***The limits to transgressive and transformative learning in 10 primary schools of Chiradzulu District Malawi By Gibson Yadunda Mphepo***

**Abstract**

A study to examine levels of drop-out rates and explore their possible causes was undertaken in 10 primary schools of Chiradzulu District Malawi in May 2013.

The study used a mixed mode research design using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The sample for the study comprised head teachers, pupils, school management committees, parent teachers associations and households with vulnerable children randomly selected. The specific methods used for collecting the data included: Consultative meetings with district level stake holders, Key informant interviews (KII), Focus group discussions (FGD), and Household interviews. The study results showed that drop out and absenteeism rates are generally higher for girls than boys. For example, Nasulu Primary School registered a dropout rate of 27 % and 14 % for girls and boys respectively in the 2011/2012 academic year. The high dropout rates for girls emanate from multiple causes including high poverty levels, cultural/traditional beliefs, unsupportive home/parental systems, lack of role models and hostile school factors. The study singled **poverty** as the most serious wicked problem against girls’ education.

The study proposes a number of interventions including introduction of home grown school feeding programmes, using biogas instead of firewood for cooking, income generating activities (IGA) to support girl education, improving school health, water and sanitation facilities, formation and support to youth, mother and disability support groups.

**Key words:** drop-out, triangulation, home grown school feeding programme, biogas, IGA