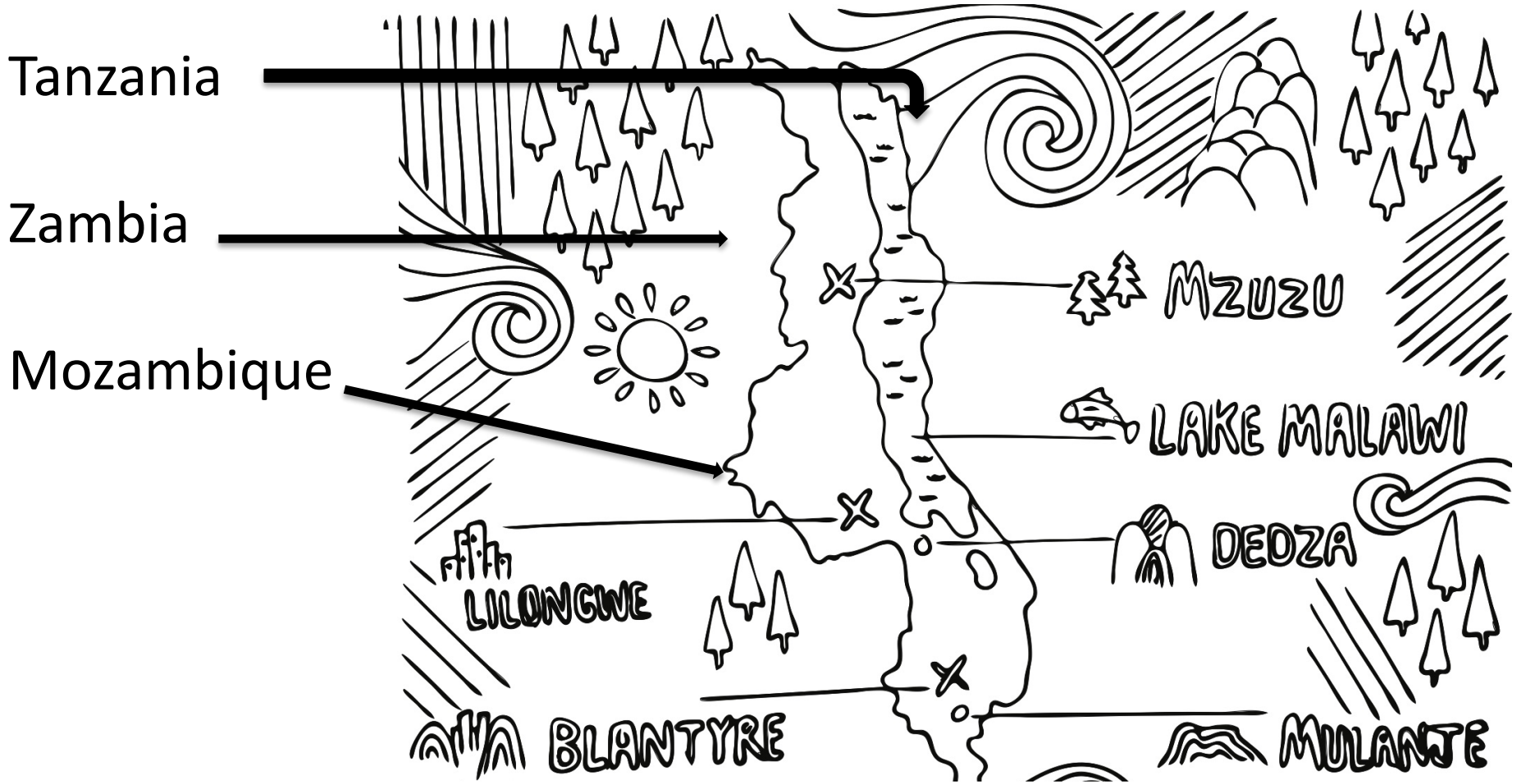


The impact of conceptualisations of disability on development of new Occupational Therapy curriculum in Malawi.

Kate Mkandawire

Malawi



Population 18 million people

OT in Malawi



Occupational Therapy
Association of Malawi
(OTAM)

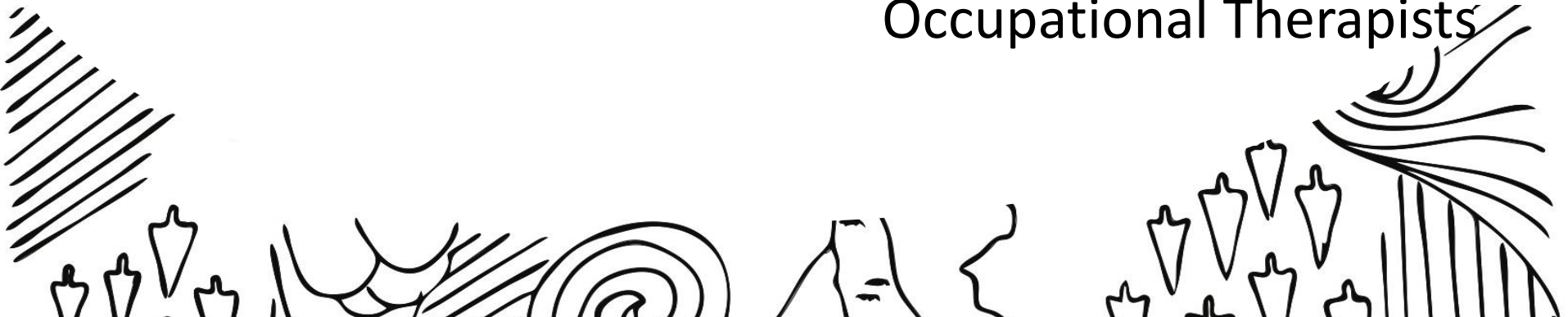
10 Occupational
Therapists currently
practicing

Development of a Bsc of
Occupational Therapy

Curriculum Development

“Having a clear understanding of the local health and welfare needs and how occupational therapists can meet those needs is the starting point for planning a curriculum”

-WFOT, Minimum Standards for the Education of Occupational Therapists



Disability in Malawi

Rate of disability: 2.4% among children
and 3.8% in general population¹¹

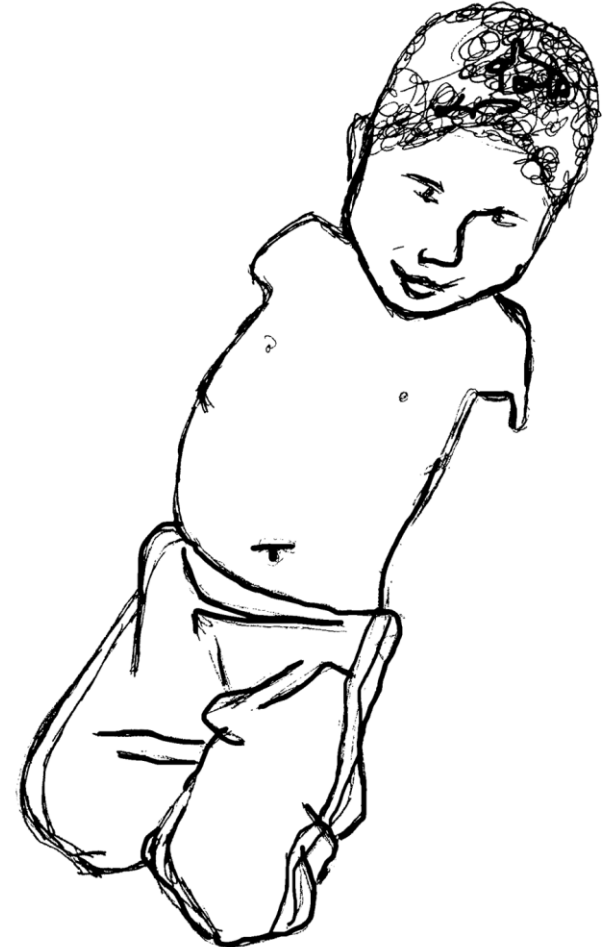
37800 children could benefit from
Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy
services and 5400 children are in need
of a wheelchair³

William

3 years old

Born with partial formation of limbs in rural village

Carer's main concern was social stigma



Questions

1. What existing dominant perceptions of disability exist among community members and health workers?
2. What unique skills, attitudes and knowledge can Occupational Therapy bring to bridge gaps formed by difference perceptions?
3. How does this knowledge impact curriculum development?

Perceptions of the cause of disability in Malawian community and carers

- 27% of family believed club foot to be caused by witchcraft⁵

Other common beliefs:

- Parents carrying out witchcraft to get rich
- A pregnant woman breaking a taboo
- Laughing at others with disability⁶

Perception of the cause of disability among Rehabilitation Workers

“Birth asphyxia

Infectious diseases during pregnancy

Prolonged labour

Premature delivery and pre-term bleeding

Cerebral Malaria

Congenital deformities

Accidents

Poor health services”

What unique skills, attitudes and knowledge can OT bring?

“Occupational therapy can bring great skills in the rehabilitation system, in a way that it is a wide field which looks at the physical, emotional and social aspect of an individual”

- Rehabilitation Technician



How this knowledge can inform the curriculum development for new OTs

“The primary objective of the BSc Occupational Therapy course at the University of Malawi College of Medicine is to train proficient, resourceful, thoughtful, evidence-based, and empathetic OTs to serve Malawi’s most pressing contemporary rehabilitation needs”

-Malawian OT Curriculum Introduction

How OT can help meet this need?



Balancing the load of resourceful, thoughtful, reflective, empathetic and evidence-based practice

Occupational Therapist

Thank you!

Contact: Kate Mkandawire: kate.e.mkandawire@gmail.com



References

1. Stine Hellum Braathen & Marit Hoem Kvam, 2008 'Can anything good come out of this mouth?' Female experiences of disability in Malawi, *Disability and Society*
2. Stine Hellum Braathen, Alister Munthali & Lisbet Grut (2015) Explanatory models for disability: perspectives of health providers working in Malawi, *Disability & Society*
3. Sarah Polack, Makisa Mulwafa, Petros Kayange, Lena Banks, Christiane Noe, Chris Lay, Myroslava Tataryn and Hanna Kuper (2017) Childhood disability in Malawi: a population based assessment using the key informant method
4. Ingstaad, B and Aide, A (2011), *Disability and Poverty*, Policy Press
5. Weston-Simons, Levy (2005) Guardians' attitudes to children with physical disabilities in Malawi
6. Fiona Nelson, (2012) An Exploration of Perceptions and Experiences of Participation of Children with Disabilities in rural Northern Malawi
7. Amos, A, Wapling, F (2011) Research: Epilepsy in Malawi, Report for Federation of Disability Organisation in Malawi in Partnership with Sue Rider Foundation in Malawi
8. Paget, A, Mallewa, M Chinguo, D, Mahebere-Chirambo, C & Gladstone, M (2015) "It means you are grounded" – caregivers' perspectives on the rehabilitation of children with neurodisability in Malawi, *Disability and Rehabilitation*
9. C. Masulani-Mwale,* D. Mathanga,† D. Silungwe,* F. Kauye‡ and M. Gladstone, (2016) Parenting children with intellectual disabilities in Malawi: the impact that reaches beyond coping?, *Child: Care, Health and Development*
10. Weston Simons (2005), Guardians' attitudes to children with physical disabilities in Malawi, *Tropical Health*
11. Malawi Givernment, 2008, Malawi Housing and Population Census
12. CIA, World Factbook, Malawi.
13. World Bank, Malawi Overview
14. WFOT, Minimum Standards for the Education of Occupational Therapists