



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://feedthefuture.gov/country/malawi>

COUNTRY PROFILE



Malawi

In Malawi, Feed the Future is targeting investments in specific regions for maximum impact. These statistics reflect the realities of Malawi and the results of Feed the Future's work there.

POPULATION	POVERTY	STUNTING	RURAL	GDP
5.2 Million Number of people living in Feed the Future target regions in Malawi (rural)	54.5 Percent Percentage of people living in poverty in Feed the Future target regions (rural)	42.3 Percent Percentage of children under 5 suffering from stunting in Feed the Future target regions (rural)	84 Percent Percentage of population living in rural Malawi (World Bank, 2012)	5.4 Percent Annual GDP growth (World Bank, 2015)
FARMERS	SALES	NUTRITION	LAND	INVESTMENT
314 Thousand Producers using new technology and practices with Feed the Future's help in FY15	\$5.8 Million Income earned by Feed the Future farmers in FY15 from agricultural sales	3 Million Children under 5 reached with nutrition help in FY15 across Malawi	54 Thousand Hectares tended with improved technologies or management practices in FY15	\$340 Thousand New private investment leveraged by Feed the Future in FY15

Approach

Malawi has benefited from decades of peace and security and the Government of Malawi has elevated agriculture and nutrition as key national policy priorities. The country has demonstrated leadership through stable governance and economic growth. However, high population density and growth, along with only a single rainy season per year, pose distinct challenges that make Malawi's agricultural growth precarious and make the country susceptible to food insecurity.

The agriculture sector represents over 30 percent of gross domestic product and employs 80 percent of Malawi's population. However, only 10 to 15 percent of smallholders sell grain each year. A litany of challenges, including small land holdings, a poorly developed seed sector, weak agricultural extension services, limited access to finance and significant policy constraints, hamper the transformation of Malawi's agriculture sector.

Partly as a result of these challenges, over half the population of Malawi lives below the poverty line. While overall poverty rates and caloric intake have improved in recent years, high rates of undernutrition, HIV/AIDS and malaria, as well as underdeveloped markets and low agricultural productivity, inhibit food security and economic development.

High freight costs, damaged infrastructure and unpredictable economic policies have impeded efforts to increase and diversify both regional and international trade. Lack of access to improved water sources and proper sanitation systems contributes to cholera outbreaks during the rainy season.

To address these challenges and leverage opportunities, Malawi has developed the Agricultural Sector-Wide Approach in consultation with stakeholders and has made commitments under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development

Program. Feed the Future activities complement Malawi's own efforts to improve food security and nutrition and reduce poverty by helping develop value chains, improve nutrition options and create an enabling policy environment.

Strategy

Goal: Reduce the **prevalence of poverty** in rural areas of Feed the Future target districts by 20 percent.

- 2011 baseline: 66.7 percent
- 2017 target: 53.4 percent

Goal: Reduce the **prevalence of stunting in children** under 5 years old in rural areas of Feed the Future target districts by 20 percent.

- 2010 baseline: 49.2 percent
- 2017 target: 39.4 percent

To achieve its goals, Feed the Future is making key investments to:

- Improve the nutrition of women and children
- Expand agricultural trade
- Increase production and consumption of legumes including groundnuts and soy
- Scale up the cultivation and consumption of vitamin-rich sweet potatoes
- Engage the Government of Malawi to improve the policy environment

Feed the Future is focusing its efforts in targeted regions and value chains to maximize impact.

Value Chains

- Legumes (including, but not limited to, soy and groundnuts)
- Orange-fleshed sweet potatoes

Target Regions

- **Primary:** Rural populations living in the Dedza, Mchinji, Lilongwe Rural, Ntcheu, Mangochi, Blantyre Rural, Balaka and Machinga districts in the Central and Southern Regions
- **Resilience Focus:** Rural populations living in the Chikwawa and Nsanje districts in the Southern Region.

Program Highlights

Value Chain Approach. Feed the Future investments in the legume and orange-fleshed sweet potato value chains are designed to boost market competitiveness and promote agricultural diversification. These value chains have the potential to expand markets, benefit livelihoods, diversify diets, boost resilience to shocks and risks, and leverage donor support in Malawi. Feed the Future facilitates a range of services within these value chains, including access to quality inputs, promotion of improved agronomic practices, and collective marketing. Feed the Future focuses on strengthening the capacity of local organizations and the private sector to provide value chain services and address the needs of farmers, emphasizing the creation of sustainable models of service provision. A promising component is the promotion of structured and transparent commodity trading systems. By linking smallholder farmers and producer organizations with domestic and regional buyers, Feed the Future is helping farmers increase their profits.

Resilience. Malawi is prone to natural disasters, such as droughts and floods, leading to food insecurity in many parts of the country. Feed the Future supports early warning systems that improve the quantity, quality and timeliness of information and predictions of extreme weather events, economic shocks, and other threats to food security. These systems monitor and assess environmental and socio-economic hazards that affect market price trends, nutrition and cross-border trade. Feed the Future is helping families increase their resilience by diversifying away from growing maize monocultures to use more climate-resilient crops like legumes, orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, and drought-tolerant cereals. This approach includes increasing the availability of smallholder farmers' access to drought-tolerant maize varieties as well as sorghum and millet. USAID's Food for Peace Program also provides development and food assistance in the Chikwawa and Nsanje districts in the Southern Region. Feed the Future makes strategic investments in improved agricultural technologies and agriculture and nutrition extension services to complement Food for Peace and help enhance resilience among rural populations living in these highly food insecure districts.

Nutrition. Feed the Future supports Malawi's National Nutrition Policy and Strategic Plan through interventions designed to

promote nutrition-sensitive, agricultural productivity and build the capacity of local health workers and organizations. Feed the Future's nutrition-related activities leverage and complement value chain investments and focus on behavior change and capacity building, working with district-level health workers to intensify messaging about essential nutrition actions and extension service providers to better coordinate and integrate agriculture and nutrition extension services. In 2011, Malawi joined the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement and the 1,000 Days partnership to reduce undernutrition in children from the critical window between pregnancy and a child's second birthday. Feed the Future is also implementing community "care groups" that deliver nutrition education in the same communities that benefit from value chain interventions and promote nutrition, sanitation and hygiene-related practices. These efforts increase availability of nutritious foods and lead to better diets, dietary diversity and better sanitation and hygiene. This in turn helps improve the nutrition status of women and children.

Gender Integration. Feed the Future encourages female participation in decision-making and control of resources. Both the legume and sweet potato value chains have high female participation and provide significant opportunities to support women's economic empowerment. Feed the Future takes gender-based roles and responsibilities into account when analyzing opportunities, constraints and advocacy to identify ways to enhance both male and female involvement in nutrition and value chain activities. Feed the Future provides leadership and literacy training to help women participate more fully in marketing opportunities and take leadership roles in producer organizations.

Policy. Feed the Future is working with the Government of Malawi to advance priority actions identified in its New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition Cooperation Framework to improve agricultural inputs, agricultural trade, institutional architecture and nutrition. Feed the Future is helping strengthen policy systems to ensure that the Government of Malawi has sound information and analysis on which to base policy development. Feed the Future is also strengthening the Government of Malawi's capacity to implement, monitor and evaluate agriculture and nutrition programs. At the same time, Feed the Future is helping Malawian civil society organizations engaged in the agriculture sector to build their capacity and develop advocacy, policy analysis and communication strategies to improve their participation in policy dialogue.

Scaling Innovations. Feed the Future is focusing on scaling up production of specific crops and agricultural practices in Malawi to benefit smallholder farmers and improve nutrition, including:

- Cultivation of **soybean varieties** that will provide higher yields for smallholder farmers, improve soil fertility, and increase smallholder participation in the growing commercial market for soy in Malawi and the region.
- Increased use of **doubled-up legume cropping**, a practice that farmers can use to improve soil fertility, thereby increasing their yields and food security.
- Increased supply of and demand for **orange-fleshed sweet potato**, which will improve resilience, nutrition and women's empowerment in Malawi. Increased consumption of sweet potatoes can improve vitamin A and energy intake.

Malawi was a focus country under the first phase of Feed the Future. It will continue to report on Feed the Future results through 2018.

Results

Results by the Numbers

- Nearly **314,000 farmers and other producers** applied new technologies and management practices for the first time on their farms last year with Feed the Future's help.
- Producers applied improved technologies and management practices on nearly **54,000 hectares** of land with Feed the Future's help.
- Feed the Future-supported producers sold agricultural products valued at nearly **\$5.8 million**.
- Feed the Future leveraged nearly **\$340,000** in new private investment in food and agriculture in Malawi.
- U.S. Government programs reached more than **3 million children** under 5 years old to improve their nutrition.

Impact

- **Poverty:** The prevalence of **poverty** in the areas where Feed the Future works in Malawi has **declined by 18 percent**, from 66.7 percent in 2010 to 54.5 percent in 2015.
- **Nutrition:** The prevalence of **stunting has declined by 14 percent**, from 49.2 percent in 2010 to 42.3 percent in 2015.

For more details on impact data, view the [Feed the Future 2016 progress report](#).

Key Achievements

- Feed the Future promoted sweet potato as a secondary crop immediately following the loss of maize crops from flooding and drought. Feed the Future also helped develop a new line of nutritious sweet potato products for commercialization.
- Feed the Future, in partnership with seed companies and agro-dealers, helped farmers access certified seed and inoculant.
- Feed the Future-supported care groups reached more than 122,000 families with nutrition education and behavioral change communication. Within these households, there has been positive behavior change as well as more home gardens, sanitation facilities and energy-saving stoves.

Source

These results reflect information from U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Peace Corps, U.S. African Development Foundation and the U.S. Department of the Treasury (through the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program) reported into Feed the Future's central monitoring system for fiscal year 2015 (FY15). Impact data for poverty and stunting statistics are derived from the 2015 Feed the Future FEEDBACK ZIO Interim Survey. The baseline data for poverty were collected from the 2010-2011 Malawi Integrated Household Survey 3, and the baseline data for stunting were collected from the 2010 Malawi Demographic and Health Survey. For more information on the indicators above, please view our [2016 Feed the Future progress report](#). All dollar amounts are listed in U.S. dollars.

Opportunities

Malawi's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program Country Investment Plan outlines the Government of Malawi's plans to address food insecurity and spur agriculture-led growth. The Government of Malawi has developed a National Nutrition Policy and Strategic Plan that is closely linked with this plan. These plans coordinate food security programming at the national and community levels.

The U.S. Government works closely with the European Union to support the Government of Malawi in implementing the [New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition](#) Cooperation Framework. This framework brings together the government, private sector and development partners to develop a plan to accelerate private sector investment and commercialization of Malawi's agriculture sector. Under the New Alliance, Malawi has made 35 policy commitments to improve the enabling environment for agriculture.

Looking for opportunities to work in our Feed the Future countries? Visit the opportunities tabs on our [Research](#) and [Civil Society](#) pages. If you're a [private sector](#) company interested in a partnership with Feed the Future agencies in the areas of food security and nutrition in Malawi, use our [interactive online tool](#) to learn more.

Activities

Feed the Future supports the following programs, partnerships and organizations in Malawi.

- Africa Research for Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING)
- Agriculture Sector-Wide Approach Multi-Donor Trust Fund
- Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
- Borlaug Higher Education Agricultural Research and Development (BHEARD)
- Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security (DCAFS) Coordinator
- Famine and Early Warning Systems Network (FEWSNET)
- [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Assets and Market Access](#)
- [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Climate-Resilient Beans](#)
- [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy](#)
- [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Grain Legumes](#)
- [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Horticulture](#)
- [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Nutrition](#)
- [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Peanut Productivity and Mycotoxin Control](#)
- [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Soybean Value Chain Research](#)
- Feed the Future Malawi Improved Seed Systems and Technologies
- Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation
- Global Agriculture and Food Security Program

- Global Center for Food Systems Innovation
- Health Communications for Life
- Integrating Nutrition in Value Chains
- New Alliance ICT Extension Challenge Fund
- Malawi Agriculture Policy Strengthening (MAPS)
- Mobile Money Acceleration Program
- Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services
- Peace Corps Small Project Assistance
- Program for Biosafety Systems
- Solutions for African Food Enterprises (SAFE)
- Southern Africa Trade and Investment Hub
- Strengthening Evidence-Based Agriculture Policy (SEBAP)
- [The John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program](#)
- Tiwalere II
- U.S. African Development Foundation
- USDA McGovern-Dole Food for Education Program
- U.S.-India-Africa Trilateral Agriculture Innovations Partnership

Target Regions

Funding

