

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION ONE SCHOOL AT A TIME

SELECTED SCHOOL PROFILES FROM DOWA DISTRICT



January 2009

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**Transforming Education One School at a Time:
Selected School Profiles from Dowa District**

Printed and published by

American Institutes for Research (AIR) in partnership with Creative Center for Community Mobilization (CRECCOM), Malawi Institute of Education (MIE) and Miske Witt and Associates Incorporated (MWAI).

Primary School Support Program: A School Fees Pilot (PSSP: SFP)

PO Box 40

Mponela

Dowa

Malawi

January 2009

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PRIMARY SCHOOL SUPPORT PROGRAM:
A SCHOOL FEES PILOT

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List of Acronyms

AC	Assistant Coordinator
AEDO	Agriculture Extension Development Officer
AIR	American Institutes for Research
BLP/M	Beginning Literacy Program for Malawi
CBCCC	Community Based Child Care Center
CDA	Community Development Advisor
CDSS	Community Day Secondary School
CL	Cluster Leader
COP	Chief of Party
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CRECCOM	Creative Center for Community Mobilization
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DAC	District Assistant Coordinator
DEM	District Education Manager
DOP	District Officer for Primary
FA	Forestry Assistant
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GVH	Group Village Headman
HSA	Health Surveillance Assistant
HT	Head Teacher
ICLEP	Integrated Child Labor Elimination Project
IGA	Income Generating Activity
JCE	Junior Certificate
MASAF	Malawi Social Action Fund
MCM	Mobilization Corps of Malawi
MIE	Malawi Institute of Education
MK	Malawian Kwacha (\$1USD = 140 MK)
MP	Member of Parliament
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate of Education
MTTT	Mobile Teacher Training Troupe
MWAI	Miske Witt and Associates, Incorporated
NLS	National Library Service
OVC	Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children
PCAR	Primary Curriculum Assessment Reform
PEA	Primary Education Advisor
PSSP: SFP	Primary Schools Support Program: A School Fees Pilot
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SIP	School Incentive Package
SMC	School Management Committee
SWA	Social Welfare Assistant
TA	Traditional Authority
TALULAR	Teaching and Learning Using Locally Using Locally Available Resources
TCC	Teacher Conference Committee
TDC	Teachers Development Centre
TFD	Theatre for Development
TOT	Training of Trainers
TTC	Teachers' Training College
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

VH
ZIP
ZOC

Village Headman
Zonal Incentive Package
Zonal Coordinator

Introduction

The Government of Malawi is faced with 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 3.2 million learners. It has not been possible to provide enough trained teachers for the overcrowded classrooms. As a result, teachers who are not adequately qualified for their jobs now teach many learners. Although the government has tried to provide pre-service and in-service training to teachers, the training has only met a small part of the need. In addition, resources needed for schools are inadequately supplied. This is where Primary School Support Program: A School Fees Pilot (PSSP: SFP) addresses the need.

PSSP: SFP is a three-year initiative funded by USAID/Malawi in collaboration with the Malawi Government. It targets all of the 226 public primary schools in Dowa district. American Institutes for Research (AIR), in its lead role, is implementing PSSP: SFP in response to the need to improve the quality of education and serve as a pilot under a US Congressional mandate to develop strategies to reduce the cost of schooling that still hinders access, especially for the most vulnerable children. PSSP: SFP is jointly implemented by AIR with Creative Center for Community Mobilization (CRECCOM), Malawi Institute of Education (MIE), and Miske Witt & Associates Incorporated (MWAI).

The core goal of PSSP: SFP is to achieve equitable access to quality basic education. To reach this goal, the project has the following objectives:

- To increase access to basic education and improve learning with special focus on orphans, vulnerable children, girls and children with special needs.
- To increase resources at the school level.
- To improve teaching and learning outcomes in schools in Dowa.

PSSP: SFP takes a holistic approach to achieving this goal. It works to improve the professional development of teachers as well as mobilize communities to become owners of the schools. This approach has proven successful as each school in Dowa has shown positive progress in achieving quality education, engaging in a range of initiatives to make the future for their children brighter. Some schools and communities have seen particularly impressive advances in classroom performance, while others have had marked improvements in community involvement. Many schools have seen improvements in both these areas. The selection of 26 school profiles highlighted in this book represents a sample of some of the more impressive schools and shares examples of how transformation in education is possible when the entire school community – teachers, parents, community leaders, community members, as well as zonal and district officials – is trained, motivated and mobilized.

PSSP: SFP Implementation Strategies

The school profiles included in this book describe the positive changes realized in school communities throughout Dowa as a result of the strategies and inputs provided under PSSP: SFP. The project looked holistically at the education system in Dowa and developed strategies, described below, to address teacher, community and learner needs and capitalize on the resources already available to help improve the quality of education, while relieving the burden on the least able. As stated in the *Holistic School Reform and School Fees Pilot Midterm Evaluation Report* (Macro, 2008), “Supporting communities’ awareness, willingness, and ability to finance school improvements, and the schooling needs for OVCs and girls, coupled with observable quality improvements in the classroom and school, have been demonstrated [by PSSP: SFP] as an effective means of increasing enrolments and learning while reducing the household burden for quality education.” PSSP: SFP was flexible in its approach, and while it provided some interventions to every school, it also provided tailored support based on individual school needs. PSSP: SFP also adjusted its approaches as it drew implementation lessons.

Developing teachers’ skills

To improve teachers’ professional skills in primary schools, PSSP: SFP conducted in-service trainings at zone, cluster and school levels. The trainings were incremental and built upon previous knowledge. The trainings used a flattened cascade model (i.e., AIR/MIE/MWAI trainers train Zonal Coordinators [ZOCs], Primary Education Advisors [PEAs], and Assistant Coordinators [ACs], who in turn train teachers). Perhaps for the first time in Dowa, trainers were reaching the teachers in the school directly.

All Dowa teachers participated in school-based continuous professional development (CPD) activities that generally occurred weekly at each school. In addition, PSSP: SFP supported a variety of teacher professional development strategies and activities to reinforce the training and ensure that knowledge and skills are improved and attitudes are changed.

Every teacher encounters challenges pertaining to teacher content knowledge and/or pedagogical skills in her or his work. As the project progressed, PSSP: SFP increasingly engaged decentralized approaches to teachers training. Each teacher’s needs are unique it is are often hard for someone from the outside to address these needs. PSSP: SFP felt that the answer to this challenge was to make each school self-reliant in solving its own problems. In this spirit, the cycles of training were transformed into Teacher Conferences.

These conferences are training workshops for teachers, led by teachers, and based on supervision findings and needs articulated by the class teacher. PSSP: SFP trained three members from each school – the head teacher, deputy head teacher and a star teacher selected by his/her peers, called the Training Coordinator to form a Teacher Conference Committee (TCC). The TCC prioritized training topics in which teachers have shown or expressed need for additional support, identified local teachers who could serve as facilitators for conducting the training, reviewed facilitators’ training plan and modules and convened the conference during the school holiday. The conference covered agreed-upon topics relevant to the cluster of schools. The topics that were specific to a given school’s needs were covered during weekly school-based CPDs.

Enhancing supervision

PSSP: SFP believes that teachers need significant support in the classroom to effectively apply lessons taught during the trainings, especially the teachers of Dowa who largely possess the lowest professional and academic qualifications in the country. To this end, PSSP: SFP field-based ZOCs observed teachers teaching in classrooms, and they provided feedback to teachers on how to improve the effectiveness of their teaching. Supervision visits were also conducted jointly with the PEAs and ACs, as well as across zones to draw lessons from others. In addition to monitoring classrooms, ZOCs and PEAs monitored and supported CPDs, giving guidance on certain concepts that teachers may not have clearly understood during the trainings. Senior PSSP: SFP staff and external monitors also provided professional advice during the trainings that promoted quality teaching. ZOCs also used this supervision to help identify what areas should be addressed in future trainings.

PSSP: SFP looked for sustainable ways to increase lesson observation and to support teachers that could inform and transform teacher performance. Mobile Teacher Training Troupes (MTTT) were formed in each cluster as a teacher mentoring method. This produced immediate and powerful results. PSSP trained seven teachers from a cluster of three or four schools, to create a MTTT. Each cluster had selected self-motivated "star performer" teachers in mathematics, science, Chichewa, English, BLP/M, and TALULAR production, plus a head teacher with demonstrated supervisory skills. The selected teachers received a supervisory and mentoring training at school level under the mentorship of the PEA, AC and ZOC. The MTTT members were trained to identify gaps in content knowledge and pedagogical skills during a lesson and how to give effective feedback and follow-up to their fellow teachers.

With the supervision and monitoring presence in schools and classrooms provided by the MTTTs, teachers said they felt more supported. They appreciated having a resource person to help improve their teaching. As a result, teachers' attitudes toward their responsibility to the children in their classes and toward the teaching profession are changing.

In addition to supervision, PSSP: SFP used a range of other support strategies that complemented the trainings and motivated teachers. For example, PSSP: SFP promoted exchange visits between schools to share best practices of one school with another, as well as to motivate those schools that are doing well. Increasingly, Open Days were scheduled as a way for teachers and pupils to share what they were doing with the community at large. PSSP: SFP encouraged high profile officials and guests to visit schools in order to motivate and inspire not only the schools visited but also the surrounding schools that would also like to have visitors see their initiatives. These various strategies, including distributing "best of" certificates, were effective motivators. They promoted a ripple effect across the district as some of the best practices or creative classroom strategies were shared. Encouraging different stakeholders also boosted morale.

These strategies have all contributed to the dramatic improvement in teacher and pupil performance over the last three years in Dowa District. When PSSP started in 2006, only 30% of the teachers were effectively using participatory teaching methods during classroom instruction. By the end of 2008, 71% of the teachers were using participatory methods effectively. Furthermore, teachers were consistently coming to school. Previously, a quarter of the teachers would absent themselves on any given day. By the end of 2008, only about 10% were absent, reflecting the improved attitudes of teachers.

Increasing classroom and school resources

Classroom and school materials are important for equipping teachers with the necessary means to instruct their pupils effectively and to make learning more interesting and relevant for the learners. PSSP: SFP recognized that teachers in Dowa did not have the resources available to facilitate their professional development. In an effort to maximize resources and draw on the strengths of previous USAID projects implemented by the same organizations, PSSP: SFP re-printed 10 useful teachers resources. PSSP: SFP developed four additional resources, in addition to the training manuals for the cycles of training and BLP/M trainings held each term. These resources were distributed to all teachers during the cycle trainings as part of the support material to the topics being introduced, and references were made to these resources in future trainings and during supervision.

These resource materials were also used by teachers for upgrading their academic qualifications. In Dowa, there was a 25% improvement in teachers' academic qualification in the last two years of the project with more teachers sitting and passing the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE). This shows that the skills and knowledge that they have gained through PSSP: SFP teacher professional development activities and teaching resources are taking root in Dowa and allowing the teachers to become better teachers.

Unfortunately, schools face an acute shortage of additional reading and supplementary materials in schools apart from the curriculum books. This poses a challenge to pupils' language skills development and hampers the implementation of particular approaches to teaching literacy. This problem is exacerbated by the schools' lack of proper storage for teaching and learning materials. PSSP: SFP worked to solve these problems through a variety of strategies. First, teachers were trained on TALULAR – using local materials to develop literacy materials to help learners read and write. Moreover, the community was called on to support teaching and learning by providing old books, magazines, newspapers, calendars, and cartons that are print rich. PSSP: SFP facilitated the donation of 42,000 books to Dowa schools and published a series of 10 books that use stories from Dowa written by the community members, teachers and learners from Dowa. PSSP: SFP's literacy program, Beginning Literacy Program for Malawi (BLP/M), included a significant infusion of classroom resources like song posters and big books. All told, over 250,000 new books, learning resources and posters were added to Dowa's schools.

To overcome the lack of storage for teaching and learning materials, schools constructed libraries for easy access to reading materials, using donated cabinets, or developing a reading corner in a classroom. Some schools used part of their small grants received from PSSP: SFP to create this space, while others identified available space for storing school materials in the community. Schools also developed mobile TALULAR banks to share resources and keep them safe. These efforts led to the development of 174 school accessible libraries, up from 10 libraries when PSSP: SFP began in 2006.

Promoting literacy

Literacy is the foundation of learning. With this in mind PSSP: SFP developed the Beginning Literacy Program for Malawi (BLP/M) that targets standard I children. BLP/M is a thematically based literacy course filled with Chichewa songs and stories for standard I learners. It focuses primarily on children's acquisition of basic literacy skills through reading and writing in Chichewa, the mother tongue for Dowa's children. The outcomes include enabling learners to read short familiar messages with fluency; to write simple sentences and stories; and to love reading and writing. The program brought about results. Standard I learners in Dowa demonstrated an improvement of 39% on pupil assessments taken in 2006 and again in 2008.

In support of literacy development, PSSP: SFP launched a literacy campaign that incorporated a number of literacy-based activities to promote reading among pupils. Many schools developed literacy centers like reading corners or libraries with specific reading times scheduled for different classes. Mobilisation Corps of Malawi (MCM) members helped establish reading clubs. Teachers used the community member-gathered reading materials for their literacy lessons. PSSP: SFP encouraged community members and learners from upper classes to collect songs, write stories, and paste them on the school notice board. Community members now serve as storytellers and historians in schools, promoting interest in listening to and in subsequently writing of stories. They have also contributed to the development of TALULAR for literacy lessons in the classroom. Open Days and literacy fairs were encouraged to help the parents and communities appreciate the efforts of the teachers and to garner parents' continued support for education.

Promoting effective school-community partnerships

A mobilized community can achieve more than can be imagined when it recognizes its challenges and knows that solutions are within its reach. Under PSSP: SFP, community mobilization began with a four-step interactive process: research, change agent-agent sensitization and training; community sensitization and mobilization; and behavior change interventions supported by on-going mass communication interventions, role model identification and utilization, and stakeholder briefings and involvement.

Combined, activities within these four steps and the support interventions have led to the desired outreach and impact – support that acknowledges the value of education for all children and recognizes the need to tackle barriers beyond the cost of schooling.

A well-tested, powerful mechanism for learning about grassroots issues and motivating communities to address those issues is the participatory action research method "theater for development" (TFD). PSSP: SFP used this process initially to understand the challenges and needs of the district and to sensitize those communities for action. Later, PSSP: SFP established local drama groups as a sustainable mechanism for helping communities examine and address their local issues affecting education.

To build a capable base in the district, PSSP: SFP mounted trainings for four types of change agents to achieve a strong holistic and coordinated force to combat the constraints haunting primary education in Dowa, particularly for OVCs and girls. There were four types of change agents trained:

- Core government field or extension workers from line ministries of Ministry of Education, Ministry Women and Child Development and Ministry of Health and Human Population Services.
- Support government field workers that operate within the impact areas (e.g., agricultural extension workers, forestry assistants and health surveillance assistants).
- School/local community-based change agents comprising traditional leaders, SMC/PTA members and teachers.
- Cluster community leaders.

The training centered on equipping change agents with appropriate skills and approaches so they could spearhead change and provide technical support to community members and schools as they forged ahead with project initiatives. The trainings created a large cadre of education-friendly supporters that should be sustainable as Dowa continues to develop.

One powerful mechanism that PSSP: SFP added to the community was the cluster community leader. A cluster leader is an elected member of a school community who voluntarily assumes a leading role in organizing and coordinating PSSP: SFP activities in approximately four school communities. Sixty-nine cluster leaders were elected, trained and provided with bicycles. The cluster community leaders inspired

various school- and community-based initiatives to support primary education in their areas. These initiatives included fundraising endeavors to support OVCs, construction or renovation initiatives to improve the school grounds, tracking of learners and other such school supporting activities.

One unique innovation piloted under PSSP: SFP is the Mobilization Corps of Malawi (MCM), a civic service program that promotes and engages youth as direct contributors to the development of their local community. PSSP: SFP trained, deployed and supported MSCE graduates who, in a spirit of service, became community change agents. These youth, or Mobilization Corps Members (MCMs), engaged in a range of community development activities in support of education at the grassroots level. The MCMs lived in the same communities as they worked and received a small stipend for living expenses. Through living and working side-by-side with community members, the MCMs developed a clear understanding of the development needs and issues faced by a community.

The MCMs assisted communities to identify relevant development needs, helped communities to access existing resources, and implemented actions to address local needs. MCMs, through teaching and transferring skills and knowledge, and by assisting communities to connect to unrealized resources, supported the development process. This resulted in tangible benefits to communities and schools.

In Dowa, special interest groups in the Chichewa culture are a major player in addressing important community issues and ensuring empowerment and local ownership of initiatives. There are many critical issues related to local attitudes, culture, traditions and practices that cannot be dealt with as effectively by standard project target groups like SMCs or teachers. PSSP: SFP trained special interest groups from *Gule Wamkulu*, *Akunjira* and *Eni Dambwe*, and female initiation counselors, *Chisamba*, that were selected by their respective communities and schools. These special groups proved powerful in changing attitudes and garnering creative support for education through their fundraising events like the “Big Dance” or using their influence to lure children to school.

Increasing financial resources at school level

As the various change agents mobilized communities and worked to improve the quality of education in their schools, they were often hampered by a lack of financial resources to complement their voluntary, non-monetary contributions. The small scale grants scheme under PSSP: SFP served to fill in this gap. The process involved sensitization, training in financial management and accountability, and monitoring. In three years, PSSP: SFP provided approximately MK61 million to add to the financial and in-kind resources communities themselves were providing in support of education. These small grants were used to construct or renovate a range of school infrastructure. All schools engaged in some form of school infrastructure renovation or construction. Through PSSP: SFP small grants, schools constructed or renovated 110 school blocks, 105 pit latrines, and 75 teachers' houses, plus they established 133 vocational skills courses and 106 income-generating activities (IGAs). The small grant is both a powerful motivator and cost effective means of improving both school infrastructure and services, yet the grant cannot do this alone. Therefore, PSSP: SFP trained SMCs in lobbying and fundraising skills to supplement and sustain their efforts.

Identification and utilization of local role models is another critical aspect of meaningful and sustainable community mobilization. Changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practice are part of a long process that differs with every place, situation, and individual. Some communities will grasp the changes immediately and others will be slow to accept change. It is with this background in mind that PSSP: SFP identified those that adopted the changes faster and used them to influence change in those communities that adopted change more slowly. PSSP: SFP used this process as a catalyst for motivation and emulation.

Using information

PSSP: SFP mass communication interventions were used to keep the public informed on project activities and to solicit feedback; encourage those involved in the project initiatives; and to promote ripple effect for the project's sustainability and expansion. Under PSSP: SFP these objectives were achieved through a range of information, education and communication products, which included print and electronic media.

In particular, PSSP: SFP used locally-written area newsletters, which proved powerful in building momentum and giving recognition for achievements.

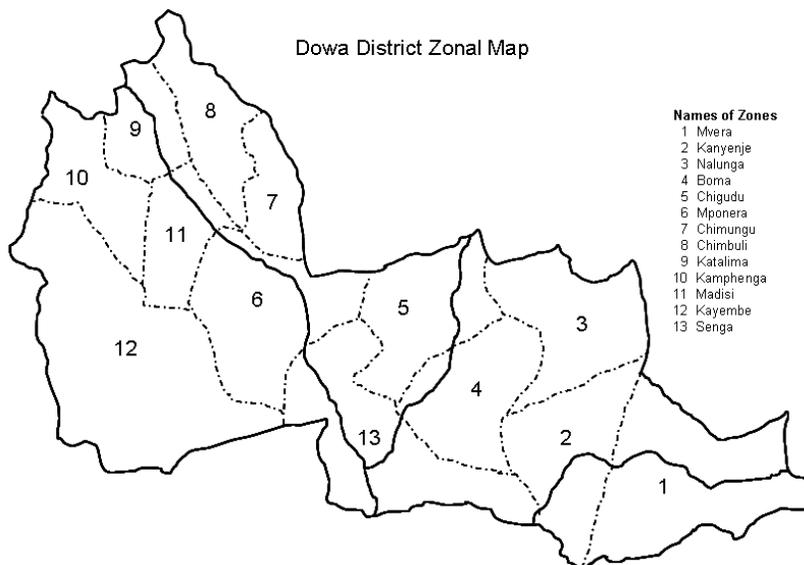
Monitoring and evaluation data informs and improves project processes, and does so most effectively when shared with a broad range of stakeholders. PSSP: SFP shared data broadly through a variety of mechanisms. PSSP: SFP included monitoring and evaluation data results in each of its technical reports and wrote special pupil assessment data reports. Teachers received baseline data results during the cycles of trainings, which motivated them to work harder. PSSP: SFP shared qualitative impact stories with the district through its area and project newsletters and other success stories written on the project. In addition, two evaluations were conducted, which revealed improved performance in all aspects of the education sector.

Evidence of Success: Selected School Profiles

PSSP: SFP's holistic effort represented by the strategies described previously has translated to improved outcomes for learners. Learners are returning to school and staying in school – 26% more learners are in school since the project started, the largest increase since free primary education was declared in 1994. Even more, the last three years have seen a 43% improvement in pupil attendance. Learners are also achieving. Scores on a range of assessments show an increase between 28% and 39% on pupil performance.

Indeed, the district should be proud of its progress. Teachers have taken increased responsibility for their classrooms, with 71% of them using participatory methods, up from 30% when the project started. Inside the classrooms there are resources – posters and books for learners, references for teachers, libraries, and teachers who are teaching effectively and learning is taking place. With the implementation of BLP/M, standard I learners can read and write and they have developed the joy of reading. Performance of learners is improving across the primary school. The look of schools is transformed with dramatic increases in new or refurbished infrastructure at all 226 schools. Communities are finding creative ways to support learners who are most disadvantaged. Three-fourths of the communities have undertaken income generating activities to support their learners. The MCMs who have successfully finished their terms of service are a resource for development. Word is spreading through media and newsletters that PSSP: SFP has helped Dowa raise quality, access and equity in education. The baton is now Dowa's to take, and PSSP: SFP expects they will continue to achieve.

The following 26 school profiles are selected from each of the original 13 zones within Dowa¹ (see map below). This collection includes two of the most impressive school profiles from each zone. The profiles provide historical background on the school and describe the state of the school prior to the arrival of PSSP: SFP; the inputs provided to the school by PSSP: SFP; resulting achievements realized after three years of project implementation; the challenges that still exist; and recommendations for future, continued improvement.



¹ When PSSP: SFP started in 2006, Dowa was demarcated into 13 zones. In mid 2007, zonal boundaries were redrawn and 6 more zones were added, bring the total to 19 zones. For implementation purposes, the original 13 zones continued to be referenced.

Mvera

Cluster **Mvera**
Zone **Mvera**
TA **Chiwere**

Location

Mvera School is situated 500m south of the TDC, adjacent to Mvera Mission Hospital.

Key players

Formal Team

PEA **Lucius Chidatha**
AC **Joab Jipson**
HT **Everson Tembo**
SMC Chair **Mayi Seveni**

Support Team

ZOC **Niffer Chikonje**
CL **Bambo Kamwambasa**
MCM **Catherine Kalumbu**
Girl Mentor **Mayi Kawale**

Background

Established in 1932 by CCAP Nkhoma Synod, the school has classes for standards 1 to 8. There are 24 teachers (nine male, 15 female), six of whom are students from Kasungu TTC. Standards 1 and 2 have two streams, each handled by its own teacher. Part of the school is a boarding school called Andrew Murray, which accommodates learners for all the classes. In 2006, 843 learners (406 boys, 437 girls) were enrolled. The school had 13 classrooms, which were in bad shape. The school had no latrines. There were eight teachers' houses. The school and community had a poor working relationship, which resulted in the absence of any



school-development activities. The SMC/PTAs did not meet nor facilitate PTA meetings for school development. It was hard for teachers to meet to plan or share ideas and experiences. The school had supplementary readers — but learners, teachers and community members were not accessing them, as they were simply stored away. OVCs did not receive any support.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

After the sensitization meeting and trainings were conducted, the local communities had a better understanding of their role and responsibilities regarding school activities. Within a short period of time they initiated various activities. They elected new SMC/PTA members, constructed two pit latrines, created a maize garden to support OVCs and lobbied for small grants to rehabilitate a

classroom block, now used as a school library. Vocational-skills trainings began with equipment, such as sewing machines provided by PSSP. Learners, including OVCs and girls, are acquiring new skills. Weluzani Meja, who uses a wheelchair, is now able to sew clothes and tailor items on his own because of the skills he has learned. Teachers contributed MK2,003 to buy tubes and tires for Weluzani's wheelchair so he could come to school daily. The school keeps and cares for the 219 books received from PSSP,



along with books from the National Library Services, in a separate room. The community provided shelves, benches and mats for this room to make it suitable for reading. Four teachers were trained as local troupers in math, English, science and Chichewa. The headteacher was trained as a supervisor to observe classroom practices, monitor school management and provide feedback.

Achievements

To encourage OVCs to remain in school, several initiatives have been carried out. Maize was harvested and sold and the proceeds used to buy 300 exercise books, 200 pens, and 100 pencils for 300 OVCs. Weluzani Meja, the OVC mentioned earlier, now moves freely and easily when crossing the river from and to Katunga village because of the resources he received for his wheelchair.



The community and SMC used the PSSP-inspired skills they learned to lobby from Active Africa. As a result, the school got 178 blankets for learners, given to 83 boys and 95 girls. The school also rehabilitated classrooms and learner hostels. Quiz and debate clubs as well as study circles were established by the MCMs, enabling learners to speak English fluently and confidently during assemblies and other zonal and school functions. For example, a learner was able to serve as translator for the District Commissioner's speech into English during a public function. During the function, the school conducted club competitions with other schools within and beyond the zone. The school's clubs won most of the competitions. The community continues to develop the school. A teacher's house is currently under construction. Enrolment has increased by 10% since 2006. The 2007 school year closed with 929 learners

(483 girls, 446 boys). More learners have been trained in vocational skills such as weaving, sewing and carpentry.

Challenges

- **Some members** of SMC and PTA are relatively inactive in school activities.
- **Few standard 8** learners were selected to go on to national secondary schools.

Recommendations

- **The community** should continue to lobby other organizations for school-development projects.
- **Teachers** should conduct CPD trainings often and peer lesson observation as well.
- **The community** should continue academic clubs and facilitate exchange visits.
- **The school** should continue to facilitate literacy fairs.
- **The community** should implement its action plan.

Thonje

Cluster **Thonje**
Zone **Kapita**
TA **Chiwere**

Location

To reach Thonje School travel 21 km northeast of Mvera TDC along the Lilongwe-Salima Road. After 11 km, turn left onto a dirt road. Pass by Kapita School and go on to Thonje School, which is on the left side of the road.

Key Players

Formal Team

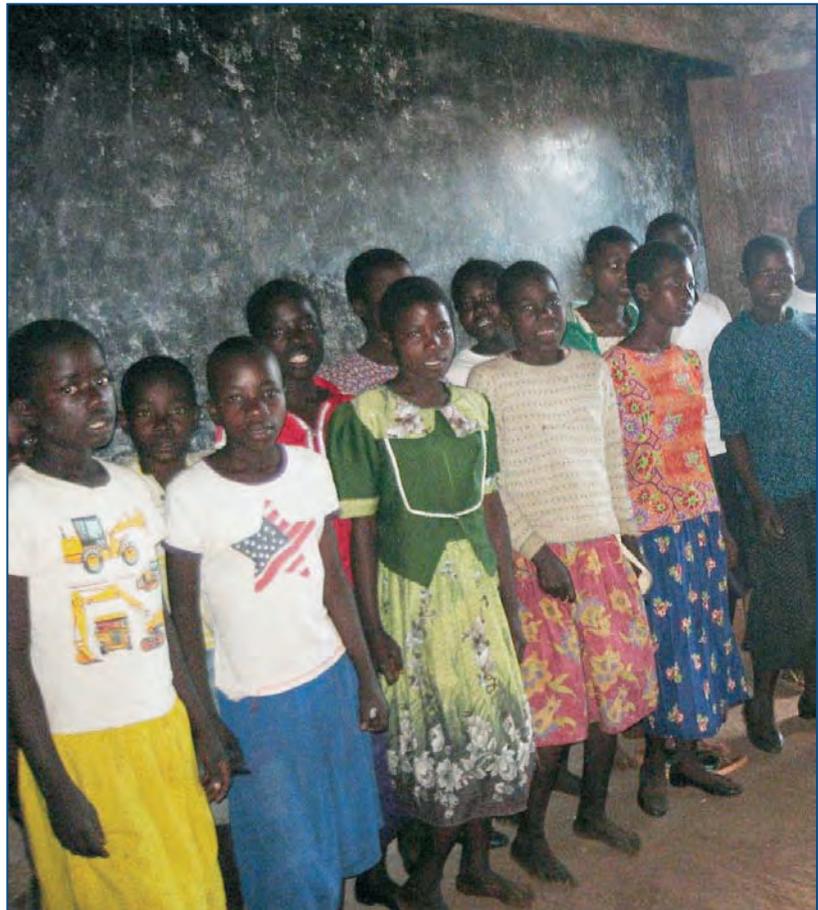
PEA **Morgan Mwale**
AC **Daniel Kazembe**
HT **Maliseni Chigowo**
SMC Chair **Mayi Kweza**

Support Team

ZOC **Niffer Chikonje**
CL **Bambo Nkhoma**
MCM **Redson Millambo**
Girl Mentor **Mayi Phiri**

Background

Thonje School was established in 1930 under CCAP Nkhoma Synod. It had two permanent and two semi-permanent classrooms. Religious leaders offered a church building for use as another classroom. There were seven permanent teachers' houses, five of which required major repairs. There was little community participation in the school's development activities and pupil absenteeism was high. Teachers, however, were commonly prepared for their lessons. The school enrolment was 734 (352



boys, 382 girls). The school also had supplementary readers.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

PSSP sensitized and trained all target groups concerned with the education of the children, including SMCs, PTAs, chiefs, teachers and parents. Teachers were trained in content knowledge and pedagogical skills, focusing on learner-centered teaching methods including module production, teacher conferences, local MTTT, facilitation, BLP/M and TALULAR production. The headteacher and deputy head were trained in instructional

leadership. The MCM established play parks, which were an attraction to pupils. PSSP supplied the school with 258 library books. A library committee was elected and trained on library-management skills. The school management was trained, as was the school's local drama group. The drama group was encouraged to educate communities on various civic issues. The MCM and cluster leader were trained to initiate activities that would motivate learners to remain in school. The school was identified as a pilot school for pupil-data assessment.

Achievements

Soon after the sensitization activities were completed, the local communities realized what their school needed and they successfully lobbied others in the community for land for gardening and PSSP for financial support. The communities grew maize and harvested 14 bags, some of which was sold for MK9,000. This money was used to pay the builders who constructed two classroom blocks. Using their PSSP small grants, community members bought materials and rehabilitated three teachers' houses, which are now occupied. A community member trained 15 learners, three of whom were OVCs, in bricklaying skills. A community member also trained 30 learners, nine of them OVCs, in tailoring. Learning bricklaying and tailoring skills will help these learners remain in school and support themselves in the future. The community



constructed a headteacher's office, with small-grant funds used for its completion. Through CPDs and TCCs, most teachers are now using participatory teaching methods and TALULAR with their learners. The school has two local troupers, in BLP/M and science, to increase school and cluster-based classroom supervision and to enhance the

quality of education. The school has maintained high pupil enrolment and, as a result, was awarded a certificate of appreciation. At district level, on sanitation, the school was ranked number four, as they really keep the school tidy. The school's enrolment for October 2008 was 748 (378 boys, 370 girls). The school's headteacher is a role model in management for the zone.



Challenges

- **Some community members are still reluctant** to take part in school-development activities.
- **Too few teachers** are on staff.

Recommendations

- **Re-sensitize local communities** on their roles in school-development activities.
- **Teachers** should continue with CPDs.
- **Communities** should implement plans they have developed.

Mpangweni

Cluster **Chankhungu**
Zone **Kanyenje**
TA **Nkukula**

Location

Mpangweni School is situated just after Lumbadzi bridge along the Lilongwe-Salima road on raised grounds to the left, 1 kilometer after the bridge.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Bwanali Jere**
AC **Louis Mangawa**
HT **Paul Makiyi**
SMC Chair **Mr. Chimphakati**

Support Team

ZOC **Martha Olive Myava**
CL **Bambo Milton**
Msokasoka
MCM **Mercy Chadza**

Background

The school was established in 1958 under CCAP Nkhoma Synod. In 2006 the enrolment was 441 learners (257 girls and 184 boys). There were five teachers (three male and two female). The school had only one block against standards 1-7, leaving five classes out of seven to learn under trees and a church shelter. This meant interruptions during hazardous weather. Communities considered any school-development activities as the duty of government and any activity related to teaching and learning as the sole role of teachers, e.g. sourcing of



materials for TALULAR production. No PTA meetings were conducted at the school. Chiefs and local leaders hardly attended to any call by the headteacher to share issues that affected the learning of the child. There was no teacher's house.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

Upon realizing that people do not turn up for meetings at the school, a neutral place was used to conduct a meeting and all community leaders and 16 village heads attended. PSSP shared its vision of a good school: one that provides quality teaching and learning. PSSP also outlined a plan to address prioritized issues to improve the learning environment:

- **Training the five teachers** in content knowledge and methodologies.

- **Training two of the teachers** as local troupers (one male, one female) to support other teachers in BLP/M and in TALULAR production, use and display.
- **Training SMC and PTA** in their roles on financial and material resource management.
- **Providing transport** to Mr. Msokasoka, an SMC member, to learn from other communities what they do to improve the teaching and learning environment.
- **Supporting the school** with small grants amounting to MK566,891 for the construction of two classroom blocks initiated by the community and buying fertilizer for maize production.
- **Providing the school** with SIP and donating 250 supplementary readers.

Achievements

As one approaches the school now, one is greeted by two beautifully constructed classroom blocks as a result of the intervention. One teacher's house has also been constructed. Enrolment has gone up from 447 in 2006 to 557 in 2008. SMC/PTA use lobbying skills acquired during the trainings to the effect that the European Union has promised one more classroom block and four teachers' houses. SMC/PTA is very active and effectively leading developmental activities. The Chairperson, Mr. Chimphakati, is good at mobilizing members of the community to take part in addressing issues for the improvement of the learning environment. The mindset of the community leaders changed so much that MK65,000 was voluntarily raised towards construction work. Community leaders also raised MK8,314.15 during SIP launch. The community also constructed five pit latrines for learners and



joined hands in sourcing and preparing for teaching and learning resources. There is good cooperation between the school and community.

Five seesaws were built in a play park for the learners, resulting in improved punctuality in arriving at school. Reading, drama and quiz clubs were introduced and learners compete with other schools. As an indicator of the activeness of the clubs, the

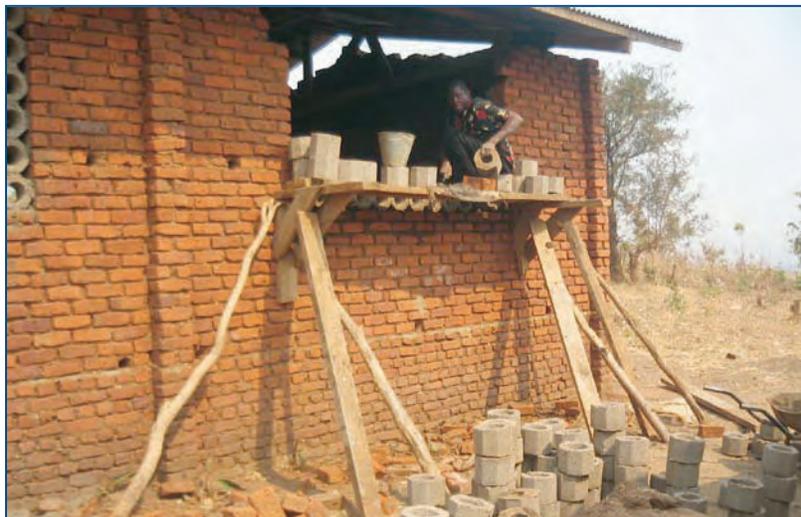
school won a wall clock in 2007. The competition was sponsored by Rabson Mandele (MCM) as an encouragement. Teachers use participatory teaching and learning and Queen Gondwe, Standard I teacher, is a role model at involving learners during lesson delivery: 75% of her learners are able to write and read simple Chichewa words and sentences. Six classes are now accommodated in classrooms and only one in a church. The community also raised MK25,000 from maize produce to supplement payment of skilled labor.

Challenges

Markets, especially the two markets of Chankhungu and Msambo, affect learner attendance on market days.

Recommendations

Strategize ways of reducing absenteeism on Mondays and Wednesdays.



Msadelera

Cluster **Msadelera**
Zone **Kanyenje**
TA **Nkukula**

Location

Msadelera School is located 8 km to the southern part of Kanyenje TDC. Travel along the unpaved road that winds down to the south until one reaches the school.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Bwanali Jere**
AC Louis **Mangawa**
HT **Backston Maseko**
SMC Chair
Henry Masotuzu

Support Team

ZOC **Martha Olive Myava**
CL **Wilson Jamikele**
MCM **Leophus Wilson**
Girl Mentors **Tinenenji Maseko,**
Dolika Makumba

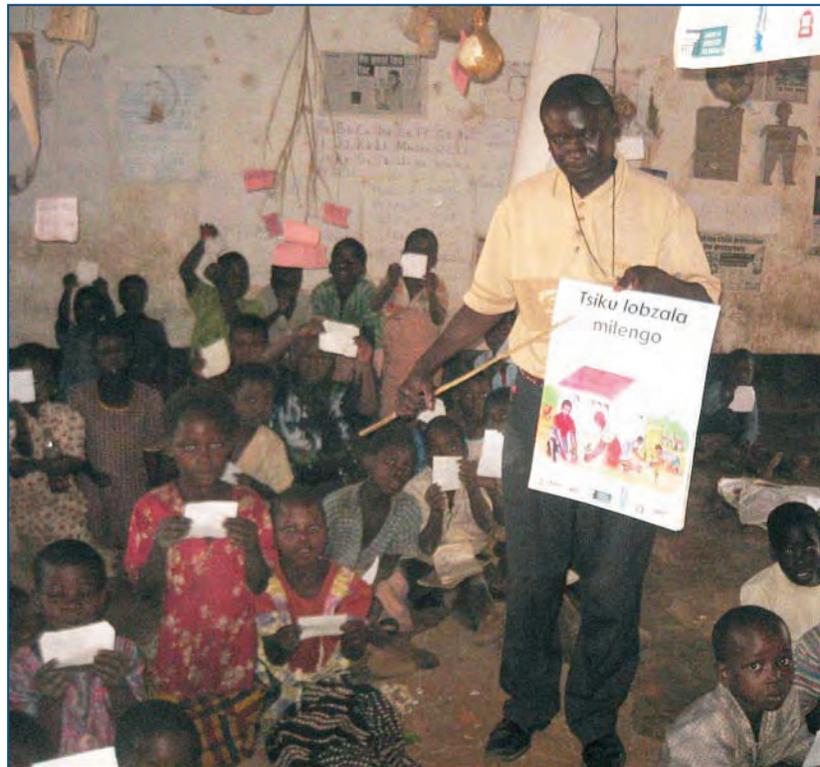
Notable Champions

GVH **Kaundama Kombe and Chitanje**

Background

Established in 1963 under the support of CCAP Nkhoma Synod, the school had an enrolment of 384 learners (204 girls, 180 boys) in 2006.

With four male teachers, there were two classroom blocks and no permanent teachers' houses at the school. The headteacher and other teachers lived in mud



and thatched-roofed houses. The SMC was inactive. OVCs received no support. None of the teachers used TALULAR with their learners. There was a poor working relationship between the school and the local communities.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

Four teachers and one volunteer teacher were trained in content knowledge and pedagogy as well as TALULAR production, use and display. The headteacher was trained in instructional leadership and cluster supervisory skills. Community-based initiatives were supported through provision of moral support and encouragement. The school received small grants amounting

to MK260,790 to help fund community-initiated development projects. The School Management Committee was trained on how to carry out their roles effectively as well as in financial and material resource management. The school received a sewing machine to use for teaching vocational skills.

The one teacher trained in library management will also support other libraries in the zone. OVC mentors were trained in mentoring skills to effectively support the school's OVCs. Reading clubs received 302 supplementary readers to improve their literacy skills and to develop a culture of reading at the school.

Achievements

The local communities were involved in school activities such as the construction of three permanent teachers' houses. The communities constructed 10 pit latrines, improving sanitation at the school. A woodlot was established at the school. V.H. Kombe and Kaundama provided needy learners with 80 and 90 notebooks and pens respectively. V.H. Chitanje and Kaundama donated 15 and 28 school uniforms respectively that were then given to 30 girls and 11 boys. School uniforms were tailored by the SMC chairperson free of charge. V.H. Kaundama also donated MK13,000 for skilled labour for the construction of a house. MK1,345 was voluntarily raised during the launch of PSSP's SIP. The communities support teachers in class by supplying materials, such as animal skins and cartons, for TALULAR displays. Teachers use these resources in their teaching, resulting in improved learner performance.



Enrolment increased from 384 in 2006 to 438 in 2008. In 2008, the year began with 409 learners enrolled and there were 438 learners by the end of the school year. All learners passed at the end of 2008 school session. Eight learners (four boys and four girls), six of whom were OVCs, were trained in tailoring. MK1,500 was raised from the sales of four school uniforms that the learners had made. The headteacher organizes supervision and exchange visits within his cluster

to share good practices. He is one of the role model teachers.

The community recruited one volunteer teacher. Village Education Committees were set up to monitor the attendance and progress of learners. At the end of every term these committees buy gifts such as notebooks and pens for star performers. There is now a good relationship between the headteacher and the local communities.

Challenge

There are only four teachers to teach six classes, resulting in a teacher:pupil ratio of 1:110.

Recommendations

Continue with support to the school by posting at least one more teacher to the school. The local communities should complete the building of the teacher's house, which only has its foundation constructed.



Kaomba

Cluster **Sungeni**
Zone **Nalunga**
TA **Msakambewa**

Location

From Nalunga TDC take the road to Kambulu. Before Kambulu school, immediately after crossing river Lingadzi, turn left and travel about 1.5 km to reach Kaomba Primary School.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Richard Nkhweza**
AC **Andrew Sapangwa**
HT **Anderson Numeri**
SMC Chair
Bambo Kamphimbe

Support Team

ZOC **Steward Kasudze**
CL **Bambo Phiri**
MCM **Masautso Labani**
Girl Mentor **Mayi Numeri**

Background

The school was established in 1995 by Nkhoma Synod of CCAP. Kaomba School had two permanent school blocks, each with two classrooms, and one teachers' house, which was occupied by the headteacher. The SMC and PTA were dormant, never raised any funds for the school and met only when major issues emerged. The school initially had classes from standards 1 to 8 but due to poor communication between the school and the community, classes were reduced so that the school had standard 1 to 4



classes. In 2004, the number of teachers dropped from six to one, which resulted in learners transferring to neighbouring schools. With only one teacher for 135 learners, it was difficult for the teacher to prepare all the required teaching and administrative records. In February 2006, 135 learners (65 boys, 70 girls) were enrolled but 19 dropped out later in the year for various reasons including early marriage, child labour and the lack of pit latrines.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

The project sensitized all school stakeholders on the importance of supporting educational activities at the school. Community leaders were trained on their roles and responsibilities to the school. Teachers were all trained on subject content knowledge and

pedagogical skills. From PSSP: SFP, the school received 88 library books. The community received a small grant to help with development requirements and monitoring and support.

Achievements

Through sensitization activities and training, the community and its leaders gained a good understanding of their responsibilities to the school. Following elections for the SMC and PTA, the committees functioned effectively and the community began working more cooperatively. The community constructed one khola for piggery and used its small grant to buy pigs. The pigs have reproduced and there are now 15 pigs, 13 of them piglets. Money raised through selling pigs goes to assist the school's two volunteer teachers and the

Kaomba

OVCs, with additional funding coming from SIP. The community has been transformed. Community members are now responding positively to school issues. Many attended BLP/M literacy fairs and came to the school to hear the end-of-year test results of their children. The community participated in the establishment of play parks and a weather station at the school. The play parks caused children who had dropped out to return. As a result of Gule Wamkulu escorting learners to school, enrolment increased from 135 to 262 learners (134 boys, 128 girls). The school expanded to include standard 7 and will expand next school year to include standard 8. Considering the increased enrolment, the community recruited two volunteer teachers. Through school-based CPDs, volunteers learned effective teaching methods. School awareness resulting from frequent PTA meetings held at the school reduced the number of boys who were going to an estate for work. The girl mentor has played a very good role in mentoring female learners. This



has minimized early marriages. The community has built six pit latrines for the school. One teacher's house which was incomplete has been completed and the community has constructed an additional teacher's house. A temporary shelter was built as a classroom. Teachers who were operating from far away have occupied the two houses on the school compound. There are now two qualified teachers and two volunteer teachers at the school.

The school experienced the transformation after the arrival of a new headteacher, Anderson Numeri. At his previous school, Mtangenji, Numeri had been a role model in terms of using participatory teaching methods. Teachers now have all the

necessary teaching records at Kaomba School, and teachers, learners and the community utilize the library books given by PSSP: SFP to the school.

Challenges

- **The khola for the piggery** is too small for the 15 pigs.
- **There is still a teacher shortage** as there are only two qualified teachers for 262 learners.

Recommendations

- **Teachers** should continue conducting school-based CPD trainings.
- **The community** should keep making bricks for construction of more teachers' houses.
- **A new, larger khola** for the pigs needs to be constructed.

Mtengenji

Cluster **Katona**
Zone **Nalunga**
TA **Chiwere**

Location

Mtengenji Primary School is located 18 km from the Mvera Trading Centre. From the Trading Centre go north taking Nalunga Road. After traveling 17 km, turn right to reach the school.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **R. Nkweza**
AC **A. Sapangwa**
HT **C. L. Shema**
SMC Chair **Abambo Jasi**

Support Team

ZOC **S. Kasudze**
CL **Bambo Biason**
MCM **Henry Lezardi**
Girl Mentor **Mayi Mannes**
Chaomba

Background

Mtengenji Primary School was established in 1964 by the CCAP Nkhoma synod. In 2006 the school had only two classroom blocks and a headteacher's office with a small store room. The community willingly built four temporary teachers' houses. In February 2006, there were six teachers (five males, one female) at the school for 460 learners (242 boys, 218 girls). Teachers, however, did not prepare adequate teaching records. The administrative records were also inadequate. Teachers worked as individuals.



They never met for professional advancement.

The school experienced frequent learner and teacher absenteeism, child labour and early marriages. In February 2006, 56 of the 460 learners dropped out. Some of these went to estates to seek jobs. Others, especially girls, got married. Another problem was absenteeism during marketing day and at times lack of punctuality by the learners.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

Sensitization meetings and trainings were conducted at Mtengenji School as to the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders with regard to the school. Small grants were given to the community for the construction of two teachers' houses. PSSP: SFP provided the school with 226 books and the

school now has reading and debate clubs. Teachers were trained on content knowledge and pedagogical skills. The girls had an education visit to Lilongwe city.

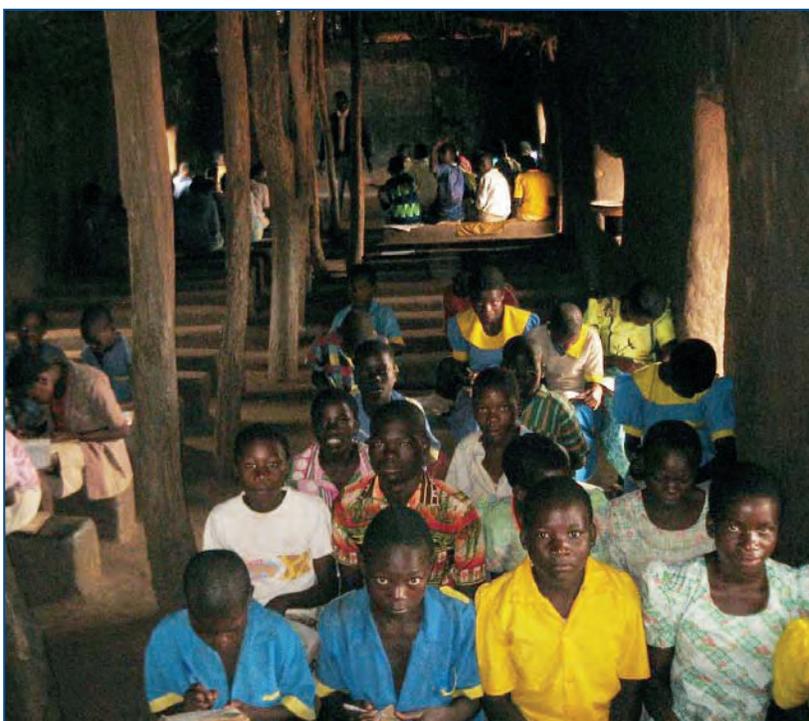
Four teachers were trained as local troupers and headteachers were trained as cluster supervisors.

Achievements

The community was sensitized and trained as to their roles regarding school activities. Gaps that existed in SMC and PTA were filled. Trainings conducted with community leaders fostered a sense of cooperation between the school and community. Focus-group discussion involving all school stakeholders paved the way for both teachers and the community to understand

each other better for the benefit of learners. This has created a conducive atmosphere for the learners.

The introduction of play parks attracted dropouts to return to school. Enrolment increased from 460 in 2006 to 600 in 2008. Frequent PTA and SMC meetings maximized community involvement in school-development activities. Soon after the arrival of the PSSP: SFP project, the community constructed two teachers' houses which are now occupied by the headteacher and his deputy. In 2008 the community moulded 170,000 bricks and built another teacher's house, which is not yet roofed. They have just started building a fourth house. Community leaders contributed MK46,000 to pay for the builders' labour. PSSP: SFP gave the school a small grant for the construction materials and to facilitate the teaching of vocational skills to OVCs. Twenty-six OVCs (nine boys, 17 girls) were trained in tinsmithing; 19 OVCs (eight boys, 11 girls) were trained in tailoring, 26 OVCs (21 boys, five girls) were trained in wood carving. Chakwanila Kabando, the deputy headteacher of the school, took charge of vocational training. Teachers meanwhile were trained in content knowledge and pedagogical skills. The trainings improved the teachers' classroom practices. As a result of the training, more than 75% of teachers now maintain adequate teaching records and go to school prepared for their lessons. The school has all the



required administrative records. Most teachers use participatory teaching methods and TALULAR with their learners. The school has three teachers who are role models in classroom practices: Chakwanila Kabondo, Mannes Chaomba and Charles Lester. The active methods the teachers' now employ during lesson delivery have improved learners' performances. The form I selection to secondary school has been good at Mtengenji School. In 2006, three learners were selected to attend government secondary schools. More than 40% of standard I learners are able to read and write. During the third term, literacy fair learners shared their displays and demonstrated many activities. Community participation was good. The learners, teachers, and community use the books they have received.

Challenges

- **The school has only one permanent school block with only two classrooms for eight classes of learners.**
- **Many learners are absent on Fridays, as it is the market day at Nyati.**
- **The school has no drinking water, as water drawn from the stream near the school is not safe.**

Recommendations

- **The school should continue to make action plans each term.**
- **The school's CPDs should be sustained.**
- **Community leaders should establish village education registers to check on dropouts.**
- **Gule Wamkulu should continue escorting learners to school to eliminate absenteeism.**

Kongwe I School

Cluster **Dowa I**
Zone **Boma**
TA **Msakambewa**

Location

Five kilometers north of Dowa Boma and very close to the famous Robert Blake Secondary School.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Ludaviko Matias**
AC **Mary Makuta**
HT **Amiton L. Mayaniakachepa**
SMC Chair **Bambo Mshanga**

Support Team

ZOC **Enock Kabuwe**
CL **Mayi Mengezi**
MCM **Chikoya Kayera**
Girl Mentor **Mayi Muss**

Notable Champion

GVH **Kalindang'om**

Background

Kongwe I School is under the proprietorship of CCAP Nkhoma Synod. Established in 1894, the school has 16 classes and 23 teachers (10 male,



of whom six were student teachers, and 13 female). The standard 1 to 8 school had only six latrines for 911 students (474 girls and 437 boys) enrolled in 2006. Within the school population were many orphans who came to school in tattered clothes with no hope of getting school uniforms. Teacher's houses were in disrepair due to a lack of maintenance. Teachers had not undertaken any in-service training in years and were not up to date with required teaching methods. There was no TALULAR production or use that would enable effective teaching.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

PSSP: SFP arrived in 2006 at Kongwe I School and started training teachers and SMC/PTAs. Through six cycles of training and three teacher conferences, teachers were trained in BLP/M TALULAR production and use, Local Mobile Training Troupes (MTTT), teacher conferences, facilitation skills and module production. PSSP: SFP provided Kongwe I School a small-scale grant of MK244,619 with which the school purchased three sewing machines, six rolls of uniform cloth and three metal sheets for making tins and other items. Cement was also purchased with the small grant for the construction of latrines and rehabilitation of teachers' houses. As a member of the PSSP: SFP team, the MCM fixed some play parks to

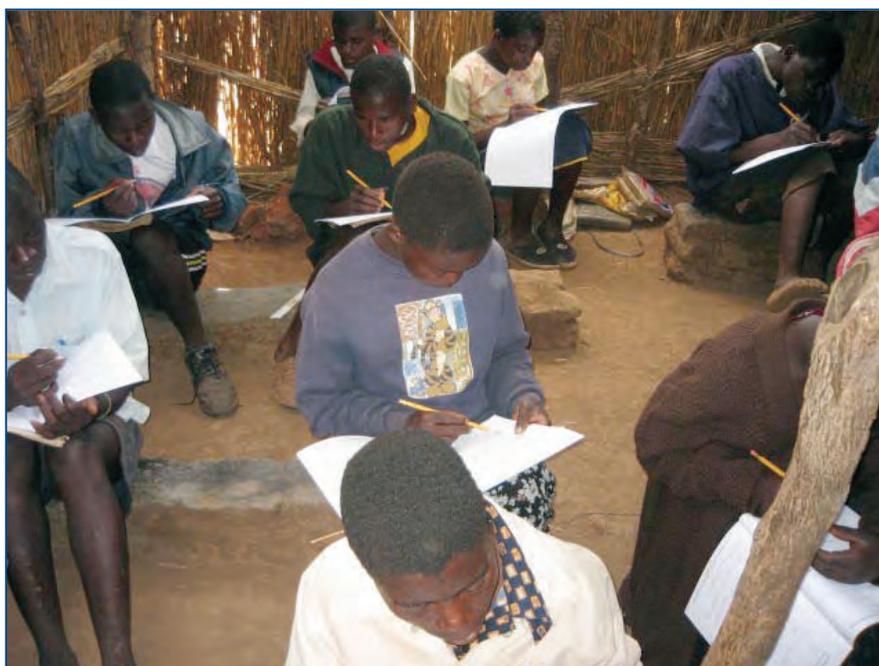


capture pupils' interest and help keep them in school. PSSP: SFP also trained communities on how to lobby for assistance from other sources. As a result, the community lobbied a C.B.O. for iron sheets for roofing the school latrines. PSSP: SFP, through the literacy department, provided the school with 229 books.

Once the trainings and purchases were completed, teachers sewed uniforms for 12 orphans (five girls and six boys), by hand and with the sewing machines. They also trained 20 pupils in sewing and tailoring skills. Thirteen new latrines were built — six for the boys and seven for the girls. One teacher, Mr. Kanache Banda, volunteered to produce TALULAR for the school. In fact, he produced enough that the school was able to create a TALULAR Bank, making Kongwe I the only school in the zone with a TALULAR Bank as well as the only school that organized an open day when orphans were given school uniforms. The open day was attended by T.A. Msakambewa and the local MP, who thanked the school for supporting orphans. Mrs. Sophie Kontho, a teacher at the school, was identified as best BLP/M facilitator and she was promoted later in the year to be a head teacher of one of the zone's primary schools.

Achievements

Since the arrival of PSSP: SFP, enrollment at Kongwe I School has increased by 12% from 911 (437 boys, 474 girls) in 2006 to 1,030 (507 boys, 523 girls) in 2008. Pupils are able to use clean latrines. Standard 1 pupils can write their names, read words and short sentences and make Big Books for reading. At the end of school year, 80% of the pupils advanced into standard 2. While other teachers in the zone



spend their time looking for TALULAR, teachers at Kongwe I can borrow teaching and learning materials at their school's TALULAR bank, use them in class and return them afterwards. "Teaching has been simple for us," stated a standard 6 teacher. Standard 8 pupils leaving the school were able to write good compositions because they were able access to the library books. James Mkanda, an example of such a pupil, participated in a visit to Bunda College and Natural Resource College, organized by PSSP: SFP, for the best standard 8 achievers in the zone. Twenty pupils (eight boys, 12 girls) have learnt tailoring skills.

Challenges

- **Too few** teachers' houses are at the school. Five teachers operate from a distance.
- **Play parks** were removed after one pupil sustained an injury during play.

Recommendations

- **Teachers and community** should continue to work together to produce better pupils as the years progress.
- **Training in life skills** such as tailoring, facilitated by PSSP: SFP, should be sustained.

Mndunje

Cluster **Kasatsi**
Zone **Chibwata**
TA **Msakambewa**

Location

Mndunje School is 3 km north of Dzaleka Refugee camp, along the Dzaleka-Ntchisi Road.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Flackson Kalinda**
AC **Mike Nyirenda**
HT **Essau Bottomani**
SMC Chair **Bambo Chitukula**

Support Team

ZOC **Enock Kabuwe**
CL **Bambo Chikuse**
MCM **Alefa Masano**
Girl Mentor **Mayi Chiputu**

Background

Established in 1963, Mndunje School is a standard 1 to 8 LEA school. The school had nine classroom blocks, three of which were so dilapidated that people used them as toilets. The other six had no doors. One block of four classes had its roof blown off because termites had eaten the rafters. The school had no library, provided no support for orphans and did not



teach pupils any vocational skills. There was only one latrine for the school's eight teachers and 787 pupils. For more than two years teachers had not received any in-service training. Standard 1 pupils could not write their names. Junior and senior pupils could not understand English. Some teachers' English-language background was not very good. Orphans were not fully supported. Selection at standard 8 was to CDSS.

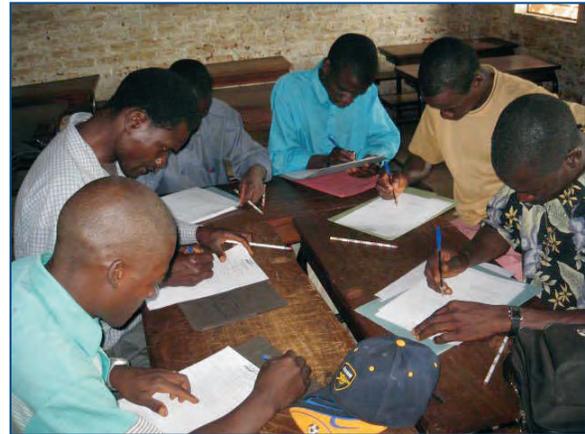
PSSP: SFP Inputs

Sensitization meetings were conducted with all stakeholders. All eight teachers completed training in content knowledge, methodologies, BLP/M approaches and TALULAR production and use. The head teacher participated in an educational tour organized by PSSP: SFP. With the small grant of MK 240,120 provided by PSSP: SFP, five teachers' houses and a classroom were rehabilitated and a sewing machine and two rolls of school-uniform cloth were purchased, as was fertilizer and maize for 1,020 pupils. Through PSSP: SFP, the school received 286 books for its library and a SIP box. Furthermore, the MCM established a play park at the school. *Akunjira* were also trained about their roles in development work.

Achievements

When the then headteacher went on an educational tour to Senga zone, she learnt about teacher attendance and pupils' daily registers that she implemented at Mndunje School immediately upon returning to her school. These registers are still in use by the current head. A standard I teacher, Ms. Joyce Chiputu, upon being trained in BLP/M and continuous assessment, has been identified as the best teacher in the cluster. As a result, she once trained other teachers at Mponela on continuous assessment. Josia Tembo, a standard 8 teacher, usually goes to Chigudu zone to train other teachers on effective composition writing. Mndunje School is the only school to send a pupil to Kamuzu Academy in the zone. By being able to access library books, teachers' have improved their teaching methods.

Since the provision of books by PSSP: SFP arrived at the school, pupils' understanding of English has improved. Because the first set of books was properly utilized, PSSP: SFP gave the school 50 extra books. With funding through its small grant, the school created a garden, which yielded 10 bags of maize. These funds also enabled a community member to train nine pupils (three boys and six girls) in tailoring skills. Sixteen latrines (seven for boys, nine for girls) have been constructed for the school's 1,020 pupils, thus creating a healthier environment. Six of nine classrooms now have doors with locks. During the SIP launch in 2007, the school received MK 3,700, which was used to buy



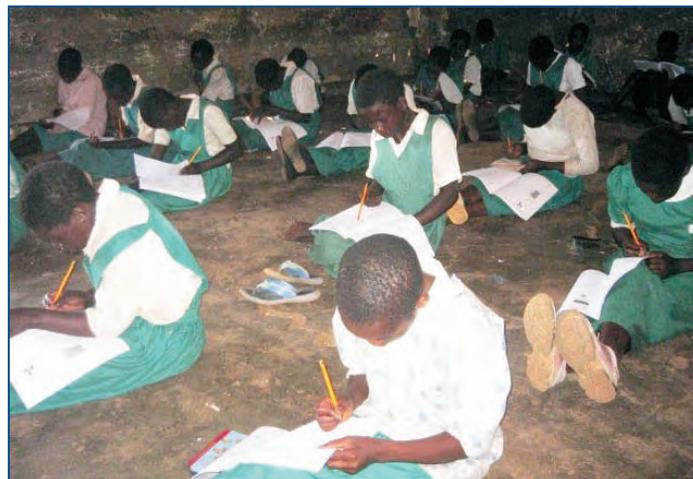
pens, rulers and notebooks for 15 orphans. The school has raised more than MK 10,000 by selling the school uniforms sewn by pupils, and this money was used to support OVCs. Enrolment at the school has increased 23% from 787 (409 boys, 378 girls) in 2006 to 1,020 (544 boys, 476 girls) in 2008.

Challenge

- **Classrooms without doors** are used as play rooms by the children. As a result, TALULAR materials cannot be left in these rooms once classes are over.

Recommendations

- **Continue working with the community** and cultivating its support.
- **Intensify and sustain the IGAs** to support orphans and other vulnerable children.
- **Implement** the school's action plan.



Matanda



Cluster **Mwangala**
Zone **Chigudu**
TA **Msakambewa**

Location

Matanda School is 18 kms northeast of Chigudu TDC. Take Msakambewa–Ntchisi road, travel 11 kms up to Mwangala Trading Centre. Turn right to Chimwala school, travel another km, turn right again to Matanda school

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Joyce Makwecha**
AC **John Kaliwamba**
HT **Brester Mtembe**
SMC Chair **Mr Sosola**

Support Team

ZOC **Stella Banda**
CL **Mr Alick Banda**
MCM **Chipiriro Maika**

Background

Matanda School began operating in 2002, with aid from CRECCOM, and is run by Local Education Authority. The school has classes from standard 1 to 4 and its enrolment was low with only 262 learners (110 boys, 152 girls). Before PSSP: SFP launched activities, the school had one classroom block, eight toilets and one headteacher's office. Parents had built two grass shelters to serve as classrooms for learners. Teachers rarely prepared their lessons in advance for the next day. There was little community involvement in school activities. In the headteacher's office, only a timetable was displayed.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

PSSP: SFP provided small grants for the construction of two teachers' houses and two classroom blocks. Play parks were introduced through MCM and the school has been provided with a SIP box. All teachers were trained in content knowledge and pedagogical skills. The project also trained SMC/PTA on financial management and school-ownership skills.

Achievements

From 2006 February to 2008 November, the school has achieved several things. Teachers' use of participatory teaching and learning methodologies has enabled learners to explore to find answers to questions the teacher asks. This helps to develop learners' critical-thinking skills and helps foster good learner-teacher and learner-learner interaction. There are two MTTT troupers who have been trained on how to identify gaps in teaching and they have used their skills to assist fellow teachers within the cluster. These teachers produced TALULAR materials, which they use in classrooms and are able to store them safely. There are



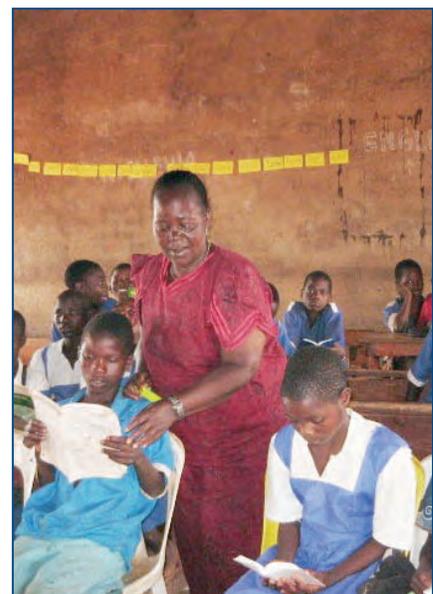
only two teachers at this school but they handle classes using the multi-grade system learnt during one of the PSSP: SFP cycle trainings. SIP box materials were distributed to best school performers and OVCs. These have been used as incentives for learners and have reduced pupil dropouts and absenteeism in all four classes. These materials are replenished every term. The problem of teacher accommodations has been minimized due to the construction of two teachers' houses. The building of two classroom blocks has enabled the creation of a conducive learning environment. Play parks have attracted more learners to enroll and has helped keep them in school. Currently there are 357 learners (157 boys and 200 girls) enrolled, and community involvement in school activities.

Challenge

There are only two teachers to teach four classes. As a result, it is a challenge for teachers to prepare all the lessons required.

Recommendation

District education management should help improve the teacher allocation for the school.



Mkanga



Cluster **Mtentera**
Zone **Chigudu**
TA **Msakambewa**

Location

Mkanga School is 9 km east of Chigudu TDC at T.A. Msakambewa's headquarters. Take the Boma road. Three km down the road, turn left. Go past Mtentera School and keep right to Mkanga school.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Joyce Makwecha**
AC **John Kaliwamba**
HT **Jacob Banda**
SMC Chair **Sekani Chisowa**
TA **Msakambewa**

Support Team

ZOC **Stella Banda**
CL **Saidi Yotamu**
MCM **Benson Ngalonde**
Girl Mentor
Mayi Justina Zunzo

Background

Established in 1953 by CCAP Nkhoma Synod, Mkanga School is a full primary school with two standard I classes

Before PSSP: SFP began activities at the school in January 2006, the school had 11 teachers' houses, four classroom blocks with two classrooms each, TALULAR materials in some classrooms and 11 toilets. Most teachers did not plan their daily work thoroughly enough, sometimes reporting for classes without lesson plans. Teaching records, records of work,

registers and progress books were not always updated. A poor relationship prevailed between the school and local community. There were 741 learners (361 boys, 380 girls) enrolled and the school did not have an active school committee.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

The following are examples of the activities facilitated by PSSP: SFP at the school: introduction of cycle trainings for teachers, vocational skills for pupils, conducting teacher conferences, providing library books, introduction of play parks by MCMs, introduction of BLP/M lessons and issuing of BLP/M materials, identification of exemplary teachers in specific areas, training of community leaders and SMC/PTAs, educational visits including a visit to Lufe in Mvera zone to learn more about TALULAR production.

Achievements

Teachers now are able to share their experiences and knowledge. As a result, learners' academic performances have improved. Standard 1 learners are able to read simple words, write their names, and draw objects. Since the project issued library books, a reading culture has been cultivated and learners in standards 6 and 7 have created classroom libraries. Enrolment is also high because of the introduction of play parks and the teaching of interesting lessons due to teachers' use of TALULAR, as well as participatory teaching and learning methods in which lessons are learner-centered. Enrolment has increased from 741 in 2006 to 852 learners (363 boys, 489 girls) in 2008.

As a result of SMC/PTA training on their school-related responsibilities, there is now greater community involvement in the functioning of school. A school library has been



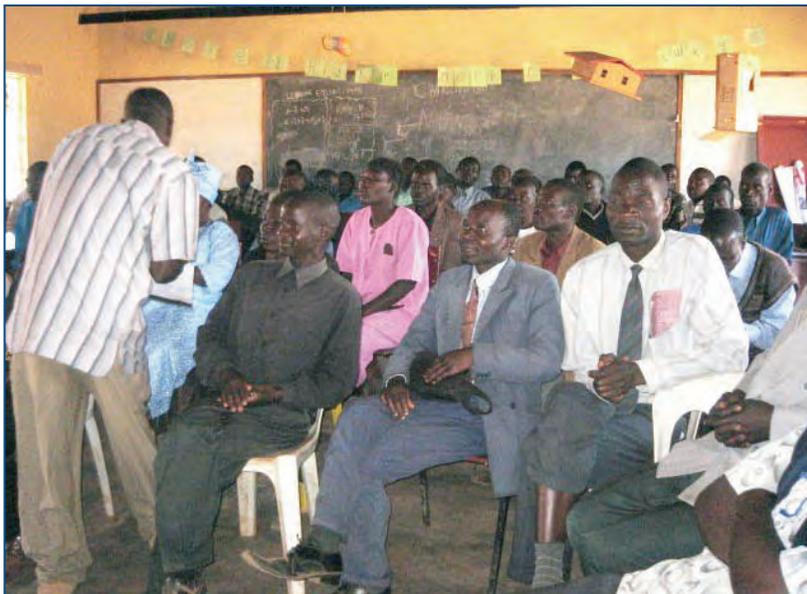
constructed and is in use. Top teachers have been identified and recognized, such as Richard Banda for good record keeping and Justina Zuzo and Fayson Kanyata for being the best BLP/M implementers. Pupils are being taught life skills through bakery and carpentry activities.

Challenge

There is need to accelerate construction work at the school to build more classrooms.

Recommendations

- **Supervision visits** by the PEA and other supervisors should be done regularly to maintain the good practices currently in use at the school and in the classrooms.
- **Encourage the community** to take an active part in school development activities.



Kachulu

Cluster **Mponela I**
Zone **Mponela**
TA **Mponela**

Location

Kachulu School is situated 6 km east of Mponela. Take Lilongwe-Kasungu Road. Take the road to Dowa Secondary School just before entering the built-up area. Travel 3 km and you are at the school.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Steven Mbindya**
AC **Redson Mainato**
HT **Knox Nguluwe**
CDA **H.B. Mndelemani**
SMC Chair **Bambo Chibwazi/Bambo Tsoka**
TA **Mponela**

Support Team

ZOC **Snolia Phiri**
CL **Bambo Lephani Kasanje**
MCM **Charles Phereni**

Background

Established in 1994 under Lilongwe Diocese, Kachulu School has classes for standards 1 to 8. Before PSSP: SFP began its initiatives at the school in January 2006, the school had 13 teachers (four female, nine male) and 370 learners (192 boys, 178 girls). There was only one teacher's house, one permanent classroom block, one pit latrine and two incomplete classroom blocks that have been used for over 10 years. Learner and teacher absenteeism rates were high, as was the



learner dropout rate. In 2005, 31 learners (13 boys, 18 girls) dropped out of school. Teachers took little interest in lesson preparation and rarely met to discuss issues pertaining to content knowledge and pedagogy. Difficult topics were skipped, negatively affecting quality of education at the school. About 70% of learners in standard 1 moved on to standard 2, but they could not read or write their own names. Most teachers used teacher-centered teaching. Learner performance in standard 8 was low. In 2006, 11 of 16 learners (eight boys, three girls) passed the PSCLE but none were selected to go on to secondary school.

Members of the SMC and the communities showed very little interest in most school activities. There was no OVC support. There was a big gap in the working relationship between the SMC/PTA and the school.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

PSSP: SFP sensitized the communities and trained SMC members and community leaders in their roles and lobbying skills. The school received small grants totaling MK195,000 as well as the school incentive package. The school received 108 books donated through IBB. Play parks were established at the school, where games such as bawo, seesaw and swings were available to learners.

All teachers were trained in content knowledge and pedagogy with a special focus on how to use participatory teaching methods and TALULAR materials. PSSP: SFP also introduced BLP/M in standard 1 to support PCAR, trained teachers in module development and supported both cluster and school-based CPD trainings. The school also got support from the Mobile Teacher Training Troupe (MTTT), which demonstrated various teaching methods. The school also received frequent classroom

support, as guidance was provided to most teachers. Three teachers, including the head teacher, participated in educational visits to share experiences with colleagues inside and outside Dowa. Three teachers (one female, two male) were identified as local troupers to support their fellow teachers. The head teacher was vested with supervisory roles to work hand-in-hand with the troupers.

Achievements

PSSP: SFP has helped to improve the school environment. Community leaders, SMC members and the local communities now actively participate in school-development activities. Using funds from the small grant, the community constructed two teachers' houses to accommodate teachers within the school premises and improve their punctuality. The school grounds have also been improved with a lawn and flower beds. The communities replenished the SIP through funds raised at a function they held recently, raising MK25,000. The school opened a bank account for the first time to ensure proper accountability of these funds.



The school is also using the community as a resource. Hon. Kadzako roofed the two classroom blocks with iron sheets and provided enough bags of cement to mould bricks for one classroom block. The school is also offering vocational life-skill training in tailoring, carpentry and bakery. So far 50 learners (26 female, 24 male), all OVCs, have benefited from this training. The school has raised MK2,550 from sale of vegetables they have grown.

Four teachers and the head teacher have been demonstrating best practices in various categories of teaching such as lesson preparation, use of participatory methods, continuous assessment and record-keeping as well as the production, use and storage of TALULAR materials. Teachers who have improved tremendously are Ignasio Khongo, Angella Msyali, Levi Zaya, and Letani Chidyauzu. The headteacher Knox Nguluwe is also taking a leading role. The rest of the teachers are following suit and Kachulu is now a model school.

Enrolment has increased from 370 learners in January 2006 to



519 as of November 2008. Use of play parks has contributed to the increased enrolment. Many learners are interested in the games and, as a result, enjoy being at school. Seventy percent of standard 1 learners now can write their names and read short sentences. In 2007 all the standard 8 learners passed the PSLCE and two were selected to a CDSS, an improvement on the school's 2006 results. The number of learners dropping out has decreased significantly from 31 learners in 2006 to 11 (four boys, seven girls) in 2008.

Challenges

- **Shortage** of classroom blocks and teachers' houses.

Recommendations

- **Continue** development activities to build more classrooms and teachers' houses.
- **Continue** supporting teachers and learners in the classroom to improve learner performance.
- **Intensify** fundraising activities to raise more funds to support OVCs and development.
- **Maintain** use of lobbying skills to get more external support.

Kawere

Cluster **Kawere**
Zone **Mponela**
TA **Mponela**

Location

Kawere School is located to the north of Mponela Trading Centre. Travel 6 km along Lilongwe-Kasungu Road and then branch to the right. Travel 150m to get to the school.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Steven Mbindya**
AC **Redson Mainato,**
Lucy Banda
HT **Mr. Essau Botoman**
CDA **Mr. Liwonde**
SMC Chair **Bambo Chakhaza**

Support Team

ZOC **Snolia Phiri**
CL **Bambo Gregory Saveka**
MCM **Sara Chibwe**
Girl Mentor **Mayi Lucy**
Bisalomu

Background

Established in 1943 under CCAP Nkhoma Synod, the school has classes from standards 1 to 8. Before PSSP: SFP began its activities at the school, the school had 19 teachers (six female and 13 male) and 495 learners (244 boys, 251 girls). In 2005, 93 learners (49 boys, 44 girls) dropped out of school. The school had 13 classrooms and only two pit latrines for 495 learners, a difficult situation.



Learners in almost all the classes received little attention from the teachers. The rate of learners' absenteeism was approximately 35%. Teachers found it very difficult to hold school-level CPDs to share knowledge and experiences. Almost all teachers found it very difficult to store teaching and learning materials properly since the head teacher's office was too small to accommodate everything. School-based supervision was not adequately done by the school administrator and other senior staff. As a result, teachers used more teacher-centered teaching methods rather than learner-centered methods. Most standard 1 learners would pass into standard 2 without being able to read and write their own names or read simple sentences. Although the standard 8 teachers tried to help their learners achieve better results in PSCLE, most learners were not

accepted to go on to secondary school. The school's library was not functional even though a trained librarian was just within reach. There was little community participation in school activities and vandalism was part of the school culture.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

PSSP: SFP held sensitization meetings with members of the SMC and community leaders, who were later trained in school ownership, lobbying, fundraising, financial management and OVC support. PSSP: SFP provided small grants to the school. All teachers were trained in content knowledge and pedagogical skills. In these trainings, teachers learned how to introduce and teach various topics effectively within different subject areas using participatory teaching methods. Teachers were trained in BLP/M so that it could be

Kawere

introduced in standard I. School-based CPDs were introduced, with teacher facilitators who were identified and selected by the teachers themselves. The school received frequent supervision visits to ensure effective teaching and learning. Play parks were established through the MCM program. The MCMs supported teachers and learners in the production of TALULAR. The MCMs also conducted TFD to change the mindsets of the teachers, learners and local communities. The practice of conducting school open days has been revived. A standard I teacher visited Lufe and Kaputalambwe schools to learn from their best practices. This teacher was chosen because of her positive attitude towards her work. Kawere School is also one of the first local MTTT schools. Two teachers were identified and appointed as local troupers to assist their fellow teachers in various subjects. The troupers are Timothy Kalungulu (math) and Stina Kadumbo (BLP/M). Various academic clubs such as debate, math and quiz, have been revived.

Achievements

Eighty percent of the standard I learners can now write their names and read simple words and sentences from the big books and PCAR learner's book. Two of the highest achievers are Clifton Botomani and Alinafe Malenga, 6 years old. Clifton can read anything written in Chichewa, including junior-level learner's books. Most learners in standards 6, 7 and 8 are now able to read long passages in English, something that learners could not do three years ago. They can solve various mathematical problems on their own. Teachers are able to organize and conduct open days and literacy fairs without somebody from above telling them what to do. Enrolment rose from 495 in 2006 to 932 in 2008 (448 boys, 484 girls).

Village headman Tchale established a monitoring team in his village to track learner attendance. Any parent who contributes to learner absenteeism is asked to work in a village garden. Village headman

Tchale has also provided needy children with notebooks and clothes. He constructed two pit latrines for learners as well as initiating a fundraising event known as the "Big Ride". Those participating in the event cycled to and from Lilongwe to raise funds or material support to enable completion of the administration block, which includes a library. Hon. Kadzako responded by offering 18 bags of cement. At the time of writing this article, plastering of the administration block had been completed. The community leaders also lobbied for additional latrines from PRDO and four were constructed as a result.

Challenges

- **Nine houses** for 17 teachers, **six pit latrines** for 932 learners.
- **The pass rate** for standard 8 exams is low
- The **dropout rate** is high.

Recommendations

- **Standard 1 and 2 teachers** continue supporting PCAR with BLP/M.
- **Education officials** continue supporting teachers and learners in the classroom.
- **Local MTTT support** continue.
- **The community** continue support for the school.
- **Continue sensitizing** the communities on how to reduce the dropout rate.



Chimungu

Cluster **Chimungu**
Zone **Chimungu**
TA **Dzoole**

Location

Chimungu School is at the TDC, 13 km from Mponela Trading Centre, along the old Ntchisi road.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Ellisie Mzale**
AC **Ephraim Malliam**
HT **Meharey Bandawe**
SMC Chair **Maduka Mwale**

Support Team

ZOC **John Mwale**
CL **Benson Kachisa**
MCM **Alfred Pemba**
Girl Mentor **Mayi Mwale**

Notable Champion

Hon. Kadzako, M.P.

Background

Chimungu Full Primary School was established in 1909 by the CCAP Nkhoma Synod. In 2006, the school had eight classrooms (four permanent, four semi-permanent), one dilapidated small staff office, seven poorly maintained teachers' houses and 14 temporary pit latrines. There were 14 teachers (two women, 12 men) and 974 learners (498 girls, 476 boys). Teachers' absenteeism rate was 20% and that of learners was 38%. The SMC rarely met to discuss school activities. The average number of lesson plans prepared by teachers was two to three per teacher per day. Most of the teaching was teacher-centered. Teachers made or used very little TALULAR. Most learners from standards 1 to 3 were not able to read and write their own names by end of the school year. About four out of every 10 school-aged children stayed at home helping their parents in the tobacco fields.



PSSP:SFP Inputs

PSSP: SFP started its activities by sensitizing community leaders, SMC/PTA and teachers on the need for all stakeholders to play a part in the school to achieve high quality education. Nine SMCs were trained who, together with community leaders, introduced village registers to track pupil school attendance. PSSP: SFP also trained all 12 teachers on pedagogical and subject content, through cycle and teacher conference trainings. The head teacher and two standard 1 teachers were trained in early literacy strategies using BLP/M approaches. Teachers participated in local MTTT activities at the school. PSSP: SFP also guided the school on how to write modules and conduct and report school-based continuous professional development (CPD) trainings. PSSP: SFP provided the school with 236 library books.

Achievements

Teachers began working as a team, helping one another. The school organized and conducted, on average, two school-based CPD trainings per month. These INSETS or in-service trainings have turned teachers into self-starters who are

committed to their teaching. Ninety percent of standard I learners now can read and write their names and Chichewa words and phrases. Of these learners, 30% can read Chichewa newspapers and Chichewa books for standard 1, 2, 3 and 4. Standard 6 learners such as 12-year-old Kafera can express themselves fully in English as well. Using funds provided through the PSSP: SFP small grant, the school's communities built a spacious head teacher's and staff office. The school's new, more conducive, learning environment has resulted in improved pupil performance in every class including standard 8. While Form 1 selection of boys remained roughly the same from 2006 to 2007, the number of girls selected doubled from 10 to 20. Many learners now borrow and read library books — so many that the school earned a prize of additional IBB books from PSSP: SFP. To crown it all, one will find TALULAR and participatory teaching methods used in every classroom at the school.



Challenge

Not all village heads participate, as they fail to come to development activities when invited.

Recommendations

• **Sensitization** of community leaders must be ongoing so school achievement can continue.

- **Both teachers and community** must encourage learners to continue to improve their academic performance.
- **The PEA** should use the school as a role model for the other schools in the zone to encourage improved learner performance at other schools.



Kabulungo

Cluster **Chimungu**
Zone **Chimungu**
TA **Dzoole**

Location

Kabulungo School is situated to the northeast of Mponela Trading Centre. To reach the school, start from Mponela along M1 to Kasungu. Travel to Mponda Trading Centre 8 km from Mponela, turn to the east and travel another 8 Km.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Ellisie Mzale**
AC **Ephraim Malliam**
HT **Paul Cheyo**
SMC Chair **Bambo Mkolongo**

Support Team

ZOC **John Mwale**
CL **Bambo Kachisa**
MCM **Alfred Pemba**



Background

Kabulungo School, developed up to standard 8, was established in 1976 under the proprietorship of Lilongwe Diocese. In November 2006 the school had seven teachers (one female, six male). There were six classrooms, four permanent and two semi-

permanent; a small, dilapidated head teacher's office; and six tiny pit latrines rarely used by learners for fear of falling in because they had big holes. SMC did not meet to discuss school issues and the G.V.H. relied on government for all school-development activities. There were six teachers' houses, four requiring major repairs. Dropout rate was high at 40% especially for OVCs because no one took the responsibility of assisting or encouraging them to remain in school. Teachers taught without lesson plans and use of TALULAR materials, for learner-centered teaching methods were not known by teachers. Standard 1 and 2 learners could not read Chichewa words. The school registered with National Library of Malawi but did not make use of it. The performance of learners was below average. About 35% of learners preferred staying at home over going to school because home was more



interesting and beneficial than school. The 11 boys and girls selected to secondary school in 2006 went to Community Day Secondary School (CDSS).

PSSP:SFP Inputs

All seven teachers were trained in participatory teaching methods and skills in producing and using TALULAR were imparted, to make teaching and learning simple and beneficial to learners. Classroom reference materials such as posters, books, pencils and a SIP box were issued to the school to improve teaching and learning and encourage learners to work even harder in class. In 2006 and 2007, the school received small grants to support the community in school-development activities. Play parks and vocational skills such as tailoring, tinsmithing and weaving were introduced. The school was also supported with 2,163 books to help learners, teachers and others develop a reading culture.

Achievements

The community constructed an admirable and spacious staff office and 10 new pit latrines with the help of small grant. The community also roofed the library out of its own pocket. Now teachers have enough room to prepare lessons and keep their books. The library also provides learners, teachers and the community a reading environment. A two-classroom block is under construction, which when finished will reduce the classroom shortage and give learners a better learning environment. Parents volunteered



to help teach tailoring, weaving and tinsmithing skills for learners. Fifteen girls and 20 boys are now able to earn a living using these vocational skills. Akunjira also influenced members of the community to turn up for molding bricks and other school developmental activities under the leadership of Bambo Kambalame. Teachers now go to school well prepared and produce and use TALULAR materials with



creativity, especially in Mr. Makamula's and Mr. Sani's classes (standards 1 and 6 respectively). These interventions have helped learners improve in reading, writing and speaking English. Selection to form one in 2006 and 2007 saw some of the boys and girls advance to boarding schools, as opposed to 2005 when all candidates selected for form 1 went to CDSS. Form 1 selection in 2006 was nine girls and 11 boys and in 2007 seven girls and 13 boys.

Challenge

- Old, small teachers' houses mean teachers can't buy more household goods.

Recommendations

- The community keep constructing teachers' houses.
- Encourage teachers to continue working as a team, use participatory teaching methods and build learners' English skills.

Chikhobwe

Cluster **Chinkhwiri**
Zone **Chimbuli**
TA **Chakhaza**

Location

Chikhobwe School is situated 22 kms to the south of Chimkoka Trading Centre. To reach the school, take Mponela-Ntchisi road. Turn left after crossing Katwe River 1 km away. Proceed to Chimungu Dam. Some 200 m from the dam, turn left and go 13 km to the school.

Key Players

Formal Team

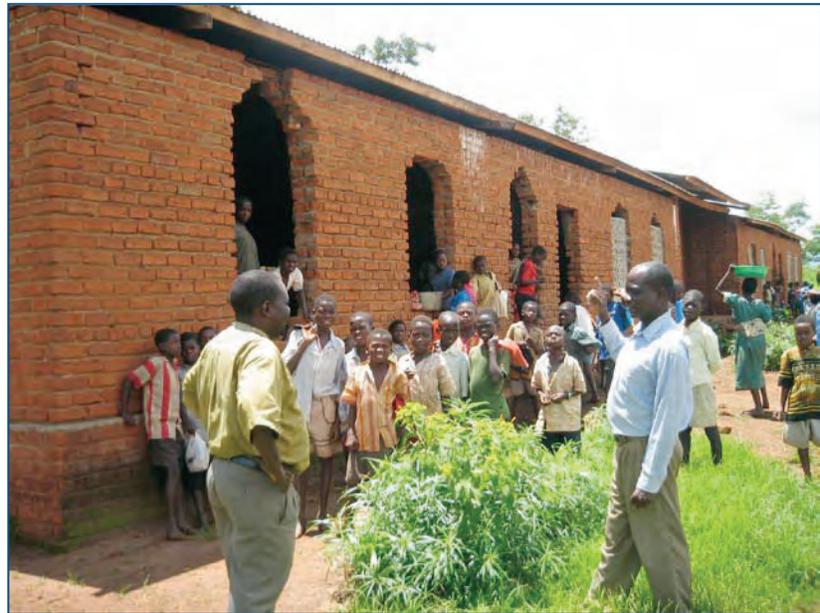
PEA **Joseph Chafukira**
AC **Lucious Chimbalanga**
HT **Botoman Stephen**
SMC Chair **Bambo Singileti**

Support Team

ZOC **Jenner Namoto**
CL **Bambo Longwe**
MCM **Kangulu Potifer**
Girl Mentor **Mayi Sitiya**

Background

Chikhobwe Full Primary School was established in 1930. In 2005, 780 learners (382 male and 398 female) were enrolled at the school, with only six teachers, all male, for eight classes. At the start of PSSP: SFP, the school had two classroom blocks and four teachers' houses, which were dilapidated. One classroom block was unsafe as the roof planks were cracked and destroyed by termites. Learners' attendance was not good



because many of the learners worked at tobacco farming. The shortage of teachers also contributed to the poor pupil attendance. Also some teachers came late to school because they operated from distant homes. The school community participation was limited to molding bricks. OVC support was regarded by the school and community as the responsibility of the government. The head teacher was frustrated by challenges encountered during his working period in the zone.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

The school community was sensitized and trained on how to improve its school. Emphasis was given to changing community members' attitudes towards their school and helping them plan effectively to implement initiatives to improve it. Seven teachers (one female, six male) were trained at the zonal and cluster

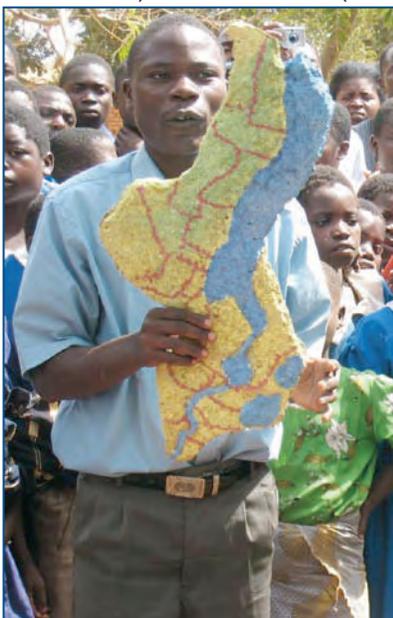
level on content knowledge, pedagogy and TALULAR production and use. The head teacher and his deputy were trained in how to be instructional leaders and to manage their school. Resource books were provided to all teachers on various subjects to help improve teaching. A total of 300 library books were donated to the schools to support literacy development. The school was given a small grant for the rehabilitation and construction of a school block. Play parks were made at the school and a mathematics club has been introduced at the school.

Achievements

The headteacher has improved teaching and management at the school. He was awarded a certificate as the most improved head teacher in the zone. He received this certificate for conducting school-based

in-service courses, supervising his teachers and improving the community and school relationship. Three teachers have been identified as the school's best teachers and they have been facilitating trainings at the zonal and cluster level. Mr. Diffart Chiwaya, a standard 6 teacher, has enabled 80% of his learners to improve their performance both in literacy and numeracy. The school now has a TALULAR bank and usually the production and collection of the TALULAR materials is done jointly by teachers and learners. School-based in-service training is done once a week, teachers assisting one another with teaching and learning practices. Fifty percent of standard I learners are able to read and write. Ulemu Chitsaka, despite ill health, can read all the standard I Chichewa books and is one of the best among the standard I learners.

Learners' enrollment has increased from 780 (382 male, 398 female) in 2006 to 899 (450



male, 449 female) in 2008. The dropout rate has decreased because of improved infrastructure and the availability of sports equipment, which helps to keep learners at school. After classes, many learners stay on at the school to play on the play parks. Those involved in mathematics clubs continue to work in their groups..

The community is now actively participating in school activities. They constructed one classroom block and one teacher's house as well as rehabilitated one school block and one teacher's house. The community raised MK21,000 by selling tobacco and contributed these funds to the school. Chiefs, through their subjects, contributed MK150,000 to ensure activities initiated by

them at the school are completed. They also lobbied for 75 desks from World Vision. The school environment is now really vibrant.

Challenges

- **Inadequate** number of teachers' houses.
- **Understaffing** of teachers is still a problem at this school.

Recommendations

- **The community** needs more training to develop lobbying skills for sourcing funds. The school has many remaining challenges, especially relating to infrastructure.
- **Teachers** should continue conducting continuous professional development at their school.

Chimbuli



Cluster **Sungeni**
Zone **Chimbuli**
TA **Chakhaza**

Location

Chimbuli School is 12 kms south of Chimbuka Trading Centre along Madisi Bowe Road from Madisi Trading Centre.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Joseph Chafukira**
AC **Lucious Chimbalanga**
HT **Danny Mtengabvumba**

Support Team

ZOC **Jenner Namoto**
CL **Bambo Chitete**
MCM **Amina Chazunda**
Girl Mentor **Mayi Scott**

Background

Established by CCAP Nkhoma Synod in 1935, Chimbuli School has classes from standard 1 up to 8. In January 2006 the school had 747 learners (352 boys, 395 girls) and six teachers (five men, one woman). Before PSSP: SFP began activities, all the school's infrastructure was dilapidated

and not safe for learners. The school community was not actively participating in school activities. Sometimes misunderstandings among village headmen made things worse at school, as the village headmen would not allow community members to volunteer at school. Teachers came to school unprepared to teach and never made and/or used TALULAR materials for teaching. The school did not have funds to support activities at school. Money that the school received was not always used as

expected, and this discouraged contributions. The only extracurriculum activities were football and netball. Many learners did not take part in these games, and often leave the school early.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

Eighteen teachers (14 men, four women) were trained in content-knowledge pedagogy and how to use TALULAR materials. All teachers were given reference materials to support their teaching. Two teachers at the school were trained on supervisory skills. As a result, they increased supervision activities at the school. The school used funds from a small grant to support the teaching of tinsmithing as a vocational life skill. The school also used the grant funds to construct a school block and two teachers' houses. Sensitization and training activities conducted with the school's community members has motivated the communities to work hard.

Achievements

The school environment has greatly improved and is more conducive to learning. Teachers are working harder, using varied teaching methods and TALULAR to ensure that learners understand what is taught. Already 50% of standard I learners are able to read and write. Learners in the senior section are able to comprehend what they have read. With the two new teacher's houses built by the community it will be easier to hire more staff at the school. MCM activities have exposed many learners to games such as volleyball, chess and traditional games such as *sikwa*. Vocational life-skill funds allowed 10 learners (five boys and five girls) to receive school uniforms, assisting these learners to avoid dropping out of the school.

Challenge

The availability of school teachers' accommodation is still insufficient. A number of teachers come from homes far away and as a result are likely to miss some of their lessons.

Recommendation

The community should continue to support teaching of vocational life skills.



Kabuluzi

Cluster **Katalima**
Zone **Katalima**
TA **Chakhaza**

Location

From Katalima TDC join the Lilongwe-Kasungu M1 to Kasese Trading Centre about a kilometre away. Turn to the left and travel four kilometres to the first village. The school is situated within that village.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Alexander P.**

Mpanan'ombe

AC **Alefa P.E. Chiusiwa**

HT **Fanuel A. Banda**

MCM **Pearson Nkhoma**

SMC Chair **S. Phaka**

Support Team

ZOC **Speaker Nkhonjera**

CL **Wilford Chikhobwe**

CDA **H.B Mndelemani**

Girl Mentor **Effinas Kamanga**

Notable Champion

GVH **Nkhungulu**

Background

The school was established in 2000 by Dowa Local Education Authority. It is a junior primary school with standards 1 to 4. The school started operating with two grass shelters for classrooms without a teacher's house. The only qualified teacher at the school was residing in the village. This teacher was assisted by three other unqualified teachers (one female,



two male) who attended classes irregularly, sometimes as little as once a week. The community around Kabuluzi firmly believed that it was the government's duty to build classrooms and to provide everything for the education of their children.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

PSSP: SFP mounted a series of sensitization meetings at the school, which resulted in communities realizing that they had a role to play in the education of their children. They moulded bricks and constructed one classroom block and two teachers' houses. PSSP: SFP's grant assisted the community in purchasing roofing materials, flooring a classrooms block and building three teachers' houses. Cluster trainings and teacher conferences were mounted. These equipped teachers with pedagogical skills so enable them teach their learners meaningfully.

PSSP also provided Local MTTT training, which helped teachers with supervisory skills. Mr Fanuel Banda is a local MTTT who supervises the teaching of science in Katalima cluster and provides appropriate guidance to the teachers on how best to teach science. To develop a reading culture in learners and teachers, PSSP carried out BLP/M trainings to equip standard 1 teachers with skills on using early literacy strategies so that standard 1 learners are able to read and write as early as possible. In order to attract children, PSSP provided the school with play parks and academic clubs through MCM activities. For example, reading club is headed by Clement Andiseni, a teacher and trained librarian under the sponsorship of PSSP.



Achievements

The school has made great achievements in the past three years. It has a permanent school block that has replaced grass shelters and three permanent teachers' houses accommodating the two qualified teachers available at the school. Owing to the more conducive learning environment, school enrolment has risen from 220 in 2006 to 269 in 2008, an increase of 22%. Ownership of the school is now in the hands of the community, as evidenced by the wide range of activities taking place at the school and the remarks community members make. For example, "*Tikuyamika bungwe la*

PSSP ndi ntchito zake, upangiri wake komanso thandizo lake limene lapangitsa kuti sukulu yathu iwoneke ngati sukulu. Ana anthu akuphunzira bwino tsopano. Sakuopanso mvula ngakhale dzuwa kaya liwale motani," said G. V. H. Nkungulu. ("We sincerely thank PSSP for making us know our roles towards the education of our children, for its activities and financial assistance given to us which has made our school look like a school. Our children are no longer bothered come heavy rains or heavy sunshine.") Through early literacy strategies, standard I learners are able to write their names and read common Chichewa words and sentences.

Challenges

- **Two teachers** against four classes
- **Two classrooms** against four classes.

Recommendations

- **Strengthen staff** by sending more qualified teachers to the school.
- **Construct two more classrooms** of permanent nature so that the classes still using grass shelters can be accommodated.
- **Continue using donated books** to promote reading culture at the school.

Nyagra



Cluster **Nyagra**
Zone **Katalima**
TA **Chakhadza**

Location

Nyagra Primary school is located to the west of Katalima TDC. From TDC travel along Lilongwe Kasungu MI to Kasese Trading Centre. Then turn to the left, cross three streams, travel 9 km and you are at the school.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Alexander P. Mpanang'ombe**
AC **Alefa P.C. Chiusiwa**
HT **Fercyline A. Mkungula**
CDA **H.B. Mndelemani**
SMC Chair **Bambo Haswell Chimutu**

Support Team

ZOC **Speaker Nkhonjera**
Cluster Leader **Bambo Batson Chidandale**
MCM **Daiton Eneya**
Girl mentor **Fercyline A. Mkungula**

Notable Champion

GVH **Nambela**

Background

Nyagra school was established in 1955 by Father Dicot. In 1963 the school changed proprietorship to L.E.A. The school had standards 1 to 8 with total enrolment of 634 (334 girls, 300 boys) and seven teachers (five male, two female) in eight classrooms, two permanent, three dilapidated and three that needed major repairs. Some teachers, during one ZOC supervision visit, openly refused to be supervised by the ZOC. Teachers came to

school unprepared, never used TALULAR or participatory methods. The community didn't feel ownership in the school.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

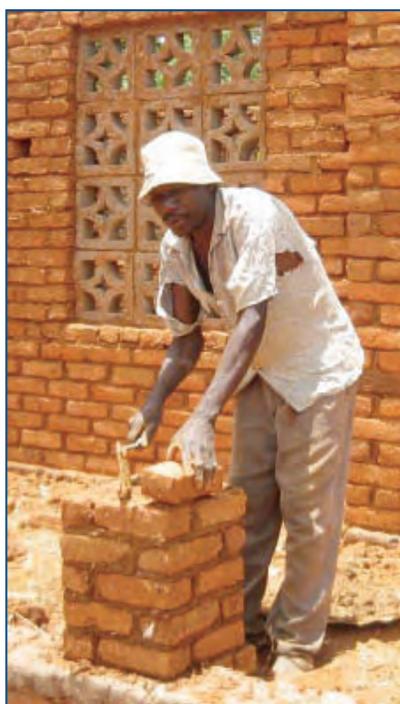
PSSP: SFP revamped the SMC and school community through intensive sensitization and mobilization meetings that supported community leaders to prioritize their needs. **PSSP:** SFP also organized cluster trainings and teacher conferences to improve teachers' performance in pedagogical skills and TALULAR production and use, and supported establishment of vocational-skills training at the school by providing small grants amounting to MK107,065 for buying tailoring and tinsmithing materials as well as pigs. Other inputs were to add 785 donated books to the school library and provide the school with resource books on mathematics, English, participatory methods, science and TALULAR. All seven teachers were trained in monitoring and supporting skills to act as local MTTTs in science, BLP/M and managerial skills. **PSSP:** SFP also initiated more frequent supervision visits,



training for headteacher and standard 1 and 2 teachers in BLP/M, as well as encouraging the school to schedule open days on which learners can showcase their abilities.

Achievements

The community constructed two classroom blocks and a headteacher's office. Pupils now learn in good classrooms and school equipment is well stored. Teachers work as a team in professional areas and share experiences and knowledge during school-based CPDs. This is resulting in improved learner performance. Teachers who once wouldn't allow the ZOC to monitor and support them in the classroom now invite the ZOC and the AC to monitor frequently and offer support. Teachers prepare before coming class, which encourages learners to come to school. Attendance



registers are always available, marked and totals made. Ownership of the school is now in the hands of the community. School enrolment has increased from 691 (364 girls, 327 boys) to 879 (463 girls, 416 boys), an increase of 27%. Learners at the school have other books to read from the library in addition to classroom books. The school also received encyclopedias. Two pigs sold for K20,000 to increase school resources at school level. Teachers now know how to use participatory teaching, e.g., Mr. Geraldo Banda. MTTT's found all of the school's teachers are dedicated to work. Mr. Duma commented, "I am failing to come up with a report which has negatives as well as positives because all teachers are doing well."

Well-wishers such as Mr. Baron have promised to build two teachers' houses. On November 4, 2008, the headteacher's office, school library room and four classrooms were officially opened by the DCOP and the Executive Director of CRECCOM.

Challenge

Only three teachers are accommodated at the school.

Recommendation

Continue conducting CPDs so that teachers continue growing professionally and in turn improve learner performance.

Longwe

Cluster **Mdanjiri**
Zone **Kamphenga**
TA **Kayembe**

Location

From Mponela take M1 to Kasungu, cross Mtiti Bridge, turn left into a road leading to Mbingwa Health Centre after 2 km. At Kasuntha Trading Centre, turn right and cover 5 km to Longwe School.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Staphiel Maunkhondo**
AC **Masauko Shawa**
HT **Charles Mpinganjira**
TA **Kayembe**
SMC Chair **Bambo Bikiyele**

Support Team

ZOC **Kaponda Otaniele**
CL **R. Daisoni**
MCM **Patrick Mnjale**
Girl Mentor **Esther Kadewere**

Notable Champion

GVH **Longwe**

Background

Longwe Full Primary school was established in 1952 under CCAP Nkhoma Synod. In 2006 the school had four permanent classrooms and an almost collapsing block, which was thatched. There were four grass-thatched teachers' houses against a teaching force of five, all male. A total enrolment of 423 (199 boys and 224 girls) used three almost collapsing latrines.



The school lacked effective instructional leadership, which resulted in low learner gains. The community ignored development activities in the school and quarrels between community members and teaching staff over low learner performance was the order of the day.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

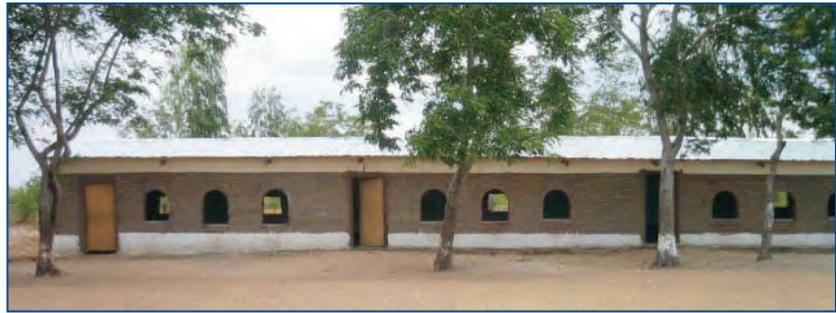
PSSP: SFP conducted several sensitization meetings with community members, inviting them to reconsider re-owning the school. School Management Committee (SMC) members were trained to understand their roles. A younger and energetic head teacher replaced the one who had been there. The new head teacher was trained in leadership and supervisory skills. Teachers attended more than eight cluster and school-based trainings where participatory

teaching methods were emphasized.

A small grant was awarded to the school for renovations of the collapsing school block and two teachers' houses. The community around the school worked tirelessly to renovate a three-classroom block and two teachers' houses. The community even helped the school plant trees around the school grounds. The SMC and teaching staff worked together cooperatively. The school was awarded 134 reading books in appreciation for its active reading club, which was established by an MCM.

Achievements

Arriving at Longwe School today, one would be greeted by a magnificent three-classroom block which has been renovated over the past years. Two teachers' houses have been renovated as well. One would not miss the confidence of the enthusiastic head teacher, sitting with the four members of staff as they carry out joint planning. The school librarian and BLP/M teacher, Mr Leonard Kalikokha, is a teacher to admire when teaching BLP/M. He really handles youngsters professionally. In standard I, learners' gains were greatly admirable and one would see that pupils are engaged. TALULAR materials are on display in all classrooms that can be locked to keep the material



secure. The school boasts a vibrant reading club, established with the help of the then-MCM, Patrick Mnjale. Looking around the school premises, community members can be seen working on school projects.

Challenges

Although the school now has turned in the right direction, it still experiences a shortage of teachers' houses and

classrooms. Moreover, library books are stored in the headteacher's office, which makes smooth operation of the facility difficult.

Recommendations

Longwe School will be more beautiful and teacher and learner friendly when it constructs enough teacher's houses, classrooms and a room for library services.



Mwaza



Cluster **Mwaza**
Zone **Chisepo**
TA **Kayembe**

Location

From Chisepo Trading Centre take Madisi Road. Soon after crossing a dam, turn left and travel two km to Mwaza School.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Tobias Mpezi**
AC **Helex Mkwezalamba**
HT **Godfrey Banda**
SMC **Bambo Sankhulani**

Support Team

ZOC **Kaponda Otaniele**
CL **T Falioti**
MCM **Tione Chafuwa,**
Tanaziyo
Girl Mentors **Zione Kaphale,**
Joanna Msonthi

Background

Established in 1970 by Lilongwe diocese and still run by the Catholic Church, Mwaza Primary School has classes from standards 1 to 8.

When PSSP began its activities in 2006, the school had an enrolment of 635 learners (345 girls and 290 boys) and a teaching staff of six, all male. There were four classrooms and five teachers' houses. Four of the teachers' houses had grass-thatched roofs. The teachers worked relatively hard, using teacher-centered methods. TALULAR materials were rarely seen in the classrooms. In 2006, 37 learners (10 boys and 27 girls) dropped out. Learner performance was average.

The community was hardworking and cooperative but lacked both lobbying skills and the financial support to improve the school's performance.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

All teachers participated in more than 10 zonal, cluster and school-based trainings that focused on content knowledge and pedagogy, including early literacy approaches as well as TALULAR production, storage and use. The headteacher and deputy headteacher were provided specialized training to enable them to carry out their roles more effectively. Two teachers, identified as demonstrating the best teaching practices, were trained as local Mobile Teacher Training

Troupers (MTTT). One teacher was a BLP/M trouper while the other was TALULAR trouper.

The school introduced tinsmith training for 19 learners (six boys and 13 girls), all OVCs. A SIP box was also given to the school. The school raised MK6,000 at the launch.

The school also received small grants to renovate teachers' houses. The MCM introduced seesaws, swings, and the game bawo for learners to enjoy during recess. SMC members were trained on how to carry out their roles more effectively.

Achievements

Mwaza School replaced grass-thatched roofs on the four teachers' houses with iron roofs and cemented the floors. The school also built a library.

More than 23 learners (nine boys and 14 girls), some of



whom are OVCs, were trained in tinsmithing. The tins they made were sold and the money raised was used to support OVCs. In April 2008 a poor boy and a girl received school uniforms from an orphan-care committee active in the villages surrounding the school.

Learners now come to school early to play on the seesaws and swings. This has greatly increased learners' punctuality. Teachers are using participatory teaching and learning methods, which has greatly improved learner gains — 60% of standard

I learners are able to read and write their names as well as simple Chichewa words. TALULAR materials are now a common sight in all classrooms, providing opportunities for learners to learn from the materials even after lessons have finished.

Challenges

Due to a lack of classroom space, standard 3, 4, 5 and 6 classes take place either inside the local church or under the shade of trees in the schoolyard. A building which was to be used as the library is still unroofed.

Recommendation

The SMC should use its lobbying skills to ask for assistance from well-wishers to help construct more classrooms and to roof the library building.



Magantha

Cluster **Kabwinja**
Zone **Kabwinja**
TA **Chakhaza**

Location

Magantha School is in Magantha village 18 km southwest of Madisi Trading Centre. One gets to the school by traveling along the M1 from Madisi to Kasungu. For about 1 km, there is a road which branches off to the west. For 3 km it branches southwards and passes through Kabwinja School. Magantha School is 3 km from Kabwinja School, just east of the road.



Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Harold Kamanga**
AC **Mphatso Kawale**
HT **Often Nthenga Mbedza**
SMC Chair **Hardwell Kanengo**

Support Team

ZOC **Nelson Mtchini**
CL **Tegede Kalebe**
MCM **Veronica Kalirani**
Girl Mentors **Generess Katema, Tiyanjane Chatanga, Mayi Mary Jenodi, Mayi Agness Yeremiya**

Notable Champion

GVH **Magantha**

Background

Magantha Primary School was established in 2000 by CCAP Nkhoma Synod. It was a feeder to Kabwinja School but the community wanted it to grow to be a recognized school. MASAF

supported the community's idea and together they built two classroom blocks, two teachers' houses, 10 latrines and a borehole for the school. The school developed up to standard 6. In 2006, there were 433 learners (203 boys 230 girls) enrolled. With only five teachers (three male, two female), the school had a teacher:pupil ratio of 1:87. Some classes were held in classrooms while two were held under the shade of trees in the schoolyard. The community built two additional teachers' houses.

Struggling to have learners succeed in their lessons, the teachers were not adequately trained to use participatory teaching methods. Also lacking were extracurricular activities to motivate learners, supplementary readers and reference materials for teachers and learners.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

Training of teachers in content knowledge and pedagogical skills was done through a series of cycle trainings, school-based INSETs and, later on, teacher conferences. While cycle trainings were facilitated by the PEA, AC or ZOC, teacher conferences opened up chances for exemplary teachers to facilitate sessions about best practices in teaching science, English, Chichewa, and BLP/M.

Members of the SMC/PTA were trained in financial and resource management as well as lobbying skills. Some members also served on library committees and were trained in the use and care of library books.

PSSP: SFP supported community initiatives with a small grant. The MCM established play parks at the school, where learners

Magantha

enjoyed their free time. This also reduced learners' absenteeism. Materials contained in a SIP box, such as exercise books, badges, rulers, atlases and balls, were used to motivate learners to do better in class.

Achievements

Two classrooms have been built at Magantha School by the community, increasing the number of classrooms to six. All six classes are now taught in classrooms with conducive learning environments. A sewing machine was bought using small-grant funds and eight girls and one boy have been taught tailoring skills. Of these learners, one boy and one girl are OVCs. A community member volunteered to train the learners at the school, enhancing the school-community relationship.

Teachers produced TALULAR materials for use in classrooms, opening a TALULAR bank with

materials kept in the classrooms. Teachers can now easily access and share the materials. Play parks have motivated many learners to report to classes regularly and on time. Often, learners stay late at the school to use the equipment from the SIP box and reading books from the library. As a result of learner interest, reading and debate clubs have been established at the school. Enrolment has increased 21% from 433 learners in 2006 to 523 learners (246 boys, 277 girls) in 2008.

The community has taken up ownership of the school. In 2007, the community contributed MK10,000 and MK3,700 in 2008 to purchase new items for the SIP box and to pay for labour for the construction work at the school. Peter Kawale, a teacher at the school, donated 20 metres of cloth to be sewn into uniforms for OVCs. Fifty-one percent of



standard 1 learners passed into the next grade. These learners were rated successful after they were found to be able to read and write their names and short sentences — skills they have acquired through BLP/M lessons.

Challenges

Learners' reading and writing skills may not continue to develop effectively if strategies used to teach reading and writing in standard 1 are not continued in standard 2; and the community may not be as accommodating as it is today if the current state of community-school relationship is not upheld.

Recommendations

The teacher who was teaching standard 1 BLP/M should carry on with learners who have been promoted to standard 2; the relationship between the community and the school needs to be maintained, nurtured and sustained.



Mtanila



Cluster **Mtanila**
Zone **Madisi**
TA **Chakhaza**

Location

Mtanila School is close to Madisi Parish of the Lilongwe Diocese at Madisi Trading Centre. It is 1 km north of the Chipiku Stores along the M1.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Magret Tembwe**
AC **Thandi Banda**
HT **Lodrick Msochi**

Support Team

ZOC **Nelson Mtchini**
CL **Lefiyoni Salatiele**
MCM **Chikondi Mbewe**

Girl Mentors **Lucia Katumbi, Sarah Banda, Mayi Mary Binison and Mayi Dorothy Gwetsera**

Notable Champion

Gule Wamkulu

Background

Mtanila School, opened in 1957 by the Catholic Missionaries, has classes from standards 1 to 5. Over the years it developed to a full primary school so that by December 2005 there were 1,190 learners (669 boys, 521 girls) enrolled. At that time, the school had 22 teachers with a teacher:pupil ratio of 1:54. There were only four latrines and eight permanent classrooms for 1,190 learners. Teachers did not frequently meet to discuss the needs of the learners or the

school. As a result, issues and problems that existed at the school were not addressed. Learner performance was adversely affected by this. The community could not decide on any initiatives for the school as most of the resources, both financially and materially, came in the form of donations to the school by the proprietor. With too little housing for teachers, most teachers came to school late for their lessons.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

PSSP: SFP has trained four SMC/PTA members in financial and resource management and the Assistant TDC Coordinator in school-management skills. Two teachers have been trained as mobile troupers who now supervise other teachers within

Mtanila cluster in content knowledge and pedagogical skills.

Mtanila School received a small grant to support various initiatives at the school. The school also received a SIP box containing pens, exercise books, a chess kit and bawo, as well as 241 donated books for its library. The books encourage learners' hunger for reading. The MCM, in collaboration with two teachers, worked with learners to develop a strong quiz team that successfully competed with teams from other zones within the district.



Achievements

Following the provision of the small-grant funds, the SMC was able to rehabilitate all the roofs of the classrooms. The akunjira made it possible to have 150,000 bricks moulded. These bricks will be to construct teacher's houses and additional classrooms in the future. Some of the bricks were used to construct 16 latrines at the school. Carpentry equipment has been used to train two girls and two boys in carpentry skills. MK10,000 was raised from sale of planks and these funds have been used to pay the house rent for student teachers and to renovate teachers' houses.

As a result of efforts by the community and akunjira to encourage school-age learners to return to school, enrolment has increased from 915 learners (472 boys, 443 girls) in 2007 to

1,138 (558 boys, 580 girls) in 2008. This includes 255 learners (136 boys, 119 girls) who are identified as OVCs. The number of teachers at the school has increased to 29 (24 female, five male). The teachers meet every week for CPDs. They serve as patrons for the quiz team, the mathematics club and the reading club. Standard I learners have shown outstanding performances due to the efforts of three teachers who are the role models at the school. They are Loveness Bauti, Ezilina Nyando, and Tadala Njati. All



have been very effective at teaching BLP/M. Two of the

teachers are trained troupers for BLP/M and TALULAR while the headteacher is a supervisor head for Mtanila cluster. One teacher, specially trained on library skills, now trains others.

Challenges

- **Community participation** in school-development initiatives has been low.
- **Only nine** of 29 teachers live in teachers' houses. More houses are needed.
- **More classrooms** also need to be built.

Recommendation

- **Encourage** the community to carry out initiatives at the school, specifically the building of more teachers' houses and classroom blocks.

Chikankha

Cluster **Mdika**
Zone **Kayembe**
TA **Dzoole**

Location

The school is located 3 km west of Mlengwe Trading Centre, then turn to the south at a school signpost and travel 2 km.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Jacob Malitoni**
AC **Spelix Mwale**
HT **Alfred C. Suze**
SMC Chair
Bambo Kasambeni Mwale

Support Team

ZOC **Symon Kalima**
CL **Bobi Kayanga**
MCM **Charles Chakuuma**

Background

Chikankha School is a standards 1 to 6 school established in 1995 under proprietorship of CCAP Nkhoma Synod. When PSSP: SFP began working in Dowa, the school had six teachers (one female and five male) and 455 learners (216 girls, 239 boys). The school had two teachers' houses, 12 permanent pit latrines, a bore hole and four permanent classrooms.

Members of the School Management Committee (SMC) and Parents and Teacher Association (PTA) knew very little of their roles and responsibilities. Their main activity was to settle disputes



when they occurred. Once they were elected, SMC/PTA members held few formal discussions pertaining to school-development issues. They felt that the headteacher and the PEA should handle all education issues at the school.

While teaching and learning seemed to be going well, teachers lacked content knowledge and teaching skills. Most teachers taught the same way they were taught a long time ago. In most cases, learners were forced to listen to teachers' long lectures. The teachers also lacked sufficient teaching records such as lesson plans, SOW/ROW and CA records. One would rarely see TALULAR materials being produced or used in the upper classes.

Learners' work in notebooks was unimpressive. They were taught only a few subjects such as Chichewa, English and mathematics. Few learners in standards 1 to 4 could write their names or read simple words in Chichewa. The headteacher did informal supervision but it was unplanned and unrecorded most of the times.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

All teachers were trained in various programmes of the project, but some teachers were identified in specific areas. For example, Mr. Alfred Suze, the headteacher, and Mr. Wyson Chizungule, a standard 5 teacher, were identified and trained on local MTTT to serve as cluster supervisory head and TALULAR materials troupers respectively.

Chikankha

PSSP: SFP gave the school 216 donated books, which increased teachers' and learners' enjoyment of reading. Literacy fairs were conducted at the school, supported by PSSP: SFP through the ZOC. The fairs encouraged teachers and learners to demonstrate their skills in public. MCMs helped the school to produce and use TALULAR materials to be used to teach key subject areas. Academic clubs also served to motivate learners to learn.

The school received a small grant enabling it to build two teachers' houses and classrooms. The grant amounted to MK180,000 for two years.

Achievements

The school now has additional teachers' houses, as one is completed while the other one just needs a roof. If one comes to Chikankha School, one will see a well-built two-classroom block and a beautiful

headteacher/library building situated between the two blocks. In the classrooms, TALULAR materials are displayed systematically, covering all subjects. In the standard 5 classroom, Mr. Wyson Chizungule has displayed excellent materials in the most attractive way and his learners are proud of their room.

The SMC/PTA has worked very hard and cooperatively with community members on plans to increase teachers' and classroom accommodation. Their work has helped to strengthen relationships between and amongst teachers, learners, parents, SMC/PTA and GVHs.

Teaching and learning has improved at Chikankha School. If one observed a lesson, one would see teachers using varied methods and learners participating in the teaching and learning process by using TALULAR materials in all subjects.



Learners' performance has improved in all classes. All standard 1 learners are able to read and write simple Chichewa words, which was not the case before.

Learners at this school have been trained to conduct assemblies on their own and they know how to take care of the school premises.

Challenge

Enrolment has decreased from 455 in 2006 to 334 learners (163 girls and 171 boys) in 2008 because parents are enrolling their children in neighbouring schools with all classes from standards 1 to 8.

Recommendations

- **Mobilize** community members to build another two classroom blocks so that the school can have room for standard 7 and 8 classes as desired by the community.
- **Continue to empower** the community to take ownership of the school and its activities.
- **Let learners continue** to be actively involved in running the school in all its activities.



Mdika



Cluster **Mdika**
Zone **Kayembe**
TA **Kayembe**

Location

Mdika School is located 4 km north of Kayembe TDC.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Jacob Malitoni**
AC **Spelix Mwale**
HT **Stephen P. Mwale**
SMC Chair
Bambo Yusufu Kamwendo

Support Team

ZOC **Symon Kalima**
CL **Mayi Agnes**
Chatambalala
MCM **Frezer Katengeza**

Notable Champion

Akunjira

Background

Mdika Primary School was established in 1911 by CCAP Nkhoma Synod. When PSSP: SFP started its activities at **Mdika** School, it had 808 learners (416 girls, 392 boys) enrolled and 10 teachers, two female and eight

male. The school had 10 classrooms, two semi-permanent. There were 12 permanent pit latrines and a borehole. Six teachers lived in the teachers' houses at the school.

In 2006, learners' attendance was irregular during the first week of the term and heads of section kept registering learners for lower primary up to the fourth week of the first term. Teachers were preparing few lesson plans for the 62 lessons taught each day. The school did not conduct CPDs for teachers as often as required. Learners and teachers were not focused

Mdika



on their performance and on the importance of education. School activities were often interrupted by church activities. The SMC/PTA conducted few meetings on school development. Over the past four years the committees were unable to provide tangible construction even though three teachers lacked accommodation.

PSSP: SFP Inputs

PSSP: SFP provided small grants to Mdika School totaling MK278,455 over two years.

These funds supported completion of a school-based initiative for building teachers' houses and a school library as well as purchasing farming material. The school also took part in local MTTT and TCC activities. Five of the 10 teachers were identified as role models for the cluster due to their effective teaching practices. Three of the five teachers were involved in facilitation of teacher conferences, BLP/M, and a TALULAR production workshop. One member of staff, Mr. Fanuel Gideon, was identified by PSSP: SFP as a teacher who could select the best stories from Dowa. He was invited to go to MIE Domasi. Mdika School was one of the 20

original schools in Dowa for MTTT for two years. This motivated teachers who would not have otherwise changed their attitudes. Some, like Mrs. Fanny Chikalipo and Mr. Fanuel Gideon, participated in an exchange visit to Lufe School. The school also received 232 donated books from PSSP: SFP. The books were added to the school library's book collection. Mr. H. Kamzangaza was trained in library management. The MCM activities sensitized learners, teachers and community members on the importance of school. Learners spent more time at school because they liked to play, even after school hours. Other learners participated in academic clubs, weather station activities and sporting games. PSSP: SFP encouraged the school to write four newsletters articles.

Achievements

Mdika School now has a newly built headteacher's office with rooms for staff and the library. There is now a well-built teacher's house occupied by a teacher. TALULAR materials are used by teachers with their classes, even in classes without doors and window shutters. In the headteacher's office, data on charts shows that enrolment has increased 13%, from 808 learners in 2006 to 917 learners (461 girls and 456 boys) as of October 2008. Teaching staff now includes five female and six male teachers.

If one observed lesson delivery in three sections of the school, it would be observed that the teachers prepared lesson plans for all subjects. Teachers use TALULAR materials. Learners are engaged throughout the lesson because teachers use participatory teaching and learning methods. Learners' progress has shown improvements. For example, 80% of the learners in standard I Chichewa can write and read common words.

The community is proud of the headteacher's office and a teacher's house they have built. They now have appropriate places to conduct regular meetings with the SMC/PTA, teachers, headteachers and G.V. heads. The community-school relationship has, therefore, improved.

Challenges

- **Interruption of lessons** by church programs conducted during school hours.
- **Outsiders living in teachers' houses** that belong to the school

Recommendations

The school should continue holding joint meetings with other schools on how to conduct cluster supervision and support classroom teachers through local MTTT and TCC. The SMC and PTA should commit themselves to have an IGA to raise money to support OVCs and girls.

Chunzu

Cluster **Funsani**
Zone **Senga**
TA **Mkukula**

Location

Chunzu Primary School is situated along the Dowa Boma Road 15 km southeast of Senga TDC. Travel 5 km along the M1 (to Kasungu) then turn right and travel 10 km to the school.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Jennifer Mbewe**
AC **Aubrey Kanthayo**
HT **Chimwe Chilinda**
SMC Chair **Stephen Chauwa**

Support Team

ZOC **Mary Mabasa**
CL **Bambo Mathews Mtepatapa**
MCM **Richard Chinyama**

Background

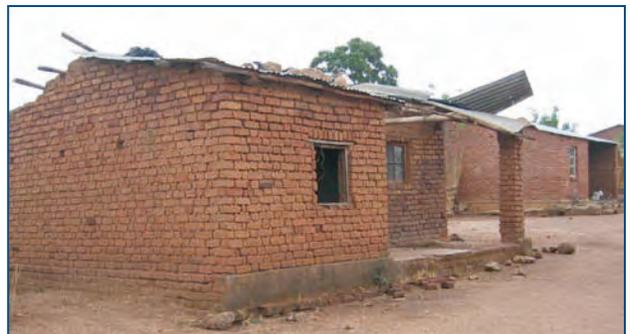
Established in 1902 under CCAP Nkhoma Synod, Chunzu School has classes from standards 1 to 8. In 2006 when PSSP started its activities at the school, there were 636 learners (276 boys, 360 girls) and eight teachers (six male, two female). The school had three school blocks each containing two classrooms, two permanent teachers' houses and two very old semi-permanent teacher's houses. Land disputes created conflict between the community and teachers. There was neither a School

Management Committee nor a PTA. The school was basically controlled by chiefs. Professionally, the school had no master timetable and the teachers did not prepare schemes of work. Teachers came to school as they wished. As a result, teachers' and learners' absentee rates were high.



PSSP: SFP Inputs

PSSP trained two teachers to become MTTT and facilitated exchange visits for school staff such as the visit to nearby Kaputalambwe School. Chunzu School staff learned how Kaputalambwe was managed and witnessed the high level of professionalism amongst the teachers. Chunzu School also received 353 books from PSSP to enhance a reading culture amongst learners and teachers. Reading and drama clubs were introduced and small grants given to assist the school with improvements. In 2006, the school received MK120,850 to renovate a school block. In 2007, the school received MK62,000, used to buy tailoring and bakery equipment to teach vocational skills. In 2008 the school received MK178,850 for iron sheets, cement, window frames and doors for the school.



Achievements

The school moulded 486,000 bricks and constructed a library, an office, a staff room, a classroom block and a teacher's house. Fundraising activities have been conducted each year. MK7,000 and K57,000 was raised through the sale of maize in 2006 and 2007 respectively. In 2008, microlending — making small loans to the community — raised MK108,000. All the money raised has gone to assist OVCs and to school improvement.

The school's PSSP-inspired hardworking spirit prompted Hon. Chika, M.P., to give the school 60 iron sheets and planks for the classroom block. The school introduced tailoring and bakery IGAs. In 2008 alone, the school raised MK35,000 from these two activities. They used part of this money to buy various items to support the best performers amongst the learners to motivate them. The teachers now organize their own school-based CPD activities. As a consequence, standard I learners are now able to read



and write short sentences. Enrolment has risen from 636 learners in 2006 to 1,144 learners (540 boys and 604 girls) in 2008. The school plans to launch a school feeding program in 2009.

The school is earmarked to expand to a CDSS based on its efforts. Both teachers' and learners' performance has greatly improved. Teachers are coming to school well prepared and learners' academic performance has improved tremendously.



Challenges

- Lack of school plans.
- Not enough school land.

Recommendations

The school needs to continue school-based trainings, open days and vocational-skills training as well as developing plans for all activities that are to be done at the school.

Kaputalambwe

Cluster **Funsani**
Zone **Senga**
TA **Mkukula**

Location

Kaputalambwe School is east of Senga TDC close to the boundary of Boma and Kanyenje zones 15 km east of Lumbadzi Trading Centre. If traveling from Lilongwe, cross Lumbadzi bridge, turn right and then travel 15 km past Funsani School to the Kaputalambwe School.

Key Players

Formal Team

PEA **Jennifer Mbewe**
AC **Aubrey Kanthayo**
HT **Charles Nyemba**
SMC Chair
Kalanguluka Siletala

Support Team

ZOC **Mary Mabasa**
CL **Matthews Mtepatapa**
Girl Mentor **Esme Chibwana**

Notable Champion

GVH **Ponombo**

Background

Established in 1995 under the Nkhoma Synod, Kaputalambwe School has classes from standards 1 to 8 taught by five teachers (four male, one female). Before PSSP:SFP began its activities in January 2006, the school had four classroom blocks and there were 493 learners (250 boys, 243 girls) enrolled. The SMC and PTA were in place but some parents



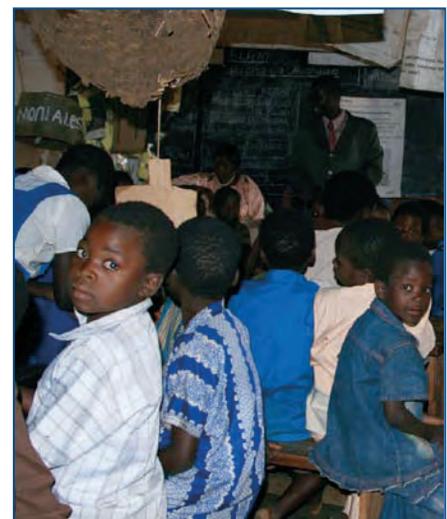
in the communities did not allow their children to enrol because of a conflict with the school.

There was a graveyard near the school which was used as a *dambwe*. *Gule Wamkulu* used to disturb classes but no one had the power to stop them. For years no professional officials ever visited the school. As a result, teachers came to school unprepared. They created unofficial holidays. Supervisors never knew about this because they never visited.

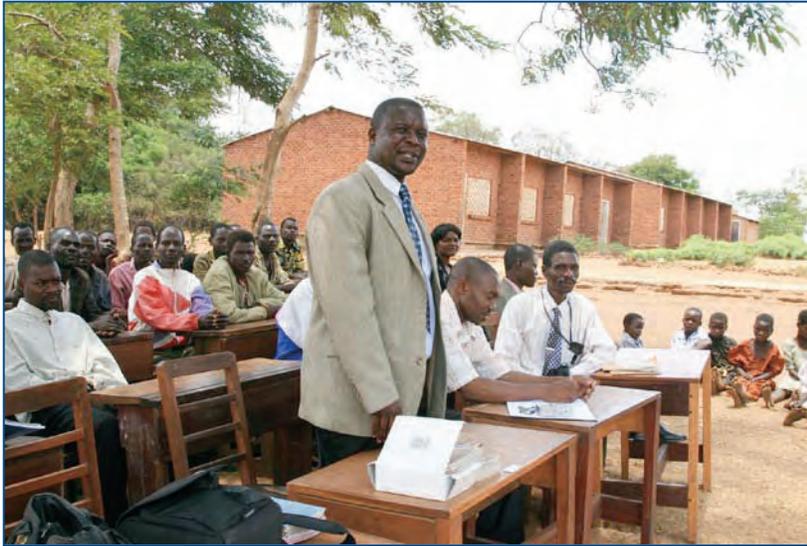
PSSP: SFP Inputs

PSSP: SFP facilitated an exchange visit to Mndolera School to see development activities done by the community. Community leaders were supported by PSSP: SFP to come up with action plans to address issues facing the school.

All five teachers were trained in content knowledge, pedagogy, and TALULAR production. The school received small grants amounting to MK129,435 which was used to construct a teacher's house and for teaching the learners vocational skills. Two teachers were trained as local troupers in mathematics, Chichewa and TALULAR to increase cluster-based classroom supervision.



Kaputalambwe



Achievements

Teachers now come to school prepared. The teacher-learner relationship has improved, thus increasing learners' scholastic gains. For example, 175 out of 209 standard 1 learners passed their exams. The 34 who failed were all under 5 years of age and were too young to be in school. Venus Mtonya, a teacher who used

to absent himself without genuine reasons, became a star performer in the whole zone in terms of his use of participatory teaching methods and TALULAR. He is now a role-model teacher. Participatory methods are used by all the teachers at this school. The teachers and the community work together very well as the community assists teachers on TALULAR



production. A community member, Mr. Kalanguluka Siletala, tells stories to learners every Wednesday and teaches learners tailoring and tinsmithing skills. Enrolment has increased from 493 learners in 2006 to 664 in 2008.

The community moulded 300,000 bricks and then constructed a teacher's house and a health centre. The school conducts SIP top-up each year. In 2006, MK15,000 was raised to buy materials for tailoring and tinsmithing. In 2007, MK35,000 was raised to pay for builders' labour and to buy exercise books for 13 OVCs. In 2008, MK60,000 was raised to establish a community lending program much like microfinance initiatives done by local NGOs.

Challenge

- **The headteacher** lives in Lumbadzi and not at the school.

Recommendations

- **Continue** to foster a good working relationship between school and community.
- **Keep up the good work.**



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