

Opportunities and challenges in education cooperation in Malawi

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What do we mean by effectiveness of educational cooperation?

- Education cooperation usually involves two partners – the donors and the recipient governments
- The purpose for such cooperation is to achieve a common goal which represents the government's priorities within that sector. Thus effectiveness of educational cooperation in the Malawian context would mean cooperation that leads to achievement of educational priorities as set up in the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) (Government of Malawi, 2008).

Educational priorities set up in NESP and ESIP

The overarching framework for all policy and development planning is the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy as the country's medium term (2006-2011) development strategy. Strategic orientation for the development in the education sector is provided by the National Education Sector Plan (2008 – 2017), which is operationalized and concretized through the four year Education Sector Implementation Plan (2009 - 2013). NESP and ESIP build on the MGDS and define three thematic areas as development priorities:

- Expand equitable access to education;
- Improve quality and relevance of education to reduce drop-out and repetition and promote effective learning;
- Improve governance and management in the education system to improve effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of services.

All the policies stipulate that they were drafted through a participatory approach implying that there should be considerable ownership by different stakeholders.

Major donors and aid operation/alignment

- Major donors: Malawi is supported by many donors some of which are major while others are minor. While USAID provides discrete support amounting to over 35% of the current education support, the largest amount is coming from China as they construct the University of Science and Technology at Ndata in Southern Malawi and a secondary school in Thyolo. Other donors however include UNICEF, CIDA and many others.
- Whilst the conventional Donor Partners as cited earlier have gone for budget support and coordinated sector support, China provides discrete budget support. Discrete support from China is making greatest impact currently but this is limited to specific activities.
- Overall however, coordinated sector programme support is found to be more influential because of its flexibility, efficiency and effectiveness due to joint planning, monitoring and evaluation systems
- And since coordinated support is mainly focussed on basic education, conventional projects aid is used to finance many more other programmes as well especially in secondary and tertiary education

Aid priorities in Malawi

Typical education issues that are being addressed by education aid are as follows:

Equitable access to education

- Infrastructure development (girls hostels, classroom construction etc)
- Targeted programmes to marginalised groups such as girls, drop outs, disabled, the poor, cultural barriers (e.g. take home rations, EDSA OVC and CTS grant, school health and nutrition, bursaries, establishment of mother groups, gender mainstreaming programmes)
- Curriculum reviews

Improving quality and relevance

- Learning achievements focussing on early grade reading and mathematics
- Initial and in-service primary teacher training and development (ODL, CPD)
- Procurement of teaching and learning materials (through school grants, World Bank funding, GSES I&II)

Improving governance and management

- Policy reviews and development e.g. decentralisation policy

Thus, aid is focussing on improving the quality of education by focussing on learning achievements, procurement of teaching and learning materials and teacher training. While strategies for improving quality of education has an indirect impact on addressing equitable access to education, infrastructure development and targeted programmes for specific groups of people have a more direct bearing. It would appear however that there is minimal emphasis on improving governance and management in the education system to improve effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of services.

Paris/Accra declaration and aid effectiveness in Malawi

According to Booth (2008) the 2005 Paris declaration identified the following five factors as ingredients for aid effectiveness:

- Country ownership: in terms of political leadership, developmental vision and willingness to transform state structures that have been associated with development in the past.
- Aid alignment with country policies and systems
- Aid harmonisation
- Managing for results
- Mutual accountability

This declaration appears to make some positive effects on the ground. The aid alignment has been associated with DPs adopting a coordinated sector support through the Sector Wide Approach (SWAp). All the sectors including education have their own basket funding and there is SWAp secretariat at the Ministry headquarters. In addition, there is SWAp Systems Task Forces (STF) for different functions of the Ministry where different stakeholders are represented in order to support the activities.

A participatory approach was used to come up with the country's development strategies including the NESP. Although not all stakeholders can meaningfully participate, there is a notable alignment by most education actors to the NESP priorities. This includes the donors themselves as already alluded to earlier in this paper.

An example of a donor funded activity that has been found successful and its success sustained is the Secondary School Teacher Education Project (SSTEP) which was implemented by CIDA between 2000 and 2007. The programme that was introduced is still running to-date.

Example: Secondary Teacher Education Programme (SSTEP)

Dates: 2000-2007

Funder: CIDA

Target group: Primary teachers wanting to upgrade to diploma and become secondary school teachers

Items for funding: Tuition fees, printing of modules and provision of a teacher starter pack (secondary school syllabus, core textbooks in the student's subject area) when the students graduate.

Policy formulation: involvement of both the Ministry of Education and the training institution, Domasi College of Education (DCE).

Mechanisms for funds disbursement: Funds disbursed to the training institution (Domasi College of Education) and administered as part of normal institutional funds.

Project Management: Local actors within DCE and MoE officials managing the project, CIDA officials participating in M&E

Outcomes: Graduate teachers who were self motivated since they were to teach in a secondary school, improve their remuneration and therefore alleviating shortage of teachers at secondary school level.

Sustainability: Programme still on todate and students pay their own tuition.

Success criteria:

- Involvement of both MoEST and DCE in policy formulation and implementation (ownership)
- Funds disbursed to DCE and administered as part of normal institutional funds (ownership).
- CIDA contributions were gradually being incorporated in DCE/MoEST budget lines – easy because the people managing SSTEP were government employees and MoEST was involved in the management as well (ownership).
- Local actors within DCE and MoEST managing the project, CIDA officials participating in M&E (managing for results, mutual accountability)
- Outcomes were self motivated teachers since they were to teach in a secondary school, improve their remuneration and alleviating shortage of teachers at secondary school level (alignment).
The outcomes of the programme are rewarding both to the teacher and to the Ministry

Challenges associated with donor support

1. Systems and behaviour change take time, so that ownership issues are making slow progress
2. There is a huge sustainability burden for government to take over some of the activities started by donors especially for activities that appear to be too much of an experiment e.g. school grants (EDSA/SIP) and school meals.
3. SWAp faces a challenge that setting up harmonised procedures and the STFs for the common funds wastes energies that might otherwise been devoted to mainstream activities.
4. Conditionality practices of some donors to the extent that they appear to be micro-managing e.g. GSES I, II, World Bank procurement of T/L materials

The Grant Support to the Education Sector, Phase I (GSES I) was implemented from 1998 to 2004 to supply quality educational textbooks and learning materials to teachers and students throughout the country. With a budget of CDN \$15 million, GSES I supplied approximately 14.9 million units of educational materials and teachers' guides, 12,300 storage cabinets and

12,500 maps to 4,943 primary schools in Malawi. However, GSES I faced a number of challenges, including poor quality textbook bindings and transportation setbacks. In addition, an important weakness was the low level of MoEST involvement in the project. Procurement implemented by CFA even in the second phase, a sign that donors are not letting go. The result was a lack of capacity at the end of the project for MoEST staff to sustain project activities.

An example of a project that faces challenges related to the Paris/Accra declaration is the School Improvement Grants (SIG) especially the part implemented by the Education Support to Decentralisation Activity (EDSA).

Example: EDSA/SIG grant for Mbayani School

Total enrolment: 11,021 learners

Location and environment: In a slum area/squatter settlement which is about 3km from Blantyre Central Business District (CBD). The majority of people living in this area are small scale businesses like fish mongers, selling fruits and vegetables, small grocery shops, saloons, barber shops, selling sweet potatoes, and some cooked food.

Total grant in 2010 and 2011:

YEAR	EDSA/SIG Grant				
	OVCs		CTS		Total (MK)
	No of beneficiaries	Amount (MK)	No of beneficiaries	Amount (MK)	
2010	125	687,500	67	502, 500	1,190,000
2011	350	1,925,000	67	502, 500	2,427,500

Mechanism of disbursement: USAID, through the EDSA disburses the money directly to the schools.

Uses of the grant:

Type of grant	Amount (MK)	Use
OVC	2,000	School shoes
	2,000	School uniform
	500	Umbrella
	1,000	User fees (for reimbursement of other school costs including school fund, examination fees)
CTS	2,000	Blanket
	2,500	Nutritious food
	3,000	Transport to go collect ARVs

Challenges:

- Policy formulation not participatory, and therefore too much of an experiment. Parents only informed about the policy through the school management committee
- Over 90% of the learners could be identified as OVCs but only a few benefited from the grant
- Government is expected to take over from USAID and roll the programme out to other schools.
- The proposal is to pay MK250,000 to all schools for both OVCs and CTS +School Improvement Plan because it is more reasonable without donor support
- This represents a 90% reduction in the amount of money used by EDSA.

Opportunities and Challenges in Education Cooperation in Malawi

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Introduction

- ▶ Education cooperation usually involves two partners – Donor Partners and recipient governments, this entails equity
- ▶ The purpose for such cooperation is to achieve a common goal of the recipient partner.
- ▶ Thus effectiveness of educational cooperation in the Malawian context would mean cooperation that leads to achievement of educational priorities as set up in the National Education Sector Plan (NESP)



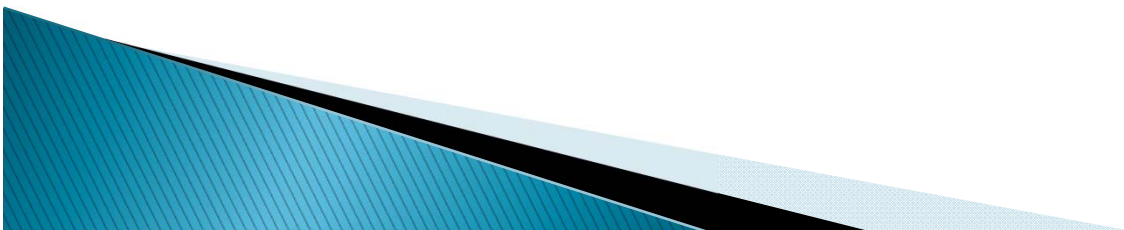
Educational priorities (NESP & ESIP)

- ▶ Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) as the country's medium term development tool (2006-2011)
- ▶ The National Education Sector Plan (NESP)(2008 – 2017), operationalized through the Education Sector Implementation Plan (ESIP)(2009 – 2013) build on the MGDS and define three thematic areas as education development priorities:
 - Expand equitable access to education
 - Improve quality and relevance of education
 - Improve governance and management in the education system.

Aid priorities in Malawi

Equitable access to education

- ▶ Infrastructure development (girls hostels, classroom construction)- UNICEF, DfID
- ▶ Targeted programmes to marginalised groups such as girls, drop outs, disabled, the poor, cultural barriers (e.g. take home rations, EDSA OVC and CTS grant - USAID, school health and nutrition, bursaries, establishment of mother groups, gender mainstreaming programmes)
- ▶ Curriculum reviews - GIZ



Aid priorities in Malawi

Improving quality and relevance

- ▶ Learning achievements focussing on early grade reading and mathematics (USAID)
- ▶ Initial and in-service primary teacher training and development (ODL, CPD - GIZ), CPD for secondary (JICA)
- ▶ Procurement of teaching and learning materials (through school grants (World Bank, DfID), GSES I&II - CIDA)

Improving governance and management

- ▶ Policy reviews and development e.g. decentralisation policy (GIZ, JICA)



Major donors and aid operation/alignment

- ▶ Major donors: USAID, UNICEF, CIDA, JICA, GIZ
- ▶ Largest amount in 2011-12 is coming from China as they construct the University of Science and Technology at Ndata in Southern Malawi and a secondary school in Thyolo.
- ▶ All donors except China have gone for coordinated sector support
- ▶ Overall coordinated sector programme support is more influential because of its flexibility, efficiency and effectiveness due to joint planning, monitoring and evaluation systems



Paris/Accra declaration on aid effectiveness

According to Booth (2008) the 2005 Paris declaration identified the following five factors as ingredients for aid effectiveness:

- ▶ Country ownership: in terms of political leadership, developmental vision and willingness to transform state structures that have been associated with development in the past.
- ▶ Aid alignment with country policies and systems
- ▶ Aid harmonisation
- ▶ Managing for results
- ▶ Mutual accountability

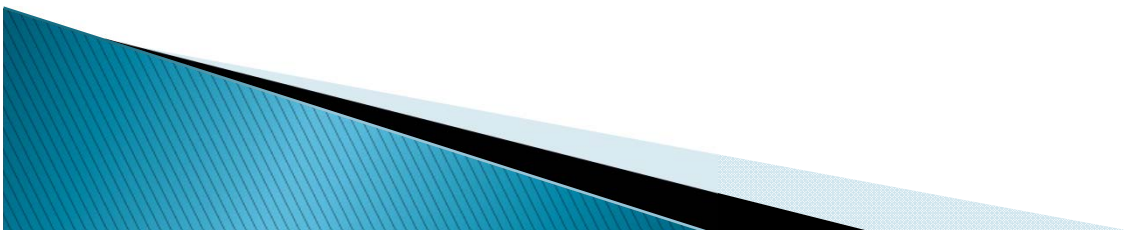
The Secondary School Teacher Education Project (SSTEP)

- ▶ Dates: 2000-2007
- ▶ Funder: CIDA
- ▶ Target group: Primary teachers wanting to upgrade to diploma and become secondary school teachers
- ▶ Fundable items: Tuition fees, printing of modules and provision of a teacher starter pack (secondary school syllabus, core textbooks in the student's subject area) when the students graduate.
- ▶ Sustainability: programme continuing to-date



Success criteria

- ▶ Involvement of both MoEST and DCE in policy formulation and implementation (ownership)
- ▶ Funds disbursed to DCE and administered as part of normal institutional funds (ownership).
- ▶ Local actors within DCE and MoEST managing the project, CIDA officials participating in M&E (managing for results, mutual accountability)
- ▶ Outcomes were self motivated teachers since they were to teach in a secondary school, improve their remuneration and alleviating shortage of teachers at secondary school level (alignment).



School grants – EDSA/SIP – Mbayani school

- ▶ Total enrolment: 11,021 learners, 10-12 streams in the lower classes
- ▶ Total of 99 teachers
- ▶ Overlapping system of education
- ▶ Located in a slum area/squatter settlement which is about 3km from Blantyre Central Business District.
- ▶ Parents and guardians are small scale businessmen selling fish, fruits and vegetables, small grocery shops, saloons, barber shops.

EDSA/SIG amount

- ▶ Grant to support Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) and Care, Treatment and Support (CTS) learners

YEAR	EDSA/SIG Grant				
	OVCs		CTS		Total (MK)
	No of beneficiaries	Amount (MK)	No of beneficiaries	Amount (MK)	
2010	125	687,500	67	502,500	1,190,000
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EDSA/SIG uses

- ▶ Money disbursed directly to school and items purchased by school actors

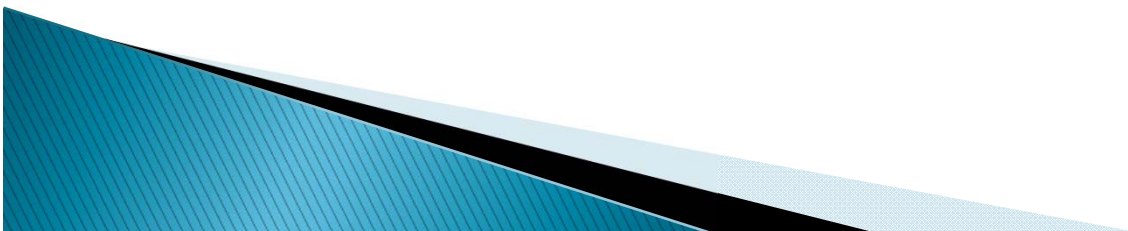
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	3,000	Transport to go collect ARVs

Some challenges

- ▶ Policy formulation not participatory.
- ▶ Grant disbursed directly to school
- ▶ Over 90% of the learners could be identified as OVCs but only a few benefited
- ▶ Government expected to take over from USAID and roll out the programme
- ▶ The proposal to pay MK250,000 to all schools for both OVCs and CTS +School Improvement Plan-representing a great reduction

Conclusion

- ▶ Education cooperation yielding mixed results
- ▶ Success depends on how much the cooperation adheres to the Paris declaration
- ▶ Aid alignment appears well adhered to
- ▶ Capacity development and therefore ownership, mutual accountability, ability to let go, managing for results appear not to be adhered to strictly.



▶ Thank you

