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**GPECS II**   
Global Project  
for Electoral Cycle Support II



European Commission  
United Nations Development Programme  
Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance



# EC-UNDP

1 - 31 March, 2018

# Electoral Assistance Projects Update

This report provides an overview of all active EU funded and UNDP implemented electoral assistance projects only and should be shared with EU delegations in the respective countries.



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## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

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With the indirect election of the President and Vice President, Nepal completed the first cycle of elections under the 2015 Constitution.

NEPAL

The project supported the National Electoral Commission (NEC) with the preparation and conduct of polls for the first round of the presidential elections, parliamentary, mayoral and local elections on 7 March, as well as for the presidential run-off on 31 March.

SIERRA LEONE

In Lebanon, the Project supported the registration of electoral lists and finalisation of the voter registration update process. Nationwide, 77 electoral lists have been registered including 520 candidates out of whom 86 are women (14.4%).

LEBANON

## Acronyms and abbreviations

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AVETOs	Assistant Voter Education and Training Officers
BVR	Biometric Voter Registration
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DGCS	Directorate General of Civil Status
ECN	Election Commission of Nepal
ECZ	Election Commission of Zambia
ESP	Electoral Support Project
IESG	UN Integrated Electoral Support Group
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IEBC	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
MASI	Solomon Islands Media Association
MoiM	Ministry of Interior & Municipalities
MWYCFA	Ministry of Women, Youths, Children and Family Affairs
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIEC	National Independent Electoral Commission
NSC	National Security Council
PWD	People with disabilities
SCE	Supervisory Commission for Elections
SECSIP	Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project
SEPK	Strengthening the Electoral Process in Kenya
SIEC	Solomon Islands Electoral Commission
SINU	Solomon Islands National University
SNEC	Support to the National Electoral Commission
TBG	Tactile Ballot Guides
ToT	Training of Trainers

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## SUMMARY

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**GUINEA:** The National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) invited political parties on 1-5 March to initiate discussions and address their concerns, but these consultations did not lead to significant results. Elected candidates are not yet officially inaugurated and heads of districts have not yet been designated.

**KENYA:** In partnership with the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), the project evaluated the effectiveness and impact of voter education initiatives. - The Strengthening of the Electoral Processes in Kenya (SEPK) project planned the post-elections evaluation of the IEBC which is expected to be concluded by June 2018. The activities will include a peer workshop to discuss and validate the evaluation methodology as well as a series of discussions with government bodies, political parties and relevant stakeholders. - The Steering Committee finalised and approved SEPK 2018 work plan.

**LEBANON:** The preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections continued according to the electoral calendar. The highlights of this period are the completion of the registration of electoral lists and the finalisation of the voter registration update process. - In this regard, on 27 March, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) successfully completed the registration of electoral lists. Nationwide, 77 electoral lists have been registered including 520 candidates out of whom 86 candidates are women (14.4%). - Furthermore, the MoIM finalised the voter registration update process and finalised the voter roll for the upcoming parliamentary elections. - The Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE), supported by UNDP, continued the process of monitoring the electoral campaign. Also, UNDP is supporting SCE in the preparation for the accreditation of observers, media, agents and special visitors.

**LIBERIA:** The National Elections Commission's lessons learnt programme was completed with support of the project, in cooperation with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). - The project's logistics expert provided on-going training for 10 staff, including 4 women, of the National Elections Commission warehouse and logistics units. - Support was provided in drafting updated manuals and polling and counting forms in advance of the forthcoming by-elections.

**NEPAL:** With the indirect election of the President and Vice President, Nepal completed the first cycle of elections under the 2015 Constitution. - The Electoral Support Project (ESP) continued with analytical work and downsizing.

**SIERRA LEONE:** The project assisted the National Electoral Commission (NEC) with the preparation and conduct of polls for the first round of the presidential, parliamentary, mayoral and local elections on 7 March, as well as for the

presidential run-off on 31 March.

**SOLOMON ISLANDS:** The voter's list for provincial elections in Choiseul and Western Province have been completed. - A technical inspection of the newly acquired Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) equipment for the data centre has been carried out. - Discussions on the operational road-map for a voter awareness program and support to women candidates have been ongoing. - The questionnaire survey for research on women's political participation has been finalised. - The Poster and Essay competition has been completed.

**SOMALIA:** The UN Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) shared with international partners a discussion paper on electoral system issues currently under consideration. - The National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) concluded its consultations with the Somali diaspora community in the US, Canada, Europe and Kenya, as part of the regional consultations the NIEC held regarding challenges facing the 2020 universal suffrage elections. - The IESG assisted the NIEC with the development and publication of a comprehensive report on the voter registration feasibility study jointly led in late 2017.

**ZAMBIA:** On 15 and 16 March, a dialogue forum was held with civil society organisations (CSOs) to discuss the potential for development of a coordinated and sustainable framework for domestic observations in Zambia. - On 1 March, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) completed a three-day workshop to gain feedback on the implementation of its Voter Education Schools Club programme at provincial level. - The ECZ conducted the first of a series of stakeholder events in late March, including a national Political Party Liaison Committee meeting and open public forums in two provinces. - The ECZ has been undertaking preparations for local by-elections scheduled for April 2018.

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# ONGOING ELECTORAL PROJECTS WITH EU FUNDING

Country	Project Title	Reference	EU Contribution	Start Date	End Date
<b>Guinea</b>	Projet d'Appui au Cycle Electoral de la Guinée – PACEG	FED/2015/367-390	€ 10,000,000.00	06.07.15	05.07.18
<b>Kenya</b>	Strengthening of the Electoral Processes in Kenya Project	FED/2016/372/463	€ 5,000,000.00	13.02.16	12.02.19
<b>Lebanon</b>	EU 2018-2020 Electoral Support to Lebanon	ENI/2018/395-460	€ 2,750,000.00	01.01.18	31.12.19
<b>Liberia</b>	Support to the 2015-2018 Liberian Electoral Cycle	FED/2015/367-723	€ 10,000,000.00	01.06.15	31.05.19
<b>Malawi</b>	Malawi Electoral Cycle Support: 2017-2019	2017/389-162	€ 2,500,000.00	11.10.17	10.04.20
<b>Nepal</b>	Electoral Support Project-Institutional Strengthening and Professional Development Support for the Election Commission of Nepal (ESP)	DCI-ASIE/2012/305-833	€ 10,050,000.00	12.01.12	29.05.18
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	Support to the National Electoral Commission	FED/2017/390-345	€ 3,000,000.00	08.08.17	07.02.19
<b>Solomon Islands</b>	Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project (SECSIP)	FED/2013/328-922	€ 3,500,000.00	01.07.13	31.12.18
<b>Somalia</b>	Joint Programme for Support to the Electoral Process in the Federal Republic of Somalia	FED/2015/366-291 FED/2015/360-953	€ 5,193,878.00	21.11.15	01.02.19
<b>Zambia</b>	Support to the 2015-2017 Electoral Cycle	FED/2015/363-147	€ 5,250,000.00	23.06.15	31.07.18
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project (ZIM-ECO)	FED/2016/380-895	€ 5,590,000.00	01.09.16	30.08.20



 GUINEA

 PAC EG

## PROJET D'APPUI AU CYCLE ELECTORAL DE LA GUINEE (PACEG)

Since July 2015, the project to “Support the Electoral Cycle of Guinea” (PACEG) provides assistance to strengthen the capacities of the Electoral Commission (CENI) and its field offices, including organizational, technical, communicational, financial and operational capacities. The main objective of the PACEG is to enable a credible, inclusive and peaceful 2015-2017 electoral process in Guinea, complying with international standards, while ensuring the effective and inclusive participation of women and young people through providing civic education and coaching. For more information, please visit the [project's website](#).

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) invited political parties on 1-5 March to initiate discussions and address their concerns, but these consultations did not lead to significant results. Elected candidates are not yet officially inaugurated and heads of districts have not yet been designated.

### I. Project activities during the reporting period

The project supported the field deployment of a joint mission consisting of UNDP, National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV). The goal of the mission was to assess the added value of the electoral assistance provided to the electoral management body (EMB) during the local elections. The mission concluded that the IT equipment provided by UNDP has been particularly useful in the management and monitoring of candidacies and, in addition, that the technical assistance provided by UNVs to the CENI field offices has been much appreciated in all electoral districts. The mission also addressed the issue of recovery, inventory and security of electoral and IT materials, including ballot boxes, voting booths, computers, printers and accessories.

The project also organised a training session for 38 national volunteers on gender policies, reporting and accountability. The training sessions built capacity of volunteers regarding gender equality, UNDP gender policy and the inclusion of women in UNDP projects and programs, as well as reporting skills.

During the reporting period, the CENI was mostly involved in recovering the IT electoral material.

Across the 13 communes, the rate of material retrieval is about 92%. At this stage, the challenge remains the safeguarding of the material until next elections as, due to a lack of resources, CENI cannot ensure security guards or lighting system in some of the storage warehouses. This issue will be raised at the next project steering committee in order to identify appropriate solutions.


## **II. Plans for the next period**

In April, the project will support CENI in organising an evaluation workshop to assess the 4 February local elections. The project is also expected to organise a BRIDGE training for national volunteers deployed in the CENI field offices. In addition, the question of extending the electoral assistance in Guinea will be discussed.

**For more information on the *Projet d'appui au cycle électoral de la Guinée (PACEG)*, please contact Mr. Abdoul Latif Haidara, [abdoul.haidara@undp.org](mailto:abdoul.haidara@undp.org) and visit the [project's website](#).**





 IEBC Communications Department

# STRENGTHENING THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN KENYA (SEPK)

The UNDP Electoral Assistance Project in Kenya (SEPK), provides technical assistance to the Kenyan Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) and other stakeholders to support credible and peaceful electoral process. The project started in February 2016 and focuses on strengthening the legal and institutional framework for the electoral process, increasing electoral participation with specific attention being paid to youth, women, and disable people, and consolidating electoral justice and dispute resolution mechanisms to increase compliance with electoral framework.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- In partnership with the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), the project evaluated the effectiveness and impact of voter education initiatives.
- The Strengthening of the Electoral Processes in Kenya (SEPK) project planned the post-elections evaluation of the IEBC which is expected to be concluded by June 2018. The activities will include a peer workshop to discuss and validate the evaluation methodology as well as a series of discussions with government bodies, political parties and relevant stakeholders.
- The Steering Committee finalised and approved SEPK 2018 work plan.

## I. Project activities during the reporting period

The following activities were conducted during the month:

- Evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of voter education initiatives employed during the 2017 elections: the project supported an Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) team to conduct a nation-wide assessment of the voter education programme conducted by the IEBC with the project's support during the 2017 general and presidential election.

- Planning for the IEBC post-election evaluation: the Strengthening of the Electoral Processes in Kenya (SEPK) project will support the recruitment of a consulting firm to work with the IEBC on the post-election evaluation. The key activities will include a peer workshop to discuss and validate the evaluation methodology, and county forums attended by key electoral stakeholders including civil society organisations (CSOs), media, political parties and government agencies. This exercise is expected to be concluded before June 2018 when the IEBC is expected to present the final report to a National Election Evaluation Conference for discussion and validation. The post-election evaluation is being co-funded by the IEBC, the project and IFES.

- Finalisation and approval by the project Steering Committee of SEPK 2018 work plan: key activities for implementation this year include post-election evaluation, legal reform, institutional capacity building, boundary delimitation, civic engagement and dialogue on reform.

## **II. Plans for the next period**

The activities planned for the following reporting period include:

- Roll out of post-election evaluation and related activities;
- Roll out of Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) trainings: seven modular trainings are expected to take place to facilitate knowledge sharing among the main electoral stakeholders. These trainings will also provide opportunities for more than 30 IEBC staff members who are currently semi-accredited BRIGE facilitators to become fully accredited, and also for four others who are already accredited to become accrediting facilitators;
- Implementation of the SEPK 2018 annual work plan: the project Steering Committee has agreed to end the implementation of project activities in September in order to allow for the project closure activities between September and December 2018.

**For more information on the project on Strengthening the Electoral Process in Kenya, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Joram Rukambe, [joram.rukambe@undp.org](mailto:joram.rukambe@undp.org).**



LEBANON

UNDP LEAP

## LEBANESE ELECTIONS ASSISTANCE PROJECT (LEAP)

The EU-funded UNDP Lebanese Elections Assistance Project (LEAP) started its activities in October 2012 with the main objective to strengthen the institutional capacity of the national institutions and stakeholders in terms of electoral management and administration, for the conduct of credible, periodical, transparent and inclusive elections in Lebanon.

To achieve these objectives, UNDP LEAP works closely with the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM), responsible for electoral management, administration and overall electoral operations. The project also supports other electoral stakeholders, such as the Constitutional Council, State Council, Supervisory Commission for the Election (SCE), judicial bodies and works in close cooperation with civil society organizations (CSOs). Within this context, UNDP LEAP provides electoral technical assistance and advisory support focused on: 1) management & administration of elections; 2) supervisory commission for elections; 3) voter education; 4) electoral dispute resolution; and 5) women's participation in elections.

For more information, visit the [Project's website](#).

### HIGHLIGHTS

- During the month of March, the preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections continued according to the electoral calendar.
- The highlights of this period are the completion of the registration of electoral lists and the finalisation of the voter registration update process. In this regard, on 27 March, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) successfully completed the registration of electoral lists. Nationwide, 77 electoral lists have been registered including 520 candidates out of whom 86 are women (14.4%). Furthermore, the MoIM finalised the voter registration update process and also the voter roll for the upcoming parliamentary elections.
- The Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE), supported by UNDP, continued the process of monitoring the electoral campaign. Also, UNDP is supporting SCE in the preparation for the accreditation of observers, media, agents and special visitors.

## I. Project activities during the reporting period

In the reporting period, UNDP LEAP prepared and implemented the following activities:

### **Training of trainers – second phase**

The Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM), supported by UNDP LEAP, organised training of trainers (ToT) sessions in 26 locations around the country. This is the second phase of the cascade training started in February and involved over 400 elections officials. The training sessions were conducted with the support of Qaemaqams and Muhafezs (local district administrators and governors of provinces), who in many cases facilitated the proceedings and provided valuable information and clarifications.

The participants were particularly enthusiastic at the prospect of elections taking place in May and their role was recognised as key for the proper implementation of the proceedings on the election day. The participants asked questions related to their roles and responsibilities but also raising unexpected issues that might occur in the polling stations during the election day. In these cases, the previous electoral experiences of the Qaemaqams helped greatly respond to questions related to security in the polling stations, to the absence of one of the polling officials and particularly on how to count the votes at the end of the day. In the third and last phase expected to take place mid-April, over 14,000 polling officials will be trained in more than 400 locations around the country, which will practically complete the cascade training.

### **Voter registration update process**

As reported previously, the MoIM, Directorate General for Civil Status (DGCS) conducted the annual voter registration update process in preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections. The process started on 1 February 2018 and was completed on 30 March, as per the electoral calendar. The completion of this key electoral process enabled the MoIM to consolidate and approve the final voter roll that will be utilised during the parliamentary elections in May. According to the available data, nationwide a total of 3,744,245 voters are registered including the 82,965 voters registered for the out-of-country polls.

### **Operations and logistics**

The MoIM continued the preparations in terms of operations and logistics. In this regard, as per the MoIM request, UNDP LEAP - funded by the EU – procured 10,000 ballot boxes, 10,000 polling booths and the associated security seals. All these materials are currently stored at the ministry's warehouse and are being prepared for deployment. The preparatory phase includes planning for the out-of-country voting which will take place on 27 and 29 April.

### **Closing ceremony of the awareness sessions targeting women candidates & voters**

Within the framework of the “Lebanese Women in Elections” initiative, UNDP Lebanese Elections Assistance Project (LEAP), UN Women and the local nongovernmental organisation (NGO) Women in Front organised the closing ceremony of the awareness sessions that were conducted to women

candidates and voters in the regions of Lebanon. The event took place on 2 March 2018 in the context of preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections. Since the beginning of the year, eight awareness sessions were conducted in the cities of Rayfoun, Sin El Fil, Chtaura, Tripoli, Saida, Zgharta, Baakline and Beirut reaching out to 500 women candidates and voters in order to encourage them to participate in the 2018 elections. The “Lebanese Women in Elections” initiative aimed at enhancing women’s capacities to participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections. The sessions tackled relevant subjects including: the new electoral law and electoral calendar, required documents to run for elections, the legal framework, pre-printed ballot papers, preferential vote, the electoral campaign, how to include women in lists, negotiations and networking. During the closing ceremony, 24 women candidates took the stage and shared their experience, expectations and challenges faced during the candidates’ nomination period and the start of the electoral campaign. In this regard, it was observed that each candidate faced different experiences and challenges highlighting the complex and diverse nature of the Lebanese elections. Nonetheless, as a common feature, all the women candidates showed resilience and determination to bring about change and enhance women’s representation in the future parliament.

## **II. Plans for the next period**

For the month of April, the project will continue to work in the following areas:

- Operations and logistics;
- Voter education initiatives (Get-out-the-vote);
- Preparations for the results management system;
- Supervision and monitoring of elections;
- Women’s participation in elections.

**For more information on the project on LEAP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Dan Radulescu, [dan.radulescu@undp.org](mailto:dan.radulescu@undp.org) and visit the [project’s website](#).**



LIBERIA

Election Project/UNDP Liberia

## SUPPORT TO THE 2015 – 2018 LIBERIAN ELECTORAL CYCLE

Support to the 2015-2018 Liberian Electoral Cycle project was established in order to strengthen the capacity of the National Election Commission (NEC) to successfully carry out electoral process within the 2015-2018 electoral cycle. Among other objectives, it introduced modern administrative systems and procedures, enhanced communications and public outreach, supported voter registration and election results management process. In addition, the project seeks to enhance the participation of women in the elections and in political activities, support civic and voter education and strengthen NEC's capacity to engage with the stakeholders and resolve electoral disputes. The project is supported by the European Union (10.85 million USD), Sweden (2,757,039 USD), UNDP (1 million USD), Canada (749,625 USD) and Ireland (568,828 USD).

For more information, [please visit the Project's website.](#)

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The National Elections Commission's lessons learnt programme was completed with support of the project, in cooperation with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).
- The project's logistics expert provided on-going training for 10 staff, including 4 women, of the National Elections Commission warehouse and logistics units.
- Support was provided in drafting updated manuals and polling and counting forms in advance of the forthcoming by-elections.

### I. Project activities during the reporting period

The National Elections Commission's lessons learnt programme was completed with support of the project, in cooperation with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). During a five-day period, over 100 staff members, including the senior manager of the National Elections Commission, participated in sessions on a wide range of areas. This included, amongst others, reviews of election planning, operations and logistics as well as human resource management and communications and

outreach campaigns.

The project's logistics expert provided on-going training for 10 staff, including 4 women, of the National Elections Commission warehouse and logistics units on using spreadsheets and computer programmes for planning and budgeting purposes. These staff were also supported to produce a disposal strategy for redundant election material.

Support was provided in drafting updated manuals and polling and counting forms in advance of the forthcoming by-elections.

## **II. Plans for the next period**

The project's annual workplan for 2018 is drafted and is tabled to the project board for review and endorsement.

A training programme for logistics staff is planned for April 2018.

**For more information on the support to the Liberia electoral cycle, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. George Baratashvili, [george.baratashvili@undp.org](mailto:george.baratashvili@undp.org) and visit the [Project's website](#).**



## ELECTORAL SUPPORT PROJECT (ESP)

The Electoral Support Project- Phase II (ESP) is a technical assistance initiative which focuses on a long-term institutional and professional capacity development of the Election Commission (ECN) for conducting credible, inclusive and transparent elections at a national. The objectives of the project are 1) to strengthen the capacity of the ECN to function as an independent and credible institution, 2) to allow the conduct of the election cycle in an effective, sustainable, and credible manner, and 3) to increase democratic participation, particularly for under-represented and disadvantaged segments of the Nepali society. For more information, [please visit the ESP website](#).

### HIGHLIGHTS

- With the indirect election of the President and Vice President, Nepal completed the first cycle of elections under the 2015 Constitution.
- The Electoral Support Project (ESP) continued with analytical work and downsizing.

### I. Project activities during the reporting period

The Electoral Support Project (ESP) prepared and submitted a concept for the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) review of the election process which emphasizes data analysis and multi-stakeholder consultations as well as cost-effectiveness. In relation to its support for a review of inclusion in the 2017 elections, the project facilitated a presentation by ECN on the inclusion of women in the elections at a side event of the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York on 12 March. The ECN presentation highlighted the progress Nepal has made in this area with 41 percent of local level representatives and one third of members in Provincial Assemblies and the Federal Parliament now women, but also indicated areas that require further improvement.

The UN Resident Coordinator received an ECN request for continued UN electoral assistance in the coming years. ECN informed that requests for support in specific areas will be based on the review of the 2017/2018 elections and the formulation of a new ECN strategic plan, which ECN intends to carry out over the coming months with support from ESP.



The project team was further reduced. At the end of March, the Voter Registration Coordination Officer and two IT Officers completed their assignments.

## **II. Plans for the next period**

ESP will continue the impact evaluation of the Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) professional development programme, the study of inclusion in the 2017 elections process, and support of ECN in the review of the processes. In addition, the project will continue discussions with national authorities regarding possible project extension.

**For more information on the Nepal ESP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Vincent da Cruz, [vincent.dacruz@undp.org](mailto:vincent.dacruz@undp.org), and visit the [Project's website](#).**



## SUPPORT TO THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (SNEC)

In response to a request from the Government of Sierra Leone and the National Electoral Commission (NEC), UNDP established a multi-donor project to support the technical preparations for voter registration and the 2018 elections. This follows a successful project that supported the NEC in the drawing of new electoral boundaries in 2016.

Previous Sierra Leone elections received large amounts of donor support, not only for technical assistance but also through meeting the cost of processes such as voter registration and polling itself. Recognizing the maturation of Sierra Leonean institutions, the project focuses only on key processes and areas that require support or improvement.

For more information, please visit the [Project's website](#).

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The project supported the National Electoral Commission (NEC) with the preparation and conduct of polls for the first round of the presidential, parliamentary, mayoral and local elections on 7 March, as well as for the presidential run-off on 31 March.

## I. Project activities during the reporting period

### 7 March elections

By 2 March, the last phase of the mass deployment of electoral materials was sent from the National Electoral Commission (NEC) warehouse at Wellington to NEC District Offices. These materials included indelible ink, final stationery and the last public information materials, all procured by the project.

Throughout the week leading to the polls for the first round, NEC continued the distribution of voter information materials across the country. These included posters and flyers on how to mark the ballot

papers, voting steps, songs, messages and jingles amongst others. Flyers and instructional materials were also printed in Braille font.

The Support to the National Electoral Commission (SNEC) project funded a face-to-face community drama called Women, Use Your Power and a sensitisation project for first-time voters that trains peer educators to spread messages in their schools, family and friendship groups. The project also assisted NEC to develop and upload comprehensive [FAQ](#) documents on the elections which have also been distributed to political parties, observers and media.

The project printed 28,000 generic tactile ballot guides (TBG) for the first round of the elections and two TBG were issued per polling station to enable the blind and visually-impaired voters to cast ballots independently. A specific TBG for the run-off ballot paper was also produced.

## Run-off

In the reporting period, the project team has revised, updated and printed the training manuals for polling and counting procedures, including updated instructions on polling and counting procedures for the run-off. These materials have also incorporated recommendations from observer missions and political parties. NEC briefed 63,058 polling officials for the presidential run-off using these materials developed by the project.

NEC has intensified its voter information strategy for the run-off. More voter information materials such as posters, flyers, voting steps, how to mark the ballot papers, songs and jingles have been developed and distributed across the country.



SNEC logistic advisor together with NEC, party agents and security agent receiving ballot papers for the presidential run-off at Lungi Airport, Freetown.  
Photo credits: Alex Spillius

The project has continued its support for people with disabilities (PWDs) by organising five regional level debriefing workshops for 19 Assistant Voter Education and Training Officers (AVETOs) in preparation for the run-off elections.

Ballot papers for the run-off were designed and printed with technical and financial assistance from the project. These materials for the run-off including the ballot papers for the deferred parliamentary and council elections were received in Freetown on 22 March by UNDP and NEC in the presence of the political parties, donor partners, observers and other stakeholders.

With the support of the project's advisors, NEC set up a working group to plan activities on the process of result aggregation, information technology and training. The project supported the development of the results management software and data entry centre procedures. Five collocated tally centres have been established in the headquarter towns of the regions supported by five international tally advisors recruited by the project. Throughout the process, NEC did extensive outreach to political parties, observers and other stakeholders on the results process as part to improve stakeholders' knowledge of the process. With the support of the project advisors, NEC also designed and produced 3000 tally and result procedures booklets and trained over 900 staff tally centre staff.

Overall, the EU noted that “the [7 March] elections were well organised by the national electoral authorities” and further remarked on “the professionalism of the Sierra Leonean National Electoral Commission” during the run-off on 31 March, which “positively marked” the electoral process (the statements available [here](#) and [here](#)).

## **II. Plans for the next period**

On 31 March 2018, the run-off for the presidential election, including the deferred parliamentary, mayoral, and council elections took place. The project will continue its support in the finalisation of this and other related activities.

**For more information on SNEC, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Ms. Kate Sullivan, [kate.sullivan@undp.org](mailto:kate.sullivan@undp.org) and visit the [Project’s website](#).**



## STRENGTHENING THE ELECTORAL CYCLE IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS (SECSIP)

Since 2013, UNDP Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project (SECSIP) has contributed to the inclusiveness and integrity of the electoral process. The project supported the successful introduction of a new comprehensive biometric voter registration system which resulted in a more inclusive and reliable voters' roll and continues to provide assistance in terms of its updating and sustainability. The project also supports the review of the electoral legal framework with a view to promote the strengthening of the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC) and assist to the fulfilment of its mandate. It also strengthens the capacity of the SIEC to advocate for women's political participation and supports the national authorities and civil society organizations in raising awareness of the population regarding voting and civic engagement. SECSIP is generously funded by the European Union, the government of Australia and UNDP.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The voter's lists for provincial elections in Choiseul and Western Province have been completed.
- A technical inspection of the newly acquired Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) equipment for the data centre has been carried out.
- Discussions on the operational road-map for a voter awareness program and support to women candidates have been ongoing.
- The questionnaire survey for research on women's political participation has been finalised.
- The Poster and Essay competition has been completed.

### I. Project activities during the reporting period

#### Support to the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC) BVR Update

During the reporting period and after the review of omission and objection claims, the Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project (SECSIP) Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) consultants supported the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC) in the completion and in-print production

of the updated voters' lists for Choiseul and Western Provinces. The BVR consultants have also assisted in the ongoing assessment and identification of BVR related procurement needs in preparation for the upcoming national registration campaign. Upon arrival of the new BVR equipment for the data centre currently under construction, a technical inspection of the newly acquired equipment has been conducted. The above will contribute to the strengthening, the sustainability and reliability of the BVR as stated in the project output 1 and project outcome.

### **Working session on voter awareness and support to women candidates**

On 9 March, the project's Senior Electoral Adviser conducted a working session to discuss the operational premises and road-map for the implementation of two initiatives: a) a broad voter awareness program and b) support to women candidates (framed in a longer-term promotion of women's political participation in the country). These initiatives are to be managed and implemented in a multi-partner effort which will include electoral authorities, government agencies and civil society organisations as well as possible collaboration with other actors including Peace Building Project, UN Women and bilateral assistance programmes. The working session was attended by 34 participants representing governmental entities and civil society organisations.

A mapping exercise seeking to identify potential partners, types of action (including for example trainings, round table discussions, drama plays) to operationalise the two initiatives is currently ongoing. These initiatives are in line with the project's outputs 3 and 5, in the areas of increased implementation of voter and civic education activities and enhanced ability of women to participate in electoral and political processes.

### **Research on women's political leadership and participation**

The project commissioned a research study to contribute to the empowerment of women as political leaders and to develop a strategic plan addressing the barriers to women's participation in the elections as candidates, contributing to the achievement of enhanced ability of women to act as leaders and representatives. During the reporting period, the research team has identified the selected constituencies and finalised the survey questionnaire. The team has also conducted training of data collectors and carried out a pilot of the survey.

Field data collection is scheduled to commence early April, including site visits to 10 constituencies located in Honiara, Malaita, Western Province, Isabel, and Central Province.

### **Poster and Essay competition**

The 2017 poster and essay competition submission deadline closed on 28 February with a total of 170 entries in the following categories: a) Poster- with a total of 37 participants (including 23 female) across all three categories (junior, senior and teachers), and b) Essay- with a total of 133 participants (including 74 female) across all three categories. The panel of judges, including representatives from Solomon Islands Artist Association, Media Association of Solomon Islands (MASI), Solomon Islands National University (SINU), Government for the Ministry of Women, Youths, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA), Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) and teachers from secondary schools, will identify winners and runners-up across all three categories.

During the reporting period, the project also contributed to the celebration of the International Women's

day by conducting a panel discussion on gender and women's political participation with the participation of secondary school students. Topics were related to voter's registration, the importance of exercising the right to vote and the principle of secrecy of the vote.

### **Partner CSOs/ small grants**

The National Council of Women conducted four training of trainers (ToT) activities targeting campaign managers of women candidates intending to contest in the national general elections. These workshops were held in Auki Malaita province, Buala Isabel province, Lata Temotu province, and Honiara for Guadalcanal and Honiara campaign managers. This activity fits under project outputs 3 and 5 for increased voter awareness and civic engagement with a special focus on strengthened female political participation.

## **II. Plans for the next period**

List of activities planned for the following reporting period:

- On-going construction of the data centre at SIEC compound;
- Commencement of data collection at selected sites for research on women's political participation and leadership;
- SECSIP provision of assistance to SIEC for the preparation of the procurement plan focusing on the national voter registration;
- On-going support to the Electoral Reform Task Force for the finalisation of the new proposed legislation including the new Electoral Bill, the Political Parties Bill and the Constitutional Bill (consequential amendments).
- Award ceremony for winners of the 2017-2018 essay competition.

**For more information on the SECSIP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Ms. Olga Rabade, [olga.rabade@undp.org](mailto:olga.rabade@undp.org).**



## UNDP/UNSOM JOINT PROGRAMME FOR SUPPORT TO THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA

The overall strategic objective of the UNDP/UNSOM Joint Programme for “Support to the Electoral Process to the Federal Republic of Somalia” is to prepare the country for universal elections through institutional capacity development of the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC), the development of the legal framework for elections, and support to promote better understanding of electoral processes.

For more information, please visit the [project's website](#).

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The UN Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) shared with international partners a discussion paper on electoral system issues currently under consideration.
- The National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) concluded its consultations with the Somali diaspora community in the US, Canada, Europe and Kenya, as part of the regional consultations the NIEC held regarding challenges facing the 2020 universal suffrage elections.
- The IESG assisted the NIEC with the development and publication of a comprehensive report on the voter registration feasibility study jointly led in late 2017.

### I. Project activities during the reporting period

On 15 March, the UN Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) shared with international partners a discussion paper on electoral system issues currently under consideration. The paper elaborates on a parliamentary electoral system for Somalia based on proportional representation and closed party list, with different options on the constituencies. The discussion on Somalia’s future system of



representation is foreseen to be tabled at the next National Security Council (NSC) which comprises Somalia's federal and state leaders. The outcome of these discussions is envisaged to feed into the drafting process of the country's electoral law.

On 20 March, the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) concluded its consultations with the Somali diaspora community in the US, Canada, Europe and Kenya. These dialogues were part of the regional consultations the NIEC held with different national and sub-national stakeholders regarding challenges facing the 2020 universal suffrage elections. In total, the NIEC conducted consultations in 31 different locations across Somalia and abroad. The NIEC had reached out to approximately 6,000 people, directly or by social media, including regional officials, elders, political parties, religious leaders, women and youth groups, and civil society organisations (CSOs). The NIEC will brief the upcoming meeting of the NSC on its consultations and findings.

On 26 March, the NIEC held a ceremony to inaugurate the perimeter wall of its future headquarters in Mogadishu. The mayor of Mogadishu and governor of Benadir regional administration attended the event and stated that he will report to the NSC meeting on the need to continue to support the NIEC, including the construction of independent NIEC offices. The NIEC chairperson thanked the United Nations and Japan for the support received in building the perimeter wall, and reiterated that it is essential for the NIEC to establish its offices outside of government's premises to guarantee its independence and operationalisation. The mobilisation of funds to proceed with construction of the future NIEC headquarters is therefore a top priority.

In March, IESG assisted the NIEC with the development and publication of a comprehensive report on the voter registration feasibility study jointly led in late 2017. The NIEC has been asked to brief federal and subnational representatives on different voter registration options. IESG has assisted NIEC in preparing this presentation.

## **II. Plans for the next period**

- Elaboration on the voter registration feasibility study and discussion on different registration methodologies;
- Advisory support on electoral systems to facilitate discussions between the Federal Government of Somalia and Federal Member States delegates and interlocutors, in preparation of the electoral law;
- NIEC briefing to the National Security Council (NSC) and the Parliament on its consultative dialogues with national and sub-national partners, and members of the Somali diaspora.

**For more information on the UNDP/UNSOM Joint Programme, please contact Filip Warnants, [filip.warnants@undp.org](mailto:filip.warnants@undp.org) and visit the [Project's website](#).**



ZAMBIA

Public Relation Department of the Commission

## SUPPORT TO THE ZAMBIA ELECTORAL CYCLE

The project “Consolidation of the Electoral Process in Zambia: Support to the Electoral Cycle” provides targeted support to the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) and other national entities to enhance the quality and credibility of electoral processes. Building upon previous electoral support, the project focuses on developing the capacity of the ECZ, enhancing public confidence in election results, strengthening modalities for dispute resolution and support to key electoral partners and stakeholders (political parties, media, CSOs, security agencies). The project started in February 2016, supported by the European Union, DFID, Irish Aid, USAID and UNDP.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- On 15 and 16 March, a dialogue forum was held with civil society organisations (CSOs) to discuss the potential for development of a coordinated and sustainable framework for domestic observations in Zambia.
- On 1 March, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) completed a three-day workshop to gain feedback on the implementation of its Voter Education Schools Club programme at provincial level.
- The ECZ conducted the first of a series of stakeholder events in late March, including a national Political Party Liaison Committee meeting and open public forums in two provinces.
- The ECZ has been undertaking preparations for local by-elections scheduled for April 2018.

### I. Project activities during the reporting period

**Domestic observation framework:** The project provided technical and financial support to the convening of an initial consultative forum with civil society organisations (CSOs) to consider potential development of a sustainable framework for domestic observations. The two-day event, held on 15 and 16 March, was implemented in partnership with the Christian Churches Monitoring Group and brought together around 25 representatives of domestic observer groups and other CSOs that work in the field of democratic governance, to consider options for strengthening collaboration amongst CSOs and creating more

sustainable engagement throughout the electoral cycle. Attendees responded positively to the initiative and it was agreed that possible modalities for taking this forward will be addressed in subsequent meetings.

**Review of Voter Education School Clubs:** As part of an Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) evaluation of the performance of its Voter Education School Clubs, the project supported the conduct of a three-day workshop from 27 February to 1 March in order to obtain direct feedback from those who run the clubs at local level. The ECZ, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, has established 40 school clubs throughout Zambia as a means of enhancing understanding of electoral issues amongst teachers and young people, and to promote their participation in democratic processes within their communities. The event brought together 40 staff of schools involved in the day-to-day running of the clubs and ten Ministry of Education officials who oversee implementation of the programme at provincial level, to assess the effectiveness of the clubs and identify good practices and areas requiring improvement, which will inform future policy and practice in managing the programme.

**Stakeholder events:** March saw the beginning of the roll-out of a series of stakeholder events organised by the ECZ with the support of the project, as part of the Commission's aim to promote continuous engagement with electoral stakeholders throughout all phases of the electoral cycle.

On 22 March, the ECZ held a Political Party Liaison Committee meeting, which was attended by representatives of 40 registered political parties, of which 4 are represented in Parliament. This provided a platform for the ECZ to brief political parties on preparations for up-coming by-elections, and for discussion of the current legal framework and the Commission's roadmap towards the 2021 general elections.

In the last week of March, the ECZ held the first two of a series of ten planned public forums to be held in all provincial capitals of the country. These forums are open to the general public and aim to encourage multi-stakeholder participation, including local authorities, police officials, religious leaders, CSOs and media representatives. The events provided an opportunity for the general public to interact with the ECZ.

## II. Plans for the next period

- Convening of a follow up meeting with stakeholders to agree the way forward on the development of a national domestic observation framework (second week April);
- Continuation of a series of stakeholder events to present and discuss topical electoral issues, including public forums at provincial level and national meetings for media and journalists;
- By-elections for the office of Councillor in 16 wards are scheduled for 24 April 2018.