**Education Malawi Strand Meeting**

**Question**

Our university is interested in involving other schools ie health and education. Please discuss how best to work with higher multiple schools or education.

**Answer**

The point of call will be the Ministry of Education for high-level introductions and then The Council for Higher Learning. Contacts of which MaSP will provide.

**Question**

When upgrading community secondary schools, what are the priorities in relation to teachers?

**Answer**

They sometimes use teachers who upgraded from being primary school teachers to a secondary school teacher. In management usually they obtain those with a university qualification.

The priority should be equality and of course numbers. Recent publications indicate that most CDSS have almost zero qualified teachers and also in short supply. Investment in teacher training with focus on methods, TLMs would be handy for teachers to deliver the national curriculum.

**Question**

What do you think are the biggest challenges facing Malawi today in relation to education?

**Answer**

Education standards are not matching the ever growing needs of Malawi’s growing economy so much so that students come out of school without employability skills.

Access to training and skills development. Education sector needs to be reformed in terms of innovation, skills development among others.

* Poor learning outcomes – the Monitoring Learning Achievement survey of 2014 indicated that 80% of children at grade 4, of primary cannot read or write. This is second by other studies such as EGRA, SACMEQ 2017.
* Quality and number of teachers, unmotivated
* System inefficiencies – the repetition rate is around 29% through the ESIP II attempted to cap repetition at 10%, this is yet to be attained
* Access issues when it comes to secondary and tertiary levels.

**Question**

Why are children with disabilities not included in mainstream education, especially in rural Malawi?

**Answer**

They are included but the issue is there are no special provisions to cater for their special needs

Children with disabilities are actually included in the mainstream school. There are very few specialist schools in the country. The question is, are the schools really ready for them. Teachers are ill equipped, school environment not friendly and curriculum unadapted. We could almost talk if excluded from within. Most children with disabilities are not enrolled due to several factors, some already mentioned and also because of stigma, value in education, long distances to school. And lack of assistive devices.

**Question**

What aspects of Higher Education staff training are the top priorities?

**Answer**

Research grants would be one of them.

Matching education curriculum with current labour needs which will entail; reforming the education system specifically with regards to science and technology subjects, and entrepreneurship to develop a pipeline of talent for STEM related job market.

Expanding HE infrastructure

Improving usage and access of ICT in HE

Promoting research technology, development and transfer in all HE

Developing HE institution programmes that are relevant to the prevailing needs of the nation.

**Question**

What are Mary’s Meals doing to include more Early Learning Centres?

**Answer**

Starting from 2018 we will be expanding in collaboration with other partners. Our core focus will be feeding component while other partners will tackle teaching and learning. Since 2002 to 2017, we have been doing both feeding teaching and learning in ECD.

**Question**

Is the Malawi government going to be able to fund school improvement grants?

**Answer**

Most likely yes. Education is one of the key areas of focus in the MDGs 3.

**Question**

Are resource centres a priority for inclusive education?

**Answer**

Yes of course

Yes they are. In the recently launched National Inclusive Education Strategy, this comes very clearly. EMIS 2016 reporting only 55 centres in the whole country, this is a priority. Gaps are quite high.

**Question**

What are you looking for in terms of “strengthening the curriculum”?

**Answer**

Make it more relevant to the environment. Curriculum must address critical success factors in the education system.

**Question**

In terms of the Malawi Government priorities – does higher education include ‘further’ education?

**Answer**

As we stand, Malawi needs to improve its transition rate from primary to secondary and from secondary to tertiary. As of 2017, only 16% of children transitioned from primary to secondary and of those only 8% move on to tertiary education. The youth who do not proceed to higher education turn out to be unemployed in the long run.

**Question**

Our aim is to create a centre of excellence in medical education. Is this realistic?

**Answer**

Very realistic, we have huge gaps in the health sector. But how about working with already existing systems like CHAM who at the moment are providing 40% of the health care and facing immense challenges.

**Question**

Under which circumstances would teachers be provided by the state to a privately funded school (via donors)

**Answer**

Key issue is access due to fees. Most pupils cannot afford tertiary education, so the strategies in this regard would include

1. Harmonize HE institutions legislation
2. Encouraging cost sharing and fundraising activities in all public universities
3. Legislating the national qualification framework
4. Establishing collaboration mechanisms with external colleges and universities
5. Strengthening HE ICT and management information systems

**Question**

What advise can you offer in relation to training professional health educators rather than vocational curriculum strengthening?

**Answer**

When it comes down to this, priority must be given to front line staff in this case it will be training professional health educators as opposed to vocational curriculum strengthening.

**Question**

How expansive a notion is meant by inclusive education

**Answer**

Usually inclusive means regardless of age, race, ethnic background etc. The notion of LGBT in Malawi is quite new and highly sensitive. You may wish to know that it’s still punishable by law and in that regard the education system can’t include these people for now.

**Question**

Teacher training - is CPO for teaching being encouraged/funded by Malawian Government at district level?

**Answer**

A12. current provision of cpd is hph and uncoordinated, with most of it project oriented, donor driven and supply driven. Our budget analysis of the last 10 years places budget allocation at less than a dollar per teacher per year. However govt has embarked on developing a comprehensive cpd frame that would guide the practice. The framework is to be linked to teacher licensure and career progression. There is quite a commitment, however it remains to be seen it this would be fully implemented given the small allocation to CPD.

**Question**

What strategies are in place to support pupils reaching the end of their secondary schooling? I.e. Transitioning to further education or work?

**Answer**

1. Mostly the government is subsiding on the fees that learners are supposed to pay as you know secondary school is not free...

2. Secondly, government pays bursaries to learners especially girls

3. Government also provide school improvement grants that enables the school management to train school management committees in order to inspire and motivate learners to complete their education.

4. The School management also calls parents days where parents and teachers discuss on the performance and the value of education.

These help in encouraging learners. Notwithstanding the dropout is very high and