



**Evaluation of LO-Norway's programme co-operation  
with the trade union movement in Malawi  
2006 to 2008**

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## Index

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Acknowledgements .....	5
Methodology.....	6
<b>Malawi .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>I MW2: ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT - MCTU.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Summary of findings .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Findings .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Finance and administration.....	10
Organising .....	15
Improvement in quality and quantity of Collective Agreements.....	17
Training .....	19
Improved capacity all round.....	20
Enforcement of labour laws.....	21
Respect for human and trade union rights .....	22
Fewer but bigger and stronger unions .....	22
Greater trade union participation and influence in national issues.....	23
Development of MCTU policies on relevant issue.....	23
Increased involvement in the fight against HIV/AIDS among workers.....	23
Internal democracy .....	24
Increase in women membership (by at least 25% of the 2005 figure) as well as greater participation of women at all levels .....	25
Significant reduction in child labour .....	26
<b>II GLO3: TRIPARTITE CO-OPERATION MCTU AND MINISTRY OF LABOUR .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>III MW3: TRAINING AND ORGANISING - TOTAWUM .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>CONCLUDING REMARKS.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Appendixes .....</b>	<b>38</b>
Appedix I: Terms of reference.....	38
Appendix II: Program.....	42
Appendix III: People interviewed.....	44
Appendix IV: MCTU structure.....	45
Appendix V: Agreements .....	46
Appendix VI: Training days per member.....	48
Appendix VII: Suggestions for more evaluations .....	49
Appendix VIII: Potential mergers .....	50

## Executive summary

The programme cooperation between the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO-Norway) and the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU) started in 1996. This was two years after the 1994 referendum that saw the end to the dictatorship of Hastings Kamuzu Banda. Before 1994 labour rights as well as human rights in general were strongly oppressed in Malawi.

With the support of LO-Norway and several other partners, the union movement has grown well in the fourteen years that have passed. This evaluation looks specifically at the period 2006 to 2008 and these three programmes:

- ❑ MW2: Organisational Development - MCTU
- ❑ MW3: Training and Organising - TOTAWUM
- ❑ GLO3: Tripartite co-operation – MCTU and Ministry of Labour

The organisational development programme with MCTU consists of support to a range of trainings for union leaders from the affiliates, organising activities and support to administration and the democratic institutions like Congress and other meetings. LO is the main contributor to MCTU's administrative budget.

A significant achievement during the project period has been the increase in membership and especially that new affiliates has left the splinter union COMATU and joined MCTU. The level of training activities has been high and reached a high number of members and leaders, spreading knowledge wider than before. The quality of the trainings is also good and relevant, with participants reporting that they use the new knowledge in their daily activities. The cooperation has had a strong focus on gender equality. Two thirds of the participants in trainings have been women and the outcomes are visible with more women holding office and participate actively in MCTU and the affiliates. Financial management has improved and were told that information from MCTU to affiliates has also improved. MCTU and LO has good reasons to be happy with the achievements over the last three years.

A main challenge at the moment is the shortcomings in collection of affiliation fees, leaving MCTU with minimal funds of their own. The congress in 2008 took a good step forward by changing from a low, flat fee per affiliate to a fee proportional with membership. The new system will however not yield enough income to contribute significantly towards financial independence and sustainability. Another challenge is that very few new collective agreements have been concluded during the last three years. The relations between some of the employers and the unions have improved in the period, but the concrete results are yet to be seen. On the home side, MCTU has blatantly continued to break their own constitution at congress, but have at the same time introduced passing motions for both internal and external policies, involving the democratic structures stronger on these issues.

Our overall recommendations are that LO continues to support MCTU with this programme. The needs, goals and priorities are still relevant. There can however be a stronger focus on outcomes like collective agreements and work on legal protection of workers in the next period given that administrative structures have improved.

The training and organising programme with the Tobacco and Allied Workers Union (TOTAWUM) mainly has the form of trainings for officers and shopstewards. The programme budget is handled by MCTU due to lack of administrative capacity at TOTAWUM. Again, the outcomes of trainings were good. It has contributed to local branches and members of TOTAWUM organising themselves and to engage employers (in most cases estate owners) in negotiations and conflict resolution. It has also empowered members on occupational health and safety, HIV/Aids related issues and women's issues. The main challenge for this programme is TOTAWUM's lack of capacity to run their own programme. The organisation cannot account for collected membership fees and does not have a good overview of membership numbers. It was therefore necessary that MCTU handled the finances in the training programme, but for future cooperation a goal should be to empower TOTAWUM so that their capacity reaches a level satisfactory to transfer responsibility.

The third programme, Tripartite cooperation, has involved The Ministry of Labour in Malawi, MCTU and the Employers Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM). Later participation has been extended to other NGO's and the meetings are renamed Tripartite plus. Labour relations in Malawi come from a very bad position with suspicion, hostility, abuse of rights and oppression. One can say that there was plenty of room for improvement. The tripartite social dialogue meetings have provided a platform for such improvement and were praised by all the participants. The meetings are used for exchange of information and discussions of policy. Knowledge levels have improved on all sides and levels of hostility have been reduced. The meetings have been claimed to lay the ground for better dialogue around policy and agreements, but for reasons lying outside of the programme, the concrete results are still few. It has been good that LO channelled support to these meetings and it is important that they continue. There is a plan for cost sharing in place, so the support from LO can be phased out in the future.

It must be noted that LO-Norway is not the only organisation supporting these organisations and the overall outcomes are results of several interventions. Political and economical developments in Malawi also affect the possibilities of achieving the overall goals. There is however no doubt that LO-Norway's support has been central to the achievements noted, not only because of the significant share of financial support, but also by contributing with knowledge and inspiration through trainings, networks and cooperation.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the good helpers who contributed to this evaluation.

MCTU had done significant work to prepare for our arrival. The three-year reports on the MCTU and TOTAWUM programmes put together especially for this evaluation were of great value to us and have been used extensively in the work after being in the field. In the same manner we would like to thank the affiliates who brought reports on their work to our meetings, giving us valuable documentation building up under what we discussed in the interviews.

LO has also been extremely helpful with providing documents and briefings in advance as well as after the field work. In particular I would like to thank LO's Regional Consultant for Africa, Alice Siame, who was the main coordinator of our field visits in Malawi. She managed to juggle the evaluation programme and our sudden changes to it in an excellent manner next to coordinating a large delegation from LO and having other work to attend to. Special thanks also to MCTU Education and Organising Officer Jessie Ching'oma, Secretary General Robert Mkwezalamba, Treasurer Prince Mudolo and President of TOTAWUM John Simiti, who took significant time out of their workdays to assist us.

Without mentioning more names, I would like to express our gratefulness to the many union officers and members who generously spent time talking to us and sharing their experiences from the programme. Without your cooperation this would have been an impossible task. The meeting with members of TOTAWUM in Mchinji will stand as a special memory and confirmation of how the union is important on the ground and is making a difference to the lives of normal working people in Malawi.

I would also like to express my thankfulness to the contributions, insights and hard work of Grace Mashalo on this evaluation. She has been a very good partner to work with. This report is the result of a tight team work, but I am responsible for how the final report has been put together and for all mistakes and shortcomings.

Ellen Cathrine Kjøsterud  
Teamleader  
Cape Town - March 2009

## The purpose of this evaluation

The Malawi Congress of Trade Unions was officially formed in 1995. The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO-Norway, or in the rest of this report only LO) has since 1996 cooperated with MCTU. In 1997 MCTU and LO entered a three year agreement on organisational development with focus on developing administrative capacity, organising and education and training. New agreements for the periods 2001-2003 and 2006-2009 were later signed focussing on the same main issues.

Malawi was further included in the LO supported Global Programme on Tri-partism (Social Dialogue) in 2004.

In addition to the co-operation between LO and MCTU, there is also co-operation with the Tobacco Tenants and Allied Workers Union of Malawi (TOTAWUM) covering the tobacco sector. TOTAWUM is an affiliate of MCTU. This co-operation started in 2002. The focus of the programme is membership recruitment and education and training for rank and file members, shopstewards and leadership.

This evaluation aims at reviewing the progress and results of the above-mentioned projects in the period 2006 to date (November 2008) and to see what has been achieved in the programme co-operation between LO and MCTU. LO intends to use the evaluation to form basis for LO's decisions regarding the future co-operation agreement between LO and Norad for the years 2010 - 2013.

The three programmes are interlinked, but we have kept them separate in this report. Each of the sections begins with an introduction, objectives and summary of findings.

## Methodology

The evaluation results are based on interviews and study of the written documentation of the project and the organisations. The contracts between LO and MCTU/TOTAWUM/Ministry of Labour contains indicators for evaluation and these have been our guidelines in addition to the Terms of Reference. The last (and only) evaluation of the programme was in 1999, when LO did an internal evaluation.

The program of visits was put together by LO with some added requests from the team. There was not time to do random visits to affiliates or workplaces and the time to see people outside of the project was limited. The result was quite well-rehearsed meetings. MCTU and LO must be complemented for the way they organised the logistics of the evaluation. In particular, the three-year reports prepared by MCTU especially for us were of great value.

Towards the end of the field visit, the team requested to get copies of documents from MCTU that we considered important for the evaluation. MCTU would not release the minutes from the General Council meetings, which would serve as confirmation that decisions are taken democratically as well as being followed up. We also requested for reports to other partners in order for us to compare activities and results, but unfortunately, we failed to have access to them. Programme, list of interviews and Terms of Reference are attached to this report.

## Malawi<sup>1</sup>

Malawi is a relatively new democracy having changed its way of governance from a dictatorship of President Hasting Kamuzu Banda. Banda led the country from its independence from Britain in 1964. In 1994 year Malawi held a referendum to let people decide the type of Government they wanted. This was a result of reported atrocities and disrespect of human and people's rights by the Banda regime that saw several Malawians going into exile while thousands and thousands more, who opposed his Government were thrown into rivers as "meat for Crocodiles." When MCTU emerged two years later it was to a population who had never experienced a democratic government respecting human rights, let alone workers rights.

Ruling President Bingu wa Mutharika was elected in 2004, representing the United Democratic Front. During his tenure of office, the Government has managed to among other things achieve lower inflation, reducing the bank interest rates from 35% to 15%, and attaining the HIPC point which catapulted new direct investment and registering an increase in the growth rate from 3% to 7% . They have also achieved a significant loss of jobs due to privatisation of public enterprises. Many of the foreign investors are considered to be even less union friendly than local businesses. Informal employment, casualisation, outsourcing and subcontracting are considered growing problems.

Members of the parliament, including the president, have since 1994 "crossed the floor" resulting in the president representing a new ruling party, the Democratic Progressive Party, which is in minority. It is very difficult for the ruling party's motions to pass or be supported by the opposition party members, who are in the majority, which has brought important labour issues to a halt. This in itself is a recipe for trouble among policy makers and the attendant difficulties in governance of the country. General Elections are to be held in May 2009 and there is a general atmosphere of not expecting any significant movement on labour issues before the new National Assembly comes together.

Malawi has ratified all of the ILO core conventions as well as Convention 144 on tri-partite cooperation. The Labour Relations Act of 1996 is also good on paper but not adhered to. There have recently been reviews of labour legislation in which MCTU took part.

The population of Malawi was estimated to 13 million in the 2008 Population and Housing Census. The population has grown 32% in the last decade. The main stay of the economy is from agriculture, which accounts for 80% of employment and 35% of its GDP with Tobacco being the main export crop seconded by Tea and cotton. Maize is the staple food for the nation and has in recent years become an export commodity as a result of the world food crisis, droughts in some parts of the world and other environmental factors. Economic development has been positive in the last years, but Malawi, as the rest of the world, feel the recent international economic crisis.

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<sup>1</sup> Sources are MCTU reports and Malawian public statistics.

## **I MW2: Organisational Development - MCTU**

The Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU) was registered in 1995 as a membership labour movement organisation with the aim of promoting and strengthening human rights standards and social welfare of workers in Malawi. The organisation has today 20 affiliates with two applications for affiliation pending. This makes it by far the largest federation in Malawi.

Cooperation with LO started in 1996 with rank and file education and training of women. In the following year the two parties agreed to enter into a three-year agreement on Organization Development with a focus on developing the administrative, organising, education and training capacities in MCTU in 1997. The goals of the cooperation have stayed more or less the same throughout.

This evaluation covers the period from 2006 to 2008 (date i,e Nov 2008). The support to MCTU from LO were to achieve:

- ❑ Administrative Development: Necessary administrative capacity for service delivery, participation in national affairs and efficient administration and financial management.
- ❑ Organising: Increased membership and increase in incomes from membership fees.
- ❑ Education and training: Capacity building among rank and file members, shopstewards and leaders and women empowerment.
- ❑ Internal democracy: Adherence to the constitutions of MCTU and its affiliates

To achieve these goals, LO has supported administration and salaries, internal meetings (eg. board and congress), organising activities and training activities. A part of the budget has been earmarked for activities aimed at women. LO has also contributed with training done by staff and trade unionists from Norway, as well as having unionists from Malawi visiting Norway.

Below are our findings and conclusions drawn on the basis of interviews conducted with various stakeholders and review of documentation presented to us.



## Summary of findings

In general good progress has been made on organisational development and the trainings have had positive impact on the ground. There is a shortage of results provided by the leadership at national and affiliates level in terms of bargaining agreements, legal victories and national policies. This is not only in the hands of MCTU, but it is now urgent that MCTU focus on outcomes beyond capacity building.

### Achievements

- ❑ A major achievement has been made in getting splinter unions into the fold.
- ❑ Developments on gender equality and empowerment of women is very good
- ❑ Financial management at MCTU has improved considerably and is satisfactory, though not perfect.
- ❑ There has been a high number of shopstewards and leaders trained and the learning outcomes of these trainings seem good.
- ❑ There are improved relations to government and business.
- ❑ Information dissemination to affiliates has improved.
- ❑ Congress has passed motions on policy, which is a new thing.

### Challenges

- ❑ There are problems with adherence to the constitution. Non-adherence on federation level is not a good example for the affiliates.
- ❑ There has been little progress on concluding collective agreements.
- ❑ Legal aid to members on micro level and achievements in legal matters on national level is below expectations. Although to a large extent outside of MCTU control, it is also an internal shortcoming.
- ❑ The organising targets are reached, but numbers are highly questionable. No mergers have taken place.

### Main recommendations

- ❑ LO should continue to support MCTU with the same objectives as before, but there is room to shift emphasis from capacity building to outcomes of activities.
- ❑ During the next programme period, a goal should be that more control and responsibility is moved down into the structures.
- ❑ LO and MCTU should consider an organising programme containing of:
  - Database to register members that can be used by all affiliates
  - Strategic organising plans for affiliates with targets
  - Funding for organising activities directly to affiliates and linked to results
- ❑ Participation in activities should be connected to membership size and only offered to affiliates in good standing.
- ❑ There should be more focus on collective agreements and legal issues.
- ❑ There should be more proactive research and support to affiliates by using research capacity at MCTU for organising strategies and bargaining support.
- ❑ MCTU should encourage mergers through benefits linked to size.
- ❑ MCTU should continue their good work on gender and HIV/Aids mainstreaming and aim to mainstream inclusion of people with disabilities in the next programme period.
- ❑ There should be more coordination between the funding partners (LO-Norway, Hivos, LO-Sweden, etc), at least on the financial side.

## Findings

The headings below are taken from the objectives for the cooperation as stated in the agreements between MCTU and LO-Norway.

### Finance and administration

In previous years, financial management has been considered a problem at MCTU. There has been shortage of capacity and competence. Improving this area has been a focus for the LO/MCTU cooperation and the efforts have had positive results.

MCTU has a total of eleven people on full time salaries and from those, three are in the accounts department. The decision to make the Treasurer a full time position came as a result of a need to improve financial administration. Systems have been improved, people have received training and the result is an improvement. The number of missing documents has come down and MCTU is complying with legal requirements and paying their taxes. However, between the 2005 and 2007 audit, several issues that could have been resolved, reoccurred and MCTU failed to provide good reasons why this was the case.

An element that has satisfied the evaluation team is that between them, a good auditor in Malawi and the project staff at LO seem to be keeping a close grip on financial issues. Lapses in financial management, if found, have been followed up and have been reversed upon being discovered. Other problems are openly documented, such as spending of money that is in breach of the contract with LO. i.e using money meant for activities to administration. Of special mention is repeatedly paying gratuity to elected officers which was not in the budget. LO has rightfully criticised this in strong terms and we do not wish to repeat the auditor's comments here, but just encourage LO to devise appropriate sanctions in consultation with MCTU to discourage similar cases in future.

While documentation and orderliness has improved and financials seem to be in good hands, there are still some issues we would like to point out:

#### *Financial transparency*

The financial relationship between LO and MCTU is a combination of several different projects. There is a base funding that goes to Administration at MCTU and to some projects. Then there is a separate budget for trainings, which is handled directly by LO. Further, the funding for Social Dialogue is channelled through the Ministry of Labour. The funding to the TOTAWUM Project goes through MCTU, but outside of the federation's main budget. There is also LO money coming through the ITUC-Africa programme, but that programme falls outside of our evaluation scope.

We learnt that the main reason to keep the training budget with the LO consultant is that MCTU tended to spend the money on Administration rather than Activities. TOTAWUM on the other hand does not have the administrative capacity required to handle their own funding, and that is the reason why this it is channelled through MCTU.

The different budgets limits transparency for the overall finances of MCTU. When the training budget is not part of the MCTU audit, the total sum of support from LO does not show in the annual financial statements. As a result, the financial statements reflect only 58% of LO funding to MCTU (2007).

MCTU have targets connected to their spending. 10% of the total budget is earmarked for Women's Activities while 30% to should be reserved for Organising. This is not possible to control

from the documentation presented to us<sup>2</sup>. However, from the reports we reviewed, we noticed that the amount spent on organising is below target even before the training cost is included<sup>3</sup>. At the same time many of the trainings aim at organising, therefore it is not correct to focus on the budget post for organising. However, the 30% target is an important one and it would therefore be important that the financial as well as narrative reports at the end of the year are presented in a manner that makes it possible for anyone to verify whether the target was reached or not.

We therefore recommend that as the financial management improves at MCTU, the responsibility for the training budget is transferred to MCTU when they fulfil all three of these requirements.

- ❑ Firstly that MCTU continue to properly document how they spend the money.
- ❑ Secondly that the management at MCTU prove that they possess the discipline to spend the money according to budget.
- ❑ And thirdly, that the budgeting and control of money goes through democratic processes, involving presenting plans and accounts to the democratically elected council.

#### *The relationship between budget, spending and activities*

There is a good breakdown of expenses in the MCTU budgets we have seen, but there are no corresponding notes to the accounts. The budgets in the audited accounts are not even the same as in the applications. We were informed that the application budgets are the basis for grants, but the grants are often different from the requested budget. The lack of notes/details on actual spending also makes it difficult to comment on efficiency.

We suggest that in the future:

- ❑ LO sign contracts with MCTU for each year with listed activities and related, adjusted budget<sup>4</sup> and budget notes.
- ❑ That LO imposes penalties when money is spent on other things than according to budget, most importantly when this has recurred several times.
- ❑ MCTU ensures that the approved budget is what goes into the audited accounts for comparison.
- ❑ Add notes to document issues that are not seen directly from the accounts:
  - How 10% of the budget is spent on women's activities across lines
  - Total benefits received by staff and officials from all donors, including housing benefit, travel allowances etc

The last point is included because of benefits for positions being such a sensitive issue. We cannot see where human resource funding from other sources fits into the overall accounts. (Like other research projects, participation in activities or payment for trainings done outside of the LO programme.)

Secondly, we were unable to establish meaningful linkages between the proposed activities and reported activities against budgets and the corresponding spending costs. The auditors are doing an excellent job controlling documentation and ensuring that the MCTU finances are managed in accordance with national legal requirements. They do not however, audit that spending is in line with the proposed plan of activities. Some organisations include that as part of audits and we propose that LO and MCTU considers this.. Alternatively, the reporting has to become much clearer on linking money to activities where relevant.

<sup>2</sup> This kind of information has been requested from MCTU by LO, but we did not see it materialise in the documentation reviewed.

<sup>3</sup> For instance: In 2006 out of a budget of MWK 2,5 million to organising, MCTU spent MWK 1,616,248.. Despite LO being very clear that organising should receive 30% of the funds, the following year, 2007, MCTU spent a mere MWK 103,200 on organising.

<sup>4</sup> MCTU has expressed that they want this.

*The relationship between different sources of income*

HIVOS' contribution to salaries at MCTU was practically equal to LO's in 2006 and 2007. There seems to be relatively limited contact between LO and the other major funding partners of MCTU<sup>5</sup>. That is not necessarily a bad priority of time, but on the financial side, we would strongly recommend that LO try to strengthen the cooperation with Hivos due to the amount of financial support it is giving the federation<sup>6</sup>..

*Actual funding*

The following table is put together from a number of documents to indicate the size of the financial contributions from LO. The currency is Norwegian kroner.<sup>7</sup>

	Handled by:	2006 Actual	2007 Actual	2008 Budget	Audit
MCTU core funding (NMW2)	MCTU	614,255	561,379	650 000 (org. dev) + 150 000 (congress)	MCTU audit with other donors
Education and training	LO	457,915	405,018	225,000	LO-Norway
COMATU course/NTL training	LO	-	-	60,000	LO-Norway
Social Dialogue	Min of Labour	295,328	431,582	150,000	MoL separate audit
TOTAWUM (NMW3) <sup>8</sup>	MCTU	91,055	98,384	100,000	TOTAWUM separate audit
Total funding from LO to Malawi as per our information <sup>9</sup>		1,458,553	1,496,363	1,110,000	

*The financials of the affiliates*

With the exception of TOTAWUM, we did not review any financial statements for any of the affiliates as they do not receive direct funding from LO and therefore fall beyond the scope of this evaluation.

<sup>5</sup> The funding partners are informed of each other's financial contribution through sharing of audited accounts.

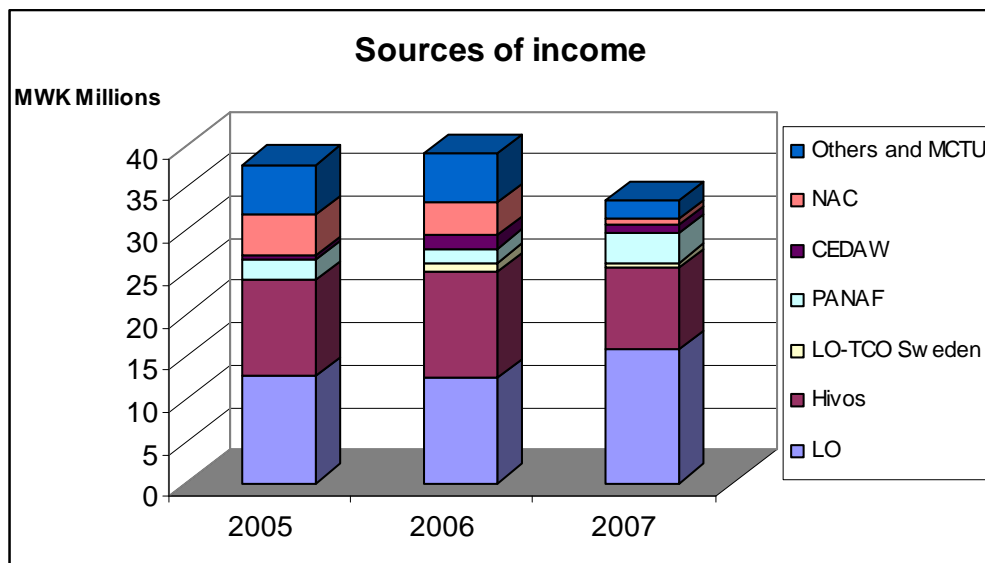
<sup>6</sup> A minimum would be to exchange plans, reports and coordinate support to administrative functions. LO-TOC- Sweden is a large supporter directly to affiliates so exchanging more information with them could also be beneficial. MCTU and LO should also strive to make other funding partners like NAC, PANAF and LO-TOC Sweden carry a share of administration. This could simply be done in the form of a fixed percentage of projects grants.

<sup>7</sup> Annual average exchange rates from Oanda.com

	2006	2007	2008
MWK for USD	139.7620	143,28227	143,70015
MWK for NOK	21,82348	24,52848	25,83215
NOK for USD	6,41557	5,86422	5,64699

<sup>8</sup> MCTU and TOTAWUM shares the responsibility for these funds.

<sup>9</sup> There are extra funds channelled to MCTU on special requests (eg travel to Norway) that we have not included. These are relatively minor sums and not part of the evaluation. The multilateral ITUC-Africa funds are also not included.

*Sources of income*

In 2006, LO contributed with 31.7% of the MCTU budget. In 2007 the share was 47.3%, due to a combination of an increase from LO and overall reduction from other funding partners. This is based on the MCTU financial statements and does not include the funding from LO towards trainings.

The LO funding is crucial beyond being such a large part of the overall budget. It covers core functions like administration, democratic institutions and the salaries of the leadership, which enables MCTU to take on project funding from other organisations. Hivos contributes significantly towards salaries, but the major part of rent, insurance, communication, vehicles etc is carried by LO.

*Increase in dues/subscriptions a by at least 30% above 2005 figures*

In the 1999 evaluation, the team recommend that MCTU should be collecting a minimum of 15% of its income from dues/subscriptions. In 2007 that would equal MWK 5,343,105. In the 2006-2009 program, the target is reduced to 30% above 2005 figures, which should be MWK 431,991 by 2009.

MCTU collected dues at about double the target in 2007 and there are reasons to believe the 2008 number will also be "good", given that several unions paid outstanding dues at Congress to be able to vote. By June 2008 the income was MWK581,276. However, whether the increase is 30% or 300%, it does not provide financial independence for MCTU.

If all unions paid their dues according to the "old system" (pre congress) of a flat MWK3000 fee per affiliate per month, the total would be for 2007 MWK 576,000. The last Congress decided that affiliation fees should be MWK 2 per member per month<sup>10</sup>. With the "new system" the dues should rise to a conservative estimate of somewhere higher than MWK 2,760,000 for 2009, including the new affiliates. That is a huge step in the right direction. It is still below 8% of last year's total income. It is also just a third of the MWK 8,234,540 in union dues that has been included in the budget for 2009.

<sup>10</sup> The General Council can according to the constitution set the fees, so there is room for increases before next Congress.

The new system was agreed upon by the Congress where the small unions had the same votes as the large ones. The Teachers Union, who makes up almost half of the last confirmed MCTU membership, was questioning why it should pay so much more than the others. They feel that the services they received from the mother body do not benefit them much in their profession as their 'training' was more specific and job related. The TUM instead organized courses for their members to upgrade themselves and gain promotions in their jobs. More work is required here and MCTU has a lot to do in order to win TUM over in as far as membership service delivery is concerned.

Establishing democratic support for increased dues is however only half way to the target. The challenge remains to collect the dues. Even with the flat MWK3000 per month, the majority of affiliates were in arrears for most of the period covered. At June 2008, more than MK 1 million was still outstanding. It is therefore crucial that MCTU manage to collect the money. A positive step is that the last Congress resolved that affiliation fees could be deducted directly from the companies when membership fees are deducted, given that the employers cooperate. MCTU should see to it that non compliant unions are punished by use of properly developed and agreed policies as a matter of urgency. Beyond denying the unions not in good standing the right to vote at congress, we recommend a strict "No pay – No benefit" policy. Only unions who are in good standing may benefit from trainings, organising assistance, travels, voting at general councils etc. This may be seen as harsh, but it is our impression that the payment (and collection) of dues is not given serious enough attention. Since the dues are such a small part of the overall budget, it is easier and makes financially more sense to use energy on securing foreign and national project funding. This practice will however make MCTU indefinitely dependent on outside funding and undermine sustainability as well as accountability towards the members.

We also recommend that MCTU or their affiliates explore alternative sources of income<sup>11</sup> which may be acceptable and beneficial to members .

We believe that the structures of MCTU would collapse if LO pulled out their support today. There is no local source of income that can match what the foreign organisations bring to the table. If LO and the Norwegian Government (from whom most of the funding originates) considers it important to have a strong labour movement to balance power and defend workers' interest in Malawi now, then there is no prospect of pulling out the funding in the foreseeable future.

What can be done is to create stronger links between local funding and the contributions from LO. If MCTU fails to reach their agreed targets, then LO can revise their contribution too. The centre of the leadership's accountability must move from LO to the members. Equally the growth of the MCTU should be dependent on membership and not the ability to attract and handle funding from overseas.

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<sup>11</sup> Other potential sources of income could be:

- engage in trading of household good or whatever is popular amongst the workforce, on credit which can be deducted from the source (salary) every month end. In Zambia, the Mine Workers' Union (MUZ) has several interests in this area and are able to sustain themselves through similar ventures.
- run union canteens at established workplaces at affordable prices for profit
- offer training to outsiders agencies (for a fee) on specialized areas in labour matters of their competence.
- engage in real estate by letting off premises for rent. MCTU is considering the office rent they pay today high and want to develop a piece of land as offices where sections can be rented out to add income. By supporting such an initiative over a long-term period, LO can help MCTU on the way to independence from foreign donor funding.

## Organising

MCTU has shown significant growth of membership seeing that it is such a young federation. This is a clear sign that potential for membership "organising activities" take place in most affiliates. However, given the advent of company closures and the effects of globalization, especially now with the world financial meltdown, more and more workers are expected to be laid off and thereby creating challenges for the MCTU.

### *Increase in membership by at least 10% annually above 2005 figure*

According to MCTU's numbers, the target to increase the membership to at least 30% higher than 2005 levels has been achieved. The numbers for 2008 are however not confirmed. From 2005 to 2007, membership increased by 10%. In 2008 it will have increased with a minimum of 23,632 members due to the new unions who have joined MCTU, bringing the number up to target even before the original member unions have submitted any increases. It means the 2008 membership, given that there are no large losses we have not heard of, will be between 115,000 and 140,000. How many of these who pay membership fees is unknown. It is also discomfoting that the new, registered membership in 2006 was simply added to the 2005 numbers without adjusting for members lost.

The other projected increases are based on a formidable increase in the tobacco sector and some significant large moves in among others the textiles sector, private schools, COWUMA and ESCOM. These are not unrealistic.

About 80-90% of the workforce is employed in agriculture, with 72% being subsistence farmers. The formal sector employment estimates we have found vary somewhere around 450,000 plus. MCTU is still a bit away from their medium/long term objective of unionising 40% of the formal sector according to their own numbers.

<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>2005 mem-ber-ship</b>	<b>2006 new registered membership</b>	<b>2007 member ship</b>	<b>June 2008 projection</b>	<b>Potential membership<sup>12</sup></b>
<b>Union</b>					
1. TOBACCO	2597	2000	4597	14,749	200,000
2. ESCOM	1200	699	1899	3,495	15,000
3. HOTELS	2446	119	3565	4,502	70,000
4. SUGAR	6500	2098	8598	8,598	20,000
5. TEA	1700	386	2086	2,586	100,000
6. CIAWU	2530	545	3075	3,000	50,000
7. WETUM	1600	315	1915	2,300	2,500
8. COWUMA	2441	415	2856	5,178	30,000
9. HOUSING	205	31	236	298	550
10. PRIVATE SCHLS	1500	213	1713	4,383	15,000
11. TEXTILES	5055	459	5514	9,243	15,000
12. TRANSPORT/ GEN.	3057	200	3257	3,257	25,000
13. RAILWAYS	456	29	485	485	500

<sup>12</sup> These numbers are from an MCTU report from 2007. MCTU have the numbers from research by Professor Chijere Chirwa on Employment Policy. They have acknowledged that there are many more workers in several of the sectors, especially in agriculture.

14. BUILDING	6138	263	6401	6,401	35,000
15. TUM	46000	207	46207	45,000	54,000
16. ELECTRONIC	243	0	243	243	600
17. CIVIL SERVANTS				12,000	60,000 <sup>13</sup>
18. NURSES UNION				5,082	
20. INFORMAL SECT				2,050	
21. MUNICIPAL				4,500	
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>83,668</b>	<b>8,979</b>	<b>92,647</b>	<b>137,350</b>	

The slogan "In numbers there is strength" met us at all levels of the organisation. Financial sustainability and political and industrial power is dependent on MCTU's affiliates recruiting a larger share of the workers to their unions.

We recommend that MCTU with the support of its partners strengthen their organising activities. It is important to look at both organising and tracking of members.

### *Organising*

The affiliates who are interested should receive assistance to develop organising strategies. Several of the affiliates have working organisers and there should be no excuse for them not being in the field every work-day. How human resources are spent should be monitored tightly.

The organising should be followed up with monitoring of how many signed up members who turn into paying members. Follow up is needed towards workplaces to arrange for check-off systems, to see that the signed up members are included in the system and to ensure that the employer pays the fees over to the affiliate.

MCTU should not be in the field signing up members. Organising from MCTU must be limited to backing up the affiliates when there are special difficulties with employers and to the training of organisers. The present practice where the Education and Organising Officer at MCTU have to go to the field because of handling the money involved, though together with affiliate's representatives, is inefficient and not sustainable. The process was described by affiliates as double work, as firstly MCTU visits the workplace to recruit and afterwards they have to visit to meet with their new members. Secondly, they claimed their own organisers did not have money to travel to the workplaces, while MCTU comes all the way from Lilongwe to do so<sup>14</sup>. The system has its background in affiliates not accounting for funds received for organising<sup>15</sup>. We see that this is a big challenge for MCTU, and we feel that the direct involvement of MCTU in recruiting is not the solution in the long run. We however suggest that assistance should be given to those affiliates who are able to account for their resources, both financially and in terms of results.

This is not to say that the staff and officers at MCTU should not work with organising. MCTU should rather assist the affiliates strategically. One such way is by identifying factories, plantations, offices, etc where recruiting can be most fruitful. An important thing is to identify workplaces that are just below the 20% required for recognition and focus on them so that they could reach the threshold. MCTU leaders should also continue using political connections, eg, social dialogue and other networks they participate in, to promote the open door policy for organising. Some serious focus can be given to the public sector.

<sup>13</sup> From the Civil Servants' Union 2008

<sup>14</sup> Most of the affiliates have their own funding for organising from other sources. We did not investigate whether it is too little or if they spend that money on other things.

<sup>15</sup> One out of five affiliates delivered reports after receiving MK 50 000 for organising.



*Tracking*

Keeping track of members is an enormous task. Most membership numbers are estimates, based on check-off systems, lists of people signing up and fees collected. They seldom reflect who the members are or whether the individuals remain in the union or leave again.

Where the union is acknowledged at the workplace and fees are taken off the member's salary, the tracking and accountability is reasonably good. But for several of the affiliates, such overview seems non-existent. Lack of overview over the membership makes it difficult to plan and prove strength. It also makes it difficult for the members to hold their leaders accountable.<sup>16</sup>

The benefits of trainings and potential to travel and participate in international networks were clearly a significant carrot for the affiliates to be members of MCTU. We therefore strongly suggest that MCTU distribute these benefits based on (paid-up) membership numbers, to encourage organising and reporting of membership. It must however be taken into account that some of the affiliates receive significant direct support from other donors that other affiliates do not have access to. In this case, special mention should be made and exceptions recorded.

It was suggested at a meeting with MCTU that MCTU should be assisted in getting the software and obtaining capacity to create and maintain a membership database. We fully support that MCTU in cooperation with their partners investigate different systems that could be beneficial. The system should be coordinated with the legal requirements of the Ministry of Labour to acknowledge union membership and with systems for collection of fees through the various employers.

We appreciate the fact that having such a system may be advanced compared to where the MCTU affiliates are situated organisationally at the moment. However, the long-term benefit is important and this would be an advantage to developing organising strategies. There are also benefits if all the affiliates can agree upon a similar system. Being able to share knowledge and even hardware can save cost given that several unions share offices already.

### **Improvement in quality and quantity of Collective Agreements**

During the period under review, only three new Collective Agreement have been signed. The project period preceding the one we are looking at was thus much more successful on this issue.

All parties to the Tripartite forums commended the contribution they have had on improved relations between the parties, especially given the negative history of strained industrial relations. We commend this as an important achievement. However; we note that this spirit has not yet

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<sup>16</sup> Lack of control over the membership makes it:

- Difficult to plan strategically where to focus on recruiting
- Difficult to prove representativity to employers and government
- Difficult to monitor the collection of fees
- Difficult to identify loss of membership in affiliated unions
- Difficult to prove rights (voting, benefits) at the federation
- Difficult for the federation to collect fees

The following issues are incentives to meddle with membership numbers:

At congress, the votes shall be proportional to membership, giving an incentive to boost membership numbers.

Affiliation fees are based on membership, giving an incentive to underreport membership numbers.

The number of members times the membership fee is a sum of money the leadership of the affiliates should be accountable for.

Reducing membership numbers will hide lack of documentation and/or theft.

contributed significantly towards concluded agreements in the area of negotiations and collective bargaining.

The organisation representing the employers in tripartite forums, ECAM, did a survey among their members in 2008. The respondents were asked to indicate whether they have signed recognition agreements or collective bargaining agreements with the workers' structures in their organisations. 85 organisations responded as following:

- ❑ The majority of respondents (95%) indicated that they had no signed recognition agreement in place.
- ❑ Only 2.5 % indicated to have a signed Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) in place.
- ❑ However, close to 48% of the respondents indicated to have a Wage Negotiation Structure in the workplace.

In the report, the ECAM researcher comments that:

“This would seem to demonstrate the low level of union density in Malawi and the lack of aggressiveness by worker organizations in terms of recruitment or negotiating with employers for collective bargaining agreements or recognition agreements. On the other hand this may also mean employers in Malawi are generally not ready for unionization. This calls for further research as this survey could not unveil the underlying nature towards this trend.”

The statistics from ECAM show that the affiliates of MCTU have a major task ahead of them.

The fact that the unions have not been able to present<sup>17</sup> more than three new Collective Agreements, does not mean that the latest years' trainings have had no benefit at all. On our field visit to TOTAWUM workers, we met tenants who had been able to negotiate contracts with the landlords. Therefore, beyond signing of collective agreements it seems that the union has been able to empower shopstewards/local leaders to negotiate on micro level and that this has had positive results. There is good reason to believe that shopstewards from other unions also have been able to use their skills on negotiations in the workplace, given that almost half of the ECAM members claim to have some kind of wage negotiation structure in place.

A table over the agreements in place, as presented to the evaluation team by MCTU, is included in the attachments to this report.

If members (unions) do not see or experience the benefit of belonging to a union by way of getting regular reviews in Conditions of Service, representation at Grievance tribunals, Training and Development e.t.c, they feel they should not pay up their subscriptions and hence MCTU would go into oblivion. The onus is on MCTU through its affiliates, to show that they are concerned about the welfare of their members through:

- ❑ Provision of service through signing of Collective Agreements
- ❑ Constant review of salaries/wages and conditions for their members
- ❑ Mergers of similar sectors and forming cartels and speak with one voice
- ❑ MCTU to intensify organising and Training in the above mentioned (a – c) and implement new strategies.

<sup>17</sup> We believe there are agreements that have not been registered by MCTU. The BCCEAWU (Building and Construction) told us they have six agreements, not three as reflected in our information..

Due to limited time and the fact that none of the unions brought any examples of progress to our attention<sup>18</sup>, we were not able to examine the contents of the agreements. We cannot comment on the contents of the collective agreements signed to establish whether or not they are reflective of members' wishes.

## Training

MCTU provided 964<sup>19</sup> days of training in 2006, 855 in 2007 and 129 up until the evaluation in November 2008. It is important to remember that Congress took place in 2008 and consumed much administrative capacity at the beginning of that year.

The training days above were received by 575 people. 66% of the participants in trainings were women, with 10 of a total of 20 trainings being pure women trainings. The women trainings are mainly similar to shopsteward trainings with some more emphasis on women's issues and sexual harassment.

The team did not have a chance to observe how the trainings are conducted, nor how the skills are used in the field. We did however get a chance to interview in groups of three participants from six different training themes, as well as meeting TOTAWUM members in the field who had been to trainings. The themes were training of educators, paralegal, shopstewards, women, occupational health and safety/HIV/Aids and specific trainings for TOTAWUM. The results from the trainings seem to be good. We were given concrete examples of how skills learned in trainings have been used to improve conditions in the workplace in the fields of

- ❑ HIV/Aids information
- ❑ conflict negotiations
- ❑ occupational health and safety
- ❑ sexual harassment
- ❑ child labour

The main programme person for LO at MCTU is the Education and Organising officer. She is an incredibly capable person and the outcomes of her work are impressive, as illustrated above. The members and office bearers interviewed were satisfied with the quality and relevance of the trainings<sup>20</sup>.

There is no doubt that trainings are popular because it is one of few opportunities to learn new things, master new skills and travel to meet other people. But as much as it empowers the individuals, it was also clearly evident that those we talked to were using the skills to promote union issues.

On the more negative side is that training still seems dependent on MCTU staff and not trained trainers in the affiliates. In the past MCTU with LO undertook a training of educators. It was a series of courses and a final practical exercise where the trainers were going in pairs to the field and did trainings while receiving feedback. The course was very good, but only two of the trainers from that group are active with MCTU today. It was therefore crucial that MCTU during the period evaluated were to repeat the four stage course. The first training took place before 2006. The

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<sup>18</sup> MCTU and some of the affiliates had prepared reports specifically for our evaluation, which were critical since we had to cover so many themes in a short time.

<sup>19</sup> The days are counted as number of actual days times the number of participants.

<sup>20</sup> Most of them showed good understanding of the issues at hand and had experienced practical use of it. Shopsteward and union leaders had learned to approach their employers and speak about issues affecting them and negotiate agreements and they now know their rights. Workers who have attended OHS trainings are knowledgeable about hazardous materials and the need for protective clothing and they query or demand it of their employers if not provided. More women are taking up leadership roles, which were not the case before. Their ability to articulate issues and debate in meetings was confirmed by people outside of MCTU.

subsequent two trainings took part in 2006. The group is still waiting for the practical training. Some of the participants are using their skills in their affiliates, but they are eager to get the practical training. This is both for the experience and to get certificates for finishing the course.

The participants in the Paralegal course also needs to receive the next modules to allow participants have sufficient working knowledge to participate in dealing with the Labour Councils and the courts.

Paralegals and educators courses are built up of modules towards an advanced level. It is commendable that LO/MCTU emphasise quality in this way.. MCTU plans series of courses with the same people to educate people that can eg do trainings or represent members in court. It seems the ability to take these programmes through has not been present in the period we were looking at. A further concern is the use of people who have been trained. Once trained, we recommend that people must be given chances to use their skills. They must conduct trainings or participate in negotiations. While some have been given opportunities to use their skills, this seems quite inconsistent and is discouraging for the individuals as well as inefficient for MCTU. A follow up strategy beyond the trainings should be addressed for present and future trainings.

We have worked out the ratio between the numbers of training days provided by MCTU in the period against membership in the affiliated unions. A table with results is attached to this report. The result illustrates that the mini-unions like Electronic Media, Housing and Railways benefit from not merging with the larger ones, given that they get equal amount of seats at most joint trainings. It looks like Building, Plantations (Sugar) and the Teachers Unions have had the least benefit per member. Those also have the highest number of members. We do however not have information on to what extent these unions have other, direct, support for training and therefore less needs than other affiliates. Other funding is a relevant element to take into account when trainings are distributed.

### **Improved capacity all round**

It is difficult to say a noticeable improvement in capacity has been achieved all round as areas such as signing Collective Agreements with employers has stagnated. Again, mergers and amalgamations of same sector unions have dragged on. It needs to be mentioned this processes of this nature brings with it improvement in capacity, which ultimately results in strength. What is commonly referred to as the fights for position of 'leadership in several unions' only goes to show how weak each union becomes on the ground. In this area, we are inclined to think that there is an area of improvement required.

On the positive side are the improvements in financial management as referred to above and the general perception that knowledge and real participation is spread to more people, from being held by very few top men in the past.

There seems to be an overlooked need for training for some affiliate union staff members. While it is important to train elected officials, it is also important that the crucial people who are receivers of the scarce resources for salaries work as efficiently as possible.

MCTU wants to expand their staff component with experts like an in-house economist and a lawyer. Attracting people with sufficient skills in these professions to stand up in court or bargaining will be a challenge, as MCTU is not able to provide competitive salaries. Many unions resort to using consultants. Although hiring a lawyer by the hour is expensive, it might for the moment be more efficient than hiring a fulltime employee. MCTU could rather support such a person with a

paralegal officer or the researcher doing groundwork to save hours needed for the lawyer and ensures that institutional memory remains in the organisation.

A problem for MCTU and many other organisations with limited resources for salaries is that the people they manage to attract are often young and inexperienced. When they have gained experience (and in many cases training) at the union, they move on to better paid jobs elsewhere. This is also an issue for the capacity in the finance department. As much as MCTU will have to live with this problem, it is our recommendation that staff members who receive advantages in the form of training and capacity building are bound to the organisation for a specified time afterwards.

### *Research*

MCTU was without a researcher for an extended part of the project period. They now have a capable and committed researcher who has been with them for close to a year. Particular interest has been given to a report on Chinese investments in Malawi done by the MCTU researcher in cooperation with others. This contributes to the impression that MCTU has a better-informed foundation for their politics.

There is value in for instance contributing papers on the globalisation effect on the world of work in Malawi to international conferences, but the use of time must be weighted against other issues. We are of the view that MCTU should explore other avenues, using their limited research capacity on feeding day-to-day information to leaders, organisers and negotiators in the federation and the affiliates. None of the affiliates took advantage of the research capacity at MCTU during the last year. The research department can provide economical data to negotiators, analyse consequences of upcoming political decisions on eg trade agreements or national laws or map out strategic organising opportunities to maximise the effect of organising resources.

### **Enforcement of labour laws**

Malawi has ratified a number of both locally and internationally recognised labour laws and conventions. Enforcement is however a major problem. We were presented with several reasons why the labour courts did not function properly, most of them being outside of MCTU control. The main issue was lack of human resources and finances. We view this as a challenge for both the MCTU and government to work together and find a lasting solution to this problem.

We interviewed two participants who participated in the MCTU paralegal training. Incidentally, only one of the two people interviewed sits on the Industrial Relations Court as a nominee from the labour movement. The person had no previous training in the running of the court, save for the basic training by the MCTU. The people who attended the course did only the basic course with a promise for further training latter. Both of them were disappointed about the lack of continuity of the course. Up until we were doing the review, it was apparent that the training was not forthcoming any time sooner.

The organisation does acknowledge the shortcomings. At congress a resolution was passed that call for improvement in the area, saying among other things:

“...the fact that a lot of workers have lost their jobs and have never been helped by their unions let alone being represented in the courts of law by the Federation part time lawyers resulting in loss of interest and lack security on the part of members.”

It is essential that the affiliates' capacity to represent their members is strengthened. MCTU should focus on putting pressure on government to ensure cases are heard and improve legislation. They should further put their muscle behind affiliates on selected core cases where the outcome has consequences for all workers.

## Respect for human and trade union rights

Democracy, like trade unionism is very young in Malawi, and such most people are still grappling with their realities. MCTU is, fortunately, not the only organisation working to spread an understanding of rights in the country. Respect for human and trade union rights have resounded in many organisations and the trainings that MCTU is imparting to its members are awaking the urge to learn more. With the help of this knowledge attained by participants in training provided for by MCTU and their partners, certain employers are beginning to respect that workers are also human and therefore deserve some rights. The practice is slow, but ongoing. A continuation in conducting awareness programs as well as sensitisation of employers on workers' rights is essential.

## Fewer but bigger and stronger unions

A major achievement during the period covered is that the competing Malawian union federation COMATU has all but dissolved and four unions have found their way to MCTU, becoming affiliates at the congress in 2008. COMATU is from many sources seen as a government sponsored tool to split and divide workers power in Malawi. The move towards one union may reflect a less hostile government attitude. This also proves that MCTU is seen as the preferred federation to represent the workers. MCTU's ability to provide trainings, international relations and services, as well as the political climate were named as significant reasons for the unions to return to MCTU. The more than 20,000 members that came with these newly recruited unions contribute to the strength of MCTU. However, the strength that lies in Malawi moving towards having practically one union federation and MCTU being able to speak on behalf of the workers with less competition and less potential split and divide opportunities for their opponents has value beyond numbers.<sup>21</sup>

Power struggle among unions still loom and calls for mergers are painfully low. Several of the unions mentioned above talk of mergers and have had meetings to achieve such a goal, but the end result is yet to be seen. The list of potential mergers is attached to this report.

There are incentives for the union leaders to not work for mergers. A major issue for the union leadership is to secure positions, having the opportunity to attend meetings and trainings, receive compensation for their work and maybe travel internationally. Each union has an executive: The more unions, the more the numbers of executives. For those unions who carry with them salaried officials, it's a source of employment. Therefore, mergers would not be in their interest. MCTU has followed a policy where the size of the union does not determine the benefits. It means that two small unions in many cases get double the benefit of one large one. They get to send the same amount of people to many of the trainings and they have had the same amount of votes at congress. (That is in breach of the constitution, but is still practiced). Whereas we cannot say that these reasons are as important as lack of political will, it should improve the chances for mergers to remove these incentives to the adverse result.

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<sup>21</sup> The MCTU researcher writes in a report that:

"For instance the signing of a collective bargaining agreement in the tea sector in Malawi has been stalled for over five years now largely because of the existence of two rival unions in the tea sector which have always failed to engage each other to come up with common positions in readiness for negotiations with the employer in this regard. These unions are Plantations Agriculture Workers Union (PAWU) affiliated to Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU) and Tea Coffee Macadamia workers union (TECOMA) affiliated to the MCTU breakaway federation called Congress of Malawi Trade Unions (COMATU). Hence the end losers in this 'cold war' between the two rival unions have been the thousands of workers in the tea estates whose conditions of service remain far much miserable, and whose interests both unions claim to represent but cannot be effectively negotiated upon with the employer in the absence of the collective bargaining agreement which is exceedingly long overdue."

## **Greater trade union participation and influence in national issues**

More and more people are getting to know the existence of the unions in Malawi. Their sensitisation and training programmes carried out countrywide reach many people. There is a regular radio programme on union issues. The Severance Bill that was returned from Parliament due to Union's calls for its withdrawal and re-examinations further by stakeholders is the most significant indicator of the Union's influence on government shown so far

Another recent achievement is that MCTU participates in different central networks and air their opinions on national issues in the Social Dialogue forums. A small section of business is claiming that they are opening up to union issues and are listening more than they did in the past.

## **Development of MCTU policies on relevant issue**

The supreme policy making body is the Congress which meets every four, but now five years. At the last Congress in April 2008, 17 motions were passed, creating guidelines for MCTU policy in the coming years. The motions address both internal policy and focus areas for MCTU's efforts. Among the issues are for instance gender equality within the unions, subscription fees, a decision to not affiliate with a political party as well as improving the legal support to members, work for HIV/Aids policies at workplaces and lobby parliament for work creation policies.

The evaluation team was informed that this is the first time such motions have been passed at Congress. It is a significant improvement that Congress becomes a forum for decisions on policy and priorities and not only electing officers for the next period. It is at the Congress that the Constitution is reviewed and endorsed as containing the guiding principle for the MCTU. However, as the time in we operate is dynamic, there are a number of other policies that should be developed to guide officials perform their duties consistently and with full satisfaction.

We are concerned that MCTU has not developed guideline or policies on performance appraisals for their employee, there are no deliberate and comprehensive Conditions of Service in place for its employees that one can refer to although we were informed that they were in the process of developing the same. It is no wonder that the workers are in the process of forming a union, hopefully to help regulate themselves in their working lives. Its pleasing in the financial arena that consultants from Delloitte helped formulate guidelines and principles of financial management which MCTU is following, more still remains in the area of personnel, purchasing procedures, and those relevant to ensuring good and transparent governance of the organization.

Anticipation of possible obstacles in the administration and the provision of remedies and procedures are of paramount importance for uniform application of justice. The absence of the same renders confusion and complications in the work place. There is therefore urgent need for the MCTU to develop policies, which should be easy to interpret and apply uniformly in respective issues. This is missing and we recommend that MCTU actively pursues the development of, and adhere to policies on relevant issues some of which are mentioned above.

## **Increased involvement in the fight against HIV/AIDS among workers**

Training and sensitisation in HIV and Aids is treated as an ongoing exercise and has been streamlined all activities conducted by the MCTU which spells commitment of increased involvement on their part. This is commendable and should continue.

Four of the affiliated unions to MCTU have developed HIV/Aids policies, while five others are in the process of doing so. A good number of unions visited informed us that they have engaged their respective employers in the fight against HIV/Aids by developing specific policies in their workplaces. It was said that discrimination of workers afflicted with the aids virus is reduced in those workplaces. Some have formed support groups. The Teachers' Union were for instance

giving members subsidies in form of food and money. In some places this has proved to be costly and thus discontinued.

### **Internal democracy**

This point in the overview of goals for the project reads "Internal democracy through adherence to MCTU Constitution and its member unions as well as greater participation of the members in their organizations." From past records, we note that the Constitution was constantly been flouted to serve the interests of some members, especially during elections. There is for instance a provision in the Constitution that non-paid up affiliates are not be voted for nor stand for elections for leadership during the Congress. The constitution clearly states that the affiliates shall have votes proportional to membership. This has been ignored before and was ignored at the last congress as well. Instead all affiliates had the same amount of votes. As a result, the legitimacy of the elected leadership can be questioned. Ironically, this took place after the Congress itself had passed a motion saying

"Congress resolves as follows;

That with immediate effect, all Constitutional waivers by the Congress be nullified and that the Constitution of MCTU rules on all matters pertaining to Union eligibility and rights at all Congresses."

An LO document from 2005 states "it looks like both sides used bribes" in the voting process during the 2004 congress. During the evaluation, some affiliates questioned how other affiliates who were not eligible to vote at the 2008 congress because they were in bad standing suddenly received the money, paid on the spot and got voting rights.

The leadership elected in 2008 keeps referring to the "previous regime" as the culprit of breaking the rules. However, the only person leaving office at last congress was the General Secretary, with two new people joining. (The previous president passed away while in office.) The "new regime" has received praise from affiliates for keeping those with e-mail access much better informed on general politics and union issues. The e-mails are also spread to more than one person in each union. This works to prevent the tendency we have been informed of where individual leaders keep all information to themselves. Though there are issues around who have access to the Internet and e-mail, the principle of more information to more people within the affiliates is an important improvement towards transparency and making it possible for the affiliates' boards to keep their leaders accountable. It should be extended to sending the most important documentation to each individual officer of affiliates by surface mail. Such information would be for instance the minutes from General Council and Executive Board meetings. A version where issues that for good reasons should be kept confidential (eg. personnel issues) are edited out should be distributed to affiliates so that they are informed of what priorities the MCTU makes. Upon asking affiliates if they know why some of their concerns are not addressed, they said they did not to know or that the response from MCTU was that "LO will not approve of it".

Despite all the improvements noted, the "new regime" has failed to hold a single General Council since Congress. In other words, no formal meeting had been called to plan for priorities and activities following the resolutions passed at Congress. The first Executive Board meeting since February 2008 was called for after our visit in November. The Constitution requires that the Board meets monthly.



MCTU is in the process of amending the constitution. It should have happened at Congress, but a decision has been made to separate in time amending the constitution from elections, as individual strategic issues would overshadow the interest of the organisation. It is probably a wise decision.

There have already been seminars working on the constitution. We sighted the draft for the new constitution and would recommend that MCTU reassess their proposed constitution in consideration of time and financial resources. As much as democracy and representation is required, MCTU should avoid including departments, committees and meetings that they cannot afford, nor manage to find time to prioritise. There are several such examples in the present constitution.<sup>22</sup> Being forced to break the constitution due to lack of time and financial resources undermines the importance of adhering to other parts of it.

We met with enthusiastic members and local leaders in the field and in interviews who are eager to contribute to improve the lives of workers and do so regularly. This is where the unions grow, so this is where the leadership must have their focus and where the majority of the money should be spent. The minutes from congress and our interviews in the field show a clear need for more organising activities and legal aid. Neither MCTU nor its affiliates can afford using all their money and the precious time of the staff and paid officers on meetings just to adhere to an overly bureaucratic constitution.

MCTU should also try to prevent the alleged issue of votes being bought at congress and the discussions around who should be considered in good standing. In the same spirit as the timing of the constitution amendments themselves, MCTU could separate the issue in time, and rule that only organisations in good standing both at the beginning of the year and at the time of congress are eligible.

### **Increase in women membership (by at least 25% of the 2005 figure) as well as greater participation of women at all levels**

We saw quite a good number of female branch officials and executive board members in the unions visited. Although some sectors like security and textiles are male dominated, there is a trend of women aspiring for leadership positions. The election of a female Deputy Secretary General of MCTU is indeed a plus. There is a provision in the co-operation agreement of reserving at least 10% of LO funding to women's activities. Beyond financing women's committee meetings, this is reflected in women's trainings. This has empowered and given confidence to more and more women to stand up and be counted.

There was a strong motion on gender issues passed at the congress. Ironically, after passing a motion promising 50% women representation as a matter of affirmative action, the Congress went on to elect an 80% male Executive Committee. Although they are not where they say they want to be yet, the fact that the Deputy General Secretary is now a woman is a victory that must be commended. The overall benefit is accredited to LO and other partners emphasising women's issues over many years and reserving resources aimed at women. It is a strategy we strongly recommend to continue.

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<sup>22</sup> Having a five member National Executive Committee, a 25 person strong National Executive Board that is supposed to meet monthly (they have met three times over the last 18 months) as well as the 45 person strong General Council meeting twice a year is neither efficient nor sustainable. Providing much better information to the other officials of the affiliates can compensate for reducing number of meetings and even number of delegates to the Council.

## **Significant reduction in child labour**

MCTU's contribution to reduction of Child Labour comes in the forms of participation in networks, studies, campaigns as well as including the issue in their own trainings so that the members will work to reduce child labour in their workplaces.

Other than the reports we reviewed and the verbal account from the women in Mchinji (TOTAWUM), there is an indication that the withdrawal of children from labour is slowly taking place. We were unable to physically establish the exact numbers but we learnt that some children have been withdrawn from work throughout the country and have registered in schools. An intervention where MCTU worked with ILO/Ipec resulted in the withdrawal of 9000 children according to a MCTU report.

Both the people we met in the field and the participants in trainings that we interviewed said the awareness around child labour contributed to children being taken out of work. MCTU and affiliates also cooperate with other organisations that work against child labour. On one account we were told that when the workers themselves encourage their colleagues, employers or neighbours to take children out of work, it has stronger effect than when external organisations do the work. The affiliates of MCTU still represent a relatively small part of the Malawian workers, especially so for the informal sector and agriculture. It is therefore important that as the unions grow, they continue to spread awareness among their members as well as taking part in networks with government, employers and other NGOs to address the elimination of child labour from all directions.

## II GLO3: Tripartite Co-operation MCTU and Ministry of Labour

LO supports tri-partite social dialogue meetings in Malawi. The project funding goes through the Ministry of Labour.. There have been four annual meetings during the 2006 - 2008 period. Three of these meetings are regional and feeds into a national meeting at the end of the year.

The LO contribution to the budget of the project was:

NOK 295,328 in 2006

NOK 431,582 in 2007 and

NOK 150,000 in 2008

According to reports, the Ministry of Labour added to this sum, covering for increased costs.

The long-term objective of the project is "A common understanding of the need and importance for tripartite cooperation has been achieved."

The short-term objective is "An enabling environment for regular contact/interaction between employers, workers and Government has been developed."

### Summary of findings

- ❑ According to all parties, the meetings have succeeded in achieving the short-term objective. From an environment of strong scepticism and hostility, the meetings have improved the relationship between the parties. It has further succeeded to meet the long-term objective for the parties involved. There is however need for more work before the need and importance of tri-partite co-operation spreads to the larger environment of government and business.
- ❑ The themes discussed at tri-partite meetings are considered important and relevant. The discussions have led to union influence on national policy, although implementation is held up by mainly political difficulties in Malawi.
- ❑ All parties view the content of the meetings as improving their knowledge base on common interest areas.
- ❑ MCTU includes a wider range of union officials that previously and have introduced a minimum level of women participation of one third.
- ❑ Although MCTU highlighted the potential of securing collective agreements as a result of Social Dialogue, we did not see any such outcome yet.

### Main recommendations

- ❑ That the meetings are continued in this form as long as all parties are as satisfied with it as they expressed.
- ❑ That LO continues to support the meetings, but move towards the planned cost-sharing plan with Government and the employers for the future.

## Findings

The labour relations have been very difficult since independence and with the coming in of multi-party politics in the early 1990's the government of Malawi enacted the Labour Relations Act of 1996 which guaranteed individuals the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining among other rights.

In 1997 the ILO and UNDP, the Malawi Employment Study which was conducted noted that the labour relations were unsatisfactory due to the following factors:

- ❑ Workers mistrust of the government's failure to fully implement provisions the Labour Relations Act
- ❑ Decline in minimum wages and deadlock in negotiations
- ❑ Weak institutional capacity of social partners
- ❑ Absence of a national forum that would provide a consultative process on social and economic issues for workers and employers.

Of the four major outcomes of the study, the government of Malawi noted that the lack of a forum was indeed a major factor in the development of harmonious labour relations on consensus building on socio-economic and development issues of national interest, hence the birth of the a Social Dialogue Forum. Initially, this was held once a year at national level but latter extended to the three regions, of the country namely northern, central and the southern in order to allow more people at local, regional and national level to participate and be consulted directly on issues affecting them. The earlier method of representatives attending the national fora was not working, as members did not get the full benefit of discussions/resolutions of the meetings held due to lack of dissemination of information to them by attendees.

The main objective of the three regional social dialogue meetings, which culminates into the National Social Dialogue, is to extend consultation of various labour related and socio-economic issues closer to the grassroots level as possible and thereby ensuring a broad spectrum of people's involvement in policy formulation. Formed in 2006, it is evident that there is a wind of change in the manner in which the three parties are collaborating. Various issues affecting the workers are discussed amongst themselves and with employers (according to interviews and reports received) at local, sectoral and national levels, which was not the case before. The spirit of tripartism among parties is expected to enhance and since it is a yearly event, there is a continuous capacity building mechanism built into the system for all the social partners/members. Changes in political climate could affect this negatively. None of the political parties show a strong and predictable pro labour cooperative line, so there can easily be setbacks. We were told that the climate was much more hostile at the beginning of 2008 when rumours said MCTU were about to start their own party<sup>23</sup>. But for now there is reason to appreciate the gains.

We sighted documents from and visited ECAM, Ministry of Labour and spoke to members of MCTU who confirmed that well researched papers on labour related issues are presented/discussed during the social dialogue meetings. By participating in skills development mechanism during these meetings, the knowledge capacity of partners is enhanced. The final reports produced and submitted to Lo-Norway and the government of Malawi, in line with terms of the Agreement contained clear indications that this process is bearing fruit. The next step is that good relations transform into good national policies. In this area it is too soon to judge, as the special national political situation in Malawi is not providing for progress.

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<sup>23</sup> There were talks of starting a party, which reached the media at the beginning of 2008, but the idea was discharged and Congress later decided to not affiliate with a party. Union officials told us that it caused strain to the relationship with government and they expected some funding was lost because of it.

Currently, the Social Dialogue has extended its membership to Non Governmental Organizations (NGO) and renamed it the Tripartite plus. Arrangements are underway at the Ministry of Labour to include the meeting as one of its budget items so as to be able to be self-sustaining beyond Lo-Norway's departure. The Tripartite (plus) would earmarked to be a forum where information flow for policy makers and the intended would meet to examine the trends in labour, socio-economic and related matters and comment and influence on government policies.

The regional meetings have contributed to participation by more MCTU affiliate representatives. In general more information about the Tripartite meetings is disseminated to affiliates and the opportunity to participate has been extended as opposed to the previous tendency of keeping it within a small clique. Among other things, the inclusion of women in the LO funded programmes is evident, as we learned that one in three union participants must be a woman.

The ministry officials have previously criticised union participants for lacking information and documentation and basing conclusions on hearsays. We were told that this had improved and that union representatives are now much better informed. Likewise knowledge levels are said to increase among government representatives and employers. Employer knowledge on labour law and workers' rights is limited in Malawi, which affects organising and negotiations negatively. The employer representative, ECAM, is doing a positive effort to get employers involved. Their representation level is however limited and LO should consider helping the organisation to grow. It could be done directly, but other options are to link them to a similar Norwegian partner who shares the LO/MCTU objectives of tripartite cooperation.

### III MW3: Training and Organising - TOTAWUM

TOTAWUM is one of the biggest unions with a potential membership of 3,7 million<sup>24</sup> tenants and workers in the tobacco sector. Tobacco is Malawi's largest export article. Workers work to a large extent under appalling conditions with high incidents of child labour, hazardous health and safety conditions and abuse of both workers and human rights. There is a widespread tenancy system in place where the tenants are only paid at the end of the harvesting season. In the meantime they build up debt to the employer for food and input articles and sometimes, especially when tobacco prices are low, these tenants end up not having any payment left after a year of work. TOTAWUM does however also have members working for salaries on plantations and in factories.

The tenancy system means that the workers, who are normally family units, are engaged on the farms to till and prepare the land for the planting season, weed, apply chemicals as required and fertilize the crop and tend for it up to the time its ready for the market. When the crop is sold, the landowner - who is often a politician or high ranking government official - pays the tenant from the profits made (if any). In many cases, workers go without being paid as the landowner sometimes claims that he did not make a profit/or has already paid the worker advances in form of food, medication and basic necessities during the year. This cycle occurs year in, year out. Workers are in some of 'bondage' or 'servitude' and can therefore not easily find ways of sustaining themselves in the preceding months, and another full cycle continues. Worse still, the majority are 'imported' from other regions of the country and can not even afford to transport themselves back to their base(s) of origin for the same reasons, the common of which is lack of money.

#### Co-operation with LO

LO supports an education and training programme specifically for the Tobacco Tenants and Allied Workers Union TOTAWUM. The budget and responsibility for the programme is in the hands of the education and organising officer at MCTU.

The long-term developmental objective of the programme is that: "The working conditions in the tobacco sector are improved and child labour discontinued".

The short-term objective is that: "TOTAWUM has political and organisational capacity to engage employers in negotiations to improve working conditions and welfare of its members."

The budget for the programme was NOK 100,000 per annum.

This translated into between 2,3 and 2,5 million MWK annually. The money is mainly for material, accommodation, transport and meals connected to trainings, but a minor part of the funding has, in agreement with LO, been spent on office costs.

Besides the LO/Tiedemann supported education and training programme, TOTAWUM received support directly from the union branch at Tiedemanns Tobacco Factory who belongs to LO affiliate NNN (Food and Allied Workers Union). We met people in the field who had received bicycles and members who had received gifts in the form of clothes etc. A water pump from a different affiliate, NTL, was handed over at the time we visited Malawi. The gifts were highly appreciated and contributed to popularity of the union. The bicycles were also repeatedly spoken of as an excellent tool in organising, which seems quite obvious knowing what distances they normally have to cover on foot. .

<sup>24</sup> Source is TOTAWUM report to CORDAID. According to MCTU, 5 million people work in the sector.

In addition, TOTAWUM received MWK 10,002,326 from CORDAID/Centre for Social Concern over the two-year period 2006 and 2007. This went to administration, infrastructure, meetings and trainings. We do not know of any other funding sources.

Due to time constraint and the fact that the General Secretary was busy with his election campaign, we did not get in-depth interviews with the leadership of TOTAWUM. We met with them in an initial meeting and spent quite some time with the President, but our emphasis was on meeting members and participants in the trainings, which was the main focus of the LO funding to TOTAWUM.

## Summary of findings

- ❑ TOTAWUM operates in an area where worker protection and empowerment is critically needed. The project is highly relevant. Although it is not possible to establish how wide the efforts of TOTAWUM reaches, the activities have contributed to the objectives of the programme.
- ❑ The trainings are good and results are in line with objectives. The members consider the focus areas relevant. They were concerned about practical issues close to heart, like child labour issues, Occupational Health and Safety and solving disputes with employers. There are an apparently increasing number of written agreements between tenants and landlords. The participants in trainings found what they learned relevant for use.
- ❑ Recruitment is good. The signing up of new members has according to TOTAWUM numbers increased. The numbers are however questionable, and especially so who of these members who are paying membership fee. We recommend that more effort be put in turning turn signed-up members into paid-up ones.
- ❑ Gender mainstreaming is successfully implemented with equal representation in almost all levels of the organisation, as well as knowledge and focus on issues of concern to women being observed in the field. The emphasis on training women has been good and should be continued.
- ❑ HIV/Aids issues are also successfully mainstreamed into trainings and people in the field say it has contributed to less stigma.
- ❑ Accountability for membership fees is non-existent and reveals that administrative capacity is limited.

## Main recommendations

- ❑ That LO continues to support TOTAWUM and continue to focus on training local leaders.
- ❑ That specific attention is given to membership tracking, collection of dues and handling of money. This can be done in cooperation with MCTU and other affiliates who share the same problems.
- ❑ That similar attention is given to negotiation skills to improve collective bargaining.
- ❑ That LO links their funding to targets on fees collection.
- ❑ That LO ensures that TOTAWUM is accountable for how membership fees are spent, as is part of the LO-TOTAWUM agreement.

- That the next project period should consider having as a goal that TOTAWUM before the end of the period run their own programme and handle their own funding at the same level of performance and accountability that the MCTU officer is doing today.<sup>25</sup>

## Findings

Below are the findings of the evaluation carried out as we examined the features of the cooperation bearing in mind the focus areas of the agreement between LO and TOTAWUM.

### *To represent and defend workers rights*

Leaders who have attended trainings are able to approach their employers/landlords when grievances are reported. We heard how some members approached employers or landlords to complain about abuse of women in the plantations and the use of child labour, which they had not done in the past. Issues of low wages or non-payment were now being brought up with employers and, in some cases, being resolved without resorting to other means. The women workers being marginalised by their fellow workers has also gone down and training in gender issues has empowered women to share chores with the male folk.

However, much still remains to be done as the union spreads its wings and employers become more sensitised to trade unionism. The tenant system also creates large turnover in membership as people move around, so there is a never-ending need to educate the new and young people who are emerging to take up leadership roles.

TOTAWUM seems to experience what many NGO's in rural areas experience: By being present, they get requests to solve all kinds of problems for the locals. In an area where almost all the people live off tobacco farming, there is no strong line between the union branch and a general community organisation. The issues they are confronted with include lobbying for social services like schools and clinics, as well as dealing with crimes like rape and fights. The union however directs the cases to the relevant authorities, like to the police for criminal cases. The union offices seems to prioritise dealing with union related cases themselves, while some branches collect money among members towards more "social service" issues like helping to send children to school and contributing towards funerals. In our experience, it seems the union draws support through being there for a wider range of activities, while the LO resources mainly go into promoting more traditional union issues of improving the working conditions, solving labour conflicts and building the organisation.

*Increase membership by not less than 10% annually and raise income from subscription fees/dues by not less than 10% annually.*

TOTAWUM has recruited more members than targeted during the period. This is evident, though we have not been presented with any reliable information on how many paid up members TOTAWUM actually has. While on field visit in Mchinji we were shown an overview of members in that area which surpasses the target for the whole organisation. The number of branches and the number of members the locals said belonged to each branch makes the number believable. The members also said these people pay the fee, which they considered low and therefore affordable.

<sup>25</sup> It is suggested that a prerequisite for this is that TOTAWUM is empowered with a finance officer. Such a position (or a programme officer) seems natural as a part of a strategy to move responsibility to TOTAWUM. LO and MCTU should be in dialogue with TOTAWUM and the organisations funding partners to decide what the best strategy would be to increase TOTAWUM's administrative capacity.



They reported that the fee was increased from MWK 250 to MWK 300 in 2008. What we saw indicates that there might be more members than the official numbers. There is a 200% plus increase projected from 2007 to 2008 (to app 15,000 members) but the latest project report (June 2008) lists approximately 45,000 members. For some of the districts, paid up membership is included. According to their own numbers it seems that less than 1000 members are actually paying the fee.

The numbers above are based on a report to LO which includes six districts. In a report to a different partner, CORDAID, TOTAWUM states that they in 2007 had 23,000 members in ten districts with a total of 490 branches. 9,170 were paid up members and they collected MWK 129,624 in membership fees.<sup>26</sup> (That would be a membership fee of MWK 14 per member). The official (MCTU) membership number for TOTAWUM in 2007 was 4597.

In other words, the membership numbers for TOTAWUM are inconsistent and more effort must be done to create proper tracking of members. It is not surprising that TOTAWUM don't have control over their membership numbers. Unions with much more resources and simpler membership base (as in having check off systems from workers on salaries) are struggling with the same problem. TOTAWUM should acknowledge this in their reports, because what they write now is misleading.

Unfortunately, the leadership of TOTAWUM are not able to provide documentation on what happens to the membership fees once they are collected. They are in terms of the agreement with LO supposed to be covered by the LO audit, but this has not been possible. The local leaders confirmed bringing the money to local/regional offices and the President confirmed that money should be banked. The branches said they did not receive any of the collected fees and the members paid for that costs at the branches in addition to fees. Upon the projected 2008 membership, fees should amount to almost 4,5 million MWK, while the latest reported membership number should yield almost 14 million. Since the members see the returns of their fees in the form of trainings (paid by the LO funding and other partner(s)), and knowing there is an office operating, there is less reason for them to question what happens to "their" money. It is therefore a serious problem that the leadership does not prioritise accountability for the funds. The people we met were however well aware that the bicycles, the water pump and some other gifts were from LO<sup>27</sup>.

We recommend that LO ensures that the TOTAWUM leadership document how many members who pay the fee and how TOTAWUM have spent the money, even if it means an investigation.

Further we recommend that LO (or their auditor) work with TOTAWUM to create guidelines to avoid a repetition of the problem.

We suggest that LO link their support to TOTAWUM achievements on dues collection. There could be a scale where TOTAWUM have to match the funding from Norway with a percentage of income of their own. By the end of the next cooperation period, TOTAWUM should be able to match funding from LO with an equal amount of own funds. TOTAWUM can use their own money as they find necessary as long as the money is banked, the budget is democratically approved and the accounts are audited and disseminated to their union members.

We also strongly recommend that LO are in dialogue with other TOTAWUM partners to avoid overlap and get an overview of activities. CORDAID financed a three-day training for 715 leaders

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<sup>26</sup> The evaluation team received this report in mid-January 2009 and has not had a chance to investigate this further. It was the first time we saw numbers on membership fees collected.

<sup>27</sup> The gifts are from the Tiedemann branch of one of LO's affiliates. Tiedemann is a tobacco company. That distinction has not sunk in at grassroots level, but the leadership understands the difference.

in 2006 and 2007 which overlaps or supplements the LO funded trainings. An important part would be to agree to accounts covering all funding. It is not possible for us to see if the motorbike purchased by Tiedemann (LO) is different from the one in the report to CORDAID. As the LO-TOTAWUM funding is controlled by MCTU/LO, we are not suggesting that money from LO have been spent irregularly. The audits are also mainly satisfactory. The issue is to create a capacity within TOTAWUM to handle their funding and their own activities in a way that makes it possible to take over the control from MCTU.

We recommend that TOTAWUM keeps an inventory of investments and gifts like motorbikes, bikes as well as furniture and equipment at the offices to ensure that these stay in active use for the benefit of the union. The TOTAWUM name should also be visible on the equipment. The overview should be included as a note to the accounts.

We believe that the leaders down to branch level should have insight in what the organisation does. Rather than translating LO reports, we recommend that TOTAWUM make an annual report of all their activities and money spent irrespective of who funded them and that this report is translated to local languages for the benefit all members.

*Uphold principles of transparency and accountability*

Besides the lack of financial transparency, there should be paid some attention to how much the members are able to control of what is happening at the top level. A vast amount of members, including officers, do not read English. Still, the constitution and other essential documents are not translated to local languages. Although meetings takes place in local languages, it makes it questionable how the members can control whether the constitution is adhered to. We were also told there is a need to translate more of the training material into local languages. TOTAWUM is however aware of the problem and plans to translate the constitution.

*Strengthen TOTAWUM through capacity building and skills training activities*

The training activities must be seen to have been successful in empowering the participant to promote union issues at the workplace, inform their colleagues and create change. With the massive growth in membership, there is a major need for training. It is good that MCTU/TOTAWUM take time to properly train local leaders. Sensitization meetings in the field are among the activities supported by CORDAID.

It seems that people are chosen for trainings either in democratic processes within their branch structure or by someone higher up in the structure just pointing at individuals. Which one is more usual was not possible to establish. The issue of choosing democratically should be high on the agenda, as well as the duty to share knowledge with the local structures. It seems availability and the representative having the means to travel also plays a role when the branches choose representatives to send to district meetings.

*Promote women's rights, encourage women young and disabled workers' participation in trade union activities and decision-making structures. Gender should be a major pre-occupation (30% women) and 10% funds allocated to women's activities.*

By looking at participation in trainings, representation in branches, women's committees and listening to what kind of issues the branches work with, it is clear that women's rights have been promoted within TOTAWUM. According to the CORDAID report, about two thirds of paid up membership are men. Still, a significant majority of participants in LO funded activities are women, much due to specific womens' trainings in addition to gender balanced mixed trainings. The executive board is male dominated except for the women's chair and committee members, but the

council elected at the congress in 2004 have a 50/50 gender balance and the same is true for the regional structures. Again, this is a strong positive result of LO's programmes in Malawi which should be sustained. There was also a significant share of young people present at meetings and represented in branch leadership that we saw.

When it comes to including people with disabilities, we did not see anyone physically challenged (as in blind, wheelchair user, albino, etc), but that does not mean there was none in the large group of members who came to one of our meetings. The TOTAWUM leadership could list a handful of officials with disabilities. We have however not seen proof of any efforts made to include people with disabilities. It is for instance not mainstreamed into trainings the way gender and HIV/Aids is. Different kinds of disabilities are widespread in Malawi, but there is little culture of inclusion. This could be a more emphasised point for the next programme period with the potential to cooperate with the organisations for the disabled. The Malawi Council for the Handicapped (MACOHA) have a link to the textile union and could be included in making strategies to benefit all affiliates of MCTU.

*Mount awareness campaigns and training activities on HIV/Aids in the work place*

Again, the trainings have included HIV/Aids in the curriculum and people we met who had been to trainings were happy with what they had learned, saying it contributed to less stigma in the local communities. It was also clear that this is seen as an important and relevant issue to work with.

*Practice and enhance internal democracy in the trade union movement and contribute towards democracy in the country.*

There have been less official meetings than stipulated, Congress was due in 2008 but did not take place and only half of the council meetings took place in 2006 and 2007. The 2004 congress did not come up with policy statements and TOTAWUM has not got a written political manifesto or strategy. The constitution is part of the trainings, but the document itself does not exist in local languages and the majority of Tobacco farmers do not speak English. There were elections to regional structures in 2007.

The goals of democratic participation in the union were not high on the agenda for the people we met in the field. For those participating in trainings, just dealing with the idea of rights is opening new doors. Their focus was on learning more about negotiations and handling grievances more than handling union money or conduct meetings. TOTAWUM is contributing towards democracy in a country that is starting from a very low level. At this point members are gaining experience in handling grievances and informing their peers of issues on the ground. With members having low expectations towards participation in decision-making processes, real bottom up union democracy will probably take time.

*Promote activities relating to elimination of child labour*

We saw many children working in the fields while driving through the countryside. TOTAWUM cooperates with other organisations to eliminate child labour. Information and awareness is working and there are examples of children who have been taken out of work and sent to school. On that level, the union is taking a clear stand and acting upon it. Cooperation is good because child labour is a complex issue. There are orphans who have no other alternative than to work. There might not be a school available for the children and it was confirmed that this is in particular a problem for those in their upper teens. A significant contribution to reducing child labour would be to increase the parents' income or reduce hazards that leave children as orphans. In such ways, union activities like OHS, bargaining and HIV/Aids awareness also contribute positively.

*Union mergers/amalgamations should be explored*

There are suggestions that the MCTU affiliates Sugar Plantation & Allied Workers Union, Plantations & Agriculture Workers Union and TOTAWUM merge into one powerful union. The three of them submitted a motion together at the last MCTU Congress calling for MCTU facilitation for mergers, which should indicate that there is political will to do so.

We are not aware of any other union organising Tobacco workers, but there is a splinter union in the agricultural sector called Tea Coffee Macadamia workers union (TECOMA) and apparently the situation of competing unions affects the tea sector negatively. TECOMA is affiliated to the Congress of Malawi Trade Unions (COMATU).

We recommend that TOTAWUM intensifies the campaign and establish amalgamations with all plantation and agriculture sectors in order to make their union strong and formidable.

*Fiscal efficiency*

There were few opportunities to look at fiscal efficiency. The number of training days compared to the LO-MCTU budget does not indicate waste of money. Having the MCTU education and organising officer managing the project is probably efficient for now, given the weak administrative capacity of TOTAWUM. In the long run it is not sustainable if TOTAWUM cannot take over their own projects.

With LO covering about a third of the overall expenses we have received reports for, the results can not alone be attributed to LO funding. The objectives of the project are highly ambitious compared to the input from LO and would not be possible to reach without TOTAWUM receiving support from other sources as well.

## Concluding remarks

### The contribution from LO beyond money

LO has contributed significantly to the successes scored to the labour movement in Malawi. The programme officers at LO seem to have a good disciplinary role holding MCTU responsible for the programmes, especially for use of funds. Visits and trainings by LO officials (like the NTL training that took place while we were there) were also commended as “inspiring”. And from what we have learned, LOs regional consultant on Africa Alice Siame has had large positive impact. The respect for “Sister Alice” is high. What she has taught people in and outside of trainings, the discussions they have and especially what she has done for the women’s position is true added value. LO’s influence on priorities within MCTU is evident and those priorities are relevant for the objectives of this cooperation. Siame makes things happen and is seen as responsible for the high level of activities. LO has a close ear to what is going on on the ground and has a network in Africa that is an advantage for the unions, linking them with other African unions and organisations.

It is easy to lean on LO when it is such a resource. For MCTU and its staff and members it may be too easy. A good step towards sustainability is that MCTU staff now does the training of trainers, previously very successfully done by LO. A goal for future programmes should be that their dependency of LO on such practical issues is further reduced.

### Conclusion

In a country with critical needs for improvement in both labour issues and wider social development, we did not see any activities that are not relevant. We mainly saw progress and good efforts. A few things could be reassessed. It makes less sense for a union to prioritise being excellent on HIV/Aids training, if they at the same time fail to secure collective agreements or to defend the workers in court. Likewise, leadership priorities of international relations may successfully be toned down to make space for more political groundwork in Malawi, such as agreements, legal cases and capacity building and attending to challenges affecting their affiliates. We do not suggest reversing the very positive and necessary work done on HIV/Aids. We just want to emphasis that the organisation must keep focus on their core union challenges that nobody else is going to solve for them.

The Co-operation with LO-Norway has contributed to the successes recorded so far. The groundwork has been done for much more to be achieved in the future. For MCTU to do it without support will slow down, or most probably reverse, the developments of a strong union federation in Malawi. That would not benefit the workers in Malawi. It would neither be in the interest of international union solidarity nor official Norwegian development aid priorities. We therefore recommend that the support continue.

## Appendixes

### Appendix I: Terms of reference

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EVALUATION OF LO' PROGRAMME CO-OPERATION WITH THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN MALAWI**

#### **Included in the co-operation projects:**

- 1) MW2: Organisational Development – MCTU**
- 2) MW3: Training and organising – TOTAWUM and**
- 3) GLO3: Tri-partism (Social dialogue) – MCTU/Ministry of Labour.**

Malawi entered into democracy and multi-party system in 1993. Malawi Congress of Trade Unions was officially formed 1995.

The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO-Norway) has since 1996 had a co-operation with the MCTU. The project co-operation started with education and training of women and rank and file members. In 1997 MCTU and LO-Norway agreed to enter into a three years agreement on Organisational Development with focus on developing administrative capacity, organising and education and training. New Agreements for the periods 2001-2003, and 2006-2009 were later signed focusing on the same main issues. Objective and targets were set. Based on the expressed need for social dialogue and tri-partism, Malawi was included in the Global Programme on Tri-partism (Social Dialogue) in 2004.

In addition to the co-operation between LO-Norway and MCTU, there is also co-operation at national union level through the Tobacco Tenants and Allied Workers Union of Malawi (TOTAWUM) covering in the tobacco sector. This co-operation started in 2002 with the assistance of the local trade union at the Tiedeman Tobacco Factory in Oslo, Norway. The focus of the programme is membership recruitment, education and training for rank and file members, shop stewards and leadership.

The co-operation and dialogue between LO-Norway and its Malawian partners is built on mutual respect for the organisations' right to develop their own policies, accountability and full transparency.

LO-Norway would like to evaluate its efforts made in Malawi over the last three years towards the end of 2008. The co-operation with Malawian trade unions was internally evaluated in 1999. The period now under evaluation is from 2006 up to date (2008).

The planned evaluation is aimed at reviewing the progress and results of the co-operation projects, and to see what has been achieved in the programme co-operation between LO and MCTU. This evaluation is also intended to form the basis for LO's decisions regarding the future co-operation agreement between LO-Norway and Norad for the years 2010 – 2013.

LO Norway will hire two Consultants to do the evaluation – one person from Norway and one person from Africa. Details regarding the arrangements with the two Consultants will be elaborated in separate contracts. LO-Norway's consultant in Africa will assist the evaluation team with technical information.

The evaluation is scheduled for November 2007. LO-Norway expects the final report of the evaluation not later than the 15 February 2009. The cost of the evaluation will be covered by LO-Norway.

The field visit to Malawi is planned to take place during the period 2 – 11 November 2008. In reviewing the main project co-operation with MCTU the Consultants are expected to meet a good number of the member unions of the national centre. Written material from the files of LO-Norway and MCTU will be important sources of information. Interviews with key personnel of LO-Norway, shop stewards at Tiedeman, the Malawian trade union movement, the Malawian Ministry of Labour as well as LO's regional consultants in Africa will be essential.

It is also recommended that the Consultants seek further information from relevant Norwegian and Malawian authorities and institutions.

The Consultants should review any strong or weak sides of the programme co-operation in Malawi, and the individual projects and co-operation partners. The Consultants should give an assessment and recommendations for future co-operation between LO-Norway and its partners. If appropriate, the Consultants may suggest alternative actions to be taken; in order to insure that the programmes achieve their goals. The current Agreements between LO-Norway and its partners expire at the end of 2009.

## **The projects.**

The main co-operation projects which should be evaluated are:

### **MW2: Organisational Development - MCTU (2006 – 2008).**

Long-term developmental objective: MCTU is organisationally and politically a strong trade union organisation, with significant influence in Malawian labour relations and society.

Short-term developmental objective: MCTU has satisfactory administratively capacity and skills to carry out its trade union functions and administer finances of the organisation.

### **MW3: Training and Organising - TOTAWUM (2006 – 2008).**

Long-term developmental objective: The working conditions in the tobacco sector are improved and child labour discontinued.

Short-term developmental objective: TOTAWUM has political and organisational capacity to engage employers in negotiations to improve working conditions and welfare of its members.

In addition we would like to evaluate the impact of:

### **GLO3: Tripartite co-operation – MCTU and Ministry of Labour (2006 – 2008).**

Long-term developmental objective: A common understanding of the need and importance for tripartite co-operation has been achieved.

Short-term developmental objective: An enabling environment for regular contact/interaction between employers, workers and Government has been developed.

Given the limited time and resources available for the evaluation, the main focus of the evaluation report should be on the project MW2 (MCTU).

The four year agreements with LO-Norway and the partners outline further objectives, expected results and indicators as reference for the evaluation.

## Content of the evaluations:

For each of the three projects, the Consultants should try to address the following questions.

1. Has LO's support been relevant? Has the project covered actual needs and priorities of the co-operation partner and its members? Have these efforts been the right priorities? If there have been smaller or larger adjustments of the project(s) during implementation, it should be made clear if these changes have been made according to agreement, due to changed needs or for other reasons.
2. How efficient has the project co-operation been? Have the main co-operation partners carried out the plans in a cost-efficient and practical manner? Have the financial and human resources been used efficiently, or could some of the work have been done in a better manner? Has there been a clear division of labour and agreement between the parties? Have both parties followed up the agreements in a satisfactory manner, and has it been adapted in an appropriate manner? Has the staff for planning, implementation and reporting of the project(s) been satisfactory? The Consultants should also consider if the partners utilise their own resources (dues collected, any business ventures, buildings, etc.) in an efficient manner.
3. What results have been achieved by the project co-operation so far? Have the objectives been clear and realistic? Is it likely that the short-term goals are/will be reached by the end of the current agreement period, and that they actually contribute towards the long-term objective(s)? If not, it should be explained why these objectives have not been fully met. If the programme co-operation has led to any internal changes of policy, organising or priorities in the trade union movement in Malawi, any activities or indicators that show this should be presented.<sup>28</sup> In this context, it should be considered if any such changes have only taken place at head-office level, or if changes have also reached the national unions or local branches.
4. Sustainability. It is of particular importance to see if the Malawian organisations have made an effort towards reducing their dependence on foreign support. Will MCTU, their member unions and local branches be able to continue activities that are currently done through financial support from LO-Norway, if and when this support is reduced? Have the organisations' capacity to carry out good financial management, dues collection, organising and recruitment, collective bargaining and promoting gender equality been permanently improved through the co-operation with LO-Norway? If the answers are positive, indicators that could confirm this development should be provided. If the answers are negative, the evaluation report should analyse why certain developments have not taken place. Of

<sup>28</sup> Any publications, training material or policy documents should be presented.



particular interest would be to consider if the division of labour and financial resources between the various levels of the trade union movement in Malawi is appropriate in relation to sustainability of the whole movement.

5. External impact. Has the co-operation between LO-Norway and the Malawi trade union movement made the organisations more able to influence government authorities at various levels, employers or the Malawian population at large regarding important issues for the trade union movement? Has the influence of the trade union movement in the society been strengthened through new legislation, new/better collective agreements or in any other way – as a direct or indirect effect of the co-operation? Has the project had any unforeseen positive or negative impacts?
6. Other issues. In addition to the points mentioned above, the Consultants are free to comment on other sides of the co-operation found to be relevant. The Consultants may comment upon the quality of the work done, and review if the role of the Norwegian partners in the co-operation has been appropriate (if not already covered elsewhere). The gender perspective should be taken care of in the evaluation report, and if found necessary, this could be made a separate issue in the report.

Based on these findings, the Consultants are requested to draw conclusions and make recommendations for the future co-operation between LO-Norway and its partners.

Oslo, 23th July 2008

**THE NORWEGIAN CONFEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS**  
**International Department**

Nina Mjøberg  
Head of the Solidarity Section

## Appendix II: Program

### PROGRAMME FOR EVALUATION OF THE MALAWI CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS (MCTU) PROGRAMME 02-11 NOVEMBER, 2008

#### **Sunday 02/11/08**

Arrival of Ellen C Kiosterud and. Grace Mashano

#### **Monday 03 November 2008**

Evaluation Team and the Norwegian delegation meet MCTU leadership at Secretariat  
Meeting with Tobacco Tenants and Allied Workers Union (TOTAWUM) Leadership  
Continuation of meetings with MCTU Leadership and Department

#### **Tuesday 04 November 2008**

Meeting with the MCTU Education and Training Officer  
Meeting MCTU participants from LO-Norway Education and Training Programme  
Meeting with Mr. Patrick Kabambe, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Labour  
Meeting with participants in trainings continued

#### **Wednesday 05 November 2008**

Evaluation Team, Tiedemann and LO Arundel Group depart for Blantyre by road  
Meeting with Employers Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM)  
Meeting with Textile, Leather, Garments and Security Workers Union  
Meeting with Building, Construction, Engineering and Allied Workers Union  
Meeting with Communication Workers Union of Malawi  
Meeting with Ivy Kwatiwani, LO-Norway trained Trainer

#### **Thursday 06 November 2008**

Depart for Mulanje  
Meeting with management and a few staff members at Esperanza Tea Estate  
Return to Blantyre  
Informal visit to see the union offices in Blantyre

#### **Friday 07 November 2008**

Depart for Lilongwe  
Meeting with MCTU Auditors Deloitte  
Meeting with Water Employees Union of Malawi

#### **Saturday 08 November 2008**

Day off

#### **Sunday 09 November 2008**

Meeting with MCTU Secretary General for the project period up to Congress 2008, Austin Kalimanjara

#### **Monday 10 November 2008**

Trip to Mjinji  
Meeting with TOTAWUM members and local union officers in two areas

**Tuesday 11 November 2008**

Meeting with the Teachers Union of Malawi

Meeting with the Civil Servants Union

Meeting with MCTU Treasurer

**Wednesday 12th November, 2008**

Presentation of Summary Draft Conclusions to the MCTU and TOTAWUM leadership

Meeting with Mr. L C Nkosi, Management Consultant

**Thursday 13th November, 2008**

Meeting with the Norwegian Embassy

Departure

### Appendix III: People interviewed

The team met with the following people during the evaluation:

Secretary General Robert Mkwezalamba, Deputy Secretary General Grace Nyirenda, President Luther Mambala, Vice President Chauluka Muwake, Treasurer General Prince Mudolo, Education and Organising Officer Jessie Ching'oma and the Research Officer Paliani Chinguwo of MCTU  
All members of the present Executive Committee of TOTAWUM

Three participants from each of six different training themes undertaken by MCTU, being training of educators, paralegal, shopstewards, women, occupational health and safety/HIV/Aids and specific trainings for TOTAWUM

The Principal Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Mr. Patrick Kabambe,

The Director of ECAM, Buxton M Kayuni

The auditors at Deloitte

Representatives of the following unions (besides meeting members as elected officers of MCTU or as participants in trainings):

- ❑ Teachers Union of Malawi
- ❑ Textile, Leather, Garments and Security Workers Union
- ❑ Building, Construction, Engineering and Allied Workers Union
- ❑ Communication Workers Union of Malawi
- ❑ Civil Servants Union of Malawi
- ❑ Water Employees Union of Malawi
- ❑ Tobacco Tenants and Allied Workers Union

The previous Secretary General of MCTU and a former Secretary General of the Teachers Union  
L C Nkosi, Management Consultant

Ivy Kwatiwani, LO-Norway trained Trainer

Representatives of branches of TOTAWUM in Mjinji.

Management and staff at Esperanza Tea Estate

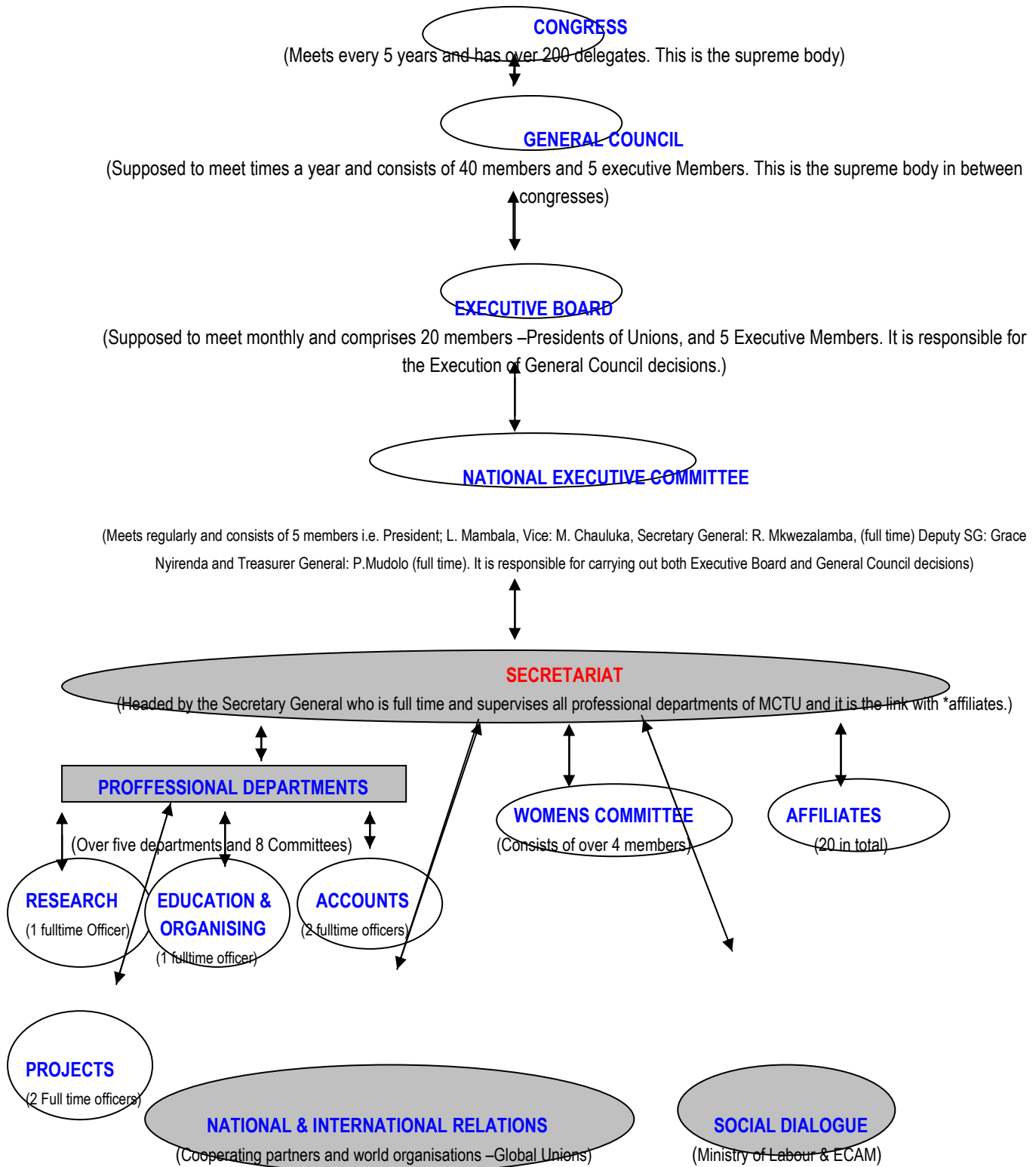
The Norwegian Ambassador to Malawi Bjørn Johannessen

LO representatives responsible for following up the programme Alice Siame and Camilla Houeland (telephone interview).

We also had less formal conversations with other staff members of MCTU and with the visiting representatives from LO, NTL and Tiedemann Tobacco Factory whom we travelled with for quite some time. We met some more staff and members of affiliates while visiting their offices in Blantyre.

### Appendix IV: MCTU structure

#### MCTU STRUCTURE



## Appendix V: Agreements

Below is a table showing the agreements in place, as indicated by MCTU in February 2009:

NAME OF TRADE UNION	TYPE OF AGREEMENT	ORGANISATION	DATE ENTERED INTO AGREEMENT
<b>Textile, Leather Garment and Security Services Workers Union</b>	Recognitions	GTMA	25 <sup>th</sup> March, 2004
	Recognitions	David Whitehead and Sons (Malawi Limited)	26 <sup>th</sup> September, 1997
	Collective Bargaining	Textile Industrial Council	7 <sup>th</sup> September, 2005
	Recognition	Knitwear	18th March, 1996
	Procedurals and		
	Recognition	Safari Clothing	7th October, 2003
	Recognition	Malawi Council for the Handicapped	6th March, 2005
<b>Malawi Housing Corporation Workers Union</b>	Collective Bargaining	Chilimba Garments	1st July 2004
	Recognition and Procedural	MHC	12th May 2004
<b>Hotel Food Processing and Catering Workers Union</b>	Procedural and Collective Bargaining	Dairy board	4th December, 2001
	Collective Bargaining	Malawi Distilleries	30th December, 2001
	"	Club Makokola	12th October, 2004
	"	Rice Milling Company	30th November, 2004
	"	Sun Crest Creameries	1st July, 2005
	"	Sun and Sand	29th July, 2005
	"	HIPO View Lodge	-
	"	Boadzulu	26 <sup>th</sup> April 2005
	"	Chibuku	-
	"	Mphatso Hotel	24th May, 2005
	"	Kalikuti Hotel	19th January, 2005
"	Sunbird	1995	
<b>ESCOM STAFF UNION</b>	Recognition and collective bargaining	ESCOM	19 <sup>th</sup> April, 2005 and March 2008
<b>Plantation and Agricultural Workers Union</b>	Access	Tea Association of Malawi	13th August, 2004
	Recognition	Tea Association of Malawi	29th September, 2004
<b>Building Construction Civil Engineering and Allied Workers Union</b>	Recognition and Procedural	Master Builders	-
	Recognition	Barloworld Equipment MW Limited	4th May, 2004
	Recognition	Portland Cement	-
<b>Tobacco Tenants and Allied</b>	Labour	TAMA	17th May, 2004

<b>NAME OF TRADE UNION</b>	<b>TYPE OF AGREEMENT</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>	<b>DATE ENTERED INTO AGREEMENT</b>
<b>Workers Union</b>	Agreement		
<b>Commercial Industrial and Allied Workers Union</b>	Recognition	Imports and Exports	
	Collective Bargaining	Shoprite	14th September, 2005
	Procedural	Supreme	12th August, 2003
<b>Communications Workers Union</b>	Collective Bargaining	Telekom Network	2 <sup>nd</sup> August, 2005
	Recognition Agreement	Malawi Telecoms Ltd	2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2002
	Collective Bargaining (revised)	Malawi Pots Corporation	28 <sup>th</sup> October, 2005
	Collective Bargaining	Malawi Institute of Journalism	June 2008
	Collective Bargaining	Montfort Press	July 2008
<b>Railways Workers Union</b>	Memorandum of Agreement	CEAR	23rd March, 1964
<b>Sugar Plantation and Allied Workers Union</b>	Recognition	SUCOMA	17th July, 2005
<b>Teachers Union of Malawi</b>	Recognition	GOM	-
<b>Transport and General Workers Union</b>	Recognition	Gaffar	May, 2005
	Recognition	Shire Bus Line	1997
	Recognition	Petroleum Services	2005
	Recognition	Malawi Lake Services	2003
	Recognition	U-Trade	2004
<b>Water Employees Trade Union of Malawi</b>	Recognition and Procedural	Lilongwe Water Board	1998
	Recognition and Procedural	Central Region Water Board	2003

## Appendix VI: Training days per member

The table below sums up the number of training days provided by MCTU in the period and how they were distributed among the affiliates.<sup>29</sup> The ratio shows how many members the organisation had in 2007 per one training day received. In other words, the lower the number, the more benefit has the organisation received in proportion to its size.

Union	Abbr.	2007 membership	2006 total	2007 total	2008 total	Total training days	Ratio to membership
BUILDING	BCCEAWU	6,401	34	25	6	65	98.5
COMMERCIAL	CIAWU	3,075	181	34	2	217	14.2
COMMUNICATION	COWUMA	2,856	33	36	43	112	25.5
ELECTRONIC	EMWU	243	40	28	4	72	3.4
ESCOM	ESU	1,899	13	25	6	44	43.2
HOTELS	HCFPWU	3,565	25	22	4	51	69.9
HOUSING	MHCWU	236	31	31	4	66	3.6
TEA	PAWUM	2,086	44	55	8	107	19.5
PRIVATE SCHOOLS	PSEUM	1,713	31	105	0	136	12.6
RAILWAYS	RWU	485	24	25	8	57	8.5
Shipping and Customs	?		0	0	0	0	
SUGAR	SPAWUM	8,598	44	25	4	73	117.8
TRANSPORT/ GEN.	TGWUM	3,257	29	24	8	61	53.4
TEXTILES	TLGSSWU	5,514	173	118	4	295	18.7
TOBACCO	TOTAWUM	4,597	44	39	6	89	51.7
TEACHERS	TUM	46,207	130	184	8	322	143.5
WATER	WETUM	1,915	20	28	2	50	38.3
CIVIL SERVANTS	CSTU	12,000	0	0	0	0	
NURSES UNION		5,082	0	0	0	0	
INFORMAL SECT	MUFIS	2,050	0	0	4	4	512.5
MUNICIPAL		4,500	0	0	0	0	
MCTU/Others			68	51	8	127	
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>		<b>92,647</b>	964	855	129	1,948	47.6

<sup>29</sup> The table is put together by us based on MCTU reports. A few activities from the training report have been excluded: These are international travel and a few other meetings who (should) fall outside of the training budget. We do however agree that these events have educational value. We did not have the full number of days for trainings in 2008 so they are probably underestimated.



## Appendix VII: Suggestions for more evaluations

This evaluation is covering a large project with targets for all issues of trade unionism involving a federation with 20 affiliates, thousands of participants in trainings, different structures and administrations. In addition we were looking specifically at two other projects. With only eleven days in the field and significant limitations to the documentation we were given, this evaluation scratches the surface on most of the issues at hand. We are confident in the issues we have included, but there are issues left out and achievements we never saw or heard of.

Given that this is the first external evaluation, such a run-through of the programme was still needed. LO should however consider focusing on sections of their support for future evaluations. Such themes could be the following:

- ❑ Trainings only – Looking at how people are selected to trainings and if and how they use what they learn in the field. Who decides what is relevant to learn? What is best of union specific trainings and mixed trainings? Are the trainers adjusting the curriculum to industry, literacy levels, language, etc. Emphasis on whether the union officials make sure the resources in the form of trained shopstewards are utilised. Also looking at content and how MCTU training supplements other trainings.
- ❑ Bargaining only – Who does bargaining, how relevant is the training, are the trained officials/shopstewards involved in bargaining, what are the obstacles, are there strategic improvements to be made? What is the role of MCTU vs the affiliates?
- ❑ Organising only – Monitoring how organising is done, what is the follow up given to new members and how are fees collected. Who does organising, what is the cost and how are volunteers involved? What is the role of MCTU vs the affiliates?

These are issues that MCTU and the unions themselves should also keep a close eye on, and direct involvement of the MCTU researcher as well as union officials in evaluations would be beneficial both for the results and as a learning process.

## Appendix VIII: Potential mergers

The potential mergers MCTU are aiming at are as following (quoted from an MCTU report):

“Among the affiliates of MCTU, possible mergers can be effected with the following unions:

- ❑ Transport & General Workers Union; Shipping & Customs Clearing Agents Trade Union; and Railways Workers Union (3 into 1).
- ❑ Water Employees Workers Unions and Municipal Workers Union (2 into 1).
- ❑ Sugar Plantation & Allied Workers Union; Plantations & Agriculture Workers Union; and Tobacco Tenants & Allied Workers Union<sup>30</sup> (3 into 1).
- ❑ Communications Workers Union and Electronic Media Workers Union (2 into 1)
- ❑ Malawi Housing Cooperation Workers Union and Building Construction & Civil Engineering Workers Union (2 into 1).
- ❑ Private Schools Employees Union and University Workers Union (2 into 1).”

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<sup>30</sup> This initiative can also be extended to Tea Coffee Macadamia workers union though it belongs to another federation so that all the four unions in the agricultural sector are merged into one strong union.