

September 2014

Public Awareness Study

Examining Scotland-Malawi links



About the Scotland Malawi Partnership

The Scotland Malawi Partnership is the umbrella organisation which exists to inspire the people and organisations of Scotland to be involved with Malawi in an informed, coordinated and effective way so that both nations benefit.

About the Study

Between June and September 2014 the Scotland Malawi Partnership commissioned a Public Awareness Study to assess the level of public awareness of, and attitudes to, Scotland's people-to-people relationship with Malawi.

A total of 516 interviews were conducted at random on the streets of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Cumbernauld and Lennoxtown.

This report gives the key summary findings.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Not only is there a high *awareness* amongst Scots of the people-to-people links with Malawi (49%), there is also a remarkably high level of active and diverse civic *involvement*: **46% of Scots know someone involved** in one of 40 different types of links with Malawi.

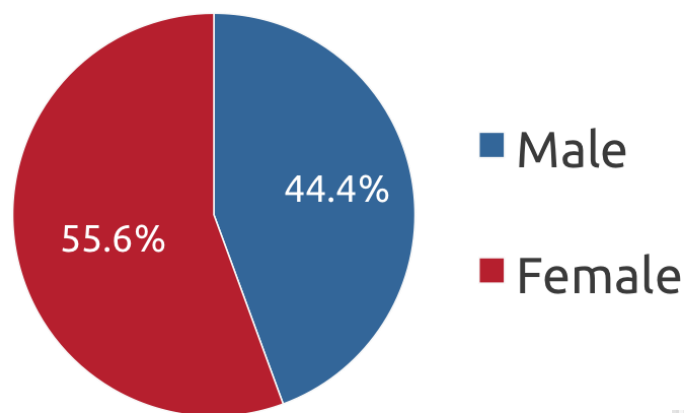
There is also remarkably strong public *support* for these civic links with Malawi: **74% are in favour of these links** and only 3% are against.

When viewed alongside comparable international development surveys across the UK it is clear Scotland's people-to-people partnership with Malawi is quite exceptional in terms of public awareness, engagement and perception.

SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

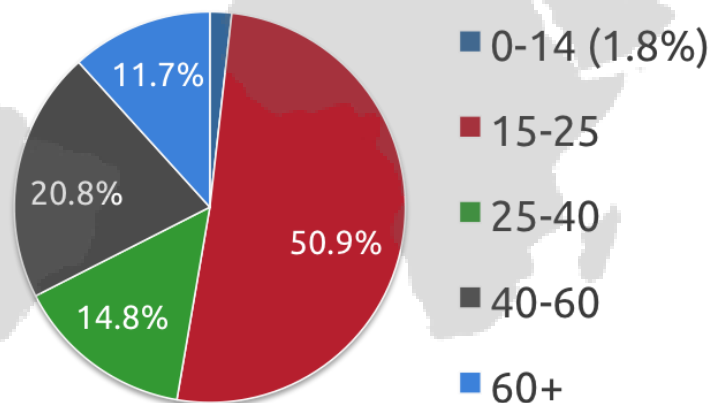
- GENDER**

55.6% of participants were female and 44.4% male.



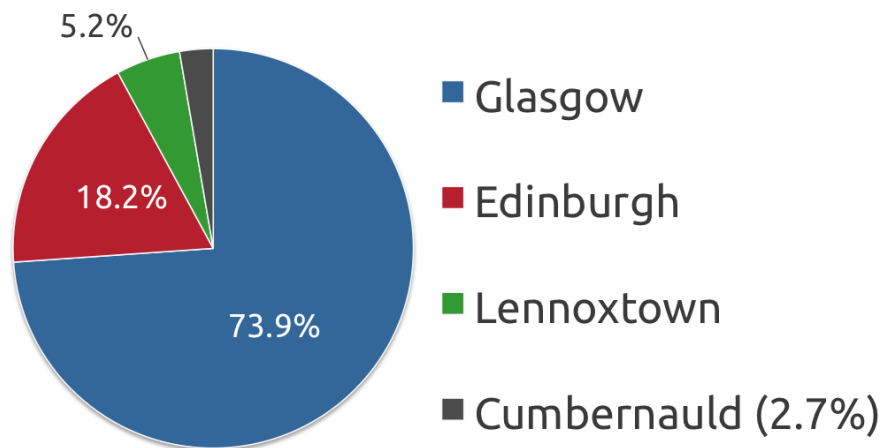
- AGE**

The 15-25 years age group was the largest group surveyed, representing 50.9% of participants. The 40-60 years age group with a 20.8% share and the 25-40 years age group with 14.8% share of participants followed this. The 60+ years age group represented 11.7% of those interviewed and the smallest of the groups, 0-14 years, represented 1.8%.



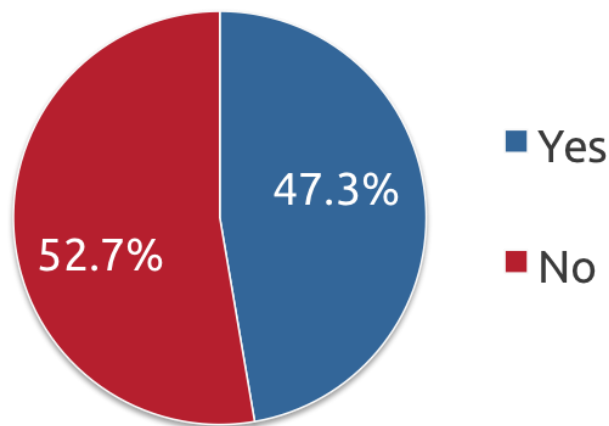
- **LOCATION**

381 (73.9%) interviews were completed in Glasgow, 94 (18.2%) in Edinburgh, 27 (5.2%) in Lennoxton, and 14 (2.7%) in Cumbernauld.

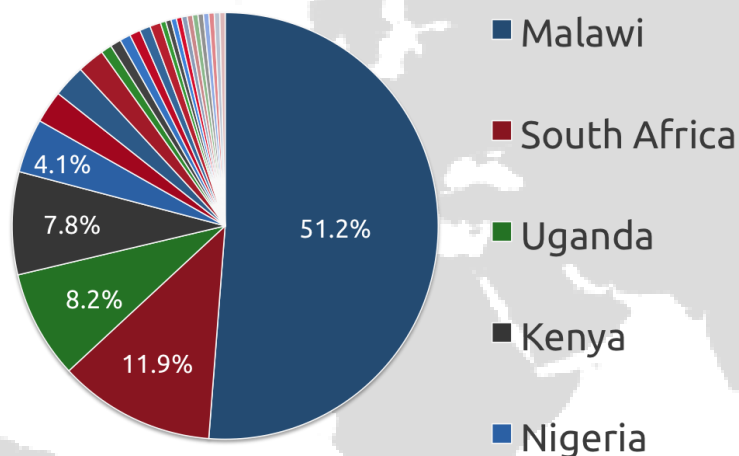


AWARENESS OF SCOTLAND-MALAWI LINKS (unprompted)

When asked, “Do you know a country in Africa that has particularly strong links with Scotland?” 47.3% said “yes” and 52.7% said “no”.



Of those who said “yes”, 51.2% named Malawi (four times more than any other country).

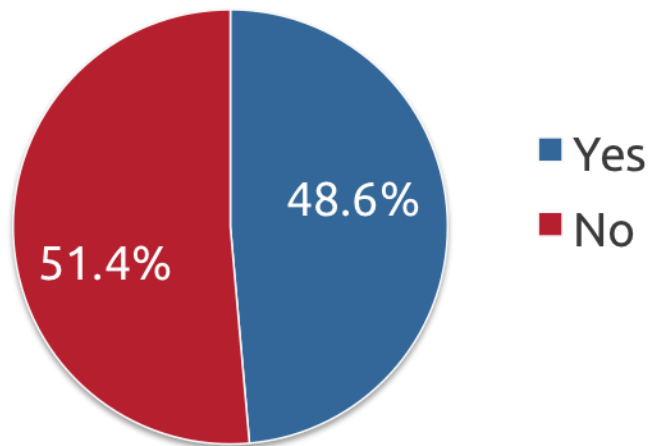


0.8% Cameroon, Congo, Cape Town, Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast

0.4% East Africa, Trinidad, Egypt, Mozambique, Libya, Jamaica, Ethiopia, Somalia, Chad, Mali, Blantyre Town, Zambia

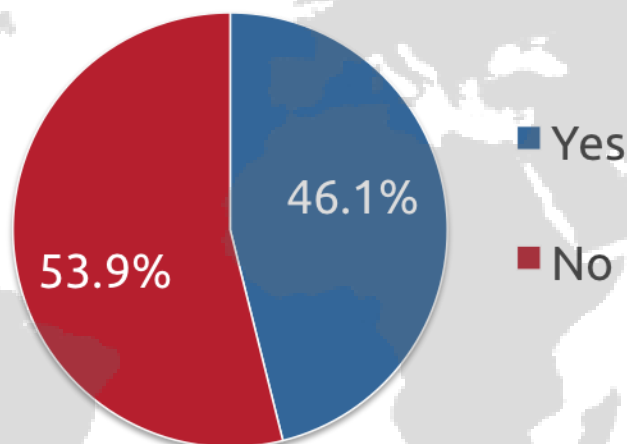
AWARENESS OF SCOTLAND-MALAWI LINKS (prompted)

When then directly asked, “*Did you know that Scotland has a strong longstanding relationship with Malawi?*” 48.6% said “yes” and 51.4% said “no”.

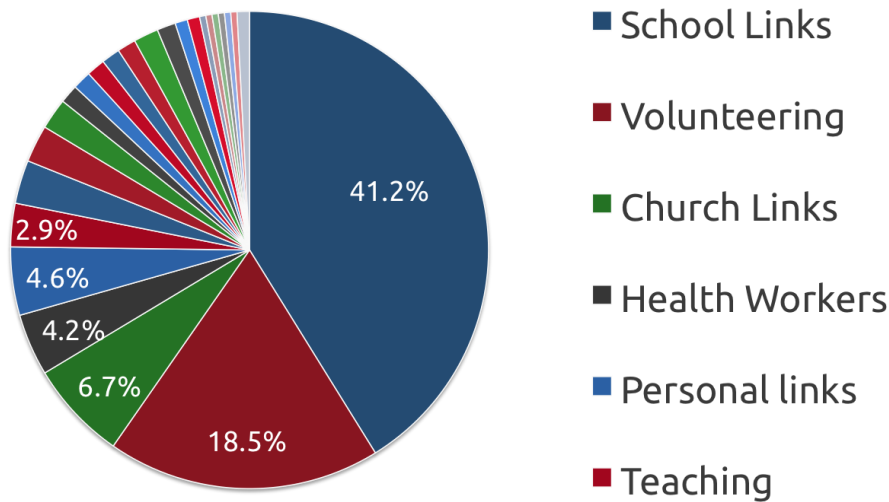


INVOLVEMENT IN SCOTLAND-MALAWI LINKS

When asked, “*Do you know anyone involved in work with Malawi?*” 46.1% of respondents said “yes” and 53.9% said “no”.



Of those who knew someone engaged in a link with Malawi, the most common activity cited was a “school link” at 41.2%, followed by “volunteering” at 18.5%, “church links” at 6.7%, and “health workers” at 4.2%. In total, 40 different types of links were stated.



Links also mentioned included:

2.9% Various NGOs

2.5% Mary's Meals

2.1% Jack McConnell

1.7% Charity workers, fundraising

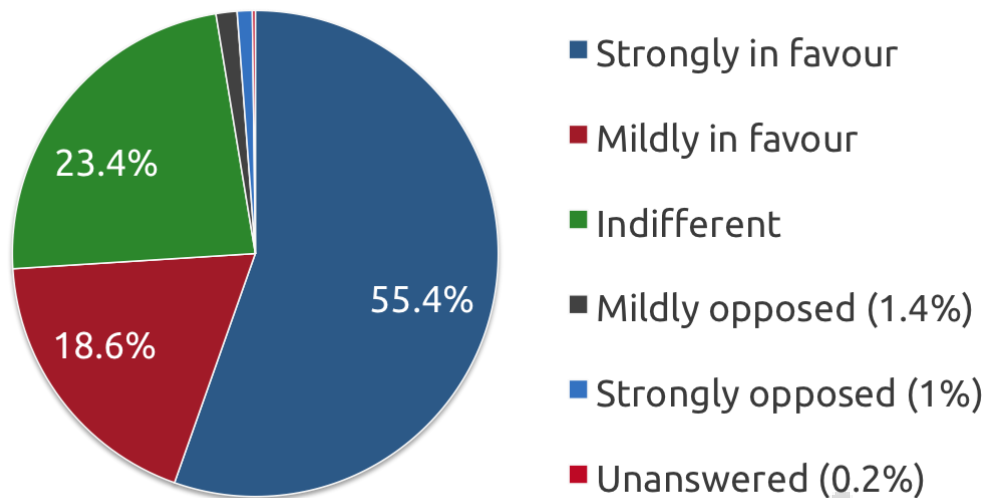
1.3% Celebrities/public figures (other), friends who live and have worked in Malawi, Scouts, missionaries, building school projects, fundraising activities

0.8% Business links, building projects, not expanded

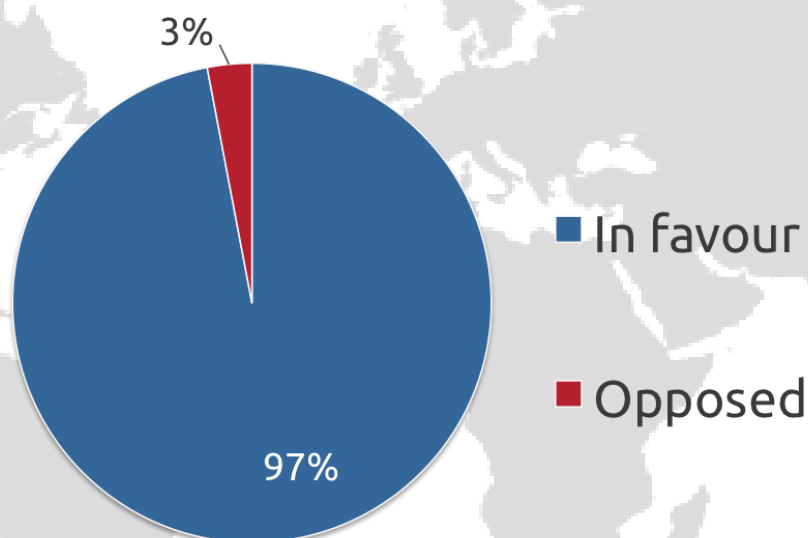
0.4% Girl Guides, oil and gas, Strathclyde University, Glasgow City Council Rice Challenge, Malawi Leaders of Learning, music group links

ATTITUDE TO SCOTLAND-MALAWI LINKS

When asked, “*What do you think of Scotland’s relationship with Malawi?*” 55.4% were “Strongly in Favour”, 18.6% were “Mildly in Favour”, 23.4% were “Indifferent”, 1.4% were “Mildly Opposed” and 1% “Strongly Opposed”.



Of those who had a stated opinion (i.e. when removing those who were “indifferent”), 97% were “in favour” and 3% were “opposed”.



CONCLUSION

It is commonly observed that since 2008, through the global economic downturn, there has been a decrease in public support for international development¹. This study presents data suggesting the Scotland-Malawi people-to-people bilateral relation has not, and is not, following this same general trend.

Some genuinely remarkable data has been generated. Perhaps most strikingly, there is evidence to suggest that:

- there is four times greater awareness in Scotland of links with Malawi than with any other African country;
- over 46% of Scots personally know someone involved with a people-to-people link with Malawi;
- 74% of Scots are in favour of links with Malawi and only 3% are against.

These figures could be seen to reinforce earlier research by the University of Edinburgh² which found that:

- 94,000 Scots and 198,000 Malawians are now actively involved in links together (an increase of 11% and 34% respectively since November 2010);
- 280,000 Scots and 1.38m Malawians benefit from this activity (an increase of 7% and 31% respectively since 2010); and
- SMP members contribute £40m annually to their links with Malawi, including in-kind activity (an increase of 25%).

If this Public Awareness Study is correct that 46% of Scots know someone engaged in a link with Malawi, and assuming the population of Scotland to be in the region of 5.3 million, this would suggest that around 2.4m Scots personally know someone with a Malawi link. If one were to assume that the average Scot tells perhaps 25 friends about their work with Malawi³, one could divide 2.4m by 25 to give a very crude estimate of 96,000 Scots involved – almost precisely the same figure given by the University of Edinburgh, which was attained using an entirely separate and distinct methodology⁴.

¹ House of Commons International Development Committee (2009) [Aid under Pressure: Support for Development Assistance in a Global Economic Downturn](#); Institute of Development Studies (2010) [Public Perceptions of International Development in the UK](#); Charity Aid Foundation (2013) [World Giving Index 2013: A Global View of Giving Trends](#); DFID (2010) [Public Attitudes Towards Development](#);

² Anders, G. University of Edinburgh (July, 2014) [The Value of Scotland's Links with Malawi: building on the past, shaping the future](#)

³ Anecdotal evidence suggests this to be a reasonable figure, although further research is required to test this hypothesis.

⁴ The University of Edinburgh research took sample data from those Scots engaged with Malawi and extrapolated this up based on membership data from the Scotland Malawi Partnership, whereas the sample data in this Public Awareness Study came from randomly selected members of the public.

It is of course deeply problematic to compare such different data sets but, even at an anecdotal level, there seems to be a compelling case suggesting these two distinct studies have comparable outcomes and offer some degree of mutual reinforcement.

It should be noted that this Public Awareness Study is not without its shortcomings: first, that it could be argued it was conducted “in-house” with the lead researcher (a student at the University of Glasgow) also a Trustee of the SMP; and, second, that it could be argued that an n number of 516 may not be enough to extrapolate up to a national level. The SMP recognises, and pre-empts, both these potential areas of criticism. As a small charity, there is limited resource the SMP can commit to such research; however, the Partnership believes this is compelling data, by any analysis, and invites other independent research bodies to undertake future research in this area.

The Scotland Malawi Partnership (SMP) believes these figures present the Scotland-Malawi people to people relationship as something distinct to the traditional conception of international development. Overwhelmingly, most links between Scotland and Malawi exist at a civic society level, receiving no financial support from the state, sustained by community engagement and activism at both sides of the partnership. This allows a model to develop based on dignified, two-way civic partnerships, growing up from a diverse range of communities, which are able to make a sustainable and effective contribution at both sides of the partnership.

Given the focus in this bilateral relationship is on the work of civil society, it is perhaps unsurprising that we see such distinctive data on public awareness, engagement and perception. The SMP believes this data gives strong credence to the innovative, distinctive and effective model of international development through dignified two-way partnership which has been advanced together by the people and governments of Scotland and Malawi.

Want to know more?

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