



The Forgotten Promise

**THE STATE OF EDUCATION SUPPORT FOR ORPHANED AND
VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN 2010-2011 MALAWI
GOVERNMENT BUDGET**

**Network of Organisations for Vulnerable and Orphaned Children
(NOVOC)**

Malawi

September 2010

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“The children of Malawi are under threat....They are all too frequently denied access to essential services including education....”

– Prof. Bingu Wa Mutharika, State President of the Republic of Malawi, in his foreword to the National Plan of Action for Orphans and Vulnerable Children which he officially launched in 2005.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The year 2010 marks 10 years of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Among the Eight MDGs is goal number 2 on “Achieving Universal Primary Education”. Malawi is party to the commitment that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. The target entails that all countries including Malawi should invest significant resources in the education sector. In addition, countries are expected to attain the MDGs with equity. This is where education support for orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) through national budgets comes in the limelight. This budget analysis establishes the levels of allocations and expenditures of funds for OVC education support in Malawi Government budgets. The initiative has been commissioned by the Network of Organisations for Vulnerable and Orphaned Children (NOVOC) with the main aim of generating evidence for action towards improved budgetary commitment to education needs of orphaned and vulnerable children in Malawi.

This is the fourth report in a series of the budget analysis and review commissioned by NOVOC. The first report was released in 2006 and it covered financial years 2004/5, 2005/06 in a comprehensive manner and it only introduced the 2006/07 figures as they were presented for approval in parliament. The second study involved a deeper analysis of the approved 2006/07 budgets and introduced trends in the 2007/08 draft budget estimates. The third analysis was entitled “Kicked Out Of School” and it uncovered the dwindling levels of education bursaries for OVC especially due to the scaling down of bursaries supported through National Aids Commission (NAC) grants. This 2010 report reviews the approved and actual expenditures for education support in 2009/10 as well as approved allocations for 2010/11 financial year.

Specifically, the analysis focus on the provision of education support or bursaries through the budgets of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Community Development (MGCCD). Efforts have also made to establish developments and trends in the Ministry of Education budgets as well as in selected district assembly votes. Funding for bursaries through the NAC has also been given additional attention. This analysis is based on national budgets that have been tabled and approved in Malawi parliament as well on information collected through interviews with selected stakeholders at national and district levels.

The report is designed to facilitate civil society input (under NOVOC) into government budgetary planning processes. In addition, this document is designed to generate input into the process of developing the successor strategy to the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS). This is part of NOVOC's effort in pursuing an evidence-based approach to policy advocacy. The report also forms basis for engagement with parliament. NOVOC expects that parliamentarians will be afforded, through this report, an opportunity to appreciate the challenges faced by OVC and that parliament can prioritize education bursaries during budget debates and in other circles of budget and policy dialogue.

2.0 BACKGROUND

In July 2010, Malawi parliament passed a landmark legislation, the Child Care, Protection and Justice Act, 2010. The Act domesticates critical principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Both instruments buttress the point that education is an important human right. The right is also guaranteed by Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and is considered as a cornerstone in the achievement of the human rights framework (UNESCO 2002). The right to education is further reinforced in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) to which Malawi is also a signatory and therefore is a state-party with obligations to satisfy. In 2000 Malawi signed up to the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) goals. For children, especially OVCs, it is an equally fundamental right that prepares them for full integration in society and broadens their opportunities. However, its provision is often conditional on the fulfillment of other rights such as non-discrimination under which OVCs often find themselves. Every child, including OVC, is entitled to the right to education without discrimination based on circumstances at birth or any other considerations.

The Malawi Republican Constitution also guarantees the right to education through Chapter 4 (Bill of Rights), under which Article 23 emphasizes that children are entitled to be protected from any interference in their education. Unfortunately, the right to education is often denied to young people especially OVC who are mostly reliant on external parties to provide them with education support (Commonwealth of Learning,

2002). While boy-OVC are in serious lack of education support, it is worth noting that under current circumstances, it is the girl-OVC and young women who are most affected by inadequate and even lack of education bursaries.

This is "The Forgotten Promise" and is attributable to higher costs of provision of education, national budget misallocation and associated capacity constraints for budget implementation, poor resource mobilization and low levels of coordination among non-state actors. These are among the factors that are impacting negatively on provision of education support for OVC (Watkins 2001).

Governments are responsible for managing public expenditures and are therefore responsible for providing education support to marginalized groups like OVCs. Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have the highest number of OVCs in the world. Malawi is one of the countries in sub-sahara Africa which is seriously affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, yet, over the years, school fees and other related education support for OVC has been the less prioritized and often the forgotten element in Malawi national budgets.

2.1 Methodology and Limitations

The review of the 2009/10 and 2010/11 national budgets has been developed based on documentary analysis and literature review. Key documents were budget documents presented and debated in parliament as well as key development policy documents.

Discussions were also held with selected Malawi government officials within MGCCD, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), Ministry of Finance, the National Aids Commission, District Assemblies and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

However, the report has been greatly challenged by inadequate and inconsistent information as well as weak capacity in various offices to process and present information related to education support for OVC in a systematic manner.

3.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR EDUCATION SUPPORT IN MALAWI

Education support for OVC is officially provided by the Malawi government through the MoGCCD and education support for needy students is provided through MoEST. However, a number of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) like World Vision, Red Cross and quasi-state institutions like the Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) have also been providing school fees and other indirect forms of education support through school feeding programs, income generating activities, cash transfers and other social protection measures.

Currently, **education support to Government is predominantly donor funded mainly with support channeled through the National Aids Commission (NAC)** which processes grants direct to schools under the auspices of district assemblies. The Ministry of Education (MoE) too runs a bursary scheme targeting needy students. Until recently, the Ministry also has students that it is supporting at an elite private institution called Kamuzu Academy.

3.1 Guidelines to Education Support for OVC

The Malawi Government through the MoWCD developed guidelines for providing education support to OVCs in 2006. According to the guidelines, education support is defined through a comprehensive package of assistance. The package includes school fees and other items listed in the table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Package of Assistance for education support

School Fees	Learning Materials	School Uniform	School Uniform
Tuition Fees	20 A4 exercise books per term for Standard 6 and above	(a) FOR BOYS	(b) FOR GIRLS
Boarding Fees	6 ball point pens per term	2 pairs of trousers	2 pairs of skirts
General Purpose Fund	1 mathematical instrument	2 shirts	2 blouses
Text Book Revolving Fund	5 pencils per term	1 pair school shoes	1 pair school shoes
Development Fund	1 rule per term	2 pairs socks	2 pairs of socks
Examination Fees		1 jersey/sweater	1 jersey/ sweater
		3 underwear	3 underwear

Source: Government of Malawi (MoWCD), 2006

The Guidelines recognize the importance of a decentralized government system as it stipulates that the aim of the education support is to strengthen the capacity of local

government assemblies so that they are better able to assess and provide school fees assistance to OVC. The guidelines further indicate the need to expand existing bursary scheme as a way of increasing OVC access to education.

The Government through the Guidelines also intends to roll out a participatory way of managing education support through involvement of communities at the level of Village and Area Development Committees. Other principles are that:

- The bursary shall **only apply to public schools**
- **Only 2.5% of budget** will be used for administration of the bursary
- There shall be equity in gender and geographical distribution
- OVC supported shall be bona fide residents of the areas and districts where the application has originated from
- The District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO), the District Education Manager (DEM), and the District Commissioner (DC), shall be the three key officers to oversee the disbursement of funds.
- All payments shall be accounted for by school heads with genuine receipts
- Children who fail examinations shall have their bursary terminated and shall be given a chance to repeat
- Any person who abuses resources for education support shall be brought to a court of law

It is clear that more needs to be done to actualize the intentions of the laid out Guidelines and address challenges that stand on the way of providing education support in accordance to the procedures.

The bursary package includes tuition fees, boarding fees, examination fees, and general purpose fund among others. This is in light of current predominant practice where **emphasis is only placed on school fees at the expense of other needs.**

3.2 Policy Context of Education Support for OVC

The policy emphasis for the provision of education support for OVC has not shifted much since the Ministry of Women and Child Development produced the National Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children in 2003. The policy aims at promoting an environment in which orphans and other vulnerable children are cared for, supported,

and protected. The need for providing education support is emphasized. Principles of transparency and accountability in the provision of services are also highlighted.

In 2005, a National Plan of Action for OVC (NPA for OVC) was adopted to guide implementation of the policy from 2005 to 2009. The NPA recognizes that Malawi is in an OVC crisis and therefore points to the need for concerted efforts to address the problem. The NPA has indicators and is a costed strategy.

The NPA also recognizes, as a key strategic objective, to enhance access for OVC to essential quality services as such as education. This is further expected to be achieved by the Government and its stakeholders through the provision of bursaries.

The Government therefore has made a commitment through the NPA and the OVC Policy to, among other things; expand the bursary schemes to increase OVC access to primary and secondary education. The targets and outputs include supporting a total of **100,000 OVC annually at an estimated annual cost of K616 million**. Of these, 65,000 are primary school going OVC at an annual cost of K273 million (or US\$ 1,950,000.00), and 35,000 OVC at an annual cost of K343 million (or US\$ 2,450,000.00).

In terms of the cost of education support (bursaries) per OVC, the Policy commitment is such that a primary school OVC **requires US\$30 (or K4,200.00) while a secondary school OVC requires US\$70 or the Malawi Kwacha equivalent of K9,800.00**. These costs are expected to be applied to the package of education support defined in the Guidelines for Education Support and highlighted in table 3.1 above.

3.3 The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS)

On the other hand, the Government launched the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS).

The MGDS is Government's overall development strategy for the five-year period from 2006-2011. Its main objective is to promote high economic growth, wealth and employment creation as a sustainable basis for poverty reduction. All sectoral policies are expected to be in harmony with the MGDS and the welfare of OVC is under the theme called Social Protection in the MGDS.

However, strategies related to basic education are under a different pillar called Social Development. Currently, Malawi Government and its stakeholders are in the process of formulating a Social Protection (SP) policy. This is in recognition of the fact that poverty has grown deep, severe and is widespread.

Vulnerability has also increased with its negative effects on OVCs and although poverty affects people everywhere in the Country, it is predominantly rural (94.5%) and concentrated in the rural Southern Region (49.7%). The implication is that Malawi could have more OVCs in the southern region compared with other regions and that relatively **more spending on education support should focus on districts in the south.**

However, this is not to indicate that no education support should be provided to districts in the central and northern region. Poverty profiles show that some of the poorest districts are in the centre and the north as table 3.2 shows.

Table 3.2: District Poverty Rates

Poorest 10			Middle 10			Richest 10		
District	Region	% population poor	District	Region	% population poor	District	Region	% population poor
Nsanje	South	76.0	Phalombe	South	61.9	Nkhosakota	Center	48.0
Machinga	South	73.7	Rumphi	North	61.6	Ntchisi	Center	47.3
Zomba Rural	South	70.0	Mangochi	South	60.7	Blantyre rural	South	46.5
Mulanje	South	68.6	Mchinji	Center	59.6	Kasungu	Center	44.9
Chitipa	North	67.2	Salima	Center	57.3	Lilongwe rural	Center	37.5
Balaka	South	66.8	Mwanza	South	55.6	Dowa	Center	36.6
Chikwawa	South	65.8	Karonga	North	54.9	Mzuzu Urban	North	34.0
Thyolo	South	64.9	Dedza	Center	54.6	Zomba Urban	South	28.7
Chiradzulu	South	63.5	Ntcheu	Center	51.6	Lilongwe Urban	Center	24.6
Nkhatabay	North	63.0	Mzimba	North	50.6	Blantyre Urban	South	23.6

Source: www.nso.malawi.net

The poverty profiles also intimate that much as rural poverty is more widespread, there are many OVCs in the urban areas since **11.3 percent of all poor people live in the urban areas.** This presupposes paying attention and providing as much adequate education support to urban public schools as to rural public schools.

However, since the key cause of orphan hood and vulnerability among children in Malawi is HIV/AIDS, the geographical disbursement of education support may have to

pay attention to trends that will be established in the final and Cabinet approved Social Protection policy.

Through the Social Protection Policy, due cognizance shall be provided to poverty trends with additional recognition that previous approaches to alleviate vulnerability have been disjointed, largely uncoordinated and therefore ineffective.

Such shortfalls have translated into inefficiencies in the provision of education support to OVC which have further been **characterized by poor targeting of beneficiaries from education bursaries, and duplication of efforts** by many players, among other effects. Social Protection [policy formulation] therefore is built on the understanding that Malawi needs to move away from safety nets programming towards long term sustainable programming (Tsoka and Slater, 2007).

3.4 Policy Framework within MOEST

In 2007/8 Ministry of Education, Science & Technology (MOEST) drafted the National Education Sector Plan (NESP), a key policy document fashioned around the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) and the Vision 2020. The NESP was set to replace the policy and investment framework (PIF), which had been used by government since 2001. The overall policy framework for MOEST is bent on defending

“Ensuring that by 2015 all children particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality”.

and protecting the right to education for all in line with the country's constitution and international conventions to which Malawi is signatory. It is also in keeping with the following 2015 EFA goal number 2. The support for OVC is in line with the above goal as it targets “children in difficult circumstances”. The emphasis on education for all including for OVC is being made because the right to education has its positive outcome in recognition of the fact that as stated in the MGDS, education, is “the key for attaining prosperity. It is a catalyst for socio-economic development, industrial growth and an instrument for empowering the poor, the weak and the voiceless”.

To realize the EFA goals, Governments were urged in Dakar in 2000 to increase their annual education budgets. It was recommended that to achieve the goals

national governments should allocate at least 20% of the total budget to education, 50% of which should be devoted to basic education. In line with this, adequate funding should also be made to ensure that children in difficult circumstances like OVC also enjoy in full the right to education at all levels.

For one to benefit under the MoEST bursary scheme, the expected beneficiary should be genuinely needy, and already selected to a secondary school; in addition one should be well behaved, not recipient of another scholarship, should have positive attitude towards education and should have completed a bursary application form.

The administration of the bursary scheme is decentralized. At the beginning of each financial year, Head Teachers of various secondary schools are supposed to provide the Education Division with number of needy children to benefit based on completed and verified bursary application forms collected. The Education Division Managers, who manage secondary schools directly, then forward their requests and budgets to the MOEST Headquarters. MOEST then makes all arrangements to make sure that the bursaries are remitted to the schools within the academic term.

4.0 SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND OVC

This analysis continues to make use of the 2007 MOEST Education Statistics compiled by Education Management and Information Systems (EMIS) officers, where it was established that the total enrolment for primary schools was 3,306,926. Out of this figure boys' enrollment was 1,653,894 representing 50.01% while the girls' figure of 1,653,052 represented 49.99%. In Secondary schools the overall enrolment was 210,325 made up of 119,273 for boys (56.7%) and 91,025 for girls (43.3%).

4.1 National Enrolment Figures for OVCs

Based on 2007 statistics, at national level, the total number of orphans in primary and secondary schools was 501,250 out of whom 257,885 are boys (51.5%) while 243,365 was girls (48.6%). There were 454,921 pupils in primary schools out of which 233,001 were boys and 221,920 girls. According to EMIS statistics, in 2007 there were 35,017 standard 8 orphans and 37,041 orphans in standard 7 suggesting that government was expected to enroll around 72,000 orphans in secondary schools in 2008 and 2009. There were 46,329 pupils in secondary schools with 24,884 boys and 21,445 girls.

The 2007 enrolment figures for OVC in primary and secondary schools are presented in the table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1: Total Number of orphans in School by end of 2007

Level	Total Enrolment	Total orphans	Orphaned Boys	Orphaned Girls
Primary	3,306,926	454,921	233,001	221,920
Secondary	210,325	46,329	24,884	21,445
Grand Total	3,517,251	501,250	257,885	243,365
%	100	14.6	51.5	48.6

Observations:

1. The total number of orphans in primary and secondary schools is about 501,250 which is around 50% of the estimated total orphan population of 1 million. This suggests that another **50% of school going age OVC (500, 000) are out of school, and is a warning to policy makers and stakeholders to**

ensure that the orphans out of school should not be denied their right to education.

2. The number of orphans in schools make up 14.6% of the total school going population of 3,517,251;
3. Boys make up 51.5% of all orphans in school while girls make up 48.6% of all orphans. This suggests that there is need to close the gender gap in government interventions over OVCs.

The table 4.2.1 below presents the picture more elaborately:

Table 4.2.1

2007 Primary School Enrolment						2007 Secondary School Enrolment					
Overall Enrolment			Orphans			Overall enrolment			Orphans		
Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
3,306,926	1,653,894	1,653,032	454,921	233,001	221,920	210,325	119,273	91,025	46,329	24,884	21,445
100%	50.01	49.98	13.75	14.08	13.42	100	56.7	43.3	22	20.86	23.55

Observations:

Depending on their size, some Education divisions and districts have high Orphan populations than others; this is an indicator that there is **need to properly target number of beneficiaries per division and district especially considering the scarcity of resources.**

In general there are more boy orphans in school than girls. The number of orphans is much bigger in primary schools than in secondary schools; this suggest that there is a high demand for secondary school space to be occupied by orphans that graduate from primary schools. This represents an **urgent call to policy makers on the need to expand access to secondary education for orphans.**

5.0 REVIEW OF THE 2007-2008 NATIONAL BUDGETS

The foregoing section presents a situation of high demand for education support as represented by the overwhelming numbers of OVC that are yet to see the inside of a classroom. The additional question that this section will be asking is: **Does the national budget provide adequate funds for bursaries for OVC?** This is premised on the expectation that Government is mandatory expected to play the provider of last resort in supporting the education needs of its citizens, and that Government should seal any loopholes for a discriminatory education support system that often pushes the education rights of OVC to the periphery and in an ironic contrast to Government's own policy commitments.

Emphasis is given to budget allocations for the Ministry of Women and Child Development as well as that of the Ministry of Education.

5.1 2007-2008 Approved Budget

An approved budget is one that has gone through the enactment process of parliament after the budget debate and after the often rigorous process of approving each vote (ministry, department) allocations during the committee of supply stage. On the other hand, revised budget estimates represent the figures of actual expenditures at the end of the financial year, and often these figures are presented together in the next financial year draft budget estimates.

The 2007/08 budget was tabled in parliament amidst threats of budget boycott by majority Opposition parliamentarians. The budget was finally approved after Government started to operate on 3-months Provisional Budget.

The total budget expenditure that was approved was MK 173.5 billion against total revenue and grants of MK 163.8 billion. However, at the close of the financial year, total revenue collected was over K10 billion higher at K174.9 billion and close to K6 billion of this good revenue performance was on account of taxes. In addition, **donor grants amounting to K10.2 billion were approved for National Aids Commission (NAC) while the actual funds disbursed by donors at the end of the budget year to NAC were higher at K12.6 billion.**[Source: Malawi Government Approved Output Based Budget Document No5, page 3].

The total budget expenditure was revised from K173.5 billion to K183.7 billion at the close of 2007/08 financial year. Out of these allocations, approved total recurrent expenditure was K110.4 billion and this was later revised to K115.2 billion. The provision for NAC was not reflected under other recurrent expenditures although this was incorporated under development expenditure, a classification which has changed in the 2008/09 budget as NAC funds are now under ORT. Table 5.1 below shows the 2007/08 budget framework

Table 5.1: 2007/08 Approved and Revised Budget Framework

	2007/08 Approved (K'000 million)	2007/08 Revised (K'000 million)
Total Revenue and Grants	163,862	174,922
Of which: Domestic Revenue	98,207	103,093
Grants	65,655	71,829
Of which: NAC	10,280	12,628
Total Expenditure	173,595	183,766
Of which: Recurrent Expenditure	110,434	115,289
Of which: Wages and salaries	30,386	30,659
Other Recurrent Expenditures	67,364	73,032
Total Development Expenditures	63,269	68,595

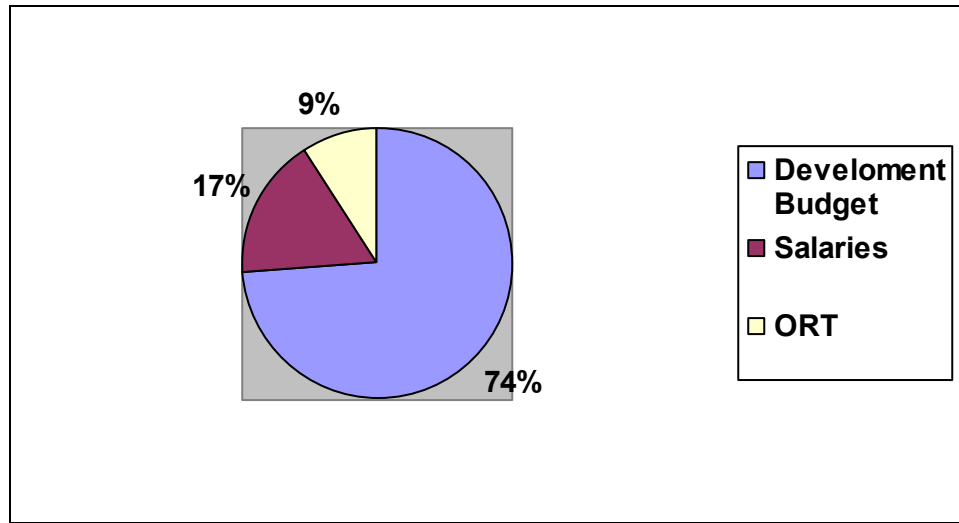
Note: Table contains selected items only adapted from Document 5 (Approved 2007/08 Budget)

5.2 Expenditure for OVC in 2007/08 budget

The Ministry of Women and Child Development which is responsible for leading implementation of the national OVC policy has as part of its strategic plan to improve the survival, protection, and development initiatives for children. Almost all the Ministry's activities are designed to be carried out at the grassroots level. The Ministry identifies the need to assist orphans with school fees as one of the key strategic plan areas of implementation.

In 2007-08, parliament approved a total of K 970.4 million for the entire MoWCD. The actual expenditure (or revised expenditure) at the end of the financial year was K987.5 million. Out of this revised expenditure amount, K170.4 million was earmarked for salaries while K 90 million was for Other Recurrent Transactions (ORT). The greater (K727 million) proportion of the total MoWCD budget (73.6%) was for its development budget.

Chart 1: % Share of Development, salaries and ORT to total MoWCD Budget



The Other Recurrent Transaction (ORT) budget line is used for activities related to education support for OVC among other priority recurrent expenditure needs. The Ministry has district offices across the country in district assemblies and has activities in communities. Just as has been the trend over the past years, the ORT for the MoWCD is grossly inadequate when the ministry's strategic needs are taken into account. **The ORT allocation of K 90 million already was inadequate** to cater for the needs of officials in addition to administering education bursaries for OVC.

5.3 ORT and Education Support

The funding for ORT in MoWCD does not match with the outputs expected of the Ministry in the four key programmes in the table 5.3 below. **It is worth-noting that the Ministry has in recent financial years not allocated any funds under its ORT for providing education support (school fees) for OVC such that no single penny from the Ministry's budget vote was used for school fees in 2007/08.**

Table 5.3: MoWCD ORT by Programme (2007/08)

	2007/08 Approved and Revised (MK' million)
ORT by Programme	90,000
01. Administration and Support Services	41,850
05. Community Services	17,460
18. Gender Development and Social Services	22,950
31. Social Planning Services	7,740

Source: Extracted from Budget Doc. 5 (Output based), p.312

The approved and revised ORT budgets for MoWCD are reported as the same as captured in Table 5.3. Take note that these allocations are running only in millions of Kwacha and should not be read as billions. For example, the entire department of Gender was allocated a mere K22.9 million while that of Social Planning had a minute K7.7 million for the whole year. Perhaps **such small ORT allocation explains why education bursaries for OVC are not accommodated in the Ministry's budget.** However, given the little funds, and other limitations, the Ministry was able to register progress in other areas of its ORT funded programmes.

The scenario on ORT observed in 2006/07 continues to be similar as the ORT allocation is far too low to the required funds according to the Strategic Plans of the MoWCD. The capacity constraints faced to manage the education bursaries are not expected to be overcome through the 2007/08 Budget unless if the ORT can be revised upwards by a considerable margin.

5.4 Local Government Assembly Budgets and Bursaries for 2007/08

The local assembly budgets have not built in education support for OVC in the decentralized budgets beyond general inclusion of the Education Sector and gender which, traditionally focus on other objectives other than acting as conduits for education bursaries. However, each assembly has staff in the established social welfare departments, a majority of who cannot adequately and effectively execute their duties mainly due to resource constraints.

According to the Policy Guidelines for OVC Education Support, and the NPA for OVC, district assemblies are expected to fast track the process of assuming responsibility of managing funds for OVC. Strictly speaking, **assemblies can only disburse bursaries from the Government system using ORT.** However, under ORT for districts, education support for OVC is not clearly identified within the official budget documents.

To **be more precise, district assemblies have no budget lines for bursaries** apart from the support which comes through NAC and other NGOs, some of which is channeled direct to the secondary schools that are educating the OVC. The assembly budgets recognize a few sectors and these are agriculture, health, water and education. The

education budget is only at primary level, and therefore there are no bursaries for secondary school OVC in assembly (government) budgets.

In addition, the ORT for the district and city assemblies is far too low one can not even think of asking for funds for bursary schemes for OVC. For example, **the ORT is insufficient to cover monitoring visits to schools and communities, to conduct identification and screening of beneficiaries, and to cover other administration costs on work done by the District Social Welfare Officers (DSWO)**, as well as district and community committees as they play various roles related to education support for OVC. Below is table 5.4 showing total budget which is the same amount as total ORT for selected local government assemblies.

Table 5.4: ORT for Selected Local Government Assemblies

Assembly	2007/2008 Approved	2007/08 Revised
	Total Vote	Total Assembly Vote
Blantyre City	K158.476 million	K158.474 million
Lilongwe City	K144.977 million	K144.977 million
Mzuzu City	K91.422 million	K91.422 million
Zomba City Assembly	K53.893 million	K53.893 million
Balaka Town	K2.785 million	K2.785 million
Karonga Town	K4.0 million	K4.0 million
Mangochi Town	K3.77 million	K3.77 million
Salima Town	K3.460 million	K3.460 million
Blantyre District	K448.719 million	K448.719 million
Chiradzulu District	K283.411 million	K283.411 million
Chitipa District	K219.076 million	K219.076 million
Kasungu District	K366.246 million	K366.246 million
Lilongwe District	K691.967 million	K691.967 million
Mwanza District	K209.299 million	K209.299 million
Nkhatabay District	K243.289 million	K243.289 million
Thyolo District	K396.044 million	K396.045 million

Each assembly has registered a nominal increase over the previous year's allocations. However, such increases are on average not too significant to impact positively on capacity for providing education support to OVC. Moreover, since education support is not identified as a budget line, the assembly increases are likely on account of the other sectors and not for bursaries.

5.5 Staffing Capacity Constraints

The Ministry is also faced with acute shortage of staff especially at technical level within the headquarters and district assemblies. This is compounded by high turn over due to HIV/AIDS, resignations for greener pastures and retirement. Out of the required (established) staffing level of 6,023 officers, there were only 4,843 by July 2007, representing a vacancy rate of about 20%. However, some established have serious vacancy rates for example grade J has a 94% vacancy rate as illustrated in the table 5.5 below. These vacancy rates have an indirect influence on the quality of attention and priority given to the welfare of OVC including management of education support.

Table 5.5: Selected posts with serious vacancy rates in MoWCD

Grade	Authorized Establishment	Filled Posts as at July 2007	Vacancy rate (%)
F	19	6	68
G	57	16	72
H	33	10	70
I	92	35	62
J	218	13	94
K	331	98	70
L	268	35	87
N	133	42	68
O	120	11	91
P	126	42	66

Source: Government of Malawi Budget Document 2007/8 Approved

6.0 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION BURSARIES AND OVC in 2007/08

The bursary scheme by MOEST of 2007/08 targeted two categories of beneficiaries in secondary schools. The first category is that of gifted students who are sponsored to study secondary education at the elite privately owned Kamuzu Academy. The second category is that of needy students who are sponsored to study secondary education in government secondary schools. This is the category where OVC feature highly. In addition this category focuses mainly on girls as one way of promoting girls education. The bursary package includes tuition fees, boarding fees, examination fees, and general purpose fund among others.

Funding for OVC education is provided within the framework of the MOEST budget. The 2007-2008 approved budgets for MOEST was **K16.2 billion**. The amount was later revised to **K18.5 billion** (GoM, Approved 2007-08 Output Budget: 238). According to the approved figures the revised **Recurrent Budget** for 2007-2008 amounts to K14.6 billion and K3.9 billion for **Development Budget**. The Recurrent Budget is further broken down to K11.7 billion for Personal Emoluments (PE) and K2.9 billion for Other Recurrent Transactions (ORT).

The ORT includes allocations for primary, secondary and tertiary education. Bursaries administered under MoEST are also embedded within the ORT.

Table 6.1: Ministry Of Education 2007-2008 Budget, Selected Items

No	Programme	2007-8 approved ('000)	2007-8 Revised ('000)
Recurrent Budget			
	Personal Emoluments	9,645,513	11,722,822
33	Primary Education	680,818	695,818
36	Secondary Education	1,074,181	1,074,181
45	Tertiary education	577,848	577,848
Development Budget			
I	Foreign financed Projects	3,498,993	3,498,993
II	Domestically financed Projects	151,395	431,395

Source: Ministry of Finance Budget Documents 2007/08

6.1 National Bursary

The Ministry runs a national bursary scheme for needy students. Much as Government policy is to prioritize bursaries for OVC and more especially for those enrolled in public schools, the Ministry of Education bursaries are a mixed bag as they do not specifically only target OVC.

The 2007/8 approved MOEST budget for bursaries amounted to K316 million. As at December 2007, government had already spent K113, 223,000 of the funds earmarked for the bursaries. At the end of school calendar, a total of 188 students enrolled at Kamuzu Academy benefited, against the targeted figure of 132 students. According to 2007/08 budget figures there was no provision for bursaries for needy students in government secondary schools although in the preceding year (2006/07) a budget of K30 million had been allocated for that purpose. This could be a reporting problem as the achievements might not have been recorded in the Output Based Budget Document (ref: Budget Doc No.5 2008/09 Approved).

However, the Ministry reports to have provided grants to grant aided secondary schools amounting to about K17.3 million. This was targeted to 23 grant aided secondary schools. This money could be on account of government supported students (including needy students) selected to these institutions. In addition, MoEST provided K28.1 million to 111 community day secondary schools. This is reported under the output of improved quality of secondary education with no indication if this money also caters for student bursaries.

The MoEST bursary scheme for 2007/08 therefore missed the majority of OVC who are in dire need of education support at the preference of channeling the bulk of the bursary funds (a staggering K316 million) for 188 students only.

6.2 NAC Support for Education Bursaries in 2007/08

Government has almost heaped the responsibility of proving bursaries to OVC on the National Aids Commission which heavily relies on donor funding. Due to the low utilization of the K201 million NAC funding for education bursaries in 2006/7, the 2007/08 bursary scheme was largely expected to utilize the resources carried forward.

This is a challenge as it demonstrates how low absorption capacity, lack of accountability, and even mere technicalities can prevent more OVC from being put in schools.

A total of 12,283 OVCs were supported under NAC funding in 2007/08. In addition, NAC transferred an additional amount of K106million to the Ministry of Women headquarters for its administrative purposes and not exactly for the actual school bursaries. In addition, the Ministry had processed a disbursement request to NAC for education bursaries for 2008 of an estimated over K200 million.

It is clear that the continued over-reliance on NAC and other donors as well as NGOs who provide education support directly to communities is an unsustainable way of providing education support to OVC. Government has the Constitutional mandate to provide public services, and education support for OVC is one of the key priorities that cannot be left at the mercy of funding from non-state actors, some of who merely act out of good-will.

NAC funding, for example is time bound and may not be there all the time unlike revenue from domestically mobilized tax and non-tax resources. It is imperative that Malawi **Government should set a side a portion of its domestically generated revenue for education bursaries.** This would also assist in meeting targets set in the relevant policies and in the NPA for OVC.

7.0 EDUCATION SUPPORT FOR OVC IN THE 2008/09 BUDGET

The 2008/09 education support analysis and review is based on the Approved Budget Documents and on financing trends obtained from the National Aids Commission. Challenges associated with management of the bursary scheme at the local assembly level are also highlighted.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security has been allocated the largest amount of resources in 2008-09 budgets with a total of K32.2 billion. Out of this, K17.7 billion was for fertilizer subsidy. Below is table 7.0 showing some of the highest allocated sectors.

Table 7.0: Highest Allocations in 2008/09 Budget

Sector	Allocation
Agriculture	K32.2 billion
Health	K31.4 billion
Education	K28.1 billion
Road Infrastructure	K14.9 billion
Irrigation and Water Development	K7.6 billion
Elections	K5 billion

Total revenue and grants was estimated at K208 billion for the entire 2008/09 fiscal year, with K118.1 billion coming in as domestic revenue (K107.3 billion taxes). Grants revenue is K89.9 billion with K18.2 billion for the National Aids Commission.

7.1 Framework for 2008-2009 Budget

Parliament approved total expenditure at K229.5 billion out of which total recurrent expenditure was K172.3 billion (with salaries at K37.2 billion). Expenditures for NAC have been incorporated into the 2008/09 budget as a recurrent expenditure with an allocation of K18.2 billion. See the table 7.1 below for selected budget revenue and expenditure items.

Table 7.1: 2008/09 Approved Budget Framework

	2007/08 Revised (K'000 million)	2008/09 Approved Estimates (K'000 million)
Total Revenue and Grants	174,922	208,071
Of which: Domestic Revenue	103,093	118,166
Grants	71,829	89,905
Of which: NAC	12,628	18,271
Total Expenditure	183,766	229,524
Of which: Recurrent Expenditure	115,289	172,304
Of which: Wages and salaries	30,659	37,256
Other Recurrent Expenditures	73,032	118,879
Total Development Expenditures	68,595	57,220

Note: Table contains selected items only adapted from Document 5 (Approved 2008/09 Budget)

It is worth noting that revenue has been increasing in Malawi government budgets over the recent years. This is mainly due to increases in donor support, although increases in tax collections play a significant role. For example, MRA collected K92.9 billion against the target of K86.2 billion, an over collection by about K5.7 billion.

7.2 Allocation for Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2008/09

The allocation for MoWCD in 2008/09 is K1.5 billion (specifically it is K1, 572,521,970). This is about K526 million above previous year budget which was K970.4 million. However, out of this K1.5 billion, only K300 million is for the Ministry's recurrent budget. The rest K1.2 billion is for the capital budget.

Total salaries under the MoWCD vote are K170, 308 million while ORT is K130 million. While the salaries budget line has not changed significantly compared with the previous year, the **ORT has increased by K40 million and this represents a 30 % upward adjustment. This is a commendable development considering the needs and resource gaps within the MoWCD.** However, more resources need to progressively be set aside for ORT especially when the K130 million is thinly spread across the four key programme functions as show in table 7.2 below.

Table 7.2: MoWCD ORT by Programme

Programme	2007/08 Revised	2008/09 Estimate	Approve
Total ORT	K90 million	K130 million	
Administration and support services	K41.8 million	K37.6 million	
Community Development Services	K17.4 million	K32.4 million	
Gender Development and Welfare Services	K22.9 million	K42.6 million	
Planning Services	K7.7 million	K17.3 million	

While ORT has increased by 30% over the 2007/08 revised budget, school fees or bursaries for OVC have not been provided for under this ORT, just like in the previous year. Education bursaries are a recurrent expenditure. This is a matter of serious concern since the MoWCD has no single budget line for OVC bursaries. This is in sharp contrast to the heightened demand for OVC bursaries, and in further contradiction to general improvement in tax revenue collection. **Currently, tax revenue is not contributing to bursaries enough and is therefore not being used adequately to take more orphans back to school** through funding that may have to be allocated under the MoWCD budget.

7.3 NAC Contribution to Education Support for OVC in 2008/09

Education support for OVC has over the recent years benefited from grants provided by the National Aids Commission (NAC). The institution has, since its establishment, been an instrumental player in managing the financing the fight against the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

Out of the MK229 billion budgeted for the 2008/9 financial year, 18.2% have been allocated to NAC and the Ministry of Health and Population (MOH). MOH budget alone amounts to 10.1 percent of the total government budget while 8.1% is allocated for NAC and HIV/AIDS activities. See Table 7.3 below.

Table 7.3: MOH and NAC 2008/9 Budget Estimates

	2008/9 Estimate (MK)	Proportion (%)
Total Government Budget	229,242,000,000	100
MoH Budget	23,178,746,334	10.1
NAC Budget	18,564,767,996	8.1
Total Health and HIV Budget estimate	41,743,514,330	18.2

Out of the NAC funding, a mere 0.3% is budgeted for personal emoluments implying that most of the funds are devoted for HIV/AIDS activities. This is very welcome and shows that given a very good plan of action, the resources in the sector could be put to good use and that education support for OVC could be expanded. However, the downside is that 60% of the Health and HIV/AIDS budget is funded by donors and Government contribution to NAC activities is 2.0% and this is very low. See Table 7.4 for more details.

Table 7.4: 2008/9 HIV and AIDS Budget Estimates

	M Kwacha	Share (%)
Donor funded HIV/AIDS expenditure	18,167,649,391	89.5
<i>Global fund contribution to NAC activities</i>	<i>15,161,529,514</i>	<i>74.7</i>
<i>Capacity development for management of HIV/AIDS</i>	<i>302,770,422</i>	<i>1.5</i>
<i>CIDA contribution to NAC activities</i>	<i>2,613,334,043</i>	<i>12.9</i>
<i>Expansion of HIV/AIDS prevention and action</i>	<i>90,015,412</i>	<i>0.4</i>
MG funded HIV/AIDS expenditure	2,126,861,758	10.5
<i>Contribution to Ministries and Departments</i>	<i>1,729,743,153</i>	<i>8.5</i>
<i>Contribution to NAC</i>	<i>397,118,605</i>	<i>2.0</i>
Total HIV/AIDS Budget estimate	20,294,511,149	100.0

Source: MHEN 2008/09 Budget Analysis

Note that if NAC funding is considered to be recurrent, then donor contribution to the recurrent budget is 52.7%. **The main point is that Government funding of HIV and AIDS activities and health capital budget is very low. It is apparent Government has left the sectors to donors but this is dangerous considering that donors can be unpredictability and are good at changing funding fashions.** While basket funding has been possible in the health sector, simple mistrust or financial mismanagement can turn the basket empty. [MHEN: 2008]

8.0 DECLINING NAC FUNDING TOWARDS BURSARIES

NAC has been providing education support for OVCs since 2005-2006. Currently, the support is being channeled direct to schools through the screening processes done by District Social Welfare offices. However, NAC funding for OVC bursaries has taken a downward plunge when compared with the funding increases and beneficiary expansion that were experienced since 2005/06 as shown in table 8.1.

Table 8.1: NAC grants and Number of targeted beneficiaries

Category	2005/2006	2006/2007
NAC Grants	K87.2 million	K201.6 million
No. of Targeted Beneficiaries	5000	32,000
No. of Primary school beneficiaries	N/A	20,000
No. of secondary school beneficiaries	N/A	12,000

The number of beneficiaries through the 2006/07 NAC grant as at December 2006 was 3,833 (of which 1,315 were female) for all the districts against the target of 32,000. However, according to the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the total funds spent on school fees by December 2006 are K22.1 million.

Table 8.2 below shows some of the districts that were scheduled to benefit from funding for school fees for OVC in secondary schools:

Table 8.2: School Fees for Selected Districts for 2006

District	No. of students	Amount (MK)
Blantyre	91	776,910.00
Chikwawa	103	999,952.00
Chiradzulu	146	908,575.00
Chitipa	187	1,060,600.00
Dedza	198	1,569,280.00
Dowa	98	705,980.00
Kasungu	139	1,142,470.00
Likoma	46	526,350.00
Mangochi	169	1,646,340.00

Mchinji	165	1,595,450.00
Mulanje	285	1,616,810.00
Mzimba	228	1,501,330.00
Mzuzu	66	494,100.00
Nkhatabay	102	627,030.00
Mwanza/Neno	59	323,518.00
Nsanje	137	1,102,300.00
Ntcheu	79	409,980.00
Ntchisi	143	1,389,010.00
Phalombe	125	1,240,500.00
Rumphi	50	514,800.00
Salima	209	1,199,200.00
Zomba	73	951,650.00
Thyolo	113	826,600.00

Source: Ministry of Women and Child Development

Due to the low utilization of the K201 million NAC funding for education bursaries in 2006/7, the 2007/08 bursary scheme was largely expected to utilize the resources carried forward. This is a challenge as it demonstrates how low absorption capacity, lack of accountability, and even mere technicalities can prevent more OVC from being put in schools.

A total of 12,283 OVCs were supported under NAC funding in 2007/08. In addition, NAC transferred an additional amount of K106million to the Ministry of Women headquarters for its administrative purposes and not exactly for the actual school bursaries.

The main challenge that NAC has been faced with over the recent years relates to capacity within Government both at the district and national level. As one way of addressing the problem, NAC set up the Technical Advisory Support Unit (TASU) in the Ministry of Women and Child Development to speed up the process of transferring funds to communities, among other functions.

However, a number of factors have continued to prompt NAC to reduce the amount of support for OVC bursaries in the 2008/09 school and financial year. **The total funds allocated for OVC bursary scheme is K50 million.** This represents a 75% scaling down from previous commitments. These are funds that NAC committed to contribute to the

scheme since other players are supposed to also make their contribution, according to the Executive Director of NAC. NAC has registered concern that the MoWCD is not contributing and that dynamics to the NAC contribution are shaped by two key factors.

First is Performance and second is availability of funds. **NAC establishes that some assemblies have not managed the funds well such that money for education support was reprogrammed by assemblies and used for other purposes.** NAC further points out that some local assemblies refuse to accept that have capacity constraints. **Some assembly officials reiterate that NAC procures expensive fleet of motor vehicles and the institution could rationalize its expenditures to free funds for OVC bursaries. While accountability issues are a challenge to many local assemblies, the NAC “slow down” has affected almost all assemblies.** There is therefore a strong indication that the second criterion –funds availability- has been an overriding factor.

Funding to the district has therefore been scaled down by about 50% to 70%, and this has an effect of sending children out of school. In addition, OVC that are about to complete primary education will not have the opportunity to enroll in secondary schools. See the magnitude of reductions of NAC contribution in selected districts as highlighted in table 8.3 below.

Table 8.3 NAC Bursary Funding To Selected Districts

District	Planned Amount	Current (Reduced) Amount
Mangochi	K11 million	K2.5 million
Blantyre Rural	K7 million	K2 million
Thyolo	K9.8 million	K1.9 million
Neno	K3.2 million	K790,000.00
Ntcheu	K4.8 million	K2 million
Nkhotakota	K4 million	K1.9 million
Dowa	K6 million	K1 million
Rumphi	K4 million	K1.2 million
Karonga	K4 million	K1.9 million
Chitipa	K4 million	K1.2 million
Chiradzulu	K4 million	K2.8 million
Mwanza	K3.5 million	K1.9 million

Source: Compiled from Malawi News (28 February 2009)

At this rate, over **50% of all targeted beneficiaries (that are already in schools) are likely to be taken out of school**, and this represents over 20,000 OVC. In addition, there are pupils completing primary education who are in need of bursaries and the funding reduction worsens the situation further with close to 50,000 OVC graduating from primary and seeking for places in secondary schools. **Unless some urgent intervention is made, the total number of OVC that may go without education support is an estimated 70,000.** This includes the following numbers of children in the following districts:

- Over 1,400 beneficiaries in Mangochi: This will also hamper efforts to rescue children out of the lucrative fishing industry
- Over 2,000 beneficiaries in Blantyre Rural: The district plans to trim number of beneficiaries to less than 400.
- Over 1,500 children in Thyolo: Officials plan to reduce the number of beneficiaries to 250 only.
- Over 1,500 beneficiaries in Ntcheu: in 2008, the assembly supported 840 children
- Nkhotakota plans to trim support from 700 beneficiaries to 200 children only
- In Karonga, about 450 children will be affected: Officials plan to provide priority to girls
- In Chitipa, close to 500 beneficiaries will be affected
- In Mwanza, There are 210 applicants and the assembly is only able to support 87 beneficiaries. NAC created high expectations when they announced at a Worlds Aids Day commemoration (held in Mwanza in 2008) that enough money for education support for OVC is available.

Box 1: The Case of Chiradzulu District Assembly

In Chiradzulu, about 900 OVC will go without education: This includes about 650 girls. Due to NAC slow down, the assembly only submitted 421 beneficiaries (155 girls). This represents only 25% of all eligible applicants. Currently, the assembly has 881 OVC who are on pending list (355 girls). In addition, the funds for the 421 beneficiaries have not even been disbursed by NAC. Some children have already been chased away and the situation is creating acrimony between assembly officials and head-teachers, and the challenge is bigger for students selected to grant aided boarding schools like St. Patrick's Secondary School. **According to Chiradzulu District Social Welfare, Mike Maulidi**, NAC is reluctant to support OVC in such "expensive schools". This has the effect of concentrating bursaries in day secondary schools which often compromise standards of quality education. "All these processes have negative psycho-social effects on OVC who are either sent back from school, or cannot proceed from primary to secondary school as they cannot access a bursary".

NAC insists that other players need to contribute their share while MoWCD indicates that the situation will normalize (Malawi News: 28 February 2009). NAC indicates that the organisation is currently negotiating with the Global Fund and the World Bank for subsequent rounds of funding. However, while these processes are underway, and while the point made by NAC that they ought not to be taken as the only player is true, the situation in schools has turned really desperate, at least as at the time of finalizations of this report. The box below captures concerns raised by some key stakeholders.

Box 2: Stakeholder Concerns on Reduced Funding for OVC Bursaries

"I need money to move money. It is not that activities have been halted, it is just that in terms of resources, they are lower than last year" - **Dr. Bizwick Mwale, Executive Director for National Aids Commission**

"We don't understand that. So, we have just decided to withdraw some of the pupils. We will keep only those we can afford with the money that we have got and we will not approve any new applications" - **Ernest Kadzokoya, District Aids Coordinator for Mangochi.**

"...NAC published it in the news that they had given us the money. They had not warned us about the reduction...people are besieging our offices already accusing us of having abused the money" - **Peter Munthali, acting District Aids Coordinator for Ntcheu.**

"Worse still, even now, NAC has not come out with any explanation. People will have wrong impressions of their assemblies" - **Charles Mwawembe, District Commissioner for Chitipa**

"We were assured we would get the money.... NAC went about the country last year telling the world that the commission has money that is lying idle" - **Andrew Misomali, District Commissioner, Rumphu.**

"There are cases where that money is just lying in the assemblies without being used. So we need to examine ourselves too" - **Felix Mkandawire, District Commissioner, Dowa**

"It is not that NAC is not going to get the money. There has just been a delay and NAC just supported the scheme within its own means. It may take time before the matter is sorted out but I can say things will get better" - **Cyrus Jeke, Public Relations Officer, Ministry of Women and Child Development.**

9.0 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION BURSARIES IN 2008/09

As has been indicated in the preceding sections, the Ministry runs a national bursary scheme for needy students. Much as Government policy is to prioritize bursaries for OVC and more especially for those enrolled in public schools, the Ministry of Education bursaries are a mixed bag as they do not public schools.

As part of planned outputs and activities on its ORT budget, the Ministry intends to ensure an increase in training of teachers, provision of adequate teaching and learning materials, and equity for vulnerable groups. It is based on the last output of equity for vulnerable groups where an expanded bursary scheme for OVC would reasonably be expected.

9.1 Bursary for Needy Secondary School Students

The office of public relations for MoEST indicate that **the Ministry has set aside a total of K30 million for bursaries for needy secondary school students**. Note that MoEST does not refer to the term "OVC" in its documentation in preference to the term "needy", and this could bring structural differences in terms of the nature of beneficiaries to whom the bursary is targeted. This is so because needy students may not necessarily be OVC where as all OVC are essentially needy.

The K30 million total bursaries are designed to benefit a total of 5,000 secondary school needy students. The bursary is administered at Education Division offices and beneficiaries are selected at that level. The size of the bursary was less than K30 million in 2007/08. currently, there is pressure on the MoEST bursary scheme in part due to increasing number of students, and on the other hand due to the scaling down of NAC bursary funding. These challenges are compounded by little coordination between MoEST and MoWCD.

With the foregoing in mind, a critical review of **the 2008/09 budget documents reveal that the Ministry has set aside K14.6 million for the 5,000 needy secondary school students and not K30 million**, unless the allocation was subjected to a mid-year adjustment. A Mid-Term Budget Review was not table in 2009 due to the closure of

parliament. In any case, the doubling of the allocation to K30 million should have come with it a corresponding increase in the number of beneficiaries.

9.2 Bursary for Kamuzu Academy Students

The largest bursary scheme repeated for budgetary funding under the MoEST is the Kamuzu Academy scheme. In 2008/09, **the budget expects to support 188 students with an allocation of about K273 million.** Previous reports have recommended the need to set priorities rights by balancing funds for needy students in public secondary schools with money spent for few students at a private high school. For example, the picture is unpleasant for 5,000 students to scramble over K30 million while 188 can spend K273 million. The scenario is as in table 9.2 below.

Table 9.2: Private School vs. Public School bursary

Institution Type	Total Budget (2008/09)	Total Beneficiaries	Annual Per Capita/student expenditure
Kamuzu Academy	K273 million	188	K1.45 million
Public Schools	K30 million	5000	K6,000.00

We encourage Government to support needy students in quality schools. However, there are double standards at play since other bursary schemes (for example NAC funded) are reluctant to support OVC even in grant aided boarding secondary school which costs only about K50, 000.00 school fees per year.

The same allocation for Kamuzu Academy would (given hard policy choices to make) take an extra 45,500 OVC back to school. Put the other way, money spent for 1 student at Kamuzu Academy can support 242 orphans and vulnerable children in public secondary schools. Given the magnitude of the OVC crisis in Malawi, coupled with competing budget priorities and pressure on scarce resources, **government needs to start rationalizing its expenditure plans and shift resources into a pool for education bursaries for OVC.** Considering budgetary resource allocative inefficiencies which exist in some budget votes, it is possible that more students can be supported both in public schools and at Kamuzu Academy, with priority given to public schools.

10.0 Role of Non-state Actors in Providing Education Support for OVC

There are a number of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working with Government that are providing bursaries to needy students and to OVC. Some of the organizations that are officially known to provide bursaries include Press Trust, Red Cross, Plan Malawi, Lions Club, McMillan, World Vision Malawi, Moslem Association of Malawi (MAM), Blantyre Synod CCAP, Livingstonia Synod CCAP, FAWEMA and Nchima Trust Fund. Mention should also be made there are players in the private sector which have also taken as part of their social responsibility to provide education support to OVC.

Most of the NGOs providing bursaries do so in their catchments areas. Plan Malawi for example provides bursaries to students from Lilongwe, Kasungu, Mchinji, and Mzimba North. The same applies for Nchima Trust, linked to Nchima Tea Estates, which largely benefits students from the tea growing district of Thyolo. Faith based organizations involved in providing bursaries like Livingstonia Synod CCAP, Blantyre Synod CCAP and MAM target beneficiaries largely from within their operational jurisdictions. Other establishments like Press Trust and Macmillan award bursaries to best performing districts in each District. Press Trust for example has been awarding bursaries to two students per district since 2003 with an annual support of 66. On its part FAWEMA targets girls in its interventions.

The support of non-state actors is counted on with desperation in 2009 mainly due to the reduction in NAC support. **NGOs, private sector and other institutions are called upon to fill the funding gaps and play their rightful roles in taking OVC back to school.** In Mwanza, Red Cross is supporting 40 children with bursaries while Action Aid Malawi is supporting 20 OVCs.

Box 3

Case of Mwanza: Empowering Communities to support OVC

MASAF is providing indirect support through income generation activities. MASAF has provided 5 maize mills to selected community based organisations in Mwanza. The income generated from the maize mills is in turn used to pay for school fees for 38 OVCs. This is a sustainable form of educating OVC where communities take a lead responsibility. The strategy also helps to cushion against unreliable donor funding and unpredictable government financing.

It should be noted that the work of NGOs in providing bursaries is crucial in complementing government efforts for promoting education for OVCs. **However, it should be noted that their programmes are dependent upon availability of donor funds and project boundaries**, a situation which limits expansion of access and sustainability. This is illustrated by the fact that due to inadequate funds available for bursaries, among the NGOs mentioned above, the total number of beneficiaries supported per year is less than 1000 with an average of 60 per NGO.

By way of illustration McMillan, a publishing company stopped offering bursaries in 2004 due to lack of funding created by a decline in book sales. The geographical boundaries for Plan Malawi make it difficult to accommodate more students. For instance, in 2007/8 Plan Malawi reached out to less than targeted 80 students because within its catchment area, there were not enough beneficiaries and could not extend to other non- project districts (Source: Ministry of Education).

This only emphasizes the need for Government to take up its constitutional mandate of protecting and promoting the right to education for all OVC. Government should operate as the provider of last resort by rescuing all children that have been kicked out of school and create opportunities for those seeking enrollment into secondary schools. Such an important role should not be absolutely abdicated to other institutions.

11.0 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

While efforts are being made by the Government to harmonize policies for education support for OVC, there are areas that require immediate attention. **Government and its policy partners should work out a comprehensive rescue package for the current desperate situation where needy students and OVC are being chased out of schools due to inadequate bursary funding.**

The rescue package should be based on the numbers of OVC that require education support in line with the National Plan of Action for OVC. In this case we recommend that funds should be set aside for at least 35,000 OVC in a common resource pool with a minimum budget of about K380 million.

While we urge Government to take an active and lead financing role, the non-state actors should help to rescue the current situation by providing bridge support for OVC that are likely to drop out of school for lack of school fees and other forms of education support.

In addition, while advocacy civil society organisations (CSOs) like NOVOC should intensify advocating for more bursaries for OVC and monitoring of bursaries to avoid diversion (or reprogramming) of funds for bursaries to other areas, communities should engage in economic empowerment activities that will help to inculcate a spirit of local ownership and sustainability in achieving the right to education for the increasing number of OVC in the communities.

The 21 Specific Recommendations

11.1 Domestically generated revenue should move in to provide for education bursaries. In this regards, we recommend that **the MoWCD budget vote should carry a clearly identified budget line for education bursaries** just as is the case with the MoEST bursary.

11.2 There is need to **strengthen the creation of a common education bursaries pool where all development partners can channel their funds** to benefit commonly agreed number of OVC within equitable remits of geographical distributions.

11.3 To ensure adequate and constant funding to the education bursaries pool from domestic revenue sources, we **recommend the creation of a special levy for OVC bursaries**. This levy should be on fuel, especially on petrol within the range of K0.30 to K0.60 per liter.

11.4 A portion of the **savings from the debt relief which Malawi experienced in 2006 should be set aside to service the demands for OVC bursaries**. This would help to also establish the benefits of debt relief through the freeing of funds for such a pro-poor activity.

11.5 **Education Support** for OVC should not only be restricted to school fees but should be extended **to cover school uniform, shoes, and learning materials**. In addition, school fees should encompass tuition fees, boarding fees (for students in boarding schools), general purpose fund, text book revolving fund, and examination fees. Payment of one component alone is largely ineffective and may contribute to OVC being sent back from school.

11.6 **Government should improve in terms of its resource allocative efficiency**. Some budget votes are funded better, experience little if any funding cuts, and are treated as more priority than education support. Allocative efficiency can free resources for OVC bursaries.

11.7 **Assemblies should improve their accountability** and finance management and should desist from reprogramming bursary funds to other activities.

11.8 **NAC should improve in terms of its communication** on strategic decisions that have an impact on operations of district assemblies and other partners. **NAC should also be accountable with public money** instead of publishing funding figures that are an exact opposite of actual disbursements. Accountability by NAC should also relate to its own overhead costs and find ways of freeing some resources for OVC bursaries.

11.9 NAC and other **financing partners should contribute to the strengthening of district assembly capacity**. However, the term "capacity" should be clearly defined especially where the word is used as a reason for scaling down support to some partners including assemblies.

11.10 **NAC should improve in terms of resource flow and work towards timely disbursement of funds to partners and local assemblies.** This is more so for funds for education bursaries which are demanded by schools within set academic time frames.

11.11 Local assemblies need to have **increased budget allocation and funding for ORT. They urgently require funds for monitoring OVC related work.** The guideline is that they should get 2% of total assembly funding, yet often times this money does not come through. The situation forces some district assemblies to doctor progress reports especially on HIV work since actual activities are halted by virtue of sporadic funding.

11.12 **Communities should be empowered with meaningful and realistic economic empowerment programmes** that can help to meet the demands for education bursaries for OVC.

11.13 Education support **bursary schemes for OVC should also be designed to cater for more students selected to boarding schools instead of serving OVC in day secondary schools only.** This is true especially for girl OVCs whose level of education attainment gets easily compromised when placed in non-boarding facilities.

11.14 **There is an urgent need for a stronger targeting mechanism for OVC beneficiaries of education support.** This includes more representative bursary committees at the community level. This also points to the need for the finalization of the Social Protection policy which must place emphasis on education support for OVC as a priority strategy under cash transfers. Any targeting mechanism must also be designed to capture more rural based OVCs as primary beneficiaries of education support.

11.15 The reduction in support for OVC occasioned by **NAC slow down should be a lesson for Malawi government against over-reliance on donor financing.** There is great need for Government to increase its portion of education support to avert uncertainties in donor funding, especially in consideration that the Global Fund and World Bank where NAC draws much of its resources are time bound.

11.16 There is need to strengthen the capacity of MoWCD in planning and managing child protection and welfare programmes. **Specifically the ORT for the Ministry needs to be increased substantially.**

11.17 There is need for **revising the administrative costs threshold for district assemblies for 2.5% to a gradual increase ranging within minimum of 5% to 10%.**

11.18 As equally observed in the 2008 NOVOC Report, **education support for OVC needs to be given higher levels of protection as a priority.** Education bursaries should come out clearly in the list of protected priority expenditure (PPE) allocations for ease of monitoring commitment of the Government to this area. The amount allocated as a PPE for education support also needs to increase in line with the needs and demands for OVC bursaries.

11.19 **There is need to improve information** flow among implementers of education bursaries especially on the role of NGOs. Some NGOs do not share information with the MoWCD and do not disclose the number of OVC they are supporting. **MoWCD and MoEST should also improve their coordination on bursaries.**

11.20 Proper balance should be made on funds allocated for bursaries to Kamuzu Academy vis a vis education support for OVC in the public schools. The **funding for OVCs in public schools must increase as much as the funds allocated for Kamuzu Academy bursaries.** Government can stick to the policy guideline of prioritizing public expenditures on public schools where bursary costs are lower than private and international schools.

11.21 **The civil society and other non-state actors must monitor implementation of the policies** and guidelines for education support to ensure that actual practice matches with policy. CSOs should also lobby for adequate funding to the MoWCD and disseminate information on decentralization and the role of local assemblies in anchoring education support for OVCs. In addition, the CSOs must progressively move into **developing monitoring mechanisms that will track expenditures for OVC education support.** The purpose should be to ensure transparency and to develop

capacity for the communities to demand accountability in this important yet often under-funded area.

12.0 CONCLUSION

The capacity of Government to provide support to OVC is entrenched in the constitutional understanding that the state has the legal and moral duty to protect, and promote the rights of children. Government should therefore seriously take over the responsibility of providing OVC bursaries and work towards reducing donor over-reliance whose negative impact is being felt on account of reduced NAC funds. Government should consolidate its domestic sources of revenue including taxes and create a special OVC bursary fund that should benefit from a fuel levy. Accountability systems should also be strengthened especially at the district assembly level although the same standards should be applied within government head offices. The measures suggested in this report are designed to rescue the thousands of orphaned and vulnerable children some of who have already been kicked out of school. Every child, regardless of orphan hood or vulnerability status, has the right to education and we plead for adoption of the suggested measures that are intended to take OVC back to school.