# Civic Governance Strand Meeting

# Monday 13th November, edinburgh city chambers, high street, Eh1 1yJ

# 14.00 – 16.00

**ATTENDEES**

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| Norman Chipakupaku | Cooperative |
| Heather Cubie | University of Edinburgh |
| Susan Dalgety | Active Learning Centre |
| Charles Gay | Christian Aid |
| David Hope-Jones | SMP |
| Gordon MacRae | Humanist Society Scotland |
| Bob Mattes | University of Strathclyde |
| Grace O'Donovan | SMP |
| Graeme Reid | Scottish Government |
| Kathy Wright | SMP |

**APOLOGIES**

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| Robert Anderson | Opportunity Scotland |
| Halla Edwards-Muthu | Rt Hon Lord McConnell of Glenscorrodale |
| Joyce Nicoll |  |
| Lewis Ryder-Jones | The Alliance |

**SUMMARY MINUTES**

# Welcome and Introduction to Malawian Input

Attendees were welcomed to the third of the five SMP strand meetings around the Scottish Government’s Malawi Development Programme call for applications. The purpose of the meeting was to allow for the sharing of opportunities, challenges, priorities and issues alongside Malawian input from a panel of colleagues and counterparts in Malawi. The meeting was conducted under Chatham House Rule and as such these summary minutes are anonymised.

Roundtable introductions were given by each attendee on their organisation and experience of Scottish Government funding and other funded governance projects.

All attendees were reminded of the importance of reading the funding round criteria and eligibility requirements before applying. It was noted that this meeting is not the official Information Day; this will be held by the Scottish Government and Corra Foundation on Wednesday 29th November in Edinburgh – full details to be announced.

Attendees were reminded that the SMP is core-funded by the Scottish Government but is independent of them, and of the grant-making process.

Malawian input remains at the heart of the SMP and all the meetings held. Thanks were given to the Malawi Scotland Partnership for their role in supporting and gathering input from key stakeholders. For this meeting the Malawian input was fed through an interactive WhatsApp discussion. Attendees were asked to write anonymous questions down, which were sent to the panel in Malawi, and their responses were revisited later (see section in minutes below).

There was discussion around the priorities for the civil society and governance strand from the Malawi government:

* Capacity building for the new Parliament i.e. Committee work etc.
* Institutional capacity building for the Malawi Prison Service (including Young Offender services)
* Support towards the fight against Corruption
* Support organisations advocating for good governance and human rights
* Support organisations advocating for gender equality
* Support for free Paralegal services

Leadership and hierarchy were identified as key themes running through these priorities.

The role of women and young people is an important factor. Are young people being prepared for leadership? What influence does hierarchy have on youth voice? Both in Scotland and Malawi? A number of attendees felt there was a trend of an elite emerging who are becoming increasingly distant from young people.

A number of interesting youth and community voice projects were shared in the “civic tech” space:

* Savvy in Sierra Leone (with Restless Development) – evidence-based advocacy, reporting data back to communities with infographics
* New youth voice platform from UNICEF
* Google Impact Award winners – innovation projects in tech for development, including civic participation tech

**ACTION:** Attendees to share links to projects with SMP, SMP to ass links to these (and others as they are identified) on the past events page [here](https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/past-events/malawi-call-civic-governance/).

# Sharing of Learning, SUPPORTING DEVELOPING APPLICATIONS/DISCUSSION

The sharing of learning was focused on three areas: application, grant management, and sustainability of projects. Some of the successes, issues and challenges identified were:

Malawian input is the key to a successful project.

The size and capacity of partners in Malawi impacts the scale of projects and the success of applying for funding – can be difficult to compete with larger NGOs that have large teams of trained staff in e.g. monitoring, reporting, logframes. Small NGOs often have good experience on the ground but face challenges working at the level expected of the big Scottish Government funding rounds.

Malawian offices of larger NGOs usually have a lot of autonomy to set their own strategic priorities and civic governance is not often included.

Using a cluster approach can build on expertise on the ground whilst allowing new players with different kinds of expertise to be part of a bid.

All strands should have governance within them.

**ACTION:** SMP to highlight this at the Information Day on 29th November.

It is important to work collaboratively, across organisations and also strands – avoid working in silos.

The Scottish Government have been flexible in the past with projects working across two or more strands. Even if the application form requires you to select one ‘lead’ strand that doesn’t mean you can’t work in other strands as well.

It is important to consider the role of local councillors. Even when positive directives are coming from Lilongwe, if the capacity or accountability at local level falls short then it means nothing to the community.

There have been some large civic governance projects funded by other donors. There are also a number of reports written on the effectiveness of these programmes and lessons learned, e.g. USAID.

**ACTION:** attendees to share reports with SMP, to then link to on past events page.

DFID are looking at making a big governance call in 2018 and have been conducting pre-call market analysis. However the National Democratic Institute has recently pulled out of Malawi.

**ACTION:** attendees to share report with SMP, to then link to on past events page.

Civic governance is key to tackling aid dependence. Local input, ownership and leadership of own programmes is vital. Malawi is not short of development actors, both local and international.

Logframes can easily become too complicated too quickly. Keep it simple.

Monitoring and reporting successes/challenges

* Using the media can be powerful in bringing about action. When reporting findings, if this is done privately there may not be action but if the media are involved then there is public accountability.
* Governance projects are rarely linear – action can be slow at times, fast at times, depending on political landscape, participation
* Still vital to keep track of progress
* Indicators and proxies are always challenging to get right when measuring

**ACTION:** SG to include question about indicators and proxies into the official FAQs

It is important to present findings to parliamentary committees. There are challenges with per diems/civic fees.

Full councils are under-resourced and as such, often do not meet quarterly as they are meant to. There have been instances of NGOs paying to cover the costs of committee meetings to ensure they happen.

The average age of MPs in Malawi is 56 and two thirds of them are serving their first term.

Sustainability:

* Look at funds already in the country – how can they be utilised? E.g. big donors looking for tried and tested projects, good stories
* If there is an enterprise element to a project, build savings in
* Tax base is fundamental challenge and needs to change

Attendees were given the opportunity to discuss potential future projects, to share application ideas, and to make useful connections and for those looking for partners to meet.

### The SMP shared information about their own governance work. In April 2016 they hosted [an event](http://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/past-events/governance/) at which Sir Andrew Cubie spoke about Scotland’s experience in recent decades relating to the theme of ‘leadership, good governance and the role of civil society’. Then Malawian academic, Dr Henry Chingaipe PhD, reflected on Malawi’s experience against this same theme. The two speakers compared experience between the two nations and there was an open discussion with an audience of key representatives across government and civil society. The event was well received and the SMP was encouraged by the government of Malawi to develop a programme of activity in this area. The SMP and MaSP have consulted in Scotland and Malawi, receiving good support for the idea, and interest from the Scottish Parliament and the RSE to be involved.

Attendees were also given the option to disclose whether they were considering applying for a Scottish Government 2018-23 Malawi grant via the Feedback and Evaluation Form. They were also given the option of having these details made public on the SMP website along with their details to be contacted directly. Others noted that the information could be posted but not their personal details, and as such they would prefer for interested parties to contact them through the SMP.

**ACTION:** Attendees who did not complete the form at the event can complete [here](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SDTYJBZ).

# Feedback from Malawian Input

Some of the answers to the anonymous questions posted on WhatsApp were shared, and are also posted on the SMP website for future reference.

Read the questions and answers [here](https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/download_file/2620/).

The Civic Governance Panel were as follows:

Name: Mavuto Bamusi

Organisation: Presidential Advisor on CSO’s and former CSO Head

Name: Brier Mlowoka

Organisation: Evangelical Association of Malawi

Name: Phillip Kamangila

Organisation: Activist

Name: Charles Kasambara

Organisation: Centre of Legal Assistance

# Closing Remarks and next steps

The Scottish Government will be hosting its own formal Information Day in partnership with the Corra Foundation for prospective applicants, which will be announced soon.

Additional strand meetings will be held on the following dates:

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| [Education](http://scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/all-events/malawi-call-education/) | Thursday 16th November, 2-4pm | Edinburgh City Chambers |
| [Renewables](http://scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/all-events/malawi-call-renewable-energy-water-climate/)  | Thursday 16th November, 4.30-6.30pm | Edinburgh City Chambers |

There will also be a [CPG meeting](https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/news-events/all-events/cpg-on-malawi-the-malawi-development-programme/) on the Malawi round on Wednesday 15th September at the Scottish Parliament.

Everyone was thanked for attending and for their open and honest contributions. Attendees were reminded that the SMP is here to help and to keep in contact.