

COVID-19 Update

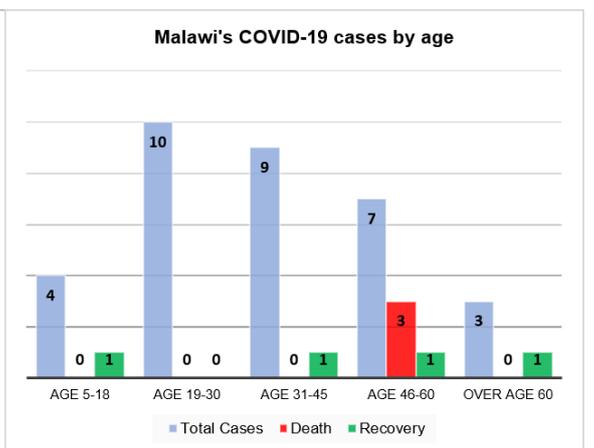
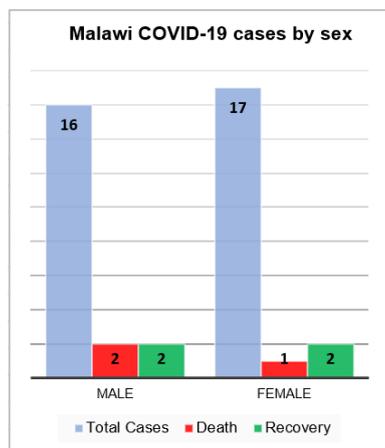
Date	Updated on 23 April 2020
Situation Update	No. 6



1. MALAWI HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ Malawi in a declared State of Disaster
- ❖ Prevention and response measures are being implemented
- ❖ Court to decide on injunction against 21-day lockdown on 29 April
- ❖ Government, UN, NGO and Partner coordination structures in place
- ❖ [COVID 19 National Information Dashboard](#) set up by Ministry of Health

Total Cases	Active Cases	Recovered	Deaths	Tests	Suspected
33	26	4	3	566	568



2. GLOBAL UPDATE	3. REGIONAL UPDATE (Africa)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 2 631 839 cases ❖ 182 100 confirmed deaths ❖ Cases in 213 countries and places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 17,522 cases in 45 countries ❖ 788 confirmed deaths ❖ 5,911 recovered

4. MALAWI GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

4.1 Malawi Preparedness and Response Plan, and Coordination

- A [National Covid-19 Preparedness and Response Plan](#), budgeted at \$213 million (K157 billion), is being implemented.
 - It aims to prevent, detect and respond to any COVID-19 outbreak in Malawi;
 - It has four pillars: Emergency Preparedness and Capacity-Building; Spread Prevention and Control; Response; and Early Recovery;
 - It is built around nine clusters comprising members from government, UN, NGOs/other humanitarian actors;
 - UN entities, Development Partners, NGOs and other stakeholders are providing technical and financial support
- On 14th April, Malawi Government declared a 21-day lockdown from 18 April to 9 May 2020. However, the Malawi Human Rights Defenders Coalition (HRDC) obtained a seven-day court injunction stopping the lockdown. The injunction is still in force until the court decides on the matter on 29 April 2020.

4.2 Hospital and Laboratory Capacity

- At least 566 samples have been tested, with 33 turning positive (both imported and local transmission)
- Confirmed cases are in five districts (Lilongwe, Blantyre, Zomba, Nkhotakota and Chikwawa);
- Active tracing and monitoring of contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases is ongoing;
- So far, 346 contacts of COVID-19 cases have been traced out of which 133 have been tested;
- 7 058 high-risk travellers have entered Malawi through formal borders and have been under monitoring;
- Of these, 1 823 have been discharged after completing the 14-day mandatory self-quarantine;
- At present, three borders are still open to allow transit of essential goods and service;
- 124 people transporting essential goods and services have entered Malawi in the past 24-hours;
- Four people have since recovered from COVID-19;

- Four laboratories are testing for COVID-19: National Health Reference Laboratory (NHRL) in Lilongwe, the College of Medicine in Blantyre, the Malawi Liverpool Wellcome Trust (MLW) in Blantyre and Mzuzu Central Hospital in Mzuzu;
- Ministry of Health (MoH) is continuing with the recruitment of additional health personnel across the country and reported that a total of 755 healthcare workers have been recruited out of the targeted 2000 so far;
- MoH said it has distributed necessary supplies to all hospitals for the management of COVID-19 cases;
- MoH confirmed that on 17th April the second donation of medical supplies and equipment were received from the Jack Ma and Alibaba foundation, including: 18 000 test kits, masks, face shields, and ventilators. The second batch of the donation from Jack Ma and Alibaba foundations to all 54 African countries includes 500 ventilators, 200 000 suits and face shields, 2 000 thermometers, one million swabs and extraction kits and 500,000 gloves;
- Government together with its partners are working on adopting selected innovations from academia and local industry to manufacture PPEs. Already Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital has procured 3 000 face shields from the Polytechnic;
- Clinical case management training for COVID-19 is underway in all districts;
- Save the Children is provided technical support to the development of the MoH's COVID-19 guidance and will support rollout of health worker training in six districts. So far, 42 health facility workers have been trained on contact, tracing and burial in Zomba; and 368 community health workers have been oriented on prevention, identification and referrals in Ntcheu, Mzimba, Mwanza, and Neno;

4.3 Socio Economic Outlook

- The country's mobile money operators, TNM and Airtel Malawi, announced removal of user fees and charges on personal transfers on the same network for a period of three months to help minimize use of bank notes;
- Reserve Bank of Malawi (RBM) has also announced that microfinance institutions and financial cooperatives would immediately provide a three-month moratorium on interest and principal repayments for loans by borrowers including payroll borrowers on a case by case basis.
- RBM also said Savings and Credit Co-operatives (Saccos) and Micro-Finance Institutions will defer all payments of dividends until the risk of Covid-19 is under control.
- RBM also said Malawi Government will engage Development Partners on stimulus grants to the financial sector.

4.4 Communication

- A wide range of local, regional and national authorities are conducting awareness and communication for development initiatives using multiple channels to ensure members of the public are well informed on COVID-19 and observe recommended measures;
- The Embassy of Iceland is supporting the Government in coordination, communication and community sensitization on COVID-19 issues within Mangochi district with a budget of MK38 million;
- Save the Children supported the Government to conduct COVID-19 awareness using mobiles vans, posters, radio jingles (aired on 13 stations, reaching five million people), and public announcement messaging;

4.5 Preventative measures instituted by Malawian Government

Measures such as the ones below, continue to be encouraged to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Social distancing
- Stop handshakes
- Avoiding overcrowded places.
- Regular hand washing with soap or alcohol-based sanitizer
- Observing self-quarantine rules for at least 14 days if you have arrived from another country or you were in contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19

4.5.1 Civil Service Guidelines

On 20 April the Chief Secretary to the Government issued [additional preventative measures for all public servants](#):

- All public servants not providing essential services are to immediately work from home;
- All Government vehicles should be parked at the office premises or have written authority for use;
- All [preventative measures for the public service](#) issued on 1 April continue still apply.

5. UNITED NATIONS and NGOs RESPONSE IN MALAWI

The 21 United Nations agencies, funds, and programmes that make up the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Malawi are actively engaged in the response to COVID-19. WHO is the technical lead, providing guidance and technical support and a COVID-19 coordinator in the Resident Coordinator's Office is supporting the UN Task Force on COVID-19 on coordination and coherence. The Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) for COVID-19 launched on 25 March seeks \$2.01 billion over a period of nine months (April – December). [Link](#). Malawi is not part of the GHRP, for this reason the HCT is preparing a Flash Appeal to operationalize the support of the UN&NGOS to the National Preparedness and Response Plan launched on 8 April 2020.

5.1 Supply Chain and Logistics (*WFP and UNICEF*)

- On 17 April, the United Nations “Solidarity Flight” from Addis Ababa to Lilongwe delivered vital medical cargo (see details on 4.2). The cargo included medical supplies donated by the Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Jack Ma Foundation to the Government of Malawi. WFP facilitated cargo reception and handling at the airport, and is expected to support the MoH with onward delivery to several districts;
- The UN recently conducted a Logistics Needs and Gaps analysis survey, in response, WFP Mobile Storage Units (MSUs) to increase screening capacity and potential isolation of patients, covering 1,104 m² at health centres and/or border points in eight districts: Blantyre, Dedza, Dowa, Karonga, Lilongwe, Mchinji, Mwanza and Ntcheu;
- Results from a global WFP Aviation survey showed high humanitarian passenger and cargo needs from the (soon to be established) Johannesburg humanitarian hub to Malawi. A major challenge is inadequate financial resources for effective and efficient response by the Logistics Cluster;
- UNICEF managed the local procurement of US\$330,000 of PPE, delivered on 21 April and to be distributed to targeted districts as per the Ministry of Health’s distribution plan. Additionally, the first shipment of the UK Aid-funded PPE, medical equipment and supplies valued at US\$ 400,000 is expected to be imported into Malawi mid-May 2020.
- A national tracking tool for COVID-19 supplies and equipment, developed by UNICEF, was adopted by the Government of Malawi that helps improving supply chain visibility by forecasting needs, tracking delivery schedules and distribution of supplies to districts and health facilities.

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

- In partnership with UNDP and the European Union, the Paralegal Advisory Service Institute (PASI) has been scaling up camp courts as one way of reducing overcrowding in prisons in Malawi. The Camp courts provide legal assistance to those who have overstayed custody, people with chronic diseases, older persons, women in detention with their children, and those who would not otherwise have had access to the justice system;
- In the past week, UNHCR and partners opened a new reception centre in Dzaleka Refugee Camp with 41 family tents and WASH facilities to accommodate up to 200 new arrivals during the 14-day isolation period. To support the dignified self quarantine of new arrivals the tents were provided with : 500 blankets, 500 sleeping mats, 200 buckets of 20 litres, 200 jerry cans of 20 litres and 200 plastic sheets;
- With a view to facilitating food security for refugees, take-home rations were distributed to the families of 300 Pre-School learners last week and to families of primary school this week;
- As a prevention measure, volunteers working in Dzaleka Refugee Camp have been provided with protective gear and have minimized home visits;
- UNHCR hosted the German Ambassador in Dzaleka refugee camp last week on a visit to local NGO *There is Hope*, which has converted its skills training centre in the camp into a nose/face mask production facility. The German Embassy donated EUR 10,000 to *There is Hope* and procured 45 sewing machines and materials to support their production. The Ambassador also procured from the NGO 1,300 masks which he donated to refugee leaders to be distributed to the most vulnerable refugees. *There is Hope* also donated 4,999 nose/face masks to the refugees;
- In preparation for the expected lockdown, a refresher training session on remote registration and documentation of asylum seekers for the Ministry of Homeland Security Registration Unit took place;
- UN agencies are working to ensure continuity of sexual and reproductive health services during the COVID-19 response. UNFPA, in collaboration with the Reproductive Health Directorate, is developing guidelines and protocols for the management of pregnant women during antenatal, labour, delivery and postnatal periods and developing a proposal for delivery of services through NGOs. SRHR and Family planning commodities procured by UNFPA and DfID will shortly arrive in country.
- UN Women is working with civil society to build the capacity of religious leaders on preventative measures on COVID-19. It is anticipated that the messaging has the potential to reach 80% of the Christian and Muslim population;
- UN Women, Care International, DoDMA and the Ministry of Gender brought together government, CSOs and Development partners working on gender and humanitarian issues. They discussed and analyzed the impact of covid-19 on women, girls and vulnerable groups and streamlined the entry points for a coordinated response.
- UNICEF’s partnership with the Malawi Police Service has supported children in conflict with the law being diverted from the criminal justice system to decongest police cells; improvement of (volunteer) community policing structures to be ready to respond to anticipated higher numbers of violence due to the circumstances of COVID-19; collaboration with District Social Welfare Offices to reintegrate children in street situations; and support to victims/survivors of violence through Police Victim Support Units.
- Spotlight Initiative (UN/EU) has been supporting Community Victim Support Units (CVSUs) to provide essential services for victims/survivors of violence. Based on the global spike in domestic violence experienced during movement restrictions and lockdowns, continuity of these services during the COVID-19 response in Malawi is essential. Save the Children visited CVSUs in Mzimba, Nkhata Bay, Dowa, Ntchisi, Machinga, and Nsanje districts and supported the reconstitution of CVSU committees to provide counselling and referrals to adults and children.

5.3 Communication (*UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, UNDP, UNESCO, UN Women, FAO*)

- A coordinated UN, Government, media and NGO effort is underway to ensure diverse, accurate and effective communication on COVID-19 at national, regional and local levels. The UN is continuing to support production of multimedia content (Chichewa and English) to promote COVID-19 messaging and stories. These will be disseminated

through various online and offline channels, including national media. Community Engagement sessions, including community radio dialogues and edutainment by partners is ongoing;

- UNDP is printing more COVID-19 posters in the local languages for dissemination by community mediators;
- With support from the European Union, FAO supported the Ministries of Agriculture and Health by printing and distribution of 45,000 WASH awareness-raising and behavior change communication materials (posters and flyers) to the following districts: Chikwawa, Balaka, Phalombe, Mangochi, Chitipa, Karonga, Mzimba, Nkhata Bay, NkhotaKota, Salima, Kasungu, Chiradzulu, Thyolo, Mulanje, Neno, Zomba and Blantyre;
- UNFPA in collaboration with partners such as Yoneco and community radio stations in Dedza, Salima and Mangochi are disseminating information on COVID-19 based on key messages developed in partnership with Government on GBV, handwashing and general information on infection prevention.
- UNICEF launched a music video titled 'Tingathe' (we will) produced by UNICEF Malawi Champion, Sangie, a famous Malawian reggae artist. The song targeting children, youth, and their parents promotes COVID-19 awareness and prevention messages.
- UNFPA in collaboration with two artists, Piksy and Taqwa, released a song and video on COVID-19, which is enjoying massive airplay on radios and TV stations. The song has also been shared with community radios in Dedza, Salima and Mangochi where UNFPA is working;
- UNDP has produced video clips of key governance institutions on the prevention of COVID 19 to be disseminated to community and national radio stations. These include Public Affairs Committee addressing religious and faith myths in the prevention, management and containment of the pandemic; Centre for Multiparty Democracy and Malawi Parliamentarians to ensure that political leaders also play their role in the fight against COVID-19 in the country.
- In taking advantage of the technology advancement and the proliferation of mobile phones across Africa; UNDP and the Government of Malawi through the Department of Disaster Management Affairs are developing creative communication tools to enable behavioural change and preventative actions to safeguard against Covid-19 among the Malawian population. This includes the production of Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD) and web-based Covid-19 facts quiz designed for smartphones. The products also include Social Media Covid-19 content pack with animated posters and visual blogs aimed at Covid-19 awareness raising;
- UNFPA will create special hotlines to respond to women's needs including referral for pregnant women who needs to access maternity care and those who need support due to GBV. UNFPA is also disseminating sexual reproductive health and rights messages through radio programmes and public address systems

5.4 Education (UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, UNESCO)

- Spotlight initiative is re-programming existing education programmes to respond to COVID-19 pandemic. Community and social mobilization on precautionary and prevention measures on COVID-19 have been added within the programme. The aim is to ensure that survivors of sexual and gender-based violence are not left behind, potentially reaching the furthest in rural and hard-to-reach areas.
- IM and coordination assistance provided to the Education Cluster by UNICEF, including an online documentation platform.
- UNESCO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has translated COVID Prevention Guidelines for schools into Chichewa, which are currently awaiting approval and distribution.
- The Ministry of Education has issued key guidelines on measures to be observed in distribution of take-home rations. WFP is in discussion with the Ministry of Education to explore maintaining this assistance for children no longer going to school due to COVID-19 measures.

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

- With UNICEF/UK Aid support, the National Reference Laboratory Real-time Polymerase Chain Reaction machine has tested 94 more cases since the last report bringing the total number tested to 424. Other partners such as the College of Medicine and the Malawi Liverpool Well-come Trust are supporting additional three laboratories in Blantyre, Lilongwe and Mzuzu.
- UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to develop a community-based definition for identification of COVID-19 cases. The revised case definition requires that any of the following symptoms need to be present: flu, cough, fever and history of travel or getting contact with a person who tested COVID-19 positive;
- UNICEF has reached a total of 26,440 people with WASH-related messages through various approaches, including handwashing demonstrations at marketplaces, communities, townships, and community radios. Of these, 13,484 are estimated to be children under 18 years, and 12,956 are estimated to be adults.
- UNICEF&United Purpose (UP) engaged public and private national radio stations, namely Zodiak, MBC, and Times to air out jingles with COVID-19 messaging.
- The installation of water tanks is expected to be completed by 24 April in all four UNICEF-supported Emergency Treatment Units in Blantyre, Mwanza, Mchinji and Mzuzu.
- UNICEF has also supported all five water boards of Malawi to ensure adequate service delivery, particularly in most vulnerable urban areas. UNICEF advocated for resources from International Financing Institutions to support the implementation of such plans.
- UNICEF is supporting the MoH to strengthen disease surveillance of suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases using the electronic Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (e-IDSR) system. A mobile-based quarantine management solution, which allows community health workers to correspond and interact with persons in quarantine and self-isolation

and monitor their symptoms in near to real-time. This and other digital health tools for the MoH are expected to go live in early May.

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

- The Protection and Social Support Cluster, in coordination with the Food Security Cluster and the Cash Working Group is working on the design and preparation for a Crisis Urban Cash Intervention (CUCI), which will provide income replacement assistance, in line with the minimal wage (35,000 MWK per household), to vulnerable and income insecure hotspots in urban and peri-urban areas.
- Household registration of hotspot areas in the four largest cities—Lilongwe, Blantyre, Mzuzu, and Zomba—has begun for the Urban-based cash response in which UN Agencies are providing technical guidance and implementation support to the Government starting 1st June.
- The gender transformative approach will be at the heart of the social protection and cash-based initiatives so that the most vulnerable women and girls are appropriately targeted and served.
- The ILO is preparing a brief on the potential impacts of COVID on jobs and employment in Malawi, in particular on informal sector workers.
- WFP launched its internal call centre on April 16 to collect information on food and non-food commodity availability and access. Additionally, WFP is working to establish an external call centre to collect household-level food security information to better understand the household-level effects of COVID-19 on individual households.
- UNDP's Growth Accelerator project invited young entrepreneurs to submit proposals responding to the COVID-19, by the closing date of 1 April 2020, 146 submissions were received ranging from small scale digital finance services and information platforms to medical solutions;
- FAO in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, through the Department of Agricultural Planning Services, is establishing an emergency surveillance system to track the effect of COVID 19 on four major areas of high interest in an emergency context: 1) Cross border trade and functionality of markets; 2) Volume of fish catch and trade in view of the restricted vessel carrying capacity especially for fish dependent livelihoods along the lakeshore; 3) Livestock markets, diseases and perishables; 4) Functionality of the value chain corridors including the Northern Corridor, the Salima-Lilongwe Corridor and Lizulu-Tsangano-Zalewa Corridor.

5.7 **Nutrition (UNICEF, WFP)**

- UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of Health's nutrition unit with ongoing onsite orientation of health workers in Nutrition Rehabilitation Units, and Outpatients Therapeutic Programme sites on the amended Community Based Management of Acute Malnutrition guidelines and Maternal Infant Young Child in the context of COVID-19.
- WFP and sister UN agencies supported the Government in drafting a cluster COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan for the Nutrition Cluster which is to be activated as part of the overall COVID-19 National Preparedness and Response Plan to specifically include; infection prevention among children with acute malnutrition, providing replacement feeding for infants unable to be breastfed, and nutritional support for patients with COVID-19.

5.10 **UN Protocols and Working Arrangements (UNCT)**

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

Additional information and updates

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

NB: The global and Africa COVID-19 figures are from WHO as of 24 April 2020, 02:00 GMT+2

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