Malaŵi

DHS EdData Survey 2002

Education Data for Decision-making

Malawi
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2002

Education Data for Decision-making

National Statistical Office
Zomba, Malawi

ORC Macro
Calverton, Maryland, USA

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ORC Macro

U.S. Agency for
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FOREWORD

This report presents the major findings of the 2002 Malawi DHS EdData Survey (MDES). The 2002 MDES is the first education survey of its kind to be conducted in Malawi. The primary objective of the 2002 MDES is to provide up-to-date information on education among children of primary school age in order to inform the development, monitoring, and evaluation of education programmes in Malawi. The survey focuses on the factors influencing household decisions about children's school attendance. These data supplement the data collected by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology by focusing on attendance and exploring the costs of schooling (monetary and non-monetary) and parent/guardian attitudes about schooling.

The survey provides data on topics such as the age of children's first school attendance, and dropout; reasons for overage first-time enrolment in school, never enrolling in school, and dropout; and frequency of and reasons for pupil absenteeism. It also collects information on household expenditures on schooling and other contributions to schooling; distances and travel times to school; and parent/guardian perceptions of school quality and the benefits and disadvantages of schooling.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of a number of organisations and individuals that contributed to the success of the survey. First I would like to acknowledge the financial assistance from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)/Malawi, the UK Department for International Development (DfID)/Malawi, and the Canadian International Agency (CIDA)/Malawi. Funding for the overall DHS EdData Activity was provided by USAID's Office of Education in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade. Thanks also to ORC Macro for technical backstopping. I would also like to acknowledge the close collaboration efforts between the staff of the National Statistical Office and the Ministry of Education Science and Technology in implementing the survey. Finally, I am grateful to the survey respondents who generously gave their time to provide the information on which this report is based.

Charles Machinjili
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National Statistical Office, Malawi

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The 2002 Malawi DHS EdData Survey (MDES) was a nationally representative sample survey covering 3,290 households, 2,048 parents/guardians, and 3,752 children of primary school age. The 2002 MDES was the first education survey of its kind in Malawi.

The survey was designed to provide information on education among children age 6-14, with a focus on factors influencing household decisions about children's schooling. This report presents information on adult educational attainment, children's rates of school attendance, absenteeism among primary school pupils, household expenditures on schooling and other contributions to schooling, and parent/ guardian perceptions of schooling.

The sample size was sufficiently large to provide estimates for indicators at the national level and at the urban-rural and regional levels for most indicators. Six survey teams trained by the National Statistical Office (NSO) and the MoEST conducted the survey from May to July 2002.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSEHOLDS AND HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

Educational Attainment. Three-fourths of adults age 15 or older have attended school, although there are substantial differences in educational attainment by gender, residence, and age group. On average, men have completed two more years of schooling than women (5 compared with 3 years). While 7 percent of adults in urban areas have never attended school, 27 percent of adults in rural areas have never attended school. About one in three adults in the Southern region has never attended school, compared with only one in ten adults in the Northern region. Older adults are considerably less likely than younger adults to have attended school.

Children's Living Arrangements. Over half of the children age 6-14 live with both of their biological parents, while 22 percent live with their mother (but not with their father), 2 percent live with their father (but not with their mother), and 22 percent live with neither of their biological parents. Many of these children have been orphaned, losing one or both parents: 15 percent have lost their father, 7 percent have lost their mother, and 3 percent have lost both parents.

Children's Eating Patterns. The survey collected information about the meals eaten by children on the day before the household was interviewed. Eighty-one percent of children ate food in the morning and 95 percent ate food at mid-day, with pupils being more likely than non-pupils to have eaten at both times of day. Overall, children ate 3 times during the day.

CHILDREN'S SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Primary School Attendance, Timeliness of Starting School, and Pupil Flow Rates. The majority (81 percent) of children age 6-13 attend primary school, with equal percentages of male and female children attending school. There are, however, differences in attendance ratios by urban-rural location, region, parents' educational attainment, and wealth. For instance, in the Northern region, 93 percent of the children of primary school age attend school, compared with 84 percent in the Central region and 76 percent in the Southern region.

Seventy-nine percent of the children age 6-14 who have ever attended school first attended standard 1 at or below the official target age of 6-7. However, among the pupils attending standard 1 in 2002, 40 percent were over age for the grade (age 8 or older). One reason pupils attending standard 1 are over age may be that they attend standard 1 for part or all of the school year, and then repeat the standard the following year: 41 percent of pupils attending standard 1 in 2001 repeated the grade in 2002.   This high repetition rate may also contribute to dropout in standard 1, which was 9 percent from 2001 to 2002.

Strikingly, 60 percent of children age 6-14 who had dropped out of school left school either during standard 1 or before attending standard 2. On average, these children left school at the age of 9.

Secondary School Attendance Ratios. Only 9 percent of children age 14-17 attend secondary school, and there are substantial differences in attendance ratios by children's characteristics. For example, children of secondary school age in urban areas are three times as likely as their peers in rural areas to attend secondary school. In addition, among secondary school students who are within or outside the official age range of 14-17, there is a notable gender gap: Two-thirds of secondary school pupils are male.

Factors Affecting Children's School Attendance. Parents/guardians whose 6-14 year-old children had never attended school were asked why their children did not go to school. The most commonly cited reasons were the child's lack of interest in attending school, the distance to the nearest school, the child being too young to attend school, and the monetary cost of schooling. Similarly, among children age 6-14 who had once attended school but later dropped out during primary school, the most commonly cited reasons for dropping out were the child's lack of interest in attending school, the household's need for the child's labour, and the monetary cost of schooling.

Household Proximity to Schools. As expected, children in rural areas face considerably longer distances and walking times to the nearest primary and secondary schools than children in urban areas. Children living far from school may be likely to start attending school over age or not to attend school at all. Among over-age children, those in rural areas are considerably more likely than those in urban areas to have started school over age because of the distance to the nearest school. In addition, the distance to school in part explains why young school-age children do not attend school, since it may be difficult or unsafe for children to walk long distances to school at the age of 6 or 7.

PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL ABSENTEEISM

Incidence of Absenteeism. Nearly all (97 percent) primary school pupils missed one or more days of school during the 2001 school year. On average, pupils absent from school missed 17 days during the year. In the week preceding the household interview, 25 percent of pupils missed one or more days of school. Pupils in rural areas are more likely than those in urban areas to have been absent during the week, and pupils from wealthier households are less likely than pupils from poorer households to have been absent from primary school.

Reasons for Absenteeism. During the 2001 school year, 86 percent of pupils missed school because they were ill, 61 percent because they were attending to funerals, 34 percent because they lacked clean school clothing, and 28 percent because they were too hungry to go.

HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES ON SCHOOLING AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO SCHOOLING

Household Expenditures on Primary Schooling. The MDES collected detailed information about household expenditures on schooling for each child attending primary school during the 2001 school year. Questions were asked specifically about each possible cost, including the development fund; examination fees; school reports; boarding fees; uniforms, shoes, and school-related clothing; school books and supplies; transportation; food; private tuition (tutoring); tuition; and other types of expenditures. Nearly all primary school pupils' households spent money on schooling during the school year. On average, non-pubic school pupils spent considerably more on schooling than public school pupils during the year (an average of MK3,600 versus MK761). Pupils in urban areas spent more than twice as much as those in rural areas (an average of MK1,636 versus MK648).

Other Household Contributions to Schooling. In addition to monetary contributions for children's schooling, children and other household members may contribute time, labour, and materials to schools. Including travel time, pupils in day primary schools in the lower standards spent 5 hours per day on school activities, while those in the higher standards spent 7 hours on school activities. About one in three primary school pupils does homework outside school and spends about 2 hours per week on the task.

Another kind of contribution households make to schooling is the time parents/guardians and other household members spend on school-related activities. Half of the primary school pupils doing homework receive help from household members. Furthermore, in the 12 months preceding the survey interview, 77 percent of parents/guardians with one or more children in primary school visited the school to attend a parent-teacher association (PTA) or school committee meeting, to attend a celebration or sports event, or to meet with a head teacher or teacher. Three-fourths of parent/guardian households made additional contributions of money, materials, or labour to the school.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOLING

Knowledge of and Attitudes about Government Programmes and Policy. Parents/guardians were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about changes in the primary school system since the advent of Free Primary Education in 1994. About eight in ten respondents agreed that since the start of FPE, children are learning more in primary school, that the quality of school buildings has improved, and that more textbooks are available. Two-thirds of respondents agreed that since the start of FPE, teachers are performing better.

Two-thirds of parent/guardian respondents with one or more children in primary school said that there was a parent-teacher association at the school, and 96 percent said there was a school committee. Of these parents/guardians, 80 percent said that the school committee was doing a good job.

Perceived Quality of Primary Schooling. Fifty-one percent of the primary school pupils attend schools that their parents/guardians consider to have problems with buildings and facilities, 44 percent attend schools with perceived problems with classroom overcrowding, and 13 percent attend schools with perceived problems with pupil safety. Parent/guardian respondents overwhelmingly agreed that for a primary school to be a good school, it must have permanent buildings and that school quality is improved by requiring pupils to wear uniforms.

Value of Schooling. Nine in ten parents/guardians disagreed with a statement that boys need only a primary school education (rather than continuing to secondary school), and a similar proportion disagreed that girls need only a primary school education. Parents/guardians were also asked about the advantages of primary schooling for a 15-year-old boy or girl compared to a boy or girl of the same age who had never attended school. Nearly all respondents said there were benefits to primary schooling. There were minimal gender differences in advantages mentioned, with commonly cited benefits for both boys and girls being literacy, finding a job, and developing a moral framework. Two benefits listed more often for girls than for boys were the likelihood of making a better marriage and becoming a better parent.

Parents/guardians were also asked about the disadvantages of sending a boy, and then a girl, to primary school. Virtually all parents/guardians said there were no disadvantages to sending children to school.

MALAWI

TANZANIA

Northern
Region

Chitipa

Karonga

Rumphi

Mzimba

Mzuzu

Lake
Malawi

Nkhata Bay

Chizumulu

Likoma

(MALAWI)

ZAMBIA

Kasungu

Nkhotakota

MOZAMBIQUE

Ntchisi

Dowa

Mchinji

Central
Region

Salima

Lilongwe

Lilongwe

Dedza

Mangochi

Ntcheu

Machinga

Balaka

Shire River

Mwanza

Zomba

Zomba

Southern
Region

Blantyre

Blantyre

Chiradzulu

Phalombe

Chikwawa

Thyolo

Mulanje

Nsanje

60   0   60

(Kilometres)

N

INTRODUCTION

1

1.1   Geography, History, and Economy

Geography

Malawi is a landlocked country south of the equator in sub-Saharan Africa. It is bordered to the north and northeast by the United Republic of Tanzania; to the east, south, and southwest by the People's Republic of Mozambique; and to the west and northwest by the Republic of Zambia.

The country is 901 kilometres long and ranges in width from 80 to 161 kilometres. It has a total area of 118,484 square kilometres of which 94,276 square kilometres are land area. The remaining area is mostly composed of Lake Malawi, which is about 475 kilometres long and runs down Malawi's eastern boundary with Tanzania and Mozambique.

Malawi's most striking topographic feature is the Rift Valley, which runs the entire length of the country and passes through Lake Malawi in the Northern and Central regions to the Shire Valley in the south. The Shire River drains the water from Lake Malawi into the Zambezi River in Mozambique. To the west and south of Lake Malawi lie fertile plains and mountain ranges whose peaks range from 1,700 to 3,000 metres above sea level.

The country is divided into three regions: the Northern, Central, and Southern regions. There are 28 districts in the country. Six districts are in the Northern Region, nine are in the Central Region, and 13 are in the Southern Region. Administratively, the districts are subdivided into Traditional Authorities that are presided over by chiefs. Traditional Authorities are composed of villages, which are the smallest administrative units and are presided over by village headmen.

Malawi has a tropical, continental climate with maritime influences. Rainfall and temperature vary depending on altitude and proximity to the lake. From May to August, the weather is cool and dry. From September to November, the weather becomes hot. The rainy season begins in October or November and continues until April.

History

Malawi was under British rule from 1891 until July 1964, during which time it was called the Nyasaland Protectorate. In 1953, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was created. It was made up of three countries: Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia), Zambia (then Northern Rhodesia) and Malawi (then Nyasaland). In July 1964, the country became the independent state of Malawi, and it gained republic status in 1966.

In 1994, the country became a multi-party state and adopted a strategy to eradicate poverty. Since then, the following have been introduced: free primary school education, a free market economy, a bill of rights, and a parliament with three main parties. Over the past ten years, the country has experienced a considerable increase in the number of persons migrating from rural to urban areas.

Economy

Malawi has a predominantly agricultural economy. Agricultural produce accounted for 85 percent of Malawi's exports in 2001; tobacco, tea, and sugar were the major export commodities.

1.2   Education System and Programmes

Malawi's education system consists of academic training at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Formal primary schooling in Malawi includes 8 years of primary school, typically referred to as standards 1 through 8. The official age range for primary schooling is 6 to 13 years. At the end of primary school, a national examination, the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination (PSLCE), is administered.

Secondary schooling consists of two levels, junior secondary (two classes) and senior secondary (two classes): the official secondary school age range is age 14 to 17 years. Completion of junior secondary leads to the award of the Junior Certificate of Examination (JCE) and completion of senior secondary leads to the award of the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE).

Tertiary education includes schooling at universities and teachers' colleges. Both universities and colleges require the MSCE. Students studying to become primary or secondary school teachers enrol in teachers' colleges after completing the MSCE. Tertiary education also includes post-secondary colleges, technical schools, and private institutions that provide certificate courses in accounting, marketing, and other areas of study.

Besides the formal system, a non-formal education system operates, including nursery school and adult education classes. The adult education programmes focus on literacy.

Primary Schooling and the Free Primary Education Initiative

In 1994, a government initiative, Free Primary Education (FPE), was implemented with the intent of broadening access to primary schooling, largely through reducing the costs of schooling to households. For many years preceding the implementation of FPE, households sending children to primary school paid a sizeable percentage of the direct costs of primary schooling. FPE aimed to reduce this household burden by eliminating tuition fees in all public primary schools. The effects of implementing FPE in 1994 were dramatic: while primary school enrolment was about 1.9 million in 1993, enrolment surged to 3.2 million at the beginning of 1994, an increase of 68 percent. Clearly, reducing the direct costs of schooling to children's families resulted in a greater willingness to send children to school.

The increase in enrolments has put other pressures on the education system, including the challenge of providing additional school places and instructional materials for pupils. The government of Malawi has been working to address these needs. Between 1994 and 2000, the number of primary schools in the country increased from 3,200 to 4,800—a 33 percent increase.[1]

Primary school enrolments have held relatively constant over the last several years. In the 2000 school year there were 3.04 million primary school pupils. Of these pupils, 48 percent were female.

Secondary Schooling

To respond to the increasing demand for post-primary schooling from FPE graduates, the MoEST is working to establish a secondary school in each of the 315 primary school education zones and encouraging the establishment of private secondary schools. Nonetheless, there are a limited number of secondary schools in Malawi (about 1,000 secondary schools in the year 2000), making access to

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[1] Malawi Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. 2000. *Education Basic Statistics Malawi 2000.* Lilongwe, Malawi: Malawi Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. Malawi Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. 1994. *Basic Education Statistics Malawi 1994.* Lilongwe, Malawi: Malawi Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

secondary schooling more limited than access to primary schooling. In 2000, approximately 165,000 youth attended secondary schools.[2]

1.3   Sources of Education Data

Annually, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) collects data on school, teacher, and student characteristics from both public and non-public schools at the primary through tertiary levels, including teachers' training colleges. Recently, the MoEST verified the results of the national education census, in an effort to improve the quality of data collected from schools on school enrollments, and on teacher and school characteristics.

Three recent large-scale data collection efforts, the 2000 Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS), the 1998 Population and Housing Census, and the 1997-1998 Integrated Household Survey (IHS), provide some household-level data on attendance and educational attainment. In addition, the IHS offers data on several other education topics, for 12,000 households.[3]

1.4   Objectives of the 2002 Malawi DHS EdData Survey

The principal aim of the 2002 Malawi DHS EdData Survey (MDES) is to provide up-to-date information on education among children of primary school age (age 6-13). The survey focuses on factors influencing household decisions about children's school attendance. These data supplement the data collected by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology by focusing on attendance rather than enrolment and exploring the costs of schooling (monetary and non-monetary) and parent/guardian attitudes about schooling. The survey provides data on topics such as the age of children's first school attendance and dropout; the reasons for overage first-time enrolment in school, never enrolling in school, and dropout; the frequency of and reasons for pupil absenteeism; household expenditures on schooling and other contributions to schooling; distances and travel times to schools; and parent/guardian perceptions of school quality and the benefits and disadvantages of schooling.

The 2002 MDES was designed to supplement education data sources and to provide data to assist policy-makers in evaluating education programmes in the country. In broad terms, the 2002 MDES aims to—

- Provide baseline data on key education indicators

- Assist in the evaluation of Malawi's education programmes

- Advance survey methodology in Malawi and contribute to national and international databases.

In more specific terms, the 2002 MDES was designed to—

- Provide data on the schooling status of Malawian children of primary school age and on factors influencing whether children ever enrol in school and why pupils drop out of school

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[2] Malawi Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. 2000. *Education Basic Statistics Malawi 2000.* Lilongwe, Malawi: Malawi Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

[3] Topics in the IHS include type of school attended (government, private, mission, or other), reasons for not attending school in the last year, and the distance and time to the school attended. Data on the grade of school currently attended or completed, however, are not specific, allowing for a range of grades only (standards 1-4, standards 5-8, forms 1-2, forms 3-4, and so on). Reasons for not attending school are also limited, allowing only four reasons: illness, fees, uniform, and other.

- Quantify household expenditures on children's schooling and examine differential patterns of expenditure by various background characteristics

- Measure parent/guardian attitudes about schooling—including their perceptions of the quality of schooling and of the effects of Free Primary Education—to provide an understanding of attitudes that shape parents' and guardians' willingness to send their children to school

- Measure the frequency of pupil absenteeism and the reasons for missing school in order to suggest approaches to maximise pupil attendance.

1.5 Organization of the Survey

The 2002 Malawi DHS EdData Survey was a comprehensive survey that involved several agencies. The National Statistical Office (NSO) had the primary responsibility for conducting the survey in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST). Model survey instruments were modified by NSO in consultation with a number of agencies, including the MoEST, the Center for Educational Research and Training (CERT), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID/Malawi), the Department for International Development (DfID/Malawi), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA/Malawi), the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). ORC Macro provided technical assistance for the 2002 MDES, and funding was provided by USAID, DfID, and CIDA. Funding for the overall DHS EdData Activity, including the development of the core survey instruments, is provided by the USAID Office of Education in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade.

1.6 The 2002 MDES and the 2000 Malawi DHS

Often, the DHS EdData survey is linked to a Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) conducted in the same country. The DHS survey is designed to provide current and reliable information on key indicators of social development, including fertility levels and trends, family planning knowledge and use, and maternal and child health. The most recent DHS in Malawi was conducted from July through November 2000. When the DHS survey and the DHS EdData survey are linked in a country, households sampled for the DHS survey are revisited and in-depth information on education is collected. For each household, data from the two surveys are statistically linked to create a joint data set that provides information on a wide range of topics.

Typically, a DHS EdData survey begins fieldwork within a month or two of the completion of the DHS survey to maximise the chances of locating and interviewing the same households interviewed for the DHS survey and to increase the likelihood that the household characteristics (such as composition and wealth) are unchanged during the period of both surveys. However, in Malawi, there was a 17-month gap between the end of the fieldwork for the 2000 Malawi DHS and the start of fieldwork for the 2002 MDES. Because of this gap, the 2000 Malawi DHS households were not revisited for the 2002 MDES. However, as discussed below, the sampling frame used for the 2000 Malawi DHS—which was based on enumeration areas defined in the 1998 Malawi Census of Population and Housing—was used to structure the sampling frame for the 2002 MDES.

1.7 Sample Design

The sample for the 2002 MDES was based on the sampling frame for the 2000 MDHS, which was designed to provide estimates of health and demographic indicators. The discussion in this section first addresses the sample design for the 2000 Malawi DHS, then the subsequent design for the 2002 MDES.

The 2000 Malawi DHS was designed to provide estimates at the national and regional levels and for urban and rural areas. It was also designed to provide estimates of some health and demographic indicators at the sub-regional level in 11 districts.

The 2000 Malawi DHS sample points (clusters) were systematically sampled from a list of enumeration areas (EAs) defined in the 1998 Malawi Census of Population and Housing. A total of 560 clusters were drawn from the census sample frame: 449 in rural areas and 111 in urban areas.

After selecting the 560 clusters, the NSO trained teams to conduct the comprehensive listing of households and to update maps in the selected clusters. Nine listing teams conducted a comprehensive listing of households and updated maps in the selected clusters, from April through May 2000. This exercise provided a basis for second-stage sampling for the 2000 Malawi DHS—and later, for the 2002 MDES.

After the listing operation, households to be included in the 2000 Malawi DHS were selected; the number of households selected per cluster was inversely proportional to the size of the cluster. In the Malawi DHS sampling frame, as in the 2002 MDES sampling frame, the number of EAs selected in each district was not proportional to the total population; rather, urban areas were oversampled in order to generate unbiased urban estimates.

As part of the 2002 MDES pre-test, a verification exercise was conducted in one urban and two rural enumeration areas around Zomba to estimate what percentage of households identified at the time of the 2000 household listing would be found during the 2002 MDES fieldwork. During this verification exercise—using structure numbers that were written on buildings during the household listing, and the name of the household head at the time of the listing exercise—92 percent of the urban and 95 percent of the rural households were located. These results suggested that the household listing conducted in 2000 as part of the Malawi DHS remained usable for purposes of the 2002 MDES.

While structures and households were still identifiable, in many instances, the household head (and sometimes the entire household) had changed between 2000 and 2002. In 52 percent of the households in the urban area and 15 percent of the households in the rural areas, the name of the household head was different in 2002 than in 2000. In other words, household composition had changed for over half of the households in the urban area and for one-seventh of the households in the rural areas, supporting the decision not to try to link information from the 2000 Malawi DHS and 2002 MDES at the household level.

For the 2002 MDES, 129 EAs—111 in rural areas and 18 in urban areas—were selected from the 560 EAs in the 2000 Malawi DHS sample.[4] The 2002 MDES was designed to provide estimates at the national and regional levels and for urban and rural areas.

1.8   Questionnaires

Three questionnaires were used for the 2002 MDES: the Household Questionnaire, the Parent/Guardian Questionnaire, and the Eligible Child Questionnaire. The three purposes of the MDES Household Questionnaire were to 1) list all household members and visitors to the household, 2) identify which children were eligible (qualified) to be covered by the Eligible Child Questionnaire, and 3) identify a parent or guardian as the respondent for each eligible child. Children age 6-14 were eligible to be covered by the Eligible Child Questionnaire.

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[4] The 2000 Malawi DHS was designed to produce district-level estimates in selected parts of the country. The 2002 MDES, by contrast, was not intended to provide district-level estimates.

The Parent/Guardian Questionnaire collected background information on each parent/guardian respondent and on general education issues. Information was collected on the parent/guardian's age, education, literacy, and religion. Questions were asked about the walking time and distance to the nearest primary and secondary schools, and about household participation in school activities. Information was also collected on each primary school attended by the children for whom the parent/guardian responded, including the school type and location, the reason for selection of that school, and perceived school quality.

The Eligible Child Questionnaire collected different kinds of information about each eligible child, depending on the child's schooling status. While the subject of the Eligible Child Questionnaire was the eligible child and his/her schooling, the respondent for the questionnaire was the child's parent/guardian, as the purpose of the questionnaire was to collect information on issues from the parent/guardian's perspective. Data were collected on the following topics, according to a child's schooling status:

- Schooling background and participation during the current school year (attended school during the 2002 school year, dropped out of school, or never attended school)
- Frequency of and reasons for pupil absenteeism, household expenditures on schooling, other costs of schooling (for children who attended school during the 2001 school year)
- Reasons for dropping out of school (for children who have dropped out of school)
- Reasons for not attending school during the 2002 school year (for children who have never attended school)
- Children's eating patterns

In April, the questionnaires were pre-tested in Chichewa in and around Zomba. A total of 108 households were interviewed and 120 Parent/Guardian Questionnaires and 367 Eligible Child Questionnaires were completed. Based on the results of the pre-test, minor changes in the pre-test survey questionnaires were made before the main survey fieldwork was conducted.

1.9   Training

Training of field staff for the main survey was conducted over a 2-week period in May 2002. A total of 46 persons participated in the main survey training for interviewers, including the 6 supervisors.

The training was conducted using the DHS EdData survey training procedures, including instruction in general interviewing techniques and field procedures, class presentations on the questionnaires, mock interviews between participants, and classroom tests. The training included practice interviews using the questionnaire in English and the two local languages into which the questionnaires had been translated—Chichewa and Chitumbuka.[5] Discussions of the translations were also an important part of the training programme. Supervisors were trained during a 1-day session.

1.10   Data Collection and Data Processing

Six interviewing teams carried out data collection for the 2002 MDES. Each team was composed of one supervisor, six interviewers, and one driver. Staff from NSO and MoEST coordinated and supervised fieldwork activities. ORC Macro staff also participated in field supervision. In the field, local guides assisted interviewing teams in locating selected households for interviews. Data were collected over a 2-month period, from 27 May through 19 July 2002.

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[5] Of the 3,290 households interviewed during fieldwork, just 1 percent of the interviews were conducted in a language other than Chichewa or Chitumbuka.

All questionnaires for the MDES were returned to the NSO office in Zomba for data processing. Data processing consisted of office editing, the coding of open-ended questions, data entry, verification, and editing of the computer-identified errors. A team of four data entry clerks, data editors, and a data-entry supervisor processed the data. Data entry and editing started in early June, using the computer package ISSA (Integrated System for Survey Analysis), which is designed to process data from large-scale household surveys of this type.

Table 1.1 shows response rates for the 2002 MDES. A total of 3,866 households were selected, of which 3,325 were occupied. Of the 3,325 occupied households, 3,290 were interviewed successfully, yielding a household response rate of 99 percent.[6]

In the interviewed households, 2,048 parents/guardians were identified to be interviewed.[7] Completed interviews were conducted with all of these parents/guardians, yielding a response rate of 100 percent.[8]

Since the parent/guardians responded to the questions for their children and the children for whom they were responsible, the Eligible Child Questionnaire response rate reflects the percentage of eligible children for whom data were collected. A total of 3,755 eligible children were identified and data were collected on 3,752 of these children, yielding a response rate of nearly 100 percent.

Table 1.1 Results of the 2002 MDES household and individual interviews

Number of households, number of interviews, and response rates, by residence, Malawi 2002

	Residence		
Result	Urban	Rural	Total
Household interviews			
Households sampled	531	3,335	3,866
Households occupied	466	2,859	3,325
Households completed	460	2,830	3,290
No household member at home	2	16	18
Entire household absent	8	40	48
Refused	2	3	5
Dwelling vacant	29	216	245
Dwelling destroyed	28	220	248
Dwelling not found	2	10	12
Household response rate	98.7	99.0	98.9
Parent/guardian interviews			
Eligible parents/guardians	280	1,768	2,048
Interviews completed	280	1,768	2,048
Parent/guardian response rate	100.0	100.0	100.0
Children's questionnaires			
Eligible children found	538	3,217	3,755
Children's questionnaires completed	537	3,215	3,752
Children's response rate	99.8	99.9	99.9

Note: All values in this table are unweighted; eligible children are age 6-14.

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[6] Occupied households exclude the following categories: entire household absent, dwelling vacant, and dwelling destroyed. The household response rate is calculated from those households expected to have been interviewed. The categories constituting "occupied" and hence the denominator for the calculation of the response rate include: completed, no household member at home, refused, and dwelling not found. The numerator for the calculation of the household response rate is "completed."

[7] The focus of the 2002 MDES was the education of school-age children as seen from the perspective of children's parents/guardians. The respondent might be the child's mother, father, grandparent, another relative, or a non-relative, and it was expected that in many households, more than one parent/guardian might be qualified to respond to questions about each child. The survey allowed for one qualified respondent to answer questions, but also allowed for the substitution of another knowledgeable parent/guardian should the "best" respondent be unavailable. As a consequence, the respondent's characteristics—such as relationship to the child, age, sex, and so on—were not known in advance. In addition, in households with more than one eligible child, the survey allowed for more than one parent/guardian respondent. The end result of this approach is that it cannot be said that the 2002 MDES includes a probabilistic sample of parents/guardians.

[8] Of the 3,290 households that were successfully interviewed, 2,034 households had members in the eligible child age range of 6-14, including 278 households in urban areas and 1,756 households in rural areas. A total of 2,048 parent/guardian respondents were interviewed in these 2,034 households, for an average of 1.01 parent/guardian respondents per household.

CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSEHOLDS AND HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

2

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a descriptive summary of some demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the population in the households sampled for the 2002 Malawi EdData Survey (MDES). Household characteristics, such as housing facilities and physical features of dwelling units, are examined This information on the characteristics of the surveyed population is essential for the interpretation of survey findings and can provide an approximate indication of the representativeness of the 2002 MDES.

For the purpose of the 2002 MDES, a household was defined as a person or a group of persons, related or unrelated, who live together in the same dwelling unit, who make common provisions for food and regularly take their food from the same pot or share the same grain store (*nkhokwe*), or who pool their income for the purpose of purchasing food. The Household Questionnaire was used to collect information on all usual residents and visitors who spent the night preceding the survey in the household. In this report, the information is analysed for the de jure (usual residents) population.

2.1   Household Population by Age, Sex, and Residence

The distribution of the household population in the 2002 MDES survey is shown in Table 2.1 by 5-year age groups, according to sex and urban-rural residence. The 2002 MDES households constitute a population of 14,818 persons. Fifty-two percent of the population is female and 48 percent is male. Among both sexes, a greater share of the population in both urban and rural areas is in the younger age groups, mainly because of relatively high levels of fertility in the past. This pattern is consistent with those observed in the 2000 Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS) and the 1998 Population and Housing Census.

Table 2.1 Household population by age, sex, and residence

Percent distribution of the de jure household populations by 5-year age group, according to sex and residence, Malawi 2002

	Urban			Rural			Total		
Age group	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
0-4	16.9	18.7	17.8	17.6	17.1	17.3	17.5	17.3	17.4
5-9	14.5	13.9	14.2	17.1	15.4	16.3	16.8	15.3	16.0
10-14	10.1	11.8	11.0	12.7	12.7	12.7	12.4	12.6	12.5
15-19	11.7	12.9	12.3	11.5	10.0	10.7	11.5	10.4	10.9
20-24	12.9	14.5	13.7	7.5	9.4	8.5	8.2	10.0	9.1
25-29	10.6	10.7	10.7	6.6	6.5	6.6	7.1	7.1	7.1
30-34	10.0	5.9	7.9	5.2	5.5	5.4	5.9	5.6	5.7
35-39	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.4
40-44	3.1	2.6	2.9	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.7	3.7
45-49	1.8	1.5	1.6	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.1
50-54	1.9	1.4	1.7	2.8	3.1	3.0	2.7	2.9	2.8
55-59	0.7	0.4	0.6	2.2	2.0	2.1	2.0	1.8	1.9
60-64	0.9	0.3	0.6	1.9	2.4	2.2	1.8	2.2	2.0
65-69	0.3	0.2	0.2	1.1	1.5	1.3	1.0	1.4	1.2
70-74	0.3	0.4	0.3	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0
75-79	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5
80 +	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.8	1.1	1.0	0.7	1.0	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	926	920	1,847	6,251	6,721	12,972	7,177	7,641	14,818

2.2 Household Composition

Information about the composition of households by sex of the head of the household and size of the household is presented in Table 2.2. Men head 72 percent of households in Malawi, similar to the level observed in the 2000 Malawi DHS survey (73 percent). Female-headed households are more common in rural areas (29 percent) than in urban areas (17 percent). The average household size in Malawi is 4.5 persons. The household size is roughly the same in urban (4.6) and rural (4.5) areas.

2.3 Educational Attainment

The 2002 MDES collected data on the highest level of education attended and the highest year of schooling (such as standard or form) completed at that level among Malawians age 5 or older. This information allows for the calculation of educational attainment among the Malawian adult de jure household population (see Table 2.3.3). Educational attainment among adults (defined here as household members age 15 or older) is an indicator of the adult population's exposure to schooling, as well as a rough indicator of the country's human resource base.

Table 2.2 Household composition			
Percent distribution of households by sex of head of household and by de jure household size, according to residence, Malawi 2002			
	Residence		
	Urban	Rural	Total
Sex of head of household			
Male	82.6	71.0	72.4
Female	17.4	29.0	27.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of usual members			
1	5.0	6.6	6.4
2	10.2	10.2	10.2
3	20.0	17.1	17.5
4	21.5	21.4	21.4
5	11.8	15.2	14.8
6	13.3	12.1	12.2
7	8.0	8.1	8.1
8	2.0	5.3	4.9
9 +	8.2	3.7	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mean size of household	4.6	4.5	4.5

The majority of Malawian adults (75 percent) have attended school, although many of them did not complete primary school. One in four Malawian adults has completed primary school or has attended school at the post-primary level.

Although most Malawian adults have attended school, the attendance patterns differ substantially by sex, urban-rural residence, and region. While only 14 percent of men have never attended school, 33 percent of women have never been to school (see Tables 2.3.1 and 2.3.2). The mean years of schooling attained reflects the overall gender gap in educational attainment, as well as an urban-rural gap: Men have completed an average of 5 years of schooling, compared with only 3 years among women. In urban areas, men have completed an average of 8 years of schooling, compared with only 5 years among men in rural areas. Among women, the gap is wider, with women in urban areas having completed an average of 7 years and women in rural areas having completed about 3 years of schooling (see Tables 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 and Figure 2.1).

In urban areas, 7 percent of the adult population has never attended school, compared with 27 percent in rural areas. One in ten adults in the Northern region has never attended school, compared with one in five in the Central region and about one in three (30 percent) in the Southern region.

The results by age group indicate that the percentage of adults who have never attended school has decreased over time: 56 percent among adults age 65 or older, 50 percent among those age 60-64, and 44 percent among those age 55-59, compared with 20 percent among those age 25-29, 13 percent among those age 20-24, and 7 percent among those age 15-19. The absolute gender gap (the difference between the percentage of men and women who have never attended school) decreases among younger cohorts. There is a gap of about 2 percent between men and women age 15-19 (6 percent of men and 8 percent of women age 15-19 have never attended school), compared with a gap of 28 percent between men and women age 65 or older (40 percent of men and 68 percent of women age 65 or older have never attended school).

Table 2.3.1 Educational attainment of adult male household population

Percent distribution of the de jure male household population age 15 and over by highest level of education attended, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	No schooling	Some primary	Completed primary	Some secondary	Completed secondary	More than secondary	Don't know/ missing	Total	Number	Mean number of years
Age										
15-19	5.8	70.2	9.3	14.1	0.6	0.0	0.0	100.0	827	5.1
20-24	7.1	44.6	12.1	22.6	13.0	0.5	0.2	100.0	590	6.7
25-29	11.1	47.2	10.5	13.1	16.7	0.5	0.9	100.0	511	6.3
30-34	14.5	45.6	15.8	7.9	13.5	1.3	1.5	100.0	420	6.1
35-39	12.6	48.1	23.1	6.8	7.4	0.8	1.1	100.0	302	5.9
40-44	16.6	49.8	20.4	4.7	8.1	0.2	0.3	100.0	258	5.3
45-49	22.7	42.7	20.4	10.6	3.7	0.0	0.0	100.0	219	5.0
50-54	21.4	48.9	15.0	3.3	8.1	1.7	1.6	100.0	195	4.4
55-59	22.3	47.6	17.9	5.7	4.2	0.0	2.4	100.0	144	4.5
60-64	32.7	49.5	9.6	2.1	2.8	0.6	2.7	100.0	127	3.1
65+	39.7	50.9	7.3	1.4	0.2	0.0	0.5	100.0	234	2.4
Residence										
Urban	3.0	34.3	15.6	19.9	24.7	2.1	0.5	100.0	542	8.3
Rural	16.2	54.9	13.2	9.7	5.1	0.2	0.8	100.0	3,284	4.9
Region										
Northern	5.3	50.5	19.4	15.2	7.8	1.8	0.0	100.0	350	6.6
Central	13.5	49.3	14.3	12.2	10.3	0.3	0.1	100.0	1,709	5.7
Southern	16.8	54.8	11.8	9.3	5.5	0.4	1.4	100.0	1,767	4.9
Total	14.3	52.0	13.6	11.1	7.9	0.5	0.7	100.0	3,826	5.4

Table 2.3.2 Educational attainment of adult female household population

Percent distribution of the de jure female household population age 15 and over by highest level of education attended, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	No schooling	Some primary	Completed primary	Some secondary	Completed secondary	More than secondary	Don't know/ missing	Total	Number	Mean number of years
Age										
15-19	7.7	73.8	5.9	10.9	1.5	0.0	0.2	100.0	791	5.0
20-24	18.3	58.3	4.9	12.6	5.8	0.0	0.0	100.0	763	4.8
25-29	28.4	52.5	7.3	5.4	6.0	0.1	0.2	100.0	539	3.9
30-34	35.4	48.9	8.7	4.2	2.5	0.0	0.3	100.0	427	3.4
35-39	39.5	44.0	10.3	2.6	3.5	0.0	0.2	100.0	345	3.2
40-44	47.3	45.6	4.9	1.0	1.1	0.1	0.0	100.0	285	2.3
45-49	52.4	40.6	4.9	0.5	0.9	0.8	0.0	100.0	234	1.9
50-54	50.2	43.5	5.9	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	100.0	219	2.0
55-59	66.7	28.9	2.9	0.8	0.1	0.5	0.0	100.0	138	1.1
60-64	63.6	32.9	2.2	1.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	100.0	165	1.0
65+	68.2	29.3	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.1	100.0	290	0.8
Residence										
Urban	10.5	44.6	13.9	17.9	12.4	0.6	0.0	100.0	511	6.7
Rural	36.6	52.8	4.7	4.2	1.5	0.0	0.3	100.0	3,683	3.0
Region										
Northern	15.5	58.6	11.8	10.8	3.0	0.4	0.0	100.0	357	5.0
Central	28.8	53.7	6.1	6.8	4.3	0.1	0.2	100.0	1,771	3.9
Southern	40.5	48.9	4.5	4.3	1.5	0.0	0.3	100.0	2,066	2.8
Total	33.4	51.8	5.8	5.9	2.8	0.1	0.2	100.0	4,194	3.4

Table 2.3.3 Educational attainment of adult household population

Percent distribution of the de jure adult household population age 15 and over by highest level of education attended, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	No schooling	Some primary	Completed primary	Some secondary	Completed secondary	More than secondary	Don't know/ missing	Total	Number	Mean number of years
Age										
15-19	6.8	71.9	7.6	12.5	1.1	0.0	0.1	100.0	1,618	5.1
20-24	13.4	52.3	8.0	16.9	8.9	0.2	0.1	100.0	1,353	5.6
25-29	20.0	49.9	8.9	9.2	11.2	0.3	0.6	100.0	1,050	5.1
30-34	25.0	47.2	12.2	6.1	8.0	0.6	0.9	100.0	847	4.7
35-39	26.9	45.9	16.3	4.6	5.3	0.4	0.6	100.0	647	4.5
40-44	32.7	47.6	12.2	2.8	4.4	0.2	0.1	100.0	543	3.7
45-49	38.1	41.6	12.4	5.3	2.2	0.4	0.0	100.0	453	3.4
50-54	36.7	46.0	10.2	1.7	3.9	0.8	0.7	100.0	414	3.1
55-59	44.0	38.4	10.6	3.3	2.2	0.2	1.2	100.0	282	2.8
60-64	50.1	40.1	5.5	1.5	1.4	0.3	1.2	100.0	292	1.9
65+	55.5	38.9	3.5	0.6	0.1	0.0	1.4	100.0	523	1.5
Residence										
Urban	6.6	39.3	14.8	18.9	18.7	1.4	0.3	100.0	1,053	7.5
Rural	27.0	53.8	8.7	6.8	3.2	0.1	0.5	100.0	6,967	3.9
Region										
Northern	10.4	54.6	15.5	13.0	5.4	1.1	0.0	100.0	707	5.8
Central	21.3	51.6	10.1	9.4	7.2	0.2	0.2	100.0	3,480	4.8
Southern	29.6	51.6	7.8	6.6	3.4	0.2	0.8	100.0	3,834	3.7
Total	24.3	51.9	9.5	8.4	5.2	0.3	0.5	100.0	8,021	4.4

Figure 2.1 **Mean Years of Schooling Completed by Men and Women Age 15 or Older, by Residence**
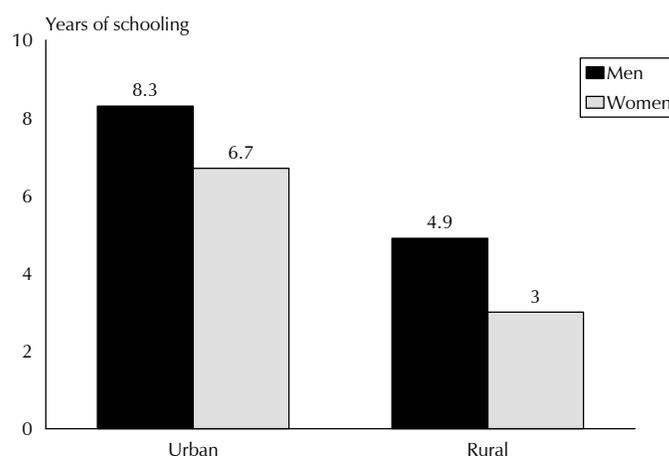
MDES 2002

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2.4   Children's Background Characteristics

Table 2.4 provides information about the age, sex, residence, and region of the 6- to 14-year-old children in the 2002 MDES sample. Forty-nine percent of the children are male. Eighty-nine percent of the children live in rural areas, and 49 percent of the children live in the Southern region.

Table 2.4 Background characteristics of children			
Percent distribution of de jure children age 6-14 by background characteristics, Malawi 2002			
Background characteristic	Weighted percent	Weighted number	Unweighted number
Age			
6-7	24.7	928	936
8-10	36.8	1,380	1,352
11-14	38.5	1,444	1,464
Sex			
Male	49.3	1,848	1,834
Female	50.7	1,904	1,918
Residence			
Urban	10.7	402	537
Rural	89.3	3,350	3,215
Region			
Northern	9.9	372	601
Central	41.4	1,552	1,301
Southern	48.7	1,829	1,850
Total	100.0	3,752	3,752

2.5   Children's Living Arrangements

Information on the living arrangements among children under age 15 is presented in Table 2.5. About half (52 percent) of children age 6-14 live with both of their biological parents. Twenty-two percent of children age 6-14 live with their mother (but not with their father), 2 percent live with their father (but not with their mother), and 22 percent live with neither of their natural parents.

The table also provides data on the extent of orphanhood, that is, the proportion of children who have lost one or both parents. Of children age 6-14, 15 percent have lost their father and 7 percent have lost their mother.[1] Three percent of children have lost both natural parents. One in five children has lost one or both parents. With the rates of adult illness and mortality related to HIV/AIDS rising in Malawi (National Statistical Office and ORC Macro, 2001), the percentage of households with orphaned and foster children is expected to rise.

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[1] The percent of children who have lost their mother (or their father) was calculated by summing the percentages of children who have lost that parent in each of the relevant categories of living arrangements (living with father, living with mother, not living with either parent). For example, the percentage of children who have lost their father (15 percent) is equal to the percentage of children living with their mother whose father is dead (8.5 percent) plus the percentage of children not living with either parent whose father is dead (3.6 percent) plus the percent of children not living with either parent whose parents are both dead (3.1 percent).

Table 2.5 Children's living arrangements

Percent distribution of de jure children age 6-14 by survival status of parents and children's living arrangements, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Living with both parents	Living with mother but not father		Living with father but not mother		Not living with either parent				Missing information on father/ mother	Total	Number
		Father alive	Father dead	Mother alive	Mother dead	Both alive	Mother dead	Father dead	Both dead			
Age												
6-7	56.6	15.7	7.7	0.7	0.8	10.5	1.9	2.9	1.4	1.8	100.0	928
8-10	54.3	13.6	7.6	1.9	0.5	10.9	3.2	3.4	2.6	2.1	100.0	1,380
11-14	47.2	11.0	9.9	1.4	1.3	13.7	4.5	4.2	4.7	2.3	100.0	1,444
Sex												
Male	51.0	12.0	10.1	2.0	1.3	11.0	3.3	3.8	3.4	2.1	100.0	1,816
Female	53.2	14.1	7.0	0.8	0.5	12.7	3.4	3.4	2.8	2.1	100.0	1,936
Residence												
Urban	52.8	6.7	9.1	1.0	0.8	9.2	4.1	5.0	5.9	5.3	100.0	402
Rural	52.0	13.9	8.4	1.4	0.9	12.2	3.3	3.4	2.8	1.7	100.0	3,350
Region												
Northern	55.0	7.5	7.3	3.3	2.5	13.1	4.4	3.6	2.1	1.1	100.0	372
Central	58.3	10.0	7.2	1.5	0.7	12.7	1.5	3.6	2.2	2.4	100.0	1,552
Southern	46.3	16.9	9.9	0.9	0.7	11.0	4.7	3.5	4.1	2.0	100.0	1,829
Total	52.1	13.1	8.5	1.4	0.9	11.9	3.4	3.6	3.1	2.1	100.0	3,752

2.6 Children's Eating Patterns

The 2002 MDES collected information about the meals eaten by school-age children on the day before the household was surveyed. The results are presented in Table 2.6, according to children's schooling status (day pupils or non-pupils) and their background characteristics.[2]

Overall, children are more likely to eat a meal at mid-day than to eat a meal in the morning (95 percent compared with 81 percent).[3] Children attending day schools are more likely than those not attending school to eat both in the morning and at mid-day. Whereas 83 percent of day pupils ate food in the morning, 75 percent of non-pupils ate in the morning on the day before the household was interviewed. Similarly, 96 percent of day pupils and 92 percent of non-pupils ate at mid-day on the day before the household was interviewed. Among children, there is little difference by gender in the incidence of eating meals in the morning and at mid-day. The differences in the mean number of meals and snacks eaten by children are minimal, with children eating about 3 meals per day.

Wealthier children are more likely than poorer children to eat in the morning, with 94 percent of the wealthiest children and 75 percent of the poorest children eating food in the morning. Roughly 95 percent of all children ate at mid-day, regardless of wealth.

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[2] Questions about food consumption on the day before the household was surveyed were asked only for non-pupils and for pupils attending day schools. Children attending boarding schools were excluded because the parents/ guardians were unlikely to be able to answer questions about the children's food consumption.
[3] For the purpose of this survey, food is defined as solid food such as porridge, *nsima,* fruit, or any other solid food. Milk and other beverages do not constitute food. If a parent/guardian said that his/her child ate food in the morning, the interviewer probed to find out what kind of food was eaten. If the reply was, for example, tea with milk, then the interviewer recorded the child as not having eaten food in the morning.

| Table 2.6 Children's food consumption on the day before the interview |

Percent distribution of children age 6-14 residing with parents/guardians by consumption of meals in the morning and at mid-day on the day before the interview, and mean number of meals and snacks eaten that day, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Morning meal				Mid-day meal					Mean number of meals and snacks
	Ate meal	Did not eat meal	Missing	Total	Ate meal	Did not eat meal	Missing	Total	Number	
Age										
6-7	83.4	16.4	0.2	100.0	96.4	3.2	0.5	100.0	927	3.3
8-10	82.0	17.7	0.3	100.0	93.7	5.7	0.6	100.0	1,378	3.3
11-14	78.7	21.2	0.1	100.0	95.6	4.1	0.3	100.0	1,428	3.2
Sex										
Male	80.7	19.0	0.3	100.0	95.0	4.4	0.6	100.0	1,843	3.3
Female	81.5	18.4	0.1	100.0	95.2	4.5	0.3	100.0	1,890	3.2
Schooling status										
Pupil	82.6	17.2	0.2	100.0	95.9	3.8	0.3	100.0	3,033	3.3
Non-pupil	74.5	25.2	0.3	100.0	91.7	7.5	0.8	100.0	700	2.9
Residence										
Urban	95.4	4.6	0.0	100.0	93.5	6.5	0.0	100.0	401	3.6
Rural	79.4	20.4	0.2	100.0	95.3	4.2	0.5	100.0	3,332	3.2
Region										
Northern	85.9	13.2	0.9	100.0	95.3	4.2	0.6	100.0	368	3.2
Central	82.8	17.1	0.1	100.0	95.4	4.5	0.1	100.0	1,537	3.2
Southern	78.7	21.1	0.2	100.0	94.8	4.5	0.7	100.0	1,828	3.3
Wealth index quintile										
Lowest	75.1	24.9	0.0	100.0	94.5	5.3	0.2	100.0	761	3.1
Second	77.7	22.1	0.2	100.0	95.5	4.1	0.3	100.0	735	3.2
Middle	79.9	19.5	0.6	100.0	94.7	4.4	1.0	100.0	758	3.2
Fourth	79.3	20.6	0.1	100.0	95.5	4.2	0.3	100.0	735	3.1
Highest	93.6	6.3	0.2	100.0	95.4	4.2	0.3	100.0	744	3.6
Total	81.1	18.7	0.2	100.0	95.1	4.5	0.4	100.0	3,733	3.2

2.7   Housing Characteristics

MDES parent/guardian respondents were asked about their household environment, including questions on access to electricity, sources of drinking water, time to water sources, type of toilet facilities and floor materials, and possession of various durable goods.   This information is summarised in Table 2.7. Five percent of households in Malawi have electricity. Use of electricity is much more common in urban areas (33 percent) than in rural areas (1 percent).

A household's source of drinking water is important because potentially fatal diseases, including typhoid, cholera, and dysentery, are prevalent in some water sources. Sources of water expected to be relatively free of these diseases are piped water and water drawn from protected wells and deep boreholes. Other sources, like unprotected wells and surface water (rivers, streams, ponds, and lakes), are more likely to carry disease-causing agents. Table 2.7 shows that overall, 16 percent of Malawian households have access to piped water and 53 percent have access to water from a protected well or borehole. The remaining 31 percent of households have access to water from unprotected wells or from surface water. These findings are comparable to those of the 2000 Malawi DHS.

As expected, households in urban areas are more likely than those in rural areas to have access to piped water (88 versus 6 percent). In urban areas, 83 percent of the households have access to water within 15 minutes, compared with 54 percent of households in rural areas.

Modern sanitation facilities are not yet available to large proportions of Malawian households. The use of traditional pit latrines is still common in both urban and rural areas, accounting for 81 percent of all households. Overall, 17 percent of the households in Malawi have no toilet facilities. This problem is more common in rural areas, where 20 percent of the households have no toilet facilities, compared with 1 percent of households in urban areas.

The type of material used for flooring is an indicator of the economic standing of the household. as well as an indicator of potential exposure to disease-causing agents. Overall, 80 percent of all households in Malawi live in residences with floors made of earth, sand, or dung, while 20 percent live in houses with finished floors, like those made of cement or wooden panels. Earth flooring is common in rural areas (88 percent).

Respondents were also asked about their household's ownership of particular durable goods. In addition to providing an indicator of economic status, ownership of these goods provides measures of other aspects of life. Ownership of a radio and a television is a measure of access to mass media; ownership of a refrigerator indicates a capacity for more hygienic food storage; and ownership of a bicycle, motorcycle, or car reflects means of transport. Information on ownership of these items is presented in Table 2.8.

Possession of the specific durable goods referenced in the MDHS is not common in Malawi, since many households simply cannot afford them. Nationally, 58 percent of households own a radio and only 3 percent of households own a television. Bicycles are the most common means of transportation owned by households; 43 percent of households have a bicycle. Ownership of motorised transport is rare. Only 1 percent of households have cars, and the same percentage have motorcycles.

Table 2.7 Housing characteristics

Percent distribution of households by housing characteristics, according to residence, Malawi 2002

	Residence		
Background characteristic	Urban	Rural	Total
Electricity			
Yes	33.4	1.0	4.9
No	66.6	98.8	94.9
Missing	0.0	0.3	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Source of drinking water			
Piped into dwelling	6.8	0.5	1.2
Piped into yard/plot	23.8	0.8	3.6
Community stand pipe	57.5	5.1	11.5
Protected well	1.5	8.1	7.3
Borehole	7.7	50.4	45.2
Unprotected well	2.2	24.1	21.5
Surface water	0.5	11.0	9.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Time to water source (in minutes)			
Percentage <15 minutes	83.0	54.4	57.8
Mean time to water source	7.7	19.8	18.4
Sanitation facility			
Own flush toilet	7.4	1.0	1.7
Pit latrine	91.5	79.3	80.7
No facility/bush	1.1	19.6	17.4
Missing	0.0	0.1	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Main floor material			
Earth/sand/dung	23.6	88.2	80.3
Cement or other modern material	76.4	11.8	19.6
Missing	0.0	0.1	0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	399	2,891	3,290

In general, households in urban areas are more likely than those in rural areas to own the items listed. For example, 81 percent of urban households have a radio, compared with 55 percent of rural households. One exception to this pattern is the ownership of bicycles, with 44 percent of households in rural areas and 30 percent of households in urban areas owning bicycles.

Table 2.8 Household durable goods

Percentage of households possessing various durable consumer goods and means of transport, by residence, Malawi 2002

	Residence		
	Urban	Rural	Total
Household possessions			
Radio	80.9	54.6	57.8
Television	14.9	0.8	2.5
Paraffin lamp	82.6	92.3	91.1
Means of transport			
Bicycle	29.8	44.3	42.5
Motorcycle/scooter	2.1	0.7	0.9
Car/truck	4.2	0.6	1.1
None of the above	2.0	5.2	4.8
Number	399	2,891	3,290

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONDENTS' BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

3

This chapter presents information on the background characteristics, educational attainment, and literacy of the parents/guardians who responded to the Parent/Guardian Questionnaire and the Eligible Child Questionnaire.

3.1 Background Characteristics

Table 3.1 presents the percent distribution of parents/guardians by sex, age group, place of residence, and region. Sixty-four percent of the respondents are female. More than half of the parents/guardians are age 25-44, with only 11 percent younger than 25 and 7 percent over 65. Most of the respondents (89 percent) live in rural areas, and about half live in the Southern region.

Table 3.1 Background characteristics of parent/guardian respondents			
Percent distribution of parents/guardians by background characteristics, Malawi 2002			
Background characteristic	Weighted percent	Weighted number	Unweighted number
Age			
15-19	2.7	55	60
20-24	8.4	172	172
25-29	14.0	288	298
30-34	16.1	330	320
35-39	13.4	274	271
40-44	11.5	235	231
45-49	8.8	180	186
50-54	8.6	176	165
55-59	4.9	100	103
60-64	4.8	97	99
65+	6.9	140	143
Sex			
Male	35.6	729	722
Female	64.4	1,319	1,326
Residence			
Urban	11.1	228	280
Rural	88.9	1,820	1,768
Region			
Northern	9.1	187	312
Central	41.2	844	708
Southern	49.7	1,017	1,028
Total	100.0	2,048	2,048

3.2 Educational Attainment

For each parent/guardian respondent, data were collected on the highest level of schooling attended and the highest standard or form completed at that level. Tables 3.2.1, 3.2.2, and 3.2.3 present the distribution of parents/guardians according to educational attainment by sex, age group, and residence.

Sixty-eight percent of the parents/guardians attended primary school or a higher level of schooling. There are sizeable differences by gender, with male respondents having higher educational attainment than female respondents. Seventeen percent of the male and 40 percent of the female parents/guardians never attended school (see Tables 3.2.1 and 3.2.2). Thirty percent of the male and 14 percent of the female parents/guardians completed primary schooling or higher. Attendance at the secondary level or higher shows a similar pattern, with 14 percent of male and 7 percent of female respondents attending school at the secondary or post-secondary levels.[1]

The mean years of schooling attained reflects gender and urban-rural gaps in educational attainment: The mean number of years of schooling among male parents/guardians is 5, compared with 3 among female parents/guardians. There are notable differences in mean years of schooling attained by gender according to urban-rural residence. Female parents/guardians in urban areas completed an average of 6 years of schooling, compared with 3 years among female parents/guardians in rural areas. Among male parents/guardians, the pattern is similar: male respondents in urban areas have completed 9 years of schooling, compared with 5 years among men in rural areas. Younger parents/guardians have completed more years of schooling than older parents/guardians. For example, among respondents age 20-24, educational attainment is 5 years of schooling, compared with an average of 2 years among those age 65 or older.

Table 3.2.1 Educational attainment of male parent/guardian respondents

Percent distribution of male parents/guardians by highest level of schooling attended, and mean number of years of schooling, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Highest level of schooling attended						Total	Number	Mean number of years
	No schooling	Some primary	Completed primary	Some secondary	Completed secondary	More than secondary			
Age									
15-19	*	*	*	*	*	*	100.0	19	*
20-24	(6.8)	(38.0)	(6.4)	(30.8)	(18.1)	(0.0)	100.0	35	(7.1)
25-29	12.7	57.6	15.6	4.1	10.0	0.0	100.0	67	5.5
30-34	7.9	59.1	13.6	7.5	10.6	1.3	100.0	104	5.9
35-39	16.8	52.2	15.8	9.4	4.2	1.7	100.0	103	5.4
40-44	7.3	52.8	29.3	6.8	3.8	0.0	100.0	92	5.8
45-49	21.6	44.5	20.2	11.5	2.1	0.0	100.0	77	5.0
50-54	22.2	57.5	5.1	5.3	7.0	3.0	100.0	69	4.1
55-59	(17.6)	(55.9)	(24.4)	(0.0)	(2.2)	(0.0)	100.0	49	(4.7)
60-64	(25.6)	(56.8)	(12.4)	(2.4)	(2.3)	(0.5)	100.0	51	(3.5)
65+	37.8	54.8	4.6	2.0	0.8	0.0	100.0	62	2.8
Residence									
Urban	0.9	34.7	9.1	25.5	23.6	6.1	100.0	48	9.0
Rural	17.7	54.5	16.3	6.7	4.4	0.4	100.0	681	4.8
Region									
Northern	5.5	43.4	30.3	10.6	7.0	3.3	100.0	85	6.7
Central	16.0	50.1	18.5	8.7	6.7	0.1	100.0	346	5.4
Southern	20.5	59.7	8.6	6.2	4.2	0.8	100.0	298	4.3
Total	16.6	53.2	15.8	7.9	5.7	0.7	100.0	729	5.1

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases. An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.

[1] Post-secondary includes schooling at the university and college levels.

Table 3.2.2 Educational attainment of female parent/guardian respondents

Percent distribution of female parents/guardians by highest level of schooling attended, and mean number of years of schooling, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	No schooling	Some primary	Completed primary	Some secondary	Completed secondary	More than secondary	Total	Number	Mean number of years
Age									
15-19	(8.1)	(58.8)	(19.6)	(9.3)	(4.2)	(0.0)	100.0	36	(5.7)
20-24	21.2	55.2	4.1	12.4	6.3	0.8	100.0	137	4.7
25-29	32.1	47.6	9.6	5.9	4.9	0.0	100.0	220	3.8
30-34	36.9	47.5	8.3	5.3	2.0	0.0	100.0	226	3.5
35-39	37.8	46.9	8.1	2.9	4.2	0.1	100.0	171	3.5
40-44	40.1	49.7	7.7	1.7	0.5	0.2	100.0	143	2.8
45-49	48.5	46.3	4.2	0.7	0.2	0.0	100.0	103	2.0
50-54	51.1	41.2	5.4	0.0	2.3	0.0	100.0	107	2.2
55-59	66.6	30.3	2.3	0.0	0.4	0.4	100.0	51	1.0
60-64	60.6	34.2	2.6	2.5	0.0	0.0	100.0	46	1.3
65+	73.2	25.2	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	79	0.7
Residence									
Urban	17.5	45.4	14.8	13.1	8.7	0.4	100.0	180	5.8
Rural	44.0	45.8	5.7	2.7	1.8	0.1	100.0	1,139	2.7
Region									
Northern	17.3	60.0	15.3	5.7	1.3	0.3	100.0	102	4.7
Central	36.4	45.9	7.0	5.4	4.9	0.3	100.0	497	3.7
Southern	46.3	43.5	5.6	3.0	1.4	0.0	100.0	720	2.5
Total	40.4	45.7	6.9	4.1	2.7	0.1	100.0	1,319	3.1

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases.

There are also sizeable urban-rural and regional differences in educational attainment among parents/guardians (see Table 3.2.3). While 14 percent of parents/guardians in urban areas never attended school, 34 percent of parents/guardians in rural areas never attended school. Parents/guardians in the Northern region are most likely to have had some schooling, with only 12 percent of parent/guardians never having attended school. In contrast, 28 percent of parents/guardians in the Central region never attended school and 39 percent of parents/guardians in the Southern region never attended school.

Table 3.2.3 Educational attainment of parent/guardian respondents

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by highest level of schooling attended, and mean number of years of schooling, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	No schooling	Some primary	Completed primary	Some secondary	Completed secondary	More than secondary	Total	Number	Mean number of years
Age									
15-19	6.6	52.0	21.8	16.0	3.6	0.0	100.0	55	6.3
20-24	18.3	51.7	4.6	16.1	8.7	0.7	100.0	172	5.2
25-29	27.5	49.9	11.0	5.5	6.1	0.0	100.0	288	4.2
30-34	27.8	51.2	9.9	6.0	4.7	0.4	100.0	330	4.3
35-39	29.9	48.9	11.0	5.3	4.2	0.7	100.0	274	4.2
40-44	27.2	50.9	16.2	3.7	1.8	0.1	100.0	235	4.0
45-49	37.0	45.5	11.1	5.4	1.0	0.0	100.0	180	3.3
50-54	39.8	47.5	5.3	2.1	4.1	1.2	100.0	176	2.9
55-59	42.5	42.9	13.2	0.0	1.3	0.2	100.0	100	2.8
60-64	42.3	46.0	7.7	2.5	1.2	0.3	100.0	97	2.4
65+	57.6	38.3	2.9	0.9	0.4	0.0	100.0	140	1.7
Residence									
Urban	14.0	43.1	13.6	15.7	11.9	1.6	100.0	228	6.4
Rural	34.1	49.0	9.6	4.2	2.8	0.2	100.0	1820	3.5
Region									
Northern	11.9	52.4	22.2	8.0	3.8	1.7	100.0	187	5.6
Central	28.1	47.6	11.7	6.7	5.6	0.2	100.0	844	4.4
Southern	38.8	48.3	6.5	4.0	2.2	0.2	100.0	1,017	3.0
Total	31.9	48.4	10.1	5.5	3.8	0.4	100.0	2,048	3.8

3.3 Literacy

Respondents who attended school beyond the primary level are assumed to be literate; therefore, the survey measures literacy only among respondents who never attended school or who attended school up to the primary level. Among respondents with primary or no schooling, the level of literacy is based on the parent/guardian respondent's ability to read none, part, or all of a sentence in a language in which he/she is likely to be literate. Parents and guardians were asked to demonstrate literacy by reading from a card with a simple sentence in one of three languages.[2] The percent literate (as presented in Table 3.3) includes respondents who could read part or all of a sentence and those who attended post-primary school or higher.

The literacy rate among parent/guardian respondents is 79 percent for male and 46 percent for female respondents (see Table 3.3). By gender, there are notable differences in literacy by urban-rural residence. While 99 percent of male parents/guardians in urban areas are literate, 77 percent of male parents/guardians in rural areas are literate. Among female respondents, 72 percent of urban and 42 percent of rural parents/guardians are literate.

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[2] The statement read from the card was: Where do you get your drinking water? Sentences were provided in Chichewa, Chitumbuka, and English.

Table 3.3 Literacy among parent/guardian respondents

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by highest level of schooling attended, and level of literacy, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| Background characteristic | Secondary school or higher | No schooling or primary school | | | | Total | Number | Percent literate |
		Can read whole sentence	Can read part of a sentence	Cannot read at all	No card with required language			
			MALE					
Age								
15-19	*	*	*	*	*	100.0	19	*
20-24	(48.9)	(33.1)	(5.3)	(12.7)	(0.0)	100.0	35	(87.3)
25-29	14.1	57.0	8.6	20.3	0.0	100.0	67	79.7
30-34	19.4	55.4	12.0	13.2	0.0	100.0	104	86.8
35-39	15.2	54.3	5.5	24.5	0.5	100.0	103	75.4
40-44	10.6	70.0	5.8	13.6	0.0	100.0	92	86.4
45-49	13.7	62.0	0.0	24.3	0.0	100.0	77	75.7
50-54	15.3	50.6	1.7	30.6	1.9	100.0	69	68.8
55-59	(2.2)	(69.9)	(4.2)	(22.3)	(1.4)	100.0	49	(77.4)
60-64	(5.2)	(66.3)	(2.9)	(25.6)	(0.0)	100.0	51	(74.4)
65+	2.8	51.3	12.0	33.9	0.0	100.0	62	66.1
Residence								
Urban	55.3	37.7	4.5	1.4	1.0	100.0	48	98.6
Rural	11.5	59.1	6.1	22.8	0.5	100.0	681	77.1
Region								
Northern	20.8	62.2	4.6	11.8	0.6	100.0	85	88.1
Central	15.4	55.8	7.3	20.7	0.7	100.0	346	79.1
Southern	11.3	58.7	4.9	24.9	0.2	100.0	298	75.0
Total	14.4	57.7	6.0	21.4	0.5	100.0	729	78.5
			FEMALE					
Age								
15-19	(13.5)	(51.6)	(6.9)	(28.0)	(0.0)	100.0	36	(72.0)
20-24	19.4	34.5	14.4	31.7	0.0	100.0	137	68.3
25-29	10.8	35.6	4.5	48.9	0.1	100.0	220	51.0
30-34	7.3	36.9	7.3	48.0	0.5	100.0	226	51.7
35-39	7.2	36.0	7.1	49.8	0.0	100.0	171	50.2
40-44	2.4	37.2	7.3	53.1	0.0	100.0	143	46.9
45-49	0.9	25.4	3.6	68.9	1.2	100.0	103	30.3
50-54	2.3	29.7	2.7	65.3	0.0	100.0	107	34.7
55-59	0.8	21.0	2.5	75.7	0.0	100.0	51	24.3
60-64	2.5	11.1	9.8	76.5	0.0	100.0	46	23.5
65+	0.0	10.0	2.0	88.0	0.0	100.0	79	12.0
Residence								
Urban	22.3	42.8	6.6	28.3	0.1	100.0	180	71.7
Rural	4.6	30.5	6.4	58.3	0.2	100.0	1,139	41.6
Region								
Northern	7.3	45.1	7.3	40.3	0.0	100.0	102	59.7
Central	10.6	33.5	9.5	46.4	0.0	100.0	497	53.6
Southern	4.5	29.4	4.2	61.6	0.3	100.0	720	38.2
Total	7.0	32.1	6.5	54.2	0.2	100.0	1,319	45.7

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases. An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.

3.4   Exposure to Mass Media

In the 2002 MDES, respondents were asked whether they usually read a newspaper at least once a week and how often they watch television and listen to the radio (see Table 3.4).[3] For purposes of planning education and other social initiatives, it is important to have information about which groups of people are more or less likely to be reached by the media.

Forty-one percent of parents/guardians do not typically read a newspaper, watch television, or listen to the radio at least once a week. Respondents in rural areas are more likely than those in urban areas not to access one or more media (44 versus 17 percent), and those in the Northern and Southern regions are more likely than respondents in the Central region not to access various media. Female respondents are more likely than male respondents not to access one or more media (47 versus 31 percent).

Among those respondents accessing media, listening to the radio is the most common activity: 67 percent of male and 52 percent of female parents/guardians reported listening to the radio at least once a week. Less common is reading a newspaper, with 14 percent of male and 7 percent of female parents/guardians reading a newspaper at least once a week. Eight percent of male and 5 percent of female parents/guardians reported watching television at least once a week.

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[3] Only literate respondents were asked about how frequently they read newspapers.

Table 3.4 Exposure to mass media

Percentage of eligible parents/guardians who usually read a newspaper at least once a week, watch television at least once a week, and listen to the radio at least once a week, by background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Reads a newspaper at least once a week	Watches television at least once a week	Listens to the radio at least once a week	All three media	No media	Number of parents/ guardians
MALE						
Age						
15-19	*	*	*	*	*	19
20-24	(31.1)	(25.0)	(75.0)	(19.3)	(21.8)	35
25-29	15.1	9.0	81.3	1.7	17.2	67
30-34	19.9	15.3	74.3	7.9	22.3	104
35-39	10.9	5.2	65.9	5.2	33.4	103
40-44	13.9	3.5	68.7	3.0	31.3	92
45-49	17.0	4.2	62.0	1.0	30.4	77
50-54	9.2	7.4	65.8	3.5	34.2	69
55-59	(7.8)	(2.2)	(65.0)	(0.9)	(35.0)	49
60-64	(9.5)	(1.6)	(54.1)	(1.6)	(40.9)	51
65+	13.3	0.0	54.9	0.0	43.2	62
Residence						
Urban	41.3	39.1	77.3	30.2	22.3	48
Rural	12.4	5.2	66.4	2.2	31.3	681
Region						
Northern	13.8	8.2	61.7	2.5	36.6	85
Central	20.8	9.2	71.0	6.0	25.1	346
Southern	7.0	5.2	64.2	2.3	35.5	298
Total	14.3	7.5	67.1	4.1	30.7	729
FEMALE						
Age						
15-19	(18.2)	(13.8)	(57.2)	(11.7)	(42.8)	36
20-24	9.0	3.3	57.5	2.1	40.0	137
25-29	6.9	9.0	56.6	2.8	42.0	220
30-34	6.9	5.8	63.8	2.1	35.4	226
35-39	12.5	6.0	57.8	3.7	40.1	171
40-44	7.0	4.2	49.4	2.3	49.0	143
45-49	2.8	3.7	36.1	2.0	62.0	103
50-54	0.0	0.0	41.7	0.0	58.3	107
55-59	0.8	0.4	51.9	0.4	48.1	51
60-64	2.6	0.0	35.2	0.0	62.1	46
65+	0.0	0.0	24.3	0.0	75.7	79
Residence						
Urban	19.1	21.9	82.0	10.8	15.4	180
Rural	4.5	2.1	46.9	0.9	52.0	1,139
Region						
Northern	4.9	3.0	35.9	1.7	62.6	102
Central	9.8	5.8	61.1	3.7	37.5	497
Southern	4.4	4.3	47.4	1.3	51.4	720
Total	6.5	4.8	51.7	2.3	47.0	1,319

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases. An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RATES

4

This chapter presents information on school attendance ratios and on primary school pupils' age relative to the standard they attend. The chapter also presents dropout and repetition rates in the primary school standards.

4.1   Primary School Attendance Ratios

The 2002 Malawi DHS EdData survey (MDES) collected information about school attendance in the 2001 and 2002 school years among youth age 5-24. This information is used below to calculate the net and gross attendance ratios (NAR and GAR), and the repetition and dropout rates (which are addressed in section 4.5). The MDES approach to measuring children's participation in schooling differs both methodologically and substantively from those generally used by ministries of education and internationally in education statistics. The Malawi Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST) collects data from school enrolment records, and uses population estimates to produce figures on children's school enrolment ratios. The MDES, on the other hand, measures children's participation in schooling using data on school attendance, collected from a representative sample of households. Attendance rates indicate the percentage of children who attend school, based on the question: "During the current school year, has (NAME) attended school at any time?"

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 present primary school and secondary school net and gross attendance ratios for the 2002 school year and the gender parity index by household residence and region. The net attendance ratio (NAR) indicates participation in schooling among those of official school age, which is age 6-13 for primary and age 14-17 for secondary. The gross attendance ratio (GAR) indicates school attendance among youth of any age, from age 5 to 24, and is expressed as a percentage of the school-age population for that level of schooling. The GAR is nearly always higher than the NAR for the same level, because the GAR includes participation by youth who are older or younger than the official age range for that level. A NAR of 100 percent would indicate that all of the children in the official age range for the level are attending that level. The GAR can exceed 100 if there is sizeable over age or under-age participation at that level of schooling.

The gender parity index (GPI) measures sex-related differences in school attendance rates: It is calculated by dividing the gross attendance ratio for females by the gross attendance ratio for males. If the primary school GAR for females and males were the same, say 70, then the GPI would be 70/70, or 1, showing parity or equality between the rates of participation among female and male children. However, if males participate at a higher rate than do females, the GPI would be below 1. The closer the GPI is to 0, the greater is the gender disparity in favor of males. A GPI greater than 1 indicates a gender disparity in favor of females, meaning that a higher proportion of females than males attend that level of schooling.

As illustrated in Table 4.1, most primary-school-age children (81 percent of children age 6-13) attend primary school. There is no difference in the net attendance ratio (NAR) by sex, but urban-rural and regional differences remain: 90 percent of children in urban areas and 80 percent in rural areas attend primary school.

A sizeable proportion of primary school pupils are outside the official age range for primary schooling: whereas the primary school NAR is 81 percent, the GAR at that level is 115, indicating that for every 81 pupils age 6-13, there are 34 pupils who are either younger than age 6 or older than age 13.

Table 4.1 Primary school attendance ratios

Primary net attendance ratios (NAR), gross attendance ratios (GAR), and the gender parity index (GPI) for the de jure household population age 5-24, by sex, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Net attendance ratio (NAR)			Gross attendance ratio (GAR)			Gender parity index (GPI)
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Residence							
Urban	90.0	90.1	90.1	131.2	123.2	127.0	0.9
Rural	79.9	79.7	79.8	116.3	109.9	113.1	0.9
Region							
Northern	91.8	94.1	93.0	134.4	123.5	128.8	0.9
Central	82.3	85.2	83.8	118.1	119.2	118.7	1.0
Southern	77.7	74.1	75.9	114.4	101.8	108.1	0.9
Father's education							
No schooling	69.6	69.5	69.6	u	u	u	u
Some or completed primary	82.3	83.6	82.9	u	u	u	u
Some, completed or higher than secondary	95.8	89.9	92.9	u	u	u	u
Mother's education							
No schooling	73.0	69.6	71.3	u	u	u	u
Some or completed primary	85.7	87.7	86.7	u	u	u	u
Some, completed or higher than secondary	99.2	95.8	97.3	u	u	u	u
Wealth index quintile							
Lowest	71.8	74.4	73.1	109.8	102.8	106.2	0.9
Second	75.6	72.6	74.0	112.0	101.4	106.4	0.9
Middle	78.8	82.7	80.6	114.1	117.6	115.8	1.0
Fourth	87.4	83.1	85.4	122.4	114.0	118.5	0.9
Highest	91.6	90.9	91.2	132.0	120.8	125.9	0.9
Total	81.0	80.8	80.9	117.9	111.4	114.6	0.9

Note: The 2002 MDES collected data on parents' educational attainment only for children age 6-14. Hence, the NAR (which includes children age 6-13) can be calculated by parents' education, but the GAR (which includes youth age 5-24) cannot be calculated by parents' education.
u = Unknown (not available)

While the NAR is 81 percent for both male and female youth, the male GAR exceeds the female GAR, indicating that male pupils are more likely than female pupils to be outside the official age range. The gender parity index at the primary level is 0.9, suggesting that there is not a large gender gap in primary school attendance among male and female youth.

A comparison of data from the 2002 MDES and the 2000 Malawi DHS allows for the tracking of changes in the NAR and GAR. Between 2000 and 2002, both net and gross attendance ratios increased— the NAR from 78 to 81 percent, and the GAR from 107 to 115.

Regional differences in both net and gross attendance ratios are substantial. In the Southern region, 76 percent of the children age 6-13 attend primary school, compared with 84 percent in the Central and 93 percent in the Northern region. A similar pattern exists for GAR by region, with the lowest GAR in the Southern region and the highest in the Northern region. Within regions, there are differences in GAR by sex (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Primary Gross Attendance Ratio, by Region and Sex
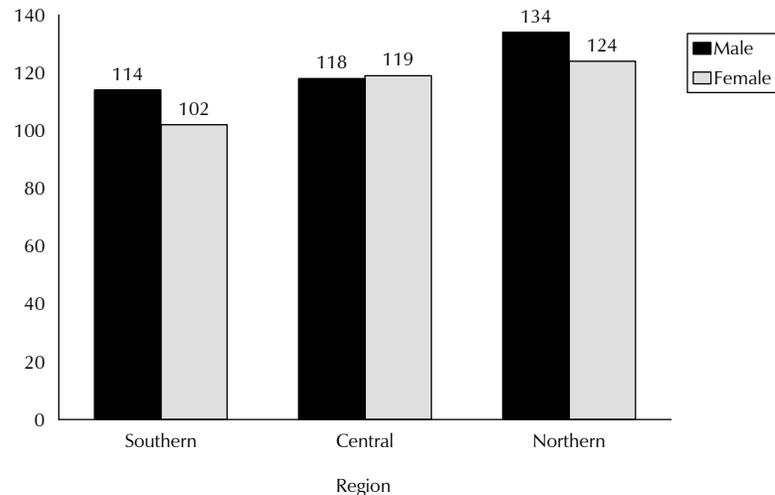
MDES 2002

For children age 5-14, the 2002 MDES provides information about parents' educational attainment, which allows for the calculation of the primary school NAR according to parents' educational attainment.[1] Many studies suggest that there are intergenerational benefits to schooling, with children being more likely to attend school and persist in school if their parents attended school. The results of the 2002 MDES are consistent with this premise: The higher the level of schooling attained by a child's mother and father, the greater is the likelihood that the 6- to 13-year-old child attends primary school (see Figure 4.2). While the NAR among children age 6-13 whose mothers have never attended school is 71 percent, the NAR among children whose mothers attended primary school is 87 percent, and among children whose mothers attended secondary school or higher, 97 percent. There is a similar pattern according to the child's father's educational attainment, with the NAR at 70 percent among children whose fathers have never attended school, 83 percent among those whose fathers attended primary, and 93 percent among those whose fathers attended secondary school or a higher level.

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[1] The GAR cannot be calculated according to parents' educational attainment because this information was collected only for children age 5-14, rather than for all youth.

Figure 4.2 Primary Net Attendance Ratio, by Father's and Mother's Educational Attainment

Percent

- NAR by father's education
- NAR by mother's education

Level of schooling parent attained	Father	Mother
No schooling	70	71
Primary	83	87
Secondary	93	97
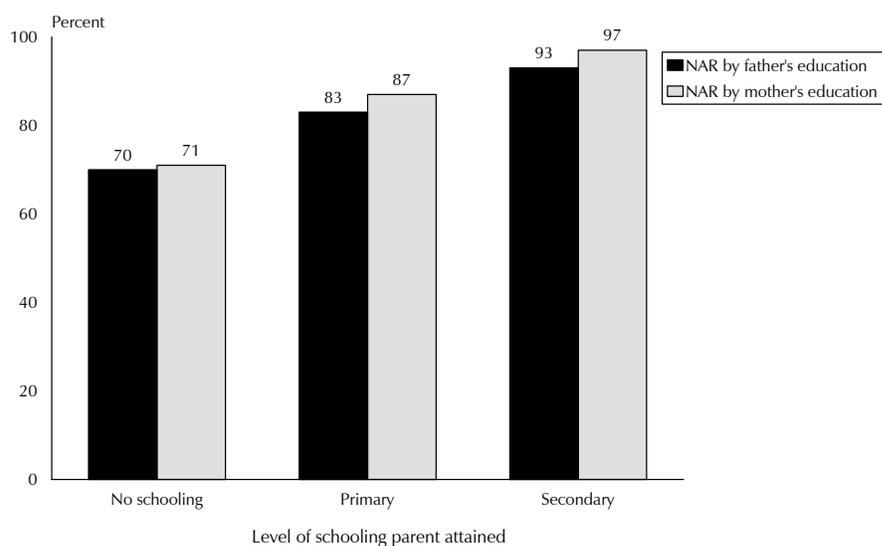
MDES 2002

At the primary level, there are substantial differences in NAR and GAR by wealth.[2] Among children age 6-13 in the highest quintile, 91 percent attend primary school, compared with 73 percent in the lowest quintile (see Figure 4.3). The gross attendance ratio follows a similar pattern, with a GAR of 126 in the highest quintile and 106 in the lowest quintile.

Figure 4.3 Primary Net Attendance Ratio, by Wealth

Percent

Wealth index	Percent
Lowest quintile	73
Second quintile	74
Middle quintile	81
Fourth quintile	85
Highest quintile	91
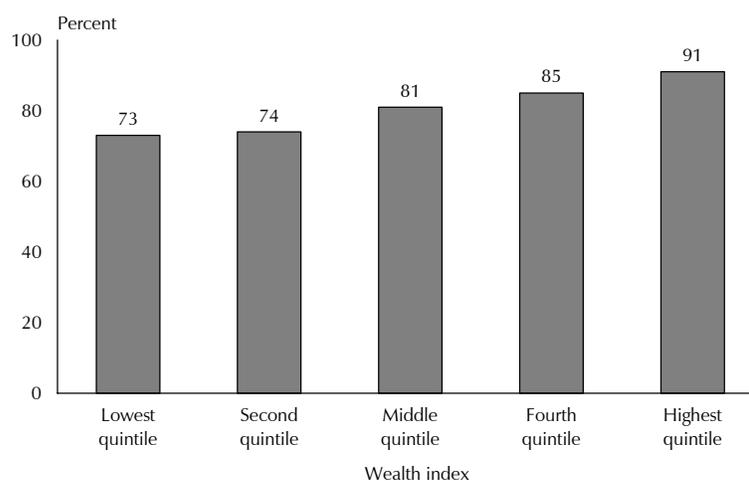
MDES 2002

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[2] The wealth index assesses economic status in terms of assets or wealth, rather than in terms of income or consumption. The assets, services, and other indicators of wealth used to form this index include: ownership of radio, television, parrafin lamp, bicycle, motorcycle/scooter, car/truck; lighting, water and fuel sources; sanitation facilities; and floor material. Each indicator used for the index was assigned a weight generated through principal components analysis, which calculated the importance of each element of the index. The index score is normalized. The distribution of the household population by wealth index score was used create break points that define the wealth quintiles.

4.2 Secondary School Attendance Ratios

At the secondary level, a far lower proportion of school-age children attend school than is the case at the primary level: 9 percent of youth age 14-17 attend secondary school (see Table 4.2). Urban youth age 14-17 are three times as likely as their peers in rural areas to attend secondary school (21 versus 7 percent). Regional differences in the secondary NAR are considerable, and follow a pattern similar to that at the primary level: 6 percent of youth age 14-17 attend secondary school in the Southern region, compared with 10 percent in the Central region and 16 percent in the Northern region.

At the secondary level, 2 in 3 students are outside the official age range of 14-17. The total GAR is 27, compared with the NAR of 9 percent, so for every 9 students age 14-17, there are 18 students outside the official age range (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Secondary school attendance ratios							
Secondary net attendance ratios (NAR), gross attendance ratios (GAR), and the gender parity index (GPI) for the de jure household populations age 5-24, by sex and background characteristics, Malawi 2002							
	Net attendance ratio (NAR)			Gross attendance ratio (GAR)			Gender parity index
Background characteristic	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	GPI
Residence							
Urban	18.2	23.4	20.8	57.3	57.7	57.5	1.0
Rural	8.3	5.7	7.1	29.2	14.2	22.0	0.5
Region							
Northern	12.0	20.5	16.1	52.7	46.9	49.9	0.9
Central	13.0	7.5	10.3	34.3	20.4	27.5	0.6
Southern	6.1	6.3	6.2	27.9	14.7	21.5	0.5
Wealth index quintile							
Lowest	3.0	2.0	2.5	15.7	5.4	10.8	0.3
Second	8.1	3.5	5.8	22.6	13.0	17.8	0.6
Middle	3.0	4.2	3.6	18.0	9.4	14.0	0.5
Fourth	6.6	8.2	7.3	31.8	13.8	23.3	0.4
Highest	26.1	19.9	23.0	72.0	52.0	62.1	0.7
Total	9.6	8.0	8.8	32.7	19.8	26.5	0.6
Note: The 2002 MDES collected data on parents' educational attainment only for children age 6-14. Hence, neither the secondary NAR (which includes youth age 14-17) nor the secondary GAR (which includes youth age 5-24) can be calculated by parents' education.							

Between 2000 and 2002, the net and gross attendance ratios at the secondary level have remained constant. In 2000, the total NAR was 8 percent (according to data from the 2000 Malawi DHS), and in 2002, it was 9 percent. The GAR was 27 in both 2000 and 2002.

While there is a minimal gender difference in NAR at the national level (8 percent of female and 10 percent of male youth age 14-17 attend secondary school), there is a substantial gender difference in the GAR. Male youth up to age 24 are far more likely than female youth to attend secondary school—the GAR among males is 33, compared with just 20 among females—as reflected in the GPI of 0.6. In urban areas, there is no gender gap (GAR is 57 for male and 58 for female youth), while in rural areas, male youth are twice as likely as female youth to attend secondary school.

There are striking gender differences in the NAR and GAR by region, sometimes with a reversal of the gender gap (see Figure 4.4 for GAR by region and sex). For instance, in the Northern region, 21 percent of female youth and 12 percent of male youth age 14-17 attend secondary school. Among youth up to age 24, though, males in the Northern region are more likely than females to attend secondary school (GAR of 53 compared with 47). In the Southern region, there is gender parity among youth age 14-17 (NAR is 6 percent), but male youth up to age 24 are nearly twice as likely as female youth to attend secondary school (GAR of 28 versus 15). In the Central region, both among youths of secondary school age and among youth up to age 24, male youth are more likely than female youth to attend secondary school.

Figure 4.4 **Secondary Gross Attendance Ratio, by Region and Sex**
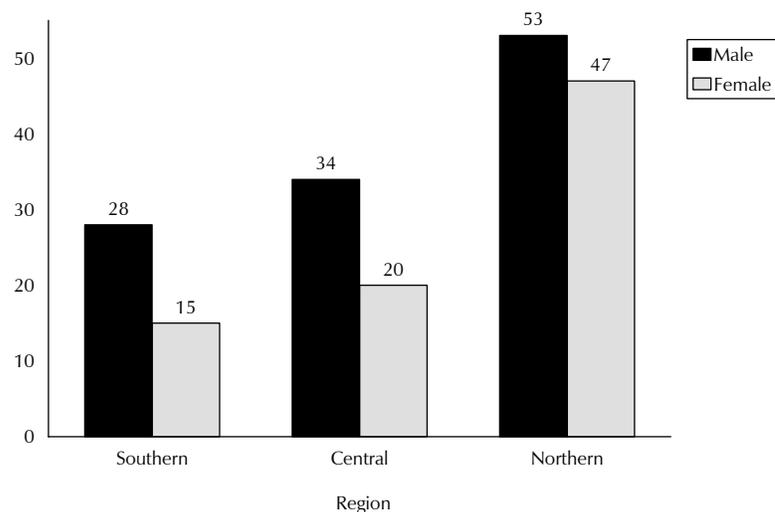
MDES 2002

Differences in the NAR by wealth at the secondary level are far more dramatic than wealth differences in the NAR at the primary level (see Figure 4.5). Only youth in the highest quintile appear to have meaningful access to secondary schooling: While 23 percent of the wealthiest youth age 14-17 attend secondary school, just 7 percent of the youth in the fourth quintile and 3 percent of those in the lowest quintile attend secondary school. A similar pattern exists among youth up to age 24, with a GAR of 62 among the wealthiest youth, 23 among youth in the fourth quintile, and 11 among the poorest youth. This pattern suggests that the monetary costs of schooling at the secondary level may present a substantial barrier to entry and persistence in school beyond the primary level.

Figure 4.5 Secondary Net Attendance Ratio, by Wealth
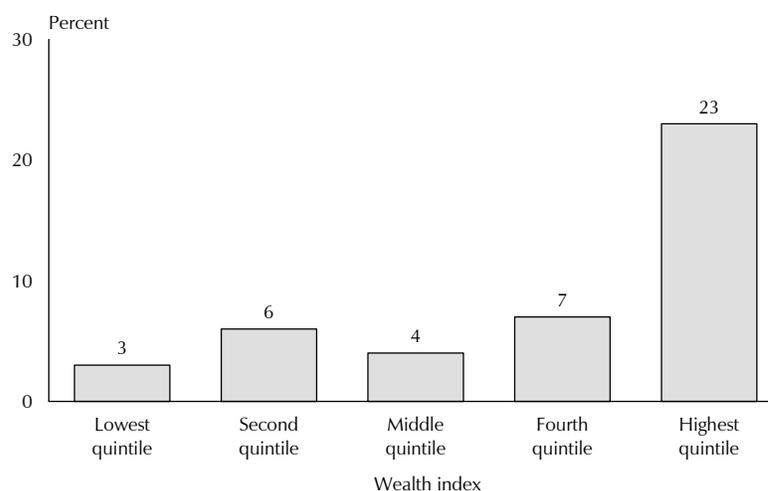
4.3   Over-age, Under-age, and On-time Pupils

Table 4.3 presents information about the timeliness of pupils' progress through the primary school system, by primary school standard. Pupils are considered to be over age if they are two or more years older, and under age if they are one or more years younger, than the official age for their standard. Pupils are considered to be on time if they are of the official age, or are one year older than the official age for their grade. Since the official age of entry to standard 1 is age 6, a standard 1 pupil who is age 6 or 7 is considered to be on time, a pupil age 8 or older is over age, and a pupil age 5 or younger is under age. This indicator—under age, on time, or over age for standard—differs from the percentage of primary school pupils outside the primary school age range (see discussion in sections 4.1 and 4.2 above) in that the proportion of pupils over age, on time, and under age is calculated for each primary school standard, rather than for primary school overall.

Having over-age pupils in class may have an impact on pupil learning, as well as on persistence in school. For example, in a class with pupils ranging in age from 5 to 15, teachers may have difficulty managing the learning environment, as younger and older pupils are at different stages of physical, social, and intellectual development. Besides, there is evidence that children who are over age for grade—especially girls—may be more likely to drop out before completing primary school.

Some children start school over age, while others repeat standards of schooling, falling behind their peers. Over age among primary school pupils is widespread in Malawi, with 65 percent of primary school pupils being over age for the standard they attend. In standard 1, 40 percent of the pupils are over age. In standard 2, the percentage rises to 61 percent, then increases more gradually up through the standards, to 79 percent in standard 8. In most of the standards, male pupils are more likely than female pupils to be over age for standard.

Table 4.3 Over-age, under-age, and on-time pupils

Percent distribution of over-age, under-age, and on-time de jure pupils in primary school, according to primary standard and sex, Malawi 2002

Primary standard	Pupils in primary school				Number of children
	Over age	On time	Under age	Total	
MALE					
1	43.7	43.9	12.5	100.0	475
2	61.7	31.7	6.5	100.0	366
3	74.2	23.0	2.8	100.0	321
4	77.0	17.9	5.1	100.0	246
5	83.1	10.7	6.2	100.0	185
6	77.1	17.9	5.0	100.0	133
7	77.1	17.6	5.3	100.0	120
8	81.6	14.4	3.9	100.0	113
Total	66.5	26.7	6.8	100.0	1,957
FEMALE					
1	36.1	47.5	16.4	100.0	460
2	60.9	30.3	8.8	100.0	362
3	69.6	22.8	7.5	100.0	331
4	73.3	24.0	2.7	100.0	231
5	75.2	20.1	4.6	100.0	173
6	79.4	17.5	3.1	100.0	139
7	78.8	15.2	6.1	100.0	117
8	74.5	22.6	2.8	100.0	85
Total	62.3	29.3	8.4	100.0	1,898
TOTAL					
1	40.0	45.6	14.4	100.0	935
2	61.3	31.0	7.6	100.0	727
3	71.9	22.9	5.2	100.0	652
4	75.2	20.9	3.9	100.0	477
5	79.3	15.3	5.5	100.0	358
6	78.2	17.7	4.0	100.0	272
7	77.9	16.4	5.7	100.0	236
8	78.6	18.0	3.5	100.0	197
Total	64.4	28.0	7.6	100.0	3,854

4.4   Age-specific Schooling Status

Tables 4.4.1, 4.4.2, and 4.4.3 present information on the schooling status of youth age 5-24, by age. Youth either have never attended school, left school at some time before the 2002 school year, or attended school during the 2002 school year at the nursery, primary, or secondary/higher level.

The overwhelming majority of youth either currently attend or have attended school: Only 10 percent of children age 6-17 have never attended school (data not shown). The percentage of school-age children who have never attended school is highest at age 6 (31 percent), and drops to between 3 and 8 percent among children age 9-13, suggesting that while children do not necessarily start attending primary school by the age of 6, they are likely to attend school at some point (see Table 4.4.3). Nursery school attendance is rare, even among children who are under age for standard 1: 2 percent of children age 5 attend nursery school, whereas 28 percent attend primary.

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Table 4.4.1 Age-specific schooling status among male youth age 5-24

Percent distribution of de jure male youth age 5-24 by schooling status, according to age, Malawi 2002

| | Not attending | | Attending | | | | | Number of youth |
Age	Never attended	Dropped out	Nursery	Primary	Secondary or higher	Missing	Total	
5	64.1	2.1	2.1	22.1	0.0	9.7	100.0	283
6	33.2	3.8	0.6	61.7	0.0	0.8	100.0	238
7	25.7	4.5	0.3	69.6	0.0	0.0	100.0	205
8	12.3	3.1	0.3	84.3	0.0	0.0	100.0	244
9	11.2	3.7	0.0	85.1	0.0	0.0	100.0	234
10	3.2	10.1	0.0	86.7	0.0	0.0	100.0	208
11	6.4	6.7	0.0	86.1	0.0	0.8	100.0	153
12	2.3	8.8	0.0	88.7	0.3	0.0	100.0	194
13	1.2	8.1	0.0	89.9	0.3	0.6	100.0	186
14	2.5	14.9	0.0	80.9	1.6	0.0	100.0	148
15	4.3	12.6	0.0	78.2	3.6	1.3	100.0	172
16	6.3	26.0	0.0	56.8	10.8	0.1	100.0	188
17	5.7	26.3	0.0	46.2	21.8	0.0	100.0	163
18	6.6	38.6	0.0	32.6	21.0	1.2	100.0	166
19	5.5	47.8	0.0	22.1	24.0	0.6	100.0	138
20	6.1	58.9	0.0	11.7	21.6	1.8	100.0	151
21	5.9	62.4	0.0	5.8	22.7	3.1	100.0	97
22	7.3	76.8	0.0	3.6	12.4	0.0	100.0	131
23	7.0	81.4	0.0	1.7	7.1	2.8	100.0	112
24	9.7	73.7	0.0	1.3	10.3	5.0	100.0	97

Table 4.4.2 Age-specific schooling status among female youth age 5-24

Percent distribution of de jure female youth age 5-24 by schooling status, according to age, Malawi 2002

| | Not attending | | Attending | | | | | Number of youth |
Age	Never attended	Dropped out	Nursery	Primary	Secondary or higher	Missing	Total	
5	58.4	2.6	0.8	33.0	0.0	5.2	100.0	274
6	29.5	5.3	1.3	63.8	0.0	0.0	100.0	227
7	20.2	4.9	0.0	74.6	0.0	0.3	100.0	236
8	13.7	5.3	0.3	80.7	0.0	0.0	100.0	229
9	3.9	6.4	0.0	89.6	0.0	0.0	100.0	201
10	4.9	8.4	0.0	86.7	0.0	0.0	100.0	229
11	4.4	10.4	0.0	84.8	0.4	0.0	100.0	201
12	6.1	7.3	0.0	86.6	0.0	0.0	100.0	218
13	3.9	13.6	0.0	81.7	0.9	0.0	100.0	169
14	1.7	13.7	0.0	80.1	4.6	0.0	100.0	143
15	3.1	21.7	0.0	68.6	5.0	1.7	100.0	143
16	3.6	36.9	0.0	49.2	9.4	0.8	100.0	167
17	3.7	43.6	0.0	39.5	11.7	1.4	100.0	177
18	16.6	45.6	0.0	24.6	13.3	0.0	100.0	160
19	9.1	66.5	0.0	7.2	15.3	1.9	100.0	144
20	15.0	73.3	0.0	3.5	5.3	2.8	100.0	190
21	14.0	78.4	0.0	1.6	5.7	0.3	100.0	155
22	20.0	69.3	0.0	2.7	3.7	4.4	100.0	195
23	25.0	69.2	0.0	1.7	0.6	3.6	100.0	129
24	19.5	75.5	0.0	1.2	2.5	1.3	100.0	95

While the same percentage of male and female children age 6-13 attend primary school (NAR is 81 percent), male children age 5-7 are more likely than female children never to have attended school (see Tables 4.4.1 and 4.4.2). This pattern suggests that male children, on average, first attend school at older ages than female children. From age 18 to 24, female youth are more likely than male youth never to have attended school, indicating that in the past, male youth were more likely than female youth to attend school at some point in time.

Table 4.4.3 Age-specific schooling status among youth age 5-24

Percent distribution of de jure youth age 5-24 by schooling status, according to age, Malawi 2002

| | Not attending | | Attending | | | | | Number |
| | Never | Dropped | | | Secondary | | | of |
Age	attended	out	Nursery	Primary	or higher	Missing	Total	youth
5	61.3	2.4	1.5	27.5	0.0	7.5	100.0	557
6	31.4	4.5	0.9	62.7	0.0	0.4	100.0	465
7	22.7	4.7	0.1	72.3	0.0	0.2	100.0	440
8	13.0	4.2	0.3	82.6	0.0	0.0	100.0	474
9	7.8	5.0	0.0	87.2	0.0	0.0	100.0	435
10	4.1	9.2	0.0	86.7	0.0	0.0	100.0	438
11	5.2	8.8	0.0	85.4	0.2	0.3	100.0	355
12	4.3	8.0	0.0	87.6	0.1	0.0	100.0	412
13	2.5	10.7	0.0	86.0	0.6	0.3	100.0	355
14	2.1	14.3	0.0	80.5	3.1	0.0	100.0	290
15	3.7	16.7	0.0	73.9	4.2	1.5	100.0	315
16	5.1	31.1	0.0	53.2	10.1	0.5	100.0	355
17	4.7	35.3	0.0	42.7	16.5	0.7	100.0	340
18	11.5	42.0	0.0	28.7	17.2	0.6	100.0	326
19	7.4	57.3	0.0	14.5	19.6	1.2	100.0	282
20	11.1	66.9	0.0	7.1	12.5	2.4	100.0	341
21	10.9	72.2	0.0	3.3	12.2	1.4	100.0	252
22	14.8	72.3	0.0	3.0	7.2	2.6	100.0	326
23	16.6	74.9	0.0	1.7	3.6	3.2	100.0	241
24	14.5	74.6	0.0	1.3	6.5	3.2	100.0	192

4.5   Primary School Pupil Flow Rates

Repetition and dropout rates describe the flow of pupils through the education system. The repetition rates produced using the MDES education data indicate the percentage of pupils who attended a particular standard in 2001, and who then attended that same standard in the 2002 school year. The dropout rates show the percentage of pupils in a standard in 2001 who no longer attended school in the 2002 school year. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 present repetition and dropout rates, by primary school standard and for the primary level as a whole, according to pupils' background characteristics.

Repetition rates

The repetition rates produced using the MDES data do not distinguish between children who completed a school year—including writing the examinations—and then repeated the same standard in the following year, and children who interrupted their schooling during one school year and returned to the same standard in the following school year. The latter phenomenon may be quite common, particularly in standard 1. Children starting school may have difficulty adjusting to the school environment, and school staff or children's families may decide that it is best for some children—especially the youngest—to stop attending standard 1 that year, and to return to school the following year when they are more mature and better prepared for schooling. Other children may remain in standard 1 throughout the entire school year, and yet not be prepared to continue to standard 2 the following year, so they repeat standard 1 in the following school year.

For the level as a whole, one-fourth (26 percent) of the pupils in primary school in 2001 repeated the same standard in the 2002 school year. The repetition rate is highest in standard 1, with 41 percent of pupils repeating the standard (see Table 4.5). About one in four pupils repeats standards 2 and 3, and one in five repeats standard 4. Repetition rates are lower (from 10 to 12 percent) in standards 5 through 7, but rise again in standard 8. About one in five pupils repeats the final standard of primary school, perhaps in order to improve their chances of finding places in secondary school.

Table 4.5 Repetition rates by primary school standard

Repetition rates for the de jure household population age 5-24 years by primary school standard, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

	Primary school standard								All
Characteristic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	standards
Sex									
Male	41.3	27.0	29.0	20.8	13.3	10.8	9.6	22.1	27.0
Female	40.0	21.6	26.1	17.5	7.2	8.6	14.9	14.2	24.5
Residence									
Urban	47.6	12.7	27.3	28.2	9.0	8.2	12.3	(11.9)	23.1
Rural	40.0	25.5	27.7	17.8	10.5	10.1	(12.2)	20.9	26.1
Region									
Northern	47.1	17.4	13.9	22.6	4.0	12.5	22.3	28.7	25.0
Central	38.7	24.1	29.4	17.9	8.6	7.7	10.4	10.8	24.3
Southern	41.0	25.8	28.9	19.3	13.3	11.2	10.9	24.7	27.4
Total	40.6	24.2	27.7	19.1	10.3	9.8	12.2	19.5	25.8

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases.

In most of the primary standards, male pupils are more likely than female pupils to repeat standards. Most notably, male pupils are more likely than female pupils to repeat standard 8 (22 versus 14 percent).

The repetition rates calculated from the 2002 MDES are generally consistent with those from the 2000 Malawi DHS, with the notable exception of the repetition rate at standard 8 (see Figure 4.6). The 2002 MDES found that 20 percent of pupils repeated the final standard of primary school, which is a considerable drop from the 39 percent repetition rate in standard 8 found by the 2000 Malawi DHS.

Figure 4.6 **Repetition Rates by Primary School Standard, 2000 and 2002**
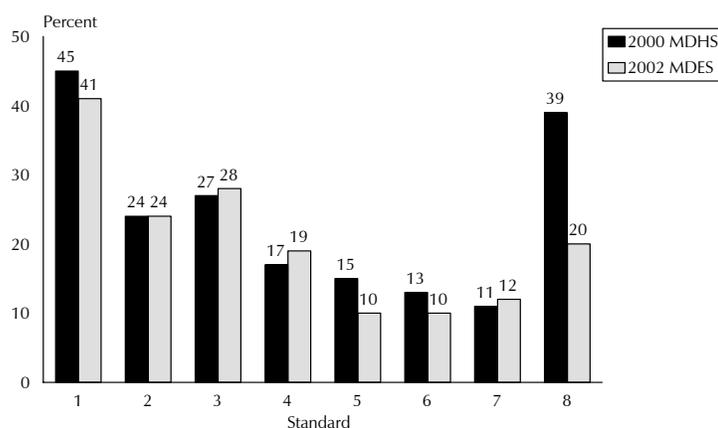
Dropout rates

For the level as a whole, 8 percent of the pupils in primary school in 2001 dropped out of school before the 2002 school year. Nine percent of standard 1 pupils dropped out of school during or after standard 1. Dropout rates decline through the remaining lower standards, ranging from 5 to 6 percent in standards 2 through 4. Rates rise in standards 5 through 7, to between 10 and 12 percent, and spike at 20 percent in standard 8. It should be noted that "dropout" is perhaps not the most accurate term for school leaving at the end of the primary school cycle, as some pupils leaving school likely would stay in school if offered a place at secondary school. Dropout that occurs because of a shortage in the supply of schooling is often referred to as "push-out" instead.

Table 4.6 Dropout rates by primary school standard

Dropout rates for the de jure household population age 5-24 years by primary school standard, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| Characteristic | Primary school standard | | | | | | | | All standards |
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Sex									
Male	7.7	3.9	5.8	3.9	10.7	12.0	8.3	19.8	7.6
Female	9.4	7.6	3.8	8.8	9.8	11.6	11.5	20.7	8.8
Residence									
Urban	0.0	3.8	3.6	1.5	2.4	2.9	4.0	(12.1)	3.0
Rural	9.3	6.1	5.0	7.0	11.6	13.7	10.9	21.5	8.9
Region									
Northern	0.0	0.3	0.5	2.4	7.5	13.9	(4.9)	12.0	3.2
Central	5.4	3.7	4.1	3.7	10.7	8.2	9.4	17.5	6.2
Southern	12.8	9.2	6.5	9.5	10.5	14.8	12.5	26.0	11.2
Total	8.5	5.9	4.8	6.3	10.3	11.8	9.9	20.1	8.2

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases.

The dropout rates calculated from the 2002 MDES are generally higher than those from the 2000 Malawi DHS. In 2002, the standard 1 dropout rate was 9 percent, compared with just 3 percent in 2000. More strikingly, while the dropout rate in the final standard of primary school was 12 percent in 2000, it rose to 20 percent in 2000 (see Figure 4.7).

Considered jointly, the repetition and dropout rates present a mixed picture. On the one hand, the percentage of pupils making the transition from standard 8 to secondary school is increasing: from the 2001 to the 2002 school year, 60 percent of standard 8 pupils made the transition from standard 8 to secondary school, while from 1999 to 2000, 49 percent of pupils made this transition.[3] On the other hand, from 2000 to 2002, the percentage of pupils dropping out from one standard to another is on the rise.

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[3] The promotion rate from one year to the next is calculated by subtracting the percentage dropping out and the percentage repeating a standard from 100 percent.

Figure 4.7 Dropout Rates by Primary School Standard, 2000 and 2002
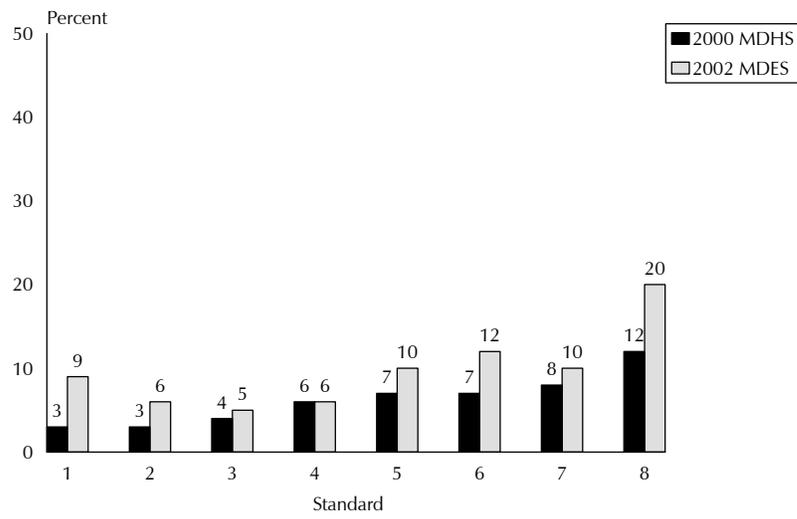
HOUSEHOLD PROXIMITY TO SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL SELECTION

5

This chapter presents information about the distance and walking time from children's households to the nearest primary and secondary school and about the types of schools children attend.

5.1 Household Proximity to Schools

Primary Schools

Information about the walking time and distance to the nearest primary school is useful as an indicator of children's access to schooling. The distance to school partly explains why some children have not yet attended school, and why many children who have attended school started school at an age greater than the official entry age (see Chapter 6). Children from households that are far from school in terms of distance and/or walking time may be less likely than other children to enrol in school at the target age of 6 years.

Table 5.1 shows the percent distribution of children age 6-14 by walking time, in minutes, to the nearest primary school, by children's background characteristics. These data, as well as those presented for distance to the nearest secondary school, are based on a question asked of children's parents/ guardians about how long it would take the parent/guardian to walk to the nearest primary school— whether this school is a Local Education Authority (LEA)/government school, a private non-religious school, or a private religious school. It is important to note that the nearest school is not necessarily a school attended by one or more children in the household. The intent of the question is to measure access to and remoteness from the closest school, rather than the variation in walking time for each child within the household. For this reason, the respondent is not asked how long it takes each child to walk to the nearest school, but rather how long it would take for an adult to walk the distance.

Ninety-one percent of children age 6-14 who attend primary school attend the primary school nearest their household (data not shown). As might be expected, pupils in urban areas are less likely than those in rural areas to attend the school that is closest to the household (80 percent versus 93 percent).

Table 5.1 Walking time to the nearest primary school

Percent distribution of de jure children age 6-14 by walking time (in minutes) to the nearest primary school, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Minutes to nearest primary school					Don't know/ missing	Total	Number of children	Mean walking time in minutes
	0-15	16-30	31-45	45-60	60+				
Residence									
Urban	64.2	27.6	1.6	6.2	0.4	0.0	100.0	402	19
Rural	32.8	32.5	6.4	17.9	9.9	0.5	100.0	3,350	41
Region									
Northern	36.8	28.6	6.2	16.3	11.2	0.9	100.0	372	38
Central	47.5	30.6	4.5	10.2	7.1	0.0	100.0	1,552	31
Southern	26.5	33.9	7.0	22.1	9.9	0.7	100.0	1,829	45
Total	36.2	32.0	5.9	16.6	8.9	0.4	100.0	3,752	39

As illustrated in Table 5.1, in terms of walking time to the nearest primary school, children in urban areas are closer than children in rural areas to a primary school: While 64 percent of children in urban areas live within 15 minutes of the nearest school, 33 percent of rural children live within 15 minutes of the nearest school. Less than 1 percent of children in urban areas are more than one hour's walk from the closest primary school, compared with 10 percent of children in rural areas. The mean walking time from the household to the closest primary school is 19 minutes among children in urban areas and 41 minutes among children in rural areas (see Figure 5.1). There are regional differences, with households in the Central region being closer to the nearest school than households in the Northern and Southern regions.

Figure 5.1 Mean Walking Time (Minutes) to Nearest Primary and Secondary Schools, by Residence
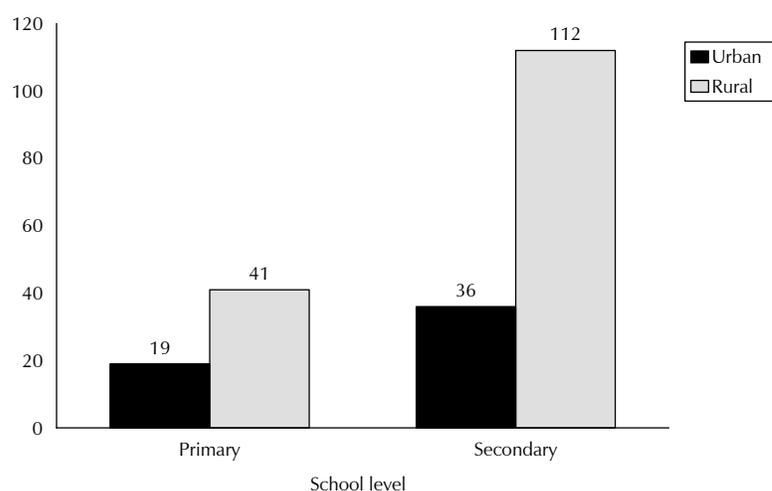
MDES 2002

Table 5.2 shows the percent distribution of children by the distance, in kilometres, to the nearest primary school, by children's background characteristics. The findings are largely consistent with those in Table 5.1. On average, children in urban areas live closer than children in rural areas to the nearest primary school (1 kilometre in urban areas compared with 2 kilometres in rural areas).

Table 5.2 Distance to nearest primary school

Percent distribution of de jure children age 6-14 by distance (in kilometres) to the nearest primary school, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Kilometres to nearest primary school					Don't know/ missing	Total	Number of children	Mean distance
	<1	1-2	3-4	5-6	>6				
Residence									
Urban	58.2	33.2	3.4	3.7	1.4	0.1	100.0	402	0.9
Rural	36.7	37.5	14.2	5.5	4.1	1.9	100.0	3,350	1.9
Region									
Northern	34.3	34.4	15.0	7.7	4.1	4.5	100.0	372	1.9
Central	48.5	39.6	8.0	1.7	1.3	0.9	100.0	1,552	1.1
Southern	31.9	35.3	16.9	8.0	5.9	1.9	100.0	1,829	2.4
Total	39.0	37.0	13.1	5.3	3.8	1.7	100.0	3,752	1.8

In the Central region, children face shorter distances to the nearest primary school than in the Northern and Southern regions. Forty-nine percent of children in the Central region are less than 1 kilometre from a primary school, compared with 34 percent in the Northern region and 32 percent in the Southern region.

Secondary Schools

The 2002 MDES also collected information about the walking time and distance to the nearest secondary school. As was the case with primary schools, the walking time and distance to the nearest secondary school—whether this school is a conventional school, a Community Day Secondary School (CDSS), a grant-aided school, or a private school—are used to indicate children's remoteness from the nearest secondary school.

Table 5.3 presents results for the estimated time (in minutes) needed to walk to the nearest secondary school. Urban-rural differentials are more pronounced for access to secondary schools than access to primary schools: 42 percent of children in urban areas are located within 15 minutes of a secondary school, compared with 9 percent of children in rural areas. The mean walking time to the nearest secondary school is 36 minutes for children in urban areas and 112 minutes for children in rural areas (see Figure 5.1). Mean walking times to the nearest secondary school vary enormously by region, with children in the Central region having the shortest and those in the Northern region having the longest walking time.

						Minutes to nearest secondary school				Mean

Table 5.3 Walking time to the nearest secondary school

Percent distribution of de jure children age 6-14 by walking time (in minutes) to the nearest secondary school, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	0-15	16-30	31-45	45-60	60+	Don't know/ missing	Total	Number of children	Mean walking time in minutes
Residence									
Urban	41.9	28.2	6.6	9.1	13.7	0.5	100.0	402	36
Rural	9.0	15.4	4.3	17.8	52.4	1.2	100.0	3,350	112
Region									
Northern	5.9	6.5	2.5	15.7	68.4	1.1	100.0	372	126
Central	20.2	20.6	4.1	15.1	39.5	0.5	100.0	1,552	89
Southern	7.3	15.6	5.3	18.6	51.5	1.7	100.0	1,829	111
Total	12.5	16.8	4.5	16.9	48.2	1.1	100.0	3,752	104

Distances to the nearest secondary school are presented in Table 5.4. On average, the distance from children's households to the nearest secondary school is 5 kilometres, compared with a distance of 2 kilometres to the nearest primary school (see Table 5.2). Children in urban areas are closer than those in rural areas to the nearest secondary school (2 kilometres versus 6 kilometres), which is consistent with the pattern of differences in walking time. Regional differences in the distance to the nearest secondary school are similar to those found at the primary level, with mean distances being shortest in the Central region and longest in the Northern region.

Table 5.4 Distance to nearest secondary school

Percent distribution of de jure children age 6-14 by distance (in kilometres) to the nearest secondary school, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Kilometres to nearest secondary school					Don't know/ missing	Total	Number of children	Mean distance
	<1	1-2	3-4	5-6	>6				
Residence									
Urban	35.2	43.3	12.6	4.8	4.0	0.2	100.0	402	1.7
Rural	11.9	25.0	19.0	13.3	28.3	2.6	100.0	3,350	5.8
Region									
Northern	4.0	18.5	13.2	18.9	41.2	4.1	100.0	372	8.7
Central	21.9	33.4	16.6	10.4	16.2	1.5	100.0	1,552	3.7
Southern	10.1	23.3	20.8	12.6	30.6	2.6	100.0	1,829	6.1
Total	14.4	27.0	18.3	12.3	25.7	2.3	100.0	3,752	5.4

5.2   School Type

The 2002 MDES collected information about what types of schools primary school pupils attend and about whether these children board at school or are day students. Schools are classified as LEA/ government, private non-religious, and private religious. LEA/government schools receive government assistance and funding, so any school receiving government support for teacher salaries or for other costs is a government-aided school. A private non-religious school does not receive government assistance and is run privately, whereas a private religious school is owned and operated by a religious group and is not assisted by government. A school founded many years ago by a religious group, but now assisted by the government, is classified as a government-assisted school, not a private religious school.

The government is the major provider of primary schooling, with 95 percent of primary school pupils attending LEA/government schools (see Table 5.5). Of the remaining pupils, 2 percent attend private non-religious schools and 3 percent attend private religious schools.

Table 5.5 Type of primary school

Percent distribution of de jure primary school pupils by type of school attended, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	LEA/ govern- ment	Non-public				Total	Number of children
		Private non- religious	Private religious	Other	Missing		
Sex							
Male	94.6	1.7	3.2	0.2	0.2	100.0	1,490
Female	95.0	1.8	2.8	0.1	0.3	100.0	1,537
Residence							
Urban	86.3	10.5	3.2	0.0	0.0	100.0	357
Rural	96.0	0.6	3.0	0.1	0.3	100.0	2,671
Region							
Northern	91.3	2.2	6.4	0.0	0.0	100.0	345
Central	97.5	1.7	0.6	0.0	0.1	100.0	1,303
Southern	93.1	1.7	4.4	0.3	0.5	100.0	1,379
Total	94.8	1.8	3.0	0.1	0.3	100.0	3,028

At the primary level, the role of the private sector is more pronounced in urban areas than in rural areas, with 14 percent of pupils in urban areas and 4 percent of pupils in rural areas attending private schools (both non-religious and religious). Interestingly, 3 percent of pupils in both areas attend private religious schools, while a much higher percentage of pupils in urban than in rural areas attend private non-religious schools (11 percent versus 1 percent).

Table 5.6 shows that virtually all (99 percent) of the primary school pupils in Malawi attending public schools are day pupils. At non-public schools, 5 percent of the pupils board at school.

Table 5.6   Day pupils and boarders at primary school

Percent distribution of de jure primary school pupils by status as day pupils or boarders, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Pupil status		Total	Number of children
	Day pupil	Boarder		
Sex				
Male	99.6	0.4	100.0	1,490
Female	99.3	0.7	100.0	1,537
Residence				
Urban	99.9	0.1	100.0	357
Rural	99.4	0.6	100.0	2,671
Region				
Northern	99.5	0.5	100.0	345
Central	98.9	1.1	100.0	1,303
Southern	99.9	0.1	100.0	1,379
Type of school				
Public	99.7	0.3	100.0	2,871
Non-public	94.9	5.1	100.0	149
Total	99.4	0.6	100.0	3,028

FACTORS AFFECTING CHILDREN'S SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

6

This chapter presents data on the circumstances surrounding decisions about children's school attendance. Information is presented on which household member decides whether children attend school. The chapter then presents data on children's nursery school participation rates, the age at which children first attend primary school, and—for those who have never attended school—the reasons they did not attend school during the 2002 school year. Finally, for children who attended school at some point but stopped attending sometime before the 2002 school year, data are presented on reasons for dropping out of school.

In several sections of this chapter, there is discussion of the costs of schooling and their influence on schooling decisions. The costs of schooling to households include both money spent on school-related expenses and non-monetary contributions. These non-monetary costs include the value of children's time, which could be used differently if the child did not attend school. If a child provides support to the household by taking care of younger children, tending animals, going fishing, or doing other work, then the time the child spends in school is time that could otherwise be spent supporting the household. In other words, the child's time is part of the non-monetary cost of schooling borne by the household. It may be that in some households, these monetary and non-monetary costs are high enough to delay children's school entry, or keep some children from attending school at all, or contribute to pupils dropping out of school.

6.1   Starting School

Household Decision-making

Parents/guardians were asked which household member decides whether children will attend school at some point in time or whether they will not go to school at all (see Table 6.1). While it is recognized that decision-making is a complex process and that more than one household member may have input on the decision, the question asks parents/guardians to say who makes the final decision in the household on whether children attend school. Overall, fathers are more likely than mothers to make the final decision about whether their children attend school: One-third of parents/guardians said that the child's father makes the final decision, compared with one-fifth saying that the child's mother makes the decision. One-third of respondents said that both parents make the decision together.

Table 6.1 Household decision-making about education

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by which household member decides whether children attend school, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Household member making final decision									Total	Number of parents/ guardians
	Mother	Father	Both parents	Guardian	Child	Parent/ guardian with child	Someone else	Decision not made	Don't know/ missing		
Residence											
Urban	14.5	21.9	47.6	12.3	0.0	0.8	0.9	0.0	1.9	100.0	228
Rural	21.1	35.6	32.6	7.6	0.2	1.1	0.6	0.1	1.2	100.0	1,820
Region											
Northern	12.9	34.5	42.1	8.6	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	100.0	187
Central	19.1	41.8	29.5	6.3	0.0	0.6	0.1	0.1	2.4	100.0	844
Southern	22.8	27.6	36.8	9.5	0.3	1.5	1.2	0.0	0.4	100.0	1,017
Total	20.4	34.1	34.3	8.1	0.1	1.1	0.6	0.1	1.3	100.0	2,048

About half (48 percent) of the parents/guardians in urban areas said that parents make the decision jointly, compared with one-third of parents/guardians in rural areas, where fathers are more likely to make the decision on their own. Fathers and mothers are most likely to make the decision together in the Northern and Southern regions, whereas in the Central region, the decision to send children to school is most often made by the father. In all three regions, the percentage of respondents saying that mothers make the final decision is lower than the percentage saying that either the father or both parents together make the final decision.

Nursery School Attendance

There is considerable evidence that attending nursery school helps provide a foundation for learning, and that children who attend nursery school are better prepared for primary school and for learning throughout life. Table 6.2 presents data on the percentage of children age 6-14 who have ever attended school who attended nursery school. Overall, less than one in ten (9 percent) children, and equal percentages of male and female children, attended nursery school before starting primary school. These children spent an average of 1.7 years in nursery school. In urban areas, 39 percent of children attended nursery school before going to primary school, compared with just 6 percent of children in rural areas. Regional differences in nursery school attendance are minimal.

Younger children are more likely than older children to have attended nursery school, suggesting that nursery school attendance rates in Malawi are increasing over time. Five percent of children age 11-14, 12 percent of those age 8-10, and 15 percent of children age 6-7 attended nursery school.

Children from households in the highest wealth quintile are far more likely than children from households in the lowest quintile to have attended nursery school (see Figure 6.1). Between 3 percent and 7 percent of the children in the first four quintiles attended nursery school, compared with 27 percent of the children in the highest quintile.

Table 6.2 Nursery school participation

Among de jure children who ever attended school, percentage who attended nursery school, and mean number of years attended, by background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Percentage who attended nursery school	Number of children	Mean number of years attended nursery school
Age			
6-7	15.1	668	1.5
8-10	11.5	1,263	1.6
11-14	4.9	1,393	2.0
Sex			
Male	9.2	1,628	1.7
Female	9.7	1,695	1.6
Residence			
Urban	38.8	383	1.9
Rural	5.6	2,941	1.4
Region			
Northern	9.7	352	1.5
Central	10.5	1,397	1.7
Southern	8.4	1,575	1.7
Wealth index quintile			
Lowest	2.7	642	1.0
Second	4.2	607	1.7
Middle	4.4	673	1.2
Fourth	7.1	677	1.5
Highest	26.7	724	1.8
Total	9.4	3,323	1.7

Figure 6.1 Nursery School Attendance among Children
Age 6-14 Who Have Ever Attended School, by Wealth
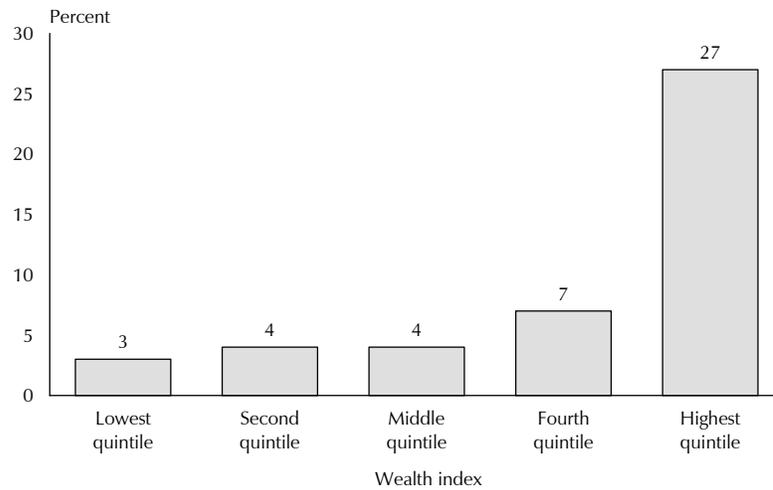
MDES 2002

Age at Primary School Entry

Table 6.3 presents information about the age at which 6- to 14-year-old children first attended standard 1, among those who have ever attended standard 1. Over half the children first attended standard 1 at the intended age of entry (age 6-7). One in four children first attended primary school at an age below the official or target entry age for standard 1. Eighteen percent of the children started school over age, at an age of 8 or older. Children in rural areas are more likely than those in urban areas to have started school over age (19 percent versus 8 percent).

Children from households in the highest wealth quintile are less likely than children from households in the lowest quintile to have started school over age. In the highest quintile, 8 percent of children started primary school over age, compared with 17 to 24 percent of children in the first four quintiles.

Table 6.3 Age at first primary school attendance

Percent distribution of de jure children age 6-14 who have ever attended primary school, by timeliness of first attendance and mean age at school entry, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Age at first standard 1 attendance					Mean age at entry	Number of children
	Under age (<6)	On time (6-7)	Over age (8+)	Don't know/ missing	Total		
Sex							
Male	26.9	52.3	17.2	3.6	100.0	6.4	1,628
Female	25.8	52.4	18.3	3.6	100.0	6.4	1,695
Residence							
Urban	38.4	49.0	8.1	4.5	100.0	5.8	383
Rural	24.8	52.8	19.0	3.5	100.0	6.5	2,941
Region							
Northern	33.1	46.4	9.0	11.5	100.0	6.0	352
Central	29.1	51.8	16.8	2.3	100.0	6.3	1,397
Southern	22.4	54.1	20.5	2.9	100.0	6.5	1,575
Wealth index quintile							
Lowest	23.6	49.9	22.1	4.4	100.0	6.6	642
Second	19.7	51.6	24.1	4.6	100.0	6.7	607
Middle	23.0	57.4	17.1	2.5	100.0	6.4	673
Fourth	25.6	52.2	19.3	2.9	100.0	6.4	677
Highest	38.1	50.5	7.7	3.7	100.0	5.9	724
Total	26.4	52.3	17.7	3.6	100.0	6.4	3,323

Parents/guardians of children who first attended primary school at age 8 or older were asked about reasons the children started school over age (see Table 6.4).[1] Thirty-nine percent of children started school over age at least partly because the nearest school was too far for the child to walk to at a young age. This reason was cited more frequently for female than for male children (42 percent compared with 36 percent). The second most cited reason was the child's lack of interest in attending school, with 21 percent of male and 15 percent of female children not starting school at the target age at least partly for this reason.

Table 6.4 Factors in over-age first-time school attendance

Percentage of de jure children age 8-14 who started primary school over age, by reasons for starting school at an age greater than 7, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Reasons for starting school at an age greater than 7							Number of children
	School too expensive	No school/ school too far	Labour needed	Child not interested	Too young	Illness	Other factors	
Sex								
Male	19.6	36.2	4.8	20.8	6.3	9.3	14.9	280
Female	14.1	41.9	9.7	15.3	4.1	10.1	13.7	308
Residence								
Urban	(7.2)	(56.1)	(6.8)	(3.9)	(1.4)	(18.9)	(28.5)	31
Rural	17.2	38.2	7.4	18.7	5.3	9.2	13.5	556
Total	16.7	39.2	7.4	17.9	5.1	9.7	14.3	587

Note: More than one response possible. Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases.

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[1] More than one reason could be cited, so the percentages do not add to 100 percent.

The monetary costs of schooling at least partly explain why 17 percent of the children starting school over age began school at an age older than the target entry age. This reason was given more often for male than for female children (20 percent versus 14 percent). In contrast, female children were more likely than male children to have started school over age partly because of the need for the child's labour in support of the household (10 percent compared with 5 percent). When asked for other reasons children started school over age, the most common reason given by parents/guardians was that the child was ill (10 percent) or was too young to start school (5 percent of children).

6.2   Never Having Attended School

Reasons for Never Having Attended School

Table 6.5 presents information about why children age 6-14 who have never attended primary school did not attend primary school at any point during the 2002 school year.[2] This table shows the percentage of children for whom each factor partly explains the reasons for not attending school. For each child, more than one factor may be involved in explaining why the child does not attend school. Factors are grouped under four headings: cost-related factors, child factors, school factors, and other.

As shown in Figure 6.2, the most commonly cited reason for a child not attending school during the 2002 school year was the child being uninterested in attending school (34 percent). This reason was cited more often for older (age 8-14) than younger (age 6-7) school-age children (47 and 25 percent, respectively). Interestingly, only 1 percent of children did not attend school partly because the parent/guardian considers school not to be important, or because what is taught in school is not seen to be relevant to a child's life.

Thirty percent of children who had never attended school did not attend in 2002 because the school was too far from the household. The distance to the nearest primary school was less a factor among children age 8-14 than among children age 6-7 (18 versus 37 percent). Another factor related to age and maturity—the perception that children are too young or not ready to attend school—was listed as a reason for children not attending school for 29 percent of children age 6-7, and was much less common among older children (9 percent among children age 8-14). There was a similar pattern in the percentage of children not attending at least partly because travel to school was unsafe, with 17 percent of children age 6-7 and 6 percent of children age 8-14 not attending school because of this reason.

The 2002 MDES asked about the influence of both monetary and non-monetary costs on the likelihood of children attending school. The monetary costs of schooling were cited more frequently as factors in children not attending primary school than non-monetary (labour-related) costs. Seventeen percent of children who have never attended school did not attend in 2002 partly because of the monetary costs of schooling. Monetary costs were cited more often as reasons for not attending among male (20 percent) than among female children (15 percent), and were mentioned far more frequently for older than younger children (27 percent among children age 8-14, and 11 percent among children age 6-7). Only 4 percent of children who have never attended school did not attend because their labour was needed to support the household.

Ten percent of children who have never attended school did not attend during the 2002 school year because they had been very ill for three months or longer, and 8 percent because of a physical or mental disability that rendered them unable to attend.

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[2] The survey inquired about reasons that children did not attend school during a particular school year because for a 12-year-old child who has never attended school, there may have been various reasons at different times. Perhaps at age 6, the child was considered unable to walk the distance to school, while at age 10, the child was needed to do work to support the household.

Table 6.5 Factors in children never having attended school

Percentage of de jure children age 6-14 who have never attended school, by reasons for not attending during the 2002 school year and background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Cost-related factors		Child factors					School factors							Number of children who never attended school
	Mone-tary cost	Labour needed	No interest	Too young	Too old	Very sick/long-term illness	Dis-abled	Travel to school unsafe	School too far	Poor school quality	School not relevant	School not impor-tant	Other reasons	No reason	
Age															
6-7	10.9	2.8	25.1	29.4	0.0	9.3	7.2	16.7	36.8	5.7	1.2	0.4	21.6	1.4	248
8-14	27.3	6.8	46.7	8.5	5.2	11.1	9.3	6.4	18.3	1.8	1.0	0.6	15.9	0.0	166
Sex															
Male	19.8	2.7	35.3	21.9	1.9	8.3	7.5	11.7	25.0	4.5	0.7	0.9	19.3	1.1	214
Female	14.5	6.2	31.4	20.5	2.2	11.8	8.7	13.8	34.7	3.8	1.6	0.0	19.5	0.6	200
Residence															
Urban	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	17
Rural	17.2	4.5	34.1	21.4	2.1	9.3	8.4	11.7	28.6	4.4	1.2	0.5	19.2	0.9	397
Region															
Northern	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	18
Central	25.4	7.7	33.9	18.6	3.3	9.6	10.7	19.1	29.8	5.3	2.1	0.0	15.5	0.0	150
Southern	12.6	2.7	34.6	21.9	1.4	10.1	5.4	8.7	29.3	3.4	0.6	0.7	22.6	1.3	246
Wealth index quintile															
Lowest	19.8	1.7	41.3	15.3	2.1	11.7	8.8	7.6	23.1	2.5	0.0	0.8	18.0	2.0	120
Second	18.9	3.6	30.1	25.3	0.0	4.8	9.6	10.0	26.4	1.3	2.3	0.0	21.2	0.7	127
Middle	11.9	7.8	29.3	20.9	0.0	8.5	8.4	12.4	41.6	4.9	0.0	0.0	18.1	0.0	82
Fourth	(7.2)	(2.5)	(36.0)	(30.4)	(3.0)	(12.0)	(6.3)	(25.2)	(33.1)	(13.6)	(2.7)	(1.6)	(16.8)	(0.6)	57
Highest	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	29
Total	17.3	4.4	33.5	21.3	2.0	10.0	8.1	12.7	29.6	4.2	1.1	0.5	19.4	0.9	414

Note: More than one response possible. Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases. An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed. Questions were asked about a total of 414 children who had not attended school. First, the parent/guardian was asked whether a child did not attend school because he/she was physically or mentally disabled, and if the answer was yes, no further questions were asked about reasons for not attending school. Next, the respondent was asked whether a child did not attend because he/she had been very sick for 3 months or longer, and if the answer was yes, no additional questions were asked. There were 33 children who did not attend because of a disability and 38 who did not attend because of long illness, so for the remainder of the questions, the sample size was not 414, but 343.

Poor school quality was rarely cited as a factor contributing to non-attendance.[3] In addition, none of the parent/guardian respondents said that a shortage of secondary school places or a shortage of jobs for school graduates were reasons children did not attend school (data not shown).

The 2002 MDES also collected information about children age 13-14 who had never attended school and who did not attend in 2002 partly because of pregnancy or marriage. The question was asked only about children age 13-14 because it is unlikely that children under the age of 13 do not attend primary school partly because they have married, become pregnant, or impregnated someone. No parent/guardian listed marriage or pregnancy as a reason for a child age 13-14 not attending school during the 2002 school year (data not shown).

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[3] Poor school quality includes one or more of the following factors: teachers not performing well, lack of pupil safety at school, school buildings and/or facilities being in poor condition, and classrooms being overcrowded.

Figure 6.2 Selected Factors in Not Attending School in 2002, among Children Who Have Never Attended School

Disabled — 8
Long-term illness — 10
Monetary cost — 17
Too young — 21
School too far — 30
No interest — 34

Percent
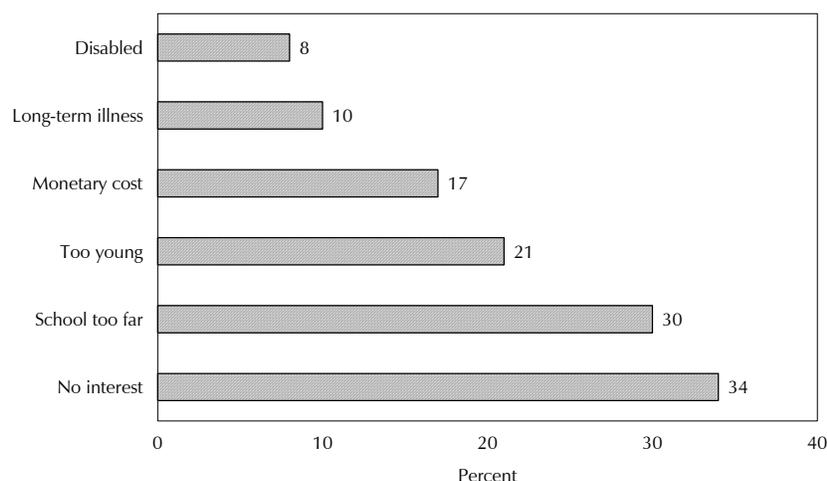
MDES 2002

6.3   Pupil Dropout

In the 2002 MDES, children are considered to have dropped out of school if they attended primary school at some point in time and no longer attend school. This group of children includes those who attended a standard without completing the year, as well as pupils who completed a standard of schooling before leaving school.

Table 6.6 presents the percent distribution of school dropouts by the primary school standard attained at the time of dropout. Sixty percent of the children age 6-14 who dropped out of school left during standard 1 or before attending standard 2. Among both male and female school-leavers, the mean age at dropout is 9. In other words, on average, children drop out of school at about the age at which they should be attending standard 3 or standard 4, but having attained only standard 1.

Table 6.6 School dropouts by educational attainment and age at dropout

Percent distribution of de jure school dropouts age 6-14 by standard attained at dropout, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Primary school standard attained								Missing	Total	Number of dropouts	Mean age at dropout
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8				
Sex												
Male	56.0	14.8	12.1	7.2	6.2	0.9	0.2	1.7	0.9	100.0	135	9.2
Female	64.3	14.8	10.8	5.5	1.9	1.9	0.8	0.0	0.0	100.0	149	8.9
Residence												
Urban	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	21	*
Rural	62.1	15.8	9.7	6.6	4.1	0.8	0.6	0.0	0.5	100.0	263	9.0
Total	60.3	14.8	11.4	6.3	4.0	1.4	0.5	0.8	0.4	100.0	284	9.0

Note: An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.

Table 6.7 presents information about why primary school leavers age 6-14 dropped out of school, either during the cycle or at the end of primary school. For 45 percent of school leavers, the perception that the child had completed enough schooling or no longer wanted to attend school, was a factor in dropping out (see Figure 6.3).

Background characteristic	Cost-related factors		Child factors					School factors			No jobs	Other reasons	No reason	Number of dropouts	Mean age at dropout
	Mone-tary cost	Labour needed	Failed exams/ had to repeat	Had enough school	Very sick/ long-term illness	Dis-abled	Too far to school	Travel to school unsafe	Poor school quality	No secon-dary school places	No jobs	Other reasons	No reason	Number of dropouts	Mean age at dropout
Age															
<6	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	22	*
6-7	29.8	37.3	7.2	40.5	10.6	6.9	8.2	1.2	7.3	0.0	0.0	7.4	1.2	71	6.6
8-14	24.5	30.0	16.9	44.6	12.7	4.5	9.1	3.0	8.2	1.7	4.3	7.3	0.5	191	10.4
Sex															
Male	22.7	22.9	16.8	48.3	12.1	6.0	6.7	3.2	8.8	1.2	4.2	12.3	0.7	135	9.2
Female	25.4	37.0	9.9	41.1	11.3	4.8	12.2	3.7	8.2	1.0	1.7	5.2	0.6	149	8.9
Residence															
Urban	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	21	*
Rural	22.0	28.6	12.5	45.5	11.8	5.4	10.4	3.8	9.2	0.9	3.1	9.2	0.7	263	9.0
Region															
Northern	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	4	*
Central	(21.9)	(32.9)	(23.4)	(57.2)	24.5	8.6	(12.0)	(2.0)	(9.3)	(2.4)	(8.2)	(5.6)	(0.0)	91	(8.6)
Southern	24.8	29.7	9.5	40.3	5.9	3.6	8.9	4.1	7.8	0.7	1.0	9.6	0.8	189	9.2
Wealth index quintile															
Lowest	36.0	26.4	10.4	40.0	14.4	3.2	6.0	5.1	3.1	1.9	1.4	7.0	0.0	85	9.2
Second	13.9	30.2	13.9	55.1	5.1	6.1	9.4	0.8	5.6	1.3	1.3	10.4	1.3	63	9.3
Middle	(17.2)	(23.9)	(18.6)	(53.1)	18.6	(5.1)	(15.7)	(4.2)	(11.4)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(9.8)	(0.0)	59	8.7
Fourth	(19.7)	(37.8)	(9.7)	(31.1)	(7.8)	(9.6)	(10.8)	(4.2)	(21.2)	(0.0)	(10.8)	(7.6)	(2.0)	44	(8.9)
Highest	(31.7)	(41.3)	(14.3)	(37.9)	(9.6)	(4.3)	(7.9)	(2.7)	(6.7)	(2.2)	(4.1)	(7.7)	(0.0)	33	(8.9)
Total	24.1	30.4	13.2	44.5	11.7	5.4	9.6	3.5	8.5	1.1	2.9	8.5	0.6	284	9.0

Table 6.7 Factors in primary school pupil dropout

Percentage of de jure children age 6-14 who have dropped out of school, by reasons for dropping out and background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Note: More than one response possible. Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases. An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed. Questions were asked about a total of 284 children who had dropped out of school. First, the parent/guardian was asked whether a child had dropped out because he/she was physically or mentally disabled, and if the answer was yes, no further questions were asked about reasons for leaving school. Next, the respondent was asked whether a child had dropped out because he/she had been very sick for 3 months or longer, and if the answer was yes, no additional questions were asked. There were 16 children who had dropped out because of a disability and 33 who had left because of long illness, so for the remainder of the questions, the sample size was not 284, but 237.

The costs of schooling were commonly cited as reasons for children leaving school. The need for children to do work in support of the household was a factor in school leaving for 30 percent of these children, with this factor being more common for female than male youth (37 percent versus 23 percent). For one-fourth of school-leavers, parents/guardians cited the monetary cost of schooling as a factor.

By comparison, other factors were relatively uncommon. Thirteen percent of pupils who have dropped out of school left school at least partly because they failed examinations or had to repeat standards. Twelve percent of dropouts left school at least partly because they were very ill for three months or longer, and 5 percent because of a disability.

In many school systems, there is a tension between the quantity of schooling provided (how many children have access to schooling), and the quality of schooling provided (as measured by both inputs such as teacher qualifications or pupil-teacher ratio, and by outputs such as pupil learning and performance on examinations). With the rapid expansion of the school system under Free Primary Education (FPE), this tension has been heightened in Malawi. Parents/guardians were asked whether

problems with teacher performance, poor facilities, classroom overcrowding, or pupil safety partly explained why their children had dropped out of school. For 9 percent of dropouts, poor school quality was cited as a reason for dropping out of school.

Gaining access to senior primary school may be difficult, particularly in rural areas. Children may live close enough to attend a school that provides standards 1-4, but they do not have ready access to schools providing the higher primary school standards. The distance to the nearest school with the required standard or form was a factor in dropping out of school for one in ten dropouts.

The 2002 MDES also collected information about children age 13-14 who left school partly because of pregnancy or marriage. The question was asked only about children age 13-14 because it is unlikely that children under the age of 13 left school partly because they married, become pregnant, or impregnated someone. No parent/guardian listed marriage or pregnancy as a reason for an eligible child leaving school (data not shown).

Figure 6.3 **Selected Factors in Primary School Pupil Dropout**

MDES 2002

HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES ON SCHOOLING

7
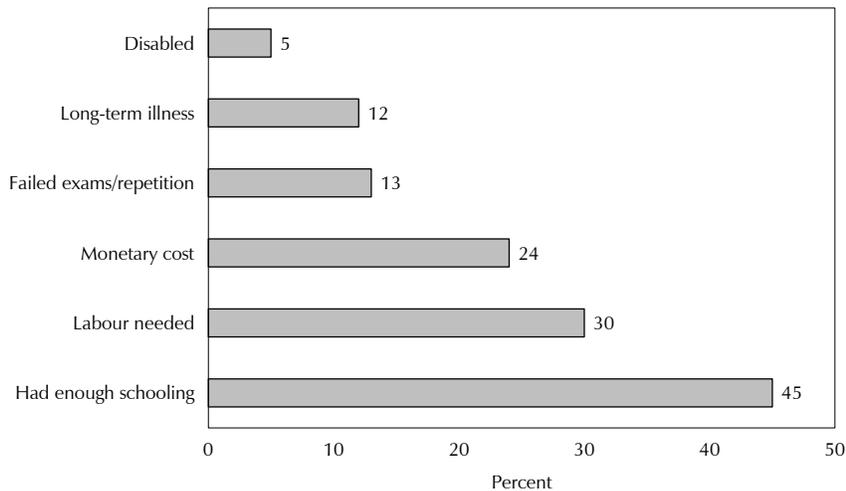
The cost of schooling to households includes the monetary costs and non-monetary contributions such as the time spent on schooling. These costs of schooling may be difficult for some households to bear and may be so burdensome as to keep children from ever attending school or result in children leaving school. This chapter focuses on household expenditures on children's schooling at the primary level, while Chapter 8 presents information on the non-monetary costs of schooling.

7.1   Incidence of Expenditures on Primary Schooling

As discussed in Chapter 1, Free Primary Education (FPE) was designed to reduce the monetary costs of primary schooling to households by eliminating tuition and other fees in public schools. Still, the question remains as to what school-related items households spend money on for children who attend primary school.

The 2002 Malawi DHS EdData Survey (MDES) collected information about whether households spent money on each pupil's schooling during the 2001 school year, and if so, how much was spent on each item. Questions were asked specifically about each possible cost, including the development fund; examination fees; school reports; boarding fees; uniforms, shoes, and school-related clothing; school books and supplies; transportation; food; private tuition;[1] tuition; and other types of expenditures. It must be emphasized that the parent/guardian respondent was asked about expenditures made by members of the household, rather than all expenditures made on the pupil's behalf. If, for example, the household did not spend money on the development fund, but an uncle living in another household paid this fee, the expenditure was not recorded for that pupil because it was not made by the pupil's household.

The tables in this section of the chapter present data on per-pupil household expenditures on schooling. The discussion is organized according to the type of school pupils attend because both the incidence and magnitude of expenditures are expected to differ according to the type of school attended. A series of tables presents information on the incidence of expenditure, or the percentage of pupils whose households spent money on each item, for pupils attending public schools (Table 7.1.1), those attending non-public schools (Table 7.1.2), and for all pupils (Table 7.1.3). Table 7.2 presents more detailed information on the incidence of expenditure on various school supplies, including textbooks, pens and pencils, exercise books, school bags, and other school supplies. Another series of tables presents the mean total amount spent on each pupil during the 2001 school year for pupils attending public schools (Table 7.3.1), those attending non-public schools (Table 7.3.2), and for all pupils (Table 7.3.3).

Overall Expenditures

As illustrated in Tables 7.1.1, 7.1.2, and 7.1.3, nearly all primary school pupils' households spent money on schooling in the 2001 school year, regardless of the type of school attended, the pupil's sex, residence, or region. Ninety-six percent of primary school pupils attending public (LEA/government) schools and 98 percent of pupils attending non-public (non-religious and religious private) schools spent money on one or more types of school costs (see Figure 7.1).

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[1] "Private tuition" is the term for private tutoring in Malawi.

Table 7.1.1 Household expenditures on primary schooling for public school pupils

Percentage of primary school pupils in LEA/government schools whose households spent money on various costs of schooling in the 2001 school year, by type of expenditure and background characteristics, Malawi 2002

												One or more expenditures	Number of pupils
Background characteristic	Tuition	Development fund	Exam fee	School reports	Boarding fees	Uniforms and clothing	Books and supplies	Transport	Food	Private tuition	Other		
Sex													
Male	0.7	58.4	2.7	14.8	0.5	67.1	81.9	0.9	34.3	4.4	2.6	95.9	1,219
Female	1.1	54.6	3.4	15.6	0.1	70.8	83.1	0.5	34.2	3.2	1.6	96.3	1,283
Residence													
Urban	2.4	73.8	18.3	53.0	0.0	64.4	94.3	1.0	59.3	15.2	1.9	99.5	284
Rural	0.7	54.2	1.1	10.4	0.3	69.6	81.0	0.6	31.0	2.3	2.1	95.6	2,217
Region													
Northern	1.9	32.0	1.4	7.3	0.8	70.8	76.0	1.1	18.6	2.1	3.7	89.4	287
Central	0.8	48.0	3.2	9.5	0.5	67.6	85.7	0.6	28.5	5.5	1.0	96.5	1,091
Southern	0.7	70.9	3.3	22.8	0.0	69.9	81.0	0.6	43.8	2.6	2.7	97.4	1,123
Wealth index quintile													
Lowest	1.5	54.5	1.7	11.2	0.1	59.8	77.4	1.4	26.0	1.0	1.8	92.8	443
Second	1.1	53.5	1.5	8.4	1.1	67.6	78.0	0.5	29.9	1.4	2.1	96.4	441
Middle	0.4	56.4	0.2	11.4	0.0	72.6	82.7	0.5	33.4	1.1	2.2	95.2	513
Fourth	0.0	60.5	3.0	14.2	0.0	69.4	82.0	0.6	35.9	1.1	2.3	96.8	526
Highest	1.6	56.6	7.8	27.7	0.4	73.6	90.2	0.5	43.1	12.7	1.8	98.5	578
Total	0.9	56.5	3.1	15.2	0.3	69.0	82.5	0.7	34.2	3.8	2.1	96.1	2,502

Table 7.1.2 Household expenditures on primary schooling for non-public school pupils

Percentage of primary non-public school pupils whose households spent money on various costs of schooling in the 2001 school year, by type of expenditure and background characteristics, Malawi 2002

												One or more expenditures	Number of pupils
Background characteristic	Tuition	Development fund	Exam fee	School reports	Boarding fees	Uniforms and clothing	Books and supplies	Transport	Food	Private tuition	Other		
Sex													
Male	25.7	48.2	6.1	15.3	4.7	77.2	92.4	2.6	44.0	13.8	3.5	97.3	69
Female	30.5	49.3	3.0	7.8	5.0	78.0	87.7	1.7	51.5	7.1	2.5	99.1	65
Residence													
Urban	66.6	28.3	0.0	12.1	0.0	88.3	97.7	2.9	74.7	25.0	4.9	98.5	43
Rural	9.6	58.5	6.8	11.5	7.1	72.5	86.5	1.8	34.7	3.8	2.1	98.0	91
Region													
Northern	16.7	34.6	0.0	11.9	0.0	82.9	92.0	2.1	35.0	4.3	6.6	98.1	29
Central	(59.1)	(41.8)	(7.8)	(12.2)	(21.6)	(74.8)	(77.6)	(6.6)	(54.9)	(33.3)	(7.0)	(100.0)	30
Southern	20.0	57.0	5.1	11.4	0.0	76.7	94.4	0.4	49.6	4.0	0.0	97.4	75
Wealth index quintile													
Lowest	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	22
Second	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	15
Middle	(0.0)	(70.2)	(7.6)	(15.3)	(0.0)	(91.7)	(95.0)	(0.0)	(48.2)	(0.0)	(1.1)	(95.0)	25
Fourth	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	18
Highest	65.3	32.3	3.6	15.4	7.7	85.7	97.6	4.8	74.7	22.1	4.8	98.3	54
Total	28.0	48.8	4.6	11.7	4.8	77.6	90.1	2.2	47.6	10.6	3.0	98.2	134

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases. An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.

Table 7.1.3 Household expenditures on primary schooling for all pupils

Percentage of primary school pupils whose households spent money on various costs of schooling in the 2001 school year, by type of expenditure and background characteristics, Malawi 2002

												One or more expenditures	Number of pupils
Background characteristic	Tuition	Develop- ment fund	Exam fee	School reports	Board- ing fees	Uniforms and clothing	Books and supplies	Tran- sport	Food	Private tuition	Other		
Sex													
Male	2.0	58.0	3.0	14.9	0.7	67.6	82.5	1.0	34.8	4.9	2.7	95.9	1,294
Female	2.5	54.3	3.4	15.1	0.3	71.1	83.2	0.6	35.0	3.4	1.6	96.4	1,356
Residence													
Urban	10.9	67.8	16.2	47.7	0.0	67.7	94.8	1.2	61.3	16.6	2.3	99.4	329
Rural	1.1	54.4	1.3	10.4	0.6	69.6	81.1	0.7	31.2	2.4	2.1	95.7	2,322
Region													
Northern	3.2	32.3	1.6	7.8	0.7	72.2	77.6	1.2	20.1	2.4	3.9	90.3	319
Central	2.3	47.6	3.3	9.5	1.0	67.5	85.4	0.8	29.3	6.2	1.2	96.5	1,125
Southern	2.0	70.2	3.4	22.0	0.0	70.4	81.8	0.6	44.1	2.7	2.6	97.4	1,207
Wealth index quintile													
Lowest	1.9	54.8	2.1	11.2	0.6	60.0	78.1	1.4	26.0	1.3	2.0	93.1	466
Second	1.0	53.2	1.5	8.4	1.0	67.6	78.2	0.4	29.2	1.3	2.1	96.2	458
Middle	0.3	57.0	0.6	11.6	0.0	73.5	83.3	0.5	34.1	1.0	2.2	95.2	538
Fourth	0.0	60.4	2.9	13.6	0.0	69.0	81.1	0.6	35.5	1.2	2.2	96.9	553
Highest	7.1	54.6	7.6	26.6	1.0	74.6	90.8	0.9	45.9	13.5	2.3	98.5	636
Total	2.3	56.1	3.2	15.0	0.5	69.4	82.8	0.8	34.9	4.1	2.1	96.2	2,651

Figure 7.1 **Percentage of Primary School Pupils Whose Household Spent Money on Schooling, by Type of School Attended and Type of Expenditure**

MDES 2002

59
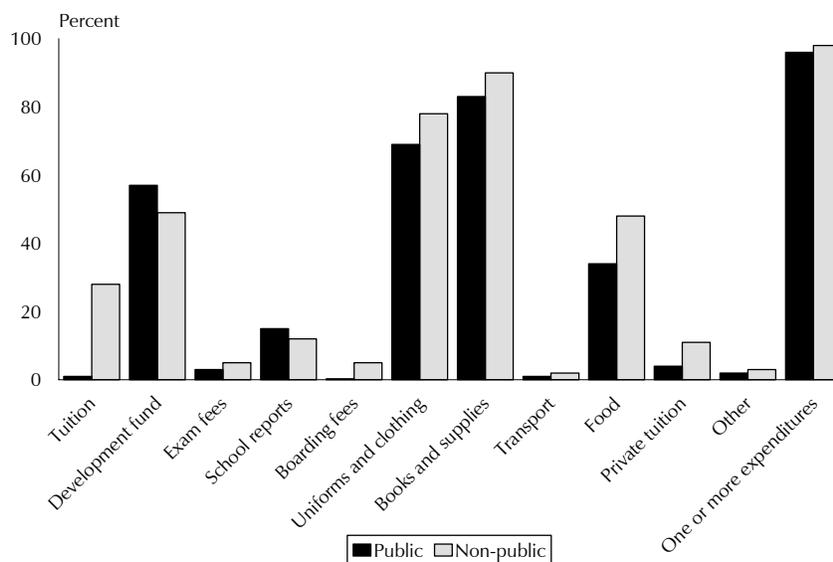
Tuition

In a school system in which tuition fees are not charged in public schools, it is not surprising that virtually no public school pupils' households paid tuition fees. In comparison, 28 percent of pupils attending non-public schools—which generally charge tuition—paid tuition fees (see Tables 7.1.1 and 7.1.2). That 72 percent of non-public school pupils' households did not pay tuition fees may be explained by various circumstances, including the possibility that for some children, parents, other relatives, or non-relatives living outside the household paid tuition fees. Among non-public primary school pupils, those in urban areas are far more likely than their rural peers to have paid tuition fees (67 percent versus 10 percent).

Development Fund

School development funds typically are used to construct or upgrade school buildings and facilities. As shown in Tables 7.1.1 and 7.1.2, during the 2001 school year, about half of the pupils in both public and non-public schools paid development or building fund fees (57 percent and 49 percent, respectively). Pupils in the Southern region are considerably more likely than their peers in other regions to have paid development fund fees (70 percent, versus 48 percent in the Central region and 32 percent in the Northern region; see Table 7.1.3).

Examination Fees

At the primary level, pupils are not assessed a fee for the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination (PSLCE). On the other hand, pupils taking mock examinations in standard 8 or examinations in other standards may be charged examination fees to cover the costs of paper and other supplies. Only 3 percent of pupils in public and 5 percent in non-public schools paid examination fees, suggesting that these fees are rarely charged at the primary level.

School reports

Pupils may be asked to pay fees before receiving their school reports for a term or for the year. Fifteen percent of pupils in public primary schools and 12 percent of those in non-public schools paid fees for school reports during the 2001 school year (see Tables 7.1.1 and 7.1.2). Nearly half (48 percent) of the pupils in urban areas paid for school reports, compared with just one-tenth of pupils in rural areas (see Table 7.1.3). As in the case of the development fund, pupils in the Southern region are most likely to have paid for school reports (22 percent, compared with 10 percent of pupils in the Central region and 8 percent in the Northern region).

Boarding Fees

At the primary level, less than 1 percent of public and 5 percent of non-public school pupils' households paid boarding fees (see Tables 7.1.1 and 7.1.2). It is not surprising that the incidence of paying boarding fees is low, given that less than 1 percent of primary school pupils attend boarding schools (see Chapter 5).

Uniforms, Clothing, and Shoes Bought for Use at School

During the 2001 school year, the majority of pupils' households (69 percent for public and 78 percent for non-public school pupils) spent money on school clothing or on shoes bought primarily to be worn to school (see Tables 7.1.1 and 7.1.2).

School Supplies

As shown in Table 7.2, nearly all pupils' households (83 percent in public schools and 90 percent in non-public schools) paid for one or more types of school supplies. Considering school supplies by type, three-fourths of all pupils spent money on pens and pencils, over half (56 percent) bought exercise books, one-fourth spent money on school bags, and 3 percent spent money on textbooks. Across these types of school supplies, pupils attending non-public schools were more likely than their peers in public schools to buy supplies. For instance, 65 percent of pupils in non-public and 55 percent of pupils in public schools bought exercise books during the 2001 school year (see Figure 7.2).

Pupils in urban areas were more likely than those in rural areas to buy various school supplies. In addition, pupils from wealthier households were more likely than those from poorer households to spend money on one or more school supplies.

Table 7.2 Household expenditures on primary school supplies for pupils

Percentage of primary school pupils whose households spent money on textbooks, pens and pencils, exercise books, school bags, and other school supplies during the 2001 school year, by type of expenditure and background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Expenditures on primary school books and supplies						
	Textbooks	Pens and pencils	Exercise books	School bags	Other school supplies	One or more types of expenditures	Number of pupils
Sex							
Male	2.9	73.5	55.0	23.1	7.1	82.5	1,294
Female	3.6	76.1	56.0	24.5	6.7	83.2	1,356
Residence							
Urban	10.5	85.4	76.3	42.7	15.9	94.8	329
Rural	2.2	73.3	52.6	21.2	5.6	81.1	2,322
Region							
Northern	3.5	72.5	52.2	22.1	10.7	77.6	319
Central	3.9	76.8	61.9	24.3	6.4	85.4	1,125
Southern	2.6	73.6	50.4	23.9	6.3	81.8	1,207
School type							
Public	3.0	74.4	55.0	22.5	6.0	82.5	2,502
Non-public	8.8	83.8	64.9	47.2	20.2	90.1	134
Wealth index quintile							
Lowest	2.0	69.1	50.2	16.8	5.3	78.1	466
Second	2.7	73.3	53.1	15.8	5.3	78.2	458
Middle	2.0	77.0	52.7	19.2	4.6	83.3	538
Fourth	2.4	72.8	53.4	20.7	4.3	81.1	553
Highest	6.4	80.1	65.3	41.5	13.3	90.8	636
Total	3.3	74.8	55.5	23.9	6.9	82.8	2,651

Figure 7.2 Percentage of Primary School Pupils Whose Household Spent Money on School Books and Supplies, by Type of School Attended and Type of Expenditure
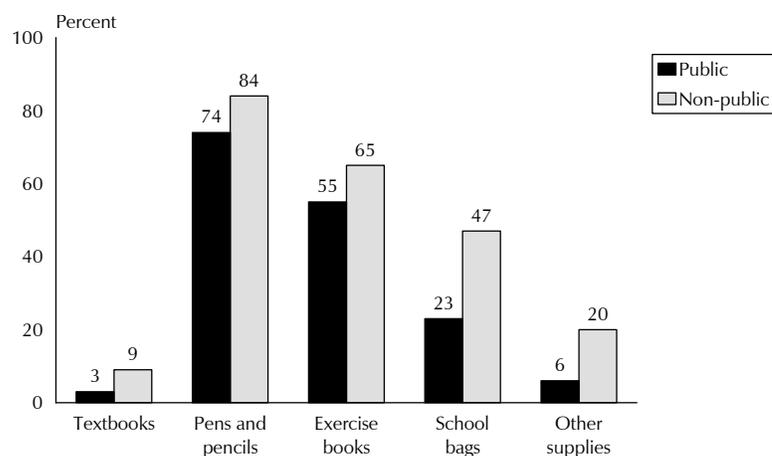
Transportation

The majority of pupils walk to school, so it is to be expected that a small proportion of pupils' households spent money on transportation (1 percent of public school pupils and 2 percent of non-public school pupils; see Tables 7.1.1 and 7.1.2).

Food

One in three public and nearly one in two non-public school pupils' households spent money on food or snacks for pupils to eat during the school day (see Tables 7.1.1 and 7.1.2). These expenditures may have been for food bought either on the way to school or at school or for food bought by the household for the child to take to school. For the small percentage of primary school pupils attending boarding schools, expenditures on food may also include the portion of boarding fees that covers the costs of pupils' meals at school.

As shown in Table 7.1.3, pupils in urban areas were twice as likely as those in rural areas to have spent money on food (61 percent compared with 31 percent). Pupils in the Southern region were far more likely than those in other regions to have spent money on food (44 percent, compared with 29 percent in the Central and 20 percent in the Northern region). The wealthier the pupil, the more likely he/she was to have spent money on food, with 46 percent of the wealthiest pupils' households spending money on food in the 2001 school year, compared with 26 percent of pupils from the poorest households.

Private Tuition

Private tuition (tutoring) is generally provided by teachers in addition to regular lessons at school. Private tuition appears to be more an urban phenomenon than a rural one, with 17 percent of urban pupils' households spending money on private tuition (regardless of the type of school children attend) compared with 2 percent of rural pupils' households (see Table 7.1.3). Private tuition provides additional instruction to pupils, and although it may be most commonly used to prepare pupils for the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination (PSLCE) at the end of standard 8, at least in urban areas, it is clear that private tuition is used more broadly than just for standard 8 examination preparation.

Other Expenditures

Parents/guardians were asked whether the household spent money on other school costs, and if they did, these school costs were specified and the total amount spent on them was reported. As shown in Tables 7.1.1 and 7.1.2, only 2 percent of pupils in public schools and 3 percent of those in non-public schools spent money on other school costs, which included items such as a postal box, money spent on school trips, fees to pay the school watchman and cleaning staff, and other miscellaneous expenditures.

7.2   Mean Expenditures on Primary Schooling

Although nearly all primary school pupils' households spent money on schooling in the 2001 school year, the total amount of money spent per child differs according to characteristics (see Tables 7.3.1, 7.3.2, and 7.3.3). The mean amount spent on schooling for a child attending primary school, including expenditures on the items discussed above, was more than four times greater for pupils attending non-public schools (MK3,600) than for pupils attending public schools (MK761).[2]

Table 7.3.1 Per-pupil household expenditures on primary schooling for public school pupils

Average annual per-pupil household expenditure (in Malawian Kwacha) on primary schooling for public school pupils in the 2001 school year, by background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Mean total expenditures (Malawian Kwacha)	Number of primary school pupils
Sex		
Male	653	1,219
Female	862	1,283
Residence		
Urban	1,636	284
Rural	648	2,217
Region		
Northern	922	287
Central	920	1,091
Southern	564	1,123
Wealth index quintile		
Lowest	721	443
Second	589	441
Middle	445	513
Fourth	698	526
Highest	1,259	578
Total	761	2,502

Table 7.3.2 Per-pupil household expenditures on primary schooling for non-public school pupils

Average annual per-pupil household expenditure (in Malawian Kwacha) on primary schooling for non-public school pupils in the 2001 school year, by background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Mean total expenditures (Malawian Kwacha)	Number of primary school pupils
Sex		
Male	3,331	69
Female	3,888	65
Residence		
Urban	7,170	43
Rural	1,902	91
Region		
Northern	2,347	29
Central	(7,967)	30
Southern	2,347	75
Wealth index quintile		
Lowest	*	22
Second	*	15
Middle	(620)	25
Fourth	*	18
Highest	7,572	54
Total	3,600	134

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases. An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.

[2] In 2002, US$1 = MK78.

As shown in Table 7.3.3, among pupils in all types of primary schools, on average, households spent 28 percent more on schooling for female pupils than for male pupils (MK1,022 versus MK797). There were also notable differences in total expenditure by urban-rural location, region of residence, and wealth. Among all pupils, the mean total household expenditure on pupils from urban households was three times greater than the expenditure on pupils in rural areas (MK2,370 compared with MK706). Among all pupils, total mean per-pupil expenditure in the Central and Northern regions was nearly twice as high as that in the Southern region (see Table 7.3.3 and Figure 7.3).

As expected, the wealthiest households spent considerably more money on schooling, on average, than less wealthy households. Primary school pupils in the wealthiest quintile spent twice as much as those in the next highest-spending quintile (see Table 7.3.3).

Mean total expenditure on schooling rises through the standards (data not shown). At standard 1, the mean per-pupil expenditure is MK559, which rises to MK689 at standard 2, MK829 at standard 3, MK1,359 at standard 4, MK1,488 at standard 5, and MK2,652 at standard 6.[3]

Summary

After a detailed discussion of the expenditures on various school costs, a brief summary is useful to underscore the main findings. Perhaps most important is that virtually all primary school pupils' households (96 percent) spent money on schooling and that on average, these households spent MK761 (public schools) and MK3,600 (non-public schools) on schooling for a child attending primary school during the 2001 school year (see Tables 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.3.1, and 7.3.2). More than eight out of ten pupils' households spent money on books and supplies, with three-fourths spending money on pens and pencils, over half (56 percent) buying exercise books, and one-fourth spending money on school bags (see Table 7.2). Seven out of ten pupils' households spent money on uniforms, clothing, and shoes to be worn to school. Almost six in ten pupils' households spent money on the building or development fund, while one in three pupils' households spent money on food (see Table 7.1.3).

The findings suggest that there are many discretionary expenditures associated with primary schooling (such as those for private tuition or food), but that households may or may not spend money on these items for their children attending primary school. On the other hand, a large proportion of households spend money on items such as school supplies and school clothing and shoes, suggesting that these costs are borne by most households with children in school.

Table 7.3.3 Per-pupil household expenditures on primary schooling for all pupils

Average annual per-pupil household expenditure (in Malawian Kwacha) on primary schooling for all pupils in the 2001 school year, by background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Mean total expenditures (Malawian Kwacha)	Number of primary school pupils
Sex		
Male	797	1,294
Female	1,022	1,356
Residence		
Urban	2,370	329
Rural	706	2,322
Region		
Northern	1,058	319
Central	1,124	1,125
Southern	677	1,207
Wealth index quintile		
Lowest	791	466
Second	577	458
Middle	453	538
Fourth	719	553
Highest	1,800	636
Total	913	2,651

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[3] Sample sizes at standards 7 and 8 are inadequate to provide estimates of mean total expenditure on schooling.

**Figure 7.3 Mean Annual Per-Pupil Household
Expenditure by Region (in Malawian Kwacha)**
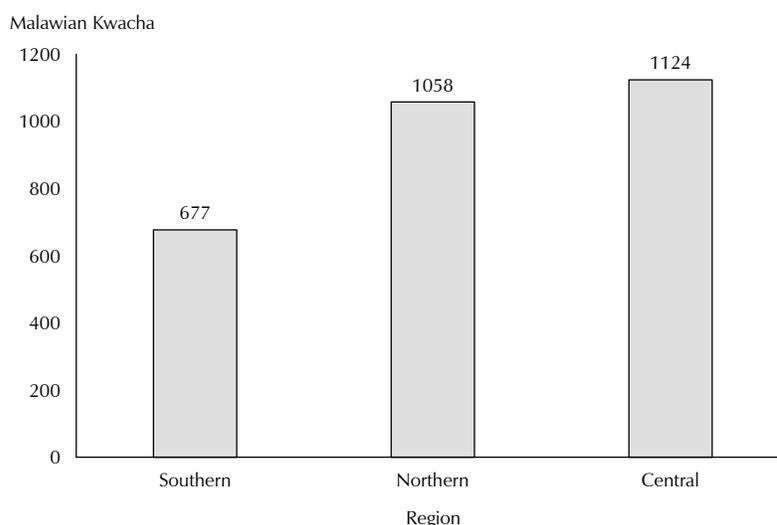
7.3   Sources of Support for the Monetary Costs of Primary Schooling

Parents/guardians were asked about the sources of monetary support for each child's primary schooling. These sources may include those within the pupil's household (from the pupil himself or herself, from the child's parents and/or other household members) and from outside the household (a bursary, a gift, or borrowing).

Almost all pupils (98 percent), regardless of their characteristics, received monetary support for schooling (see Table 7.4). A similar proportion (97 percent) received assistance from their parents and/or others in the household. Receipt of a bursary, which did not include government support through FPE, was uncommon. Overall, 7 percent of pupils were supported by a gift from someone outside the household. Receipt of a gift to support a pupil's schooling was most common in the Northern region (14 percent) and least common in the Central region (4 percent). Five percent of pupils were supported by funds obtained through borrowing.

Pupils age 11-14 were more likely than younger children to contribute to covering the costs of their own schooling. Similarly, pupils in rural areas were more likely than those in urban areas to help pay for school costs (4 versus 0.1 percent), and pupils from poorer households were more likely than those from wealthier households to contribute to the payment of their own school costs.

Table 7.4 Sources of support for the monetary costs of primary schooling

Percentage of primary school pupils who received support from various sources in the 2001 school year, by background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Parents/ household	Child	Bursary (scholarship)	Borrow-ing	Gift	One or more sources of support	Number of pupils
Age							
6-7	97.1	0.8	0.0	6.1	7.0	97.6	372
8-10	97.5	1.8	0.4	5.6	6.3	98.1	1,056
11-14	97.0	5.5	0.6	5.0	7.5	98.3	1,223
Sex							
Male	96.7	4.2	0.3	5.1	7.2	97.7	1,294
Female	97.7	2.6	0.5	5.7	6.7	98.4	1,356
Residence							
Urban	98.6	0.1	0.6	6.1	4.3	98.7	329
Rural	97.0	3.8	0.4	5.3	7.3	98.0	2,322
Region							
Northern	93.2	4.9	1.3	4.9	13.9	96.0	319
Central	97.2	2.8	0.2	6.4	3.6	97.6	1,125
Southern	98.3	3.5	0.5	4.6	8.3	99.1	1,207
Wealth index quintile							
Lowest	96.8	6.2	0.2	5.3	8.1	98.2	466
Second	96.6	3.6	0.7	4.1	7.7	98.5	458
Middle	97.4	2.5	0.3	4.3	7.3	97.8	538
Fourth	96.6	5.0	0.3	6.7	8.5	97.4	553
Highest	98.4	0.5	0.7	6.3	4.0	98.6	636
Total	97.2	3.4	0.4	5.4	6.9	98.1	2,651

OTHER HOUSEHOLD CONTRIBUTIONS
TO SCHOOLING

8

This chapter presents information mainly about non-monetary contributions made to schools and teachers by household members, including the time children spend in school, time spent on homework, parent/guardian visits to schools, and other household contributions. The time household members spend at school (such as visiting school or working at school to construct or maintain buildings), has value to the household, because this time could have been spent supporting the household in other ways. In addition, the non-monetary resources devoted to schooling also have value to the household and constitute part of the cost of schooling for households. This chapter quantifies some of these additional household contributions to schooling and discusses differentials across groups.

8.1   Time Children Spend on School-related Activities

Table 8.1 presents the distribution of primary school pupils by the amount of time spent on school-related activities on the average school day. This time includes time spent traveling to and from school, time spent in classes and after-class study sessions, and time spent on extracurricular activities such as sports or drama. This time explicitly does not include time spent on homework done outside of school, which is discussed in Section 8.2 below. Because of the difficulty of quantifying how much time children staying at boarding school spend on school activities and on homework, this question, as well as the questions used to produce Tables 8.2 and 8.3, were asked only about children who were day pupils at the time the household was surveyed.

The time spent on school activities increases up through the standards. Children attending standards 1 and 2 spend 5 hours per day on school activities, those in standards 3 and 4 spend 6 hours, and those in standards 5 through 7 spend 7 hours. Only 2 percent of primary school pupils spend more than 8 hours on school-related activities. There is virtually no difference in the time spent on schooling by sex, by urban-rural residence, region, or wealth.

8.2   Homework

Table 8.2 presents information about how much time primary school pupils spend doing homework outside school during the average school week.[1] It should be noted that in addition to the homework done outside school, many pupils and students may do homework during the school day. The 2002 MDES captured this time as time spent on school-related activities, discussed in Section 8.1.

Thirty-one percent of the pupils in primary school do homework outside of school. As might be expected, pupils in the higher primary school standards are more likely than those in the lower standards to do homework. Eight percent of standard 1 pupils do homework, compared with 84 percent of standard 7 pupils. While the percentage of pupils doing homework outside school increases through the standards, the amount of time spent per week on homework varies little, from about 2 hours in the lower standards to 3 hours in the higher standards.

By most of the background characteristics, there are minimal differences in the homework pattern. Pupils in urban areas are more likely than those in rural areas to do homework outside school (39 percent versus 30 percent). More striking are the differences by wealth, with 38 percent of pupils in the highest quintile and 24 percent of pupils in the lowest quintile doing homework outside school.

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[1] Time spent at study sessions at school is not included. Only time spent studying at home, at a library, at friends' or relatives' homes, and at other non-school sites is included.

Table 8.1 Time pupils spend at school

Percent distribution of de jure primary school day pupils by time spent at school per day, according to school standard and background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Hours spent at school				Total	Number of day pupils	Mean hours spent at school per day
	Up to 5	More than 5, up to 8	More than 8	Don't know/ missing			
Standard							
1	73.5	26.4	0.0	0.2	100.0	819	4.8
2	65.4	34.2	0.0	0.4	100.0	699	5.0
3	28.1	71.2	0.6	0.1	100.0	597	5.8
4	26.6	71.0	1.4	1.0	100.0	386	5.9
5	6.8	87.1	6.1	0.0	100.0	237	6.7
6	3.6	87.2	9.1	0.0	100.0	153	6.9
7	0.9	84.8	14.3	0.0	100.0	80	7.1
8	(2.1)	(83.8)	(14.1)	(0.0)	100.0	37	(7.1)
Sex							
Male	44.6	52.7	2.2	0.5	100.0	1485	5.5
Female	45.2	53.3	1.4	0.1	100.0	1526	5.5
Residence							
Urban	46.8	48.9	4.3	0.0	100.0	357	5.5
Rural	44.7	53.5	1.5	0.3	100.0	2654	5.5
Region							
Northern	45.4	53.8	0.8	0.0	100.0	343	5.5
Central	52.6	44.8	2.0	0.7	100.0	1289	5.3
Southern	37.7	60.4	1.9	0.0	100.0	1379	5.7
Wealth index quintile							
Lowest	51.6	47.6	0.8	0.0	100.0	554	5.4
Second	46.5	50.8	2.6	0.0	100.0	544	5.5
Middle	40.6	58.7	0.4	0.3	100.0	614	5.6
Fourth	45.1	53.0	1.9	0.0	100.0	624	5.5
Highest	42.0	53.9	3.1	1.0	100.0	674	5.6
Total	44.9	53.0	1.8	0.3	100.0	3011	5.5

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases.

Table 8.2 Time pupils spend on homework

Percent distribution of de jure primary school day pupils by whether pupils do homework outside school and time spent per week on homework, according to school standard and background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| Background characteristic | No homework | Hours spent on homework per week | | | | Total | Number of day pupils | Mean hours spent on homework per week |
		Up to 3	4	More than 4	Don't know/ missing			
Standard								
1	92.3	6.8	0.1	0.8	0.0	100.0	819	1.7
2	83.7	13.7	0.4	2.0	0.2	100.0	699	1.9
3	65.9	29.6	1.4	2.2	0.9	100.0	597	1.6
4	51.7	36.1	4.3	7.0	1.0	100.0	386	2.2
5	33.2	49.9	6.0	8.4	2.5	100.0	237	2.4
6	27.7	51.8	3.5	15.6	1.4	100.0	153	2.8
7	15.1	57.3	3.8	22.6	1.2	100.0	80	3.0
8	(5.1)	(56.8)	(18.7)	(18.8)	(0.5)	100.0	37	(3.2)
Sex								
Male	70.5	23.0	1.8	4.0	0.6	100.0	1,485	2.2
Female	67.0	25.7	2.0	4.6	0.7	100.0	1,526	2.2
Residence								
Urban	61.4	28.7	3.2	6.7	0.1	100.0	357	2.4
Rural	69.7	23.8	1.8	4.0	0.7	100.0	2,654	2.2
Region								
Northern	69.1	27.5	0.7	1.9	0.8	100.0	343	1.8
Central	73.2	19.1	1.5	5.9	0.3	100.0	1,289	2.6
Southern	64.5	28.5	2.6	3.5	0.9	100.0	1,379	2.0
Wealth index quintile								
Lowest	75.3	19.2	1.4	3.1	1.0	100.0	554	2.1
Second	72.0	22.1	2.4	2.9	0.6	100.0	544	1.9
Middle	67.6	26.2	0.9	4.6	0.7	100.0	614	2.1
Fourth	68.8	25.0	1.8	3.6	0.8	100.0	624	2.1
Highest	61.7	28.3	3.0	6.8	0.1	100.0	674	2.6
Total	68.7	24.4	1.9	4.3	0.6	100.0	3,011	2.2

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases.

In addition to the time children spend doing homework, other household members may spend time helping the children with homework (see Table 8.3). Among children doing homework outside school, more than half (52 percent) of primary school pupils receive assistance with homework from someone in the household. Urban-rural differences at the primary level are sizeable, with 48 percent of pupils in rural areas receiving assistance, compared with 72 percent of pupils in urban areas. Pupils in the Northern and Southern regions are less likely than those in the Central region to receive assistance with homework.

The wealthier the pupil, the more likely he/she is to receive assistance from someone in the household. Seventy-one percent of the pupils in the highest quintile received homework assistance, compared with 40 percent in the lowest and second quintiles.

Table 8.3 Household assistance with homework

Among children who have homework, percent distribution of de jure primary school day pupils by whether a household member assists the pupil with homework and the frequency of this assistance, according to school standard and background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	No assistance provided	Assistance provided		Don't know/ missing	Total	Number of day pupils
		Sometimes	Frequently			
Standard						
1	35.0	50.9	12.0	2.1	100.0	63
2	46.7	34.6	16.5	2.2	100.0	114
3	49.0	36.4	13.6	1.0	100.0	204
4	51.4	41.5	7.0	0.0	100.0	187
5	48.0	43.1	8.6	0.2	100.0	158
6	45.7	45.4	7.8	1.1	100.0	111
7	46.9	34.9	17.4	0.7	100.0	68
8	(41.3)	(34.5)	(20.8)	(3.5)	100.0	35
Sex						
Male	48.9	39.1	11.4	0.6	100.0	438
Female	45.8	41.3	11.7	1.3	100.0	503
Residence						
Urban	27.7	55.2	16.9	0.1	100.0	138
Rural	50.6	37.7	10.6	1.1	100.0	804
Region						
Northern	56.8	32.4	9.4	1.4	100.0	106
Central	35.7	46.1	16.6	1.6	100.0	346
Southern	53.4	37.8	8.4	0.4	100.0	490
Wealth index quintile						
Lowest	59.2	31.3	8.6	0.9	100.0	137
Second	58.6	35.7	4.8	0.8	100.0	152
Middle	52.0	37.4	9.9	0.6	100.0	199
Fourth	49.6	37.1	11.3	2.0	100.0	195
Highest	28.8	52.2	18.5	0.6	100.0	258
Total	47.3	40.2	11.5	1.0	100.0	941

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases.

8.3   Parent/Guardian Involvement at Primary Schools

One measure of parent/guardian involvement in children's primary schooling is the frequency with which parents/guardians visit school for various reasons. Table 8.4 presents information on parent/ guardian visits to primary schools within the 12 months preceding the interview for the purpose of attending parent-teacher association (PTA) meetings; attending school committee meetings; attending a celebration, performance, or sporting event; and meeting with a head teacher or teacher.[2] It is possible that during a single visit to the school, a parent/guardian participated in more than one of the events asked about, perhaps attending a PTA meeting and meeting with the head teacher on that single visit.

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[2] Only parents/guardians with one or more children in primary school were asked these questions.

Table 8.4 Parent/guardian involvement at primary school

Percentage of parents/guardians with one or more de jure children in primary school who have gone to a primary school in the last 12 months for a PTA meeting; a celebration, performance, or sports event; or a meeting with a head teacher or teacher, by background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| Background characteristic | Parent/guardian involvement at primary school | | | | | | | |
	Attended PTA	Attended school committee meeting	Attended celebration/ performance/ sports event	Attended meeting with head teacher or teacher	One or more visits	Number of parents/ guardians	Number who have a PTA	Number who have a school committee
Sex								
Male	67.1	63.4	56.7	21.7	84.0	645	422	635
Female	68.5	55.9	26.8	20.2	72.1	1,098	668	1041
Residence								
Urban	76.9	60.0	16.5	28.5	75.2	214	123	196
Rural	66.8	58.6	40.8	19.6	76.7	1,530	967	1,480
Region								
Northern	43.5	44.6	59.6	24.8	79.2	180	111	177
Central	63.1	53.7	39.9	18.3	71.4	738	413	707
Southern	76.3	66.4	31.3	22.1	80.6	825	565	792
Wealth index quintile								
Lowest	61.0	50.8	38.1	16.8	70.3	359	222	346
Second	63.6	59.0	39.1	19.4	73.3	316	193	302
Middle	68.4	61.3	41.1	17.9	77.6	349	229	339
Fourth	71.7	56.3	37.9	20.7	78.6	356	218	342
Highest	74.4	66.2	33.4	28.5	82.4	364	227	348
Total	67.9	58.7	37.9	20.7	76.5	1,743	1,089	1,676

In the 12 months preceding the survey interview, 77 percent of parents/guardians went to a primary school for one or more of the reasons mentioned above. Male respondents were more likely than female respondents to have visited school for one or more reasons (84 percent versus 72 percent), and were considerably more likely to visit to attend a celebration, performance, or sports event. The majority of parents/guardians attended a PTA meeting (68 percent) or a school committee meeting (59 percent). More than one in three attended a celebration, performance, or sporting event (38 percent), and one in five met with a head teacher or a teacher. Parents/guardians in urban areas were more likely than those in rural areas to have attended a school PTA meeting or to have met with a head teacher or teacher, while parents/guardians in rural areas were far more likely to have attended a celebration, performance, or sporting event. The wealthier the parent/guardian, the more likely he/she is to have visited school one or more times.

8.4   Other Contributions to Schooling

Table 8.5 presents information on other household contributions to schools and to teachers over the 12 months preceding the survey interview.[2] Households often contribute additional money to support the construction or maintenance of school buildings and teachers' houses, to pay for the digging and construction of a toilet block, or to support other school projects. Households may also provide materials for the school, such as roofing, stone, and sand. Household members may donate their labour to schools, by working to mould bricks or to construct or maintain school buildings. Some of the same contributions may be made to school teachers. Seventy-four percent of parent/guardian households have made one or more contributions (of money, materials, or labour) to primary schools. A much smaller proportion of

parent/guardian households (8 percent) have contributed money, food, or labour to primary school teachers.[3]

Overall, parent/guardian households in rural areas are more likely than those in urban areas to have made one or more contributions to schools (77 percent versus 48 percent) and to teachers (9 percent versus 4 percent). Notable differences exist in the incidence of contributions to schools. Parent/guardian households in urban areas are more likely to have contributed money to schools, rather than materials or labour. Parent/guardian households in rural areas are much more likely than those in urban areas to have contributed materials (20 percent versus 6 percent) and labour (72 percent versus 25 percent) to schools.

The wealthier the parent/guardian household, the less likely it is to have contributed labour to schools: 40 percent of parent/guardian households in the highest quintile contributed labour to schools, compared with 77 percent of parent/guardian households in the lowest quintile. In addition, the wealthier the household, the more likely it is to have contributed money to schools.

Table 8.5 Other household contributions to schooling

Percentage of parents/guardians whose households have contributed money, materials, or labour to primary schools and/or teachers within the last 12 months, by background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Contributions to schools				Contributions to teachers				Number of parents/ guardians
	Money	Materials	Labour	One or more contributions	Money	Materials	Labour	One or more contributions	
Residence									
Urban	35.0	6.2	24.9	47.6	1.1	2.6	0.2	3.5	228
Rural	26.2	19.9	71.8	77.2	1.9	5.5	3.0	8.8	1,820
Region									
Northern	23.5	35.6	68.0	73.8	1.0	7.8	6.3	11.6	187
Central	19.6	10.1	61.2	67.9	1.6	5.4	2.7	8.2	844
Southern	34.0	22.0	70.7	78.9	2.2	4.6	2.1	7.6	1,017
Wealth index quintile									
Lowest	22.6	18.7	76.6	79.4	1.2	4.8	3.5	7.9	460
Second	22.9	18.2	74.7	78.4	2.3	5.0	3.9	8.8	394
Middle	29.5	19.1	71.5	76.9	1.4	3.4	1.7	5.9	408
Fourth	30.0	23.7	67.2	74.5	2.9	5.2	2.5	8.6	401
Highest	31.3	11.7	40.1	58.8	1.6	8.0	1.8	10.2	385
Total	27.1	18.4	66.5	73.9	1.8	5.2	2.7	8.2	2,048

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[3] In addition to money spent on a given child, households may also make other general contributions to schools and teachers.

KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES ABOUT GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES AND POLICY

9

This chapter presents data on parent/guardian perceptions of the effects of the Free Primary Education (FPE) initiative and issues related to school governance. The findings of this chapter provide insight into parent/guardian perceptions of the effects of FPE on the quality of primary schooling.

9.1   Free Primary Education

Parents/guardians were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about changes in the primary school system since the advent of FPE. A series of tables (9.1 through 9.4) show the distribution of parents/guardians by their responses to the following statements: Since the start of FPE in 1994, a) primary school pupils are learning more; b) the performance of primary school teachers has improved; c) the quality of primary school buildings has improved; and d) there are more textbooks available in schools.

Seventy-nine percent of parent/guardian respondents agreed that since the start of FPE, pupils are learning more in school (see Table 9.1). Respondents in urban areas were substantially less likely than those in rural areas to agree with the statement (59 percent versus 82 percent; see Figure 9.1). Similarly, parents/guardians from wealthier households were less likely than those from poorer households to agree with the statement. Respondents in the Southern region were more likely than respondents in other regions to agree that pupils are learning more in school now than before the start of FPE.

Table 9.1 Perceived effects of FPE on pupil learning				
Percent distribution of parents/guardians who have heard of Free Primary Education (FPE) by opinion on the effects of FPE on primary school pupil learning, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002				
	Pupils are learning more under FPE than before FPE			
Background characteristic	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ missing	Total	Number of parents/ guardians
Sex					
Male	78.8	20.2	1.1	100.0	710
Female	79.3	16.8	3.9	100.0	1,279
Residence					
Urban	59.4	34.7	5.9	100.0	2,270
Rural	81.6	15.8	2.5	100.0	1,762
Region					
Northern	65.9	25.9	8.2	100.0	178
Central	75.5	23.3	1.2	100.0	819
Southern	84.5	12.2	3.4	100.0	991
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	84.1	11.9	4.1	100.0	430
Second	80.5	16.1	3.4	100.0	379
Middle	82.9	15.6	1.5	100.0	405
Fourth	80.9	17.2	1.9	100.0	392
Highest	66.2	30.1	3.7	100.0	383
Total	79.1	18.0	2.9	100.0	1,989

Statements about effects of FPE
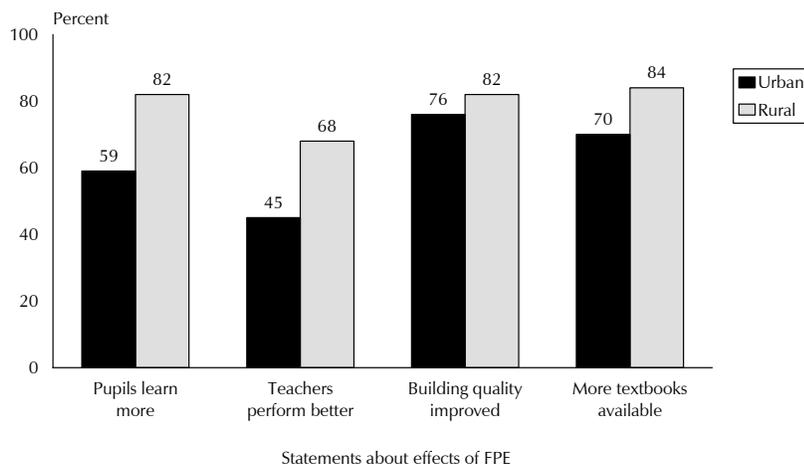
MDES 2002

Nearly two in three (65 percent) of the parents/guardians agreed that teachers are performing better since the start of FPE (see Table 9.2). Female respondents were more likely than male respondents to agree that teacher performance has improved, and parents/guardians in rural areas were more likely than those in urban areas to agree with the statement. Respondents in the Northern region were less likely than parents/guardians in other regions to agree with the statement (47 percent, compared with 62 percent in the Central region and 72 percent in the Southern region). Parents/guardians from wealthier households were less likely than those from poorer households to agree that teachers are performing better since the start of FPE.

Table 9.2 Perceived effects of FPE on teacher performance

Percent distribution of parents/guardians who have heard of Free Primary Education (FPE) by opinion on the effects of FPE on primary school teacher performance, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| Background characteristic | Teachers perform better under FPE than before FPE | | | | Number of parents/ guardians |
	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ missing	Total	
Sex					
Male	58.6	40.0	1.4	100.0	710
Female	69.2	26.6	4.2	100.0	1,279
Residence					
Urban	45.3	51.0	3.7	100.0	227
Rural	68.0	28.9	3.1	100.0	1,762
Region					
Northern	47.2	46.4	6.3	100.0	178
Central	62.0	36.1	1.9	100.0	819
Southern	71.5	24.8	3.7	100.0	991
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	73.8	21.6	4.6	100.0	430
Second	71.1	24.2	4.7	100.0	379
Middle	66.7	31.3	2.0	100.0	405
Fourth	66.9	30.0	3.1	100.0	392
Highest	47.4	51.1	1.5	100.0	383
Total	65.4	31.4	3.2	100.0	1,989

Eight in ten (82 percent) parents/guardians agreed that the quality of school buildings has improved since the start of FPE (see Table 9.3). Parents/guardians in the Southern region were most likely to agree with the statement (89 percent), while those in the Central and Northern regions were less likely to agree (75 percent and 72 percent, respectively).

Table 9.3 Perceived effects of FPE on building quality					
Percent distribution of parents/guardians who have heard of Free Primary Education (FPE) by opinion on the effects of FPE on primary school building quality, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002					
	Quality of school buildings has improved under FPE				Number of parents/ guardians
Background characteristic	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ missing	Total	
Sex					
Male	80.4	19.0	0.5	100.0	710
Female	82.3	16.3	1.3	100.0	1,279
Residence					
Urban	75.7	23.6	0.7	100.0	227
Rural	82.4	16.5	1.1	100.0	1,762
Region					
Northern	72.2	24.3	3.5	100.0	178
Central	75.4	23.8	0.9	100.0	819
Southern	88.6	10.7	0.8	100.0	991
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	83.6	14.2	2.2	100.0	430
Second	84.7	14.3	0.9	100.0	379
Middle	83.1	15.6	1.3	100.0	405
Fourth	81.7	18.2	0.1	100.0	392
Highest	74.8	24.5	0.7	100.0	383
Total	81.7	17.3	1.1	100.0	1,989

Eight in ten (82 percent) parents/guardians agreed that since the start of FPE more textbooks are available (see Table 9.4). Respondents in rural areas were more likely than those in urban areas to agree with the statement (84 percent versus 70 percent). Parents/guardians in the Southern region were more likely than those in other regions to agree that more textbooks have been made available since the advent of FPE.

Table 9.4 Perceived effects of FPE on textbook availability

Percent distribution of parents/guardians who have heard of Free Primary
Education (FPE) by opinion on the effects of FPE on primary school
textbook availability, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| Background characteristic | Textbook availability has improved under FPE | | | Total | Number of parents/ guardians |
	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ missing		
Sex					
Male	82.9	12.9	4.2	100.0	710
Female	81.8	12.5	5.7	100.0	1,279
Residence					
Urban	70.0	23.1	6.9	100.0	227
Rural	83.7	11.3	4.9	100.0	1,762
Region					
Northern	72.2	20.4	7.5	100.0	178
Central	78.9	16.2	4.9	100.0	819
Southern	86.7	8.4	5.0	100.0	991
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	84.4	8.1	7.5	100.0	430
Second	86.4	10.2	3.4	100.0	379
Middle	83.5	10.9	5.6	100.0	405
Fourth	78.9	16.7	4.3	100.0	392
Highest	77.4	17.9	4.7	100.0	383
Total	82.2	12.6	5.2	100.0	1,989

9.2 The Parent-teacher Association and the School Committee

This section of the chapter presents the percent distribution of parents/guardians with one or more children in primary school, according to whether the parent/guardian reported that there is a parent-teacher association (PTA) and a school committee at the school the children attend. PTAs are voluntary organizations run by parents and teachers that focus on the welfare of students and teachers and the overall development of the school. The school committees are the statutory representatives of the MoEST at the primary school level and are charged with overall development of the school.

Sixty-three percent of parents/guardians said that there is a PTA at the school their children attend, although 17 percent of respondents did not know whether there was a PTA or did not answer the question (see Table 9.5). In contrast, 96 percent of respondents said that there is a school committee at the primary school their children attend.

Parents/guardians who said there was a school committee at the school their children attend were asked whether they thought the school committee was doing a good job. Eighty percent of respondents said that the school committee was doing a good job, while 11 percent said it was not, and 8 percent did not have an opinion or did not answer the question (see Table 9.6). There were minor differences by background characteristics.

Table 9.5 Presence of parent-teacher association (PTA) and school committee

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by presence of PTA and school committee in the primary school attended by their children, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| | PTA | | | | School committee | | | | |
Background characteristic	PTA at school	No PTA at school	Don't know/ missing	Total	School committee at school	No school committee at school	Don't know/ missing	Total	Number of parents/ guardians
Residence									
Urban	57.3	13.4	29.2	100.0	91.7	1.4	7.0	100.0	214
Rural	63.2	22.0	14.8	100.0	96.7	1.2	2.0	100.0	1,530
Region									
Northern	61.5	15.9	22.6	100.0	98.1	0.8	1.1	100.0	180
Central	55.9	24.3	19.8	100.0	95.7	1.2	3.1	100.0	738
Southern	68.6	19.2	12.3	100.0	96.0	1.4	2.6	100.0	825
Wealth index quintile									
Lowest	61.9	25.7	12.3	100.0	96.4	1.0	2.6	100.0	359
Second	61.1	24.9	14.0	100.0	95.5	1.2	3.3	100.0	316
Middle	65.5	20.0	14.5	100.0	97.0	1.7	1.3	100.0	349
Fourth	61.2	21.6	17.2	100.0	95.9	1.2	2.8	100.0	356
Highest	62.5	13.3	24.2	100.0	95.7	1.0	3.3	100.0	364
Total	62.5	21.0	16.5	100.0	96.1	1.2	2.6	100.0	1,743

Table 9.6 Approval of the job done by the school committee

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by opinion on whether the school committee is doing a good job, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| | School committee is doing a good job | | | | |
Background characteristic	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ missing	Total	Number of parents/ guardians
Residence					
Urban	76.8	11.8	11.4	100.0	196
Rural	80.9	11.3	7.8	100.0	1,480
Region					
Northern	77.4	15.0	7.7	100.0	177
Central	77.5	13.9	8.6	100.0	707
Southern	83.6	8.3	8.1	100.0	792
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	79.9	8.8	11.3	100.0	346
Second	83.9	9.3	6.7	100.0	302
Middle	81.7	11.8	6.5	100.0	339
Fourth	79.7	11.6	8.7	100.0	342
Highest	77.2	15.0	7.8	100.0	348
Total	80.4	11.4	8.2	100.0	1,676

PERCEIVED SCHOOL QUALITY

10

This chapter presents information on parent/guardian perceptions of the quality of the schools that their children attend, as well as on various education policies, such as uniform requirements and discipline. Perceptions of school quality may influence parent/guardian willingness to send children to school or to keep them in school through the end of primary school and beyond.

10.1 School Facilities

Parents/guardians were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that in order for a primary school to be a good school, its buildings had to be permanent structures (see Table 10.1). Most parents/guardians (97 percent) agreed that a good school had to have permanent buildings; the differences by sex, wealth, urban-rural residence, and region were minimal.

Table 10.1 Importance of permanent school buildings

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by whether they agree or disagree that all school buildings must be permanent structures in order for a school to be a good school, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| Background characteristic | Must have permanent buildings | | | | Number of parents/ guardians |
	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ missing	Total	
Sex					
Male	97.7	2.2	0.2	100.0	729
Female	95.9	3.4	0.6	100.0	1,319
Residence					
Urban	91.4	8.6	0.0	100.0	228
Rural	97.2	2.3	0.5	100.0	1.820
Region					
Northern	97.1	1.1	1.7	100.0	187
Central	95.8	4.2	0.0	100.0	844
Southern	97.1	2.3	0.6	100.0	1.017
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	96.9	1.6	1.4	100.0	460
Second	97.5	2.0	0.5	100.0	394
Middle	96.4	3.6	0.0	100.0	408
Fourth	98.3	1.4	0.3	100.0	401
Highest	93.6	6.4	0.0	100.0	385
Total	96.6	3.0	0.5	100.0	2,048

Parents/guardians were also asked about their perceptions of whether the schools their children attend have big, small, or no problems with school buildings and facilities, classroom overcrowding, and pupil safety at school (see Table 10.2). Table 10.2 presents these results on parent/guardian respondents' views, at the child level, according to the type of school attended by children.

Table 10.2 Perceived problems with primary school buildings and facilities, classroom overcrowding, and pupil safety

Percent distribution of public and non-public school pupils by parent/guardian perceptions of problems with primary school buildings and facilities, classroom overcrowding, and pupil safety, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	School buildings and facilities					Classroom overcrowding					Pupil safety					Number of pupils
	Big problem	Small problem	No problem	Don't know/ missing	Total	Big problem	Small problem	No problem	Don't know/ missing	Total	Big problem	Small problem	No problem	Don't know/ missing	Total	
Residence																
Urban	27.5	8.6	61.1	2.8	100.0	34.7	3.3	55.0	7.1	100.0	8.1	1.1	87.8	3.0	100.0	357
Rural	42.7	9.8	45.2	2.3	100.0	36.2	8.3	48.6	6.9	100.0	7.2	5.8	83.6	3.4	100.0	2,671
Region																
Northern	42.3	12.0	41.7	3.9	100.0	30.2	11.4	51.8	6.6	100.0	8.4	7.7	77.2	6.7	100.0	345
Central	49.7	10.2	37.1	3.0	100.0	39.2	7.7	43.3	9.8	100.0	9.3	4.8	82.5	3.4	100.0	1,303
Southern	32.2	8.5	57.8	1.4	100.0	34.5	6.7	54.5	4.3	100.0	5.1	5.2	87.3	2.4	100.0	1,379
School type																
Public	41.8	9.6	46.3	2.4	100.0	36.5	7.7	48.7	7.1	100.0	7.6	5.2	83.8	3.4	100.0	2,871
Non-public	23.4	12.1	62.6	2.0	100.0	26.9	7.7	61.3	4.0	100.0	1.0	6.8	90.4	1.8	100.0	149
Wealth index quintile																
Lowest	35.0	9.0	52.4	3.6	100.0	29.3	6.3	56.9	7.5	100.0	5.6	4.9	82.7	6.9	100.0	557
Second	42.3	9.3	46.6	1.8	100.0	37.6	7.4	49.1	5.9	100.0	4.9	5.7	87.5	1.9	100.0	544
Middle	45.1	9.0	43.6	2.4	100.0	42.4	5.1	45.6	7.0	100.0	7.6	5.4	84.7	2.4	100.0	614
Fourth	39.3	11.1	47.2	2.5	100.0	37.1	11.4	42.5	9.0	100.0	7.3	6.3	82.6	3.7	100.0	628
Highest	42.5	9.8	46.1	1.7	100.0	33.5	7.9	53.2	5.4	100.0	10.3	4.2	83.4	2.2	100.0	684
Total	40.9	9.7	47.0	2.4	100.0	36.0	7.7	49.4	6.9	100.0	7.3	5.3	84.1	3.4	100.0	3,028

Children attending public schools were more likely than those attending non-public schools to attend schools with perceived problems with school buildings and facilities, classroom overcrowding, and pupil safety at school. Over half of the public school pupils (51 percent) and more than one in three non-public school pupils (36 percent) attend schools that their parents/guardians consider to have problems with school buildings and facilities. Forty-four percent of public and 35 percent of non-public school pupils attend schools with perceived problems with overcrowding. Only 13 percent of children in public and 8 percent of children in non-public schools attend schools with perceived problems with safety.

Among all pupils, there are urban-rural differences in the percentage of pupils attending schools with perceived problems (see Figure 10.1). In urban areas, 36 percent of pupils attend schools with perceived problems with buildings and facilities, compared with 53 percent of pupils in rural areas. Thirty-eight percent of pupils in urban areas and 45 percent in rural areas attend schools with problems with classroom overcrowding. Among both groups, the percentage attending schools with perceived problems with pupil safety is considerably lower (9 percent of pupils in urban areas and 13 percent of pupils in rural areas).

Figure 10.1 Percentage of Primary School Pupils Whose Parents/Guardians Perceive Problems (Big or Small) in Schools Attended, by Residence
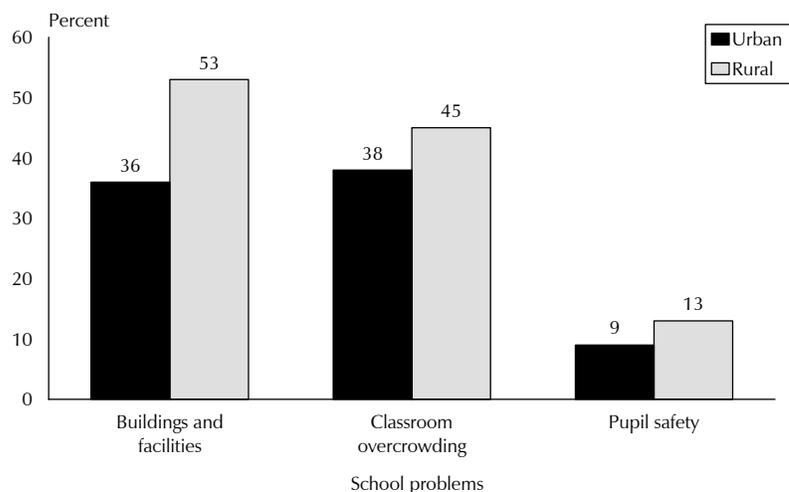
MDES 2002

10.2   School Policies

Parents/guardians were asked their opinion about whether requiring pupils to wear uniforms improved primary school quality, had no effect, or made a school worse (see Table 10.3). Parents/guardians overwhelmingly agreed that having pupils wear uniforms improved the quality of a school (98 percent). This view was held by parents/guardians regardless of gender, wealth, place of residence, or region.

Table 10.3 Importance of required uniforms						
Percent distribution of parents/guardians by perceived effect of requiring pupils to wear uniforms on school quality, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002						
	Effect of uniform requirement on school quality					
Background characteristic	Better	No effect	Worse	Don't know/ missing	Total	Number of parents/ guardians
Sex						
Male	98.0	1.4	0.4	0.2	100.0	729
Female	97.9	1.7	0.2	0.2	100.0	1,319
Residence						
Urban	99.4	0.4	0.2	0.0	100.0	228
Rural	97.8	1.8	0.3	0.2	100.0	1,820
Region						
Northern	99.0	0.0	0.4	0.6	100.0	187
Central	97.7	1.9	0.4	0.0	100.0	844
Southern	98.0	1.7	0.1	0.2	100.0	1,017
Wealth index quintile						
Lowest	97.1	2.1	0.3	0.5	100.0	460
Second	97.0	2.1	0.6	0.3	100.0	394
Middle	98.7	1.0	0.3	0.0	100.0	408
Fourth	97.8	2.2	0.0	0.0	100.0	401
Highest	99.3	0.6	0.1	0.0	100.0	385
Total	97.9	1.6	0.3	0.2	100.0	2,048

Parents/guardians were asked if caning pupils to enforce discipline improves school quality (see Table 10.4). On this question, opinion was divided: 46 percent of parents/guardians agreed that caning pupils to enforce discipline improves school quality, while a substantial percentage of respondents (36 percent) thought it negatively affected quality, and 17 percent said it had no effect on quality. Perceptions did not differ appreciably by urban-rural residence. In the Southern region, however, parents/guardians were more likely than their counterparts in other regions to say that caning improves school quality (53 percent, compared with 46 percent in the Northern region and 38 percent in the Central region). There are noticeable patterns by wealth: The parents/guardians in the highest quintile are the least likely to favor caning to maintain discipline (38 percent), while the parents/guardians in the lowest quintile are most likely to favor caning (54 percent).

Table 10.4 Importance of caning pupils to maintain discipline

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by perceived effect of caning pupils to maintain discipline on school quality, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Effect of caning pupils on school quality				Total	Number of parents/ guardians
	Better	No effect	Worse	Don't know/ missing		
Sex						
Male	40.6	21.4	37.8	0.3	100.0	729
Female	48.9	15.2	34.9	1.0	100.0	1,319
Residence						
Urban	43.8	23.4	32.8	0.0	100.0	228
Rural	46.2	16.7	36.3	0.8	100.0	1,820
Region						
Northern	45.8	7.6	44.8	1.8	100.0	187
Central	37.6	20.9	41.0	0.5	100.0	844
Southern	52.9	16.3	30.1	0.7	100.0	1,017
Wealth index quintile						
Lowest	54.0	15.1	29.6	1.4	100.0	460
Second	50.1	16.0	33.4	0.4	100.0	394
Middle	42.5	15.1	42.0	0.4	100.0	408
Fourth	43.4	17.9	37.7	1.0	100.0	401
Highest	38.3	23.6	37.7	0.3	100.0	385
Total	45.9	17.4	35.9	0.7	100.0	2,048

10.3   Teachers

Parents/guardians were asked whether more girls would complete primary school if there were more female teachers in schools. Researchers have argued that girls in primary school who have female teachers as role models may be more likely than girls without female role models to persist through the end of primary school. Nationally, in 2000, about 38 percent of the teachers in primary schools were female.[1]

While 59 percent of the parent/guardian respondents agreed that more girls would complete primary school if there were more female teachers, 40 percent disagreed (see Table 10.5). There are no clear patterns in differences of opinion on this question by sex. Likewise, there is no clear pattern by wealth, although it is notable that those in the highest quintile are the least likely to agree that more girls would complete primary school if schools had more female teachers (44 percent). Differences by residence and by region, however, are substantial. Respondents in rural areas were twice as likely as those in urban areas to agree that having more female teachers would make girls more likely to complete primary school (62 percent versus 32 percent).

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[1] Malawi Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. 2000. *Education Basic Statistics Malawi 2000*. Lilongwe, Malawi: Malawi Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology.

Table 10.5 Importance of female teachers in primary school

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by whether they agree or disagree that more girls would complete primary school if schools had more female teachers, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| Background characteristic | More girls would complete primary school if schools had more female teachers | | | Total | Number of parents/ guardians |
	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ missing		
Sex					
Male	61.2	38.4	0.4	100.0	729
Female	57.4	40.3	2.3	100.0	1,319
Residence					
Urban	32.4	65.0	2.6	100.0	228
Rural	62.1	36.4	1.5	100.0	1,820
Region					
Northern	56.0	40.0	4.0	100.0	187
Central	61.0	37.9	1.1	100.0	844
Southern	57.4	41.0	1.6	100.0	1,017
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	62.5	34.9	2.6	100.0	460
Second	65.1	33.4	1.5	100.0	394
Middle	58.6	40.0	1.4	100.0	408
Fourth	62.7	36.6	0.7	100.0	401
Highest	44.0	54.5	1.6	100.0	385
Total	58.8	39.6	1.6	100.0	2,048

Parents/guardians were asked if they thought that the schools their children attend have big, small, or no problems with head teacher performance and with teacher performance (see Table 10.6). To illustrate the percentages of pupils facing these perceived problems, results are presented at the child level. The majority of children attend schools with no perceived problems with head teacher (81 percent) or teacher performance (73 percent). Children attending non-public schools are less likely than those attending public schools to attend schools with perceived problems with either head teacher or teacher performance. Children in urban areas are less likely than those in rural areas to attend schools with either big or small problems with head teacher or teacher performance. There are regional differences in perceived problems: Both head teacher performance and teacher performance are seen to be a greater problem in the Northern region than in the Central and Southern regions.

Table 10.6 Perceived problems with primary school head teacher and teacher performance

Percent distribution of public and non-public school pupils by parent/guardian perceptions of problems with performance of primary school head teacher and teacher, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Head teacher performance					Teacher performance					Number of pupils
	Big problem	Small problem	No problem	Don't know/ missing	Total	Big problem	Small problem	No problem	Don't know/ missing	Total	
Residence											
Urban	4.3	3.5	82.9	9.3	100.0	9.2	8.4	78.1	4.3	100.0	357
Rural	8.5	3.9	81.2	6.4	100.0	16.3	7.1	72.6	3.9	100.0	2,671
Region											
Northern	11.7	5.4	72.8	10.2	100.0	24.6	11.2	57.1	7.1	100.0	345
Central	9.9	4.0	80.4	5.7	100.0	15.4	7.3	73.4	3.9	100.0	1,303
Southern	5.2	3.3	84.6	6.9	100.0	13.3	6.2	77.2	3.2	100.0	1,379
School type											
Public	8.3	3.8	81.1	6.8	100.0	15.6	7.2	73.2	4.0	100.0	2,871
Non-public	1.9	5.6	87.1	5.4	100.0	11.7	8.2	76.0	4.1	100.0	149
Wealth index quintile											
Lowest	8.6	5.6	77.6	8.2	100.0	13.2	4.5	76.2	6.1	100.0	557
Second	4.6	1.4	88.7	5.3	100.0	10.2	5.9	80.4	3.5	100.0	544
Middle	10.6	3.5	81.8	4.1	100.0	19.1	6.8	71.2	2.9	100.0	614
Fourth	6.4	2.7	83.7	7.1	100.0	18.7	8.0	68.3	5.0	100.0	628
Highest	9.2	5.7	76.4	8.7	100.0	15.4	10.3	71.7	2.6	100.0	684
Total	8.0	3.9	81.4	6.7	100.0	15.5	7.3	73.3	4.0	100.0	3,028

10.4   Curriculum

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that primary schools should teach more practical skills, such as carpentry or sewing (see Table 10.7). Most parents/ guardians (95 percent) agreed that schools should teach more practical skills than they do currently. There were trivial differences across groups of parents.

10.5   Parental Involvement

Respondents were asked whether having parents actively involved in a primary school improved school quality, had no effect, or made a school worse. The majority (89 percent) of parents/guardians agreed that parental involvement made a school better (see Table 10.8). Differences by sex and urban-rural residence were minor, but regional differences exist. Parents in the Northern region were more likely than those in the Central and Southern regions to say that parental involvement in school made a school better.

Table 10.7 Importance of learning practical skills in primary school

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by whether they agree or disagree that primary schools should teach more practical skills, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Primary schools should teach more practical skills				Number of parents/ guardians
	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ missing	Total	
Sex					
Male	94.1	5.5	0.4	100.0	729
Female	95.0	4.1	0.9	100.0	1,319
Residence					
Urban	92.7	7.1	0.2	100.0	228
Rural	94.9	4.3	0.8	100.0	1,820
Region					
Northern	90.4	6.6	3.0	100.0	187
Central	93.4	6.4	0.2	100.0	844
Southern	96.5	2.8	0.7	100.0	1,017
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	94.7	3.4	1.9	100.0	460
Second	93.8	5.4	0.8	100.0	394
Middle	94.4	5.3	0.3	100.0	408
Fourth	96.3	3.4	0.3	100.0	401
Highest	94.1	5.7	0.1	100.0	385
Total	94.7	4.6	0.7	100.0	2,048

Table 10.8 Importance of parents being actively involved in school

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by perceived effect of parents being actively involved in the school on school quality, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| Background characteristic | Effect of parental involvement on school quality | | | | Total | Number of parents/ guardians |
	Better	No effect	Worse	Don't know/ missing		
Sex						
Male	89.4	4.8	4.7	1.2	100.0	729
Female	87.9	5.8	5.0	1.3	100.0	1,319
Residence						
Urban	91.6	4.5	3.0	1.0	100.0	228
Rural	88.1	5.5	5.1	1.3	100.0	1820
Region						
Northern	93.4	2.0	3.3	1.4	100.0	187
Central	85.6	6.9	6.1	1.5	100.0	844
Southern	89.9	4.8	4.2	1.0	100.0	1,017
Wealth index quintile						
Lowest	87.0	4.9	6.7	1.4	100.0	460
Second	89.3	5.0	4.7	1.0	100.0	394
Middle	87.4	6.8	4.4	1.4	100.0	408
Fourth	86.7	6.9	5.1	1.4	100.0	401
Highest	92.3	3.4	3.5	0.9	100.0	385
Total	88.5	5.4	4.9	1.2	100.0	2,048

PERCEIVED VALUE OF SCHOOLING

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11

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This chapter provides information on parent/guardian perceptions of the importance of post-primary schooling, and on the benefits and disadvantages of schooling. Parent/guardian attitudes about schooling may affect the likelihood of sending children to school and keeping them in school, as well as the likelihood of children making the transition to secondary school. The data presented below provide insight into parent/guardian opinions on schooling.

11.1   Importance of Schooling

Parents/guardians were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about the importance of schooling (see Chapter 10 for additional opinion questions). One of the statements was: Girls do not need more than a primary school education. This statement was followed by a similar one about boys' schooling to determine whether respondents perceived girls' and boys' needs for secondary schooling differently.

While the majority of parents/guardians disagreed with the statements, 9 percent agreed that girls and boys do not need more than a primary school education (see Tables 11.1 and 11.2). Parents/guardians in rural areas were more likely than those in urban areas to agree with the statement about boys (10 percent in rural and 3 percent in urban areas) and girls (10 percent in rural and 1 percent in urban areas). Respondents in the Central region were more likely than those in other regions to agree that boys and girls do not need more than a primary school education. The wealthiest parents/guardians were the least likely to agree with the statements about boys' and girls' schooling.

Table 11.1 Importance of schooling for boys

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by whether they agree or disagree that boys do not need more than a primary school education, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Boys do not need more than a primary school education				Number of parents/ guardians
	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ missing	Total	
Sex					
Male	8.7	90.9	0.4	100.0	729
Female	9.1	90.3	0.6	100.0	1,319
Residence					
Urban	3.3	95.0	1.7	100.0	228
Rural	9.7	90.0	0.3	100.0	1,820
Region					
Northern	2.5	96.9	0.6	100.0	187
Central	11.6	87.8	0.7	100.0	844
Southern	8.0	91.7	0.3	100.0	1,017
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	10.4	89.2	0.4	100.0	460
Second	9.2	90.3	0.5	100.0	394
Middle	11.0	88.4	0.7	100.0	408
Fourth	9.1	90.4	0.5	100.0	401
Highest	4.6	94.9	0.5	100.0	385
Total	9.0	90.5	0.5	100.0	2,048

Table 11.2 Importance of schooling for girls					
Percent distribution of parents/guardians by whether they agree or disagree that girls do not need more than a primary school education, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002					
	Girls do not need more than a primary school education				
Background characteristic	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ missing	Total	Number of parents/ guardians
Sex					
Male	9.2	90.6	0.2	100.0	729
Female	8.7	90.8	0.5	100.0	1,319
Residence					
Urban	1.0	98.1	0.9	100.0	228
Rural	9.9	89.8	0.3	100.0	1,820
Region					
Northern	2.7	96.6	0.6	100.0	187
Central	12.0	87.6	0.4	100.0	844
Southern	7.4	92.3	0.3	100.0	1,017
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	11.3	88.0	0.7	100.0	460
Second	10.4	89.0	0.6	100.0	394
Middle	11.2	88.8	0.0	100.0	408
Fourth	8.1	91.9	0.0	100.0	401
Highest	3.0	96.5	0.5	100.0	385
Total	8.9	90.7	0.4	100.0	2,048

11.2   Benefits of Schooling

This section of the chapter presents parent/guardian opinions on the benefits of schooling. Parents/guardians were asked to consider a 15-year-old boy who had completed primary school and who had left school thereafter and a boy of the same age who had never attended school. Next, parents/ guardians were asked what advantages, if any, the boy who finished primary school had over the boy who had never attended school. This question was followed by a similar question about girls. Because parents/ guardians could list numerous benefits, the percentages in Tables 11.3 and 11.4 do not add to 100 percent.[1]

Overwhelmingly, parents/guardians consider primary schooling to be beneficial. Few parent/ guardian respondents said that a boy (1 percent) or a girl (2 percent) who completed primary school had no advantage over a boy or a girl who had never attended school (see Tables 11.3 and 11.4). Parents/guardians in the Central region were more likely than respondents in other regions to say that there were no advantages to boys' or girls' primary schooling. The remainder of the parents/guardians listed one or more advantages for boys and for girls (see Figure 11.1). In the discussion below, the benefits of schooling are discussed individually within each category, including economic benefits, academic skills, skills for life, and other benefits.

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[1] Parents/guardians were not asked to answer "yes" or "no" to specific benefits, but instead were asked to list benefits without prompting. The interviewer then recorded the benefits listed by the respondent.

Table 11.3 Perceived benefits of primary school completion for boys

Percentage of parents/guardians who perceive specific benefits to completing primary school for a 15-year-old boy, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

		Economic benefits		Academic skills					Skills for life				
Background characteristic	No benefit	Chance to go to secondary school	Find a better job	Provide support to household/ parents	Literacy	Learn languages	Numeracy	Critical thinking	Vocational/ technical	Morals/ values	Make a better marriage	Be a better parent	Other	Number of parents/ guardians
Sex														
Male	1.2	6.7	57.2	14.9	79.3	8.6	16.8	24.2	12.7	34.2	1.8	4.2	0.3	729
Female	1.5	7.0	60.2	16.1	77.8	7.0	11.5	16.9	8.8	29.2	2.6	3.5	0.5	1,319
Residence														
Urban	1.7	5.4	61.3	13.1	81.1	5.5	13.1	20.8	8.7	35.6	4.3	2.7	0.1	228
Rural	1.3	7.1	58.9	16.0	77.9	7.8	13.4	19.4	10.3	30.5	2.1	3.9	0.5	1,820
Region														
Northern	0.8	18.1	53.6	23.2	74.5	27.5	30.7	15.9	15.4	21.1	4.2	16.4	0.3	187
Central	2.6	5.6	57.1	16.1	81.5	5.9	12.9	19.1	12.8	33.3	1.6	2.7	0.3	844
Southern	0.5	6.0	61.9	13.9	76.4	5.3	10.6	20.6	7.0	31.0	2.6	2.3	0.6	1,017
Wealth index quintile														
Lowest	1.3	4.8	59.5	13.1	74.7	6.0	9.9	13.7	8.4	26.5	2.9	4.2	0.2	460
Second	0.3	6.1	57.0	17.2	80.5	8.8	14.0	23.5	9.4	27.9	1.7	3.3	0.8	394
Middle	1.3	9.1	56.0	17.2	78.6	6.8	14.6	17.2	9.1	32.7	1.3	2.7	0.6	408
Fourth	2.5	7.8	62.0	16.3	76.3	8.3	13.9	18.5	11.1	31.3	2.3	2.9	0.3	401
Highest	1.4	7.1	61.1	14.9	82.1	8.4	15.2	26.0	13.3	37.6	3.2	5.5	0.3	385
Total	1.4	6.9	59.1	15.7	78.3	7.6	13.4	19.5	10.2	31.0	2.3	3.7	0.4	2,048

Table 11.4 Perceived benefits of primary school completion for girls

Percentage of parents/guardians who perceive specific benefits to completing primary school for a 15-year-old girl, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

			Economic benefits		Academic skills					Skills for life				
Background characteristic	No benefit	Chance to go to secondary school	Find a better job	Provide support to household/ parents	Literacy	Learn languages	Numeracy	Critical thinking	Vocational/ technical	Morals/ values	Make a better marriage	Be a better parent	Other	Number of parents/ guardians
Sex														
Male	1.6	7.6	52.9	17.1	77.0	8.5	16.0	19.4	8.6	33.3	12.9	7.9	0.2	729
Female	1.9	6.8	58.4	15.4	74.0	7.1	11.4	16.9	9.6	29.1	9.6	6.2	0.3	1,319
Residence														
Urban	2.6	9.3	53.9	16.8	79.5	5.0	10.7	20.5	10.5	40.3	12.2	6.7	0.1	228
Rural	1.7	6.8	56.7	15.9	74.6	7.9	13.3	17.5	9.1	29.4	10.6	6.8	0.2	1,820
Region														
Northern	1.5	17.3	52.1	26.6	67.5	29.4	28.8	11.9	15.7	19.4	14.3	20.9	0.2	187
Central	3.1	7.3	51.8	20.5	78.7	4.2	11.8	16.7	11.9	34.9	12.4	5.6	0.1	844
Southern	0.8	5.0	61.1	10.2	73.5	6.4	11.2	19.8	5.9	29.1	8.8	5.2	0.3	1,017
Wealth index quintile														
Lowest	1.0	4.6	58.3	14.3	72.4	6.0	8.4	13.9	7.8	22.1	8.2	6.9	0.0	460
Second	1.5	4.9	54.2	14.0	77.4	10.8	15.0	19.4	7.8	27.2	10.4	7.4	0.5	394
Middle	1.8	8.3	56.4	17.1	74.8	5.9	15.2	16.9	7.8	31.8	8.6	4.3	0.2	408
Fourth	2.8	9.4	58.2	16.3	75.0	9.1	13.0	16.3	10.6	31.3	13.2	6.6	0.3	401
Highest	2.0	8.6	54.7	18.5	76.5	6.5	14.3	23.3	12.8	42.3	14.2	8.9	0.1	385
Total	1.8	7.1	56.4	16.0	75.1	7.6	13.0	17.8	9.3	30.6	10.8	6.8	0.2	2,048

Figure 11.1 Percentage of Parents/Guardians Who Perceive Specific Benefits of Primary School Completion for Boys and Girls

Percent

	Boys	Girls
Find job	59	56
Support parents	16	16
Literacy	78	75
Critical thinking	20	18
Learn morals	31	31
Make a better marriage	2	11
Be better parent	4	7

Benefits of primary school completion
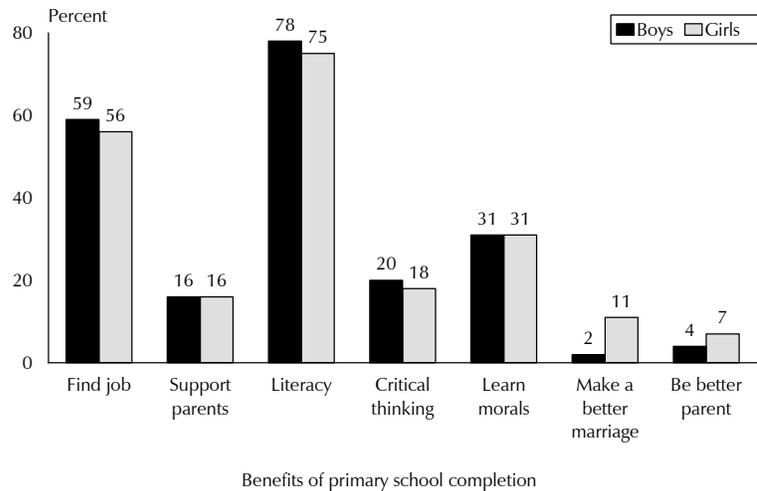
MDES 2002

Among the benefits of schooling, economic benefits were commonly cited. Fifty-nine percent of parents/guardians listed the possibility of finding a job (or a better job than would otherwise be available) as a benefit of primary schooling for boys, and 56 percent listed this benefit for girls. Primary schooling is seen as giving both male and female children an advantage in the job market over children who have never attended school. The perception that a child with a primary school education will help support the household and his/her parents was listed as a benefit less frequently (16 percent for both boys and girls).

Academic skills were widely given as benefits of schooling, with literacy being listed by a higher percentage of parents/guardians than any other benefit (78 and 75 percent, respectively, for boys and girls). Numeracy was also listed as a benefit, with 13 percent of respondents considering numeracy a benefit for boys and for girls. Eight percent of respondents considered learning other languages to be an advantage of primary schooling for both boys and girls. Parents/guardians said that the ability to think critically or analytically is a benefit to both boys and girls who complete primary school (20 and 18 percent, respectively). A smaller percentage of respondents listed vocational or technical skills as benefits of schooling (10 percent for boys and 9 percent for girls).

Skills for life—which include the development of a moral framework, making a better marriage, and becoming a better parent—were listed as benefits of primary schooling. About one-third (31 percent) of parents/guardians listed the development of a moral framework as a benefit for boys and for girls. Generally, the same proportion of parents/guardians cited the benefits of primary schooling for boys and for girls. Two exceptions are the role of primary schooling in helping a child make a better marriage and become a better parent. While only 2 percent of parents/guardians said that completing primary school would help a 15-year-old boy make a better marriage, 11 percent said that completing primary school would help a girl make a better marriage. Parents/guardians were more likely to say that finishing primary school would make a girl a better mother than to say it would make a boy a better father (7 percent versus 4 percent).

Overall, male and female parents/guardians listed similar benefits of schooling for boys and girls. Male respondents were more likely than female respondents, though, to list numeracy, critical thinking, and the development of a moral framework as benefits for both boys and girls. Wealthier parent/guardians were more likely than poorer respondents to list the development of vocational or technical skills and the

development of a moral framework as benefits of schooling for boys and girls. There was, however, little difference by wealth in the perceived economic benefits of schooling for both boys and girls—providing support to the household and finding a job or a better job.

There was marked similarity in perceived benefits among parents/guardians in urban and rural areas, with the exception of the development of a moral framework: 29 percent of respondents in rural areas and 40 percent in urban areas listed the development of a moral framework as a benefit of schooling for girls. Differences were smaller but in the same direction for boys.

The most striking differences in perceived benefits are by region, with the Northern region being distinguished from the Central and Southern regions. Parents/guardians in the Northern region were far more likely than parents/guardians in the other regions to list numeracy, learning languages, and becoming a better parent as benefits of schooling for both boys and girls.

11.3   Disadvantages of Schooling

After the questions on benefits, parents/guardians were asked about the disadvantages of sending a boy to primary school (see Table 11.5). Next, parents/guardians were asked about the disadvantages of sending a girl to primary school (see Table 11.6). Most parents/guardians said that there were no disadvantages to sending a boy or a girl to primary school (98 percent and 97 percent, respectively).

Table 11.5 Perceived disadvantages of primary schooling for boys

Percentage of parents/guardians who perceive specific disadvantages to sending a boy to primary school, by background characteristics, Malawi 2002

| Background characteristic | No dis-advantage | Disadvantages of a primary school education for boys | | | | | | Number of parents/ guardians |
		Monetary costs of schooling	Loss of child's labour	Bad manners	Not willing to work	Migrates from village	Other	
Sex								
Male	98.4	0.2	0.4	1.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	729
Female	98.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.2	1,319
Residence								
Urban	99.3	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	228
Rural	98.3	0.3	0.5	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.1	1,820
Region								
Northern	98.7	0.1	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	187
Central	97.7	0.3	1.0	1.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	844
Southern	98.9	0.3	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.2	1,017
Wealth index quintile								
Lowest	98.7	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0	460
Second	97.4	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.3	394
Middle	98.7	0.0	0.7	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.3	408
Fourth	97.8	0.3	0.3	1.9	0.0	0.3	0.0	401
Highest	99.2	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	385
Total	98.4	0.3	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.1	2,048

Table 11.6 Perceived disadvantages of primary schooling for girls

Percentage of parents/guardians who perceive specific disadvantages to sending a girl to primary school, by
background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	No dis-advantage	Disadvantages of a primary school education for girls							Number of parents/ guardians
		Monetary costs of schooling	Loss of child's labour	Bad manners	Not willing to work	Migrates from village	Later marriage/ harder to find husband	Other	
Sex									
Male	97.6	0.2	0.3	1.5	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.0	729
Female	97.3	0.4	0.6	1.4	0.3	0.1	0.6	0.1	1,319
Residence									
Urban	99.3	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	228
Rural	97.2	0.4	0.5	1.5	0.4	0.1	0.6	0.1	1,820
Region									
Northern	98.2	0.1	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	187
Central	96.5	0.3	1.2	1.1	0.8	0.1	0.9	0.1	844
Southern	98.0	0.4	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	1,017
Wealth index quintile									
Lowest	97.8	0.5	0.4	1.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.0	460
Second	96.6	0.9	0.7	2.0	0.7	0.0	0.3	0.0	394
Middle	97.3	0.0	1.0	1.1	0.3	0.0	0.5	0.5	408
Fourth	96.1	0.3	0.0	2.3	0.6	0.0	1.5	0.0	401
Highest	99.1	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	385
Total	97.4	0.3	0.5	1.4	0.3	0.1	0.5	0.1	2,048

This chapter examines the issue of absenteeism among primary school pupils. Pupils who are absent frequently or for long periods are likely to have difficulty mastering the material presented in class, making absenteeism an important education issue.

Information on the frequency of pupil absenteeism, however, can be difficult to obtain. Well-kept school records can be an invaluable source of information on the frequency of pupil absenteeism. Household surveys, however, depend on the accuracy of the respondents' recollections over a period of time. Recognizing that parent/guardian recall may be not be totally accurate, the 2002 MDES collected information about children's school attendance over two periods: the 2001 school year (for children who were pupils in that school year) and the seven days preceding the interview (for children who were pupils at the time the household was surveyed and whose households were surveyed while school was in session).

12.1   Primary School Pupil Absenteeism in the 2001 School Year

Table 12.1 presents data on the extent of absenteeism among primary school pupils in the 2001 school year and on reasons for those absences.[1] The majority (97 percent) of pupils were absent one or more days during the 2001 school year. On average, pupils who were absent from school missed a total of 17 days during the year. Pupils in rural areas were slightly more likely than those in urban areas to have missed school, and pupils in rural areas missed more days of school (17 versus 12 days). Children from households in the highest quintile who were absent from school missed fewer days than those from households in the lowest quintile (12 days versus 19 days).

The most commonly cited reasons for absenteeism are: children's illness, attending to funerals, not wanting to go to school, children's lack of clean school clothing, and children's hunger (see Figure 12.1). The vast majority of pupils (86 percent) missed school during the 2001 school year because they were ill. There were minor differences by background characteristics.

Almost two in three primary school pupils (61 percent) missed school because of a funeral. They were either attending a funeral or assisting family members with funeral-related activities. Older pupils were more likely than younger pupils to be absent because of a funeral, and pupils in urban areas were considerably less likely than those in rural areas to miss school because of a funeral (46 versus 63 percent). Pupils from wealthier families were less likely than poorer pupils to miss school for this reason: 51 percent of pupils in the highest quintile and 66 percent of those in the lowest quintile missed school because of a funeral.

One in three pupils was absent from school during the 2001 school year because their school clothes were dirty. Pupils may have only one set of clothing or one uniform to wear to school, and there may be days that their school clothes are being washed and are unavailable for them to wear to school. Some households may have little or no money to buy soap, making it very difficult to keep

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[1] Absenteeism is defined as missing one or more complete days of school.

Table 12.1 Reasons for primary school absenteeism

Percentage of primary school pupils who missed school in the 2001 school year, by reasons for absenteeism and background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Domestic work	Work for family farm/ business	Any work	No money for fees	Did not want to go	Funeral	Initiation ceremony	Illness	Too hungry to go	School clothes dirty	Other	Percentage missing on 1 or more days	Number of pupils	Total days missed
Age														
6-7	6.4	2.1	7.2	8.3	45.8	51.7	1.0	86.6	26.9	27.1	3.1	96.1	372	16.1
8-10	7.8	2.8	9.6	10.4	40.9	61.0	1.2	86.6	29.3	35.5	2.0	96.9	1,056	17.0
11-14	13.7	4.6	16.6	10.3	34.7	63.7	2.3	84.4	26.7	34.4	2.8	96.2	1,223	16.6
Sex														
Male	8.4	4.4	11.4	10.3	43.0	60.4	1.7	83.7	28.8	34.3	2.8	96.1	1,294	16.9
Female	12.1	2.7	13.5	9.8	34.7	61.4	1.6	87.3	26.8	33.4	2.3	96.8	1,356	16.4
Residence														
Urban	8.9	0.3	9.1	13.5	32.3	46.4	0.9	83.9	17.5	25.1	1.0	93.9	329	12.1
Rural	10.5	4.0	13.0	9.6	39.7	63.0	1.8	85.8	29.2	35.1	2.7	96.8	2,322	17.3
Region														
Northern	12.3	6.3	16.6	7.1	30.9	61.2	0.1	83.8	17.7	34.4	5.2	94.8	319	15.3
Central	8.3	2.8	10.4	5.6	33.8	56.3	0.9	85.8	30.9	35.0	1.9	96.0	1,125	17.9
Southern	11.7	3.4	13.3	15.0	45.5	65.2	2.8	85.8	27.5	32.6	2.4	97.3	1,207	15.9
School type														
Public	10.4	3.5	12.6	10.2	39.0	61.1	1.8	85.6	28.3	34.5	2.5	96.6	2,502	17.0
Non-public	7.3	4.1	8.8	7.8	33.0	57.6	0.0	85.0	19.4	23.2	2.9	94.1	134	11.7
Wealth index quintile														
Lowest	11.7	3.5	13.4	11.0	46.1	66.2	2.5	87.4	36.5	39.5	1.5	96.8	466	19.3
Second	12.2	5.4	16.1	9.2	44.2	67.1	0.3	84.7	32.6	40.8	2.3	97.9	458	18.3
Middle	12.7	4.1	14.6	10.7	38.5	65.6	1.5	84.7	26.0	32.2	1.5	96.2	538	17.6
Fourth	10.7	4.1	13.8	10.2	39.9	58.6	2.2	87.0	30.4	38.0	3.7	97.6	553	17.0
Highest	5.6	1.1	6.2	9.3	28.8	50.7	1.7	84.3	17.2	22.5	3.3	94.4	636	12.4
Total	10.3	3.5	12.5	10.1	38.8	60.9	1.7	85.6	27.8	33.8	2.5	96.5	2,651	16.7

school clothes clean. Pupils in rural areas were more likely than those in urban areas to be absent from school for this reason (35 percent and 25 percent, respectively). While 23 percent of pupils from households in the highest quintile missed school for this reason, 40 percent of pupils from households in the lowest quintile missed school because their school clothes were dirty.

During 2001 and 2002, Malawi suffered widespread food shortages as a result of poor rains and lack of maize in the food reserves. Almost a third of the population was severely affected. Not surprisingly, the resulting hunger among the population affected children's school attendance: 28 percent of pupils were absent from school because of hunger. Twenty-nine percent of pupils in rural areas and 18 percent of those in urban areas missed school because of hunger. There were also marked regional differences, with 31 percent of pupils in the Central region missing school because of hunger, compared with 28 percent in the Southern region and 18 percent in the Northern region.

Figure 12.1 Among Pupils Missing School in 2001, Percentage Absent for Specific Reasons
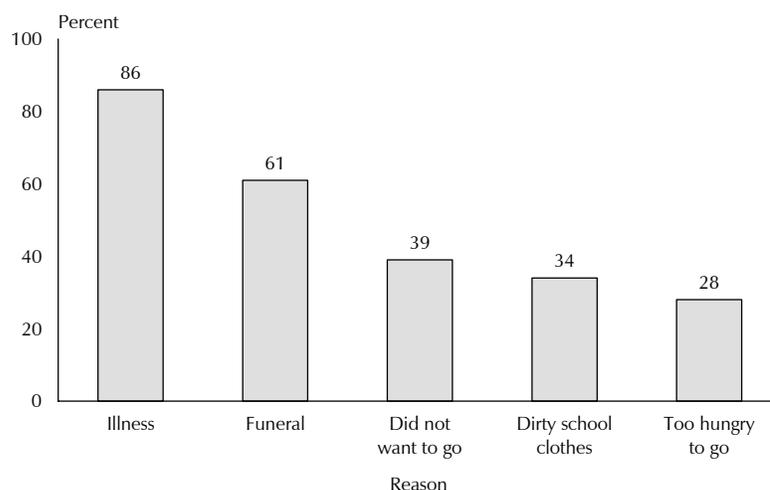
MDES 2002

Thirty-nine percent of pupils missed school because—according to their parents/guardians—they did not want to attend. Male pupils were more likely than female pupils to miss school for this reason (43 percent versus 35 percent), and pupils from households in the lowest quintile were more likely than pupils from households in the highest quintile to miss school because they did not want to attend (46 percent versus 29 percent). Pupils in the Southern region were more likely to miss school for this reason (46 percent) than those in the Central (34 percent) and Northern regions (31 percent).

Thirteen percent of primary school pupils missed school to do some type of work (domestic work or work on the family farm or in the family business) in support of the household. Older pupils were more likely to have missed school to do work to support the household than younger pupils (17 percent of children age 11-14 versus 7 percent of children age 6-7). Pupils in rural areas were more likely than their urban peers to have missed school to do work for the household. Female pupils were more likely than male pupils to miss school to do domestic work (12 versus 8 percent). While 13 percent of pupils from households in the lowest quintile missed school to do some kind of work for the household, 6 percent of pupils from households in the highest quintile missed school for this reason.

Ten percent of pupils missed school because there was no money available to pay the fees that were due. Pupils in urban areas were more likely than those in rural areas to miss school for this reason, as were pupils in the Southern region (15 percent, compared with 7 percent in the Northern and 6 percent in the Central regions). Interestingly, there was little difference in the percentage of pupils missing school for this reason by household wealth.

12.2 Primary School Pupil Absenteeism in the Week Preceding the Interview

This section of the chapter presents information on pupil absenteeism during the five school days preceding the survey interview.[2] Twenty-five percent of pupils were absent one or more days during the week preceding the interview, and 75 percent missed no days of school (see Table 12.2). Pupils in urban areas were less likely than those in rural areas to have missed school during the week (16 versus 26 percent), and the wealthier the pupil's household, the less likely he/she was to have missed school.

Table 12.3 presents information on the reasons children missed school during the week preceding the interview. As with the reasons given for absenteeism in the 2001 year, pupil illness was the most commonly cited reason for missing school (37 percent). The patterns in pupil absenteeism because of illness during the week preceding the interview show greater variation than absenteeism during the last year because of illness. During the week before the household was surveyed, 41 percent of female pupils missed school because of illness, compared with 32 percent of male pupils. Pupils in the Central region were most likely to miss school because of illness (43 percent, compared with 39 percent in the Northern region and 31 percent in the Southern region).

Table 12.2 Absenteeism among primary school pupils in the week preceding the interview

Percent distribution of primary school day pupils by attendance in the week preceding the interview, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Pupil absenteeism			Total	Number of parents/ guardians
	Attended all school days	Absent one or more days	Don't know/ missing		
Age					
6-7	70.0	30.0	0.0	100.0	605
8-10	76.8	23.0	0.2	100.0	1,135
11-14	76.5	23.5	0.0	100.0	1,197
Sex					
Male	75.5	24.5	0.0	100.0	1,441
Female	75.0	24.8	0.1	100.0	1,496
Residence					
Urban	84.2	15.8	0.0	100.0	345
Rural	74.1	25.8	0.1	100.0	2,592
Region					
Northern	73.0	26.7	0.3	100.0	335
Central	76.3	23.7	0.0	100.0	1,235
Southern	74.9	25.0	0.1	100.0	1,367
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	70.7	28.9	0.4	100.0	537
Second	72.4	27.6	0.0	100.0	531
Middle	74.3	25.7	0.0	100.0	608
Fourth	74.3	25.7	0.0	100.0	606
Highest	83.3	16.7	0.0	100.0	655
Total	75.3	24.7	0.1	100.0	2,937

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[2] The calculation included only those pupils whose schools were open and whose classes were meeting. Pupils at boarding schools were excluded because parents/guardians would be unlikely to know whether the children had missed school during the specified week of school.

Table 12.3 Reasons for absenteeism among primary school pupils in the week preceding the interview

Percentage of primary school day pupils who missed school in the week preceding the interview, by reasons for absenteeism and background characteristics, Malawi 2002

						Reason pupil missed school									
Background characteristic	Domestic work	Work for family farm/ business	Work for employer	Any work	No money for fees	Did not want to go	Funeral	Initiation ceremony	Illness	Too hungry to go	Bad weather	Clothes dirty	Other	Don't know/ missing	Number of pupils
Age															
6-7	2.3	0.1	0.0	2.4	0.4	27.9	5.2	0.0	39.8	1.4	3.5	10.1	9.1	0.0	182
8-10	6.3	0.6	0.5	7.2	0.9	32.1	6.5	0.0	33.5	2.5	2.2	10.8	6.0	0.5	261
11-14	7.3	1.5	1.3	9.8	0.9	21.8	7.5	0.2	37.4	2.6	2.8	11.8	5.4	0.0	281
Sex															
Male	4.4	0.8	0.7	5.4	0.9	32.5	4.6	0.1	31.8	1.0	3.1	13.5	6.2	0.4	353
Female	6.9	0.9	0.7	8.5	0.6	21.8	8.4	0.0	41.2	3.4	2.3	8.7	6.9	0.0	371
Residence															
Urban	11.5	0.0	0.4	11.9	2.0	21.7	2.9	0.8	41.8	0.8	4.8	8.7	4.5	0.0	55
Rural	5.2	0.9	0.7	6.6	0.7	27.5	6.8	0.0	36.2	2.4	2.6	11.2	6.7	0.2	669
Region															
Northern	8.5	0.3	1.1	9.9	0.7	12.7	12.2	0.0	38.7	1.1	6.2	3.8	13.5	0.0	89
Central	5.0	1.1	0.1	5.9	0.3	24.2	4.5	0.0	42.5	3.1	1.6	16.0	4.0	0.0	293
Southern	5.6	0.7	1.1	7.2	1.2	33.2	6.8	0.1	31.0	1.8	2.8	8.6	6.9	0.4	341
Wealth index quintile															
Lowest	4.5	0.2	0.9	5.6	0.6	29.6	3.6	0.0	31.3	2.4	4.0	15.9	11.0	0.0	155
Second	5.1	1.6	0.0	6.2	1.0	26.6	7.2	0.0	39.5	4.6	1.1	11.1	3.6	0.8	147
Middle	6.7	0.8	0.9	8.4	1.3	31.2	7.1	0.0	34.9	0.0	2.0	10.7	5.3	0.0	157
Fourth	4.3	1.0	0.6	5.5	0.0	24.8	9.1	0.0	39.0	3.4	1.8	8.0	7.4	0.0	156
Highest	8.7	0.4	1.1	10.3	1.0	21.2	5.3	0.4	39.4	0.4	5.5	8.7	4.5	0.0	110
Total	5.7	0.8	0.7	7.0	0.8	27.0	6.5	0.1	36.6	2.3	2.7	11.0	6.5	0.2	724

The second most cited reason for absenteeism during the week preceding the interview was that the pupil did not want to go to school (27 percent). As with reasons for absenteeism during the 2001 school year, this reason was given far more often for male than for female pupils (33 percent versus 22 percent). Pupils in the Southern region were most likely to miss school because they did not want to attend school (33 percent), compared with 24 percent in the Central and 13 percent in the Northern region.

Eleven percent of pupils missed school because their school clothes were dirty. Male pupils were more likely than female pupils to miss school for this reason (14 percent versus 9 percent), and children in the Central region were more likely than their peers in other regions to miss school for this reason. Children from wealthier households were less likely than children from poorer households to miss school because of dirty clothes.

Seven percent of pupils missed school because of funerals. Twelve percent of the pupils in the Northern region missed school because of funerals, compared with 7 percent in the Southern and 5 percent in the Central region. During the week before the household was interviewed, from late May through mid-July 2002, 2 percent of pupils missed school because of hunger.

The need to do work for the household (including domestic work, work on the family farm or in the family business, and work for an employer) was cited as a reason for absenteeism for 7 percent of children who missed school during the week preceding the interview. Among the types of work, domestic work was listed more often than other types of work and was cited more often for older children than for younger children.

12.3   Pupil Absenteeism and Household Work

As seen in tables 12.1 and 12.3, 13 percent of primary school pupils missed school during the 2001 school year to do some type of work to support the household and 7 percent of respondents cited work for the household as a reason for absenteeism during the week prior to the interview. In addition to the questions on reasons for absenteeism, parents/guardians were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a statement saying that children should be kept home from school whenever necessary to work or help at home (see Table 12.4). Despite the incidence of pupil absenteeism due to the need to do work for the household, nearly all parents/guardians (97 percent) disagreed with the statement. There was little variation by background characteristics.

Table 12.4 Importance of child's work or help in the household

Percent distribution of parents/guardians by whether they agree or disagree that parents should keep their children home from school whenever necessary to work or help in the household, according to background characteristics, Malawi 2002

Background characteristic	Should keep children home to work or help in the household			Total	Number of parents/ guardians
	Agree	Disagree	Don't know/ missing		
Sex					
Male	1.9	97.9	0.2	100.0	729
Female	3.6	96.4	0.0	100.0	1,319
Residence					
Urban	1.2	98.8	0.0	100.0	228
Rural	3.2	96.7	0.1	100.0	1,820
Region					
Northern	2.3	97.0	0.6	100.0	187
Central	2.2	97.7	0.1	100.0	844
Southern	3.7	96.3	0.0	100.0	1,017
Wealth index quintile					
Lowest	4.6	95.4	0.0	100.0	460
Second	3.9	95.8	0.3	100.0	394
Middle	3.0	97.0	0.0	100.0	408
Fourth	2.2	97.7	0.1	100.0	401
Highest	1.0	99.0	0.0	100.0	385
Total	3.0	96.9	0.1	100.0	2,048

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SAMPLE DESIGN

A major objective of the 2002 MDES sample design was to provide independent estimates with acceptable precision for important education indicators. The sample was designed to provide these estimates for different domains, including estimates for the country, for urban and rural areas, and for each of the three regions. The population covered by the 2002 MDES was children age 6-14 living in the selected households.

Sample Frame

The sample for the 2002 MDES is based on the sampling frame for the 2000 Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS), which was designed to provide estimates of health and demographic indicators. Based on the 1998 census frame, the National Statistical Office developed an updated preliminary master sample to use during the intercensal period. In order to maintain an integrated household survey approach for future household surveys, it was decided that the 2000 MDHS sample—and later, the 2002 MDES sample— should use the preliminary master sample as the sample frame. The 2000 MDHS and the 2002 MDES sample of enumeration areas (EAs) are thus a sub-samples of NSO's preliminary master sample, with the 2002 MDES being a sub-sample of the 2000 MDES.

NSO's preliminary master sample of EAs is stratified according to district designation and, within districts, by urban-rural designation.[1] One objective of the 2000 MDHS master sample was to permit estimation at the district level, so as a consequence, the total number of EAs per district was not allocated proportional to population size of the district. Instead, a minimum of 24 EAs were allocated to each district, with certain districts being allocated more EAs based on size and health and population programmatic interest. For instance, Lilongwe and Blantyre districts were each allocated 48 EAs in the master sample. The master sample includes a total of 816 EAs out of the 9,213 EAs established in the 1998 census. A small number of EAs located in national parks and forest areas (representing less than 1 percent of the population of Malawi) were excluded from the master sample.

The design features and stratification of the master sample are implicit in the 2000 MDHS, the 2002 MDES, and all other subsamples.

Sample Selection

Based on the 2002 MDES sample design objectives, a total of 129 EAs (111 in rural and 18 in urban areas) were selected from the 9,213 EAs established in the 1998 census. The total coverage is almost 99 percent, with only areas located in national parks and forest areas (representing less than 1 percent of the population of Malawi) being excluded from the master sample.

The sample "take" (i.e. number of households sampled) per EA was determined using the following formulae:

$$P_{1i} = \{(a * M_i) / (S\, M_i)\} * \{c/a\}$$

$$P_{2i} = b_i / L_i$$

where

---

[1] Rural enumerations areas (EAs) have populations of between 800 and 1,200 persons; urban EAs have populations of 1,000 to 1,500 persons

a   is the number of EAs to be selected in each of the urban/rural components of the district sample from the master sample,

c   is the number of EAs to be selected in each of the urban/rural components of the district sample in the 2002 MDES sample,

M_i is the number of households in the i-th EA in each of the urban/rural components of the district according to the 1998 population census,

$S M_i$ is the total number of households in each of the urban/rural components of the district according to the 1998 population census,

b_i is the household sample take selected in each EA, and

L_i is the total number of households listed in the selected i-th EA during the 2000 MDHS listing operation.

In conjunction with the 2000 MDHS, before the final household selection, a complete household listing operation was completed for each selected EA. This household listing was also used for the 2002 MDES. Based on these household lists, the household selection was then implemented to maintain a self-weighted sample in each domain but the sampling rates differ between districts. Therefore, the total 2000 MDHS and the 2002 MDES samples are weighted, and a final weighting adjustment is required to provide national estimates.

All children age 6-14 were targeted to have data collected about them from a parent or guardian.

Sample Implementation

The results indicate that of the 3,866 potential households selected, the 2002 MDES fieldwork teams successfully interviewed 3,290 of these households (see Table 1.1 in Chapter 1). The main reasons that potential households were not interviewed were that the potential household was found to be vacant at the time of the interview or had been destroyed since the time of the 2000 household listing, and in total this accounted for 13 percent of potential households. A total of 3,325 households were occupied, of which 3,290 were successfully interviewed. Overall, the household response rate was 99 percent. The household response rate was similar among the urban and rural areas. In the interviewed households, 3,755 eligible children were identified and Eligible Child Questionnaires were completed for 3,752 (nearly 100 percent) of them.

The estimates from a sample survey are affected by two types of errors: (1) non-sampling errors and (2) sampling errors. Non-sampling errors are the results of mistakes made in implementing data collection and data processing, such as failure to locate and interview the correct household, misunderstanding of the questions on the part of either the interviewer or the respondent, and data entry errors. Although numerous efforts were made during the implementation of the 2002 MDES to minimise this type of error, non-sampling errors are impossible to avoid and difficult to evaluate statistically.

Sampling errors, on the other hand, can be evaluated statistically. The sample of respondents selected in the 2002 MDES is only one of many samples that could have been selected from the same population, using the same design and expected size. Each of these samples would yield results that differ somewhat from the results of the actual sample selected. Sampling errors are a measure of the variability between all possible samples. Although the degree of variability is not known exactly, it can be estimated from the survey results.

A sampling error is usually measured in terms of the *standard error* for a particular statistic (mean, percentage, etc.), which is the square root of the variance. The standard error can be used to calculate confidence intervals within which the true value for the population can reasonably be assumed to fall. For example, for any given statistic calculated from a sample survey, the value of that statistic will fall within a range of plus or minus two times the standard error of that statistic in 95 percent of all possible samples of identical size and design.

If the sample of respondents had been selected as a simple random sample, it would have been possible to use straightforward formulas for calculating sampling errors. However, the 2002 MDES sample is the result of a two-stage, stratified design, and consequently, it was necessary to use more complex formulae. The computer software used to calculate sampling errors for the 2002 MDES is the ISSA Sampling Error Module (SAMPERR). This module used the Taylor linearisation method of variance estimation for survey estimates that are means or proportions. The Jackknife repeated replication method is used for variance estimation of more complex statistics such as fertility and mortality rates.

The Taylor linearisation method treats any percentage or average as a ratio estimate, $r = y/x$, where y represents the total sample value for variable y, and x represents the total number of cases in the group or subgroup under consideration. The variance of r is computed using the formula given below, with the standard error being the square root of the variance:

$$var(r) = \frac{1-f}{x^2} \sum_{h=1}^{H} \left[\frac{m_h}{m_h - 1} \left(\sum_{i=1}^{m_h} z_{hi}^2 - \frac{z_h^2}{m_h} \right) \right]$$

in which

$$z_{hi} = y_{hi} - r \cdot x_{hi}, \text{ and } z_h = y_h - r \cdot x_h$$

105

where

h represents the stratum which varies from 1 to H,

m_h is the total number of clusters selected in the hth stratum,

y_{hi} is the sum of the weighted values of variable y in the ith cluster in the hth stratum,

x_{hi} is the sum of the weighted number of cases in the ith cluster in the hth stratum, and

f is the overall sampling fraction, which is so small that it is ignored.

The Jackknife repeated replication method derives estimates of complex rates from each of several replications of the parent sample, and calculates standard errors for these estimates using simple formulae. Each replication considers *all but one* cluster in the calculation of the estimates. Pseudo-independent replications are thus created. In the 2002 MDES, there were 129 non-empty clusters. Hence, 129 replications were created. The variance of a rate r is calculated as follows:

$$se^2(r) = var(r) = \frac{1}{k(k-1)} \sum_{i=1}^{k} (r_i - r)^2$$

in which

$$r_1 = kr - (k-1)\, r_{(i)}$$

where r is the estimate computed from the full sample of 129 clusters,

$r_{(i)}$ is the estimate computed from the reduced sample of 128 clusters (i^{th} cluster excluded), and

k is the total number of clusters.

In addition to the standard error, SAMPERR computes the design effect (DEFT) for each estimate, which is defined as the ratio between the standard error using the given sample design and the standard error that would result if a simple random sample had been used. A DEFT value of 1.0 indicates that the sample design is as efficient as a simple random sample, while a value greater than 1.0 indicates the increase in the sampling error due to the use of a more complex and less statistically efficient design. SAMPERR also computes the relative error and confidence limits for the estimates.

Sampling errors for the 2002 MDHS are calculated for selected variables considered to be of primary interest. The sampling errors are presented in this appendix for the country as a whole, for male and female children, for urban and rural areas, and for each of the three regions (Northern, Central, and Southern). For each variable, the type of statistic (mean, proportion, or rate) and the base population are given in Table B.1. Tables B.2 to B.9 present the value of the statistic (R), its standard error (SE), the number of unweighted (N) and weighted (WN) cases, the design effect (DEFT), the relative standard error (SE/R), and the 95 percent confidence limits (R±2SE), for each variable. The DEFT is considered undefined when the standard error considering simple random sample is 0 (when the estimate is close to 0 or 1).

In general, the relative standard error for most estimates for the country as a whole is small, except for estimates of very small proportions. There are some differentials in the relative standard error for the estimates of sub-populations. For example, for the variable *never attended school,* the relative standard errors as a percentage of the estimated mean for the whole country, for males, and for females are 8.6 percent, 10.5 percent, and 8.7 percent, respectively.

The confidence interval (e.g., as calculated for the variable *never attended school*) can be interpreted as follows: the overall national sample proportion is 0.110 (or 11 percent) and its standard error is 0.009. Therefore, to obtain the 95 percent confidence limits, one adds and subtracts twice the standard error to the sample estimate, i.e., $0.110 \pm 2 \times 0.009$. There is a high probability (95 percent) that the *true* proportion of children age 6-14 who have never attended school is between 9.2 and 12.8 percent.

Table B.1 List of selected variables for sampling errors, 2002 MDES		
Variable	Estimate	Base population
Repetition rate for standard 1	Proportion	Primary school pupils age 5-24 attending standard 1 in 2001
Dropout rate for standard 1	Proportion	Primary school pupils age 5-24 attending standard 1 in 2001
Repetition rate for standard 8	Proportion	Primary school pupils age 5-24 attending standard 8 in 2001
Dropout rate for standard 8	Proportion	Primary school pupils age 5-24 attending standard 8 in 2001
Repetition rate for primary overall	Proportion	Pupils age 5-24 attending primary school in 2001
Dropout rate for primary overall	Proportion	Pupils age 5-24 attending primary school in 2001
Never attended school	Proportion	All eligible children age 6-14
Dropped out of school	Proportion	All eligible children age 6-14
Attended school during 2002 school year	Proportion	All eligible children age 6-14
Total expenditures on schooling	Mean	Primary school pupils age 6-14

Table B.2 Sampling errors: Total sample, 2002 MDES

			Number of cases				Confidence limits	
Variable	Value (R)	Standard error (SE)	Un-weighted (N)	Weighted (N)	Design effect (DEFT)	Relative error (SE/R)	R-2SE	R+2SE
Repetition rate for standard 1	0.406	0.018	1069	1072	1.216	0.045	0.370	0.443
Dropout rate for standard 1	0.085	0.010	1069	1072	1.222	0.122	0.064	0.106
Repetition rate for standard 8	0.195	0.032	195	173	1.131	0.165	0.131	0.260
Dropout rate for standard 8	0.201	0.039	195	173	1.351	0.193	0.123	0.279
Repetition rate for primary overall	0.258	0.009	3878	3742	1.309	0.036	0.239	0.276
Dropout rate for primary overall	0.082	0.004	3878	3742	1.001	0.054	0.073	0.091
Never attended school	0.110	0.009	3752	3752	1.855	0.086	0.091	0.129
Dropped out of school	0.076	0.005	3752	3752	1.257	0.072	0.065	0.087
Attended school during 2002 school year	0.810	0.012	3752	3752	1.899	0.015	0.786	0.834
Total expenditures on schooling	912.475	65.404	2693	2651	0.920	0.072	781.668	1043.283

Table B.3 Sampling errors: Male sample, 2002 MDES

			Number of cases				Confidence limits	
Variable	Value (R)	Standard error (SE)	Un-weighted (N)	Weighted (N)	Design effect (DEFT)	Relative error (SE/R)	R-2SE	R+2SE
Repetition rate for standard 1	0.413	0.020	521	530	0.948	0.050	0.372	0.454
Dropout rate for standard 1	0.077	0.012	521	530	1.032	0.157	0.053	0.101
Repetition rate for standard 8	0.221	0.038	129	117	1.027	0.170	0.146	0.297
Dropout rate for standard 8	0.198	0.048	129	117	1.362	0.242	0.102	0.294
Repetition rate for primary overall	0.270	0.011	1978	1903	1.129	0.042	0.248	0.293
Dropout rate for primary overall	0.076	0.007	1978	1903	1.153	0.090	0.063	0.090
Never attended school	0.116	0.012	1834	1848	1.623	0.105	0.091	0.140
Dropped out of school	0.073	0.007	1834	1848	1.152	0.096	0.059	0.087
Attended school during 2002 school year	0.808	0.016	1834	1848	1.696	0.019	0.777	0.839
Total expenditures on schooling	797.447	62.714	1309	1294	1.036	0.079	672.018	922.875

Table B.4 Sampling errors: Female sample, 2002 MDES								
			Number of cases				Confidence limits	
Variable	Value (R)	Standard error (SE)	Un-weighted (N)	Weighted (N)	Design effect (DEFT)	Relative error (SE/R)	R-2SE	R+2SE
Repetition rate for standard 1	0.400	0.029	548	542	1.371	0.072	0.343	0.458
Dropout rate for standard 1	0.094	0.016	548	542	1.262	0.168	0.062	0.125
Repetition rate for standard 8	0.142	0.045	66	57	1.037	0.317	0.052	0.231
Dropout rate for standard 8	0.207	0.058	66	57	1.159	0.281	0.091	0.324
Repetition rate for primary overall	0.245	0.012	1900	1840	1.168	0.047	0.222	0.268
Dropout rate for primary overall	0.088	0.006	1900	1840	0.944	0.070	0.075	0.100
Never attended school	0.105	0.009	1918	1904	1.303	0.087	0.087	0.123
Dropped out of school	0.079	0.006	1918	1904	0.998	0.078	0.067	0.091
Attended school during 2002 school year	0.812	0.013	1918	1904	1.409	0.016	0.787	0.837
Total expenditures on schooling	1022.239	96.280	1384	1356	0.764	0.094	829.679	1214.799

Table B.5 Sampling errors: Urban sample, 2002 MDES								
			Number of cases				Confidence limits	
Variable	Value (R)	Standard error (SE)	Un-weighted (N)	Weighted (N)	Design effect (DEFT)	Relative error (SE/R)	R-2SE	R+2SE
Repetition rate for standard 1	0.476	0.069	106	86	1.426	0.146	0.337	0.615
Dropout rate for standard 1	0	0	106	86			0	0
Repetition rate for standard 8	0.119	0.071	47	26	1.483	0.595	0	0.261
Dropout rate for standard 8	0.121	0.065	47	26	1.354	0.539	0	0.251
Repetition rate for primary overall	0.231	0.032	620	440	1.913	0.140	0.166	0.295
Dropout rate for primary overall	0.03	0.007	620	440	0.957	0.218	0.017	0.043
Never attended school	0.042	0.017	537	402	2.011	0.416	0.007	0.077
Dropped out of school	0.053	0.011	537	402	1.156	0.212	0.03	0.075
Attended school during 2002 school year	0.900	0.016	537	402	1.249	0.018	0.867	0.932
Total expenditures on schooling	2370.104	371.585	448	329	0.968	0.157	1626.934	3113.275

Table B.6 Sampling errors: Rural sample, 2002 MDES								
			Number of cases				Confidence limits	
Variable	Value (R)	Standard error (SE)	Un-weighted (N)	Weighted (N)	Design effect (DEFT)	Relative error (SE/R)	R-2SE	R+2SE
Repetition rate for standard 1	0.400	0.019	963	986	1.193	0.047	0.363	0.438
Dropout rate for standard 1	0.093	0.011	963	986	1.217	0.123	0.070	0.116
Repetition rate for standard 8	0.209	0.035	148	147	1.054	0.169	0.138	0.280
Dropout rate for standard 8	0.215	0.045	148	147	1.318	0.208	0.126	0.305
Repetition rate for primary overall	0.261	0.010	3258	3302	1.241	0.037	0.242	0.281
Dropout rate for primary overall	0.089	0.005	3258	3302	0.998	0.056	0.079	0.099
Never attended school	0.119	0.001	3215	3350	1.829	0.088	0.098	0.139
Dropped out of school	0.079	0.006	3215	3350	1.258	0.076	0.067	0.091
Attended school during 2002 school year	0.799	0.014	3215	3350	1.921	0.017	0.772	0.826
Total expenditures on schooling	705.901	43.559	2245	2322	0.852	0.062	618.784	793.018

Table B.7 Sampling errors: Northern sample, 2002 MDES

Variable	Value (R)	Standard error (SE)	Un-weighted (N)	Weighted (N)	Design effect (DEFT)	Relative error (SE/R)	R-2SE	R+2SE
			Number of cases				Confidence limits	
Repetition rate for standard 1	0.471	0.060	163	105	1.525	0.127	0.352	0.591
Dropout rate for standard 1	0	0	163	105			0	0
Repetition rate for standard 8	0.287	0.086	54	29	1.381	0.299	0.115	0.459
Dropout rate for standard 8	0.120	0.072	54	29	1.618	0.602	0	0.265
Repetition rate for primary overall	0.250	0.021	691	410	1.253	0.083	0.208	0.291
Dropout rate for primary overall	0.032	0.006	691	410	0.911	0.191	0.020	0.044
Never attended school	0.048	0.004	601	372	0.466	0.085	0.039	0.056
Dropped out of school	0.010	0.002	601	372	0.427	0.173	0.007	0.014
Attended school during 2002 school year	0.938	0.006	601	372	0.602	0.006	0.926	0.950
Total expenditures on schooling	1057.784	337.710	508	319	0.970	0.319	382.364	1733.205

Table B.8 Sampling errors: Central sample, 2002 MDES

Variable	Value (R)	Standard error (SE)	Un-weighted (N)	Weighted (N)	Design effect (DEFT)	Relative error (SE/R)	R-2SE	R+2SE
			Number of cases				Confidence limits	
Repetition rate for standard 1	0.387	0.025	350	436	0.951	0.064	0.337	0.436
Dropout rate for standard 1	0.054	0.016	350	436	1.315	0.294	0.022	0.086
Repetition rate for standard 8	0.108	0.035	61	73	0.881	0.326	0.038	0.179
Dropout rate for standard 8	0.175	0.065	61	73	1.325	0.372	0.045	0.305
Repetition rate for primary overall	0.243	0.012	1344	1595	1.033	0.050	0.218	0.267
Dropout rate for primary overall	0.062	0.005	1344	1595	0.690	0.073	0.053	0.071
Never attended school	0.097	0.017	1301	1552	2.043	0.173	0.063	0.13
Dropped out of school	0.058	0.007	1301	1552	1.071	0.119	0.044	0.072
Attended school during 2002 school year	0.842	0.019	1301	1552	1.879	0.023	0.804	0.880
Total expenditures on schooling	1123.995	101.237	948	1125	0.994	0.090	921.521	1326.468

Table B.9 Sampling errors: Southern sample, 2002 MDES

Variable	Value (R)	Standard error (SE)	Un-weighted (N)	Weighted (N)	Design effect (DEFT)	Relative error (SE/R)	R-2SE	R+2SE
			Number of cases				Confidence limits	
Repetition rate for standard 1	0.410	0.028	556	531	1.362	0.069	0.353	0.467
Dropout rate for standard 1	0.128	0.016	556	531	1.127	0.125	0.096	0.160
Repetition rate for standard 8	0.247	0.056	80	72	1.160	0.228	0.134	0.359
Dropout rate for standard 8	0.260	0.059	80	72	1.188	0.225	0.143	0.377
Repetition rate for primary overall	0.274	0.016	1843	1738	1.518	0.058	0.242	0.305
Dropout rate for primary overall	0.112	0.009	1843	1738	1.164	0.076	0.095	0.129
Never attended school	0.134	0.013	1850	1829	1.600	0.094	0.109	0.160
Dropped out of school	0.104	0.009	1850	1829	1.293	0.088	0.086	0.123
Attended school during 2002 school year	0.757	0.018	1850	1829	1.786	0.024	0.721	0.792
Total expenditures on schooling	676.912	70.000	1237	1207	1.174	0.103	536.911	816.913

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