



THE AFRICAN CAPACITY  
BUILDING FOUNDATION

FONDATION POUR LE RENFORCEMENT  
DES CAPACITÉS EN AFRIQUE

# ACBF's cooperation with **Malawi**



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## INTRODUCTION

The partnership between the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and the Republic of Malawi began in 2006 when the former provided capacity building support to the country. The Republic of Malawi then became a member of the ACBF in 2007. Since then, the partnership between the Foundation and the Government of Malawi has grown from strength to strength. To date, the country has been a shareholder and member of the African Capacity Building Foundation for 13 years. The country is represented by its Minister of Finance Economic Planning & Development in the ACBF Board of Governors.

## ACBF'S INVESTMENTS IN MALAWI

The Foundation's investment in Malawi, to date, has reached about US\$ 3.66 million. ACBF is proud to have supported human and institutional capacity development in the country. The Foundation has supported national projects in Malawi which include the Malawi Statistical Systems Project (MSSP) and Malawi Public Policy Research and Analysis Project (MPPRAP) as well as key institutions like the National Economic Council (NEC), to mention just a few. With support from the ACBF, the aforementioned national institutions have become more valuable and are playing significant roles in the country's development agenda.

**Table 1: ACBF-supported projects and programs in Malawi (US\$)**

National Projects/programs	Phases	Investments
Malawi Statistical Systems Project (MSSP)	SMTP I	1,200,000
National Economic Council Project (NEC)	SMTP I	1,500,000
Capacity Building for National Focal Point (NFP)	SMTP I	50,000
Malawi Public Policy Research and Analysis Project (MPPRAP)	SMTP III	500,000
Malawi Knowledge Network for Research and Development (MAKNET)	SMTP II	300,000
Training for Employment & Entrepreneurship	SMTP III	40,000
EDC	SMTP III	70,000
YES Malawi	ACBF Strategy (2017-2022)	10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3,670,000</b>

## ACBF SUPPORTED KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS FOR MALAWI

The Foundation has conducted several research studies to inform policy formulation and implementation in Malawi. Some of the knowledge products prepared for Malawi are detailed in Annex 1.

**Table 2: Current ACBF-Supported projects in Malawi (2023)**

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT DETAILS
African-Finnish Partnerships on Taxation Capacity in Africa	The aim is to strengthen the capacity of selected African governments and pan-African organizations to increase Domestic Resource Mobilization (DRM) through informed policy-making and effective tax administration
African Union Transformative Climate Finance program	The projects aim at addressing the capacity gaps in climate change adaptation in Africa. Key activities include a Scoping and mapping of green growth landscape in Africa, conducting of a Capacity Needs Assessment and Development of a Capacity Development Program.

## **MALAWI'S CONTRIBUTION TO ACBF**

The Foundation has benefitted immensely from the African and global political influence of the Malawi Government. The country has since 2007 been contributing to ACBF, and to date has made a cumulative contribution of US\$1.15 million.

With the support of the Government of Malawi, ACBF has been able to leverage resources from the international community to support capacity development across Africa and to achieve significant results in support of the continent's development process. Notably, ACBF has been catalyzing change in Africa by investing in capacity development initiatives in the public and private sectors as well as in Civil Society Organizations; providing technical assistance in implementation of capacity development interventions; generating, managing, and sharing knowledge on best practices in capacity building and development management.

The Foundation has strengthened public policy across Africa, produced highly skilled public sector economists and managers, strengthened institutions of financial accountability, and enhanced the effectiveness of non-state actors. ACBF has also supported the creation of platforms for dialogue on, and coordination in capacity development, supported improvements in trade and regional integration, empowered women and strengthened parliaments.

**Table 2: Malawi's contributions to ACBF (US\$)**

<b>FINANCING PHASE</b>	<b>PLEDGE</b>	<b>PAYMENTS</b>	<b>OUTSTANDING</b>
SMTP II (2007-2011)	250,000.00	250,000.00	-
SMTP III (2012-2016)	500,000.00	500,000.00	-
ACBF STRATEGY 2017-2022	1,000,000.00	400,000	600,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,750,000.00</b>	<b>1,150,000.00</b>	<b>600,000.00</b>

## ANNEX 1: SELECTED ACBF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES BENEFITING MALAWI

Name of Project	Key objectives/Focus
<b>STATISTICAL CAPACITY BUILDING FOR MALAWI NATIONAL STATISTICAL SYSTEM</b>	To build human and Institutional capacity of NSO and other data producing agencies in the line Ministries to provide high quality, timely, and authentic statistical information for policy formulation and decision making. To strengthen Malawi PRS monitoring and Evaluation Division of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development and of the Ministry of Finance to conduct policy analysis, policy formulation and decision making required to monitor and evaluate MPRS. To strengthen coordination among various data producers and among users and producers of data ensuring standardization, quality and timeliness of data. To revise statistical policy analysis and legal framework in collaboration with Malawi Law Commission.
<b>NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL PROJECT (NEC)/MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (MEPD)</b>	To enhance the capacity of the National Economic Council to operate effectively and to provide professional advice and technical support to government and the public on economic, social and development policy. To create a streamlined, efficient land well-coordinated economic management machinery, particularly among the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, National Economic Council, Reserve Bank of Malawi, and donor agencies. To improve the capacity of the executive and legislative branches (e.g. the Malawi Law Commission) of government to make effective and timely decisions on economic reform.
<b>Malawi Knowledge Network for Research and Development (MAKNET) project.</b>	To provide a platform for debate in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and programmes. To mobilize policy experts, academics, professional associations/institutions, public and private sector, civil societies, policy activists and advocates to share and debate developmental issues. To provide a knowledge base for development policies through the establishment of a website and database of experts in Malawi, region, and the world.

**Table A: Selected knowledge products to support African Union (AU) agenda, policy, and development programs where Malawi was covered.**

Year	Type of Knowledge Product	Title/Theme	Coverage for Malawi
2019	Africa Capacity Report 2019	Fostering Transformative Leadership for Africa's Development	Malawi Country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2018	Occasional Papers	Brain Drain in Africa: The Case of Tackling Capacity Issues in Malawi's Medical Migration.	Case study on Malawi
2018	Compendium of case study	Compendium of case studies on youth and managing for development results	Case study on Malawi
2018	Compendium of case study	Compendium of case studies on gender and managing for development results	Case study on Malawi
2017	Africa Capacity Report 2017	Building Capacity in Science, Technology, and Innovation for Africa's Transformation	Malawi Country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2016	Development Memoirs	The Role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) In Africa's Sustainable and Inclusive Development: Understanding the Capacity Challenges	Case study on Malawi
2015	Africa Capacity Report 2015	Capacity Imperatives for Domestic Resource Mobilization in Africa	Malawi Country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2014	Africa Capacity Report 2014	Capacity Imperatives for Regional Integration in Africa	Malawi Country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2013	Africa Capacity Report 2013	Capacity Development for Natural Resource Management	Malawi Country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2012	Africa Capacity Report 2012	Capacity Development for Agricultural Transformation and Food Security	Malawi Country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics
2012	Occasional papers	Africa's Quest for Food Security: What is the Role of Urban Agriculture?	Case study on Malawi
2011	Africa Capacity Report 2011	Capacity Development in Fragile States	Malawi Country Capacity Profile & Compendium of Statistics

**Table B: Selected knowledge sharing events and networking to support African Union (AU) agenda, policy, and development programs which Malawi has benefitted from.**

Year	Knowledge Event	Title/Theme	Coverage for Malawi	Date and Venue
2019	2019 Africa Think Tank Summit	Tackling Implementation Challenges for Africa's Sustainable Development	1 participant from the National Planning Commission sponsored to attend	24 – 26 April, Nairobi, Kenya
2018	2018 Africa Think Tank Summit	Tackling Africa's Youth Unemployment Challenge: Innovative Solutions from the Think Tanks	1 participant from Ministry of Economic Planning sponsored to attend	5 - 7 April Accra, Ghana
2017	Fourth Planning Meeting for the African Union Committee of 10 Heads of State Championing Education, Science and Technology in Africa (C10) Conference	Science, Technology, and innovation (STI)	Workshop held in Malawi. Local participants from the Government of Malawi, University representatives and private sector representatives, among other stakeholders.	26 – 27 March, Lilongwe, Malawi
2017	2019 ACR Data Collectors' Training Workshop	Fostering Transformative Leadership for Africa's Development	1 data expert hired and sponsored to participate in data collection training workshop	29 May to - 1 June Harare, Zimbabwe
2017	2017 Africa Think Tank Summit	African Think Tanks and Industrialization in Africa	2 participants from the Malawi Public Policy Research and Analysis Project (Department of Economic Planning) sponsored to attend	6 - 8 April, Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire
2016	COMESA Knowledge Sharing Meeting	AfCoP COMESA knowledge sharing	Meeting held in Malawi. Participation by Malawi Government ministries, the Malawi Community of Practice (CoP) and other local stakeholders	22-23 September Lilongwe, Malawi
2016	2016 AfCoP Annual Forum	Mobilizing Domestic Resources for Africa's Transformation	4 participants from Malawi sponsored to attend: 1 from Office of the President, 1 from AfCoP Youth for Results Network; 1 from Performance Enforcement Department, Office of President, and Cabinet and 1 from the Reserve Bank of Malawi.	13 - 15 Jul Nairobi, Kenya
2016	3 <sup>rd</sup> Capacity Development Forum and the 25th Anniversary Celebrations for the African Capacity Building Foundation	Developing Capacity for Africa's Economic and Social Transformation	2 participants sponsored to attend: 1 from the University of Malawi and 1 from the Reserve Bank of Malawi	3 – 5 May Harare, Zimbabwe

Year	Knowledge Event	Title/Theme	Coverage for Malawi	Date and Venue
2015	2017 Africa Capacity Report Data Collectors' Training Workshop	Building Capacity in Science, Technology, and Innovation for Africa's Transformation	1 data expert hired and sponsored to participate in data collection training workshop	16 – 19 November Harare, Zimbabwe
2015	Board of Governors' Meetings	Domestic Resource Mobilization	3 participants from Malawi sponsored to attend: 1 from Innovations for Poverty, 1 from University of Malawi and 1 from Reserve Bank of Malawi	2 – 4 September, Addis Ababa Ethiopia
2014	2015 Africa Capacity Report Data Collectors Training Workshop	Capacity Imperatives for Domestic Resource Mobilization in Africa	1 data expert hired and sponsored to participate in data collection training workshop	12 – 15 February, Harare, Zimbabwe
2014	2015 Africa Capacity Report Data Collectors' Training Workshop	Capacity Imperatives for Regional Integration in Africa	1 data expert hired and sponsored to participate in data collection training workshop	17 – 21 October, Harare, Zimbabwe
2013	2013 Africa Capacity Report Data Collectors Training	Capacity Development for Natural Resources Management	1 data expert hired and sponsored to participate in data collection training workshop	8 – 11 October, Harare, Zimbabwe
2011	2012 Africa Capacity Report Data Collectors' Training Workshop	Capacity Development for Agricultural Transformation and Food Security	1 data expert hired and sponsored to participate in data collection training workshop	13 – 18 June Harare, Zimbabwe
2010	2011 Africa Capacity Report Data Collection Training Workshop	Capacity building in Fragile states	1 data expert hired and sponsored to attend training workshop	13 – 16 July 2010 Harare, Zimbabwe

## ANNEX 2: SUCCESS STORIES

### 1. Enhanced inclusiveness and effective participation of Non-State Actors

The MAKNET, a knowledge network spearheaded by the ACBF (from 2008 to 2012) promoted and supported inclusive engagement and effective participation of non-state actors in the Malawi's development discourse.

The network provided a platform for knowledge sharing and ideas-sourcing on strategic national issues. Further, it promoted the consolidation, advocacy and use evidence-based knowledge for decision making by the key development actors in the country. MAKNET project resulted in mobilization of policy experts, academics, professional associations, public and private sector institutions, and individuals to share and debate contemporary developmental issues. With a membership of over 585 individuals and institutions, MAKNET built a legitimate constituency and a voice that is considered reliable and factual. The network ably held forums to share policy briefs and on-line discussions.

Through implementation of MAKNET, the sharing of best practices across professional associations and practitioners was highly promoted. Despite its closure on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2012, MAKNET left a legacy in the form of an Information Bank established as a knowledge network that still lives a repository policy and research reference materials. During the four years of operation, the project resulted in mobilization of policy experts, academics, professional associations, public and private sector institutions, and individuals to share and debate developmental issues in Malawi. The broad-based policy and development research topics of interest included those focusing on: (1) Urbanization in Malawi (2) Role of Chiefs in development (3) Ways of improving foreign exchange generation, and (4) Research for Development.

Through achievement of one of its respective objectives, "cultivating the culture of wide consultation through broadening access to and utilization of information," the Foundation (ACBF) through MAKNET, supported other national economic-development programs through information supply through government, citizenry, and stakeholder engagement. Contemporary development debates had made a good deal of influencing policy pathways.

To harness global information on development, MAKNET leveraged knowledge between professionals in Malawi and those in Diaspora through electronic discussions and social platforms. The gathered information was made available to policymakers to make inputs into development conceptualization, implementation, and management. Locally, MAKNET harmonized development policy debates in collaboration with other institutions such as the Ministry of Development Planning and Cooperation, the Malawi National Assembly, the Reserve Bank, the National Bank of Malawi, the National Statistics Office, the Council for Non-Governmental Organizations in Malawi, (CONGOMA), the Centre for Social Research, the National Association of Business Women (NABW), the Malawi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Economics Association of Malawi (ECAMA) and the Polytechnic as the Secretariat. It was therefore recognized that the concept of knowledge generation, sharing and continuous learning was real at MAKNET. The development policy platform formed an affordable way to debate and discuss development issues virtually from one's office and yet at one's own convenience through embracement of technological modernization.

## 2. 'Harnessing accountability'<sup>1</sup> in Malawi National Statistical System

The ACBF supported three main areas in the National Statistical System in Malawi, namely, statistical advocacy, human resource development and training. This support enabled the National Statistical Office (NSO) to develop a Strategic Plan (2007- 2011) that had given rise to the establishment of the National Statistical System (NSS). Based on internationally approved standards, the NSO in collaboration with several line ministries developed the first ever National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) - locally referred to as the National Statistical System Strategic Plan for the period 2008 to 2012. This forms the basis of implementation of activities by the NSS.

The Foundation's support led to the update of Malawi's Statistics Act which enabled the NSO to legitimately coordinate the NSS. The updated Act created a Data Ecosystem that included the needs of Government Ministries; the Academia; Civil Society Organizations; the Media; and the general public. The Foundation support empowered NSO and its partners to advocate for systematic institutional changes at various levels of Government institutions including via taking policy makers on study tours to appreciate institutional set-ups in other countries.

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<sup>1</sup>Story adapted from '20 years of Building Capacity in Africa. Our stories-Our Vision - our work' 2012.



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