

Cross Party Group on Malawi
Wednesday 18th February 2015
17.30 – 19.00

Scottish Parliament
CR5
MINTUTES

Co-Conveners: Liam McArthur MSP and Michael Russell MSP

1. Liam McArthur MSP
2. Michael Russell MSP
3. Janey Andrews (Strathclyde University)
4. Charlie Bevan (Scotland Malawi Partnership)
5. Colin Cameron (SMP Member)
6. Ronald Copeland (ECRAD)
7. Margaret Cullen
8. Jackie Farr (Scotland Malawi Partnership)
9. Julie Gemmill (Woodford Foundation)
10. David Hope-Jones (Scotland Malawi Partnership)
11. Graham Kenala (Star Radio)
12. Colin McLean (ECRAD)
13. Fiona Meikle
14. Joseph Meikle
15. Tamara Mhura (APSTAR)
16. Emily Mnyayi (Scotland Malawi Partnership)
17. Elspeth Pentland (SMP Member)
18. Mercy Phiri (Star Radio)
19. Lucinda Rivers (UNICEF UK)
20. Jane Salmonson (CBM UK)
21. Paul Shaw (Geovision)
22. David Stevenson (SMP Member)
23. Dave Thomson (F.R.O.M Malawi)
24. Andrew Wainwright (F.R.O.M Malawi)
25. James Wells (EMMS International)
26. Peter West (Honorary Consul)

Introduction to new Conveners by Secretary of CPG on Malawi

Opening remarks from Conveners

Approval of minutes and apologies

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved and seconded by David Stevenson and Peter West.

Apologies: James Dornan MSP, Elaine Smith MSP, Geoff Earl, Pat Hiddleston, Colin Jackson, Fikelephi, Jackson, Brian Kerr

Update on Malawi Floods and Scotland's response

Scotland Malawi Partnership

David Hope-Jones, Principal Officer, outlined the role of the SMP in supporting Scotland's response to the flooding in Malawi which has included:

1. Disseminating news and information to members about the latest situation on the ground in Malawi:
2. Providing information about channels through which members can donate
3. Providing advice on how members can effectively support their partners in Malawi
4. Raising awareness of the floods in the UK/Scottish media.
5. Working with DFID and the Scottish Government to ensure a prompt and effective response from both governments.

UNICEF UK

Lucinda Rivers from UNICEF UK gave an overview of UNICEF Malawi's response to the flooding.

She outlined the situation in numbers

- 230,000 people displaced
- 15 districts affected
- 104 people deaths and 645 injured
- 172 people are missing
- 181 schools occupied by displaced people

She explained that UNICEF was providing leadership and coordination in support of the joint response between DoDMA and UNRCO. UNICEF in particular is leading on WASH, Education and child protection. So far 58,065 people have been reached with sanitation support (latrines, bars of soap, hygiene promotion and water treatment in hospitals) and 30,982 provided with safe drinking water.

In terms of education and child protection, UNICEF has helped establish 40 temporary classrooms, recruited 80 additional volunteer teachers and is working with WFP and Mary's Meals on school feeding.

However threats from cholera, malnutrition, inoperable schools, child neglect and destroyed livelihoods are still very present and the need is great.

EMMS International

James Wells from EMMS International gave an update on EMMS response to the flooding. EMMS had received £4,500 from the Scottish Government, as well as donations from supporters which have been used to support their long standing links with Mulanje Mission Hospital.

When the floods hit, the hospital was directly affected in several ways:

- The hospital had no mains electricity for some days, and had to run it all day off its generator. Now the hospital is still experiencing power cuts of 4 to 6 hours per day. The Scottish Government grant is paying for the generator fuel needed to keep the hospital going all day, every day.
- Due to the power cuts, the hospital needed to buy emergency lights for the two wards not yet connected to the solar lighting system. The Scottish Government grant paid for these two remaining wards to have emergency lighting.
- As a result of the floods, the hospital immediately received more patients, including children who had been hit by their house falling on them, and an increase of patients with malaria and diarrhoea. The Scottish Government grant is paying for the extra medical supplies needed in the first instance.
- A hospital toilet block was destroyed by the floods, as in the attached photograph. This is being rebuilt at the moment, using the Scottish Government grant and will be completed this month.

F.R.O.M Malawi

Dave Thomson outlined the response to date that FROM Scotland sent to their partners in Malawi. Their appeal generated support from the public, their own supporters, Scottish Government (£10,000) and Strathclyde University.

The major challenges to the disbursement of supplies include inaccessible roads, many people having been displaced, collapsed houses, as well as the spread of diseases.

FROM's partners in Malawi have been providing food, blankets and support to over 3000 people and have provided over 30,000 meals to children. In areas where crops have been lost they are being replanted with winter crops such as cassava and sweet potatoes.

On the 31st January a 40 foot container was loaded and sent off to Malawi. It contained hospital beds, zimmers, tents, medical supplies and clothing. This is the 6th container sent by FROM Scotland in the last 3

years. In addition FROM has fed 2500 children every day and have raised £350,000. Every penny of which has gone directly to Tracy Morse's projects in Southern Malawi.

Malawi High Commission

Hon Consul Peter West passed on thanks from the Malawi High Commission to the people of Scotland for their response to the floods. He praised the community links between our two nations which meant flood supplies could be distributed quickly, and thanked the Scottish Government for quickly recovering underspend from the funding programme to be re-allocated for the floods.

Debrief from CPA (Scotland Branch) on recent visit to Malawi

Liam McArthur MSP spoke about the recent visit to Malawi as part of the CPA (Scotland Branch) delegation. Elaine Smith MSP and James Dornan MSP, who had also been on the trip, sent their apologies.

The purpose of the visit was to work with the Committee Chairs and the Malawian National Assembly. Many of the committee chairs had only been elected in during the May 2014 elections, and Liam expressed how impressed he had been with the commitment to independence, collaboration and scrutiny of Government policies.

While in Malawi the MSPs also visited a number of projects with links to Scotland, including Mbuve Youth Centre and Malawi Underprivileged Mothers.

With regard to the flooding response in Malawi, Liam reflected there had been good coordination and messaging, and that many community groups, NGOs and individuals in Malawi had made significant and sacrificial contributions towards the flood relief and there was much pride taking in how Malawians had supported those who had been most severely affected.

Q and A discussion on recent floods

Questions were raised during the discussion on issues relating to WASH, the risk of a cholera outbreak, the impact on schools, environmental factors and coordinating structures in Malawi.

A number of attendees also intimated their disappointment at the lack of media attention on the flooding. Michael Russell MSP suggested a press release be sent out following the meeting to try and generate some much needed coverage in the Scottish

AOB

Date of next meeting: 6th May 2015, 1.30-3pm in CR1.

Against all Odds event:

On the 25th of April Against All Odds, will be hosting a fundraising event. All those attending the CPG are officially invited to attend the Gala Dinner. For further details visit www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dare-to-dream-dare-to-fly-against-all-odds-anniversary-fundraising-dinner-ball-2015-tickets-15486696125