



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Malawi Country Brief December 2024

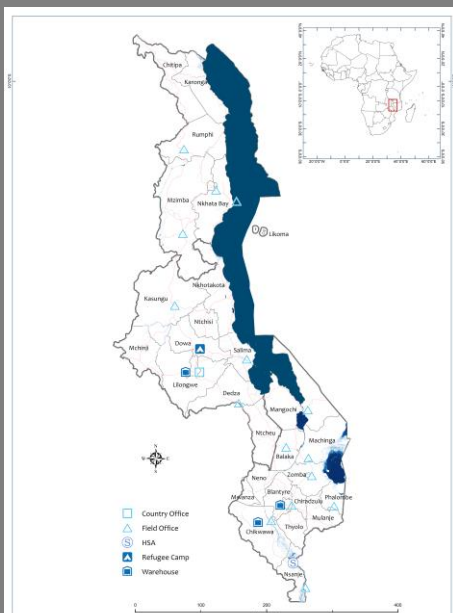


Operational Context

Malawi is a small landlocked country in Sub-Saharan Africa with a rapidly expanding population at 3 percent per year. With most livelihoods dependent on rainfed agriculture, the population is highly vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters, especially drought and cyclone-induced floods.

Malawi's challenges are compounded by weak economic growth, high overall debt distress, low primary school completion (51 percent), a high prevalence of stunting and high prevalence of HIV/AIDS infection (8.8 percent). The country is also facing a food security crisis because of El Niño-induced dry spells that damaged 44 percent of the national crop area.

The UN World Food Programme (WFP) supports the Government for a food and nutrition secure and resilient future, guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). WFP has been present in Malawi since 1965.



Population: est. 20 million

2022 Human Development Index: 169 out of 191 countries

Income Level: Low

Stunting: 35 percent of children aged 6-59 months old

In Numbers

19,173 mt of maize distributed for *El Niño* response

USD 1.8 million in cash-based transfers distributed for *El Niño* response (September-October)

1.5 million people assisted for *El Niño* response

11 million six-month net funding requirements (January - June 2025) representing 18 percent of total requirements

Operational Updates

El Niño Response: As part of the national efforts to support the *El Niño* drought response and the United Nations Flash Appeal, WFP is working with the Government of Malawi to address acute food shortages. By the end of 2024, WFP had provided food assistance to 1.5 million people, including cash-based transfers to 208,000 individuals. Together with the Government, WFP aims to assist 2 million of the 5.7 million people facing acute food insecurity during the lean season from October 2024 to March 2025.

Refugees: WFP is providing cash-based transfers to refugees and asylum seekers in Dzaleka Refugee camp. In December, 56,760 refugees (60 percent women) received assistance, covering 75 percent of their food needs. The number of refugees has increased in the last few months, creating an escalating challenge. With the current funding, WFP can only maintain the 75 percent ration until the end of February 2025. Without urgent additional resources, it will not be possible to sustain this level of support beyond that point. Immediate funding is critical to ensure continued assistance for those in need.

Nutrition: Despite ongoing efforts to improve food security and nutrition, cases of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) continue to rise. In November 2024, SAM admissions increased by 21 percent while MAM admissions surged by 185 percent. WFP continues supporting the Ministry of Health with lifesaving food commodities, including super-cereal plus (CSB++), for MAM treatment in children aged 6-59 months across four districts. Since September 2024, over 22,600 children have received treatment. In 2025, WFP plans to expand support to pregnant and breastfeeding women, individuals with HIV and TB, and three additional districts. Capacity building for 192 health facilities is already underway to ensure effective programme implementation.

School Meals: As part of the *El Niño* emergency response, WFP will continue to provide emergency hot meals to over 256,000 students until March 2025 and begin distributing take-home rations to 90,000 learners in January. In December, WFP Malawi, in partnership with the Malawi Ministry of Education and the Brazil Centre of Excellence, launched the national school feeding strategy, advocating for greater investment in school feeding programmes. This month, WFP hosted a community event to promote clean cooking and raise awareness about sustainable practices, aiming to reduce environmental impact.

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Cover photo: Beneficiary at a food distribution point in Blantyre District. © WFP/Patricia Cepeda.

Country Strategic Plan (2024-2028)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
80.6 m	107.5 m	11 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs.

Focus area: Crisis Response

Activity 1: Provide food assistance, nutrition, and livelihood support to populations in anticipation of and response to seasonal or other shocks, leveraging national social protection systems where possible.

Activity 2: Provide food and nutrition assistance, services and livelihood support to refugees, asylum seekers and host communities.

Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: People have better nutrition, health & education.

Focus area: Root Causes

Activity 3: Promote optimal nutrition practices and strengthen partnerships with food system actors to increase availability and utilisation of diversified nutrient dense foods.

Activity 4: Promote the provision of safe, nutritious, and diversified meals to pre and primary school children delivered in an integrated, inclusive and gender responsive environment, and linked to local production and markets

Strategic Result 3: Sustainable Food Systems

Strategic Outcome 3: People have improved & sustainable livelihoods.

Focus area: Resilience building

Activity 5: Provide an integrated package of climate and nutrition-sensitive resilience and livelihoods building support to households and communities, particularly smallholder farmers and value chain actors.

Strategic Result 4: Capacity Strengthening

Strategic Outcome 4: National programmes & systems are strengthened.

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activity 6: Provide technical support to national and sub-national actors for resilient food systems, emergency preparedness and response, health, and supply chain systems.

Activity 7: Provide technical expertise and targeted systems and capacities to national and local actors involved in food and nutrition security, social protection, education, health, disaster risk management, anticipatory action and emergency preparedness and response aimed at building government-led, sustainable, scalable national systems.

Strategic Result 5: Enhance Global Partnerships

Strategic Outcome 5: Humanitarian & development actors are more efficient & effective.

Focus area: Crisis response

Activity 8: Provide services through the Logistics Cluster to the National Disaster Management Agency and humanitarian and development partners to enhance logistics coordination and supply chain management.

Activity 9: Provide effective and efficient access to on-demand services to Government, humanitarian, and development actors to augment their capacity to ensure more effective and efficient interventions.

Livelihoods: WFP reached 31,600 targeted households for the food-for-assets interventions under the Integrated Resilience Programme, with “double-ration” cash transfers for work completed in October and November 2024. Each household received MWK 100,000 (approximately USD 57). The cash helps beneficiaries meet their immediate food demands while creating productive assets to improve their livelihoods. Transfers for December’s works will be conducted in January 2025, marking the closure of the 2024 implementation cycle.

Food Systems: WFP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Lilongwe University, is finalising the value chain and market system analysis for sesame, cowpeas, and sorghum. WFP has set up a technical team to prepare for stakeholders’ validation in late-January. WFP is upgrading Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (ADMARC) weighbridges in five districts to replace outdated manual systems. A Rapid Market Viability Assessment will be conducted to strengthen ADMARC’s role in WFP’s procurement programmes.

Health Supply Chain: The 2024 Simulation Exercise report was validated this month. Conducted at the Humanitarian Staging Area in August 2024, the exercise identified critical areas for improvement, laying the groundwork for continued progress. The lessons learned serve to strengthen emergency response systems, fostering resilience and equipping health logistics actors to better address future natural disasters and public health emergencies.

Emergency Preparedness and Response: Tropical Storm Chido impacted Malawi on 15 December 2024, causing less damage than expected. While WFP did not need to respond to this emergency, WFP supported Malawi’s emergency preparedness efforts - in collaboration with the Government - ahead of the storm. The Government activated all emergency clusters and established an emergency operations centre in the southern region. Critical transport and logistics services were prepositioned from 13th December. Search-and-rescue equipment, including boats, as well as transportation and storage services for partners, were deployed, ready to use from the weekend onwards.

Transport and Logistics Cluster: As co-lead of the transport and logistics cluster, WFP is supporting the Department of Disaster Management Affairs in transporting maize for the *El Niño* response. In December, WFP transported 16,163 mt of maize from the national Strategic Grain Reserve to communities in nine districts (Blantyre, Chiradzulu, Mulanje, Mwanza, Neno, Nsanje, Ntcheu, Thyolo and Zomba) on behalf of the Government.

Challenges

WFP faces a funding gap of USD 11 million for January to June 2025.

Donors

Adaptation Fund, Canada, Denmark, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, European Union International Partnerships, France, Germany, Government of Flanders, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Jesus Christ Church of Latter-day Saints, Malawi, Multilateral Funds, Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Takeda, United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), United States Agency for International Development Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID BHA), and WFP’s Emerging Donors Matching Fund. (in alphabetical order).