

# Education

## German development cooperation in Malawi

### The challenge

While Malawi has made significant gains in increasing access to primary schools, the **quality of education remains poor**. The Southern African regional assessment of learning achievements in literacy and numeracy (SACMEQ) still ranks Malawian pupils' learning results as some of the lowest. A massive increase in enrolment since the introduction of free primary education in 1994 put enormous strain on the limited physical and technical capacity of the primary education sub-sector. While the net enrolment rate shows positive figures (90% in 2017/18), the high repetition rate (24,5% in 2017/18) and low primary school survival rate (41% in 2018) mean that **less than half of learners complete primary school in the designated eight-year period**. Large class sizes, on average one qualified teacher for 70 learners in 2018, continue to have a negative effect on the quality of primary education. While gender parity has been achieved in access to the first years of primary school many girls drop out of school even before they attain basic literacy and numeracy skills.

### Our approach

German development cooperation in Malawi's education sector **aims at improved quality and efficiency in primary education** to improve learning results of girls and boys. The work is guided by the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) and the **Education Sector Implementation Plan (ESIP II)**. Special emphasis is laid on the inclusion of children from disadvantaged areas, children with learning difficulties, poor population groups and girls. The cooperation focusses on three pillars:

- 1) **Improving teacher training, development and motivation,**
- 2) **Improving learning conditions** through investments in better school infrastructure and digital education technologies,
- 3) **Fostering school health and nutrition.**

Volume of German funding via Financial and Technical Cooperation for current projects under Education:

EUR 66.79 mio. + EUR 4.2 mio. under preparation

(in addition, EUR 19 mio. co-financing by EU)

In addition, Germany is a large contributor to the sector through its financial contributions to the European Union, World Bank, African Development Bank, the United Nations and the Global Partnership for Education.

Through technical cooperation, Germany provides support to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the Malawi Institute of Education, e.g. with the revision and **implementation of the primary teacher education curriculum** and the introduction of **National Standards for Teacher Education**. The teacher training colleges (TTCs) are supported in the implementation of the revised curriculum, the achievement of National Standards, improving teaching practice and in the **use of ICT in teaching and learning**. Besides that, an in-service course on **Inclusive Education** was developed and piloted using a range of digital education technologies.

In line with the National School Health and Nutrition Strategic Plan 2016-2020, Germany with additional funding from European Union provides support for home grown school meals and school health and nutrition education in primary schools. **Schools are supported in setting up and managing school meals activities** on their own. Behavior change activities such as school-based health clubs and theatre for development are promoted to **improve nutrition and hygiene practices** at school level and beyond in the surrounding communities. School kitchens, storage rooms, energy efficient cook stoves are constructed in all benefiting schools and investment in sanitary facilities take place in selected schools.

Under financial cooperation Germany invests in infrastructure to improve teacher education through the construction of classrooms, hostels for students and the rehabilitation and extension of water supply and sanitary facilities in TTCs and teaching prac-

left: *Unlocking talents through tablet-supported individual learning.*

right: *Interactive teaching methods are part of inclusive education.*





left:

A mathematics teacher at a TTC demonstrates how learners can be taught to tell the time.

right:

School children enjoy their daily home-grown school meal provided with German support.



tice schools (TPS). Furthermore, Germany will support the education sector through the **Education Services Joint Fund (ESJF)**, a common funding mechanism aimed at strengthening donor harmonization and coordination in line with Government priorities. Funds from the ESJF are expected to support infrastructure development in primary schools including construction of new classrooms and teachers' houses as well as infrastructure improvements in TTCs, among other things. In addition, Germany supports the **utilisation of tablet based digital education technologies** in primary schools to increase the attainment of literacy and numeracy core competencies of learners.

## The benefits

Through the German-supported reform of primary teacher education, the **quality of teacher training has been improved**. The curriculum for initial teacher training was revised to enhance the practice-orientation and to better equip young teachers with relevant skills to improve the learning outcomes of their pupils. Malawi, as one of a few countries in the region, has succeeded in introducing National Standards for Teacher Education to **ensure and monitor the quality of training provided by teacher education institutions**. 177 teachers have been equipped with skills to identify and adequately serve disadvantaged children with learning difficulties in regular classrooms through in-service training. They continued teaching during the course and could verify and utilize the newly acquired skills immediately in their class rooms.

**More than 110,000 primary school and 10,000 pre-school learners are benefitting daily from nutritious home-grown school meals and additional school health and nutrition activities**. This enables especially disadvantaged children to attend classes regularly and improve their school performance. All 150 supported schools now have professionally constructed or modernized kitchens with energy efficient stoves and store rooms. Additionally, in selected schools sanitary facilities were constructed or renovated. Through support to the District Education Managers' Offices, capacities at district level have been strengthened to implement the home grown school meals approach as well as good nutrition and hygiene practices.

With German funding, **teacher training colleges** have been **expanded** to cater for 870 more students. Moreover, urgently needed **classrooms, teachers' houses, students' hostels and sanitation facilities** are **constructed** at 60 teaching practice schools. In 2017, approximately **7.4 million primary school textbooks** were **procured** improving the pupil-to-textbooks ratio, allowing chil-

dren to use textbooks in the classroom and at home. About 130,000 students will have **access to tablet based learning apps** to improve their numeracy and literacy skills.

Over recent years, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, supported by German Development Cooperation, **developed and implemented various studies and guidelines in priority reform areas**, e.g. improving learning outcomes, reducing high repetition rates, decentralizing education management.

