MALAWI 2025/26

WASH Budget Brief

Investing in climate resilient WASH infrastructure amidst fiscal space challenges

Key Messages and Recommendations

01

The provision of WASH services in Malawi is governed by two key legislative frameworks: the Water Works Act (1995) and the Water Resources Act (2013). However, these laws do not adequately address contemporary challenges such as climate change, rapid population growth, increasing urbanisation, and the urgent need for improved sanitation infrastructure. These gaps highlight the critical necessity for comprehensive legislative reforms to ensure that the WASH sector is equipped to meet current demands and future pressures.

Recommendation

The Ministry of Water and Sanitation (MoWS) is strongly urged to prioritise and expedite the review of the WASH sector regulatory framework to ensure the policy and enabling environment are responsive to current needs and foster resilience to emerging challenges. This process should involve a thorough review and revision of the laws, incorporating inputs from a wide range of stakeholders, including local communities, NGOs, and international experts.

02

For the first time in several years, the WASH budget for 2025/26 shows a stable trend in relation to the total Government budget (3.5 per cent from 3.4 per cent) and GDP (constant at 1.1 per cent). This stability is, however, largely influenced by donor financing – which account for 85 per cent of the sector funding in 2025/26.

Recommendation

The MoWS is encouraged to accelerate leveraging of its climate-resilient WASH financing strategy to explore innovative funding sources, such as private-sector investments, public-private partnerships (PPPs) and community-based financing models, to ensure sustainability of financing towards WASH services and help achieve WASH targets by 2030.

Leveraging climate financing opportunities in partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change will substantially enhance WASH sector resilience and adaptability.

03

At MK64 million in 2025/26, the allocation to Sanitation and Hygiene (S&H) – a budget line introduced in 2023/24 – has stagnated in real terms and only accounts for 1 per cent of the total ORT budget for the MoWS. This remains relatively low given the rising demand for S&H services driven by recurring health and climate emergencies.

Recommendation

The MoWS is encouraged to continue scaling up sanitation and hygiene funding in alignment with annual ORT allocations and AfricaSan commitments, to enhance government investment in sustainable sanitation services.

Furthermore, given the limited fiscal capacity, a gradual strategy is recommended. The S&H budget should be raised to at least 5 per cent of the total MoWS ORT budget by 2026/27, and to 10 per cent by 2027/28. This approach could significantly enhance sanitation services and help address the severe sanitation shortfalls affecting children in Malawi.

↗ 04

The 2025/26 WASH budget reflects continued growth in investments towards infrastructure creation with 98 per cent (MK278.8 billion) of the MoWS budget allocated towards development projects. However, like previous years, the budget for operations and maintenance (O&M) of WASH services remain very minimal (1 per cent of the total) and has reduced in real terms.

Recommendation

To ensure equitable and effective service delivery, the MoWS is encouraged to prioritise a more balanced and needs-based allocation criteria across all WASH sub-programs and expenditure categories, with particular attention to Water Supply and Sanitation and Hygiene, as well as balancing infrastructure creation with adequate O&M budgets, which is critical to ensure continued functionality of water systems, especially in rural communities.

↗ 05

Despite the drive towards decentralisation, WASH sector allocations remain overwhelmingly centrally managed under the Ministry of Water and Sanitation as central government transfers to Local Councils have reduced in real terms as allocations to the Water Fund have not changed in five years, at MK2.3 billion. These resources are increasingly insufficient, especially considering the growing demand for WASH services.

Recommendation

Considering inflation, Treasury is encouraged to increase the allocation to the Water Fund in 2026/27, in line with overall increases in central government transfers, as the costs of constructing boreholes have significantly increased since the introduction of the Water Fund (Construction of Water Structures).

> While 98% of the WASH budget is for building new water systems, only 1% is allocated to maintain them.

Introduction

A critical analysis of the adequacy, equity, and efficiency of WASH spending in Malawi.

This budget brief provides a summary analysis of the trends in spending on water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in Malawi in the framework of the 2025/26 fiscal year (FY) budget. It provides insights into the adequacy, equity, efficiency, and effectiveness of WASH spending in Malawi. The information presented in this brief is especially relevant for government entities, donors, civil society organisations (CSOs), and other stakeholders positioned to drive change towards enhancing the efficiency and sustainability of Malawi's WASH programs. This analysis builds on previous WASH budget briefs[1] and is informed by government budget documents from 2021/22 to 2025/26, mainly the programme-based budget (PBB), detailed budget estimates, and ceilings for local councils from the National Local Government Finance Committee (NLGFC).

The brief primarily focuses on water supply for domestic use and not for agricultural or industrial purposes. Based on this definition, the WASH sector budget consists of allocations to four main entities:

1. The Ministry of Water and Sanitation (MoWS) (entire allocations under Vote 210),
2. Environmental health interventions under the Ministry of Health (MoH) (Vote 310),
3. Transfers to Local Councils for other recurrent transactions (ORT) (Vote 900) and the Water Fund (construction of water structures), and
4. Subventions to the National Water Resources Agency (NWRA).

Overview of the WASH Sector in Malawi

The WASH sector is guided by coherent policy frameworks that harmonise efforts across various sectors to enhance the effectiveness of WASH interventions nationally. The Water Works Act (1995) and the Water Resources Act (2013) serve as overarching legislative frameworks for supporting the development and maintenance of essential water services. Complementing the acts are the strategic policy frameworks such as the National Water Policy (2025) and its Strategic Plan (2025-2030), the Malawi Climate Resilient WASH Financing Strategy (2022-2032)[2] and the National Sanitation and Hygiene Policy (2018-2024)[3]. These aim to streamline sectoral efforts to address the multifaceted challenges of achieving universal access to safe water and sanitation in Malawi.

The Ministry of Water and Sanitation (MoWS) is the principal policyholder of water and sanitation services in Malawi. However, the multisectoral approach to WASH ensures the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture are integral in providing other services like sanitation, hygiene and water resource utilisation, which are integrated within the public health care and sustainable water resource management initiatives to improve the overall well-being of communities.

Malawi is committed to achieving universal access to improved water and sanitation services by 2030, in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 6) and the country's vision, Malawi 2063, particularly under Enabler 5 (Human Capital Development). By 2030, Malawi aspires to enhance access to safe water for everyone, everywhere, with over 74 per cent of the population accessing improved sanitation services and at least 75 per cent of the population accessing improved hygiene services. To realise these targets, the Government of Malawi adopted a multisectoral approach to expand infrastructure, promote hygiene behaviour change, and strengthen policy frameworks while addressing critical challenges like funding and infrastructural constraints. This holistic approach aims to ensure equitable, resilient, and sustainable WASH services for all Malawians, transforming aspirations into tangible progress.

> Malawi is committed to achieving universal access to water and sanitation by 2030, in alignment with SDG 6 and the country's vision, Malawi 2063.

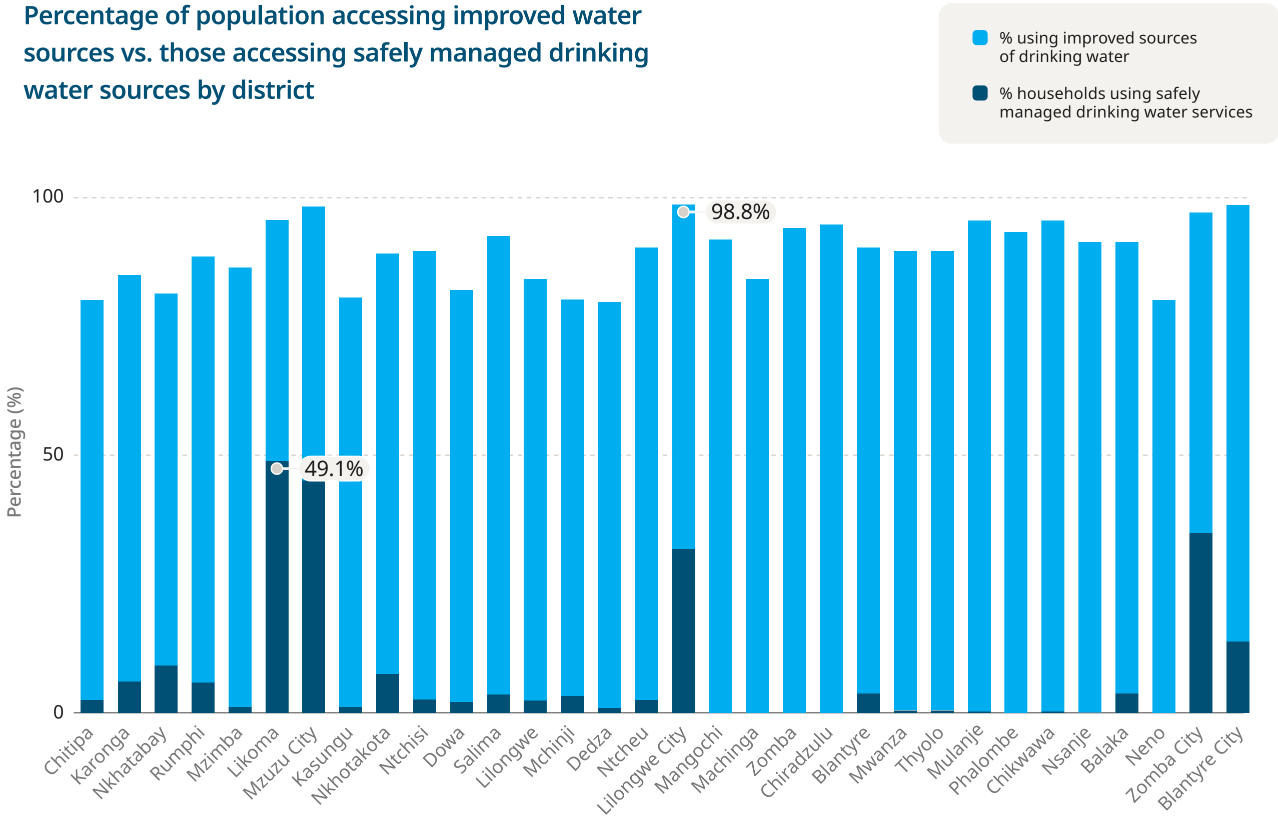
Situational Analysis

Malawi has made significant progress in improving access to improved water sources among its population[4]. The percentage of the population accessing improved water sources increased from 83 per cent in 2010 to 90 per cent in 2020, representing a 7 percentage-point increase[5]. Geographically, 97.1 per cent of the urban, peri-urban, town and market centre population has access to improved water sources, significantly higher than the rural areas at 88.3 per cent. Sewage coverage in urban areas is around 15 per cent and overall access to improved sanitation is about 35 per cent.[6]

Despite this progress, the 2023 Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) by WHO and UNICEF indicates that only 18 per cent of Malawi's population access safely managed drinking water sources[7] **(Figure 1)**. The situation is worse in the rural areas, with only 10 per cent of the population accessing safe drinking water, unlike urban areas with approximately 54 per cent. Similarly, sanitation and hygiene indicators reveal further deficiencies, with only 47 per cent of the population accessing safely managed sanitation facilities and only 15 per cent accessing basic hygiene facilities.

FIGURE 1

Percentage of population accessing improved water sources vs. those accessing safely managed drinking water sources by district



Source: Malawi Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Report, 2019/20

The recurring climatic shocks, characterised by floods and droughts, are posing a threat to WASH services. Sanitation remains the main deprivation children in Malawi face, with approximately 65 per cent of children lacking improved sanitation facilities, largely driving the multidimensional poverty rate between 2018 and 2023[8]. The recent cyclones Chido and Jude have affected over 45,000 people across 13 districts in the southern and eastern regions and exposed over 8,000 household latrines and handwashing stations in low-lying geographical areas to contamination[9] – further posing a threat of worsening child multidimensional poverty in Malawi.

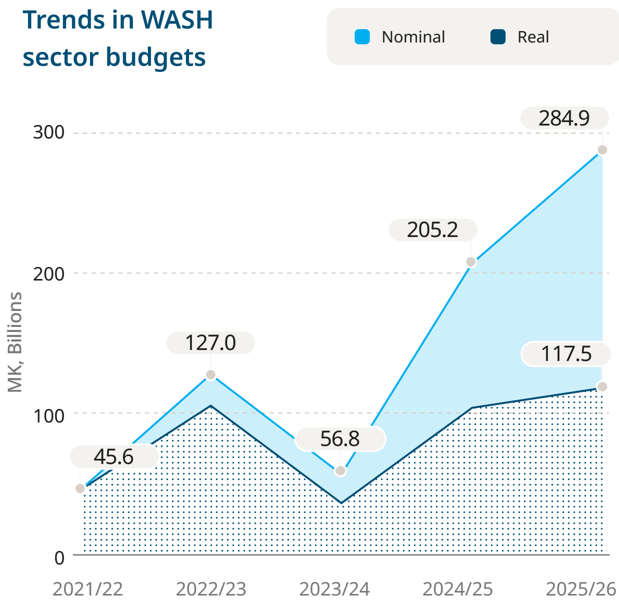
The Government of Malawi, in collaboration with its partners, is currently developing WASH Accounts as part of a strategy to enhance the financing of WASH interventions across all sectors of the country. Establishing WASH Accounts is critical for understanding financial flows within various sectors, including tracking expenditures, investments, and resource allocations. The process will employ the TrackFin methodology, which comprehensively and comparably analyses these financial flows to improve financial transparency and ensure that resources are strategically allocated to address priority areas in WASH services[10].

Size of WASH Spending

The budget allocation to the WASH sector has increased in nominal (38.8 per cent) and real[11] terms (14 per cent) – from MK205.2 billion in 2024/25 to MK284.9 billion in 2025/26 (Figure 2). This increase is mainly driven by additional resources for water supply and sanitation projects from development partners (DI) – from MK181.7 billion to MK240.2 billion. For context, donor support accounts for 85 per cent of the total allocation towards the WASH sector in 2025/26. Additionally, the Government's own contribution to infrastructure creation (DII) has more than doubled from MK17.7 billion to MK38.7 billion. This reflects government's commitment towards improving infrastructure creation in the WASH sector to address water supply challenges consequently ensuring sustainable water resource management and access to clean and safe water for the population.

FIGURE 2

Trends in WASH sector budgets

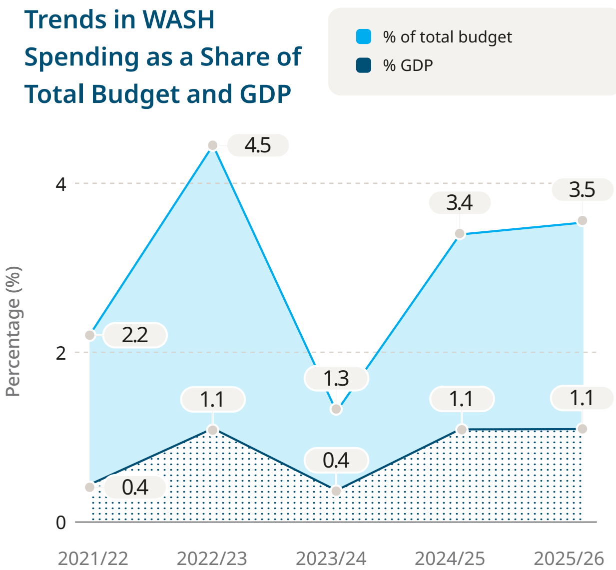


Source: Government Budget and Financial Documents, 2021/22-2025/26

For the first time in several years, the WASH budget shows a stable trend in relation to total Government budget (3.5 per cent from 3.4 per cent) and GDP (constant at 1.1 per cent) (Figure 3). This stability is, however, largely influenced by donor financing – which account for 85 per cent of the sector funding in 2025/16. Looking ahead and considering the shrinking donor financing landscape, the Government is encouraged to leverage the WASH financing strategy – as well as the World Bank-supported WASH investment plan under development – to explore additional domestic financing channels to strengthen sustainability and improve budget execution within the sector. This could include tapping into innovative WASH financing, including public private partnerships (PPP) arrangements.

FIGURE 3

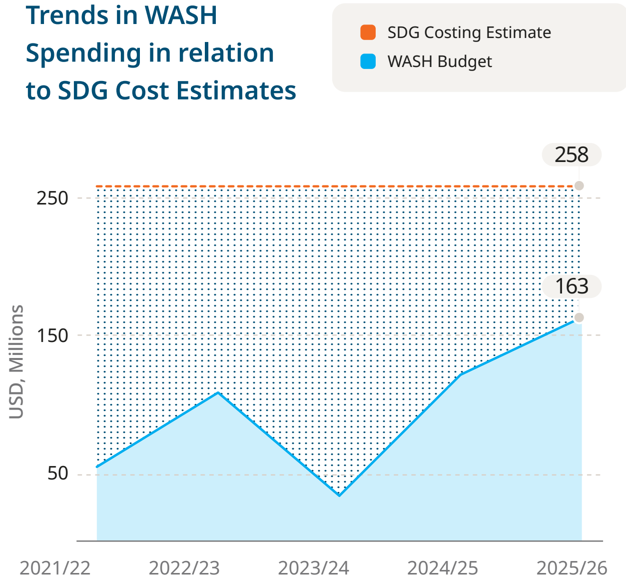
Trends in WASH Spending as a Share of Total Budget and GDP



Source: Government Budget and Financial Documents, 2021/22-25/26

FIGURE 4[12]

Trends in WASH Spending in relation to SDG Cost Estimates



Source: Malawi National WASH Building Blocks Assessment (2021); 2021/22- 2025/26 Financial Statement

Benchmarking WASH Estimates with SDG Costing Tool

Following the increased budgets, the WASH financing gap has narrowed in relation to costed SDG requirements (Figure 4). Against the recommended benchmark of US$258 million, the WASH sector was allocated US$163 million, an increase of 34 per cent from US$121 million in 2024/25. To sustain this improvement, government is encouraged to explore innovative funding sources, such as private-sector investments and public-private partnerships, to ensure the necessary financial resources and investments are available to meet the WASH targets by 2030.

While the WASH budget has stabilised, its reliance on donor financing poses a significant risk to long-term sustainability.

Composition of WASH Spending

Despite the drive towards decentralisation, WASH sector allocations remain overwhelmingly centrally managed under the Ministry of Water and Sanitation (Table 1). About 99 per cent (MK282.1 billion) of WASH allocations in 2025/26 are centrally allocated under the MoWS. Only 1 per cent of the budget is decentralised to Local Councils through the Water Fund (MK2.3 billion) and transfers for Other Recurrent Transactions (ORT)[13] (MK426 million) – yet the majority of WASH services are delivered at the local level. The remaining allocations include the National Water Resource Agency (MK500 million) subvention and environmental health interventions under the Ministry of Health (MK81 million).

TABLE 1

Trends in the Composition of WASH Sector Budgets by MDA, in MK millions[14]

MDA	Sub-programme/ Budget Line	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	% change (2024/25 vs. 2025/26)	Share of the WASH Budget by MDA
MoWS (Vote 210)	Water Resources & Management	25,313	123,762	134	190	245,419	129,068%	98.80%
	Water Supply	16,964	-	51,673	199,530	33,668	-83%	
	Sanitation & Hygiene	-	-	31	53	64	22%	
	Management & Admin	-	-	2,040	2,451	2,603	6%	
MoH (Vote 310)	Environment	650	1,076	69	77	81	6%	0.03%
Subvented Organization (Vote 275)	NRWA	161	215	246	252	500	981%	0.2%
Local Councils (Vote 900 series)	ORT	182	188	291	349	426	22%	1%
	Water Fund (Construction of Water Structures)	2,316	1,737	2,316	2,316	2,316	0%	1%
Total		**45,586**	**126,978**	**56,801**	**205,218**	**285,079**	**39%**	

Source: Government Budget Estimates (2020/22-2024/25)

> While the Government's contribution to new WASH infrastructure has more than doubled, the budget to operate and maintain these systems has shrunk in real terms.

The 2025/26 WASH budget reflects continued growth in investments towards infrastructure creation (Table 2). Approximately 98 per cent (MK278.8 billion) of the MoWS budget is allocated towards development projects – MK240 billion from donor resources (DI). Notably, the Government's own contribution to WASH infrastructure has more than doubled from MK 17.7 billion in 2024/25 to MK 38.6 billion in 2025/26.

TABLE 2

Composition of the MoWS Budget by Economic Classification

Classification	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	% of total, 2025/26	% change 2025/26
Foreign Resources (DI)	137,515	92,929	30,836	181,725	240,166	85%	32%
Local Resources (DII)	11,648	13,800	20,800	17,749	38,650	14%	118%
ORT	541	413	543	657	734	0.3%	12%
PE	1,567	1,342	1,700	2,093	2,205	0.8%	5%

Source: Government Financial Statements 2021/22-2025/26

However, like previous years, the budget for operations and maintenance (O&M) of WASH services remains very minimal (1 per cent of the total) and has reduced in real terms. The central government ORT budget grew from MK657 million to MK734 million, while local council ORT increased from MK349 million to MK426 million. Considering the average inflation of 22.3 per cent, this translates to a reduction in real terms. It is noteworthy that while water boards generally finance their O&M costs through user tariffs, they still face challenges in balancing operating costs and revenues, highlighting the need for cost optimisation and revenue enhancement strategies.

The majority of WASH projects continue to target urban areas (Table 3) disproportionately. Despite the Government's ongoing efforts to enhance water supply and infrastructure in both urban and rural areas, a disproportionate share of current investments remains focused on urban areas (about 57 per cent). This trend may, in part, be due to the perception that urban WASH projects are more financially viable and easier to implement, with fewer risks and logistical challenges than those in rural settings. Nevertheless, the continued urban focus has the potential to exacerbate existing disparities in access to WASH services. The Government is therefore encouraged to address this imbalance in all programmes in the sector, including sanitation and hygiene, to ensure comprehensive and sustainable WASH services. Table 3 presents the major WASH projects in 2025/26.

TABLE 3

Major Water Infrastructure Projects, in MK Millions

Major wash projects	Donor	2023/24		2023/24		2025/26	
		DI	DII	DI	DII	DI	DII
Malawi Resilience and Disaster Risk Management Project (Rural and Urban)[15]	World Bank	11,453	600	49,614	-	40,941	0
Lilongwe Water and Sanitation (urban)	World Bank	11,177	500	45,285	200	53,798	2,000
Malawi Watershed Services Improvement Project (Rural)[16]	World Bank		600	25,961	-	49,754	0
National Water and Sanitation Project (Blantyre Water Board) (urban)	World Bank			27,439		65,194	1,000
Lilongwe Water Resource Efficiency Programme (urban)	European Investment Bank	6,755	800	7,481	-	-	1,000
Nkhata-bay Town Water Supply and Sanitation Project- Counterpart (urban)	African Development Bank	910.82	1,300	291	1,000	-	3,500

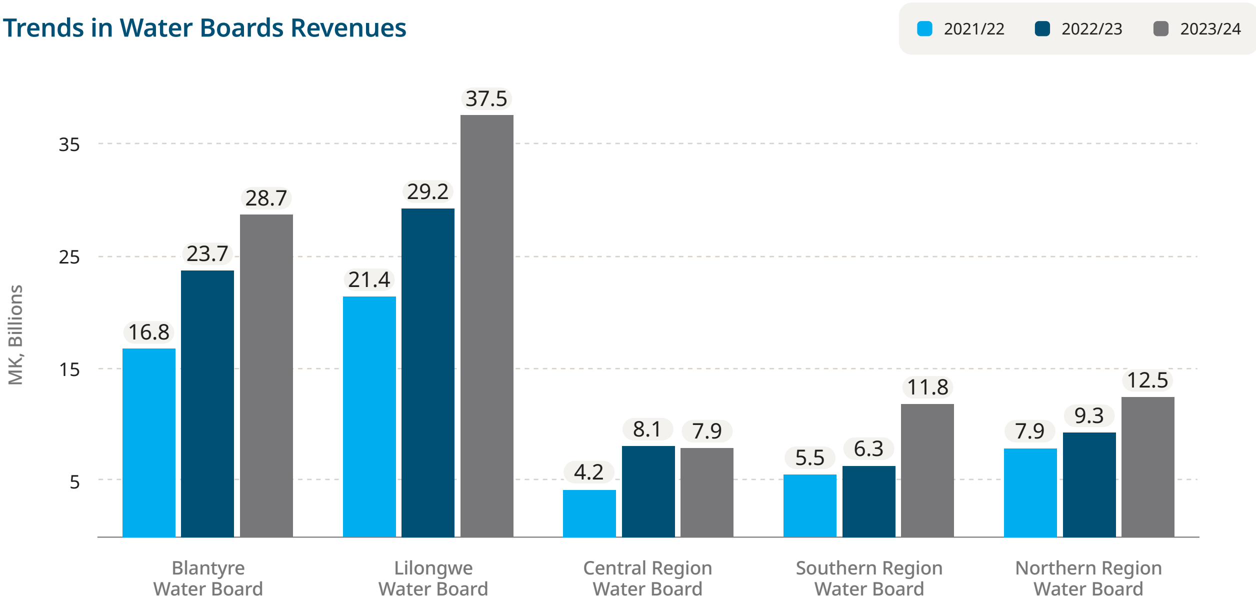
Source: MoWS, Annex 3 - Budget Documents 2023/24 -26

The allocation to Sanitation and Hygiene (S&H) – a budget line introduced in 2023/24 – was increased from MK53 million in 2024/25 to MK64 million in 2025/26. While this marks a 22 per cent increase in nominal terms, it has not changed in real terms, considering the average inflation of 22.3 per cent. In addition, the S&H budget only accounts for 1 per cent of the total WASH budget. This remains relatively low given rising demand driven by recurring health and climate emergencies. While the gradual nominal increase is commendable, more is needed. The MoWS is encouraged to progressively raise S&H funding in line with annual ORT provisions and Africa San commitments to strengthen government financing for sustainable sanitation services.

Total revenue collected by the five waterboards steadily increased between 2021/22 and 2023/24, by 28.4 per cent from MK76.7 billion in 2022/23 to MK98.4 billion in 2023/24 (Figure 5). Lilongwe Water Board (LWB) collects the largest revenue, amounting to MK37.5 billion in 2023/24, followed by Blantyre Water Board (BWB) at MK28.7 billion (Figure 5). Between 2022/23 and 2023/24, the southern region (SRWB) and the northern region waterboards (NRWB) experienced the highest relative increases in revenues by 87 per cent (from MK6.3 billion to MK11.8 billion) and 34 per cent (from MK9.3 billion to MK12.6 billion), respectively. For context, revenue collected by Water boards is a proxy for expenditure by institutions and households.

FIGURE 5

Trends in Water Boards Revenues



Source: Water Services Association of Malawi (WASAMA), 2025

> Despite a 22% nominal increase, the budget for Sanitation and Hygiene has effectively stagnated in real terms, failing to keep pace with inflation and growing needs.

However, despite this increase in revenue collections, the BWB and NRWB have been operating at a loss since 2020 (Table 4). This is largely on account of the delayed and non-implementation of tariff adjustments which have resulted in foregone revenues and increased cashflow challenges hindering the waterboards' capacity to finance O&M. LWB is the only one to have registered consistent profits between 2020 and 2023.

Importantly, the tariff-based model used by the waterboards, does not apply to district councils' systems which often lack reliable revenue streams and remain heavily dependent on government ORT allocations.[17] Hence, the continued underfunding of O&M raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of service operations and the maintenance of existing WASH infrastructure, particularly in rural areas where functionality remains a challenge.

TABLE 4

Trends in Financial Performance (Profit/Loss) (2020-2023), (MK Millions)

	2020	2021	2022	2023
BWB	(7,946)	(13,831)	(8,188)	(20,693)
CRWB	(1,449)	(1,422)	(391)	1,953
LWB	2,503	1,163	594	1,103
NRWB	(3,778)	641	(5,409)	(7,414)

Source: MoFEA, Annual Economic Reports

Despite rising revenues, several of Malawi's key water boards continue to operate at a loss, threatening the long-term sustainability of essential services.

Budget Credibility and Execution

The performance of the WASH budget has generally improved between 2023/24 and 2024/25 (Table 5). The total revised budget for the MoWS in 2024/25 was roughly in line with the approved levels, with a marginal variance of -3 per cent, which is within the ±5% PEFA credibility threshold. The overall variance reflects a combination of expenditure overruns on salaries and wages (PE) of 21 per cent and underperformance in ORT transfers to Local Councils (-9 per cent) and slight underperformance (-1 per cent) in the Government development budget. Allocations to the Water Fund, ORT for MoWS and donor resources were disbursed in line with approved figures. Going forward, the government is encouraged to ensure allocated budgets are timely disbursed to enhance resource predictability and support effective planning while strengthening confidence among stakeholders and development partners. This should also be accompanied by efforts to enhance budget execution.

TABLE 5

Performance of the 2023/24 and 2024/25 MoWS Budget, MK Millions

Category	2023/24			2024/25		
	Approved	Revised	% Variance	Approved	Revised	% Variance
Total MoWS	**117491**	134792	15%	296784	288461	-3%
PE	**1399**	1700	22%	1730	2092.6	21%
ORT	**542.7**	542.7	0%	656.7	656.7	0%
DI (foreign resources)	**30835**	30835	0%	181724.6	181724.6	0%
DII (local resources)	**13800**	20800	51%	17943.4	17749.2	-1%
Water Fund	**2316**	2316	0%	2,316	2316	0%
ORT Transfers to Local Councils	**68598**	78598	15%	92413	83922	-9%

Source: MoWS PBB 2022-24, Financial Statement

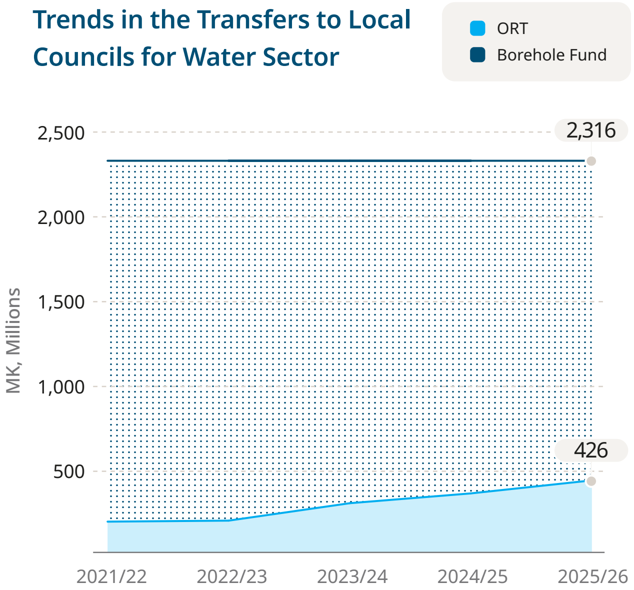
To enhance credibility, the government must ensure allocated budgets are timely disbursed and effectively executed.

Fiscal Decentralisation and WASH Budgets

Central government transfers to Local Councils for the delivery of WASH services have reduced in real terms as allocations to the Water Fund have not changed in five years, at MK2.3 billion (Figure 6). In 2025/26, the Government plans to transfer a total of MK2.7 billion to Local Councils – MK2.36 billion for the Water Fund (Construction of Water Structures) and MK426 million in ORT transfers. In real terms, allocations to the Water Fund have cumulatively reduced by over half, compared to 2021/22. For context, the Water Fund allocation is spread across the councils at a flat rate of MK12 million per constituency without considering district-specific profiles. While the ORT budget for 2025/26 has increased by 22 per cent in nominal terms, compared to 2024/25, allocations have stagnated in real terms, considering the average fiscal year inflation for 2025/26 of 22.3 per cent.

FIGURE 6

Trends in the Transfers to Local Councils for Water Sector



Source: Financial Statement, 2022-25

These resources are increasingly insufficient, especially considering growing demand for WASH services – due to population growth and recurring health and climate-related emergencies – and will likely adversely impact the delivery and functionality of local water and sanitation services. Considering inflation, the Water Fund allocation per constituency of MK12 million has reduced in real terms as the amount has remained the same since 2021/22. In relation to other devolved sectors, planned ORT transfers to the water sector are 0.47 per cent of the total ORT in 2025/26. For context, the education, health, and agriculture sectors are the largest three in terms of transfers to Local Councils as shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5

ORT Budgets for Selected Devolved Sectors, Amounts in MK millions

Sector	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Share of total ORT Budget 2025/26
Education	17,940	21,529	26,265	25.6%
Health Sector – excluding drugs	14,537	21,362	25,512	24.9%
Water	291	349	426	0.42%
Agriculture Sector	2,270	2,724	3,323	3.2%
Community Development	326	391	477	0.47%
Gender	326	391	477	0.47%
Nutrition	209	251	306	0.30%

Source: NLGFC (2024-25)

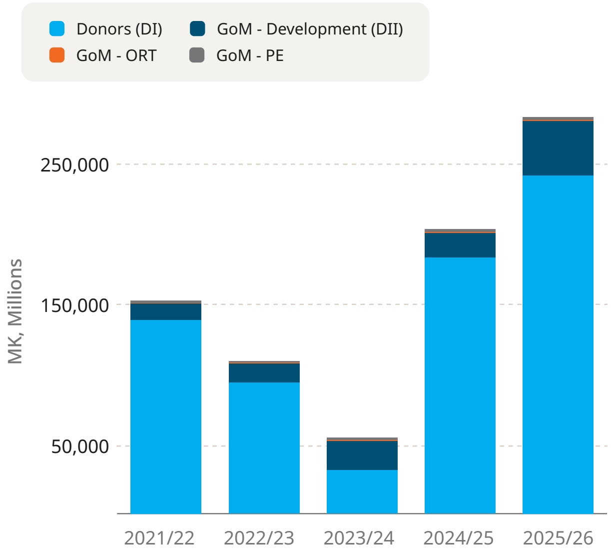
Financing of WASH Services in Malawi

The financing of the WASH services in Malawi remains heavily dependent on foreign resources, when on-budget resources alone are considered (Figure 6). In 2025/26, 84 per cent of the total WASH budget is expected to be funded by development partners, predominantly the World Bank, mostly targeted at major water supply and sanitation projects in urban areas. On the other hand, the Government's contribution to the sector's funding remains very low, at 16 per cent of the total in 2025/26 (Figure 7).

> An 84% reliance on donor funding poses a critical risk to the sustainability of Malawi's WASH sector.

FIGURE 7

Trends in WASH Financing by Source



Source: Financial Statements, 2021/22 – 2025/26

The World Bank is the major donor funding on-budget WASH projects, contributing 87.9 per cent of the 2025/26 foreign-financed development budget. This is followed by funding from the European Investment Bank (EIB) (10.3 per cent) and the African Development Bank (ADB) (1.6 per cent). The available donor funding is mostly financed through project grants at 65 per cent, with project loans at 35 per cent. The current heavy reliance on donor funding is not sustainable and requires the government to work progressively towards a more sustainable funding arrangement for the sector.

In addition, there are considerable off-budget investments through donors, NGOs, Waterboard tariffs, as well as private household expenditures that are channelled off-budget. The latest available comprehensive WASH financing analysis from the 2020 WASH public expenditure review (PER)[18], revealed that households are the largest contributor to financing of WASH services (through tariffs and self-supply), followed by donors and NGOs (21.3 per cent) and waterboards (excluding households) (17 per cent), a financing pattern that is unlikely to have significantly changed since 2020. The planned WASH accounts exercise will provide an update on the overall sector financing landscape.

Citations

1 Available at: https://www.unicef.org/malawi/media/11786/file/UNICEF_MLW_WASH_Budget_Brief_2024-25_Final.pdf.pdf

2 https://www.unicef.org/malawi/media/7831/file/Malawi%20Climate%20Resilient%20WASH%20Financing%20Strategy%202022-2032.pdf

3 https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/mlw220702.pdf

4 Improved water sources—water sources that are likely to be protected from contamination, especially from faecal matter, either by their construction or through active intervention.

5 Revised National Water Policy (2022), Malawi Government. Available at https://www.water.gov.mw/index.php/ar/downloads/policy-documents.

6 Malawi Fifth Integrated Household Survey (IHS5) 2019-2020.

7 Safely managed drinking water sources—access to an improved source (like piped water or protected wells) that is accessible on premises, available when needed, and free from contamination.

8 https://www.unicef.org/malawi/reports/2023-child-multi-dimensional-poverty-report

9 https://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/southern-africa-tropical-cyclone-chido-flash-update-no-6-18-december-2024

10 Global Monitoring: WASH Accounts | UN-Water

11 Nominal values refer to current values that have not been adjusted for inflation, while real values refer to values which have been adjusted for inflation and provide a more accurate representation of purchasing power over time.

12 Note that exchange rates used were based on the prevailing rate for each respective year, at USD1:MK1,751 in 2024/25 and 2025/26.

13 ORT refers to government expenditures that are recurrent (i.e., regular and ongoing) but do not include personal emoluments (salaries and wages). These transactions cover the non-salary operational costs required to run ministries, departments, and agencies.

14 The substantial changes in the distribution of resources between Water Resources & Management and Water Supply sub-programmes between 2023/24 and 2025/26 are purely technical and budgeting issues that do not necessarily reflect the actual size of programme priority.

15 Balaka, Blantyre, Blantyre City, Chikwawa, Chiradzulu, Machinga, Mangochi, Mulanje, Mwanza, Neno, Nsanje, Phalombe, Thyolo, Zomba and Zomba City in the Southern Region and Dedza and Ntcheu in the Central Region.

16 The project is mainly implemented in the Shire River Basin with expansions to other river basins in Linthipe, Bua, and Dwangwa (Central Region) and North Rukuru and Lufilya (Northern Region).

17 2023/2024 Performance Report for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Sector.

18 https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/6491/file/unicef_malawi-wash_public_expenditure_review_2020.pdf

for every child, clean water

Acknowledgements

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