

MALAWI GUIDE

Brief Note for International Staff Arriving in Malawi



UNDP Malawi

2005

Malawi Brief

INTRODUCTION TO MALAWI.....	4
GEOGRAPHY.....	4
CLIMATE.....	5
HUMAN GEOGRAPHY.....	6
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE.....	6
RELIGION.....	7
LANGUAGE.....	7
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	7
ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.....	8
CULTURAL NOTES.....	9
TRAVEL.....	11
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL.....	11
DOMESTIC TRAVEL.....	11
SHIPMENT OF PERSONAL GOOD.....	13
PACKING & SHIPMENT OF GOODS.....	13
CUSTOM REGULATIONS.....	13
VEHICLES & PERSONAL EFFECTS.....	14
DOMESTIC PETS.....	15
FIREARMS.....	15
VISA & IMMIGRATION.....	16
VISA REQUIREMENTS.....	16
ID CARDS / RESIDENT PERMITS.....	16
UPON ARRIVAL.....	17
HEALTH CLEARANCE.....	17
COMMUNICATIONS.....	18
TELEPHONE AND FAX SERVICES.....	18
EMAIL SERVICES.....	18
MAIL SERVICES: NATIONAL POSTAL SERVICES, UN DIPLOMATIC POUCH, AND COURIERS.....	18
MONEY, WEIGHTS & MEASURES.....	20
CURRENCY.....	20
BANKING.....	20
LOCAL WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.....	21
HOTELS AND HOUSING.....	22
HOTELS.....	22
HOUSE HUNTING.....	23
FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT.....	24
HOUSEHOLD HELP.....	25
UTILITIES.....	25
HEALTH & MEDICAL FACILITIES.....	27
HEALTH CONDITIONS.....	27
MEDICAL FACILITIES & EVACUATION.....	27

COMMON ILLNESSES	28
DENTISTS & OPTICIANS	28
EDUCATION.....	29
HIGHER EDUCATION	29
DESIGNATED PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS	29
SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT	31
FOOD & CLOTHING	32
FOOD.....	32
DINING OUT	33
CLOTHING	33
U.N. AGENCIES	35
OFFICE ACCOMMODATION & WORKING HOURS	35
SECURITY	36
RESIDENTIAL SECURITY	36
INSURANCE	37
SOCIAL LIFE & RECREATION	38
RADIO & TELEVISION.....	38
OUTDOOR SPORTS & CLUBS	39
NIGHTLIFE.....	39
THE LAKE	39
BIRD & GAME VIEWING.....	40
PAINTING AND GARDENING	40
WALKING & HIKING	40
TOURISM.....	41
THE LAKE.....	41
NATIONAL PARKS & GAME RESERVES.....	41
THE MOUNTAINS.....	42
OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST.....	42
REGIONAL TOURISM.....	43
BOOKS & NEWSPAPERS.....	43
U.N. AND & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS	44
PRACTICAL INFORMATION ABOUT TOWN.....	45
PLACES OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.....	45
UN / BILATERAL & DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS.....	45
SPOUSE FORM.....	47
RESTAURANTS	48
IMPORTANT NUMBERS.....	48

INTRODUCTION TO MALAWI

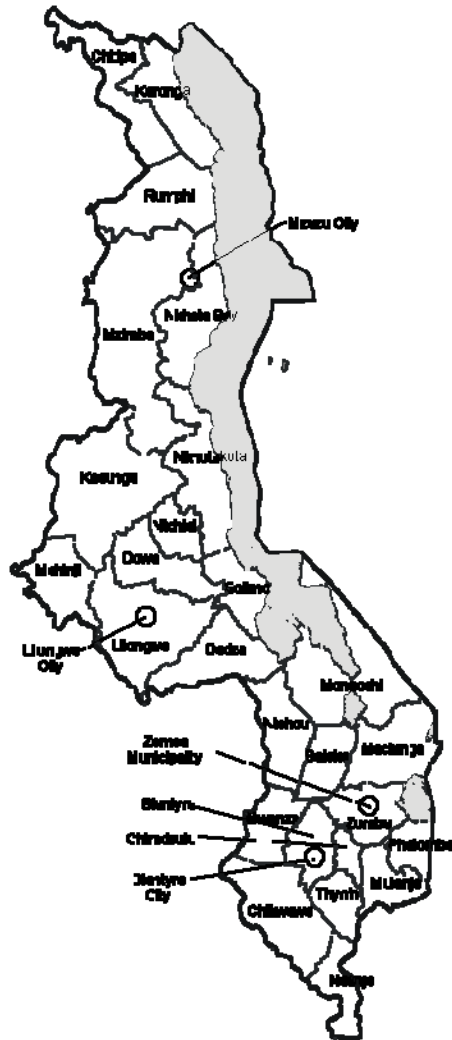
Geography

The Republic of Malawi is a small, landlocked country in East Central Africa, comprising of more than 20% water and lying entirely within the tropics. It is 896 kilometres in length and varies in width from 80 to 160 kilometres, a land area of nearly 120,000 sq km. It is bordered by Mozambique on the east and southwest, by Tanzania on the north and northeast, and by Zambia on the west and northwest.

For a small country Malawi has a vast range of geographical features. There are high plateaus in the north reaching to heights of between 1,830 and 2,440 m (6,000 to 8,000 ft). The lowlands of the Kasungu & Lilongwe plains in the centre stand at 1,070 m (3,500 ft) high. Then there are the mountains of the Shire Highlands namely Zomba Plateau (2,130 m / 7,000 ft) and the Mulanje Massif (3,000 m / 9,847 ft), which is the highest mountain in Central Africa. The Lower Shire Valley, only just above sea level is at the southern most point.

Lake Malawi, formally Lake Nyasa and almost 2 million years old, makes up one fifth of the country's surface area and is Africa's third largest lake. The lake is the southern end of the Rift Valley and is one of the deepest lakes in the world. Its surface level is 470 m (1,555 ft) above sea level. It contains nearly 300 species of fish, 90 per cent of which are unique to the lake. Its only outlet is the Shire River, which flows southwards to join the Zambezi River on its journey to the Indian Ocean.

The country is made up of a variety of woodlands, tropical rainforests, open savannah high altitude grasslands and scrub. One will be amazed by the enormous baobab trees, the legendary fever trees, and the tall palm, which bear hard vegetable ivory nuts used for carved ornaments. There are still some forests of the unique Mulanje cedar on the Mulanje Massif



and one of the largest forests in the world the man-made forest in Chikangawa Forest in Mzimba District in the northern region. The human pressure upon Malawi's natural environment is very serious, with more and more of the country being put under cultivation of maize and cash crops and being cleared for human habitation. The woods of Malawi are under dire threat from the local population's need for firewood as fuel.

During the rainy season (November to April) the country is lush with green maize, tobacco, high elephant grass, plants and trees. After the rains stop, the land dries quickly, the green is replaced by dusty brown except for a few scattered evergreen plants and trees, principally mangoes. In September-November, the country is ablaze with the purple jacarandas and the deep red Flame Trees.

Climate

Malawi experiences a tropical continental climate. There are three seasons in Malawi: the dry/hot (August to November), the wet/hot (December to April), and the cool and drizzly (May to August).

Rainfall varies according to altitude but in most parts of the country there is sufficient rain for dry-land farming. The wide range in climate enables Malawi to grow both tropical and sub-tropical crops, such as maize, tobacco, groundnuts, cotton, fruits and vegetables.

Daylight hours in Malawi are roughly 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The dry winter months of the Central and Northern regions from May to August are typified by sunny skies and cold nights. Temperatures can fall to -2°C (Mzuzu) and 1°C (Lilongwe). October is the hottest month (30°C) as the humidity gradually increases. The first rains normally break in November and continue until April.



Picture courtesy of Central Africa Wilderness Safaris

Human Geography

While a census is long overdue, the current estimated population is 12.5million. Forty-five percent are under the age of 15 years. Eighty percent live in the rural areas. The average population density is 110 persons per square km. The Southern Region is the most densely populated, while the Northern Region is the least densely populated. At the current population growth rate of 3.2 per cent per annum Malawi's population is expected to double by the year 2018. Life expectancy is 35 years of age.

The indigenous population of Malawi is composed of many ethnic groups, the largest being the Chewa and Nyanja, who live mainly in the Southern and Central Regions, the Yao and Lomwe in the South, and the Tumbuka, Tonga and Nkhonde in the North.

National literacy stands at 40 % for females and 72 % for males.

Women are key workers and producers at household and national levels. They are farmers, income earners, traders and family caretakers. Women represent two-thirds of the full-time farming population.

Administrative Structure

Malawi is dividedPage 6 of 50 into three regions: Central, Southern and Northern and there are a total of 26 districts. There are four main urban centres in the country:

Lilongwe: (Alt. 1,065 m), Central Region. Commonly known as the sleepy capital since January 1975, Lilongwe has evolved into a full capital when newly elected President Bingu Wa Mutharika commanded all government offices to move to Lilongwe after the May 2004 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. The current estimated population is just fewer than 500,000. It is the seat of Government and is served by Lilongwe International Airport. The UN is based here.

Blantyre: (Alt. 1,035 m), Southern Region. It is Malawi's commercial, media, and industrial centre. Founded by missionaries in the late 19th century it has always been associated with tea growing and tobacco. The city has an estimated population of just over 500,000. It was formerly the seat of some Government departments including the judiciary and ADMARC.

Zomba: (Alt 1,490 m), Southern Region. This small town was Malawi's capital until 1975. Now a quiet, little town with an estimated population of 70,000 it houses Chancellor College, the main campus of the University of Malawi.

Mzuzu: (Alt. 1,280 m) is the administrative headquarters for the Northern Region. The current population is almost 100,000.

Religion

75 percent of the population is Christian, with 20 percent comprising of Muslims and Hindu. The remaining adheres to traditional beliefs, including ancestor worship. (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Places of Worship*).

Language

The official working language is English, while Chichewa is the national language. Other local languages are spoken, of which the main are Yao and Tumbuka. All local languages use the Roman script. English is taught at all schools and is widely spoken.

Historical Background

The first organised settlements are thought to have taken place in about 8,000 BC, when the Akafula, part Bushman, part Bantu, who lived from hunting and fishing, moved in from the north. Some 9,000 years later, the first Bantu groups began to appear from the north and west. They were agriculturists and iron-smelters and more warlike than the Akafula. At first the two co-existed peacefully, but in the 16th Century the Akafula were overrun and decimated by the Amaravi from Katanga. The conquerors established their rule over the lake country and over areas of what are today Zambia and Mozambique. The Maravi Empire lasted for over two centuries.

When in 1859 David Livingstone, the British missionary explorer, first reached Lake Nyasa, as Lake Malawi was then called, the Maravi Empire had collapsed under a series of invasions. The Yao themselves driven by Arab traders from their territory in northern Mozambique had entered from the north and west inspiring terror by their raids and mass destruction of Amaravi settlements. In the 1840s Arab slave-traders had begun to enter the lake country from Zanzibar and, often assisted by Yao chiefs, captured and enslaved whole communities. This period of violence, fear and atrocity continued until the Arab Sultan Mlozi's defeat at Mpata, near Karonga by the British in 1895.

A British protectorate was declared over the Shire country in 1889 and extended over the hinterland and adjoining Lake Nyasa in 1891. In 1907 the country was named the Nyasaland Protectorate. In 1953, the territories of Nyasaland, Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia were incorporated into a Federation.

In 1960, a new constitution was introduced, which provided for the direct election of Africans to the Legislative Council. Dr. Banda became the first Prime Minister in 1963. The Federation was subsequently dissolved and independence was formally granted on July 6, 1964.

The country was renamed Malawi which is a modern derivation of Maravi which means "land of the fire". Malawi became a member of the United Nations in 1964 and joined the Commonwealth in 1966. In 1970 Parliament declared Dr. Banda Life President of the Republic. The Malawi Congress Party was then the only political party in the country and Malawi continued as a one-party state until 1994.

In March 1992, a Pastoral Letter issued by Malawi's Catholic bishops decried the oppressive policies of the dictatorial Malawi Congress Party regime under Dr. Banda. This initiated a movement for political change. Major donors added pressure in May 1992 by suspending non-humanitarian assistance to Malawi. Reluctantly, the Malawi Congress Party Government gave in to demands for a referendum to elicit people's opinion on the continuation of a one-party state. Two new parties, the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD), gained prominence. In a referendum, held on June 14, 1993, more than 60 percent of Malawians voted to change to a multi-system of governance.

Subsequent to the Referendum, Malawians went to the polls on May 17, 1994 to elect a new Parliament and a President by universal adult suffrage. The UDF President, Bakili Muluzi became Malawi's first democratically elected President for a five-year term. Muluzi was re-elected in 1999. Although he tried to stand for a third time through a Bill known as the Third Term Bill, he was forced to concede to defeat and the party paved the way for Bingu Wa Mutharika to run on the UDF ticket. Wa Mutharika won the 2004 race beating four other contenders. The current Constitution, adopted in 1995, provides for a Presidential system of government and guarantees fundamental human rights including freedom of speech and association.

Economic Conditions

Two-thirds of Malawians live below the poverty line, living on less than \$1/ day. The majority of households are unable to meet their food requirements.

Agriculture is the largest economic sector. The industrial base remains limited. The mineral sector is almost non-existent. Tourism has a potential for growth but is underdeveloped.

Agriculture accounts for one-third of GDP, 90 percent of export earnings, and three-quarters of total employment. The principal exports were estimated to be tobacco, sugar, tea and coffee. Non-farm employment opportunities are extremely limited, and levels of income are low.

Maize is the dominant subsistence crop and covers 80 per cent of all cultivated land. Irrigated crop production is currently limited to sugar production and a few isolated rice schemes and individual farms. Fishing and fish processing is a major economic activity around the lakes. Fish is a major source of animal protein for the people though stocks are being rapidly depleted. Livestock farming is still underdeveloped.

Manufacturing's overall contribution to GDP is about 14 percent. It comprises mainly of processing agricultural commodities, such as tobacco, tea, maize, sugar, groundnut, cotton, oil seeds, fruit and vegetables. Charcoal production also takes place in the north. Other industries in Malawi include the manufacture of plastics, textiles and clothing, shoes, agricultural implements, brick and roof tiles, cement, enamelware, soap, beverages, cigarettes, sweets and

biscuits, electrical appliances, canned fruits and vegetables, paint, truck and bus bodies, and stationery.

Limestone is quarried for the production of cement. Some of the coal deposits have been developed. The possibility of gas and oil being found under Lake Malawi has been established but no further exploration is currently under way.

Malawi depends entirely on hydro-power for its electricity. Current generation capacity stands at 240 MW per year, which is insufficient to meet load growth. Two major hydro-power projects are under way to provide an additional power of 100 MW. Currently, less than 4% of Malawians have access to the electricity grid. The main cities are prey to power cuts. For the majority of the population wood is the main source of energy.

Cultural Notes

The Malawian society is steeped in tradition and practices are strictly adhered to and exert a strong influence on the day-to-day life of an average Malawian.

There are an enormous variety of traditional songs and dances that use the drum as the major musical instrument. There are various traditional arts and crafts in wood and ivory. Traditional Medical Practitioners are commonly found in villages. Expatriate doctors should be conscious of the fact that their patients may have been taking local medicines before and at the same time as coming for consultations.

Malawians are a non-violent people, polite and very respectful of authority. They are averse to aggressive language and behaviour. Expatriates should keep this in view when dealing with subordinate staff at the office as well as with domestic staff.

While English is generally understood in the country, one can easily form a wrong impression of a domestic servant's level of understanding of the language. Therefore, when recruiting domestic help, an expatriate is best advised to call in a Malawian colleague to assist in explaining the terms and conditions of service.

Traditional chiefs and village headmen are highly respected and any activity taking place within their jurisdiction requires their sanction. Family ties are very strong among Malawians, which may result in family demands taking greater precedence over work considerations. Among these, attendance at funerals is of prime importance.



Picture courtesy of Central Africa Wilderness Safaris

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS related deaths makes funerals a more common occurrence. Nevertheless, the closeness of the deceased may not always necessitate attendance at the funeral and one therefore faces a very delicate task when having to decide on a request for leave to attend a funeral. As to one's own participation in a funeral, that depends on the relations with the deceased or with any of the deceased's close relatives. A cash contribution to the bereaved family is expected with the condolences. Funeral rites are very sacred and must be respected. Cars must stop on one side when a funeral is passing.

The practice of providing assistance to poor and needy relatives is based on the strong family structure. Nearly every employed Malawian provides some support to relatives in the extended family. Due to the high rate of HIV/AIDS and the increasing amount of orphaned children (estimated one million to date), there is a real and ever increasing pressure on the income-earner to provide for his /her dead siblings' children. Given this reality, colleagues, subordinate staff and domestic servants do not hesitate to seek financial assistance from an expatriate in times of need. Assistance is usually sought in the form of a loan.

TRAVEL

International Travel

There are two international airports in Malawi: Lilongwe and Blantyre. There are no direct flights from Malawi to Europe with Nairobi & Johannesburg being the international link off the continent. There is road access to all neighbouring countries. There is a goods rail service to the port of Nacala in Mozambique as well as a goods & passenger rail service to the Zambian border.

CF PRACTICAL INFO for airline information

Domestic Travel

Air Malawi operates regular flights between the major urban centres. There are also occasional flights to the luxury lodges on the lake (Club Makokola). It is also possible to hire private single and twin-engine aircrafts.

Two lake steamers operate services to lake towns and villages and connect with railways at the port of Chipoka. The steamers link the lakeside areas to Likoma Island and Chizumulu Islands.

The main highways in the country are tarred. A two-lane asphalt highway connects north and south, from Karonga to Blantyre. Some of the dirt roads are at times impassable during the rainy season. Most roads, as well as roads within towns and cities, are badly in need of maintenance. While travel during daylight hours is relatively safe, it is not recommended to travel after dark, both because of driving conditions and lack of security.

Bus services connect all main towns and conditions of travel are reasonable. There are also bus services of varying standards within the cities. Taxis are available in Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba. As most taxis do not have metres, charges per kilometre and fees depend on the customer's bargaining power.

There are a number of car rental companies in the main towns providing self-drive hire but charges are very high.

In Lilongwe:

AVIS.....01756 105
Rainbow Car Hire... 01 755 517
Silver Car Hire01 752 335
SS Rent a car.....01 750 122

SHIPMENT OF PERSONAL GOOD

Packing & Shipment of Goods

Malawi, being a landlocked country, qualifies for full surface shipment by airfreight. It is best to have personal effects shipped direct from the point of departure to Lilongwe. Personnel should contact their respective Agencies. If transfers en route are necessary, efforts should be made to route through European airports or South Africa.

Goods shipped by air should be in lightweight plywood boxes or strong waterproof cardboard boxes with metal or nylon bindings. Internal air shipments from Lilongwe to Blantyre must be in small packages as the planes to Blantyre can only take containers smaller than 47" x 43" x 24" (199cm x 109cm x 60cm). There is a reliable and cheaper overnight road freight service from Lilongwe to Blantyre and other parts of the country.

All personal goods should be consigned care of the UNDP office, Lilongwe, (CF PRACTICAL INFO for contact information) or other respective agency office. Surface shipments from Europe and the Americas can take up to six months. If one has to resort to surface shipments container arrangements should be used, or alternatively, strong wooden crates with metal bindings are advised. The best port of entry is Durban (South Africa) or Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania) or Beira / Nacala, Mozambique from where the consignment is transferred to Malawi by road. Serious delays should be expected at ports and borders.

Custom Regulations

United Nations personnel are entitled to import their household and personal effects free of customs duty within the first six months of arrival. They may also import a car, refrigerator, radio, record player, tape recorder, electrical appliances, photographic and cinema and video equipment etc. provided these were owned or ordered before arrival. Invoices giving the dates on which orders were placed should therefore be carefully retained to prove, if required, that new goods shipped were ordered before arrival.

UN personnel use mail order companies such as Peter Justensen and Samtrex (CF PRACTICAL INFO *Important numbers*) to purchase goods unavailable in Malawi. Samtrex, a South African based company specializes in food, drinks and household goods and can procure and ship other items when issued with exact description, such as car parts or computers.

Vehicles & Personal Effects

A car may be purchased duty-free locally from bonded stocks within six months of arrival as an alternative to duty-free import. A motorcycle may be imported or purchased locally duty-free if no car has been imported. Second-hand vehicles can also be purchased duty free from privileged persons. The re-sale of cars imported or bought duty-free is subject to the payment of customs duty and surtax, unless the buyer is him/herself entitled to duty-free purchase. Used cars are available but prices are usually high. New cars, particularly various models of Toyota, Hyundai, Daewoo and Land Rover, are usually in stock at local dealers.

Transport for private use is provided neither by the Government nor the UN projects. In view of the unreliable public transport system and prohibitive car rental charges, a private car is a necessity.

There are no installment loans available for any reason in Malawi; however, car advance loans are granted by some Agencies, for assignments of over two years.

One should check with one's Agency to determine loan entitlement. Whether locally purchased or privately imported, a percentage of transportation costs is also reimbursable. If one opts for importing a private vehicle, arrangements can be made with the shippers to have the vehicle delivered directly in Malawi.

Alternatively, a car may be imported. It should be shipped to Dar-es-Salaam, Beira or Durban and then driven / transported to Malawi. In this case, arrangements should be made to have the car cleared as soon as possible after it is off-loaded at the port. Cars can also be purchased in South Africa or Dubai and transported to Malawi.

Although all standard models are suitable for driving within the cities, cars with higher ground-clearances are recommended for country travel. Four-wheel drive vehicles are essential during the rainy season for up-country trips, if one intends to do much traveling. The most popular field vehicles in Malawi are Mitsubishi Pajero, Toyota Land Cruiser and Land Rover Discovery and Nissan Patrol.

Service facilities vary in standard from poor to reasonable. Spare parts and tyres are not always available and it is advisable to order some spares with the vehicle

Traffic regulations: Throughout the country the speed limit is 80 km per hour and 50 km per hour in townships. Standard international road signs are used and distances are generally indicated in kilometres. Traffic moves on the left hand side of the road, but left-hand drive vehicles are permitted. Front seat belts are obligatory. There is also a Road Tax, which varies according to the size of the car.

The law requires all drivers to be insured against third party claims for damage. Insurance coverage can be easily obtained locally. Premiums for comprehensive insurance are very high and insist on the car being fitted with an approved type of burglar alarm. Insurance is done on the British system with up to 60 percent discount being allowed on the premium on the basis of the individual's insurance and driving record of which documentary evidence must be submitted. Since there are no strict vehicle fitness requirements, defective vehicles can be

seen on the roads. This makes driving hazardous, particularly at night when the lack of street lighting has an adverse effect on visibility.

A valid national driving license is acceptable during the first three months of arrival after which a Malawian Driving License must be obtained. A Malawian Driving License may be obtained by producing a valid national license. Drivers should carry their license on their person.

Domestic Pets

Domestic animals are allowed into the country subject to an import permit required prior to arrival. An international staff member wishing to bring a domestic animal to Malawi should send all the relevant details to the UN Offices Lilongwe for obtaining the necessary permit. A rabies certificate must be obtained within 14 days prior to arrival. Quarantine is not required if animals have valid rabies vaccination certificates. All dogs are supposed to be registered with the Government.

Rabies is a serious problem in Malawi with a lot of the local animals carrying the disease. Make sure that your pet's vaccinations are kept strictly up to date. When adopting/buying a local cat or dogs you should immediately take the animal to a good vet to be checked for distemper and rabies. Likewise precautions must be taken concerning children & adults when bitten by a local animal (*CF PRACTICAL INFO important numbers*).

Firearms

Non-automatic firearms and ammunition, sporting rifles, shotguns and pistols may be imported subject to issuance of a Malawi import permit, and preferably an export license from the country of origin. An import permit is required also for ammunition. Firearms and ammunition, which arrive without an import permit, are liable to be held up at Customs. A license must be obtained for all firearms from the Police and renewed every year. The Police should be notified if firearms or ammunition are sold, stolen or exported.

VISA & IMMIGRATION

Visa Requirements

Entry visas are required except for nationals of Antigua, Australia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Barbuda, Belgium, Botswana, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Dominica, Fiji, Finland, Gambia, Federal Republic of Germany, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Nauru, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Samoa (W), San Marino, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Swaziland, Sweden, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, United Kingdom United States of America, Vanuatu, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Nationals of other countries must obtain an entry visa irrespective of whether they are traveling on their national passport or on a United Nations Laissez-Passer. Where there is no Malawi Embassy, the British High Commission or Consulate will assist in obtaining visas. An entry visa may be issued at the port of entry when traveling on a United Nations Laissez-Passer. Since immigration regulations are subject to periodic revisions, it is advisable for intending travelers to confirm whether or not they need an entry visa.

Immigration and Customs services at land borders do not operate during some hours at night. To avoid being stranded, travelers are advised to confirm beforehand the timings at which these services are available.

ID Cards / Resident Permits

The UN Offices arrange for the required residence permits for UN personnel and their families after their arrival. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues diplomatic identity cards to all UN staff assigned to Malawi and to their dependants. Four passport-size photographs are required, two for the identity card and two for a driving license. It is advisable to have extra copies of passport-size photos of each member of the family handy, as these are often required for visas and other official documents.

All international personnel who wish to visit Malawi for official business must obtain government clearance. In order to arrange this clearance, the UN Offices concerned should be provided the following information three to six weeks in advance: date and time of arrival, purpose and duration of visit, name, nationality, date and place of birth, educational background, brief curriculum vitae (indicating in particular countries of education and

employment), and details of the passport to be used (number, issuing authority, date and place of issue, date of expiry).

Upon Arrival

All UN project personnel are expected to visit the UNDP Office in Lilongwe for briefing and completion of administrative formalities.

Taxi service from both airports (Lilongwe and Blantyre) is available (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*). Porters are available at the airports.

Health Clearance

The Government of Malawi's health requirements (following WHO International Sanitary Regulations) should be checked prior to arrival. This can be done either through one's national health authorities or with the recruiting agency.

Currently required are:

Cholera

Yellow fever: Vaccination required for arrivals from infected areas

Currently recommended:

Typhoid

Tetanus-Diphtheria

Poliomyelitis

Hepatitis A + B

Meningitis A+C

Rabies

Malaria prophylaxis: WHO recommended prophylaxis for all visitors and residents (*CF Chapter 8iii Malaria*).

COMMUNICATIONS

Telephone and Fax Services

Telephone services in Malawi are poor. While a 24-hours direct dialing facility between main centres within the country is available, it can be difficult to get through, particularly during business hours and the rainy season. Direct international dialing service is available to 60 countries, mostly in Europe, North America and Africa. Calls to other countries can be placed through the international operator and are sometimes subject to disruptions and considerable delays.

Telephone charges are high.

Cellular telephones have been introduced. The service is becoming more widespread and efficient. There is only coverage in certain parts of the country, mainly in and around and between the main cities: Lilongwe, Blantyre, Zomba and Mzuzu. It is recommended to bring in your own handset and to get it adapted to Malawi as local purchase is extortionate.

Email Services

All U.N. Offices have e-mail systems in operation. Various e-mail service providers (Malawi Net /Celtel) offer private internet connections.

Mail Services: National Postal services, UN Diplomatic Pouch, and

Couriers

Airmail from the United Kingdom normally takes 4 to 9 days, while airmail from other countries in Europe, USA, Canada, Asia, Japan, Australia and New Zealand can take up to three weeks. Letters and parcels sent by surface mail can easily take up to six months to arrive. Mail from within Africa, including neighbouring countries, can be subject to extraordinary delays of up to six weeks. There is no house-to-house mail delivery.

U.N. Offices have their own Post Office Boxes, which are generally used by U.N. personnel. Some experts prefer to use the postal address of the Government office to which they are attached. The UNDP also has a Private Bag Number 30135.

The Post Office also has an Express Mail service to main cities within the country and to countries all over the world. The costs are very high but the service is quick and reliable. The DHL courier service (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*) is also available and gives a discount to U.N. personnel.

The UNDP Office maintains a weekly pouch service between Lilongwe and New York/Geneva for official correspondence and documents. The present pouch schedule is: Mail to Geneva and New York, Friday noon; mail from New York Monday, from Geneva Wednesday. Private mail (including magazines), prescriptions, eyeglasses, audio and videocassettes, and films are allowed to be pouched in certain quantities. For the appropriate address for pouching personal mail, personnel should contact their Agency.

MONEY, WEIGHTS & MEASURES

Currency

The unit of currency is the Malawi Kwacha (MK), which is divided into 100 Tambala. While there are no restrictions on bringing in foreign currency into the country, the amount of Malawi currency that can be taken out is K 3,000 per traveler. Banks, authorized hotels and other institutions accept traveler's checks and foreign exchange of all major currencies.

The rate of exchange is subject to fluctuation. Current rate Information sheets are available at the UNDP field office.

Banking

Most U.N. personnel have their accounts with the National Bank of Malawi, in which the UNDP also maintains its local accounts. Normal banking hours are from 8.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. on weekdays and 8:30 to 11:00 am on Saturdays.

U.N. personnel usually open non-resident accounts. In theory monies from non-resident accounts can easily be converted into foreign currency, though cash is rarely available. However, travelers' checks are obtainable. Remittance by draft or telex transfer is also possible. Local currency deposits, except from other non-resident accounts, are not accepted into a non-resident account but proceeds of the sale of household appliances and car upon completion of assignment can be deposited upon clearance by the Reserve Bank of Malawi.

Licensed foreign exchange bureaus operate in the major cities. These undertake foreign currency transactions, including cashing travelers' checks.

ATM machines are becoming more common though only in city centres.

Major hotels and travel agencies also cash travelers' checks. However, banks and "forex" bureaus do not operate on weekends and hotels will also not always cash travelers' checks on weekends. Travelers are therefore advised to use the facilities of the National Bank of Malawi branch at the airport upon arrival. The District Commissioner's office can also cash travelers' checks in districts where there are no banking facilities.

Local weights and measures

Malawi uses the metric system.

HOTELS AND HOUSING

Hotels

There is a large and varied selection of hotels, inns, lodges that cater for many different needs



Picture courtesy of Central Africa Wilderness Safaris

The following hotels and lodges offer accommodation and dining facilities:

Lilongwe Hotels

Le Meridien Capital Hotel	01 783 388
Lilongwe Hotel, Lilongwe	01 740 488
Riverside Hotel	01 750 511
Cresta Crossroads	01 750 333
Lilongwe Hotel	01 756 333

Lilongwe Lodges:

Four Seasons Guest house	01 753 496	
Sheila's Lodge	01 794 010	
Wendel's Guest House	01 770 237	wendels@african-online.net

Ufulu Gardens	01 794 079
Annie's Lodge	01 794 572 annieslodge@globemw.net
Lingadzi Inn	01 754 166
Kumbali Lodge	01 771 041
Korea Garden Lodge	01 753 467
Kuta Lodges	01 794 763
Capital City Motel	01 774 911

Blantyre Hotels

Mount Soche Hotel	01 620 588
Ryalls Hotel	01 620 955 ryalls@proteamalawi.com

Mzuzu Hotels

Mzuzu Hotel	01 332 622/332 515
-------------	--------------------

Zomba hotels

Ku Chawe Inn	01 522 342/ 01 514 266
--------------	------------------------

Mangochi

Club Makokola	01 584 244
---------------	------------

Salima

Livingstonia Beach Hotel	01 363 222/444
--------------------------	----------------

House Hunting

Finding reasonable housing can be difficult and especially in Lilongwe it can be expensive. New arrivals should, therefore, be prepared to spend some time in hotel / lodge accommodation. For those with large families it is advisable to come alone at first until proper housing can be found.

The UN Housing Committee should be contacted via the respective UN Agency regarding the availability of Government housing from the UN housing pool. Houses and flats have been built in Lilongwe, Blantyre and Mzuzu with a loan from UNDP, and these are allocated to UN personnel. The Government in Blantyre and Zomba also supplies houses and flats, but they are not easily available. These also tend to be in poor condition with bad plumbing, leaking roofs and poor security.

In addition, private or commercial houses are available for rent. Agencies can be employed in the search for suitable housing. (*CF Anne x6 Important Numbers*). Rents are quite high and owners often demand twelve months' rent in advance. UN personnel are advised to seek advice from their agencies before entering into a lease agreement.

Government houses usually have two or three bedrooms, a lounge and dining room, one or two bathrooms, a kitchen and a veranda (locally called "khonde"), plus garage. The floors are generally cement and require some painting or covering. Most houses are on one-acre plots, which, with little effort, can be made into attractive gardens, or even into orchards and small vegetable gardens.

Rentals for a Government allocated or UNDP loan house in Lilongwe, Blantyre and Zomba are very reasonable and certainly much cheaper than the commercial letter who charge First world rates. Furnished accommodation is very rare to find.

Furniture & equipment

Carpeting is available but the choice is limited and it is very expensive. It is advisable that rugs and carpets be sent together with personal effects. It is possible to purchase locally woven reed and grass mats which, though not satisfactory substitutes for carpeting, can still provide floor covering.

Pests (ants, bugs, cockroaches) can be a problem in many houses. Locally available exterminators may need to be called in.

Government houses, houses constructed with a UNDP loan and apartments used to be supplied with basic government furniture. As old and broken furniture is not being replaced, the availability and quality of furniture is constantly decreasing and therefore it is mostly out-dated. In most cases furniture leaves a lot to be desired.

Furniture can also be bought locally. Variety is very limited and quality is not great. Factory-made furniture, including foam mattresses and armchairs, is available but expensive. Wicker and palm chairs and tables are cheap and fairly plentiful. Other locally made handicrafts include reed mats and carved chairs.

It is advisable to import kitchen and tableware, electrical appliances, linen, a refrigerator, a freezer and an electric or gas cooker, as all of these tend to be expensive in Malawi. A refrigerator is essential and a freezer can do much to offset the effects of seasonal fluctuations and periodic shortages in the supply of fresh foodstuffs. In view of the increasing frequency of power cuts it is advisable to have a generator as well as a back up gas bottle cooker.

Nights are cold during the winter months and expatriates usually find electric heaters and warm blankets necessary. All houses and some flats have wood burning fireplaces. In the summer, air-conditioning is not generally required except in the lowlands in the Shire Valley.

Household Help

Domestic help is readily available, inexpensive but the quality and reliability varies considerably. Good experienced cooks are rare. It is customary for a small family or a single person to employ one or two members of staff to do some or all of the cooking, washing and house cleaning chores. A gardener is usually required to maintain gardens and lawns. A cook earns from K6000 to K12,000, while a houseboy and a gardener earn on the average K4500 and K8000. Locating suitable employees is fairly simple and often they are taken over with the house. Once word is out that a position is to be filled, a lot of job seekers will present themselves. It is advisable to check their references and employment records carefully, and send potential employees for a medical check up.

Usually staff work five full days and Saturday mornings. Common practice for holiday time is 3-4 weeks per annum. There are 10 Malawian national holidays and staff are not required to work on these days. The employer usually provides uniforms. A set of three uniforms for house servants, one white and two khakis should last for twelve months. Most houses have servants' quarters within the compound and it is common for servants to live in these with their families.

Utilities

Apart from some disruptions during the dry season, water supply is regular in the main centres. Water needs to be boiled and / or filtered before drinking.

Sewerage systems are available in some areas of Lilongwe and Blantyre but most houses use septic tanks, with the City Council being responsible for their maintenance. Garbage is collected in the main centres only.

The electricity supply is 230/220 volts, 50 cycles AC, single-phase. Normal domestic electric fittings use 13-amp fused square three-pin plugs, which are available locally. The three pin square plug is found in most residences and offices. Electricity can be expensive. It is recommended to use the prepaid system to avoid nasty run-ins over the previous tenant's unpaid bills.

Power cuts have become more and more frequent. Moreover, power supply is subject to frequent voltage fluctuations. Hence, it is advisable to bring stabilizers and surge-protectors to safeguard electronic equipment, as well as a small stand-by generator.

Gas is available should you bring in a gas cooker / heater. It can be subject to availability and prices reflect local supply

It is most advisable upon finding a house, be it private or government owned, to quickly establish that all the previous utility bills have been paid. Getting the water, electric and landline telephone be put in your name at the start of the tenancy will spare you many hours of frustration to say nothing of kwacha

(cf PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers)

HEALTH & MEDICAL FACILITIES

Health Conditions

Health is something that must be taken seriously, particularly since the medical facilities in the country are weak with overstretched hospitals, underpaid staff and a national lack of capacity. Expatriates or those with access to foreign exchange can avail themselves private clinics in the major towns or can get themselves to South Africa in the case of a medical emergency. It is very important to ensure that you and your family have been immunized appropriately before arrival, preferably stocking up with anti malaria drugs before arrival.

Malawi has one of the highest incidences of HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa. According to the most recent estimates, around 15 % of the population is HIV positive. HIV prevalence is much higher in urban areas. The AIDS pandemic explains the high levels of morbidity among Malawians. It is essential that anyone coming to Malawi become quickly aware of the sensitivities and sensibilities surrounding the disease. Taking the normally recommended precautions, both inside and outside the home, including those to be taken when assisting a bleeding person, must never be overlooked.

Medical Facilities & Evacuation

Medical facilities are extremely inadequate. There are only a few qualified physicians and specialists, and hospitals fall far short of minimum international standards. There is Mzuzu referral hospital in the Northern Region. The Lilongwe Central Hospital in Lilongwe and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Blantyre are insufficiently equipped and inadequately staffed.

There is a UN Clinic in Lilongwe staffed by a qualified doctor, a nurse and laboratory technician (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*). Basic medical care, laboratory services and most essential drugs are available at the Clinic to UN personnel and their recognized dependants. However, for cases of serious illness or injury, UN arranges to evacuate any UN staff/dependant to authorized treatment centers mostly in South Africa. This is done upon advice of the UN doctor and necessary authorizations from employing Agencies.

Common Illnesses

Malaria is endemic to the country and must be taken extremely seriously. Malaria prophylaxis must be taken regularly (beginning two weeks before arrival). Since no prophylactic drugs can offer total protection, other measures to protect against mosquito bites are advised. These include remaining within well-screened accommodation particularly after sundown, enclosing the bed with mosquito nets while sleeping, and use of mosquito repellents in the evenings. The first line of treatment is Fansidar or Halfan. Cases of Fansidar resistant and quinine resistant malaria are on the increase. It is advisable to consult a doctor as soon as one feels unwell, particularly if feverish with or without headaches. If diagnosed early, malaria can cause little to no damage. However, the condition can quickly become cerebral if not attended to immediately.

The incidence of Bilharzia (schistosomiasis) contamination from Lake Malawi as well as in the rivers is very high. Swimming or any physical contact with the Lake and rivers should be avoided. The lakeshore beaches (apart from those exclusive to popular hotels) are undeveloped and leave much to be desired by way of hygiene. For those using the lake regularly it is advisable to take the bilharzias cure once a year or 12 weeks after leaving the potentially infected area.

A high rate of cases of rabies occur among dogs. There are no longer any Government controls and bands of stray dogs are a common sight particularly at night in the urban areas. It is advisable to either be vaccinated before arrival or as soon as you are bitten by a local animal (dog, cat, monkey)

Diarrhea is a common symptom, but most cases are non-infectious, self-limiting, and arise as a result of climatic changes or food irregularities. Though Cholera rarely occurs, it is advisable to boil or drink filtered water and thoroughly cleanse all fruits and vegetables.. Measles can be serious, particularly among children. Precaution against Hepatitis A and meningitis is also highly advisable.

Dentists & Opticians

There are a few reliable dentists in Lilongwe, Blantyre, Zomba and Mzuzu. There are opticians in Lilongwe and Blantyre (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*). Prescriptions for glasses can be made up in-country. However, local suppliers have to arrange dental appliances and contact lenses from abroad. These can be subject to long delays and it is recommended to bring extra pairs of prescription glasses and/or contact lenses and lens care products.

The availability of drugs and medical supplies is extremely limited. Pharmacies (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*) are stocked with drugs manufactured mostly in South Africa. It is advisable to bring a supply of general antibiotics and patent drugs, particularly any pediatric medications that your children require. Anyone on specific medication should bring an initial supply of their needs and remember to replenish well in time.

EDUCATION

Schools in Malawi generally follow the British system of primary, secondary and higher levels of education. Primary education in Government assisted schools is free, while nominal fees are charged for secondary education. There are many unassisted schools, which are financed by private individuals, voluntary contributions and missions.

Higher Education

The University of Malawi is divided into five constituent colleges: Chancellor College, Zomba, with degree courses for most of the arts and science subjects; the Malawi Polytechnic and the College of Medicine in Blantyre; the Bunda College of Agriculture and the Kamuzu College of Nursing in Lilongwe and Blantyre.

Resident expatriates can enroll in the University through an application process. Applicants may have to sit for an entrance examination.

Designated Primary & Secondary Schools

Children of expatriates, foreign mission personnel and UN personnel usually attend any one of the Designated Schools Board facilities either in Blantyre, Zomba or Lilongwe. Classes in these schools tend to be small and the standard of teaching generally high. The majority of the staff are expatriates and each school has a Parent-Teacher association. The schools follow the three-term pattern Sept-Dec, Jan-Mar and Apr-July.

The primary schools are: Bishop Mackenzie and ABC in Lilongwe, St. Andrew's in Blantyre, Hillview in Limbe and Sir Harry Johnston in Zomba.

The secondary schools are: Bishop Mackenzie and ABC in Lilongwe which offers the IGCSE course and IB Programme and St. Andrew's in Blantyre which offers the A level Programme. Boarding facilities for both girls and boys are available only at St. Andrew's for 50 primary and 180 secondary pupils. There is also the Kamuzu Academy, Malawi's sole grammar school, situated in Kasungu.

Kindergartens are available in all major towns.

The school fees are extremely high, even by North American and European standards. Both tuition and boarding charges can be paid in Kwacha.

In addition to the above institutions, the Lilongwe Private School offers primary and secondary level teaching leading to the GCSE Level. The Central High School in Blantyre offers both `O' and `A' level schooling. Tuition fees at these schools are substantially lower than at the "Designated" Schools.

UN personnel wishing to bring their children to Malawi are advised to contact the UN in Lilongwe as early as possible for further information about the school facilities and for assistance to secure a place at one of the schools and, if required, boarding accommodation. Many of the designated schools have waiting lists. (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*)

SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT

Employment opportunities suitable for spouses of UN staff arise, now and then, in international organizations, diplomatic missions, educational institutions, hospitals as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) particularly those involved in welfare activities. Though preference is understandably given to Malawian candidates, nationals with appropriate qualifications are not always easy to find. Secretarial, nursing or teaching vacancies are not difficult to come by, and spouses with advanced professional qualifications can at times also obtain short or medium term assignments with international organizations. There is a Spouse Association in Lilongwe, which is not an employment agency but can assist spouses in obtaining employment by providing information on appropriate vacancies.

Apart from employment in international organizations and diplomatic missions, work permits are required but not difficult to obtain particularly where the employer can confirm that it is not possible to recruit a suitably qualified Malawian

If your spouse will be seeking employment during your posting in Malawi, please ask her/him to fill the form in PRACTICAL INFO, and return to the UNDP Office, P.O. Box 30135, Lilongwe 3, Malawi

FOOD & CLOTHING

Food

Staples such as flour, sugar, salt and oil are available locally, though shortages do occur at times. Imported supplies of these items are normally available, but expensive. Meat, poultry, eggs, vegetables and fruits are usually available and of excellent quality but subject to seasonal fluctuations. Occasionally, shortages of chicken eggs do occur. Good quality fish from Lake Malawi, including chambo (tilapia) is available except during October-March when fishing restrictions apply. Prices vary from reasonable to expensive.

Fresh milk is available and good quality in the main towns. Other dairy products including butter, fresh cream, cheese and yoghurt are available, but periodic shortages occur. Imported varieties of these products are expensive. Varieties of canned foods, including fruit juices, baby products and convenience foods (cake mixes, prepared foods etc.) are available but are expensive.

Locally grown vegetables and fruits are available and generally good quality and inexpensive. The following fruits are grown locally: citrus fruit, paw-paws, mangoes, berries, bananas, avocado pears, pineapples, guavas, granadillas, passion fruit, and strawberries. Pears, grapes, apples and peaches, imported from South Africa and Zimbabwe are also available in supermarkets. A selection of vegetables can be obtained from the local markets, depending on the season.



Most expatriates find it necessary to have a freezer for stocking supplies of vegetables, meat and fish, when they are available.

All cities, towns and some major villages are served by branches of one indigenous supermarket chains (People's Supermarket and the Kwik Save), which stock varieties of locally manufactured canned food and leading brands of bottled soft drinks, as well as staples. Outlets of Shoprite, a South African giant supermarket chain offers a great range of imported and local stock in all the major cities. Recently various shops have opened in Lilongwe, which sell a variety of imported food and goods from Zimbabwe and South Africa, including meat, dairy products, washing powder, etc. Imported wines, though available, are relatively expensive. Locally produced gin, brandy and vodka are cheaper than imported brands and are

good. Carlsberg has a brewery in Blantyre, which produces four types of lager. Cigarettes are manufactured locally.

Dining Out

Most hotels have acceptable dining facilities for non-residents. In addition, there are several good restaurants (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Restaurants*). The fast food chains Southern Fried and Nandos have branches each in Lilongwe and Blantyre.



Picture courtesy of Central Africa Wilderness Safaris

Clothing

An extremely limited selection of imported clothing is available at high prices. Locally made clothes are available at reasonable prices, though the quality is poor. The choice of footwear is also very minimal. Choice of dress fabric and materials is also limited. While there are many tailors, a good one is hard to come by. You should, therefore, bring a good supply of casual, tropical outdoor use gear for all members of your family. Summer and winter pajamas, slippers, raincoats and umbrellas should also be brought in.

Men wear suits or jackets and ties in offices. Medium-weight suits are worn in the winter months (May through August) and lightweight suits are worn during the summer (September through April). Dark suits, and very rarely, dinner jackets are worn for formal occasions. Importance is attached to correct dress and regulations must be adhered to.

Cotton dresses and skirts and light trousers for women are suitable for most occasions, including work. In summer, washable cotton dresses and skirts and T-shirts are practical for the daytime. Synthetics can be worn comfortably except on the few hottest summer days. Sweaters and warmer dresses or suits are required during the cooler months. The much-

publicized dress code of Malawi, which banned women from wearing short dresses and skirts as well as trousers, was removed in 1993.

Light clothes for the summer and warm clothing with pullovers in winter are required for children. Long-sleeved shirts and trousers are preferable in evenings to minimize exposure to mosquito bites.

If possible, newcomers should bring a good supply of bed sheets, towels, blankets, and duvets as the availability of good quality linen is both limited and expensive.

Laundry is usually done at home by domestic help or with an imported washing machine. Dry-cleaning facilities exist in Lilongwe and Blantyre though some are not up to Western standards. Tailors, shoe repairers, hairdressers and beauty parlours of varying standards exist in the main towns. (CF *PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*)



U.N. AGENCIES

The Resident Representative of UNDP is also the UN Resident Coordinator of the U.N system in Malawi. In this capacity he/she coordinates the activities of the U.N. and participating specialised agencies in Malawi. There are FAO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WHO and World Bank offices with Resident Representatives, while the day to day operations of WFP are directed by its Country Director.

The UN Offices assist UN personnel in all their official administrative matters from their arrival to their exit formalities on departure. Upon arrival they assist where possible with hotel reservations, housing, residence permits, customs clearance of shipments, official transportation for newly arrived personnel, banking arrangements and vehicle registration. Assistance will also be given in emergency situations such as medical evacuations. Other services offered are for example visas for travel abroad and security advice. The UN Resource Centre also maintains a small library with newspapers, periodicals and UN publications, in addition to a collection of UN films and videos.

Office Accommodation & Working Hours

The Government normally provides adequate office space and secretarial services for UN advisors and staff

Government working hours are 7:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m.- 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The UN working hours are 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Friday. There is a skeleton staff on duty on Friday afternoon up to 4:30 p.m.

(CF PRACTICAL INFO, UN contact information)

SECURITY

Residential security

The law and order situation, though far better than in neighbouring countries, has been deteriorating and incidents of burglaries are on the rise. There are two reputable security companies, which offer good services (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*)

There are three types of residential security measures available to UN personnel:

1. New arrivals are advised to ensure that the house they intend to occupy is fitted with proper security/burglar window and door bars. Once during their tenure in Malawi, U.N. personnel can claim reimbursement for the installation of security bars of 80 per cent up to a maximum of US \$ 1,000 (maximum net reimbursement = US \$ 800).
2. It is recommended that high security alarm be fitted to main entrances. Some security companies provide a "rapid response" service, costing \$150/month, whereby a security squad arrives within minutes of pressing an alarm button. The U.N. reimburses 80 per cent of the rental charges for a security alarm system up to a maximum of US \$ 200 (maximum monthly net reimbursement = US \$ 160). Alternatively, up to US \$ 2,000 will be reimbursed for the purchase of an alarm system. In the latter case 10 per cent annual rental has to be paid to the UN.
3. All expatriates employ at least one night watchman and many keep watchdogs. There are several reliable national security organizations in the main centres from which guards can be hired at a monthly cost of \$150/guard/month. It is also possible to employ a guard directly for K3000 per month. The UN reimburses 80 per cent of the costs of employing one security guard up to a maximum of US \$ 300 (maximum monthly net reimbursement = US \$ 240).

The U.N. in Malawi operates a U.N. security network. Security wardens are appointed for the various residential areas, which are responsible for regular contact on security issues with U.N. personnel in their respective areas and updates on security incidents. The U.N. operates a security radio system to be used in case of emergencies. Weekly radio checks are carried out. Radios are issued to most international staff and all security wardens. A security briefing package is distributed by the UN Security Committee upon arrival of all new UN staff, and should be completed and returned to the UN.

Car crimes, specifically thefts, are on the increase. Cars should be fitted with alarms and anti-hijack systems. Further specific advice is included in the security briefing package including minimizing traveling after dark, driving with the windows locked, and always carrying a mobile phone and / or radio handset.

Insurance

It is advisable to have an insurance cover against break-ins and theft. There are local insurance companies (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*), which however do not take into account inflation or replacement value and assess claims on the basis of original cost less depreciation. UN personnel may be able to obtain better deals from insurance companies in their home countries. A personal insurance scheme (Worldwide Group Personal Property Insurance Plan for Specialized Agencies and Organizations of the United Nations System) through the Herbert L. Jameson & Company of New York is available at a reasonably low cost to international personnel. Information on this plan is available at Agency Headquarters, or can be obtained from the UNDP office on arrival.

Any further questions regarding security matters should be addressed to the U.N. Field Security Officer.

SOCIAL LIFE & RECREATION

There is an International Women's Association in Lilongwe. It is open to the spouses of U.N. personnel. It meets monthly for talks; demonstration films etc. and groups within the Association often organize morning and afternoon tea functions and fund raising events for charity. (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*)

The cultural officers of the larger diplomatic missions occasionally arrange concerts by visiting and local artists, as well as exhibitions of paintings, batiks and sculpture work in wood and soapstone. The British Council and the United States Information Service have lending libraries and also have regular film and video shows.

In Lilongwe, music and drama clubs have regular performances by members of various societies. The Agricultural Society and the Wildlife Society organize nature hikes and garden competitions

Radio & Television

Radio is in both Chichewa & English. Radio broadcasts in English are the following

FM98.00	BBC World Service
FM 91.5 & FM 94	6pm & 8pm English Bulletins
FM88.3 ABC Radio	Christian programming & music
FM 102.5 Capital Radio	One of the many privately owned Commercial Radios

A powerful short-wave receiver should be imported for international news programmes. Record players and cassette decks should be brought along for home entertainment.

There is one commercial television station free to the public, which includes DOS WorldNet. There are a number of companies (MultiChoice), which install satellite dishes (DSTV) capable of receiving programmes from South Africa, CNN, BBC World Service and several other stations. It is possible to import duty free equipment. If you are planning to subscribe to DSTV you need a PAL 1 TV set. The satellite kit is available locally. You can suspend your subscription when you are away. Moreover, there are several video/DVD shops at which a wide range of video / DVD films are available for rent.

Outdoor sports & Clubs

Facilities for swimming, golf, volleyball, tennis, squash, football, rugby, cricket and hockey are available in Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba where there are sports clubs, though ill-equipped. The Gold Club offers many things and The Capital Hotel in Lilongwe operates a swimming and squash club with a limited membership. (CF *PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*)

Picnics to beach resorts are enjoyable and wind surfing is also done on Lake Malawi There are small yacht clubs on the municipal reservoirs of Blantyre and Lilongwe. Trout fishing is good in the streams of Zomba, Mulanje and Nyika plateau.

A satisfactory range of equipment for the above sports is available in Blantyre and Lilongwe but prices are very high.

Nightlife

Nightlife is limited. The major hotels organize shows by visiting singers, musicians and dancers. There are numerous bars in town: The Shack, the Casino, and Harry's Bar in Lilongwe. Some have discos. Bazaars, fairs and casinos are also regularly organized for charity by various local organizations. There are numerous taverns, called "bottle stores" in Malawi, which mostly serve the Chibuku and Napolo Ukana beers, which are made by fermenting maize and millet.

The Lake

Lake Malawi has a wide range of fish species. 40% of all fresh water tropical fish in European aquariums originate from Lake Malawi. Snorkeling and scuba diving are becoming popular pastimes but suitable equipment is not always available. There are various scuba diving schools offering training courses at beginner and advanced level.

There are two steamers on the lake. The 615-ton passenger lake steamer, the **ILALA** and **The MTENDERE**, make weekly return journeys from Monkey Bay (in the Southern Region) to Karonga (in the Northern Region), calling at lakeside ports. First class cabin facilities for 10 people are available, but these must be booked well in advance through Malawi Railway Limited.

Bird & Game Viewing

Bird life is exceptional. Illustrated books on birds found in Malawi and neighbouring countries are available locally. Most East African big game species can be found in small numbers in Malawi, although they are becoming increasingly rare even within the seven national parks and game reserves. (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*) There is no big game hunting in Malawi, but duck and guinea fowl shooting is good.

Painting and gardening

Garden supplies are plentiful and nurseries sell seeds and plants at reasonable prices. Gardening equipment and tools are in short supply and expensive. A power rotary lawn mower and spare parts would be useful to bring along (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, Important Numbers*).

Paints and canvasses are available but are expensive compared with European and US prices. Hobby craft equipment is normally not available. UN personnel and their families with specialized hobbies should bring their own supplies. Macramé work is popular but the jute material is often not available. Knitting materials are available in Blantyre and Lilongwe but good quality brands if available, are usually very expensive.

Walking & Hiking

Good one-day climbs are possible from Lilongwe, mainly in the Dedza area, and the nature trail walks in the forests on Zomba Plateau are a refreshing change. Lilongwe has an interesting nature sanctuary where a variety of native flora and fauna may be studied. A good booklet for walking enthusiasts is "*Day Outings from Lilongwe*" by Judy Carter.

TOURISM

The lake

The principal tourist attraction in the country is Lake Malawi, which is set among rolling hills covered in tropical vegetation. The bird life is spectacular and the lake has one of the highest diversities of fresh water tropical fish in the world, some of which are unique to Lake Malawi alone. The most developed areas are Mangochi in the south with its luxury resorts of Club Makokola & Nkopola Lodge and the Salima area, the nearest lakeside retreat from the capital with the Livingstonia Beach Hotel in Senga Bay. Cape Maclear has excellent snorkeling and diving sports, as the water is crystal clear. On the northern lakeshore between Nkhatakota and Chintheche, Nkhata Bay there are also many small lodges as well as camping facilities.



Picture courtesy of Central Africa Wilderness Safaris

National Parks & Game Reserves

There are many parks in Malawi offering a wide range of game viewing from hippo, to elephant, lion, antelope, buck, wart hogs, monkeys, zebra etc. Accommodation ranges from luxury lodges to basic camping. (CF PRACTICAL INFO) Some parks have good roads, a lot of game and beautiful surrounding ranging from high



Picture courtesy of Central Africa Wilderness Safaris

altitude Nyika plateau to the Shire River Mvuu Lodge packed with crocodile and hippo. For further information you should either consult guidebooks and / or the safari operators, which will be delighted to arrange bookings and logistics for you.

The Mountains

Mulanje Mountain is the highest in Central Africa and affords spectacular climbs and walks. There are 8 forestry department huts on the mountain. These have equipment, which belongs to the Mulanje Mountain Club, which is available to all members. Membership forms and circulars of activities can be obtained from the Secretary of the Mulanje Mountain Club, P.O. Box 240, Blantyre. The huts can be booked through the Assistant Conservator of Forests, Likabula, who will also arrange for guides and porters, if required. For mountain lovers the forest and walks on **Zomba Plateau** are also enjoyable and the Ku Chawe Inn offers very good accommodation.

Other Places of Interest

Some of the main historic sites are those connected with early mission activities, particularly in the Shire Highlands and along the lakeshore and Cape Maclear, Likoma Island and Bandawe. The lake steamers can reach Likoma Island and its main attraction is a large and beautiful cathedral. The Mua Mission, located in Central Malawi, is well known for its woodcarvings, which are produced by local artists and sold in a shop operated by an artist cooperative. Attached to the mission is a museum depicting Malawian culture and history. It includes an impressive collection of about 600 traditional wooden masks. The Livingstonia Mission in northern Malawi, supposedly the most scenic place in all of Malawi, is situated overlooking Lake Malawi.

Blantyre has a national museum with well-exhibited displays. There is also a small museum in Mangochi with interesting lake shipping relics. Nkhotakota, on the lakeshore is said to be the largest traditional village in Southern Africa and in the last century was one of the main slaving centres in the lake region.

Rock paintings can be seen in the Chongoni Forest Reserve 10 km north of Dedza; five rock shelters all of which house prehistoric rock paintings.

Further detailed information on where to go both on the shores of the lake and beyond can be found in the guidebooks listed under reading material.

Regional Tourism

Being assigned in Malawi provides an excellent opportunity to visit world famous holiday resorts and game reserves in neighbouring countries. The Luangwa National Park in Zambia is a five hour drive from Lilongwe. There are also trips to The Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe; Serengeti game reserve, the Ngorongoro Crater and Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania; and the Masai Mara game reserve in Kenya. Trips to Mauritius, South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Namibia, Zanzibar, Madagascar and the Seychelles are also popular. Central African Wilderness Safaris in Lilongwe is a good source of information (*CF PRACTICAL INFO, important numbers*).

Books & Newspapers

There are two daily newspapers - The Daily Times and The Nation - and five or six weekly newspapers of which most are produced by the independent press. Foreign weekly newspapers are received by airmail from Europe and other African countries daily, but they have to be specially ordered either at a local bookshop or with the publisher or distributor in the country of origin. There are public libraries and reading rooms operated by the National Library Service in the main towns.

- Briggs, Philip - Guide to Malawi, (Bradt Publications, 1996).
Crosby, Cynthia A. - Historical Dictionary of Malawi, (The Scarecrow Press Inc., 2nd ed. 1993).
Economist Intelligence Unit - Malawi: Country Profile 1995-96, (EIU, 1996).
Else, D. - Trekking in East Africa, (Lonely Planet, 1993).
Lwanda, John Lloyd - Kamuzu Banda of Malawi: A study in promise, power and paralysis, (Dudu Nsomba Publications, Glasgow, 1993).
Lwanda, John Lloyd - Democratic Transition in Malawi 1961-1999, (Dudu Nsomba Publications, Glasgow, 1996).
Maurel, Martine - Visitors' Guide to Malawi, (Southern Book Publishers, 2nd ed. 1995).
Mhone, G. (editor) - Malawi at the Crossroads, (Sapes Books, Sapes Trust, 1992).
Pachai, B. (editor) - Early History of Malawi, (Longman, 1972).
Pike, J.G. - Malawi: A Political and Economic History, (Pall Mall Press, 1968).
Ransfield, Oliver - Livingstone's Lake, (Camelot Press, 1966).
Williams, T.D. - Malawi: the politics of despair, (Cornell University Press, 1978)
Johnston, Frank and Garland, Vera - Malawi - Lake of Stars, (Central Africa, Blantyre, 1993).
Ng'ombe, James - Sugarcane with Salt, (Longman, 1989).
Ng'ombe, James - Madala's Children, (Jhango Publishing House, 1996).
Mpasu, Sam - Political Prisoner 3/75, (African Publishing Group, 1995).
Mogg, Stuart - A guide to Malawi, (Central Africana, Blantyre, 1994).
Roscoe, A.A. and Schoffeleurs, J.M. - Land of Fire - Oral Literature from Malawi, (Popular Publication, Limbe, 1985).

U.N. and & Public Holidays

National Holidays

New Year's Day:	1 January
Chilembwe Day:	15 January
Martyr's Day:	3 March
Good Friday:	
Easter Monday:	
Labour Day:	1 May
Freedom Day:	14 June
Republic Day:	6 July
Mother's Day:	2nd Monday of October
Christmas Day:	25 December
Boxing Day:	26 December

If a national holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the following Monday is declared a holiday.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION ABOUT TOWN

PLACES OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP

Bahai Centre	01 771 713
Christian:	
Anglican, St Peter's, Glyn Jones Road,	01 752 812 English Service: 0730 Sunday
Assembles of God Mission, Chilambula Rd	01 761 706 English Service 10:00 Sunday
Baptist, CCBC, Presidential Way,	01 744 514 English Service 0900 Sunday
Catholic, Kamuzu Procession Rd,	01 795 312 English Service 0900 Sunday
International Bible College, ABC,	01 761 554 English Service 1000 Sunday
Lutheran, Blantyre Rd,	01 724 917, English Service 0830 Sunday
Pentecostal, Area 18,	01 796 008 English Service 1000 Sunday
Presbyterian, Area 12,	01 771 528, English Service 0830 Sunday
Word Alive Ministries International	01 759 013, English service 0900 Sunday
Seventh Day Adventist, Area 14,	01 773 814, English Service 1100 Saturday
Hindu Temple	01 726 652
Jewish	01 772 373
Muslim Lilongwe Islamic information bureau	01 726 859
Sikh Gurdwana in Limbe	

UN / BILATERAL & DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS

United Nations Agencies	
UNDP	2651 773 500
WFP	2651 784 666.
UNWPA	2651 771 444
WHO	265 1 772 755
UNICEF	265 1 775 232
FAO	265 1 773 255
UNHRC	265 1 772 155
WB	265 1 770 611

UNAIDS	265 1 773 927
IMF	265 1 770 725
ILO	(based in Lusaka, Zambia)
UNIDO	(based in Lusaka, Zambia)
UNESCO	(based in Harare, Zimbabwe)

Bilateral donors

The European Union	265 1 773 199
DFIF	265 1 772 400
USAID	265 1 772 455
Norway	265 1 774 211
Germany	265 1 772 555

Diplomatic Missions

American Embassy	01 773 166
British HC	01 722 400
Egyptian Embassy	01 794 657
German Embassy	01 772 555
Libyan Embassy	01 775 735
Mozambican Embassy	01 774 100
Norwegian Embassy	01 774 211
South African	01 773 722
Embassy of China (Taiwan)	01 772 571
Zambian Embassy	01 772 590
Zimbabwean HC	01 774 997

Non residential missions

Austria	01 633 869
Belgium	01 710 355
Canada	01 651 450
France	01 775 265
Italy	01 752 953
Netherlands	01 635 268
Finland	01 794 626
Portugal	01 670 300
Switzerland	01 641 376

SPOUSE FORM

To be completed and sent to

LESA Chairman,
UNDP PO BOX 30135, Lilongwe 3 Malawi

- 1 Name & title: Mr/Ms**
- 2. Staff member & Agency**
- 3. Nationality:**
- 4. Expected date of arrival in Malawi:**
- 5. Expected duration of stay**
- 6. Field of Professional interest.....**
.....
.....
- 7. Work experience and specialization.....**
.....
.....
.....
- 8. Language proficiency.....**

Please do not enclose your CV, personal history. This form is just to have an initial record of your professional field of interest and experience. The Local Spouse Association will try to liaise between spouses and potential work opportunities but is not in itself an employment agency. .

RESTAURANTS

Indian:

Modi's, Old Town, 01 757 694
Huts, Old Town, 01 752 912

General

Buchanan Grill, at Four Seasons, garden setting 01 772 846
Don Brioni's Old Town 09 967 482
Causerie, Capital Hotel 01 773 828
Wendel area 12 01 771 771

Italian

Mama Mia Old Town 01 758 362

Far Eastern

Korea Gardens Area 3 01 751 941
Golden Dragon, Capital City Centre 01 773 101
The Macau at The Portuguese Club 08 828 419

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Phone numbers starting with 017 are Lilongwe and 016 Blantyre and 015 Zomba

POLICE

Emergency calls 199
Lilongwe Police 01754 644
Lingadzi Police 01 977 783
Blantyre police 01 670 200
Limbe Police 01 641 333

Directory Enquiries 191

Telephone Faults 197

Electricity (ESCOM):

Blantyre01 636 000
Lilongwe.....01 753 666 / 01 744 166
Mzuzu01 332 011
Zomba01 522 236

Water

Blantyre.....01 672 000
 Lilongwe01 753 630 / 756
 Mzuzu01 332 552
 Zomba01 522 766

Ambulance Blantyre/Limbe: - 01 630 333
 Lilongwe: - 01 721 555/721 133
 Mzuzu: - 01 332 299
 Zomba: - 01 523 266/522 274

UN Doctor Dispensary: 01 770059
Hospital Lilongwe Central 01 754 331
 Likuni Mission 01 766 602/574
 ABC clinic 01 761 670

Airports Lilongwe International Airport - 01 760 266/760311
 Chileka Airport, Blantyre - 01 694 322
 Mzuzu Airport - 01 332 666

VET Dr Kristina Cuisinier 01 754 418

Dentist Dr Mazloun 01 770 853
 Dr Hakima 01 757 112

Pharmacies Central 01 754 294
 Capitol 01 773 388

Estate Agencies Farmsgate Estate 01 751 090
 Hope Estate 09 200 686
 Kasuka Properties 01 771 575
 Knight Frank 01 772 843
 Watts 01 752 337

Airlines operating in Malawi

Air Malawi
 Air Zimbabwe
 South African Airways
 Ethiopian Airways
 Kenya Airways
 Zambia Airways

Safari Companies

Ulendos in Old Town 01 754 950 info@ulendo.net
 Makono Safaris 01 762 424 makono@malawi.net
 Central Wilderness Safaris 01 771 153 info@wilderness.malawi.net

Dutyfree importer

Peter Justesen 01 754 974
 Samtex

Couriers DHL

Web address for further information

www.malawi-travel.com

www.malawitourism.com

www.friday.sikomo.net

www.nationmalawi.com

www.chipunga.con