

# MALAWI NATIONAL GENDER STATISTICS ASSESSMENT



# Malawi National Gender Statistics Assessment





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# List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank
ART	Antiretroviral treatment
AU	African Union
BEmONC	Basic Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CABS	Common Approach to Budget Support
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CGD	Citizen-generated data
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DAGG	Development Assistance Group on Gender
DFID	Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DQAF	Data Quality Assessment Framework
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EU	European Union
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEA	Gender Equality Act
GoM	Government of Malawi
ICPD	International Convention on Population and Development
IHS	Integrated Household Survey
JSSP	Joint Sector Strategic Plan
LFPS	Labour Force Participation Survey
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MCTU	Malawi Congress of Trade Union
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MDHS	Malawi Demographic and Health Survey
MoGCDSW	Ministry of Gender Community Development and Social Welfare
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MHRRC	Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoT	Ministry of Trade

MSME	Micro, small and medium enterprise
NACAL	National Census of Agriculture and Livestock
NAIP	National Agriculture Investment Programme
NAP	National Action Plan to Combating Gender-Based Violence
NAP	National Agriculture Policy
NESP	National Education Sector Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NGO-GCN	Non-Governmental Organisations Coordination Network
NGP	National Gender Policy
NICE	National Initiative for Civic Education
NSO	National Statistics Office of Malawi
NSS	National Statistical System
NSSP	National Statistical Strategic Plan
PBB	Program-Based Budget
PHIM	Public Health Institute of Malawi
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
PWC	Price-Waterhouse Cooper
RBM	Result-Based Management
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SATUC	Southern Africa Trade Union Congress
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health Rights
SWG	Sector Working Group
TB	Tuberculosis
TEVETA	Technical Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Authority
UN Women	United Nations Entity on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNSD	United Nations Statistical Division
USD	United States Dollar
WEE	Women's economic empowerment
WOLREC	Women's Legal Resources Centre



# Acknowledgement

This assessment report has been developed for UN Women in Malawi. It was based on a study commissioned for an initiative in which UN Women globally is supporting governments in gender data and statistics under the umbrella program of Making Every Woman and Girl Count (Women Count). The work was conducted to assess the gender statistics systems in Malawi in close cooperation with the national gender machinery and the National Statistical Office of Malawi. The study was led by Dr. Anthony Malunga who was supported by Milward Tobias under FIGD Consult.

The team would like to thank UN Women staff especially George Major Mbewe, Dr. Isabella Schmidt and Victor Maulidi for technical and logistical support throughout the assessment. Other appreciations go to the members of the UN Women Reference Group who also provided input in the assessment. The UN Women team provided invaluable technical support which has contributed to the production of this report.

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Any error whatsoever contained is solely the responsibility of the consultants and not anyone or any institution acknowledged.

# Executive Summary

UN Women globally is supporting governments in gender data and statistics under the umbrella program of Making Every Woman and Girl Count (Women Count). In Africa, the Women Count project is underpinned by three primary objectives: i) Creating an enabling environment, ii) Increasing data production and iii) improving data accessibility and use. The assessment was done to establish to what extent these challenges also exist in Malawi. Fieldwork for the study was carried out from February to July 2021. It is based on a desk review, stakeholder consultations administering four questionnaires designed for this purpose by Paris21 and UN Women, feedback from a validation workshop, and an additional question set that was sent to specific stakeholders after the validation workshop. The assessment was executed by a consultant as part of a partnership between UN Women/Women Count, the Ministry of Gender, Community Development, and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW), the National Planning Commission (NPC) and the National Statistics Office of Malawi (NSO Malawi).

This study focused on identifying data and capacity gaps in the Malawi national statistical system (NSS) and identifying how these gaps can be bridged to increase the production, uptake, and use, and improve the management of quality gender statistics in the country. The most important challenges identified included inadequate normative frameworks and infrastructure to support statistical production, large time gaps between household surveys and censuses, limited dissemination and use of gender data and statistics across the NSS, and weak administrative data quality and systems.

The NSO Malawi is a regulator as well as a producer of statistics. While neither the National Statistics Act 2013 nor the National Statistical Strategic Plan (NSSP 2019-2023) have gender-specific provisions, the Act includes gender in the list of statistical domains of the NSS. The study also found challenges related to weak monitoring of NSSP implementation and limited data dissemination channels, inadequate human resource capacity, and lack of autonomy of the NSS. The absence of specific gender statistics outcomes in the NSSP contributes to weak political will related to gender statistics production, dissemination, and accountability. Limited resources and the absence of a dedicated gender statistics unit in NSO Malawi have impacted negatively on the production of gender statistics.

MoGCDSW is responsible for gender equality policy directions and NSO Malawi is primarily responsible for statistical coordination in the country. Currently, there are no specific coordination mechanisms in place for gender statistics. Better coordination, collaboration between the NSO Malawi, Ministry of Gender, and other MDAs on gender statistics will be critical for the country to make progress on the production, uptake, and use of gender statistics.

The assessment found that many government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) which are part of the NSS collect and use gender statistics but do not have adequate capacity, infrastructure, and systems to ensure that quality gender statistics are regularly collected and organized. It is recommended that the MDAs and NSO Malawi work closely to ensure that gender statistics data production is standardized. There should be a proper system that allows for data transfer from local district production centers to the central level with clear standardized mechanisms and infrastructure that NSO Malawi can approve for validity and technical reliability. This will make such gender statistics trustworthy for use in planning.

NSO Malawi is heavily dependent on donor funding to produce household surveys and the Population and Housing Census (PHC). The gap between household surveys is generally five years and PHCs ten years. Key gender statistics indicators are being measured by most MDAs for their budget reporting frameworks. However, if those indicators are obtained from household surveys,

they are only produced once every five years. The administrative systems that have to produce the remainder are generally not functioning well. Malawi has only managed to report on 42% of the 122 gender-responsive indicators required for monitoring Agenda 2030. Important standalone gender surveys such as comprehensive gender-based violence (GBV) prevalence surveys, time use surveys, and the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) survey have never been conducted in Malawi. These more comprehensive surveys are important as they allow for a more detailed analysis that will enable a better understanding of the circumstances around these gender specific concerns to better inform policy and programmatic interventions.

This will be possible with a supportive legal and policy framework which recognizes and promotes gender statistics, which is currently not the case. If Malawi is to have an NSS that can effectively produce, manage, and use gender statistics, efforts must be made to address critical challenges in terms of the (i) Institutional and policy environment and coordination among the relevant gender machinery and NSS stakeholders; (ii) strengthening data collection and statistical production processes, (iii) human and institutional capacities and (iv) data accessibility and use. The report makes a range of detailed recommendations on how the identified constraints can be addressed.



# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women) was established in 2010 as the UN organ to accelerate the attainment of gender equality and women empowerment in UN member states. UN Women evolved from the work of four distinct parts of the UN system namely: i) Division for the Advancement of Women, ii) International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, iii) Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, iv) United Nations Development Fund for Women<sup>1</sup>. UN Women globally is also supporting governments in gender data and statistics under the umbrella program of Making Every Woman and Girl Count (Women Count). In Africa, the Women Count project is underpinned by three primary objectives: i) creating an enabling environment, ii) increasing data production, and iii) improving data accessibility and use.

In Malawi, UN Women started operating in 2015 and collaborates with government through the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW). Through this ministry, the Malawi Government has mainstreamed gender in all sectors, plans, and programmes to the extent that there are gender focal persons in some ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs). Gender has been a key issue of advocacy among non-state actors especially non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to respond to the historical inequalities between men and women. The realization that past plans and programmes missed out some section of society or benefited some sections more than others has motivated investment in gender statistics. Since 2015, UN Women has been investing in the capacity of the National Statistics Office in Malawi (NSO Malawi) on the production of gender statistics. This was evident in the production of gender issues integrated in the 2015/2016 Malawi Demographic Health Survey (MDHS) Report. The UN Women Gender-Based Governance Programme (GRB) evaluation showed the positive effects of the NSO Malawi capacity strengthening efforts on gender statistics. At the same time, the evaluation highlighted gaps in the capacity of other stakeholders and policymakers who need to use gender statistics in the MDHS 2015/2016. There still are gaps related to the production, documentation, and utilization of gender statistics thus necessitating this assignment. The outcomes of this assessment and the project proposal will assist the country within the strategic objectives of the National Statistical Strategic Plan (NSSP) that guides the development of official statistics within the NSS over the years.

Gender statistics are defined as statistics that adequately reflect differences and inequalities in the situation of women and men in all areas of life<sup>2</sup>. They bear the following characteristics: a) data is collected and presented by sex as a primary and overall classification; b) data reflects gender issues; c) data is based on concepts and definitions that adequately reflect the diversity of women and men and capture all aspects of their lives; d) data collection methods take into account stereotypes and social and cultural factors that may induce gender bias in the data (UN, 2016).<sup>3</sup> Gender statistics are produced, disseminated and used in the NSS. An NSS consists of all statistical organizations and units in a country that collect, process and disseminate official statistics on behalf of the national government (OECD et al., 2002). Official statistics provide information related to the economy, demography, society and the environment to the general public, governments, business and research communities. These statistics are used for evidence-

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2013/07/un-women-the-united-nations-entity-for-gender-equality-and-the-empowerment-of-women/#:~:text=elimination%20of%20discrimination%20against%20women,action%20and%20peace%20and%20security.>

<sup>2</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1221#:~:text=Gender%20statistics%20are%20defined%20by,men's%20lives%2C%20including%20their%20specific>

<sup>3</sup> Assessing data and capacity gaps in gender statistics, 2019. Available from <https://paris21.org/node/3286>

based decision-making at the state and global level (UN, 2015).

This report is the result of a collaboration between UN Women, MoGCDSW and NSO Malawi. It is the culmination of an assessment of the data and capacity gaps of gender statistics systems in Malawi. The primary objective was to assess the gender statistics systems in Malawi in close cooperation with the national gender machinery and NSO Malawi. The assessment was carried out between February and June and the report was completed in July 2021. The study was led by FIGD Consultants and was commissioned in response to a number of challenges experienced with gender statistics in Malawi<sup>4</sup>.

Among the challenges this study sought to better understand was the weak enabling environment, insufficient data production indicated by inadequate gender statistics generation capacity, and limited awareness of the importance of gender statistics for attaining the gender equality goal. Finally, the study also focused on the current usage and accessibility of gender statistics and associated bottlenecks. The data collection tools and, consequently, this report were prepared in the context of the Women Count objectives and the three broad areas of concern included in the global flagship programme.

## 1.2 Report organization

This report is organized in the following manner: the introductory chapter (Chapter 1) is followed by Chapter 2, which covers the methodology and approach used for the execution of the assessment as well as data processing and analysis. Chapter 3 provides the background and country context including the current gender equality and women's empowerment context and the range of gender statistics currently available in the country. The fourth chapter integrates findings from the literature review and assessment and focuses on the general statistical context and the gender statistics system. It summarizes the national gender statistics context, policy and legal environment, UN Women context for gender statistics work, literature-based readiness for gender statistics, legal and policy framework that anchors the gender statistics system and key issues related to coordination, resource availability, support, and infrastructure. Chapter 4 also includes an analysis of the production and sources of gender statistics, as well as indicator gaps and status of all gender responsive SDG indicators. It also describes the stakeholders and institutions that use gender statistics, data accessibility, dissemination and use, data production, trainings on gender statistics, and gaps in available statistics. Other aspects such as data sharing frameworks and advocacy, stakeholders' interests, political will and support for gender statistics, human resource capacity, and statistics production process are also covered. The final part of the assessment contains the main findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

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<sup>4</sup> UN Women's Flagship Programme Initiative (FPI) "Making Every Woman and Girl Count" (MEWGC) Country Survey 2019

# 2 Approach and methodology

## 2.1 Objective

As indicated in the introduction, UN Women has been supporting governments to improve gender data and statistics as part of the Women Count global flagship programme. Women Count is underpinned by three primary objectives in Africa; these are also applicable to Malawi: i) creating an enabling environment, ii) increasing data production, and iii) improving data accessibility and use. The data collection tools and consequently this report has been framed by these three broad pillars.

The primary objective of the study was to assess the data and capacity gaps of the gender statistics system in Malawi. It was executed in close cooperation with the national gender machinery and NSO Malawi.

## 2.2 Scope of work

The terms of reference of the study can be summarized as follows:

- Carry out an initial in-depth review of the institutional framework of the National Statistical Office, Ministry of Economic Planning, Development and Public Sector Reforms, MoGCDSW, and other key ministries that are involved in data production and use.
- Conduct consultations with NSO Malawi and other key MDAs to assess the technical capacity gaps in gender statistics among producers and users of data particularly within NSO Malawi and MoGCDSW.
- Conduct consultations with the National Planning Commission and UN Country Teams, civil society organizations, universities, research institutions and development partners to have a better understanding of the needs, constraints, potential solutions to facilitate increased collaboration between users and producers of gender statistics
- Facilitate a validation workshop and incorporate all inputs to finalize project document and annual work plan.
- Support NSO Malawi, the National Gender Machinery, and UN Women to develop a project document and associated work plan for the advancement of gender statistics in Malawi.

The consultant executed the scope of work and produced the assessment report and project document which will guide further work for UN Women and stakeholders in working with NSO Malawi to take key actions forward in addressing the identified challenges.

## 2.3 Methodology

### 2.3.1 Overview

The methodology used in the study was primarily based on the Paris21/UN Women framework/implementation guidelines on 'Assessing data and capacity gaps for producing better gender statistics'<sup>5</sup>. The methodology makes use of four questionnaires to assess data capacity gaps.

<sup>5</sup> Assessing data and capacity gaps in gender statistics, 2019. Available from <https://paris21.org/node/3286>

**Table 1: PARIS21 Questionnaires**

Questionnaire	Responders	Main purpose of questionnaire
A	Main module	Identify gender statistics gaps in the national statistical system, by focusing on the statistical capacity, enabling environment, and statistical production as well as coordinating mechanisms, and the use of gender statistics.
B	Gender focal points	Collect information on the statistical capacity of staff responsible for the production of gender statistics in NSO Malawi and MoGCDSW.
C	Ministries	Collect information on gender statistics produced by different ministries/institutions as well as on the overall coordination of gender statistics production and use.
D	Gender statistics users	Collect information on the use of gender statistics produced by the national statistical system. Individual responses were treated with confidentiality.

The study combined a desktop review of existing documents and literature, interviews with key informant and other stakeholders, and the completion of the Paris21/UN Women resource materials. A reference group consisting of officials from NSO Malawi as well as MoGCDSW was also established. The group provided general oversight of the study and held a validation meeting to verify the main findings and recommendations of the study.

### 2.3.2 Document and literature review

The desk top review focused on an increased understanding of the institutional framework for gender and gender statistics, legal and policy environment, and the national indicators coverage compared to the scope of gender indicators in Sustainable Development Goals and African Union Agenda 2063.

The following documents were reviewed:

- i) Malawi Vision 2063
- ii) Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS III)
- iii) Gender Equality Act
- iv) National Gender Policy
- v) National budget documents particularly funding allocation towards gender programs and activities
- vi) Specific Acts of Parliament, National Policies and Strategic Plans for the institutions.
- vii) The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi
- viii) UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly SDG 3,4 and 5.
- ix) DHS and other national surveys (Labour Force Surveys) among others
- x) Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Shadow Reports for Malawi
- xi) International gender protocols and declarations such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women and others.
- xii) Research reports and academic papers on gender.



### 2.3.3 Key informant interviews

Key informant interviews were conducted with selected organizations identified by UN Women, some of which formed the reference group for the assessment.

Based on their main area of work, key informants comprised government ministries, including NSO Malawi and the National Planning Commission, NGOs and academic institutions. A client-supplied tool was administered to each group according to what suited them best. The consultants categorized the respondents into three categories: 1) producer of statistics, 2) user of statistics and 3) both producer and user of statistics.

**Table 2 List of institutions consulted**

No	Name of institution	Formation	Orientation
1	Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare	Government	Gender statistics expert and user
2	Ministry of Agriculture	Government	Producer and user of statistics
3	Ministry of Health	Government	Producer and user of statistics
4	Ministry of Education	Government	Producer and user of statistics
5	Ministry of Trade	Government	Producer and user of statistics
6	National Statistics Office	Government	Producer of statistics
7	National Planning Commission	Quasi government	User of statistics
8	Department of Human Resource Management and Development	Government	Producer of statistics
9	WOLREC	Civil society	User of statistics
10	Oxfam	Civil society	User of statistics
12	ActionAid	Civil society	User of statistics
13	University of Malawi	Academic/research institution	Producer and user of statistics
14	UN Women	Civil Society	Users of Statistics

Source: Survey (2021)

### 2.3.4 Reference group for the Assessment

The reference group consisted of six member organizations and provided both technical and strategic oversight. Unfortunately, reference group meetings were not always well attended due to competing commitments of members. While several meetings were convened, most members only attended one or two of the three key meetings. However, the key institutions such as NSO Malawi, UN Women and MoGCDSW were available most of the time.

**Table 3: Reference group members**

No	Name of institution	Formation	Orientation
1	Nations Statistical Office	Government	Producer of gender statistics
2	Economic Planning and Development	Government	User of statistics
3	Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare	Government	Gender statistics expert and user
4	National Planning Commission	Semi-government institution	User of statistics
5	UNDP	Civil Society	User of Statistics
6	UN WOMEN	Civil Society	User of Statistics

### 2.3.5 Validation of the draft report

UN Women organized a validation workshop as part of the process of finalizing the assessment report. The validation workshop created an opportunity for the consultants to present their findings to key stakeholders, gather additional insights to enhance the report, and discuss the main recommendations of the report. The comments received during the validation workshop and from UN Women technical staff were incorporated into the final report. The following organizations attended the validation workshop.

**Table 4: Organizations participating in the validation**

No	Name of institution	Association	Role
1	Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare	Government	Gender statistics expert and user
2	Ministry of Agriculture	Government	Producer and user of statistics
3	National Statistics Office	Government	Producer of statistics
4	Economic Planning and Division	Government	Producer of statistics
5	National Planning Commission	Quasi government	User of statistics
6	Department of Disaster and Management Affairs (DODMA)	Government	Producer of statistics
7	Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre	Civil society	User of statistics
8	NGO-Gender Coordination Network	Civil Society	User of Statistics
9	For Equality	Civil Society	User of Statistics
10	Oxfam	Civil society	User of statistics
11	ActionAid	Civil society	User of statistics
12	University of Malawi	Academic/research institution	Producer and user of statistics
13	UN Women	Civil Society	Users of Statistics

### 2.3.6 Supplementary consultations after validation

The second stakeholder consultations involved selecting some of the stakeholders who had already responded to the assessment to complete the supplementary tool (see Appendix 2). This questionnaire was developed by the consultants to help respond to the comments that emanated from the validation workshop. The following institutions were selected to complete the supplementary questionnaire:

- National Statistical Office
- Ministry of Gender, Community Development, and Social Welfare
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Trade
- National Planning Commission

The UN Women focal point provided follow-up support for the completion of the supplementary questionnaire. Only one institution submitted their responses.

After the completion of the final draft of the report and additional stand-alone virtual meetings, UN Women further consulted with representatives of NSO Malawi and MoGCDSW to further explore some of the key recommendations of the study.

### 2.3.6 Data management and analysis process

The findings of the literature review were used with the information obtained during the stakeholder consultation to triangulate and ensure consistency of findings. Part of the consultation and literature review data was used to inform the development of the project document which UN Women and NSO Malawi can use to source funding to address some of the gender statistics capacity issues for the country as outlined in the project proposal.

## 2.4 Limitations of the study

This study was not without limitations; some were addressed while some may have affected the outcome of the assessment.

1. During the consultative interviews, it was noted that some participants from government ministries are human resource officers are instrumental in advocating for gender mainstreaming in recruitment and promotion in Government. These individuals do not necessarily have a role in collecting and managing program statistics produced by their respective ministries as production and use of such statistics is the responsibility of the planning directorate. This limited the depth of information about data and gender statistics in the respective ministries and also affected the quality of gender statistics response the consultants collected. The review of documents somehow mitigated this limitation.
2. The study was designed such that the client will support the operational needs for the study directly. Since the assessment was done under Covid-19 rules, the delays in processing airtime and other needs affected how data was collected. It also affected the responsiveness of some of the respondents since some scheduled interviews kept being postponed due to internet/communication data disbursement delays to the consultants. Although further follow-ups were done for some respondents to respond, it was a bit difficult for stakeholders to spend enough time on the interviews. The limited availability of the reference group members for important meetings also affected the process. Consultants had to rely on possible supplementary tools which also did not attract the anticipated response rate. Consultants relied on UN Women technical staff and additional literature reviews to fill some technical gaps for the assessment.

3. There is notable data sharing fatigue for some stakeholders who had committed to support the supplementary data collection process. Follow-ups by the client focal person were unsuccessful and the consultant had to resort to desk reviews to try and fill the remaining information gaps. This may have resulted in some gaps in the findings presented.
4. To some extent, the pre-determined UN Women and PARIS21 tool was not easy for some stakeholders to complete. While consultants apportioned sections for the specific respondents based on the analysis of their roles, some questions were not responded to adequately and some of the missing data had to be supplemented through the desk review.
5. Gender statistics is a reasonably new concept in Malawian literature, hence not much has been written on the subject. The consultants had to extrapolate literature and understanding from other gender status findings which helped to present a contextual picture for the study and help locate the Malawi assessment within the discourse. This may have limited some of the contextual issues of the assessment.

# 3 Country context

## 3.1 Introduction

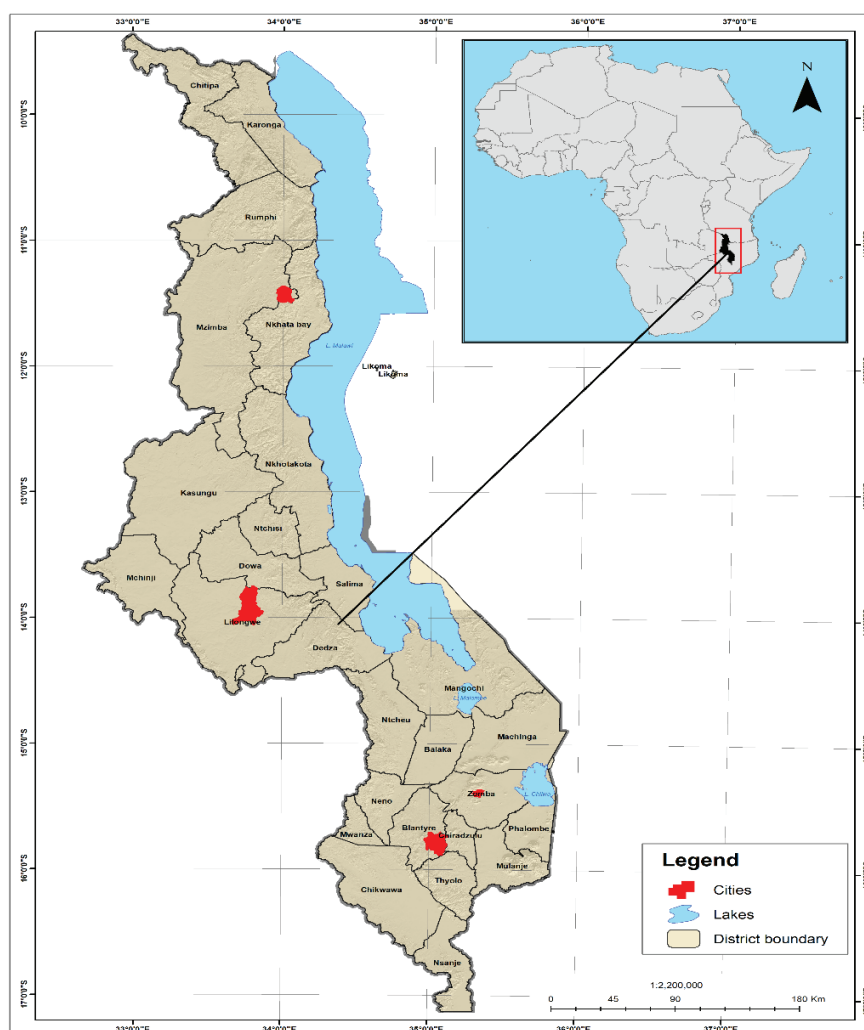
The production of gender statistics takes place in the context of the general gender equality situation in Malawi. Chapter 3 focuses on the country context in general but also the gender-related context. It also demonstrates to some extent what kind of gender statistics are currently available.

This chapter provides a brief overview of the socio-economic, legal, political, education, and human rights situation in Malawi.

## 3.2 Socio-economic overview

Malawi is a landlocked country located in Southern Africa and shares borders with Mozambique to the South and South-East, Tanzania to the North and Zambia to the West. A 2018 Population and Housing Census (PHC) found that the population is 17,563,749 of which, 49% are males (8,521,456) and 51% (9,042,293) are females<sup>6</sup>.

The Southern Region has the highest population with 44% of the total population, followed by the Central Region with 43% while Northern Region constitutes 13% of the total population. The majority, 84% of the population (14,780,385 people) lives in rural areas while 2,783,364 people, 16% live in urban areas, which include the four major cities of Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba and other towns, Bomas (district headquarters), and gazetted town planning areas (GoM, 2019). Malawi's population is predominantly rural and more women than men live in rural areas (women 7,644,147; men 7,136,238). Approximately the same number of women and men live in urban areas (women 1,398,146, men 1,385,218) (GoM, 2018).



<sup>6</sup> NSO (2018) Malawi Population and Housing Census Report, p 4. Zomba

The median age of the population in Malawi is 17 years. In terms of proportions, census results revealed that about 3% of the total population in Malawi are infants aged less than one year old; 15% of the population are aged under-five years and about 49% are aged 18 years or older while a further 4% are aged 65 years or older. Malawi's population is therefore still youthful but also transitioning from high fertility to low fertility given the narrowing base of the population aged 0-4 years (NSO Malawi, 2018). The status of gender equality in Malawi presents a mixed picture with limited gains and considerable losses over the years even though gender equality is very critical to the National Transformation Vision 2063 of Malawi (Malunga, 2021)<sup>7</sup>. The 2019 female HDI<sup>8</sup> value for Malawi is 0.493 in contrast with 0.500 for males, resulting in a Gender and Development Index (GDI)<sup>9</sup> value of 0.986. This places the country into Group 1 suggesting it is one of the countries with high equality in human development index (HDI) achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of less than 2.5 percent). The GDI<sup>10,11</sup> is calculated for 167 countries and in comparison, GDI values for Mali and Zambia are 0.821 and 0.958 (UNDP, 2020). Malawi is ranked relatively low in the Global Gender Gap Index<sup>12</sup> and the Gender Inequality Index<sup>13</sup> of 101 out of 144 countries (World Economic Forum, 2017) and 171 out of 189 countries (UNDP, 2018) respectively<sup>14</sup>. These low rankings are relatively due to low education attainment and a low score of economic participation and opportunities for women (UNDP, 2018).

Malawi had a GDP per capita of US\$603<sup>15</sup> in 2020, which represents a significant increase from US\$411<sup>16</sup> in 2019 following rebasing of GDP from 2010 prices to 2017 prices; an HDI of 0.483<sup>17</sup> and high structural vulnerability to economic and environmental shocks. Malawi is categorized as a least developed country by the classification of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); a low income country by the classification of the World Bank and a low human development nation by the classification of the United Nations.

National surveys (See figure 1) confirm that both poverty and income inequality are high. It is estimated that 51.5% of the population lives below the national poverty line and 20.1% are ultra-poor with women more likely than men to be poor. Income inequality as measured by gini coefficient is 0.43<sup>18</sup> meaning that to attain income equality, 43% of national income would have to be redistributed. The richest 20% of the population controls 51.7% of total income while the poorest 20% control 6.4% of total income<sup>19</sup>. In terms of poverty by sex of household head (see Figure 2), 58% of households headed by women are poor compared to 49% headed by men.

7 Malunga, A (2021) Examining attainability of Gender Equality in Malawi (Paper) in the Malawi Development Digest, Centre for Research and Consultancy, Lilongwe

8 HDI -Human Development Index

9 The GDI measures gender inequalities in achievement in three basic dimensions of human development: health (measured by female and male life expectancy at birth), education (measured by female and male expected years of schooling for children and mean years for adults aged 25 years and older) and command over economic resources (measured by female and male estimated GNI per capita) (UNDP, Malawi Human Development Report, 2020)

10 Countries are divided into five groups by absolute deviation from gender parity in HDI values. Group 1 comprises countries with high equality in HDI achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of less than 2.5 percent), group 2 comprises countries with medium to high equality in HDI achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of 2.5-5 percent), group 3 comprises countries with medium equality in HDI achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of 5-7.5 percent), group 4 comprises countries with medium to low equality in HDI achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of 7.5-10 percent) and group 5 comprises countries with low equality in HDI achievements between women and men (absolute deviation from gender parity of more than 10 percent).

11

12 The Global Gender Gap Index benchmarks the evolution of gender-based gaps among four key dimensions (Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment) and tracks progress towards closing these gaps over time

13 Gender Inequality Index is a composite measure reflecting in-equality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labor market.

14 UN Women and African Development Bank (2020) Malawi Gender Profile Country Report (Draft), Lilongwe

15 National Planning Commission (2020), Malawi 2063, Lilongwe

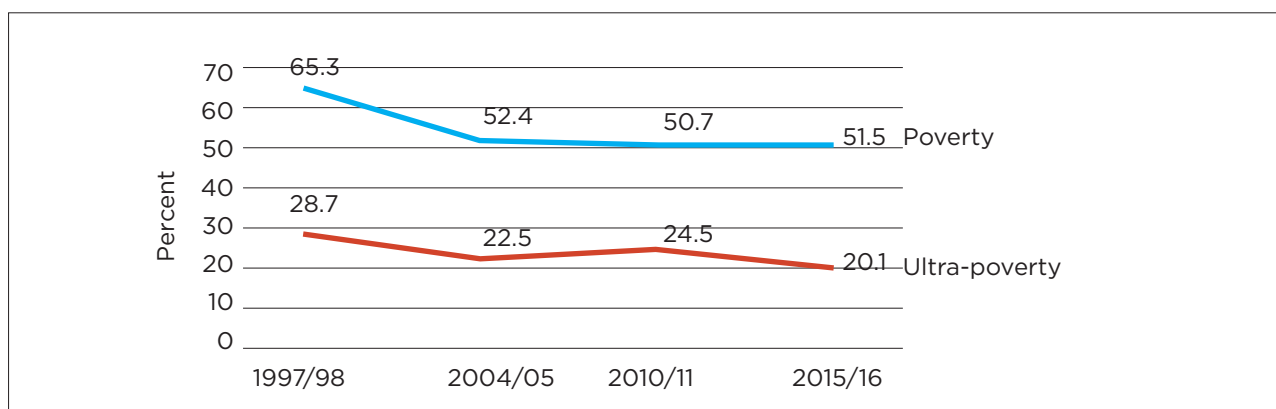
16 World Bank (online), World Development Indicators, Databank

17 UNDP (2019), Human Development Report, New York

18 NSO (2017), Integrated Household Survey, Zomba

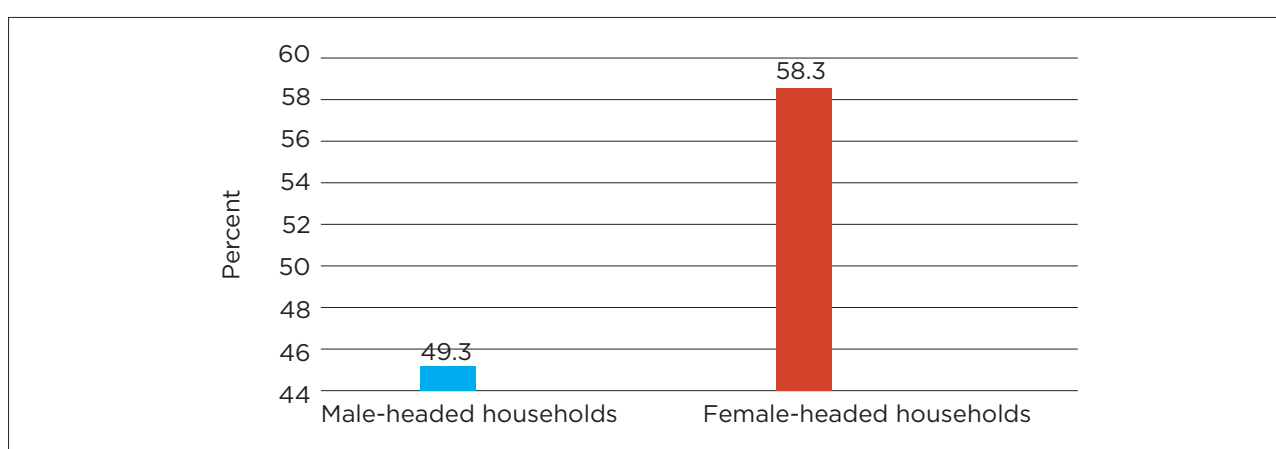
19 World Bank (online), World Development Indicators

**Figure 1: Trends in poverty rates**



Source: NSO Malawi (2019), Poverty Statistics

**Figure 2: Poverty rates by sex of household head in 2017**



Source: NSO Malawi (2019), Poverty statistics

### 3.3 Legal, policy and institutional framework

Sections 20, 24, and 41 of the Constitution of Malawi 1994 uphold the principle of equal rights and equal access to justice for women and men and prohibit any discrimination based on gender or marital status. In 1987, Malawi ratified the CEDAW and signed the Optional CEDAW Protocol in 2000. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa was ratified in 2005<sup>20</sup>.

Malawi is a party to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which features 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets aimed at ending poverty, combating inequalities, and promoting prosperity by 2030. In relation to gender, SDG 5, aims at 'achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls by 2030 as well as 37 gender-related targets spread across 10 of the 17 other SDGs. The 2030 SDGs commit to addressing core issues of gender equality such as eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, eradicating discriminatory laws and constraints on sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work, and increasing women's participation in decision-making.

<sup>20</sup> SIGI, Malawi country profile: <http://www.genderindex.org/sites/default/files/datasheets/MW.pdf>



Malawi is also a signatory to major international and regional commitments to achieving gender equality, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development. In implementing these agreements, progress has been made on some gender indicators<sup>21</sup>. For example, after 20 years of the Beijing Declaration, women's percentage in non-agricultural wage employment has increased<sup>22</sup>. However, some gender inequality remains in participation and benefits in agriculture, including smallholder production. Customary laws still dictate unequal gender relations and reinforce the patriarchal social order that perpetuates discrimination that some women face in public and private institutions<sup>23</sup>.

The Constitution of Malawi, which is the supreme law of the land, stipulates principles of national policy. It empowers the government of Malawi to come up with instruments, strategies, policies, and legislation that aim at achieving equality and, more specifically, gender equality<sup>24</sup>. Section 13 (a) of the Constitution states as follows:

"The state shall actively promote the welfare and development of the people of Malawi by progressively adopting and implementing policies and legislation aimed at achieving gender equality". This will be achieved through "i) full participation of women in all spheres of Malawian society on the basis of equal opportunities with men; ii) the implementation of the principles of nondiscrimination and such other measures as may be required and iii) the implementation of policies to address social issues such as domestic violence, security of the person, lack of maternity benefits, economic exploitation and rights to property"<sup>25</sup>.

Malawi developed and adopted the Gender Equality Act (GEA) into law in 2013<sup>26</sup>. The goal of the GEA is "promoting gender equality, equal integration, influence, empowerment, dignity and opportunities for men and women in all functions of society, to prohibit and provide redress mechanisms for sex discrimination, harmful practices and sexual harassment, to provide for the public awareness on promotion of gender equality issues<sup>27</sup>". Malawi also has a number of laws intended to reduce gender inequality including the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act, 2006; Deceased Estates (Wills, Inheritance and Protection) Act, 2011; Gender Equality Act, 2013, and the Marriage, Divorce, Family Relations Act. 2015.

In addition to the GEA, Malawi also has a National Gender Policy 2015, a document whose goal is to reduce gender inequalities and enhance the participation of women, men, girls, and boys in the socio- economic development process of the country<sup>28</sup>. The National Gender Policy 2015 has been aligned to the regional SADC Protocol on Gender and Development in 2014. The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development is an instrument that guides member states on how to integrate gender into their development agenda<sup>29</sup>. Among other member states, Malawi has committed to mainstream gender into the SADC Program of Action and Community Building Initiatives as a prerequisite for sustainable development to deepen regional integration and strengthen community building among member states.

The Malawi 2063 National Development Plan covers gender under the enabler, human capital development. It contemplates that gender inequalities shall be addressed to improve the socioeconomic status of people in Malawi by accelerating the pace of inclusive wealth creation. Malawi 2063 acknowledges that gender inequality manifests in various aspects. This includes but is not limited to households headed by women's agricultural productivity; wages and profits that

21 UMFULA (Uncertainty reduction in models for understanding development applications) project, "Gender, Agriculture and Climate Change in Malawi" retrieved from: <http://futureclimateafrica.org/project/umfula/>, p3

22 Ibid

23 Kanyongolo, N. (2011) 'Economic Empowerment of Women: Law and Policy Review'. Lilongwe: MGCCD, Livingstonia Synod and DanChurchAid; O'Neil et al, 2016 <http://bit.ly/2ipgctf>

24 Constitution of Malawi, 1994 (as amended), Sec 13, sub section 1

25 GoM (2016) The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi, Lilongwe

26 Gender Equality Act, Malawi, 2013

27 Ibid

28 National Gender Policy, Malawi 2015

29 <https://www.sadc.int/issues/gender/>



flow from non-agriculture activities; women's access to infrastructure, finance, and social services such as education and health; resilience to shocks; ownership of assets including land; and women's rights and representation in political and decision-making positions<sup>30</sup>.

Nationally, the MoGCDSW is mandated to provide policy direction and lead the formulation, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the national gender policy and gender equality activities at different levels of the government. The national gender policy has a monitoring framework. This monitoring framework has 60% gender-related indicators and the ministry of gender is responsible for its monitoring. The MoGCDSW provides technical leadership for the national gender machinery, which is established to coordinate interventions by government and promote gender equality. The national gender machinery comprises a network of national institutions, mechanisms, and processes coordinated by a central policy coordination body. Other national policies with implications on gender include the National Youth Policy, agriculture policies, education policies, the Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) policy, Environmental Policy, and HIV and AIDS policy. Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks of these policies cover gender disaggregated statistics.

The Malawi Government has implemented women empowerment programs through various mechanisms. The MoGCDSW coordinates gender mainstreaming in all sectors, policies, and programs. The women empowerment approach has encompassed a wide range of interventions; with support from UNFPA, the MoGCDSW implemented a Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE) program. GEWE is aimed at accelerating national development. Some of the interventions through GEWE include the establishment of Savings and Loans Groups (SLG) clubs. The Village Savings and Loans VLS groups are now called Savings and Loans Groups. It also established one-stop-centers to provide comprehensive services to survivors of gender-based violence (GBV)<sup>31</sup>. GEWE is an institutionalized program in the MoGCDSW and covers three subprograms, namely i) socio and economic empowerment, ii) gender mainstreaming, and iii) GBV<sup>32</sup>.

### 3.4 Gender statistics across different domains in Malawi

In 2018, Malawi's female population was estimated at 9.2 million representing 51%, while the male population was approximately 8.94 million representing 49%. The 2018 census shows that about 49% of the population is aged 18 years or older and the median age of the population is 17 years. The age and sex pyramid therefore shows that Malawi's population is still youthful. In terms of religion, which shapes gender attitudes, beliefs, and practices, the 2018 census showed that over 70% of Malawians are Christians and around 14% are Moslems (NSO Malawi, 2018)

#### 3.4.1 Gender and education statistics

The 2018 national census revealed a 68.6% literacy rate in Malawi with the literacy rates higher for men than women, at 71.6% and 65.9% respectively. There is gender equality in school attendance rates, which show that 94% of girls aged 6-13 attend primary schools compared with 93% of boys. However, only 5% of women and 9% of men have completed secondary school or gone beyond secondary school. (Zeiger, Cifarelli, Sibale, & Marshall, 2018). The percentage of children not attending school indicate that a significant proportion of children are missing out on the benefits of school. In Malawi, 5% of children of official primary school ages are not attending school – when disaggregated by sex this represents approximately 6% for boys and 5% of girls (See figure 3)<sup>33</sup>. For children of primary school age in Malawi, the biggest disparity can be seen between the poorest and the richest children. Figure 4 looks at the percentage of youth of secondary school ages who are out of school in Malawi. It shows that nearly 26% of women youth of secondary school age are

30 National Planning Commission (2020), Malawi 2063, Lilongwe

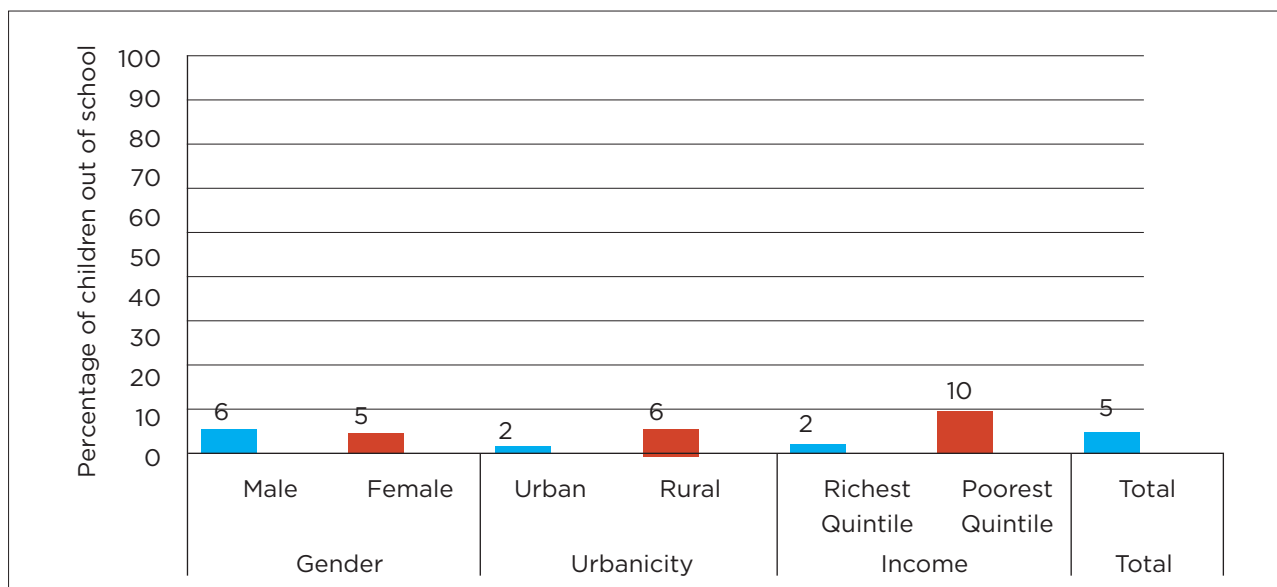
31 UNFPA (online source), Gender Equality and Women Empowerment, available at <https://malawi.unfpa.org/en/news/gewe-gender-equality-and-women-empowerment>

32 GoM (2020), Ministry of Finance, 2019/2020 Program Based Budget, Lilongwe

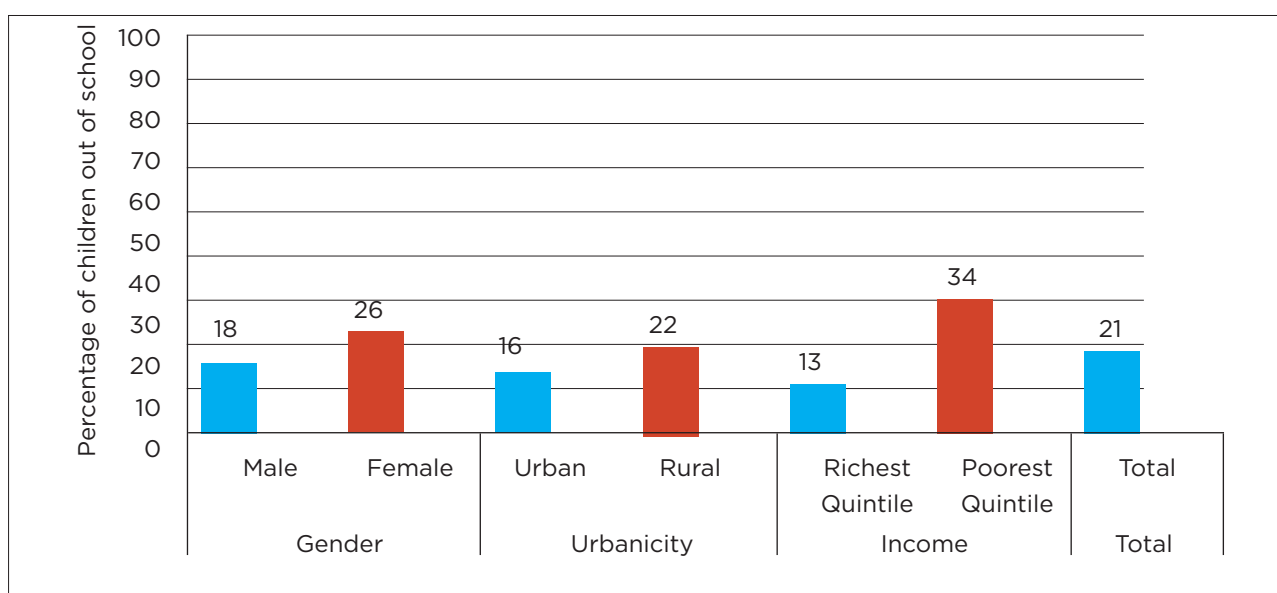
33 Malawi National Education Profile 2018 Update: FHI360 [https://www.epdc.org/sites/default/files/documents/EPDC\\_NEP\\_2018\\_Malawi.pdf](https://www.epdc.org/sites/default/files/documents/EPDC_NEP_2018_Malawi.pdf)

out of school compared to 18% of men youth of the same age<sup>34</sup>. For youth of secondary school age and those at primary level, the biggest disparities can be observed between the poorest and the richest youth.

**Figure 3: Percentage of Children of Primary School age (age 6-11) out of school**



**Figure 4: Percentage of Children of Secondary School age (age 14-17) out of school**

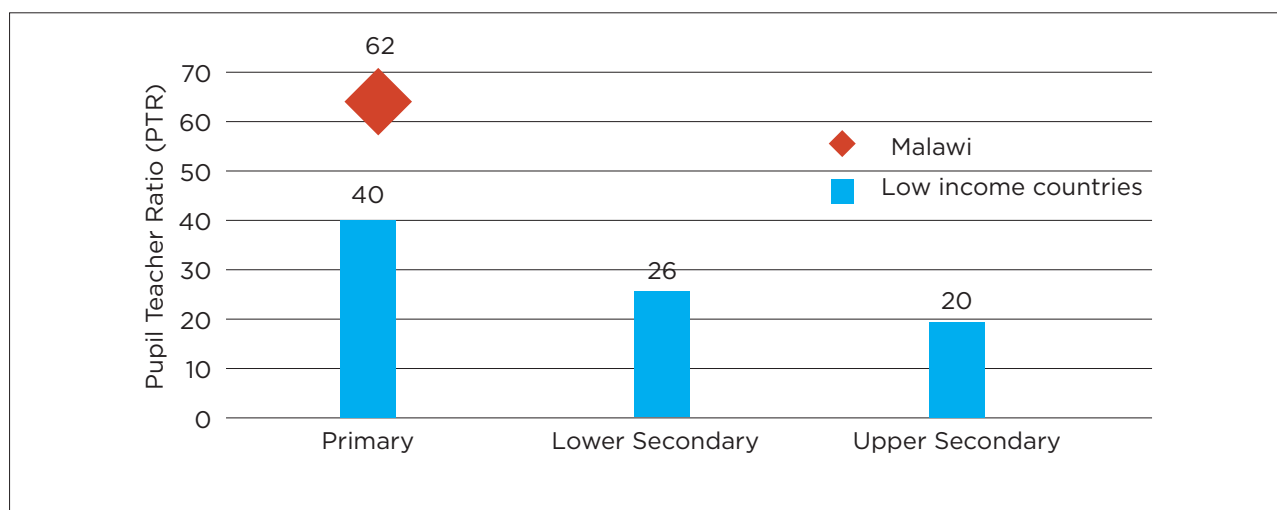


Another important gender statistic in education is the pupil-teacher ratio (PTR). In Malawi, the PTR is a proxy learning quality and resource availability indicator. In schools where resources like desks, books and other materials are limited, girls may be more disadvantaged than boys and hence it may be good to document relevant gender statistics in the area. In Malawi, the PTR in primary education is 62.3. Thus, on average, there is one teacher for every 62.3 students in primary school, which is higher than the median PTR for low-income countries of 40. See Figure 5<sup>35</sup>. Investment in human capital development in terms of educational attainment will be an enabler for the Malawi vision 2063, the SDGs, and other human development indicators. Therefore, investing in the education of women and girls will be crucial to ensuring gender equality.

<sup>34</sup> ibid

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

**Figure 5: Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) by school level**



### 3.4.2 Gender and health statistics

Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (DHS 2015-2016) shows that maternal mortality in Malawi is still high at 439/100,000 live births. According to the survey, the unmet needs for family planning among unmarried respondents was 40% and 9% for those who were married. The percentage of pregnant<sup>36</sup> women that are abused by their husbands is at 5%. (MDHS, 2015-16). The WHO in Table 1 shows Under 5 mortality rates (MR) at 41% for both sexes, maternal mortality rates (MMR) at 349, and life expectancy of 69 for women and 62 for men as of 2019.

**Table 1: WHO updated online Malawi Key Health Indicators**

Mortality and global health estimates	
Neonatal mortality rate (per 1000 live births) (2019)	19.8 (Both sexes)
Under-five mortality rate (probability of dying by age 5 per 1000 live births) (2019)	41.6 (Both sexes)
	37.2 (Women)
	46 (Men)
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100 000 live births) (2017)	349 [ 244 - 507 ]
Sustainable development goals	
Life expectancy at birth (years) (2019)	62.3 (Men)
	68.9 (Women)
	65.6 (Both sexes)
Births attended by skilled health personnel (%) (2015-2016)	89.8

On HIV/AIDs, the 2015 Malawi Population-Based HIV Impact Assessment (MPHIA) put prevalence of HIV among adults ages 15 to 64 years at 10.6% with 12.8% for women and 8.2% for men. This corresponds with approximately 900,000 people living with HIV (PLHIV) aged 15 to 64 years. The annual incidence of HIV among adults ages 15 to 64 years was 0.37 percent: 0.48% for women and 0.25% for men, which corresponds to approximately 28,000 new cases of HIV annually. The prevalence of viral load suppression (VLS) among HIV-positive adults ages 15 to 64 years was 67.6 percent: 72.9% for women and 58.6% for men. Thus, women are more affected and infected by HIV/AIDS, which is an important gender statistic to document as it guides the needed gender-responsive planning to deal with the pandemic.

<sup>36</sup> Malawi, Country Key Indicators WHO <https://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.cco.ki-MWI?lang=en> Accessed July 2021

### 3.4.3 Gender and women`s voice, decision, and access to economic resources

Malawi is a democratic country with elections conducted every five years for the president, members of parliament, and councilors. It follows presidentialism where the electorate votes for a president rather than parliamentarism where electorate votes for Members of Parliament and the leader of the party with majority seats in Parliament becomes president. Since 1964 when Malawi attained independence, Malawi has had six presidents and only one, Joyce Banda (2012-2014) was a woman. She came to power under constitutional order upon the death of President Bingu Wa Mutharika.

On women`s voice, the MDHS 2016 found that women were more likely to be involved in making decisions to visit their family or relatives (78%) than making decisions about their own healthcare (68%) or making major household purchases (55%). Around 47% of women participate in making the three decisions while 15% participate in none of the three decisions (NSOMalawi, 2017). Access to economic resources and assets continues to be problematic for women. Laws guaranteeing women inheritance and land ownership rights are often overridden by social norms and customs<sup>37</sup> and more often, they favour men even in matrilineal settings. Women play an important role in agriculture as they produce and estimated 70% of food that is consumed locally<sup>38</sup>. However, only a third of agricultural holdings in Malawi are held by women even though this is still higher than in many African countries<sup>39</sup>. Thus, although women perform 50-70% of all agricultural tasks, they rarely have control over the land or yields thereby denying them economic benefits from the sales of agriculture produce. On average, women-managed plots are 12% smaller than those of men and 25% less productive due to differing levels of knowledge and access to inputs for improving farming efficiency. Agriculture transformation is a central pillar of Malawi`s Vision 2063 and it can unlock opportunities for women to economic empowerment. As such, the participation and benefit from agriculture of all gender groups will be critical for the Vision and indeed the SGDs. Related to agriculture, the effects of environmental mismanagement affect women due to gender roles they play in resource utilization. This is true in the case of deforestation, desertification and decreasing water availability. These affect women`s economic productivity and nutritional status.

### 3.4.4 Gender and participation in formal employment

The participation of women in formal employment is low in Malawi. According to the 2013 Malawi Labor Force Survey (MLFS)<sup>40</sup>, a total of 5.5 million people were employed. This represents an 80% employment rate. Men were more likely than women to be employed at 86% and 74% respectively. The 2013 MLFS indicates that most employed persons were absorbed in agriculture, forestry, and fishing (64%) and wholesale, retail, and repair of motor vehicles (16%). Most working people were engaged in informal employment (80%), and women were more likely to be employed in informal employment than men. The share of informal employment in rural areas was 91% compared to 69% in urban areas. The labor force participation rate for 2017 was 72% for women and 82% for men aged 15 years or above<sup>41</sup>. The most recent report on labor force participation rates show that the rate for women was 72.6% and men was 81.1% in 2019<sup>42</sup>. These rates show persistent gender inequalities in labor force participation. One`s level of education determines their representation in high status occupations and these affect women more than men - the unemployment rate is higher for women (26%) than men (14%). The urban versus rural area unemployment rate is 28% and 19% respectively (NSO Malawi, 2013). Therefore, there are relatively few women aged 15-64 years are involved in the labor force i.e., 73% compared to men at 82% within the economically active population.

The agricultural sector employs most of the country`s work force, and also mostly women. The ILO estimates that in 2018, 71% of total employment was in agriculture. Women also constituted 30%

37 UN Women and African Development Bank (2020) Malawi Gender Profile Country Report (Draft), Lilongwe

38 FAO SOFA 2010-11, Women in Agriculture -closing the gender gap. <http://www.fao.org/publications/sofa/2010-11/en/>

39 Ibid, supranote 7, p2

40 Malawi Labour Force Survey 2013: Key Findings Report. National Statistical Office Zomba, Malawi.

41 Human Development Report, 2017

42 Human Development Report, 2020

of total wage employment in non-agriculture in Malawi in 2013 with the percentage increasing to 48.5% in 2019. The percentage share of women in wage employment in non-agriculture in rural areas was higher than in urban areas. The 2013 MLFS reported that women's and men's shares of employment in senior and middle management were very low at 0.07% for women and 0.32% for men. The proportions of women and men in senior and middle management positions were higher in urban areas than in rural areas. Representation of women and men in high status occupations was positively related to one's level of education and since men in Malawi have a higher level of qualification than women, they are likely to be employed in high status occupations. The Human Development Report, 2017 showed that only 16.7% of women aged 25 and older had at least some secondary education between 2010 and 2017 compared to 25% of their men counterparts. Low participation of women in formal employment is also attributed to inadequate policies that deliberately support women and address their needs and priorities.

### **3.4.5 Gender and women headed households**

As of 2018, Malawi had a total of 3,984,929 households of which 1,401,211 were headed by women, representing 35% of household heads (NSO Malawi, 2018). In terms of urban and rural areas, 81% of households in urban areas are headed by men and around 20% are headed by women. In rural areas, 73% of the households are headed by men while 27% are headed by women (NSO Malawi, 2017). Age-wise, 28% of households are headed by women aged 24 years or less and 22% of the households are headed by women aged 35-49 years. About 57% of women-headed households are poor compared to 43% of their men-headed counterparts (Ministry of Finance Economic Planning and Development, 2017). Dominantly, 92% of women-headed households are those with widows.

In terms of trade unions, the Malawi Congress of Trade Union (MCTU) is the major organ for unionization in the country; women occupied close to 40% of leadership and decision-making positions at MCTU as at 2018. There are efforts towards revising the MCTU constitution to be more women and youth inclusive towards 50/50 participation of both women and youth in MCTU activities (LO/FTF Council, 2017). The employment/unemployment status and unionization are among the indicators that show that gender equality may remain a challenge in Malawi.

### **3.4.6 Gender and unpaid or household care work**

Unpaid care work refers to the provision of services for family and community members outside of the market where concern for the well-being of the care recipients is likely to affect the quality of the service provided (Oxfam, 2016). In 2017, the MDHS reported that 61% of men who were employed were paid in cash compared with 30% of women while 59% of women were not being paid for their labor compared to 26% of men (NSO Malawi, 2017). Thus, women do more unpaid care work than men and it is particularly acute among younger women and men. The women-to-men unequal distribution of care work restrains women from participating in politics and income-generating activities thereby limiting their decision-making power and control over assets at the household level.

### **3.4.7 Gender-Based Violence**

Despite Malawi's progress in having a stronger policy and legal framework on violence against women and girls and harmful practices, GBV remains manifest through early child and forced marriage, harmful cultural practices, religious beliefs, low literacy levels, and low economic empowerment of women among others. The Malawi Demographic Health Survey (MDHS) shows that 47% of women are married by age 18 and the majority will have their first child by age 19. A National Child Protection strategy evaluation for the Ministry of Gender noted that there are major issues such as cultural bias, GBV and limited women's representation in decision-making (Zeiger, Cifarelli, Sibale, & Marshall, 2018) that exacerbate GBV. For example, the 2015-16 Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (MDHS) shows that as much as 34% of women aged 15-49 years experienced physical violence by age 15 while 20% experienced sexual violence. A 2012 GBV

baseline survey done in 17 districts of Malawi found that 38% of women respondents experienced physical, psychosocial, and sexual violence compared to 30% of men respondents. Increasingly, the percentage of young married women (age 15-19 years) have experienced physical violence from age 15 with an increase from 21% in 2010 (DHS, 2010) to 23% in 2016 (DHS, 2016). At couple level, spousal and intimate partner violence reduced from 48% in 2010 to 42% (DHS, 2016). The most common type of spousal violence remained emotional violence (30%), followed by physical violence (26%) and sexual violence (19%). About half (53%) of married women reported that their current husband is the main perpetrator of physical violence and 31% reported that their former husbands were the main perpetrators. The continued status of unpaid care work, where most of the burden is carried by women and the continued manifestation of violence against women are among the indicators that demonstrate that gender equality remains far from being attained in Malawi.

### 3.4.8 Gender statistics state in politics and public service

As indicated earlier, Malawi is a signatory to the SADC<sup>43</sup> Protocol on Gender and Development (2008). The Protocol obligates state parties to have 50% women representation in leadership and decision-making positions in the public and private sectors. Article 13 of the Protocol recommends measures for achieving the 50% gender quota. Women's participation in politics in Malawi is still low despite having had a woman President Joyce Banda between 2012- 2014. There has been limited progress towards equal political participation by women due to the expensive nature of politics, limited capacity of women, and socio-cultural norms, beliefs and stereotypes that undermine women in leadership, among others. Despite this, at the end of the 2019 tripartite elections, representation of women MPs increased to 23%, while local government representation went to 14.5%. In other sectors, women are still under- represented; for example, in 2018 the Malawi Police Service had a 26% representation of women while in the Malawi Defence Force, women presentation was at 7%. In 2017, women ambassadors were at 21%, Central Banks CEOs and Board of Directors were at 35% and 29% respectively<sup>44</sup> and in 2019 the judiciary had 10 women and 25 men judges<sup>45</sup>

Malawi has more people employed in the public sector than any other sector. According to 2014 statistics, a total of 1,492 officers were recruited and in decision-making positions in public service. Of these, only 24% were women compared to 76% that were men in MDAs. There continue to be gender disparities in public sector super scale grades with men dominating in almost all decision-making positions despite the Gender Equality Act 2013 provision of 60 or 40% ratios of either sex.

The assessment reviewed the status of the country in implementing the 2030 SDGs particularly SDG 5 on achieving gender equality and the empowerment all women and girls. This detailed analysis is summarized in Appendix 3.

Despite some of the successes in certain indicators and in the assessment of specific SDG targets, there are also broad challenges that will affect the realization of the SDGs in Malawi. To begin with, there is not enough data available to adequately monitor the performance of the country, especially when all the goals that are gender responsive are taken into consideration. The 2020 SDGs Review Report for Malawi<sup>46</sup> also identifies several points of action with regards to the GEWE agenda that need further attention. These include: i) child marriages remain common in the country; ii) there is lack of human and financial support and equipment in the GEWE space. This is manifested for example in limited internet, laptops, and gender professionals. iii) cultural patriarchal norms and traditional practices that are an obstacle to gender equality and women's empowerment and girl's participation. iv) GBV and other harmful practices.

<sup>43</sup> Southern Africa Development Community

<sup>44</sup> 2018 Malawi Government submission for SADC Gender Monitor

<sup>45</sup> Malawi Judiciary Registrar office (as cited in UN Women and African Development Bank (2020) Malawi Gender Profile Country Report (Draft), Lilongwe)

<sup>46</sup> MALAWI 2020 VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) Main Report, Lilongwe: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26317MalawiVNRReport.pdf>



# 4 Assessment of the gender statistics system in Malawi

## 4.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of the gender statistics system in Malawi beginning with an analysis of some gender statistics indicators and status issues. It also describes the institutions that are responsible for producing gender statistics, their capacity, and challenges and describes institutions that use gender statistics and their impressions on the adequacy or shortcomings of the gender statistics. Further, the section explains the legal and policy framework that anchors the gender statistics system in Malawi.

## 4.2 Statistical normative frameworks

The first Statistics Act of Malawi was adopted in 1967. The revised National Statistics Act, approved by Parliament in 2013, defined the role of the NSS with a clear mandate and responsibilities related to production, dissemination, and usage of statistics, which essentially includes gender statistics. The National Statistical Strategic Plan (NSSP) 2019-2023 and its predecessor is used as a policy tool for the systematic implementation of the provisions of the Act and the production of official statistics. Official statistics are defined as any quantitative, qualitative, aggregate, and representative information produced by NSO Malawi and/or line government ministries, departments and public authorities certified as official by the Commissioner of Statistics<sup>47</sup>.

These policy and legal instruments underpin the commitment to produce and document gender-disaggregated data to inform planning and decisions at various levels. International and regional reporting commitments, such as BPfA, CEDAW and the Maputo protocol also require the production of quality gender data and statistics and, where there are gaps, highlight the need for additional gender statistics. For example, the Malawi CEDAW Shadow Report of 2015 found gaps in documenting some gender disaggregated statistics in Malawi. This led the CEDAW Committee to implore the Malawi government to ensure the timely availability of such data to inform policy decision-making. Thus, the centrality of production, documentation, and utilization of gender statistics in an NSS cannot be overemphasized.

Both the National Statistics Act 2013 and the NSSP 2019-2023 assert that official statistics are key to planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development frameworks such as the Third Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) at national level, the 2063 African Union Agenda – The Africa We Want – at the continental level, and Agenda 2030 on the SDGs at the global level. Accordingly, this calls for mainstreaming statistics in general but more specifically gender statistics into policy and planning processes. This will contribute towards making statistics more relevant to national development processes and support and align with the various global and regional integration initiatives for reporting and monitoring<sup>48</sup>.

47 NSO (2020), 2019/2020- 2022/2023 National Statistical Strategic Plan, Zomba

48 National Statistical Strategic Plan 2019-2023

### 4.3 National statistics system in Malawi

The Malawi NSS was launched in 2006 with the primary function of coordinating the production and dissemination of official statistics. The revised Statistics Act was approved by Parliament in 2013, regulating both the establishment and functions of NSO Malawi and the NSS. The Act mandates NSO Malawi and NSS to collect, compile, analyze, abstract, publish and disseminate statistical information for evidence-based policy design, monitoring and evaluation and decision-making. The Act principally mandates the NSS through NSO Malawi to coordinate the production of official statistics in the country.

The primary mandates of the NSS are to:

- Increase awareness among the public about the importance and role of statistical information
- Collect, process, analyze and disseminate quality statistical data and information in a coordinated and timely manner
- Promote the use of best practices and international standards in statistical production, management, and dissemination
- Promote the use of statistics for evidence-based policy design, monitoring and evaluation and decision making and
- Build sustainable capacity for the production and use of statistical information in Malawi. This specifically entails the production of official statistics.

The NSS comprises the NSO and all other institutions that produce statistics. The National Statistics Act, 2013 provides the basis for NSO Malawi and the NSS to collect, compile, analyze, abstract, publish and disseminate statistics information. The Act obliges NSO Malawi to be the central repository of all official statistics produced and disseminated in Malawi. Further, the Act empowers the Commissioner of Statistics to endorse as official statistical information that is produced by MDAs and other producers upon certification of their quality<sup>49</sup>.

In the NSSP 2019-2023, the NSS goal is to develop an NSS that responds to current and emerging data needs in addressing contemporary national and international development challenges. Gender statistics are among the critical statistics for the country going by the outcomes of the UN CEDAW Committee for Malawi recommendation from the 2015 CEDAW Report concluding observation.

The NSSP 2019-2023 has five specific goals which require strengthening and are all relevant if gender statistics can be easily produced and used in Malawi, namely to:

- Strengthen and coordinate the National Statistical System
- Enhance statistical capacity across the NSS
- Provide quality statistics for evidence-based decision making
- Enhance dissemination and promote use of statistical products, including Management Information Systems, for statistical purposes; and
- Mobilize adequate resources for implementation of the Strategic Plan.

<sup>49</sup> NSO (2020), 2019/2020 – 2022/2023 National Statistical Strategic Plan, Zomba



The NSSP also highlights cross-cutting issues that include quality assurance processes, harmonization, training, human resource and infrastructure development, among others. The NSSP also seeks to enhance the use of Management Information Systems (MIS) for statistical purposes and includes activity plans of MDAs, including NSO Malawi, as well as their budgets. The current assessment also found that there are various areas that were identified and will require improvement. These will be highlighted in subsequent sections of the report.

The Malawi NSS, like other statistical systems in developing countries, faces challenges in producing and disseminating official statistics that meet user needs<sup>50</sup>. The primary problem areas identified include inadequate coordinating mechanisms, inadequate supporting infrastructure, inadequate skilled statistical staff and limited financial resources. With the ever-increasing demand for statistics, it is imperative to enhance the organization and capacity of the NSS to: make efficient and prudent use of resources; improve productivity and management of data; increase the availability of quality data and raise the profile of statistics.

Several other factors constraining statistical production were also identified in the final evaluation of the implementation of the 2013-2017 NSSP. Those that are particularly relevant to gender statistics include:

- Inadequate infrastructure for statistical production across the NSS
- Weak administrative data quality and systems
- Inadequate coordination by the National Statistical Office
- Limited statistical awareness and advocacy
- Donor and technical assistance dependency
- Inadequate data management and archiving at NSO Malawi and the MDAs
- Weak monitoring of implementation of the NSSP
- Limited data dissemination channels
- Inadequate human resource capacity
- Lack of autonomy of the NSO

In trying to address these challenges in the current NSSP, a SWOT analysis for the then Strategic Plan was done as a learning for NSO Malawi and implementing agencies (MDAs) going forward. This SWOT analysis has also revealed some issues that the UN Women-led assessment has also identified as will be discussed in later sections of this report. The SWOT analysis conducted across implementing agencies during the final evaluation of the 2013-2017 NSSP informed the development of the 2019-2023 NSSP. This plan aims to take advantage of and capitalize on the strengths and opportunities while improving on the weaknesses and finding ways of mitigating the threats to achieving its goal. The findings of the SWOT analysis are summarized in the figure below.

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<sup>50</sup> National Statistical Strategic Plan 2019-2023

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of regulatory framework and legal mandate (passing of the National Statistics, 2013)</li> <li>• Established and upgraded institutional structures</li> <li>• The presence of qualified personnel in some ministries</li> <li>• Presence of some qualified and experienced staff in NSO to oversee quality assurance</li> <li>• Availability of structures at district level in most ministries</li> <li>• Availability of a compendium of Statistical Concepts and definitions</li> <li>• Availability of a Data Quality Assurance Framework (DQAF) to promote quality products</li> <li>• Existence of Management Information Systems in some sectors within NSS</li> <li>• Progressive government support towards statistics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low profile of statistics within the sector ministries</li> <li>• Limited access to data by users</li> <li>• Limited financial provision for statistics continued reliance on donor support</li> <li>• Lack of institutionalized quality assurance processes</li> <li>• Non-existence of Statistical Units in some MDAs</li> <li>• Inadequate coordination between NSO and some MDAs</li> <li>• Inadequate ICT infrastructure in MDAs</li> <li>• Inadequate dissemination of statistical data and information in MDAs</li> <li>• Limited capacity of staff to manage data at all levels</li> <li>• Non-existence of management information systems in some sectors within the NSS</li> <li>• Low utilization of administrative or management data for statistical purposes</li> <li>• Lack of data sharing protocol</li> <li>• Absence of central statistical data repository (Data Centre)</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High demand for quality statistics</li> <li>• Existence of a pool of administrative data in most the MDAs</li> <li>• Donor support for statistical activities</li> <li>• Ever growing technological advancement</li> <li>• Increased alignment of the NSS SP to national and international initiatives</li> <li>• Presence of statistical courses and training programmes locally</li> <li>• Strong commitment from MDAs towards NSS</li> <li>• Public service reform initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unpredictable and inadequate financial resources</li> <li>• Respondents' fatigue</li> <li>• Low appreciation of statistical information</li> <li>• Staff turnover</li> <li>• Expectation of rewards by respondents</li> <li>• Government bureaucracy</li> <li>• Absence of basket funding for NSS activities</li> <li>• Emergencies of other producers of statistics not endorsed by the Commissioner of Statistics</li> </ul>

## 4.4 Enabling environment for gender statistics

### 4.4.1 Normative framework

NSO Malawi is a regulator as well as a producer of statistics. Neither the National Statistics Act 2013 nor the NSSP (2019-2023) have gender-specific provisions. However, the Act includes gender as a statistical domain of production.

Apart from NSO Malawi, the MoGCDSW also regulates the production and use of gender statistics. In terms of gender-related laws, besides Section 13(a) of the Republican Constitution, there is the Gender Equality Act 2015 and the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act 2015. Government has developed a National Action Plan on Women Empowerment and a National Action Plan on Political Empowerment of Women.

The Act provides for the coordination and collection of gender-relevant data and the production and dissemination of gender statistics.

The statistical mandate of NSO Malawi therefore includes:

- i) Production of main statistical outputs relating to gender statistics
- ii) Compilation of gender statistics inputs from other agencies and/or administrative records from different data sources (CSOs, NGOs).
- iii) Providing guidance and training on gender statistics
- iv) Organization of consultations among gender statistics producers and users
- v) Advocating for the use of gender statistics
- vi) Lobbying for relevant programs and bills related to gender statistics

Despite the legislation providing an environment for the production and use of gender statistics, challenges remain. Some of the challenges which NSO Malawi highlighted include the following:

- i) There is no regulation specifying the collection of gender information by other MDAs.
- ii) Existing regulations restrict the exchange of data between institutions.
- iii) Gender aspects are not represented in the Statistics Board, Advisory Group, or similar entity (whether in terms of membership or scope of the agenda)
- iv) The gender statistics unit in NSO Malawi does not have sufficient staff and the necessary equipment to carry out its tasks.
- v) The gender statistics unit in NSO Malawi has limited mandate as it is not a full department with sufficient operational and technical leadership on gender statistics needs.

The National Gender Policy, which was endorsed and implemented by the government of Malawi in 2015, regulates all work related to the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda in Malawi. The current six-year policy comes to an end in 2021 (2015-2021). This policy does not state the need for evidence-based gender statistics to monitor gender equality as a policy objective. Despite this, the current policy also does not have guidelines specifying the establishment and tasks of a gender statistic unit in the NSS.

There are no sectoral gender statistics plans and strategies in place in Malawi save for a commitment to collect some basic sex disaggregated data as part of administrative data systems and the collection of data through official surveys such as the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). Some ministries have monitoring and evaluation plans in place but there are no specific strategies around the resources required for collection and use of the data. There are also limited skills and capacities in MDAs to analyze gender data and produce reports that can be used for policy formulation and decision-making.

The assessment found that there is currently no political will to produce gender statistics. While the MoGCDSW is key to providing the leadership necessary to garner political will on gender statistics, this is yet to happen due to different factors including inadequate funding and limited capacity. There are also no procedures in place to deal with the political or administrative pressure faced by NSO Malawi when making and disseminating statistical information. There is no political support to produce gender statistics. While the Ministry of Gender is key to providing the leadership necessary to garner political will on gender statistics, this is yet to happen due to different factors including inadequate funding and limited capacity.

#### 4.4.2 Institutional setting and organizational design

The 2019/20 – 2022/23 NSS Strategic Plan lists institutions that form part of the NSS and the type of surveys they conduct. The NSS is comprised of the NSO as the supreme organ responsible to produce statistics in Malawi. NSO Malawi conducts all national surveys and censuses and also produces gender statistics apart from other statistics. At the time of the assessment, NSO Malawi had two gender statistics staff members.

Other institutions that form part of the NSS include the following:

- i) Ministry of Agriculture
- ii) Department of Economic Planning and Development
- iii) Ministry of Education
- iv) Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare
- v) Ministry of Health
- vi) Ministry of Trade
- vii) Department of Irrigation and Water Development
- viii) Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
- ix) Ministry of Justice
- x) Ministry of Labour
- xi) Ministry of Forestry and Environment
- xii) Ministry of Mining
- xiii) Ministry of Energy
- xiv) Ministry of Transport and Public Works

The institutions listed above as well as the Treasury, Reserve Bank of Malawi, National Registration Bureau, Malawi Revenue Authority, National Planning Commission, and Statistical Association of Malawi form the NSS Technical Working Group<sup>51</sup>.

The NSO Malawi is faced with significant shortages of staff in general but also shortages of staff qualified in statistics. Of the 433 total staff establishment of NSO Malawi, 333 posts are involved in statistical production and only 220 (66.1%) were filled at the time of the assessment.

The institutional setting and organizational design of the NSO currently lack an independent gender statistics department dealing specifically with gender statistics. Even though there is a gender unit, this is an inadequate structure without an adequate mandate. The unit also only has two statisticians who have other duties in addition to the production of gender statistics. The two focal persons on gender statistics work are often burdened with too many other responsibilities, which could have been addressed if it was a department with more staff. The two staff members have limited access to computers.

The Research and Planning Department of MoGCDSW has two statisticians who undertake gender-related research and three economists who work with M&E related issues. They have been part of training during previous capacity building workshops. The Ministry produces reports on gender issues, which are then sent to the NSO to validate.

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51 Ibid

The other MDAs, have some staff, in some cases based in the M&E or the planning units. However, their capacity, competence, agency to do gender statistics work and political will is limited. Most have not produced any statistical reports related to gender. MDAs also experience challenges related to the availability of key resources for the process such as access to internet, laptops, and a management information systems (MIS) platform for the staff to link between themselves at central level and their counterparts in the districts within an MDA. The stakeholders observed that there was need for clear linkages between the statistics collected or documented at district level by various MDAs and those which arrive at the headquarters as well as NSO Malawi.

The Government of Malawi also made provision for the appointment of gender focal persons in each of the respective MDAs. The focal persons are human resource officers who are appointed to champion gender sensitivity in recruitment and promotion within the civil service but besides monitoring gender quotas in the civil service are not involved in the production and use of gender statistics. The focal points are not linked or working directly with district staff and therefore not able to collect and document gender statistics produced at district level.

Generally, it was found that few MDAs facilitate on-the-job training in gender statistics. Most reported having received no training in gender and gender statistics. All respondents included in the assessment indicated that they would appreciate an invitation to participate in training on gender or gender statistics. Equally, they indicated their staff members would appreciate an invitation to attend a training on understanding gender statistics.

There is an MIS in the MoGCDSW, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Health but none yet in other ministries where gender statistics could be collected and more effectively accessed. Efforts to develop the necessary infrastructure to collect gender statistics under the GEWE programme as well as current efforts by the UN Spotlight Initiative to support the production of gender statistics are yet to bear substantial fruit.

#### 4.4.3 Financial and physical resources for gender statistics

The gender responsiveness of the national budget has been inconsistent despite the intent to mainstream gender. For example, in the fiscal year 2020/21, the revised budget for MoGCDSW was K30.5 billion. By program, GEWE activities got a lion's share of 77% of the MoGCDSW's total budget. In the 2021/22 budget, the allocation to GEWE activities has dropped to 0.16%<sup>52</sup>. In the 2018/19 budget, GEWE activities received an allocation of 1/3 of total budget for the ministry. The funding for GEWE-related activities is therefore inconsistent over time and does not specifically track expenditure on gender statistics. The figure below shows the distribution of resources by the program.

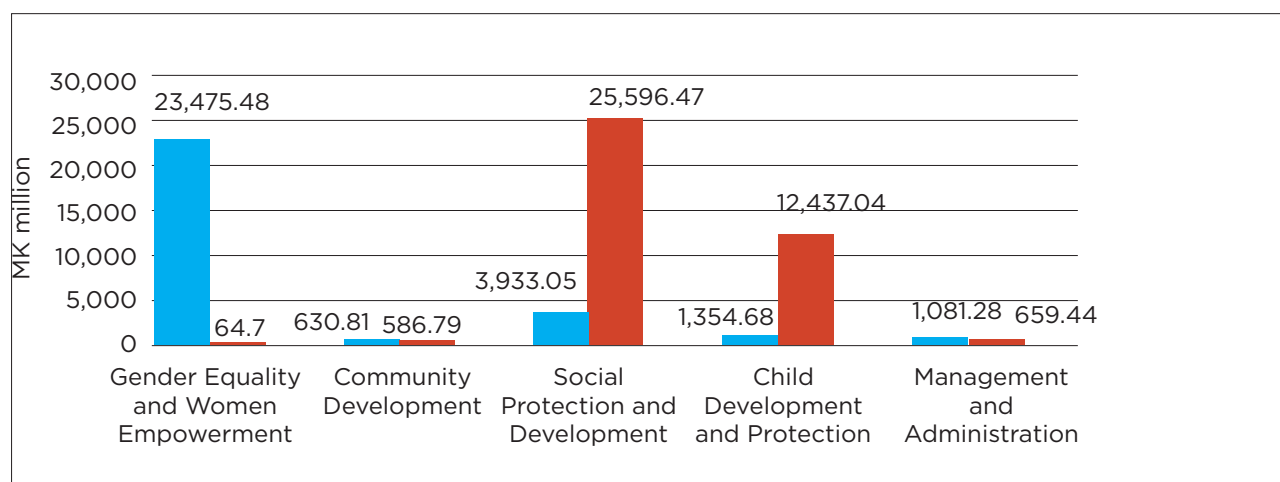
Given that gender is a cross-cutting issue, other ministries also allocate financial resources to implement gender interventions. In education, for example, financial resources towards interventions to ensure that girls remain in school such as appropriate sanitation facilities at schools can be regarded as gender responsiveness. In health, financial provision towards SRH services contribute to a gender-responsive budget. There are also non-state actors supporting gender interventions off the national budget. The 50:50 campaign in decision-making positions is one such intervention. Putting up close to an accurate estimate of the amount of resources spent on GEWE is a study on its own. Nonetheless, the financial allocation to the coordinating ministry signals government commitment even though it is limited. It is on the basis of this allocation that this assessment concludes that government commitment is low and needs to improve. No specific allocations have been made for gender statistics in any of the ministries that participated in the study.

The assessment also found that there are no resources dedicated to gender statistics in the NSO and Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning & Development (EPD). The budget set for demographic and social statistics at the NSO is inadequate to produce and support the production of gender

<sup>52</sup> Ministry of Finance (2021), Program Based Budget, Lilongwe

statistics across the NSS. The Ministry of Health collects gender statistics through its regular health data and could do more on health-related statistics with adequate budgetary support. Except for the Ministry of Education and Health, the other line ministries or entities interviewed had no specific budgets or equipment for the production of gender statistics.

**Figure 6: Distribution of financial resources in MoGCDSW by program**



Source: GoM (2021), Ministry of Finance, Program Based Budget, Lilongwe

#### 4.4.4 Collaboration and coordination of gender statistics

The United Nations Statistics Commission for Central Europe<sup>53</sup> defines coordination as a process whereby activities, responsibilities, command, and control structures are synchronized and integrated. Within a statistical context this refers to the more efficient production of statistics by using common standards, norms, and principles.

The 2019- 2023 NSSP identified coordination as one of NSS challenges due to ineffective coordination within and between agencies. Most of the line ministries or agencies (social development, planning, local government, labor, health, and education) collect some gender-specific data. Currently, there is no statistical coordination mechanism for the various producers of gender data in the NSS. Building good coordinating mechanisms in the NSS will improve gender statistics, quality of data, and minimize efforts and cost.

The national gender machinery in Malawi is tasked with the coordination of gender-related work while NSO Malawi is tasked with coordinating the production of statistics. The assessment also found that there is no gender statistics sectoral committee to coordinate the production and dissemination of gender statistics. The coordination of the NSS in the current arrangement has presented practical difficulties. NSO Malawi and/or MDAs produce, package, and release their data independently resulting in duplication and sometimes inconsistencies. The system also lacks a robust M&E framework. Other stakeholders in the statistical operating environment produce statistics in Malawi but face challenges from organizations generating statistical products applying poor standards and methods. This poses a threat to the overall integrity of statistical production in the country and to the relevance of the NSS.

Coordination is not as effective as expected because statistical advocacy in the MDAs has generally been unsatisfactory. The evaluation of the NSSP 2013-2019 found that effective statistical coordination was affected by the location of NSO Malawi Headquarters in Zomba. This situation persists and there is a need to relocate NSO Malawi Headquarters to Lilongwe where most NSS stakeholders are located. This would contribute towards improved NSS coordination and would reduce operational costs related to mobility of NSO Malawi officials between Zomba and Lilongwe.

<sup>53</sup> Coordination of the production of official statistics. [https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/technical\\_coop/2014/mtg3/S2\\_Jan\\_Byfuglien.pdf](https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/technical_coop/2014/mtg3/S2_Jan_Byfuglien.pdf)



Relocation will also enhance visibility and raise the profile of the NSO Malawi and MDA statistics in the country.

According to ministries that participated in the study, they collaborate with NSO Malawi when compiling and analysing data. Gender focal persons in government departments are typically human resource officers; they indicated that they collaborate with the Department of Human Resource Management and Development and MoGCDSW as their main partners. Previous reviews on collaboration<sup>54</sup> in the NSS by the different actors highlighted that unlike in other counties, Malawi does not have Statistical Common Service (SCS) which provides a great opportunity for greater collaboration and coordination across the NSS.

## 4.5 Gender data and statistics production

### 4.5.1 Introduction and overview

As already highlighted in previous sections, NSO Malawi and other agencies face several challenges in producing and managing gender statistics. Besides problems related to the enabling environment, users also identified lack of critical information and irregular data production as some of the production-related challenges. Despite these remaining challenges, the 2013-2017 NSSP achieved a 71.8% score for data production performance<sup>55</sup>. It should be noted that most of these challenges also apply to the MDAs consulted and the suggested redress mechanism also applies. It is critical for NSO Malawi and other MDS that gender statistics are available, accessible, and used to inform policy-making to ensure planning decisions and accountability for delivering GEWE in Malawi.

The assessment found that gender has been mainstreamed in the statistical production processes of NSO Malawi. Within the organization, an integrated process is used to coordinate gender statistics covering survey design, data collection, data management, data analysis, and dissemination. Most of the household surveys and the Census have some components which address gender-related issues and individual responses can all be disaggregated by sex. For example, in the selected chapters of the Malawi Demographic Health Survey (MDHS), themes like women's empowerment and domestic violence are produced and disseminated as gender statistics. The gender thematic report for the MDHS 2015/16 was produced with support from UN Women and the same was the case for the census of 2018. On whether there are challenges in the process, NSO Malawi indicated that its main challenge is capacity. The assessment found that since NSO Malawi produces many gender-related indicators. The most challenging issue is its capacity to produce more reports in the survey data and funding to help it carry out these activities. Furthermore, since gender statistics is not yet a standalone section or department, its roles are not well defined. It is therefore difficult for NSO Malawi to monitor the gender variables in most of the surveys which are conducted. NSO Malawi does not have autonomy on how issues to do with gender are being handled in most of the surveys. In the gender data production process, NSO Malawi involves its demography department particularly statisticians, senior statisticians, principal statisticians, and chief statisticians. Sometimes, NSO Malawi engages consultants, especially when resources are available from donor contributions towards the execution of surveys. A recent innovation in data production has been the use of Computer Assisted Personnel Interviews (CAPI). This system relies on resources to function properly, hence can be useful for gender statistics data collection.

<sup>54</sup> National Statistical Strategic Plan 2019-2023

<sup>55</sup> Ibid

## 4.5.2 Household surveys and Census

Malawi has an institutionalized cycle of household surveys. Most of these are carried out with five-year intervals between them and are heavily dependent on donor resources. The most important sources of gender data in Malawi are summarized in the table below.

**Table 2: Surveys, their frequency and type of gender statistics in Malawi**

Name of survey	Frequency (years)	Most recently conducted	Type of gender statistics
Population and Housing Census	10	2018	Socio-economic gender statistics
Integrated Household Survey	5	2017	Socio-economic gender statistics
Demographic and Health Survey	5	2015/2016	Health gender statistics
Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey	5	2013/2014	Health and HIV gender related statistics
Labor force survey	Irregularly	2012/2013	Employment participation statistics

Other data sources include the Department of Human Resource Management and Development which conducts human resource surveys and skills audit particularly in the public sector. The data are disaggregated by sex. The surveys make it possible to track the concentration of each sex by grade and profession. Universities and research centers are also sources of gender statistics. Global statistical publications also contain statistics for Malawi, which include gender statistics. The publications include the World Development Indicators of the World Bank, the World Health Statistics of the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Program.

It is important to note that significant standalone nationally representative gender surveys such as comprehensive and nationally representative GBV prevalence surveys, time use surveys, and Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) surveys have never been conducted in Malawi.

The assessment found some significant gaps related to producing enough and timeous gender statistics. For example, the issue of limited data disaggregation by age was commonly cited as a challenge. Other stakeholders pointed out that there is limited information on fiscal space and how it affects women's rights. They argue that there is an absence of data to link fiscal justice to gender justice. Poverty statistics were also faulted for lack of disaggregation by sex. It was submitted that there is value in knowing how many poor people are male and how many are female. Statistics are also required in areas such as women's access to productive resources, women in business or entrepreneurs, access to justice and cultural practices that hinder women's economic empowerment. Broadly, there are other gaps in gender statistics based on its relevance. For example, Malawi has not had conducted time use surveys or women economic empowerment surveys. The key is that for gender statistics, it is important to select topics that are relevant namely topics that specifically tackle inequalities between women and men in all aspects of life. Of particular relevance to gender equality are equal decision-making power, equal economic opportunities, pay and status, work-life balance, elimination of gender stereotypes and freedom from gender-based violence. These, among others, have not been documented in Malawi hence the numerous gaps in gender statistics. To ensure such surveys happen, there is need for adequate resources including technical and coordination preparedness.

Several survey tools are used in Malawi to address the indicators in SDG 5 on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. On ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, the Gender Equality Act, Gender Policy, and Malawi Growth and Development



Strategy have interventions to address that. The Demographic and Health Survey Report contains statistics on various forms of GBV.

The Demographic and Health Survey Report, and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey collect statistics on eliminating all harmful practices such as child, early, and forced marriages, and female genital mutilation (FGM) and support the monitoring of the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act, 2015.

The Demographic and Health Survey Report covers statistics on universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as agreed following the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the BPfA as well as reports from their review conferences. Even though data on land ownership categorized by gender is scarce in Malawi, the Gender Equality Act of 2013, Deceased Estates (Wills, Inheritance and Protection) Act of 2011 and Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Women Rights in Africa provide tools to undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources, following national laws. It should be noted that women own only 17% of the land with deeds in Malawi<sup>56</sup>. There are few or no documents and statistics on the use of enabling technology, mainly information and communication technology, to promote women's empowerment.

In collaboration with the respective relevant ministries and its parent Ministry of Economic Planning and Development and funding partners, NSO Malawi produces the Population and Housing Census (PHC) Report every ten years, and the Integrated Household Survey Report and Demographic and Health Survey Report every five years. The most recent PHC was conducted in 2018. As will be observed in a later section, stakeholders noted that statistics lack timeliness due to the long production interval. For example, at the time of writing this report, the most recent available Demographic and Health Survey Report was of 2017, which captured data from the 2015-2016 survey. The most recent Labor Force Survey Report was from 2013 while the most recent Integrated Household Survey (IHS) was from 2018. Neither of these data sets have been explored further from a gender perspective nor have any reports been produced. However, the current production interval is the practice in most countries and may be due to the expensive nature of the surveys. In terms of gender statistics, respondents from NSO Malawi reported that the institution collects most of the relevant gender statistics in the Malawi context except for those related to politics such as the number of women who are members of Parliament, number of women councilors, and number of women cabinet ministers as these keep changing. As it shall be noted in next section, politically related indicators are captured in a budget document under MoGCDSW.

### **Education statistics**

Education datasets cover primary, secondary, and tertiary education institutions including teacher training colleges. Gender-related indicators are literacy rate, enrollment rate, progression rate, drop-out rate, and gender parity index (female/male learners).

However, national indicators do not cover some SDG indicators including: proportion of a population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional literacy and numeracy skills by sex; proportion of children under 5 years who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being by sex. With regards to the AU Agenda 2063, national indicators do not cover the following: proportion of teachers qualified in science, mathematics, engineering or technology by sex and level (primary and secondary).

Data sources include the PHC, IHS and Education Statistics Bulletin. Health datasets cover infant mortality rate, child mortality rate, under-five mortality rate, maternal mortality rate, life expectancy, HIV prevalence rate, Antenatal Care coverage rate, Antiretroviral therapy coverage, immunization

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-malawi-landrights-women-idUSKCN1M51GQ>

coverage, child nutrition, family planning and others.

### Health statistics

Health data sources include the Demographic and Health Survey Report, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, National Health Accounts Report, IHS and Health Statistics Bulletin. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Public Health Institute of Malawi (PHIM) has disseminated COVID-19-related data. The Health Statistics Bulletin, IHS, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, and DHS collect information on health conditions, health behavior disaggregated by location (rural versus urban), and wealth quintile and sex (male versus female). The National Health Accounts collect and compile information on financing mechanisms and disease conditions that money is spent on.

Health indicators covered in the Program-Based Budget (PBB) document include i) percent of one-year-old children fully immunized, ii) percent of antiretroviral treatment (ART) coverage, iii) tuberculosis (TB) case notification rate, iv) institutional maternal mortality rate, v) institutional infant mortality rate, vi) ante-natal coverage, and many others. Data on ART coverage and TB case management are not disaggregated by sex.

### Agriculture statistics

Agriculture is the backbone of Malawi's economy. More than half (55.8%) of those employed in agriculture are female<sup>57</sup>. More women are employed in the low-earning agricultural sector which may explain high poverty and vulnerability among women and girls compared to men and boys. The "National Census of Agriculture and Livestock (NACAL)" was last undertaken in 2006 with a follow-up surveys planned for 2016 although this was not carried out. The PHC 2018 provides a sampling frame for agriculture-related household surveys. Besides the census and agricultural surveys, other relevant datasets include access to safe drinking water sources and access to improved sanitation. These have a bearing on women.

The Ministry produces agriculture statistics which, among others, show the number of program beneficiaries by sex of household head. The PBB captures the indicator 'number of farmers by sex and age adopting new technologies increased' under Ministry of Agriculture. The actual data however is not disaggregated. The PBB does not contain sex disaggregated data. For example, it is not known how many male and female-headed households receive subsidized farm inputs. The share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land by type of tenure is one important indicator in the Agenda 2063 handbook that is still missing in Malawi statistics. Land is an important factor of production and the issue of land ownership between men and women has been of central focus especially patriarchal systems. The issue of lack of gender statistics on economic inequality emerged during stakeholder consultations confirming that there is a data gap that must be addressed.

### Trade statistics

Trade statistics are being measured at a macro level showing aggregates without disaggregation by sex. There is an increasingly pressing need for statistics on gender as governments strive to develop gender-responsive trade policies, especially after signing the Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment in December 2017<sup>58</sup>. Also, some trade constituencies, such as cross-border traders, are traditionally dominated by women. Making trade policies more gender-responsive requires sound statistics. However, statistical authorities lack data and tools to measure gender and trade especially in developing countries such as Malawi, where women are most vulnerable and statistical capacities less developed.

The Ministry of Trade produces trade statistics and has a trade portal and NSO Malawi also has a department responsible for producing trade statistics. The trade statistics provide macro level

57 NSO (2019), 2018 Population and Housing Census Report, Zomba

58 H.Luomaranta & et al , 2020. The impact of multinational and trading enterprises on gender equality - Case Finland - UNCTAD Research Paper No. 45. (UNCTAD/SER.RP/2020/4).

data and data on exports and imports including exports destinations, source countries for imports, and values. As expected with high-level data, there is no disaggregation by sex. Another data source for trade statistics is the Fin-Scope Survey which focuses on micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME). The most recent one was conducted in 2019.

### **Labor statistics**

The Ministry of Labour infrequently conducts a Labor Force Survey which shows the nature of jobs, level of employment by sex, youth employment by sex and other relevant variables. The PHC also captures economic data which includes number of people in the labor force, those economically active, those employed and the form of employment - whether as employer, employee, self-employed, and those unemployed. It also shows employment by sector. The 2018 PHC found that out of a total labor force of 6.6 million people, 3.4 million (51%) are female. Out of those in employment, 50% are female. This means that slightly more women than men are economically active and yet slightly more men than women are employed, a scenario that may reflect the social-cultural factors that favor men compared to women.

While labor statistics typically measure gender inequalities in the labor market and is generally available, data about the impact of trade on women as entrepreneurs, producers, and consumers is often difficult to find. For a long time, policymakers considered trade gender-neutral and designed policy interventions accordingly<sup>59</sup>. It is now widely accepted that international trade affects women and men differently due to existing gender disparities in production and consumption in the labor markets.

### **4.5.3 Administrative data and non-traditional data sources**

Considering the limited data availability for SDG reporting, administrative, and other non-conventional data sources such as citizen-generated data (CGD) could potentially be used as alternative for evidence-based decision-making and gender reporting purposes. The SDGs monitoring framework recognizes the importance of using alternative data sources (even if there is no written policy, which is still important to have in place). NSO Malawi identified administrative records as an alternative data source to produce gender indicators and developed a plan to use them as an important source of gender data in future. The action plan for the next stage comprises three pillars: rehabilitation of infrastructure, staff capacity building and utilization of technology. However, there is still a gap in the policy frameworks that enable and support the use of these alternative data sources.

Most MDAs in Malawi have administrative data systems. Administrative data systems in the ministries of health and education are reasonably strong and provide sex disaggregated data. MoGCDSW developed a platform that can be used to facilitate data entry into an MIS based on administrative data. However, this system was never really fully used as no one is actively populating and managing the system. Data systems that supply data from MDAs need to be properly quality assured so that this data can be used for national reporting processes. The study did not find any evidence of IT-based systems at the district level that allow for data entry. Currently, under the Spotlight initiatives, there have been efforts to improve data systems around gender-responsive budgeting as well as GBV and SRH. Two administrative data systems that could benefit from support and will positively contribute towards the women's economic empowerment (WEE) agenda as well as the production of gender statistics are the administrative system of the Department of Trade as well as the Department of Agriculture.

<sup>59</sup> H. Luomaranta & et al, 2020. The impact of multinational and trading enterprises on gender equality - Case Finland - UNCTAD Research Paper No. 45. (UNCTAD/SER.RP/2020/4).

**Table 3: Existing administrative data sources that contain sex disaggregated data**

Name of administrative data set	Responsible ministry/entity	Kinds of indicators measured
Civil registration system	1. Civil Registration Authority, Ministry of the Interior 2. Department of Statistics' Birth and Death Register, Ministry of Health 3. Central Bureau of Statistics	Goals 3,4,5
Health information system	Ministry of Health	Goals 3,6
The National Information system	Ministry of Cabinet	Goals 8,9,12,17
EMIS	Ministry of Education	Goal 4

#### 4.5.4 Gender data indicator gaps

Malawi does not have a national gender indicator framework but most of the MDA M&E indicator frameworks include some gender indicators. So far, data needs for monitoring the implementation of international agreements (CEDAW, BPfA, SDGs) have been systematically integrated in the official data systems, but significant gaps remain. If the gender-responsive indicators that form part of Agenda 2030 are considered, the country can only currently report on 42% of the indicators required for monitoring<sup>60</sup>. Specific gaps in priority gender areas include violence against women, unpaid care and domestic work, key labor market statistics, and the gender pay gap. Additionally important areas of concern to women such as gender and poverty, gender and the environment, and access to assets for example land are not collected regularly using comparable methodologies. A detailed analysis of the status of each indicator can be found in Annex 5.

**Table 4: Malawi gender SDG indicator availability per goal**

Goal Number	Goal Specific analysis	Grand total gender indicators		Indicator value not available		Available - low achiever		Available - medium achiever		Available - high achiever	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
	Total all SDG	122	100	84	68.9	27	22.1	9	7.4	2	1.6
1	No poverty	11	9.0	8	9.5	2	7.4	0	0.0	1	11.1
2	Zero hunger	2	1.6	1	1.2	1	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	Good health and well-being	15	12.3	2	2.4	8	29.6	2	22.2	3	33.3
4	Quality education	32	26.2	22	26.2	8	29.6	2	22.2	0	0.0
5	Gender equality	25	20.5	8	9.5	8	29.6	6	66.7	3	33.3
8	Decent work and economic growth	10	8.2	5	6.0	4	14.8	1	11.1	0	0.0
9	Industry, innovation and infrastructure	1	0.8	1	1.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

<sup>60</sup> UN Women country profiles. <https://data.UN Women.org/country/South-Sudan>

Goal Number	Goal Specific analysis	Grand total gender indicators		Indicator value not available		Available - low achiever		Available - medium achiever		Available - high achiever	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
10	Reduced inequality	2	1.6	2	2.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
11	Sustainable cities and communities	4	3.3	4	4.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
13	Climate action	1	0.8	1	1.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
16	Peace, justice and strong institutions	18	14.8	16	19.0	0	0.0	2	22.2	0	0.0
17	Partnerships for the goals	1	0.8	1	1.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Source: UN Women country profiles

The PBB in Malawi captures performance indicators for each MDA. By virtue of the reporting requirements of the Government, these indicators are measured regularly. For MoGCDSW, some of the indicators include:

- i) Percent of women representation in decision-making structures
- ii) Number of groups for marginalized women socially and economically empowered (through skills and Savings and Loans Groups)
- iii) Percent of women in decision-making positions (in parliament, public service, and local government)
- iv) Number of sectors mainstreaming gender
- v) Number of awareness campaigns conducted about women, children, and youth rights
- vi) Percent of children accessing integrated Early Childhood Development services
- vii) Number of people oriented on how to promote child friendly initiatives at district level
- viii) Number of districts with strengthened child participation systems
- ix) Number of districts with functional child rights systems
- x) Percent of ultra-poor and labor constrained households economically empowered through the social cash transfer program
- xi) Number of male and female destitute assisted through repatriation and other forms of social assistance
- xii) Number of children rescued from child trafficking
- xiii) Number of institutionalized young male and female offenders reformed and reintegrated
- xiv) Number of male and female district child protection workers trained in case management and psychosocial support
- xv) Number of children living and working on the streets reintegrated

The African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 indicator handbook lists several gender equality indicators. Most of them are captured in Malawi statistics and some are available as domesticated indicators i.e., in a slightly different format than the Agenda 2063 metadata, and some are not available at all. Most of these indicators are also measured in surveys that are produced in a five-year interval and can therefore not inform budget documents (e.g., the Annual Economic Report and PBB) which are reported on and produced annually. For example, the Agenda 2063 indicator on the proportion

of women and girls subjected to sexual and physical violence is captured in the Malawi DHS but not in the PBB. The Annual Economic Report captures statistics of the proportion of women and men in ministerial positions in addition to other gender-related statistics.

Some of the gender statistics indicators captured in this section have been extracted from the national budget document and are indicators tied to targets and budget allocation. These are mostly from three ministries - gender, health and education. There are others extracted from DHS.

**Table 5: Other key indicators and rationale for their collection**

Some gender statistics indicators	Whether they are collected
Gender equality and women empowerment indicators.	Most of the indicators on women empowerment are collected and are known in the country.
a) Percent of women representation in the decision-making structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Parliament</li> <li>ii) Local government</li> <li>iii) Public service</li> </ul>	There are relevant MDAs and institutions keeping the data on these.
b) Number of economic empowerment groups formed and capacitated with skills	All these are critical, but the national data is not there hence may be collected just at institutional level. Interviews on with women rights organisations leaders pointed to the need for such data/indicators to be collected which is not happening.
c) Number of economic empowerment groups formed for Savings and Loans Groups	
d) Number of sectors mainstreaming gender	
e) Number of awareness campaigns conducted about women, children and youth rights	
Health indicators related to gender.	These can be collected from MoH settings, but the challenge is whether there is political will to document and track to give national picture.
a) Number of females who received Youth Friendly Health Services Family Planning Information and Counselling	These are all collected and there is national information to that effect.
b) Institutional maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births	
c) Percent antenatal care coverage	
d) Percent of births attended by skilled health personnel	
Education indicators related to gender	These are also collected and there is information.
a) Gender Parity Index (girls/boys) in primary, secondary, Teacher Training Colleges and universities	

Stakeholders value the relevance of the data on these indicators as they are useful to inform programmes and plans. However, there are gaps on who collects data, the process of data production, and the coordination needed to ensure a national picture of gender statistics data on some of the indicators is available and accessible.

#### 4.5.5 Data quality

NSO Malawi works with the UN Statistics Division and UN Statistical Commission<sup>61</sup> - the highest decision-making body for international statistical activities especially in setting statistical standards and developing concepts and methods and implementing these at the national level.

The assessment questionnaires included a request to rate the quality of the gender statistics produced in Malawi according to the dimensions of relevance, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility

<sup>61</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom>



of data and coherence. Overall, the agencies consulted assigned a high rating to these quality indicators (refer to Table 6). The agencies singled out several areas in need of improvement including coherence and timeliness.

Agencies mentioned NSO Malawi, MoGCDSW, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, and search engines such as Google as the data sources that gender statistics users typically rely on. Stakeholders were asked to rate available gender statistics in terms of relevance, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, and user-friendliness on a scale of 1-5 with 5 as the best score. Below is a result of some responses to this question followed by a short analysis.

**Table 6: Gender statistics quality rating**

Rating variable	Oxfam	ActionAid	National Planning Commission	WOLREC
Relevance	4	3	4	3
Accuracy	3	2	4	4
Timeliness	3	2	3	2
Accessibility	4	3	4	3
User-friendliness	3	3	3	3

Source: Survey 2021

Participants of the validation workshop had mixed views on the perceptions of stakeholders as summarized in the table above. For example, some users felt that challenges related to user-friendliness of the gender statistics related to limited disaggregation of some variables and yet others felt that the available reports or press releases on gender statistics are understandable. Challenges with timeliness were identified to be associated with national surveys such as the DHS, IHS, and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey. The long interval means that outdated statistics are still being used even when the situation on the ground has changed. Some actors felt the interval is not too long to effectively inform planning and policymaking as long there is a commitment to closely refer to these statistics during planning.

#### 4.5.6 Other factors that impact on statistical production

Based on previous reviews of the NSS in Malawi, there are also other issues related to statistical infrastructure needed for data production which require redress. The general NSS infrastructure relevant for data production includes the Business Register, Compendium of Statistical Concepts and Definitions, and the Data Quality Assessment Framework (DQAF), among others. Statistical sampling infrastructure such as the master sample frame from the PHC, other registers and standard tools are critical as they are used as the basis for all household surveys and other forms of sampling.

Inasmuch as it made use of the 2018 PHC Mapping, the 2018 PHC has provided an updated sampling frame. Similarly, the NACAL was carried out in 2006 with the subsequent one planned for 2016 but was not undertaken. The 2018 Census will provide a sampling frame for agriculture-related household surveys. These activities are likely to improve the quality of statistical products and services in the NSS. There are data gaps particularly with regards to administrative data, lack of an integrated census and survey programme, and lack of a comprehensive calendar for data releases and dissemination. Over and above a lack of statistics structures, where they are in place, they are understaffed, under resourced, and lacked both voice and visibility<sup>62</sup>

#### 4.5.7 Data production and Covid-19 pandemic

Apart from NSO Malawi and MoGCDSW, other government ministries routinely produce statistics that reflect gender considerations. These include the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education,

<sup>62</sup> National Statistical Strategic Plan 2019-2023.

Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Trade. During the COVID-19 period, processes related to data production and data generation have been partly affected. Some stakeholders including NSO Malawi observed this in the assessment, which is consistent with the findings of the UN Global Survey<sup>63</sup>, which showed that NSOs have been adversely affected in many countries. Some of the key findings of this report and its relevance to the Malawi context are summarized in the box below.

**Box 1: Key findings of the UN global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on statistical production and how they relate to Malawi**

- More than 6 in 10 of headquarters offices of NSOs were fully or partly closed; 9 out of 10 asked their staff to work from home; and 96% have fully or partially ceased face-to-face data collection. This also applies to Malawi.
- 9 in 10 NSOs in low- and lower-middle income countries experienced a declined ability to meet international reporting requirements due to the pandemic.
- 9 in 10 NSOs in low- and lower-middle income countries faced difficulties operating during the pandemic due to funding constraints. This is the situation in Malawi as well.
- Phone surveys have been the most commonly used approach to analyze or monitor aspects of the pandemic. In some countries like Malawi, using phone surveys to generate data can present a significant challenge due to accessibility and cost constraints.
- Approximately half of the NSOs surveyed have developed or were planning to develop national data platforms to serve government and public data needs. The Spotlight Initiative is supporting NSO Malawi on this aspect. Given that it is a project-based intervention, its success may not be fully assured.
- 6 in 10 NSOs that participated in the survey stated the need for additional external support to face the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. This is also the case for Malawi.

The findings of the UNECA assessment echoed those of the East and Southern Africa (ESA) region as well as the impacts of COVID-19 on statistical production in Malawi. During the assessment, most respondents indicated that COVID-19 has affected the production of gender statistics by delaying data collection exercises and consequently, the availability of data for uptake and use. According to respondents, the cost of producing statistics has also increased.

## 4.6 Data accessibility and use

### 4.6.1 Stakeholder consultation and data sharing

According to MoGCDSW, there is no data sharing policy that regulates the exchange of data across MDAs in Malawi. From the data producer's perspective, the primary users of gender statistics are policymakers, development partners, and stakeholders. Other users are parliamentarians, journalists, and local and international organizations. Previous reviews such as the NSSP 2016-2019, found that data sharing and advocacy have been a challenge and that this remains a challenge. This has had negative consequences for statistical development in the sectors including inadequate commitment to statistical development, lack of prioritization for statistics including gender statistics, lack of statistics units in some sectors, lack of associated statistical programmes and lack of dedicated funding for statistics and gender statistics in most sectors. According to the respondents who felt that data sharing and advocacy was limited, this was largely the result of lack of empowerment and support to statistical staff in MDAs by their own management teams as well as NSO Malawi.

<sup>63</sup> UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Statistics (2020) Monitoring the state of statistical operations under the COVID-19 Pandemic, June 2020. See <https://covid-19-response.unstatshub.org/survey/covid-19-nso-survey-report-1.pdf>



Several organizations were of the view that data users were consulted during the assessment. They included the National Planning Commission (NPC) and NGOs. Gender statistics users in Malawi appreciate gender equality as a policy priority and see statistics as an important part of the process of achieving it. Others indicated that the appreciation for gender equality is only really recognized when most organizations factor statistics into their institutional policies.

Before a major survey, NSO Malawi organizes meetings with different data users to identify their gender-specific needs, for example, the validation meeting for a tool on women empowerment. It should also be pointed out that NSO Malawi conducts a user satisfaction survey that enquires specifically about gender statistics that the institution produces.

#### 4.6.2 Dissemination and use of statistics

NSO Malawi increasingly disseminates its products through its website. Dissemination workshops are only organized for the release of key statistical findings and rarely for gender statistics unless specifically funded by donors. Due to financial and human resource constraints, NSO Malawi cannot effectively advocate for comprehensive data dissemination mechanisms in the MDAs and there is no effort in the MDAs to release gender statistics. Most MDAs lack websites as potential dissemination platforms and hence such data is not readily available for use by the public. All stakeholders who completed the assessment questionnaires indicated their interest in attending dissemination forums on gender statistics organized by NSO Malawi. The respondents also expressed an interest in receiving regular information from NSO Malawi on newly-released gender statistics and further indicated that the receipt of timely information would help them to develop sound project proposals.

In terms of preferences on the format of gender statistics, most individuals reported that they appreciate statistics when presented in the form of graphs/infographics. These visualizations also contribute towards making their work easier. Other formats such as reports/articles, videos, press conferences, and dissemination of reports also contribute to making work easier for stakeholders. It should be noted that in academia, interest in gender statistics is mainly for research purposes.

All stakeholders who completed the assessment questionnaires indicated a similar pattern in terms of scope of use for gender statistics and stated that they use gender statistics often. The most frequently cited uses for gender statistics include policy formulation, identifying project beneficiaries, designing and monitoring projects and programs, and for research and proposal development. The assessment found that Oxfam uses gender statistics to i) analyze current developments for short-term decision making, ii) analyze trends for long-term policy formulation, iii) monitor existing government policies, for example, Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, iv) highlight gender issues, and v) target program beneficiaries such as in the education program. The assessment found that ActionAid uses gender statistics for purposes similar to those reported by Oxfam reported, including for research. According to the Women's Legal Resources Centre (WOLREC), gender statistics-related tasks are explicitly recognized to the extent that they are a requirement when planning, implementing, and monitoring as well as reporting. For the NPC, they use gender statistics as highlighted above including research but excluding targeting program beneficiaries.

Examples of use include, among others, the use of gender statistics to engage government authorities on early childhood care, economic empowerment of women, and women's access to land. Another user stated that the organization used gender statistics when conducting a mid-term review of MGDS III. Some sectors, such as the departments of health and education have successfully established MISs yet these systems are not being consistently supported and systematically developed for the generation of statistics and indicators and consequently uptake and use. Other sectors generate a lot of data mainly for internal use and without consideration for the data needs of external stakeholders. This is mainly reflected in the fact that even though a lot of data is collected by MDAs for administrative purposes, very few publish it and make it available to external users.

# 5 Main findings, conclusions and recommendations

## 5.1 Main findings and conclusions

This assessment focused on identifying data and capacity gaps in Malawi's NSS and identifying ways in which these challenges can be overcome to increase the production, management, uptake, and use of gender statistics in the country. The study was supported by UN Women under the Women Count initiative in coordination with MoGCDSW, the NPC and NSO Malawi. The findings will be used as the basis for a project proposal aimed at responding to the main challenges identified in the study and identifying potential partners who can seek donor support to address these challenges for Malawi.

The main findings of the study are that the most important challenges experienced in the NSS from a gender statistics perspective are: inadequate normative frameworks and infrastructure in support of statistical production; long intervals between household surveys and censuses; limited dissemination and use of gender data and statistics across the NSS; and weak administrative data quality and systems.

NSO Malawi is a regulator as well as a producer of statistics. Neither the National Statistics Act 2013 nor the NSSP (2019-2023) has gender specific provisions but the Act includes gender in the list of statistical domains of the NSS. The study also found challenges related to weak monitoring of NSSP implementation and limited data dissemination channels, inadequate human resource capacity, and lack of autonomy of the NSS. The absence of specific gender statistics outcomes in the NSSP contributes to the weak political will with regard to gender statistics production, dissemination, and accountability. Through the Act, NSO Malawi has the legal mandate to produce gender statistics within the context of their custodianship of the NSS. However, the lack of a dedicated gender statistics unit with staff devoted to the production of gender statistics and poor availability of resources such as computers and other infrastructure makes it difficult for the Demographic Statistics Department to regularly produce all the required project outputs.

The MoGCDSW is responsible for gender equality policy directions. As such, it has accepted some responsibility for coordinating the monitoring of outputs of the various MDA activities related to gender. However, in terms of the NSS, NSO Malawi is the institution primarily responsible for statistical coordination in the country. There are currently no coordination mechanisms in place for gender statistics. Better coordination and collaboration between NSO Malawi, the Ministry of Gender, and other MDAs on gender statistics will be critical if the country is to make progress on the production, uptake, and use of gender statistics. NSO Malawi, MoGCDSW and the NPC need to work more closely together to provide better coordination and leadership in the gender statistics production system. The fact that NSO Malawi is not based in the capital city, Lilongwe, further compounds issues around coordination.

The assessment found that there are many MDAs that are part of the NSS that collect and use gender statistics and yet they do not have adequate capacity, infrastructure, and systems to ensure that quality gender statistics are regularly collected and organized. Official gender statistics production and dissemination remains the responsibility of NSO Malawi. It is suggested that the MDAs and NSO Malawi work closely to ensure that gender statistics data production is standardized. There should be a proper system that allows for data transfer from the local district production centers to the central level with clear standardized mechanisms and infrastructure that NSO Malawi can approve for its validity and technical reliability. This will make such gender statistics trustworthy for use in planning.

NSO Malawi is heavily dependent on donor funding to produce household surveys and the PHC. The gap between household surveys is generally five years and ten years for the PHC. Reports that provide comparisons between women and men are produced albeit at irregular intervals and with donor support. The study found that key gender statistics indicators are measured regularly and most MDAs have gender responsive indicators in their budget reporting frameworks. However, those indicators, if obtained from household surveys, are only produced once every five years and the administrative systems that have to produce the remainder are generally not functioning well. Malawi has only been able to report on 42% of the 122 gender responsive indicators required for monitoring Agenda 2030. In terms of GEWE performance, Malawi has not done well in most of these gender statistics indicators for SDG 5. This assessment has shown that there is a need for more effort to produce the SDG 5 indicators that are currently not being reported on as well as gender-responsive indicators in the other Agenda 2030 goals. Important standalone gender surveys such as comprehensive GBV prevalence surveys, time use surveys, and the SIGI survey have never been conducted in Malawi. The more comprehensive surveys are important as they allow for a more detailed analysis that will enable a better understanding of the circumstances around these gender specific concerns to better inform policy and programmatic interventions.

This will be possible with a supportive legal and policy framework which recognizes and promotes gender statistics, which is not currently the case. If Malawi is to have an NSS that can produce, manage and use gender statistics, efforts must be made to address critical challenges in terms of the (i) institutional and policy environment and coordination among the relevant gender machinery and NSS stakeholders; (ii) strengthening data collection and statistical production processes, (iii) human and institutional capacities and (iv) data accessibility and use.

## 5.2 Recommendations

In view of the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made within the context of the three main pillars of UN Women's gender data and statistics work.

### Enabling environment for gender statistics production, uptake, and use:

- More investment is needed in gender statistics to improve the measurement and achievement of gender-responsive indicators of Agenda 2030. MoGCDSW is responsible for providing gender equality policy direction and hence accepted responsibility for the coordination of gender statistics with the technical leadership of NSO Malawi. There is a need to strengthen coordination structures and mechanisms within the NSS and establish appropriate mechanisms for gender statistics. It will also be important to clarify the roles and responsibilities of NSO Malawi, MoGCDSW, and the NPC as lead agents in this process.
- Adequate human and capital resources need to be allocated for gender data work in NSO Malawi and MoGCDSW to produce, analyze and prepare statistical reports relevant to the needs of stakeholders. Additional resources will enable these two institutions to carry out the necessary processes to produce quality gender statistics, address data gaps, and promote the uptake and use of gender data for policy formulation, planning, resource allocation, project implementation and M&E.
- Government and development partners need to support NSO Malawi to address ongoing challenges including recruitment of additional staff to cover current vacancies including having a separate gender department/unit with dedicated staff within NSO Malawi. In this regard, NSO Malawi also requires support to establish an office in the capital city of Malawi, Lilongwe to increase visibility and coordination of gender statistics-related work in the NSS.
- Gender focal points in MDAs should not only be human resource officers, but also technical officers - either statisticians or economists - who are equipped with the necessary skills to produce and analyze gender statistics.

### Production of gender statistics:

- The Government of Malawi need to invest in the necessary infrastructure (relevant ICT materials) to support the generation of gender statistics while increasing the capacity of staff with knowledge and gender statistics management skills. The Government also needs to ensure that adequate financial resources are allocated to the production and use of gender statistics. Due to high staff turnover, as well as limited capacities in MDAs, it is also recommended that UN Women, MoGCDSW and NSO Malawi conduct training in gender statistics for government officers and civil society organization staff to enhance their capacity, interest and appreciation of the relevance of gender statistics in the country.
- Given the large time lapses between household surveys and censuses, more attention should be given to improving administrative data systems as data sources for reporting on national and international commitments.
- MDAs and NSO Malawi must work closely together to ensure that gender statistics data production is standardized. Systems should be established to allow for data transfer from local district production centers to the central level with clear standardized concepts and definitions, mechanisms, and infrastructure. As the coordinator and custodian of the NSS, NSO Malawi needs to approve this work for its validity and technical reliability.
- There is need to mobilize support for conducting important standalone gender surveys e.g., comprehensive GBV prevalence surveys, time use surveys, and the SIGI survey, which have never been conducted in Malawi.
- There is need to work on improving the capacity of the human resources responsible for managing gender-related statistics and the availability of internal data auditors to help in carrying out gender statistics audits for quality assurance. There is also a need to agree on clear reporting times and action plans for the production, management, dissemination, and use of gender statistics.

### Uptake and use of gender statistics:

- Priority should be given to raising awareness on the importance of gender statistics and improving the understanding of stakeholders to demand and use gender statistics for national planning and development decisions. Priority should also be given to providing general financial and political support for the use of gender statistics.
- NSO Malawi and MoGCDSW do not have a clear gender statistics communication and development plan. There is a need to communicate more deliberately and disseminate the statistics that are being produced to promote uptake and use.
- Even though MDAs produce gender statistics, these are often difficult to access, not analyzed and consequently not being used.

# Annexes

## Annexure 1 Supplementary questionnaire

### Assessment of Gender Statistics System in Malawi

#### *Supplementary Questionnaire to (MALAWI, MoGCDSW, MoA, MoE, MoH, MoT, National Planning commission)*

1. How many staff positions are in the statistics (research) unit and of those how many are filled?
2. Are there dedicated staff for gender statistics or gender statistics are collected and managed by same staff responsible for all statistics?
3. If there are dedicated gender statistics staff, how many are they and how many are needed?
4. What is the overall impression on available skill sets compared to the needed skill sets? Would you say staff have adequate skills for gender statistics?
5. Share with us how statistics and in particular gender statistics are coordinated from survey design, data collection, data management, data analysis, and dissemination
6. What challenges if any do you encounter in the process in question number 5?
7. Which actors'/staff posts are involved in the process in question 5
8. How does your ministry coordinate with NSO as main organ for statistics?
9. Which gender statistics are you able to collect, what you are not able to collect?
10. For you to collect better gender statistics for your sector/ministry, what issues should be covered in the data collection tools? Are these tools available already?
11. How do you ensure gender statistics data related to your Ministry/sector come from the district to the central level?
12. Are there any challenges in this process in 11? How do we address these challenges?
13. Tell us about the capacity in your Ministry/sector to analyze data for gender statistics? What may need to be done to address any challenges if any.

## Annexure 2 List of stakeholder institutions consulted

### List of institutions consulted

No	Name of institution	Formation	Orientation
1	Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare	Government	Gender statistics expert and user
2	Ministry of Agriculture	Government	Producer and user of statistics
3	Ministry of Health	Government	Producer and user of statistics
4	Ministry of Education	Government	Producer and user of statistics
5	Ministry of Trade	Government	Producer and user of statistics
6	National Statistics Office	Government	Producer of statistics
7	National Planning Commission	Quasi government	User of statistics
8	Department of Human Resource Management and Development	Government	Producer of statistics
9	WOLREC	Civil society	User of statistics
10	Oxfam	Civil society	User of statistics
12	ActionAid	Civil society	User of statistics
12	University of Malawi	Academic/research institution	Producer and user of statistics
13	UN Women	Civil Society	Users of Statistics

## Annexure 3: Overview of the SDG 5 Achievements in Malawi

Target	Indicator	Country status and analysis
End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination based on sex	<p>One of the indicators under this target is ensuring the availability of legal frameworks to enforce and monitor equality and discrimination on the basis of sex. Malawi has enabling legislation from the Constitution, with the principles of national policy requiring that the government takes steps to eliminate violence against women and girls through, among others, the enactment of legislation. The country has a number of laws such as the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act, the Gender Equality Act, the Deceased Estates, Wills and Inheritance Act. The Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare is tasked with ensuring that these gender-related laws are enacted and enforced. The Ministry is supposed to have gender desk officers in the various districts in the country. At local level, stakeholders have promoted some bye-laws that gives effect to these gender related laws, but these are limited and not standardised in every district. The Ministry of Gender proposed regulations on the implementation of the gender related laws (GEA and Trafficking in Person Act) and also the Deceased Estates-Will and Inheritance Act and Marriage Divorce and Family Relations Act but to-date these regulations have not been operationalised by Ministry of Justice due to issues of mandate and collaboration. There are clear statistics in terms of the laws enacted; however, there remains a gap in the statistics in terms of full usage of these laws and sometime the laws are not fully publicized.</p>



Target	Indicator	Country status and analysis
Eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation	5.1.1 The proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual, or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by the form of violence, and by age	MDHS data (2016) indicator show that indicator 5.1.1 on proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months was 32.8 percent in 2016 (MDHS, 2016). Malawi's position was higher than the sub-Saharan Africa average of 22.0 percent in 2016, (WDR, 2018). Domestic violence trends show that the incidence of violence is worsening from 15.0 percent in 2004 to 32.8 in 2016. This shows that Malawi is off track on this target, which aims to eliminate all sorts of violence by 2030.
	The proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, age and place of occurrence	For Indicator 5.2.1, the proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months was 32.8 percent in 2016, which is higher than the sub-Saharan Africa average of 22.0 percent in 2016. Domestic violence in the country is worsening from 15.0 55percent in 2004 to 32.8 in 2016 that shows that Malawi is off track on this target, which aims to eliminate all sorts of violence by 2030
	5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence. The country proportion of women and girls aged 15 and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than intimate partner in the previous 12 months	For indicator 5.2.2, the country's proportion of women and girls aged 15 and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than intimate partner in the previous 12 months was 13.9 percent in 2016. Only 40 percent of women who have experienced any physical or sexual violence have sought help to stop the violence and half have never sort help or told anyone about the violence. According to the MDHS 2015 survey, report indicates that, among ever-married women age 15-49 who have experienced sexual violence, 63 per cent reported the current husband and 31 per cent reported a former husband as perpetrators of the sexual violence. Five (5) per cent of ever-married women mentioned strangers as perpetrators of sexual violence. Among never married women, a current or former boyfriend is the most common perpetrator (38 per cent), followed by a stranger (22 per cent) and a friend or acquaintance (18 per cent).



Target	Indicator	Country status and analysis
		<p>In short these indicators under this target require clear statistics on the proportion of women and girls aged 15 years or older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence in the previous 12 months. It is the responsibility of agencies such as the police, immigration offices and the judiciary to ensure that they keep such statistics. Often such data is not always handy and where it is present, it has gaps and inconsistencies. It is the responsibility of the MoGCDSW to have such data, which should be collected through relevant officers at different levels in a given year, which is not the case due to capacity and coordination challenges. The National Statistics Office has data related to occurrence and experience of gender-based violence.<sup>64</sup> The data are presented in line with the indicator 5.2.1<sup>65</sup> related to violence at the hands of intimate partners. However, there is a lack of such information in the report. (Table available in the Yearbook or the Malawi Demographic and Health Survey Report).</p>

64 2020 Malawi Statistical Yearbook, pp94-95

65 Indicator 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months. According to the MDHS (2015-2016) results, of ever-married women had experienced spousal violence in the past 12 months. The most common type of spousal violence is emotional violence (29.5 percent), followed by physical violence (25.9 percent) and sexual violence (19.2 per cent) while any form of physical and or sexual violence was reported at 24 per cent. MDHS (2015-16) reveals that 23 per cent of women who have never been married experienced physical violence and 35 percent of the married women experienced some form of physical violence. Furthermore, 22 per cent of women who are married have experienced sexual violence.

Target	Indicator	Country status and analysis
Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriages, and female genital mutilation	5.3.1 The proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18	Indicator 5.3.1 on child marriages. The proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 was 12.5 percent and before age 18 was 42.1 percent which is higher than the regional average of 38.0 percent.
	The proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age	The two indicators require that there must be gender statistics on the proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18, as well as the proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting by age. Malawi has the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act, 2015 as one law that covers, issues of marriage and unions. The Malawi Population and Housing Census report does not provide data on all forms of the indicators. Other sources should have been the Demographic and Health Survey report and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey report. The population housing survey report presents data relating to the total population from age 12 and above and their age at first marriage <sup>66</sup> . The information is disaggregated by sex. There is, therefore, a gap in data specifically targeted at this by the NSOMalawi. However, such information can be found with other institutions such as NGOs and INGOs. The challenge with such data from NGOs is that, it is not representative enough, it is usually based on projects and for few or limited districts and hence cannot represent a national statistical picture.
Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibilities within the household and the family as nationally appropriate	The proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age, and location	This indicator is partly covered in the Population and Housing Census report 2018 which talks of unpaid family work by industry, sex, location and age- but the issues of time spent on work is not clearly covered, there are no such statistics. Time use studies on unpaid care work are scanty in Malawi generally even though the Labour force survey report 2013 has gendered statistics on family work and formal hours of work, earnings and wages. In both documents, there are more women involved in family contribution on unpaid work related activities. There are some social protection schemes in Malawi that recognize value of unpaid care work with most beneficiaries being women. However, other public services like infrastructure, i.e access to good markets, access to capital, good road networks are still a challenge.

<sup>66</sup> NSO (2019), 2018 Population and Housing Census Report, Zomba

Target	Indicator	Country status and analysis
Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic, and public life	55.1 The proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments	Indicator 5.5.1 on women in national parliament. The proportion of seats held by women in national parliament was 16.7 percent in 2018, declining from 21.0 percent in 2010. Malawi's position is lower than the regional average of 24.0 percent (WDR, 2018). The Ministry of Gender, Community Development, and Social Welfare, Malawi Electoral Commission, Malawi Local Government, Malawi Parliament do have gender statistics on parliamentary and local government women representation. There has been steady increase though not yet as SADC target for women in parliament with presently at 22.9% and local councils representation (currently at 12.39%). While the 50/50 parity ratio has not been attained yet, there is still ongoing advocacy around need for the Gender Equality Act to have a clause that provides for the gender quotas.
	5.5.2 The proportion of women in managerial positions	Indicator 5.5.2 The proportion of women in managerial positions reported nationally as the percentage of women represented in decision-making positions reported nationally was estimated at 24.0 percent in 2016. The Labour force survey report 2013 has gender statistics on this where it covers female share of employment in senior and middle management position. The representation of males and females in high status occupation is positively related to one's level of education. Generally, women are lowly represented than men.

Target	Indicator	Country status and analysis
Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed following the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.	<p>Indicator 5.6.1 The proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use, and reproductive health care.</p> <p>Indicator 5.6.2 Malawi has laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education.</p>	<p>Indicator 5.6.1 The proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health was 78.6 percent.</p> <p>Women's and girls' autonomy in decision making over consensual sexual relations, contraceptive use and access to sexual and reproductive health services is key to their empowerment and the full exercise of their reproductive rights. According to the 2015/16 MDHS, 34 per cent of women aged 15-49 years can make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care. MDHS (2015-16) also reveals that 46 per cent of women can say no to their husband if they do not want to have, sexual intercourse and nearly half (49 per cent) can ask their husband to use a condom. On Indicator 5.6.2, the laws on access to information and education on SRH are there, but the access to SRH care is often hampered by stereotypes, discrimination by both communities and health care providers especially for the youth. The Demographic and Health Survey report has some of these statistics. What still remains is to ensure access to contraceptive and unhindered health care which is not the case as at now. The gender statistics available on these often records about women who want to access contraceptives and not men. The Marriage Divorce, Family Relations Act and Malawi Constitution provides for the right to marriage, unions and sexual relations.</p>

Target	Indicator	Country status and analysis
Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources and access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources, following national laws.	<p>(a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure</p> <p>The proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and control</p>	Malawi has the Gender Equality Act of 2013, Deceased Estates (Wills, Inheritance and Protection) Act of 2011 and the New Land Laws (though are under review) which should have regulated these gender statistics among others. Malawi also signed to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa among others. The proportion of women in agriculture is generally high, over 70% involvement in production while the benefits from the same is low compared to men. Access to land is often easier but control and ownership remains a challenge for Malawian women even in matrilineal settings. The Land laws were somehow gender responsive, though there are some aspects in there that undermine women rights. The relevant statistics on gendered ownership of land and benefits from agriculture resources are not easy to trace in Malawi. Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Local Governance seem less capable to ensure such statistics are collected at different levels.
Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communication technology, to promote the empowerment of women	The proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex	Use of Technology is very critical for the socio-economic development. The Mobile phones ownership shows clear gender statistics disparity. For example, the data from the DHS survey 2015-2016 found that male ownership was 52 per cent and female ownership was 33 per cent. Such statistics are collected during DHS and through MACRA surveys. Malawi has an ICT Policy and the communication Act. There is also an Act on Electronic Transaction and Cyber Security which regulates protection of users of ICT from violating rights of others online. Women and girls have particularly become victims of cyber-attacks and there is no record of gender statistics to this effect.
Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation to promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.	The proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment	The Gender Equality Act of 2013 promotes this, however in the Budget statements and the detailed Government expenditure reports, the analysis of spending based on gender is not entrenched. The Gender mainstreaming guidelines developed for all MDAs and Ministries to use for gender responsive budgeting have not been followed since they were developed in the early 2000s by Min. of Gender.

## Annexure 4: Detailed assessment of SDG gender responsive indicator gaps in Malawi

Goal	Target	Indicator number	Gender indicator	Assessment
1	1.1	1.1.1	Employed population below international poverty line, by sex and age (%)	Low achiever
1	1.1	1.1.1	(supplementary) Population living below the international poverty line by sex and age (%)	Low achiever
1	1.2	1.2.1	Proportion of population living below the national poverty line (%)	Not available
1	1.2	1.2.2	Proportion of population living in multidimensional poverty (%)	Not available
1	1.3	1.3.1	[ILO] Proportion of population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit, by sex (%)	Not available
1	1.3	1.3.1	[ILO] Proportion of mothers with newborns receiving maternity cash benefit (%)	Not available
1	1.3	1.3.1	[ILO] Proportion of population above statutory pensionable age receiving a pension, by sex (%)	Not available
1	1.3	1.3.1	[ILO] Proportion of unemployed persons receiving unemployment cash benefit, by sex (%)	Not available
1	1.4	1.4.2	Proportion of people with legally recognized documentation of their rights to land out of total adult population, by sex (%)	High achiever
1	1.4	1.4.2	Proportion of people with secure tenure rights to land out of total adult population, by sex (%)	Not available
1	1.b	1.b.1	Proportion of government recurrent and capital spending to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor and vulnerable groups	Not available
10	10.3	10.3.1', '16.b.1	Proportion of population reporting having felt discriminated against, by grounds of discrimination, sex and disability (%)	Not available
16	16.1	16.1.1	Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex (victims per 100,000 population)	Not available
16	16.1	16.1.2	Conflict-related death rate (civilians), by sex, age and cause of death (%)	Not available
16	16.1	16.1.3	Proportion of population subjected to physical violence in the previous 12 months, by sex (%)	Not available
16	16.1	16.1.3	Proportion of population subjected to robbery in the previous 12 months, by sex (%)	Not available
16	16.1	16.1.3	Proportion of population subjected to sexual violence in the previous 12 months, by sex (%)	Not available
16	16.1	16.1.4	Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live (%)	Not available

Goal	Target	Indicator number	Gender indicator	Assessment
16	16.2	16.2.2	Detected victims of human trafficking for forced labour, servitude and slavery, by age and sex (number)	Not available
16	16.2	16.2.2	Detected victims of human trafficking for removal of organ, by age and sex (number)	Not available
16	16.2	16.2.2	Detected victims of human trafficking for other purposes, by age and sex (number)	Not available
16	16.2	16.2.2	Detected victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, by age and sex (number)	Not available
16	16.2	16.2.3	Proportion of population aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18, by sex (% of population aged 18-29)	Medium achiever
16	16.3	16.3.1	Police reporting rate for physical assault, by sex (%)	Not available
16	16.3	16.3.1	Police reporting rate for robbery, by sex (%)	Not available
16	16.3	16.3.1	Police reporting rate for sexual assault, by sex (%)	Not available
16	16.5	16.5.1	Prevalence rate of bribery, by sex (%)	Not available
16	16.7	16.7.1	Ratio for female members of parliaments (Ratio of the proportion of women in parliament in the proportion of women in the national population with the age of eligibility as a lower bound boundary), Lower Chamber or Unicameral	Medium achiever
16	16.7	16.7.1	Ratio for female members of parliaments (Ratio of the proportion of women in parliament in the proportion of women in the national population with the age of eligibility as a lower bound boundary), Upper Chamber	Not available
2	2.1	2.1.2	Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the adult population (%)	Low achiever
2	2.3	2.3.2	The income of small-scale food producers, disaggregated by sex and indigenous status.	Not available
3	3.1	3.1.1	Maternal mortality ratio	Low achiever
3	3.1	3.1.2	Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	Low achiever
3	3.2	3.2.1	Infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births)	Low achiever
3	3.2	3.2.1	Under-five mortality rate, by sex (deaths per 1,000 live births)	Low achiever
3	3.3	3.3.1	Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex and age (per 1,000 uninfected population)	Low achiever
3	3.4	3.4.1	Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease (probability)	Medium achiever

Goal	Target	Indicator number	Gender indicator	Assessment
3	3.4	3.4.2	Suicide mortality rate, by sex (deaths per 100,000 population)	High achiever
3	3.5	3.5.1	Alcohol use disorders, 12-month prevalence (%)	High achiever
3	3.7	3.7.1	Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods (% of women aged 15-49 years)	High achiever
3	3.7	3.7.2	Adolescent birth rate (per 1,000 women aged 15-19 years)	Low achiever
3	3.8	3.8.1	Universal health coverage (UHC) service coverage index	Not available
3	3.9	3.9.3	Mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisonings, by sex (deaths per 100,000 population)	Low achiever
3	3.a	3.a.1	Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older, by sex (%)	Medium achiever
3	3.c	3.c.1	Health worker distribution, by sex and type of occupation (%)	Low achiever
3	3.c	3.c.1	Health worker distribution, by sex and type of occupation (%)	Not available
4	4.1	4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people achieving a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics (%)	Not available
4	4.1	4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people achieving a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics (%)	Not available
4	4.1	4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people achieving a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics (%)	Not available
4	4.1	4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people achieving a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics (%)	Not available
4	4.1	4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people achieving a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics (%)	Not available
4	4.1	4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people achieving a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics (%)	Low achiever
4	4.1	4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people achieving a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics (%)	Low achiever
4	4.1	4.1.2	Completion rate, by sex, location, wealth quintile and education level (%)	Low achiever
4	4.1	4.1.2	Completion rate, by sex, location, wealth quintile and education level (%)	Low achiever
4	4.1	4.1.2	Completion rate, by sex, location, wealth quintile and education level (%)	Low achiever



Goal	Target	Indicator number	Gender indicator	Assessment
4	4.2	4.2.1	Proportion of children aged 36–59 months who are developmentally on track in at least three of the following domains: literacy-numeracy, physical development, social-emotional development, and learning (% of children aged 36-59 months)	Not available
4	4.2	4.2.2	Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex (%)	Not available
4	4.3	4.3.1	Participation rate in formal and non-formal education and training, by sex (%)	Low achiever
4	4.4	4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by sex and type of skill (%)	Not available
4	4.4	4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by sex and type of skill (%)	Not available
4	4.4	4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by sex and type of skill (%)	Not available
4	4.4	4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by sex and type of skill (%)	Not available
4	4.4	4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by sex and type of skill (%)	Not available
4	4.4	4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by sex and type of skill (%)	Not available
4	4.4	4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by sex and type of skill (%)	Not available
4	4.4	4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by sex and type of skill (%)	Not available
4	4.4	4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by sex and type of skill (%)	Not available
4	4.6	4.6.1	Proportion of population achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional skills, by sex, age and type of skill (%)	Not available
4	4.6	4.6.1	Proportion of population achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional skills, by sex, age and type of skill (%)	Not available

Goal	Target	Indicator number	Gender indicator	Assessment
4	4.7	4.7.1	Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment	Not available
4	4.a	4.a.1	Schools with access to single-sex basic sanitation, by education level (%)	Not available
4	4.a	4.a.1	Schools with access to single-sex basic sanitation, by education level (%)	Low achiever
4	4.a	4.a.1	Schools with access to single-sex basic sanitation, by education level (%)	Low achiever
4	4.c	4.c.1	Proportion of teachers who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country, by sex and education level (%)	Not available
4	4.c	4.c.1	Proportion of teachers who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country, by sex and education level (%)	Not available
4	4.c	4.c.1	Proportion of teachers who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country, by sex and education level (%)	Medium achiever
4	4.c	4.c.1	Proportion of teachers who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country, by sex and education level (%)	Medium achiever
4	4.c	4.c.1	Proportion of teachers who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country, by sex and education level (%)	Not available
5	5.1	5.1.1	Legal frameworks that promote, enforce and monitor gender equality (percentage of achievement, 0 - 100) -- Area 3: employment and economic benefits	Not available

Goal	Target	Indicator number	Gender indicator	Assessment
5	5.1	5.1.1	Legal frameworks that promote, enforce and monitor gender equality (percentage of achievement, 0 - 100) -- Area 1: overarching legal frameworks and public life	Not available
5	5.1	5.1.1	Legal frameworks that promote, enforce and monitor gender equality (percentage of achievement, 0 - 100) -- Area 4: marriage and family	Not available
5	5.1	5.1.1	Legal frameworks that promote, enforce and monitor gender equality (percentage of achievement, 0 - 100) -- Area 2: violence against women	Not available
5	5.2	5.2.1	Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age (%)	Low achiever
5	5.2	5.2.2	Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment	Not available
5	5.3	5.3.1	Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 (%)	Low achiever
5	5.3	5.3.1	Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 18 (%)	Low achiever
5	5.3	5.3.2	Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age (%)	Not available
5	5.4	5.4.1	Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic chores and care work, by sex, age and location (%)	High achiever
5	5.5	5.5.1	Proportion of elected seats held by women in deliberative bodies of local government (%)	Low achiever
5	5.5	5.5.1	Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (% of total number of seats)	Medium achiever
5	5.5	5.5.2	Proportion of women in managerial positions (%)	Low achiever
5	5.5	5.5.2	Proportion of women in senior and middle management positions (%)	Not available
5	5.6	5.6.1	Proportion of women who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care (% of women aged 15-49 years)	Medium achiever

Goal	Target	Indicator number	Gender indicator	Assessment
5	5.6	5.6.2	Extent to which countries have laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education (%)	Medium achiever
5	5.6	5.6.2	(S.1) Extent to which countries have laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education: Section 1: Maternity Care (%)	Low achiever
5	5.6	5.6.2	(S.2) Extent to which countries have laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education: Section 2: Contraceptive and Family Planning (%)	Medium achiever
5	5.6	5.6.2	(S.3) Extent to which countries have laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education: Section 3: Sexuality Education (%)	Medium achiever
5	5.6	5.6.2	(S.4) Extent to which countries have laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education: Section 4: HIV and HPV (%)	Medium achiever
5	5.a	5.a.1	Share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure (%)	High achiever
5	5.a	5.a.1	Proportion of people with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land (out of total agricultural population), by sex (%)	High achiever
5	5.a	5.a.2	Degree to which the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control (1=No evidence to 6=Highest levels of guarantees)	Not available
5	5.b	5.b.1	Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex (%)	Low achiever
5	5.c	5.c.1	Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment (%)	Low achiever
8	8.1	8.10.2	Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a financial institution or mobile-money-service provider, by sex (% of adults aged 15 years and older)	Low achiever
8	8.3	8.3.1	Proportion of informal employment, by sector and sex (ILO harmonized estimates) (%)	Not available

Goal	Target	Indicator number	Gender indicator	Assessment
8	8.5	8.5.1	Average hourly earnings of employees by sex and occupation (local currency)	Not available
8	8.5	8.5.2	Unemployment rate, by sex and age (%)	Medium achiever
8	8.6	8.6.1	Proportion of youth not in education, employment or training, by sex and age (%)	Low achiever
8	8.7	8.7.1	Proportion of children engaged in economic activity, by sex and age (%)	Low achiever
8	8.7	8.7.1	Proportion of children engaged in economic activity and household chores, by sex and age (%)	Low achiever
8	8.8	8.8.1	Fatal occupational injuries among employees, by sex and migrant status (per 100,000 employees)	Not available
8	8.8	8.8.1	Non-fatal occupational injuries among employees, by sex and migrant status (per 100,000 employees)	Not available
8	8.8	8.8.2	Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status	Not available
9	9.5	9.5.2	Researchers (in full-time equivalent) per million inhabitants, by sex	Not available
10	10.1	10.2.1	Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	Not available
11	11.1	11.1.1	Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing, by sex	Not available
11	11.2	11.2.1	Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	Not available
11	11.7	11.7.1	Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	Not available
11	11.7	11.7.2	Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months	Not available

Goal	Target	Indicator number	Gender indicator	Assessment
13	13.b	13.b.1	Number of least developed countries and small island developing States that are receiving specialized support, and amount of support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, for mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities	Not available
16	16.7	16.7.2	Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group	Not available
17	17.18	17.18.1	Statistical capacity indicator for Sustainable Development Goal monitoring	Not available





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