



**Building Futures in Malawi**  
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## **PROJECT REPORT FOR EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT**

**FOR THE PERIOD**  
**JUNE – AUGUST, 2020**

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Person to whom it is to be submitted	Lameck Chirwa, Finance and Administration Officer	
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For the period	June – August 2020	Monthly

### **Introduction**

Building Futures in Malawi (BFM) remains closed to the public, however, work is still done from home. With our UK counterparts, we have been and continue to be meeting every fortnight on Zoom platform. In few instances, such as CPD for Mkanthama School teachers, and consultations with educational officials, physical meetings could be made.

### **Online webinar attendance**

Since schools in most countries are temporarily closed due to COVID-19 pandemic, most international NGOs in education sector hold interactive online discussions to establish programmes that would fit in the current situation in order for learning to continue. Such organizations include Global Partnership for Education, Education Cannot Wait, Global Education Monitoring, Child Alliance and Sharda University. These NGOs unanimously agreed that investing in remote learning is paramount to avoiding learning loss. This is why Global Partnership for Education released funds to support high risk countries and Malawi received a sum of at least \$15m. In response, the government launched remote learning through use of televisions, radios and education ministry's website. However, the system lacked effectiveness as access to the sources is largely limited.

BFM attendance to webinars helped the education department to explore projects which would help to compensate learning loss. The department was working on effective strategies for Interactive Radio Instructions and the use of print materials by students. Due to technological challenges faced by our key local stakeholders, we could not hold our departmental webinar to discuss approaches which we find helpful to the current situation.

### **BFM management Zoom meetings**

BFM management is made up of Malawi project/department officers and UK project advisors (also trustees in the UK). Every fortnight, the team met and continues to meet on Tuesdays from 11:00 hours on Zoom to discuss the current situation and how the project officers are to respond. One of the meetings has led to the proposed survey next month on remote learning strategies.

### **School reopening**

In May 2020, the Ministry of Education set 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 as the schools reopening day. BFM participated in the consultation process by government. After change of government from DPP led to the current Tonse Alliance

administration, the date has been changed to 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020 with examination classes and 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020 for other classes. As such, BFM education department consulted different government educational officials such as Ministry of Education officials at Capital Hill to understand the process that is put in place for safe return of schools. Though reopening of schools is positive and something that was long being awaited by Independent Schools Association, we observed that schools were not fully equipped to comply with guidelines set by government.

Realizing that safe return of schools is paramount, our NGO through education department thought of establishing Hygiene Education when schools return. And we moved to prioritize handwashing items in our minor grant provision to schools. Traditionally, we provide standard textbooks as minor grants to schools we work with.

### **Mkanthama School teachers' CPD**

BFM runs a school called Mkanthama in a remote village of Chiwamba in Lilongwe. With schools returning, the department of education organized a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training from 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2020. The training was organized to prepare teachers for the new teaching environment as directed by the government in its schools reopening guideline manual. Teachers were also reminded on general teaching methods and effective planning.

### **Conclusion**

BFM office is still closed to the public until 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020. In past three months, we have continued working from home except when conducting CPD training and consulting officials. Projects are resuming when schools return on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020, especially on helping schools to provide a safe environment for teachers and students. Find more on our website: [www.buildingfuturesinmalawi.org](http://www.buildingfuturesinmalawi.org).