



Blantyre City, the commercial and industrial capital city of Malawi, is located in the geographical centre of the south of the country. The city is a communications node, with road, rail and air links to all parts of the country and to the neighbouring countries of Mozambique, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Zambia and Tanzania. The city covers a total area of 228 square kilometres of hilly ground, and has a cool and pleasant climate.

Blantyre City had a total population of 478,155 in 1998, growing at 4.1% per annum, and accounting for 34.5% of the total urban population of the country. The city has a very young population, with over 60% below the age of 25. Approximately 62% of the economically active population is employed. Poverty is pervasive throughout the city, with 65% of households below the poverty line. Income disparity between high and low income earners is alarming. The majority (71%) of the city's residents live in unplanned settlements characterised by poor living conditions.

Blantyre

Local partners

A number of partners provide support to the Blantyre City Environmental Profile Project at the local level. Most of these partners are members of Blantyre Urban Network (BUN). BUN is a forum that aims to coordinate the activities of service delivery organisations and CBOs working within the city with a view to reducing duplication of resources and efforts in assisting the urban poor. Some of the specific areas of collaboration are in the fields of education, environment and recreation, water and sanitation, health and social welfare.

The project is being implemented by the Blantyre City Assembly under Urban Agenda 21 in the unplanned areas of Mbayani and BCA Hill. Key partners include the Malawi Social Action Fund, community development committees, local NGOs and the City of Hanover (Germany).

Bilateral and Multilateral Partners

The Blantyre City Environmental Profile Project is funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Other partners include NGOs, CBOs, the Malawi Social Action Fund, UNICEF, the City of Hanover and East Staffordshire Borough Council.

Main Dates in the Blantyre Project

January 1998 Programme Support Document signed between the Government of Malawi and UNDP, under which UNDP/UN-HABITAT will provide financial and technical support for an Urban Agenda 21 Project in Malawi

February 1998 Urban Agenda 21 Project launched in two areas in Blantyre - Mbayani and BCA Hill informal settlement areas

October 1998 Pilot communities produce their first Community Action Plans

End 1998 Implementation of Community Action Plans begins

August 1999 The Blantyre City Environmental Profile Project begins

August 2000 Evaluation of the Urban Agenda 21 Project recommends that Blantyre should implement a full-fledged Sustainable Cities Programme

September 2000 Projected completion date of City Environmental Profile

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Lilongwe lies on the Lilongwe-Kasungu plain in the Central region at an altitude of 1100 metres above sea level. It is the main administrative city of Malawi, and has road and rail links with major centres both within and outside the country. It is also the site of an international airport. The city has a population of 438,000 (1998), growing at the rate of 8.7 % per annum.

Lilongwe is the main centre for government administration. It has a number of agro-based industries manufacturing for both export and domestic demand. Living conditions are overcrowded, and the city is suffering from increased criminal activity due to a high illiteracy level and poor civic education. Vending activities throughout the city are causing traffic management problems, especially in the older part of the town. The urban environment is also deteriorating.

The Government of Malawi is presently in the process of decentralising. This process will enhance community participation in governance and development.

Pilot activities - objectives

Community level

- to empower communities at the household level to assess their constraints and opportunities, and to develop action plans towards addressing community issues in an environmentally friendly manner
- to build capacity at the household level to alleviate gender differences in decision-making, roles and access to assets

Municipal level

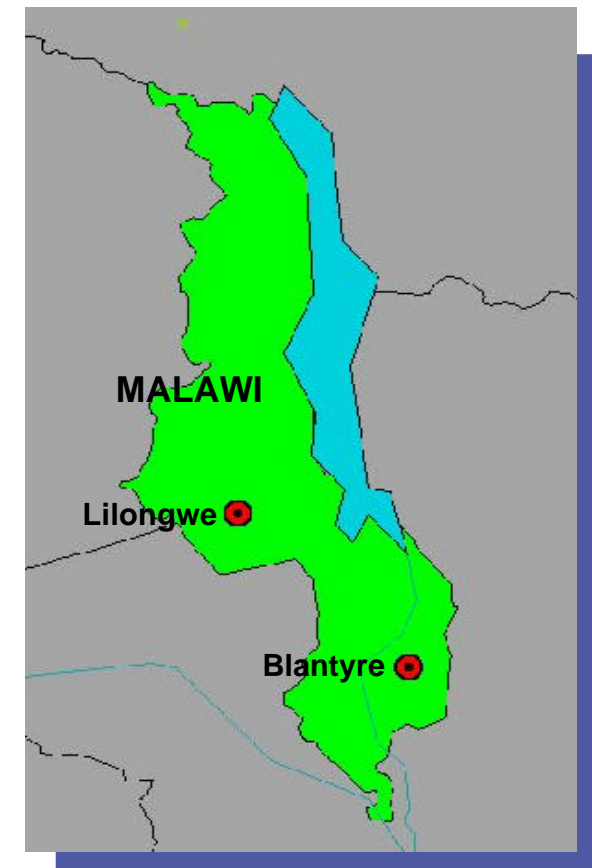
- to enhance the capacity of local authorities to enable them to facilitate community participation in the development planning process and ensure proper coordination of national policies, strategies and community level plans

National level

- to create an enabling environment for proper coordination and collaboration between the public and the private sector

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Lilongwe



Local partners

- Lilongwe Water Board
- Christian Service Committee (CSC) in collaboration with GTZ

Bilateral and multilateral partners

- European Union
- Save the Children (UK)
- UNDP
- Mario Mission of USA
- Evangelical Enterprise in Development
- GOPA
- GTZ

