

From 2010 to 2018



**Bridge
Malawi
Project Report**

September 2018



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I. INTRODUCTION

The first phase of the Bridge Malawi Project (the Project) was implemented in Malawi from October 2010 to October 2018. The Project has supported grassroots activities through the establishment of Community Learning Centres (CLCs), which act as hubs of community-led development activities in non-formal education, with the aim of assisting the country to attain the Education for All goals and United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4(SDG4) on Quality Education. The project has mobilized and empowered communities and leadership at local level to take charge of non-formal education programmes.

From 2010 to 2013, the Bridge Malawi Project operated through NGOs and saw the placement of Korean young volunteers who worked with the communities involved in the Project.

The Bridge Malawi Project began working directly with beneficiary communities following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (KNCU) and the Malawi National Commission for UNESCO (MNCU) on 18th October, 2013, and the subsequent establishment of CLCs in 2014.

Education programmes that are offered in these Bridge CLCs include early childhood development, after-school extra tuition for primary school children aimed at giving remedial support in literacy and numeracy skills, adult literacy classes, and vocational skills training.

II. BACKGROUND

1. Country Overview

Malawi is a landlocked country in southeast Africa, bordered by Zambia to the northwest, Tanzania to the northeast, and Mozambique to the east, south, and west. The country has the third-largest lake in Africa, Lake Malawi, which takes up three-quarters of Malawi's eastern boundary with Tanzania and Mozambique. The name Malawi comes from Maravi, an old name of a kingdom established by the Nyanja people who first inhabited the area before the 10th Century AD.

The current population of Malawi is estimated at 18 million with an annual growth rate of 2.9 percent ¹⁾. People aged under 15 comprise 45.1 percent of the population, those between 15 and 64 years old, 52.2 percent, and those aged 65+ years, 2.7 percent ²⁾. Life expectancy at birth is 63. The total dependency ratio of the population, defined as the ratio of people who are generally not in the labour force (dependents) to those in the workforce of a country (the productive part of a population), is 91.4 percent ³⁾. This means that the pressure on the productive population in Malawi is very high. The poverty headcount ratio at \$3.10 per person per day as a percentage of the population is at 87.60%.

2. Current Situation of Education in the Country

Early Childhood Development, Pre-school Education

The Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability & Social Welfare (MoGCDSW) is the ministry responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) policy and programmes.

1) UNESCO UIS < uis.unesco.org/en/country/mw >

2) United Nations Statistics Division

3) <http://countrymeters.info/en/>

Access to ECD services by children of 0 to 5 years has increased from 2.63% in 2000 to 45.6% in 2017 ⁴⁾. However, the majority of ECD centres are concentrated in urban and semi-urban areas. The increase in access to ECD services has resulted in better education provision and improved childcare services, child protection, and health care outcomes. A study on the Early Child Development Index (ECDI) in Malawi conducted between 2011 and 2015 ⁵⁾ revealed that the country's ECDI score was 59.8% in 2014, implying that about 60% of Malawian children were developmentally on track. The ECDI for girls was higher than for boys, at 64% and 56%, respectively. The study showed that 89.1% of the children were developmentally on track in terms of physical development, 71.4% were on track in terms of social and emotional development, and 79.9% were on track in terms of early learning. However, the majority did not fare well in terms of literacy and numeracy, with only 17.2% having demonstrated proficiency.

The implementation of ECD activities in the CLCs under the Bridge Malawi Project, and the involvement of MoGCDSW in the Bridge National Committee, align very well with the Malawi Government's policy on ECD.

Formal Primary, After-school & Complementary Basic Education programmes

The Directorate of Basic Education, part of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST), is mandated to look after formal primary education in Malawi. Currently, the total enrolment in formal primary education, based on 2015/16 Education Management Information System (EMIS) data, is around 4,901,000. The survival rate to Standard 8, the last grade at primary education level, is 32.5 percent (male 36%, female 29%) ⁶⁾. This implies that a large number of children of school-age do not complete their primary education on time, possibly due to high rates of grade retention and dropout.

The average repetition rate in primary education (standard 1 to 8) in 2016 was 23.4% (male 24.1%, female 22.7%) ⁷⁾. Repetition was highest in Standard 1 at 28.8% (male 29.5%, female 28.1%). The low completion rate could also be because of the proportion of children who drop out of school. Dropout rate is estimated at 4.8%, implying that out of the total enrolment in 2016, around 235,000

4) 4th Integrated Household Survey (IHS4) 2016-2017, and 3rd Integrated Household Survey (IHS3) 2010-2011

5) Study on Impact Evaluation for Protecting ECD (2011-2015)

6) Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2017) Education Management Information System (EMIS) 2015/16. EMIS Department, Lilongwe.

7) Ibid.

students dropped out. In order to reduce the dropout rate, the government is implementing a school feeding programme in some schools. As of 2018, about 44% of schools provide school meals. The government has also introduced a complementary basic education (CBE) programme, which provides a second chance for children who have previously dropped out of school to access basic education, and later transition to regular schools or acquire lifelong skills for a better livelihood. The government also encourages communities to set up after-school classes for primary school children in order to provide assistive and remedial learning to children in the afternoon after attending their formal classes in the morning.

The after-school classes provided under the Bridge Malawi Project have helped to enhance implementation of the government's policy to address the challenges that children of school-age face in their studies.

Adult Literacy and Out of School Youth Programmes

The National Centre for Literacy and Adult Education (NCLAE), under the Department of Community Development in the Ministry of Civic Education, Culture and Community Development, is responsible for coordinating implementation of adult literacy programmes in Malawi.

According to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS), there were over 417,000 out-of-school adolescents in Malawi in 2016. The literacy rate for 15-24 year olds in 2016 was 72.94% (male: 72.49%; female: 73.39%). In absolute figures, the illiterate population aged 15-24 years was close to one million (960,158). The literacy rate for people aged 15 years and older in 2017 was 73% (male: 81%; female: 66%)⁸⁾. For those aged 15 years and older, the illiterate population was estimated at 3.5 million. Between 2010 and 2017, there was some improvement in the literacy rates, from 65% to 73%, for both males and females aged 15 years and older⁹⁾.

The government runs over 10,000 adult literacy training centres across the country, offering training in Chichewa, with an average of 25 learners per class. There are also 1,633 centres that teach English. In addition to government-run centres, adult literacy services are also offered by civil society and faith-based organizations. Every year, more than 100,000 learners are declared literate after

8) Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2017) Education Management Information System (EMIS) 2015/16. EMIS Department, Lilongwe.

9) Ibid.

attending the adult literacy centres for 10 months of intensive learning, and then taking a literacy assessment.

The Department of Community Development has adopted the concept of Community Learning Centres implemented under the Bridge Malawi Project, which promotes community ownership and participation in integrated non-formal education and other livelihood activities.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

The Ministry of Labour, Youth, Sports and Manpower Development (MoLYSMD) offers policy direction pertinent to Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training (TEVET) in Malawi. TEVET programmes in Malawi are guided by the TEVET policy of 2013. Priority Area 1 of the policy is Access and Equity. To increase access to TEVET, the Government of Malawi introduced the Community Technical Colleges programme in 2015. In addition to the Community Technical Colleges run under this programme, there are also a number of Community Skills Development Centres.

Most secondary school graduates in Malawi do not go on to university education because of the limited number of places available at higher education institutions. Currently, there are seven public technical colleges, of which four are government-owned and three are grant-aided. There are also private technical colleges. However, with a combined intake of less than 2,000 students per year, the existing colleges cannot meet the large and growing demand for skills development.

TEVET is regulated by the TEVET Authority (TEVETA) and is offered in two forms, namely, formal and informal. The TEVET sector has also developed Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) guidelines, which will soon be piloted. The RPL system will help the sector to recognize and certify those who obtained their skills outside the college system. This will also give them the opportunity to enrol in formal training.

The Bridge Malawi Project has worked with the MoLYSMD at policy level through the involvement of the Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training in the Bridge National Committee. The Bridge Malawi Project has also worked with TEVETA on the curriculum development and assessment process for a tailoring course for learners with special educational needs at one of the Bridge CLCs (Namiyango).

III. OVERVIEW OF THE BRIDGE MALAWI PROJECT

1. Introduction to the Bridge Malawi Project

Rationale

The formal education system in Malawi is currently unable to adequately address the learning needs of all the country's people. The country has a low ECDI score in literacy and numeracy, a low completion rate to the last grade of formal primary education, high repetition and dropout rates, a large number of illiterates, and a high dependency ratio.

Malawi needs to develop innovative and effective approaches to support the vulnerable who constitute the majority of those who do not benefit from the formal education system. The poor and those who are otherwise disadvantaged comprise the majority of those who do not enrol in formal education. When they enrol, they comprise the majority of those who repeat years, drop out or complete the formal education system without acquiring the minimum proficiency levels in reading, numeracy and life skills required for a decent livelihood.

The Government of Malawi has a well-articulated policy framework and plan documents. However, owing to limited human and financial resources, it has not been able to provide formal education that adequately meets the demand.

The Bridge Malawi Project was therefore introduced as an effective alternative intervention to promote non-formal education through the establishment of multi-purpose CLCs. The Bridge Malawi Project is one of eight national projects that form part of the Bridge Africa Programme.

The Programme has involved eight partner countries: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Bridge Africa Programme, as a whole, was initiated by KNCU with a view to meeting the needs of marginalized people in its partner countries by expanding access to education, as well as improving the quality of education. The Programme began as a community development programme in 2010, and has since evolved into a non-formal education programme focusing on Early Childhood Development (ECD), literacy and vocational skill training.

Aim

The ultimate aim of the Bridge Malawi Project is to expand lifelong learning opportunities at community level for those excluded from formal education in Malawi. This has been done through the Bridge CLCs, which provide learning opportunities to people in rural and semi-urban villages. The CLCs operate Early Childhood Development (ECD) classes, after-school classes, adult literacy classes and vocational training classes.

Principles

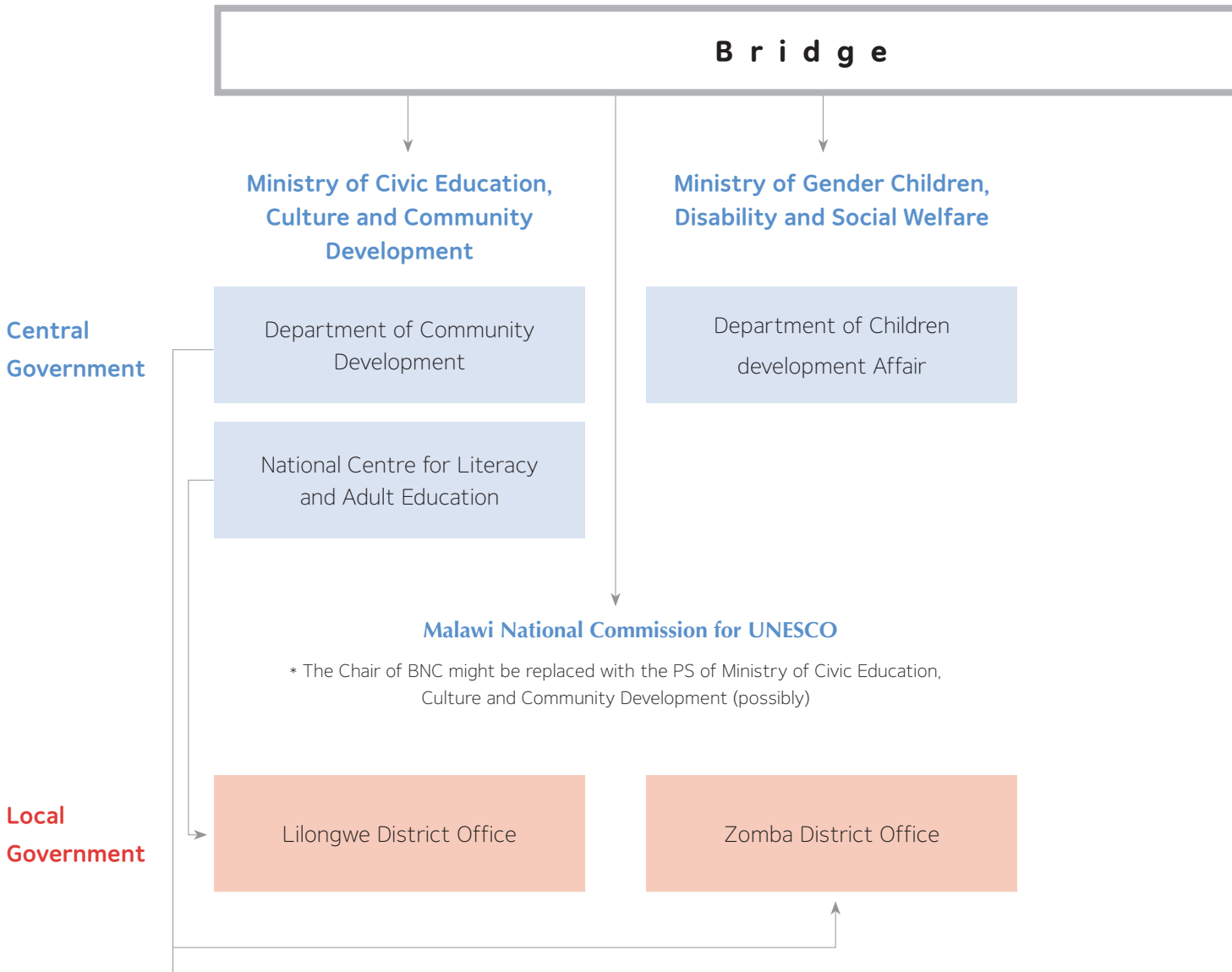
The Bridge Malawi Project operates on the principles of Sustainability, Ownership, and Self-reliance. These principles were adopted by the Bridge Africa Programme at the Bridge Africa Conference, which was held in Lilongwe in 2016, and attended by stakeholders from the Bridge Africa Programme's partner countries. In accordance with these principles, MNCU maintains close cooperation with relevant government bodies while adopting a strong community-driven approach when managing CLC activities. Consequently, all activities are planned and implemented in line with Malawi's national education strategies. The Bridge Malawi Project's stakeholders also focus strongly on enhancing the self-reliance of the local community at all stages, from the planning to the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of each individual activity.

The local leadership and communities are mobilized and empowered to take charge of their education programmes from conception to implementation, as well as in monitoring and evaluating their progress and impact. Thus, the Bridge Malawi Project promotes community ownership of the Bridge CLCs, and encourages the community's general interest and participation in education activities. This is very much in line with the Malawi Government's Primary School Improvement Programme (PSIP), which engages with schools and communities to implement various programmes through direct grants from the MOEST. The Project's approach instils a sense of ownership across the board and consequently ensures cooperation among stakeholders so that educational goals can ultimately be attained.

Duration

The Bridge Malawi Project has been implemented since 2010 through a partnership between KNCU and MNCU, based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between KNCU and MNCU signed on 18th October, 2013. The duration of the MOU is 5 years and will expire on 18th October, 2018.

Structure



Community

2016 Bridge Writing Festival (3 CLCs participated)

Mwera Board of Trustee

Mwera Management Committee

Mwera CLC
(@T/A Malili – Population: 90,809)

Mwera Management Committee

Naphini CLC

ECD
Afterschoo
Adult Literacy

ECD
Afterschoo
Adult Literacy

National Committee

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

Department of Basic Education

Ministry of Labour, Manpower and Youth Development

Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training

Department of Youth Development

National Library

* The Chair of BNC might be replaced with the PS of Ministry of Civic Education, Culture and Community Development (possibly)

Blantyre District Youth Officer Urban and Blantyre City Council

Ministry of Education –Department of Special Needs (Blantyre Office)

Millennium Village

Catholic University

FDYD (Forum of Development Youth with Disability)

CONGOMA

Namiyango CLC (Student with Disability)
(@Bangwe township
- Population: 250,000)

Afterschool

Carpentry

Tailoring

Computer Class

Parent Empowerment

2. Introduction to the Bridge Community Learning Centres in Malawi

In order to reduce the illiteracy rate in rural areas and local communities, in addition to providing classes, the three Bridge Community Learning Centres have provided teaching and learning materials, and developed the capacities of local leaders, members of the CLCs' management committees, and teachers.

All three Bridge CLCs in Malawi are very active. The Mwera and Naphini centres provide education programmes for adult literacy (both Chichewa and English), Early Childhood Development (ECD), and after-school classes. The Namiyango centre, which specializes in education services for people with disabilities, provides after-school classes and vocational training.

The Naphini and Mwera centres are good examples of CLCs that are managed and run by the community. In each case, the chief of the village is closely engaged with the committee that runs the centre and listens to the local community to ensure that the centre meets its needs. As part of endeavours to enhance the centres' sustainability and self-reliance, Naphini CLC set up a maize mill, and Mwera has a cafeteria for its feeding programme that can also be used for income-generating activity.

3. Introduction to the Bridge National Committee in Malawi

The Malawi Bridge National Committee (BNC) is an inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral body established to ensure the sustainability, ownership and self-reliance of the Project and help it achieve its goals. The BNC is composed of representatives from the Ministry of Civic Education, Culture and Community Development; the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare; the Ministry of Labour, Manpower and Youth Development; the National Centre for Literacy and Adult Education; the National Library Service; the Malawi National Commission for UNESCO; and the Korean National Commission for UNESCO. It ensures that all the activities of the Project are aligned with Malawi's education strategy and fit Malawi's local context by promoting collaboration among different stakeholders based on their experience and expertise.

As described by Ms. Sawasawa, a member of the BNC and the Director of Community Development the main roles of the BNC are (1) providing policy guidance and support for the Project's activities, and (2) functioning as a forum where people from different government ministries can exchange ideas and interact with each other to design an effective and innovative approach to the Project. According to Ms. Simango, another member of the BNC and the Acting Director of Basic Education, other important roles of the committee are driving the whole process of the Bridge Malawi Project and providing technical knowledge.

IV. ACHIEVEMENTS

1. History of the Bridge Malawi Project: Main Activities from 2010 to 2018

The Bridge Malawi Project has been implemented since 2010 through a partnership between the KNCU and MNCU. To begin with, the Project partnered with local NGOs in Malawi. In Balaka, the project partnered with H.E.L.P (Hope, Education, Love and Protection) Malawi, which is based near Liwonde National Park. In Blantyre, the project partnered with AYISE (Active Youth Initiative for Social Enhancement). In Zomba, it partnered with the Scouts Association of Malawi. However, as it was observed that the beneficiary communities were not sufficiently benefiting from the NGOs due to administrative costs, it was decided to try to involve the communities directly in managing the Project.

Against this backdrop, Korean project volunteers, who had worked with the communities through the NGOs, were seconded to the relevant communities. One of the major missions of the project volunteers was to design and implement literacy classes together with the community. However, without knowing the culture and needs of the local community, it was not possible for the volunteers to start the literacy classes immediately. Therefore, they first spent one to two years living in the relevant community in order to understand the local lifestyle, culture, and educational needs.

Based on the needs assessments conducted by project volunteers, the Project established its current form of operations through Bridge Community Learning Centres (CLCs). There are now three Bridge CLCs in Malawi: one in Likuni (Mwera Centre), another in Blantyre (Namiyango Centre), and the other in Zomba (Naphini Centre). By establishing these CLCs in remote areas of Malawi, the Bridge Malawi Project has helped to expand learning opportunities for marginalized communities.

The year 2016 was a turning point for the Bridge Africa Programme. In 2016, KNCU and its partner National Commissions for UNESCO (NatComs) in the countries participating in the Bridge Africa Programme saw the need to promote South-South cooperation among these partner countries in order to increase the practical and incremental learning effects for all the participants and stakeholders in the programme. The result of the decision to initiate such South-South cooperation was the 2016 Bridge Africa Conference, which was held from 17th to 19th February 2016, in Lilongwe, Malawi.

As agreed during the Conference, KNCU has since officially seconded Korean Project Managers to the offices of the partner Natcoms in the Bridge Africa Programme, including MNCU. The Project Managers cooperated with MNCU in the implementation of the Bridge Malawi Project, including on

the design and implementation of the project; planning and developing operational activities of the three CLCs; and following up on the periodic reporting of the Project's activities.

To further enhance local ownership and sustainability of the Bridge Malawi Project, since 2016, following the agreement of Terms of Reference by the two Natcoms, KNCU has transferred project funds directly to MNCU's bank account, and MNCU has assumed financial and administrative responsibility for implementing the Project.



2. Quantitative Outcomes

Year	Centre	Access to educational activities				Improvement of quality of education	
		ECD	After School Classes	Adult literacy	Vocational skills training	# of teachers who received training	# of books printed and distributed
2010	NA	NA	5	NA	NA	NA	NA
2011	NA	51	1,540	376	196	7	750
2012	NA	0	229	24	61	0	0
2013	Naphini	80	0	0	0	2	71
	Namiyango	0	10	0	0		
2014	Naphini	70	200	57	8	89	2,225
	Namiyango	0	40	100	0		
	Mwera	0	0	100	100		
2015	Naphini	60	200	35	0	100	19,032
	Namiyango	42 (children with disabilities)	0	0	38		
	Mwera	0	0	38	0		
2016	Naphini	120	820	43	0	57	11,000
	Namiyango	0	218	0	71		
	Mwera	222	472	101	0		
2017	Naphini	120	840	103	0	10	11,000
	Namiyango	0	326	0	46		
	Mwera	206	485	72	0		
2018	Naphini	64	437	60	0	46	0
	Namiyango	0	255	0	0		
	Mwera	96	390	42	0		

3. Linkages between the Bridge Malawi Project and the SDGs, AU Agenda 2063 and CESA 16-25

The Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016–2025 (CESA 16-25) is a comprehensive ten-year continental education strategy. It is Africa's response to SDG4 ("Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all"). Through CESA 16-25, African countries not only own the SDG4 Targets, but adapt and make them compatible with Africa's own aspirations. CESA 16-25 seeks to achieve better results than any previous education strategic frameworks. The strategy proposes that all stakeholders and actors be given freedom to act and take positive initiatives proactively.

AFRICAN UNION (AU) AGENDA 2063 - Our Aspirations for the Africa We Want

- ① A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
- ② An integrated continent, politically united based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance
- ③ An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
- ④ A peaceful and secure Africa
- ⑤ An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics
- ⑥ An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children
- ⑦ Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner

The African Union's Agenda 2063 was initiated in 2013 and sets out a number of aspirations for Africa, to be achieved by the year 2063. Like CESA 16-25, it is consistent with the SDGs adopted at the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, but takes a longer-term view. It emphasizes the need to harness demographic dividends through integrated investments in youth and women. Agenda 2063 urges African countries to make commitments towards, among other things: mobilization of the people and their ownership of continental programmes; the principle of self-reliance and Africa financing its own development; the importance of capable, inclusive and accountable states and institutions at all levels and in all spheres; and holding everyone, including governments and institutions, accountable for results.

In line with both CESA 16-25 and Agenda 2063, the Bridge Africa Programme adopted three principles (Sustainability, Ownership, and Self-reliance) at the 2016 Bridge Africa Conference, and has operated under those principles since then, as agreed by the Secretaries General from the Natcoms of the participating countries.

4. Implications and Outcomes of CLCs

1) Early Childhood Development (ECD)

Parents and caregivers at the Mwera and Naphini centres have commented that the provision of Early Childhood Development (ECD) classes in the CLCs is a very effective strategy for education development. They have said that children who attended the ECD programme proceeded to primary education more confident and ready compared to those who go straight from the village into primary school without any exposure to ECD.

Mwera Community Learning Centre

Judith Willy shared that her son, Steven, who is now 3 years old, has changed a lot since he joined the ECD programme at the Mwera CLC. According to her, Steven can now read and recite alphabet letters, enjoys going to classes, and has become very clever and emotionally stable.

“Ndeu zinachepa komanso anachenjera kwambiri kusiyana ndi mmene analili poyamba.
(‘He does not fight any more and he is more alert and attentive compared to the time before he joined the ECD class.’)”

Eliza Lapkeni, the mother of five-year-old Isha, also expressed her appreciation for Mwera CLC, which she referred to as a life-changing institution. She noted that Isha, who was previously shy and withdrawn, has not only become more emotionally stable and social, but also developed intellectually. Eliza also noted with pride that Isha can now write her first name. She now sees a brighter future for Isha with the school’s assistance, as all her three children who passed through the CLC are performing well in primary school. Her dream is for Isha to become a Social Worker

“Mwana wanga ndikufuna azakhale ngati inuyo akuyendetsa galimoto.
(‘I want my child to be like you and be able to drive her own car when she grows up.’)”

Similarly, the communities observed that after being exposed to ECD activities in the CLCs, most children are performing extremely well in primary school. The centres provide a good learning environment, and services such as meal provision that are hard to find in many other communities, especially in rural areas, and that motivate children to go to school every day.



ECD class at Naphini CLC

Naphini Community Learning Centre

The story was similar for Mary Mkowila, grandmother to Priscilla Manjawira, who attends Naphini ECD centre. Mary praised Naphini centre’s caregivers for teaching Priscilla well. Mary is hopeful that her grandchild will go further with her education.

“Mwana wanga amayankhula za ku school zokha zokha basi. Ndikuchita kuwona kuti azapita ku Joni uyu. (‘My grandchild talks about school most of the time. I can foresee her travelling to other countries.’)”

The allowances from the CLC have also helped Mercy, one of the caregivers, to pay for her child’s school fees and her upkeep. Her child is now in Standard 4, which, she stated, would not have been possible without the centre.

With the assistance of the Bridge Malawi Project, both Mwere and Naphini have built additional classroom blocks where ECD classes are housed, and have managed to provide services to over 700 children since 2009. The communities also now produce enough food for all children in the ECD classes, which is rarely accomplished at most centres in Malawi.

2) After-school Classes

Mwera Community Learning Centre

The community is pleased to report that the after-school lessons have greatly improved education standards in the area. As the Chairman of Mwera CLC noted, “Kubwera kwa sukulu za masana kwathandiza kuti ana asamabwereze-bwereze makalasi poti akumakhonza (‘The introduction of after-school lessons has reduced the repetition rate in the surrounding schools because most learners are passing examinations’).” It was also reported that the centre is bringing learners from different schools together enabling them to share their various experiences.

Furthermore, training provided to teachers has helped to build their capacities, ultimately improving the overall quality of education. Ms. Jacqueline Chisanje, an after-school teacher commended the centre for providing the teachers with training.

“Pano zilibwino timaphunzitsa molimba mtima
(‘Now things are good, we are able to teach with confidence’).”



After-school class at Mwera CLC

Naphini Community Learning Centre

Mr. Mlima, the Group Village Headman and Chairman of the Naphini centre, reported that, since it was established in 2010, the centre has encouraged local leaders to work together to improve the quality of education while making efforts to reach out to community members.

“Pulojekiti ya Buliji yapangitsa mafumu ozungulira dela lino kugwira ntchito limodzi yotukula maphuniro... ife ngati mafumu timalimbikitsa nzika zathu zonse kutumiza ana ku sukulu ya madzulo (‘The Bridge Project has brought together all chiefs and village heads from the surrounding villages to work together in promoting the education of their people...As chiefs, we encourage all our people to send their children to the after-school classes’).”

Local residents have also dedicated time and effort to support the CLC, for instance by offering free labour on farms as an income-generating activity. Their collaborative efforts have translated into improved quality in the CLC’s learning programmes and have allowed many youths to benefit from after-school activities.

The after-school programme of the centre has learners from Standard 1 to Standard 7, coming from the surrounding primary schools. During the 2017/2018 academic year, the centre had 470 learners in the first term, 428 in the second, and 428 in the third term. One example of a previous learner is Ms. Memory Manjawira who attended after-school classes at the CLC in 2010/11 and was a teacher there in 2014/15. She was ultimately able to matriculate at a nursing school using the money she received by way of honoraria from the centre for teaching there.

“Ndinkabwera kuno kumadzawerenga mu library ndili ku secondary school. Komonso nditamaliza ndinakhala after-school teacher (‘I used to come to this centre to read books in the library. After completing the classes I became an after-school class teacher’).”

The community has set up by-laws to support effective implementation of the CLC’s programmes, and these are enforced by the chiefs and village heads. Those failing to comply with the by-laws are subject to a fine established and agreed to by all community members.

Namiyango Community Learning Centre

The after-school programme at Namiyango helps children with disabilities, who were previously denied educational opportunities, to gain access to education. Most students are now able to read and write. Through the Bridge Malawi Project, Namiyango CLC has also trained parents on how to look after their children better.

Previously, children with disabilities often remained at home. With the after-school programme, however, they have gained access to education and social interaction with peers outside their homes. An interview with parents showed that providing access to education had benefited their households in various ways. For instance, Judith Nawita, the parent of a child with a disability, said that not only could her child now develop properly with the centre's education, but that she herself could also go out and work while her child was at school, which was previously not feasible as she had to spend majority of her time with her children at home.

“Kale tikamachokam, pena timaatsekela nyumba (‘In the past, we used to lock our children in our houses whenever we wanted to go out and do other errands’).”

Chisomo Kamala, a 12-year-old primary school pupil, started school in 2012. Before coming to Namiyango, he was at the government-owned Naizi Primary school, where he was not getting the attention he needed. Commuting to the school also presented a problem as his parents needed to carry him on their backs every day. Now, however, he has a wheelchair which he uses to get to school. He would like to become a medical doctor or a driver when he finishes school. He likes playing bawo (a traditional mathematical game played with stones on a curved piece of wood with holes) both at school and home.

Another pupil, Ellen, is an 18 year old with epilepsy who is currently doing her primary education. She started her primary education in 2015 at Kambuku Primary School in Chigumula and completed up to Standard 4, but because of her disability she later enrolled at Namiyango. She said that before enrolling at Namiyango, she had no idea of what to become in life. She now wants to become an accountant and also open an orphanage to look after orphans after she completes her education.

Accounts from teachers also demonstrated that programmes at the centre have benefited not just the children but also trainers as well. For instance, Ms Carolyn Mlelemba, a trainer in the basic class who has taught at the institution for 2 years, said that she has since developed a passion for working with people with disabilities.

3) Adult Literacy

Mwera and Naphini Community Learning Centres

Most women who have enrolled in adult literacy classes have acquired literacy and numeracy skills. After graduating from the local vernacular language syllabus, some learners have enrolled in English classes. The English classes are designed to further cultivate reading and comprehension skills so that the learners can make use of more complicated learning materials, whether in agriculture, health, or other field of studies. The Project has also supported the translation of some post-literacy booklets from Chichewa into English.

Overall Achievements of the Project in Adult Literacy

- * Funded the procurement of primers for both Chichewa and English
- * Assisted in the printing of English post-literacy books
- * Training of instructors
- * Provided honorarium payments for instructors
- * Construction of an adult literacy block



Adult literacy class at Mwera CLC

After acquiring basic literacy skills, participants are able to manage small scale businesses and support their families' basic needs. Some of the graduates have formed Village Savings and Loans groups, and managed to generate a revolving fund, which is loaned to members of the group.

With their acquired literacy skills, some of the literacy graduates have been given key positions on various local development committees. Adult literacy graduates are also taking an active role in their children's schooling by assisting them in reading, writing, and mathematics, which has further improved the performance of their children at school.

The teaching and learning materials that have been developed and provided under the Project, such as the Chuma ndi Moyo primers, are designed to be directly applicable to learners' daily lives, helping them to gain knowledge in the areas of:

- ① sanitation, teaching how to construct sanitary facilities, such as toilets and rubbish pits in individual homes;
- ② environment and climate change management, instructing learners on the value of conserving nature and encouraging them to plant trees to protect the environment;
- ③ enhanced family planning services, letting women know more about the benefits of accessing family planning services;
- ④ enhanced nutritional knowledge, helping families prepare nutritious food for a balanced diet;
- ⑤ gender equality and equity, promoting gender equality in the execution of various household roles and responsibilities; and
- ⑥ human rights, helping communities exercise their rights by demanding and actively participating in development activities.

4) Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training (TEVET)

Namiyango Community Learning Centre

Namiyango CLC has contributed to the implementation of the Malawi Government's TEVET policy, which outlines improved access and equity in skills development as a key priority. The centre gives opportunities to learners with disabilities to access vocational training as it is not possible for all of them to enrol at a technical college.

Many children with disabilities in Namiyango and the surrounding areas, as well as their parents, have benefited from the Bridge Malawi Project, which has built a disability-friendly toilet and a classroom block for learners at Namiyango, for both after-school and TEVET classes. The CLC started with 11 learners, and so far, more than 100 learners have benefited from the centre.

Thirty learners have completed a tailoring course, gaining practical skills in tailoring which will enable them to find employment or start their own businesses. Four students out of the 30 are currently employed by professional tailors.



TEVET tailoring class at Namiyango CLC

When interviewed, Chisomo Nyang'ama, one of the tailoring teachers who herself has a physical disability, offered details of some of the tangible benefits seen from the TEVET class. She reported that she had 30 students, five of whom have a hearing impairment, and that most students have become proficient at making various clothes, such as dresses, skirts, and aprons, with some even being able to make money from the sales of those clothes.

An interview with one of the pupils, Carolyn Kalima, who is now 25 years old, demonstrated that the class had opened doors for her to pursue her dream. Carolyn, who has been with the centre for a year, lamented that before she joined the programme, no one was willing to hire her because of her disability. However, training in tailoring has changed her life completely as she now has hope of finding a place of employment with her skillset. She also intends to open a tailoring shop and employ other people with disabilities in the near future.

In addition to these benefits, the Project has also brought public attention to the Namiyango CLC, which now appears on the map and receives many visitors. One organization has even donated a borehole after its visit in 2017, allowing the centre's surrounding community to benefit immensely from the water supply as well.

According to one of the members of Namiyango CLC's Management Committee, Ms F Kalima, the major positive contribution of education to persons with special education needs is that it helps the development of the country. In addition, children with disabilities who are adequately supported to pursue their education are able to associate with other children with confidence.

Contribution of the Bridge Malawi Project to the Community in Namiyango

The community has benefited from the provision of a classroom block and a disability-friendly toilet. In addition, the school feeding programme provided by the Bridge Malawi Project has encouraged learners to attend classes. Last but not least, the Project has attracted other donors to the community, one of whom drilled a borehole for the community in 2017.

ACHIEVEMENTS AT NAMIYANGO

- Introduction of a tailoring class, which has increased access by children with disabilities to TEVET training.
 - Most of the TEVET learners became able to make dresses which were sold.
 - Construction of a classroom block and disability-friendly toilets for the learners.
 - Parents of children with disabilities have been sensitized to look after them better, and no longer lock the children in their homes when the parents need to go out.
 - Teachers were also trained on how they can handle children with disabilities.
 - Most learners learned to read and write.
 - The Project has created employment for the teachers.
 - The Project has put Namiyango centre on the map.
 - An estimated 8 out of 10 children with disabilities from the surrounding communities are attending classes at the centre, which was not the case in the past.
 - The community is proud of the Project and has welcomed it wholeheartedly.
 - Teachers are proud that they are able to handle learners with disabilities and have since developed a passion for working with disabled children.
 - The learners now have developed confidence and know what they would like to do in future. Examples of what the learners would like to do include becoming doctors, accountants, or drivers, or opening their own tailoring shops or orphanages.
 - Students from Catholic University in Nguludi, Chiradzulu come to the CLC to do their internships, particularly those pursuing a degree course in Special Needs.
-

5) Income-generating Activities



Naphini CLC

Naphini CLC has a farm where maize and groundnuts are grown for the ECD feeding programme. The centre also has a tailoring shop and a maize mill which is used for generating income. Each family is also encouraged to contribute 100 Malawian Kwacha to the centre to sustain its education programmes.

The Project supported a financial management workshop for the centre's management so that they could manage the CLC's income in a more effective, efficient and transparent way.



Mwera CLC

The Bridge Malawi Project has provided support for a financial management workshop and cookery training workshop, although Mwera CLC has not yet started implementing income generating activities. The cookery training was provided to help improve the ECD feeding programme, as well as to facilitate possible income-generating activities. The centre will utilize its cafeteria building, which was constructed with the support of Hyundai Green Food through the Korean National Commission for UNESCO, for such income-generating activities as well as for its original purpose, the feeding programme for ECD learners.

❶ Maize mill at Naphini CLC, built by the Project to help the centre's sustainability

❷ Cafeteria at Mwera CLC, built with funding from Hyundai Green Food

V. LESSONS LEARNED

A number of lessons have been drawn from the implementation experience of the Bridge Malawi Project. These lessons relate to a number of different areas: programme/project design; community engagement at grassroots level; public service delivery; monitoring; transparency and accountability; community leadership and motivation; involvement of volunteers; construction of community public infrastructure; North-South partnership; effective transformative strategies for community development; the human rights approach to non-formal education delivery; and library services and information and communication technologies (ICT).

Programme/project design

The Bridge CLCs have demonstrated that they are an effective model of delivering development to the communities in which they are situated. The integrated approach to community development projects, in which several non-formal education programmes (i.e. ECD, After-school, Adult Literacy and TEVET) that are dealt with by different government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) are implemented collectively at one community learning centre, is cost effective and at the same time addresses many community needs. The involvement of the MDAs in the Bridge National Committee (BNC) meetings, and in activities such as capacity-building training for the communities and monitoring exercises, has promoted and strengthened inter-ministerial collaboration and information sharing.

Community engagement at grassroots level

The three CLCs have offered lessons on effective engagement of the communities at grassroots level. One key lesson is that strengthening the existing traditional leadership structures (chiefs, and village heads) helps to strengthen implementation and sustainability of project activities. Naphini CLC is an example of good practice, where the local leaders are at the forefront of the centre's activities. One other key lesson that has been learnt is the need to strengthen governance, transparency and accountability systems and structures at community level through registration of CLCs with District Councils, establishment of management and accountability structures, development of reporting systems, and providing capacity-building training courses to members of the community. Income generating activities implemented at the centres have also proved to be an effective initiative for sustaining community engagement.

Mobilization of public service institutions towards community development work

For communities to be able to participate effectively in programme activities and management they need timely and efficient support from public service institutions in terms of training, provision of technical guidance, and regular monitoring.

Strong and effective Inter-ministerial collaboration amongst the MDAs concerned with the project is also crucial for effective integrated delivery of community-based programmes. The Bridge Malawi Project has provided lessons on how such inter-ministerial collaboration can be sustained. One of the lessons relates to time management. Inter-ministerial committees usually involve staff at the level of Principal Secretary, directors, heads of institutions or specialized technical staff. Malawi's public services have a very high level of staff vacancies at professional level and, as a result of the low staffing levels, the few members of staff available have a lot of competing calls on their time. In order to take full and effective advantage of their involvement, one lesson that has been learnt is to ensure that organizers of activities should prepare adequately well in advance and make presentations that are concise, and straight to the point, to allow quick understanding of the issue and easy decision making. Planning for such activities should take into consideration the time limitations that such professionals have. Proper communication and information sharing prior to the meeting is crucial.

Monitoring

Frequent monitoring of community projects is crucial to maintain momentum, reminding community members that someone is following up on what they do, checking the quality and standards. Christina, a member of one of the communities involved in the project, summarized this point well:

“Nthawi zambiri mukangotisiya zimakhala ngati zilibe mwini wake zinthuzo.”

(Little or no monitoring makes us feel like there is no interest from those supporting us.)

Transparency and accountability - promotion of democratic governance at community level

Transparency and accountability are key ingredients of accelerated integrated community development. The Bridge Malawi Project has demonstrated that community development activities that use systems and tools that promote transparency and accountability encourage community members to become active participants in these activities. In relation to the Bridge CLCs, such systems include:

- ① having a democratically developed constitution for the CLC;
- ② having a data collection and reporting system in place, such as attendance registers and time-on-task forms (At Naphini CLC, each of the teachers and other staff is supposed to fill in a time card on their arrival at the centre each day); and
- ③ holding regular public events and open days where members of the community and the general public are given an opportunity to observe, see, watch and interact with what goes on at the CLC.

Community leadership and motivation

The experience of the Bridge Malawi Project has taught that where there are weak (or no) traditional leadership structures or where there is no motivated leadership to support the CLCs, helping the communities to set up governance structures is key to ensuring attainment of the programme/project goals, aims and objectives.

Involvement of young and old volunteers - leveraging the demographic dividend

The CLCs enlist both young and old people to provide their time and services as volunteers. The volunteers do not receive salaries. In some cases they receive an honorarium, while in others they do not receive any allowances. However, in CLCs where volunteers do not receive any honoraria there is high turnover among the young volunteers. This challenge is compounded by mocking remarks that some members of the general public make to the volunteers as expressed by one of the volunteers:

“Zimawagwetsa ulesi zonena zamakolo. Amati amakhala ngati zawo zidayera kale. Anthu osowa zochita.” (“What some parents say demotivates us. They say that we have nothing meaningful to do.”)

The involvement of retired people in the provision of services as members of the management committees on a voluntary non-payment basis is another positive lesson learnt from the Bridge Project. Some of these retired people are former senior public officials. Their knowledge, skills and experience in governance, management and public engagement, as well as their dedication to duty, have provided much-needed support to the operations of the CLCs.

Construction of community public infrastructure

Malawi has a critical shortage of public service facilities, such as class rooms, multipurpose buildings, toilets, safe drinking water sources, desks, etc. Most activities such as classes and meetings are held outside in the open while sitting on bare ground. Procurement and provision of construction services to rural communities is done either through a formal system, i.e. by the government, following set procedures, or by beneficiary communities themselves. Each approach has its own pros and cons. Procurement by communities has the advantages of flexibility, timely implementation and low procurement costs. However, if not properly checked, the quality of the structures can be seriously compromised. Whilst procurement through the government system can guarantee a better quality of services and facilities, the process can be costly in terms of time and the charges involved.

North-South partnership

The Bridge Malawi Project received technical support from young Koreans who worked as volunteers and project managers at community level and at national level. The involvement of these young Koreans has been transformative to the communities they lived in and to the people they worked with, leaving an indelible mark. This is a classic example of how the north-south partnership can be modelled to address Sustainable Development Goal #17: Partnerships for Sustainable Development Goals.

Effective Transformative Strategies for Community Development

The Bridge Malawi Project has demonstrated that it is not enough simply to provide materials and finances to the communities without also capacitating the communities. It is also not enough simply to provide capacity-building training without providing the necessary materials and financial support to allow the communities to use their new capacities. Transformative engagement of the communities entails continuous engagement with the communities, 'living their life', understanding and appreciating their daily needs and challenges and integrating these into the design of the project solutions.

Incentives given to the members of the local communities who become involved in the Project contribute not just to their commitment to CLC work, but also to their family welfare.

**Emails between Naphini CLC and Government
officials showing effects of project activities**

From: Naphini Centre<naphiniclc@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, Aug 2, 2018 at 8:58 AM
Subject: GREETING FROM NAPHINI
To: Hendrix Saka <kajilas***@gmail.com>

Dear Mr. Saka,
I would to greet you this morning, how is Lilongwe.
Here Naphini is fine, may you pass the greeting to Mr. Kuseri.
Thanks for the training we had at Liwonde You equiped me and the laptop is doing fine.
This year I sat for MSCE exams and I wrote computer studies with the knowledge you
shared to me.

Thanks,

Regards,

Felix Khozomba (programs manager).

On Sat, Aug 4, 2018 at 8:57 PM,
cosawas***@yahoo.com<cosawas***@yahoo.com> wrote:
Colleagues,

This is wonderful! Wow! It looked like capacity building for the CLC but the benefits are
also spreading to individuals and their households. This is community empowerment
and it is very encouraging. If it were possible to conduct a refresher course or training
them on a new area they could be encouraged further. A visit to the CLC would also
encourage the members.

Human rights approach to non-formal education delivery

“Every soul is precious. Every human being is special”. This is what parents of children born with disabilities said at the end of this phase of the Bridge Malawi Project. The Project has benefited a lot of children with disabilities in Bangwe, the community around the Namiyango CLC. Children with disabilities are no longer locked inside their houses when their parents need to go out, as was the case before. Instead, they are able to interact with their peers and can express themselves. They are also able to acquire new skills.

Library services and Information and Communication Technologies

The Bridge Malawi Project has demonstrated that libraries and ICT facilities, if made available to community members accompanied by appropriate training and support, can transform communities and individuals. A library at Naphini CLC, which has been receiving support from the National Library Service in terms of book donations and training, has had a very positive impact on the community. Children in the area have developed a reading culture. One of these children, who began as a learner in the after-school class and went on to become one of the youth volunteers, used the library to widen her knowledge and to proceed to tertiary level education.

VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Message and Evaluation from the Executive Secretary of MNCU, Mr. Emmanuel KONDOWE



The Malawi National Commission for UNESCO (MNCU) expresses its profound compliments to the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (KNCU) for the fruitful partnership and cooperation that has existed between the two National Commissions under the Bridge Malawi Project from 2010 to 2018 under the South Korea - Bridge Africa Programme.

The Project has benefited the communities in a number of ways including, among others: construction of school blocks; construction of a Skills Training Kitchen and Dining room (Cafeteria) at Mwera Community Learning Centre; provision of learning materials; capacity building training of community leaders, management committee members and teachers; and support to the running of the community learning centres. The Programme has also supported the setting up of an inter-ministerial policy body, the Bridge National Committee, which has been instrumental in mobilising line ministries and institutions in providing policy direction for the project.

In February, 2016, Malawi was privileged to host the Bridge Africa Conference, which brought together colleagues from Southern Africa National Commissions for UNESCO where the South Korea - Bridge Africa Programme was operational, namely Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Eswatini (Swaziland), Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The conference was seen as a launch pad for the promotion of South-South cooperation to facilitate an increase of the practiced as incremental learning effects for all participants and stakeholders of the programme.

The Bridge Malawi Project approach is, in my opinion, a very innovative approach to the development of non-formal education at community level because of a number of reasons, but the most important of all is its "whole education development approach" for communities involving key public service institutions in the planning, management and monitoring of activities.

It is a **best practice example and a promising strategy for attaining Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 4 and other related SDGs.** The project has increased the level of engagement of community members and their leaders at community level. I appreciate the work of the volunteers and Project Managers that were sent from Korea to Malawi. Young Koreans worked and lived with communities in the villages of Malawi, enduring the hardships of the village settings. They have left an indelible mark on the minds of the people of Malawi that Koreans are of high

integrity, hardworking, friendly and very understanding people.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Malawi I would like to thank the Korean Government, the Ministry of Education in Korea, the Korean National Commission for UNESCO and the people of South Korea for the support provided to Malawi.

Message and Evaluation from the Secretary-General of KNCU, Mr. Kwangho KIM



Education is one of the key elements for the development of a country. In this regard, the Bridge Malawi Project has particular importance, as it is designed to give access to education to educationally marginalized people in remote areas of Malawi.

I would like to acknowledge the Malawi National Commission for UNESCO (MNCU)'s achievement in completing the first phase of the Bridge Malawi Project in such a successful way.

I must express my appreciation for MNCU's professionalism in conducting the project. The efforts made by the Executive Secretary, Mr. Emmanuel Kondowe, and all the members of MNCU in this joint project are commendable.

The Bridge Malawi Project is notable for its modality of implementation to date. The Project has been based on the cooperation between National Commissions for UNESCO (NatComs). This mechanism of cooperation between NatComs is very much in line with the fundamental purpose and functions of the National Commissions for UNESCO stipulated in the Charter. ("National commissions collaborate with each other ... in fostering regional, subregional and bilateral cooperation in education, the sciences, culture and information, particularly through the joint formulation and execution of programmes." - Article I, Paragraph 4, Charter of National Commissions for UNESCO)

As clearly recognized in the UNESCO Constitution, NatComs are principal partners for the coordination, consultation, implementation and evaluation of UNESCO programmes in Member States. NatComs play a bridging role between government and civil society, as partners of UNESCO in implementation of UNESCO's ideals and programmes in Member States. For these reasons, I am particularly happy to see the successful completion of this joint project between our two NatComs.

As the MOU between our two National Commissions for UNESCO comes to an end, MNCU will from now on take over full responsibility for the project. At this crucial time in the life of the project, I am profoundly grateful to note that the project's stakeholders in Malawi, including the relevant

government authorities and the local communities, have worked hard to develop and implement sustainable measures to ensure the future of the Bridge CLCs.

While this phase of the Bridge Malawi Project has ended, I sincerely hope that the friendship forged between our two National Commissions for UNESCO through the project will continue to go from strength to strength.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude once again for all the support that has been rendered to the Bridge Malawi Project by all its stakeholders.

Thank you and my very best wishes for the future. Zikomo Kwambiri.

1. List of the Bridge Project Volunteers and Managers

Name	Position	Work Period
Mr. Seung-ryong LEE	Volunteer	October 2010 ~ September 2012
Ms. Kyoung-lee PARK	Volunteer	October 2010 ~ December 2011
Ms. You-joung KIM	Volunteer	October 2010 ~ October 2012
	Project Coordinator	May 2013 ~ December 2013
	Project Manager	March 2014 ~ September 2014
Ms. Yousun KIM	Volunteer	February 2012 ~ October 2012
Ms. Shinye MIN	Volunteer	August 2013 ~ December 2013
Mr. Ho Kyung KIM	Volunteer	August 2013 ~ December 2013
Ms. Jiae HAN (Hana)	Volunteer	August 2013 ~ January 2016
Ms. Bobae LEE	Project Manager	May 2015 ~ May 2016
Ms. Eunha KIM	Project Manager	March 2016 ~ March 2017
Ms. Yeahyoung JEON	Project Manager	March 2017 ~ October 2018

2. Interviews



Bridge Project Volunteer: Ms. Jiae HAN

Q. Tell me about yourself

A. Hello, I am Hana (aka Jiae), I am 28, and I worked in Malawi for nearly two and a half years, from August 2013, as a volunteer for the Bridge Africa Programme. I was based in Domasi, Zomba, and was responsible for Naphini community learning centre.

Q. How did you get involved with the Bridge Malawi project?

A. I wanted to visit Africa in particular, mainly because I had been exposed to a singular image of Africa through adverts by major NGOs and UN agencies, raising funds for children who suffer from various things, including HIV/AIDS, hunger and poverty in general. I wanted to see with my own eyes what life is like in Africa. Actually, it is a huge continent with 54 official countries, but I was amazed by the culture and spirit that African people share with one another. Anyway, I saw the recruitment post on KNCU's website and I thought this was my opportunity to fulfill my curiosity and passion. Hence, I applied for the volunteer position and luckily I got it.

Q. What do you remember most about your experience in managing the Bridge Malawi Project?

A. Obviously, it is the people I worked with in my community, especially the village headmen and headwomen of our community. We used to meet every week, at least once a week. It was like a long and possibly boring process where you may not see what would happen until you keep doing it. We did this over two and a half years, and it took more than six months for us to get used to having a regular meeting. I loved working with them because they are the people who will continue to develop their community. I am not only talking about our community learning centre but all sorts of activities and programmes that people in the community need. They are responsible for the people and at the same time, they are part of this community. For me, to see the community leaders, including the chief and teachers, changing over the course of time was the most beautiful thing.

Q. Please share one successful achievement of the Bridge Malawi Project

A. Expanding on my answer to the previous question, again, what makes me so proud is that now we are ready to hand over our programme to the local people because they are now capable of managing and mobilizing people on their own terms and rules, rather than relying on donors or partner organizations to do something for them. Yet, I still think that there are lots of things to be done as education and development projects require constant monitoring and reflection. However, they have been inspiring other communities and improving themselves in order to be who they are and what they are now. More importantly, I believe Naphini community learning centre and its representatives - the chief, teachers and administrators - show the possibilities of community learning and its wide impact on people.

Q. Comments for MNCU and the Malawi community

A. Mulibwanji? Ndakusowani nonse. Ndatogoza kwambiri for your support and love. I believe we have all witnessed the possibilities and the power of individual people who support and bring out the best in each other. It is not necessarily a dramatic change but the process of people transforming themselves to be better people as individuals but also to be productive members of the society they live in. Education does not need to take place in schools; organizations like MNCU should encourage everyone in society to find meaning in their life by giving them an opportunity to discover such meaning. I am so happy to be able to see this process of transformation as well as being part of this moment. I wish all the best to all community learning centres in Malawi and hope to see you all soon.

Q. Comments and suggestions for KNCU

A. Thank you for bringing all these changes to this community. We all appreciate KNCU, and personally I am deeply grateful to KNCU for your trust and cooperation throughout the projects we have done together. Please continue your work and all the best.



Bridge Project Manager: Ms. Yeahyoung JEON

Q. Tell me about yourself

A. I am Yeahyoung, and I have been working as the project manager for the Bridge Malawi Project since 2017.

Q. How did you get involved with the Bridge Malawi Project?

A. I have always been interested in making the world a better place and I believed that I can contribute to making those positive changes through international development. After studying social policy and development, I aspired to work for social inclusion, particularly in the development context. I was very interested in the job posting for Bridge project manager as the Bridge Africa Programme aims to provide non-formal education for educationally marginalized people through community learning centres. I believe that education is a very strong tool for social inclusion by providing not only education itself but also a base for self-reliance. I was also attracted by the opportunity to work in cooperation with a partner National Commission for UNESCO. I was happy that I was able to join the Project.

Q. What do you remember most about your experience working with other national commissions for UNESCO in Africa in managing the Bridge Malawi Project?

A. Though I'm still working for the Project, the most memorable experience for me during the management of the Project was the third Bridge Writing Festival that was held in 2017 with the theme of microhistory. The participants wrote about their personal history or that of their village. At the award ceremony, selected writings were presented by the writers in front of other people. Though many stories were so sad, as they were about the writers, mostly children and women, being abandoned by their parents or their husbands, it was meaningful to see them writing about their own story for their first time. I was touched that people did not deny or just feel depressed about their situations, but were happy to have an opportunity to express themselves. I was also happy to see that the writers liked the published booklet of their stories.

Q. Please share one successful achievement of the Bridge Malawi Project.

A. I think one of the most successful achievements of the Project is that the CLCs are now recognized as a hub of education in their areas. Through the various activities of the centres, including awareness-raising activities, people in the areas send their children to the centre and the illiterate adults come and join the literacy class as well. Furthermore, people refer other people to the centre. It is very inspiring that the importance of education is increasingly recognized by people and more and more people spend time at the centre to learn something, rather than staying idle.

Q. Comments for MNCU and the Malawi community

A. I would like to thank MNCU and the Malawi community for their warm welcome, cooperation and active participation in the Project. Whenever I met people from the centres, I was really able to feel the warm heart of Africa. When I felt exhausted with paperwork, what kept me encouraged were the people from MNCU and the CLCs whom I work with. I believe their passion for education can sustain the CLCs even after the first phase of the Project ends.

Q. Comments and suggestions for KNCU

A. I am sure that the Project has truly brought changes in the lives of the people who studied in the Bridge CLCs and I am grateful that I could be part of this process through KNCU. I hope KNCU will continue its work to reach more and more marginalized people in the education sector and that KNCU cooperates with implementing partners in a way that enables the partners to work with more ownership.

The report is written by:

Pauline Simwaka

Ministry of Gender, Children, Disabilities and
Social Welfare (Section on ECD)

Alexandar Nkunika

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
(Section on After-school lessons)

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