



CountryOpinionSurveys

# FY 2025 Malawi

## Country Opinion Survey Report

# Acknowledgements

The Malawi Country Opinion Survey is part of the Country Opinion Survey Program series of the World Bank Group. This report was prepared by the Business Intelligence (BI) team, led by José De Buerba (Senior External Affairs Officer) and Svetlana Markova (Senior External Affairs Officer). Yulia Danilina, Jessica Cameron, and Sofya Gubaydullina oversaw the design, reporting, and analysis of the survey results. Noreen Wambui and Irina Popova provided data support.

BI acknowledges the significant contribution from the Malawi country team and the independent field agency, Suntha Associates. In particular, BI is grateful for the support from Henry Harlod Chimbali (External Affairs Officer) and Lewis Junie Msasa (Consultant), who coordinated the survey-related activities from Lilongwe, Malawi.



# Contents

Objectives

Methodology Overview

Executive Summary

Overall Views of the World Bank Group (WBG)

The WBG's Work on Development Priorities

The WBG's Instruments

The WBG's Engagement and Collaboration

Communication and Outreach

Sample Demographics and Detailed Methodology



# Objectives

This survey was designed to assist the World Bank Group (WBG) in gaining a better understanding of how stakeholders in Malawi perceive the WBG. The survey explored the following questions:

- 1. Overall Views of the WBG:** How familiar are stakeholders with the WBG? How much trust do stakeholders have in the WBG? What are their opinions on the WBG's effectiveness and relevance to development in Malawi? Are these perceptions improving or declining? Do stakeholders feel that the WBG has changed for the better or worse in the past year?
- 2. The WBG's Work on Development Priorities:** What areas of development are perceived to be the most important? Has the WBG helped achieve the goals of its projects in these areas? How did these projects impact the people of Malawi, and how could the WBG improve its effectiveness?
- 3. WBG Instruments:** What do key stakeholders value the most regarding the WBG's work in Malawi? What opinion do key stakeholders have of WBG financial instruments and knowledge products? How are stakeholders using WBG knowledge work, and has it influenced government policy in Malawi?
- 4. The WBG's Engagement and Collaboration:** How is the WBG perceived as a development partner in Malawi? Are opinions improving or declining? How effectively has the WBG facilitated the Government's engagement with civil society?
- 5. Communications:** What are the preferred communication channels, and do they differ between stakeholder groups? Do stakeholders recall any WBG messaging? What key topics communicated by the WBG do stakeholders recall? What information do stakeholders seek from the WBG?



# Methodology Overview

## Fielded in February 2025 – April 2025

- 759 potential participants were asked to complete the survey
- Respondents received the questionnaire in person or completed it online
- A list of names was provided by the WBG country team and supplemented by the field agency
- Data collection managed on the ground by the field agency

## 307 participants (40% response rate)

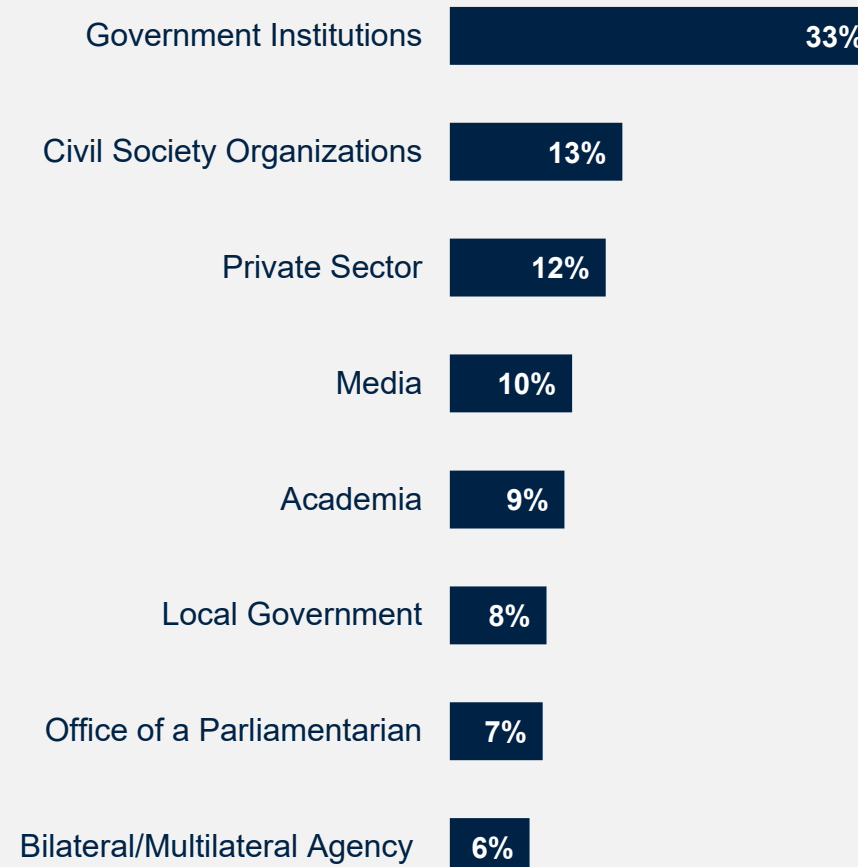
- 67% from Lilongwe
- 55% have collaborated with the WBG within the past 3 years

## Compared to the FY22 Country Survey Results

- 359 participants (51% response rate)
- 74% from urban areas
- 45% collaborated with the WBG

Click [here](#) for details of the Respondent Sample and Methodology.

## Stakeholders in FY25 COS Sample



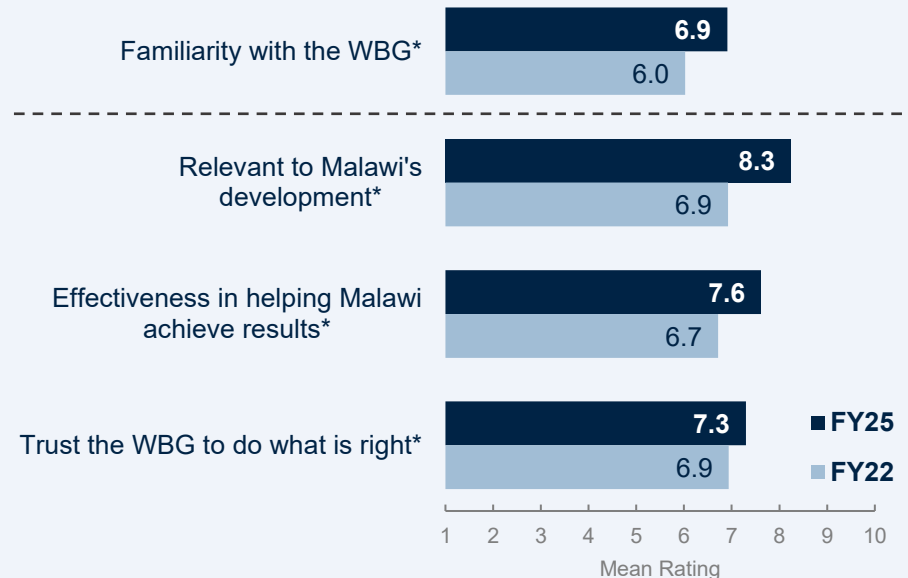
What is your primary professional affiliation? (Select only 1 response)  
(Percentage of Respondents, N=305)

# Executive Summary

## 1. Overall Views of the WBG:

In FY25, stakeholders reported significantly higher levels of **familiarity** with the WBG’s work than in the FY22 Country Survey. Respondents considered the Bank **among the most trusted institutions** in Malawi, on par with regional development banks. Stakeholder perceptions of the WBG’s **relevance** to Malawi’s development and **effectiveness** in helping the country achieve results have also improved significantly in comparison to the FY22 survey results.

In addition, respondents in Malawi gave higher ratings for the WBG’s relevance, effectiveness, and trust than respondents in other Eastern and Southern African countries and IDA countries surveyed in FY24.

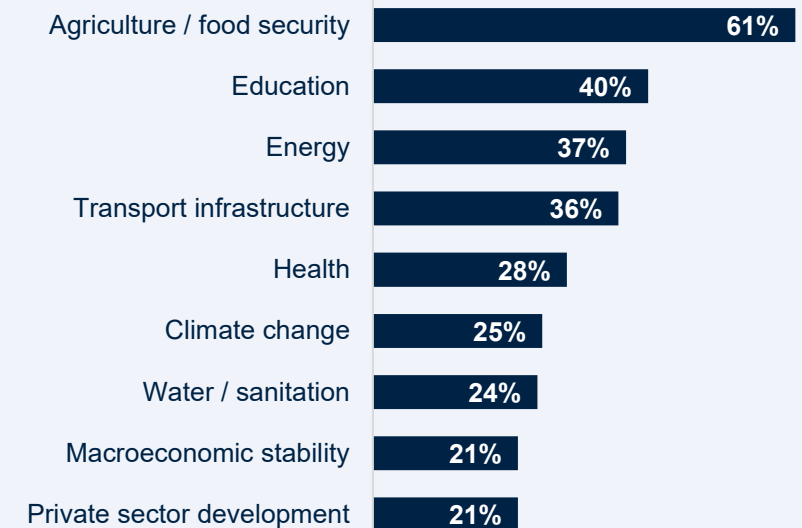


## 2. The WBG’s Work on Development Priorities:

**Agriculture/food security, education, energy, transport infrastructure, and health** were indicated by stakeholders as the top priorities for the WBG’s support going forward. Notably, **transport infrastructure** and **water and sanitation** emerged as significantly more important development priorities compared to FY22—each sector was selected by more than twice as many respondents.

**When asked how helpful the WBG was in achieving project goals, 98% of clients said the Bank was helpful**, with 76% of respondents rating it as very helpful.

In their open-ended comments, respondents emphasized the need for the WBG to support climate-resilient agriculture, expand infrastructure and energy access, develop human capital through investments in education and health, and strengthen governance through local capacity building and institutional transparency.



# Executive Summary (continued)

## 3. WBG's Operational Effectiveness:

When asked about the WBG reform efforts over the past two years, two-thirds of stakeholders (67%) indicated that the WBG had become somewhat or significantly **more effective in fulfilling its core mission of improving people's lives** in Malawi. Over half of all respondents (52%) also recognized progress in the WBG's efforts to improve the **country's overall business environment**.

Clients and partners identified three key areas where reform-related improvements were most evident: the **technical quality** of WBG-supported projects in Malawi, collaboration with others to **mobilize development finance**, and enhanced coordination across WBG institutions. More than 40% of respondents rated the WBG's progress in these areas positively.

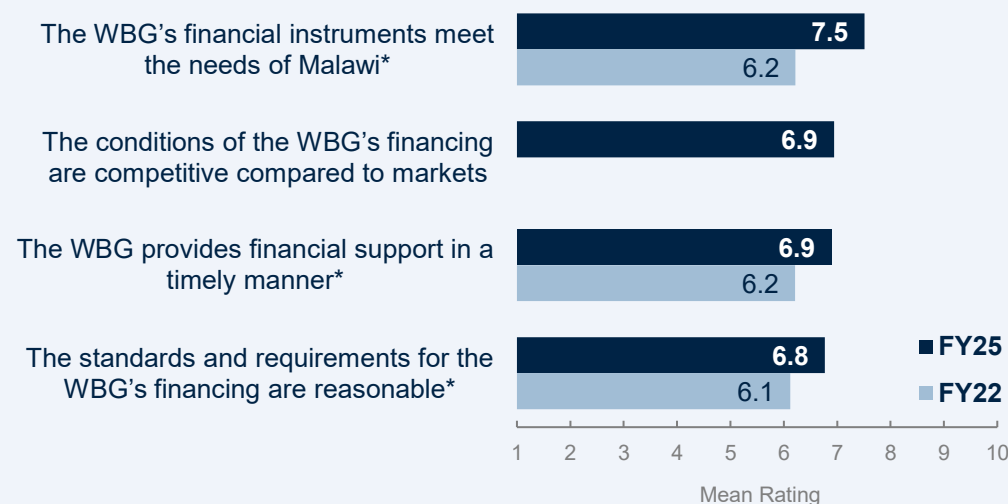
However, perceptions of the WBG's **operational speed** and **ease of collaboration** were mixed. Roughly one-third of stakeholders noted improvements, another third reported no change, and some observed a decline—particularly in relation to the speed of operations.

Respondents emphasized the need for **stronger accountability** through independent monitoring, performance-based funding, robust anti-corruption measures, and simplified financial reporting for CSOs. They called for greater efficiency by reducing bureaucratic delays, decentralizing decision-making, streamlining procedures, and addressing bottlenecks to ensure timely project delivery. Additionally, they recommended **focusing WBG resources on fewer, larger, high-impact projects in the priority sectors**, while fostering cross-sectoral synergies and integrating climate resilience and disaster risk management in its operations.

## 4. WBG Instruments:

The majority of stakeholders (81%) viewed the WBG's **financial resources as** its greatest value to Malawi. They reported strong agreement that the **WBG's financial instruments meet the country's needs**—a perception that has improved notably, along with views on the **timeliness of support** and the fairness and appropriateness of the WBG's standards and requirements.

When asked about their use of the WBG's knowledge work, **respondents most often reported using the WBG's research and analytical reports** (46%), and only about 22% of respondents said that they had not used the WBG's knowledge work. Moreover, **82% of respondents believed that WBG policy advice had influenced government policy in Malawi**, contributing to the development of new environmental and natural resource regulations, macroeconomic and fiscal policy reforms, and initiatives supporting new electricity solutions.



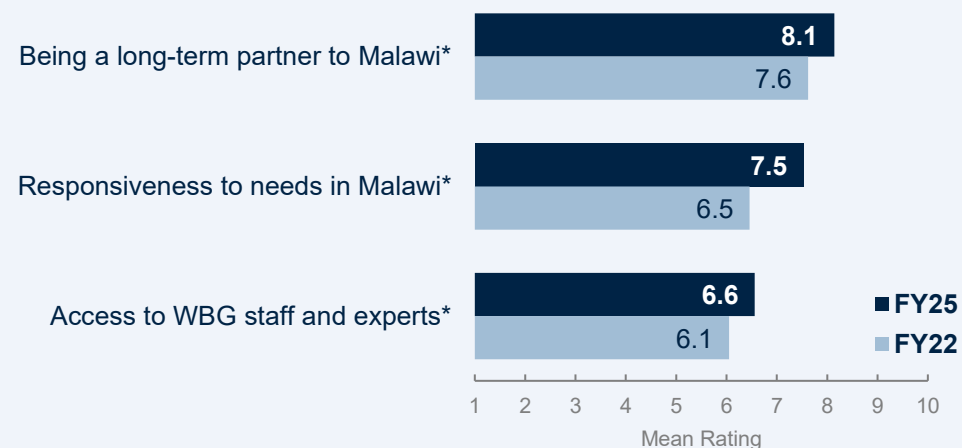
# Executive Summary (continued)

## 5. The WBG's Engagement and Collaboration:

In FY25, stakeholders expressed significantly more positive views of the WBG as a development partner than in the FY22 survey, particularly regarding its role as a **long-term partner** responsive to Malawi's needs. Perceptions of WBG staff accessibility have also improved, though they remain relatively moderate.

The WBG received the highest ratings for the effectiveness of its **collaboration with the national government** (mean=8.2) and **other donors and development partners** (mean=7.6), and improved ratings for the WBG's collaborations with the **private sector**. In addition to its partnership with the national government, respondents would like the WBG to **collaborate more with local governments** (50%), the **private sector** (38%), and **academia** (34%).

Stakeholders felt the WBG was moderately effective at **facilitating civil society participation in policy dialogue and implementation** in Malawi (mean=6.3). While respondents gave many examples of the



WBG's effective engagement with civil society, some respondents suggested that the WBG could strengthen civil society participation in policy dialogue and implementation by **engaging directly with local CSOs**, providing them with targeted funding and capacity-building support, fostering inclusive and regular consultations, reducing bureaucratic barriers, and ensuring CSOs play a meaningful role in project design, monitoring, and advocacy to better reflect community needs and priorities.

Four in ten respondents (41%) felt the WBG has become somewhat or significantly better at creating **investment opportunities** in Malawi. The main challenges to private sector development identified by stakeholders were access to finance (65%) and corruption (53%). Respondents emphasized the need to expand access to finance for SMEs and agribusinesses, foster public-private partnerships, support industrial and value chain development to boost exports, and create favorable conditions for private investment to drive sustainable economic growth.

## 6. Communications:

The WBG's **events/workshops** (in person or online, 49%), **website** (49%), and **publications** (42%) were listed as the most preferred WBG communication channels. Regular **updates on WBG activities** (53%) were the preferred information type sought by stakeholders.

More than two-thirds of respondents (69%) reported recently seeing or hearing about the WBG—most commonly through the traditional media (58%). Among those, the most frequently recalled topics were the **WBG's economic forecasts** (61%) and its **work on disaster risk management** (56%).



# ***Overall Views of the World Bank Group***



**WORLD BANK GROUP**

# Familiarity with the WBG has significantly increased since FY22, Highest Among Academia, Government Institutions, and the Office of a Parliamentarian

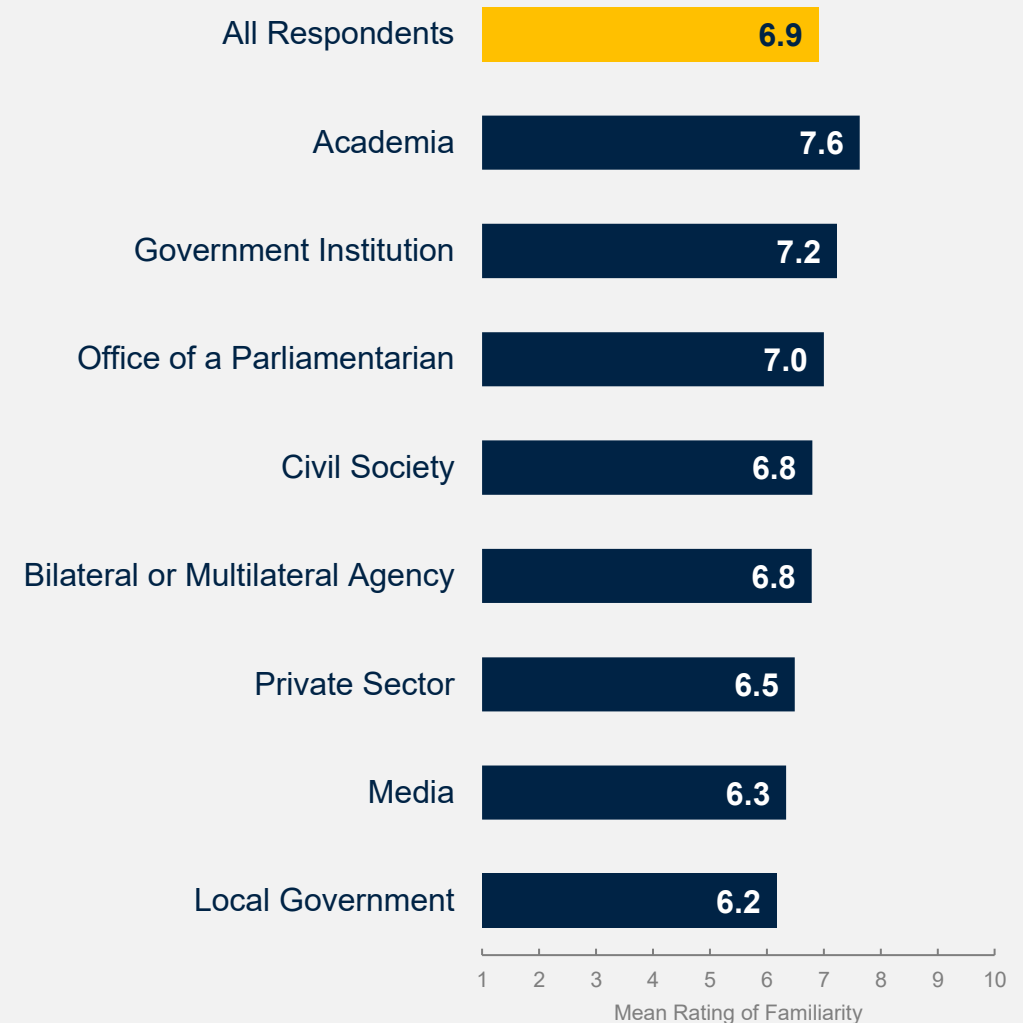
- Comparison of FY22 and FY25:** Respondents in this year's Country Survey reported significantly higher levels of familiarity with the World Bank Group compared to respondents in the FY22 Survey:

Mean familiarity:     **FY25 = 6.9**  
                                   **FY22 = 6.0**

- Collaboration with the WBG:** Respondents who indicated that they collaborate with the WBG reported significantly higher levels of familiarity with the institution's work:

Mean familiarity:     **Collaborate with WBG = 7.7**  
                                   **Do not collaborate = 5.9**

- Stakeholder groups:** Respondents from academia, government institutions, and the office of a parliamentarian had the highest levels of familiarity with the WBG, whereas local government had significantly lower levels of familiarity.

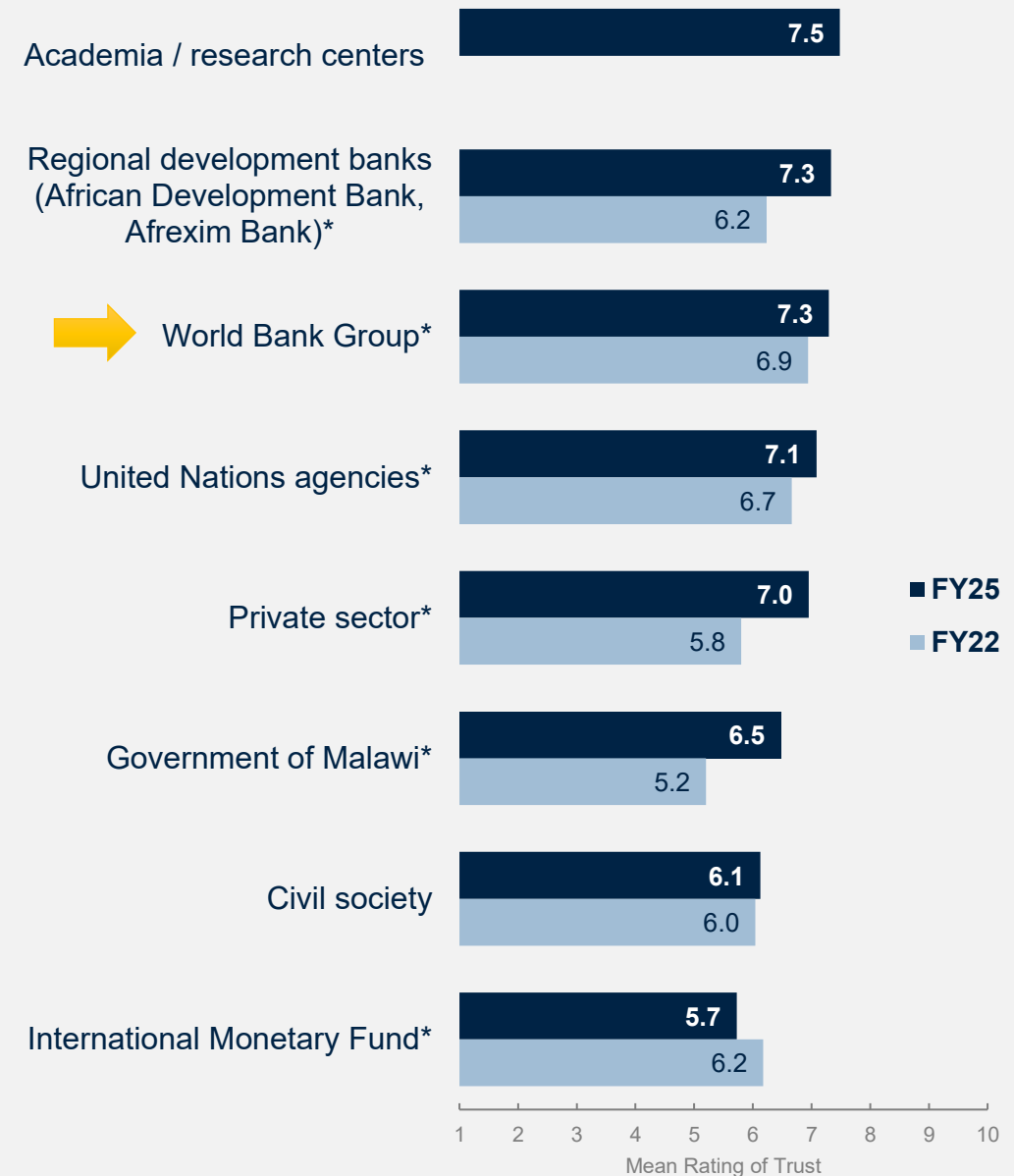


# Trust in the WBG Among Stakeholders

Respondents rated **academia, regional development banks, and the WBG** as the most trustworthy institutions in Malawi.

Most institutions, except for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and civil society, received significantly **higher ratings of trust in FY25 than in FY22**.

- **Government respondents** expressed the strongest trust in the Government of Malawi, the WBG, and regional development banks, whereas **civil society** and **media** respondents gave significantly lower ratings of trust in the WBG.
- In addition, respondents from **civil society gave the highest ratings of trust in civil society** and academia, whereas respondents from the office of a parliamentarian gave significantly lower ratings.



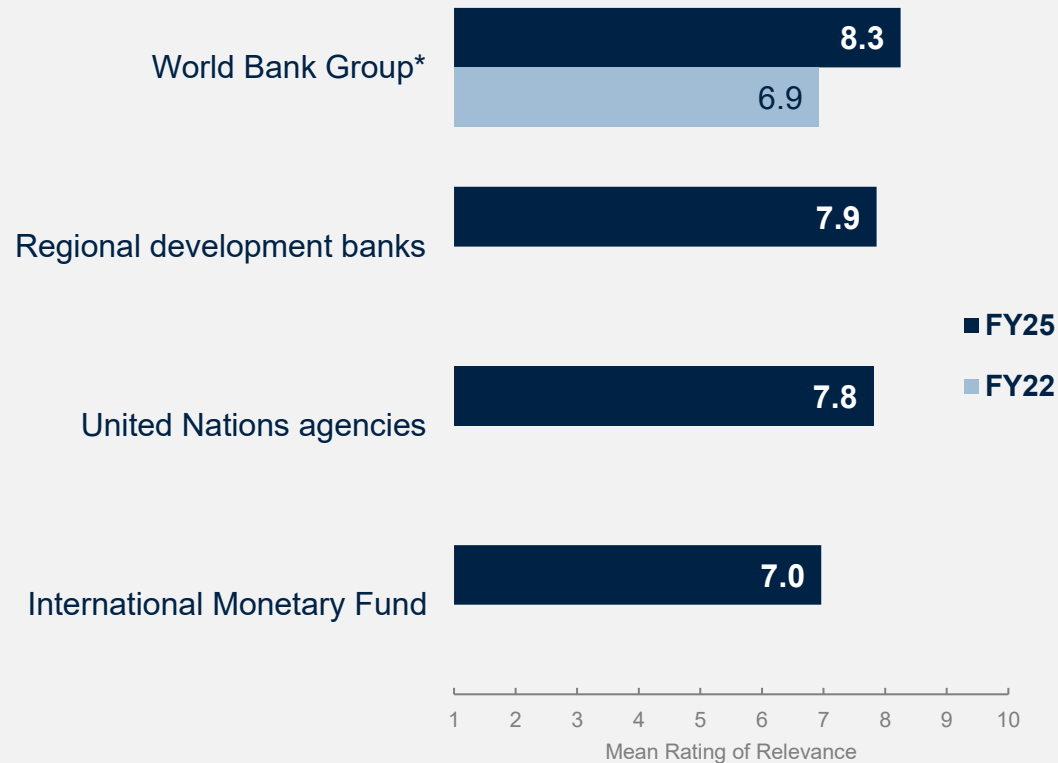
\*Denotes significant differences between years



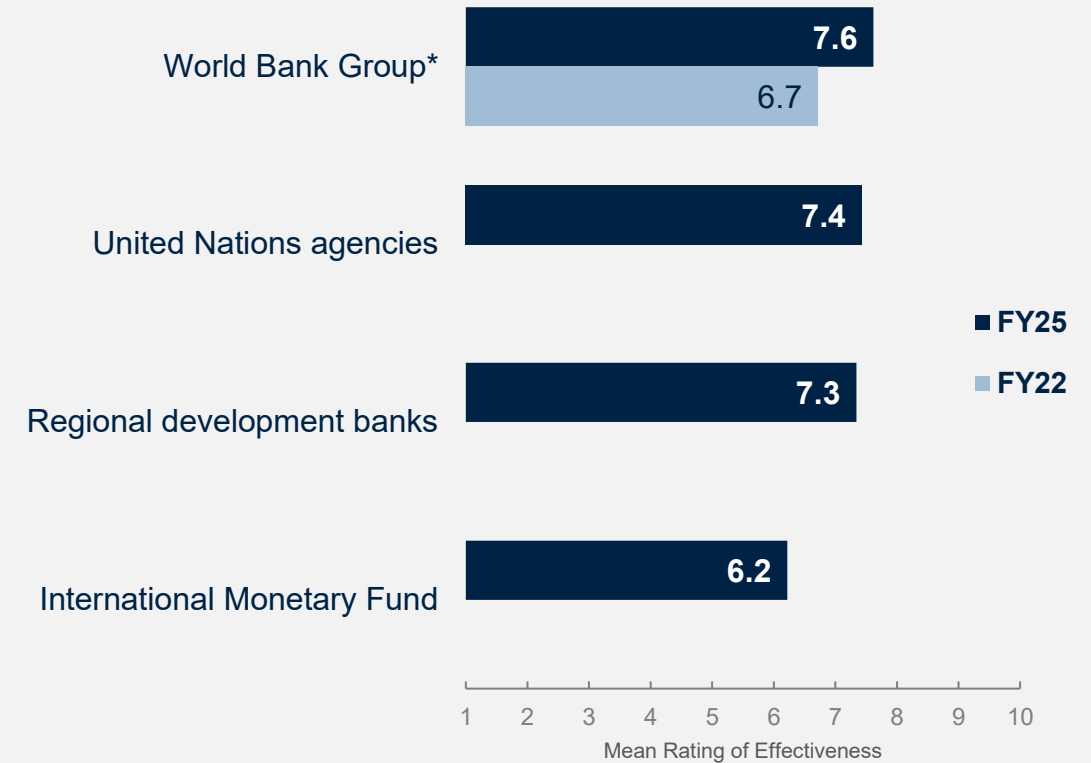
# WBG Effectiveness and Relevance in Comparative Context

The WBG received the highest **relevance** and **effectiveness** ratings among all organizations in FY25, showing a significant increase from FY22.

## RELEVANCE to Malawi's development



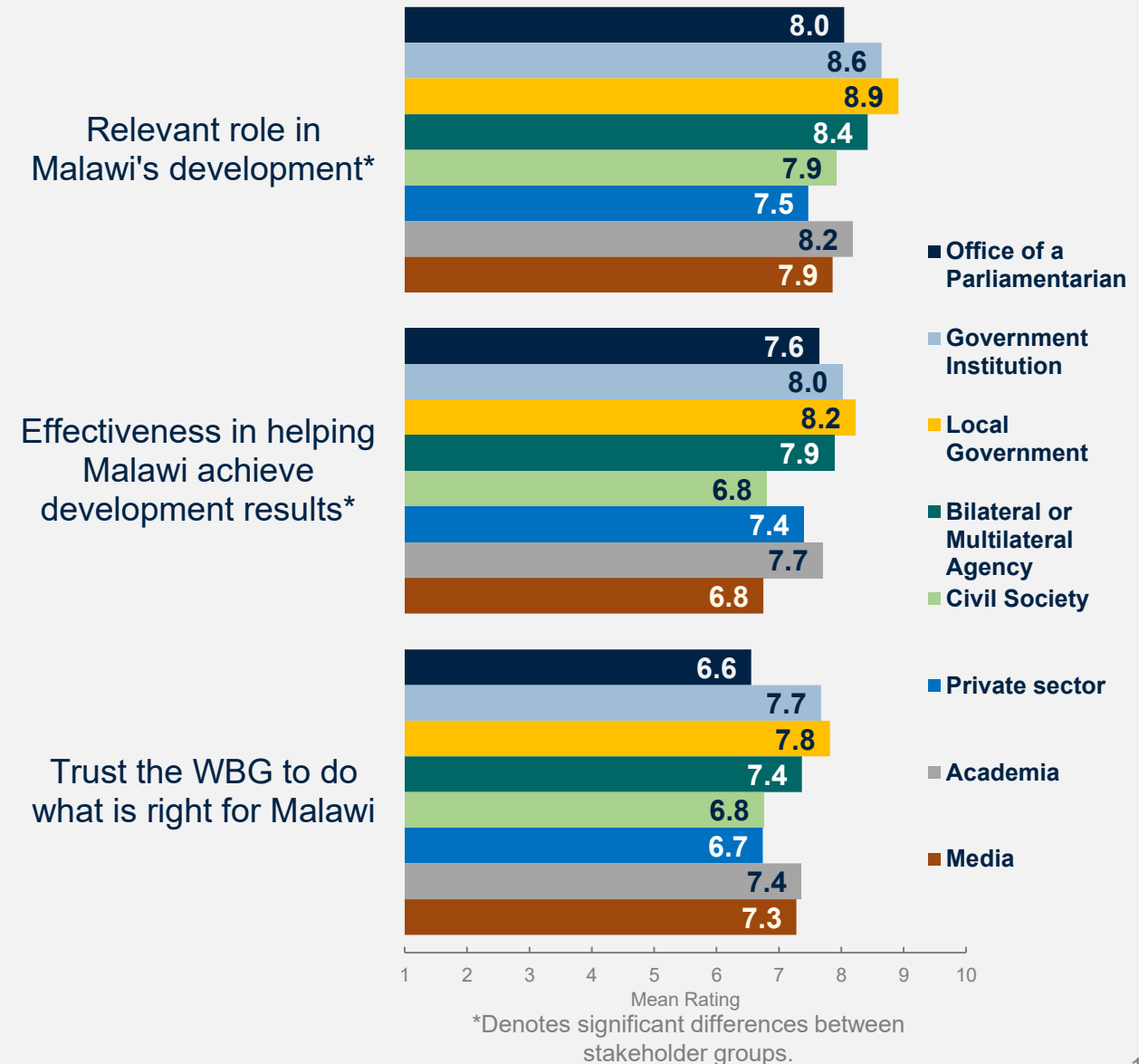
## EFFECTIVENESS in achieving development results



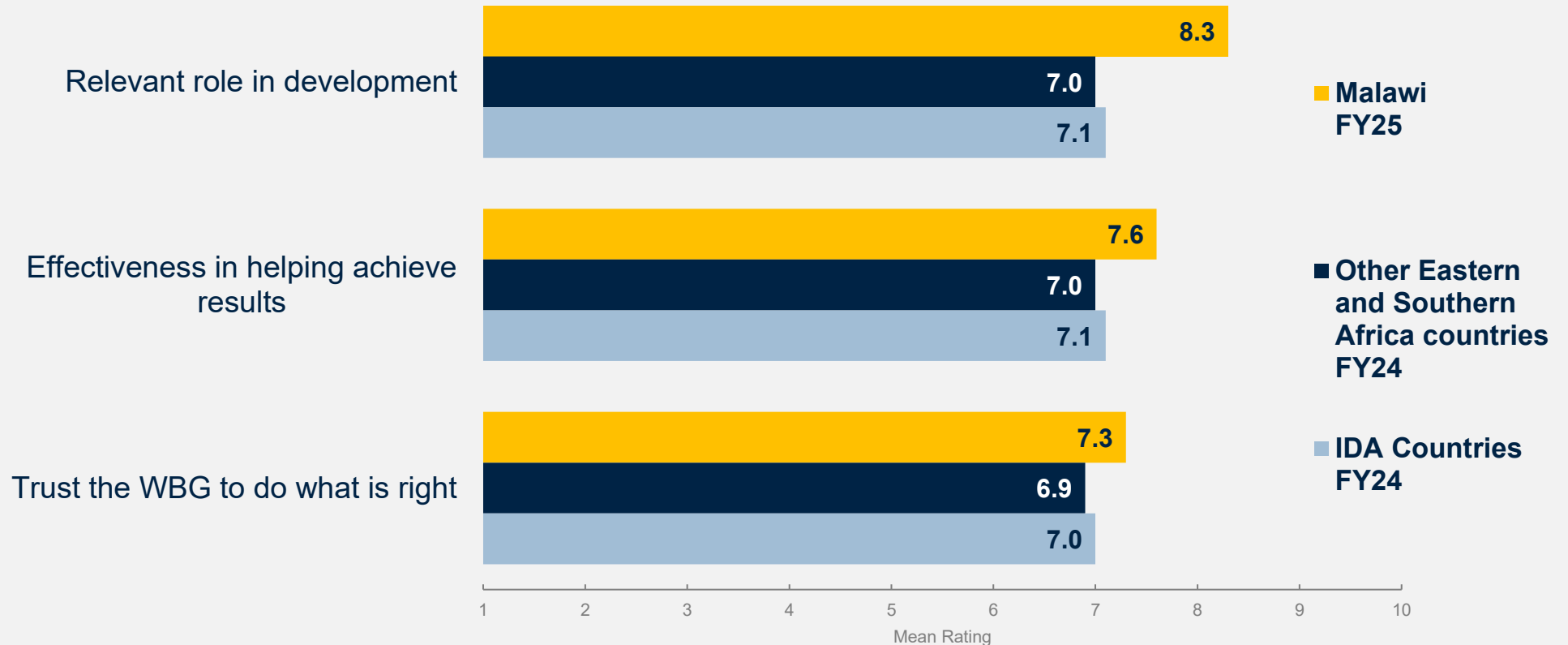
\*Denotes significant differences between years

# Stakeholders from Local Government had Most Positive Perceptions of the WBG

Comparisons of ratings for trust, relevance, and effectiveness between stakeholder groups show that respondents from **local government** and **government institutions** gave the highest ratings for these key indicators, while the **media, civil society**, and **the private sector** were more critical of the WBG.

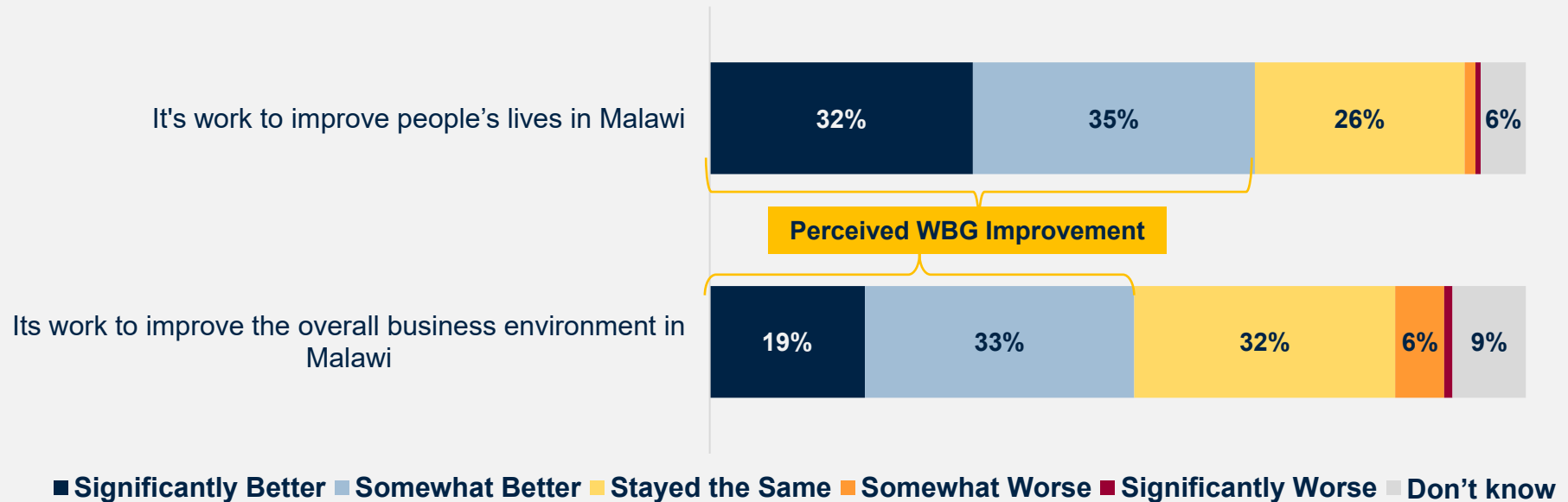


# KPI Ratings in Malawi are Higher than other Eastern and Southern African countries and IDA Averages in FY24



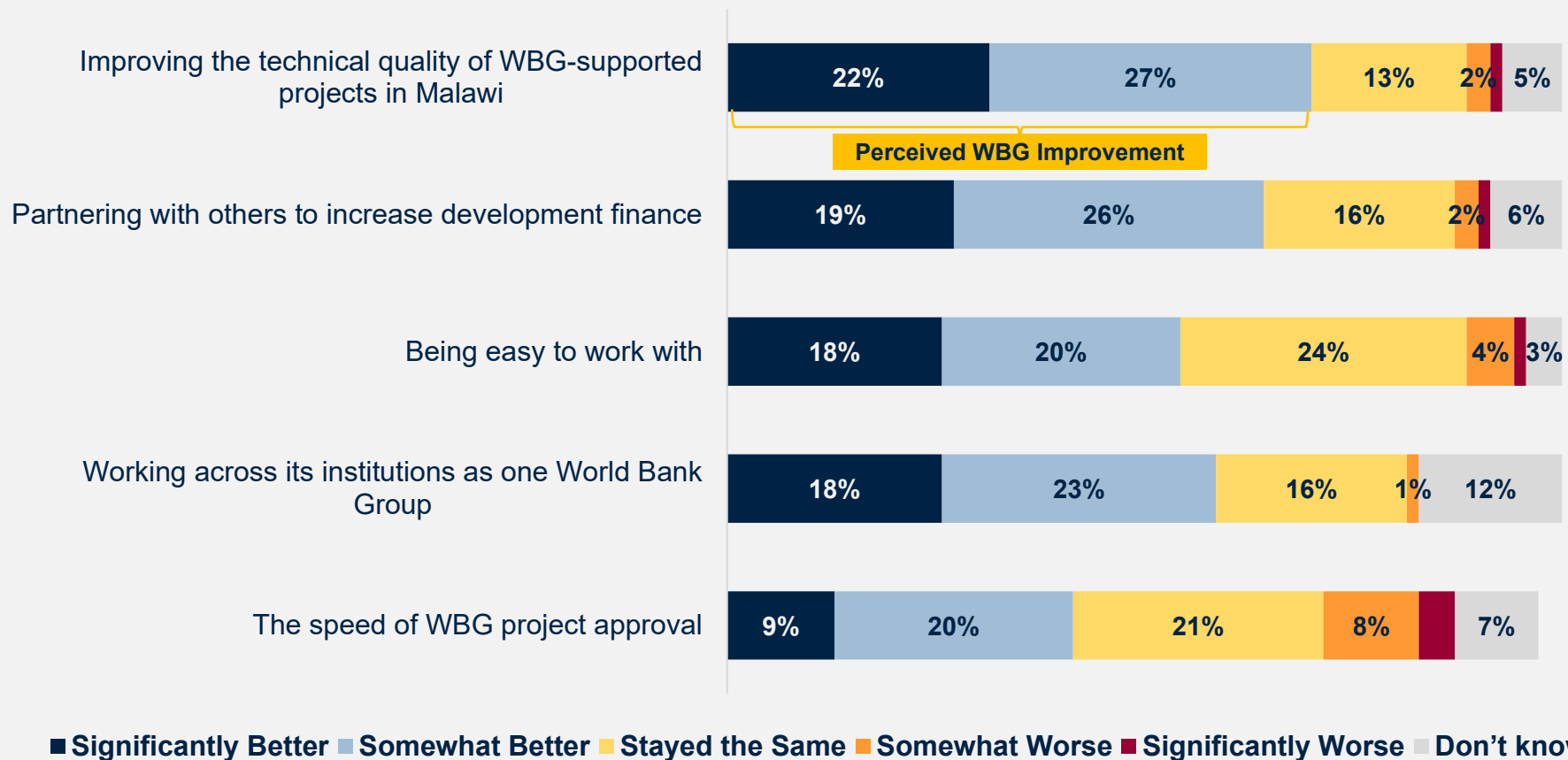
# Over Half of the Stakeholders Said the Bank Was Better or Significantly Better at Improving People's Lives and the Business Environment in Malawi in the Past Two Years

Based on your experience, *in the past two years*, how has the WBG changed in terms of...



# WBG Clients and Partners Observed Improvements in WBG's Operations Over the Past 2 Years

Based on your experience, *in the past two years*, how has the WBG changed in terms of...



# ***The WBG's Work on Development Priorities***

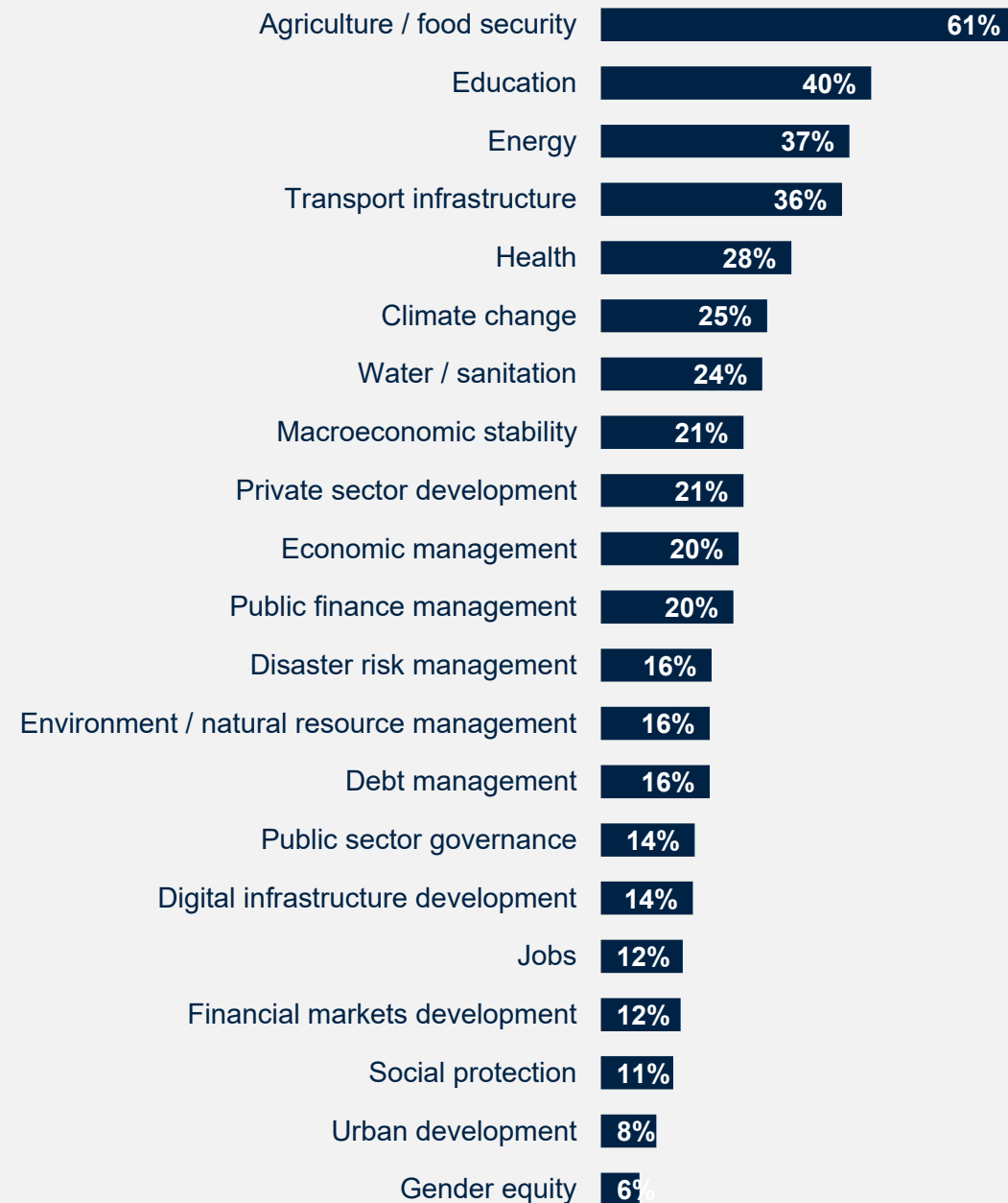


# WBG: Focal Development Areas

Respondents in Malawi ranked **agriculture/food security, education, and energy** as their top priorities for the WBG focus. Compared to FY22, **water and sanitation** surged in importance, with four times as many people prioritizing it, and support for **transport infrastructure** doubled since FY22, moving both into the top seven.

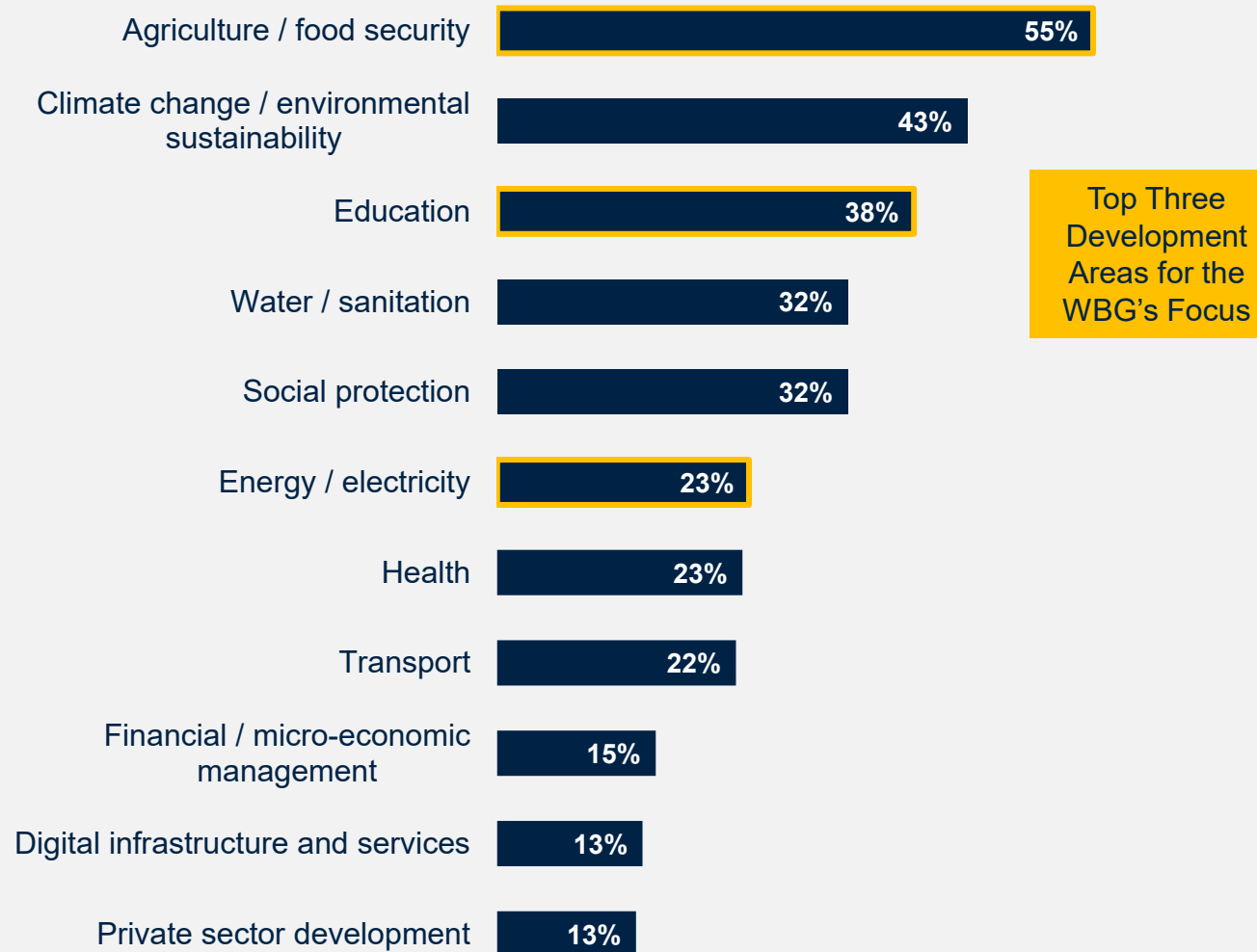
In open-ended comments, respondents discussed the following focus areas for the WBG<sup>^</sup>:

- **Agriculture & Climate Resilience:** Modernize and de-risk farming through public–private partnerships, digital platforms, irrigation schemes, and climate-smart practices, alongside expanded access to affordable inputs and finance for smallholders.
- **Infrastructure & Energy:** Invest in reliable power generation (including renewables), core road and transport networks (urban and rural), water systems, and digital connectivity to unlock industry, improve mobility, and support service delivery.
- **Human Capital, Governance & Accountability:** Strengthen education (from secondary through tertiary), health services (e.g., results-based financing for maternal/child health), local capacity-building, and institutional transparency—backed by community engagement and robust public financial management.



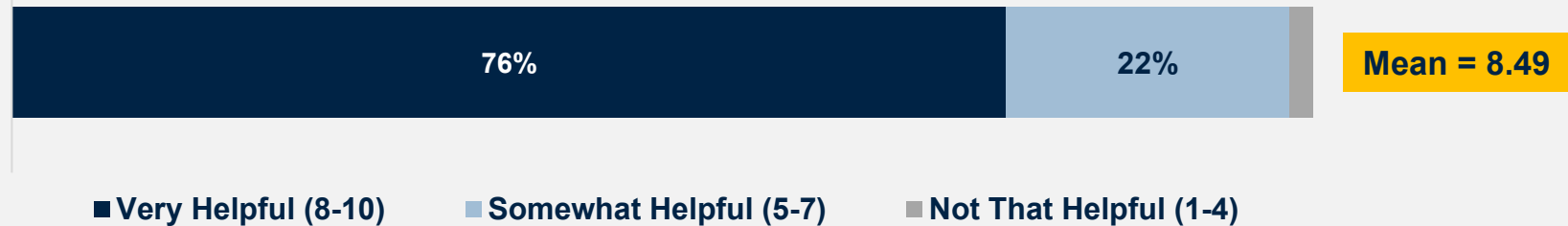
Which areas should the WBG prioritize to have the most impact on development results in Malawi? (Select up to 5) (Percentage of Respondents, N=280)  
<sup>^</sup> What is the most important thing the WBG could do to increase its effectiveness in these priority areas in Malawi? (N=240)

# Over Half of All WBG Clients Indicated That They Were Most Familiar With a Project Involving Agriculture and Food Security



# Nearly All WBG Clients Said the WBG Was Helpful in Achieving Project Goals, With Majority Saying “Very Helpful”

How helpful was the WBG in achieving the goals of this project or initiative?



## In Open-Ended Comments, Clients Discussed the Impact the WBG-Supported Project Had on the People of Malawi

*“As a PhD student at LUANAR, I have benefited from a World Bank Group (WBG)-sponsored exchange visit to Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique, which enhanced my research collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and capacity-building in agricultural development and digital media adoption. [...] This experience aligns with WBG’s broader impact on Malawi’s education sector, including the Malawi Education Reform Program (MERP), the Skills for a Vibrant Economy (SAVE) Project, and the Malawi Floods Emergency Recovery Project (MFERP). [...] My exchange experience reflects WBG’s commitment to enhancing education, skills development, and economic growth in Malawi...”*  
 (Civil Society Respondent discussing **MERP**)

*“[...] The SSRLP, through cash transfers and other local work projects, has ensured that the poor people in communities survive in a harsh economic environment post-COVID. It has helped maintain disadvantaged families keep children in school to secure a better future”*  
 (Civil Society Respondent discussing **SSRLP**)

*“The AGCOM project provided agricultural financing to farmers on a matching grant basis to procure productive assets for farming. With the grants, farmers have been able to commercialize the productive [assets], evidenced by increased production and sales.”*  
 (Government Respondent discussing **AGCOM**)

# Key Actions to Enhance the WBG's Operational Effectiveness in Malawi: Strengthening Accountability, Streamlining Delivery, and Focusing on Impact – Summary of Comments

*What is the most important thing the WBG could do to increase its effectiveness in these priority areas in Malawi?*

## Enhancing Accountability, Transparency, and Monitoring

- Implement **rigorous, independent monitoring** and evaluation, including field visits by third-party assessors.
- Promote **performance-based funding** with clear results frameworks.
- Intensify **fraud prevention, anti-corruption measures**, and prudent resource management at all levels.
- Make **financial reporting simpler** for CSOs to flag issues and monitor project delivery.

## Improving Project Efficiency and Timeliness

- Reduce **bureaucratic delays** in approvals, procurement, and disbursement; decentralize decision-making to the country office.
- Streamline **No-Objection** procedures and give realistic timelines for implementation.
- Address bottlenecks in project extensions and ensure timely rollout of activities.

## Prioritization and Focus

- Avoid spreading resources too thin across **small, politically driven projects**; instead, invest in fewer, **larger, high-impact infrastructure projects**.
- Align programs with **productive sectors** such as agriculture commercialization, energy, and climate resilience.
- Ensure **cross-sectoral synergies** and integrate disaster risk management and climate adaptation into infrastructure.

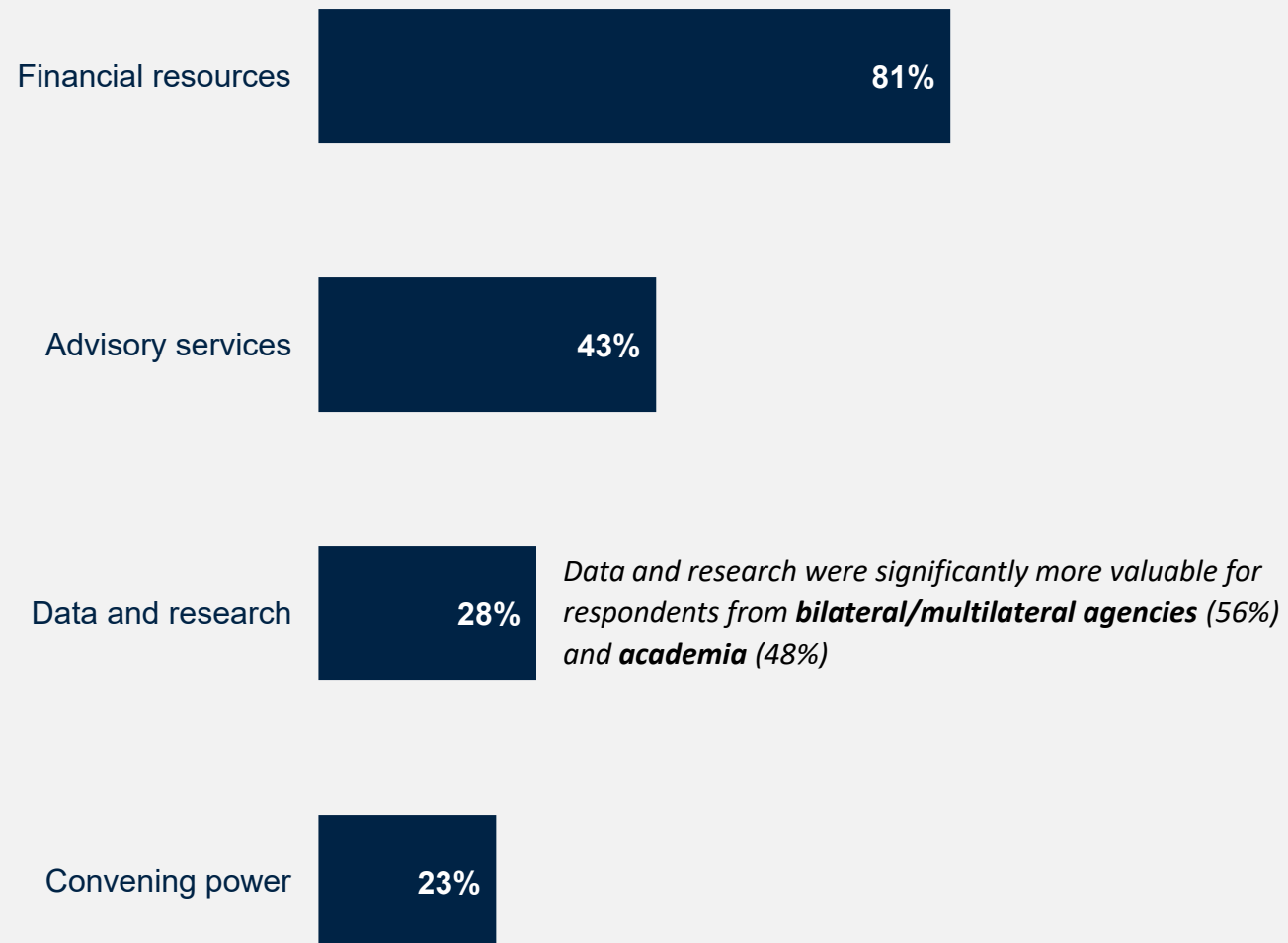


What is the most important thing the WBG could do to increase its effectiveness in these priority areas in Malawi? (Please be specific) (N=240)

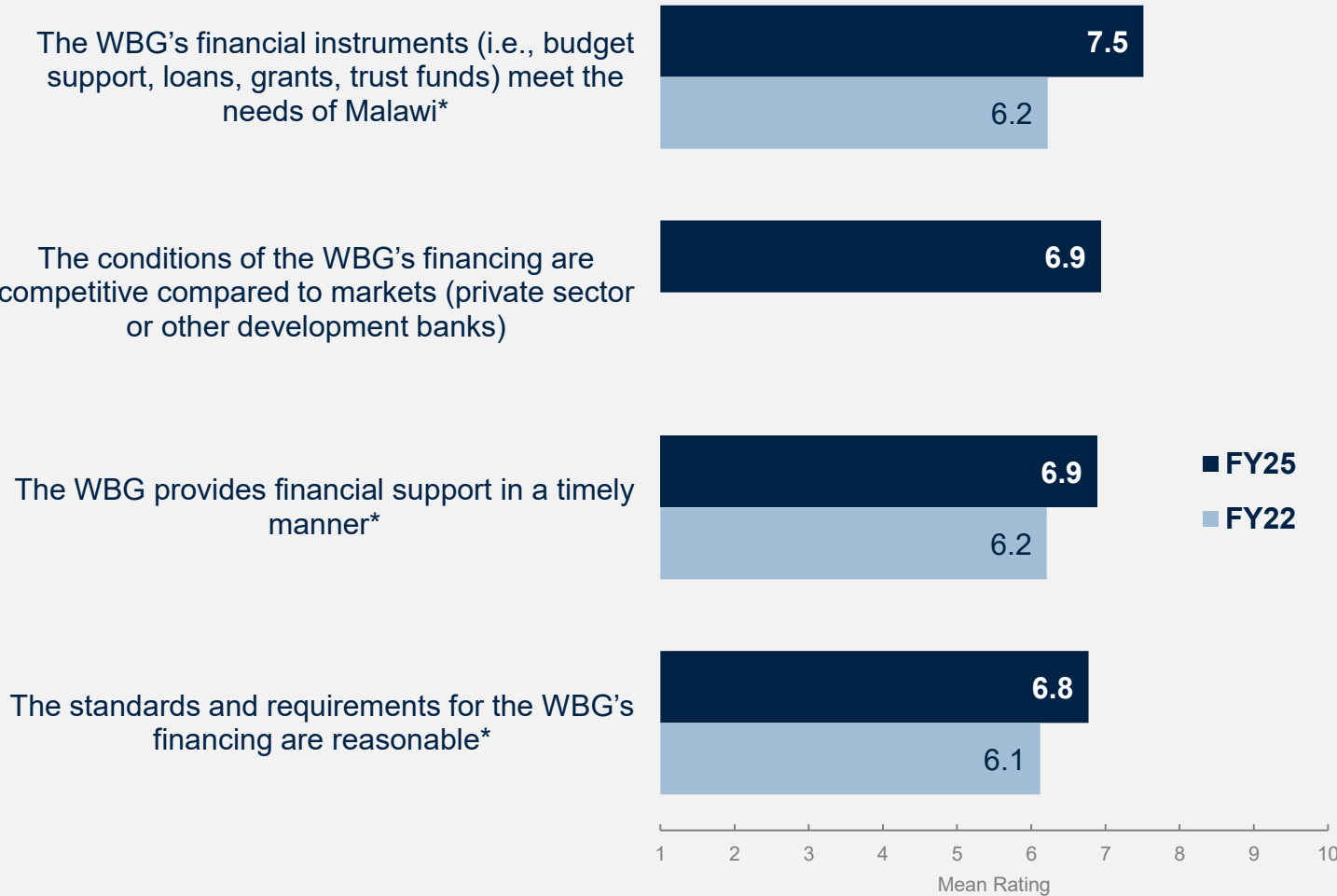
# *The WBG's Instruments*



# Financial Resources Considered the WBG's Greatest Value to Malawi



# Stakeholders Report Improved Perception of WBG Financial Instruments and Timeliness of Support



To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the WBG's financial support to Malawi?  
 Scale: 1 Strongly disagree – 10 Strongly agree (Only asked those in government institutions or who said that they collaborate with the WBG)

\*Denotes significant differences between years

# Key Actions to Enhance the WBG's Effectiveness via Financing: Summary of Comments

*What is the most important thing the WBG could do to increase its effectiveness in these priority areas in Malawi?*

## Scale and Allocation

- Respondents repeatedly called for increased funding—both in volume and in continuity (grants and loans)
- Respondents recommend more targeted funding rather than broad or budget support, suggesting channeling funds directly into priority sectors (e.g., agriculture, health, education, infrastructure, climate resilience).

## Timely and Efficient Disbursement

- Delays in project startup due to unclear expectations and slow procurement were highlighted
- Calls for timely disbursement to maximize project effectiveness

## Public-Private and SME-Focused Financing

- Respondents propose de-risking finance for SMEs through blended mechanisms and risk-sharing facilities
- Encourage local financial institutions to provide innovative loans to agribusinesses and entrepreneurs
- Call for much more investment in PPPs—especially in energy, transport, and infrastructure—as a way to expand development impact



# 78% of Respondents Said That They Had Used WBG Knowledge Work in the Past 3 Years

Respondents reported most frequently using the WBG's **research and analytical reports** and the WBG's **data resources**. Different stakeholder groups used different types of WBG knowledge work:

- Respondents from bilateral or multilateral agencies were the most likely to use the WBG's **data resources** (65%), followed by respondents from civil society (62%)
- Respondents from local government were the most likely to use the WBG's **workshops or training courses** (59%).
- Respondents from civil society were most likely to use WBG's **policy notes** (50%).



# Stakeholders Used WBG Knowledge Work for a Variety of Purposes

*For what purpose did you use this WBG knowledge activity/analytical work?*

- **Research, Proposal, and Project Development**

Respondents used WBG knowledge to support research, write proposals, and design projects. It helped generate evidence, structure funding applications, and align programs with development goals.

- **Policy Formulation and Advisory**

WBG analysis informed policy development and advisory work. It was used to draft policy briefs, guide reforms, and support government and institutional decision-making.

- **Communication and Reporting**

WBG data supported internal and external communication, including news stories, reports, media content, and website updates.

- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Data Use**

Respondents used WBG indicators to track progress, evaluate outcomes, and benchmark national performance.

- **Learning, Training, and Capacity Building**

WBG resources were used for learning, training, and strengthening individual and institutional capacity.

- **Strategic Planning and Decision Support**

WBG insights helped inform strategic planning, resource allocation, and operational decisions.



# 82% of Respondents Said WBG Policy Advice Influenced Government Policy, and Discussed Its Impact in Several Development Areas

## Macroeconomic and fiscal policy

- “[...] The World Bank has supported the Malawi government to initiate several fiscal and structural reforms, including external debt restructuring to restore macroeconomic stability and create foundations for sustainable and inclusive long-run growth to initiate reforms.”  
(Civil Society Respondent)
- “The Malawi policy on both internal and external borrowing and the use of Forex.”  
(Media Respondent)

## Water

- “Development of the Water Resources Act and National Water Policy is a way of participating in the stakeholders' consultations. During these consultations, the World Bank assisted in providing advice on how these policy instruments should be developed in relation to the water sector in Malawi.”  
(Government Institution Respondent)

## Environment

- “Integrated Pest Management Plan. Use of different classes of chemicals and pesticides”  
(Government Institution Respondent)

## Social Protection

- “The World Bank has been instrumental in shaping Malawi's social protection programs, particularly the Social Cash Transfer Program (SCTP), known as Mtukula Pakhomo.”  
(Government Institution Respondent)

## Agriculture / Food Security

- “National Agriculture Extension and Advisory Services Strategy and National Agriculture Extension and Advisory Services Policy (at Cabinet Level now). These documents have supported the coordination and implementation of agriculture extension and advisory services interventions.”  
(Government Institution Respondent)
- “The World Bank's ‘Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) Country Profile for Malawi’ (2021) influenced the Malawi Government's National Agricultural Policy (NAP) by promoting climate-smart practices, such as drought-tolerant crops and sustainable land management. The policy now emphasizes climate resilience through these practices, aligning with the WBG's recommendations. This guidance also contributed to the development of the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program (CSAP), which encourages these approaches at the community level, strengthening Malawi's efforts to adapt to climate change in agriculture.”  
(Civil Society Respondent)

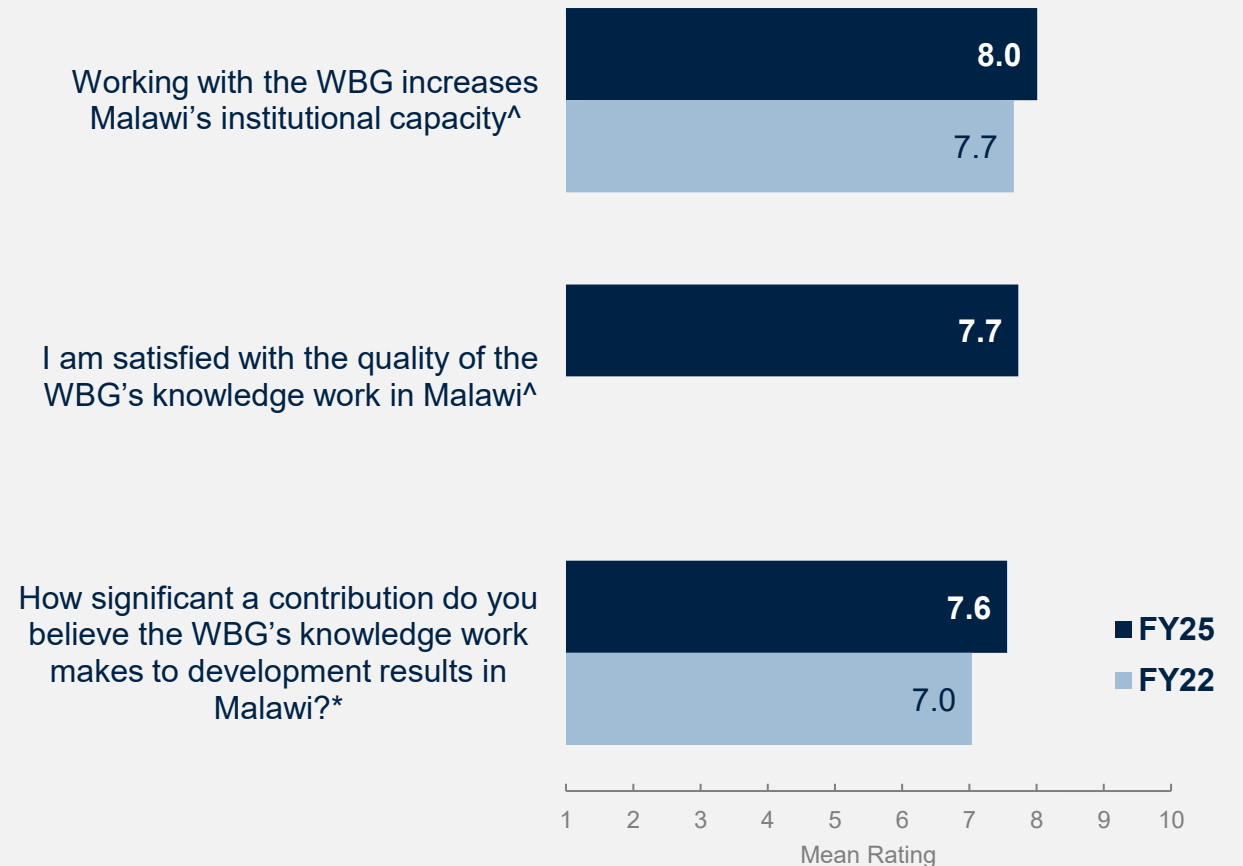
## Energy

- “[...] The WBG has influenced policy adjustments to attract private sector investments in renewable energy. Support from WBG led to policies promoting off-grid and mini-grid electricity solutions in rural areas.”  
(Private Sector Respondent)

# Stakeholders Were Consistently Positive About the WBG's Knowledge Work, Especially Its Impact

In FY25, respondents expressed strong approval of the WBG's knowledge work, with significantly improved perceptions of its contribution to strengthening Malawi's development results.

**Perceptions varied across stakeholder groups.** Respondents from local government were the most positive, assigning a high average rating of 8.8 for the WBG's contribution to development results. In contrast, media representatives were significantly less favorable in their assessments, with a mean score of 6.5.



\*Denotes significant differences between years



How significant a contribution do you believe the WBG's knowledge work makes to development results in Malawi?

Scale: 1 Not significant at all – 10 Very significant

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Scale: 1 Strongly disagree – 10 Strongly agree

<sup>^</sup>Only asked those who indicated that they had used WBG knowledge work in the past 3 years



# Key Actions to Enhance the WBG's Effectiveness in Malawi through Knowledge, Capacity, and Technical Support: Summary of Comments

## Strengthening Policy and Technical Expertise

- Enhance the provision of technical assistance and advisory services to improve governance, public finance management, and accountability in local institutions.
- Develop and disseminate clear policy frameworks and guidelines that support sustainable development initiatives, particularly in agriculture and infrastructure.
- Foster partnerships with government and civil society organizations to ensure that WBG interventions align with national priorities and community needs.

## Capacity-Building and Training Initiatives

- Invest in targeted training programs for local officials and stakeholders to enhance skills in governance, financial management, and project implementation.
- Promote capacity-building initiatives that empower civil society organizations and local governments to monitor and evaluate development projects effectively.
- Facilitate workshops and stakeholder meetings to share knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned from WBG-supported programs.

## Research, Data Sharing, and Implementation Support

- Increase the sharing of research findings and data to inform decision-making processes among stakeholders, ensuring evidence-based policy development.
- Provide implementation support that includes knowledge transfer components, enabling local authorities to sustain development initiatives independently.



If you rated the quality of the WBG's knowledge work between 1-4, how could the WBG improve the quality of its knowledge work in Malawi?  
(Please be specific) (N=5)

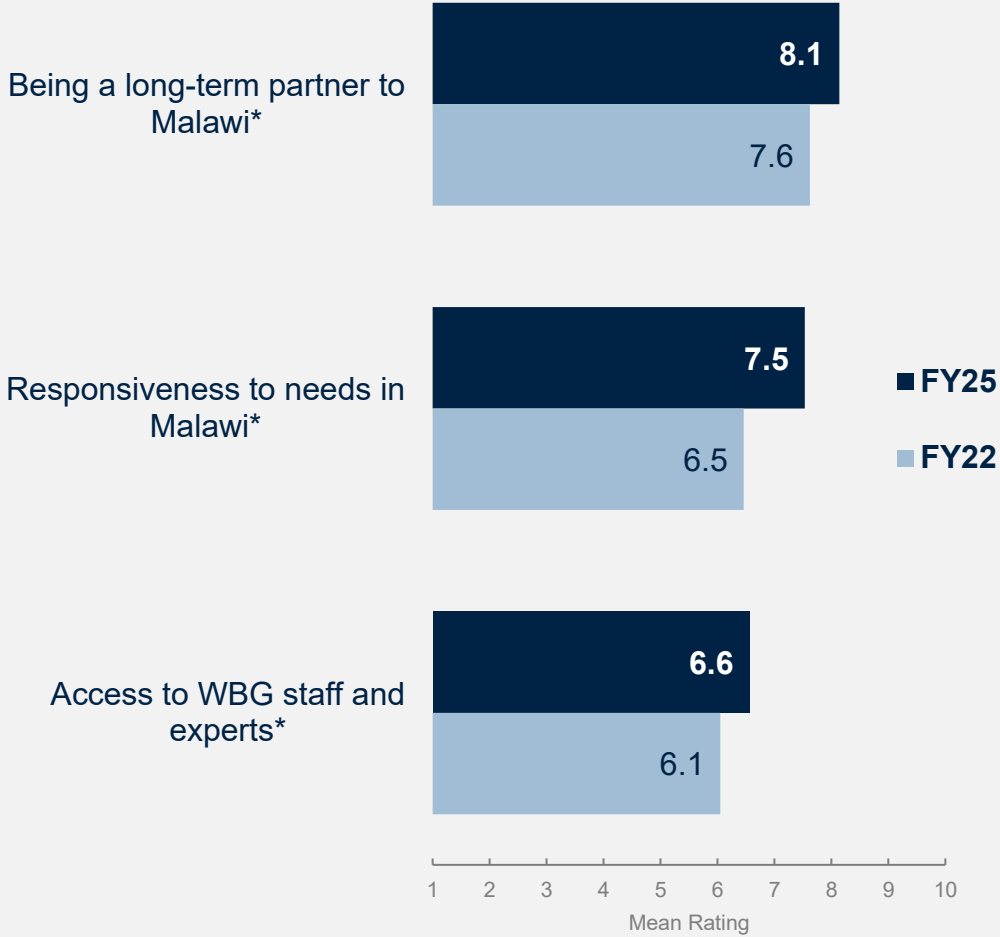
What is the most important thing the WBG could do to increase its effectiveness in these priority areas in Malawi? (Please be specific) (N=240)

# ***The WBG's Engagement and Collaboration***



# Perceptions of the WBG as a Development Partner Have Significantly Improved in Malawi

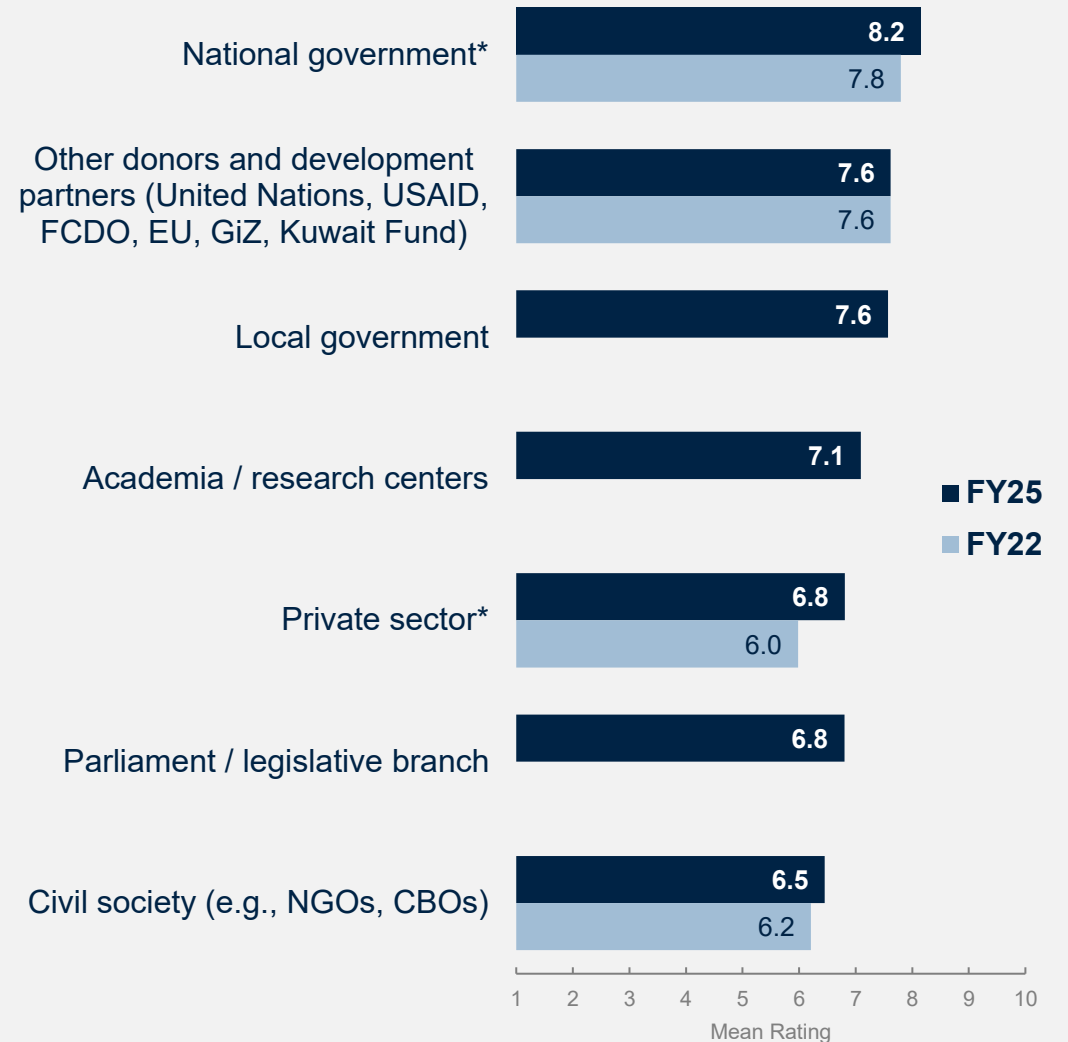
Stakeholder opinions varied significantly. Respondents from the **media** and **civil society** were significantly more critical across all three questions. They gave particularly low ratings (below 6.0) for the WBG staff accessibility.



\*Denotes significant differences between years

# Improved Perceptions of WBG Collaboration with Government and Private Sector

Respondents from **local government** rated the WBG's collaboration with their own group the highest (mean = 8.5), indicating a strong sense of partnership and alignment. In contrast, **civil society respondents** expressed significantly less satisfaction, giving the lowest rating for the WBG's collaboration with their group (mean = 5.4). This disparity highlights differing perceptions of engagement quality across stakeholder groups.



\*Denotes significant differences between years



# Stakeholders Want the Bank to Collaborate More With Local Government, the Private Sector, and Academia

A little over one-quarter of respondents who provided comments on how the WBG could be more effective in Malawi<sup>^</sup> emphasized the importance of enhancing its engagement and collaboration with stakeholders:

## Strengthen Local Government and Civil Society Engagement

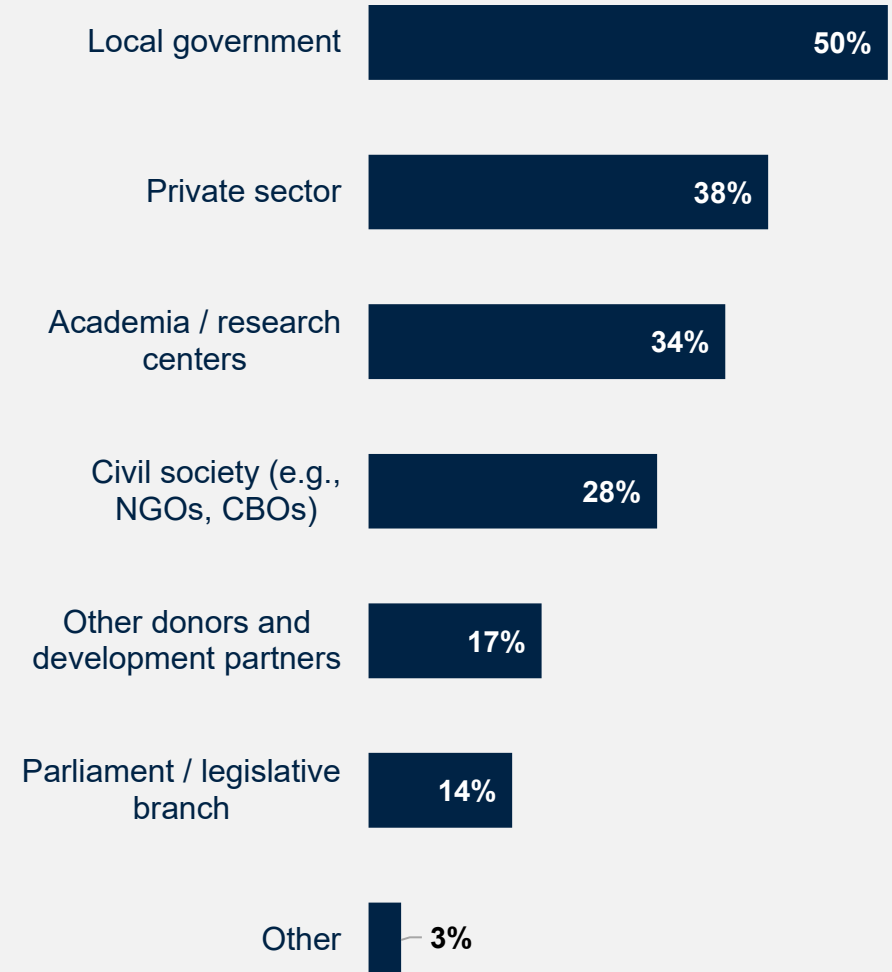
- Collaborate closely with local governments, councils, and grassroots organizations to ensure ownership and sustainability.
- Treat CSOs as equal partners in planning, accountability, and policy dialogue, not just as implementers.
- Increase direct funding and capacity building for CSOs, enabling them to monitor, advocate, and support implementation.
- Involve youth, women, and marginalized groups in project design and delivery.

## Enhance Private Sector Collaboration

- Support public-private partnerships, especially in agriculture and infrastructure, to drive growth and innovation.
- Improve access to finance and digital tools for SMEs and farmers.
- Create platforms for regular dialogue with private sector actors to align priorities and reduce barriers.

## Deepen Government Partnerships and Shared Ownership

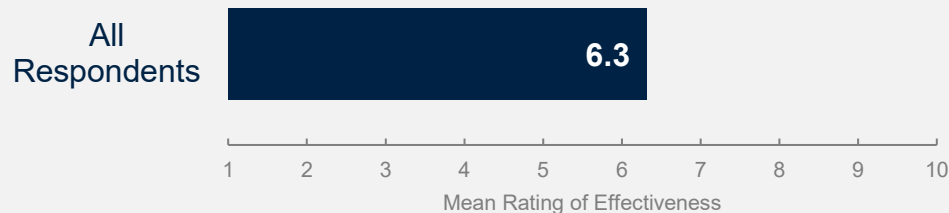
- Work as an equal partner with the government, aligning with national plans and respecting local decision-making.



In addition to its partnership with the national government, which of the following should the WBG collaborate with more to have a greater impact in Malawi? (Select up to 2) (Percentage of Respondents, N=291)

<sup>^</sup> What is the most important thing the WBG could do to increase its effectiveness in these priority areas in Malawi? (N=240)

# WBG Effectiveness in Facilitating Civil Society Participation



Respondents across all stakeholder groups **gave significantly different ratings** for the WBG’s effectiveness in facilitating civil society participation in development policy dialogue and implementation in Malawi. **Civil society respondents** gave one of the lowest ratings (mean = 5.7). Around 20% of respondents rated the WBG’s effectiveness below average (1-4). These respondents suggested the following could help to make the WBG more effective:

- Engage directly with local CSOs and communities to ensure projects reflect grassroots priorities;
- Shift focus from policy dialogue to practical support for project implementation;
- Involve CSOs in monitoring, evaluation, and feedback to enhance transparency and accountability;
- Minimize top-down approaches and avoid overreliance on government-led implementation;
- Establish structured platforms for continuous dialogue and collaboration with civil society.

## Some Examples of the WBG’s Effective Facilitation of Civil Society Participation

*“Malawi Country Partnership Framework (CPF): The WBG’s **CPF for FY21–25** was developed through extensive consultations with civil society organizations, government, and development partners. This framework aligns with Malawi’s strategic development priorities, such as the Malawi 2063 vision, and emphasizes citizen engagement and accountability.”*  
(Government Institution Respondent)

*“Civil society participation in **MASAF**, [...] a community-driven development approach, which encouraged direct participation of local communities in identifying, planning, and implementing development projects, communities were given the authority and responsibility to decide on allocation of resources and types of projects they wanted to develop”*  
(Private Sector Respondent)

*“WBG has collaborated with young civil society organizations in **digital skills transformation**, which has been successful.”*  
(Private Sector Respondent)

*“CSOs have been key in enforcing accountability.”*  
(Local Government Respondent)



How effective is the WBG in facilitating civil society participation in development policy dialogue and implementation in Malawi? Scale:

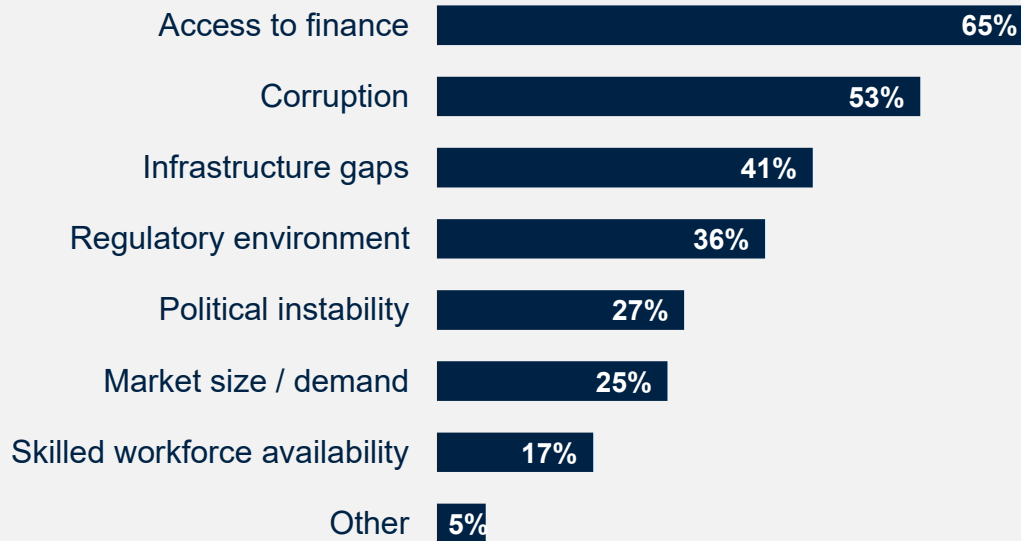
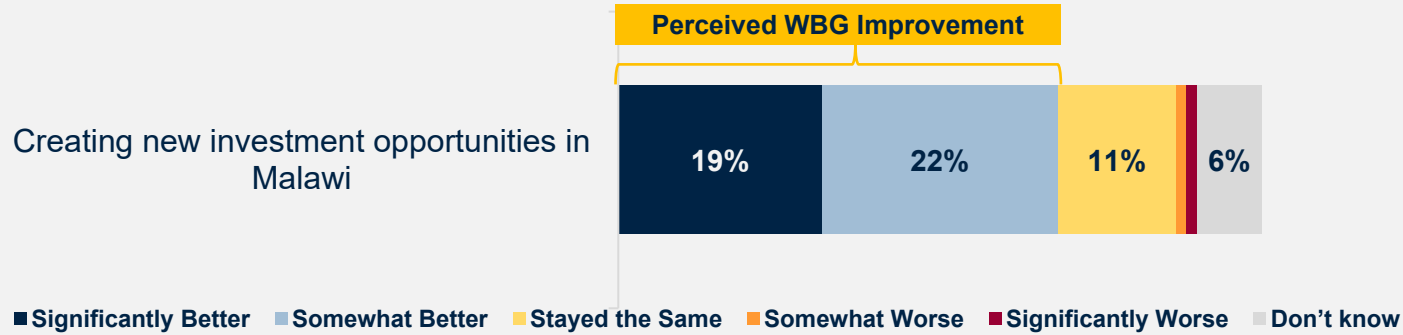
1 Not effective at all – 10 Very effective

[If effectiveness rating < 5] How could the WBG be more effective in facilitating civil society participation in development policy dialogue and implementation? (Please be specific) (N=33) [If effectiveness rating > 4] Please share examples of the WBG’s effective facilitation of civil society participation in development policy dialogue and implementation. (Please be specific) (N=102)



# Access to Finance and Corruption are the Biggest Challenges to Private Sector Development in Malawi

Based on your experience, in the past two years, how has the WBG changed in terms of...



## To Make the WBG More Effective in Private Sector Development, Respondents Discussed:

- The importance of facilitating access to finance for SMEs and agribusinesses
- Foster Public-Private Partnerships
- Support industrial development and chain development to boost exports and sustainable economic growth
- Create enabling conditions for private investment

Based on your experience, in the past three years, how has the WBG changed in terms of... (Percentage of Respondents, N=184)

What are the biggest challenges facing private sector development in Malawi? (Select up to 3) (Percentage of Government & Private Sector Respondents, N=171)

What is the most important thing the WBG could do to increase its effectiveness in these priority areas in Malawi? (Please be specific) (N=240)

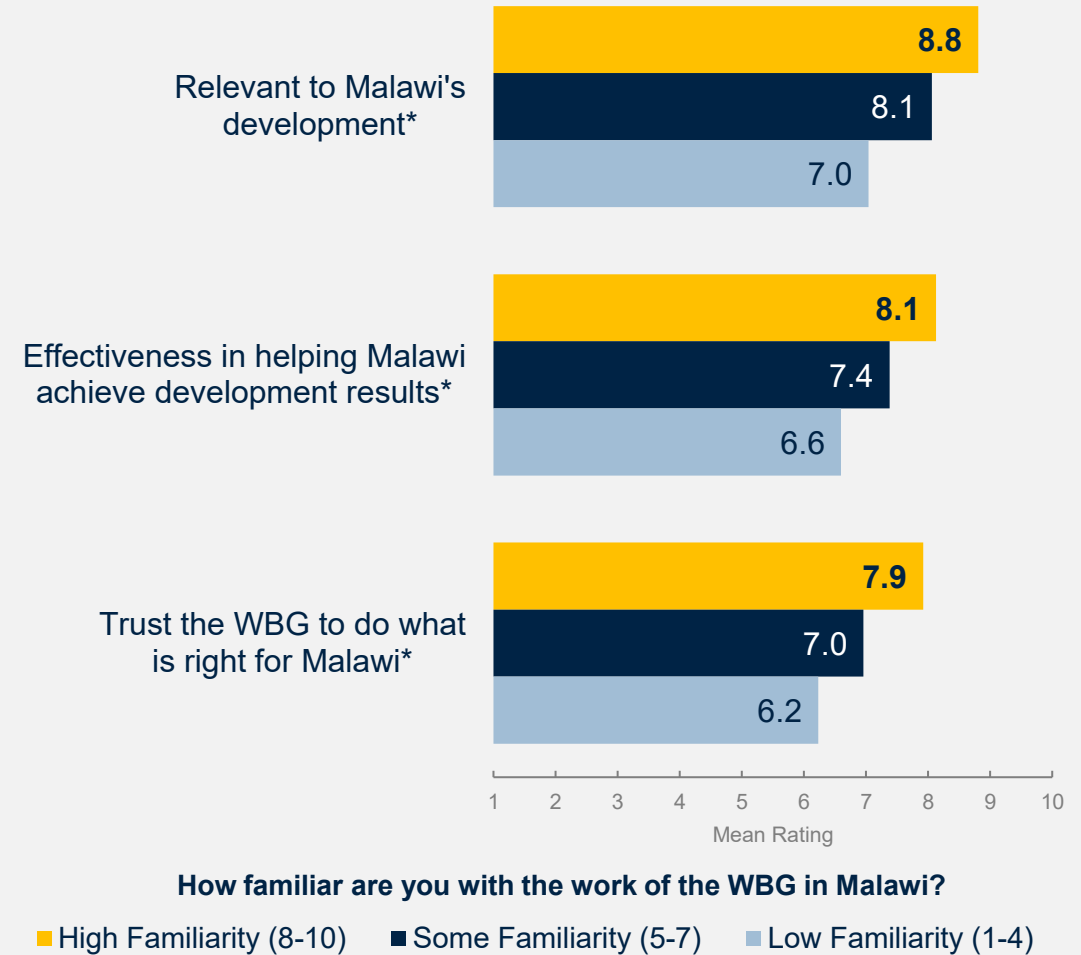


# *Communication and Outreach*



# Why Outreach and Engagement Matter: Familiarity Drives Positive Perceptions

Greater engagement with the WBG not only meets stakeholder demand but also fosters more positive perceptions. Stakeholders highly familiar with the WBG (ratings of 8–10) consistently rate its trust, relevance, and effectiveness higher than those with low familiarity (ratings of 1–4).



\*Significant difference between levels of familiarity

How familiar are you with the World Bank Group's work in Malawi? Scale: 1 Not familiar at all – 10 Very familiar  
 How relevant is each of the following organizations to Malawi's development? Scale: 1 Not at all – 10 Very much  
 How effective is each of the following organizations in helping Malawi achieve development results? Scale: 1 Not at all – 10 Very much  
 How much do you trust each of the following institutions to do what is right for Malawi? Scale: 1 Not at all – 10 Very much



# WBG Events, Website, and Publications are the Most Preferred Channels to Obtain Information From the Bank

Key differences between stakeholder groups should be considered for targeted outreach (e.g., private sector or media respondents were the most likely to prefer social media).

	Top Two Preferred WBG Channels								
	All Respondents	Office of a Parliamentarian	Government Institution	Local Government	Bilateral or Multilateral Agency	Civil Society	Private Sector	Academia	Media
WBG event / conference / workshop ( <i>in person or online</i> )	49%	43%	55%	59%	35%	59%	49%	38%	37%
WBG website ( <i>including blogs</i> )	49%	38%	48%	73%	47%	41%	46%	62%	44%
WBG publications*	42%	29%	51%	41%	88%	36%	26%	58%	15%
Direct contact with WBG staff* ( <i>e.g., in person, virtually, phone, email</i> )	35%	38%	35%	32%	29%	38%	43%	35%	30%
WBG social media channels*	34%	33%	23%	27%	35%	36%	51%	19%	56%
WBG e-Newsletters	26%	24%	26%	27%	18%	36%	23%	38%	15%
WBG direct messaging ( <i>e.g., WhatsApp</i> )	17%	19%	15%	14%	6%	15%	20%	23%	30%
WBG podcasts	10%	14%	12%	5%	12%	10%	9%	4%	7%



How would you prefer to obtain information from the WBG? (Select up to 3) (Percentage of Respondents, N=288)

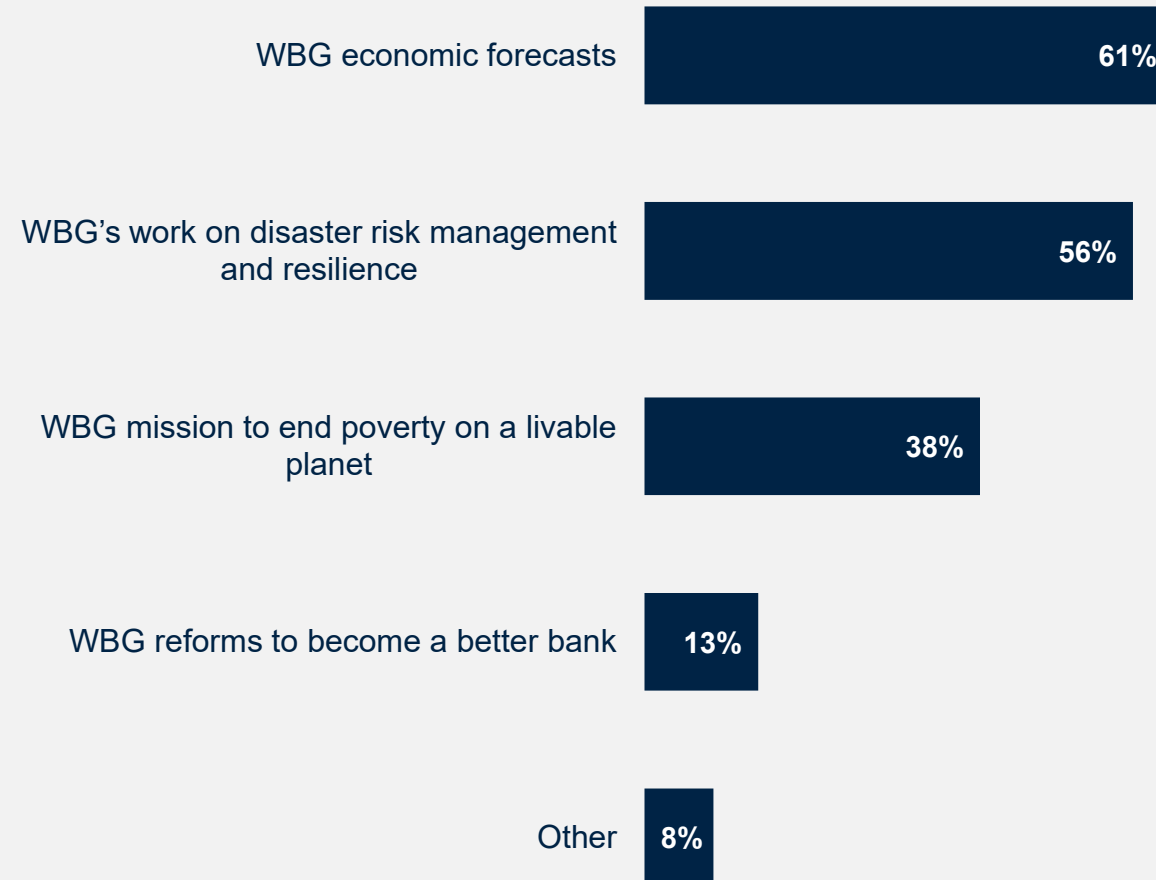
\*Denotes significant differences between stakeholder groups

# 69% of Respondents Recalled Seeing or Hearing About the WBG Recently, Most Often in the Media

Of the 69% of respondents who recently recalled hearing or seeing something about the WBG, over half cited traditional media (TV, radio, or newspapers), and more than 40% mentioned social media. **Local government** stakeholders most often learned about the WBG through events, 70% of the **private sector respondents** via social media, and 30% of **civil society** respondents recalled WBG e-newsletters.



# The WBG's Economic Forecasts and its Work on Disaster Risk Management Were the Most Commonly Recalled Topics



# Stakeholders Wanted Information About Regular Updates on WBG Activities, Impact Assessments, and Evaluations

Key differences between stakeholder groups should be considered for targeted engagement. For example, private sector respondents seek information on how to partner with the WBG, whereas respondents from parliamentary offices are more interested in an overview of the WBG's financial products and services.

Top Two Types of Preferred Information About the WBG									
	All Respondents	Office of a Parliamentarian	Government Institution	Local Government	Bilateral or Multilateral Agency	Civil Society	Private Sector	Academia	Media
Regular updates on WBG activities*	53%	35%	41%	82%	59%	62%	50%	54%	74%
Impact assessments and evaluations	47%	45%	45%	41%	47%	59%	41%	42%	48%
Information on how to work / partner with WBG	42%	30%	36%	36%	59%	49%	65%	38%	41%
WBG research and knowledge	36%	35%	38%	32%	47%	38%	38%	38%	22%
Sector-specific strategies	31%	15%	38%	36%	35%	31%	29%	31%	19%
Overview of WBG financial products and services*	31%	65%	30%	36%	35%	18%	35%	27%	15%
Case studies of WBG projects*	28%	15%	38%	23%	6%	31%	15%	35%	26%



What information would be most helpful to you in understanding the WBG's role in Malawi? (Select up to 3)  
 (Percentage of Respondents, N=283) \*Denotes significant differences between stakeholder groups

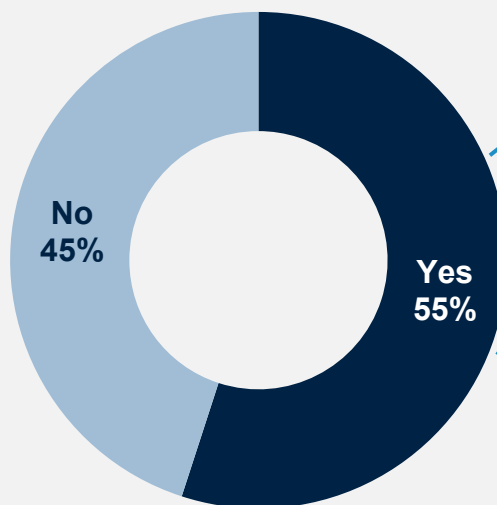
# ***Sample Demographics and Detailed Methodology***



# Sample Demographics

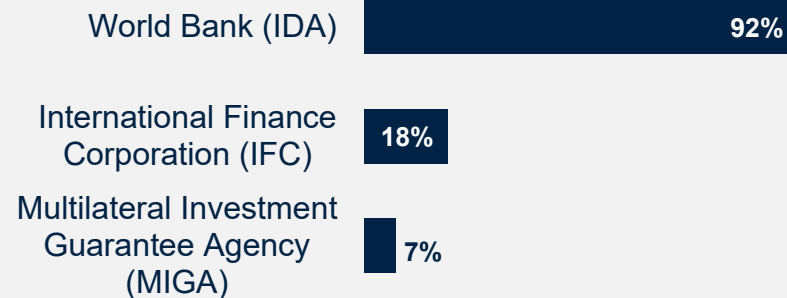
**In the past 3 years, have you worked or collaborated with the WBG in Malawi?**  
(N=307)

Respondents from government institutions were most likely to collaborate with the WBG (74%), while those from the media were far less likely to do so (28%).

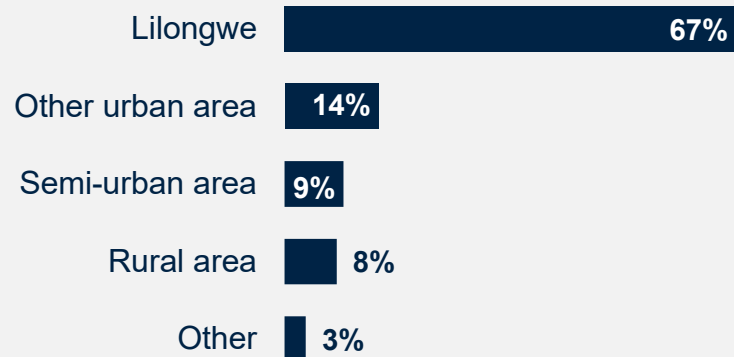


**Which of the following WBG agencies have you worked or collaborated with in Malawi?**

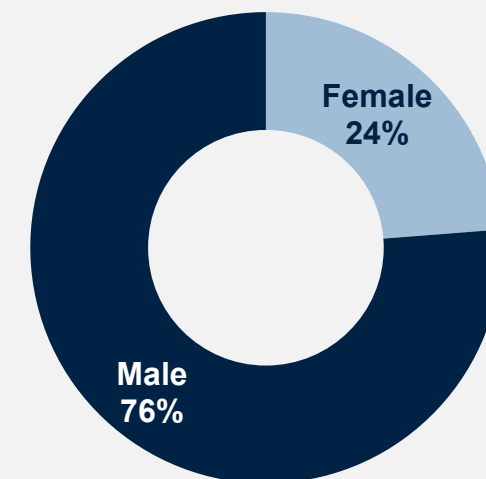
(N=166)



**Which best represents your geographic location?**  
(N=291)

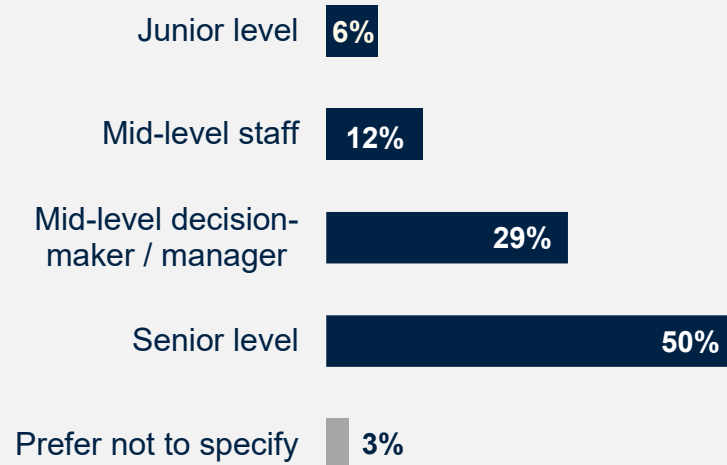


**What is your gender?**  
(N=292)

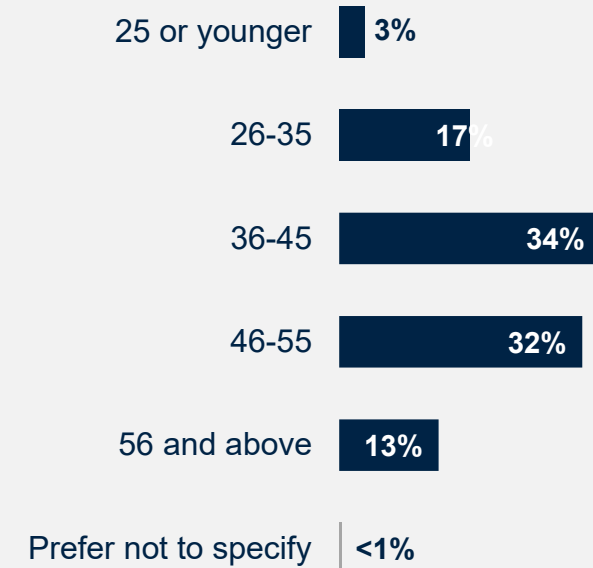


# Sample Demographics (continued)

Within your organization,  
would you describe yourself as...  
(N=289)



What's your age?  
(N=292)



# Detailed Methodology

From **February 2025 to April 2025**, a total of 759 stakeholders in Malawi were invited to provide their opinions on the WBG’s work by participating in a Country Opinion Survey (COS). A list of potential participants was compiled by the WBG country team and the field agency. Participants were drawn from government institutions, bilateral or multilateral agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector, academia and research centers, and the media.

Of these stakeholders, **307 participated in the survey (40% response rate)**. Respondents received the questionnaire in person, delivered by the research assistant, or completed it online.

**This year’s survey results were compared to the FY22 Country Opinion Survey, which had a response rate of 51% (N=359).**

Comparing responses across Country Surveys reflects changes in attitudes over time, as well as changes in respondent samples, methodology, and the survey instrument itself. To reduce the influence of the latter factor, only those questions with similar response scales/options were analyzed. However, the stakeholder compositions for both survey years should be taken into consideration when interpreting these comparisons.

Key statistically significant findings (tested at the research standard of  $p < .05$ ) are noted throughout the report.

Percentage of Respondents	FY 2022	FY 2025
<b>Government Principals:</b> Office of the President, Prime Minister, Minister, Parliamentarian	14%	9%
<b>Government Institutions:</b> Employee of a Ministry, Department, Project Implementation Unit, Independent Government Institution, Judiciary, State-Owned Enterprise	23%	33%
<b>Local Government</b>	7%	8%
<b>Bilateral/Multilateral Agency:</b> Embassy, Development Organization, Development Bank, UN Agency	7%	6%
<b>Civil Society Organization:</b> Local and regional NGO, Community-Based Organization, Private Foundation, Philanthropy, Professional/Trade Association, Faith-Based Group, Youth Group	12%	13%
<b>Private Sector:</b> Private Company, Financial Sector Organization, Private Bank	21%	12%
<b>Academia / Research Center</b>	5%	9%
<b>Media</b>	8%	10%
<b>Other</b>	3%	0%
<b>Total Number of Respondents*</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>305</b>



What is your primary professional affiliation? (Select only 1 response)

\*Not all respondents provided information about their professional affiliation. Therefore, the total number of respondents listed in the table is lower than the N reported in the methodology.

# Detailed Methodology (continued)

**Breakdowns for individual questions by stakeholder group and by year** can be found in the “Malawi COS FY25 Appendices.xlsx” file published in the WBG Microdata Library, along with the survey microdata and this report.

Please note that not all questions were asked of every respondent in FY25. Some questions—particularly those requiring more in-depth knowledge of WBG projects and operations—were only presented to a subset of stakeholders. Consequently, for year-over-year comparisons, some FY22 means shown in this report are based only on the subset of respondents who received the same questions in FY25, rather than the full FY22 sample. As a result, these means may differ from those published in the original FY22 report. Please refer to the questionnaire for details on question routing. The questionnaire is published in the WBG Microdata Library, along with the survey microdata, appendices, and this report.

The open-ended comments to this survey were analyzed with ChatGPT, a generative AI tool, and reviewed by the World Bank staff for accuracy.



CountryOpinionSurveys

# Thank you

*For more information about this report  
or the Country Opinion Survey program,  
please contact:*

[countrysurveys@worldbankgroup.org](mailto:countrysurveys@worldbankgroup.org)

