MALAWI COUNTRY PROFILE

Gender Inequalities in Rural Employment in Malawi

An Overview

Prepared by the Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division of FAO

2011

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
ESW	Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division of FAO
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FHH	Female Head of Household/Female-headed household
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPI	Human Poverty Index
IHS	Integrated Household Survey
ILO	International Labour Organization
MHH	Male Head of Household/Male-headed household
NACAL	National Census of Agriculture and Livestock
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSO	National Statistical Office
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
RIGA	Rural Income Generating Activities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UN	United Nations
WMS	Welfare Monitoring Survey

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This country profile aims to contribute to a better understanding of gender inequalities in rural settings in Malawi, and to serve as a policy support tool to better integrate gender equity and decent rural employment in agriculture and rural development policies and programmes.

Malawi is a predominantly rural country with an agriculture-based economy. Rural areas in the country are characterized by poverty and a lack of decent work opportunities, the majority of which are in the agriculture sector. Women are often more disadvantaged when it comes to decent work opportunities and face greater difficulty translating their labour into paid work and their paid work into higher and more secure incomes, which would ultimately lead to enhanced food security. Efforts are therefore needed to promote gender equity in policies and programmes, in order to support decent employment in rural areas.

In looking at the multiple dimensions of social and gender inequalities (particularly in rural areas), the country profile focuses on four main areas: (1) demographic, political and economic context; (2) income, poverty and inequalities; (3) gender inequalities in rural employment; (4) gender patterns in mobility. The key findings are as follows:

Demographic, political and economic context

- Malawi is largely rural. Despite rapid urbanization, nearly 85 percent of the total population of Malawi lives in rural areas.
- The population structure in Malawi is very young. The national mean age is 21 years, and 54 percent of the total population is younger than 18 years old.
- Rural Malawi has a sizeable female population. The share of rural women (51.7 percent) is higher than that of rural men (48.3 percent), while in urban areas the figures reverse. The share of female-headed households in rural areas is 24 percent, while in urban areas it is 15 percent.
- Malawi is one of the poorest of the least developed countries in the world, ranking 153 out of 169 countries on the Human Development Index (2010).
- The agriculture sector supports the majority of livelihoods in the country and provides employment for nearly 90 percent of the population.
- Smallholder farmers in Malawi cultivate on average one hectare of land – 30 percent cultivate less than half a hectare.
- More poor rural households (roughly 50 percent) suffer through the “hungry season” than non-poor rural households (about 42 percent).

Income, poverty and inequalities in rural Malawi

- In 2004/05, 78 percent of rural households in Malawi were poor, of which 25 percent were female-headed.
- Wealthier male-headed households are characterized by younger heads of household, whereas female-headed households tend to be older. Further analysis is needed to explore the reasons behind these patterns, which may be related to the civil status of the female household head.
- Female-headed households have on average about one-third less working members than male-headed households, implying relatively more labour constraints for female-headed households.
- Female-headed households are particularly disadvantaged in terms of education. In the lowest wealth quintile they have, on average, one year of education against four years for their male counterparts. Rural women with lower levels of education have poorer employment prospects.
- Almost all rural households in Malawi participate in on-farm activities, with more than 60 percent of their income (among all wealth quintiles) coming from these activities. The highest level of participation in agricultural activities is found among poorer households.
- Rural households across all wealth quintiles adopt different income diversification strategies, including both farm/off-farm and paid/non-paid activities. The degree of diversification depends on the wealth level of the household and on the sex of the household head.

- While rural households across all wealth quintiles participate to some degree in agricultural wage labour, this does not necessarily offer a pathway out of poverty. Poorer households (in particular female-headed) are more involved in agricultural wage labour, which is likely low paid and casual.
- Non-agricultural employment is more predominant among wealthier households. Female-headed households are underrepresented in both non-agricultural wage labour and non-agricultural self-employment and have lower shares of income coming from these sources.

Gender inequalities in rural employment

- The majority of Malawi's rural workforce is employed as *mlimi* (subsistence farmers). This is especially so for rural women.
- Rural women play a pivotal role as subsistence farmers, yet their productivity is hindered by gender inequalities.
- A large share of the rural workforce engages in wage employment as a second job – mainly seasonal/casual wage jobs (*ganyu*). This is especially so for rural women.
- Rural women´s participation in paid employment is hampered by a significant domestic work burden. Most rural women dedicate more time to domestic (usually unpaid) activities than their male counterparts, which leaves them with less time to engage in productive employment and income generating activities.
- Illiteracy is high among rural women and gender inequalities persist in secondary education.
- Child labour in agriculture is an issue in Malawi. Gender patterns in child labour and time use may perpetuate later in their working lives.
- There is high internal labour mobility in Malawi with particular gender dimensions.

Gender patterns in mobility

- There is significant internal labour mobility in Malawi, which has a gender dimension.
- Seasonal migration is an important reason for labour mobility. There are significant flows of labour migration from rural to urban areas, and the main driver for both men and women is to look for a job.
- There are gender differences with regard to reasons for internal migration: for men it is labour driven, whereas for women it is mainly because of marriage (even if many also move for work reasons).
- There are differences between rural labour migration drivers for men and women. For men the main reasons include returning from work elsewhere and looking for land; while for women looking for land is relatively more important, followed by returning from work elsewhere.
- Women are more likely to move shorter distances (e.g. within the district), while men are more likely to move to more distant locations (e.g. to other districts or to urban areas).
- Available data on these issues is limited. More evidence is needed to better inform policies.

INTRODUCTION

Rural poverty in Malawi is widespread and both rural men and women lack decent work opportunities. However, rural women are often more disadvantaged in comparison to their male counterparts. As a result, women have greater difficulty translating their labour into paid work and their paid work into higher and more secure incomes, which would ultimately lead to enhanced food security. In view of this, efforts are needed to promote gender equity in labour markets and income-generating activities, and to support decent employment initiatives in rural areas. Yet, such efforts are often hampered by a lack of comprehensive information on the multiple dimensions of social and gender inequalities, particularly in rural areas. The present country profile, developed by the Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW) of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), is a response to this gap.

The profile aims to contribute to a better understanding of gender inequalities in rural settings, and to serve as a policy support tool to better integrate gender equity and decent rural employment in agriculture and rural development policies and programmes. It constitutes an important value added to existing sources, notably because it provides rural-specific information and cross-examines different dimensions of inequalities. The country profile assesses the nature and degree of existing gender disparities in employment and income in rural areas, linking them to aspects such as education, age and wealth when possible. In addition to the information provided on labour/employment and income disparities, the profile provides basic information on gender inequalities in education, recognising its close correlation to and supportive role in increasing labour productivity and income generating capacity.

The profile relies upon the most recently available quantitative information and nationally representative data. In particular, it is based on the National Census of 1998 and 2008, the Welfare Monitoring Survey 2008 and the Integrated Household Survey 2004-2005 (from the RIGA database[1]). Specific methodological considerations are provided throughout the profile and in the methodological note.

The country profile is divided into four main parts. Part I provides an overview of the demographic, political and economic context in the country. Part II addresses poverty and inequalities in Malawi, looking at differences in inequalities based on demographic characteristics, educational attainment and income sources. Part III looks in detail at gender differences and inequalities in rural employment. This part explores employment patterns in rural areas, as well as inequalities in wage labour, gender differences in time use and linkages between education level and employment. Part IV addresses gender patterns in mobility (both rural-rural and rural-urban), looking at key drivers of migration and in particular labour-related migration.

[1] See: http://www.fao.org/economic/riga/en/

PART I: COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Did you Know?

- Malawi is largely rural. Despite rapid urbanization, nearly 85 percent of the total population of Malawi lives in rural areas.
- The population structure in Malawi is very young. The national mean age is 21 years, and 54 percent of the total population is younger than 18 years old.
- Rural Malawi has a sizeable female population. The share of rural women (51.7 percent) is higher than that of rural men (48.3 percent), while in urban areas the figures reverse. The share of female-headed households in rural areas is 24 percent, while in urban areas it is 15 percent.
- Malawi is one of the poorest of the least developed countries in the world, ranking 153 out of 169 countries on the Human Development Index (2010).
- The agriculture sector supports the majority of livelihoods in the country and provides employment for nearly 90 percent of the population.
- Smallholder farmers in Malawi cultivate on average one hectare of land – 30 percent cultivate less than half a hectare.
- More poor rural households (roughly 50 percent) suffer through the "hungry season" than non-poor rural households (about 42 percent).

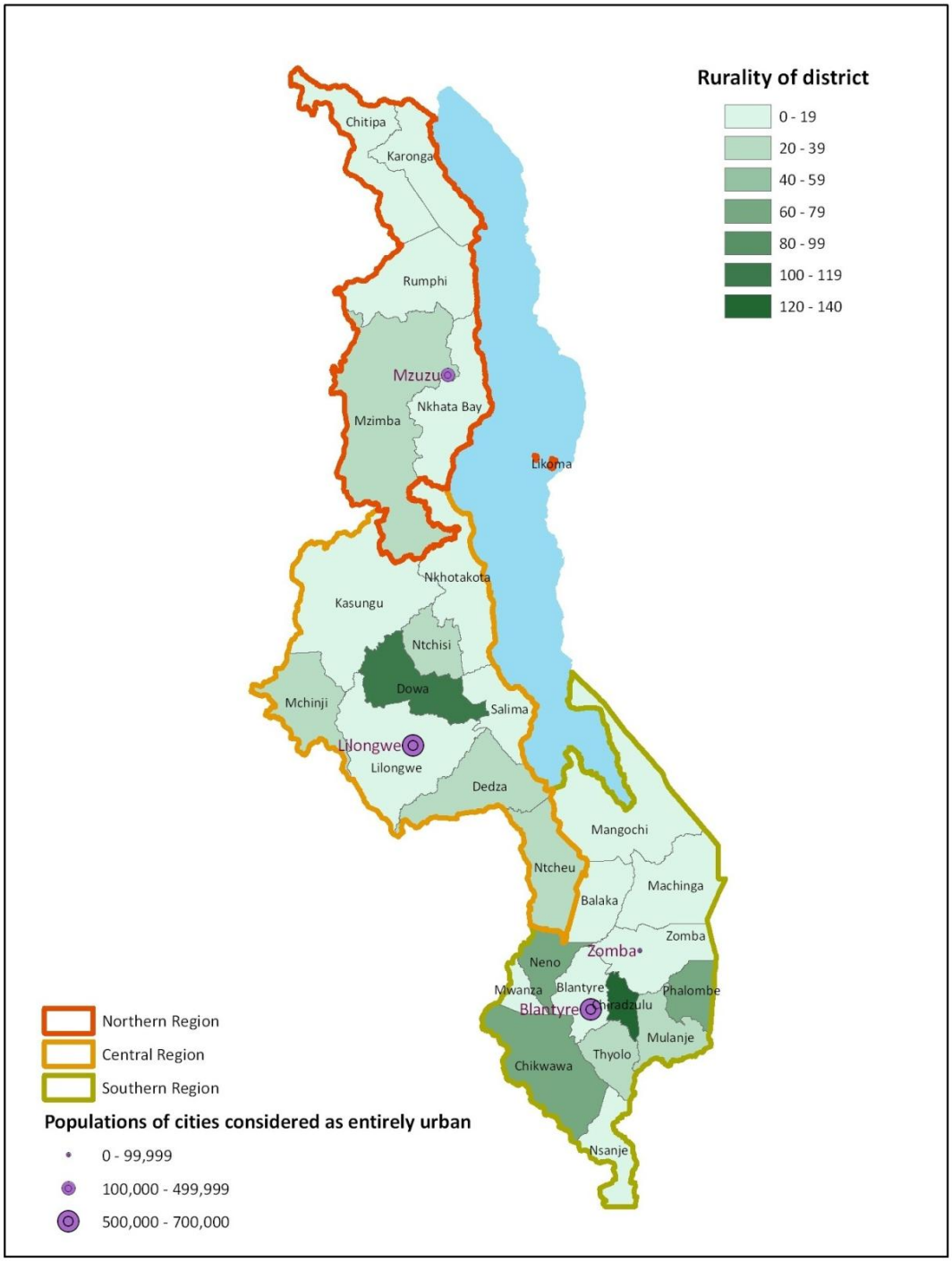
1. Demographic Context

Population growth in Malawi has been faster in urban areas, where the population increased by 39.6 percent between 1998 and 2008. In rural areas the corresponding growth rate was 30.3 percent. One reason for this trend is the urbanization of some areas in the country, mostly due to rural to urban migration. Despite rapid urbanization[2], Malawi is largely rural. In 2008, 80 to 85 percent of the population were living in rural areas, deriving their livelihoods from agriculture. Much of the countryside is "deeply rural" in that it is characterised by a poor rural road network and poor physical, economic and social infrastructure[3].

There are four important urban centres in the country – Lilongwe, Blantyre, Mzuzu and Zomba (Map 1) – which comprise just under 20 percent of the population[4]. Most rural districts are located in the South-Western and Southern areas of the country.

[2] Malawi has the highest urbanization rate in the world at 6.3% (UN-HABITAT, 2010).
[3] European Community's Country Strategy Paper for Malawi and the National Indicative Programme for the period 2008-2013.
[4] UNDP, 2010.

Map 1: Population structure, Malawi (urban and rural areas)



*Rurality within Malawian districts is calculated by dividing the population of inhabitants of a given district that are described as rural, by those indentified as urban. The larger the figure, the greater the rurality.

Source: Based on data from the Population Census, 2008

In both 1998 and 2008, the female population exceeded the male population in rural areas (51.5 and 51.7 percent respectively), whereas in urban areas the opposite was the case. Over the last decade, there has been a slight decline in the sex ratio[5], indicating a growing share of women in the population.

[5] From 96 to 94.7 (rural and urban combined). Sex ratio is the number of males per 100 females.

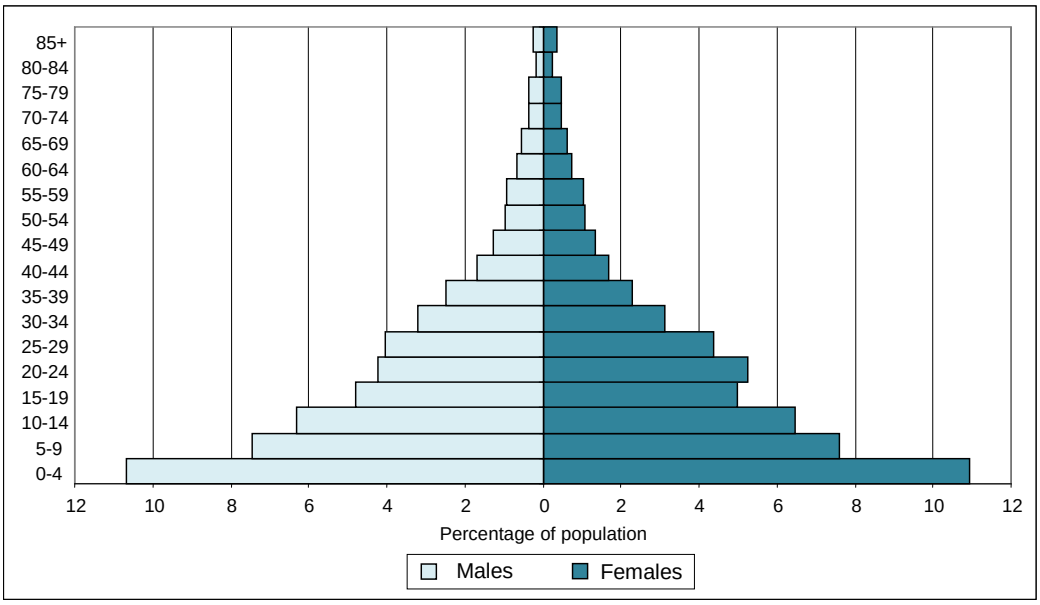
Table 1: Total population and sex ratio of population, Malawi (1998 and 2008)

	1998		2008	
	%	*Sex ratio*	*%*	*Sex ratio*
Malawi	**100**		**100**	
Men	49.0	96.0	48.6	**94.7**
Women	51.0		51.4	
Rural	**85.5**		**84.7**	
Rural Men	48.5	94.3	48.3	**93.3**
Rural Women	51.5		51.7	
Urban	**14.4**		**15.3**	
Urban Men	51.7	107.3	50.6	**102.6**
Urban Women	48.3		49.4	

Source: Population Census, 1998 and 2008

In 2008, 54 percent of the population was under the age of 18. Such a young population structure (see Graph 1) is mainly due to high fertility rates and a low life expectancy rate[6]. Malawi's young and rapidly growing population is also characterised by a high dependency rate of 96.2 percent[7], which is one of the key factors for Malawi's high and persistent poverty. The vast majority of the Malawian population under 18 years of age (both males and females) lives in rural areas. In rural areas, 46.5 percent of the population is younger than 18 years of age, compared to 7.5 percent in urban areas.

Graph 1: Population structure, Malawi (2008)



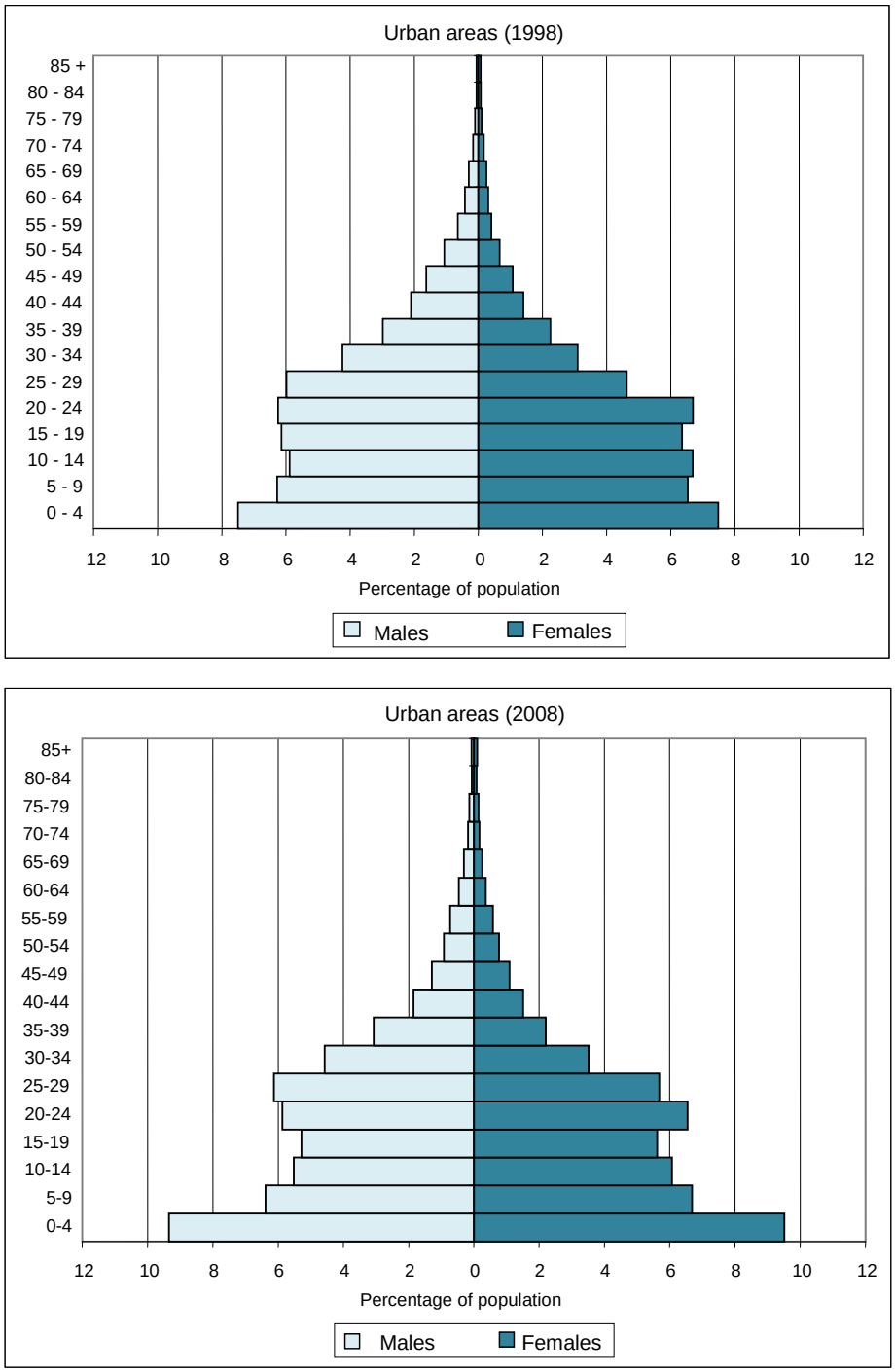
Source: Population Census, 2008

The main trends observed during the decade that spanned from the 1998 census to the most recent one in 2008 are the increase in the population share of younger age groups and the continuity of migration from rural to urban areas. Graphs 2 and 3 highlight the importance of rural-to-urban migration within the population aged 20 to 35 years, with the share of the population in this age range increaing in urban areas due to people leaving villages.

[6] As opposed to developed countries that have completed their demographic transition and have a "low mortality, low fertility" regime.
[7] UNDP, 2010.

The proportion of children between 0 and 4 years in both rural and urban areas increased significantly from 1998 to 2008. A possible reason behind this trend is the improvement in child mortality rates[8]. This age group accounted for more than 22 percent of the rural population in 2008 and 18 percent in urban areas. This difference can be attributed to higher fertility rates in rural areas (5.5) compared to urban areas (3.8) [9]. The share of both males and females aged 55 years and above is higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

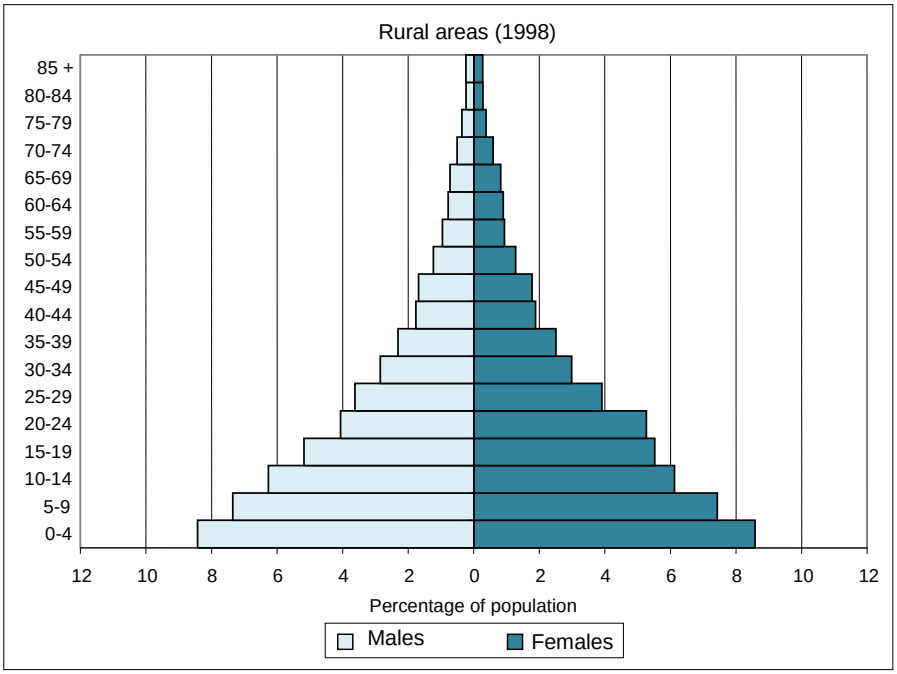
Graph 2: Population structure of urban areas (1998 and 2008)

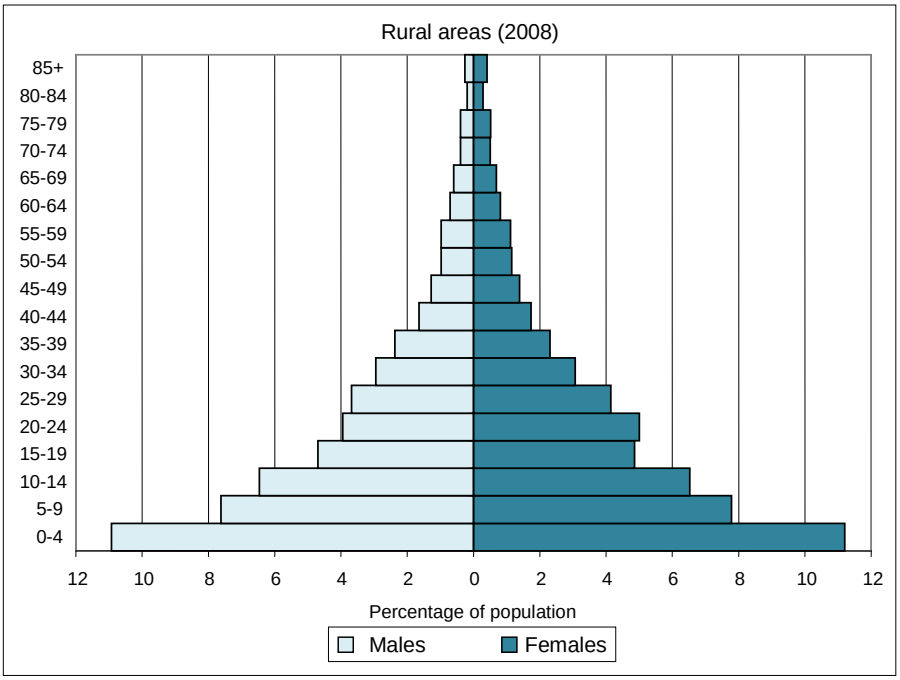


Source: Population Census, 1998 and 2008

[8] The under five mortality rate (per 1000) in Malawi decreased from 164 in 2000 to 110 in 2009 (The World Bank, 2009).
[9] Total fertility rate in Malawi is 5.2 with no significant difference between regions (Population Census 2008).

Graph 3: Population structure of rural areas (1998 and 2008)





Source: Population Census, 1998 and 2008

In Malawi 23 percent of households are headed by women. This national average obscures important differences as in rural areas female-headed households account for about 24 percent, while in urban areas they do not exceed 15 percent. Across all regions, female-headed households are more prevalent in rural areas than in urban areas. In 2004, the highest share of female headship in rural areas was observed in the Southern region, followed by the Northern and Central regions. The difference in female headship between urban and rural areas might be due to the out-migration of men from rural to urban areas, as well as HIV-related widowhood.

2. Political Context

Malawi had its fourth Presidential and Parliamentary multiparty elections on 19 May 2009. President Bingu wa Mutharika of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was re-elected to a second term with 66 percent of the valid votes. The president has prioritized agriculture, education, transport, energy generation, rural development, irrigation and water development, youth development and anticorruption as key development areas during his second term of office, which ends in 2014.

For the first time in Malawi's electoral history, 2009 witnessed a female presidential candidate, a female running mate for the DPP presidential candidate and the highest number ever of female parliamentary candidates. A total of 234 female candidates ran in the election. Female candidates won 22 percent of all parliamentary seats (42 seats out of a total of 193), which implies an increase of 7 percent with respect to the previous legislative period. This result was partially due to an intense campaign – the "50:50 Campaign" – coordinated by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, with support from international donors and United Nations Organisations (namely UNFPA and UNDP), aimed at promoting women's participation in politics and decision-making positions.

Important efforts are still needed to realize commitments made in the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development[10]. Despite progress made, deep gender disparities persist in participation in politics and decision-making positions (see Table 1). There are moreover evident gender disparities in the public sector super scale grade[11] (see Table 2).

Table 2: Representation of women in decision-making and political and judicial bodies

	1994		1999		2006		2008		2009	
Position	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
Presidential candidate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	14
Cabinet Minister	2	9	8	17	6	27.3	4	20	6	27
Deputy Minister	-	-	-	-	1	7.1	-	33.3	5	25
Member of Parliament	10	5.6	15	83	27	14.1	-	14	52	27
High Court Judge	-	-	4	9.1	-	-	4	14.8	-	-

Source: Journal of Democracy (see: http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy/)

Table 3: Gender disparities in public sector employment (2008)

Position	Total	Male	Female	% Male	% Female
Civil service	1754	1416	338	80.7%	19.3%
Police	127	104	23	81.9%	18.1%
Judiciary	78	54	24	69.2%	30.8%
Law Commission	33	25	8	75.8%	24.2%
Office of the director of Public Procurement	14	12	2	85.7%	14.3%

Source: Cited in University of New Brunswick

[10] The Protocol states that "state Parties shall endeavour that, by 2015, at least fifty percent of decision-making positions in the public and private sectors are held by women including the use of affirmative action measures as provided for in Article 5 (SADC Protocol on Gender and Development). Malawi signed this protocol in August 2009. Available at: http://www.sadc.int/index/browse/page/465

[11] Grades P8 and above.

The level of female participation in government and leadership positions is important in promoting gender equality and in ensuring gender-sensitive policies and programmes. According to UNIFEM, it is a "fundamental prerequisite for gender equality… and is a means of ensuring better accountability to women"[12].

3. Economic Context

Malawi is one of the poorest of the least developed countries in the world, ranking 153 out of 169 countries on the Human Development Index for 2010[13]. It has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US$4.7 billion and GDP per capita of US$310[14]. Between 1997 and 2005 the country experienced modest economic growth of about 3 percent on average and a high degree of volatility and instability.[15] With a population growth of over 2 percent per annum, per capita income increased by only 1 percent over the period. Positive macroeconomic management, favourable weather conditions and a supportive donor environment have contributed to high growth rates, averaging 7.5 percent from 2006 to 2008.

Malawi has an agriculture-based economy[16], highly dependent on rain-fed agriculture and a small range of products[17]. The agriculture sector supports the majority of livelihoods in the country and provides employment for nearly 90 percent of the population[18]. In 2008, agriculture contributed to 34 percent of GDP and generated over 90 percent of export earnings[19], most of which was produced by smallholder farmers. Non-manufactured burley tobacco is by far Malawi's largest export commodity[20], accounting for 60 percent of merchandise export earnings[21]. Sugar and tea contribute to the remaining 40 percent of merchandise export earnings, whereas the main imported commodities are fuel, oils and fertilizers[22].

Malawi's agriculture sector is characterized by a dual structure, consisting of smallholder farms[23] and estates[24]. The estate sector mainly produces tobacco, tea, sugar and coffee – almost entirely for export – and is the main provider of wage labour in the country.[25] In 2006/07, there were about 2.6 million farmers in the smallholder sector. Smallholders are predominantly engaged in rain-fed maize production, cultivating on average around one hectare of land – 30 percent cultivate less than half a hectare of land.[26] For all maize varieties, plots operated by men had higher yields than those operated by women[27]. Although smallholder agriculture is mainly subsistence oriented, smallholders also contribute significantly to cash crop and export production in burley tobacco, where they account for over 80 percent of total production and represent more than 50 percent of the value of all smallholder crop sales[28]. Tobacco is grown in 19 percent of male-headed households compared to just 7 percent of female-headed households[29].

[12] See: http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/democratic_governance/
[13] Human Development Index 2010. See: http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/hdi/
[14] Latest available data is for 2009. World Development Indicators 2009. See: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator
[15] Mainly due to the impact of recurrent drought conditions during 1991, 1994, 1997, and most recently in 2001 and 2005 (See: Government of Malawi and The World Bank, 2007).
[16] Agriculture is followed by manufacturing, construction, transport and financial services.
[17] Main agricultural products are potatoes, maize, cassava and tobacco (FAOSTAT).
[18] National Statistical Office of Malawi, 2008a.
[19] Government of Malawi, 2009.
[20] Tobacco leaves accounted for 66 percent of all agricultural products exported (in value) in 2004 (FAO, 2009). In 2007, Malawi ranked 7th place among the national un-manufactured tobacco producers worldwide (FAOSTAT).
[21] Government of Malawi, 2009.
[22] National Statistical Office of Malawi, 2007.
[23] Smallholder farmers, small-scale producers and family farming may be used interchangeably in this document, though the authors acknowledge that there can be some differences between these terms.
[24] Estates have a minimum size of 10 hectares (Government of Malawi and The World Bank, 2007).
[25] Southern region had 1.2 million holders, Central region had 1 million holders and Northern region had 307 057 holders (National Census of Agriculture and Livestock (NACAL) 2006/07).
[26] Government of Malawi and The World Bank, 2007
[27] National Census of Agriculture and Livestock (NACAL) 2006/07.
[28] Government of Malawi and The World Bank, 2007.
[29] Ibid.

The production of staple crops is an important component of food security. In 2007/08, 92 percent of Malawian households grew staple food crops – 91 percent of male-headed households and 94 percent of female-headed households respectively[30]. Maize, the main crop with respect to food security, is grown by about 97 percent of agricultural households, independent of region, poverty status, land size or expenditure quintile[31]. Many rural poor, however, suffer through the "hungry season" (the three month period preceding the maize harvest[32]), when most smallholders run out of their own-produced maize several months before the next harvest[33]. As a result, proportionately more poor rural households (about 50 percent) compared to non-poor rural households (about 42 percent) buy maize precisely when prices are at their highest. Although poor households are the least able to absorb the high costs, they remain the most exposed to seasonal price fluctuations. Poverty and consequent food insecurity are most severe in the Southern and Central regions of the country[34].

Economic growth is essential for poverty reduction in Malawi. The real GDP growth rate, however, has been highly variable because of the economy's dependence on the agriculture sector, which is susceptible to changes in weather (drought and flooding), particularly in smallholder agricultural production. This vulnerability directly impacts GDP, influences governmental financial allocations and puts pressure on the current account when emergency interventions and exceptional food imports are needed. Even in years when rainfall is adequate, 40 percent of the population of Malawi does not have the purchasing power to satisfy their daily needs[35]. In 2004/05, it was estimated that the poorest 20 percent of households accounted for 7 percent of national consumption[36] and the richest 20 percent of households accounted for 46.3 percent[37].

[30] Welfare Monitoring Survey 2008.
[31] Government of Malawi and The World Bank, 2007.
[32] IMF, 2004.
[33] Azzarri, C. et al., 2006.
[34] Government of Malawi and the World Bank, 2007.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Van Klaveren et al., 2009.
[37] As measured from the 1997/98 household survey. The 1991/92 household survey computed a Gini coefficient of 0.62, but because of methodological differences the two measures are not comparable (International Monetary Fund, 2004). http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2004/cr04389.pdf

PART II: INCOME, POVERTY AND INEQUALITIES IN RURAL MALAWI

Did you know?

- In 2004/05, 78 percent of rural households in Malawi were poor – 25 percent were female-headed.
- Wealthier male-headed households are characterized by younger heads of household, whereas female-headed households tend to be older. Further analysis is needed to explore the reasons behind these patterns, which may be related to the civil status of the female household head.
- Female-headed households have on average about one-third less working members than male-headed households, implying relatively more labour constraints for female-headed households.
- Female-headed households are particularly disadvantaged in terms of education – e.g. in the lowest wealth quintile they have, on average, one year of education against four years for their male counterparts. Rural women with lower levels of education have poorer employment prospects.
- Almost all rural households in Malawi participate in on-farm activities, with more than 60 percent of their income (among all wealth quintiles) coming from these activities. The highest level of participation in agricultural activities is found among poorer households.
- Rural households across all wealth quintiles adopt different income diversification strategies, including both farm/off-farm and paid/non-paid activities. However, the degree of diversification depends on the level of wealth of the household and on the sex of the household head.
- While rural households across all wealth quintiles participate to some degree in agricultural wage labour, this does not necessarily offer a pathway out of poverty. Poorer households (in particular female-headed) are more involved in agricultural wage labour, which is likely low paid and casual.
- Non-agricultural employment is more predominant among wealthier households. Female-headed households are underrepresented in both non-agricultural wage labour and non-agricultural self-employment and have lower shares of income coming from these income sources.

The percentage of Malawians living in poverty has steadily declined over the past decade, but it still remains high. The percentage of people living below the national poverty line fell from 65 percent in 1998[38] to 52 percent in 2004 and 40 percent in 2008[39]. In 2007, 90 percent of the population lived on less than US$2 per day (purchasing power parity) and 74 percent of the population made ends meet with a daily income below US$1.25.[40] Poor households in Malawi also tend to be larger – households in the poorest wealth quintile are more than twice as large as households in the richest (6.3 vs 2.9 members.

Table 4: Poverty and income inequalities in Malawi

Human Poverty Index (HPI)	***90 (out of 135)***
Population living below the national poverty line (2000-2006)	65.3 %
% of rural and urban population living below the poverty line (2005)	Urban: 25.4 %; Rural: 55.9 %
Share of the rural and urban poor (2005)	Urban: 5.5 %; Rural: 94.5 %
Population living below $2/day (2000–2007)	90.4 %
Population living below $1.25 a day (2000–2007)	73.9 %
GINI coefficient of consumption	National: 0.39; Urban: 0.48; Rural: 0.34[41]
Ratio of the richest 10 percent to the poorest 10 percent[42] (1992-2007)	10.5 %

Source: National Statistical Office of Malawi, 2007

[38] Van Klaveren, M. et al., 2009.
[39] Malawi NSO socio-demographic data (See: http://www.nso.malawi.net/)
[40] UNDP, 2009.
[41] International Monetary Fund, 2004.
[42] Data shows the ratio of the income or expenditure share of the richest group to that of the poorest (UNDP, 2009).

Poverty in Malawi is heavily concentrated in rural areas. According to the Rural Income Generating Activities (RIGA) data (2004/05), 78 percent of rural households in Malawi were poor, of which 25 percent were female-headed[43]. The share of female-headed households in rural areas is 24 percent.

Poverty has a distinct gender dimension in Malawi. The incidence of poverty and ultra-poverty appears to be higher in female-headed households – the proportion of poor and ultra-poor is 58 percent and 27 percent, respectively, in female-headed households and 51 percent and 21 percent for male-headed households[44]. On average, female-headed households earned only 60 percent of the annual income of male-headed households. About 60 percent of the expenditure of female-headed households was on food, whereas for male-headed households it was 54 percent.[45]

As the Employment section of this country profile points out, rural women are relatively more concentrated in the agriculture sector, and in particular in subsistence farming (*mlimi*), compared to their male counterparts – 94 percent of rural women work in this sector compared to 85 percent of men. Women are overrepresented in non-remunerative occupations[46] – 94 percent as compared to 80 percent of rural men[47] – and in low paid employment (see graph 13 – Employment section).[48] Moreover, rural female workers face a greater burden combining domestic and productive workloads compared to their male counterparts, which further restricts their participation in economically productive activities (see Time use section of this country profile).

Box 1: Gender inequalities hinder women's role as producers in Malawi

Data from the FAO gender and land rights database show that only 32 percent of individual holders of agricultural land in Malawi are women. Despite the significant numbers of matrilineal communities[49], gender inequalities in land access and ownership are overwhelming. Female-headed households and female operators had less land than their male counterparts – nearly half of female-headed households, compared to one quarter of male-headed households, have holdings of less than 0.5 hectare[50].

According to Takane (2008) "among small-scale maize farmers in Malawi, females own less land but still use about 10 percent less total labour per hectare than their male counterparts and much of that labour is supplied by children, who must work to make up the shortfall caused by their mothers' other duties".

Gilbert, Sakala and Benson (2002) found that "women maize farmers in Malawi require male labour for ploughing, but female-headed households often lack male family members who can do the work and they may not have the cash needed to hire male labour. As a result, women cultivate smaller plots and achieve lower yields". "This web of constraints means that women in Malawi have difficulty growing cash crops such as tobacco or improved maize that require purchased inputs, because they cannot generate the income necessary to obtain credit and guarantee repayment. Such labour constraints in some cases may prevent female- headed households from even applying for credit." (Chipande, 1987)

"Credit constraints also limit the access of female-headed households to fertilizers in (…) Malawi" (Minot, Kherallah and Berry, 2000). According to a nationally representative study conducted by Gilbert, Sakala and Benson (2002), "maize yields were 12–19 percent higher on men's plots, but when women were given the same level of fertilizer for use on experimental plots, they achieved the same yields".

(Extracted from: FAO gender and land rights database[51] and SOFA, 2011)

[43] Valdés, A. et al., 2009.
[44] Mathiassen, A. et al., 2007.
[45] Van Klaveren, M. et al., 2009.
[46] Non-remunerative occupations include subsistence farming (*mlimi*) and contributing family workers.
[47] Welfare Monitoring Survey 2008.
[48] Welfare Monitoring Survey 2008.
[49] Women's access to land in Malawi is often through the family head, who is almost always a man. In matrilineal societies, the family head is the maternal uncle, while husbands still exercise power over the use of land and its products. Matrilineal communities are most predominant in parts of Central and Southern regions (Ibid).
[50] National Census of Agriculture and Livestock (NACAL) 2006/07.
[51] See: http://www.fao.org/gender/landrights

Despite the paramount role that women play as farmers, rural women are disproportionately affected by constraints in agricultural production and face a number of disparities stemming from gender-based inequalities, such as: lack of access to assets, resources and services, including education, health care, credit, technology, agricultural inputs, extension services and markets, in addition to constraining socio-cultural norms. All of these factors can exacerbate women's overall poverty and that of their household.

1. Assessing income, poverty and inequalities

The country profile assesses income composition and disparities, as well as relative income poverty in terms of expenditure quintiles[52] and participation in labour markets.[53] The analysis is carried out at the household level, as unfortunately no data were available at the individual level. Several household characteristics, such as education level, age and gender of household head, and the number of working members within the family, are taken into consideration to assess whether income poverty is associated with household characteristics (see Table 5).

Table 5: Characteristics of rural households by expenditure quintile[54]

	Expenditure quintile				
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Average age head of HH	45	44	44	43	41
FHH	*48*	*48*	*49*	*51*	*50*
MHH	*44*	*43*	*42*	*40*	*38*
HH members in working age	2.4	2.2	2.1	2.0	1.8
FHH	*1.9*	*1.7*	*1.6*	*1.4*	*1.2*
MHH	*2.6*	*2.4*	*2.3*	*2.2*	*1.9*
Average years of education of HH	3	4	4	5	6
FHH	*1*	*2*	*2*	*2*	*4*
MHH	*4*	*4*	*5*	*5*	*6*
Participation in on-farm activities	98 %	98%	98%	97%	93%
FHH	*98%*	*98%*	*99%*	*96%*	*94%*
MHH	*99%*	*99%*	*98%*	*97%*	*93%*
Participation in agricultural wage labour	67%	62%	56%	48%	41%
FHH	*70%*	*63%*	*60%*	*45%*	*37%*
MHH	*66%*	*61%*	*54%*	*49%*	*43%*
Participation in non agricultural wage labour	14%	14%	15%	17%	21%
FHH	*11%*	*9%*	*8%*	*10%*	*13%*
MHH	*15%*	*16%*	*17%*	*19%*	*23%*
Participation in non agricultural self-employment	25%	27%	30%	34%	34%
FHH	*19%*	*25%*	*28%*	*28%*	*29%*
MHH	*27%*	*27%*	*31%*	*36%*	*35%*
Share from on-farm income	62%	68%	69%	68%	61%
FHH	*59%*	*69%*	*71%*	*70%*	*67%*
MHH	*63%*	*68%*	*69%*	*67%*	*59%*
Share from agricultural wage income	18%	13%	9%	9%	8%
FHH	*19%*	*11%*	*9%*	*6%*	*6%*
MHH	*17%*	*13%*	*10%*	*9%*	*9%*
Share from non agricultural wage income	5%	6%	6%	8%	12%

[52] *Expenditure quintiles* and *wealth quintiles* are used interchangeably throughout the country profile. Quintiles are sorted from poorest to richest.
[53] This section of the country profile is based on the methodological approach adopted by Valdés et al. (2009) in order to describe rural poverty across countries for which RIGA data are available. Income composition and disparities, as well as relative income poverty are assessed based on RIGA data (2004/05).
[54] Quintiles are sorted from poorest to richest.

FHH	*3%*	*2%*	*2%*	*2%*	*8%*
MHH	*6%*	*6%*	*7%*	*9%*	*14%*
Share from self-employment income	7%	7%	9%	9%	12%
FHH	*5%*	*6%*	*8%*	*8%*	*8%*
MHH	*7%*	*7%*	*9%*	*10%*	*13%*

*FHH = Female head of household; MHH = Male head of household
**As a result of rounding off, the total sum of rows may not equal 100 percent.
Source: RIGA, 2004/05

Of particular importance is the assessment of different sources of income to identify the dependence on income from agriculture and whether there are opportunities for off-farm work. The analysis also highlights that certain household characteristics of male- and female-headed households are more associated with certain types of income than others.

In order to assess different income categories, the RIGA dataset methodology is used as a reference point. The RIGA dataset classifies seven main income sources, which are then grouped into four broader categories (see Table 6). Income can be further aggregated into *off-farm* activities (the sum of *agricultural wages*, *non-farm* income and *transfers/other*); *non-agricultural* activities (the sum of the *non-farm* and *transfers/other* category); and *agricultural* activities (the sum of *on-farm* and *agricultural wages*)[55].

Table 6: RIGA classification of income sources

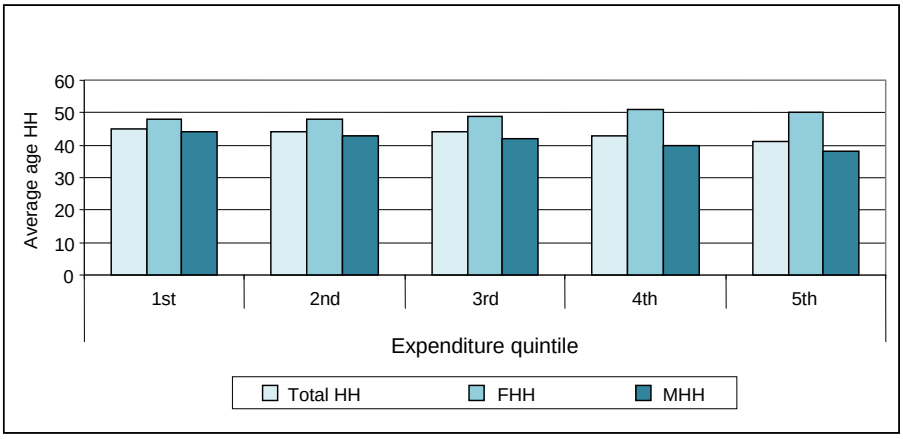
Income sources	Categories
1. Income from crop production	On-farm activities (self-employed farming)
2. Income from livestock production	
3. Agricultural wages	Agricultural wage activities
4. Non-agricultural wage employment	Non-farm activities
5. Non-farm enterprises	
6. Public and private transfer income	Transfers/other
7. Other non-labour sources	

2. Demographic characteristics

There are no clear patterns that emerge in terms of age of household head across the different expenditure quintiles. Female heads of household (FHH), however, tend to be older than male heads of household (MHH), across all quintiles. Moreover, while wealthier male-headed households are characterized by younger heads of households, the opposite is true for female-headed households. As a result, for higher wealth quintiles the age difference between FHHs and MHHs is greater (Graph 4) – female heads of household in the highest expenditure quintile are 12 years older than their male counterparts, compared to the lowest expenditure quintile where the age difference is on average four years. This issue deserves further analysis to explore the reasons behind these patterns, which may be related to the civil status of female household heads.

[55] Ibid.

Graph 4: Average age of household head by expenditure quintile

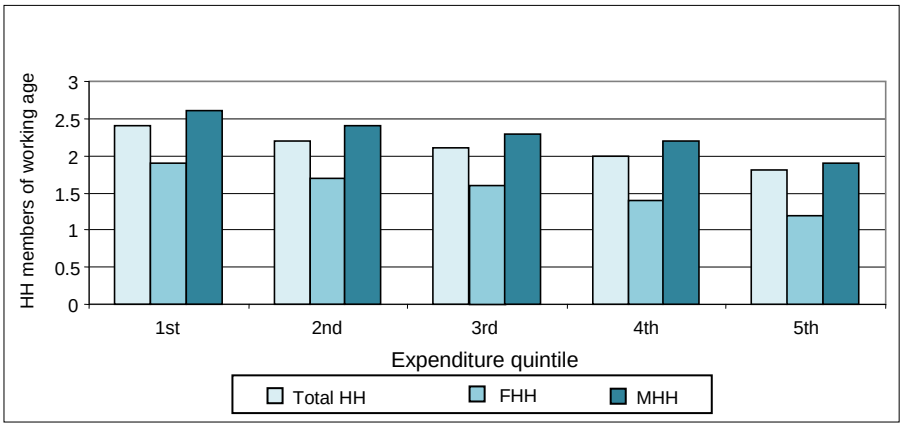


*FHH = Female head of household; MHH = Male head of household

Source: RIGA, 2004/05

Households in higher expenditure quintiles have less working age members, in particular among female-headed households. Female-headed households across all wealth quintiles have on average about one-third less working members than male-headed households, although it is even higher in the upper two wealth quintiles. Less working age members in female-headed households may imply relatively more labour constraints for these households, which may, in some circumstances, lead to using non-working age household members, namely children.

Graph 5: Household members in working age by expenditure quintile



*FHH = Female head of household; MHH = Male head of household

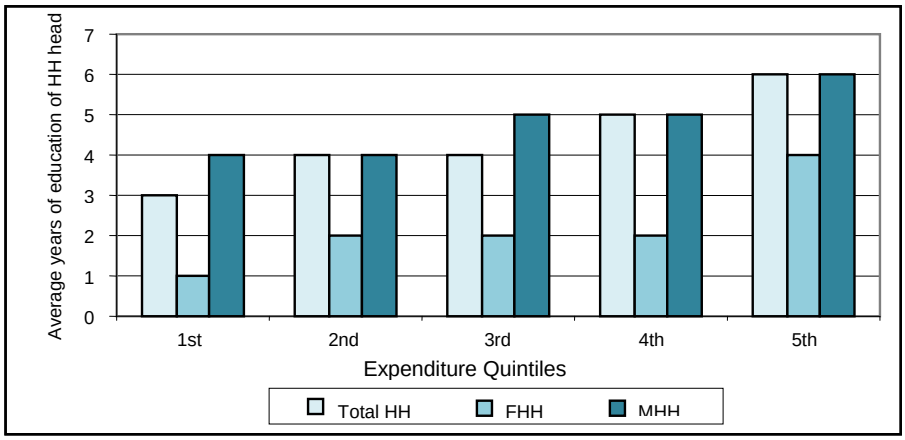
Source: RIGA, 2004/05

3. Education

According to RIGA data, the probability of being poor is clearly linked to education level[56] (Graph 6). Hence, it can be expected that rural women's possibilities to overcome poverty are more limited than those of rural men (and much more so than those of urban women and men) because they are systematically disadvantaged in their educational and labour opportunities. Male heads of household have, on average, more than twice the number of years of education as female heads of household. For instance, female heads of household in the lowest expenditure quintile have, on average, one year of education against four years four years for their male counterparts. In the middle quintiles they have exactly half the number of years.

[56] Valdés, A. et al., 2009.

Graph 6: Average years of education of the household head by expenditure quintile



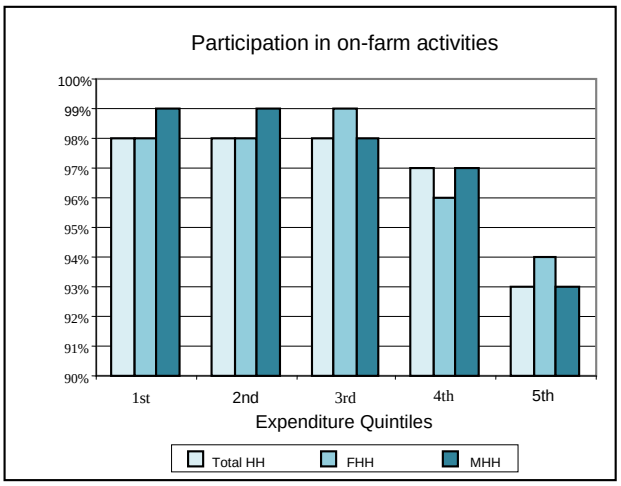
*FHH = Female head of household; MHH = Male head of household

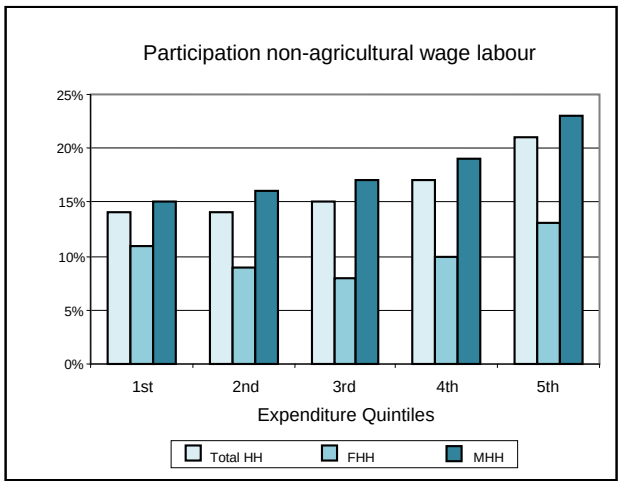
Source: RIGA, 2004/05

4. Income sources

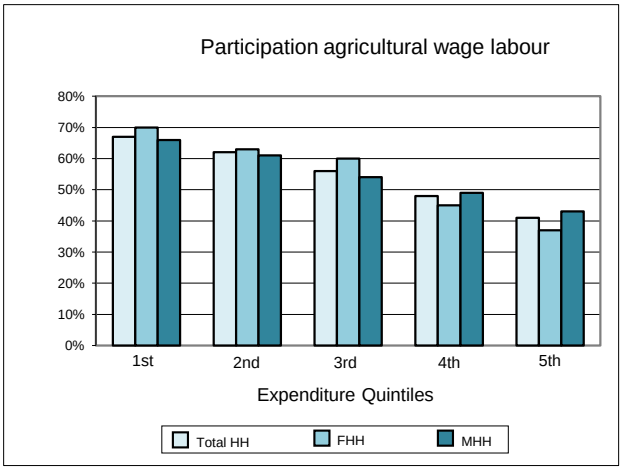
Rural households have different diversification strategies for their income sources. These, however, hinge upon access to assets, household characteristics, as well as the functioning of local labour and credit markets. It may therefore be the case that certain types of households specialize in certain activities[57]. Gender patterns of diversification and specialization of household strategies need to be examined. Participation in different employment opportunities (Graph 7) and share of income from different labour sources (Graph 8) are used as complementary indicators to assess the diversification strategies of rural households in Malawi.

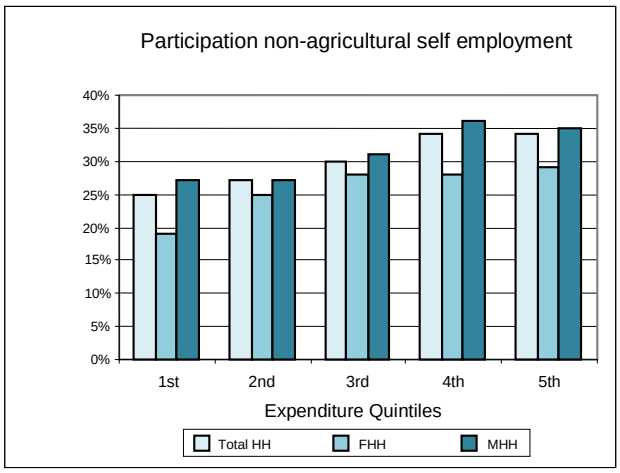
Graph 7: Participation in employment opportunities





[57] Valdés, A. et al., 2009.





*FHH = Female head of household; MHH = Male head of household

Source: RIGA, 2004/05

In terms of different employment opportunities, households across all quintiles participate in both farm/off-farm and paid/non-paid activities. However, the degree of participation strongly depends on the level of household expenditure and on the sex of the household head. According to available data, the highest level of participation in agricultural activities is found among households in the lowest expenditure quintile, whereas participation in non-agricultural activities is more predominant among wealthier households.

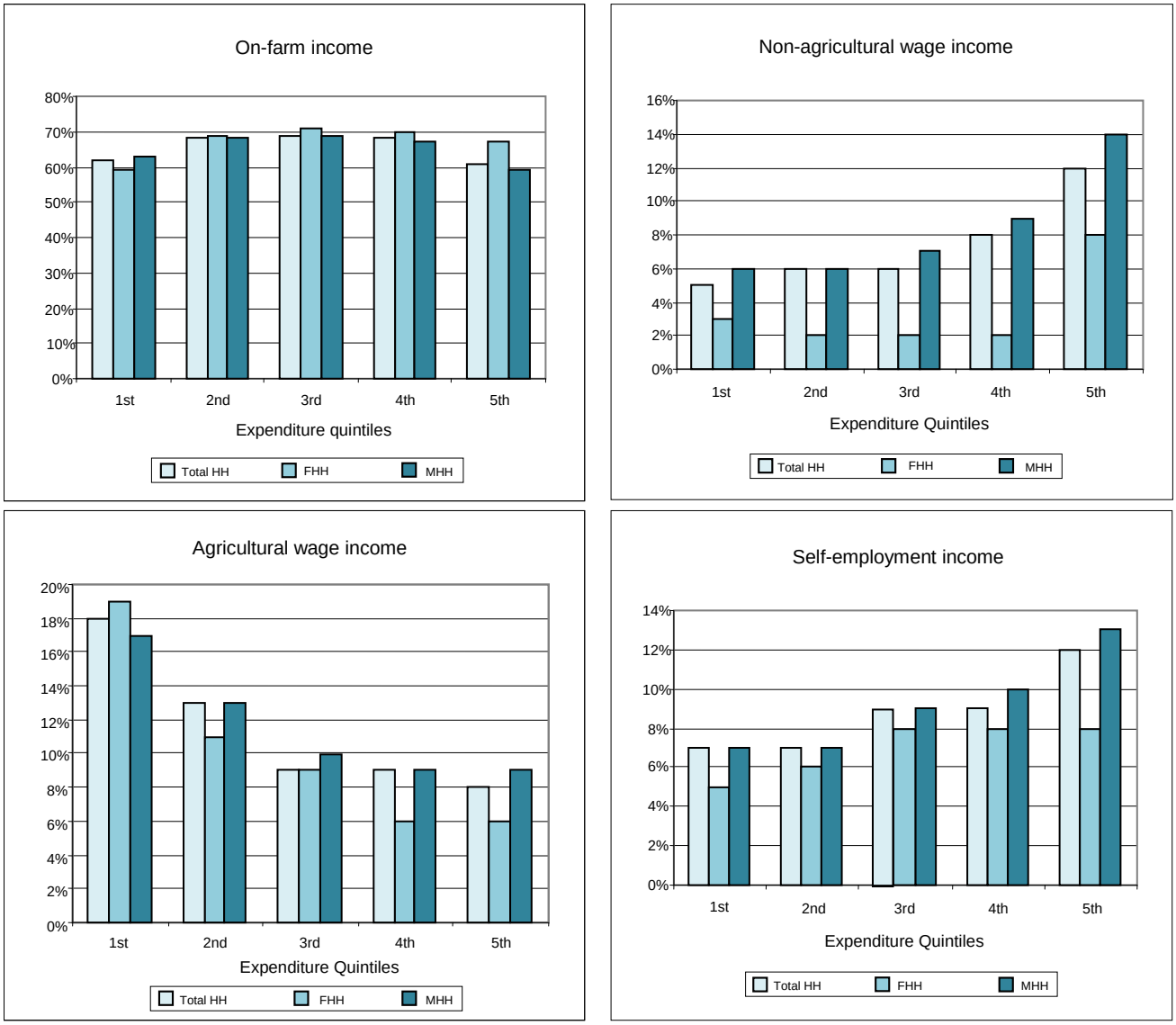
Almost all rural households in Malawi participate in on-farm activities, which is in line with findings at individual level. In fact, a large percentage of the rural workforce is engaged in subsistence (family) farming (*mlimi*). It is worth noting, however, that households in the highest expenditure quintile show a lower percentage of participation in farming activities (93 percent, compared to 98 percent for the lowest quintile). There are no major gender differences within this type of activity.

Household participation in agricultural wage activities presents a similar pattern, yet with more pronounced disparities. Households in all expenditure quintiles participate in agricultural wage labour, however, a quarter more households in the lowest wealth quintile engage in this type of work than in the highest. From a gender perspective, there are slight differences in participation in agricultural wage labour. Female-headed households in the lowest expenditure quintile are relatively more engaged in agricultural wage employment than male-headed households within the same quintile – 70 versus 66 percent. Conversely, there are less female-headed households engaged in agricultural wage employment than male ones in the highest expenditure quintiles.

The opposite pattern is observed for participation in non-agricultural wage employment, for which higher levels of participation are seen for relatively better-off households. Looking at gender dimensions, male-headed households are more engaged in this type of employment than female-headed households in all expenditure quintiles. For the highest quintiles, the share of participation of male-headed households in non-agricultural wage employment is around twice as high as that of female-headed households.

Participation of households in non-agricultural self-employment across all wealth quintiles is higher than participation in non-agricultural wage employment. It is worth noting, though, that participation in non-agricultural self-employment is relatively higher for households in the higher expenditure quintiles. Participation in non-agricultural self-employment is lower among female-headed households than male-headed households in all expenditure quintiles. For example, 19 percent of female-headed households in the lowest quintile participate in non-agricultural self-employment, relative to 27 percent of male-headed households in the same quintile.

Graph 8: Share of household income derived from different labour activities



*FHH = Female head of household; MHH = Male head of household

Source: RIGA, 2004/05

More than 60 percent of rural households' income comes from on-farm activities (for all expenditure quintiles). Those in the lowest quintile have a higher share of income from agricultural wage employment (19 percent), relative to wealthier households (8 percent). Conversely, the share of income from non-agricultural wage employment, as well as self-employment, is higher in wealthier households than in less wealthy households.

There are also gender disparities in terms of income sources. Similar to participation in different employment opportunities, female-headed households have lower shares of income coming from non-agricultural income sources (e.g. non-agricultural employment and self-employment) than male-headed households. This is the case for all expenditure quintiles. While wealthier male-headed households have a higher share of income from on-farm activities than less wealthy households, there is not such a clear pattern for female-headed households.

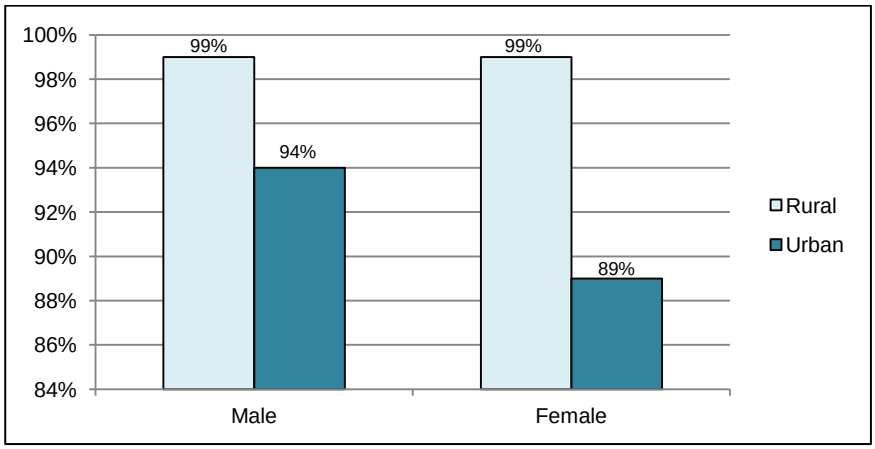
PART III: GENDER INEQUALITIES IN RURAL EMPLOYMENT

Did you know?

- The majority of Malawi's rural workforce is employed as *mlimi* (subsistence farmers). This is especially so for rural women.
- Rural women play a pivotal role as subsistence farmers, yet their productivity is hindered by gender inequalities.
- A large share of the rural workforce engages in wage employment as a second job – mainly seasonal/casual wage jobs (ganyu). This is especially so for rural women.
- Rural women´s participation in paid employment is hampered by a significant domestic work burden. Most rural women dedicate more time to domestic (usually unpaid) activities than their male counterparts, which leaves them with less time to engage in productive employment and income generating activities.
- Illiteracy is high among rural women and gender inequalities persist in secondary education.
- Child labour in agriculture is an issue in Malawi. Gender patterns in child labour and time use may perpetuate later in their working lives.
- There is high internal labour mobility in Malawi with particular gender dimensions.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the domestic economy. The agricultural sector (including forestry and fishing[58]) supports the majority of livelihoods in the country, providing employment for 85 percent of men and 94 percent of women. Since the majority of Malawi's poor live in rural areas and their only, or main, productive asset is labour, the promotion of productive and decent employment for rural women and men is crucial for reducing poverty and increasing food and nutrition security.

Graph 9: Employment rate in urban and rural areas



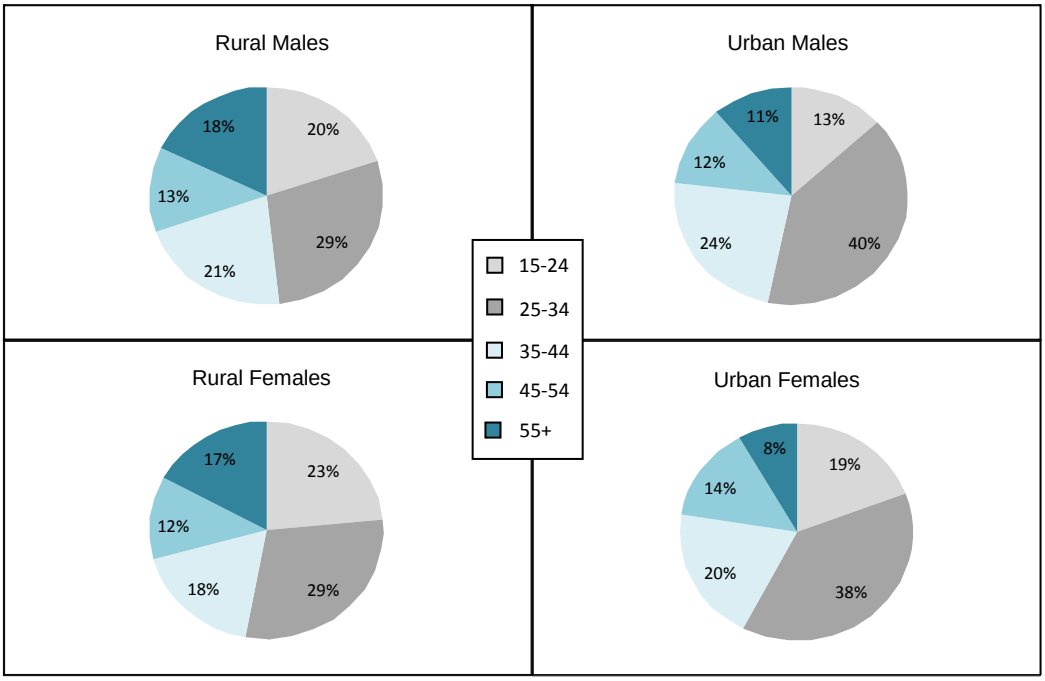
Source: WMS, 2008

In Malawi, almost all of the working-age population (in particular in rural areas) reported to have worked during the last seven days prior to the Welfare Monitoring Survey (WMS)[59]. At this level of aggregation, there are no major gender differences. It is necessary to explore in more detail the composition of these figures in order to get a better understanding of the structure and characteristics of the rural labour market, and also to disentangle potential gender disparities by occupation or industry and by type of work arrangement or contract.

[58] The Welfare Monitoring Survey 2008 does not disaggregate further the sector of economic activity.
[59] This question tries to identify people who did any type of work during the last seven days without any restriction on the number of hours or type of activity.

Nationwide, 84 percent of the employed population is 15 to 54 years old. The highest share of the working population is concentrated in the 25 to 34 age group (30 percent for both men and women). Youth[60] represent 22 percent of the economically active population and 21 percent of the total working population[61].

Graph 10: Age structure of the female and male working population (rural and urban)



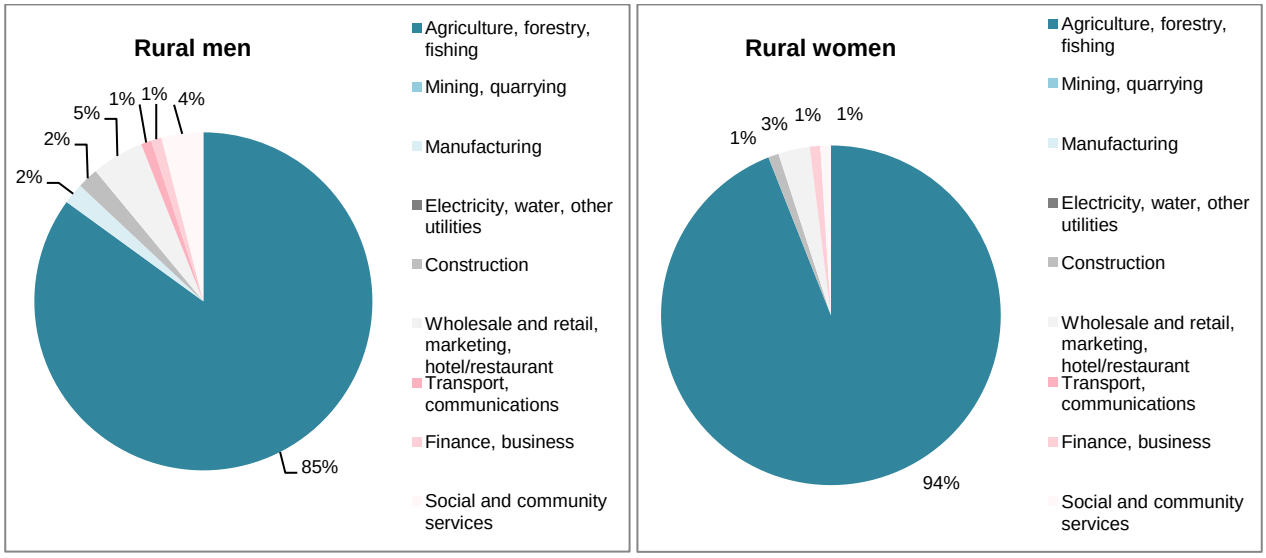
Source: WMS, 2008

1. Employment patterns of rural women and men

While agriculture is the main source of employment in rural areas for both women and men, available evidence indicates that there is relatively more diversification among male workers than female workers in terms of their economic activities. Nevertheless, for both groups wholesale and retail activities, together with social and community services, are the second largest employment sectors (see graph 11). It is important that forthcoming surveys collect more detailed data (e.g. by subsector of economic activity) in order to explore the presence of gender- and age-specific patterns within employment in the agriculture sector[62].

[60] This comprises the population aged between 15 and 24 years. The UN definition of youth is 15-24 years, whereas the Malawi youth definition is 15-30 years.
[61] Employed in the period of reference of the WMS survey.
[62] The need for further disaggregation by subsector of agricultural economic activity is also relevant when assessing youth employment and child labour, as these are vulnerable categories for which assessment of potential employment segregation is needed.

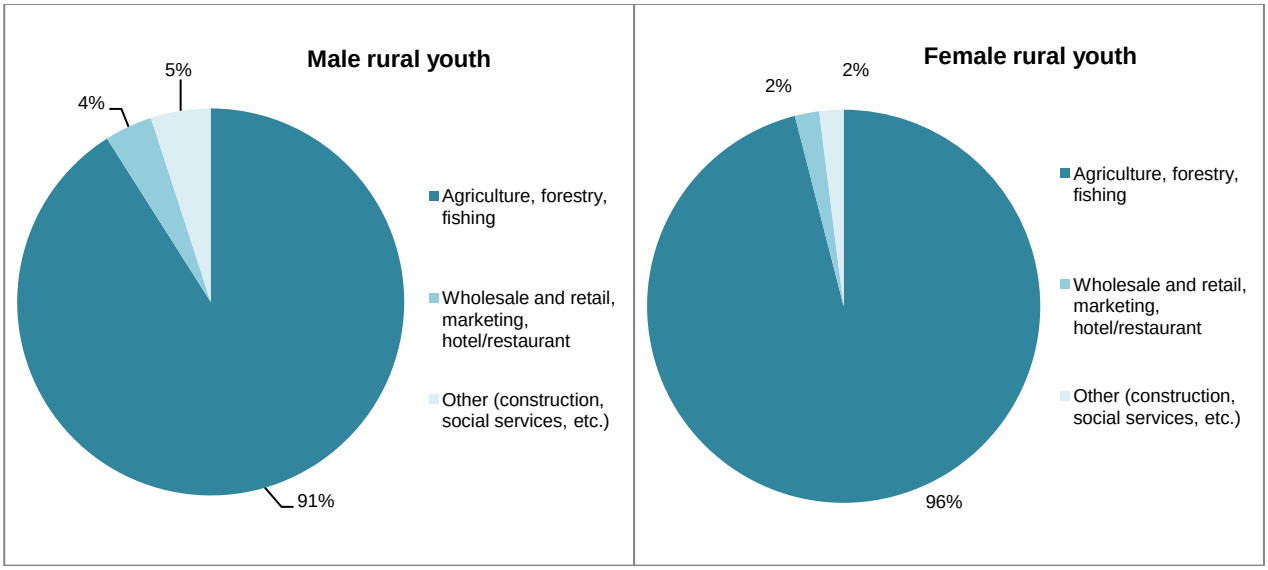
Graph 11: Main sector of employment for rural men and women



Source: WMS, 2008

Agriculture is also the main sector for youth employment. Interestingly, the agriculture sector is relatively more important for young workers, compared to the total working age population. In rural areas, 91 percent of young male workers and 96 percent of young female workers are employed in agricultural activities (graph 12).

Graph 12: Main sector of employment for rural youth

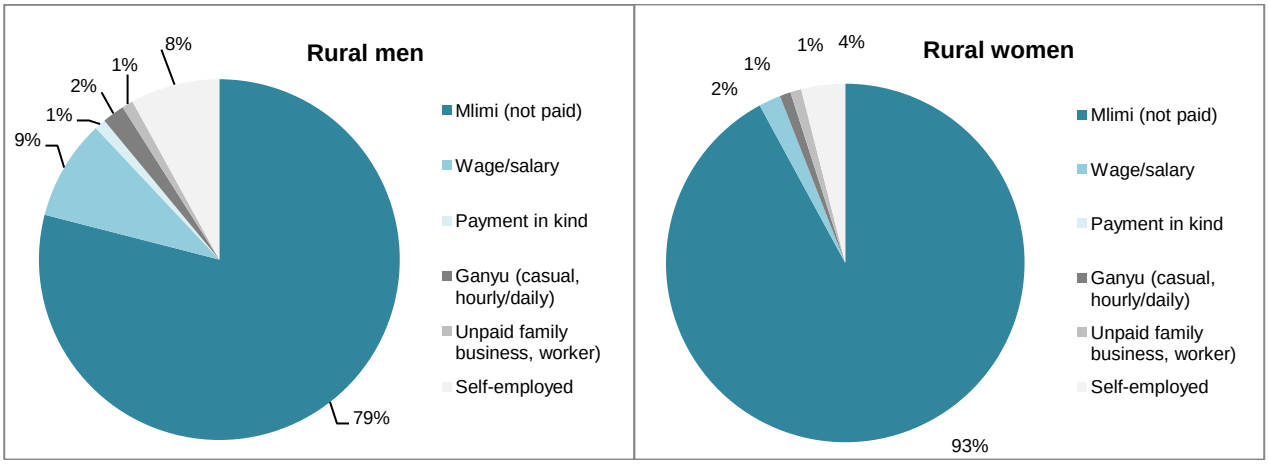


Source: WMS, 2008

According to WMS 2008 data, 86 percent of the rural working population is employed in subsistence farming (*mlimi*). Even though the majority of men also work as *mlimi,* they have more opportunities than women to participate in other categories of employment, such as wage employment[63] and self-employment.[64] In fact, 93 percent of women work as *mlimi*, compared to 79 percent of men (graph 13). The *mlimi* sector is largely made up of the rural workforce without any completed formal education – 77 percent (72 percent of men and 82 percent of women).

[63] Wage employment includes wage/salary work, payment in kind and *ganyu* (casual hourly/daily labour).
[64] Employment categories are defined as follows: *mlimi* (unpaid/ subsistence farming); wage/salary; payment in kind; *ganyu* (casual hourly/daily labour); unpaid family business workers; and self-employed.

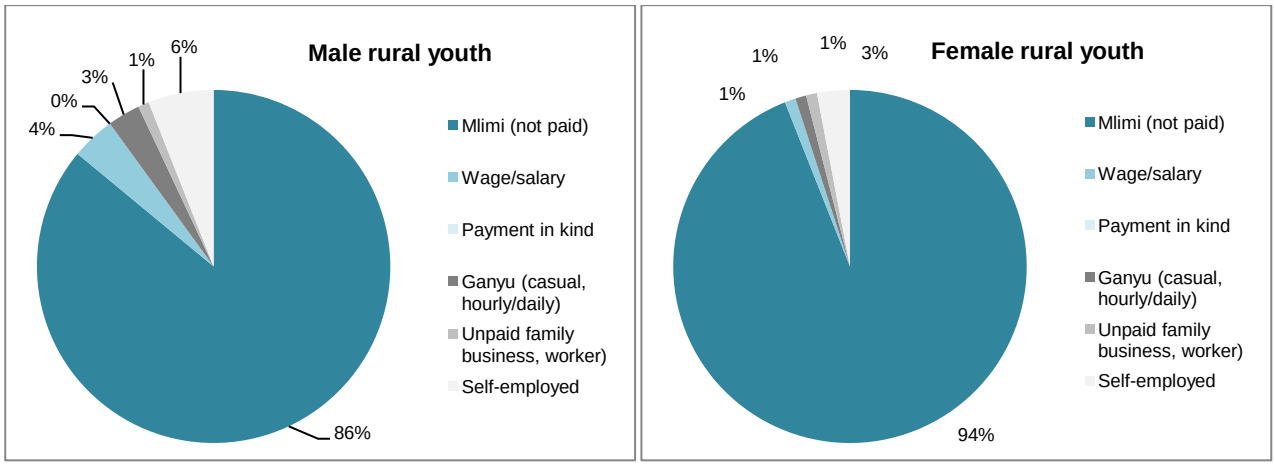
Graph 13: Employment status of rural men and women



Source: WMS, 2008

Similar patterns are found between rural youth and adults in terms of employment status. Even so, there is a relatively higher number of male rural youth working as *mlimi* than male rural workers in general (graph 14).

Graph 14: Employment status of rural youth



Source: WMS, 2008

2. Gender inequalities in wage labour

Most subsistence farmers complement their income with other jobs – mainly paid casual/seasonal and part time labour (*ganyu*). Informal rural wage labour in Malawi is a way to assure a basic level of income for farmers and it is hence a key component of rural livelihood strategies. Though rural men and women both lack decent employment opportunities, women are often more disadvantaged in comparison to their male counterparts. As a result, women have greater difficulty translating their labour into paid work and their paid work into higher and more secure incomes.

Box 2: Gender, rural employment and decent work

"Rural employment is a critical means for poverty and hunger reduction, as labour is often the only asset that poor people own. The main problem with employment in rural areas, however, is that many jobs do not ensure decent levels of income and sustainable livelihoods. Rural workers are at the heart of the food production system but are disadvantaged in many respects. They are among the most socially vulnerable, the least organized into trade unions, and the least likely to have gender equality in opportunities and pay, and access to effective forms of social security and protection. Many of them are employed under poor health, safety and environmental conditions."

Many rural workers face vulnerable employment, which is a measure of those "who are less likely to have formal work arrangements or access to benefits or social protection programmes, and are therefore more exposed to economic cycles (ILO, 2008). Vulnerability is often associated with gender pay gaps, low representation, limited security, hazards and overall poverty".

Ensuring productive and decent work for rural workers is crucial if they are to escape from poverty and have the means to produce or purchase adequate and nutritious food. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the concept of ***decent work*** entails "opportunities for work that are productive and deliver a fair income; security in the workplace and social protection for families; better prospects for personal development and social integration; freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men".

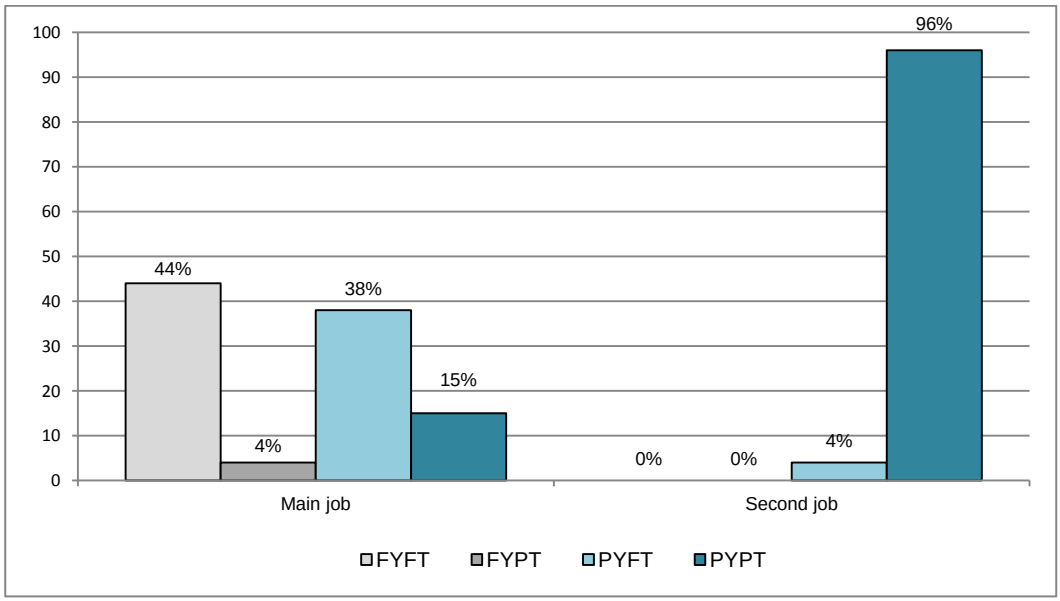
(Extracted from: FAO-ILO website "Food, Agriculture & Decent Work" – http://www.fao-ilo.org)

Frequency and duration of employment are very important in determining workers' employment status in terms of stability. Their employment status in turn determines their level of income and wealth, particularly in rural areas. Overall, both rural male and female waged workers are mainly employed under casual (*ganyu)* contractual arrangements and employed on a part-time/part-year basis.

<u>Women outnumber men in casual wage employment</u>

When considering those who work in waged labour as their main job, just under half (44 percent) have a full-time job throughout the year, about 40 percent have a full-time job on a seasonal basis (part-year) and only 15 percent work as *ganyu.* However, when taking into account waged labour as a second job, the pattern is very different as 96 percent work on a casual/seasonal, part-time basis.

Graph 15: Frequency and duration of rural waged labour (1st and 2nd job compared)

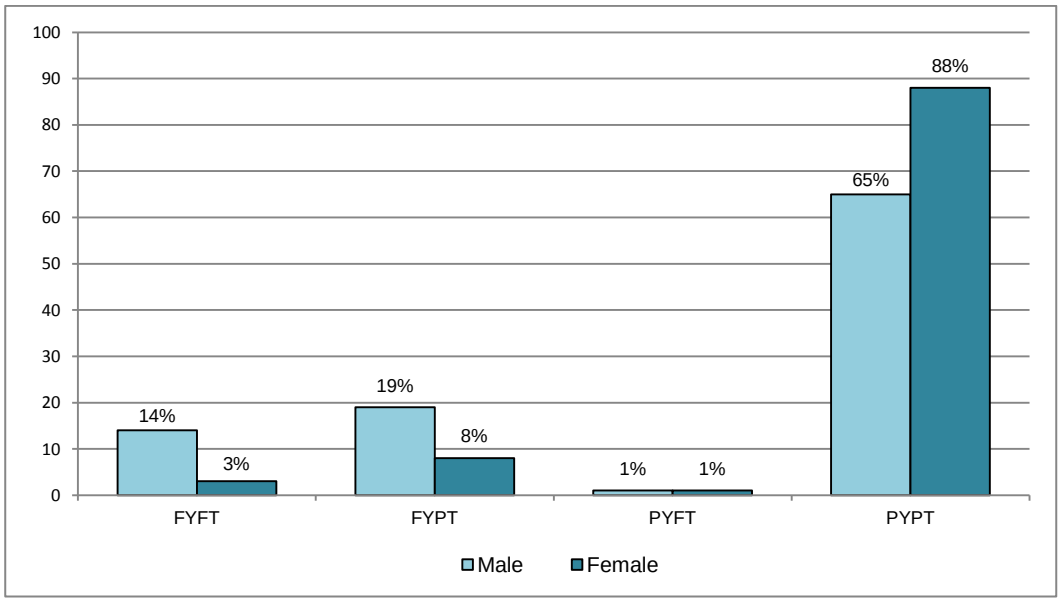


*FYFT = Full-time employment; FYPT = Part-time employment; PYFT = Seasonal; and PYPT = Casual/Ganyu

Source: RIGA, 2004/05

Women are substantially over-represented in part-time/part-year employment – 88 percent of women compared to 65 percent of men (Graph 16).

Graph 16: Frequency and duration of rural waged labour by sex (1st and 2nd job together)

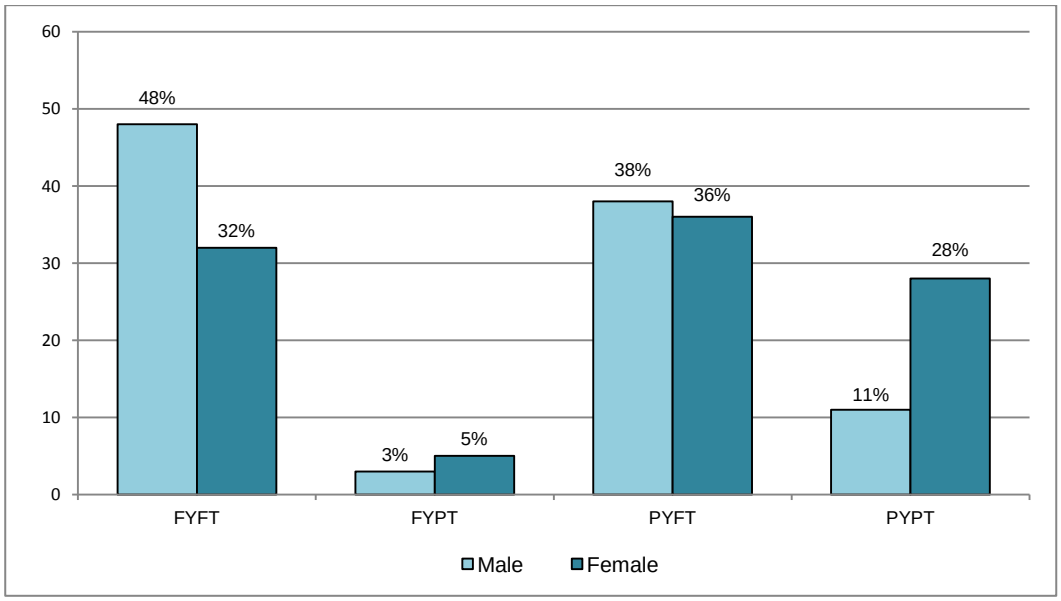


*FYFT = Full-time employment; FYPT = Part-time employment; PYFT = Seasonal; and PYPT = Casual/Ganyu

Source: RIGA, 2004/05

As seen in Graph 17, nearly half (48 percent) of rural men engaged in waged labour as their main job work full-time throughout the year, compared to less than a third of rural women (32 percent). Rural men and women engaged in waged labour as their main job hold almost the same share (38 percent and 36 percent, respectively) of full-time waged jobs on a temporary/seasonal basis. The largest gender difference is observed with regard to part-time jobs on a temporary/seasonal basis, with about 60 percent more rural women than men working in this category. In other words, rural women who hold a waged job as their main job work under less stable conditions (time-wise) than their male counterparts.

Graph 17: Frequency and duration of rural waged labour by sex (1st job)



*FYFT = Full-time employment; FYPT = Part-time employment; PYFT = Seasonal; and PYPT = Casual/Ganyu

Source: RIGA, 2004/05

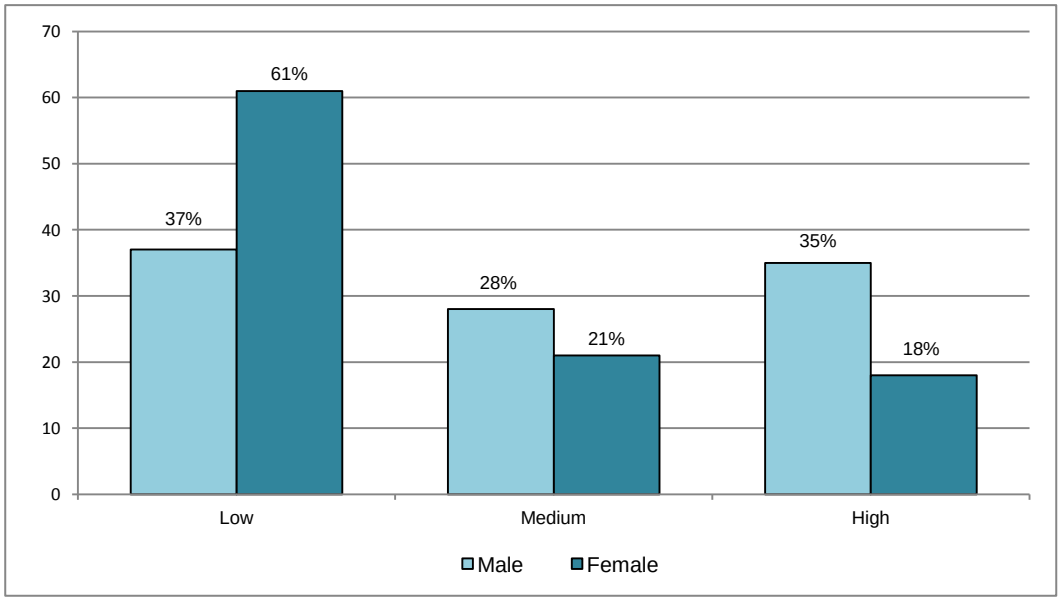
Women are over-represented in low paid jobs (both agriculture and non-agriculture sectors)

G*anyu*[65] is the main form of employment for agricultural waged workers (89 percent), relative to non-agricultural workers (20 percent). Workers engaged in non-agricultural activities are relatively more likely to be employed in full-time seasonal work arrangements (38 percent) than as agricultural workers (8 percent).

Rural waged employment is unstable, especially in agricultural activities. The high share of farmers engaged in *ganyu* labour indicates that subsistence farmers seek additional sources of income through occasional work, mainly in agriculture. On the other hand, it implies that the rural labour market is highly demand-driven, offering casual/seasonal employment arrangements under vulnerable conditions which, in turn, negatively affects the level of wages of the majority of rural waged workers.

An examination of the rural wage labour market (including first and second job) by wage level (low, medium, high) indicates that rural women are over-represented in low paid jobs. Sixty-one percent of female waged workers fall within the lowest wage category compared to 37 percent of their male counterparts (Graph 18). Furthermore, almost twice as many men compared to women participate in activities where wages are relatively higher (35 percent and 18 percent, respectively).

Graph 18: Rural wage level by sex (1st and 2nd job together)

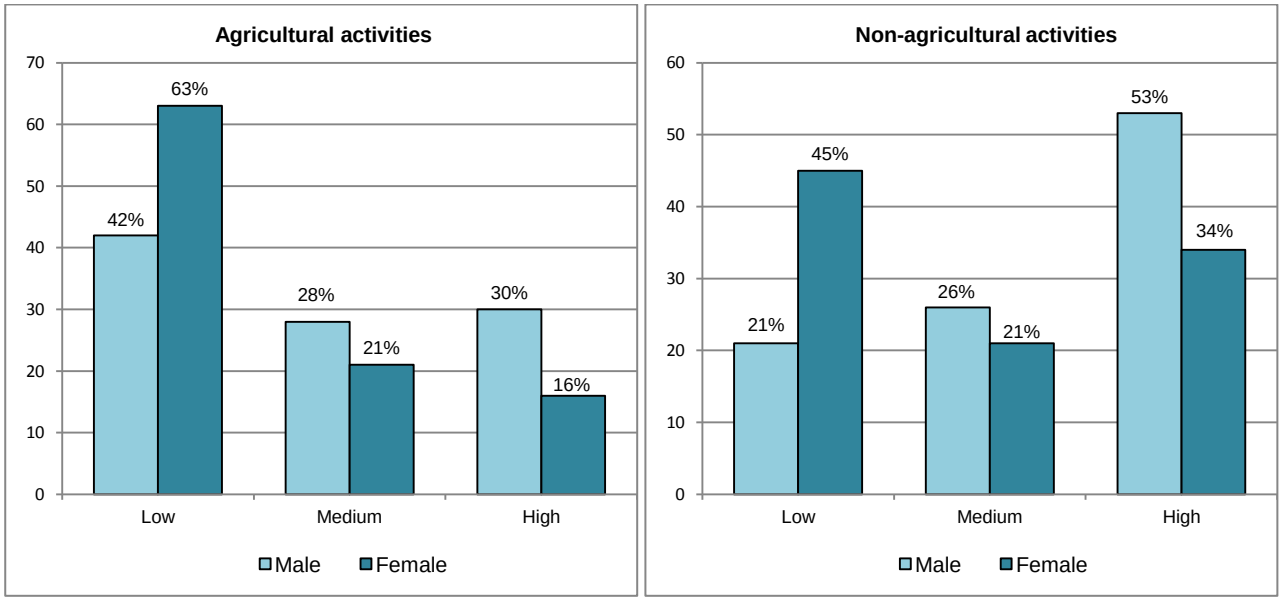


Source: RIGA, 2004/05

Women are concentrated in low paid activities in both agriculture and non-agriculture sectors, while for men the situation changes substantially in the latter (Graph 19). Sixty-three percent of rural women are clustered in low paid activities in the agriculture sector. While the situation improves somewhat when considering non-agricultural activities, 45 percent of women are still employed in low paid jobs. For men, the situation is different. While 42 percent of men participate in low earning activities in the agriculture sector, this percentage decreases to 21 percent in the non-agriculture sector. In fact, in non-agricultural activities, higher paid wage employment is more widespread among male workers (53 percent) relative to female workers (34 percent).

[65] Casual hourly/daily labour.

Graph 19: Rural wage level by sex in agricultural and non-agricultural activities



Source: RIGA, 2004/05

Compared to men, women are particularly disadvantaged in wage employment. Women are over-represented in more unstable jobs and are clustered in low wage categories, both in agriculture and non-agriculture sectors.

Gender differences by the type of occupation in rural wage employment are significant (Table 7). In each of the more skilled occupations, the participation of male waged workers is substantially higher than that of female waged workers. The gender gap is only less pronounced in the elementary occupations and clerks category.

Table 7: Rural waged labour by occupation (1st and 2nd job)

Occupation	Men	Women
Legislators, senior officials and managers	88.9	11.1
Professionals	71.1	28.9
Technicians and associate professionals	92.6	7.4
Clerks	58.0	42.0
Service workers and shop and market sales workers	88.9	11.1
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	76.6	23.4
Craft and related trades workers	83.8	16.2
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	97.9	2.1
Elementary occupations	56.7	43.3

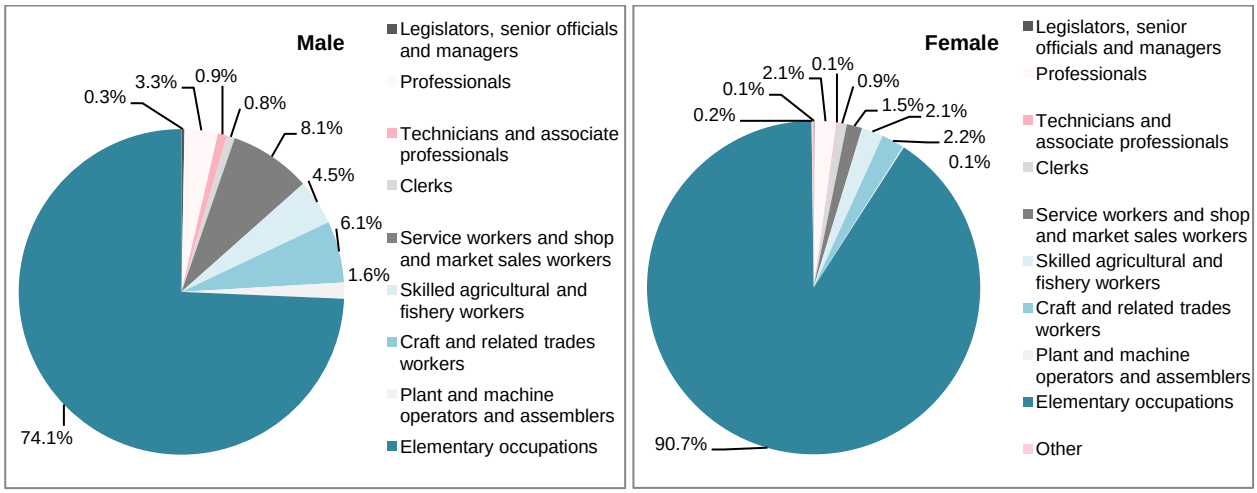
Source: RIGA, 2004/05

Most rural wage employment is characterised by low skilled occupations and some medium-skilled positions[66]. There are few rural wage workers in high skilled occupations (Graph 20). However, there are gender differences to be emphasised. The large majority of female wage workers in rural areas (91 percent) are employed in elementary occupations with low or no skill requirements. This clustering of waged workers within elementary occupations is also observed among male waged workers, although the share is

[66] Namely skilled workers in agriculture and fisheries, service workers and shop and sales workers.

smaller (74 percent). Given the importance of agriculture in terms of employment, it is also interesting to note that only 2.1 percent of female waged workers in this sector undertake more skilled positions, relative to 4.5 percent for their male counterparts. A similar gender pattern can be observed for wage employment in services, shops and market sales, as well as other skilled occupations in craft and related trades.

Graph 20: Rural male and female waged labour by occupation (1st job plus 2nd job)



Source: RIGA, 2004/05

Overall, lower education levels attained by rural women[67] in Malawi could be a factor determining the type of occupation and wage level when engaged in waged employment. In this regard, investment in female education in rural areas would be a key policy area. Given the gender differences in terms of wage employment and the role that this plays – mainly as a secondary job in rural households' livelihoods – further analysis is needed in order to assess the gender dimensions of participation in wage employment at the household level.

In view of the significant share of rural workers depending on wage employment, more research is needed to investigate the working conditions of rural women and men. For instance, evidence is needed to assess their wage levels, access to social protection, representation and voice (role of famers' and workers' organizations), situation with regard to occupational safety and health (OSH), and labour standards. Particular attention should be paid to gender disparities and to identifying their underlying causes. Surveys and research need to gather evidence on this and data needs to be processed in a timely manner to feed into policy processes.

3. Gender differences in productive and domestic time use

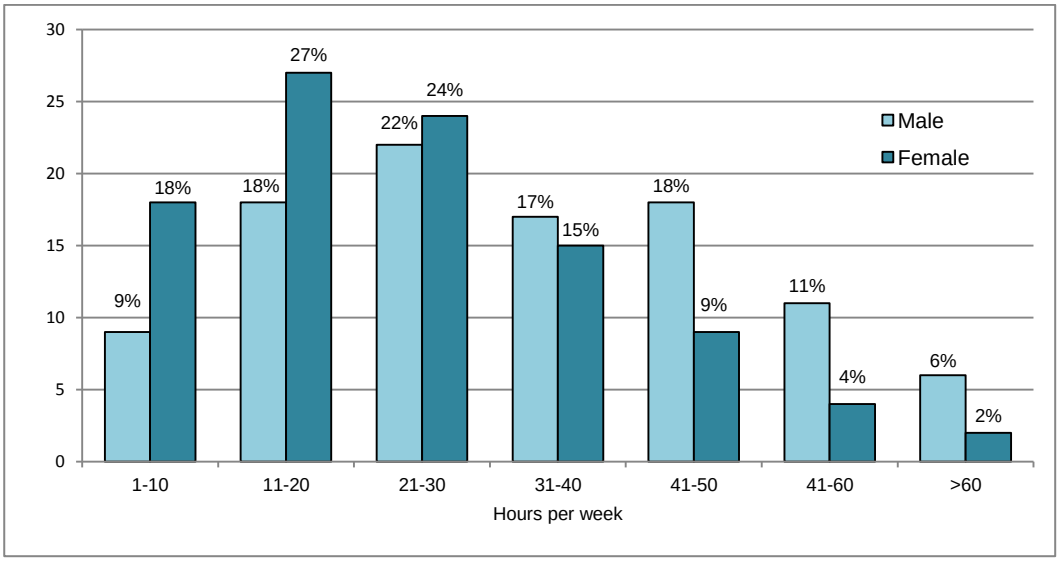
In Malawi, both men and women engage in a number of productive and domestic activities[68]. Time use studies are useful to understand the gender division of labour, including in domestic and care activities needed for the reproduction of the household. This section highlights the constraints that female workers encounter in allocating their time between these two types of activities relative to their male counterparts[69]. As a result of time constraints, female workers encounter more difficulties in undertaking productive work or even in combining part-time work with training.

[67] Around ten percent more women than men have not completed primary education (78 versus 68 percent in rural areas and 38 versus 29 percent in urban areas). Only nine percent of women in rural areas have completed secondary education, compared to 16 percent of men.
[68] Productive and domestic activities are defined based on available IHS2 data. Productive (economic) activities include waged labour, *ganyu*, *mlimi*, non-agricultural business activities and household agricultural activities, whereas domestic (non-economic) activities refer to cooking, and water and firewood collection. Domestic reproductive activities such as caring for children and other family members are not captured in the data used for the profile.
[69] The population of reference is the employed workforce.

Time allocation to productive activities

Around half of rural women devote between 11 and 30 hours per week to productive activities, while 30 percent allocate more than 30 hours (Graph 21). The distribution of time use in productive activities among rural working men is more even as they are engaged in productive activities in roughly equal shares in the ranges between 11 and 50 hours per week, with the highest percentage of working men (22 percent) engaged in productive activities 21-30 hours per week. The most significant gender gaps are found in the allocation of time to productive activities in the 1-20 and 41-60 hours per week categories – the lower and higher ends of the scale. There are relatively more women than men engaged in productive activities 1-20 hours per week, whereas this pattern reverses when moving towards the higher end of the scale (from 41 hours onwards). In fact, two to three times as many rural men work between 41 and 60 hours per week, compared to their female counterparts. These figures show that women mostly work in productive activities on a part-time basis, compared to men who likely have more possibilities and/or time to commit to productive activities.

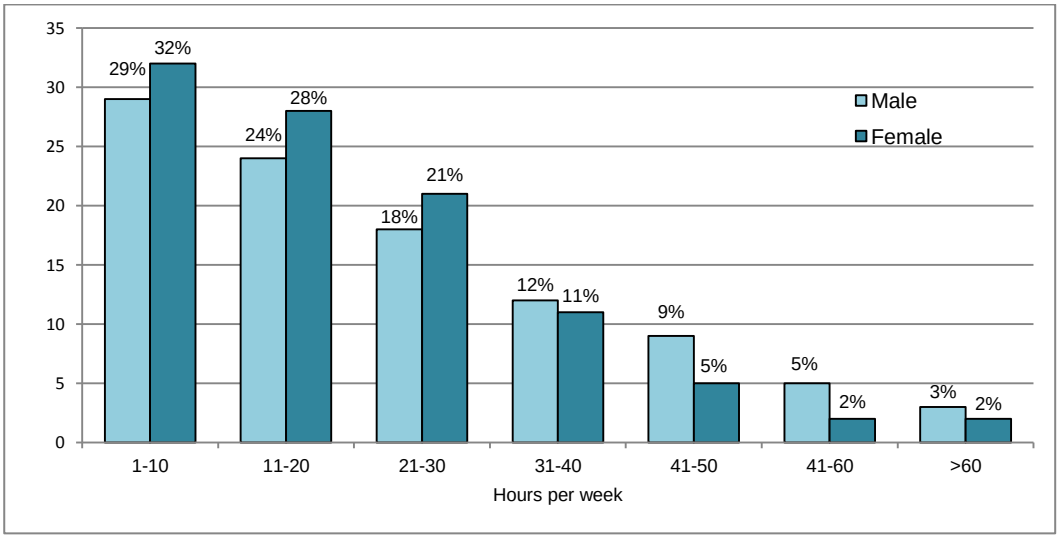
Graph 21: Time allocation of rural men and women to productive activities



Source: IHS2, 2004/05

Time allocation patterns to productive activities between rural adults and rural youth differ substantially, in particular for rural women. In contrast to the findings for the rural adult population, there are no significant gender differences in the time devoted to productive activities among the young rural working population (Graph 22). Female youth devote just slightly less time to productive activities than male youth. There are more young females working less than 30 hours per week than young males, who instead are relatively more engaged in productive activities in terms of time.

Graph 22: Time allocation of rural youth to productive activities

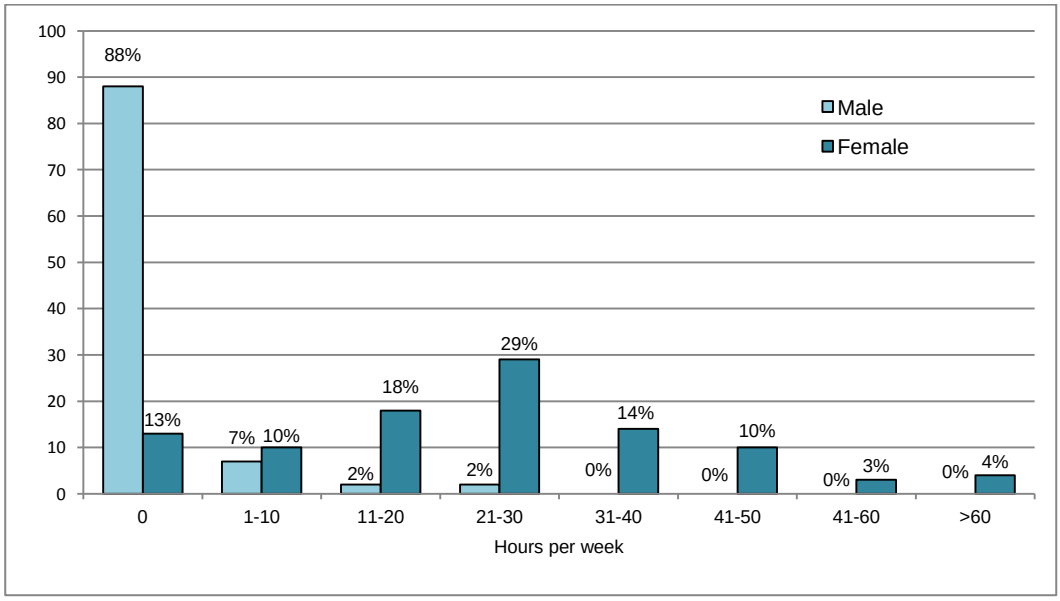


Source: IHS2, 2004/05

Time allocation to domestic activities

There is a wide gender gap in the time allocated to domestic activities[70]. The large majority of rural working men (88 percent) do not perform any domestic activities, compared to 13 percent of women. While around half of rural working women devote between 11 and 30 hours per week to domestic activities, only 4 percent of men do so.

Graph 23: Time allocation of rural men and women to domestic activities



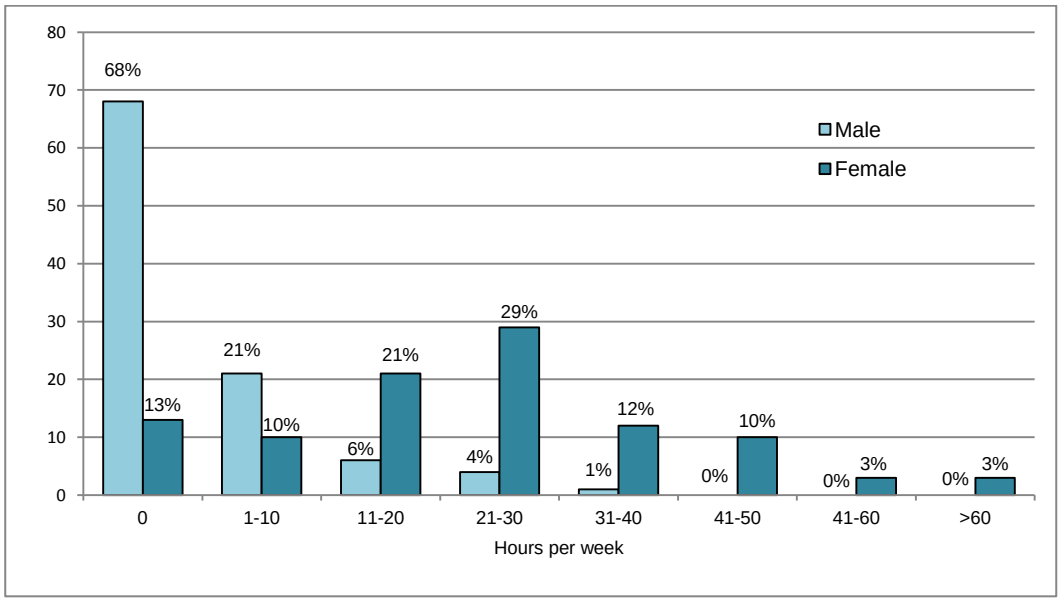
Source: IHS2, 2004/05

Conversely to what is observed in the time allocation of working rural youth to productive activities, there is a sizeable gender gap in time allocation to domestic activities, although less pronounced than for adults. While 68 percent of male rural working youth report not participating in domestic activities, this is the case for only 13 percent of their female counterparts. Interestingly, there are differences between male youth and male adults in terms of time allocation to domestic activities – over 20 percent of young men dedicate 1-10 hours to domestic activities, compared to only 7 percent of adult men. The gender gap widens with

[70] Domestic activities are defined based on available IHS2 data. Activities include: cooking, doing laundry, cleaning the house, collecting water, and collecting firewood. It does not include child and elder care activities.

the increase in the number of hours devoted to domestic activities, peaking at 21-30 hours per week. It is also interesting to note that 10 times more young women than young men work 41-50 hours per week in domestic activities (Graph 24).

Graph 24: Time allocation of rural youth to domestic activities



Source: IHS2, 2004/05

Compared to men, rural working women have to combine a greater proportion of domestic activities with their productive roles. The double burden is even worse for young rural women due to their greater involvement in productive activities (compared to adult women), yet without a decrease in their domestic workload.

Overall, in rural areas domestic tasks are primarily carried out by women. As such, they have less time available to participate in income-generating activities and to take full advantage of market opportunities. Time constraints also impede women's ability to develop their capacities and skills through education and skills development, which could in turn enhance economic returns and wellbeing.

Gender patterns in children's time use

According to International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions, child labour is "work that harms children's well-being and hinders their education, development and future livelihoods"[71]. In accordance with section 21 of the Employment Act of Malawi, no person under the age of 14 shall be employed or work in any public or private agricultural, industrial or non- industrial activity. Moreover, the Act prohibits the employment of persons younger than 18 years old in work that is hazardous, harmful or that interferes with their education. The Government of Malawi is in the process of adopting new policies and programmes that aim to protect children further from work-related exploitation.

Despite legal provisions, child labour is relevant in Malawi, particularly in the informal rural sector. Children often work in their households, where they are engaged in work that is not normally considered as productive activities – e.g. taking care of younger siblings, fetching water, collecting firewood, cooking, cleaning and other household activities. When children are required to work long hours (both in the fields and in their households), their ability to attend school or skills training is limited, which prevents them from gaining an education that could help lift them out of poverty in the future. Devoting long hours to productive and domestic activities chores has a negative impact on children's development. Child labour also exhibits gender patterns that perpetuate later in children's working lives.

[71] ILO-IPEC, 2006.

Box 3: Overview of child labour in Malawi

Facts and Figures

- According to the Malawi Child Labour Survey (2002), 37 percent of children aged 5-17 (1.4 million children in total) were involved in child labour; the subsequent Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (2006) put this figure at 29 percent for children aged 5-14.
- Ninety-five percent of children involved in economic activities are in rural areas.
- Child labour is most evident in agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing (53 percent), followed by community, social and personal services (42 percent).
- Children are employed on commercial farms, in smallholder agriculture, domestic services, the informal sector, and in commercial sex.
- Child labour was first identified in tobacco plantations in the mid-1990s.
- The Northern region has the highest proportion of children involved in child labour (48 percent), followed by Central and then Southern region.
- Fifty-eight percent of child labourers have attended school only up to standard 5 (12 percent up to standard 8 and only 1 percent had post-primary education); 29 percent of child labourers have never attended school.

Government responses

- In 1992 the Government of Malawi ratified ILO Conventions 138 and 182 on the minimum age of entry into employment and on the worst forms of child labour.
- Conventions 138 and 182 have been integrated into Malawi's Constitution, Employment Act of 2000 and the National Code of Conduct on Child Labour.
- The Government has developed a National Action Plan (NAP) on Child Labour (2009-2016).

(Extracted from: Child Labour National Action Plan for Malawi, 2009-2016, Ministry of Labour)

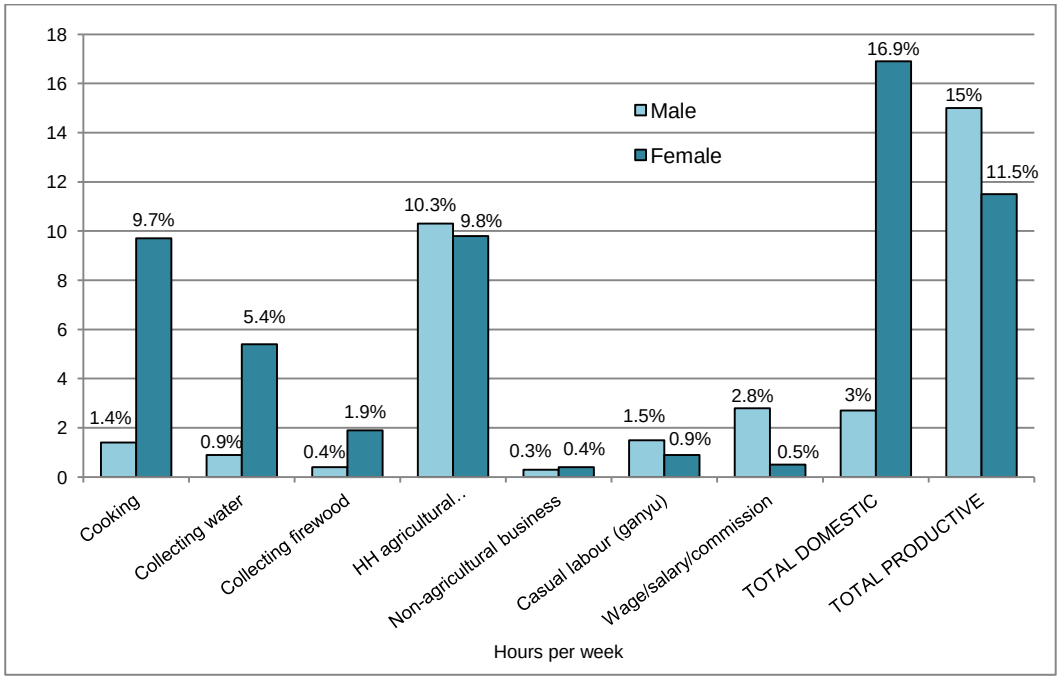
Children's time use is assessed in terms of hours per week devoted to both productive and domestic activities (by gender and with a focus on rural areas).[72] In the analysis, domestic activities are limited to cooking and the collection of water and firewood, while productive activities include agricultural activities within the household, non-agricultural business, *ganyu*, and wage employment. Two age groups are considered: younger children from 5 to 11 years, and older children from 12 to 14 years.

There is a significant gender disparity in the amount of time that children aged 5 to 14 allocate to domestic activities (Graph 25). Girls dedicate over six times as much time to domestic activities than boys – 16.9 hours/week compared to 2.7 hours/week. Girls dedicate most of their time to cooking (9.7 hours/week) and collecting water (5.4 hours/week). While the same pattern of time allocation to respective activities applies also for boys, the number of hours is substantially lower.

There are gender differences among children in the allocation of time to productive activities, albeit considerably lower compared to those observed for domestic activities. Most of the time that both girls and boys spend on productive activities is on agricultural activities (about 10 hours per week). This is in line with the high rates of employment as *mlimi* in rural Malawi.

[72] Time use is assessed using the data provided by the RIGA project.

Graph 25: Time use of rural children aged 5 to 14

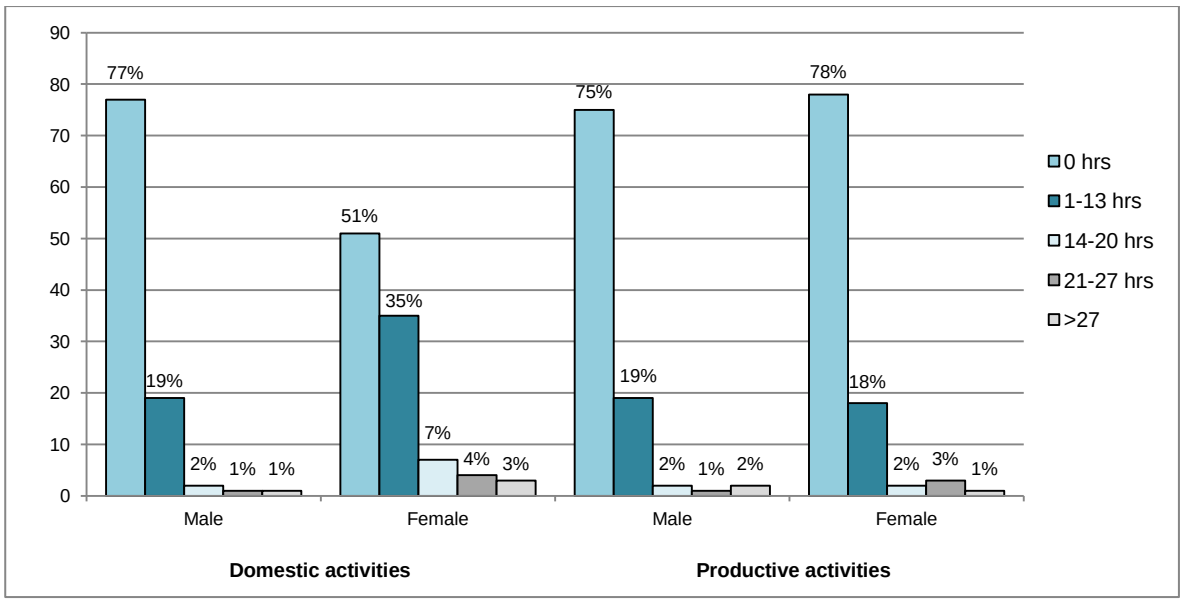


Source: RIGA, 2004/05

A more complete picture emerges when taking into account age groups. In comparing graphs 26 and 27, it can been seen that the amount of time that girls and boys dedicate to productive and domestic activities increases drastically for the 12-14 age group.

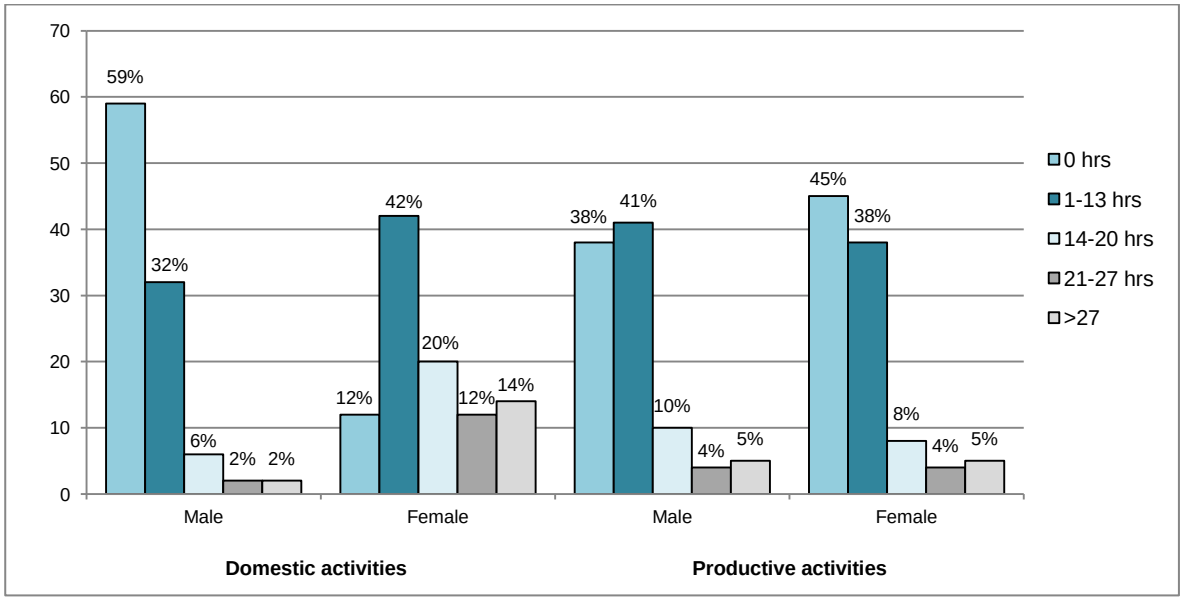
For domestic activities, there are notable disparities in terms of the time devoted by boys and girls (in both age groups). While the proportion of older boys allocating some time to domestic activities is higher than for younger boys, their contribution to these activities is still significantly lower than that of girls. In other words, girls are highly disadvantaged in terms of time availability to attend school, study, play and enjoy themselves.

Graph 26: Distribution of time use of rural children aged 5 to 11



Source: RIGA, 2004/05

Graph 27: Distribution of time use of rural children aged 12 to 14

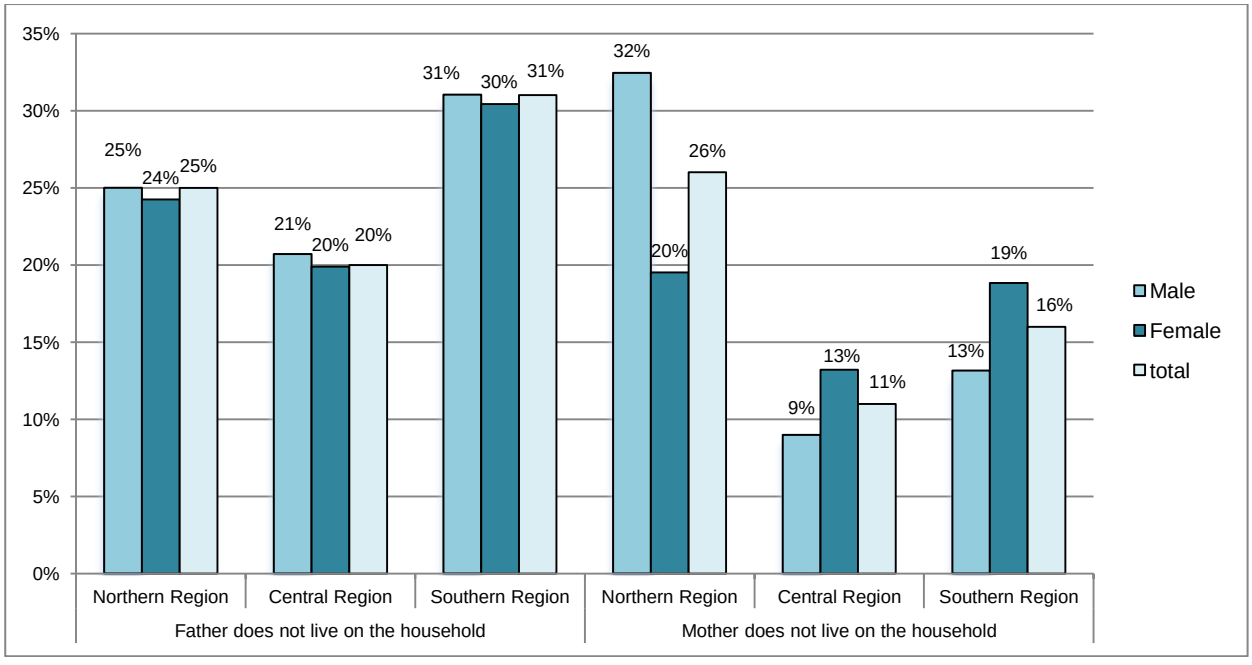


Source: RIGA, 2004/05

Differences in household composition may determine the participation of children in productive activities. If one of the parents is missing (due to out-migration, death, divorce, etc.), the re-distribution of labour within the household may require children to participate in productive activities to supplement or substitute adult labour.

According to WMS 2008 data, children in households where the father is not present are more likely to work (Graph 28).[73] This is highest in the Southern region where roughly 31 percent of working children live in households where the father is absent[74].The highest share of children working in households where the mother is not present is in the Northern region (26 percent).

Graph 28: Share of working children aged 5 to 14 living in households where a parent is absent



Source: WMS, 2008

[73] Data is based on asking respondents whether the father or the mother lives in the household. Reasons why the parent is not present are not available.
[74] For the Northern and Central regions, the figures are 24.6 and 20.3 percent respectively.

Given the importance of time use constraints in poverty reduction strategies, further research should be devoted to this issue. It is essential to have a better understanding of how gender-differentiated time use patterns are affected by household composition (age and gender composition of household members); seasonal and farm system considerations; regional and geographic factors, including ease of access to water and fuel; availability of infrastructure; and distance to key economic and social services such as schools, health centres, financial institutions and markets[75]. Examining time use data is essential to provide policymakers and development practitioners with a more complete and comprehensive picture of the labour constraints and opportunities, and to promote gender equity and decent employment.

4. Illiteracy and gender inequalities in education[76]

Education is a key component of human capital and plays a fundamental role in determining people's ability to access better labour opportunities and escape from poverty, which also has implications at household level. In other words, people with higher levels of education or more years of schooling are generally more likely to have more favourable labour market outcomes, in terms of both job opportunities and higher incomes. Despite the adoption of policies and strategies since 1994 to expand access to basic education for both boys and girls and in moving towards the goal of "Education for All", available data shows large gender, rural-urban, regional and age disparities in educational outcomes.

According to WMS 2008 data, the adult literacy rate (population aged 15 and above) is nearly 70 percent[77]. There are however gender and geographical disparities in literacy rates. For instance, the overall literacy rate for women in Malawi is 60.5 percent, compared to 80 percent for men. Literacy rates in urban districts are substantially higher than those in rural districts – almost 93 percent in urban districts, compared to roughly 68 percent in rural districts. Urban literacy rates for both men and women (95 percent and 90 percent, respectively) are well above the national average. Gender differences are more significant in rural areas – nearly 58 percent of rural adult women are literate, compared to 78 percent of rural adult men.

Important cross-regional differences are also observed in Table 8. The literacy rate in the Northern region (87.2 percent) is well above the national average. The Northern region also reports less gender differences in adult literacy than in the Central and Southern regions. While the gender literacy gap in the Northern region is 11 percentage points, in the Southern and Central regions it rises to 21. In the Southern and Central regions, roughly 56 percent of women are literate, compared to 78 percent and 76 percent of men, respectively.

Table 8: Adult literacy rate by region and district (%)

	Males	Females	Total
Northern Region	***92.9***	***81.8***	***87.2***
Chitipa	89.8	71.3	80.3
Karonga	89.7	77.1	83.2
Rumphi	95.1	83.7	89.3
Nkhata Bay	91.5	76.8	83.8
Mzimba	92.0	82.7	87.3
Mzuzu City	*98.6*	*95.9*	*97.2*
Central Region	***76.1***	***55.5***	***65.5***
Kasungu	82.5	62.5	72.6

[75] World Bank, 2006.
[76] This section examines information concerning adult literacy rates and educational attainment of adults (who we can assume have completed their years of schooling) based on the WMS 2008 data for the population of Malawi aged 15 and above. To capture existing inequalities in education, the information is disaggregated by location (rural-urban, districts), sex and age group. Including age as a variable in the analysis provides some information to determine whether relative improvements of educational opportunities for younger generations are taking place.
[77] UNICEF data indicate that the average national literacy rate is 72 percent (UNICEF Statistics).

Ntchisi	73.2	61.1	67.0
Dowa	73.4	52.3	62.9
Nkhota kota	79.1	53.4	65.9
Salima	76.0	51.5	63.4
Dedza	62.6	39.9	50.1
Ntcheu	75.5	56.4	65.2
Lilongwe Rural	72.5	51.1	61.4
Lilongwe City	***95.0***	***86.9***	***91.1***
Mchinji	76.8	55.0	65.9
Southern Region	77.8	56.2	66.4
Balaka	77.2	57.4	66.3
Mangochi	59.1	38.2	47.8
Machinga	66.8	37.3	50.9
Zomba Rural	78.1	57.2	67.2
Zomba Municipality	***93.6***	***87.7***	***90.7***
Chirazulu	79.9	59.8	68.6
Blantyre Rural	84.7	62.6	73.0
Blantyre City	***92.9***	***90.9***	***91.9***
Mwanza	81.4	60.0	70.1
Thyolo	84.6	60.3	71.8
Mulanje	79.4	54.4	65.6
Phalombe	77.6	51.3	63.9
Chikwawa	71.7	43.6	57.5
Nsanje	69.0	43.5	56.0
TOTAL	***79.9***	***60.5***	***69.8***

Source: WMS, 2008

Higher male literacy is consistent throughout all age groups. Gender differences are slightly lower for younger cohorts (in both rural and urban areas), implying some progress towards gender parity for younger generations. The greatest gender differences in literacy rates are found in the population aged 55 and above, with an average national difference of 40 percentage points in favour of men. All age groups in rural areas lag behind urban areas, especially women aged 25 years and above.

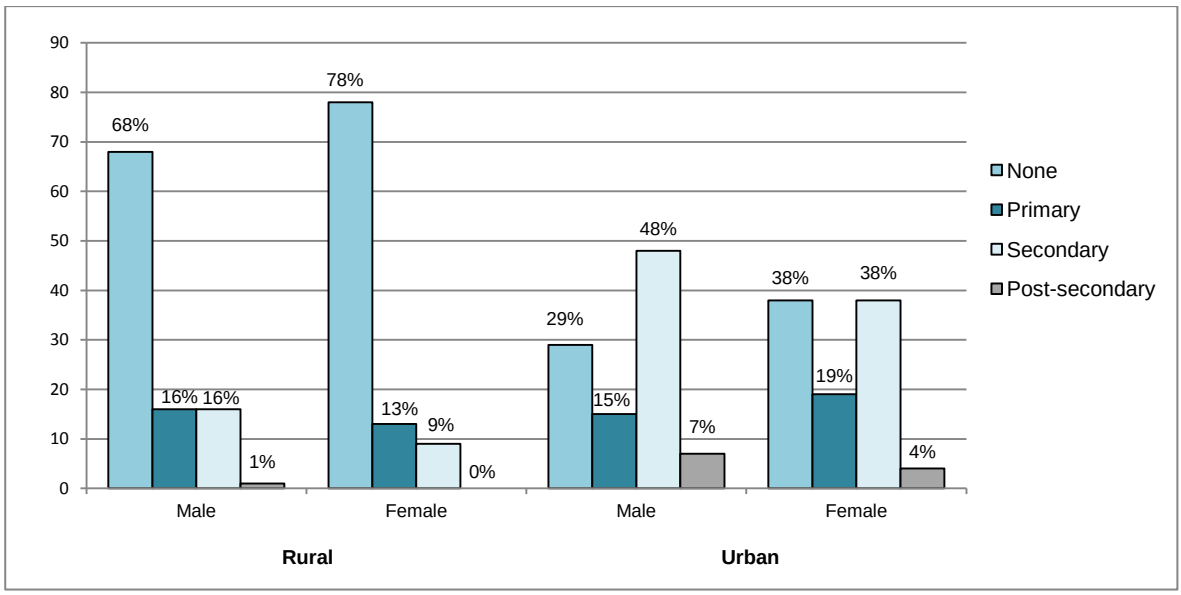
Table 9: Adult literacy rate by age group in rural and urban areas (%)

	Rural			**Urban**		
	Males	***Females***	***Differential***	***Males***	***Females***	***Differential***
15-24	85	79	6	96	95	1
25-34	81	63	18	95	92	3
35-44	77	48	28	97	87	9
45-54	74	41	34	94	82	12
55+	62	23	39	88	74	15
TOTAL	***78***	***57***	***21***	***95***	***91***	***4***

Source: WMS, 2008

Nearly 80 percent of rural women and 70 percent of rural men have not completed primary education (Graph 29). There is a relatively lower gender disparity between men and women with completed primary education, which in rural areas is 10 percentage points in favour of men. High gender and rural-urban disparities, however, are found in the attainment of post-primary education. In rural areas, secondary education rates are extremely low overall, and yet twice as many men than women have completed secondary education (16 percent and 9 percent, respectively).

Graph 29: Educational attainment level for rural and urban population aged 15 years and above (%)



Source: WMS, 2008

The distribution of educational attainment across the country mirrors that of adult literacy (Table 10). There are important regional, and even more striking urban-rural, disparities with significantly more highly educated people living in urban areas. This is particularly true in the Southern region, where the greatest rural-urban disparities can be observed.

The rural North has fewer people with no educational qualifications and the highest share of the rural population that has attained primary and post-primary education. It has to be noted that the Northern region is the least densely populated and has the lowest poverty rates, which contribute to higher literacy rates and educational attainment among both men and women in rural and urban areas.

Significant differences are found when comparing the educational attainment of rural women across regions. In the rural areas of the Northern region, there are lower gender inequalities (however, still in favour of men) than in the other two regions. The Southern and Central regions present similar educational attainment patterns, with the large majority having no attained education – about 80 percent for women, and 70 percent for men, respectively.

Table 10: Highest educational attainment of population aged 15 years and above, by region (%)

	Rural		Urban	
	Males	***Females***	***Males***	***Females***
Northern Region				
None	56	69	27	36
Primary	21	20	21	24
Secondary	22	11	50	38

Post-secondary	1	0	3	1
Central Region				
None	72	81	34	44
Primary	14	12	14	15
Secondary	13	7	43	36
Post-secondary	1	0	9	4
Southern Region				
None	69	80	28	37
Primary	14	11	14	18
Secondary	15	8	51	39
Post-secondary	1	0	8	6

Source: WMS, 2008

Gender inequalities in education are also found when analyzing household characteristics. In general, members of female-headed households in both rural and urban areas have relatively lower educational attainment compared to members of male-headed households. About 32 percent and 13 percent of members of female-headed rural and urban households, respectively, have not completed primary education compared to 22 and 8 percent of members of male-headed rural and urban households. With regard to the attainment of primary education, the percentage is more consistent across male- and female-headed households, both in rural and urban areas. There are fewer members of FHHs achieving secondary education relative to MHHs, even if the differences are lower than for primary education. Further analysis would be required to draw conclusions about the effects of household composition in educational attainment. Factors that should be considered include heterogeneity in terms of household composition and the education level of the household head.

Table 11: Highest educational attainment of population aged 15 years and above disaggregated by the sex of the household head (%)

	Rural areas		**Urban areas**	
	MHH	***FHH***	***MHH***	***FHH***
None	21.9	32.2	7.5	12.8
Primary	61.5	55.2	45.5	45.1
Secondary	16.0	12.2	42.7	36.2
Post-secondary	0.6	0.3	4.4	5.9

Source: WMS, 2008

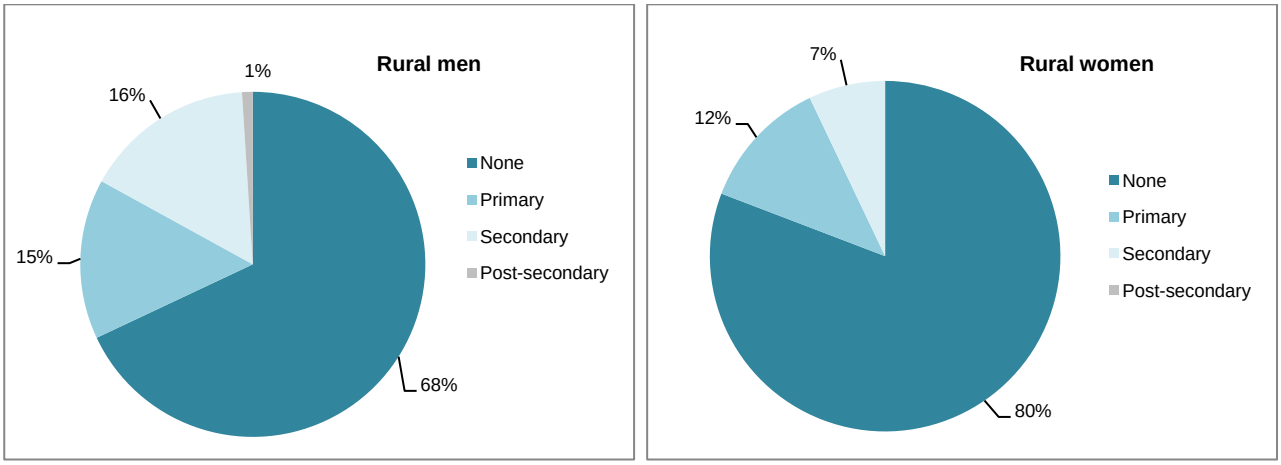
Overall, the urban-rural divide seems to be significant in terms of gender disparities and access to education. Limited educational infrastructure in rural areas and poverty, which affects more female-headed households, may be an important reason for these disparities. The nature of work in rural areas may also affect educational outcomes. Agricultural work is more demanding physically, and for women some household chores may take longer due to lack of physical infrastructure (e.g. the need to walk long distances to collect water). Also, the mostly manual nature of agriculture in Malawi[78] and lack of access to labour-saving technologies means that more household members may need to engage in agricultural activities, which in turn increases the probability of younger household members withdrawing from school.

[78] Farm mechanization is largely absent in Malawi's smallholder sector and most farm work is done manually (Takane, 2008).

Rural workers employed as *mlimi* have low education levels

The majority of rural workers (both men and women) have not completed any formal education. Low education levels are a major issue for rural workers as a whole, though women are particularly disadvantaged – 80 percent have not completed any formal education, compared to 68 percent of their male counterparts (graph 30).

Graph 30: Education level of rural workers (men and women)



Source: WMS, 2008

WMS 2008 data shows that the agricultural workforce is mostly composed of women and men without any completed formal education, while the other main economic sectors present more diversified patterns (Table 12). Both rural women and men with higher education levels tend to be less engaged in agriculture. Although descriptive statistics do not allow for establishing correlations and causalities, data indicate that those employed in sectors other than agriculture, in particular in social and community services sector, tend to have higher education levels.

Table 12: Level of education among rural women and men (%)

		None	Primary	Secondary	Post-secondary	Total
Agriculture	*Male*	72	15	13	0	100
	Female	82	12.2	5.7	0.1	100
Whole sale and retail	*Male*	49	18	31	2	100
	Female	53	18.2	26.5	2.2	100
Social and community services	*Male*	23	8	61	9	100
	Female	23	9	60	8	100

Source: WMS, 2008

Tables 13 and 14 illustrate that while the *mlimi* "sector" is largely made up of the rural workforce without any completed formal education, other sectors show a more differentiated pattern in terms of education level of the workforce. Although the share of rural employment in the public sector is minor, it is worth noting that those employed in this sector have higher education levels (in terms of secondary education attainment for both men and women). However, about a third of public sector workers do not have any completed formal education, which indicates that they may be employed in low-skilled positions. The only significant gender disparity that emerges from Tables 13 and 14 is that within the *mlimi,* the proportion of non-educated women is higher than that of their male counterparts.

Table 13: Employment of rural men by sector of employment and educational level

	Public	Private	Self-employment	Mlimi	NGO and others	Total
None	36%	58%	61%	73%	37%	68%
Primary	11%	16%	18%	15%	13%	15%
Secondary	47%	25%	20%	12%	44%	16%
Post-secondary	6%	1%	1%	0%	5%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: WMS, 2008

Table 14: Employment of rural women by sector of employment and education level

	Public	Private	Self-employment	Mlimi	NGO and others	Total
None	33%	65%	64%	82%	31%	80%
Primary	12%	13%	19%	12%	21%	12%
Secondary	48%	21%	16%	6%	41%	7%
Post-secondary	7%	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: WMS, 2008

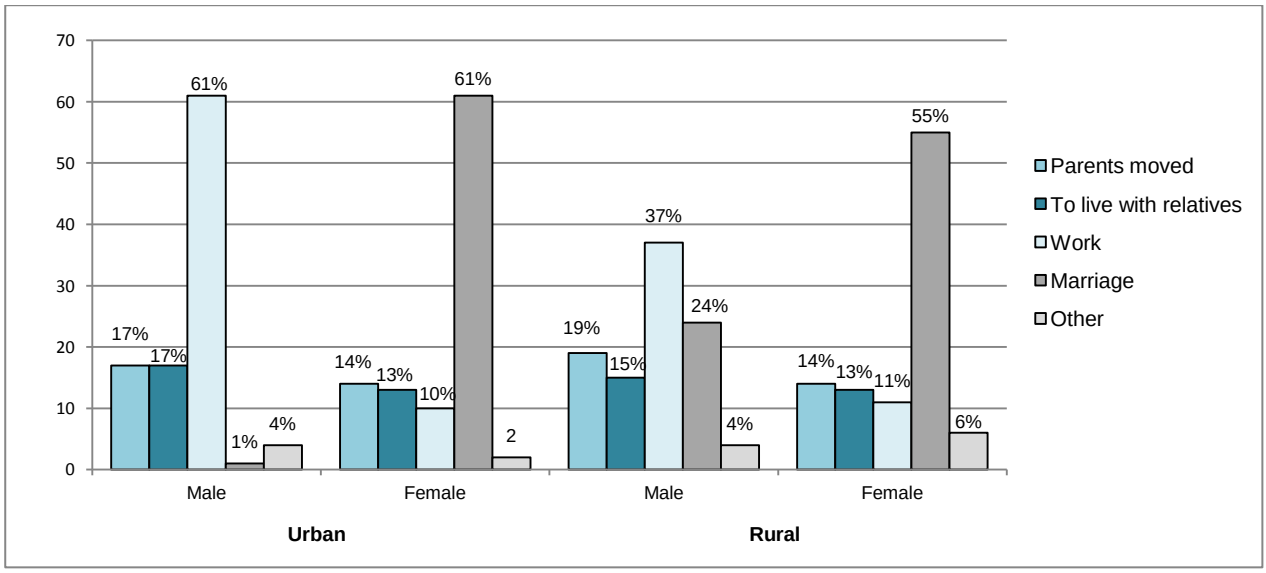
PART IV: GENDER PATTERNS IN MOBILITY

Did you Know?

- There is significant internal labour mobility in Malawi, which has a gender dimension.
- Seasonal migration is an important reason for labour mobility. There are significant flows of labour migration from rural to urban areas, and the main driver for both men and women is to look for a job.
- There are gender differences with regard to reasons for internal migration: for men it is labour driven, whereas for women it is mainly because of marriage (even if many also move for work reasons).
- There are differences between rural labour migration drivers for men and women. For men the main reasons include returning from work elsewhere and looking for land; while for women looking for land is relatively more important, followed by returning from work elsewhere.
- Women are more likely to move shorter distances (e.g. within the district), while men are more likely to move to more distant locations (e.g. to other districts or to urban areas).
- Available data on these issues is limited. More evidence is needed to better inform policies.

Malawi is characterized by high internal mobility, with the main reasons for migration being labour-related. Over half of rural women who migrate to another rural or urban area do so because of marriage (55 percent), compared to only 24 percent of men who migrate for the same reason. On the contrary, only 11 percent of rural women migrate because of work-related reasons, compared to 37 percent of men. Although marriage (or family reasons) is the main reason for migration among women, this does not exclude that within the marriage agreement or upon marriage itself, women who have migrated are expected to undertake work activities. In general, given the complexity of migration, the reasons for it often overlap.

Graph 31: Labour-related migration versus other reasons for migrating

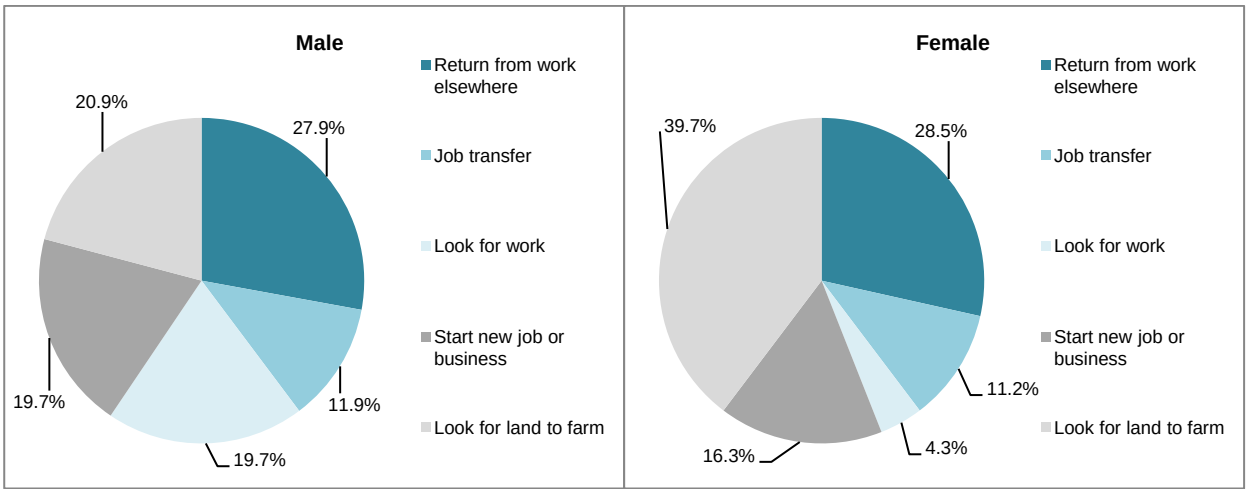


Source: RIGA, 2004/05

For people who migrate internally for work, the specific purpose depends on the destination of the migrant. There are also interesting differences according to the sex of the migrant. For male labour migrants moving from urban to rural areas, the main driver appears to be returning from work in another location. This might be explained by seasonal movement of rural workers, who may combine periods of work back home with periods of work in urban or other rural areas. Looking for land to farm appears to be

particularly important for women migrating towards rural areas. Overall the reasons for labour migration to rural areas appear to be more evenly distributed among male labour migrants than for women.

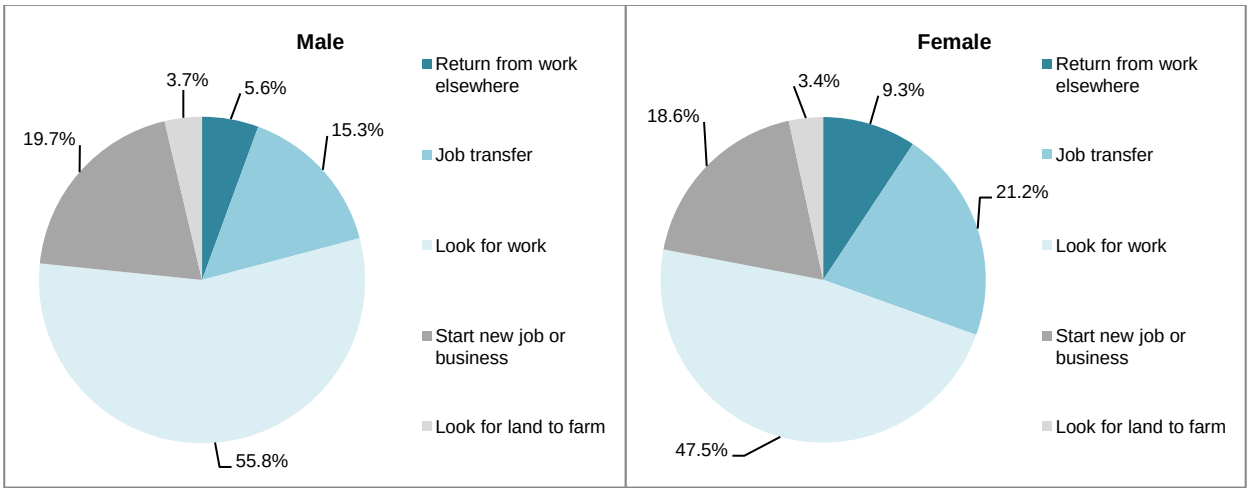
Graph 32: Male and female labour-related migration to rural areas



Source: RIGA, 2004/05

The main reason for moving to urban areas for both men and women is searching for a job, though this reason appears more important for men than for women. Interestingly, job transfer seems to be an important reason, in particular for women labourers moving to urban centres. Nearly one fifth of both men and women migrate to urban areas because they want to start a new business.

Graph 33: Male and female labour-related migration to urban areas

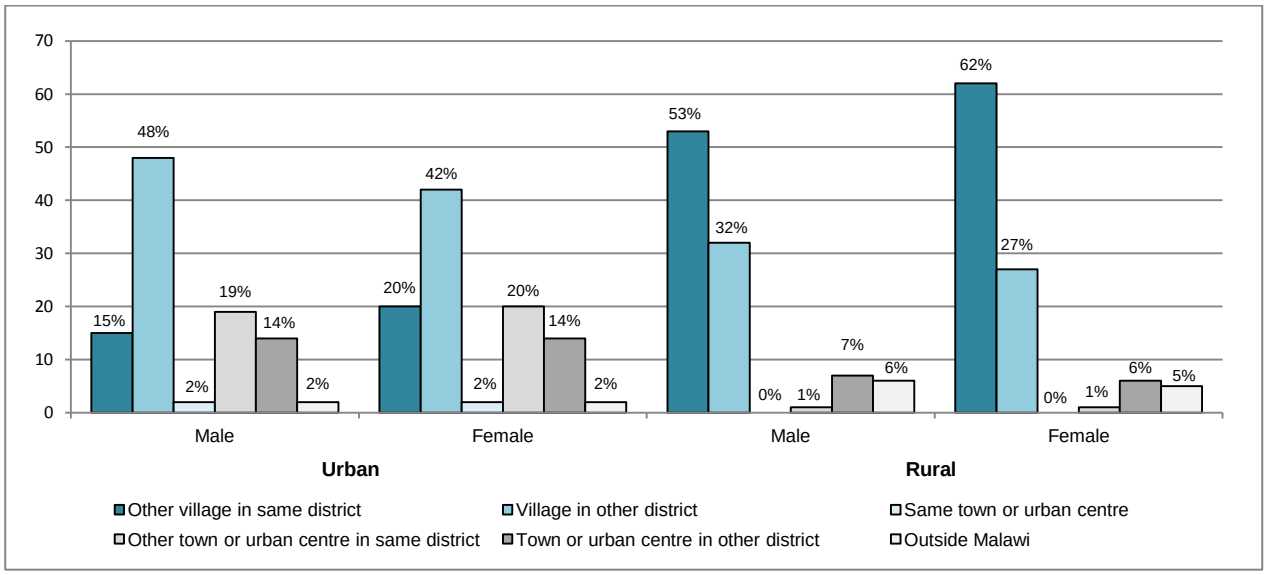


Source: RIGA, 2004/05

The rural population in Malawi is characterised by high labour mobility (Graph 34). The majority of rural men and women (85 percent and 89 percent, respectively) that migrated for work came from other rural areas (villages within their own district or from other districts). Within-district labour mobility prevails among rural workers – 62 percent of women and 53 percent of men have moved from another village within the same district. These labour mobility patterns could be linked to seasonal movements of the rural workforce, which may in turn respond to household strategies for income diversification. In terms of gender differences, estimates show that women are more likely to move in search of work within the district, while men are more likely to seek work in more distant locations (e.g. in other districts or urban areas). Urban-to-rural migration on the other hand is relatively low for both men and women (8 percent and 7 percent, respectively).

The majority of female and male urban migrant workers moved from rural areas (around 62 percent), predominantly from other districts (48 percent of urban men and 42 percent of urban women). Migrants from other countries are mainly located in rural areas – there are three times as many foreign migrants in rural areas as in urban areas (for both women and men).

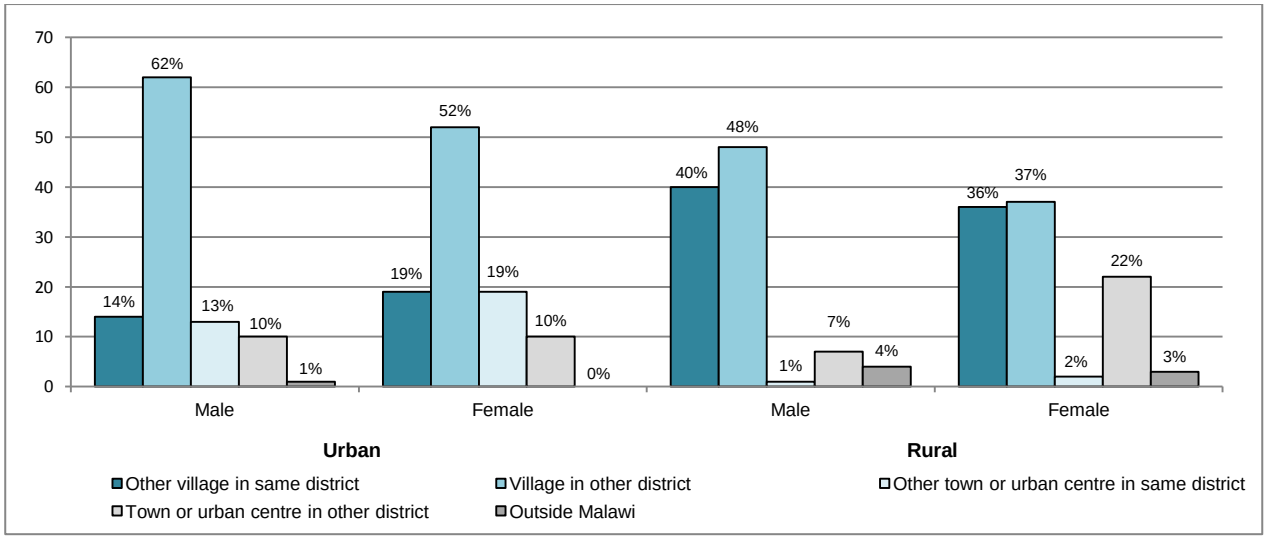
Graph 34: Place of origin of rural and urban labour migrants



Source: RIGA, 2004/05

Compared to figures for the rural population in general, rural youth are relatively more likely to move from one district to another. Forty-eight percent of young rural males and 37 percent of young rural females have moved from a village in another district, relative to 32 percent and 27 percent of men and women, respectively. Moreover, youth tend to move to more distant locations to seek work, especially young men.

Graph 35: Place of origin of youth migrants



Source: IHS2, 2004/05

Migration is present in rural areas, and is characterized by high rates of internal mobility with specific gender differences. Impacts of reallocation of labour and remittances on migrant households need to be further analysed. Moreover, the presence of international migrants employed in rural areas should be further researched and analysed in order to assess working conditions. More migration-related data is necessary to better inform related policies.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

This country profile provides information about social and gender inequalities associated with rural employment issues. It has a descriptive orientation, presenting information that can be used for more specific and in-depth analysis.

The country profile uses the most recent nationally representative data available in the country. The selection of the datasets and indicators was conditioned to a significant extent to frame the analysis around social and gender inequalities, taking into account some of the pillars of the decent work framework (job creation and quality of employment). After an appraisal of the most recent available data[79], four databases[80] were selected for the development of the Malawi Country Profile:

- Population and Housing Census of Malawi, 1998 and 2008
- Malawi Welfare Monitoring Survey (WMS), 2008
- Integrated Household Survey (IHS2), 2004/05
- Rural Income Generating Activities (RIGA), 2004/05

These databases have been used in a complementary manner to cover the different sections of the country profile, bearing in mind that they are not directly comparable. At the bottom of each table, graph and map, the corresponding source is indicated.

The analysis of the Population and Housing Censuses (1998 and 2008) has mainly been used in the Demographic section. Having access to the most recent population data made it possible to identify some interesting demographic patterns over the ten year timeframe. Other sections of the country profile have utilized data from the IHS2 and WMS surveys, as well as the RIGA database (which is based on IHS2). Both the IHS2 and the WMS are part of the Integrated Household Survey programme of Malawi. This programme entails the realization of (a) a comprehensive Integrated Household Survey every five years and (b) a shorter Welfare Monitoring Survey every year in between Integrated Household Surveys. The Welfare Monitoring Survey is a much lighter questionnaire than the Integrated Household Survey. For the country profile, the WMS provided more recent data, however, for a series of indicators it was necessary to use IHS2 data.

The RIGA dataset is based on the IHS2. It provides information that is relevant to labour issues by reorganizing the information originally contained in the IHS2 and by creating new variables. RIGA is a joint project of FAO, the World Bank and the American University in Washington.

The use of the Integrated Household Survey 2004/05 and the RIGA 2004/05 dataset needed the consideration of household and individual weights so that the sample properly represented the Malawian population. These two weighting variables were already included within the datasets and were therefore applied in the calculations.

Additional data already processed by the National Statistical Office of Malawi (NSO) have been also used, in addition to the above mentioned datasets.

[79] It is acknowledged that a Labour Force Survey would have been a suitable source for many of the labour market indicators used in this country profile. Unfortunately, a Labour Force Source survey has not been conducted in Malawi since twenty years. There are nonetheless plans to carry out one in the coming future (as stated in the Decent Work Country Programme of Malawi).

[80] For further information on these databases visit the National Statistical Office of Malawi website (www.nso.malawi.net) and the Rural Income Generating Activities (RIGA) website (http://www.fao.org/es/ESA/riga/index_en.htm).

Statistical programs used

For the statistical part of this Country Profile, three software packages were used to analyse data:

- *Stata v.10:* For the Integrated Household Survey 2004/05 and the RIGA 2004/05 datasets.
- *SPSS v.17:* For the Welfare Monitoring Survey 2008 database.
- *Microsoft Excel:* For the Population and Housing Censuses 1998 and 2008.

Key definitions and concepts

Age structure of the population

The population pyramids represent the age structure of the population from 0 to 85 years old and above. The age distribution of the Malawian population shows that an important share of people lives beyond the estimated national life expectancy rate. This may be due to registry problems[81] (both for births and deaths) linked partially to high levels of illiteracy in the country – especially in rural areas – and to technological infrastructural deficits, which pose challenges for the maintenance of reliable records. Thus, following a number of preliminary assessments, the upper age limit of the population pyramid has been set at 85 years. People reported older than this age have been grouped in the "85+" category.

Age structure of the working population

Five age groups have been defined, starting from 15 years onwards. Each group comprises a ten year range, except for the last one which includes all workers aged 55 and above.

Children and child labour

Child labour is assessed for the group aged between 5 and 14 years. It considers two age categories: from 5 to 11 years, and from 12 to 14 years. The reason for this is the need to consider differences between these two age groups in terms of participation in productive and domestic activities, which can have implications in terms of school participation and child labour. This is in line with ILO standards (18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, Resolution concerning statistics of child labour; ILO, Geneva, 2008).

Disaggregation

Data is disaggregated by sex, age, place of residence (rural-urban), geographic location (district/region). Data at district and regional levels have been calculated over the district and regional population, respectively.

Education groups

For indicators related to education, data from the WMS 2008 have been used. Four education groups have been defined in terms of educational attainment. This is derived from the variable "higher qualification degree obtained", namely: (i) none – those with no educational qualification; (ii) primary – those holding the Primary School Leaving Certificate; (iii) secondary – those holding the Junior Certificate of Education or the Malawi School Certificate of Education; and (iv) post-secondary – holders of non-university diplomas, university diplomas, or post-graduate programs. The use of the highest level of education attained as an indicator for educational achievement requires some caution when interpreting the data as it does not adequately capture those individuals who have started but not completed a certain level of education. It is nonetheless a good indicator to gather evidence about the education system in terms of quantity of schooling.

[81] Different population counts have been found in the Population and Housing Census 2008 when referring to the same group of the population.

Employment

People classified as "employed" are those who participate in the labour force and have a job, irrespective of frequency or duration. Employment includes both formal and informal work, paid (in cash, in kind, or barter) and unpaid, that contributes to the livelihood of the household. This includes work on the agricultural holding, both of the owner and of family members helping out without pay. The period of reference for employment related questions of the WMS is the last week – i.e. any type of work during the last seven days, without any restriction on the number of hours or type of activity. The WMS has been used to calculate labour force participation and employment/unemployment, as well as for questions regarding "main activity" or "main job". In view of the relevance of multiple jobs in rural areas, the country profile also looks at second jobs and "*ganyu* labour" of rural workers. The IHS2 and RIGA database have been used to examine these issues. The period of reference for questions related to second jobs and *ganyu* labour in both data sets is the last 12 months.

Frequency and duration of a job

With regard to duration, a full-year job refers to an activity that is performed for ten or more months on a yearly basis, whereas a part-year job is performed for less than nine months. Regarding frequency, a full-time job is an activity that is performed for 35 or more hours a week, whereas a part-time job is performed for less than 35 hours a week. The analysis of job frequency and duration in the country profile follows the RIGA classification. The RIGA database provides relevant information about the nature of contracts and the amount of time dedicated to work-related activities. RIGA classifies labour according to labour time characteristics of jobs in order to capture the degree to which an individual is involved in the labour market. To do so, RIGA defines four categories of labour engagement: full-time (FT) vs. part-time (PT); and year round work (FY) vs. casual/seasonal labour (PY). The combination of these categories gives a snapshot of rural labour markets in terms of stability and casual work. The FYFT category refers to full-time employment, while *ganyu* is captured within the PYPT category and seasonal work within PYFT.[82]

Income activities

In the income section, data from the RIGA database are used. In particular, "participation in" and "share of income from" are used as complementary indicators to assess the diversification of income sources and the nature of the job from which they derive the income. The income aggregates constructed for the RIGA database contain seven main income sources (crop, livestock, agricultural wages, non-agricultural wages, non-farm enterprises, transfers, other non-labour activities), which are grouped into four categories: (i) on-farm activities (self-employed farming, income being the sum of crop and livestock production); (ii) agricultural wage activities; (iii) non-farm activities (the sum of non-agricultural wage employment and non-farm enterprises); and (iv) transfers/other containing public and private transfer income and other non-labour sources). One can further aggregate income into (a) off-farm activities (the sum of agricultural wages, non-farm income and transfers/other); (b) non-agricultural activities (the sum of the non-farm and transfers/other); and (c) agricultural activities (the sum of on-farm and agricultural wages).

[82] See also: Quiñones, E.J., De la O-Campos, A. P., Rodríguez-Alas, C., Hertz, T. and Winters, P. (2009): "Methodology for Creating the RIGA-L Database". FAO-ESA.

Labour force participation/activity rate	This includes the population aged 15 years and above who are currently working or actively looking for a job. Students, unpaid domestic workers and others are not considered labour force participants. The minimum age of 15 utilized in the country profile is line with the Malawi Employment Act 2000, which prohibits employment of children aged 14 or under.
Rural	The NSO classification of rural areas has been adopted in this country profile. Only four districts in Malawi are considered urban (Lilongwe, Mzuzu, Blantyre, and Zomba), and all the rest are classified as rural. This classification is also adopted in the data sets used in the profile (WMS, IHS2, and RIGA).
Sector of economic activity	This includes agriculture (including agriculture, forestry and fishing); mining and quarrying; manufacturing; electricity, water and other utilities; construction; wholesale and retail, marketing, hotel and restaurants; transport and communications; social and community services. As pointed out in this country profile, given the sizeable share of the population employed in agriculture, it would be useful to collect data by agricultural subsector.
Sector of employment	This includes the public sector, private sector, self-employed, *mlimi*, NGOs and others.
Sex ratio	This common demographic indicator is calculated as follows: (number of males/number of females) x100.
Status of employment	This includes the following categories: *mlimi* (unpaid/subsistence farming); wage/salary; payment in kind; *ganyu* (casual hourly/daily labour); unpaid family business workers; and self-employed.
Time use in productive and domestic activities	An assessment of time allocation between productive and domestic activities was carried out for the working population, youth and children. Productive (economic) activities include waged labour, *ganyu*, *mlimi*, non-agricultural business activities and household agricultural activities, whereas domestic (non-economic) activities refer to cooking, and water and firewood collection. Domestic reproductive activities such as caring for children and other family members are not captured in the data used for the profile. Both categories have been defined according to the available variables in the IHS2 2004/05.
Unemployment	People classified as "unemployed" are those who participate in the labour force but who do not have a job, and are looking for one.
Youth	Those aged from 15 to 24 years old. This definition is according to international standards – it was drafted during preparations for the International Youth Year (1985) and later endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly (see A/36/215 and resolution 36/28, 1981).

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Malawi Law Commission:

http://www.lawcom.mw/index.htm?http%3A//www.lawcom.mw/gender.htm

OECD Gender Equality and Social Institutions Index (SIGI) for Malawi:

http://genderindex.org/country/malawi

SADC Protocol on Gender and Development:

http://www.sadc.int/index/browse/page/465

UNFPA:

http://www.unfpa.org/hiv/docs/report-cards/malawi.pdf

UNICEF Malawi Fact Sheet – Justice for Children:

http://www.unicef.org/malawi/Justice_for_Children_public.pdf

University of New Brunswick – Centre for Property Studies:

http://www.unb.ca/fredericton/cps/index.html