



**SPEECH DELIVERED BY COMMISSIONER MAJOR STEVEN DUWA**

**(RTD)**

**CHAIRPERSON, MEDIA, CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION**

**DURING THE OPENING OF**

**TRAIN THE FACILITATOR (TTF) BRIDGE COURSE FOR STAFF**

**19<sup>th</sup> October, 2020  
MANGOCHI**

## **PROTOCOLS**

- The Chief Elections Officer, Mr Sam Alfandika
- The Lead Facilitator, Ms Rindai Chipfunde Vava and all course facilitators,
- Distinguished Course participants
- Members of the Press
- Ladies and gentlemen

Let me start by saying that I am delighted to stand before you and make a few remarks at the start of one of the most important and most coveted Building Resources In Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) courses, Train The Facilitator (TtF). Those of us who are familiar with BRIDGE courses, this is a fundamental course for one to become a BRIDGE facilitator. You cannot facilitate a BRIDGE course unless you have been accredited and the fundamental step towards accreditation is participation in this course. I, therefore, congratulate all of you who have been accorded this rare opportunity to undergo the initiation process to become BRIDGE facilitators. You should consider yourselves lucky and blessed because everyone in the MEC family wanted this opportunity.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Commission is committed to develop capacities of its staff. It is in the same vein that we approached

our Development Partners, through the UNDP managed basket fund, to support this training. The rationale is for the Commission to have a pool of BRIDGE facilitators so that we should be able to conduct several BRIDGE courses parallel to each other. We look forward to a day whereby we will be able to train 100 people at a goal through four courses held simultaneously across the regions of the country. In elections management, time is of essence and with a good number of qualified facilitators we will be able to accomplish much of our activities within a short time.

Therefore, let it be clear to all of you attending this TtF training workshop that there will be much expected from you after this training. You will be expected to help in facilitating BRIDGE courses. If you know that you are not ready to do this, then leave the room now, we will find a replacement for you immediately. It will be of no benefit to MEC to train you the next 12 days and then you go and sit on the knowledge and skills. This is a unique BRIDGE course. MEC has hosted many BRIDGE courses and none has gone beyond five days but this one is taking 12 days. That should be a signal to you of how unique and important the course is from the others. We are training you to be trainers and if you are not ready to be a trainer, let the coordinator, Mr Wellingtone Katantha know immediately I finish my speech. You will not only

facilitate BRIDGE courses but also other trainings for election field staff.

I should also explain that if we train you, this is a lifelong investment in you. Should you happen to leave MEC, today or tomorrow, we will still need your services to help the Commission in facilitating BRIDGE courses.

Distinguished participants, let me also warn you, that in this course you will be assessed for you to be accredited. Make sure that you stick to the BRIDGE guidelines that will be given by your facilitators. You should also be warned that there is a lot of work and be prepared for it. It is not automatic that you will be accredited by the fact that you have attended this course. You have to demonstrate that you have captured and mastered what has been shared.

Let me emphasize that this is not an ordinary training or workshop. I have been reliably informed that you will be constantly assessed and some of the areas include punctuality, full and undivided attention to discussions, sharing of information and, most importantly, full participation. At the end of it all, there will be a ranking process according to your performance throughout the period by the Facilitators. The progression in the accreditation process will also depend on your performance during this

training. With your dedication and commitment, I have no doubt you will all make it.

The Commission wishes you all the best and it is our sincere hope that you will all satisfy the requirements of the facilitators for you to be accredited at the end of this training.

As I conclude my speech, allow me to thank the Development Partners that have funded this BRIDGE Course through the basket fund managed by the UNDP in the name of UNDP, EU, Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) UK, Irish Aid and USAID. The Commission appreciates that the Development Partners have committed to supporting the Commission throughout the electoral cycle.

Finally, allow me to thank the lead facilitator, Ms Rindai Chipfunde Vava for making herself available. This is her umpteenth time to be in Malawi to facilitate a BRIDGE course. To you Rindai, I say that this demonstrates the trust and confidence that Malawians have in you and your abilities. You are welcome, Malawi is your second home.

I thank you all for your attention and wish you every success.

It is now my honour and privilege to declare the BRIDGE TTF opened.

I thank you very much