

# CITIZENS FORUM

## *Evaluation of the Community Centred Education Project*

By:

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Project Background**

The Community Centred Education (CCE) project is meant to mobilize communities towards active and effective participation in the education processes and programmes. This project was conceived in 2006 out of the People's Constitution Campaign (PCC) of the Citizens Forum (CF). The CF had embarked on promoting the social and economic rights being incorporated in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of Zambia.

### **1.2. The Citizens Forum**

The Citizens Forum was born in March 2004 from a realisation that many Zambian citizens were not actively participating in the governance of the nation. It is a social movement, which seeks to bring together concerned citizens from diverse backgrounds, devoted to using their intellectual and moral conviction in finding and articulating appropriate solutions to the many development challenges that Zambia faces. The movement commits itself to addressing national issues that will move the country forward, and education is one of the key national issues.

### **1.3. Specific Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of the CCE Project**

The CF requested the Consultant to:

- Carry out a desk review of the CCE project from 2006 to 2008;
- Follow up on the policy recommendations made by CF to government in December 2006;
- Review the national budget for education from 2005-2007;
- Identify some weaknesses/challenges in the CCE and recommend further CF strategies on the CCE project.

## **2. EDUCATION CONTEXT IN ZAMBIA**

The Government of Zambia is committed to the provision of education for all in line with the Education for All (EFA) goals set in 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand and reaffirmed in 2000 in Dakar as well as the Millennium development goals (MDGs) set in September 2000 at the United Nations Summit. In addition, the Zambian Government is committed to achieving the goals set at the regional level under Network for Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and Southern Africa Development Cooperation (SADC) which are targeted at reforms to improve the quality and relevance of education.

Moreover, the government of Zambia recognises that education is a basic human right and a means for enhancing the well-being and quality of life for the entire society.

Further more, the centrality of citizen's contribution to national development is recognized in the National Policy *Educating Our Future*. In the context of government's policies and practices to promote equality, equity, efficiency, partnership, pluralism, transparency and accountability in education, Citizens Forum (CF) focuses on promoting increased community participation in the education processes and programmes in line with the education policies and programmes articulated in education chapter of the Fifth National Development Plan (FNDP) 2006-2010 and the education policy *Educating Our Future* (1996). It is worth noting that although the policy on education is still a good policy and well recognized by various countries and researchers, it does not clearly outline the strategies for implementation of the policies articulated. The Strategic Plan (2003-2007) on the other hand was the first full response by the Ministry of Education to the education policies articulated in *Educating Our Future*. In this report, the consultant presents the key findings and responses to CF from the Ministry of Education by the key informants and the document reviews.

Generally, the Ministry of Education has made significant strides in such areas as infrastructure development, teacher deployment and bridging the gender gap at grade 1, more needs to be done. Although the quality of education still remains an area that requires special attention, to a greater extent Ministry of Education appreciates the complementary role that civil society provides and in particular the works of CF. To address the questions raised and recommendations made by CF to the Ministry of Education in 2006, the responses are grouped in line with the issues raised.

### **3. POLICY**

The Ministry of Education acknowledges the fact that the policy *Educating Our Future* (EoF) is due for review, at the same time the Ministry and its signatory partners indicate that the policy is still a good policy and all chapters are still relevant. Additionally, the most recent document the Education and Skills Development chapter of the FNDP, for example, re-emphasizes the main areas of the EoF and the objectives of the SP (2003-2007). While acknowledging the fact that CF's CCE is grass root centred, CF should also remain alert on issues of policy at higher levels. The meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> December 2006 at Cresta Golf View is commended. As it relate to policy, CF needs to engage Ministry in more dialogue at policy level on a more regular basis than is currently prevailing. For example, CF should engage the Top Management within the Ministry to take long steps to move away from merely policy development frameworks and begin to focus on evidence-based policy. The Ministry for example should have a vibrant EMIS system in the Directorate of Planning and Information which only needs strengthening as it has the possibility of providing

evidence-based policy. CF should advocate for the strengthening of the policy and research unit in the Ministry.

The Ministry of Education in its 2007 Annual report acknowledges the fact that the research section is very weak. For example since 2003, only three key studies have been undertaken – the High School Sub-Sector Review, the Teacher Education Review, and the Education Sector Public Expenditure Review. Unfortunately, it is difficult to see that these reports are internalized by MoE or that they have begun to influence planning in a significant manner. CF with its comparative advantage should advocate for the integration of Education and Skills Development – formal education and TEVET. This is vital as CF addresses the issue of localized curriculum.

CF should also advocate for the more recognition of Civil Society in matters of policy than is currently prevailing. Much policy discussion is between MoE and the donor community – currently filtered through the Lead Donor mechanism. In the normal circumstance, Policy discussion should be national in nature – between MoE and the academic community and civil society. CF has the potential of developing a critical mass of expertise to enable it engage effectively with the Ministry on policy and strategy development which will filter through to the communities.

### **3.1. Policy on Basic Education**

#### **Revisiting the provision of automatic progression up to Grade 9**

Although clearly articulated in EoF, automatic progression to Grade 9, very steady steps have been taken to implement this policy. This has been due to the fact that the Ministry realizes that there is insufficient infrastructure to do so. The number of teachers currently available also cannot cater for this ambitious goal. The rationale, however, has been that continuous assessment would be introduced as a mode of assessment of pupils at every grade. Currently, Examination Council of Zambia (ECZ) with support from USAID through the EQUIP2 Program has piloted continuous assessment in 180 community schools and in over 830 GRZ schools. Over time this initiative will form the basis for scaling up the continuous assessment mode of examination.

#### **3.2. Automatic Employment for graduate teachers**

Strides have been made to deploy over 8,000 who graduated from various colleges of education. Although the number of teachers deployed is not sufficient to cater for the high numbers of pupils in schools, this at least is a bit of progress in the right direction. The Ministry reports that it is committed to employing more teachers each year. The delay in employing teachers as soon as they completed colleges or universities was necessitated by the international dictates in order for the country to meet the HIPC completion obligations. Since 2006, over 8,000 teachers have been

deployed. By the end of 2009, over 12,000 backlog of teachers will be deployed. The Ministry aims to ensure that all teachers who graduate will be employed on completion of their courses.

### **3.3. Policy on Community Schools**

#### **Deploying trained teachers in community schools and remunerating them**

Government has responded by seconding some trained teachers to some community schools. So far almost 2,000 graduates from colleges have been employed to work in community schools while receiving a salary from government. With the development and dissemination of the Community School Policy and its Guidelines, strides have been made to second teachers to Community Schools. Students in colleges of education are also encouraged to go and work in community schools where in most cases they assume the responsibilities of teacher in charge. However, the numbers of teachers seconded are still insufficient. Moreover, there is no legal status established for Community school teachers' posts in community schools. CF can consider advocating for establishment of the legal status for Community School teachers to have established teaching posts.

In the revised MoU with ZCSS in 2005 which has currently been overtaken by the policy and its guidelines of 2008, the Ministry of Education has stated that teachers in community schools shall be remunerated based on the availability of funds. The Ministry does not therefore commit itself to paying teachers salaries for teachers who are not GRZ trained except in situations where there is availability of funding.

The Ministry has come up with a deliberate policy to deploy graduate teachers to the neediest places where a critical shortage of teachers. For the past five years, priority was given to rural government schools. Therefore, regardless of where the graduate teacher came from before entering college, the Ministry simply posted teachers to where they perceived as having critical shortage of teachers. However, in some districts, some DEBS have re-directed some of these teachers to their community schools.

The policy guidelines and strategies developed have created coherence and consistency in approaches to coordination, management and resourcing of Community Schools. Efforts to improve and standardize approaches to record keeping have improved the management of education services. These are areas that the Ministry has seen as being needy in community schools. However, teacher development, infrastructure and teaching and learning materials are still major issues of concern not only for community schools but for GRZ schools too. In addressing the issue of learning and teaching materials, MoE with support from the cooperating partners, have provided tool kits to over 1,948 community schools that were targeted

in Lusaka, Southern, Central, Copperbelt and Luapula Provinces. For provincial and district officials who have provided assistance, however, the MoE's efforts to clarify support mechanisms has legitimized their initial efforts to channel resources to Community schools.

On the concern raised about making community schools as examination centers, the Ministry of Education has a criteria in place which makes schools to qualify to be an examination centre. The school should have a lockable strong room or office where trunks containing examination materials should be kept. However, almost 60% of the community schools in the country lack infrastructure where they can store examination papers. It is worth mentioning that community schools that have met the criteria (particularly in Lusaka and Copperbelt and a few in Southern Province) are now examination centers. It is the wish of the Ministry however, that funds allowing improvements to these schools in terms of infrastructure will be improved. Steps have been taken to include them in the AWPB in 2009.

### **3.4. Policy on the Teaching Profession**

MoE has performed well on all the indicators of access both gross and net at basic school level. The sustained investment in basic education over the years has paid off. The contribution of BESSIP and community schools is of significance at this level. The Ministry faces the challenge of safeguarding the achievements scored in terms of access. The country still has a backlog of 36.63% girls (7 year olds) who are still out of school (*Review of the Ministry of Education Sector Plan, 2007*).

In relation to the quality of education, there are improvements in the quality proxy indicators; however, MoE has not achieved the targets as outlined in the Strategic Plan. Statistics from the Ministry of Education statistical bulletin (2007) shows that.

## **4. NATIONAL BUDGET FOR EDUCATION – 2005 - 2008**

The allocation of finances in the national budget towards education has been fluctuating in different years. In 2005 the budget allocation for education was less than 10% of the whole national budget. The amounts were K872billion (eight hundred and seventy billion kwacha). This allocation was far below meeting the various education challenges requiring financial resources.

In 2006 the allocation was K1,647.4 (just over one trillion six hundred and forty seven billion). This represented about slightly over 16% of the total national budget. Again the increase in the amount did not translate in addressing the education challenges adequately.

In 2007 the education sector received in excess of one trillion kwacha, that is K1,808.4. However in comparison to the 2006 allocation, this figure was a lower percentage of the total national budget as it represented 15%.

In 2008 the education sector was allocated slightly over two trillion kwacha, and the figure was K2,118.5.

The various challenges expected to be addressed from these allocations are enormous. For example, there are many primary schools that have been upgraded to upper basic schools. However there have been no corresponding structural improvements or increase. Although many trained teachers graduate every year, not all deployed to schools due to inadequate funds in government. Also few teachers are absorbed by rural schools because many of them lack accommodation.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

### 5.1. Proposed Thrust for CF

The core of CF's mission is to “advocate for educational policies and programmes that endeavors to facilitate for participation of citizens in local governance. And one of the governance issues which is key to development is education” (CF Community Centered Education phase 2 Annual Narrative Report). The suggestions made by the key informants and the consultancy's view on the strategic direction of CF over the next plan can be categorized as referring to the institutional level on the one hand and programmatic level on the other hand. This means that CF needs to re-orient itself as an organisation (institutional level) to its mission which should be reflected in terms of what CF does (programmatic level).

At the institutional level the issues to be considered in the next plan as they relate to education should include:

- ☞ **Administrative structures for implementation:** CF needs to re-examine the organizational structure. CF needs to ensure that competent officers are in charge of following up on issues at lower levels. CF can do so by recruiting officers who have an appropriate skills mix at the secretariat as well as at provincial and district levels. This means that the FPPs should be skilled in strategic advocacy for policy change to better engage MOE in policy dialogue.
- ☞ **Partnerships:** CF should find ways of strengthening and broadening the scope of engaging other partners such as FAWEZA and ZOCS in educational related matters. FAWEZA for example, has the comparative advantage of having signed MOU with MOE is better placed when it comes to policy related issues. On the other hand, CF with its strength in issues related to education. FAWEZA for example as an educational civil society organization has the potential of

engaging and challenging the Ministry in matters of policy. CF therefore does not need to duplicate efforts but use the same structures used by FAWEZA except to strengthen their capacities in conducting advocacy activities. CF should use its comparative advantage in advocacy works to strengthen the capacities of FAWEZA and other civil society organization that are working with the Ministries in order to better operationalise the MOU at national, provincial and district levels. This should lead to closer collaboration between other Civil Society organizations involved in education and the MOE personnel at all levels. In particular this is needed for strengthening the linkages between the Provincial Focal Point Persons the Ministry of Education Standards Officers at lower levels. In addition CF needs to reflect on how to strategically use the strong partnerships and networks base for the attainment of its vision as well as find ways of using the civil society networks to strengthen areas of weakness.

- ☞ **Monitoring and Evaluation:** While CF is a an advocacy organisation with strength in research and reaching out to local communities, there is a need to improve on monitoring and evaluation of interventions in all policy areas that the organisation raises concern on and introduce a requirement that all schools and communities implementing CF interventions provide annual progress reports for accountability purposes.
- ☞ **Governance:** As earlier stated, CF needs to broaden its membership beyond civil society organisation and involve universities more so as to strengthen strategic thinking and research capacities. In addition, CF needs to build the capacity of governance structures (District and Provincial level members) to mobilize resources and account for them effectively and transparently as a way of enhancing ownership of the interventions for sustainability.
- ☞ **CF Advocacy Strategy:** CF needs to develop a clear plan for advocacy that articulates the approaches to be used in advocacy and expected outputs and outcomes.
- ☞ **Evidence-based approach:** CF should adopt a policy that all its advocacy activities should be evidence-based and, as necessary, make use of appropriate external expertise in policy analysis, and research for better informed advocacy for policy change.
- ☞ **Research:** Given that there are gaps between policy and practice in the Ministry of Education, CF needs to strengthen its research portfolio and make it innovative and participatory so as to continuously generate innovative ideas on the promotion of the education of the children and in particular the vulnerable children. In other words CF needs to suggest other alternative approaches which the Ministry can learn some thing from.
- ☞ **Expansion of outreach:** Although CF scores highly in this area, there is need to purposively target the interventions to reach out to the very remote areas of the country where the needs are greatest, and in such areas, initiate interventions

that target communities as well as the schools. To facilitate this, CF needs to undertake context-specific policy analysis and research for better targeting of interventions.

- ☞ **Mainstreaming of successful interventions:** out of interventions currently being implemented, CF needs to put in place the necessary mechanisms for identifying and documenting the best practices that should be mainstreamed and undertake advocacy to ensure that the mainstreaming takes place.
- ☞ **Sustainability of Interventions:** CF should have an existing strategy for all the interventions. For all interventions CF should take cognizance of the policy implications. For example, it is evident that there is need for advocacy for: (a) a policy that makes basic education (up to grade 12) in Zambia, free and compulsory; and (b) a policy to put all girls in remote places in boarding schools to reduce the number of girls in weekly boarding; (c) Extra allowances for teachers in rural schools (hardship allowance); (d) the Ministry of Education to construct houses for teachers and managers

#### **Data obtained from:**

##### **Primary data**

|                                   |                   |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Permanent Secretary               | Mrs. L Kapulu     |
| Director Planning and Information | Dr. Felix Phiri   |
| Infrastructure section            | Mr. Joseph Nthele |

##### **Secondary data**

|                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Ministry of Education | 2007 Statistical Bulletin |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|

# **CITIZENS FORUM**

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION PRESENTED TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AT CRESTA GOLFVIEW HOTEL**

**By Mr. Kafula Mwila, Chairperson, National Management Committee  
12 December 2006**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Community Centred Education (CCE) project is meant to mobilize communities towards active and effective participation in the education processes and programmes. It is common knowledge that today education standards in Zambia have gone down, and for various reasons. Improving education standards requires the participation of communities. The CCE project is thus exploring various ways through which communities can participate actively in the education system in the country at various levels.

In its quest to facilitate for active participation of the citizens in governance, the CF has, since inception, been involved in the constitution-making process, through its People's Constitution Campaign (PCC). From January 2006, the CF embarked on popularizing the contents of the draft constitution that was produced by the Mung'omba Constitution Review Commission (CRC) on 29 December 2005. The CF reproduced some parts of the draft constitution for purposes of disseminating to communities. One of these parts was the Bill of Rights.

The CF reached out to various rural communities and facilitated for comparison between the current constitution and the draft constitution. One of the issues of concern that came out strongly was the right to education.

While the right to education is not guaranteed in the current constitution, and hence not justiciable, communities appreciated the fact that a lot would be achieved in the education sector, if this right was

guaranteed. However, it was also appreciated that communities needed to participate actively in the process of improving the standards of education in the nation.

The CF thus decided to go back to the communities to facilitate deeper debate, on community participation in the education processes and programmes. This process is what gave birth to the Community Centred Education (CCE) project. The National Policy on Education was the basis of the CCE project debates. The Community Centred Education project is thus a product of the People's Constitution Campaign.

As an organisation we are indebted to the Netherlands Embassy and the Norwegian Church Aid for the facilities and resources that enabled us to reach out to a number of rural and urban communities.

During the implementation of the PCC the CF reached out to twenty five (25) rural districts, and held a total of 27 community rallies and 9 public meetings. In this process the PCC reached out over twenty thousand (20,000) people, all of them in rural communities. 649 people in rural areas and 177 in urban areas participated in the CCE project debates.

In both the PCC and the CCE a total of 23 traditional leaders have been actively involved. These have been in the Northern, Central, Southern, Eastern, and Copperbelt Provinces.

The interaction of the CF with communities through the PCC and CCE projects form the basis of the recommendations we are presenting to government tonight. We do not intend to re-invent the wheel, in as far as the National Policy on Education is concerned. What we are carrying with us is the voice of the citizens on some provisions in the policy.

## **2.0 COMMUNITY CENTRED EDUCATION**

The goal of the CCE project is ***to create a critical mass around issues of education and enhance community participation in the education processes and programmes.***

We have just concluded phase one of the project, which had the following objectives:

- To examine the extent to which education in Zambia is community-centred;
- To involve traditional leaders and other community leaders in the promotion of community centred education in Zambia;
- To identify avenues for integration of education in local governance structures;
- To advocate for community friendly education policies and practices.

## 2.1 Activities

During the implementation of the project the CF held meetings with stakeholders, to explain the project and explore ways of networking with them. These included the Decentralisation Secretariat, Local Government Association of Zambia, Stuart Marshall Limited (an Information Management Company), and some Traditional Leaders in the Eastern and Northern Provinces.

Other stakeholders in this project included the Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ), Forum for Women Educationalists in Zambia (FAWEZA), Human Rights Foundation (HRF), Zambia Civic Education Association (ZCEA), Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC), and the Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS).

In its outreach activities the CF held public meetings in both rural and urban areas. The focal point for these meetings were Basic Schools. In the urban areas participants in these meetings included school managers and teachers, leaders of the Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), leaders of the Resident Development Committees (RDCs), area councilors, and members of the public who had pupils at the particular basic schools.

In the rural areas participants included traditional leaders, traditional councilors, village headpersons, school managers and teachers, health centre staff, government extension workers, leaders of the Area Development Committees (ADCs), and leaders of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and women's clubs.

The meetings looked at some aspects of the National Policy on Education. They examined and explored the role of communities in the education processes and programmes. They also debated the current state of education in Zambia, and its various challenges, and they also looked at avenues for the integration of education programmes in the structures of local governance.

## 3.0 National Policy on Education

The CF selected some provisions in the policy and disseminated them to the community. According to the policy, ***“the fundamental units around which Zambia’s school system will be organized are basic schools and high schools”*** and ***“as basic education becomes more universal, the Grade 7 composite examination will become less important and eventually will be abolished”***. The CF selected mostly provisions that touched on issues that affected basic education. Some of these provisions are outlined below.

### 3.1 Policy on Basic Education

- The goal of the Ministry of Education is that every child should have access to nine years of good quality education. Attainment of the goal of nine years of good quality education for all will be pursued on a partnership basis between the Ministry on the one hand, and local communities and other providers of education on the other.
- In order to achieve this the Ministry will progressively increase the number of Grade 8 and 9 places during the period 1996-2005, so that in the immediate future an increasing number of children can enter Grade 8 and complete Grade 9;

### **3.2 Challenges**

- While this is appreciated, there are some challenges around it. One of the contributing factors to the decline in education standards has been the discontinuation of promotion tests at various levels. It will be better to have promotion tests from lower basic to middle-basic, and from middle basic to upper basic. The competition that pupils are subjected to makes them work very hard. And those who fail the tests should not be allowed to proceed to the higher grade. On the other hand they should not be thrown on the street but should repeat the lower grade, and only proceed after they have passed the promotion test.
- The time to upgrade primary schools to upper basic schools, and phase out Grades 8 and 9 from high schools is not yet ripe. Schools that have already been upgraded are faced with a lot of challenges. One of them is the inadequacy of infrastructure. For example Luangwa Basic School in Kitwe, which goes up to Grade 9 still has a shortfall of four classrooms. This is despite the fact that Grades 1 – 7 have 4 classes each while Grades 8 and 9 have two each. The situation will be worse when the Grade 7 composite examinations are done away with.
- There is a classic example of a school that loses one class at Grade 7. This is Kawama Basic School in Kitwe. It has five classes each from Grades 1 to 6, and four classes for Grade 7. After Grade 6 where does one class go? Pupils do not sit for a selection examination to compete for the four Grade 7 classes. One class dies at the beginning of Grade 7 because of the shortage of classrooms. Room has to be created to accommodate Grades 8 and 9.
- Already the standards of education for Grades 8 and 9 who go to high schools and those who go to basic schools are different. For example the basic schools do not have laboratories for science subjects. They are only found at high schools, giving advantage to high school pupils.
- Most schools in the country, particularly the rural areas, do not have the required numbers of teachers, with the required qualifications. For example Ndake Basic School in Nyimba has had inadequate staff for a very long time. In Senior Chief Nalubamba's chiefdom in Namwala, most basic schools are understaffed, and there is very little effort is being made to equip them with teachers.

### **3.3 Recommendations**

- We wish to recommend that the Ministry of Education revisits the provision of automatic progression up to Grade 9. The quality of education should not be compromised for the sake of attainment of the goal of universal basic education for all children.

- Government should re-introduce the system of automatic employment for graduate teachers.

#### **4.0 Policy on Community Schools**

- Communities that wish to establish community schools, that would operate as community schools outside the government or District Education Board system, will be strongly encouraged to do so. The Ministry will contribute to the running costs of such schools through the provision of teachers and teaching supplies, or through a system of capitation grants. Partnership between the Ministry of Education and communities in moving towards the goal of nine years of education for all will be effected through joint responsibility towards the development of basic schools. The responsibility of the community will be to provide the infrastructure required for adequate educational provisions.
- The responsibility of the Ministry will be to provide technical advice and, once the physical facilities are in place, to supply teachers, equipment and material for approved developments.

#### **4.1 Challenges**

- While many communities have established community schools, the standards of education in these schools have largely been compromised. Pupils from community schools do not perform as well as those in the regular stream. The pass rate is extremely low, and many pupils fail to get full certificates.
- One of the reasons is that many of these schools only have volunteer untrained teachers. Apart from being untrained, these teachers are not motivated as they are not on a salary. Moreover they are overworked in most instances. For example, Chifukuzi community school in Nyimba operates under very difficult conditions as there is only one volunteer who is not paid a salary but in kind by the community.
- In the quest to improve the standards of education in community schools, the Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS) provides teacher training to community school teachers, who come from the local communities and are not formally trained by government. However when government is requested to put such trained teachers on government payroll, they are taken away from the community schools. This defeats the efforts to improve the education standards at community schools.
- Although government has committed itself to funding the community schools, the funds are often inadequate, and usually reach the schools late.
- Many community schools also lack teaching materials. Sometimes books are donated by well-wishers, but this is not on a regular basis, and is not the case with all community schools.
- Community schools rely on other examination centres resulting in some of their pupils who reach Grade 7 not writing examinations.

#### **4.2 Recommendations**

- Government should send trained teachers to teach in community schools and these should be remunerated accordingly. Volunteer teachers who eventually undergo teacher training, and are put on government payroll, should be sent back to their schools.
- Government should send adequate and timely teaching materials and funds to community schools.
- Community schools should be given examination centre status by the Examinations Council of Zambia to avoid situations where some grade seven pupils in these schools fail to enter for examinations.

## **5.0 Policy on the Financing of Basic Education**

- According to the policy on education the development of new basic schools and the upgrading of lower and middle basic schools to upper basic status will be undertaken on a partnership basis between communities and the Ministry. While communities will share in appropriate fashion in the financing of education, the Government will continue to bear the major responsibility for the running of basic schools.
- The Ministry will seek to have the budgetary allocation to basic education raised to a level commensurate with the needs of a growing and inadequately-resourced sector. In its budgetary submissions, the Ministry will make generous provision for inputs and activities that will enhance the quality of basic education.

## **5.1 Challenges**

- Although the policy commits government to bear the major responsibility for the running of basic schools, funding to most schools is inadequate and erratic.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

- Government grants should be sent directly to the schools, and communities should set up committees that will receive and account for whatever is sent to the schools. School grants should thus be controlled by schools, PTA and Area Development Committees.
- There should be a provision for government to provide free books and pencils to vulnerable children

## **6.0 Policy on the Teaching Profession**

- In order to foster the quality and effectiveness of the education system, the Ministry of Education will promote the quality of individual teachers and of the teaching profession as a whole. Dependence on untrained teachers will be reduced, but untrained teachers already in the system will be given an opportunity to undergo training.
- Recognising that the terms and conditions of service crucially affect the morale and commitment of teachers, the Ministry will strive to have these improved. To increase the attractiveness of a posting to a rural school, and to enhance commitment to teaching in a rural area, the Ministry will provide

extra incentives for rural teachers. The Ministry will also work in partnership with communities in the rehabilitation and building of teachers' houses, particularly in the rural areas.

## **6.1 Challenges**

- Teachers increasingly feel that their services are not appreciated by their employer, namely the government. Whenever they speak out on their conditions of services, and whenever they demand for just wages, their sentiments are dismissed as being politically motivated. When they see that their demands are falling on deaf ears they decide to go on strike, but they are issued with threats, and their strike action considered to be illegal. This has dampened their morale, consequently affecting the standards of education.
- Many government teachers concentrate more on private tuitions than their regular teaching. This has disadvantaged pupils who cannot afford to enroll for private tuition. But the teachers see a direct appreciation of their services when they conduct private tuitions.
- Teachers in rural areas face a lot of hardships. The rural hardship allowance is inadequate and in most cases is not paid to the teachers serving in rural areas. They are also overworked as some of them are lone teachers for a whole school from Grade 1 to Grade 7.
- Rural teachers face hardships when getting their salaries, as the banks are far from many rural schools. For example teachers in Luwingu go to get their salaries in Kasama, which is more than 160 km from Luwingu boma. And most of the teachers come from remote rural schools, some of them more than 60 km away from the boma.
- Teachers countrywide face accommodation problems. Housing allowance is an issue that government has not addressed adequately. Many times teachers have gone on strike over the issue of housing allowance, consequently affecting the delivery of education to the children.
- Teachers who want to up-grade themselves in education have to be removed from the payroll until they are through with their studies. This has compromised the quest to improve education standards through teachers' self-improvement.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

- Government should seriously address the conditions of service for teachers. The 2007 national budget should allocate adequate resources to take care of teachers' conditions of service. All housing allowance arrears ought to be paid from the 2007 national budget.
- Teachers who are on a professional development programme should not be removed from the payroll.
- Government should immediately employ the graduate teachers who are roaming the streets so that they can go and fill up the gaps in many rural schools.
- Government should increase the rural hardship and housing allowances for teachers, and ensure that payments are made promptly.

- Teachers' accommodation facilities countrywide should be addressed as a matter of urgent concern.

### **Conclusion**

We hope government is going to listen to the voice of the citizens from different parts of the country, as presented above.

We thank you, ladies and gentlemen.