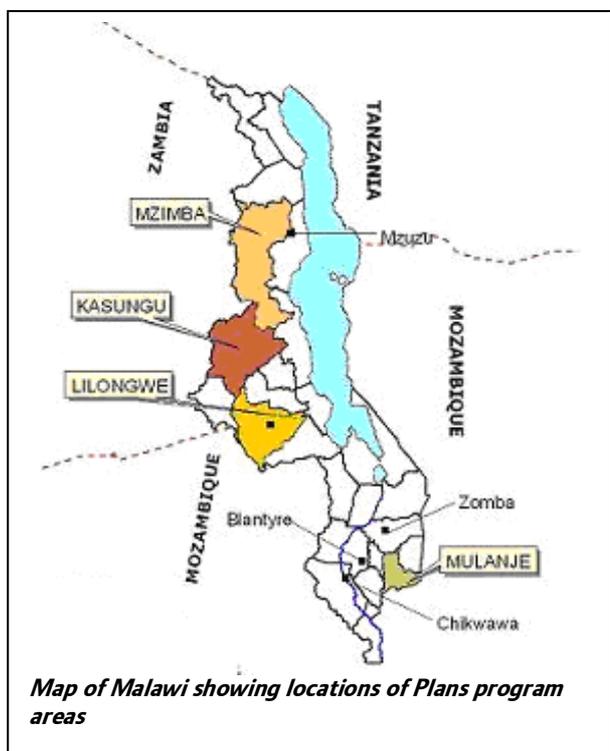


This document describes how Plan Malawi and its partners will mobilise the different resources to improve the welfare and prospects of vulnerable children. It provides the strategic framework for consistent and continued

Malawi is ranked as one of the poorest countries in the world. Since 1994, the institution and system of democracy have started to be established and in 1998 a system of local government was put in place. However women’s and children’s rights are not fully reflected in the current legislation and some traditional attitudes and practices discriminate against and are harmful to women and children. The HIV and AIDS pandemic, recurrent food crises and famine have contributed to the depth of poverty in the country which is disproportionately experienced by women and children.



About Malawi

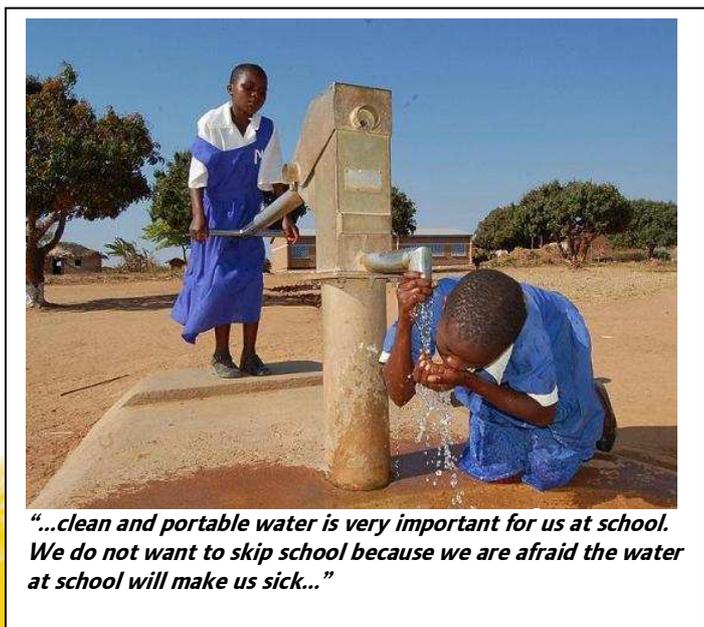
Population: 12 Million
Languages: Chichewa, Chitumbuka, Chiawo
Economy: Tobacco
Crops: Maize, tobacco, groundnuts and beans
Ethnic groups: Yawo, Chewa, Tumbuka
Currency: Kwacha

The southern region of Malawi where we have the Mulanje program area prides itself in having the highest mountain in central Africa called the Mulanje mountain. A lot of tea is grown around this mountain which makes the area just below the mountain ever green and beautiful. Some of Plan’s communities in Mulanje are just below the foot of the mountain.

Achievements and lessons learnt

Plan started working in Malawi in 1994. Since then, it has expanded to four program units: Mulanje in the south, Lilongwe and Kasungu in the centre and Mzimba in the north. Since then, a lot has been achieved in the areas of:

Health. Health workers have been trained resulting in the improvement of quality medical services that people receive in the community. Plan has also distributed medicines and drugs to hospitals so that access to drugs by children and their families is improved. Health campaigns and awareness have also been carried out resulting in a lot of people having information about good sanitation and how their families can stay health and disease free. This has also resulted in less and less people getting sick from preventable diseases. Difficulties in accessing potable and safe drinking water are also a thing of the past in almost all communities where Plan is working.



Food security. Plan Malawi has been able to train farmers in modern farming methods and training in irrigation farming has also been initiated to ensure that people have food all year round.

Education. Teachers have been trained in interactive teaching methods to improve their skills in teaching children. Teachers' houses have been constructed in primary schools where Plan is working. Modern classroom blocks have been constructed and a lot of schools have been provided with teaching and learning materials.

Critical issues affecting children

The key issues impacting on the quality of lives of children have been identified as follows:

- Limited opportunities for learning and development.
- Poor health of children, adolescents and their families.
- Children and their families negatively impacted by HIV and AIDS pandemic.
- Limited capacity of families to provide for their children.
- Lack of an enabling environment for the realisation of children rights at local and national level.

How Plan is addressing issues affecting children

In response to the above issues we are implementing the following programs:

- **Child and Adolescent Health:** The priorities of this program are to reduce high child deaths and to improve the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents. Other components of the program include: ensuring that mothers and their children (especially the under fives) grow up healthy, handling of water and general sanitation is conducted properly and that people living with HIV and AIDS are treated the same as everybody.
- **Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods:** This program focuses on working with government and specialist non-governmental organisations to improve farmers' education and introduce improved farming technologies including winter cropping, small scale irrigation and improved food storage and processing. Farmer groups are being assisted to identify market opportunities and families are trained in enterprise development and business management.



“.....Class attendance has improved at school since Plan provided us with desks. We now sit comfortably and learning is easy.....”

- **Quality Learning Opportunities:** Focusing on working with communities, children, families, non-governmental organisations as well as government staff to plan for “what should a good school look like” and “what resources it should have” and together implement that plan. It also includes working with communities in identifying the resources available and the problems affecting primary and pre-primary education.
- **Child Rights and Gender:** A program which raises awareness of women and children's rights at all levels and promotes their participation in decisions that affect them. Plan Malawi is continuing to build on the child protection and birth registration activities at community and district levels and will continue to participate in national policy making bodies.

Program Approach

Plan Malawi seeks to support government efforts to bring about lasting improvements in the quality of life of disadvantaged children. This will be done through implementing development activities that directly benefits the child. Plan is building the capacity of children, their families and communities as well as the government and other partners to sustain development processes that realise children's rights and enable them to develop to their full potential. Plan is building the capacity of children to actively participate in the development activities that affect them. This is being done by raising awareness of children's rights and responsibilities and developing children's community groups and groups of adults that support them.

Plan is also building the capacity of the village local government structures to facilitate the formulation of community development plans with the active participation of women and children. Plan is promoting the community management of projects by community based organisations to improve ownership, active participation and sustainability.