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Youth and skills: Putting education to work

Alternative approaches to education provision for out-of-school youth in Malawi

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Alternative approaches to education provision for out-of-school youth in Malawi

The case of Complementary Basic Education

Background paper for the 2012 UNESCO Global Monitoring Report

Catherine M. Jere¹

Introduction

Young people in Malawi face many challenges. Primary education is struggling with poor internal efficiency, low quality and poor educational outcomes. Access to post-primary education is limited and highly selective. The majority of young people who exit the formal education system dropout in the primary cycle, mainly for reasons related to poverty and other forms of marginalization, such as the impact of HIV/AIDS (Kadzamira and Rose, 2003, Moleni, 2008). Only around a tenth enter the economic mainstream, many more depend on subsistence farming or informal sector activities for their survival (Kadzamira and Nell, 2004). Few out-of-school youth have had access to technical, vocational or entrepreneurial training, or the chance to develop key skills to support and sustain livelihoods in the country's predominantly rural-based economies.

Until recently education and skills development for out-of-school youth was given scant attention at the national level, falling under the remit of adult literacy education or youth programmes (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2008). However, in response to growing concerns about the ability to meet Education for All (EFA) targets and to support poverty alleviation strategies, the Malawi government now acknowledges the need for alternative approaches to basic education in order to cater for out-of-school children and youth (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2008b). In 2006, the Complementary Basic Education (CBE) programme was launched in Malawi, first piloted and then expanded across several rural districts in Malawi. Initially heavily promoted and supported by donor agencies, CBE has since been fully integrated into the country's current National Education Sector Plan (NESP), with the expectation that it will be rolled nationally from 2012. Extensive documentation of the development, piloting and formative evaluation of the CBE programme provides insight into the potential of non-formal, community-based initiatives to offer a 'second-chance' education to out-of-school children and youth. CBE also introduces an innovative, accelerated curriculum that provides a framework not just for the delivery of basic education, but for a range of practical skills to improve livelihoods; a shift from the more traditional, high-cost formal technical and vocational training to more holistic, contextualized skills development relevant to learners' needs: a conceptual and practical shift advocated by commentators as a means to address skills shortages and poverty reduction amongst vulnerable groups (World Bank, 2009, Bennell, 1999).

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This paper presents an overview and analysis of the role of CBE in educational provision for out-of-school youth. In doing so, it focuses on the expectations, participation and outcomes of older learners, as well as the challenges faced in the delivery of curriculum content and practical pre-vocational skills training in light of the differing needs of children and youth. As such, it explores the interface between basic education and skills development and reflects on lessons to be learnt with regard to the design, implementation and mainstreaming of complementary and non-formal education programmes.

Youth in Malawi

Context

Malawi is a small, landlocked country in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with a population of just over 13 million. It has limited natural resources, a very small industrial base and an economy highly dependent on agriculture, predominantly subsistence farming. Although the urban population is increasing, the overall pattern of urbanisation has changed little in the last decade, with approximately 85 percent of the population located in rural areas (National Statistics Office Malawi, 2008). Malawi has a young population. The 2008 Population and Housing Census reports the median age of the population as just 17 years, with over half of the population (54%) as 18 years of age or younger (National Statistics Office Malawi, 2009).

Malawi is currently ranked 153 out of 169 in the Human Development Index (HDI), with 39 percent of the population categorised as 'poor' and a further 15 percent as 'ultra-poor.' Much of the poverty in Malawi is located in rural areas, with the proportion of poor and ultra-poor in rural settings estimated at 43 percent and 17 percent respectively, compared to just 14 percent and 3 percent in urban centres (National Statistics Office Malawi, 2009). Despite some notable improvements in recent years, poor health and social indicators continue to characterise poverty in the country: low literacy levels, high infant and under-five mortality rates, and a life expectancy at birth of 54 years² (NSO, 2009). The country has also been severely affected by the legacy of HIV and AIDS. Although nationally the HIV prevalence in adults (15 to 49 years) has stabilised, it remains high, at approximately 11 percent³. Prevalence rates in urban centres are twice that in rural areas (National Statistical Office and ICF Macro, 2011). It is estimated that there are around 110,000 new infections annually, with at least half of these occurring amongst young people aged 15 to 24 (UNGASS, 2010). HIV prevalence in this age group is estimated at 5.2 percent amongst girls and 1.9 percent amongst boys; girls three times more likely to be infected⁴ (National Statistical Office and ICF Macro, 2011). The chances of being an orphan increase with age and almost a third of young people aged 15 to 17 years (30.9%) are considered to be

² Although low, life expectancy has increased, up from 37.5 years reported in the 2004 DHS Malawi. Likely reasons suggested for this increase include a reduction in under-five and infant mortality rates and widespread access to anti-retroviral drugs.

³ Adult HIV prevalence decreased slightly between the 2004 and 2010 MDHS, from 12 to 11 percent, although this was not statistically significant.

⁴ For urban youth, the prevalence rate rises to 11.2% of girls and 3.7% of boys. One suggestion for higher rates amongst females in both rural and urban areas is the occurrence of transactional sexual relationships between young women and older men (UNGASS, 2010).

orphaned or vulnerable (National Statistical Office and ICF Macro, 2011), often requiring them to shoulder adult responsibilities and putting their continued education at risk.

Formal Education It is difficult to estimate the proportion of out-of-school children and youth in Malawi due to inconsistencies between population data and government EMIS data (Kadzamira and Nell, 2004). However, according to the 2008 census, only two-thirds (67.8%) of children and young people below 18 years were enrolled in formal education (National Statistics Office Malawi, 2008). High enrolment rates in the early grades of primary schooling suggest that relatively few children have never attended school, and that the majority of young people out of school are likely to be school dropouts rather than non-enrollees (Kadzamira and Nell, 2004). Indeed, 2010 DHS data shows that for 15 – 24 year olds only 2.6 percent of males and 5.3 percent of females had received no formal education.⁵

Malawi is one of several SSA countries whose education systems are characterized by very high initial enrolments in primary schooling, but high repetition and dropout leading to low completion rates, and with falling transition rates to secondary and tertiary education. (Lewin, 2007:17). Dropout rates are highest in the early grades and again in Standard 8, the final year of primary schooling, when girls are particularly at risk of permanent dropout⁶. Between 2005 and 2007, when CBE was being conceptualized and developed, the survival rate to Standard 8 was approximately 30 percent, with over half of all pupils dropping out before Standard 5 (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2010)⁷.

Late entry and consistently high repetition rates in primary schools result in large numbers of over-age children in the education system. Analysis of EMIS data shows that in 2010, 12.3 percent of children across all grades were 14 years of age or older. In senior grades (Standards 6 to 8), this figure rose to 46.7 percent and in Standard 8, almost three-quarters of pupils (71.1%) were overage. Large numbers of pupils above the appropriate age for their grade present challenges in teaching and in addressing social and learning needs; older children, particularly girls, are also at increased risk of dropout (Hunt, 2008, Kadzamira and Chibwana, 2000)⁸. Transition rates to secondary school are low and strongly dependent on economic status, with young people from poorer families unable to cover school fees and other costs. Access is further restricted by a competitive selection process at the entry point into secondary school, based on pupils' performance in national examinations. Up until the late 1990s, a parallel system of distance education centres (DECs) run by the Malawi College of Distance Education (MCDE), provided an alternative route for primary school completers not selected to attend conventional schools, although these were associated with a poorer quality of education and higher user costs

⁵Rates for 'no education' amongst 15-19 year-olds are 1.9% for males and 2.9% for females ; rising to 5.3% and 7.8% percent respectively for 20-24 year-olds.

⁶ For example, in 2010, 23.2 % of girls dropped out during Standard 8, compared to 7.4 % of boys (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2010).

⁷ Increased survival rates for 2010 indicate some improvement in the ability of the primary school system to retain its pupils. However, figures show that, despite this, approximately half (52.2 %) of all enrolled pupils fail to reach their final year of the primary school cycle.

⁸ Many female youth exit formal education due to entry into marriage and/or pregnancy. The 2010 DHS shows that one in four female adolescents aged 15 to 19 had begun childbearing (26.1%). Amongst older youth (20 to 24 years) the great majority (84.6%) had one or more children.

(Lewin and Sayed, 2005). In 1998, these centres were re-designated Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSSs) in response to increasing demand for formal secondary education.

Currently, a fifth of young people (19.8%) attend secondary school, a figure inflated by the proportion of over-age youth, predominantly male, still in the system (National Statistical Office and ICF Macro, 2011). Participation in tertiary education is very limited; with transition rates of less than 1percent (Table 1). Institutions offering formal tertiary education consist of public and private universities, public and private Teacher Training Colleges and Technical and Vocational colleges offering public and parallel programmes. The recent introduction of an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) teacher training programme has expanded intake into primary teacher education (Steiner-Khamsi and Kunje, 2011). Vocational courses and primary teacher education can be pursued after successful completion of the first two years of secondary education or the full four-year secondary cycle, respectively. In recent years, a growing number of small, private colleges offer access to courses for international qualifications (Table 2).

Work

According to the 2009 Welfare Monitoring Report, 58 percent of 15 to 24 year-olds in Malawi work⁹ (National Statistics Office Malawi, 2009). As with the wider adult population, the dominant form of employment for young people remains agricultural work: largely unpaid, subsistence farming, although a greater proportion of older youth (20 – 24 years) do find work in other sectors (Table 3). Notably, around a third of employed older male youth (32.3%) is involved in skilled or unskilled manual labour and over a quarter of older female youth (26.0%) is in sales and services. This greater variation in the occupations of older youth perhaps reflects the entry of secondary school leavers into the labour market (National Statistical Office and ICF Macro, 2011), but also is suggestive of more general changes in the landscape of work and employment in Malawi.

Household poverty and the impact of HIV/AIDS on the labour force and social cohesion have been linked with important livelihood shifts apparent amongst Malawi's predominantly rural population (Bryceson et al., 2004, Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2008b). Self-sufficient, unpaid labour for the benefit of the household (e.g. working in family fields) is shifting towards greater uptake of casual, individualized piecework (*ganyu*) to earn cash for subsistence needs and other costs (e.g. medical care, school materials). Such coping strategies have been documented amongst both in-school and out-of-school adolescents and youth (Moleni, 2008).

There has also been a shift from agricultural to non-agricultural activities, including petty trade and services (Bryceson et al., 2004). A survey of out-of-school youth found that just over a quarter of those interviewed had been self-employed at some point after leaving school, with little difference between rural (28%) and urban (27%) areas (Kadzamira and Nell, 2004). A significant proportion of urban youth (39%) stated that they were 'just staying', a colloquial expression indicating the absence of regular, paid employment. Those few who had wage employment were in low-paying work such as domestic servants, minibus touts or shop assistants. As in other SSA countries, informal sector enterprises in both rural and urban areas

⁹ **Work** was defined as both formal and informal work, both paid work (in cash or in kind) and unpaid work contributing to the livelihood of the household, including work on agricultural holdings not only for the owner, but for family members helping out without pay.

are generally survivalist, income-generating activities with low earnings and profits and limited opportunity for expansion. Despite this, many out-of-school youth aspire to work in the informal sector, running small-scale businesses, market trading or as an artisan; earnings are generally higher than for agricultural work alone, and can be an important contribution to household incomes (Adams, 2008, Kadzamira and Nell, 2004).

Education and training for out-of-school youth

The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) sets out the government's current development programme. It puts economic growth at the centre of the government's agenda for reducing poverty. It prioritises six policy areas: agriculture and food security, irrigation and water development, transport infrastructure, energy supply, integrated rural development, nutrition and HIV/AIDS. Education is not highlighted as a policy priority, but is recognised as a catalyst for socio-economic development and industrial growth, as well a means of empowering the marginalized and promoting their participation in society (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2008b). In operationalising this, the NESP gives, for the first time, the responsibility for the education and skills development of out-of-school youth to Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST).

Prior to NESP and the commencement of CBE, the provision of 'second-chance' basic education for out-of-school youth fell to functional literacy programmes or literacy classes integrated into development projects designed to improve economic, social or health-related outcomes in target communities. Few of these were specifically designed for young people (Meke, 2007). For example, the government-initiated National Adult Literacy Programme (NALP) targets men and women over the age of 15 years (Table 5), and thus is effectively open to many out-of-school youth (Chimombo and Chiuye, 2002). Yet there has been little acknowledgement of this group within the programme, or consideration of their specific needs. In contrast to NALP's traditional primer-based adult literacy classes, programmes such as the UNDP-funded Sustainable and Economic Empowerment Programme (SSEEP) use a REFLECT¹⁰ approach to improve the literacy, numeracy and life-skills of participants alongside the development and implementation of interventions to promote sustainable livelihoods (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2008). An innovative approach to functional literacy provision that specifically targets the youth is the Adolescent Girls Literacy Project (AGLIT). AGLIT began in 1997 as a locally-run NGO project in Southern Malawi to address illiteracy and poor health indicators amongst adolescent girls (Hogg et. al., 2005). With input from surrounding communities and regularly refined in response to local realities, a combined literacy and health curriculum was designed to meet the needs of rural girls (aged 10-18 years) who have missed out on school. Since 2002, boys have been included in many of their activities. AGLIT works extensively in Southern Malawi and is one the Service Providers for the CBE programme (see below). Initiatives in basic education provision have been predominantly in rural areas, where literacy rates and educational retention and attainment have consistently been much lower than in urban centres. As of yet, little priority has been given to 'second-chance' basic education for urban youth.

¹⁰ Regenerated Frerarian Literacy through Empowering Communities Techniques

The quasi-autonomous Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education Training Authority (TEVETA) is responsible for the regulation and standardization of technical and vocational training in Malawi, with its multiple private and public provider systems. Although entry to foundation level TEVET courses is theoretically open all who can demonstrate basic pre-requisite competencies, in practice, a shortage of places makes admission to government technical colleges highly selective¹¹. Thus, opportunities for skills development and vocational training for out-of-school youth have been very limited, often restricted to small-scale projects implemented by NGOs and FBOs as strategies to support orphaned and other vulnerable children (Table 5). One such example is the Samaritan Trust that supports the welfare, education, skills development and reintegration of street children in Blantyre, Malawi's largest city in the South - one of the few examples of training provision for urban youth. The Trust has established a Skills Centre for young people that provides TEVETA accredited training in a trade (e.g. welding, carpentry, tailoring) *alongside* basic education in literacy and numeracy, allowing those with little or no schooling to participate without first acquiring formal qualifications (The Samaritan Trust, 2009). An organization with similar goals is the Stephanos Vocational Training Centre (SVTC). This accredited institution was set up to provide training for young people leaving the Stephanos orphan centre, although target beneficiaries were predominantly secondary school leavers (Kapyepye and Saiti, 2009)

Provision of vocational training has also been criticized for not matching the needs of young people working in the informal sector, nor being accessible or relevant to artisans and crafts people in rural areas (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2008a). The recent NAC - funded TEVETA programme 'Technical, Vocational and Skills Training for Orphaned, Vulnerable and affected Youth' (TVST-Ovay) has attempted to address some of these concerns. Under its Skills Development Initiative (SDI), TEVETA has supported informal sector training for vulnerable youth through local communities and district-run skills development centres. Young people with formal qualifications received training through were enrolled in technical colleges, the remainder – the majority of beneficiaries- received training through short courses and attachments with skilled artisans, themselves trained as master trainers by TEVETA.

A less well-documented route to skills acquisition for young people is through their participation in the voluntary sector. In Malawi, international and local NGOs - as well as donor-funded government initiatives - rely heavily on community-based volunteers to implement their development-orientated projects. A study of the role of youth in volunteering in Malawi (Moleni and Gallagher, 2007) highlights several youth-specific projects that provide training for peer-educators in a range of transferable skills, such as leadership skills, communication skills and other life skills. In turn, these peer-educators work with youth clubs and networks supported by the national 'Youth and Participation' programme (Table 5). During CBE needs assessment activities, several of the out-of-school-youth interviewed said they wanted to improve their literacy skills to stand a better chance of being recruited into such development projects (Moleni et al., 2005). However, projects involving peer educators generally expect volunteers to have completed their primary education, and often at least two years of secondary, thus excluding many young people (Moleni and Gallagher, 2007).

¹¹ Students are generally expected to hold a minimum of a Junior Certificate of Education (JCE), sat for after two years of secondary education.

Youth participation in the Complementary Basic Education programme

The CBE Model

Complementary Basic Education (CBE) was set up with the purpose to help out-of-school children and youth to acquire the essential knowledge, skills and values to promote self-reliance, encourage lifelong learning and to participate in society and its development. CBE targets children and youth aged between 9 and 17 years who have never attended school or dropped out before completing standard 5, and its three-year course is so designed that on successful completion, learners can re-enter into standard 6, if desired. The CBE model aims to provide a relatively cost-effective alternative to primary education, delivered in a more appropriate, flexible and relevant way for children and youth who faced difficulties in accessing formal schools, but whilst ensuring equivalency with the formal system (Moleni and Nampota, 2006).

Following extensive needs assessment, curriculum development and training activities, CBE was piloted in 15 learning centres in three districts in Malawi to determine the best means of implementing such a system nationally. Following the first year of this pilot phase, Phase 2 of the programme saw the CBE model rolled out to an additional 102 learning centres; and 240 centres in Phase 3. In doing so, CBE has reached out to approximately 10,000 out-of-school children and youth. As of 2011, CBE was operating in six rural districts, selected for their high dropout rates. With government plans for national coverage, there are ongoing discussions regarding the modification of the CBE model for districts with differing language requirements (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010). A pilot to assess the possibility of adapting the CBE model for urban settings is currently underway¹².

Key characteristics of CBE include:

- Smaller class sizes (maximum 40) and flexible timing of classes to suit learners' needs.
- Locally-recruited and trained facilitators with a secondary education.
- An accelerated 3-year course with core areas covering primary curriculum content.
- Learner Centres located centrally within villages and community-managed.

CBE falls under the remit of the Basic Education Directorate in the MOEST, but is implemented at the district level by NGOs selected as Service Providers. These Service Providers provide a network of Supervisors who regularly visit Learning Centres, liaise with Learner Centre Management Committees (LCMC), monitor CBE activities and provide supervisory support and training for facilitators. Facilitators are selected by the Service Provider, following interviews attended by community and district representatives. Young men and women, less than 35 years-old, with a secondary qualification and living in or nearby the villages hosting the Learning Centres are encouraged to apply. Once selected, they undertake a 15-day induction course

¹² Since the drafting of this paper, CBE has completed a review of a small-scale pilot in two semi-urban areas on the outskirts of Malawi's cities, Lilongwe and Blantyre. Initial lessons learnt suggest a relatively low demand amongst out-of-school youth, which may relate to a programme focus on curricular topics for school re-entry rather than pre-vocational training and skills development; the latter further hampered by very poor community support and expectations of stipends for service. In addition to difficulties commensurate with those in rural areas, high opportunity costs and competition with other projects offering incentives to beneficiaries also emerge as challenges to the participation of older children and youth (Fay, 2012).

focusing on practical, learner-centred teaching methodologies. In addition, they receive regular in-term and between-term training.

- In-term training – three hour sessions are held once a week (either morning or afternoon) for all facilitators in a zone to meet together and plan for the next week's work. Sessions are normally led by Supervisors. On occasion district extension workers (Primary Education Advisors) may also attend.
- Between-term training – Intensive training in content and teaching methods led by tutors from government Teacher Training Colleges.

The CBE model can be commended for the form and intensity of its continued in-service training, often lacking in conventional and ODL teacher training programmes (Steiner-Khamisi and Kunje, 2011). Attendance of facilitators at weekly training sessions remained consistently high despite challenges. However, it has been recommended that these sessions should strive to be less generic in structure and focus on specific issues of content and pedagogy (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010).

The recruitment of community-based secondary school leavers as facilitators provides important local employment opportunities, as well as role models for village youth. In terms of future career opportunities, a few of the originally recruited facilitators have since joined the government's ODL primary teacher training programme. There has also been discussion with regard to upgrading more experienced facilitators to the role of Supervisor within the CBE programme (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010).

Learner Participation and Motivation

The opening of CBE learning centres saw a high demand within target communities, although confusion over eligibility, inaccurate expectations and subsequent high early dropout, and further recruitment, saw numbers fluctuate considerably during the first two terms. However, the initial enrolment for the CBE pilot was estimated at 585 learners, of which over half (58.9%) were youth aged 14 or older. Of these older learners, two-thirds (62.3%) were male (Moleni and Nampota, 2006). However, Table 4 shows that these figures mask much variation between the three pilot districts: older enrollees made up the majority of CBE learners from Lilongwe and Ntchisi in the Central Region (59.9% and 74.2%, respectively) and were predominantly male. In contrast, in Chikwawa, fewer learners were 14 years or above (45.7%) and over two-thirds of learners, both older and younger, were female (71.3% and 65.8% respectively). The greater enrollment of girls in Chikwawa has been attributed to the presence of AGLIT in the district and its success in promoting non-formal education for girls (Moleni and Nampota, 2006).

Initial demand also indicated that CBE was reaching out to vulnerable groups. Baseline data shows that approximately a third (30.0%) of learners eligible and enrolled in CBE were orphaned children, a figure notably higher than in primary schools within the target districts¹³. Amongst older learners this figure rises to almost half (49.3%). In addition, several married youth (6%) had enrolled with CBE, the majority of whom (76.1%) were adolescent girls with children, predominantly from Chikwawa (Moleni and Nampota, 2006).

¹³ In Chikwawa, Lilongwe and Ntchisi the percentage of orphaned children enrolled in primary schools in 2005 was 15%, 10% and 10%, respectively (Moleni and Nampota, 2006).

Enrolled learners generally lived in homes that reflect low socio-economic status: no electricity or running water, built with mud bricks and floors and thatch roof, and with few household items or livestock. Amongst older learners, the majority (67.5%) lived with one or both parents, whilst a fifth (22.5%) lived with their grandparents or other relatives. A minority (9.0%) were staying in their own home, with their spouse and/or children. Amongst those who were orphaned, half (50%) were living with the surviving parent, a third (31.4%) with grandparents and a small minority in child-headed households (2.3%).

Only a small minority of older learners (5.1%) had taken part in any non-formal education programme on leaving school or had received any form of vocational training (7.5%). As young adults, a quarter of older learners (25.1%) were involved in income-generating activities in addition to subsistence farming. Most common amongst these were the selling agricultural produce (e.g. tobacco), casual labour (*ganyu*), small-scale business and vending (Moleni and Nampota, 2006).

In terms of their schooling, 13.7 percent of older learners had never attended school, compared to 21.5 percent of younger learners. Of those that had attended school, 45.7 percent of older girls and 33.3 percent of older boys had persisted to Standard 4 or above¹⁴. In contrast, the vast majority (91.5%) of enrolled learners of 13 years of less had dropped out before Standard 3 (Moleni and Nampota, 2006). Late entry into formal education is common in Malawi, as is high dropout and re-entry in the early grades, and it is possible to draw a distinction here between younger CBE learners who had not yet entered formal school or had dropped out at a relatively young age, but may yet ‘drop-in’ again, and older learners who had persisted longer in school, but were already ‘over-age’ on exit.

Survey data from Phase 2 of the CBE programme shows that older children and youth continued to make up a substantial proportion of CBE enrollees, with 50 percent 14 years of age or older. However, a much greater proportion of learners in from this second cohort stated that they had never attended school – as high as 35 percent (Chiuye, 2009b). The majority of these (71%) were younger learners. This suggests a shift towards CBE being used as a ‘first-stop’ alternative to formal schooling for late or non-enrollees, rather than a safety-net or ‘second-chance’ for older dropouts.

Absenteeism and dropout have been ongoing challenges for CBE. In Phase 1, absenteeism amongst learners was higher than the set target of 30 percent (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010). During the first year, high absenteeism rates were inflated by large numbers of long-term absentees amongst both older and younger learners (37% and 34%, respectively) who subsequently dropped out of the programme (Moleni and Nampota, 2007b). Thereafter numbers stabilised and persistence improved dramatically, but poor attendance amongst the remaining learners continued for rest of the pilot. Later case studies found lower rates of absenteeism in Learning Centres with high levels of community monitoring and support (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010). Much of the early dropout was attributed to poverty, household responsibilities and the need to work: involvement in harvesting and grading tobacco was a common reason for withdrawal amongst older boys. For others, initial (false) expectations had not been met – largely in terms of receiving food handouts

¹⁴ Despite CBE guidelines that stipulate that eligible children are *not* to have reached beyond Standard 4, a small minority of learners (7%) said they had dropped out in Standard 5 or 6.

and material gain – and this perceived lack of benefit had contributed to learners’ disengagement and dropout (Moleni and Nampota, 2007b). A later survey of CBE dropout also found that for older learners, dropout related to poor motivation - a lack of interest, feeling too old, and a perceived absence of future opportunities (Chiuye, 2009a).

What motivated out-of-school youth to join CBE? Overwhelmingly, learners appeared concerned with acquiring basic literacy skills - 83.5 percent of older learners interviewed during the baseline stated that they believed CBE classes would assist them to learn how to read and write (Moleni and Nampota, 2006). This reflects findings from the CBE Needs Assessment, which saw out-of-school youth ranking literacy skills as their highest priority in terms of curriculum needs (Moleni et al., 2005). Learning English, as opposed to a local language, was emphasized by many of the learners. Very few older learners anticipated or aspired to return to school. Rather, the majority said that on completing CBE as they hoped to find work (49.8%) or set up their own business (20.4%). Yet, relatively few older learners saw wage employment as a direct benefit of CBE, suggestive of CBE being perceived, instead, as a stepping stone to further training or opportunities.

Curriculum and teaching

The main emphasis of the CBE curriculum and teaching is towards the attainment of literacy (including communication skills) and numeracy. Reading and writing in the local language (Chichewa) is established first, whilst English is initially taught as an oral course, later progressing to reading and writing. The content of these three core areas – Chichewa, English and Numeracy - was organized in the same way as the primary curriculum.¹⁵ Other CBE content areas were re-aligned and condensed to give a more practical orientation, relevant to local contexts. These areas were designed to contribute to the development of sustainable and healthy livelihoods: Healthy Living, Agriculture and Environment, Livelihoods and Citizenship (see Table 6). The same curriculum content is taught to all learners regardless of age, prior schooling or ability, something which many facilitators found challenging (Moleni and Nampota, 2007a).

As well as speaking, reading and writing activities led by facilitators, a wide range of participatory teaching methods were drawn together for curriculum delivery. These included: group work, role-play, song and dance, locally-relevant expressive arts and games and hands-on practical sessions. Learners also took part in individual and group research activities to investigate scenarios within their communities (e.g. crop use, local markets), although logistically facilitators found this more challenging (Moleni and Nampota, 2007a). Curriculum delivery was supported by high quality, illustrated learner books, facilitator lessons notes and supplementary readers. Learners attested to high levels of individual and remedial support from facilitators. They also commented on the open and friendly attitudes of the facilitators and the absence of physical punishments. This latter point is likely to be of particular importance, as harsh and unfair punishments can be a contributing factor to young people’s exclusion and withdrawal from school (Moleni, 2008).

¹⁵ Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR)

The CBE model does not make direct provision for technical and vocational training, which is argued to be beyond the scope and budget of the CBE programme (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2011). However, this created a tension between the perceived priority needs and aspirations of young people and community members – who made mention of a range of vocational skills during initial needs analysis exercises – and learning needs conceptualised by programme providers (Nampota, 2009). To address this ‘mismatch’, emphasis was instead placed on the development of livelihood skills: basic entrepreneurial skills more suitable for small-scale business ventures and commercial farming, as well as exposure to a range of economic activities and pre-vocational skills to inform future livelihood decisions (see Table 6). Although these course elements proved popular and were generally regarded as relevant and appropriate, the absence of more advanced technical and vocational topics (e.g. carpentry, metalwork) may have influenced the early dropout of some older youth (Moleni and Nampota, 2007a).

A key strategy in the provision of livelihood training was to engage communities’ support to identify and encourage local artisans to share their skills with learners (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010). Although a few examples of this were found (e.g. pottery, weaving mats, making hoe and broom handles, radio repair), generally the use of local people as resource persons proved to be problematic and unsustainable. Crucially, local artisans and craft persons would expect payment, something contrary to CBE guidelines at the time. In addition, it was not always possible to source and purchase materials to demonstrate practical skills. When unable to find people with suitable skills, facilitators would often just skip practical sessions (Moleni and Nampota, 2007b).

Learner Outcomes

It is difficult to present an accurate picture of the learning gains of CBE learners, since measures for literacy and numeracy outcomes taken subsequent to the baseline were hampered by poor tracking of data, high attrition and a lack of equivalency between pre- and post-test groups. Regression analysis to identify and control for confounding factors was not done. However, an assessment of Phase 1 learners at the end of Year 3 shows that the majority of older learners were competent at Level 2 in Chichewa and Numeracy¹⁶ (67.7% and 55.5%) and a significant proportion were competent at Level 3 (46.5% and 33.3%, respectively) (see Table 7). Whilst over 40 percent of older learners had mastery of English at Level 2, almost none (0.4%) had reached Level 3, the equivalent of Standard 5. Suggested reasons for this include the incomplete coverage of the English curriculum content by the time of the assessment and the poor English skills of Facilitators (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010). Formal assessments of the other content areas were not done.

Learner outcomes from CBE appear to compare favourably with those from formal primary schooling. For example, earlier SACMEQ II studies found that only 0.6 percent of Standard 6 pupils in Malawi had achieved desired mastery levels (Milner et al., 2001) and the recent national Primary Achievement Student Survey (PASS) found that less than 8 percent of Standard 3 pupils and less than 1 percent of Standard 5 pupils attained grade level competency in Mathematics and English¹⁷ (Government of Malawi, 2010). Only the poor performance of CBE learners in Level 3

¹⁶ Level 2 corresponds to Standard 3; Level 3 corresponds to Standard 5 (see Table 7).

¹⁷ In the PASS report grade competency is assumed if a pupil scored 50% or above in the administered test.

English was comparable to that of primary schools, where almost none of the pupils in either group had achieved the expected competency.

The use of adapted or reduced school curricula was familiar to many of the stakeholders involved in the development of the CBE model, having been met previously in community schooling programmes (Rose, 2002, Durston and Nashire, 2001) or distance education modules (Yates and Bradley, 2000). There were a few initial concerns amongst stakeholders that CBE teaching and learning would be inferior to that of conventional schools and lack equivalency. Others, paradoxically, were concerned that CBE, with its smaller classes, locally-relevant curriculum and access to learning materials, would present competition for primary schools, enticing pupils away rather than supporting their re-entry (Moleni et al., 2005). Once CBE implementation was underway, a common perception amongst LCMC members, parents and community leaders was that CBE learners were acquiring skills faster and performing better than children in conventional primary schools (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010, Moleni and Nampota, 2007b).

An analysis of enrolment data from the CBE pilot shows that 42 percent of learners completed the 3-year programme and an additional 12 percent left early to return to primary school. Anecdotal evidence suggests that most of those returning to primary school were younger learners, more able assimilate back into the formal system (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010). As of yet, there no information available on the destination of learners on completion - on numbers returning to primary school or accessing vocational training, or other livelihood outcomes. An assumption amongst CBE Service Providers and management that much of the early dropout during Phases 1 and 2 was from disaffected, older learners has led to a suggestions from programme management for re-focusing of the programme to prioritise younger learners (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2011). This, however, is somewhat at odds with the NESP strategies for out-of-school youth, which envisioned CBE as a key strategy to provide education to out-of-school youth, both in terms of basic literacy and as a potential entry point to vocational training (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2008a).

Way Forward

A key issue for the sustainability of CBE will be its successful integration into government policy and practice. So far, CBE has an appointed taskforce within the MOEST, under the Basic Education Directorate, and clear budget lines within the NESP (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2008a). However, the challenge remains to ensure that this taskforce leads the CBE programme with the same drive and commitment as the previous GIZ-funded management team and enables the timely procurement of goods and services. Working within a de-centralised framework, steps should be taken to strengthen existing relationships between Service Providers and district structures and establish new linkages as the programme rolls out (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010).

Lessons for the design of alternative education and vocational training programmes targeting out-of-school youth

There is a high demand for basic education amongst out-of-school children and youth, with attaining numeracy and literacy skills, including English, seen as a priority (Kadzamira and Nell, 2004, Moleni et al., 2005). Educational outcomes for the first two phases of the CBE programme

suggest that those completing the CBE course have shown real improvements in both literacy and numeracy; that real learning had taken place (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010). By adopting a model that draws on approaches adopted by non-formal education programmes and, in particular, community schools (DeStefano et al., 2006), CBE has several strategies in place that are conducive to learning for older learners: a reduced and flexible timetable that is more able to accommodate young people's household responsibilities and work; a more inclusive regime that supports, for example, learners with families; reduced schools costs (no requirement for school uniform); smaller class sizes and opportunities for remedial support and less authoritarian, supportive facilitators. Community involvement in terms of monitoring and follow-up also helps support learner participation (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010). Although teaching and learning takes place essentially in a classroom-like setting, this might not necessarily be seen as odd or childish, as many of their peers in the 14-17 years age-group would be in formal primary schools.

A major challenge for the CBE programme, and other programmes that target out-of-school children and youth, is high rates of dropout. Whilst dropout rates for the pilot phase were only slightly higher for older learners compared to the younger age-group (30% and 26%, respectively), it seems likely that a significant proportion of the younger learners left to return to primary school (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010, Moleni and Nampota, 2007b). For others, poverty and vulnerability were major constraints on dropout and attendance. Clearly greater flexibility of timetabling has its limits and additional strategies have to be put in place, either to address demand-side challenges (such as through the provision of financial or material support) or to find means to ensure continued access to learning during times when getting to class proves difficult (Pridmore and Jere, 2011). In terms of poor motivation, several of the learners who had left prematurely said they did so because they had 'learnt enough' (Chiuye, 2009a). As almost half of CBE dropouts (47%) acknowledged improvement in literacy and numeracy skills, it might be that, for some, what they had learnt was sufficient in terms of their expectations and needs (such as small business start-up), and other content areas were perceived as less relevant. To address this, the CBE curriculum could be organised on a modular basis and tailored to the needs of older learners, few of whom had expectations of returning to formal education. In doing so, there could be greater emphasis on acquiring vocational and livelihood skills, once their needs for literacy and numeracy had been met. This would also reflect strategies put forward in the NESP to improve engagement of older youth:

If the numbers out-of-school youth in a village are sufficient, it may be possible to establish classes for younger and for older children. Another possibility is differentiation... in the third year, with a stronger emphasis on prevocational skills for the youths and ... on literacy for the younger children (Ministry of Education Science and Technology Malawi, 2008:9).

Discussions regarding the roll-out of CBE have also highlighted the possibility of developing a CBE programme and curriculum for out-of-school youth who dropped out in higher grades (Standard 6 and above) (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010).

A major difficulty faced in the implementation of the CBE model was in the use of local resource persons to provide the practical element of livelihood and pre-vocational skills training, something in high demand from learners and communities (Moleni et al., 2005). It is clear that without the provision of incentives for identified artisans and craftspeople such a strategy is

unsustainable and depriving learners of building an important and relevant skills base. One option put forward by several facilitators was that they should receive training in a range of relevant skills in order to support their teaching of these topics (Moleni and Nampota, 2007b). Alternatively, CBE Service Providers could support learning centres to link up directly with existing structures, such as the recently-established TEVETA-Ovay scheme that has trained local artisans as master trainers to provide informal sector training and skills development through community and district-run development centres (Table 5).

A paradigm shift in favour of wider skills development rather than more formalised vocational education and training requires that programme quality be largely determined by the success of its outputs in terms of impact on livelihoods (Kadzamira and Nell, 2004, World Bank, 2009). A critical shortfall in the CBE programme is the absence of accurate information on the destination of CBE learners on exit from the programme. The collection of detailed tracking data by Service Providers would improve programme evaluation and inform future planning and responsiveness of programme strategies. Importantly, the CBE model does not make provision for follow-on strategies to support young people in their choices on exit, whether it is a return to formal education or finding routes into the labour market. Anecdotal evidence suggests that on re-entry to primary schools young people may feel uncomfortable and excluded by the schools' more rigid and authoritarian learning environment; schools less responsive to the needs of older, working learners or teenage mothers, for example. Options to address this could include mentoring of returnees and joint initiatives with schools to adopt more open and flexible learning strategies (Pridmore and Jere, 2011).

For those not returning to formal education or training, access to post-literacy materials and activities are likely to be limited, potentially reducing impact. Youth-specific literacy programmes implemented by AGLIT (see Table 5) cater for this with the establishment of follow-on clubs, which as well promoting post-literacy events, also provide training in practical, income-generating skills and life skills (Meke, 2007). CBE and other basic education initiatives could consider integrating follow-on activities into programme design or establish linkages with existing youth clubs and organisations, such as those supported by the 'Youth and Participation' programme (Table 5). Such clubs often have access to IEC materials supporting life skills and HIV/AIDS prevention messages.

For young people in Malawi aspiring to take up a trade, traditional apprenticeships remain a common route, particularly for those in the rural areas and without formal qualifications (Kadzamira and Nell, 2004). Through maintaining links earlier established with artisans and master craftspersons, CBE could help young people access such apprenticeships. Again, this is likely to require some form of financial incentive for trainers, and possibly for the young people themselves. As noted above, entry into formal technical and vocational training is highly selective. However, TEVETA has introduced a modular, learner-centred system of Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) designed to create more flexible pathways to training and qualifications, and support previously disadvantaged groups by recognizing skills acquired outside of formal education and training, through, for example, work experience or the informal sector (Technical Entrepreneurial Vocational Education and Training Authority, 2008). CBET supports youth employment through widening access to trade certification in areas such as general fitting, joinery, plumbing and electronics and promotes participation of girls in non-

traditional areas. This has important implications for out-of-school youth who have acquired pre-vocational and entrepreneurial skills through participation in non-formal education, traditional apprenticeships and income-generating projects. Here again programmes such as CBE should be at the forefront of advocating for established links and clear referral systems.

With a weak industrial base in Malawi, waged employment opportunities in a trade are limited. Under the MGDS, economic growth and poverty reduction strategies place emphasis on the small and medium enterprise (SME) sector development. However, trained youth often lack the financial and social capital to translate their skills into self-employment or business opportunities and earn an income (World Bank, 2009). In Malawi, efforts to support self-reliance amongst youth through technical and vocational training can prove unsustainable if funds for tools and set-up cost are not available (Kapyepye and Saiti, 2009). Again, through strengthening wider, multi-sector linkages, exit strategies could be built into programme design to refer learners to existing schemes that provide funds to support young entrepreneurs wishing to set up commercial enterprises, such as the Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF) (Table 5). A few organisations have done just that, albeit on a relatively small scale, ensuring their livelihood training matches the priorities and expectations for YEDF funding, and assisting young people in the application process. One such example is the Temwa project, which provides training in rural agro-based activities suitable for small business development (Table 5).

In the absence of comprehensive labour market information and clear policy direction with regard youth underemployment (UNDP Malawi, n.d.), much of the focus of youth skills development has focused on small-scale enterprise creation, influenced by MGDS priorities for pro-poor economic growth and, to a lesser extent, in response to the needs of the growing informal sector. However, many initiatives also reflect more traditional aspirations for technical and vocational training, held by young people regardless of limited labour market opportunities (Nampota, 2009). CBE is perhaps unique in Malawi in providing livelihood and pre-vocational training that, alongside a basic education, builds a *foundation* for a range of future livelihood options – whether paid or self-employed - without committing to resource-intensive, technical and vocational training that could be at odds with local economies. As such, it provides an introduction and ‘step-up’ for young people entering the labour market and, potentially, the flexibility to respond to changing needs and priorities.

CBE provides no certification on completion of its three-year course (Allsop and Chiuye, 2010). And whilst we have seen that training and livelihood opportunities focusing on competencies, rather than formal qualifications, are available, these opportunities are often limited in number. Young people are likely to benefit from some form of acknowledgment of achievement, highlighting equivalency with formal schooling and the TEVET Qualifications Framework. As noted above, a modular approach to skills acquisition might be more in keeping with the needs of older learners. As such, CBE (and potentially other education and skills providers) could implement an ‘education passport’, along the lines of the nationally recognized ‘health passport’ used by health providers, where completed modules could be listed and added to as necessary.

In Conclusion

In Malawi, large numbers of young people exit the formal education system prior to secondary schooling every year. A greater proportion of these dropout before completion of their primary

schooling building a cadre of young people with no formal qualifications and poor literacy and numeracy skills. Many are overage, vulnerable and from amongst the rural poor, with few expectations of returning to primary school. Opportunities to attain literacy and numeracy alongside appropriate skills development are crucial for their future livelihoods. CBE provides a relatively successful, inclusive and low-cost alternative to basic education provision, although issues of erratic attendance and dropout need to be addressed. Concerns that much of the dropout is from older, disengaged youth may lead to a re-focusing of the programme to prioritise younger learners. However, this risks CBE evolving into a parallel system drawing children away from formal primary schooling, whilst a valuable opportunity to provide a good quality, 'second-chance' education for out-of-school-youth is lost.

Incorporating responsive and flexible strategies to improve access and continuity in learning, as well as catering for the differing expectations and learning needs of younger and older learners could better support out-of-school youth. A modular approach to curriculum delivery could allow older learners to tailor their learning to their own livelihood needs. Central to re-engaging the youth and improving relevancy of skills development would be re-vitalising the practical content of the curriculum, designed to expose learners to contextualised and relevant livelihood options, based on sound, localised labour market analysis that considers both rural and urban needs. Skills development and training that draws on local expertise could enhance both individual learners' and communities' human and social capital, yet financial incentives have to be built in to ensure sustainability. Critical too, to 'second-chance' education and livelihood training is follow-on support for learners, through youth clubs, establishing referral systems or improving access to grants or loans. Greater advocacy is required to build consensus on equivalency and establish and strengthen linkages across sectors.

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Appendices

Table 1: Enrolment across all levels of formal education in Malawi, selected years

Year	Primary	Secondary	MCDE	Teacher Training Colleges	Technical & Vocational Colleges	University
1994	2,860,819	48,360	57,481	3,085	1,080	3,601
1998	2,805,785	59,636	132,455	9,401	1,308	3,179
2002	3,164,191	45,989	N/A	12,522	1,756	4,565
2008	3,600,771	233,573	N/A	3,794	1,388	7,972
2010	3,868,643	240,918	N/A	8,569	4,477	9,817

Source: MOEST (2010) *Education Statistics 2010*, EMIS data

Table 2: Post-secondary education and training: 2010 enrolments

Institutions/ Programmes	Teacher Training Colleges		Technical and Vocational Colleges		University (all colleges, inc Nursing Colleges)	
	Public	Private	Public	Parallel	Public	Private
Male	5106	155	1004	1919	4618	1367
Female (%)	2730 (34.8%)	578 (78.9%)	439 (30.4%)	1115 (36.8%)	3120 (40.3%)	712 (34.2%)
All students	7836	733	1443	3034	7738	2079
Total	8596		4477		9817	

Source: adapted from MOEST (2010) *Education Statistics 2010*, EMIS data.

Table 3: Occupation of youth employed in 2010, disaggregated by age group and gender

Age group (yrs)	Currently Employed ¹⁸		Proportion of youth employed (currently or in prior year), by sector (%)											
			Profession Manager/ Clerical		Sales & Services		Skilled Manual		Unskilled Manual		Domestic Service		Agriculture	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
15 -19	60.3	36.5	0.7	0.5	9.8	16.3	10.6	5.4	13.2	7.9	2.0	2.1	63.8	67.8
20-24	79.4	51.0	4.1	2.5	14.6	26.0	21.8	5.5	10.5	6.1	1.5	1.7	47.5	58.2

Source: 2010 Malawi DHS data (National Statistical Office and ICF Macro, 2011)

¹⁸ 'Currently employed' is defined as having done work in the past seven days (paid or unpaid) and includes persons who did not work in the past seven days, but who are regularly employed and were absent or on leave.

Table 4: Enrolment in CBE pilot, by age group and gender

District	Proportion of learners (%)					
	9-13 years		14-17 years		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Chikwawa	34.2	65.8	28.7	71.3	31.7	68.3
Lilongwe	82.2	17.8	81.7	18.3	81.9	18.1
Ntchisi	42.6	57.4	71.9	28.1	64.3	35.7
<i>All districts</i>	<i>49.6</i>	<i>50.4</i>	<i>62.3</i>	<i>37.7</i>	<i>57.4</i>	<i>42.6</i>

Source: CBE Baseline Survey (Moleni and Nampota, 2006)

Table 5: Selected non-formal skills development and training opportunities for out-of-school youth in Malawi

Programme	Aim/objectives	Coordination	Target group	Form and Scope	Programme focus and skills development	Source
National Adult Literacy Programme (NALP)	To reduce illiteracy rates in Malawi	National Centre of Literacy and Adult Education under the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Established in 1986.	Illiterate adults and young people over 15 years of age.	Over 4,000 literacy classes nationally run by trained volunteers. At peak, reached 860,000 learners.	Functional literacy (in local language). As part of wider poverty reduction strategy.	(Chimombo and Chiuye, 2002, Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2008)
Adolescent Girls Literacy Project (AGLIT)	to improve the health of adolescent girls, especially their reproductive health, through a combined literacy and health curriculum.	Locally-run NGO (AGLIT+) in Southern Malawi established in 1997. Now implementing several donor-funded projects.	Primarily out-of-school rural girls (10-18 yrs). Extended to include boys in 2002.	Participatory literacy circles with combined literacy & health curriculum. Follow-on youth clubs.	Functional literacy and locally-relevant health promotion. Livelihoods, income generation (baking, cooking, tailoring, selling garden produce) & post-literacy activities through clubs.	(Hogg et al., 2005)
Sustainable and Economic Empowerment Programme (SSEEP)	to promote interventions to empower vulnerable groups to enhance their livelihood base in a sustainable manner.	UNDP supported joint NGO-government programme Action Aid in prominent role.	Illiterate adults and out-of-school youth over 15 years of age.	Implemented through district structures and REFLECT Circle committees. 12 rural districts.	Develop interventions to promote sustainable livelihoods. Incorporates functional literacy & life skills. Soft loans and funding for IGA.	(Concern Universal, 2006, Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2008)
Complementary Basic Education	to help out-of-school children and youth to acquire the essential knowledge, skills and values to promote self-reliance, encourage lifelong learning and to participate in society and its development.	GIZ-funded management team and MOEST Basic Education Directorate, implemented through districts and NGO service providers	Out-of-school children and youth aged 9 to 13 years	Community-based and managed Learning Centres. 5 rural districts. 10, 000 learners.	Basic literacy and numeracy; livelihoods and pre-vocational skills, agriculture, health and hygiene, citizenship.	(Allsop and Chiuye, 2010)

Programme	Aim/objectives	Coordination	Target group	Form and Scope	Programme focus and skills development	Source
Technical, Vocational and Skills Training for Orphaned, Vulnerable and affected Youth (TEVETA-Ovay)	To equip vulnerable youth with life skills and entrepreneurial skills for self employment ventures through small technical skill-based enterprises.	NAC supported TEVETA programme	Marginalised youth of 15 – 24 years of age. Demonstration of basic competencies required	Short, tailored courses through local communities and district-run skills development centres. Approx. 2000 youth trained	Informal sector training and skills development: Life Skills, HIV and AIDS and Entrepreneurship Set-up capital and equipment provided.	TEVETA, 2008
Samaritan Trust Skills Centre	To promote self-reliance and re-integration of vulnerable children	Samaritan Trust - local charity supporting street children in Blantyre	Street children and young people on exit from sister orphan centre.	Accredited courses from Trust's Skills Centre. Localised	Basic education in literacy and numeracy & formal training in a trade. Set-up capital and equipment	(The Samaritan Trust, 2009, Kadzamira and Nell, 2004)
Stephanos Trust	To enable orphans and vulnerable children to build a means of living	Local charity supporting OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children	Accredited courses at Stephanos Vocational Training Centre	Vocational training in carpentry, bricklaying, tailoring, tin-smithing, agriculture, Hotel Management, Plumbing and Welding	(Kapyepye and Saiti, 2009)
Integrated Youth Development Programme (IYD)	-To promote access of youth to appropriate skills for participation in commercially viable agro-enterprises. -To generate employment for young people through supporting pro-poor policies and institutional capacity building	Recently established UNDP-funded programme, implemented by Ministry of Youth Development and Sports and Ministry of Labour.	18 – 35 year-olds.	-To date, establishment of Neno National Youth Centre for provision of training courses. 10 youth trained as trainers and entrepreneurial leaders. -Situational analysis and dialogue on youth employment.	Training courses and practical demonstrations in agro-entrepreneurial (farming, fishing, resource management) leadership and management skills.	(UNDP MALAWI, n.d.)
Youth Enterprise Development Fund (YEDF)	To provide knowledge, skills, competencies and opportunities to engage in micro, small and medium enterprises, as self-employment mechanism.	Government programme managed by Malawi Rural Development Fund (MARDEF), in collaboration Ministry of Youth Development and Sports.	18 – 35 year-olds. Out-of-school youth and school leavers/graduates	Provision of business loans and training courses to set up sustainable commercial enterprises. Over 11,000 loans dispersed, 700 trained.	Training in business, vocational and entrepreneurial skills and enterprise development. Loans provided mainly for agriculture and food production ventures, but also urban informal sector (e.g. hairdressing, internet cafes).	(Malawi Rural Development Fund, 2009)

Programme	Aim/objectives	Coordination	Target group	Form and Scope	Programme focus and skills development	Source
Youth Participation in Development	-To improve the quality of life for young people and to assist them to achieve their potential. - to establish platforms of participation for young people. - to enhance health and well-being of youth.	National donor-supported (UNICEF/UNFPA) programme under Ministry of Youth Development and Sports. Implemented through District Youth Officers.	Youth 15-25 years	Established youth clubs, centres and district networks. Peer education & outreach activities. Approx 3,000 clubs at peak; 1200 peer educators trained under Youth and Health project.	Life skills & SRH education through clubs; Provision of HIV/AIDS IEC material and guidance and counselling. Training in leadership skills for peer educators; linked to entrepreneurial skills development.	(Moleni and Gallagher, 2007)
Banja la M'tsogolo (BLM)	- Provision of youth-friendly SRH and family planning services.	Donor supported health provider.	Youth 15-25 years	Recruitment & training of peer educators as community-based agents	SRH and HIV/AIDS prevention, counselling and contraceptive distribution. Leadership and community-development training for peer educators.	(Moleni and Gallagher, 2007, Nhlane, 2002)
Temwa 'Youth Enterprise Development Project'	-To help identify and nurture promising entrepreneurial talent among the youth in Nkhata Bay	Fund-raising through UK-based organisation, Malawi-based management and volunteers	Youth, especially those from vulnerable households	Recruits and trains youth enterprise groups and provides assistance in applying for loans for income-generation activities. Approx 600 youth assisted	Income-generation skills and activities (rural-based): pig and poultry production, beekeeping, carpentry, fish farming etc.	Website: http://www.temwa.org/projects/skills-development.html#yeds

Table 6: Content Areas of CBE Curriculum

Core Area	Description
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content areas 1 & 2 focus on acquiring skills in listening, reading, writing and speaking in local language and English.
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of skills in counting, basic mathematical operations and recognizing patterns and shapes. • Application of basic numeracy skills and skills in measuring and recording data to solve real-life situations.
Healthy Living:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to promote an holistic approach to individual health, positive personal relationships and interactions within wider society. • Incorporates key aspects of life skills and agriculture from the primary curriculum. • Focuses on health promotion (especially prevalent diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS), food and nutrition and personal development.
Agriculture and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to provide knowledge and practical skills to cope with ongoing changes in agriculture and the environment. • Acknowledges and applies both indigenous knowledge and skills and modern technology and innovation. • Introduces knowledge, skills and investigation methods used in natural sciences through practice for application and further learning in agriculture, environmental protection and food production.
Livelihoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to develops and extend learners practical, entrepreneurial and creative skills • Provides training in basic skills in business management (e.g. planning, budgeting, procurement and marketing) • Exposed learners to a range of economic activities to inform decisions about future livelihoods. • Offers training in practical, pre-vocational skills.
Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces learners to Malawi's traditional and diverse cultural heritage and implications of globalization. • Addresses social and moral development, discussing human rights and responsibilities, gender equity, and the rule of law. • Outlines structures of society and government, and their evolution.

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2011)

Table 7: Learning Outcomes for CBE Phase 1, by age group

Learning Area/Level of test item**	Mean Percentage of Learners achieving given Level			
	Younger Learners (9-13 yrs)		Older Learners (14-17yrs)	
	Baseline (n=195)	Year 3 (n=43)	Baseline (n=255)	Year 3 (n=103)
<i>Chichewa</i>				
Level 1	20	53	50	76
Level 2	7	52	31	67
Level 3	3	29	21	47
<i>English</i>				
Level 1	15	43	31	52
Level 2	4	48	11	41
Level 3	0.8	0.3	2	0.4
<i>Numeracy</i>				
Level 1	36	73	73	92
Level 2	8	33	33	56
Level 3	3	24	13	35

**Levels of test items listed in Table 6 and used during baseline and subsequent evaluation activities were equivalent to the formal curriculum and primary grades as follows:

- Level 1 equivalent to Standard 1 (grade 1)
- Level 2 equivalent to Standard 3 (grade 3)
- Level 3 equivalent to Standard 5 (grade 5)