



*Photo 1 Manchewe Village Primary School*

**TOURISM, COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL  
ENTERPRISE:  
A CASE STUDY ON THE  
PERCEIVED COMMUNITY  
IMPACT OF MUSHROOM FARM  
LODGE IN MANCHEWE VILLAGE,  
MALAWI**

**Tamra Carlson**

University of Colorado Denver  
Master of Social Science Candidate – Spring  
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**Committee Members**

Chair: Marty Otañez, Ph.D.

Member: Omar Swartz, JD, Ph.D.

Member: Emily VanHouweling, Ph.D.

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## Introduction

The aim of this exploratory case study is to investigate the connection between backpacker tourism (budget lodges/hostels) in Malawi and its perceived effects on community development as seen through the eyes of the lodge owners, lodge employees, as well as members of the local community. Specifically, the project question is: *What is the relationship between Mushroom Farm Eco-Lodge and Manchewe village?*

The project is designed as a single-site case study drawing upon qualitative data, utilizing visual methodology, interviews, and observations. It is composed of two parts: a scholarly video entitled *Manchewe Votes Mushroom Farm To Stay!* and this accompanying report. The video is meant to best showcase the relationship between the lodge and the community, as well as function as a tangible, accessible end product for study participants. This is an important component of the constructivist framework that will be outlined further in this paper. The purpose of this companion report is to elaborate on the study framework, methodology and additional findings that are part of the landscape on which the video was created. The report is meant for researchers, practitioners and others with an interest in backpacker tourism, community development, or social enterprise.

The results of this study are intended to document a specific example of how the tourist industry has effectively immersed themselves within the local Malawian context and created a perceived positive impact in one local community, rather than to produce generalizable knowledge. Ultimately the findings are guiding my own endeavors to create a sustainable, community-driven social venture, in the form of a social enterprise eco-lodge, in Malawi, which

will be discussed in this report. Since the findings are directly applicable to the creation of a new community development project, one that will be driven *not* by my own capital desire, rather by the wishes of the intended community, understanding how similar communities view impact is essential. Additionally, community development is a highly subjective term; further exacerbated by the intent to capture it neatly in a box. Since the motivation to explore this relationship between backpacker tourism and community development stems from my own proposed social venture, it is important to embrace a constructivist approach, to help lodge owners and employees, the local community members and myself as the researcher begin to understand the impact we have on each other. The constructivist paradigm allows for the exploration of this viewpoint by allowing the key stakeholders to work together to co-create this knowledge.

## Guiding Paradigm

Paradigms are an important component of any study, as they outline the framework or lens that the researcher will use to make “truth” of the data collected. Lincoln and Guba, qualitative researchers, explain paradigm via their constructivist lens by utilizing theory and fact: “facts are facts only within some theoretical framework” (Guba and Lincoln 1994, 107). In agreement with their stance on paradigms in general, I embraced a constructivist approach as the guiding backbone in gathering and interpreting information throughout this study. Constructivism originally stemmed largely from social scientists wanting to break free from the positivist or objective vision of the “received view” of the world (Guba and Lincoln 1994, Charreire Petit and Huault 2008, Lupovici 2009). Constructivists rely heavily on research participants to co-create the knowledge ultimately sought out in their study and generally

embrace an emic perspective, meaning they value the viewpoint of the local or indigenous participants, unfiltered by Western views (Lewis 2005).

The epistemological question, which is the relationship between the knower and people “co-producing” the knowledge, is what sets critical theorists and constructivists apart from positivists and post-positivists. Constructivists believe that the researcher and the participants actively create knowledge together which Lincoln and Guba call “transactional and subjectivist” (Guba and Lincoln 1994, 111). The methods that constructivists use to acquire this socially constructed, ever changing knowledge rely heavily on dialectical exchange and often stress triangulation, to get multiple angles and voices in the conversation. Many researchers utilizing this framework actively integrate research participants into every phase of their project, throughout the design, data collection and analysis phases specifically (Golafshani 2003, Chandra et al. 2017).

While the constructivist approach has taken on various sub-approaches since Lincoln and Guba defined it (Parsons 2015, Lupovici 2009), they all focus on the social construction of knowledge. As Parsons puts it, “constructivist scholarship argues that we cannot access something we should want to know about action without paying attention to interpretive social constructs like ideas, norms, practices, identities, or discourse” (Parsons 2015, 504). As Lincoln and Guba originally outlined, constructivist’s ontological approach, or what is constituted as “real” for them, stems from a relativist approach. That is:

Realities are apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature (although elements are often shared among many individuals and even across cultures), and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions (Guba and Lincoln 1994, 110).

What is vital to this study is the constructivist idea that knowledge is subjective and shaped or created by the mind, rather than “discovered by the mind” (Charreire Petit and Huault 2008). That co-creation of knowledge takes place as a result of the interaction between the researcher and the participants through an iterative process that allows participants to be actively involved in defining what community development even means in the context of their society. To stay true to this idea of iteration, I talked to many people in the initial phases of this study, across the key stakeholder groups. This allowed for the interview questions and probes to change over the course of my fieldwork and for emerging themes to be explored in greater depth.

To decipher meaning from this study, it was important to take an all-encompassing approach to learning about the community’s perspective. The reality for different stakeholders can vary significantly based on the social constructs at play in their lives and can even change or be reconstructed based on their interaction with the researcher. Knowing this, I sought to make sure that the story that was unfolding was “true” (or simply more informed) for the larger community by speaking to as many different people as possible in the time frame given and probing specifically for variations to the story. Additionally, I was able to observe and participate in several community events, specifically the adult literacy class end of term celebrations, which occurred when I was performing my fieldwork. The sentiment expressed by the community members present at these events, unprompted by me, supported the experiences of the interviewees. This congruency helps to add credibility to this study, which is particularly important due to the short time frame for data collection.

While it was difficult due to technology and distance problems (the internet and cell network in Malawi is very temperamental and slow), I did provide participants with an opportunity to view the scholarly video produced as a part of this study to vet it for accuracy and authenticity and provide feedback before publishing it online. Since the owners of the lodge, Cameron and Maddy, have better internet access, I started by emailing them the video and asking them to share it with the lodge staff and participants. During my fieldwork, I emphasized to each participant that I would try to give them the opportunity to provide feedback before finalization and expressed to them the value that would add to the project. I did also clarify that I could make no promises due to the lack of good access to technology and internet. At the time this report was written, I had yet to receive any feedback from the community. However, in July 2018 I will conduct a public viewing in Manchewe, when I am back in Malawi. At that time, I will sit with participants to go through the film and make the necessary changes before showing it publicly or posting it on Mushroom Farm's website in an effort to stay true to my constructivist approach.

## Visual Research

An ever-growing body of academic knowledge exists around the role video can play in research design and how the dissemination of that knowledge is of utmost significance. In her book *Advances in Visual Methodology*, Sarah Pink says:

Yet brought together we can see how social science, art and intervention invite new ways of thinking about how we might do visual research; how we might engage participants and publics in the processes of research and in the dissemination of such work; how in a digital context this invites new ideas and new practices; and thus what advances in visual methodology this brings (Pink 2012, 14).

As Ton Otto points out, little academic attention has been paid to “the impact of film as products of collaboration on the reciprocal interaction between researchers and their partners in the field” (Otto 2013, 196). His viewpoint is that:

Film can function as a gift that strengthens reciprocal relationships and it is a medium that facilitates dialogue and intercultural exchange. [He] argues that film has great potential for eliciting cultural differences and enhancing intercultural communication as people relate to the same visual material from their different perspectives more easily than in the case of written text (Otto 2013, 197).

While neither of these scholars claim to operate under a constructivist framework outright, to my knowledge, the aspects of visual ethnography they both advocate for effectively exemplify the constructivist approach. Taking it one step further, some social scientists, anthropologists and other scholars make use of participatory videos as a method for engaging with local communities. Participatory video making – where research participants are taught to develop and record their own stories – is thought to be an exemplary way to give participants who would generally lack a voice more power, especially when it is used in policy dialogue and advocacy work (Gough, Langevang, and Namatovu 2014).

Video methodology played an integral role in this study, contributing significantly to the co-creation of knowledge. After many informal or pre-interviews were done in the community, concurrently with observations, I was able to determine the participants best able and willing to portray the story of this relationship visually, on film. This process was iterative, as the interview questions fluctuated based on the responses of each stakeholder. While the method doesn't fall into the classification of “participatory videos,” in that participants were not making the videos themselves, they will have the opportunity (in July 2018) to view the final video before online publication and shed light on whether the meaning of their stories is represented

appropriately. This type of feedback cycle is generally not possible with a written work, hence allowing participants and myself to shape the output of the study together.

## Issue

International development challenges, such as increasing livelihood opportunities in rural areas, have been addressed through a wide variety of approaches. One field that has been emerging over the last several decades as an innovative way to address some of these social and environmental challenges is social enterprise (Bonanni; Lépineux; and Roloff 2011, Galvin and Iannotti 2015). There are many definitions of what exactly social enterprise and social entrepreneurship entail, but most of them agree that it aims to address a pressing social or environmental concern through the use of earned income. What sets a social enterprise apart is that its mission is driven by social impact rather than profit, even though earned income is integral in their financial structure. In this regard, a social enterprise can take the legal form of nonprofit, for profit, or some type of hybrid and they are sometimes even found in government agencies (usually in the form of intrapreneurship) (Chahine 2016). The debate in the definition of this field generally lies with whether a venture *must* be innovative (and to what degree) and scalable to be considered a social enterprise (Guo and Bielefeld 2014).

This study defines social enterprise in a broad context, with no mention of innovation or scalability, because of the constructivist framework embraced which stresses the importance of contextual relevance. Because no two communities are alike, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to community development. It is under this premise that the study denies a venture must be scalable in order to be classified as a social enterprise. Furthermore, innovation is a

highly subjective term, open to much interpretation, and therefore it is also excluded from defining the entity in this study.

Regardless of the definition used, social enterprise is undoubtedly gaining momentum in the field of international development as a new way to provide value to communities in developing countries (Chahine 2016, Von der Weppen and Cochrane 2012). One of the industries that is crossing into this interdisciplinary problem-solving realm is that of tourism, specifically those dedicated to budget travel in developing countries, loosely referred to as *backpacker tourism* or *ecotourism* (Eshun 2014). In many places, tourism is already adding economic value to society through job creation and the use of sustainable, locally sourced resources during construction (Butler 2017, Snyman 2012). However, many lodges worldwide are also leveraging their close ties with the community and those tourists passing through to address pressing social concerns. For example, one community in rural Uganda developed a local tourism cooperative to capitalize on tourists visiting the nearby wetlands. When interviewed, local residents had only positive perceptions of tourism in their area and the most cited example of community benefit was the new secondary school built by the cooperative, which now supported the whole community. People also cited community development in general as well as higher income, improved agricultural markets and “random good fortune” (Lepp 2007, 880).

Though even with this shifting dynamic between tourism and development, there is still the challenge of how to measure social impact. Several authors point out (Deery; Jago; and Fredline 2012) that “although several studies have been constructed to highlight social impacts, they have frequently failed to examine the importance of the *quality* – and not just the quantity

– of tourism jobs” (Butler 2017, 200). Deery, Jago and Fredline (2012) advocate for future research on the social impacts of tourism to utilize more qualitative methods in order to provide deeper, more meaningful insight into these impacts. Furthermore, there is a lack of academic research to show how social entrepreneurship, specifically in tourism, can create lasting positive impact in communities. Due to this scarcity of literature and in attempt to answer the call for *quality* in tourism research, this study intends to provide a very specific example of how one lodge has built beneficial relationships within their community and how each stakeholder perceives the impact of that relationship. In this regard, Malawi is a prime setting for studying this relationship, as the country is underdeveloped with a robust tourist industry and the people, immensely proud of their status of being “the warm heart of Africa,” some of the most hospitable, friendly people around (Malawian Tourism Website 2017).

## Malawi

Malawi is a land locked country in sub-Saharan Africa bordered by Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zambia and is the home to roughly 16 million inhabitants (Bello; Lovelock; and Carr 2017). While a relatively small country in comparison to its neighbors, Malawi is ethnically diverse, encompassing nine major groups (United Nations 2014). In Rhumpi district in northern Malawi, where this study took place, the primary ethnic group is the Tumbuka people who speak Chitumbuka. As a low-resource country, with a Human Development Index (HDI) score of 0.418, ranking 170 out of 187 countries (United Nations 2014), the Malawian economy is largely dependent on agriculture. Tourism, however, is starting to play an important role in the GDP of Malawi (Bello; Lovelock; and Carr 2017). The country is home to one of the most biodiverse lakes in the world. Lake Malawi – a major draw for tourism – makes up a fifth of the

total area of the country and is less than a three-hour drive from almost anywhere in the country.

## Self-Reflection

To be up-front about any personal bias that may exist, it is important to disclose my own reasons for pursuing this topic. Prior to the development of this project, I set a goal is to start my own social venture, in the form of a budget-friendly eco-lodge, in Malawi. This project was prompted due my entrepreneurial drive and my initiative to identify the best ways to work within communities in Malawi. The impetus for this project is rooted in my deep-seated connection to sub-Saharan Africans (initiated in 2007 during Peace Corps service in Zambia), stemming from their culture and vibrancy as people. So, it is of utmost importance that my potential endeavor is sustainable and mutually beneficial to all stakeholders. In order to create something rich (in the cultural sense) and long lasting, my belief is that due diligence must be carefully observed in the initial startup phases to understand the complexities that exist: the intricacies of Malawian culture, but also the overlap between social enterprise, community development, and tourism. This project gave me the opportunity to further explore how these topics are deeply intertwined and shed light on practices that should be embraced or avoided – or at least recognized – in creating my own social venture.

## Review of Relevant Literature

As this study was designed to be interdisciplinary, it is important to draw on relevant literature from across multiple disciplines. There have been few studies done to date that analyze the perceptions of a broad array of stakeholders in the fields of backpacker tourism, specifically in regards to *social entrepreneurship*. Each of these arenas (social enterprise and

backpacker tourism) are relatively new areas of study, so the review of literature was expanded to include several general studies on tourism and social entrepreneurship, as well as a geographical expansion to include southern Africa. Some of the common areas explored in the relevant literature are that of tourism, international development, and economics.

Within the tourism discipline there are numerous classifications of “alternative tourism” (Giampiccoli; Saayman; and Jugmohan 2016, Krippendorf 1991) or tourism that offers societal or environmental benefits, which differ from traditional mass tourism. While several of these classifications were explored for the study, such as *fair trade tourism* (Boluk 2011), *community based tourism* (Giampiccoli; Saayman; and Jugmohan 2016), *Albergo Diffuso tourism* (Giampiccoli; Saayman; and Jugmohan 2016), and *rural tourism* (Ezeuduji 2017), there is significant overlap amongst them. Furthermore, these terms are used primarily by academics, so attaching a specific lodge to a single classification proves difficult. Though one article did concisely organize the characteristics usually present in successful tourism development in rural regions. Based on the research of Gianna Moscardo, success happens when:

- it emerges from initiatives developed within the destination community;
- it is planned, and the planning and control of tourism offers opportunities for real public participation;
- the destination residents are knowledgeable about tourism and its impacts;
- tourism contributes to capacity building within the destination community;
- there are good connections to tourism distribution systems;
- the community has effective tourism leaders/entrepreneurs and
- there is higher local ownership of tourism enterprises (Moscardo 2014).

This list can easily be applied in all of the areas of alternative tourism and though she doesn't discuss backpacker tourism specifically, these factors are a starting point in evaluating that sector as well.

Most of the studies specific to backpacker tourism focus on southeast Asia where the backpacker industry is deemed to be the most popular (Sørensen 2003). However there is a considerable body of academic literature coming from tourism research done in South Africa (Butler 2017, Rogerson 2007, Visser 2004), as the backpacking industry has been thriving there and continues to grow. Of the research on backpacker tourism analyzed for this project about half of the articles focused on the specific qualities and characteristics of backpackers and their motivations for traveling in this manner (Ooi and Laing 2010, Paris and Teye 2010, Sørensen 2003). The other articles delve into the developmental implications of backpacker tourism and discuss the critiques of the industry on community development, as well as the changing landscape and possible benefits backpacker tourism can bring to local (especially rural) villages in developing countries (Rogerson 2007, Scheyvens 2002, Visser 2004). An initial review of this literature shows the most cited concern with backpackers as being their aggressiveness for being thrifty, to the point of pushing locals to lower their prices on goods. Goodwin, Kent, Parker and Walpole, in 1998, said that backpackers, “become excessively concerned with bargain hunting” (Scheyvens 2002, 147). On the contrary, one of the biggest benefits that backpackers bring to local, rural community development is the length of stay and wide geographic coverage. Since backpackers are known to stay longer and travel further – usually to off the beaten track places (i.e. rural) – it is shown that they spend more in country than higher-end tourists due to length of stay and the economic benefits they provide are more wide reaching because they travel to areas that would otherwise be unaffected by tourism (Scheyvens 2002).

The missing link between the topic of this study and the research done to date is the voice of local communities on the impact of backpacker tourism. Most of these studies rely on secondary data, as well as the perceptions of the backpackers themselves, rather than attempting a qualitative, emic perspective on development. Of the few studies that capture the local voice, there was one qualitative case study done in Uganda that presented solely the view of the local community, on ecotourism specifically. Their findings were overwhelmingly positive, citing benefits such as community development, income generation, improved agricultural outcomes, as well as “random good fortune” (Lepp 2007, 880). While not specific to budget or backpacker tourism, another study done in South Africa provided the viewpoint of employees in the tourism sector (predominantly non-White, South African females) and owners or managers in the industry. That study also cited community benefits, specifically towards employees.

These benefits included empowerment through capacity building and the acquisition of positions that involved a high degree of responsibility, many of which would have been otherwise unobtainable but for the support of local tourism businesses. Others were afforded opportunities to pursue formal qualifications that enabled them to pursue dreams of senior positions or even new career paths (Butler 2017, 199).

A conflicting conclusion was found in a study conducted in Malawi: local perception towards tourism was apathetic, and people failed to see the benefits that had been promised to their community. However, this study was focused specifically on community participation during ecotourism planning processes not on established tourism infrastructure (Bello; Lovelock; and Carr 2017).

As unique and interesting as these studies are, they don't provide generalizable knowledge for the context of this study. The constructivist framework I embodied dictates the

need for a contextually, socially relevant understanding of the perceptions of the pertinent actors. The literature does however provide good insight as to how other communities may view tourism, as well as offer methodological ideas on how to approach a similar case study, stressing the need for a qualitative approach.

## Methodology

As such, the methods used in my study were of vital importance to facilitating dialogue between all stakeholders, in an iterative process, to really create a cohesive understanding of what the relationship between the key stakeholders (lodge employees, lodge owners, and community members) looked like. In line with the methods that are most commonly used in both qualitative research in general and by constructivists alike, I blended the use of informal and semi-formal interviews, participant and direct observation (Golafshani 2003), as well as video-recorded interviews to capture the subjective and contextually specific relationship between Mushroom Farm Eco-Lodge and Manchewe village.

This exploratory study was designed as a single-site case study with an emphasis on utilizing visual methodology to investigate the perceptions of each of the key stakeholder groups at the Mushroom Farm Eco-lodge in Manchewe village in northern Malawi. This study did not qualify as human subject research in the IRB's classification thereof, however it was still designed and executed thoughtfully to ensure participants' rights were being respected. According to the Colorado Multiple Institutional Review Board (COMIRB), "activities do not involve human subjects if the investigator does not obtain data about a living individual." An example of this is would be methodology that focuses on things, process or policies (in this case community perceptions on development and tourism) rather than "people or their thoughts

regarding themselves” (Colorado Multiple Institutional Review Board 2017). For each interview, I did inform the participant about my study, as well as my own motivations for asking questions and asked for their verbal consent. For those who took part in video-recorded interviews, I asked each participant on film if it was ok to use their video and answers for my study.

The fieldwork took place over the course of eight days in December 2017, where I stayed as a guest at Mushroom Farm Eco-Lodge ([themushroomfarmalawi.com](http://themushroomfarmalawi.com)). Initially, the location within Malawi was chosen based on geographic region and availability of backpacker lodges during the time frame available for research. From within that pool, backpacker lodges were narrowed based on their stated or visible community connections and/or identification as a social enterprise, as well as from recommendations given by Peace Corps Malawi volunteers. The initial proposal included two field sites, both budget lodges in northern Malawi, however the first lodge visited in the field, Maji Zuwa, turned out to be functioning as a non-profit entity rather than a social enterprise and was removed from the study. In Manchewe village, convenience sampling was used to select study participants based on their availability (i.e. are they scheduled to work at Mushroom Farm and free from catering to guests), their interest in participating, as well as their willingness to be filmed. Local community members were also selected through snowball sampling, being referred by other study participants who thought they might be interested.

To answer the study question, *What is the relationship between Mushroom Farm Eco-Lodge and Manchewe village?*, and to be able to tell the story visually, eight informal interviews, three full days of participant and direct observation, as well as approximately ten informal conversations were first conducted. This was done to gain insight on community

perceptions, before filming could begin (see Appendix A for interview guide). This step was important in positioning myself, as an outsider, and explaining my intentions, in order to gain the acceptance and trust of the community. The last five days in Manchewe were spent conducting semi-structured, video-recorded interviews with study participants whose life experiences were representative of the greater story developing around the relationship between Mushroom Farm and Manchewe village. Nine video interviews were conducted with eleven participants (see Appendix B) which included the lodge’s co-owners (two), six community members with

various connections to Mushroom Farm, and three paid employees. Of the

| Stakeholder group | Male     | Female   | Total     |
|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Owners            | 1        | 1        | 2         |
| Employees         | 3        | 0        | 3         |
| Community Members | 3        | 3        | 6         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>7</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>11</b> |

*Table 1: Composition of Video-Recorded Interviewees*

participants interviewed using video, four were female and seven were male (see Table 1).

Additionally, I was able to observe and participate in two end-of-term ceremonies of the Adult Literacy program and film portions of those events as part of the study as well. Over the course of eight days, I collected approximately 165 minutes of interview footage and 41 minutes of B-roll footage. Interviews were captured using a Samsung Galaxy S8 phone, with an external microphone connected with an auxiliary cable to a Tascam iXZ Mic and Guitar interface. Adobe Premiere video editing program (Creative Cloud 2018) was used on my laptop computer to organize media and produce the video.

## Data Analysis

All of the video recorded interviews were first transcribed. I transcribed the interviews that were conducted in English and the two interviews that were done in Chitumbuka (a local Malawian language) were transcribed by three Malawian colleagues. The second interview conducted in Chitumbuka was not transcribed in its entirety, as there was also a translator present who translated that interview on the spot. Only the sections of the interview that added to the overarching narrative were transcribed.

Data collected were coded in Nvivo, including interview transcriptions, participant observations and field notes. Nvivo is a coding software that is used to create themes across multiple formats, including documents, pictures, video and audio. The analysis process began in the field, as the story of the relationship between Manchewe village and Mushroom Farm began to unfold. This helped inform and guide the direction of the video interviews. But, as Baxter and Jack (2008) put it, “each data source is one piece of the ‘puzzle,’ with each piece contributing to the researcher’s understanding of the whole phenomenon. This convergence adds strength to the findings as the various strands of data are braided together to promote a greater understanding of the case” (Baxter and Jack 2008, 554). As such, utilizing a coding software to analyze the data helped solidify the story the community told and helped me decide which clips of video to include in the scholarly video to best portray the findings of this study (see Appendix C for samples of themes utilized).

## Video Editing

After coding was complete, and the overarching theme of the relationship between Manchewe village and Mushroom Farm became apparent, I started production on *Manchewe*

*Votes Mushroom Farm To Stay!* ([link to scholarly video](#), see Appendix D for transcript of video).

The next step, which was ongoing, was to decide which pieces of the interviews could best portray the story to the viewers and to decipher exactly who the audience really should be. The project itself was tailored, in part, to meet the requirements of an academic audience. At the same time, it was important to me that this video be useful to a wider audience, specifically the lodge, owners, staff members and the community of Manchewe, due to my constructivist approach. In struggling with this dichotomy, as relayed in the challenges outlined below, my solution was to always go back to the framework and the project question. For example, one participant specifically stated he didn't want a title on the screen when his interview played, however academically, my film may be critiqued as being inconsistent in its formatting. Ultimately though, it is more important to be true to my participants rather than to cater to technical viewers, so I left out his title.

Several challenges did emerge during the video editing process (which began after transcription and coding) around how and what to focus on to best reflect the findings. First, what the data began to tell was several small stories within a greater narrative. Producing a video intended for a wide breadth of audiences that still tells a rich synopsis of the relationship between these two stakeholders made it difficult to choose which stories to tell. For example, the hydroelectricity project (*see 05:55 to 7:30*) is a significant part of the emergent story of Manchewe and Mushroom Farm. It exemplifies a large-scale development project funded and managed by small a scale entity, that energizes the community and that harnesses local ingenuity. But when looking at the footage, and knowing the whole story as it emerged from coding, it was hard to pick which footage of John, the "mastermind behind the hydro," (*see*

2:54) to use due to how inspirational his own story is, within the larger story. John, Mushroom Farm chef and manager of the hydro project, has been tinkering with turbines his whole life despite not having formal training or education. Highlighting the project as “his dream” versus a community project that Mushroom Farm funds was tricky to navigate.

While John’s story is compelling and I had great footage of him telling it, I decided to not include it in its entirety. Thinking of the larger picture of Manchewe community, I wanted to be true to the overall sentiments of many of the participants and re-iterate the themes that were frequently mentioned. I could have chosen to focus the whole video on him, as a case study within a case study, to showcase how Mushroom Farm is highlighting the expertise that is already in the community. Instead, since I heard from more people about the relationship they have formed together with the lodge, it was really this larger narrative that best addresses the relationship between Mushroom Farm and Manchewe village.

Another important editing decision was to not focus on the how Mushroom Farm and Manchewe arrived at where they are today (i.e. what did Cameron, Maddy and the community do to build this unique bond) rather to focus on the “what.” What is the relationship and how do they work together currently. The original project question put forth in the proposal for this study stressed best practices, but in talking to the community and the owners, their story was focused more around gratitude and appreciation. Participants who answered the question of “how” this bond formed tended to invoke detailed discussions around the differentiation between what Cameron and Maddy do versus the previous lodge owner and the current, neighboring lodge owner. This decision was based on my preference for highlighting positivity and not a comparison of Mushroom Farm with the other lodges/owners, as that would

inevitably bring out negativity and potentially create rifts in the community. However, it is important to address the issue of reflexivity in this study, meaning that despite having attempted to gain the trust of the community, they might have given me the answers that I wanted to hear, rather than full truthfulness. But considering how frequently respondents compared the actions of the current owners to the previous owner and neighboring lodge owner, I feel certain that the story I heard was honest, at least for the participants involved in the study (see the Limitation section for further discussion).

Another major challenge in the video editing process was trying to decide which participants to use in the final video, specifically how to balance the breadth of roles people play, without over or under representation of any one group. The design of the study was to incorporate the voices of three distinct stakeholders (owners, employees, community members). In actuality, there was a fourth group that emerged, which was program participants who were also community members, like women in the adult literacy program for example. Likewise, the Mushroom Farm local staff also double as community members. Having the power to tell this story, one that is not mine, caused me to grapple with how to best represent the sentiments of all the participants, rather than to just produce a video that would appeal to western audiences. For example, in the first round of editing, I compiled the transcript for the video, noting the time segments and roles for each participant (see Appendix D for final transcript). I noticed I had not used anyone who was solely a community member and not involved with Mushroom Farm programs. It was at this point that I added excerpts from Alick and Fyodah (*see 00:13 to 00:33 and 1:40 to 2:24, respectively*). Their narratives were more focused on the overarching relationship of the community and Mushroom Farm. Knowing the

importance of their voices and what I think they will mean to the community when they watch the video, I made sure to include them in a way that supports the sentiments of all the participants in this study. Both of these men hold a leadership role in the community as village headmen, roles that are very important in Malawian culture. Going back to my constructivist framework, I'm confident that if I had left them out of the video, my video would have still had a similar impact on western viewers, unfamiliar with Malawian culture. But this study is focused on showcasing the emic voice and allowing for the context of this specific village to shine through.

## Results

*Manchewe Votes Mushroom Farm To Stay!* touches on the most compelling themes that emerged from this study. The first is about the bond or relationship that has been formed by the owners of Mushroom Farm Eco-lodge, Cameron and Maddy, and the community. While the title of the film may not be intuitive to non-Malawian viewers, this phrase around 'voting' was mentioned by three of the study participants and in one speech at the adult literacy end-of-term celebration, all on separate occasions (*see 00:13 to 00:33*). It was such a recurring statement during my fieldwork, that I started asking a few of the Malawian participants to explain how the phrase is normally used, to make sure I, as a westerner, could understand the emic meaning of this phrase. They use this phrase to emphasize how much they appreciate someone who appears in their lives by chance. One example I was given was that of a school teacher. You don't get to choose which teachers get placed at your school, but if the community really appreciates what that teacher is doing, they say that if they could have chosen them (by vote, for example) they would have. It is for this reason that I chose a

rendition of the phrase for the title of the film, as it does perfectly exemplify the sentiments of every participant I spoke with. Many people went even further to express that they hope the owners of Mushroom Farm will stay much longer.

However, in an effort to unearth a different side of the story, I asked all of the participants, candidly and off record if they chose, to talk to me about anything the owners had done in the community that wasn't as well received or about any mistakes they had made along the way. This question, for most participants, just spawned more praise of the owners or a lot of critique of the previous owner and neighboring lodge-owner. However, one participant discussed with me about some negative perceptions of Mushroom Farm in the community, though the sentiments were vague.

You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs. Because when you make an omelet, you first break the eggs, then you making the omelet. Not that they are doing bad to the community, it's not all people can like Mushroom Farm but sometimes other people they will talk this-and-that, it's just because the way someone understands something else. But so far, to the eyes of many people, they see Mushroom Farm is contributing very well to the development of Manchewe and the whole area.

While this kind of critique is important and may well exist in the community, it was not a feeling expressed by any of the other participants in the study. It does however indicate that more research could be done in the community to determine if these sentiments are felt by a larger portion of community members in Manchewe.

In addition to this overarching theme of appreciation from the community towards the Mushroom Farm and its owners, *Manchewe Votes Mushroom Farm To Stay!* highlights the three community projects most mentioned by participants throughout the study: the adult literacy program (3:08 to 4:16), the Manchewe Mountain Mamas sewing group (see 4:19 to

5:54), as well as the hydroelectricity project (see 5:56 to 7:30). The community center that Mushroom Farm is currently constructing (and has since opened since this fieldwork was completed), as well as the nursery school were also mentioned by many participants as significant benefits to Manchewe community. The Manchewe Mountain Mamas (often referred to as the Mamas) was one of the first projects Cameron and Maddy embarked on after purchasing Mushroom Farm. It is a sewing group for women in the community that are struggling with HIV, taking care of orphaned children, or have other problems effecting their ability to sustain themselves. They are trained on sewing machines and techniques and the products they make are sold to tourists at the lodge.

The adult literacy program was an idea that the Mamas had, spawned by noticing that adults in the community were lacking in English literacy. When it first started, the literacy program was open to both men and women, but only women participated in the classes. The program has three levels, the first two focusing on English literacy and level three focusing on business literacy. During level three, participants are given a small loan to start a business as a group and each week they are taught different skills to manage and grow their businesses. It is a friendly competition in the class to see which group can make more revenue over the course of the first term. At the end of the term celebration, members of the literacy program announced the profits and allowed the women to either re-pay their loans or re-invest them in continuing their businesses.

The hydro-electricity project was one that was discussed by many participants, but also informally by members of other communities further away. For example, as I was travelling to Manchewe, I met three people in Mzuzu, Malawi (a much larger city about 120 kilometers from

Manchewe) who had surprisingly heard of this project and mentioned it organically when I told them I was visiting Mushroom Farm. This hydro project was developed by a local Manchewe community member, John, who is also the chef at Mushroom Farm. He had the idea and asked the owners to help financially support him with building a hydro plant at the base of Manchewe Falls to provide electricity to the village. In January 2018, the project was underway and soon will be functional. In its initial phase, the hydro plant will power a maize mill that has already been built nearby the town center. The second phase will be to secure enough funding to purchase the necessary equipment to store the power and develop the infrastructure to power nearby homes.

These projects are important to showcase, as they provide the viewer with an opportunity to visualize the impact being made, as well as hear firsthand from local participants the importance of these projects to their lives and community. While the video sequence with Cameron and Maddy (*see 2:29 to 3:06*) who introduce the community project section of the film wasn't necessarily mentioned by anyone else, it was a recurrent theme with owners themselves, stressing many times the importance of their projects evolving naturally from the community. At one point in the formal, video interview with the owners they even laughed together about how if they implemented some of their ideas, they would not work.

The last overarching theme presented in *Manchewe Votes Mushroom Farm To Stay!* explores the dynamic of Manchewe community itself, and how that energy contributes to the greater "spark," as owner Maddy puts it, to making this social enterprise lodge model work (*see 7:32 to 9:01*). This theme was recognized by both the owners and several members of the community who noted that Manchewe seems to have something unique. Cameron and Maddy,

the lodge owners, both point out how Manchewe has people who are “forward thinkers” (*see 8:37*) or “longer term” thinkers (*see 8:00*) that foster the ability to come up with and execute new projects. Budget, the Mushroom Farm manager and Manchewe community member, stresses how collaborative the community is when there is a need, all coming together to function effectively as a team (*see 8:07 to 8:31*).

In addition to the key themes portrayed in the video, many subthemes emerged from this study. When discussing the benefit the community has realized since the coming of the current owners of this lodge, many of the participants specifically mentioned the construction of homes, especially with iron sheet roofs, has drastically increased. Mushroom Farm has increased employment in the area dramatically, not just through their full-time lodge employment (although that has also increased from 4 full time staff to 28 full time staff, over the course of four years) but through the employment of daily worker or piece workers (task-specific jobs) as well. One of the participants noted:

There is also people doing some piece work. Some of them they are planting some trees...they are teaching them how they can go to the waterfall with ropes, so they are also paying them. So the community, at least in Manchewe, a lot of people are benefiting. Especially for the boys who were very poor and were stealing, many of them now are finding some jobs from Cameron and Maddy.

Several of the full-time staff expressed their gratitude for being employed, stressing how hard it is to find jobs in Malawi. Additionally, they felt secure in their jobs at Mushroom Farm and expressed having room to be comfortable and grow in their roles. Many of the participants mentioned the differences between the previous owner and the neighboring lodge’s owner to Cameron and Maddy, noting the way they treat and pay their staff as a significant advantage. One employee told a story about how he broke a wine glass during his first day on the job and

was so afraid he would be fired, because that is what would have happened at the neighboring lodge. He was afraid to tell Maddy, so he told her boyfriend as an intermediary, who then told her and they all laughed about it together. As Maddy explained to me in her one-on-one interview, their goal from the beginning was to establish a foundation of trust with the staff, to create a family-type feeling amongst the staff. When Maddy and Cameron first bought Mushroom Farm, they found the previous owner had installed security cameras everywhere, had everything locked up and even had guard dogs. One of the first things they did was to dismantle this high-level of security and start trusting people, which they believe contributed to their ability to integrate into the Manchewe community.

While the theme of social enterprise was never explicitly mentioned by any of the participants other than the owners, many participants alluded to the concept that it embodies. In the video, Budget talks about how the lodge is using its earned income to “contribute to the village” (*see 1:26 to 1:34*). Though the clip was not used for the final video, Alick Kanyotha, village headman, stated in his video interview:

Yes, there is a lot of impact because these people [Cameron and Maddy] do not simply take that money for their own benefit, personal benefit, but they share that money to us. There are some teachers at the school, who are paid by people, so there is a lot of sharing the money that they get from here, they do share with us.

John Saylence, Mushroom Farm chef and manager of the hydroelectricity project, also touched on the subject:

I think if the other organizations could be doing like Mushroom Farm, I think Malawi could be a better land to live in, but they are not doing the same as the Mushroom Farm. Mushroom is doing the best, because it's on the same business that the Mushroom Farm is doing is also sharing with the community, so while the other people, they just do the business, they just put the money in their own pockets but the Mushroom Farm is doing the best, yes.

These references to social enterprise, by community members I spoke with, certainly add legitimacy to the model that the owners are striving to emulate through their lodge. Owner Maddy stressed in her interview that the mission of the lodge was never to make money rather to “try this out as a social business versus a charity” and the study reifies the model is essentially working.

## Limitations

One of the major limitations of this study was the inability to talk to a wider variety of people in Manchewe community. To more thoroughly answer the project question, *What is the relationship between Mushroom Farm Eco-Lodge and Manchewe village?* and to feel confident that the scholarly video most accurately portrays this answer, it would have been useful to have more time in Manchewe. Over the course of eight days, I talked to a wide variety of individuals and groups, but many of the participants either had a tie to Mushroom Farm or held a leadership position in the community. It would have been beneficial to this study to search out other participants in the community that might have a contradicting view of the lodge. Utilizing snowball sampling to select community participants added to this problem, as most of the participants were referred by Mushroom Farm staff members, rather than being chosen organically. Having only eight days to perform the fieldwork also contributed to this limitation, as building trust in the community is a time-consuming process and I was fortunate, as a perceived tourist myself, to have gained credibility in the short time I did.

Another limitation relates to the video. Initially, it was my goal to keep the video to around six to eight minutes in length, with the hopes it would appeal to wide public audiences.

However, even in the field, it became apparent to me that the story I was setting out to tell would take more time. As the final production expanded to a total time of ten minutes, it still was not able to incorporate the voices of every participant. Due to this time limitation, I was also not able to incorporate all the findings, sub-themes, and narratives that emerged from this study, only the most broad and most captivating. Also, by expanding the time frame of the video, I also expanded the file size, which challenges the ability of local participants to be able to download the film. Since having an accessible medium for the findings was integral to my constructivist framework, I have considered segmenting the film into chapters to allow participants to more easily download the file. The final decision will be made in July 2018 prior to the public showing in Manchewe.

The production included technical limitations, namely my own abilities with video editing and filming in the field. Through the project, I developed basic proficiency in videography and video editing. Part of capturing video involves a number of technical challenges such as obtaining high quality audio and imagery. I was unable to use the video footage from one interview due to a glitch with the microphone setup that caused a loud, irritating noise during playback. Also, my camera overheated during an interview and the footage required additional work to sync the video and audio in the editing program due to switching between two different applications during filming.

## Discussion

This study provides an opportunity to examine how intricately the tourism industry can be integrated with rural communities and the impact lodge owners can have on their local

communities. Contrary to a previous study done in Malawi that found members in one community felt apathetic towards tourism in their area, due to unfulfilled promises (Bello; Lovelock; and Carr 2017), this study invoked an opposite response from the community members. Manchewe community members who participated in this project felt grateful and appreciative, praising the owners repeatedly, for the benefits they had seen since the new owners took over. This distinction is what sets this study apart from the existing literature, which focuses on how tourism affects rural communities primarily through examining the acts of the tourists themselves rather than the emic perspective. When asked about how the tourists interact within the community or any possible benefits they bring, none of the study participants noted any impact at all, neither positive nor negative. Rather study participants highlighted the owners of the lodge and their actions. This suggests that the tourists themselves don't play a significant role in the development of the community, at least in Manchewe village, though their indirect role as customers of the lodge does contribute significantly to the ability of the lodge to stay afloat and continue their projects.

Furthermore, many of the Malawian participants mentioned that they wished more lodges in Malawi were doing the same thing as Mushroom Farm. John, Mushroom Farm chef and manager of the hydro project expresses this sentiment in his interview by saying that owners Cameron and Maddy "should also teach their friends to do the same as what they are doing." Future studies in tourism and community development should systematically evaluate how a lodge interacts with its local community, rather than focus on the tourists themselves. This became blaringly evident in this study, as nearly every participant mentioned the previous owner of the lodge as being less engaged along community lines than the current owners. This

shows that tourism is an important driving force, but not the only one, behind community development in rural areas.

While this study didn't explore the financial side of running a social enterprise lodge, it is apparent that Mushroom Farm certainly is successful in staying true to its mission of being part of the community and balancing efforts to earn income and support the community simultaneously. As founder Maddy McAlister alluded to in her interview, this social enterprise model, for a lodge, needs the right mix of inputs to be successful. She says:

I don't think you could replicate this model in say Nkhata Bay... or Lilongwe or Mzuzu or some of the bigger places [in Malawi]. I think we just have all the kind of elements here that it has just been the right little spark to make something work. I think our whole model coming in to it...like we didn't move to one of the world's poorest countries to make money, you know. We're not making a real business here, we kind of wanted to be part of the community and try this out as like a social business versus a charity.

By going into the business with the social entrepreneurial mindset from the start, Cameron and Maddy were able to make genuine connections in the community, an integral part of building the relationship that they now have. Maddy started off by volunteering at a school and going to church, and Cameron played a lot of soccer and started a gym with local men in the community. It is precisely this mindset that has allowed the community projects to develop organically. Utilizing a social enterprise model for a budget lodge is unique, but certainly allows for projects to be initiated, designed and managed primarily by the local community.

As the video highlights, the community of Manchewe also plays an integral role in this symbiotic relationship. During my interactions with the Mushroom Farm owners, they pointed out frequently how community members were extraordinarily skilled, driven, and extremely motivated. Budget, Mushroom Farm manager and Manchewe community member, points out

how well the people in Manchewe collaborate with each other. Cameron, Mushroom Farm owner, suggests that maybe the villagers are exceptionally skilled due to their proximity to Livingstonia, which has a technical college, though it is just his suspicion. Whatever the reason, the fact that the owners embrace, acknowledge and utilize these local skills, rather than seeking outside expertise or pushing their own agenda, is what sets Mushroom Farm apart from other lodges, and other organizations trying to make impact in rural communities.

## Conclusion

*Manchewe Votes Mushroom Farm To Stay!* illustrates how effectively one lodge in Malawi was able to form beneficial relationships with local community members, through the use of a social enterprise model. By going into their venture with a social mission as their primary motivation, the lodge owners established relationships in their community and fostered development projects that the community highly values, such as an adult literacy program, a women's sewing group that helps underserved women, and a hydroelectricity project that will soon bring power to this remote village.

This story could prove to be useful tool for academics and professionals in a wide range of disciplines. The social enterprise lodge model Cameron and Maddy pioneered could be studied further by others in the tourist industry as a way to bolster community development projects and drive economic benefits in rural areas. It could also be highlighted by the Malawian tourist industry to potential tourism investors, like myself. International development and nonprofit professionals could learn from their approach to relationship building, acknowledging the value in harnessing the local skills available in rural areas as opposed to

simply bringing in outside expertise. Other researchers who are interested in studying community development and tourism should also acknowledge the gap in the existing literature on the voice of local community members and undertake more case studies like this one, that prioritize the emic view of what tourism and community engagement means to local participants.

As an aspiring social entrepreneur hoping to replicate this lodge model in Malawi, this study has demonstrated to me that if done correctly, a socially-driven eco-lodge has the potential to provide measurable benefits to rural community members. By having a visual, widely accessible medium to showcase this case study, I will be able to sit with other chiefs and community members in the area I end up starting my lodge (if it is contextually appropriate, of course) and display to them what type of relationship I hope to create. This project reiterated to me that there must be the right mix of inputs present in a community to make this lodge model successful and that building solid relationships from the beginning, as well as going in with a strong desire to learn from the community, are key to building a positive environment for the future lodge.

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## Appendix A – Interview Guide

### Questions for Backpackers Owners

#### **Your Motivations and initial perceptions of the community.**

- Why did you start this backpackers lodge, what were your motivations?
- When you started the backpackers, how did you envision your involvement with the local community?
  - Has that changed over time?

- How do you think the community feels about your backpackers?
  - What makes you think that? Can you give examples?

### Your Work

- How does this backpackers/lodge support the community? Or in what ways? Give specific examples of project/programs.
- What successes have you seen in your interaction in the community?
  - Can you give examples?
- Were there any setbacks or challenges in working with the community?
  - Can you give any examples?
- Do you evaluate your impact in any way? If so, how?

### Changes

- Do you feel like the community has changed much since you began your work here?
- How has your perception of the community changed over time?
- Do you have any other thoughts or feelings about how this industry (backpacker tourism) can or does impact community development?

### Questions for Backpackers Employees

- How long have you worked here?
- How did you first learn about this backpackers lodge?
  - What drew you to want to work here?
- As an employee, you have a closer connection to both the lodge ownership and your local community. With this in mind, how would you describe the interaction between this lodge and the community?
  - Do they do projects in the community or support the community in other ways?
    - Examples?
  - How do you think the local community views the backpackers lodge?
- Did you live in this community when the lodge first came?
  - If so, can you give any examples of how they came to get involved in the local community?
    - Are there things that helped them “integrate”?
    - Or are there things they did that created a bad relationship with the community?
  - Do you feel like the community has changed much, positively or negatively, since the lodge first came?
    - In what ways or areas have you seen change?
    - If so, what do you think caused those changes?
- Has your own perception of this backpackers lodge changed since you started working here until now?
  - In what ways?
- Do you feel like backpackers lodges should be involved in the local community beyond just creating jobs?
  - If so, why?

- Do you have any other feelings towards backpacker tourism in Malawi, especially as it relates to community development for locals?
- Do you have any friends or family members that don't work for the lodge who you think might be interested in talking about this topic? Or have a specific experience (good or bad) that might be worth talking about?
  - Would you be willing to connect us?

#### Questions for Local Community Members:

- Tell me a little bit about yourself, first, and what you do?
  - How long have you been living here? Has your family always lived here?
  - What kind of things do you do to make a living?
  - What kind of things do you do if you have free time?
- What is your community like here?
  - What are the things you like the most about this community?
  - What are the challenges the community faces?
- Were you living in this community when the backpackers first came?
  - If so, can you give any examples of how they came to get involved in the local community?
    - Are there things that helped them “integrate”?
    - Or are there things they did that created a bad relationship with the community?
  - Do you feel like the community has changed much, positively or negatively, since the lodge first came?
    - In what ways or areas have you seen change?
    - If so, what do you think caused those changes?
- Has your own perception of this backpackers lodge changed over time?
  - In what ways?
- Do you feel like backpackers lodges should be involved in the local community beyond just creating jobs?
  - If so, why?
- Do you have any other feelings towards backpacker tourism in Malawi, especially as it relates to community development for locals?
- Do you have any friends or family members who you think might be interested in talking about this topic? Or have a specific experience (good or bad) that might be worth talking about?
- Would you be willing to connect us?

## Appendix B – Interviewees

12/20/2017:

Interview 1: Jackson Kanyotha – Pastor of Pentecostal Gathering

Interview 2: Alick Kanyotha – Village Headman

Interview 3: Dorothy Mumba – Vice chair of Manchewe Mother’s Group

Interview 4: Fyodah Msiska – Group Village Headman

Interview 5: Bishop Msiska

12/21/2017:

Interview 1: Rose Chirwa & Ellen Mhango – Manchewe Mountain Mamas

Interview 2: John Saylence – Illuminate Manchewe Hydro Power Project

Interview 3: Budget Julius Msyali (prefers no title on screen, just his name)

12/23/2017:

Interview 1: Maddy McAlister – Mushroom Farm Founder and Cameron McAlister – Mushroom Farm Owner

## Appendix C – Nvivo Coding Structure Sample

The screenshot shows the Nvivo software interface with a coding structure table. The table has the following columns: Name, Sources, References, Created On, Created By, and Modified On. The 'community benefits' node is highlighted in blue. Below is the data from the table:

| Name                               | Sources | References | Created On           | Created By | Modified On        |
|------------------------------------|---------|------------|----------------------|------------|--------------------|
| C and M integrating into Manchewe  |         | 2          | 5 2/18/2018 1:34 PM  | TRC        | 2/20/2018 10:26 AM |
| Challenges                         |         | 7          | 14 2/16/2018 11:45 A | TRC        | 2/20/2018 10:19 AM |
| community benefits                 |         | 8          | 22 2/16/2018 11:42 A | TRC        | 2/23/2018 4:32 PM  |
| adult literacy                     |         | 2          | 2 2/18/2018 12:57 P  | TRC        | 2/23/2018 4:32 PM  |
| buying goods or services from comm |         | 3          | 3 2/18/2018 12:17 P  | TRC        | 2/18/2018 2:21 PM  |
| community center                   |         | 2          | 2 2/18/2018 12:57 P  | TRC        | 2/23/2018 4:32 PM  |
| construction                       |         | 1          | 1 2/18/2018 12:59 P  | TRC        | 2/23/2018 4:32 PM  |
| electricity or hydro               |         | 4          | 6 2/18/2018 12:28 P  | TRC        | 2/23/2018 4:32 PM  |
| employment                         |         | 7          | 9 2/16/2018 11:49 A  | TRC        | 2/20/2018 10:22 AM |
| home improvements                  |         | 5          | 6 2/16/2018 11:45 A  | TRC        | 2/20/2018 10:09 AM |
| loans                              |         | 2          | 2 2/16/2018 11:45 A  | TRC        | 2/18/2018 1:03 PM  |
| maize mill                         |         | 4          | 6 2/18/2018 12:27 P  | TRC        | 2/23/2018 4:32 PM  |
| MF paying school fees              |         | 4          | 7 2/18/2018 12:26 P  | TRC        | 2/23/2018 4:32 PM  |
| nursery school                     |         | 2          | 2 2/18/2018 12:57 P  | TRC        | 2/23/2018 4:32 PM  |
| soccer field and team              |         | 3          | 3 2/18/2018 1:04 PM  | TRC        | 2/20/2018 9:59 AM  |
| teachers salaries                  |         | 3          | 3 2/16/2018 1:10 PM  | TRC        | 2/20/2018 9:59 AM  |
| Favorite clips                     |         | 9          | 61 2/20/2018 8:18 AM | TRC        | 2/23/2018 4:33 PM  |
| Initial perceptions of Cam and Mad |         | 5          | 13 2/16/2018 11:40 A | TRC        | 2/18/2018 2:21 PM  |

## Appendix D – Transcript for *Manchewe Votes Mushroom Farm To Stay!*

| Time Frame     | Script  | Speaker              | Role             |
|----------------|---|----------------------|------------------|
| 00:13 to 00:33 | These are the people the community would like to stay here, because we have benefited quite a lot and we are still enjoying their stay here. And if it were to be a situation of voting, we would have voted them to stay even more here. Yeah, they are very good people.  | Alick Kanyotha       | Community Member |
| 00:45 to 1:02  | So Mushroom Farm is a social enterprise. It's set up as an eco-lodge, so it's 100% off grid. At the moment we've got one big dormitory and five rooms, a kitchen, a bar, a restaurant, but it's basically an eco-lodge backpackers up in Northern Malawi.   | Maddy McAlister      | Founder          |
| 1:04 to 1:35   | Mushroom Farm is doing very well to the community. It's able to help the people. You know they are able to sponsor the students, they are able to support the women, they are able to support the kids, they are able to support the adult literacy, they are able to support the hydro. Mushroom Farm, as a lodge, as a business, they are able to, from what they make, they are able to also to contribute to the village.                                       | Budget Julius Mysali | Employee         |
| 1:40 to 2:24   | In this village, we have been helped in so many areas by this group (lodge). They have helped our children with school fees, built a building for children and adult education. They have employed our children. Our children have been able to build homes. They have assisted our children with loan assistance to purchase iron sheets. The loans have small repayment plans. As chiefs, we are very happy with the help that has been received from this group. | Fyodah Msiska        | Community Member |
| 2:35 to 2:55   | I think the projects will come because like for example like the nursery school, that was Budget's idea. He brought a proposal and we talked to the different ladies who would be teaching it and kind of got that off the ground. Like basically people have really good ideas it's just like lack of funding that they don't have. John, obviously, he's the mastermind behind the hydro.   | Cameron McAlister    | Owner            |
| 2:55 to 3:00   | And then the Mama's were the ones that talked about the adult literacy class, that they wanted that, so it's always been...   | Mady McAlister       | Founder          |
| 3:01 to 3:06   | Everything just comes from the community. We just provide like the intial kind of funding involved.   | Cameron McAlister    | Owner            |
| 3:15 to 3:38   | As I am here, I am a school student at Manchewe. We started last year, then this term, they told us to, that we are going to give you money, loan for doing business to help your family and children.  | Dorothy Mumba        | Participant      |

|              |   |                                   |             |
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| 3:40 to 3:53 | "What do you do now?" "So, we are finished working and so now we are business ladies." "Ok, what are you selling?" "We are selling groundnuts and chips." "Chips! Chips! Chips! Come and buy chips!"  | Adult Literacy Class participants | Participant |
| 3:55 to 4:17 | The valued thing is, I know how to speak English and to speak to Azungu [white] people, no problem for that. So they taught us how to make business, to make budget and so on.  | Dorothy Mumba                     | Participant |
| 4:27 to 5:20 | We sew napkins, headbands, peace flags, cushion covers, gift bags, shirts, skirts. Maddy took these things and sold them on our behalf. Money derived was used for community development efforts while some was used to buy soap and fertilizer and savings.  | Rose Chirwa                       | Participant |
| 5:22 to 5:52 | Some of the ladies which are in this group, most of them they are the people who, they are sick. Some of them they are the ladies which have HIV, some of them are keeping the children which their parents have died. So our group is not for the people who are well. But the group of the womens are the people who have got a lot of problems, that's Manchewe Mountain Mamas.  | Ellen Mhango                      | Participant |
| 6:02 to 6:45 | Ah you know we thought, I thought of the way the cliff is at the Manchewe Falls, it's very difficult side because it is 144 meters. So I was little bit scared of starting that project, just because I knew that it would require a lot of money, so I was trying to get a job so that I can save some money to do the project there but I knew that I can't find a good job to manage to build the generator there. Then I came to the Mushroom Farm and asked the boss, that if they can help me. And possibly they said that they will help me and now they are helping me to fund that project.  | John Saylence                     | Employee    |
| 6:45 to 7:30 | Yes, so i came up with that idea just because you know Manchewe is a very remote area. Women from Manchewe, they move to Livingstonia grind their maize, just because it is where there is electric access. So that is why I wanted to build the generator in Manchewe, so that the electricity could be closer to the people's houses, so that they should have a maize mill by their houses. Also, I was worried about how the deforestation is taking place. If we'd have our own generator, our own electricity, people would be able to cook using electricity, so that maybe the forest can have a rest a bit, and it can take place. | John Saylence                     | Employee    |
| 7:38 to 8:05 | A very like optimistic and hard working village. You know I've heard from different Peace Corps volunteers that it's really hard to get their village motivated and I feel like even from   | Maddy McAlister                   | Founder     |

|              |  |                      |          |
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|              | the getgo, we'd talk about an idea or listen to an idea and the whole community would come out and support. So I feel like we are quite fortunate in that way, that everyone has new ideas here and they are really really eager to get things off the ground. And even if there is no money involved, if it's just a little bit more longer term thinking , I think that this village is really, for the area, like amazing.  |                      |          |
| 8:07 to 8:31 | The only thing that I like, is the community, when there is a need of something, like a development, they all rise up and work together as a team. And they are very good at working together as a team and they are doing very well. There is good coordination, there is not any problems, like quarrels and the like, there is no problem. They always work together as a team.   | Budget Julius Mysali | Employee |
| 8:33 to 9:01 | We really lucked out. Manchewe is an awesome community but there is definitely like real forward thinkers in the community and just like giving them the opportunity to kind of do what they want to do. And yeah, as I said, like Budget with the nursery school, John with the hydro, I mean like there's so many like smart guys that just don't have the opportunity here -smart guys and ladies - who just don't have the opportunity but are just like completely self taught, self trained and have all these goals and dreams. | Cameron McAlister    | Owner    |
| 9:03 to 9:23 | It just feels like I could just take my mattress and move to the generator and sleep there and stay there the whole day working day and night to get it fast, fast as possible, because I've been dreaming it for ever ever. Yes and I'm very very happy because my dream is now coming true.  | John Saylence        | Employee |