

### 3.0 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

#### 3.1 Project Approach

The project will be implemented under the Direct Implementation Modality. The project will commence immediately upon approval of the budget and formal signature by the Government of Malawi (GOM), MEC, and UNDP. The key stakeholders are the GOM, MEC, UNDP, the Development Partners, political parties, the CSOs and the media. The GOM has the ultimate responsibility of ensuring free and credible elections in Malawi. MEC is mandated by the constitution of the Republic of Malawi, to conduct such elections. Development Partners will support the efforts of the GOM, in bolstering MEC's capacity to play its constitutional role.

Given its accent on inclusiveness, the project will liaise closely with, firstly, the Malawi Electoral Commission, political parties, civil society organizations, the media and Development Partners. In this regard, the project will provide assistance for the production of campaign materials and delivery of messages through print and electronic media, and supporting the development of party resources and capacity; and the accredited CSOs that will conduct voter education. The project will also support MEC which will engage with MACRA to ensure that the Code of Conduct is adhered to and that the state media is not be biased. Furthermore, the project will ensure regular, monthly reporting to MEC and Development Partners including UNDP, on activities undertaken. Both the media and the CSOs will play a proactive advocacy role to conduct voter education, encourage healthy voter turnout, mobilize newly eligible voters to register and promote voluntary affirmative action by political parties to sponsor increased nomination of women candidates.

As with previous electoral programs, the Government of Malawi will appropriate a national budget for the elections and avail it directly to the MEC. The financial and technical contribution from Development Partners will be coordinated and administered by UNDP in accordance with its corporate procedures which include technical and financial reports at regular intervals throughout the duration of the project. The respective responsibilities of the key players are set out hereunder.

##### 3.1.1 The Government of Malawi

The total budget for the Local Government Elections is estimated at US\$ 21 million. The Malawi Government is committed to contribute about US\$13mil towards the Local Government Elections leaving a balance of US\$8mil of which the Development Partners are willing to contribute about US\$5mil leaving a balance of US\$ 2.9 million. The government will also provide, in kind, support to the process through the use of physical facilities throughout the country including schools, post offices, and community halls as registration centers, polling stations and locations for display of the voters' register.

##### 3.1.2 The Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC)

MEC, as a principal beneficiary of the project, will work closely with UNDP through:

i) **Long Term Technical Assistance Coordinator ( Project Manager)** who will ensure effective communication between MEC and Development Partners, including UNDP, and will manage the short term experts. Located at MEC, the Coordinator /Project Manager will deploy a range of skills to assist MEC across the electoral services and IT fields, and will be recruited as soon as possible once the date of the elections has been announced. He will remain in post after the LGE to support a lessons learnt retreat for MEC Commissioners, staff and all stakeholders, assist in a Strategic Planning exercise to take the Commission from 2011 to completion of the 2014 elections. This Strategic Plan will become the foundation for the development of a Program Support Document (PSD) for the capacity development



activities to be supported by Development Partners, including UNDP between 2011 and 2013. The Project Managers will also manage and support the formulation process.

ii) **1 Short term ICT expert** to provide technical backstopping to MEC's ICT department on operating voter registration system and related computer based electoral management processes (party and candidate management system, results management system and claims and objections management systems).

iii) **1 Short term Capacity Building Expert** to support the training of voter registration teams and poll workers. The consultant will work with staff of MEC to develop plans, strategies and materials to deliver more effective training to these key personnel. The expert will undertake two visits of three to four weeks' duration at dates to be agreed with MEC once the election date has been announced.

iv) **1 Short term VE/VI Expert** to support MEC's planning and materials development, develop the capacity of the CSOs, and design the delivery strategies for voter education. He will work with Civil Society Organizations to develop methodology for evaluation of CSO proposals and a disbursement system for funding made available to assist voter education. Two visits one of six weeks and a second of three, will be made by the expert to the Malawi Electoral Commission<sup>1</sup>.

v) **1 Short Term Constant in Public and Media relations** to support the establishment of the candidates resource centers, establish the media monitoring practice in MEC and develop the MEC's plans and practices for engagement of the national and international media in the run up to the LGE. The consultant is foreseen to have an initial mission of one month and return 4 week prior to the LGE and continue until two weeks after to assist in report writing.

### 3.1.3 The United Nations Development Program

UNDP will be the lead coordinating partner to electoral support for MEC and other stakeholders. Following consultations with the country's other development partners, a trust fund will be established and administered by UNDP to support the LGE process. UNDP's role will include:

- Management of the Trust Fund and oversight of MEC's compliance with the operational and reporting requirements of the Direct Execution
- Coordination of technical support to MEC
- Coordination of related support to other stakeholders including political parties, CSOs, and the media
- Coordination among Development Partners including preparation and dissemination of regular monthly and quarterly reports for their information on project finances and progress achieved
- Provide timely financial and technical reports as outlined in the MoUs with each respective development partners.

To perform the foregoing, UNDP puts in place a Local Government Elections Project Team under the leadership of the Resident Representative. The team comprises the Resident Representative, the Deputy Resident Representative (Program) and Deputy Resident Representative (Operations), head of the Governance Unit and a Program Analyst (Governance) who will be responsible for day to day management of the project. In addition, the team will have a finance specialist who will be responsible for financial planning, budgeting reporting and audit support for the Trust Fund; finance associate who will be assisting with management of daily payments, reconciliations, accounting and administration of Project funds; a program associate who will provide general project management support; a procurement assistant who will be responsible for all the elections procurement function from within UNDP. An

<sup>1</sup> Annexes 4 – 8 are terms of reference for these experts.

international Technical Assistance Coordinator (see 3.1.2) will be stationed at the MEC offices in Blantyre to work directly with the Commission and facilitate communication between MEC and UNDP on implementation of the project. He/ she will be assisted by an Administrative Assistant and be responsible for supervision of teams of technical assistance consultants who will be recruited to work with MEC.

#### **3.1.4 Development Partners**

Development Partners will make timely financial contributions to the project pursuant to their pledges and signed MOUs. Through their participation in the project's management structures, namely, the Elections Task Force and the Donor Elections Trust Fund group, they will be able to monitor progress on preparations towards the elections, and provision of technical and financial resources to MEC and other stakeholders as set out in the project. The following donors have committed to provide financial support to the project through a Trust fund:

#### **3.1.5 Elections Task Force**

The Elections Task Force (ETF) that was constituted during the PPE comprising the MEC, UNDP and development partners supporting elections and electoral reforms in Malawi will continue to provide guidance to the electoral processes on the Local Government Elections. The ETF is currently chaired by the MEC Chairperson who can, however, delegate this responsibility to a fellow Commissioner or the Chief Elections Officer (CEO). The ETF will continue to be the main forum for coordination and joint monitoring of the program. Further, the Ministry of Finance will be co-opted to attend all the ETF meetings.

#### **3.1.6 Trust Fund Donor Group**

The ETF donor members (called the Trust Fund Donor Group) that will be constituted to support the management of the Trust Fund. This group will concentrate on the management and technical aspects of the Trust Fund focusing on issues such as planning and budgeting, financial and technical reports. The group will also conduct preliminary analyses and lay out options for discussion and adoption during the ETF meetings. It may also propose agenda items for the ETF meetings. This Group will be coordinated and chaired by the UNDP Resident Representative and will meet at least one week before each ETF meeting or more frequently, as required.

### **4.0 IMPLEMENTATION MODALITY**

The project will be implemented under the Direct Implementation Modality whereby UNDP becomes directly responsible for procurement of goods and services in accordance with its corporate guidelines. These emphasize transparency, competitive selection of vendors and direct accountability for use of resources. The Direct Implementation Modality places the burden of accountability for all project resources and delivery of project results on UNDP who is also expected to do all the procurements including financial and technical progress reporting. All procurement and recruitment processes will be undertaken by UNDP based on a substantive and documented agreement between MEC and UNDP, especially on the specifications. MEC will be engaged in the selection and procurement panels conducted by UNDP. The need to have direct execution modality for this project is premised on the fact that the Malawi Electoral Commission was micro-assessed as a significant/high risk institution. Accordingly, UNDP will not be able to reimburse on any procurement done by the Malawi Electoral Commission.

### **5.0 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING**

The overarching institution for monitoring implementation of the project will be UNDP in close collaboration with the MEC and the Development Partners.

UNDP will be responsible for producing regular performance reports. The reports will comprise a quarterly technical report, a quarterly financial report, and monthly updates on project issues and



progress to be presented to the monthly meetings of Development Partners. The reports will contain a summary of activities supported by the project, information on progress achieved as well as constraints encountered and action taken to address them. An evaluation of the project will be undertaken in 2011 after completion of the local government elections. The findings of the evaluation will be part of the lessons learnt exercise that will follow the elections and lead to formulation of a long term (2011–2014) Strategic Plan for MEC.

#### **6.0 AUDITING**

The project shall be subject to the internal and external auditing procedures laid down in the Financial Regulations, Rules and directives of UNDP during the first quarter of 2011. UNDP will ensure that all the audit recommendations and action points are duly implemented.

#### **7.0 Project Budget**

The project total estimated cost is at US\$5.4 million, which will be utilized for supporting the Malawi Electoral Commission to conduct credible local government elections with specific attention to updating the voters register, increasing the number of women councilors, and supporting for the procurement of registration and polling materials.

#### **8.0 RISKS**

There are many risks to the to the successful implementation of the project. These risks include (a) environmental or policy related risks like limited time available for the conduct of local government elections; and delayed demarcations of wards which might further cause political tension among the political parties; (b) operational risks such as disenfranchisement of voter due to late registration process; inadequate voter education and voter information which might result into low turnout and lack to understanding of the local government elections; delayed procurement of goods and services, especially registration and polling materials; inadequate polling materials; late printing of ballot papers including errors in the ballot papers; delays in processing election result; and (c) financial risks which include delayed donor contributions to the Trust Fund; inadequate funding for the local government elections; and allegations or procurement mismanagement. ; To mitigate these risks, there is need to monitor, on a regular basis, the implementation of the project through the offline risk logo for the project which is annex 3.

#### **9.0 LEGAL CONTEXT**

This Project Document is the instrument referred to in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Malawi (herein called the Government) and the United Nations Development Program (herein called UNDP) signed on 15th July 1977. The project shall be implemented in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement and in conformity with the general terms and conditions applicable to UNDP assistance. Based on an agreement between the signatories, revisions may be made to the project document to cater for increases in costs due to inflation or as a result of the need for expenditure flexibility.

