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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 - 30 April, 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.



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

The National Independent Election Commission awarded temporary registration certificates to three political parties bringing the total to 10 parties registered so far.

SOMALIA

On 24 April 2018, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) conducted local government by-elections for the office of Councillor in 16 wards in different districts of the country and announced the results on 25 April.

ZAMBIA

On 4 April, the Chief Electoral Commissioner and National Returning Officer declared the results of the presidential run-off election, in which Julius Maada Bio of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party was victorious. This concluded two years of intense electoral activities.

SIERRA LEONE

Acronyms and abbreviations

AVETOs	Assistant Voter Education and Training Officers
BVR	Biometric Voter Registration
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
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
MEC	Malawi Electoral Commission
MEHRD	Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoiM	Ministry of Interior & Municipalities
MWYCFA	Ministry of Women, Youths, Children and Family Affairs
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIEC	National Independent Electoral Commission
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
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZHRC	Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission

SUMMARY

GUINEA: The President of the Republic initiated a meeting with the opposition leader on 2 April 2018, in reaction to some protests following the 4 February local elections.

KENYA: Strengthening Electoral Processes in Kenya (SEPK) project finalised its 2018 annual work plan (AWP). The AWP focuses on lessons learned during this post-election period to draw and document lessons for future electoral support by UNDP and the European Union. The AWP also proposes targeted institutional strengthening initiatives aimed at setting key electoral stakeholders on the right path for the start of the 2022 electoral cycle.

LEBANON: During the month of April, the preparations for the 2018 parliamentary elections entered their final phase. Sensitive and non-sensitive materials were deployed to all locations including the out of country polling stations. Consequently, the out of country voting (OCV) was conducted on 27 and 29 April. The importance of the OCV lays overwhelmingly in the fact that it was the first test of the implementation of a new electoral law with a different polling modality. From this perspective, the OCV represented the first test for the electoral management body – Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) and for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), on their ability and capacity to organise and implement jointly this complex undertaking. The OCV proceedings were followed throughout the day by EU and LADE observers deployed on the ground and by Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE) and other observation groups.

LIBERIA: The project supported a training on warehouse and logistics management targeting National Elections Commission staff. - The project continued to provide assistance in drafting updated manuals and polling and counting forms in advance of the forthcoming by-elections.

MALAWI: A validation workshop has been undertaken for the voter education strategy. - A meeting has been held between Malawi Electoral Commission and electoral stakeholders. - The Women Political Economic Analysis: A Perception Survey has been launched.

NEPAL: The project focused on analytical work.

SIERRA LEONE: On 4 April, the Chief Electoral Commissioner and National Returning Officer declared the results of the presidential run-off election, in which Julius Maada Bio of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party was victorious. This concluded two years of intense electoral activities including two boundary delimitation exercises, compilation of a biometric voters' register and distribution of voter ID cards, conduct of non-national elections and the

four-tier simultaneous elections held on 7 March followed by the presidential run-off on 31 March.

SOLOMON ISLANDS: The project has provided support to the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC) awareness actions in connection with Gizo-Kolombangara by-election. - The recruitment process for the project's graduate programme has been launched. - The award ceremony for the secondary school Essay & Poster Competition has been held.

SOMALIA: The National Independent Election Commission (NIEC) awarded temporary registration certificates to three political parties bringing the total to 10 parties registered so far. - The NIEC conducted a by-election to fill a vacant seat in Galmadug State in the Federal House of the People.

ZAMBIA: On 24 April 2018, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) conducted local government by-elections for the office of Councillor in 16 wards in different districts of the country and announced the results on 25 April. - The ECZ conducted multi-stakeholder public forums in six provinces. - The ECZ is undertaking preparations for further by-elections scheduled for June 2018.

ZIMBABWE: ZIM-ECO project has been providing support in key capacity building and institutional strengthening areas of election operations, Biometric Voter Registration (BVR), operational planning for BVR, training of election staff, voter education, stakeholder engagement, election dispute resolution and gender mainstreaming.

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ONGOING ELECTORAL PROJECTS WITH EU FUNDING

Country	Project Title	Reference	EU Contribution	Start Date	End Date
Guinea	Projet d'Appui au Cycle Electoral de la Guinée – PACEG	FED/2015/367-390	€ 10,000,000.00	06.07.15	05.07.18
Kenya	Strengthening of the Electoral Processes in Kenya Project	FED/2016/372/463	€ 5,000,000.00	13.02.16	12.02.19
Lebanon	EU 2018-2020 Electoral Support to Lebanon	ENI/2018/395-460	€ 2,750,000.00	01.01.18	31.12.19
Liberia	Support to the 2015-2018 Liberian Electoral Cycle	FED/2015/367-723	€ 10,000,000.00	01.06.15	31.05.19
Malawi	Malawi Electoral Cycle Support: 2017-2019	2017/389-162	€ 2,500,000.00	11.10.17	10.04.20
Nepal	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
Sierra Leone	Support to the National Electoral Commission	FED/2017/390-345	€ 3,000,000.00	08.08.17	07.02.19
Solomon Islands	Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project (SECSIP)	FED/2013/328-922	€ 3,500,000.00	01.07.13	31.12.18
Somalia	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
Zambia	Support to the 2015-2017 Electoral Cycle	FED/2015/363-147	€ 5,250,000.00	23.06.15	31.07.18
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project (ZIM-ECO)	FED/2016/380-895	€ 5,590,000.00	01.09.16	30.08.20



GUINEA

 PACEG

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 President of the Republic initiated a meeting with the opposition leader on 2 April 2018, in reaction to some protests following the 4 February local elections.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

From 17 to 21 April, the project organised a modular Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) training for 38 logistics and operations national volunteers hired to assist the CENI field offices, in line with the 2018 annual workplan. This training, supported by the CENI, focused on electoral administration, and was divided into separate modules dealing with basic principles of electoral administration, criteria for free and transparent elections, types and functioning of electoral management bodies (EMBs), legal framework and international standards on elections, electoral observation, and electoral dispute prevention and resolution mechanisms.

CENI also continued its support in the recovering, inventory and safeguarding of the electoral material.

Besides, CENI has started discussions regarding: 1) the assessment of local elections and 2) the action plan for next legislative elections.

II. Plans for the next period

In May, the project will continue its activities and will focus on identifying relevant support areas in the electoral process.

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 and visit the [project's website](#).



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

- Strengthening Electoral Processes in Kenya (SEPK) project finalised its 2018 annual work plan. The AWP focuses on lessons learned during this post-election period to draw and document lessons for future electoral support by UNDP and the European Union. The AWP also proposes targeted institutional strengthening initiatives aimed at setting key electoral stakeholders on the right path for the start of the 2022 electoral cycle.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The following activities were conducted during the month:

1. Evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of voter education initiatives employed during the 2017 elections;
2. Planning for the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) post-election evaluation;
3. Approval by SEPK Project Steering Committee of SEPK 2018 work plan;
4. Roll out of Building Resources in Democracy Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) trainings for various cadres of officers.

II. Plans for the next period

- Roll out of post-election evaluation and related activities.

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.



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 April, the preparations for the 2018 parliamentary elections entered their final phase. Sensitive and non-sensitive materials were deployed to all locations including the out of country polling stations. Consequently, the out of country voting (OCV) was conducted on 27 and 29 April. The importance of the OCV lays overwhelmingly in the fact that it was the first test of the implementation of a new electoral law with a different polling modality. From this perspective, the OCV represented the first test for the electoral management body – Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) and for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), on their ability and capacity to organise and implement jointly this complex undertaking. The OCV proceedings were followed throughout the day by EU and LADE observers deployed on the ground and by Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE) and other observation groups.
- It was also a test of the voters' knowledge and understanding of the new law. It was observed an overall good understanding of the voters on the electoral process, way to vote, polling locations etc. As per the rules and regulations, the casted votes will be sealed and sent to Beirut where they will be kept, under strict security, until the 6 May e-day, when the counting and tabulation will take place.
- The SCE, supported by UNDP, continued the process of monitoring the electoral campaign. In addition, SCE conducted successfully the accreditation of observers, media, agents and special visitors.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Operational updates

The Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM), supported by the project, finalised distribution and deployment plans of sensitive and non-sensitive materials for the 6,793 polling stations across the country.

The Results Management System (RMS) has been tested multiple times in order to ensure reliability during the counting and tabulation of results.

At the request of the MoIM, the project developed and implemented a Polling Station Locator that is available online at: <https://bit.ly/2w2vwH6>.

Training of elections and tabulation officials

As part of the cascade training that started in February, the MoIM – with the support of the project – organised between 13 and 15 April the training of over 16,000 elections officials. The training was facilitated by trainers prepared in the previous two waves of training of trainers (ToTs) and was focused on voting procedures, opening/closing proceedings and counting exercises. The consecutive trainings were conducted in 26 locations nationwide.

On Friday 20 April, the MoIM – with the support of UNDP LEAP - organised and conducted a training session for over 200 tabulation personnel. The training was organised in Beirut and LEAP provided assistance and support, as required. In addition, in the same day, the MoIM briefed representatives from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) on the tabulation and Results Management System and procedures. These two activities are essential in the overall preparation for the tabulation and electoral results management.

Get out the Vote campaign

UNDP Lebanese Elections Assistance Project launched on 16 April the public media awareness campaign - "Get out the Vote" – which aims to encourage young and first-time voters to vote in the upcoming elections, and to provide and remind the citizens of the essential electoral information on how to vote.

The 1st TV spot was launched on 16 April, and the second one, Voter's Journey, on 24 April and was sent to all local TV stations. Furthermore, and as planned, three animations were developed and produced to remind citizens of the most important steps and procedures of voting:

- How to vote: <https://bit.ly/2w86kP9>
- Ballot Paper: <https://bit.ly/2HJe27U>
- The Do's and Don'ts in the polling station: to be released soon.

In addition, polling booths were delivered to 10 universities with flyers showcasing the steps of voting (see below).



Voter information campaign

The Electoral Management Body in Lebanon - the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) - plays a vital role in informing the citizens with the new procedures and regulations of the electoral law 44/2017, especially those related to voting.

The MoIM produced a comprehensive voter education campaign and, to complement it, UNDP LEAP was requested to provide assistance in developing a media awareness campaign targeting the out of country voters and people with disabilities, aiming at encouraging them to participate in the upcoming elections.

The underlying principle of the campaign is based on informing the targeted audience on how to vote within the frame of the new electoral law and to encourage them to participate in the political and electoral process.

Videos can be viewed under these links:

- How do expats vote: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RcY8_dplu_Q
- How to vote with sign language: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCUfLdJWhM8>
- How to vote with Arabic subtitles: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FyJA88KTKkg>

Youth awareness sessions for the parliamentary elections 2018: Get out the vote!

UNDP LEAP, in partnership with Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) organised five info sessions in four different universities and in various regions AUB (Beirut), AUT (Halat), MUBS (Aley), LIU (Saida). The awareness info sessions targeted youth and university students with the aim to inform them on the new electoral law and encourage them to participate in the upcoming parliamentary

elections. These awareness sessions were also part of a broader get-out-the-vote campaign to motivate and increase youth participation in politics and help in advocating and influencing public behavior to support the inclusion of youth in public life.

The sessions were conducted during the month of April (5-13 April 2018) and were attended by almost 200 university students aged between 19 and 26. The presentations were conducted by the project's team and LADE focal points and covered the electoral cycle, the new electoral law, electoral calendar, the required documents to vote for elections, pre-printed ballot papers and election observation. At the end of the sessions, the project distributed visibility and elections materials. The clip on the awareness sessions is available here : <https://bit.ly/2HD5LBP>

UNDP LEAP developed and produced a vox pop to reflect the opinion of youth and first-time voters on their participation in elections, their aspirations and expectations and their involvement in decision making policies and politics. At the end of these university info sessions, the vox pop was conducted as students were picked up randomly to answer questions related to the new law and other challenges that they are facing as youth. The vox pop will be posted on social media outlets to increase visibility and outreach. The vox pop can be viewed following this link: <https://bit.ly/2JXkISN>



Photos credits: UNDP LEAP

Thematic video clip -Jingle

The UNDP Lebanese Elections Assistance Project produced a small animated video complementing the “get-out-the-vote” campaign and included a jingle with the main objectives to encourage first time

voters and young people to vote, advocate for change and engage in democracy at the same levels as their older counterparts. The jingle addresses the challenges that young people in Lebanon are facing such as access to higher education, pollution, lack of public spaces, unemployment etc. and advocates for a better participation and inclusiveness of youth and first-time voters in the democratic process. The video clip - jingle is available here: <https://bit.ly/2Hdwy3X>.

Electoral dispute resolution (EDR) awareness campaign

As part of its framework, the project aims to support a strengthened capacity for the resolution of elections dispute and an increased public and stakeholders' awareness and understanding on the role of elections dispute bodies, as well as on the measures to access remedies.

In line with these objectives, the project developed and produced a series of four animation clips on elections dispute resolution aiming to provide citizens, as well as other parties involved in elections, with practical information on the main types of complaints and claims that might occur during the different phases of the parliamentary elections, and on the ways to file them. The clips are uploaded on LEAP's social media platforms and were shared by many partners and individuals (@UNDPLEAP).

The clips come as follows:

a. [Complaints related to the Electoral Campaign: Electoral Funding and Spending](#)

This video contains information regarding the complaints that may be submitted during the electoral campaign for the parliamentary elections, notably related to the electoral funding and spending.

b. [Complaints related to the Electoral Campaign: Electoral Media and Advertising](#)

This video provides information on the complaints that may be submitted during the electoral media and advertising phase of the electoral campaign for the parliamentary elections.

c. [Complaints arising from E-Day](#)

This video tackles the violation/s that might occur during E-day which can affect the elections' results.

d. [Challenging the Validity of Election](#)

This video provides information on challenging the election, outlining who is eligible to challenge the validity of the election, when and to whom to submit a challenge.

II. Plans for the next period

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

- Operations and logistics (E-Day operations);
- Voter education initiatives -Get-out-the-vote- (continued);
- Preparations and implementation of the results management system;
- Support to the supervision and monitoring of elections.

For more information on the project on LEAP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Dan Radulescu, 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 project supported a training on warehouse and logistics management targeting National Elections Commission staff.
- The project continued to provide assistance in drafting updated manuals and polling and counting forms in advance of the forthcoming by-elections.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The staff of the National Elections Commission, 29 men and 8 women, participated in a project-supported training on warehouse and logistics management. Over a two-day period, the participants in this training reviewed the present logistics and warehousing practices of the National Elections Commission, identified best practices in this field and highlighted the need for improvements in the system currently employed.

The project continued to provide assistance in drafting updated manuals and polling and counting forms in advance of the forthcoming by-elections.

Following the public launch of the European Union Election Observation Mission's final report on 26 April 2018, the project attended a round table meeting on the mission's recommendations. Key recommendations include aligning Liberia's citizenship act with international standards, a review inter alia of legislation related to candidate and political party registration and complaints and appeals. The project has an output designed specifically to take up election observer recommendations going forward.

II. Plans for the next period

Following agreement with international partners, the project will support a number of key activities in the preparations for the two by-elections that could take place at the end of June 2018. Activities will include support to the delivery of electoral material and logistics, printing and distribution of the voter register, deployment of poll workers and civic and voter education.

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 and visit the [Project's website](#).



MALAWI

Malawi Electoral Commission

MALAWI ELECTORAL CYCLE SUPPORT 2017-2019

The “Malawi Electoral Cycle Support 2017-2019” project is supported by a basket fund that is currently financed by the EU and UNDP. The project will support the internal capacities of the Malawi Electoral Commission through stronger planning, operational and administrative support, as well as in the areas of dispute resolution, communication, voter education, voter registration and results transmission. It will also encourage and support female aspirants to stand for office through mentoring, as well as ensuring that the political and cultural landscape is more accepting of the role women in the political life. The project will also partner with the Centre for Multiparty Democracy-Malawi, the organization that brings political parties together around common interests, to assist political parties to be more resilient organisations working around genuine political programmes and principles of transparency, accountability, fairness and merit.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A validation workshop has been undertaken for the voter education strategy.
- A meeting between Malawi Electoral Commission and electoral stakeholders has been held.
- The Women Political Economic Analysis: A Perception Survey has been launched.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

April saw the conclusion of the deployment of several experts supporting the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) in strengthening certain key internal processes. These include a communications expert that is working on MEC’s communication plan; two voter education experts to gather data on the previous voter education strategy and formulate the new one; and, the disputes handling expert putting together MEC’s guidelines on the handling of future electoral petitions and formal complaints.

The voter education expertise culminated in a national validation workshop held on 23 April with members of civil society, political party representatives, religious leaders and development partners. Aside from some minor comments and suggestions, the strategy was well received and was given significant media attention. The other expert assignments are finalising their draft reports in preparation

for their respective validations.

On a procurement side, the project has imported 7 servers for use at the district level which will allow MEC to upload voter registration data onto them before exporting the data to the MEC server mainframe. It has also procured finger-printing software which will assist in the identification of citizens who want to register as voters but have lost their biometric national ID Card or had it damaged or stolen. In this way, MEC is ensuring that there is no disenfranchisement of citizens on the voter register but who have not got an ID card when they come forward to register as voters.

A validation conference took place on 4 April regarding the UN WOMEN supported study on the "Political Economy Analysis and Perception Study for Women in Politics". This is a flagship report which will inform the project and other actors working on gender empowerment. The objectives of the validation meeting were to (i) present the findings of the Political Economy Analysis and Perception Study to the various stakeholders in the gender community (ii) initiate a discussion and subsequently validate the findings (iii) disseminate the findings to the various stakeholders in the gender community.

On the regional HeforShe campaigns, UNWOMEN has been working with local chiefs as HeforShe champions who will support the mobilisation of women in politics. The first set of chiefs engaged with are from the districts of Karonga, Salima, Dedza and Mangochi.

With project support, the Centre for Multi-Party Democracy (CMD) has initiated discussions and consultations with Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Justice to explore opportunities for budgetary allocation to CMD to support its coordination work with political parties. The first consultative meetings have supported interaction with the Budget/Finance Committee on the subject matter. This will be an ongoing dialogue process with government and other partners and will form part of CMD's sustainability framework which will be developed.

The Centre for Multi-Party Democracy - with the technical support from the project - organised a technical level meeting to review the new political parties bill. The meeting brought together legal experts from the Ministry of Justice, the Law Commission and the Law Society of Malawi who discussed the new bill in detail and identified and isolated key provisions of the law and provided legal guidance on what is required of political parties. CMD also organised a high-level meeting between the political parties and MEC on addressing key issues such as voter registration and political violence.

II. Project activities during the reporting period

The next period will see the validation of the Disputes Handling Guidelines as well as MEC's communication plan. It will also see the review of the chiefs' code of conduct and the initiating of training and sensitisation of media on electoral issues. It will also see the identification of the violence against women monitoring mechanism and the design of a situation room for women political aspirants. CMD will be supported in engaging with the youth and women wings of political parties to discuss how they are mainstreamed into the main political party structures.

For more information on the Malawi Electoral Cycle Support Project, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Richard Cox, richard.cox@undp.org.



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

- The project focused on analytical work.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The team conducting the impact evaluation for the Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) professional development programme that the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) implemented in Nepal from 2007 to 2016 with extensive support from the Electoral Support Project (ESP), IFES and International IDEA, presented its findings to the ECN as well as to development partners and submitted a draft report.

The evaluation concludes that BRIDGE received a high level of acceptance as a professional development tool for ECN, created a paradigm shift in training methodology at ECN, significantly contributed to the capacity development of ECN, and improved the quality of relationships between ECN and its stakeholders. The evaluation team identified challenges for the future of BRIDGE in Nepal, which include its high cost as well as some shortcomings in the ECN knowledge management, among others. The team also recommended steps to be taken so for ECN to take full ownership of BRIDGE and establish it as a continuous learning process in future.

The two external consultants conducting the final evaluation of ESP started their work on 23 April.

In response to the ECN request for continued UN electoral assistance in the coming years, the UN

Resident Coordinator wrote to ECN recommending a no-cost extension of ESP to the end of 2018.

II. Plans for the next period

ESP will continue the final evaluation and focus on analytical work, in the areas of electoral dispute resolution, gender equity and social inclusion.

For more information on the Nepal ESP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Vincent da Cruz, 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

- On 4 April, the Chief Electoral Commissioner and National Returning Officer declared the results of the presidential run-off election, in which Julius Maada Bio of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party was victorious. This concluded two years of intense electoral activities including two boundary delimitation exercises, compilation of a biometric voters' register and distribution of voter ID cards, conduct of non-national elections and the four-tier simultaneous elections held on 7 March followed by the presidential run-off on 31 March.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Project activities during the reporting period

After the elections, the National Electoral Commission (NEC) held a one-day focus group discussion on lessons learned with 10 polling staff from Freetown who were involved in the March elections. This was to share experiences, lesson learned and document recommendations to incorporate in the next elections.

The project funded a one-day debriefing in Freetown with the 19 persons with disabilities (PWDs) recruited by the project as Assistant Voter Education and Training Officers (AVETOs). During the

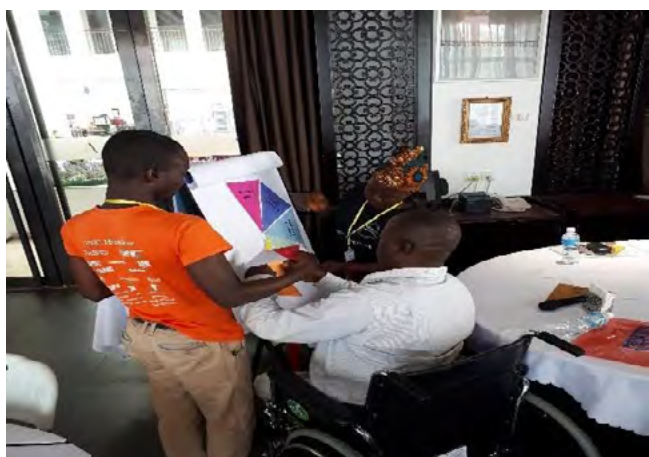
debriefing, the AVETOs presented what went well, what went not so well and what could be improved. They presented the reports from their areas, and this information will be collated in a final report covering the first round and the run-off.

In the last week of April, the project funded a three-day Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) workshop on Introduction to Electoral Administration aimed at enhancing the electoral awareness of the AVETOs and members of Disabled Persons Organizations in Sierra Leone. This activity is in line with the project outcome to develop the capacities of the electoral stakeholders, in particular persons living with disability (PWD).

The following topics were covered: legal framework; international standard-election laws and conventions; electoral cycle, election stakeholders, justice and representation; introduction of electoral systems; majoritarian electoral systems; concepts of voter education, civic education and voter information; introduction to electoral access; what does access mean; access in election phases; developing an access strategy; integrity of elections.



Presentation of group work on the importance of elections.
Photo credits: Kwalar Vera



Activity on mapping the electoral cycle.
Photo credits: Kwalar Vera



Group photo of participants (AVETOs and DPOs).
Photo credits: Kwalar Vera

II. Plans for the next period

NEC will hold a post-election retreat in first week of May. NEC supported by the project's team will review the 2014 capacity assessment and identify key areas for support.

For more information on SNEC, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Ms. Kate Sullivan, 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 project has provided support to the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC) awareness actions in connection with Gizo-Kolombangara by-election.
- The recruitment process for the project's graduate programme has been launched.
- The award ceremony for the secondary school Essay & Poster Competition has been held.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

SECSIP graduate programme

With a view to address the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC) human capacity constraints, the project Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands II (SECSIP II) has devised a 'graduate programme' initiative that will function as a temporary mechanism to contribute to the

enhancement of capacities and sustainability of partner organizations¹. The expected outcome of this programme is two-fold:

- to contribute to the enhancement of technical capacities and sustainability of the partners organisations;
- to provide professional experience to young graduates in highly demanded areas of work.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the Permanent Secretary (PS) of Ministry of Home Affairs, PS Civil Service and the Secretary to the Prime Minister provides for the general framework and mechanisms of this initiative. The recruitment of incumbents of 7 posts (SIEC Operations, Training, Awareness and IT assistants and PPC Legal, Training and Research assistants) commenced in late April. The selected candidates are expected to report to office by 1 June 2018.

Support to Gizo-Kolombangara by-election

The project's National Media Consultant has provided technical advice to support SIEC Media and Awareness Manager in the design and implementation of awareness actions for this by-election. The project has also provided financial assistance covering production and airing costs for the dissemination of the by-election information including a 15-minutes radio programme informing the public on the nomination requirements, electoral campaign policy, electoral offences, etc.

This initiative falls under the project's output 3.1.2 to establish products (media and database) in support of voter awareness and education.

Support to election operations and biometric voter registration (BVR) and elections procurement

With a view to provide BVR technical support and build a core team of national expertise, the project is in the process of engaging a Senior Biometric Adviser, Software Engineer and United Nations Volunteer Data Management Centre Officer.

An Elections Operations Specialist is also expected to start late May and will work closely with SIEC Head of Operations in the planning, logistics and overall preparation of the upcoming electoral events.

SIEC has sought project's support for the procurement of equipment for the upcoming national registration campaign and for the preparation of the national general election. The identified equipment and goods include BVR kits batteries, printer batteries, cartridges, fingerprint scanner, portable generators, polling kits, ballot boxes and bottles of indelible ink. The BVR equipment is expected to arrive in late June 2018 while the polling materials will be delivered to Solomon Islands in October 2018.

Research on women's political leadership and participation

The project commissioned a research on women's leadership and political participation in 10 selected constituencies. Field data collection commenced in early April including site visits to 10 constituencies located in Honiara, Malaita, Western Province, Isabel, and Central Province where 93 interviews were conducted including:

- o 34 women and 59 men

¹ Main SECSIP beneficiaries are the Office of SIEC and the Office of the Registrar of the Political Parties Commission.

- o 38 candidates from the target constituencies; 24 candidates from other constituencies; 15 women leaders, 16 other / political personnel (e.g. campaign managers)
- o Of the 62 former candidates interviewed, 51 were national (13 women) and 11 provincial candidates (3 women)
- The provincial breakdown of candidates included:
 - o 9 Central Province (5 Ngella; 4 Russels/Savo)
 - o 7 Honiara (5 Central Honiara; 2 East Honiara)
 - o 9 Isabel (2 Gao/Bugotu; 7 Maringe/Kokota)
 - o 3 Malaita (1 Fataleka; 2 Lau/Mbaelelea)
 - o 10 Western (2 North Vella La Vella; 8 West New Geogia / Vona Vona)
- In Fataleka, due to difficult access to many former candidates, additional interviews were carried out with individuals involved in campaign processes (for example, campaign managers)

It is expected that the findings and recommendations of this study will provide the basis for targeted actions for the development of a strategic plan addressing the barriers to women's participation in the elections as candidates and contribute to the full incorporation of women as political leaders achieving enhanced ability of women to act as leaders and representatives.

Poster and essay competition award ceremony

An award ceremony was held on 5 April 2018 at the Art Gallery Display Room. Opening remarks were provided by UNDP Country Manager who reflected upon the substantial increase in participants in this edition. The key note speech was provided by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs who presented the Awards to the winners in the junior student category. This was followed by the introduction and presentation of awards to the winners in the senior student category by the EU Ambassador who ended his remarks quoting the words of award recipient from Bishop Epalle School 'to dream big, and to take steady steps towards the increase of women's leadership in Solomon Islands' and poster winner from King George School with her piece 'break a barrier, raise a nation', expressing his support towards the idea of a society where both men and women work together side by side on equal terms to effectively overcome barriers and obstacles to lead the progress of their country.

The Australian High Commissioner presented the awards for the teachers' category and referred to the importance of educators and particularly secondary school educators expressing his admiration to these teachers who, with limited means and competing priorities not only have encouraged their students to participate in this competition, but have also shared their reflections on how to encourage women's leadership and political participation.

A total of 170 entries were received in this edition experiencing a substantial increase over the inaugural edition held in late 2016 which had 42 entries. The breakdown of entries was as follows: poster competition with a total of 37 participants, including 23 female; and the essay competition with a total of 133 participants, including 74 female.

The panel of markers included representatives from Solomon Islands Artist Association, Media Association of Solomon Islands (MASI), the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), the Ministry of Women, Youths, Children and Family Affairs (MWYCFA), Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development (MEHRD) and teachers from secondary schools.

II. Plans for the next period

List of activities planned for the following reporting period:

- On-going process for the recruitment of candidates for the graduate programme;
- Completion of data-centre and installation of the BVR server in the new datacentre in the SIEC;
- Completion of research on women's leadership and political participation in selected constituencies;
- Arrival of Operations Specialist.

For more information on the SECSIP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Ms. Olga Rabade, 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 National Independent Election Commission (NIEC) awarded temporary registration certificates to three political parties bringing the total to 10 parties registered so far
- The NIEC conducted a by-election to fill a vacant seat in Galmadug State in the Federal House of the People

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Registration of political parties

On 8 April, the National Independent Election Commission (NIEC) awarded temporary registration certificates to three political parties bringing the total to 10 parties registered to date. The newly registered parties are: Tiir Party, Wadajir Party and Samu Party. The NIEC indicated that a dozen or more political associations are under consideration for temporary registration certificates if they meet the criteria. The NIEC has the mandate to oversee and conduct the registration process of political

parties in line with the 2016 political parties' law. The political party registration is envisaged in two phases: temporary registration until registration of voters, followed by official registration based on the submission of the signatories of 10,000 registered voters from minimum 9 of the 18 regions that existed before 1991. Upon inauguration of the 10th Federal Parliament on 26 December 2016, it was announced that all members of parliaments would become a member of a political party within two years.

The list with the registered political parties can be found [here](#).



NIEC registration of political parties, 8 April 2018, Mogadishu. Photo credits: NIEC

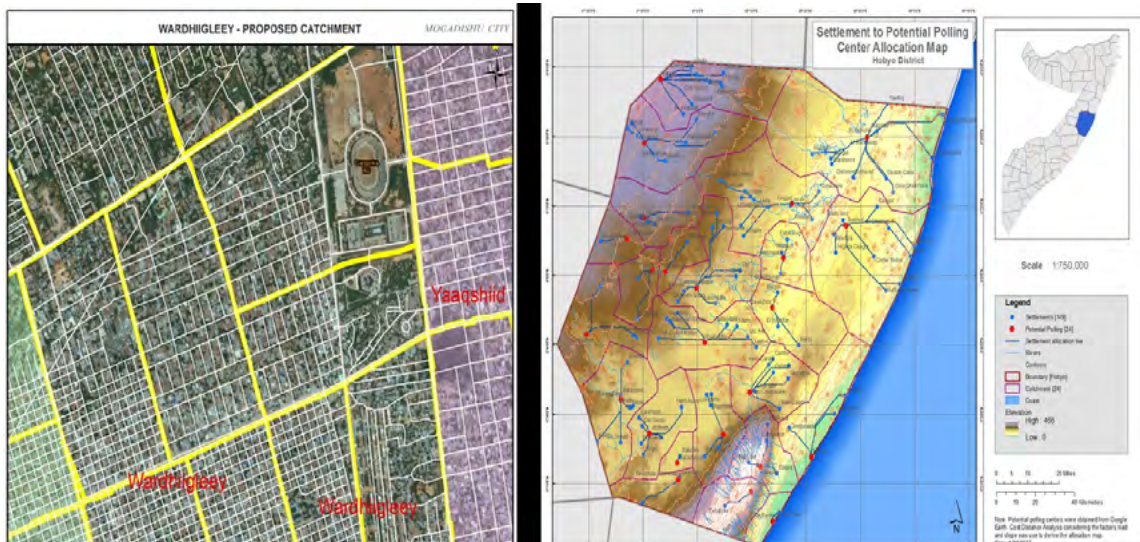
By-election

On 15 April, the NIEC conducted a by-election to fill a vacant seat in Galmudug State in the Federal House of the People. In line with the procedures of the '2016 electoral process', including the provision of 51 clan-based voting delegates, the NIEC announced that the election would be held in Dhusamareeb, the new capital of Galmudug. The chief elder of Duduble sub-clan submitted the list of 51 delegates, including 16 women, and 10 youth. Out of three candidates, Mr. Abdullahi Farah Weheliye was elected in the first round with 28 votes.

More information about past by-elections conducted by the NIEC and the results are available on the NIEC's website: <http://niec.so/en/election/>

Capacity development of the National Independent Electoral Commission

The UN Integrated Electoral Support Group to Somalia is supporting the NIEC with the establishment of a GIS unit (geographic information system unit) to define voter catchment areas based on satellite images and geographic indicators. The UN supported the NIEC with the procurement of sophisticated GIS hardware and the training of Somali specialists.



Figures 1 and 2: GIS mapping of potential voter catchment areas.

On 18 and 19 April, UNDP initiated a micro-capacity assessment of the NIEC, reviewing the institution’s administrative and financial management system, and help to decide the appropriate cash transfer modality and related assurance activities. The assessment includes recommendations for further capacity development of the NIEC by the project.

II. Plans for the next period

- UN electoral needs assessment mission (NAM) (12-21 May) to assess the parameters of UN electoral support to Somalia;
- Workshop with NIEC on voter registration concepts and planning (14-16 May). The elaboration on the voter registration feasibility study, the preparations for enhanced sessions on voter registration and different registration methodologies will take place next month.

For more information on the UNDP/UNSOM Joint Programme, please contact Filip Warnants, 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 24 April 2018, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) conducted local government by-elections for the office of Councillor in 16 wards in different districts of the country and announced the results on 25 April.
- The ECZ conducted multi-stakeholder public forums in six provinces.
- The ECZ is undertaking preparations for further by-elections scheduled for June 2018.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Stakeholder Events

April saw the continuation of the roll-out of a series of ten public forums to be held in all provincial capitals of the country, with the support of the project, as part of the electoral commission’s aim to promote continuous engagement with electoral stakeholders throughout all phases of the electoral cycle. These forums are open to the general public and aim to encourage multi-stakeholder participation, including local authorities, police officials, religious leaders, civil society organisations (CSOs) and media representatives. The events provided an opportunity for citizens to interact with the Commission, ask questions and

provide feedback on issues relating to elections in Zambia. Following the implementation of the first two public forums in March, the ECZ held six further public forums between 6 and 23 April 2018.

Other project activities were deferred until after conduct of the April local by-elections.

II. Plans for the next period

- Conduct of ECZ provincial public forums in the remaining two provinces;
- Convening of a follow-up meeting with stakeholders to agree the way forward on the development of a national domestic observation framework;
- Initiation of a training programme for ECZ on COBIT 5, an established framework for the governance and management of enterprise IT.

For more information on the Support to the Zambia Electoral Cycle, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Ms. Katie Green, katherine.green@undp.org.



ZIMBABWE

UNDP Zimbabwe

ZIMBABWE ELECTORAL COMMISSION CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT (ZIM-ECO)

The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project (ZIM-ECO) focuses on developing the institutional and organizational capacity of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) to meet its Constitutional mandate. The project provides technical assistance to voter registration process to promote its credibility and inclusiveness, strengthens election dispute resolution mechanism, fosters gender mainstreaming during the electoral cycle and promotes participation of women, youth and people with disabilities in the electoral process.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ZIM-ECO project has been providing support in key capacity building and institutional strengthening areas of election operations, Biometric Voter Registration (BVR), operational planning for BVR, training of election staff, voter education, stakeholder, engagement, election dispute resolution and gender mainstreaming.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Electoral reforms: UNDP has provided technical advisory support to the electoral commission with regards to possible electoral amendments, and has been advocating for the adoption of these legal and regulatory reforms. The civil society organisations (CSOs) and political parties have also been encouraged to take up the issues with the Parliamentary Committee reviewing the Electoral Act. A draft bill is now under discussion.

Technical assistance for voter registration operations: The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) has registered a total of 5.42 million potential voters and has shared desegregated data by gender and age. The analysis shows that 54% women have been registered and youth (aged 18-34) represent 44% of the registered voters. The data cleaning exercise has been completed and the de-duplication process

has been started. Voter inspection is planned from 19-29 May 2018 and this is a critical process to ensure transparency and accuracy of the voter's roll. The voter inspection process is planned across 10,000 polling stations, where the voter's roll for each polling station will be displayed.

UNDP is providing technical assistance to ZEC in reaching out to the voters during the inspection process. A SMS facility has been set up, which will send SMS with details of a registered voter, to around 3.5 million voters who have provided their phone numbers. Other voters can use a USSD¹ facility by providing their national ID to the ZEC USSD number "265" and get their voter registration details, this facility is currently being set up and tested. In addition to these services a national voter education campaign has been developed, with the message "Time to Inspect".

Training of polling staff: The project assisted ZEC with development of training methodology that covers the different categories of election staff from ZEC headquarters to the polling station level. The first stage of the training includes training for the "Candidate Nomination" process, which will be rolled out in May 2018. For the polling staff training, an innovation has been made, to use a training video. This video has been developed and covers the entire polling process, starting with opening of the polling stations to conduct of polls to counting and tabulation and announcement of results. The training of trainers for polling has been planned for June with the full roll out starting in July 2018.

Stakeholder consultations: The stakeholder consultations are continuing with the political parties, CSOs, faith-based organisations (FBOs), media and the diplomatic community to discuss issues and challenges regarding the implementation of the BVR process and general preparation for elections. An Election Dispute Resolution (EDR) workshop was organized by ZEC in last week of March 2018 and, as an outcome of the workshop, Multi-Party Liaison Committees are being formed even before the legally prescribed period to address issues and conflicts arising among political parties and candidates before and during the election campaign period.

Voter education campaign for elections: In partnership with CSOs and with technical support from UNDP, ZEC is developing three voter education campaigns. The "Campaign for Inspection" has already been developed and is being rolled out. A "Campaign for Elections" is in the final stages and it will be accompanied by a targeted "Campaign for Women Participation in Election". UNDP is supporting ZEC to roll out these campaigns, through printed voter education material, radio and TV campaign, social media messages, road shows, call centre and SMS messages. UNDP is working with UN Women on the campaign promoting women participation.

Human rights and dispute resolution: The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) has been able to mobilize funds from Government resources for the implementation of the Election Strategy and UNDP has mobilized funds from Japan and additional resources from its thematic window. UNDP provided technical assistance to ZHRC to develop tools for the monitoring of elections and developed a campaign for protection and promotion of human rights during elections. The message developed for the campaign is "My Vote, My Right, My Choice".

Gender mainstreaming: UNDP is working in partnership with UN Women for implementing gender

¹ Unstructured Supplementary Service Data

mainstreaming interventions across all the project activities. A gender baseline survey with nationally represented sample was conducted and its findings are being used to develop a gender policy for ZEC and to identify key interventions to bring improvements in areas of voter registration, voter education, women's political participation and media coverage. As indicated above a gender focused campaign has been developed and will be rolled out.

II. Project activities during the reporting period

- Roll out of the inspection process and voter education campaigns for inspection;
- Finalisation of training material for polling staff trainings;
- Discussion on media monitoring and conflict management training with ZEC;
- Developing procedures and processes for voter registration inspection;
- Involving the police management in developing training methodology and materials.

For more information on the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project (ZIM-ECO), please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Azhar Malik, azhar.malik@undp.org.