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USAID/MALAWI PARTICIPANT TRAINING SUPPORT PROGRAM
USAID/MALAWI
FINAL REPORT
May 6, 2011 – May 5, 2012

Contract No.: 674-C-00-11-00052-00
Effective Dates: 5/6/11 – 5/5/12
Contract Total: \$431,500
Obligated Amount: \$431,500

This Report summarizes the activities of World Learning from May 6, 2011, through May 5, 2012, under the Malawi Participant Training Support Program Contract No. 674-C-00-11-00052-00, with the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The report is organized as follows: Summary; Activities; Concerns/Constraints; and Recommended Actions. **Summary** provides an overview of the entire Task Order. **Activities** section describes the accomplishments during the reporting period toward fulfilling the major tasks and deliverables under the Task Order. **Success Stories** highlights selected small projects implemented by Lakeland College alumni. **Concerns/Constraints** describes any issues and/or problems toward fulfilling the major tasks and deliverables under the Task Order. **Conclusions, Recommendations, and Lessons Learned** describes proposed solutions to address any concerns and/or constraints toward fulfilling the major tasks and deliverables under the Task Order.

I. SUMMARY

In April 2011, anticipating the expiration of the FORECAST contract on May 5, 2011, the Regional Mission in South Africa issued an RFP for a new contract in order to provide a continuation of the activities initiated under the FORECAST Task Order for Malawi for one year.

The contract was issued and signed in May 2011 to support USAID/Malawi's overall strategy of "*Investing in People*" through a continuation of the Mission's long-term academic training program within the education and health sectors. Through this contract, World Learning continued to assist the Mission in implementing its training and capacity development activity to effectively and efficiently support the achievement of its current and proposed strategic objectives and to provide pre-training, life of training, and post-training services to Malawian participants for long-term academic training in the U.S., as well as in-country and third-country higher education institutions.

The contract supported the Bachelor's level degree programs for Malawian teachers, which serve to strengthen the capacity of teacher training colleges in Malawi, the Malawi education sector in general, and specifically, education at the primary level; and supported degree programs on all levels

for Malawian health professionals, which complements the Mission's long-term strategy for the health sector by building the capacities of its health practitioners to implement health services, a move which will help to improve the quality of life for Malawians and serve as an incentive for professionals to join and remain with the public health service.

As of the end of the contract on May 5, 2012, 50 students had graduated from Lakeland College (Sheboygan, WI) with undergraduate degrees in Education and returned to Malawi to take positions in Malawi's teacher training colleges. Five were poised to graduate in May 2012; their graduation marks the end of this highly successful US-based training program. One student completed her studies on the graduate level in Kenya in August 2011, and 10 students were enrolled in four separate graduate programs in Malawi. This contract assisted USAID/Malawi in supporting the remaining participants of existing programs begun under FORECAST, track their progress, and evaluate the effectiveness of their training programs.



The contract supported the following activities:

1. **Life of training program support** through monitoring, including regularly scheduled monitoring of the final cohort and a site visit to the Lakeland College campus. Site visits consisted of: an end-of-program evaluation with Cohort 11, the remaining cohort, a cultural re-entry workshop, and an action plan finalization session.
2. **Post-Training support** in the form of a final site visit to Malawi hold a workshop on the successes and challenges faced by the Lakeland College graduates and strategies for disseminating their knowledge and skills to their colleagues, students, and institutions and gather information for success stories. Assessment interviews and focus groups were also conducted, not only with the Lakeland alumni, but with the current in-country students and the third-country graduates.

Summary Table

US Academic Program (Lakeland College)	Cohort	Number of Participants		
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
	10	3	2	5
	11	3	2	5
	Total	6	4	10
Third Country Programs (TICH-Great Lakes University of Kisumu, Kenya; Graduate Program in Community Health and Development)	NA (Graduated 08/11)	0	1	1
	Total	0	1	1
In-Country Programs (Kamuzu College of Nursing-University of Malawi; Graduate Program in Reproductive Health)	NA (Program completed 3/12)	1	2	3
In-Country Programs (Kamuzu College of Nursing-University of Malawi; Graduate Program in Midwifery)	NA (Program completed 3/12)	0	3	3
In-Country Programs (Bunda College of Agriculture University of Malawi; Graduate Program in Food Science and Human Nutrition)	NA (Degree expected 08/12)	1	2	3
In-Country Programs (Malawi Institute of Management; Graduate Program in Supply Chain Management)	NA (Degree expected 06/12)	1	0	1
	Total	3	7	10
GRAND TOTAL:		9	12	21
Percent Male/Female		43%	57%	100%

II. ACTIVITIES

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

At the time of award, there were a total of 21 students: the remaining Lakeland College students (10 already in place at the school – Cohorts 10 and 11); one student finishing at Tropical Institute of Community Health (TICH), Great Lakes University, in Kenya; and the 10 in-country students at various institutions in Malawi. All were monitored during the course of the contract. By the end of the contract, nine participants remained in degree programs: the five participants in Cohort 11 at Lakeland College (B.A. in Education); one at the Malawi Institute of Management, and three at the Bunda College of Agriculture. The participants on this contract were enrolled in the following programs:

- Ten students enrolled in the Bachelor's Degree program in Education at Lakeland College, Sheboygan, WI, U.S.
- Three students enrolled in the Master's Degree program in Reproductive Health at the Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre.
- Three students enrolled in the Master's Degree program in Midwifery at the Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre.
- Three students enrolled in the Master's Degree program in Food Science and Human Nutrition at Bunda College of Agriculture (BCA), University of Malawi, Lilongwe.
- One student enrolled in the Master's Degree program in Supply Chain Management at Malawi Institute of Management (MIM), Lilongwe.

During this contract, World Learning made its final site visit to Lakeland College to wrap up monitoring of participants there. In addition, World Learning made a site visit to Malawi to implement a workshop for alumni of the Lakeland College program and to monitor all the In-Country participants at KCN in Blantyre, BCA in Lilongwe, and MIM in Lilongwe, as well as graduates of TICH in Kenya who live in Lilongwe.

The six participants enrolled in degree programs at KCN completed all the requirements for their degree programs by March 2012 and were only finalizing revisions to their theses. The participant completing his degree at MIM will finish by the end of June 2012. The three students enrolled in graduate programs at BCA expect to finish their program by the end of August 2012.

A Purchase Order for monitoring and financial closeout is expected. This will allow completion of maintenance allowance payments to the BCA students and monitoring of the conclusion of their program, as well as follow-up on additional success stories and setting up the World Learning Online Global Community and ensuring Lakeland alumni understand how to navigate it.

SUMMARY OF PERIOD FROM MAY 6 – JUNE 30, 2011

Highlights:

- Cohort 10 graduated from Lakeland College and returned to Malawi (UST; May 2011)
- Cohort 11 completed their Field Experience in local classrooms (UST; May 2011)
- Cohort 9 was posted to Teacher Training Colleges (UST; June 2011)

Summary of Student Activities:

Education Strategic Objective

Cohort 10: Elizer Kalilombe; Joyce Kamanga; Charles Laini; Frackson Liteleko; and Aries Mcherewatha. Lakeland College, August 2008 – May 2011.

Cohort 11: Alemekenzeke Chitanje; Adams Disi; Justina Mandala Longwe; Khama Otaniele; and Vincent Chafukira Paseli. Lakeland College, August 2009 – May 2012.

This first quarter under the new contract saw the departure of Cohort 10, who graduated from Lakeland College on May 8, 2011 and departed on two different dates: May 19 (Joyce Kamanga, Elizer Kalilombe, Frackson Liteleko, and Charles Laini) and May 23 (Aries Mcherewatha). They all safely returned to Malawi and waited to be told what dates they would travel to Mzuzu University for their practice teaching. This final cohort completed their program in typically successful fashion, with cumulative GPAs ranging from 3.38 to 3.85.

Cohort 11 completed their Field Experience during this time period as well (during May Term), in which they were assigned to area classrooms to observe. Their assignments ranged from Grades 1 to Grades 6, and responsibilities included tutoring, reading to students, helping with assignments, and assisting teachers in working with the students in groups. They presented an occasional lesson as well. Grades were based on a combination of elements: keeping a daily log of their activities, their Lakeland professor's observation (who came to each school to observe for one day), and the elementary school teacher's evaluation. Cohort 11 began their Summer Term on May 31.

During this quarter, Cohort 9 also received their postings to Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) as follows:

- Zephaniah Grevuloh was posted to Lilongwe TTC
- Mary Potani was posted to Machinga TTC, the newest TTC to open
- Ireen Sichinga was posted to Kasungu TTC
- Gloria Thom was posted to Blantyre TTC
- Beatrice Wawanya was posted to Lilongwe TTC

Health Strategic Objective

Third-Country Training

Jean Mwalabu, Tropical Institute of Community Health and Development (TICH), Great Lakes University in Kisumu, Kenya, Africa, August 2009-August 2011.

This quarter began with one continuing participant enrolled in a Master's Degree program in Community Health and Development in Kisumu, Kenya, scheduled for graduation in August 2011. Mrs. Mwalabu's entered the final phase of gathering data and writing her thesis. She returned to Kenya in April to take electives.

In-Country Training

Master's Degree in Reproductive Health:

Chrissy Bwazi, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Robert Chasweka, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Eneles Kachule, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Master's Degree in Midwifery:

Bertha Chikuse, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Lydia Chimtembo, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Ruth Mwale, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Master's Degree in Food Science and Human Nutrition:

Hilda Chilabade, Bunda College of Agriculture, University of Malawi, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, August 2010-May 2012.

Grace Kussein, Bunda College of Agriculture, University of Malawi, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, August 2010-May 2012.

Cacious Phiri, Bunda College of Agriculture, University of Malawi, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, August 2010-May 2012.

Master's Degree in Supply Chain Management:

Samuel Chirwa, Malawi Institute of Management, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, October 2010-May 2012.

During this period, World Learning continued to monitor 10 participants completing the following Master's Degree programs: three participants completing Master's Degrees in Reproductive Health at KCN, University of Malawi in Blantyre, Malawi; three participants working toward Master's Degrees in Midwifery at KCN, University of Malawi in Blantyre, Malawi; three participants working toward Master's Degrees in Food Science and Human Nutrition at the BCA, University of Malawi in Lilongwe, Malawi; and one participant working toward a Master's Degree in Supply Chain Management at MIM in Lilongwe, Malawi.

All of the students in the KCN degree programs (Reproductive Health and Midwifery) were already conducting research for their theses. These students were scheduled to complete their program in October 2011.

The students in BCA were still in the first year of their program at the time of award and entered their second year in the Fall of 2011; research proposals were submitted at that time.

The final student was enrolled in his first year at MIM.

SUMMARY OF QUARTER (JULY 1, 2011 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2011)

Highlights:

- **Cohort 10 started practicum at Mzuzu University**

Summary of Student Activities:

Education Strategic Objective

During this quarter, World Learning began planning in conjunction with USAID/Malawi for a fourth site visit to meet with all current and recently-graduated In-Country participants, as well as past participants in the Third-Country program (the students who attended TICH in Kenya) for monitoring and evaluation, and with such Malawi institutions as Bunda College of Agriculture and Malawi Institute of Management in Lilongwe, and with Kamuzu College of Nursing in Blantyre. In addition, plans also were put into motion to hold another workshop featuring the Lakeland College alumni in Lilongwe. Finally, World Learning began designing a questionnaire to survey the Lakeland

alumni about the knowledge and skills acquired in the U.S. and how they have been able to share that knowledge with their colleagues to benefit the Teacher Training Colleges as a whole.

The members of Cohort 10, who returned to Malawi in May 2011, began their teaching practicum at Mzuzu University (September 5-November 2011).

Cohort 11: Alemekezeke Chitanje; Adams Disi; Justina Mandala Longwe; Khama Otaniele; and Vincent Chafukira Paseli. Lakeland College, August 2009 – May 2012.

World Learning conducted a digital videoconference monitoring call with Cohort 11 on September 22. Their Fall Term began on August 29 and ended on December 16. During the summer term, three of them did internships: Adams Disi worked with the Salvation Army; Justina Longwe worked with Safe Harbor (a women's shelter); and Vincent Paseli worked with the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Adams's internship with the Salvation Army involved working in the food pantry, which provides food for low-income families, where he helped to sort food and work with the emergency shelter for the homeless; his supervisor was the Director of Social Services. Justina's internship allowed her to work directly with clients, i.e., women and children, and answer crisis calls, which she considered a good skill to have for classrooms; her supervisor was the Program Director. Vincent's internship at St. Vincent de Paul allowed him to work in the Society's shop, counting donations, and tagging prices; his supervisor was the Shop Manager. The students felt the internships gave them an opportunity to observe management of these organizations and how they recruit volunteers, among other things.

In the Fall, Cohort 11 began its centerpiece course, *Educational Administration in Malawi*, dividing up the work as follows:

- Adams took the chapter on education in Malawi – its history, challenges, solutions.
- Justine took the chapter on teacher education and development.
- Aleme wrote the chapter on student services in the educational system, e.g., services that are supposed to be provided but are not, e.g., books and learning materials, food, etc.
- Khama reported on the financial aspects of education in Malawi, i.e., how MOEST plans its budgets and finances education.
- Vincent wrote the chapter on infrastructure – building services, roads, etc., that affect education.

GPA's for Cohort 11 ranged from 3.5934 to 3.9670, for an average GPA of 3.81.

Health Strategic Objective

Third-Country Training

Jean Mwalabu, Tropical Institute of Community Health and Development (TICH), Great Lakes University in Kisumu, Kenya, Africa, August 2009-August 2011.

Mrs. Mwalabu successfully defended her thesis and completed her program in August 2011, returning to Malawi the same month.

In-Country Training

Master's Degree in Reproductive Health:

Chrissy Bwazi, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Robert Chasweka, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Eneles Kachule, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Master's Degree in Midwifery:

Bertha Chikuse, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Lydia Chimtembo, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Ruth Mwale, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Master's Degree in Food Science and Human Nutrition:

Hilda Chilabade, Bunda College of Agriculture, University of Malawi, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, August 2010-May 2012.

Grace Kussein, Bunda College of Agriculture, University of Malawi, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, August 2010-May 2012.

Cacious Phiri, Bunda College of Agriculture, University of Malawi, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, August 2010-May 2012.

Master's Degree in Supply Chain Management:

Samuel Chirwa, Malawi Institute of Management, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, October 2010-May 2012.

During this quarter, World Learning continued to monitor a total of 10 participants completing their Master's Degree programs. The students in KCN's degree programs (Reproductive Health and Midwifery) spent the term conducting research and finalizing their theses. During this quarter, the lone student who had not gotten her research proposal approved, Ruth Mwale, did so. The students at BCA began submitting research proposals during the Fall Semester of 2011, and Samuel Chirwa began the final year of his program at MIM.

SUMMARY OF QUARTER (OCTOBER 1, 2011 – DECEMBER 31, 2011)

Highlights

- **Planning for site visit (Ongoing throughout quarter)**
- **Cohort 10 completed teaching practicum (November 2011)**
- **Post-training questionnaires sent (December 2011)**

Summary of Student Activities:

World Learning finalized plans for its site visit to Malawi, scheduled for January 14-27, 2012. Plans included meetings with In-Country participants in both Lilongwe and Blantyre, as well as past participants in the Third-Country program to monitor their progress and evaluate participation in their programs. World Learning also planned to hold another workshop for the Lakeland College alumni in Lilongwe to focus on opportunities and challenges for the alumni, and explore how best to exploit their combined energies to contribute to their institutions and the continued strengthening of educational delivery systems in Malawi. World Learning also planned to meet with principals of several Teacher Training Colleges.

During this quarter, World Learning also finalized the questionnaire and, in December, sent it to the Lakeland alumni, the alumni of TICH in Kenya, and all the students enrolled in In-Country Training programs in Malawi (KCN, BCA, and MIM). The survey focused on capturing information on their current positions and responsibilities; their views on how useful the training program has been to their professional development and advancement; its relevance to their current work; new ideas they have been able to adopt at work; what challenges they face in applying their knowledge and skills, etc. Results have been analyzed and are shared in a separate report.

Finally, during this quarter, the members of Cohort 10, who returned to Malawi in May 2011, completed their teaching practicum at Mzuzu University (September 5-November 2011).

Education Strategic Objective

Cohort 11: Alemekzeke Chitanje; Adams Disi; Justina Mandala Longwe; Khama Otaniele; and Vincent Chafukira Pseli. Lakeland College, August 2009 – May 2012.

Cohort 11's Fall Term ended on December 16, one which the participants characterized as their most difficult to date. During this past term, Cohort 11 tutored elementary student for 10-15 hours over the course of the semester; they identified students to tutor by contacting principals at area schools. Their favorite class for the term was *Educational Administration in Malawi*. They also handed in their preliminary action plans as follows:

- Adams Disi submitted plans to construct a two-classroom school block in Ntcheu District that will accommodate approximately 100 students, and to establish an alumni association at a primary school, also in Ntcheu District, that he hopes will carry out various projects, promote a culture of giving back to the community, and generally revive the volunteering spirit in school-related projects;
- Aleme Chitanje planned to construct a primary school classroom in Lilongwe;
- Justina Longwe planned to provide a library for teachers and students in Nkhatabay;
- Khama Otaniele planned to build four classroom blocks at a primary school in Lilongwe;
- Vincent Pseli planned to construct a library at a primary school.

Cohort 11 continued to do exceptionally well academically, with GPAs for Cohort 11 averaging 3.81.

Health Strategic Objective

In-Country Training

Master's Degree in Reproductive Health:

Chrissy Bwazi, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Robert Chasweka, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Eneles Kachule, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Master's Degree in Midwifery:

Bertha Chikuse, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Lydia Chimtembo, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Ruth Mwale, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Master's Degree in Food Science and Human Nutrition:

Hilda Chilabade, Bunda College of Agriculture, University of Malawi, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, August 2010-May 2012.

Grace Kussein, Bunda College of Agriculture, University of Malawi, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, August 2010-May 2012.

Cacious Phiri, Bunda College of Agriculture, University of Malawi, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, August 2010-May 2012.

Master's Degree in Supply Chain Management:

Samuel Chirwa, Malawi Institute of Management, Lilongwe, Malawi, Africa, October 2010-May 2012.

During this quarter, World Learning continued to monitor a total of 10 participants completing various Master's Degree programs, as described above, at KCN, BCA, and MIM in Lilongwe, Malawi. All students in the two KCN programs (Reproductive Health and Midwifery) continued to conduct research and finalize theses. The students completed classes in early October and were given extra time to complete their theses until early in 2012.

Two of the students in the BCA (Hilda Chilabade and Cacious Phiri) submitted research proposals and received approval for them. Samuel Chirwa at MIM also submitted his thesis for approval this term.

SUMMARY OF QUARTER (JANUARY 1 – MARCH 31, 2012)

Highlights:

- **Site Visit to Malawi (January 2012)**
- **Return of Surveys from Participants (January-February 2012)**
- **Completion of degree program/ICT Kamuzu College of Nursing students (March 2012)**

Summary of Student Activities:

Site Visit to Malawi (January 14-26, 2012)

World Learning implemented a site visit to Malawi from January 14-26, 2012 to present a workshop for the Lakeland College graduates, to meet with USAID and several teacher training college principals, and to conduct monitoring and assessment interviews with current in-country graduate students and former third-country graduates. This was the fourth site visit overall by World Learning to Malawi and the fourth workshop for Lakeland alumni, although it was the first workshop to focus on how to maximize opportunities and overcome challenges in their work rather than on skills development per se. World Learning met with the following individuals:

- Christine Djondo, Florence Nkosi, and John Collins (USAID Education Team)
- Violet Orchardson, Health, Population, and Nutrition, USAID
- Patrick Themu, Training Manager, Department of Teacher Education and Development (DTED)
- Virginia Chavula, Principal, Lilongwe TTC
- Harris Kachale, Principal, Kasungu TTC
- Mr. M. Magelegele, Principal, Blantyre TTC
- Ellen Chirwa, Vice Principal, KCN
- Dr. Msilimba, Dean of Education, Mzuzu University

In addition, World Learning also interviewed two former TCT students, John Sande and Laston Stima; and all of the current ICT students from KCN, MIM, and BCA.

Workshop: January 19-20

DAY ONE:

The workshop took place at the Public Affairs Section (PAS) Auditorium on January 19-20, 2012, presented by Neil O'Flaherty, Senior Education Advisor at World Learning, and was attended by 37 Lakeland College alumni; Mrs. Virginia Chavula, Principal of Lilongwe TTC; Mr. Patrick Themu, from the DTED; as well as a contingent from USAID – Christine Djondo, Florence Nkosi, and Ida Mataya.

Day one included multiple presentations from alumni on challenges in creating change and building TTC capacity followed by a guided session synthesizing the content of the presentations and strategies for next steps, as follows:

Esnart Chapomba (St. Joseph's TTC, Dedzga). Esnart's PowerPoint presentation featured how best to train student teachers, and how the U.S. experience has been applied to all TTC activities. She included among her successes the high pass rate of student teachers and their participation in the Children's Forum, a program operating out of St. Joseph's TTC that brings children from the area to the school after their lessons and on weekends for classes. The program 1) provides an opportunity

to the student teachers to practice teaching; 2) gives them the opportunity to establish a relationship with the community; 2) provides extra lessons for the students; and 4) helps to minimize vandalism of college property by youth in the community. It also serves to positive reinforce learning. Classes are taught on a volunteer basis by St. Joseph's student teachers. The idea originated with the college's lecturers, including Lakeland graduates. As of now it only runs at St. Joseph's, but other colleges have shown interest in it, including Machinga TTC.

Gift Dube (Mzuzu University, Mzuzu). Gift, who is a librarian at Mzuzu University, started a children's library at the university to serve children from the local community, particularly lower-income children. His presentation centered on how a few individuals can initiate change through knowledge-sharing, e.g., computer expertise, new teaching strategies, writing skills, etc, and offered ideas on how to circumvent challenges by dealing directly with school management and the community. Other ideas included using internet technology, e.g., Facebook; writing needs-based grant proposals that are realistic, cost-effective, and accountable to donors; acting as leaders and innovative thinkers; seeking out professional development opportunities; and developing personal learning networks. He suggested using Teacher 2.0, an independent community for educators to explore their interests and passions, to help build a network of support for educators; Classroom 2.0, a social network with over 60,000 members from 181 countries – a free, community-supported network; and Edublog, an education blogging service.

Mery Tauzi-Ngwira (Karonga TTC, Karonga). Mercy Tauzi-Ngwira offered her thoughts on creating changes and building capacity. Her own successes included working effectively in different subject areas; taking leadership positions within the school; becoming involved with the community; supervising building school blocks and libraries; offering her computer knowledge to colleagues; and serving as a resource and facilitator for her colleagues. She also acknowledged the challenges that remain, e.g., a hierarchical educational system; insufficient resources; resistant attitudes by colleagues/workmates; no further professional development since her U.S. training; little support for networking; and limited visits by supervisors.

Noah Chirwa (Kasungu TTC, Kasungu). Noah Chirwa made a presentation touching on some of the same challenges that Mercy brought up, such as having positions that offered responsibility, but not authority; lack of promotion potential; resistance to change, stemming from lack of exposure and a fear of the unknown; lack of ongoing inservice training; women not being taken as seriously as men; and a persistent stereotype of Lakeland graduates, e.g., their directness.

The day also included a presentation by Public Affairs Section staff on opportunities for graduate study in the U.S.

DAY TWO:

Day two included presentations on the alumni's experience of preparing trainee teachers to work in Malawian schools, followed by a guided discussion on curriculum and pedagogical approaches. The group was reminded of the important of beginning with small steps first, e.g., set up Facebook page or utilize World Learning's Online Global Community (OGC). A committee consisting of Joseph

Mvula, Edward Kalua, and Alstarico Mbizi, was chosen to set this up, with assistance from World Learning's IT people, including someone who works intimately with the OGC for other academic exchanges. In the meantime, Gift volunteered to help with things he mentioned in his presentation, such as Teacher 2.0.

The day's presentations were themed *Maximizing Opportunities, With a Focus on Students*:

Ndamyo Mwanyongo (Kasungu TTC, Kasungu). Ndamyo presented on Kasungu's teacher training program, with its two categories of primary school training programs, one for conventional pedagogy and one for open distance learning (ODL). Given certain constraints, such as the fact that supervision is inadequate and infrequent, and professional responsibilities are made more difficult for women with family responsibilities, Ndamyo recommended the following for ODL: it is better to start with one group before another group joins in, more lecturers should be trained in specialty areas, and resources should be adequate and available.

Philip Nachonie (Machinga TTC, Machinga). Philip discussed how to prepare student-teachers, a discussion that included "selling" the profession, with teachers serving as role models whose conduct was exemplary; frequent supervision by lecturers, with an emphasis on grading and assisting students, being as objective as possible, and providing immediate and constructive feedback; implementing/emphasizing TALULAR (teaching/learning using appropriate resources); the government providing resources, e.g., Learners' Guides, Handbooks and Modules; a curriculum that is not exam-oriented, with an equal emphasis on practical and theoretical teaching; and training student teachers on computer skills. He also hoped that many at Machinga TTC would like to adopt the Children's Forum at the TTC's demonstration school, an idea that is seen as a child-friendly school initiative and one that has the support of the principal, management, and staff.

Catherine Kutsaira (formerly with Lilongwe Teacher Training College, now with the Ministry of Education). The final presentation addressed the strengths that Lakeland graduates brought to the table (flexibility, good team players, commitment to work, consistently rising to challenges, reform-oriented, confident), and the challenges they face, in her opinion, e.g., dealing with resentment from other colleagues, difficulty in getting promotions, high expectations, etc.

The group spent some time brainstorming on next steps, considering points raised during the presentations, e.g., sharing skills and knowledge with colleagues; community outreach; how to promote the concept of child-friendly schools; and how to remain a team. Major points emerging from this session were:

- You must be the change
- Touch the lives of students in multiple ways
- Success requires collaboration
- With what we have we can change lives
- We need to be passionate

- Maintain our hard-working spirit
- Start from small and move to big
- We must both teach and learn
- Put ideas into practice to make change
- We are role models

Additional Business:

In addition to alumni of USAID-funded program recently being given access to such State Department-sponsored vehicles, such as the alumni.state.gov website (which was presented to the Lakeland alumni at the 2010 workshop) the group now has been allowed entry into the Embassy-run alumni association, MUSEAA, established in 2005 and one of ECA's more active alumni groups. Staff from PAS gave a presentation on the benefits of belonging to the association, and the Embassy's goal to bring together alumni of all U.S.-funded programs. There are four chapters - Mzuzu, Lilongwe, Zomba, and Blantyre - and they develop plans of action yearly. World Learning followed up with PAS to provide contact information needed to enter alumni into the database and make them eligible to sign up.



INTERVIEWS

World Learning conducted a number of interviews while in Malawi. A summary of each is below.

Focus Group – Practicum

At the end of the workshop, World Learning used the site visit opportunity to conduct a focus group with recent graduates from Cohorts 7, 8, and 9 (Cohort 7: Moses Madzedze, Dedza TTC; Cohort 8: Tamara Mabviko, Blantyre TTC; and Rebecca Makanga, Blantyre TTC; and Cohort 9 (Mary Potani, Machinga TTC; and Gloria Thom, Machinga TTC) to discuss the effectiveness of their teaching practicum at Mzuzu University, asking about how the practicum was set up, what the

students taught, the general usefulness of the practicum, how their knowledge and skills could likely be applied in their teaching at the TTCs, the applicability of new teaching and learning models in the Malawi context, what factors in their current working conditions might limit its usefulness, and how to improve the practicum. The interview was conducted at the conclusion of the two-day workshop in Lilongwe.

Because USAID does not want Lakeland alumni to be certified to teach in WI, Lakeland made an arrangement with Mzuzu University in Malawi for the returnees to do their practice teaching there. The practicum lasts 12 weeks at Mzuzu University, who supervised the practice teaching at least once per week. For the first six weeks, practicum students were at a primary school (utilizing three schools in the area); for the second six weeks, they moved to TTCs for practice teaching (Kasungu and Karonga TTCs). While at the primary school, each student was assigned subjects to teach (Rabbecca: *English, Chichewa*; Tamara: *Life Skills, Bible Knowledge, Social/Environmental Sciences*; Mary: *Agriculture, Life Skills, Mathematics*; Gloria: *General Sciences, Chichewa*; and Moses: *English, Social/Environmental Sciences*). They were assigned subjects when they moved over to the TTCs (Rabbecca, Mary, and Moses taught the same subjects; Tamara taught the same subjects, but switched from *Bible Knowledge* to *Religious Studies*; and Gloria taught *Life Skills* and *Social/Environmental Sciences*).

The group said they felt the skills acquired at Lakeland gave them confidence and prepared them well for the practicum experience and helped them to be comfortable. Lakeland had forced them to develop a varied background, imparting such skills as the sciences, and concepts of constructivism. Overall, they felt they were good and useful resources during the practicum.

They were able to introduce new ideas or methods into their student teaching, e.g., continuous division in Mathematics class, teaching science as an inquiry using constructivism theory, and using games, e.g., word puzzles, in teaching English.

Regarding the applicability of new teaching and learning models in Malawi context, they noted that there was a notable difference between the teacher training curriculum and methods practiced in Malawi and those learned at Lakeland, i.e., those learned at Lakeland were more learner-centered and required students to find answers on their own. In addition, student teachers have access to more resources in the U.S.; in Malawi, the students had to improvise more and relied on available technology. They were able to incorporate research and group work, i.e., giving students group tasks to complete, into teaching in Malawi. The group said that generally colleagues were receptive to using new ideas and methods during the practicum, although there was not much opportunity for sharing, and not all colleagues seemed ready to welcome their ideas.

They felt that the biggest obstacle in their current working conditions that might limit the usefulness and applicability of new teaching and learning methods was a lack of resources, forcing them to improvise; overcoming it is a challenge. Their advice was to keep a positive attitude: work hard, be creative, do your best.

Their suggestion on improving the practicum was that perhaps teaching in their former schools in Malawi, where they were regarded as one of the community, would make them less isolated. They did not express much fondness for their experience at Mzuzu, where they felt did not accommodate their needs, and where they were treated as wealthy because of their tenure in the U.S. Finally, their grades were not sent back to Lakeland in a timely manner, causing delays in getting their degree certificates and thus postings at TTCs.

MEETINGS AND OTHER CONTACTS:

Visits to Teacher Training Colleges: Lilongwe, Kasungu, Blantyre

World Learning visited three teacher training colleges – Lilongwe, Kasungu, and Blantyre - interviewing principals at all three. The purpose was to get their input in order to maximize the dissemination of good practices of the trainees and ultimately benefit the TTCs. Among the issues discussed were

- Has the Lakeland College graduates' experience been valuable to the school?
- Did alumni share ideas or techniques with colleges? Have they been useful ideas?
- How can the best value be maximized from Lakeland College?
- What do TTCs need?

Lilongwe TTC

Mrs. Virginia Chavula, Principal of Lilongwe TTC. This school presently employs the following Lakeland College graduates: Patrick Tembwe-Banda, Fabson Chambwe, Zephaniah Grevuloh, Lloyd Chauluka, and Beatrice Wawanya; Goodson Jonas is on leave, getting his graduate degree at the University of London. Mrs. Chavula felt that, given their skill set (computer skills, etc.) and qualities (farsightedness, confidence), ideally she would like more of them at the college and cited their individual successes – becoming experts in certain areas, such as Open/Distance Learning, serving as valuable resources for computer skills and financial issues, and taking the initiative to serve as liaison for outside projects, such as Read Malawi. The Lakeland graduates have enriched the experience of the student teachers. In her words, “they are delivering the goods and are well-received.” She would like to see them getting more involved in outreach to parents in the community, and working with students on issues involving self-esteem and self-confidence.

Kasungu TTC

Mr. Harris Kachale, Principal of Kasungu TTC. Kasungu TTC currently has seven Lakeland College graduates working there: Ndamyo Mwanyongo, Joseph Mvula, Nancy Nyirenda, Kapera Mlowoka, Noah Chirwa, Asili Kachigamba, and Ireen Sichinga.

Like Mrs. Chavula, Mr. Kachale felt that the graduates have multiple competencies to offer, e.g., confidence, computer literacy, leadership, facilitation skills and composure in front of groups, etc., that has been borne out by their leadership positions in the college as head of Expressive Arts, head of Information Studies, budget officer, and trainer of trainers for computer training. In addition, they have extended their talents into the community through workshops on learner-centered education, still viewed as new methodology, and got both positive and negative reactions on this last item. Both Ndamyo Mwanyongo and Kapera Mlowoka have conducted in-house trainings for staff.

The college has allowed them to work as a group in order to have a bigger impact, and they have never condescended to their colleagues.

Since enrollment in the TTCs has increased, and MOEST has plans for additional TTCs, Mr. Kachale felt they needed more books, as their library falls short of fulfilling student needs (they had gotten some for their demonstration primary school from Read Malawi); however, they need a dedicated space for a library and more reading materials to keep pace with literacy needs.

Blantyre Teacher Training College

Mr. M. Magelegele, Principal of Blantyre TTC. At Blantyre TTC, six Lakeland College alumni currently teach there: Bashir Chipanda, Stella Chauluka, Africa Walata, Rabecca Makanga, Mike Kumwamba, and Tamara Mabviko.

Mr. Magelegele felt that the graduates had made both valuable and relevant contributions, proving their ability to work independently and confidently. They are also quite competent in Information Communications Technology (ICT) issues, which include systems for managing communication and teaching people to communicate effectively through such things as e-mail, Facebook, etc. The school uses Lakeland graduates a great deal in the college, assisting students, colleagues, and members of the community. They are professionally grounded and know their work. They also are willing to share their knowledge – and gain knowledge - and don't segregate themselves. They have brought numerous issues to the fore - ICT issues, teaching strategies, gender issues, computer skills, communication skills, public speaking, etc.



USAID

Education

At USAID, World Learning met with the Education Team (Christine Djondo, Florence Nkosi, and John Collins), who briefed World Learning about preparing the country's education strategy, which will focus on such things as literacy and early childhood education and is due sometime later this year. World Learning briefed the team on plans for the workshop and again extended an invitation to attend and say a few words.

HPN/HIV Team

World Learning met with Violet Orchardson, Nutrition Specialist with USAID's HPN/HIV team to try to identify local partners for future work with World Learning's HIV team. Information was gathered on USAID/Malawi's concentrated areas - family planning (training/capacity-building for district workers); maternal/child health, nutrition, malaria, and tuberculosis at the community level. As part of USAID Forward's strategy, the major focus is on capacity-building, giving direct grants to local organizations, with international organizations taking on the role of sub-partner to build capacity.

Department of State - Public Affairs Section

World Learning met with Benjamin Canavan, Public Affairs Officer, to brief him on the workshop and to discuss possible discretionary funding and the alumni association (MUSEAA). Upon return to the U.S., World Learning forwarded a list of names of Lakeland College alumni, email contacts, where they reside, and the year they graduated, so PAS can contact them about the association (this was subsequently done).

Department of Teacher Education and Development

World Learning's final meeting was with Patrick Themu, Training Manager with DTED. Discussion centered on what World Learning can do to strengthen the TTCs and teacher education institutions such as Domasi College and Mzuzu University, which produce teacher trainers. Mr. Themu said the number one problem facing schools is the number of students dropping out when they reach grades 7 & 8. He emphasized the need to understand where these students are going, why they drop out, and what economic needs drive parents to pull kids out of school. He said that no one has studied the problem, and with a substantial amount of funding, academic research could be done into the issue. He suggested as a possibility that teachers at the TTCs could be trained in Action Research to collect data. Another need to address was one of enriching the second year of teacher training, as well as supervisory/follow-up work for teacher trainers, and how to give constructive feedback to teacher trainer students; Mr. O'Flaherty talked about approaching private donors for small amounts to fund pilot programs. This is especially timely, as MOEST wants to build five more TTCs.

PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS:

TCT: Tropical Institute of Community Health, Great Lakes University, Kisumu, Kenya

As part of a process to assess how former participants have utilized their knowledge and training, World Learning interviewed two of the four alumni of TICH, in Kisumu, Kenya, since 2007, John Sande and Laston Stima (the two other graduates of TICH, Twambilire Phiri and Jean Mwalabu,

were unreachable). World Learning elicited information on their training covering program satisfaction and training usefulness; how training enhanced their professional performance; and how their work may have benefited others in their communities.

John Sande's current position is Head, Case Management and Malaria Control Program, in the Department of Preventive Health, Ministry of Health, where he works on planning for diagnosis and treatment of malaria, finding diagnostic tools and reviewing issues of treatment and checking them for effectiveness. He travels to districts monthly to supervise the Ministry of Health's point person in each district and works to solve problems. He has introduced Rapid Diagnostic Testing and developed training materials, trained health workers, and plans to use community volunteers as much as possible in the future, having seen their use in improving diagnostics and reducing the incidence of malaria. His third-country training was particularly useful for learning about planning, teamwork, and community development. He gained new knowledge and ideas on diagnostic tools, knowledge he has been able to impart to highly-receptive colleagues.

Laston Stima is currently Program Manager for River Blindness (Onchocerciasis) with the Ministry of Health. He coordinates program activities, ordering drugs (the drug of choice for river blindness is Ivermectin) and supervising their administration. He also prepares the annual budget to send to the African Program for Onchocerciasis Control, funded by the World Bank; prepares annual reports regarding the outcomes of activities; supervises trainings for volunteers in the districts (community volunteers distribute the drug); and is generally responsible for education, sensitization, and reporting on people treated. His training helped him to develop better working skills for report-writing, supervision, teamwork, learning how to mobilize resources, and coordinating programs, research skills, etc.

ICT – Blantyre (KCN)

Kamuzu College of Nursing, Dr. Ellen Chirwa, Vice Principal, KCN. World Learning also traveled to Blantyre to meet with the graduate students completing their degrees at KCN. Dr. Chirwa said that the students at KCN were currently finalizing their theses and would return to their old jobs at District Offices/Hospitals when they finish, albeit with enhanced leadership and managerial skills; the object was to allow them to grow professionally.

Dr. Chirwa said that in an ideal world, graduates remain with the Ministry of Health rather than going to NGOs once they finish their degrees, although she acknowledged the difficulty in retaining them. To help stem this outbound flow to NGOs, she wanted more post-graduation supervision of them, including perhaps a mentorship program to increase retention of students in government service; funding for follow-up visits to graduates; continuing education workshops; and implementation of small projects in District Hospitals.

Interview with Kamuzu College of Nursing students. World Learning met with all six KCN nursing students - Robert Chasweka, Eneles Kachule, Chrissy Bwazi, Bertha Chikuse, Lydia Chimtembo, and Ruth Mwale – to discuss the benefits and impact from their training experience and to assess its usefulness in helping them attain their objectives; how their participation in the program presented

new opportunities or information that will help them in their careers; the most valuable part of the training experience; and what new ideas they expected to be able to transfer to work.

Although the students had differing expectations for their training, most were interested in acquiring more advanced knowledge and skills in their field and wanted to learn how to conduct more effective research and improve decision-making and planning skills. All felt that the degree would help them take on new responsibilities. They felt that the degree has equipped them with the skills they were looking for, which will ultimately benefit their districts. Through this experience, they have gained the confidence to do research and have acquired leadership skills; they felt much more confident in their ability to devise a solution when encountering a problem. They also gained a background in policy issues previously lacking.

All the students felt there could be many potential ideas that can be transferred to the workplace, e.g., problem-solving (how to manage time, problems with supervision, etc.), and have learned new ways to treat victims of domestic violence and devising plans to aid them and training District Health Officers and those at the Central Hospital on how to handle domestic violence. They also gained more knowledge on how to develop a community-based approach, as opposed to a hospital-based approach, and how to combine both approaches. Their hope was that the community-based approach to pre-conception care will make individuals in the community more aware of nutrition and diseases. Their final thoughts concerned their desire to work with schools regarding health and life skills – and toward this end, they would like to reach out to primary and secondary schools.

ICT – Lilongwe (BCA and MIM): January 24

Bunda College of Agriculture and Malawi Institute of Management. World Learning also stopped at BCA to interview the students currently completing their graduate degrees in food science and human nutrition (Cacious Phiri, Grace Kussein, and Hilda Chilabade), as well as Samuel Chirwa, who is completing his graduate degree in supply chain management at MIM. The purpose of this interview was the same as that for the KCN students, namely to discuss the benefits and impacts from the training experience, whether that participation has presented new opportunities that will likely help them in their jobs; the usefulness of their training experience and whether it lived up to their expectations; the most valuable part of the training experience; and whether they can take new ideas to their jobs.

Not surprisingly, there was variety in their training objectives. Samuel's was to use improved knowledge to improve systems; Grace wanted to close the gaps in her knowledge of nutrition and gain more responsibility after training; Hilda also wanted to add to her knowledge – since she works in treating malnutrition, the training has equipped her with better information; Cacious wanted to gain more knowledge of the technical skills involved in nutrition – as he coordinates nutritional activities and policy, it was useful to be able to upgrade his knowledge of technology so that he can apply it.

They are already seeing how their participation in the program has helped, teaching them broadened approaches on how to handle nutrition issues, and giving them better research skills, some of which

can be used to do their own research on the job. Overall, skills in which they were previously lacking have been acquired, and they can now better approach areas of work with confidence. Their new knowledge and skills are very important in helping them with the review and formulation of policy formulation; what they've done in their coursework has been relevant to their work. Ultimately, this training will provide many potential opportunities for growth, e.g., a broader view towards conditions such as malnutrition, increased analytical skills, and how to maximize the efficiency of systems with few resources. As with the KCN students, they plan to return to the same jobs when they finish, but with additional responsibilities and new ideas.

Trip to Mzuzu

While Patricia Howe traveled to Blantyre, Neil O'Flaherty visited Mzuzu University for a one-day visit to get a better understanding of the work the university carries out both in teacher education and in children's reading and literacy. Mr. O'Flaherty met with the university's librarian, who is currently Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor, to discuss the academic programs offered by the university, as well as the university's faculty training needs and English language resources.

Administrators at Mzuzu were receptive to future collaboration on training and professional development needs of Malawian teachers, particularly those concerning curriculum review and development of curriculum modules relating to schools as facilitators of interventions for the support of OVCs and other vulnerable cohorts. Mr. O'Flaherty also visited the children's library at the university, a venture spearheaded by Gift Dube, a Lakeland graduate. The library serves children from the local community, including street children, and hopes to expand services to children from a wider range of schools and rural communities. Several options were discussed, including (a) the development of adult literacy programs for the parents of library users and (b) potential use of adult literacy capacity development as a first step in building HIV/AIDS education and awareness, farming advice, and nutritional information provision via SMS (short message service) and other literacy-dependent formats.

Health Strategic Objective

In-Country Training

Master's Degree in Reproductive Health:

Chrissy Bwazi, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Robert Chasweka, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Eneles Kachule, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Master's Degree in Midwifery:

Bertha Chikuse, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Lydia Chimtembo, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Ruth Mwale, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

All six Kamuzu College of Nursing students, having completed classes in early October 2011 and having been given six months to complete their theses, handed in their theses for examiners' review on 31st March 2012. Although officially they will not graduate until September 2012, technically they have completed their program, except for revisions to their theses, for which they do not require financial support.

SUMMARY OF PERIOD APRIL 1 – MAY 5, 2012 (END OF CONTRACT)

Highlights:

- Sixth and final site visit to WI (April 2012)
- Graduation of final cohort from Lakeland College (May 2012)

Summary of Student Activities:

Education Strategic Objective

Cohort 11: Alemekzeke Chitanje; Adams Disi; Justina Mandala Longwe; Khama Otaniele; and Vincent Chafukira Pseli. Lakeland College, August 2009 – May 2012.

World Learning conducted its sixth and final site visit for this program on April 13, 2012. With the graduation of Cohort 11, the program officially ended. World Learning met with all five members of the remaining cohort, Cohort 11, conducting a cultural re-entry workshop, assisting with Action Plan finalization, and conducting an exit evaluation with them. In addition, interviews were conducted with Dr. Stephen Gould and Sandy Gibbons-Vollbrecht, Dean of Students to discuss the overall impact of the Lakeland Malawi program.

There were no major issues of concern to the students. Their airline tickets were purchased and forwarded to them previously, and their contact information was sent to USAID. Three of the five completed all degree requirements with the end of the Spring Term, foregoing the need to spend

May Term on campus; Alemekzeke Chitanje, Adams Disi, and Justina Longwe departed on May 13. The remaining two participants, Khama Otaniele and Vincent Paseli, lacked the credits to depart without taking May Term and departed on May 26.

CULTURAL RE-ENTRY WORKSHOP

World Learning conducted a cultural re-entry workshop to help ease the transition from life in the U.S. to life and work in Malawi. Since the participants have spent three years in the U.S. learning the technical skills and motivation to initiate and/or support change, the workshop is intended to help them re-adapt to their environment, developing strategies for re-entering their personal and professional lives, initiating effective processes for change and tackling challenges they may face, e.g., dealing with resistance, lack of infrastructure, etc., and how to fit what they hope to achieve into the context of Malawi culture.

The workshop focused on their personal experiences with culture shock, how they have changed since being in the U.S., reverse culture shock, and how to be an agent of change. Using a list of symptoms for culture shock that included sadness/loneliness; health issues (e.g., insomnia, sleeping too much); lack of confidence; idealizing about home; trying too hard to absorb new culture; and homesickness, the group talked about which symptoms they had experienced the most dramatically and what they did to deal with it.

All felt homesick initially and longing for family, and for three of them, that was the symptom most dramatically experienced. Although they all continued to experience it, they call home several times a week to help them feel more like an integral part of their family and to ensure a sense of greater control over family life. To a degree, being independent has become the “new normal.” For others, being in a new place, with everything new, lecturers speaking too fast, the process took time to adapt. Although being a teacher helped in the adaptation, particularly for such things as class presentations, it took time, and required the support of the network of Malawi students and advisors.

The students also discussed how they have changed individually during their time in the U.S., exploring the cultural differences in dress, professional demeanor, and formality. Brainstorming characteristics for each culture, they then talked about which side they felt more comfortable with now. This group differed from previous ones, who have made distinctions between the type of casual dress and informality enjoyed in the U.S., as opposed to what is required in Malawi. This group felt that the barriers to women dressing in pants in public, e.g., in schools, at least at the university level, have been lowered, although they conceded that at the TTCs, “professional,” or more formal attire, is mandatory. They generally identified with a more casual approach.

Regarding the workplace, they all agreed that Malawi is more formal than U.S. culture, and, while all felt they would have no problem adjusting, they did feel that the element of time consciousness, with which they now identify, could pose some difficulties for them. This last is one of the elements of U.S. culture that all groups want to transfer back to some degree or another to their workplaces.

The group also considered what they can and cannot transfer back to Malawi. They felt that the dress issue is less a problem now, but that student teachers cannot dress informally; and some American expressions do not translate readily. Furthermore, profanity should be avoided, and time-consciousness could be difficult. As with past groups, this last issue, that of time management, is always a concern to groups. Cohort 11 acknowledged that this is one of the more difficult elements to change. To introduce it into the workplace, as with other groups, they felt that the best solution is to lead by example, e.g., show up at the meeting room first.

The workshop also focused on reverse culture shock, its challenges, and strategies to manage it. Each student was asked to record the challenges they expect to face for family, culture, and professional life, selecting choosing one challenge per category to share with the group. The group as a whole brainstormed strategies for dealing with them. With regard to family life, as with all group, this cohort was concerned about their re-adjustment to family life, which has gone on in their absence; specifically, they have missed out on a few of their children's developmental years, and childcare roles have been altered or reversed (for the women). For these challenges, they felt it important to explain to their children carefully what they have done to warrant discipline to give them reasonable expectations on behavior, and sitting down with spouses and jointly working out a way to impose rules. Spouses need to prepare their children for the return of the other parent. All groups have also shared concerns about family (financial) expectations centering from the knowledge about relatives being in the U.S. As with past groups, this one felt they need to emphasize to their families that their objective in going to the U.S. was to get an education, not to make money.

Most concerns about their professional lives involved introducing new ideas that might run contrary to those of others, i.e., will colleagues think it is because they were in the U.S.? They agreed that it is important to be conscious of the way you present yourself, and, if you need to express contrary views, do it in the Malawi context. Ultimately, it is best not to make constant references to the U.S. experience. It was also suggested using earlier cohorts as a resource for all difficulties in adjustment.

Similarly, cultural challenges centered on others' realization that they have been in the U.S. for three years, and it may color the way people regard them, even to the extent that they might be seen as "showing off." They also feared introducing time-consciousness and individualism to the culture. For the first example, they felt that simple solutions, such as making sure they don't use English expressions when speaking Chichewa – and also that they would adjust in time; for the latter, they felt it best to try to lead by example, e.g., being the first to arrive. Ultimately, they know that certain things will not change, and they will have to re-adjust to them, e.g., cultural focus on the group rather than the individual.

Finally, the group was challenged to come up with things *they* would change in the educational system if they could (*introduce the concept of kindergarten in public schools; teach all subjects in English beginning with Grade 1; bring more resources to the schools; change the dress code; lengthen the school day; have curriculum developers consult with teachers before devising the curriculum; institute better pay and more respect for teachers*). Then they discussed what changes were actually possible (*introduction of kindergarten would need the support of MOEST – and so they should seek support from civil society organizations, teachers union, MPs; there*

seems to be support for teaching English in early grades; changing the dress code for teachers and students; lengthening the school day – something already done in Zomba; start a pilot program initially to get curriculum developers to consult with teachers). They all agreed that some things are not likely to change anytime soon, such as more teaching/learning materials and better pay, both due to a lack of funds.

All cohorts know the difficulties of effecting change, especially when they are not in a position of much authority, hence the need for patience and to start small. The above activities were designed to make the students think and reflect on the ways in which they have changed in the last three years and recognize the impact their experience has had and will continue to have as they resume their place in Malawi society and in their families. But they were also intended to recognize the challenges of making improvements in the workplace when they return and get a better sense of how to approach that. All have learned important skills that will better serve them when they return.

Cohort 11's preliminary action plans were submitted in December 2011. At the workshop, those plans were discussed, and the group spent time reflecting on the practical aspects of implementing their plans. This year's action plans will focus on building classroom blocks and providing a library in primary schools. This element of the U.S. experience has always been a productive aspect of their training. To date, 10 small projects have been completed in Malawi upon the students' return. The post-training skills-building workshops on grant-writing, project planning, and financial management of small projects in Malawi have contributed to the ability of the alumnae to continue action planning on a self-sustaining basis as they explore new options and opportunities open to them for funding small projects, e.g., the Friends of Malawi Teacher Education Program; and the Ambassador's Self-Help Fund, administered by the US Embassy.

World Learning conducted an exit evaluation to gather Cohort 11's thoughts on their U.S. training experience. They responded to such questions as whether their educational training objectives were met; what ideas they can use in their work; how they would rate the quality of instruction at Lakeland; how well they felt integrated into the cultural life of the U.S., and how much contact they had with U.S. families; and how involved they became in extracurricular activities (on and off-campus).

The group unanimously felt that their training objectives had been met; these included becoming equipped with the necessary skills to train other teachers; the opportunity to observe classrooms in the U.S.; developing new strategies and methods of teaching (group work and hands-on, student-centered methods, such as letting students discover on their own, i.e., posing a problem and encouraging students to solve them on their own). They plan to take numerous ideas back with them, e.g., respecting students and taking them as individuals; using different strategies and methods of assessment, e.g., testing, continuous assessment; teaching using real life situations, such as field trips; methods for dealing with students with disabilities, e.g., recognizing some things as behavioral disorders like dyslexia and ADD; and disciplining children using positive reinforcement instead of more traditional, punitive methods.

They rated the quality of instruction received at Lakeland as "very good." At first, they struggled with the difference in teaching methods, but felt they learned a lot as well. They especially enjoyed

the Field Experience, their opportunity to go into the classroom and observe during May Term last year, which gave them an excellent opportunity to see how classes in the U.S. are conducted. They also liked the student-as-practitioner projects, opportunities for them to volunteer in classes to help mark papers, conduct experiments, and present in class. Having host families, with whom they could spend U.S. holidays, such as Thanksgiving and July 4 – and more universal holidays, such as Christmas – served to help introduce them into American life. Other means of getting involved in American life were the student associations they belonged to – the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance and the Global Students Association, as well as the many presentations they made on Malawi in the local school system and community. World Learning concluded the visit by briefing them about their ability to access the alumni.state.gov website and to join MUSEAA when they return.

INTERVIEWS WITH LAKELAND COLLEGE PRESIDENT, DEAN OF STUDENTS, AND MALAWI TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Given that the Teacher Education Program is ending at Lakeland College, World Learning wanted to speak with Lakeland's President and its Dean of Students about the impact the program has had on the college and the community. Specifically, Dr. Gould and Dr. Gibbons-Vollbrecht were asked what the program has meant to the school; what is their general view of the students; and what have the students brought to the college? Emphasizing that Lakeland is mostly a first-generation-serving institution, Dr. Gould pointed out the significance of that fact and the transformation it has brought to the college, i.e., bringing an international dimension to the school and its students, helping American students understand how other people live and work. Sending back several dozen Malawi students after their tenure here has also obviously had a tremendous effect in Malawi, especially given the country's small size. Dr. Gould called them "terrific students" – smart, hard-working, great role models, and great on-campus citizens, slightly older and wiser in the ways of the world than the average U.S. student. Their presence has opened up relationships between students and the community given their visibility through classroom observations, presentations at local schools, churches, and organizations such as Kiwanis and Lion's Club.

Dean of Students Sandy Gibbons-Vollbrecht

Dr. Gibbons-Vollbrecht called the relationship with Malawi and its cohorts "a joy on so many levels." She too pointed out what Dr. Gould had, namely, that it has been an educational, mind-expanding experience for the U.S. students and offered multiple benefits for students and community. Having them in class was inspirational to the other students. She, too, mentioned their visibility in the community, and how they have shared their experiences with others. In addition, it has raised a great deal of awareness of Malawi within the area and allowed the school to have a direct impact through donations of books and funds for educational purposes.

Dr. Jeff Elzinga, Director, Malawi Teacher Education Program

Dr. Elzinga, who was the driving force behind the program over the years and its initiator, said the biggest impact on Malawi has been the multiplier effect created by providing the students with a liberal arts core that includes critical thinking and disciplinary skills that have provided a foundation for skills they subsequently teach in Malawi. Put simply, Lilongwe TTC and Blantyre produce between 700-850 students per year; Kasungu TTC graduates 600-700; Karonga TTC graduates 500-650; and Machinga TTC and St. Joseph's TTC produce a combined 500-600 per year. A

conservative estimate of the number of students directly or indirectly affected by the program is over 2,000 students per year.

Graduation was held on May 6, and all of Cohort 11 participated.



Health Strategic Objective

In-Country Training

Master's Degree in Reproductive Health:

Chrissy Bwazi, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

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Eneles Kachule, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Master's Degree in Midwifery:

Bertha Chikuse, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Lydia Chimtembo, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

Ruth Mwale, Kamuzu College of Nursing (KCN), University of Malawi, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, February 2010-October 2011.

World Learning used this closeout period to confirm end dates for all health students and reconcile finances with the Kamuzu College of Nursing students and pay out stipends for the Bunda College of Agriculture. Samuel Chirwa will complete his program at MIM at the end of June, and the BCA students will complete theirs at the end of August.

Purchase order to allow World Learning to complete monitoring and pay out the last of the stipends for the BCA students (until the end of August) was pending.

There were no other outstanding issues for any of the health students during this time period.

SUCCESS STORIES

As an outgrowth of action plans, many returned Lakeland College alumni have put words into action by sponsoring and overseeing the implementation of small projects in their schools and/or communities. To date, 10 have been successfully implemented. Three of them are highlighted below:

BOREHOLE PROJECT AT CHANKHUNGU ANGLICAN ORPHAN CARE CENTER

Joyce Kamanga, Cohort 10 (2008-11)

The Chankhungu Orphan Care Center in the Lake Malawi area is run by the Anglican Church. The church has been providing food, education, shelter and spiritual needs on an ongoing basis and has set up a children's corner where teenagers can get counseling on issues such as HIV/AIDS; the church also provides physical, emotional, and social support for HIV/AIDS victims.



Nonetheless, the center lacked safe, clean water for the 300 orphans it cares for. The center has been using an unprotected dug-out well as a source of water. Since these orphans, who are the among the poorest, are already vulnerable to malnutrition and other infant diseases, a lack of safe and clean water causes even more health problems, such as diarrhea, cholera, and other waterborne diseases. Lack of clean safe water puts these children at even further risk and is not conducive to either learning or physical and spiritual growth and well-being.

While in the U.S., Joyce attended St Peter's Episcopal Church in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin. Inspired by their concern for the needs of the less fortunate, not only in their own community, but

also worldwide, Joyce approached them about the need for safe and clean water at Chankhungu Orphan Care Center. In March 2010, she submitted a proposal for the borehole project to St Peter's Church, which they approved. A total of \$3,000 was provided, and the project was funded and completed in August 2010, opening in early September 2010 by church leaders. Although Joyce was still in the U.S. and unable to attend the opening, she was thrilled that the borehole now provides clean and safe water for the orphan care center, as well as the surrounding community. St Peter's Episcopal Church has made a critical difference for these children, one that will last for years.



LIZIMBA SCHOOL BLOCK PROJECT
Moses Madzedze, Cohort 8 (2006-2009)

After Moses Madzedze graduated from Lakeland College in 2009, he returned to Malawi and very shortly thereafter approached Dr. Jeff Elzinga at Lakeland College about a way to assist the teachers and students at Lizimba Junior Primary School in Lizimba Village, Monkey Bay in Eastern Malawi, near Lake Malawi. At the time, the school consisted of one dilapidated structure; many children were having classes under the shade of trees. Dr. Elzinga spoke to St. John's United Church of Christ of Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin near Sheboygan, who agreed to provide funds for building a school block for the children. Moses mobilized the communities, who threw their support into the project, to build the structure. Members of the community were moulded bricks and helped bring construction materials to the site. Despite some challenges encountered along the way, the project was completed and today the school enjoys another set of classrooms for its children. Children who used to learn outside are now able to learn in a protected environment. St. John's UCC has truly made a difference in the life of these children. Thanks for bringing a smile to the Lizimba Community!



Mzuzu University Children's Library and Information Centre.
Gift Dube, Cohort 2 (2000–2003)

The idea of having a Children's Library at Mzuzu University came about after the university's librarian, an advocate of promoting children reading habits, observed that children from schools surrounding the university seemed to wander about aimlessly after school, some of whom engaged in risky behaviors. Most of these children came from families who could not afford to buy books for their children. Since the university stresses outreach programs to surrounding communities, Mzuzu University, with funds from the UK Beit Trust, constructed a children's library as an annex to the main university library. Opening in 2004, it serves as the only children's library in Mzuzu and provides children a place to go after school, provides reading materials, and generally promotes a reading culture among them.

In 2006, Gift Dube, a Lakeland graduate, was brought on board to manage and develop the library, first reorganizing it to meet the substantial literacy challenges and provide holistic approaches to addressing them. In 2010, it became the Children's Library and Information Centre with a new mission: "*Mzuzu University Children's Library and Information Center is committed to developing reading culture, promoting information literacy, and creating appropriate reading and learning environment for the children of Malawi through the provision of appropriate information resources, activities and training that respond to 21st century reading needs.*" Gift has envisioned it as a leading center in the promotion of independent and lifelong learning in Malawi and Africa, that will (a) promote and sustain reading culture and information literacy skills among children; and (b) demonstrate the ability to create a positive educational environment in a literate, technology-rich, and inviting library atmosphere. As such, more programs have been introduced, such as a reading clinic for street children; reading hour for special needs children; storytelling and sharing for children in surrounding schools; self-selected reading; and book talks. To keep up with the demand brought on by the broadened mission and expanded programs, in September 2011, Gift submitted a proposal to Lakeland College for furnishings that would create an inviting environment conducive to reading. The contribution made by Lakeland provided reading tables, bookshelves, computer desks, and chairs. Since the furniture arrived, library attendance has increased by over 50%.



The difference this library has made in the lives of children in the community has been extraordinary. Where before, there was no children's library, its presence has helped to fulfill the challenges that many children face due to lack of reading materials and a lack of reading culture, which too often lead to poor academic performance for children. As a direct result of the library, children have improved reading skills and learned to like reading; communication skills have improved as they share stories that they have read with others and learn more about the world beyond their homes; academic performance has improved, especially among street children, who now remain in school. The library has had an enormous impact on children who previously struggled to read or were reading below their level. Through its reading clinic program, children are now motivated to learn. The library has also impacted parents as well; more parents from surrounding areas are coming to the library with their children. Special needs children, who attend the library once a week for 90 minutes, have improved both their communications skills and their self-esteem. Through storytelling, book discussions, and video watching, children with learning difficulties have improved listening abilities, speech, and retention.

The library has a capacity of up to 40 children and operates two sessions a day. Initially, the library was never full; now it is always full, and some children have to be turned away because of lack of space. On average, the library serves 400 children a week against the target population of over 8,000 children. Due to lack of books, children are not allowed to borrow books. Prior to the library's inception, most of these children spent their time playing in the streets, helping with chores at home; helping the family economically by selling commodities in town, etc. Since the library has opened, children are learning new vocabulary, tolerance, unity, and hard work. The children have their favorite books: *The Lion and the Mouse* by Christine Kasonde; and such perennial favorites and classics, such as *Cinderella*, *Aladdin*, *The Ugly Duckling*, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.



Most children dream of doing great things in the future. Through reading, children aspire to take on new responsibilities once beyond their imagining, such as becoming engineers, artists, computer technicians, and leaders. This library has provided children with literacy skills that will make them independent and lifelong learners. Beyond the obvious ability to boost reading skills, a key activity for success, children find books with characters that inspire them and teach them values that will help them achieve in life. Having access to a library also provides children with a forum to learn from characterization in books how others with similar challenges solved them. In short, a library provides a learning resource for every child because it provides resources that meet the needs of every child regardless of economic and social background.

Gift has many ideas for additional programs and expansion in the future:

(a) instituting a mobile library, which would allow it to reach out to more children. This will require more books and vehicles.

(b) Publishing Children's Books - the library currently houses about 4,000 books, about 150 of which are locally published. Research shows that struggling readers learn to read easily in their local language, and children are motivated to read when they read stories that are familiar to them. Publishing books locally would allow children to use them as stepping stones to read book about other cultures.

(C). Computer Integration - In order to provide children with multiple literacy environments, we need to have computers connected to the Internet. Children and teachers will be trained to use them to find information and do their learning activities. Computers with internet will help children access free eBooks.

(d). Expand the Reading Clinic - The reading clinic program targets children at risk of dropping out due to reading problems. Most of these children are in upper primary school grades and cannot read

at their level. At the moment, there are only 20 children in that program. Plans for the future include enrolling more children into this program. There are many children whose main reason for not going to school is their inability to read. This will require more human resources and materials.

(e). Buddy Reading system - In order to help younger children read, older children will read to younger children, providing a win-win situation, as older children learn more as they read and tell stories to younger children; at the same time younger children learn to read.

The Council and Management of Mzuzu University through the Children's Library are infinitely grateful to Lakeland College for making such as timely donation, one that has provided the children of Mzuzu an environment for reading and will ultimately help them realize their academic, social, and economic potentials.



FORMER PARTICIPANTS

World Learning sent out a questionnaire in December to the Lakeland alumni, the alumni of TICH in Kenya, and all the students enrolled in In-Country Training programs in Malawi (Kamuzu College of Nursing, Bunda College of Agriculture, and Malawi Institute of Management). The survey focused on capturing information on their current positions and responsibilities; their views on how useful the training program has been to their professional development and advancement; its relevance to their current work; new ideas they have been able to adopt at work; what challenges they face in applying their knowledge and skills, etc. Forty-one responses were received, results have been analyzed and are shared with USAID in a separate report.

III. CONCERNS/CONSTRAINTS

There were no participant issues during this contract.

IV. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

CONCLUSIONS

It seems clear that this program has created opportunities for substantial professional development that will impact both its educational systems and its health delivery systems. For all participants – UST, TCT, and ICT – the program has helped them achieve needed skills in teaching methodologies, research, planning, and supervision that will allow them to bring new ideas to their workplaces and institutions and advance to increasing levels of responsibility. In addition, they have acquired from their experience qualities that their colleagues and supervisors feel have served them well: confidence, farsightedness, taking initiative, willingness to share knowledge – and that will position them to take on increasing challenges and inspire others with whom they work. World Learning has seen firsthand through its numerous site visits not only the passion and dedication that the alumni have for their profession and the desire to have a lasting impact on Malawi, but the effect their work has had on their students and the students of those students. World Learning has been honored to have been a part of this dynamic and far-reaching program and looks forward to a continued association with these extraordinary individuals.

The post-training activities that began with FORECAST have been an important reminder of the value not only of training itself, but of maintaining ongoing ties with participants, specifically, the workshops and opportunities to monitor in-country and third-country and conduct assessments of training impact.

For the Lakeland alumni in particular, this program has acted not only as a catalyst for internationalism on the school's campus, but has created lasting mutual impact for both the Wisconsin community and local Malawian communities, and given Wisconsinites a permanent investment in the country. The increasing number of attendees at each of the workshops for former U.S. trainees has been a good indicator of the seriousness of alumni motivation. These former participants are a much more cohesive group now than they were at the time of the first meeting in 2008, and although the Lakeland College program has ended, World Learning feels that the alumni are well-positioned to move forward from here, as they will need to do from now on, taking advantage of the numerous opportunities now in place for them. The workshops have given them opportunities to develop new skills or build on old ones, preparing them for seeking out support for their community and school projects, as seen in their enthusiastic attendance at all four meetings and workshops since 2008. They now have access to the State Department alumni website and the Malawi-US Exchange Alumni Association, avenues that will help to expand their network and expose them to additional opportunities for training and professional development. These opportunities will enable them to continue developing skills and talents to the betterment of their schools and communities, and continue to oversee small projects in their communities.



LESSONS LEARNED:

Education:

In addition to accumulating a significant amount of knowledge in teaching methodologies, the participants' learning gains in ancillary subjects such as computer skills, finance/budgeting, planning have been impressive and noted by supervisors at the TTCs. They have always been highly motivated, but since their return they have been able to take advantage of post-training workshops and acquired further skills that will serve their schools and communities, i.e., the range of grantsmanship tools (researching/identifying donors, writing proposals, implementing projects, financial management, reporting/accountability).

The cultural re-entry workshops introduced several years ago for the Lakeland students have been a way to help prepare them for returning to Malawi after a significant time away from family and colleagues. Applying lessons learned in the U.S. to the Malawi context is an ongoing challenge and dependent on some factors beyond their control, e.g., lack of financial and material resources, bureaucracy, etc.

They have seen two presentations since 2010 on the services provided by the Public Affairs Section with regard to opportunities for funding for graduate school in the U.S., an avenue of which they were previously unaware, and in addition to being given tools in grantsmanship via workshops, they have also learned of possible options for funding, e.g., the Ambassador's Self-Help Fund, that will enable them to continue making an impact locally. In addition, now that the alumni can utilize both the State Department's alumni website and can join MUSEAAA, those are two more opportunities for interaction with peers, networking, getting involved in projects, taking advantage of professional opportunities, etc.

Health: Similar to the Education participants, the Health participants gained significant content knowledge in their respective fields, as well as critical skills in research, planning, teamwork, community development reporting, supervising, using scarce resources, decision-making, leadership. These will help them take on new responsibilities and bring new ideas to their jobs.

In order to make professional progress, they could all benefit from further training, either participation in professional development opportunities, trainings, international conferences, etc., or additional degree training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Next steps the Mission might consider include the following:

1. Continue long-term undergraduate and graduate degree training in the U.S. to expose Malawi professionals to the U.S. higher education system and latest developments in their field to help cultivate high standards and expose them to new systems and ideas;
2. Consider short-term U.S. training or attendance at regional conferences and workshops in Africa aimed at building skills and networking among international professionals to help them build relationships and networks;
3. Build institutional capacity in local institutions, such as the TTCs, DTED, KCN, etc. through performance improvement measures, which could include USAID's HICD methodology, or other similar approaches. More information on HICD can be found in the FORECAST II Practitioner's Handbook at http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADQ720.pdf.
4. Utilize the talents and skills of alumni in collecting data on pressing problems affecting Malawi's educational system, such as helping DTED collect information on Malawi's dropout rate.
5. Follow up with alumni to see how many are taking advantage of networks such as the State Department's alumni website and MUSEAA, and who has contacted the PAS's education office regarding funding for graduate school in the U.S. (and make sure the TCT and ICT are aware of this avenue).