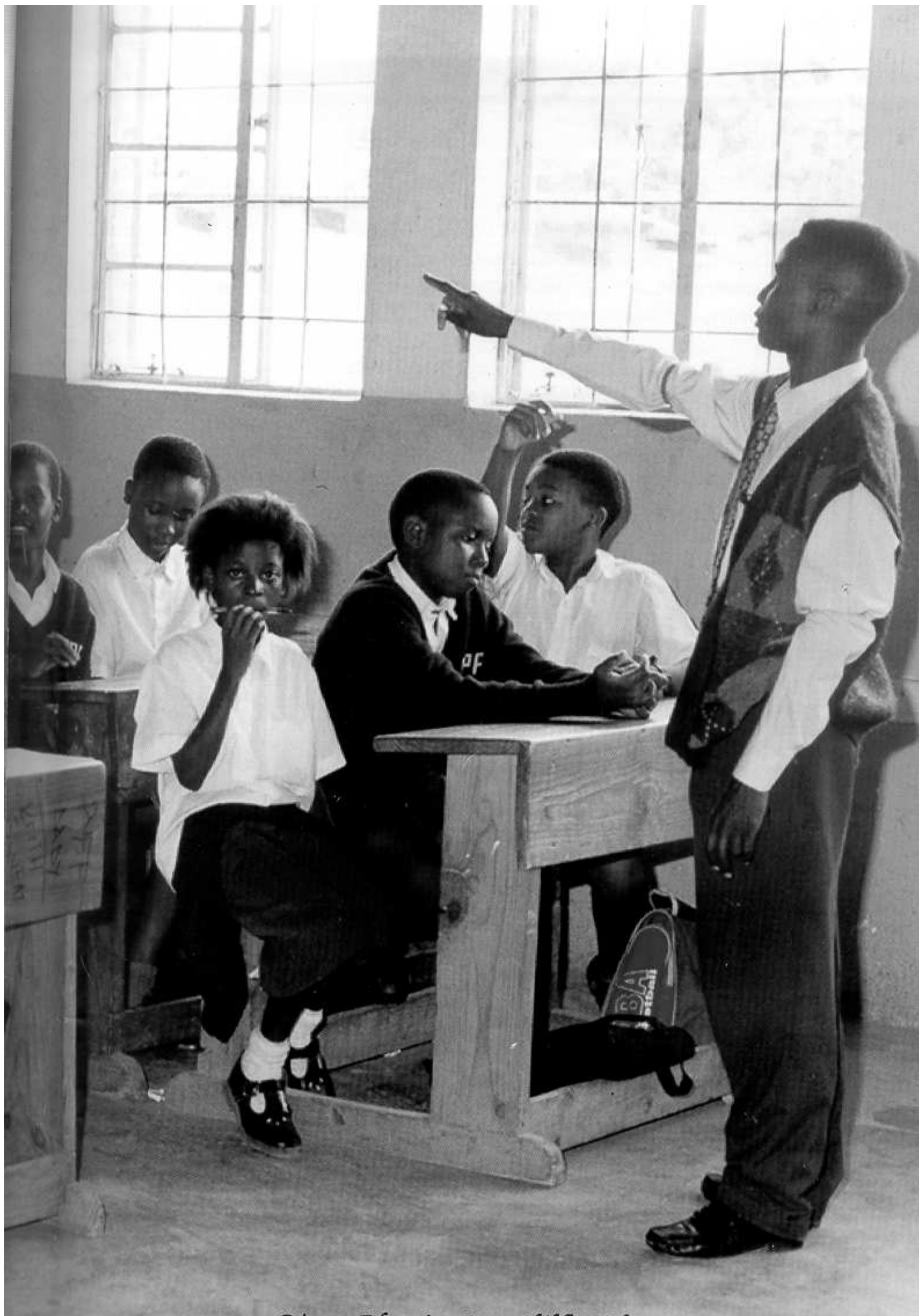




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**ADVANCING  
QUALITY  
EDUCATION**



# 4. Advancing Quality Education

## OUR AIM

*The UDF government believes that education is key to social and economic development. Basic education helps to improve people's understanding of nutrition, health, literacy, and numeracy. Additionally, every nation needs a critical mass of individuals to drive the development agenda forward. The UDF government is aware that serious deficiencies exist in the education system of our country. Most of the shortfalls arise from external factors such as poverty, overpopulation, and lack of resources.*

*The introduction of free primary education in 1994 was a phenomenal accomplishment for the UDF government. However the increase in annual primary enrollment from 1.5 million to 4 million children brought with it some challenges which the UDF government is grappling with. These include shortage of classroom blocks and teachers, lack of adequate teaching and learning resources, and high drop out and attrition rates. Therefore the UDF government will continue investing in primary education by building additional school classroom blocks and training more teachers. Initiatives to increase access to secondary education will include supporting entrepreneurs who want to build private schools. The UDF government will expand access to universities and colleges. Establishing parallel programs*

## WHAT WE PLEDGED

In 1994 and 1999, the UDF government pledged the development of an education system that responds to the nation's social and economic needs. It promised to increase budgetary allocation to education which would improve primary enrollment through free primary education. The UDF government pledged to improve access to secondary education and higher education and increase female participation in education.

## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

### Basic Education

- Since the launching of Free Primary Education in 1994, enrollment levels, which stagnated during the MCP era, have increased from 1.9 million children in 1993/94 to 4 million in 2003.
- The number of primary schools has increased considerably from 3,216 in 1994 to 4,915 in 2003. The number of classrooms has increased threefold

from 19,909 in 1994 to 52,022 in 2003.

- The supply of textbooks has dramatically increased from 1,413,200 in 1994 to 11.4 million in 2003.
- Due to the Malawi Integrated In-service Teacher Education Program (MIITEP), the number of primary teachers in the systems increased from 27,748 to 53,029.
- The number of qualified teachers has jumped from 23,443 to 31,122 in 2003.
- The number of teachers' houses has doubled from 15,708 to 29,603.
- Domasi College has introduced a Bachelor of Education in Primary Education which will help to increase the number of teacher trainers.
- Currently, the UDF government is implementing a Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform

(PCAR) program. This includes restructuring the primary school cycle from 8 to 7 years and introducing a reception class, reducing the number of subjects, minimizing overlaps and duplication, adding prevocational subjects, and introducing religious and moral education as core subjects in the curriculum.

## Secondary Education

- In 1996 the UDF government converted distance education centers into community day secondary schools. The number of secondary schools has increased from 104 to 840. Enrollment has quadrupled from 46,444 students to 173,842 in 2003.
- Private secondary schools have mushroomed throughout the country, enrolling 25 percent of secondary school students.
- Students have more textbooks today (51,9876) compared to what was available (3,840) in 1993/94.
- Teacher training has been boosted with Domasi College of Education upgrading primary school teachers and enrolling students on a distance education track.
- The number of qualified secondary school teachers has doubled from 2,672 to 5,902.
- Conditions of service for teachers have improved substantially with the introduction of housing allowances and increased training opportunities.
- Constituent colleges of the University of Malawi and Mzuzu University have increased their intake of secondary school teachers from less than 100 in 1994 to over 500 annually.
- A major review of the secondary school curriculum was completed in

1998. The new curriculum introduces prevocational subjects and puts emphasis on English, Mathematics, Science, and development studies. The number of subjects taken by each student has been reduced, and overlaps and repetitions minimized.

## Technical and Vocational Education

- In 1999, the UDF government established the Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Training (TEVET) system which is demand driven and flexible. This is a modular system with multiple entry and exist points, making the acquisition of technical, managerial and entrepreneurial skills a life long process.
- Additionally, government established the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVETA) to regulate training programs and activities.
- The government continues to run 7 well equipped technical colleges and vocational schools offering formal training in 22 trade fields including building, engineering and printing. The technical colleges maintain an enrollment of about 1,300 students. This figure is expected to increase with the introduction of TEVET.
- The Polytechnic and Mzuzu University have added the training of technical college tutors to their curriculum.
- The UDF government has facilitated the construction of a Regional Guidance and Counselling Center which is located in Lilongwe.

## Higher Education

- The establishment of Mzuzu University in 1998 presents yet a milestone in educational development under the UDF

government. The college is currently enrolling 500 students annually, most of whom are training as secondary school science teachers.

- The University of Malawi is undergoing a restructuring and revitalization process in order to expand enrollment and diversify its resource base. Parallel programs have been introduced which target qualified candidates who due to bed space and financial constraints faced by colleges are unable to benefit from government scholarships. Such degree programmes currently offered at the Polytechnic, Chancellor College and Bunda College are already proving to be well patronised.
- The higher education sub-sector has experienced the emergence of private colleges and institutes including the Share World, Africa Bible College, and Livingstonia University. These institutions are offering alternative higher education and training to students who have not been absorbed the public universities and colleges.
- At the policy level, the UDF government introduced an unprecedented district distribution policy in university entrance. The policy enables 10 students from each education district to be selected into the university on government scholarships, while admitting the majority on partial scholarships and economic fee paying basis.
- Female enrollment at the university has increased from 268 in 1994 to 1116 in 2003. The number of teaching staff has also increased from 268 in 1994 to 567 in 2003.
- The government continues to invest in capacity building institutions including the Malawi Institute of Management, the Malawi Institute of Tourism, Mpemba Staff

Development College, and the Malawi Institute of Journalism.

- A new independent Institute for Social and Economic Transformation has been established. The Bakili Muluzi Institute (BMI) is a think tank for leadership development, entrepreneurship, policy analysis and research, and excellence in education. The institute has so far trained 45 chief executives and senior managers from the private sector and parastatals.

### Policy and Management

- The UDF government decentralized the administration of the education system into 6 education divisions, 30 education districts, and zones. This system has improved the delivery of education services at the regional and district levels. The second phase of the decentralization process is to hand over the management of primary schools to district assemblies by the end of 2003.
- Efforts are being made to improve capacity in the Ministry Headquarters, Region and District levels as this is critical for the decentralization of primary schools to District Assemblies planned for August 2003.
- The UDF government established the Teaching Service Commission which is ensuring proper management and general welfare of teachers. The commission is competently handling promotion and discipline issues.
- The government has provided an enabling environment for the growth of private secondary schools by recognising the Private Schools Association of Malawi (PRISAM). This Association is working with government to improve the performance of registered private schools.



- The UDF government has come up with a comprehensive Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) for the sector as a whole which is guiding policy implementation.
- The government, with its development partners, is designing a comprehensive education system development program with linkages to the economic and social goals of Malawi, including nutrition and lowering opportunity costs of education.
- The UDF government is implementing HIV/AIDS initiatives in the education system, targeting the poor and vulnerable groups through the school feeding and nutrition programs in selected districts.
- The UDF government is currently implementing a huge reform program which will retain and sustain the gains of Free Primary Education by curbing absenteeism, arresting dropout and repetition rates, establishing sound teacher deployment and management systems, and boosting the quality of education through curriculum reform and improving school environments.

## THE CHALLENGES

### Primary

- In spite of the policy of Free Primary Education, approximately 25% of learners of eligible age are still not attending school due to poverty related problems.
- There is a high rate of drop out from the system, particularly among girls. 70% of pupils drop out before they reach Grade 8 and less than 50% of children complete 6 years of education.
- Repetition rates are high in grades 1-4, with 0.6% of Standard 6 pupils

reaching the 'desirable level' of mastery and 21.6% of the pupils reaching the 'minimum level' of mastery.

- Due to the rapid expansion of the primary sub-sector, 50% of primary teachers are still unqualified. Additionally there is a disproportionate distribution of teachers between urban and rural areas.
- The average pupil-teacher ratio is 123:1 from 82:1 in 1994, and can be as high as 300:1 in rural areas.

### Secondary

- Community day secondary schools, which enroll 71% of secondary school students are under-resourced, in terms of trained teachers, learning and teaching materials, and science laboratories and equipment.
- Pass rates at the MSCE are generally below 45% and as low as 14% for CDSS and private schools.

### Higher Education

- Enrollment and graduation rates remain low at the higher education level. The enrollment of 4000 students constitutes roughly 0.3% of learners of eligible age.
- There is a disproportionate ratio of academic and support staff in college campuses, which leads to inefficient use of resources. The provision of full time support services is escalating unit costs of higher education.
- Colleges like Chancellor College, Bunda and the Polytechnic need infrastructural rehabilitation before they fully embrace an entrepreneurial culture.
- As new private universities emerge, a regulatory body to set and

monitor standards is not yet in place.

## Policy and Management

- Management of the national examination system is challenged by wide scale cheating during MSCE examinations.
- The capacity at the Ministry of Education headquarters remains low due to the large number of unfilled posts.
- The UDF government inherited a poor National Adult Literacy Programme (NALP) catering for 2,617 centers and 40,000 learners. The projected target of the NALP was 10,500 centers and 262,500 learners by 1992. These targets have not yet been met due to inadequate teaching and learning materials and lack of instructors - a situation that needs redress by the next UDF government.
- The registration system of private schools, which cater for a sizable number of students is not yet fully developed, and therefore fails to adequately monitor established standards and quality.
- The impact of HIV/AIDS on the education sector is devastating. The attrition rate of teachers due to HIV/AIDs is alarming. It is estimated that by 2005, the system will have lost 50 percent of its trained teachers. This poses a challenge for the government in its attempt to develop an efficient education system.

## OUR COMMITMENT

The challenges highlighted above will need more investment in the education sector by the UDF government, cooperating partners, the private sector and recipients. More resources will be invested in teaching and learning materials in order to improve quality.

The UDF government will make heavy investment in rehabilitation of educational infrastructure at all levels to improve the learning environment. Because of a shortage of resources a phased plan over a period of 5 - 7 years will be designed. The UDF government will adopt a policy that allows secondary schools to retain fees paid by students within the school as additional resources for maintenance and provision of other basic needs. This will go a long way in improving the school environment.

Under this manifesto, there will be more investment in the training of teachers, coupled with a refinement of policies on teacher management and deployment which are enforceable. A skills audit will be conducted to ensure that teachers are deployed where they are more effective and that capacity building is based on identified needs. Tied to this strategy will be the development of a policy on the provision of incentives for teachers in rural areas and a policy on teacher establishments per school to avoid overstaffing in urban areas in order to get better and equitable utilization of trained teachers. The policy on retirement age for teachers will be reviewed to increase this from the current 55 to 65.

This UDF government will strengthen the school registration system in order to maintain standards in private provision. It will provide some assistance on a per capita basis to some categories of private schools and colleges in order to maintain quality and standards.

The UDF government will formulate a policy on HIV/AIDS that facilitates the voluntary testing of teachers and students and will provide for antiretroviral drugs in order to keep infected teachers and students in the classroom as long as possible.

Recognizing that the country cannot develop without an adequate science and technology base, the UDF government will place more emphasis on science and

technology throughout the education system, with a serious look at how to provide learning and teaching materials for science and technology at the lower levels of the system.

The UDF government will establish a sustainable policy on student finance in higher education that places more burden on the consumers of education at this level, so that the savings can be used at lower levels. More attempts will be made to expand distance education to increase access and reduce costs of higher education by using information and communication technologies. A policy on the provision of non-core services at college campuses will be reviewed towards subcontracting and outsourcing.

National development oriented research coming out of institutions of higher learning will be encouraged. This requires more linkages and partnership between the institutions, government, and the private sector.

To address gender disparities in educational attainment the UDF government will continue implementing policies that remove obstacles for women and girls. The success of the Girls Attainment of Basic Literacy and Education (GABLE) project will be consolidated by newer programs that will keep girls in school. Gender equity programs will extend to the secondary and higher education levels where women's participation is still low.

The UDF government will facilitate the establishment of more girl's boarding secondary schools and a women's university as it has been proven that single sex education is the best for women and girls.

To improve the management and efficiency of the education system, the UDF government will restructure the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in such a way that the various subsectors operate independently. That is, there will be a

separate financial and organisational structure for basic education, secondary and higher education.

The Ministry of Basic Education will cater for early childhood, primary, and adult education. The Ministry of Secondary Education will administer both government and private secondary schools, vocational schools, technical colleges and teacher training colleges. The Ministry of Higher Education will be responsible for private and public tertiary institutions, colleges, universities, and manage science and technology programs. The new organisational structure will result in an education system that really works, in terms of financial and resource management, policy development, delivery of service, and implementation of reforms.

The UDF government is committed to eliminating illiteracy and giving adult learners functional skills. The next UDF government will resuscitate the almost defunct functional adult literacy programme and increase the literacy levels from the present 60% to 80% by 2008. This goal will be achieved by placing adult education under the Ministry of Basic Education. In this way adult education will be designed and managed by specialists who have the necessary technical expertise.

### OUR PLEDGES

**The next UDF government will do the following:**

#### Basic Education

- Continue to implement the Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform Program.
- Introduce double shifting in primary schools to increase access and reduce teacher-pupil ratio.
- Increase incentives to reduce drop out and absenteeism and increase retention among girls and



disadvantaged students.

- Intensify efforts to integrate children with disabilities into conventional schools.
- Improve school environment by increasing supply of teaching and learning materials.
- Construct more classroom blocks under the MASAF III program based on community needs.
- Rehabilitate school blocks and teacher's houses through district assembly initiatives.
- Mobilize support from the private sector and NGOs for early childhood development centers.

### **Secondary**

- Implement the new curriculum which includes prevocational and technical education subjects.
- Construct new Community Day Secondary Schools in densely populated areas to equalize access and increase market opportunities in rural communities.
- Continue to increase the number of girls gaining access to secondary education by providing bursaries and scholarships, bridging programs, boarding facilities, and guidance and counseling opportunities.
- Reduce the number of subjects examined at the MSCE level to improve student performance.
- Discontinue the JCE examination and replace it with continuous assessment methods.
- Continue to increase intake of secondary teachers through distance education, private, and non-residential teacher training.

### **Higher Education**

- Increase intake of university students by optimizing use of existing physical resources, through double shifting, evening classes, and distance education.
- Articulate a National Higher Education Strategic Plan to guide the expansion of the sub-sector.
- Develop a Higher Education Act which will provide the regulatory framework for coordinating, harmonizing, and safeguarding standards.
- Establish a Council for Higher Education to regulate both public and private universities and colleges.
- Maintain 30 per cent of intake of female students and target 50 per cent by 2012. This can be achieved by enforcing the quota system and introducing scholarship awards to women in non traditional subjects.
- Introduce tutorials and bridging programs for female and disadvantaged students including the disabled.
- Facilitate the establishment of a women's university which will focus on retraining women who are in non traditional jobs to help them upgrade to more challenging occupations.

### **Technical and Vocational Training**

- Set up mobile village polytechnics in all districts to train people in specialized vocational skills.
- Establish vocational centers in rural areas which will be linked to designated technical colleges.
- Increase the number of technical colleges from 7 to 10 by 2008.

- Construct 1 national technical teacher training college by 2008.
- Link the formal education curricula to vocational training by introducing pre-vocational and technical subjects at the primary and secondary levels.
- Provide training and support for business development, entrepreneurship, and management in rural communities.

### Teacher Education

- Run a parallel primary teacher training program that includes 2 year residential programs, crash programs, and distance education.
- Construct 3 additional teacher training colleges by 2008.
- Adjust teachers' salaries on a regular basis in line with the cost of living.
- Provide monetary incentives to encourage teachers to work in rural areas.
- Design and implement a teacher recruitment and deployment system which will be district and gender based.
- Create a Teacher Education Development Program to improve and harmonize teacher education in the country.
- Implement an automatic system for promotion of teachers that have served for more than 10 years.

### Policy & Management

- Continue to implement policies outlined in the Policy Investment Framework (PIF) while refining the policy document to accommodate emerging needs.
- Break Ministry of Education into

three: Basic Education, Secondary Education and Higher Education.

- Complete decentralization of primary schools to district assemblies by end of 2004.
- Improve the system of registering private schools and monitoring established standards and quality.
- Introduce a parallel system whereby students are tracked into academic or technical education programs at both the primary and secondary levels. This will ensure that each level of education produces graduates that are ready for work or self-employment.

### Adult Literacy

- Conduct Adult Education under the Ministry of Basic Education to ensure the efficient running of the National Adult Literacy Program.
- Allocate adequate resources for the National Adult Literacy Program in order to increase literacy to 80% by 2008.
- Launch social mobilization campaigns to boost enrollment and promote equitable participation of men and women in adult literacy classes.
- Improve the adult literacy curriculum to make it more attractive and beneficial to rural men and women.
- Build institutional and human capacity for the effective delivery of the National Adult Literacy Program.