Malawi | GirlUp.org

Adolescent Girls in Malawi

In Malawi, girls’ rights and opportunities are disproportionately affected by widespread poverty. While girls enroll in primary school at high rates, they are more likely to drop out than boys and nearly a third of enrolled girls fail to finish primary school. Tradition and economic realities force many girls to drop out of school in order to marry, bringing health risks like complications from adolescent pregnancy and increased likelihood of HIV infection.

What is Girl Up doing in Malawi?

Girl Up has supported both a comprehensive program run by the United Nations to reach adolescent girls in Malawi, and the Adolescent Girls Advocacy and Leadership Initiative (AGALI) in Malawi. With the support of Girl Up, the UN and AGALI programs in Malawi have resulted in:

- **The improvement of girls’ lives**

  Jointly, this program has included complimentary basic education programming, scholarships for at-risk girls, all-girls math and science camps, adolescent health service training and delivery, child protection and gender-based violence programming and awareness raising. More than 30,000 girls and young women have been provided with training programs that empower them to advocate for their own rights.

- **Policy impact**

  Adolescent Girls’ Advocacy Network (AGANET) was launched as a nationwide coalition of civil society organizations and partners advocating to improve girls’ lives. In addition, AGALI has collaborated with village chiefs to develop and implement innovative bylaws that prohibit early marriage in target communities. Village chiefs are enforcing strict penalties for men who marry child brides.

About Malawi

Malawi is a small country in southern Africa tucked between Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia. Malawi became an independent nation in 1964, and today, the official languages are Chichewa, spoken by nearly 60% of the population, and English.

Following independence Malawi operated under three decades of single-party rule, but is now a multi-party democracy under the leadership of southern Africa’s first female president, Joyce Banda. Malawi has one of the worst records in the world in the areas of health and education and high levels of poverty. High rates of HIV infection continue to be a problem for the health and economy of Malawi.

*Because adolescent girls in Malawi deserve to be educated, healthy, safe, counted and positioned to be the next generation of leaders.*

You see a girl. We see the future.

---

**Facts**

- More than half of girls in Malawi are married by age 18.*
- Women with more than a secondary education get married more than seven years later than those with no education.
- More than a quarter of all girls ages 15-19 have already given birth.
- Girls age 15-19 are more than three times more likely to be HIV positive than their male peers.
- 35% of urban households have electricity compared with only 4% of rural households.

---


---

Facebook.com/GirlUp Twitter.com/GirlUp