

## **TRAINING FOR ROVING OBSERVERS FOR THE FRESH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS (FPE)**

NICE embarked on a training series to capacitate its observers to the dos and don'ts for observing the Fresh Presidential Elections (FPE) being held on 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2020. Six clusters were planned where volunteers convened for these trainings i.e. Lilongwe, Karonga, Nkhatabay, Salima, Liwonde, Mulanje and Blantyre. In total NICE has trained 462 roving observers. NICE embarked on these training series to capacitate its observers to the dos and don'ts the FPE considering that the tripartite elections were nullified based on irregularities.

During the trainings it was emphasized that election observation is one of the most transparent and methodical ways to promote and encourage democracy and human rights. Thus, election observation is based on commitment to ensuring democratic elections. Specifically, NICE has trained its volunteers, and staff on monitoring and polling observation. The critical aspect will be to support the volunteers to act as independent monitors at every polling station

The trainings were facilitated by NICE and mHub, a technological geek and connoisseur to provide technological support to our volunteers so that the observation and reporting is real time by sending messages through phones. A checklist was introduced for discussion and how to generate messages that would capture the essence of the observation parameters. Thus, the engagement and reporting of the electoral process from the ground, the polling centres, are directed to respective authorities such as Malawi Electoral Commission, Malawi Human Rights Commission, and the Police in order to take timely action.

After the training NICE is confident that its pool of observers, 5002 stationed and 462 that are roving will make sure that the FPE will be transparent and that they will take ownership of the electoral process. Furthermore, they were encouraged to always play a neutral role and report objective findings, which can either highlight shortcomings in the elections or alleviate potential for conflict.

NICE can confidently report a success series of trainings that will help the upcoming election be free and fair.