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Grant application forms on request
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website

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GRANTS COMMITTEE REPORT

FOM's grants program has supported community based development efforts in Malawi for nearly thirty years. Recently, the FOM Board changed the grants program to a partnership program. This will help to reduce administrative burden for grantees and FOM volunteers yet allow funding of sustainable projects and offer supporters opportunities to engage with ongoing projects through social media and crowdsourcing platforms.

Additional organizations will be chosen through a screening process that allows FOM volunteers and leaders to take a holistic approach in supporting individual communities in Malawi. Instead of supporting a patchwork of efforts across many communities and organizations, the focus will be on a smaller number of locally led organizations to support their comprehensive efforts in order to have a positive impact on the lives of Malawians.

Organizations are welcome to apply to become a Program Partner by completing a simple form from the website. [Check <http://www.friendsofmalawi.org> for details.]

Currently, FOM is partnered with three groups in Malawi: The Kapiri Success School, Peace Corps-Malawi, and Lilongwe University of Agriculture & Natural Resources (LUNAR). A report on each specific partnership project follows.

KAPIRI SUCCESS SCHOOL PARTNERHSIP

The Kipiri Success School is located in the Mchinji district and serves the following villages: Madzi, Mazenga, Panye, Mkomachilolo, Kathobwa and Nthema Trading Center. It was founded in 2007. It serves students of all abilities —traditional fee-paying students and scholarship students with disabilities, orphans and those with “ability-to-pay” students. The school also provides nutritious meals on a daily basis. With community support, 80 thousand bricks have been molded. FOM is providing funds to build school blocks that eventually will house a fully inclusive primary school.

PEACE CORPS-MALAWI PARTNERSHIP

BOOKS FOR AFRICA PROJECT

Peace Corps Malawi received a large donation of textbooks and leisure novels from Books for Africa, an organization that fights the book famine by being the largest shipper of donated text and library books to the African continent. This donation is thanks in large part to Friends Of Malawi’s \$2,000 restricted donation of funds to cover transportation costs. About 3,000 books were divided amongst 29 currently serving Volunteers to be used at their Community Day Secondary Schools.

These books are essential in promoting the reading culture in schools and helping to develop language communication skills amongst students throughout Malawi. Some of these books will be used to start new libraries, while others are supplements to already existing libraries and will be used as classroom and extracurricular resources. These books are important tools in the Peace Corps Volunteers’ efforts to promote literacy in their schools and communities and to motivate students to develop a positive mindset toward academic excellence.

In addition to the books for Education Volunteers, this generous donation provided a number of medical texts and reference books to be used by Peace Corps GHSP Volunteers teaching at Medical and Nursing schools throughout Malawi. As Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan once said, “Literacy is quite simply a bridge from misery to hope”.

Books have arrived!



Checking out some of the new books.



For FOM Financial Report go to : www.friendsofmalawi.org

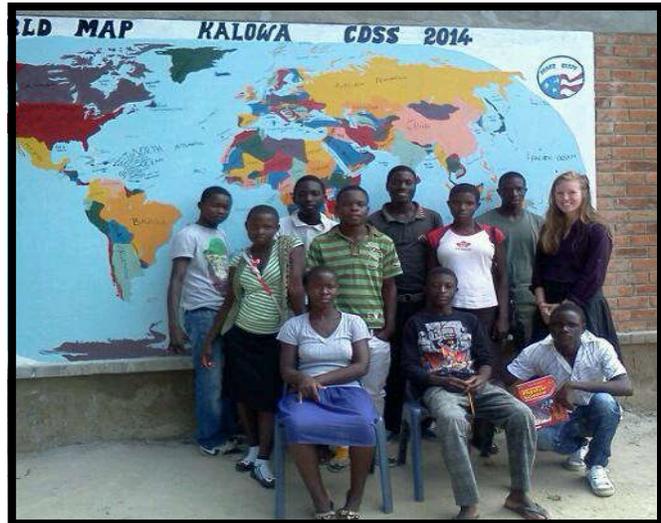
ASSOCIATE PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR FUND

Friends of Malawi donated \$2500 to the once-dormant APCD Fund. The fund was established in 2008-9 as a small, quick-disbursing fund aimed to support PCV efforts in their communities. This FOM donation will enable Peace Corps-Malawi to disburse small amounts of money to large numbers of PCVs without delays through APCD grants. The APCD Fund money can be used to help PCVs in their training/capacity building efforts within their communities or it can serve as “seed money” for projects that may grow into something bigger in the future. Volunteers present small project ideas and, if approved, money is sent quickly to the PCV. The small scale and rapid response allows PCVs and their communities to execute projects that require little money, rather than either funding the projects from their own pockets or following the formal Peace Corps Grant process that can take several months.

Health Volunteer, Tara Milligan was able to hold a Grassroots Soccer SKILLZ Girl’s Art Camp using the fund for supplies. Tara said, “I was able to reach about 90 kids with just \$100 from the APCD fund.” The APCD fund was used for the two projects featured below.



PCV Lea Marano & students learning about composting, tree planting & permagardening on Earth Day



PCV Kaylee Beck & Geography students' world map.

LILONGWE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

PARTNERSHIP

INDIGINOUS CHICKEN IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

In September 2015, FOM board member Ellen Collisson and her brother Ed Whited visited Malawi to explore possibilities for FOM collaborations with Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUNAR). They met with LUNAR Professor Gondwe and specialists at the National Rural Poultry Centre (NRPC) in Lilongwe. NRPC is a private organization dedicated to the successful expansion of a viable rural poultry program. NRPC along with LUNAR and other agencies, is concentrating on developing vaccines that can be practically used in villages to protect poultry from various diseases. *(Report continued on page 4)*

Geneticist Gondwe with his team, provides these vaccinated hybrid birds to villages, along with training in good husbandry, inexpensive food and safe housing. The birds receive Newcastle disease virus (NDV) vaccine developed and produced in Malawi. NDV continues to be considered one of the greatest issues for poultry throughout Africa.

FOM donated \$1350 to the LUNAR poultry project to replace a dysfunctional incubator. The incubator, replacing the unpredictable hen, is essential for any successful poultry project that will provide much needed protein for the villages of Mkwinda and Mitundu.



Ellen and Gondwe

HYBRID CATTLE PROGRAM

A thriving program initiated by the former Dean of LUNAR, Dr. Mfitalodze, focuses on the distribution of dairy cattle for rural use. The cattle are hybrids between the high milk producing European cows and the

more hardy village zebu cattle. A cow is given to a village and the first offspring is given back to the program as payment. Future animals are used by the village for milk or sold to acquire additional animals, such as rabbits or pigs. The milk is marketed and provides needed protein for the diets of children.

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MEETING WITH MALAWI

AMBASSADOR

Malawi's Ambassador to the United States requested a meeting with FOM Board members this past November. Mike Buckler was able to meet with Ambassador Necton Mhura and his Deputy, Jane Nankwenya to discuss how Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and the Malawian embassy could work together. The Ambassador is interested in what FOM currently is doing in Malawi and what, if any, plans it has for the future.

Mike explained about the small grants program and grass roots projects, but noted that achieving a great impact from the United States is very difficult. A variety of ideas were discussed including reaching out to influential RPCVs in government, academia and business to encourage them to forge a relationship with Malawian agencies, universities and businesses. With regard to tourism, the Ambassador asked Mike to give a presentation on his love for hiking Mulange Mountain.

IN MEMORIAM

Randy Cowley (Malawi IV) passed away October 8, 2015, at the age of 74. Randy and his health project group of PCVs were to work in detecting TB with Mantoux TB skin tests, delivering medications for home treatments and monitoring results. In their travels, Randy and fellow PCV Art Weinstein noticed the plight of many babies. They got a grant for \$2,600 to construct a Well Baby Clinic at Namitambo, in the Chiradzulu District. They weighed and examined babies for malnutrition and provided the mothers with health education. Today, the clinic has expanded and still provides essential services.

After leaving Malawi, Randy earned a Masters degree in Social Work at Wayne State University and married PCV Ann Ross who had taught at Chiradzulu Community Day School. Together they re-enlisted and served as PCVs in the Philippines. They had three daughters.

Randy worked at the Meminger Foundation for many years and then became Chief of Social Work for the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation.

Ann passed away in 2004, and Randy remarried in 2007. Randy was a loving husband, devoted father and grandfather. His thoughtful, patient, compassionate and authentic qualities served him well in the Peace Corps and in his profession of Social Work.

(Information adapted from a tribute to Randy by Arthur Weinstein)

SUBJECTS IN THE NEWS

GENDER INEQUALITY

Women in Malawi are 52 percent of the population, yet they account for 70 percent of the labor force in agriculture. The United Nations estimated that Malawi loses \$100 million each year because of a widening gender gap in the agriculture sector. Women are not designated as “farmers”, but as wives of farmers. As the wife of a tenant farmer, a woman is in a worse situation because access to productive resources, including agricultural advisory services, is not available. It is estimated that with equal access to productive inputs, women would increase yield by 20-30 percent. This could lift 239,000 people out of poverty each year.

CASHGATE STILL IN THE NEWS

The Nation has reported that Cashgate information was stolen from the home of a high ranking German expert who was working on financial management reforms and a forensic audit of government coffers. Only papers dealing with investigations into the K557 billion audit were taken. Germany is financially supporting the audit that is being carried out by PriceWaterhouseCoopers . The audit is focusing on financial mismanagement within the government between 2009 and 2013. Although the Cashgate theft of K24 billion was made public during the administration of Joyce Banda, the scandal may have been started earlier under the Bingu Mutharika administration.

THEFT OF DRUGS

Theft of drugs from the Ministry of Health is such a wide spread problem across the country that the US has threatened to suspend its K114bn malaria fund. Recently, two men in the Chiradzulu District were arrested for possession of medical equipment and drugs belonging to the Ministry of Health. Seized were 12 bottles of antiretroviral drugs, 500 tablets of Flagyl, 2250 tablets of cotrimazole, 12 bottles of Benz Penicillin Sodium Powder for injection, two thermometers and 40 syringes.

LEPROSY OUTBREAK

Officially, leprosy was eliminated decades ago in Malawi. However, one person has died at Thyolo District Hospital and at least twenty-four individuals are receiving treatment with medication and counseling in Balaka at Utale II Health Center run by the Catholic Church. Those receiving treatment are from Zomba, Machinga, Salima, Phalombe and Balaka. Two of the group are being quarantined while the others get medication monthly.

According to the World Health Organization, leprosy is a chronic infectious disease caused by an acid-fast bacterium that mainly affects nerves and skin. The increase in leprosy in Malawi is probably due to a lack of awareness both on the part of new medical staff and the community since the disease was taken off the books 45 years ago.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION LACKING

The government of Malawi has made some progress in providing basic education needs for children with disabilities, but no where does it meet the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Because of a lack of money and supplies, many classrooms are not accessible, and there is an inadequate number of trained special education teachers.

ENHANCED INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) is a global trade program designed exclusively to provide aid to 48 least developed poor countries. EIF has pledged to Malawi \$214.8 million to develop strategies for private development and to use trade as a way to gain economic growth and jobs to reduce poverty. Currently, phase one is being implemented by supporting farmers in Mchinji.

UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

Oxfam International has reported that the gap between the richest 10 percent and the poorest 40 percent (eight million of Malawians) is causing a dangerous divide across a number of areas including education, consumption, health and wealth. This inequality is reinforced by corruption, gender inequality and an unequal distribution of political power. It is estimated that if this inequality were to continue at the same pace, there would be over a million more poor people in 2020, resulting in 10.2 million poor people trapped in poverty for generations. Although there has been rapid economic growth, gains have not been spread evenly and the gap between rich and poor has increased at an alarming rate.

POPULATION GROWTH WILL BE A PROBLEM

The Malawi government and Mac Phail Magwira of the Ministry of Health have serious concerns about projections that the country's population will grow to 40 million by the year 2040. Magwira noted that the country will not be able to sustain that number of people. Already the government is straining to sustain health, agriculture, education and economic sectors. A United Nations Population Fund representative has urged the government and donors to aim toward a goal of 60 percent contraceptive prevalence rate for all women of reproductive age. The current estimate is 33 percent contraceptive use. There is a plan to try to increase family planning methods to 60 percent for married and sexually active women between the ages of 15 and 24 by the year 2020.

Go to an App called 'google translate' to translate English into Chichewa.

HYDRAFORM

A company in Johannesburg, South Africa has developed different sizes of machines for making interlocking blocks and conventional brick and block making soil-cement products for all types of buildings. The dry stack interlocking blocks eliminate the use of mortar in 70 percent of the building structure. The company provides comprehensive training on how to use and maintain the machinery and how to market the products. They will deliver the machine to the nearest city in a number of countries including Malawi. (We understand that Habitat for Humanity in Malawi has one.)

FOM Newsletter
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NOTE: Receiving your FOM Newsletter electronically helps to save funds for more grants. Please email FOMmembership@gmail.com to elect to receive the Newsletter by email instead of in paper form.

CAN YOU HELP? *FOM has lost track of the following people.* Please send up-dated address to: FOMmembership@gmail.com. Also designate paper or email version of the Newsletter.

Anderson, Virginia
Bell, Elizabeth H. C.
Denny, Susan
McGraw, Michael
Press, Michelle
Reilly, Elizabeth
Stroud, Leslie

ZIKOMO, THANKS, YEWO!

Friends Of Malawi wishes to thank friends and donors for their support. Funds go to support the grants program, the website and the Friends Of Malawi Newsletter. To donate and be on the mailing list, contact FOM Treasurer:

Lance Cole

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Portland, OR 97219.