Smaller Families, Healthier Families in Phalombe District

Family size matters for better access to social services and resources
- Population density in Phalombe District has increased by ½ in the last two decades, from 156 to 225 people per km².
- 9 out of 10 households have an improved source of drinking water.

Benefits of family planning
Smaller family size can help parents invest more in each child’s education and increase future employment opportunities. Slower population growth makes it easier to plan and manage improvements in social services and resources such as access to clean water, health care, and transportation.

Family size matters to the health and well-being of women and their families
- 9 out of 10 households use a form of wood for cooking; 1 in 50 has access to electricity.
- Only 1 in 50 women and 1 in 14 men complete secondary education.
- 2 out of 3 women and 3 out of 4 men are literate.
- 1 out of 4 women and 1 out of 7 men are unemployed.
- Distance to the nearest health facility is a serious problem for 1 out of 2 women who try to get treatment when they are sick.

Benefits of family planning
- 1 out of 4 women gives birth at home.
- 1 out of 2 married women use a method of family planning; 1 out of 4 reports using family planning to limit their births.
- 1 out of 9 women and 1 out of 11 men believe a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances.
- 1 in 6 deaths of women 15 to 49 years old are due to maternal-related complications. Family planning allows young women to delay pregnancies and avoid the health risks associated with early childbearing. A woman’s ability to space and limit births has a direct impact on her health and well-being.
- Children whose mothers die are less likely to thrive and complete school.

Family size matters to the survival and welfare of children
- 1 out of 12 children under age 5 is underweight.
- 1 in 3 women ages 15-19 have begun childbearing.
- 1 out of 2 children under age 5 is stunted.

Benefits of family planning
- Family planning improves child survival by allowing couples to adequately space births and limit pregnancies. Babies who are born 3 or more years apart are more than twice as likely to survive as babies who are born less than 2 years apart. With smaller family sizes, parents are better able to provide adequate care and nutrition for their children.

In Malawi, 1 woman dies every 2 hours from maternal-related causes.

1 infant less than 12 months old dies every 7 hours in the district.

Among children under 5 years of age, there is 1 death every 4 hours in the district.