

AISI-Connect National ICT Profile MALAWI (MW)

GENERAL DATA	ICT-INFRASTRUCTURE	ICT POLICIES
Capital: Lilongwe	Fixed lines (K) '98: 37	Competition in local loop: Monopoly
98 Population (M): 10.75	97-98 % Fixed Line Growth: 0.02	Competition in telephone terminals: Yes
Currency: MWK	98 Mobile Lines (K): 10	Independent regulator: Yes
Exch rate (/US\$): 42.486	Mobile Line Growth (%):	Private Wireless Data allowed: No
Currency Stability:	Cities with Internet POPs: 2	Independent Internet VSAT Allowed: No
97 GDP US\$/person: 242.0	Local Call National Internet: Yes	VSAT License Fees:
97 Total GDP (\$B):	Dialup Internet subscribers: 2400	Satellite Phone access: No
Local Stock Exchange: No	International Bandwidth (Kbps): 128	Universal Service Obligations:
Personal Safety: 3	Internet Hosts: 2	IAP License Fees (\$/yr):
Political Stability:	Internet domains:	Private Phone Kiosks: No
Tertiary ICT Students:	Dialup Internet Cost 20hrs/mnth (\$):	Public VOIP Allowed: No
ICT Training seats:	64K Local Internet link (\$/mnt):	Business Ownership Rules:
ISDN: No	64K Internat Internet Link (\$/mnt):	Repatriation of Profits Rules:
VPN Services: No	Local phone call cost (US\$/hr): 1.56	Restrictions on market entry:
UNDP Human Devel Index:	Monthly tel line rental (\$/mnt):	Export Credit Guarantees:
.	Telephone waiting time/Wait List:	.
.	Internet Access Providers 2	.
.	Mobile Operators:	.
.	Fixed Line Telecom Operators:	.

[Key to table values](#) All figures above in US Dollars (\$)

ICT Profile:

Internet:

Full Internet services have been supplied since mid '97 by **MalawiNet**, although this was preceded by a number of email providers - **BUMAS**, **Integrated Computers** and **Epsilon Omega** and Unima

who have recently been allowed to set up full Internet services and compete with MalawiNet.

There is a national Internet presence with a local call tariff for access throughout the country, and the MPTC recently liberalised the Internet market, allowing private ISPs to obtain their own connections, either via MalawiNet's POPs in Lilongwe or Blantyre or via a direct international link from MPTC.

Telecommunications:

The telecommunications sector is regulated by the **Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority** (MCRA), under the **Ministry of Information, Posts and Telecommunications**. A Communications Bill has been processed by parliament and includes the establishment of criteria and a formal procedure for tendering and issue of communication licences, as well as establishing a regulatory body to oversee them.

Malawi has one of the poorest telephone infrastructures in Africa - about 70 000 lines with unreliable links between cities. The availability of new lines is low, with a waiting time of 24 months not uncommon. The previous regime of President Banda did not encourage development telecommunication infrastructure and the level of telephone penetration is one of the lowest in Africa.

Currently the Malawi Posts and Telecommunication Corporation (MPTC) is still the sole operator of basic services. A joint venture between Telekom Malaysia and MPTC (which owns 40%) called Telekom Network, provides cellular services in limited areas. VSAT - based services have recently been allowed, with companies such as Lever Brothers and Oilcom installing equipment to service their internal communications needs. MPTC is due to be privatised this year.

A new earthstation was commissioned in Blantyre in July '97 which has relieved the congestion in international circuits.

The Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) is the only large scale broadcaster. It has been claimed that most applications for private radio stations are turned down. Currently only two commercial stations have been given licences. They are owned by the President's press secretary and the son of a Minister. A third station, for rural women, supported by donors, has also received a licence recently, and the African Bible College runs a religious station which MPTC does not allow to broadcast news.

National ICT Activities:

There is no national process for the development of information infrastructure plans. Neither is there a formal national and academic research network, however the **National Research Council of Malawi** (NRC) is being assisted by the UNDP's SDNP to establish a node at the **Malawi Polytechnic** in Blantyre.

SDNP Malawi is expected to help link the **Medical College** in Blantyre, as well as other academic, research and public institutions across the country.

The **Bunda College of Agriculture**, near Lilongwe is receiving substantial support for upgrading facilities.

An informal group called the Internet Support Group (ISG) was formed to increase access to full Internet in the country.

Communication Costs:

Costs have recently increased by 60% following the devaluation of the Malawi Kwacha.

MalawiNet: Email only: Setup - 2000 MK, Subscription - 420 MK/mnth, Free Time - 2hrs/month, additional time 2.4 MK/minute

Dialup Internet: Setup - 4160 MK, Subscription - 2500 MK/month, Free Time - 20 hrs/month, additional time 1.6MK/minute.

Additional Email addresses - Setup 1500 MK, 1000K/month post office charge and 420Mk/month per user id.

9.6Kbps analogue leased line. Own router Setup - 1 200USD, Subscription- 700 USD/month. Router included - Setup - 1500USD, Subscription - 950USD/month.

Drop in service - 1000Mk/month.

Web hosting. 5MB storage: Setup -135USD, subscription - \$135USD/month, up to 25MB storage:

Setup - 400 USD, subscription - 300 USD/month.

Web design. 65USD/hour.

Local calls cost 0.60 MK / 90 seconds - US\$1.56/hour and are available nationwide for internet access via MalawiNet's POPs.

Organisational Activities in the ICT Sector:

Chancellor College Store and forward Internet service provider. postmaster@unima.wn.apc.org

College of Medicine Malawi Operates a store and forward Internet service for the health sector. SDNP Malawi is expected to help link the College and other academic, research and public institutions across the country. The project was approved 2 years ago, but resistance from the Government over the provision of independent Internet links delayed the project until the ISP sector was liberalized last year. In May '98 permission to obtain a 64Kbps international link to the US was obtained at for a cost of about \$7500 a month. <http://www.healthnet.org/hnet/mlw.html>
postmaster@mal.healthnet.org

Department of Research and Environmental Affairs

SADC Forestry Sector Technical Coordination Unit (FSTCU) Aiming to establish an electronic network of forestry information.

Ministry of Information of Malawi Mr J W Nyirenda, MACRA

Malawi Posts and Telecommunications Corporation The sole provider of basic telecommunications services. It also operates an X.25 service in Lilongwe and Blantyre. A joint venture between Telekom Malaysia and MPTC (which owns 40%) called **Telekom Network**, provides cellular services in limited areas.

The MPTC recently liberalised the market, allowing private ISPs to obtain their own connections, either via MalawiNet's POPs in Lilongwe or Blantyre or via a direct international link from MPTC (costing 20 000 USD/mnth). VSAT - based services have recently been allowed, with companies such as Lever Brothers and Oilcom installing equipment to service their internal communications needs.

Epsilon & Omega Computer and Engineering Services One of the Internet service providers.
<http://www.eomw.net/> Thandi Mbvundula thandim@eomw.net

Internet Support Group An informal group, it was formed to increase access to full Internet in the

country and it is planning a series of awareness campaigns on the benefit of the Internet and email. Reflecting the predominantly rural and farming nature of the country, the ISG is focussing on the Agribusiness sector in Malawi. The coordination of the ISG, which represents a number of companies and NGOs in Malawi, is being carried out by Malawi Investment Promotion Agency in Lilongwe. Thoko Kampezeni TKampezeni@eo.wn.apc.org

MalawiNet A joint venture between the PTO, (MPTC) and American company USCOMNET Inc. MalawiNet operates a 128Kbps link directly to the US with POPs in Lilongwe and Blantyre, but calls from anywhere in the country are tariffed at local call rates. With about 2000 users, the company is currently the the largest Internet service provider. <http://www.malawi.net/> Bessie Saidi bessie@malawi.net

National Research Council of Malawi It is being assisted by the UNDP's SDNP to establish a node at the **Malawi Polytechnic** in Blantyre. The project co-ordinator is has also operated the **University of Malawi IUNIMA**) email link in Zomba since '93. Dr. Paulos Nyirenda Pnyirenda@unima.wn.apc.org

Bunda College of Agriculture Situated near Lilongwe, it is receiving substantial support for upgrading facilities from Japanese international co-operation and is also being assisted by the Ford Foundation to obtain Internet connectivity.

The British Council administers an Academic Links Scheme to promote development and co-operation between the academic staff of higher education institutions of the UK and overseas. The link of longest standing, established in 1969, is the one between the University of Malawi, Bunda College of Agriculture and the University of Wales, Welsh Institute of Rural Studies, Aberystwyth. <http://www.irs.aber.ac.uk/research/bunda.htm> Dr Z M Kasomekera kasomekera@unima.wn.apc.org

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Source:

AISI-Connect database - <http://www2.sn.apc.org/africa> Telecom/GDP stats source: ITU/World Bank. Internet hosts: Network Wizards

If located in Africa and not listed here, [add your organisation to this page](#).