



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

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 July, 2017

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

From 10 to 12 July, the National Independent Electoral Commission of Somalia (NIEC) together with the UNDP/UNSOM electoral Joint Programme and UNDP RBAS, organized a political party registration workshop in Nairobi with representatives from other African and Arab electoral management bodies for them to share experiences and expertise in light of Somalia's first political party registration process since 1969.

SOMALIA

On 10 July, the OSCE/ODIHR Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) published the final report on the 2 April 2017 National Assembly elections. The general assessment is that "the process of voter identification through the VADs was conducted efficiently and without significant issues." See the whole report here: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/328226?download=true>

ARMENIA

In a historic session held on the 16 of June, Lebanon's Parliament approved the country's first proportional electoral law since its independence in 1943.

LEBANON

SUMMARY

ARMENIA: On 4 July 2017, the UN and the Central Electoral Commission of Armenia (CEC) signed the official document for the transfer of property from the UN to the CEC of all voter authentication equipment procured for the implementation of the voter authentication process in Armenia. - On 10 July, the OSCE/ODIHR Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) published the final report on the 2 April 2017 National Assembly elections. The general assessment is that "the process of voter identification through the VADs was conducted efficiently and without significant issues."

KENYA: Six days ahead of the August 8, 2017 General Elections, a total of 19,611,423 Kenyans were registered as voters: 47% are women, while 51% are youth aged 18 – 35 years. There are 14,523 candidates, 9.72% of these aspirants are women, vying for 1,882 elective positions. - The project supported IEBC and the National Police Service to train 60 master trainers and 1,670 county trainers under the innovative Electoral Security Arrangement Programme (ESAP).

LEBANON: In a historic session held on the 16 of June, Lebanon's Parliament approved the country's first proportional electoral law since its independence in 1943. As per the final draft approved by the Parliament the law divides Lebanon into 15 electoral districts based on a proportional system, and grants a preferential vote in the 26 minor districts. However, the new electoral framework does not include provisions for women's quota or lowering the voting age. Parliament's ratification of the landmark vote proportional law will clear the way for elections in May 2018, the first time since 2009. Also the draft law includes an article that calls for an 11-month "technical extension" of the current Parliament.

LIBERIA: Training of trainers was conducted for 41 county-based trainers in advance of the full rollout of training for staff on replacing of voter registration cards. - Election security training commenced on 17 July 2017 for civilian security agencies including the police responsible for election security matters and has been attended by 45 lead trainers. - Phase two of the civic and voter education campaign has been completed following the organization of over 900 community entertaining events reaching out to over 100,000 community members.

MALAWI: On 3rd July, 2017 the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) in collaboration with the National Registration Bureau (NRB) organized an interface meeting with the Public Affairs Committee (PAC), a quasi-religious civil society body, to discuss the voter registration exercise using the biometric National ID as proof of eligibility.

NEPAL: ECN considers the use of electronic voting machines for next electoral cycles. - Continued ESP support for this electoral cycle and beyond requested.

SOMALIA: From 10 to 12 July, the National Independent Electoral Commission of Somalia (NIEC) together with the UNDP/UNSOM electoral Joint Programme and UNDP RBAS, organized a political party registration workshop in Nairobi with representatives from other African and Arab electoral management bodies for them to share experiences and expertise in light of Somalia's first political party registration process since 1969. - On 22 July, a delegation of the NIEC conducted a mission to the Federal Member State of Jubaland and engaged with key dignitaries in Kismayo, including the State President, Members of Parliament and civil society. The State President of Jubaland offered his support to the Commission in line with its constitutional mandate. - On 26 July, the NIEC Chairperson addressed the House of the People on steps to be taken in preparation of general 'one person, one vote' elections by 2021. While providing an update on progress, activities and challenges, the NIEC also delivered a presentation on electoral systems and replied to several questions on the necessary steps forward in preparation of universal elections.

ZIMBABWE: The project has been providing support in key capacity building and technical assistance areas of Biometric Voter Registration (BVR), election operational planning, voter education, election dispute resolution and gender mainstreaming.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ONGOING ELECTORAL PROJECTS WITH EU FUNDING	1
ARMENIA	2
GUINEA	5
KENYA	6
LEBANON	8
LIBERIA	11
MALAWI	13
NEPAL	14
SOLOMON ISLANDS	16
SOMALIA	17
ZIMBABWE	20

ONGOING ELECTORAL PROJECTS WITH EU FUNDING

Country	Project Title	Reference	EU Contribution	Start Date	End Date
Afghanistan	Support to Electoral Assistance in Afghanistan	DCI-ASIE/2015/368-884	€ 15,500,000.00	01.06.16	31.03.19
Armenia	Support to the Electoral Process in Armenia (SEPA)	ENI/2017/383-645	€ 2,000,000.00	01.07.16	01.10.17
Georgia	Studies and Research of Media Election Coverage in Georgia for Local Self-Government Elections 2017	ENI/2016/378-735	€ 276,663.00	01.01.17	31.12.17
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 Support to the Lebanese Elections Assistance Programme (LEAP): Building Sustainability for Implementation of Electoral Reforms	ENPI/2013/333-144	€ 1,810,000.00	01.01.14	31.12.17
	Lebanese Electoral Assistance Programme for the 2013 Parliamentary Elections	ENPI/2013/316-094	€ 3,000,000.00	01.01.13	31.12.17
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 Project - MECS	FED/2013/321-549	€ 5,000,000.00	01.06.13	30.06.17
Nepal	Electoral Support Project-Institutional Strengthening and Professional Development Support for the Election Commission of Nepal (ESP)	DCI-ASIE/2012/305-833	€ 8,400,000.00	12.01.12	11.01.18
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	30.09.17
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



SUPPORT TO THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN ARMENIA (SEPA)

The UNDP project “Support to the Electoral Process in Armenia (SEPA)”, which started in July 2016 with the support of the EU, US, Germany, UK and the Government of Armenia, provides assistance to the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Armenia to increase transparency of the electoral process and improve confidence of voters in the process by introducing an electronic voter authentication (VA) process at polling stations. Technical assistance is provided for the procurement of the technical equipment, developing the VA software and procedures, support the CEC in training voter authentication devices (VADs) operators and support the CEC in implementing a voter education campaign to familiarize voters and other stakeholders with the VA process as well as other novelties introduced by the 2016 Electoral Code.

HIGHLIGHTS

- On 4 July 2017, the UN and the Central Electoral Commission of Armenia (CEC) signed the official document for the transfer of property from the UN to the CEC of all voter authentication equipment procured for the implementation of the voter authentication process in Armenia.
- On 10 July, the OSCE/ODIHR Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) published the final report on the 2 April 2017 National Assembly elections. The general assessment is that “the process of voter identification through the VADs was conducted efficiently and without significant issues.”

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human rights (ODIHR) published the final report on the Armenian National Assembly elections held 2 April 2017 (<http://www.osce.org/odihr/328226?download=true>). The final report reaffirmed that the Armenian authorities largely respected “fundamental freedoms” during the “well-administered” vote. The report also presents a number of overall positive observations on the voter authentication process: “The process of voter identification through the VADs was conducted efficiently and without significant issues... » and «The introduction of the VADs was welcomed by most OSCE/ODIHR EOM interlocutors as a useful tool for

building confidence in the integrity of election day proceedings”.

On 4 July 2017, the UN Resident Representative and the CEC Chairman signed the official transfer of property from the UN to the CEC of all voter authentication equipment. The Government of Armenia Focal Point for Elections was also present at the signature and renewed its appreciation for the role played by the UN in the implementation of an “important phase of Armenia’s change of political system” and for the support of the donors, namely the EU, US, UK and Germany.



Transfer of the Voter Authentication Devices (VADs), 4 July 2017. Photo credit: UNDP Armenia

On 17 July, the Chair of the CEC and the project team finalized the concept notes of the CEC lessons-learned exercise and the strategic planning workshop. The lessons-learned exercise will take place on 5 and 6 September while the workshop “introduction to strategic planning for electoral administrations” is scheduled for 12 and 13 September.

The Project IT advisors have completed the testing of the latest version of the VIU Client – 2.2.13.6 on 27 July and are in the process of reviewing the code for final certification of the VIU Client software.

The project voter education (VE) team completed the compilation of all graphic design templates and archive of VE and communication documents which was handed over to the CEC on 20 July. The archive includes all materials designed for the voter education campaign as well as communication materials (CEC pens, business cards, banners, letter heads, etc.). The templates, for future utilization, were presented to the CEC followed by explanation on the usage.


The Project VE team finalized the terms of reference for the website developer for the CEC website restructuring. In cooperation with the CEC IT Department a potential candidate was identified for the development work to start as soon as the first week of August and completing the task, tentatively by the end of September.

II. Plans for the next period

- Drafting the documentation required for the completion of the handover of the VA process to the CEC.
- Finalize organizational preparations for the lessons-learned exercise and Strategic Planning workshops scheduled respectively for 5-6 September and 12-13 September.

For more information on the Support to the Electoral Cycle in Armenia (SEPA), please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Ms. Costanza Lucangeli, costanza.lucangeli@undp.org.



 GUINEA

 PACEG

PROJET D'APPUI AU CYCLE ELECTORAL DE LA GUINEE

I. Project activities during the reporting period

NTR

III. Plans for the next period

NTR



KENYA

IEBC Communications Department

STRENGTHENING THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN KENYA

HIGHLIGHTS

- Six days ahead of the August 8, 2017 General Elections, a total of 19,611,423 Kenyans were registered as voters: 47% are women, while 51% are youth aged 18 – 35 years. There are 14,523 candidates, 9.72% of these aspirants are women, vying for 1,882 elective positions.
- The project supported IEBC and the National Police Service to train 60 master trainers and 1,670 county trainers under the innovative Electoral Security Arrangement Programme (ESAP).

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The project supported IEBC and the National Police Service to train 60 master trainers and 1,670 county trainers under the innovative Electoral Security Arrangement Programme (ESAP). ESAP seeks to strengthen capacities of the security agencies on important electoral security aspects including renewed understanding of the revised electoral legislation, investigation and prosecution of electoral offences and early warning systems. The project also supported production and dissemination of 180,000 copies of the electoral security handbook, electoral security training manual, electoral security police role card and electoral gender based violence handbook. These materials will be used to train over 150,000 security officials from the Kenya Police Service, Administration Police Service, National Youth Service, Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service, National Prisons Service, that will be deployed on election day.

The project supported Media Council of Kenya (MCK) to train 250 journalists on balanced, gender responsive and conflict sensitive coverage and reporting of elections. Sixty television stations, 150 radio stations and 2,900 journalists were accredited to cover the 2017 general elections by the IEBC.

The project supported IEBC to publish regulations for development and submission of party nomination

lists. A briefing for political parties was also held by IEBC with the support of the project, including to continue to provide information on status of preparedness. The briefing was attended by 64 political parties which submitted the party lists as per regulations. The party lists elicited 100 disputes which are in the process of being resolved.

The project provided ongoing support to Elections Observation Group (ELOG). ELOG is a long-term, permanent and national network of CSOs, including FBOs (faith based organizations), mandated to undertake impartial, integral and inclusive observation and monitoring of electoral processes. Through this support, ELOG has deployed 290 long-term observers, 83 Special Interest Group observers, 21 hate speech monitors, 5710 General Observers, 290 Constituency Tallying Centre Observers, and 1,703 PVT (parallel vote tabulation) Observers. The project also supported the Kenya National Commission for Human rights (KNCHR) to recruit and train 84 monitors in 30 counties. The monitors are used to identify and report violations of various human rights, especially the right to elect and the right to be elected, before, during and after the 2017 General Elections.

II. Plans for the next period

- The project will continue to provide technical assistance to all domestic observation groups supported under the project before, during and after the 2017 General Elections on August 8. The project will provide ongoing support to ELOG and KNCHR to undertake observation and monitoring of the GE.
- During the month of August 2017, the project will support Office of the Registrar of Political Parties to develop a comprehensive reference popular guide for the Political Parties Act, its amendments and other laws relevant to the activity of political parties. This will also be necessary for sustained political party strengthening post elections.
- The project will commission evaluation of the effectiveness of voter education initiatives; assessment of the capacity of political parties to foster internal democracy and undertake credible primaries; and a mid-term evaluation of the project.

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.



LEBANON



LEBANESE ELECTIONS ASSISTANCE PROJECT

HIGHLIGHTS

- In a historic session held on the 16 of June, Lebanon's Parliament approved the country's first proportional electoral law since its independence in 1943. As per the final draft approved by the Parliament the law divides Lebanon into 15 electoral districts based on a proportional system, and grants a preferential vote in the 26 minor districts.
- However, the new electoral framework does not include provisions for women's quota or lowering the voting age.
- Parliament's ratification of the landmark vote proportional law will clear the way for elections in May 2018, the first time since 2009. Also the draft law includes an article that calls for an 11-month "technical extension" of the current Parliament.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

In the reporting period UNDP LEAP continued supporting the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) in the preparatory phases towards May 2018 elections. For this, the project is working closely with the specialized departments of the Ministry in the following key areas:

- Support in drafting of the subsidiary legislation to ensure legal consistency and a tentative electoral calendar;
- Support in the development of a comprehensive operational plan which includes key electoral processes such as: training program, voter education, operations and logistics, procurement plan and candidates registration and results management plans;
- Technical assistance and advisory support for the required technical specification of sensitive and non-sensitive electoral materials (ballot papers, ballot boxes, indelible ink etc.).

As the preparations are progressing it is expected that the actual implementation of these plans would start in the last quarter of the year.

Also, as the proposed gender quota was not endorsed by the parliament, LEAP continues to work

with partners and stakeholders (UN Women, Ministry of Women's Affairs, and national NGOs) in order to identify and implement alternative modalities to encourage women participation in the upcoming elections. Among the initiatives considered for the next period the project will contribute to the following proposed actions:

- Info sessions and briefings organized and facilitated by the project focused on the provisions of the new law, targeting potential women candidates;
- Media campaign encouraging women to participate in the next elections as candidates/voters and highlighting the possible temporary special measures beyond gender quota;
- Publications and toolkits promoting gender equality and women participation in elections.

II. Plans for the next period

As agreed with the national stakeholders and implementing partners, for the next period LEAP will continue to provide technical assistance and advisory support for the organization of the 2018 parliamentary elections in the following main areas of intervention:

Management and implementation of elections

- Strengthening strategic planning capacity;
- Increasing the efficiency of the candidate registration and results management systems through automation (software and hardware);
- Strengthening electoral officials' professional knowledge and awareness through comprehensive training programs;
- Increasing access to electoral processes for persons with disabilities;
- Supporting electoral operations and logistics for elections.

Supervision and monitoring of elections

- Supporting the establishment and operational capacity of the supervisory body for electoral campaigns Supervisory Commission on the Elections (SCE);
- Strengthening SCE capacity to implement its mandate.

Voter education and information

- Design, development and production of comprehensive education and information campaigns on changes to the electoral framework;
- Promoting public participation in electoral processes;
- Developing public civic awareness campaigns including voter registration and voter education campaigns.

Resolution of electoral disputes

- Supporting a transparent, effective and accessible election dispute resolution mechanism;
- Strengthening the capacity for electoral dispute resolution;
- Promoting transparency and raising public awareness on the role of the Constitutional Council on electoral disputes.

Women's participation in elections

- Strengthening the knowledge and awareness of women in regard to electoral participation in elections and representation in eligible positions;
- Providing a comprehensive knowledge base of the appropriate affirmative measures and policies that would enhance the participation of women in electoral processes;
- Developing knowledge products and toolkits for the effective implementation, and engage in direct initiatives to promote women as candidates and as election officials.

For more information on the project on LEAP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Dan Radulescu, dan.radulescu@undp.org.



LIBERIA

Election Project/UNDP Liberia

SUPPORT TO THE 2015 – 2018 LIBERIAN ELECTORAL CYCLE

The project to support the electoral process in Liberia aims to strengthen the capacity of the National Election Commission (NEC) to successfully carry out electoral processes within the electoral cycle 2015-2018. Key in this regard is the preparation and conduct of the Presidential and General elections scheduled for 10th October 2017. Among other specific objectives, it introduces modern administrative systems and procedures, enhances its communications and public outreach and supports voter registration ahead of the elections. 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.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Training of trainers was conducted for 41 county-based trainers in advance of the full rollout of training for staff on replacing of voter registration cards.
- Election security training commenced on 17 July 2017 for civilian security agencies, including the police responsible for election security matters and has been attended by 45 lead trainers.
- Phase two of the civic and voter education campaign has been completed following the organization of over 900 community entertaining events reaching out to over 100,000 community members.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Two independent legal experts supported by the project provided the National Elections Commission with legal support.

Training of trainers was conducted for 41 county-based trainers in advance of the full rollout of training for staff on replacing of voter registration cards. A complementary manual was produced guiding staff in procedures for such replacements. The budget for training in advance of the 10 October 2017 elections was also completed.

Logistics and operational plans for election delivery were drafted and a communication plan improving field level reporting was finalized.

Election security training commenced on 17 July 2017 for civilian security agencies including the police responsible for election security matters. A total of 45 lead trainers underwent training on election procedures and best practice policing for elections. A pocket book was produced for easy reference at polling place level.

Phase two of the civic and voter education campaign is completed. During this phase 925 community events, such as palaver hut meetings and theatre performances, were organized reaching over 100,000 community members, including women and first time voters. A total of 169 hours of entertainment, including football matches and concerts, reached 30,000 people. Radio content was also produced for broadcast across all 15 counties. In a survey conducted by national election observers, 82.4 percent of respondents stated they had 'adequate information about the voter exhibition process.'

II. Plans for the next period

- The period for replacing lost, damaged or corrected voter identity cards is scheduled to open on 7 August 2017 for a five-day period.
- The official election campaign period starts on 31 July 2017.
- A third phase of the civic and voter education campaign improving public awareness of voting day procedures will also start on 18 August 2017.
- The final voter register will be published and the project's international IT consultant will begin to install a secure database for election results.
- To strengthen hearings and the election commission's access to legal expertise, an international legal consultant will join the project in August 2017.
- Training for an estimated 7,200 civilian security personnel that will be deployed for the election period will be rolled out to centres across the country.
- Knowledge products to be finalized include an easy user guide to polling procedures for civil society and civic educators involved in the voter awareness campaign, which will be done in conjunction with the finalization of a manual for polling and counting procedures.

For more information on the support to the Liberia electoral cycle, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. George Baratshvili, george.baratshvili@undp.org.



MALAWI

Malawi Electoral Commission

MALAWI ELECTORAL CYCLE SUPPORT PROJECT (MECS)

HIGHLIGHTS

- On 3rd July, 2017 the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) in collaboration with the National Registration Bureau (NRB) organized an interface meeting with the Public Affairs Committee (PAC), a quasi-religious civil society body, to discuss the voter registration exercise using the biometric National ID as proof of eligibility.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC), National Registration Bureau (NRB) and Public Affairs Committee (PAC) Interface Meeting: MEC, in collaboration with NRB, organized an interface meeting with PAC to explain the process of biometric registration and issuance of the National ID as proof of citizenship, and how MEC will use the National ID as proof of eligibility during the voter's registration exercise expected to commence in April 2018. MEC further demonstrated to PAC how the National ID will guarantee "one person, one ID, one vote" by eliminating duplications and errors in the voters register. In the end, PAC acknowledged the importance of the meeting and sharing of the critical information on the difference between the mass national registration and the voter's registration to be carried out by MEC.

Board of Commissioners Meeting: The MECS project assisted the MEC to hold Board of Commissioners meeting between 3rd and 4th July. During this meeting the Commissioners resolved to conduct by-elections on 17th October, 2017 and to hold stakeholder's meetings in all vacant constituencies and wards on 16th August, 2017. MEC is planning to fill vacancies in 3 parliamentary constituencies and 3 local government wards that fell vacant due to the passing on of incumbents.

II. Plans for the next period

- Technical Committee meeting to discuss and endorse workplan (August- December) to be approved by the Steering Committee.

For more information on the Malawi Electoral Cycle Support Project, please contact Claire Medina, Deputy Resident Representative, claire.medina@undp.org.



ELECTORAL SUPPORT PROJECT

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.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ECN considers the use of electronic voting machines for next electoral cycles.
- Continued ESP support for this electoral cycle and beyond requested.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

After completion of the second phase of the local elections, ECN is preparing the implementation of the Phase III, covering Province number 2, with polling on 18 September.

Considering higher incidence of invalid votes in urban areas than in rural areas in both phases of the local election, ESP provided ECN with technical advice on possible ways to enhance the effectiveness of voter education activities in urban areas.

ESP engaged with ECN in the discussions surrounding the possible introduction of electronic voting machines. While stressing that it is not advisable to make such an important change in the tight timeframe for the upcoming elections, ESP supported a visit to India of a four-member technical team tasked with evaluating Indian electronic voting machines. ESP also advised ECN to hold broad consultations with political parties and other electoral stakeholders before taking a decision.

In support of the voter registration update campaign which started on 15 July, the ESP regional offices contributed to the dissemination of information, and provided advice to DEOs in planning and managing the process.

II. Plans for the next period

- In view of the third and last phase of the local election, nine support areas were identified, primarily covering voter education, training, IT support as well as advice and support for general operations.
- In continuation of ESP support for voter education in Phase II, the project is preparing to launch the voter education campaign in the eight districts of Phase III. The core of the ESP support will consist of engaging local implementing partners to hold small community-level voter education events. TV and Radio PSAs will also be produced and broadcasted.
- A joint functional testing of the new Voter List Application (VLA) software that was developed by the project for ECN is scheduled for early August.
- The project will provide support to the national counterpart in drafting an electoral operational plan for future electoral cycles.

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



SOLOMON ISLANDS

SECSIP

STRENGTHENING THE ELECTORAL CYCLE IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS (SECSIP)

I. Project activities during the reporting period

NTR

II. Plans for the next period

NTR



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.

HIGHLIGHTS

- From 10 to 12 July, the National Independent Electoral Commission of Somalia (NIEC) together with the UNDP/UNSOM electoral Joint Programme and UNDP RBAS, organized a political party registration workshop in Nairobi with representatives from other African and Arab electoral management bodies for them to share experiences and expertise in light of Somalia's first political party registration process since 1969.
- On 22 July, a delegation of the NIEC conducted a mission to the Federal Member State of Jubaland and engaged with key dignitaries in Kismayo, including the State President, Members of Parliament and civil society. The State President of Jubaland offered his support to the Commission in line with its constitutional mandate.
- On 26 July, the NIEC Chairperson addressed the House of the People on steps to be taken in preparation of general ‘one person, one vote’ elections by 2021. While providing an update on progress, activities and challenges, the NIEC also delivered a presentation on electoral systems and replied to several questions on the necessary steps forward in preparation of universal elections.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) of the Federal Republic of Somalia hosted a three-day workshop from 10 to 12 July, in Nairobi, Kenya, on Political Party Registration supported by

the UNSOM/UNDP Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) in partnership with the Arab Electoral Management Bodies Organization (Arab EMB's) and UNDP Regional Hub for Arab States. As a member of the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies (Arab EMB's), the NIEC invited a panel to share expertise and experiences with the NIEC to enrich policy decision-making and administrative approaches, aimed at establishing a strong foundation and developing appropriate systems in compliance with legislation. Bearing in mind that the NIEC is a relatively new statutory body with no prior experience in conducting an electoral process, NIEC members deemed it prudent to learn from other Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) from Africa and Arab States that have implemented the registration of political parties, which falls within responsibilities of NIEC.

On 22 July, the Joint Programme provided logistical support to the NIEC's visit to Kismayo, Jubaland as part of the NIEC's external relations strategy to reach out to the different Federal Member States. Commissioners met the State President, different Members of Parliament, and civil society representatives to discuss plans for the 2021 federal elections, including presenting its five-year work plan and preparations for political party registration. The State President of Jubaland pledged and offered his support to the Commission in line with its constitutional mandate. Earlier in June, the NIEC had a successful mission to Puntland where the State President confirmed his support to the NIEC.

On 26 July, the NIEC addressed the House of the People on electoral preparations for the 2021 elections. This was the second time NIEC was reporting to the parliament, the last time being July 2016. The NIEC informed the Members of Parliament about its progress, achievements and challenges, its 5-year strategic plan, the ongoing political consultations with federal state members, and the opening of the office of the registrar and the appointment of the registrar. The NIEC provided a response to nine questions that the House had asked the Commission in writing. The NIEC Chair also brought up the issue of the budget. A follow-up session of the NIEC's hearing in the Parliament is scheduled for 8 August.

II. Plans for the next period

• Support to NIEC

- Finalization of NIEC Strategic Plan with regards to budget and incorporation of feedback
- NIEC engagement with political associations and stakeholders on Political Party Registration
- NIEC ongoing engagements with the Federal Member States of Somalia
- Preparation voter registration feasibility study
- Ongoing enhancement of NIEC internal processes and regulations

• Support to MOIFAR

- Ongoing drafting and consultation workshops on the Electoral Law
- Outreach to national and international partners on options of electoral systems and political/technical distinctions
- Printing and dissemination of historical Electoral Laws (Somali and English)

- **Other activities**

- Development of revised UN Electoral Support Project Document - Donor and Stakeholder Engagements
- Coordination of International Technical Assistance to NIEC

For more information on the UNDP/UNSOM Joint Programme, please contact Filip Warnants, filip.warnants@undp.org.



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 technical assistance areas of Biometric Voter Registration (BVR), election operational planning, voter education, election dispute resolution and gender mainstreaming.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Technical Assistance for Voter Registration Operational Planning: Technical assistance was provided for the development of National and Provincial Voter Registration (VR) Operational Plans. A 2-day Voter Registration Operational Planning Workshop was organized on 17-18 July 2017 to finalize the plans. A BVR Expert engaged by the project provided his insights and shared experiences regarding the challenges, issues and constraints of a BVR system.

The main objective of the workshop was to develop and finalize the National and Provincial VR Operational Plans. Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) officials from all the departments, provincial and district staff and the Commission members including the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson actively participated in the deliberations of the workshop.

The dates for the BVR roll out are being firmed up and it is expected that the roll out will start in October

2017 across the 10 provinces. Within each province 4 phases are being planned to be covered in a period of 72 days. ZEC is making efforts to ensure the completion of the BVR field registration before the start of the rainy season.

Procurement of the Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) Kits: UNDP was initially supporting the procurement of BVR Kits, but the Government decided to finance the procurement of BVR kits. After the signing of the contract with the selected company, the dates of the deliveries are being firmed up. The kits for training are expected to be delivered in end of August, while the remaining kits are expected at the end of September, 2017.

Stakeholder Consultations: The earlier stalled process of stakeholder consultations has been revived by ZEC with consultations held with political parties, CSOs, FBOs and media on the roll out of the BVR process. ZEC has committed to continue with the stakeholder consultation process and replicate it at the provincial level. It is expected that these consultations will reduce concerns of different stakeholders and, where appropriate take them into account during the implementation of the BVR process which will also help build confidence.

Voter Education Strategy and its implementation: Technical assistance was provided on the development of ZEC Voter Education Strategy, in partnership with EISA and in consultation with CSOs through a participatory process. Following a 3-day workshop in May, the project engaged Communication specialists to design and develop the materials for the BVR Voter Education Campaign. The draft of the printed materials was submitted to ZEC and procurement processes for the selection of companies for road shows, radio / TV production, SMS services, call centre and printing of materials is currently underway and expected to be finalized by end of August, 2017. A National BVR Voter Education Campaign is expected to be started in September, 2017.

Human Rights and dispute resolution: ZEC organized a 3 days' International Conference on Election Dispute Resolution (EDR) in May, 2017. Several recommendations surfaced from the Conference and, as a follow up to the workshop, UNDP firmed up the proposal on a platform for the Chapter 12 Institutions to discuss elections related issues, including possible electoral violence. Discussions have been held with Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) on developing of an election strategy for ZHRC in coming months in line with the recommendations of the Conference.

Gender Mainstreaming: UNDP is working in partnership with UN Women for implementing gender mainstreaming interventions across all the project activities. A gender baseline survey has commenced aimed at determining public perception around electoral processes, including challenges of participation of women. It will be a nationally representative survey of 2,000 households across Zimbabwe and will enable ZEC to come up with a strategy to address the key issues and challenges identified.

II. Plans for the next period

- Developing of the training plan for the BVR Operators Training
- Arrival of the BVR Training Kits
- Finalization for BVR Voter Education Campaign materials
- Finalization of contracts for printing of voter education materials, call centre, road shows, production of TV and radio programs etc.

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.