

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES REPORT FOR OCTOBER, 2024



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 October, 2024 for the Malawi Electoral Support Project (MESP) and other activities carried out by Institute for Policy Interaction (IPI).

2.0 Town Hall meeting

Institute for Policy Interaction (IPI) organised Town Hall meeting in Mulanje district. The objective of the meeting was to bring key electoral stakeholder together for familiarisation with the changes in the electoral law and to emphasise the need to follow electoral guidelines to ensure fair and credible in the 2025. In addition, to check a status quo on awareness campaign on new electoral laws, pilot voter registration and preparedness for voter registration and encourage stakeholders to jointly mobilize eligible voters for voter registration.



A cross-section of MPLC, DEST, CSOs, Media, Community, Religious and Market Leaders participants during a Town Hall Meeting in Mulanje district.

The Town Hall Meeting was patronised by 76 participants. The participants were drawn from different electoral stakeholders groupings namely; Multiparty Liaison Committee (MPLC), District Elections Supervisory Team (DEST), National Registration Bureau (NRB), Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), religious institutions, Police, Education institution, youth clubs, and women platforms such Churches, Mosques, Markets, Youth Club meetings, Media, Women groups, Market Leaders and local leaders.

Therefore, engaging them it was very vital to help disseminate electoral management process information to potential voters. Among other issues discussed during the meeting were;

1. To refrain from hate speech, and not to spread unverified information, gossip, and disinformation on social media.
2. Promote greater participation and representation of women, youth and persons with disabilities.
3. The media to report on the electoral and polling process without fear or favour.
4. The CSOs to maintain neutrality, and efficiency in disseminating voter civic education and in election monitoring.
5. To refrain from acts of violence, and vandalism during the campaign and results time.

A. Summary of Participants

District	M	F	Total
Mulanje	51	25	76
Disability	2	1	3

B. Description of an Inclusive Approach Taken

The engagement meeting drew stakeholders namely; Multiparty Liaison Committee (MPLC), District Elections Supervisory Team (DEST), National Registration Bureau (NRB), Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), religious institutions, Police, Education institution, youth clubs, and women platforms such Churches, Mosques, Markets, Youth Clubs, Women groups, Market Leaders, young voters and the first-time voters. The stakeholders represented the concerned and potential voters who matter in the society and have influence in electoral issues.

C. Expected Results/ Immediate Outcomes

- 76 key electoral stakeholders from Multiparty Liaison Committee (MPLC), District Elections Supervisory Team (DEST), National Registration Bureau (NRB), Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), religious institutions, Police, Education institution, youth clubs, and women platforms such

Churches, Mosques, Markets, Youth Clubs, Women groups, Market Leaders, young voters and the first-time voters were engaged and are familiarised with the changes in the electoral law and are able to follow electoral guidelines to ensure fair and credible in the 2025.

- 76 key electoral stakeholders agreed refrain from hate speech, and not to spread unverified information, gossip, and disinformation on social media.
- Electoral stakeholders agreed promote greater participation and representation of women, youth and persons with disabilities.
- The media agreed and were encouraged to report on the electoral and polling process without fear or favour.
- The CSOs present were encouraged and agreed to maintain neutrality, and efficiency in disseminating voter civic education and in election monitoring.
- Youths and political parties agreed and were encouraged to refrain from acts of violence, and vandalism during the campaign and results time.

D. Lessons Learnt and Observations

- The involvement electoral stakeholders from civil society organizations (CSOs), Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC), National Registration Bureau (NRB) religious institution, education institution, youth clubs, community gatherings, first time voters and women from Mulanje was very critical because the participants were very vibrant to unearth some of the very critical issues regarding elections such as;
 - i. MPLC, DEST, CSOs, Religious, Community and Market leaders and other partners threw their weight behind the town hall meeting because they encouraged citizens to participate, ask questions and gets answers right away. Town hall meetings is a good system that can help citizens engaging duty bearers on pertinent issues that need urgent solutions. During the town hall meeting citizens asked burning questions to MEC and NRB to clear the eligibility to voter registration issues surrounding the 2025 general elections.
 - ii. It was learnt that there is misinformation and disinformation regarding to the changes in electoral laws. Many political parties are using propaganda

to their followers. This has left electorates not fully aware of the changes in electoral laws. Stakeholders are willing to help disseminate the electoral information to the potential voters using their platforms.

- It was learnt that majority of stakeholders were not aware that MEC has made a declaration that people will also use the NRB generated slip during voter registration.
- It was also learnt that NRB will be at each and every voter registration centres to verify the cards and slips for the people that may have some problems with their cards for eligibility to register with MEC.
- It was learnt that stakeholders are anticipating a highly contested elections come the 16th September, 2025 due to unclear information from NRB that the institution is not being honest to tell the exact number of people it registered during mass and mop-up exercise registration and how cards have been issued and distributed. This issue is bringing contestation among political parties that feels that there is a hidden agenda from NRB.
- Stakeholders demanded that, there is a need for an independent body to conduct a research to know how many people have National Identification Cards that might help to know how many people are eligible to vote in all regions.

E. Challenges:

- IPI invited a few members of Multiparty Liaison Committee (MPLC), District Elections Supervisory Team (DEST) and a few electoral stakeholders namely; religious, CSOs, PWDs, Youth, Women, markets and local leaders due to inadequate of resources.
- Some participants came from far where transport refunds were not enough with the distances they covered.

I. Recommendations:

- There is a need of engaging of Multiparty Liaison Committee (MPLC), District Elections Supervisory Team (DEST) and a few electoral stakeholders namely; religious, CSOs, PWDs, Youth, Women, markets and local leaders frequently to be appreciating the sequence of electoral events so that No is Left Behind.

- IPI should continue engaging all the stakeholders in the electoral process because of their large following will help to reach out a huge population with electoral messages.
- There is a need to lobby for more funding to reach out potential voters with electoral messages in remotest areas to avoid voter apathy.
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3.0 . Election Stakeholders Meeting

National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) organized electoral stakeholders meeting for Blantyre.

Objective

The meeting aimed to discuss the catchment areas of various stakeholders and provide updates from the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) and the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB).

Key Agreements

Sharing Work Plans: Stakeholders agreed to share their activity work plans to avoid duplication of efforts. This initiative was one of the reasons for forming the WhatsApp group.

Updates from MEC

- Voter registration preparations are complete.
- Civic voter educators for the constituencies have been recruited and have begun work.
- These educators are yet to submit their work plans, which will facilitate ongoing engagement.

ACB Presentation Highlights

The ACB focused on outlining corrupt practices, emphasizing the following:

Examples of Corruption:

- Bribery (Ziphuphu): Involves giving or receiving items to influence another person's behaviour. An example includes distributing hand-outs during campaign periods.

- Action Point: Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) should inform the public that distributing hand-outs is illegal. Reports of such practices can be made to ACB at 113 during working hours.
- Abuse of Power: For instance, if a Member of Parliament or councillor uses development funds for campaign purposes. ACB therefore stressed the importance of mainstreaming this information during civic education and also letting the people know the disadvantages of allowing such people to ascend these positions.

Electoral Fraud:

1. Distribution of hand-outs
2. Bribery of electoral officials
3. Data manipulation
4. Voter suppression

Collaborative Efforts

- Stakeholders agreed to share responsibilities and resources for civic education.
- CSOs are encouraged to collaborate in mobilizing communities, particularly in overlapping operational areas.

Catchment areas for different CSOs

ORG	AREA	STAFF/V
FARSOUND	KAPENI U/R MACHINJIR U/R KUNTAJA U/R	52 Staff/V
HOGWOLF	KAPENI (URBAN) KUNTAJA RURAL	9 staff/V 13 Volunteers
DAXO	T/A MAKATA " RUNDU CIGALU	7 staff - TA SOMBA 13 V
SPT	All T/A	7 staff 10 Volu

IPI	KAPENI & MACHINJIR URBAN	3 staff
NICE	All T/A RURAL & URBAN	3 staff ACEC 27 ZC 33 DCE 260
PEFENAP	All T/A	7 staff 20 Volunteers
SDI	All T/A	7 staff 27 Volunteers

4.0 People Reached During the month of October, by Volunteers

In the month of October, 2024, Institute for Policy Interaction (IPI) through its jingles on radio stations namely Radio Maria, Tuntufye FM and Mzati FM reached 7, 154,000. While through volunteers reached 732,719 people through community awareness campaigns (community gatherings, markets, Churches and Mosques) in the 7 districts namely; Balaka, Blantyre, Chiradzulu, Mulanje, Mwanza, Thyolo and Phalombe. The breakdown of the population and gender reached is stated below

1. Men = 177,023
2. Women= 379,003
3. Youth = 159,066
4. Elderly= 17,627

Among the 732,719, the 79 were persons living with disabilities.



A cross-section of people during the Civic and Voter Education