



# Malawi

## Republic of Malawi

### Africa

### Geography

**Area** 118,484 sq km. Central African state extending along Lake Malawi and its outflow river, the Shire. A landlocked nation whose southern half is virtually an enclave within Mozambique.

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010 15,691,784	2.82%	132/sq km
2020 20,536,979	2.67%	173/sq km
2030 25,896,558	2.23%	219/sq km

**Capital** Lilongwe 864,608. **Other major city** Blantyre 856,000. **Urbanites** 19.8%. **Pop under 15 years** 46%. **Life expectancy** 52 yrs.

### Peoples

**Bantu peoples** 97.2%. 22 peoples divided roughly into northern, central and southern groups.

**Chewa-Sena**(7) 70.4%. Chewa 46.9%; Southern Nyanja 11.6%; Tumbuka 8.0%; Sena 2.3%; Tonga 1.4%.

**Yawo**(3) 12.3%. Yawo 8.5%; Lomwe 2.1%; Kokola 1.7%.

**Ngoni**(2) 7.8%.

**Central-Tanzania**(6) 4.8%. Ngonde 3.0%.

**Other** 2.8%. South Asians 0.7%; many migrant peoples from Central and East Africa en route to South Africa.

**Literacy** 64.1%. **Official languages** Chichewa and English. **All languages** 24. **Indigenous languages** 16. **Languages with Scriptures** 8B1 1NT 1por 3w.i.p.

### Economy

A densely populated country with little development, cycles of drought/heavy rainfall, soil exhaustion (especially from tobacco growing) and widespread AIDS. Heavily dependent on agriculture, and therefore vulnerable to both global markets and local weather. Foreign aid props up the economy but

pushes Malawi deeper into external debt – although much of it has recently been cancelled. Many live in poverty, but the economy has been growing in recent years. High unemployment drives many Malawians to work in other lands. **HDI Rank** 160<sup>th</sup>/182. **Public debt** 49% of GDP. **Income/person** \$313 (1% of USA).

### Politics

Independent from Britain in 1964. Dr. Hastings Banda ruled for 30 years as a colourful but ruthless dictator. Economic stability was gained at the expense of political freedom. Internal and international pressure against increasing corruption led to multiparty elections in 1994. The elected National Assembly is led by a separately elected president. Recent general elections were peaceful and fair; for the first time, voting was aligned in terms of issues rather than ethno-regional loyalties.

### Religion

Freedom of religion exists; the various confessions of Christianity and Islam as well as smaller faiths co-exist peacefully.

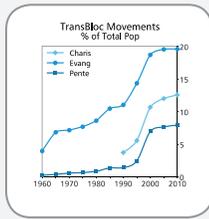
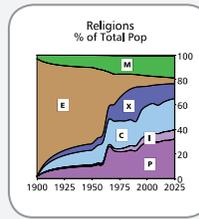
Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	76.00	11,925,756	3.0%
Muslim	16.90	2,651,911	3.2%
Ethnoreligionist	6.50	1,019,966	0.5%
Non-religious	0.20	31,384	5.0%
Hindu	0.20	31,384	2.8%
Baha'i	0.20	31,384	2.8%

Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	62	29.47	4,625,000	2.4%
Independent	331	6.83	1,072,000	3.1%
Anglican	1	1.78	280,000	1.9%
Catholic	1	23.06	3,618,000	2.0%
Orthodox	1	<0.01	1,000	0.0%
Marginal	1	1.03	162,000	4.0%
Unaffiliated		13.80	2,170,000	3.1%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Catholic Church	C	165	1,884,375	3,618,000
Ch of Central Afr Presby	P	467	700,800	1,752,000
Assemblies of God	P	2,500	553,191	780,000
Seventh-day Adventist	P	1,212	272,642	445,000
Other Afr Indep Chs	I	2,890	173,423	385,000
Anglican Church	A	425	112,000	280,000
Baptist Convention	P	1,500	112,500	225,000
Zambezi Evang Ch	P	630	100,455	221,000
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	1,210	81,000	162,000
Zion Churches	I	1,212	72,727	160,000
African Baptist Assembly	P	811	60,800	152,000
Charismatic Chs	I	200	60,000	92,400
Churches of Christ	P	1,500	40,000	92,000
Luth Ch of Christ Afr	P	260	44,667	67,000
Living Waters	I	193	29,000	58,000
Chr Chs/Chs of Christ	P	55	32,934	55,000
Ch of the Nazarene	P	266	24,490	48,000
United Pentecostal Ch	P	430	20,000	45,000

Africa Evangelical Ch	P	135	12,941	44,000
Apostolic Faith Mission	P	230	18,300	40,626
United Evang Ch	P	132	13,201	40,000
Other denominations[59]		6,167	421,912	995,185
<b>Total Christians[397]</b>		<b>22,590</b>	<b>4,841,358</b>	<b>9,757,211</b>

TransBloc	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
<b>Evangelicals</b>			
Evangelicals	19.6	3,069,243	2.9%
<b>Renewalists</b>			
Charismatics	12.5	1,968,034	3.8%
Pentecostals	7.9	1,241,668	3.6%



## Answers to Prayer

**1 Malawi remains a stable and peaceful land** in a region plagued by wars, civil strife and violent politics. This reflects the peaceful and mostly rural nature of the people – despite intensifying pressure from population growth, AIDS and large-scale movements of peoples into, out of and through Malawi. The multiparty democracy is in good health, having a president with a background in economics and a tough anti-corruption stance. Praise God for the peace that allows Christian ministry and national development to continue unhindered.

**2 Malawi continues to be a rich spiritual scene** with steady evangelical growth. Years of outreach (AE, DM, Global Field Evangelism, CFAN evangelistic campaigns), youth ministry (SU, SCOM/IFES), New Life For All programmes in the churches, house meetings and prayer movements have all contributed. Evangelical presence is widespread in mainline, conservative and African Initiated Churches (AIC). The gospel has penetrated nearly every section of society, and some places have seen local revivals. While charismatic growth in Malawi is less explosive than in other parts of Africa, there is a solid if unspectacular increase in biblical faith across the board, which is in itself a more praiseworthy trend.

## Challenges for Prayer

**1 Malawi faces serious challenges in the future**, such as the combination of poverty, high population growth and increasing pressure on agricultural land. High levels of national debt, AIDS and unemployment, when added to the aforementioned economic factors, produce challenges that will require wisdom, long-term planning and proactive policies by the government. The grip of poverty hampers development not only in the financial sense but also in terms of education, AIDS prevention, family life and even effective ministry and discipleship. Pray for leaders in Malawi, most of whom are church members, to act with wisdom, humility and long-term planning on biblical principles.

**2 The increasing activity of Islam** is a significant issue in Malawi. Over 80% of the Yao are Muslim, and make up the largest block of Muslims in Malawi. The Qu'ran has been translated into Chichewa. A Quranic movement (Sukuti) is trying to replace the prevalent Qaddiriya folk Islam with a more scriptural version of the faith. Malawi has a great influx of funds via the Africa Muslim Agency. These extend Islam's influence through primary education, scholarships for tertiary students to go to Muslim nations, aid distribution, drilling wells, medical aid, mosque building and many other means. Although the impact of these has thus far been quite limited, pray for awareness and training for the equipping of Christians to meet this challenge. Pray also for a persistent, loving witness to Muslims throughout Malawi.

**3 AIDS has been a terrible scourge.** Life expectancy was reduced at one point to age 43, and over 1 million are infected with HIV. AIDS is the leading cause of death for

those aged 20 to 49 years. The 15- to 24-year olds are most affected; within this group, females account for more than twice as many cases as males. There are over 500,000 AIDS orphans. Pray also for the “Why Wait” programme, which in the fight against HIV/AIDS educates teachers and others on the blessings of abstinence before marriage. Anti-retro viral treatments are available and effective, but the social stigma remains. Pray that churches might be better equipped and envisioned to face AIDS with effective ministries; SU and SCOM/IFES work among students and teachers in this area.

**4** **The CCAP (Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian)** is the largest Protestant denomination and the direct fruit of the vision of 19th Century explorer David Livingstone. It is a union of the churches planted by the South African Dutch Reformed Church, the Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland. Pray for revival as nominalism and the influence of African traditional religion are commonplace, yet there are also many strong evangelical leaders and congregations. Pray for unity within this diverse denomination, and for many to come to genuine faith within the framework of the CCAP.

**5** **The major issues to be tackled** by the churches are:

- a) **Maintaining effective ministry** in the midst of deep poverty and the growing AIDS crisis.
- b) **Effective and appropriate theological education.** There are 17 Protestant and four Roman Catholic seminaries and Bible schools. Pray for the CCAP theological faculty at Zomba to take a more strongly evangelical stand. Pray for many to be called into the ministry. Pray for the further establishment of pastoral training programmes among the fast-growing Pentecostal and charismatic churches.
- c) **Training for pastors and workers,** because the traditional model of theological education cannot produce leaders fast enough to meet the needs of the rapidly growing Church. Poor rural churches are especially needy – few can afford to train or support workers. TEE courses are run from Zomba by TEEM (TEE of Malawi). In-service training for pastors is available through various means.
- d) **Financial provision** for theological students and pastors in training, since poverty is the primary factor hampering theological education. Pray for provision via funding and partnerships. Pray also for new models of training that can accommodate the many poor and already overstretched pastors.
- e) **Unity.** Pray for more cooperation among the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM), the more mainline Christian Council (CCM) and the charismatic churches.

**6** **Student ministries flourish** (Life Ministries/CCCI, SCOM/IFES, SU, Chi Alpha), with over 500 SCOM student groups, involving 30,000 young people. CCCI moves beyond the campus to partner with churches in discipleship and evangelism training. Students are spiritually open, but not just to the gospel. Pray for a lasting impact from student ministries – that lifelong disciples be formed and the entire nation transformed.

**7** **The least evangelized.** Pray that both Malawian and expatriate workers may effectively share the love of Christ with:

- a) **The Yawo,** mostly Muslim, remain the biggest missional challenge in Malawi. Currently, outreach attempts are made by a partnership of evangelical missions – SIM, Brethren in Christ, AoG, Frontiers, Australian and South African Baptists, FEBA, CAPRO, Deeper Life and others – but few have come to Christ. Bible translation, audio resources and radio broadcasts are all being developed, and a Yawo church is coming to life!
- b) **The various tribes** that still practice traditional ethnic religion. All of these have some Christians among them, but usually a smaller minority. They include the Southern Nyanja (11.6% of the population), the Kokola (1.7%), Nyungwe (0.1%) and a few smaller groups.
- c) **The Asian peoples,** including Gujaratis, Kachis and Tamils. Only sporadic attempts are made to evangelize these predominantly Hindu and Muslim peoples.

**8** **Expatriate missionaries** primarily support existing denominations and agencies in training, outreach and Christian institutions. Pray for genuine partnerships between foreigners and Malawians that result in fruitful ministries. The largest agencies: SIM, IMB, NGK, Liebenzell Mission, PAoC.

## 9 Christian help ministries for prayer:

- a) **Bible translation.** Completing the whole Bible in Lomwe and Chilambya is the next major challenge. The Yawo Bible will be finished in 2011. Several minority languages are without a NT and may need translations.
- b) **The Bible Society.** There are great demands for Scripture for local use and for the refugee community – but limited funds to meet them. Many rural Christians have no Bibles. The Bible in audio format is a fast developing ministry; Scriptures and/or teaching already exist in 26 languages (Bible Society, **GRN**, **TWR**).
- c) **Literature** is much sought after, but expensive. Pray for an adequate supply of quality reading material for the literate, growing, but poor Church. The bulk of available literature includes secondhand Christian books in English and some locally published material.
- d) **Christian radio.** The national broadcasting network regularly airs Christian programmes. Local channel All Nations Radio covers half of the districts in the country. **TWR** now broadcasts 24/7 from Lilongwe along with six other private local Christian stations, including the African Bible College and FEBA.