



World Food Programme

SAVING
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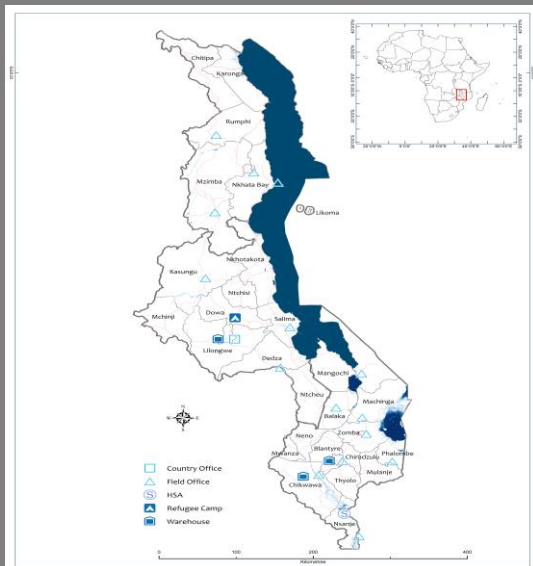
WFP Malawi Country Brief September 2025



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

4 million people (22 percent of Malawi's population) will be food insecure through March 2026

60,000 refugees and asylum seekers have been assisted with cash-based transfers

USD 93 million six-month net funding requirements (September 2025 to February 2026) representing 76 percent of total requirements

Operational Updates

- **Emergency lean season response:** The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report for the 2025–2026 consumption season shows an estimated 4 million people (22 percent of the analysed population) are likely to face IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis), including 8,000 projected to experience IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) through March 2026. This is driven by high food prices, economic instability, and poor harvests, compounded by four consecutive years of major disasters. WFP plans to assist 1.9 million people during the emergency lean season. WFP requires USD 69 million for a 4-month response in nine districts facing high food insecurity.
- **Refugees:** About 60,000 refugees currently reside in Dzaleka Refugee camp with numbers expected to rise by approximately 400 new arrivals and 150 births monthly. To ensure everyone has access to food, WFP continues to provide monthly cash-based food assistance to these refugees and asylum seekers. In August WFP conducted a double distribution to cover for August and September, to ensure sustenance pre and post elections. 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 eight months.
- **Nutrition:** In response to the rising malnutrition, partnership with the Ministry of Health, WFP and UNICEF is providing nutrition support for management of acute malnutrition and scaling prevention through supplements, cash top-ups, and community outreach. WFP also supports resilience and school meals programmes in 14 districts as part of malnutrition prevention.
- In September WFP reached 19,465 children with specialised nutritious foods to manage moderate acute malnutrition with an 87 percent recovery rate, exceeding WHO Sphere standard of 75 percent.
- **School Meals:** Children are back to school. WFP has transferred Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) funds to district councils to support over 800,000 learners in 712 primary schools and 140 Early Childhood Development centres. In addition, to support the Government's initiatives to reach 100 percent coverage – currently at 43 percent – WFP supported the Deputy Director, Department of School Health and Nutrition to participate in the Second Global School Meals Coalition Summit in Fortaleza, Brazil. WFP remains committed to promote linkages between school meals, local farmers, and inclusive economic growth.

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Cover photo: Nutrition screening at Mloza Health Facility © WFP/Zaithwa Chabvuta

Country Strategic Plan (2024-2028)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
122 m	86 m	93 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.

Operational Updates (Continued)

- **Livelihoods:** WFP convened dissemination meetings for the final evaluation of the integrated resilience programme's Adaptation Fund project across the targeted districts of Balaka, Machinga and Zomba. The sessions brought together stakeholders across all levels to co-create actionable recommendations for future programming and policy.
- **Food Systems:** WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) jointly conducted an investment and sustainability assessment to strengthen the sesame, cowpea and sorghum value chains in Malawi. A baseline survey for the three crops was carried out by Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR). The results are being used to identify where support is needed and to design a plan for tracking progress and measuring impact. In addition, with funding from Japan, WFP is procuring genetic testing equipment for the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) to enhance the testing and certification of agricultural commodities to meet international quality standards.
- **Health Supply Chain:** WFP continues to strengthen national health systems through digital innovation and data-driven tools. In partnership with the Ministry of Health, WFP supported the rollout of KoBoToolbox forms in 720 health facilities and developed dashboards to track medicine consumption and vaccine stock gaps. These efforts are aimed at enhancing decision-making, improving supply chain visibility, and building long-term resilience across Malawi's health sector.
- **Emergency Preparedness and Response:** WFP is working with the Southern African Development Community to strengthen disaster preparedness across Southern Africa. WFP country teams from Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe in collaboration with regional and national stakeholders conducted a planning meeting for upcoming activities including standby rescue services.
- **Transport and Logistics Cluster:** As co-lead of the transport and logistics cluster, WFP supports the Government with prepositioning maize ahead of 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 47,693 mt of maize which was distributed during the El Niño response. Due to savings made, procurement and delivery of an additional 8,000 mt is underway to support the 2025/2026 Emergency Lean Season Response.

Challenges

- WFP faces a funding gap of USD 93 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).