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, has few 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’s Vision 2063, USAID’s 2020–2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy partner with the Malawian government and civil society to build a more self-reliant nation 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) pursuing a private sector that increases inclusive and sustainable wealth generation. USAID coordinates a wide range of projects 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 improve access to quality education and expand the essential skills youth need to live healthier, more productive lives. We also help educators improve children’s early grade reading skills, provide teacher training, and expand access to and safety of schools, so that more youth, especially adolescent girls, complete primary and secondary school. In coordination with the National Reading Program, we supported the production and distribution of more than 24
million textbooks and supplementary readers, achieving a 1:1 student-to-textbook ratio in Standards 1-4 (grades 1-4) for the first time ever.

**HEALTH, NUTRITION, AND POPULATION**

In coordination with the Ministry of Health and local governments, USAID programs help prevent and treat malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV and support people living with HIV, including orphans and vulnerable children. USAID projects support the Ministry of Health’s ability to deliver health services more effectively across the country, especially to underserved rural areas, with direct financial support for hiring new staff and staff training. 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 helps boost agricultural productivity, increase incomes, and improve nutrition. We train communities to introduce and enforce forest protection and sustainable management practices to maintain habitats and reduce emissions. We also help fisheries expand to provide better nutrition and sustainable livelihoods. We deliver emergency food assistance to those affected by conflict and natural disasters and provide food assistance to address the underlying causes of hunger. Between 2012 and 2020, USAID provided 17.8 million Malawians with humanitarian food assistance worth $224 million.

**DEMOCRACY, RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE**

Working closely with the Government of Malawi and civil society partners, USAID projects improve the accountability and efficiency of local and national government services; increase citizen participation in decision-making; and build citizen capacity to advocate for responsive, effective, and fair government policies and services. We also support the Malawian government to strengthen the civil service for better government performance.

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USAID and PEPFAR provide youth-friendly health services to adolescent girls and young women.

PHOTO: USAID/MALAWI

USAID is increasing the numbers and expanding skills of an employable youth workforce.

PHOTO: USAID/MALAWI

USAID helped register 6.8 million voters in 2019, strengthened civic and voter education, and monitored fairness and accuracy in reporting.

PHOTO: USAID/MALAWI