



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

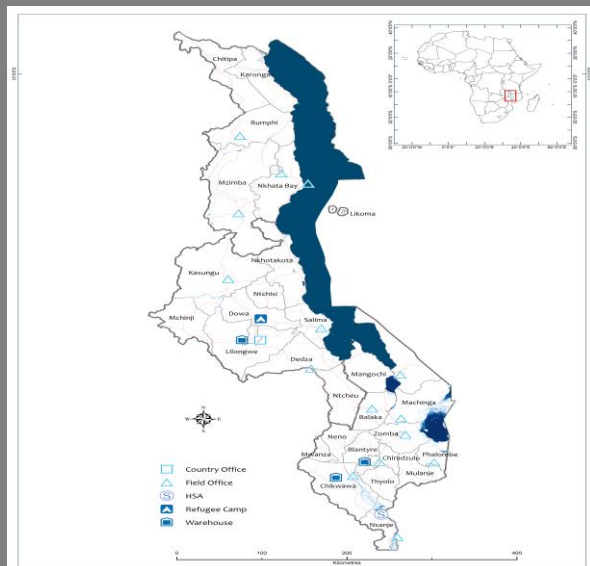
WFP Malawi Country Brief October 2025



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

Income Level: **Low**

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

In Numbers

A State of disaster has been declared in 11 Districts across Malawi, three in central Malawi (Lilongwe, Nkhosakota, Salima) and eight in the south (Blantyre, Chikwawa, Mulanje, Mwanza, Neno, Nsanje, Phalombe, Thyolo).

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

USD 103 million six-month net funding requirements (November 2025 to March 2026) representing 75 percent of total requirements.

Operational Updates

- **Emergency lean season response:** Latest [IPC results](#) indicate that 4 million people (one in five) are projected to face crisis level (IPC Phase 3) food insecurity and 8,000 in emergency conditions (IPC Phase 4) between October 2025 and March 2026. On 25 October, the President declared a State of Disaster in 11 of Malawi's 28 districts. The Government has since launched a 2025-2026 Lean Season Food Insecurity Response Programme targeting about four million people nationwide.
- WFP aims to assist 1.9 million people during the emergency lean season response, however, funding challenges persist, WFP requires USD 76 million for a 4-month response in nine districts facing high food insecurity.
- **Refugees:** Dzaleka refugee camp hosts around 60,000 refugees, with 400 new arrivals and 150 births monthly. WFP provides monthly food assistance through cash-based transfers. Due to funding gaps, refugees are receiving only 50 percent of recommended calorie needs. In partnership with UNHCR and the Department for Refugees, WFP is raising awareness of available assistance and ensuring access to community feedback mechanisms.
- **Nutrition:** The I/NGO Humanitarian Committee has issued an urgent Nutrition Call to Action due to persistently high stunting, rising acute malnutrition, and declining household access to nutritious diets. Nutrition services remain uneven and at risk. The Call urges stronger coordination and expansion of community-based services to safeguard child growth, learning, and long-term development. In response, the Ministry of Health, with WFP and UNICEF, continues supporting management of acute malnutrition. In October, WFP reached 18,019 children with specialized nutritious foods to address moderate acute malnutrition, achieving an 87 percent recovery rate.
- **School Meals:** WFP supported the Ministry of Education and partners from non-state actors and the donor community in reviewing the school meals expansion roadmap. The meeting also focused on aligning country commitments to the Global School Meals Coalition and adopting Terms of Reference for the National Taskforce on school feeding expansion. WFP's participation in the meeting reaffirmed its commitment to ending malnutrition by strengthening national school feeding systems.

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Cover photo: A mother and her daughter at Mloza Health Facility
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Country Strategic Plan (2024-2028)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
136 m	88 m	103 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 distributed MK167.7 million (USD 95,700) to 6,423 beneficiaries in Machinga, Balaka and Zomba under climate insurance schemes. The goal of these payouts is to reduce suffering and support recovery for smallholder farmers from below average harvests and drought conditions. This aligns with WFP Malawi's five-year Zero Hunger strategy, which promotes household food security through resilient, self-reliant villages.
- **Food Systems:** WFP advanced its food systems transformation agenda through capacity-building and market-oriented interventions. 60 farmers from 20 Farmer Organizations (FO) were trained in record keeping, bookkeeping and gross margin analysis to improve production and pricing decisions, with the aim of increasing se profitability by 15-20 percent. During World Food Day, WFP showcased sorghum, sesame and cowpea value chains to promote crop diversification, nutrition, and climate resilience agriculture. WFP also developed 20 FO business plans to enable aggregation and collective marketing in Phalombe and trained 273 farmers in the Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion (SHEP) approach and value addition, projected to boost incomes by up to 30 percent.
- **Health Supply Chain:** To improve performance and accountability across health facilities, WFP provided technical support to the Ministry of Health's capacity in supply chain management. WFP conducted monitoring visits in 130 health facilities across 13 districts and capacity building to over 260 medical personnel. The exercise identified and addressed key gaps in warehouse practices, data quality, and supply chain visibility.
- **Emergency Preparedness and Response:** To strengthen and ensure operational effectiveness of national disaster response efforts, WFP participated in the development of the National Contingency Plan led by the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA), aligning it with the National Anticipatory Action Framework. Ahead of the 2025/2026 Lean Season Response, WFP also engaged with DoDMA to consolidate the response plan and ensure operational alignment.
- **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 1,534 mt of maize.
- **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 was procured and delivered to support the 2025/2026 Emergency Lean Season Response.

Challenges

- WFP faces a funding gap of USD 103 million between November 2025 and March 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 of America and WFP's Emerging Donors Matching Fund (*in alphabetical order*).