

**CPG on Malawi****20<sup>th</sup> November 2019****Attendee List**

Abigail Maseko	STEKAskills
Alexander Stewart MSP	Scottish Parliament
Alison Adam	George Watson's College
Anne McCafferty	
Bob Garrow	RS Garrow Ltd
Brian Kerr	Soko Fund
Chimzy Dorey	Scotland Malawi Partnership Board
Clare Cunningham	Dundee Medical School
Craig Docking	Scotland Malawi Partnership
David Hope-Jones	Scotland Malawi Partnership
Douglas Coulter	Scotland Malawi Partnership
Dr Karen Lynn Paarz	
Eilidh Duthie	Dundee Medical School
Emma Tennant	Dundee Medical School
Emma Wood	STEKAskills
Gemma Burnside	Scotland Malawi Partnership
Gift Thompson	STEKAskills
Gillian McMahan	Mary's Meals
Godknows Maseko	STEKA
Imogen Smedley	Dundee Medical School
James Gondwe	Centre for Youth & Development
James Turing	Turing Trust
Jeremy Bagg	University of Glasgow
Kenneth Undi	Ex-volunteer at Scotland Malawi Partnership
Laura McEachran	Glasgow City Council
Lillian Nseula	Strathclyde University
Lillian Owiti	Corra Foundation
Maureen Watt	Scottish Parliament
Michele Stewart	Malawi Leaders of Learning
Moira Dunworth	Mamie Martin Fund
Natasha Mwenda	Wateraid
Pamela Tulloch	Scotland Malawi Partnership
Paul Shaw	Africa Community Development
Rachel Brutin	Dundee Medical School
Raymond French	University of Edinburgh / Scottish Football Supporters Association
Roderick McCafferty	Inventor

Rosa Bock	Dundee Medical School
Sally Rae	George Watson's College
Samuel Donnelly	Dundee Medical School
Sharon Hayward	Malawi Leaders of Learning
Simon Kaack	
Stuart Brown	Scotland Malawi Partnership
Vivienne Armstrong	Malawi Leaders of Learning
Yankho Mataya	WaterAid

### Minutes

**Alexander Stewart MSP (AS)** welcomed speakers and thanked attendees for coming to the CPG on Malawi. The theme of the evening was **schools and education**. The Minutes of the previous CPG from 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were introduced, were proposed by **Dr Alasdair Allan MSP** and seconded by **Lillian Owiti**. It was noted that the size of the font had been increased due to previous concerns about legibility, whilst still being conscious of the environment. Apologies were given for **Elaine Smith MSP**, who was unable to attend the previous CPG but is willing to continue in the position of Vice Co-Convenor. The date of the next CPG on Malawi was announced at 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

### **STEKA & STEKA Skills - Godknows Maseko & Emma Wood**

AS introduced **Godknows Maseko (GM)**, founder of **STEKA**, and **Emma Wood (EW)**, Chair of **STEKAskills**. GM shared the story of his early life in Malawi, born to a single mother before leaving home and living on the streets of Blantyre for three years. After returning home to his mother and completing secondary school, he pursued an opportunity in South Africa, where he found himself the victim of human traffickers. After escaping this life, GM wished to rescue children from similar situations, so he and his wife Helen created STEKA in Blantyre, Malawi in 2007. STEKA **provides a home for children who were previously trafficked, abandoned or orphaned**. GM stressed that STEKA is **not an orphanage**, but rather a **loving family environment**. He partnered with EW, who had an interest in school trips from Scotland to Malawi. They both shared concerns about how many volunteer trips can reinforce aid-framed agendas. The volunteer should not be seen as the active agent in positive social change, as this normalises the idea of 'developed' and 'undeveloped' countries, and that the local community cannot affect these changes on their own. Together, GM and EW created STEKAskills to **connect young Scots with young Malawians**, so that they can work together and motivate each other in a way that impacts genuinely positive change. Part of how they achieve this is through their **Brave Space**, a dialogue group where young people can share their thoughts in a mutually respectful environment. Their work benefits young Malawians, as they feel respected and can earn income on their own, instead of relying on donations. Young Scots can learn from people with different life experiences, how to foster community spirit and appreciate the true impact of climate change. EW wishes to help other NGO's learn this approach.

Q: What is the vision for STEKA's future 15 years from now?

A: GM hopes to develop and sustain the **STEKA Centre for Vocational Skills and Community Enterprise**. This will help young people to find outlets when they grow up, such as work or

further education, and secure sustainable futures. He also wants to **prepare parents and caregivers** on what to expect, to reduce the risk of children finding themselves alone.

Q: What support is there for those with psychological issues?

A: GM believes that parental love and support is the first step, and this will have positive psychosocial effects. EW added that GM has psychosocial training.

Q: What happened in the Brave Space, and were the Malawians surprised by the experience of the Scots?

A: EW referred this question to **Gift Thompson** and **Abigail Maseko**, two young Malawians who are closely involved with STEKAskills. Gift answered that all participants were able to **act as equals**, in a way that was mutually beneficial for everyone. A short video was then played which featured Malawians and Scots discussing their experiences with STEKAskills.

Further comments:

A representative of George Watson's College commented that taking part in the STEKA Dialogue groups was the highlight of their pupils' visit to Malawi and gave the young people confidence in knowing how to engage with other Malawians during their trip.

#### **Mary's Meals - Gillian McMahon**

AS introduced **Gillian McMahon (GM), Director of Supporter Engagement and Income at [Mary's Meals](#)**. GM outlined the history of Mary's Meals and their vision that every child receives **one daily meal in their place of education**, and that all those who have more than they need share this with those who lack even the most basic things. They currently work in 18 different countries, with affiliates in 15. Their largest programme is in Malawi. They currently work with 37 schools in Malawi as equal partners, providing the food and entrusting the implementation to volunteers. Where possible, **locally-grown food** is used and they do seek to **minimise environmental impact**. They have collaborated with Wateraid to help them with this. Mary's Meals makes a long-term commitment in the countries where it works, and always **prioritises the needs of the children**. After assessing their impact over the last 5 years, they have found that hunger has decreased while school enrolments have increased. Children were found to be much happier, and both children and parents suffer less anxiety due to hunger. A short video was then played, which followed the journey of Veronica, a young Malawian who was one of the first children to receive Mary's Meals. The programme helped her to maintain her school life, and eventually went on to graduate university in Malawi with a bachelor's degree in Education (Business Studied).

Q: Would Mary's Meals extend their programme to secondary schools, with an emphasis on rural areas?

A: GM advised that this is under consideration, but the main aim is currently to provide support in areas with the most need. While there are certainly needs in these areas, these needs are **different and more complex** than what they currently handle.

Q: What is being done to improve school attendance?

A: GM agreed that this is an important issue, but more **government lobbying** is required to help with this.

Q: Does Mary's Meals receive sponsorship from major companies?

A: GM answered that they do have partners, but this is not currently a major focus.

Q: How can similar organisations help?

A: GM recommended their school sponsorship programme.

### **WaterAid - Natasha Mwenda**

AS introduced **Natasha Mwenda (NM)**, Malawi-based Project Manager of [WaterAid's Scottish Government-funded project Deliver Life](#). NM outlined the project's aims to **improve health outcomes for women, adolescent girls and children under five** in low income rural and peri-urban areas of Malawi. They aim to do this by increasing access to sustainable water supply, improved sanitation and promotion of essential hygiene behaviours in their communities, healthcare facilities and early childhood development centres. They achieve this through capacity building in these areas and installation of their solar-powered water supply systems. They have so far given 4,677 men, women and children access to safe water, are working on 2 additional water supply systems and 11 boreholes and continue to promote [WASH](#) principles and build capacity. Their work has helped **empower women and girls** by making them more aware of their maternal, neonatal and child health rights. As water and hygiene are not prioritised financially, Wateraid works with the government to improve awareness and funding in these areas. They have used findings from the 2019/2020 national budget to lobby for increased funding in early childhood development. NM discussed some of the challenges they face, which include staff turnover, currency exchange, political instability and the aftermath of Cyclone Idai. She then closed with the information that **Deliver Life 2** was on track to achieve all key milestones set for the year and end of the project.

Q: Is ground water suffering because of climate change?

A: NM agreed that this was the case, and mentioned the use of **hydrological surveys** for finding areas where solar energy could effectively harvest water. She also stressed the importance of finding ways to mitigate climate change.

Q: Can more be done to harvest rainwater?

A: NM talked about how the water supply structures are community-based and there is a limit to their effectiveness. Rainfall in Malawi starts in November and ends in February/March, so there is a very **limited space of time to harvest rainwater** and this is not sustainable year round. Conversations are still ongoing in this regard, and solutions have not yet been found.

Q: Is Wateraid involved with the Water Process Act?

A: NM talked about Wateraid's involvement with government, and noted that this is a politically delicate issue. They are looking at **borehole drilling standardisation** and

**challenging existing models** of water service supply. They are engaging with [Strathclyde University](#) for assistance with this.

**Centre for Youth & Development (CYD) - James Gondwe**

AS introduced **James Gondwe (JG), Malawi-based founder and Executive Director of the Centre for Youth and Development (CYD)**. CYD is an implementing partner for the [Turing Trust](#), who support education in Malawi by **reusing computers and improving teacher training using ICT**. JG discussed how computer studies were only introduced to Malawian schools in 2005 and, while there is a need for young people to learn computer skills, **adequate hardware is first required** in schools. He then told the story of Sydney Chiumia, whose school was one of the early beneficiaries of CYD. Sydney first interacted with a computer in 2017, but was immediately interested and eager to learn more. He is now studying Computer Systems and Security at the [Malawi University of Science and Technology](#). JG then showed four more examples of students who have graduated from CYD's target schools and are now **studying various ICT courses in Malawian universities**. The computers are sourced and prepared by the Turing Trust, and then shipped to Malawi. The aim is to provide 20 computers to every school that CYD works with. So far, **1200 computers have been installed across 47 partner schools**. Teachers are provided training with not only the hardware, but the educational software that CYD also provide. They operate a continuous model, so technicians will be available throughout the year to fix or replace any broken computers. JG mentioned the benefits of grants and donations from the Scottish Government, and his vision to **install computers in every school in Malawi**. CYD is currently expanding to the Central Region, with hopes of also expanding to the Southern Region, though more support is required for the latter. In closing, JG expressed his desire to eventually install 25,000 computers.

Q: What is the situation in Malawi regarding access to high speed internet?

A: Internet access is an issue in Malawi, but **all CYD computers are offline**, so this is not a problem for them. All computers are supplied to schools with **pre-installed software** to aid learning.

Q: Have computers with rechargeable batteries been considered?

A: This would be beneficial, but the resources required would increase the cost per unit x30. This is **cost prohibitive at the present time**.

Q: What have been the benefits of working with the Malawi Scotland Partnership?

A: JG talked positively of the **opportunities offered by MaSP**, such as regional meetings that allow the sharing of experiences with peers, training, advocacy and advice on financial management.

Q: Could old television sets be recycled as computer monitors?

A: JG said this was a complicated technical question, but was happy to discuss during the networking session.

Further comments:

David Hope-Jones complimented the work being done by the CYD.

Moira Dunworth praised CYD's work based on her experience with schools in Malawi using their service.

### **Closing Statements**

Stuart Brown asked all speakers to share their thoughts on partnership and how it has affected them.

NM said that moving to **integrated programming was beneficial**, and other colleagues in academia can offer useful insights using their outside experience.

GM said that their collaboration with Wateraid had gone very smoothly. As everything was made clear from the beginning and networking and collaboration have happened throughout the process, this has **helped to enable partnership as opposed to competition**.

EW talked about the importance of shared values, specifically a focus on **empowering and connecting young people**. The friendships that develop from these connections allow them to speak frankly in a calm environment.

AS thanked the speakers and SMP. Everyone was reminded that the next CPG would be held on 19/02/2020, and were invited to stay for a networking session over Malawi gin and tonics and soft drinks.