

The Action entails these intertwined enablers: 1) To strengthen efficiency and effectiveness of civil registration services, while safeguarding human rights and data privacy; 2) To increase participation, in particular of women, youth and disadvantaged groups, in democratic processes and 3) To enhance credibility, transparency and management of electoral processes.

The Action includes a significant CSO component working across the three enablers, specifically targeting women, youth and disadvantaged groups increasing participation, uptake and involvement.

The strengthening of civil registration will build on the achievements of the National Registration Bureau (NRB) to develop and roll out the first national civil registration system. The NRB, with support from development partners, has registered 10 million adults for the first time, and provided them with a national ID, empowering them not only with a right of identity but also facilitating access to enjoyment of other rights. This Action will then support NRB in furthering the registration efforts while developing strategic options for the National ID to increasingly become a feature for enhancing e-governance, improving public service delivery and ultimately increasing accountability and transparency across administrative processes in the public sector.

Broad support to civic education and increasing public participation (Enabler 2) will complement the efforts towards an increasingly transparent and accountable public sector. The Action will provide technical support to the Ministry of National Unity (MoNU) to fulfil its mandate as policy holder in this field and specifically in the development and implementation of adequate frameworks for citizens' participation to thrive and develop. The technical support provided to the MoNU will also include the coordination of the work the Action intends to implement on the demand-side.

The Action will in fact also provide support to the National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) to deliver on its core mandate. NICE is a public trust, mandated by the Government for the implementation of all actions concerning national civic education. NICE will be supported to deliver at community level on those key priorities of the MoNU strategic plan that are relevant to the Action. These include voter education, accountability strengthening, human rights enjoyment, mobilisation for citizen participation in decision-making and national development.

Similarly, the technical support hosted by the MoNU will also ensure coherence between the activities implemented by NICE and the work the Action intends to promote, through CSOs, on increased participation of vulnerable categories, focusing in particular on women and youth. Considering that over the past two decades various initiatives have targeted the national level but yielded low return, the Action will focus not only on raising awareness, understanding and support for the target groups to venture into the governance space, but also on the existing contextual and legislative barriers that are impeding their involvement seeking partnerships with local authorities, local sections of political parties and civil society at large. Priority will be given to those districts where lack of participation is more pronounced.

Finally, building on the work conducted under the two other enablers, the Action will support credible, transparent and well-managed electoral processes in preparation to the national election scheduled for September 2025. GoM and the relevant Development Partners (DPs) in the sector have agreed to continue the support provided over the last two electoral cycles via a UN led Basket Fund, building also on the recommendations of a the evaluation of past support, of the EOM 2019 and of a recent UN Needs Assessment mission.

The Action contributes to MIP Priority Area 2: Democratic and Economic Governance. Specific Objective 1, advancing democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Expected result 2.1.1: Inclusive, transparent and credible electoral processes and a pluralist democratic system promoted. The Action aligns to Team Europe Initiative 2 - "Good governance for Malawi".

This Action is also aligned to SDG 16 – Promotion of Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and SDG 5 – promotion of gender equality and SDG 10 – reduced inequalities. It is consistent with the European Consensus for Development, particularly under the themes, Peaceful and inclusive societies, Democracy, Effective and Accountable Institutions, Rule of Law and Human Rights for all. The programme responds to the Human Rights and Democracy Strategy (2021 -2024), Gender