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MALAWI

ABE/LINK MALAWI TPDS MONTHLY BULLETIN

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2010

MALAWI TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT (MTPDS) AWARDED

In February 2010 USAID/Malawi awarded the MTPDS to provide technical assistance support to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) in implementing teacher education support and systems management. Emphasis will be placed on completing and reinforcing introduction of the Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR) over a three year period. Six Results underscore MTPDS objectives.

- Result 1: *Strengthened Teacher Policy, Support & Management Systems*
- Result 2: *Enhanced Teacher Performance*
- Result 3: *Improved Early Grade Literacy & Numeracy*
- Result 4: *Improved Early Grade Literacy & Numeracy for Out-of-School Children or Youth*
- Result 5: *Enhanced Quality of Primary Teaching & Learning Materials*
- Result 6: *Improved Teacher Education-NPC, M&E Systems & Quality*

These Results recognize that the reality for most Malawian children is that they will struggle to learn in school and most likely dropout unless they can quickly become independent learners. One key to becoming an independent learner is acquiring early literacy. MTPDS activities therefore will be guided throughout by a focus on early literacy and numeracy and on development of higher order reading and math skills that enable students to succeed in all subjects in upper primary standards.

MTPDS partners include:

- Creative Associates (CA-II): *Overall contract management, administration and procurement.*
- Research Triangle International (RTI): *Technical management, teacher policy support, management and information systems, decentralization, early grade literacy and numeracy (EGRA/EGMA), learning standards, assessment, monitoring, evaluation, and data collection.*
- Seward Associates: *Education quality, teacher development and performance, teaching and learning materials, trainer deployment and, non-formal education, ICT and gender.*
- Local Resource Partners: *Teacher Training, HIV/AIDS, Literacy, Numeracy*

MTPDS TO BUILD ON AND SUPPORT MOEST AND DONOR PILOT SUCCESSSES

MTPDS also recognizes that the challenge for Malawi's education reform is demanding but not impossible. Malawi faces an ongoing "emergency" created by Free Basic Education and an influx with more than 3.6 million students enrolled in primary school in 2008. The system's high inefficiency is reflected in a transition rate from primary to secondary school of only 40% (2008). It has been able to allow students in, but has not been able to assure learning, or to increase completion rates.

To help meet this challenge, MTPDS has been designed to build upon the Programme of Work, including activities funded by the Government of Malawi (GOM) and its Development Partners (DPs). These include: USAID, DFID, CIDA, GTZ, KFW, AfDB, British Council, JICA, and others who have attained success and solid experience in responding to the emergency and in developing numerous best practice models. MTPDS will work in collaboration with Malawi's Sector Wide Approach (SWAp).

The primary challenge for Malawi is to now make a policy and institutional shift so the system can build on these models so that it actually operates *effectively* at the higher levels of enrollment. This requires first and foremost a much more efficient and effective system for recruiting and training teachers, and in turn building early literacy and numeracy skills so that pupils can become independent learners, regardless of class size. This is the core MTPDS strategy and the foundation of its planned activities at national district, zonal and local levels.

MOEST, USAID AND MTPDS LAUNCH PARTNERSHIP WITH JOINT PLANNING

On February 25-26, the MTPDS team began field based mobilization with a series of meetings with the USAID Education Team and with key MoEST counterparts. These included a review of the most important (GOM) priorities and continued joint planning which has informed the MTPDS design and its subsequent Work Plan. MoEST participants included, among others:

- Moffat Chitimbe , Principal Secretary, Education, Science and Technology
- Dr F. Augustine Kamlongera, Director of Planning
- McKnight Kalanda, Director of Basic Education
- Mrs. C Mussa. Deputy Director, Basic Education
- Mrs. Matilda Kabuye, Director of Education Methods and Advisory Services (EMAS)
- Mr. Raphael Agabu, Deputy Director, EMAS and PCAR Coordinator
- Mrs. Darles Mbewe, Director of Teacher Education and Development
- Dr. Elias Chakwera, Principal Domasi College of Education
- Dr. Susuwele, Acting Director of the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE)
- Absalom Phiri, Acting Director, Center for Professional Development

A series of additional joint planning sessions in late March concluded with a review by 18 participants from the MoEST who collectively reviewed and informed the MDPTS Work Plan for the initial period through July 2010. Participants included representation by the MoEST Department of Education and Training, Directorate of Planning, Education Management and Assessment Systems, and others.

UNDERLYING OPERATIONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC PRINCIPLES AFFIRMED

As MTPDS moves forward in the month of April its underlying operational principles include:

- **Working together** (MoEST, USAID, MTPDS) and with other ongoing education support programs in Malawi (e.g., Tikwere Interactive Radio Instruction, Education Decentralization Support Activity (EDSA), GTZ's Continuing Basic Education (CBE) pilot, Read Malawi's Textbook and Learning Materials Program, etc).
- **Working within the context of the MoEST**, supporting ongoing programs and policies - particularly the implementation of PCAR, NCP and the in-service and pre-service teacher education system.
- **Building on successful models** that have been developed in Malawi for improving learning and retention (e.g., MTTA supported CPD model, PSSP, DSS, Tikwere and others).
- **Empowerment**, for widespread capacity building and sustainability.
- **Standards**, so that teachers and communities have tangible goals to work towards.
- **Efficiency**, achieving standards at a reasonable cost – prerequisite for sustainable reforms
- **Sustainability**, helping teachers to develop the core competencies related to PCAR and the NPC that are needed to ensure that they and their students are successful.