

MALAWI SHIPMENT REPORT

July 2016

Analysis of Monitoring & Evaluation feedback

“Through the books provided by School Aid our learners have developed a reading spirit” *Primary school teacher*

INTRODUCTION

In July, 2016 a container of educational resources was sent to the Rumphi area in northern Malawi.

Our main partner for this shipment was Life Concern with whom we began working 2015. Their mission is:

“to ensure better health and development of the marginalised and vulnerable local populations”.

We also established a new partnership with a UK based NGO, Temwa.

Temwa’s activities are focused on remote, rural areas of northern Malawi where they develop self-sufficient communities by supporting projects in education, health, agriculture and forestry, and microfinance.

THE RECIPIENTS

The resources arrived in September and distribution was organised by Life Concern and TEMWA.



Unloading the cartons



Children helping to carry the cartons

The remoteness of some of the TEMWA schools is illustrated by their report which refers to the challenges they faced when the boat they had to use to transport the resources to two primary schools was caught up in heavy wind and rain which led to strong waves battering them as they made their way across the bay.



Lakeshore distribution by boat with books covered with a tarpauline against rains

The container included reading, reference and text books as well as school uniforms, sports kit and some tables and chairs.

The recipients, identified by Life Concern and TEMWA, were:

- 10 primary schools
- 6 secondary schools
- 4 community libraries



Enough for a team!

In addition a one-off donation was made to ELA Malawi, a small organisation in the area founded by a Slovenian woman, Jana Dular, who contacted us for assistance with resources.

ELA runs educational and youth programs reaching over 250 disadvantaged children. Jana distributed their 15 boxes of books to a primary and secondary school as well as to their centre, which works with 200 children aged from 1 to 14 years.

This final report is based on interviews conducted as part of the third phase of the School Aid Monitoring and Evaluation process which is designed to gather feedback approximately one year after resources are received.

Feedback from 3 primary schools, 4 secondary schools and 3 libraries was collected in November, 2017.

Our thanks go to Life Concern for their efforts and time in collection of the data.

The total number of school students in the sample totalled just over 5600 boys and girls. This ranged from 106 students who attend a resource centre to 1600 who attend a community library.



Excited children with sports kit

FEEDBACK

This report is based on the School Aid monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system consisting of questionnaires with fixed-response and open-ended questions giving quantitative and qualitative data.

Each school has three formats for responses:

- a standard questionnaire to be completed by the head teacher or other suitable employee
- a questionnaire to be completed through an interview with a teacher
- a questionnaire to be completed through an interview with a student

Feedback was also collected from three community libraries.

This report provides summary data from the questionnaires. The full spreadsheet containing all the data is available separately on request.

It should thus be noted that the comments and conclusions are based solely on the views expressed by the sample of respondents and are thus by their nature subjective.



Temwa staff receiving their books

School profiles

The table below provides summary details of the number of students, teachers, classes and class sizes.

	Numbers
Student numbers	
Max and min total number of pupils in the schools	1200 - 122
Max and min number of girls	612 - 56
Max and min number of boys	588 - 48
Max and min number of teachers in the schools	34 - 5
Max and min number of classes per school	12 - 4
Highest number of pupils in a school class	83
Lowest number of pupils in a school class	19

As the data shows class sizes can be high with more than half the sample having classes of more than 60 students. The teacher to student ratio is also high. In the Rumphu district on average there is one Teacher to 68 students on average, although it could be as high as one to over 100 students.

Overview of data

1. Summary of data from the head teacher

All schools reported that the books are stored in a library, with the exception of one. This school stated that the books are in a store room as they are running short of classrooms due to increased number of students.

The responses indicated that the books were being regularly used by the students including during specific library periods. However one secondary school reported less frequent use of the books as they are not syllabus orientated.

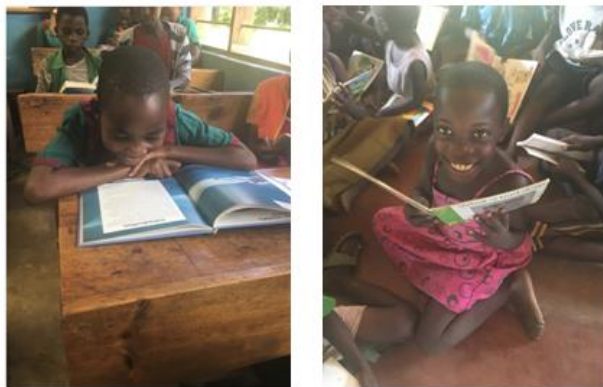
The teachers were also making regular use of them in a whole class, in small groups and by each student as well as for their own studies.

Nearly all the sample schools reported setting up new initiatives as a result of receiving School Aid resources, including establishing a school or classroom library and setting up study circles.

All of the respondents reported that receipt of the books has made a positive difference, contributing to improved reading and English skills and an increased interest in learning as demonstrated by increased pass rates. Significantly all respondents stated that the resources were encouraging more students to continue their education, including going on to university.

Benefits to girls and boys are also noted. For example, girls have an increased interest in reading and their academic performance is improving while boys are beginning to spend their free time in the library.

Only the community libraries provide access to the books to the wider community. The schools limit access to their own students and teachers.



Children from ELA enjoying the books

Quantitative data

Question	Average Response*
How often are resources used	3.3
Number of teachers using the resources	3.8
Beneficial effects on girls	3
Beneficial effects on boys	3.6
Extent to which girls have been helped to attain higher levels of achievement	3.4
Extent to which orphans and vulnerable children have been helped	3.3
Extent to which willingness to learn has increased	3.7
Difference resources have made to teaching and learning	3.4
Frequency with which students have access to the library	3.6
Frequency with which members of the community have access to the library	2
How often do teachers/students from other schools have access to your library	2.8

***Key**

- 1 = none/not at all/no
- 2 = a little/a few
- 3 = often/many/quite a lot
- 4 = very frequently/most/a lot

2. Summary of data from teachers

Teachers were interviewed from all of the seven schools. Five stated their role was also to act as the librarian.

The length of time they had been employed ranged from 6 months to 5 years and the length of time they had been qualified as a teacher from 1 to 29 years.

The ages of the children ranged from seven to 23 years. The high age is not unusual in Malawi with many children starting school late or having to repeat years if they fail the exams required to move to the next form.

The average responses to the quantitative questions are shown in the table below.

All the teachers reported that the books had led to improved reading skills and performance.

Both teachers and students have easy access to the books which can also be borrowed.

English was considered to be at the right level and satisfaction was expressed by the teachers in relation to the link between the books and the curriculum. Most teachers use the books as reference materials.

All teachers except one indicated that there were insufficient books to meet the needs of the students in their school.

Quantitative data

Question	Average Response*
Have the books made a difference to literacy skills?	3.7
Have the books made a difference to numeracy skills?	3.6
How often do you use resources from School Aid in the classroom?	3.6
Impact on learning outcomes	3.9

*Key

1 = none/not at all/no

2 = a little/a few

3 = often/many/quite a lot

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3. Summary of data from students

Six students were interviewed.

They were all aware of the donation from School Aid and all had used books. They all stated the resources had brought about changes in their school including improving literacy and numeracy, pass rates and English.

They all had had hopes of becoming professionals on leaving school including being a doctor, engineer, nurse and bank manager.

“Now there is no scrambling of books to read and for reference”

Student, Rumphi Secondary School

Quantitative data

Question	Average Response*
How have changes affected your school?	3.3
How have resources affected you as a student?	3.6

*Key

- 1 = none/not at all/no
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CONCLUSION

The feedback received clearly demonstrates that the donation of books are highly valued by the recipients who all report on the benefits in both improving literacy and numeracy and academic performance.

In response to this a further shipment to the Life Concern and TEMWA was sent in 2017.

Adele Wilter

Malawi Coordinator

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