

DEMOCRACY WORKS FOUNDATION

# CONCEPT NOTE

## WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT ELECTORAL INTEGRITY IN MALAWI

POLITICAL PARTIES AND  
ELECTIONS SUPPORT

14-15 November 2024

Sunbird Lilongwe Hotel  
Malawi



# A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE TO REFLECT ON AND DRAW LESSONS FROM PAST ELECTIONS TO IMPROVE THE 2025 ELECTORAL PROCESS

On 16 September 2025, Malawi will hold her 6th general election since the re-introduction of multiparty democracy. This is a significant milestone in this country's efforts to deepen and consolidate democratic governance, given the centrality of elections to democracy. Elections provide a direct, structured method for citizens to choose their leaders and express their collective will. At their core, elections ensure that political power derives from the consent of the governed, making them vital to the legitimacy of democratic systems. Thus, the upcoming elections are therefore more than just a ritual. These elections will give voice to the political will of Malawians and hence constitute a fundamental bedrock in Malawi's constitutional democracy in which "The authority to exercise the power of State is conditional upon the sustained trust of the people of Malawi and that trust can only be maintained through open, accountable and transparent Government and informed democratic choice" (Constitution of Republic of Malawi, Sec.12(iii)).

As Malawi approaches the 2025 general elections, it is crucial to draw lessons from previous electoral experiences to enhance the integrity and credibility of these elections.

Building on the best practices, success and lessons from past elections, this workshop aims to bring together a broad range of electoral stakeholders—including relevant government agencies, political parties, civil society organisations, the electoral management body as well as development partners to reflect on the lessons that can be drawn from past elections and which-if taken into account- can contribute to the success and credibility of the 2025 electoral process.

The discussions at this multi-stakeholder dialogue will largely be informed by key lessons, best practices and recommendations drawn from international and domestic election observation mission reports as well as other available assessments of the recent elections that have been held in Malawi and the region.

Democracy Works Foundation has organised this dialogue session within its USAID-Southern Africa-funded regional programme: Political Parties and Elections Support (PPES). This is a five-year (November 2023-October 2028)- regional initiative that presently covers Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Malawi. The overall goal of this programme is to support a trend toward representative multiparty systems, ensuring that political parties are responsive to citizens while providing targeted assistance to promote electoral integrity.

**Through this one and half day reflection, we seek to realise the following specific objectives:**

**ANALYZE ELECTORAL INTEGRITY CHALLENGES:**

To identify recurring issues that have compromised electoral integrity in the past and reflect on what can be done differently to proactively manage or respond to such issues to improve the 2025 electoral process.

**IDENTIFY BEST PRACTICES:**

To Identify and reflect on best practices and successes from previous elections to improve the upcoming elections further

**ENHANCE STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION:**

To foster greater cooperation and a sense of shared responsibility among key electoral stakeholders in ensuring the credibility and legitimacy of the 2025 electoral process.

# AGENDA

Time	Topic	Responsible
<b>Day One: 14 November 2024</b>		
<b>OPENING SESSION</b> Facilitated by Ms Fannie Nthakomwa, DWF Deputy Regional Director and Deputy Chief of Party- Political Parties and Elections Support Programme		
08:30 – 09:00	Participants Registration	DWF
09:00-09:30	Introductory remarks	Dr Augustine Magolowondo, DWF Regional Director and Chief of Party – PPES
09:30 – 09:45	Statement of Support – MEC	Justice Annabel Mtalimanja, Chairperson, Malawi Electoral Commission
09:45-10:00	Official Opening Remarks	Ambassador Ron Nkomba, Former Electoral Commissioner and Chairperson of the DWF Malawi Board of Directors
10:00-10:30	Health Break and Group Photo	<b>Moderator</b>
<b>SETTING THE CONTEXT OF THE 2025 ELECTORAL PROCESS</b> Overall Moderator - Mr Wisdom Chimgwede Communications, Visibility and Media Specialist		
10:30-11:00	Learning from the Past to Inform the future: A Critical Analysis of Relevant lessons and recommendations from Previous Election Observation Mission Reports and other assessments	Mr. Ernest Thindwa, Independent Governance Expert/Managing Director, Primacy Consulting
11:00-11:30	Unpacking the Political Economy of the 2025 electoral process	Associate Prof. Boniface Dulani, University of Malawi, School of Law, Economics and Government

Time	Topic	Responsible
11:30-13:00	Plenary	Moderator
13:00- 14:00	Lunch Break	
<b>UNPACKING THE ROLES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESSES</b> <b>Moderator: Mr. Wisdom Chimgwede.</b>		
Breakaway session to further reflect, in clusters, on the key lessons from past elections and the roles that the respective stakeholders can play to contribute to credible 2025 elections: Clusters to focus on:		
14:00-15:30	1. The role of Political Parties and other stakeholders - lead presentations by - Prof. Boniface Dulani, Governance Expert - Ms Fannie Nthakomwa, DWF Rapporteur: Ms Tadala Chumachiyenda, DWF Regional Coordinator	Moderated by : Mr. Mogale Mashiapata, DWF Programme Manager (Malawi, South Africa, Eswatini and South Africa)
	2. The role of Civil Society, media and other stakeholders - lead presentation - Mr. Grey Kalindekafe, Executive Director, NICE (Civil Society) and - Mr. Bright Sonani, Media Expert Rapporteur: Mr. Enea Katundu, Independent Consultant	Moderated by Dr. Augustine Magolowondo, DWF
15:30-15:45	<b>Tea &amp; Coffee Break</b>	
15:45-16:30	Feedback session	Rapporteurs
16:30-16:45	Reflections and Takeaways for Day One	Ambassador Roosevelt Gondwe, Board Member, DWF Malawi
<b>Day Two: 15 November 2024</b>		
<b>TOWARDS 2025: BUILDING A TRANSPARENT, INCLUSIVE AND CREDIBLE ELECTORAL PROCESS</b> <b>Moderator: Mr. Wisdom Chimgwede</b>		
08:30-09:00	Registration	DWF
09:00-09:45	A reflection on the key lesson from past and ongoing electoral processes: What role can the key electoral stakeholders play to ensure credible elections going forward	Mr Andrew Mpesi, Chief Elections Officer, Malawi Electoral Commission
09:45-10:30	Plenary discussion	Moderator
10:30-11:00	<b>Health Break</b>	
11:00 -12:30	<b>Panel Discussion</b>  <b>Towards an inclusive, peaceful and credible electoral process: Key considerations for the</b>	Ms Rehema Patricks, Founder & Executive Director, Section 30/Youth Champion

Time	Topic	Responsible
	promotion of electoral integrity from the perspectives of the youth, political parties and law enforcing agencies	Mr Alex Simenti, Assistant Commissioner of Police/Electoral Security Task Force Member  Dr Augustine Magolowondo (DWF)
12:00-12:30	Concluding Reflections from the Floor	Moderator
12:30-12:45	Vote of Thanks and Closing Remarks	Ms Fannie Nthakomwa, DWF
<b>13:00-14:00</b>	<b>Lunch and End of Programme</b>	

# THANK YOU

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