



**GERMAN GOVERNMENT AND  
FEDERAL STATES PROGRAMME**  
BUND-LÄNDER-PROGRAMM (BLP)



**Federal state – partner country**  
Thuringia – Malawi

**Title**

Strengthening Pandemic Response Infrastructure  
and Capacity Development in Malawi

**In cooperation with the GIZ programme**

Health System Strengthening  
with a Focus on Reproductive Health

**Financing arrangements**

BMZ contribution	€ 720,000
Thuringia contribution	€ 480,000

**Duration**

01.01.2021 – 31.03.2023

**Responsible ministry**

State Chancellery of Thuringia

This project helps to achieve the following  
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



The planning team at the construction site for the new infectious diseases ward in the grounds of Zomba Central Hospital, Zomba, Malawi

## Combating the Pandemic in Malawi

### Local situation

The senior management team at Zomba Central Hospital, one of the four central hospitals in Malawi, is under considerable pressure to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The hospital can admit no more than four patients to its intensive care unit out of the 4.6 million residents in its catchment area. It has problems treating and accommodating patients with COVID-19 separately from other patients. Improvements to the infrastructure are therefore urgently required in order to separate highly infectious patients physically and organisationally. Both staff and patients must be made more aware of the symptoms, consequences and risks of highly infectious diseases such as COVID-19. In addition, there is a shortage of medical personnel trained specifically in hygiene and infection control. Apart from COVID-19, highly contagious diseases are a regular occurrence in Malawi. The current pandemic situation emphasises even more how urgent it is to establish the physical capacity and human resources needed to tackle such diseases in the country.

*“In Zomba the recent third wave was the worst in terms of coordinating services and the availability of resources. Zomba Central Hospital had many patients who needed to be put on ventilators, but this was not possible because we didn’t have the capacity, so nearly all of those patients died. There is no doubt that preventing and controlling infection in Malawi are the key to saving lives.”*

**Dr Saulos Nyirenda,**  
Acting Hospital Director,  
Zomba Central Hospital, Malawi



3-D model of the planned infectious diseases ward

## Cooperation arrangements

The project’s cooperation partners are Zomba Central Hospital (ZCH) in Malawi, which is funded by the national Ministry of Health, and the State Chancellery in the Free State of Thuringia. The project’s implementation partner is the Thuringian association Zomba Hospital Projekt e. V. (ZHP e. V.). As a prominent civil society actor, the association has been involved in non-governmental development cooperation with Zomba Central Hospital since 1996. It also has close ties with the Sophien- und Hufeland-Klinikum gGmbH hospital in Weimar.

## What we are doing – and how

As part of the German Government and Federal States Programme (German: Bund-Länder-Programm; BLP), the project supports Malawi’s efforts to combat the pandemic by developing infrastructure and local capacity so that Malawian stakeholders can benefit from Thuringia’s expertise in infectious diseases. The project’s intermediaries consists of doctors and medical staff at Zomba Central Hospital in Malawi. The target group is the local population of Malawi, who will benefit in the long term from improved health protection in the country’s hospitals. The BLP project also supports local efforts to create the necessary infrastructure and develop additional capacity at Zomba Central Hospital in order to improve medical care for COVID-19 patients. At the heart of the project is the construction of a dedicated

coronavirus/infectious diseases ward. Additional support is available in the form of in-service training for medical staff in hygiene and infection control, awareness-raising activities among the general population and hospital staff, and the sharing of information and experience in combating pandemics. A final conference will be held to support the dissemination of the knowledge acquired during the project in Malawi.

## Useful links

- The association Zomba Hospital Projekt e. V. (ZHP e. V.):  
<https://zombaprojekt.de/>
- Technical cooperation programme Health System Strengthening with a Focus on Reproductive Health:  
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/20127.html>
- More information on the programme:  
<https://bund-laender-programm.de/en>  
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/91262.html>  
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/34949.html>

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  
Registered offices:  
Bonn and Eschborn | Germany  
German Government and Federal States Programme (BLP):  
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Design kippconcept gmbh, Bonn | Germany

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