

SCHOOL AID – Report for the Lions Club on the Malawi Programme

SUMMARY

- School Aid was founded in 1998 and has worked in Malawi since 2012, supporting the literacy skills development of 54,378 Malawian children through the provision of books and partnership activities to encourage a reading culture.
- In 2015 the Lions Club funding supported a shipment to Malawi of 20,000 books for 18,513 school children, which was delivered to schools and libraries in September.
- From 2016 to 2018 School Aid will source and supply over 40,000 books each year to selected Malawian schools, pre-schools and libraries, and will launch Reading Clubs to develop reading skills one-to-one and in groups.
- School Aid welcomes opportunities to work with the Lions Club through fundraising, volunteering, packing days, local schools outreach and youth projects. We can establish contact with the Lions Clubs in Malawi on the ‘Reading Action Program’, initially introduced through help2read in Lilongwe. We are delighted to visit and speak to UK clubs who would like further information and feedback on the Malawi programme.

SCHOOL AID BACKGROUND

Each year School Aid supports the education of over 52,000 African children, improving literacy levels and enabling better teaching. The long-term benefits are better educated people who strengthen their communities and contribute to economic development and stability. School Aid has over the past decade provided in excess of 710,000 books to 350,000 children in 650 disadvantaged African schools. It works in Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, and Lesotho to meet the specific needs of individual schools, support literacy skills development and improve the whole educational environment. In 2011 School Aid launched a new libraries project, and to date it has established six new school libraries, new reading clubs, and trained library staff in South African townships.

School Aid works in the UK with a network of 1,200 organisations and schools nationally, who donate books and materials, run school projects such as ‘Project Pencil’, volunteer time, support transport and shipping, and provide funding. Our UK Schools Outreach programme of talks and events gives British pupils an insight into the challenges that face so many African children, promoting global citizenship and providing a practical way to help reduce poverty and improve the lives of their African peers.

MALAWI PROGRAMME – Building the Foundations of Literacy

“These will have a big impact on opportunities to read – books are so rare”

-- Feedback from Malawian partner upon delivery of books, 30th September 2015

Malawi’s low education standards prevent the next generation from finding work and contributing to growth. It currently ranks 155 of 205 in global literacy rates. Schools are overcrowded and under-resourced with class sizes of over 200 children. Teachers with little training have few materials to prepare classes and lack opportunity to develop their own skills. Without books, children who cannot read drop out of school with their illiterate parents powerless to help them. This high rate of illiteracy carries on a cycle of family poverty from generation to generation. Operating in Malawi since 2012, School Aid has already supported 54,378 children and teachers in 68 schools with vital reading materials for literacy skills.

In May 2015, supported by Lions Club funding and working with our partner NGO’s, The Book Bus and Help Malawi, 18 primary and secondary schools, two day care centres and a community library in and around Mangochi on the southern end of Lake Malawi were selected to receive resources for 200 teachers and 18,513 young students. Data was collated onto profile forms for each school and used to inform School Aid about the facilities, pupils and teachers and most importantly to open a dialogue which we then used to establish what type of resources they would like to receive and how they intend to use them. The completed profile forms were collated and sent to School Aid’s UK



warehouse where our team of volunteers carefully picks and packs the educational resources. Books are collected from across England, via our sponsored national delivery service. 21,000 books were sorted, packed and shipped via sea container and arrived in the selected Malawian schools in September.

Feedback and photos will be collected periodically over the next 12 months, with a first evaluation report available early 2016.

We have just received the following email follow up from the September distribution:

“The exercise of delivering library books to various schools is over. It was really an exciting moment that most schools thought it was a dream. This support will go a long way in shaping the future of our communities and the country at large.”

“Let me also take this opportunity to thank you more sincerely. We do not take it for granted that we got books from overseas. It took passion, hard work, dedication, generosity and love that you organised all that. Thank you!

-- Lemani Ngaiyaye, National Program Manager, H.E.L.P.

From the detailed evaluation report of the School Aid project in Malawi in 2012, children say that the School Aid materials give them access to books for the first time in their lives, to take home as well as to read in school, and to research and revise. Teachers say they use School Aid books ‘very frequently’; for preparing lessons, classroom reading and teaching. Teachers and students both said that they read more and therefore that overall literacy levels and usage of English is greatly improved.

“There were inadequate resources earlier on but the arrival of the books at this school has made the learners improve in literacy.” – Headteacher near Dedza, 2014

“Those who dropped out of school are now back because they see the books we borrow from the library” – Student near Dedza, 2014

MALAWI SCHOOLS PROGRAMME 2016 – 2018

From 2016 to 2018, School Aid is committed to building our programme to further support child literacy skills development in Malawi. It will work with schools to improve literacy through the provision of books, support of library infrastructure and training. School Aid has also established partnerships with local NGOs who help to implement reading support and teaching in the schools.

Each year School Aid will supply approximately 40,000 books and other educational resources to schools, which will be accessed by over 24,000 Malawian children and 300 teachers through new library areas or conversions. Books will be used by students to build reading skills, learn English, and for school work across the curriculum. Books will also be borrowed from school libraries to read at home which benefits parents, brothers and sisters. At a **cost of approximately £1.95 per child** these books will provide long-lasting support for literacy skills in school and in families.

In line with our strategy to further the effective use of educational resources in the development of the school environment and to support learning goals, in 2016 we will

appoint a part-time School Aid Representative and Literacy Coordinator in Malawi. The Coordinator will amongst other duties pilot a Reading Club project in 10 primary schools in Malawi. The clubs will offer both group activities and one-to-one support to encourage children's confidence, develop literacy skills, encourage interest in subjects across the curriculum, and support a reading culture for individual children and in the whole school. This will also launch a long term literacy programme in the schools, as volunteers will be recruited and trained to run the clubs.

The annual cost of the Malawi programme is detailed below. This is the total cost for information, however School Aid has already raised funding which **covers 50% of our programme.**

Budget Item	Cost
<i>Collection of resources from UK schools via volunteers, contribution to warehouse cost for two shipments (rent/rates, volunteer support, packing and admin of shipment)</i>	£ 27,452
<i>Container shipments UK to Malawi (handling, security, customs, freight and distribution in Malawi)</i>	£ 12,240
<i>Malawian Literacy Coordinator- Reading Clubs and evaluation (6 month/18 months)</i>	£7,200
TOTAL PROJECT COST	£ 46,892

Thank you very much for considering our proposal. If you have any questions please contact Clare Junak, General Manager, clare.junak@school-aid.org, or Martha Ware, Fundraising Development Manager, martha.ware@school-aid.org.



Building Partnerships with African Schools

School Aid

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