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Introduction

Overcoming the twin challenges of child labour and the youth decent work deficit will be critical to Malawi's progress towards realising its sustainable development goals. Evidence presented in this report indicates that 2.1 million Malawian children remain trapped in child labour. At the same time, young persons in the 15-35 years age group are concentrated overwhelmingly in low skill jobs in the informal economy that offer little prospect for advancement or for escaping poverty and exploitation. The effects of child labour and the decent work deficit facing youth are well-documented: both can lead to social vulnerability, societal marginalisation and deprivation, and both can permanently impair lifetime patterns of employment and pay.

The current Report examines the related issues of child labour and youth employment in the context of Malawi. Guided by observed outcomes in terms of schooling, work activities and status in the labour market, the report considers the economic as well as the social determinants of child labour and youth employment. The Malawi National Child Labour Survey conducted in 2015 (NCLS2015) is the primary data source for the report. Data from this survey permit a comprehensive and nationally-representative picture of the child labour and youth employment situations.

The Report was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Youth, Sports and Manpower Development, the National Statistical Office of Malawi and with the UCW partner agencies (ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank). As such, it provides an important common basis for action in addressing child labour and the youth decent work deficit.

Three related objectives are served by the report: (1) improve the information base on child labour and youth employment, in order to inform policy and programmatic responses; (2) promote policy dialogue on child labour and the lack of opportunities for decent and productive work for youth; and (3) analyse the relationship between early school leaving, child labour and future status in the labour market.

Panel 1. Understanding Children's Work (UCW) programme

The inter-agency research programme, Understanding Children's Work (UCW), was initiated by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UNICEF and the World Bank to help inform efforts towards eliminating child labour.

The Programme is guided by the Roadmap adopted at The Hague Global Child Labour Conference 2010, which lays out the priorities for the international community in the fight against child labour.

The Roadmap calls for effective partnership across the UN system to address child labour, and for mainstreaming child labour into policy and development frameworks. The Roadmap also calls for improved knowledge sharing and for further research aimed at guiding policy responses to

child labour. Research on the work and the vulnerability of children and youth constitutes the main component of the UCW Programme. Through close collaboration with stakeholders in partner countries, the Programme produces research allowing a better understanding of child labour and youth employment in their various dimensions and the linkages between them.

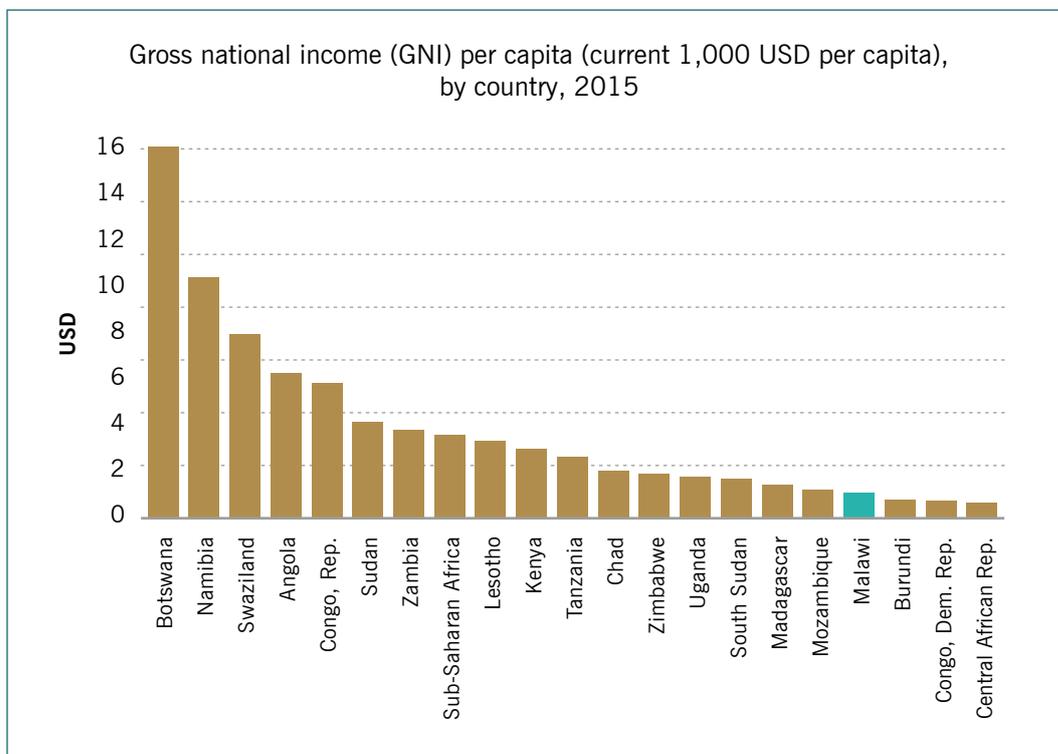
The results of this research support the development of intervention strategies designed to remove children from the world of work, prevent others from entering it and to promote decent work for youth. As UCW research is conducted within an inter-agency framework, it promotes a shared understanding of child labour and of the youth employment challenges and provides a common platform for addressing them.

The remainder of the Report is structured as follows. Chapter 2 reviews the national economic and social context. Chapter 3 reports estimates of child labour for the 5-13 and 14-17 years age groups. Chapter 4 of the report focuses on understanding children's work in the 5-13 years age group, looking first at the extent of child labour and then at its main characteristics. Chapter 5 addresses the extent and nature of child labour among older, 14-17 year-old, children. Chapter 6 examines the interplay between child labour and schooling. Chapter 7 then turns to youth employment, covering issues including job access, job quality, human capital and skills mismatches. Chapter 8 of the Report reviews current national responses to child labour and youth employment concerns. Chapter 9 consists of a concluding discussion of policy priorities for accelerating action in the areas of child labour and youth employment.

Malawi and its labor market: recent trends and main characteristics

Malawi has made important economic and structural reforms over the last decade, contributing to sustained economic growth rates and to progresses in terms of human development. Nevertheless, poverty and inequality are still widespread, and the economy remains undiversified and vulnerable to external shocks. Malawian economy is based on agriculture, and more than one-third of GDP and 90% of export revenues come from this. Coping with natural disasters is a major challenge: the weather will continue to play a major part of the economic cycle and households remain vulnerable to natural shocks such as drought and flooding, and food price inflation. In January 2015 southern Malawi was devastated by the worst floods in living memory, affecting more than a million people across the country, including 336,000 who were displaced, according to UNICEF.¹ Malawi is positioned among the poorest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Figure 1) and in the world.

Figure 1. Malawi is positioned among the poorest countries in South Sub-Saharan Africa



Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank.

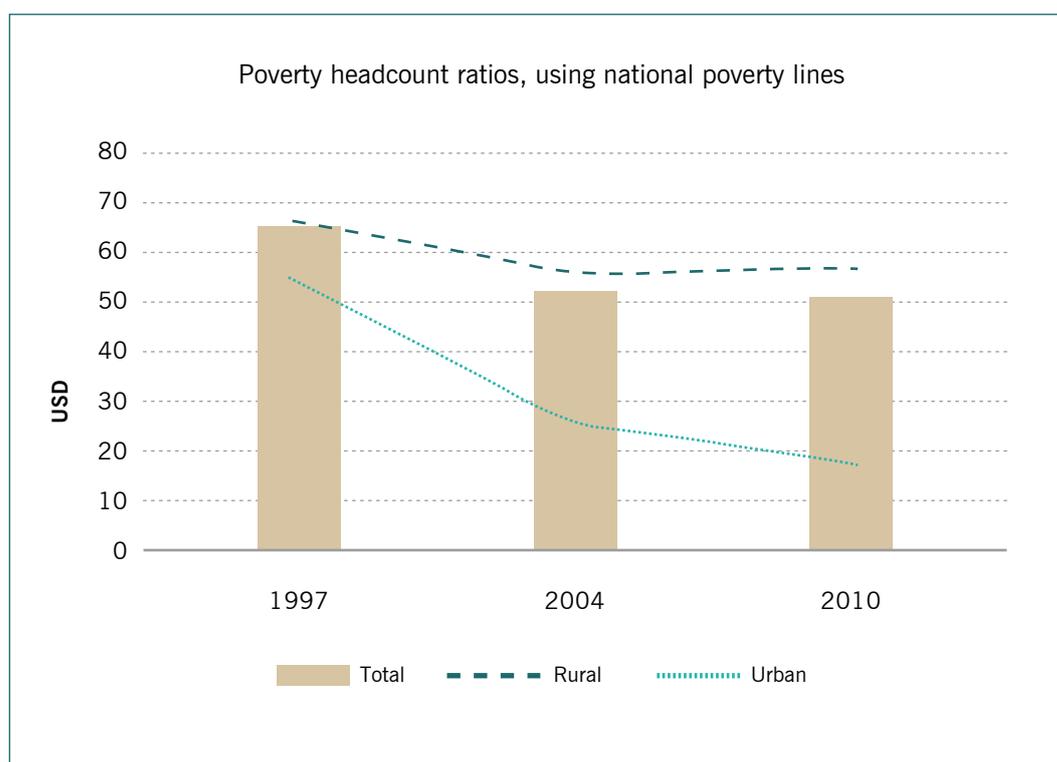
¹ https://www.unicef.org/malawi/reallives_16385.html

Despite these challenges, the poverty rate in Malawi is decreasing through the work of the government and supporting organizations. The share of people living under the national poverty line decreased from 65.3% in 1997 to 50.7% in 2010 (Figure 2). This reduction was even more substantial in urban areas, where the rate decreased from 50.4 to 17.3.

Using a multidimensional child poverty indicator (MCPI) and threshold of two or more deprivations, 63 percent of children are multidimensional poor in Malawi. This rate is higher than the child monetary poverty rate of 43 percent. Multidimensional poverty is highest among the group of children aged 15-17 years (73%), while monetary poverty rates are highest among children 5-14 years old (44%). Both rates are also higher in rural areas relative to urban areas.²

A significant number of children, 30 percent of the total, are deprived in two or more dimensions yet live in households that are above the poverty line. This result implies that social programs that target on income, i.e. cash transfers, will miss a significant number of vulnerable children in Malawi.³

Figure 2. Poverty trends in Malawi, 1997-2010



Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank.

Many analysts believe that economic progress for Malawi depends on its ability to control population growth.⁴ The total population in Malawi in 2015 amounts to about 18 million, compared with about 13 million in 2005. The observed rise in total population was accompanied by an increase in the number of persons of working age, i.e. 15 to 64 years old (from 6.4 in 2005 to 9.1 million in 2015) as well as in children younger than 15 (from 6.1 to 8.3 million respectively) (Table 1).

² UNICEF 2016. Child Poverty in Malawi.

³ UNICEF 2016. Child Poverty in Malawi.

⁴ "Why Population Matters to Malawi's Development: Managing Population Growth for Sustainable Development Department of Population and Development." Department of Population and Development. Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. Government of Malawi. 2012. Retrieved 8 October 2014.

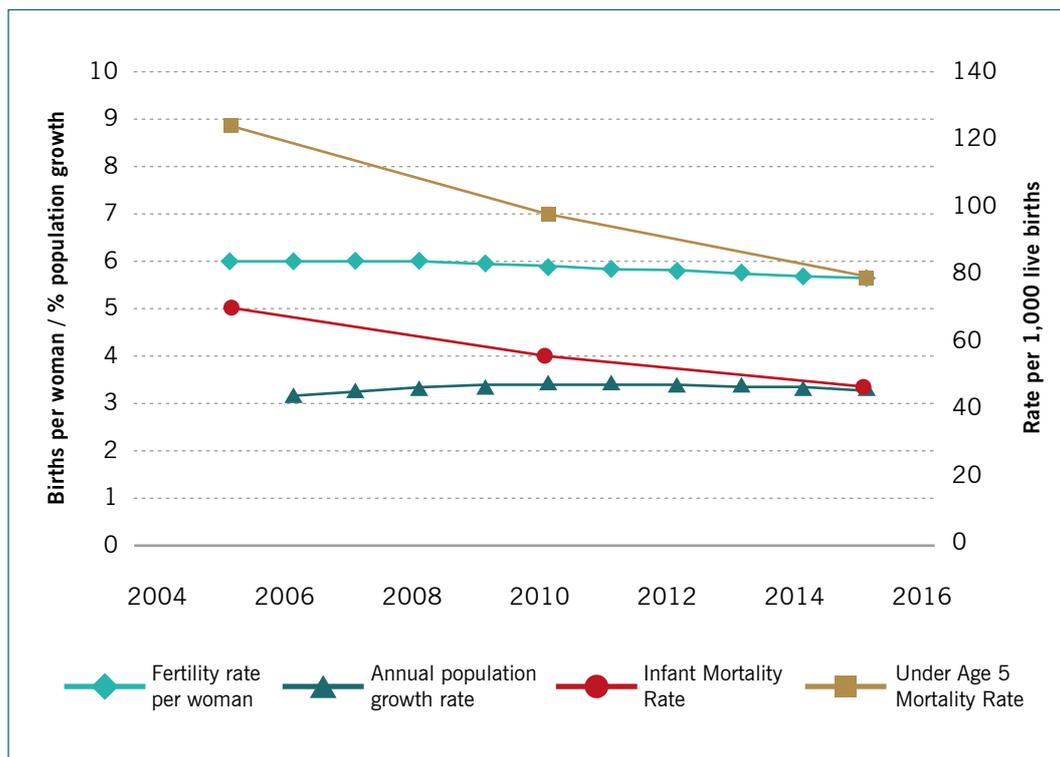
Table 1. Demographic changes in Malawi, 2005-2015

	2005	2010	2015
	12,863,421	15,182,821	17,964,697
Population, female (% of total)	0.51	0.51	0.51
Population ages 0-14 years, total	6,111,191	7,230,073	8,394,661
Population ages 15-64 years, total	6,395,545	7,543,968	9,086,627
Population ages 65 years and above, total	483,409	213,735	269,674
Age dependency ratio	7.56	2.83	2.97
Fertility rate, total (births per woman)	6.0	5.9	5.6
Life expectancy at birth, total (years)	49	57	61

Source: US Bureau of census, International Database.

These population trends – which will continue in the next decades – are significantly affecting the structure of the Malawian labour market. The sharp rise in the potentially active population has resulted in a major increase in the Malawian labour force (see below), thereby raising a growing concern about the capacity of the Malawian economy to create enough jobs to match a continuously increasing labor supply.

Figure 3. Basic demographic trends in Malawi, 2005-2015



Source: US Bureau of Census, International Database.

CHAPTER 2

Child labour: the overall picture

Child labour in Malawi continues to affect an estimated 2.1 million children aged 5-17 years, 38% of this age group. These numbers indicate clearly that efforts in this regard need to be intensified and accelerated in order that the goal of child labour elimination is reached in the nearest possible future. In this chapter we briefly summarise estimates of involvement in child labour for the overall 5-17 age group, based on national legislation and statistical practices.

The legal framework for child labour in Malawi is contained in the Employment Act of 2000 (CAP 55:01). The Act sets the minimum age for admission of a child to employment at 14 years. The Act further prohibits children between the ages of 14 and 18 to work in hazardous work. The definition of “hazardous” fulfils at least one of the following work conditions:

- working in designated hazardous industries, namely tobacco, mining, quarrying and construction;
- working in designated hazardous occupations, namely those listed in the Employment act of 2012 (Prohibited hazardous work, CAP 55:02);
- working for more than 40 hours per week;
- working in other hazardous conditions, namely working at night, being exposed to hazardous working environment, carrying heavy loads, operating any dangerous machinery/equipment at work or begging.

The Child care, Protection and Justice act. 2010 identifies children in child labour as children in need of care and protection.

Following national legislation and national statistical practices, children are classified in child labour on the basis of the following criteria:

- For children aged 5-13 years: those in employment;
- For children aged 14-17 years: those in hazardous forms of employment.

Children in employment, in turn, are those engaged in any economic activity for at least one hour during the reference period in any public or private agricultural, industrial or non-industrial undertaking, excluding work performed at a vocational technical school or any other training institution. Economic activity, therefore, covers all market production and certain types of non-market production (principally the production of goods and services for own use). It includes forms of work in both the formal and informal economies; inside and outside family settings; work for pay or profit (in cash or in kind, part-time or full-time), or as a domestic worker outside the child's own household for an employer (with or without pay).

Child labour measured on this basis is very common in Malawi. Some 1.7 million children aged 5-13 years, and more than 400 thousand aged 14-17 years are in child labour. Summing these two groups yields a total of almost 2.1 million children aged 5-17 years involved in child labour (Table 2). These overall estimates mask important differences by residence and region. Urban areas feature a lower level of child labour: for the 5-17 years age group, the rate of child labour in rural areas (39%) is substantially higher than in urban areas (30%). Child labour varies by region from a high of 46 and 41 percent in North and South to a low of thirty-six percent in Center.

Gender disparities do not appear particularly large. Boys are more likely to be involved in child labour than their female peers: there is a two percentage points difference between boys and girls for the overall 5-17 years age group and a four percentage point difference for the 15-17 years age group. However, it is important recalling that these estimates do not include involvement in household chores, a form of work where girls typically predominate.

These numbers represent conservative estimates of child labour, because they exclude so-called "worst forms of child labour other than hazardous work." These forms of child labour include child trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation and the involvement of children in illicit activities. In Malawi, as in most countries, information on children involved in the worst forms of child labour other than hazardous is limited due to both measurement difficulties and cultural sensitivity. The Malawi National Child Labour Survey and other similar surveys are not designed to generate information on children involved in worst forms of child labour other than hazardous work. Targeted research using specialized survey instruments is required to generate more complete information on this particularly vulnerable group of children in child labour. Such research is envisaged as part of the new Child labour National Action Plan,⁵ drawing on ILO guidelines⁶ in this area and research experience from other countries.

5 The Malawi Child Labour National Action Plan (2011-2016) is the national response to the ILO Global Action Plan which called on the member states to commit themselves to the elimination of child labour by 2016.

6 See, for example, *Child Labor Statistics, manual on methodologies for data collection through surveys*. International Labour Organization (ILO)/Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC), Geneva, 2004. *Manual on child labour rapid assessment methodology*. International Labour Organization and UNICEF, Geneva, 2005. *Hard to see, harder to count: survey guidelines to estimate forced labour of adults and children*. International Labour Office. Geneva, 2012

Table 2. Child labour estimates based on national legislation

	Children aged 5-13 years in child labour		Children aged 14-17 years in child labour ^(a)		Total child labour children aged 5-17 years	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Male	42.1	883,155	30.7	211,575	39.3	1,094,730
Female	40.2	834,139	26.5	189,762	36.7	1,023,900
Urban	33.6	195,600	21.6	47,975	30.3	243,575
Rural	42.4	1,521,693	29.9	353,362	39.3	1,875,055
North	40.1	218,335	15.4	28,979	33.8	247,314
Center	36.0	638,716	25.8	148,938	33.5	787,654
South	46.5	860,242	35.0	223,420	43.5	1,083,662
Total	41.2	1,717,294	28.6	401,337	38.0	2,118,630

Note: (a) Child labour for this age group consists of hazardous work. Working children are considered to be in hazardous work if they are found to be in any one of the following categories: children working in designated hazardous industries (mining, quarrying and construction); children working in designated hazardous occupations (they refer to the list of hazardous work established by the national legislation); children working long hours (40 hours or more per week); children working under other hazardous conditions such as night work, using hazardous tools and being in an unhealthy work environment.

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Children aged 5-13 years

This chapter analyses the extent and nature of child labour among 5-13 year-olds in more detail, based on data from the Malawi National Child Labour Survey of 2015 and on the measurement concepts outlined in the previous chapter. This analysis highlights above all the high prevalence of child labour in Malawi in this age group, relative to both regional and global averages.⁷

3.1 Involvement in child labour

More than two in five children aged 5-13 years (41%), almost 1.7 million in absolute terms, are children in child labour (Table 3). Table 3 indicates that overall estimates of child labour mask important differences by age and residence. In short, child labour increases with age and is much higher in rural areas than in cities and towns. Differences in terms of involvement between boys and girls, however, are negligible.

We now look in more detail below at how child labour (and schooling) varies in accordance with these and other background variables. This discussion also draws on results of the econometric analysis presented in the Annex (Table A1 and Table A2).⁸

7 ILO-IPEC. *Marking progress against child labour - Global estimates and trends 2000-2012* / International Labour Office, International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) - Geneva: ILO, 2013.

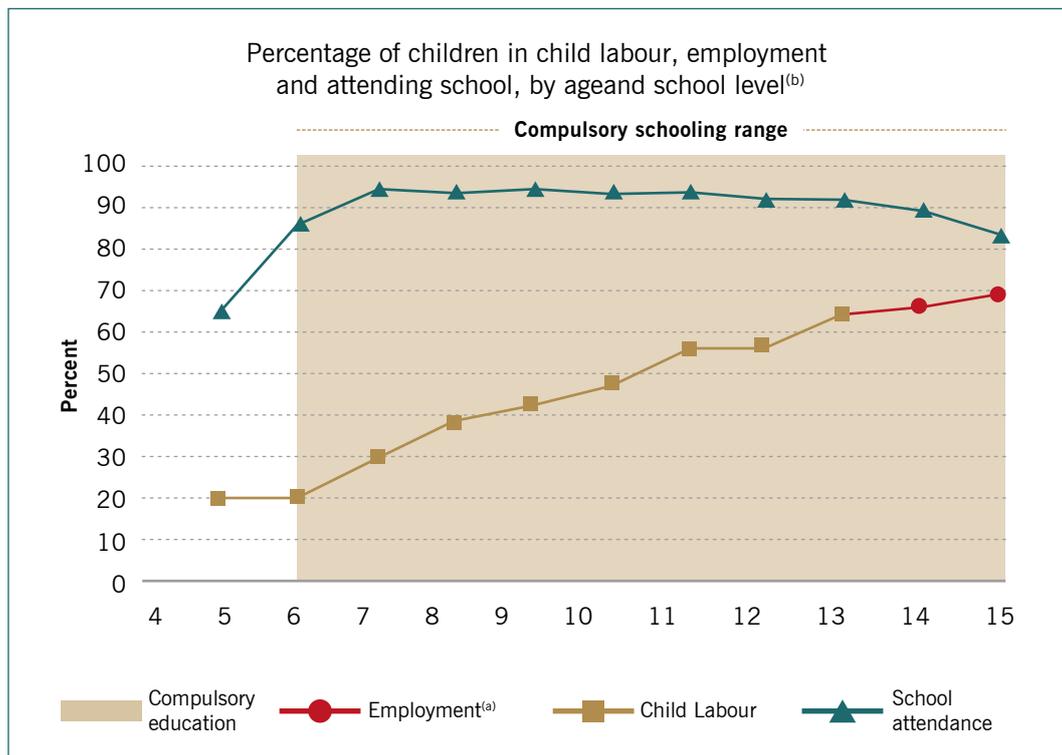
8 A simple economic model of household behaviour is used to guide the empirical specification. For detailed information on the model, see Cigno, A.; Rosati, F.C. 2005. "The economics of child labour" (New York, NY, Oxford University Press).

Table 3. Involvement of children aged 5-13 years in child labour by age, sex and residence

Percentage					
Age	Sex		Residence		Total
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	
5-9 years	28.7	31.7	24.0	31.2	30.2
10-13 years	59.1	51.3	45.0	57.0	55.2
Total 5-13 years	42.1	40.2	33.6	42.4	41.2
Number					
Age	Sex		Residence		Total
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	
5-9 years	336,835	369,908	76,137	630,605	706,742
10-13 years	546,320	464,231	119,463	891,088	1,010,551
Total 5-13 years	883,155	834,139	195,600	1,521,693	1,717,294
<i>Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.</i>					

Age. Involvement in child labour increases with age (Figure 4). This pattern is largely due to the fact that the productivity of children increases, as they grow older, meaning that the opportunity cost of keeping children in school as opposed to the workplace also goes up. This pattern notwithstanding, the numbers of very young children (5-9-year-old) in child labour are by no means negligible. In all, more than 700,000 children in this age group are already engaged in child labour. These very young children are especially vulnerable to workplace hazards and abuses, and they therefore constitute a particular policy priority.

Figure 4. Employment increases significantly across children aged 5-13 years while school attendance moves in the opposite direction



Notes: (a) As explained in chapter 2, the concepts of child labour and employment diverge after the age of 13 years. (b) Compulsory schooling in Malawi is 9 years in duration. The school system is comprised of a 3-year pre-primary cycle, a 6-year primary cycle, a 6-year secondary cycle (of which 3 compulsory) (Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics).

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Gender. Child labour does not appear to have an important gender dimension, as boys and girls work in employment in roughly equal proportions. But it is worth recalling in interpreting this result that it does not include involvement in household chores, a form of work where girls typically predominate. For this reason, our estimates may understate girls' involvement in child labour relative to that of boys.⁹

⁹ In keeping with national legislation, household chores is not included in the analysis. Nonetheless, for sake of completeness, we analyse involvement in household chores in Panel 3.

Panel 2. Gender discrimination and violence against women and girls

Malawi is making positive strides towards attaining gender equality and women's empowerment, but significant challenges remain.

The Constitution of Malawi upholds the principle of equal rights for men and women and prohibits any discrimination based on gender or marital status, including in the workplace. The Gender Equality Act (2013) re-affirms the principle on non-discrimination based on gender and calls for policies and procedures aimed at eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace; it also sets quotas for women's participation in public offices. Several policies and programs tackle gender discrimination, as for example the National Gender Programme by the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE) Programme, Girls Empowerment through Education and Health Activity (ASPIRE) and many others.

Also thanks to these efforts, women political participation increased from 6% to 22% between 1994 and 2009. Mrs Banda was the first female president (2012-2014) and her assignment also resulted in an increased number of women in top ranking positions such as the chief justice and chief secretary.

Notwithstanding these progresses, discrimination against women is pervasive, and women have significantly lower levels of literacy, education, and have limited access to land, resources and inheritance. Women are more likely than man to be in vulnerable employment (66.6% and 54.5%

respectively); HIV prevalence among young women (15-24 year-olds) stands at 4.5% in 2016, almost twice as for their male counterparts (2.2%).

Violence against women and girls is a real pandemic in Malawi, and domestic violence remains common: 40% of women in a 2012 survey reported having experienced sexual violence in their lifetime, 30% having experienced physical violence and 44% having experience psychosocial violence. Forty-six percent of girls marries before the age of 18 and 9 percent before the age of 15.

The 2013 Violence against Children and Young Women Survey (VACS) revealed that one out of five females aged 18-24 years experienced at least one incident of sexual abuse before turning 18 years of age. Moreover, In the 12 months preceding the survey, nearly one out of five females and one out of eight males aged 13 to 17 years experienced at least one incident of sexual abuse, with over three quarters of both females and males reporting multiple incidents. The average age of first incident of sexual abuse was 12-14 years.

The main legislations and policies addressing discrimination and violence are contained in the: Child Care, Protection and Justice Act (2010); Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act (2015); Trafficking in Persons Act (2015); National Plan of Action for Vulnerable Children (2015-2019); National Plan of Action to Combat Gender Based Violence (2016-2021); National Strategy to End Child Marriage (2018).

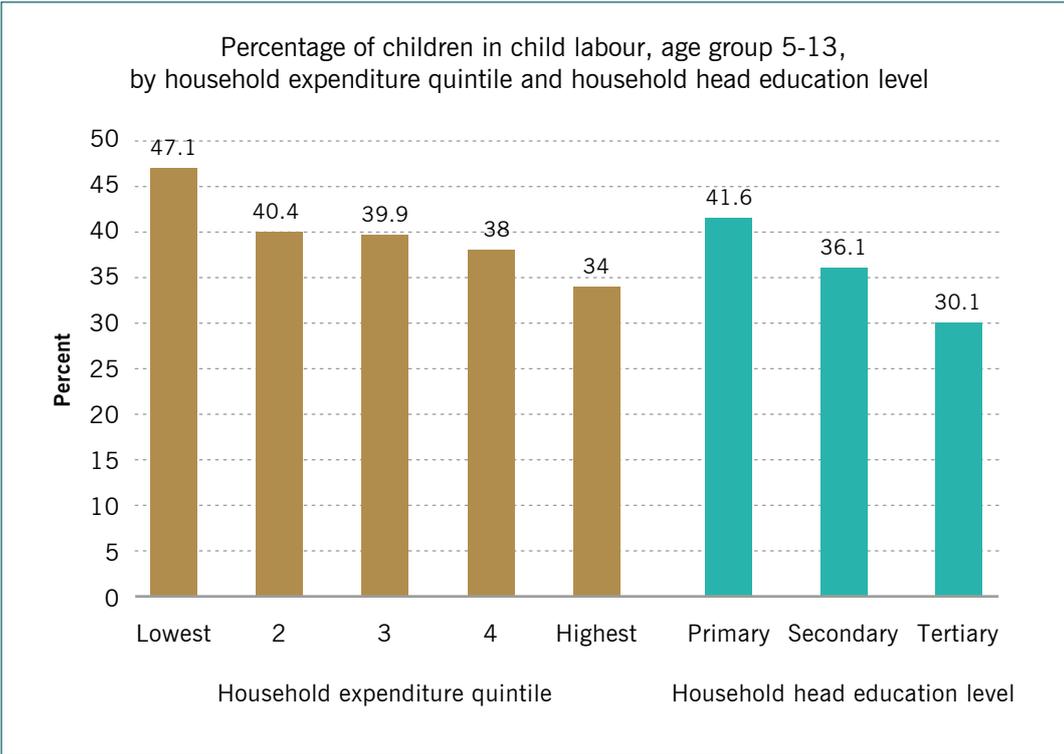
Source: UN Women Africa; The World Bank (World Development indicators), Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2015.

Residence and region. Child labour extends to both rural and urban locations but prevalence is higher in the former. Forty-two percent of all children in rural areas are in child labour compared to 34% of children living in cities and towns. There are also considerable differences in child labour across regions, pointing to the importance of area-specific approaches to addressing it. The Southern region stands out as having the highest level of child labour (46%), followed by the Northern (40%) and Central regions (36%) (Table 2).

Household poverty. Child labour is higher among children from poor households (Figure 5). Even among best-off households, more than one in three children are in child labour. In policy terms, this result suggests that a strategic response based on poverty reduction alone is unlikely to be effective in eliminating child labour.

Education level of the household head. The effect of the level of education of the household head in reducing child labour and increasing school attendance is important. A higher educational level of the household head makes it more likely that a child attends school and less likely to be engaged in child labour. These patterns are confirmed by the econometric results controlling for income and other variables, indicating it is not merely a disguised income effect (Annex Table A1 and Table A2).

Figure 5. Child labour is correlated with household poverty and household education levels



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

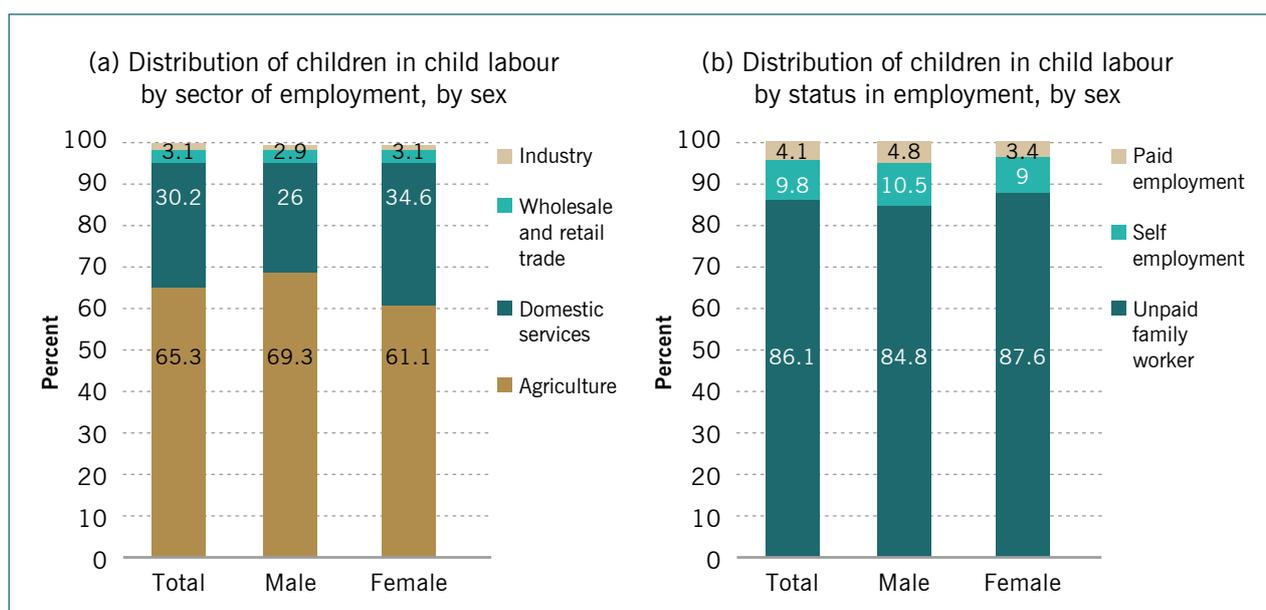
Access to basic services. Access to basic services including piped water in dry season and cooking fuel (as opposed to reliance on firewood) is also very relevant: children from households with these basic services are less likely to work and more likely to attend school (Annex Table A1 and Table A2). Basic services are important in large part because they influence the value of children’s time outside of the classroom. In contexts where access to basic services is limited children must often shoulder a greater burden for tasks such as carrying water and fetching fuel wood.

3.2 Characteristics of child labour

Information on the characteristics of children in child labour is necessary for understanding the nature of children’s work and children’s role in the labour force. A breakdown of children in child labour by industry and by status in employment is reported in order to provide a standardised picture of where children are concentrated and additional insights into how child labour is carried out. Average working hours is looked at as an indirect indicator of the possible health and educational consequences of child labour.

The largest share of children in child labour works in agriculture (65%) (Figure 6a). The predominance of agriculture is a particular concern in light of the fact that this sector is one of the three most dangerous in which to work at any age (along with construction and mining), in terms of work-related fatalities, non-fatal accidents and occupational diseases.¹⁰ Domestic services is the second-most important sector (accounting for 30% of children in child labour). This is another sector where children are particularly vulnerable to abuse, not least because domestic service takes place in isolation within private homes, hidden from public scrutiny. In terms of status in employment, children are found overwhelmingly in unpaid family work (86%) (Figure 6b).

Figure 6. Children in employment are concentrated in agricultural work within the family unit

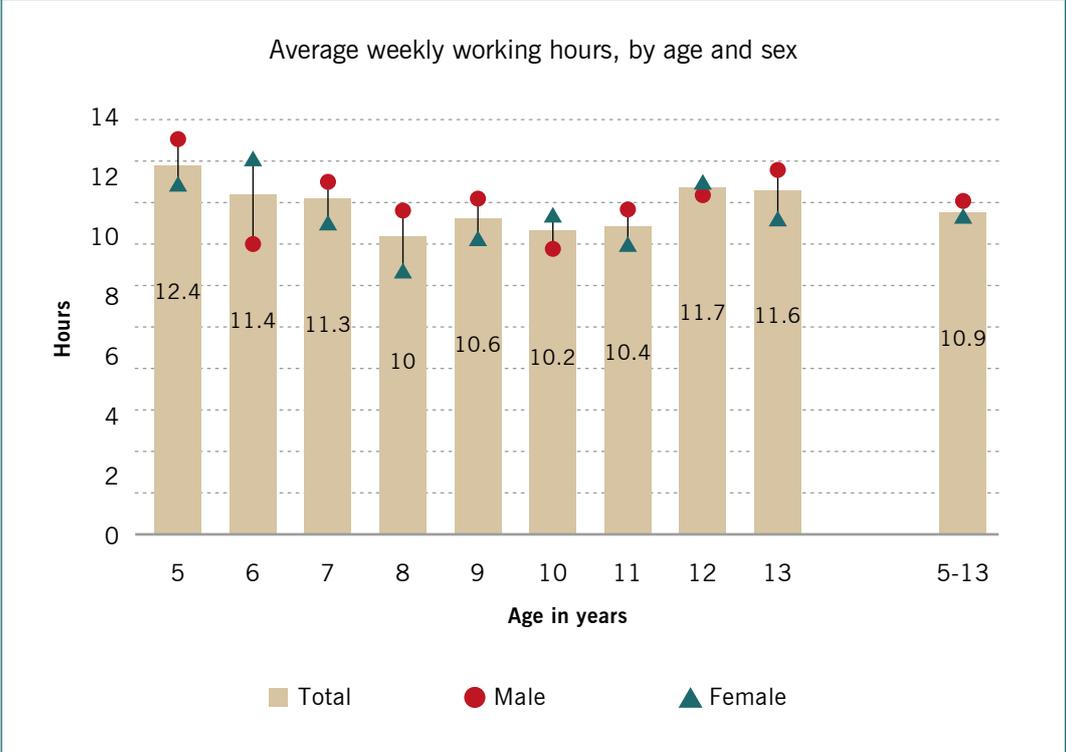


Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

10 For further details, please visit the “Child labour in agriculture” section of the ILO-IPEC website: www.ilo.org/ipcc/areas/Agriculture/lang-en/index.htm.

Gender considerations appear to play a role in terms of the nature of the work assigned to children. As reported in Figure 6a, girls are more likely to be tasked with work in the services sector, and less likely to be involved in farm work. Both girls and boys are overwhelmingly employed in family based work arrangements (Figure 6b).

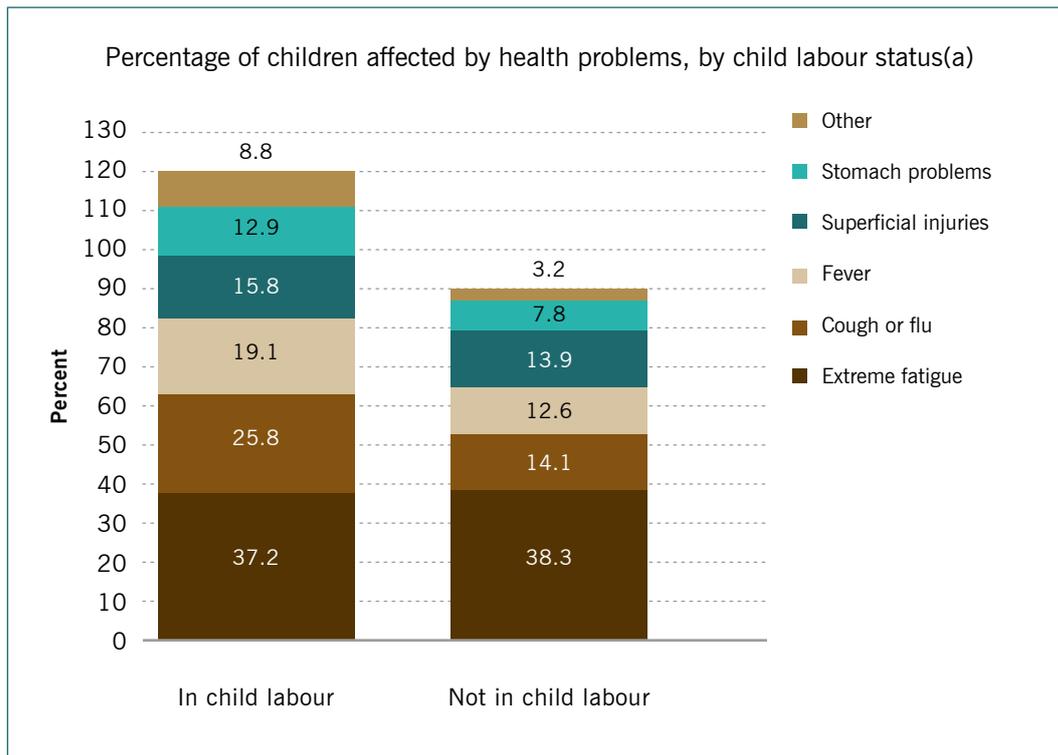
Figure 7. The time burden of child labour differs little across children aged 5-13 years



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Children aged 5-13 years in child labour log an average of 11 working hours per week (Figure 7). It is noteworthy that working hours do not rise appreciably with age; indeed, children as young as five and six years must shoulder roughly the same number of working hours as children aged 13 years. Not included in these totals are the additional hours that most children spend each week performing chores within their own homes.

Figure 8. Children in child labour are more likely to present health problems in the year



Note: (a) Percentages for each sub-group sum to more than 100 because some children are affected by more than one health problem.

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Children in child labour are more likely than their non-working peers to experience health problems (Figure 8). While these figures do not specify whether the health problems are related to work,¹¹ work is likely to be an important factor in explaining the large difference in prevalence of most health problems between children in child labour and other children.

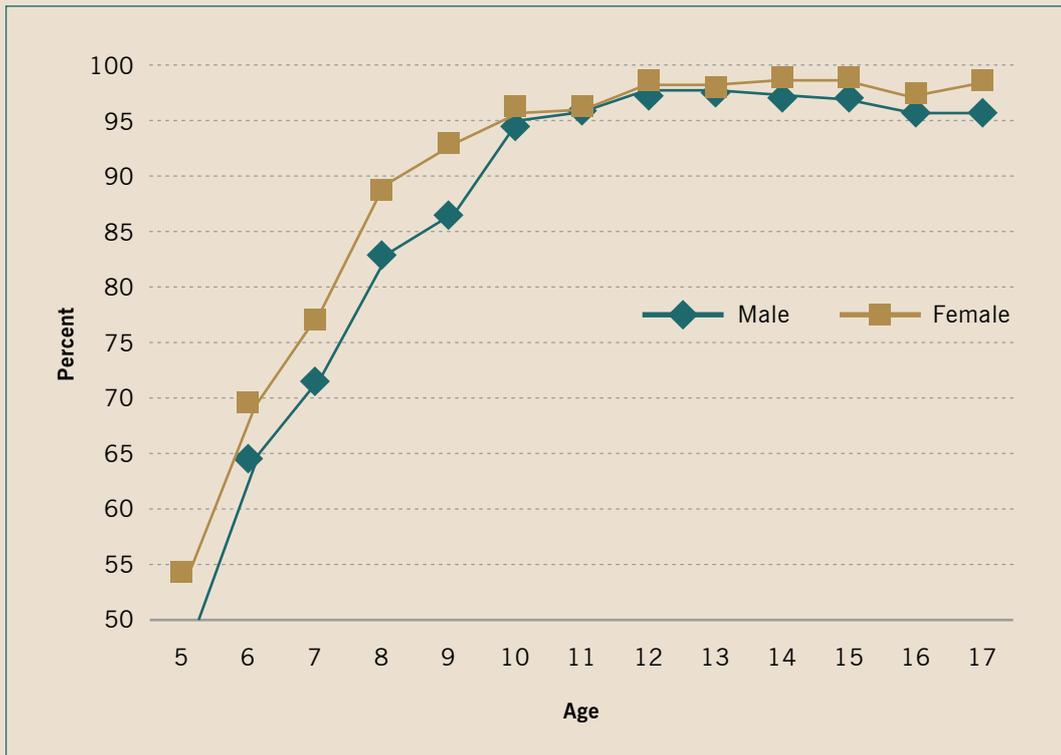
¹¹ Unfortunately, Malawi NCLS 2015 did not collect information on work-related health problems.

Panel 3. Child labour and household chores

Many boys and girls are involved in performing household chores (see Figure A), a category of work that is not included in the discussion on child labour. Involvement in household chores

increases sharply with age; females are more likely than males to perform household chores, but the difference by sex in this regard is not large.

Figure A. Percentage of children and adolescents involved in household chores



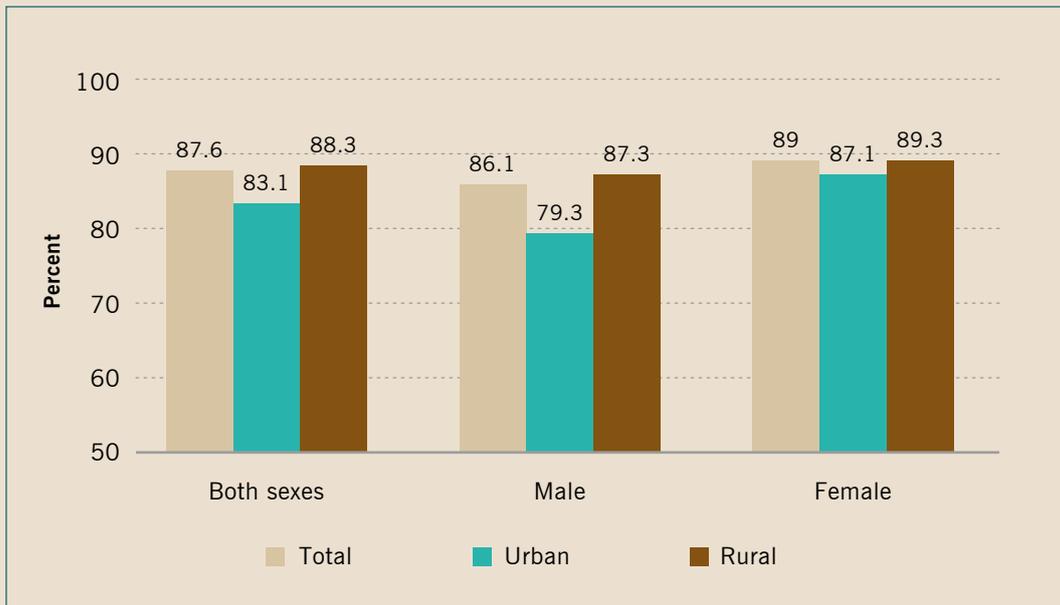
Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Figure B and Figure C show household chores involvement at extensive and intensive margin. Over 87% percent of children aged 5-17 are involved in household chores.

On average, children spend 10 hours on household chores each week, with no significant differences in gender or residential area.

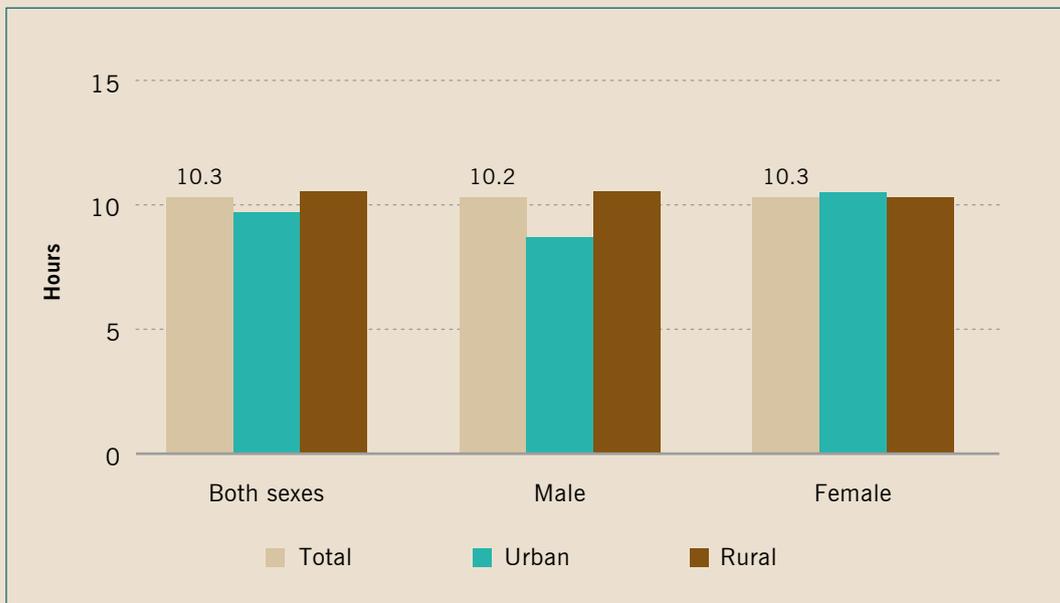
Panel 3. (cont.)

Figure B. Percentage of children and adolescents involved in household chores, by sex and residence



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Figure C. Weekly hours in household chores performed by children aged 5-17 years by sex and residence



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Adolescents aged 14-17 years

Adolescents aged 14-17 years are of interest to efforts relating to both child labour and youth employment. Even though this group is over the minimum working age, they are still children in legal terms and still considered “children in child labour” under ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182 if the work they do is hazardous. In other words, adolescents are legally permitted to work but only if this work is not hazardous in nature. Hazardous work in adolescence can create huge barriers – educational, physical, psychological, social – that impede young persons from transitioning successfully to adult life and securing decent work. A key goal for policy efforts in both the child labour and youth employment fields, therefore, should be to protect adolescents from hazardous jobs. In this chapter we address the extent of nature of child labour among children in the 14-17 years age group.

4.1 Involvement in child labour

Child labour among 14-17 year-olds is very high in Malawi. As reported in Table 4, almost 29% of all children in this age group, more than 400 thousand children, are engaged in child labour. Child labour in the 14-17 years age group accounts for about one-fifth of all child labour in Malawi. This statistic more than any other illustrates how the broad policy goals of eliminating child labour and improving youth employment outcomes intersect for the 14-17 years age group. The fact that adolescents constitute an important component of the overall child labour population means that it will not be possible to achieve child labour elimination without addressing the employment outcomes of this group.

Table 4. Children aged 14-17 years in child labour^(a)

Percentage					
Age	Sex		Residence		Total
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	
14 years	25.3	27.9	26.9	26.6	26.7
15 years	29.1	25.4	14.8	29.3	27.2
16 years	35.1	25.2	27.4	30.9	30.2
17 years	35.4	28	18.2	34.9	31.7
Total 14-17 years	30.7	26.5	21.6	29.9	28.6
Number					
Age	Sex		Residence		Total
	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	
14 years	45,363	54,662	13,043	86,981	100,024
15 years	62,828	58,054	9,484	111,398	120,882
16 years	58,374	40,797	16,448	82,723	99,171
17 years	45,010	36,249	9,000	72,259	81,259
Total 14-17 years	211,575	189,762	47,975	353,362	401,337

Note: (a) Child labour constitutes (1) children working over 40 hours per week; (2) children working during the evening or night; (3) and children exposed to hazardous forms of work irrespective of working hours.

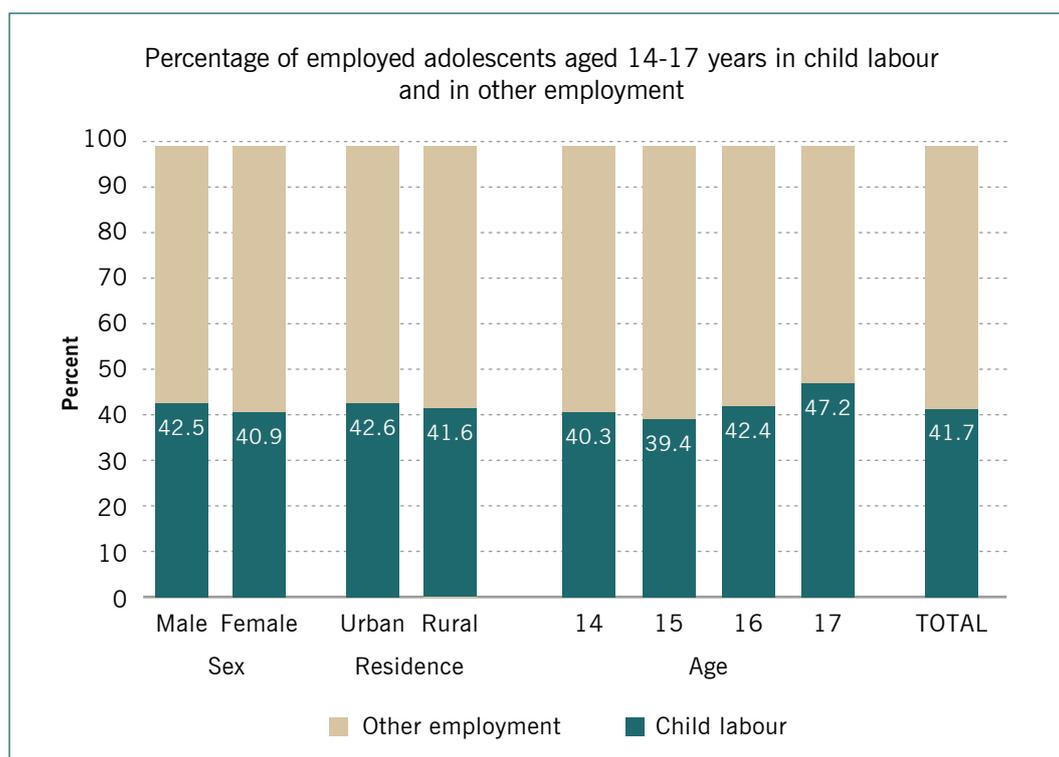
Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Differences in involvement in child labour by sex and residence are also present for the 14-17 years age group. Child labour among adolescents is somewhat higher for males – 31% of male 14-17 year-olds are in child labour against 26% of same-aged females. As with younger children, child labour among 14-17 year-olds is also more common in rural areas. The share of rural children in this age group in child labour (30%) is higher than that of urban children (22%); in absolute terms, rural children in child labour outnumber their urban counterparts by over 300,000 (Table 4).¹²

Another way of viewing the issue of child labour for the 14-17 years age group is its importance relative to overall employment for this age group. In other words, the share of employed adolescents in this age group that are in child labour. In Malawi, this share is relatively high – almost 42% of those with jobs are in child labour (Figure 9). The high incidence of hazardous work among employed 14-17 year-olds is one indication of the size of the “decent work deficit” facing this group.

12 In Malawi, the majority of the population lives in rural context, representing the 85 percent of the total.

Figure 9. Child labour constitutes a substantial share of total employment among adolescents aged 14-17 years



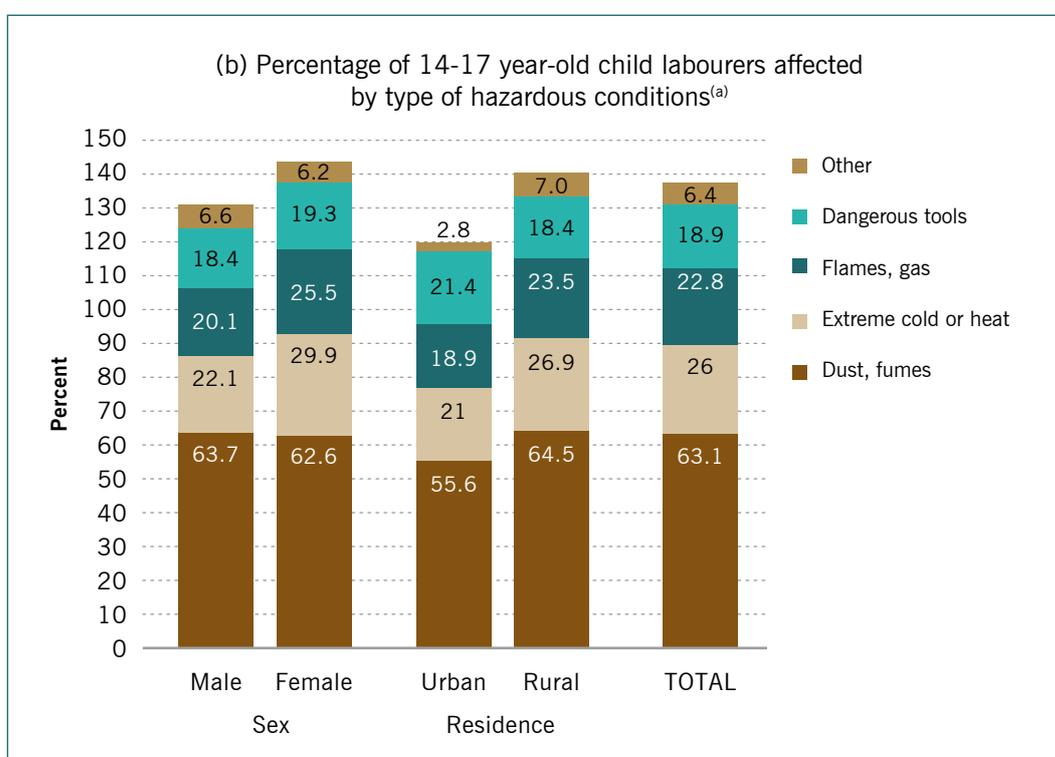
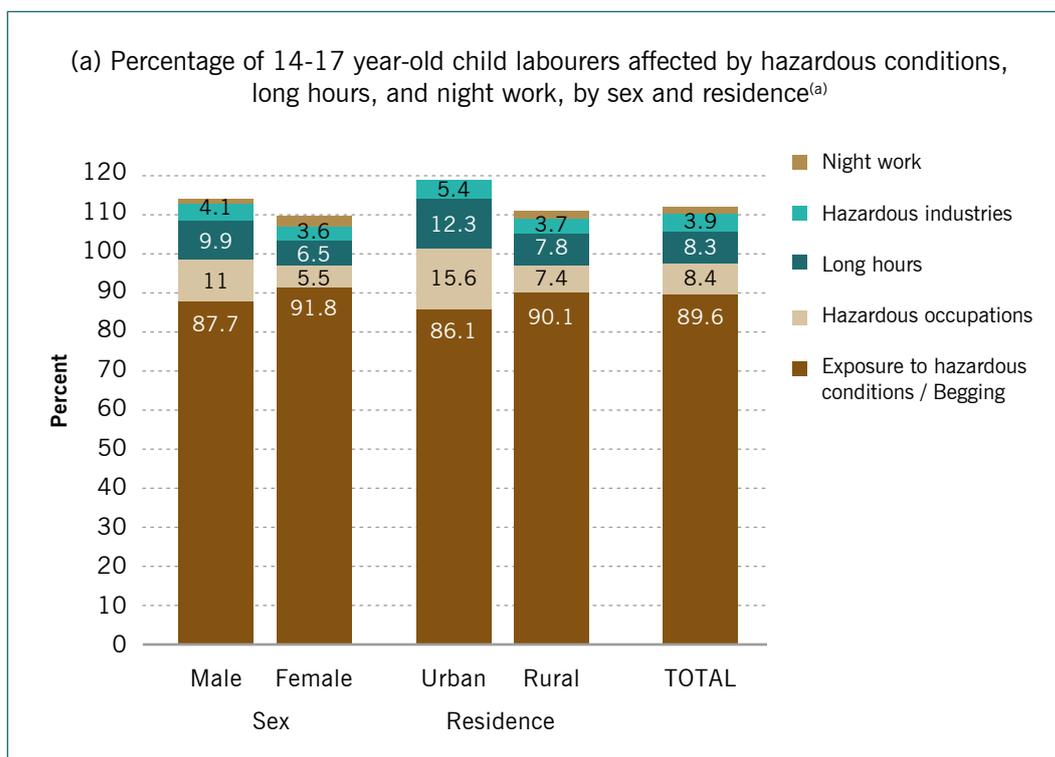
Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

4.2 Characteristics of child labour

Most employed adolescents are in a situation of child labour because of their exposure to hazardous conditions.¹³ As reported in Figure 10a, hazardous conditions are experienced by 90% of all those in child labour, hazardous occupations by 8.4% and the long hours by 8.3%. Exposure to dust and fumes is by far the most common hazard, experienced by nearly two-thirds (63%) of all those in child labour. Other common hazards include exposure to extreme heat and cold, experienced by 26% of adolescents in child labour, exposure to flames or fumes, affecting 23% of them, and work with dangerous tools, affecting 19% (Figure 10b).

¹³ Recall from Chapter 2 that we considered a number of criteria in estimating hazardous work – hazardous conditions (being exposed to hazardous working environment, carrying heavy loads, operating any dangerous machinery/equipment at work or begging), hazardous occupations or industries, night work and long hours.

Figure 10. Hazardous conditions are the most important criteria for child labour in children aged 14-17 years

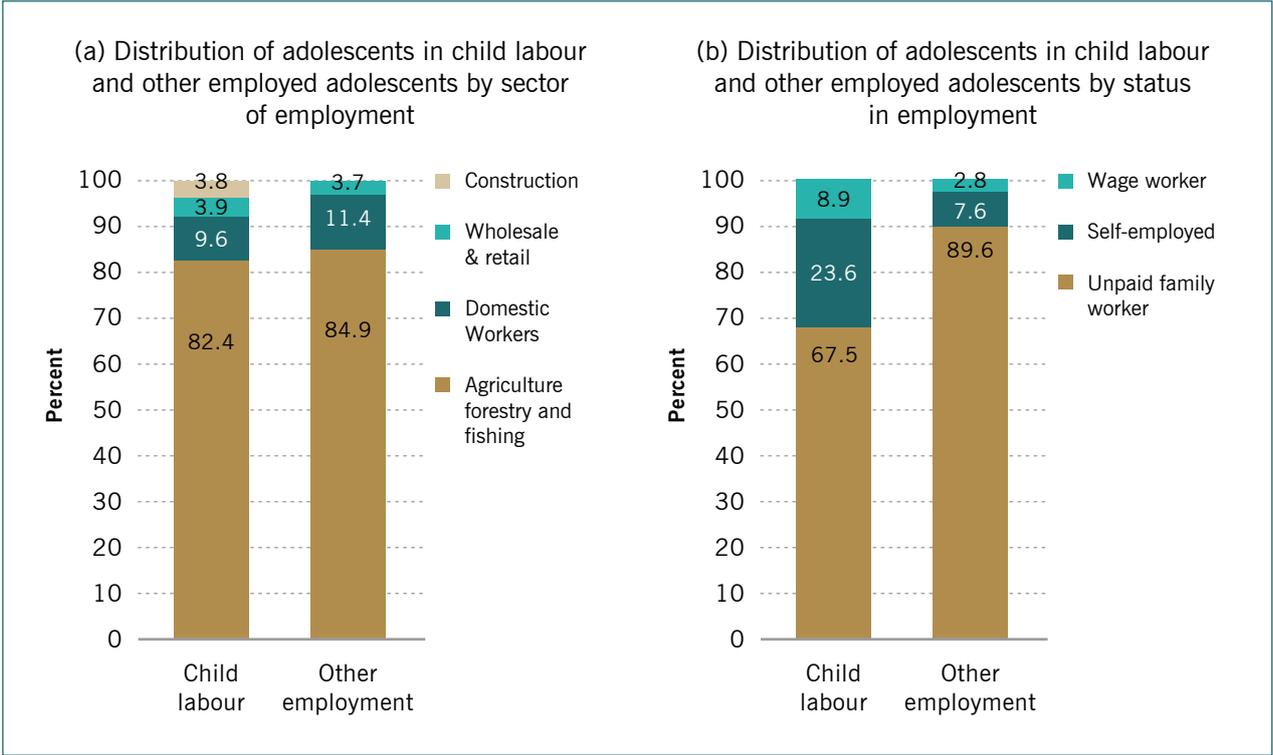


Note: (a) Percentages for each sub-group sum to more than 100 because some children in child labour meet more than one of the child labour criteria.

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

More than four fifth (85%) of adolescents in child labour are found in the agriculture sector (Figure 11a). A distant second in importance is domestic services, accounting for ten percent of adolescent child labour. It is interesting to note that this sectoral composition differs only slightly from that of employment not constituting child labour for the 14-17 years age group. Figure 11b reports the distribution of children in child labour and other employed adolescents by status in employment. Differences between adolescents in child labour and other employed adolescents are much larger in this regard. Those in child labour are much less likely to be in family work, and much more likely to be in self-employment and wage employment, than other adolescents with jobs.

Figure 11. Children in child labour are concentrated in agricultural work within the family unit



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

CHAPTER 5

Children's employment, child labour and education

The degree to which work interferes with children's schooling is one of the most important determinants of the long-term impact of early work experience. Reduced educational opportunities constitute the main link between child labour, on the one hand, and poor employment outcomes for youth, on the other. Clearly, if the exigencies of work mean that children are denied schooling altogether or are less able to perform in the classroom, then these children will not acquire the education and life skills necessary for successfully transitioning to adult life and decent work. This section looks at evidence of the impact of children's work on their education. Links between child labour, human capital levels and youth employment outcomes in Malawi are explored in more detail in Chapter 6 of this report.

One way of viewing the interaction between children's employment and schooling is by decomposing the child population into four non-overlapping activity groups – children in child labour only, children attending school only, children combining school and child labour and children in neither. This breakdown shows that 52% of children aged 5-13 years attend school only, while 38% combine child labour and school. Only three percent of children aged 5-13 years are exclusively in child labour, while the remaining seven percent are neither studying nor in child labour (although they are likely to be engaged in other productive activities, such as household chores) (Table 5). Rural children face a double disadvantage in terms of schooling: a smaller proportion attends school (89% versus 93%), and those that do attend school are more likely to have to shoulder the burden of work at the same time.

Table 5. Activity status of children aged 5-13 years by sex and residence

Characteristics		Percentage						
		Activity				(a)&(c) Total in employment	(b)&(c) Total in school	(a)&(d) Total out- of-school
(a) Only in employment	(b) In school exclusively	(c) In employment and school	(d) Neither in employment nor in school					
Sex	Male	3.2	50.5	38.9	7.4	42.1	89.4	10.6
	Female	3.1	53.4	37.1	6.4	40.2	90.5	9.5
Residence	Urban	2.2	61.7	31.4	4.7	33.6	93.1	6.9
	Rural	3.4	50.3	39.1	7.2	42.4	89.4	10.6
TOTAL		3.2	51.9	38	6.9	41.2	89.9	10.1
Characteristics		Number						
		(a) Only in employment	(b) In school exclusively	(c) In employment and school	(d) Neither in employment nor in school	(a)&(c) Total in employment	(b)&(c) Total in school	(a)&(d) Total out- of-school
Sex	Male	67,950	1,058,889	815,204	155,092	883,155	1,874,093	223,043
	Female	65,300	1,106,602	768,839	132,295	834,139	1,875,441	197,595
Residence	Urban	12,793	359,588	182,808	27,387	195,600	542,395	40,180
	Rural	120,457	1,805,903	1,401,236	260,000	1,521,693	3,207,139	380,458
TOTAL		133,250	2,165,490	1,584,044	287,387	1,717,294	3,749,534	420,637

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

The interaction between work and school differs considerably for adolescents in the 14-17 years age group: a much smaller percentage (27%) only studies and a much higher percentage (14%) is in employment exclusively; 54% combine both activities and nine percent neither study nor work (Table 6). These differences between the 5-13 years and 14-17 years age cohorts are not surprising, as the age of 14 years corresponds with the time that adolescents begin their transition from school to working life. The difference in activity status between rural and urban children is also noteworthy for the 14-17 years age group. Again, rural children are less likely to be in school and, among those that are in school, more likely to have to work at the same time.

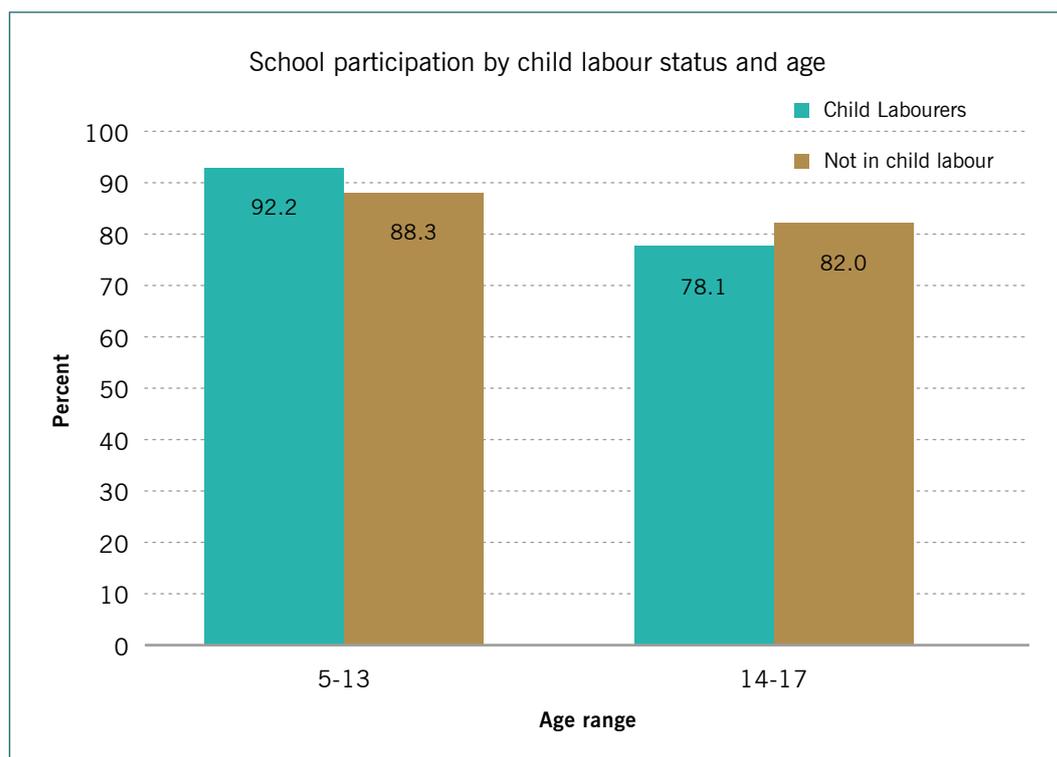
Table 6. Activity status of adolescents aged 14-17 years by sex and residence

		Percentage						
		Activity						
Characteristics		(a)	b)	(c)	d)	(a)&(c)	(b)&(c)	(a)&(d)
		Only in employment	In school exclusively	In employment and school	Neither in employment nor in school	Total in employment	Total in school	Total out-of-school
Sex	Male	14.3	24.3	58	3.5	72.2	82.3	17.7
	Female	14.3	29	50.6	6.2	64.9	79.6	20.4
Residence	Urban	13.3	39.8	37.5	9.5	50.8	77.3	22.7
	Rural	14.4	24.2	57.4	4	71.8	81.6	18.4
TOTAL		14.3	26.7	54.2	4.8	68.5	80.9	19.1
		Number						
Sex	Male	98,136	167,450	399,192	23,755	497,328	566,642	121,891
	Female	101,998	207,214	361,959	44,129	463,958	569,173	146,127
Residence	Urban	29,436	88,200	83,188	21,004	112,624	171,389	50,441
	Rural	170,699	286,464	677,963	46,880	848,662	964,427	217,578
TOTAL		200,135	374,664	761,152	67,884	961,286	1,135,816	268,019

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Children in child labour do not appear disadvantaged in terms of their ability to attend school. Indeed, for the 5-13years old attendance is actually higher among children in child labour, while the 14-17 years old in child labour show lower attendance rate than their peers not in child labour. The Malawi NCLS2015 survey does not provide information concerning learning achievement. A growing body of evidence from elsewhere, however, suggests that the time and energy required for child labour can also have an important negative impact on the ability of children to study and benefit fully from their time in the classroom.

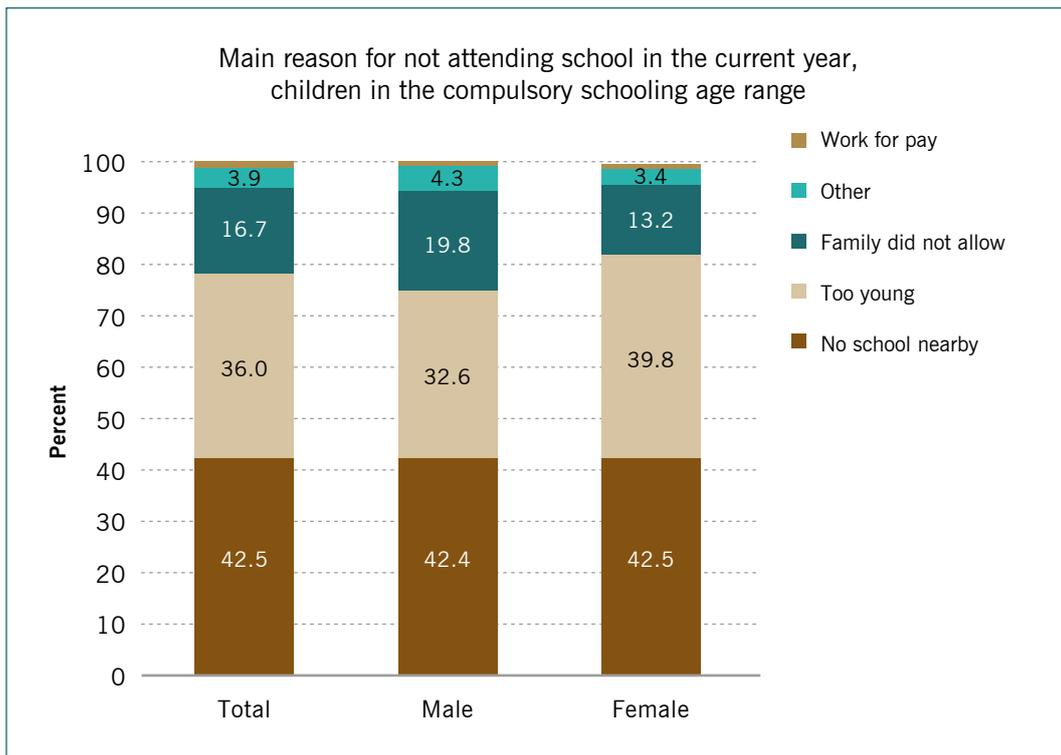
Figure 12. Children in child labour do not appear disadvantaged in terms of their ability to attend school



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Why are children outside of the school system? Feedback from children themselves in the compulsory schooling age group points to the importance of both supply- and demand-side factors (Figure 13). Forty-two percent of children report being out of school because of the absence of a nearby school, pointing to the on-going challenge of extending the coverage of school facilities. Over one-third of all children, and 39% of girls, state that they are too young, despite the fact that they fall in the compulsory schooling age group, indicating the late entrance also remains a concern. About 17% of children are not in school because their family does not allow them to attend, highlighting the fact that negative attitudes towards education still persist in some households. Finally, only about four percent of children are not in school because of the need to work.

Figure 13. Push and pull factors are both important in explaining out of school children



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Young persons aged 15-35 years

This chapter focuses on the labour market situation of Malawian young persons, a group defined for the purposes of this report as people falling into the 15-35 years age group. The chapter first provides an overview of the activity status of Malawi's young persons and then looks in more detail at job access and job quality and at how human capital levels influence both. The definitions of the key labour market indicators used in this chapter are presented in Panel 4.

Panel 4. Youth employment definitions

Labour force participation: The labour force participation rate is defined as the labour force expressed as a percentage of the working age population. The labour force is in turn the sum of the number of persons employed and the number of persons unemployed.

Employment: A person is considered employed if he or she worked during the week prior to the survey for at least one hour for pay (or without pay), profit, in kind, or family business. A person is also considered to be in employment if he or she was not working but had a job to go back to.

Unemployment: A person is considered unemployed if he or she did not work during the week prior to the survey but is actively seeking work and is available for work.

Underemployment: A person is considered underemployed if he or she is working less than 35 hours. The underemployment rate is the underemployed expressed as a percentage of the total employed population.

Inactive: A person is considered inactive if he or she is not in the labour force. The inactivity rate and labour force participation rate sum to 100.

NEET: A person is categorized as NEET if he or she is not in education, employment or training. NEET is therefore a measure that reflects both youth who are inactive and out of education as well as youth who are unemployed.

6.1 Youth labour force status: The overall picture

Ninety-one percent of Malawi's youth is in the labour force and 28% is continuing with their education (Table 7). Only a small share of youth – 3% – is absent from both education and the labour force. Among those in the labour force, about three percent are unemployed. “NEET” youth, who include both unemployed youth and youth absent from education and the labour force, make up 3.5% of the youth population. Young people who are neither attaining marketable skills in school nor in the labor force, are particularly at risk of both labour market and social exclusion.¹⁴ At a macro-economic level, they constitute unutilized productive capacity and a constraint to growth. Other risks borne by unemployed youth are also well documented: unemployment can permanently impair their productive potential and therefore negatively influence lifetime patterns of employment, pay and job tenure.¹⁵ These headline labour force statistics for the 15-35 years age group mask large variations by residence and sex, as also reported in Table 7 and discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

The definition of youth in Malawi, however, covers a wider age group (i.e., 15-35 years) and the headline labour force statistics for Malawi youth should be interpreted with this mind. The youth labour force picture changes somewhat if we restrict our focus to the narrower 15-24 years. As reported in Table 7, labour force participation is lower for this cohort (87%) while education participation is much higher (49%). Rates of NEET (6%) and unemployment (4%) are also higher among youth in the 15-24 years age cohort.

Table 7. Aggregate labour market indicators in young people aged 15-35 years by residence, sex, and age group

Population category		Percentage of population					Percentage of active population	
		Labour force participation	Education participation	Inactive and out of school	NEET ^(a)	Employment ratio	Unemployment rate	
Residence	Urban	86.5	28.3	3.7	6.5	83.7	5.8	
	Rural	92.3	28.7	1.8	2.8	91.3	2.1	
Sex	Male	91.4	33.9	1.8	2.9	90.3	2.6	
	Rural	91.1	23.9	2.4	4.0	89.5	2.9	
Age group	15-19 years	78.6	68.6	3.7	5.2	77.1	5.0	
	20-24 years	96.1	19.5	1.6	3.6	94.1	2.6	
	15-24 years	87.3	49.3	2.6	6.0	83.8	4.0	
	24-29 years	97.2	11.7	1.5	3.2	95.5	2.4	
	30-35 years	98.9	0.9	0.8	1.2	98.4	0.7	
Region	North	90.4	31.0	1.7	3.3	88.9	3.5	
	Center	91.6	25.7	2.3	4.1	89.7	3.4	
	South	91.2	31.1	2.0	2.8	90.4	1.7	
Total		91.2	28.6	2.1	3.5	89.9	2.8	

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

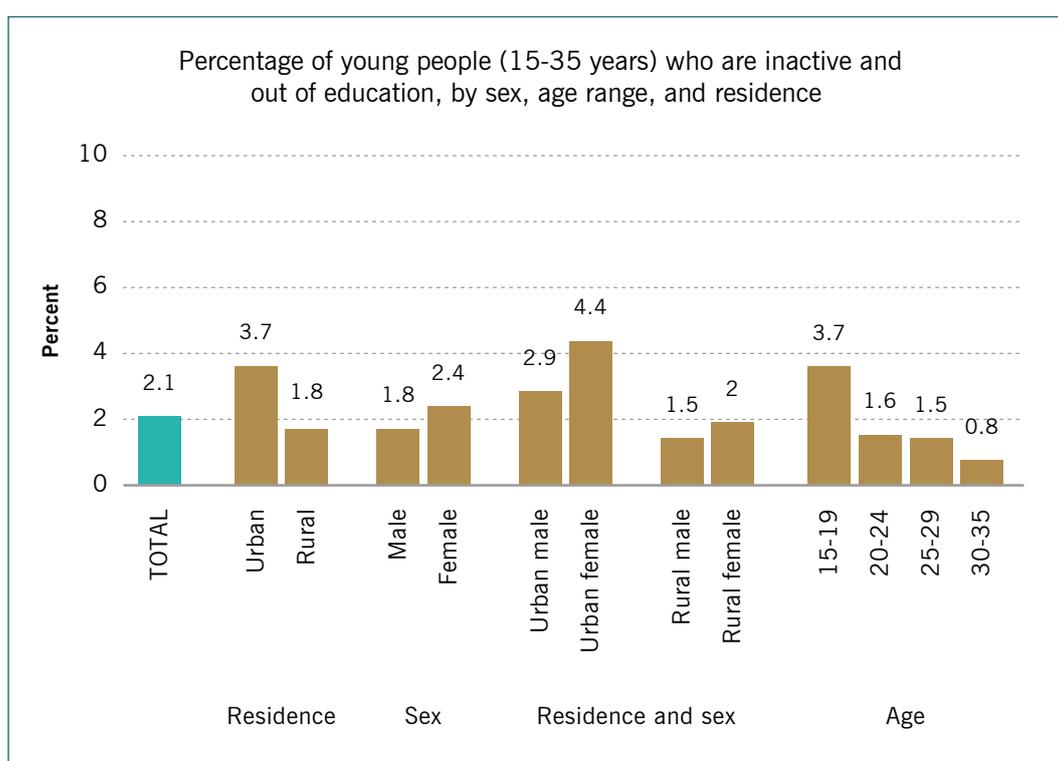
14 ILO (2013). *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013*. International Labour Organization (ILO), 2013, Geneva.

15 M.Ranzani, F.C. Rosati (2012).. *The NEET trap: a dynamic analysis for Mexico*. Background paper for the WDR 2013.

6.2 Youth access to jobs

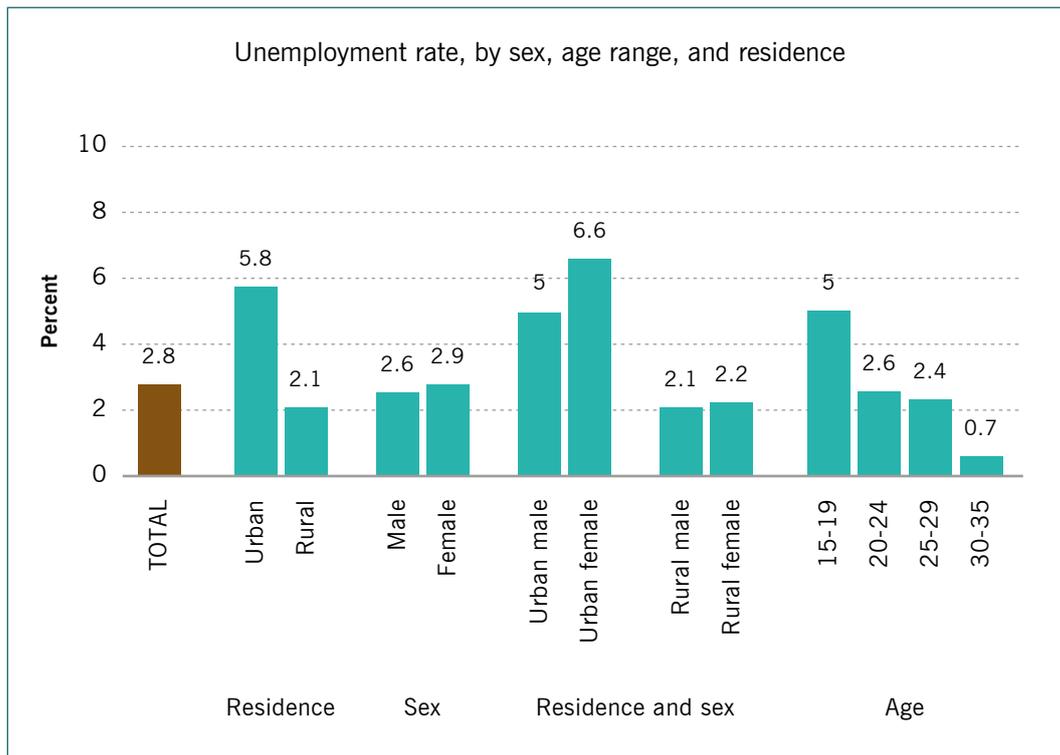
This section focuses on youth labour market challenges as reflected by lack of access to jobs. Two main groups of young people are looked at in this context: youth not in education and not in the labour force; and unemployed youth. Only a relatively small share of Malawian young people fall into these two groups – two percent of all 15-35 year-olds are out of education and out of the labour force (Figure 14) while the unemployment rate for this age group stands at three percent (Figure 15). For both these measures, percentages are highest for urban youth, those at the lower end of the 15-35 years age group and for females. The share of NEET youth accounts for 3.5% of all people in the 15-35 years age group (Figure 16). Again, NEET prevalence is also highest for urban youth, female youth and those at the lower end of the age group.

Figure 14. Only a small share of Malawian youth are not in education or in the labour force



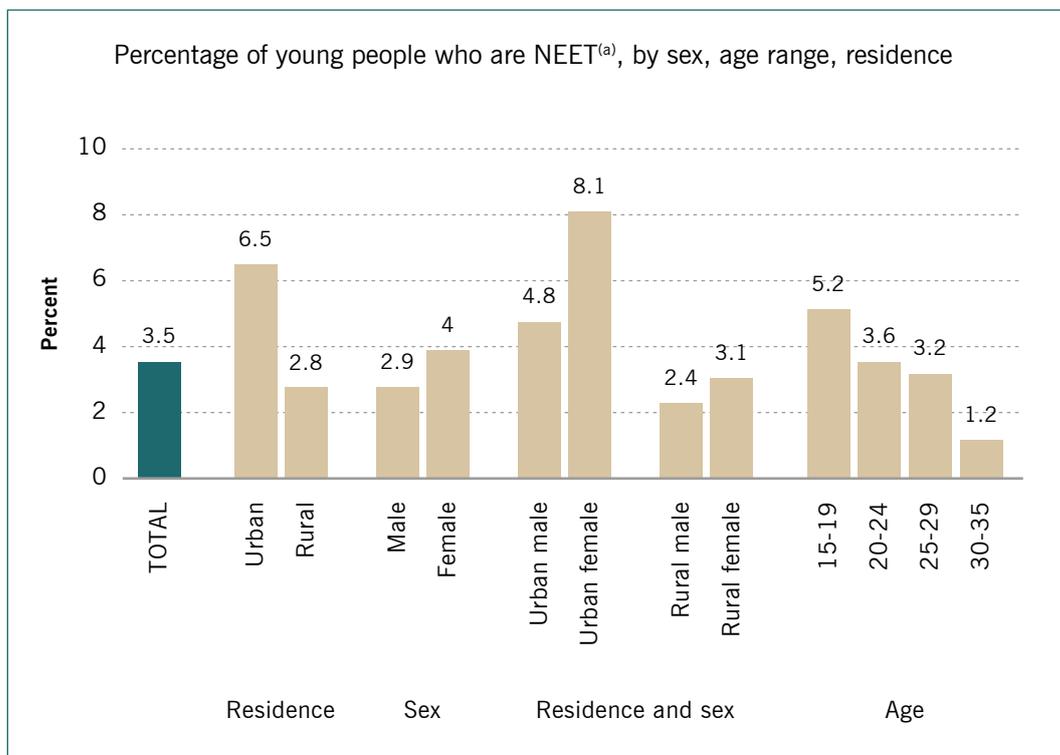
Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Figure 15. Unemployment affects only about three percent of young people in the labour force



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Figure 16. Less than four percent of all young people fall into the NEET category



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

These figures, taken together, suggest that job access in a strict sense is not the primary challenge facing Malawian young people. But obtaining a job is of course an insufficient condition for successful labour market outcomes. This is because in countries such as Malawi where poverty is widespread, many youths simply cannot afford to remain without work altogether and must accept jobs regardless of the conditions and pay associated with them. Policy concern is not limited to whether young people are working, but also extends to whether jobs constitute decent work, offer a path for advancement and route out of poverty. Securing decent work rather than work *per se*, is the desired goal of the transition to working life, and we need to assess youth jobs against basic decent work criteria for a more complete picture of labour market success. Youth job characteristics and decent work are taken up in the next section.

6.3 Youth job characteristics

Effectively measuring decent work is critical to assessing the employment outcomes of young persons. Yet, the multifaceted nature of the decent work concept – it combines access to full and productive employment with rights at work, social protection and the promotion of social dialogue – means that measurement is a complex task. This section presents the few available indicators of job characteristics in order to provide a partial picture of the extent to which youth jobs constitute decent work.

Panel 5. ILO and Decent Work

Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

The Decent Work concept was formulated by the ILO's constituents – governments and employers and workers – as a means to identify the Organization's major priorities. It is based on the understanding that work is a source of personal dignity, family stability, peace in the community, democracies that deliver for people, and economic growth that expands opportunities for productive jobs and enterprise development.

Promoting Decent Work for All

The ILO has developed a Decent Work Agenda for the community of work. It provides support through integrated Decent Work Country Programmes developed in coordination with its constituents. Putting the Decent Work Agenda into practice is achieved through the implementation of the ILO's four strategic objectives, with gender equality as a crosscutting objective:

Creating jobs – an economy that generates opportunities for investment, entrepreneurship, skills development, job creation and sustainable livelihoods.

Guaranteeing rights at work – to obtain recognition and respect for the rights of workers. All workers, and in particular disadvantaged or

Panel 5. (cont.)

poor workers, need representation, participation, and laws that work for their interests.

Extending social protection – to promote both inclusion and productivity by ensuring that women and men enjoy working conditions that are safe, allow adequate free time and rest, take into account family and social values, provide for adequate compensation in case of lost or reduced income and permit access to adequate healthcare.

Promoting social dialogue – Involving strong and independent workers' and employers' organizations is central to increasing productivity, avoiding disputes at work, and building cohesive societies.

Making Decent Work a global goal and a national reality

The overall goal of Decent Work is to effect positive change in people's lives at the national and local levels. The ILO provides support through integrated Decent Work Country Programmes developed in coordination with

ILO constituents. They define the priorities and the targets within national development frameworks and aim to tackle major Decent Work deficits through efficient programmes that embrace each of the strategic objectives.

The ILO operates with other partners within and beyond the UN family to provide in-depth expertise and key policy instruments for the design and implementation of these programmes. It also provides support for building the institutions needed to carry them forward and for measuring progress. The balance within these programmes differs from country to country, reflecting their needs, resources and priorities.

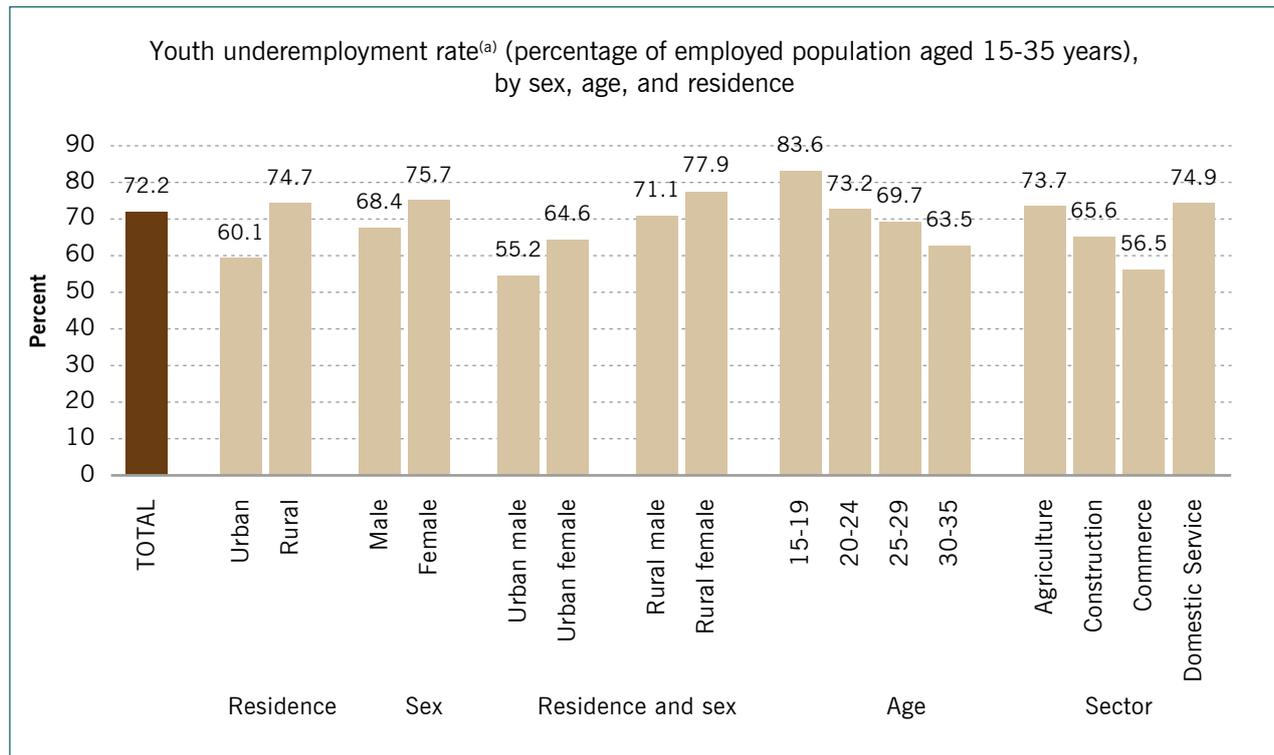
Progress also requires action at the global level. The Decent Work agenda offers a basis for a more just and sustainable framework for global development. The ILO works to develop "decent work"-oriented approaches to economic and social policy in partnership with the principal institutions and actors of the multilateral system and the global economy.

Source: ILO (<http://ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/decent-work-agenda/lang--en/index.htm>).

Rates of underemployment,¹⁶ sometimes referred to as "hidden unemployment", are extremely high among young persons in Malawi. As reported in Figure 17, underemployment affects over three-fourths (76%) of all Malawian youth with jobs. The underemployment rate rises to 84% for youth in the 15-19 years age group, suggesting that part-time work is common entry point in the labour market for youth. Underemployment is much higher in rural areas (75%) compared to urban ones (60%). The youth underemployment rate in the agriculture sector, where much of rural youth employment is concentrated, stands at 74%.

¹⁶ Time-related underemployment, as the only component of underemployment to date that has been agreed on and properly defined within the international community of labour statisticians, is the best available proxy of the underutilized labour force. The time-related-underemployed as share of total employment is measured as those who work less than 35 hours per week. The underemployment rate is defined here as the number of employed persons in situations of underemployment expressed as a percentage of total persons in employment.

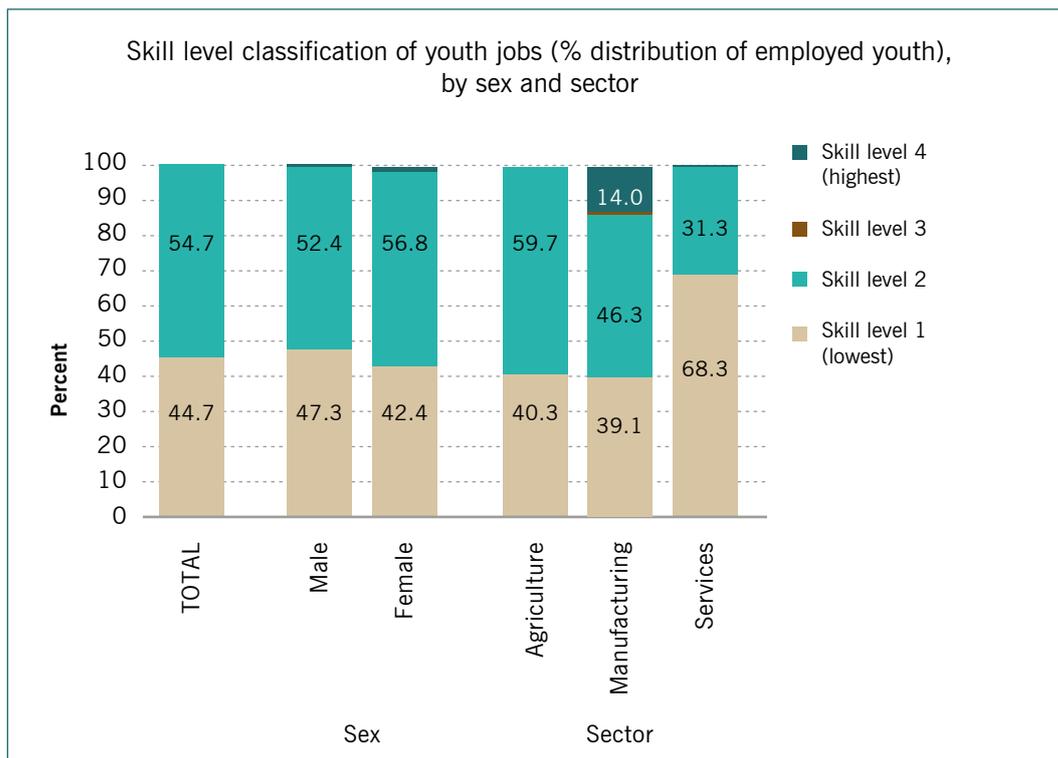
Figure 17. Underemployment is also an issue for employed youth, especially in rural areas and in some provinces



Note: (a) The time-related underemployment rate is defined as the number of employed persons in situations of underemployment expressed as a percentage of total persons in employment. A person is considered in a situation of underemployment if he/she works less than 35 hours a week.
Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Youth are concentrated overwhelmingly in low-skill jobs, another indicator of their decent work deficit. Figure 18 reports the decomposition of youth jobs by skills requirements based on the four standardised International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) skills. It shows that 45% of youth jobs falls in the lowest skills category, requiring only the performance of simple and routine physical or manual tasks, and that 55% of total jobs fall in the second-lowest skill category, requiring the performance of tasks such as operating machinery and electronic equipment. Only 0.6% of all youth jobs, by contrast, require higher level 3 or 4 skills. Manufacturing is the only sector with an appreciable share higher skill jobs; 13% of all jobs held by youth in this sector fall into the two highest skills categories. As discussed further in the next sections, a large share (43%) of even the most educated group of youth with tertiary education manages to only secure low-skill jobs (in the lowest two skills categories).

Figure 18. Youth are concentrated in low skill jobs

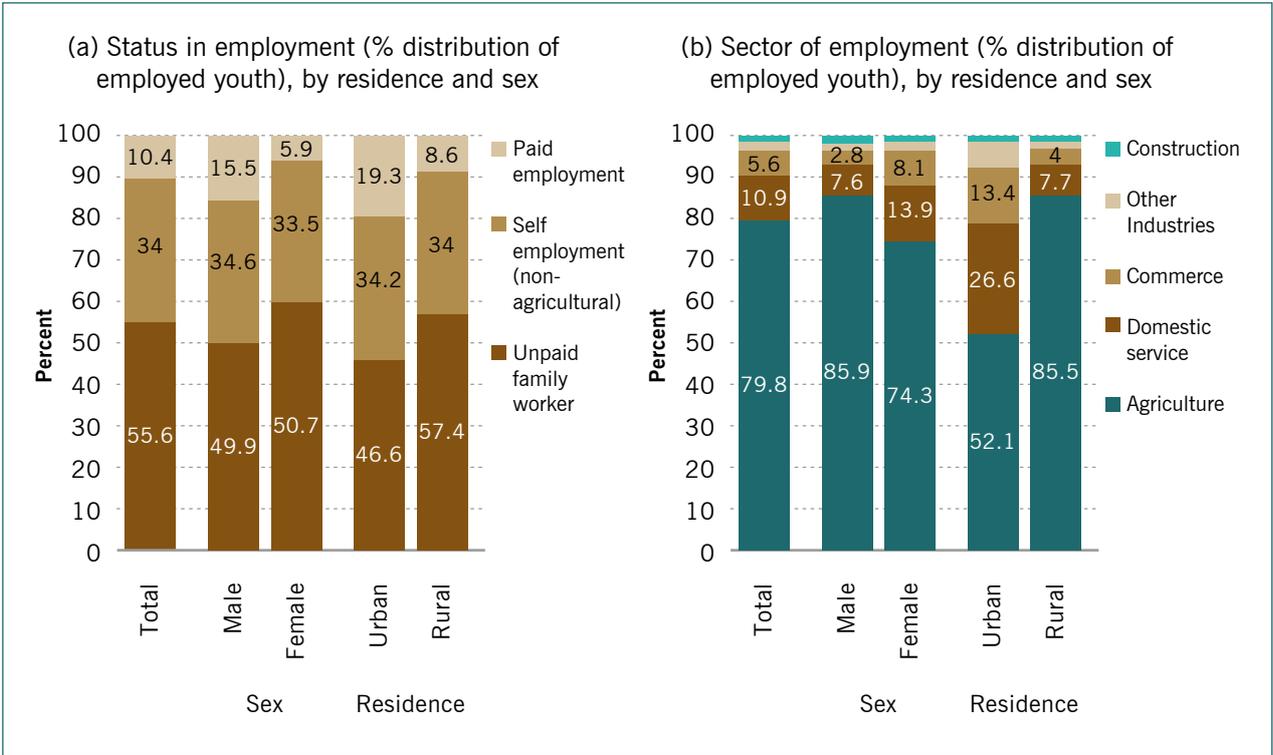


Notes: Definitions of each of the four ISCO skill levels are as follows: Skill Level 1. Occupations at Skill Level 1 typically require the performance of simple and routine physical or manual tasks. They may require the use of hand held tools, such as shovels, or of simple electrical equipment, such as vacuum cleaners. They involve tasks such as cleaning; digging; lifting and carrying materials by hand; sorting, storing or assembling goods by hand (sometimes in the context of mechanised operations); operating non-motorised vehicles; and picking fruit and vegetables. Many occupations at Skill Level 1 may require physical strength and/or endurance. For some jobs basic skills in literacy and numeracy may be required. If required these skills would not be a major part of the job; Skill Level 2. Occupations at Skill Level 2 typically involve the performance of tasks such as operating machinery and electronic equipment; driving vehicles; maintenance and repair of electrical and mechanical equipment; and manipulation, ordering and storage of information. For almost all occupations at Skill Level 2 the ability to read information such as safety instructions, to make written records of work completed, and to accurately perform simple arithmetical calculations is essential. Many occupations at this skill level require relatively advanced literacy and numeracy skills and good interpersonal communication skills. In some occupations, these skills are required for a major part of the work. Many occupations at this skill level require a high level of manual dexterity. Skill Level 3. Occupations at Skill Level 3 typically involve the performance of complex technical and practical tasks that require an extensive body of factual, technical and procedural knowledge in a specialised field. Occupations at this skill level generally require a high level of literacy and numeracy and well developed interpersonal communication skills. These skills may include the ability to understand complex written material, prepare factual reports and communicate with people who are distressed. Skill Level 4. Occupations at Skill Level 4 typically involve the performance of tasks that require complex problem solving and decision-making based on an extensive body of theoretical and factual knowledge in a specialised field. The tasks performed typically include analysis and research to extend the body of human knowledge in a particular field, diagnosis and treatment of disease, imparting knowledge to others, design of structures or machinery and of processes for construction and production. Occupations at this skill level generally require extended levels of literacy and numeracy, sometimes at a very high level, and excellent interpersonal communication skills. These skills generally include the ability to understand complex written material and communicate complex ideas in media such as books, reports and oral presentations.

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Youth employment consists overwhelmingly of non-wage work in the informal economy. As reported in Figure 19a, nearly nine out of every 10 employed youth are in non-wage work, either as own-account workers (34%) or as unpaid family workers (56%). This figure rises to 94% among employed female youth and to 92% among rural youth. Wage jobs, which are generally perceived as preferable because they are more commonly associated with fair income, security in the workplace, social security and other key decent work attributes, account for only 10% of all youth jobs. The breakdown of youth employment by sector, reported in Figure 19b, highlights the predominance of agriculture. Nearly 80% of all youth jobs are in agriculture, while domestic service accounts for 11% of jobs, commerce 6% and construction and other industry the remainder. Agriculture, not surprisingly, plays a relatively more important role in rural areas; domestic service and commerce account for a relatively larger share of youth jobs in urban areas.

Figure 19. Youth employment consists predominantly of non-wage work in the informal economy

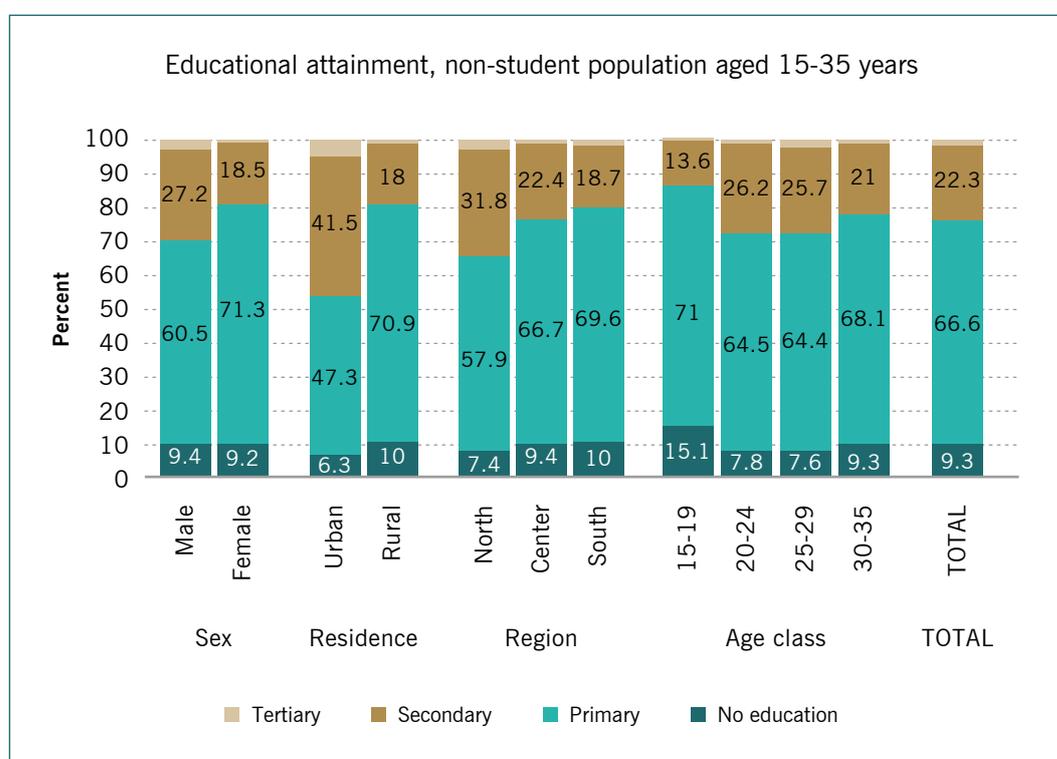


Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

6.4 Human capital and youth employment outcomes

Levels of human capital are very low for most Malawian young people, compromising their future prospects. Three-quarters of young persons who are not in school either have no education (9%) or only primary education (67%)(Figure 20). Low human capital is especially pronounced in rural areas, where 71% of youth leave school with only primary education and 9% have no education at all. Female youth also face a relative disadvantage in terms of education – the share of female youth with primary or less education is about 10 percentage points higher than that of male youth. By region, the share of youth with primary or less education ranges from 80% in the South region to 65% in the North region. These figures point to the importance of “second chance” learning opportunities for Malawian youth aimed at equipping them with the basic skills needed for work and life.

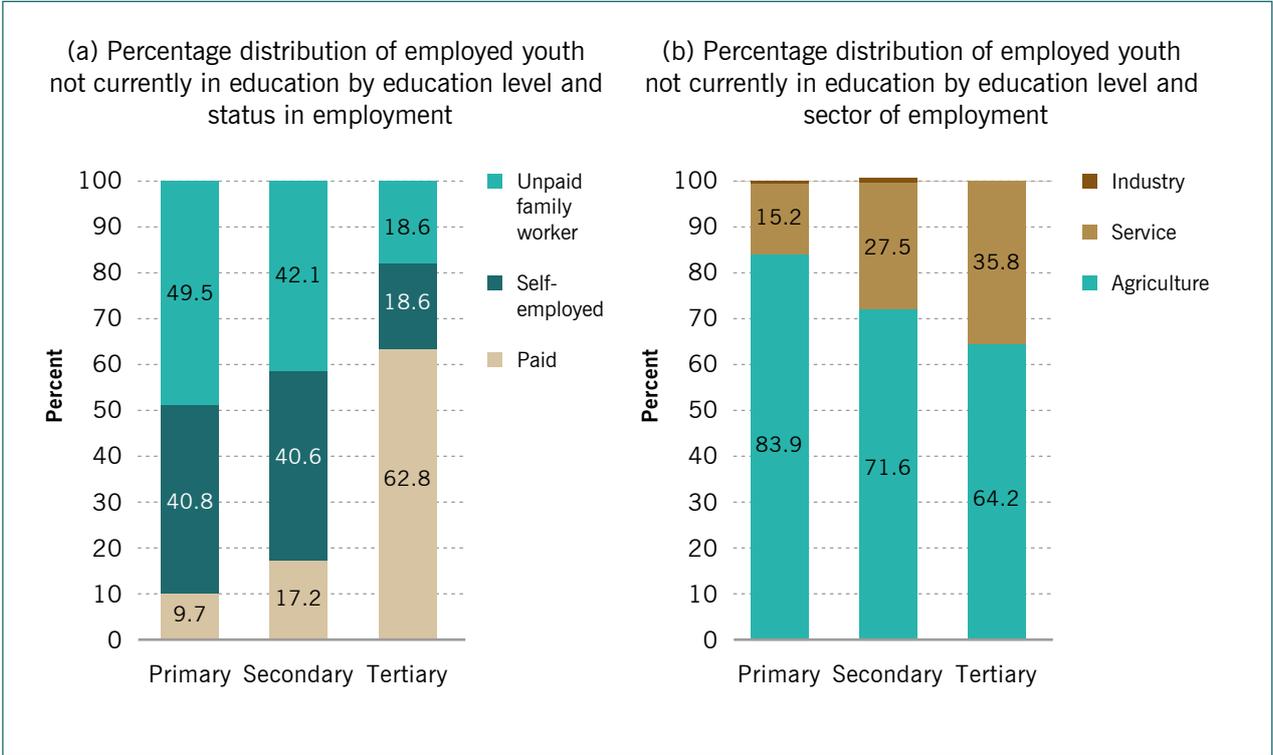
Figure 20. Educational levels remain low for many Malawian young people



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Levels of education are clearly correlated with job outcomes. Figure 21 reports the composition of youth employment by level of education. It shows that the likelihood of wage work and of work outside the primary agriculture sector both rise consistently with more education. Involvement in wage employment rises from 10% among those with least education to 63% among those with most education. At the same time, involvement agricultural work falls from 84% among those with least education to 64% for those with most education, and involvement in the service sector rises from 15% to 36% moving from primary to tertiary education. As discussed below, educated youth are not surprisingly also more likely to be found in jobs requiring higher skills, although a very large share of even educated youth must settle for low-skill jobs.

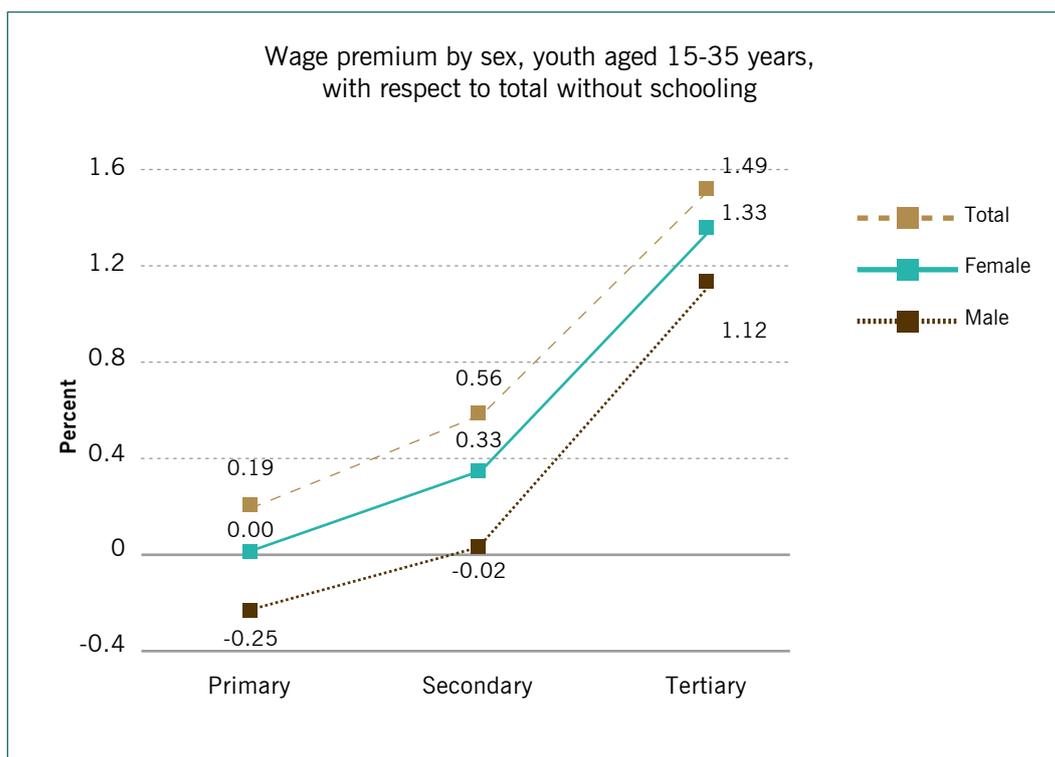
Figure 21. Better-educated youth are much more likely to enjoy wage and tertiary sector employment



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Education is associated with a substantial earnings premium. A wage equation was estimated in order to assess the importance of education and other individual and household characteristics on earnings. The results relating to education, reported in Figure 22 and Table A3, shows that the wage premium associated with tertiary education is especially large. Those with higher education can expect to earn about 100% more than those with only secondary education and 133% more than those with only primary education. The results also point to a significant gender gap in wages at all education levels.

Figure 22. More education is associated with a substantial earnings premium

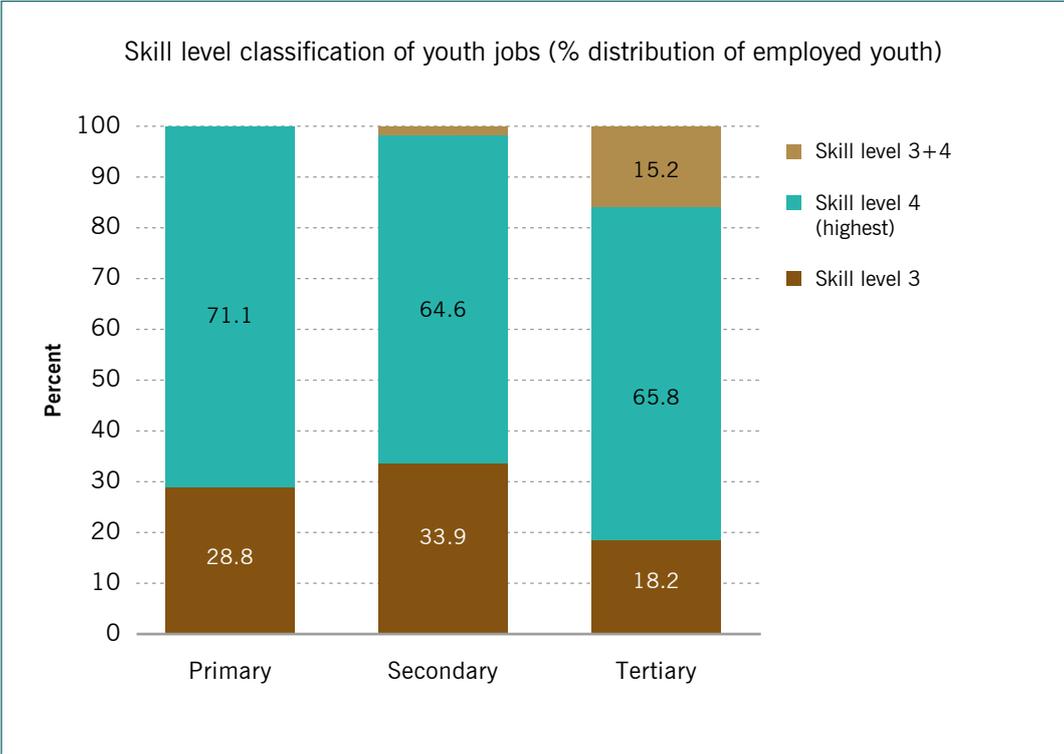


Note: Wage premium are computed through a regression of log of monthly wage on the following set of covariates: female, dummies for educational level (reference category: Primary), interaction between female and education dummies, second order polynomial in age, number of children below 5, number of children between 5 and 17, number of household members between 18 and 64, number of household members above 65, dummies for region (reference category: North). Coefficients and standard error of this regression are reported in Annex Table A3. Wage premia are computed by rescaling the coefficient attached to female, education and their interactions and constraining the wage premium of primary education for both sexes being zero.

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Skills mismatches appear significant among employed Malawian young people. The decomposition of youth jobs by skills intensity, reported in Figure 23, shows that young people across all education levels are concentrated overwhelmingly in low-skill jobs. Almost all those with primary or secondary education, and 84% of even those with tertiary education, are in jobs in the two lowest skill classifications.

Figure 23. A substantial of even well-educated youth must settle for low-skill jobs



Note: Definitions of each of the four ISCO skill levels are provided in Figure 18.
Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

CHAPTER 7

National responses to child labour and youth employment concerns

Malawi has made a number of important commitments to address child labour and youth employment, which are reflected in national and relevant sector policies, plans and strategies, programs and legislation. Thus, this chapter is dedicated to providing the institutional framework for addressing the twin challenges of child labour and youth unemployment.

7.1 Legal framework for child labour

Malawi has made a number of important legal commitments in the areas of child labour and children's schooling. The Government of Malawi (GoM) has ratified ILO Convention No. 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour), ILO Convention No. 138 (Minimum Age), and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the three most important international legal standards relating to child labour. The Government has also adopted the Optional Protocol to the CRC on Combating the use of Children in Armed Conflict and the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Other important international standards adopted by GoM include the ILO Convention No. 29 (Abolition of forced labour) and the Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons, which promotes the principle enshrined in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up in 1998, and the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

As a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Malawi is party to the SADC Code of Conduct on Child Labour as well as a signatory to the SADC Charter on Fundamental Social Rights.

These international commitments are also ratified in a range of national statutes and supporting issuance.

The Constitution of Malawi (2002) contains relevant provisions regarding children. The Constitution, through the amendment act. of the 14th February 2017, defines children as persons below the age of 18 (the constitutional provision on the age of the child was 16). The Constitution protects children from economic exploitation or any treatment, work or punishment that is, or is likely to be hazardous, interfere with their education, or be harmful to their health or to their physical, mental or spiritual or social development in Article 23. While Article 25 entitles all persons to education, Article 26 prohibits slavery and servitude, forced labour and tied labour that amounts to servitude and, Article 27 prohibits forced labor. Finally, while Article 30 provides for special consideration of children in the application of right to development and therefore

enjoyment of economic, social, cultural and political development, Article 31 provides right of State to withdraw labour.

Of particular relevance are the **Employment (Prohibition of Hazardous Work for Children) Order (2012)** and the **Employment Act No. 6 (2000)**. The **Employment Order** includes a list of prohibited work for children. It also states that “a person between the ages fourteen and eighteen years shall not work for more than forty hours in a week” and sets lower limits for children enrolled in school. It also includes provision for night work and work in extreme temperature. **The Employment Act No. 6** Forced Labor (Section 4) and provides for Minimum Age for Work at 14 (Section 21) in agricultural, industrial, or non-industrial work, and excludes workers in third-party homes, such as in domestic work, or non-commercial agriculture in which children are known to work. It also provides for Minimum Age for Hazardous Work at 18 (Section 22).

Panel 6. Legal framework relating to child labour in Malawi

The Trafficking in Persons Act 2015: Addresses key gaps that existed in the country's legal framework in relation to protecting all children under age 18 from trafficking in persons, including protection from commercial sexual exploitation regardless of gender. It prohibits Forced Labor (Section 15), Child Trafficking (Section 15) and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Sections 15 and 20).

Employment (Prohibition of Hazardous Work for Children) Order, 2012 prohibits Hazardous Occupations or Activities for Children (Sections 1–9, and Paragraph 6, sections 1–6). The Order sets time limits for work performed between the ages fourteen and eighteen of no more than forty hours per week and twenty hours in a week for children enrolled in school.

Amendment to Penal Code 2011: Provides for upward adjustment of minimum age for sexual consent from 13 to 16 years.

Child Care, Protection and Justice Act of 2010 provides for Minimum Age for Hazardous Work at 16 (Section 2), prohibits Forced Labor (Sections 79 and 82), prohibits Child Trafficking (Section 79), prohibits Commercial Sexual Exploitation

of Children (Sections 23 and 84), prohibits using Children in Illicit Activities (Section 23), defines age of criminal responsibility, sets alternative care guidelines, prohibits forced marriage, criminalizes the abduction of girls under 16, and prohibits discrimination against women.

The **Constitution of Malawi (2002)** contains relevant provisions regarding children. The Constitution, through the amendment act. of the 14th February 2017, defines children as persons below the age of 18 (the constitutional provision on the age of the child was 16). The Constitution protects children from economic exploitation or any treatment, work or punishment that is, or is likely to be hazardous, interfere with their education, or be harmful to their health or to their physical, mental or spiritual or social development in Article 23. While Article 25 entitles all persons to education, Article 26 prohibits slavery and servitude, forced labour and tied labour that amounts to servitude. Again, Article 27 prohibits forced labor. Finally, while Article 30 provides for special consideration of children in the application of their right to development and therefore enjoyment of economic, social, cultural and political development, Article 31 provides right of State to withdraw labour.

Panel 6. (cont.)

The Employment Act No. 6 of 2000 prohibits Forced Labor (Section 4) and provides for Minimum Age for Work at 14 (Section 21) in agricultural, industrial, or non-industrial work, and excludes workers in third-party homes, such as in domestic work, or non-commercial agriculture in which children are known to work. It also provides for Minimum Age for Hazardous Work at 18 (Section 22).

Penal Code: Prohibits Forced Labor (Sections 140–147 and 257–269), Child Trafficking (Sections 140–147 and 257–269) and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Sections 137–138, 140, 142, 147, 155 and 160 A-G) and criminalizes assault, rape and attempted rape but excludes marital rape or forced anal sex of males and females.

Defense Force Act: Provides for Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service at 18 (Section 19).

Finally, the **national code of conduct** provides guiding principles to the State, employers, organisations, parents and guardians, children and the community in their efforts to combat all forms of child labour. Specifically, the State and employers should take into account views and opinions of children in all actions concerning harmful and exploitive child labour as well as discourage use of harmful and exploitive child labour.

The **Education Act** (2013) and the **Gender Equality Act** (2013) are also relevant to efforts against child labour in Malawi. The Education Act provides free and compulsory primary education until the age of 18 years (Art. 13). The Gender Equality Act prohibits discrimination and promotes gender equality and equal integration in the society; it specifically promotes equality in access to education and training.

Panel 7. Tenancy and child labour in Malawi

The tenancy system was introduced in Malawi in the early 1990s mainly to support tobacco production. Within the tenancy regime, tenants and their family members are employed to produce tobacco on a plot allocated by the leaseholder/estate owner. Tenants enter into an (often oral) agreement with estate/farm owners, who provide land, loan agricultural inputs and stipend or food that will be deducted from future profits. These costs, together with those of the

rental, can be greater than the income from tobacco sales and then can lead to situation of debt bondage.

The majority of tenants are internal migrants (77%), who move from the southern region to the tobacco growing districts in the Central and Northern regions. Recruitment practices are highly informal and expose tenants and their families to exploitation and abuse. Most

Panel 7. (cont.)

of the children work for 12 hours a day or more, especially during the harvesting season. They carry out household chores and tie tobacco leaves, which involves sitting and repeating the same movements for long hours, and expose to occupational poisoning likely to harm their health. Moreover, during harvest periods, children do not attend school due to the workload and the situation is exacerbated by the absence of schools near tobacco farms and by a shortage of teachers.

The Government in Malawi has spread efforts to protect tenants since 1992 and the Ministry of Labour initiated the process to develop the Tenancy Labour Bill to regulate the relations

between the tenants and landlords. Since then, several versions of the Bill have been adopted and revised. Most recently, in 2012, the Tenancy Labour Bill was revised and includes provision for recruitment and contracting, and it explicitly prohibits the engagement of children below 18 years.

However, children are still employed in tobacco estates and enforcement is a critical issue. Beyond withdrawing children and sending them to school, measures should address the root causes of children exploitation and economically empowering tenants will be critical to break the vicious cycle of poverty.

Sources: ILO (2015). A rapid assessment of the tobacco sector in Malawi.

Centre for Social Concern (2015). Tobacco production and tenancy labour in Malawi. Treating individuals and families as mere instruments of production.

7.2 National policies, plans and strategies relating to child labour

7.2.1 National development framework

The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy is the country's overarching strategy for the period from 2017 to 2022, the third-cycle Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS III). It reflects the extent to which child labour issues have been mainstreamed into broader national development plans. MGDS III explicitly indicates the elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a strategy to ensuring a gainful and decent employment for all. It recognizes that an educated and skilled population will help Malawi achieve accelerated economic growth and attain the SDGs; the MDGS III therefore focuses on improved access and equity to all levels of the education systems. It also calls for strengthening national child protection systems to reduce vulnerability, violence and exploitation. Key actions to achieve these outcomes include, among others, reviewing and enforcing child labour laws and regulation, conducting sensitization campaigns on child labour and children's rights and building institutional capacity at all levels, including the traditional authority courts.¹⁷

The **National Employment and Labour Policy** (2014-2019) provides framework and guidance to country's efforts towards promoting productive and decent employment and enterprise development; compliance with labour standards by employers, investors and workers; and social

¹⁷ Malawi Government (2017). *The Malawi Growth and Development Strategy* (MGDS III, 16th august 2017).

protection and social dialogue. Relevant priority areas of the policy include Labour Administration and Labour Standards as well as Agricultural Sector and Employment.

Malawi has also undertaken a number of measures aimed at expanding access to **education** since early 1990s, when the GoM introduced the Free Primary School Education (FPE).¹⁸ The **National Education Sector Plan**(2008-2017) provides a framework for quality and relevant education to Malawians. Centered on improving access, equity, quality, relevance, governance and management of education especially through improvements in early child development (ECD), non-formal education and formal education (primary, secondary, technical and vocational training – tertiary and higher education, the Plan addresses key reform areas including (i) increasing accountability through providing grants to schools; (ii) reducing the rural urban disparity in pupil teacher ratios; and (iii) promotion of double-shifting. Aimed at advancing girls' education, the **National Girls' Education Strategy (2014)** tackles the barriers that girls face in terms of participation and access to education. It provides support to the establishment of by-laws with local leaders and Chiefs' Councils as a means for ensuring that all eligible children attend school regularly by imposing fines on parents or guardians who do not abide by the set by-laws.

The **Complementary Basic Education (CBE) Programme (2006 To-date, GoM, DPs, NGOs, CSOs)** was piloted from 2006 to 2010 with financial and technical support from GIZ; the GoM took full ownership of the programme in 2011 as an innovative tool for improving education services and opportunities for out-of-school children and youth. The program brings back children who dropped out of the formal education system, thereby providing them with a second chance to education and ultimately reduce child labour. CBE targets out-of-school children and youth aged between 9 and 17 years, who must have either dropped out of primary school for a period of one year before completing Standard 5 or have never entered school at all. With the broad objective of encouraging life-long learning and enabling children to participate fully in society and its development, the three-year CBE curriculum incorporates the essentials of the curriculum normally taken from Standards 1 to 5 of the formal primary education system. The curriculum also incorporates skills and values needed to promote self-reliance. As such, on successful completion of the programme, the CBE learners have the opportunity to either re-integrate into the formal primary school education system or lead a productive life by using the livelihoods, literacy, numeracy and life skills acquired from the programme.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is also responsible for implementing **Girls and Boys Bursaries** for all public secondary schools, targeting double and single orphans, and children from extreme poor families and child headed families.

Targeted Support to School Meals aims at reducing drop-out rates, promoting regular attendance, increasing enrolment and improving children's ability to concentrate and learn by providing children with a daily mid-morning serving of fortified super cereal (Likuni Phala) porridge each school day as well as providing girls and orphan boys in standards 5 to 8 with a monthly Take-Home Ration (THR) of maize grain during the lean months of January to April on condition that they attend 80 percent of school days. The programme, under the NSSP) is implemented by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in partnership with Forum for African Women Educationalists in Malawi (FAWEMA), Mary's Meals, World Food Programme (WFP) and with support of DFID Malawi and GIZ.

¹⁸ The initiative allowed low income households to send their children who could not attend primary school due to budget constraints. Primary school enrolment increased from 1.9 million in 1993 to 3.2 million in 1994. Source: National Child Labour Survey, 2015.

Malawi has also undertaken a number of measures aimed at extending **social protection** for vulnerable families, also of direct relevance to reducing dependence on child labour as a household survival strategy. The **National Social Support Policy** (NSSP 2012) outlines the national strategy in the field of social protection, which is operationalized through the Malawi National Policy Support Programme (MNSSP). The NSSP aims at enhancing the quality of life for those suffering from poverty and hunger and improving resilience of those who are vulnerable. The **Farm Input Subsidy Programme** (FISP, 2005 to-date) aims at improving access to improved agricultural farm inputs by resource poor smallholders so to achieve food self-sufficiency and increase incomes.

Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme (MSCT, 2006 To-date, DPs, NGOs, CSOs) is executed as part of the portfolio of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare and with policy oversight and guidance provided by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development (MoFEPD). The program aims to fight poverty, hunger and starvation and help ultra-poor and labour constrained households send their children to school. Beneficiaries receive a monthly stipend that meets minimum basket of basic goods, services and socio-economic amenities, as well as child education bonuses based on primary and secondary school enrolment. The Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme, locally known as the Mtukula Pakhomo, begun as a pilot in Mchinji district in 2006 and was then scaled up to reach 18 of the 28 districts of Malawi. By December 2015, it had reached over 163,000 beneficiary households. A recent evaluation found strong effects of the program on children's school participation across all age groups. These effects do not merely reflect increased enrolment, but increased regular participation in school (i.e. participation without extended withdrawal during the school year). Although program effects on children's participation in household chores and economic activities are limited, the program results in increased engagement in hazardous activities (exposure to dust, fumes, or gas, and exposure to extreme heat, cold or humidity). A possible explanation is the increase in household investment in productive activities.¹⁹

Implemented by District Councils and with support from various donors such as the EU/EC, the five-year **Income Generating Public Works Programme** (IGPWP) aims at creating employment opportunities for income transfer while at the same time building economic infrastructure through labour intensive activities such as building roads, tree planting, water provision. Results from a recent UCW evaluation²⁰ indicates temporary positive effects on school attendance and no reduction in child labour, pointing to the need of amending public work programs to make them more effective in promoting human capital investments.

The **Malawi Social Action Fund IV** (2014–2018) provides loans for community development and social support programs, including work opportunities, skill-building, and cash transfers.

The **National Action Plan for Vulnerable Children** (NPA, 2015-2019) has six strategic objectives aiming at improving access to essential services by vulnerable children for their survival, protection and development and at building the capacity of families and communities to help children realizing their full potential. It also provides a framework for the development of district implementation plans for assisting vulnerable children. The Plan builds on the findings of the impact evaluation of the previous NPA for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) and on the

19 University of North Carolina (2016). *Malawi Social Cash Transfer Programme Endline Impact Evaluation Report*.

20 De Hoop, J., and Rosati, F. (2016). *Labour intensive public works and children's activities: the case of Malawi*. UCW Working Paper Series.

OVC Situation Analysis (2013).²¹ The **Child Protection Strategic Plan**: The Plan outlines the responsibilities of the Ministry of Labour, Malawi Police Service and the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability, and Social Welfare to coordinate efforts towards combating child labor.

Malawi has also a number of measures **directly aimed at eliminating child labour**.

The **Child Labour National Action Plan** (2010-2016) was developed to translate previous policy pronouncements into concrete programmes and activities and to ensure effective coordination of the various institutions and their programmes. Specifically, the Plan assigned roles and responsibilities to each government ministry in charge of implementing child labor policies, provided a comprehensive framework to reduce the worst forms of child labor, and proposed concrete activities to support policies to combat child labor. Prepared through a very consultative process, the Plan depicted potential for demonstrable positive impact on child labour as it targeted common and fundamental contributing issues of child labour in Malawi, including both supply and demand side factors.

The project **Together Ensuring Children's Security (TECS)**²², aimed at addressing the child labour situation in its root causes, mainly poverty, by improving the general living conditions of children and their communities in 20 villages.

It aims at addressing the child labour situation in its root causes, mainly poverty, by improving the general living conditions of children and of their communities in 60 villages.

The project **ARISE II**²³ targets Child Labour Reduction through improvements in education services and opportunities; increased economic empowerment and social mobilization of tobacco-growing communities to combat child labour; and improved regulatory framework and institutional development for the elimination of child labour.

Panel 8. Child labour: Coordination, implementation, enforcement and monitoring mechanisms

The national coordination, implementation, enforcement and monitoring mechanisms for the policies, plans, strategies, programs and laws outlined above takes into account the multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral nature of child labour. Thus, the list below includes both individual and cross-sectoral institutions that play key roles and responsibilities in child labour in the country.

The Tripartite Labour Advisory Council (TLAC): Representing the necessary political will and buy-in of business, labour and government, the Council is the highest coordination body that advises the Minister responsible for Labour, Youth and Manpower Development on all labour and employment issues.

21 Government of Malawi (2015). *National Plan of Action for Vulnerable Children*.

22 The project was implemented (2002-2006) in Ngala and Dwangwa areas of Dowa and Kasungu districts by ILO/IPEC with support and funding by the Elimination of Child Labour in Tobacco (ECLT) Foundation.

23 *Achieving Reduction of Child Labour in Supporting Education*, 2015-2018, ILO, Japan Tobacco International (JTI) and Winrock International.

Panel 8. (cont.)

The National Steering Committee on Child Labour (NSCCL): Comprising policy makers from government, civil society, development partners, employers and workers, it is a tripartite plus coordination body which provides policy directions to the Ministry of Labour, Youth and Manpower Development. It is also responsible for policy direction and buy-in as well as resource mobilization.

The National Technical Working Group on Child Labour (NTWGCL): Comprising technical officers from key interest groups including government, DPs, civil society, employers and workers, it is responsible for the provision of technical backstopping services and coordination of child labour programmes.

The Decentralized Child Labour Structures: Include District, Area and Community Child Labour Committees and are responsible for coordination, implementation and monitoring of child labour activities at district, area and community levels, respectively.

The Ministry of Labour, Youth and Manpower Development: This is the Ministry with the primary responsibility of coordinating the implementation of child labour policies and also serves as the Secretariat for the TLAC, NSCL, NTWGCL as well as chair of the NTWGCL. As part of the enforcement mechanism, the Ministry, through the Child Labor Unit (CLU), also monitors and implements child labor law compliance through child labor monitoring visits. Again, as

part of the enforcement mechanism, the Ministry also performs inspections and investigates all labor complaints, including those related to child labor.

District Labor Offices: These enforce child labor laws at the district level.

Ministry of Home Affairs: Enforces human trafficking laws and prosecutes trafficking in persons.

Department of Child Development, Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare: Provides child protection and development services.

Child development Technical Working Group: Focus on increasing resources for early childhood education, infant health and nutrition, parenting skills education.

Social Welfare Technical Working Group: Promote social protection mechanisms such as conditional cash transfers, school-based food programmes, age-based pension initiatives, mental health resources, shelters and safe homes.

District Child Protection Committees: Coordinate all child protection activities at the district level and improve local coordination on child protection issues.

Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs: Prosecutes criminal offenders.

7.3 Legal framework for addressing youth employment issues

The legal framework for enforcing the provisions of the policy and national planning instruments that relate to youth above draws from the Constitution of Malawi as well as international instruments. However, while the **Constitution of Malawi** (2002) generally covers young people, it is noteworthy that it makes no specific reference to the youth as it does for other categories of people of Malawi that require special consideration such as children and women. The oversight may be explained by the fact that most of the relevant provisions regarding children in the Constitution also relate to young people. In terms of **international, continental and/or regional commitments**, Malawi is signatory to, inter alia, the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment and the African Youth Charter. As a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Malawi is party to the SADC Orphan and Vulnerable Children and Youth Policy.

The list of relevant national legislation includes the following:

- **Gender Equality Act 2013:** Provides for the promotion of gender equality in areas of education and reproductive health.
- **Employment (Prohibition of Hazardous Work for Children) Order, 2012** prohibits Hazardous Occupations or Activities for Children (Sections 1–9, and Paragraph 6, sections 1–6).
- **Child Care, Protection and Justice Act of 2010** provides for Minimum Age for Hazardous Work at 16 (Section 2), prohibits Forced Labor (Sections 79 and 82), prohibits Child Trafficking (Section 79), prohibits Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Sections 23 and 84), prohibits using Children in Illicit Activities (Section 23), defines age of criminal responsibility, sets alternative care guidelines, prohibits forced marriage, criminalizes the abduction of girls under 16, and prohibits discrimination against women.
- **The Employment Act No. 6 of 2000** prohibits forced Labor (Section 4) and provides for Minimum Age for Work at 14 (Section 21) in agricultural, industrial, or non-industrial work, and excludes workers in third-party homes, such as in domestic work, or non-commercial agriculture in which children are known to work. It also provides for Minimum Age for Hazardous Work at 18 (Section 22).
- **Technical, Vocational and Entrepreneurial Training Act 1999:** Provides for the promotion and coordination of technical, vocational and entrepreneurial education and training as well as establishment of the TEVET Authority and Employer Contribution Training Fund.
- **Penal Code:** Prohibits Forced Labor (Sections 140–147 and 257–269), Child Trafficking (Sections 140–147 and 257–269) and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Sections 137–138, 140, 142, 147, 155 and 160 A-G) and criminalizes assault, rape and attempted rape but excludes marital rape or forced anal sex of males and females.
- **Defense Force Act:** Provides for Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service at 18 (Section 19).
- **National Youth Council of Malawi Act of 1997:** The Act provides for the promotion, coordination and implementation of youth development programmes in Malawi. It also provides for the establishment of a National Youth Council of Malawi (NYCOM).

7.4 National policies, plans and strategies

National policies by the GoM reflect the extent to which youth employment issues have been mainstreamed into broader national development plans. Specifically, recognizing that youth constitute a significant proportion of Malawi's population, the thematic area of Social Development in **MGDS III** included a sub-theme on youth development which, in turn, again falls under the strategy's priority area of Gender, Youth Development, Persons with Disability and Social Welfare. Recognizing that education is key to create human capital and hence to socio-economic development and industrial growth, the MGDS III calls for a reform of the education system to include entrepreneurship and skills development in order to improve employability of the young Malawians and reduce youth employment.

With the overall goal of creating an enabling environment for all young people to develop to their full potential and contribute significantly to personal and sustainable national development, the **National Youth Policy (2013)** provides a framework that guides youth development and implementation of all youth programmes. While the policy defines youth as those between ages 10-35 years and contains strategies targeting youth in ages 10 to 35, it allows flexibility in this definition given the myriad parameters that can be used in categorizing the youth such as educational and training opportunities as well as economic empowerment initiatives. The policy further calls upon adults, guardians and parents to ensure provision of quality education to youth and the time to dedicate to their school attendance as well as protect youth from exploitation, including child-labour and child sex work.

The **National Education Sector Plan (2008-2017)** provides a framework for quality and relevant education to Malawians, including providing technical and vocational training and education for youth.

National Employment and Labour Policy: covering the period from 2014 to 2019, the policy provides framework and guidance to the country's efforts towards promoting productive and decent employment and enterprise development; compliance with labour standards by employers, investors and workers; and social protection and social dialogue. Relevant priority areas of the policy include Youth Employment, Skills Development and Labour Productivity, Labour Administration and Labour Standards as well as Agricultural Sector and Employment.

The Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Policy (TEVET) promotes the development of formal and informal skills in the public and private sectors. It focuses on four priority areas as follows: access and equity; quality and relevance; research and development and governance and management. The Policy contributes to attain the national growth objectives through the creation of skilled and competent workforce.

7.4.1 Programs addressing youth employment issues

Malawi has a number of programs aimed at tackling youth employment issues.

The **Competitiveness and Job Creation Support Project (CJCSP)** (October 2012 – November 2017, GoM, ADB) is implemented by the Ministry of Industry and Trade with a total budget of UA11.18 million of which UA 10 million (US\$15 million) was ADF loan and UA1.18 million (US\$2.7 million) was Government contribution, the project aimed at contributing towards

poverty reduction through sustainable pro-poor economic growth and improved socio-economic development led by the private sector. The National Labour Force Survey, with a budget of US\$123,000, was conducted under this project.

The **Malawi Jobs for Youth Project** (2017-2020, GoM and African Development Bank) is executed by the Ministry of Labour, Youth, Sports and Manpower with a budget of UA 9.70 million. The project seeks to economically empower young women and men by promoting entrepreneurship and access to finance, market and information, developing technical and business skills, and involving the private sector.

With a total budget of US\$ 50.9, the **Skills Development Project (SDP)** (June 2014 – June 2019, GoM, World Bank) aims at increasing access, market relevance and result orientation of supported skills development institutions in agreed priority areas. Among other beneficiaries, the project targets unemployed youth, students in universities and low artisans. The project includes carrying out a program of specific activities at the Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TEVETA) to broaden the range of market oriented skills programs.

Malawi's Action for Adolescents and Youth project, 2016, UNICEF: The project provided functional literacy programmes for 5,000 adolescent mothers.

Panel 9. Youth employment: Coordination, implementation, enforcement and monitoring mechanisms

The institutional arrangement for implementing youth policies, plans, strategies and programs involves various stakeholders at both individual and cross-sectoral institutional levels as follows:

The Sector Working Group on Gender, Youth Development and Sports (SWGGYS): Involving policy makers from relevant government agencies, DPs, NGOs, CSO and the private sector, this is the highest policy coordination body on youth issues.

Technical Working Group on Youth (TWGY): Comprising technical officers from relevant institutions, it is responsible for the provision of technical backstopping services and coordination of youth programmes.

The Ministry of Labour, Youth and Manpower Development: This is the Ministry with the primary responsibility of coordinating the implementation of youth policies and also serves as the co-chair for the SWGGYS and chair and secretariat for the TWGY.

The National Youth Council of Malawi: This is a statutory institution established under the National Youth Council Act of 1996 to, among other things, contribute towards youth empowerment and development through the promotion and coordination of activities of youth organizations. It is an advisor of the ministry responsible for youth issues on matters relating to youth participation and development.

Panel 9. (cont.)

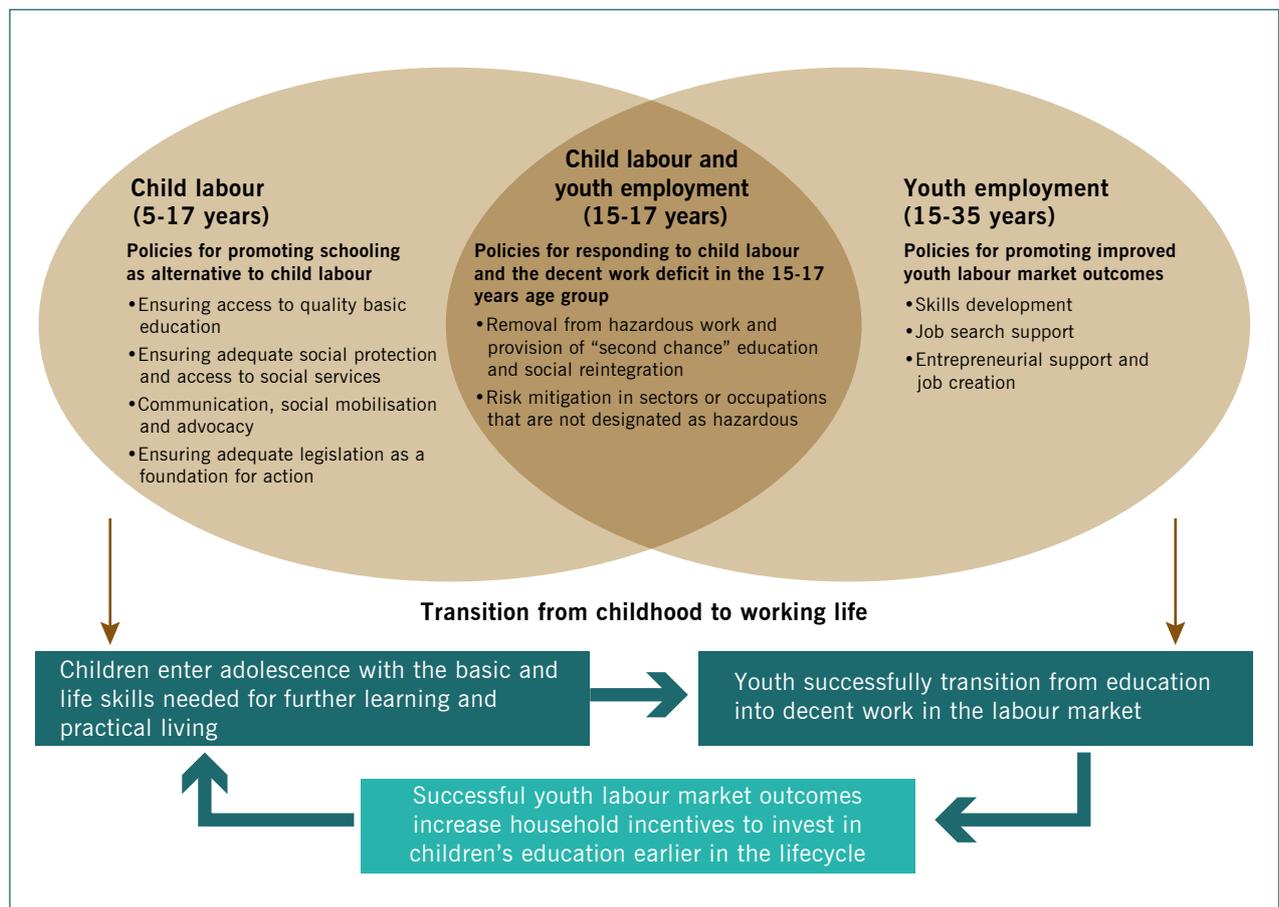
The Decentralized Youth Structures: The Youth Technical Committees (YTC) is an inter-agency coordination structure at district level which works with all district-level structures in the youth sector.

District Youth Offices: These coordinate, implement and monitor youth activities at the district level in collaboration with District, Area and Community Youth Committees and/or Clubs/Networks.

Addressing child labour and the youth decent work deficit: policy priorities

This chapter discusses policy recommendations for addressing child labour and the youth decent work deficit drawing on the evidence presented above. Child labour and youth employment are closely linked, underscoring the importance of addressing the two issues hand in hand, following a lifecycle approach. The figure below illustrates key components of an integrated response. A set of child-centred policies are needed to promote schooling as an alternative to child labour, and, following from this, to ensure that children enter adolescence with the basic and life skills needed for further learning and practical living. This foundation is in turn crucial to the success of active labour market policies for promoting improved youth employment outcomes, and to ensuring that youth successfully transition from education into decent work in the labour market. This causal chain can also work in the opposite direction: successful youth labour market outcomes can increase household incentives to invest in children’s education earlier in the lifecycle.

Figure 24. An integrated response to child labour and youth employment problems



8.1 Addressing child labour: children aged 5-13 years

Child labour in Malawi continues to affect almost 2.1 million children aged 5-17 years, or 38% of all children in this age group. These stark figures underscore the distance that the country must still travel to achieve child labour elimination, and highlights the need for accelerated action to reach this goal in the nearest possible future. Child labour is a complex phenomenon requiring a policy response that is integrated and cross-sectoral in nature. Evidence from Malawi and elsewhere point to a set policy pillars that are particularly relevant in this regard – basic education, social protection and child protection services, public awareness, social mobilisation and advocacy – building on the foundation provided by comprehensive child labour legislation and a solid evidence base.

8.1.1 Education access and quality

There is broad consensus that the single most effective way to stem the flow of school-aged children into work is to extend and improve schooling, so that families have the opportunity to invest in their children's education and it is worthwhile for them to do so. School attendance needs to be made an attractive prospect for children and parents both by addressing the costs of school attendance and by ensuring that schooling is inclusive and relevant. Providing schooling as an alternative to child labour is important not only for the individual children concerned, but also for society as a whole, as children who grow up compromised educationally by child labour are in a poor position to contribute to the country's growth as adults.

Levels of human capital are very low for most Malawian young people, with rural and female youth being relatively disadvantaged, suggesting that school drop out is a serious concern to the education sector. Evidence from elsewhere indicates that only 58.5% of children completed their 4th year in school and the national average drop-out rate is at 10.5%.²⁴ Female children are at particular risk of dropping out, due to early marriages and pregnancies.

According to UNICEF and UNESCO, the education sector faces a number of challenges such as lack of qualified teachers, inadequate classrooms, and shortage of teaching and learning materials and poor sanitation facilities.²⁵

There is therefore need to improve school access and quality, within the framework provided by the National Education Sector Plan (2008-2017) and the National Girls' Education Strategy (2014).

Ensuring access to early childhood education (ECD). Evidence from a range of developing countries suggests that early childhood development programmes can promote learning readiness, increase school enrolment and school survival, and help children keep away from work in their early years. The Government of Malawi has dramatically increased the scope and coverage of essential Early Child Development services in health, nutrition, education since the 1990s.²⁶ Free pre-primary education is provided for 3 to 5 year-olds children (but it is not mandatory) by the community or by private organizations. However, service delivery suffers from poor quality

24 UNICEF: www.unicef.org/malawi/development_15943.html.

25 UNESCO, Malawi, <http://uis.unesco.org/country/MW>; UNICEF: www.unicef.org/malawi/development_15943.html.

26 The ECD system is guided by the National Policy on Early Childhood Development (2006) and the National Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Development (2009-2014).

and the absence of an explicit ECD law and corresponding budget is an obstacle to effective implementation of established ECD policies and services. But despite the increase in the number of children benefitting from ECD services, only 40 of children aged 1 to 5 years participated in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age).²⁷ Access remains particularly difficult in some locations, particularly in rural or remote areas, where young children may have to travel long distances to attend school. The national Early Childhood Care Development Policy provides the broad framework for national efforts in addressing these challenges.

Promoting education access and quality. Continued efforts are needed to remove access and quality barriers to schooling for all children. Increasing school access is a particular challenge at the upper end of the compulsory school age group. Ten percent of all children are out of school at the age of 14 years, rising thereafter. Foremost among the factors for being out of school is distance, together cited by over 42% of out of school children, and being too young, cited by a further 36% of out-of-school children. School quality also remains an important challenge. As mentioned above, overcrowding, inadequate water and sanitation facilities, poorly-trained teachers and limited textbook supplies are among the among the issues affecting the quality of the education received by Malawian students.²⁸ Measures addressing school access and quality feature prominently in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) III and in the National Education Sector Plan (2008-2017) but need to be operationalised across the education system.

8.1.2 Social protection

The importance of social protection in reducing child labour is well-established. Social protection instruments serve to prevent vulnerable households from having to resort to child labour as a buffer against poverty and negative shocks. There is no single recipe for expanding social protection programmes to reduce household vulnerability and child labour. Unconditional and conditional cash transfer programmes, including various forms of child support grants, family allowances, needs based social assistance and social pensions, are all relevant to ensuring household livelihoods, supplementing the incomes of the poor and reducing household dependence on child labour. Public works schemes can serve both the primary goal of providing a source of employment to household breadwinners and the secondary goal of helping to rehabilitate public infrastructure and expand basic services, both being potentially relevant in terms of reducing reliance on child labour. Micro-loan schemes can help ease household budget constraints and mitigate social risk.

The Government has prioritized social protection expansion and the MDGS III calls to scale up social protection to cover the most vulnerable. In particular, it is planned to expand the Social Cash Transfer Programme from 18 to 28 districts (covering 319,000 households). Results from evaluations of the Social Cash Transfer and of the Public Work Programmes, as discussed in Section 8.2, point to the need of amending them to make them more effective in promoting human capital investments if they are meant to address child labour.

²⁷ Malawi Government. *The Malawi Growth and development strategy (MGDS) III*.

²⁸ UNESCO, Malawi, <http://uis.unesco.org/country/MW>; UNICEF: www.unicef.org/malawi/development_15943.html.

These and other efforts, taken together, provide key protection for vulnerable families but do not yet constitute a complete basic social protection floor. Further investment is needed evaluating their impact, and, on this basis, extending the most effective approaches to reach all vulnerable households.²⁹

Panel 10. HIV/AIDS and child labour

Malawi has one of the highest HIV prevalence in the world despite the impressive progress the country has made in recent years.

The Malawi Population-Based HIV Impact Assessment (MPHIA 2015 – 2016)³⁰ shows significant progress towards the globally endorsed targets of 90-90-90.³¹ HIV incidence declined from a peak of 110,000/year in 1998 to 85,000/year in 2004, before dropping to an estimated 28,000/year in 2016, coinciding with an increase in anti-retroviral therapy coverage. The assessment also indicates that an estimated 979,896 people were living with HIV in Malawi, of whom 104,093 are children younger than 15 years old.³² HIV prevalence among adults ages 15 to 64 years is 10.6%, with an annual incidence of 0.37% (approximately 28,000 new cases of HIV annually)³³, while among children HIV prevalence is 1.6 %.

HIV prevalence remains higher among females than males in all age groups, and it is particularly disproportioned among the 25-29 years old

age group, where HIV prevalence is three times higher for females (14.1 percent) than males (4.8 percent).³⁴

Ending AIDS epidemic is more than a human right, it also represents a development challenge. Evidence shows that HIV/AIDS strikes working-age adults during what should be their most productive working years. For children, one of the most devastating impacts of HIV is the loss of one or both parents. Children are directly affected in several ways. They may live at high risk of HIV, they may leave with a chronically-ill parent and be required to work or put their education on hold as they take on household and caregiving responsibility.³⁵

Even if we have no direct evidence for Malawi on the impact of HIV pandemic on child labour, results from other countries indicate that children belonging to HIV/AIDS affected households are more likely to be involved in child labour to substitute for parents' work. Orphan children are even more vulnerable and more likely to work.³⁶

29 The ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation (No. 202) of 2012 provides a key framework for efforts in this regard. The Recommendation sets out that SPFs should contain basic social security guarantees that ensure that all in need can afford and have access to essential health care and have income security at least at a nationally defined minimum level over the life cycle. See ILO, 2011. *Resolution and conclusions concerning the recurrent discussion on social protection (social security)*, International Labour Conference, 100th Session, Geneva, 2011, in Record of Proceedings (Geneva, 2011), No. 24: Report of the Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on Social Protection, 2011b, paras. 4 and 5. Available at: www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meeting-document/wcms_152819.pdf.

30 The challenge of sustainability: The impact of DREAM program on the social, economic and working conditions of patients with HIV/AIDS. This is the first survey in the country that measured national HIV incidence, pediatric HIV prevalence, and viral load suppression.

31 90-90-90 is an ambitious treatment target to help end the AIDS epidemic. By 2020, 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status, 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy and 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression.

32 Malawi Country Operational Plan 2017. Strategic Direction Summary. April 2017. www.pepfar.gov/documents/organization/272017.pdf.

33 Malawi population-based HIV impact Assessment - MPHIV 2015-2016, December 2016.

34 Ibid.

35 Children affected by AIDS, Africa's Orphaned and Vulnerable Generations, August 2006.

36 L. Guarcello, S. Lyon, F.C. Rosati, *Orphanhood and child vulnerability*, Malawi. Understanding Children's Work Project Working Paper Series, September 2004.

Panel 10. (cont.)

An evaluation of the impact of the HIV/AIDS treatment administered by the DREAM program³⁷ shows that the treatment has a significantly positive impact on the overall health status (based on clinical and virological parameters) as well as on the socio-economic conditions. In particular, the evaluation finds a positive impact on productivity and income, an increase in hours worked (+ 25% in the last week ones and +31% in last month). Consequently, income generated in the last week increased by 85%, while income generated in the last month increased by 80%.

Source: Addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic is, therefore, essential to tackle household vulnerabilities, which are among the root causes of child labour.

8.1.3 Strategic communication

Strategic communication is needed as part of efforts to build a broad consensus for change. Child labour is a clear example in which both social norms and economic considerations are important, and strategic communication efforts need to be designed with this in mind. Households require information concerning the costs or dangers of child labour and benefits of schooling in order to make informed decisions on their children's time allocation. But factors which influence decisions concerning children's schooling and child labour can extend well beyond economics or work conditions. Cultural attitudes and perceptions can also direct household decisions concerning children's schooling and child labour, and therefore should also be targeted in strategic communication efforts.

Communication efforts are needed at both national and local levels. A mix of conventional (e.g., radio, television and print media) as well as of non-conventional communication channels (e.g., religious leaders, school teachers, health care workers) is important in order to achieving maximum outreach. Social media represents another increasingly important communication tool in the context of both national awareness raising and global campaigns against child labour abuses. Baseline information on local knowledge and cultural attitudes towards child labour is needed to tailor communication messages, and to evaluate changes in awareness and attitudes following communication activities. Providing information on relevant national legislation, presented in terms that are understandable to the populations and communities concerned, is another communication priority. For girls in particular, there is also a need to educate families on what are acceptable domestic chores for children and what are not. While doing light chores around the house can be important for the socialization of children, research shows that children are working very long hours in the home and have little time for rest, study or leisure.

³⁷ The DREAM program mixes antiretroviral therapy with a range of correlated services such as psycho-social support, health education and nutritional support.

8.1.4 Social mobilisation and advocacy

Achieving sustainable reduction in child labour requires social consensus well beyond the level of the household. Policy responses to child labour are also unlikely to be effective in the absence of the active participation of civil society and of social partners in implementing them. Similarly, laws to protect children from child labour are unlikely to be effective if they are not backed by broad social consensus. Social mobilisation is therefore critical to engaging a broad range of social actors in efforts against child labour. Various social actors, including, for example, NGOs, faith-based organisations, teachers' organizations, the mass media, trade unions, employers' organizations, have important roles to play in a broader societal effort against child labour. The National Steering Committee on Child Labour (NSCCL), whose membership includes various Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), civil society organizations, workers' organizations, employers groups and development partners, has a particularly important potential role to play in social mobilization efforts.

Several national and community advocacy and awareness raising campaigns aimed at sensitizing masses against the evils of employing children have been conducted. The Fight Against Child Labour Programme implemented with financial assistance from the Norwegian Government and technical assistance from UNICEF has been instrumental in integrating child labour issues within the broader child protection framework, thus not only creating synergies and economies of scale but also enhancing the impact of the programmes on child labour and protection. Advocacy programmes have been implemented by the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions as well.

8.1.5 Child labour legislation, inspections and monitoring

Achieving sustainable reductions in child labour requires a supportive policy and legislative environment which is in line with international standards and effectively mainstreamed into national development plans and programmes. This has the important effect of signaling national intent to eliminate child labour and providing a framework in which this can be achieved.

While significant progress has been made in developing a comprehensive legal framework (see discussion in Section 8.1.1), this framework is not yet complete and discrepancies exist between national and international legislation, as well as among national legislation. For instance, according to the ILO Convention No. 138 (Minimum Age) the minimum working age should not be lower than the age of completion of compulsory education. While the provision included in the Article 13 of the Education Act is consistent with the ILO convention, the Article 23 of the Constitution protects children from exploitation under the age of 16 years. Likewise, Section 21 of the Employment Act No. 6 also states for an inconsistent minimum age for employment at age 14.

Legislative gaps are also those relating to specific sectors: for example, inspections in private homes or privately owned farms are not in the legal framework for labour inspection as provided by the Employment Act (Section 21). Similarly, despite discussions on the tenancy system (used in the tobacco production and exposing children to debt bondage), Malawi lacks legal protection for tenants and their families.

Finally, Malawi would go a long way towards eliminating child labour by approving and implementing the already drafted National Child Labour Policy (NCLP).

The effectiveness of legislation in protecting children from child labour also depends on establishing and strengthening mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing laws, including provisions for inspections and for the removal of children in child labour to safe places. Expanding the Government's actual capacity to monitor formal workplaces remains a major challenge, and unregistered businesses in the informal economy are largely outside formal inspection regimes. The labour inspectorate needs to be strengthened so that inspectors can effectively enforce labour legislation and workplace safety standards relating to child labour. But given the extent of child labour and resource constraints, it will likely continue to be difficult for the formal inspection system alone to be effective in protecting children from workplace violations. This highlights the importance of establishing effective community-based child labour monitoring systems as a mechanism for identifying children who are involved or at risk of engaging in child labour, referring them to appropriate social services, and tracking them to ensure positive outcomes.

8.1.6 Improving the evidence base

Effective and well-targeted responses to child labour demand a strong body of knowledge on the issue, including an understanding of how many children in child labour there are, which sectors and geographical areas they work in, the demographic characteristics of the children involved, and the type of work that they carry out. Despite recent national household surveys, data quality and comparability are uneven and significant information gaps remain, affecting understanding of the child labour phenomenon and the ability of policy-makers to address it. Better data is especially needed on programme impact, in order to identify good practices from the large number of child labour initiatives undertaken in the country, and, following from this, approaches with most potential for broader scale implementation. More evidence is also needed, *inter alia*, on the worst forms of child labour, recognizing that “the effective elimination of the worst forms of child labour requires immediate and comprehensive action”,³⁸ and on child migration (in-country and cross-border).

8.1.7 Ensuring enforcement and monitoring

A critical assessment of the existing coordination, implementation, enforcement and monitoring mechanism shows limited enforcement capacity due to resource constraints. Moreover, coordination of child labour elimination in Malawi has so far been done through a loose alliance of stakeholders.

Although Malawi has programs that target child labor, the coverage of these programs is insufficient to fully address the extent of the problem and to tackle specific sectors, such as agriculture and fishing. Above all, the resource envelope is limited, with resource commitments and actual disbursements below the resource requirements in most cases. For instance, while the programmatic response through the Decent Work Country Programme, whose preparation involved all relevant stakeholders was commendable, the program's resource gap of USD 27 million three years after its launch and stakeholders are facing difficulties in mobilizing the necessary resources.

National commitment and political will through adequate resource allocations are critical for ensuring the sustainability of the interventions and programmes. In a context of limited resources,

38 Preamble, Convention 182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, International Labour Organization, 1999.

this implies prioritizing child labour and the decent work agenda within the national development strategy.

The key legislative gaps in existing legislation will still hamper implementation progress even when the child labour programs are adequately resourced. Some of the gaps promote piecemeal and limit comprehensive approaches for fighting child labour. It is noteworthy that piecemeal approaches are inconsistent with the multi-layered challenges that children in general and children in child labour face. For instance, while there is a legal framework for labour inspection, including child labour, in areas such as commercial agriculture, the framework does not cover inspection in private homes or privately owned farms. Thus, it would be necessary extending the coverage of the legal framework to these sectors. Likewise, Malawi a separate legal framework for the tenancy system would help protecting children from to debt bondage.

The coordination, implementation, enforcement and monitoring functions of the Ministry of Labour are weakened by the lack of a national policy on child labour. The National Child Labour Policy (NCLP), developed by the Government in collaboration with strategic stakeholders, is yet to be approved.³⁹

Likewise, given the complexity of the child labour issue, there is a need to finalize and fully implement key policies protecting children from the worst forms of child labor, including the Child Protection Policy, as well as explicitly mainstreaming child labour into relevant policies and plans such as the National Education Sector Plan.

This is suggestive of weak enforcement mechanisms for existing legislation, particularly within the Ministry of Labour, Youth and Manpower Development. Finally, apart from financial constraints, the Ministry of Labour, Youth and Manpower Development suffers from weak enforcement mechanisms due to lacks human capacity and structural bottlenecks.

Finally, the access of child laborers and their families to existing social support and services has mostly been indirect and limited to-date due to several reasons. Above all, important national social support documents such as the National Social Support Policy and Programme do not specify child laborers and their families as direct beneficiaries. In addition, the MoL's involvement and/or membership in such important national structures as Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) which are very critical in determining location of services as well as specific beneficiaries is either absent or inactive. Further, the MoL continues to depict elements of weak capacity to administer services that should directly benefit child laborers and their families. No wonder TEVET services were displaced from MoL to MoEST after barely 1 year, thereby bringing back to the fore the Ministry's weak capacity.

³⁹ The NCLP aims to deepen the policy environment and provide adequate guidance and framework for child labour elimination. The policy will guide and promote sustainable interventions by the state, employers, workers organizations, parents and guardians, children, the community and others in their efforts to eliminate all forms of child labour in the country.

8.2 Addressing child labour: Adolescents aged 14-17 years

Even though adolescents aged 14-17 years are over the minimum working age they are still considered “children in child labour” under ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182 and national legislation if the work they do is hazardous. As we saw in Chapter 5 of this Report, child labour among 14-17 year-olds is very high in Malawi, affecting almost 29% of all children in this age group, or 401,000 children in absolute terms. Children aged 14-17 years in child labour account for about one-fifth of total children in child labour of all ages in Malawi. At the same time, almost 42% of all 14-17 year-olds in employment are in child labour. Adolescents aged 14-17 years are therefore of common interest to programmes addressing child labour and the decent work deficit faced by youth, but they have not to date been accorded priority attention in either. While the policies articulated above for younger children are also largely relevant for combating child labour in the 14-17 years age group, there is also a need for additional policy measures tailored specifically to the unique challenges posed by child labour in this age group.

8.2.1 Removing youth from hazardous work in order that they are protected and afforded second chances for acquiring decent work

In instances in which adolescents in the 14-17 years age group are working in sectors or occupations that are designated as hazardous or where there is no scope for improving working conditions, the policy requirement is clear – they must be removed from the hazardous job. In these instances, it is imperative that there is an effective inspections and monitoring system for identifying the adolescents concerned and a strategy in place for providing withdrawn adolescents with adequate support services and opportunities for social reintegration. Community-based mechanisms close to where the children in child labour are located are particularly relevant in this regard.

Empirical evidence presented above on educational attainment and work conditions indicates that school enrolment declines sharply as children enter the 14-17 years age group, and many of those leaving the school system end up in hazardous jobs. Options for reaching disadvantaged, out-of-school children with second change learning opportunities includes mainstreaming (i.e., providing returning children with special remedial support within the regular classroom) and “bridging” education (i.e., separate intensive courses, delivered within or outside the formal school system, designed to raise academic proficiency prior to returning to the regular classroom). Second chance policies need to take place within the context of a broader effort improve secondary schooling access and quality, in order to make secondary schooling a more viable and attractive alternative to hazardous work.

For out-of-school children whose circumstances mean that they are unable to re-enter basic education, experience in a range of countries suggests that targeted packages of active labour market policies can be effective in terms of providing withdrawn adolescents (and other vulnerable youth) with second chances for securing decent work. Many of the elements discussed in the next section of this chapter are relevant in this context, including vocational and technical training, apprenticeships, job search training and support, and entrepreneurial support, with the critical difference being that they are tailored to the special needs of this group of particularly vulnerable youth. Not infrequently, adolescents withdrawn from exploitative situations may also need a range of social services: emergency shelter, medical care, psychosocial counseling, legal support, family tracing and assessment and post-reintegration follow-up.

8.2.2 Mitigating risk in order to ensure that youth are not exposed to hazards in their workplace

Risk mitigation is a strategic option in instances where adolescents are exposed to hazards in sectors or occupations that are *not designated as hazardous in national hazardous work lists* and where there is scope for changing work conditions. Such a strategy involves measures to remove the hazard, to separate the child sufficiently from the hazard so as not to be exposed, or minimise the risk associated with that hazard.

The ILO speaks of this as “identifying hazards and reducing risks”. Strategies aimed at improving the working conditions of adolescent workers include various types of protective measures: hours of work can be reduced; work at night, or travel to and from work at night, can be prohibited; workplace policies against harassment can be established and enforced; adolescents can be barred from using dangerous substances, tools or equipment; and adequate rest periods can be provided.

Especially important in the context of risk mitigation is training and awareness-raising on occupational safety and health for employers and their young workers, including on adequate and consistent supervision. Another priority is the implementation of adequate monitoring mechanisms. Trade unions, business associations, chambers of commerce, community organizations, social protection agencies – when properly trained and linked with the labour inspectorate – can monitor minimum age guidelines, the safety of the workplace and its adolescent workers.⁴⁰ Risk mitigation should be seen as part of a broader effort to ensure that young persons receive equal treatment and are protected from abuse and exposure to hazards.⁴¹ The enforcement of labour laws and collective agreements should be strengthened, and the participation of young people in employers’ and workers’ organizations and in social dialogue should be enhanced.

8.3 Addressing the decent work deficit: young persons aged 15-35 years

The results presented in this Report highlight a number of challenges facing Malawian young people entering the labour market. Levels of human capital remain low for many Malawian young people, compromising their future prospects. Seventy-six percent of young persons not in school have either no education (9%) or only primary education (67%). About four percent of all youth are not in education, employment or training (NEET) and therefore at risk of social marginalisation. Youth employment is dominated by low-skill, unremunerating jobs in the informal economy offering fewer chances for upward mobility. Underemployment, or “hidden unemployment”, affects 72% of employed youth. These results point to the need for active labour market policies⁴² aimed at

40 It is important to note that while we are focusing here on children, neither is hazardous work acceptable for adult workers. The ILO Conventions on occupational safety and health (OSH) and on labour inspection offer protection for all workers. In fact, nearly half of all ILO instruments deal directly or indirectly with OSH issues. It has long been recognized in this context that action against child labour can also be action for decent work for adults. In the case of hazardous work, where economic necessity or deeply ingrained tradition blocks attempts to improve conditions for adult workers, it is sometimes the call to stop child labour that can be the entry point to change. Eliminating hazardous work of children can help improve safety and health of all workers – the ultimate goal.

41 A recent learning package to support trade unions, employment services, education and training institutions, as well as youth organizations, in their initiatives aimed at raising young people’s awareness of their rights at work, see ILO (2014): *Rights@Work 4 Youth: Decent work for young people: Facilitators’ guide and toolkit* (Geneva).

42 Active labour market policies are designed to improve labour market outcomes for young people within existing institutional and macro-economic constraints; the broader structural economic reforms needed to reduce youth unemployment in the long run are beyond the scope of this Report.

improving youth labour market outcomes, building on the knowledge foundation acquired during childhood through improved basic education and preventing child labour.

8.3.1 Skills development

A variety of TVET programmes are in place in the country under the administrative umbrella of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Policy (TEVET). Notable among them, beyond the public TEVET offered by technical colleges, are the Skills Development Project the Skills and Technical Education Programme (STEP) and the Work Integrated Learning. These efforts have led to progress in terms of increasing access to training for young persons, but both the quality and coverage of training nonetheless remain limited. The fact that the majority of young workers are under-qualified for their jobs (Figure 23) is evidence of unmet training needs. Ensuring training opportunities extend to vulnerable youth with limited levels of formal education remains a particularly important challenge facing the TVET system. This group of vulnerable youth includes those whose education was compromised by involvement in child labour. Access is also especially limited for female youth and for the rural poor.

This discussion points to the importance of continued investment in providing “second chance” opportunities to former working children and other categories of vulnerable youth for acquiring the skills and training needed for work and life. Empirical evidence presented above on educational attainment indicates that such policies are particularly relevant in the Malawi context: many students leave the system prior to the end of the primary education cycle and many of those out of school lack the minimum amount of school time as necessary for acquiring basic literacy skills.

The MGDS III puts youth at the forefront of growth and development. As far as skills development is concerned, it focuses on improved access and equity in skills development training, improved quality of labour force and enhanced workforce capacities and supportive systems.

There are already a number of second chance learning initiatives active in the country, as for example, the UN Joint Programme on Girls education (UNJPGE) providing functional literacy and numeracy skills to both in and out of school girls. Effectively coordinating these wide-ranging efforts, and successfully extending them based on needs-based criteria to ensure they reach all unserved groups of vulnerable youth, however, remain key priorities. Integrating informal training and apprenticeships into the formal system is another priority. Currently, the array of informal training and apprenticeships do not lead to formal certification or qualifications, although National Apprenticeship Programme (NAP) is aimed in part at linking informal apprenticeships with formal TVET institutions. Additional investment is also needed in evaluating the impact of existing efforts and in tracing labour market outcomes of participants, in order to identify the approaches with most potential for expansion.

8.3.2 Job search support

The high levels of skills mismatch among Malawian youth (see discussion in Chapter 7) is suggestive of a need for further investment in job search skills and in formal mechanisms linking young job seekers with appropriate job openings. It will again be especially important to ensure that at-risk youth are able to access these employment services programmes. This can be difficult because most at-risk youth live in either marginal urban or rural areas, while most employment services are offered in more central locations. One criticism of employment services programmes

elsewhere has been that those who benefit from the programmes are typically more qualified and connected to begin with and therefore more likely to become employed. This points to the importance of targeting job search support to disadvantaged young people most in need.

8.3.3 Public works programmes

The high percentage of youth who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) and who are underemployed (see discussion in Chapter 7) points to the need for demand-side measures aimed at improving employment opportunities for young people. Labour-intensive public works programmes targeting young persons represent one important policy option in this context. Such programmes can provide both qualified and unqualified young people with an entry point into the labour market within broader efforts to reduce poverty and develop rural services infrastructure.

There are a range of public works programmes already in place in Malawi, including the Malawi's public work program operating under the Malawi Social Action Fund.⁴³ These programmes do not explicitly target youth and opportunities for youth participation in employment creation programmes are limited. This discussion underscores the need to effectively "mainstream" vulnerable youth into public works programmes as part of broader strategy promoting youth employment. Experience from public works programmes targeting youth outside Malawi indicate that adding mandatory technical, behavioural skills, financial literacy, or job search training to the public works initiatives can further increase their impact in terms of improving youth employment outcomes.

8.3.4 Youth entrepreneurship

Promoting youth entrepreneurship represents another important demand-side strategy for expanding youth employment opportunities and improving employment outcomes for the large proportion of Malawian youth currently underemployed or outside of employment and education.

These efforts notwithstanding, there remains a number of outstanding priorities for expanding youth entrepreneurship opportunities, particularly for vulnerable youth. Priorities in this context include supporting an entrepreneurial culture by including entrepreneurship education and training in school. Easing access to finance, including by guaranteeing loans and supporting micro-credit initiatives, is also critical, as a major stumbling block for young entrepreneurs is the lack of access to credit and seed funding. Expanding access to effective business advisory and support services, and the capacity to deliver them, is another key element in promoting youth entrepreneurship, as isolation and lack of support prevent many potential young entrepreneurs experience from gaining a foothold in the business world. The formation of self-help groups, including cooperatives, by young people would also allow for better access to supplies, credit and market information.

8.3.5 Prioritizing youth

The youth subsector systems and institutions at national and subnational levels in Malawi remain underdeveloped and efforts to improve implementation continued in 2016. Specifically,

⁴³ The key component of World Bank-Government of Ghana funded Ghana Social Opportunities Project aimed at providing short-term employment for very poor and usually unskilled persons in rural communities during the off-agriculture season. Areas of employment include rehabilitation and construction works on rural infrastructure, afforestation, among others.

UNICEF supported the Government to revitalize the implementation of the youth policy and of a medium-term sector strategic plan which comprehensively and holistically addresses adolescent and youth issues for the first time. The overall sub-sector reorganization and prioritization were accelerated by the first-ever national youth conference that provided a policy framework to address issues from the Malawi Youth Status Report 2016. Thus, it is fair to attribute the limited implementation progress to the underdeveloped youth subsector systems and institutions at national and subnational levels.

In addition, internal factors inherent within the implementation mechanism and the respective cross-sectoral bodies exacerbate the situation. Above all, the various programmes face limited resource allocations in relation to the magnitude of youth issues in the country. Given the nascent youth SWAP, one of the major challenges to sector expansion and increasing access of youth to adolescent friendly services in 2016 was limited resources. For instance, while advocacy efforts by partners such as UNICEF resulted in an increased allocation rise from 0.3 per cent in 2012 of the national budget to 0.6 in 2015/16, the budget allocation for the youth sector remained comparatively lower than other sub-sectors. Consequently, at least US\$4 million was leveraged from other UN agencies in 2016.

In addition, the legislative gaps cited above continue to weaken the implementation progress, thereby promoting piecemeal and contradictory approaches for addressing youth employment issues. Moreover, according to the NYP, the national legislation lacks adequate enforcement and cites legislation affecting young offenders like the Children and Young Persons Act as well as the Liquor Licensing Act. In addition, despite existing provisions of relevant legislation, corporal punishment, marriages below the legal age of 18 are still the norm, according to the Malawi Youth Status Report of 2016.

8.3.6 Addressing legislative gaps

Article 10(2)(c) of the Constitution which calls for the interpretation of the constitution with due regard to current norms of international law ensures consistency of national legislation with international and regional youth commitments. As such the domestication of the international conventions ensures consistency of national legislation with international child labour norms through the process of initiating, enacting and implementing policies and legislation in the interest of the people of Malawi also as provided for in Articles 7 – 9 of the constitution. However, key legislative gaps still exist.

Inconsistencies in the age definitions of children and youth among the constitution (child <16 years) and the NYP (youth between ages 10-35 years), Liquor Act (youth <18 years), Children and Young Act (child <14 and youth 14 or above and <18) brings confusion and complicates efforts to understand the link between child labour and youth unemployment. Second, the overlap contradicts some of the efforts to address youth unemployment. For instance, the Liquor Act, which prohibits employment of young persons from any activities related to selling liquor, is indeed contradictory to these efforts. Finally, the national legislation lacks adequate enforcement. For instance, while some of the laws contain adequate provisions, they are not enforced. Examples include those affecting young offenders like the Children and Young Persons Act as well as the Liquor Licensing Act, according to the NYP.

Annex: Additional statistics

Table A1. Employment and school attendance of children aged 5-13 years
(Probit regression, marginal effects reported)

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Children employment	se	School attendance	se
Female	-0.020	(0.013)	0.018**	(0.008)
Age	0.096***	(0.022)	0.163***	(0.012)
Age square	-0.002*	(0.001)	-0.008***	(0.001)
Urban	-0.008	(0.022)	0.022	(0.015)
Children below 5 years	0.003	(0.009)	-0.003	(0.005)
Children between 5 and 17 years	0.014**	(0.007)	-0.011***	(0.004)
Family members between 18 and 64 years	-0.024***	(0.008)	-0.003	(0.005)
Elderly members above 64 years	0.015	(0.019)	0.002	(0.012)
Female headed household	0.034*	(0.018)	0.016	(0.011)
Head household with secondary education	0.018	(0.019)	0.054***	(0.012)
Head household with tertiary education	-0.088*	(0.051)	0.012	(0.037)
Cooking with firewood	0.107***	(0.031)	0.029	(0.021)
Electricity	-0.032	(0.021)	0.024*	(0.014)
Piped water	-0.086***	(0.030)	0.051**	(0.021)
Quintile 2	-0.051***	(0.018)	-0.014	(0.011)
Quintile 3	-0.065***	(0.020)	0.016	(0.012)
Quintile 4	-0.059***	(0.021)	0.026**	(0.013)
Quintile 5	-0.078***	(0.025)	0.011	(0.015)
Center	-0.039**	(0.016)	0.009	(0.009)
South	0.051***	(0.015)	0.015*	(0.009)
Observations	6,986		6,986	

Notes: Standard errors (se) in parentheses.
*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Table A2. Mutual exclusive work-study categories (aged 5-13 years)
(probit regression, marginal effects reported)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
VARIABLES	Work Only	se	Study Only	se	Work and Study	se	Nothing	se
Female	-0.003	(0.005)	0.037***	(0.014)	-0.017	(0.013)	-0.015**	(0.007)
Age	-0.040***	(0.008)	0.085***	(0.022)	0.148***	(0.022)	-0.109***	(0.010)
Age square	0.002***	(0.000)	-0.007***	(0.001)	-0.005***	(0.001)	0.005***	(0.001)
Urban	-0.006	(0.008)	0.023	(0.023)	-0.001	(0.022)	-0.014	(0.013)
Children below 5 years	0.008***	(0.003)	0.005	(0.009)	-0.004	(0.009)	-0.006	(0.004)
Children between 5 and 17 years	0.003	(0.003)	-0.024***	(0.007)	0.011	(0.007)	0.007**	(0.003)
Family members between 18 and 64 years	-0.001	(0.003)	0.022**	(0.009)	-0.023***	(0.008)	0.004	(0.004)
Elderly members above 64 years	0.004	(0.006)	-0.007	(0.020)	0.012	(0.019)	-0.006	(0.010)
Female headed household	0.005	(0.006)	-0.015	(0.019)	0.029*	(0.018)	-0.024**	(0.010)
Head household with secondary education	-0.014*	(0.007)	0.018	(0.019)	0.031*	(0.018)	-0.038***	(0.010)
Head household with tertiary education(a)	--	--	0.076	(0.054)	-0.066	(0.050)	0.010	(0.028)
Cooking with firewood	-0.013	(0.013)	-0.098***	(0.031)	0.127***	(0.030)	-0.016	(0.019)
Electricity	-0.023**	(0.009)	0.037*	(0.022)	-0.016	(0.021)	-0.003	(0.011)
Piped water	-0.052**	(0.020)	0.091***	(0.032)	-0.064**	(0.030)	-0.021	(0.018)
Quintile 2	0.013**	(0.006)	0.054***	(0.019)	-0.066***	(0.018)	-0.003	(0.009)
Quintile 3	-0.007	(0.007)	0.077***	(0.021)	-0.059***	(0.020)	-0.012	(0.010)
Quintile 4	-0.003	(0.008)	0.083***	(0.022)	-0.057***	(0.021)	-0.025**	(0.011)
Quintile 5	0.013	(0.009)	0.104***	(0.025)	-0.090***	(0.024)	-0.028**	(0.013)
Center	0.006	(0.006)	0.051***	(0.017)	-0.045***	(0.016)	-0.016**	(0.008)
South	-0.002	(0.006)	-0.039**	(0.016)	0.054***	(0.015)	-0.012	(0.007)
Observations	6,849		6,986		6,986		6,986	

Notes: Standard errors (se) in parentheses.
(a) The coefficient for tertiary education for the "Work Only specification was not estimated because of few observations in this sub-group.
Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Table A3. Wage regression of log monthly wage on its determinants (aged 15-35 years) (OLS)

	coeff.	se
Female	-0.435***	(0.089)
Secondary	0.375***	(0.113)
Tertiary	1.303***	(0.222)
Female X secondary education	-0.105	(0.156)
Female X tertiary education	0.061	(0.466)
Age	0.318***	(0.064)
Age square	-0.005***	(0.001)
Urban	0.530***	(0.094)
Children below 5 years	0.016	(0.049)
Children between 5 and 17 years	-0.082***	(0.025)
Family members between 18 and 64 years	0.019	(0.037)
Elderly members above 64 years	-0.127	(0.148)
Center	0.100	(0.077)
South	-0.321***	(0.076)
Constant	4.233***	(0.808)
Observations	2,700	
R-squared	0.211	

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses.
*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Table A4. Aggregate labour market indicators for young people aged 15-24 years

		Labour force (employed and unemployed)	In education	Inactive not attending school	NEET	Employment rate	Unemployment rate
TOTAL		85.5	49.3	2.9	4.6	83.8	4.0
Sex	Male	86	57.1	2.5	3.9	84.6	4.0
	Female	85	42	3.3	5.2	83.1	4.0
Residence	Urban	77.3	48.7	5.4	8.5	74.2	7.9
	Rural	87.3	49.5	2.4	3.8	85.9	3.2
Age class	15-19 years	78.6	68.6	3.7	5.2	77.1	5.0
	20-24 years	96.1	19.5	1.6	3.6	94.1	2.6
Region	North	84.8	51.4	2.2	4	83.1	4.9
	Center	85.6	46.4	3.2	5.4	83.4	4.9
	South	85.6	51.6	2.9	4	84.5	2.7

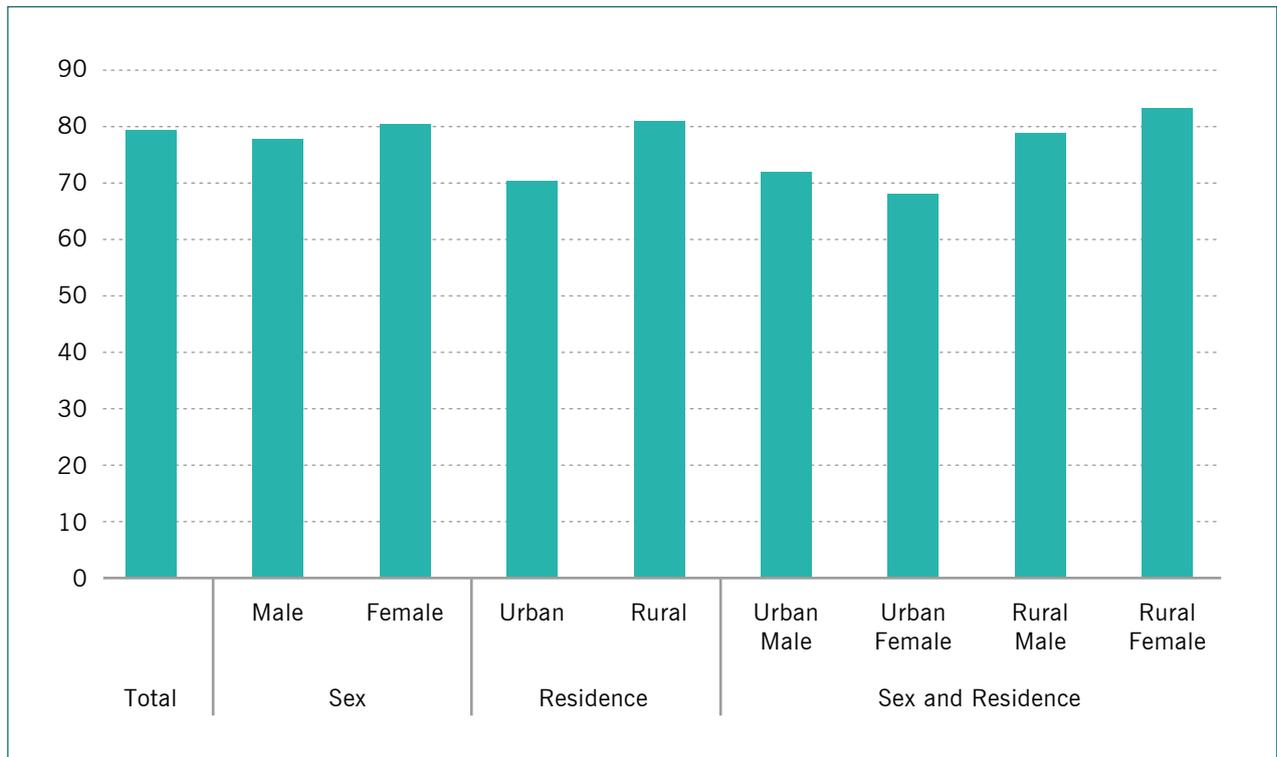
Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Table A5. Percentage of inactive, unemployed and NEET young people aged 15-24 years by residence, sex, age class and region

	Total	Sex		Residence		Sex and Residence				Age class	
		Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Urban Male	Urban Female	Rural Male	Rural Female	15-19 years	20-24 years
Inactive not attending school	2.9	2.5	3.3	5.4	2.4	4.4	6.3	2.1	2.7	3.7	1.6
Unemployment rate	4.0	4.0	4.0	7.9	3.2	8.1	7.6	3.2	3.2	5.0	2.6
NEET	4.6	3.9	5.2	8.5	3.8	7.2	9.6	3.3	4.2	5.2	3.6

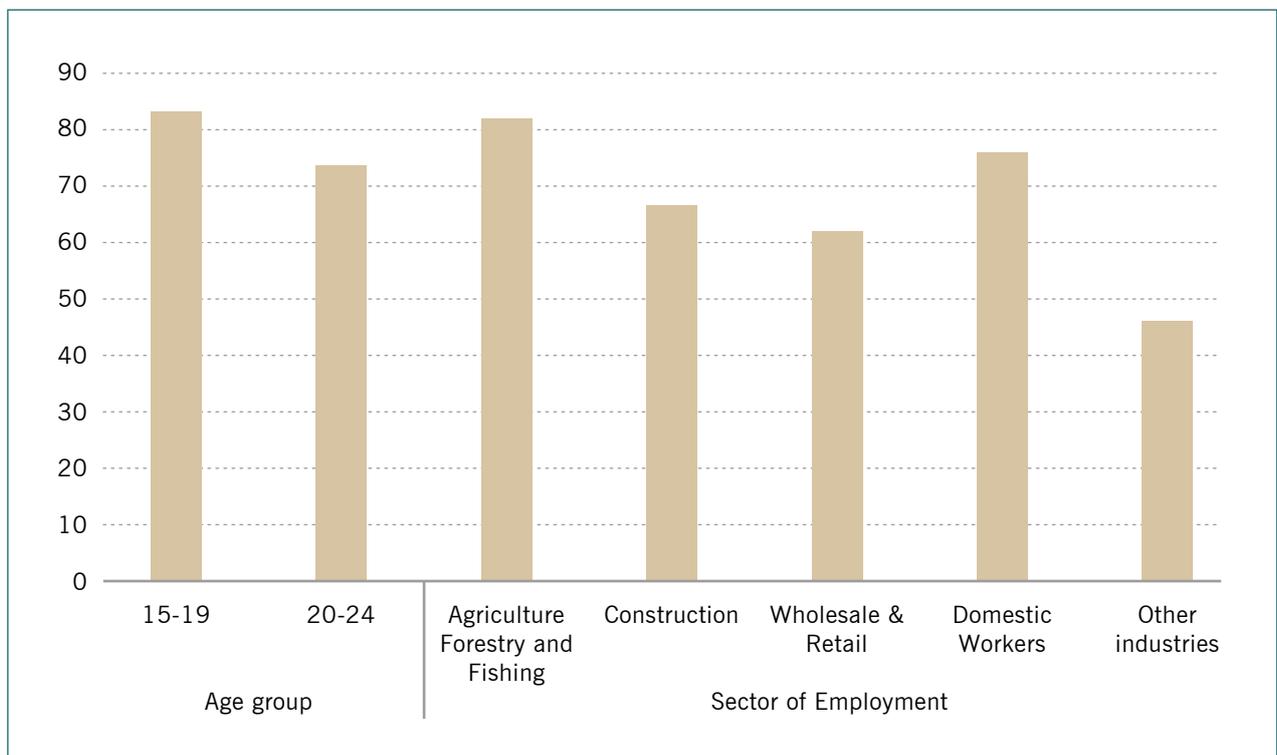
Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Figure A1. Percentage of young people aged 15-24 years in underemployment by sex and residence



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Figure A2. Percentage of young people aged 15-24 years in underemployment by age group and sector



Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Table A6. Classification of skill levels, by sex, residence and sector

	Sex			Residence		Sector		
	Total	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Agriculture Forestry and Fishing	Industry	Services
Level 3+4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Level 4	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.2	0	4.4	0
Level 3	0.1	0.1	0	0.4	0	0	0	0.3
Level 2	29.5	22.4	36.2	30.6	29.2	29.8	51.1	22.5
Level 1	70.3	77.2	63.7	68.8	70.6	70.2	44.5	77.2

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Table A7. Employment of young people aged 15-24 years by sector and type

Employment by sector and type	
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	77.3
Construction	1.9
Wholesale & retail	4.5
Domestic workers	14.4
Other industries	1.9
Employee	7.6
Self-employed	22.3
Unpaid family worker	70.1

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Table A8. Sector of employment of young people aged 15-24 years by residence and sex

	Total	Urban	Rural	Male	Female
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	77.3	43.9	83.5	79.5	75.2
Construction	1.9	2.2	1.9	2.6	1.3
Wholesale & retail	4.5	11.7	3.2	3.8	5.2
Domestic workers	14.4	37.3	10.1	11.9	16.8
Other industries	1.9	4.9	1.3	2.2	1.6

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

Table A9. Status in employment of young people aged 15-24 years by residence and sex

	Total	Urban	Rural	Male	Female
Employee	7.6	14.6	6.3	9.8	5.5
Self-employed	22.3	20.4	22.7	20.9	23.6
Unpaid family worker	70.1	65.1	71	69.2	70.9

Source: Calculations based on: Malawi National Child Labour Survey (NCLS) 2015.

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