

July 2026 — Project Update

Fish for Tomorrow in Lake Malawi

Field Partner: Ripple Africa

I wanted to send you a mid-year update on the Fish for Tomorrow Project in Malawi and to thank you for your support for this project! As a reminder, this project seeks to stabilize and reverse the effects of a highly unsustainable fishery in one of the world's most speciose freshwater lakes.

Key Achievements: More fishers are switching to multifilament nets. This is not unexpected and is due to the efforts of the district task forces targeting shops to eliminate monofilament nets. The project has confiscated a total of 1,030 kilometers of monofilament nets from Lake Malawi since Jan 2025. If lined up end-to-end, that's further than the distance between Toronto and Québec City!

In the last six months, the Beach Village Committees (BVCs) have confiscated 196,300 metres of monofilament nets, 34 mosquito nets (mostly in Mangochi where the project is newest), two trawler nets and 22 various types of beach seines. Confiscated nets are stored at District Fisheries Offices so that they cannot be re-used and they are destroyed with lots of publicity so that fishers can see the consequences of using illegal gears.

Community Awareness Activities

During the first half of the year, **339** meetings were held with local leaders and with fishing community members. These covered issues such as the importance of adopting sustainable fisheries practices and the detrimental effects of using illegal fishing gear. The meetings were attended by 13,483 fishers and local leaders. **49** primary and secondary schools attended talks on the project from the teams. In total 19,522 students attended the school sessions, the largest number of learners were in Mangochi District, where 14,862 students attended 24 large scale school events.



Beach Village Committees (BVCs) and Sub Fisheries Associations (Sub FAs)

In total, **465** meetings with BVCs and Sub FAs were held in this reporting period, attended by 5,207 committee members, 38% of whom were female. The topics at the meetings with BVCs included self-financing methods, beach hygiene initiatives and the importance of observing fishing regulations. Sub Fisheries meetings focused on enforcing the closed season and strengthening enforcement to eradicate monofilament fishing nets. In Mangochi District, the BVC meetings also discussed local revenue collection and the challenges faced by the relatively new BVCs. along with possible solutions.



One of the key aspects of the project is to ensure that all the Local Fisheries Management Authorities (LFMAs) such as Beach Village Committees (BVCs) and Sub Fisheries Associations (Sub FAs) carry out their roles effectively. BVC performance has been evaluated with respect to beach cleaning exercises, by-law knowledge and enforcement, self-financing initiatives, community engagement, and their overall efficiency and effectiveness. In Mangochi, over 88% of the BVCs have initiated meaningful of generating income for their operations including beach landing fees, vegetable and maize farming and bee keeping.

Beach and Breeding Areas

Regular beach inspections are carried out by BVCs, Ripple Africa and Fisheries extension workers to monitor fishing gear and confiscate illegal gears. 18 brush parks (fish aggregation devices) have been installed in breeding areas. These are usually constructed from branches and old canoes and offer a sanctuary for the juvenile fish and discourage fishing in these areas as they snag fishing nets (but see Annex 5 for a slightly different approach).



Reading about the impact happening in Malawi is great, but the photos are spectacular. Please have a look at the extensive images appended to the end of this update.

Feel free to reach out if you have any questions, suggestions, or just want to chat about this project.

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