



International
Labour
Office

MALAWI CHILD LABOUR DATA COUNTRY BRIEF



International
Programme on
the Elimination
of Child Labour
(IPEC)

SELECTED SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS

Population (millions)	12.6
Population under 15 years (percentage of total)	47.3
Literacy rate (percentage of people ages 15 and above)	64.1
Net primary school enrolment rate	95
GDP per capita, PPP	\$646
Human Development Index Value	0.4
HDI ranking	166/177

Source: 2004 data from UNDP Human Development Report 2006



I. Legislative Framework

RATIFIED CONVENTIONS RELATING TO CHILD LABOUR

Convention	Ratification	Entry into force
The Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) (minimum age specified: 14 years)	19-11-1999	19-11-2000
The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182)	19-11-1999	19-11-2000
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	02-01-1991	01-02-1991

RELEVANT NATIONAL LEGISLATION

- The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi, 1999;
- Employment Act, No. 6 of 2000;
- Education is compulsory for children ages 6-13

REGULATION OF WORK FOR PERSONS BELOW 18 YEARS

Regulation of work for persons below 18 years	Age	Legislation
General minimum age for admission to employment or work	14 years	Section 21 (1) of the Employment Act
Admission to light work activities	No minimum age for light work specified	
Admission to hazardous work	18 years	Section 21 (1) of the Employment Act The list of the types of hazardous work has not yet been determined

II. Child Labour Indicators

Key child labour indicators can be derived from the Malawi Child Labour Survey (MCLS), conducted by the National Statistics Office in 2002. The survey was carried out within the framework of the Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme (SIMPOC) of the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). The MCLS was an independent household survey intended to collect information on the nature, magnitude, and determinants of child labour and its effect on children's education, health, and development. The survey covered boys and girls from 5 to 17 years of age.

Children's activities

Results from the Malawi National Child Labour Survey indicate that 23.3 per cent (0.73 million) of all children ages 5-14 work; this is 25.4 per cent (0.39 million) of boys and 21.3 per cent (0.34 million) of girls in that age group.

Approximately 4.7 per cent (0.15 million) of children participate in the labour force and do not attend school. The percentage is higher for boys (5.1 per cent) than for girls (4.3 per cent). Children in rural areas are more likely than those in urban areas to work without attending school (5.3 vs. 1.6 per cent), reporting a higher percentage of boys than girls doing so (boys 5.9 vs. girls 4.8 per cent). In urban areas the trend is inverted with girls more likely than boys to work and not attend school (boys 1.1 vs. girls 2.0 per cent).

CHILDREN AGED 5–14, BY SEX, TYPE OF ACTIVITY AND RESIDENCE

Sex	Activity	Urban		Rural		Total	
		%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Male	Work only ^a	1.1	2,914	5.9	76,177	5.1	79,091
	Study only ^b	75.6	202,993	47.2	608,035	52.1	811,028
	Work and study ^c	7.9	21,248	22.9	294,298	20.3	315,546
	Total work*	9.0	24,162	28.8	370,475	25.4	394,637
	Total study**	83.5	224,242	70.1	902,333	72.4	1,126,575
	Neither	15.4	41,415	24.0	309,334	22.5	350,749
Female	Work only ^a	2.0	5,887	4.8	61,544	4.3	67,431
	Study only ^b	76.7	221,072	52.0	672,293	56.5	893,365
	Work and study ^c	6.9	19,857	19.3	249,303	17.0	269,160
	Total work*	8.9	25,744	24.1	310,847	21.3	336,591
	Total study**	83.5	240,929	71.3	921,596	73.6	1,162,525
	Neither	14.4	41,589	23.9	309,033	22.2	350,622
Total	Work only ^a	1.6	8,800	5.3	137,721	4.7	146,521
	Study only ^b	76.1	424,065	49.6	1,280,328	54.3	1,704,393
	Work and study ^c	7.4	41,105	21.1	543,601	18.6	584,706
	Total work*	9.0	49,905	26.4	681,322	23.3	731,227
	Total study**	83.5	465,170	70.7	1,823,929	73.0	2,289,099
	Neither	14.9	83,003	24.0	618,367	22.4	701,370

* "Total work" refers to children that work only and children that work and study, i.e. a+c.

** "Total study" refers to children that study only and children that work and study, i.e. b+c.

77.9 per cent of children are involved in household chores; 82.9 per cent of girls and 72.8 per cent of boys in the 5-14 age group.

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN INVOLVED IN HOUSEHOLD CHORES*, BY AGE AND SEX

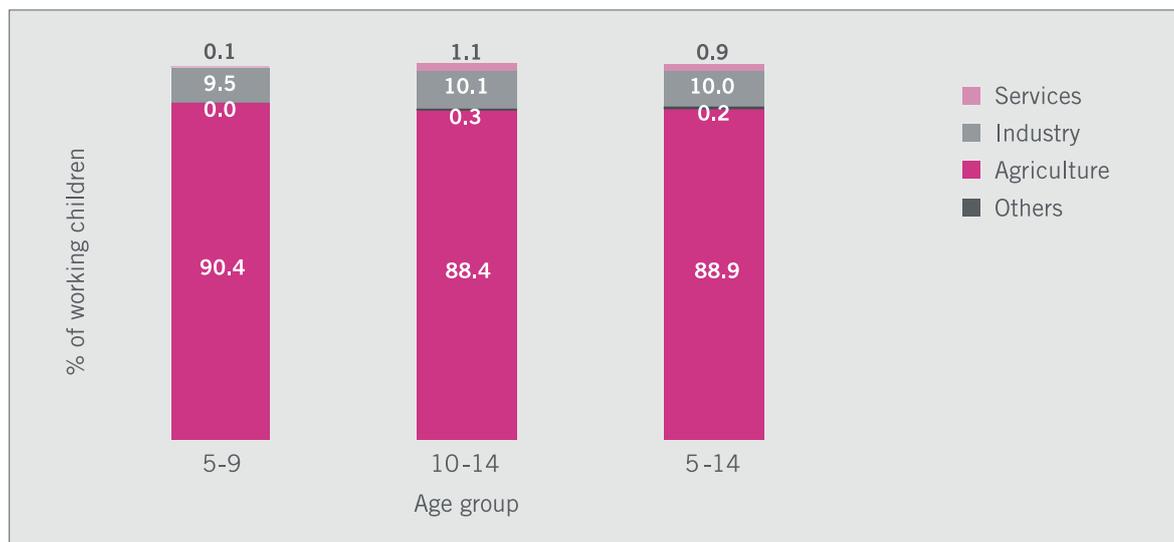
Age	Male	Female	Total
5	45.3	55.5	50.6
6	58.4	66.5	62.6
7	62.1	80.5	71.6
8	75.1	85.0	80.0
9	76.9	86.9	81.9
10	78.7	92.8	85.6
11	83.2	93.2	88.4
12	85.9	92.7	89.3
13	85.7	91.3	88.4
14	84.1	95.3	89.6
Total	72.8	82.9	77.9

* Children performing household chores for at least one hour per day

Characteristics and conditions of child labour

88.9 per cent of working children are employed in the agricultural sector, 10.0 per cent are employed in the industrial sector and 0.9 per cent work in services. Girls are slightly more likely than boys to be employed in the industrial sector (11.9 per cent vs. 8.4 per cent).

DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING CHILDREN AGED 5-14 BY INDUSTRY AND AGE GROUP

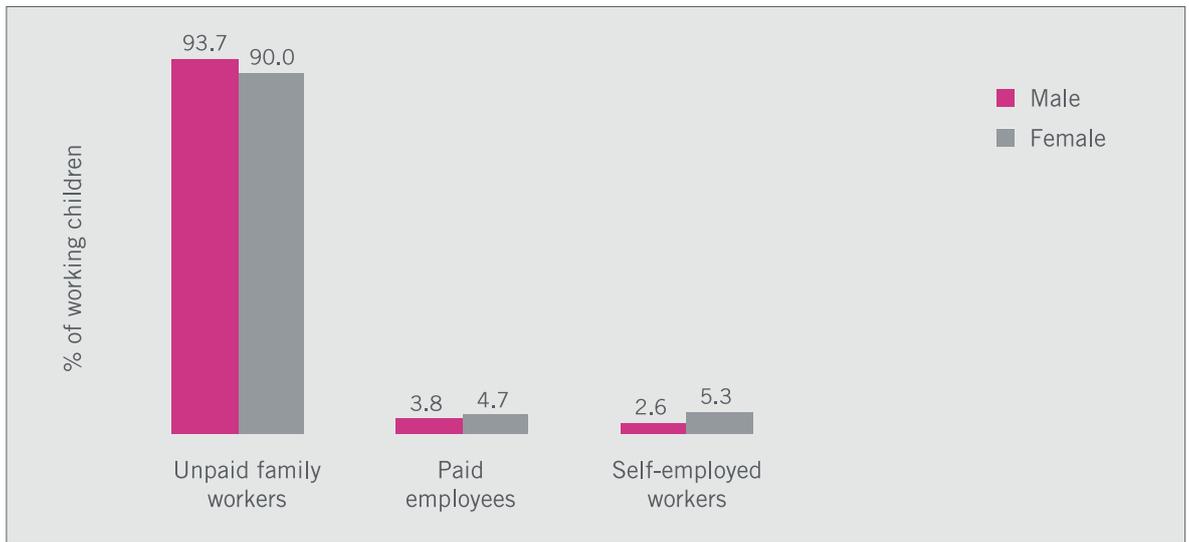


DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING CHILDREN AGED 5-14 BY INDUSTRY AND SEX



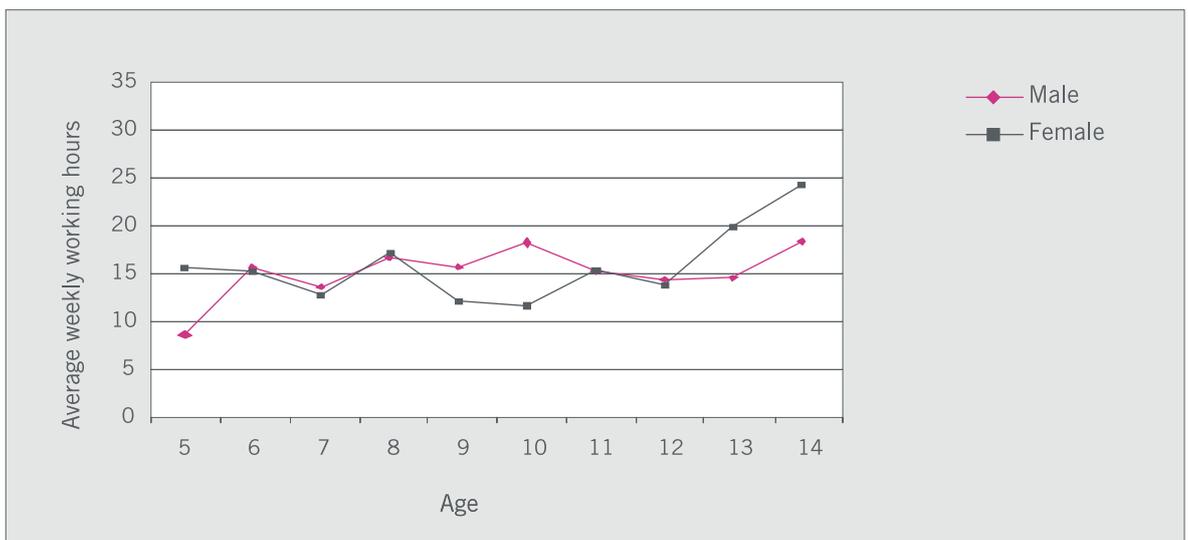
A high percentage of working children are employed as unpaid family workers (93.7 per cent in the case of boys and 90.0 per cent in the case of girls). Fewer working boys (6.4 per cent) than girls (10.0 per cent) ages 5-14 are salaried or self-employed.

DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING CHILDREN AGED 5-14 BY STATUS IN EMPLOYMENT AND SEX



Boys and girls aged 5-14 tend to work, on average, a similar amount of hours per week (16.7 hours per week in the case of boys and 16.9 hours per week in the case of girls).

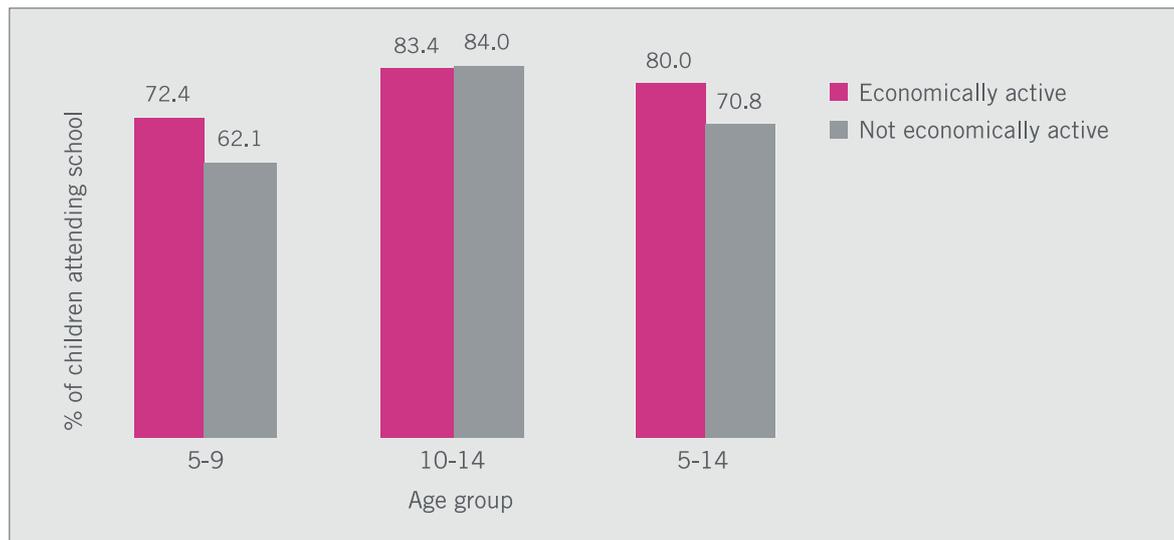
CHILDREN WORKING: AVERAGE WEEKLY HOURS BY AGE AND SEX



Child labour and children's education

Economically active children 5 to 14 years of age are more likely to attend school than those who are non-working (80.0 per cent vs. 70.8 per cent). The discrepancy is particularly significant among 5 to 9 year olds. 72.4 per cent of working children in that age group attend school compared to only 62.1 per cent of non-economically active children.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE CHILDREN IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY VERSUS CHILDREN NOT IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY



III. Information on the worst forms of child labour

RATIFICATION OF SPECIFIC TREATIES

Convention	Ratification	Entry into force
Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	Not ratified	
Optional Protocol to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict	Not ratified	
United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC)	Not ratified	
Human Trafficking Protocol, supplementing the CTOC	Not ratified	
Smuggling of Migrants Protocol, supplementing the CTOC	Not ratified	
The ILO Forced Labour Convention (No. 29)	19-11-1999	19-11-2000

SIMPOC STUDIES

- Malawi Child Labour Survey 2002 – Report of Analysis, ILO-IPEC, 2004.

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