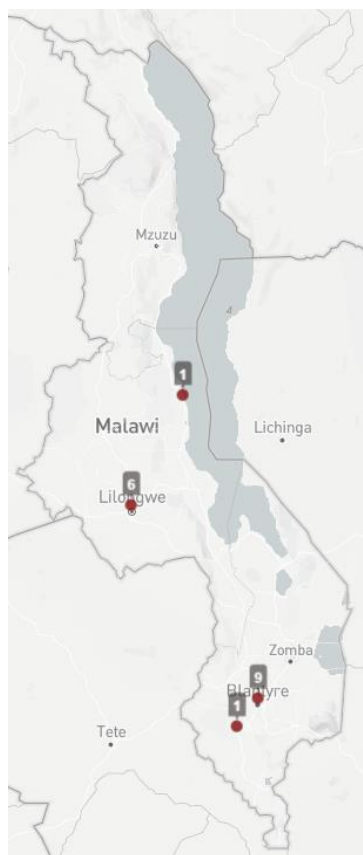


COVID-19 Update

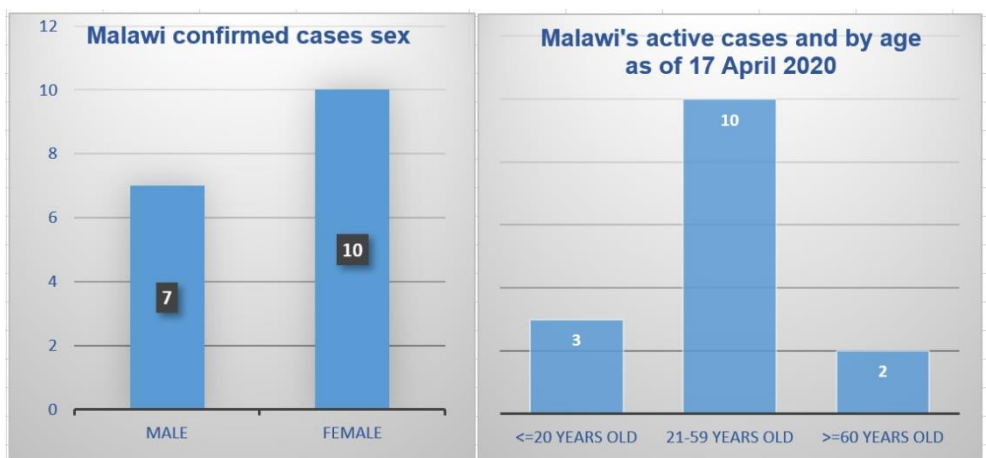
Date	Updated on 17 April 2020
Situation Update	No. 5



1. MALAWI HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ Malawi is in a declared State of Disaster
- ❖ Court stops 21-day national lockdown (18 April to 9 May) for 7 days
- ❖ Prevention and response measures are being implemented
- ❖ Government, UN and Partner coordination structures in place
- ❖ [COVID 19 National Information Dashboard](#) set up by Ministry of Health

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths	Tests	Contacts traced
17	15	0	2	353	295



2. GLOBAL UPDATE	3. REGIONAL UPDATE (Africa)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 2 074 529 cases ❖ 139 378 confirmed deaths ❖ Cases in 213 countries and places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 11 733 cases in 45 countries ❖ 583 confirmed deaths ❖ 2 739 recovered

4. MALAWI GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

4.1 Malawi Preparedness and Response Plan, and Coordination

- A [National Covid-19 Preparedness and Response Plan](#), budgeted at \$213 million (K157 billion), is being implemented.
 - It aims to prevent, detect and respond to any COVID-19 outbreak in Malawi;
 - It has four pillars: Emergency Preparedness and Capacity-Building; Spread Prevention and Control; Response; and Early Recovery;
 - It is built around nine clusters comprising members from government, UN, NGOs/other humanitarian actors;
 - UN entities, Development Partners, NGOs and other stakeholders are providing technical and financial support
- On 15th April, World Bank approved \$37 million support for COVID-19 response in Malawi
 - \$7 million is in immediate funding to support Malawi's response under a new Malawi COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness project;
 - This will provide funding towards detection, surveillance, response and system strengthening activities;
 - \$30 million is available from the Disaster Risk Management Development Policy Financing with a Catastrophe Deferred Drawdown Option (Cat-DDO) to strengthen the country's response;
 - This will support economic policy initiatives and smooth out macro-economic shocks on Government's finances;
- On 14th April, Malawi Government declared a 21-day lockdown from Saturday 18 April midnight to 9 May 2020 midnight;
 - Statements on the lockdown by [President Arthur Peter Mutharika](#) and [Minister of Health](#).

4.2 Laboratory Capacity

- At least 380 samples have been tested, with 17 turning positive and 11 pending results;
- The first three cases that tested positive on 2 April tested negative on 16 April. The three tests will be repeated on 18 April and if they turn negative again, the cases will be declared cured of COVID-19;
- Four laboratories are testing for COVID-19: National Health Reference Laboratory (NHRL) in Lilongwe, the College of Medicine in Blantyre, the Malawi Liverpool Wellcome Trust (MLW) in Blantyre and Mzuzu Central Hospital in Mzuzu;
- Ministry of Health is continuing with the recruitment of additional health personnel across the country.
- A total of 626 healthcare workers have since been recruited out of the targeted 2000, according to Ministry of Health;

4.3 Communication

- A wide range of local, regional and national authorities are conducting awareness and communication for development initiatives to ensure that members of the public are well informed on COVID-19 and observe recommended measures.

4.4 Socio Economic Outlook

- Commercial banks were directed to implement a three-month moratorium on principal and interest repayments on loans; restructure, refinance or renegotiate loans issued to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and other borrowers; reduce fees and charges for internet banking, mobile payment and related services by 40%; and defer all bonus payments;
- Voluntary tax compliance window allowing taxpayers to settle tax obligations without penalty for six months;
- Relief fund established to collect private contributions;
- Liquidity Reserve Requirement on domestic currency deposits reduced to 3.75% (from 5%) releasing K12 billion (\$16 million) additional liquidity to banks;
- Lombard Rate cut by 50% (to 0.2% above Policy Rate), lowering cost of borrowing from the Reserve Bank of Malawi;
- Emergency Liquidity Assistance Facility activated;
- Relief granted to banks on a case-by-case basis;
- Prompt Corrective Action Directive recapitalisation plan approved beyond 90 days in the event of a bank breaching the Prudential Capital Requirement Directive as a result of the crisis.

4.5 Preventative measures instituted by Malawian Government

On 17 April, the High Court granted a seven-day injunction to the Human Rights Defenders Coalition, stopping Malawi Government from implementing a 21-day lockdown of the country due to COVID-19. The lockdown was expected to run from midnight Saturday 18 April to midnight Saturday 9 May 2020. The following are additional measures which were announced to be implemented during the lockdown, which was made in reference to Section 31 of the Public Health Act ([Link](#)):

- The lockdown shall apply to all districts of Malawi;
- Enforcement officers, and persons with a permit to supply essential services are allowed to continue working. Permits are possible for essential services from local government authority. Diplomatic and UN staff and implementing partners ' essential staff are allowed to continue working following a procedures set up by Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- All essential services shall be obtained within the locality of residence.
- All central markets shall be closed. Local markets within localities shall remain open from 5:00 am to 6:00 pm on any day.
- During the lockdown all non-essential businesses or services will be suspended, filling stations and banks are considered essential service.
- Any person who breaches these measures commits an offence and shall be liable to a fine as prescribed under the Public Health Act.

5. UNITED NATIONS RESPONSE

5 Malawi

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Malawi comprises 21 United Nations agencies, funds, and programmes with a presence in the 28 districts of Malawi. The UN team in Malawi is producing a consolidated Response Plan together with the INGOs to operationalize the National Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID19.

5.1 Supply Chain and Logistics (WFP and UNICEF)

- The first United Nations "Solidarity Flight" left Addis Ababa on 14 April to transport vital medical cargo to all countries in Africa. The cargo, supplied by WHO and transported by WFP, includes face shields, gloves, goggles, gowns, masks, medical aprons and thermometers, as well as ventilators.
- The UN has established two additional Mobile Logistics Bases at Ntcheu and Dedza District Hospitals for screening and potential isolation of COVID patients.
- Through the National Logistics Cluster, the UN continues to engage with several partners regarding their needs on Mobile Storage Units and Mobile Logistics needs and have created an online form to streamline requests.
- The UN is carrying out a Logistics Needs and Gaps analysis survey which will inform the Logistics sector response –to be completed on Monday, 20 April.

- The total value of supplies that UNICEF is procuring for the COVID-19 response has reached US\$ 3,000,000. These are being procured from international as well as local suppliers. UNICEF has identified local Malawian suppliers for latex gloves, apron plastic, heavy-duty gloves, surgical masks and N95 masks.
- Locally procured supplies valued at US\$75,000 have already been received while international orders are estimated for delivery between mid-April and mid-August 2020.
- To date, UNICEF in collaboration with the MoH have distributed supplies valued at US\$278,556. The MoH has adopted a national tool developed by UNICEF for tracking supplies available in-country. This tool will assist with mapping and tracking of these supplies.

5.2 Special Groups and Protection Issues (UN Women, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA, ILO)

- Blantyre and Machinga districts have received technical and financial support from the UN for delivery of child protection services, including online counselling, psychosocial support and referral services through telephones.
- An analysis is underway of data collected in Mzimba, Nkhatabay, Ntchisi, Dowa, Nsanje, and Machinga districts, to assess the needs on mental health and psychosocial (MHPSS) including the capacity to deal with the increased caseload. Basic MHPSS content was shared for integration in health worker training, which is currently underway. The content includes an impact on children's mental health and psychosocial wellbeing.
- The UN continues to work with government counterparts including Social Welfare, Malawi Police and the Judiciary, at national and district levels on COVID-19 preparedness and response, to ensure continuity of essential services for child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response.
- Psychological First Aid (PFA) training for UN staff and partners is planned and alternative ways of delivering the training, using online platforms, are being explored.
- The UN has integrated child protection and GBV mitigation and MHPSS elements into Communication for Development messaging.
- UN as co-lead of Protection Cluster, continues to support the Ministry of Gender in preparedness and response efforts.
- ILO is supporting the Employers Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM) to conduct a national COVID-19 labour market impact assessment.

5.3 Communications and Communication for Development (UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, UNDP, UNESCO, UN Women)

- Coordination with the Government, media, NGOs and other partners to ensure evidence-based communications on COVID-19 in Malawi is continuing;
- Community Engagement sessions, including community radio dialogues and edutainment by partners is ongoing.
- New/revised approaches, including interpersonal communication for health/social/community mobilizers and awareness modalities through mobile vans, are being implemented.
- UN is producing multimedia content (Chichewa and English) to promote COVID-19 messaging and stories. These will be disseminated through various online and offline channels, including national media. This past week, our social media messages have reached more than five million online audiences.
- UN will continue to use U-Report platform extensively to reach people with messaging on COVID19 through SMS, polling, open-end questions, quiz, information bots, social media, etc. So far, UNICEF has conducted three U-Report polls on COVID-19.

5.4 Education (UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, UNESCO)

- UNICEF has received a grant from the Global Partnership for Education (US\$ 70,000) to address immediate needs of strengthening coordination and quality assurance in learning programme on water, sanitation and hygiene
- UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and the Malawi College of Distance Education, supported an assessment of existing education materials at the primary and secondary level to support continuity of learning. The assessment identified key gaps in the interactive radio programme and distance learning at early learning and primary and secondary levels. To address these gaps, material adaptation and production will be conducted, while quality assurance will also be performed for secondary school materials utilizing the funding received from Education Cannot Wait (ECW).

5.5 WASH and Health (WHO, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UN Women)

- With funding from UK Aid, UN has supported the Ministry of Health to train about 80 health workers on COVID-19 case management in the nine UNICEF-supported districts.
- With support from UK Aid, UN continues to support screening of all travelers at Points of Entry (POE). Most of the travelers that have arrived recently are Malawians returning home.
- Since the last report, four additional emergency prefabricated latrines (2 in Blantyre, 2 in Mwanza) have been installed, bringing to 20 (10 Male, 10 Female) latrines have been installed at the four Emergency Treatment Units – 6 at Blantyre, 6 at Mwanza, 4 at Mchinji and 4 at Mzuzu.
- UN, through its partner United Purpose, is working in close coordination with hospital maintenance staff to install 5,000-litre tanks and undertake plumbing works. United purpose has also reached 42,862 people in Blantyre, Mwanza, Mzuzu and Mchinj with demonstrations on proper handwashing and disseminated Ministry of Health approved COVID-19 prevention messages through community radios reaching up to 10,500 people.
- With UN support, 1,000 posters and leaflets were distributed to people in Mwanza and Mchinji markets and at the border posts. In Blantyre, 200 posters were distributed at Ndirande high-density low-income settlement markets and Blantyre Central Business District and Wenela bus depot.

- To date, a total of 40 health front line workers have been trained on "Safeguarding and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse during the response".
- Regular WASH Cluster meetings are ongoing. During the reporting period, UN facilitated the engagement of the country's Water Boards to develop and share plans to ensure uninterrupted water supply, especially in hot spots of urban areas as part of the COVID-19 response.

5.6 Socio Economic Impact and Social Protection (WFP, UNICEF, UNDP)

- WB-UN agencies have developed a joint UN approach to support the government in its effort to expand social services to urban areas under the COVID-19 Urban Cash Initiative, which aims at assisting poor areas of Malawi's major cities, characterized by high levels of poverty and informal economy with cash transfers at minimum wage amounts.
- The ILO has launched a website on measures taken to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 on the economy and the labour market ([Link](#))

5.7 Nutrition (UNICEF, WFP)

- Health workers in Nutrition Rehabilitation Units and Outpatient Therapeutic Programme sites are undergoing orientation on COVID-19, its implication for the nutrition status of children and women and the guidance on infection prevention. The training is targeting 200 health workers in Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu, Mwanza, and Mchinji, Lilongwe, Dowa, Blantyre, Phalombe, Nsanje, Salima, Thyolo, Mulanje, Chikwawa, Mangochi, Nkhatabay, Kasungu, Mzimba, Karonga, Chitipa and Nkhotakota.
- Messages on Infant and Young Child Feeding in emergencies have been finalized and shared with implementing partners for dissemination. Senior management from the MoH and nutrition donor partners have been oriented on these messages and the modifications to the Community Management of Acute Malnutrition protocol.

5.8 UN Protocols and Working Arrangements (UNCT)

- External missions and non-essential travel are not allowed;
- The UN in Malawi continues to work, but there is an increased use of virtual meetings, teleworking as well as reducing implementation to essential/ critical programmes while scaling up COVID-19 responses.

Additional information and updates

- Myth busters: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>
- Technical Guidance: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>
- WHO Africa: <https://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus-covid-19>
- WHO Africa Situation Reports: <https://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus-covid-19#sitrep>
- WHO Global: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- UN Global: <https://www.un.org/coronavirus>
- Ministry of Health and Population: <https://www.facebook.com/malawimoh>

NB: The global and Africa COVID-19 figures are from WHO as of 17 April 2020, 02:00 GMT+2.

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