

EU Partners

- Government of Malawi
- Statutory Institutions
- Non-Governmental and Community-Based Organisations

Facts & Figures

- The EU allocates €451 million to Malawi under the 10th EDF 2008–2013.
- The promotion of the rule of law and civic education in Malawi is a five-year EU-funded project with a budget of €28 million.
- The civic education component (NICE) is in its third phase since it started as a voters' education project in 1998.
- The rule of law component is in its second phase since it started in 1999
- Beneficiary institutions under the rule of law component are: Ministry of Justice, Judiciary, Parliament, Law Commission, Anti-Corruption Bureau, National Archives, Prison Service, Law Faculty and Malawi Electoral Commission
- NICE has a nation-wide coverage and at least one office in each of the 28 districts in Malawi.



**EU Delegation to
the Republic of
Malawi**

Support to the promotion of the rule of law and civic education in Malawi

"I cannot envisage a situation in this country where we could hold elections without NICE".

Commissioner Nsanja - Malawi Electoral Commission, Lilongwe, August 2006.



Malawi - a young democracy

- Since Malawi's decision to become a multi-party democracy in 1993, all relevant institutions which are needed to safeguard the constitution and the rule of law have been established and are functional. Notably, the Judiciary is to a very high degree independent, and corruption is at a relatively low rate, although it is present in all layers of society and in many institutions.
- An EU Election Observation Mission declared the May 2009 presidential and parliamentary elections in Malawi to have been credible, respecting fundamental freedom of assembly, expression and movement, but failing to fully meet Malawi's commitment to international and regional standards.
- Turnout and understanding of the local government elections in 2000 was low, and local government elections were not held in 2005, as required by the Constitution.
- Less than 10 per cent of Malawians have access to the formal justice sector. The illiteracy rate is 68 per cent and proves to be a major challenge in the process towards the consolidation of democracy.
- Financial support through the Malawi state budget to constitutional institutions in the governance sector remains limited.

EU support to consolidation of democracy in Malawi

- Since 1998, the EU supports the Government of Malawi in its attempt to consolidate governance-related institutions through funding of eight constitutional bodies (see left-hand column).
- During the 1999 presidential and parliamentary elections, a voter education project was established which was then extended and built up as a nation-wide civic and voter education project: National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) Today NICE is one of the actors at the forefront of grassroots democratisation work in Malawi.

MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

EU support to the promotion of the rule of law and civic education

Objectives

- The EU's objective is to contribute to the strengthening of democratic processes and good governance in Malawi.
- The project *Promotion of the rule of law and civic education in Malawi* aims at enhancing good governance in Malawi's political system. This is to be achieved by improved access to justice; improved accountability and transparency in the conduct of public affairs; ensuring the protection of human rights, especially for the most disadvantaged groups; and empowering citizens to exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities.
- The civic education component (NICE), more specifically, aims at:
 - facilitating citizens' participation in democratic decision-making processes at community, district and national level;
 - supporting capacity-building of civil society organisations and their ability to promote citizens' participation in decision-making;
 - increasing public accountability.

What have we achieved so far?

- 163 community-built and community-managed rural libraries have been set up to promote literacy and facilitate access to information. Radio clubs have also been started to raise awareness of current events among the rural population;
- Training of over 6,000 peer educators to inform communities about issues related to democratisation;
- Sound voter education and mobilisation of people to register for and participate in the 2009 presidential and parliamentary elections. Over 200,000 people were reached and over 400 election monitors were trained;
- In the legal sector, a country-wide improvement of the record-management systems has been supported;
- Increased capacity-building for government bodies, as well as national and local civil society organizations in the field of governance;
- Building of a new Law Faculty annex building, to provide legal education to more students, thus producing more legal practitioners for the country.



Keeping the population informed: Launching of NICE Phase III



Community-built and maintained: Dedza rural library