

# REPORT ON MY TRIP TO SWITZERLAND

## EXCHANGE VISIT TO THE INSTITUT VORSCHULSTUFE UND PRIMARSTUFE (IVP)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

I was invited to attend a two Malawi-Week on behalf of Machinga TTC by the Institut Vorschulstufe Und Primarstufe (IVP), a Teacher Training College in Switzerland. This followed the two visits The Deputy Principal (Mr Andreas Jungen) of the college made to Malawi-Machinga TTC. I arrived in Switzerland on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2013. See appendix 1 for the program.

Machinga TTC is developing a cooperation/partnership with the College in Switzerland. The college (IVP) is to collaborate with Machinga TTC to carry out a teacher training program based on partnership. It will assist Machinga TTC in the efforts to improve Teacher Training by providing support in two main areas:

- Curriculum development and administration
- Exchange of lecturers and student teachers

From 2014, it is planned to cooperate with Chiladzulu TTC when it opens in order to extend the current partnership with Machinga TTC. The objectives of the partnership are:-

### A. Partnership

- To establish an efficient and effective partnership between IVP-Bern and Machinga TTC
- To facilitate insight into the education systems of both partner countries
- To create the opportunity to learn about the partner country and its people, culture and language

### B. Teacher Training

- To study content-related and pedagogical questions
- To improve teacher training at TTCs in Malawi
- To develop situational innovative training content
- To develop child-centred pedagogical concepts and support their implementation in the field
- To develop target specific didactic teaching and practice concepts
- To implement projects in a joint manner

### C. Global intercultural learning

- To get to know and understand global interrelations
- To understand mutual dependences and the North-South differences
- To become aware of one's own scope of action, to develop competence to shape one's environment
- To reflect upon and deal with one's own and with foreign values and prejudices
- To gain experience in working with people from different cultural backgrounds and critical reflection
- To gain language experience and to tolerate the difficult to communicate
- To practice communication in difficult language situations and to overcome language barriers
- To learn how to deal with and react appropriately to insecurities, un known situations and change
- To consider a stay in a foreign country as an opportunity and an enrichment

## 2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank the Malawi Government through the Ministry and Department of Teacher Education and Development (DTED) for allowing me to attend this Two Malawi-Week activity in Switzerland. I would also like to thank the Institut Vorschulstufe Und Primarstufe (IVP), a Teacher Training College in Switzerland for inviting me and travel expenses through UNICEF. I promise to share what I have learnt from the trip to the college to improve teacher training by implementing the lessons learnt from the Malawi-Week activities.

## 3. INSTITUT VORSCHULSTUFE UND PRIMARSTUFE (IVP)

The college is one of the 11 colleges in Bern Canton. It is not a boarding institution with a capacity of 226. It has 45 lecturers with some operating on part time basis. Table below gives details of the college as of 2013 academic year.

**Table 1 Enrolment**

Year 1			Year 2			Year 3		
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
3	65	68	3	72	75	4	79	83
<b>Grand Totals</b>		<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>					
		<b>10</b>	<b>216</b>					

You may wish to note that their teachers are awarded a diploma at the end of the training with no formal final assessment. As long as one has undergone the full course, with results for continuous assessment together with the teaching practice report, he/she is awarded the certificate.

One other thing to note from this information is that there are very few males being trained as elementary school teachers because it is considered as a female job to look after kids with very low salaries while at secondary and higher education institutions, the situation is different. There are more males than females.

## 4. ACTIVITIES

During the Two Malawi-Week period, I was involved in the following activities, (ref to Appendix 2):

a) Exhibitions;

- displaying of Malawian different items like local resources, and books which I took and some were carried by The Deputy Principal as he was returning back home after his visit to Malawi
- Lesson presentations done by our student teachers which I video tape before I left for the trip
- A screen showing an interview which the Deputy Principal (Andreas) did with both student teachers and lecturers of Machinga TTC
- Gender related pictures/posters from Malawi

- b) Presentation; I made the following presentations:
- Teacher Training system in Malawi
  - Assessment frame work for our teacher training program
  - Education system in Malawi
  - Chichewa language lessons
  - Gender Responsive Pedagogy (GRP)
  - Special Needs Education with focus on Albinism
  - Malawian children songs and culture
- c) Lesson Observations; I had a chance to observe lessons at elementary level, Teacher Training and Special Needs School

## **5. LESSONS LEARNT**

There are several lessons learnt from this Exchange Visit. I will only sight some of them in bullet form. They include:

- Teachers arrive at a school earlier than learners to give them time for organisation and arrangement of teaching and learning resources, something worthy emulating but needs a lot of motivational factors
- There classes are very small, a teacher-pupil ratio of about 1:7 at elementary level. Anything beyond 6, the classes is divided into two for easy individual assistance to the learners. This might be difficult to adopt and or adapt in our setting due to inadequate infrastructure and personnel
- Lecturer evaluation by student teachers done twice in a semester. Teachers are free to discuss with learners' evaluation results for improvement in lesson delivery.
- Student Teachers choose their Teaching Practice School, normally accessible to them where they would report once a week for a semester. Both the practice school head and the student write a report to the college about their performance which becomes a basis for their assessment.
- Education system for Switzerland which is very different from ours since they do not have a uniform curriculum. Each Canton (District) has its own curriculum. This applies to teacher training program, ref to appendix 3
- One other interesting lesson is that each Canton has got its own government system. There is no president of the country instead they use District Ministers who run the districts independent of each other. They refer to it as a direct democracy meaning every district has its own parliament. They have four official languages in the country.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- While Government is implementing Staff Appraisal, it should also be encouraged that learners should evaluate their teachers and have a free discussion of the results between the teacher and the learners.
- Government should continue to support the partnership through allowing both student teachers and lecturers to have these exchange visits.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

Quoting our Father and Founder of the Nation; Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda, 'Travelling is learning', if one is given a chance to travel, you learn a lot of things. You also have experiences in many things including different peoples' culture. As teachers this can help us to be motivated and learn more from others to improve the education system in Malawi.

**Appendix 1 PROGRAM OF THE TWO MALAWI-WEEK**

	14.11.13	15.11.13	16.11.13	17.11.13	18.11.13	19.11.13	20.11.13	21.11.13			
07:00	Arrival	Resting				Discussions with one of the students to visit Malawi					
08:00					GRP Presentation			Lesson observ			
09:00							Orientation of Music RM	Discussions with a lecturer to visit Malawi	Lessons on MW Songs		
10:00									Open disc with Students		
11:00				Orientation of the college	Visit Biel-A place of Tourism specialising in Culture		Lessons on Malawian Songs				
12:00											
13:00										Pres on Assess	
14:00											
15:00											
16:00											
17:00											
18:00											Lessons on MW Songs
19:00											
20:00											

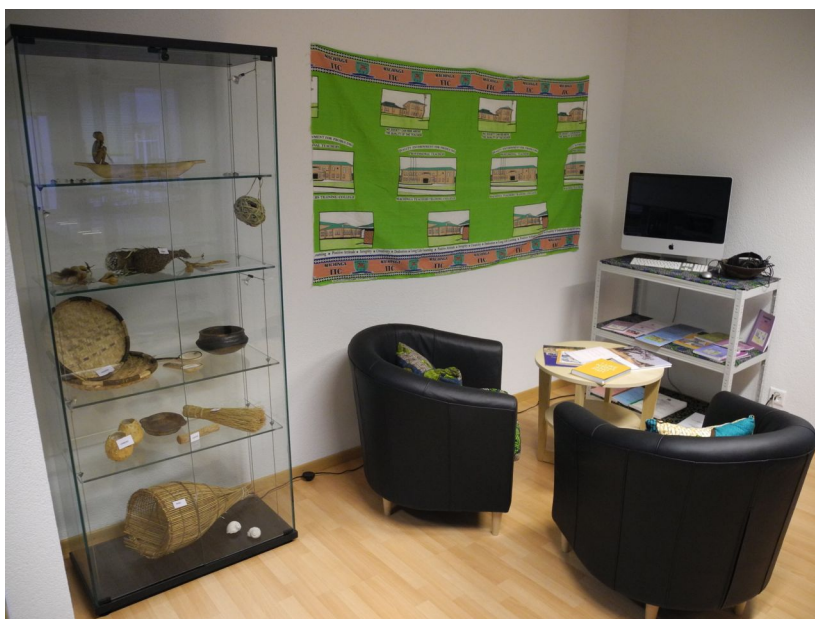
	22.11.13	23.11.13	24.11.13	25.11.13	26.11.13	27.11.13	28.11.13	29.11.13							
07:00	Lesson observations at NMS elementary school	Resting	Discussions with the Principal of the college	Lesson observations at a TP school	Gave Chichewa lessons to both students and lecturers	Visit SNE school and lesson observations	Albinism Pres	Discussions with the Principal							
08:00															
09:00															
10:00															
11:00															
12:00															
13:00															
14:00															Departure
15:00															
16:00															
17:00															
18:00															
19:00	Dinner with UNICEF official			Choral evening wt Mw songs		Presentation on system of Ed in Malawi	Exp Sharing & evaluatio								
20:00															

## Appendix 2 PRESENTATION AND EXHIBITIONS

### PRESENTATION



### EXHIBITION





Appendix 3

EDUCATION SYSTEM IN SWITZERLAND

