

# The Danish Union of Teachers in *Malawi*

Partner in Malawi	DLF cooperates with TUM, the independent national teachers union Teachers' Union of Malawi, who has 45,000 members out of a potential membership of approximately 70,000 members.
Development goal	The project's main objective is to strengthen TUM as a financially independent and democratic teacher organisation that provides relevant information and service to the members, to the benefit of the education sector in general. The specific objective of the project is to strengthen the TUM capacity to develop and implement strategic and evidence-based advocacy, and to strengthen the organisational, administrative and economic capacity of TUM to sustain the results of the project independent of external funding. The project activities are integrated into TUM's Strategic Plan (2017-2022).
Time frame and budget	The project cooperation began in July 2014 and the current project phase is expected to be finalised in April 2021. The budget is about 250,000 €, financed by Danida/Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
Country facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Malawi is located at the Lake Malawi in South Eastern Africa and has borders on Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia</li><li>• Malawi has some 15m inhabitants, of whom half are under 15 years of age</li><li>• Approximately 90 per cent of the population work in the agricultural sector and 75 per cent of the population over 15 years of age can read and write</li><li>• The GNP is 270 USD per inhabitant, and half of the population lives under the poverty line of 2 USD per day</li><li>• The starting salary for a teacher in Malawi is a monthly 115 USD.</li></ul>
School situation	The official teacher-pupil ratio is 1:80, but in some class rooms there are more than 200 pupils. At the same time there is significant lack of trained teachers and teaching materials. Moreover, there is no in-service training and supervision of teachers. This has led to deprofessionalisation of the teaching profession, which, among other things, has resulted in reduced quality of education as well as problems such as sexual exploitation of students. The administration of the education system has not been decentralised, which slows down the handling of all kinds of objections and complaints from teachers, who have been treated unjustly. These are mostly caused by missing payment of the teachers' salaries, wrongful punishment or lack of automatic promotion.
Background and project development	<p>Together with the global teacher organisation Education International, the DLF contributed to the process of developing the TUM Strategic Plan 2017-2022. The precondition for supporting the implementation of the Plan was that TUM raised the membership fees from 0.2 per cent of the salary to 1 per cent, and thus, in the long term, enabling TUM to finance the organisation's activities without external financing. The increased membership fee was decided at an extraordinary TUM congress.</p> <p>The project activities are of high quality, but have not been implemented as fast as planned, due to other challenges that TUM has been facing. Firstly, the Ministry of Finance, who withdraws the membership fees from the teachers' salaries, has not transferred the fees to TUM and, secondly, there has been a significant staff turnover, which has resulted in changed working procedures and processes.</p>

