



Document Release

Malawi Route-to-Market Geospatial Enabled Tool for SHS Companies

NEWS RELEASE

As part of the USAID Solar Home System (SHS) Kick-Starter Program for Malawi the USAID Southern Africa Energy Program (SAEP), a Power Africa initiative, is releasing a **“Route-to-Market (RTM) Database and Supporting Documentation”** that brings together geospatial data and techniques to map population, density, electrification and road infrastructure data. The RTM tool enables SHS companies to prioritize geographic markets shown to have the highest potential for expansion or deeper market penetration, and thereby develop robust RTM strategies. To tackle the low electricity access rate in Malawi, the RTM geospatial tool is part of a series of initiatives centered on the USAID SHS Kick-Starter Program for Malawi to support the off-grid sector and spur private sector investment in electricity delivery.

Benefits

- Helps identify high **potential geographic markets** in Malawi for expansion
- Enables **easy navigation** for targeted views
- Supports efficient delivery of products for **increased sales**

Background to RTM Support

In September 2018, USAID SAEP developed an RTM database for Malawi, building on a geospatial tool developed in Zambia for SHS companies. The database brings together different factors that SHS companies typically use to prioritize geographic target areas, at both the district and the village levels. Providing this information in a consolidated and digestible way to companies can help them finetune their market expansion strategy by targeting the areas with the highest potential, and then locating their service centers and selecting sales agents in or close to those areas. The RTM database pulls together several data sources, including population size, population density, distance from Lilongwe and other major cities, income levels, mobile activity and agricultural activity.

USAID support to SHS players in Malawi includes:

- **Operational support**, which includes RTM strategy support, research and analysis and business efficiency improvements available on request
- Results-based **grant financing** through the SHS Kick-Starter Program for Malawi
- **Access to working capital** financiers who are looking at opportunities to invest in the sector
- **Access to the RTM database**, an easy-to-use Excel data set that can be viewed with Google Earth for georeferencing

The goal of the Malawi SHS support is to **enable SHS companies to accelerate their expansion and to improve their operations**, and thereby help to raise Malawi's electricity access rate.

Resources

- For an overview of the RTM tool, click [here](#)
- To access the RTM tool and data for Malawi, click [here](#)
- Downloading instructions
Google Earth installation on Windows:
 1. Go to <https://www.google.com/earth/versions/>
 2. Click on "Google Earth Pro on desktop"
 3. Click on "Download Earth Pro on Desktop"
 4. Click "Accept & Download" 5. Double click on the downloaded file and follow the Windows installation instructions

For assistance with the tool or to request operational support, contact USAID SAEP at malawi@southernafricaenergy.org

Liz Pfeiffer | SAEP Deputy Chief of Party
Phone: +27 12 942 9392
Email: lpfeiffer@southernafricaenergy.org

Arthur Wengawenga | SAEP Malawi Country Lead
Phone: +265 999 956 821
Email: awengawenga@southernafricaenergy.org

The USAID Southern Africa Energy Program is a five-year initiative to improve access to energy and increase power generation in Southern Africa. It is a part of Power Africa, a U.S. government-led initiative launched in 2013, aimed at increasing electricity access in sub-Saharan Africa by adding more than 30,000 megawatts of electricity generation capacity and 60 million new connections by 2030.

USAID Southern Africa <https://www.usaid.gov/powerafrica/>