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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, 2019

Electoral Assistance Projects Update

This report provides an overview of all active EU funded and UNDP implemented electoral assistance projects.



SUMMARY

ARMENIA: A series of post electoral lessons-learned activities (2 workshops and a conference) were conducted and recommendations were formulated. - A gender assessment of the election administration and a workshop on "Promoting Women's Participation in the Electoral Process" for the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) members and staff were conducted. - The project supported the CEC in the development of an e-Learning platform for the election stakeholders. - The project has initiated the assessment of the IT capacity and needs of the CEC.

KENYA: The Donor Group on Elections (DGE) finalised the evaluation of donor support to 2017 elections. The evaluation found that donor support was an important complement to the resources provided by government to fund the 2017 elections. - The evaluation recommended continuation of partner support in institutional capacity building; political party strengthening; voter education and civic engagement; domestic and international election observation; stakeholder engagement and coordination; and electoral peace and security. The evaluation recommended early support to voter education and institutional strengthening in preparation for the 2022 elections.

LIBERIA: Project implementation remains on course in support of the National Elections Commission (NEC) with a key focus on electoral reform. A number of other interventions continue as work in progress, all geared toward institutional and human capacity development to enhance the effectiveness of the NEC in the discharge of its mandate. The project supported the rollout of the enterprise resource planning system (ERP), the procurement of various warehouse safety materials and equipment, warehouse rehabilitation and provided technical assistance regarding electoral reform processes.

LIBYA: The project provided technical support to the High National Elections Commission regarding the rehabilitation of the new HNEC head office, logistics and procurement, IT and data management, public outreach.

MADAGASCAR: Sensitive election printed materials for the legislative election have been delivered on 29 April by plane in Antananarivo from South Africa where they have been produced. - A workshop gathering women candidates for the legislative elections and women leaders in the public, private, political and civil society sectors was held on 9 April. - On 10 April, the CENI and the High Constitutional Court facilitated a training of trainers workshop on the legal framework

for parliamentary elections.

MALAWI: Telecoms service providers and IT specialists have been contracted to work on the results transmission system. - Civic and voter education activities have been ongoing with the contracting of 8 road show companies and 15 loud hailing truck companies. - A total of 300 political party polling agent master trainers for polling day have been trained.

NEPAL: The Electoral Support Project (ESP) supported the participation of representatives from the Election Commission, Nepal (ECN) in the 9th Forum of Latin American Democracies in Mexico City. The Forum discussed the challenges of politics and democracy in the digital age.

SOLOMON ISLANDS: The Electoral Office, supported by the project, has successfully organised the peaceful national general election on 3 April 2019. - Post-election lesson learned exercises documented good practices, challenges, and recommendations for further improvement of electoral cycle.

SOMALIA: The National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) has decided to opt for a biometric voter registration methodology that includes facial recognition. - On 29 and 30 April, the NIEC participated in a workshop in Mogadishu on gender equality in elections, organised by the Swedish Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) and assisted by UNDP Somalia. - Strengthening South-South cooperation, Judge J. Kriegl, former Chair of the South African Electoral Commission and renowned senior international electoral expert, was invited to speak in Mogadishu to the Commissioners of the NIEC at a high-level workshop on building trust in a politically difficult and violent electoral environment, as well as on principles of electoral dispute resolution.

ZIMBABWE: ZIM-ECO project has been providing support in key capacity building and institutional strengthening areas of election operations including planning, review processes, knowledge management, polling process, Biometric Voter Registration (BVR), training requirements in pre-election, election and post-election period, voter education, stakeholder engagement, gender mainstreaming, inclusivity and election dispute resolution. An Electoral Cycle approach has been adopted by the project to ensure that issues and recommendations from one election cycle can be addressed in the next one (2018-2023).

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ONGOING ELECTORAL PROJECTS WITH EU FUNDING

Country	Project Title	Reference	EU Contribution	Start Date	End Date
Afghanistan	UN Electoral Support Project (UNESP)	DCI-ASIE/2015/368-884	€ 15,500,000.00	29.12.15	31.12.19
Armenia	Electoral Project Support in Armenia (EPSA)	ENI/2018/404-610	€ 1,500,000.00	25.07.18	31.12.19
Guinea-Bissau	Support to Electoral Cycle in Guinea-Bissau 2018-2019	EDF 2018/401-213	€ 2,500,000.00	15.10.18	15.01.20
Kenya	Strengthening of the Electoral Processes in Kenya Project (SEPK)	FED/2016/372/463	€ 5,000,000.00	13.02.16	30.06.19
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
Madagascar	Soutien au Cycle Electoral à Madagascar (SACEM)	FED/2018/398-673	€ 1,500,000.00	04.07.18	31.08.19
Malawi	Malawi Electoral Cycle Support: 2017-2019 (MECS)	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	28.12.19
Libya	Promoting Elections for the People of Libya (PEPOL)	ICSP/2018/395-667	€ 5,000,000.00	01.11.17	01.11.20
Solomon Islands	Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project (SECSIP)	FED/2013/328-922	€ 3,500,000.00	01.07.13	27.08.19
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	31.12.19
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project (ZIM-ECO)	FED/2016/380-895	€ 5,590,000.00	01.09.16	30.08.20



ELECTORAL SUPPORT PROJECT IN ARMENIA (ESPA)

HIGHLIGHTS

- A series of post electoral lessons-learned activities (2 workshops and a conference) were conducted and recommendations were formulated. Final report prepared jointly with the Central Electoral Commission of Armenia (CEC) is expected by mid-May.
- A gender assessment of election administration and a workshop on “Promoting Women’s Participation in the Electoral Process” for the CEC members and staff were conducted.
- The project supported the CEC in the development of an e-Learning platform for the election stakeholders.
- The project has initiated the assessment of the IT capacity and needs of the CEC. This process will help the project to identify hardware and software requirements to enhance the capacity of the CEC data centre, IT infrastructure as well as regional structures (Territorial Electoral Commissions, TECs).

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Lessons learned

The project has supported the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) to organise and conduct two workshops and one conference on post-election lessons learned issues. The aim of the conference was to evaluate the CEC performance, assess and identify lessons learned from the organisation and management of the 2018 December pre-term National Assembly Elections in view of their compliance with the international standards, as well as to develop recommendations for further improvements of the electoral processes.

The two-day Lessons Learned Conference provided the platform for departmental and other stakeholders presentations, discussions, questions and answers’ sessions, sharing of challenges and experiences, which helped to identify set of recommendations for improvement.

The Lessons Learned report is in the process of finalisation upon discussions with the CEC.

Gender

The assessment related to the CEC's internal policies and practices and the administration of elections conducted through interviews with CEC members and staff as well as with civil society, and in consultation with the UNDP "Women in Politics" project, will be completed in mid-May. As a result of the interview discussions and the consequent increased commitment to the topic shown by the CEC, the first workshop on Gender Mainstreaming in the Electoral Process was held with CEC members and staff (28 participants including 22 women) on 19 April. The discussions on the CEC's strengths and areas of improvements, as well as Armenia's commitments to international conventions and international best practices enabled the CEC to propose concrete actions towards strengthening women's participation through polling and electoral arrangements, voter education and outreach, legal and policy reform and collaboration with key stakeholders.

In this context, enhanced awareness of the CEC members and staff to strengthen women's participation in the electoral process has been evidenced through interests expressed during the gender assessment interviews, and the formulation of concrete actions to be undertaken by the CEC during the workshop. Recommendations from both the gender assessment and the workshop are serving the drafting of the CEC's internal gender policy, which is intended to further strengthen its organisational capacities, establish policies and practices and develop programming in election administration towards enhancing gender equality in the electoral process.

Finally, acknowledging the importance of sex-disaggregated electoral statistics, the CEC jointly with the project kicked off the elaboration of the CEC's first brochure with respective data from 2018. Its publication is intended to serve as an information tool on the situation of women's participation in the electoral process in Armenia, while enhancing the credibility of the CEC. Finalized sex-disaggregated data is expected to be released in May.



Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming in the Electoral Process

Photo credits: Hrant Sahakyan

II. Plans for the next period

For the month of May 2019, the project will:

- Pilot the beta version of the e-Learning platform and present it to the donors and other stakeholders

through a public event at the CEC;

- Organise one more workshop on “Promoting women’s participation in electoral process”, this time with the participation of the TECs;
- Finalise the Armenian translation and publication of the UN Women guidebook: “Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women’s Participation” for the CEC;
- Finalise the Gender Assessment Report and present it to the CEC and other stakeholders;
- Initiate the strategic planning development process with the CEC.

For more information on the Support to the Electoral Support Project in Armenia (ESPA), please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Shalva Kipshidze, shalva.kipshidze@undp.org.



KENYA

IEBC Communications Department

STRENGTHENING THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN KENYA (SEPK)

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Donor Group on Elections (DGE) finalised the evaluation of donor support to 2017 elections. The evaluation found that donor support was an important complement to the resources provided by government to fund the 2017 elections.
- The evaluation recommended continuation of partner support in institutional capacity building; political party strengthening; voter education and civic engagement; domestic and international election observation; stakeholder engagement and coordination; and electoral peace and security. The evaluation recommended early support to voter education and institutional strengthening in preparation for the 2022 elections.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

End term evaluation of the SEPK project: With the assistance of an independent evaluator, there was continued engagement on the SEPK project end-term evaluation. The end-term evaluation is an assessment of the progress made by the SEPK project and will provide recommendations for improving programming on elections for UNDP and other UN agencies. Initial engagement of key national level partners through key informants interviews is ongoing. This assignment will generate important lessons to inform future electoral assistance to Kenya.

Ongoing preparation of SEPK successor programme: The project continued spearheading design of a project document for a broader deepening democracy programme. The proposed programme is designed to ensure sustainable engagement on key issues related to democratic governance in between electoral events. The programme design adopts a cyclical approach and seeks to address key governance and democracy issues, including access to justice, electoral security, capacity building of electoral institutions and civic engagement through the media and civil society organisations. The

programme will lay a firm foundation for a management of the 2022 elections. The programme will be implemented by UN Women, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) under the leadership of UNDP.

Finalisation of Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) gender and inclusion policy: The project engaged a consultant to finalise the IEBC gender and social inclusion policy. The development of the policy commenced in 2016 but was stalled to allow the commission to prepare for and manage the 2017 elections. The finalisation process will involve stakeholder engagement at the county level. This policy will provide guidance to IEBC and other electoral stakeholders on inclusion of women, youth, people with disabilities (PwDs) and other special interest groups in electoral processes.

Development of strategic plans for Judiciary Training Institute (JTI) and Political Parties Dispute Tribunal (PPDT): The project is supporting JTI and PPDT to develop their strategic plans. These plans will spell out the strategic choices for the two institutions for the period 2019-22. It is hoped that through the plans, JTI and PPDT will equip themselves to undertake robust electoral dispute resolution.

II. Plans for the next period

The activities planned for the next reporting period include:

- Completion of SEPK project end-term evaluation;
- Finalisation of the IEBC gender and inclusion policy;
- Ongoing support to development of JTI and PPDT strategic plans;
- Development of SEPK knowledge products.

For more information on the project on Strengthening the Electoral Process in Kenya, please contact Mr. James Wagala, james.wagala@undp.org.



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

- Project implementation remains on course in support of the National Elections Commission (NEC) with a key focus on electoral reform. A number of other interventions continue as work in progress, all geared toward institutional and human capacity development to enhance the effectiveness of the NEC in the discharge of its mandate.
- The project supported the rollout of the enterprise resource planning system (ERP), the procurement of various warehouse safety materials and equipment, warehouse rehabilitation and provided technical assistance regarding electoral reform processes.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

On 18 April, the Enterprise Resource planning system (ERP) finally went live. The official launching ceremony was carried out by the Board of Commissioners of the National Elections Commission and witnessed by representatives of UNDP and other stakeholders. Meanwhile, the uploading of assets into the ERP fixed assets module has also commenced. A total of 700 assets have been verified and catalogued, by the NEC asset management team. Out of the 700 classified assets, 500 have so far

been uploaded to the ERP system.

Warehouse safety equipment and materials including forklift, pallets, trolleys, safety shoes, helmets etc. were delivered to the National Elections Commission in the presence of representatives of UNDP and the donors. The items are intended to improve safety standards and working conditions of logistic staff both at the HQ warehouse and across the country. At the same time, the project, through the asset management consultants both from the project and Techno Brain, has developed an asset management standard operation procedures and policy which has been endorsed and approved by the Commission. Additionally, bid documents for warehouse rehabilitation are currently with procurement for review and will be launched in the coming weeks.

In continuation of the electoral reform process, the project with the support of its policy consultant has identified a reform agenda based on observers' recommendations for consideration and implementation by the Commission. Recommendations were categorised by theme i.e. constitution, status, regulation, policy and implementation. During the reporting period, eight policy papers on key reform issues were done and submitted to the Commission for consideration. Advocacy strategy and engagement with key actors and decision makers was also conducted. The draft advocacy strategy was submitted to NEC and has since been approved by the Technical Working Group which heads the implementation of the road map for electoral reform.

II. Plans for the next period

- Launch of bid for warehouses renovation and constructions / fencing;
- Continuation of physical assets verification and data collection exercise;
- Training of NEC staff on forklift operation;
- Collection of inventory and asset information at HQ and HQ Warehouse and data entry as per timelines;
- Presentation to NEC Board of Commissioners and senior staff on updated version of Asset Management Policy Document and standard operation procedures.

For more information on the support to the Liberia electoral cycle, please contact Mr. James Monibah, james.monibah@undp.org and visit the [Project's website](#).



 LIBYA

 Iason Athanasiadis,
UNSMIL, 2014

PROMOTING ELECTIONS FOR THE PEOPLE OF LIBYA (PEPOL)

The Promoting Elections for the People of Libya (PEPOL) project is a three year electoral assistance project, designed in the spirit of cooperation and national ownership with the Libyan High National Elections Commission (HNEC). The project forms part of the UN integrated electoral assistance framework which is led and coordinated by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). The project's overall objective is to help HNEC develop its overall institutional capacity in order to prepare for and administer inclusive and credible balloting events in Libya. To this end, four key outputs are identified with related activities to be implemented throughout the electoral cycle approach:

1. Support HNEC in the planning, preparation and conduct of national elections and out-of-country voting (OCV);
2. Develop HNEC institutional and staff capacities and raise awareness on the requirement of (a) transparent, credible and inclusive electoral processe(s);
3. Promote public participation in (the) electoral processe(s) targeting vulnerable groups; and
4. Raising the electoral awareness of local partners and stakeholders.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The project provided technical support to the High National Elections Commission regarding the rehabilitation of the new HNEC head office, logistics and procurement, IT and data management, public outreach.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Despite the challenges caused by the relocation of project staff to Tunis and the interruption of operation at the High National Elections Commission (HNEC) due to security reasons, the project continued to support the HNEC by providing technical assistance (albeit remotely) on:

- o rehabilitation of the new HNEC head office;
- o logistics and procurement;
- o IT and data management;
- o public outreach.

The project handed over various completed works including the security upgrade of the new HNEC headquarters and renovation of two of the three buildings at the new HNEC headquarters in Tripoli.

Works on the painting and façades of the three buildings continued, as well as on landscaping of the compound during the period, although hampered by the ongoing conflict. These works are expected to be completed by end of May 2019.

The project finalised the tender notice procedure for the procurement of voter education banners for the HNEC, which will be launched beginning of May.

II. Plans for the next period

- Project meetings to review the 2019 project annual work plan and budget.

For more information on the project, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Joram Rukambe, joram.rukambe@undp.org.



MADAGASCAR

CENI Madagascar

SOUTIEN AU CYCLE ÉLECTORAL DE MADAGASCAR (SACEM)

From 2017 to 2019, the SACEM project intends to support the CENI and other stakeholders in the electoral process in the organisation of credible, inclusive and peaceful elections on the Big Island. It focuses on the reliability and security of the electoral register, the promotion of electoral governance through legal framework reforms, the raising of electoral awareness, the capacity building of electoral agents, the provision of voting material and the rapid and secure transmission of electoral data.

The project, implemented by UNDP, is supported by the European Union, USAID, Norway, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, South Korea, Switzerland, Australia and South Africa. For more information, please visit the [project's website](#).

HIGHLIGHTS

- Sensitive election printed materials for the legislative election have been delivered on 29 April by plane in Antananarivo from South Africa where they have been produced.
- A workshop gathering women candidates for the legislative elections and women leaders in the public, private, political and civil society sectors was held on 9 April.
- On 10 April, the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) and the High Constitutional Court facilitated a training of trainers workshop on the legal framework for parliamentary elections.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Delivery of sensitive printed materials for the legislative elections. Sensitive electoral materials (ballot papers, forms for keeping meeting minutes, counting and scoring sheets, inventory sheets, inviolable envelopes) for the legislative election were delivered on 29 April in Antananarivo by cargo plane from South Africa where they have been produced and packaged. A total of 252 pallets of material were delivered. The materials were stored in a secure warehouse, before being distributing to the polling stations of the country, in line with the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) logistics plan.

Awareness-raising activities for the legislative elections. Supported by the project, the CENI and Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) have started a new phase of the national awareness campaign, ahead of the legislative elections. These outreach activities focus on providing voters with information on how to use the single ballot, mass voter turnout, and practical information for voting. The campaign began at the level of each district to better reflect the proximity aspect of the legislative elections. Since 22 April, nearly 900 animators from local civil society organisations (CSOs) have been deployed in the 22 regions.

Training of trainers on the legal framework. On 10 April, the CENI and the High Constitutional Court facilitated a training of trainers workshop on the legal framework for parliamentary elections. This kicked off a series of workshops in the 22 regional capitals targeting the presidents of the electoral material collecting sections (Sections de Recensement Matériel de Vote, SRMV¹). The SRMV Presidents will then be training their representatives and candidates within their respective districts during concertation frameworks. At this occasion, the High Constitutional Court and the CENI focused on legal and regulatory framework of the legislative elections, in order to prepare candidates and other interested parties for the next phases of the electoral process.

Workshop with women candidates in the legislative elections. A workshop gathering women candidates for the legislative elections and women leaders in the public, private, political and civil society sectors was held on 9 April. This one-day dialogue and information workshop aimed at discussing the various obstacles that women face in politics and in different spheres of society, in order to identify solutions to address gender inequalities and encourage the participation of women in national debates.

Cascade training of the members of the electoral commission. In the run-up to the legislative elections, the SACEM project has been supporting the first two levels of the training cascade for polling station members. In early April, a capacity building training targeting members of the permanent bureau of the CENI and its technical staff members, as well as magistrates expected to assume the role of trainers has been organised in Antananarivo. A second cascade of Training of Trainers of electoral officers and staff of the electoral material collecting sections (SRMVs) began at the end of April.

II. Plans for the next period

- Distribution of ballot papers and other sensitive printed materials. The sensitive printed materials for the legislative will be disseminated to the polling stations across the country, in line with the CENI chronogram.
- Reactivation of the VSAT network. The reactivation and operationalisation of the VSAT network, in order to secure the transmission of electoral data, will take place in May 2019.
- CENI and HCC communication. A total of 119 banners of the CENI will be produced and distributed to the districts of the country. Billboards will also be used for CENI communication at the regional levels. An address by the President of the High Constitutional Court regarding electoral disputes will be broadcasted on community radios.
- Legislative elections. Polling stations will be open on Monday 27 May 2019 from 6am to 5pm.

For more information on the SACEM, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Flavien Misoni, flavien.misoni@undp.org and visit the project's [website](#).

¹ There are 119 SRMVs in Madagascar – one per district. SRMVs do an inventory of the documents sent by each electoral office and their roles is verify the accuracy of the counting and procès-verbaux transmitted by polling stations.



MALAWI

Malawi Electoral Commission

MALAWI ELECTORAL CYCLE SUPPORT 2017-2019

The “Malawi Electoral Cycle Support 2017-2019” project is supported by a basket fund. 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 organisation 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. For more information, [visit the project's website.](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Telecoms service providers and IT specialists have been contracted to work on the results transmission system.
- Civic and voter education activities have been ongoing with the contracting of 8 road show companies and 15 loud hailing truck companies.
- A total of 300 political party polling agent master trainers for polling day have been trained.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Support was provided to the sensitisation of community radio stations so that they can be a source of accurate information about how the elections have been organised, how to cast the ballot and how the results will be transmitted. This is a vital part of the media as most Malawians do not have access to daily newspapers or the television. Community radio can do much to inform, reduce tension and mobilise the electorate. A total of 52 community radio journalists were invited to the sensitization session which took place over two days.

Contracting was done with telecoms service providers and IT specialists to start work on the Results Transmission System. With the first test foreseen on 2 May it was vital to ensure that the IT safeguards and security protocols started to be put in place – for which the project hired international expertise - and that the relevant telecoms companies ensured booster links around the constituency tally centres

so that there will be no issues with data transmission. The test will see all stakeholders invited to attend the event.

The contracting out of the civic and voter education measures took place in April with scores of loud hailing trucks and road shows underway spreading information on how to vote and encouraging people to come forward and exercise their constitutional rights. Not less than 8 road show companies and 15 loud hailing truck companies were hired by the project and are already on the road.

The Gender Elections Engagement Room is still monitoring all violent incidences against women politicians and any violence done to women which are politically related. Moreover, it is following up with the police gender focal points on actions undertaken to resolve an issue where a victim has filed an official complaint. A total of 36 incidences have been reported to date since the launch of the campaign period on 19 March.

The project supported the Centre for Multi-Party Democracy (CMD) in the training of 300 political party polling agent master trainers for polling day. Around 300 political party agents were identified and trained so that they can pass on their skills to other party agents on what the monitoring of a polling station consists of and what a polling agent can and cannot do. This is a critical part of the credibility of the process.

The training of the police on electoral security continued its intensive roll out in April with 180 police drivers trained and certified; field training exercises conducted for 400 tactical officers in public order management; community sensitisation on electoral security, human rights and issues of albinism targeting 640 civilian members of community police program (20 from each of the 32 Malawi Police Service stations); and, the development of radio programmes, messages and jingles on electoral security management.

II. Plans for the next period

The next period is polling month as elections are scheduled on 21 May.

The project will mostly work on the procuring of 100 lorries, to complete MEC's transport requirements for the delivery and retrieval of sensitive and non-sensitive electoral materials, and the deployment of an international audit firm that will support MEC in validating the results emerging from the 197 constituency tally centres that will provide an extra layer of assurance and credibility come the announcement of the results.

There will also be two tests of the results transmission system to ensure country-wide connectivity and ensure that there are no issues with the transmission of data from the constituency tally centres to the mainframe in Blantyre.

For more information on the Malawi Electoral Cycle Support Project, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Richard Cox, richard.cox@undp.org and visit the project's [website](#).



ELECTORAL SUPPORT PROJECT (ESP)

The Electoral Support Project- Phase II (ESP) is a technical assistance initiative which focuses on a long-term institutional and professional capacity development of the Election Commission (ECN) for conducting credible, inclusive and transparent elections at a national level. 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 Electoral Support Project (ESP) supported the participation of representatives from the Election Commission, Nepal (ECN) in the 9th Forum of Latin American Democracies in Mexico City. The Forum discussed the challenges of politics and democracy in the digital age.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The Electoral Support Project (ESP) supported the participation of representatives from the Election Commission, Nepal (ECN) in the 9th Forum of Latin American Democracies in Mexico City, as well as in a peer-to-peer exchanges between election officials of Mexico, Tunisia and Nepal organised by the National Electoral Institute of Mexico (INE).

The Forum discussed the challenges of politics and democracy in the digital age. Mexico shared its experience of creating a social media platform for the 2018 elections in Mexico with Facebook, Twitter and Google in order to verify the information in real time. The Forum also discussed issues related to electronic voting as well as security considerations related to introducing technology.

The peer-to-peer exchange brought together ten participants, three from Nepal and seven from Tunisia. It brought to light the challenges and opportunities faced by the three countries on issues including campaign financing, outreach and technology in elections.



The 9th Forum of Latin American Democracies in Mexico City

Photo credits: ESP

In Nepal, the project made preparations to mark the World Press Freedom Day, in collaboration with UNESCO, the Election Commission of Nepal and the Federation of Nepali Journalists. The one-day event is being organised with the theme of “Media for Democracy and Peace: Journalism and Elections in the Age of the Internet.”

Recruitments also continued and two Operations Assistants joined the team.

II. Plans for the next period

On 3 May, the project and its partners will mark World Press Freedom Day.

Following a period of leadership transitions at the Election Commission, the project will engage with the new Chief Election Commissioner to review areas of support.

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](#).



SOLOMON ISLANDS



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 organisations 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.

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Electoral Office, supported by the project, has successfully organised the peaceful national general election on 3 April.
- Post-election lesson learned exercises documented good practices, challenges, and recommendations for further improvement of electoral cycle.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Electoral Operations Support

National General Election (NGE) 2019

The project's support was instrumental to strengthen the operational and human resources capacities of the Electoral Office (EO) to manage the NGE efficiently. On 3 April 2019, Solomon Islands held the first national general election since the departure of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands in June 2017. The polling, organised by Solomon Islands Electoral Office (SIEO), was smooth with no serious disruptions, and the results for all 50 constituencies were announced by 7 April 2019. The 11th Solomon

Islands Parliament has 50 members. The voter turn-out was approximately 86% of registered voters. The project's team provided technical support for preparation and management of the polling, counting and declaration of results.

Polling data analysis and management

In line with the Electoral Act (EA), the project's data management expert developed tools and forms for the counting and consolidation of results. He also prepared several data analysis and assessment management tools for disaggregating results by candidates, constituencies and provinces to assist in the identification of trends and analysis thereof. His assistance helped to mitigate some of the limited functionalities of the biometric voter registration database and electoral management system.

Lesson learned exercise

The project contributed to the organisation of 3 post-election lesson learned workshops in Gizo (15-17 April), Auki (26-27 April) and Honiara (23-24 April). The workshops were attended by Election Managers and Returning Officers of respective provinces, as well as Electoral Office staff and international advisers. Some of the issues identified for improvement were in connection with the legal provisions for the determination of ordinarily resident, operational issues in connection with the out of constituency registration and possible extension of pre-poll to other categories. With respect to the capacities of the electoral officials, the lessons learned contributed to identify some weaknesses in the training of polling staff and the need for the continuous capacity building efforts for electoral officials. It also identified the positive aspects such as the selection of locations and increase in number of polling stations (max. 600 voters per polling station) which contributed to enhance accessibility/participation and the smooth operation of the poll. Issues related to the face-to-face awareness campaign, fair and gender balanced recruitment of electoral staff were also discussed. Given the active participation and perspectives provided by different staff and advisers, the findings resulting from these workshops will constitute a tool to provide recommendations in terms of policies and practices for strengthening the electoral cycle in future.

Support to Political Parties Commission (PPC)

SECSIP graduates' work supporting the PPC Registrar was instrumental to analyse the requirements for possible political parties coalitions after the election based on Political Parties Integrity Act (PPIA). The graduates assisted the PPC in the registration of two political parties and contributed to raise awareness on PPIA requirements for independent MPs intending to join the political parties as well as for the analysis of election results desegregated by political parties.

Voter Education and Awareness

- The project conducted awareness raising activities to groups of 4 to 10 people in four communities of North Vella. A total of 700 mini voter awareness booklets, 22 offences and penalties posters, 22 how to vote poster and 22 sample ballot paper posters have been distributed in Leona, Liangai and Suanatali polling stations.
- SECSIP grantee CSOs have been working on narrative and financial reports in April. One grantee, TEFILA submitted a report stating that they have conducted face-to-face awareness actions for 2,540 people (not including minors) in West Kwaraae Constituency and for 2,507 in Small Malaita Constituency.
- The project's National Media Consultant helped to prepare and broadcast several press releases focusing on the polling, counting and declaration of election results.

Support to Women's Political Participation

The project's Women Leadership Adviser collected information on legal instruments governing the

provincial elections and provided advice on requirements concerning the campaign period, the nomination fees from the Provincial Government which was shared to promote women's participation in the provincial elections.

A reflection and lesson learned workshop with NGE women candidates is being planned in early May. This workshop will also contribute to the internal evaluation of project support for women leadership and political participation conducted by the project.

II. Plans for the next period

- Reflection and lesson learned workshop with women candidates;
- Review and follow up on narrative and financial reports of CSOs and process their final payment;
- Preparation of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) study.

For more information on the SECSIP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Ms. Olga Rabade, olga.rabade@undp.org and visit the [project's website](#).



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 Electoral Commission (NIEC) has decided to opt for a biometric voter registration methodology that includes facial recognition.
- On 29 and 30 April, the NIEC participated in a workshop in Mogadishu on gender equality in elections, organised by the Swedish Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) and assisted by UNDP Somalia.
- Strengthening South-South cooperation, Judge J. Kriegler, former Chair of the South African Electoral Commission and renowned senior international electoral expert, was invited to speak in Mogadishu to the Commissioners of the NIEC at a high-level workshop on building trust in a politically difficult and violent electoral environment.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

NIEC decision on the voter registration methodology

On 17 April, the Chairperson of the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) addressed the House of the People with an update of the preparations for the federal parliamentary elections by late 2020, highlighting the Commission’s decision to opt for a biometric voter registration methodology

that includes facial recognition. The Commission selected this method for its simplicity, integrity and price.

NIEC preparations for identification of potential voter registration sites

The UNDP/UNSOM Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) assisted the NIEC with the planning for a field exercise to identify potential voter registration centres in different areas of the country. The NIEC plans to commence this field exercise in May in Mogadishu and different federal member states. Information on the number and locations of the identified voter registration centres will feed into the NIEC's operations plan. Once approved by the Commission, it will inform IESG and donors on the required budget for voter registration and timely procurement of voter registration kits.

Knowledge sharing from South Africa's 1994 challenging electoral experiences

Strengthening South-South cooperation, IESG invited Judge J. Kriegler, former Chair of the South African Electoral Commission and renowned senior international electoral expert, to speak in Mogadishu to the Commissioners of the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) at a high-level workshop on 22-23 April on building trust in a politically difficult and violent electoral environment, as well as on principles of electoral dispute resolution. Electoral insights and valuable lessons for Somalia were shared from his experiences as Chair of the election commission in South Africa during the transition period ahead of the election of President Mandela (1994), as well as from his later electoral assignments other post-conflict and conflict-prone countries.



Judge J. Kriegler briefed NIEC on electoral challenges in South Africa in 1994 and shared valuable lessons for Somalia. Mogadishu, 22-23 April 2019.
Photo credit: NIEC.

Workshop on gender equality in elections

On 29 and 30 April, the NIEC participated in a workshop in Mogadishu on gender equality in elections, organised by the Swedish Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) and assisted by UNDP Somalia. In preparations for next year's elections, the NIEC strives towards gender empowerment and an increase in women's role in elections, as candidates, voters and electoral officers. The Swedish Ambassador to Somalia underscored Swedish support to gender mainstreaming. In addition to representatives from the NIEC, the workshop was attended by female Members of Parliament from both Houses, who all

participated in the plenary discussion.

BRIDGE course: 'Training of Master Trainers'

To strengthen the NIEC's institutional capacity and electoral knowledge, IESG provided in April different workshops with the NIEC, including on electoral integrity (22-23 April) and 'training of master trainers' (part 2) (6-10 April). After an initial course in March, the second phase of the 'Train the Facilitators' training took place in Mogadishu from 6 to 10 April with the assistance of international BRIDGE trainers (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections). NIEC staff have been trained on modules that elaborates on the system of master trainers, the mechanics of a cascade training, knowledge transfer, skills development, and quality assurance. During voter registration and later during elections, the NIEC's field operations will comprise thousands of temporary/short-term election workers which need to be trained properly in a very short time with limited resources. Key requirements to successful electoral operations include proper planning, consultation, coordination, customising, and accountability.

NIEC by-election in Baidoa

NIEC travelled to Baidoa in South-West State from 24 to 28 April to conduct by-elections for three seats for the Federal Member of Parliament vacated. The by-elections were held according to the clan-based mechanism developed during the 2016 electoral process. The NIEC Chairperson met with the State President and discussed the identification of voter registration sites in preparation for the voter registration process.

Elections information sharing meeting – Board meeting

On 15 April, the NIEC and the UN Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General co-chaired an electoral information sharing meeting for international stakeholders and electoral assistance providers. The NIEC gave an update on progress and its preparations, in particular on its decision for a sound and simple biometric voter registration methodology. The information sharing meeting was followed by a board meeting with NIEC, UNDP/IESG and donor partners.



Electoral information sharing meeting with international partners on electoral progress, co-shared by NIEC Chairperson, Halima Ibrahim, and UNSOM Deputy SRSG, Rai Zenenga. Mogadishu, 15 April 2019
Photo credit: NIEC

II. Plans for the next period

- Early May: Cabinet to approve draft Electoral Law;
- May: NIEC roll-out of the field verification exercise to identify voter registration sites.

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



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

HIGHLIGHTS

- ZIM-ECO project has been providing support in key capacity building and institutional strengthening areas of election operations, including planning, review processes, knowledge management, polling process, Biometric Voter Registration (BVR), training requirements in pre-election, election and post-election period, voter education, stakeholder engagement, gender mainstreaming, inclusivity and election dispute resolution. An electoral cycle approach has been adopted by the project to ensure that issues and recommendations from one election cycle can be addressed in the next one (2018-2023).

I. Project activities during the reporting period

ZEC post-election review: A National Post-Election Review Conference was organised by Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) with support from the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) from 10-12 April 2019 as a lesson learnt exercise that included review and feedback sessions with participation of civil society organisations, faith-based organisations, media, political parties, Independent Commissions, Ministry of Justice, Zimbabwe Republic Police, etc. This national conference was the culmination of the review processes that covered the entire electoral cycle with dedicated sessions on legal framework, election administration, election environment, voter education, election dispute resolution, observer reports and media. Several recommendations were made in terms of legal reforms, operational reforms, technological improvements, intensification of voter education and deepening stakeholder consultations.

Strategic plan development: The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission had developed its 2016-2020 Strategic Plan with a commitment to adhere to a plan-based vision. The post-election review processes that were conducted made several recommendations. While analysing these recommendations in conjunction with the ZEC Strategic Plan, there are areas in the existing strategic plan that need to be revisited, improved and new areas to be added. A realignment of the existing strategic plan to the electoral cycle (2019 – 2023) is being planned in May 2019 while considering suggestions made by stakeholders during the post-election review process.

Longer term capacity development approach: Having agreed to use internationally recognised Building Resources in Democracy Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) methodology for the longer-term capacity development of ZEC, an expert BRIDGE trainer has been recruited and a Train the Facilitator (TtF) workshop has been planned in June 2019 to develop a pool of 25 BRIDGE certified trainers. In addition to TtF, development of modules in areas of voter registration, voter education, election operations, boundary delimitation and results management and its roll out has been planned from July onwards.

Gender mainstreaming: Dissemination of the gender baseline survey was organised on 10 April 2019 and this event was used as an advocacy platform with electoral stakeholders on promoting gender equality in electoral and political processes. The process for development of Gender and Inclusion policy is expected to be finalised by May 2019. Technical support is being provided to Zimbabwe Gender Commission to develop long-term policy advocacy measures to address issues related to affirmative action and women's quota for ensuring women political representation, which will expire at the end of the current parliament as per the Constitution.

Training of police on human rights, elections and policing: A comprehensive participant handbook and training manual have been developed for police training on human rights, elections and policing. Using these training tools, a Training of Trainers was organised from 29 April to 3 May resulting in certification of police officials as trainers to roll out the trainings in the provinces.

Continuous voter education: The introduction of continuous voter education has been identified as key aspect by the CSOs and ZEC internal reviews processes. Plans have been made to review and develop voter education material for by-elections in partnership with CSOs and Disabled People Organizations (DPOs) and roll out of voter education activities on a continuous basis. The first workshop with CSOs has been planned in June 2019.

II. Plans for the next period

- Developing a draft of the Strategic Plan 2019-2023;
- Plan for implementation of BRIDGE training;
- Roll out of Training of Trainers for police officials;
- Development of draft Gender and Inclusion Policy.

For more information on the project, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Azhar Malik, azhar.malik@undp.org and visit the project's [website](#).