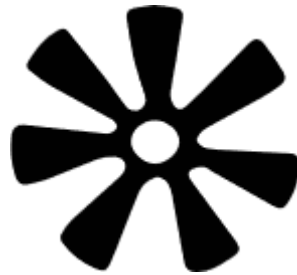


# Knowledge Institutions in Africa and their development 1960-2020

## Malawi

### Introduction

This report about the development of the knowledge institutions in Malawi was made as part of the preparations for the AfricaKnows! Conference (2-4 December 2020) in The Hague, see [www.africaknows.eu](http://www.africaknows.eu).



Reports like these can never be complete, and there might also be mistakes. Additions and corrections are welcome! Please send those to [dietzaj@asc.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:dietzaj@asc.leidenuniv.nl)

### Highlights

- 1 Malawi's population increased from 3.6 million in 1960 (when it was a British colony with the name of Nyasaland), via 9.4 million in 1990 to 19.1 million in 2020.
- 2 Malawi's adult literacy rate was 62% around 2015 and mean years of schooling for adults increased from 2.5 years in 1990 to 4.6 years in 2018.
- 3 Primary school enrolment is almost universal, and net secondary school enrolment was 34% in 2018. Expected years of schooling for children increased from 5.4 years in 1990 to 11.0 years in 2018.
- 4 The education index, part of the human development index, improved from .231 in 1990 to .459 in 2018 (the scale is between 0 and 1). Blantyre had the best performance and Mangochi the worst. For all education indicators regional inequality was rather extreme in 1990, but it diminished considerably afterwards.
- 5 Malawi's education sector benefited a lot from Scottish missionary activities and its first university already started in 1895, as a private missionary establishment that still exists. In 1964, immediately after Independence, the first public university started. Particularly after 2000 the number of private tertiary knowledge institutions has grown fast. Currently there are 5 public universities or other tertiary knowledge institutions, and 22 private ones.
- 6 Malawi has one of the lowest gross enrolment rates for students in higher education in Africa: currently around 3%, ca 45,000 students altogether.
- 7 Malawi has three known think tanks, and nine museums.

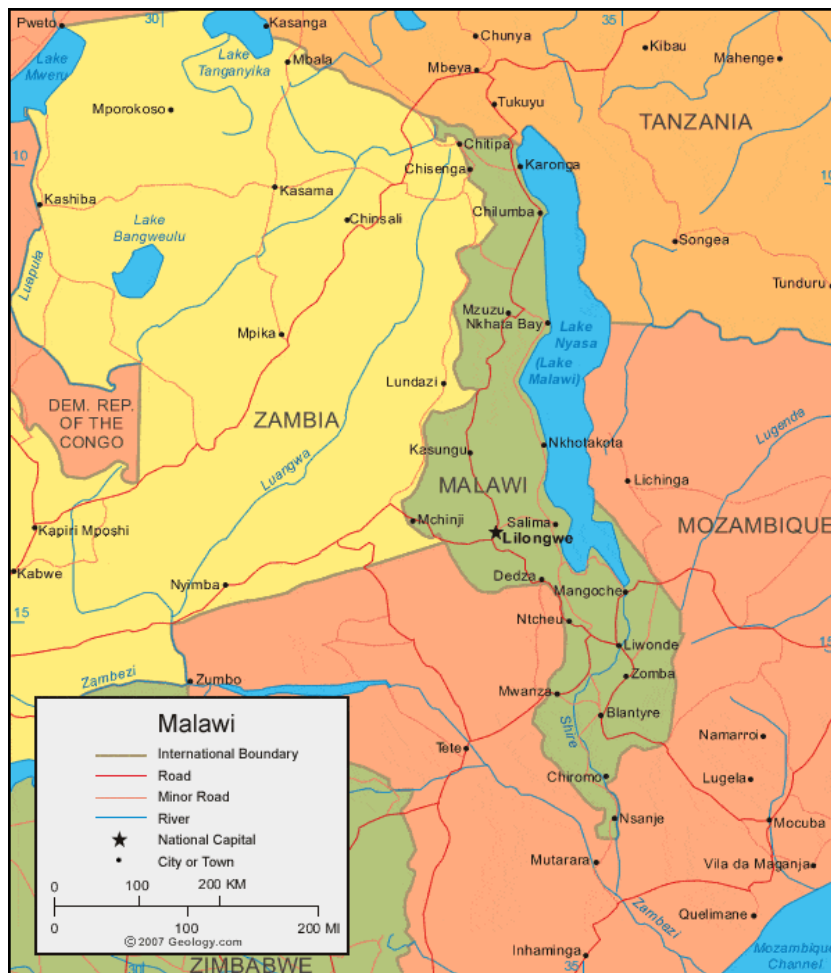
## Part 1: The Story

### Malawi's demographic and education development

Malawi is located in Southeastern Africa, bordered by Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique. Malawi was a British colony from 1891 onwards under the name of Nyasaland (and it became part of the Colonial federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland). The country became independent in 1964 as Malawi.

Malawi's population increased from 3.6 million in 1960 to 19.1 million in mid-2020. In 1960, only 4.3% of the Malawian population lived in cities (only 158,800 people), while the urban population has increased to 18.5% or 3.5 million, which is still very low for African standards. Malawi's largest city is Lilongwe .

Malawi's life expectancy increased from 37.3 years for males and 37.5 years for females in 1960 to 62.5 years for males and 68.8 years for females currently. The median age first decreased from 18 years in 1960 to 16.6 years in 2005-2010. Since then, it started to increase and presently is 18.1 years. In 1960 an average woman gave birth to 6.9 live-born children, which increased to 7.6 in 1980-1985. Since then, the fertility rate is decreasing and currently an average woman gives birth to 4.3 live-born children<sup>1</sup>.



Source: geology.com

## Literacy and enrolment

1 <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/malawi-population/>

The adult literacy rate in Malawi was ca 62% in 2015 (the latest figure available), slightly below the figure for earlier years<sup>2</sup>. Of the youth (15-24 years old) 471,100 males and 463,200 females were regarded as illiterate in 2015. For the adult population as a whole these figures are 1.3 million for males and 2.1 million for females.

Malawi's population of primary school age children (6-11 years) is about 3.2 million children<sup>3</sup>. Education is compulsory from age 6 to age 13 (8 years). Almost all children in the primary school age group attend primary school (although recent data for net enrolment are missing. Those for 2009 suggest a net primary enrolment rate of 98%<sup>4</sup>. Children with the age to attend secondary school (12-17) are 2.7 million. 34% are attending secondary school according to the latest figures (2018): males 33.7% and females 34.8%. Finally, 1.5 million people are in the age category to attend tertiary education (people between 18 and 22). Gross enrolment rates for tertiary education increased from 0.72% in 2010 to 0.82% in 2011 with females at 0.64%, and males at 1.02%. This would mean that Malawi only had ca 12,000 students in its higher education institutions, but based on old, 2011, data. Campusfrance does not give data about student numbers and students in international mobility for Malawi<sup>5</sup>. In a relatively recent source, Malawi was described as the country with the lowest tertiary enrolment rates in the world. It also stated that in 2018 there were between 40,000 and 50,000 students in the country<sup>6</sup>. This would mean a gross enrolment rate of ca 3%.

### **Regional differentiation of education results in Malawi: 1990-2018**

The information provided by the Globaldatalab about the subregional human development index, its components and its indicators (<https://globaldatalab.org/shdi>) provides data for the period between 1990 and 2018 and uses thirteen regions. Between 1990 and 2018 the population of Malawi as a whole increased 1.92 times, but with major differences between the regions: Lilongwe's population increased 2.39 times, while Machinga District's population hardly increased at all.

The Globaldatalab provides data about the education index (one of the three indexes that together form the Human Development Index), and about two relevant indicators: mean years of schooling, showing the average education level of the adult population per region, and expected years of education, showing the expected number of years current children will attend schools.

We present the data for the years 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2018 (the latest year available at the moment). See tables 1-4 in part 2.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://countryeconomy.com/demography/literacy-rate/malawi#:~:text=Malawi%20it%20has%2C%20according%20publishes,the%20ranking%20of%20literacy%20rate.>

<sup>3</sup> <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/mw>

<sup>4</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.NENR?locations=MW>

<sup>5</sup> [https://ressources.campusfrance.org/publications/mobilite\\_pays/en/](https://ressources.campusfrance.org/publications/mobilite_pays/en/)

<sup>6</sup>

<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20180705091345766#:~:text=However%20the%20total%20student%20population,be%20between%2040%2C000%20and%2050%2C000.>

## **Education Index**

The education index is one of the elements of the human development index. The education index in Malawi improved from .231 in 1990 to .459 in 2018 (its range is between 0 and 1). The improvements have been consistent everywhere, but with major differences between the regions. The district with the best performance in 1990 (Mzimba in the north<sup>7</sup>) showed the slowest improvements over time, while the district with always the worst results (Mangochi) showed the fastest improvements. As a result the high inequality in 1990 diminished to moderate levels later. From 2000 onwards the best district has always been Blantyre, the largest city and commercial capital of the country.

## **Mean Years of Schooling for Adults**

According to UNESCO, 'Mean Years of Schooling' is an indicator about the "average number of completed years of education of a country's population aged 25 years and older, excluding years spent repeating individual grades"<sup>8</sup>. In Malawi the mean years of schooling for adults increased from 2.5 years in 1990 to 4.6 years in 2018. Blantyre always had the best performance, and Mangochi always the worst. Particularly in the decade between 2000 and 2010 progress was rapid. The fastest improvements happened in Lilongwe, and the slowest in Mzimba. Regional inequality was rather high in 1990, but diminished later.

## **Expected Years of Schooling for Children**

UNDP defines the 'expected years of schooling' as the: "Number of years of schooling that a child of school entrance age can expect to receive if prevailing patterns of age-specific enrolment rates persist throughout the child's life"<sup>9</sup>. In Malawi the expected years of schooling for children increased from 5.4 years in 1990 to 11.0 years in 2018, with the most rapid improvements in the 1990s. The district with the best performance shifted from Mzimba in 1990, via the other northern districts in 2000 and 2010, to Blantyre in 2010 and 2018. Mangochi performed worst, with the exception of 2000, when that bottom position was for Salima District in the Central Region. However, Mangochi was the district with the fastest improvements between 1990 and 2018, and Mzimba the district with the slowest improvements. Regional inequality was extreme in 1990, but improved afterwards, and currently is low.

## **Malawi's tertiary knowledge development**

Malawi currently has 27 universities or other tertiary institutions. There are 5 public ones and 22 private ones, a few of them with a religious background. University education already started in 1895. The number of private tertiary institutions started to grow from 2000 onwards and soon there were many more private institutions than public ones. Currently they far outnumber the public universities (but not in terms of numbers of students). 75% of

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<sup>7</sup> Mzimba District includes the Embangweni Missionary Centre, that was started in 1902 by Scottish missionaries, who also started a school in 1904; see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Embangweni> This explains the relatively high education performance.

<sup>8</sup> <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/mean-years-schooling>

<sup>9</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/expected-years-schooling-children-years>

the tertiary institutions in Malawi are located in or near the capital city Lilongwe. There are also some think tanks and museums in Malawi (more spread out in the country). The 4icu ranking of African universities lists the University of Malawi, the University of Livingstonia and the Unicaf University as among the 200 top universities of Africa.

Historically the development of the number of universities is as given in the table below.

**Malawi’s universities and other tertiary institutions 1960 – 2020**

Type	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	Year Unknown
Public	0	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	5	5	0
Private	1	2	2	3	5	5	7	10	19	21	1
Total	1	2	4	5	7	8	10	13	24	26	1

Sources: see tables 5 and 6 in part 2

**Public and private universities in Malawi**



University of Malawi<sup>10</sup>



University of Livingstonia<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/unima.mw/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.ccapsofinia.org/departments/university-of-livingstonia/#>



Unicaf University<sup>12</sup>

### **Think tanks and other knowledge institutions in Malawi**

According to the 2018 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report, there are 15 think tanks or research institutes in Malawi, outside the university system, but only for three of them further details have been given. See table 7 in part 2.

### **Museums in Malawi**

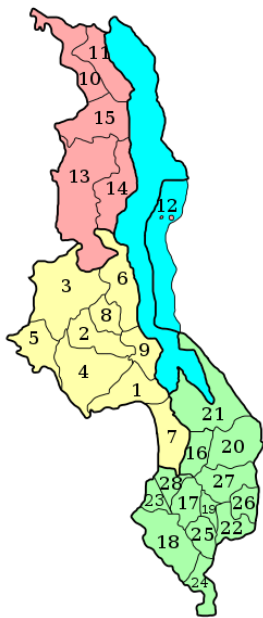
Most museums in Malawi are historical cultural museums, and with locations in various parts of the country. See table 8 in part 2: nine museums.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.unicaf.org/open-doors-at-the-unicaf-university-malawi-campus/>

## Part 2 : the Data

**Map and table 1: Malawi: changes in regional population between 1990 and 2018; population numbers in thousands**

Region	Regions	1990	2018	2018/1990
	Blantyre = 17 in C	670	1270	1.90
	Kasungu = 3 in C	370	760	2.05
	Lilongwe = 4 in C	1130	2700	2.39
	Machinga = 20 in S	660	700	1.06
	Mangochi = 21 in S	510	1210	2.37
	Mulanje = 22 in S	600	830	1.38
	Mzimba = 13 in N	560	1150	2.05
	Other central	1900	3550	1.87
	Other northern	560	1080	1.93
	Other southern	1070	2530	2.36
	Salima = 9 in C	270	550	2.04
	Thyolo = 25 in S	640	810	1.27
	Zomba = 27 in S	470	1000	2.13
	Total Malawi		9410	18100

Malawi has 28 districts<sup>13</sup>. The Globaldatalab uses nine of those, and lumps together the 19 others in 'other central', 'other northern', and 'other southern'.

Other central = Dedza (1), Dowa (2), Mchinji (5), Nkhotakota (6), Ntcheu (7) and Ntchisi (8)

Other northern = Chitipa (10), Karonga (11), Likoma (12), Nkhata Bay (14), Rumphi (15), Balaka (16), Chikwawa (18) and Chiradzulu (19)

Other southern = Mwanza (23), Nsanje (24), Phalombe (26), and Neno (28).

**Table 2: Malawi: Education index 1990-2018<sup>14</sup>**

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
Blantyre = 17 in C	338	498	543	556	1.64
Kasungu = 3 in C	266	420	461	487	1.83
Lilongwe = 4 in C	198	386	420	491	2.48
Machinga = 20 in S	178	310	372	398	2.24
Mangochi = 21 in S	122	294	328	374	3.07
Mulanje = 22 in S	187	350	415	446	2.39
Mzimba = 13 in N	356	454	484	515	1.45
Other central	226	353	392	423	1.87

<sup>13</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Districts\\_of\\_Malawi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Districts_of_Malawi)

<sup>14</sup> The HDI data, and its components go from 0 (worst level) to 1 (best level). We present the figures x 1000. The inequality figure is the highest value divided by the lowest value in a particular year.

Other northern	332	482	507	521	1.57
Other southern	211	337	406	431	2.04
Salima = 9 in C	206	320	398	383	1.86
Thyolo = 25 in S	196	342	433	444	2.27
Zomba = 27 in S	244	358	462	466	1.91
Total	231	378	428	459	1.99
Inequality	2.9	1.7	1.7	1.5	

**Table 3: Malawi: Regional data for 'mean years of schooling'**

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
Blantyre = 17 in C	4.4	5.5	6.8	6.8	1.55
Kasungu = 3 in C	3.0	3.6	4.7	4.9	1.63
Lilongwe = 4 in C	2.4	3.3	4.6	5.7	2.38
Machinga = 20 in S	1.5	1.9	3.3	3.1	2.07
Mangochi = 21 in S	1.3	1.7	2.7	2.9	2.23
Mulanje = 22 in S	1.7	2.4	3.6	4.0	2.35
Mzimba = 13 in N	4.1	4.3	5.4	5.9	1.44
Other central	2.2	2.5	3.6	4.0	1.82
Other northern	3.5	4.6	5.7	5.9	1.69
Other southern	2.0	2.4	3.7	3.9	1.95
Salima = 9 in C	1.9	2.6	3.7	3.1	1.63
Thyolo = 25 in S	2.5	2.5	4.1	4.1	1.64
Zomba = 27 in S	2.5	2.4	4.5	4.6	1.84
Total	2.5	3.1	4.3	4.6	1.84
Inequality	3.4	3.2	2.5	2.3	

**Table 4: Malawi: Regional data for 'expected years of schooling'**

Region	1990	2000	2010	2018	2018/1990
Blantyre = 17 in C	6.9	11.3	11.4	11.9	1.72
Kasungu = 3 in C	6.0	10.8	10.9	11.6	1.93
Lilongwe = 4 in C	4.3	9.9	9.5	10.9	2.53
Machinga = 20 in S	4.6	8.9	9.5	10.6	2.30
Mangochi = 21 in S	2.9	8.6	8.5	10.0	3.45
Mulanje = 22 in S	4.7	9.7	10.6	11.3	2.40
Mzimba = 13 in N	7.9	11.2	11.0	11.5	1.46
Other central	5.5	9.7	9.8	10.5	1.91
Other northern	7.7	11.8	11.4	11.7	1.52
Other southern	5.2	9.2	10.2	10.9	2.10
Salima = 9 in C	5.2	8.4	9.9	10.1	1.94
Thyolo = 25 in S	4.1	9.3	10.7	11.1	2.71
Zomba = 27 in S	5.8	10.0	11.2	11.2	1.93
Total	5.4	9.9	10.3	11.0	2.04
Inequality	2.7	1.4	1.3	1.2	



**Table 5: Public universities in Malawi**

University	Year of establishment	Location
University of Malawi ( <a href="http://www.unima.mw/">http://www.unima.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 1 in Malawi)	1964	Zomba, Blantyre, and Lilongwe
Malawi College of Accountancy ( <a href="http://www.mca.ac.mw/">http://www.mca.ac.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 11 in Malawi)	1980	Blantyre
Mzuzu University ( <a href="https://www.mzuni.ac.mw/">https://www.mzuni.ac.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 4 in Malawi)	1997	Mzuzu
Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (formed by a merger between Bunda College of Agriculture of the University of Malawi and Natural Resources College (NRC)) ( <a href="http://www.luanar.ac.mw/luanar/">http://www.luanar.ac.mw/luanar/</a> ) (4icu rank: 6 in Malawi)	2012	Lilongwe
Malawi University of Science and Technology ( <a href="http://www.must.ac.mw/">http://www.must.ac.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 7 in Malawi)	2012	Limbe

(Sources: Wikipedia: Universities, 4ICU (<https://www.4icu.org/mw/>), and <https://www.4icu.org/top-universities-africa/>), World Higher Education Database ([https://www.whed.net/results\\_institutions.php](https://www.whed.net/results_institutions.php)); and the websites of the institutions, if available.

**Table 6: Private Universities in Malawi**

University	Year of establishment	Location	Religious affiliation
University of Livingstonia ( <a href="http://www.unilia.ac.mw/">http://www.unilia.ac.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 2 in Malawi)	1895	Livingstonia	Yes
Malawi Adventist University (LakeView seminary) ( <a href="http://mau.ac.mw/">http://mau.ac.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 8 in Malawi)	1969	Ntcheu	Yes
African Bible College University ( <a href="http://africanbiblecolleges.com/abcmalawi">http://africanbiblecolleges.com/abcmalawi</a> )	1988 (1976)	Lilongwe	Yes
Africa University of Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development ( <a href="https://augcyd.wixsite.com/augcyd-1">https://augcyd.wixsite.com/augcyd-1</a> )	1994	Lilongwe	No
ShareWORLD Open University ( <a href="https://shareworld.melimu.com/">https://shareworld.melimu.com/</a> )	1994	Lilongwe, Blantyre and Mzuzu	No
Columbia Commonwealth University/Malawi ( <a href="https://ccwuniversity.org/index.html">https://ccwuniversity.org/index.html</a> )	2001	Lilongwe and Blantyre	No
St. John of God College of Health Sciences ( <a href="https://sjog.mw/college-of-health-sciences/">https://sjog.mw/college-of-health-sciences/</a> )	2003	Mzuzu	Yes
Catholic University of Malawi ( <a href="https://www.cunima.ac.mw/">https://www.cunima.ac.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 5 in Malawi)	2006	Limbe	Yes
Blantyre International University ( <a href="http://www.biu-edu.com/">http://www.biu-edu.com/</a> ) (4icu rank: 9 in Malawi)	2008	Blantyre	No
Exploits University ( <a href="https://exploitsmw.com/">https://exploitsmw.com/</a> ) (4icu rank: 18 in Malawi)	2008	Lilongwe	No
Daeyang University ( <a href="https://www.dyuni.ac.mw/">https://www.dyuni.ac.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 14 in Malawi)	2010-2011	Lilongwe	Yes

DMI - St John the Baptist University ( <a href="https://www.dmisjbu.edu.mw/">https://www.dmisjbu.edu.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 13 in Malawi)	2011	Lilongwe	Yes
Nkhoma University ( <a href="http://www.nkhoma.ac.mw">http://www.nkhoma.ac.mw</a> ) (4icu rank: 16 in Malawi)	2011	Lilongwe	Yes
Unicaf University ( <a href="https://unicafuniversity.ac.mw/">https://unicafuniversity.ac.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 3 in Malawi)	2012	Lilongwe	No
Skyway University (Formerly known as Skyway Business College)	2012	Lilongwe	No
Central Christian University (formerly known as Christian College of Education) ( <a href="https://ccuonline.mw/index.php">https://ccuonline.mw/index.php</a> )	2013	Blantyre	Yes
Malawi Assemblies of God University ( <a href="https://magu.ac.mw/">https://magu.ac.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 12 in Malawi)	2013	Lilongwe	Yes
Pentecostal Life University ( <a href="https://www.plu.mw/">https://www.plu.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 10 in Malawi)	2013	Lilongwe	Yes
Lake Malawi Anglican University ( <a href="https://lamau.edu.mw/">https://lamau.edu.mw/</a> )	2014	Lilongwe	Yes
Millennium University ( <a href="https://www.mu.ac.mw/">https://www.mu.ac.mw/</a> ) (4icu rank: 15 in Malawi)	2016	Blantyre	No
University of Blantyre Synod ( <a href="http://www.ubsmw.com/index.php/en/">http://www.ubsmw.com/index.php/en/</a> ) (4icu rank: 19 in Malawi)	2017	Blantyre	Yes
Riverton University ( <a href="https://rivertonmw.com/">https://rivertonmw.com/</a> ) (4icu rank: 17 in Malawi)	?	Lilongwe	No

(Sources: Wikipedia: Universities, 4ICU (<https://www.4icu.org/mw/>), and <https://www.4icu.org/top-universities-africa/>), World Higher Education Database ([https://www.whed.net/results\\_institutions.php](https://www.whed.net/results_institutions.php)); and the websites of the institutions, if available.

**Table 7: Think tanks and other knowledge institutions in Malawi**

Think tanks	Year of establishment	Location
Natural Resources and Environment Center (NAREC) ( <a href="http://www.unima.mw/centers/chancellor+college/natural-resources-and-environmental-centre">http://www.unima.mw/centers/chancellor+college/natural-resources-and-environmental-centre</a> )	1999	Zomba
Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA) ( <a href="https://cepa.rmportal.net/">https://cepa.rmportal.net/</a> )	2002	Blantyre
Center for Free Market Enterprise (CFME) ( <a href="https://cfmemalawi.org/">https://cfmemalawi.org/</a> )	2014	Zomba

(Sources; [https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=think\\_tanks](https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=think_tanks) (for: 2018 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report); <http://africathinktanks.org/think-tanks>)

**Table 8: Museums in Malawi**

Museums	websites	Location
Chamare Museum & Research Centre	<a href="http://www.kungoni.org/page1.html">http://www.kungoni.org/page1.html</a>	Mtakataka

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Chichiri Museum	<a href="https://web.archive.org/web/20061024074809/http://www.africom.museum/museums/malawi-chichiri.html">https://web.archive.org/web/20061024074809/http://www.africom.museum/museums/malawi-chichiri.html</a>	Blantyre
Cultural & Museum Centre Karonga	<a href="http://warmheartofmalawi.org/">http://warmheartofmalawi.org/</a>	Karonga
Lake Malawi Museum	<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Malawi_Museum">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_Malawi_Museum</a>	Mangochi
Kungoni	<a href="http://kungoni.org/">http://kungoni.org/</a>	Mua
Mtengatenga Postal Museum	?	Namaka
Mtengatenga Museum	?	?
Mzuzu Regional Museum	?	Mzuzu
Top Mandala Museum	?	Blantyre

(source: Wikipedia: Museums, and other sources, like <https://www.arts-store.com/mus%C3%A9es-museums-world-1/>). Not included: cultural centres

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*This report was made by Anne van Gent, African Studies Centre Leiden, and extended by Ton Dietz (also ASCL).*