



Educate Africa

2017 Post-Trip Report

For his Year 10 work experience, Joe McDermott founded and developed “EducateAfrica.co.uk”, under the umbrella of an existing UK charity, raising funds to build a classroom at the Good Hope Free School in Lilongwe, Malawi. With fantastic generosity from donors, he has raised over £9000, surpassing the original target and creating the opportunity for further support to the school.

Joe (and his Dad, Robbie) visited Malawi 1st – 9th July 17, to witness the construction of the new classroom, meet the children and teachers and identify further development needs. The programme included:

- Living with School Director Brian Mari, to better *understand the challenges ‘on the ground’* in Area 25.
- *Visiting Good Hope, meeting the Headmistress, teachers and support staff* to discuss current and future issues – and attending a fantastic whole-school ceremony to open the n.
- *Delivering First Aid equipment and training* for teachers and senior pupils.
- *Delivering educational supplies* - pens, maths cards, footballs, a projector & a laptop with pre-loaded teaching resources to the school to allow the classroom and other facilities of the school to be used to their full potential.
- Meeting Police Officer Robert Nyala to discuss *child safeguarding governance* in the region.
- Staying with a Malawian family of academics and international business operators, to discuss *practical solutions to challenges of project finance* and development.
- *Meeting with Head of UK DFID Malawi* and Norwegian Ambassador to understand national-level issues with foreign aid, good governance and long-term challenges.

All travel, accommodation and subsistence costs were met by Joe and Robbie, so that every pound donated goes towards the school.

The effects of your donations so far...

At the end of a school day, the children launched an enormously humbling display of thanks for the Educate Africa work. We explained that the money has come from UK Primary and Secondary school pupils, kind individuals,



Foundations complete, bricks delivered, bricklayer on the way... New classroom for 100 pupils

relatives, and small organisations. There is a strong culture of supporting extended family and friends in Malawi, but simply not enough resource to go around. They thanked all the donors who have supported the project and expressed how beneficial it will be. I ‘cut the ribbon’ on the new classroom project and planted a ceremonial tree outside the new building. During our



“Thanks to all the kind and caring people...”

Hoping the tree grows like the school!



visit, the school's director pointed out various things that the school would benefit from, ranging from stationery to a cover and pump on the well to stop the young children from falling in. The classroom has come in UNDER BUDGET, and so we have been able to fund some extra immediate additional projects and equipment. This includes desks and chairs for the classroom, extra solar panels, teaching equipment and some shown below. I'm also considering funding a perimeter fence for the children's safety. SKYPE link proved elusive due to internet problems – but is one for the future!

"Water well and paint-tin bucket – we are funding a handpump and well-cap



Bicycle taxi for poorly children



- Books, posters, pens
- Footballs/netballs
- Lockable cabinet

Laptop and projector in use – yes that's Duffield on the screen!



Current projects and future needs will be listed on the donors' page of www.educateafrika.co.uk – please keep a lookout and donate if you can!

THE FUTURE...

The aim is to continue EducateAfrica.co.uk as an ongoing fundraising project to support Good Hope School in its core business of educating under-privileged Malawian children. I hope that selected Ecclesbourne students will take on the role of Chief Fundraiser next year whilst I develop plans for longer-term sustainability.

Longer-term needs... such as:

- Infrastructure: more classrooms; staff office; ablutions.
- Teaching quality – assess results and consider funding training for teachers.
- The feeding issue: previous 'breakfast' programme has ceased – too expensive; some but not all children arrive with no breakfast; options include purchase or growing of maize/soya.

Sustainability.... creating a sustainable income. I heard many ideas from the Director and staff on small business ideas to fund the school, but there are some arguments against this. An alternative may be a Malawi-based 'income trust fund' under UK control.

From Joe and the children of Good Hope School –

"A massive ZIKOMO and I hope you'll be able to support us again next year..."

