ANNUAL REPORT

A nation with scientifically and technologically led sustainable growth and development

March 2025

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FOREWORD

This Annual Report provides a comprehensive overview of achievements through the activities undertaken in the past year from 1st April 2024- 31st March 2025. It highlights our successes, the lessons we have learnt and the challenges we have overcome. I am pleased to report that we have made significant strides in the following areas:

1. Intensifying the promotion, support, coordination and regulation of research, technology and innovation.
2. Growing the financial muscle of the Commission by strengthening income generation and financial management towards self-reliance.
3. Promoting public awareness and understanding of STI, and foster access, sharing and utilization of STI information.
4. Strengthening collaboration with local and international partners while exploring and establishing new ones.

I am confident that our efforts will have a lasting impact in the Science, Technology and Innovation landscape. As we look to the future, we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead. We will continue to build on our strengths, address our weaknesses, and innovate to stay ahead of the curve. We are committed to delivering exceptional value to our stakeholders and to making a positive difference in building the National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) staff capacity and a critical mass of highly qualified researchers in the country and providing means for retaining them.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Government, the NCST Board Members, partners, and stakeholders for their hard work, dedication, guidance and support. Without their contributions, we would not have been able to achieve what we have. I am proud to lead such a talented and committed team, and I am excited to see what the future holds for us.

Behind these achievements, there is a community made of incredible and hard-working staff, interns, partners and stakeholders who are committed to supporting our vision and mission. It is because of this enthusiasm and dedication that NCST has continued to successfully deliver on its mission. I thank each one of you for the work you do and for your support

Gift A. Kadzamira
Director General

PREFACE

This is the 14th Annual Report that the NCST has published and it is the first Annual Report under my direction and oversight. The Government of Malawi has placed NCST at the apex of the governance framework to champion Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in the country, and it is our collective responsibility to attain the goals of NCST in STI ecosystem.

It is pleasing to note that the Commission has managed to attract more funding from global funders such as the IDRC, GRF, FCDO, SIDA, NRF, NORAD, GCC and the Gates Foundation; improve its own-income generation, beating its target by 67%, and establish a second Technology Transfer Office at Mzuzu University among several key achievements in the year.

Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the Minister of Basic and Secondary Education, Honourable Madalitso Kambawuwa-Wirima for ascending to the Chairperson of the Specialised Technical Committee of Education Science and Technology Bureau 5 in the year 2024. This means Malawi will lead the Bureau for the next 2 years. I would like to assure the Minister of NCST's commitment to the Government of Malawi to promote implementation of the AU-EU Innovation Agenda 2030. In the same year, NCST has vigorously worked with the SCGI initiative to promote the role of Science Granting Councils in Africa in the implementation arrangements of the successor STISA 2034. This is a sign that the Africa Union Commission has all the instruments for implementing its second agenda after STISA 2024 at member state level.

On a special way, let me also congratulate the new Minister of Higher Education, Honourable Dr Jessie Kabwila Kapasula and the new Ministry of Higher Education. NCST will work collaboratively to support the mission of the new Ministry.

To the general public, I have to state with conviction that the NCST is your organization and therefore, connect with the Secretariat as well as my board members for you to benefit from the mother body that is charged with facilitating STI implementation at national level.

I wish you a good readership as you peruse through the Annual Report for 2024-25.

Prof. David Mkwambisi
Board Chairperson

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AATF	African Agricultural Technology Foundation
AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology
AU-EU	African Union – European Union
AU-STC-EST5	The African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Education Science and Technology Bureau 5
BIS	Business Innovation Survey
CFT	Confined Field Trials
CDSS	Community Day Secondary School
DHRMD	Department of Human Resources Management and Development
FCDO	Foreign Commonwealth and overseas Development Organisation
GCC	Grand Challenges Canada
GEII	Gender, Equality, Inclusivity and Intersectionality
GRF	German Research Foundation
IDRC	International Development and Research Cooperation
IP	Intellectual Property
ISC	International Science Council
NBRC	National Biotechnology Regulatory Committee
NCRSH	National Committee on Research in Social Sciences and Humanities
NCST	National Commission for Science and Technology
NHSRC	National Health Sciences Research Committee
NIP	National Innovation Portal
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NRF	National Research Foundation of South Africa
NSTIP	National Science Technology and Innovation Policy
OFAB	Open Forum on Biotechnology
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SPD	Strategic Planning Document – An intermediate Strategic Plan for NCST
STAM	Seed Traders Association of Malawi
STI	Science Technology and Innovation
TAS	The Academy of Sciences in Malawi
TIPC	Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NCST is a key institution mandated to promote, coordinate, and regulate the development and application of science, technology, and innovation (STI) in the country in accordance with the Science and Technology Act no.16 of 2003. As the primary advisory body on STI matters, NCST plays a pivotal role in shaping policies, fostering research, and driving innovation to support national development.

In line with its mandate, NCST works closely with government institutions, academia, private sector stakeholders, and international partners to create an enabling environment for scientific advancement and technological progress. Its strategic interventions focus on strengthening research capacity, formulating evidence-based policies, and facilitating the adoption of innovative solutions to address national challenges.

In the 2024-25 financial year, NCST has made significant progress in updating key policy frameworks, enhancing its monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, providing research, science, technology and innovation grants, and contributing to regional and continental STI initiatives. These efforts align with the country's long-term vision for economic growth and transformation, Malawi 2063, the National Research Agenda (NRA) and also the African Union's Science, Technology, and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA2014-2024).

Planned Activities and Achievements

During the 2024/2025 programming year, several activities were planned after approval by the Board. The activities were designed to achieve growth in the selected Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs). The planned activities:

SFA 1: Intensify the promotion, support, coordination and regulation of research, science, technology and innovation.

This SFA was structured into two subprograms, each with distinct outputs and achievements. These subprograms were:

1. Research, Science, and Technology Development Subprogram
2. Technology Transfer, Innovation, and Commercialization Subprogram

The following were the planned activities for the Research, Science, and Technology Development Subprogram:

- Review 170 research studies
- Approve 60 studies for ethical compliance
- Conduct 4 regulatory audits

- Award 40 small grants
- Initiate and sustain 4 new research programs

Achievements by the end of the financial year under this program include the following:

- Reviewed 161 research studies, achieving 95% of the target of 170 studies.
- Approved 161 studies for ethical compliance, exceeding the target of 60 by 268%.
- Conducted 1 regulatory audit, achieving 25% of the target.
- Awarded 31 small grants, meeting 78% of the target.
- Initiated and sustained 13 new research programs, surpassing the target of 4 by 325%.

Under the subprogram of Technology Transfer, Innovation and Commercialization the following outputs were planned:

- Initiate and sustain 2 new technology transfer and commercialization programs
- Map 120 new innovators through the National Innovation Portal
- File for 1 patent

At the end of the year the following outputs were achieved under this subprogram:

- A total of 5 new technology transfer and commercialization programs were initiated and sustained, exceeding the target of 2 by 150%.
- 135 innovators were identified and mapped through the National Innovation Portal, surpassing the initial target of 120 by 12.5%.
- During this period, NCST did not file any patents.

SFA 2: Grow the financial muscle of the Commission by strengthening income generation and financial management towards self-reliance

In this SFA, NCST planned the following outputs:

- Sustain Government subvented activities with MK1.744billion funding from Treasury
- Generate MK167,555,000 through review fees
- Generate at the Minimum U$200,000 through donor support

By 31st December 2024 this SFA had achieved the following:

- MK1.254 billion had been received from treasury to support subvented activities. This represented 71% of the annual budget

- NCST had generated MK255,000,000 through review fees, surpassing the target by 52%.
- NCST had received $378,000 an increase from the targeted $200,000 by 89% and also an additional ZAR5,970,859 and MK346,490,117

SFA 3: Build NCST staff capacity and a critical mass of highly qualified researchers in the country and providing means of retaining them

This SFA had the following target outputs in the 2024-25 financial year:

- Train 5 NCST staff members in work related skills
- Train 50 researchers in research and innovation management
- Mentor 55 girls in science, technology and innovation careers

At the end of 2024-25 financial year, NCST had achieved the following outputs under this SFA:

- 25 NCST staff members have been trained in work related skills, representing a 400% increase from the target.
- 141 researchers have been trained in research and innovation management, representing a 182% increase from the target.
- 310 girls have been mentored in science, technology and innovation careers representing a 463% increase from the target.

SFA 4: Promote public awareness and understanding of STI, and foster access, sharing and utilization of STI information

In this RFA, NCST had planned the following outputs:

- Conduct 4 public lectures on Biotechnology
- Conduct a stakeholder visitation to GM maize cornfield targeting 130 people
- Produce and disseminate 500 information, education and communication material relating to Science, technology and innovation in Malawi
- Develop and make available to the public 3 sciences, technology and innovation databases.
- Facilitate two award ceremonies for journalists, researchers and innovators.

At the end of 2024-25 financial year, NCST had achieved the following outputs:

- Conducted 2 public lectures on Biotechnology representing a 50% decrease from the target of 4.
- 80 stakeholders from various institutions attended the 'seeing is believing' tour of GM maize cornfield against a target of 130 people, representing a decrease of 62.5%.
- Produced and disseminated 971 information, education and communication material relating to Science, technology and innovation in Malawi, representing an increase of 94.2%

- Developed and made available to the public 2 sciences, technology and innovation databases representing a decrease of 33%.
- Facilitated 3 award ceremonies for journalists, researchers and innovators against a target of two, representing an increase of 33%.

SFA 5: Strengthen collaboration with local and international partners while exploring and establishing new ones

In this SFA, the report compares the partnerships that were created in 2023-24 and those created in 2024-25. It focuses on both local and international partnerships.

As could be observed from the report, NCST had 6 international partners in the 2023-24 and the same number of partners was maintained in the 2024-25 financial year. Locally, NCST had 5 partners in the 2023-24 financial year and the same number has been maintained in the 2024-25 financial year.

SFA 6: Strengthen the NCST institutional programming

In this SFA had the following outputs planned in the 2024-25 financial year:

- Finalise 1 strategic planning document,
- Update 1 monitoring and evaluation framework for the STI sector, and
- Support the development of policies including NSTIP

In the 2024-25 year, NCST managed to achieve the following:

- Conclude 1 strategic planning document
- Complete and operationalize 1 monitoring and evaluation framework for the STI sectors
- Support development of three policies and strategies as planned

Lessons Learnt

Throughout the year, NCST has gained valuable insights from its activities, policy implementations, and stakeholder engagements. The key lessons learned include:

- The importance of strong stakeholder engagement: active collaboration with government agencies, academia, private sector players, and international partners is essential for advancing science, technology, and innovation (STI). Regular consultations ensure alignment with national and regional priorities.
- Need for increased funding and resource mobilization: The demand for research grants, technology development, and innovation support exceeds available resources. Exploring alternative funding mechanisms, including public-private partnerships, is crucial for sustainability.
- Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Systems: A robust M&E framework is essential for tracking progress, measuring impact, and

ensuring accountability in STI programs. Continuous refinement of these systems improves efficiency and effectiveness.

- Bridging the gap between research and commercialization: while the STI sector continues to generate various research outputs, translating them into market-ready innovations remains a challenge. Strengthening technology transfer and commercialization mechanisms is necessary to enhance impact.
- Enhancing ethical compliance and regulatory oversight: The high number of research studies approved highlights the importance of maintaining rigorous ethical review processes. Strengthening regulatory audits and compliance mechanisms ensures research integrity and public trust.
- Leveraging digital platforms for innovation mapping: The success of the National Innovation Portal in mapping innovators underscores the value of digital platforms in identifying, supporting, and promoting local innovation. Expanding such initiatives will improve national innovation ecosystems.
- Policy adaptation and flexibility: The review of the National Science and Technology Policy (NSTP) highlighted the need for policies that are adaptable to emerging trends in STI. Continuous policy evaluation ensures relevance and effectiveness in a rapidly evolving landscape.

By applying these lessons, NCST aims to enhance its role in coordinating and driving STI for national development, ensuring impactful research, innovation, and technology-driven progress.

Table 1: Summary of Results for 2024/2025

Results area	**Programme Target April 2024**	**Achieved March 2025**	**Comments**
SFA 1: Intensify the promotion, support, coordination and regulation of research, science, technology and innovation			
• **Research, Science, Technology Development Subprogram**			
Review research studies	170	161 (95%)	73 protocols were reviewed by NCRSH alone while 88 were reviewed by NHSRC
Approved studies for ethics compliance	60	161 (168%)	The number is based on the submissions made in the previous FY
Undertake regulatory audits	4	1 (25%)	NCST is anticipating to do more audits before

			end of March 2024
Award Small Grants	40	31 (78%)	
New Research Programmes initiated and sustained	4	13 (225%)	The increase in the number of new research programmes initiated and sustained was due to increased donor support through the Science Granting Council Initiative
• **Technology Transfer, innovation and Commercialisation Subprogram**			
New Technology Transfer and Commercialization programmes initiated and sustained	2	5 (150%)	Establishment of new TTOs; Business Innovation Survey; appropriate technology; technology innovation grants
Innovations mapped through national innovation portal	120	135 (12.5%)	NCST intensified promotion through TV advertisement
Number of IP filings (patents)	1	0 (0%)	The focus is now on strengthening the capacity of research institutions
SFA 2: Grow the financial muscle of the Commission by strengthening income generation and financial management towards self-reliance			
Government subvention sustained	MK1.744billion	MK1.308billion (75%)	This is the figure attained by the end of the third quarter.
Own generated revenue increased;	MK167.6 Million	MK255 Million (152%)	NCST has surpassed the target by K88m
Donor funding enhanced			
• Foreign	US$200,000	US$378,000 (189%)	U$328,000 NRF. Only US$75,000 received by December 2024; $50,000 OFAB;
• Domestic	-	MK156.5 million	MK102 million from Bayer Malawi and 54.5 from UNDP Malawi

SFA 3: Build NCST staff capacity and a critical mass of highly qualified researchers in the country and providing means of retaining them			
NCST staff trained in work related skills	5	34 (500%)	OCS and GEII and Innovation Survey
Researchers trained in research and innovation management	50	141 (282%)	Biotechnology and IP audit training
Girls mentored in Science Technology and Innovation careers	55	310 (563%)	Girls were mentored in 4 different schools targeting form 1's and 3's
SFA 4: Promote public awareness and understanding of STI, and foster access, sharing and utilization of STI information			
Results area	**Programme Target April 2024**	**Achieved March 2025**	**Comments**
Public lectures on Biotechnology	4	2 (50%)	Limited resources could not allow us to conduct all the 4
Seeing is Believing visits on the Confined Field Trials for GM maize at LUANAR	130 people from different institutions	80 people from different institutions (61%)	Some people did not turn up despite being invited
IEC material produced and disseminated	500	971 (194%)	Launch of Innovation Portal contributed to the increase
Science technology databases accessible to the general public	3	2 (66%)	Women in STI, Lab Equipment
Science journalists, researchers and innovators awards conducted	2	3 (133%)	OFAB; NSTI Fair; Kasiya Community STI Fair
SFA 5: Strengthen collaboration with local and international partners while exploring and establishing new ones			
Results area	**Achievement March 2024**	**Achievement March 2025**	**Comments**
International partnerships created/maintained	6	6	

Local partnerships created or maintained	5	5	
SFA 6: Strengthen the NCST institutional programming			
Results area	**Programme Target April 2024**	**Achieved March 2025**	**Comments**
NCST strategic document finalized	1	1 (100%)	The Board approved an interim NCST Strategic Planning Document in December 2024
NCST monitoring and evaluation framework updated	1	1 (100%)	NCST was developed and finalized in line with SPD
Development of STI policies supported	3	3 (100%)	NCST continues to support NSTIP 2025
African Science Technology and Innovation Indicators Initiative (ASTIII)	2	2 (100%)	Publication of African Innovation Outlook and Collection of Business Innovation Survey data

Conclusion

As NCST continues to drive innovation and research for national development, the focus will be on deepening partnerships, scaling up research funding, enhancing technology commercialization, and integrating digital innovations into its operations. The Commission will continue working towards a knowledge-based economy by aligning its efforts with national and regional development priorities including Malawi 2063, STISA-2034 and the AU-agenda 2063.

With a strong foundation in place, NCST is well-positioned to drive transformative change in the coming years. The Commission expresses its gratitude to all stakeholders, government agencies, researchers, and development partners for their continued support in advancing STI for sustainable development.

NCST Board of Commissioners

Prof. David Mkwambisi, Chairman

Mrs. Margret Shirley Dzoole, Commissioner

Dr Cecilia Maliwichi-Nyirenda, Commissioner

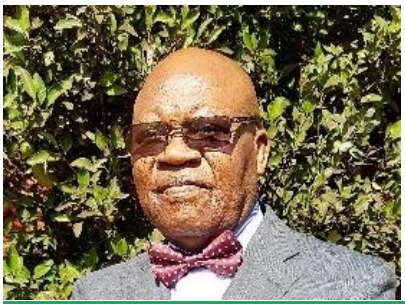
Prof. Limbikani Matumba, Commissioner

Prof. Ken Maleta, Commissioner

Dr. Elizabeth Meke, Commissioner

Prof. Cosmo Ngongondo, Commissioner

Prof. Elias Kaphesi, Commissioner



Mr. Enock Daniel Alfred Chibwana, Commissioner

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The NCST plays a vital role in supporting, promoting, coordinating, and regulating STI to drive socio-economic development in Malawi. As the principal advisory body on STI matters, NCST works closely with government agencies, academic institutions, private sector stakeholders, and international partners to create an enabling environment for scientific research, technological advancement, and innovation-driven growth.

This 2024/25 Annual Report provides a comprehensive overview of NCST's activities, achievements, and challenges over the past financial year. It highlights key initiatives undertaken in research, science, technology and innovation development; technology transfer and commercialization; resource mobilization, Capacity building and policy development. Additionally, the report outlines NCST's contributions to national and regional STI frameworks, including National Science Technology and Innovation Policy and the African Union's Science, Technology, and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2034).

The report also reflects on lessons learned, areas for improvement, and strategic priorities for the next financial year. As NCST continues to drive the STI agenda, its commitment remains steadfast in fostering innovation, strengthening research capacity, and ensuring that science and technology contribute meaningfully to national development.

Through this report, NCST reaffirms its commitment to the advancement of a knowledge-based economy and invites continued support and collaboration with stakeholders to harness the full potential of STI for sustainable growth in Malawi.

2.0 NCST 2024/2025 SCOPE OF WORK

The NCST 2024/2025 scope of work is derived from its six (6) strategic focus areas namely:

- Intensify the promotion, support, coordination and regulation of research, science, technology and innovation.
- Grow the financial muscle of the Commission by strengthening income generation and financial management towards self-reliance.
- Build NCST staff capacity and a critical mass of highly qualified researchers in the country and providing means of retaining them.
- Promote public awareness and understanding of STI, and foster access, sharing and utilization of STI information.
- Strengthen collaboration with local and international partners while exploring and establishing new ones.

- Strengthen the NCST institutional programming.

In the section that follows details of work that was undertaken under each SFA has been discussed.

2.1 SFA 1: Intensify the promotion, support, coordination and regulation of Research, Science, Technology and Innovation (RSTI)

This SFA aims at strengthening the development and implementation of RSTI in a structured and impactful manner. It emphasizes the need for increased advocacy, financial and institutional support, streamlined coordination, and effective regulatory frameworks to drive innovation and scientific advancements. By fostering collaboration among stakeholders, ensuring compliance with national and international standards, and enhancing the visibility of RSTI efforts, this strategic focus area seeks to accelerate socio-economic transformation and sustainable development. The SFA has been implemented through two sub-programs namely: Research, Science and Technology Development; and Technology Transfer, Innovation and Commercialization.

2.1.1 Research, Science and Technology Development subprogram

The Research, Science, and Technology Development Subprogram is designed to promote, support, coordinate and regulate research and development activities in Malawi. Table 2.1 presents the expected outputs for the 2024/2025 Research, Science and Technology Development Subprogram.

Table 2.1 Expected Outputs for the 2024/2025 Research, Science and Technology Development Subprogram

Results Area	Target April 2024	Achieved by March 2025	Comments
Review research studies	170	161 (95%)	73 protocols were reviewed by NCRSH while 88 protocols were reviewed by NHSRC
Approved studies for ethics compliance	60	161 (268%)	The increase is due to the increased number of sensitizations and inspections of approved studies
Undertake regulatory audits	7	5 (71%)	
Award Small Grants	40	33 (83%)	
Research programmes initiated and sustained	4	4 (100%)	In 2024/25 NCST has maintained four on-going programmes

Output 1: Research studies reviewed

A research study review refers to the process of evaluating a research proposal or study to ensure it meets ethical, scientific, and regulatory standards before approval or continuation of the research activities. This review is conducted by an Ethics Committee, in this case the NCRSH and NHSRC. During the reporting period, the Commission planned to review 170 studies and by the end of the period, it reviewed 161 research studies achieving 95% of the target.

Output 2: Ethics Compliance of the Approved Research Studies

Research ethics compliance approval is the official authorization granted to a research study after it has been reviewed for adherence to ethical principles and regulatory guidelines. This approval is typically issued by an Ethics Committee and ensures that the study upholds the rights, safety, and well-being of research participants. In the reporting period 161 studies were approved compared to a target of 60 studies, achieving a 268% approval rate.

Output 3: Regulatory Audit of Research Ethics Committees (REC) conducted

A regulatory audit of a REC is a formal evaluation conducted to assess the committee's compliance with ethical, legal and regulatory requirements in overseeing approved research studies. This process ensures that the REC is functioning effectively and upholding the highest ethical standards in research oversight. In the 2024/25 financial year, the Commission conducted five regulatory audit against a target of seven.

Output 4: Small Grants Supported

One of the key functions of the Commission is to award grants for RSTI activities. In the year under review, a call was put up for the award of small grants. The grants were disbursed according to the areas prescribed in the Small Grants Scheme Procedures and Guidelines, which include Dissertation Grant; Travel Grant; ICT Grant; Research Dissemination Grant; General Event Grant; and Production of Journal Grant and Technology Transfer and Commercialization Grant. Out of the targeted 40 grantees 33 grantees were awarded achieving 83%. The target of 40 grants could not be reached due to low quality application and non-compliance to requirements by some applicants.

Output 5: New Research Programmes Initiated and Sustained

The initiation and sustenance of new research programs play a crucial role in advancing scientific knowledge and addressing societal challenges. This involves the introduction of innovative research initiatives aimed at addressing emerging issues, advancing technology, or solving critical problems within a specific field. In the reporting period we planned and sustained the four (4) on-going research programmes namely: SGCI, AFRA, Biotechnology and Grand Challenges Malawi. In 2024/25 NCST has supported 21 new research and innovation projects through

utilizing donor funding through the SGCI (13) and IAEA (8-AFRA Programme). (See Annex on the list of the projects).

At national level through S&T Fund, NCST supported 2 research projects namely: Business Innovation Survey worth MWK168,000,000 and Facilitating the Transfer of Appropriate Technology in the Republic of Malawi for Community Development through Universities and Research institutions worth MWK62,910,000.

2.1.2 Technology Transfer, Innovation and Commercialization

The Technology Transfer, Innovation and Commercialization subprogram promotes, coordinates, supports and regulates the conduct of technology transfer, innovation and commercialization in Malawi. Table 2.2 presents expected outputs for the 2024/2025 Technology Transfer, Innovation and Commercialization subprogram.

Table 2.2 Expected Outputs for the 2024/2025 Technology Transfer, Innovation and Commercialization subprogram.

Results area	Target April 2024	Achieved March 2025	Comments
Technology Transfer and Commercialization Projects initiated and sustained	2	5 (150%)	Technology transfer offices, Business Innovation Survey, Organo-mineral project; Technology innovation grants, development of national framework for higher education and industry engagement
Development of the National Innovation Portal	1	1 (100%)	

Output 1: Technology Transfer and Commercialization Projects Initiated and Sustained

The Technology Transfer and Commercialization projects are vital initiatives designed to bridge the gap between research and practical, market-ready applications. These projects focus on transferring research findings, technological inventions, and innovations from academic or research institutions into the commercial sector for wider societal and economic impact. In the year under review, the Commission initiated and sustained two projects as detailed below:

i. Establishment of Technology Transfer Office (TTO).

A TTO is a dedicated department or unit within research institutions, universities, or government agencies that is responsible for facilitating the transfer of knowledge, technologies, and innovations developed through research into practical applications in the commercial sector. In the year being reported NCST supported the process of establishing four TTOs at Mzuzu University (MZUNI), Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR), Malawi University of Science and Technology (MUST) and Technical Colleges. Out of the four, MZUNI TTO is fully operational whilst the others are still under development.

a) Mzuzu University TTO

NCST facilitated the establishment of a TTO at Mzuni in accordance with the Procedures and Guidelines for Technology Transfer in the country. The first step was submission of an expression of interest followed by a capacity building exercise for the University staff on the management of a TTO. At the moment the TTO is fully operational making it the second TTO in public universities after MUBAS.

b) Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources

LUANAR submitted an expression of interest to establish a TTO and NCST conducted capacity building exercise on the management and requirements for a TTO. At the moment, LUANAR has developed standard operating procedures, which have been approved by the senate and recruitment of staff is underway.

c) Malawi University of Science and Technology

MUST has also submitted an expression of interest to establish a TTO. Capacity building training was conducted for the University on the management of a TTO at the moment the University is in the process of developing standard operating procedures.

d) Technical Colleges

NCST sensitized Technical Colleges in all the three regions of the country on the need to establish TTOs to manage intellectual property generated in the technical colleges. Following the sensitisation exercises the Ministry of Labour is currently planning to initiate the process of establishing innovation hubs in the technical colleges which will be aligned to NCST's procedures and guidelines for Technology Transfer and Commercialisation.

Technical support to sustain the operations of the TTO at MUBAS

The MUBAS TTO was established in 2023. During the reporting year, NCST has continued to provide technical support to sustain the operations of the TTO at MUBAS. The following are key milestones:

- Processing 21 invention disclosures from which they plan to scale 8 technologies;
- Recruited two new staff members on permanent basis with support from UNDP
- Processing their first patent application through ARIPO.

ii. Facilitating the Transfer of Appropriate Technology in the Republic of Malawi for Community Development through Universities and Research Institutions

NCST with support from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and UNDP are implementing a Project on Facilitating the Transfer of Appropriate Technology in the Republic of Malawi for Community Development through Universities and Research Institution. The main aim of the project is to provide support to Malawi towards addressing development challenges and to contribute to its technological capacity building especially with the use of patent information to conduct research and development. The Project will facilitate and support the building of national capacity in the use of technical and scientific information contained in patent information.

Under this project, the Commission is working with LUANAR to develop an organo-mineral fertilizer that can be commercialized. A prototype for the fertilizer has been developed and is being tested under rain-fed conditions at Chitala in Salima, Bembeke in Dedza, and Mkwinda and Bunda in Lilongwe.

Furthermore, equipment for granulating the fertilizer has been procured and soon the process of granulating the fertilizer will start. A business plan is 70% complete. What is remaining is the actual production costs for the fertilizer.

iii. Technology Innovation Grants.

In January 2024 the Commission awarded technology innovation grants to 8 innovators with small scale businesses to scale up production and commercial distribution of their technologies. The project period was for one year, thus from January 2024 to January 2025. The projects demonstrated varied successes as shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Impact of Technology Innovation Grants

Indicators	Totals Before TIGs	Totals After TIGS	Percentage Change (%)
Annual turnover	11,664,060	39,878,230	242
Employment	20	36	80
Market penetration (units sold)	2,507	10,056	301
Partnerships	2	8	300

iv. Conducting Business Innovation Survey (BIS)

A BIS is a structured assessment conducted to evaluate the level, nature, and impact of innovation within business enterprises. The survey collects data on how business enterprises develop, adopt, and implement new or improved products, processes, services, and business models. It helps policymakers, researchers, and industry leaders understand trends in innovation and identify areas for growth and support. In partnership with National Statistical Office (NSO), NCST conducted the first ever BIS with a target to interview 666 enterprises. The survey was financed through the Science and Technology Fund and Review Fees. Data collection started on 23rd February 2025 and as of 30th March 2025, 70% of the total target questionnaires had been collected.

v. The Malawi National Framework for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Industry Engagement: 2025-2030

In a bid to strengthen the National Innovation System, the Ministry of Education implemented a $7.5 Million USAID funded Transforming Higher Education Systems (THES) project whose aim was to address 13 challenges one of which is to improve policy environment for research and innovations in Malawian Higher Education Institutions. NCST as an apex body in STI leads the implementation of this challenge. In 2024/25 FY, NCST led the process of identifying a Consultant who developed a draft Higher Education Institution (HEI) and Industry Engagement Framework. The Framework is being developed through consultations with various stakeholders particularly Universities, Industries, Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Preliminary findings indicate that the challenges in HEI-Industry engagements include: skills mismatch between the industry and universities; lack of research infrastructure; and absence of long-term capacity building initiatives between universities and industry.

The withdrawal of USAID has derailed progress and NCST and the Ministry of Higher Education are exploring mechanisms to finalise the project.

Output 2: Development of the National Innovation Portal

NCST developed a centralized digital platform to bridge the gap between innovators, researchers, financiers, and industry experts. The portal aligns with the goals of Malawi 2063 Pillar 2, which focuses on industrialization, by providing a virtual marketplace for innovators to showcase their work, connect with stakeholders, and foster collaborations. The portal, launched on 20th December 2024 provides information to innovators on funding opportunities and collaborators. In addition, funders can easily access bankable innovative solutions. Currently, the NCST has registered 141 innovators in the portal against a target of 120. The platform was developed with financial support from Malawi Government and UNDP.

2.2 SFA 2: Grow the financial muscle of the Commission by strengthening income generation and financial management towards self-reliance

Securing funding is essential for the successful execution of RSTI initiatives in the country. NCST has traditionally depended on Government subvention to run its programs. However, in the wake of the macro-economic shocks that the Government of Malawi is facing, it has become imperative for the Commission to intensify its resource mobilization efforts. This section presents some of the achievements NCST has made in growing its financial muscle by focusing on three sources of income namely: Government subvention; Own Generated Revenue and Donor Funding.

Table 2.4 presents expected outputs for this SFA in the 2024/2025 FY.

Table 2.4: Expected Outputs for the 2024/2025 SFA to Grow the financial muscle of the Commission by strengthening income generation and financial management towards self-reliance

Results area	Programme Target April 2024	Achievements March 2025	Comments
Government subvention sustained	MK1.744billion	MK1.544 billion (88%)	During the mid-year there was budget cut so NCST did not receive all the funding.
Own generated revenue increased;	MK167,555,000	MK255,000,000 (152%)	NCST has surpassed the target by K88m
Donor funding enhanced			
Foreign	US$200,000	US$378,000 (189%);	U$328,000 NRF. Only US$75,000 received by March 2025; $57,000 OFAB; $33,563 by WHO-MPEC project
Domestic		MK156.5 million	MK102 million from Bayer Malawi and 54.5 million from UNDP Malawi

i. Government subvention

In the year under review, Government approved a total subvention of MK1,744,386,000. At the end of March, 2025, NCST had received total subvention of MK1,544,250,300 representing 88% of the approved budget. The lower funding is attributed to the mid-year budget cut.

ii. Own Generated Revenue

NCST generates its own revenue mainly through research review fees. Review fees are paid to NCST by researchers following submission of protocols for ethical clearance.

In the year under review NCST had planned to generate MK160 million but managed to generate MK255 million, representing an increase of 59%. The amount of review fees collected is dependent on the number of protocols reviewed and the total budget of a particular research.

iii. Donor Funding

NCST periodically receives donor support to carryout various projects or activities. In the 2024/25 financial year, NCST received financial support from various donor partners as shown in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: **Donor support for different projects**

Donor Partner	Project/Activity Supported In 2024-25	Total Amount Budgeted	Total Amount Received
SGCI	The project grant is (a) To support management of research calls and research in agricultural biotechnology through bilateral joint research proposals call by NCST-Malawi and the Research Council of Zimbabwe for researchers from the two countries; and (b) To support management of research call and research in renewable energy, fisheries and aquaculture through national research proposals call by NCST-Malawi.	MK190 million	MK190 million
NRF	AI and IOT Research	US$328,000	US$ 75,000

OFAB	To facilitate and promote partnerships with public and private sector entities designed to remove barriers that have prevented smallholder farmers in Malawi from gaining access to agricultural technologies that could help achieve food security and reduce poverty and has determined the need to implement advocacy and influencing activities for the promotion of agricultural biotechnology and	USD 50,000	USD 50,000.00
Bayer Malawi	To improve political will and acceptance of GM food crops as one of the tools to support sustainable food and feed production in Malawi; improve general awareness and understanding of biotechnology as a tool for increasing agriculture productivity in Malawi; improve outreach and capacity building efforts for science-based decision-making.	MK102 million	MK102 million
UNDP	Activity 1: Facilitate Transfer of Appropriate Technology for Community development Activity 2: Enhanced Capacity in Conducting Institutional IP Audits	MK54,490,117.50	MK54,490,117.50

2.3 SFA 3: Build Research, Science, Technology and Innovation (RSTI) Capacity at National Level

In this knowledge based economy, it has become important for countries to put in place measures that increase the research capacity of its people. Countries with a strong research base lead in Science, Technology, and Innovation, gaining a competitive edge internationally. In this section, the report outlines some of the achievements made in the SFA. Expected outputs for 2024/2025 RSTI capacity building at national level SFA are provided in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Expected outputs for 2024/2025 for RSTI capacity building at national level SFA

Results area	Target April 2024	Achieved March 2025	Comments
NCST staff trained in work related skills	5	25 (500%)	Training areas include OCS and GEII and Data Collection
Researchers trained in research and innovation management	50	141 (282%)	Training areas include Biotechnology and IP
Girls mentored to take up careers in Science Technology and Innovation	55	310 (563%)	Girls were mentored in 4 different schools targeting form 1's and 3's

Output 1: NCST staff trained in work related skills

During the reporting period, NCST undertook internal training for its staff in the following areas:

(i) Online Conference Management Systems: this is a system that has been developed to manage research dissemination processes such as receiving abstracts, assigning reviewers and many others. Being a new system, staff members had to be trained on how the system operates. A total of 10 staff members were trained.

(ii) GEII in Research Management: the main purpose of the training was to equip research managers at NCST on how to incorporate GEII issues in research management. The training took place on 9th January 2025 and 15 staff members were trained.

(iii) Training in Data Collection: NCST organized a physical training of the business innovation questionnaire at Linde Hotel from 26th to 28th September 2024. The purpose of training NCST Staff was to understand an innovation survey questionnaire and how to collect data. Nine (9) people were trained.

NCST had initially targeted to train 5 people in the year under report and the Commission managed to train 25 people.

Output 2: Researchers, Journalists and lawyers trained in Research Science, Technology and innovation

In the year being reported, NCST had planned to train 55 researchers on various aspects of RSTI however by the end of the year, NCST over shoot the target as it had trained 96 various researchers as captured in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7: Researchers, Journalists and lawyers trained in research, Science, Technology and innovation

Area	Target Group	Number Trained
Biotechnology	Lawyers	45
Biotechnology	Journalists	40
Business Plan development for Commercializing IP	Researchers and innovators	23
IP Audit	Researchers and innovators	33

i. Training of Journalists in Biotechnology in Malawi, May, 2024

One of the functions of NCST is to promote public understanding of science and it is in this regard that through support from the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF) through the Open Forum for Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB), NCST facilitated a media training on Biotechnology activities in Malawi. The event was conducted in order to increase the capacity of journalists in science reporting with emphasis on biotechnology. The training was organized in collaboration with LUANAR in May 2024 to clear some misconceptions, and misinformation and ensure accurate reporting on issues of biotechnology. A total of 40 media personnel participated in the training.

ii. Orientation of Lawyers in legal issues on Biotechnology (Science of Biotechnology and Biotechnology litigation), October 2024

NCST supported orientation of lawyers on Science of Biotechnology and Biotechnology litigation, which was conducted in October 2024. This followed a request by the Attorney General's Chambers in the Ministry of Justice to orient lawyers on Biotechnology legal issues, biosafety policies and related issues. Out of the 26 lawyers in the Attorney General Chambers, 13 lawyers were oriented in Phase 1. Whilst the other 11 were trained in the second phase which was conducted in March 2025.

iii. Training on Business Plan Development for Commercializing IP, 4th May 2024, Crossroads Hotel, Lilongwe

NCST facilitated a training on Business Plan development as part of the project on Facilitating the Transfer of Appropriate Technology in the Republic of Malawi for Community Development through Universities and Research Institutions. The training aimed at equipping researchers, innovators, and entrepreneurs with the necessary skills to develop strong business plans to successfully commercialize their intellectual property (IP). NCST managed to train 23 researchers from various institutions against the target of 27 as some invitees did not manage to attend.

iv. Capacity Building on Intellectual Property (IP) Audit for Research Institutions

An IP Audit is a systematic review of a company's or institution's intellectual property assets and related processes. It helps organizations to identify, evaluate, and manage their IP to maximize value, ensure legal protection, and mitigate risks. NCST implemented a capacity building workshop for research institutions on how to conduct an IP Audit.

The capacity building workshop was conducted with financial support from Scinnovent Centre (Kenya), UNDP Malawi and NCST's own resources. A total of 33 participants were trained against the target of 36 from 10 research institutions namely: MUST, MZUNI, UNIMA, MLW, MUBAS, ABC, UNILIA, KUHES, LUANAR and TRF.

Further to the capacity building initiative, a pilot IP audit exercise was initiated at MUBAS which reviewed 300 theses/dissertations (from 2014 to 2024) with the intention to examine and identify valuable IP assets worth protecting and commercializing. NCST expects to receive a final report in 2025/26 financial year.

Output 3: Girls mentored to take up careers in Science Technology and Innovation

One of functions of NCST is to create science and technology awareness at the political and other levels of society and thereby obtain their commitment towards the value of science and technology as integral parts of national development strategies and implementing programmes that aim at promoting public understanding and inculcating a science and technology culture among the public.

Based on this, NCST organized career/mentoring sessions, in various secondary schools to encourage and motivate girls to take up science subjects as one way of minimizing gender bias and de-mystify science in the country and achieve the Malawi 2063.

The primary aim of the girls' mentoring sessions is to inspire and support young girls to pursue careers in STI. A summary of the girls mentored per each school is provided in Table 2.8

Table 2.8: Summary of the girls mentored.

School	District	Form	Number of students
Umbwi Secondary School	Dedza	1 & 3	100
Sadzi CDSS	Zomba	1 & 3	50
Liwonde CDSS	Machinga	1 & 3	100
Mtangatanga CDSS	Mzimba	1& 3	60
Total			**310**

2.4 SFA 4: Promote public awareness and understanding of STI, and foster access, sharing and utilization of STI information

In the 2024/25 financial year, NCST continued its efforts aimed at increasing public awareness and understanding of STI and ensuring that STI-related information is easily accessible, shared effectively, and used for practical purposes. Expected outputs for this SFA are presented in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9: Expected Outputs for 2024/2025 for Promote public awareness and understanding of STI, and foster access, sharing and utilization of STI information Strategic Focus Area

Results area	Target April 2024	Achieved March 2025	Comments
Public lectures on Biotechnology	4	2 (50%)	Limited resources affected the implementation
Seeing is Believing (Field Day) by different stakeholders	130 people from different institutions	80 people from different institutions (61%)	Some people did not turn up despite being invited
IEC materials produced and disseminated	500	971 (194%)	Launch of Innovation Portal contributed to the increase
STI databases available and accessible to the general public	3	2 (66%)	Women in STI, Innovation database and Lab Equipment
Science journalists, researchers and innovators awards conducted	2	3 (133%)	OFAB; NSTI Fair; Community STI Fair

Output 1: Public Lectures on Biotechnology, April and May 2024

The Commission in collaboration with the UNIMA, MZUNI and LUANAR conducted public lectures at University of Malawi and Mzuzu University in April and May 2024, respectively. The public lectures were conducted in order to raise awareness and clear misconceptions and dis-information on biotechnology issues.

The public lectures were participated by 120 members of staff and students. 50 participants attended public lectures at UNIMA while 70 participated at MZUNI.

Output 2: Seeing is believing (Field Days) by different stakeholders.

With support from BAYER Malawi, NCST and LUANAR are collaborating on a programme that is conducting Confined Field Trial (CFT) on Genetically Modified (GM) maize at Bunda Campus in Lilongwe. Field days to the CFT site were organised for various stakeholders from 7 March – 20 April 2024. The purpose of the CFT was to provide a clear understanding of the objectives of the GM maize trial as well as get feedback on the progress of the trial. Specifically, the field day aimed at achieving the following:

i) To provide an opportunity to various stakeholders to appreciate GM maize under trial;
ii) To clear dis-information about GM maize;
iii) To demonstrate the potential positive impact of the trials on the economy;
iv) To obtain feedback from stakeholders on the CFT.

The stakeholders that visited the trial site included:

a) Staff and Management of LUANAR;
b) Media fraternity;
c) Members of the cluster Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture;
d) Women's Caucus of Parliament;
e) NBRC members;
f) Staff and Management of NCST;
g) Seed Traders Association of Malawi (STAM) members;
h) Stakeholders in biosafety and biotechnology;
i) Religious leaders;
j) Farmer's groups and community leaders from Dedza and around the trial site.

Output 3: Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material (brochures, magazines, posters etc.) produced and disseminated.

The development and dissemination of IEC materials play a crucial role in enhancing public awareness and knowledge on key issues relating to STI. The materials are designed to provide useful information to diverse audiences, including the general public, policymakers, researchers, and industry. Various material resources such as brochures, flyers, posters, newsletters, digital content, and audiovisual were produced to ensure widespread reach and impact. In the year under review, the Commission planned to produce and disseminate a total of 500 mixed IEC materials and has achieved 971 as presented in Table 2.10. This increase

is attributed to the support from UNDP for the launch of the National Innovation Portal IEC materials.

Table 2.10: Details of the various IEC materials produced

Description	IEC material	Quantity	Distribution channel
Advertisement of National Innovation portal to the general public	Posters	500	Launch of innovation portal
	Banner	1	
	TV advert	2	MBC (24 times) Zodiak (24 times)
Advertisement of Business Innovation Survey	5 minute Video Clip	1	Social media
NCST visibility	NCST Branded shirts	33	Handed to members of staff
	NCST Branded Calendars	400	Delivered to institutions
	NCST Branded diaries	33	Handed to members
	Newsletter	1 (electronic)	Social media
Procurement of video-conferencing equipment under Grand Challenges	Video-Conferencing equipment	1	-

Output 4: STI Databases accessible to the general public

STI databases are tools that provide valuable access to information on Research, Innovations, and technologies. Some of these resources are made available through open-access platforms, government repositories, and institutional digital libraries to ensure that researchers, innovators, technologists, entrepreneurs and policymakers can easily find and utilize relevant information. The S&T Act mandates NCST to document statistical data on STI in Malawi for easy access by the general public. In the year under review, NCST developed 2 against the target of 3 databases.

i. Database of Laboratory Equipment in Malawi

NCST has developed a Database of laboratory equipment that can be accessed on the following link: https://www.ncst.mw/directory/lab_view.php. The purpose of the database is to raise awareness of the laboratory equipment that is available in the various research institutions in the country.

Data was collected from stakeholders with laboratories through online and physical questionnaires. A total of 50 research institutions against the target of 85 have so far submitted their data and appear in the database.

ii. Development of a National Inventory on Women Scientists in Malawi

During the reference year, NCST developed an electronic National Inventory on Women Scientists comprising the following fields of science: Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Physics, Education and Medicine. The e-Inventory provides names, qualifications, affiliation, field of expertise, and contact details of 295 women profiles. It is anticipated that the Inventory will facilitate networking and collaboration among women scientists.

iii. NCST Rebranding and Website Redesign

Still under the Information and Knowledge Management priority area, NCST initiated the process of redesigning and rebranding its website to address challenges of lack of fluidity, inflexibility, scattering of content and making the site more active and appealing. It is anticipated that the new website will provide the following:

- Better user experience and easier navigation.
- Optimization for mobile device access for visitors using smartphones and tablets.

Output 3: Science Journalists, Researchers and Innovators Awards Conducted

In response to one of the functions in the Science and Technology Act, NCST is expected to award outstanding Researchers and Innovators. In the year under review, NCST organised Science Journalists, Researchers, and Innovators Awards to recognize outstanding contributions in science communication, research, and innovation. The awards aim to honor individuals and institutions that have made significant impacts in advancing scientific knowledge, developing groundbreaking innovations, and effectively communicating science to the public. Science journalists are acknowledged for their role in translating complex scientific concepts into accessible information, helping to bridge the gap between researchers and the public. Through these Awards, the country fosters a culture of scientific inquiry, creativity, and public engagement in STI. In 2024/25, the Commission conducted 3 ceremonies against 2 namely: OFAB media awards, NSSS Fair and Kasiya Secondary School Science Fair. The following are the details for each ceremony.

i. Open Forum for Agricultural Biodiversity (OFAB) Media Awards for Africa

NCST in partnership with the AAATF, hosted the 10th edition of the OFAB Africa Media Awards in Lilongwe on 16th December 2024. The OFAB Media Awards (OMAs) are aimed at recognizing exemplary journalism that exhibits best practices in credible science reporting that is crucial to better public understanding and

acceptance of STIs that are needed to transform African agriculture for food security, sustainable development and poverty eradication.

The specific objectives of the Awards are two-fold:

i) to promote excellence in science journalism and appreciate the contribution of journalists in promoting sustainable agricultural technologies particularly agricultural biotechnology.

ii) to reward journalists in promoting constructive dialogue on modern biotechnology through responsible, professional, ethical, and effective reporting.

The OFAB Africa Media Awards contest that culminates from the OFAB-Chapter Awards brings together OFAB country level finalists from which the overall winners are selected in the categories of television, radio and print and online.

The 2024/25 OFAB Africa Media Awards event was graced by Commissioner Professor Elias Kaphesi, who represented the Board Chairperson of NCST. Ms Chaltu Gololcha Miessa from Ethiopia won the 10th OFAB Journalist of the Year award.

ii. 2024/25 National Secondary Schools Science and Innovation Fair, (NSSSIF) Kamuzu Academy

In the 2024/25 financial year NCST supported the organization of the National Secondary School Science Fair that took place from 20th to 22nd October 2024 at Kamuzu Academy, Kasungu. The 2024/25 fair was held under the theme "Harnessing Science for Sustainable Development: Shaping Malawi's Future Towards 2063 and Beyond." The Commission provided a grant worth MK8 million towards the fair. A total of 35 schools participated in the fair and the following were the overall winning projects:

Table 2.11: NSSSIF Results

Number	Name of School	Name of Project
One	Dedza Open Secondary School	DEGOSS Artificial Intelligence
Two	Chayamba Open Secondary School	Cereal Screening Machine
Two	New Hope Academy	Cholera Patient Monitoring System
Four	Namphungo CDSS	Automated Irrigation System
Five	Chigoneka Open CDSS	Water Pump

The category winners received a certificate and cash price amounting to K250,000.00 while the overall winners received a certificate and the following cash prices; First position MWK1,500,000.00, two 2nd Position MWK750,000.00, 3rd Position MWK 600,000.00 and two 4th Position MWK 450,000.00. The winners also received lab equipment support for their schools amounting to MWK300,000.00 from Lab Enterprises.

iii. Award 3: Kasiya Secondary Schools Science Fair in Kasiya, Lilongwe

NCST in partnership with the Ministry of Education through the Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI) and the Sovereign Services Limited (SSL) organized the first ever Secondary Schools Science, Technology and Innovation Fair for schools around Kasiya project intervention area on 28th February, 2025. The fair was financed by SSL under their Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative. The objective of the fair was to promote STI among secondary schools around the Kasiya project area. Dr. Rachel Chimbwete Phiri, Secretary for Basic and Secondary Education was the Guest of Honour.

The four community day secondary schools that participated in the fair include Kampudzama, Kasiya, Kabudula and Kamzimbi and exhibited technologies and innovations that demonstrated science in practice. Table 2.12. shows a list of the four best technologies that were awarded in order of merit.

Table 2.12: A list of the four best technologies that were awarded

Name of School	Project title	Position	Prize
Kapudzama	Electric bell	1	MWK1,600,000.00
Kasiya	Biogas from organic waste	2	MWK1,400,000.00
Kabudula	Briquettes making	3	MWK1,000,000.00
Kadzimbi	Grinder	4	MWK1,000,000.00

2.5 SFA 5: Strengthen collaboration with local and international partners while exploring and establishing new ones

Strengthening collaboration with local and international partners in RSTI is essential for advancing innovation, knowledge sharing, and capacity building. By fostering strong partnerships with universities, research institutions, industry leaders, and government agencies, the country can enhance its research capabilities, access new technologies and leverage funding opportunities.

International collaborations provide exposure to global best practices, facilitate joint research projects, and enable knowledge transfer, ultimately driving scientific

advancements and technological breakthroughs. At the same time, building strong local networks ensures that research efforts are aligned with national priorities and contribute to sustainable development. Table 2.13 provides a comparison of 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 partnerships for NCST.

Table 2.13: A comparison of 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 partnerships

Results area	Number of Partnerships (2023/2024)	Number of Partnerships (2024/2025)
International Partnerships created/maintained	6	6
Local partnerships created or Maintained	5	5

Output 1: International Partnerships created/maintained

During the reporting period, NCST maintained five international partnerships particularly with the Science Granting Council Initiative (SGCI), Transforming Innovation Policy Consortium (TIPC), Open Forum for Biotechnology (OFAB), Grand Challenges, AUDA-NEPAD and also revived an existing network with the International Science Council (ISC) which supports Academies of Science globally.

The Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI) – Phase II Plus

Malawi through NCST is participating in Phase II plus of SGCI for Sub-Saharan Africa. Her participation builds on Phases I and II of SGCI objective of strengthening capacities of research councils/commissions in sub-Saharan Africa to support research and evidence-based policies that will contribute to socio-economic development. In this phase, NCST received grants amounting to approximately MWK600,000,000 and US$250,000 from IDRC and ACTS respectively, to fund collaborative research projects in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The specific objectives of the project grants are:

(c) To support management of the research call in agricultural biotechnology through bilateral joint research proposals from NCST-Malawi and the Research Council of Zimbabwe (RCZ) for researchers in the two countries; and

(d) To support management of the research call in renewable energy, fisheries and aquaculture through national research proposals by NCST-Malawi.

(e) To strengthen research collaboration with NSTC (Zambia) and RCZ (Zimbabwe) by funding trilateral research projects using AI in Agriculture and Health service delivery to address food insecurity and improve access to health care.

(f) To support climate linked humanitarian crises research interventions at national level.

Additionally, in February, 2025 an M&E exercise showed that implementation of the project activities is on track, however, the following challenges were identified:

a) Devaluation effect of the Malawi Kwacha has caused the rising cost of goods and services thereby affecting the implementation of some project activities;
b) Dry spell for crops such as soybean, cowpea, other legumes beans, pigeon pea planted under rain-fed in the 2023/2024 cropping season, prolonged dry spells negatively affected performance of all crops. Currently, the studies await the analysis of the performance of the crops under the 2024/25 season.
c) The Projects have suffered from the delay in implementation and may need no-cost extension.

Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium (TIPC)

TIPC was initiated in 2016 as a global network with members and partners contributing from Colombia, Spain, UK, Finland, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, Panama, Senegal, South Africa, Botswana, Malawi and Sweden.

Built on core pillars of research, experimentation and learning about the enactment of policies for transformative system change in diverse contexts, TIPC has led to the emergence of regional Hubs in Africa and Latin America and a thriving global Knowledge Community. Malawi is in the TIAH hub which is based at the University of Pretoria.

TIPC is coordinated by the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) at the University of Sussex Business School in partnership with the Joint Research Centre of the Spanish National Research Council, The Polytechnic University of Valencia and the Utrecht University Centre for Global Challenges.

The Ministry of Education through DSTI delegated NCST to join the TIPC network to ensure that Malawi is able to drive innovation for a sustainable future by spearheading a holistic and integrated approach to policymaking. Under the TIPC, members harness the power of systems thinking, recognising that innovation is a complex interplay of actors, components, and contexts within ecosystems. The Consortium brings together policymakers, communicators, researchers, and visionaries to revolutionise the way innovation policy is approached.

Open Forum for Agriculture Biotechnology (OFAB)

In an effort to increase awareness and networking in the field of biotechnology, the AATF has established advocacy forums called OFAB across African countries namely: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda and Nigeria. The platform intends to create an enabling environment for biotechnology research, development, and deployment for the benefit of smallholder farmers in Africa. OFAB also enhances knowledge and awareness on agricultural biotechnology to build understanding of the technology

and inform decision making. The key stakeholders include policy makers, the media, farmers, biosafety regulators, scientists, industry, and consumers. OFAB Malawi Chapter was established on 1st April, 2022 and some of the Malawi Chapter key activities carried out during the reporting period are presented in Table 2.14

Table 2.14: Some of the OFAB Malawi Chapter key activities

Performance Indicator	Annual Target	Achievement % Achievement (as at Reporting month)	% Achievement
One-on-One engagements with key decision makers	6 one-on-one engagements	6 one-on-one engagements have been conducted representing a 100% achievement of the planned meetings.	100%
Development and production of a documentary and short video clips	The target was to produce a biotech documentary to be aired in major TV and Radio stations and 3 short video clips to be used on various social media platforms	The documentary shooting process was done and some of the materials were aired on TV and Radio stations and currently final compilation and editing of the full documentary and the short video clips is underway	80%
capacity building for media personnel in Science reporting with emphasis on Biotechnology	The annual target was to conduct 4 media training sessions with media personnel who have not been engaged and trained in biotech issues across the country.	So far, three training sessions have been conducted reaching out to over 80 media people. Training them on the science behind the technology and biotech progress to date in the country.	80%
Leveraging on Partner's initiatives (Net-mapping exercise) to	Enhancing collaborations with like-minded partners is very important for the	The target is to enhance collaborations with all relevant stakeholders in biotechnology sector. Currently, NCST is	90%

enhance collaborations	success of the chapter. It is therefore the aim of the chapter to leverage on initiatives that partners are implementing in the country in the area of biotechnology.	collaborating with LUANAR, PBS, EAD and Private sector.	

The Malawi Science-Based Outreach and Engagement Program with Bayer

The Malawi Science-Based Outreach and Engagement Program with Bayer is a 2 year's program from 2024/2025 with support from Bayer Malawi to the tune of MWK 400,000,000 aimed at helping the country to communicate effectively and close the information gaps around agricultural biotechnology. Biotechnology needs consistent information sharing platforms so that all the concerned stakeholders can understand the technology and consequently choose innovations based on science amid negative propaganda and disinformation that surrounds the technology. NCST in addition to the "Seeing is Believing (Field Days)" also conducted a number of activities through this program, which included the following:

a) Facilitating Stakeholder's collaboration in carrying out Biotechnology research activities

In an attempt to enhance stakeholder collaboration in conducting biotechnology research as observed during the field days to the trial sites, NCST organized a number of stakeholder engagement meetings in order to generate the stakeholders interest to work with LUANAR in the research trials. The meetings included one-on-one meetings with the Department of Agriculture Research Services (DARS), LUANAR and others. During the meetings, participants were briefed on the GM maize CFTs being conducted at LUANAR and how the various stakeholders can collaborate on the trials. The meetings were conducted from June – July 2024.

b) Scaling and Knowledge Translation: Media interviews for the production of a documentary for Biotechnology activities in Malawi, Southern, Central and Northern region of Malawi, 17 – 20 September 2024

The other activity carried out under the program is the "scaling and knowledge translation" where media interviews for the production of a documentary on Biotechnology activities in Malawi were conducted. The activity aimed at producing a documentary on the Trecepta maize CFT activities at LUANAR and other biotechnology activities taking place in the country. Visits were made to

biotechnology research activities from 17 – 20 September 2024 and the sites visited include the GM cotton growing farmers and communities in Salima, Balaka and Chikwawa; the Banana GM trials in Nkhata bay and the Trecepta maize CFT at LUANAR. Interviews were conducted with researchers, farmers and beneficiary communities.

c) Support to conduct Stakeholder's consultations on the review of Biosafety Act of 2002, Crossroads Hotel, Blantyre, 13 June, 2024,

During the year ended, NCST received a funding request from the Biosafety Registrar at the Malawi Environment Protection Authority (MEPA) to conduct stakeholder consultation meetings. This followed MEPA's plans to revise the Biosafety legal framework, which includes the Biosafety Act of 2002 and its Regulation of 2007. The objectives of the stakeholder consultation meeting were three-fold:

- To share some key findings of the desk review of the biosafety legal framework;
- To provide a platform where stakeholders can share their views to be considered in the revision of the biosafety legislation; and
- To allow for identification of other gaps and get stakeholders recommendations to ensure robust and effective biosafety institutional and legal framework.

The outcomes of the stakeholder consultation meeting include the following:

- A clear understanding of stakeholders on the current Biosafety legal framework; and
- Identifying gaps in the current frameworks which will be addressed by the Revised Biosafety Act.

d) Stakeholder Briefing on the status of Biotechnology in Malawi, Sigelege Hotel, 20 September 2024

NCST together with LUANAR organized a stakeholders' briefing meeting on the status of biotechnology activities in Malawi at Sigelege Hotel on 20 September 2024. The event was organized to inform stakeholders on the different biotechnology activities that are taking place in the country; build their confidence on the safety of biotechnology and its contribution to sustainable agriculture and smallholder farming; provide a platform for open dialogue on the benefits and risks of biotechnology and to have their concerns addressed; and sensitize them on biotechnology to minimize any potential impact of disinformation on its adoption for the benefit of smallholder farmers.

Stakeholders included participants from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Homeland and Security, DARS, CAMA, NPC, LUANAR, EAD, Cotton Council of Malawi, Quton, Seed Traders Association of Malawi, Farmers Union, MRA and MBS.

African Union Development Agency- New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD) AUDA-NEPAD

AUDA-NEPAD is a continental organization that plays a key role in promoting economic development, integration, and cooperation in Africa.
NCST collaborates with AUDA-NEPAD in many of its programmes of action under the African Union Commission umbrella to.

(i) Mobilize resources: AUDA-NEPAD mobilizes resources, including financial, technical, and human resources, to support African development. It supported NCST in 2023 to establish the Grand Challenges Malawi Initiative which was launched by the Minister of Education at BICC.
(ii) To synthesize the R&D and Innovation indicators since NCST is the national focal point in the African Science Technology and Innovation Indicators (ASTII) Initiative.
(iii) To implement the activities of the AU-EU Innovation Agenda since NCST is the national focal point for the partnership in Malawi.

International Science Council (ISC)
The ISC is a global organization that unites scientific bodies across the natural and social sciences. Formed in 2018, the ISC is the result of a merger between the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Social Science Council (ISSC) whose mission is to act as the global voice for science, promoting science as a global public good. To achieve this, the organization convenes and mobilizes the international scientific community on issues of major scientific and public importance. The ISC focuses on three key areas:

(i) Stimulating and supporting international scientific research: The ISC supports international scientific research and scholarships, communicating science relevant to international policy issues.
(ii) Promoting science's contribution to major issues: The organization promotes the ability of science to contribute to major global challenges.
(iii) Defending the free and responsible practice of science: The ISC defends the free and responsible practice of science, ensuring that scientific research is conducted in an ethical and responsible manner [3].

NCST was invited to attend the ISC Annual General Meeting that was held in Oman in January 2025 and was joined by Professor Adamson Muula, one of the Executive Directors (Board member) of the Malawi Academy of Sciences. The newly established Academy of Sciences is being hosted by NCST and during the year in review, NCST and the Academy worked collaboratively to develop a Strategic Plan for the Academy.

Output 2: Local partnerships created/maintained

In the 2024/25 NCST maintained its partnership with the following organizations in relation to supporting the National Secondary Schools Science Fair:

1. Press Trust
2. Malawi Bureau of Standards,
3. Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI),
4. Department of Innovation and Creativity
5. ICT association of Malawi and Malawi Library Association.

Under the Mvera Innovation City project led by Mvera Development Cooperation, NCST is among the three anchor tenants who are also in the Board of directors of the Cooperation. The Innovation City is a special economic zone that will be driven by STI to support the economic transformation of Malawi. The other anchor tenants are MACRA and MDF. The Commission is now planning to review the Business Plan for the multipurpose STI infrastructure which will be under the Innovation City in 2025/26.

SFA 6: Strengthen the NCST institutional programming

Strengthening NCST institutional programming is essential for fostering innovation, research, and sustainable development. By enhancing the framework for strategic planning, resource allocation, and inter-institutional collaboration, NCST can create a more robust and effective scientific ecosystem. Details of the expected outputs from this SFA are provided in Table 2.15

Table 2.15: Details of the expected outputs from the SFA on strengthening of the NCST institutional programming

Results area	Target April 2024	Achieved March 2025	Comments
NCST strategic document finalized	1	1	The Board approved NCST SPD in December, 2024.
NCST monitoring and evaluation framework updated	1	1	NCST was developed and finalized in line with SPD
Development of STI policies supported	3	3	NCST continues to support NSTIP 2025
African Science Technology and Innovation Indicators Initiative (ASTIII)	2	2 (100%)	Publication of African Innovation Outlook and Collection of Business Innovation Survey data

Output 1: NCST Strategic Documents Finalized

During the 2024/25 financial year, NCST initiated the development of a Strategic Planning Document (SPD). Serving as a transitional framework, the SPD was developed to guide NCST's programming while awaiting the formulation of a comprehensive strategic plan in 2025/26.

Output 2: NCST Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Updated

With technical assistance from Evidence for Policy (Evi-Pol) under the SGCI network, NCST initiated the process of updating its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework. This effort was essential for enhancing NCST's capacity to efficiently monitor and track key indicators for development related to RSTI in the country. The improved framework will enhance reporting obligations to both local and international organizations.

Output 3: Development of STI Policies and Strategies for Malawi Supported.

In the 2024/25 financial year, NCST continued to support the development of various strategies and policies both nationally and regionally aimed at providing a conducive environment for STI. They include the following:

- **Development of the Science Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA 2034) Implementation Plan.**

In partnership with the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), NCST, one of the 18 African countries within the SGCI, was invited to contribute to the drafting of the phased implementation plan for STISA-2034. This plan aims to outline key activities that will guide the gradual execution of STISA-2034. Once finalized, the plan is expected to be adopted by African Union member states to facilitate the strategy's implementation. STISA-2034 serves as the AU's long-term framework for leveraging science, technology, and innovation (STI) to drive economic and social transformation across Africa.

- **Reviewing the National Science and Technology Policy 2002**

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education and UNESCO, NCST supported the review of the 2002 National Science and Technology Policy. The revised policy introduces enhanced policy statements that emphasize innovation, an aspect that was less prominent in the previous version. Stakeholder consultations on the policy have now been completed, and the policy is set to be submitted to the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) in March 2025 after incorporating final inputs from key Ministries and Departments. The OPC will oversee the final steps outlined in the road map, with the policy awaiting discussion at the cabinet level.

- **Development of Science and Technology Licensing Regulations**

As part of its governance and coordination strategy, NCST initiated the development of STI Regulations in line with its regulatory role in Malawi's STI sector. This effort aims to enforce the provisions of the S&T Act and ensure national-level compliance with STI requirements. Section 50 of the Act grants the Minister responsible for Science and Technology the authority to develop these regulations. The STI Order paper was developed and gazetted. Currently the Ministry of Justice is working on incorporation of application forms, and licensing fees for the prescribed activities.

- **Development of a Malawi National Framework for Higher Education Institutions and Industry Engagement**

The need for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) such as universities, colleges and vocational and professional training institutions in Malawi to develop and commercialize their research innovations has existed over time. While universities in other regions of the world have leveraged on partnerships with the industry to promote research development and innovations, the level of engagement in Malawi has remained low. On this premise, the Ministry of Education's priority actions as elaborated in the National Education Sector Investment Plan 2020–2030 Implementation Plan provides guidance for the HEIs-Industry Collaboration (HEIIC).

To facilitate the development of a functional and impactful engagement between HEIs and industry, there is a need for the National Framework to guide HEIs as they develop their own engagement frameworks or policies. A draft National Framework was developed with some remaining stages to address the need for more engagement with the private sector gap. Once completed, the National framework for HEI–industry engagement will help HEIs to promote the commercialization of their research and innovation outputs, which is a key for attaining aspirations as encapsulated in the Malawi 2063 agenda (GoM, 2023); develop and offer relevance of academic programmes to the needs of the industry and the labor market and enhance employability of their graduates in line with the aspirations of the Malawi 2063. NCST and the Ministry of Higher Education will ensure that all remaining tasks are taken care of in the next phases before it is submitted for validation.

Output 4: African Science Technology and Innovation Indicators Initiative (ASTIII)

Under the AUDA-NEPAD ASTIII, NCST periodically collects data for Research and Development and Innovation Indicators. In the year 2024/25, NCST initiated a Business Innovation Survey as reported under SFA 1. In addition, NCST has contributed data from the R&D survey of 2019 towards the publication of the AU-African Innovation Outlook 4.

4.0 FINANCIAL REPORT

4.1 Income as at 31st March 2025

In the reporting period NCST generated a total income of MWK 2,525,997,552. This represented a decrease of 14% from the total income generated in 2023/2024 FY of MWK 2,957,349,855.

4.2 Financial Expenditure as at 31st March, 2025.

The total expenditure recorded by the end of the year 2024/25 was MWK 2,630,983,632 from MWK 2,466,865,970 in 2023/24 FY an increase of 6%. This increase is mainly due to the capital costs that were incurred for procuring a vehicle in 2024, and also the high inflation that affected the cost of accessing routine services such as vehicle maintenance costs.

4.3 Deficit/Surplus as at 31st March, 2025

The total deficit as at 31st March 2025 was MWK 104,986,080. Comparing to 2023/24 FY, NCST had a surplus of MWK 490,483,885 by 31st March, 2024.

4.3 Unaudited Financial Statements

(A) Unaudited Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 MK	2024 MK
Income			
Subvention and own collection	16(a & b), 18	1,978,139,637	1,767,138,524
Project income	17,19-24	547,057,915	1,188,914,869
Interest received	24 &25	800,000	1,296,462
Sub Total income		**2,525,997,552**	**2,957,349,855**
Other comprehensive income			
Total income		**2,525,997,552**	**2,957,349,855**
Expenditure			
Staff expenses	11	545,725,118	349,227,123
Operational expenses	12	949,259,527	979,999,337
Board Expenses	13	111,290,765	39,444,148
Bank and finance			

charges	14	1,796,678	2,028,749
Project Expenses	15	1,022,911,544	1,096,166,612
Total expenditure		**2,630,983,632**	**2,466,865,970**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		**(104,986,080)**	**490,483,885**

(b) STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Note	2025 MK	2024 MK
ASSETS			
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	4	238,098,273	151,808,177
Total non-current assets		**238,098,273**	**151,808,177**
Current assets			
Inventory	5	20,259,680	13,069,350
Trade and other receivables	6	108,883,309	37,303,862
Cash and cash equivalents	7	386,922,235	376,569,939
Total current assets		516,065,224	426,943,150
Total assets		754,163,497	578,751,327
Capital Funds	8	88,793,410	88,793,410
Accummulated Funds	9	211,232,803	806,702,768
Total funds		300,026,213	895,496,178

Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	10	85,234,297	11,351,032
Total current liabilities		85,234,297	11,351,032
Total funds and liabilities		385,260,510	906,847,210

(c) CASHFLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Item	2025 MK	2024 MK
Cash outflow from operating activities		
Surplus/Deficit for the year	(104,986,080)	490,483,885
Depreciation of non-current assets	49,799,947	49,799,947
Loss on disposal of non-current assets	-	-
Interest received	(1,335,222)	(1,025,222)
Disposal of non-current assets	(5,411,000)	-
	(61,932,355)	539,258,610
Movement in working capital		
Increase/{decrease) in inventories	(7,190,330)	-
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other receivables	-	-
Increase(decrease) in trade and other payables	73,327,419	(19,654,815)
Net cash generated from operating activities	4,204,735	519,603,795
Investing activities		
Purchase of property, plant & equipment	(126,137,256)	(39,847,160)
Disposal proceeds	5,411,000	-
Interest received		1,025,222

	1,335,222	
Net Cashflows investing activities	(119,391,034)	(38,821,938)
Financing activities		
Increase(decrease) in accumulated Fund		
Net Cashflow Financing activities	-	-
Net increase in cash & cash equivalents	(115,186,299)	480,781,857
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial period	224,909,468	224,909,468
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial period (Refer to note 7)	109,723,169	705,691,325

5.0 Challenges

In the year 2024-25 NCST faced several challenges. The table below lists the different challenges and the actions being undertaken or recommended to address the challenge.

Challenges faced by the Commission	Action Being Taken/to be Taken
1. Inadequate staffing levels	Recruitment of additional staff members was initiated
2. Old fleet of motor vehicles	Need to procure additional vehicles for new Directors and also for field work for staff
3. Salary for staff is less competitive and too much below the threshold levels	The Board approved new salaries but they are yet to be implemented
4. Lack of adequate incentives to attract highly skilled labour	Revise the conditions of service
5. Weak visibility	Modernizing, Improving communication systems and strategies

6.0 CONCLUSION

NCST has made significant strides over the past year in advancing research, innovation, and policy development to strengthen the national science and technology landscape. Through research and technology grants, strategic partnerships, policy reviews, and capacity-building initiatives, NCST has reinforced its commitment to fostering a knowledge-driven economy.

Key achievements include the award of research and technology transfer grants through SGCI and S&T Fund; improved own-income generation beating the target by 67%; establishment of a TTO at MZUNI; revision of the National Science and Technology Policy; initiation of a first ever Business Innovation Survey; contributions to the STISA-2034 implementation plan; and the development of a robust M and E framework. These efforts align with both national development priorities and regional frameworks aimed at leveraging science, technology, and innovation for sustainable growth.

As we look ahead, NCST remains dedicated to enhancing collaboration with stakeholders, driving impactful research initiatives, and ensuring that science, technology and innovation continue to play a pivotal role in national development. With a strong foundation established, the Commission is well-positioned to build on its successes and further contribute to the nation's progress in the coming year.

We extend our gratitude to all partners, government agencies, and stakeholders for their continued support and commitment to advancing science, technology, and innovation for national development.

ANNEX 1a: RESEARCH PROJECTS

1	Confined field trials for GM Maize	Bayer – Malawi
2	SGCI Phase II Plus	SGCI
3	Research and Innovation Management (RIM)	ACTS
4	Management of Collaborative Research and Innovation Grants in Rwanda and Malawi	NRF

1b: PROJECT TITLES FOR SELECTED FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS

ID	Project Titles	Funder
1	Out-scaling of Improved Fish Processing Technologies	SGCI
2	Promoting small-scale cage aquaculture in Likoma	SGCI
3	Evaluation of Symbiotic Efficiency and Competitiveness of Indigenous Rhizobia and Mycorrhiza Strains for use as Inoculants on Food and Forage legumes	SGCI
4	Developing and Upscaling Microbial Consortia-based Biofertilisers in Zimbabwe and Malawi	SGCI
5	Alternative Sustainable Renewable Biomass for Tobacco Curing and Clean Cooking in Malawi: An Assessment of Fuel Quality and Performance	SGCI
6	Developing a Mobile Solar Powered Battery Energy Storage System for Power Backup of Milk Cooling Facilities in Thyolo District	SGCI
7	Functionalization of Black Soldier fly Frass Hermetia illucens (Diptera: Stratiomyidae), rice husk biochar and coffee ground mixture as sustainable organic fertilizer for improving soil health and agricultural productivity in Malawi and Zimbabwe	SGCI
8	Climate Smart Sanitation Infrastructure (CSSI)	ACTS/SGCI
9	Sustainable Urban Sanitation and drainage Systems (SUSTAIN)	ACTS/SGCI
10	Leveraging Artificial Intelligence for Optimal Livestock Security and Productivity (LAI4SEP)	ACTS/SGCI
11	Two-Sided Artificial Intelligence Risk Predictive Model for Early Identification of High-Risk Antenatal Mothers	ACTS/SGCI
12	Scaling Artificial insemination in Goats and Chickens	ACTS/SGCI
13	Organo-Mineral Fertilizer Appropriate Technology	NCST
14	Confined Field Trial (CFT) for GM Maize	Bayer-Malawi

Annex 2: Pictorial Focus of the Activities conducted in the 2024/25 FY.

Research, Technology and Innovation development and management.

LUANAR is undertaking confined field trials of GMO maize to boost agricultural productivity and food security. Additionally, with support from WIPO and UNDP, NCST is conducting Organo-mineral fertilizer production at LUANAR for improved fertilizer production and increased crop yields. Figures 1–4 illustrate stakeholder field visits to the GM maize fields and Organo-Mineral fertiliser prototypes and Maize trial

Figure 1: The Vice-Chancellor of LUANAR (Front left) and the leader of Women Caucus in Parliament who led the Members of Parliament appreciating Bt Maize trials at LUANAR.

Figure 2: Farming communities from Lilongwe being sensitized by LUANAR Scientists on GM Maize at the University Campus.

Figure 3: Different Organo-Mineral Fertiliser prototypes undergoing confined trials at LUANAR

Figure 4: Part of the Maize Trial lab using Organo-Mineral Fertiliser at LUANAR

Science Granting Council Initiative Research Projects:

Malawi, through NCST is participating in SGCI Phase II Plus, supporting projects that apply AI to enhance livestock productivity and introduced cage capture techniques for fish farmers in Likoma. Figures 5-7 shows highlights of these projects from benefiting farmers.

Figure 5: The trainer from LUANAR demonstrating artificial insemination in goats during a farmers training organised by LUANAR

Figure 6: Part of the farmers in Lilongwe who participated in the training of artificial insemination to improve livestock productivity organised by LUANAR

Figure 7: The Fish cage installed at Likoma Island where farmers are benefiting improved fish catch and production.

Technology Transfer and Commercialization

NCST developed and launched the National Innovation Portal (NIP) with support from UNDP and the Government of Malawi through the Science and Technology Fund. NCST also conducted Capacity building workshops where research institutions were trained on IP and IP audit. Figures 8 and 9 illustrates these activities.

Figure 8: Former Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Education (2nd left) and Lilongwe City Council Mayor (2nd Right) cutting the ribbon during the innovation portal launch while NCST Board Chair (1st left) and Deputy Resident Representative for UNDP in Malawi (1st right) looks on.

Figure 9: NCST Staff and stakeholders during a training in Intellectual Property Audit in the Southern region of Malawi**.**

Science, Technology and Innovation Governance:

Malawi, represented by Hon. Madalitso Wirima-Kambauwa MP, was nominated Chairperson of the STC-EST for 2025–2027 term. NCST Board of Commissioners provided guidance on the review of the National Science and Technology Policy of 2002. Figures 10-11 illustrates pictures from these events.

Figure 10: Hon. Madalitso Wirima-Kambauwa MP, Chair of STC-EST-5.

Figure 11: NCST Board of Commissioners, Staff and Ministry of Education during the review of 2002 National Science and Technology engagement meeting.

NCST participated in the Youth-in-Innovation symposium on AI, public health, and STI measurement in Pretoria and also joined AUDA-NEPAD and other SGCI countries in drafting the phased implementation plan for STISA 2034. Pictures from these events are illustrated in Figures 12 to 13.

Figure 12: NCST Acting Director of Planning and Resource Mobilisation (3rd from right in the front right) in Pretoria at the Youth-in-Innovation symposium

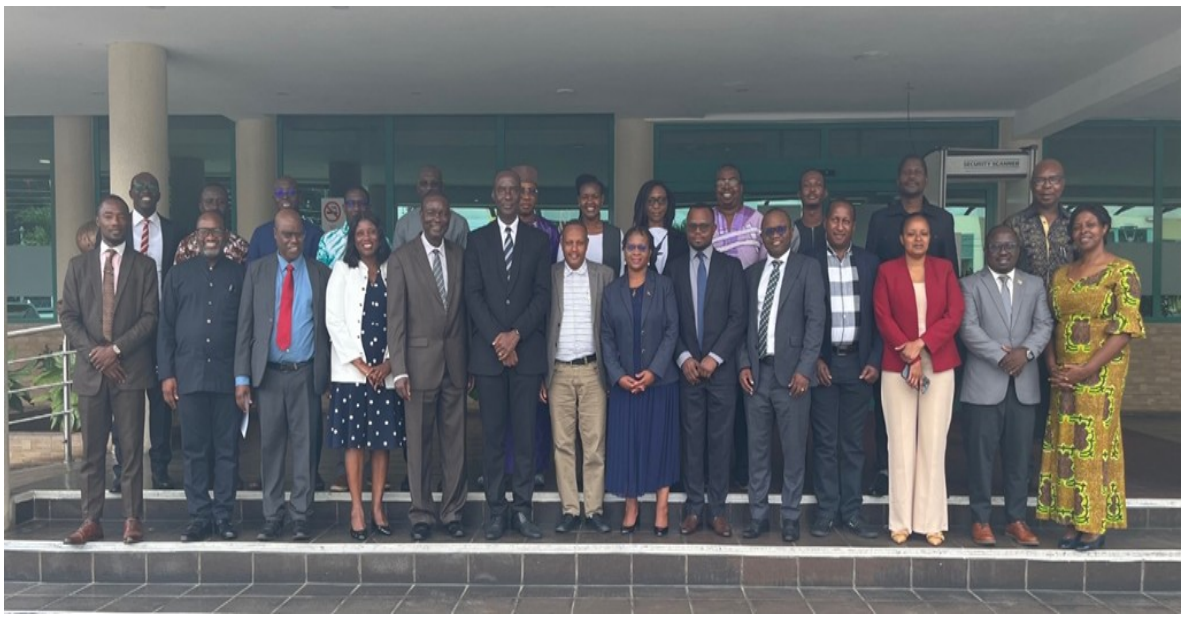


Figure 13: NCST Director General of NCST (7th from right in the front row) with other members from AU in Cape Town discussing the implementation plan of STISA 2034

Annex 3: Staff Exits

7.1 Retired Officers

After reaching the mandatory age of retiring, three officers namely Dr. Sefren Khumula Acting Director of Finance and Administration, Mr Hambani Gausi – Chief Documentation and Information Services Officer and Mr Jamieson Phumisa – Head Driver have retired from the NCST. The Commission therefore wishes the three colleagues a happy retirement and thank them for being instrumental to the growth of NCST through their hard work and commitment to duty.

Dr Khumula, retired in December 2024

Mr Jameson Phumisa retired in December 2024

Mr Hambani Gausi retired in December 2024

7.2 Obituary

Late Fredrick Munthali who passed on in June 2024

His significant contributions to NCST include finalization of the Ethanol Driven Motor Vehicle Research Project. Various research leads on Solid Waste Management and greenhouse quantification studies, Assessment on concrete block manufacturing and development of standards and development of plastic waste inventory for Malawi in collaboration with Environmental Affairs Department among others.

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