

# CDC in MALAWI



Accessible version: <https://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/countries/malawi/>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) established an office in Malawi in 2001. CDC Malawi helps implement high-impact HIV and tuberculosis (TB) programs through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). The office also works with local and international partners to strengthen health systems to prevent, detect and respond to diseases. Beyond service delivery, CDC's partnership with Malawi also focuses on building healthcare workforce capacity, strengthening laboratory systems, and increasing the capacity of surveillance and health information systems. These systems collect and analyze data to inform program decisions and activities. CDC Malawi provides technical and financial assistance to the Ministry of Health (MOH) to develop national laboratory policy and strategic plans to guide and monitor HIV and TB program implementation. CDC also provides support to implement interventions for malaria control under the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI).



As of September 2022, more than 920,000 people receive HIV antiretroviral therapy, which represents 93% coverage



In August 2022, 107 participants from the Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe (DREAMS) program graduated from Siyakha, a comprehensive program that provides vocational training and internships.



In 2022, 764 facilities in Malawi had an electronic medical record system that supports one or more service delivery areas



In 2022, four more molecular laboratories were accredited for HIV viral load testing, increasing the total of accredited laboratories to eight out of ten



CDC conducted more than 640,000 HIV viral load tests in 2022



CDC trained more than 8,000 staff working in COVID-19 diagnostic testing and sample collection



More than 140 people graduated from the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) as of November 2022



CDC helped introduce FETP-Intermediate between 2021 and 2022. Participants help the MOH to investigate and determine the magnitude and risk factors associated with an ongoing cholera outbreak



CDC-supported entomological monitoring documented a rise in insecticide (pyrethroid) resistance in Malawi, which led to changes in the procurement of insecticide-treated bed nets

## HIV and Tuberculosis (TB)

As a key implementer of PEPFAR, CDC works with Malawi to build a sustainable national HIV response program to accelerate progress towards the UNAIDS global goals to control the HIV epidemic. Through PEPFAR, CDC supports HIV prevention, treatment, and care in Malawi. In 2017, Malawi began providing TB preventive therapy (TPT) to people living with HIV in districts with the highest HIV/TB burden. CDC also partners with the MOH to strengthen the country's health system capacity and implement high-impact HIV programs. CDC is scaling up two initiatives: pre-exposure prophylaxis and the Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-Free, Mentored, and Safe (DREAMS) program.

## Strengthening Public Health Systems

With CDC support, the Malawi MOH and partners enhanced healthcare quality and health facility efficiency across the country by establishing an electronic medical record system. CDC's technical support strengthens public health systems to prevent, detect, and respond to emerging infectious diseases, such as COVID-19. CDC focuses on real-time disease surveillance, laboratory systems and diagnostics, workforce development, and emergency management. CDC's efforts include developing an integrated laboratory strengthening initiative and strengthening surveillance for antimicrobial resistance, acute febrile illness, and acute encephalitis syndrome.

## Laboratory Capacity Strengthening

CDC supports the MOH to establish and sustain a four-tiered approach (central, district, facility, and community) to strengthen laboratory capacity testing for HIV diagnostic and treatment monitoring, COVID-19, and TB. CDC helps implement continuous quality improvement for both conventional and point-of-care testing laboratories. CDC also supports the Public Health Institute of Malawi on emerging infectious diseases and pandemic response.

## Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP)

CDC partnered with the Public Health Institute of Malawi to establish FETP in 2016. FETP trains epidemiologists to investigate and respond to disease outbreaks before they become epidemics. Participants strengthen their data collection skills and translate data into evidence-based action.

## Malaria

Through the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), CDC assigned a resident advisor to the malaria-endemic country of Malawi to support malaria prevention and control activities. PMI provides long-lasting, insecticide-treated bed nets and indoor residual spray, improves diagnostics and malaria case management, and helps prevent malaria during pregnancy. Through a cooperative agreement with the Malawi College of Medicine's Malaria Alert Centre, PMI also conducts entomological monitoring and operational research to guide malaria program decisions. Recent studies include:

- Evaluation of first- and second-line antimalarials
- Assessments of the efficacy of an alternative medication for intermittent preventive treatment in pregnancy (IPTp) and of a new delivery method to increase its uptake

## Vaccine Preventable Diseases

CDC provides technical and programmatic expertise to eradicate, eliminate or control vaccine-preventable diseases through immunizations. CDC works with international and local partners to strengthen immunization systems and provide evidence-based technical knowledge to expand routine vaccine delivery. This work helps prevent cases of infectious diseases like polio and measles. In 2022, CDC supported field activities to respond to the polio outbreak in Malawi. This included vaccination campaign planning, program monitoring, acute flaccid paralysis surveillance, outbreak investigations, community outreach, research, and data management.



The director of the Balaka DREAM laboratory performs daily maintenance. The CDC-supported Balaka DREAM laboratory achieved international accreditation in 2021 and ensures consistent, accurate, and reliable testing. Photo by Fredrick Namaya.



### CDC STAFF

- 9 U.S. Assignees
- 36 Locally Employed



### AT A GLANCE

Population: >20.4 million  
Per capita income: \$1,630  
Life expectancy: F 75/M 69 years  
Infant mortality rate: 35/1,000 live births

Sources:  
Population Reference Bureau 2022, Malawi



### TOP 10 CAUSES OF DEATH

1. HIV/AIDS
2. Neonatal disorders
3. Lower respiratory infections
4. Tuberculosis
5. Diarrheal diseases
6. Malaria
7. Stroke
8. Ischemic heart disease
9. Cirrhosis
10. Congenital birth defects

Source:  
GBD Compare 2019, Malawi



For more country information  
[www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/countries/malawi](http://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/countries/malawi)

CS329448-BB