Classroom Assessment Practices
The Malawi Experiences

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Organisation

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- Purpose of assessment in Malawi
- Assessment methods
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General Assessment Issues

- The Malawi National Examinations Board (MANEB) as a main assessment Policy Holder (Primary, Secondary and Primary Teacher Training Colleges – (TTCs))
- University Colleges are semi Autonomous in assessment (operating through both Internal and External Assessment Moderation)
- Most Primary, Secondary, TTCs, and University Colleges have either assessment committees or examination departments that oversee matters of assessment
- There are other professional bodies that plan and manage their own assessment practices:
  - a) Malawi Nurses Council
  - b) Malawi Medical Council
  - c) Chartered Institutes of Malawi
  - d) Engineers
  - e) Lawyers etc
How I Understand Assessment

- As an integral part of teaching and learning process
- Process for collecting information using different strategies, tools and methods (Chirwa, 2014)
- How teachers perceive assessment influence they way they assess teaching and learning (Susuwere Banda 2005)
- Teachers Knowledge and self belief determines how they undertake assessment practices
- Encompasses testing, measurement and evaluation for decision making and is continuous
Purpose Assessment Play in Malawi

- facilitates student-teacher communication
- Guides day to day teacher – teaching and learning processes
- Empowers learners to monitor and take responsibility for their own learning
- Provides feedback to various stakeholders on learner achievement levels
- Motivates learners to aim for more
Purpose of Assessment ctd..

- Raises teacher/school status in society (or the reverse)
- Helps teachers and learners to construct new knowledge from existing knowledge
- It is used for placement and certification processes
- Builds records for learner achievement over the years (school, national, regional and global level)
Assessment Methods

(a) Assessment of Learning methods such as: Various kinds of tests:
- end of topic
- end of term
- end of year (school or national examinations)
- school, cluster, national or regional based assessment tests

(b) Assessment for Learning through:
- student reflective journals or logs
- teacher reflective journals or logs
- observation and reflection checklists/rubrics
- individual or group based project based learning
- Various forms of field research or experimentation learning
Tools For Assessment

- Those used to generate Learner Achievement eg Test sheets, Marking sheets and scoring rubrics
- Those used for Assessment Records eg Attendance or performance registers
- Those used for Reporting eg Report cards
- Those used for Storage eg report cards, learner portfolio and teacher portfolio
Negative Influence of Assessment

- Fear for examinations amongst learners (at times teachers and parents)
- Outright cheating cases or in extreme cases (drop out from schools)
- Shame and embarrassment (learners, parents and teachers alike)
- Mislabling of people as dull or intelligent (due to miss assessment or limited assessment knowledge and know how) (Refer to multiple intelligence research and literature)
- Schools or learning institutions seem stuck in assessment of learning mode and less on assessment for learning or for life mode)
- Suicide or depression for those whom assessment has labelled wrongly
Factors that influence Assessment Practices

- Teacher Preparation at pre-service and post service stages
- High teacher – pupil ratio
- Teacher qualification and experience
- Level of pressure to succeed from multiple stakeholders
- Class size
- Nature and economic status of the school
- Teacher – student; and teacher – teacher; and student – student relationships
- Teacher knowledge, skills and self beliefs
- Purposes for or of assessment
Ending Thoughts for Reflection

- To what extent has assessment helped to build or destroy many learners in our region?
- To what extent has limited or wrong assessment practices contributed towards under development of Africa?
- What national or regional assessment reforms do we need to learn or emulate from Finland, Singapore and or South Korea where there are non-stressful high student achievement levels?
- How do we balance assessment of learning, with assessment for learning and assessment for life?
- Clip from UK and Clip from Capetown (if time permits)