

## Background

It has been demonstrated through experience in more than 80 countries that National Public Health Institutes (NPHIs) have great potential to overcome public health challenges and improve the public health status of the populations in countries where they have been established. The proposed **PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE OF MALAWI (PHIM)** will attract and retain highly qualified experts in public health and will streamline decision-making processes in responding to public health emergencies. The institute will have technical expertise in analysing and interpreting public health data for the Health Sector as well as pilot innovative public health interventions in collaboration with disease control programs to provide evidence informed public health policy development and technical guidance. It is envisaged that these interventions will in the long run save lives and money by basing public health policy decisions on country-specific data on health burden, efficacy of interventions and implementation of health programs. PHIM will be a catalyst for the implementation of International Public Health Regulations that are both sustainable and suitable for the local context.

The development of a public health institute in the country is one of the priority areas in the Malawi Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP 2011-2016). The public health institute will exist to address public health threats and serve as a coordinating body with a core mandate and capacity of combating public health problems that Malawi faces.



**PHIM** | PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE  
of MALAWI

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# PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE OF MALAWI



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# Goal, Mission and Vision of PHIM

## Overall Goal

To provide national leadership in surveillance, research, prevention and control of diseases of major public health importance.

## Mission

To provide leadership in disease surveillance, research, prevention and control as well as to generate information that informs policy and practice in public health service delivery.

## Vision

A centre of excellence in public health that contributes towards quality and productive life of all Malawians.

## Structure, functions and operationalising the Institute

PHIM will have the following scientific and administrative divisions:

### Scientific Divisions

- Surveillance, research, and development
- Disease prevention and response
- Public Health Reference Laboratory

### Management and administrative Division

- Human Resources Development
- Finance and Administration

### The sections that have moved into the institute in the initial phase are:

- Epidemiology unit
- National Public Reference Laboratory
- Research unit

When the institute has developed certain levels of capacity and competency it may take on additional responsibilities to expand its profile in public health functions.

## Strategic objectives

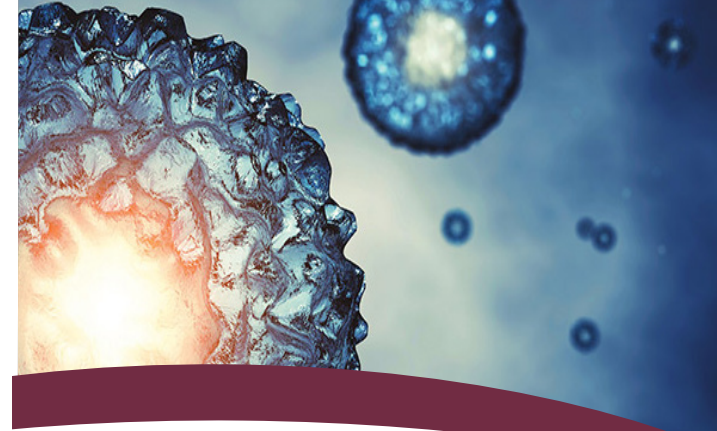
The institute will fulfill the roles and responsibilities of the Institute through the following strategic objectives:

1. Establish and use effective and efficient mechanisms for disease surveillance, response, control and prevention for conditions of public health importance.
2. Provide leadership for identification and implementation of research that is responsive to public health issues.
3. Generate information for public health policy development and review.
4. Establish and use effective and efficient systems for monitoring progress and impact of public health interventions.
5. Develop a robust and sustainable national public health reference laboratory capacity to address national public health concerns
6. Facilitate networking in-country and internationally on matters of public health importance.
7. Generate additional resources for sustainability.
8. Contribute to national capacity development for public health services provision for both private and public sector.

## Links with national health programs and stakeholders

The Ministry of Health through the district health systems shall still be responsible for patient care, routine disease surveillance, data collection, and disease control. The disease control programs will collaborate with the institute in areas of disease surveillance, data analysis and interpretation as well as innovative approaches to disease control.

The institute shall collaborate with various sectors, health institutions, training and research institutions and international associations as well as foundations both nationally as well as internationally.



## Broader national benefits

1. A streamlined and enhanced decision-making process through a good governance structure to meet the various requirements of an efficient Public Health Institute.
2. A visible institutional home and strong leadership for public health: a career home for a cadre of public health experts and scientists
3. Evidence-informed public health policy formulation and public health interventions.
4. Resource mobilization and efficient use of resources to meet the needs of the various programs.
5. A strategic approach to meeting the requirements of the International Health Regulations, national and regional requirements.
6. A strengthened capacity to respond with speed and decisiveness to public health emergencies thereby contributing to the reduction of morbidity and mortality in the country.
7. Contribute to the attainment of the MDGs and the MDGS II.

The institute will commence its activities within the Ministry and it will eventually transform into a statutory body that is closely interlinked with MOH and the health sector. The institute will be accountable to the public and the government. The institute will have its own campus; at present it is housed on the premises at Community Health Sciences Unit. The institute has a strategic plan that guides its operations.