

More Information on Malawi

GENERAL INFORMATION

Malawi is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa with a population of over 12 million people, half of whom are below the age of 15.

From 1985-1995 Malawi accommodated 1 million+ refugees from Mozambique. In 1996 Malawi accepted 6,000+ refugees seeking asylum from Rwanda and the Congo, creating a serious overpopulation problem along with a drastic increase spread of HIV/AIDS as many of the refugees were infected with the virus.

The country's resources are struggling to support everyone, the inadequate infrastructures means that schools and hospitals are overflowing.

Roughly 85% of Malawi's population lives in rural areas. Those residing in rural areas are living in extreme poverty below \$1.00USD per day. With an income of about US \$160 per capita and a Human Development Index ranking 165 out of 177 countries, Malawi is among the poorest, least developed countries in the world.

The country has one of the highest rates of HIV infection in the world, and life expectancy at birth stands at less than 40 years. Between 22-64% of households suffer from chronic illness.

The national literacy rate is 42%, among women it is only 34%. The number of children that are chronically malnourished under the age of 5 is about 48%. The infant, child and maternal mortality rates are amongst the highest in the world, 10% of infants born in Malawi die before their 1st birthday. Nearly 20 percent die before the age of five. Malawi is about 80% Christian.

The official languages: of Malawi: English & Chichewa.

If a native Malawian has not received years of education they primarily speak their native language of the Bantu tribe which is Chichewa. Chitumbuka & Chiyao are spoken in the northern region.

ORPHANS

In Malawi there is no accurate data collection on the numbers. However, they are expected to dramatically increase over the next 10 years.

Family systems, faith-based organizations and the communities are attempting to provide the majority of care for the orphans. However, they have reached their saturation point as the number of orphans rapidly increases.

Malawi's vulnerable children and orphans face crisis. They lack of food, shelter, clothing, access to education, clean, safe water, sanitation, basic health services, access/availability of medication & social support.

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION OF MALAWI'S ORPHANS

Regulations only stipulate that prospective parents undergo an 18-to-24 month assessment period in Malawi. The concern is to protect the children from becoming vulnerable to trafficking.

Advocacy for new International adoption laws need to occur for the millions of Malawi orphans to have the right to be adopted into to loving homes abroad. Malawi needs to adopt a U.N. convention on international adoptions, under which authorities in the prospective parents' home country could monitor the child's and family's progress. Assessments would then be communicated to the country from where the child came, to standardize the law to meet the international standards of the international conventions like the Hague Convention, the Convention of the Rights of the Child, and other laws.

[MORE ON ADOPTION CLICK HERE](#)

HIV/AIDS PANDEMIC

Daily, on average, 270 individuals in Malawi become infected with the HIV virus. AIDS related infections account for 241 deaths daily.

Currently, 760,000 Malawians are infected with HIV/AIDS 59% of whom are women.

In Malawi, 20,000 children are born with the virus every year and an estimated 83,000 children are living with the virus.

To suggest a whole country become celibate is unrealistic.

Condom use is not widely accepted by this conservative culture, nor readily available. People who have no money for food certainly don't have funds to purchase protection from the virus. The elimination of traditional cultural practices fisi, kuchota fumbi and kulowa kufa is not only violating human rights but also exposing victims to HIV/AIDS.

The food crisis has forced young girls to turn to sex for food.

MALARIA

Malaria is the 2nd largest killer in the world. Most in Malawi don't have access to medical treatment or have the ability to pay \$5.00 for malaria medication so they simply die. Malaria directly contributes to poverty. The mosquitoes hatch after the rains; this is when crops are planted. Once the illness devastates the family they are unable to work in the fields. The family goes hungry. Bed nets can reduce the instances of malaria by 60%

EDUCATION

The Malawi Education system is comprised of 8 years of primary school, 4 years of secondary, and an average of 4 years of tertiary study. Primary education is free, with over 3 million children enrolled in the existing 4000+ primary schools in Malawi.

Secondary education is offered through secondary schools and Community Day Secondary Schools. Approximately 140,000 students are enrolled in public secondary education schools (40,000 in conventional secondary schools and 100,000 in CDSS). Tertiary education is provided by an array of educational institutions, including primary and secondary teacher training colleges, technical, vocational training schools and a number of other post-secondary professional training institutions.

Almost 8,000 students are enrolled in Malawi's 6 national training colleges and over 500 students are enrolled at the Domasi College of Education - which trains secondary school teachers.

Out of the 3 million children attending primary school, only 18% enter secondary school, and less than 5% will ever receive tertiary education. Only 11.2% of adults (aged 25 years and above) have completed the standard 8 years. The gap in the number of children accessing education in Malawi has placed the nation's future at risk.



Geography: Malawi shares borders to the north and northeast with Tanzania, to the south, east and southwest with Mozambique and to the west with Zambia. Lake Malawi, the third largest lake in Africa, is the dominant feature of the country, forming the eastern boundary with Tanzania and Mozambique. The scenery varies in the country's three regions. The Northern Region is mountainous, with the highest peaks reaching over 2500m (8200ft), and features the rolling Nyika Plateau, rugged escarpments, valleys and the thickly forested slopes of the Viphya Plateau.

The Central Region is mainly a plateau, over 1000m (3300ft) high, with fine upland scenery. This is the country's main agricultural area. The Southern Region is mostly low-lying except for the 2100m- (6890ft-) high Zomba Plateau south of Lake Malawi and the huge, isolated Mulanje Massif (3000m/10,000ft) in the southeast.



