



MALAWI LEADERS OF LEARNING

IMPROVING EDUCATION IN GLASGOW AND MALAWI

Summary report on February 2023 visit

Team: Maureen McKenna, Marie Breckenridge, Stephen Sweeney, Amanda Sergeant and Jade Foster

Travel arrangements:

Flights were booked from Glasgow to Blantyre via Heathrow and Addis Ababa using Ethiopian Airways. Budget Air was the on-line agent through Skyscanner. The transit time at Heathrow was too short and a delay in the BA flight to Heathrow meant a sprint from Terminal 5 to Terminal 2 – we were the last passengers on board and the luggage didn't make it.

Addis Ababa airport is much improved and is similar to other major airports with food courts and good quality toilets.

There are regular flights from London to Addis and from Addis to Blantyre which meant that the luggage arrived on Sunday. This is notably better than any previous experience via J'burg.

Activities:

Similar to September, all the printing was carried out by Omega Publishing in Blantyre. Francis collected and it was ready for us in Kabula. The papers left by the September team were all delivered and provided a good starter.

On Sunday morning, we all went to Stella Maris to celebrate mass with the girls and the nuns. As always, it was an amazing experience and a wonderful introduction to Malawi for Mandie and Jade who had never been to Malawi before.

The rest of Sunday was spent sorting the resources and getting the flip charts ready for the training as well as a short meeting with the District Education Managers to finalise arrangements.

The MLOL bus and the car are both working well.

Water and biscuits were provided for the training sessions. This time we provided a clear explanation about healthy eating in Scotland and no fizzy juice being allowed, hence the water. There continued to be some complaints in the evaluations but fewer than in September. It has been suggested that we provide apples for the snack in future. Francis has a contact to buy these in bulk.

A total of 157 senior leaders attended the training across five days at Chigumakire TDC, Nankumba TDC, Kachanga and Limbe TDC.

A total of 195 teachers/librarians attended the training across four days at Chigumakire TDC, Nankumba TDC and Ndirande TDC.

The evaluations were overall very positive. Senior leaders and teachers enjoyed the training and wanted more. They enjoyed the interactive format of the learning.

Some teachers advised that they had attended the training in September. In future it should be made clearer that the training is designed to be delivered to different groups of teachers.

The detailed evaluations for each day are very helpful and should be used to inform next steps.

Evaluations

Leadership training	Monday - Friday
The objectives of the training were clear, shared at the beginning and throughout	85% strongly agreed 15% agreed
I learnt from working with others	83% strongly agreed 17% agreed
The areas explored in the sessions were relevant to my job	92% strongly agreed 8% agreed
The content covered in the sessions will be useful for my job	87% strongly agreed 13% agreed
I understood the materials and think they will help me	67% strongly agreed 32% agreed 1% disagreed
The objectives of the training were met	77% strongly agreed 23% agreed

Similar to September 2022, the lowest scoring evaluation was linked to the materials. We purposefully did not provide participants with handouts except for the four MNES which were being used. It may be that the participants were expecting a range of handouts to be provided and this resulted in the low score.

Participants also wanted more training which was similar to September 2022.

The role play was enjoyed and everyone participated enthusiastically. It is recommended that this is included in future training.

There was a difference noted between the knowledge and experience of the headteachers in the Urban district and those in Rural, although, as expected, there were exceptions to this. It is likely that this is because schools in the Rural district are smaller and more isolated. A number of them reported that they were understaffed and, therefore, had to take classes themselves leaving them little or no time for administrative duties.

Some examples of the strengths and areas for improvement identified

Strengths

•Quality of facilitation •Active participation •learnt how to communicate with teachers to change for the better

Good collaboration amongst participants• Methods were wonderful• We learnt about the standards

There was good participation and excellent sharing of experiences• We enjoyed and got knowledge from participants• We shared ideas as headteachers

Areas for Improvement

I wish this training could be every term• I wish you could use real examples from schools• I wish you could assist with school problems

Next time they should involve section heads• Have more training in other areas like method of teaching

Teacher training	Monday - Friday
The objectives of the training were clear, shared at the beginning and throughout	88% strongly agreed 12% agreed
I learnt from working with others	81% strongly agreed 19% agreed
The areas explored in the sessions were relevant to my job	79% strongly agreed 21% agreed
The content covered in the sessions will be useful for my job	85% strongly agreed 15% agreed
I understood the materials and think they will help me	72% strongly agreed 28% agreed
The objectives of the training were met	84% strongly agreed 16% agreed

As with the evaluation of the leadership training, the lowest scoring was the materials. However, a number of leaflets and handouts were provided for participants. It wasn't clear, therefore, why this should be the lowest score.

Both the teachers and senior leaders commented that they wanted more training and wanted the sessions to be longer. However, the facilitators all felt that the format of around 3 hours with a short break was an ideal length of time. It allowed for active participation and a range of activities to be carried out. Keeping to this meant that there was a brisk pace. It also allowed more time for teachers/senior leaders to travel back to their school/home. In addition, it allowed time for the facilitators to prepare for the next day's training and given that training was delivered every day in different venues this time was essential.

Some examples of the strengths and areas for improvement identified

Strengths

The variation of teaching methods was good • I have learnt how to invite learners into the library • The resources used simplified the teaching concepts • Learning methods to motivate learners • The session was interactive •

I learned how to use the Good Lesson cycle when planning • I gained lots of tips on how to have learners use a library • I have learnt to connect learning in different ways • The facilitators had a deep knowledge of learning and teaching •

• Learning to teach through role play • I liked two stars and a wish and I will use it with my learners

Areas for Improvement

More time/days for training • To see a Malawian teacher use the strategies • I would like to visit a school to see Reading Leaders in action • I wish the training could happen frequently

It would be better to have a few sessions through the year to remind teachers • I wish the training could happen frequently • I wish you could visit my school to teach us more and organise the library

Filming

Throughout the week, we took the opportunity to film short sequences of the training and other examples of learning and teaching through visits to schools in the afternoon.

These will be uploaded to a YouTube site for sharing and watching through a smart phone.

Next steps

We will review the training on offer and change the approach. The following is suggested:

For headteachers/senior leaders

- Retain MNES on learning and teaching but explore the possibility of watching a teacher take a lesson – suggest that we have a volunteer PEA or headteacher be the teacher and the role play could be with the rest of the senior leaders being the class or could we watch a class in the primary school that is part of the TDC?
- Consider what other MNES could be considered, perhaps, linked to self-evaluation?
- Include work on the Good Lesson and Reading Leaders drawing from the current material used for teachers
- Ensure that role play plays a key part in the training
- There would be options developed which could be used depending on the experience of the group of senior leaders.

For teachers

- Ensure that it is different group of teachers coming in September and February to extend the reach. Remove 'librarian' as this may have caused the confusion.
- Do more work on Reading Leaders, 'think, pair, share' and the Good Lesson, how to organise books, introduce books to children
- Using books to develop children's learning – how could you use this book to develop into a lesson?
- Increased focus on active learning, strategies they can deploy in their classrooms, organising a library and the range of kind of books that are good and those that are not good for learners (dense text, inappropriate content – these books could be placed in the staffroom for teachers to read)
- Role play and active learning approaches must play a key role in the training
- There would be options developed which could be used depending on the experience of the group of teachers

Maureen McKenna

February 2023