

Malawi: US donates machine to protect consumers from sub-standard products

 By [Gregory Gondwe](#)

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The United States government has donated a machine worth close to US\$60,000 to the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) which will enable it to identify banned or sub-standard ingredients that may be used in foods produced or imported into the country.

Public Affairs Officer in the US Embassy for Malawi, John Warner said installation of the machine, which arrived in the country in mid-August, was expected to be complete by Friday, August 29.

He said Pfizer, a major US-based pharmaceutical company, has donated the equipment which is a High Performance Liquid Chromatography machine (HPLC).

“This donation has been made possible through the collaboration between USAID/Malawi and Pfizer under [United States Agency for International development] USAID's Global Development Alliance (GDA) initiative,” he said.

He said the machine will assist the MBS in various analyses of food, such as the determination of the nutrient values of foods that are consumed in the country.

“It is hoped that the presence of the HPLC machine will enable MBS laboratories to test more parameters and speed up delivery of analytical services to its customers in its pursuit of good quality products for all residents of Malawi,” he said.

The donation he added will also complement ongoing work that the USAID/Malawi is supporting in the health and nutrition sectors.

“The GDA initiative is a unique program that enables USAID missions to leverage significant resources - technical, human and financial - that exist within the private sector to address developmental needs,” said Warner, before touting the impact of these public-private partnerships as impressive.

Since the launch of the GDA in 2001, the initiative has seen a major shift in the ratio of US funding resources for development assistance.

For example, Warner said in 1970, 70% of assistance to the developing world was official development assistance, and 30% was from the private sector while currently the percentages are roughly reversed.

He said there are several public-private partnerships being implemented in Malawi in 2008, including projects in the dairy, aquaculture, biodiversity/natural resource management, education, and democracy and governance sectors.

“In total, these projects are leveraging approximately \$4,7m in private sector cash or in-kind contributions,” he said.

ABOUT GREGORY GONDWE

Gregory Gondwe is a Malawian journalist who started writing in 1993. He is also a media consultant assisting several international journalists pursuing assignments in Malawi. He holds a Diploma and an Intermediate Certificate in Journalism among other media-related certificates. He can be contacted on gregorygondwe@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter at @Kalipochi.

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