



annual **2015**  
**report.**

PEACE CORPS MALAWI

# ANNUAL REPORT 2015

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

To our valued partners,

It is with tremendous pride that we present our 2015 annual report, which highlights the shared accomplishments of Peace Corps Volunteers and their Malawian counterparts who work hand in hand across the country in the areas of health, education, and the environment.

The success stories and accomplishments preserved in this report represent a fraction of the resourcefulness, ingenuity, and determination of people who, despite hardships in 2015, joined hands to build a stronger, greener, and healthier Malawi. It is incredibly inspiring to see what is possible when motivated people come together.

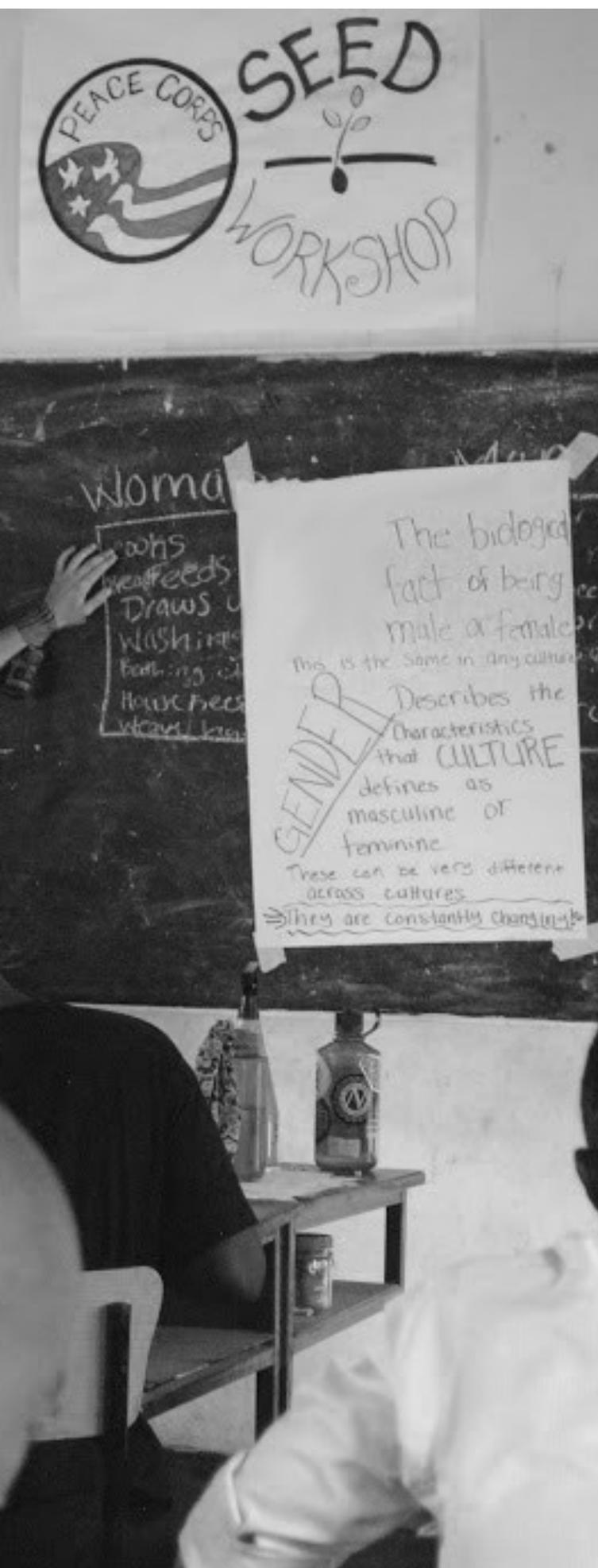
We would like to extend our warmest appreciation to the Government of Malawi and to all of our partners, including the many individuals, families, and communities that have welcomed our Volunteers into their lives and their homes, and without whom we could not do our work.

We look forward to our continued collaboration and friendship.

Carol Spahn  
Country Director



Environment Volunteer, Stefanie, teaches youth how gender roles affect environmental issues at the SEED Workshop.



“What has really blown me away is how creative the kids are when given free rein. The cartoons, stories, and opinions the club members create are always unexpectedly insightful. I see a whole different side of my students when they contribute to the newspaper.”

— Education Volunteer, Bryan P.

“I’ve learned that the basic steps to improve quality of care and strengthen systems are universal and so many of my previous experiences can be shared with hospital staff here to improve the care provided.”

— Health Volunteer, Ashley M.

“People often resort to using natural resources for profit. The honey production club was simultaneously able to conserve resources while producing a product. Forest-based enterprises like this give the forest a new value for the community and help ensure sustainable, long term conservation.”

—Environment Volunteer, Justin G.

“If we do the right things at the right times and in the right places, we can eliminate the spread of HIV/AIDS including the transmission from mother to child which is really at the heart of all we do here.”

—Response Volunteer, Deanna S.

“It has been an amazing privilege to be a part of training the first class of family medicine registrars in Malawi. Many district hospitals, which can serve catchment areas of more than a million people, have functioned without physician oversight. We are now working toward training enough family medicine specialists to have two in each district.”

—GHSP Volunteer, Anna M.





## ABOUT US

More than 2,800 Volunteers have proudly served in Malawi since Peace Corps was invited by the Government of Malawi in 1963. In 2015, 128 Volunteers worked in three sectors: Education, Health, and Environment. In addition, PC Malawi participated in the third year of the Global Health Services Partnership, which places highly skilled physicians and nurses as adjunct faculty at colleges of medicine and nursing.

## OUR VOLUNTEERS

Peace Corps Volunteers are U.S. citizens with university degrees who make a two year commitment to work with communities across Malawi. They have a common spirit reflected in the belief that service to others, a commitment to hard work, and healthy idealism are catalysts for positive change. Ranging in age from 20 to 80, they represent a variety of geographical, cultural, religious, educational backgrounds, and perspectives.

Volunteers undergo ten weeks of intensive village-based language, cross cultural and technical training in Malawi to prepare them for integration into their host communities and to bring relevant skills to their health centers, schools, national parks, forest reserves, and communities. All Volunteers are trained in HIV/AIDS and malaria prevention as well as gender promotion.

### PEACE CORPS MISSION:

To promote world peace and friendship by fulfilling three goals:

To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women

To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served

To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans

## WHAT WE DO

Education Volunteers teach in Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS) across Malawi where there is a tremendous need for qualified teachers in the areas of mathematics, physical Science, biology, and English. They design and deliver in-service training for teachers and work to build awareness and support among students, teachers and communities to practice gender-equality in the classroom while reducing gender based violence. Volunteers engage with community members and students outside of the classroom in a wide range of activities designed to improve education and health outcomes including community gardens, school libraries, girls clubs, reading clubs, and HIV/AIDS and malaria prevention activities.

## OUR STORIES: NEWSPAPER CLUB

When Volunteer Bryan P.'s school purchased a computer and a printer, Bryan saw the equipment for what it could provide: an opportunity to encourage students' creativity and improve their English writing skills. After brainstorming some ideas of how the school could utilize the computer, students chose to produce a school newspaper. With Bryan's guidance, Mphomwa Times Newspaper Club was launched.

After basic lessons teaching journalistic writing, photography, typing, and editing, Mphomwa Times' staff produced six issues in 2015. The newspaper's content ranges from academics, sports, local news, and advice columns to cartoons, creative stories, and poems. All content is generated by the club's students who have been assigned roles such as editors, photographers, and distributors and meet twice weekly.

Once content is reviewed and formatted, the newspaper is printed and sold to the community. The price is equal to the cost of production, currently about twenty Malawian Kwacha. Newspaper sales add to the Club's learning experience as it imparts business knowledge on pricing, distribution, and advertising.

Although Bryan serves as a physical science teacher, his additional activities such as the Newspaper Club demonstrate his commitment to development not only in the classroom but also in the community. With his secondary project, Bryan has promoted community literacy, computer and business skills, English writing, and finally and possibly most importantly creativity – a skill not often nurtured for Malawian youth.

**Cartoons** **Mphomwa TIMES** **Page 6**

**MOTO BUU!**  
Moto buu! Mphomwa ikupitabe pamwamba, mawinidwe m'ngosayamba. Kasungu imeneyi taponda kale. Tikakhala phe! Fuso nkumati kodi kumene tikupitaku zikatithela bwanjji? Yankho lake ndi kulimbika pamasewero athu kuti tikawineso kachiwiri. Let us put Mphomwa high. tikakawinanso kumeneko tidzasimba lokoma.  
-Written and drawn by Davrick Sicken.

**Xenophobia in South Africa**  
By Horace Nkhoma  
The car driver is Prime Minister of South Africa and the policemen in Malawi General DeGale  
What about the xenophobic attacks?  
Let all foreigners be free since they are Africans as we are Africans. That would have been the brain child of Nelson Mandela in as far as xenophobia attacks is concerned.  
Xenophobia attacked people?

**Conflicts**  
By Horace Nkhoma  
Umachepa mphwanga  
Hu wa aaaa!!  
STOP EARLY MARRIAGE

Cartoon by Horace Nkhoma

**Congratulations to our new prefects!**  
Head Boys: Reuben Soko, Henderson Ngalonde, Nancy Chazi, Martha Chinsolo  
Head Girls: Reuben Nhlane, Emelida Kasonga, Chrispine Chikalema, Memory Banda, Eness Gumbo, Luke Sane, Charity Lusale  
Sports: Danwork Msusa, Hastings Mtonga, Hannah Nyirenda, Glyn Nyirenda  
Sanitation: Tendai Kamanga, Isabel Kanyinji, Goodwell Moyoyo  
Entertainment: Emmanuel Kamanga, Wezzie Binya  
Commanders: ...and congratulations to Mphomwa Leopards for winning at the TTC!  
From Mphomwa Times staff  
Editor-in-Chief: Reuben Soko  
News Editor: Harrison D. Tembo  
Variety Editor: Gerald Banda  
Head Distributor: Mphatso Nyirenda  
Head Photographer: Madalitso Jere

Issue #3 Date: 18 May 2015 Page 6

**1,621** Students who demonstrated leadership.

**3,267** Students who demonstrated improved English proficiency.

# HEALTH

## WHAT WE DO

Health Volunteers work directly with Ministry of Health facilities, usually at community hospitals or rural health centers. In 2015, Volunteers implemented projects in HIV prevention, care and support services, system strengthening, nutrition, malaria prevention and behavioral change. They engaged in activities ranging from outreach to improve HIV testing and counseling, adherence and treatment, and nutrition education to promoting youth friendly health services, life skills and girls' empowerment, educating community members on malaria prevention strategies, and promoting good hygiene and safe water practices.

## OUR STORIES: PBI REVIEW



Ashley., Macdonald and Mavuto organize the pharmacy.

Volunteer Ashley M. and her colleagues at Monkey Bay Community Hospital went into a tense frenzy when a vehicle marked with a Support for Service Delivery Integration (or SSDI) arrived during her first month at the hospital. The unexpected guests' arrival meant a Performance Based Incentives (PBI) review was underway – a program used to monitor and evaluate various measures at the hospital.

The review analyzes the number of women starting antenatal care in the first trimester and quality measures like HIV/AIDS care. Malawi aims to improve healthcare utilization and quality of services, and this review ultimately offers financial rewards to hospitals meeting targets in antenatal, under-five, maternity and antiretroviral therapy care.

The hospital did not fare well in the first PBI review: there were no staff uniforms, the pharmacy was disorganized, and important records were nowhere to be found. The hospital's self-reported numbers did not meet the expected targets and were inaccurate.

Ashley knew she had work to do and commenced meetings with staff to discuss improvements. She led staff through the PBI review metrics one by one and encouraged staff to focus on areas where change was immediately possible like organizing the pharmacy. She conducted mock PBI reviews to better prepare the hospital for their next surprise visit. Together, she and staff compiled priority lists of short, medium and long-term tasks to improve their performance-based scores.

The work paid off! The review scores increased from 62% to 80% and the hospital will receive a financial reward to spend on hospital improvements. More work needs to be done, but Ashley and staff are committed to better monitoring, evaluation and reporting for the benefit of patients and staff.

**2,654** People having access to clean, safe drinking water.

**4,770** Individuals reached with an HIV prevention intervention.

# ENVIRONMENT

## WHAT WE DO

Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Volunteers work with the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Department of Forestry, and the Department of Parks and Wildlife. Volunteers work with local communities and government counterparts to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of natural resource conservation, reduce the impact bordering communities have on protected areas such as national parks and forest reserves, and improve agricultural practices to address food security. Volunteer activities include the development of tree nurseries, promotion of improved cookstoves, and encouraging the use of sustainable farming techniques such as permagardening, agro-forestry, and small-scale irrigation. They work with schools teaching environmental education. They also instruct community members on beekeeping, soap making, seed oil production, jam and juice making, fisheries and tree nursery management and then train them to become entrepreneurs selling their products.

## OUR STORIES: BEEKEEPING CLUB

Environment Volunteer, Justin G., found sweet success with a bee keeping and honey production group in Mimosa Village, Mulanje. Justin worked with this community to not only build and establish fifty beehives but to also emphasize the need for further conservation efforts through the planting of one thousand local trees around the perimeter of the forest. From educating on the importance of trees to directing the tree nursery establishment to ultimately planting the trees, Justin has helped the community understand that the long term sustainability of honey-derived income is directly related to the long term success of the forest.

The TRF Honey Bee Club worked in partnership with and was trained by the Tea Research Foundation of Central Africa, Mulanje Mountain Conservation Trust, and Gold Top Honey. They have created a profitable business, selling their high quality honey locally and to commercial buyers. The club's beehives have brought new value to a protected, eighty-hectare indigenous forest that had previously been illegally used for timber production, firewood, and charcoal.

The club can fully attest to the benefits of forest conservation, and, as a result of the honey production, all illegal activities have stopped in the forest and the chiefs and community actively patrol and manage this area. The group aims to increase production until they can add further value



Justin's beekeeping club poses with their hives.

to their honey through bottling and labeling. Community members are committed to being the stewards of these new trees in order to increase the honey production five to ten years in the future.

**1,806** Individuals taught new environmental knowledge and skills.

**4,770**

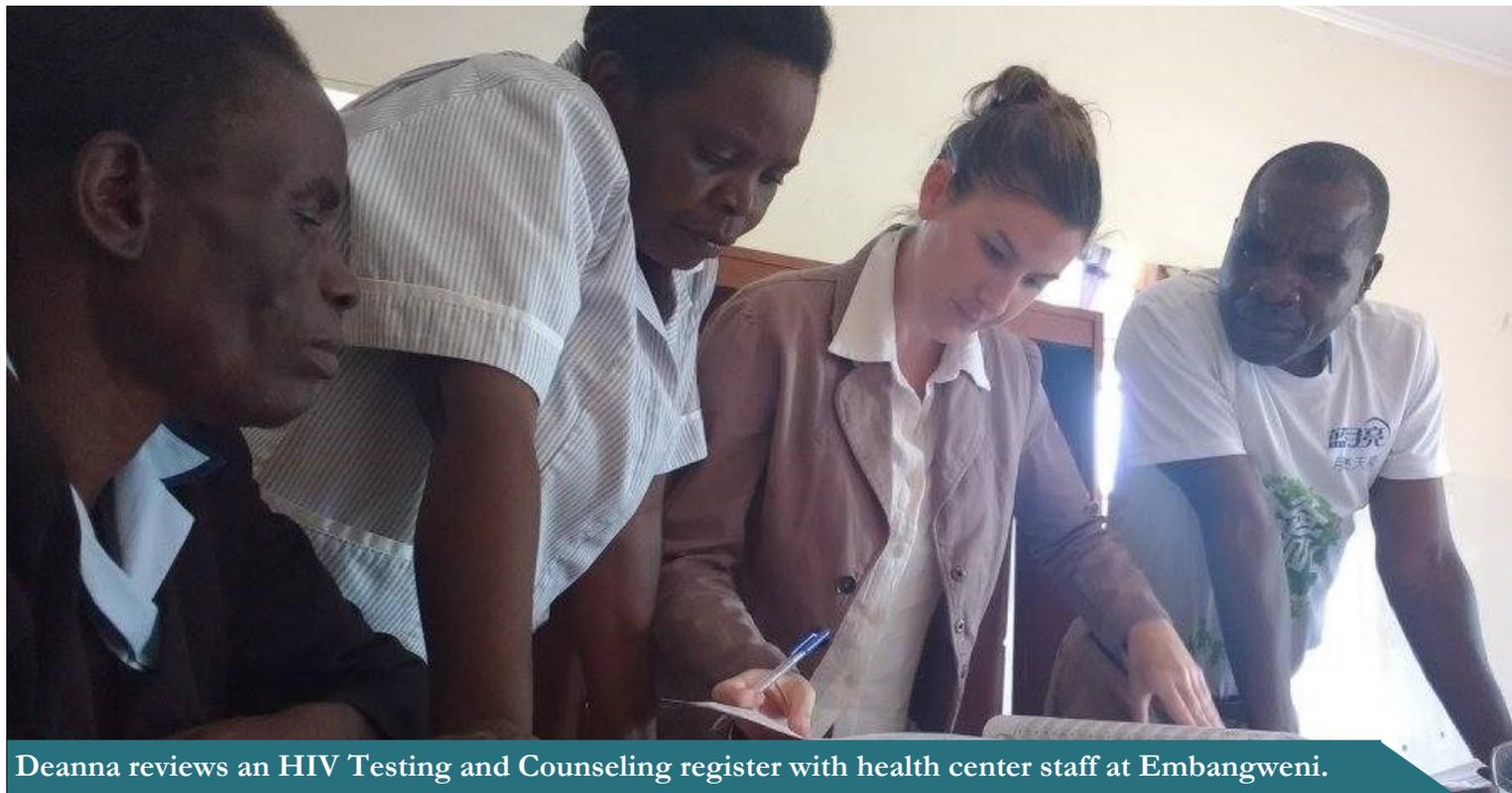
Farmers who applied improved technologies or management practices.



# RESPONSE

## WHAT WE DO

The Peace Corps Response program provides seasoned international development professionals the opportunity to serve in targeted, short-term assignments ranging from six months to a year. In Malawi, Response Volunteers partner with organizations whose missions align with Peace Corps Malawi's project frameworks. Volunteers contribute their professional skills and experiences to support the organization's strategic goals and objectives. In 2015, Peace Corps Malawi placed two Response Volunteers. In the future, the program is expected to grow with more placements to meet Malawi's critical development needs in Health, Environment, and Education.



Deanna reviews an HIV Testing and Counseling register with health center staff at Embangweni.

## OUR STORIES: MENTORSHIP AND SUPPORT

Deanna S. joined the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF) as a Peace Corps Response Volunteer after serving as a Health Volunteer in Balaka District. As an Evidence to Programs Officer, Deanna worked to improve the evidence base for EGPAF as a member of the M&E team as well as for PEPFAR-priority health facilities. Deanna visited these facilities on a quarterly basis to provide support, advice, and mentorship in order to improve data collection and use.

Due to EGPAF's focus on prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT) and early identification of mothers and infants living with HIV, Deanna spent much of these health facility visits working with staff on their HIV Testing and Counseling (HTC) registers. In Malawi, all pregnant women should be tested for HIV/AIDS at the antenatal and maternity clinic to ensure early disease diagnosis and linkage to treatment to reduce transmission of HIV infection to infants. Additionally, infants exposed to HIV are monitored for HIV infection through regular testing intervals at 2, 12 and 24 months. With consistently-monitored testing data, staff can more easily see where improvements are needed and which gaps to address to ensure optimal patient care.

In one year, Deanna was able to provide mentorship and support to twenty-five facilities each quarter while mentoring and supporting more than seventy-five healthcare providers. Additionally, she helped to design and facilitate a training for health facilities across seven districts for 125 healthcare providers. The training focused on data use for decision making and improvements in care and treatment.

## WHAT WE DO

The Global Health Service Partnership Program (GHSP) is a special collaboration among Peace Corps, the President's Emergency Plan For AIDs Relief (PEPFAR), and Seed Global Health. Nurses and physicians are placed as adjunct faculty at colleges of medicine and nursing to improve clinical education, expand the base of educators, and build healthcare provider capacity. In 2015, 11 Volunteers were placed in three institutions across Malawi: University of Malawi, College of Medicine and Kamuzu College of Nursing, and the Mzuzu University.

GHSP nurses and medical doctors build capacity of staff and students through classroom instruction, mentoring, clinical skill demonstrations, applied case management, participation in ward rounds and management, introduction of new teaching methodologies, and other activities related to clinical education. Some illustrative courses our GHSP Volunteers teach and lead include: infection prevention, child health and medical surgical nursing, pediatrics, clinicals in pediatrics, family and internal medicine and child health, and rotations in pediatrics, family medicine, internal medicine and obstetrics and gynecology.

## OUR STORIES: FAMILY MEDICINE

Family Medicine or General Practitioner Postgraduate Training exists in 65% of countries around the world. Dr. Jonny Kumwenda sought to improve Malawi's rural medicine practice through the introduction of Family Medicine in 2001. Dr. Kumwenda thought general practitioners would be better equipped to deal with the range of medical problems seen at district-level hospitals and, thus, these doctors would be able to fulfill their assignments at rural posts. Previously, many doctors at rural posts abandoned their assignments due to the overwhelming and all-encompassing nature of the lower-staffed, more generalized district health facilities.

The Global Health Service Partnership, with funding from PEPFAR and in close collaboration with the College of Medicine, helped bring Dr. Kumwenda's vision to fruition. GHSP Volunteers have helped to start a Masters in Family Medicine MMED program at Mangochi District Hospital. The training began in January 2015 with three Masters in Medicine registrars and

undergraduate student courses at the College of Medicine's main campus in Blantyre. Two GHSP volunteers, Dr. Allana K. and Dr. Jessie R., laid the program's foundation while Drs. Anna M. and Nicholas N. have continued strengthening the Family Medicine program in Malawi. They not only provide bedside teaching to medical residents and registrars in Mangochi, but they also travel to the College of Medicine for lecturing as well as preparing and implementing exams.



Dr. Anna M. reads an X-ray.

# 2,413

Hours of classroom  
and clinical teaching.

# CROSS CUTTING PROGRAMS



## HIV/AIDS

Peace Corps Malawi works in partnership with PEPFAR to address prevention of new infections, and to provide care services for people living with HIV. All volunteers in Malawi are trained in HIV prevention interventions and use evidence based tool kits to promote positive behavior change. Volunteers also conduct outreach programs to increase voluntary testing and counselling, support girls clubs and camps to improve gender equality, enhance condom distribution, facilitate community mapping to improve access to HIV services and train on income generating activities and permaculture for food security and promotion of good nutrition.

**1,772** HIV-positive adults and children receiving care and support services.

## STOMP OUT MALARIA

Peace Corps' Stomp Out Malaria Program partners with the President's Malaria Initiative to eradicate malaria. In Malawi, Volunteers and Health Surveillance Assistants (HSAs) promote evidence-based malaria prevention strategies including promoting the importance of sleeping under long lasting insecticide treated bed nets and the importance of seeking early diagnosis and treatment. Volunteers also debunk myths about malaria and encourage pregnant women to take intermittent preventive treatment. Working hand in hand with community members, Volunteers create engaging murals with malaria prevention messages to provide a creative and consistent reminder of effective malaria prevention strategies and design interactive activities including bed net repair events and dramas to build awareness for net use.

**6,123** Individuals receiving malaria prevention.



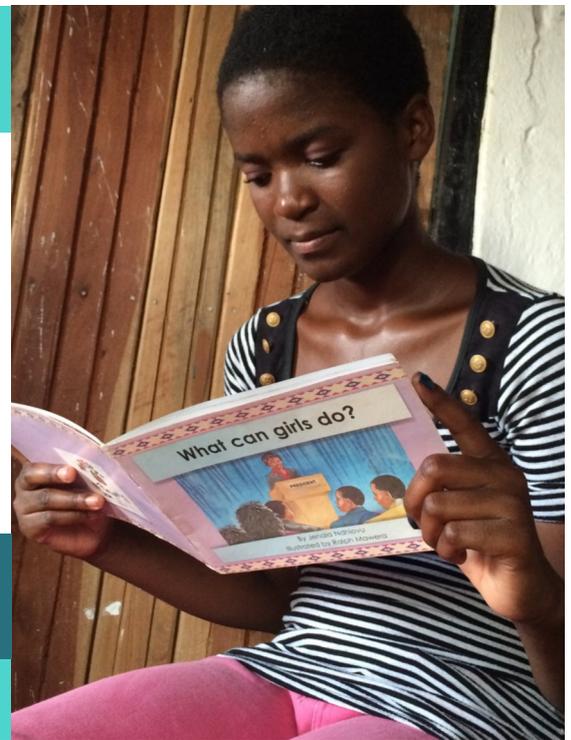
Acting as a mosquito, this young man performs in a demonstration of proper bed net hanging and care.

# GENDER

Gender is a critical component of all Peace Corps Malawi programming and includes building awareness and understanding of gender related issues, training girls and women on their rights, developing projects and activities to keep girls in school and providing income generating opportunities to empower women.

In 2015, Peace Corps Malawi implemented the U.S. government's Let Girls Learn initiative which helps adolescent girls attain a quality education and enables them to reach their full potential. The program encourages community-led solutions by empowering local leaders to put lasting solutions in place.

**3,791** Individuals reached through gender equality programs.



# SOLID



Hilary discusses compost with her SOLID group.

Sustainable Opportunities for Leaders of Internal Development (SOLID) is a program aimed at identifying and empowering host country nationals who are dedicated to developing their communities. SOLID equips these individuals with the training and resources necessary to implement their own development projects. Health Volunteer Hilary F. and her Malawian counterpart decided to begin the SOLID curriculum when they recognized the program's potential to engage the community in their future development.

After area chiefs helped to recruit committed, hardworking participants, Hilary's group began their four month SOLID training program. In addition to SOLID's standard fifteen sessions, Hilary also included supplemental lessons focused on permagardening, food preservation, the benefits of *moringa*, and practical business skills. The group

received orange flesh sweet potato vines and created a 'vine library' in which they were responsible for multiplying vines and further distributing the vines to HIV support groups, women's groups, and local community gardens to improve the nutritional status of the community.

Hilary's SOLID group has already demonstrated how a few community members can have a massive impact at the grassroots level. At the end of the SOLID training, fifty individuals graduated from the program.

The SOLID group continues to implement the skills they learned and will teach a future SOLID group the same skills. The group has plans for soap making, gardening, and nutrition trainings. The members acknowledge that as community workers, their work is never complete—but as they like to say, "If you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together!"

"My favorite thing about working with SOLID is the commitment the members show towards bringing Malawi forward while leaving no one behind. They are passionate about involving both men and women in our projects and diversifying tasks so there are no 'women only' or 'men only' jobs. They embrace the fact that we must support the health of mothers and children first and foremost, and that when women succeed, the whole community will too."

— Hilary F., Health PCV

**700**

Individuals reached through SOLID programs.

# CAMPS

## CAMP GLOW

With the theme “We Are Together”, 66 young women from across Malawi were encouraged to support and empower one another during Camp GLOW (Girls Leading Our World). This national leadership camp encourages young women to become active and healthy citizens by asserting their rights, engaging in life planning and goal setting, and building their self-confidence and self-awareness. Campers also learned critical HIV prevention strategies and committed to bringing their new skills and passion back to their communities, where they promised to lift and inspire their friends by sharing their new strategies and leadership skills.



A Camp GLOW participant shows off a reusable sanitary pad.

“By building genuine bonds locally and internationally, across color lines and cultures, women create a support system in which information about our unique experiences is shared. This increase in awareness allows us to empower each other in various ways as we work towards gender equality and equity for all women.”

—Simone C., GLOW Coordinator

## CAMP SKY

80 hard-working students from 30 rural based Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS) participated in Camp Sky, a national education camp that provides intensive instruction to prepare students for MSCE exams. The students discuss post-secondary school life and learn goal setting skills to prepare for the future.



Mike B. leads a session at Camp SKY.

# SEED

Sustainable Environmental Education for Development (SEED) aims to inspire Malawian youth about the importance of conserving Malawi's precious resources, related to environment and conservation practices, while teaching important life skills, such as HIV and malaria prevention. This year, 25 lucky campers travelled to Liwonde National Park to learn about health and nutrition, mud stove construction, food preservation, tree nurseries, and many other practical ways to both improve their lives and livelihoods while protecting the forests.

Shannon K. talks about permagardens at Camp SEED.



“It has been a great, memorable week in my life. I have learned some small solutions that can automatically address BIG problems. Now, I am a SEED of change whose roots will spread widely.”

—Kelvin, SEED Workshop participant

# MALAWI MUSIC PROJECT

Malawi Music Project (MMP), which began in 2008, is a collaboration between the Peace Corps and Music Crossroads Malawi. This year, MMP brought 15 youth from Lilongwe and 15 youth from rural communities around Malawi together for a week long training in the prevention, social implications, and science of HIV/AIDS as well as the history of Malawian music, songwriting, music structure, theory, stage presence and music entrepreneurship. The students are then put into bands and tasked to arrange an original song around the theme of HIV/AIDS. At the end of the project, the bands have an opportunity to record their respective tracks and there is a Battle of the Bands performance open to the community on the last day of the camp. Students leave MMP equipped with the knowledge to spread behavior change messages about HIV/AIDS and other pressing issues through their emerging music ability, and dedication to see Malawi rise above its HIV/AIDS infection rates and social stigma.



Joe E. and MMP participants practice drumming.

# GRASSROOT SOCCER

Grassroot Soccer is an organization that leverages the power of soccer to educate, inspire, and mobilize youth in developing countries to overcome their greatest health challenges, live healthier, more productive lives, and be agents for change in their communities.

This popular HIV prevention, mitigation and support training has been steadily expanding since GRS and PC Malawi began working together in 2012. The initial draw of GRS is the soccer — it is fun, active and universally enjoyed by Malawians. However, it is the cohesive, holistic, field-tested curriculum that makes it a highly effective and wonderful cross-sector program for any PCV. GRS strikes the balance between being engaging and empowering as well as educational and relevant for Malawian youth.



PCVs and counterparts join in a team cheer.

PCVs empower GRS counterpart coaches and encourage them during trainings to master the curriculum and ultimately be able to implement the program on their own in their communities and for broader replication across Malawi.

**6,293** Youths reached through Grassroot Soccer SKILLZ programs.



Orange flesh sweet potatoes are rich in Vitamin A.

## FOOD SECURITY

The past several years have seen devastating drought and food shortages across the country. This year, in order to combat the increasing problems surrounding food security in rural areas, Peace Corps Volunteers across all sectors received permagarden and nutrition training. By implementing sustainable gardening practices and encouraging the growing and eating of nutritious and locally available crops, Volunteers and communities are able to respond to the crisis at hand and work on solutions from the ground up.

**247**

Permagardens created.

**1153**

Individuals who completed food security trainings.

# THANK YOU

Peace Corps Malawi staff.



It is with extreme gratitude that we recognize the entire Peace Corps Malawi staff for their dedicated hard work and commitment to the Peace Corps Malawi program. Through countless hours of trainings, meetings, obstacles, and triumphs, the effort put forth by these individuals led nearly 150 PCVs through a happy, healthy, and fulfilling Peace Corps service in 2015. The Volunteer community thanks you for your invaluable expertise, care, and support.



Combined Health and Environment 2015 Trainees swear in as Volunteers.

"Peace requires the simple but powerful recognition that what we have in common as human beings is more important and crucial than what divides us."

Sargent Shriver

*First Peace Corps Director*





## PEACE CORPS MALAWI

4/70 Murray Road  
P.O. Box 208, Lilongwe Malawi

[www.peacecorps.gov/malawi/](http://www.peacecorps.gov/malawi/)



LET \*  
GIRLS  
LEARN