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NSTED Review Report

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1.0 Summary of findings and recommendations

The NSTED document has a comprehensive list of policy options and strategies for improving the initial training, professional development and management of teachers in Malawi. For primary school teachers, these can be summarized as shown in the table below:

Table 1: Summary of NSTED policy options and strategies

Initial Teacher Training	Continuing Professional Training	Teacher Management
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recruit trainees using district-based requirements and gender balance 2. Expand TTC capacity and build new ones 3. Introduce alternative modes of training, (i.e. ODL and Non- residential) 4. Raise minimum teacher training entry to MSCE 5. Upgrade JCE holder teachers 6. Introduce specialized courses for infant and junior stages 7. Ensure adequate numbers of TTC lecturers 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tie CPD to career path advancement and rewards/awards 2. Introduce modular accreditation for higher teacher academic qualifications 3. Improve facilities in TDCs 4. Ensure teachers have at least 3 days of CPD sessions in a year 5. Make school improvement plans which include CPD mandatory 6. Train PEAs and senior teachers to support CPD 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve coordination between institutions and departments with various teacher training and management roles 2. Decentralize the MGTSC 3. Decentralize TEMIS 4. Teacher allocation/ assignment should be based on a standardized PTR 5. Enhance capacity in planning, monitoring and supervision TTCs 6. Link TEMIS with EMIS 7. Introduce and apply teacher performance appraisal standards 8. Create ways to periodically cover classes of teachers living with HIV/AIDS

NB: Highlighted options/strategies are those yet to be implemented.

Although the NSTED was approved in 2008 it was not widely disseminated. However some of the options and strategies proposed in the NSTED document have already been implemented but these are mostly options and strategies aimed at improving access to initial training of teachers.

While all the proposed options/strategies are very important, those for CPD are particularly crucial for the improvement of the teaching and learning going on in the classrooms and for the effective implementation of the new primary school curriculum. However, proper implementation of the CPD strategies can only take place if there is good coordination between the various institutions and departments of the MoEST. Establishment of a system that ties career path advancement to CPD requires the collaboration and participation of both the teacher training institutions and departments such as the Department of Teacher Education and Development (DTED), Department of Human Resource Management and Development (DHRMD), Department of Basic Education (DBE), Department of Education Planning (DEP) and the Department of Education Methods and Advisory Services (EMAS)

It is therefore being recommended that MoEST should prioritize the implementation of the following policy options and strategies:

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

It is further being recommended that MTPDS should help the Ministry of Education Science and Technology to:

- i. Improve coordination among its departments and institutions involved in teacher education and development by clarifying their roles and responsibilities.
- ii. Establish a career path for primary teachers that ties advancement to CPD as already outlined in the NSTED (p22). This will require working with MIE, DCE, DHRMD, MGTSC, Department of Basic Education and EMAS.
- iii. Establish a CPD program aimed at equipping PEAs and senior school staff with supervisory and monitoring skills.
- iv. Introduce modular CPD program that have accreditation for higher academic qualifications

2.0 Introduction

2.1 *Objectives of the review*

Among other things TPDS is to provide technical assistance to help MoEST identify and address priority policy issues within its existing policy framework, plans and sector strategies. Through the NSTED review TPDS would help the MoEST examine the existing policy options and strategies for teacher education and management with the view of identifying key policy priorities to be supported by the project. The specific objectives of the review of the NSTED document, therefore, were to:

- Identify which of the strategies/recommendations proposed in the NSTED document have since been implemented,
- Determine which of the strategies/recommendations that have not yet been implemented are still the ministry's priorities, and
- Determine key priority areas that should be supported by TPDS

2.2 *Overview of the NSTED document*

The NSTED was approved in 2008. It is divided into five sections namely:

1. Teacher Education and Development in Malawi,
2. Primary Teacher Education and Development,

3. Secondary Teacher Education and Development,
4. Teacher Management and
5. Summary of Finance for Teacher Education and Development.

Although the entire NSTED document was reviewed special attention was given to sections two and four, which deal with primary teacher education and development because of their relevance to TPDS.

Sections Two of the NSTED document has two parts:

- Part one lists the immediate, medium and long term strategies designed to achieve the set goals in teacher education and development.
- Part two amplifies the same strategies by giving some background information and further explanation.

Section Four has four parts:

- Part one outlines the existing structures for teacher management giving the roles and responsibilities of the various offices.
- Part two focuses on the perceived challenges faced by the main offices that deal with day to day management of primary school teachers and then gives a list of strategies or recommendations for addressing the challenges.
- Part three deals with other challenges to teacher management, which include HIV/AIDS and teacher motivation and retention.
- Part four deals with challenges pertaining to research, monitoring and evaluation.

This review attempted to assess the status of the implementation of the strategies and recommendations contained in the two sections of the NSTED document.

The document also contains the following appendices:

- A. Primary and Secondary Teacher Requirements from World Bank Study 2007,
- B. Establishment for Primary School Teacher as at 28th May 2008,
- C. Teacher Education Staff Costs,
- D. Primary School Teachers in community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS),
- E. Teacher Education College Construction Costs,
- F. Teacher Development Center Running Costs and
- G. Continuing Professional Development Strategy for Primary and Secondary Teachers.

The report makes reference only to Appendix G.

3.0 Background

The education sector in Malawi continues to face many challenges. In an attempt to address these challenges the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) produced three policy documents which include the National Education Sector Plan (NESP), the Education Sector Investment Plan (ESIP), and the National Strategy for Teacher Education and Development (NSTED). The NESP outlines the

government's plans for achieving education goals and objectives in areas of access and equity, quality and relevance, and governance and management for the period 2007 to 2017. The ESIP covers a period of 5 years and gives the cost estimates of implementing the priorities outlined in the NESP. The NSTED covers the period from 2007 to 2017 and it "provides guidelines for the establishment of a coherent and responsive teacher education and development program that strives to claim back teacher's professional integrity and contribute to the development of quality education in Malawi." (NSTED, p ii). For TPDS, therefore, a review of the NSTED is a natural starting point

4.0 Methodology

It is important that the content of NSTED should be consistent with that of the NESP and ESIP. The NSTED review therefore included a comparison of the proposed strategies and activities for teacher education and development in NESP and ESIP with those outlined in the NSTED. A table listing these strategies and activities was produced and circulated to counterparts in the Department of Teacher Education and Development (DTED), department of Education Methods Advisory Services (EMAS) and the Department of Education Planning (DEP). The counterpart in the Department of Basic Education (DBE) was not available. The counterparts were asked to examine the lists and identify which activities or strategies have already been or are being implemented and which ones are not being implemented. A meeting with the counterparts was held on 26th July 2010 where their observations were discussed and the original table was updated to show what had happened and what had not happened since the NSTED was approved in 2008. The table has been attached to this report as Appendix 1. In an attempt to be consistent with the arrangement in NESP, the strategies under the NSTED column were arranged in terms of whether they are for access and equity, quality and relevance or governance and management of teacher education and development. The findings below have also been categorized following the same arrangement.

5.0 Findings

5.1 *General*

Surprisingly no printed copies of the NSTED were available at the time of the review. Once the NSTED was approved electronic copies were sent to a few stakeholders mostly from those departments and institutions which took part in compiling it. These were mainly members of the Technical Working Group (TWG) on teacher education and development. A launch of the document was planned but never took place. As a result very few people had seen the document even in the departments that received the electronic copies. Even fewer people had read it. The surprising thing was that the problem was not lack of funds for printing the document because funds were available under a World Bank Education Sector Support Project (ESSUP I).

Through the review process counterparts from the ministry appreciated the importance of having the NSTED document disseminated. They encouraged the officer responsible to make arrangements for it to be printed and disseminated. The document has since been printed and there are plans to have it disseminated during the month of September.

5.2 Access and Equity

As the table in Appendix 1 shows, a total of 9 strategies in the NSTED document can be classified as those that are meant to improve access and equity in teacher education and development. Of these three were placed in the category for immediate action while the others were placed in the medium to long term category. Although the document was not widely disseminated, some of the strategies it prescribes for improving access and equity in the provision of initial primary teacher education are already being implemented. Table 2 below shows those strategies that were already being implemented and those that were yet to be implemented.

Table2. Access and Equity strategies being implemented and yet to be implemented

Strategies already being implemented	Strategies yet to be implemented
i. Introduce a distance learning mode of IPTE targeted particularly at areas where teacher recruitment and deployment is problematic	i. Working with higher education institutions to develop a modular system of accreditation leading to higher academic qualifications
ii. Train adequate numbers of and improve incentives for TTC lecturers	ii. Training of adequate special needs education college tutors
iii. Diversify modes of training with an extended residential course	iii. Training of primary school teachers in special needs education
iv. Establish at least one primary teacher training college in each education division	iv. Integrating special needs education support system within the TDC network
	v. Introduce incentives to attract female and special needs education teachers

An Open and Distance Learning (ODL) training program started early this year. Recruitment of trainees in this program is from districts that have very high PTRs. With the introduction of Bachelor of Education (BEd) in Primary Education at Domasi College the problem of shortage of lectures in Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) seems to have been sorted out. The college is now graduating over 30 lectures per year. Efforts to increase intake of students in colleges have included extension of bed space in some and enrollment of non residential students in all government TTCs. In addition one new TTC has been constructed and will open on 6th September 2010. It is understood that the total output capacity of the TTCs has now risen from 2,700 to over 4,000 per year. There are also plans to construct four more TTCs. Although the average PTR target of 60: 1 is yet to be achieved it can be said that good and steady progress is being made to improve the ratio. It has to be mentioned, however that efforts to improve equity have not been very successful. Although Government has improved the bed space in TTCs to enable them enroll equal numbers of female and male students it has not been possible to find enough female candidates. This is mainly because not many females pass Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) examinations with the required subjects.

5.3 Quality and Relevance

Eighteen (18) strategies in the NSTED document can be classified as for improving quality and relevance of teacher education and development. Of these, 13 were placed in the immediate category while 5 are in the medium to long term category. Only 5 of the 18 proposed strategies had been implemented or were being implemented at the time of the review. These have been shown in Table3 below.

Table3: Quality and Relevance strategies being implemented and those yet to be implemented

Strategies already being implemented	Strategies yet to be implemented
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Raising the minimum entry qualifications for primary school teacher learners ii. Ensuring that TTCs have adequate instructional materials, access to ICT and qualified teacher educators iii. Introduction of life skills and HIV/AIDS education in TTCs iv. Reforming of the TTC curriculum in line with primary education reforms v. Reduce the percentage of unqualified teachers in primary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Encourage JCE holder to upgrade ii. Ensure that infrastructure in TTCs conform to minimum standards and are maintained and rehabilitated regularly iii. Ensure that all TTCs develop their own strategic plans iv. Establish networks of TDCs for primary school teachers in every zone v. Equip TDCs with electricity and internet vi. Train PEAs and senior teachers in provision of support to teachers vii. Ensure that all primary school teachers have at least three days of INSET in a year viii. Establish funding mechanism for TDCs ix. Establish and maintain an annual evaluation of TDCs and teacher development within the zone x. Ensure that annual school improvement planning is mandatory and that it includes teacher development xi. Introduce special TTCs courses for infant primary school classes xii. Raise the minimum qualification for TTC lecturer to a degree xiii. Ensure upgrading of current JCE holders to MSCE

In 2008 the minimum qualification for entry into TTCs was raised from a Junior Certificate of Education (JCE), which is obtained after two years of secondary education, to Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE), obtained after four years of secondary school education. As indicated in section 5.2, while this ensured that those entering TTCs are of higher quality it did not help the efforts to improve equity because it is proving to be difficult to find enough female candidates. With the assistance of donors, all government TTCs now have computers and have access to the internet. The IPTE curriculum

was aligned to the new primary school curriculum in 2005 and Life skills became an examination subject in TTCs in 2007. It may be worth mentioning here, that another USAID funded project; the Malawi Teacher Training Activity (MTTA) was involved in the orientation of the TTC lecturers to Life Skills in 2008.

A look at the table will show that all the strategies that had already been implemented involve initial training while the majority of those that were yet to be implemented involve CPD of the teachers. Although the ministry produced the “Continuing Professional Development Strategy” (Appendix G of the NSTED) no effort has been made to have it implemented. The continuing Professional Development Strategy was developed in order “to provide a systematic way for planning, implementation and monitoring of regularized teacher professional programs that appropriately respond to the needs of the country”. The document outlines the teacher professional development strategic areas and arrangements for implementation and monitoring and evaluation. In short the Continuing Professional Strategy document provides implementation guidelines for the CPD policy options and strategies outlined in the NSTED document. However, not much has happened since its production.

We believe that it is only when the strategies for CPD are implemented that the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom can be ensured.

5.4 Governance and Management

The table in Appendix 1 has only four policy strategies under the NSTED column on Governance and Management. These are mainly on the governance and management of teacher education and development. They include

- Formalization of the establishment of DTED,
- Agreement on a strategic plan for teacher education and development and deployment,
- Systematic recruitment and deployment of teachers and
- Establishment of a career path that is linked to professional development.

It was established that efforts to formalize the establishment of DTED and establish a teacher recruitment system based on district requirements were already underway. However, it was not clear as to what was meant by “strategic plan on teacher education and development and deployment” and none of the counterparts knew about the existence of such a plan. In addition, so far, little or no effort to tie career progression to CPD has been made.

As it has already been stated, issues of governance and management of teachers have mainly been dealt with in Section Four of the NSTED document. The remainder of this section of the report summarizes the strategies and recommendations made in that section of the document.

5.4.1 Strategies for various teacher management levels

The existing structures for the management of primary school teachers include:

- i. Malawi Government Teaching Service Commission
- ii. Department of Human Resource Management and Development

- iii. Department of Teacher Education and Development
- iv. Department of Basic Education
- v. District Education Offices
- vi. Schools

Section Four of the NSTED document has detailed strategies/recommendations under each one of these structures related to the challenges perceived to be faced by them. Below is a summary of what could be considered to be the major strategies/ recommendations.

a. Malawi Government Teaching Service Commission (MGTSC)

- i. The functions of the MGTSC should be decentralized to at least divisional level.
- ii. MGTSC should establish an effective and transparent teacher appraisal system to be used for teachers' promotions.

b. Department of Human Resource Management and Development (DHRMD)

- i. Establishment of teachers' posts should be based on a standard pupil-teacher-ratio (PTR).
- ii. Upgrade and decentralize Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS).
- iii. DHRMD functions should be decentralized to district level.
- iv. Teacher payment vouchers should provide for the counter signature of Chairperson of the School Committee or any such local body to authenticate the existence of the teacher at the school

c. Department of Teacher Education and Development (DTED)

- i. DTED should be officially established as a department of the MOEST.
- ii. DTED should be effectively staffed.

d. Department of Basic Education (DBE)

- i. DBE should cease licensing and registering teachers. This function should go to the MGTSC or a Teachers' Council which should be established.

e. District Education Offices (DEO)

- i. District Assemblies should ensure that cost centres (such as the DEOs) have autonomy to raise and expend funds.
- ii. Teachers should not be transferred from a school for a minimum of 5 years unless there are good professional or moral reasons.

f. Schools

- i. School management committees should have a say in decisions to transfer teachers.
- ii. No two teachers should be allowed to teach in one class at the same time unless they have clearly shared lessons or topics. (This is an attempt to deal with a common practice in the schools whereby even when there is more than one teacher for a class or standard the teachers prefer not to split the class into smaller classes but to take turns in teaching it. This gives them the opportunity to have free days)

There was no attempt to categorize these strategies/recommendations in terms of whether they were for immediate or long term action. However, a number of these had already been implemented. These include efforts to establish a teacher appraisal system, establishment of vacancies based on the PTR of 60:1, upgrading of HRMIS, decentralization of some DHRM functions such preparation and payment of salaries to district level and efforts to formalize the establishment of DTED.

5.4.2 Strategies for other teacher management challenges

5.4.2.1 HIV/AIDS

The NSTED recognizes the fact HIV/AIDS is a major challenge in the management and administration of teachers in Malawi. Both teacher and pupil school absenteeism has increased due to the impact HIV/AIDS. To address the impact of HIV/AIDS the NSTED made a number of recommendations in addition to those captured in the table in Appendix 1. The following are the major ones:

- i. MOEST and its education partners must continue providing information to teachers both in initial and in in-service teacher education programs. (HIV/AIDS activities in schools and colleges are mainly dependent on donor funds. For example Life Skills in primary schools came as UNICEF and UNFPA projects while Life Skills in TTCs was done with assistance from USAID through MTTA. The recommendation therefore is that the activities need to continue even after the projects.)
- ii. MOEST needs to find ways of maintaining continuity of learning in the classroom while teachers are absent. (One of the effects of HIV/AIDS in the schools is high teacher absenteeism. The recommendation here is that deliberate efforts should be made to find ways of ensuring that the classes are taught even when the class teachers are absent)
- iii. There needs to be a program at workplace for prevention of HIV/AIDS and mitigation of its impact among teachers and other education staff. (As indicated above the main medium for taking HIV/AIDS messages into the schools and colleges has been the introduction of Life Skill as a subject. However this was mainly targeting the learners and not the teachers. Therefore the recommendation is that there should a program targeting the teachers.)
- iv. Efforts should be made at national, district and community levels to ensure the schools are safe places for educators and learners.

No special arrangements have been put in place for maintaining continuity of learning while teachers are absent. However, through the Department of HVI/AIDS and Nutrition, the MOEST has embarked on a program specifically targeting the teachers in schools.

5.4.2.2 Teacher Motivation and Retention

The NSTED indicates that the morale of teachers in Malawi is low because of the low social status attached to the job which is a result of poor remuneration and working conditions. The documents expresses concern that the decentralization of primary education administration to District Assemblies might exacerbate the situation since there might be wider differences in conditions of service between districts. This might result in some districts losing teachers to others. A number of recommendations to address the situation have been made of which the following are the major ones:

- i. The promotion of teachers should be based on their classroom performance.
- ii. There should be a balance between a career path that targets the classroom teacher and a career path that targets school administrators.
- iii. There is a need to design an employment continuation scheme that is attractive to the retired teachers.

5.4.3 Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

The NSTED notes that education research, monitoring and evaluation activities are not coordinated in Malawi. Various institutions and departments engage in different types of research, monitoring and evaluation of the education, development and management of teachers but there is little coordination and often findings are not disseminated. In particular there is little coordination between EMAS, DTED, MIE and teacher training institutions. The following is a summary of the recommendations made to address the challenges of research, monitoring and evaluation:

- i. There should be research on the relevance and appropriateness of the various teacher education programs.
- ii. There is an urgent need to explore more efficient and responsive approaches to teacher education.
- iii. There is need to clarify roles of EMAS and DTED on monitoring and evaluation
- iv. MoEST should facilitate capacity building for monitoring and evaluation in the entire system.

6.0 Conclusion

The review has shown that the NSTED document presents a comprehensive analysis of the challenges in the area of teacher education and development and also in management of teachers in the education system in Malawi. However the review has also shown that differences exist in the amount of the effort being applied to implement the various NSTED policy options and strategies for initial teacher training, continuing professional development and management of the teachers. More effort has been put on improving access to initial training than on improving the provision of continuing professional development of the teachers. Some strategies aimed at improving the management of the teaching service have also been implemented but a lot is yet to happen especially in improving the coordination between institutions and departments that are involved in training, professional development and management of teachers.

The strategies and recommendations outlined in the NSTED document can indeed form a basis for a coherent and responsive teacher education and development program. However, for this to happen there is need for close cooperation and collaboration of the various institutions and departments involved in teacher training, professional development, and management. The activities of these institutions and departments need to be carefully coordinated. Unfortunately, the review has shown that not much is being made to ensure that the implementation of the strategies by the various institutions and departments of the ministry is well coordinated. For example although the section of Human Resource Management is trying to update its database for teachers and has decentralized its functions to district level, the head of the section did not even know about the existence of the NSTED

document. Another example is that although the MGTSC requires that candidates for the post of primary school head teacher should possess an MSSSP certificate the HRMIS does not include it in its database. (The Malawi School Support Systems Project was funded by DFID and it ran from 1997 to 2002. Among other things it trained Primary Education Advisors and Primary school senior staff in supervision and school improvement.) In addition efforts by MIE to reintroduce the program have not received much support from government.

7.0 Recommendations

CPD is crucial to the improvement of the teaching and learning that goes on in the classroom. Through a carefully planned CPD program teachers can be helped to acquire new skills needed for the effective implementation of the new curriculum. This is particularly true for the implementation of the new approaches to the teaching of literacy. Through CPD teachers can also improve their academic qualifications. It is important therefore that the NSTED policy options and strategies for continuing professional development of the teachers be implemented. It is also important that the CPD program be tied to advancement through a career path. This adds value to the program and gives teachers the motivation for participating. Such a program will require proper coordination between the relevant departments and institutions of the ministry. The establishment of a career path that is linked to a CPD program will help the ministry achieve its goal of establishing “a coherent and responsive teacher education and development program that strives to claim back teacher’s professional integrity and contribute to the development of quality education in Malawi.”

Since most of the strategies for improving initial teacher training have been implemented, it is being recommended that MoEST should now focus on the strategies for CPD and the teacher management strategies that will ensure a smooth implementation of the CPD programs. Specifically it is recommended that MoEST should prioritize the implementation of the following strategies:

- i. Improve coordination between ministry’s institutions and departments with various teacher training and management roles.
- ii. Introduce modular accreditation for higher teacher academic qualifications.
- iii. Tie CPD to career path advancement and rewards/awards.
- iv. Ensure teachers have at least 3 days of CPD sessions in a year.
- v. Make school improvement plans which include CPD mandatory.
- vi. Train PEAs and senior teachers to support CPD.

It is further being recommended that MTPDS should help the Ministry of Education Science and Technology to:

- v. Improve coordination among its departments and institutions involved in teacher education and development by clarifying their roles and responsibilities.
- vi. Establish a career path for primary teachers that ties advancement to CPD as already outlined in the NSTED (p22). This will require working with MIE, DCE, DHRMD, MGTSC, Department of Basic Education and EMAS.

- vii. Establish a CPD program aimed at equipping PEAs and senior school staff with supervisory and monitoring skills.
- viii. Introduce modular CPD program that have accreditation for higher academic qualifications