**Short Report on Refresher Courses**

Between October and December 2013, FLAEM run four refresher courses for Why Wait teachers. A total of 305 teachers attended the courses. The idea to run the refresher courses was in response to requests from the trained teachers.

The refresher courses were a big opportunity for the teachers to share their experiences and sharpen their skills in teaching Why Wait. All the teachers narrated success stories of the programme from their schools. Notable among the success stories were: reduced discrimination of pupils living with HIV and AIDS, both pupils and teachers assisting the less privileged learners in the schools. One of the teachers bought school uniform for a girl who almost dropped out of school as her parents could not afford the school uniform. This is a very good example of sacrifice from the teacher because the teachers do not get a living salary (considering the current financial situation of the country). The teachers also reported that Why Wait has given them new skills and knowledge in the field of HIV and AIDS which they are able to use in other government examinable subjects such as Life Skills.

Perhaps most interesting was the narration of a number of teachers who saw Why Wait as a catalyst for a change in their personal lives. They said that when preparing the lessons they felt challenged in their own lives and started asking probing questions on why they were doing certain things.

The programme has full support of ministry officials at the district level beginning with the District Education Manager himself, Mr Gossam Mafuta. Mr. Mafuta has described the programme approach as the best because it has taken sustainability into consideration from the onset through the training of teachers who will always be there even if FLAEM were to move out of the district. (FLAEM trains teachers who implement the programme in the schools). The Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) who are responsible for the zones which the schools are divided into are also very supportive. They attended the refresher courses and challenged the trained teachers to teach the programme because it is a programme that has a holistic approach. The PEAs cooperate fully with FLAEM. They among other things supervise Why Wait lessons when they do their regular visits to the schools. They also provide information when required. The PEAs have confided to FLAEM that most of the teachers who have gone through the training are showing positive changes in their behaviour.

Why Wait does not want to confine itself to classroom situations. During the refresher courses, it was agreed that the schools will also work with the community so that the community starts taking an active part in the education of their children. Through this initiative, each school will look for role models and resource person who will be one in a while coming to the schools to talk and train the learners in different skills. The schools have developed work plans on what they intend to do. Some of the activities include starting school vegetable gardens, visiting and cheering the sick, doing charity work such as cleaning health centres, learning different skills such as making hoe handles.

One of the trained teachers who is living positively expressed his gratitude to FLAEM saying that through the interactions during the training and what he has read in the Why Wait books, he realised that life was still worthy living. He therefore decided to upgrade himself. He had a Junior Certificate (had passed year two secondary school). He enrolled for Malawi School Certificate of Education (year four of secondary school). He said that he surprised himself after passing the exam which he previously thought he would not pass. He is now a living example among his friends. He says the training changed his attitude towards his status. He is now chairing the Association of Teachers Living Positively as he has publicly declared his status.

Learners who are participating in the programme have started to open up. A number of them have reported to the teachers of the hardships (ill treatment) they go through in their homes (either from parents or guardians). This is a result of what the programme teaches them about the value that they have because of being created in the image of God.

Statistics

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| Class | Streams | Boys | Girls |
| Standard 5 | 58 | 3,632 | 3,487 |
| Standard 6 | 53 | 2,450 | 2,551 |
| Standard 7 | 47 | 1,930 | 1,931 |
| Standard 8 | 42 | 1,761 | 1,442 |