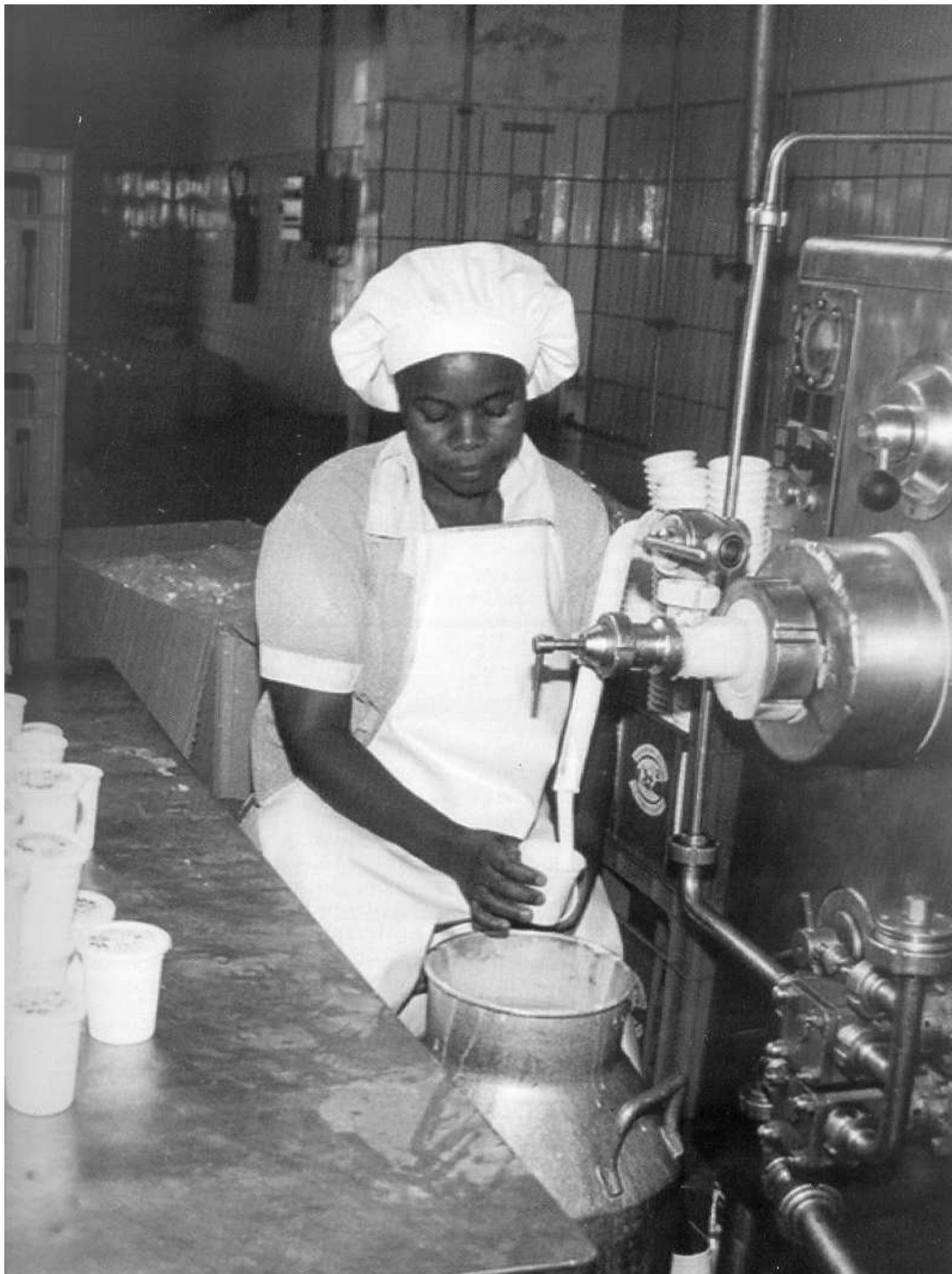




**CREATING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR
EMPLOYMENT**



5. Creating Opportunities For Employment

OUR AIM

The UDF government realizes that a substantial number of young men and women completing formal education do not find employment. Out of about 300,000 school leavers, only 30,000 enter formal employment annually. The current annual capacity of public and technical colleges is 1,441 students while university entrance is about 1,000 students annually. Only 18,000 students enter private training institutions. This leaves a balance of 250,000 untrained and unemployed school leavers. Over 20 percent of those that undergo tertiary education are not able to find employment.

The UDF government will therefore endeavour to ensure that young men and women who exit the formal education system should be able to earn enough income to start a life. Recognizing that jobs in the formal employment sector are limited, the UDF government will create a deliberate policy to encourage self-employment through the provision of loans to school leavers. The first provision for these loans will be included in the 2004/2005 budget.

The UDF Government is reviewing the wage policy in Malawi. One area where the UDF wants immediate action is the civil service pension scheme. The UDF has observed that the standard of living of most civil servants goes down after retirement. This situation needs to be corrected so that civil servants can maintain a decent life style after retirement.

WHAT WE PLEDGED

When the UDF government took over power in 1994, it had a clear strategy for creating opportunities for employment among Malawians. The UDF promised to create an economic and political environment that was conducive to higher investment from local and foreign entrepreneurs. We promised to improve industrial relations and create conducive work environment and equitable conditions of service. The UDF pledged to establish the Technical and Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training (TEVET) program to increase the pool of skilled and semi-skilled workers.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

- The liberalization of the economy by the UDF government triggered the growth of small business, industry and trade. As a result the country has witnessed an escalation of job opportunities for unskilled and

semi-skilled workers, thereby helping to reduce poverty.

- The establishment of TEVET and TEVETA has helped to increase the pool of skilled and semi skilled workers for the private sector and industry.
- The Labour Relations Act and the Industrial Relations Court established under the UDF government continue to improve conditions of workers.
- The expansion of social service provision by the UDF government has created enormous opportunities for jobs. For example, with primary schools enrolling about 3.5 million pupils per year, the current demand levels are 20,000 for primary teachers and 15,000 for secondary teachers. Similar gains have been made in the police and health sectors.
- The UDF government with assistance from development



partners, is currently conducting a capacity assessment program to determine capacity gaps in all sectors of the economy. The results of the assessment will form the basis for the design of a national capacity building program which will include new recruitment and deployment, retraining, and producing of professionals and skilled workers.

THE CHALLENGES

The challenge for the UDF Government in creating job opportunities is to sustain an economic and political environment that is conducive to high levels of both local and foreign investment in both the private and informal sectors. TEVETA should take up the challenge of increasing enrollment in technical courses and entrepreneurship to prepare more school leavers for the world of work.

OUR COMMITMENT

The UDF Government is determined to assist individuals, particularly young people, to make a meaningful transition from school to work. To this end, the government will continue to offer opportunities for skills training and entrepreneurship through the TEVET program and expansion of the primary and secondary school system to include technical subjects. The UDF believes that Malawi has the potential to curb unemployment and create a vibrant economy through investment in human resource development.

OUR PLEDGES

The next UDF government will do the following:

- Create an environment for the growth of the private sector to create more middle income job opportunities for the many school leavers who are currently unemployed.

- Design a comprehensive national capacity building program which will link the nation's capacity needs to employment, training, and deployment trends.
- Invest more in apprenticeship and technical training through TEVET to increase the supply of a skilled labour force.
- Remove discriminatory employment practices between men and women, local employees and expatriates to achieve equal pay for equal work.
- Support the work of the Center for Entrepreneurship and Productivity at the Bakili Muluzi Institute (BMI) which will promote employment research and enhance productivity in the country.
- Continue to accord workers freedom of association and collective bargaining to close wage gaps.
- Finalize a revamped legislation on Safety and Health and HIV/AIDS for workers in Malawi.
- Encourage the formation an association for self-employed Malawians with a view to strengthen their bargaining power and access to credit and markets.