Malawi’s economic development challenges are interwoven and inseparable. USAID works to support Malawi 2063 with multi-sector, integrated solutions designed to mobilize Malawi’s private sector to lift people out of poverty and food insecurity and accelerate Malawi’s ability to achieve inclusive, resilient, and sustainable wealth generation.

OUR IMPACT

$4 million
Since 2016, USAID investments have mobilized more than $4 million in agricultural financing, improving agricultural productivity for smallholder farmers.

20,000
USAID provided technical assistance to more than 20,000 micro, small, and medium enterprises to improve business performance, which led to more than $26 million in sales for agricultural producers.

700,000
Since 2017, USAID has helped to bring close to 700,000 hectares of natural forests in 12 forest reserves under improved natural resources management, providing livelihood benefits to more than 56,000 beneficiaries around these forest reserves.

540,000
In 2021, USAID distributed $6.7 million in cash transfers to 108,000 food insecure households and provided support to government-led, in-kind maize grain distributions that reached 540,000 people.
APPROACH

Agriculture is the foundation of Malawi’s economy, but the sector’s contribution to gross domestic product is declining. Malawi’s economy is largely informal and small and medium businesses face many obstacles. There is a need for accelerated economic growth that takes advantage of Malawi’s agricultural and natural resource potential and engages with companies and partners to expand markets, trade and exports, investments, access to credit to grow jobs, incomes, and micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises in a manner that is inclusive, resilient, and environmentally and socially sustainable. Ultimately, a prosperous Malawi reduces food insecurity and increases resilience.

USAID’s strategic investments apply market principles and a private sector lens. We are partnering with the Government of Malawi and a wide array of actors to increase economic competitiveness among Malawian businesses, expand trade and investments, and access to finance, strengthen resilient livelihoods and systems, recover and maintain natural resources, and improve the enabling environment for wealth creation. We do this while also helping vulnerable households be more food secure through cash transfers and jobs for conservation works; addressing child nutrition; and responding to emergencies. Each year, we invest $48 million in agriculture; humanitarian assistance and food security; environment and climate change; power; and trade.

RESULTS

• USAID works closely with the Ministry of Agriculture to accelerate the identification and release of more productive seed varieties for cash crop production. Through the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Peanut, more than 1,000 new, commercially valuable, climate-resilient groundnut varieties are being researched through public-private partnerships, and three new varieties have been released since 2020.

• USAID helps build the capacity of more than 500,000 small holder farmers to improve agricultural productivity and increase food security. In 2021, USAID’s activities leveraged over $2.75 million in new private sector investment to support food security and nutrition.

• USAID has helped the Government of Malawi to strengthen conservation and support fisheries livelihoods in Lake Malawi covering nearly 2.3 million hectares in 2021. Through our partnership, we have preserved biodiversity in 72 community-managed fish sanctuaries in fish breeding habitats, resulting in a 22 percent increase in fish diversity across all Malawian lakes.

• Since 2017, USAID has helped to bring close to 700,000 hectares of natural forests in 12 forest reserves under improved natural resources management, providing livelihood benefits to more than 56,000 beneficiaries around these forest reserves.

• Our regional Trade and Energy programs support Malawi to expand exports and to increase renewable energy generation, clean energy alternatives and increase access points to on-grid and off-grid power. In 2021, USAID facilitated over $600,000 worth of exports to South Africa and assisted four energy companies to promote solar home systems, resulting in nearly 74,000 new connections.

• Through the Southern Africa Energy Program, USAID is helping Malawi to increase renewable energy generation, expand clean energy alternatives, and scale-up access points to on-grid and off-grid power. In 2020, USAID supported the Government of Malawi to operationalize its strategic plan, resulting in the addition of 33 megawatts to the grid.