# SMP Health Forum

# tuesday 31st october, edinburgh city chambers, high street, Eh1 1yJ

# 14.00 – 16.00

**ATTENDEES**

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| Jane Andrews | The University of Strathclyde |
| Briony Ackroyd-Parkin | College of Medicine |
| Katrina Bishop | First Aid Africa |
| Doris Bowie | The Dalitso Project |
| Kruti Buch | Scotland’s International Development Alliance |
| Christine Campbell | The University of Edinburgh |
| Heather Cubie | The University of Edinburgh |
| Sergio Della Sala | The University of Edinburgh |
| Sheila Dunphy | The Dalitso Project |
| Jackie Farr | SMP |
| Jonine Figueroa | The University of Edinburgh |
| Gwen Gordon | NHS Tayside |
| Dermot Gorman | NHS Lothian |
| David Hope-Jones | SMP |
| Barry Klaassen | NHS Tayside |
| Stella Mazeri | The University of Edinburgh |
| Carol McGregor | SightSavers International |
| Itamar Megiddo | The University of Strathclyde |
| Amy Menzies | Christian Aid |
| Neil Merrylees | The University of Dundee |
| Mercy Mgoola | Malawi diaspora |
| Tawachi Nyasulu | The University of Strathclyde |
| Josephine Odala Mpango | Mastercard Fellowship |
| Grace O’Donovan | SMP |
| Bernadette O’Hare | The University of St Andrews |
| Graeme Reid | Scottish Government |
| Derek Sloan | The University of St Andrews |
| David Stevenson | The University of Edinburgh |
| Robert Stewart | The Scotland Malawi Mental Health Education Project (SMMHEP) |
| Michael Stitt | The University of Edinburgh |
| Susan Warren | Haemophilia Scotland |
| Pam Wilson | Westgate/Matawale Health Centre Twinning Project |
| Bob Wright | Edinburgh Napier University |
| Kathy Wright | SMP |

**APOLOGIES**

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| --- | --- |
| Simon Guild | The University of Glasgow |
| Julie Struthers | The University of St Andrews |
| Alistair Tough | The University of Glasgow |
| Charles Fawcett | Aiming Higher in Malawi |
| Olivia Giles |  |
| Ewan Brown | NHS Lothian |
| Andrew Blaikie | The University of St Andrews |
| Sam Riddell | NHS |
| Mary Millar | Meningitis Research Foundation |
| Wilber Sabiiti | The University of St Andrews |
| Morven Shearer | The University of St Andrews |
| Pamela Woodburn | VSO International |
| David Dewhurst | The University of Edinburgh |
| Kevin Irvine | Aiming Higher in Malawi |
| Chisomo Kalinga | The University of Edinburgh |
| Laura Macpherson | THET |
| Cathy Ratcliff | EMMS International |
| Halla Edwards-Muthu | Rt Hon Lord McConnell of Glenscorrodale |

**SUMMARY MINUTES**

# Welcome and Introduction to Malawian Input

Attendees were welcomed to the SMP’s first of five meetings ahead of the Scottish Government’s Malawi Development Programme round of grant funding. The purpose of the Forum was to allow for the sharing of opportunities, challenges, priorities and issues alongside Malawian input from a panel of colleagues and counterparts in the Malawi health sector in order to facilitate high quality applications. The meeting was conducted under Chatham House Rule and as such these summary minutes are anonymised.

The timing of the forum prior to the announcement of the round was due to the meeting having been pre-scheduled two months earlier. The Scottish Government were supportive of the meeting still going ahead. All attendees were reminded of the importance of reading the criteria and eligibility requirements before applying. It was noted that this meeting is not the official Information Day; this will be held by the Scottish Government and grant managers after the call has come out.

Attendees were reminded that the SMP is core-funded by the Scottish Government but is independent of them, and of the grant making process.

Malawian input remains at the heart of the SMP and all the meetings held. Thanks were given to the Malawi Scotland Partnership for their role in supporting and gathering input from six key stakeholders. The Malawian panel recorded video interviews in Malawi, which are available on the SMP website [here](https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/past-events/health-links-forum/). For this meeting the Malawian input was fed through an interactive WhatsApp discussion. Attendees were asked to write anonymous questions down, which were sent to the panel in Malawi and their responses were revisited later (see section in minutes below).

All potential applicants were encouraged to familiarise themselves with these two key Malawian government policy documents: the [Malawi Health Sector Strategic Plan II](https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/download_file/view/2560/788/) and the [Malawi National Community Health Strategy](https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/download_file/view/2566/788/).

# Sharing of Learning

A range of previously Scottish Government funded health projects fed in their experience and learning to help inform new applications. The panel included:

Heather Cubie, the University of Edinburgh

Christine Campbell, the University of Edinburgh

Barry Klaassen, NHS Tayside

Bernadette O’Hare, the University of St Andrews

Dermot Gorman, NHS Lothian

Jane Andrews, the University of Strathclyde

The panel were asked a number of questions related to their applications, Malawian input, duplication of projects, and the challenges.

What made your application particularly strong:

1. The evidence base for what was needed came from local community engagement, and given that the breadth and depth of projects is huge, the strength of applications showed that the projects were deemed a priority on the Malawian side, not the Scottish side.
2. The application highlighted that there is a real need on the ground.

When you have the grant:

1. Rigorous agreement and minuting of all discussions between the Scottish and Malawian side.
2. Using the same rigorous methodology in describing the evaluation as you would for a project in Scotland.

Avoiding duplication with other work already implemented:

1. Capitalise on the fact that people in the Health Sector know each other and are connected.
2. Open dialogue is key.
3. Be aware that fear of rivalry is a challenge, so people are not always communicating as well as they could.
4. Duplication in the health sector is potentially dangerous, especially if there are multiple projects teaching different methods and causing confusion.
5. Different areas in the health sector can overlap, which can make it challenging to know who to connect with and who the relevant contacts are.
6. Coordinated effort with potentially a Memorandum of Understanding so everything is relatively formalised.

Grant management, reporting, monitoring:

1. Work out within your own organisation who will be doing what. For example, who is responsible for travel, or for monitoring and reporting.
2. Be aware that changing priorities means that the set of skills you need change with them. You may require someone with excellent communication skills to begin with, but further into the project, the emphasis may be on organisation.
3. Financial and administrative support is essential.
4. Full reporting every 6 months can be arduous and complex, so do not underestimate the time this takes and factor in accordingly.

Tools or approaches that helped/things to avoid:

1. Good planning.
2. Time and money.
3. Good management involvement on the Malawian side so it can be self-sustaining; it is essential that both sides understand how the money can be used.
4. Ideally there would be equity across projects to allow for travel, expenses, etc. – to avoid people on the ground competing to work for other projects with greater international funding.
5. Be wary of the cost of international bank transfers and the length of time until they are received.
6. Be aware of the HR issues of having someone on the ground in Malawi where contracts, tax, etc. are concerned.

Project sustainability:

1. Make sure the person on the ground is well connected.
2. Define early on what is *meant* by the term ‘sustainable’.
3. True sustainability should not require that projects in Malawi require funding from the Ministry for Health to continue – if they depend on the Ministry for funding, they won’t be sustainable as funding is hard to come by.
4. Training is essential so that practices can continue – however, resource limitations means that there can be a tipping point where it then becomes unsustainable despite the training.
5. Personnel, and cohesive governance, are still fundamental challenges.

# SUPPORTING DEVELOPING APPLICATIONS/DISCUSSION

Attendees were given the opportunity to discuss potential future projects, to share application ideas, and to make useful connections and for those looking for partners to meet. An SMP action arose from this section of the Forum, stemming from an acknowledgement that there is potential for mapping what projects have been implemented in Malawi and where, in order to avoid duplication and to be able to facilitate collaboration.

Attendees were also given the option to disclose whether they were considering applying for a Scottish Government 2018-23 Malawi grant via the SMP Health Forum Feedback and Evaluation Form, and whether they would like to describe their prospective application, including likely geographic areas of work, nature of the project and partners. They were also given the option of having these details made public on the SMP website along with their details to be contacted directly. Others noted that the information could be posted but not their personal details, and as such they would prefer for interested parties to contact them through the SMP.

Projects publically posted are as follows:

**Jane Andrews**, **the University of Strathclyde** – [j.j.andrews@strath.ac.uk](mailto:j.j.andrews@strath.ac.uk)

* Curriculum development for improved MSA training (Strathclyde-led bid)
* Economic modelling for health systems improvement (Academic interest for potential collaboration)
* Biomedical engineering – diagnostic tools (Academic interest for potential collaboration)
* Communications technologies for remote health workers (Academic interest for potential collaboration)

**Bernadette O’Hare**, **the University of St Andrews** – [bernadetteohare@gmail.com](mailto:bernadetteohare@gmail.com)

* Cross-disciplinary calls would be useful.
* Considering applying for a grant to support an advocacy project.

**Pam Wilson**, **Westgate/Matawale Health Centre Twinning Project** – [pam\_pjw2001@yahoo.com](mailto:pam_pjw2001@yahoo.com)

* Solar power for Matawale Health Clinic Zomba.
  + This has arisen out of an identified need from the Malawian contact, where electricity load sharing causes blackouts that make midwifery and CPD departments very challenging.
  + Fuel is expensive for their generator and not always available.

**Tawachi Nyasulu**, **the University of Strathclyde** – [tawachi.nyasulu@strath.ac.uk](mailto:tawachi.nyasulu@strath.ac.uk)

* Looking for funding for a pilot project for my research studentship.
* The focus is on measuring the impact of rural data wireless communication networks on the efficiency and effectiveness of food and nutrition surveillance systems, especially for under-five children.

**Anonymous** – please email the SMP at [grace@scotland-malawipartnership.org](mailto:grace@scotland-malawipartnership.org) if you would like to get in contact regarding this project.

* Cancer prevention and cancer monitoring for prioritising policy and prevention campaigns.

# Feedback from Malawian Input

Answers to anonymous questions posted on WhatsApp were displayed for attendees to see, and are also posted on the SMP website for future reference.

Read the questions and answers here: <https://goo.gl/sPekHL>

The Malawi Health Sector Panel are as follows:

Name: Emma Mabvumbe

Position: Director of Planning and Policy Development

Organisation: Ministry of Health

Name: George Jobe

Position: Executive Director

Organisation: Malawi Health Equity Network

Name: Dingaan Mithi

Position: Programme Manager

Organisation: JONAIDS

Name: Beatrice Kabota

Position: Cervical Cancer Screening Coordinator

Organisation: Nkhoma Hospital

Name: Dr. David Morton

Position: Deputy Medical Director

Organisation: Nkhoma Hospital (World Partner Church of Scotland)

Name: Vera Kamtukule

Position: Chief Executive

Organisation: Malawi Scotland Partnership

**Questions answered on the panel videos:**

1. *What are the key challenges in the Malawi health sector?*
2. *What are the key priorities for the Malawi health sector?*
3. *What are the key governance issues in the Malawi health sector?*
4. *What are the key structures or systems in the Malawi health sector?*
5. *Who are the key players within Malawi’s health sector?*
6. *What are the Do’s and Don’ts for people developing health projects in Malawi****?***

Watch the videos here:

<https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/all-events/health-links-forum/>

# Closing Remarks and next steps

The Scottish Government will be hosting its own formal Information Day in partnership with the Corra Foundation for prospective applicants, which will be announced soon.

Additional strand meetings will be held on the following dates:

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| [Sustainable Economic Dvpt](http://scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/all-events/malawi-call-sustainable-economic-development/) | Thursday 9th November, 2.30-4.30pm | SFTF, Robertson House, Glasgow |
| [Civic governance](http://scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/all-events/malawi-call-civic-governance/) | Monday 13th November, 2-4pm | SCVO, Brunswick House, Glasgow |
| [Education](http://scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/all-events/malawi-call-education/) | Thursday 16th November, 2-4pm | Edinburgh City Chambers |
| [Renewables, water and climate](http://scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/all-events/malawi-call-renewable-energy-water-climate/) | Thursday 16th November, 4.30-6.30pm | Edinburgh City Chambers |

There will also be a [CPG meeting](https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/all-events/cpg-on-malawi-the-malawi-development-programme/) on the Malawi round on Wednesday 15th September at the Scottish Parliament.

Everyone was thanked for attending and participating, in particular the panellists for their open and honest contributions. Attendees were reminded that the SMP is here to help and to keep in contact.