

## **PREFACE**

The 1998 Population and Housing Census is the fourth of the censuses that have been conducted in Malawi in the post-independence era. The first census was conducted in 1966 and was on both the de jure and de facto basis. In the de jure census a person is enumerated according to where he/she usually lives. In the de facto census a person is enumerated at a place where he/she was found at the time of the census. The second was in 1977 and the third one was conducted in 1987.

The fourth one had been planned for 1997 but because of funding problems the census had to be postponed until 1998. Both the 1987 and 1998 Censuses collected data on population and housing characteristics and were de facto censuses.

In the three previous censuses the majority of the census field staff were seconded from other government departments, notably the Ministry of Education and Culture and Office of the President and Cabinet (District Administration). The majority of those recruited to work as enumerators or supervisors in the 1998 Population and Housing Census were recruited from the open market and were deployed to work in the areas where they were usually residing.

This report presents the major findings of the 1998 Population and Housing Census. It shows, among other things, data on the population size, age-sex composition, survival status of parents of children aged 20 years or less, and spatial distribution of the population, literacy, as well as the 1987-98 annual population growth rates.

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## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

### 1 POPULATION GROWTH

The 1998 Population and Housing Census enumerated a total population of 9.9 million. Of this total, 4.9 million or 49 percent were males and 5.0 million were females. The 1998 population grew from about 8.0 million in 1987 and represents a population growth rate of 2.0 percent per annum and an increase of 1.9 million persons or 24 percent.

At regional level, the population in the Northern Region grew the fastest from around 900,000 in 1987 to about 1.2 million in 1998, depicting an annual population growth rate of 2.8 percent. The population in the Central Region grew from 3.1 million in 1987 to 4.1 million in 1998 and that in the Southern Region grew from around 4.0 million in 1987 to about 4.6 million in 1998. The annual population growth rates in the Central and Southern Regions were 2.4 and 1.4 percent respectively.

**TABLE A: TOTAL POPULATION: 1901-1998 CENSUSES**

YEAR OF CENSUS	TOTAL POPULATION	AVERAGE ANNUAL INTERCENSAL GROWTH RATE (%)
1901	737,153*	-
1911	970,430*	2.8
1921	1,201,983*	2.2
1926	1,263,291	1.5
1931	1,573,454	4.4
1945	2,049,914	2.2
1966	4,039,583	3.3
1977	5,547,460	2.9
1987	7,988,507	3.7
1998	9,933,868	2.0

Note: \* De jure population

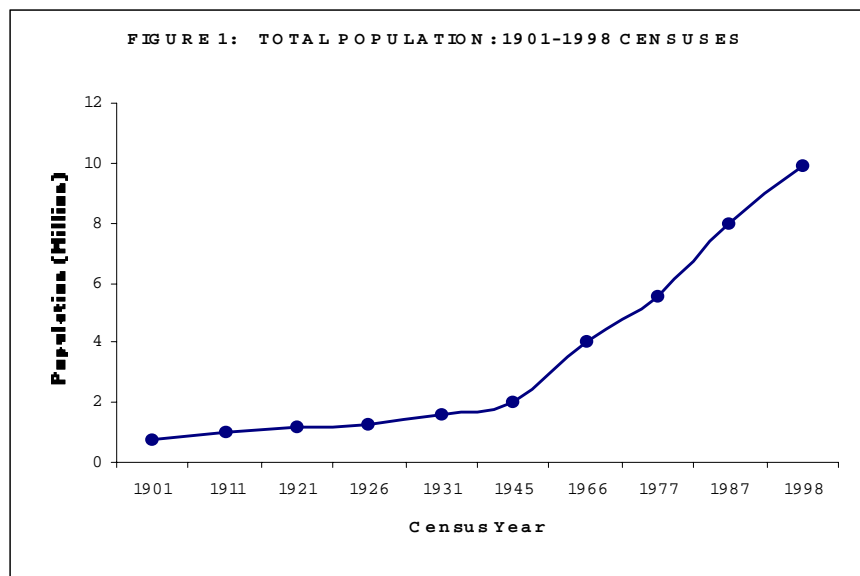
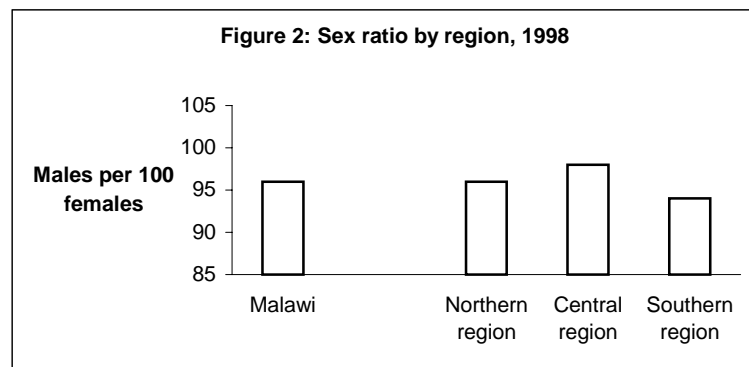


Table A shows the population growth in Malawi since 1901. In the last century population in Malawi grew from an estimated 737,000 in 1901 to about 970,000 in 1911, representing an annual growth rate of 2.8 percent. The population further grew to about 1.6 million in 1931, 2.0 million in 1945 and up to about 4.0 million in 1966. During the 1966-77 intercensal period the population grew by 2.9 percent per annum from 4.0 million in 1966 to around 5.5 million in 1977. With the influx of the war refugees from Mozambique, the population further grew to about 8.0 million in 1987 at an annual growth rate of 3.7 percent.

Annual population growth rates at district level show that population in the districts that lie along the border with Mozambique grew with the slowest rates. This suggests that the repatriation of Mozambican war refugees who were concentrated in these districts during the 1987-1998 intercensal period had an impact on the growth of the population. Most of these districts are in the Southern Region and some, such as Ntcheu and Dedza Districts, are in the Central Region.

## 2 SEX RATIO

The Sex Ratio defined as the number of males per 100 females shows that more females than males lived in Malawi in 1998.



The final results show that about 51 percent of the total population enumerated in 1998 were females. This implies that the overall sex ratio at national level was 96 males per 100 females.

It is also worth noting that sex ratios in the four major urban areas of Lilongwe, Blantyre and Mzuzu Cities and the Municipality of Zomba and Kasungu, Mchinji and Nkhotakota Districts indicate that more males than females lived in these areas. The highest sex ratio (110.8) is observed in Lilongwe City whereas Likoma District (85.9), Mulanje District (88.3), Phalombe (89.0), Chiradzulu (89.3), Dedza (89.8), Ntcheu (90.2) and Thyolo (90.8) exhibit the lowest sex ratios. However, on the overall sex ratios in 1998 were higher than the corresponding sex ratios in 1987 (Table B).

The results further show that the distribution of the population by sex and age in the Northern Region was the same as that for Malawi as a whole. In the case of Central Region, approximately half of the population were females and the sex ratio was 98 while in the Southern Region the proportion of females was 52 percent and the corresponding sex ratio was 94. In each of the regions at least half of the population was aged 18 or older and between 16 and 17 percent were under-five children.

At district level Mulanje, Phalombe, Chiradzulu, Dedza, Ntcheu (53 percent each) and Thyolo (52 percent) had the highest proportions of females. Thus these districts had the least sex ratios ranging from 88.3 in Mulanje to 90.8 in Thyolo.

In the case of each of the four major urban areas of Mzuzu, Lilongwe and Blantyre Cities and the Municipality of Zomba about 48 percent were females and the sex ratio was at least 106.

**TABLE B: POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY SEX, SEX RATIO AND REGION/DISTRICT: 1987 AND 1998**

Region/ District	1987				1998			
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Sex Ratio	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Sex Ratio
<b>MALAWI</b>	<b>7,988,507</b>	<b>3,867,136</b>	<b>4,121,371</b>	<b>93.8</b>	<b>9,933,868</b>	<b>4,867,563</b>	<b>5,066,305</b>	<b>96.1</b>
<b>NORTHERN REGION</b>	<b>911,787</b>	<b>441,290</b>	<b>470,497</b>	<b>93.8</b>	<b>1,233,560</b>	<b>601,752</b>	<b>631,808</b>	<b>95.2</b>
Chitipa	96,794	45,797	50,997	89.8	126,799	60,682	66,117	91.8
Karonga	148,014	71,304	76,710	93.0	194,572	93,673	100,899	92.8
Nkhata Bay	130,189	63,858	66,331	96.3	164,761	80,107	84,654	94.6
Rumphi	94,902	46,162	48,740	94.7	128,360	63,272	65,088	97.2
Mzimba	433,696	210,427	223,269	94.2	610,994	300,287	310,707	96.6
Likoma	8,192	3,742	4,450	84.1	8,074	3,731	4,343	85.9
<b>CENTRAL REGION</b>	<b>3,110,986</b>	<b>1,521,234</b>	<b>1,589,752</b>	<b>95.7</b>	<b>4,066,340</b>	<b>2,016,166</b>	<b>2,050,174</b>	<b>98.3</b>
Kasungu	323,453	167,705	155,748	107.7	480,659	247,850	232,809	106.5
Nkhotakota	158,044	79,314	78,730	100.7	229,460	114,847	114,613	100.2
Ntchisi	120,860	59,118	61,742	95.8	167,880	83,595	84,285	99.2
Dowa	322,432	157,968	164,464	96.1	411,387	203,828	207,559	98.2
Salima	189,173	91,896	97,277	94.5	248,214	121,994	126,220	96.7
Lilongwe	976,627	482,776	493,851	97.8	1,346,360	673,854	672,506	100.2
Mchinji	249,843	127,637	122,206	104.4	324,941	164,090	160,851	102.0
Dedza	411,787	189,950	221,837	85.6	486,682	230,237	256,445	89.8
Ntcheu	358,767	164,870	193,897	85.0	370,757	175,871	194,886	90.2
<b>SOUTHERN REGION</b>	<b>3,965,734</b>	<b>1,904,612</b>	<b>2,061,122</b>	<b>92.0</b>	<b>4,633,968</b>	<b>2,249,645</b>	<b>2,384,323</b>	<b>94.0</b>
Mangochi	496,578	234,592	261,986	89.5	610,239	293,217	317,022	92.5
Machinga	301,849	141,099	160,750	87.8	369,614	176,853	192,761	91.7
Zomba	441,615	209,578	232,037	90.3	546,661	265,859	280,802	94.7
Chiradzulu	210,912	97,327	113,585	85.7	236,050	111,376	124,674	89.3
Blantyre	589,525	304,148	285,377	106.6	809,397	413,429	395,968	104.4
Mwanza	121,513	57,157	64,356	88.8	138,015	67,087	70,928	94.6
Thyolo	431,157	208,139	223,018	93.3	458,976	218,381	240,595	90.8
Mulanje	419,928	196,630	223,298	88.1	428,322	200,834	227,488	88.3
Phalombe	218,134	100,328	117,806	85.2	231,990	109,229	122,761	89.0
Chikwawa	316,733	156,886	159,847	98.1	356,682	178,217	178,465	99.9
Nsanje	204,374	98,278	106,096	92.6	194,924	94,457	100,467	94.0
Balaka	213,416	100,450	112,966	88.9	253,098	120,706	132,392	91.2

### 3 AGE-SEX DISTRIBUTION

The final results of the 1998 Population and Housing Census further show that in Malawi 1.7 million were under-five children and about 4.9 million were aged 18 years or more.

Both at national and regional levels the census results reveal that about 17 percent were under-five children and approximately half of the population enumerated were aged 18 years or older. Thus the median age of the population in Malawi was 18 years. This shows that Malawi has a young population where approximately one in every six persons was an under-five child.

Furthermore, about 4 percent of the total Malawi population were infants aged less than 1 year while a further 4 percent were elderly persons aged 65 years or older.

In rural areas, male and female infants aged less than 1 year each constituted about 4 percent of the total population while under-five female and male children each contributed about 17 percent to the total population. The proportions of infants and under-five children in urban areas are similar to those in the rural areas although in general they are slightly lower.

**TABLE C: POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY BROAD AGE GROUP AND DISTRICT/REGION**

Region/ District	Total	AGE GROUP (Years)				
		Under 1	1 - 4	5 - 14	15 - 64	65 and Over
<b>MALAWI</b>	<b>9,933,868</b>	<b>368,325</b>	<b>1,292,065</b>	<b>2,672,870</b>	<b>5,206,150</b>	<b>394,458</b>
<b>NORTHERN REGION</b>	<b>1,233,560</b>	<b>43,144</b>	<b>165,936</b>	<b>343,682</b>	<b>634,675</b>	<b>46,123</b>
Chitipa	126,799	4,404	17,201	38,614	61,934	4,646
Karonga	194,572	6,061	26,646	55,220	100,128	6,517
Nkhata Bay	164,761	5,276	21,643	45,122	85,679	7,041
Rumphi	128,360	4,447	17,741	35,001	66,811	4,360
Mzimba	610,994	22,756	81,741	167,418	316,018	23,061
Likoma	8,074	200	964	2,307	4,105	498
<b>CENTRAL REGION</b>	<b>4,066,340</b>	<b>156,890</b>	<b>551,200</b>	<b>1,104,115</b>	<b>2,102,439</b>	<b>151,696</b>
Kasungu	480,659	20,279	66,055	129,724	251,874	12,727
Nkhotakota	229,460	9,077	32,333	62,909	117,545	7,596
Ntchisi	167,880	5,758	22,665	47,707	84,753	6,997
Dowa	411,387	14,151	57,350	112,964	209,944	16,978
Salima	248,214	9,715	34,263	67,484	126,669	10,083
Lilongwe	1,346,360	52,125	178,948	355,973	714,443	44,871
Mchinji	324,941	13,038	45,159	90,243	166,040	10,461
Dedza	486,682	18,483	67,425	134,033	242,816	23,925
Ntcheu	370,757	14,264	47,002	103,078	188,355	18,058
<b>SOUTHERN REGION</b>	<b>4,633,968</b>	<b>168,291</b>	<b>574,929</b>	<b>1,225,073</b>	<b>2,469,036</b>	<b>196,639</b>
Mangochi	610,239	23,346	82,245	162,640	314,423	27,585
Machinga	369,614	13,587	50,162	99,087	188,235	18,543
Zomba	546,661	20,739	65,446	141,769	294,445	24,262
Chiradzulu	236,050	8,453	26,965	63,129	125,455	12,048
Blantyre	809,397	26,946	91,392	205,919	466,387	18,753
Mwanza	138,015	5,734	17,978	37,925	71,236	5,142
Thyolo	458,976	16,700	55,344	123,499	242,650	20,783
Mulanje	428,322	15,765	49,145	112,491	230,473	20,448
Phalombe	231,990	8,640	28,860	60,923	122,661	10,906
Chikwawa	356,682	12,246	48,071	95,856	185,587	14,922
Nsanje	194,924	6,726	26,906	52,987	97,570	10,735
Balaka	253,098	9,409	32,415	68,848	129,914	12,512

The population distribution by age and sex in each of the three regions is similar to that of Malawi as a whole. At district level, however, Zomba Municipality had the least proportion of infants aged less than 1 year (2.8 percent) as well as children aged less than 5 years (14.3 percent). Other districts with low proportions of infants aged under one include Blantyre City (3.3 percent), Mzuzu City (3.4 percent), Chiradzulu and Thyolo (3.6 percent each), Phalombe (3.7 percent) and Lilongwe City (3.8 percent). The proportions of under-five children in each of these districts, regardless of sex, are between 14 and 16 percent.

#### **4 SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION AND POPULATION DENSITY**

About 47 percent of the total population in 1998 lived in the Southern Region. The corresponding figures for the Central and Northern Regions were 41 and 12 percent

respectively (Table D). The regional distribution pattern appears to have remained the same as that of 1987.

Further to that 14 percent of the population lived in the urban areas of the country. However, 11 percent of the total population lived in the four major urban areas and only 3 percent lived in the other urban areas, which mostly consist of Bomas and gazetted townships. Furthermore, urban population in Malawi had grown from about 850,000 in 1987 to around 1.4 million in 1998. This represents an annual growth rate of 4.7 percent during the 1987-1998 intercensal period. The urban population in Malawi had increased by 68 percent during the intercensal period.

**TABLE D: POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, DENSITY AND LAND AREA BY DISTRICT: 1977, 1987 AND 1998**

REGION/ DISTRICT	LAND AREA (sq. Km.)	POPULATION CENSUS			DENSITY			PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION 1998
		1977	1987	1998	1977	1987	1998	
<b>MALAWI</b>	<b>94,276</b>	<b>5,547,460</b>	<b>7,988,507</b>	<b>9,933,868</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>NORTHERN REGION</b>	<b>26,931</b>	<b>648,853</b>	<b>911,787</b>	<b>1,233,560</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>12.4</b>
Chitipa	4,288	72,316	96,794	126,799	21	23	30	1.3
Karonga	3,355	106,923	148,014	194,572	36	44	58	2.0
Nkhata Bay	4,071	97,949	130,189	164,761	24	32	40	1.7
Rumphi	4,769	62,450	94,902	128,360	11	20	27	1.3
Mzimba	10,430	301,361	433,696	610,994	29	42	59	6.2
Likoma	18	7,854	8,192	8,074	436	455	449	0.1
<b>CENTRAL REGION</b>	<b>35,592</b>	<b>2,143,716</b>	<b>3,110,986</b>	<b>4,066,340</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>40.9</b>
Kasungu	7,878	194,436	323,453	480,659	25	41	61	4.8
Nkhotakota	4,259	94,370	158,044	229,460	22	37	54	2.3
Ntchisi	1,655	87,437	120,860	167,880	53	73	101	1.7
Dowa	3,041	247,603	322,432	411,387	81	106	135	4.1
Salima	2,196	132,276	189,173	248,214	60	86	113	2.5
Lilongwe	6,159	704,117	976,627	1,346,360	114	159	219	13.6
Mchinji	3,356	158,833	249,843	324,941	47	74	97	3.3
Dedza	3,624	298,190	411,787	486,682	82	114	134	4.9
Ntcheu	3,424	226,454	358,767	370,757	66	105	108	3.7
<b>SOUTHERN REGION</b>	<b>31,753</b>	<b>2,754,891</b>	<b>3,965,734</b>	<b>4,633,968</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>46.6</b>
Mangochi	6,273	302,341	496,578	610,239	48	79	97	6.1
Machinga	3,771	195,249	301,849	369,614	52	80	98	3.7
Zomba	2,580	352,334	441,615	546,661	137	171	212	5.5
Chiradzulu	767	176,184	210,912	236,050	230	275	308	2.4
Blantyre	2,012	408,062	589,525	809,397	203	293	402	8.1
Mwanza	2,295	71,405	121,513	138,015	31	53	60	1.4
Thyolo	1,715	322,000	431,157	458,976	188	251	268	4.6
Mulanje	2,056	307,804	419,928	428,322	150	204	208	4.3
Phalombe	1,394	169,742	218,134	231,990	122	156	166	2.3
Chikwawa	4,755	194,425	316,733	356,682	41	67	75	3.6
Nsanje	1,942	108,758	204,374	194,924	56	105	100	2.0
Balaka	2,193	146,587	213,416	253,098	67	97	115	2.5

At district level, Table D shows that the largest population was enumerated in Lilongwe (1,346,000 or 13.6 percent), Blantyre (809,000 or 8.1 percent), Mzimba (611,000 or 6.2 percent), Mangochi (610,000 or 6.1 percent) and Zomba (547,000 or 5.5 percent). On the other hand, the least populated districts were Likoma (8,000 or 0.1 percent), Chitipa (127,000 or 1.3 percent), Rumphi

(128,000 or 1.3 percent), Mwanza (138,000 or 1.4 percent) and Ntchisi (168,000 or 1.7 percent). At regional level, the Northern Region (46) was the least densely populated whereas the Southern Region (146) was the most densely populated of the three regions. The population density in the Central Region stood at 114 persons per square kilometre. At district level, Rumphi (27) was the least densely populated and Likoma (449), Blantyre (402) and Chiradzulu (308) were the most densely populated districts in Malawi.

## 5 INTERCENSAL POPULATION INCREASE AND ANNUAL GROWTH RATES

As already noted the Malawi population increased by 24 percent between 1987 and 1998 representing an intercensal growth rate of 2.0 percent per annum. Furthermore, the results indicate that the population of the Northern Region increased by 35 percent between 1987 and 1998 while that of the Central Region increased by 31 percent and the Southern Region by 17 percent. The intercensal annual growth rates for the Northern, Central and Southern Regions are 2.7, 2.4 and 1.4 percent respectively.

**TABLE E: INTERCENSAL ANNUAL GROWTH RATES BY SEX AND POPULATION INCREASE DURING 1977-87 AND 1987-98 INTERCENSAL PERIODS**

REGION/ DISTRICT	ANNUAL GROWTH RATE (%)						POPULATION INCREASE (%)	
	1977 - 1987			1987 - 1998			1977 - 87	1987 - 98
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female		
<b>MALAWI</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>24.4</b>
<b>NORTHERN REGION</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>40.5</b>	<b>35.3</b>
Chitipa	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.5	2.6	2.4	33.9	31.0
Karonga	3.3	3.5	3.1	2.5	2.5	2.5	38.4	31.5
Rumphu	4.2	4.7	3.8	2.1	2.1	2.2	52.0	35.3
Nkhatabay	2.7	3.0	2.5	2.7	2.9	2.6	32.9	26.6
Mzimba	3.7	3.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.0	43.9	40.9
Likoma	0.4	0.4	0.5	-0.1	0.0	-0.2	4.3	-1.4
<b>CENTRAL REGION</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>30.7</b>
Kasungu	5.1	5.1	5.1	3.6	3.6	3.7	66.4	48.6
Nkhotakota	5.2	5.6	4.8	3.4	3.4	3.4	67.5	45.2
Ntchisi	3.3	3.5	3.1	3.0	3.1	2.8	38.2	38.9
Dowa	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.2	2.3	2.1	30.2	27.6
Salima	3.6	3.6	3.6	2.5	2.6	2.4	43.0	31.2
Lilongwe	3.3	3.3	3.3	2.9	3.0	2.8	38.7	37.9
Mchinji	4.6	4.6	4.5	2.4	2.3	2.5	57.3	30.1
Dedza	3.2	3.3	3.2	1.5	1.7	1.3	38.1	18.2
Ntcheu	4.6	4.6	4.7	0.3	0.6	0.0	58.4	3.3
<b>SOUTHERN REGION</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>16.9</b>
Mangochi	5.0	5.3	4.7	1.9	2.0	1.7	64.2	22.9
Machinga	4.1	4.3	4.0	1.8	2.1	1.7	54.6	22.4
Zomba	2.3	2.1	2.4	1.9	2.2	1.7	25.3	23.8
Chiradzulu	1.8	1.7	1.9	1.0	1.2	0.8	19.7	11.9
Blantyre	3.7	3.6	3.8	2.9	2.8	3.0	44.5	37.3
Mwanza	5.3	5.3	5.4	1.2	1.5	0.9	70.2	13.6
Thyolo	2.9	2.8	3.1	0.6	0.4	0.7	33.9	6.5
Mulanje	2.9	2.8	3.0	0.2	0.2	0.2	36.4	2.0
Phalombe	2.5	2.3	2.7	0.6	0.8	0.4	28.5	6.4
Chikwawa	4.9	5.0	4.8	1.1	1.2	1.0	62.9	12.6
Nsanje	6.3	6.5	6.2	-0.4	-0.4	-0.5	87.9	-4.6
Balaka	3.8	3.8	3.8	1.6	1.7	1.4	45.6	18.6

The final results also show that the districts with the highest annual intercensal growth rates were Kasungu (3.6 percent), Nkhotakota (3.4 percent), Mzimba (3.1 percent), Ntchisi (3.0 percent), Lilongwe and Blantyre (2.9 percent each), Nkhata Bay (2.7 percent). Districts with lowest annual intercensal growth rates were Thyolo and Phalombe (0.6 percent each), Ntcheu (0.3 percent), Mulanje (0.2 percent), while Nsanje and Likoma Districts had negative intercensal annual growth rates of -0.4 and -0.1 percent respectively (Table E).

Amongst Malawi's 4 major urban centres, Mzuzu and Lilongwe Cities had the highest population increases of 97 and 95 percent respectively and their intercensal growth rates were 6.2 and 6.1 percent per annum respectively. As for Blantyre City and Zomba Municipality, population had increased by about 44 and 48 percent respectively between 1987 and 1998. The intercensal growth

rate for Blantyre City was 3.3 percent per annum while that of Zomba Municipality was 3.6 percent per annum.

## **6 NATIONALITY, LANGUAGE AND RELIGION**

The final census results show that about 99 percent of the total population enumerated in Malawi were Malawians. The majority of the foreign-born population were Mozambicans who though contributed only 0.3 percent of the total population.

The census results further reveal that around 5.7 million or 57 percent of the total population in Malawi used Chichewa as their language of communication in their households. The other languages most commonly used for communication within households were Chinyanja (13 percent), Chiyao (10 percent) and Chitumbuka (9 percent).

In the Northern Region, the most popular language used in households was Chitumbuka (65 percent), followed by Chitonga (11 percent) and Chichewa was used as a medium of communication in households by only 5 percent of the total population enumerated in the Region. On the other hand, in the Central Region 91 percent of the population enumerated in the Region used Chichewa as their language of communication within their households. Chitumbuka and Chiyao (about 3 percent each) were the other languages that were commonly used for communication in households in the Region. In the Southern Region, the most commonly used language for communication in households was Chichewa (42 percent) followed by Chinyanja (26 percent). Chiyao was used for communication within households by 19 percent of the population in the Region.

It is also noted that of the 9.9 million people enumerated in the 1998 Population and Housing Census, about 7.9 million or 80 percent were Christians and a further 1.3 million or 13 percent were Moslems. The proportions of Christians in the Northern, Central and Southern Regions were 96, 83 and 73 percent respectively while about 1, 7 and 21 percent of the populations in the three respective regions were Moslems.

## **7 EDUCATION AND LITERACY**

The census enumerated about 8.3 million persons aged 5 years or older. Of this total, 4.8 million or 58 percent were able to read and write at least one particular language. The results reveal that literacy rate for Malawi as a whole increased from 42 percent in 1987 by about 38 percent. Literacy rates among males and females in 1998 stood at 64 and 51 percent respectively. In 1987 the corresponding literacy rates were 52 and 32 percent for males and females respectively.

A preliminary analysis of the census data further shows that the highest literacy rates are observed in the Northern Region where about 72 percent of the persons enumerated in the Region reported being literate as compared to 55 percent and 57 percent in the Central and Southern Regions respectively. It is also noted that literacy rates for males were 76, 61 and 64 percent in the Northern, Central and Southern Regions respectively. Female literacy rates were generally lower than those for their male counterparts in each of the regions: they were 68, 48 and 49 percent in the Northern, Central and Southern Regions respectively.

A marked variation in literacy rates, however, exists between rural and urban populations in Malawi. In urban areas 79 percent of the population aged 5 years or over were literate as opposed to only 54 percent in the rural areas, while 83 and 75 percent of the male and female populations aged 5 years or more respectively in urban areas were literate. The corresponding literacy rates in rural areas were 61 percent for males and 47 percent for females.

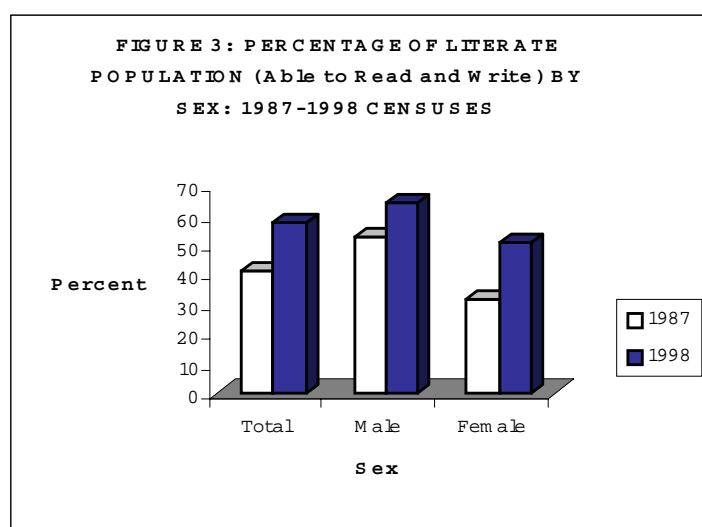
The results further show that of the total population aged 5 years or older, 2.7 million or about a third had never attended any school. Around 4.9 million (59 percent) had attended primary school

and a further 700,000 (8 percent) had been to secondary school and only 28,000 (less than 0.3 percent) had attended beyond secondary school education. Sex differences in school attendance are evident from the results. About 1.1 million (26 percent) males had never attended school as compared to 1.6 million (39 percent) females. On the other hand, males and females who had attended primary school were roughly of equal magnitude: 2.5 million (63 percent) for males and 2.4 million females (56 percent). However, about 20,000 males (0.5 percent) as opposed to 8,000 females (0.2 percent) had attended higher education.

The final results also reveal that 500,000 (6 percent) had Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLC) as the highest education attainment while 7.3 million (88 percent) did not have any academic certificate and 280,000 (3 percent) had Junior Certificate (JC). Furthermore, about 172,000 or 2 percent of those aged 5 years or older had attained a Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) while only 17,000 or 0.2 percent had either a University Degree or Diploma. Similar patterns exist by sex in each of the three regions.

It is also noted that of the 5.2 million persons aged 5-29 years, about 2.4 million (46 percent) were attending primary, secondary or university education during the one-month period prior to the census; that is, in August 1998. Of those attending formal education, the majority of them, that is 2.2 million persons (90 percent) were attending primary school education, 230,000 (9.6 percent) and only 3,000 (0.1 percent) were attending secondary and university education respectively.

It is further noted that of the 2.5 million males and 2.7 million females aged 5-29 years, about 1.3



million males (50 percent) and 1.1 million females (50 percent) were in school during the reference period. Regardless of sex, the majority of those attending formal education were in primary schools (88 percent females and 92 percent males). The results furthermore show that sex differentials in education are sharp only for males and females attending secondary school or university education. Around 144,000 males (6 percent) were attending secondary school education and 2,100 (0.1 percent) were in the university while only 86,000 (3 percent) and 900 (less than 0.05 percent) were attending secondary school and university education respectively.

## 8 SURVIVAL STATUS OF PARENTS

The census results also show that there were about 5.7 million persons aged 20 years or younger. Of these around 5.1 million (90 percent) reported that their both parents were alive and about 88,000 (1.5 percent) reported that their both parents were dead. Furthermore, there were about 480,000 persons aged 20 years or less with only one parent alive. About 333,000 persons

(69 percent) reported that their fathers were dead and about 147,000 reported that their mothers were dead at the time of the census.

In rural areas, about 467,000 persons (9.6 percent) aged 20 years or less reported that either their mother or father was dead or both their parents were dead as opposed to about 100,000 persons (12.5 percent) in urban areas. In general, the proportion of children with one parent or both parents dead in rural areas is lower than that in urban areas.

At regional level, the highest proportions of persons aged 20 years or younger with dead parents is observed in the Southern Region where around 11.7 percent had either one parent or both parents dead. The corresponding proportions in the Northern and Central Regions were 9.7 and 8.3 percent respectively.

A further examination at district level shows that the highest proportions of children with dead parents lived in Likoma District where 16 percent of the persons aged 20 years or less reported that one of their parents or both parents were dead at the time of the census. Other districts with high proportions of orphans were Chiradzulu (15.4 percent), Mulanje (13.8 percent), Blantyre (13.4 percent) and Zomba (12.1 percent). The districts with the least proportions of persons aged 20 years or less with one parent or both parents dead were observed in Ntchisi (6.3 percent), Mchinji (6.6 percent), Dowa (6.8 percent) and Kasungu (6.9 percent). In general, it is noted that more children were orphaned as a result of their fathers being dead rather than their mothers' deaths.

## **9 MARITAL STATUS**

The census results also show that of the 6.8 million persons aged 10 years or older enumerated in Malawi in 1998, about 3.7 million persons (55 percent) were then currently married and 2.5 million (37 percent) had never been married.

In urban areas about 534,000 (52 percent) were then currently married as opposed to 55 percent of their rural counterparts. Furthermore, of the 3.3 million males aged 10 years or older about 1.8 million (54 percent) were currently married in 1998 as compared to 2.0 million females (56 percent of their female counterparts).

At regional level, the proportions of persons aged 10 years or over who were currently married were almost the same where 53, 56 and 54 percent of them enumerated in the Northern, Central and Southern Regions respectively were currently married in 1998. However, the proportions of those divorced or separated were highest in the Southern Region where about 6 percent of the nubile population aged 10 years or over were either divorced or separated as compared to 3.9 percent and 3.2 percent of their counterparts in the Central and Northern Regions respectively.

## **10.0 FERTILITY AND MORTALITY**

### **10.1 FERTILITY**

The final results further reveal that there were around 2.4 million females in the childbearing ages; that is, between 15-49 years.

The Crude Birth rate (CBR) is defined as the number of births that occurred in a particular calendar year per 1,000 population. It is the simplest measure of fertility and although CBR fails to take the age structure of the population into consideration, it is still a useful indicator of fertility in a population.

It should be noted that the number of births or the number of children women may have given birth to during their lifetime are often misreported. In fact, in most cases, these data are underreported and it is a usual practice to apply some demographic techniques to adjust

these data in order to establish plausible levels of fertility.

In the 12-month period prior to the census there were about 373,000 infants who were born to all the women in Malawi. This shows that the reported or unadjusted CBR was about 37.9 births per 1000 population. In the rural and urban areas, reported CBRs were 38.6 and 33.8 births per 1000 population respectively. At regional level, the lowest unadjusted CBR was observed in the Southern Region (36.1), followed by Northern Region (37.1) and the highest was noted in the Central Region (40.1).

The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is the number of births a woman would have if she survived to the end of her childbearing age, usually 50, and experienced the currently observed age-specific fertility rates. The reported or unadjusted TFR in Malawi using the 1998 census data was 4.8 children per woman.

At regional level the Central Region reported the highest TFR (5.3) and the Southern Region recorded the lowest (4.5). In the Northern Region, reported TFR was 4.8 whereas in urban and rural areas reported Total Fertility Rates were 3.7 and 5.0 respectively.

## 10.2 MORTALITY

The Census results furthermore show that about 208,000 deaths took place in Malawi during the 12-month period prior to the census. However, as with fertility data, mortality data are also prone to underreporting, and it is necessary to adjust the death data to estimate the levels of mortality in an area more accurately. Crude Death Rate (CDR) is defined as the number of deaths that occurred in a given calendar year per 1,000 population. The reported CDR in Malawi was about 21.1 deaths per 1000 population.

It is noted that half of all the deaths in Malawi occurred to children under 5 years of age. In each of the regions, however, about 55 percent of all the deaths occurred to males. Regional variations of under-five mortality are evident. In the Northern Region about 49 percent of all deaths were under-five deaths as compared to 59 and 45 percent in the Central and Southern Regions respectively. Mortality was highest in the Southern Region where a reported or unadjusted CDR of 24.3 per 1000 population was observed and least in the Northern Region where the reported CDR was 17.8 per 1000 population. Reported CDR in the Central Region stood at 18.6 deaths per 1000 population. The results also show that mortality in urban areas (reported CDR of 15.8 per 1000) was substantially lower than that in rural areas of Malawi (22.0 per 1000 population).

Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) which is defined as the total number of deaths among births aged under 1 which occurred during the 12-month period prior to the Census is also often as a measure socio-economic status in a population. It should be noted that besides the problem of underreporting of the death events (due to memory lapse or simply because respondents do not want to talk about the deaths of their relatives in the household) another source of error exists. Respondents may report deaths of infants that might have occurred outside the reference period of 12 months. In some cases some infants that were born outside the 12-month reference period and die during the year may erroneously be included as deaths of infants we are analysing. All these errors require that the mortality data for infants or children under-five be adjusted. *Thus the infant mortality rates presented in this report should be considered as crude estimates of the actual infant mortality rates as they are derived from deaths as they were reported and collected in the census.*

At national level, a rough estimate of the reported IMR was 121.0 infant deaths per 1000 live births. Regional differentials also show that infant mortality was heaviest in the Southern Region where roughly 141 infant deaths occurred among every 1000 live births during the 12-month period prior to the census. The reported IMR for the Northern and Central Regions were roughly 103 and 104 per 1000 live births respectively.

### **10.3 CRUDE RATE OF NATURAL INCREASE**

The reported Crude Birth Rates and Crude Death Rates show that the Crude Rate of Natural Increase in Malawi was 17 per 1000 population; that is, 1.7 percent per annum. The Crude Rate of Natural Increase (RNI) is the gap between the crude birth rate and the crude death rate and suffers all the disadvantages of the crude birth rate and crude death rate, in particular varying age distributions. The RNI does not include the effect of migration in the population growth.

At regional level, RNI was highest in the Central Region (2.1 percent) followed by the Northern Region (1.9 percent) and was the lowest in the Southern Region (1.2 percent) .

## **11 ECONOMIC ACTIVITY**

Of the about 6.8 million persons aged 10 years or older around 4.5 million or 66 percent were economically active. Of the economically active population, the majority of them (78 percent) were subsistence farmers (*Mlimi*) and a further 13 percent were employees.

In urban areas, about 46.5 percent of the population aged 10 years or older were economically active as opposed to 69.5 percent of their rural counterparts.

At regional level, the proportions of economically active populations in the Northern, Central and Southern Regions were 57.4, 67.6 and 66.9 percent respectively.

A further investigation of the proportions of economically active populations by sex reveals that the proportions of economically active males in urban areas were substantially higher than that of economically active females. In rural areas, these proportions are more or less at the same levels.

The census further reveals that of the 4.5 million persons aged 10 years or over about 3.7 million (83 percent) were in the Agriculture, Animal Husbandry or Forestry sector while only around 7,000 (0.2 percent) were in Administrative and Managerial sector. Similar patterns are also noted for males and females in Malawi as a whole as well as in each of the three regions. In urban areas, however, the majority of the persons aged 10 years or over, or 112,000 persons (23 percent) were in the sales sector whereas in the rural areas the pattern is similar to that for Malawi as a whole.

## **12 DWELLING UNIT AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS**

The census results show that the majority of households in Malawi were male headed. Of the 2.3 million households enumerated in the country about 69 percent were headed by males. In the Urban areas one fifth of the households were headed by females as compared to about a third in the rural areas.

Of the 9.9 million household-based population, 6.5 million (66 percent) lived in dwelling units that had thatched roofs with mud walls, or walls made of mud and wattle; that is, traditional structures. About 1.6 million (16 percent) lived in structures that had roofs constructed with iron sheets, tiles, concrete or asbestos and walls made of burnt bricks, concrete or stones (permanent structures). The results also show that about 3.3 million or around a third of the population lived in two-room houses and 8.5 million or 86 percent of the total population lived in their own structures.

It is also worth noting that in Malawi about 2.6 million or around 27 percent had access to boreholes as their main source of drinking water while 2.5 million or 25 percent drew their drinking water from unprotected wells. A further 21 percent used either piped water or communal standpipes as their main sources of drinking water.

The final results also indicate that around 7.2 million or 73 percent of the total population had

access to traditional pit latrines while 2.2 million or 22 percent had no access to any toilet facility.

It is also noted that the majority of Malawians (94 percent) used firewood and only 2 percent used electricity as their main source of energy for cooking and 90 percent of them used paraffin while 5 percent used electricity for lighting. Furthermore, about 4.9 million or roughly half of the total population had access to at least one radio and 4.0 million or 41 percent had access to at least one bicycle.

**TABLE F: POPULATION IN HOUSEHOLDS AND NUMBER OF PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD  
BY REGION/DISTRICT 1987 AND 1998**

Region/ District	1987 Total Household Population	Number of Households	Average Number of Persons per Households	1998 Total Household Population	Number Of Households	Average Number of Persons per Households
<b>MALAWI</b>	<b>7,716,578</b>	<b>1,912,591</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>9,883,222</b>	<b>2,273,846</b>	<b>4.3</b>
<b>NORTHERN REGION</b>	<b>905,452</b>	<b>190,283</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>1,227,658</b>	<b>243,060</b>	<b>5.1</b>
Chitipa	96,167	19,796	4.9	126,097	25,748	4.9
Karonga	146,518	27,814	5.3	193,710	39,880	4.9
Nkhata Bay	129,655	27,789	4.7	163,658	33,374	4.9
Rumphi	94,148	19,890	4.7	127,509	25,353	5.0
Mzimba	430,862	93,451	4.6	608,744	117,178	5.2
Likoma	8,102	1,543	5.3	7,940	1,527	5.2
<b>CENTRAL REGION</b>	<b>3,086,611</b>	<b>716,648</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4,049,971</b>	<b>908,942</b>	<b>4.5</b>
Kasungu	321,216	72,362	4.4	478,500	96,787	4.9
Nkhotakota	155,962	39,182	4.0	228,685	50,031	4.6
Ntchisi	120,222	26,364	4.6	167,167	35,947	4.7
Dowa	320,594	71,648	4.5	410,065	90,379	4.5
Salima	183,443	46,886	3.9	247,320	58,491	4.2
Lilongwe	970,005	227,001	4.3	1,339,236	307,941	4.3
Mchinji	248,313	56,795	4.4	324,098	70,792	4.6
Dedza	410,019	95,404	4.3	485,326	113,544	4.3
Ntcheu	356,837	81,006	4.4	369,574	85,030	4.3
<b>SOUTHERN REGION</b>	<b>3,724,515</b>	<b>1,005,660</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>4,605,593</b>	<b>1,121,844</b>	<b>4.1</b>
Mangochi	492,635	122,930	4.0	607,016	151,316	4.0
Machinga	299,912	125,456	2.4	366,993	90,138	4.1
Zomba	436,162	110,046	4.0	540,352	135,369	4.0
Chiradzulu	209,807	49,971	4.2	234,819	58,529	4.0
Blantyre	582,546	144,232	4.0	802,650	195,792	4.1
Mwanza	120,691	28,300	4.3	137,311	32,177	4.3
Thyolo	428,811	101,969	4.2	457,280	112,136	4.1
Mulanje	418,873	153,385	2.7	426,642	103,973	4.1
Phalombe	217,414	53,019	4.1	231,385	59,292	3.9
Chikwawa	315,332	69,542	4.5	354,884	79,074	4.5
Nsanje	202,332	46,810	4.3	193,713	43,491	4.5
Balaka	212,214	51,740	4.1	252,548	60,557	4.2