

## Country Context Report - Malawi

### General Country Information

#### Africa Education Initiative Program Component(s)

Ambassadors' Girls' Scholarship Program  
Teacher Training

#### Primary Language(s)

English: Official, Instruction Grades 1-4, Instruction Grades 5-7/8

Chichewa: National, Official, Instruction Grades 1-4

##### Sources

CIA Fact Book - <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>

#### Population

	Total	Male	Female
Total	11,651,239	5,788,672	5,862,567
Under 14	5,446,110	2,748,058	2,698,052

##### Sources

CIA Fact Book - <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>

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## **Basic Education General Information**

### **Breadth of Basic Education Activities**

Length of Primary School Cycle: 8 Years

The grades are termed standards with Standard 8 as the final grade. Standards 1 and 2 are called the infant classes or the infant section; Standards 3 to 5 are called the junior classes or the junior section; and Standards 6 to 8 are called senior classes or the senior sections. The school year begins in September and ends in July.

### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999  
Malawi Domestic Household Survey (DHS) EdData Survey 2002: Education Data for Decision-making - National Statistical Office and ORC Macro

## **Early Childhood Education**

Early childhood education is provided.

Early childhood education is one of the recent developments in the education sector. When the government started providing early childhood education facilities in 1994 though at a small scale, the private sector and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) also joined the service. By 1994, NGOs that offered one form or the other of services in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) included the following:

Save the Children (SCF)(US)  
World Vision International (WVI)  
Moslem Association of Malawi (MAM)  
Church of Central Africa (CCAP)  
Action Aid (AA)  
Other Church Organizations.

Despite the inability of the majority of parents to meet the costs of ECCE, there was by 1994 a tremendous increase in the demand for the service from both the rural and urban communities.

### Sources

UNESCO - <http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/malawi/>

## **National Curriculum**

A national curriculum exists.

### Sources

Malawi Domestic Household Survey (DHS) EdData Survey 2002: Education Data for Decision-making - National Statistical Office and ORC Macro

## **National exams - At what level are national exams written?**

At the end of primary school, a national examination, the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination (PSLCE), is administered. Completion of junior secondary (Grades 3-8) leads to the award of the Junior Certificate of Examination (JCE) and completion of senior secondary leads to the award of the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE).

### Sources

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology website - <http://www.malawi.gov.mw/educ/educ.htm>

## **Other**

Malawi has been divided into six education divisions namely:

- South West Division (Chikwawa, Blantyre Rural, Blantyre Urban, Mwanza, Nsanje)
- South East Division (Zomba Rural, Zomba Urban, Balaka, Mangochi, Machinga)
- Shire Highlands Division (Mulanje, Chiradzulu, Thyolo, Phalombe)
- Central West Division (Lilongwe Rural, Lilongwe Urban, Mchinji, Ntcheu, Dedza)
- Central East Division (Kasungu, Dowa, Ntchisi, Salima, Nkhotakota)
- North Division (Mzuzu, Mzimba, Karonga, Chitipa, Nkhatabay, Rumphu)

These education divisions are comprised of four to six education districts. These districts are divided further into zones and each zone has six to 10 primary schools. On average, a single primary school contains up to 3,000 pupils and an average of 350 teachers. This form of grouping is done to enhance management of the schools.

### Sources

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology website - <http://www.malawi.gov.mw/educ/educ.htm>

## **What are the key basic education challenges?**

The internal efficiency of the primary school system in Malawi is low. It is estimated that one-third of all pupils drop out between Grades 1 and 2, and that only one-fifth of children entering primary school will complete their schooling within the allotted time. Pupils from urban areas spend longer in school than those from rural areas. Repetition rates are as high as 25%. Fewer than 10% of pupils completing the primary cycle go to secondary school. Perhaps the most critical contributory factor is that of the quality of the teaching force. Free primary education was introduced in Malawi in 1994 and resulted in a massive increase in the number of primary pupils. To meet this increased demand, over 20,000 unqualified teachers have been drafted into the system – a doubling of the teaching force.

### Sources

Supporting teacher development in primary schools - Kay, J. (2000)

## **Is primary education 'free' (legally)?**

Free primary education is provided.

In 1994, a government initiative, Free Primary Education (FPE), was implemented with the aim to reduce the household burden by eliminating tuition fees in all public primary schools. The effects of implementing FPE were dramatic. In 1993/94, the total pupil enrollment was 1,895,423. After the introduction of free primary schooling the enrollment skyrocketed to 2,860,819 in 1995 and stood at 2,887,107 in 1996, an increase of 68%. Clearly, reducing the direct costs of schooling to children's families resulted in a greater willingness to send children to school.

### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

## **What are the barriers to student access and participation in basic education?**

According to education statistics, 30% of the pupil population is in Grade 1. The proportion gradually decreases to 5% in Grade 8. Girls make up 47% of the school population. In Grade 1, the proportion of girls is 50.3% and it gradually decreases to 39% in Grade 8. This is mainly because girls register a considerably higher dropout rate estimated at 9% while boys register a dropout rate estimated at 6%. According to the Ministry of Education (MOE), the dropout rates of Grades 1 and 2 pupils were 13.2% and 8.4% respectively. This represented the highest drop-out rates in the system. There are several reasons, which explain the persistence of this phenomenon. Some of them are listed below in order of importance:

- Teachers report of high rates of pupil absenteeism, which make progress in teaching difficult and very slow.
- There is a scarcity of teaching materials ranging from blackboards to textbooks. Children are not exposed to adequate enabling teaching and learning aids denying them the hands-on experience necessary at this stage of development.
- Classrooms present very adverse learning conditions for pupils. When they are lucky, the pupils are given classrooms but they sit on the cold/hot cement floor. If this floor is not cemented, they sit on dirt. In most circumstances, the pupils learn under trees while seated on stones of all shapes. They try to gain wisdom while seated in this way. The adverse weather also takes its toll.
- The enrollments are very large giving rise to large teacher- pupil ratios, which make teaching almost impossible. In rural areas, it is not uncommon to get teacher-pupil ratios near 1:200 (1995).
- Most teachers assigned to these classes do not have proper training for handling and teaching pupils.
- Inevitably children suffer culture shock caused by the difference between the conditions at home/the village and the classroom/school environment, which for the reasons mentioned above, make school environments adverse locations in which to learn or teach.

### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

### **In what ways is the education system addressing the needs of marginalized groups? Are there special schools?**

Special schools exist.

General policies adopted by the government to improve general education conditions for all pupils include:

- Successful immunization programs
- Introduction of Universal Free Primary Education and subsequent increase in enrollment
- Provision of scholarships to all girls in secondary school
- Introduction of "Life Skills" training into the primary school curriculum to inform children about the dangers of HIV/AIDS
- Establishment of Child Rights Unit in the Human Rights Commission of Malawi.

Blind:

There are two schools for the blind in Malawi: Stella Maris Secondary School in Blantyre and Chibwata F.P. School in Zikapadana Village.

Health:

In 2000, Save the Children began providing malaria treatment kits to 33 schools in Mangochi. Teachers were trained to diagnose the disease and give medicine. Children were encouraged to go to school and get treatment as soon as they began to feel ill. Parents and village leaders were involved in administering, promoting and contributing financially to the effort.

Hearing-Impaired:

A five-year project to promote the development of sign language and interpreting services has been running in Malawi, supported by the Finnish Deaf Association. However, results are unsatisfactory as:

- The Deaf Association is very weak.
- There are few services for deaf adults.
- The education of deaf children presents considerable difficulties.

#### Sources

Africa Union website - <http://www.africaneducationdecade.org/pages/article2.htm>  
Learning Channel website - <http://learningchannel.oneworld.net/article/archive/1778/>

### **What is the stage of development of the education system?**

Vision 2020: The National Long Term Perspective Study has identified the main challenges facing Malawi's education system. These are: improving access, quality and equity in primary, secondary and tertiary education; strengthening the science, technical, vocational and commercial components of the school curriculum; improving special education; improving the performance of supporting education institutions; and developing an effective and efficiently managed national education system. In view of this, government will embark on strengthening key aspects of the national educational system.

Key Education Quality Indicators (1997):

Performance in National Examinations (% Pass) in Government Schools

Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination (PSLCE): 77%

Junior Certificate Examination (JCE): 81%

Malawi School Certificate Examinations (MSCE) - Secondary Schools: 36%

Malawi School Certificate Examinations (MSCE) - Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSSs): 8%  
% of Qualified Teachers

Primary (diploma or certificate): 51%

Secondary (holders of diploma or above): 37%

CDSSs (holders of diploma or above): 1%

Teacher Training Colleges (degree holders): 25%

Technical/Vocational institutions (degree holders): 35%

University (Ph.D. holders): 20%

Pupil:Teacher Ratios

Primary: 62:1

Secondary (incl. CDSS): 36:1

University: 10:1

Repetition and Drop-out Rate (Primary)

Repetition (all Grades): 15%

Drop-out (all Grades): 17%

Survival Rate to Grade 8: 20%

Physical Facilities (Primary)

Pupils per permanent classroom: 119

Pupils per desk: 38

Pupils per chair: 48

Pupils per textbook (English, math and Chichewa): 24

Deterioration in the quality of education offered by Malawi's school system has introduced other challenges. One of them is that the poor quality of education has tended to contribute to the very high rates of dropouts and repeaters, particularly at the primary school level. This has resulted in extremely low levels of internal efficiency of the primary system. Given the paucity of the resources likely to be available to education in both the short and long term, appropriate measures to arrest the wastage problem will need to be put in place.

Although an adequate and professionally qualified teaching force is a felt need at all levels of the system, such a need is most critical at the basic education level. The large numbers of teachers required to compensate for the high level of attrition, coupled with the increasing number required to implement the improvements in the system dictate that a school based distance education teacher training model as well as a program of professional staff development for practicing teachers should continue in the short term. For any on-going teacher training and development program to be effective, due consideration has to be given to the capacity of the primary teacher training colleges to deliver, and also to ensure that the systems for field support and supervision are developed and embedded nationally.

For both the basic and secondary school levels, the level of teacher recruitment, and the quantity required to sustain the system demands that a strategic plan for teacher recruitment is formulated. Such a plan should also take account of the need to train teachers who are more flexible with regard to what they can and should teach. Also critical is the need for an ongoing in-service training program for practicing teachers. Given that both the recruitment and retention of teachers for all levels of the education system has much to do with their economic and social status, a review of the remuneration package for teachers and other educational staff is a matter deserving urgent attention.

Relevance

In addition to the provision of relevant physical and human resources, the quality of education

provided by Malawi's educational institutions should be enhanced by a thoroughly revised curriculum. The challenge is to design a school curriculum which de-emphasizes selection for post-primary education. Instead, the focus should be on the more than 90% of the primary and secondary school graduates who have to seek employment in the private and informal sectors. In this connection, the primary and secondary school curriculum of the future should strive to impart essential skills and knowledge on a broad range of issues including new basic skills, critical thinking and analytical skills, civic and democratic values, computer skills, entrepreneurial skills, life skills and environmental education. The teaching of science and mathematics will also deserve more attention in the re-oriented curriculum.

At the tertiary, and to a limited extent lower levels as well, a key challenge remains one of getting relevant institutions to keep pace with world-wide developments in science and technology and to relate what is taught to the needs of the wider society and the private sector. These changes call for commensurate changes in teacher training programs.

#### Management

An effective management and planning system is a pre-requisite for both improved quality as well as better use of available resources. In addition to identifying appropriate mechanisms for addressing the training needs of educational managers for all levels of the system, there are challenges relating to the improvement of supervisory services and to the decentralization of management, especially teacher recruitment and deployment. Also relevant is the need to work out strategies to enhance the participation of stakeholders in education-decision making and for promoting a clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities of these groups. The overall performance of the education system is likely to be promoted by a system of decision-making, which places the school and its constituents at the center of educational decision-making.

#### Planning

The major educational planning challenge relates to the strengthening of relevant capacities for the collection, analysis, storage and use of educational data. There is a clear need to establish an effective information retrieval system that can be used as a planning and policy tool for all levels of the education system. This calls for the establishment and strengthening of sustainable Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), and at the tertiary level for the strengthening of institutional capacity for strategic planning. Supplementary to the EMIS in the rationalization of the provision of educational services, will be a Malawian School Mapping exercise, which will be a systematic approach to determining the provision of education services within a prescribed socio-economic context with respect to demographic factors.

#### Finance

The strong government commitment to education is not enough to accommodate the demands of significant expansion and improvement in the system. In view of the fact that available government resources can be stretched only so far, a major shortcoming of the current system of education finance is its over-dependence on scarce government resources. Although donor presence is strong especially in the area of development expenditure, such heavy dependence on the donor community poses serious problems of national ownership and sustainability. Also, regrettable is the fact that although the private sector is a major beneficiary of the public school system, its role in national educational financing remains rather limited.

#### Sources

Ministry of Education Sports and Culture Malawi Education Sector: Policy & Investment Framework (PIF) Revised: January 2001 - <http://chambo.sdn.org.mw/edu/new/min-education/whole.htm#challenges>

### Primary School Enrollment by Year and Grade

Year	Grade	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
2000 (1)	Total	3,016,972	1,558,062	1,458,910	256,065	2,760,907
2000	Grade 7/8	507,696	88,321	65,401	17,825	135,897
2000	Grade 4	353,974	181,366	172,608	32,910	321,064
2000 (2)	Grade 1	804,312	399,647	404,665	47,416	756,896

(1) - Between 1992 and 2002, rates of primary school attendance increased. In 2002, 81% of children (6-13 years old) attended primary school, up from 78% in 2000, 69% in 1996, and 58% in 1992. School-age males and females were almost equally likely to attend primary school in 2002, 2000, and 1992.

In 2002, 90% of children in urban areas attended primary school, compared to 80% in rural areas. This 10% urban-rural difference is an improvement from 2000 (12%), 1996 (19%), and 1992 (21%).

(2) - In 2002, 40% of Grade 1 students were over the age of seven.

#### Sources

Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) EdData Education Profile: Malawi 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002 - USAID  
Education Basic Statistics Malawi 2000 - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

### Enrollment Age

Year	General	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
2004 (1)	7	7	7	7	7

(1) - The enrollment age is seven years old, the MOE regards six years and 15 years as the minimum entry and maximum leaving ages respectively. However, schools sometimes admit pupils below six years of age. Pupils with ages of 16 years and above are also found in the system. This is so, because many Grade 1 pupils enroll while they are above six years of age. Pupils also repeat grades when they fail, and dropouts, are allowed into the system at any point. Therefore, in any one grade the pupils are of different ages.

Many of the children attending primary school are not the correct age for their grade. This can have tremendous impact on the educational infrastructure, the experience in the classroom, and education planning. In 2002, students over or under the official primary school age range made up 30% of the primary school population.

#### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999  
Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) EdData Education Profile: Malawi 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002 - USAID  
Education Basic Statistics Malawi 2000 - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

### Average Grade Repetition

Year	General	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
2002 (1)		22	14		
2000 (2)		44	47		

(1) - The above amounts are the percentages of male and female pupils repeating Grade 8.

In 2002, 22% of male and 14% of female students were repeating Grade 8. These rates are an improvement from 2000, when 40% of male and 37% of female students were repeating Grade 8.

(2) - The above amounts are the percentages of male and female pupils repeating Grade 1.

The percentage of males and females repeating grades was substantial in both 2000 and 2002,

although there was a notable decline during the same period in the Grade 8 repetition rate.

Sources

Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) EdData Education Profile: Malawi 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002 - USAID

### **Drop Out Rates**

Year	General	Male	Female	Urban	Rural
2002 (1)		8	9		

(1) - The above percentages are the dropout rates for male and female students in Grade 1.

The percentage of males and females dropping out of school was generally higher in 2002 than 2000. In 2002, the Grade 1 dropout rate was 8% for males and 9% for females, up from 3% and 2% in 2000. From 2000 to 2002, the dropout rate in the final grade of primary school increased from 10% to 20% for males and from 14% to 21% for females.

In 2002, 60% of primary school students who entered Grade 1 could be expected to reach Grade 5, with or without grade repetition. However, only 39% of those who entered Grade 1 could be expected to reach Grade 8.

Sources

Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) EdData Education Profile: Malawi 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002 - USAID  
Education Basic Statistics Malawi 2000 - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

### **Average Distance to School by Year and Grade**

Year	Grade	General	Urban	Rural
2004 (1)	Total	5.00 km		

(1) - In the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) profile, distance to school was cited as a factor in non-attendance of school for 30% of children.

Sources

Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) EdData Education Profile: Malawi 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2002 - USAID  
USAID - Patricia Ziwe

### **Duration of School Day by Year and Grade**

Year	Grade	General	Urban	Rural
2004	Total	5.00 Hours		

Sources

USAID - Joan Wood

### **Are there alternatives to traditional schools?**

Yes. Approximately 1,300 students are enrolled in technical and vocational education institutions, which are now run by the Ministry of Labour and Manpower Development. Technical and training colleges offer courses in such fields as Forestry, Marine Science, Social Welfare and Hotel Management, as well as in various trades. These courses lead to certificates awarded after studies lasting between six months and four years.

Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

## **Which approaches is the country taking to combat HIV/AIDS?**

Malawi's National Response to HIV/AIDS for 2000-2004 is "Combating HIV/AIDS with Renewed Hope and Vigour in the New Millennium." The key strategic actions are to firstly enforce laws relating to rape, sexual harassment, discrimination of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), alcohol and drug abuse, and access to public places of entertainment to protect children and youth. Secondly, strengthen and broaden the scope of lending institutions, entrepreneurial training organizations, and formal and non-formal education programs targeting women, youth, and other marginalized people. The challenge is inadequate social and economic life skills among women and men, girls and boys, to prevent HIV infection and mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS. There is also the "National Policy on Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children" and the "National Policy on Early Childhood Development."

While nearly all sub-Saharan African countries have a national multi-sectoral HIV/AIDS policy, the education sectors of these countries rarely have a sector-specific policy framework or effective HIV/AIDS focal point system. In Malawi, there is a lack of strong leadership or sustained advocacy on HIV/AIDS issues in the education sector. For the most part, advocacy on HIV/AIDS in this sector centers on curricular issues such as preventive or life skills education for pupils. Efforts are often sporadic and scattered. In addition, policies such as prevention of discrimination against sero-positive staff are inadequately enforced. Partners such as teachers' unions have been slow to react in supporting HIV/AIDS policies. International partners tend to view HIV/AIDS as a health and/or human rights problem and when they develop interventions on HIV/AIDS in the education sector in Africa these are generally limited to promoting preventive education, often in a school health context.

### Sources

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology website - <http://www.malawi.gov.mw/educ/educ.htm>  
HIV/AIDS: a Threat to Educational Quality in Sub-Saharan Africa - Association for the Development of Education in Africa, 2003

## **Are there political conflicts and what is the impact of these conflicts on education?**

There are no political conflicts.

## **Are there on-going, recently completed projects relating to the following areas?**

### Teacher Training

The Enhancing Technical, Entrepreneurial Vocational Education and Training (TEVET) Outcomes (ETO) project was launched at the Malawi Institute of Management (MIM) in August 2003. The objective of the project is to address various needs of the TEVET systems such as policy and management development, teacher training, entrepreneurship and development of model technical colleges: one rural and one urban college. The project also addresses cross-cutting issues of gender, environmental education and HIV/AIDS. During the launch, various committees were set up and entrusted with running and managing issues of the project. The working groups set up include the Project Steering Committee, the Policy and Management Working Group, the Teacher Training Working Group and the Entrepreneurship Working Group.

### Sources

Malawi Information Site - <http://www.siastr.sk.ca/international/malawietop/wh>

### Girls' Education

In Malawi, USAID's Girls' Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE) program, from 1989-98, first targeted community groups. One program intervention was the use of a participatory theater model as a research method. Researchers lived within the community and worked with

community members to develop plays that reflected their concerns about girls' education. The GABLE program then developed a national social mobilization campaign to encourage girls to enter and remain in school. The GABLE program has been successful. In two years, first grade admissions for girls have risen by 75%, and gross enrollment ratios for girls have increased by 71%. Girls now outnumber boys in primary school. Pass rates have risen for all students.

Sources

USAID website - <http://www.usaid.gov/wid/pubs/educfocus98.htm>

### **What is the status of Muslim education?**

There are two Islamic NGOs in Malawi, namely the World Islamic Call Society (WICS) and the International Islamic Council for Da'wa and Relief. These are inter-governmental organizations, which provide considerable material and ideological support. WICS is a religious organization committed to the spread of Islam. One of the main objectives is to introduce Islam and disseminate Islamic culture and conversion. It is also active in printing translations of the Koran as well as of translating other religious and cultural books into local languages.

Sources

World Islamic Call Society Website - <http://www.islamic-call.org/> - 2k

## **Additional Basic Education General Information**

### **Donor Information**

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs - 2002

US\$ 4,863,641

Assistance in Development of Capacity for Gender Training and Research of Gender Issues

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation - 2002

US\$ 2,876,164

African Economic Research Consortium

USAID - 2001

US\$ 4,011,000

USAID - 2000

US\$ 2,875,000

USAID - 1999

US\$ 4,864,000

Training teacher trainers and school committees  
Monitoring implementation of policy reforms  
Identifying local constraints to educational quality  
Promoting community involvement in schools  
Management training for head teachers  
Training teachers in more effective, participatory methodology

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) - 2001

US\$ 281,468

Association for Development of Education in Africa

Save the Children - 1999

Improved Education Quality (IEQ) Project

World Bank - 1996

US\$ 25,200,000

The Primary Education Expansion Program focuses on: the construction of 1,600 primary classrooms and associated structures; pedagogical support and in-service teacher training particularly for newly-recruited teachers; and provision of teaching and learning materials (in 1998, 8,000 teachers had completed their residential training course and 8 million notebooks and 3.5 million slates had been distributed to schools).

Sources

USAID Malawi website - <http://www.usaid.gov/mw>  
Foreign Affairs Department, Japan - <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/africa/ticad2/list98/>

**Country Spending on Education - Total Government Expenditure by Budget Type and Year**

Type	Year	Amount
National Budget	2000	US\$ 490,000,000
Education Budget	2000	US\$ 27,501,416
Primary Education Budget	2000	US\$ 20,672,676
Teacher Training Budget	2000	US\$ 844,283
Teaching Resources and School Supplies Budget	2000	US\$ 1,865,931

Sources

Education Basic Statistics Malawi 2000 - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

**Teacher Training**

**Number of Primary Teachers by Gender**

Total	Male	Female
47,840	29,687	18,153

39% of primary school teachers are female. Out of the 5,581 teachers in urban areas, 915 are male (16%) and 4,666 female (84%). Of the 42,259 teachers in rural areas, 28,772 are male (68%) and 13,487 female (32%).

Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) have in the past run residential courses, which reserved only a third of all the boarding places for females. There is considerable gender bias in the distribution of teachers by grade. The average proportion of female teachers varies inversely in relation to the grade. Grade 1 has the highest proportion of female teachers (46%), while Grade 8 has the lowest (7%).

Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999  
Education Basic Statistics Malawi 2000 - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

## **Primary Teachers by Region**

In total, there are 5,581 teachers in urban areas and 42,259 in rural areas. (1999 estimate)

### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

## **Primary Teachers by Education/Grade**

Of the total 47,840 teachers, 24,566 are qualified (51%) and 23,274 are unqualified (49%).

T3: 723 male and 671 female teacher students passed the primary teacher training college examination – Total 1,394 (1995/96).

T2: 741 male and 393 female teacher students passed the primary teacher training college examination – Total 1,134 (1995/96).

Candidates with a Junior Certificate Examination (JCE) graduate with a T3 qualification and those with a Malawi School Certificate Examination (MSCE) graduate with a T2 teacher qualification.

### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999  
Education Basic Statistics Malawi 2000 - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

## **Percentage of Primary Teachers Certified to Teach**

Certified: 51 %

Untrained: 49 %

Of the total 47,840 teachers, 24,566 are qualified (51%) and 23,274 are unqualified (49%).

### Sources

Education Basic Statistics Malawi 2000 - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

## **Pupil/Teacher Ratio**

Level	Total	Urban	Rural
Total	100:1	70:1	135:1

### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

## **What are the barriers to teacher sufficiency?**

- There is an inequitable distribution of teachers by grade and gender to rural and urban areas.
- It takes a long time to post newly qualified teachers giving rise to teacher anxiety.
- It takes more than two years to confirm teachers as permanent employees of the government and this causes a lot of anxiety with respect to the security of the job.
- Quite often the teachers are allocated to positions, which they are ill-prepared to fill. The courses in college do not cater for specialization.
- At school, there is improper and infrequent supervision and upgrading courses when available are merely repetitions of initial teacher training.
- Head teachers and teachers are given heavy teaching loads and at the same time society expects a lot from schools especially when it comes to Grade 8 performance.
- Some policies constrain the organization and management of schools and colleges.

There is low morale amongst teachers. Currently, the education system is beset by personnel management problems, which have a far-reaching effect on the morale and attitudes of teachers in their work. The system is plagued by poor working conditions, characterized by poor housing facilities, low salaries and little promotional incentives. Moreover, teachers have a low status in the

community and there is little chance for them to upgrade to better positions. To arrest the inevitable attrition the government created the Government Teaching Service, which allowed teachers to enjoy the same privileges as other civil servants. Attrition could be reduced further if communities built more and better houses for teachers. Teachers' status could be elevated if government could raise their salaries and provide better promotional incentives. Teachers' morale could also be enhanced if upgrading opportunities were made available on a regular basis.

Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

### **What is the design of pre-service teacher training programs?**

Teacher education in Malawi is divided into two distinct categories. The first is the Primary Teacher Training, which is controlled by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry, thus, dictates the staffing, recruitment of trainees and the nature of the curriculum to be followed. The second is the Secondary School Teacher Education, which is primarily under the University of Malawi but now supplemented by upgrading courses mounted by the Ministry of Education.

The ultimate aim is to improve the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools in Malawi by reducing the number of untrained teachers in the system. However, starting from 1996 the Ministry is recruiting 3,000 new recruits every year to offset any imbalances that the three-month residential training under Malawi Integrated In-service Teacher Education Programme (MIITEP) might cause and to fill vacancies created due to resignation, retirement, in-service training and increases in pupil enrollment in schools. This means that in addition to the 18,000 untrained teachers engaged in 1994 and programmed to go through MIITEP by 2000, there will be another group of untrained teachers in the system totaling 15,000. It then seems that MIITEP will not have eliminated the problem of untrained teachers but rather provided a systematic way of recruiting them into the system.

Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

### **What is the design of in-service teacher training programs?**

The Malawi Integrated In-service Teacher Education Programme (MIITEP) introduced in 1995, was designed to train 18,000 unqualified teachers from 1997 to 2000. Ideally, however, the Ministry of Education targeted a 1:35 teacher-pupil ratio but settled for 1:60 because of the enormous costs associated with the achievement of 1:35 teacher-pupil ratio. The candidates under MIITEP are required to have at least the following:

- JCE or MSCE certificate
- Pass an oral interview
- Undergo an orientation course
- Teach in primary schools for at least a year.

The MIITEP course is designed to last two years per cohort. It comprises:

- 1 term residential training in teacher training colleges estimated to last 390 hours
- 4 terms of self-study through the distance mode for 220 hours
- 5 terms supervised teaching for 110 hours
- 12 one-day seminars for 60 hours
- One assignment per subject for 36 hours
- 4 large assignments/projects estimated to take 354 hours.

This gives an approximate total of 1,170 hours.

Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

## **Number of Teacher Training Institutions. Names and Addresses of Prominent Institutions**

### **General**

Number of Institutions: 6

Blantyre Teachers' Training College  
Private Bag 502  
Limbe  
Malawi  
+265-650222

Kasungu Teachers' Training College  
P/Bag 23  
Kasungu  
Malawi  
+265-253368

Domasi College of Education  
P.O. Box 49  
Domasi  
Malawi  
+265-531255

Montfort Teachers' Training College  
P.O. Box 5452  
Limbe  
Malawi  
+265-641211  
+265-634913 (fax)

Karonga Teachers' Training College  
P.O. Box 122  
Karonga  
Malawi  
+265-362266  
+265-362337 (fax)

St. Joseph's Teachers' Training College  
P.O. Box 11  
Dedza  
Malawi  
+265-220274

### **Sources**

Malawi Information Site - <http://www.siastr.sk.ca/international/malawietop/wh>

## **Minimum Requirements for Teacher Training Recruitment**

### General

Since 2000, the minimum entry qualification for primary school teacher trainees was raised to the Malawi School Certificate Examination (MSCE) and the current untrained teachers who are Junior Certificate Examination (JCE) holders shall be afforded an opportunity to upgrade their academic qualifications. From 2000, potential primary school trainees will be required to have credit passes in Mathematics, English, one natural science and one social science. Previously, the basic requirement for enrollment into primary teacher training is a Junior Certificate. Candidates who accumulate grades over the years and eventually acquire certificates were also considered.

### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

## **Demand for Teacher Training**

Enrollments: 2,997

1996 estimate

### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

## **What are current methods of teacher training?**

The Malawi Integrated In-service Teacher Education Programme (MIITEP)

### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

## **Is there evidence of curriculum revision?**

### Innovative teaching practices

The Ministry of Education prescribes the curriculum of primary teacher education. Therefore, all colleges offer the same kind of courses approved or dictated by the Ministry. From 1993, Malawi experienced major socio-political changes, which warranted serious reviews to the 1988 primary school and teacher education curricula. A preliminary analysis of the MIITEP curriculum reveals that some new topics were added to the old curriculum. 15 subject areas were identified for teacher education. The 15 subjects represent the core curriculum. Apart from the teaching practice the rest are areas, which deal with life survival skills in communities. Increasingly special needs pupils are enrolling in school and this requires teachers to be able to handle such cases without discrimination. MIITEP has a section on this to equip teachers with the necessary skills.

### Remove gender bias from textbooks

Gender issues have been incorporated into the curriculum to sensitize the teachers and school children to the importance of involving women in all sectors of life as equal partners to men. Civic education is also featured in MIITEP to highlight the socio-political changes that have occurred since 1993.

### Relevance to the world of HIV/AIDS

A section on the scourge AIDS is now included in MIITEP considering that only very few communities in the country have remained unaffected by HIV/AIDS. It is hoped that in this way teachers can disseminate the information they have learned and become "life savers."

### Classroom Management

Foundation Studies also takes precedence because it deals with learning theories and methodologies for effective teaching, learning and classroom management. Emphasis is now placed on school-based training, which is a marked departure from the previous teacher training courses.

### Life Skills

Social Studies deals with life survival skills in communities. There are now more issues relating to population and environment arising from the current high rate of population growth estimated at 3.3% per annum and the alarming rate of environmental degradation. Malawi has also lagged behind in its economic growth because of high mortality and fertility rates. The MIITEP curriculum addresses these issues quite comprehensively. Furthermore, practical skills have been given a new dimension where teachers are encouraged to value such skills because most pupils they are going to teach will not continue their education after primary school. Lastly, the MIITEP curriculum includes community-school relationships in order for teachers to acquire skills of mobilizing communities to participate in school development.

#### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

### **Proportion of New Graduates Employed as Teachers**

Employed Graduates: 2,528

1,464 male and 1,064 female teacher students passed the primary teacher training college examination (1995/96). Total 2,528 - 42% female. These figures do not necessarily translate into teachers going into schools. Some decide to join other sectors of the job market.

#### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

### **How is the assignment to schools done?**

Teachers are posted to different districts by the Ministry depending on the demand. The District Education Office (DEO) then distributes the teachers to different schools. It is not clear what criteria the DEOs use in allocating teachers to schools because the primary school system has a very uneven distribution of teachers.

#### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

### **Starting Salary for Teachers**

Public Schools: US\$ 25

The starting salary for trained primary school teacher is only US\$25 per month, that of a secondary school teacher holding a university degree, US\$51 and that of a university lecturer holding a minimum of a second degree US\$155.

#### Sources

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology website - <http://www.malawi.gov.mw/educ/educ.htm>

### **Are there incentives for teachers to teach in rural areas?**

No. Rural schools are at a decided disadvantage since they are less likely than urban areas to offer decent housing, and therefore have particular difficulty in attracting qualified teachers.

#### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

### **Terms and Working Conditions for Teachers**

Urban posts are closer to retail, education and health facilities. The rural areas are characterized by low mobility, challenging working conditions and reduced possibilities for education and other professional development opportunities. Semi-urban and rural schools have poor housing for teachers and insufficient classrooms.

#### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

### **Are there programs for the professional development and support of head teachers and school administrators?**

Programs for the professional development of teachers exist.

The Malawi School Support Systems Programme (MSSSP) was designed to strengthen systems, which support school and teacher development in the primary sector. The program aims to improve the conditions for supporting the learning and development of teachers by:

- Operationalizing Teacher Development Centers and school-based development activities
- Enhancing institutional and systems capacity to support teacher development
- Establishing and institutionalizing a national training program for senior school staff and primary education advisers
- Establishing and operationalizing monitoring and evaluation systems
- Establishing and operationalizing program management systems.

The MSSSP has been running since 1996. The main target groups for the program are: Primary Education Advisers; senior primary school staff—head teachers, deputy head teachers and heads of department; primary school class teachers; district, divisional and headquarters staff; teacher trainers and staff from the Malawi Institute of Education and the University of Malawi. The following has been achieved:

- 92 Teacher Development Centers have been constructed throughout the 33 districts, and another 36 are near completion; as soon as a Teacher Development Center is built, a trained Primary Education Adviser is in position to take it over.
- Members of the Ministry's staff and Divisional Managers have been orientated through seminars and training to understand the concepts of school and teacher development. The program is also working with the Ministry to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the inspection service.
- A Department of School and Teacher Development, whose remit is to take the lead in the professional development of teachers, has been set up at the Malawi Institute of Education—Institute professionals are key members of the National Core Training Team for the program.
- Each Primary Education Adviser and Teacher Development Center has been located in close proximity to the schools, which they serve. Along with the Primary Education Adviser, two senior staff from within the zone form a "zonal training team" responsible for implementing the training program for school staff, thus strengthening the capacity of the district to support teacher development activities.
- At school level, three senior school staff members at each primary school are being trained through a national training program. The program focuses on factors of classroom and school improvement, which have been shown to significantly affect student learning. Regular consultation

with stakeholders was built into the process of the training program's development. Four major themes are addressed:

- Staff development and advisory support
- School organization and management
- School improvement
- Classroom improvement.

Sources

Supporting teacher development in primary schools - Kay, J. (2000)

### **Are working conditions sufficiently competitive to attract and retain quality teachers?**

Working conditions for teachers are poor. Moreover, teacher housing and facilities are insufficient. This is coupled with low salaries and few promotional incentives.

Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

### **Stability of Teachers**

Average Time Teachers Stay at School: 4 Year(s)

There is a high teacher turnover rate due to poor working conditions and inadequate salaries. The high turnover rate results in a constant influx of inexperienced teachers.

Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

## **Girls' Education**

### **What are the primary reasons for girls' low enrollment and completion rates?**

- Domestic chores leave limited time for homework, and lead to absenteeism.
- Many girls have to supplement their families income by finding a job.
- Pregnancy
- Marriage
- Lack of school fees and money for school clothing and stationery
- Differentiated expectations and styles of interaction from families and teachers that favor boys over girls; this negatively effects girls' educational behavior, abilities and activities.

Sources

Gender Gaps in Schools and Colleges: Can Teacher Education Policy Improve Gender Equity in Malawi? - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 2000

### **What is the policy on pregnancy?**

For Girls

School girls and teacher trainees who become pregnant are allowed to return to school in the term after the birth of their child.

The new policy dismissed for one-year boys who made girls pregnant. The same policy allowed the girls to return to school after the birth of a child. Community members were generally delighted, as almost everyone had female relatives whose educational careers had been blocked by pregnancy. However, some teachers, head teachers, and district education officials opposed the policy. They felt it would encourage sexual activity among girls and that returning girls would be poor role models and would no longer be able to concentrate on schoolwork. Teachers particularly opposed suspending boys who had impregnated girls. In many cases, they have allowed those boys to remain in school. Over time, though, with pressure to implement the policy coming from both the community and the

ministry, teachers and local officials began to accept and support the new policy.

#### For Teachers

Teacher trainees who become pregnant are allowed to return to school in the term after the birth of their child.

#### Sources

USAID website - <http://www.usaid.gov/wid/pubs/educfocus98.htm>

### **Is there evidence of curriculum revision?**

#### Remove gender bias from textbooks

Gender issues have been incorporated into the curriculum to sensitize the teachers and school children to the importance of involving women in all sectors of life as equal partners to men.

#### Sources

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology website - <http://www.malawi.gov.mw/educ/educ.htm>

USAID website - <http://www.usaid.gov/wid/pubs/educfocus98.htm>

#### Relevance to the world of HIV/AIDS

Civic education and HIV/AIDS awareness is now also featured.

#### Sources

USAID Malawi website - <http://www.usaid.gov/mw>

### **What are the reforms most likely to stimulate the enrollment and persistence of girls in school?**

- Increasing the long-term financial base for education
- Continuing to increase the proportion of the government revenue budget going to the education sector
- Continuing to increase the proportion of the education budget going to the primary-education sub-sector budget
- Increasing the proportion of the primary-education budget for learning
- Improving the quality, availability, and efficiency of primary education by increasing the number of schools through the establishment of community-based primary schools (with an emphasis on improved attainment for girls), recruiting and training more teachers, putting more learning materials into the hands of pupils, encouraging the enactment of policy changes to increase school efficiency, and improving the statistical and planning capacity of the Ministry of Education.
- Improving the relevance of primary education for girls by 1) strengthening a body called the Gender Appropriate Curriculum unit, established with USAID assistance under Girls' Attainment in Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE); 2) establishing a scholarship fund for eligible secondary-school girls; and improving the achievement of girls on the Primary School Leaving Exam through gender streaming for math classes.

#### Sources

USAID Malawi website - <http://www.usaid.gov/mw>

## **Are schools safe for girls? What is the most common threat to the safety of schoolgirls?**

In survey findings conducted by an NGO, ID21 Insights, 20% of teachers stated that there were sexual relations between students and teachers at their schools. The survey noted that transactional sex between young girls and older men is common in Malawi and in most cases sexual misconduct by teachers goes unpunished. Moreover, most teachers interviewed did not regard sexual harassment of students to be a serious crime. Important findings from the ID research are:

- Sexual abuse of girls by male pupils and teachers is prevalent along with corporal punishment, verbal abuse and bullying, as an inevitable part of school life. It exploits unequal power relations and the authoritarian ethos within schools.
- The reluctance of education authorities to address the issue and to prosecute perpetrators allows abuse to flourish unchecked. By their inaction, authorities condone and encourage it. Male teachers who openly pursue sexual liaisons with girls are indicating to boys that such behavior is acceptable. Fear of abusive teachers and mistrust of other staff that turn a blind eye prevents pupils from reporting incidents.
- Sexual abuse of girls in school is a reflection of gender violence and inequality in the wider society. Domestic violence against women and children is commonplace, as is rape and forced sex within relationships. Women are considered as "belonging to men", and hence, accorded lower value and status.
- The rapid spread of HIV/AIDS has increased girls' vulnerability to sexual abuse by "sugar daddies" and by male teachers, relatives and neighbors. The myth that AIDS can be cured by having sex with a virgin, exposes girls as young as six to rape. Gifts, money and promises of marriage lure teenage girls into sexual relationships that put them at risk of HIV infection.

Sources  
ID21 Insights website - <http://www.id21.org/insights/insights-gv-special/>

## **Is there evidence of reforms to reduce the cost of schooling?**

Evidence of reforms to reduce the cost of schooling exist.

The policy of free primary education was introduced by the government of Malawi in 1994.

Sources  
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology website - <http://www.malawi.gov.mw/educ/educ.htm>

## **Textbooks and Other Learning Materials**

### **Textbook/Pupil Ratio**

Total	Urban	Rural	Grade 1-4	Grade 5-7/8
4.00				

(1994/1995 estimate)

Sources  
Africa Union website - <http://www.africaneducationdecade.org/pages/article2.htm>

### **Are textbooks free?**

Free textbooks are available.

However, there is a shortage of textbooks and not all pupils have access to textbooks.

#### Sources

Africa Union website - <http://www.africaneducationdecade.org/pages/article2.htm>

### **Are teaching guides and other resources available?**

Teaching guides are available.

The Malawi Institute for Education (MIE) launched an innovative program targeting the production of teaching aids called Teaching and Learning Using Locally Available Resources (TALULAR). All teachers are exposed to methods of how one can use all sorts of materials around the school to make teaching aids.

#### Sources

Africa Union website - <http://www.africaneducationdecade.org/pages/article2.htm>

### **Are learning/teaching materials available in all regional languages?**

Learning/teaching materials are available in regional languages.

Textbooks are available in Chichewa and English. In 1989, the government approved that all pupils' books for Grades 1 to 4, except those of English, be written in Chichewa.

#### Sources

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology website - <http://www.malawi.gov.mw/educ/educ.htm>

### **What are the mechanisms for development/distribution of teaching and learning material?**

#### Development

The government of Malawi has embarked on another reform (after the above mentioned 1998 reform) but this time it takes into account the increased enrollment numbers of students. It is called the Primary Curriculum Assessment and Review (PCAR). The United Kingdom, through the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) is funding this program. It will review the primary curriculum, and take into account all the emerging issues such as HIV/AIDS, Life Skills and Social and Developmental Studies.

#### Distribution

The private sector distributes textbooks directly to all primary schools. Originally, the distribution of learning materials was done through the Supplies Unit, a Government procurement and distribution Unit, however this Unit was inefficient in procurement, distribution and tracking. This led to thousands of teaching and learning materials lying months on end in the warehouses and the District Education Offices. Some of its materials found the way into the open market. Canada, through CIDA, therefore decided to support a system that by-passed the Supplies Unit and targeted the schools directly. To maximize efficiency, CIDA reprinted all the textbooks in Canada and using the private sector distributed the textbooks directly to all the primary schools. They provided about 11.4 million textbooks and 12, 000 metal cupboards in schools.

#### Sources

Africa Union website - <http://www.africaneducationdecade.org/pages/article2.htm>

## **Perception of Adequacy of Learning Resources**

There is a scarcity of teaching materials ranging from blackboards to textbooks. Children are not exposed to adequate enabling teaching and learning aids denying them the hands-on experience necessary at this stage of development.

### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

## **To what extent is information communication technology available/used in basic education?**

### ICT Available

Most technology infrastructure in Malawi is still government-controlled, although processes to privatize some of this have commenced. Malawi's postal service has recently been privatized. Levels of ICT infrastructure and use, both in government departments and educational institutions, in general could be said to be very low. E-mail access in government departments is almost non-existent and many government departments and offices have not yet been issued computers. Access to information and communication technologies for staff and students in educational institutions remain very restricted. Staff at Chancellor College, University of Malawi do have computers and e-mail access. The Malawi Institute of Education has Internet access and is well equipped with a range of ICTs and printing equipment. By far the majority of schools do not have any access to computers, and there are some schools that do not have telephones. Support staff in educational institutions still commonly use electric typewriters. The Malawi College of Distance Education (MCDE) has two computers only. One of these is used to do desktop publishing of their materials. In urban areas, 80% of telephone lines are available to 20% of the population, and the majority of the rural population is left without adequate telephone facilities. In 1998, it was estimated that there were approximately 1,060,000 radio sets in use in Malawi.

### ICT Used

There are three Internet Service Providers in Malawi and 35,000 Internet users.

### Sources

Global Distance EducationNet - <http://www.saide.org.za/worldbank/countries/malawi>

## **Description of Transportation Systems and Projected Improvements**

There are 43 airports in Malawi. There are 5,254 kilometers of paved highways and 23,146 kilometers of unpaved highways. There are ports in Chipoka, Monkey Bay, Nkhata Bay, Nkhotakota and Chilumba, and 797 kilometers of railway.

### Sources

CIA Fact Book - <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>

## Community Participation in Basic Education

### In what ways is the community involved in basic education?

#### General

One important policy reform has been the adoption of community-oriented primary education. The community is invited to contribute to the actualization of formal schooling integrated with non-formal schooling. Community or village based schools provide better access to schooling for marginalized communities. Parents, community leaders, pupils and the school interact in order to bring about development within the school and the community. Communities were asked to participate in issues like selection of school sites, designing of school buildings, construction of the schools, selection of teachers, provision of teachers' houses and school development.

#### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

### What is the level of community participation vs. government share of social and financial responsibility for basic education?

Local communities and parents are increasingly playing a role in educational finance especially with regard to sharing in the cost of buildings and their maintenance, transport to schools, food, uniforms, learning materials, and extra-curricular activities. Community participation is particularly significant at the primary level. More than 75% of Malawi's primary schools have been built with the support of local communities and primary school maintenance has largely been a responsibility of communities.

#### Sources

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology website - <http://www.malawi.gov.mw/educ/educ.htm>

### Are NGOs and civil society involved in education? What role do they play? Who are they?

NGOs and civil society are involved in education.

Currently the government is co-operating with NGOs like UNICEF and the Primary Community Schools Project (PCoSP) to pilot community schools. The PCoSP intends to build 100 such schools throughout the country while UNICEF (US) has six schools in one district with very low levels of educational participation. In these pilot schools, communities have been involved at all levels of decision making and implementation.

#### Sources

A Baseline Study of the Teacher Education System - Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER), 1999

## Impact of HIV/AIDS on Basic Education

### **How is HIV/AIDS affecting the supply and quality of education, the number of teachers dying each year of HIV/AIDS and the educational management's ability to plan long-term?**

#### Number of Teachers Dying each Year of HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS has become one of the biggest challenges facing Malawi. There has been an increasing trend of attrition in the Civil Service between 1990 and 2000. The average attrition rate in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology is 1.6%. The main causes of attrition are deaths, retirements, dismissals, resignations, redundancy and HIV/AIDS related mortality.

The highest mortality rates are mainly among the technical cadres and frontline staff, whose work involves a lot of field travel. Based on estimates of AIDS cases among professionals, 799 out of a total of 8,105 deaths are likely to be HIV/AIDS-related. The age and gender profile of deaths among public sector employees corresponds with the prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS in the general population.

The study shows that:

- Most government ministries and departments do not have a system of recording and monitoring absenteeism and its causes.
- There are high levels of absenteeism in the Civil Service, with sickness being the main cause.
- Sick leave policy is not implemented consistently due to laxity in enforcing rules and regulations in the public service.
- There has been an increasing trend of attrition in the Civil Service between 1990 and 2000.

#### Sources

United Nations Development Program - <http://www.undp.org/mw/hiv/aids-final.doc>

### **Is there provision for the education of orphans and vulnerable children?**

There is provision for the education of orphans and vulnerable children.

It is estimated that there are more than 850,000 orphans due to HIV/AIDS and that nearly 500,000 people are HIV infected. Research in Malawi has shown growth in the number of orphans in a sample of 65 schools. In the researched schools, the percentage of students who had lost one or both parents increased from 12% to 17% between February 1999 and October 2000. The impact of orphanhood is felt mainly in terms of absenteeism, repetition and dropout rates rather than in performance as measured in scores in literacy and numeracy tasks. The free primary education policy is designed to ensure that orphans and vulnerable children are able to access basic education.

Malawi has also drafted the "National Policy on Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children," as well as the "National Policy on Early Childhood Development." The key strategic actions of these policies are firstly advocate for increased mobilization of existing cultural knowledge, technical know-how, and the broad social capital available in communities for the support of orphans, widows, widowers, and children living in affected families. Secondly, strengthen the provision of psychosocial counseling, care, and support to orphans, children in HIV/AIDS-affected families, widows, and widowers, particularly at community and family levels. Thirdly, build the capacity of men and women, boys and girls, to provide support and care for the sick and HIV-positive persons on the basis of principles of equality, equity, and human rights.

Existing statutes protecting children and youth should be enforced at all levels of society. Appropriate gender-responsive child-rearing practices, counseling services, and civic education should be

provided to youth to develop positive values, attitudes, and norms.

Sources

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology website - <http://www.malawi.gov.mw/educ/educ.htm>

