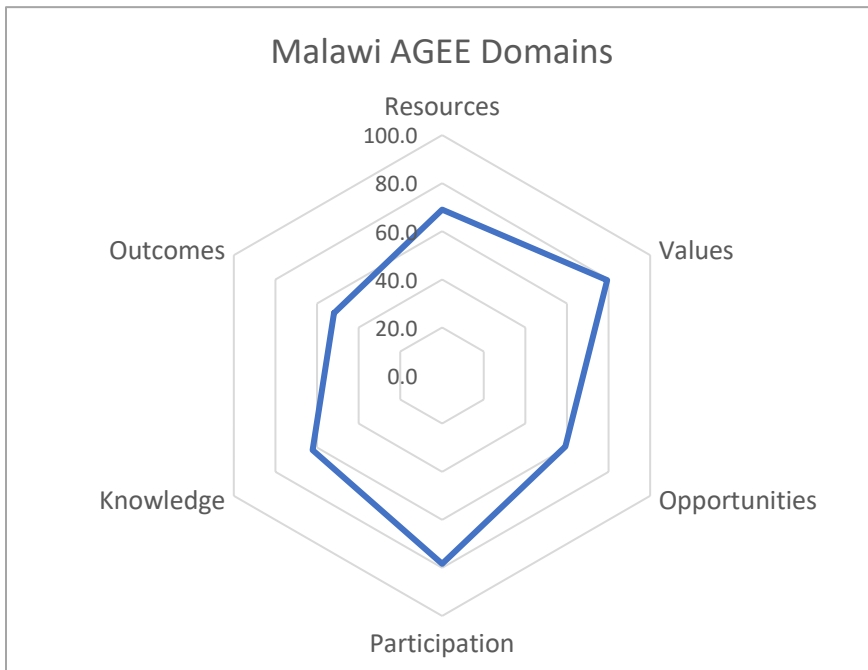


This brief<sup>1</sup> is part of the *AGEE Country Spotlight Series*<sup>1</sup> that demonstrates how the AGEE Framework can be applied to explore gender equality in and through education using cross-national indicators collected in global data sets. The indicators were chosen based on specific criteria and agreed on through a participatory peer review process, though they remain open to revision as more data becomes available. Please see the [Technical Guide](#) on the AGEE website ([www.gendereddata.org](http://www.gendereddata.org)) for more information on indicator criteria, the review process, and how the AGEE graphs were generated. Please also see the **Appendix** for a list of all indicators and values used to generate the AGEE domain graphs for Malawi discussed in this Spotlight Brief.

## The AGEE domains graph: Malawi



This graph shows the composite values at each of the six AGEE domains associated with gender equality in and through education using data for Malawi. It is intended to give more information than simple gender parity. The values were calculated by rescaling and aggregating selected indicators to the AGEE scale of 0 to 100, where 0 indicates least gender equality, and 100 indicates most gender equality in the relevant domain. This graph only includes cross-national indicators available in global data sets. We acknowledge that additional indicators are available at national and local levels and these will be used in future work. This graph thus provides only a partial picture. Its purpose is to draw from existing global data sets to provide a more rounded view on gender equality and inequality in and through education in Malawi, as it allows us to observe trends within and across the domains.

<sup>1</sup> **Suggested citation:** AGEE. (2024). *Malawi spotlight brief*. AGEE Spotlight Series, 2. London: AGEE Project, University College London.

## Contextualising the domain graph: A brief overview of education policy in Malawi

Since 1994, the Government of Malawi has enacted policies to improve education and promote gender equality. Malawi's national vision document, [Malawi 2063](#), released in 2020, underscores education and gender equality as key enablers for

transforming the country into “an inclusively wealthy and self-reliant nation”. [The National Education Sector Investment Plan](#) 2020-2030 gives prominence to girls' education and notes girls as a special category to be supported in all levels of education. In 2022, Malawi submitted a [National Statement of Commitment](#) at the UN Transforming Education Summit that listed the country's educational goals, which included providing a minimum of 12 years of education for all children, achieving completion and transition rates of 100% at primary and secondary education for all children, and intensifying focus on girls' education.

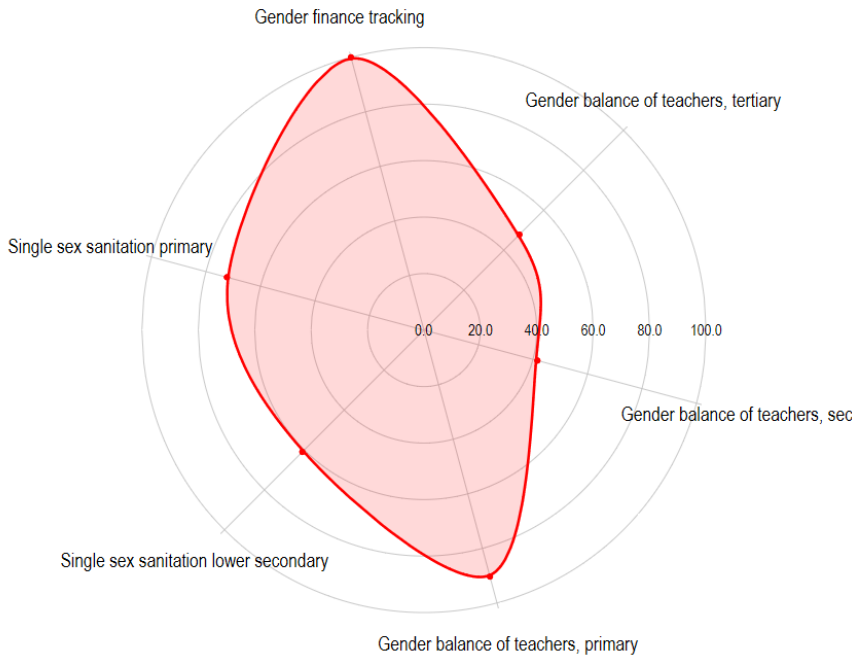
Malawi is categorised in the medium band by the classification of the [OECD's Social Institutions and Gender Index](#), which looks at institutions associated with gender discrimination. On this measure, higher levels of gender discrimination are documented in restricted physical integrity and civil liberties. The country is categorised as [a low-income country](#) by the classification of the World Bank, which looks at gross national income per capita, and in the low human development band, using the classification on the [UNDP's Human Development Index](#), which looks at national achievements in the health, education, and income.

---

## Reflecting on the AGEE domains and cross-national data in Malawi

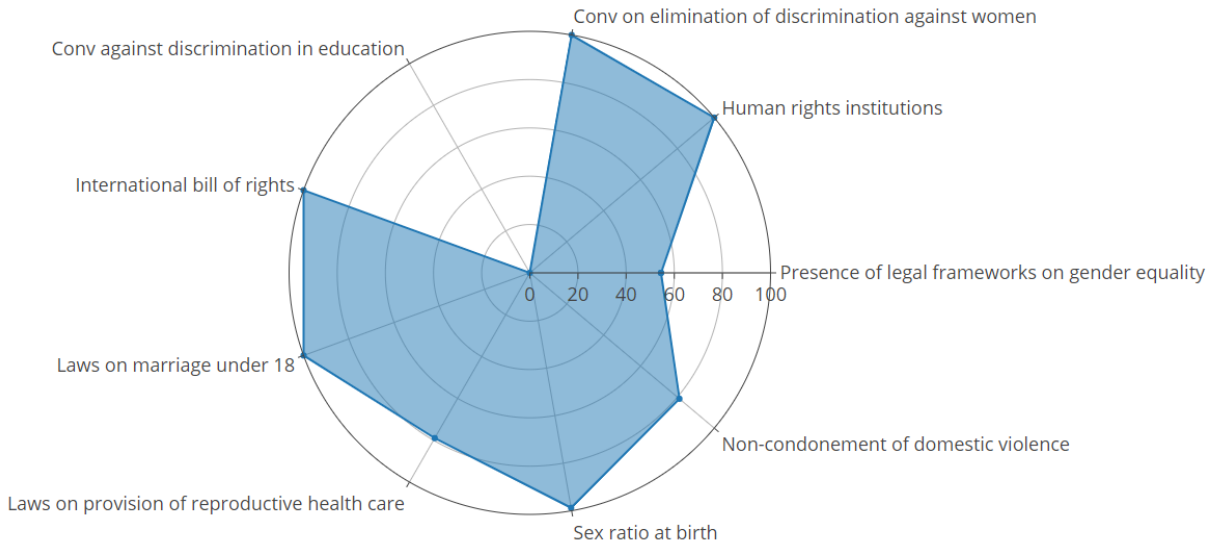
The AGEE Framework assembles indicators in six domains. The **Appendix** to this Brief provides a detailed list of all indicators and values used to generate the composite domain values shown in the AGEE domain graph for Malawi. The indicators used are based on what data are currently available in global datasets and not what data are needed. It is hoped that future briefs, in later elaborations of the AGEE project, will be able to draw on more comprehensive data.

Domain 1: Resources for Gender Equality in Education Malawi



This domain includes the goods and services required for a gender-equitable education system. Indicators in this domain are concerned with financing for education, the provision of teachers and infrastructure. The value at this domain indicates that resources in primary education are more gender equitable than those in secondary or tertiary education in Malawi. While there is near gender parity in the number of women and men teachers employed in primary education, the percentages of women teachers reduce significantly in secondary and tertiary education. The data also show more resources for single-sex toilets in primary schools than in secondary schools.

Values for Gender Equality in Education Malawi

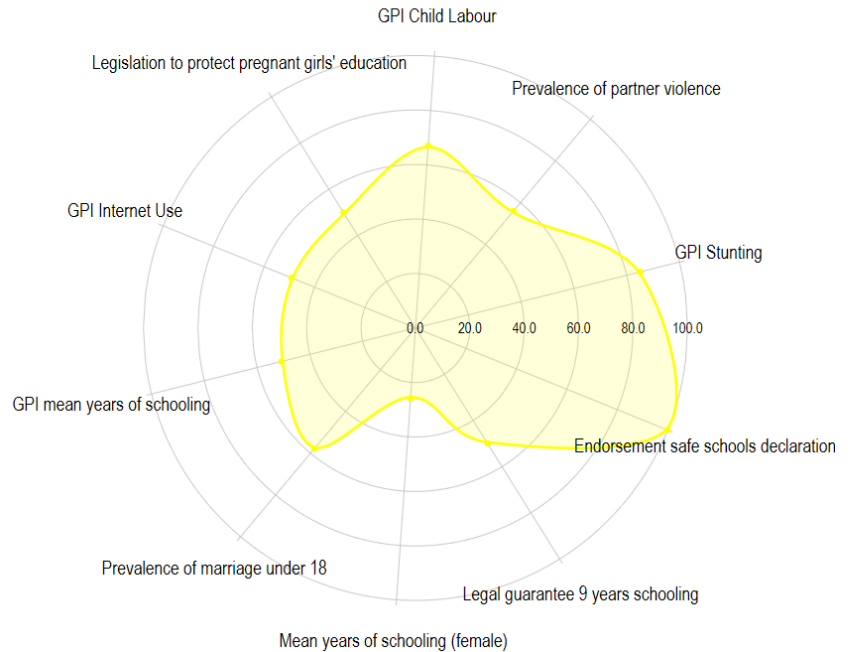


This domain measures how policy is understood, put into practice, or contested. Malawi has ratified a number of international conventions and treaties protecting women’s rights and human rights, which is reflected in the relatively high value at this domain. The country, however, has not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination in Education.

## Opportunities (value: 59.2):

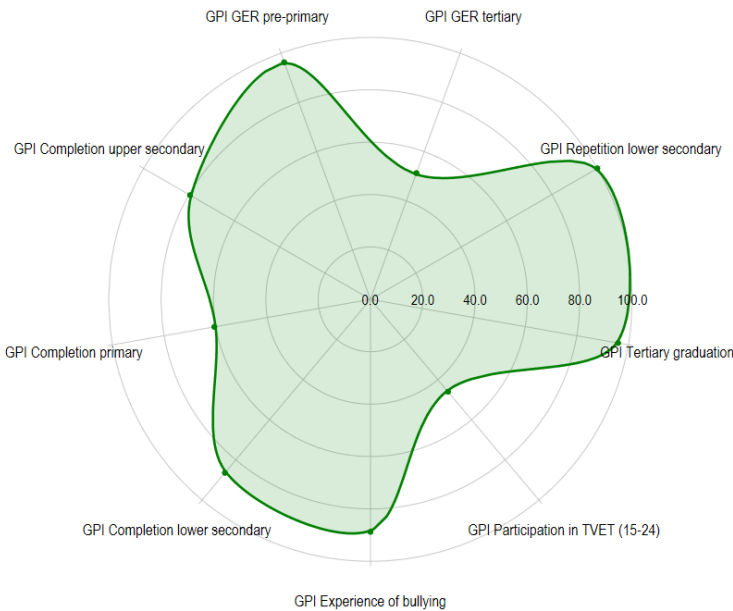
The data in this domain documents relationships constraining or enabling gender equalities in education, with indicators associated with safety and support in education. Malawi has endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, but national legislation guarantees eight years rather than the recommended nine years of schooling. Additionally, the data indicates a high prevalence of child marriage and intimate partner violence, and limited legal protection for pregnant girls in education.

Domain 3: Opportunities for Gender Equality in Education Malawi



## Participation (value: 78.3):

Domain 4: Gender Equality in Participation in Education Malawi

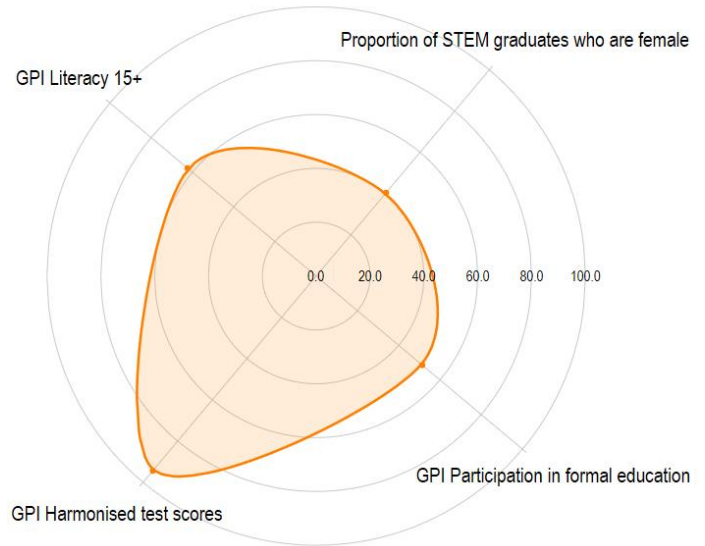


This domain measures gender differences in the participation and progression of girls and boys through school. Malawi's overall value at this domain is relatively high, indicating that the country has made significant progress in improving the enrollment and completion rates of girls and boys in primary and secondary education. The data, however, also indicates some gender differences, with lower female student participation rates in TVET and gender differences in enrollment rates in tertiary education.

## Knowledge, understanding and skills (value: 62.1)

This domain documents indicators concerned with learning levels of girls and boys in education. The value at this domain is lower than that regarding participation. The data indicates gender differences in literacy rates and that more male than female students are graduating from STEM courses. While the data show near gender parity on harmonised test scores, in 2020, [average harmonised scores were low](#) for both girls and boys.

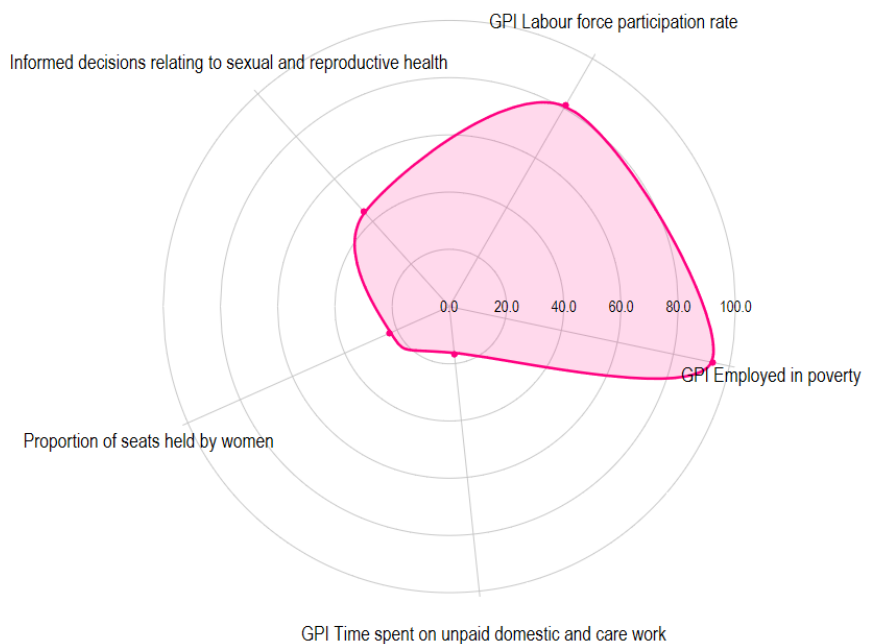
Domain 5: Gender Equality in Knowledge Malawi



## Outcomes (value: 51.9)

This domain has indicators associated with outcomes in women’s health, employment, and political participation. In Malawi, the data indicate gender differences, with more women than men engaged in unpaid work. Women also hold less than one-third of national parliament seats. While there is near gender parity in the population employed below the poverty line, it is also important to acknowledge that estimates show that [51.5% of the total population](#) (men and women) lives below the national poverty line in Malawi.

Domain 6: Outcomes of Gender Equality in Education Malawi



**Overall**, the data across all six domains provides a more comprehensive view of gender equality in and through education in Malawi, highlighting both opportunities and challenges. In each domain, the data reveals areas where the country is successfully supporting and promoting gender equality, as well as areas where progress is limited or constrained. The domains where the country scores highest are in values and participation, while more attention and action are needed in relation to opportunities, knowledge, understanding and skills and outcomes. There are no significant gaps with regard to data in cross national datasets.

**Further reading on gender and education data and policy in Malawi:**

- Malawi Ministry of Education. (2023). *2023 Malawi Education Statistics Report*.  
<https://www.education.gov.mw/index.php/edu-resources/education-news/175-2023-malawi-education-statistics-report>.
- Malunga, A. (2021). Examining attainability of gender equality in Malawi (Paper) in the Malawi Development Digest, Centre for Research and Consultancy, Lilongwe.

Appendix 1: AGEE domains indicators and specific values

AGEE Domain: Resources		
Indicator	Name of indicator	Value
GenFin	Gender finance tracking	100
PrimSan	Single sex sanitation primary	73.3
LowSecSan	Single sex sanitation lower secondary	61.0
WomTeachPrim	Gender balance of teachers, primary	90.3
WomTeachSec	Gender balance of teachers, secondary	41.6
WomTeachTert	Gender balance of teachers, tertiary	47.8
Total		69.0
AGEE Domain: Values		
leggen	Presence of legal frameworks on gender equality	54.5
hrpp	Human rights institutions	100.0
cedaw	Conv on elimination of discrimination against women	100.0
cade	Conv against discrimination in education	0.0
ibr	International bill of rights	100.0
marr18	Laws on marriage under 18	100.0
wvsq30	Views on women's access to higher education	nd*
shrc	Laws on provision of reproductive health care	79.0
csr	Sex ratio at birth	98.8
domvcon	Non-condonement of domestic violence	81.1
Total		79.3
AGEE Domain: Opportunities		
NineYrsEd1	Legal guarantee 9 years schooling	50.0
EdPreg1	Legislation to protect pregnant girls' education	50.0
SSD1	Endorsement safe school declaration	100.0
Marr18Prev1	Prevalence of marriage under 18	57.9
VAWPrev1	Prevalence of partner violence	56.0
ChildLab	GPI child labour	67.0
IntUse1	GPI Internet use	49.2
StntGPI1	GPI stunting	85.1
MeanSch1	Mean years of schooling (female)	26.0
MeanSchGPI1	GPI mean years of schooling	50.8
Total		59.2



AGEE Domain: Participation		
GPI GER PreP1	GPI GER pre-primary	96.33
GPI GER Ter1	GPI GER tertiary	51.3
GPI TVET1	GPI Participation in TVET (15-24)	46.04
GPI Com Prim1	GPI completion primary	60.53
GPI Com LSec1	GPI completion lower secondary	86.46
GPI Com USec1	GPI completion upper secondary	79.55
GPI Grad Ter1	GPI tertiary graduation	95.98
Rep1	GPI repetition lower secondary	100
BullSch2a	GPI experience of bullying	88.76
Total		78.3
AGEE Domain: Knowledge		
GPI Lit	GPI literacy 15+	62.4
HTS	GPI harmonised test scores	94.4
WomTr	GPI participation rate of youth and adults in formal education and training	51.4
STEM	Proportion of STEM graduates who are female	40.4
Total		62.1
AGEE Domain: Outcomes		
medinc	GPI employed in poverty	94.1
lfpr	GPI labour force participation rate	81.3
wminst	Proportion of parliamentary seats held by women	22.9
infdec	Proportion of women making informed decisions relating to sexual and reproductive health	44.7
unpaidwk	GPI time spent on unpaid domestic and care work	16.8
Total		51.9

\*'nd' indicates no data is available for this indicator in the cross-national datasets used to compile the spotlight countries. This appendix shows the full list of AGEE indicators for each domain and therefore notes when no data is available; however the indicators with missing data have been omitted from the graphs in the main section of the brief. For the 'domain graph' at the start of this brief, we will produce an average value for a domain if a country is missing data for up to two indicators, but we will not calculate an average if more than two indicators are missing. It is envisaged that more data will become available for most indicators as the SDGs move forwards. In future, it may be possible to impute data for these gaps from other sources at the national level. For further discussion of how the data was compiled for the spotlight briefs, please see the [technical note](#) on the AGEE website.

<sup>i</sup> This work was supported by the Global Partnership for Education Knowledge and Innovation Exchange, a joint endeavor with the International Development Research Centre, Canada and a UCL QR PSF (policy support funding) grant.