

# POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTIONS SUPPORT



Promoting resilient democracies in  
Southern Africa



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## THE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Political Parties and Elections Support is a five-year regional programme that DWF is implementing with the support of USAID (Southern Africa). The programme presently covers Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia and South Africa. The programme recognises that inclusive, issues-based democratic political parties are critical to a successful democratic system. This is because political parties provide the main channel for articulating issues of public concern, linking the public to their government. Thus, political parties that understand the needs of citizens are better positioned to advocate for and/or develop responsive policy positions on issues of public concern. Furthermore, the programme also acknowledges the centrality of elections to democratic governance. Considering that political parties are the only stakeholders that participate in elections with the sole purpose of winning or retaining power (making political parties the key electoral stakeholders), the programme further recognises the importance for political parties to better understand how they can meaningfully and constructively participate in elections as well as advance electoral reforms that contribute to effective democratic governance and electoral integrity. Against this background, the overall goal for Political Parties and Elections Support is to support a trend toward representative multiparty systems with political parties that are responsive to citizens while providing targeted assistance to promote electoral integrity. Through this programme, DWF seeks to promote representative multiparty systems with democratic and responsive political parties, and electoral integrity in selected countries in Southern Africa.

Political Parties and Elections Support is consolidating the gains and successes of a similar regional programme, the Southern Africa Political Parties and Dialogue (SAPP&D) Programme, which DWF concluded in July 2023 and covered Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia.

## POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTIONS SUPPORT'S KEY RESULTS AREAS AND THEIR CORRESPONDING OUTPUTS

Key Result Area	Corresponding outputs
1. Political parties develop responsive evidence-based policy making skills and practices	<p><b>1.1</b> Support and facilitate existence of functional platforms and mechanisms that allow political parties to know and access citizen's needs.</p> <p><b>1.2</b> Support political parties and elected representatives (in the case of Eswatini) to have the capacity and knowledge to develop responsive and evidence-based policies</p> <p><b>1.3</b> Support civil society to have the knowledge and capacity to influence political parties' responsiveness to citizen's needs.</p>
2. Political parties to develop more inclusive party structures and increase party responsiveness to citizens and party members	<p><b>2.1</b> Support political parties to have knowledge and capacity for them to undertake a self-assessment that will allow them to identify relevant reform areas.</p> <p><b>2.2</b> Assist political parties to review, develop and/or implement internal rules, regulations, structures, systems that enhance inclusion and responsiveness.</p>

<p><b>3.</b>Political parties support and implement practices that promote electoral integrity and democratic electoral reforms</p>	<p><b>3.1</b> Assist political parties to have knowledge of relevant international, regional and national frameworks, standards and assessments that promote electoral integrity.</p> <p><b>3.2</b> Support political parties to have capacity, tools and skills to meaningfully champion democratic electoral reforms and electoral integrity.</p>
<p><b>4.</b>Political parties and other relevant stakeholders have comparative knowledge, experiences, and practices on democratic political parties and electoral integrity</p>	<p><b>4.1</b> Develop thematic comparative knowledge and tools that are accessible by political parties and other relevant stakeholders.</p> <p><b>4.2</b> Facilitate regional and cross-party learning events for political parties and other relevant stakeholders.</p> <p><b>4.3</b> Create and maintain a functional digital portal/ platform that will serve as an online resource centre to be accessed by political parties and other relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p><b>5.</b>Transparency, inclusiveness, and competitiveness of electoral processes in selected countries in the region enhanced</p>	<p><b>5.1</b> Enhance capacity and knowledge for electoral stakeholders, including political parties, CSOs and media to exercise oversight and promote inclusion in the electoral processes.</p> <p><b>5.2</b> Assist electoral stakeholders including electoral management bodies, political parties, civil society organisations and relevant public institutions to jointly reflect on and address issues to promote credible and inclusive electoral processes.</p>

<sup>1</sup> While Political Parties and Elections Support has these five outcome areas, it is important to note that interventions under outcome five will be dependent on availability of extra funds that may come about in any of the countries in southern Africa in response to any emerging opportunities and/or challenges.

## OUR IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Building on the experiences of our predecessor programme (the Southern Africa Political Parties and Dialogue Programme), we will continue with our **three-pronged approach** to working with and supporting political parties in the region. Our implementation strategy therefore comprises a **cross-party regional approach**, a **cross-party country specific** approach and a **bilateral (party by party)** approach. A cross party approach (both at regional and country levels) will promote inter-party dialogue and build consensus on and find solutions to developmental and governance issues of common concern, facilitate opportunities for building a healthy, vibrant and competitive political party environment while at the same time promoting peer learning, mutual understanding and allowing for competition that is less fractious and the kind of political contestation that engenders societal trust in political parties. To respond to party specific challenges, we will complement the regional and country level cross-party approaches with a bilateral approach, whereby DWF will directly engage with individual political parties to assist them to reflect on and address their respective unique challenges for them to evolve into better functioning democratic institutions that can effectively contribute to the deepening of democratic governance and development. Underlying this three-pronged strategy is our commitment as DWF to working in an inclusive manner by working with both governing and opposition parties, building trust, maintaining strict non-partisanship, and ensuring transparency in the programmes that we are implementing.



## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTIONS SUPPORT SOUTHERN AFRICA

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### ABOUT DEMOCRACY WORKS FOUNDATION

Democracy Works Foundation (DWF) is a Southern African non-profit company focused on democracy development in the region. We provide tools to build resilient democracies - democracies that are inclusive, equitable, sustainable and consensus-driven. As an independent foundation, that works on the supply and demand side of democracy, providing tools, platforms and content to strengthen democrats, democratic culture and democracy institutions.

DWF strengthens resilient democracies through 5 programmatic impact areas: monitoring democracy, strengthening institutions and systems, training democrats and leaders, strengthening democratic culture as well as working on climate change and governance. With headquarters in South Africa, we operate in the following countries in the Southern Africa region: Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia.

### OUR PROGRAMMES

- [Charter Africa Project](#)
- [CSO Capacity Building for Credible Local Elections \(CAB4CLE\)](#)
- [Climate For Growth – Fostering Inclusive Growth Through Climate Change Champions](#)
- [Putting Youth and Women at the center of Inclusive Economic Governance \(PYWIEG\)](#)
- [Parliamentary Support Program](#)