

One Health in Malawi

Malawi is a densely populated land-locked facing economic challenges, high poverty rates, and vulnerabilities due to its predominantly agrarian economy. Over 80% of households rely on subsistence agriculture, exposing the nation to threats of food and income insecurity, weak infrastructure, climate shocks, and endemic infectious diseases. Environmental degradation further compounds issues, impacting soil fertility, water quality, overfishing, and biodiversity. Malawi COHESA team conducted a comprehensive baseline assessment of One Health (OH), from September 2022 to March 2023 to understand Malawi's position within the OH context. The assessment included a desktop review of existing literature, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions with experts. The assessment found that almost all existing OH platforms in government, academia, and the private sector were informal, although in some cases stakeholders connected for coordination of activities, research, and some degree of policy making.

Activities implemented under COHESA

- Development of OH Governance Strategy, in collaboration with Government of Malawi partners
- Establishment of One Health Policy Drafting Committee
- Establishment of OH University Consortium with annual research symposiums
- Pilot OH primary school extracurricular education programmes



5May23, Lilongwe, Malawi. COHESA-Government of Malawi meeting

Key findings/lessons/opportunities

- Across sectors, there is an appreciation of the value of OH and the willingness to collaborate in novel ways
- Multiple informal OH platforms already operational
- Many One Health research and outreach activities in country exist without being formally designated as such
- Government of Malawi is very willing to collaborate with COHESA on OH initiatives; the pathways to achieve meaningful governance action are unclear but are being developed through ongoing discussions

Planned activities (2024-2025)

- Development of OH research initiatives among members of the OH University Consortium, ILRI and CIRAD
 - Climate change and vector borne disease
 - Deforestation and human well-being
 - Community-based surveillance for zoonotic disease
- Annual OH Research Symposium
- WHO-WOAH bridging workshop
- Panel Discussion in Global Health Securities, Sydney, June 2024
- Co-teaching OH short-course Georgetown University May 2024

Consortium



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Technical partner

