

PMS **Poverty
Monitoring
System**

The Poverty Monitoring system is an activity under the Poverty Alleviation Programme of the Government of Malawi. The core research activities of the PMS include four institutions:

- National Economic Council
- National Statistical Office
- Centre for Social Research of the University of Malawi
- International Food Policy Research Institute

The poverty monitoring research program has been designed to gain a comprehensive understanding of poverty in Malawi. The findings presented here are part of a series of briefs designed to inform policy makers about the current state of poverty and the methodologies used to measure poverty.

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The Poverty Analysis of the Integrated Household Survey
covers 8 two-page policy briefs, Nos. 1 - 8
November 2000 - June 2001

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The institutional context - the Poverty Alleviation Programme

The aims and methods of the Poverty Monitoring System

The core institutions of the PMS

The Complementary Panel Survey

Other research on poverty

Other policy briefs

Special points of interest:

- The PMS is an integral component of the Poverty Alleviation Programme of the government of Malawi
- The PMS employs a dynamic approach to understanding poverty, using both quantitative and qualitative methods.
- the Complementary Panel Survey will extend our understanding of poverty beyond that provided by the results of the HIS presented here - particularly in enhancing our understanding of the *dynamics* of poverty

THE STATE OF MALAWI'S POOR: THE INCIDENCE, DEPTH, AND SEVERITY OF POVERTY (Policy Brief No 2)

Contents:

The number of poor in Malawi

The cost of eliminating poverty in Malawi

Poverty gap and poverty severity indices

Policy implications of the poverty measures

Poverty lines

Other policy briefs

Special points of interest:

- 65.3 percent of Malawi's population is poor. These individuals are unable to meet their basic needs.
- Poverty is worse in the rural areas. The Southern region is the poorest of the three regions.
- There is considerable variation in poverty levels within regions, with both very poor and relatively well-off districts found in the same region.

The annual cost of eliminating poverty in Malawi is put as MK 17.3 billion in September 2000 prices (US\$ 345 million).

THE STATE OF MALAWI'S POOR: WHO THEY ARE (Policy Brief No 3)

Contents:

The size of poor households

The age and sex characteristics of poor households

Characteristics of the head of poor households

What sorts of people are not poor

Poverty and gender

Other policy briefs

Special points of interest

- Poor households are larger than non-poor households.
- Poor households have more dependants for every worker in the household.
- Most poor households are headed by men, but a disproportionate number are female-headed.
- Individuals in their twenties, both men and women, are the most likely to be non-poor.
- Urban households are less poor with fewer females.

THE STATE OF MALAWI'S POOR: THEIR EDUCATION (Policy Brief No 4)

Contents:

The schooling of children in poor households

Rural-urban contrasts in welfare benefits from education

The educational attainment of adults in poor households

Primary school enrolment measures

Secondary and university

Other policy briefs

Special points of interest:

- There is a strong correlation between the educational attainment of adults and their welfare level.
- However, only in the urban areas can most individuals with higher education derive benefits from their schooling.
- Primary education is available to almost all children.
- However, the quality is poor, leading to poor progress, frustration, and drop-outs, primarily for the rural poor and rural non-poor girls.

THE STATE OF MALAWI'S POOR: THEIR HEALTH (Policy Brief No 5)

Contents:

The fertility of poor women

Child survival in poor households

Child nutritional status in poor households

Immunization

Morbidity

Other policy briefs

Special points of interest:

- The educational level of the mother interacts with wealth status to explain fertility rates and child nutrition status.
- The poor in Malawi appear to have a higher threshold of feeling poorly before they consider themselves to be ill.
- Where one lives in Malawi, rural or urban, is more important than wealth status in acquiring quality medical care.
- Immunization coverage is consistently high across wealth groups and rural-urban.

THE STATE OF MALAWI'S POOR: THEIR ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS (Policy Brief No 6)

Contents:

Expenditure patterns of poor households

Sources of income for poor households

Non-farm business ownership of the poor

Industries and employers of the poor

Food consumption

Other policy briefs

Special points of interest:

Food dominates the expenditures of all households, but particularly of rural households.

Subsistence production is the principal economic activity of rural Malawi.

Urban patterns of expenditure and sources of income are more diverse than rural.

Trade is the most common non-farm business.

Agriculture is the most common occupation. Yet, the non-poor are more likely than the poor not to be farmers.

**THE STATE OF MALAWI'S POOR: AGRICULTURE AND MAKING A LIVING FROM THE LAND
(Policy Brief No 7)**

Contents:

The access of the poor to agricultural land

Food crops

Livestock and the poor

Agricultural policy and the poor

Cash crops

Other policy briefs

Special points of interest:

Cropping patterns do not differ greatly between poor and non-poor. Regional differences in crop mix are more significant.

The non-poor are less likely to have cropland, but if they do, they have larger holdings.

Cash cropping is done by both the poor and non-poor. However, non-poor derive greater benefits from the effort.

Livestock ownership is low overall, except for poultry. Only cattle ownership shows a strong poor/non-poor contrast

THE DETERMINANTS OF POVERTY IN MALAWI (Policy Brief No 8)

Contents:

Which efforts will reduce poverty in Malawi the most?

Modelling the determinants of poverty

Simulating the effects of poverty reduction efforts

Assumptions

Other policy briefs

Special points of interest:

- The most effective and sustainable ways of reducing poverty in Malawi are shown to be:
 - Higher levels of educational attainment, especially for girls and women.
 - Reallocation of household labour away from agriculture to manufacturing or sales and services.
- The simulations using the model of the determinants of poverty allow policy makers to make quantitative judgements of the likely effect on poverty of a range of potential poverty reduction efforts.
- The full model and simulations are described in the publication, *The determinants of poverty in Malawi, 1998*, available from the PMS.