



World Food Programme

SAVING
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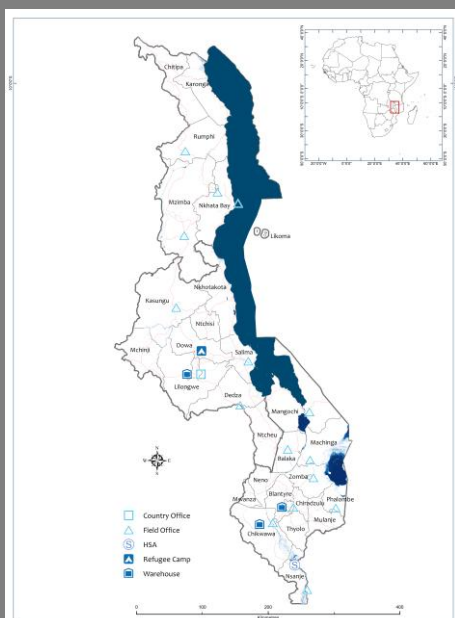
WFP Malawi Country Brief August 2025



Operational Context

Malawi is a small landlocked country in Sub-Saharan Africa with a population expanding rapidly at around three 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). 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. The country is facing a food security crisis because of back-to-back climate shocks and high prices of food.



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

65,000 people (mostly children) have been treated for moderate acute malnutrition since September 2024

58,000 refugees and asylum seekers have been assisted with cash-based transfers

USD 105 million six-month net funding requirements (September 2025 to February 2026) representing 84 percent of total requirements

Operational Updates

Preparations for the emergency lean season response: Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET, August 2025) reports IPC Phase 3 food insecurity in southern districts of Phalombe, Mulanje, Thyolo, Neno, Mwanza and Blantyre. Food crisis levels will likely increase to districts of Nsanje, Chikwawa, and Balaka by December 2025. WFP, in collaboration with the Government, will begin delivering food assistance in October, aiming to reach 1.9 million people. Securing additional resources will be key to delivering a comprehensive response.

Refugees: WFP continues to provide monthly cash-based food assistance to refugees and asylum seekers in Dzaleka Refugee camp. Due to funding shortfalls, WFP has only been able to provide transfers of MWK 15,600 (USD 9.00) to cover 50 percent of the caloric requirements for the past seven months. Over 58,000 refugees currently reside in the camp with numbers expected to rise by approximately 200 new arrivals and 150 births registered monthly. Donor contributions remain the backbone of our efforts to improve food and nutrition security and strengthen livelihoods.

Nutrition: Malnutrition rates surge during the lean season, with Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) nearly doubling from 4.4 percent to 7.1 percent during the past lean season (Ministry of Health, 2025). FEWS NET estimates GAM rates will remain between 5–9.9 percent in the worst-affected districts through January 2026. Since September, WFP has provided MAM treatment to over 65,000 individuals, including 4,519 new caseloads in August alone. WFP and UNICEF remain committed to supporting treatment and prevention of malnutrition.

School Meals: WFP links over 35,000 local farmers to schools through its Home-Grown School Feeding Model (HGSM), offering a consistent market for their produce. To this effect, WFP has introduced a digital marketplace for farmers called Farm2Go to inform and connect farmers and schools. WFP continues to support the Government's initiatives to reach 100 percent coverage – currently at 43 percent – of the HGSM by drafting school meals expansion roadmaps.

Livelihoods: To strengthen market linkages that support smallholder farmers and local food systems, WFP participated in the National Agriculture Fair in August organised by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Malawi Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, WFP and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) trained 100 farmers in Zomba district under the seed multiplication initiative to support quality seed production.

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Cover photo: WFP warehouse in Blantyre © WFP/Patricia Cepeda

Food Systems: To strengthen quality assurance in sesame exports and promote resilient value chains, WFP has trained over 92 Malawi Bureau of Standards staff and is equipping smallholder farmers to align cowpea, sesame, and sorghum production with market demand. The goal is to improve incomes and livelihoods of 3,858 farmers. To support the Government's efforts in improving efficiency in commodity handling, 4 out of 10 Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (ADMARC) weighbridges have been upgraded.

Anticipatory Action Activation: To reduce human suffering, economic loss and response costs, WFP and the Government of Malawi have activated an Anticipatory Action Plan in response to drought alerts in Zomba, Nsanje and Phalombe districts. This first operationalisation of the programme in Malawi includes early warning messages reaching over 1.3 million people, agricultural input support to 4,800 farming households in October, and anticipatory cash transfers during the peak lean season (January–February).

Emergency Preparedness and Response: To strengthen disaster preparedness across Southern Africa, WFP is supporting the Southern African Development Community in launching a multi-country initiative covering Malawi, Mozambique, Madagascar, Zimbabwe and Zambia. The project aims to develop a Regional Prepositioning Strategy, enhance Emergency Response Teams, and advocate for humanitarian logistics protocols to accelerate the cross-border movement of life-saving relief items.

Transport and Logistics Cluster: As co-lead of the transport and logistics cluster, WFP supports the Government with prepositioning maize ahead of the start for the 2025/2026 lean season. So far, WFP has supported the Government with transportation of 1, 295 mt of maize to two districts.

On demand services: The Government of Malawi and WFP signed an agreement for WFP to procure, import and transport a total of 47,693 mt of maize for the El Niño response. The full consignment has not been distributed across Malawi and due to savings made, procurement and delivery of an additional 8,000 mt is underway to support the 2025/2026 Emergency Lean Season Response.

WFP faces a funding gap of USD 105 million between September 2025 and February 2026.

Donors: Adaptation Fund, Canada, Denmark, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, European Union International Partnerships, France, Germany, Government of Flanders, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, The Church of Jesus Christ 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*).

Country Strategic Plan (2024-2028)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
135 m	69 m	105 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.