Kuyenda
COLLECTIVE

- Moving Education Forward -

The Learning Crisis in Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zimbabwe

A desktop review of education sector system delivery constraints affecting rural learners

Contents

Background

The Kuyenda collective is a consortium of civil society and non-governmental organisations made up of:

- Global Integrity (GI)
- Public Social Accountability Monitor (PSAM)
- Stimulus Africa
- Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWEMA) Malawi
- Centre for Learning and Capacity Building (CESC)Mozambique
- Policy Forum (PF), Tanzania
- TEACH for Zimbabwe.

The goal of this collective is to strengthen the efforts of non-traditional education system actors to address the learning crisis through enhanced advocacy aimed at systems strengthening of the Education Sector at a national and transnational level.

Kuyenda's strategic objectives in meeting this goal are:

1. Capacitating Rural Youth Collectives (RYCs) in Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zimbabwe in engaging with education system actors using a systems approach to data collection for effective advocacy at a national and transnational level.
2. Enhancing the efforts of Non-Traditional Actors (NTAs) working with Rural Youth Collectives aiming to influence and add voice to education focused decisions made in transnational spaces.

These strategic objectives are informed by a Year 0 analysis of the learning crisis characterised as Learning Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). This analysis employed desktop research, stakeholder interviews, and country level experience of the consortium members active in the youth development and education space. The findings were consolidated in a Program Proposal and Project Design which asserts that:

- Rural Youth represent a marginalised and vulnerable youth population significantly affected by Learning Poverty in SSA.
- "Learning poverty is rooted in ineffective educational systems occupied by under resourced and under informed system actors." (Verbatim, Program Proposal, Executive Summary)

This document is a consolidation of initial data from desktop reviews undertaken by Country Experts within the consortium around the nature of the learning crisis in Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

Approach

As the project aims to address systems strengthening at a national and transnational level it is important that the lens through which the problem being addressed is also framed from a systems perspective.

A systems approach aims to identify the root cause of a complex problem by understanding the interrelationships and interdependencies between determining factors around the problem. This helps to isolate the root of a problem with many faces affecting many stakeholders.

Learning, by nature is a broad field and a lifelong pursuit. It involves multiple stakeholders at various levels of the value chain in every field and discipline of knowledge and at every stage of life. However, the basis of all learning capacity begins with childhood education. Therefore, the trajectory of learning outcomes throughout the lifetime of learning can be strengthened, delayed, or challenged by the delivery system around childhood (pre-primary and primary) education.

The key determining factors that mutually reinforce positive or negative learning outcomes in childhood education are the circumstances of the learner, teacher, school inputs and school management, whether education is delivered in a public or private setting – traditional or non-traditional setting. The impact of COVID-19, however, has affected the processes of how these determinants perform when delivering education as a product, service or public good which adds an additional layer of connections and dependencies in the system to be mindful of when applying a systems approach.

Finally, it is important to understand that in the interplay between correlating dependencies and relationships in a system's components, in this case; the inputs, processes, outputs, feedback and control mechanisms around the learner, teacher, school inputs and school management, there is a flow of information and resource that either enables or disables the system. If the interplay is enabling then the system is robust, regardless of whether the interplay intersects public private partnerships, private system actors, or non-traditional system actors. If the interplay is disabling, then there may be aspects of the components that are in entropy – not moving or feeding information and resources to other parts of the system and are in decline.

Therefore, our systems approach will also need to be "listening and learning" about:

- To what extent joint action is taken between state and non-state actors in meeting a public need either through accountability mechanisms or joint resourcing or alternative solutions to meeting educational needs;

- How robust is the feedback or interface between different actors at different levels, i.e. are system actions being undertaken in a "silo mentality" or with an understanding of the holistic impact;

- Whether the above processes are accurately informed and properly resourced to create balance or dysfunction within the system.

This desktop review therefore will apply the systems approach to the problem of rural youth collectives engaging in systems strengthening advocacy by:

- Presenting the learning crisis in the four countries by juxtaposing the purpose of learning as enshrined in the education policy framework of each country and learning outcome data that is publicly available or findable.

- Highlighting common education system service delivery indicators affecting the learning outcomes identified.

- Identifying priority systemic drivers of the learning crisis in the four countries that

can be addressed at a transnational level within existing opportunities for entry on current transnational agendas.

- Highlighting key lines of ongoing inquiry that can inform the systems mapping process to be undertaken throughout the life of the project. (These are sectioned in green throughout the document and then tabulated at the end of the document.)

- Identifying key system actors, both traditional and non-traditional, that can be engaged in data collection through stakeholder mapping, user research, and ongoing systems mapping for building effective advocacy mechanisms.

The focus of the review will place an emphasis on childhood education (pre-primary and primary level with a bias towards primary) because of its compounding effect on all other learning outcomes.

Contextual Overview

Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe have both common challenges and unique aspects to their political and socio-economic contexts. This section provides a high-level overview of these factors as public sector service delivery systems operate within a larger environment with political, social and economic forces that shape beliefs and engagements of system actors and their dynamics with one another.

Politically all four countries have five-year electoral cycles with bi-party political dynamics on the surface of what are at heart single party states. Malawi is an exception as the previous election in 2019 saw the long-standing incumbent initially being re-elected but later that result was successfully challenged by the opposition's candidate. The role of the youth population was key in the civil actions that took place in protest of the initial election result.

Tanzania on the other hand, saw President John Magufuli successfully continue his stronghold with another win in 2020, but he later died, and the nation swore in it's first woman president, President Samia Suluhu Hassan was sworn in on March 19, 2021. Tanzania, of all of the four nations, boasts the largest population and a female labour participation rate of 80% which is much higher than the SSA average of 63%. However, women remain disproportionately disadvantaged in economic outcomes, even more so in rural settings.

Zimbabwe is preparing for its next presidential and parliamentary elections in 2023 and Mozambique will follow suit in 2024.

Socio-economically, Malawi has the largest rural population at over 80% in comparison to the other three countries which average out at between 60 to 67%. Out of the four Malawi is most reliant on subsistence agriculture and has the fourth highest percentage of people living in extreme poverty globally. While Tanzania's rural population may be just over two thirds of its society, it has managed to sustain its economic growth over the last two decades and has developed its mining, hospitality and electricity sectors. Inflation while on the rise as the nation bounces back from COVID-19 is at 4.1% in comparison to Zimbabwe's inflation which danced around the 800% mark in 2020 but managed to come down to 60% by December 2021. Despite coming down to 60% the impact was still felt on the national budget eroding the value of allocated resources for sector expenditure. In Zimbabwe, agriculture remains a key driver of economic growth, mining exports have increased, and tourism, trade and transport are expected to improve with knock on effects in other sectors. Youth populations are a key focus of economic empowerment policies in the country through public private partnerships and development actors such as Care International with the Youth Empowerment Programme among many other such programmes.

Mozambique on the other hand, has a rural population of 63% and 70% of its population work in the agricultural sector. However, economic prospects despite its status of

recovery from the natural disaster of 2019; Cyclone Idai, and the COVID Pandemic which swiftly followed the subsequent year and the effects of a military insurgency in parts of the gas-rich province of Cabo-Delgado are cautiously optimistic. Not only is Mozambique rich in natural resources, there has also been a new discovery of natural gas offshore raising its economic prospect.

All four countries have a significant youth bulge in their populations averaging around 43% of the population being 14 years and under (Malawi at 42%, Mozambique at 43%, Tanzania at 43% and Zimbabwe at 41%).

Essentially the critical masses of these countries' populations are in the primary and first phase of education levels within the education sector. Lines of inquiry to pursue during the period of the Kuyenda programme is how political engagements and policy making factor in this demographic when prioritising issues for electoral campaigning versus actual policy implementation. In turn, inquiries also need to be made to what extent these constituencies are being enabled by external advocacy (targeted advocacy mechanisms or initiatives) to participate as citizens in any existing consultative processes that inform general political engagements versus targeted political decision making around youth empowerment programmes, and basic rights realisation around education.

Unfortunately, disaggregated data regarding the youth population, particularly in terms of the rural urban divide, is fragmented and subject specific in mainstream monitoring and reporting by international development agencies who remain the most up to date authorities on population intelligence in SSA and its development challenges.

However, the fragmented data does indicate that rural youth have challenges with regards to their development outcomes economically resulting in financial exclusion among other disadvantages. Further inquiries need to be made as to what extent these poor development outcomes are connected to learning outcomes. For instance:

- In Malawi, rural youth entrepreneurs have low education levels and acquire business skills informally (80.3%), either by being self-taught (43.9%) or through family members (36.5%). (OECD) Understanding what qualifies as low education levels is required to assess the extend of learning poverty implied by this data.

- In Tanzania rural youth are one of the most financially excluded groups in with 45% having neither formal nor informal financial services. Rural youth are people in rural areas aged between 16 to 24 years old (about 4.4 million people or 16% of the Tanzanian population over the age of 16). (2017 FinScope Study) Understanding if there is correlation between financial exclusion of rural youth and unequal access to education from a public service delivery perspective would be an interesting line of inquiry.

- In Mozambique rural youth tend to prioritise farming as sustainable economic activity but cite a lack of access to knowledge and skills in farming to enhance their economic livelihoods. (CIMMYT 2018)

Learning Goals

All four countries have the right to education as an article of their constitutions. However, the enforceability of this provision differs. For instance, in Tanzania, while access to education is a right, it is not a basic right. Interestingly, Tanzania and Zimbabwe have undergone consultative constitution making processes with Zimbabwe adopting a new constitution in 2013 yet Tanzania's new constitution remained at draft stage. In the case of Zimbabwe, constitutional alignment institutionally is still underway with 50 laws still misaligned.

For the purposes of the Kuyenda Collective's systems mapping, further inquiries need to be made as to how constitutional provisions for education as a basic right are first, guaranteed and then aligned to the vertical legal and institutional frameworks that form a basis for the planning, implementation, resource allocation and management of education as a public service that should be available to all. In all the four countries constitutions are the highest law and the first writ of permission aligning the state's commitments to international observances and regional concerts of effort in particular sectors. The timing of promulgation and trajectory of reform a constitution undergoes is also critical to understanding the maturity of a democracy and the level of force that "citizen participation" or "voice" exert in governance systems which ultimately set the agenda for sector systems.

All four countries also have Education Acts that provide the structure of the national education system, and the legal framework for universal access, compulsory education at a primary level, non-discrimination and teaching and school management regulations. Quality of education and access to education are key indicators across all four Education Acts. This is also the level of legal framework where education purposes and or objectives are defined.

The Malawi Education Act states; "The purpose of education in Malawi shall be to equip students with knowledge, skills and values to be self-reliant, and to contribute to national development."

Mozambique has The National System of Education Act n° 6/92 of 6 May which focuses on system regulation and planning.

The Tanzania Education Act and its amendments focuses primarily on regulating the education system but does not explicitly highlight the purpose of education. However, its National Education and Training Policy 2014 provides a robust framework for the purpose of education stating that; "Education is the process of initiating and preparing man through training, in his environment, to play an active role in society." There is a clear link made between the process of education and a greater national purpose of achieving "self-reliance" and each level of education has clearly stated objectives.

In Zimbabwe, the Education Act states the goal of education in terms of a fundamental right with objectives relating to non-discriminatory access with regulations for fees, local authorities, and schools. The Nation Action Plan: Education For All Plan (2005) states that government policies around education are the basis for addressing inequalities of colonial policies, driving socio-economic and political transformation and education is a basic human right, which played a pivotal role in combating ignorance, disease and poverty.

The different countries all have National Visions and Development Plans which make a link between education and socio-economic development necessary to mitigating risks to ongoing and worsening poverty as well as education as a public good.

Finally, each country also has an Educational Sector Strategy Plan (ESSP) with key result areas and performance indicators that inform the implementation of the education sector's key result actions within the frame of the country's broader development strategy. The sector strategic plans also quantify percentages of the national budget required to resource these plans.

The different countries ESSPs and national education policies are typically developed after periods of consultative processes with representative voices of learners, teachers, school administration actors and other street level bureaucrats (local government officers), civil society organisations and development agencies and technical partners. To what extent these consultations are planned for, resourced and targeted is unclear, however, all the ESSPs of the four countries make mention of the consultative process in their preambles or introductory statements of their plans. Finally, the countries all have complementary policies in other sectors, or additional policies within the educational sector (e.g. Zimbabwe School Health Policy, Tanzania Law of the Child Act etc) that impinge on or are related to policy indicators for education within the system.

Table 1: Table Showing Current Status of Legal and Institutional Framework Guiding Education Sector By Country

	Malawi	**Mozambique**	**Tanzania**	**Zimbabwe**
Legal	· Constitution 1994 amended to 2017 · Education Act 2013	· Constitution 1990 · National System of Education Act 1992	· Constitution 1977 amended to 2005 · Education Act 1978	· Constitution 2013 · Education Act 1987
National Vision	**Vision 2063** "An inclusively wealthy and self-reliant nation."	**Agenda 2025** "Mozambique: An enterprising and continuing successful country."	**Vision 2025** "Towards a middle-income economy by 2025"	**Vision 2030** "Towards a prosperous and Upper Middle Class Economy by 2030"
Development Plan	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy 2017-2022 Phase III	National Development Strategy 2015-2035/ ENDE (Portuguese Only)	National Development Plan 2020/21 to 2025/6 PHASE III	National Development Strategy 1 2020-2025
Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) & Policies	National Strategy on Inclusive Education 2017-2021 National Education Investment Plan 2020-2030	ESSP 2020-2029 (Portuguese Only)	ESSP 2015/16 -2020/21	ESSP 2016-2020 ESSP 2021-2026 development in progress
Curriculum Framework (Basic Education or Childhood Education)	2001 to Date: Practical skills for entering self employment and entrepreneurship (MCSER 2014)	2004/5: A new curriculum with three main blocks (grades 1–2, grades 3–5, and grades 6–7). Options for decentralisation of 20% of content at district or province level and for teaching in the native tongue for grades 1 and 2 were provided. (WORLD BANK 2012)	2019: National Curriculum Framework for basic education and teacher education – cultural identity, competence focused to achieve, learning, literacy and life skills. (MoSET, NCFBTE 2019)	2015-2022: Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education – Competence, culture and identity, life long learning, active citizenry and life skills. (MOPSE Curriculum Framework 2015)
Custodian	Ministry of Education (MoE)	Ministry of Education (MINED)	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST)	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE)

It is interesting to note that in the hyper information age and a COVID-19 world ESSPs and Curriculum frameworks were not easily available on the Ministry of Education websites for Malawi, Mozambique or "findable" on the MoEST website for Tanzania.

Understanding the purpose of education as enshrined in the legal and institutional framework of a country is key to evaluating alignment to educational agendas at a transnational level. It is also the baseline for defining a system engine within a systems mapping process as it iterates the performance indicators of a system and the goal a system aims to achieve. Finally, when collecting data through a systems mapping process it helps to frame a reference for measurement against a real versus ideal state of the system and more importantly how effective or if there is any monitoring and measurement available at all in a system.

With regards to education acts, as with constitutional alignment, education acts need to be tracked for reforms since inception to identify any gaps between reforms and implementation. If this is done comparatively with electoral cycles, development planning cycles, and sector planning cycles over a period some insights may emerge regarding political processes of engagement and whether they reflect responsiveness to voice and agency being used by citizens engaging in participatory approaches to democracy, governance and system engagement by sector. This is critical in systems mapping to identify how accountability functions systemically and whether political engagements with the public are robust, are tactical or strategic, disrupt or drive reform, among other things.

Additionally, indicators for performance measurement are rooted in the development plans and sector plans of a country. Resource allocations for implementation of sector policies and action plans are rooted in commitments made in national visions. From the table above it is apparent that the different countries are in different phases of development planning or sector reform at each level of the legal and institutional framework, therefore further enquiries need to be made as to the status of next stage planning where plans have ended (e.g. Malawi, Tanzania and Mozambique) and channels for feedback, monitoring and measurement where other plans have just been launched or in progress. It would be ideal if these inquiries are made with a view to mapping access that rural youth have to engage in these planning consultations or performance evaluations being undertaken.

Learning Outcomes

In all four countries the education sector is structured in two mainstream systems:

- Primary and Secondary education using a three level, or three phase system understood to be pre-primary, primary (which some split into two sub-phases) and secondary school.
- Tertiary or Higher Education

Technical and vocational training centres and adult education do feature within the system, however, the mainstream trajectory for the public education systems remains hierarchically structured in the above stages.

The Kuyenda Country Experts have gathered data from their different contexts to describe the learning crisis by learning outcomes in their countries. With a bias towards childhood or basic education, the data is classified accordingly.

Basic learning or childhood education outcomes reveal that the four countries are experiencing learning poverty or low literacy levels – inability to read a basic text by age ten. Net enrollment rate which is the ratio of children of official school age who are enrolled in school to the population of the corresponding official school age is high across the board for primary education but decreases at secondary and tertiary level for all countries depicting the legacy of past poor learning outcomes.

MALAWI:

The data collected for Malawi is from UN agencies and EMIS statistics readily available in the National Education Investment Plan and the MoE website.

- According to UNFPA net enrollment rates are at 98% for primary education, 81% at secondary education level and 31% at tertiary level.
- Malawi's literacy rate is currently at 72.9 % - 72.5% (males) and 73.4% (females), (UNESCO, 2015).
- In 2019/20, 56% of learners that enrolled in primary school in 2011/12 academic year completed the primary education cycle. This implies that the 44% learners, either dropped out, or repeated or got incapacitated.
- In terms of transition rates to secondary schools, 38% (38.1% boys, 39.3% girls) in 2019 and 37.6% (37.3 boys, 37.8 girls) in 2020 transitioned from primary to secondary school. This means that over half of the learners in Malawi do not make it even to secondary school.
- Repetition rate in 2019 was at 18.7% (19.1% boys, 18.3% girls) and in 2020 at 22.2% (22.8% boys and 22.8% girls). The increase in the repetition rate for 2020 is largely due to the effects of the COVID-19 school closure where learners stayed at home for almost 7 months.
- More people in urban areas are literate (89 percent) than in the rural areas (61 percent).

MOZAMBIQUE:

A 2019 World Bank Service Delivery Indicators Survey of the Education Sector found the following regarding learning outcomes:

- Net enrollment of primary education is 99% but at 57% for secondary level and 31% at tertiary level
- Under half of grade 4 students could correctly identify a word and under 1 in 5 could read a simple paragraph.
- In math, around 6 out of 10 students were able to perform a basic single-digit addition, and only a third of the students can do a single-digit subtraction.
- Student learning in urban schools was already higher in 2014, but it increased far more than scores in rural schools over the past 4 years. As a result, the urban-rural gap has almost doubled. Compared to other countries in the region, Mozambique has one of the largest urban-rural gaps in education outcomes.14
- Gender gaps in student learning also showed no improvement. On average, boys scored higher than girls in both mathematics and Portuguese language. The gap is around 6 percentage points in Portuguese and almost 4 percentage points in math.

TANZANIA:

- Basic reading in terms of being able to read a simple Standard 2 level Swahili text was at less than 50% among a sample survey child in Standard 3. (UWEZO 2015)
- Less than a third of the same sample size could do multiplications that they were required to learn in Standard 2. (UWEZO 2015)
- Tanzania has a 68 percent primary school completion rate, just above the average for low-income countries.
- According to BEST, 2015, pass rates in primary and secondary level national examination ranged between 50 -70% for the years 2010 to 2015.

ZIMBABWE:

- According to the reading assessment done in Zimbabwe for Shona, English and Ndebele for children aged 7 to 14, the percentage of children who could correctly read 90% of the words in a story was 60% with the urban areas averaging 77.9% and the rural areas averaging 54.7%. (ZimStat: Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2019)
- The same report indicated that 24.6% of children demonstrated fundamental literacy skills, with urban areas averaging 41.4% and rural areas averaging 19.1%.
- At 88.8%, Zimbabwe is one of the countries with relatively high primary school completion rates (UNICEF: Budget Brief 2021)
- The Learner to Teacher Ratio (LTR) of 40 and 38 pupils per teacher for ECD and primary education respectively, in 2019, is relatively high making Zimbabwe one of the countries with the highest LTRs.
- 28% attendance for Early Childhood Education which is very low
- 9% Upper Secondary School attendance
- 89% of children complete primary school and 15% complete upper secondary

To put the above learning outcomes into context from a socio-economic development perspective by nation, the table below highlights the compound effect of basic literacy, access to learning and test scores for reading and maths using the Human Capital Index (HCI) which is developed by World Bank.

First launched in 2018, the HCI measures the amount of human capital that a child born today can expect to attain by age 18. It conveys the productivity of the next generation of workers compared to a benchmark of complete education and full health. The table below only shows the education outcome data of the most recent country briefs on the HCI.

Table 2: Comparative Scan of Human Capital Deficiencies in Education By Country

2020 HCI	Malawi	Mozambique	Tanzania	Zimbabwe
Human Capital Index	A child born in Malawi today will be 41 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health.	A child born in Mozambique today will be 36 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health.	A child born in Tanzania today will be 40 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health.	A child born in Zimbabwe today will be 47 percent as productive when she grows up as she could be if she enjoyed complete education and full health.
Expected Years of School.	In Malawi, a child who starts school at age 4 can expect to complete 9.6 years of school by her 18th birthday.	In Mozambique, a child who starts school at age 4 can expect to complete 7.6 years of school by her 18th birthday	In Tanzania, a child who starts school at age 4 can expect to complete 7.8 years of school by her 18th birthday.	In Zimbabwe, a child who starts school at age 4 can expect to complete 11.1 years of school by her 18th birthday.
Harmonized Test Scores.	Students in Malawi score 359 on a scale where 625 represents advanced attainment and 300 represents minimum attainment.	Students in Mozambique score 368 on a scale where 625 represents advanced attainment and 300 represents minimum attainment.	Students in Tanzania score 388 on a scale where 625 represents advanced attainment and 300 represents minimum attainment.	Students in Zimbabwe score 396 on a scale where 625 represents advanced attainment and 300 represents minimum attainment.
Learning-adjusted Years of School	Factoring in what children actually learn, expected years of school is only 5.5 years.	Factoring in what children actually learn, expected years of school is only 4.5 years.	Factoring in what children actually learn, expected years of school is only 4.8 years.	Factoring in what children actually learn, expected years of school is only 7 years.

The HCI shows that learners in all four countries will struggle to complete their basic education and that learning outcomes will be elementary level or lower. Harmonised test scores measure learning outcomes using the average of test scores from TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) and PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study), both carried out by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement. The scores recorded in the table above indicate a level of learning achievement that places young people from the four countries at slightly above minimum.

The data from the HCI does not have disaggregated data by gender or rural/urban divide because this type of data is not readily available for all countries. Much like the literacy, enrolment and other data sourced by country expert teams' evaluation and monitoring of learning outcomes is varied and driven by interests of the entity commissioning the research. While statistics from Malawi and Zimbabwe are sourced from government monitoring through the statistics office, the extent to which each country undertakes this process is varied and dependent on how centralised the education system is and resource allocations available for this type of practice. However, it is important to note that the National Education Investment Plan for Malawi covering 2020-2030 has more data referenced from the Education Management Information System than its predecessor document which had no data referenced at all, albeit it did make information management system a key priority area for development.

Drivers Of The Learning Crisis

All four countries have national plans and policies that place an emphasis on access and quality as key objectives in effective service delivery of education within their systems. Relevance is often discussed as a quality issue and is often framed as curriculum frameworks which include pedagogy and standards of proficiency.

These two key objectives are framed in the national development plans and then further developed in the education sector strategies and policies for implementation.

Quality:

1. Basic education: adequate basic numeracy and literacy levels as gateway skills to ongoing learning, development, and human survival and effective mechanisms for retention and completion rates within the education system.

2. Relevant curriculums to mitigate poor skills development for meeting critical labour demands, capacitate gainful employment, and build necessary competencies required in the emerging world of work in a 21st century world i.e. STEM, innovation and entrepreneurship.

3. Human capital development of teachers, and better incentives for teachers as well as teaching practices.

Access:

4. Inclusivity through gender mainstreaming, providing adequate facilities, and targeting children with special needs.

5. Equitable access through infrastructure.

6. Compulsory education at Primary level as a legal requirement enforcing universal access to education

Kuyenda Country experts further analysed the issues affecting Quality, Access and Relevance to better understand the key drivers of the learning crisis and found the following constraints in their contexts.

Table 3: Learning Crisis Drivers

	MW	MZ	TZ	ZW
CONSTRAINTS TO QUALITY AND ACCESS				
Distance in between schools	▶	▶		▶
Gendered Norms Excluding Girls	▶	▶	▶	▶
Available inputs for special needs children	▶	▶	▶	▶
Student Teacher Ratio	▶	▶	▶	▶
Learning Materials & Inputs		▶	▶	▶
Language of Instruction	▶	▶	▶	
COVID-19/Digital Exclusion	▶	▶	▶	▶
Teacher Knowledge & Motivation	▶	▶	▶	▶
Teaching Practice		▶	▶	▶
Teaching effort		▶	▶	▶
Learning Environment/Infrastructure		▶	▶	▶
Relevance: Curriculum Frameworks	▶	▶	▶	▶

An initial difficulty that emerges when analysing these drivers is that quality, access and relevance are mutually reinforcing objectives of a robust education system, which makes drivers affecting their realisation interrelated as well. This is clearly reflected in the way they are framed at national strategy and educational sector planning levels.

From the learner's perspective access is the initial hurdle to solve in terms of achieving learning outcomes. However, access is interrelated to constraints within the learner's personal environment, school infrastructure and inputs available, as well as frameworks for delivery in terms of teaching practice. The interdependencies of these components creates a ripple effect within the system, therefore solving one does not mitigate another constraint within the subsystem of another component. For instance, a learner may be able to access a school by having the number of schools in their district increase thereby reducing the distance but still fail to access basic literacy because at the school there is insufficient learning materials, time with the teacher due to a high student teacher ratio or high levels of absenteeism from the principal due to poor motivation, effort, and incentives.

As such, there is difficulty in understanding the true nature of the learning crisis drivers with the greatest impact on all interrelated factors affecting the education service delivery and the extent of the problem. In other words: To what extent, in a rural setting (which for all four countries is where the majority of the population is placed) is there disproportionate access to quality education services for youth under the age of 14 who are the critical mass of the population? In essence this is the starting point for the research as well as listening and learning informing the ongoing systems mapping process to be undertaken by the Kuyenda Collective.

A key informant will be rural learners themselves as the output of the project aims to build effective advocacy skills within this population group and their enabling non-traditional system actors. Key will be understanding from the rural learner's perspective:

- What the learning crisis looks like from their perspective and,
- Mapping the state actors and processes and non-state actors and processes that are available to them in addressing that crisis.

As the project aims to develop effective data driven advocacy pathways for rural youth to engage with system actors, the above enquiries need to then dig deeper and understand:

- How do rural youths understand participatory approaches to service delivery such as accountability and advocacy? What is their current level of interface as citizens with voice in the public service delivery system?
- Are rural youth aware of any existing external resources such as non-state actors participating in joint actions with state actors to deliver education services?
- Are these external resources properly targeted, accessible, and relevant to the rural youth?
- To what extent are rural youth aware of the processes involved in delivering a public service such as education to them?
- To what extent are rural youth aware of the opportunities available to them within the legal and environmental framework for participating in or giving voice to mechanisms and processes which affect the other three determinants of their learning outcomes – teacher, school inputs and school management.

Another difficulty is that there are dynamic and critical cross cutting issues that have a compounding effect on the substantive learning outcomes for rural youth. These are the event of COVID-19 and public system responses to service delivery of education and gender mainstreaming.

Covid-19 Responses And Implications For Education Sector Strengthening

In September of 2020, EdTech published a report on "The Effect of Covid-19 on Education in Africa and its Implications for the Use of Technology: A Survey of the Experience and Opinions of Educators and Technology Specialists". Diverse actors in the education sectors were engaged in the survey and respondents from Tanzania were among those providing a higher volume or responses with Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe averaging with moderate volume or responses by comparison. Across the board, the majority of respondents were educators.

The survey found that educators agreed with government responses of lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic and saw the lockdowns as an opportunity to further develop delivery systems technologically by expanding service delivery to include distance learning as a mode of service delivery. Many agreed with government policies to deliver learning through e-learning or distance learning models. However, many agreed that there were common resource constraints that

would present challenges to realising this.

The main obstacles to the effectiveness of distance learning initiatives proposed by governments, institutions and teachers were seen by respondents as the lack of:

- access to effective infrastructure and technology (44%)
- affordable and accessible electricity and connectivity (49%)
- access to appropriate ICT devices (30%)
- a good learning environment at home (23%)
- access to learning materials and an appropriate curriculum (11%)
- capacity building, personal development and training (71%)

Kuyenda country experts were able to provide deeper insights at country level and provided the following insights.

MALAWI

The Covid-19 pandemic saw compounding effects on the constraints to learning outcomes in Malawi;

- Over 7.7 million were children out of formal schooling for over 7 months in 2020.
- Classroom sizes were decongested to accommodate 40 learners per teacher, but this had the knock-on effect of reducing learning time so that all learners could be met

The Government of Malawi responded in the following ways:

- Distance learning education measures by distributing radios, developing online materials and non-digital learning sets for Secondary Schools
- Guidelines for how schools and learners could organise themselves and introduced radio programs for primary school learners. However, schools had the flexibility of how to use these guidelines. The majority of schools used WhatsApp based teaching as learning platforms.
- The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology prepared self-learning modules in Agriculture, Biology, Chichewa, English and Mathematics for students in community day secondary schools in hard-to-reach areas.
- The Department of Science, Technology and Innovation sought to scale up digital education across the country.
- Partnership with non-state actors through the EQUALS project, funded by the World Bank where digital laboratories and libraries are being established across the country.
- Public-private partnerships to facilitate e-learning; MoEST signed a memorandum of understanding with Telekom Networks Malawi (TNM) in April 2020 to provide free access to online education content to students for two months, depending on the situation. Students could access lessons through the MoEST website, where the lessons were uploaded at no data cost. Airtel Malawi, another mobile network provider in Malawi, also supported students with distance learning through zero-rated or no-cost access to the ministry's website.

- MoEST also collaborated with Onebillion and Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), both non-profit organisations, on the Onetab tablet project to provide children in rural areas with customized, low-cost tablets, which are pre-installed with an offline application containing learning material. Tablets have already been distributed to 700 households in two villages and there are plans to 4 Digitalization in teaching and education in the context of COVID-19. Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is also working in this area through UNICEF. Other CSOs include CSEC who are also rolling out an EduTech project as part of lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic and way forward to deal with the issue. Other stakeholders include GIZ, JICA, Save the Children, USAID and UNESCO.

However, there were major challenges to utilise these platforms for learning.

- Accessing radios was a challenge as only 46% of the population in Malawi own radios. Some learners, particularly in rural areas, were not able to access phones or computers. Some areas do not have electricity, moreover there are frequent electricity blackouts and internet connectivity problems.
- In addition, most of the schools that utilised the WhatsApp platform are from the urban areas, the majority being the private schools.
- In addition, most schools have received inadequate support to deliver remote learning and remedial learning.

To further support the COVID-19 response, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) provided a US$10 million grant to support the implementation of the education cluster activities of the National COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan through UNICEF (GPE 2020). The funding would go towards solar-powered radios and tablets to support innovative digital learning solutions for vulnerable children with limited access to electricity; a toll-free hotline to provide additional support for lessons; training to teachers and education managers who provide online teaching programmes; awareness campaigns to encourage parents to support home learning; remedial support by teachers once schools reopen to help students through assessments; and accelerated learning and second-chance opportunities.

TANZANIA

To ensure that learning continued during school closures the Tanzanian Government, through the MoEST and the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government, utilized radio and television programming as well as YouTube to deliver lessons to students. Equally, owners of private schools sought means by which students could be engaged in learning remotely. However, the immediate response to remote and distance learning revealed the deep digital divide between rural and urban areas, as well as between students from poor and well-to-do families (Makoye 2020). Many of those students living in rural areas were not able to participate in remote learning due to limited internet connectivity, lack of access to needed devices and limited availability of some parents to closely monitor their children's learning.

ZIMBABWE

According to UNICEF, 4.6 million children lost access to learning in 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and only 6.8% of children had access to digital learning in 2020.

Further enquiries for the Kuyenda Collective will be around the extent to which the COVID Pandemic affected learning outcomes by country and tracking of performance of the COVID-19 responses by educational actors.

Gender Mainstreaming

The paucity of disaggregated data for learning beyond the literacy outcomes between girls and boys in the four countries already highlights a weakness in gender mainstreaming monitoring within the education systems of all the countries. A critical starting point is the joint Global Partnership for Education (GPE),United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI), UNICEF guidelines: Guidance for Developing Gender Responsive Education Plans. The guidance is developed using existing methodological frameworks for sector planning on the continent and offers good direction for statistical analysis and its role in gender mainstreaming in the education sector, as well as a guide for engaging with education system actors during education planning phases.

In the interim, Kuyenda country experts can provide the following initial insights at country level.

MALAWI

For Malawi, the last Gender Audit in the Ministry of Education (MoE) was done in 2012. This was done through the Department of School Health, Nutrition, HIV and Aids Department in the Ministry of Education which is responsible for Gender issues in MoE. Currently the country is still using this as it has not yet been updated/reviewed. There has been workshops on gender mainstreaming and Gender analysis as well that the department has undergone apart from the Gender Audit.

MOZAMBIQUE

In Mozambique, a recent (2021) study by UNWOMEN has sought to assess the gender statistics system in Mozambique. By way of assessment provide a framework for gender statistics across sector as it is noted that there is a disconnect between policy commitments to gender mainstreaming by sector and actual statistical support to effectively inform policy. The report did however note that within the educations sector, girls are disproportionately affected. The following is an excerpt from the report.

"The 2018 school survey indicates that girls consist of around 48 to 49% of the pupils in all levels of education (MINED, 2018). Aggregate statistics tend to hide geographic and other disparities. When considering the first grade (in the primary education) gender parity is evident in all provinces of the country. However, in the higher grades gender parity decreases. Cultural factors undermining the value of girl's education as well as political instability and climate factors contribute towards challenges in the adequate provision and use of educational services.

According to IPPFAR (2018), Mozambique is among the top 10 African countries with regards to the incidence of adolescent pregnancy (42% of girls aged 15-19 years old). The same survey also indicates that 16.8% of women aged 20-24 years old were married or in union before they were 15 years old, and a further 52.9% were married or in union before age 18, adding to the high number of young

people needing focused educational services. The number of students (particularly girls) with special needs by type of need is not captured by the statistical system. Of the 2.9 million pre-school-age children (aged 3-5 years) only 4 to 6% have access to pre-school education due to the insufficient educational infrastructure (Republic of Mozambique, 2020).

Past analysis has shown that the supply and quality of education services influence gender equilibria, especially in the first years of schooling. These concerns, include among others:

- Distance to school – as parents fear letting a girl child walk long distances alone in fear of abuse. As such, they do their best to delay age of school entrance;
- School safety that includes protection against harassment by men student counterparts and school staff, and separate sanitation services – due to sexual and gender-based violence within the school premises, parents chose to withdrawal girls as a means of protection against such acts;
- Quality of education that reduce time of permanence in the same level of education through repetition – together with distance to school, low quality of education contributes to high dropout rates, as girls enter puberty. At this age, traditional communities consider girls ready for marriage.
- Reduction of girl's social burden – traditional gender roles impose on girls performing domestic responsibilities such as fetching water, washing clothes, cooking and helping to take care of younger siblings."

TANZANIA

CSO actors and academic researchers are the primary sources of monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming in Tanzania. Findings consistently highlight that the girl child is still negatively discriminated against fully realising intended learning outcomes in both primary and secondary education. While primary school enrollment among girls and boys is nearly equivalent, only one in three girls who start secondary school will finish their lower secondary education. Causes of low secondary enrollment and retention among girls include economic hardship, early marriage and/or teen pregnancy, and school-related gender-based violence. Gender parity in Secondary schools remains low with the ration of boys to girls at 68:32 and higher dropout rate for girls at 52% due to pregnancy. Until recently, the current minimum age for marriage is 15 for girls and 18 for boys. In November 2021, the Government of Tanzania announced the removal of barriers to access to education, including those that have prevented pregnant girls or young mothers from attending formal school. This important decision underscores the country's commitment to support girls and young women and improve their chances at receiving a better education. More than 120,000 girls drop out of school every year in Tanzania. 6,500 of them because they are pregnant or have children. Meanwhile development agencies have been active with regards to mitigating gender inequality. USAID supports increasing adolescent girls' enrolment and retention in secondary school in Tanzania through its Waache Wasome activity. The activity works closely with local government authorities, school and community leaders, teachers, and parents to bring a holistic package of interventions to public secondary schools in target districts and communities. These interventions are designed to empower girls to create and achieve goals for their future and address the social norms and economic barriers that constrain their ability to remain and excel in school.

ZIMBABWE

In Zimbabwe gender mainstreaming in the education sector is difficult to track in literature in recent years. Much of the statistical analysis remains in the years 2009 and prior and was done by education system academics and civil society organisations.

However, civil society has recently engaged Ministry of Education through the Gender-Responsive Education Sector Planning (GRESP) program led by a GPE, UNGEI, UNICEF and Plan International, FAWE, ANCEPA, UNESCO IIEP, to train them on the need for gender mainstreaming. Initial feedback indicates that Ministry of Education was able to articulate and identify additional technical needs and deepen key planning officials' understanding of the technical requirements of a truly gender-responsive education sector plan. They made a commitment to integrate these learnings in the new Education Sector Plan to be released soon.

Resource Management Within The Education System

It is clear from the discussion of learning crisis constraints that challenges affecting the education system are interdependent, interrelated, and mutually reinforcing. As rural learners are more likely to access education services from the public system a useful way to identify systemic causes for education system ineffectiveness is by evaluating resource management within the system through existing budget performance evaluations.

National and sector budgets are financial summaries of intentions and plans for implementing sector objectives and strategic priorities. UNICEF has been tracking budget performance in all four countries across all sectors. The tracking is done from the perspective of budget plans for a fiscal period with an analysis against past years or previous years performance. The following discussion is a summary of the most recent budget briefs from UNICEF on the education sector which gives a starting point for understanding resource allocations and resource management challenges creating mutually reinforced learning crisis drivers.

MALAWI

Education is funded primarily domestically (taxes, etc), then supplemented by donors and development agencies at basic education level. Tertiary education tends to be funded more by parents, guardians and families. Basic education remains a top spending priority (MK184 billion/ US$ 252.7 million) for the Government of Malawi for the Financial Year (2019/20) in line with a steady upward trend for the five years preceding. It absorbs between 25% and 18.5% of the total education sector budget. Funding in pre-primary education has increased threefold but remains below basic education which increased by 8%. The increase in basic education is due to personnel remunerations (80%) however needed spending infrastructure and inputs development remains low. In addition, realisation of these levels of expenditure in real terms vary by 4% due to inflation. Also, reports of delayed disbursement of the School Improvement Grant (SIG) persist, which have negative consequences on the procurement of learning materials and other education supplies.

Despite commitments to leave no child behind, the reality on the ground shows that

human, financial and technical resources in the education sector are not equitably distributed. For instance, disparities have been observed in the deployment of both primary and secondary school teachers. Data from EMIS (2018) show that pupil qualified teacher ratio ranges from 1:46 in Zomba Urban to 1:84 in Machinga. The most remote and rural schools often struggle to attract qualified teachers. There are also significant differences in the quality of infrastructure within and amongst districts. Rural schools have been the most disadvantaged. The learning environment for most CDSS is not conducive for quality learning. Most of them operate without libraries or laboratories despite the roll out of the new curriculum which demands them. The fact that there are classes with as many as 130 pupils (against the recommended 60), especially in rural areas, creates overcrowding and forces teachers to deliver lessons under trees.

While policies have been developed, i.e. Grade Promotion Policy for Malawi Primary Schools (2018), National Girls' Education Strategy (2018 – 2023) and the Teacher Management Strategy budget performance does not indicate clear correlation between expenditure and policy objectives as these policies are yet to be implemented.

While the Malawian National Audit Office (NAO) issued an unqualified audit opinion on the Financial Statements for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for the year ended 30th June, 2020, weaknesses within the financial and internal controls of the Ministry, and various schools, colleges, divisions and Universities. Consideration should be given to these weaknesses especially if they relate to and impact upon rural youth supported during project implementation. The NAO also released a Performance Audit Report on the Supply of Learning and Teaching Materials Programme within the Ministry. While this report is a decade old (31 March 2011) and considered the period 2007/08, should concerns remain regarding inadequate access to Learning & Teaching Material, the project should consider exploring the extent to which the findings and recommendations contained in this report have been acted upon in subsequent financial years.

MOZAMBIQUE

Data available for budget performance is only as recent as 2019 indicating some monitoring issues correlating with the period of the COVID-19 pandemic preceded by Cyclone Idai. Historically, the 2019 initial allocation of MT 56.7 billion (US$ 930.4 million) to education was the largest ever nominal allocation to the sector, whereas it is on par with that of 2016, 2017 and 2018 in real terms. Between 2008 and 2018, expenditure has varied from the initial allocation by no more than an average MT 1 b or approximately 3 percent of the sector's total value. This is 16.6% of the total national budget and 5.9% of the GDP. The ratio of general to higher education was 84% to 16%.

The budget is resourced domestically (90%) and externally (10%). Two types of external resources fund the Education Sector: "FASE contributions", which is funding from development partners to the multi-donor Common Fund for Education, and (b) "Bilateral Project Funds", which are all other grants and credits from partners not channeled through FASE. It is important to mention that donors' disbursements under FASE rarely matched commitments in the past decade. This hampers the ability of the Education Sector to effectively plan when not all resources are received.

Spending is over 88% towards personnel with 12% on infrastructure and learning environment development. Though small, the allocation was actually 400% higher than past instances but 130% in real terms due to inflation. For 2019, the 12% investment was towards desks and learning materials.

Increased education spending has helped improve primary school enrolment but not learning and completion. Teacher motivation remains low. The Education budget would have been impacted by the Cyclone Idai.

TANZANIA

The education sector was explicitly allocated TSh 4.51 trillion ($US 1.9 billion) in FY 2019/20 compared to TSh 4.64 trillion in FY 2018/19, which marks a decline of 2.8 per cent in nominal terms. The sector allocation takes up 13.6% of the total budget. Given the population growth in the country and shortage of teachers in basic education, Tanzania has long term plan towards achievement of the Education for All (EFA) target, of committing 20% of its national Currently, student classroom ratios are 1 classroom per 76 primary students and 1 per 40 secondary students. International best practice points to a maximum of 30 children per classroom. GoT ministries hold most responsibilities for the education sector on

the Mainland. However, this sector still faces some issues such as the shortage of teachers and classrooms, as well as inequality in access to educational services. The share of primary education spending has drastically increased from 10.5 per cent to 44 per cent between FY 2017/18 and 2019/20. Salaries or personnel take up 70% of the budget leaving the remaining amounts for development or investment.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) is responsible for policy formulation, planning, monitoring and evaluation of basic, technical, vocational, folk, non-formal, and higher education. The President's Office–Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) coordinates the administration, delivery and management of pre-primary, primary and secondary education through a decentralized system involving 185 local government authorities (LGAs). In the National Audit Office's Annual General Report for Central Government 2020/21 the following anomalies regarding the Ministry of Education are noted: "There has been no new strategic plan since the 2016/17 to 2020/21 plan expired. A Report on the Implementation of the 2016/17-2020/21 Strategic Plan is yet to be prepared."

The MoEST and PO-RALG manage 31 and 3.5% of the education budget respectively. At present the largest share of the MoEST's budget goes to the categories of "access and quality of education" at 44%, followed by wages 31% and "working environment for efficient and effective delivery of services" at 4% percent of total allocations. Budget execution is good at an overall total of 89.7% for FY 2018/19, with 96.4% of total commitments for the recurrent budget being executed, and 90.8% of the development local expenditure.

Disparities in the allocation of resources to LGAs are driven by the level of availability of social infrastructure (schools) and teachers.

The National Audit Office detailed within its Annual General Report for Development Projects 2020/21 that it had undertaken and produced 11 financial audit reports in the year concerned with the Education Sector. These reports don't appear readily accessible to the public. The project should consider engaging the NAO to seek access to these reports in order to determine whether their findings and recommendations could inform project implementation. The aforesaid Annual General Report noted that while the Teacher Educaton Support Program had prepared a curriculum for a diploma related to pre-primary and primary education (that cost TZS 2.9 billion) it had not yet been put into use. The Report found that: "The curriculum was expected to be put into use in September 2020. However, up to the time of the audit; September 2021, the prepared curriculum was not put into use. This was attributed to inadequate planning and management of the project activities. Failure to put the produced curriculum into use limits the attainment of project objectives. I recommend the Management of Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) to liaise with the MoEST to put the developed curriculum of diploma for pre-primary and primary level education into use without further delay." The Kuyenda Collective stakeholders may need to engage with this issue should inadequate teacher capacity at the pre-primary and primary levels be identified as a significant contributing factor towards delayed education outcomes, and may need to consider advocacy to support the role out of the curriculum.

Still to be incorporated: Draw in highly relevant content from pages 114 onwards of https://www.nao.go.tz/uploads/reports/ANNUAL_GENERAL_REPORT_FOR_LOCAL_GOVERNMENT_AUTHORITIES___FY_2020_21.pdf that details under delivery of text books; under release of free education grants; considerable shortage of school infrastructure; shortage of school teachers; school dropouts; and low rate of primary school enrolmentZIMBABWE

At 2.3% of GDP and 13% of the national budget, the allocations for primary and secondary education falls short of the sector financing needs. Employment costs account for 73% of the total education spending, while the investment budget accounts for only 10%. Over the period 2017 – 2021, domestic resources accounted for an average of 94% of education financing, while 6% came from external sources. However, a School Financing Policy for the education sector in Zimbabwe has been in development. This will allow multi-stakeholder partnerships in education financing through bringing in other players including the private sector, philanthropic organizations, and foundations in the sector.

Employment costs largely account for the over-expenditure in 2020, exceeding the approved budget by 225%. Budget overruns have widened since 2018, with total actual expenditure exceeding budget by 23% in 2019 and 99% in 2020, mainly due to inflation. In nominal terms the MoPSE budget increased by 373% from US$146 million (ZW$8.52 billion) in 2020 to US$690 million (ZW$55.2 billion) in 2021. Despite the huge increase, the education budget is still below the peak of US$890 million allocated in 2015. Underperformance of the capital budget and other budget line items reduces the MoPSE bargain and leveraging power to request for more resources from Treasury. Limited capacity to plan and execute infrastructure projects including procurement delays due to limited understanding of the new procurement legislation, policies and guidelines are some of the cited factors contributing to the weak performance. Funding requirements have immensely increased considering introduction of the Free Basic Education and the rollout of the new curriculum which brought in additional cost implications related to such issues as ICT and STEM subjects.

It is clear from the above budget briefs that spending in education is predominantly weighted to teaching staff, however, teacher based indicators in the system are still underperforming. This is because development or investment spending in infrastructure and school inputs is still lagging behind at a pace that is behind the policy implementation towards free and compulsory education. Finally, resource boosting of education sector from external sources, while requiring effective policy frameworks to guide it, also requires accurate information management around budget performance. All four countries are not yet meeting their target of education sector spending taking up 20% of the national budget as iterated in the Dakar Declaration of 2000.

Systemic Drivers For Priority Advocacy At A Transnational Level

Emerging insights from the above analyses confirm the initial problem framed by the Kuyenda Collective being; "Learning poverty is rooted in ineffective educational systems occupied by under resourced and under informed system actors." The connection between a mismatch in monitoring and information system management and resource management is clear when the education system is viewed through the links between policy and planning and expenditure against learning outcomes and learning poverty indicators.

A critical outcome of the Kuyenda Collective project is the effective engagement of rural youth and NTAs at transnational level. As the education sector and its challenges are both broad and complex, it is important to prioritise the basis for advocacy in a way that aligns with the existing transnational agenda and the systemic drivers with the greatest impact on system delivery with the most long-term dividends.

A review of the current educational agendas in key transnational spaces indicates three strategic opportunities for the Kuyenda Collective to leverage.

1. DATA & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
Currently, the African Union (AU) is the largest transnational space on the continent with the greatest influence in convening and gathering countries. The AU has articulated a ten-year Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA).

Access, Quality and Inequality feature prominently as key strategic themes in this strategy. Information management features prominently on the CESA agenda as Strategic Objective 11:

Build and enhance capacity for data collection, management, analysis, communication, and improve the management of education system as well as the statistic tool, through capacity building for data collection, management, analysis, communication, and usage.

- Establish regional and continental Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) and education observatories
- Produce and disseminate regular publications, such as digests and outlooks
- Identify and provide support to educational think tanks
- Support educational research, dissemination, and communication

SADC dovetails nicely with the above agenda as it features Education under its Social and Human Development agenda which details its commitment to access and quality education in the region in its Protocol on Education and Training Programme which asserts and reinforces the AU objective on the EMIS and provides for a Technical Committee within its structure.

Education Management Information System (EMIS) is an institutional service unit which produces and manages educational data and information. It is normally established within a national Ministry or department responsible for education. The focal functions of EMIS are the collection, processing, utilizing and dissemination of educational data and information and avail it to educational stakeholders on a timely, routine, reliable and predictable basis via uncomplicated and user-friendly interfaces. In its normal operation it employs both manual and ICT through computerised systems.

Education Ministries of education in the region face a number of challenges regarding their education statistics. There is a policy and institutional gap in terms of the legal mandate to compel the compliance of education and training institutions in supplying accurate and comprehensive information. There is an information gap in terms of relevant statistics for planning, budgeting and monitoring purposes. It is also evident that there are quality gaps in terms of common standards, including concepts, definitions, and methodologies. A capacity gap in terms of both human resources and infrastructure also exists.

Data reliability, disaggregation, consistency and comprehensiveness is an issue that is fundamental to systems strengthening of the education sector. This is because education sector strategies across the four countries have shallow reflection of the data on the ground regarding the realities of the learning crisis. This is most evident by the responsiveness of the system to cross cutting issues such as the long-standing gender mainstreaming agenda which is poorly tracked in available data and therefore superficially addressed in sector planning.

In the light of these challenges, the SADC ministers of education in July 2008 directed the SADC Secretariat to develop and harmonize statistical norms and standards for the region in order to address the challenge of benchmarking capacities and evaluating progress toward effective information management systems.

Country adoption and institutionalization of SADC EMIS Norms and Standards Assessment Framework and the appropriate EMIS policy, resourcing levels and methodologies for producing quality education statistics and information at the country level may assist to an extent in this regard. Since these norms and standards have already been adopted at the sub-regional level, it may be best to begin the discussion about adoption at the national level.

However, the situation has not shown significant improvement. Several evaluations have also been undertaken since this SADC directive by Association For Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) and other development organizations showed that most African countries face several challenges in producing education statistics that are timely, accurate and comprehensive. In 2019, ADEA through their Task Force on Education Management Policy System (TFEMPS) developed a comprehensive EMIS diagnostic and benchmarking tool also known as "EMIS Norms and Standards" followed by an assessment framework.

MALAWI

The Ministry of Education conducts annual school census to provide up to date information for quality decision making in the provision of education services in the country. Every year, questionnaires were administered in all education institutions across the country. The

census data collection is manned at zonal and district levels as a result of the decentralization of EMIS to zonal and district level for all the 34 education districts of Malawi. Zonal Education Management Information System (ZEMIS) and District Education Management Information System (DEMIS) officers were pivotal in data collection and capturing exercise. (EMIS 2020) Currently, the country uses staff from the National Statistical Offices (NSO) based at the Department for Education Planning in the Ministry of Education to manage the EMIS. In addition, the country works in line with the NSOs standards and in line with the National Statistics Act of 2016.

MOZAMBIQUE

According to an evaluation of EMIS in 2006, the role played by EMIS in educational planning in Mozambique is mixed. At the national level the initial evidence suggests that EMIS helps generate targets for policy frameworks. In addition EMIS supports the Ministry of Education and Culture to establish targets and objectives for their strategies, as well as helping them to monitor progress towards achieving them at the national level. However, on the downside it would appear that links between information systems and planning are not so strong at other levels of the education, such TVET. Similarly, EMIS plays a limited role in supporting the planning process at the provincial level due to lack of funds and access to data at the local level.

There is a lack of transparency in education finance exacerbated by poor communication between the education and finance ministries resulting in a lack of reliable financial information for planning and operations at the various levels. Budgetary information systems are weak and there is no system for tracking teacher performance. Linkages between EMIS and organizational structures have been weak but recent developments have greater stakeholder involvement. However, access to information beyond the central level is limited with expansion heavily dependent on training, equipment and energy supplies. EMIS utilization is greatly reduced by the lack of capacity to exploit it fully.

Further country research is required to ascertain if there has been any reform or use of EMIS in current plans and strategies recently launched. Current challenges experienced in this desktop survey was that all available planning documents on the education sector are in Portugeuse which is the first language for this country.

TANZANIA

Tanzania has an EMIS Development Plan, this indicates a political will by the government to implement the same. However, its implementation is faced by a number of challenges such as data accuracy, validity, reliability and timeliness. A study by Assela M. Luena (2012) on Strengthening the EMIS in Tanzania: Government Actors' Perceptions about Enhancing Local Capacity for Information-based Policy Reforms noted that in most cases Ministry officials encounter mismatch between EMIS data and the actual situation prevailing in 38 different levels of education delivery and management. They reflected on the entire process of data production and identified some weaknesses such as lack of efficient and effective mechanism to validate and control quality of data collected at schools/institutions and districts levels. They also showed doubts about data accuracy in the resource constrained contexts within which EMIS operates and remarked that it is common to get data from schools and districts with errors as most of them are limited to technology that caused them to work manually that increases probability of making errors.

Moreover, poor storage and management of data which is a normal situation in a limited resource settings, schools and districts get difficulties to either retrieve or update data and information in their local databanks. The majority stated that schools and districts have low skills and knowledge about statistics and education indicators that might contribute to increase errors in the data they submit to the EMIS unit. Nevertheless, the observed low capacity of the EMIS unit prompted the management staff to question about the authenticity of EMIS data and suspected that sometimes data is manipulated so that it could portray what management authorities would like to see according to the education sectors and sub-sectors' expected outputs and outcomes.

ZIMBABWE

There is political will to support EMIS as it

features in the institutional framework for the education sector's system of delivery at national and sectoral level. The country has a Census and Statistics Act to guide the coordination, provide for the collection and processing of national statistics. The Ministries of Education have a mandate to collect and process statistical data for institutions under their jurisdiction through the Article 23, Articles 17 of the Education Act [Chapter 25:04], Article 68 of the Manpower Planning and Development Act [28:02], and the Public Service Regulations. Data confidentiality in the statistical value chain is upheld as the Official Secrets Act and the Census and Statistics Act stipulate penalties for violating the act. However, to date, there are no EMIS Policies to guide implementation of EMIS activities.

There are plans to enhance and expand the EMIS in the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP 2016-2020). The EMIS budget within the MoPSE is available through the planning directorate but this is inadequate. The other two Ministries concerned do not have EMIS budgets. There is high staff attrition among staff who possess the skills necessary to perform the EMIS function. There is also no dedicated EMIS unit or dedicated EMIS Staff or EMIS equipment as ICT infrastructure in general is inadequate.

There are already good methodological processes aligned to national and international standards for data collection, processing, publication and dissemination. Specialised surveys are conducted in collaboration with partners/stakeholders to supplement data sourced from the school census are conducted periodically. There are difficulties in getting data from Private and unregistered institutions in primary and secondary education. Some Ministerial departments collect department specific statistics without the involvement of EMIS staff e.g. Early Child Development, Non-Formal Education (NFE), LWS etc. There are difficulties in the collection of statistics due to definitional issues. Furthermore, some indicators in the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education Annual questionnaire are not presented in the same way as the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) definitions.

Currently education reporting involves Ministries of Education presenting data to the Education Parliamentary Portfolio Committee. There is collaboration between the Ministries of Education and ZIMSTAT, and education data is submitted to ZIMSTAT, as the overall authority. However, there are no formal structures for data sharing among key stakeholders are in place.

The Zimbabwe EMIS Peer Review achieved an overall ranked score of 3.2, meaning that the country's Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) is perceived as producing statistical information that are acceptable (scores 2.6-3.3) as per the SADC EMIS Norms and Standards Assessment Framework ranking criteria. There is room for improvement in areas where the country scored below three with full ownership of the findings and implementation of the recommendations. However, it is important to note that the SADC EMIS Norms and Standards should be used alongside international and continental standards, such as the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) and African Union tools. The fact that the region has its own tool alongside international and continental tools can only serve to strengthen it' so that the region can meet international standards.

2. INCLUSION OF DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

CESA also provides for inclusion of more system actors as one of its strategic objectives in a bid to create a more robust education system balanced with more activity from more stakeholders.

CESA as Strategic Objective 12 provides the priorities involved for increased stakeholder participation and engagement:

Set up a coalition of all education stakeholders to facilitate and support initiatives arising from the implementation of CESA 16-25

- Map out key stakeholders on the basis of their comparative advantages
- Jointly identify and develop strategic initiatives
- Identify and mobilize champions to leverage priority areas of the strategy
- Recognize champions and publicize their achievements

The CESA commits to support this objective by robust communication and advocacy to create an awareness of the strategy at national, sub-regional, continental, and global level. An important opportunity is available here, even though CESA is midway in its roll out, in that, systems mapping engagements by Kuyenda can seek understanding as to what extent this communication and advocacy has been undertaken and what are the existing communication processes that provide entry with regards to identifying and mobilising champions and their achievements. Successful engagements regarding EMIS and the SADC Technical Committee are a great platform for connecting to this objective as a valuable stakeholder at national and regional levels. This is also bearing in mind the critical role that actors supporting CESA within the AU framework such as Agenda 2063.

3. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

CESA also gives guidance on resource mobilisation for better resource management in line with achieving its agenda in the region. These strategies also provide an entry for NTAs seeking to open up channels for increasing external source funding for their education sectors nationally as the basis for continental education investment is rooted in sound national resource management mechanisms.

CESA states that:

Innovative mechanisms for sustainable financing and mobilization of resources are a pre-requisite for the success of the CES. New financing mechanisms to mitigate the burden on the public must be implemented including the effective deployment of the private sector.

A ten-year education sector investment plan at continental, regional and national levels must first be developed in participatory and collaborative manner.

Given the importance of national resource mobilization for CESA 16-25 implementation, it is essential that sustainable business models be developed that will reflect the following principles – diversification, cost sharing, strengthening effective and efficient management resource systems in public institutions and expansion of service providers.

Effective information management around budget performances according to strategic objectives of sector plans will go a long way to providing fundamental systems strengthening change at a transnational level. Fundamental to this is accurate information and data around budget execution and performance that is trackable. This data speaks to credibility of the education system delivery which informs investor confidence, whether investments are coming from private entities or donor agencies. Data also allows for better thinking around the problems of resource inefficiencies and new innovations in meeting those gaps.

Emerging Questions For Further Research

Transnational frameworks are wide and broad ranging and the above does not provide an exhaustive treatise but a focused list of highlights that resonate with the issues raised in our contextual analysis.

However, the fundamental critical issue to address at the onset of this project is clearly identifying rural youth populations in configurations of collectives, and then capacitating them to identify and match relevant data useful for informing advocacy within transnational spaces and their decision-making processes as well as effective dissemination of learning outcomes at grassroots level. All of this will need to be undertaken while mitigating against COVID-19 related restrictions.

Strategic Questions therefore for a systems approach to systems mapping of the learning crisis within the educational sector will need to be address nationally and regionally.

Questions need to be directed from the perspective of actors in the system around the rural learner, starting from the inside of the Kuyenda Collective working outwards towards the key system actors to be engaged in the systems mapping process.

KUYENDA COUNTRY EXPERTS

Country experts can build on the initial findings of this desktop review throughout the course of the project during ongoing systems mapping engagements as NTAs in their educational sectors.

1. What are the planning cycles for education sector cycles in your country?
2. How does the ministry of education engage with NTAs active in the education system in your country?
3. To what extent have provincial, district and or national planners within the education ministry in your country engaged rural youth actors engage in the consultative processes undertaken for the existing education sector or upcoming education sector strategy?
4. When do consultative processes for education sector budgeting occur and what are the ways in which NTAs can be engaged?
5. To what extent are budget allocations for the basic education system disaggregated by according to rural and urban, and gender?

RURAL YOUTH LEARNERS

1. What do rural youth desire for their futures – economically, socially and as people?
2. What role does education play in achieving those outcomes?
3. What levels of learning or learning achievement do rural youth consider necessary to their personal and economic development?
4. What are the biggest challenges for rural youth in accessing education services?
5. Are there any "gap fillers" (internal and external strategies or system actors) that rural youth find credible in addressing these challenges?
6. Do rural youth have any internal challenges affecting their learning achievement?
7. In what ways could rural youth be helped to address internal challenges affecting their learning achievement?
8. What assistance do rural youth feel they need to engage with education system actors?
9. Are they aware of any groupings, gatherings or collectives acting to work to benefit rural youth/rural youth welfare/rural youth social and economic development?

NTA RURAL EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDERS

1. Why are they in the education system?
2. What role doe they play?
3. What do they consider to be good learning outcomes for young people below the age of 14 years?
4. What are the current learning outcomes being experienced?
5. What do they consider to be important drivers of motivation and effort in their work?
6. What are key inputs for delivering good learning outcomes in rural settings?

CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS

1. What is their experience of the learning crisis affecting rural youth?
2. What do they see as critical needs that are unmet in rural education?
3. How do they measure, monitor, or track needs of rural youth?
4. What role does data/evidence/information play in their work?
5. Where are they accessing critical data/evidence/information necessary for their engagements with rural youth?
6. What are the critical data/evidence/information gaps pivotal to advancing their work and fulfilling their achievements in their work?
7. What role does education play in the welfare and development trajectory of rural youth?
8. What are resources they are investing in rural youth?
9. What are their relationships and engagements with traditional education system actors in ministry of education at national, provincial and district levels?
10. How responsive do they feel traditional education system actors in ministry of education at national, provincial and district levels are to overtures/gestures/invitations and engagement strategies?
11. How would they evaluate the closeness or level of relations they have education system actors in ministry of education at national, provincial and district levels?
12. Which other NTAs are they aware of working in the rural education system?
13. How would they evaluate the closeness or level of relations they have education system actors in ministry of education at district levels?
14. How relevant are continental and regional education programmes and strategies in their work?
15. Do they have any level of engagement with SADC or AU educational committees or teams and how often?

TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS

1. What role does national EMIS play in their policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation and responses to gender mainstreaming and COVID-19?
2. How integrated and effective are international learning assessments such as TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) and PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) and regional protocols on training that guide standardisation of learning assessments and outcomes from SADC?
3. What are the gaps in national EMIS outputs affecting achievement of CESA?
4. At what stage of rollout and uptake is the EMIS benchmark diagnostic tool, "EMIS Norms and Standards", developed by ADEA TFEMPS?

5. What are the channels and protocols for engagement by NTAs in their spaces?
6. When do consultative processes occur regarding monitoring, evaluation, and communication and advocacy around education issues affecting basic education outcomes in the region?
7. What are the planning cycles for reviewing, and developing the next cycle and phase of planning for strategy?

The above are guidance to be taken in conjunction with the further inquiry green shaded boxes throughout the document. Kuyenda research teams should take the initiative to develop these further for appropriate contexts and levels of engagement. Ongoing considerations will be:

1. Identifying interconnected relationships and dependencies between issues raised.
2. Mapping the distance between the rural learner and different system actors investigated during the research and tracking how these relationships strengthen and weaken over time as rural youth are capacitated.
3. Identifying opportunities for systems strengthening through collective action, synergies, better information sharing and feedback mechanisms vertically and horizontally in the system.
4. Focusing opportunities identified in 3) around improving EMIS adoption and use with a view to resource management, and disaggregated statistical intelligence by gender, technology use and or adoption, and rural vs urban.

STAKEHOLDER MAP

The Stakeholder map brings together key sources identified by Country Experts as active in their education systems. These are grouped according to priority qualified by their impact in the system:

- **High Priority** – Participants or Primary stakeholders in the educational system. Typically, those who are at the system engine and the most important determinants in learning outcomes – the learner, the teacher, system actors who have a direct impact on school inputs and school management including the development of the learning environment (including street level bureaucrats).

- **Mid to High Priority** – Enablers or Secondary stakeholders are those who enable the system to produce results but are not directly responsible for its delivery. Typically, development agencies and CSOs would be in this category. This is also where many NTAs can initially sit.

- **Moderate Priority** – Influencers or Tertiary Stakeholders are researchers, academics and other mainstream actors such as media who help to connect primary and secondary stakeholders to the general public and play a role in shaping their perceptions and ideas about the sector. This also includes, NTAs informal institutional structures such as community leaders, village headmen or chiefs, religious leaders and other opinion leaders in a community. They are typically custodians of values that shape belief systems that provide impetus for or against certain agency on an internal level for individuals in a community.

TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS:

Continental and Regional Entities
- AU
- ADEA (Task Force on Education Management and Policy Support TFEMPS)
- Agenda 2063
- SADC Technical Committee on EMIS

Key Development Agencies or Donors
- Global Partnership for Education (Secretariat; Country engagement team)
- UNICEF
- UNIGEI
- UNESCO
- World Bank
- UNDP
- USAID (Tanzania Education Sector Assessment, Mozambique Education Sector)
- fHI 360 (Education Team – useful regarding EQUIP-T which sought to assist in roll out of EMIS capacity building)

**Transnational actors listed above are key informants who are high level stakeholders but when mapped are yet to exert that level of influence on the rural youth or learner.

COUNTRY LEVEL	Enablers: Secondary Stakeholders (Mid to High Priority)	Participants: Primary Stakeholders (High Priority)	Influencers: Tertiary Stakeholders (Moderate Priority)
Malawi	Telekom Networks Malawi (TNM) Airtel Onebillion Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO CSEC EdTech GIZ JICA Save the Children	MoE Provincial Planners Youth Parliament	ILO SACMEQ (The Southern and Eastern Africa, Consortium for Monitoring, Educational Quality) Research Committee Member Mr Jennings M. KAYIRA (Malawi)
Mozambique	USAID EdTech	MINED School Committees Youth Parliament	SACMEQ Research Committee Member Dr Carlos LAUCHANDE (Mozambique) Former Managing Committee Member: Hon. Ms Conceita Ernesto Xavier Sortane , Minister of Education and Human Development , Mozambique.
Tanzania	HAKIELIMU TWAWEZA UWEZO TENMET USAID EdTech	MoEST PRO-LGAs The Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) Youth Parliament	Researcher Committee Member Dr. Edicome Cornel SHIRIMA (Tanzania - Mainland) Former Chair: Hon. Dr. Joyce Ndalichako (Chair), Minister of Education, Science, Technology, and Vocational Training, Tanzania (Mainland).
Zimbabwe	CAMFED Zimbabwe Plan International Save the Children NANGO ECOZI	MOPSE Junior Parliament Ministry of ICT Higher Life Foundation Catholic Diocese (Convent Schools) Anglican Diocese (Anglican school) United Methodist (Africa University)	SACMEQ Research Committee Member Dr. Timothy CHIWIYE (Zimbabwe) Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe POTRAZ Powertell TelOne

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