



SOCIAL INDICATORS		
	Male	Female
Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)	0.334	
Percentage of Women in Parliament (2013)	22%	
Life Expectancy at birth in years (2013)	58	61
Labour Force Participation rate	82	85
Population with at least some secondary education (% aged 25 and above)	20	10
Estimated Gross National Income (GNI) per capita (USD)	\$777	\$652
Maternal mortality ratio (deaths per 100,000 live births) (2010)	460	
Adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 women aged 15-19) (2010-15)	145	

REGION- AFRICAN		
	Male	Female
Population (Estimated,000)	8809	8787
Population Density (2014 -per sq. km)	134.3	
Human Development Index (HDI RANK -2015)	178	
Global Gender Gap Report (2014)	0.728	



MALAWI

EAST AFRICA - INDIA UNITE: INTEGRATING WOMEN IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Malawi, a landlocked nation in East Africa, is one of the most economically underdeveloped countries in the world, and also in Africa. According to World Bank data, Malawi's per-capita income of USD 815 per annum is the 4th lowest in the world (*World Bank GDP per capita Purchasing Power Estimate, 2014*).

Gender Profile

On the Gender Inequality Index (GII) developed by the UNDP in 2012, Malawi ranked 124th among 148 countries. This is primarily due to the country's poor performance in key gender-specific indicators such as maternal health, female literacy and wage incomes.

Socio-Economic Profile

While the labour participation rate among women is high – 84.8% (2012), there is a significant disparity between men and women in the nature of jobs and wages earned. The unemployment rate among women at 10.4% (2005) was almost twice of that among men. Since Malawi is

predominantly rural (85%), gender inequalities in rural employment are a major part of the problem (*Gender Inequalities in Rural Employment: An Overview – Malawi Country Report, 2011*).

Most rural women work as subsistence farmers, with low wages and minimal land ownership. In this context, any effort at diversification of employment opportunities for women in Malawi can contribute significantly to their economic empowerment.

Education Profile

Education in Malawi largely remains low. Even though primary enrolment stands at 118%, the completion rate is a mere 46% due to fragile schooling demand among the poorest. 103 girls for every 100 boys complete primary schooling (*Malawi EFA profile*).

Compared to other countries in Africa, the rank of Malawi stands at the 82 percentile in access and at the 17 percentile in learning. Girls have a high drop-out rate (mainly due to pregnancy related issues),

but it is also established that literate girls marry and have children significantly later than ones who are not literate. (*Population Council, 2015*)

Health Profile

Malawi has high levels of child and adulthood mortality rates with high prevalence of diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, HIV/AIDS. For every 100,000 live births in Malawi, 807 mothers die as a result of pregnancy and childbirth related causes.

Diseases combined with nutritional deficiencies and women's low socio-economic standing underpin what is one of the world's highest maternal mortality rates.

This is a clear indication of women's limited access to quality reproductive health services.

Poverty further encourages prostitution making girls prone to getting affected with HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

National Framework: Policies, Programmes and Initiatives

Major Result Areas: Institutional capacity of the national “Gender Machinery” strengthened (defined as Civil Society, Public and Private Sector Actors working towards gender equality and equity).

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- Capacity for mainstreaming gender in National AIDS Commission (NAC)
- Equality between women and men in society improved through economic, social and legal empowerment initiatives
- National Gender Policy (2007-11) aims at working on areas including HIV and AIDS, gender-based violence, environmental degradation and gender dimensions of poverty (Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, Government of Malawi)



Addressing Violence Against Women

As per data available, 41% of women in Malawi experience physical or sexual violence. One in five women face sexual abuse, half of them face physical assault and one in five face emotional distress as children.

As per the UNICEF data, there is high prevalence of violence among adolescent girls, which reflects an increasing trend of sexual abuse of young girls (VACS Survey, UNICEF, 2013).

The results of this survey have significant implications for the design and implementation of Malawian specific prevention and response programs and

STORIES OF CHANGE: GREEN BRICK TRANSFER TECHNOLOGY



An interesting project that set out to demonstrate green technologies in the housing sector to arrest deforestation took an interesting and welcome turn towards economic empowerment of women. In Malawi, the demand for bricks is high due to increasing urbanisation. Unfortunately, bricks are produced through conventional use firewood for the firing process.

Estimates indicate that 1.7 billion units of burnt clay bricks will be required annually for walling alone. This volume will be produced at the cost of 850,000 MT of wood. At this rate, Malawi was staring at complete deforestation in 30 years. A Vertical Shaft Brick Kiln (VSBK) system of manufacturing bricks was introduced to look into the deforestation hazards. This technology demonstration and transfer initiative envisioned major outcomes in augmenting the supply of green, affordable building materials while simultaneously supporting livelihood development and entrepreneurship development to poverty reduction in Malawi, **especially for women**. The project has potential for socio-economically empowering Malawian women a fact appreciated by the local Minister of Land, Housing, Urban Development. About a year has passed since the inception of the first kiln in Lilongwe, and 40% of the total workforce at the kiln are women. They are now earning thrice as much as they used to working in other fields or even in traditional brick molding.

“I have been associated with VSBK since the time the foundation was laid. I have seen it grow gradually. It is now an integral part of my life, supporting me and my family” – Ruth, Employee at VSBK Plant, Mthyoke, Malawi

policies to address abuse and violence against children.

Opportunities and Challenges

- Pertaining to a record rate of urbanisation (5%), industry is expected to grow opening multiple avenues for women to participate.
- The building material sector has huge demand for labour and partner entrepreneurs where women have begun participating
- Education is another area of potential for women with decreasing drop-out rates and greater conversion rates ensuring fulfillment of basic education
- Challenges include a high poverty rate for women (67% of the 52% women) with lower literacy rates and low socio-economic status owing to poor quality of life and high prevalence of illness and disease

The Way Forward

The Ministry of Gender, Children Disability and Social Welfare is mandated to promote gender equality and protect the welfare of Malawian women to become self-reliant and beneficiaries of the national development agenda. Greater awareness, and government initiative, is encouraging the Malawian women to become economically independent. Education is also solicited independently giving rise to a more confident future generation. The National Gender Policy aims to raise awareness of gender matters, legal rights of women, nutrition, and their economic empowerment in conjunction with the poverty alleviation programme.

** Compiled from various internet sources. The figures may not be accurate.*

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