



Ushirika wa Maendeleo ya Elimu Barani Afrika
الرابطة لأجل تطوير التربية في إفريقيا
Association for the Development of Education in Africa
Association pour le développement de l'éducation en Afrique
Associação para o Desenvolvimento da Educação em África



Ministry of Education,
Science and Technology
REPUBLIC OF MALAWI



Africa Foundational Learning Exchange

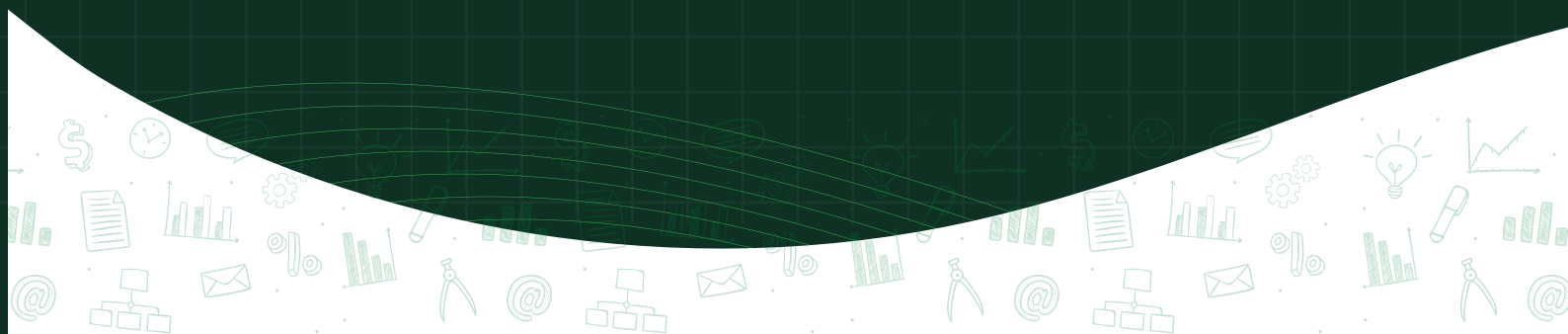
Lilongwe * Malawi | 15 - 17 July, 2026

THE LILONGWE MINISTERIAL COMMUNIQUE

THE 3RD AFRICA FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING EXCHANGE (FLEX2026)

*From commitment to results:
Delivering foundational learning at scale*

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We, the Ministers of Education from Botswana, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ghana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, The Gambia, Uganda, Zanzibar, and Zimbabwe, and Heads of Government Delegations from Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Togo, and Zambia, gathered at the Third Africa Foundational Learning Exchange (FLEX2026) in Lilongwe, Malawi, reaffirm our shared conviction that foundational learning is the cornerstone of quality education, human capital development, social cohesion, and sustainable economic transformation across our continent.

We **recognize** the learning challenge facing our continent, currently affecting an estimated nine in ten children at the foundational level, with implications for equity, quality, opportunity, resilience, and prosperity.

We further **acknowledge** that unless accelerated action is taken at scale, millions of African children will continue to be denied the essential literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional foundational skills required to participate fully in society and contribute meaningfully to the realization of Africa's aspirations.

Recalling the commitments made in Freetown and Kigali, we reaffirm our collective resolve to improving learning outcomes to end learning poverty in Africa by 2035 and to translate this ambition into sustained, measurable action across systems and visible at the classroom level.

We **recognize** meaningful but uneven progress since Kigali. While policy commitment and institutional frameworks have strengthened in many countries, delivery at scale remains inconsistent, and engagement in continental coordination mechanisms has in some cases declined.

We further **acknowledge** the valuable contribution of the 2025 ADEA Triennale in Accra in deepening the continental agenda through a stronger focus on implementation, system reform, and practical measures to improve learning outcomes for every child.

Recognizing that enduring progress requires consistency and continuity as much as innovation, we underscore the importance of sustaining and strengthening the measures that have shown the greatest impact and promise in improving foundational learning across diverse national contexts.



These include: strong political leadership and government ownership; evidence-based, context-responsive structured pedagogy, including instruction in languages children understand; effective teaching and learning materials matched with sustained teacher support and system leadership; coaching and mentoring; robust use of assessment and administrative data to drive accountability and decision making; coherent alignment of financing and partnerships behind

national priorities; better spending of domestic budgets on what matters for foundational learning; and deliberate attention to whole-child access — ensuring every child, including those with special educational needs, those out of school, those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds; and those in climate-vulnerable and hard-to-reach areas, can enter, remain in, and transition successfully through school in safe and resilient learning environments.

In this regard, FLEX2026 serves not only as a moment of reflection but as a renewed call to collective responsibility, mutual accountability, and practical action, in line with the African Union's broader education and development agenda.

Guided by the **lessons** of our shared journey from Freetown to Kigali, and now to Lilongwe via Accra, we come together in a spirit of solidarity and determination to carry forward what works, learn from one another, and accelerate delivery at scale. We do so with the firm belief that every African child has the right to acquire foundational skills in reading, mathematics, and social and emotional aspects of life, and that the realization of this right is indispensable to the ambition for an African-designed, African-led, and Africa-supported transformation that is inclusive and promotes sustainable growth, prosperity, dignity, peace, and opportunity for all.

Based on the above, we agree collectively to take forward **the following recommendations.**

OUR COMMITMENTS



1

Political leadership and ownership.

Governments will lead the reform and anchor foundational learning in national systems and budgets; partners will support, rather than substitute, government-led interventions for systems strengthening.



2

Financing and equitable resourcing:

Dedicate a specific budget line for foundational learning that prioritizes teacher training, coaching and mentoring, learning assessment, teaching and learning materials, and learners' welfare, which show the clearest link to learning outcomes, while advocating for increased domestic funding to education based on set continental and global benchmarks.



3

Data, assessment and accountability:

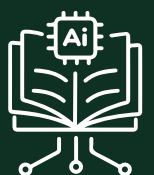
Strengthen school-to-national quality data pipelines and utilization for evidence-based decision-making, and build credible and sustainable measurement, monitoring, and accountability systems.



4

Results at scale:

Continue to scale evidence-based context-responsive approaches that improve foundational learning outcomes by strengthening and embedding partners' initiatives within government programmes.



5

AI & EdTech:

Establish an innovative policy that will allow for growth in the use of AI and EdTech tools as instructional aids for teachers and learners.



6

Whole child access and transition pathways:

Align Early Childhood Education admission and transition policies to ensure children enter primary school with adequate school-readiness support that includes capacity to basic reading, numeracy and social and emotional skills.

Made on this 17th day of July 2026 in Lilongwe, Malawi.



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