in Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs). In addition, a weekly radio program will address all the themes of the project.

In line with USAID/Malawi, MTTA will also contribute towards three USAID' s Key Result Areas:

- KRA 1: Improving teachers' professional skills,
- KRA 2: Making schools more effective, and
- KRA 3: Mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS in the education sector.

3.0 PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

3.1 Summary of Project Implementation Activities Accomplished over the period April – June 2006

3.1.1 In-service district level interventions

Developing cycle 5 in-service training and resource materials

- Conducted a planning workshop in readiness for cycle 5 trainings. The workshop involved:
 - Selecting topics considered difficult by teachers
 - Revising *How to use the English resource manual*
 - Introducing *How to use the resource manuals for mathematics and science*
 - Drafting Training Handbook units as well as pre- and post-test instruments for English, mathematics and science
 - Introducing the concept of teacher development conferences to be incorporated in cycle 5 for use in the 6th and 7th cluster training workshops
- Finalized refining *Cycle 5 Training Handbook* and produced camera-ready copy (CRC) in readiness for printing
- Revised, refined and produced camera-ready copies of:
 - *In-service mathematics resource for primary teachers*
 - *In-service science resource manual for primary teachers*
- Completed video shooting of good practice lessons in English, mathematics and science for a DVD for TTCs.
- Oriented 1101 teachers on research-based approaches to teaching English reading.
- Trained 7 (4 male and 3 female) Mobile Teacher Training troupe (MTTT) members in readiness for the launch of the MTTT initiative.
- Mounted the MTTT initiative in all the four impact districts during which 1314 pupils were reached.
- Monitored classroom observation and feedback discussions conducted by MTTT members.
- Trained 6 new (3 male and 3 female) MTTT members in June to strengthen the task force.

3.1.2 ZINFA-facilitated training workshops

- Supported a total of 13 ZINFA-facilitated workshops.

3.1.3 Utilization of IBB books

- Monitored teachers' and pupils' use of IBB books and found out that 247 schools (30%) near TDCs have been using IBB books:
 - By teachers to improve their content knowledge to teach senior classes more confidently.
 - To upgrade themselves academically for formal examinations.
 - By students and teachers to read them for knowledge or pleasure.
 - By pupils to improve their performance.

A total of 20 neighboring secondary schools were reported using the IBB books.

3.1.4 Conducting quiz competitions

- Conducted quiz competitions with the support of the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) to promote friendly competitive spirit among pupils.

- 3.1.5 Teacher supervision
- Supervised 1,606 teachers in their classrooms in Phalombe, Machinga, Kasungu and Mzimba South.
- 3.1.6 Pre-service Life Skills for HIV and AIDS training
- Completed developing the DVD manual entitled *How to use the Malawi Pre-Service Life Skills Education for HIV and AIDS DVD* to ensure maximum utilisation of DVDs in TTCs
 - Conducted a 5 day long workshop to support TTC tutors in the teaching of Life Skills.
 - A total of 40 tutors from 8 TTCs (6 government and 2 private) were trained.
- 3.1.7 HIV and AIDS School Club Pilot Initiative
- Established office space for two additional staff to spearhead the initiative.
 - Identified the two additional personnel.
 - Obtained quotations for the procurement of two motor cycles for the staff.
- 3.1.8 Writing success stories
- Collected and refined success stories from district education partners and teachers.
- 3.1.9 Monitoring and Evaluation
- Monitored activities using observations, interviews and focus group discussions. The activities included:
 - Classroom teaching and learning in 31 sampled schools where 81 teachers were formally observed and 60 pupils were assessed during the monitoring mission
 - Teacher supervision by mentor teachers, trainer heads, ZINFAs and PEAs
 - Utilization of IBB books
 - The impact of the MTTT initiative
 - ZINFA-facilitated teacher in-service workshops
 - Produced and circulated a monitoring report to MTTA staff to inform practice.
- 3.1.10 Mass Communication
- Drafted MTTA news letter.
 - Featured 13 fifteen minute MTTA programs on the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) Radio 1
 - Completed developing the radio drama program which MBC continued to air
- 3.1.11 Coordination and Reporting
- Participated in meetings with USAID, line ministries and Safe Schools Program (SSP) to share experiences.
 - Conducted meetings with district education partners in Mzimba South, Kasungu, Machinga and Phalombe.
 - Continued to work with MIE and Ministry of Education Headquarters (DTED) on the progress of PCAR implementation timeframe.
 - Attended two international conferences as follows:
 - An AIR IDP Chiefs of Party Summit in Washington DC to share knowledge and experiences
 - An ICT Conference for Africa on Education Development and Training in Addis Ababa
 - Hosted AIR Washington DC professional staff.

- Developed and submitted monthly technical reports for April, May and June and a quarterly report for the entire quarter.
- Reviewed and updated the July 2006 through August, 2007 MTTA work plan.

3.2 MTTA Accomplishments relative to the work plan for the reporting period

Activities	Q2			Remarks
	A	M	J	
1 In-service District Level Intervention				
1.1 Planning for training		■	■	Accomplished
1.2 Develop handbook for trainers		■	■	Accomplished
1.3 National Core Training (NCT)				
1.4 Training of Trainer (TOT)				
1.5 Cluster Training				
1.6 Classroom supervision	■	■	■	Accomplished
1.7 Phase 2- Math materials- test, revise, print	■	■	■	Accomplished
1.8 Phase2 materials disseminated at training				
1.9 Phase 3- Science materials- test, revise, print	■	■	■	On-going
1.10 Phase 3 materials disseminated at training				
1.11 ZINFA refresher training				
1.12 ZINFA in-service courses	■	■	■	On-going
1.13 Planning for Teacher Training Troupe		■		Accomplished
1.14 Teacher Training Troupe intervention	■	■	■	On-going
1.15 Teacher Training Troupe reporting/monitoring	■	■	■	On-going
2 Social Studies Training (In- and Pre-service)				
2.1 Pilot training guide				
2.2 Revise and print guide				
2.3 Develop posters				
2.4 Six Divisional orientations including TTC tutors	■			Awaiting PCAR roll-out
2.5 Develop and produce DVD	■	■	■	Awaiting PCAR roll-out
3 Pre-service Life Skills for HIV/AIDS training				
3.1 Plan training for 1 plus 1 program	■			Accomplished
3.2 Training Life Skills TTC tutors	■			Accomplished
3.3 Develop resource guide for training (for DVD)	■	■		Accomplished
3.4 Test, revise, print guide		■	■	Accomplished
3.5 Guest lecture/support to TTCs	■	■	■	On-going
3.6 Produce DVD	■			Accomplished
3.7 Training/Support on how to use DVD equipment			■	Postponed due to delay in DVD production
3.8 Materials/poster development and production		■	■	On-going
3.9 HIV/AIDS video conference				

Activities	Q2			Remarks
	A	M	J	
4 Monitoring and Evaluation				
4.1 Supervising and monitoring teachers/classrooms				On-going
4.2 Plan data collection				
4.3 Train data collectors				
4.4 Conduct data collection for teachers				
4.5 Conduct data collection for pupils				
4.6 Data entry				
4.7 Data analysis				
4.8 Dissemination of data				Accomplished
4.9 M & E for in-service training				Accomplished
4.10 M & E for HIV/AIDS at TTCs				
4.11 M & E for social studies in-service				Awaiting PCAR roll-out
4.12 M & E for social studies pre-service				
5 Mass Communication				
5.1 Radio program planning				Accomplished
5.2 Radio program broadcast				Accomplished
5.3 Develop MTTA Newsletter				Accomplished
5.4 Print and disseminate newsletter				To be done in July
6 Project Coordination and Reporting				
6.1 Hold MTTA weekly team meetings				Accomplished
6.2 Conduct Advisory Committee Meeting				Postponed to July 2006
6.3 Meet with USAID and line ministries				Accomplished
6.4 Participate in USAID quarterly SO9 meetings				Accomplished
6.5 Conduct policy maker briefing				
6.6 Hold National Launch				
6.7 Write monthly report				Accomplished
6.8 Write quarterly report				Accomplished
6.9 Write annual report				
6.9 Update work plan and PMP				Accomplished
6.10 Calculate quarterly accruals				Accomplished

4.0 ACTIVITIES ACCOMPLISHED OVER THE REPORTING QUARTER

4.1 In-service district level interventions

4.1.1 Development of in-service training and resource materials: Preparing for cycle 5 in-service trainings

MTTA continued preparing for cycle 5 training. The project conducted a planning workshop with a core of group of subject specialists.

The main objectives of the workshop were to

- Select topics considered difficult by teachers
- Revise *How to use the English resource manual* relative to lessons learned
- Introduce *How to use the resource manuals for mathematics and science*
- Draft training handbook units and pre- as well as post-test instrument for English, mathematics and science

Accomplishments

The following content areas were selected for inclusion in the cycle 5 trainings:

English

Unit 1: Introduction to the *MTTA In-service English Resource Manual for Primary Teachers* (2 hours)

Unit 2: Teaching reading for comprehension with a sample demonstration/micro lesson adapted from *Activities with English for Standard 6: Unit 10 Lesson 73*

This unit is divided into two parts A and B: Reading in small groups and Reading quiz respectively.

Mathematics

Unit 1: Introduction to the *MTTA In-Service Mathematics Resource Manual for Primary Teachers*

Unit 2: Fractions—this unit focuses on word problems.

Unit 3: Graphs

Science

Unit 1: Introduction to the *MTTA In-Service Science Resource Manual for Primary Teachers*

Unit 2: Machines and force

Although this topic was covered in cycle 1 in-service training workshops, teachers felt that they needed more support due to its level of difficulty. The writers simplified the concepts in some areas and suggested ways of improvising teaching and learning resources using locally available materials, and to enhance classroom teaching and learning with minimum difficulty.

Drafting in-service training materials

Having selected content areas, participants began drafting the *Cycle 5 Training Handbook* with some guidelines on the “concept of teacher development conferences”. Each of the first three sections has a unit on how to use the resource manuals under each subject i.e. English, mathematic and science respectively. The participants also drafted pre- and post- test instruments with possible responses and suggested answers.

The draft handbook was refined to produce a camera-ready copy in readiness for printing. MTTA also developed a draft cluster training timetable to be used in cycles 5, 6 and 7.

4.1.2 **Editing first drafts of In-service mathematics resource manual and In-service science resource manual**

MTTA finalized revising and refining *In-service Mathematics Resource Manual* based on teachers' feedback from field-testing and produced camera-ready copy (CRC). A total of 7500 copies of *In-service Mathematics Resource Manual for Primary Teachers* were printed and will be distributed to all teachers in Phalombe, Machinga, Kasungu and Mzimba South impact districts.

Revision of the *In-service Science Resource Manual* based on teachers' feedback collected through field testing in Phalombe commenced during this quarter. A camera-ready copy of the manual was completed and printing was still underway at the time this report was developed.

MTTA, with the support of Dr Greg Sales, Jonathan Stratsman, and a film producer providing technical assistance, completed shooting video of good practice lessons in English, mathematics and science for a DVD for TTCs.

4.1.3 **Orientation of teachers to the research-based approach for teaching English reading**

Due to persistent low level pupil performance in reading as reported in February during the baseline survey, in the impact districts, MTTA introduced an intervention called *research based approach for teaching English reading*. This reading approach encourages teachers to organize pupils in 4 or more groups. The teacher gives the pupils a variety of reading resources and tasks to do within a given period of time. This done, the teacher helps one group in the teaching corner to read beginning with drilling of key words from a reading passage for about 15 minutes while the other three groups are busy working on different tasks they have been given to do. Brighter pupils assist others in their respective groups. After 15 minutes, the teacher invites the second group to the teaching area where s/he helps the pupils as s/he did with the first group. A total of 1101 teachers were reached during the reporting quarter, and follow-up visitations showed that the intervention is improving pupils' learning (see section 4.6 bullet 4).

4.1.4 **Teacher in-service trainings**

MTTA began implementing Mobile Teacher Training Troupe (MTTT) initiative in Mzimba South, Kasungu, Machinga and Phalombe. Two schools in each of the four districts benefited from this initiative.

MTTA reached a total of 60 teachers and 1314 pupils. The MTTT process is as follows:

MTTT members

- Observed English, mathematics and science lessons taught by class teachers.
- Interviewed teachers and community members on levels of teaching/learning within the school.
- Identified content and pedagogical needs for the individual schools.
- Addressed the needs identified through demonstrations of specific pedagogical skills, micro-lessons, and general discussions on areas of concern. Needs which could not be addressed, such as shortage of teachers, were drawn to the attention of the District Education Office.

The teachers, in turn, tried to put into practice the knowledge and skills acquired by conducting model lessons to pupils in standards 1, 2, 3 and 6 while being observed by the troupe members and the rest of the teachers at the school. At the end of the one-week session at each of the schools, teachers with support from the PEA and ZINFA, developed action plans, which they would follow in order to effectively implement the MTTT initiatives activities.

The highlights of the MTTT initiative were as follows:

- All the teachers were observed in two or more subjects during the preliminary action research sessions.
- The MTTT members demonstrated good command of subject content, effective and appropriate use of participatory methods as well as use of teaching and learning resources.
- Most of the model lessons taught by the teachers were better than those that were originally observed during the action research.
- The MTTT members promoted a spirit of team work; sharing content knowledge and pedagogical skills among the teachers as observed during the time the teachers' needs were being addressed.
- Most of the MTTT members were able to interact with teachers effectively during feedback sessions.

There is no doubt that the MTTT innovation is an extremely powerful tool that hinges on isolating pertinent challenges to individual schools/teachers and engages the very teachers to come up with double solutions spearheaded by the teacher educators on site.

Considering the number of schools to be reached by October 2006 relative to the number of MTTT members, MTTA decided to increase the number of troupe members from 6 to 12. Hence a total of 6 new MTTT members (4 male and 2 female) were trained to strengthen the team.

The content covered during the training for new MTTT members included the following topics:

- The concept of MTTT and how it fits into the MTTA project
- Characteristics/qualities and roles of MTTT members
- How MTTT members work in the field
- Sharing MTTT's field experiences e.g. some challenges related to classroom observation
- Developing and using interview and classroom observation instruments
- Practicing classroom observation and conducting feedback sessions with teachers at Machinga LEA School
- Techniques for interviewing community leaders

4.1.5 ZINFA-facilitated teacher training workshops

A total of 25 ZINFA facilitated in-service teacher training workshops in the four impact districts were conducted, (see Attachment A2).

The major objectives of the training workshops were to

- Share experiences on continuous assessment
- Practice use of participatory teaching and learning methods

- Share content knowledge in areas of specific need in English, mathematics and science
- Share experiences in preparing teaching and learning aids and schemes of work
- Practice the research based method of teaching English

The following content topics were covered during the training workshops:

- Phrases and clauses, direct and indirect speech, punctuation question tags and teaching reading and writing in infant classes in English
- Profit and loss, averages, compound proportion areas of geometric shape in mathematics
- Sound, growing up and changing, and substances in our environment in science

The strengths of the training workshops included the following things:

- Effective use of some teaching and learning items such as clock faces
- Participants shared content knowledge and skills in areas of need in English, mathematics and science.
- More teachers are showing increased competency in facilitation skills
- Some teaching and learning items such as place value boxes, spring balances and charts were prepared and used

No cost ZINFA-facilitated INSETs are now becoming an integral part of the life of many education zones. This suggests a major attitudinal change among teachers regarding the “allowance syndrome” that has tended to thwart professional development endeavors among them.

4.1.6 Utilization of IBB books

The number of schools using IBB books at and around the 54 TDCs in the 4 impact districts is 247 (29.9%) (see Attachment A3). In addition to the 247 primary schools, 20 neighboring secondary schools are reported using the books. Both teachers and pupils from primary, community day and district secondary schools continued to borrow the IBB books, which they read to upgrade themselves academically and improve their performance in teaching different subjects. Four (7.4%) TDCs are using a decentralized system where head teachers of schools borrow and return books on behalf of staff at their school. This is solving problems of long distances from individual schools to TDCs and helping to develop a reading culture among teachers and pupils. In Chaima and Kalolo zones, teachers have programmed children to visit the TDC once a week to borrow and read books. Pupils from each school are allowed to borrow the books for a period of one week. These are some of the innovations MTTA is propagating to other zones/districts through exchange visits.

4.1.7 Conducting quiz competitions

MTTA with the support of MBC conducted a quiz competition which was aired on Malawi Broadcasting Cooperation Radio 1 just to demonstrate the importance of such activities to teachers/pupils across the country. Santhe and Chipozza Primary Schools in Santhe zone were the first schools to be recorded. Chipozza won the competition. The second, an inter-class quiz competition was recorded at Chimbiri Primary School of Mulomba zone in Phalombe district. Quiz competitions are aimed at encouraging teachers to promote a hard working spirit among pupils in addition to developing their listening, speaking and critical thinking skills.

4.1.8 Supervising classroom teaching and learning

MTTA supervised classroom teaching and learning in all four impact districts. Mentor teachers, trainer heads and ZINFAs supervised a total of 1606 teachers representing 26.8% of all the teachers (see Attachment A1).

MTTA supervised classroom teaching and learning at Davy, Kazengo and Luviri schools in Kaphuta 1 and Luviri zones in Mzimba South. The findings from all the supervisions made over the reporting period show that

- About 71% of the teachers used innovative teaching and learning resources.
- 26% of them supervised continued to integrate HIV and AIDS information with classroom lessons
- 70% of the teachers supervised practiced participatory teaching and learning methods
- 60% of them demonstrated good command of subject matter especially on subject content covered during cycle training workshops
- 85% of the teaching and learning records were available and well updated
- Approximately 50% of the pupils assessed demonstrated ability to read from their textbook
- Over 80% of the teachers observed teaching, assessed pupils' performance through written, oral and practical work in English, mathematics, science and in other subjects
- Approximately 72% of the pupils observed were able to answer questions from the teacher in science, mathematics and English.

4.1.9 **Writing success stories**

During this reporting period MTTA collected success stories and testimonials of project impact from teachers, head teachers, teacher supervisors, PEAs and ZINFAs. Some of them were refined and submitted together with the monthly technical reports or kept for subsequent sharing.

4.2 **Pre-service life skills for HIV and AIDS training**

To ensure maximum utilisation of DVDs in TTCs, MTTA completed the final draft of the DVD manual entitled "*How to use the Malawi Pre-service Life Skills Education for HIV and AIDS DVD*"

In an effort to continue supporting the teaching of life skills in TTCs, MTTA conducted 5 day long life skills training workshop for TTC tutors. A total of 40 tutors were trained. The tutors came from government, government-aided and private colleges. Government colleges were Blantyre, Karonga, Kasungu and Lilongwe while government-aided ones were Montfort and St. Joseph's colleges. The private colleges that participated in this workshop were Emmanuel and DAPP. The workshop focussed on the development of the resource manual for Life Skills Education at the TTCs.

MTTA continued supporting TTC tutors at Blantyre, Montfort, St Joseph's, Lilongwe, Kasungu and Karonga on the teaching of Life Skills and HIV/AIDS education through the provision of guest lecturers. All the 6 government and aided TTCs submitted their guest lecturers programs. Of these Blantyre and Lilongwe began the guest lecturers' activity.

4.3 **HIV and AIDS School Clubs Pilot Initiative**

All the MTTA staff members were briefed on the new pilot activity, and their roles defined. Fritz Kadyoma is the internal activity manager. Two additional staff were identified and

hired. A detailed six month (activity life span) work plan and PMP were developed and incorporated within the main MTTA work plan and PMP. Work is proceeding according to plan under this initiative.

4.4 Mass Communication

The Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) Radio 1 aired five 15-minute MTTA programs on a wide range of project interventions. The MBC staff member with MTTA staff visited Chimbiri School of Mulomba zone in Phalombe district to collect inter-class quiz material for a quiz corner program on MBC Radio 2.

The Story Workshop completed developing the radio drama program which the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) continued airing.

MTTA completed drafting the MTTA Newsletter. MTTA was editing and formatting the newsletter at the time this report was being produced.

4.5 Coordination and Reporting

Participating in external meetings and conferences

- MTTA participated in meetings with USAID, line ministries and Safe Schools Program (SSP) to share experiences.
- MTTA attended two presentations by Centre for Education Research and Training (CERT) and Women and Law in Southern Africa (WILSA) on causes and consequences of school related gender based violence. These presentations enriched MTTA's perception of a "conducive teaching/learning environment".
- The MTTA Chief of Party attended an AIR IDP Chiefs of Party Summit in Washington D.C. This provided much needed insight that continues to inspire the management and implementation of MTTA.
- MTTA participated in the first International Conference on ICT for Education Development and Training which took place at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia from the 24th to 26th May 2006. The purpose of the conference was to share ideas on new issues related to the efficient use of advanced learning technologies, the need for appropriate pedagogy and local content and the requirements demanded by institutional and service development in African education and training systems. Dr Fritz Kadyoma represented MTTA at the conference and co-presented a paper with Dr Greg Sales of Seward Inc., a Consultant in the production of a Malawi DVD for Pre-service Life Skills Education for HIV and AIDS. The presentation focused on the process of producing a DVD for Pre-service Life Skills Education for HIV and AIDS in Malawi, including successes and challenges encountered. This was consolidated by a demonstration of the DVD. The presentation was very well received.

Hosting AIR Washington DC staff

Ms Heather Simpson, MTTA Project Manager, paid the field office a week-long visit during which she worked with staff to provide in-depth insight in their work. She helped to review MTTA's scope of work to come up with alternatives to the Social Studies initiative which has remained dormant up to now following delays in the PCAR roll-out plan.

Planning and coordination meetings

- MTTA conducted planning and coordination meetings with district education partners in each of the 4 districts.
- It continued to work with MIE and Ministry of Education on the progress of PCAR implementation process.

Writing technical reports

- From April to June, 2006 MTTA wrote and submitted the following reports:
 - January 1 - March 31, 2006 quarterly report
 - 2006 March monthly technical report
 - 2006 April monthly technical report
 - 2006 May monthly technical report
 - Monthly financial reports and quarterly accruals.

4.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

MTTA made a special effort to monitor and assess the impact of its classroom supervision endeavors.

It interacted with 81 teachers from 31 schools during the monitoring mission. The major findings were

- All supervisors (mentor teachers, trainer heads and ZINFAs) had well planned supervision schedules indicating when and where they would be supervising. It was discovered that as a result of their capabilities, 50% of the mentor teachers and ZINFAs have been assigned challenging classes such as Standard 8 by their head teachers thus making it difficult for them to regularly conduct supervision.
- Mzimba South devised a strategy where PEAs pick up mentor teacher and/or ZINFA on his/her motorbike for supervision. This facilitates the movement of the support supervisors and ensures that good supervision occurs.
- 60% of the teachers who were oriented to the research-based teaching of English reading started putting this into practice. This was evidenced by the availability of the 'word bank' on the chalkboard. It was also observed that pupils had started writing their names before attempting any written exercise which helps them develop writing skills.
- Pupils' reading skills showed tremendous improvement. Some 60 standard 3 pupils were asked to read a passage from their textbook. 60% of them scored 50% and above. One pupil scored 5% while 12 scored 100%. The 12 pupils read all the words and pronounced them correctly. Another remarkable observation was that pupils from two of MTTA's Mobile Teacher Training Troupe (MTTT) schools had moved from a reading performance baseline of 31% (before MTTT) to a 40% after only four weeks following the intervention launch at those schools.
- 70% of teachers interviewed during the monitoring visit had personally used IBB books before for upgrading themselves academically and/or as reference material to enrich their lessons. Teachers and pupils located far from TDCs had limited access to IBB books though in some few cases some head teachers borrow books on behalf of their teachers and pupils.

- Beneficiaries of IBB books included primary teachers and pupils, neighboring community day secondary school teachers and students, members of staff of health and agriculture and some interested elite community members.
- 25% of the teachers observed were still doing continuous assessment. For those using it, they cited large classes and understaffing as major challenges to effective utilization of continuous assessment.
- All zones had conducted at least one zonal INSET during the term while some were planning to have more before the end of the term. Action plans showing the topics, resource and dates were observed as evidence.
- All schools where MTTT had been were continuing implementing the recommendations made by MTTT members. PEAs and ZINFAs had visited these schools at least once after MTTT members had left.

MTTA team members digested these findings amongst themselves to inform practice. One decision arising from the discussions for example is that MTTA will arrange and support exchange visits for selected teachers educators (PEAs, ZINFAs, Mentor teachers) to visit Mzimba South district and learn from and share experiences with their counterparts to extend/consolidate best practices.

5.0 CHALLENGES AND STRENGTHS

5.1 Challenge

The fact that some mentor teachers/trainer heads have been given challenging classes to teach full time due to their increased capabilities makes it difficult for them to leave their classes and go to supervise other classes or schools as they otherwise would. MTTA will monitor this development.

5.2 Strengths

- The research-based approach for teaching English reading motivates teachers as well as pupils upon seeing the quick increase in reading skills among pupils. Pupils are interested in learning to read and understand more words. When a teacher sees this he/she is motivated to give them more opportunities to improve their reading skills. By the end of each week, pupils are able to read more new words.
- The Mobile Teacher Training Troupes is an extremely powerful hands-on tool to fostering professional development among teachers. Being teacher-centered and action-oriented, it promotes enthusiasm that leads to achieving the expected results. MTTA will continue to monitor the intervention very closely in order to draw as many lessons from it as possible.

6.0 LESSON LEARNED

Team preparation of lessons (during MTTT activities) revealed that teachers' performance improves tremendously over a very short time when they work as a team. Teachers need to be consultative.

7.0 **CONCLUSION**

MTTA is on track and it will continue to strategize its activities relative to lessons learned in order to improve the performance of teachers and eventually that of pupils.

8.0 ATTACHMENTS

Table A1. Number of schools visited and teachers supervised

District	# of schools visited	# of teachers supervised
Mzimba South	247	767
Kasungu	190	692
Machinga	267	667
Phalombe	118	254
Total	820	2380

Note that number of schools visited in Machinga and Phalombe exceeds the actual number of schools in the districts. The reason is that some schools were visited more than once and the teachers were supervised more than once.

Table A2. ZINFA - facilitated teacher-training workshops

District	# of Training Workshops	Total # of participants		Totals # of participants for each district
		Male	Female	
Mzimba South	8	237	91	328
Kasungu	6	168	45	213
Machinga	5	174	34	208
Phalombe	6	129	34	163
Grand totals	25	708	204	912

Table A3 Number of schools using IBB books

District	# of schools using IBB books		# of TDCs which have decentralized use of IBB books	TDCs, which have programmed children's access to IBB books
	Primary	Secondary		
Kasungu	85	10	2 (Chaima and Kalolo TDCs)	Chaima and Kalolo TDCs
Mzimba South	63	4	1 (Kaphuta TDC)	Not yet
Phalombe	41	2	1 (Mulomba) TDC	Not yet
Machinga	58	4	0	Not yet
Totals	247	20	4	2

MTTA Case Studies



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MALAWI

CASE STUDY

International Book Bank (IBB) books – impetus for academic upgrading and professional development



Challenge

Maxwell Mutilwa is a head teacher at the Chingani School in Nyezelera Zone in Phalombe district in Southern Malawi. Reflecting on the impact of the donated International Book Bank (IBB) books on his career as a teacher he says, “As head teacher and class teacher, it has always been my aspiration to be a role model in the way I teach my pupils in Standard 8. Like most schools, my school has had a problem of lack of reference books especially for science and mathematics. In addition, the situation did not favor my ambition of upgrading my academic qualifications through independent study. The secondary schools around could not assist me much because they also lacked relevant books.”

Initiative

Phalombe has received a precious gift of assorted books in English, mathematics and science from the International Book Bank (IBB) through the Malawi Teacher Training Activity (MTTA). “With the arrival of IBB books, a golden chance opened up for me to study on my own and sit for the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) examinations,” he remarked proudly. Maxwell has been borrowing the IBB books from the TDC in his zone and confidently sat for the 2005 examinations.

Results

When the exam results were released, Maxwell was very happy because he had done well with high scores in English, mathematics and science. He is now encouraging other teachers and pupils at his school to make use of the books. He also continues reading the books for professional development because he has found a hidden treasure in them.



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MALAWI

CASE STUDY

Life Skills Education - a tool for combating HIV and AIDS pandemic in Teacher Training Colleges



Context

The high HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in almost all the age groups in Malawi is threatening family, community and national development. Most of the people hit by the pandemic are in the age range of 14-49 years. To mitigate the effects of this scourge, the government has introduced Life Skills Education into the national curriculum. The hope is that the knowledge and skills gained from studying the subject will help to eradicate the problem. However, Life Skills Education has not been as effective as was hoped be due to lack of trained personnel in the teaching of Life Skills Education and lack of teaching and learning resources.

Initiative

The Malawi Teacher Training Activity (MTTA) has taken bold steps to address the HIV/AIDS problem. The project is providing training in Life skills to all the college lecturers. Thus far, 41 lecturers have benefited from MTTA's training program. The project workshops are designed so lecturers gain the necessary knowledge and skills, and develop desired competencies in Life Skills Education. In addition, MTTA has equipped all government-funded Teacher Training Colleges with teaching and learning resources such as a DVD on Life Skills Education and DVD players. These recourses enable teacher trainees to observe best practice in teaching Life Skills Education, so that they may model their own practice based on the best practices. One teachers said, "Personally, I have found the initiative very useful."

Results

Life Skills Education is on the right course. Lecturers are exposed to a variety of strategies and methods for teaching the subject. The experiences shared among lecturers through the MTTA guest speaker-initiative, have brought more understanding of Life skills and HIV and AIDS related issues. "I am now able to handle Life Skills and HIV and AIDS subject content better than before. My student teachers at Kasungu Teachers College now enjoy learning Life Skills Education. Some student teachers already feel that if the subject was introduced some time back, the pandemic should not have reached the present scale," says Mr Muhabi Chivunga of Kasungu Teachers' College.



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MALAWI

CASE STUDY

Linyangwa zone adopts good classroom practice



Challenges

Linyangwa is one of the education zones in Kasungu district in central Malawi. Similar to many education institutions, many schools in Linyangwa zone are experiencing a number of problems. The most common of which is the lack of teaching and learning resources.

Teachers facing this problem often say that one of the main causes is a lack of locks on classroom doors. They said that when they display teaching and learning resources in the open classrooms, the materials often get destroyed.

Initiative

MTTA is working with Mr. Moffat of Changuluwe F P School, in Linyangwa zone. MTTA interventions include workshops and technical advice provided by the Primary Education Advisor, zonal in-service facilitators (ZINFAs) and mentor teachers. MTTA also encourages communities to support teaching and learning in the schools. MTTA, through community leaders, has sensitized communities not to protect rather than destroy the educational resources in the classrooms even when they have easy access to them. In addition, pupils take part in preparing and collecting the teaching and learning resources. These are either displayed on tables or walls. Nobody destroys them because the community has been sensitized on the importance of teaching and learning resources.

Result

The standard one classroom where Mr. Moffat teaches is a shelter made of poles and glass. He has his teaching materials displayed in the classroom without fear of vandalism. Although Mr. Moffat teaches a class of 180 pupils, he is able to involve his pupils in his lessons. This is possible because of his use of adequate teaching and learning resources and varied methods. As a result, pupils in his class find learning interesting and enjoyable during and after classes.