



Photo by Lawrence Lazarus, Palladium

MALAWI COUNTRY PROFILE

Malawi has enjoyed more than 50 years of peaceful independence and has long been a close partner with the United States. With USAID support, the Government of Malawi is working to strengthen governance, expand the educational and economic opportunities available to its people, and promote the growth of its private sector.

Malawi has a rich and vibrant cultural history and a strong tradition of democracy, but it lacks some of the economic advantages of its neighbors: it is landlocked with an economy that relies largely on agriculture and natural resources, and is dependent on imports for most essential commodities. The country also has a very high birth rate, low levels of educational attainment, significant environmental degradation, and a changing climate that adversely impacts the subsistence agriculture practiced by three-quarters of its households.

OUR WORK

USAID partners with the Government of Malawi and local and international organizations on a shared development agenda to address these challenges. In close alignment with Malawi 2063, USAID's 2020–2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy aims to work with the government and civil society to build a more self-reliant Malawi that is gender-equitable and democratically accountable. The strategy focuses on three development objectives to help achieve this goal: (1) strengthening the accountability and effectiveness of the public sector; (2) helping Malawi's youth lead healthy, informed, and productive lives; and (3) ensuring that a more diversified and inclusive private sector drives sustainable wealth creation. USAID coordinates a wide range of activities to reach these objectives through its education, health, economic growth and agriculture, and democracy and governance programs.

EDUCATION

USAID partners with the Ministry of Education to deliver the essential skills youth need to live healthier, more productive lives. USAID interventions strengthen the education system, improving children's early grade reading skills, teacher practice, and institutional service delivery of Malawi's National Reading Program. USAID supports the most marginalized and vulnerable learners, including adolescent girls and young women, youth from rural backgrounds, and learners with disabilities. USAID is building secondary schools closer to where youth live to reduce barriers that prevent them from accessing secondary education. USAID strengthens the higher education system by increasing the market relevance of degree programs and course offerings. We expand access to tertiary education through open and distance e-learning opportunities, partnerships with industry for internships, and scholarships for the most marginalized learners.

HEALTH, NUTRITION, AND POPULATION

In coordination with the Ministry of Health, Finance, and local governments, USAID programs help prevent and treat malaria, tuberculosis, HIV, and emerging diseases and support people living with HIV, including orphans and vulnerable children. USAID projects support the Government of Malawi's ability to deliver health services more effectively and equitably across the country, especially to underserved rural areas, with financial and technical support to health facilities and community health workers. USAID also supports the management of essential medicines and commodities and strengthening of systems for data collection, human resource management, and financing. We also help the Ministry to expand access to voluntary family planning services to improve family health, reduce poverty, increase gender equality, and promote women's empowerment.

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

USAID's market-led investments aim to increase the adoption of resilient livelihoods and systems, increase economic competitiveness among Malawian businesses, and improve the enabling environment for wealth creation. Our activities promote the expansion of Malawi's private sector; increase diversification, commercialization and value-addition in the agriculture, energy and natural resource sectors; mobilize access to finance; strengthen small and medium enterprises; and improve nutrition and resilience, food security, and rural livelihoods for the most vulnerable. We work jointly with the government to address risks to Malawi's economic development, such as illegal charcoal, overfishing, and environmental crimes, and promote access to renewable energy. For those affected by conflict and natural disasters, we deliver emergency humanitarian assistance.

DEMOCRACY, RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE

Working closely with the Government of Malawi and civil society partners, USAID activities improve the accountability and efficiency of local and national government services; increase citizen participation in decision-making; and support greater accountability through support to Parliament and oversight institutions. We also support local non-governmental organizations to promote the rights of citizens, combat human trafficking, and promote a robust civil society.

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