

6.5 Targeted Inputs Programme (TIP)

6.5.1 Subsidised inputs remain essential for many of the poorest farmers. However all costs associated with providing subsidised inputs effectively, including distribution and related extension services, must be budgeted to avoid understating costs, and to be sure inputs achieve the expected results.

Recommendation 12: Substantially increase the budget for the Targeted Inputs Programme (TIP), include funds adequate to ensure proper distribution and associated delivery of extension services, and designate the same as a Priority Poverty Expenditure.

7. Education

7.0.1 Only about 30% of students who start primary school remain students through Standard 8 (*PER*). The poor quality of inputs is at the root of the deepening crisis in education characterised by high attrition in primary school and the disastrous results of the MSCE examinations.

"The most disturbing question to be asked is whether we can seriously think that a totally unqualified JSE teacher, standing under a tree in front of more than 100 children with no textbooks, is effectively imparting knowledge to our future leaders ... People are asking why go to school to learn little or nothing!"

Civil Society Coalition for Basic Education

7.1 Primary Education

7.1.1 Improvements in the quality of education are urgently needed both at primary and secondary levels. However, because it is essential to set priorities and concentrate resources, the Committee and other stakeholders have focused on primary education as most important for enabling the poor to improve their economic circumstances. With better primary education and increased literacy, poor households will be better able to control the numbers of children in their

families, take advantage of agricultural extension services to increase productivity, plan production so they can obtain access to credit, and cater for their own health needs by improving household nutrition and hygiene.

7.1.2 While primary education is the top priority, the Committee hopes to see increased funding in the budget for secondary education as well, specifically for teacher training, improvements to teachers' conditions of service, teaching and learning materials, and curricula that focus on life skills and vocational training. Information is needed on how Government expects to cope with demand for secondary school education from the large cohort of students that entered school when free primary education was instituted.

7.1.3 Information is needed on allocations of funds and anticipated results from programmes designed to curb the spread of HIV/AIDS among teachers and students.

7.2 Teacher Training

7.2.1. At both the primary and secondary level there is a huge shortage of properly qualified teachers. At the primary level, half of the teachers are not qualified. Yet, the six teacher training colleges for this level have been closed since September 1999 due to inadequate funding. The qualified teacher to pupil ratio is 1:118. This obviously results in very little effective supervision of students, much less serious teaching.

7.2.2. Funds must be provided to enable colleges that train primary teachers to operate at full capacity, and additional training should be organised through other institutions such as the universities.

7.2.3 Calculations provided in testimony to the Committee by civil society indicate that at least US\$1.72 million (MK 137.6 million) will be needed, just for the training required to reduce the percentage of unqualified teachers in primary schools to 30% by 2002, the first target of the Government's Policy Investment Framework for Education. An additional \$587,500 (MK 47 million) per year will be needed to reduce the percentage of unqualified teachers in primary schools to 10% by 2012.

7.2.4 The Decision Point Document suggests indicative use of US\$3.8 million in funds freed by HIPC debt relief for training teachers in 2001/2002.

Recommendation 13: Substantially increase the budget for training primary school teachers, and designate the same as a Priority Poverty Expenditure.

7.3 Conditions of Service for Teachers

7.3.1. It makes no sense to train teachers only to have them choose other careers from the outset, or to lose them due to attrition. Very poor conditions of service for teachers at primary and secondary levels have made education the profession of last resort, and contributed to extremely high attrition among teachers. At the primary level alone, Malawi loses about 500 teachers a month. Salaries are amongst the lowest for professionals and salary payments are often delayed. Failure to provide housing and inadequate transportation make it difficult to recruit teachers, particularly for rural areas. Attention by senior officials within the Ministry of Education to change attitudes and curtail disrespectful, dismissive treatment of teachers is also essential.

7.3.2 According to testimony from civil society, to raise salaries for 50,000 primary school teachers to a minimum of MK5,930 per month, an estimated US\$3.8 million (MK 304 million) would be required *in addition to* funds to support salaries at the current levels. Funds are also needed for teachers housing.

Recommendation 14: Substantially increase the budget for personal emoluments (salaries and benefits) for teachers, and designate the same as a Priority Poverty Expenditure.

7.4 Teaching and Learning Materials

7.4.1 Throughout the education system, basic teaching and learning materials are non-existent or in short supply. This has a decidedly negative impact on student achievement.

7.4.2 According to Government documents quoted in testimony from civil society, the average number of pupils per textbook in 1997 was 24, and US\$5.41 million (MK432.8 million) would be required to achieve a target of 2

pupils to a textbook at the primary level. Despite this, expenditure on teaching and learning materials actually decreased between 1993 and 1999 (*PER*).

7.4.3 It should be feasible to make significant progress in this area in 2001/2002. The Decision Point Document suggests indicative use of US\$6.1 million in HIPC resources for teaching materials in 2001/2002. The U.K. Department for International Development (DFID) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) have also pledged large grants for educational inputs.

<p><u>Recommendation 15</u>: Substantially increase the budget for teaching and learning materials for primary schools, and designate the same as a Priority Poverty Expenditure.</p>

8. Health

8.0.1 Malawi continues to suffer from persistently high mortality and morbidity rates from preventable diseases such as malaria, respiratory infections, diarrhoea, and ailments associated with childbearing and childhood (*PER*). Combined with a worsening HIV/AIDS epidemic, the situation is bound to deteriorate further unless there is a concerted effort to increase access to quality health care, particularly primary health care in rural areas.

8.0.2 The poor are caught in a vicious circle created by the mutually reinforcing combination of poverty and poor health. Low literacy rates, for example, handicap the ability of the poor to cater for their own health needs. Most of the poor live in rural areas that are most disadvantaged in terms of local access to good public health care. Good health is not only a fundamental aspect of human well being, but also a requisite for economic growth because ill-health leads to absenteeism and low productivity.

8.0.3 During the past few years, Government has made a conscious effort to shift public spending towards social sectors, including health. Malawi now has a medical college, a new central hospital, and has made progress with childhood immunisation. However, increased allocations for health as a share of the total budget have been insufficient to keep up with the rising cost of inputs and a rapidly growing population. Per person spending on health in real terms (i.e., adjusted for inflation and devaluation of the Kwacha) by Government and donors combined has actually declined since the mid-1990s (*PER*).