

## **Global Astronomy Survey : Malawi**

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SPoC Approved : Yes

### **1. Professional (Research) Astronomy:**

(i) Number of universities offering Astronomy (and their names)

Astronomy is not taught in University. There are only elements of astronomy that are tackled in physics and Earth Sciences.

(ii) Number of universities offering Physics (and their names)

University of Malawi, Mzuzu University

(iii) Number of academics who have been trained in Astronomy (ideally with their names and levels of qualification)

Unknown

(iv) Number of astronomical facilities (observatories, telescopes, etc) and as much detail about each as possible (websites/contact details)

None

(v) Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would you rate your country in terms of Professional Astronomy?)

Can be rated as a phase 3 country. There are currently no research and outreach activities although physics, mathematics and Earth Sciences are taught at the University of Malawi. There is interest in this area as well

### **2. Public Understanding of Astronomy:**

(i) What governmental astronomy/science outreach programmes for the public take place (co-ordinated either by government departments or national facilities)

None

(ii) What non-governmental astronomy/science outreach programmes for the public take place (NGO activities or international programmes that your country is involved in)

None

(iii) Comment on the presence of astronomy in the media (TV, radio, newspapers). Is it very prominent? Are there specific programmes on astronomy? Is the media generally willing to publish news on astronomy?

Not very prominent except for astronomical events e.g. eclipse that happen once in a while

(iv) Comment on the presence of astronomy/science in the general culture of the people. Are there any specific challenges or setbacks? Is astronomy a welcome subject of conversation?

It is a welcome subject of discussion although the culture of the people is that there is a general lack of appreciation for the astronomy/science

(v) Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would you rate your country in terms of Public Understanding of Astronomy?

Phase 3

### **3. Astronomy in Schools:**

(i) What governmental astronomy/science education and outreach programmes for schools take place (co-ordinated either by government departments or national facilities)

As mentioned earlier, the various elements of astronomy are only tackled within other disciplines. There is currently no institution that teaches astronomy either due to lack of expertise and associated requirements for teaching this science.

(ii) What non-governmental astronomy/science education and outreach programmes for schools take place (NGO activities or international programmes that your country is involved in)

None

(iii) Comment on the presence of astronomy in the school curriculum. Is it part of the school curriculum? Is it very prominent? What age groups?

Not very prominent. Only tackled at a cursory level

(iv) Comment on the status of astronomy/science in schools. Are there any specific challenges or setbacks? Sufficient number of students studying maths and science? General interest in maths/science/astronomy in schools?

There is general interest in maths and science more especially astronomy. Just requires additional motivation. There is also strong commitment by government to advance science and technology.

(v) Self evaluation (according to the different phases above, how would you rate your country in terms of Astronomy in Schools?

Phase 3

**Any other general comments or information that you feel would be useful for this survey?**

There is a lot on interest in astronomy at different levels of the society but even in education institutions starting from primary up to tertiary levels. What is lacking are the skills and facilities to inculcate a culture of appreciation of this discipline. The Cairo conference should among other outcomes, make deliberate efforts to promote those countries without the know-how but with interest so that the research in the area is enhanced. The “open-skies principle” should unite both the developing and developed countries in research and outreach activities in astronomy