



## Leaving No One Behind: What does it mean for Malawi?

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By

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## Abstract

This paper investigates the concept of “leave no one behind” in the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Malawi. The study examines what leave no one behind means for Malawi: who are those left behind; and unravels some of the determinants of being left behind. To achieve its objectives, the paper examines if individual characteristics, household level characteristics, and community level characteristics such as age, household size, and proximity to a healthcare facility determine the status of being left behind in income and health poverty in Malawi. The study employs multinomial logit and logit models in Stata Software to generate regression output by means of maximum likelihood approach using data from the third Malawi Integrated Household Survey. Leave No One Behind implies that the SDGs and their targets should be met for everyone with a focus on the poorest, the most vulnerable and farthest behind – those who are often the hardest to reach. The descriptive statistics generated by the study show that *income plays a prominent role in explaining access to public services such as electricity, water, and sanitation by households in Malawi*. The research findings based on predictive analysis indicate that being left behind in income poverty is primarily determined by household size, education, and location as suggested by the magnitude of the coefficients and significance levels. In a similar manner being left behind in health-poverty is mainly determined by education, location, and use of treated mosquito nets. The paper has taken an econometric approach focused on the income dimension and emphasized on vertical inequalities. The analysis needs to go further and unravel the ‘horizontal and spatial’ inequalities that intersect with the vertical inequalities and further exacerbate the inequalities. The paper proposes that a holistic action agenda for Malawi be developed, which aligns all stakeholders, duty bearers, and rights holders since collaborative and integrated approaches across sectors at various levels are required to ensure that no one is left behind.

## 1.0 Introduction

The term “leave no one behind” has become a central rallying cry around Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>i</sup> Of interest is the implication that the phrase has for Malawi as the country continues to face poverty and inequality, challenging macroeconomic conditions, and climate-related natural disasters that have adversely affected agricultural productivity resulting in food insecurity and vulnerability.<sup>ii</sup> Many people continue to lack opportunities, access to essential services, and decent living standards. It is therefore indispensable that the country’s National Development Strategy, the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS III: 2017-2022), should address these challenges, by focusing on “leaving no one behind” to achieve human development for all.

The World Bank (2005) observes that it is easy to ignore the poor if they are statistically invisible and that one cannot help them without at least knowing who they are, where they are found, and the extent of their poverty. Much progress has been made in investigating the subject of poverty and the people who are left behind in development in Africa. However, the approaches used in the analysis have mostly relied on regional and national averages, which constrain the understanding of the root causes. This paper, therefore, is a systematic attempt to examine the underlying causes of being left behind in poverty and development. The paper investigates two research questions: (a) who are being left behind? and (b) why are they being left behind? It draws upon the ODI report, “Who is Being Left Behind in Sub-Saharan Africa?” in inclusion of some of the goals and targets for analysis.

The specific objectives of this paper are as follows:

- (1) To examine if gender, age, household size, education, location, and employment status determine the status of being left behind in income poverty;
- (2) To investigate if the use of treated mosquito nets, location, proximity to a healthcare facility, and education status affect the outcome of being left behind in health poverty in Malawi.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 discusses the country context while Section 3 presents the methodology. Section 4 details the relevant literature review and analysis; Section 5 discusses the research findings generated by means of descriptive and regression techniques. Section 6 concludes the discussion and provides policy recommendations.

## 2. Country Context

Malawi is a low-income country with per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$381 (World Bank, 2016). The economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, which accounted for 31 percent of GDP between 2010 and 2015; 80 percent of the country's export earnings (tobacco is the leading export product); and employs 85 percent of the population (NSO, 2010). Females comprise 51 percent of the population. The population has been growing at an average rate of 3.0 percent from 2009 to 2015 and is estimated at 17 million in 2016 (NSO, 2008). It is projected to grow to 26 million by 2030 (UNFPA, 2016). About 46 percent of the Malawi population is under 15 years of age (World Bank, 2015).

The 2016 Human Development Index (HDI) for Malawi stands at 0.476. Malawi continues to remain in the low human development category ranking 170 out of 188 countries and its growth trajectory has been unpredictable. The economy grew at an average rate of 6.5 percent per year between 2003 and 2014 before sliding down to 2.8 percent in 2016 (World Bank, 2016). The country went through two consecutive years of erratic weather, which adversely impacted agricultural productivity in 2015 and 2016. The resulting increase in food insecurity left 6.7 million people in need of humanitarian support. World Bank (2016) estimated the steep decline in agriculture production, particularly of maize, was the equivalent to 5.6 percent of GDP. Inflation rose from 7.4 percent in 2010 to 20 percent in 2016 fueled by food inflation. Together with a steep decline in electricity generation<sup>2</sup>, this led to low private sector growth. This situation was exacerbated by high public debt at 58 percent of GDP, up from 40 percent in 2012 (IMF, 2016). The Malawian Kwacha depreciated by 29 percent in 2016, which in turn resulted in higher import bills (RBM, 2016). However good weather and sufficient rain in 2017 has led to an improvement in the food inflation which is down to 4.3 percent<sup>3</sup> in December 2017, and the Kwacha has also stabilized. The economy is projected to grow by 4.4 percent in 2017<sup>4</sup>. Nevertheless, it remains vulnerable to external shocks, a narrow export base, and aid dependency.

The low growth rate of 2.8 percent is not only below the minimum 7.0 percent recommended for the achievement of the SDGs<sup>5</sup> but has been outpaced by the population growth rate at 3 percent. The World Bank (2015) observes that the proportion of people living below the international poverty line (US\$1.99/day, 2011PPP) is expected to increase from 69.6 percent in 2015 to 69.8 percent in 2016. The 2016 HDR notes that 56.1 percent of the population is multi-dimensionally poor while an additional 27.2 percent live near multidimensional poverty. The intensity of deprivation, which is the average deprivation score experienced by people in multidimensional poverty, is 48.6 percent.

Malawi has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.614, ranking it 145 out of 159 countries, reflecting tremendous gender-based disadvantage in three dimensions—reproductive health, empowerment, and the labor market.

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<sup>2</sup> The available electricity generation capacity of 287 megawatts (MW) was insufficient to meet the estimated potential electricity demand of 325 MW (ESCOM, 2015).

<sup>3</sup> Headline inflation down to single digits at 7.1% in December 2017 after remaining over 20% for the last 4 years, NSO, December 2017

<sup>4</sup> The World Bank projection as reflected in the 2017 Malawi Economic Monitor.

<sup>5</sup> UN minimum recommended rate for achievement of SDGs in LDCs/LICs

### 3. Methodology

To investigate who is being left behind in income and health poverty in Malawi, the study employed quantitative methods of data analysis. The motivation behind the chosen approach emanates from theory and empirical evidence. The paper follows recent research by Oxfam (2016), and Lynch et al. (2016), but also an earlier study by World Bank Institute (2005) which conducted similar analyses. The study uses descriptive statistics and employs econometric approaches to generate regression output on probabilities. The econometric analysis has used two types of discrete outcome models to examine the causes of being left behind in income poverty and health poverty.

On one hand, the analysis on income poverty has employed the Multinomial Logit Model to analyze data on household heads, which were classified into lowest income, low-middle-income, middle-income, middle-upper-income and upper-income categories. The final outcome model of a Multinomial Logit is specified as follows.

$$P_{ij} = \frac{e^{x_i \beta_j}}{1 + \sum_{l=1}^J e^{x_i \beta_l}} \quad (1)$$

Where  $P_{ij}$  is the probability that, individual  $i$ , with characteristic  $x$ , is going to end up in income category  $J$ .

For this model, the regressors do not vary over alternatives, and there is a separate coefficient ( $\beta_i$ ) on each independent variable for each possible outcome. The analysis in this paper picked upper income as a base category against which all the other income categories were compared. Diagnostic tests relevant for validating the outcome of the Multinomial Logit Model were duly performed, and the results show that the model is satisfactory. The study conducted the Hausmann and McFadden Test to investigate the independence of irrelevant alternatives (IIA), the Wald Test to examine the inclusion of irrelevant regressors, and the Likelihood Ratio Test to establish if the chosen model fits the data and if it can forecast the future value of the regressors.

On the other hand, the analysis on health poverty has been performed by means of the Logit model, which investigates the probability of being left behind regarding this category of poverty. The final outcome Logit Model is specified as follows.

$$P(Y = 1 | X) = \Lambda(x\beta) = \frac{e^{x\beta}}{1 + e^{x\beta}} \quad (2)$$

Equation 2 gives the probability of an individual belonging to a particular category  $Y$  given a set of regressors  $X$ . For each of the specified Logit models, the study has performed the Wald Test and Likelihood Ratio Test, which are necessary to validate the outcome of such regression model output. The interpretation of the probability results of the study is by means of the marginal effects, which have been reported for both the Multinomial Logit and the Logit Models.

The data that has been used to perform descriptive analysis and regression analysis was sourced from the Third Integrated Household Survey (IHS3); which was conducted by the National Statistical Office (NSO) of Malawi. The survey covers the 2010 to 2011 period and a sample of 12268 household heads. This sample is representative enough of the Malawi population to ensure that meaningful inferences are made. The study has also featured

figures obtained from the second Integrated Household Survey of Malawi, 2016 Malawi Demographic Health Surveys (MDHS), 2014 Malawi End-line Survey, and other reports. The reports have assisted in identifying individual and group-based inequalities. From both the analysis performed by this study and issues presented in other reports the paper has come up with reflections and policy recommendations.

It is worth pointing out that this study is not devoid of limitations in its analyses. Lynch et al. (2016) observe that while most surveys contain a wealth of valuable information, they have limitations regarding identifying the most marginalized groups. Carr-Hill (2013) argues that the designs of household survey sampling frames tend to exclude the homeless; people who are mobile; and often under-represent people living in urban slums, and fragile households. There are also limitations to the content of the analysis. For example, health outcomes are most predominantly focused on young children and mothers, which can make the estimation of the results for older adults or comparison of men and women challenging. Even though a more integrated and cross-sectoral analysis has been attempted, the results still reflect averages given the way the available data is structured. It also points to the need for a deeper analysis based on more disaggregated data that covers those presently not counted or included.

#### 4.0 Literature Review

The term “leave no one behind” means that the SDGs and their targets should be met for everyone, with a focus on the poorest, the most vulnerable and farthest behind – those who are often the hardest to reach. Melamed (2015) argues that no goal is met unless it is met for everyone. Lee (2016) notes that to leave no one behind means working toward shared progress – so that progress also benefits those who are on the margins of society. The key lesson from the MDGs has been the need to look beyond averages when measuring progress (UNDP, 2016). This requires unveiling the disparities masked by averages, identifying the most marginalized, excluded and discriminated groups and understanding the patterns of discrimination, inequalities, and disparities. UN Women (2016) concurs and argues that “leaving no one behind means moving beyond assessing average and aggregate progress towards ensuring progress for all population groups at a disaggregated level. This will require disaggregating data to identify who is being excluded or discriminated against, how and why, as well as who is experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and inequalities.

Ensuring that no one is left behind is not just about transferring resources that push people above the poverty line, but it is also about ensuring that people have the freedom, opportunities, and access to live the lives they value. The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) notes that understanding the different ways that 'leave no one behind' can be interpreted will make implementation of the SDGs more effective in practice. The SDGs can stimulate action to deliver key standards in areas such as education, nutrition and food security, social protection, health and wellbeing, water and sanitation, access to sustainable energy, decent work and adequate living conditions. To fulfill the promise of the 2030 Agenda, there is hence the need to ensure that no person – wherever they live and regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religion or belief, race, sexual orientation or other statuses – is denied universal human rights and basic economic opportunities<sup>6</sup>.

#### 4.1 Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is arguably one of the main factors that cause people to be left behind in Malawi because it creates a sense of lack of recognition, lack of belonging, lack of acceptance, and occurs when individuals and communities are blocked from rights and opportunities that are available to others (Levitas, et al, 2007). People who are socially excluded are more economically and socially vulnerable and hence tend to have impoverished life experiences. Addressing social exclusion in Malawi necessitates focusing on the drivers which include: weak policy, legal and institutional norms; retrogressive religious, political, cultural and economic factors. This will

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<sup>6</sup> EU 2016

require support to legal, policy, institutional and other measures to promote equality and reverse the trend of rising inequalities. It will also require, free, active and meaningful participation of all stakeholders, particularly the most marginalized, in mechanisms for ensuring accountability, recourse and remedies to all<sup>7</sup>.

#### 4.1.1 Stigmatization of HIV and AIDS

Malawi has made significant progress in its national response to HIV and AIDS over the last two decades. Significant reduction in HIV prevalence has been achieved from 16.6 percent of the population in 2000 to 9.1 percent in 2015 (NSO, 2015). The annual rate of new HIV infections has reduced from 97,000 in 2000 to 31,000 by end 2015. Nonetheless, Pindani et al, (2014) argue that stigmatization of those living with HIV continues to exist in Malawi. Stigmatization prevents these people close to 1.5 million from accessing adequate health services with ease forcing them to be left behind. Paucity of resources, as for instance the financing gaps in the HIV National Strategic Plan 2016 exacerbates the problem.

#### 4.1.2 Discrimination against the LGBTI community

Discriminatory policies that criminalize same-sex relations have affected the LGBTI<sup>8</sup> community in Malawi leading to their marginalization. The UN (2016) observes that hate speech against LGBTI persons and human rights defenders working on LGBTI rights continue to increase. The LGBTI persons are highly discriminated against and abused due to punitive laws (section 153,154 and 156 of the Penal Code); socio-cultural and religious factors which threaten the very existence of such persons. As per a 7-site ‘men having sex with men’ (MSM) HIV prevalence socio-behavioral and population size estimation study, released at the end of 2014, it is noted that there is about 1.84 percent (40,000) of the male population that is MSM in Malawi which is subjected to this discrimination and hence forced to be left behind (UNDP, 2014).

#### 4.1.3 Discrimination against and harassment of persons with Albinism

Another group facing discrimination and harassment are persons with albinism. Amnesty International reports that the population of people with albinism in Malawi is between 7000 and 10,000 and observes that at least twenty persons with albinism have been murdered in Malawi since 2015.<sup>9</sup> Although Parliament passed legislation to protect this group, they continue to live in fear of losing their lives to violent crimes for their body parts. The World Bank (2017) reports that people with albinism are discriminated and excluded from serving in the Defense Force and Police in Malawi for unexplained reason other than having albinism.

#### 4.1.4 Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) is also a major factor in women being left behind. The incidence of physical abuse, such as beating, hitting, or battering has been twice higher among females as compared to males (24.5 percent versus 12.4 percent)<sup>10</sup>. GBV perpetuates poverty among the affected groups. The 2030 Agenda, specifically SDG 5<sup>11</sup> highlights the need to address the lives of women and girls who experience alarming rates of sexual and physical violence in both public and private spaces. It also calls for an environment where girls are free from GBV and allowed to stay in school, get an education and get on in life, and further live in a world free of child marriages, unwanted early pregnancies and harmful cultural practices (Seppo, 2016). Far too many

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<sup>7</sup> UN Women (2016)

<sup>8</sup> LGBTI - Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/malawi-people-albinism-living-fear-170419064018308.html>

<sup>10</sup> Source: Ministry of Gender, Community Development, and Social Welfare (2014)

<sup>11</sup> SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

women and girls also continue to die in childbirth. There is also a lack of accountability for maternal and child deaths.<sup>12</sup>

#### 4.1.5 People with disabilities

The 2008 Malawi Population and Housing Census showed that in 2010 there were 498,122 of people with disabilities (PWD) in Malawi who still find themselves without the support they need (NSO, 2010). This translates into a national prevalence of 4.0 percent of the population, which would be around 680,000 in 2017. The census showed that there are more PWDs in rural areas compared to urban areas and that the major types of disability were visual and walking impairments. The PWDs face various challenges and sometimes find themselves excluded from accessing services such as education, health, employment, leadership and decision making and participation in development activities in general (Munthali, 2011). With changing family structures, and the decreasing availability of traditional family caregivers to provide help for their frail and struggling relatives, the situation with PWD has gotten worse over the years (Oxfam, 2017). Even when support is made available through private or government assistance programs, many individuals do not qualify for this assistance, and those who do are often unable to access it. Hence, they are left to beg on the streets, and are thus left behind.

#### 4.2 Child poverty

A UNICEF (2016) study observes that child poverty is a major factor contributing to many children being left behind. About 63 percent of the children in Malawi are deprived of access to basic needs such as adequate nutrition, quality education, safe drinking water, and sanitation facilities and health. Of the 63 percent deprived children, 93 percent live in the rural areas in the poorest households where they face multiple challenges including child labour. The 2015 National Child Labour Survey<sup>13</sup> indicates that 38 percent of children aged 5-17 years are involved in child labour. Child poverty is also aggravated by orphanage and vulnerability, a factor that contributes to being left behind. UNICEF (2012) observes that, close to 1300,000 of the total population in Malawi are Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC). Most of these have lost one or both parents to AIDS. About 20 percent of Malawian households are looking after OVCs, and many of these households are headed by girls, women, and elderly women. Most families caring for OVCs in Malawi lack the means to provide their family members with necessities. The OVCs very often lack parental care and proper nutrition, have inadequate shelter and limited access to education and healthcare, and are at an increased risk of exploitation and abuse.

#### 4.3 Corruption

The endemic corruption in Malawi continues to disadvantage the poor disproportionately as public resources are diverted from financing public services that would support many to benefit few corrupt individuals. Corruption victimizes the poor and perpetuates poverty thereby causing many to be left behind. In Malawi, corruption has been characterized by embezzlement of public funds, bribery, and misuse of donor aid. In the year 2014, Malawi lost 30 percent of its budget to corruption (Chinunda, 2014). The cash-gate scandal led Malawi to lose approximately US\$250 million. The opportunity cost of the funds abused is very high. The resources could have instead been invested in social services delivery. The abuse left much of the society deprived of vital social services.

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<sup>12</sup> See the Malawi Country Assessment on the cycle of accountability for sexual reproductive, maternal, child and neonatal health and human rights (2016)

<sup>13</sup> ILO (2015) Malawi 2015 Child Labour Survey Report.

#### 4.4 Weak justice delivery system

Anderson (2006) argues that despite the equality that people are entitled to before the law, in practice access to justice does not work exactly as it should. In Malawi, while the legal aid department aims to provide legal assistance to the poor, in practice it has failed to deliver such services to all those who need them. The Human Rights Commission of Malawi (MHRC) describes the country's criminal justice system as weak. The MHRC notes that justice is compromised because of the many archaic laws on the statute books and denial of justice due to lack of legal representation for the indigent. For instance, 50 percent of the prisoners have been known to be on remand awaiting trial while some have stayed more than seven years in prison without having their cases heard in court. Kamanga (2015) argues that the political interference; constitutional interpretation of fundamental human rights and its implication on corruption; and lack of expertise in the legal authorities to determine and define corruption contributes to the weak delivery that continue to leave many people behind from accessing fairness.

#### 4.5 Inequality

Inequality in Malawi is of increasing concern given its high prevalence and direct impact to leave many behind. While there is a broad consensus on economic growth being necessary for poverty reduction, there is equally an emerging realization that it is not a sufficient condition reduce the increasing inequality (Oxfam, Malawi)<sup>14</sup>. Therefore, robust economic growth in itself will fail to reduce poverty.

##### 4.5.1 Income Inequality

Income inequality<sup>15</sup> measured by annual per capita consumption worsened between 2004 and 2010 as the gap between rich and poor increased thereby consigning majority of the people into absolute poverty. Oxfam (2015) observes that in 2004, the richest 10 percent of the population accounted for 46 percent of total consumption, while the bottom 40 percent of the population accounted for 15 percent of total consumption. The share of consumption attributable to the top 10 percent increased to 53 percent in 2011, and that for the bottom 40 percent declined to 13 percent. This means that over the period 2004-2011, the consumption of the top 10 percent rose from about three times higher to about four times greater than that of the poorest 40 percent. Inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, increased between 2005 and 2011 from 0.339 to 0.452 by 33 percentage points as reported by IHS3. All these statistics point to have devastating has income inequality has contributed to leaving many behind.

##### 4.5.2 Inequality in land ownership

Inequalities in land ownership affect women disproportionately. The 2015 National HDR observes that 2.0 million smallholder farmers experience unequal rights on land, and on average cultivate less than 1 hectare while 30000 estates cultivate 100-500 hectares. However, women are the most disadvantaged regarding land and property rights mainly because of cultural barriers. The 2011 Malawi Gender and Development Index reports that only 20 percent of women, compared to 80 percent of men, own land. Securing women's legal rights including respect to land and other property is an indispensable means of economic empowerment that would ensure that no women are left behind (Seppo, 2016). Land is used as collateral in accessing financial services like microcredit. Hence being denied access or title to land results in not being able to access critical services as loans or training to improve their livelihoods. Furthermore, limited access to and control over land is one of the

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<sup>14</sup> A Dangerous Divide; The State of Inequality in Malawi, OXFAM, 2015

<sup>15</sup> The IHS3 reports that income inequality as measure of distribution of income as a share of total consumption per quantile as defined in the Integrated Household Survey 3.



major challenges to women's access to agricultural extension services. Consequently, it poses a threat to agriculture production, and therefore limits realization of the right to food. That notwithstanding, the Government should be commended for passing new land laws and the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Legislation that is expected to address these challenges.

#### 4.5.3 Inequality in employment and wages

Inequality in employment is one of the major causes of people being left behind. The Malawi Labour Force Survey (2013) observes significant gender-based disparities. Women constitute just 30 percent of total wage employment in non-agriculture in Malawi. The unemployment rate is higher among females, at 26 percent, than among males at 14 percent. In urban areas, the unemployment rate is 28 percent and the corresponding rate is 19 percent in rural areas. An overview of yearly remuneration for women in larger private companies by Klaveren et al, (2009) revealed huge differences, with earnings in financial services 25 times those in agriculture, construction and real estate. Only 14 percent of firms have women in top management positions as of 2014. A high proportion of women (31.6 percent) with secondary school education are not employed compared to their male counterparts at 16 percent (GOM, 2016). Women constitute only 17 percent of the Members of Parliament (MPs), a figure which is below the 50 percent target set by the African Union (AU).

#### 4.5.4 Inequality in Youth Employment

The young people in Malawi continue to be left behind in employment. The unemployment rate among the youth aged 15-35 years is 23 percent using ILO<sup>16</sup> broad definition. The country is characterised by inability of the economy to generate employment opportunities commensurate with labour supplies. The capacity of the formal economy to provide decent employment and income opportunities is shrinking. Around 130,000 young people enter the labour market each year, whereas the formal sector only produces around 30,000 jobs; which results in most youth being left behind (DTUCIDA, 2014). Young women are generally disadvantaged in terms of access to employment. By law, they are equal to their male counterparts, but culturally they are not seen as such and often forced to drop out of school, tend to household chores and marry early (UNICEF, 2015). Malawi also has one of the lowest minimum wages<sup>17</sup> in the world, denying working people the right to an adequate standard of living.

#### 4.5.5 Inequality in Tertiary Education

The World Bank report (2016) notes that at less than 1.0 percent of the population, Malawi's tertiary education enrollment rate is among the lowest in the world. Just 80 students were enrolled in tertiary education per 100,000 inhabitants in 2011. Private institutions account for 12 percent of total enrollment. Enrollment data disaggregated by socioeconomic status demonstrates that 91.3 percent of students enrolled in higher education are drawn from the richest quintile (20 percent) of households, while the poorest quintile of the households account for just 0.7 percent of higher education enrollment. Despite the introduction of affirmative action measures to encourage female education, with an increase in female enrollment in higher education from 2,838 in 2008 to 4,212 in 2011, enrollment data continue to demonstrate significant gender disparities. The report also suggests that few students with disabilities are enrolled in higher education institutions. Besides, most of the infrastructure in Malawian

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<sup>16</sup> ILO (2015) broad definition: Unemployment is without work during the reference period, i.e. were not in paid employment or self-employment; and currently available for work, i.e. were available for paid employment or self-employment during the reference period

<sup>17</sup> The minimum wage for low income countries in Su-Saharan Africa is USD119 (PPP 2013; Minimum Wages in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Primer | The World Bank ...<https://academic.oup.com/wbro/article/32/1/21/2797759>) as compared to USD 34 in Malawi in 2017.

universities does not cater for the needs of people living with disabilities, and this demonstrates a clear case of institutional and policy failures that perpetuate exclusion of would-be learners, causing them to be left behind.

#### 4.5.6 Inequality in health care

The Oxfam study (2014) observes that there are more public health facilities in urban and peri-urban areas compared with the rural areas where the poorest Malawians tend to live. The Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM) hospitals provide nearly 40 percent of available healthcare in Malawi. However, although CHAM hospitals are often based in rural areas, they charge user fees, which excludes the poor from accessing healthcare. With respect to health spending, there is a clear dynamic across spatial inequalities. In 2011, about 12.3 percent of the richest female-headed households in rural areas incurred health payments as compared to 5.9 percent in urban areas. Similarly, 11.9 percent of the richest male-headed households in rural areas incurred health payments, while the corresponding number for urban areas was 5.5 percent. This shows that well to do people in urban areas have access to more health facilities which includes Government facilities that provide free health hence their low health expenditures. Those living in rural areas are grossly disadvantaged from accessing free health care and are forced to spend more. The situation is more precarious if the poor are taken into consideration and hence they are left behind.

## 5.0 Presentation of Research Results

### 5.1 Descriptive Analysis on Access to Social Services

#### 5.1.1 Access to electricity

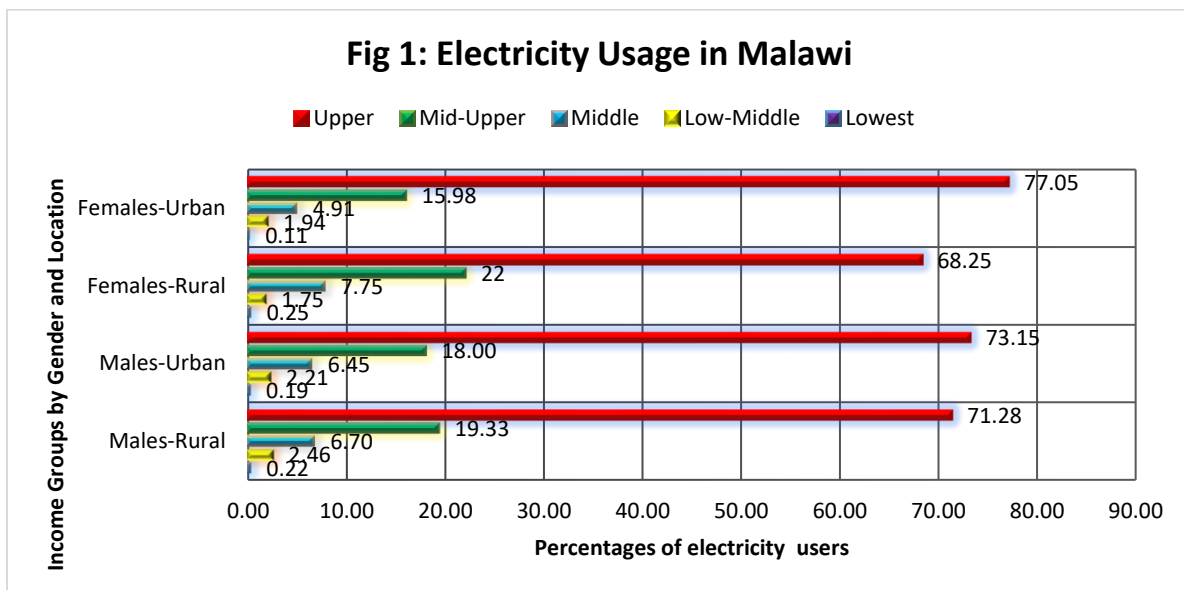
Access to electricity, across the board, is very low in Malawi. The 2016 HDR puts access to electrification rate at 9.8 percent at national level and 2.0 percent of the population in rural areas. This is very low as compared to Sub-Saharan Africa, where the electrification rates, on average, are 35.4 nationally and 14.9 percent in rural areas.

Figure 1 below shows the proportion of people using electricity by income category, gender, and location. Using data from IHS3, the general picture is that across the gender and location disparities, *usage of electricity is highly correlated with income levels*. People in the highest income category have better access to electricity as compared to those in the lowest income category. For example, in the urban areas, 77.05 percent of female-headed households in the upper-income quintile have access to electricity as compared to only 0.11 percent in the lowest income quintile.<sup>18</sup>

This analysis suggests that people that are being left behind in the use of electricity in Malawi are essentially those that belong to the lowest income category. This outcome holds irrespective of location, and gender disparities. Priority should, therefore, be given to implementing policy measures that enhance the disposable income of individuals regardless of their gender and location- as well as mechanisms to facilitate provision of essential services to ensure universal and equitable access. Policy actions that favor inclusive and sustainable growth can also support the achievement of SDGs 7.1, which is about attainment of universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy for all.

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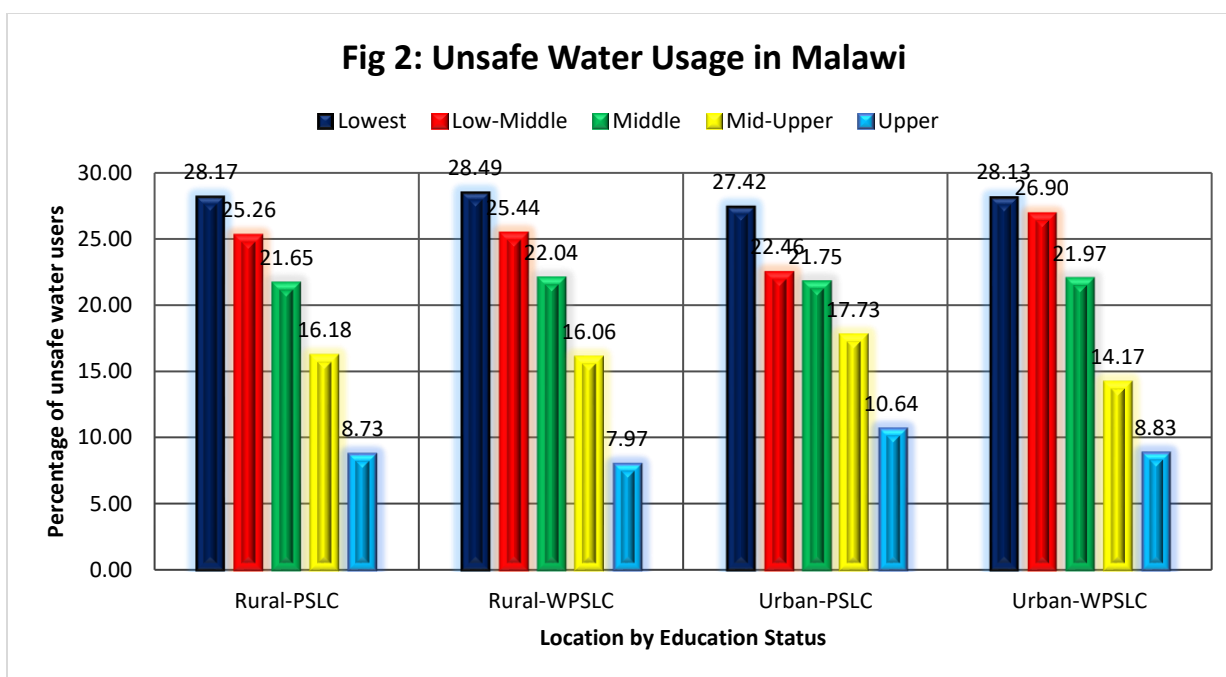
<sup>18</sup> It is also noted that females in mid-upper income category in rural areas are actually better off than their male counterparts in the same category. There are other interesting results noted amongst the different income categories as per gender which will require further investigation.



Authors' computation with data sourced from NSO Malawi

#### 5.1.2 Access to safe drinking water

The Malawi End-line report (2014) observes that access to safe drinking water has considerably improved since 2005. The percentage of household members using improved sources of drinking water reached 86.2 percent in 2014 from 66.4 percent in 2005, representing a 30 percent increase. Figure 2 below shows the proportion of household heads that are using unsafe water.



Authors' computation with data from NSO, Malawi

For this analysis, the study has grouped the household heads based on their income level, basic education, and location to identify intersecting inequalities. The picture that emerges shows that being left behind in terms of *usage of unsafe water is highly correlated with income levels*. Even for the individuals with the benefit of a Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLC)<sup>19</sup>, there is a high concentration using unsafe drinking water if they happen to also belong to the lowest income category. The outcome does not vary much even when location differences are considered; 28.17 percent of the population in the lowest income category in rural areas and 27.42 for urban areas do not have access to safe drinking water. Usage of unsafe water is lower for household heads in the upper-income bracket at 8.73 percent and 8.83 percent for rural and urban areas respectively. Clearly, about 28 percent of those individuals that belong to the lowest income category are being left behind in the use of safe potable water, and this is irrespective also of their basic educational qualification.

The above analysis shows that *the state of being marginalized and left behind in the use of water is not necessarily due to location and basic education, but is determined by income level*. From a policy perspective, priority of remedial interventions should focus not only on providing services such as drilling more boreholes but complementing the same with sustainable water harvesting techniques and improving the income status of the people through for example, public works programmes involving the affected groups to guarantee them basic minimum wages. Income empowers people's choices to seek better water services and even to assist in the maintenance of the infrastructure.

### 5.1.3 Access to proper sanitation

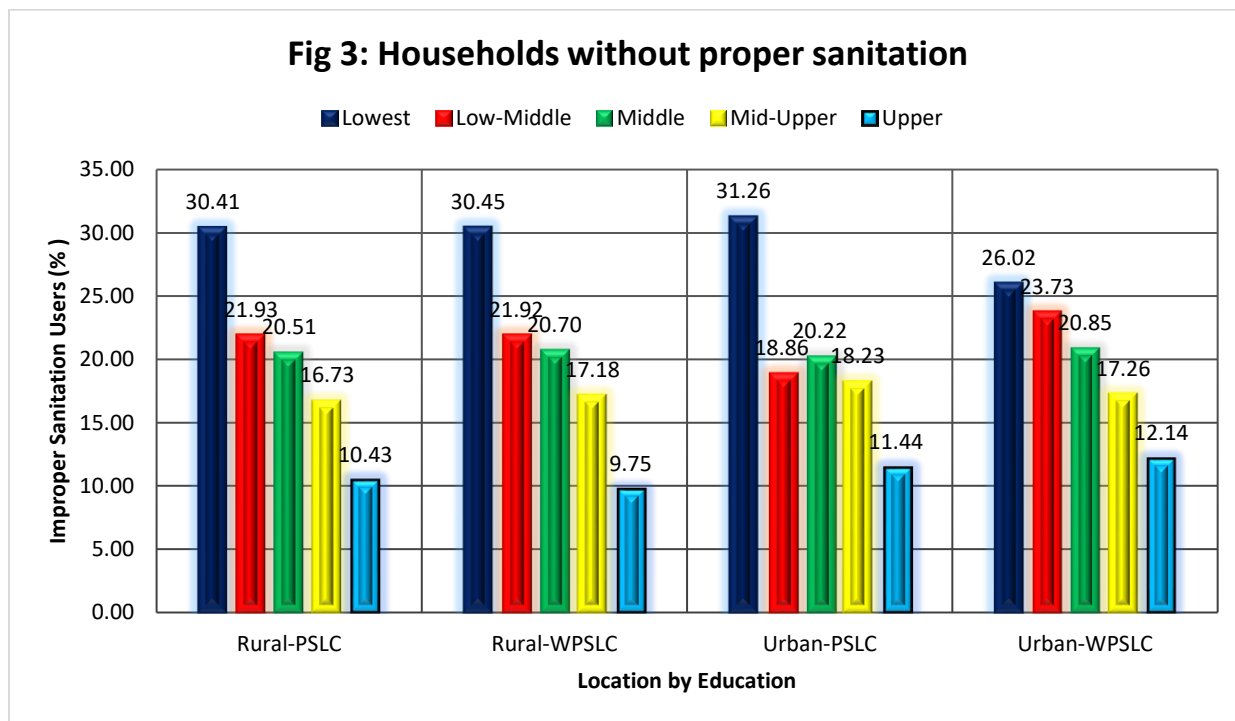
The Malawi Demographic Health Survey (2016) reports that more than half of the households in Malawi (52 percent)<sup>20</sup> use improved toilet/latrine facilities, whereas a third of households (31 percent) use facilities that would be considered improved if they were not shared by two or more households. The most common type of toilet facility in rural areas is a pit latrine with a slab that is not shared with other households (52 percent of rural households).

Overall, 6 percent of households have no toilet facility at all and are exclusively rural dwellers. Figure 3 shows the proportion of people without proper sanitation in Malawi based on their income level, location, and basic education qualification status. About 30 percent of those without proper sanitation are in the lowest income category, and they are from the rural areas. This outcome holds irrespective of whether the individuals have a primary school leaving certificate or not. In contrast, only about 10 percent of the people in the highest income category residing in the rural areas do not have proper sanitation. This outcome is irrespective of basic education status. Having a basic education, however, makes a considerable difference in the urban areas. The proportion of households without some basic education and proper sanitation stands at 31 percent for those in the lowest income category, but this figure is at 26 percent for those with at least a basic education qualification in urban areas.

The analysis above again suggests that *use of proper sanitation is determined by income levels as evidenced by a low concentration of users without proper sanitation in the highest income category regardless of location and basic education status*. There is minimal difference in the percentages between those without basic education, and those with at least a basic education in the rural areas.

<sup>19</sup> WPSLC means those people that do not have Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLC)

<sup>20</sup> The 2011 Integrated Household Survey recorded that 66.4 percent of the population has access to improved sanitation, which later improved to 78.9 percent. The drop may be technically explained by the sample size and survey methodologies used.



**Authors' computation with data from NSO, Malawi**

However, there is a slight difference between those with a basic education and those without it in the urban areas especially for those in the lowest income category. Nonetheless, the general picture emerging suggests that the households which are being left behind in the use of proper sanitation are those in the lowest income quintiles irrespective of location and educational qualification. It is noted that individuals in rural areas with primary school education and belonging to upper income categories are slightly worse off than their counterparts without primary school education. Likewise, in urban areas individuals in mid-upper income categories with primary education are worse off in accessing sanitation than their counterparts without primary education. The difference is small however, and is possibly on account of the data generating process and the sampling framework.

**5.1.4 Access to education services**

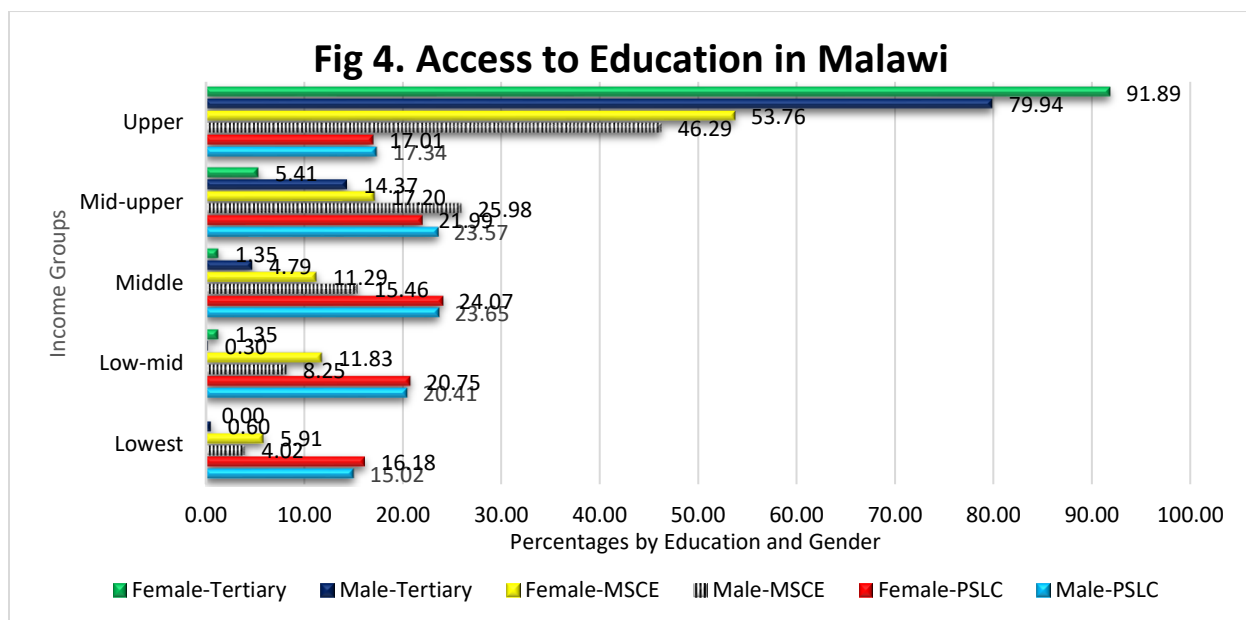
The analysis examined the distribution of school attendance and those in education poverty<sup>21</sup> for the population aged 15 years and above to determine who is being left behind in education. The IHS3 shows that while literacy levels have improved in Malawi by 2.3 percentage points between 2005 and 2011, education poverty, that is those who have never attended school, remains as high as 21 percent in 2011 at national level (3.6 million people). The percentage for men is at 14 percent while for women it is at 27.7 percent.

Figure 4 below shows the percentages of male and female household heads with access to various education qualifications explained by income categories. For both males and females there is a high concentration of individuals in the upper-income category with a tertiary education. In fact, 91.89 of females with a tertiary education come from the upper-income category whereas no woman from the lowest income category has a tertiary education. Similarly, males in the upper-income category comprise 79.94 percent of all males with a

<sup>21</sup> According to Lynch et al, 2016, education poverty is defined as individuals between 20 and 24 years old with less than four years of education. For the purposes of this analysis and in line with data limitation in Malawi the definition is extended to cover those who have never attended school.

tertiary education whereas only 0.60 percent of males in the lowest income group have a tertiary education. Clearly, individuals in the lowest income category are the ones being left behind in accessing tertiary education. This tallies with the World Bank argument in section 3.1.5 above that tertiary education in Malawi is mostly for the rich and not the poor. Interestingly, more females than males have tertiary education in the upper and lower middle-income categories while males perform better in the mid-upper and middle-income categories.

A similar picture is also observed when secondary level education is considered. About 53 percent of women with Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) as their highest qualification come from the upper-income category. In contrast, only 5.91 percent of women with MSCE as their highest qualification belong to the lowest income category. The outcome is not any much better for males. In fact, 46.29 percent of males with MSCE certificate as their highest qualification comes from the upper-income group. Only 4.02 percent of males with MSCE certificate as their highest qualification comes from the lowest income category. ***Being left behind in access to secondary school level qualification in Malawi is highly dependent upon income and not necessarily gender disparities.***



**Author's computation based on data from NSO, Malawi**

Notwithstanding the foregoing, there are minimal differences for various income categories in the access to primary school education for both males and females. Whereas 17.01 percent of females with primary school level education as their highest qualification come from the upper-income category, 16.18 percent originate from the lowest income category. Similarly, 17.3 of males with primary school level education their highest education qualification comes from the upper-income category. This statistic is not considerably different from that of males in the lowest income category who stand at 15.02 percent. That notwithstanding, ***the people who are left behind in secondary and tertiary level education are constrained by income factors.*** Policy interventions and programmes should thus focus on supporting the lowest income earning individuals so that they are not left behind in attaining secondary level and tertiary level education. It is worth pointing out that the outcome of education, gender and income level is not consistent with general expectation. The results seem to suggest that females in the upper income category have more access to tertiary and secondary education than their male

counterparts. Nevertheless this inconsistency with general observation can possibly be attributed to the data generating process or errors in the sampling framework.

## 5.2 Probability Analysis on Demographic Factors and Income

### 5.2.1 Income Poverty and Gender

Table 1 below shows the outcome from regression analysis. It is shown that the chances of being male and belonging to the low-income categories is statistically significant and negative at 1 percent significance level for both the lowest and low-middle income categories. Holding other variables constant, being male is associated with 7.0 percent reduction in the probability of belonging to the lowest income category, and 4.0 percent decrease in the likelihood of belonging to the low-middle income category at 1.0 percent significance level. The estimation results clearly suggest that males have reduced odds of belonging to the lower income categories. The inverse to this analysis is that females are more likely to belong to the low-income category and as such, they are susceptible to being left behind. This gives credence to the argument that has already been advanced in the literature review that policies that promote gender equality specifically targeting and empowering women through poverty reduction strategies, access to assets and employment, and business opportunities, if implemented may contribute to ensuring that women are not left behind in the development process.

**Table 1: Multinomial Logit Model Output on the Likelihood of Being in the Bottom 40 Quantile**

	Lowest dy/dx	Low-mid dy/dx	Middle dy/dx	Mid-upper dy/dx
SEX	-0.0698*** (0.0087)	-0.0413*** (0.0103)	0.0147 (0.0108)	0.0471*** (0.0105)
AGE	-0.0064*** (0.0011)	-0.0072*** (0.0014)	-0.0011 (0.0016)	0.0056*** (0.0016)
AGE <sup>2</sup>	0.0001*** (0.0000)	0.0001*** (0.0000)	0.0000 (0.0000)	-0.0001*** (0.0000)
HH-SIZE	0.1323*** (0.0065)	0.0965*** (0.0076)	0.0158** (0.0080)	-0.0896*** (0.0076)
HH-SIZE <sup>2</sup>	-0.0073*** (0.0005)	-0.0052*** (0.0006)	-0.0012* (0.0007)	0.0050*** (0.0007)
PSLC	-0.0644*** (0.0071)	-0.0408*** (0.0108)	0.0145 (0.0135)	0.0446** (0.0143)
MSCE	-0.1294*** (0.0065)	-0.1428*** (0.0098)	-0.0884*** (0.0138)	0.0568*** (0.0168)
TERTIARY	-0.1430*** (0.0056)	-0.2207*** (0.0060)	-0.2064*** (0.0130)	0.0843*** (0.0223)
RURAL	0.1262*** (0.0068)	0.1029*** (0.0098)	-0.0386*** (0.0120)	-0.0578*** (0.0128)
NORTH	-0.0306*** (0.0073)	-0.0022 (0.0108)	0.0203 (0.0124)	0.0342** (0.0129)
CENTER	-0.1039*** (0.0062)	-0.0635*** (0.0084)	0.0021 (0.0099)	0.0814*** (0.0104)
EMPLOYMENT	-0.0796*** (0.0076)	-0.0294** (0.0107)	0.0201 (0.0123)	0.0423*** (0.0122)

LR	5752.21
P-value	0.0000
N	12268

**Source: Authors Analysis in Stata Software using Data from IHS3.**

### 5.2.2 Age factors

The regression analysis also shows that individuals who are advanced in age<sup>22</sup> have increased chances of belonging to the low-income categories and this outcome is statistically significant and positive at 1 percent significance level for both the lowest and low-middle income categories. The implication is that the likelihood of belonging to the lowest and low-middle income category marginally increases by 0.01 percent for the older people. The most important conclusion from the analysis is that chances of being left behind increase if an individual is advancing in age with diminished capacity to generate a livelihood. The elderly are, thus at risk of sliding back into the lowest and low-middle income groups from higher income categories. This calls for more social protection policies such as old age pensions and health insurance, tailored towards the elderly to ensure no one is left behind.

### 5.2.3 Household size factors

The coefficient of household size is statistically significant and positive at 1 percent significance level for the lowest, and low-middle-income categories. Thus, holding all other variables constant, *any additional member to the household is associated with a 13 percent and 10 percent, increase in the likelihood of remaining in the lowest, and low-middle-income categories respectively.* The analysis shows that the probability of being left behind increases with each additional member to the household. The important conclusion to derive is that household heads with large families' risk being left behind and being stagnant in the lowest and low-middle income categories. In the context of the right to reproductive health services, the government should, therefore, continue to adopt policies and programmes that intensify and encourage family planning to maintain low household sizes to reduce population growth, which is currently constraining socio-economic development in Malawi.

### 5.2.4 Education factors

The coefficient of primary school education is statistically significant and negative at 1 percent significance level for the lowest and low-middle-income groups. This implies that holding other variables in the model constant, *a discrete change from not having a primary school leaving certificate to having one is associated with 6.4 percent reduction in the probability of belonging to the lowest income group and a 4.1 percent decrease in the likelihood of belonging to the low-middle income group.* The inference from this analysis is that lack of primary school education contributes significantly to poverty and being left behind. To ensure that no one is left behind, universal primary education should be compulsory and free and of good quality in line with Malawi's aspirations<sup>23</sup>. Furthermore, when one holds a Malawi School Leaving Certificate (MSCE), the probability of

<sup>22</sup> This is explained by age-square hence the connotation advanced in age from 50 years above.

<sup>23</sup> The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2017 recommended that Malawi (a) Eliminate hidden cost of education, such as "development fees", as well as gender and regional disparities in accessing education; CRC/C/MWI/CO/3-5 (b) Recruit newly qualified teachers to reduce the pupil teacher ratio; (c) Address the high number of drop-outs, particularly among girls, due to pregnancy, child marriage, poor sanitary conditions, poverty and family responsibilities; (d) Address sexual abuse of children, especially of girls, by teachers and peers; (e) Decentralise and simplify re-admission process for adolescent girls returning to school after pregnancy and ensure appropriate support; (f) Make schools accessible to children with disabilities and provide them with infrastructure, teaching and learning materials that are disability-friendly; (g) Improve efficiency in spending of resources allocated to the education sector; (h) Reinforce and develop programmes to encourage the training of female teachers.



belonging to the lowest income category recedes even more. An MSCE certificate reduces the odds of belonging to the lowest income group, low-middle income group, by 12.9 and 14.2 percentage points respectively and this is statistically significant at one percent for the two income categories.

### 5.2.5 Location issues

Table 1 also shows that in Malawi, residing in the rural area is associated with increased chances of belonging to the low-income categories. This outcome is statistically significant at 1 percent significance level for the lowest, and low-middle-income group. Thus, holding other variables constant in the model, a relocation from urban to rural areas will lead to an increase in the probability of belonging to the lowest, and low-middle-income category by 12.6 and 10.3 percent respectively. It can be deduced from the outcome that people in the rural areas are at risk of being left behind because they are the ones more prone to belong to the lowest income brackets, likely because of low agricultural productivity, limited non-farm opportunities and access to services. The outcome substantiates the IHS3, findings of 56 percent poverty in the rural areas, compared to 17% in urban areas.

### 5.2.6 Employment factors

The coefficient of employment is statistically significant and negative at 1 percent significance level for the lowest income group and at 5 percent significance level for the low middle-income group. The analysis shows that being employed reduces the odds of belonging to the lowest and low-middle-income categories by 8.0 and 2.9 percent respectively. Clearly, the status of being employed is a significant mitigating factor for the outcome of being left behind in Malawi. Those that work stand a better chance of not being left behind as they have the capacity to generate more disposable income and meet their basic needs which lead to improved human development. Therefore, employment generation and by implication skills development should be prioritized to ensure no one is left behind.

## 5.3 Probability Analysis on Public Services

### 5.3.1 Malaria and Insecticide Treated Beds Nets

Malaria remains a significant problem in Malawi that puts the entire population at risk. Insecticide-treated bed net (ITNs) is considered an effective tool for prevention of Malaria. The 2016 MDHS reports that since 2009, more than 20 million ITNs have been distributed in Malawi through mass campaigns and clinics. There has been a general increase in household ownership of at least one ITN and the use of ITNs by children less than the age of five years. The proportion of the overall population with access to ITN at national level stands at 40 percent of the household population.

Table 2 shows that the likelihood of suffering from Malaria while using treated nets is not statistically significant at all conventional levels, but it bears *a priori* expected sign of negative. Nonetheless, this concurs with other studies that argue that using a treated mosquito net reduces the chances of suffering from Malaria and the probability reduces by 1.3 percentage points as per the present analysis. However other analysis suggest reduces effectiveness of ITNs over time.<sup>24</sup>The outcome suggests that policies that encourage the use of mosquito nets are a necessary but not sufficient step in combating malaria. Accordingly, more needs to be done to expand access to the remaining 60 percent of the households in Malawi to ensure effective prevention. A multifaceted

<sup>24</sup> The effectiveness of a nationwide universal coverage campaign of insecticide-treated bed nets on childhood malaria in Malawi; □ Collins O. F. Zamawe, Kanan Nakamura, Akira Shibanuma and Masamine Jimba; Malaria Journal, 2016. <https://malariajournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12936-016-1550-9> accessed on 16 October 2017

approach is required rather than dependence on ITNs; local or community level malaria interventions should complement the universal coverage campaign.<sup>25</sup>

### 5.3.2 Primary School Education Factors

The table below also shows that the likelihood of suffering from Malaria when one has a primary school education is reduced and this outcome is statistically significant at 10 percent significance level. Individuals who attain at least primary school education have 1.3 percent reduced probability of having Malaria. People with basic education have better appreciation and knowledge of preventive measures for Malaria such as use of mosquito nets, clearing the surrounding areas, and many others. Promoting basic education is a vital step to ensure reduced susceptibility to Malaria.

**Table 2: Logit Model Output on Health Poverty - Malaria Prevalence**

	dy/dx	Std. Error	z	P-value	x
Treated Nets*	-0.010	0.013	-0.760	0.446	0.031
Rural*	0.012	0.006	2.050	0.040	0.818
Hospital-Availability*	-0.006	0.002	-3.210	0.001	3.491
Mosquito-Usage*	-0.004	0.005	-0.910	0.361	0.618
PLSC*	-0.013	0.007	-1.900	0.057	0.118
LR		19.79			
P-value		0.0014			
N		12269			

**Source: Authors analysis in Stata Software using IHS3 data from NSO, Malawi**

### 5.3.3 Proximity to Health facility

Table 2 further shows that the incidence of Malaria is statistically significant and negative at 1 percent significance level if one happens to be close to a hospital. By inference, the presence of a health facility in the community is associated with reduced incidences of Malaria by 0.6 percent since the proximity arguably reduces the distance to allow for timely access to treatment and testing. To ensure that no one is left behind in health poverty, the Government needs to increase access through construction of better-equipped clinics with adequate personnel to service communities especially in rural areas.

It is evident from the above analysis that to leave no one behind in prevention and treatment of Malaria, a multifaceted approach is required, increasing also knowledge of malaria transmission and prevention along with expanding the usage of ITN to the remaining 60 percent of the households. The proliferation of more clinics in the country is also a necessity.

## 6.0 Conclusion

The paper has taken an econometric approach focused on the income dimension and emphasized on vertical inequalities. The analysis needs to go further and unravel the ‘horizontal and spatial’ inequalities that intersect with the vertical inequalities and further exacerbate the inequalities. These pertain to patterns of social exclusion referred to earlier in section 4 as well as the pervasive gender inequality. Groups facing intersecting inequalities, for instance, persons with albinism living in poverty in rural areas, are likely to be more disadvantaged than income poor people.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *ibid*

<sup>26</sup> ‘Leaving no one behind’: the challenge of intersecting inequalities; Naila Kabeer; World Social Science Report 2016, UNESCO and the ISSC, Paris

The research findings in this study based on descriptive statistics have shown that income plays a prominent role in explaining access to public services by households in Malawi. Being left behind in the access to electricity, safe water, and proper sanitation is highly correlated with income levels irrespective of gender, location, and education. This also applies to access to secondary and tertiary education. *Individuals in the lowest income categories are the most disadvantaged and left behind.* These findings are in line with the fact that more than half of the country's population is categorized as poor and the majority are concentrated in rural areas.

This calls to attention the need to focus interventions on rural areas to provide essential services. The research findings based on predictive analysis, indicate that being left behind in income poverty is primarily determined by household size, education, and location as suggested by the magnitude of the coefficients and significance levels. Similarly, being left behind in health-poverty is mainly determined by education, location, and use of treated mosquito nets.

The paper hence proposes that a holistic action agenda for Malawi be developed that aligns all stakeholders, duty bearers and rights holders to increase sustainable and inclusive income to boost purchasing power at household level to allow them to access the public services while at the same time improving education and skills attainment through a collaborative and integrated approach to ensure that no one is left behind.

Access to services requires adequate purchasing power. This in a sense closes the loop. The freedom of 'being' and 'doing'<sup>27</sup> is thus a critical factor in ensuring access to adequate income and in turn better human development outcomes. Employment creation offers an excellent solution to income generation apart from deployment of other opportunities linked to agriculture productivity that stand to benefit 85 percent of the population in Malawi. Better access to public services particularly those of health and education will improve the likelihood of not being left behind. This gives credence to the ongoing policy interventions by the Government to improve availability and accessibility to such services for all. The paper argues that more work needs to be done to ensure that no one is left behind, especially focusing on a population suffering from multiple deprivations and intersecting inequalities.

A notable policy that the Government has implemented to leave no one behind is the National Registration and Identification System (NRIS) project, which provides a legal identity for all, and facilitates the achievement of comprehensive birth registration by 2030. All Malawians, 16 years of age and older will have a national identity thereby forging a provable identity for inclusion. This is an important step in ensuring that all are counted. This will be a good basis to facilitate interlinking of interventions. The Government is also in the process of finalizing the National Resilience Policy that would protect the poor and vulnerable from shocks arising from climate change related disasters as happened in the last two years.

### 6.1 Leaving No One Behind: An Action Agenda for Malawi

The following actions are proposed for all stakeholders, duty bearers and rights holders since a collaborative and integrated approach across sectors and at various levels is required to ensure that no one is left behind.

- a) **Establish a Robust Data Eco System:** The present analysis while attempting to co-relate several variables to identify the drivers of leaving no one behind could only come up with some averages about generic population groups. To realize the spirit of leaving no one behind there is an immediate need to delve beyond these averages to look at disaggregated and spatial data and to also ensure that everyone is counted. More information on intersecting inequalities is required. This will require a robust data system, which brings together all data producers and users beyond the government institutions. A functional and responsive data system will support the identification of those left behind, the marginalized and the vulnerable through

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<sup>27</sup> Capability approach, Amartya Sen

disaggregation of data, towards whom affirmative action can be then initiated and followed up. For instance, availability of specific and relevant data will facilitate the formulation of specific indicators from monitoring. This will be invaluable not only for MGDS III but also for other programmatic interventions such as the UNDAF.

- b) **Develop a comprehensive Social Protection System:** Once the marginalized and vulnerable are identified it is imperative that targeted interventions are made to alleviate their disadvantages. For instance, a child support grant could be helpful in alleviating child poverty. Likewise, a universal old age pension scheme could prevent the elderly from falling into poverty or even a universal health care initiative could ensure that the poor and needy can access adequate health care facilities. Other initiatives such as disability grant, care-giver grants as well as a basic income grant could be helpful in ensuring that no one is left behind. It is important to create an environment and policy framework that ensures that no one is left behind and that appropriate redistributive policies ensure that resources are directed at those who need them the most in line with the State's human rights obligations.
- c) **Affirmative action on women empowerment:** Addressing gender inequality demands Malawi to accelerate policies on women economic empowerment; legal status and rights; and voice, inclusion, and participation. For economic empowerment, focus should be on education (including keeping girls in school and raising the quality of education) and skills development; employment creation for women through positive discrimination; eliminating gender gaps at workplaces; enhanced business opportunities and improved access to finance. Legal status and rights would entail improving the property, inheritance, and land rights while voice, inclusion, and participation entail affirmative action to empower women to enhance involvement in decision making bodies such as Parliament. It is imperative to create by-laws to support effective implementation of the existing legal frameworks. This is especially important for guiding traditional leaders at the local level and in ensuring that no one is left behind or is discriminated.
- d) **Empowering those left behind:** It is critical to ensure that the poorest and marginalized are informed of their rights and are capacitated to voice their needs. This will ensure an inclusive process at the local development level/councils. Ensuring that all are counted and have voice, active, free and meaningful and participation or greater self-determination will facilitate accountability of the duty bearers in ensuring no one is left behind. This is also important as a mechanism to build resilience in the citizenry as well as self-reliance and stem a reversal of development gains. Empowered actors working together at the local level is essential for leaving no one behind.
- e) **Participatory governance and responsive institutions:** Policies, strategies, and action plan whether, in the government, private sector or civil society should be designed to uphold human rights, access to justice, promote inclusion and accountability. This is the foundation for ensuring no one is left behind. Citizen engagement in the framing of laws and in their implementation is as important as framing right legislation and policies. This needs to be complemented by strong institutions that are responsive to citizen needs, especially those of the vulnerable and marginalized. The recent Afro-barometer survey (2017) argues that "about half of Malawians think that 'most' or 'all' police officers, business executives and officials in the presidency are corrupt' 'Most see the fight against corruption as lacking action.' Participatory governance, i.e. involvement of citizens through social audits, scorecards, etc. will not only enhance accountability of institutions but also strengthen the relationship between service providers and service users.

Important to note here that the duty bearers are not only in the government but also those in the private sector, civil society, traditional and religious leaders as well as parliamentarians and development partners. Concerted, coordinated and collaborative action is the essence of people-centered development that enhances opportunities and capabilities for all and leaves no one behind.

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