

expound a system in which the role of DAs will be spelt out and disseminated to all concerned parties to follow on the registration of schools, licensing and registration of teachers.

While inspection will be the duty of MoE, the advisory services and supervision will mainly fall under the DAs; however, there is need to improve the structure of such a services if current weaknesses are to be surmounted at all levels (district, division and headquarters). The intent of advisory and methods services at DA is to ensure that schools are actually teaching and pupils are achieving intended standards. Since the MoE is initially devolving the primary education sector, it has accomplished the followings, between 2005 to date:

- (1) Opened bank account for districts. These are accounts which have been, to a large extent, agreed with the WB for direct funding of schools for teaching and learning materials under ESSUP 1;
- (2) Under the current budget some programs were removed from division office to district; and
- (3) Circulated to all districts the devolution guidelines for primary education.

Whereas the primary education sector is being devolved, the secondary school level remains with the MoE. However, there are all signs that there will be a separation of secondary schools in future between the CDSS, districts secondary schools and division/national secondary schools. The CDSS and district secondary schools are likely to fall under the DA in future; while the division/national schools will be a responsibility of the MoE. This expectation should be taken with caution because there is still a possibility that GoM may decide to bring all secondary school under MoE or the under each respective DA.

CHAPTER III: TRAINING WORKSHOP TO UPDATE DEPS

3.1 BACKGROUND

As a consequence of NSMMP (2000-2002), 33 DEPs were produced by the DPTs through a series of workshops at the Malawi Institute of Management (MIM) in Lilongwe. Following each workshop, DEMs took their DEPs to their Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and education sub-committees of DAs for review and approval. The DEPs then were transmitted to those DA staff responsible for producing the DDP, which contains all the sectors under the purview of the DA (education, health, transportation, etc.). Because the education sector, with its DEPs, was one of the first sectors to produce district level plans and budgets, it was reported anecdotally, at both district and at the Department of Local Government (DLG) levels, that the DEPs were being used as a model for other sectors to adopt and adapt for their own sector plans and budgets as part of DDPs.

After the completion of the original DEPs, a few marketing efforts by the DEMs resulted in modest support from the DDF in 2003 – 2004. There were and are potentially various players or partners in the improvement effort at the district level, especially international partners and local community support groups and agencies, including parents, SMCs and NGOs. These organizations were in most districts, rarely engaged in resource mobilization to implement the original DEPs. While most responses were negligible with respect to documented DEP follow-up efforts, there were a few notable exceptional cases such as in Salima; they were successful to request NGOs to assist them in classroom construction, using their DEP.

3.2 DEPS UPDATING WORKSHOPS

The DEPs updating process in NIPDEP was implemented through a workshop program for key persons at the district level involved with the production of the original DEPs. The first step in 2003/04 was to bring together the District Planning Teams (DPTs), which consisted of DEM, CPEA, DPD, Director of Finance (DoF), one school head from a primary school and one from a secondary, to develop a draft DEP and the second step in 2004 was to bring them together again to produce a final DEP for 2005/06 – 2007/08.

The objectives of the DEP updating training workshops were to:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) revive the district personnel's memory of how they created their original DEP; (2) review and update their DEPs covering FY 2002/03 – FY2004/05; and, (3) learn how to market their DEPs locally and beyond. |
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The expected outcomes of the training were to have participants:

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) understand the role of the DEP in decentralization; and (2) update the 33 DEPs and make them more realistic and practical. |
|---|

The main chapter headings of the updated DEPs, which were same for the original ones, were:

- Chapter I: Introduction
- Chapter II: District Socio-Economic and Educational Profile
- Chapter III: Stating Policy Objectives, Strategies, Indicators, Targets, Resources, Budgeting and Costing
- Chapter IV: Implementation Plan, Schedule and Resource Mobilization Plan

Figure-4 shows the timeline of preparation and updating of the DEPs during NSMMP and NIPDEP from 2000 to 2005.

Figure-4: Timeline of DEPs Preparation and Updating from 2000 to 2005

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
DEP Preparation and Updating						
NSMMP		←→				
1. Preparation of the original DEPs		←→				
NIPDEP				←→		
2. 1 st DEPs drafting workshop				←→		
3. 2 nd DEPs updating workshop to prepare DEPs 2005/06 – 2007/08					↔	

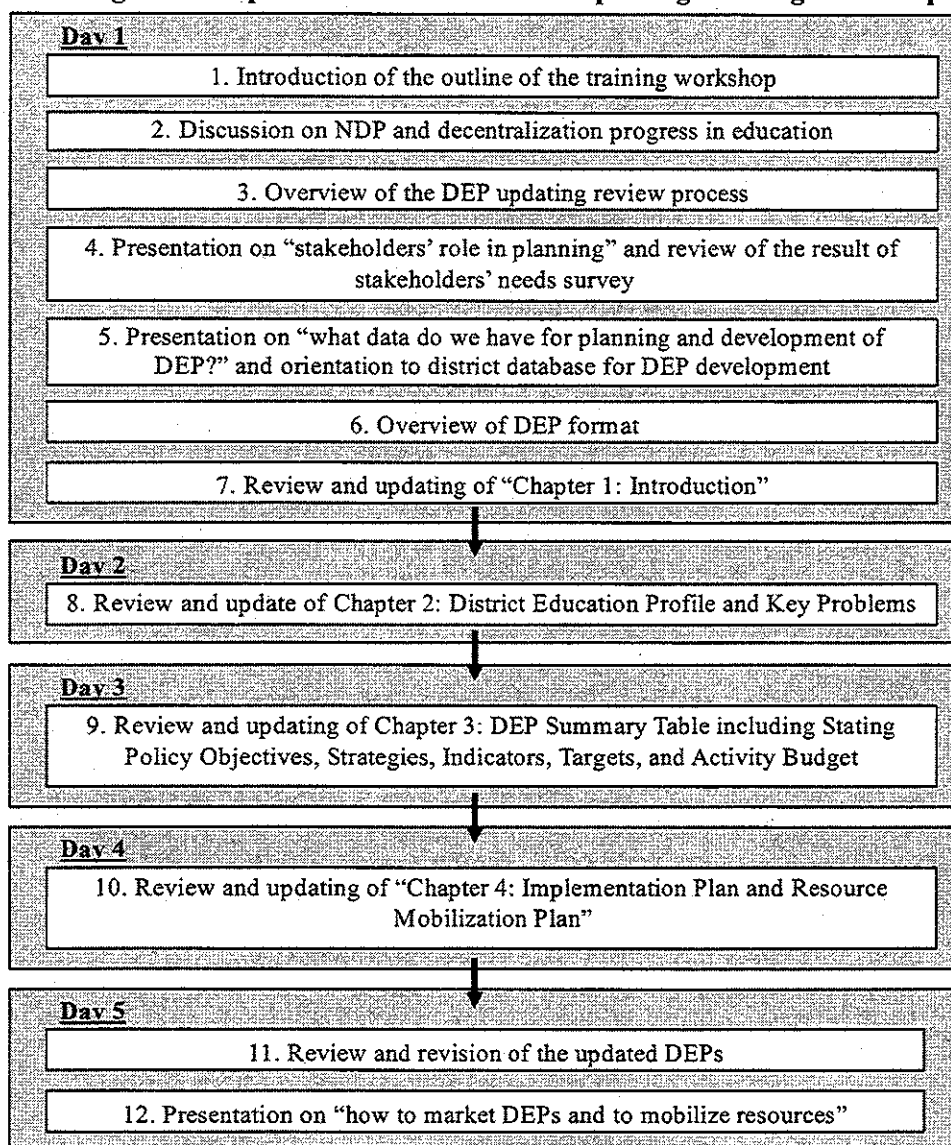
The first day of the DEPs drafting workshops in 2003/04 was partially spent in activities, including presentations by the DLG on the background and purposes of decentralization and the current status of devolution in the education sector. The remainder of the workshop was spent in group works going through their original DEPs chapter by chapter to make changes based upon changes in their districts backed up by appropriate recent data and documentation.

The second workshops in 2004, to produce a final DEP, followed somewhat the same schedule and activities as the earlier ones, but more time was allotted to group work to produce the final plans. The sessions on marketing the DEPs involved group work to lay out new specific action plans for enlisting

and mobilizing outside support to implement their DEPs. Also, the sessions on budgeting were longer, as the activity budgeting formats used by the pilot districts in developing their proposals were introduced into the final plans to help to make the budgeting and costing more realistic.

The steps and schedule of the DEP updating workshop is summarized in Figure-5.

Figure-5: Steps and Schedule of a DEP Updating Training Workshop



The materials for the workshop included:

- (1) DEPs Updating Manual;
- (2) a revised PIF gap analysis worksheet;
- (3) copies of their original DEPs in hardcopy and on a floppy disk;
- (4) results of district funding sources survey collected by the DEMs;
- (5) school census data kept by the DEM office and the national EMIS data;
- (6) item cost information for budgeting revisions; and
- (7) rented computer to use for the duration of the workshop to make their revisions more efficient as they worked their way through each of the DEP chapters.

The learning processes used in the training workshops was essentially, "learn-by-doing." While presentations were made by Core Trainers to get participants oriented to their tasks and to answer questions regarding updating issues, the emphasis was upon group work, where trainees were to see what kind of plans were put together a year or more ago and then agree as to what extent conditions may have changed. Stakeholder input was elicited before the workshops through surveys to key stakeholders in each district and summarized before or during the workshops by the DEMs. Periodically, throughout the workshops, the DPTs would swap their draft plan progress to learn from one another how they were approaching similar problems.

3.3 DEPS MARKETING AND MARKETING FAIRS

NIPDEP, through the DEP updating workshops, put emphasis in the training on the need for district personnel to distribute the DEP widely in their districts and market their Plans to potential supporters and donors as part of resource mobilization to implement their DEPs. The revised DEPs now include a new section on marketing and resource mobilization.

A Marketing Fair was organized in August 2005 to bring the donors together for a promotion of the DEPs in general. The Fair involved all 33 districts, pilot and non-pilots, represented by the DEMS, some district managers, desk officers and in some cases assembly staff, MoE officials and staff, and representatives from over 20 different international partners and NGOs, including WB, UNDP, UNICEF, EU, WFP, DfID, USAID, GTZ, CIDA, Action Aid, World Vision International, Save the Children, Care International, Sight Savers International and the Muslim Association of Malawi. Several of these organizations brought more than one representatives to assure better coverage of the DEP presentations. It was reported that most of the international partners already were planning to attend because they felt it would be very valuable to them in their efforts.

The international partners and NGOs appeared to be very interested in each presentation and almost all remained throughout the two days and, in fact, some additional partners who were unable to come the first day participated on the second. They also made brief presentations to the districts on what kinds of projects they had interest, how to contact them and what procedures they followed in providing assistance. There was a common understanding that follow-up on contacts were needed, although some of the contacts being informal and useful during tea breaks and lunch. NIPDEP provided the contact list of international partners and NGOs to the district participants.

Four half-day Marketing Fairs on DEPs took place for the six education divisions on the following days 17th August 2005 (CWED and CEED), 19th August (SEED), 22nd August (NED) and 24th August (CWED and SHED). All workshops were facilitated by the Core Trainers and presentations were made in most cases by DEMs. The fair had invitees from the different development partners from the respective districts. These partners were largely the same organization that were present during the national Marketing Fair although based at the district or regional level and taken as part of implementation agency and not just funding or facilitating/soliciting funding.

The fairs were concluded by recommending that they should be annual and the district should conduct them with the stakeholders at the grassroots. Secondly, it was argued that the budget estimates should be refined as and when the activities are bound to be implemented. The participants to all these fairs highlighted the need for community participation in relation to development partners' contribution to be reflected as uniform if consistency is to be attained.

3.4 KEY ISSUES IN UPDATING AND MARKETING OF DEPS

- (1) The quality of the updated DEPs for the non-pilot districts, based on the observation of the NIPDEP Team, appeared to be better than the original ones done in 2001-02, but there is still room for improvement. There is still a tendency to want to address too many needs right away, which realistically could not be fulfilled in a three year period. While the updated pilot district DEPs are more realistic and better done all the way around, they still can be improved.
- (2) The priority setting process is still not fully understood or there is still reluctance to make such decisions lest some constituent group may be unhappy. The professional judgment of local planners should be exercised in these instances, but often it was not done, leaving the credibility of the final DEP priorities in question. These priorities are supposed to be related and form the basis of the strategies and projects in the plan designed to reduce the gaps.
- (3) Attempts were made in the updating process to get the DPTs to reduce the number of strategies and projects to be carried out in the three year planning period. The project selection by the DPTs was improved by requesting that they classify their projects as to whether they were for construction, procurement, or training and community awareness. The pilot district DEPs emphasized teacher recruitment and improvement generally higher than infrastructure development.
- (4) The activity budget formats were standardized based upon the one used for pilot project proposals submitted to JICA in the first phase of NIPDEP. Because of problems in completing the longer activity budgets by non-pilot districts, the forms were simplified and streamlined for the pilot districts. The pilot districts prepared DEP budgets for three years that were substantially more credible than the non-pilot districts.
- (5) The DEP updating process has placed a much greater emphasis than it did in the original DEP process on providing training in marketing of DEPs and resource mobilization to implement DEPs. The experiences in some districts that have used their DEPs as an effective marketing tool show how powerful the DEPs can be in gathering needed targeted support. If the DEP process is not sustainable through the commitment of the district and the national level professional personnel, then an opportunity will be missed to truly foster decentralization and meet the real needs for improvement of the schools and the educational system of Malawi.
- (6) The Marketing Fair was a milestone for sensitizing the districts and potential donors of the value of the DEPs in assessing the varied needs of the districts beyond the global needs which will be expressed in the National Education Sector Plan. Based on the experience and the lessons learned from the Fair, it is recommended that:
 - 1) The Fairs at the national level become an annual event followed by division level fairs and initially be supported by NIPDEP;
 - 2) The fairs held in the divisions, in their planning, work with other nearby divisions to assure that where feasible be coordinated, making them as efficient as possible for the international partners, NGOs and civil societies;
 - 3) The contacts between donors and districts, if they result in more detailed efforts to implement DEPs be reported to the MoE Department of Planning to give it the opportunity to assist, where needed, in coordination; and
 - 4) There be a follow-up evaluation of the Fairs annually to determine what changes can be made to make them more effective and whether or not the Fairs are generating more support from donors that is better targeted and have fostered better coordination of efforts within districts, among districts and nationally.

CHAPTER IV: PILOT PROJECTS TO IMPLEMENT DEPS

4.1 OBJECTIVES AND TARGET GROUPS

The objectives of the NIPDEP pilot projects were to provide district level personnel an opportunity to:

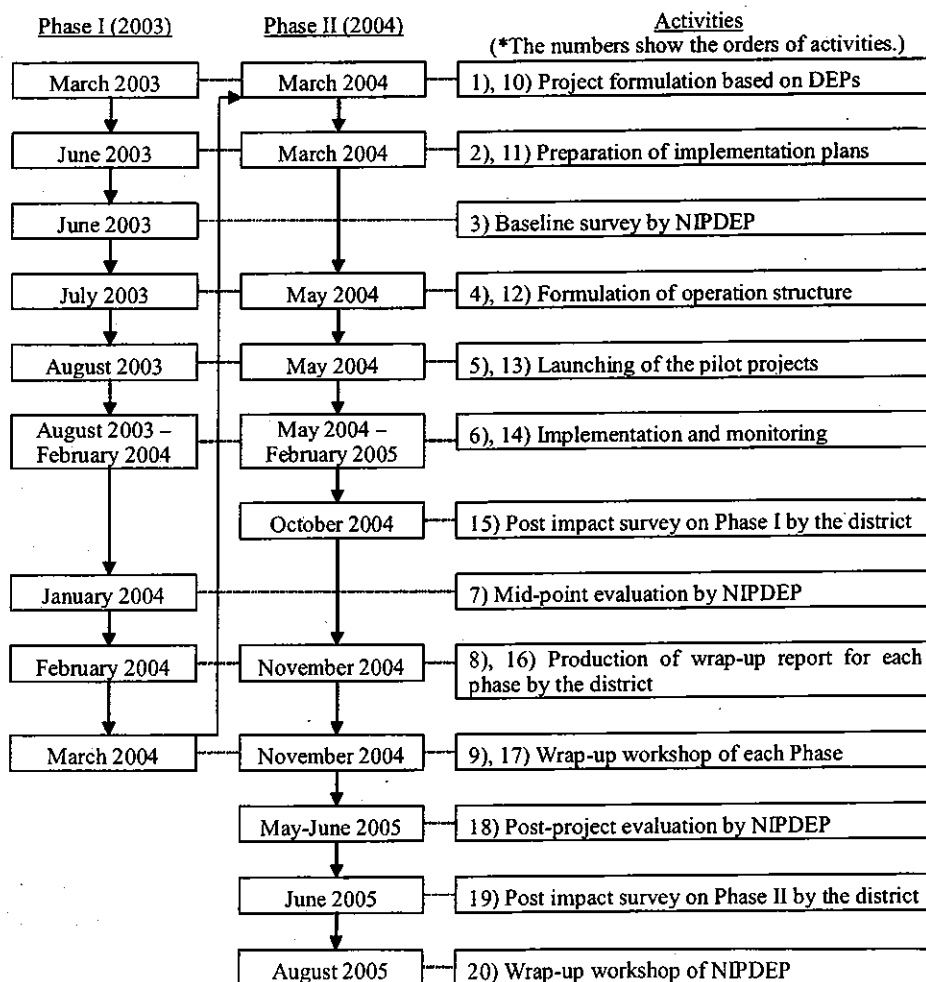
- (1) implement several improvement strategies identified in their DEPs;
- (2) learn from this effort how to manage resources to achieve objectives;
- (3) be accountable and transparent in project operations;
- (4) work with the community to give it a sense of ownership for their schools;
- (5) recognize the complexity of the improvement process; and,
- (6) reveal the extent to which the planning process and DEPs were realistic.

The primary target areas were the six pilot districts of Nkhata Bay, Ntchisi, Mchinji, Machinga, Thyolo and Nsanje. The secondary targets were the 27 non-pilot districts which were to receive training under NIPDEP to update their DEPs. 39 pilot projects were conducted in Phase I from June 2003 to February 2004 and 41 pilot projects were conducted in Phase II from May 2004 to February 2005. The list of pilot projects of Phase I and Phase II by district is attached in Appendix-2.

4.2 PLANNING OF PILOT PROJECTS

The implementation schedule of the NIPDEP pilot project is summarized as shown in Figure-6.

Figure-6: Schedule of the NIPDEP Pilot Project Implementation



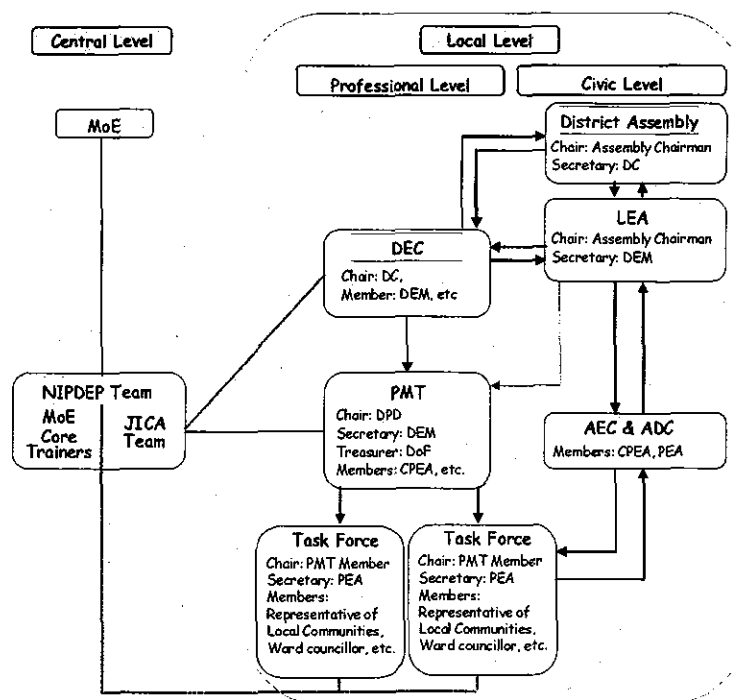
The DPTs that developed specific and detailed pilot project proposals to JICA were the DEMs, DPDs, DoFs, CPEAs, District Director of Public Works (DPWs), District Community Development Officer (DCDO), with Core Trainers in supportive roles. The DPTs were trained on how to prepare the matrices, as shown in Box-1, according to the NIPDEP Pilot Project Implementation Manual and the implementation plans were completed at the workshops.

Box-1: Matrices and Forms in Pilot Project Implementation Manual	
Matrix 1A:	PMT Pilot Project Operational Structure Plan
Matrix 1B:	Task Force Structure Plan
Matrix 1C:	Task Force Terms of Reference
Matrix 2:	Community Participation Action Plan
Matrix 3:	Pilot Project Activities Steps Timeline
Matrix 4:	Activity Budget
Matrix 5:	Monthly Operating Budget Estimate
Account Book:	Daily Log Forms
Monitoring Form A:	PMT Monthly Report
Monitoring Form B:	TF Monthly Report
Monitoring Form C:	Monitoring Visit Report

4.3 OPERATION STRUCTURE

The pilot project management structure was developed as shown in Figure-7 in order to insure that the structure was one that would result in the local communities feeling a sense of responsibility and ownership for results. Each set of district projects was to be overseen by a Project Management Team (PMT), a mix of local professional, political and community leaders. The PMT was technically created by the District Executive Committee (DEC), which had its authority from the DA. The PMTs related directly to the NIPDEP Team composed of the Core Trainers and the NIPDEP Team.

Figure-7: Operation Structure of the NIPDEP Pilot Project



Each pilot project in a district was to have a pilot project Task Force (TF) of approximately eight local persons with appropriate expertise appointed by the PMT, including selected appropriate PMT members. Based on the Phase I pilot project implementation, for Phase II, the structure was revised as that SMC chairpersons were to be added to the TFs in order to improve the linkage between the projects and supporting communities, especially with respect to construction projects.

4.4 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Budgeting for NIPDEP pilot projects was done along the line with activity steps identified in the implementation schedule of Matrix 3. It was an activity-based budget which the planning team had to calculate in Matrix 4 with the estimated costs of different items required for each activity with the unit price list provided by NIPDEP. Each pilot project was to show how local resources were to be mobilized to assist in the support of the projects. The teams had to complete a Monthly Operational Budget Estimate: Matrix 5 that detailed their monthly estimated costs to implement each activity or step. The Matrix 5 was needed in order to assure that project managers had their funds in time to carry out their activities or steps and stay on schedule.

NIPDEP tried to design its financial and reporting system to place financial planning and management at the local pilot district level in order to foster capacity development as part of decentralization. The PMT treasurers were expected to be the entity in the district NIPDEP structure to manage the district's project bank account and make disbursement to TFs on the basis of budgeted monthly amounts and expenditure reports. It had overall fund management responsibilities. The treasurer of the PMTs was also responsible for reviewing expenditures and receipts submitted monthly by TF treasurers before transmittal of PMT financial reports to the NIPDEP Team office in Lilongwe to receive the next month's allocations for TF activities.

Reporting for the pilot project activities was in two parts: 1) financial and 2) progress/monitoring. financial reporting is as described in the previous section. The monthly progress reports were compiled by the TF secretaries. A complete progress report was made up of monitoring reports and minutes of meetings. The TFs would submit these reports to the PMT. The PMT would then compile a monthly PMT report which would then be submitted to the NIPDEP Team office. A complete PMT monthly report had to contain complete financial and monitoring reports from all TFs and PMT. Any district that did not submit a complete report could not be funded for the next month's activities.

4.5 ACHIEVEMENT IN TRAINING AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN PROJECTS

Among the 39 pilot projects of Phase I, 17 projects (44%) were related to capacity building, while there were 14 out of 41 projects (34%) in Phase II. The ratio of the capacity building projects decreased from Phase I to Phase II; however, the capacity building projects were planned, implemented and monitored more carefully by PMTs, TFs and the NIPDEP Team to improve their quality and output in Phase II. An immediate output of INSET projects was that a large number of teachers were trained, which is summarized in Appendix-3. Some TFs selected their target groups from several zones out of the whole district; others selected several schools in all zones. Training manuals, handouts and other materials, such as posters and maps, were other important outputs. About a half of the TFs that implemented INSET courses could not supply enough training manuals due to technical and financial problems and limits.

Measuring the outcomes and impacts of the INSET was not an easy task. Five days training should not be expected to change teaching behaviors overnight; however, it was observed that the impact of

training on class management such as the preparation of lesson plans, time management, and uses of the syllabi was more evidently learned by comparison with the teaching of subject matter. In Nsanje, after the CDSS training, some teachers went back to their schools and prepared the lesson plans for the new term as trained in INSET, so that they now know preparation is necessary before each class. It was also observed in relation to the application of participatory methods, that some teachers became more interactive, giving pupils/students more opportunities to participate actively in classroom teaching and learning in the form of, for example, question-and-answer (Q&A) and brainstorming, group activities, etc. Some negative outcomes were also seen. The five-day INSET did not really help those unqualified. They could not really be expected to be capable of handling subject matter like science and mathematics in such a short time.

NIPDEP awareness programs included training to strengthen the SMCs and PTAs. An education awareness campaign was conducted in Machinga, training for gender awareness in Mchinji and an HIV/AIDS intervention campaign was conducted in Thyolo. The main objectives of the SMC and PTA training in Nkhata Bay and Ntchisi was to equip the PTA, SMCs and local communities with knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to contribute effectively towards school management.

The summary of the outputs and outcomes of the awareness programs is provided in Appendix-3. The immediate output of the awareness training was the provision of training for the various stakeholders as explained earlier. In the case of Nkhata Bay and Ntchisi, the TF produced a training manual for the PTAs and SMCs. They are now at the DEM's office a general guideline for the forthcoming awareness activities in the district. Poster, handouts and leaflets were made available by the gender awareness TF in Mchinji, too. Many of the SMCs were revived and members or related people recognized their role in education in their local communities. The role of pilot projects was to reactivate the existing committees to pursue their roles or to familiarize the stakeholders with important social issues. Some of the stakeholder groups already started to take actions. The real question, however, is whether the continuity or sustainability of such activities will be supported by the community.

4.6 ACHIEVEMENT IN PROCUREMENT PROJECTS

11 projects out of 39 NIPDEP pilot projects (28%) in Phase I, and 11 out of 41 (27%) projects in Phase II were procurement projects. Procured equipment were science kits, desks and chairs, textbooks and teachers guides, and office equipment. Main objectives and key issues for each procurement project are as shown on Appendix-4.

In general, project activities were implemented as they were originally planned. The process for site selection differed among TFs. In Phase II, assessment was improved and most of the TFs conducted the assessment by visiting potential sites. In order to have effective use of procured goods, schools that were really in need of the goods should have been assessed properly.

Community participation in procurement posed a challenge for the pilot projects. In an effort to instil community ownership of the desks, textbooks, science kits and office equipment supplied under these projects, the TFs held community sensitisation meetings before purchasing, and some after the delivery of these goods. These sensitisation meetings tried to let them know the roles of teachers, students and community on the security of goods, and importance of the goods for education betterment. At the same time, the meetings aimed to ask the communities to do fund raising for maintenance, provided consumables, and set up a Textbook Revolving Fund (TRF).

Trainings were held either purely focused on maintenance or were orientation programs on the use of the equipment, including maintenance as a topic. In order to make effective use of procured goods, NIPDEP recommended these trainings and the use of contingency funds remaining after all the scheduled activities were completed to utilise it for purchasing start-up consumables. As for the purchase of consumables for the office equipment procurement and science kit projects, it was expected that procured goods are not used once their consumable goods (papers, toners, etc) and replacement goods (broken beaker, tubes, etc) were finished. In order for this not to happen, TFs should have procured the start-up stocks from their contingency budgets; however, it was still necessary for division planners and district education managers to follow up to get financial support from the division, district, or a contribution from the communities.

The output of procurement projects throughout Phase I and Phase II are shown in Appendix-4. Other than the immediate outputs of procurements including the improvement in the access to the procured goods such as pupil/desk and pupil/textbook ratio, there were outcomes of Phase I procurement projects that were reported on the Impact Survey conducted by the DEM office staff members. The introduction of equipment had been misunderstood by parents as reducing their financial burden. It might be true in the short term, but in the long term, the cost of maintenance and sustenance should be taken seriously and planned in advance by both parents, communities, and district and division offices.

4.7 ACHIEVEMENT IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The NIPDEP construction projects followed the basic strategies to have: 1) reasonable and less expensive building costs for self-sustainability; 2) effective and efficient community participation within the project timeframe; 3) solid structures; 4) the capacity development for district officers; and 5) a regular and routine monitoring system.

In Phase I, the budget plan was prepared based on sample records from the pilot districts and so cost proposal limits were set by the NIPDEP Team. Some projects underestimated the amount of activity required to carry out construction and/or included only a limited contingency. As a consequence, some were forced to reduce the number of facilities or the amount of furniture purchased. The DPTs were advised by NIPDEP in Phase II plans to include a contingency of 10-15% of the estimated total project cost. The timelines for construction projects were very tight considering the numbers of construction sites and their scattered locations. Furthermore, it was the districts' first opportunity to lead and handle construction projects. It was critical for NIPDEP to complete the project within the project period.

In Phase I, in most cases, the DPTs chose faraway isolated project sites, which were very critical sites to address poor accessibility and no other donors or NGOs had taken care of those sites. Poor accessibility and distance between the project sites forced logistical challenges for contractors to procure materials to construct facilities and for TFs to monitor projects frequently. In addition, construction on scattered sites caused higher overhead costs. The transportation volumes were not enough to enjoy efficiencies of scale. In Phase II, the NIPDEP Team and district TF teams improved this process by conducting social and technical site surveys from March to May 2004. As a result distances among sites were taken into account, and therefore monitoring activity was done smoothly. This survey also contributed to the transparency and accountability of the site selection process.

Monitoring and supervision was done by the local consultant, TFs and the NIPDEP Team. Based on the lessons learned from Phase I, frequent monitoring was practiced in Phase II, which contributed to the reduction of problems, although the NIPDEP Team still encountered the same kinds or new types of problems.

Community participation was considered at the outset of a construction project, to be a critical mechanism for not just cost saving through their materials mobilization, but to instill in the supporting community a sense of ownership in the structures constructed. During actual construction, the communities participated by supplying locally available materials, such as bricks, sand and stones. In addition, the communities participated in the excavation of pits for latrines and molding of Soil Stabilized Blocks (SSBs) by volunteering their labor. At the early stages of the planning, without any technical survey, it is not efficient to design and implement a community participation plan. The detailed community participation plans should be prepared in the later stages. Generally, the communities showed willingness to participate in development works. Their availability was heavily dependent on each community's social calendar. Any activities which did not follow the community traditions could expect minimum participation. In addition, the communities needed technical advice to maintain the quality of materials.

Achievements of the construction projects of Phase I and Phase II were showed in Appendix-5. The delays of the construction projects during Phase I were mainly caused by lack of the technical skills of local contractors, insufficient monitoring by TFs and limited monitoring capacity of the NIPDEP Team. Compared with Phase I, in Phase II, more skilled district level contractors were selected and logistics were done by TFs, so there was improvement. Remaining works finished by January 2005.

4.8 KEY ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

- (1) ***Importance of Proper Programs Based on Needs Assessment:*** The TF members did not have the expertise often to conduct such survey like a needs assessment, so the training tended to be off-the shelf training programs used in other INSET training by MIE. This improved in Phase II by emphasizing needs assessment and providing assistance to TFs from the Communication Development Initiatives (CDI) to learn how to do needs assessment.
- (2) ***Timely Delivery or Hands-on Training on Delivery:*** The key issue in procurement was that some of the procurements, such as science kits, did not arrive on time and the training on the equipment was not always possible or well done.
- (3) ***Needs Assessment for Procurement:*** Needs should be assessed properly from the point of how the procurement will contribute to the betterment of education. Proper site surveys should be conducted to assess the environment. The survey should also assess the capacity of the target people, as to whether they can use the procured items comfortably and keep them safe, and the financial resources available from the communities at the target site, MoE and DAs.
- (4) ***Selection of Contractors and Suppliers:*** One of the key issues in construction was the question as to whether to use local contractors or national contractors outside of the district. At the same time, for selection of contractors and suppliers of materials, competitive tendering is essential. Selection should not only be based on the competitive price but also should take into consideration the capacity of the contractors to produce quality buildings and provide service and materials on time.
- (5) ***Site and Social Surveys:*** At the stage of project formulation, the importance of site and social surveys before site selection cannot be emphasized too much, for they contain important information such as availability and access to materials, community readiness, and land ownership, for smoother implementation and sustainability.
- (6) ***Importance of Regular Monitoring:*** Regular monitoring visits are the most effective way to follow the progress of projects. Based on the experience, it is recommended that districts should leave a similar layer of monitoring for implementing DEPs. Quality construction requires highly

technical expertise. It is recommended that monitoring costs should be incorporated at each district and division office budget as recurrent costs.

- (7) **Community Participation and Ownership:** It was learned that frequent monitoring and consensus building by the communities fostered participation by the communities from the early stages of the construction projects, even from the time of the site surveys. Scheduling and timing of work involving the communities is important to prevent possible disruption from social events and agricultural work in the community.
- (8) **Quality Control of Community Contribution:** Construction materials being mobilized by the communities such as bricks, sands, quarry stones, and water, the quality issue should be taken seriously and carried out according to pre-established commitments. Preferably, the district should build the capacity to judge the quality at community level.
- (9) **Timing of the Community Participation:** One interesting observation during implementation was the consequences of the delay in carrying out construction and the repercussions arising from early community mobilization. Thus a lesson here is that community mobilization in relation to the actual starting of a project should be carefully timed and should be done at the appropriate time of the year, not when the community is embarking on tending to their gardens.
- (10) **Coordination among Donor Projects:** The district should coordinate carefully when they have several donor projects coming in at the same time. Each may come to the same district with different ways to involve communities, and it may disturb the local market for construction materials. Thus, this is the area where coordination is needed at the top by MoE, but it is also important to be done by the DA, as well.
- (11) **Attitude for Allowance:** Allowance issues for those involved in the project activities kept coming up. The size and rules for the giving of allowances should be solved at the ministry level.
- (12) **Importance of Leadership:** In a number of cases, the leadership of the chairperson among the PMTs and TFs was, at times, lacking because these persons had too many activities and did not delegate work. However, all these happenings were taken as part of the learning curve in the leadership process, because different TFs and their PMTs ended up having teams that could be seen as having stronger leadership than when the projects started.
- (13) **Limited Teamwork Experience:** One major problem in the implementation of projects was the fact that the pilot district planning teams often had never worked together locally and some had no experience with planning or management of development projects. Most of the planners had little experience, as well, with working closely with the community to enlist its involvement and participation in project implementation.
- (14) **Commitment of the DEMs, PMTs, TFs and Communities:** Assignments of responsible personnel should consider not only their expertise but their commitment and other responsibilities. NIPDEP proposed the formation of PMTs and TFs with ideal memberships considering the positions at district level with strong links to the communities. Reduction of meal allowances for meetings and workshops incited more reluctance from some district personnel to participate in NIPDEP activities, opting to dedicate their time to higher paying activities.

CHAPTER V: NATIONAL DISTRICT EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PLANS (NDEP) TO SUPPORT DEPS MANAGEMENT

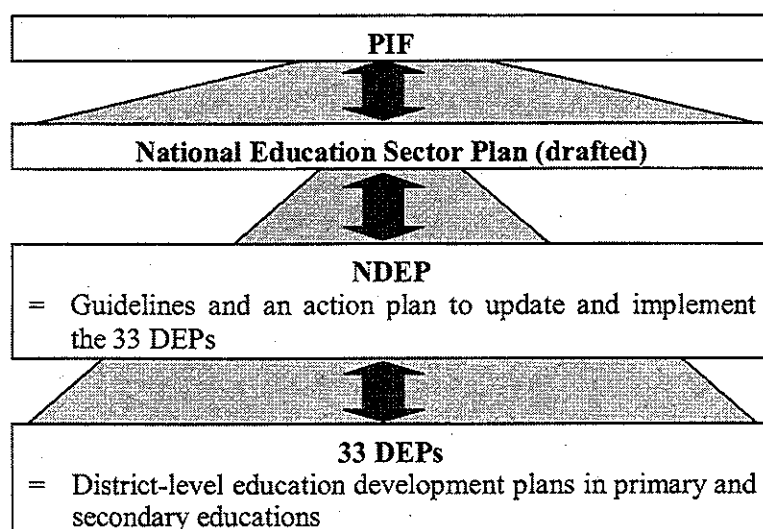
5.1 EXPECTED ROLES OF NDEP AND DEPS

The objectives of the NDEP are to:

- (1) contribute to the achievement of the national goals as stipulated in PIF and the National Education Sector Plan. Under PIF and the Sector Plan, the NDEP is also expected to promote the NDP, HIV/AIDS Strategy, MPRSP, MEGS, Gender Policy and the MDGs in education sector;
- (2) provide MoE HQs, divisions and the district officials with a concrete plan and guideline to update, implement, monitor and evaluate DEPs;
- (3) improve understanding and build capacity in MoE HQs to support the districts' updating and implementing of DEPs; and,
- (4) define more clearly the roles of MoE and the GoM in improvement and development of education in the districts and what educational development in the districts and which development actions and activities should be shared between GoM, MoE, international development partners, NGOs and the district and local communities.

The target sub-sectors of the DEPs and the NDEP are the primary and secondary education. The relationship among PIF, the National Education Sector Plan (drafted), NDEP, and the 33 DEPs is shown as in Figure-8.

Figure-8: PIF, National Education Sector Plan, NDEP and DEPs



5.2 APPROACH

The approach for NDEP development was based on consultations among the different key stakeholders with interest in education (civil societies, NGOs, international cooperation partners), other GoM departments, such as the Ministry for Economic Planning and Development (MEP&D), Ministry of Finance (MoF), MoLGRD, the MoE (relevant departments and the Department of Education Planning) and the NIPDEP Team. The consultations culminated into a position that could be taken by the GoM as a guide for NDEP strategy and its implementation in the light of DEPs and other strategies advanced by the MoE.

The following structure was used to support the NDEP activities:

- (1) The Steering Committee of NIPDEP was considered the key to directing, coordinating, monitoring and approving the development of the NDEP. Thus the overall responsibility fell to the Principal Secretary for Ministry of Education. The secretariat remained under the Directorate of Education Planning of MoE. The Steering Committee used existing terms of reference under NIPDEP but taking into account NDEP requirements,
- (2) Below the Steering Committee, there was a Working Group, which took care of technical issues related to NDEP preparation while the Steering Committee was a policy related body. Thus the working group's terms of reference had more to do with technical issues such as approving a proposed outline and subsequent resultant activities of the sub-groups, ensuring availability of relevant documentation and personnel for the formulation of the plan to the sub-groups,
- (3) There were three sub-groups, namely basic education, secondary education and planning, management and finance. These sub-groups had towards the end assembled sector statements and action plans into one document as a NDEP.

5.3 CONTENTS OF NDEP

The NDEP has the following chapters and contents:

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Overview of DEPs Management
- Chapter 3: Action by District and Support by MoE
- Chapter 4: Operation Structure
- Chapter 5: Implementation Schedule and Budget
- Chapter 6: Recommendations

The full document of NDEP is included in the Main Report of NIPDEP Final Report, in Appendix-IV.

5.4 KEY ISSUES FOR NDEP IMPLEMENTATION

- (1) The NDEP has a close relationship with the DEPs and the national policies and strategies such as PIF, National Education Sector Plan (drafted), NDP etc.; therefore, it should be reviewed and updated by MoE when these national policies and strategies are finalized and/or updated.
- (2) The Planning Department of MoE has played a role in leading a section in the preparation and implementation of the DEPs and the NDEP. In order not to eliminate the districts' potentials and to promote the education development activities at the district level, it is highly recommended that the Planning Department should have a stronger sense of a leadership role and ownership in the NDEP and DEP implementation and its updating.
- (3) When coordinating international development partners, the Planning Department must prepare a list of project achievements, outputs and future project plans for and in each district with those which MoE has completed and/or plans to implement.
- (4) Furthermore, there is a need to establish an effective and efficient mechanism to ratify DEPs so that no delays will hamper the development at district level.
- (5) For marketing DEPs, DEMs must identify possible funding sources at the local and national levels. Contributions from communities will be one of the most useful and effective resources for project implementation.

CHAPTER VI: POST PROJECT IMPACT SURVEY DONE BY PILOT DISTRICTS

To collect information about achievements, impacts and sustainability of the NIPDEP as well as its pilot projects from the different viewpoints as much as possible, three types of evaluation surveys were conducted by the different groups with the technical assistance of the Core Trainers and the NIPDEP Team, which were as follows:

- (1) "Post project impact survey," conducted by the education officers of the pilot districts; which also aimed at capacity development in evaluation of development projects.
- (2) "Post pilot project evaluation," conducted by the Center for Education Research and Training (CERT), the Center for Social Research (CSR) and Malawi Institute of Education (MIE).
- (3) Evaluation on "capacity development in NIPDEP," done by CDI.

Chapter VI summarizes the approaches and the findings of the (1) post project impact survey done by the pilot districts. The following two Chapters (VII and VIII) cover the (2) post pilot project evaluation and the (3) evaluation on capacity development in NIPDEP.

Additionally, a collection of anecdotes of the NIPDEP pilot projects, which includes unexpected impacts of the pilot projects, is shown in Appendix-6.

6.1 APPROACH, METHODOLOGY AND OPERATION STRUCTURE

The Survey covered at most 10 schools/TDCs as samples from the construction and procurement projects in each pilot district. The interviewer team basically consisted of DEM, CPEA or Primary Education Advisors (PEAs) from PMT/TFs. The interviewees were head teachers, deputies and/or PEAs at schools and the teacher development centers (TDCs).

The survey tool was the questionnaire which was prepared by the NIPDEP Team. It has two parts. Part 1 was an interview sheet. The interviewees were directed to rate the results of each intervention and the contents of the maintenance plan, from very poor (rated 1) to very good (rated 5) on scale of 5 point. Part 2 of the questionnaire was the Data Sheet. The interviewer first filled in the data as to conditions before and after the pilot projects from the school records and district EMIS data. Indicators included were: 1) number of pupils/students, 2) attendance rate, 3) number of teachers, 4) number of classroom block (permanent or temporary), 5) which school year students/pupils use the classroom blocks newly constructed by NIPDEP, 6) pupil/classroom ratio, 7) number of pit latrine for boys and girls, 8) number of teachers' houses (permanent or temporary), 9) availability of safe water etc.

In total, 52 out of 98 pilot project sites (schools and TDCs) were covered by the first impact survey, and 51 out of 95 pilot project sites were covered by the second impact survey. NIPDEP requested the DEMs report the result of the Impact Survey in the form of a report accompanied by the questionnaire forms collected.

6.2 FINDINGS OF IMPACT SURVEY

6.2.1 Achievement in the Construction Projects

In Nkhata Bay, construction projects contributed to the increase in the enrolment in some cases and reduced drop-outs. The teaching and learning environment was improved, especially for laboratory

construction. It increased the number of students taking sciences. The absenteeism rate has considerably reduced in most school block projects.

In Ntchisi, for teacher's house construction, the teacher to house ratio and the attendance rate improved, while the enrolment went down. The number of teachers increased at Kafamtandala with one teacher's house constructed from Phase I, but remained the same at Msinda where in total, three teachers' houses were built. As a result, the teacher/house ratio improved.

In Mchinji, indicators on enrolment increased at Lombwa and increased a little bit at Nthema. There was an inflow of pupils also from neighboring schools. This was assumed to be due to the improvement of the learning environment with two new classroom blocks and pit latrines, and the procurement of desks at each site. The number of teachers increased, as well, without the construction of teacher's houses.

In Machinga, there was a great variation in enrolment, some showed increases while others showed decreases in enrolment of either boys or girls in the various classes for different schools. In the case of borehole and pit latrine sites, the enrolment increased mainly in the lower classes. As for the attendance rate, it showed increases after the project. It might have been that the pupil's problems that caused low attendance were reduced by the NIPDEP pilot projects.

In Thyolo, the student enrolment for secondary schools registered a rise, except for January. At the primary schools, where the construction of pit latrines took place, the pit latrine to student ratio improved, but the pit latrines were not yet in use when the impact survey was conducted. That might be why the enrolment at Goliati Primary went down. A positive development was that the decline was higher for boys than girls, who were the main target of the pit latrine projects.

6.2.2 Achievement in the Procurement Projects

In Ntchisi, the number of desks increased thereby the student to desk ratio increased.

In Machinga, textbooks for pupils and teachers' guides were increased at school level; thereby improving the pupils to textbook ratio.

In Thyolo, the improvement of pupils to textbook ratio was large, for example from 108:1 to 20:1 at January CDSS in Mathematics, from 8:1 to 2:1 at Nyodola CDSS in English. The science kits in Thyolo enabled some schools to extend them to the senior classes, and some schools were able to introduce the subject for the first time. Practical lessons raised students' enthusiasm to learn science subjects. Teachers were motivated to teach science, and some parents were encouraging their wards to learn science because they were aware of the availability of science kits.

In Nsanje, the provision of textbooks for secondary schools and the training of the librarians made it possible for the pupils to benefit from this timely assistance. As a result of desks and chairs procurement, both primary and secondary school students, especially girls, were more comfortable at school using desks. Their uniforms were kept clean as compared to the time they were sitting on the floor. In Nsanje, the duplicating machines procured for TDCs were useful to both primary and secondary schools. The machines were ideal because they could be operated manually.

6.2.3 Impact of the Construction Projects

In Nkhata Bay, pit latrines improved school sanitation, resulting in improved health practices in schools. The supply of desks for the classroom blocks enhanced the joy of learning. Communities

made use of school blocks for other social occasions such as community activities, church services etc. With respect to PMT/TF, teamwork was enhanced. The laboratory improvements in science subjects should result in an increase in the number of pupils taking sciences.

In Ntchisi, at Msinda School, the teacher's houses added to the beauty to the school and teachers were more motivated to teach. The teachers were more punctual and available to the pupils most of the time as they resided at the school. School property care improved as the houses were used as storerooms for the school. The communities were motivated and the spirit of self-help was rekindled. The standards for education started showing improvement, as the inspection visits in June 2005 found Msinda School as one of the best schools. Communities which benefited from the knowledge acquired on the use of SSB machines were more demanding construction of teachers' houses.

In Mchinji, at Lombwa School, with the beautiful classrooms, teachers were willing to teach there, while in the past they would refuse to be transferred to such a school with obsolete classrooms. The teachers in the schools were better motivated because their teaching environment was improved. An increase in the number of classrooms and pit latrines gave hope that teaching and learning would be improved and the performance of pupils improved. Another effect in Mchinji brought about by the construction projects was the community cooperation to continue, when handling a project.

In Machinga, after the completion of the teacher's houses, teachers were relieved from traveling long distances. This boosted morale for the effective practice of teaching. Pit latrines contributed to the improved health of the population around the school, which was noted in the reduced cases of diarrhea. There was hope that the attendance rate would gradually normalize with the pit latrines, because the pupils who had been reluctant to go to school, due to problems of sanitation, were likely to come back to school, especially girls. The boreholes drilled at schools in Machinga were used by the schools and surrounding communities. It saved the time of teachers and pupils to search for water from a distance and minimized accidents cases of pupils scrambling to nearby water points.

In Thyolo, their only construction project was pit latrines at two schools. At the time of the survey, the latrines were not yet put in use. The attendance for girls was expected to improve and the nearby tea estate security guards would have a rest from chasing pupils trespassing to use their facilities. The new latrines encouraged the SMCs to embark on their own similar projects, especially at Mpinji Primary School, because there was a need to increase more permanent latrines of this type and the urinals for boys were needed.

6.2.4 Impact of the Procurement Projects

In Ntchisi, the desks were procured for CDSSs where there was an acute shortage. Most of the girls were not expected to drop out of school as they were now sitting at desks. Lab kits in Ntchisi were procured for CDSSs which had never had this equipment. It was a morale booster for the science teachers as they started teaching science with emphasis on practical learning. The students found lessons more interesting as they had hands on experience and their learning environment had improved. The textbooks bought from the contingency of TF 1 helped both professional staff at the office and teachers to upgrade their competencies.

In Machinga, pupils' textbooks and teachers guides, which were procured in CDSSs, were expected to create a healthy learning environment for pupils and enable the teachers to perform more effectively. The SMC and parents were relieved from expenditures for books, and the community had pride in the books that will benefit pupils. The textbooks also increased the confidence in teachers during their

instruction. Students were getting more information on their own since they had access to textbooks. For Machinga the fish pond income generation project, teachers, pupils, and households had the advantage of having available protein mainly from eggs and chickens. It was also a source of new funds that were used for school activities.

In Thyolo, typewriters for CDSS improved the communications between the community and the school, because letters were well-typed and easy to read. The quality of data produced and made available by schools was to be of higher quality, as well. Textbooks for secondary schools assisted teachers and pupils to learn; also, as pupils could have access to some of the reference books needed. Some CDSS complained that they were given a book, which they did not order.

In Nsanje, in the schools, which procured desks and chairs during Phase II for the examination cluster centers, it was anticipated that there would be no problems of sitting on the floor during examinations. In Nsanje, no CDSSs had lab kits before the coming of NIPDEP. Interest in science subjects was aroused in some pupils. The qualified teachers in the science subjects were lacking in the CDSSs. Some chemicals were still kept at the division office and had not reached the schools yet. Duplicating machines and typewriters at TDCs were felt very useful in the preparation of examinations.

6.2.5 Sustainability

In Nkhata Bay, deliberate efforts were put into capacity building of local communities for the sustainability of the projects. Project teams were trained in post project maintenance. Some borehole spare parts were purchased in advance for the repair of water sources by the communities. The DPT members continued monitoring and supervision activities after the NIPDEP pilot projects.

In Ntchisi, all secondary schools that benefited by receiving desks made arrangements to provide security for the property and use School Development Funds for maintenance of broken pieces of furniture. The communities around schools, where there was construction of teacher's houses, agreed to take care of the building and maintain the structure for house rents.

In Mchinji, in all the schools, where construction was done, the communities formulated plans for maintenance of their facilities. The interviewer observed that through the community contribution, the community's greater share of ownership of the project was nurtured. As they had been doing projects, community members planned to make financial contributions towards maintenance of the structures.

In Machinga, the second report stated that the spirit of ownership to sustain the assistance was high and the element of pride in the project was seen at the sites. Maintenance plans were already on the ground. Textbooks provided were to be maintained through the maintenance of records. For borehole, water point committees were set up and operational to enforce rules for care and security. For the fish pond project, fish pond committees and poultry committees were set up and poultry houses were cleaned daily. Teachers' house rents collected were being used for development activities in the school.

In Thyolo, 60% of the schools interviewed already developed maintenance plans for the facilities, while for the rest, the interviewees had no idea about maintenance, or they were not asked about it. However, there was a hope of sustainability in the procurement projects, because schools relied on the SMC to set up mechanisms for maintaining the facilities.

Nsanje appeared quite outstanding in the development of maintenance plans for procurement projects. For desks, schools sat down and formulated regulations to be followed on the usage and care of desks. They agreed that a desk should be maintained as soon as it showed signs of defects. Mpatsa Primary

School agreed to charge a fee for desks to be used by other people, for example, during weddings. Secondary schools had funds for maintenance through the development fund at their schools. For science kits, the TF made some social contracts with the schools. These schools were held responsible for replacing the broken items and used up chemicals. TFs made agreements with the schools that the books shall be maintained. All books were stamped to show which schools owned them. Parents agreed that a pupil who has lost a book should buy a new book to replace it. Torn books should be maintained by the school, using the general purpose fund (GPF) and TRF.

6.3 KEY ISSUES

- (1) In Mchinji, based on their experiences, they felt that the issues with the contractor had to be sorted out with urgency, so that completion of the projects could be done on schedule. Mchinji analyzed the fact that paying contractors at each stage upon certification by stakeholders could make the projects to reach completion.
- (2) In Nkhata Bay, the district members became more transparent in the procurement, because even community members were interested to know what had been purchased and why it had been purchased from a particular supplier. For the project management aspect, Ntchisi officers indicated that they had learned how to account for the cash received and the importance of meeting deadlines.
- (3) There were lessons drawn from Ntchisi and Thyolo DEMs on resource allocations. Both of them suggested that where there was such a big gap to fill, it was better to concentrate all the efforts and resources to solve problem rather than thinly spread resources over all problems at once.
- (4) The Thyolo DEM emphasized that communities must be made fully aware of the nature of their contributions towards a particular project, and that, where possible, communities must be trained on how they would accomplish some activities. Ntchisi also suggested that, for any project to be successful, it would be important to involve the stakeholders from planning to implementation.
- (5) The importance of continued monitoring and supervision was emphasized in the Nkhata Bay Report. They came to the conclusion that regular meetings are essential for the success of any project. With respect to monitoring, Ntchisi suggested that intensified monitoring during implementation is important. Thyolo had the idea that monitoring should be done by people who understand the nature of the activities taking place.
- (6) Nsanje also noted that the multi-sectoral approach in the implementation of the project assisted in completing projects on time. Machinga and Nkhata Bay claimed that working with officers from various departments had far reaching results in terms of expertise at various levels and disciplines.
- (7) Mchinji and Nsanje felt that the implementation structure had been very good for transparency and accountability. Mchinji emphasized that due to the participation of many stakeholders, the projects enabled them to learn how best projects could be implemented.
- (8) During the impact survey, there were rampant mistakes made on the same data sheet in calculating the gaps and ratios. All in all there was an improvement in the way they conducted the survey and their reporting from the first to the second survey. Therefore, in the future, it is expected that further guidance and training would boost their capacity even more in this area. If they have a chance in the future, it would be recommended that they go back to the same sites and check the same items to ensure sustainability.

CHAPTER VII: POST PILOT PROJECT EVALUATION BY NIPDEP TEAM

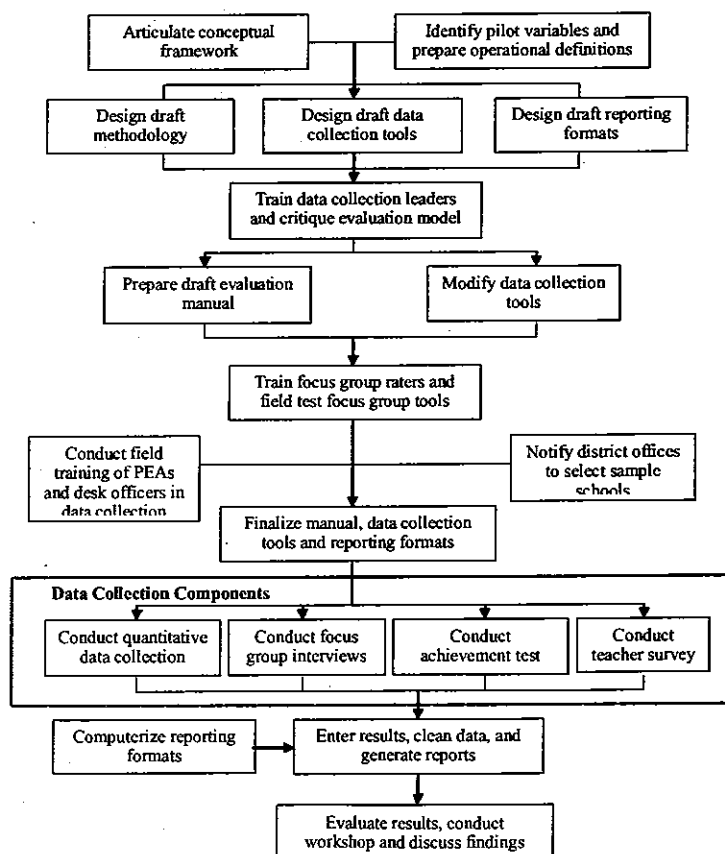
7.1 METHODOLOGY AND OPERATION STRUCTURE

A baseline study was undertaken in June of 2003 while a mid-point evaluation study was conducted in March 2004 except the achievement testing, which was conducted in June 2004 to carry it out in the same time of the year as the baseline. The post-project evaluation was conducted during June of 2005. The report of the post pilot project evaluation is included in the NIPDEP Reference Documents. The evaluation of the pilot projects spanned two full school years. The objectives of the evaluation were to:

- (1) Evaluate pilot input, process and outcome indicators at three points in time and determine which interventions seem to cause the greatest positive impact on improving the education system.
- (2) Evaluate pilot outputs to determine if all districts completed their planned pilot outputs and to account for problems in pilot implementation.

The project evaluation methodology was conceptualized as a two-tiered analysis examining results at district level and at school level. The NIPDEP Team, in support of CERT, contracted to implement the project evaluation, designed a flowchart for implementation as shown in Figure-9. The evaluation team was comprised of CERT and CSR staff (responsible for overall design and implementation) and Malawi Institute of Education (MIE) (responsible for development, administration and reporting of achievement scores). The Core Trainers and the district education officers were also included for their capacity development in data management and evaluation and the NIPDEP Team personnel provided technical support for them in the entire process.

Figure-9: Study Flowchart



The following tools were developed to collect data for this study.

- (1) **Survey Tools:** The *District Survey Form* was used to collect quantitative data from the 124 primary schools and 24 secondary schools that were participating in this study. These schools were sampled across the six districts. The *Master Survey Form* was to be used to transfer all quantitative and qualitative data for the subset of 24 primary schools and 12 secondary schools that were selected on the basis of the pilot project configuration.
- (2) **Focus Group Forms:** There were four different forms – 1) the *Student Focus Group Form*; 2) the *Teacher Focus Group Form*; 3) the *Education Manager Focus Group Form*; and 4) the *Community Focus Group Form*. The student, teacher and community forms were used for both primary and secondary school focus groups across the total sample of 36 schools. A total of 150 separate focus group interviews were conducted.
- (3) **Achievement Test:** A total of eight different achievement tests were prepared. *Mathematics* and *English Tests* were constructed for standards 4 and 6, and forms 1 and 3. Open ended tests were constructed based on the accepted curriculum in use in Malawi schools.
- (4) **Teacher Questionnaire:** An additional survey questionnaire was administered to all teachers of the 124 primary schools and 28 secondary schools. This questionnaire aimed at soliciting teacher's views about the teaching learning process.

7.2 FINDINGS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AT SCHOOL LEVEL

7.2.1 Enrolment

A close examination of the enrolment trends from the schools revealed the usual picture of diminishing enrolment figures as pupil's progress to higher standards. Girls' enrolment diminishes faster than that of boys, an indication that there are still serious problems of girl's education in Malawi primary schools.

7.2.2 Pupils to Classroom Ratio

Problems of classroom shortage have persisted in Mchinji, Machinga and Thyolo districts where over 100 pupils are in one class, which are shown in Figure-10. Nkhata Bay and Mchinji carried out the pilot projects of primary school block construction. The numbers of the school blocks constructed through the NIPDEP pilot were limited; however, benefited also from other classroom construction projects, the classroom to pupil ratio in Mchinji improved slowly. In Nkhata Bay, the ratio substantially improved from baseline to mid-point. As shown in Figure-11, the students to classroom ratio for the secondary schools were much better than the primary, however it might be caused by the low rate of the enrolment. Among the pilot districts, Ntchisi and Mchinji had the trend of the increase of the ratio. Mchinji had the ratio of 55.64:1 at the baseline and 100.25:1 at the post pilot evaluation.

Figure-10: Pupils to Classroom Ratio of the Primary Schools in the Pilot Districts

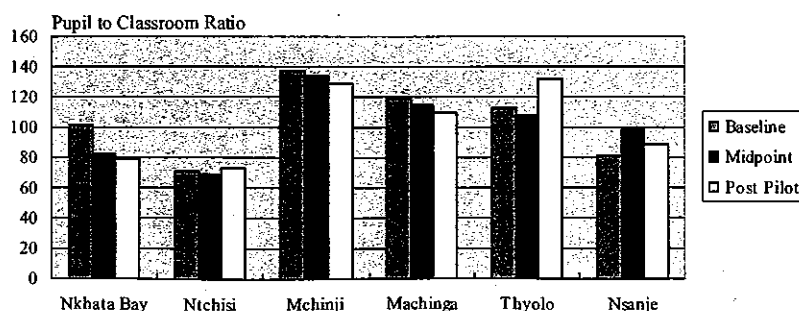
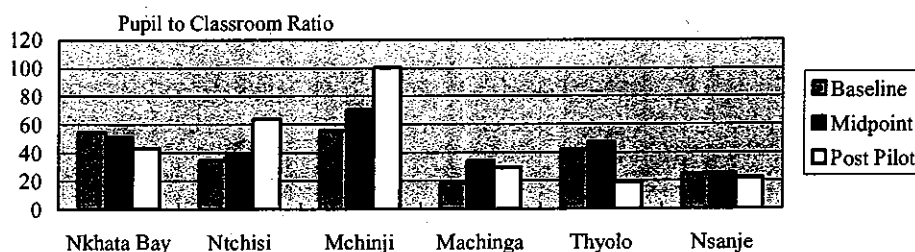


Figure-11: Students to Classroom Ratio of the Secondary Schools in the Pilot Districts



7.2.3 Safe Water Supply

Machinga, which showed the gradual decrease of the percentage of the primary schools with safe water (Table-4), has the borehole construction pilot projects. Mchinji showed the big decrease of the percentage from the mid-point to the post pilot. At the secondary school level, only Ntchisi had a 100% provision of water. The fact that the provision of safe drinking water was low and decreasing should be a worrying sign for the MoE given the negative effects.

Table-4: Change of Percentage of Primary Schools with Safe Water in the Pilot Districts

	Baseline (%)	Mid-point (%)	Post Pilot (%)
Nkhata Bay	52.38	57.14	61.90
Ntchisi	50.00	50.00	59.09
Mchinji	77.27	77.27	50.00
Machinga	52.94	52.94	47.06
Thyolo	65.38	57.69	46.15
Nsanje	58.82	70.59	70.59

7.2.4 Pupils to Latrine Ratio

Table-5 shows that in the primary schools, the provision of toilet facilities has greatly improved for both boys and girls. Nkhata-bay had the least pupils to latrine ratio seconded by Ntchisi. In the NIPDEP pilot projects, Nkhata Bay, Mchinji, Machinga and Thyolo conducted the latrine construction projects. Among them, Machinga still have the worst ratio of 76:1.

Table-5: Pupils to Latrine in the Primary Schools in the Pilot Districts

	Boys			Girls		
	Baseline	Mid-point	Post Pilot	Baseline	Mid-point	Post Pilot
Nkhata-Bay	54	47	26	53	44	25
Ntchisi	47	41	30	47	38	22
Mchinji	125	125	50	152	96	41
Machinga	154	141	79	143	138	76
Thyolo	99	91	47	100	97	45
Nsanje	89	113	70	77	74	43

7.2.5 Untrained Teachers

Generally, there have been decreases in the percentage of untrained teachers in both primary and secondary schools (Table-6). This might be an indication of improved teacher distribution. In both primary and secondary, the percentage of untrained teachers decreased at a faster rate in Mchinji

district. It should however be noted that there are more problems of teacher quality in the secondary schools essentially because most of the teachers there are primary school trained teachers.

Table-6: Percentage of Untrained Teachers of the Primary and Secondary Schools in the Pilot Districts

	Primary (%)			Secondary (%)		
	Baseline	Mid-point	Post Pilot	Baseline	Mid-point	Post Pilot
Nkhata Bay	23	17	19	100	76	62
Ntchisi	23	20	20	44	49	30
Mchinji	36	30	21	77	29	23
Machinga	38	27	26	50	61	48
Thyolo	29	28	23	66	69	44
Nsanje	32	30	29	91	90	42

In the NIPDEP, all pilot districts conducted the INSET project for the primary teachers except Nsanje, while three pilot districts, Machinga, Thyolo and Nsanje, conducted the INSET for the secondary teachers, mainly targeting CDSSs teachers. Nsanje had the bad percentage of 91% at the baseline and 90% at the mid-point, which drastically decreased to 42% at the post project evaluation, although we can not tell that this was only because of the NIPDEP-pilot projects.

7.2.6 Pupils to Desk Ratio

Nsanje conducted the desks/chairs procurement pilot projects both for the primary and for the secondary schools for two years. Ntchisi conducted one for the primary in Phase I and for the secondary in Phase II. Mchinji showed the worst pupils to desk ratio both for the primary and for the secondary among the pilot districts, although they carried out the desks/chairs procurement project for the secondary in Phase I, especially 9.0:1 for the primary at the post pilot (Table-7). In spite of Nsanje's efforts to conduct the desks/chairs procurement projects for two years, the pupils to desks ratio did not improve. It was said this "no improvement" was because more pupils from Mozambique had come to attend to the schools where new desks and chairs equipped across the boundary.

Table-7: Pupils to Desks Ratio of the Primary and Secondary Schools in the Pilot Districts

	Primary			Secondary		
	Baseline	Mid-point	Post Pilot	Baseline	Mid-point	Post Pilot
Nkhata Bay	1.8	2.8	2.8	0.6	0.5	0.5
Ntchisi	1.3	1.1	1.7	0.9	1.3	0.4
Mchinji	5.0	7.0	9.0	0.8	0.7	1.7
Machinga	1.8	2.8	2.8	0.6	0.5	0.5
Thyolo	3.7	4.9	4.2	0.8	0.7	0.7
Nsanje	1.9	2.6	2.3	0.4	0.2	0.5

7.2.7 Pupil Dropout Rate

At the primary school level, there were no major differences in terms of dropout at the first two points of the project evaluation; however at post pilot, there was a big decrease in Nsanje, and slight decreases in Machinga and Ntchisi (Table-8). Dropout rates increased in Mchinji and Thyolo districts. These figures are an indication of the low levels of efficiency in the schools of these pilot districts. At

the secondary school level, dropout rates decreased in all the districts except Mchinji; however, the dropout rate decreased to 0% in Mchinji at post project evaluation. Machinga, Ntchisi and Thyolo showed a steady decrease, while Nkhata Bay and Nsanje had worse rates. It should be noted that the unification of CSSs and CDSSs policy brought a lot of problems into Malawi's secondary education sector and the high dropout rates below are just an indication of such problems.

Table-8: Dropout Rates of the Primary and Secondary Schools in the Pilot Districts

	Primary (%)			Secondary (%)		
	Baseline	Mid-point	Post Pilot	Baseline	Mid-point	Post Pilot
Nkhata Bay	8.75	8.01	8.09	27.87	14.6	19.75
Ntchisi	16.94	15.27	14.3	21.25	5.13	4.4
Mchinji	10.79	11.01	13.86	7.12	8.42	0
Machinga	12.93	12.58	11.64	22.86	15.54	7.95
Thyolo	9.63	7.77	10.63	20.37	9.13	2.63
Nsanje	14.7	14.11	7.47	20.13	14.08	19.66

7.3 FINDINGS OF ACHIEVEMENT TEST

It was difficult to see the changes in the pupils' achievements due to their too low average scores (Appendix-7). In most of the pilot districts, the pupils' records did not increase at the three points of the evaluation. It might be because of the design and the level of the achievement tests, the primary pupils had better average scores in mathematics than in English, the secondary students were better in English than in mathematics. The average scores of the boys and the girls were quite similar in most of the pilot districts.

Five of the six pilot districts (Nkhata Bay, Ntchisi, Mchinji, Machinga and Thyolo) conducted the INSET projects for the primary teachers and five (Nkhata Bay, Mchinji, Machinga, Thyolo and Nsanje) conducted the ones for the secondary teachers during NIPDEP. The changes among the children were too small to see how they improved or worsened by the teaching and learning environment, for which some intervention was provided by NIPDEP. The extreme low rates of the pupils/students might be caused by their poor knowledge, by the design of the tests, or by the limited motivation of taking the tests, which need to be considered for the next phase.

In most of the districts, the teachers' scores increased from the baseline to the post pilot; except Machinga and Thyolo. Machinga did not have the records for Form 1 mathematics and English; however, some scores stayed at the same level or decreased from the mid-point to the post pilot. Thyolo had good scores in the primary, while the scores of the secondary teachers were low and did not increase. The teachers of the sample primary schools got the higher scores than the secondary teachers. In Ntchisi and Mchinji, even the secondary school teachers improved and good scores both in English and mathematics. Low scores of the secondary school teachers might reflect the poor quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms in CDSS.

It might be too bold to say but the INSET of NIPDEP might have contributed to some extent to the improvement of the teachers' knowledge in Nkhata Bay, Ntchisi and Mchinji when seeing the results of the achievement tests.

7.4 FINDINGS OF TEACHERS SURVEY

At the primary school level, there were fewer unqualified teachers compared to the secondary (Table-9). The number of unqualified teachers were decreasing in most of the pilot districts except in the primary schools in Nkhata Bay, however the total numbers of the teachers (total number of the qualified and unqualified teachers) decreased in most of the districts from the mid-point to the post-pilot, which might partly examined by the influence of the HIV/AIDS.

Table-9: Number of Qualified and Unqualified Teachers by Sex in the Pilot Districts

		Nkhata-Bay			Ntchisi			Mchinji			Machinga			Thyolo			Nsanje		
Primary		Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post
Male	Qualified	71	61	70	64	70	66	123	123	100	58	64	65	114	163	96	44	52	65
	Unqualified	14	17	80	15	17	8	34	26	12	19	13	47	64	52	37	15	22	37
Female	Qualified	15	22	38	17	24	23	54	69	63	40	21	29	28	66	58	12	21	22
	Unqualified	10	14	8	9	6	3	17	10	7	14	6	13	20	20	8	4	13	5
Total teacher	Qualified	86	83	108	81	94	89	177	192	163	98	85	94	142	229	154	56	73	87
	Unqualified	24	31	88	24	23	11	51	36	19	33	19	60	84	72	48	19	35	42
Secondary		Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post
Male	Qualified	3	2	2	17	4	4	19	15	3	2	19	4	8	17	23	13	13	7
	Unqualified	20	33	21	5	22	13	3	26	21	18	26	12	20	50	31	15	51	21
Female	Qualified	1	0	0	1	2	2	3	5	0	0	2	0	5	3	3	1	5	0
	Unqualified	2	4	1	2	4	2	1	3	5	6	10	0	8	12	7	2	5	1
Total teacher	Qualified	4	2	2	18	6	6	22	20	3	2	21	4	13	20	26	14	18	7
	Unqualified	22	37	22	7	26	15	4	29	26	24	36	13	28	62	38	17	56	22

The number of female teachers in secondary schools is very low. Some of the sampled districts like Machinga had not a single female teacher whether qualified or unqualified while Nkhata Bay, Mchinji and Nsanje districts registered no qualified female teacher during the post evaluation survey.

At both primary and secondary levels, more teachers indicated minimal use of lecture methods at the post evaluation than during the baseline and the mid-point surveys (Table-10). The use of question and answer was rated as the most used in teaching and learning among the teaching methods. In the post evaluation, group work and presentations came second followed by group projects.

Table-10: Frequency of Teaching/Learning Interaction Methods Used in the Classrooms

		Never			Rarely			Hard to Tell			Sometimes			Often			Always		
		Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post	Base	Mid	Post
Primary																			
Lecture		28.3	10.2	11.7	26.6	18.0	20.4	22.8	27.7	28.1	14.0	24.8	19.9	3.8	12.6	14.3	4.5	6.8	5.6
Q and A		0.5	1.0	---	0.7	0.5	3.1	2.5	4.8	4.7	12.9	14.8	14.1	21.3	33.5	31.4	62.2	45.5	46.6
Group Projects		24.5	13.8	13.6	12.1	24.1	12.5	17.7	13.3	23.4	22.0	26.6	27.2	15.4	18.2	14.1	8.2	3.9	9.2
Group Work		2.2	5.9	1.6	3.3	---	6.9	11.9	13.7	12.2	26.7	28.8	25.9	31.2	35.6	35.4	24.7	16.1	18.0
Education Visits		37.3	41.3	35.8	19.1	35.4	41.7	16.7	15.5	13.9	12.8	4.4	6.4	9.0	2.4	0.5	5.0	1.0	1.6
Retelling		7.6	12.1	13.1	15.1	24.2	16.8	21.5	31.9	20.4	30.1	23.2	33.0	18.8	6.8	10.5	7.0	1.9	6.3
Secondary																			
Lecture		8.9	25.9	25.8	22.6	27.8	25.9	25.0	20.6	23.4	26.2	16.8	15.5	9.5	6.0	4.7	7.7	2.8	4.7
Q and A		---	0.6	0.7	1.7	1.2	0.7	4.0	2.7	1.9	19.4	10.5	7.8	24.0	34.2	22.9	50.9	50.7	66.0
Group Projects		13.7	14.9	17.4	22.2	14.7	13.1	17.6	19.3	21.7	27.5	27.6	26.0	14.4	16.0	15.7	4.6	7.6	6.1
Group Work		1.2	1.4	1.4	6.4	2.7	3.7	18.7	11.2	7.5	28.7	27.5	19.6	30.4	34.2	31.1	14.6	23.0	36.7
Education Visits		41.6	33.8	37.9	25.9	22.0	28.2	12.7	21.7	15.6	10.8	11.4	11.1	7.8	3.6	5.7	1.2	1.5	1.4
Retelling		21.7	4.0	3.5	21.1	10.1	9.1	24.8	23.8	19.4	18.6	33.6	33.0	11.2	20.3	5.7	2.5	8.1	1.4

7.5 FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

The sample schools, pilot configuration and grouping for the focus group interview is shown in Tables -11 and -12. Participants in the focus groups were selected from the pilot school area as well as those schools designated as control. STD 4 and 6, Form 1 and 3 students and teachers were selected to participate in the focus groups while community members participating as members of the school committee or the PTA were selected. School level managers included anyone assigned to the TDC if attached to the pilot school, the head teacher and other assistant managers. The district level focus groups included CPEAs, cluster heads, the DEM and other district personnel.

Table-11: Primary Schools Selected for School-Level Evaluation

Pilot Configuration and Grouping	Urban Schools	Rural Schools
Group 6: Construction and data accuracy in-service	1. Nkhata Bay - Chikale 2. Mchinji - Lombwa	1. Nkhata Bay - Mlare 2. Mchinji - Sunama
Group 5: Teacher in-service and in-service for educational managers	1. Ntchisi - Kalinganya 2. Mchinji - Matuwamba	1. Ntchisi - Mtuwanjovu II 2. Nkhata Bay - Nkwali
Group 4: Public awareness, sanitation and in-service	1. Nkhata Bay - Bandawe 2. Thyolo - Luchenza	1. Thyolo - Konzalendo 2. Machinga - Kayuni
Group 3: Furniture and in-service	1. Nsanje - Chigumukire 2. Machinga - Chinduza	1. Ntchisi - Mtsiransembe 2. Thyolo - Mberenga
Group 2: Public awareness and sanitary constructions	1. Machinga - Liwonde 2. Mchinji - Bua	1. Machinga - Mikachu 2. Thyolo - Mpinji
Group 1: Schools with minimal participation.	1. Nsanje - Bangula 2. Nsanje - Nyamadzere	1. Ntchisi - Nyanga 2. Nsanje - Mtawira

Table-12: Secondary Schools Selected for School-Level Evaluation

Pilot Configuration and Grouping	CDSS	CSS
Group 6: School construction and classroom furniture	1. Nkhata Bay - Maula 2. Nkhata Bay - Tukombo	
Group 5: Instructional materials with teacher in-service and classroom furniture	1. Thyolo - Mtambanyama 2. Thyolo - Bvumbwe	
Group 4: Improvement in quality of data collection and reporting; and classroom furniture	1. Ntchisi - Mawiri 2. Mchinji - Bua	
Group 3: Science laboratories, or kits including supplies; classroom furniture	1. Machinga - Chinkwezule 2. Ntchisi - Kayoyo	
Group 2: CDSS with minimal interventions for managers	1. Nsanje - Mtowe 2. Nsanje - Magoti	
Group 1: CSS with no interventions		1. Machinga - Puteya 2. Mchinji - Ludzi Girls'

The focus group analyses examined processes and outcomes and addressed these indicators in two ways: 1) analysis of by districts for primary and secondary schools and 2) analysis by group for primary schools and for secondary schools. In this analysis group 1 is the control group and results will be compared to each of the five pilot groups. In all cases, the number of indicators that increased by one or more between baseline and post project were two times more than or as many as the number of decreases. This shows that managers perceive that the quality of their schools as measured by changes in processes has improved in many more ways than has decreased.

The number of indicators that were ranked as high average or above average (score of 3 or more in a range from 0 to 5) in all cases increased from baseline to post pilot (Nsanje = 7 to 11; Thyolo = 9 to 10; Mchinji = 4 to 13; Machinga = 6 to 13; and Ntchisi = 7 to 12). With N equaling 14, all managers

indicate that most of their school processes are performing at high average to above average level. Almost no indicators were ranked as zero at anytime.

INSET for teachers, head teachers and PEAs demonstrated the most erratic behavior. This is probably related to pilot activities assuming that target audiences received no INSET from other donors; therefore, the zero rating was used when no pilot activities were instituted for in service, and high rankings given by those where pilot activities included in service. One group of indicators with the most consistent increase is those indicators related to communication. In almost every case post pilot results showed above average communications across the system, when at baseline communication was considered average or below. It demonstrates a significant improvement in vertical linkages as measured by communication.

Use of DEPs also showed a substantial increase. In four cases, the indicator scores increased significantly to well above average. In one case the score remained the same at above average while in the final case the score fell from above average to high average; however, it is unclear how schools and other managers were using the DEPs. Teachers' use of data collection tools increased significantly in most cases to high average and above, which may account for why data accuracy scores all increased to high average and above. This may also relate to why DEP use is high in the four cases. For the most part, active school committees increased significantly to above average and much higher. Community engagement scores, however, were much more erratic. While some increased significantly, one decreased to zero which seems to be a significant piece of data and should be investigated further.

7.6 KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS OF POST PILOT PROJECT EVALUATION

- (1) Among the six pilot districts, only Nkhata Bay and Mchinji conducted the classroom block construction projects. Nkhata Bay had relatively good pupils to classroom ratio at the baseline and improved it at the post pilot. Mchinji had the worst ratio at the baseline and improved it a little at the post pilot, although the ratio of 128.28:1 was still high. When we consider the fact that Nkhata Bay and Mchinji were the two of the three districts among the six pilot districts, it may not be so unreasonable to say that there might have been some influence from NIPDEP to the improvement of the access to primary schools in Nkhata Bay and Mchinji.
- (2) From the same evaluation viewpoint mentioned above, when looking at the results of the achievement test, Nkhata Bay and Mchinji had steadily increased scores of the teachers from the baseline to the post pilot evaluation besides Ntchisi. Ntchisi conducted the INSET pilot project for primary and for the SMC in the NIPDEP pilot projects. Additionally, in Ntchisi, a large scale program of classroom construction has been carried out with financial assistance of Dfid. Therefore, when only judging from the teachers' scores of the achievement tests, as shown by Nkhata Bay, Mchinji and Ntchisi scores, it might be possible to say it is effective to improve teachers' motivation and teaching skills by the given inputs under NIPDEP.
- (3) The impact of the pilot projects to the district education achievements were difficult to measure; because the project scale were too small and the project sites were too scattered to produce any visible outputs and outcomes; and there were various projects being carried out by the international development partners and by the NGOs. If the purpose of the pilot projects was to measure the impact, the designing and the site selection should have been properly done.
- (4) This design was inappropriate for this pilot project model. Instead, a model should have been chosen which was compatible to the type of project where it was not possible to control for outside interferences. Often a case study approach would be used involving observations as the primary data collection technique.

CHAPTER VIII: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN NIPDEP

8.1 APPROACH: METHODOLOGY, SCHEDULE AND OPERATION STRUCTURE

One of the key objectives of NIPDEP was capacity building at all system levels. The direct target groups include 1) counterparts (officers of MoE headquarters); 2) Core Trainers (division planners); 3) DPTs of all of the 33 education districts; and 4) PMT and TF members of the six pilot districts. The logical flow of the capacity development in NIPDEP and the indicators to measure the capacity developed through NIPDEP are summarized in the logical framework in Table-13.

Table-13: Logical Framework of NIPDEP (as of August 2005)

Project Summary	Indicators	Data Source of Indicators	Important Conditions
<p>Long-term Goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qualitative and quantitative improvement of primary and secondary education in Malawi - Universal primary education and improved gender disparity (Both relate to PIF/MDGs goals) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Results of the pass rate of the national examination - Achievement level - Enrolment rate - Dropout rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National examination results - EMIS data - School census data at district level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MoE's strong ownership and commitment to DEPs and NDEP - Decentralization promoted under NDP.
<p>Mid-term Goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational improvements in the primary and secondary education sub-sectors are to be promoted following the DEPs and based on the local needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DEPs are recognized by the National Sector Plan and by related ministries, donors and communities - Use of DEPs and NDEP - No. of projects and outputs produced based on DEPs - Budget flow to the district education sector and use of the funds for improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment on capacity developed in NIPDEP - Baseline survey, mid-term and post-project evaluations - Post project impact survey by DEM office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational improvements and human resources development to be given priority under MPRSP and MEGS..
<p>NIPDEP Program Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity development of the district education officers in planning, implementing, monitoring, marketing and resource mobilization. - Develop and strengthen a mechanism in MoE and the division offices to support the districts in updating and implementing DEPs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of DEPs updated - District personnel capacity in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. data management b. updating/marketing of DEPs c. implementation, financial management and community mobilization in the NIPDEP pilot projects - MoE and division offices' capacity in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. financial and technical support for the districts in DEPs management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School census and the Education Management Information System (EMIS) data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Division planners and district personnel will not be replaced or move to other sectors more frequently
<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct DEP updating workshops with the officers of the 33 education districts - Implement NIPDEP pilot projects with the 6 pilot districts 	<p>Input (personnel, physical and financial resources):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steering and Technical Committees - Core Trainers - District personnel: DPT and PMT/TF members - Community members - NIPDEP Team 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education stakeholders' good understanding, collaboration and commitment

- Prepare NDEP	- Funds for the study and the pilot project implementation	
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The capacity building assessment is based on a self-evaluation questionnaire, which was administered to members of either the PMT or TF in the six pilot districts and to DPD, DEM, CPEA and DoF or their representatives in the non-pilot districts. The self-evaluation questionnaire survey was done three times; namely the preliminary, first follow-up and final follow-up surveys. The schedule of the survey is shown in Table-14:

Tabl-14: Schedule of the Self-Evaluation Questionnaire Survey

Surveys	Schedule	DEPs Workshops
1. Preliminary evaluation questionnaire survey	July-August 2004	Before and/or during the DEPs updating workshops
2. 1 st follow-up survey	October-November 2004	After the DEPs updating workshops
3. Final follow-up survey	May-June 2005	Impact survey in the end of NIPDEP

The significance of this evaluation was in:

- (1) Measuring the output and outcome of the capacity built by NIPDEP in and for the education sector at the district and division level; and,
- (2) Formulation of lessons learned and recommendations to improve the sustainability of the capacity built by NIPDEP and to strengthen future capacity building strategies and projects conducted by MoE and/or JICA and other donor agencies.

8.2 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN DEP UPDATING

The responses written in the evaluation forms for the DEPs updating workshops filled by the workshop participants can be summarized as follows:

- (1) A number of trainees stated that this training was applicable in their respective professions as DPD when preparing the DDP; whereas DEMs felt that the training was an eye opener in how they can initiate planning issues prior to involving the division planner and others.
- (2) An evaluation of the relevance and applicability of the workshop showed that in all cases when a workshop was done the participants order of response was between average and maximum. All participants felt that the workshops were useful and/or relevant to their work in general and to specific functions. Also, all participants recognized that the workshops raised their readiness and ability to update DEPs.
- (3) The training was not able to assist fully the participants to prepare their activity budgets with relative ease. The problem of budgeting should be seen in the light of time given for preparing activity budget during the training workshop in relation to determining the gap analysis and problem identification, because one or more issues resulted in taking more time to complete at the expense of other exercises.
- (4) The teams may have resorted to the use of particular individuals (DoF or their representatives) at the expense of the entire team members to minimize the loss of time. It was a reflection of the actual situation at work with respect to division of labour at both DA and DEM office.

On the basis of the aggregated results of the checklist for rating the updated DEP filled by the NIPDEP Team and Core Trainers during the 2nd DEP updating workshop (Table-15), rating for "Good" received 135 points, which was the highest among the 5 rating classes; followed by 105 points for "Average," 25 points for "Poor," and 19 points for "Very Good." It can be assumed that the entire process was a

success. However it should be noted that there were extremes and this was due to too much turnover of staff participants from the non-pilot districts.

The results of the checklist show that the trainees felt more comfortable when preparing the vision statement (5 points in “Very Good” and 17 points in “Good”) and the socio-economic profile and major educational achievement (2 points in “Very Good” and 17 points in “Good”). The logical flow of their DEPs was also enhanced (0 in “Very Good” and 16 points in “Good”), compared to the original DEPs, although there are some room which needs to be improved.

The clarity of the DEP text was also improved (2 points in “Very Good” and 15 points in “Good”), this was mainly because the trainees’ computer literacy increased and most of them could input and edit their DEP text by themselves. This was one of the great improvements from NSMMP to NIPDEP; however, more capacity should be developed in data input and management with basic computer software such as Word and Excel. The points for accuracy of budget plans, reality of implementation schedule, and understanding mobilization plan were still even among “Poor,” “Average,” and “Good.” Ability to handle/calculate data has also has some room for improvement.

Table-15: Aggregate Rating of Checklist of DEPs Revised During the 2nd Workshops

Content Area Presentation	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good
1. Vision statement	0	0	0	17	5
2. Socio-economic profile	0	0	3	17	2
3. Major educational achievement	0	1	12	8	2
4. Summarizing of stakeholder survey	0	2	8	9	3
5. Gap Analysis	0	0	10	11	1
6. Logical presentation of 4 and 5	0	2	9	10	1
7. Link of Chapters I to III	0	1	13	9	0
8. Accuracy of budget plans	1	4	13	3	1
9. Reality of implementation schedule	2	5	8	6	1
10. Understanding mobilization plan	1	7	8	6	0
11. Logical flow of DEP	0	0	6	16	0
12. Ability to handle/calculate data	0	3	10	8	1
13. Clarity of text	0	0	5	15	2
Aggregate rating	4	25	105	135	19

The results of the preliminary survey shows that 40.4% of the trainees from the non-pilot districts rated their skill of collection and handling of education data as “Good,” and 31.1% of them rated their skills of DEPs preparation and updating as “Good.” These numbers were increased to 45.9% and 44.8%, respectively, at the first follow-up survey, while they decreased to 28.2% and 32.5%, respectively, at the impact survey. On the contrary, they gave higher rating for their improved education services through preparing and having DEPs; 34.5% at the preliminary, 37.2% at the first follow-up, and 46.8% at the impact survey. This might tell that they have come to assess their own competence more properly after they updated DEPs, and they come to consider the DEPs in the more comprehensive context of the district education improvements. The percentage shows that their skills for marketing of the DEPs needs to be more improved.

8.3 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN PILOT PROJECTS

Based on the responses by a total of 81 PMT and 81 TF members from the six pilot districts of Machinga, Mchinji, Nkhata bay, Nsanje, Ntchisi and Thyolo, the overall results indicate that the PMT and TF members had improved greatly in general project management. More than half of the members stated that they were capable of handling issues in most of the activities necessary for project management. The results further showed that members gained capacities in data collection and management, planning, report preparation and facilitation and coordination. Apparently, this indicates that there is now capacity at district level to carry out project activities. Mchinji, Machinga and Thyolo district had exceptionally high capacity than the other three (Nkhata Bay, Ntchisi and Nsanje).

The above results also indicate that the district teams are capable of implementing projects and this should act as a basis for future projects. There was a small percentage who indicated poor performance and no acquisition of skills in all the listed areas. Overall results show that the capacity to understand and follow procurement procedures had improved in all districts, although specific areas of improvement were strongly observed in needs assessment in Machinga, Ntchisi and Mchinji: community mobilization in all districts. But improvement was marginal to poor in all six districts in selecting target schools and bidding.

The changes of the percentages in the results of the three questionnaire surveys were not clearly identified. They gave higher rating "Good" or "Greatly Improved" for collection and handling of education data, DEP preparation and updating, implementation of INSET and PMT/TF performance in implementation both at the 1st follow-up and at the final follow-up. This might not be a fair assessment; however, the results might imply their improved confidence and sense of ownership. They were relatively fair when they assessed their skills in marketing of DEPs and implementation of construction, which reflects their experience in NIPDEP.

In assessing INSET in relation to capacity building, it showed that although the PMT and TF members stated that it was well done, there were a number of things that required improvement. INSET was largely facilitated through the intervention of CDI. This organization, on behalf of the NIPDEP Team, assisted the districts to gain significant improvement. In the words of Mr. Khoropa (CPEA from Nsanje) the coming in of CDI changed things for the better because the key district personnel learnt much, gained confidence and were and are able to do a number of things with minimal intervention from outsiders. Furthermore, the projects and their training have made the districts aware of their internal resources.

8.4 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE ADMINISTRATION LEVEL

A high percentage of the PMT members said that supervision and coordination by the office of the DEM had greatly improved in their respective districts. Exceptional positive observations on improvements were noted in Mchinji and Thyolo. The capacity of the DEM's offices was found wanted by two percent of the PMT and TF members who responded to the questionnaire. Somehow such a negative observation implied that there was still room for improvement for the DEMs to be fully seen as changed and developed in management.

In terms of the flow of information to and from the DEMs office, PMT and TF members indicated that it was good. The highest percentage reported that this came from PMT members was 28.6 %. At the district level, Mchinji and Thyolo had high percentages of members saying that information flow to and from the DEMs office was good. Thus it can be construed that the district improved its capacity to

communicate properly with stakeholders, zones and schools and within the district. PEA supervision in the light of management was another area that was evaluated. Overall results from the PMT and TF members indicate that PEA supervision was good in terms of school supervision and PEA to teacher or vice versa correspondence. Amongst the six pilot districts, Ntchisi, Thyolo and Mchinji had a high percentage of capacity of PEA supervision. Mchinji could be an example of NIPDEP's capacity building effort to change and provide growth when DEPs exhibited showed their confidence and ability to salvage an abandon training of trainers during Phase II.

In terms of SMC involvement in school management, 16.3% of the TF members said the involvement of the SMCs in school management had greatly improved while another 43.9% said it was good. These results indicate that community members were taking part in running schools and in decision making. At district level, the highest percentage stating that SMC involvement was good came from Mchinji (10.2%), followed by Thyolo and Ntchisi with 9.2 % each. When these results are interpreted in terms of capacity building of SMCs on school management, it shows that the pilot projects had a positive affect.

At PMT and TF levels, overall results indicate that communication was good between stakeholders and districts (50%), zones and districts (48.0%) and district and MoE (45.9%). There were lower percentages of members, however, saying that communication was good between district and division levels and between DEM and DA level. These two areas are critical areas and need to be improved for future DEP implementation. At district level, a high percentage of the members indicated that communication was good between school and zone, zone and district and district and MoE.

8.5 KEY ISSUES

The following could be advanced as lessons learned in evaluating capacity building:

- (1) Capacity development has advance on two fronts, namely in theory and in practice if it is to leave a mark on the trainees. Otherwise practical learning without the backing it with theory can easily lead to frustration and disaster; likewise theory without practice can not make any difference on sense when training is offered to employees who are already working in a particular mode and fashion.
- (2) The use of Core Trainers and DPTs (mainly DEMs and DPDs) was practical because it minimized time wastage in a number of cases. It may be recognized that this system was not fully appreciated where the DEM and DPD were weak. Actually, it negatively affected progress in terms of time management.
- (3) It was observed that there was need for more time when it came to DEP preparation to allow districts to complete their first draft and offer better understanding of the issues such as activity budgeting since a number of the participants, mainly among the non-pilot districts, were new.
- (4) Continuity of the same personnel in reviewing and updating DEPs and implementing them is critical, if capacity building is to be fully realized. On the other hand, pilot districts showed that the period for familiarizing and enabling change to take hold must not be underestimated, because people have different levels of understanding, mainly when activities being pursued are new or not of the usual and obvious type.
- (5) Limiting trainees to those directly in district education activities reinforced the possibility of updating the content in the context of local needs and generating a sense of ownership of the DEPs. The continued pairing of DEM and DA self proved useful and fruitful because the two complemented each other in understanding education and financial issues.

- (6) Finally, training materials should address all key areas that will be practiced comprehensively and should be in formatted in readiness for being delivered as handouts. At the same time, trainers have to carefully study the training materials in advance to make a thorough presentation of the area covered. This is because, currently, many trainees rely on and feel comfortable with the written materials given in advance for reference, especially for adult learners.

CHAPTER IX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 CONCLUSION

The outputs and outcomes of NIPDEP are summarized, as shown in the Table-16, based on the findings and key issues described from Chapter I to Chapter V and the results and the lessons learned from the three evaluations reported in Chapters VI, VII and VIII:

Table-16: Evaluation Results of NIPDEP

Evaluation Viewpoints	Results		
(1) Achievements	<p>The expected outputs of NIPDEP were created and achieved as planned in the Scope of Work signed by MoE (MoEST at that time) and JICA in October 2002, although there is still room for the enhancement.</p> <p>1) Documents produced by NIPDEP were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 33 updated District Education Plans (DEPs) - National District Education Development Plans (NDEP) - DEPs Updating Manual - NIPDEP Pilot Project Implementation Manual - NIPDEP Post Pilot Project Evaluation Guidelines <p>2) Accomplishments in the area of capacity development were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nine Core Trainers trained in data management, planning, facilitation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting - approximately 140 members of the DPTs from the 33 education districts trained in updating and marketing of DEPs - approximately 500 members of the PMTs and TFs of the pilot districts trained in project implementation and monitoring <p>3) Outputs of the NIPDEP pilot projects are shown in the table below:</p>		
	Phase I (FY2003)	Phase II (FY2004)	Total
No. of teachers, SMCs and PTAs trained	3,330 teachers 970 SMC/PTA members	1,850 teachers 1,760 SMC/PTA members	5,180 teachers 2,730 SMC/PTA members
Classroom blocks constructed	8 blocks	7 blocks	15 blocks
Teacher houses constructed	13 houses	5 houses	18 houses
Science laboratories constructed	1 lab	1 lab	2 lab
Pit latrines constructed	20 latrines	19 latrines	39 latrines
Boreholes constructed	3 boreholes	2 boreholes	5 boreholes
Fish pond constructed	--	3 ponds	3 ponds
Textbooks procured	5,170 books	3,410 books	8,580 books
Desks and chairs procured	1,400 desks/chairs	1,490 desks/chairs	2,890 desks/chairs
Science kits procured	12 kits	15 kits	27 kits

Evaluation Viewpoints	Results
(2) Relevance	<p>Because of its objectives and approaches, NIPDEP was, is and will be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Relevant to the GoM's decentralization policy: NIPDEP trained the district officers in planning and project management, who will play a key role under the decentralization system, which contributes to the GoM's decentralization policy. 2) Respondent to Vision 2020, MEGS, MTEF, MPRSP, National HIV/AIDS Strategy and PIF: the DEPs and NDEPs were updated and prepared to fully contribute to the promotion of these national policies. 3) Relevant to the National Education Sector Plan (drafted): the Sector Plan draft included in its budget plan for the annual updating of the DEPs, which means the DEPs as officially accepted as district education plans. 4) Useful in promoting direct budget support programs, through its capacity building in planning and financial management at the district level.
(3) Impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The annual updating of DEPs will be accepted as a regular and routine task of MoE and the districts and routine funds will be provided, which mentioned in the budget plan of the draft of the National Education Sector Plan. 2) The DEPs have the latest education statistics in its achievement and problem analysis section, which can be function as useful primary and secondary education database for each district. 3) A system to update DEPs was understood by DEMs, although their competence and the DEPs quality need to be improved. 4) The district officers' sense of ownership of the DEPs increased through the two year updating workshops and the Marketing Fair. 5) The post pilot project evaluation including achievement tests and data collection did not document completely clear impacts, although the potentials and problems with the delivery of education services in the pilot districts were identified. 6) The scale of the pilot projects was too limited to influence substantially education achievements; however, the major achievements of the pilot districts by contrast with the whole national education sector in Malawi before and after NIPDEP are summarized as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The total enrolment in Malawi has increased by 5.2% from 3,009,623 in 2000 to 3,166,786 in 2003; however it is not catching up with the pace of the annual population growth rate of 3% (UNDP). - Most of the pass rates of the national examinations, PLSCE, JCE and MSCE, in the pilot districts increased from 2002 to 2004, although some of the pilot districts still have lower rates than the national average rate. - The pupil to classroom ratio of the pilot districts decreased except Nkhata Bay and Thyolo; Mchinji, Machinga and Thyolo have still higher rates than the PIF goal of 80:1. - The qualified teacher to pupil ratio was worse off in every district, one of the major causes is said to be an increased death rate from HIV/AIDS infection. 7) The capacity among the pilot district education officers was improved in data management, project planning, implementation, monitoring, and financial management, which also enhanced their confidence, competence and leadership in education improvement in their districts.

Evaluation Viewpoints	Results
	<p>8) During the pilot projects, community participation was promoted and community members worked together, which enhanced their sense of the ownership for projects and schools.</p> <p>9) The pilot projects included a few projects for gender sensitization, HIV/AIDS prevention and income generation to build a community foundation for improvement in the pilot districts, although the impact was limited.</p>
(4) Efficiency	<p>1) DEPs updating was carried out following the original schedule.</p> <p>2) National and district EMIS could not be used properly during the DEPs updating, because the latest database and/or statistics books were not ready.</p> <p>3) DPTs included the officers from the DAs, which improved the understanding, cooperation and the support for the DEPs from the DAs.</p> <p>4) Combinations or relationships among the pilot projects were not properly considered for the pilot project planning. The types of pilot projects were diversified and the sites were scattered around the districts; therefore, the impacts of pilot projects were diffused and difficult to identify.</p> <p>5) The INSET and procurement pilot projects were conducted following the original schedule, while the construction pilot projects were delayed. These delays affected the schedule for the monitoring and evaluation and report writing. The next phase needs to be designed based on the lessons learned from these projects.</p> <p>6) Construction sites of the pilot projects were often located in isolated areas and/or were dispersed widely in the districts, especially in the pilot project Phase I, where some were in extremely isolated locations, which negatively affected project supervision and monitoring and that quality control of the outputs.</p> <p>7) The implementation schedule for the preparation of the NDEP was modified, because the MoE officers did not actively participate in it. Eventually, the NIPDEP Team needed to prepare the first draft of the NDEP to further the process, which was not ideal.</p>
(5) Sustainability	<p>1) The capacity of DEMs in updating of DEPs was improved to some extent by NIPDEP. To enhance the sustainability of the DEPs updating, NIPDEP strengthened the Core Trainer team and prepared a DEPs Updating Manual. To improve the institutional memory, the skills and know-how that DEMs learned from NIPDEP should share with the other members in DEM's offices.</p> <p>2) The planning and implementation department of the MoE needs to be involved more actively in the DEPs updating and the NDEP preparation to strengthen the sustainability of the NIPDEP impact.</p> <p>3) The Planning Department of the MoE needs to show a stronger sense of ownership for NIPDEP and effect better donor coordination to avoid duplication of donor assistance and make better resource allocations.</p> <p>4) Core Trainers were not replaced during NIPDEP and were actively involved in project activities; they have become a stable group of facilitators and coordinators to further the NIPDEP activities.</p> <p>5) What the district personnel and division planners learned from the DEPs updating workshops needs to be routinely delivered to other district officers by the trainees, because there were many cases from year to year of replacements for division</p>

Evaluation Viewpoints	Results
	<p>planners and district officers.</p> <p>6) The budget flow from the MoE to the district under the decentralization policy needs to be fully implemented and enhanced by GoM in order to make full use of the NIPDEP outputs of improved professional capacity in project management and financial management in the pilot districts.</p>

9.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOE'S ENHANCEMENT OF DEPS AND NDEP

9.2.1 NDEP and the National Education Sector Plan (Drafted)

NIPDEP was highly conscious of the need to blend or meld its DEPs and NDEP with the National Education Sector Plan. NIPDEP tried to provide input into the development of the National Education Sector Plan as it is assumed and understood that NDEP would be an integral part of the National Sector Plan. The current draft of the National Education Sector Plan did recognize the annual updating of the DEPs, in the Plan's budget plan, as an official task of the district officers and provided the funds for the districts to carry it out. However, at the same time, NIPDEP was disappointed that there was no mention about the roles of the DEPs and/or the NDEP in its documents. If the MoE had a stronger sense of ownership for NIPDEP and were devoted to the promotion of the devolution policy, they should have clearly introduced the DEPs and the NDEP in its Sector Plan, according to the discussions between the MoE staff members and NIPDEP at the 5th Steering Committee held in February 2005.

It is highly requested by the NIPDEP Team that MoE should reflect and encompass its recommendations in any further drafting or editing of the final Sector Plan to clearly identify the DEPs in it and, the NDEP as the supporting system for the DEPs updating and management. This is critical and essential for the promotion of the decentralization policy in the education sector.

9.2.2 DEPs Usefulness and Sustainability

The production of DEPs has been clearly a major capacity building effort at the district level to train people of the appropriate education and assembly staffs to: 1) use stakeholders to identify needs; document those needs through the uses of local and national databases, 2) agree on development priorities; 3) develop improvement projects and strategies based on the priority needs; 4) carefully cost the projects; and 5) develop implementation schedules and identify monitoring responsibilities. It is recommended that the MoE continue to support and fully sustain the annual updating of DEPs, as shown in the budget plan of the draft of the National Education Sector Plan, through a process similar to those used in NIPDEP. The updating should be ostensibly directed and supported by the staff of the MoE Department of Education Planning with the help of division planners and key DEMs, who have demonstrated special competence in the managing and carrying out the process.

The Core Trainer team has the capacity to train and facilitate the district planners to update, implement and monitor the DEPs and they can use a set of the NIPDEP guideline and manuals: such as NDEP, DEPs Updating Manual, the NIPDEP Pilot Project Implementation Manual and NIPDEP Post Pilot Project Evaluation Guidelines. These capacity and manuals should be maintained and updated as useful institutional memory by Planning Department of MoE. It is suggested that MoE strengthen the updating, marketing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of DEPs with continuing collaboration of JICA. The Planning Department of MoE should use the DEPs updating and marketing

workshops as a useful platform to discuss educational development needs with the districts, international development partners and NGOs and to coordinate their resources.

9.2.3 Leadership and Ownership of Educational Development

The presence of key leaders in development is obviously critical to success in meeting goals and objectives. It was significant, also, that NIPDEP training provided many persons lacking such skills and at the outset, certain leadership skills, NIPDEP training activities required leaders to learn how to plan and implement projects. The one issue, however, that will probably never cease to be a problem, is the rapid turnover and deployment changes of DEMs and supporting persons. The lack of continuity of the key players at the district level in the delivery of NIPDEP initiatives and projects was a major problem. For future education projects, the MoE and the GoM must be aware of the turnover problem and allow for continued training to keep those relied on most at effective levels of participation.

It is recommended that future projects and the MoE consciously establish a way to systematically identify potential leaders for development work and transmit these impressions, formally or informally, to those making personnel decisions at the GoM or district levels as to appointments, redeployments, advancements or into key development roles at the district level or for special training opportunities in-country or abroad. Leadership and management training, using learn-by-doing techniques, should be a key element in the planning of future projects, emphasizing leadership enhancement at the district and school levels. Although there may be reluctance to make local people responsible for development activities, the placement of activities within localities should be routine. Material and moral support should be given to those in such roles to help them grow in their leadership and managerial competencies. Future projects must not become top down, but remain bottom-up relying on local leaders for planning, management and evaluation.

9.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW PROJECT AFTER NIPDEP

9.3.1 DEPs Updating and Decentralization

It is recommended that a new project after NIPDEP be designed to continue to emphasize capacity building activities for the key and development project related personnel at the district and division levels. This effort should continue to be done through training programs coupled with the continuation of the responsibility of these persons to produce updated DEPs and have the major responsibility for managing, monitoring, evaluating and marketing development projects. In the new project, the roles and the responsibilities, in the devolved system of the DEM offices, the DAs and the secondary schools, as cost centers, should be clarified.

The DEPs updating workshop should spend more time; 10 days instead of the current 5-day workshop. If it is possible, the next project should conduct a remedial one-day workshop prior to bringing the full team together for an updating workshop for those at district who are new to their positions or have no familiarity with the DEPs and the updating process. It should be recommended that the updating team have at least one member capable of basic keyboarding skills, word processing and Excel. After the DEPs are drafted, it might be helpful for the DPTs to have a meeting with the Planning Department of MoE to introduce their priority strategies and projects and to have a consultation for marketing and fund raising with them. It might be more useful that the next project gives more attention to the marketing and the fund raising for the DEPs to make the DEP updating more practical and attractive for the district officers, the stakeholders in the communities, the international development partners,

NGOs and civil societies to strengthen the outputs, DEM's ownership and donors' interest, of the DEP Marketing Fair in August 2005.

9.3.2 Pilot Project Planning, Implementation and Monitoring

The new project after NIPDEP will conduct educational development projects as NIPDEP implemented the pilot projects. The purpose of implementing these educational development projects in the next project is to enhance the capacity of the district officers in project planning, implementation, community mobilization, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation. The development projects might include classroom block construction, INSET, community awareness and procurement. When planning, it is needed to consider a comprehensive approach through the combination of the various types of projects to produce more substantial outputs and outcomes than NIPDEP. Monitoring and evaluation is important component of the project management. To improve the quality of the project implementation, it is necessary to strengthen the monitoring system, especially in the construction projects.

In the next project, it is suggested that educational development projects will be implemented in at most three districts chosen from the 33 education districts; three districts might be appropriate for effective monitoring to improve the project implementation process and to enhance the quality of the project outputs based on the lessons learned from NIPDEP. To compare the input and the output of the development projects by the post evaluation, it might be useful to choose three districts including one district from the NIPDEP pilot districts, one from the pilot districts of SMASSE or any other donor projects, and one from the districts which have only limited donor inputs.

9.3.3 Pilot Project Implementation: INSET and Awareness Campaigns

It is recommended that the districts, MoE and MIE, through, perhaps, a special TF, re-examine the delivery of all INSET. The TF should develop, design and disseminate a set of guidelines to correct project delivery management and teaching and learning deficiencies identified through the NIPDEP project and other similar projects and administer a district by district assessment of training needs using a common or standard process recommended by the TF.

The MoE, as a routine responsibility, should annually, using a standard process, district by district, assess the INSET needs for teachers, managers and community support groups, such as members of SMCs. The assessment results would be shared with the DEMs for them to have as an annual systematic picture of the training needs in their district and those nearby. From this information, they would draw up a list of potential training programs in their district for the year and indicate the size and type of programs required, justifications, locations within the district for such training, potential sources of support for the program and a tentative indication of who will deliver it. The list would be provided, also, to the division offices, Ministry and, perhaps, MIE, so that they could be helpful in matching training with available resources.

The DEMs with the help of CPEAs would be responsible for finding the resources to conduct the trainings, plan for them, organize and complete them according to schedule. The Core Trainers would be responsible for providing coordination where appropriate for cooperation among districts in the delivery of training programs with similar objectives and target groups. The DEMs would be responsible for conducting evaluations of each program and for organizing and budgeting for follow-up evaluations of each training program to assess the impact of the training on the performance of participants in their work place. It should be considered, by the next project after NIPDEP, that

using the DEPs to identify INSET projects and to decide the contents and targets. This will contribute to shifting of the INSET from a supply-side approach to a demand-side approach.

9.3.4 Pilot Project Implementation: Procurement

Procurement was involved with construction projects, and there were significant NIPDEP procurements for desks, textbooks at secondary level, science kits, office machines, such as copiers, computers and other equipment. It is recommended that the districts be provided by the MoE or other appropriate agencies assistance in assessing carefully and systematically procurement needs for their routine administrative needs and for development projects, so that qualitative standards are met for purchased equipment and material and maintenance reinforced.

It would be helpful for the MoE or appropriate GoM agencies to recommend standard procurement contracts and tendering or bidding procedures for the districts to use to ensure that their purchases of goods and services are protected and the money spent is well-targeted, implemented at the lowest cost possible for high cost items, distribution is equitable within a district and follow-up evaluation is conducted. If there are standard forms and procedures already in existence, then the Ministry should make sure that all DEMs have them and that appropriate persons in the district assemblies have them, as well. If training in the use of them is needed, the districts should help organize with the division offices such training. Under the next project, it might be useful to develop a procurement manual, including forms and standards.

9.3.5 Pilot Project Implementation: Construction

Construction was the major thrust of the pilot project implementation and very much the most complicated part of the NIPDEP effort. The issue of community participation and mobilization was most significant in construction projects and, in fact, required the inculcation a local sense of ownership. GoM and MoE construction projects assisted by international development partners or NGOs should be thoroughly familiar with the lessons learned in NIPDEP and to:

- (1) institute a more thorough and required needs assessment before determining a site or a proposal that would include more accurate demographic data regarding the community and school population to be targeted (using EMIS or school mapping), an assessment of community resources available for mobilization, and a more accurate assessment of community commitment to assisting with the project;
- (2) institute a systematic and regular liaison with other donor partners in the district as to proposed sites, their sources of building materials and labor and other matters which must be coordinated so that there is no costly and needless duplication;
- (3) produce more careful assessments of geographic and geological potential obstacles to a site's selection to avoid overruns on costs or to change sites after construction may have begun;
- (4) develop better district level intra-communications with ground rules between TFs, contractors, outside supervisors, community leaders and all those involved in or have an interest in the construction;
- (5) re-examine building specifications to insure that they are clear and simple enough for local and outside contractors to understand and execute them in order to insure that final construction meets standards and the work does not have to be redone after inspection; and
- (6) emphasize those involved in DEP development and in proposal writing to be realistic about the

number of projects that can be managed in the JICA time frame, so that projects can be done to high standards and on time.

9.3.6 Importance of Comprehensive Approaches in Education and with Other Sectors

Collaboration with the other sectors are sometimes difficult because extra procedures are needed to work with other ministries; however, more interest from the communities and greater impact of the projects should be expected based on the experience of the NIPDEP pilot projects. To address the educational improvement problems, a comprehensive approach is essential to improve the readiness of children and the parents' and guardians' awareness. At the same time, it is also important to address poverty in the communities to increase access to school and to make the curriculum more practical such as introducing pre vocational subjects.

Safe water supply, agriculture training in school gardens, school health and sanitation, rural electrification, HIV/AIDS prevention are the possible options of the component of multi-sectoral projects for educational development and community empowerment. It is necessary to consider these multi-sectoral projects when updating the DEPs in the next project after NIPDEP. In addition, the next project should formally invite more agencies related to education development to the Steering Committee and/or the Technical Committee, to promote smoothly collaborative works for the pilot projects by asking them to join NIPDEP at the project formulation workshop.

9.3.7 Coordination and Collaboration with International Development Partners and NGOs

To maximize the outputs of the limited resources allocation in the country, it is necessary for MoE to coordinate the interventions of the international development partners and NGOs. The MoE was equipped with the PIF, the National Education Sector Plan, NDEP and DEPs as a policy and guidelines to discuss with donors the coordination of their activities and inputs. More collaborative work should be included in the next phase of NIPDEP; such as EMIS and school census improvement, DEPs updating and marketing, pilot project implementation, capacity development of the MoE and the education officers, and the monitoring and evaluation of programs and/or projects.

The DEPs Marketing Fair at the national level provided a good example of setting up a platform for effective coordination among international development partners and NGOs with the leadership of MoE as well as with the bottom-up approach from the DEM's offices. MoE, in collaboration with the JICA-assisted new project, need to utilize and expand this useful opportunities to disseminate the DEPs and to mobilize and coordinate resources from the donors and NGOs.

9.3.8 Monitoring and Evaluation of DEPs and Development Projects

Evaluation is an important tool to improve the project activities and outputs as well as for project sustainability. Therefore, the next project after NIPDEP should have an expert on monitoring and evaluation in the education sector, who can join the project occasionally and continually at the very beginning. He or she can contribute the proper designing of the pilot projects planning and the monitoring and evaluation activities, assess the capacity locally to do the research and monitor research outputs at each stage.

MoE has set up a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit under the Planning Department. Under the guidance of the MoE Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Core Trainers and the local specialists (education, construction, facilitation and monitoring), the educational development projects of the next project

after NIPDEP should be monitored and evaluated, based on the NIPDEP experience, by the members of the DEM's offices and DAs for their capacity development as well as by the third party to assess the impact and to improve the transparency of the development projects. At the same time, it is recommended that the process, achievements and impact of the DEPs, NDEP and the National Education Sector Plan are to be assessed by the MoE Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and the Core Trainers. The process and achievements of the DEPs can be evaluated, also, by the DEMs and other DPT members at the annual DEP updating workshop to obtain useful lessons learned and to update DEPs efficiently.