

Scotland and Malawi:

Partnerships, Knowledge Exchange and the Role of Power Relations between Donor and Recipient

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Abstract

The research focuses on the role of the partnership between Scotland and Malawi and reflects on the nature of the power relations inherent in the partnership, given how both countries use the relationship to strengthen their position on the international development stage.

The relationship between donor and recipients within these partnerships reflects the need for developing countries to take a more prominent leadership in the aid relationship. The move towards partnerships; supports the idea of the reversal of the traditional aid relationship of donor and recipient, towards a more equal relationship which allows developing countries such as Malawi to take ownership of development assistance. This new style of donor-recipient relationship is evident even in the 2005 Co-operation Agreement between Scotland and Malawi, which in its very creation expounds partnership which is Malawian owned, rather than Scottish led. Without doubt, there is clear argument that the development assistance given by the Scottish Government, does as much to put Scotland on the international stage as it does to further the existing partnership between Scotland and Malawi.

Theoretically the 2005 Scotland-Malawi Co-operation Agreement puts Malawi centrally at the aid relationship, focusing on partnership and Malawian input. The Scottish Government Malawi Development Programme, which puts partnership and co-operation at the centre of its aid programme strives to demonstrate that the input of the developing state is key and so development assistance is more sustainable.

The paper will argue that the relationship between Scotland and Malawi, based around co-operation, partnership and knowledge exchange is prevalent in the attempt by both donor and recipient to strengthen their position on the international development stage. Further to this the paper will consider the sustainability of partnership and knowledge exchange particularly within the Malawian Education sector, as noted as a pillar of the 2005 Co-operation Agreement. Based upon case study research, the paper will question the partnership between Scotland and Malawi as a power relationship in disseminating development assistance in relation to their own positions in International Development.

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Introduction

“Dr Livingstone I presume” (Sir Henry Morton Stanley [1872] 2005: 812) has become one of the most famous phrases associated with Dr David Livingstone; the nineteenth century explorer and missionary. It was due to knowledge that Henry Morton Stanley was able to coin the now famous phrase; the premise of this paper will be to consider the role of knowledge and knowledge exchange between Scotland and Malawi. The link between Scotland and Malawi is often attributed to the work of Dr Livingstone and thus has become one of the foundations of the current relationship between Scotland and Malawi.

The contemporary relationship between Scotland and Malawi has developed as the Scottish Government developed its International Development Policy but also as a result of a personal interest that the First Minister (Jack McConnell) at the time had in Malawi. Building upon the existing relationship between Scotland and Malawi, the Scottish Government set up the “Malawi Development Programme” and in 2005 the Co-operation Agreement was signed. In relation to the Co-operation Agreement this paper will explore the partnership between Scotland and Malawi, the role of knowledge exchange – considering how these relate to the role of power relations between Scotland and Malawi. The paper in an attempt to discuss the partnership, knowledge exchange and role of power relations some will tackle some of the key issues in relation to Scotland and Malawi.

The paper begins by discussing the background to the relationship between Scotland and Malawi focusing on the progression from the time of Livingstone to the signing of the 2005 Co-operation Agreement. The paper then sets out the Co-operation Agreement in full covering the four main strands. Further to this the paper details some of the key points of the 2005 Agreement in relation to partnerships and knowledge exchange. The paper then goes on to discuss the Scottish Government’s International Development policy, considering the key sections of the policy in relation to partnership and knowledge exchange.

The paper will also discuss the political aspect of the partnership with a particular focus on the Scottish Parliament and it’s roll in knowledge exchange and the influence on the relationship between Scotland and Malawi. In a change from outlined in the original abstract the paper will not fully focus on the education sector. The paper then follows this by discussing some of the projects in action in relation to the existing partnership and exchange of knowledge. Finally the paper will question the sustainability of the partnership and the changing relationship between Scotland and Malawi.

From Livingstone (1859) to Co-operation Agreement (2005)

The relationship between Scotland and Malawi goes far beyond the current partnership between Scotland and Malawi, existing civil society and political interests of groups and individuals. In 1859 Dr David Livingstone a Scottish explorer, visited Malawi. Formerly Nyasaland, Malawi became central in Livingstone's fight against the slave trade (Friends of Malawi, 2010). It was a year after Livingstone's death in 1873 that the first Scottish Missionaries arrived in Malawi; this was the beginning of the long standing relationship between Scotland and Malawi (Scottish Government, 2007). The missionaries who arrived in Malawi in 1874 and 1875 were Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland (McCracken, 1977: 195) and their focus was on spreading Christianity. The work of the Livingstonia and Blantyre missions of Malawi has arguably impacted upon on the political and educational structures of the country. The consequence of such missions helped create a tangible link between the two nation states. It was the work of Dr Livingstone and the continued missionary work of generations of Scots in Malawi that partly inspired the Scotland-Malawi Co-operation Agreement which was signed in 2005 by the former First Minister Jack McConnell and the President of Malawi, His Excellency, Dr Bingu wa Mutharika (Scottish Government, 2005).

The Co-operation Agreement is an outline of the key areas where Scotland and Malawi have agreed to work together for the benefit of both countries (Scottish Government, 2005). The agreement between the First Minister of Scotland and the President of Malawi arguably was and continues to be as strategic move for both nation states to form a stronger and more productive partnership between Scotland and Malawi. The Co-operation Agreement focuses on four broad themes of development; civic governance and society, sustainable economic development, health and finally, education (Scottish Government, 2005).

The four key strands of the Co-operation Agreement are

1. Civic Governance and Society
2. Sustainable Economic Development
3. Health
4. Education

The four key themes each incorporate sub-themes of aims and objectives of the Co-operation Agreement, which gives structure to the work of both partners. Effectively the four themes which are key themes within International Development demonstrate that the Malawian and Scottish Governments have worked together in order to develop an agreement which suits the needs and wants of both nations.

Realistically the exchange of knowledge could be considered as a paternalistic relationship however the partnership between Scotland and Malawi demonstrates a mutual and balanced relationship. The exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise are key to the Co-operation Agreement and this is highlighted in some of the literature produced by the Scottish Government (Scottish Government, 2010). The role of the Cross-Party Group on Malawi continues to monitor the role of Scotland in Malawi and relies on the Malawian Diaspora to be a continual part of discussions. The significance of the literature on Malawi, particularly official government documents on the links between the two governments and parliaments is of continual importance in the role of the Cross-Party Group, the function of the new pairing scheme and the mandate of the Scottish Government in international development.

The 2005 Co-operation Agreement which is outlined below expounds the four key themes that the Scottish and Malawian Governments have pledged to work together on. The Agreement also outlines the potential areas for knowledge exchange and that the Agreement goes beyond financial support. The 2005 Agreement for which much of this paper refers to also sets out the boundaries of the relationship between donor and recipient.

2005 Co-operation Agreement (Scottish Government, 2005)

Scotland and Malawi have a long history of collaboration, particularly in health and education. Both countries share a wish to build upon this history by actively engaging through partnership. This is a reciprocal partnership based upon sharing experiences and skills. It is an opportunity to learn from each other and to recognise the needs of our two countries.

The guiding principles underpinning this agreement are as follows:

All engagement will be consistent with current government priorities and existing policies and activity. Engagement will build upon the context of the long standing friendship between both countries, recognising the benefits of learning and sharing from one another.

Scotland and Malawi will develop and increase collaboration across the following broad themes:

Civic governance and society, in particular:

- To strengthen governance by working with others to develop schemes for sharing government and parliamentary experience on both a local and central government level, and for sharing legal and financial expertise by engaging with national bodies and civil society
- To share experiences of addressing inequality and the needs of vulnerable groups in society by supporting mechanisms for exchanging expertise and mentoring initiatives
- To develop mechanisms for strengthening the media by facilitating links between key partners
- To investigate innovative ways of developing and using technology, with particular reference to remote and rural communities

Sustainable economic development, in particular:

- To initiate discussion on how best to stimulate enterprise by facilitating the exchange of skills and business expertise in relevant sectors
- To explore opportunities to stimulate tourism, including between the two countries, by encouraging links.
- To investigate potential collaboration between agricultural bodies

Health, in particular:

- To contribute to the improvement of maternal health by supporting the increase in the number of trained midwives and facilitating the exchange of knowledge and skills required for dealing with obstetric and gynaecological emergencies
- To increase the capacity of Health Colleges (Government and CHAM) by developing in-country teaching support for trainee clinical officers, nurses, midwives, nurse technicians and allied health professionals
- To support the College of Medicine in the development of specialist medical training for health professionals and facilitate mechanisms for the exchange of medical and health management expertise
- To support HIV/ AIDS prevention, treatment and care by developing partnerships for sharing expertise (especially around health education) and assisting in addressing human resource capacity in services
- To support communities to access and deliver health services at local and district level through support of local community initiatives, especially those focussing on child health, disability and gender equality

Education, in particular:

- To help build capacity in education by further developing teacher exchange programmes and supporting the development of training of trainers for local delivery
- To support the exchange of knowledge and skills by facilitating academic links and twinning initiatives between local government, schools and higher education institutions
- To explore how best to address access to and availability of quality education, with particular attention to remote and rural communities
- To initiate discussion on the provision of vocational education and training by encouraging the sharing of best practice and expertise and the development of links with Further Education
- To encourage equality in the participation of education by supporting the development of initiatives to empower vulnerable groups

...and other areas of mutual interest that may emerge

Scottish Government – International Development Policy

The Scottish Government's Policy on International Development and Overseas Development Aid upon which the partnership has been enshrined (in Scotland) demonstrates with some clarity the perspective with which they view the partnership between Scotland and Malawi. The International Development Policy of the Scottish Government details that

“Scottish Ministers are committed to advancing Scotland's place in the world as a responsible nation by building mutually beneficial links with other countries as outlined in the Scottish Government's International Framework. As part of that Framework, Scotland has a distinctive contribution to make in its work with developing countries recognising our global responsibility to work together to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)” (Scottish Government, 2008)

Within the international development policy document there are several aims and objectives which in their outline highlight that Scotland makes a standing contribution to international development through DFID and the policy on international development “*reflects how the Scottish Government, as a devolved administration, can enhance Scotland's contribution to the global fight against poverty*” (Scottish Government, 2008). The policy goes on to outline the intentions of the Scottish Government to engage with the “global agenda” and further defines the Scottish Government's approach to international development.

Essentially the Scottish Government aims to enhance Scotland's contribution to the “*global fight against poverty*” and to do so through supporting the work to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Further to this the Policy highlights the aim to demonstrate a commitment to “*play its role in addressing the challenges faced by the developing world, recognising Scotland's identity as a responsible nation*” (Scottish Government, 2008). In the Policy the Scottish Government not only demonstrate that there is a desire to contribute to the developing world but arguably to highlight their position within international development as donors.

Within the Policy Objectives there are key themes which have particular relevance to the Scotland-Malawi relationship and the development of the Scottish Government's Malawi Development Programme. The policy states that the Scottish Government will “*work in a focussed way with a small number of identified developing countries to provide support to those in greatest need and the most vulnerable*” (Scottish Government, 2008). The policy

further states that this will be done through the work of organisations in Scotland and will be done so in consideration of the priorities of the respective countries.

Further objectives include to “*develop Scotland's special relationship with Malawi, working with the Government of Malawi to achieve sustainable outcomes*” (Scottish Government, 2008). This objective is supported by the 2005 Cooperation Agreement between Scotland and Malawi, which sets out some of the parameters of the partnership between Scotland and Malawi and outlines the key aim and objectives of the relationship. The Policy documents also states that the Scottish Government will support key agencies for International Development in Scotland; recognising the importance of their role in the exchange of knowledge and information and also the promotion of best practice. In encompassing the importance of the partnership between Scotland and Malawi and supporting key agencies for International Development, it can be argued that as an umbrella organisation that the Scotland-Malawi Partnerships as an agency and facilitator and partnership between Scotland and Malawi supports the Scottish Government’s International Development Policy.

In consideration of key values and principles of the Scottish Government in International Development, the policy states that the *needs and priorities of developing countries are paramount*” (Scottish Government, 2008). As a statement this places the role of developing nations at the centre of the Scottish Government’s International Development Policy, theoretically making it “Scottish funded, Malawian owned”. Focusing further on the “*special relationship*” between Scotland and Malawi, the policy includes a key value regarding the commitment to Malawi.

“The Scottish Government is committed to continuing to work with Malawi based on the unique and historical relationship between the two countries. The Scottish Government have confirmed our commitment to honour the Co-operation Agreement ring fencing at least £3 million per annum to support this, within this spending review period. The Scottish Government will continue to work with the Government of Malawi to develop a focused programme of engagement and will continue to review and monitor progress through the Joint Commission process, a mechanism which is strongly supported by the Government of Malawi” (Scottish Government, 2008).

Thus, the Scottish Government clearly set the boundaries for their development initiatives in Malawi, which essentially concurs and expands on the 2005 Co-operation Agreement. The International Development Policy also states that it will encourage the consideration and adoption of best practice in development, particular importance will be placed on country-led identification of needs. (Scottish Government, 2008) The policy further expands on this suggesting that “*the sharing of knowledge and transfer of skills, the training of trainers and re-*

sponding to the developing countries' assessment of how the Scottish Government might best support development” (Scottish Government, 2008).

The policy clearly states that the delivery of the International Development Policy will be supported by the International Development Fund which will be disseminated through tailored funding arrangements for each element. Over the course of three years there has been an continual and increasing financial commitment to international development. In 2008/09 £6 million was dedicated to the international development fund. This continued in 2009/10 and in 2010/11 there was a further increase to £9 million for that financial year. These figures are also inclusive of the commitment to Malawi and there is a further breakdown of what areas funding has been focused on.

Finally in considering the policy of the Scottish Government, there is a commitment to continual and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of all Scottish funded activity. There is a reporting system for all projects that requires six monthly and annual reports (Scottish Government, 2008). In terms of the commitment to Malawi and the Scottish Government’s Malawi Development Programme, there is a joint commission which has been established with the purpose of fulfilling monitoring and evaluations which include Scotland and Malawi in the process. There has also been an independent review of the projects in practice, which primarily focuses on the objectives and outcomes of each project which has financial support from the Scottish Government.

A Political Aspect to Partnership and Knowledge Exchange

The role of politics in the partnership between Scotland and Malawi is central to the power relationship. The Scottish Government in its introduction of the “Malawi International Development Programme” took its first steps onto the international development stage, demonstrating that as devolved government/parliament they were able to make a difference.

The Scottish Parliament in the previous parliamentary sessions has expanded upon the Co-operation Agreement, with particular reference to the stream of Good Governance and Civil Society. In doing so the Parliamentary Pairing Scheme was formed alongside the existing Cross Party Group on Malawi. These two sections of parliamentary work are central to the exchange of knowledge, particularly in terms of good governance. This can also be further

expanded into the role of organisations and individuals under the other key themes of the Co-operation Agreement.

The role of the parliamentary partnership can be regarded as neither abstract or confined, but rather as a method of exchanging knowledge for the future benefit of both partners and achieve some of their individual objectives. The Parliamentary Pairing Scheme was created as a result of the Malawian Parliamentary Commissioners visit to Scotland and the subsequent visit of MSPs to Malawi. The founding principle of the scheme is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge between experienced Scottish Parliamentarians and newly elected Malawian Parliamentarians through partnerships (Gillon, 2010). A further link to Malawi within the Scottish Parliament is the Cross-Party Group on Malawi. The group which acts primarily as a forum for discussion allowing MSPs to learn from the Diaspora and other organisations based within the Scottish Parliament. The role of partnerships and knowledge exchange between parliamentarians is reflective of the civil society links between Scotland and Malawi. The parliamentary links are central to the argument that partnership and knowledge exchange is the way forward for development and the practice of good governance.

The Parliamentary Pairing Scheme mandate is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and establish further links between the Scottish Parliament and the Malawian Assembly. The scheme although early in its development, has been adopted as a result of the existing links between the partners. In the most recent parliamentary elections to take place in Malawi there was approximately a seventy-five per-cent turnover (Gillon, 2010) of new MPs being elected to Parliament; the Malawian parliamentary Commissioners agreed that this would be an ideal opportunity to learn from established MSPs who are experienced in their role. The scheme although unique in many respects to Scotland and Malawi is reflective of many partnerships that have taken place particularly between towns, medical facilities, and educational institutions.

The pairing of the ten Malawi MPs with Scottish MSPs is a pilot scheme that is hoped will be expanded to include more parliamentarians in the future. The pilot scheme has allowed for experienced parliamentarians to be linked with newly elected MPs; who are lacking knowledge and experience. The interests and experience of MSPs were partially matched with the MPs with whom they would be paired, focusing on whether their constituency had agricultural, fishing or rural elements, or if there was a relation in terms of parliamentary

committee interests. The pairing scheme focuses on the need for the exchange of knowledge, information and experience that is a two-way relationship. With many of the Malawian Parliamentarians being new to their positions, Karen Gillon (former MSP) suggests that this was the ideal opportunity for them to learn from more experienced parliamentarians based in Scotland.

The Parliamentary Pairing Scheme is an example of exchange of knowledge being used and developed not only as a support mechanism but also as a partnership. Initially the Parliamentary Pairing Scheme appears to have one stronger partner, however as Ms Gillon suggests the partnership can be considered to be very authentic. The pairing between parliamentarians is a mutual learning experience for all and the continual exchange of knowledge is one that was highlighted by Ms Gillon. Ms Gillon (2010) said that *“it is a two way relationship so if we can share information and knowledge with each other then we will learn from each other”*. Ms Gillon highlighted the process of learning in her reference to Malawian MPs being able to give a real perspective to more abstract issues such as HIV/AIDS and climate change.

As a set up for the exchange of knowledge, and despite its early stage, the Parliamentary Scheme demonstrates that partnerships and exchange of knowledge are part of the future of development. The Pairing Scheme is only one example of a partnership, however it is unique in its set up between parliamentarians, particularly as it is a cross-party scheme that almost side steps the political standing or party politics of the individual parliamentarian. However *“it’s not just MSP to MP or Parliament to Parliament but its community to community and people to people that will make a difference”* (Karen Gillon MSP, 27th May, 2010). Civil society also plays a role in forming partnerships and facilitating the exchange of knowledge.

The Scottish Parliament’s Cross-Party Group (CPG) on Malawi consists of MSPs from all political parties, members of the Scotland-Malawi Partnership, Malawian Diaspora and members of affiliated organisations. The mandate of the Cross-Party Group is to act as a forum for discussion to bring ideas and issues to the table. The role is to partially focus discussion on Malawian issues that are of particular interest to Malawians in Scotland and Scots working in Malawi (Scottish Government, 2010).

Although the role of the Cross-Party Group on Malawi is not to directly influence the Scottish Government’s International Development Framework for Malawi, it acts as a forum to equip MSPs with the information to lobby the Scottish Government. An example of such

discussions is during a recent Cross-Party Group meeting, where discussion is usually dominated by the Scottish Participants, the discussion of education was led by the Malawian participants. Moreover the further example from Ms Gillon highlights;

“It was fascinating to learn and understand their views about proposals to introduce quotas and that then gave us information when we went over in February in our dialogue and discussion with Malawian MPs to feedback to the them what was happening in Scotland and what the views were in Scotland, and the reaction of folk who had benefited from University Education on what was being proposed” (Gillon, 2010)

The criteria of the Cross-Party Group on Malawi to act as a forum of discussion follows on with the idea of the exchange of knowledge as key to the role of the Scottish Government in international development. Ms Gillon (2010) highlighted that there is no equivalent to the Cross-Party Group within the Malawian Assembly which can make the exchange of knowledge, between the two parliaments more difficult. However, after a visit by the Parliamentary Service Commissioners from Malawi, they have recommended that the Malawian Assembly establish a similar group to act as a vehicle for the exchange of knowledge.

“If our objective in terms of Malawi is not to continue to provide financial assistance for the next 100 years, but is actually to work with the Malawian government, others partners and DfID and everybody else to enable the Malawians to support themselves, then knowledge transfer is integral to that” (Gillon, 2010).

It is through the process of education and knowledge exchange that nation states are able to learn from each other. The relationship between Scotland and Malawi is arguably primarily concentrated through partnership. This is reflected in the work of the Cross-Party Group to act as a forum for discussion and is beneficial beyond the internal workings of the Scottish Parliament.

Project Aid in Action

The development initiatives that the Scottish Government currently finances are for the most part project aid. The funds as provided by the Scottish Government for development projects in Malawi not only ties into the Co-operation Agreement between the two nation states, but it also clearly falls under the idea of the exchange of knowledge and the purpose of meeting the particular needs identified by the Malawian Government. The projects that are funded fall

under the four thematic themes, as highlighted by the 2005 Co-operation Agreement. The purpose of project aid is normally to fulfil a specific requirement and in many case to act as a stop-gap when the state itself is not able to provide goods and services (Riddell, 2007:180). The projects funded by the Scottish Government fall under the streams of governance and civic society, sustainable economic development, education and health. Due to the nature of the Co-operation Agreement between Scotland and Malawi it is more difficult to define donor input and output requirements, but rather the objectives of both the Scottish Government and the Malawi Government can be noted (Scottish Government, 2009). The objectives are simple, in that they are to strengthen the links between Scotland and Malawi and to continue to foster good relations under the four headings of the Co-operation Agreement.

As a bilateral donor of development funding (specifically project aid) there is a strong argument that the Scottish Government are seeking to use their resources not only to fill gaps in knowledge and experience but also to develop existing knowledge and expertise through pairing Malawian institutions, agencies and organisations with Scottish counterparts, examples include; the Parliamentary Pairing Scheme and Scotland-Malawi Partnership. The independent review which focused on the project aid provided by the Scottish Government suggests that there has been “*a balance of funding of Malawi-focused projects under the International Development fund which is in line with the priorities of the Malawi Government*” (Independent Review, 2009:5). In relation to the role of Civic Governance there have been seven IDF funded projects under way. Each of these projects has an element of focus on the importance of a continual exchange of knowledge.

One of the central objectives of the Scottish Government’s IDF is to support partnerships that capitalize on knowledge exchange and understanding (Independent Review, 2009:8). Some of the projects funded by Scotland’s IDF follow the rights-based approach to development. The projects that follow this approach are not necessarily designed as a result of a moral obligation, but rather to meet the needs of the Malawian people.

Knowledge Exchange: A Malawian View

The exchange of knowledge and the role of partnerships in development is the basis of the civil society research exercise carried out by Hope-Jones (2010). Of the primary research undertaken, the latter eight of the eleven questions asked of the Malawian participants are of relevance to the role of partnerships and knowledge exchange between Scotland and Malawi. The questions which are listed in box A of this paper.

The questions which have been asked of the Malawian research participants target their knowledge and understanding of Malawian civil society and the partnerships which they have experienced with Scottish individuals and organisations. The use of the research questions in stakeholder meetings, smaller break-out groups and in individual questionnaires arguably allows for Malawian knowledge and experience to be acknowledged as well as the consideration of their perspective on civil society and the partnerships between Malawians and Scots. As there are several questions from the research exercise that are pertinent as a Malawian voice on the role of partnerships, this section will analyse some of the answers given by the research participants, during the civil society research exercise carried out by Hope-Jones (2010).

Box A: Primary Research Questions (Hope-Jones (2010: 26)

- 1 What is Civil Society in Malawi
2. What challenges/ issues does Malawian civil society currently face
3. What are the current needs/priorities of Malawian civil society
- 4(a) Do you presently have contact or a partnership with an individual or organisation in Scotland
- 4(b) If yes, please list the name/s or contacts in Scotland and briefly summarise the nature of the partnership
5. What challenges or issues have you had with your Scottish Partnership?
6. What successes have you had with your Scottish Partnership
7. What needs/priorities do you have with regards to your Scottish Partnership?
- 8 (a) Are you interested in establishing new links/partnerships with Scotland?
(b) if yes, please summarise the type of organisation/individual you are hoping to engage with, the work you hope to undertake together, and the outcomes you hope to achieve
9. What mechanisms/ interventions would help with the development/capacity building of your existing or prospective new, links with Scotland?

Each of the research respondents were asked if they already had contact or a partnership with an individual or organisation in Scotland; of the two hundred and eleven responses, fifty-eight percent said no, whilst forty-two percent said yes. This is relevant to the answers given, as it demonstrates the research exercise was not simply targeted at existing Malawian contacts that were pre-existing to the research exercise commencing. Of the partnerships that were identified, schools and education, church and healthcare were the three most commonly given answers. Partnerships between schools are prominent in Malawi, the Scotland-Malawi Partnership have over 200 schools listed as members (SMP, 2010) – demonstrating that education based partnerships are common. Links through the church are also highlight the role of partnerships; this arguably has been sustained from the work with the missionaries. Faith organisations such as The Church of Scotland and the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) are two of many Faith Based Organisations who work in Malawi. The other most prominent partnership is through healthcare and this is demonstrated in the partnership between Westgate Medical Centre and the Zingwanga Clinic. These are examples of partnerships within the streams that have been identified by members of Malawian civil society.

Furthermore, the research participants were asked to identify challenges and issues that they had with their Scottish Partners as well as the successes. Although the partnerships are not descriptive of the parliamentary and civil society partnerships discussed as key examples in this paper, the Malawian perspective is instrumental in the future of knowledge exchange and in the sustainability of such partnerships. In the answers given concerning the challenges of the partnerships, communication, or lack thereof, was one of the most commonly given answers in both the questionnaires and from the working groups. Communication is key in the exchange of knowledge and as identified from the research participants, is appears to be a re-occurring issue. Donor set priorities and also a lack of understanding, are also re-occurring answers demonstrating that although suggested otherwise by the literature that some partnerships are viewed as still maintaining paternalistic values. Upon highlighting the issues of lack of communication and understanding as well as donor setting priorities; the Malawian research participants identified the lack of internet connectivity as the main issue with existing communication problems (Hope-Jones, 2010:64). The research conducted by Hope-Jones (2010:64) also highlights that communication problems were particularly prevalent in the partnerships between schools.

Hope-Jones (2010:64) also highlights that research participants continually reported that their relationship with their Scottish partners was paternalistic; with the Scottish partners setting the targets, which in turn meant that the most urgent needs were not being met. According to Hope-Jones (2010:64) there was a consensus by the research participants that the relationship between Scots and Malawians was imbalanced, with the Scottish partners being more dominant. However this was not considered to be due to the donor-recipient relationship but rather as a result of cultural differences between Scottish and Malawian civil society. As the Rev. Maxwell M. Banda (CCAP Education Department, Mzuzu in Hope-Jones, 2010: 71) said *“this is a great partnership due to the long history and deep involvement in each other affairs. Most Malawian have had contract with foreigners who were from Scotland even at village level.”*

The partnerships between Scotland and Malawi, as highlighted in the research of Hope-Jones (2010) are not without problems and issues; however there were also positive outcomes of the research. There are clear suggestions that existing partnerships are viewed as providing positive opportunities, whilst new partnerships and links are welcome. Of the two-hundred-and-eleven questionnaires, ninety-four percent answered that they are interested in establishing new links/partnerships with Scotland (Hope-Jones, 2010:47). In considering the range of research methods employed by Hope-Jones (2010) in order to engage with Malawian civil society, it is clear that many opportunities were given to respond to questions. The responses of the participants, demonstrates that there is a number of partnerships already established between Scotland and Malawi, and further to the work of the Scotland-Malawi Partnership, the Parliamentary Pairing Scheme and the work of the Cross-Party Group on Malawi; the research highlights the vast number of existing partnerships between civil society organisations.

The Scotland-Malawi Partnership primary focus is to act as an umbrella organisation, which facilitates knowledge exchange and resource sharing (SMP, 2010). The Scotland-Malawi Partnership is the only organisation of its kind, which operates to facilitate links between Scotland and Malawi, whether it is for schools, organisations or individuals. From education and health to local engagement and work with the Diaspora, the Scotland-Malawi Partnership as an organisation is able to offer information and guidance for both Scots and Malawians alike (SMP, 2010). The exchange of knowledge is continually present throughout the work of the Scotland-Malawi Partnership. The exchange of knowledge and the role of discussion are evident in the work of Partnership. Closely linked with the Scottish Parliament, and funded

by the Scottish Government, the Scotland-Malawi Partnership is based on the premise of an open forum and the exchange of knowledge.

Sustainability: A Changing Relationship

The special relationship between Scotland and Malawi has developed over time and led to the introduction of the Malawi Development Programme and the Co-operation Agreement. In its nature the partnership has focused on knowledge exchange and the role of participation. In the current economic and diplomatic climate it has to be asked if a partnership between Scotland and Malawi is sustainable, not just in financial terms but also in the relation to the resources and facilitation of knowledge exchange.

This paper has focused on the political aspects of the partnerships and has demonstrated the role of the Scottish Parliament. If taking into consideration the role of the Scottish Government's International Development policy it is quite clear that the long term objective is not to continually give financial support to Malawi. As the former MSP Karen Gillon stated

“If our objective in terms of Malawi is not to continue to provide financial assistance for the next 100 years, but is actually to work with the Malawian government, others partners and DFID and everybody else to enable the Malawians to support themselves, then knowledge transfer is integral to that” (Gillon, 2010).

The partnership and arguably the Scottish Government's development programme is still at the early stages. The Co-operation Agreement is only six years old and schemes like the Parliamentary Scheme are only just starting to take shape. With the continued support of the Scottish Government and working with non-government agencies such as the Scotland-Malawi Partnership there is scope for the continuation of the partnership.

In many ways the relationship between Scotland and Malawi is set to change as progress is made. The policies of the Scottish Government also allow for their position on the International Development stage to be heightened as the Scottish Government international development initiatives expands beyond Malawi. The use of the relationship as a notion of power will contribute to the development of the partnership. The evidence from Scottish Government policy and official documents suggests that the focus is to be on working together, however in doing so it is also evident that both partners are gaining from the

relationship. Essentially the Malawian Government and wider society are gaining knowledge, resources and some financial support from the partnership whilst the Scottish Government are able to say that they have a stake within International Development in Malawi.

This paper has explored some of the main issues that concerns the partnership and has discussed some of the key milestones in the work of the partnership especially in relation to the political roles of the government's and parliaments. The research has produced more questions than answers which will be tackled as the research progresses. At this stage it is near impossible to say whether the partnership will still be functioning in the same way in the next couple of decades, though it can be suggested that at a grassroots level it is making a difference, arguably a small one, but it's making a difference all the same.

Conclusion

The history of the special relationship between Scotland and Malawi sets the scene for the contemporary partnership between the two nations. The partnership as it exists today is expounded through the 2005 Co-operation Agreement and is further explored in the developing role of the partnership between Scotland and Malawi. The exchange of knowledge is central to the partnership and to the role of power for both Scotland and Malawi. The partnership which is arguably Malawian owned rather than Scottish led, has developed through the 2005 Co-operation agreement and demonstrates the continuing work of all those involved in the partnership. The role of power has been important to both nations, not just as partners but also for them on the International Development Stage. For Scotland and arguably the Scottish Government, their role within International Development has been defined by the special relationship with Malawi, particularly as one of the first international development programmes. As a devolved government, the Scottish Government's role in International Development demonstrates the ability of Scotland as a nation to be involved in international issues.

For Malawi, the role of power is also evident in the relationship with Scotland, their input into the 2005 Cooperation Agreement and the continuing work members of the partnership, demonstrate to some extent how Malawi has taken the lead. Malawi as a nation has arguably

using the relationship to get the “best deal” in terms of development resources – i.e. knowledge.

This paper has been written at the beginning of my PhD research into the partnership between Scotland and Malawi, focusing on the 2005 Co-operation agreement and the developing partnership between the two nations. The brief research, which has focused on the Scottish Parliament and civil society, is the basis for further research into the special relationship between Scotland and Malawi with a particular focus on education as a stream of the existing 2005 Cooperation Agreement. The role of participation and knowledge exchange is key to the contemporary partnership and is reflected through the research, which focuses on education.

The role of power in particular is evident in the relationship between Government’s and upon the international development stage but is arguably not so relevant to the working level of the partnership. At the grassroots level of the partnerships it is arguably the role of exchange of knowledge in the partnership which is more important to the actors to the relationship in terms of power between the partners. The International Development Policy of the Scottish Government clearly sets the boundaries in terms of development issues and further suggests that there is an aspect of being able to demonstrate a capability to sustain the support of such policies.

Finally the role of power relations between donor and recipient are more evident at a government and policy level than at the grassroots level of the partnership where arguably the exchange of knowledge takes place. The move towards co-operation and working together is central to the relationship between Scotland and Malawi and this is demonstrated in the Co-operation Agreement and the role of actors within the partnership. The partnership may be used as a standing block within the international development arena but it also demonstrates that a special relationship of more than 150 years has been able to develop and change to incorporate the contemporary interests of both partners.

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