

Scotland-Malawi Public Awareness Study:

Assessing changes in the scale of public awareness, engagement and support in Scotland for the bilateral relationship with Malawi, 2014-2018

July 2018

Executive Summary:

Between March and May 2018 a team of researchers led by Colin Reilly of the University of Glasgow repeated a 2014 study using the same methodology to assess the extent of public awareness, engagement and support for Scotland's links with Malawi. 449 randomly selected Scots were stopped on the streets of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Cumbernauld and St Andrews and asked six quick questions relating to Scotland's links with Malawi. Every reasonable effort, within the limitations of the study, was made to select a random cross-section sample and to record their views and opinions with as little influence as possible.

The study succeeded in broadly replicating the age and geographies of the 2014 data set, albeit with 67 fewer respondents (13%) and, entirely unintentionally, a 15.5% shift in gender balance, with fewer female respondents in 2018.

The 2018 results are remarkably similar to the 2014 data, with very similar levels of public awareness, engagement and public support.

The study suggests that there continues to be a notable degree of public awareness, engagement and support for Scotland's links with Malawi, with the majority of respondents in support of such links (77.3% of participants in favour of Scotland's links with Malawi). There remains a substantial degree of awareness of Scotland's links with Malawi with 48.1% of participants stating that they were aware of Scotland's relationship with Malawi and 44.5% knowing someone who has worked in Malawi.

These results are encouraging to all those involved in the Scotland-Malawi relationship and can be used alongside similar research published in the past twelve months to evaluate the strength

of the Scotland-Malawi relationship. Findings from Anders (2018)¹ highlight that 208,000 Malawians and 109,000 people in Scotland are actively involved in partnership connections with Imlah (2017, p2)² suggesting that this offers 'a hopeful vision for international cooperation'. The Scotland-Malawi relationship represents an innovative way of engaging in North-South partnerships based on people-people relationships and this study suggests that Scotland and Malawi's relationship enjoys a healthy degree of popular awareness, engagement and support.

Introduction:

Between March and May 2018 Colin Reilly of the University of Glasgow led a team of researchers and volunteers to undertake a Public Awareness Study relating to Scotland's links Malawi. The research was commissioned by the Scotland Malawi Partnership, the national network which exists to coordinate, represent and support the civic bilateral relationship.

This 2018 research was a repeat of a 2014 study, also led by Colin Reilly, using the same methodology to assess whether public awareness and support for Scotland's links with Malawi had increased or decreased over this four-year period.

Aims:

The study aimed to assess:

- a) The extent of public awareness and understanding of Scotland's links with Malawi
- b) The proportion of Scots that personally know someone involved in work with Malawi
- c) The extent of public support for Scotland's links with Malawi

Methodology:

With these three aims, the study hoped to interview c500 randomly selected Scots, asking six quick questions:

1. Please name a country in Africa.

¹ Anders , Gerhard PhD, LLM (2018) *Valuing the links between Scotland and Malawi: Sustained growth in partnership*, University of Edinburgh

² Imlah, Alayna PhD (2017) *Assemblages of networks, partnerships and friendships in international development: the case of Malawi and Scotland*, PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow

2. Do you know a country in Africa that has particularly strong links with Scotland?
3. Did you know that Scotland has a strong longstanding relationship with Malawi?
4. Do you know *why* Scotland has a strong relationship with Malawi?
5. Do you know anyone involved in work with Malawi? If so, please briefly describe.
6. What do you *think* of Scotland's relationship with Malawi? (Strongly in favour; Mildly in favour; Indifferent; Mildly opposed or Strongly opposed)

For each respondent, the researchers also collected data on the date, time and precise location of the interview, and the perceived age and gender of the respondent.

Researchers ensured they had no obvious associations with Malawi visible and did not answer any questions about the research prior to asking these six questions (other than the interview would take no more than two minutes). Every reasonable effort was made to capture the unbiased views of those interviewed and researchers were encouraged to stop a random cross-section of those that passed them on the street.

Interviews took place in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Cumbernauld and St Andrews at roughly the same times of day as in 2014.

Results:

The sample set:

In total, 449 interviews were completed between March and May 2018.

Geographies: 340 interviews (75.7%) were completed in central Glasgow, 84 (18.7%) in Edinburgh, 23 (5.1%) in Cumbernauld and 2 (0.4%) in St Andrews.

Gender: 40.1% of participants were female and 59.9% male.

Age: 15-25 was the largest age group represented in the survey with 43.7% of participants. This was followed by 25-40 at 23.6%. 21.2% of participants were aged 40-60. Participants aged 60+ represented 8%. Those aged 0-14 represented the smallest group at 3.3%. Age information was not available for 1 participant (0.2%).

Question one: 'please name a country in Africa'.

A total of 48 different locations were mentioned when participants were asked to name a country in Africa. 8.2% of participants were unable to correctly identify a country in Africa.

The top five most common answers were: Nigeria (12.2%), Kenya (11.1%), South Africa (9.6%), Zimbabwe (8%) and Malawi (7.8%).

Question two: 'Do you know a country in Africa that has particularly strong links with Scotland?'

208 respondents (46.3%) were able to name a country in Africa with a strong link to Scotland. In total, 25 countries were named, of which Malawi was the most frequently cited.

100 of those who responded yes (48.1%) named Malawi. This is 3.8 times higher than the next most cited country from this group (12.5% South Africa, 9.6% Uganda, 5.2% Kenya).

Question three: 'Did you know that Scotland has a strong longstanding relationship with Malawi?'

When asked directly this question, 216 respondents (48.1%) said 'yes' they knew that Scotland had a strong longstanding relationship with Malawi.

Question four: 'Do you know why Scotland has a strong relationship with Malawi?'

180 respondents (38.5%) suggested a reason for the strong relationship between Scotland and Malawi.

- 42 respondents (23.3% of those who gave a reason) cited "David Livingstone" or "a Scottish explorer"
- 38 respondents (21.1%) cited "charity", "charity links" or similar
- 16 respondents (8.9%) cited "school links" or similar
- 15 respondents (8.3%) cited "aid", "international development" or similar
- 10 respondents (5.6%) cited "colonial legacy" or similar

- 8 respondents (4.4%) each cited
 - “church”, “faith links” or similar
 - “Mary's Meals”
 - “trade”, “business”, “economic ties” or similar
- 5 respondents (2.8%) cited “missionaries” or similar
- 4 respondents (1.1%) each cited
 - “Jack McConnell”
 - “volunteering” or similar
- 2 respondents (1.1%) each cited
 - “SCIAF”
 - “education” or similar
 - “government” or similar
 - “infrastructure” or “building projects”
 - “water”
- 1 respondent (0.6%) each cited
 - “Alexander McCall Smith”
 - “Commonwealth”
 - “Make Poverty History”
 - “Fair Trade”
 - “Glasgow City Council”
 - “History”
 - “Immigration”
 - “Nursing”
 - “Health research”
 - “Mining”
 - “Political links”
 - “Malawi President studied in Scotland”
 - “Share the same patron saint”
 - “City twinning”
 - “Strathclyde University”

Question Five: 'Do you know anyone involved in work with Malawi?'

200 respondents (44.5%) said they knew someone involved in work with Malawi, with 37 different types of engagement cited³.

- 86 respondents (43% of those who knew someone) cited “friends”
- 85 respondents (42.5%) cited, “schools”, “school links”, “teaching” or similar
- 53 respondents (26.5%) cited “volunteering” or similar
- 30 respondents (15%) cited a “construction project” or similar
- 15 respondents (7.5%) each cited
 - “family” or similar
 - “church links” or similar
 - “university” or similar
- 13 respondents (6.5%) cited “charity” or similar
- 10 respondents (5%) cited “work” or similar
- 6 respondents (3%) cited “health links” or similar
- 5 respondents (2.5%) cited “aid work” or similar
- 3 respondents (1.5%) each cited
 - “orphanage” or similar
 - “social media friends” or similar
 - “friend/family member from Malawi” or similar
- 2 respondents (1%) each cited
 - “army” or similar
 - “tourism” or similar
 - “environment”, “wildlife” or similar
 - “fundraising” or similar
 - “children” or similar
 - “water” or similar
- 1 respondent (0.5%) each cited
 - “gap year”

³ A number of respondents cited more than one type of engagement, this has been fully recorded. For example, if someone said “My brother went out with his university to build a school”, this has been recorded as one reference for each of: “family”; “university”; “school” and “construction”.

- “many people”
- “Mary’s Meals”
- “Duke of Edinburgh Award”
- “underprivileged mothers”
- “government”
- “JTS rice challenge”
- “fair trade”
- “SCIAF”
- “partnership”
- “Model UN”
- “Spirit Aid”
- “SKIP” or similar
- “Habitat for Humanity” or similar

Question six: ‘What do you think of Scotland’s relationship with Malawi?’

252 participants (56.1%) were ‘strongly in Favour’ of Scotland’s relationship with Malawi

95 participants (21.2%) were ‘mildly in Favour’

94 participants (20.9%) were ‘indifferent’

2 participants (0.4%) were ‘mildly opposed’ and

5 participants (1.1%) were ‘strongly opposed’.

Longitudinal comparison:

	2014 data	2018 data	Comparison
<i>n number</i>	516	449	67 fewer participants (13%)
<i>Gender</i>	55.6% Female 44.4% Male	40.1% Female 59.9% Male	Significant shift in gender balance, with 15.5% more males and fewer females
<i>Age</i>	1.8% were 0-14 50.9% were 15-25 14.8% were 25-40 20.8% were 40-60 11.7% were 60+	3.3% were 0-14 43.7% were 15-25 23.6% were 25-40 21.2% were 40-60 8% were 60+	Broadly comparable demographic spread
<i>Location</i>	73% Glasgow 18% Edinburgh 5% Lennoxton 2.5% Cumbernauld	75.7% Glasgow 18.7% Edinburgh 5.1% Cumbernauld 0.4% St Andrews	A very similar geographic spread
<i>“Do you know a country in Africa that has particularly strong links with Scotland?”</i>	47.3 % Yes; 52.7% No	46.3 % Yes; 53.7% No	A very similar result
<i>Of those who said yes, how many named “Malawi?”</i>	51.2% which is 4.3 times more than next most cited (11.9% South Africa, 8.2% Uganda, 7.8% Kenya)	48.1%, which is 3.8 times more than next most cited (12.5% South Africa, 9.6% Uganda, 5.2% Kenya)	A very similar result
<i>“Did you know that Scotland has a strong longstanding relationship with Malawi?”</i>	48.6% Yes; 51.4% No	48.1% Yes; 51.7% No	A very similar result
<i>“Do you know anyone involved in work with Malawi?”</i>	46.1 % Yes; 53.9% No	44.5% Yes; 55.5% No	A very similar result – marginal decrease
<i>“What do you think of Scotland’s relationship with Malawi?”</i>	55.4% Strongly in favour; 18.6% Mildly in favour; 23.4% Indifferent; 1.4% Mildly opposed; 1% Strongly opposed; 0.2% N/A	56.1% Strongly in favour; 21.2% Mildly in favour; 20.9% Indifferent; 0.4% Mildly opposed; 1.1% Strongly opposed; 0.2% N/A	A very similar result – slight increase in support

Conclusions:

The study succeeded in repeating the same methodology as was conducted in 2014, with the same researcher briefings (and many of the same volunteers) and a very similar age profile and geographic location of respondents. There were 67 fewer respondents (13%) in 2018 than in 2014, and 15.5% fewer female respondents. This reduced *n* number was simply the result of time and capacity and the shift in gender balance was entirely unintentional, only observed when the research collection phase had ended and the results were analysed.

This study's findings suggest that similar levels of public awareness, engagement and support for Scotland's links with Malawi have been largely maintained from 2014 to 2018. There has been a marginal decrease in the percentage of respondents who said they knew Scotland had a strong longstanding relationship with Malawi (0.5%) and a slight decrease in proportion that personally knew someone involved in a Malawi link (1.6%). There has been a slight increase in the proportion of respondents that are strongly or mildly in favour of these links, of 3.3%. However, none of these changes represent a significant alteration from the 2014 study.

Given the nature and limitations of the study, the researchers are careful not to over claim or extrapolate too firmly from this data. However, within the confines of the research, the study is able to conclude that there continues to be a notable degree of public awareness, engagement and support for Scotland's links with Malawi, with the majority of respondents in support of such links (77.3% of participants in favour of Scotland's links with Malawi). Further, while 20/9% of participants stated that they were indifferent towards Scotland's relationship with Malawi, only 1.5% stated that they were opposed to it. There remains a substantial degree of awareness of Scotland's links with Malawi with 48.1% of participants stating that they were aware of Scotland's relationship with Malawi and 44.5% knowing someone who has worked in Malawi.

The study notes that of those who stated they were aware of Scotland's relationship with Malawi, 72.7% knew someone who had worked in Malawi. In comparison, of those participants who were not aware of Scotland's relationship with Malawi 18.5% knew someone who had been to Malawi. It is more likely that people who know a friend of family member who has worked in Malawi will have an awareness of the link between the two countries. While further research would be required to explore this further, this could suggest that individuals' understanding of the relationship stems from their own local connections, from volunteerism and civil society engagement.

These results are encouraging to all those involved in the Scotland-Malawi relationship and can be used alongside similar research published in the past twelve months to evaluate the strength of the Scotland-Malawi relationship. Findings from Anders (2018)⁴ highlight that 208,000 Malawians and 109,000 people in Scotland are actively involved in partnership connections with Imlah (2017, p2)⁵ suggesting that this offers ‘a hopeful vision for international cooperation’. The Scotland-Malawi relationship represents an innovative way of engaging in North-South partnerships based on people-people relationships and this study suggests that Scotland and Malawi’s relationship enjoys a healthy degree of popular awareness, engagement and support.

Limitations and areas for further research:

This study provides a useful insight into the extent of public awareness, engagement and support for Scotland’s links with Malawi, albeit within set time, capacity and funding limitations.

With greater time, funding and a larger research team, the research could be improved in a number of ways. A larger *n* number and a more representative sample across Scotland, beyond the central belt, would allow a more robust extrapolation to the national level. The study also recognises the myriad difficulties in selecting a genuinely representative cross-section sample given researchers were only able to interview those who happened to be passing during the research windows, in that location, and were willing to stop and provide data. Collecting unbiased attitudinal data is especially difficult, with it being all too easy to unintentionally influence results in the way the question is asked. All the researchers received basic training in which it was made clear that they were to do everything reasonably possible to avoid unintentional influence.

While every reasonable effort was made to ensure as robust data collection as possible, the researchers recognise the limitations of the study. However, as a largely volunteer-led enterprise commissioned by a relatively small Scottish charity, this study succeeded in meeting its brief and offering some reasonable insight into the scale of public awareness, engagement and support for Scotland’s links with Malawi. Repeating this survey in parallel with more in-depth qualitative interviewing could provide a more detailed and nuanced understanding of what the Scotland-Malawi relationship means to the Scottish public.

⁴ Anders, Gerhard PhD, LL.M (2018) *Valuing the links between Scotland and Malawi: Sustained growth in partnership*, University of Edinburgh

⁵ Imlah, Alayna PhD (2017) *Assemblages of networks, partnerships and friendships in international development: the case of Malawi and Scotland*, PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow

The Researchers:

Colin Reilly is nearing the completion of his PhD at the University of Glasgow. His research, funded by the Carnegie Trust, investigates language use and language attitudes in Malawian universities. Since 2014, he has been a Director of the Scotland Malawi Partnership but he undertook this paid commission in a personal capacity as an individual researcher. Colin Reilly was assisted by Gareth Davis, Julia Diachkova, Lucy Bryce and Agnes Munyoro, David Hope-Jones, Kathy Wright, Jackie Farr, Grace O'Donovan and Beata Skobodzinska in the collection of the data for this research.