

Malawi Governance Forum (MGF) - minutes

Thursday 25th June 2015 | Edinburgh

No.	Item	Summary / Discussion	Outcomes / Actions
SECTION 1: GENERAL UPDATE			
1	<p>local governance issues from Malawi</p> <p><i>Gertrude Chirambo, via phone link</i></p>	<p><u>Summary</u> Local Blantyre Councillor Gertrude Chirambo addressed the forum detailing some of the issues she has experienced since taking up her post, see paper attached for details.</p> <p>In particular Gertrude highlighted issues of roles and responsibilities between local councillors, MPs and traditional authorities (e.g. village headmen).</p> <p>David Hope-Jones asked what could be done to engage more with traditional authorities?</p> <p>➤ <i>Gertrude replied that a meeting is required to first of all understand the different positions before moving forward.</i></p> <p>George Finlayson asked why the new system isn't working as there are already clear rules in place defining roles and responsibilities for local councillors?</p> <p>➤ <i>Kettie Musukwa commented that while there are rules in place in practice it is a big challenge to implement as there have been no active local councillors for over 10 years in Malawi.</i></p> <p>Keith Bohannon reported back on some progress from the Active Learning Centre's (ALC) capacity building work in Malawi, i.e. delivering workshops to all local councillors and skills audit of all the councillors (based on input from Susan Dalgety). Keith suggested that the above issues could be commutated to ALC so they could take in to account for future training.</p>	<p><u>Outcome(s)</u> The forum members continue to be informed of live issue on the ground in Malawi related to local governance.</p> <p><u>Action(s)</u> Keith to reconnect Gertrude Chirambo with Susan Dalgety from Active Learning Centre, who are currently undertaking capacity building work in Malawi on local governance.</p>
2	<p>general update on progress / issues</p> <p><i>David Hope-Jones</i></p>	<p><u>Summary</u> David Hope-Jones reported progress on the following items since the last meeting in March...</p> <p><i>Flooding in Malawi</i> The Trustees of the Beit Trust have donated £20,000 to the Scotland Malawi Partnership to assist with community recovery, rehabilitation and preparedness work after the January floods in Malawi. For details of the funded projects click here.</p> <p><i>Scottish Government Vehicle Policy</i></p>	<p><u>Outcome(s)</u> Forum members updated on progress since last forum meeting in March.</p> <p><u>Action(s)</u> Members wishing to attend the event with the MHC are kindly requested to e-mail: info@scotland-malawipartnership.org</p>

		<p>SMP have completed a consultation with members on 'sharing experience, feedback and ideas' related to the current vehicle policy. This has been collated and communicated to SG for consideration in their forthcoming consultations on the ID programme.</p> <p>UK General Election</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 59 Scottish MPs elected, all contacted and sent briefing on Scotland-Malawi links. • Chance to meet Scotland's new MPs at welcome event in Westminster on 7 July. <p>Malawian High Commission (MHC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His Excellency Mr Kena Mphonda has been appointed as the new High Commissioner for Malawi to the UK and will visit Scotland on July 29th. 	
3	<p>update from DFID</p> <p><i>Eilidh Simpson</i></p>	<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>Eilidh Simpson, policy lead for Scotland, reported the latest news from DFID to the forum.</p> <p>Key areas for DFID in Malawi are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Society, maintaining vibrant civil society links • Governance, see previous inputs from DFID Malawi • Renewable Energy, symposium in Lilongwe planned for August 2015 • Education, DFID have announced an additional £11.6 million of support for Malawi which will be used to construct classrooms for over 30,000 pupils, announced by Minister of State Grant Shapps during his recent visit to Malawi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>In response to a question from the floor from George, Eilidh confirmed that this is indeed additional funding for Malawi, over and above existing plans.</i> <p>Jen Marshall, head of DFID Malawi will visit Scotland on July 28th to meet with SMP members.</p> <p>Three key global events for DFID in 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa in July • UN Summit on SDGs in New York in September • World Climate Summit in Paris in December <p>Eilidh thanked SMP for connecting her with Dr Lisa Cameron, MP for East Kilbride.</p> <p>Margaret Neal commented that during the visit of the Scottish Parliament delegation to Malawi in February 2015 it was noted that the parliamentary committee chairs and officials from the assembly seemed very capable and able but did not have the resources required to complete their duties. Margaret asked if DFID would consider funding this</p>	<p><u>Outcome(s)</u></p> <p>Forum members updated on the latest news from DFID.</p> <p><u>Action(s)</u></p> <p>Members who would like to attend the meeting with Jen Marshall on July 28th are kindly requested to e-mail: info@scotland-malawipartnership.org</p>

		<p>potentially through a 'basket fund' approach?</p> <p>➤ <i>Eilidh commented that DFID have funded similar activities in the past, as part of a joint approach with other international donors. In general the experience wasn't positive, particularly difficult in terms of defining tangible outputs, so DFID would be unlikely to fund this again.</i></p>	
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SECTION 2: PARLIMENTARY LINKS

4	<p>discussion with visitors from Malawi Parliament</p> <p><i>Kettie Musukwa</i></p> <p><i>Isabel Tambala</i></p>	<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>Kettie Musukwa and Isabel Tambala, visiting officials from the Malawian Assembly, spoke about their experiences in Scotland over the last few weeks on an exchange with the Scottish Parliament (facilitated by the CPA).</p> <p>Apart from attending Parliamentary meetings in Edinburgh Keetie and Isabel also visited Orkney and Coatbridge as part of Parliamentary Day events, which they found very interesting.</p> <p>Main learning points from Kettie and Isabel were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extensive use of technology as a resource • The importance of having sufficient staff allocation • The role of research to inform policy <p>George Finlayson asked if there was more funding available for committees what would it be spent on?</p> <p>➤ <i>Kettie and Margaret replied that some would be on practical resources, printing etc, and some would be towards expenses to allow committee members time to properly scrutinise policy.</i></p> <p>➤ <i>Kettie calculated the cost of one committee for one week as approx. £18,000.</i></p> <p>David commented that given the realities of parliamentary working the issue of paying expenses is always a sensitive one, in the UK and in Malawi. David suggested potentially breaking the costs down into expenses and operational/running costs.</p> <p>Isabel commented that Malawi really needed a move away from aid and towards trade.</p> <p>Joyce Nicholl asked if there were any experiences from Malawi that could be useful to share with Scotland?</p> <p>➤ <i>Kettie commented that there is more fluidity in Malawian politics with MP changing parties ('crossing the floor') where as in Scotland and the UK this is not a common practice or an easy process (with bi-elections etc).</i></p>	<p><u>Outcome(s)</u></p> <p>Forum members directly engaged with officials from the Malawian Assembly to share views and experiences.</p> <p><u>Action(s)</u></p> <p>As with the local governance aspect SMP to propose a way for the Malawian Assembly to feed into future forums.</p>
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SECTION 3: TRANSPARENCY

5	<p>practical challenges of transparency in Malawi</p> <p><i>Hamish Goldie-Scot</i></p>	<p><u>Summary</u> Hamish Goldie-Scot presented on the practical challenges of transparency in Malawi, mainly based on his experience working with the Construction Sector Transparency Initiative (CoST), see full presentation for more details.</p> <p>Key points noted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CoST proposes that the factors that drive good performance in construction procurement are: Capacity; Accountability; an enabling Setting and Trust between all stakeholders involved. • Perceptions of corruption in Malawi in Malawi differ by sector, these perceptions effect trust. • In Malawi CoST took the approach of creating a Multi-stakeholder Group (MSG) with representation from government, industry and civil society. • This approach resulted in high level of participation and disclosure in projects, for example from the Water Boards and Department of Energy. <p>Eilidh Simpson commented that there is more data on transparency available on the Transparency International website. Eilidh also commented that there is an upfront cost associated with transparency and that a simple cost benefit analysis would be useful to illustrated this.</p> <p>David Hope-Jones asked what is meant by ‘trust’ in this instance.</p> <p>➤ <i>Hamish replied that really it is openness and gave the example of building trust with supplier being cited as the key enabler in the preparation for the London Olympics, which came in on time and under budget.</i></p> <p>Charlie Bevan asked where the disclosure data on construction work in Malawi was available?</p> <p>➤ <i>Hamish replied that it is made available on the website buy also on boards at the development sites showing live progress.</i></p>	<p><u>Outcome(s)</u> Members presented with some positive practical examples of transparency in Malawi.</p> <p><u>Action(s)</u> Keith to share the presentation material with the forum.</p>
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SECTION 4: PROJECT / ORGANISATIONAL GOVERNANCE

6	<p>discussion on the challenges of project / organisational governance and how the partnership can help strengthen</p> <p><i>chaired by David Hope Jones</i></p>	<p><u>Summary</u> David asked if anyone would like to share:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margaret Neal commented that this is really about good project management practice and mentioned that she had seen a disability project which was well managed, but this was achieved through additional support outside the project. • Joyce Nichol suggested that one way is to get advice and input from diaspora members who are aware of 	<p><u>Outcome(s)</u> Members have an opportunity to shared experience and learning in the area of project / organisational governance.</p>
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		<p>some of the local context / challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George Finlayson proposed that projects working with the private sector need to be governed in a different way to 'traditional' development projects on health and education, e.g. measuring impact. • Feedback from Malawi suggests that financial management capacity is an issue were additional support is required. <p>On the last point Keith fed back on some initial member consultation and research done by SMP to check what options there are in Malawi for support on financial management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George Finlayson fed into the consultation that there are two main financial institutions, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Malawi (ICAM) and Society of Accountants in Malawi (SOCAM). • In terms of Higher Education there is the Accountancy Department at the Polytechnic of Malawi in Blantyre • There are a limited number of consultants, e.g. UMODZI, who have some expertise in this area and have worked successfully with members. • In terms of training and capacity building we found... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>a UK organisation called Accounting for International Development (AfID), which organises professional volunteer placements (they have worked successfully with the Micro-loan Foundation);</i> ➤ <i>an organisation called Mango, who run financial management training courses for NGOs;</i> ➤ <i>some professional organisations, e.g. Ernst & Young, encourage and support short term placements in developing countries as part of stall development.</i> 	<p><u>Action(s)</u> SMP to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Raise awareness of what support is available (2) Publish some guidelines on best practice, including some positive examples (3) Promote some options offered by members / partners (4) Ask funders (e.g. Scottish Government and DFID) if they have specific learning / recommendations to feed into this.
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