

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES REPORT FOR JANUARY, 2025



COMPILED BY

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SUBMITTED TO

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1.0 Introduction

This report outlines the summary progress for activities implemented in the month of January, 2025 for the Malawi Electoral Support Project (MESP) and other activities carried out by Institute for Policy Interaction (IPI).

2.0 Conflict Resolution Workshops in Mulanje and Thyolo districts

Institute for Policy Interaction (IPI) organised conflict management training for election stakeholders on political violence in Mulanje and Thyolo districts. The conflict management training for election stakeholders on political violence was organized to equip participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to mitigate and address conflicts arising before, during, and after elections. The training aimed to promote peaceful electoral processes and enhance stakeholders' capacity to handle disputes constructively.

- **Objectives: The main objectives of the training were:**
 - To understand the nature and causes of political violence.
 - To equip stakeholders with conflict resolution and mediation techniques.
 - To enhance collaboration among election stakeholders in preventing and managing election-related violence.
 - To develop strategies for early warning and response mechanisms.
- **Participants:** The training brought together a diverse group of election stakeholders, including:
 - Electoral commission officials
 - Political party representatives
 - Security agencies such as police and National Intelligence Bureau (NIB)
 - Civil society organizations
 - Education
 - Media personnel
 - Community and religious leaders
 - Market and Youth leaders
- **Training Content:** The training covered the following key areas:

- Understanding Political Violence: Definition, types, and causes of election-related conflicts.
- Conflict Resolution Techniques: Mediation, negotiation, and dialogue approaches.
- Legal Frameworks: National laws governing elections and conflict resolution.
- Role of Stakeholders: Responsibilities of different actors in preventing and managing political violence.
- Early Warning and Response Mechanisms: Tools for detecting and addressing potential conflicts before escalation.
- **Methodology:** The training employed a participatory approach, including:
 - Expert-led presentations
 - Group discussions and case studies
 - Question and answer sessions



A cross-section of participants during the election stakeholders training in conflict resolution workshops, including mediation and communication skills in Mulanje.



A cross-section of participants during the election stakeholders training in conflict resolution workshops, including mediation and communication skills in Thyolo.

C. Summary of Participants

District	M	F	Total
Thyolo	37	14	51
Mulanje	33	22	55
			106

D. Expected Results/ Immediate Outcomes

- 106 electoral stakeholders were trained in conflict management on political violence
- Enhanced understanding of political violence and its impact on democratic processes.
- Strengthened collaboration among stakeholders to prevent election-related violence.
- Improved capacity of participants to mediate and resolve conflicts.
- Development of actionable recommendations to ensure peaceful elections.

E. Lessons Learnt and Observations

- Electoral stakeholders are showing willingness to engage political parties' leadership and supporters.
- Electoral stakeholders asked Chichewa version of the training material.

- The majority of the stakeholders were not aware that they become the genesis and conduits of political violence by commission and omission.
- There are already some signs of political violence in some parts of the district that is preventing others to take part in politics.
- The electoral stakeholders have agreed to form a forum that will be used to report early warnings of political violence.
- It was learnt by the stakeholders that MEC does not engage them effectively and timely on MEC important issues.

F. Challenges:

- Challenges and Recommendations Some challenges encountered during the training included:
 - Limited resources to train many electoral stakeholders as agents of change.
 - Limited time to cover all topics in detail.
 - Differences in perspectives among participants, requiring extensive discussions.
 - Some participants came from far and demanded for Daily Subsistence Allowances (DSAs).

G. Recommendations:

- Conduct follow-up sessions to reinforce knowledge and skills.
 - Promote continuous dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders.
 - Implement community sensitization programs to foster peace and non-violence in elections.
 - Train volunteers in conflict management on political violence.
- The conflict management training was a significant step in building the capacity of election stakeholders to address political violence effectively. By equipping participants with the necessary skills and fostering collaboration, the training contributed to promoting a more peaceful and democratic electoral process.