

MALAWI FACT SHEET

December 2008

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Key Gender Trends

- In 2008, Malawi's Department of Agricultural Research and Bunda College of Agriculture employed a combined total of 178 professional staff, of which 30 were female. The share of female professional staff remained relatively unchanged during 2001–08.
- Only 10 percent of all PhD-qualified staff were female, compared with 19 and 21 percent of staff with MSc and BSc degrees, respectively.
- The distribution of female professional staff by age was less equal than the comparable distribution of male professional staff. In 2008, over half of all professional women were aged between 31 and 40 years, and most women had been employed at their respective agencies for a comparatively short period of time.
- The share of women in management, including positions as deans of faculties and head of departments, was 15 percent.
- In 2008, female students accounted for about one-third of the total student population in agricultural sciences, and 56 percent of the students that graduated that year were female.

Shares of Female Professional Agricultural Staff by Agency and by Degree

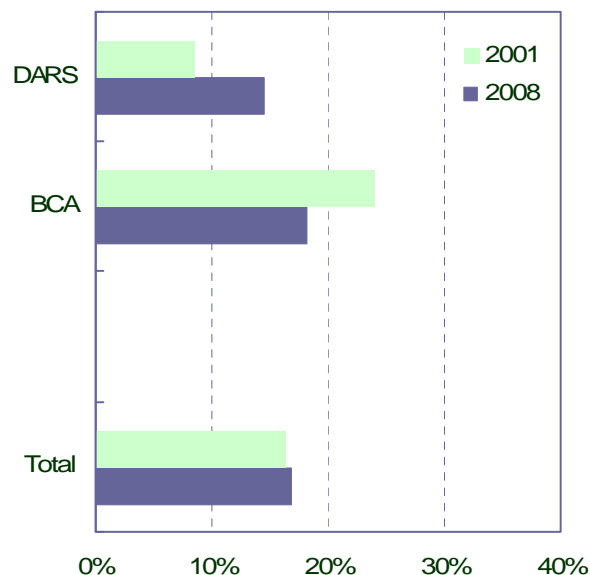
In 2008, the two largest government and higher education agencies involved in agricultural research in Malawi—the Department of Agricultural Research (DARS) and the Bunda College of Agriculture (BCA)—together employed 178 professional staff, of which 30, or 17 percent, were female. The combined share of female professional staff remained relatively unchanged during 2001–08, at 16–17 percent (Figure 1). In 2001, the two agencies employed a combined total of 59 percent of Malawi's agricultural research staff in terms of full-time equivalents. The female share of professional staff at DARS increased from 9 to 15 percent, whereas the female share at BCA declined from 24 to 18 percent during this period due to a comparatively larger increase in the number of male professional staff employed at the college.

In 2008, of the professional staff at the two agencies, only 10 percent of those with PhD degrees were female (Figure 2). This was considerably lower than those with MSc degrees (19 percent) and BSc degrees (21 percent). Although the number of women with PhD degrees increased in absolute terms, their relative share declined by 3 percent from 2001 to 2008.

Qualifications of Professional Agricultural Staff by Gender

In 2008, on average, 20 percent of all the female staff held PhD degrees compared with 35 percent of the male staff.

FIGURE 1. Female share of professional agricultural staff by agency, 2001 and 2008



Note: See page 3 for a list of agency names and categories. One government agency, FRIM, was excluded due to lack of available data.

(Figure 3). The gap has widened since 2001, when 22 percent of the female staff held PhD degrees compared with 28 percent of the male staff (Figure 3a). In absolute terms, however, the number of female staff with PhD degrees increased from 23 to 30 over the seven years (Figure 3b).

FIGURE 2. Female share of professional agricultural staff by degree, 2001 and 2008

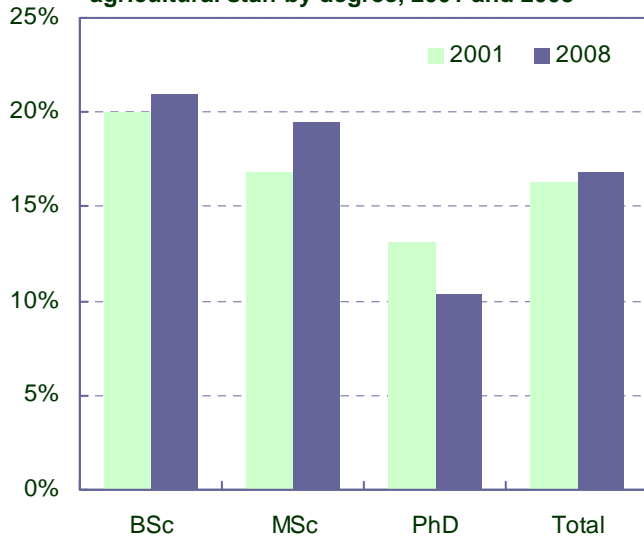


FIGURE 3a. Qualifications of professional agricultural staff by gender, 2001 and 2008 (shares)

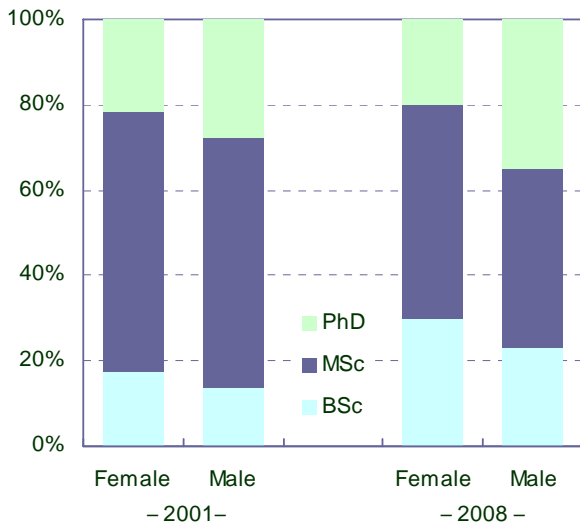
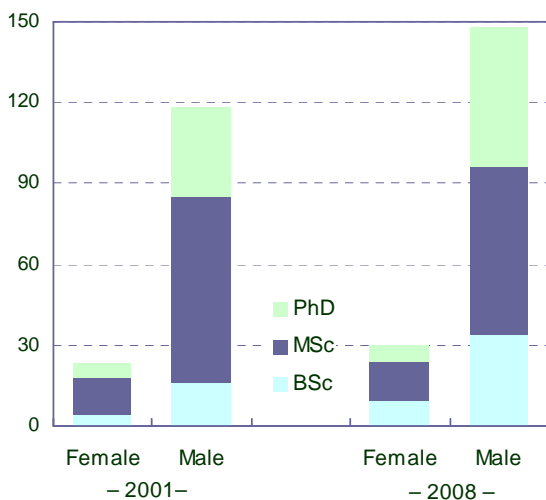


FIGURE 3b. Qualifications of professional agricultural staff by gender, 2001 and 2008 (headcounts)



Age and Seniority of Professional Agricultural Staff by Gender

In 2008, 55 percent of the 29 women employed at DARS and BCA were aged between 31 and 40 years (Figure 4). Only 3 of the 33 professional staff over 50 years old were female, and only one woman and one man, employed at BCA, were younger than 25 years old.

Three of the 14 deans of faculties and heads of departments at BCA were female, and 2 of the 20 management positions at DARS were held by women (Figure 5). Unsurprisingly, a relatively higher share of the professional and technical support staff were female.

FIGURE 4. Age of professional agricultural staff by gender, 2008

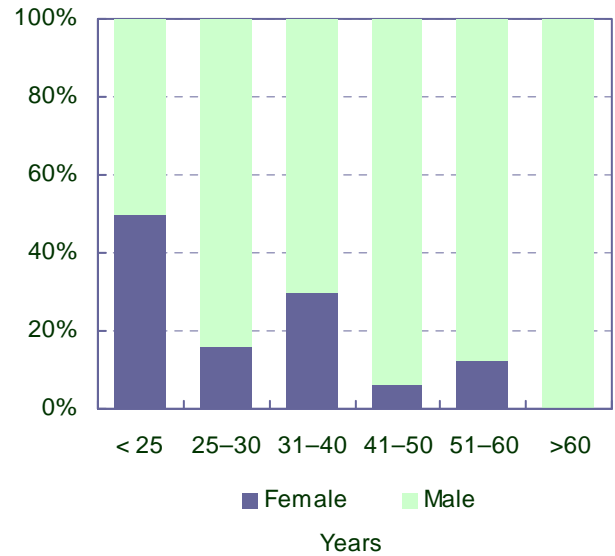
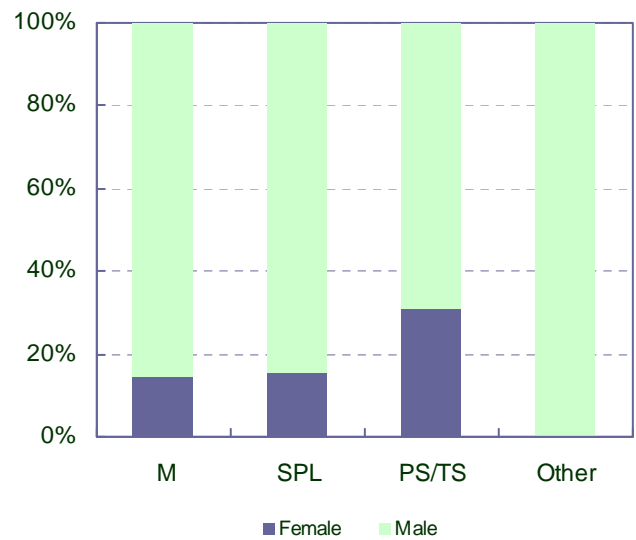
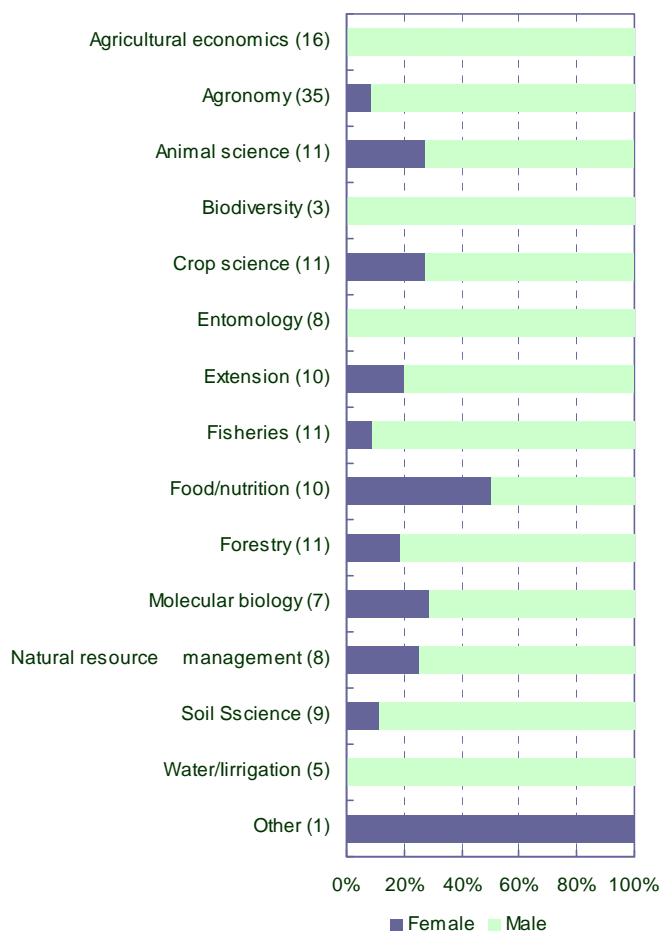


FIGURE 5. Seniority of professional agricultural staff by gender, 2008



Note: M indicates management and includes directors, deans, and department heads; SPL includes scientists, (assistant) professors, and (senior) lecturers not in management positions; and PS/TS indicates professional and technical support staff.

FIGURE 6. Discipline-mix of professional agricultural staff by gender, 2008

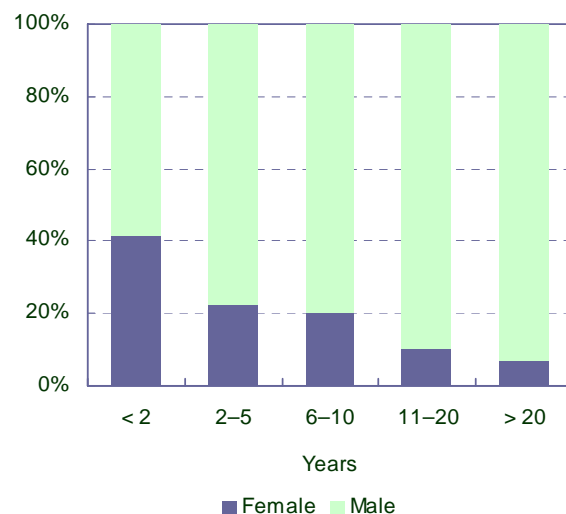


Discipline Mix and Years of Service of Professional Agricultural Staff by Gender

Half of the professional staff trained in food and nutrition science were female. In contrast relatively few women were trained in agronomy, fisheries, and soil science (9 to 11 percent). No women were trained in agricultural economics, biodiversity, and water/irrigation management (Figure 6).

Forty-two percent of staff employed by their agency less than two years were female (Figure 7). This share decreased with increasing years of service.

FIGURE 7. Years of service of professional agricultural staff by gender, 2008



Notes: The number of staff within each category is shown in parentheses. None of the staff at either sample agency was trained in ecology in 2008.

TABLE 1. Departures and promotions of professional agricultural staff by gender, 2005–07, and as a share of female and male professional staff employed in 2008

Status	Number of staff, 2005–07		Share of 2008 staff	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Departures	1	16	3%	11%
Promotions	7	37	23%	25%

Departures and Promotions of Professional Agricultural Staff by Gender

Overall, 1 woman and 16 men departed the two sample agencies during the 2005–07 period, and 7 women and 37 men were promoted (Table 1). For the purpose of comparison, numbers of departing staff represent 3 and 11 percent of the female and male staff employed in 2008, respectively, and numbers of promoted staff represent 23 and 25 percent of female and male staff employed in 2008, respectively. The resulting trends indicate that the share of women departing the agencies was substantially lower than the share of men departing, and that the shares of the promoted staff were roughly equal by gender.

The data in this fact sheet are derived from the following government and higher education agencies:

One government agency

DARS Department of Agricultural Research

One higher education agency

BCA Bunda College of Agriculture

Note that one major government agency, the Forestry Research Institute of Malawi (FRIM), was excluded due to lack of available data.

For further information on the organization of agricultural research in Malawi, see http://www.asti.cgiar.org/pdf/Malawi_CB22.pdf.

TABLE 2. Professional agricultural staff completing training, by gender, 2005–07, and as a share of female and male professional staff employed in 2008

Level of Training	Number of staff, 2005–07		Share of 2008 staff	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
BSc	4	7	44%	21%
MSc	6	20	40%	32%
PhD	2	11	33%	21%

Note: Na indicates that data were not available.

Training by Gender

Of the professional staff employed in agriculture at the government and higher education agencies in 2008, only two women had obtained a PhD degree during 2005–07 compared with 11 men. More men than women also obtained MSc or BSc degrees during this timeframe. In relative terms, however, higher shares of female staff obtained degrees (Table 2).

About ASTI

The Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI) initiative compiles, processes, analyzes, and reports data on institutional developments, investments, and human resources in agricultural R&D in developing countries. The ASTI initiative is managed by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and involves collaborative alliances with many national and regional R&D agencies, as well as international institutions. The initiative, which is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation with additional support from IFPRI, is widely recognized as the most authoritative source of information on the support for and structure of agricultural R&D worldwide. To know more about the ASTI initiative visit www.asti.cgiar.org.

About AWARD

The African Women in African Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) program, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is implemented by the Gender & Diversity (G&D) program of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Competitive two-year fellowships focused on building capacity in science, mentoring, and leadership are offered to high-performing female African scientists at one of three critical career junctures: completion of a BSc, MSc, or PhD degree. To know more visit www.genderdiversity.cgiar.org.

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IFPRI was established in 1975. IFPRI is one of 15 agricultural research centers that receives its principal funding from governments, private foundations, and international and regional organizations, most of which are members of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (www.cgiar.org).

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