

A. Sector Analysis

1. Current situation and major challenges of the sector:

The Malawi education system is classified into basic, secondary and tertiary levels which follows an 8-4-4 system. Primary education takes 8 years, secondary 4 years and tertiary ranges from 2 years for a certificate to 4 or 5 years for a first degree. Basic education comprises of early childhood development, out of school youth, adult literacy and primary education. Early Childhood Development caters for children aged zero to eight. ECD is under Ministry of Gender, Children Development and Social Welfare. Entry age to primary is 6 years. Reinforcement of this policy has been a daunting challenge leading to entry of under age children who overcrowd the schools and classrooms which are already direly resourced with teachers and teaching and learning materials causing effective teaching and learning challenging. Currently, overall enrolment for 2020 is at 5.4 million registering an annual increase of 3 percent from enrolment of 5.1 million in 2019 (MoE 2020). High enrolments are experienced at primary with 91 percent net enrolment rate but as low as 55 percent completion rate and 38 percent transition rate to secondary education. Higher education is over restrictive less than 1 percent gross rate of eligible candidates attending higher education. Double shifting, open learning and distance learning have been some of the solutions to increase access. However, quality of these services has been a challenge and many students shun away from these education modes.

With the first closure of schools from March to October in 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic, learning was lost and as many as 20,000 - 40,000 girls have dropped out due to pregnancies and early marriages. The government and its cooperating partners have put together resources for stopping further spread of the virus and to also mitigate its impact on the system. Due to the long break, the curriculum could not be completed on time and the ministry extended the academic year but still time is not enough because learners attend school on a shifting/staggered basis. Recurring increased enrolments compounded by poor management of these resources and inefficient governance system put more pressure on the already constrained resources resulting into poor quality of learning as evidenced by the low achievement results in the Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality that shows that, among all the 15 participating countries, Malawi learners were the lowest performers in both mathematics and English. Despite the government's emphasis on allocating a larger share of its limited resource envelop on the sector, system battles endless problems of high dropouts, recurring repetition rates, general wastage and low learning outcomes. This challenge implies that the monitoring system including the annual joint sector reviews are not used to provide feedback to the system. The 2020 Education Sector Performance Report (MoE 2020) presents a situation where, from 2019, dropout and repetition rates have averaged as high as 3.2 percent and 22.7 percent. These problems might continue to torture the society if the approach to the planning and policy decision system remains the same and unresponsive to the reality on the ground.

2. Sector policy, strategic plan, priority areas:

a) The third Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (2017-2022) (MGDS III): in aligning to the Sustainable Development Goal (2030) number 4, the MGDS III is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all focusing on innovation, skills development, science and technology, and entrepreneurship.

b) The National Education Sector Investment Plan (NESIP) (2020 - 2030): NESIP 2020-2030 is based on the results of the review of the previous NESIP (2008-2017). The current NESIP also includes the government's aspiration for education taking into account the impact of COVID-19 and the need for recovery from the loss of learning.

NESP 2020-2030 sets Malawi's education sector goals, objectives and strategies and how they will be realized focusing on expansion of equitable access to education, improvement of quality and relevance of education and better governance and management.

This long term plan has put emphasis on lifelong learning ensuring linkages across subsectors from Early Childhood Education (ECD), Primary Education, Out of School Youth, Adult Literacy, Secondary Education, Higher Education, Technical and Vocational Training and Teacher Education. Issues of girls' education and learners with special education needs have also been given prominence in the plan

3. Donor activities and commitments:

Donor	ECD	Primary	Secondary	Higher Ed	TEVET/Skills Dev.	Teacher training	Cross sectoral / sub-sectoral
AFD: 2017-2020 (3 years)					\$ 12,278,099		
DFID: 2015-2023 (8 years)	\$ 10,063,779						\$ 71,000,000
EU: 2016-2021 (5 years)					\$ 35,900,000		\$ 59,357,142.86
GIZ: 2016-2021 (5 years)							\$ 23,987,357.14
KfW: 2016-2023 (7 years)							\$ 54,301,074
GPE: 2016-2020 (4 years)		\$ 44,900,000					
JICA: 2019-2021 (2 years)						\$ 19,000,000	
RNE: 2016-2024 (8 years)		\$ 3,000,000		\$ 1,800,000			\$ 46,000,000
UNICEF: 2019-2023 (4 years)							\$ 100,500,000
USAID: 2015-2023 (8 years)		\$ 4,500,000	\$ 13,900,000	\$ 10,700,000			\$ 93,800,000
World Bank: 2014-2023 (9 years)	\$ 60,000,000		\$ 90,000,000	\$ 12,000,000			\$ 50,000,000
Total	\$ 70,063,779	\$ 52,400,000	\$ 103,900,000	\$ 24,500,000	\$ 48,178,099	\$ 19,000,000	\$ 498,945,574

Source: MoE, 2019

4. Budget situation:

According to the Education Sector Performance Report (MoE 2020) the government has since 2011 allocated above 23 percent of its annual budget to the education sector. In 2019/2020, the allocation hit 26 percent without donor contribution. Among the subsectors, basic education gets the largest share of 63 percent. The rest, secondary education, higher education and management as well as administration got 12 percent, 22 percent and 3 percent, respectively.

About 66 percent of the education budget allocation goes to salaries for primary and secondary school teachers. This leaves little for operations such as construction as well maintenance, purchase of teaching and learning materials, teacher training and continuous professional development. This implies that the budget is mainly for sustaining the system and not necessary for development.

5. Dialogue structure of the sector:

The Ministry of Education has sector monitoring structures such as Joint Sector Review, Sector Working Group (SWG) meetings, Technical Working Group (TWG) meetings, Development Partner meetings and Troika. However, poor coordination of the SWG and TWG results in their limited functionality and meetings are irregularly conducted. JICA is currently a co-chair for an infrastructure technical working group and is a member for teacher education, standards, secondary and basic education TWGs.

B. JICA's Position

1) History of JICA's cooperation:

TYPE	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
TC Basic Education	National Implementation Program for District Education Plans			District Education Plan Institutionalization Programme: (DEPIP)															Mathematics Curriculum Development Country Focused Training			
TC Secondary Education	Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education																					
GA Secondary Education									Expansion and Construction of Community Day Secondary Schools													
GA Higher Education	Improvement of Domasi College of Education										Construction of Nalikule College of Education					Expansion and Upgrading of Domasi College of Education						

In addition to those activities summarised in the above chart, the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers have been in existence in Malawi since 1971. To date, 1837 volunteers have been dispatched to support the government of Malawi in various fields of development such as education, health, agriculture, etc.

Capacity Development/ Human Resource Development

JICA, through its short-term and long-term training programs, has also been supporting capacity building of government as well as private personnel with different skills.

Long Term

27 Malawians have benefitted from the African Business Education Initiative for Youth with a Masters and Internship experience from Japanese institutions. The program started in 2014 but Malawi joined in 2015. The program has entered into its 8th year of operation since inception in 2014.

8 Malawians from the mining sector were selected to study for masters and PhD degrees in Japan. This program started in 2015.

Short Term

Around 3,000 Malawians have benefitted from different short term capacity building programs either in Japan or in a third country such as Egypt, Malaysia, and Zambia.

2) Major outcomes:

- **The Micro-planning and School Mapping project** (Technical Cooperation: 2000 to 2002) effectively provided district assemblies with the basis and capacity to plan for and implement educational development programs to operationalize the decentralization reform.
- **The Strengthening Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education (SMASSE)** activity (Technical Cooperation: 2004 to 2017) is now fully funded by the government. Its contribution to learning outcomes through teacher's capacity development by INSET training system that SMASSE established
- **The Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of Selected Community Day Secondary Schools** (Grant Aid: 2010 to 2017) of 23 secondary schools allowed many girls to enrol and remain in school because of the dormitory facilities. Other development partners have adopted the idea into their assistance strategy.
- Both **the construction of Nalikule College of Education** (Grant Aid: 2013 to 2017) and the initial **expansion of Domasi College of Education** (Grant Aid: 2004 to 2006) have the potential to provide adequate number of qualified maths/science teachers, especially female teachers, for the expanded secondary education sub-sector.

3) Lessons learned:

What comes out clearly from the education sector is the continued decimal performance in learning outcomes which is a clear indication that learning is not taking place at all levels of the system. Sustainability is challenged by lack of ownership at the onset of development activities. As such future development cooperation should infuse the component of ownership to ensure sustainability of the cooperation results.

4) Cooperation Assets:

Through the construction of the Nalikule College of Education for initial training and upgrading of secondary school teachers, the government of Malawi is assured of a consistent supply of well-trained mathematics and science teachers who have been in inadequate supply over the past years. This facility has the capacity to host both pre-service and in-service teacher development programs. Because of its bias towards mathematics and science programs, the college will be able to support all other initiatives related to these fields to ensure that JICA interventions in the sector are sustained.

Since 2000, JICA supported the government's effort to decentralize services to local community by implementing a microplanning project which resulted in the development of District Education Plans which are currently mainstreamed and using effectively by the councils to implement plan and implement education services in their areas of jurisdiction.

5) Comparative Advantage of JICA:

JICA is known for advanced expertise in mathematics, science and technology education and quality in delivering grant aid projects. JICA has maintained its strong presence in these fields and has supported government in developing expertise in these fields. The presence of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers in Malawi has strengthened the teaching of mathematics and sciences in the schools. The long history of JICA in these fields is a good reason for JICA to maintain attached to them while expanding to other areas where there is need for support with the development needs of the sector in line with JICA's policy of development assistance.

6) TICAD process:

In August 2019, the Government of Japan hosted the Seventh Tokyo International Conference for African Development in collaboration with United Nations, UNDP, World Bank and African Union Commission (AUC). In his opening remarks, the Japanese Prime Minister Mr Abe said, “human resource building is where Japan has invested the greatest amount of effort in Africa over the years.

The ABE Initiative, which nurtures industry leaders, has grown as many as 2,700 young people over the past five years. The number of Japanese companies welcoming them as interns is now 358 (5.4 times the number when the initiative was first launched). New TICAD will launch the “ABE Initiative 3.0.” Over the next six years, it will aim to train a total of 3,000 people. They will be the pilots Japanese companies can count on even more as they approach the African market.”

JICA Malawi will ensure that successfully benefits from this program by working with the government of Malawi to select the best applicants who would have the capacity to bring Japanese firms to Malawi.

7) Possible Areas of Future Cooperation:

JICA’s cooperation in Malawi will bring desired outcomes through promotion of quality education for the youth and capacity development of critical personnel. This will be done through the following programs:

- Promoting teacher professional development through quality continuous professional development activities such as in-service training, cluster activities, lesson study, etc.
- Capacity building programs for core staff through short and long term KCCP such as ABE, and Sustainable Development Goals (Leadership Program for Africa).