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PRIMARY SCHOOL SUPPORT PROGRAM: A SCHOOL FEES PILOT (PSSP: SFP)

ANNUAL REPORT January – December, 2007



January 31, 2008

This report was produced for the United States Agency for International Development under Contract No: GS 10F-0112J Order No: 690-M-00-06-00023-00. It was prepared by the American Institutes for Research in partnership with Creative Center for Community Mobilization, Malawi Institute of Education, and Miske Witt & Associates, Incorporated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations.....	ii
1.0 Preamble.....	1
2.0 Program Description.....	2
3.0 Performance Overview	3
3.1 Summary of Accomplishments Relative to Work Planned for January – December 2007 ...	3
3.2 PSSP: SFP Accomplishments Relative to Work Plan for Year Two.....	7
3.3 Cumulative Project Results Against Indicators.....	11
4.0 Activities Accomplished During the Reporting Year in More Detail	27
4.1 Project Operations.....	27
4.2 Teacher Professional Development.....	27
4.3 Learning Resources and Literacy.....	38
4.4 Community Mobilization.....	45
4.5 Mass Communication.....	56
4.6 Coordination and Reporting	57
4.7 Monitoring and Evaluation	62
5.0 Implementation Challenges.....	67
6.0 Lessons Learned.....	68
7.0 Conclusion	69
Annex	
Annex A: Supplementary Tables and Figures	70
Annex B: Case Studies from PSSP: SFP	93
Annex C: Sample Story for the Dowa Story Book.....	100
Annex D: Performance Monitoring Indicators.....	101

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Assistant Coordinator
AEDO	Agriculture Extension Development Officer
AIR	American Institutes for Research
BLP/M	Beginning Literacy Program/Malawi
CDA	Community Development Assistant
CBCCC	Community Based Child Care Center
CPD	Continued Professional Development
CRECCOM	Creative Centre for Community Mobilization
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer
DEM	District Education Manager
DOP	Desk Officer Primary
DSSP	Direct Support to Schools Program
EMAS	Education Methods and Advisory Services
FA	Forestry Assistant
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GVH	Group Village Headman
HQ	Headquarters
HSA	Health Surveillance Assistant
IBB	International Book Bank
ICLEP	Integrated Child Labor Elimination Program
IGA	Income Generating Activity
INSET	In-Service Teacher Training
JCE	Junior Certificate
MANEB	Malawi National Examinations Board
MASAF	Malawi Social Action Fund
MCM	Mobilization Corps of Malawi
MESA	Malawi Education Support Activity
MIAMI	Malawi Integrated AIDS Mitigation Initiative
MIE	Malawi Institute of Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOWCD	Ministry of Women and Child Development
MP	Member of Parliament
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate of Education
MTL	Malawi Telecom Limited
MTTA	Malawi Teacher Training Activity
MWAI	Miske Witt and Associates Incorporated
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NLS	National Library Service
OVC	Orphan and Vulnerable Children
PCAR	Primary Curriculum Assessment Reform
PEA	Primary Education Advisor
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PS	Principal Secretary
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SIP	School Incentive Packages
SMC	School Management Committee
SMC-EQ	Social Mobilization Campaign for Education Quality
SWA	Social Welfare Assistant
TA	Traditional Authority
TALULAR	Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources

TDC	Teacher Development Centre
TFD	Theatre for Development
TOT	Training of Trainers
TTC	Teacher Training Colleges
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
ZOC	Zonal Coordinator
ZIP	Zonal Incentive Package



1.0 PREAMBLE

Project Title: Primary School Support Program (PSSP)

Contractor: American Institutes for Research

Award No: GS 10F-0112J Order No: 690-M-00-06-00023-00

Reporting Dates: January to December, 2007

Project Start Date: January 1, 2006

Project End Date: December 31, 2008

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2.0 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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 pupils. 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 pupils. 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. 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 and 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.



3.0 PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

3.1 Summary of Accomplishments Relative to Work Planned for January - December 2007

3.1.1 *Teacher Professional Development*

- Monitored and supported 60% of teachers for cycle 3 INSETs
- Developed, printed and distributed cycle 4 training manuals
- Conducted cycle 4 TOT reaching 48 trainers (14 female and 34 male)
- Conducted cycle 4 cluster trainings in 54 clusters reaching 1,036 cluster mentor teachers (285 female, 751 male)
- Monitored 39 of the 54 clusters (72%) for cycle 4 cluster-based training
- Monitored and supported 932 teachers (282 female, 650 male) for cycle 4 school-based INSETs
- Developed, printed and distributed cycle 5 training manuals
- Conducted cycle 5 TOT reaching 58 participants (17 female, 41 male)
- Conducted cycle 5 cluster trainings reaching 1,146 mentor teachers (252 female, 894 male) in 59 clusters
- Monitored 41 of the 59 clusters (69%) for cycle 5 cluster-based training
- Monitored and supported 800 teachers (273 female, 527 male) for cycle 5 school-based INSETs
- Launched mobile teacher training troupes (MITTI) in 20 schools reaching 181 teachers (43 female, 138 male)
- Launched 69 teacher conferences reaching 1,851 teachers (434 female, 1,417 male)
- Planned headteacher training for quarter 1 2008
- Monitored and supervised in the classroom nearly every teacher in all 226 schools
- Monitored and supported PCAR implementation in 95% of schools
- Attended PCAR TOT trainings for standard 5 and teacher training
- Supported CPD meetings, reaching 85% of the standard 1 teachers in all the revised 19 zones
- Implemented teacher motivational strategies
- Supported National Day of Education in all 13 zones

3.1.2 *Learning Resources and Literacy*

- Reprinted and distributed 2,400 copies of 4 previously developed USAID resources
 - *Effective Use and Care of textbooks: A Resource Book for Schools and Colleges.*
 - *Resource Centre Guide: A Guide for Schools and Colleges.*
 - *Towards Effective Teaching and Learning: A resource book for self and peer monitoring.*
 - *Teaching Science in Malawian Primary Schools*
- Collected stories from Dowa's communities and pupils
- Cataloged and organized local stories in preparation for publishing
- Received, sorted and cataloged over 42,000 books from the IBB using the services of the National Library
- Conducted sensitization meetings in 46 centers reaching 677 people (98 female, 579 male) across all 226 schools
- Distributed 15,056 books to 57 library centers
- Supported the development of TALULAR
- Developed the lessons for BLP/M terms 1 and 2, and began to edit and develop term 3 lessons
- Conducted validation meetings with 50 standard 1 teachers (31 female, 19 male) from 30 selected schools
- Developed and printed all term 1 BLP/M materials

- 685 copies of teachers guides comprised of term 1 syllabus and lessons
- 768 copies of 5 titles of big books
- 450 copies of 16 titles of song posters
- 450 copies of Chichewa alphabet chart
- 380 copies of English alphabet charts of sacks
- 450 copies of story star poster
- 450 copies of character map poster
- Drafted BLP/M materials for term 2, which include term 2 Chichewa syllabus, 8 song posters, 3 poems and 4 big books
- Conducted BLP/M 'TOT' training preparing 23 trainers to reach all standard 1 teachers
- Conducted BLP/M term 1 trainings for all Standard 1 teachers, headteachers and Assistant TDC Coordinators at zonal level, reaching 562 participants
- Continued to promote literacy development in schools

3.1.3 Community Involvement

- Trained 10 new local drama troupes reaching 160 members (75 female, 85 male)
- Conducted 21 performances by these local troupes reaching 6,277 people
- Trained 69 MCMs in TFD principles
- Conducted 31 performances by MCMs
- Held 2 day review and re-planning meetings for 272 zonal change agents
- Held 4 day review and re-planning meetings for 56 most critical zonal change agents
- Held 3 day review and re-planning meetings for all 69 cluster leaders
- Supported cluster leader led meeting and follow-ups reaching 22,630 people (10,490 female, 12,140 male)
- Trained 254 special group members (18 female, 208 male)
- Supported and monitored change agents, cluster leaders, and special group activities.
- Allocated full scale, 69 member MCM cohort to clusters, and supported cohort with bicycles
- Conducted 2 trainings and review/re-planning sessions with MCMs
- Reviewed and edited *MCM Training Manual*
- Recruited, selected and trained second cohort of MCMs with 20 new members
- Conducted small grants orientations reaching 2,006 community members (718 female, 1288 male)
- Distributed 154 schools grants totaling K17,546,678.79
- Distributed SIP to 164 schools and communities raised 233,715.20MK during their launches
- Briefed 10 zones and 164 schools on how to use and sustain their SIP/ZIP packages reaching 6,092 females and 7,777 males
- Encouraged the identification and utilization of at least 300 role models
- Supported open days, exchange visits and educational tours

3.1.4 Mass Communication

- Produced and distributed to schools and other shareholders:
 - 1,200 copies of Area Newsletter Vol. 2, Issues 6, 7 and 8 for Madisi, Mponela and Mvera Areas (300 English and 900 Chichewa versions)
 - 2,000 copies of bi-annual Project Newsletter Vol. 1, First edition, English and Chichewa versions
 - 1,200 English/Chichewa versions of Vol. 2, Issues 6-8 of the Project Area Newsletters
- Featured:

- 15 times in national newspapers: The Daily Times, The Nation, The Guardian and The Chronicle
- 31 times in various programs on local stations particularly the MBC and Zodiac
- 5 times on Television Malawi

3.1.5 Coordination and Reporting

- Held partners meetings, monthly staff meetings, regular management and project implementation committee meetings
- Mounted a 3-day critical review and reflection workshop for all staff and partners
- Met with other AIR and partner colleagues from MTTA
- Held Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting
- Hosted home office support and technical assistance from MWAI
- Met CTO and other USAID officials several times each quarter
- Presented and participated in the USAID SO9 extended team meeting
- Attended all 5 USAID synergy meetings
- Facilitated 3 field visits of USAID/US Government officials
- Attended USAID sponsored meetings/workshops in other sectors
- Met regularly with Dowa district officials
- Attended the PCAR Coordination Meetings
- Conducted two formal briefings at the Ministry of Education and another at Ministry of Women and Child Development
- Presented, in collaboration with MTTA, at the Technical Working Group on Education at DTED on the lessons learned from USAID projects that could help Ministry in rolling out PCAR.
- Hosted stakeholders briefing to share lessons and project progress with MOE, donors and other NGOs
- Continued to meet and liaise with various NGOs, donors and other interested parties throughout the year
- Attended the Commission on the Status of Women's Conference in New York
- Attended the CIES conference in Baltimore, MD and showcased the MCM initiative
- Attended the AIR International Development Program Summit in Washington, DC
- Submitted 4 rolling annual work plans and PMP
- Wrote 12 monthly reports, 3 quarterly reports and 1 mid-term report

3.1.6 Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

- Trained 13 ZOCs (5 female, 8 male) on how to collect year two pupil assessment data
- Collected year two pupil assessment data in both Dowa and in the comparison district, Dedza, on 1,616 pupils (780 girls, 836 boys) in Dowa and 1,082 pupils (548 girls, 534 boys) in Dedza
- Entered, cleaned and analyzed year two-pupil assessment - 19% increase in Chichewa (22% girls, 16% boys), 22% increase in English (18% girls, 25% boys) and 31% increase in mathematics (26% girls, 35% boys)
- Printed and distributed monthly tracking instruments to all 226 schools in Dowa
- Continued entering, cleaning and school-based data
- Analyzed progress in pupil enrollment, which increased 23.2% (120,789 in 2006, 148,785 in 2007)
- Trained 6 external data collectors on how to collect SMC/PTA follow-up data
- Collected year two SMC/PTA data in 59 sample schools across Dowa district

- Entered, cleaned and analyzed data on year two SMCs/PTAs involvement in school improvement – 60% SMCs/PTAs undertaking IGAs, 93% SMCs/PTAs involved in some physical rehabilitation or building projects and 55% SMCs/PTAs lobbying for external support
- Trained 8 external data collectors (2 female, 6 male) on how to collect school financial data
- Collected school financial data
- Entered, cleaned and analyzed SMC/PTA school financial data, which showed a 13 fold increase in financial resources available at school level
- Disseminated follow-up data findings
- Drafted a data book for Dowa education statistics

3.2 PSSP: SFP Accomplishments Relative to Work Plan for Year Two

Each quarter, PSSP: SFP is required to submit an updated rolling annual work plan. Given the multifaceted and complex nature of PSSP: SFP, the team used the opportunity to review the program and make adjustments as appropriate to the plan to best serve the child of Dowa, within the existing constraints. This work plan is the best synthesis of the year’s plan in one table, incorporating adjustments as they arose.

Activities	2007												Status and Remarks
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
1 Teacher Professional Development													
1.1	Support teachers in the classroom, including support to the PCAR classroom implementation											Accomplished and ongoing	
1.2	Identify schools with good practices											Accomplished and ongoing	
1.3	Facilitate exchange visits and utilize role models											Accomplished and ongoing	
1.4	Plan incremental cycle trainings											Accomplished	
1.5	Develop training materials and distribute to zones											Accomplished	
1.6	Train trainers (PEAs, AC and ZOCs)											Accomplished	
1.7	Train school teachers at cluster level											Accomplished	
1.8	Facilitate teacher conferences											Accomplished	
1.9	Facilitate school-based INSETs trainings											Accomplished and ongoing	
1.10	Supervise cycle and school-based trainings											Accomplished and ongoing	
1.11	Support PCAR trainings, including CPD											Accomplished and ongoing	
1.12	Implement and support teacher motivational strategies											Accomplished and ongoing	
2 Learning Resource Development													
2.1	Print selected teaching and learning materials											Accomplished and ongoing	
2.2	Distribute teaching and learning materials to schools											Accomplished and ongoing	
2.3	Receive donated (IBB) books											Accomplished	
2.4	Sort donated books											Accomplished	
2.5	Sensitize schools and TDCs on libraries and donated book usage											Accomplished	
2.6	Facilitate library establishment											Accomplished and ongoing	
2.7	Distribute to schools and TDCs											Accomplished and ongoing	
2.8	Support development of TALULAR materials in schools											Accomplished and ongoing	
2.9	Monitor and support care and use of teaching and learning materials, including donated books											Accomplished and ongoing	
3 Literacy Program													
3.1	Develop and implement a Literacy Campaign											Accomplished and ongoing	



Activities	2007												Status and Remarks
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
3.2													Accomplished
3.3													Accomplished
3.4													Accomplished
3.5													Accomplished
3.6													Accomplished
3.7													Accomplished
3.8													In progress
3.9													Postponed to the next quarter
3.10													Accomplished
3.11													Accomplished
3.12													Accomplished
3.13													In progress
3.14													Accomplished
3.15													Accomplished
3.16													Accomplished
3.17													Accomplished and ongoing
3.18													Accomplished and ongoing
4 Community Mobilization													
<i>Training</i>													
4.1													Accomplished and ongoing
4.2													Accomplished and ongoing
4.3													Accomplished
4.4													Accomplished
4.5													Accomplished and ongoing
4.6													Accomplished
4.7													Postponed due to budgetary considerations
4.8													Accomplished and ongoing

Activities	2007												Status and Remarks
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
4.9													Accomplished
4.10													Accomplished
4.11													Postponed to Qtr 1 2008
4.12													Accomplished and ongoing
4.13													Accomplished and ongoing
4.14													Accomplished and ongoing
4.15													Accomplished
4.14													Accomplished and ongoing
4.15													Accomplished and ongoing
<i>Small grants and financial incentives</i>													
4.16													Accomplished and ongoing
4.17													Accomplished and ongoing
4.18													Accomplished and ongoing
4.19													Accomplished
4.20													Accomplished and ongoing
4.21													Accomplished and ongoing
<i>Mobilization Corps of Malawi</i>													
4.22													Accomplished and ongoing
4.23													Accomplished
4.24													Accomplished and ongoing
4.25													Accomplished
4.26													Accomplished
5 Mass Communication													
5.1													Accomplished and ongoing
5.2													Accomplished and ongoing
5.3													Accomplished and ongoing
5.4													Accomplished and ongoing
5.5													Accomplished and ongoing

Activities	2007												Status and Remarks	
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4				
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D		
6	Project Coordination and Reporting													
6.1	Hold PSSP: SFP team meetings													Accomplished
6.2	Hold Advisory Committee meeting													Accomplished and another planned in Qtr 1 2008
6.3	Hold Policy Makers/Stakeholders briefing													Accomplished
6.4	Hold project critical review and reflection workshop													Accomplished
6.5	Meet with USAID, line ministries and other NGOs													Accomplished
6.6	Write monthly report													Accomplished
6.7	Write quarterly report													Accomplished
6.8	Update work plan and PMP													Accomplished
6.9	Calculate quarterly accruals													Accomplished
7	Research, Monitoring and Evaluation													
7.1	Collect data for schools/tracking													Accomplished and ongoing
7.2	Analyze and disseminate school data													Accomplished and ongoing
7.3	Collect data for SMCs/PTAs													Accomplished and ongoing
7.4	Analyze and disseminate SMC/PTA data													Accomplished and ongoing
7.5	Collect teacher observation data													Accomplished
7.6	Analyze and disseminate teacher observation data													Accomplished
7.7	Develop new pupil assessment items and pilot													Accomplished
7.8	Finalize year 2 pupil assessments													Accomplished
7.9	Train data collectors for pupil assessments													Accomplished
7.10	Conduct data collection for pupils													Accomplished
7.11	Enter data for pupil assessments													Accomplished
7.12	Analyze data for pupil assessments													Accomplished
7.13	Disseminate of data for pupil assessments													Accomplished and ongoing
7.14	Monitor and evaluate teachers/classroom practices													Accomplished and ongoing
7.15	Monitor community mobilization strategies													Accomplished and ongoing
7.16	Write annual follow-up data report													Accomplished
7.17	Participate in Book Donation Study													Postponed due to funding constraint for EQUIP1
7.18	Conduct Research Study: Phase 1 Literacy													In progress
7.19	Conduct Research Study: Phase 1 Hidden Costs of Schooling													In progress
7.20	Conduct Research Study: MCM													In progress
7.21	Prepare for and participate in USAID midterm review													Postponed by USAID until April 2008

3.3 Cumulative Project Results Against Indicators

In its second year, PSSP: SFP continued to make strides in the district and realized significant achievements as evidenced by a range of qualitative indicators that have emerged as a result of the project's sensitization, training and mobilization activities. Following is the project's indicators by result areas; activities that support each initiative are documented and qualitative examples of project impact are organized by each indicator. This representation is hardly exhaustive; however it serves to illustrate the transformation taking place in Dowa schools. A few success stories that provide additional context on the impact of PSSP: SFP are included in Annex B

Result 1: Increasing access to basic education and improved learning with a special focus on orphans, vulnerable children, and girls

1. Increased percentage of pupils achieving basic literacy in Chichewa in Standard one

- PSSP: SFP has trained 1,882 teachers (564 female, 1318 male) in early literacy principles over 5 cycles of training. These trainings were designed to lead to improved classroom instruction, which will lead to improved student learning and achievement.
- PSSP: SFP has trained 1,882 teachers (564 female, 1318 male) on TALULAR production, care, use and establishment of TALULAR banks in schools for use during teaching and learning. The production and use of TALULAR has assisted learners to acquire basic skill and concepts in literacy.
- Mobilization Corps of Malawi members are helping organize reading groups and supporting community based literacy clubs such debate, quiz, drama and reading competitions for school-going children. This is also motivating those that have dropped out of school to return to school.
- PSSP: SFP and PCAR have trained PEAs and ZOCs on how to support the Standard 1 teachers and learners, as a result ZOCs and PEAs are able to supervise Standard 1 teachers during literacy lessons.
- PSSP: SFP developed a comprehensive literacy program, the Beginning Literacy Program of Malawi (BLP/M).
- All 323 Standard 1 teachers in 226 schools in Dowa were trained in BLP/M .
- PSSP: SFP has facilitated the shipment of over 42,000 donated books, the establishment of school libraries and the shipping of books to 57 school libraries.
- PSSP: SFP has conducted validation meetings with 50 Standard 1 teachers from 30 selected schools in the district sharing and practicing early literacy techniques as part of the BLP/M program and getting their feedback on the materials that have been developed.
- PSSP: SFP has also conducted a literacy needs assessment in 106 schools across the 13 zones in order to find out the type of reading materials and type of storage available in schools to tailor to school needs its literacy campaign strategies.
- PSSP: SFP has provided schools with teaching materials such as resource manuals for teaching English in schools, participatory teaching methods and TALULAR making, to support classroom activities in basic literacy.
- PSSP: SFP has facilitated a range of grassroots level activities in the schools and communities as part of its literacy campaign.

For example

Teachers from schools like Manondo, Chivala, Dowa 1, James, Kongwe 2, Nakondwa, Mtenthera are assessing pupils' ability to read and write and providing remediation where necessary.

Pupils skills are reinforced through regular use of name cards, word trees, alphabet charts and posters at Nalunga, Mtengenji, Mdabwi, Kaomba, Windu and Kanyanyata in Nalunga zone.

Over 80% of Standard 1 learners at Chiwichwi and Sungeni schools in Chimbuli zone are able to write their names.

Parents and guardians from school communities like Kabulungo and Chimungu are providing reading resources like cards with words to read at home to increase their children's exposure to reading.

Teachers are finding creative ways to improve basic literacy schools: at Kapini, Mphimbi and Dowa 2, learners are given name cards to wear around their necks, to read and practice writing their own names on each assignment.

2. Increased percentage of pupils achieving in English reading at Standard 6

- PSSP: SFP has trained 1,882 teachers (564 female, 1318 male) in methodologies and strategies for teaching English in lower and upper classes of primary school in the five cycle trainings. This training equipped teachers with knowledge of handling English lessons with confidence.
- PSSP: SFP has supported teachers' facilitation of school based INSET's to share knowledge, skills and ideas on how to help learners master literacy skills.
- PSSP: SFP has provided resource books for English teaching to all teachers. PSSP: SFP has also distributed library books to help teachers and learners improve their literacy skills. Reading clubs have also been formed to promote reading culture and provide a structured opportunity for pupils to write stories and poems.
- PSSP: SFP has facilitated the shipment of over 42,000 donated books, the establishment of school libraries and the shipping of books to 57 school libraries.
- PSSP: SFP has supervised teachers in senior classes and advised and supported the use of English as the medium of instruction.
- MCM members are helping tutor learners who have problems in speaking, reading and writing skills in English by providing them with activities that promote their understanding through reading clubs, drama and quiz competitions.

For example

Selected schools in Mvera Zone, for example Mvera MDF, have taken speaking English in the school premises for the senior classes very seriously.

Teachers at schools like Malambo, James, Senga, Mponela 1, Mpatsa and Dzoole are assessing pupils and find that 70% can now read short paragraphs.

Teachers at schools such as Chimbuli, Sungeni, Bowe, Chimkoka, Ngala, Bwanyundo, Mwaza, Mduku, Mtengenji, Kaomba, St Matias, Thonje, Mvera FP, Mvera MDF, Kanyenje, use a variety of strategies to enhance effective teaching and learning such as study circles, subject panels and clubs to give more opportunities to learners understand the concepts. Teachers also use a variety of TALULAR to help learners improve reading skills.

Schools like Kayembe, Kabulungo, Mlengwe, Senga and Chimungu have introduced story production competitions that are helping pupils write their own stories and case studies, to both include in a book that PSSP: SFP plans to publish of Dowa stories and more immediately to expand reading corners in the classroom.

MCMs in all zones, including Chimungu, Madisi and Mponela have established weekly reading clubs that are helping pupils at all levels improve their English reading skills.

Reading and debate clubs have been formed in some schools including Chimbuli in Chimbuli zone, and Mwanza school in Kamphenga zone, which have assisted the learners to be fluent in speaking and

reading English. This is complemented by the use of various techniques e.g. reading boards and games by the teachers. 50% of the assessed learners are able to read English properly without problems.

Most schools like Kanyenje, Chimbuli, Senga, Boma and Mvera have embarked on intensive reading TALULAR production and have established TALULAR banks.

3. Increased percentage of pupils achieving in mathematics at Standard 6

- PSSP: SFP has trained 1,882 teachers (564 female, 1318 male) in mathematics content in 5 cycles of training. The training is designed to lead to improved classroom instruction which will lead to improved student learning and achievement.
- PSSP: SFP has provided schools with teaching materials to support classroom activities in mathematics, like the resource manual for teaching mathematics in Malawian primary schools.
- MCM members have tutored pupils in mathematics and organized mathematics clubs.
- PSSP: SFP has facilitated the shipment of over 42,000 donated books, including mathematics books, the establishment of school libraries and the shipping of books to 57 school libraries,
- PSSP: SFP has supported teachers' facilitation of school based INSETs to share knowledge, skills and ideas on how to help learners master mathematics skills.
- PSSP: SFP has supervised teachers teaching mathematics and provided strategies for more effectively teaching mathematics concepts like ratio and common denominators.

For example:

In cycle 4, rate, ratio and proportion were taught which has increased teacher confidence in tackling these topics for standard 6 mathematics. The teachers are using concrete activities in introducing these mathematical concepts making the understanding easier.

Teachers are exchanging ideas during INSETs that are helping the stronger ones assist those who are struggling with certain concepts. For instance, Malambo School in Mponela zone has a very strong standard 1 teacher who is imparting numeracy skills competently, and who is discussing strategies with the standard 6 teacher to establish some causes of students' poor skills in some basic concepts.

Teachers are providing enrichment opportunities for better learners and remediation for slower learners. For instance, the standard 7 teacher at Kamwana School has instituted very effective working groups in mathematics. Learners work together on the board with the teacher, they first do the class exercise in groups and after assessment they work individually. 90% of the learners will have understood their activities before they embark on individual work.

At Mvera MDF, Kapita, Lufe, Mphande, Thonje and Kawangwi schools teachers are using a variety of TALULAR to enable learners understand mathematics concepts easily and this has led to more and more learners liking and performing well in the subject

MCMs in all zones, including Chimbuli, Kamphenga, and Mvera have established weekly mathematics clubs that are helping pupils at all levels improve their numeracy and analytic skills.

4. Decreased pupil dropout

- PSSP: SFP sensitized 98% of the school communities on the importance of education and helped mobilize communities to implement initiatives to help pupils attend and stay in school.
- Community members developed village registers to track all school-aged children. This helps them understand which children in the community are going to school and which ones are not in school, with the end goal of supporting those out-of-school youth to return to school. Community members then engage in door-to-door campaigns to re-enroll children who have dropped out of school.

- Communities have introduced school feeding programs at schools where the lack of food has been an impediment to pupils staying in school.
- PSSP: SFP trained special groups, including the Gule Wamkulu in strategies for supporting education, and they have in turn been escorting children to school thus encouraging all school-aged children to attend class and not drop out.
- Schools are incorporating activities to make the learning environment more attractive to local students, thus decreasing drop-out rates. For example, some are introducing competitive football teams; netball; play grounds including see-saws and swings; games such as foot races, jumping, and dumb bells; traditional dancing; vocational life skills such as tinsmithing, tailoring, pottery, carpentry, radio repairing, knitting, and sewing, among others.
- School Management Committees (SMCs), with the support of the project, have increased their skills to monitor teacher and pupil attendance, and are tracking potential drop-outs. .
- MCM members have established play parks in schools that have drawn dropouts back to classes.

For example

Schools like at Mkanile School in Kamphenga zone, and Windu and Katona schools in Nalunga zone are using volunteer teachers to address the teaching shortage and teach additional lessons in vocational life skills. To date over 70% of the schools in Dowa district are engaged in life skills trainings, which has boosted pupils' interest in school and are helping them stay in school.

Efforts by village heads to introduce village school attendance registers have seen more pupils attending classes daily, helping to lower dropout rates.

Construction of pit latrines has assisted to curb drop out, most especially that of girls. This has been noticed at Nyagra and Katsuka schools in Katalima zone where 12 and 8 pit latrines have been constructed, benefiting 960 and 480 learners, respectively.

Continued efforts by Gule Wamkulu in escorting and entertaining children as they go to school have curbed pupil absenteeism and drop out and most children are attending classes, Mdinga school in Katalima zone is but one example.

The introduction of play parks and clubs in schools by the MCMs has helped to decrease pupil dropout.

SIPs have assisted in retention of learners in schools as commented by one head teacher from Chilinde School in Chimbuli zone: *"The packages are assisting us quite a lot as you can see most pupils are attending classes and there is a good relationship between the school and the village heads. Since we promised that a village head that would send more kids to school would get a token of thanks and most village heads have put in place a mechanism of tracking down absentees and we have received more children that dropped out of school."*

As most pupils who are likely to dropout of school are OVC, efforts are being put into place to assist the OVC with school and day-to-day needs to ensure their school attendance. For example, Chinkhwiri cluster in Chimbuli zone organized a Gule Wamkulu festival to raise funds for the needy pupils; K11,700 was raised. A choir festival at Dzalo School in the same zone yielded over K2,800 that was used to purchase exercise books for OVC.

Community members have taken up their own initiatives to ensure pupils attend school. For instance, village heads in Senga zone at Senga School ring bells at 6.00 am every morning to awaken children to start for school. Enrolment in Senga zone has risen from 13,115 to 14,166.

5. Decreased pupil repetition

- PSSP: SFP has trained 1,720 teachers in pedagogy, student centered learning techniques, and content knowledge in literacy and numeracy. The training is designed to lead to improved classroom instruction, which will lead to improved student learning and decreased pupil repetition rates.
- PSSP: SFP has developed an observation tool combining all MOE and PSSP indicators. With the use of this tool by both the ZOCs and PEAs, class support and monitoring will be increased thereby most teacher will be assisted, enhancing teaching and learning and reducing repetition rates.
- PSSP: SFP interventions to increased attendance and decreased dropout rates will also lead to decreased pupil repetition rates.
- The community-based interventions mentioned above, affecting dropout rates also have an affect on decreasing pupil repetition rates.
- The intensified community-based interventions, especially the special group activities, have resulted in increased attendance and decreased dropout rates and are expected to contribute in part to the reduction of repetition rates for the 2008 school year.

For example:

PSSP: SFP has provided extra support for the volunteer teachers to ensure they are effective in their support of the classroom. This has given them more confidence and skill in teaching and the learners more confidence in their teachers resulting in more attendance and greater achievement, particularly in schools in Kanyenje and Katalima zones.

At Nalikonda School in Kayembe zone, 24 standard 8 learners sat for PSLCE in 2007 and all of them passed and got selected to various secondary schools, whereas in previous years results were poor.

Teachers who are using TALULAR in their participatory teaching and learning are reaching more learners by providing alternative ways of learning the same thing. Chances of learners understanding what they are doing are enhanced. Chimbuli and Madisi zone schools hold weekly TALULAR making sessions to exchange ideas with their fellow teachers.

At many schools like Mwaza School in Kamphenga zone, the SMCs have introduced village attendance registers that are used to track down the attendance of pupils at school.

Nambamba School in Madisi zone and Chimbuli school in Chimbuli zone have re-introduced giving rewards to top pupils during term closing day as an incentive to boost pupils' performance.

In several schools like Kayembe School, teachers have started self reflection on their teaching. This is helping them to examine their performance in lesson preparation and delivery. This is assisting the teacher to discover and know where the learners have failed and how to assist them, so that learners are able to get appropriate individual help, which should reduce the need to repeat the class.

6. Increased pupil completion rates

- PSSP: SFP support and mobilization of teacher- and community-based interventions mentioned above are designed to have a positive effect on increasing pupil completion rates.

For example:

In zones such as Kamphenga, and Katalima, communities have garnered support from external donors and even undertaken their own programs for school feeding, which has seen learners in need through the lean period, greatly checking learner absenteeism and increasing chances pupil retention through the end of the year.

Chimungu cluster schools have improved in completion rates due to MCM activities that included quiz, debate and academic clubs. The club members took very good positions in class, as manifested by the 3rd term/end of year tests.

Two schools in Senga zone, Fusani and Senga, have introduced class praise boxes where class teachers collect pens, pencils and exercise notebooks which they give to learners that are working hard in class.

Schools such as St Mathias in Kanyenje, Fusani in Senga, Mondwe in Kamphenga, Gogo and Lufe in Mvera have embarked on peer observation. Teachers have become more open minded and objective in dealing with lesson delivery problems. They are able to correct each other and to objectively take advice given to them. This has improved their teaching, which in turn has improved pupil interest and performance in school and is expected to help students pass their end of year exams.

To remedy the shortage of teachers, class overlaps have been successfully introduced at Lufe in Mvera zone and Thedze and Mtenthera in Chigudu zone. No class is left without a teacher. At least all core subjects are taught on a daily basis and learners are encouraged to come to school daily.

7. Increased percentage of girls and OVCs enrolled in primary school

- PSSP: SFP support and mobilization of teacher- and community-based interventions mentioned above are designed to have a positive effect on increasing pupil enrollment.
- PSSP: SFP has provided sustainable school supply boxes, SIPs, that provided an infusion of supplies to support OVCs. Communities in turn have raised funds to keep those boxes replenished.
- Schools have established school gardens, selling the produce and then using the money to subsidize the education needs of girls and OVCs.
- Schools, communities, and local drama groups have engaged in interventions designed to support OVCs and girls providing them with basic items such as clothes, soap, and learning materials. These materials help pupils enroll and stay in school.
- Communities are establishing Community based Child Care Centers (CBCCCs) to watch the youngest children while older siblings are able to attend school.
- According to the Dowa district education office statistics, the overall pupil enrollment increased by 11.6% between February 2006 and February 2007. Enrollment for girls increased by 9.8% and for boys increased by 12.5%.

For Example:

In Kamphenga Zone 140 OVCs, who dropped out from school, have re-enrolled following the PSSP: SFP mobilization activities. These orphans are being supported by various key players including the Kasuntha Multicultural Group which is donating notebooks and pens to schools. Initiatives to equip the orphans with life skills such as sewing, and tinsmithing have started in the zone where the materials made will be sold for income to sustain the support to OVCs.

A CBCCC, mostly comprising orphans and vulnerable children, has been opened in Chimbuli Zone. Community members raised K10,000 through piece work to purchase maize, soya beans and sugar and to provide meals to the children at the CBCCC. Part of this money was also used to buy exercise books and pens which they donated to six orphans. This has helped reduce dropouts at Chimbuli as the pupils are no longer leaving school due to hunger or lack of resources.

Matsewa school in Chimbuli zone has re-enrolled the would be dropouts through the support of Gule Wamkulu who go round the villages in the morning to escort learners to school.

Communities have intensified interventions that are supporting OVCs and girls, to make sure that these disadvantaged groups of children are learning in schools. Through the income generating activities that

the communities initiated the needy pupils are being supported with basic items such as school uniforms, soap and learning materials. This support enables OVCs to enroll and be retained in school.

Sindeya School in Kayembe zone used maize garden proceeds and sold products of vocational skills to support 11 OVCs with uniforms and others school materials. This encouraged them to enroll and stay in school.

Before PSSP, about half the schools had no funds in their account. However, schools like Kachulu came up with vocational skills of tailoring where school uniforms are made. So far K4,405 has been realized from the sales, which has been used to assist 15 OVCs with exercise books and reinvest into maintaining the life skills training.

Result 2: Increased Resources at the School Level

8. Increased financial resources available at the school level

- PSSP: SFP has provided 214 schools with small grants to support initiatives designed to improve teaching and learning. Some schools are using grant money to improve school infrastructure, conduct school fundraising activities, and/or provide vocational life skills training.
- All 226 schools are engaged in school and community-based initiatives to mobilize resources to support teaching and learning.
- SMCs have initiated Income Generating Activities (IGAs) to increase the financial resources at the school.

For example

Many community members like Mbalame, Dzoole, and Fusani school communities are donating agricultural produce such as maize and tobacco leaves to the school. For example, Kafulu School collected contribution of tobacco (350 kgs, sold at K46,900) which was used to buy cement and pay the builders of a teacher's house.

SIP/ZIP launch at Chimpeni Mduku in Kamphenga zone raised over K11,000 that was used to buy rafters and supported 6 OVCs.

At Chankhungu School voluntary money contributions raised K8,314.15 that has been used to hire a car for sand collection and assisted 120 learners with learning materials.

At Sindeya School, the Gule Wamkulu festival managed to raise over K16,000 which was used to pay the builder and bought balls for the learners.

A mock wedding at Mathimba School in Kayembe zone raised K6,000, part of which was used to purchase 200 pens and 150 note books that benefited the learners, most of which are OVCs.

Many schools like Ngala, Nambamba, Chikwete, Chikankha, and Chunzu have initiated IGAs such as rearing and selling livestock such as rabbits, goats and pigs; establishing gardens and selling the produce; or establishing life-skills programs such as tailoring, carpentry, tinsmithing, radio repairing, bakeries, and selling products and services.

9. Number of SMCs trained in financial management and lobbying skills

- PSSP: SFP has trained 4,710 SMC members in financial management and lobbying skills. Although PSSP: SFP has assisted only 95% schools with small grants, PSSP: SFP trained all 226 school management committees on financial management and lobbying skills. SMCs have shown they are

able to manage funds given and many SMCs have been able to lobby from various individuals and organizations.

For example

SMC of Dowa I school in Boma zone has successfully lobbied for a feeding program from Scottish International Relief of Scotland. The school received 4 pots, 4 plastic basins, 1000 cups, 4 stoves, 4 pales, 4 tins, and 4 cooking sticks and also on a monthly basis the school receives 176 bags of 10 kg flour.

SMCs for Mdika, Nalikonda, Chigongolero, Kawale and Mkwichi schools in Kayembe zone, and Malambo and Mwachiswa schools in Mponela zone have successfully lobbied from their members of parliament.

SMC at Chikankha School in Kayembe zone has tracked and managed K90,000 that the community has raised through tobacco sales. With those funds the communities have started constructing a two-classroom block and the SMC is preparing to lobby for more support. Carpentry instruction has also been established.

SMCs of Manondo and Chakhala in Senga zone have so far contributed over 36 bags of maize and 34 bags of maize, respectively, in order to support OVCs. SMC at Chibweza School has initiated a move to raise K110, 00.00 through contributions from 22 villages. The SMCs have so far raised over K20,000.

Before PSSP: SFP, about half the schools in Dowa district had no funds and those schools that had money were unable to account all the funds. After PSSP: SFP trained SMCs/PTAs, the situation has improved tremendously. All the SMCs reconciled the PSSP: SFP small-scale grants with minimal difficulties. Follow-up monitoring shows most schools are accounting for and utilizing their resources satisfactorily. For example, Kachulu School in Mponela zone received K89, 811 for tailing and tinsmith as well as the roofing of a teacher's house and has reconciled all their money and the SMC has opened an account for the school. So far they have raised and saved over K13, 000.

10. Percentage of SMCs engaged in IGAs to support schools

- PSSP: SFP has trained 4,710 SMC members in financial management and lobbying skills.
- Thus far 70% of the SMCs have initiated Income Generating Activities (IGAs) to increase the financial resources at the school. Examples of the IGAs include rearing and selling livestock such as rabbits, goats and pigs; establishing gardens and selling the produce; establishing life-skills programs such as tailoring, carpentry, tinsmithing, radio repairing, bakeries, and selling products and services.
- PSSP: SFP trained extension workers who are providing technical support to some of the income generating activities for the schools
- Community members are teaching of vocational life skills whose proceeds are sold to further the skill training and support OVCs.

For example

To ensure OVC support, some communities like Mtayafuko and Namwiri Schools ventured into rearing animals, using their grant to procure goats and rabbits. Some of these animals were distributed to a few OVCs who will give the animals' offspring to other OVC.

At Nyagra School in Katalima zone, K20,000 was raised through vocational skill training in tailoring, allowing uniforms to be made and sold. The money was used to pay the skilled labourers at the construction of administration and library block and to support OVCs.

Gardens established at Katalima School raised K36, 100.

Kambulu School in Nalunga zone started with 2 pigs and now has 8.

Schools like Chimbuli and Chinkwili Schools in Chimbuli zone are teaching life skills and selling the products. So far they raised over K5,000 and over K2,000 respectively from sales of tin smith products, which they are re-investing in vocational skills training.

11. Percentage of SMCs who lobby for funds from outside sources

- PSSP: SFP has trained over 98% of the SMCs members on lobbying skills aimed at securing financial resources for the school. Thus far, 85% of all PSSP: SFP SMCs have engaged in lobbying initiatives, over 60 % are successfully lobbying for support of the initiatives.
- PSSP: SFP raised the awareness of MPs through briefings about the goals of PSSP: SFP and their role in supporting education.

For example

So far 214 schools have successfully fulfilled the requirements of lobbying for support from PSSP: SFP small grants and have been awarded grants.

Gudyu School lobbied the US Ambassadors Self-Help fund which awarded K500,000 to the school, which has spurred their drive to seek additional funds and support. They have received support for building a library, latrines and renovating a classroom block from organization such as the EU and Africare.

In Mvera zone, communities lobbied for a wheel chair and 5 cartons of school books. The wheel chair was donated to Alice Chiwayula (an OVC in Mvera zone) and the books were distributed to 5 schools.

At Kanyenje school in Kanyenje zone, the community successfully lobbied for a school block from the Catholic Parish at Chezi.

Most SMCs of Dowa district have successfully lobbied from Members of Parliament resulting in 80% of the constituency development funds being channeled to schools' development in Dowa because of successful lobbying and the readiness of the SMCs.

Communities are also devising ways of lobbying support from local well wishers through entertainment fundraising. For example, Mdinga School in Katalima zone held a Gule Wamkulu festival to raise funds to pay a carpenter to roof a school block that was supported by small grant. The festival raised over K8,000.

In Katalima zone, the Niagra School has an acute shortage of classroom blocks. The school has lobbied and received over K200,000 for the construction of classroom blocks, a library, a head teachers office, and a staff room. Some of these funds were lobbied from individuals but most of the funds were lobbied from the estate that is close to the school. The estate has also provided a tractor for the transportation of sand and bricks.

12. Percentage of SMCs and PTAs that undertake one or more physical rehabilitation or building project to support education

- PSSP: SFP has sensitized school communities on their role in supporting education including infrastructural development work.
- PSSP: SFP has provided construction grants to 70% of the schools in an effort to support community initiatives.
- All 226 SMC/PTAs have helped organize one or more physical rehabilitation or construction projects at their schools.

For example

There are a number of infrastructure improvement activities that the SMC/PTA are involved in to face-lift their schools and create a conducive learning environment for both learners and teachers. For example, at Chigongolero School in Kayembe zone the school block they were constructing is now in use. In the same zone at Msokonezi 2, teachers are now residing at the school after the community constructed 2 teachers' houses. At Chamwala School in Boma zone the SMC and PTA have facilitated the renovation of two school blocks and head teacher's office which is benefiting over 630 learners.

At Nyagra School in Katalima zone a school block, head teacher's office and library have been constructed with the support of the small grant. Kayembe School in Kayembe zone renovated a library. At Chimungu School in Chimungu zone and Gogo school in Mvera zone communities have contributed iron sheets and roofed teachers' houses. At Katundu School in Kanyenje zone, SMCs have spearheaded the construction of a two classroom block and the digging of shallow well.

Schools are not only fixing the exterior structures but communities are improving school furniture and fixtures. For instance, at Namwili School in Mponela zone 16 benches were constructed for pupils. At Bwevu School in Chigudu zone and Mponela I school in Mponela zone all broken desks have been repaired.

Creative efforts by the community to secure resources include brick molding through special groups (Gule Wamkulu). Mtanila and Madisi schools in Madisi zone have already molded over 750,000 bricks.

13. Percentage of schools that receive school incentive packages (SIPs)

- PSSP: SFP procured all the materials to include in SIPs and ZIPs, including school supplies and recreational equipment
- PSSP: SFP has distributed 226 SIPs and 13 ZIPs (Zonal Incentive Packages) to schools
- PSSP: SFP has sensitized all 226 schools and communities about SIPs/ZIPs. Schools gathered their own items for including in the SIP boxes such as learning materials, clothing, and soap.
- Schools have established SIP committees to oversee the fundraising, use and care of the SIP boxes

For example

Most of the schools are replenishing their boxes and are putting their packages in use. Communities have organized competitions among different stakeholders and a lot has been done to assist OVCs and enhance education in the schools. For instance, G.V.H. Walinda donated fifty exercise books to needy students at M'bindo School. Dzoole School in Mponela zone realized K2,000 from community contributions during the SIP distribution at their school and they have used the money to assist 15 needy pupils. They also raised over K15, 000 during the SIP launch.

In Senga zone, communities raised over K45,000 and 5 bags of beans for the ZIP. The money has multiplied to over K255,000 through small scale lending to communities and teachers at a small interest rate. Senga plans to use this money to provide grants to its schools to bolster community led education initiatives.

Nkhamanga and Aimalandiwo schools in Mponela zone raised K6,824 and K6,090 respectively through the SIP/ZIP launch and at Sunjeni School in Chimbuli zone, K2,200 was raised through the Gule Wamkulu festival and the proceeds were used to support a total of 50 OVCs.

All stakeholders have welcomed the SIP and ZIP. This is evident during the launch of the packages where the communities made generous contributions for their schools. At the district SIP and ZIP

launch in Mvera zone the district team and field extension workers showed their appreciation of the packages. The DEM alone contributed K3,500 to five schools present at the function.

Some zones have been able to organize inter-school, cluster and zonal learners competitions where the best performers are given incentives from the ZIP boxes. One of such activity was organized in Kanyeje zone.

School have motivated pupils, teachers, SMC, PTA by awarding badges from the SIPs/ZIPs. Schools like Kawere, Kapatamoyo, Mbindo have inspired others by using the awards for role models in their schools.

14. Number of school accessible libraries established or expanded

- PSSP: SFP has sensitized school communities on creating space for a library or expanding existing school libraries. Schools with library books were encouraged to utilize the resources by giving learners the opportunity to use the resources.
- PSSP: SFP has facilitated the shipment of over 42,000 donated books, the establishment of school libraries and the shipping of books to 57 school libraries.
- PSSP: SFP has provided 10 learning resource titles to all the teachers of Dowa and multiple copies of 5 cycles of training manuals to each of the schools.
- PSSP: SFP provided and oriented teachers on 2 relevant resources for managing libraries: *Resource Center Guide* and *Use and Care of Textbooks*.
- PSSP: SFP has sensitized 705 key school and community members on establishment, management and care of school libraries and books in all the 13 zones.

For example

Communities and schools have undertaken constructing and renovating library rooms. At Nyagra School in Katalima zone and Bowe School in Chimbuli zone the communities have constructed combined blocks that house the administration block and libraries. The combined block at Bowe is in use and the one at Nyagra is being completed.

All 226 schools have formed library committees comprised of teachers, SMC, PTA, MCM, learners and community leaders, to manage existing libraries or establish new libraries in schools and the committees.

At Mvera Primary School, the block renovated with support from the small grant has been refurbished into a fully fledged library. In Kayembe zone, Kayembe, Mlengwe, Msokonezi and Sandulizeni schools have built new libraries to serve as learning centers for pupils.

Schools like Kongwe 1, Dowa 2, Funsani, Chivala, Simankhwala, Manondo and Mbalame, Chibanzi, Kapatamoyo have received supplementary books from PSSP: SFP which are being used enthusiastically by learners, teachers and community members.

Existing school resources have been revived at schools like Kafulu, Longwe, Katalima, Kaphiri, Ngala, Chakhaza, Simbi. Communities which had books previously have revitalized their use as resources in teaching and learning processes.

Result 3: Improved Teaching in Schools

15. Number of teachers trained in content and pedagogical practices

- PSSP: SFP has trained 1,882 teachers (564 female, 1318 male) over 5 cycles of training in pedagogy, student centered learning techniques, and content knowledge in mathematics, English and literacy. This training included all the government teachers and some volunteer teachers and student teachers.
- PSSP: SFP has supported all 1,882 teachers (564 female, 1318 male) with resource manuals for English, Mathematics, teachers' professional code of ethics, participatory teaching methods, TALULAR making and use that help them with skills, techniques and content knowledge for improving teaching.
- Teachers in all the 226 schools in Dowa have conducted school based INSETs to share ideas, knowledge and skills and address issues affecting their teaching and learning processes.
- PSSP: SFP deployed MTTT to support 20 schools, reaching 181 teachers with intensive supervision.
- PSSP: SFP launched teacher conferences whereby teachers started teaching themselves and addressed localized needs, reaching all teachers in the district.
- PSSP: SFP supervised teachers during classroom instruction to help them apply the lessons learned from the cycles of training.

For example

All the PCAR standard 1 teachers that were used as role models are continuing to grow professionally.

85% of the teachers at the 20 MTTT schools have expressed more confidence in their ability to handle reading in their classes and collecting and using TALULAR for science lessons.

After the introduction of MTTT in the zones, schools like Manondo and Chunzu in Senga zone and Chikankha in Kayembe zone have started their own local MTTT.

70% of the teachers across the district have improved in their marking skills. They are making marking meaningful for the learner by indicating where the problem is, which has assisted learners to know when they make similar mistakes.

During preparation for teacher conferences, both facilitating and participating teachers were seen reading more in preparation for meaningful contribution to the trainings. Over 80% of the sessions held serious and educative debates based on what they had read.

With teacher conferences, teachers have been freer to expose the challenges they face in content knowledge, and are more willing to look for assistance from other teachers.

Teachers in Boma, Chimungu, Katalima, Chimbuli, Mvera, Senga, Madisi, Kapita, Kanyenje and Mponela are more readily adapting to TALULAR production and utilization.

Most teachers from Boma, Kayembe, and Mponela zones have expressed they are using the resources provided by PSSP: SFP to support teaching and learning in schools, particularly as reference materials when planning their lessons. These resources have been used most extensively during the teacher conferences by both participants and facilitators.

16. Increased percentage of teachers using participatory teaching methods during classroom instruction

- PSSP: SFP has trained 1,882 teachers in 5 cycles of training thus far in pedagogy, and student centered learning techniques. The training is designed to lead to improved classroom instruction.

- PSSP: SFP has supported all 1,882 teachers (564 female, 1318 male) with resource manuals in particular with ones on participatory teaching methods, TALULAR making and use that help them with strategies for improving teaching.
- PSSP: SFP deployed MTTT to support 20 schools, reaching 181 teachers who felt supported with intensive supervision
- PSSP: SFP launched teacher conferences whereby teachers started teaching themselves and addressed localized needs, reaching all teachers in the district.
- PSSP: SFP is promoting exchange visits between schools to share best practices and motivate teachers who are doing well.
- PSSP: SFP has supported teachers' facilitation of school-based INSETs to share knowledge, skills and ideas on how to help learners achieve.
- PSSP: SFP has supervised teachers teaching and provided strategies for more effectively teaching using strategies like role plays, group work, pair work, etc.

For example

The introduction of MTTT, reading in small groups and the use of a teaching corner, are intensifying the use of participatory methods in all the learning areas.

Using PCAR Standard 1 strategies, schools such as Katundu, Mvera MDF, Mvera FP, Kamphenga, Lufe, Malambwe, Funsani and Chimpeni are assisted to engage in participatory methods

Approximately 90% of the Standard 1 classes have maintained the four learning groups in their classrooms. 30% of the teachers are fully prepared for the lessons and are using the groups effectively.

About 35% of the teachers observed teaching science have started using TALULAR, a significant increase for this subject.

ZOCs and PEAs monitored and supported Standard 1 teachers. Every one of the 13 zones has identified between 2 to 5 teachers who are following the PCAR teaching specifications well.

Several PCAR Standard 1 teachers from Malambwe, Mndunje, Samuel, Chinziri, Lufe, Chimpeni, Thonje, Mvera MDF and FP schools and Kamphenga, have been utilized on several occasions to demonstrate how different activities, including pupil assessment and compiling of profiles, is done. Over 50% of the learners from these classes are able to read some simple words. They have also been used as trainers for BLP/M implementation.

Role models for standard 1 PCAR from Lufe, Malambwe, Kamphenga, Thonje, Samuel, Katona, Chimpeni among others have been identified and utilized effectively by their zones

17. Increased percentage of primary teachers trained in and applying early literacy teaching techniques in the classroom

- PSSP: SFP has trained 1,882 teachers (564 female, 1318 male) in 5 cycles of trainings on principles and techniques for teaching early literacy in schools. The trainings that are offered are designed to lead to better achievement and improved teaching and learning which eventually improve learners' literacy skills. These techniques have helped teachers better implement the new PCAR curriculum
- PSSP: SFP has provided all 1,882 teachers (564 female, 1318 male) with the resource manual *Teaching English in Malawian Primary Schools*.
- PSSP: SFP has trained 1,882 teachers (564 female, 1318 male) on TALULAR production, care, use and establishment of TALULAR banks in schools for use during teaching and learning. The production and use of TALULAR has assisted teachers to better apply and learners to acquire basic skill and concepts in literacy.

- PSSP: SFP and PCAR have trained PEAs and ZOCs on how to support the Standard 1 teachers and learners. As a result ZOCs and PEAs are able to supervise Std 1 teachers during literacy lessons.
- PSSP: SFP developed a comprehensive literacy program, the Beginning Literacy Program of Malawi (BLP/M).
- All 323 Standard 1 teachers in 226 schools in Dowa were trained in BLP/M.
- All 226 headteachers were trained in BLP/M to support Standard 1 teachers in its roll out.
- PSSP: SFP has provided all Standard 1 classes with big books, song posters, and teachers guides to enhance the classroom environment and help ensure it is print rich for literacy development.
- PSSP: SFP has supervised teachers in junior classes and advised and supported them on the applying the early literacy strategies taught during the cycles of training.

For example

At Mdabwi, St Matias, Gawamadzi, Mtengenji, Mtchakhatha, Mbira, Chimwankhuku learners in lower classes are served with cards to use in reading and writing their names at an early stage. Teachers are also using songs and stories to teach literacy skills like story telling, answering comprehension questions, predicting, reciting, speaking, reading and writing.

At Funsani, Manondo, Mtunthama, Simankhwala, Kaputalambwe in Senga zone teachers are encouraging learners to read newspapers and magazines, posters, and books so that they can write their own short stories.

Teachers at Lingadzimilimi started an extra class to assist learners after school who do not know how to read and write.

Chikwete Primary School teachers have made 500 word cards for pupils to practice reading during teaching and learning in a class. To foster development of literacy skills, learners are given cards to read at home to their parents and siblings.

Most teachers like those at Daimoni School, have developed many types of TALULAR such as word cards, word trees, alphabet charts, reading boards, and name cards to assist in literacy teaching.

18. Change in the percentage of teacher absenteeism

- Communities have been engaged in rehabilitating and constructing homes for teachers. These structures will help decrease the travel time many teachers will have to take to get to class. This will help decrease teacher absenteeism.
- School Management Committees, with the support of PSSP: SFP, have increased their skills to monitor teacher and pupil attendance.
- PSSP: SFP has provided all 1,882 teachers a resource guide and orientation on teacher ethics.
- PSSP: SFP has tracked teacher absenteeism with each school visit, which has pushed teachers to come to school as they recognize someone is monitoring the situation.
- PSSP: SFP has encouraged exchange visits and role model utilization for motivating teachers.
- PSSP: SFP has undertaken a range of motivational strategies like best attendance awards to motivate teachers

For example

The head teacher at Simankhwala School has established a teacher attendance chart posted in the head teacher's offices for all to see. This was in response to high teacher absenteeism, which has been reduced from as high as 30% down to 5%. This has improved pupil attendance too as the teachers are their role models and being present has made going to class worthwhile. PSSP: SFP has encouraged exchange visits

with Simankhwala and the attendance chart concept is spreading. For example, the head teacher at Senga School has started an attendance tree that displays the status of teachers' attendance.

Construction and occupation of teachers' houses at Chamitu School in Kayembe zone, Kalonga School in Senga zone, and Dzalo School in Chumbuli zone have placed teachers to reside at the school. Asking some of those teachers if it has made a difference, they have expressed that they feel valued by the school and being close to school has helped them focus on their responsibility to the school.

At Kayembe School in Kayembe zone, through community based workshops and continued monitoring by SMCs, teachers have learnt to be responsible. As a result teacher attendance has greatly improved this year as compared to last year. The absenteeism rate has reduced from 20% to 8%.

SMCs/PTAs have been checking teacher absenteeism in Chigudu zone. At Maiwe and Chigudu schools cases of absenteeism of about three to four teachers each day have been reduced to one or two. Those absences are due to illness, or attending cluster or zonal education meetings, unlike in the past when absenteeism was due to teachers going to Tobacco Auction Floors or to do other personal business.

Teacher attendance has improved by 15% from 2006 to 2007; 87% of the teachers are now present.

19. Change in the percentage of pupil absenteeism

- PSSP: SFP's teacher training and ongoing support initiatives are designed to help teachers address the needs of pupils in their classroom. Improved classroom practices will lead to a decline in pupil absenteeism.
- Schools are incorporating activities making the learning environment more attractive to local students. For example, some are introducing competitive football teams; netball; play grounds including see-saws and swings; games such as foot races, jumping, and dumb bells; traditional dancing; vocational life skills such as tinsmithing, tailoring, pottery, carpentry, radio repairing, knitting, and sewing, among others.
- PSSP: SFP has sensitized communities and supported community-based initiatives to decrease pupil absenteeism, such as Gule Wamkulu escorting all school-aged children to school or chiefs regulating the schedule of Gule Wamkulu initiations to take place during school holidays, thus curbing pupil absenteeism.
- SMCs, with the support of PSSP: SFP, have increased their skills to monitor teacher and pupil attendance.
- PSSP: SFP has provided attendance registers to all schools to help them monitor and record pupil attendance.
- PSSP: SFP has sensitized teachers and communities on their roles in communicating the absenteeism situation of the school and together finding solutions.

For example

Introduction of SIP boxes for people to voluntarily contribute items for OVCs are still sustained after being first introduced under SMC-EQ. With re-sensitization, schools like Mphimbi School in Mponela zone have re-invigorated contributions like clothes, soap and teaching and learning materials, which are later distributed to OVCs. This has helped improve attendance in children who were ashamed to come to school dirty.

Communities' use of Gule Wamkulu to escort pupils to school like at Mdinga school in Katalima zone has improved attendance.

At Nalikonda school in Kayembe zone, there was a lack of water due to a bore hole that broke down. This lack of water affected attendance. The borehole has been maintained and 202 pupils are benefiting. In a similar case at Tchawale School in Chimungu zone, 300 pupils are using the repaired borehole.

Lack of pit latrines affect pupil attendance, most especially that of girls. Kavuu School in Nalunga zone was no exception until the construction of 10 pit latrines. At Chankhungu School in Kanyenje zone, 16 pit latrines have been constructed, resulting in improved attendance of 300 learners.

Many schools in an effort to improve learning and reduce absenteeism have started to focus on classroom structures in an effort to create a conducive learning environment. For example, the community around Mphimbi School in Mponela zone fixed breeze blocks in the windows of the school, which reduced theft of TALULAR materials.

Absenteeism fell from 23% to 13% between the start of term 3 in 2006 and start of term 1 in 2007.

4.0 ACTIVITIES ACCOMPLISHED DURING THE REPORTING YEAR IN MORE DETAIL

4.1 Project Operations

Operations in year 2 were enhanced with the greater experience of our field team as well as infrastructural development in Dowa.

PSSP: SFP designed the project to provide counterparts, Zonal Coordinators (ZOCs), to the zonal officers in education, particularly the Primary Education Advisors (PEAs). This was in recognition of the extensive workload of PEAs and the need to provide extra support during the intensive project phase. The addition of ZOCs has proved to be a valuable resource to the project, but these staff were new to working for a project, which posed a significant learning curve. PSSP: SFP held multiple meetings, trainings and individual consultations and, coupled with the experience of the past two years, the project has produced a well-trained cadre of personnel that see their role more clearly and are effective in their positions. ZOCs' relationships with their counterparts has improved and the delicate balance of doing and supporting has been largely achieved. Efforts like joint monitoring, joint area meetings and PSSP: SFP support of PCAR has strengthened that cooperation, leaving the district more prepared to carry on the initiatives of PSSP: SFP long after it leaves the district.

Another challenge faced in the first half of year 2 of PSSP: SFP was the prolonged illness and eventual passing of the PSSP: SFP Teacher Training Coordinator, Mavis Chona. This position plays a key role in leading the teacher professional development aspects of the project and her health status hindered some of the efforts to improve Dowa teachers. That said, more technical assistance from MWAI was brought in and all staff worked to fill the gap. PSSP: SFP hired a new Teacher Training Coordinator, Ms. Sophie Mhoni who had worked as the District Training Coordinator (on MESA, another USAID project with similar interventions) and she has brought new vigor to this position and has successfully led the teacher professional development aspects of the project in the second half of the year.

AIR chose to locate its office premises at Mponela Township, a centrally located, accessible town in Dowa District. For working with the schools and communities, it was an excellent choice, both in gaining acceptance as inside supporter to education as well as making the district accessible to the project and the project to the district. However, for most of the first 2 years, infrastructure issues ranging from intermittent electricity and running water, limited phone service and no internet access, as well as the lack of banking and other facilities, plagued the operations of the project. While the project adapted and put in alternative measures, the end of year 2 shows a new dawn. In the last quarter, Broadband installed a tower in Mponela, opening internet access to the office, improving communication and expanding resources available to the project. Electricity has improved and the pump that supplies water to Mponela was replaced. In addition, at the start of 2008, National Bank is opening a branch in Mponela. Also, the road stretching across Mponela to Ntchisi was opened and paved, improving access to that region of the district. All of these developments will help the project better serve the children in Dowa.

4.2 Teacher Professional Development

PSSP: SFP conducts incremental in-service trainings at cluster and school levels in order to improve teacher performance in both pedagogy and content knowledge. The training uses a flattened cascade model (i.e., AIR/MIE/MWAI trainers train Zonal Coordinators (ZOCs), Primary Education Advisors (PEAs), and Assistant Coordinators (ACs) who train teachers). This year, the project continued the incremental cycle based trainings. The project conducted cycle 3 school-based INSETs, and cycles 4 and 5 incremental trainings, starting with TOT at the district level followed by cluster and school-based INSETs during the Easter and July holidays. In the last quarter, PSSP: SFP embarked on two new participatory teacher professional development training strategies to build upon the cycle trainings. PSSP: SFP adapted from

MTTA the idea of Malawi Teacher Training Troupes (MTTT) to mentor teachers one-on-one in best classroom practices. The project also introduced teacher conferences where teachers identify instructional challenges in the classroom, identify ways of addressing the challenges, and present their instructional strategies to each other in professional teacher conferences. In addition, PSSP: SFP supports a variety of teacher professional development strategies and activities to reinforce the training and to ensure that knowledge and skills are improved and attitudes also are changed.

Zonal re-demarcations

When PSSP: SFP started, Dowa education district was divided into 13 zones where the smallest had 11 schools and the largest had 22. The project based its personnel and training structures on that demarcation. More than a year into the project, MOE decided that a zone should have not less than 10 schools and not more than 15 under its jurisdiction. In line with the decision, Dowa was re-demarcated into 19 zones. This shift has presented some challenges in reporting, training roll-out, staffing and budgeting. For example, the project employed 13 ZOC who are now working in overlapping zones and sometime with up to 3 PEAs, making coordination more challenging. PSSP: SFP and the district are aware of the challenges and have maintained open communication to minimize the impact and capitalize on the strength of more personnel to support the schools.

Incremental Teacher Trainings (Cycles 3-5)

Cycle 3

Cycle 3 cluster trainings were conducted in December, 2006 and PSSP: SFP monitored and supported the 226 school based INSETs from January to March of 2007. In the 226 district schools 1,288 qualified teachers (775 female, 513 male) were reached (see Table 1). The training topics that teachers found most helpful included handling large classes, supervision, teacher code of ethics, participatory teaching and learning methods, and literacy reading skills.

During this training period, teachers showed improvement in facilitation skills compared to cycle 2 school-based INSETs. This indicates that teachers are getting better acquainted with peer facilitation and are accepting the model of professional development. Observations showed that:

- 90% of teachers observed demonstrated remarkable improvements in participatory teaching and learning methods. The 10% observed who were not using participatory methods effectively had very limited or no teaching and learning materials, which made lesson conceptualization and learner participation a challenge.
- 80% of the teachers participating in school-based trainings were actively involved in the discussions, demonstrations, and shared experiences and knowledge on the different topics being presented.
- 90% of the teachers had started drawing plans of action to address their professional needs which would have an impact on their teaching.
- The “allowance syndrome” (i.e., desire for more or higher allowances) and poor attitude to trainings affected about 10% of the teachers who chose not to join the others in school-based INSETs. Such schools and teachers were monitored closely to ensure they did not negatively influence the others.

Table 1. Outreach for cycle 3 school-based trainings

Month	No of Schools	Trained Teachers		
		Female	Male	Total
Jan	94	210	232	442
Feb	77	300	281	581
Mar	123	265	232	497
Total Visited	294	775	513	1,288

Schools were given the opportunity to decide what day of the week and time of day (i.e., afternoon, as classes were not to be disturbed by the INSETs) would be most suitable for their school's INSET. In schools with effective head teachers, INSETs were consistent and teachers were not coerced to hold them; they participated willingly.

Generally, INSETs were getting established in most schools and they were becoming a forum for dealing with different teaching and learning challenges among teachers. Most of the INSETs were held from Tuesdays to Thursdays and the timing shared with the Mobilization Corps of Malawi (MCMs) to take advantage of meeting the teachers to discuss different issues pertaining to learners. The module for TALULAR development was covered during the cluster training and the INSETs provided an opportunity for the teachers and MCMs to make TALULAR for classroom instruction, which they did with enthusiasm.

Cycle 4

PSSP: SFP developed 14 modular training materials for cycle 4 which included topics such as reflective teaching, literacy, numeracy, continuous assessment, data reporting and use in teaching and learning and care and use of textbooks. The modules were developed by experts from MIE, MWAI, and Bunda College. As usual, the modules included facilitators' notes, which are a particularly helpful reference for teachers to use during school-based INSETs. Once developed, the modules were used at TOT, after which they were edited and refined before printing.

A four-day TOT kicked off cycle 4, which was facilitated by the same subject experts from Bunda College, MIE and PSSP: SFP who developed the modules. The TOT reached 48 participants (14 female and 34 male), including 13 ZOCS, 19 PEAs, and 14 ACs who would facilitate at cluster level. Also in attendance were the DEM and the DOP, who formed part of the quality assurance team that monitored the cluster trainings.

PSSP: SFP conducted cycle 4 cluster trainings in 54 clusters reaching 1,036 cluster mentor teachers (285 female, 751 male) (see Table 2). This represents half of the teachers of Dowa who were trained to be mentors for the remaining teachers at school-based INSETs. The teachers were enthusiastic about the training and most were eager to implement what they had learned and share with their fellow teachers the skills they had gained. The incremental approach to the training is also valued as teachers expressed that they felt they were learning, applying and building upon their previous knowledge with each cycle of training.

Table 2. Outreach for cycle 4 cluster training

Zone	No of Clusters	Teachers		
		Female	Male	Total
Boma	8	22	63	85
Chigudu	4	6	56	62
Chimungu	4	13	45	58
Chimbuli	4	16	61	77
Kamphenga	5	5	45	50
Katalima	4	17	56	73
Kanyenje	4	10	45	55
Kayembe	6	15	77	92
Madisi	6	29	50	79
Mponela	7	55	108	163
Mvera	7	26	72	98
Nalunga	4	1	43	44
Senga	6	75	25	100
Total	69	290	746	1,036

To ensure quality was maintained, a number of individuals monitored the trainings. These included the materials developers (who were also the facilitators at TOT), assisted by the district education office, DTED, Central Eastern Education Division, and Ministry of Education (Basic Education) monitors working alongside PSSP: SFP staff. The monitoring was especially important given the shift back to the cascade mode of training, with half the teachers reached at cluster level, who in turn reached half the teachers at the INSETs. The monitors reached 39 of the 54 clusters (72%). The monitors supported the clusters and, where the facilitators or teachers struggled with a particular concept, they supported them. The areas of difficulty were noted so that the ZOCs and PEAs could offer additional support to teachers over the term. The TTCs in particular were grateful to be involved as developers and monitors, as it gave them an insight to the challenges teachers face once they leave college and are in the classroom environment. This encouraged the lecturers to think about how they could improve their lessons to better prepare their students to be teachers.

At the end of the cluster training, school-based INSETs were planned and dates for each training submitted to the PSSP: SFP office. During the INSETs, 123 school-based INSETs were monitored and supported directly by PSSP: SFP staff, reaching 932 teachers in all the zones (282 female, 650 male). See Table 3. The monitoring of the INSETs showed that:

- 80 % of teachers participated actively through discussions, demonstrations, and sharing of ideas.
- About half way through the term, 75% of the schools were on track – a significant improvement from year one. Without prompting from PSSP: SFP, most schools rescheduled their INSETs if there were necessary reasons for postponement. This is a sign that such schools are on their own seeing the benefit of participating in these INSETs for their professional growth. A few schools and teachers are still not participating. These are being followed up by PSSP: SFP and by the DEM's office.
- About 10% of the facilitators showed a lack of confidence in some topics but some were open enough to call upon others to assist them. All schools monitored valued having a resource person to support them.
- One of the most popular modules was Reflective Teaching which shows that the relationships among the staff in the school are becoming supportive and teachers are willing to be supervised by peers.
- At this point in time, 90% of the mentor teachers who were having problems with facilitation were comfortable enough to ask other mentors who were more capable to co-facilitate with them.

Table 3. Outreach for monitoring cycle 4 school-based INSETs

Zone	No of Schools	Teachers		
		Female	Male	Total
Boma	10	30	55	85
Chigudu	8	8	46	54
Chimungu	6	14	42	56
Chimbuli	6	11	42	53
Kamphenga	8	0	47	47
Katalima	11	16	49	65
Kanyenje	13	16	53	69
Kayembe	12	15	77	92
Madisi	10	39	43	82
Mponela	11	48	57	105
Mvera	12	29	53	82
Nalunga	7	3	37	40
Senga	9	53	49	102
Total	123	282	650	932

Cycle 5

Subject experts from AIR, MIE, MWAI and University of Malawi critically reviewed cycle 4 cluster and INSET trainings and previous training materials to draw lessons from them for informing cycle 5 materials development. The experts developed modules for TOT trainings that highlighted the following topics:

- Advising and supporting teachers at school level
- Literacy: Comparative adjectives and strategies for teaching BLP/M
- Numeracy: Calculating area, measuring length and converting mixed numbers to decimals
- Continuous assessment: Developing assessment items and how to assess
- Effective use of school level data in improving teaching and learning
- Textbooks: Care and use of textbooks and use of textbooks in large classes
- Special needs education: Teaching children with special needs (fast and slow learners) and handling children with physical challenges
- Community mobilization: Using the community as a resource

PSSP: SFP conducted a four-day Training of Trainers (TOT) training, reaching 58 participants (17 female, 41 male). See Table 4. The sessions were facilitated by PSSP: SFP, MIE, and University of Malawi personnel.

Table 4. Outreach from cycle 5 TOT training

Participant	Female	Male	Total
EDM	0	1	1
DEM	0	1	1
SEMA	0	1	1
TTC Lecturer	0	2	2
MIE Curriculum Specialist	0	1	1
Ministry of Gender Official	1	0	1
PEAs	6	13	19
ACs	5	14	19
ZOCs	5	8	13
TOTAL	17	41	58

Trainers' participation and engagement was at an all time high. They said that the incremental approach to the training has enabled them as trainers to observe and support teachers and to get reinforcement themselves as trainers.

PEAs and ACs' working relationships have improved through these trainings. No longer are ACs seen as a rival to the PEA, rather they are seen to be a support to the PEAs in their professional work. This has improved the effectiveness of supervision in the school. In addition, PEAs have become more confident in their supervision, as seen during the monitoring and supervision during Term 3.

Following the TOT training, PSSP: SFP conducted cycle 5 cluster trainings. This three-day training reached 1,146 mentor teachers (252 female, 894 male) in 59 clusters. See Table 5. The types of teachers included volunteer teachers (4 female, 13 male), student teachers (9 female, 12 male) and other qualified teachers (239 female, 869 male), including those from 6 private schools. The cluster training were monitored by a team of 14 professional (3 female, 11 male) who supported 41 cluster centers reaching 830 teachers (192 female, 638 male) and observing each trainers' facilitation. The monitoring team included 2 lecturers (1 Kasungu TTC, 1 Lilongwe TTC), 3 Curriculum Developers from MIE, 1 Education Division Manager (Central East Education Division), 1 DEM, 1 DOP, 1 SEMA (Central East Education Division) and 4 PSSP: SFP staff.

Table 5. Outreach for cycle 5 cluster training

Zone	No of Clusters	Teachers		
		Female	Male	Total
Boma	5	23	82	105
Chigudu	4	15	70	85
Chimungu	4	15	47	62
Chimbuli	4	11	62	73
Kamphenga	5	6	50	56
Katalima	4	17	47	64
Kanyenje	4	18	45	63
Kayembe	4	15	71	86
Madisi	5	20	77	97
Mponela	6	49	115	164
Mvera	6	25	84	109
Nalunga	4	2	37	39
Senga	4	36	107	143
Total	59	252	894	1,146

Monitors observed that trainers continue to be more confident and able to effectively deliver the training to the teachers. Teachers were particularly pleased to receive training on how to support children with special needs. More children with special needs have returned to schools since PSSP: SFP started and many teachers said they did not know how to cope, but with this training they feel more able to support these learners. Content knowledge of teachers continues to appear to be a gap in the trainings. PSSP: SFP continues to include specific knowledge areas in its trainings (e.g., using adjectives for English or measuring length in mathematics) to address those gaps. Schools also are encouraged to undertake study circles to close the gap further. In some cluster trainings, teachers struggle to connect what they are learning to the classroom experience and they have difficulty applying what they have learned. PSSP: SFP has intensified classroom supervision to address this gap.

Non-funded INSETs are increasingly becoming owned by the schools as a good mode of improving professional skills. This has taken some time to develop and is still not uniformly embraced, but significant progress was made during the year. All 226 schools had started their school-based INSETs within the first month, despite the fact that most schools were affected by national examinations whereby Standard 8 teachers were required to escort their candidates to the exams and some teachers were invigilators. Over the term, PSSP: SFP monitored 138 school-based INSETs reaching 800 teachers (273 female, 527 male). See Table 6. From this monitoring, 65% schools regularly were holding their INSETs on time, with 100% attendance, and showed active facilitation and participation. However, a few schools are still not taking seriously the training and came unprepared to the INSETs. Dialogue was ongoing with the headteachers, PEAs and DEM to help transfer ownership and responsibility of professional development to the teachers and the government support structures. The EDM issued a circular promoting school-based INSETs as a government initiative and encouraged all teachers to participate. This helped those schools or teachers that were seeing INSETs as a project intervention to recognize it was a support to the government and hence pushed them to participate and benefit from the ongoing professional support.

Table 6. Outreach for monitoring cycle 5 school based INSETs

Zone	No of Schools	Teachers		
		Female	Male	Total
September	62	129	202	331
October	57	109	232	341
November	19	35	93	128
Total	138	273	527	800

Teacher conferences (Cycle 6)

Upon completion of cycle 5, PSSP: SFP critically reviewed how well the teachers were progressing in their professional development and considered strategies to fill any gaps and ensure that professional development is owned by the teacher and is sustained long after PSSP: SFP leaves Dowa. Given the solid foundation from the previous incremental trainings, PSSP: SFP felt teachers were ready to address their own needs. Adapting a concept developed under MTTA, PSSP: SFP embarked upon the establishment of a teacher conference. This conference would draw together teachers at cluster level to teach each other on topics they identified as needs.

Cluster Teacher Conference Committees (TCC) were established, comprised of approximately 2 members of each school to manage the conference at their cluster. Each teacher was asked to provide a list of areas where they needed additional support. TCC tallied the lists and the 8 topics listed most frequently were presented back to the cluster as training topics to be developed. In addition, the project developed a module on teaching in small groups, following its success in the MTTT schools. The remainder of the lists was returned to the schools, to be addressed at the school level. The TCC identified facilitators for each topic who were responsible for developing the module and for leading the discussions during the conference. TCC met at the zonal level to share ideas for the conferences and to convene the facilitators to work together to develop or refine the modules.

Conferences were held during the November/December school holidays for 3 days. Through the 69 teacher conferences 1,851 teachers (434 female, 1,417 male) were reached. Eleven external monitors (3 female and 8 male) from Division, District, TTCs, MIE, and a retired MOE official monitored 52 conferences but all 69 conferences were supported by the ZOCs and ACs. Some conferences also were supported by the PEA, if he or she was not engaged in PCAR trainings.

Teachers who were selected to facilitate for teacher conferences were very eager to do so. Teachers who were not selected were motivated to show a higher level of performance to be chosen next time. Participants were very excited by holding the conference and felt their needs were being addressed directly. In most cases, teachers were very supportive of one another and where gaps were identified during a given module, fellow teachers did their best to assist. Given the ongoing challenge of poor English skills of some teachers, PSSP: SFP encouraged clusters to conduct their sessions in English, which was done in all conferences. The teacher conferences helped identify role models in various areas; PSSP: SFP will continue to utilize them next year.

Quality of the modules was sometimes not as high as desired, however, the teachers were proud to have had the opportunity to try and they felt they learned tremendously in the process of developing the module. Also, in some cases, the facilitator was not well-versed with the content of the topic, so fellow teachers and ZOCs assisted as necessary. The openness of facilitators to this support and feedback is a good testament to the progress teachers have made in accepting peer support – a significant challenge PSSP: SFP faced last year. PSSP: SFP will follow up with a module development training for ZOCs and PEAs at the start of next quarter to help teachers write modules for the INSETs and prepare for conferences next holiday break.

Mobile Teacher Training Troupes (MTTT)

As part of PSSP: SFP efforts to improve classroom practices, PSSP: SFP decided to launch Mobile Teacher Training Troupes (MTTT) in Dowa in the last quarter of the year. These were conceptualized under a related USAID effort, Malawi Teacher Training Activity (MTTA) implemented by AIR. MTTT is an innovation whereby a group of 3 retired teachers who are subject specialists in maths, science and English spend a week in a school working with the teachers in the classrooms, providing feedback, modeling better practices, and tailoring support to individual needs. Since it proved to be a powerful mechanism under MTTA, PSSP: SFP decided implementing MTTT in Dowa could help solidify the lessons taught during the trainings and would make sustainable change in the schools. PSSP: SFP recruited 30 retired teachers (11 female, 19 male) who had served as troupe members with MTTA. Twenty schools were selected, 1 from each of the 19 recently re-demarcated zones and 1 extra for Mponela zone, which had the highest number of teachers. Troupe members were deployed, reaching 181 teachers (43 female, 138 male) and 14,661 learners directly (7,604 girls 7,057 boys) (see Table 7).

Table 7. Outreach for MTTT establishment contact by school

No	School	Teachers			Learners		
		Female	Male	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
1	Chinziri	3	4	7	344	222	566
2	Chivutwe	2	4	6	288	251	539
3	Kachulu	3	9	12	242	229	471
4	Kainja	0	4	4	416	379	795
5	Kamphenga	1	7	8	331	385	716
6	Kanyerere	3	4	7	432	472	904
7	Karonga	1	7	8	614	510	1124
8	Kasangu	1	5	6	324	216	540
9	Kongwe II	1	8	9	276	275	551
10	Mdika	6	5	11	472	436	908
11	Mdunje	4	5	9	440	415	855
12	Mphudzu	1	11	12	380	391	771
13	Msandelera	0	3	3	250	179	429
14	Mtiti	4	12	16	372	364	736
15	Nalunga	0	8	8	470	458	928
16	Nkhalanjoka	6	9	15	376	358	734
17	Nkhamanga	4	15	19	596	626	1222
18	Nyagra	1	5	6	389	338	727
19	Samuel	1	7	8	345	316	661
20	Thedze	1	6	7	247	237	484
	Total	43	138	181	7,604	7,057	14,661

The long period of contact with MTTT members helped teachers to become more open to feedback and, by the end of the week, teachers actually sought out support for areas they felt needed improvement. This reflective approach has been sustained in most schools, especially where the administration encouraged it. Schools have embraced reading in small groups, which has reaped the rewards of improved pupil motivation and learning outcomes in literacy. The support in science was seen as critical by the teachers, many of whom were avoiding teaching science or skipping over sciences lessons for lack of knowledge. PSSP: SFP will build on that lesson in next year's professional development plans. Next quarter, PSSP: SFP will send the troupe members back to the original schools to solidify the practices shared and to provide additional follow-up support.

In Kayembe, during the MTTT implementation, some heads and teachers from schools surrounding the MTTT school participated on a daily basis in the discussions that arose from the classroom observations and exercises. Some schools, like Tchuale, Mafosha, Manondo, Sidze, that were not included have been impressed by the intervention and have established their own local MTTT to support their teachers. Building on this momentum, PSSP: SFP is planning to facilitate the establishment of local MTTT's in all clusters across Dowa.

Planning head teacher training

PSSP: SFP has been monitoring and supporting teaching and learning in the district for the past two years. In the course of the period, schools in the district have been classified as functional or partially functional. Midway through the year, 48 schools were identified to be partially functioning, representing almost one fifth of Dowa's schools. Observation and investigations revealed that these schools had very weak head teachers who are failing to function because they were either not chosen on merit or they were not oriented to their work. Further investigation revealed almost 75% of the head teachers in Dowa have had no orientation.

It is very clear that some schools will not improve unless the head teacher gets training. This has necessitated PSSP: SFP to find ways to support such training. The district, also clearly recognizing the need, has asked if PSSP: SFP could jointly mount and fund the training. At present, specific gaps have been identified in instructional leadership and general management that include people management. Training materials will be adapted from MTTA's headship training and MOEST's National Training Programme in Headship. Preparations are underway and the training will take place in the first quarter 2008.

Classroom monitoring and supervision

PSSP: SFP realizes that teachers meet a lot of challenges in their classrooms and feel that they need significant support while implementing what they have learned from the trainings. During the reporting period, PSSP: SFP with the district partners monitored and supervised nearly every teacher, many more than once, across all the 226 schools (see Table 8). An observation tool was developed and refined over the year, and in term 3 a tool was implemented that was produced jointly to cover parameters for both PSSP: SFP and the district education office. In addition, a new school and zonal reporting format was developed to improve communication related to successes and challenges, so that remediation measures can be taken more quickly where necessary.

Table 8. Outreach of support to classroom teaching

Month	No of Schools	Teachers			Learners		
		Female	Male	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
January	While teachers were observed, data was inconsistently reported across zones. A new tool was developed in the first quarter to accurately track teacher observation figures and was implemented starting in April						
February							
March							
April	36	61	151	212	963	793	1,756
May	72	114	378	492	7,800	8,286	16,086
June	48	98	155	253	2,978	2,919	5,897
July	59	281	421	702	7,070	7,469	14,439
August	HOLIDAY						
September	104	177	355	532	14,671	14,894	29,565
October	112	115	277	392	10,318	9,844	20,162
November	47	73	217	290	5,739	5,503	11,242
December	HOLIDAY						

*Cumulative figures are not provided as some teachers and schools were visited more than once.

Through their school visits, staff and external monitors have helped assess the level of knowledge and skills gained during the cluster trainings. Teachers and head teachers received feedback on their strengths and weaknesses and strategies for improvement were discussed. Monitoring showed that most schools were trying to practice group and pair work in classroom teaching and learning, although this was not always done effectively. There were also serious gaps in both content knowledge and pedagogy in the teaching of science in all classes, an area the project will address. PSSP: SFP has encouraged the teachers to use English as the language of instruction (according to MOE policy) and observations showed that 80% of the teachers were consistently doing so. Some still struggled with their English skills, a challenge the project is working to address. Teaching reading and writing in all classes was also seen not to be very effective, due to the sizes of the classes and inadequate availability of instructional materials. Teaching and learning in groups improved noticeably by the end of the year in Chimungu, Kapita, Mvera, and Senga. The most effective examples were found at Kamwana and Kabulungo schools, which can be used as role models for other schools. This will be fostered next quarter.

There is need to help and encourage teachers to complement these participatory teaching methods effectively by using adequate TALULAR and instructional materials in the context of large classes. PSSP: SFP identified 68 schools that are already consistently applying best practices and using TALULAR in teaching and learning, which is resulting in learners' improved performance in literacy and numeracy. Five zones (Boma, Chimbuli, Kanyenje, Senga, Chimungu) have intensified the production of TALULAR in all the schools. For instance, Chimbuli has trained all the MCM and selected teachers in the production of TALULAR from recycled paper. These are in turn teaching other teachers at the school and cluster levels as well as at the TDC. Special focus was given to production and use of TALULAR in 48 schools, reaching 73 teachers (33 female, 40 male). PSSP: SFP identified 20 ideal teachers (10 female, 10 male) as role models on production and effective use of TALULAR for participatory teaching and learning. These role models will be promoted next quarter.

Monitoring and supporting the implementation of Standard 1 PCAR curriculum

As part of PSSP: SFP's role in supporting the national agenda and the implementation of the Primary Curriculum Assessment Reform (PCAR) within the district of Dowra, PSSP: SFP participated in the PCAR training of teachers, monitored its implementation in the classroom, and provided professional support. PSSP: SFP sent all 13 ZOCs and three managers to participate in the five-day PCAR training of trainers for PEAs for standard 1 term 1 and again for terms 2 and 3. PSSP: SFP ZOCs also attended standard 5 PCAR

trainings, but given overlapping training schedules, did not attend the TOT for standards 2 and 6. A special session will be held next month to ensure the ZOCs are prepared to support PCAR in the classrooms.

PSSP: SFP has intensified its support of standard 1 teachers to ensure effective implementation of PCAR. PSSP: SFP monitored and supported teachers and assisted in their preparation of teaching records in 95% of the schools (see Table 9). Observations from the monitoring and support showed that the PCAR approach of dividing the standard 1 class into four working groups is being applied. Teachers have expressed that what they have learned from PSSP: SFP on participatory methods has helped them. Teachers are struggling some to prepare their lessons in the PCAR format, but feel they are progressing with the support of PSSP: SFP zonal coordinators. Recognizing that one training was not sufficient, PSSP: SFP supported the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) meetings, reaching 85% of the standard 1 teachers in all the revised 19 zones.

Table 9. Outreach for PCAR implementation monitoring and supporting, by month

	No of Schools	Teachers		
		Female	Male	Total
January	54	96	150	246
February	90	48	92	140
March	189	127	389	516
April	68	31	37	68
May	33	18	15	33
June	27	8	19	27
July	59	27	46	73
August	-	HOLIDAY		
September	56	31	25	56
October	89	38	51	89
November	19	9	10	19
December	-	HOLIDAY		

*Cumulative figures are not provided as some teachers and schools were visited more than once.

Teacher motivational strategies

PSSP: SFP recognizes the ability and potential of some teachers is hidden by poor motivation. Motivated teachers benefit the learners, fellow teachers and the schools at large. PSSP: SFP is making strides to see that teachers are being motivated to perform to their best, by having their efforts rewarded. Over the year, PSSP: SFP focused on providing certificates for good performance, utilizing role models and giving high performers the opportunity to meet with high level delegations, or participate as trainers.

These interventions are working. For example, during the National Education Day, star teachers received certificates in different categories ranging from ability to effectively deliver in specific subjects, to ability to produce and effectively use TALULAR, and effective use of participatory methods in teaching and learning. In addition, PSSP: SFP recognized the contributions of SMCs, PTAs, Village Headman, Gule Wankulu and others in the community for excellence in their support of education. In total, 273 certificates were awarded, 21 per zone for different categories. The reaction was most encouraging.

4.3 Learning Resources and Literacy

4.3.1 Learning Resources

Resource manuals, training manuals, learners' books and teachers' guides all facilitate the processes of teaching and learning. Ongoing professional development of teachers also depends to a large extent, on reading from a range of sources available. Children's learning is enriched and made more interesting when resources are available and used. During the year, more resources for teachers were reprinted to guide and enrich teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical skills. As part of the Beginning Literacy Programme of Malawi (BLP/M), a set of teaching and learning resources were provided to all schools in Dowa, livening the classroom environment and giving children new materials so they can learn to read – and learn to love reading. PSSP: SFP also recognizes that developing resources locally is a sustainable way to build excitement for education and involve many actors in contributing to improved quality in education. With this in mind, PSSP: SFP provided an opportunity for learners, teachers and even community members to create stories, some of which will be published by the project.

Resource materials for teachers

PSSP: SFP recognizes that teachers do 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 has re-printed an additional 2,400 copies of the following four useful teachers resources:

- *Effective Use and Care of Textbooks: A Resource Book for Schools and Colleges.*
- *Resource Centre Guide: A Guide for Schools and Colleges.*
- *Towards Effective Teaching and Learning: A Resource Book for Self and Peer Monitoring*
- *Teaching Science in Malawian Primary Schools*

By the end of year 2, every teacher in Dowa had received 10 resource manuals to enrich their planning of lessons and teaching in the classroom. These were distributed to all teachers during the cycle trainings as part of the support material to the topics being introduced. During the training, trainers taught teachers how to use these resources so they could acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to teach effectively. Teachers were given practical examples for using the books and to help encourage use during classroom lesson planning and delivery. Trainers referenced these resources in subsequent trainings, in an effort to strengthen teachers' familiarity with and use of these resources. A deliberate effort has also been made to encourage teachers to use these resource materials during lesson planning. This was further solidified by the teacher conferences, where teachers developed their own modules and had to do research to develop their training topics and deliver it to their peers.

Over the year, teachers were asked about their use of these resource materials. Teachers revealed that they have appreciated the resources that they have received and feel the materials enrich the face-to-face training sessions. Some indicated they have created additional time at school or at home to read materials, which they have found useful for learning new knowledge, strategies and methodologies. As one teacher admitted, *'the resource manuals are not only a means to an end because by using them, I have grown to create some other interesting techniques for myself as a teacher but also for my learners'*. Another teacher who underwent MIITEP pre-service teacher training commented, *'I find the resource manuals to be eye opener for many things that I learnt in college theoretically or had inadequate time was allocated to learning it. Now I read some of these techniques because they are well explained in PSSP Resource manuals which are easy to read and understand and I try them in a real classroom and understand them better. This is enriching the basic teaching skills that I had acquired during pre-service training'*.

Resources for pupils

Schools face an acute shortage of reading materials 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 has tried 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 has been called on to support teaching and learning by providing old books, magazines, newspapers, calendars, and cartoons that are print rich.

To address this need for supplemental reading materials, PSSP: SFP is in the process of developing a series of books that contain stories from Dowa communities and children. PSSP: SFP held a competition, which was open to teachers, learners and community members, including MCMs. More than 300 educational, original and entertaining stories, poems, riddles, jokes, puzzles and drawings were submitted. PSSP: SFP collected, compiled and sorted these articles according to levels and themes that are prevalent in BLP/M (e.g., my family, my home, my community) in readiness for printing a Dowa story book. The Dowa story books will be published according to reading levels of infant, junior and senior sections and distributed to all schools in Dowa. See Annex C for a sample story.

By writing and subsequently reading their own stories, PSSP: SFP hopes that learners as well as communities will develop an increased appreciation for books and reading, thereby promoting development of the reading culture that will aide literacy development. Teachers, learners and community members have been encouraged to continue writing these articles and to submit them to PSSP: SFP, as well as using them at school during literacy period or posting them on the notice boards for other to read and emulate. PSSP: SFP has also encouraged schools to create their own strategies to promote literacy through writing competitions and activities such as open days where these pieces of writing could be shared or read by learners, teachers and community members. As an unintended benefit, the project, through these writing competitions, was able to identify teachers' professional needs as well as those of learners in terms of writing composition and grammar, which need to be addressed at cluster and school level INSETs.

To overcome the lack of storage for teaching and learning materials, some schools are constructing libraries for easy access to reading materials, using donated cabinets, or developing a reading corner in a classroom. Others have identified available space for storing school materials in the community. Schools have started to develop mobile TALULAR banks to share resources and keep them safe. PSSP: SFP has also provided donated supplementary books that will be distributed to every school, as will be discussed in the next section.

Providing supplementary books

To help support and expand libraries in Dowa district, PSSP: SFP facilitated a book donation from the International Book Bank (IBB). The IBB serves as a repository of donated new books from publishers that can be sent cost effectively to developing countries. PSSP: SFP personnel selected books based on the following criteria: suitability for primary level in Malawi; content books (i.e., English, science, and mathematics, in particular); and suitability for primary teacher professional development.

The National Library Service (NLS) received over 42,000 books. PSSP: SFP decided to use NLS to strengthen it as a local institution and to draw on its expertise in categorizing books and training librarians. NLS processed and categorized the books to facilitate access and accountability of the books. In readiness for distribution of books to school libraries, PSSP: SFP conducted sensitization meetings in 46 centers across 13 educational zones in Dowa reaching 677 people (98 female, 579 male) in all 226 schools (see Table 10). This meeting involved the PEAs, headteachers, teacher librarians, teachers, MCMs, Village Heads, cluster leaders, PTA, SMC, and parents. The sensitization meetings were aimed at developing a shared vision of libraries, establishing procedures for managing libraries and taking care of books, discussing ways of utilizing library

books, and demonstrating how selected samples of books can be used in teaching and learning. During the sensitization almost 95% of members attended and participated. The majority of participants appreciated the exercise and expressed their commitment to developing libraries and providing necessary support and resources for the library. At the end of the meetings, all schools developed a plan of action for sensitizing the community and stakeholders in education on the importance of school resources and places for storage and use. Consequently, school communities completed or started to build library facilities and instituted library committees to manage the books.

Table 10. Outreach for library sensitization meetings

Zone	No of centres	F	M	Total
Boma	4	12	50	62
Chigudu	4	5	39	44
Chimbuli	4	10	51	61
Chimungu	2	5	31	36
Kamphenga	3	5	41	46
Kanyenje	4	6	32	38
Katalima	3	10	42	52
Kayembe	4	4	55	59
Madisi	4	10	48	58
Mponela	4	12	59	71
Mvera	4	15	49	64
Nalunga	3	0	34	34
Senga	3	4	48	52
Total	46	98	579	677

Distribution of books was made in phases according to the readiness of the schools. By the end of the year, 15,056 books had been distributed to 57 library centers - 13 TDCs, 18 school libraries and 26 cluster centers (see Table 11). Distribution to the remaining schools will be made by PSSP: SFP once library facilities are ready and library committees are in place. So far, 15 more schools have embarked on library construction in order to access the books.

Table 11. Outreach for library books distribution by zone

Zone	No of library centres	No of books received
Boma	4	1083
Chigudu	4	1075
Chimbuli	5	1298
Chimungu	3	824
Kamphenga	5	1286
Kanyenje	6	1568
Katalima	2	603
Kayembe	7	1753
Madisi	4	1087
Mponela	1	368
Mvera	6	1525
Nalunga	4	1070
Senga	6	1516
Total	57	15056

The establishment of libraries in Dowa has inspired well wishers to donate materials. These not only include individuals from within the community, but as far as America. Donations have included schools materials like pencil sharpeners, pencils, writing pads, and most significantly a shipment of 25 cartons filled with a range of books for infant to senior classes. These donations have been used to encourage top performing pupils, teachers and schools to continue their efforts.

To ensure proper use of books by the teachers and learners in schools as well as the community, PSSP: SFP included modules on care and use of textbooks in the classroom, establishing a school and classroom library, and care and use of textbooks in a large classes during cycle 4 and 5 cluster and school-based trainings. In addition to the training, PSSP: SFP provided 2 resources, *Resource Center Guide* and *Care and Use of Textbooks* to aide schools in establishing and maintaining their libraries.

PSSP: SFP also conducted monitoring exercises on the use of books in the schools. Schools have established library periods, reading clubs, games and other initiatives that are helping to promote literacy development. Creating synergies with efforts of NLS, 8 teachers from 8 schools in Dowa who were recently trained on establishment of libraries and management of library books will be used as resource persons to support schools facing challenges in the establishment or utilization of libraries.

Monitoring development and use of TALULAR

One of the means of promoting quality teaching and learning in schools is through development and use of TALULAR – Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources. Throughout the year, PSSP: SFP conducted ongoing lesson observations in all schools, which included monitoring the use of TALULAR. Approximately 65% of teachers used more than 1 type of TALULAR. From the observations, teachers were seen using coins, posters, chart papers, used wrappers, empty tins, boxes, cartons, bottle tops, word trees, name and word cards, bottles, just to name a few. Some teachers showed even more creativity by making clay or papier-mâché alphabet letters, creating self made big books, using newspaper and magazine cuttings. Some teachers are indeed using old curricula literacy books to support reading activities in case of shortage of textbooks for learners. All these activities are done with the help of MCMs and community members who provide some of the TALULAR resources. Teachers are increasingly understanding that availability of these resources enhances effective use of learner-centred approaches such as group work, discussion, reading in small groups, role play, songs and even during remedial activities to make learners understand difficult concepts more easily. BLP/M actively promotes TALULAR to ensure pupils have the necessary manipulatives to reinforce literacy development.

To further promote use of TALULAR, PSSP: SFP has supported and encouraged exchange visits where ideal teachers make and use TALULAR and share ideas with other teachers from other zones or schools. These exchange visits have proven effective in building momentum for schools to address their challenges through local means. Although TALULAR is an important tool for effective teaching and learning in a resource scarce environment, its availability is at risk because many schools do not have adequate storage facilities due to shortage of classroom blocks, or missing doors or locks on existing doors. The materials are vulnerable to theft, vandalism or the weather. In response to this situation, PSSP: SFP conducted sensitisation meetings on the use and importance of TALULAR and the community members' role in supporting quality education in their areas and in self-guarding school resources. PSSP: SFP encouraged teachers and learners to display some of the TALULAR materials they made during open days and to explain how it is used to help community members understand how useful TALULAR is in the teaching and learning process. These efforts have encouraged schools to use part of their small grants to create such a safe space for materials and books. PSSP: SFP will continue to monitor and support teachers and communities in developing and using TALULAR materials.

4.3.2 Literacy

In Malawi reports have been made on the deteriorating standards of literacy in schools. Pupils go as far as standard 5 without acquiring the basic skills of reading and writing. Some new literacy programs have been piloted on a small scale with success, but the programs are far too costly to be scaled up or sustainable. With this in mind, PSSP: SFP is developing the Beginning Literacy Program of Malawi (BLP/M), which targets children in standard 1.

Beginning Literacy Program of Malawi (BLP/M)

Beginning Literacy Program of Malawi (BLP/M) is a thematically based literacy course filled with Chichewa songs and stories for standard 1 learners. BLP/M is based on the notion that what learners can say can be written and what can be written can be read.

BLP/M intends to create a nation of readers and writers through a sustainable literacy model. It mainly focuses on children's acquisition of basic literacy skills through reading and writing in Chichewa. The expected outcomes include enabling learners: to read short familiar messages with fluency; to write simple sentences and stories; and to love reading and writing. BLP/M as a balanced approach to literacy instruction offers deliberate and planned instruction in phonics and phonological awareness; consists of thematically-based songs and stories; uses learners' experiences; and focuses on essential components of reading and writing in order to build a strong literacy foundation. BLP/M has built in a formative assessment system where learners are assessed on reading and writing once every four weeks. In addition, high parental and community involvement is planned, including their engagement at the beginning of the term to attend a meeting to discuss ways of supporting learners' literacy development. At the end of the term it is planned they will come for a literacy fair where pupils display what they have learnt. BLP/M builds on and supplements the PCAR curriculum and focuses more intensely on the acquisition of literacy skills. BLP/M builds on the introduction of how to handle a book from PCAR, and has included lesson evaluation sheets for teachers, like those introduced in PCAR, for teachers to reflect on and to assess the lessons and their own teaching. BLP/M designed themes similar to PCAR, and cross-references them as appropriate. BLP/M uses those themes in its lessons and the application of songs and stories to guide the teaching of letters and vocabulary. BLP/M materials for teachers and pupils include a teacher's guide with lessons, song posters, big books and teacher-developed manipulatives.

Since BLP/M complements PCAR and integrates topics such as general studies and numeracy, some of the BLP/M resources also will assist teachers in teaching other learning areas. This will help students to build literacy skills and concepts while at the same time building their skills in other areas—the concept of “literacy across the curriculum.”

BLP/M development

In preparation for BLP/M implementation, PSSP: SFP continued the development of lessons and materials for standard 1 in Chichewa.

BLP/M is a Malawi-owned and developed literacy program. At the outset, Malawian and US-based literacy experts developed and locally vetted a framework for the program. From this framework, lessons were developed by a team of writers from leading Malawian education institutions (i.e., MIE, TTC, DTED, and Domasi College of Education) as well as MOE officials and practicing teachers. This year, guided by the ideas from these lessons, the senior literacy experts from Miske Witt & Associates developed the lessons for Terms 1 and 2, and began to edit and develop Term 3 lessons. This involved careful attention to the building blocks of the program (e.g., sequencing of lessons and amplifying the framework) and attention to Chichewa translation and language use. A native Chewa speaker and literacy tutor at Kasungu TTC translated lessons

from English to Chichewa. Art briefs and texts were developed for song posters and big books and subsequently a team of illustrators drew pictures for the materials.

PSSP: SFP conducted validation meetings with 50 standard 1 teachers (31 female, 19 male) from 30 selected schools across 3 zones in Dowa district (see Table 12). These meetings were aimed at introducing BLP/M concepts and resources that accompany the program, and seeking teachers' input. For example, several of the 15 foundational early literacy techniques introduced through BLP/M were introduced to standard 1 teachers in these validation meetings. Teachers learned the methods of "teacher read-aloud" and "teacher-think-aloud" and were given the opportunity to comment on the materials. The feedback from the teachers as grassroots level implementers helped PSSP: SFP BLP/M team in Malawi and USA to fine tune the materials and teachers guide.

Table 12. Outreach for BLP/M validation meetings

Zone	No of schools	STD 1 teachers		Total
		F	M	
Boma	10	11	7	18
Kanyenje	10	7	10	17
Mponela	10	12	3	15
Totals	30	30	20	50

BLP/M materials for Term 1 were finalized and are discussed in detail next. BLP/M materials for Term 2, which include the Term 2 Chichewa syllabus, 8 song posters, 3 poems and 4 big books were being reviewed and finalized in readiness for printing. Local printers were engaged to compile and produce the materials.

By the end of the year, PSSP: SFP developed and printed all Term 1 BLP/M materials, which included

- 685 copies of teachers guides comprising of term 1 syllabus and lessons
- 768 copies of 5 titles of big books
- 450 copies of 16 titles of song posters
- 450 copies of Chichewa alphabet chart
- 380 copies of English alphabet charts of sacks
- 450 copies of story star poster
- 450 copies of Character map poster

Balancing resource constraints and recognizing the need for BLP/M to be a cost-effective, sustainable program, PSSP: SFP printed some materials in colour and others in black and white. During implementation, PSSP: SFP will observe what if any differences may exist in pupil engagement and understanding as a result.

Materials were in the process of being distributed to all standard 1 classes at the end of the year. Each standard 1 class will receive a set of materials (1 teacher's guide, 1 copy of each poster and 2 copies of each big book) and an additional copy of the teachers guide will be given to the head teacher for monitoring and follow-up. Additional big books will be printed for Term 1 to provide young children more opportunities to handle books, to practice turning pages, and to read to each other. To facilitate development of writing by learners, PSSP: SFP has distributed notebooks and pencils to all 41,735 standard 1 learners in all 226 schools in Dowa.

One challenge encountered during BLP/M material production was possible copyright conflicts with a local publisher whose recently published books contain Malawian folktales with the same title as two stories that BLP/M has developed. PSSP: SFP sought permission to use the stories, even though BLP/M stories were not copied from this publisher. At first, the publishers were reluctant to provide that permission, however PSSP: SFP negotiated with the publisher and an agreement was reached to print and distribute the materials.

BLP/M training of teachers

To prepare the teachers in readiness for rolling out BLP/M, PSSP: SFP conducted BLP/M TOT training, preparing 23 trainers to reach all standard 1 teachers in Dowa. The trainers included 13 ZOCs (5 female, 8 male), 3 practicing teachers (1 female, 2 male), 3 TTC tutors (3 male), 1 Domasi College of Education lecturer (1 male), 1 MANEB (1 male) and 2 MTTT members (2 male). Members from MOE HQ, Division, District and the training colleges attended the trainings and were enthusiastic about the program. One TTC principal felt BLP/M should be integrated into the teacher education programs in the TTC curricula because the literacy strategies being used in the BLP/M would make it more interesting for both teachers and pupils. Another attendee indicated that BLP/M complemented PCAR in many ways, and he said it was important to highlight this. Another felt PSSP: SFP and MOE need to find ways of encouraging teachers, by recognizing their talents and achievements, so they could share what BLP/M was offering to other teachers as well.

PSSP: SFP then conducted BLP/M term 1 trainings for all Standard 1 teachers, headteachers and Assistant TDC Coordinators at zonal level, reaching 562 participants (see Table 13). This activity was monitored by 1 SEMA, 1 DOP, 1 DEM, 6 TTC tutors, 1 MOE HQ director, 1 DTED, 1 retired DEM and 1 Bunda College representative, along with PSSP: SFP staff. It is quite pleasing to note that facilitators were well versed in BLP/M and confident in delivery of the concepts. They effectively demonstrated specific strategies that BLP/M has designed. The pairing up of ZOCs and BLP/M writers promoted sharing of experiences and enriching each other's capacity in terms of training. Teachers receiving the training expressed excitement about the program, indicating they really felt their learners will be able to read and write quickly.

Table 13. Outreach for BLP/M term 1 teacher trainings

Zone	No of schools	Number of STD1 Teachers			H/teachers	Assistant Coordinators			Total
		F	M	Total	Total	F	M	Total	
Boma	20	18	20	38	20	0	3	3	102
Chigudu	16	4	10	14	16	0	1	1	46
Chimbuli	17	7	18	25	17	0	1	1	69
Chimungu	13	7	9	16	13	0	1	1	47
Kamphenga	16	3	13	16	16	0	1	1	50
Kanyenje	14	7	10	17	14	0	1	1	50
Katalima	20	4	16	20	20	1	1	2	64
Kayembe	21	9	20	29	21	0	1	1	81
Madisi	18	14	11	25	18	2	0	2	72
Mponela	22	16	27	43	22	1	1	2	112
Mvera	22	10	15	25	22	0	2	2	76
Nalunga	11	3	11	14	11	0	1	1	41
Senga	16	22	13	35	16	1	0	1	88
Total	226	124	193	317	226	5	14	19	562

For successful implementation of the program, PSSP: SFP in collaboration with the DEM's office, has set up a mechanism for monitoring and supporting teachers implementing BLP/M. Recognizing that BLP/M training and PCAR trainings were done concurrently, and that the PEAs were unable to participate in the BLP/M TOT and zonal trainings, PSSP: SFP will train the PEAs at the start of next quarter to ensure they understand how BLP/M will be implemented in schools and to ensure that they can effectively monitor and support teachers in the course of their teaching.

In preparation for the BLP/M rollout, PSSP: SFP engaged in multiple consultations with the district office. As BLP/M lessons are one hour long and designed to be taught every day, the DEM's office agreed to have an additional hour of learning every day in order to maximize learning gains in literacy among learners. This is intended to build a strong foundation of literacy right at the beginning in standard 1. Since BLP/M is supporting PCAR curriculum, Standard 1 learners will have an added advantage as they will have more time for learning how to read, write, sing and play using song posters, big books and other resources learning.

Literacy campaign and promotion

As preparations for BLP/M roll out were underway, PSSP: SFP supported a number of activities to promote literacy in schools and communities. PSSP: SFP sensitized teachers and communities on strategies to promote literacy including the provision of TALULAR materials, creation stories and establishment of reading clubs and libraries as centers of learning with the support of MCMs. To improve teachers' skills in early literacy instruction, during cycle 4 and 5 trainings, PSSP: SFP developed literacy training modules for orienting teachers. Topics included teaching of grammar, vocabulary, introduction to BLP/M, grammar component of adjectives, BLP/M teaching techniques such as teacher-read-aloud and line-up game using sample song posters and big books. The trainings were aimed at making teachers familiar with BLP/M strategies and have the teachers start practicing the strategies in their lessons.

4.4 Community Mobilization

Community mobilization under PSSP: SFP begins 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 basic tuition costs.

4.4.1 Participatory action research verification and mobilization

A well tested and powerful mechanism for learning about grassroots issues and energizing communities into addressing those issues is the participatory action research method theater for development (TFD). While proven to be a powerful mechanism for community mobilization, using university students is a costly endeavor. In order to extend the reach farther to the entire district with the available resources, PSSP: SFP further consolidated and extended the influence of participatory drama performances by mobilizing and training non-funded school drama groups. By the end of the project's first year, PSSP: SFP trained 10 local drama groups to conduct TFD performances. This year, the first cohort was monitored, 10 more local troupes were trained and then 69 MCMs were equipped with the skills to use this technique to impact change in their cluster and zones.

Adding to the existing capacity of the group, PSSP: SFP trained an additional 10 troupes, with 160 members (75 female, 85 male) (see Table 14) using 10 Chancellor College students and PSSP: SFP staff.

Table 14. Outreach of trained drama actors

Zone	School	Females	Males	Totals
Mponela	Kachulu	8	8	16
	Chilima	8	9	17
Dzoole	Diriro	8	8	16
	Dzoole	8	8	16
Kayembe	Chimbalu	7	9	16
Mvera	Nkhalanjoka	7	8	15
Madisi	Chikwawe	9	8	17
Katalima	Mambala	7	8	15
Chimbuli	Chinkhwiri	6	10	16
Chimungu	Kanyangala	7	9	16
Totals		75	85	160

Over the year, 21 performances were conducted by these local troupes reaching 6,277 people, including children (1,922 girls and 2,000 boys); parents (1,211 female and 977 male); teachers (3 female and 33 male); and community leaders (16 female and 115 male). These drama clubs have proved to be powerful mechanisms for reaching communities. For example, performances have resulted in communities tracking pupil attendance and ensuring all school age children are attending schools. However, these new performers do not possess the same skill level as the Chancellor College trained performers and in some cases have struggled to resolve issues that were raised during the performance. To address this, PSSP: SFP staff attend the performances to provide any necessary support and follow-up with the communities.

Building on their newly developed skills, MCMs also mobilized communities to implement the PSSP: SFP activities through participatory sensitization drama performances. Prior to these participatory performances the MCMs conducted research in the identified school communities in order to determine the problems from which they developed storylines and scenes. Thirty one drama performances were performed to raise awareness in school communities on issues surrounding infrastructural development, sanitation, and lack of vocational skills trainings. Follow-up to the sites have shown that the performances have made an impact, as stakeholders are implementing their plans of action. For example, at Gogo School in Mvera zone they have revived the vocational schools and at Kawere School in Mponela zone two pit latrines have been constructed.

To further enhance the MCMs skills in participatory drama performance, PSSP: SFP and 2 Chancellor College TFD students watched the MCMs conduct a performance and the following day provided feedback to the performers. The MCMs performances sensitized community members on issues that negatively affect the teaching and learning process at their schools. However, it was observed that the MCMs were finding it tough to make the audience come up with plans of action on the issues which were depicted in their plays. Issues were not thoroughly concluded during the plans of action formulation. This could be attributed to the fact that the MCMs were not fully conversant with techniques of plans of action formulation during performances. Therefore, the MCM received additional training in the relevant TFD concepts.

The MCMs are ideally situated to surface and solve complicated issues that negatively affect their schools due to their daily interaction with the community members they serve. The MCMs have a zeal to learn and with continuous monitoring and support, PSSP: SFP and the communities themselves will have capable people at the grassroots level who can identify problems and help communities find local solutions and achieve.

4.4.2 Change Agents, Cluster Leaders, and Special Group activities

Change agent review and re-planning

In the first quarter, review and re-planning meetings for change agents were organized to share successes, challenges, solutions and re-plan PSSP: SFP change agent activities. Thirteen zonal review and re-planning meetings were held for 2 days involving 272 change agents (32 female and 117 male HSAs, 5 female and 1 male community nurses, 1 female and 4 male medical assistants, 10 female and 78 male AEDOs and 6 female and 28 male forest assistants). One review and re-planning workshop lasting 4 days was organized for the 56 most critical change agents - 5 female and 5 male CDAs, 1 female and 2 male SWAs, 6 female and 13 male PEAs, 5 female and 8 female ZOCs, 9 male district team members and 1 female and 1 male Ministry desk officers.

Reviewing their previous plans of action, the zonal level change agents (HSAs, AEDOs and Forest Assistants) implemented 75% (1,511 of the 1,998) of planned activities, reaching 21,553 female and 24,469 male adults and 18,367 girls and 19,158 boys in a period of 8 months since their training. The primary zonal level change agents (CDAs, PEAs, SWAs, ZOCs), District team and Ministry desk officers implemented 89% (733 of the 820) of planned activities reaching 32,585 female and 27,449 male adults and 34,702 girls and 33,466 boys in a period of 8 months since their training. Activities included sensitization meetings, CBCC establishment, and livestock production. Sensitization and awareness meetings have been conducted in all 226 schools in Dowa targeting the surrounding communities. School gardens as an IGA and learning resource have been established in almost all the schools.

After sharing and discussing their activities in the review and re-planning meetings, participants drew plans of action to September 2007. Following these plans, the change agents implemented a range of activities over the past year that have contributed to mobilizing communities to improve quality in education. These activities were implemented with little or no funding from the project, in an effort to promote ongoing sustainability. For example, many communities contributed money and agricultural produce to increase resources at the school level. Lobbying of MPs, donors and well-wishers has also successfully expanded resources for schools' construction and water and sanitation issues.

One challenge in engaging change agents is that government field workers are in high demand by multiple entities and often have programs that conflict with scheduled PSSP: SFP events, even when commitments are made by top district officials to participate in these scheduled PSSP: SFP events. The involvement of these field workers is vital for the future sustainability PSSP: SFP. Re-planning of activities will continue where necessary to ensure PSSP: SFP goals are met and all government extension workers are involved. Fortunately, PSSP: SFP has trained and involved multiple departments, improving coverage.

Cluster community leader review and re-planning

A cluster community leader is a community member elected by the community itself to lead them as they forge ahead with PSSP:SFP community-initiated interventions. A 3 day review and re-planning meeting for all 69 cluster leaders (5 female and 64 male) was organized in all the 13 zones in Dowa District to share successes, challenges, solutions and re-plan PSSP: SFP cluster community leader activities. A total of 513 of the 511 planned cluster leader activities from July 2006 to February 2007 were accomplished reaching 44,661 adult females and 45,816 adult males, and 41,691 girls and 30,749 boys. The community cluster leaders were instrumental in ensuring that the community undertook construction and infrastructure maintenance activities at all schools.

Following these re-planning meetings, cluster leaders continued throughout the year to spearhead many developmental activities in the schools and follow-up on the activities for sustainability. Through these continuing efforts and follow-up the cluster leaders reached 22,630 people (10,490 female, 12,140 male).

Table 11: Outreach for Cluster Leader Community meetings and follow ups

Zone	SMC/PTA		Com/Leaders		Parents		Teachers		Children		Total	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Boma	46	59	5	27	425	547	17	31	670	546	1163	1210
Chigudu	25	36	2	15	291	278	08	15	306	330	632	674
Chimbuli	21	47	4	32	540	643	10	17	467	434	1042	1173
Chimungu	20	37	3	14	214	330	09	22	328	427	574	830
Kamphenga	29	33	5	44	430	633	06	20	458	455	928	1185
Kanyenje	14	44	3	38	334	459	08	14	443	511	802	1066
Katalima	17	39	2	49	360	436	10	24	356	339	745	887
Kayembe	13	26	4	29	479	438	07	18	405	445	908	956
Madisi	08	28	3	32	411	467	10	27	324	388	756	942
Mponela	23	36	2	35	318	393	12	23	445	458	800	945
Mvera	17	31	4	26	359	363	07	18	328	366	715	804
Nalunga	09	19	2	15	237	327	00	14	236	252	484	627
Senga	28	40	4	37	440	521	11	21	458	222	941	841
Totals	300	505	43	433	4838	5835	115	264	5264	5473	10490	12140

The cluster leaders helped to initiate activities such as constructing classroom infrastructure, teaching of vocational skills and using them as IGAs for schools, lobbying for additional financial or material resources, establishing home based care or CBCCs, cultivating gardens for feeding programs or funds for schools, and hosting Gule Wamkulu festivals to raise funds, among other things.

Like any voluntary position, not all leaders are as active as expected. Some cluster leaders are de-motivated because cluster committees are not supporting the maintenance of their bicycle. PSSP: SFP made efforts to continue to raise awareness that the bicycles are there not for the cluster leaders but to assist the clusters in carrying out and coordinating educationally supportive. Others cluster leaders have been jealous of MCMs who receive training more often, as well as a stipend for their involvement. In addition to promoting regular cluster, inter-cluster and zonal meetings for cluster leaders, MCMs and extension workers, PSSP: SFP continues to help all communities see the benefits of everything they do as improving the community's future by improving the future of their children.

Special Interest Groups

Special interest groups are major players in issues of community sensitization, motivation, and mobilization. This sect of the community influences communities' decisions on cultural and traditional issues. Their incorporation into an education project like PSSP: SFP cannot be over emphasized, and thus PSSP: SFP has conducted trainings for special interest groups, as well as other target groups such as community leaders, SMC/PTA and teachers.

Special interest group trainers were selected from a pool of government extension workers who are well conversant with the issues of special groups and have been involved in similar assignments before. The selected trainers underwent a 2-day training of trainers where there was a briefing on the project goals, objectives and activities. Later training topics appropriate for the target group were drawn up, as well as a tentative schedule. The trainers practiced presentations and finally prepared the training materials. The training team included of 1 officer from Agriculture, 2 officers from Community Services, 1 officer from Education and 2 officers from PSSP: SFP.

Special interest groups from the Gule Wamkulu cult, *Akunjira* and *Eni Dambwe*, and female initiation counselors, *Chisamba* were selected by their respective communities and schools. There were at least 4 special

interest groups per cluster from 64 clusters in 12 zones. Senga zone was left out as another partner, Together Ensuring Children's Security (TECS), which implements the MIAMI project in the same area, already had plans to train the same target groups. SSP:SFP divided the groups into 2 separate 3-day residential trainings. In group one, 130 special group members (3 female, 99 male) were trained and in group two, 124 special group members (15 female, 109 male) were trained.

The training covered topics like hindrances to achievements of quality of education in and around schools, positive relationships between culture and formal education, and the roles of different target groups in education. During the trainings participants discussed issues that hinder achievement/improvement of quality of education in and around schools and strategized ways to address them. One challenge noted was the strained relationship between the special groups and the school proprietors, which are mostly churches. The training helped open the eyes of this group on how they are both partners in creating a future for children and developing them to be productive Malawians. By the end of the training the participants had developed a plan of action to embark on interventions to mitigate the challenges of OVCs and girls in education.

Following these trainings the special groups have been instrumental in fund raising activities, mobilization of children to go to school and involvement in developmental activities like molding of bricks and building school infrastructure—something school stake holders never dreamed of achieving before. The groups will continued to be followed-up and encouraged.

4.4.3 Mobilization Corps of Malawi

The MCM intervention aims at inspiring volunteerism for development among youths, particularly in rural communities. The initiative started in 2006 with a pilot activity of 15 MCM members (7 female, 8 male) in 3 of the 13 education zones who worked in the zones for four months. The initiative was subsequently scaled up with an additional 56 youths (19 female 37 male) recruited with the full participation of their respective communities for the remaining 10 zones of the district. After a comprehensive training for the full scale MCMs in December 2006, the MCMs were allocated to clusters to start implementation of their plans of actions.

In the initial cohort, 26 MCMs were placed in clusters outside their home area, while the remaining 43 served in their home clusters, in order to allow the project to see which model of placement was most effective. After being assigned to a cluster, the MCMs were then introduced to key stakeholders in their zones, reaching 951 people (195 female, 756 male) (See Table 12). The MCMs were warmly welcomed and the communities were excited to have their support.

Table 12. Outreach during main MCM introductory meetings in the communities

Zone	Teachers		SMC/PTA		Community Leaders		MCM		Cluster Leaders		Change Agents	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Mvera	6	10	14	30		7	2	5	1	6	6	17
Nalunga	0	11	8	21	0	4	0	4	0	4	3	5
Chigudu	0	16	3	21		5	3	3	1	4	3	12
Kanyenje	0	12	9	17	0	5	1	4	0	5	7	8
Boma	1	13	6	24	1	11	2	5	0	7	6	9
Senga	0	14	9	23	0	5	1	4	1	4	7	3
Katalima	2	17	1	30	1	4	0	5	0	5	1	3
Kamphenga	0	10	8	13	0	7	2	4	0	4	0	4
Kayembe	0	19	4	19	0	7	1	6	1	6	0	14
Madisi	2	13	9	21	0	5	3	2	0	5	6	5
Chimbuli	0	17	13	37	0	13	2	2	0	4	4	10
Chimungu	0	13	9	13	0	4	1	3	0	4	2	3
Mponela	1	17	7	29	0	10	1	5	0	6	7	13
TOTALS	6	182	113	268	2	87	19	49	3	64	52	106

After 4 months of service, PSSP:SFP undertook a second training and planning session from 6th to 20th May 2007 at Chankhanga TDC in Kasungu District, a neutral venue for all attendees. There were 68 MCMs (21 females, 47 males) present. This training helped to review the activities planned and implemented by sharing with the larger group their experiences, successes, and challenges, with the larger group. During their first 4 months, MCMs largely focused on building play parks, establishing youth clubs, and raising funds to support OVCs and replenish the SIP. MCMs were trained in additional areas such as theater for development techniques, specifics on academic club strategies, role model utilization, and conflict resolution, just to name a few.

The review enlightened the MCMs what was expected from them and how to better focus in their plans made for the remainder of their service. This training/review period also served as an excellent opportunity to progress on the development of the MCM Training and Reference Manual. This manual was refined building on lessons learned over the year and is being used for the next group of MCMs.

Like any new intervention, the MCM program is not without challenges. Despite having signed an agreement about expected behaviors and being sensitized on these issues, five MCMs were withdrawn from service due to disciplinary problems. PSSP:SFP held a follow-up meeting with all MCMs to remind them of their responsibilities to the children of Dowa and the vital role they play in that process. The five MCMs were replaced from the reserve list. An additional 10 MCMs resigned from service early due to acceptance into teacher training colleges or the police academy, however, PSSP:SFP considers these early departures a success story. Early reports from the TTCs have indicated these students are becoming class leaders and are seen as assets to their classes. These MCMs will be followed up.

In the final months of 2007, preparations for the second wave of MCM recruits were made. Awareness of the upcoming positions was raised during various sensitization meetings. Adverts were placed in all schools, TDCs and trading centers in the district, attracting 1,356 applicants (249 female, 1107 male). A short listing process selected 118 candidates (52 female, 66 male) who were then screened by the communities. Simultaneously, current MCMs were appraised to determine continuation of service. Following interviews and appraisals of current MCMs, 20 new MCMs (10 female and 10 males) were recruited.

In December, a final review of the activities undertaken by the original cohort was undertaken. The participants during the review included 83 MCMs: 57 current MCMs (10 females and 47 males), 6 past MCMs who are undergoing a teaching course at Kasungu TTC (5 females and 1 male), and 20 (10 females and 10 males) newly recruited MCMs. This was a fruitful time for all participants and the review showed that in the 7 months since the previous review, MCMs had accomplished a tremendous amount in support of education. (see Table 13).

Table 13. Outreach of MCM planned and completed activities

No	Activity	Planned	Done	Outreach			
				ADULTS		CHILDREN	
				M	F	B	G
1	Introduction and sensitization meeting	614	659	18959	15,568	33, 709	35, 302
2	Establishment of play parks	1055	863	3527	6127	4531	78, 346
3	Information	606	578	11829	11,911	19, 774	24, 582
4	TALULAR making	546	681	5173	5888	2501	5966
5	Establishment of CBCCs	105	128	2263	3306	6567	7154
6	Establishment of youth clubs	206	144	1965	1619	4, 852	4463
7	Establishment of vocational skills	317	568	2789	2063	3, 002	29, 603
8	Organising or introduction of sporting activities	564	586	1780	2217	10, 987	7800
9	Information gathering	516	516	5551	7312	10, 459	7972
10	Focus group discussion	339	335	4085	3135	18, 298	25079
11	Exchange visits	143	141	2032	2319	1, 719	1814
12	Establishment of IGAs	190	164	4190	3805	18, 895	4146
13	Organising cluster competition	58	184	3387	2551	19, 883	23822
14	SIP & ZIP launching replenishment	158	59	11480	7519	37, 375	36555
15	Role model utilization	64	47	1910	1471	7, 098	9195
16	Follow ups	782	907	3100	2193	22, 183	27251
17	MCM meetings	108	78	445	483	251	222
18	Zonal meetings	112	130	207	100		
19	Mentoring	20	7	66	49	81	93
20	Playing with children	721	690	4021	316	32, 126	35890
21	Inter-zonal meeting	23	42	174	76		
22	Area meeting	0	5	94	65		
23	TFD rehearsals	39	33	7240	5,250	33, 156	35071
24	TFD performance	54	49	47	22	4, 407	74020
25	Attending school open days and closing days	39	33	9236	88, 099	11, 979	220671
26	Cluster meetings	15	18	4160	13, 548	10, 961	12, 108
27	Data collection on OVCs	48	68	118	8, 283	995	1, 268
28	Any Other	199	215	3165	4, 275	1, 629	2, 056

The MCMs presented their various activities with increased confidence, reflecting the increase in maturity and experience the MCMs have gained over the year. The most successful activities included the establishment of play parks, working with the children in the various youth clubs, sensitization meetings, and fundraising activities to support the OVCs. The review helped focus the original MCMs on what was expected and how to best plan for their final year. The new recruits benefited from the experienced MCMs during review and this facilitated their knowledge acquisition during training.

All 69 MCMs (21 females and 48 males) were trained together for 17 days. The training included facts about PSSP: SFP, community mobilization techniques and methodologies, field based practical and projects. To capitalize on the experience of the MCMs and to build their capacity, 22 original MCMs (5 females and 17 males) were selected as facilitators for the trainings, along side PSSP: SFP staff and external trainers. In addition to classroom instruction, field practicals were conducted to practice facilitating focus groups, establishing play parks and developing TALULAR. Additional time was devoted to training in theatre for development and practical drama performances. The training workshop ended with participants developing plans of actions for the next four months, January through April 2007. Activities planned ranged from sensitization meetings, establishment of play parks, youth clubs, working with children and playing games, exchange visits at cluster and zonal levels, zonal club competitions to enhance pupil performance, promoting initiatives which would attract the awarding of small grants to support community initiatives to achieve access, retention and pupil performance.

The MCMs left the training charged, motivated, mobilized and equipped with techniques and approaches to work with communities and schools. At the start of next quarter, they will be settled in their respective clusters. Monitoring will be intensive in the first quarter to ensure the new recruits start off well. The MCM intervention promises to be an extremely productive model for spearheading youth volunteerism for development not only in Malawi but possible for the entire continent of Africa.

4.4.4 Small Scale Grants

As communities strive to improve the quality of education in their schools, they are often hampered by lack of financial resources to complement their voluntary, non-monetary contributions. The small scale grants scheme serves to fill in this gap. The small scale grants have also motivates communities to address issues hamper access and quality education.

Last year, PSSP: SFP conducted a series of small grants sensitization meetings. The project further provided training in financial management to core and support change agents from various government departments, so that they are able to support SMCs and PTAs appropriately. Then SMC/PTA members, teachers and selected influential community members were oriented to the procedures for accessing grants. This year, orientations on small-scale grants were conducted in all the zones, reaching 2,006 community members (718 female, 1288 male) emphasizing how the community can benefit from the grant, what the grant can be utilized on, how to procure materials, proper record keeping for transparency and accountability, stores management and how to lobby from outside sources for sustainability of the initiatives (see Table 14).

Table 14. Outreach for community based orientation on small grants administration

Zone	SMC/PT		C/Leader		Parents		Teacher		Cl/lea		Children		Total	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Boma	08	15	01	05	10	34	01	02	00	04	12	18	32	78
Chigudu	08	29	03	25	08	41	-	10	4	02	27	20	50	127
Chimbuli	28	56	03	25	14	31	-	19	-	04	01	02	46	137
Chimungu	09	51	05	16	55	27	02	08	01	04	07	12	79	118
Kamphenga	05	13	02	03	12	19	03	02	01	02	19	20	60	59
Kanyenje	08	25	07	16	11	15	03	05	00	03	09	13	45	77
Katalima	11	20	05	25	33	23	01	03	00	06	19	13	69	90
Kayembe	20	72	01	22	13	20	01	13	02	06	15	23	62	156
Madisi	06	10	03	03	20	25	02	02	00	03	12	13	47	56
Mponela	17	31	10	23	18	12	10	08	03	05	25	15	77	100
Mvera	18	45	02	30	08	14	02	01	02	03	18	16	50	109
Nalunga	10	27	05	15	33	24	04	06	04	08	23	25	79	105
Senga	08	12	01	08	24	15	05	08	03	08	20	25	61	76
Totals	156	406	48	216	253	306	34	87	20	58	207	215	718	1288

Communities who had taken a wait and see approach in year one, came forward in year two with initiatives to support OVCs and infrastructure construction activities in the schools. Schools that had previously received grants re-invigorated their efforts. For example, some communities intensified income generating activities after seeing results of their initial efforts. For example, at Banga School in Mvera zone, the communities initially constructed teachers' houses, which improved the teachers' support at the school but then they embarked on the teaching of vocational skills and rearing of goats. The community taught tinsmithing which realized K2,500 from various products sales, assisting 3 girls and 2 boys with school uniforms.

Prior to receiving a grant, schools are appraised. Small-scale grants application forms were collected from all 226 schools. Various stakeholders were involved in the appraisal process including district team members, field extension workers, PSSP zonal coordinators, cluster leaders and MCMs as well as PSSP project staff.

Following these preparatory activities, deserving schools were awarded the small grants, which have been utilized to support the teaching of vocational skills, establish income generating activities and construction of infrastructure. This year, 154 schools received grants totaling K17,546,678.79. Since project inception, a total of 214 schools have received grants.

Building on lessons learned in year one, the disbursement process was modified to ensure effective and timely implementation and reconciliation of the grant. Previously, schools received their grant in cash after being appraised and oriented on how they would utilize the grant and sustain the activities. Through this process the communities purchased items on their own and later reconciled the money. However, communities faced several challenges in this process, namely lack of transport to carry the items from the purchasing point to their respective schools (which the grant was not allowed to cater to); minimal understanding of the reconciliation form due to low literacy levels, frustrating the reconciliation process; poor coordination among the stake holders for agreeing on one time to jointly purchase the items; increases in process from the time budgeted to the time purchased, and purchasing items of poorer quality or purchasing of items not budgeted, although beneficial to the school.

To address these challenges, this year all approved schools were grouped with about 5 other schools in a close geographic areas to be transported to the nearest trading center and subsequently have their goods transported back to the schools. The reconciliation form was modified for easier understanding of the semi-literate community members, most of whom are semi-literate and the reconciliation was done together just after the procurement of the materials.

As a result of the grants, communities have embarked on and are sustaining various initiatives that have increased access to basic education, resources at school level and ultimately improved learning with a special focus on orphans, vulnerable children, and girls. Community initiatives include income generating activities, teaching of vocation skills to pupils and rehabilitation to construction of school infrastructure. These activities have encouraged many children, particularly OVCs and girls, to go back to school. Table A1 in Annex A shows a comprehensive list of the grants awarded over the year, which ranged from K2,400 to K427,485.

School and zonal incentive packages

In an effort to increase resources at the school level, PSSP: SFP finished distributing SIPs and ZIPs to all schools and zones. This is part of the creative mobilization strategy put in place at the grassroots level to enable the communities to learn creative ways of mobilizing resources for the teaching and learning process. SIPs and ZIPs are boxes containing various teaching aids supplied to schools as “starter packs” to induce the communities voluntary contribution of similar items. Sustainability of the packages is the critical aspect of this intervention and upon distribution communities are sensitized on various sustainability strategies that range from organization of open days, fund raising activities and voluntary contribution to how to organize competitions and give out incentives to deserving individuals and learners to ensure that there is continued support of school activities and learning itself.

Communities in the remaining 10 zones and 164 schools were briefed on how to use and sustain their packages, which reached 6,092 females and 7,777 males (See Table 15). Communities learned that the packages are to enhance development activities and learning in their schools, hence the importance of sustainability. At the cluster level the SIPs and ZIPs were presented to the communities as a starting point, and the schools and community representatives had to demonstrate how they plan to sustain the packages through voluntarily contributions. The district launch of SIP and ZIP was conducted at Mvera MDF in Mvera zone, reaching 1,458 females and 1,891 male.

Table 15. Outreach during the SIP and ZIP re-sensitization and distribution in this quarter

Zone	Participants													
	SMC/PTA		Com. Leaders		Teachers		Parents		Children		E /workers		C /leaders	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Katalima	207	123	16	7	15	2	560	764	25	19	5	1	5	0
Kamphenga	187	99	24	3	12	8	470	342	23	16	7	2	4	0
Kayembe	211	87	19	1	13	2	670	769	14	18	6	0	7	0
Senga	197	69	14	5	20	7	870	789	15	13	6	2	4	1
Kanyenje	180	67	15	8	16	8	845	956	25	16	7	0	4	0
Mvera	167	85	34	2	23	2	560	457	23	26	6	2	6	0
Boma	129	134	29	0	18	3	437	236	21	15	4	0	4	0
Chigudu	106	67	32	1	32	5	543	247	12	17	4	0	4	0
Nalunga	67	55	19	1	13	3	332	206	23	17	5	0	3	0
Chimungu	117	57	17	1	14	6	231	189	17	11	4	2	3	1
Totals	1568	843	219	29	176	46	5518	4995	198	168	54	9	44	2

Across all cluster level launches, 233,715.20MK was raised as well as contributions of foodstuff and materials, a significant sum for this rural district (See Table 16).

Table 16. Community contributions during SIP and ZIP launch

Zone	Cash	Note books	Pencils	Pens	Maize Cobs	Pumpkins	Cucumber	Cassava	Rubber	Crayons	Sharpeners	S/ cane
Katalima	23,912.70	20	7	20	310	7	0	4	0	0	0	4
Kamphenga	10,500.00	18	8	18	42	9	0	3	0	0	0	3
Kayembe	27,339.00	13	10	13	55	10	0	6	0	0	0	6
Senga	69,000.00	40	15	40	90	11	0	8	0	0	0	8
Kanyenje	18,936.50	33	20	33	65	9	0	9	10	15	15	9
Mvera	21,406.00	42	15	42	40	31	16	6	0	0	0	6
Boma	9,750.00	14	9	14	89	23	0	3	0	0	0	3
Chigudu	14,029.00	16	8	16	100	6	0	2	0	0	0	2
Nalunga	7,800.00	11	7	11	55	9	0	8	0	0	0	8
Mponela	5,567.00	9	9	9	87	11	0	6	0	0	0	6
Chimbuli	17,550.00	32	12	32	34	13	0	7	0	0	0	7
Madisi	3,250.00	8	7	8	23	15	0	5	0	0	0	5
Chimungu	4,675.00	10	4	10	21	7	0	3	0	0	0	3
Totals	233,715.20	266	111	266	1011	161	16	70	10	15	15	70

Following the cluster launches, communities were charged to launch their packages and determine strategies to sustain them. Communities mobilized themselves to voluntarily contribute money, crops (e.g., beans, tobacco, and maize), exercise books, pens, clothes, soap, and teaching materials in the schools. Some communities have been more creative and embarked on fundraising initiatives like a Big Walk and Big Dance. A friendly competitive spirit has sparked in some schools which should lead to more support

The packages themselves have increased the resources at the school level, but so has the community contributions. For example, in the 3 months following the launch nearly 6 hundred thousand kwacha in cash (approx \$42,800) was raised across the district to support the SIP along with over 1,500 pails of maize and other food products, and nearly 2,000 school based materials (e.g., notebooks, pens). Another example comes from Senga zone, where the communities raised over K45,000 and 5 bags of beans for the ZIP. The money has multiplied to over K255,000 through small scale lending to communities and teachers at a small interest. Senga plans to use this money to provide grants to its schools for bolster community led education initiatives.

The SIP/ZIP distribution was deliberately staggered to encourage schools to be ready for the packages and be able to sustain them. This proved effective as schools wanted to get their packages and put the mechanism in place to receive them. PSSP: SFP has ensured that the composition of the committees to look after the SIP and ZIP is diverse by including community leaders, SMCs/PTAs, teachers and other influential leaders and trained these committees on effective lobbying skills. The project will continue to monitor and support the committees in their efforts to sustain the SIP/ZIP packages.

Role model initiative and open days

Identification and utilization of local role models is a critical aspect of meaningful and sustainable community mobilization. Its objectives in PSSP: SFP are two-fold:

- To help consolidate best practices, and
- Influence change where it is slow

Role models have been identified and utilized in various forums including meetings and open days and have been featured in mass media like newspapers, newsletters, radio and TV throughout the year. This year, not less than 300 role models were identified and used in the schools, clusters and zones. Role models ranged from teachers and pupils to community leaders and business persons. Refer to Table A2 for some of the role models identified and utilized in 2007. Their impact is never fully known, but the role models themselves were motivated by their consideration as a forerunner in their area of achievement and those that interacted with the role model were often inspired to emulate the practices or characteristics shared.

PSSP: SFP encouraged schools and communities to conduct open days. Open days are organized by the schools, clusters or zones to showcase the school's achievements and progress and to bring together different target groups to share what is happening at the school, cluster or zone. A number of activities are planned and carried out during an open day, including classroom teaching demonstration, TALULAR displays, different target groups activities and initiatives, learners in class and out door activities, recognizing and rewarding of the best performers and role models.

PSSP: SFP supported some of the open days through participation and publicizing the events via mass media. Refer to Table A3 for details about some of the open days PSSP: SFP was able to document. Open days will continue to be encouraged in year 3.

Support to education visits/tours

Over year 2, PSSP: SFP supported education visits/tour and exchange visits to consolidate lessons and expand horizons for pupils, teachers and community leaders. In the exchange visits deliberate efforts were made to get representatives from all key target groups to travel to the other school, cluster or zone to learn how their counterparts are implementing the project and various initiatives in their respective area. Schools organized education visits for their learners and other role models. Particular attention was placed on including OVCs.

Schools identify the learners and role models from each target group they wish to promote for an education tour or exchange visits. Once the school determines the destination, they raise funds to support the initiative. Some schools have raised all funds themselves and have purely informed the project while others seek project support in organizing the venue they intend to visit and for providing transport.

For the learners, some of the visits widened their career horizons and encouraged them to work extra hard in class. Some visits were for sporting or academic competitions, which encourage learners to remain and achieve in school. ZOCs, MCMs and cluster leaders have also been involved in exchange visits and learning from each other through participation in each others' open days and other functions. Teachers have been encouraged by the practices of their peers and have improved their classroom instruction. Community leaders have also been inspired by the initiatives of others and have returned to their catchment area to support activities to improve education. Refer to Table A4 for details of some education visits, exchange visits carried out by schools, clusters and zones in 2007.

4.5 Mass Communication

Mass communication interventions keep the public informed on project activities and solicit feedback; encourage those involved in the project initiatives; and promote ripple effect for the project sustainability and expansion. These objectives are achieved through information education and communication products including print and electronic media. Following are the key activities conducted over the year.

Project newsletters and success stories

To highlight school and community initiatives to both motivate those who are doing well and inspire those who could do more, PSSP: SFP produced 3 Area newsletters. The newsletter articles grouped activities from 3-4 adjoining zones and shared the achievements with the entire district and the nation. The project produced and circulated 1,200 copies (300 English and 900 Chichewa versions) of Madisi, Mponela and Mvera Area newsletters Volume 2, Issues 6, 7 and 8. The project also produced an overall district wide newsletter and 2,000 copies (English and Chichewa versions) of the first edition were printed and distributed to all relevant stakeholders. Layout, editing and verification of story articles for the second edition are underway.

PSSP: SFP continues to collect case studies and success stories to track the achievements of the schools and share those successes with wider audiences. In addition, to support and follow-up on school activities, the compendium of initiatives continued to be updated. The school tracking database was populated with existing compendium information and the gaps that have been identified were and will continue to be followed up in the next quarter.

Media awareness campaign

PSSP: SFP disseminates information about the project through publications, radio and television programs as well as through displays at events in order to promote awareness of the project and maximize its ripple effect. Over the past year, PSSP: SFP events such as stakeholder field visits, teacher training, community review and

re-planning workshops as well as local events like open days, fundraising events and school level donations were covered by the media (see details in Table A5).

Print media

PSSP: SFP activities were featured in 15 newspaper articles featured as follows:

- 10 'hard news' and 2 'feature' articles in The Guardian
- articles in the Daily Times

Electronic media

The project was also featured in 36 news bulletins aired/beamed as follows:

- 14 on ZBS
- 13 on MBC
- on Star Radio and
- on Power 101
- news bulletins beamed on Malawi Television

Although it is hard to ascertain the impact of mass media, PSSP: SFP has established prominence in Malawi and is becoming a household name not only in Dowa district but across the Central Region and the entire country as well. Experience has demonstrated that media is a very powerful tool for influencing people's attitudes and practices as well as government policy. PSSP: SFP will continue to invite the media to report on the project impact.

4.6 Coordination and Reporting

Internal meetings and technical assistance

Given the complex and multifaceted nature of PSSP: SFP, coordination among team members and technical assistance were important aspects to the continued success of PSSP: SFP. To ensure good communication and ongoing collaboration, monthly all-staff meetings were held to bring together our 13 zonal coordinators as well as partners and field office staff to share experiences, coordinate issues, disseminate information and provide training in areas such as report writing and USAID regulations. Management meetings were held regularly to liaise across departments, plan broadly and address any challenges as they arose and a project implementation committee met regularly to look at the day-to-day implementation on the ground and ensure that all actors are working together to achieve PSSP: SFP goals.

In addition to regular meetings, PSSP: SFP mounted a 3-day critical review and reflection workshop for all staff and partners to review year 1 implementation of PSSP: SFP and discuss ways it can be improved. The session was immensely valuable for not only determining an even stronger way forward in year 2, but also team building.

Within Malawi, PSSP: SFP met with other AIR and partner colleagues from MTTA on numerous occasions to strategize teacher professional development strategies, particularly the book donation process and how to support a reading culture, mobile teacher training troupes and collaborate on various issues, including mounting a joint policy makers briefing. These collaborations are helpful in strengthening both projects.

PSSP: SFP called together its Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Members to formally meet and advise the project. The 11 members include leaders from MIE, MOE, MOWCD, MANEB, National Library, TTC, Dowa district, and a TA within Dowa. While members have been included in various functions and informed

of project progress through reports and newsletters, this was the first PAC meeting. The members welcomed the development. The PAC visited Kapulungo School in Chimungu zone and subsequently came together at the Mponela field office to share ideas on how to capitalize on the groundwork laid by PSSP: SFP and strengthen implementation not only in Dowa, but to have the effect ripple across the nation.

PSSP: SFP had the benefit of a rich source of technical assistance and home office support this year. The support has improved the quality of the work in the field, offered alternative strategies to address various challenges and is building the capacity of the field staff. PSSP: SFP hosted Ms. Heather Simpson, Project Manager for PSSP: SFP who supported the project technically and administratively, particularly the MCM program. She has subsequently moved onto another project and the new Project Manager is Ms. Jennifer Anderson. Near the end of the year, PSSP: SFP in the field hosted Ms Anderson, who came to support re-budget efforts, communication strategies and familiarize herself with PSSP: SFP.

PSSP: SFP hosted Ms. Kristen Barba, AIR Project Associate, who worked with PSSP: SFP Finance Manager and partner organizations to strengthen financial and administrative reporting. She has subsequently returned to graduate school and has been replaced by Mr. Tom Bewick. Mr Bewick came to Malawi to support the re-budget effort and familiarize himself with PSSP: SFP

PSSP: SFP twice hosted Dr. Diane Prouty Harris, MWAI Associate, who on her first visit assisted the project team on teacher professional development and on specific planning for cycle 4 trainings and on her second visit she supported the training of trainers for cycle 4. She helped consolidate lessons from the previous cycles and the critical review and forged the group forward to making the training even more practical and understandable.

PSSP: SFP hosted Dr. Shirley Miske and Sarah Koehler, who supported the monitoring and rollout of teacher conferences and helped the team prepare for the BLP/M launch. Dr. Miske's ongoing support to the professional development of Dowa's teachers has been cited by MIE as professionally enriching and valuable to the Institute's skills base in support of education in Malawi.

PSSP: SFP twice hosted Steve Sharra of MWAI who on the first visit co-facilitated the BLP/M validation workshops and on the second visit co-facilitated the BLP/M training for Std 1 teachers. His ongoing support, alongside Dr. Nancy Clair has been invaluable to the development of the BLP/M program.

USAID meetings

The implementers of PSSP: SFP and USAID have worked closely together and met frequently to maintain good open communication and ensure good visibility and success of PSSP: SFP.

Members of the PSSP: SFP team met with USAID/Malawi numerous times each quarter over the year. Discussions centered on project implementation, especially of the literacy program and support of PCAR, USAID's Operational Planning, Data Quality Assessment and annual reporting processes, as well as CIES paper proposals and communication strategies. This was also a year of changes within USAID. Dr. Tom LeBlanc moved onto USAID/Uganda and Mr. Ramsey Sosola and Ms. Marisol Perez joined the USAID/Malawi education team, around which several meetings took place to ensure a smooth transition.

PSSP: SFP team members presented and participated in the USAID SO9 extended team meeting, which was a fruitful session updating the team on USAID developments as well as sharing ideas among the partners in education. PSSP: SFP looks forward to additional meetings in the future.

PSSP: SFP attended all 5 USAID synergy meetings with the mission director and other NGOs across sectors. One meeting was held at AIR's office in Zomba PSSP: SFP and MITA presented on sustainability to the cross-section of USAID partner. These were an excellent opportunity to liaise with others working for the

development of Malawi and share strategies addressing needs related to PSSP: SFP goals, as well as keep abreast of developments within USAID and US government.

PSSP: SFP facilitated the field visits of USAID/US Government officials. Of particular note, PSSP: SFP:

- Organized and hosted US Ambassador's visit to M'bindo, a PSSP: SFP school. As he expressed in the visitor's log, "the school and community are doing a wonderful job of educating the children and developing the school itself, with some help from the US supported PSSP: SFP." The event was also attended by MOE and MOWCD officials.
- Facilitated new team leader, Marisol Perez and new CTO, Ramsey Sosola attendance in the National Day of Education events in Chimbuli Zone, Dowa District to see how the zone perceived the impact of PSSP: SFP, which were resoundingly positive for the teachers, and pupils as well as communities.
- Supported Acting Deputy Ambassador, Robert Pope and his wife to Gudyu School to launch the renovated school block using the Ambassador's Self Help Fund. The community and school were honored by the visit and it encouraged them continue to strive high for the benefit of their children. Gudyu School is seen as a model by other NGOs who are now supporting it as a result of the self-help fund and the communities' active role in sustaining the school.

The USAID/USG visits to the field were an inspiration to the teachers, pupils and community members, which have been motivated to work even harder for the benefit of their children. PSSP: SFP would like to encourage more such visits next year.

PSSP: SFP attended a food security strategy development meeting at USAID to share how to maximize food security initiatives in support of education. It was helpful to hear progress on food security issues at large and PSSP: SFP appreciates the dedication shown to improving food security for Malawi.

PSSP: SFP also attended the USAID Anti-Corruption Workshop to learn more about corruption issues in Malawi and strategies to minimize negative impact. It was helpful to hear how Malawi is improving and consider how we can minimize factors in the education system like ghost teachers that continue to trouble accurate reporting for the government.

External meetings with Ministry, NGOs and other stakeholders

District and Headquarters

Given PSSP: SFP's close collaboration with Dowa district officials, numerous meetings and exchanges occurred each quarter over the year. The district office supported and attended each of the cycles of training of trainers, which allowed fruitful exchanges of ideas and ways to support the teachers of Dowa. The district office also supported and monitored the cycle cluster trainings, teacher conferences and BLP/M trainings. PSSP: SFP met formally with DEM and DOP on how to improve coordination within the zones and address specific school issues, resulting in joint supervision and monitoring of teachers/schools. The fruits of this strengthened team monitoring were seen over the year in terms of communication between the zonal team members as well as translating to impact on learner performance. The frequent exchanges have helped both PSSP: SFP and the District see that poor headship at the schools continues to frustrate efforts to solidify changes in classroom practices and therefore are planning a jointly funded training early next year for headteachers and deputy headteachers, specifically.

In preparation for PSSP: SFP pupil assessments, PSSP: SFP meet with the Dowa DEM and subsequently met with the newly appointed DEM from Dedza to share the goals and objectives of PSSP: SFP and to request permission to continue to use Dedza as a comparison district to Dowa.

PSSP: SFP attended the PCAR Coordination Meetings to support the national program and ensure good cohesion between the programs. Discussions were ongoing with MIE and PCAR on the logistics of teacher

training and ensuring schedules are known and making necessary adjustments where there may be conflicts. PSSP: SFP remained flexible and adjusted to the frequent changes in PCARs training plans. During the meetings, PSSP: SFP has provided feedback on what is being seen on the ground and has shared our experiences in PCAR implementations.

Given some changes in leadership at the HQ level, PSSP: SFP conducted two formal briefings at Ministry of Education and another at Ministry of Women and Child Development. PSSP: SFP briefed PS2 and four directors from MOE on PSSP: SFP and garnered their support around issues impacting Dowa, particularly the placement of the new teacher trainers in rural schools that PSSP: SFP promises to support next year. PSSP: SFP also briefed the new PS of MOWCD on the goals and objectives of PSSP: SFP. Another meeting was held with PS1 of MOE to share updates on how the project was progressing.

As part of PSSP: SFP dedication to supporting the national agenda, PSSP: SFP presented, in collaboration with MTTA, at the Technical Working Group on Education at DTED on the lessons learned from USAID projects that could help Ministry in rolling out PCAR. While there were many viewpoints presented during the meeting, PSSP: SFP remains poised to assist MOE.

PSSP: SFP formally met with MIE Director, Charles Gunsaru, to share the progress of PSSP: SFP, particularly on the BLP/M program and materials development that MIE is helping to support. The partnership with the Institute is valued and appreciated.

PSSP: SFP supported National Day of Education events in all zones of Dowa District. It was a colorful day marked with demonstrations of best practices, dances, poems and songs. PSSP: SFP in its efforts to promote best practices provided 273 motivational awards across the district (21 per zone), which were well received. These included “best of” awards for teachers, schools and communities as well as “most improved” awards.

The culminating Ministry meeting of the year was a stakeholder briefing held, in partnership with MTTA, to share lessons and project progress with MOE, donors and other NGOs. Most delegates were engaged in the conversations and expressed appreciation for the project’s achievements and hopes for the future. Significant interest was expressed by the Ministry in PSSP: SFP MCM youth program, the BLP/M literacy program, and the model used for ongoing professional development. Dialogue will be followed up.

Donors and NGOs

In keeping with PSSP: SFP commitment to create synergies and support education broadly within Dowa and Malawi at large, the project continued to meet and liaise with various NGOs, donors and other interested parties, as appropriate. Also, as word about PSSP: SFP spread and other organizations sought information and wanted to share ideas with PSSP: SFP. Over the year, PSSP: SFP

- Met with UNHCR Education Advisor at the Dowa refugee camp to share teacher professional development strategies and plan to include their teachers in future trainings
- Met with Clinton Hunter Foundation, which recent received funds to support infrastructure development at schools and shared what schools in their operating area most needed support. PSSP: SFP offered its technical assistance to mobilize communities and ensure synergies of effort.
- Liaised with Peace Corps on possible opportunities to support the MCM program
- Met with PRDO on water and sanitation issues at schools
- Attended Global Education Campaign meeting in Kamphenga that also highlighted the needs of OVCs in education
- Met frequently with National Library on training and distribution of donated books in Dowa.
- Liaised with Plan International, who is interested in seeing PSSP: SFP schools and understanding the approach of the project.

- Met with researcher, Kate McPhedran, from UNICEF who conducted a school sanitation study and shared what PSSP: SFP is doing in support of education. This meeting was a result of her visits to Dowa schools that repeatedly stated they were improving practices because of PSSP and she wanted to incorporate some of our lessons into the research.
- Liaised with GTZ School Health and Nutrition Project to support and share strategies with their nutrition student who is looking at school feeding programs.
- Met with the foundation, Better World Together, to share ideas on what strategies have been successful in support of development in Malawi.
- Attended a child protection stakeholders meeting sponsored by Dowa based NGO, Every Child and in particular strategized plans around the establishment of children learning centers.
- Ensured synergy with other CRECCOM projects (ICLEP and MIAMI) operating in a couple of zones in Dowa to maximize resources.
- Interacted at the grassroots level with other education implementers (e.g., Action Aid, World Vision, Concern Worldwide), sharing plans and strategies for the betterment of Dowa's children.

PSSP: SFP continues to build relationships with other partners and is seen as a supporter and resource to others implementing in the district.

PSSP: SFP also had the opportunity to share with interested parties outside of Malawi and to learn from others in areas of support to PSSP: SFP efforts in Dowa.

- Assistant Executive Director of CRECCOM attended the Commission on the Status of Women's Conference in New York with the relevant theme "elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against girls, orphans and vulnerable children". This was an excellent opportunity to showcase the best practices of PSSP: SFP in support of education.
- The PSSP: SFP Project Manager attended the CIES conference in Baltimore, MD and showcased the MCM initiative of PSSP: SFP in a presentation titled "Engaging Youth in Development: Balancing empowerment and traditional community structures."
- The Deputy Chief of Party attended Chewa cultural course at Mua Mission in order to better understand and support the majority culture of Dowa. This has proven incredibly beneficial in understanding and subsequently strategizing how to overcome barriers to reach certain groups based on family structure and cultural norms.
- The PSSP: SFP leadership in the field attended the AIR Summit in Washington DC, which was instrumental in sharing practices and lessons learned under PSSP: SFP, especially the use of youth in development, as well as learning additional strategies for teacher professional development and sustainability of such practices.

These exchanges helped raise the profiles of PSSP: SFP and USAID as well as provide ideas and strategies to improve the implementation of PSSP: SFP. PSSP: SFP will endeavor to continue its exchanges and sharing with all actors relevant to improving quality in education.

Work Plans and PMP

Over the year, PSSP: SFP developed the annual work plan and performance monitoring plan, which were modified as contractually required each quarter. The quarterly updates provided the project a regular opportunity to look at its progress relative to its plans and make modifications in relation to the circumstances on the ground.

Reports

Over the year, PSSP: SFP submitted 12 monthly reports, 3 quarterly reports and a midterm report. This report covers the 4th quarter report. The monthly reports were mainly used to keep USAID and the project



team at large informed of all aspects of the project. The quarterly and midterm reports were more widely disseminated to various stakeholders and helped them know and appreciate the activities and impact of PSSP: SFP. Feedback has been very positive and members within Ministry of Education have made an effort to visit the project after reading these reports.

4.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

The objectives of PSSP: SFP monitoring and evaluation are two-fold:

- To inform decisions and practices for both the teacher professional skills development and community mobilization, and
- To form the basis for telling PSSP: SFP success stories

The monitoring and evaluation process is dynamic and aims at tracking and measuring the achievements of PSSP: SFP and defining areas in need of attention. PSSP: SFP collected baseline data on the performance of pupils, teachers and school communities. Annex D shows the indicators for PSSP: SFP and the interim and ultimate targets for the project.

Pupil level data

Pupil assessments

PSSP: SFP measures its impact on the ultimate beneficiary, the pupil, through annual pupil assessments for standard 1 in Chichewa and Standard 6 in maths and English. PSSP: SFP conducted a baseline assessment in 2006 (see report titled *Pupil Assessment Baseline Data Report, 2006*) and a follow-up assessment in 2007 at the beginning of term 3. The assessment for year two likewise for year one, started by pilot testing the instrument. The pupil assessment items for standard 6 mathematics and English for year two were therefore piloted in 40 selected schools of Dowa in order to refine the standard 6 English and mathematics test items.

The original sample of 59 schools across all the 13 zones of Dowa and 52 schools in the comparison district of Dedza were used for the exercise. ZOCs, who had previously administered the instruments received refresher training for one day and collected the data. The original sample in Dedza was 40 schools but in year two it was discovered that twelve of the originally sampled schools received intervention similar to PSSP: SFP. This being the case, twelve additional schools that did not receive any type of classroom intervention were sampled in addition to the original 40. However, the analysis only used the original 40 schools of Dedza since no significant differences were noted between the newly supported schools and the unsupported schools. Up to 30 pupils were randomly sampled from each of the sample class. For standard one, 6 pupils were randomly selected for the individual administered Chichewa assessment. See Table A6 for sample size details.

Results showed significant gains in Chichewa, English and mathematics pupil performance in Dowa and gains are significantly greater than the comparison district, Dedza. Highlights are presented below, but see *Pupil Assessment Follow-up Data Report, 2007* for more details.

Standard 1 Chichewa assessment results

Most learners at early stages in Malawi have difficulties to read and write. PSSP:SFP over the two years of its implementation trained all the teachers across Dowa in various teaching methodologies in order to improve pupil learning gains. Significant resources have been added to the classroom and BLP/M is ready to be launched. These efforts are paying off. The standard 1 Chichewa literacy assessment, revealed a 19.0% increase in Chichewa with girls surpassing boys for Dowa against 17.5% decline in Dedza (See Tables A7-A8 and Figure A1).

Standard 6 English and mathematics assessment results

For the standard 6 English and mathematics assessment, four performance levels were established: *Minimal, Needs Improvement, Proficient, and Advanced*. The last two categories represent the passing levels where pupils demonstrate the satisfactory knowledge and skills required by the instrument. Overall, standard 6 English assessment revealed a 22.0% increase in (25.0% boys, 18.0% girls) in Dowa, compared to a 3.8% increase in Dedza (see Tables A9-A10 and Figure A2). In 2007, 42.5% of learners in Dowa reached the proficient level or above, compared with 20.9% in 2006, representing a significant improvement.

Similarly, there was significant improvement between 2006 and 2007 in mathematics. Overall, standard 6 mathematics assessment revealed a 31.0% increase in mathematics (35.0% boys, 26.0% girls) in Dowa, compared to a 16.3% increase in Dedza (see Tables A11-A12 and Figure A3). Again, in 2007, approximately 55.5% in Dowa reached a proficient level or above, compared with 24.6% in 2006.

As shown by these significant increases in pupil performance, PSSP:SFP interventions are bearing fruits. Pupils are learning and gaining more from their classroom experiences. PSSP:SFP will continue to forge ahead and ensure next year's results show more pupils achieving and on the path of life long learning.

Pupil Enrollment

In year two, PSSP: SFP increased sensitizations to help the head teachers and teachers on how to collect enrollments accurately, which have improved the quality of information sent to the district office. PSSP:SFP following the collection pattern established in year one is using data from the district education office. PSSP:SFP continues to share verification data with the district office and support the accurate collection of district wide data.

Earlier this year, Dowa district re-demarcated its educational zones from 13 zones to 19 zones in order to enhance supervision and support of teachers. Comparing February 2006 to February 2007, pupil enrollment increased by 12.0% between February 2006 and February 2007. Furthermore, comparing February 2006 and February 2007 the enrollment of girls surpasses boys (see Table A13). However, because of the new demarcations, zonal comparisons between mid year of 2006 and 2007 are not possible at zonal level, however district level comparisons can still be made. Comparing July 2006 and July 2007 (mid year) there has been a 10.6% increase in pupil enrollment across in Dowa (See Table A14-A15). Here also enrollment of girls surpasses boys. The increase in enrolment is an indication of effective community mobilization and sensitization in order to increase access to basic education for girls, orphans and other vulnerable children in Dowa. PSSP: SFP continues to sensitize all stakeholders the importance of sending all school aged learners to go and remain in school.

Pupil attendance

PSSP: SFP intensified its sensitizations on use of school data and data reporting. Pupil attendance data continued to be challenging to accurately capture in year two as well (see *Preliminary Baseline Data Report, December 2006*). Many schools did not fill attendance forms properly despite having given them attendance registers at the end of year one. However, when PSSP: SFP made follow-ups, at least many schools were collecting data a few of days out of the month, which could be used as a sample. PSSP: SFP increased its sensitizations and conducted an extra training with the PEAs and ZOCs to help them supervise the teachers. Absenteeism fell from 23% in 2006 at the end of the term to just 16% in 2007 representing an overall drop of 30% against a target of 10%. PSSP: SFP continues to work with all stakeholders to find sustainable ways to ensure that all the stakeholders are engaged in tracking pupils for the benefit of Dowa child.

Pupil completion, repetition and dropout

PSSP: SFP is collecting completion, repetition and drop out rates using Education Management Information System (EMIS) data that is collected nationwide, including Dowa. This supports the efforts of EMIS and reduces any potential inconsistencies that arise from different data collection methods. That said, PSSP: SFP wants to track overall school efficiency rates, not just by standard, as EMIS reports. PSSP: SFP has tried to



ascertain their raw data, however EMIS indicated it was not possible to get it and that most organizations calculate a mean of means. PSSP: SFP is seeking alternatives given the challenges of making overall calculations using that method. However, for now the mean of means is reported.

While there was a slight improvement in dropout rates, completion and repetition rates declined at the end of the first year of PSSP: SFP (see Tables A16-A18). The reasons are simple. PSSP: SFP enrollment campaigns were successful and within the 2006 school year, 10% of the pupils, often the most disadvantaged, return to school. Some of these pupils did not return until term 3 and given such a late start, they had not gained enough knowledge to pass the end of term exams. These pupils were encouraged to return for the 2007 school year and were being provided with the necessary support, which PSSP: SFP expect will translate into higher completion rates. PSSP: SFP will continue to mobilize all stakeholders to support these pupils.

Teacher level data

Profile of Dowa Teachers

PSSP:SFP zonal staff collected background information on all teachers in year two just like in year one in order to keep current the information about the district as well as track academic progress. PSSP: SFP distributed to all 226 schools data forms to collect teachers' details, such as gender, and professional/academic qualifications. Findings revealed that gender imbalances remain: over two-thirds are male, more than half of the teachers in Dowa hold a Junior Certificate (JCE) and more than three quarters are at PT4 grade, which is the lowest grade for a teaching professional. The relatively lower level of qualification of the teachers in Dowa therefore, continues to pose a challenge to PSSP: SFP in terms of type of training to mount and the need for additional supervision and monitoring. This has been and continues to be factored into PSSP:SFP plans. Gender imbalance means there are fewer female role models in the district, especially it continue to be made to promote gender issues at all levels of the project, a challenge not just with teachers, but also with community leaders. PSSP: SFP is also encouraging study circles and providing resources for teachers to upgrade their academic qualifications. While these changes take time, some progress is already being made. For example, an additional 5% of the teachers now hold their MSCE reflecting progress that PSSP: SFP will continue to foster.

Teacher Performance

In 2006, PSSP: SFP administered a teacher observation instruments to find baseline figures on the use of participatory methods (See *PSSP:SFP Preliminary Baseline Data Report, 2006*). After implementing 5 cycles of training, and intensifying its classroom supervision to help teachers master the various classroom methodologies taught, PSSP:SFP also decided to launch teacher conferences and MTTT. Wanting to see the impact after these interventions, PSSP:SFP postponed the teacher observations to January 2008. The follow-up information will be reported in the next quarter. However, ongoing classroom monitoring and supervision shows that teacher performance is improving. More teachers are using TALULAR like name cards, establishing science corners, reading corners, etc, practicing various participatory methods, especially group/pair work and role plays and more effectively teaching literacy skills through increased use of manipulatives, collecting reading materials and practicing strategies like reading aloud to help pupils achieve.

Teacher attendance

In year one as well as year two, PSSP: SFP collected a sample using the project field staff, zonal coordinators. They filled in a teacher attendance form as they visited schools. They checked how many teachers were in class or outside their classrooms (e.g., at the school ground) against the registered teachers (See *PSSP:SFP Preliminary Baseline Data Report, 2006*).

The absenteeism of teachers has been significantly reduced by 39.5% for male teachers (from 23.3% absent in 2006 to 14.1% absent in 2007) and by 46% for female teachers (from 26.3% absent in 2006 to 14.2% absent in 2007 school session). This is a clear indication that PSSP: SFP sensitization of communities and

teachers and the subsequent community initiatives has greatly improved the situation as more teachers have realized the importance of being in class all the times.

School and community level data

SMC/PTA Interviews

PSSP: SFP continues to empower school communities to support and take ownership of project activities and their schools. Over the reporting quarter, the follow-up SMC/PTA data collection occurred. Based on lessons learnt from baseline data collection on SMC/PTA, 6 extension workers from other districts were deployed to interview SMC/PTA members in 59 sample schools of Dowa. Following a one-day orientation on the data forms, protocols and expectations, the external monitors collect the data from the schools. The data were then entered, cleaned and analyzed. One pleasing aspect outside of the results was the improved recordkeeping of most SMCs, which was one of the major challenge in year one.

The results indicated that there has been a significant improvement in many areas supported by the SMC/PTA. Approximately 59.3 % of the SMCs are engaged in IGAs in support of the school (from 18% at baseline). Similarly, there has been a significant increase in SMC/PTA involved in physical rehabilitation and construction support to schools, from 82.8% the same time last year to 93.2%, which they attributed to PSSP: SFP. SMC/PTAs have been trained on how to lobby for support from various players in support of education and is seen in the results, with an increase of 14.5% from the same time last year (41.4% to 55.9%). The increase is because of PSSP: SFP sensitization and mobilization. Most SMCs/PTAs are now able to lobby for support for their schools.

Collection of data on financial resources in the schools:

To assess how the schools' financial base has increased since the inception of PSSP: SFP, the project collected data from SMCs in the 59 sample schools using a data collection form. The form was designed to collect the amount of funds that the schools had at the beginning of the year 2006 (January) which was before PSSP: SFP and at the end of the same year (December) following PSSP: SFP interventions. A total of 8 external monitors (2 females, 6 males) who have previous been deployed to collect data from the schools and to support monitoring activities in the schools were deployed and trained for a day on the data collection exercise and on how to collect the data using the form. The data collection exercise was then conducted and the data was entered cleaned and analyzed.

In terms of financial resources available at the school level, the results show that the funds have increased from a baseline value of K9,000 in January 2006 before PSSP SFP interventions to K119,346 following PSSP SFP interventions by December 2006. This increase is contributed to a number of efforts by PSSP: SFP and the community including: injection of the small grants under PSSP: SFP to support schools initiatives, increased fundraising initiatives because of PSSP: SFP sensitization and mobilization, schools undertaking IGAs, and increased lobbying. PSSP: SFP recognizes that the baseline values may not be exact given the poor record keeping skills of the SMC/PTAs before PSSP: SFP, however the 13 fold increase indisputably represents a substantial increased in funds available to the schools to support education.

School and community midterm stocktaking

Given the project recently passed its midway point, PSSP: SFP management undertook a 3 day intensive supervision exercise reaching 17 schools. Two to three members of the management team met with the headteacher, teachers, SMC/PTA members, Village Headman, Cluster leader, MCM, PEA, AC, ZOC, and parents. Every school was found to be implementing interventions inspired by PSSP: SFP, but some schools were not functioning to the level desired. In some cases the communities and school were not collaborating effectively and miscommunications were leading to resentment and reduced support. PSSP: SFP used the opportunity to re-sensitize all parties on the need to focus on the child and that everyone's efforts mattered. Follow-up meetings were held at area level with district and zonal education officials (DEM's office, ZOC,

PEA, AC) and MCMs to share global findings and ensure the project addresses individual school challenges so all children benefit.

Data dissemination

PSSP: SFP believes that data is collected to inform and improve project processes. To do this effectively, the results need to be shared with various stakeholders from the grassroots to US Congress. PSSP: SFP has shared data in each of its quarterly reports and wrote two special data reports, one on baseline data collection and another on the baseline pupil assessment and has nearly finalized the follow-up reports for both. These have informed high level Ministry officials and USAID of where the project has started and progress to date. Teachers have received baseline data results during the cycles of trainings, which have motivated them to work harder, especially after seeing the low pupil performance compared to their counterparts in Dedza. PSSP: SFP has shared qualitative impact stories with the district through its area and project newsletters. This has had a ripple effect in the district as extension workers and community leaders/members are inspired by what their counterparts are doing in other parts of the district.

PSSP: SFP is planning to do a data dissemination piece in the next edition of the newsletter. A draft booklet for teachers has been made using Dowa related data to inform teachers how to use data to improve classroom practice. PSSP:SFP is looking into making a creative handout for schools and community leaders to make the data more accessible to less educated populations.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

As with any project, PSSP: SFP was not without its challenges. Some of these challenges may be beyond the direct control of the project, but are areas PSSP: SFP needs to strive to improve or put strategies in place to minimize possible negative impacts. Following are some of the major challenges PSSP: SFP has faced in Dowa its second year.

Implementation challenges	Proposed solutions
Approximately a fifth of the head teachers lack both basic school management and instructional leadership skills. Coordinating activities, confidentiality and decision making is a problem. Poor administration in some schools has left communities not willing to assist in the running of the schools	PSSP: SFP is working closely with the District to train the Heads in both effective school management and instructional leadership policies and strategies implementation. In addition, PSSP: SFP shared its observations about non-performing heads and the district is making efforts to either motivate or move out non-performing heads.
Observation showed that PCAR Standard 1 was not as effectively handled in its first year of implementation as PSSP: SFP hoped. As teachers were struggling to get better acquainted to the new curriculum, sometimes quality was compromised	PSSP: SFP will continue supporting the standard 1 teachers and this year will have the additional support of BLP/M. PSSP: SFP also will ensure that all PEAs and ZOCs are very familiar with the Standard 2 PCAR syllabi so that they can help the Standard 2 teachers to be better equipped to identify mastery gaps and identify possible solutions. PSSP: SFP has also identified role models that are demonstrating to others how to better handle Standard 2.
Teachers engage in code switching (mixing English and Chichewa in the same sentences) when teaching, which hampers learners ability to truly grasp English.	PSSP:SFP will continue to encourage teachers and learners to use English to improve their literacy skills through establishment of debate, quiz and reading clubs. Teachers will also be encouraged to use particular techniques that enhance their own and their learners' mastery of English language (e.g., role plays, dialogues, practice writing compositions, stories, and poems, and reciting poems among learners) with the aim of promoting literacy. Literacy training modules and resources have been designed to help teachers who have problems using and teaching English and their use as a reference will be encouraged. Over this next year, PSSP:SFP will continue to emphasize using English at school at all times, using English in training sessions and focus on strategies during INSETs and teacher conferences to help pupils understand as they make the transition to English as the language of instruction.
Some of the volunteer teachers for vocational skills are no longer as enthusiastic as they started due to pressure of their personal engagements while others offered their support in the hopes of financial gain, which when they realized that it was not coming they were disappointed.	More sensitization will continue to help communities identify committed and dedicated volunteers and also to rely on the learners that have picked the skill to assist teaching others.
Dowa is a farming district – tobacco is the primary commercial enterprise and subsistence farming is used to sustain many families. This year, faming tobacco has taken center stage with the good auction floor prices last year and presidential level promotion for even better profits this year. This is affecting involvement in school activities, worse still more teachers are engaged in growing tobacco. Concerns exist that learners who come to school may be used as labor to supplement the high demand or that parents may not send them to school to work in their own fields.	PSSP:SFP is aware of the potential scenario where learners could be the losers and has discussed concerns with the district and zonal teams. Sensitizations will continue at the grassroots level. MCMs will be mobilized to mitigate some of the risks and communities that are doing well will be recognized.

6.0 LESSONS LEARNED

- Both ‘gifted teachers’ and ‘teachers in formation’ bring out their best and are willing to discuss issues positively and map a way forward. PSSP: SFP has come up with several star performers (“ideal teachers”) because of this approach. Such teachers have been able to influence others to change their attitude towards their work. In addition, incorporation of ideal teachers in training other teachers has proved to be a motivation for those selected teachers, as well as their peers. Teachers are becoming more self-sufficient in identifying and addressing their teaching and learning needs.
- Gule Wamkulu have proven themselves as partners in education and should be capitalized on as an influential supporter for education. Schools are registering high enrolments and attendance, raising funds and involved in more development work as a result of the involvement and participation of Gule Wamkulu.
- With a small injection of funds into community initiatives, communities have proven they can make a significant difference as owners of the schools. There are more initiatives taking place in schools than ever before in Dowa. Initiatives like of vocational skill training, IGAs and school structure construction and renovation have sprouted up at all schools. Communities are capable of doing a lot on their own, with small grants supplying only 15-20% of a given initiative’s cost. More OVCs are being assisted; learning environment has improved with more learners learning under a roof and benefiting for more teachers located in houses at the school

7.0 CONCLUSION

At the kick off of the USAID funded PSSP: SFP in Dowa District, a seemingly insurmountable challenge that the project faced was how to climb the giant mountain of education related problems in the basic education sector: inadequate and poor infrastructure; a poorly skilled teaching force; low community participation in school development work; weak school management committees; inadequate teaching and learning materials; poor/inadequate support to orphans girls and other vulnerable children which led to frequent absenteeism and drop out of pupils from schools; and many other related problems.

Today, after two years of PSSP: SFP's implementation, the project has proven that with the right approaches that enable communities and schools to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for improving their schools educational standards, and relevant community and teacher training strategies, the mountain of educational problems is surmountable. This report has highlighted a number of strategies that PSSP SFP used and the activities it has implemented to achieve teacher and community ownership of and responsibility for their schools. Teachers have increasingly embraced child-centered classroom practices and applied them in the classroom. BLP/M promises to start a new era of literacy for Dowa's future. The community response has been extremely gratifying: molding and baking of bricks and constructing and rehabilitating school infrastructure (school blocks, teachers houses, libraries, administrative offices, pit latrines); engaging in a variety of fundraising and lobbying initiatives which has led to schools increasing their financial resource base; supporting OVCs through the teaching of local life skills and provision of their basic needs (schools uniforms, writing materials, moral support and counseling, monitoring of their attendance and performance) which has led to more pupils (including OVCs) coming to schools and enjoying learning; the training of MCMs has invigorated the once despondent and frustrated young men and women to take pride in contributing to the achievement of access and quality basic education. They have among others; introduced play parks, are following up on drop outs and carrying out drama performances to continue the community sensitization and mobilization process. The small grants initiative that PSSP SFP introduced has help communities to get support beyond what they could manage leading to construction of permanent structures, introduction of IGAs and purchase of their own materials and other resources like life skills materials.

With all these achievements, one may hesitate to ask the question *"Is it sustainable."* That is why PSSP: SFP's focus as it gets into year three of implementation is to, among other goals, continue focusing on sustainability issues for all the above-mentioned initiatives, and to support those communities that are lagging behind.

ANNEX A: SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES AND FIGURES**Table A1. Summary of small grants distributed in 2007**

ZONE	SCHOOL	AMOUNT RECEIVED	ACTIVITY(S) SUPPORTED
KATALIMA	NYAGRA	107,065.00	RENOVATION OF SCHOOL BLOCK
	BWEYA	83,880.00	RENOVATION OF SCHOOL BLOCK
	CHILINKHOLI	108,504.00	CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOL BLOCK
	MNDINGA	163,070.00	CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS HOUSE
	KATALIMA	57,230.00	ROOFING OF S/BLOCK
	KABULUZI	50,815.00	ROOFING OF TEACHERS HOUSE
	KALIKULU	150,982.00	TAILORING, TINSMITH, CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS HOUSE
CHIMBULI	MTSUKAMAKOZA	21,415.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, CARPENTRY, TAILORING
	CHIMBULI	113,600.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	GUDYU	74,990.00	CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS HOUSE
	MATSEWA	21,275.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK, TAILORING
	KASANGU	34,965.00	CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS HOUSE
	MSAMBAADZUKULU	27,325.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE
	KAPHIRI	54,781.00	RENOVATION OF S/BLOCK
	CHIKHOBWE	118,230.00	CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOL BLOCK
	CHIMKOKA	12,145.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK, TAILORING
	CHIWICHIWI	28,980.00	ROOFING OF S/BLOCK
	DZALO	135,087.00	CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOL BLOCK
	CHILINDE	152,165.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK, COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE
SENGA	MNDOLERA	90,845.00	RENOVATION OF SCHOOL BLOCK
	SIMAMNKHWALA	74,040.00	CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS HOUSE
	KAPUTALAMBWE	88,975.00	
CHIMUNGU	KABULUNGO	85,513.00	CONSTR. OF STAFF ROOM, S/BLOCK & T/HOUSE
	MTSIRO	90,000.00	CONSTR. T/HOUSE & TINSMITH
	MIWALE	126,399.00	CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS HOUSE
	CHIMUNGU		COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK & S/ROOM

ZONE	SCHOOL	AMOUNT RECEIVED	ACTIVITY(S) SUPPORTED
		80,045.00	
MVERA	MPHANDE	89,800.00	COMPLETION OF STAFF ROOM & TAILORING
	THONJE	26,015.00	TAILORING, TINSMITH
	CHING'AMBA	162,220.00	CONSTRUCTION OF SCHOOL BLOCK
	MVERA	90,030.00	CARPENTRY, TINSMITH, TAILORING
	TSIKITI	87,576.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	GOGO	90,847.00	ROOFING T/HOUSE, TAILORING, TINSMITH
	KAPITA	132,545.00	RENOVATION OF T/HOUSE, CARPENTRY
	BANGA	59,741.00	TAILORING, TINSMITH
	MADZIDZI	29,640.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK
	MBIRA	133,164.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK
	MTAYAFUKO	113,789.00	CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS HOUSE, TAILORING, TINSMITH
	MNKHALANJOKA	76,310.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	MVERA MDF	91,205.00	RENOVATION OF S/BLOCK, LIBRARY EXTENSION
CHIGUDU	MAIWE	61,090.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	MSAMBAIMFA	16,000.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	CHINGONDO	164,229.76	
	MATANDA	427,485.00	CONSTRUCTION OF 2 S/BLOCKS, T/HOUSE
	MWANGALA	137,995.00	CONSTRUCTION OF 15 PIT LATRINES
	MPATAWADZOMBE	70,399.00	CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS HOUSE
	CHAMWAVI	73,778.00	CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHERS HOUSE
	MKANGA	152,885.00	CONSTRUCTION OF LIBRARY
	MTENTHERA	116,650.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	NAKONDWA	57,353.00	CONSTRUCTION OF LIBRARY
	THEDZE	73,064.00	CONSTRUCTION OF 2 T/HOUSE
	KAPATAMOYO	122,993.00	CONSTRUCTION OF LIBRARY
KANYENJE	MGONA	70,685.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	PHELENI		COMPLETION OF 2 TEACHERS HOUSES

ZONE	SCHOOL	AMOUNT RECEIVED	ACTIVITY(S) SUPPORTED
		75,141.25	
	CHIGWERE	103,624.25	CONSTRUCTION OF 2 T/HOUSE
	CHANKHUNGU	51,922.88	CONSTRUCTION OF 2 T/HOUSE
KAYEMBE	DAIMONI	89,080.00	RENOVATION OF 3 T/HOUSES
	CHIKANKHA	103,750.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	THIWI	108,465.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	MLENGWE	87,704.00	COMPLETION OF 2 T/HOUSES, TAILORING
	MUNDUNDU	99,820.00	TAILORING, TINSMITH
	CHIMBALU	179,953.38	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	CHULU	110,147.51	COMPLETION OF 2 T/HOUSES, TAILORING, TINSMITH
	KAWALE	118,616.00	COMPLETION OF 2 T/HOUSES, TAILORING, CARPENTRY
	KALULU	90,050.00	COMPLETION OF 3 T/HOUSES, TINSMITH
	MSOKONEZI	114,101.13	COMPLETION OF 2 T/HOUSES, TAILORING, TINSMITH, CARPENTRY
NALUNGA	KABADWA	66,554.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	KATONA	55,251.60	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	KANYANYATA	49,602.65	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, GARDEN, TAILORING
	KAOMBA	66,610.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE
	KAVUU	81,380.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE, TINSMITH
KAMPHENGA	MILORE	55,948.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE, TINSMITH
	MDANJIRI	88,975.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE
	CHISEPO	179,950.00	CONSTRUCTION OF 2 T/HOUSES
	CHILIMMIMBA	59,919.60	CONSTRUCTION OF 2 T/HOUSES
	MKANIRE	71,586.50	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSES
	MDUKU	163,984.80	CONSTRUCTION OF 3 T/HOUSES
	LONGWE	129,721.00	RENOVATION OF S/BLOCK
MADISI	CHIKWAVE	62,679.60	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	CHAKHAZA	70,590.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	MBAYO		CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK

ZONE	SCHOOL	AMOUNT RECEIVED	ACTIVITY(S) SUPPORTED
		134,996.30	
	MTANILA	129,979.00	RENOVATION OF T/HOUSE
	MADISI	86,885.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
NALUNGA	KAOMBA	52,070.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	KAVUU	58,500.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSES
	KAMBEWA	64,470.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSES
	NALUNGA	89,350.00	RENOVATION OF T/HOUSE
	WINDU	60,180.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	MTENGENJI	19,300.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
MADISI	MALUNJE	91,558.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TINSMITH, TAILORING
	NAUCHI	68,876.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TINSMITH, TAILORING
	CHANDAWE	78,419.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TINSMITH, TAILORING
	KABWINJA	49,935.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSES
	CHIZOLOWONDO	41,190.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	MAGANTHA	59,947.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK, TAILORING
	NAMBAMBA	113,615.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TINSMITH, TAILORING
	MNDUNJE	85,770.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE, TINSMITH
	SIMBI	60,000.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK, CARPENTRY
	MBAWA	89,545.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	M'TITI	59,965.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	MKUYU	59,955.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, TINSMITH
	MPHUDZU	89,672.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK, TINSMITH
BOMA	MWEZOWALA	112,672.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE, CARPENTRY
	KONGWE 1	88,369.00	TAILORING, TINSMITH
	CHIBWANA	73,631.70	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	KASATSI	117,570.00	RENOVATION OF S/BLOCK, TAILORING
	MPONDA	94,056.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	KAFUMPHE		COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK

ZONE	SCHOOL	AMOUNT RECEIVED	ACTIVITY(S) SUPPORTED
		60,000.00	
	NAMATONJE	110,732.38	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	TSACHE	104,894.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
MVERA	MKHALANJOKA	2,400.00	RABBIT REARING
	BANGA	16,500.00	PIG REARING
MPONELA	NYENGERE	160,385.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING, PIG REARING
	CHIBWEZA	156,120.00	CONSTRUCTION OF 2 T/HOUSES, TINSMITH
	NAMWILI	107,980.00	CONSTRUCTION OF LIBRARY, TAILORING
	CHILIMA	59,380.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	MPONELA II	180,000.00	CONSTRUCTION OF LIBRARY, TAILORING, CARPENTRY
	MPHIMBI	108,365.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	SAMUEL	222,420.00	CONSTRUCTION OF 3 T/HOUSES
	DZOOLE	89,931.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING, TINSMITH
	MALAMBO	281,440.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	MPONELA	15,000.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE
	GUDYU	15,000.00	COMPLETION OF LIBRARY
SENGA	KALONGA	102,586.50	RENOVATION OF T/HOUSE
	CHINYIMBO	162,754.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	SENGA	103,024.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	SIDZE	60,398.50	RENOVATION OF T/HOUSE
	MNDOLERA	41,980.00	RENOVATION OF S/BLOCK
	CHAKHALA	192,292.60	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK, COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE
	CHUNZU	159,083.60	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	NG'OZI	205,900.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	MTUNTHAMA	195,464.60	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSES
	FUNSANI	99,395.20	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSES, CARPENTRY
	MANONDO	68,948.00	RENOVATION OF T/HOUSE
	MBALAME		RENOVATION OF S/BLOCK, TAILORING

ZONE	SCHOOL	AMOUNT RECEIVED	ACTIVITY(S) SUPPORTED
		106,327.50	
CHIMBULI	CHILINDE	78,340.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK
	KATENGEZA	90,880.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSES
	CHIKHOBWE	84,195.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK
	CHINKHWIRI	126,168.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK, TAILORING
	CHIWICHIWI	94,480.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK, TAILORING
	MTSUKAMAKOZA	97,770.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK
	MATSEWA	138,831.50	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK
	SUNGENI	216,305.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	CHIMKOKA	99,860.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK
	DZALO	14,780.00	COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE
	BOWE	195,664.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	KATUNTHA	75,888.50	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK, TAILORING
	KACHIPANDE	130,000.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK
	KASANGU	195,676.00	ROOFING T/HOUSE, CONSTRUCTION OF LIBRARY, COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK
MADISI	MBAYO	181,540.00	ROOFING 2 S/BLOCKS
	KABWINJA	123,601.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	MKHOBOLA	60,000.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK
CHIGUDU	MAIWE	201,005.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	NAKONDWA	99,985.00	COMPLETION OF LIBRARY
	LINGADZIMLIMI	65,355.00	CONSTRUCTION OF LIBRARY
	CHIBANZI	129,200.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	BWEVU	145,200.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	MSAMBAIMFA	149,287.00	CONSTRUCTION OF S/BLOCK
	CHIGUDU	135,854.00	CONSTRUCTION OF PITLATRINES
KATALIMA	CHILIPHIZA	75,555.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	KAPHIRI	179,995.00	CONSTRUCTION & RENOVATION OF T/HOUSE, TINSMITH
	NGALA		COMPLETION OF T/HOUSE

ZONE	SCHOOL	AMOUNT RECEIVED	ACTIVITY(S) SUPPORTED
		90,760.00	
	KABULUZI	89,925.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	MNDINGA	16,930.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	CHILINKHOLI	120,000.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK
	KATSUKA	199,845.00	CONSTRUCTION OF 5 T/HOUSE
	KAMONGO	90,260.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE, TAILORING
	TCHALE	82,115.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	MAMBALA	110,130.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
KAYEMBE	NAMBAMBA	3,500.00	PIG REARING
CHIMUNGU	MAUNI	90,000.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	MTANDAWAGALU	74,232.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
	KANYANGALA	135,850.00	CONSTRUCTION OF 2 T/HOUSES
	KOLOWILO	75,940.00	DESKS REPAIRING
	LONGWANI	98,747.00	PIG REARING, CARPENTRY, RENOVATION OF S/BLOCK
	CHIVUTWE	95,000.00	CONSTRUCTION & RENOVATION OF T/HOUSE, TINSMITH
	TCHAWALE	75,805.00	COMPLETION OF S/BLOCK, PIG REARING
	CHAMBIDZI	112,784.00	CONSTRUCTION & RENOVATION OF T/HOUSE, TINSMITH
	MAFOSHA	65,325.00	CONSTRUCTION OF T/HOUSE
TOTAL		17,546,678.79	

Table A2. Some examples of role models identified and used in schools, clusters and zones in 2007

Role Model	Zone	School	Venue & Activity	Recognized for:
V.H. Sonkhwe and Chidowoka	Katalima	Nyagra	Recognised at school closing ceremony	Rewarding best performers in their villages
Naison Saizi, Cluster leader for James cluster	Boma	James	School closing	Encouraging SMCs/PTAs in various initiatives
Ms. Joyce Chiputu, Teacher	Boma	Mdunje	Used during cycle training TOT to demonstrate at Mponela	Doing very well on continuous assessment in std 1
V.H. Chinguwo	Boma	Konngwe II	At the area meeting	Constructing a Mdindo school block now in use by std 6 learners
Kabulungo school	Chimungu	Kabulungo	Being visited by other schools	Good classroom practice, creation & use of TALULAR, Community involvement, secondary school selection etc
Chimungu school	Chimungu	Chimungu	Being visited by other schools, clusters and zones to admire good practices	Good classroom practice, creation & use of TALULAR, Community involvement, change of teacher mind set etc
Mrs. Kampakeni- Head teacher and Mr. A. Mavuka	Chigudu	Chibanzi and Kapatamoyo	Mwangala school and Chigudu TDC respectively to facilitate TALULAR production	Effective leadership
Mr. Saidi- Cluster leader	Chigudu	Ntentera	Thedze cluster enlightening the school and community efforts in his cluster	Performing cluster leader in the zone
Mr. Maseko	Chgudu	Chibanzi	Chigudu TDC during cycle training	Best practices in teaching math's using TALULAR
GVH Mtanda	Chigudu	Chigudu	Mvera zone	Best leadership in community involvement
Lucy Kapeta, Rhoda Chimlozi of St. Mathis, Mr. Baluwa, Chimwaza and G. Chambwinja of Katundu school and Abraham Chautsi and Mr. Kandioni on Mbindo	Kanyenje	St. Mathias, Katundu and Mbindo	Utilised during cluster trainings and teacher conferences	Effective use of participatory teaching and learning practices
Mr. H. Kasalika head teacher Natola CDSS	Madisi	Nambamba	Utilised at a zonal open day at Nambamba school	His life and achievements through hard work

Role Model	Zone	School	Venue & Activity	Recognized for:
Mr. Robert Chipande a member of special group-Gule Wamkulu	Madisi	Mtiti, Mbayo, Chakhaza, Malunje	During Nambamba open day	Efforts being made to make teaching and learning in schools much easier
Patrick Mbulunde a teacher at Msipe school	Mvera	Msipe school	During cluster trainings and teacher conferences in Kapita zone	Effective use of participatory skills
Mr. Jeremani a special group in Mphande cluster	Mvera	Mphande cluster	During cluster open day	Supporting OVCs
Lufe school teachers	Mvera	Lufe school	Schools, clusters and zones from all over the district have been flocking to Lufe	Production, use and storage of TALULAR-Bank
Chamitu school	Kayembe zone	Chamitu	Used during cluster meetings and open days	Best kept school in most aspects regardless of being in a remote location
Brown Chilapondwa teacher from Chimkoka cluster	Chimbuli	Chimkoka cluster	Utilized during Gudyu cluster training	Good facilitation in English and math's

Table A3. Some examples of open days for schools, clusters and zones in 2007

Activity	Zone	School	Venue	Outreach					
				Children		Adults		Totals	
				F	M	F	M	F	M
Zonal Open Day-Display of teacher, learners, cluster leaders, MCMs and other target group activities & initiatives	Nalunga	All	Nalunga TDC	-	-	-	-	1, 467	554
Zonal Open Day- Rewarding role models & fundraising	Senga	All	Senga TDC	245	356	94	46	339	402
Zonal Open Day- fundraising	Chigudu	All	Chigudu TDC	2, 000	1, 500	219	382	2, 219	1, 882
School open days	Kayembe	Kayembe, Mdika, Sindeya & Chikankha	At the schools	-	-	-	-	-	-
Zonal Open Day- fundraising	Kanyeje	All	Chankhungu TDC	-	-	-	-	-	-
School open day- Donation of 28 school uniforms to OVCs	Msadelere	Msadelera school	Msadelera school	-	-	-	-	-	-
School open days	Mponela	Malambo, Nkhamanga, Dzoole	At the schools	-	-	-	-	-	-
School open days- presentation of school uniforms to 17 OVCs	Boma	Kongwe 1	Kongwe 1	-	-	-	-	-	-
School open day- display of best practices	Chimungu	Chimungu	At the school	520	450	15	25	535	475
School open day- display of best practices	Chimungu	Tchawale	At the school	216	351	29	37	245	388
School open day- display of best practices	Chimungu	Chambidzi	At the school	327	318	12	26	339	344
School open day- display of best practices	Chimungu	Kabulungo	At the school	236	223	19	32	255	255

Activity	Zone	School	Venue	Outreach					
				Children		Adults		Totals	
				F	M	F	M	F	M
School Open Day-fundraising	Chigudu	Chakhala, Manondo, Chinyimbo, Simankhwala, Karonga, Senga, Chunzu, Mtunthama, Mndolera, Kaputalambwe	At the schools	-	-	-	-	723	1, 560
Cluster open day	Madisi	Nambamba	All schools in the cluster	2, 021	2, 119	210	115	2, 231	2, 234
School open days	Madisi	Magantha, Malunje, Chakhaza and Simbi	At the schools	1, 083	991	173	161	1, 256	1, 152
Zonal open day	Mvera	Mvera MDF	All schools in the zone	581	413	134	107	715	520
Cluster Open day	Mvera	Mphande Cluster	All schools in the cluster	301	226	168	110	469	336
School open day	Mvera	Mvera F.P	At the school	269	272	253	216	522	488
Zonal open day	Katalima	All schools	At the TDC	1, 104	1, 275	513	768	1, 617	2, 043

Table A4. Some examples of education and exchange visits for schools, clusters and zones in 2007

Activity	Zone	School	Destination	Outreach					
				Learners		Adults		Totals	
				F	M	F	M	F	M
Exchange visit	Boma		Senga zone	-	-	-	10	-	10
Learners Competitions	Boma	James	Chimungu school	-	-	-	-	-	-
Learners Competitions	Boma	Mponda	Mtenje in Kanyenje zone	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exchange visit	Kayembe		Lufe school in Mvera zone	-	-	-	13	-	13
Exchange visit	Chigudu		Lufe school in Mvera zone	-	-	3	7	3	7
Exchange visit on TALULAR, Vocational skills	Kamphenga		Kayembe	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exchange visit on TALULAR	Katalima	Katalima	Nyagra school in Katalima	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education Visit	Mponela	Mphimbi	Salima- Lake Malawi	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education visit to National Park	Chimungu	Tchawale	Kasungu National Park	18	16	3	8	21	32
Learners Competitions	Chimungu	Chimungu	Senga school in Senga zone	-	-	-	-	-	-
Learners Competitions	Chimungu	Chimungu	James school in Boma zone	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exchange visit	Chimungu	Chimungu	Kabulungo school in Chimungu zone	8	8	1	2	9	10
Exchange visit	Chimungu	Mtsilo	Chambidzi in Chimungu zone	17	24	4	5	21	29
Exchange visit	Chimungu	Mtsilo	Mafosha in Chimungu zone	32	18	1	3	33	21
Education visit to Lilongwe	Chimungu	Chimungu	Lilongwe- ZODIAK, Kamuzu Mausoleum, Kamuzu Airport & Lilongwe nature sanctuary	23	24	2	2	25	26
Education visit to Lilongwe	Mponela	Mpatsa	Lilongwe- ZODIAK, Kamuzu Mausoleum, Kamuzu Airport & Lilongwe nature sanctuary	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exchange visit and learners competition	Kamphenga	Mkanile	Madisi	-	-	-	-	-	-
Learner competitions	Boma	Mponda	Kasatsi school in Boma zone	-	-	-	-	-	-
Learner competitions Girl soccer	Boma	James	Mvera Secondary school	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exchange visit	Kanyenje	Kanyenje	Kalewa school	-	-	-	-	-	-

Activity	Zone	School	Destination	Outreach					
				Learners		Adults		Totals	
				F	M	F	M	F	M
Education visit to a fish pond	Nalunga		Mapilani fish pond						
Exchange visit on TALULAR	Senga	Mbalame	Chivala	0	0	4	8	4	8
Exchange visit on how English std 6 & Chichewa std 1 is taught	Senga	Kalonga	Simankhwalwa & Funsani	0	0	4	5	4	5
Senga head teacher	Senga	Senga	Manondo & Chakhala	0	0	0	1	0	1
Exchange visit on learning from others	Senga	Sidze	Chivala	0	0	6	16	6	16
Education visit- Head & deputy head teachers	Senga	All schools	Mangochi & Liwonde National Park	0	0	3	32	3	32
Exchange visit to share best practices	Kanyenje	All schools rep.	Senga zone	0	0	1	12	1	12
Exchange visit to share best practices- std 8 teacher	Kanyenje	St. Mathias	Mvera school	0	0	0	1	0	1
Exchange visit to learn good practices	Kanyenje	Katundu school	St. Mathias	0	0	0	2	0	2
Education visit- to learn about shipping	Kanyenje	Chankhungu	Chipoka Harbour	-	-	-	-	48	42
Education visit- to learn about fisheries	Kanyenje	St. Mathias	Mphwepwe Fisheries	-	-	-	-	32	30
Education visit of Mtanila head teacher to witness an open day	Madisi	Mtanila	Kabulungo school open day in Chimungu zone	-	-	-	1	0	1
Exchange visit- teachers, SMC/PTA,	Mvera	Tsikiti, Mpala, Banga, Kawangwi	Thonje school to learn best practices	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exchange visit of SMC/PTA to learn about community initiatives	Mvera	Kalewa, Tsikiti	Mvera MDF	-	-	-	-	-	-
Learner competitions	Kayembe	Mlengwe	Manthimba school in the same zone	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education visit to learn about lobbying skills	Chimbuli	Selected teachers	Mbeleketete- Englishman school	-	-	-	7	-	7
Exchange visit to a private school	Katalima	Chimwendo	St. Francis Private school in Madisi	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table A5. Details of media coverage in 2007

Program	Channel	Theme/Activity	Publicity Dates
News bulletins (12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MBC Radio I ▪ ZBS Radio ▪ Power 101 	- US Ambassador's field visit– M'bindo School - SIP/ZIP launch–Army Cluster - Cycle 4 TOT - Review & Re-planning - Kongwe Open Day–Boma Zone - Katalima & Kanyenje Open Days - Mponela Zone Big Walk - Chakhala SIP launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ February 7-8, 2007 ▪ February 8, 2007 ▪ February 7, 2006 ▪ February 6-7, 2007 ▪ February 8, 2007 ▪ March 18, 2007 ▪ March 19, 2007 ▪ March 19, 2007 ▪ March 31, 2007 ▪ March 30-31, 2007 ▪ April 1, 2007 ▪ April 2, 2007 ▪ May 21, 2007 ▪ May 19-20, 2007 ▪ May 21, 2007 ▪ May 25-27, 2007
News bulletins (8)			
News bulletins (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Star FM 	- Gule Wamkulu Festival –Mvera Zone - New USAID CTO visit to Chimkoka TDC –Chimbuli Zone “National Day of Education” - US Deputy Ambassador's visit to Gudyu School –Chimbuli Zone “New School Block Handovers” - Awareness Campaign –Media Coverage at Kambulu & Kamvuu Schools –Nalunga Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ July 12-13, 2007 ▪ July 12-13, 2007 ▪ July 20, 2007 ▪ July 20, 2007 ▪ July 20, 2007 ▪ August 3, 2007 ▪ August 2-3, 2007 ▪ August 26-27, 2007 ▪ August 27, 2007
News bulletins (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MBC ▪ ZBS 	- Mobile Teacher Training Troupe activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ October, 2007
News bulletins (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MBC ▪ ZBS 	- GVH Kaundama's initiative at Msadelera School in Kanyenje Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ November, 2007
News bulletin (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TVM 'Nkhani mwa Chindunji' 	- US Ambassador's field visit– M'bindo School - ZIP/SIP launch–Army Cluster - Review & Re-planning workshop - Katalima/Kanyenje Open Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ February 10-11, 2007 ▪ February 8, 2007 ▪ February 25-26, 2007 ▪ April 5, 2007
News bulletin (1) 'Nkhani mwa Chindunji' (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TVM 	- US Deputy Ambassador's visit to Gudyu School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ August 7-9, 2007

Mode	Paper	Headlines/Titles	Publicity Dates
Hard news article (1)	▪ The Daily Times	- 'Program Helps Improve Education in Dowa' –Review	▪ March 27, 2007, pp. 4
Hard news article (1)		- 'Pupil Enrolment Increases in Dowa' –Review	▪ March 28-29, 2007, pp. 6
Feature articles (1)	▪ The Guardian		▪ Feb. 12-13, 2007 pp. 9
Feature article (1)	▪ The Guardian	- 'Communities Make a Difference in School Management'	
	▪ -The Guardian	- 'Dowa Schools Reap from PSSP'	▪ March 14-15, 2007, pp. 8
Hard news article(1)	▪ The Daily Times	- 'Dowa North East MP Hails PSSP' (Kongwe Open Day–Boma Zone)	▪ April 2-3, 2007 pp. 4
Hard news article(1)	▪ The Guardian	- 'Education Standards Improve in Dowa'	▪ April 4-5, 2007, pp. 3
Hard news article(1)	▪ The Daily Times	- 'Dowa Parents, Teachers in Fundraising Campaign'	▪ May 23, 2007, pp 4.
Hard news article (1)	▪ The Guardian	- 'Educate Every Child for Better Future Regardless of his/her Status'	▪ May 21-22, 2007, pp. 6
'Hard news' (1)	▪ The Guardian	- 'Gule Wamkulu in Education Drive'	▪ July 16-17, 2007 pp. 5
'Feature' (1)	▪ The Guardian	- 'Gule Wamkulu Engages a Literacy Gear'	▪ July 25-26, 2007 pp. 12
Nil	▪ The Daily Times ▪ The Nation	- New USAID CTO visit to Chimkoka TDC –Chimbuli Zone "National Day of Education"	▪ Not featured
'Hard news' (1)	▪ The Guardian	- US Deputy Ambassador's visit to Gudyu School –Chimbuli Zone "School block handover"	▪ August 6-7, 2007, pp. 6
'Hard news' (1)	▪ The Guardian	- Awareness Campaign –Media Coverage at Kambulu & Kamvuu Schools –Nalunga Zone	▪ August 27-28, 2007
'Hard news' (1)	▪ The Daily Times	- Mobile Teacher Training Troupe activities	▪ October, 2007
'Hard news' (1)	▪ - The Guardian		
'Hard news' (2)	▪ The Guardian	- GVH Kaundama's initiative at Msadelera School in Kanyenje Zone	▪ November, 2007

Table A6. Sample Size for Standard 1 Chichewa, Standard 6 English and Math Assessments, in 2006 and 2007

	2006 Baseline		2007 Follow-up	
	# of School	# of learners	# of School	# of learners
<u>Standard 1 Chichewa</u>				
Intervention (Dowa)	59	354	59	354
Comparison (Dedza)	40	240	40	240
<u>Standard 6 English</u>				
Intervention (Dowa)	59	1372	59	1616
Comparison (Dedza)	40	1084	40	1082
<u>Standard 6 Math</u>				
Intervention (Dowa)	59	1372	59	1616
Comparison (Dedza)	40	1084	40	1082

Table A7. Standard 1 Chichewa - Percentage of pupils passing the test

	Intervention (Dowa)	Comparison (Dedza)
<u>2006</u>		
Fail (Minimal)	74.9%	72.9%
Pass (Passing + Advanced)	25.1%	27.1%
<u>2007</u>		
Fail (Minimal)	55.9%	90.4%
Pass (Passing + Advanced)	44.1%	9.6%
<u>2006 - 2007 Comparison</u>		
Pass (Passing + Advanced)	↑ 19.0%	↓ 17.5%

Table A8. Standard 1 Chichewa - Percentage of pupils passing the test by gender

	Intervention (Dowa)		Comparison (Dedza)	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
<u>2006</u>				
Fail (Minimal)	75.0%	74.7%	75.0%	70.7%
Pass (Passing + Advanced)	25.0%	25.3%	25.0%	29.3%
<u>2007</u>				
Fail (Minimal)	59.1%	52.8%	88.5%	92.4%
Pass (Passing + Advanced)	40.9%	47.2%	11.4%	7.6%
<u>2006-2007 Comparison</u>				
Pass (Passing + Advanced)	↑ 15.9%	↑ 21.9%	↓ 13.5%	↓ 21.7%

Figure A1. Percentage of Standard 1 Pupils at Chichewa Literacy Performance Levels by District in 2006 and 2007

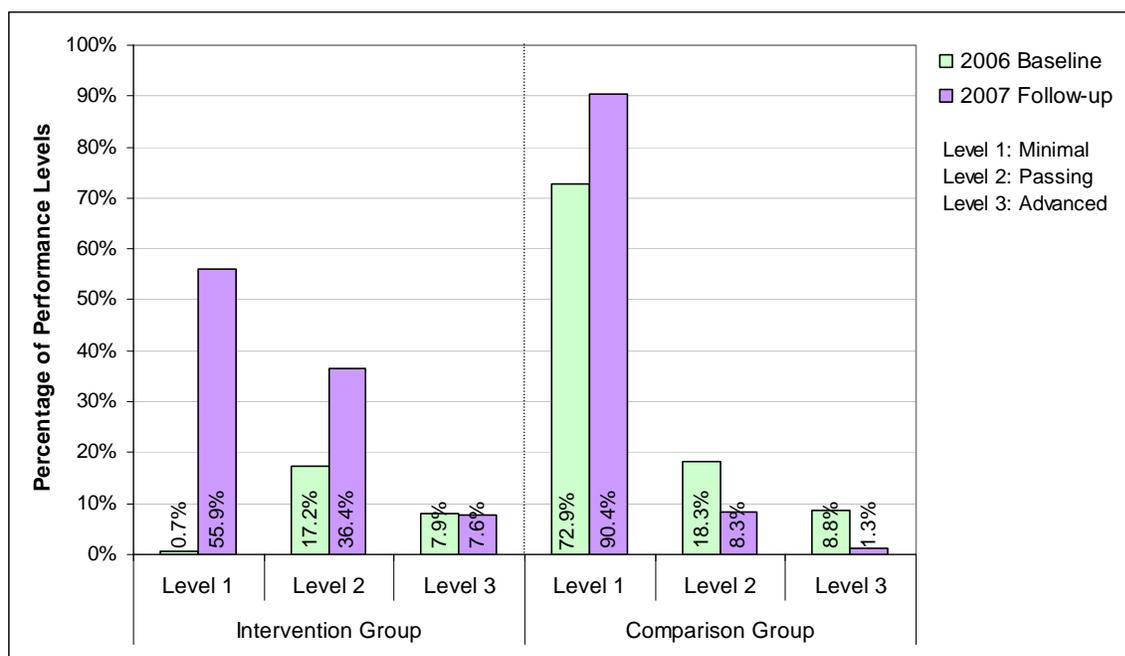


Table A9. Standard 6 - Percentage of pupils by proficiency level on English test

	Intervention (Dowa)	Comparison (Dedza)
2006		
Fail (Minimal + Needs Improvement)	79.1%	63.7%
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	20.8%	36.3%
2007		
Fail (Minimal + Needs Improvement)	57.5%	59.9%
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	42.5%	40.1%
2006-2007 Comparison		
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	↑ 21.6%	↑ 3.8%

Table A10. Standard 6 - Percentage of pupils by proficiency level on English test by gender

	Intervention (Dowa)		Comparison (Dedza)	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
2006				
Fail (Minimal + Needs Improvement)	78.1%	80.1%	62.0%	65.4%
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	21.9%	19.9%	38.0%	34.6%
2007				
Fail (Minimal + Needs Improvement)	53.0%	62.3%	56.0%	63.7%
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	47.0%	37.7%	44.0%	36.3%
2006-2007 Comparison				
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	↑ 25.1%	↑ 17.8%	↑ 6.0%	↑ 1.7%

Figure A2. Percentage of Standard 6 Pupils at English Performance Levels by District in 2006 and 2007

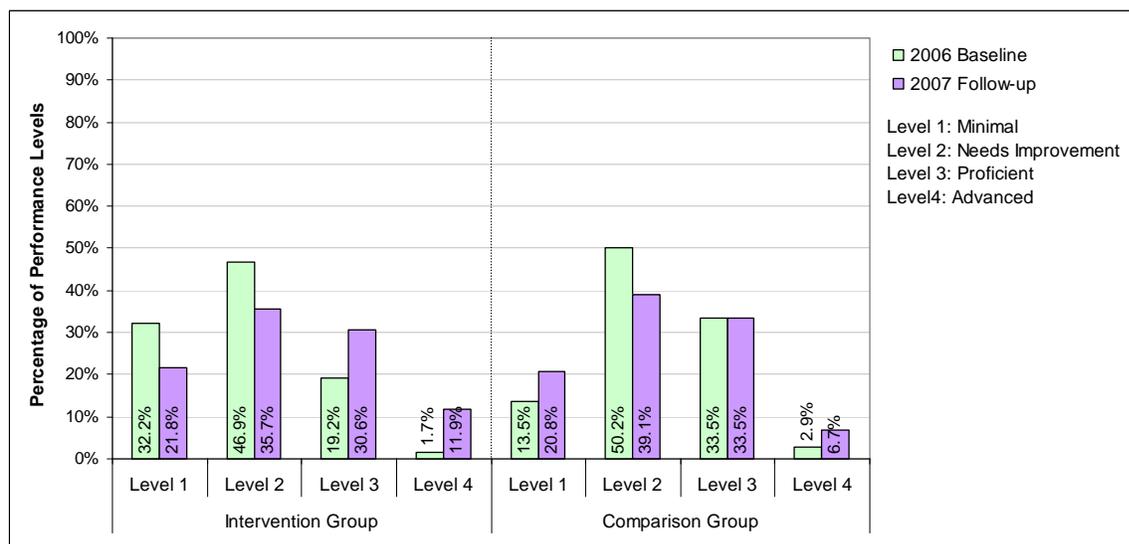


Table A11. Standard 6 – Percentage of pupils by proficiency level on Mathematics test

	Intervention (Dowa)	Comparison (Dedza)
2006		
Fail (Minimal + Needs Improvement)	75.5%	63.4%
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	24.6%	36.6%
2007		
Fail (Minimal + Needs Improvement)	44.5%	47.1%
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	55.5%	52.9%
2006-2007 Comparison		
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	↑ 31.0%	↑ 16.3%

Table A12. Standard 6 - Percentage of pupils by proficiency level on Mathematics test by sex

	Intervention (Dowa)		Comparison (Dedza)	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
2006				
Fail (Minimal + Needs Improvement)	71.9%	78.7%	57.7%	69.6%
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	28.0%	21.3%	42.4%	30.4%
2007				
Fail (Minimal + Needs Improvement)	36.9%	52.6%	36.3%	57.7%
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	63.1%	47.4%	63.7%	42.3%
2006-2007 Comparison				
Pass (Proficient + Advanced)	↑ 35.0%	↑ 26.1%	↑ 21.4%	↑ 11.9%

Figure A3. Percentage of Standard 6 Pupils at Math Performance Levels by District in 2006 and 2007

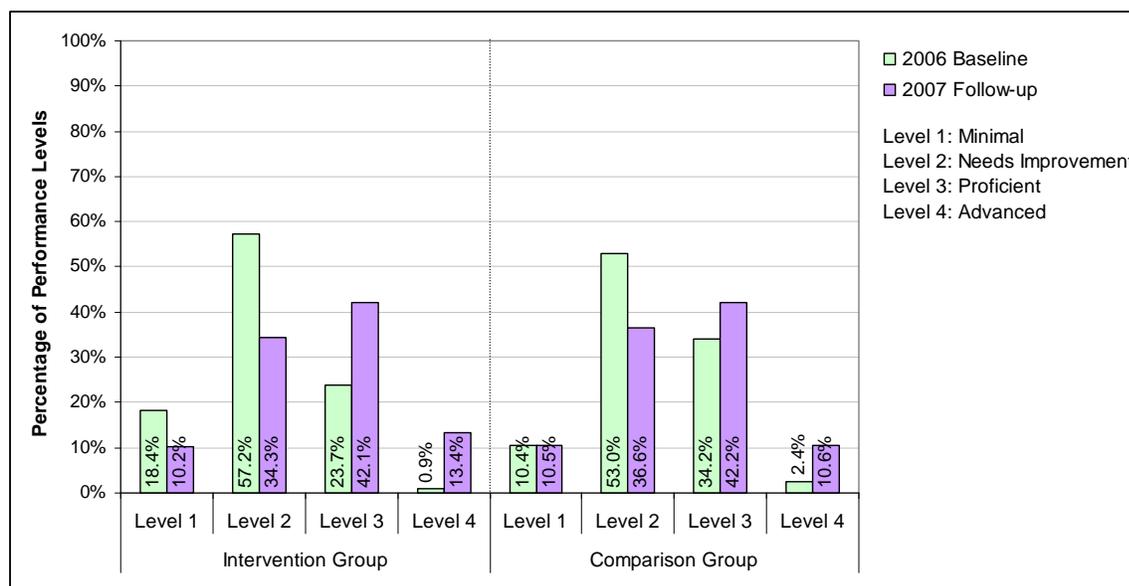


Table A13. Number of enrolled learners per zone July 2006 between February 2006 and February 2007

Ser. #	Zone	Number of learners February 2006			Number of learners February 2007			Change from February 2006 to February 2007
		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	
1.	Boma	5,952	6,342	12,294	6,532	6,948	13,480	Gained 1,186
2.	Chigudu	3,949	4,268	8,217	4,458	4,617	9,075	Gained 858
3.	Chimbuli	4,509	4,326	8,835	5,645	5,737	11,382	Gained 2,547
4.	Chimungu	3,647	3,895	7,542	4,294	4,487	8,781	Gained 1,239
5.	Kamphenga	3,853	4,215	8,068	4,101	4,294	8,395	Gained 327
6.	Kanyenje	3,744	4,294	8,038	4,065	4,451	8,516	Gained 478
7.	Katalima	4,154	4,281	8,435	4,995	5,076	10,071	Gained 1,636
8.	Kayembe	6,625	6,862	13,487	7,124	7,519	14,643	Gained 1,156
9.	Madisi	5,313	6,298	11,611	5,564	5,987	11,551	Lost 60
10.	Mponela	7,347	7,464	14,811	7,702	8,100	15,802	Gained 991
11.	Mvera	4,642	4,764	9,406	5,844	5,904	11,748	Gained 2,342
12.	Nalunga	2,225	2,465	4,690	2,718	2,849	5,567	Gained 877
13.	Senga	6,075	6,518	12,593	6,739	7,218	13,957	Gained 1,364
Total		62,035	65,992	128,027	69,781	73,187	142,968	Gained 14,941

Table A14. Number of enrolled learners per zone July 2006

Serial #	Zone name	Number of learners – July 2006		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1	Boma	6,192	6,672	12,864
2	Chigudu	3,978	4,326	8,304
3	Chimbuli	5,189	5,388	10,577
4	Chimungu	3,659	4,029	7,688
5	Kaphenga	4,124	4,359	8,483
6	Kanyenje	3,985	4,392	8,377
7	Katalima	4,276	4,401	8,677
8	Kayembe	6,753	7,142	13,895
9	Madisi	4,912	5,274	10,186
10	Mponela	7,554	7,789	15,343
11	Mvera	5,658	5,839	11,497
12	Nalunga	2,663	2,818	5,481
13	Senga	6,340	6,860	13,200
Total		65,283	69,289	134,572

Table A15. Number of enrolled learners per zone July 2007

Serial #	Zone	Number of learners – July 2007		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1	Boma	3,495	3,669	7,164
2	Chibwata	3,611	3,786	7,397
3	Chigudu	3,620	3,666	7,286
4	Chimbuli	5,756	6,548	12,304
5	Chimungu	4,297	4,521	8,818
6	Chisepo	2,907	3,142	6,049
7	Dzoole	3,902	3,989	7,891
8	Kabwinja	2,977	3,372	6,349
9	Kafumpe	2,253	2,423	4,676
10	Kaphenga	3,116	3,263	6,379
11	Kanyenje	3,100	3,245	6,345
12	Kapita	2,442	2,376	4,818
13	Katalima	4,012	3,824	7,836
14	Kayembe	4,826	5,035	9,861
15	Madisi	3,519	3,592	7,111
16	Mponela	5,938	6,103	12,041
17	Mvera	3,552	3,559	7,111
18	Nalunga	2,839	2,746	5,585
19	Senga	6,633	7,131	13,764
Total		72,795	75,990	148,785

Table A16. Pupil dropout rate by standard for 2006 and 2007, by sex

		2006	2007	Gain
Standard 1	Boys	19.6	14.8	-4.8
	Girls	18.5	18.32	-0.18
	Total	19.0	16.64	-2.36
Standard 2	Boys	1.8	-0.84	-2.64
	Girls	5.8	-1.26	-7.06
	Total	3.9	-1.06	-4.96
Standard 3	Boys	15.0	4.24	-10.76
	Girls	14.7	7.54	-7.16
	Total	14.9	5.94	-8.96
Standard 4	Boys	17.1	10.18	-6.92
	Girls	17.4	9.6	-7.8
	Total	17.2	9.89	-7.31
Standard 5	Boys	16.9	11.75	-5.15
	Girls	11.7	9.98	-1.72
	Total	14.2	10.84	-3.36
Standard 6	Boys	17.5	8.15	-9.35
	Girls	15.6	13.21	-2.39
	Total	16.6	10.74	-5.86
Standard 7	Boys	12.8	7.7	-5.1
	Girls	15.3	17.5	2.2
	Total	14.0	12.69	-1.31
Standard 8	Boys	15.1	43.61	28.51
	Girls	31.7	53.43	21.73
	Total	22.7	48.33	25.63
Mean ¹	Boys	14.5	12.4	-2.1
	Girls	16.3	16.0	-0.3
	Total	15.3	14.3	-1

*Source data: EMIS 2007

¹ PSSP:SFP used source data from EMIS to collect dropout, repetition and completion data. However, EMIS calculates these figures by standard and do not overall. When seeking their raw data, EMIS indicated it was not possible to get it and that most organizations calculate a mean of means. PSSP:SFP is seeking alternatives given the challenges of making overall calculations using that method.

Table A17 Pupil repetition rate for 2006 and 2007, by sex

		2006	2007	Gain
Standard 1	Boys	29.5	30.2	0.7
	Girls	28.8	27.4	-1.4
	Total	29.1	28.7	-0.4
Standard 2	Boys	25.0	25.1	0.1
	Girls	21.9	24.6	2.7
	Total	23.4	24.8	1.4
Standard 3	Boys	25.0	30.2	5.2
	Girls	24.7	25.2	0.5
	Total	24.8	27.6	2.8
Standard 4	Boys	19.9	21.7	1.8
	Girls	20.4	20.0	-0.4
	Total	20.2	20.8	0.6
Standard 5	Boys	15.6	17.9	2.3
	Girls	19.5	16.2	-3.3
	Total	17.6	17.1	-0.5
Standard 6	Boys	10.7	13.0	2.3
	Girls	11.4	11.9	0.5
	Total	11.0	12.5	1.5
Standard 7	Boys	9.5	10.2	0.7
	Girls	10.5	10.0	-0.5
	Total	10.0	10.1	0.1
Standard 8	Boys	15.2	20.2	5
	Girls	15.6	17.8	2.2
	Total	15.4	30.2	14.8
Mean ²	Boys	18.8	21.0	2.2
	Girls	19.1	19.2	0.1
	Total	18.9	20.1	1.2

*Source data: EMIS 2007

² PSSP:SFP used source data from EMIS to collect dropout, repetition and completion data. However, EMIS calculates these figures by standard and do not overall. When seeking their raw data, EMIS indicated it was not possible to get it and that most organizations calculate a mean of means. PSSP:SFP is seeking alternatives given the challenges of making overall calculations using that method

Table A18. Pupil completion rate for 2006 and 2007, by sex

		2006	2007	Gain
Standard 1	Boys	51.0	55.1	4.1
	Girls	52.7	54.3	1.6
	Total	51.9	54.7	2.8
Standard 2	Boys	73.1	75.8	2.7
	Girls	72.3	76.7	4.4
	Total	72.7	76.3	3.6
Standard 3	Boys	60.0	65.6	5.6
	Girls	60.6	67.2	6.6
	Total	60.3	66.4	6.1
Standard 4	Boys	63.0	68.2	5.2
	Girls	62.3	70.4	8.1
	Total	62.6	69.3	6.7
Standard 5	Boys	67.5	70.3	2.8
	Girls	68.9	73.8	4.9
	Total	68.2	72.1	3.9
Standard 6	Boys	71.8	78.8	7
	Girls	73.1	74.9	1.8
	Total	72.5	76.8	4.3
Standard 7	Boys	77.7	82.2	4.5
	Girls	74.2	72.5	-1.7
	Total	76.0	77.2	1.2
Standard 8	Boys	69.7	36.2	-33.5
	Girls	52.7	28.7	-24
	Total	61.9	32.6	-29.3
Mean	Boys	66.7	66.5	-0.2
	Girls	64.6	64.8	0.2
	Total	65.8	65.7	-0.1

**Source data: EMIS 2007*

ANNEX B: CASE STUDIES FROM PSSP: SFP

Case Study # 1: Towards Financial Independence:

Chambidzi Primary School lies in Chimungu Education Zone about 20 kilometers from the Mponela Trading Centre in the village of Chidothi. Like most other schools in the district, Chambidzi was frustrated by the persistent lack of funds to help orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) overcome obstacles hindering their attendance and participation in school. The 86 OVCs enrolled at Chambidzi Primary School frequently missed school for lack of adequate clothing, food, notebooks and writing materials. PSSP: SFP has responded to the needs of schools like Chambidzi Primary School with community mobilization programs that show communities how to fundraise and mobilize resources. The school's chairperson, after working with PSSP: SFP, remarked on the positive effects of the program: "We had the desire to help but had no idea where and how to find the money towards the support of these children until PSSP: SFP came to our rescue."

PSSP: SFP's sensitization and mobilization activities emphasize the need for communities to participate in ensuring equitable access to quality basic education. The project also mobilizes communities to come up with creative ways to fundraise and amass existing resources towards supporting education. PSSP: SFP then provides small grant "injections" to effectively mobilized communities that help their income-generating activities become sustainable.

The Chambidzi community responded favorably to the messages, introducing a mechanism that helped generate funds to ensure that OVC's basic needs were satisfied. Offering their own time and equipment, community members began teaching OVCs useful vocational skills such as carpentry, tailoring, and tinsmithing. Besides equipping the children with local skills that would be their source of income in future, the products are currently being sold to generate funds for supporting OVCs. From sales of the products, five learners have already been provided with school uniforms and another 20 have been given notebooks and pens.

PSSP: SFP project staff members were impressed with the community efforts. Through the project, the school received a small grant injection of K110, 000.00 (\$788) which they used to purchase a number of items including the school's sewing machine, carpentry and tailoring materials, and construction materials for the repair of two teachers' houses.

Also, as part of income generation, the School Management Committee and the Parent and Teachers Association (PTA) members bought two goats. "When they multiply, we will be selling some to generate income purely for the support of OVCs," explained the PTA chairperson, who also added that they planned to make a nearly 80% profit on lamp fuel, known locally as *paraffin*.



PTA member selling paraffin to generate income

Inspired by PSSP: SFP efforts, the community has also cultivated a two acre maize garden and has used part of the money provided by PSSP: SFP to purchase four bags of fertilizer and maize seed. The purpose is to provide the neediest children--especially infants--with porridge.



A school garden cultivated by the SMC and PTA members



Bags of fertilizer and maize seed bought by community members

PSSP: SFP has also showed teachers creative teaching methods that have attracted more learners to school. Enrollment has increased from 657 learners as of September 2006 to 723 learners in September 2007.

“We are on the right track towards financial independence.” commented the SMC Chairperson of the school.

Case Study # 2: Children Have Got to Read

A bitter irony of schooling in Malawi is that although schools exist to promote reading and learning, a majority of primary schools in rural areas--and even a good number in the urban and semi - urban areas--have no school libraries. The consequences of this are disastrous to children's process of knowledge acquisition. To begin with, children do not develop a habit of reading that would help them widen their knowledge and increase their interest in education. Secondly, rather than spending some of their time in the library after classes, children may get involved in unproductive and dangerous behaviors

For Dowa District, however, the problem of unavailability of libraries in primary schools is becoming history as a result of PSSP: SFP community sensitization and mobilization activities. PSSP: SFP has successfully mobilized community members to establish school libraries throughout Dowa. As of the end of 2007, about 20 Schools in the district have constructed their own libraries. Some of these schools benefited from the PSSP: SFP's small grant initiative to buy iron sheets, cement, doors, window frames, and other sturdy materials that have been used to create long-lasting structures.

One of these schools is Mtsiro Primary School in Chimungu Zone. The school rehabilitated a dilapidated building that used to be a classroom whose roof had been blown off about six years ago. It had been abandoned when new classroom blocks were constructed. When people saw the need for a library, they amassed some bricks, bought eight bags of cement, and deployed some local artisans to rehabilitate the old classroom block. It was eventually divided into three compartments: a library, a head teacher's office, and a staff room. These efforts merited a small grant from PSSP: SFP amounting to K90, 000.00 (\$644). The money was used to buy doors, windows, iron sheets, paint and other materials for vocational skills training (sewing machine, tinsmith and carpentry materials). The school, like many other schools, has already received a donation of International Book Bank books under PSSP SFP.

"The library will make a big difference to both the children and teachers. They are both enjoying reading as never before. We thank PSSP: SFP for this kind of support," said the deputy head teacher of the school, Mr. R.E Kamlomo (pictured below next to the rehabilitated building).



Case Study # 3: The Bait

On the grounds of primary schools in Dowa District, one observes some unique features that are rarely seen in other districts of Malawi: locally made play parks, see –saws, “bawos”, swings, long jump and high jump areas, and a number of other local games. One also observes that, unlike other schools that become ghost schools after children knock - off from school or are on holidays, such schools have a good number of children within the school premises playing, laughing and sharing relaxing times in the parks during their free time and holidays. But what is most amazing about these play parks is the difference they are making in reducing pupil absenteeism and drop-outs while encouraging former drop-outs to return to school. For instance, if you went to Kalipindire Primary School in Mponela Zone today where these play parks are available, you would learn that 31 pupils who dropped out of school have returned, having been attracted by the play parks. They saw their fellow school-going children playing on see – saws and swings and could not resist returning to school. What is most gratifying is that out of the 31 children who returned to school, 21 managed to pass third term examinations. One of these pupils, Chisomo Mateyu, explained how he was specifically motivated by the play parks: “I saw my friends playing on see – saws and swings and since I was not allowed to play on them because I dropped out of school, I decided to return to school. The school has become more interesting and I am happy that I have passed well this term.”

The head teachers reported that they are observing a lot of positive changes as a result of these play parks. Relationships among children have improved and there are fewer fights and altercations amongst children as they learn to share playing space on the play parks. They are also learning to accommodate each other, overcoming selfishness and greed.

“The play parks have served as bait that is attracting children to come and remain in school, but that is not the end of the story,” commented the Kalipindire School head teacher. “PSSP: SFP has intensified training of teachers on pedagogical skills through cycle trainings which has really made the teaching and learning not only effective, but also very interesting for both teachers and pupils.”



At most schools in Dowa District, one observes that teaching has become more participatory for children following PSSP: SFP cycle trainings.

Case Study # 4: Saved from the Jaws of Early Marriages

Malita Naeni woke up one day decided: “I am getting married.” She was 16 years old, in standard 6 at Kawale School in Dowa District, having recently passed end of year exams to start standard 7. She ended up only attending the first two weeks of the 2007 school year before dropping out. The suitor, a young tobacco farmer, had approached Malita promising a good life, love and care. This is the type of situation that has lured many school-going girls into dropping out and getting married. Such girls find themselves in similar circumstances that Malita was in: struggling to get school supplies, no decent clothing, and most importantly, lacking moral support and counseling.

However, fortunately for Malita, this happened after USAID funded PSSP: SFP had come to Dowa District. Two years ago, prior to the implementation of PSSP: SFP, it is likely that Malita would have gotten married and dropped out of school. Instead, she is still enrolled and excelling in her studies.

This was all due to PSSP SFP’s intervention. PSSP SFP is implementing a very unique initiative known as the Mobilization Corps of Malawi (MCM) inspired by the American Peace Corps. A team of 79 young boys and girls who had completed their MSCE level (O level equivalent) and who were unemployed in their villages in Dowa District were deployed as MCMs. In brief, they were trained to foster development activities in their locations. Among other things, they have introduced recreation activities in the schools, formed a variety of clubs in schools such as debate clubs, AIDS awareness clubs and math clubs. They conduct sensitization meetings and focus-group discussions, follow up on drop outs and lobby for their return to school, as well as participate in a number of development activities. The MCMs set a positive example to school-going children by showing them that, after they complete their MSCE and are unemployed, they can still benefit their communities by participating and leading in development activities where they live.

The MCM for the area where Kawale School is located had heard about Malita’s intentions. He and members of the school committee followed up on her. They met Malita and counseled her on the importance of education and provided several examples of girls who rushed into marriage but are now struggling with life. To further encourage Malita, they bought her exercise books and pens. Malita expressed her gratitude for the help and attention: “I was touched, not only by the gesture they made to follow up on me, but also by what they said. I was motivated and determined to return to school.” Malita’s class teacher added that Malita is performing very well, especially in science.

Lusiyano Gimani and Evelesi Maenje are the other girls who had dropped out of school, yet have returned following follow-ups made by the MCM and members of the school committee.

Case Study # 5: Improved Classroom Shelter Hikes Enrolment

A young pupil explained why he was absent from Sindeya School in Dowa for the entire rainy season in 2005: “Our house is grass-thatched and leaks heavily during the rainy season. But being my home, I cannot run away from it...On the other hand, learning under a tree during the rainy season? Excuse me, but I better stay at home.”

This was only one child, but he represented many in the area. A school whose surrounding community had the potential to register over 600 school-aged children had only enrolled an average of 300 pupils for many years. Children found it difficult to learn under rainy tree shelters and dropped out. Most community members became extremely frustrated with the government as school blocks never came their way. They folded their arms waiting for the “right” government to come to the rescue. This went on for years until 2006 when the USAID supported PSSP: SFP arrived in Dowa District.

PSSP community sensitization and mobilization activities that targeted school management committees, teachers, community leaders and the entire community at large were conducted in all the schools in Dowa District, including Sindeya. They charged the community into action, reversed their thinking, and mobilized them towards accepting responsibility for improving their school. Sindeya has transformed unbelievably, boasting a permanent two-roomed school block. The block is a result of communities molding bricks and providing labor (artisans) on one hand, and complimented by PSSP: SFP rewarding their efforts with a small grant amounting to K90, 000.00 (\$644), which managed to buy them iron sheets, cement and other construction materials.

“We were suffering from lack of ownership and responsibility for our school, then PSSP: SFP came with the right drug, we are healed, and we will suffer no more,” gleefully remarked Group Village headman Nankhalu. Since the construction of the classroom block, the school’s enrolment averages 600 almost double the previous enrolment.

Case Study # 6: BLP/M Teaching Strategies Instrumental to Literacy Acquisition in Senga Zone

Senga is one of the 13 zones in Dowa District located along Lilongwe-Kasungu road, 25 km from Mponela Trading Centre and 35km from Lilongwe.

Before PSSP: SFP initiated its activities in Dowa, Senga zone was one of the worst zones. Teachers were unable to write lesson plans, learners in Std 1 were not able to read and write and even those in Std 6 learners were not able to read and understand English.

After implementation of cycles 1 to 5 trainings, teachers started using varied teaching and learning methods, preparing and using TALULAR. As a result learners' performance changed tremendously. Learners in Std 1 are able to read short sentences such as "Amayi atenga dengu." Mwana wagwa.' like at Kaputalambwe, Funsani and Manondo. The inclusion of continuous assessment in the cycle and cluster trainings has assisted teachers to be able to identify and support gifted and slow learners effectively leading to low repetition rate. For example, at Kaputalambwe, Funsani and Senga schools learners by the end of year one session were able to read books, newspapers and posters. Teachers like Mr Mtonya from Kaputalambwe school, Mrs Z. Sefa and Mrs Chibwana from Funsani school and Mrs E. Mwale from Senga school have introduced word boxes and word trees in literacy lessons as a result learners are able to read even after classes. Learners are also given homework to do at home like making words using syllables like 'sa se si so su' 'ba be bi bo bu'; 'ma me mi mo mu'. However, parents and guardians are also supporting their children in their homework and are also providing literacy TALULAR needed at school.

Senga zone has also appreciated BLP/M trainings. Most teachers liked the training and said that 'BLP/M teaching strategies would assist them implement PCAR.' These strategies are being used by most of the teachers in all classes. Mr Mbonongo, the Head teacher of Senga School said, "I have never come across such a training of good strategies which would assist learners in literacy acquisition." Some teachers reached the extent of recommending the inclusion of all teachers in the training for better delivery of literacy lessons. Group Village Headman Silino from Chinyimbo School was impressed with his child's performance and went to ask the headteacher the strategies that were used to make his child read and write letters like 'S' 'T' 'B' and 'A' after learning for only two weeks. The answer was BLP/M teaching strategies. Mrs E. Mkandawire from Mbalame School said, "I am now enjoying teaching because learners are able to follow my instructions easily and they will be able to write letters even during the first week of the term." She went on to say that BLP/M teachings strategies are better and will complement outcomes based education as advocated by PCAR'.

The strategies acquired by the teachers during the cluster and school based trainings, teacher conferences and mobile teacher training troupes sessions will help teachers to improve their content and pedagogical knowledge leading to improved teaching and learning for high learners' performance. BLP/M is a turning point in literacy development.



Some of the teachers during BLP/M training at one centre in December

ANNEX C: SAMPLE STORY FOR THE DOWA STORY BOOK

Example story collected for the Dowa Story Book series titled *The Fight Between the Masqueraders*

ZILOMBO ZILIMBIRANA SITEPI

Written by Efelemu Sitolo

Standard 6 Chikwawe School

Padangokhala padali tilitonse! Padali Kankwakwa wina iyeyu amagwirizana ndi nzake dzina lake Kamano. Komatu ngakhala owiriwa amagwirizana Kankwakwa samakondwera nazo konse. Kamano amamuonetsera chikondi chonse pamene mumtima mwa Kankwakwa munali chidani kwambiri. Tsono chidatsitsa dzaye kuti njovu ithyoke m'nyanga n'chakuti. Kwina kudachitika ufumu. Ndiye ofumuwo adaitana vilombo vija kuti vikasangalatse anthu. Koma mwambo uja utayambika oyamba kuvina adali Kamanoyo. Mosakhalitsa Kankhwakwa adayimirira ndi kugwira pakhosi pa Kamanoyo. Anthu atafunsa chimene Kankwakwa adagwirira pakhosi pa mnzakeyo iye sadafune kubisa koma adanena chifukwacho nati adamutengera sitepi yake iye adakasowa chovina. Poweruza mlandu uja chifukwa chidapezeka kuti ndikulimbirana sitepi pamapeto onse adapita opanda chisudzulo. Munjira kumangokhala ndewu basi.

ANNEX D: PERFORMANCE MONITORING INDICATORS

No.	Indicator	Means of Verification	2006			2006			2007			2008					
			Baseline			Target	Actual			Target	Actual			Target	Actual		
			M	F	Total	Total	M	F	Total	Total	M	F	Total	Total	M	F	Total
Result 1: Increasing access to basic education and improved learning with a special focus on orphans, vulnerable children, and girls																	
1	Increased percentage of pupils achieving basic literacy in Chichewa in standard 1	Pupil Assessment	25.0	25.3	25.1	N/A				5% ↑	15.9% (40.9)	21.9% (47.2)	19.1% (44.1)	10% ↑			
2	Increased percentage of pupils achieving in English reading at standard 6	Pupil Assessment	21.9	19.9	20.8	N/A				5% ↑	25.1% (47.0)	17.8% (37.7)	21.6% (42.4)	10% ↑			
3	Increased percentage of pupils achieving in Mathematics at standard 6	Pupil Assessment	28.0	21.3	24.6	N/A				5% ↑	35.0% (63.1)	26.1% (47.4)	31.0% (55.3)	10% ↑			
4	Decreased pupil dropout	School Records and Tracking	13.6%	18.8%	16.1%	2% ↓	14.5%	16.3%	15.3%	4% ↓				5% ³ ↓			
5	Decreased pupil repetition	School Records and Tracking	17.6%	16.5%	17.0%	2% ↓	18.8%	19.1%	18.9%	4% ↓				5% ↓ ⁴			
6	Increased pupil completion rates	School Records and Tracking	68.8%	64.8%	66.9%	3% ↑	66.7%	64.6%	65.8%	5% ↑				7% ↑			
7	Increased percentage of pupils enrolled in primary school	School Records and Tracking	58,175	62,614	120,789	4% ↑	64,818	68,188	133,006	8% ↑	72,795	75,990	148,785	12% ↑			
Result 2: Increased resources at the school level																	
8	Increased financial resources available at the school level	SMC Survey Interviews School Records			K9,000	10% ↑			K119,346	20% ↑				30% ↑			
9	Number of SMCs trained in financial management and lobbying skills	Training Reports			0	120			188	226			226	226			

³ AIR will not be able to collect this data in year 3 as the definition prevails. Data needs to be collected after the start of the school year (Feb 2009).

⁴ ditto

No.	Indicator	Means of Verification	2006			2006			2007			2008					
			Baseline			Target	Actual		Target	Actual		Target	Actual				
			M	F	Total	Total	M	F	Total	Total	M	F	Total	Total	M	F	Total
10	Percentage of SMCs engaged in IGAs to support schools	Interviews			18%	10%			51.7%	50%			59.3%	80%			
11	Percentage of SMCs who lobby for funds from outside sources	Interviews			0	20%			41.4%	50%			55.9%	70%			
12	Percentage of SMCs and PTAs that undertake one or more physical rehabilitation or building project to support education	SMC Survey School Records Site Visits			0	10%			82.8%	50%			93.2%	90%			
13	Percentage of schools that receive school incentive packages (SIPs)	Project Reports			0	80%			25.6%	100%			100%	100%			
14	Number of school accessible libraries established or expanded	Library Records			10	14			13	50			57	90			
Result 3: Improved teaching in schools																	
15	Number of teachers trained in content and pedagogical practices	Training Reports	0	0	0	1,695 ⁵	1241	479	1720	1,695	1,318	564	1,882	1,695			
16	Increased percentage of teachers using participatory teaching methods during classroom instruction	Classroom Observation	N/A	N/A	N/A ⁶	25%	26.4%	42.5%	30.3%	55%				70%			
17	Increased percentage of primary teachers trained in and applying early literacy teaching techniques in the classroom	Training Reports Classroom Observation	0%	0%	0%	20%			100% ⁷	60%				80%			

⁵ 1,695 teachers is the population of government teachers in Dowa district. The project expects to reach all teachers via PSSP: SFP trainings so if the numbers do expand, PSSP: SFP will reach those new teachers as well.

⁶ The project collected data for this indicator near the end of the academic school year and therefore the actual for 2006 will also serve as the baseline.

⁷ All teachers of Dowa have received incremental training in early literacy strategies. A specific observation tool that looks at the literacy strategies promoted in BLP/M is under development as the BLP/M lessons are being finalized and BLP/M specific training plan is being developed.

No.	Indicator	Means of Verification	2006			2006			2007			2008					
			Baseline			Target	Actual			Target	Actual			Target	Actual		
			M	F	Total	Total	M	F	Total	Total	M	F	Total	Total	M	F	Total
18	Change in the percentage of teacher absenteeism	School Records and Tracking Instrument	23.3	26.3	25.0	2%↓	23.2	26.3	25.0	5%↓	39.5% (14.1)	46.0% (14.2)	43.6% (14.1)	10%↓			
19	Change in the percentage of pupil absenteeism	School Records and Tracking Instrument	23.8	23.3	23.5	5%↓	23.8	23.3	23.5	10%↓	31.1% (16.4)	31.3% (16.0)	31.1% (16.2)	15%↓			