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TPDS DEVELOPS CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODULES



The team from MIE and TPDS who have been working on developing CPD modules.

One major focus of the TPDS is enhancing teacher performance in Malawi, through a Continuous Professional Development (CPD). During August, the CPD team of TPDS, which consists of Senior Teacher Training Advisor Dr. Absalom Phiri and the two Teacher Training Specialists, Dr. Steve Sharra and Master Kalulu, worked with counterparts from MIE and from MoEST's Department of Teacher Education and Development (DTED) and Educational Methods and Assessment (EMAS), and Tikwere, to prepare CPD materials. The materials will be used to support technical manuals that were already developed by the MoEST and MIE, which offer schools a systematic procedure to establish school-based CPD programs in the clusters and schools.

The first step was identifying a list of needs based on observations, studies and reports of teacher performance in the four learning areas of English, Chichewa, Mathematics and Life Skills. MIE hosted a series of workshops where these processes unfolded. Classroom teachers also participated in order to ensure that the materials remained grounded and relevant to the perspectives of classroom practitioners.

After identifying needs, which ranged from problems teachers encounter in introducing numbers and letters to problems in assessing teaching and learning, participants prioritized the lists and engaged in the technical process of drafting CPD materials. The drafting effort resulted in the production of several units per learning area. These were formatted as lesson plans, meant to be used by teachers as resources. The materials were then refined. Classroom teachers came to the fore during this process. They studied the units and suggested improvements to make them level-appropriate and teacher-friendly.

This work laid the foundation for the piloting phase, which will take place in the last two weeks of September, in Salima district. To prepare for the piloting, CPD team effort during the first part of September will be directed at unifying the materials and formatting them into a trial module, and then printing them.

During September the team will also plan the piloting process, inform participants, and orient the training teams, who will comprise Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) and mentor teachers. Dr. Greg Sales, and an expert in instructional design, will fly in from Minneapolis, USA, together with Jonathan Stratman, a videographer who will tape the training sessions and edit them to be used in the national trainings that will start in October.

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MOEST AND TPDS REVIEW NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR TEACHER EDUCATION (NSTED)

During July and August TPDS undertook a review of the National Strategy for Teacher Education, working in close collaboration with MoEST counterparts from all relevant directorates. A draft report will soon be finalized. NSTED sets out all current policy priorities of the MoEST in the field of teacher education, and this review of its contents forms the foundation upon which TPDS's policy support work will be built. It was therefore surprising to discover that, although the NSTED document was approved in June 2008, it was not widely disseminated. Electronic copies had been sent to a few stakeholders but no copies were printed. Very few MoEST officials and stakeholders had seen the document and fewer had read it.

TPDS Senior Policy Advisor, Charles Gunsaru facilitated the review process by extracting from the document all the key policy options, strategies and recommendations for initial training, professional development and management of primary schoolteachers and circulating these to MoEST counterparts. A meeting with these counterparts was then held on 26th July in which the policy options, strategies and recommendations which NSTED contains were analyzed in terms of the status of their implementation. The counterparts also indicated which of the policy options and strategies were still considered priorities by the MoEST. This meeting generated a list of all the NSTED policy options and strategies that have already been implemented and those that have not.

It was discovered that most of those policy options and strategies not implemented relate to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of teachers, which suggests a direction for TPDS's future work. The list was subsequently modified to encompass other related key policy statements and proposed activities in National Education Sector Plan (NESP) and ESIP respectively.

At this meeting it was discovered that funds printing and dissemination were available under a World Bank funded project called Education Sector Support (ESSUP 1) and steps have already been taken to utilize this opportunity, with 700 copies now printed. As the various policy options and strategies were discussed, counterparts realized that the implementation of some of the strategies must take place not just at MoEST headquarters but also at division, district and even school levels. Plans to hold dissemination meetings are now underway. These are expected to take place during September.

As a follow up to the meeting Charles Gunsaru produced a draft report of the NSTED review. Among other things the report summarized the NSTED policy options and strategies for primary teacher initial training, professional training and management. The report was circulated to the counterparts for their observations and comments.

Another meeting was held on 31st August in which the report was discussed with representatives of DTED, EMAS and Basic Education. The result of this meeting was a list of priority NSTED policy options and strategies. Among the likely priorities to be supported by TPDS are:

1. Improving coordination between ministry's institutions and departments with various teacher training and management roles.
2. Introducing modular accreditation for higher teacher academic qualifications.
3. Tying CPD to career path advancement and rewards/awards.
4. Ensuring teachers have at least 3 days of CPD sessions in a year.
5. Making school improvement plans which include CPD as mandatory.
6. Training PEAs and senior teachers to support CPD.

This exercise illustrated the close working relation emerging with between TPDS staff and MoEST counterparts.

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TPDS SUPPORTS MIE IN BUDGETING FOR THE PCAR TEXTBOOK REVISION

Deficiencies in the quantity and quality of available learning materials are a clear indication of the under-resourcing of education in Malawi. The roll out of PCAR in 2006 created an urgent need to produce and distribute text books at short notice. Inevitably, this meant that books were developed and produced without sufficient piloting. By the end of 2009, DFID and CIDA supported MoEST and MIE to develop, print and distribute textbooks for Standards 1-8. The resulting materials had an intended lifespan of only three years which has now expired. Now it is time to take stock of the situation and TPDS has been requested by MoEST and MIE to evaluate and identify possible revisions to textbooks with attention to 3 main concerns:

- Appropriately sequenced learning objectives and time allotments for literacy and numeracy
- Material to ensure support for research-based instructional strategies (e.g. textbooks with sequenced material and examples of reading passages aligned for literacy development stages)
- Well-defined evaluation criteria aligned with learning objectives and benchmark outcomes which teachers can easily make use of for continuous assessment of student learning.

The textbook revision process was initiated on 28th July at a meeting attended by the Director of MIE Dr Suswele-Banda and National PCAR Coordinator Davie Kaambankadzanja, the TPDS Chief of Party Dr. Steve Harvey and ODL Specialist McLloyd Polepole. This meeting resulted in the production of a comprehensive budget and plan for the review of all seven textbooks and seven teachers guide covering every subject taught in standards 1 and 2. This will involve a systematic nationwide research study to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of existing textbooks and learning materials followed by a participatory textbook revision process hosted by MIE. Special attention will be paid to a review of continuous assessment criteria. TPDS is supporting MIE in seeking the necessary funding to complete this vitally important process, which is beyond TPDS's current scope of work.

TPDS INTRODUCED TO EVERY DISTRICT IN MALAWI.

TPDS aims to make a national impact on the quality of primary education and this necessitates that the project has a national presence and reach. TPDS will place a staff member in each of the six education division offices who will reach out to every district in collaboration with MoEST divisional staff. During the month of August, the Teacher Training Coordinator, Sydonio Matope organized a sensitization meeting in each division, which were attended by District Education Managers (DEMs) and Coordinating PEAs from every district nationwide. The meetings were chaired by the Division Managers and facilitated by MTPDS staff. The objectives of the meetings were as follows:

- Brief DEMs, CPEAs and Senior Methods Advisors (SEMs) on the objectives, activities and operations of TPDS.
- Discuss expectations of TPDS from DEMs and those of DEMs from MTPDS.
- Conclude arrangements for TPDS to take up office space at Divisional offices.



DEMs' TPDS meeting Central West Education Division

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Present : District Education Managers as follows:

| Divisions & Districts | District Education Managers | Dates |
|---|--|---------------|
| Northern: Chitipa, Karonga, Rumphi, Mzimba North, Mzimba South, Mzuzu, Nkhata Bay, Likoma Island | D D Muva, J J Nyondo, L A D Khamisa, B B Msimuko , E L Jere, Annie Sichinga, Mzondi Moyo, G Mhango | 09-08 - 2010 |
| Central East: Kasungu, Ntchisi, Dowa , Salima, Nkhotakota | C M Kumikundi, A K B Ntandika, Lewis Chakhota, G Y Chamdimba, K J Mphande | 06- 08 - 2010 |
| Central West: Mchinji, Lilongwe West, Lilongwe East Lilongwe Urban, Dedza, Ntcheu | Alfred Hauya, B B Hausi, Joyce Masache, S C Misomali, Billy Banda, Joseph Nkhata | 10 08 - 2010 |
| South East: Mangochi, Balaka, Machinga, Zomba Rural, Zomba Urban | N T Mzunga, Paul Chiphanda, Enock , Chumachao, R M Kamwachale, A M Chalila | 11 -08 - 2010 |
| South West: Blantyre Rural, Blantyre Urban, Mwanza, Neno, Chikhwawa, Nsanje | Ellen Simango, R Samati-Kambali, HE B Gwede, Reuben Menyere, George Ngaiyaye, Ignatius Kasonya | 13- 08 2010 |
| Shire Highlands: Phalombe, , Mulanje, Thyolo, Chiradzulu | E K Ali, Gossam Mafuta, Tommy Namangale, Charles Sakwata | 12 -08 - 2010 |

During these meetings participants made the following request:

- EDMS and DEMs should be involved in supervision, monitoring and evaluation of project activities
- All correspondences to the districts should be channeled through the District Education Managers
- The implementation of the project should be decentralized and work through those situated closest to the teachers.
- Teaching Service Commission should be involved in order to develop a reward and career advancement structure associated with CPD
- Special needs education specialists be involved during the development of CPD materials.

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As a result of these meetings TPDS management is now confident that the project and its objectives are well understood by key stakeholders at district level.



Prof. Greville Rumble with Dr. Suswele-Banda

significant design decisions:

- Materials have been designed and half the materials have been printed
- 4,097 students were recruited and 93% of these attended the three week orientation programme held in TTCs, and have now been deployed to schools
- Year 1 assignments have been written

TPDS SUPPORTS MOEST IN PLANNING & BUDGETING ODL

In response to the continued national shortage of primary teachers, MoEST has introduced a distance learning based Initial Primary Teacher Education (IPTE) course targeted particularly at geographical areas where teacher recruitment and deployment are problematic. TPDS is supporting the MoEST to develop an effective and efficient system for initial training through Open and Distance Learning (ODL). Student teachers learn on site at primary schools, while continuing their course of study. Candidates will sit exactly the same examination as those who are based full-time in teacher training colleges. Through the ODL initiative MoEST aims to inject at least 4,000 new teachers annually in to the system over the next 3 years. The ODL Planning Committee has taken

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TPDS is supporting the MoEST to develop this work further. Through recent short term technical assistance assignments, Prof Greville Rumble has undertaken a comprehensive systems description and analysis and has led a workshop aimed at developing an accurate and comprehensive budget for the process. Furthermore extensive exploration of options for the application of IT solutions in ODL has been undertaken by Sarah Pouzevara. Meanwhile ODL Specialist McLloyd Polepole is making consistent input to all relevant national policy forums.

PROJECT WELCOMES CURRICULUM SPECIALIST AND FINANCE MANAGER

The TPDS team is approaching full strength. Three more team members took up their posts in August



Rosemary Ngalande took up the position of Primary Curriculum Specialist. She will lead the projects activities relating to the development of textbooks and other learning materials under Result 5. She will also provide support for the development and implementation of the TPDS literacy and numeracy strategies under result 3. Rosemary has formerly worked as Acting Director of Teacher Education and Development (1999-2005) and INWENT Coordinator for the Sandwich Teacher Education Program in Malawi.



Euclid Mtonga assumed the position of Finance and Administration Manager. His work will ensure financial control and administrative compliance with the terms of the contract, as well as fiscal control of commodity procurement. Euclid comes to TPDS from Action Aid where he served as Regional Accountant.



Odala Banda took up the position of EGRA/EGMA Specialist. In addition to managing Early Grade Reading and Mathematics Assessment, he will take overall responsibility for the delivery of Result Area 3: Improved Early Grade Literacy and Numeracy. Odala has previously worked as a Literacy Specialist on the PSSP Project and as a Language Curriculum Specialist at MIE.