Overview of Zambia Nurse and Life Skills Training Program

Through a five year partnership with the MasterCard Foundation, ChildFund International (ChildFund) and the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) are implementing the Zambia Nurse and Life Skills Training Program. The program delivers an integrated and scalable technology solution to increase employment opportunities among the growing youth population and address the need to expand coverage of skilled health care professionals to rural and remote locations across the country. Integrating Elearning with the existing curriculum to train registered nurses and midwives, scholarship support for deprived, excluded and vulnerable youth, and enhanced life skills training, the program will support the Zambian Ministry of Health to add 6000 skilled nurses and midwives to the workforce by 2017. The key features of the program include:

1. **Leveraging Elearning to improve the outcomes (skills and numbers) in pre-service nursing and midwifery training**
   Building on AMREF’s experience in Elearning in Kenya, Uganda, Lesotho and Tanzania, ChildFund and AMREF have formed a partnership with the General Nursing Council of Zambia to work together in the adaptation of the accredited nurse and midwife training curricula to Elearning modules, improving standardization and quality of training while maximizing human resources. Sustainable, multi-purpose technology infrastructure will also be rolled out to schools and health facilities to enable a broader geographic reach.

2. **Increasing the absorptive and training capacity of the Ministry of Health**
   In 2011, there were 9,085 nursing applicants for 1,675 training spots and 750 midwife applicants for 173 training spots. The Zambia Nurse and Life Skills Training Program will build the capacity of a number of training institutions to incorporate Elearning within their program and transform current classroom instructors to ETutors, who with the use of this improved technology, will be able to support more students effectively. While students will receive a number of tutorials via the Elearning modules, they will also attend skill building sessions and labs in person.

3. **Disseminating learning from this model to inform eLearning curricula in other high-potential sectors**
   Using an evaluation model tailored to Elearning, the program maintains a rigorous monitoring, evaluation, and documentation component (known as the Kirkpatrick Model) which will generate key program learning for expansion of this innovative technology into other sectors.

4. **Providing scholarships for the most economically marginalized**
   Rural youth in Zambia face several key challenges including limited employment opportunities, increased exposure to HIV and AIDs and sexually transmitted infections and lack of sufficient family income to support education. The program supports youth with the academic qualifications but limited means to enroll in the current accredited nurse and midwifery training programs.

5. **Improving the retention rates of registered nurse and mid-wife graduates by providing enhanced life-skills training**
   Building from ChildFund’s experience in developing and implementing life skills training, the program integrates enhanced life skills training into the nurse and midwifery curricula, including both Elearning and in-person components. The enhanced life skills training builds students’ capacities in: coping and decision-making, conflict resolution and management, relationship-building, financial management, and self-esteem.