



Notes from the Warm Heart of Africa



All growth depends upon activity. There is no development physically or intellectually without effort, and effort means work.

—Calvin Coolidge

Issue 19
February 1, 2010

USAID, GoM and Development Partners Sign Joint Financing MoU for Education Sector



Hon. George Chponda, Minister of Education, Science and Technology (standing) delivers the keynote speech joined by Richard Kimball, Acting USAID/Malawi Mission Director and other dignitaries.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) became the third ministry in Malawi to adopt the Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) behind the Ministries of Health and Water and Sanitation.

More than eight major Development Partners to the Education sector in Malawi including USAID, signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the SWAp. Four of those eight including the Department of International Development (DIFD), the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank signed a Joint Financing Agreement (JFA) with MoEST.

The signing of the MoU and JFA will lay the groundwork for the implementation of Malawi's long and mid-term education plans. These plans are linked to the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2007-2017 and the Education Sector Implementation Plan (ESIP), 2009-2013. In his speech at the signing ceremony, Education Minister Honorable George Chponda welcomed the develop

Spotlight/ Farewell



Pedro J. Carrillo, Food for Peace Officer, Sustainable Economic Growth team, will be leaving Malawi shortly. We caught up with him during his last days at USAID/Malawi to have a brief chat.

Where were you before coming to Malawi? I worked as a contractor for USAID/Afghanistan from 2007-08) also Ethiopia 2004-07 and Madagascar 2000-04. Prior to that I worked as a Foreign Service National (FSN) at USAID/Peru from 1992 to 2000. This coming June, 2010 is going to be my 18th year working for USAID. **CONT.P3**

ment and assured government partners that all activities and programs under the education SWAp will be properly implemented to achieve quality education.

USAID/Malawi's efforts in the education sector support the priorities set by MoEST as articulated by the NESP and ESIP and the signing of the MoU solidifies that relationship. USAID/Malawi allocates an approximate budget of \$10 to \$12 million per year for education. These funds are used to improve basic education quality, relevance and management acquisition.

Important Dates

Synergy Meeting	02/12
Family Planning Media Training for Journalists	02/24-26
Recognition of Mzuzu District Hospital Ceremony	2/24
Commercial Courts Handover Ceremony:	02/25
RAPID Presentation	02/26

Welcome & Welcome Back

Welcome back to USAID/Malawi Mission Director Curt Reintsma who was in Washington for three months on a Food Security Initiative assignment. We will hear more about his experiences in the next edition.



USAID/Malawi would like to welcome: **Masauko**

Dzutse, Custodian who joined USAID in January 2010. Prior to joining USAID he worked at Peace Corps Malawi for seven years handling various administrative tasks.

Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy Drafted in Malawi

Through a \$700,000 USAID grant, JBS International and the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) have formed a joint Capacity Development Task Force (CD TF) to formulate an education sector capacity development strategy and plans. The strategy will identify ways of strengthening the delivery and management of education in Malawi.

The Education Sector Capacity Development Strategy will align with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS). The MGDS outlines education as a “catalyst for social-economic development, industrial growth, and instrument for empowering the

poor, the weak and voiceless.” The capacity development exercise will complement two major MoEST plans, the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) and the Malawi Education Sector Implementation Plan (ESIP). NESP focuses on longer term goals regarding access to education, quality and management; while ESIP lays out immediate to mid-term plans for policy reform, institutional reform, communication, financial institutional reform, communication, financial reform and monitoring and evaluation issues.

“education is a catalyst for social-economic development, industrial growth”

Marisol Perez, Education Team Leader for USAID/Malawi had this to say about the strategy, “much of the direction for GoM efforts in education have been articulated in the existing NESP and ESIP plans, which USAID and other development partners have helped support. Our greatest collective challenges to effectively serve the Malawian children and other learners are multi-faceted and multi-level, but almost exclusively centered on capacity issues. Our intention through this activity is to outline all capacity constraints so the Government and donors can determine the right way to address them.”

USAID/Malawi Partner’s Column



Pact Malawi

Matthew Tiedemann, Country Representative.

In late 2006 Pact was awarded a cooperative agreement from USAID/Malawi with funding through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) to implement the Rapid and Effective Action Combating HIV/AIDS (REACH) Program, a major HIV/AIDS grants management and technical and capacity building program. Through this program Pact Malawi supports 25 local organizations, which provide HIV and AIDS prevention, care and support services across Malawi. The REACH Program supports the Malawi Government’s National Action Framework to prevent the spread of HIV, and focuses on mitigating HIV’s disastrous effects on the Malawian population. Pact is also a partner with PSI on the Evidence-Based, Targeted Prevention project and with John’s Hopkins Center for Communication Programs on the BRIDGE II project, two

PEPFAR/USAID HIV prevention projects awarded in 2009.

We took a moment to chat with Matthew Tiedemann of Pact Malawi to learn more about Pact’s work.

Tell us about the objectives, goals and mission of Pact Malawi. Pact is a leading development organization committed to empowering individuals and communities in disadvantaged settings to improve their lives. Pact takes a systems approach to development challenges, and building capacity of our partners, so that they become better able to effect change, is key to our approach. This approach is fundamental to everything we do and it has enabled us to work in a variety of development areas, not only HIV/AIDS.

Your slogan “Capacity Building Worldwide” - could you please elaborate more on that? We consider strengthening capacity essential for sustained improvement. We know that, as an external agency, we won’t be working on a particular issue in any particular setting forever... we shouldn’t be; we should be working ourselves out of the job over time. To be able to do that, we strive to leave our partners

stronger than they were before working with Pact, so that they can continue to meet the challenges they seek to overcome after our support ends. Our work in Malawi covers a wide range of areas. We start with strengthening partners’ financial

“We exceeded almost 90% of all targets we set with the partners”

management and monitoring and evaluation, through training and one-on-one mentorship, because if those aspects are not handled right, then we all go home. We then emphasize technical capacity in HIV/AIDS, including prevention, care for orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), palliative and home-based care, and testing and counseling. And we go beyond those efforts to strengthen our partners’ projects and also focus on development of their organization as a whole, because we want to help the partners we work with to be able to continue to offer the vital services they provide in their communities well into the future. We conduct a series of assessments with each partner and from the results the partners develop institutional strengthening plans, which they implement through and, hopefully beyond, the life of the **CONT.P.3**

Spotlight Continued

What Department do you work in, what other departments have you worked? During the 18 years with USAID, I've worked in different capacities and field areas. In Peru as an FSN, I worked in the area of Alternative Development, a \$150 million/year coca substitution program in the upper jungle areas of Peru, providing economic alternatives to coca growing farmers. I also assisted in managing an \$80 million/year Food for Peace program, providing livelihood alternatives to farmers living in the highlands of Peru.

Starting in 2000, I managed for 4 years a \$10 million per year Food for Peace Program in Madagascar. In 2004, I managed the Pastoral Livelihoods Program that USAID implemented in low-land areas of Ethiopia bordering with Somalia and Eritrea. Then in 2007 I did a tour in Afghanistan managing a \$150 million

per year Food for Peace Program, implemented by the World Food Program and managed the start-up of a US\$12 million food security program in Ghor Province.

Any big accomplishments during your time here, or is there anything you are proud of? I helped support the review, approval and implementation process of the Food for Peace Multi-year Assistance Program (MYAP), for Malawi. The MYAP was won by Catholic Relief Services/Malawi and its Consortium members. It is a US\$80 million, 5 year food security program that will assist 125,000 people from the southern drought and flood prone region of Malawi. The MYAP for Malawi is the 6th largest development-type program under the Food for Peace Office worldwide.

Where are you going from here,

and what will you miss most about Malawi? My family and I are heading to Guatemala where I will be the new USAID/Food for Peace Officer. We will miss the excellent weather that Malawi offers and the warmth and good humor of its people. Being able to travel easily to Lake Malawi and its national parks will also be missed.

Any memorable moments here? Being able to travel with my family around Malawi and visit wonderful natural sites. I also loved doing my monitoring and evaluation field trips, checking our MYAP activities, being able to talk and interact with our beneficiaries and see first hand the impact that the Food for Peace supported program has in Malawi.

Any last words or comments? Just to thank the Mission and the Food for Peace Office in Washington for the opportunity to work in Malawi. **Bon Voyage, Pedro!**

Partner's Column Continued

project.

What were the major accomplishments in 2009? The 25 partners that we have are constantly working to improve people's lives in Malawi. Over the past year we have seen real progress in these organizations' technical and programmatic abilities. Through their efforts, with Pact's support, in 2009 we exceeded over 90% of the targets we set with the partners. Over 200,000 clients were tested for HIV and received their results, some 58,000 orphans and vulnerable children received services last year, and 125,000 clients received some form of palliative care - that's a substantial contribution to the national response made possible by PEPFAR and USAID through Pact.

Any major plans for Pact Malawi in 2010? We are really focusing now on resource mobilization for our partners, as the support through Community REACH may not extend beyond 2011. In addition, I am eager to look for possibilities to bring other aspects of Pact's experience and expertise to Malawi, in particu-

lar economic empowerment, as the ability to earn a livelihood is fundamental not only for health but for any aspect of development. In conclusion, we appreciate the support that USAID has provided; it's been a very collegial relationship. The Mission's support for building local capacity demonstrates their interest in promoting sustainable solutions in Malawi. **Thanks Matthew and keep up the great work.** To learn more about Pact please contact Matthew Tiedemann at mtiedemann@pactmw.org

Child Survival Health Grants

USAID/Malawi requests applications for the Fiscal Year 2010 Child Survival and Health Grants Program. Estimated Total Program Funding: \$13,500,000. Award Ceiling \$1,750,000. Closing Date for Applications: March 22, 2010.

For more information on the grant or application process, please visit the following website: www.grants.gov/search or contact Jeannine Beavers, Agreement Specialist at jbeavers@usaid.gov

Communications Working Group



Patrick Zgambo, Communications Officer, Save the Children presents to the group.

The Communications Working Group held its fourth session on January 14 at USAID/Malawi Offices in Lilongwe. The group outlined some activities for the year and is geared up for an exiting 2010. Patrick Zgambo, Communications Officer for Save the Children gave a presentation on "Crisis Communications and Media Opportunities," which led to a lively discussion.

The next meeting is on **March 4, 2010** at USAID Offices, Lilongwe. There will be a presentation on "Writing Success Stories." USAID/Malawi encourages all USAID partners to actively participate in these important meetings.

Financial Management Office (FMO) Corner

A call for participants - Financial Management Training for USAID

In October, 2009 FMO conducted Financial Management Training for USAID recipients. A similar training has been scheduled for early March (tentatively March 22-26, 2010). The course takes 4-5 days and covers a wide range of areas including such topics as:

- Financial Management Standards
- Internal Control
- Fraud Detection and Prevention
- Procurement
- Personnel and Payroll
- Travel and Transportation
- Pipeline and Budget Monitoring
- Financing Mechanisms

- Accruals
- Tax Reporting
- Cost Sharing
- Award Close Outs
- Auditing

The class limit was set to accommodate up to 30 people. Registration was on first come first served basis and many new and existing partners have taken advantage of this opportunity and have signed up to participate. The Mission hopes to offer this training again sometime in the next 6 months, so keep your eyes open for the next training. For further information on the training or the topics discussed, please contact **Mark Misomali** mmisomali@usaid.gov

USAID/Malawi Welcomes Two New Partnerships

Total Land Care (TLC) began implementing the three year Kuleka Biodiversity program in October, 2009. The program aims to assist 45,000 resource poor households with improved governance of protected areas, improved rural livelihoods and increased rural incomes. Communities to benefit from the program include Nyika-Vwaza complex, Mkuwazi Forest reserve, Nkhotakota Wildlife reserve and Ntchisi Forest Reserve.

The Mount Mulanje Conservation Trust (MMCT) Mobilise program aims to improve the ecological status of Mount Mulanje and the livelihoods of communities around the Mulanje area by introducing more intensive and diversified natural resource utilization-based opportunities; and also increase local involvement in mountain management activities.

Malawi Launches National Nutrition Policy

On January 29, the Department of Nutrition, HIV/AIDS in the Office of President and Cabinet, joined by USAID, its implementing partners and other development agencies launched the first ever National Nutrition Policy and Strategic Plan in Malawi. The theme for the launch was “Ensuring Adequate Nutrition for all Malawians, Act Now!”

Nutrition challenges continue to be one of the obstacles to development in Malawi despite efforts by the Government of Malawi (GoM) and development partners. Forty-eight percent of children under five years of age have stunted growth and 22% are under weight, according to the 2004 Malawi Demographic Health Survey (DHS). Almost half of the under five population has chronic malnutrition with potential risks of suffering from permanent physical and mental retardation. Adequate nutrition is a pre-requisite for human development. The policy aims

to facilitate improvement of the nutritional needs in Malawi with an emphasis on vulnerable groups such as pregnant and lactating mothers, children below 15 years of age, orphans, the elderly, people living with HIV/AIDS and those in emergency situations.



A nutritious meal on display at the launch

The policy document will provide nutrition guidance, raise national awareness and create an enabling environment for the delivery of

nutrition services and programs in Malawi. Speaking at the launch Malawi's Vice President Joyce Banda praised government for placing nutrition high on the agenda by including it as one of the top priority areas being pursued under the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS). “Prevention management and management of nutrition disor-



Senior Chief Kaomba of Kasungu checks out nutrition statistics

ders, HIV/AIDS is priority number six in the MGDS” said Banda. Banda also highlighted some of the successes Malawi has made including improved vitamin A supplementation for under five children; increased proportion of mothers who are exclusively breast feeding increased from 53% to 57%; and, the death rate for malnourished children has reduced from 20% to 2%, she added. USAID/Malawi is supporting the implementation of proven high impact interventions in households and communities while also improving the continuum of care through referrals.

Note from the editor: If you have exciting and relevant information, please share it with Ulemu Malindi, Development Outreach and Communications Specialist, for possible addition to the newsletter. Please send to umalindi@usaid.gov