

VISIT TO LIKHUBULA - 29TH JUNE – 8TH JULY 2016

Fiona Anderson
Ian Brown
George Bond

Thursday 30th June

**Visit to Nansato Primary School (Headmaster Mr Alfred Chalela since 2013
1,074 pupils, 20+ teachers)**

**Visit to Pasani Primary School (Headmaster Mr Khemson Nyalapa, 1600 +
pupils, 20+ teachers)**

Mr Nyalapa formally welcomed the Dunblane Visitors and thanked them for the support in completing the refurbishment of 10 classrooms. He expressed his desire for future support highlighting issues such as refurbishment of the Headmasters office, houses for teachers and new desks.

Meeting with Likhubula Steering Committee (LSC)

Present:

Fiona Anderson
Ian Brown
George Bond
Akimu Maula - Communciations Officer
Pritchard Safari – Chairman
Ruth Simbota – Vice Chair
Stella Nganga
Obvious Malichi
Lewis Seyani – Treasurer
Jess Lauli – Mangombo (TBC)
Moses Jali – Mangombo
Mercy Chisola - Chilanga

The LSC welcomed the Dunblane representatives and expressed the view that they valued the Partnership with Dunblane very much and looked for it to continue and grow stronger. The Dunblane Representatives presented the heartfelt greetings from the Dunblane Steering Committee and looked forward to a very valuable and fruitful visit.

The Dunblane Representatives asked the LSC to give their views on what had gone well and what not so well over recent years, and what their wishes and aspirations were for the future.

The LSC provided the following opinions on past and current projects/topics -

Projects/topics that had gone well:

Education & Bursars
Toilets
Water Supply
Food Aid
Fertiliser
Communications

Projects/topics that had not gone well:

Housing
Goats
Sewing School
Mvano Communications
Exchange Visits

The LSC gave their views on why some projects had not been successful:

Housing – The LSC felt they had not been sufficiently involved with the project, had not been asked to monitor progress, were not included in all communications with the builder (Phillip Ngoliwa) and payments to him had been made ‘up-front’ and not in stages as the project progressed.

- The LSC agreed that it was a valuable project which they fully supported and claimed that they (and the Chiefs) were fully behind the work – they stated they had provided everything required (bricks and sand), had not been responsible for any missing materials and that problems were solely down to the builder’s absence.

-The LSC stated that they had no confidence in the builder and were not in favour of asking Phillip Ngoliwa to continue. They offered to obtain quotes from local builders to complete the work.

- The Dunblane Reps advised that it was their intention to ensure all six houses were completed at the earliest opportunity. They would meet with Phillip Ngoliwa on 4th July after which they would discuss the best way-ahead with the LSC.

Goats – The LSC stated that conditions were not favourable for the hybrid variety of goats that had been recommended by Mulanje Mission Hospital – these required the right diet, more care and medication. They expressed the view that local goats allowed to roam freely would have been a better choice.

Sewing School - The LSC stated that the community had been willing to support this project but the sewing machine provided was old and unreliable, there were no spares and being electric it was susceptible to power cuts.

Mvano – The LSC described the background to recent events with Mvano. With the change of key committee members it provided the opportunity to re-

establish relationships with the Dunblane Women's Guild. They noted that a meeting with Mvano was scheduled for later during the visit when a gift from Dunblane would be handed over directly to Mvano.

Exchange Visits - Whilst very much welcoming this visit from Dunblane the LSC expressed their strong view that for a true Partnership there should be reciprocal visits to Scotland noting that the last such visit was in 2005. They believed that such visits would strengthen the Partnership and develop their education and knowledge. They maintained that the problems experienced after the last visit from Likhubula in 2005 would not occur again in part because of the wider involvement of other denominations and not just the CCAP.

- The Dunblane Representatives noted this request from the LSC and undertook to present this to the Dunblane Steering committee for comment and decision about a future visit from Likhubula

The LSC described the following wishes for future assistance:

Food Aid – The LSC stated that the provision of the emergency food after the recent floods was very welcome and they would always like to receive more food. The Dunblane Representatives explained that this would only be done in extreme circumstances as it was important that future projects and support were 'sustainable'.

Fertiliser – The LSC expressed their deep appreciation for the recent fertilizer allocation and stated that the supply arrangements with Agora in Chitakale had worked very well with Village Chiefs selecting which families should receive the fertilizer. They explained that the fertilizer allowed families not only to have more food to eat but also some to sell. They asked if a further supply of fertiliser could be provided this year.

Tertiary Education – The LSC endorsed the support given to Gift and Christina and welcomed the possibility of tertiary education and training opportunities for deserving Bursars in the future. They understood that such commitment could not be open-ended and was dependent on available funding.

Chickens – The LSC proposed that a number of chickens could be purchased (approximately 2000-2500 Kwachas each) for distribution to needy families who could breed these to provide food and to sell.

Friday 1st July

Visit to the Housing Project

The Dunblane Representatives visited each of the six houses under construction and met the occupants. (Photographs of each house to be forwarded separately.)

In summary:

- none of the houses has been completed
- all had walls and roofs in place
- only one room in one house had a concreted floor – the others were mostly bare earth with varying amounts of rubble to be cleared
- no doors, windows or glass fitted to any houses
- three houses had some of the outside or inside walls rendered

Despite the unfinished condition of the houses all the occupants were grateful for what had been done so far.

During the visit some 6 Hybrid Goats were seen in 2 kraals. (Another addition – to be named Kilby – was born the day after our visit)

Visit to Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust (MMCT)

The Dunblane representatives visited Mr Laston Mbemba, Finance, Administration and Procurement Officer of the MMCT. He acts as a signatory on cheques for the LSC and confirmed he is happy to continue to do so though was keen to operate a voucher system meaning that he had some better information about the purpose of the cheques he was being asked to sign. He undertook to discuss this further with the LSC. He also wanted to convey (unprompted) his support of the Likhubula committee as an effective, hard working and trustworthy committee.

Saturday 2nd July

Lunch with the Bursars and Likhubula Steering Committee

A buffet lunch was arranged at Likhubula House with all 15 Bursars (plus two ex-bursars), the Boys Brigade, Likhubula Steering Committee, Mr Nyambalo and Gift. (Christina arrived later)

This was a good opportunity to meet and talk to the Bursars - they and the Boys Brigade also talked 'one-to-one' to learn a little more about each other (see Annex D). All the Bursars expressed their gratitude, seemed keen and enthusiastic and recognized the value of education.

A number of speeches were made by the Dunblane Representatives, the LSC, Mr Nyambalo and a Bursars representative thanking Dunblane for the support provided and encouraging the bursars to work hard at school. Mr Nyambalo expressed a wish to enhance the bursars outfits with provision of a rain cape and a solar lamp to help them to do work at night. The extra food provided to Bursars in Jan/Feb was also most welcome.

Meeting with Gift and Christina

After the Bursars Lunch the opportunity was taken to talk with Gift and Christina about their further education courses.

Gift came across as keen, earnest and clearly enjoying his accountancy training. He was due to finish his training in December 2017 after which he wanted to find a job in accountancy, preferably in the Mulanje area. There is a possibility he can extend his training after a year towards a higher level of certification. This would be completed while working.

Christina appeared to be doing well in her teacher training but she said that she didn't enjoy it and clearly regretted not being able to do nursing. She was due to complete her training in July 2017 after which she expected to be appointed to a school for (five) years before getting free choice of what school to apply to work in.

Sunday 3rd July

Meeting with Village Chiefs

All six village chiefs (or their representatives), the Dunblane Representatives, Akimu and Safari met to discuss the Chiefs views on projects undertaken to date and their wishes for the future:

Fertiliser. Provision of fertilizer (NPK and Urea) had been very successful. Chief Nakhonyo had split their allocation into two to help more needy families. They stated that provision of fertiliser in Aug/Sept was the best time.

Food Aid. The Chiefs thanked Dunblane for the food aid to help the vulnerable. Maize flour, soya flour, beans and cooking oil were priorities and the Chiefs expressed a desire for more Food Aid this year if at all possible.

Bursars. The Chiefs expressed their thanks for the educational support provided by Dunblane. They were keen for Dunblane to expand the Bursar programme and to embrace other schools in the area.

Toilets. The Chiefs acknowledged the success of the new Toilet blocks at Nansato primary school. They also agreed to ensure that maintenance (replacement) of missing water taps and essential repairs to leaking water pipes was undertaken by the community.

Housing. The Chiefs stated that this project was very welcome and would be of great benefit to the planned beneficiaries. They had met with Phillip Ngoliwa and agreed the specification for each house but were disappointed that he had not completed the agreed works. They stated that they had undertaken all that was required of them and that the deficiencies were solely down to the builder. They appreciated the commitment of the Dunblane Representatives to ensure

completion of all houses as soon as possible and would be happy to work with local builders to help achieve this.

Likhubula Medical Facility. The Chiefs expressed a wish to construct a medical facility in Likhubula to be staffed by a nurse/medical practitioner from the District Hospital. They explained that Likhubula was served by a mobile clinic only on a Friday (operated by a Charity) or by a private medical clinic which was too expensive for people to use. Otherwise people had to walk 9km to the Chambe Health Facility for treatment. They stated that the District Hospital had agreed to provide a nurse/medical practitioner on a permanent basis if the community could provide a medical facility.

- The Chiefs stated that such a facility would cost an estimated £1.5M Kwachas and that the community would be willing to make a “25% contribution” with provision of bricks and river sand.

- The Dunblane Representatives noted this request and emphasised the need to have a very clear guarantee in writing from the District Hospital that the medical support would definitely be available if such a facility was constructed.

- It was agreed that everyone would consider this proposal further

Tailoring Training. The Chiefs suggested that training as tailors could be given to school leavers to equip them with a skill for the future. They would need to obtain manual sewing machines and identify a suitable place, trainer and materials. It was agreed that the Chiefs would develop this proposal further and advise Dunblane in due course.

Water Supply. The Chief of Nakhonyo village stated that a mains water pipe passed very close to her village and that she would like to build a link from this to her village to provide a water supply. The Dunblane Representatives suggested that a cost estimate with detailed plan (including formal approval from the local Water Authority) would be necessary to allow further consideration of this proposal.

Monday 4th July

Meeting with Phillip Ngoliwa

The Dunblane Representatives travelled to Blantyre to meet Phillip Ngoliwa because his car had broken down and he was unable to come to Likhubula as originally agreed.

Phillip explained the background to his earlier efforts to complete the houses including the difficulties in getting support from the Likhubula community and problems with the local builders. He accepted that work was required on all the houses but maintained that he would be able to complete these by 6th August. However on questioning about remaining funds (approx. 200,000 Kwachas) it was unclear how he would be able to obtain sufficient material required for completion.

Phillip acknowledged that he still had the £750 provided separately by Iain Smith and agreed that he would deal with Iain directly about return of this money to him.

The Dunblane Representatives asked that Phillip provide an updated expenditure statement as a matter of urgency – Phillip agreed to provide this by the following day 5th July. They also asked that Phillip take no further action in respect of the houses until further discussions had been held with the Dunblane Committee and agreement reached on the way ahead

Note: As of 13th July Phillip has not provided the requested expenditure statement.

Meeting with Ruth Shakespeare, Mulanje Mission Hospital

The Dunblane Representatives explained the Nurse project envisaged by Dunblane High School and sought Ruth's advice on how this could be best implemented for the benefit of the Likhubula population. Ruth advised that Mulanje Mission Hospital provided a visiting nurse service to schools on a weekly/monthly basis. She suggested that this could be extended to include Chambe, Nansato and Pasani schools including an assessment of needs, screening and regular first aid and dental treatment.

Ruth advised that Mulanje Mission Hospital would charge a 10% management fee to provide a nurse service and she offered to prepare a costed proposal for consideration.

Ruth expressed some surprise at the suggestion that Mulanje District Hospital had agreed to provide medical support in Likhubula noting that there were many demands for such support and many examples of such projects that only lasted "three to five" years. She was concerned that the village chiefs were exaggerating the advice they had received but she offered to speak to the District Hospital and check the facts.

The Dunblane Representatives welcomed Ruth's offer to speak to the District Hospital and advised that they would reply separately on the nursing proposal once they had discussed further with their Committee in Dunblane.

Tuesday 5th July

Meeting with Mr Mkina, Headteacher of Chambe High School

Present:

Mr Mkina, Headteacher Chambe High School

Sophie ? - Deputy Headteacher

Pritchard Safari, Likhubula Steering Committee

Dunblane Representatives

The Dunblane Representatives asked Mr Mkina about the background to their decision to break links with Dunblane High School. Mr Mkina stated (quite forcefully) that it was simply because Chambe had had no replies to many emails sent to DHS. He quoted the MOU between the UK and Malawi that encouraged school exchange visits yet nothing had ever been arranged with Dunblane. He added that even information about today's visit had been notified to him by the LSC and not DHS.

The Dunblane Representatives expressed their view that there appeared to be a break-down in communications as they had not received any emails in recent times from Chambe. They expressed a strong wish to maintain and develop the links between the two schools and proposed that new email arrangements be tested quickly and set-up for end August / early Sept when the schools were back after summer holidays.

Mr Mkina accepted that DHS had a strong wish to continue with the links and he agreed to support renewed efforts to re-establish the Partnership between the two schools.

Meeting with Bursars Monitor

Present:

Mr Often Nyambalo

Mr Alfred Chalela, Headteacher Nansato

Mr Foster Phiri, Deputy Head Nansato

Dunblane Representatives

Mr Nyambalo began the meeting by describing the detailed selection criteria used to identify Bursars. In reply to a question from the Dunblane Representatives he emphasized that selection was simply done on the best candidates overall and that no emphasis or bias was given to gender. He explained that in his view girls were not so hard working and less competitive than the boys but he understood the Dunblane Committee's wish to see more girls selected and he agreed that where there were candidates of equal strength then preference would be given to girls to help balance the numbers.

The meeting discussed the possibility raised by Mr Nyambalo of extending the Bursars scheme to select from a wider range of schools within the Likhubula and immediately adjacent areas. Both Mr Nyambalo and Mr Chalela were in favour of considering selection of Bursars from Pasani school and to include Milonga and Mulanje Secondary school as well as Chambe.

(Mr Nyambalo advised that approximately 15-20 pupils were selected to go to Chambe Secondary School each year and 5 to Milonga Secondary. Fees were approximately 5000 Kwachas per term at Chambe and Milonga and 30,000 Kwachas per term at Mulanje Secondary (Boarding) school.)

Mr Nyambalo raised a number of other issues and proposals:

- strong support for the possibility of Tertiary Education for deserving Bursars
- inclusion of Solar Lamps in the Bursars initial outfit at an estimated cost of 16000 Kwachas for a good quality lamp.
- the continued issue of a 50Kg bag of Maize to each Bursar in Jan each year
- the possibility of providing extra tutorial support to Bursars who were struggling in any topic
- the possibility of obtaining a laptop so that he could write-up Bursar reports and email directly to Dunblane.

The Dunblane representatives thanked Mr Nyambalo and Mr Chalela for their comments and proposals and undertook to consider these with the Dunblane Steering group as soon as possible. They also took the opportunity to suggest that Mr Nyambalo should consider appointing a deputy to provide support and a measure of continuity when Mr Nyambalo decided to retire. He acknowledged the value of this advice and undertook to consider the proposal. (Mr Gracious Metuka a teacher at Nansato was suggested as a possible candidate)

Meeting with Mvano

The Dunblane Women's Guild gift of £100 (100,000 Kwachas) was handed over to Mvano who expressed deep appreciation for this donation. This would be used to support vulnerable members of the community including the old, infirm and orphans.

Mvano had recently made a CD and a number of copies were purchased for Dunblane.

Meeting and Dinner with Likhubula Steering Committee

Present:

Akimu Maula

Pritchard Safari

Ruth Simbota

Jessie Lauli

Mercy Chisola

Moses Jali

Lewis Seyani

Stella Nganga

Often Nyambalo

Dunblane Representatives

As a 'thank you' for hosting the visit to Likubula the Dunblane Representatives invited the members of the Likhubula Steering Committee and Mr Nyambalo to dinner at Nancy's Dream Restaurant.

The Dunblane Representatives reviewed the discussions and proposals received during the week with the LSC. In addition

- 162,000 Kwachas were presented to the LSC to purchase school books
- 7 secondhand Blackberry mobile phones were given to the LSC with a request that one be given to Mr Nyambalo for his personal use
- The LSC were asked to obtain updated quotes from local builders to complete the houses. It was emphasized that this was required to help the Dunblane Committee to make a decision about the best way-ahead.
- The LSC were asked to obtain an updated bank statement as soon as possible. They advised that current bank balance stood at 312,000 Kwachas.

As a parting gift the LSC presented a memento of the visit to the Dunblane Representatives and thanked them for visiting Likhubula to meet and talk to everyone.

Conclusions

1. The LSC, Village Chiefs and the Likhubula community were very keen to maintain the links and Partnership with Dunblane.
2. The LSC and Village Chiefs appeared active, involved, enthusiastic and keen to lead and develop projects that strengthened their local community
3. The LSC had a good working relationship with Village Chiefs.
4. The chance to meet people, talk directly about their needs and aspirations and understand the local issues at first hand was invaluable.

Recommendations

1. We should continue to develop the Partnership with Likhubula with renewed efforts to maintain steady and strong links including much more regular visits to Likhubula.
2. New Projects should have the full support of the Likhubula Steering Committee (and the Village Chiefs) and they should have a large responsibility for developing and implementing them
3. Subject to a review of quotes we should arrange for local builders to complete the houses and ask the LSC to monitor completion with staged payments to the builders
4. Mvano and Dunblane Women's Guild should renew their efforts to maintain communication links.

5. An exchange visit from Likhubula to Dunblane should be arranged in 2017 for 3/4 people. The Dunblane Committee should consider their involvement in how visitors would be selected.
6. A supply of Fertiliser sufficient for 150 – 200 families should be made in approx Sept of each year until further notice
7. Tertiary education and vocational training support should be provided to suitable candidates as funds permit
8. Approx 250 chickens (estimated cost £500) should be purchased for distribution to needy families as decided by Village Chiefs.
9. Dunblane should consider further efforts to maintain contact with Bursars on a regular basis
10. Bursars outfits should be reviewed to include waterproof capes, solar lamps and a 50Kg bag of Maize in Jan each year.
11. Additional projects for Training and Water Supply proposed by the Village Chiefs should be considered if and when they develop the proposals for consideration.
12. Ruth Shakespeare should be asked to provide a costed proposal for nursing support at Nansato, Pasani and Chambe schools. If endorsed by Dunblane this should be presented to the headteachers and LSC for agreement.
13. Subject to advice from the District Hospital (via Ruth Shakespeare) that medial support could be provided, Dunblane should consider provision of a medical facility in Likhubula.
14. Email links with Mr Mkina Headteacher of Chambe Secondary school should be tested quickly and renewed efforts made to establish direct links between DHS and Chambe with a view to a possible school exchange visit in the near future.
15. An expanded Bursars scheme should be considered to include suitable Bursars with selection from the Likhubula and immediately adjacent area, and including Milonga, Mulanje and Chikwaza Secondary schools as well as Chambe.
16. Support for Projects at Pasani primary school should be considered as well as Nansato
17. Selection of a 'back-up' for Mr Nyambalo should be monitored over the coming months

Annex A - List of Meetings & Visits

Thursday June 30th

Visit to Nansato & Pasani Primary Schools
Meetings with Likhubula Steering Committee - Nansato

Friday July 1st

Visit to Housing project – Likhubula Villages
Visit to Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust - Mulanje

Saturday July 2nd

Visit to Classrooms for Malawi Project (Painting)
Lunch with Bursars and Likhubula Steering Committee – CCAP House
Meeting with Gift & Christina - Hiker's Rest Restaurant

Sunday July 3rd

Church Service Nansato
Meeting with Village Chiefs – Nansato

Monday July 4th

Meeting with Phillip Ngoliwa, Blantyre
Meeting with Ruth Shakespeare, Mulanje Mission Hospital

Tuesday July 5th

Meeting with Headmaster Chambe Secondary School – Chambe
Meeting with Bursars Monitor - Nansato
Meeting with Mvano – Nansato
Meeting & Dinner with Likhubula Steering Committee, Nancy's Dream
Restaurant

Annex B – Likhubula Steering Committee Members

Name	Role	Village
Pritchard Safari	Chairperson	Mbewa
Ruth Simbota	Vice Chair	Mangombo
Akimu Maula	Communications Officer	Kalilombe
Obvious Malichi	Treasurer	Kalilombe
Martha Mungeni	Committee member	Mangombo
Lewis Seyani	Committee member	Chilanga
Mercy Chisola	Committee member	Chilanga
Stella Nganga	Committee member	Nakhonyo
Jessie Lauli	Committee member	Mangombo
Eline Gulani	Committee member	Nakhonyo
Mary Baluwa	Committee member	Gibson
Moses Jali	Committee member	Mangombo
Edda Katambere	Committee member	Mbewa
Elesi Mphulupulu	Committee member	Mangombo

Annex C – Likhubula Villages – Populations & Households

Village	Population	Number of Households
Chilanga	1200	362
Mangombo	4017	1900
Mbewa	1070	251
Kalilombe	604	220
Gibson	2475	670
Nakhonyo	1510	365
Mulunguzi	522	110

Annex D – Meeting between Form 1 Bursar and Boy’s Brigade member

Bursar never knew his father, his mother died when he was one and he lived with his Grandmother until she died in 2011. Since then he has been living with his step-brother but they don’t get on.

He wants to go to college to learn to become a joiner/carpenter. In the holidays he helps to make chairs to earn some money.

He was friendly, open and keen to communicate. He felt alone at times.

He liked his teachers and enjoyed English but found Maths difficult. He enjoyed sports including football and running.