



Chipunga Development Committee

c/o Mr. Daniel Mthuti
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Malawi

March 13, 2010

Feedback and comments to your report

Dear Daniel
Dear CDC members

Thank you so much for your detailed and comprehensive answer concerning my letter dated January 29. In addition we did receive more reports from Kathi, Ayla, Jona, and a letter from the teachers Patricia and Annie. Everything together gives quite a pretty good picture on your thoughts, ideas, and needs.

Remarks on your coverage about the 2009 activities:

Bicycles: we do understand the private and business consequences of this investment. Deem the relatively high self-contributions have been paid back to your GRACE account in the interim.

Goats scheme: we get the impression you handle the system and the optimizations of the distribution plan very well. Purchasing of new goats is a wise investment to continue the scheme. Good luck for the further development. We wish you a lot of healthy young goats and a transparent way of distribution.

Education at secondary school: at least 3 out of 5 students got their Malawi School Certificate of Education. Presume the 2 who failed get another chance? Hope all undertakings concerning pre-schools and primary school will cause more candidates being worthy to claim for GRACE support. It will take some time.

Health: what is your forecast on the cost increase for 2010/2011? What are the reasons? Please advice.

Chicken project: good to hear about your success. Despite initial difficulties this income generating activity works. However, you have to consider a threatening price decrease in case of over-flooding your local market with chicken – so please check the needs of your market and weight up either to run more chicken groups or better to look for alternative promising activities. Jona proposed to run a guided group with young persons. This might be a good idea to show how business is functioning and to educate business thinking and engagement. Regarding the described monetary gain for GRACE: We don't want to make profit out of this income generating doing. At least the initial outlay should come back to our account. If this is not the case and we „earn money“ we beg CDC to consider the gain share of the project very carefully.

Situation at Chipunga Primary School:

The GRACE teachers raised similar points from your parent-teacher workshop. The conclusion is to get:

- a) more qualified teachers
- b) unqualified volunteers / trainees
- c) further training (presume for less qualified teachers; and techniques to teach the four disabled kids)
- d) things for the school (exercise books, pens, clocks, racks, flip charts, and various others)
- e) a new school block
- f) houses for additional teachers

In the following I will discuss point by point:

a) Annie Bandawe and Patricia Silungwe say three additional teachers are to be sent to Chipunga by government. Could you please verify whether this is an official agreed teacher raise or a personal wish only? And if so will the new teachers come from the EMANUEL college in Lilongwe? As Ayla and the teachers went to Lilongwe to run an advertisement campaign for Chipunga this might be a true option. Please clarify.

b) Some basic thoughts: Has the DEM been involved? Is there an example of another community who did so (what would be the best practice)? How would the key players at Chipunga community contribute? Please advice and explain the intended part of GRACE.



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c) Can you give us proposals on where one can get such trainings (e.g. EMANUEL in Lilongwe), and about the costs? Is there a contribute of the community planned to support this activity? On the long term it would be a goal to replace every unqualified by qualified teachers.

d) Before we can grant any support we need to have an estimate on the quantity of all materials mentioned, and on the cost. It would be helpful if you could provide us with a listing sorted by importance (please start with the cost and quantity of the most important item and continue till the last important item). Presuming the total cost is high one can easily focus on the most important materials. According to the GRACE policy usually a self-contribution is needed. We would be happy to receive your proposal on that.

e) You mentioned the VDC has changed and the new people might be better in doing something. Well, you and we know the failure of the recent experience. The community and CDC know the contact at the German embassy and therefore one can apply for another chance. GRACE can mediate if anticipated. As the idea failed miserably the first time the embassy might not be willing to think about the project again. If you want to continue it needs quite more efforts than a written promise only. E.g. the community could renovate the current school blocks themselves and ahead of any inquiry for financial support. Otherwise it would become totally implausible to explain the need.

f) As seen in our initial example it is important to have accommodation ready to attract the excellent educated teachers. On the other hand one must see improvement of school attendance and basic education first until we start thinking about more houses for teachers. So this point goes together with point a) and will be of value to discuss if new EMANUEL teachers will come to Chipunga. Please keep us in the loop of information.

May we ask CDC to check the wall painting in the teacher houses. We would be glad if the community or VDC could take over the responsibility to repair or repaint. Colour can be bought through the GRACE account, but a self-contribution (which means the paint work) from the community and/or VDC is expected.

Remarks on your anticipated 2010 projects (besides usual health and secondary education):

Health: The support of HIV/AIDS activities and workshops is granted (according to Kathi this is mainly cost for transportation and food for workshops; testing is through a local NGO) Please correct me if I am wrong.

Education: What is behind the mentioned support of the pre-schools (I know about sugar for tea only)?

Concerning the plan to back up an university student we are not eager to promote at this point in time. The reason has been discussed repeatedly quite a few times: our focus is on pre-school and elementary school education to get more students to secondary school and to pass their Malawi School Certificate of Education. If this goal has been achieved, CDC can propose candidates for University and/or vocational training.

Livelihood: Dining sets: 25 tables + 120 chairs – what would be the total cost minus 25% self-contribution? Fertilizer: has the price come down again or is it still high? What would be your estimate for the 2 varieties of fertilizer for the 25 worker families?

Jona raised a couple of ideas, which might be discussed by the CDC together with the weltwaerts team:

- Pilot project with honey bees (probably another income generating activity)
- Workshop on how to build an energy-saving oven (idea: to cook effectively with low wood consumption)
- Recovery of the Chipunga youth club and development of job creation scheme
- teaching of English for adults

Due to halving of the workforce at Chipunga Farms the CDC managed budget of 2010 is: MKW 300.000,- (reflecting a 50% cut plus a compensation for the increased cost of living index). Please let us know how does the GRACE account stand up-to-date. Note: If you need more money, e.g. for new projects or any reason, please send to us a brief explanation on: what, why, when, who and of course a cost estimate.

We wish the CDC a wise and circumspect steering and accompanying of the various projects, and a fruitful exchange and co-operation with the young German "weltwaerts team". It is to be anticipated that always a lasting solution is found. Good luck to your new secretary Jameson Msiska as well.

With best regards on behalf of the GRACE Managing Committee,
Jens


Dr. Jens Diedrich
President GRACE charity