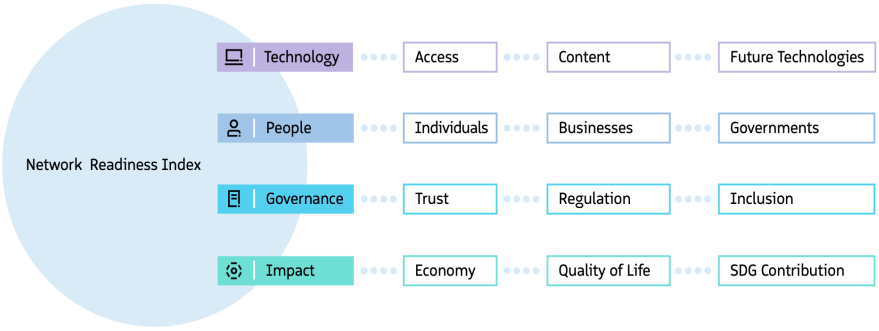
Malawi

The Network Readiness Index (NRI) is one of the leading global indices on the application and impact of information and communication technology (ICT) in economies around the world. In its latest version of 2025 the NRI Report maps the network-based readiness landscape of 127 economies based on their performances in four different pillars: Technology, People, Governance, and Impact. Each of these pillars is itself comprised of three sub-pillars (see Figure 1) that have been populated by a total of 53 variables.

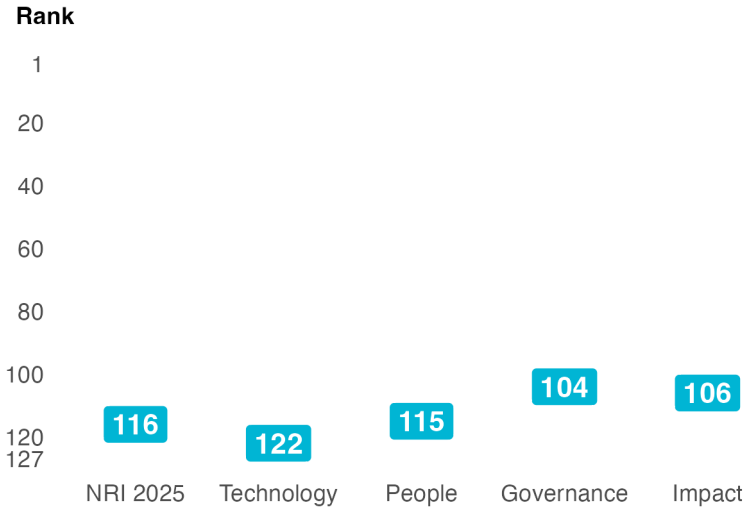
Figure 1: The NRI 2025 model



Global NRI position of Malawi

Malawi ranks 116 out of the 127 economies included in the NRI 2025 (Figure 2). Its main strength relates to Governance. The greatest scope for improvement, meanwhile, concerns Technology.

Figure 2: Malawi global ranking, overall and by pillar



Performance at sub-pillar level

When it comes to sub-pillars, the strongest showings of Malawi relate to Economy, Inclusion and SDG Contribution, among others (Table 1). More could be done, though, to improve the economy's performances in the Quality of Life, Access and Content sub-pillars.

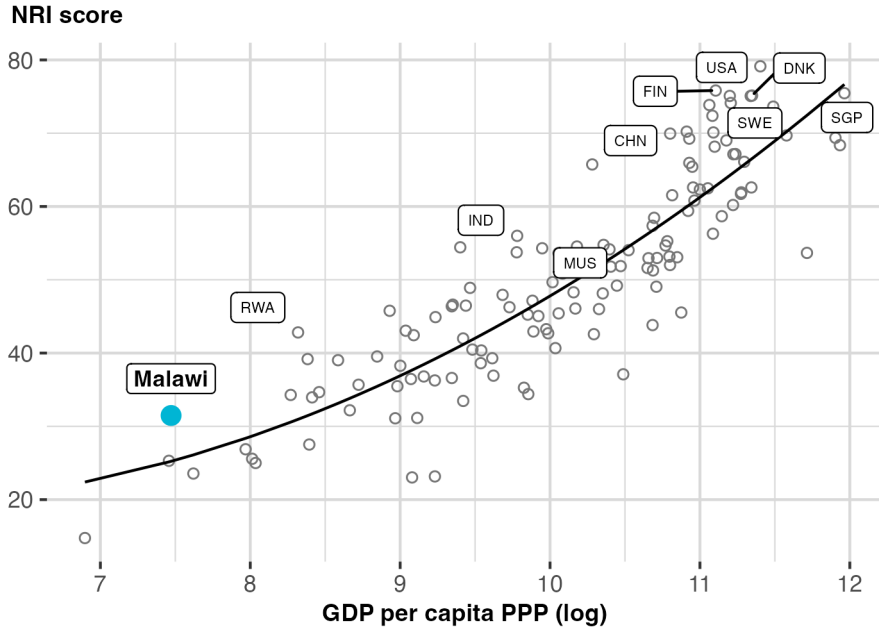
Table 1: Malawi rankings by sub-pillar

Sub-pillar	Rank	Sub-pillar	Rank
Economy	53	Future Technologies	110
Inclusion	94	Trust	110
SDG Contribution	96	Individuals	116
Businesses	100	Quality of Life	118
Governments	100	Access	121
Regulation	109	Content	123

NRI score and income

Figure 3 shows the position of Malawi in terms of both NRI score and GDP per capita (PPP). The trend line shows the expected NRI score given an economy's income level. As can be seen, Malawi is well above the trend line, which suggests that it has a greater network readiness than would be expected given its income level.

Figure 3: NRI score and GDP per capita PPP (log)



Note: USA = United States of America (rank: 1), FIN =Finland (rank: 2), SGP = Singapore (3), DNK =Denmark (4), SWE = Sweden (5), CHN =China (24), and IND = India (45).

Performance against its income group and region

Low-income countries

Malawi is ranked 3rd in the group of low-income countries (Figure 4, left panel). In terms of pillar performance, it has a score higher than the income group average in three of the four pillars: People, Governance and Impact. At the sub-pillar level, it outperforms low-income countries in eight of the twelve sub-pillars: Individuals, Businesses, Governments, Trust, Regulation, Inclusion, Economy and SDG Contribution.

Africa

Malawi is ranked 17th within Africa (Figure 4, right panel). It has a score above the regional average in one of the four pillars: Impact. With regard to sub-pillars, it outperforms the average in Africa in two of the twelve sub-pillars: Inclusion and Economy.

Figure 4: Performance of Malawi against its income group and region, overall and by pillar

Table 2: Malawi scores vs. averages of its income group and region, overall and by pillar

Dimension	Malawi	Low-income countries	Africa
NRI	31.48	28.02	34.00
Technology	16.55	20.32	25.85
People	25.23	19.98	26.78
Governance	42.87	34.60	43.45
Impact	41.28	37.17	39.92

NRI 2025 At-A-Glance: Malawi

Network Readiness Index Rank: 116 (out of 127) Score: 31.48

Pillar/sub-pillar	Rank	Score
A. Technology pillar	122	16.55
1st sub-pillar: Access	121	29.26
2nd sub-pillar: Content	123	0.80
3rd sub-pillar: Future Technologies	110	19.58
B. People pillar	115	25.23
1st sub-pillar: Individuals	116	27.65
2nd sub-pillar: Businesses	100	21.59
3rd sub-pillar: Governments	100	26.45

Pillar/sub-pillar	Rank	Score
C. Governance pillar	104	42.87
1st sub-pillar: Trust	110	34.43
2nd sub-pillar: Regulation	109	43.48
3rd sub-pillar: Inclusion	94	50.69
D. Impact pillar	106	41.28
1st sub-pillar: Economy	53	35.37
2nd sub-pillar: Quality of Life	118	34.97
3rd sub-pillar: SDG Contribution	96	53.50

The Network Readiness Index in detail

Indicator	Rank	Score	
A. Technology pillar	122	16.55	
1st sub-pillar: Access	121	29.26	
1.1.1 Mobile tariffs	124	16.14	○
1.1.2 Handset prices	123	20.24	
1.1.3 FTTH/building Internet subscriptions	119	5.67	
1.1.4 Population covered by at least a 3G mobile network	113	44.16	
1.1.5 International Internet bandwidth	116	60.08	
1.1.6 Internet access in schools	n/a	n/a	
2nd sub-pillar: Content	123	0.80	
1.2.1 GitHub commits	119	0.31	
1.2.2 Internet domain registrations	123	0.09	
1.2.3 Mobile apps development	n/a	n/a	
1.2.4 AI scientific publications	82	1.99	●
3rd sub-pillar: Future Technologies	110	19.58	
1.3.1 Adoption of emerging technologies	97	35.67	
1.3.2 Investment in emerging technologies	115	19.75	
1.3.3 Robot density	n/a	n/a	
1.3.4 Computer software spending	106	3.33	
B. People pillar	115	25.23	
1st sub-pillar: Individuals	116	27.65	
2.1.1 Mobile broadband internet traffic within the country	100	4.18	
2.1.2 ICT skills in the education system	64	50.97	●
2.1.3 Use of virtual social networks	125	1.39	○
2.1.4 Adult literacy rate	84	54.08	
2.1.5 AI talent concentration	n/a	n/a	
2nd sub-pillar: Businesses	100	21.59	

Indicator	Rank	Score	
C. Governance pillar	104	42.87	
1st sub-pillar: Trust	110	34.43	
3.1.1 Secure Internet servers	120	25.20	
3.1.2 Cybersecurity	82	76.48	●
3.1.3 Online access to financial account	n/a	n/a	
3.1.4 Internet shopping	114	1.62	
2nd sub-pillar: Regulation	109	43.48	
3.2.1 Regulatory quality	112	22.90	
3.2.2 ICT regulatory environment	54	76.56	●
3.2.3 Regulation of emerging technologies	111	4.11	
3.2.4 E-commerce legislation	107	50.00	○
3.2.5 Privacy protection by law content	60	63.85	●
3rd sub-pillar: Inclusion	94	50.69	
3.3.1 E-Participation	90	42.03	
3.3.2 Socioeconomic gap in use of digital payments	99	47.23	
3.3.3 Gender gap in Internet use	92	40.98	
3.3.4 Rural gap in use of digital payments	26	72.51	●
D. Impact pillar	106	41.28	
1st sub-pillar: Economy	53	35.37	
4.1.1 ICT patent applications	n/a	n/a	
4.1.2 Domestic market scale	119	33.86	
4.1.3 Technology-Enabled Work Flexibility	78	28.98	
4.1.4 ICT services exports	17	43.28	●
2nd sub-pillar: Quality of Life	118	34.97	
4.2.1 Happiness	126	0.00	○
4.2.2 Freedom to make life choices	96	56.38	

Network Readiness Index 2025

Indicator	Rank	Score	
2.2.1 Firms with website	81	39.33	
2.2.2 Number of venture capital deals invested in AI	n/a	n/a	
2.2.3 Annual investment in telecommunication services	113	25.14	
2.2.4 Public cloud computing market scale	113	0.29	
3rd sub-pillar: Governments	100	26.45	
2.3.1 Government online services	107	35.33	
2.3.2 Data Capabilities	91	4.99	○
2.3.3 Government promotion of emerging technologies	58	39.04	●
2.3.4 Gross expenditure on R&D	n/a	n/a	

NOTE: ● indicates a strength and ○ indicates a weakness.

Indicator	Rank	Score	
4.2.3 Income inequality	75	62.50	●
4.2.4 Healthy life expectancy at birth	115	34.58	
3rd sub-pillar: SDG Contribution	96	53.50	
4.3.1 SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being	111	28.89	
4.3.2 SDG 4: Quality Education	n/a	n/a	
4.3.3 SDG 5: Women's economic opportunity	84	70.91	●
4.3.4 SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	104	55.76	
4.3.5 SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	98	38.75	

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