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GPECS II 
Global Project
for Electoral Cycle Support II



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



EC-UNDP

1 - 31 October, 2019

Electoral Assistance Projects Update

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



SUMMARY

ARMENIA: The project began to support the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) in the process of Precinct Election Commission (PEC) members licensing training. - The project delivered a training on “Conflict Management and Negotiation Skills” for the CEC staff and continued planning of additional capacity building activities for the CEC. - The project continued the development of management systems and introduction of ICT solutions for the CEC. - The project supported the CEC in ICT capacity enhancement and continued the strategic planning process.

GUINEA-BISSAU: A total of 12 candidates were approved by the Supreme Court to run for presidential elections. - A total of 450 civic animators have been trained for presidential elections’ voter awareness campaign. - National Election Commission starts plenary meetings with candidate representatives.

LIBERIA: The electoral reform consultations with political parties, civil society, and professional organisations have been completed. - The National Election Commission’s six-year Strategic Plan has been launched. - The Needs Assessment Mission report has been shared with partners.

MADAGASCAR: The inviolable minutes and envelopes for municipal and communal elections were produced and delivered on 27 October in Madagascar. - A consultation framework between the electoral commission (CENI) and the administrative courts and the State Council has been put in place. The judges benefited from capacity-building workshop from 7 to 10 October 2019. - The District Information Centers leaders and SRMV (Sections de Recensement Matériel de Vote) presidents were trained on the module of good management and transmission of the results of the upcoming polls. - Four radio spots were produced to raise Malagasy voters’ awareness.

NEPAL: The project continued its initiatives to sustain election-related capacity-building. - The project also launched series of workshops with women journalists to sensitize them on elections reporting.

SOLOMON ISLANDS: The Knowledge Attitude and Practice Survey has been finalised. - The Outstanding Women initiative is under implementation. - A total of 167 domestic observers (74 women and 7 members of the Association of People with Disabilities) have been accredited to observe the national general election.

SOMALIA: The Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) is working closely with the NIEC on the revision of specific articles in the draft electoral law. - On 30 October, UNDP contractors started construction work on the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) data processing centre and warehouse building in the new NIEC compound.

NB: the above-mentioned countries do not reflect the entirety of current ongoing joint electoral assistance projects (see list on p.1).

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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
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	31.05.20
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

- The project began to support the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) in the process of Precinct Election Commission (PEC) members licensing training.
- The project delivered a training on “Conflict Management and Negotiation Skills” for the CEC staff and continued planning of additional capacity building activities for the CEC.
- The project continued the development of management systems and introduction of ICT solutions for the CEC.
- The project supported the CEC in ICT capacity enhancement and continued the strategic planning process.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Support to the CEC's capacity building

The ESPA project continued consultations with the CEC Secretary to plan capacity building and training activities to be implemented by the end of 2019 and beyond.

A two-day training on “Conflict Management and Negotiation Skills” was organised on 10-11 October with the participation of 18 CEC members/staff (12 women and 6 men). The objective of the training was to present to the CEC members and staff problem-solving tools and negotiation strategies, towards strengthening every day interpersonal communication as well as effectively managing differences arising at various stages of the electoral process. The article related to this training can be viewed [here](#). The training evaluation showed high degree of satisfaction by the participants and highlighted the need to enhance further the acquired skills through advanced level follow up trainings.

During the entire month of October, ESPA focused on supporting the CEC in planning and implementing the “PEC Members Licensing Training”, in view of the CEC's long-term capacity building. The training began in Shirak region (marz) on 27 October and will run up to the end of November covering all 10 regions of Armenia and Yerevan.

The project's support to the CEC focused on the following:

- The online registration software for applicants for the Precinct Electoral Commission (PEC) Members Licensing Training was developed. The number of applicants registered from all 10 marzes and Yerevan totaled 12,645, with 6,976 women (55.17%) and 5,669 men (44.83%). The sex-disaggregation was facilitated by the newly developed and applied software.
- For the first time, partnership with a mobile service company to inform applicants on the PEC Members Licensing Training by sending personalised messages to all 12,645 applicants about the date and venue of the training and link to the e-Learning platform. Considering its efficiency evidenced through positive feedback received during ESPA team's monitoring mission in the field, the CEC expects to continue this practice for all future trainings.
- Update of the PEC Training Manual by developing content for a new component focused on "Leadership and Conflict Management" based on the relevant tools and exercises from the recently organised Conflict Management and Negotiation Skills training.
- The eLearning platform is already operational with the possibility of viewers to read the course materials and try out the quiz.
- Organisation of a Training of Trainers (TOT) on 23 October at the CEC premises, led by the CEC Secretary with all CEC trainers (CEC members and staff) for the purpose of reviewing the updated training manual as well as the updated e-Learning platform. Participants' suggestions for improvements shared during the TOT were integrated into the final training manual and e-Learning platform.
- Support to the overall planning and implementation of the training of an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 applicants to be conducted by 17 CEC trainers (11 women and 6 men) country-wide. The project provided operational support such as the printing and delivery of 20,000 training manuals and 20,000 tests, as well as the provision of 3,000 clear sheet protectors and 16,000 eco pens with the CEC logo.
- Finally, ESPA deployed a team to monitor four trainings held in Stepanavan in Lori region on 31 October. According to the CEC trainers, the SMS with the invitation to the training and the e-Learning link were positively evaluated by the participants. Out of the 146 participants attending the training observed by the ESPA team, 101 (69%) were women and 45 (31%) were men, which reflected Lori region's tradition of having the highest women's representation among PEC members. Age groups varied from 21 to 60 years old.

Additional consultations were held with the CEC Deputy Chair to revise the CEC's gender assessment report. Based on the CEC's request, the report was divided into two separate documents, with 1) one focusing on the general situation of gender equality and women's political participation in Armenia, and 2) the other focusing on solely the assessment related to the CEC.

Enhancement of the CEC and other stakeholder's IT equipment

The project delivered hardware equipment, including one enterprise level UPS and one data storage for the CEC data center in accordance with ESPA's hardware procurement plans.

The technical specifications for upgrading the CEC website have been shared with the CEC for feedback. This upgrade is expected to enable the CEC to use up-to-date technology for its website.

ICT capacity building (implementation of management systems for CEC)

Jointly with CEC staff, the project updated the e-Learning platform adding the online quiz for the applicants of the PEC Members Licensing Training. A pilot online exam through the e-Learning platform will be held mid-November targeting 200 applicants for of the PEC Members Licensing Training. For this purpose, 6 additional laptops were purchased, bringing the total number of laptops to serve the pilot to 10.

Enhancing the IT capacity of the CEC staff

The CEC IT department staff finished the second phase of the training on “ASP.NET Core web programming principles by using the C# language” at the Microsoft Innovation Center, which was organised and funded by ESPA. The certificate of completion has been provided to the participants from Microsoft Innovation Center.

II. Plans for the next period

For the month of November 2019, ESPA will:

- Continue support to the PEC Members Licensing Training activities in all regions and in Yerevan.
- Launch the pilot online exam with around 200 applicants of the PEC Members Licensing Training in Yerevan.
- The Advisor on election dispute resolution process will work closely with the CEC legal department and the Commissioners to conduct a review of the EDR process and provide recommendations for further improvements.
- The mission of the Advisor on Strategic Planning is planned for end of November 2019.
- Continue the development of management systems and IT solutions for the CEC.
- Continue the work on the CEC ICT strategy and roadmap development.
- Continue the development of the CEC strategic planning. Next visit of the Strategic Planning Advisor is planned for end of November.
- Continue capacity building planning for 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 and visit the [project's website](#).



GUINEA-BISSAU

Photo credit: IESU

SUPPORT TO THE ELECTORAL CYCLE 2018-2019

The “Support to Elections Cycle in Guinea-Bissau 2018-2019” project aims to address the Guinea-Bissau capacity to hold legitimate, transparent and credible elections in accordance with domestic legislation and international standards.

The project provides technical assistance to the Elections Management Bodies (CNE – National Election Commission - and GTAPE – Bureau of Technical Support to the Electoral Process) on areas of voters’ registration, elections logistics, electoral operations, civic education, information technologies. It also provides financial assistance to these operations and for the purchase of polling station kit’ consumables.

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- A total of 12 candidates were approved by the Supreme Court to run for President.
- A total of 450 civic animators have been trained for presidential elections’ voter awareness campaign.
- National Election Commission starts plenary meetings with candidate representatives.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

UN electoral assistance to the electoral management bodies in Guinea-Bissau – the National Electoral Commission (CNE), and the Technical Support Office to the Electoral Process (GTAPE) – is being provided through the UN Integrated Electoral Support Unit, comprising staff of UNDP and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS).

The Supreme Court of Justice approved on 14 October 12 candidacies for the presidential election, excluding 7 candidates whose candidacies did not fulfill the legal requirements.

On 3 and 4 October, GTAPE conducted the synchronization and consolidation of the data obtained from the omission’s correction process, under the presence and supervision of representatives of several political parties. In total, data was collected from 5,147 persons, from which 122 duplicates were discovered, resulting in 5,025 unique entries.

On 19 October, the CNE held its first plenary meeting in preparation for the presidential election of 24 November. The swearing-in ceremony of the representatives as non-permanent members of the plenary meeting took place during the session, as well as the official draw to decide the order of the candidates in the ballot paper, which occurred in a transparent and consensual way. In the second plenary session, on 22 October, the plenary members discussed the advantages and disadvantages of using the same voter list of 10 March legislative elections or the use of an updated voter list with the inclusion of voter entries resulting from the omissions correction process. Following the discussion, the members voted unanimously for the adoption of the voter' list used on 10 March.

The civic education campaign for the presidential elections, which is supported by UN Integrated Electoral Support Unit (UNIESU), will have as motto "Your vote is free and sovereign" [O seu voto é livre e soberano]. The campaign involves a total of 450 civic animators in the field, across all regions of Guinea-Bissau (although the number represents a reduction of 55% in the total number of animators from the legislative elections). On 11 and 12 October, the training of trainers on civic education was held in Bissau by the CNE, with 35 participants. The regional trainings took place on 14 and 15 October and comprised theoretical presentations and simulations of civic animation situations in the field. Following the trainings, civic animators were divided into groups as each group will be deployed to work in a different sector of the region. The civic education campaign was set to start on 22 October but the launch was postponed for 1 November.

Following an initiative by UN Integrated Electoral Support Unit (IESU) and UNIOGBIS gender unit in May 2019, CNE has been working under the stewardship of its deputy executive secretary, Ms. Felisberta Moura Vaz, to review its internal structure, strategic planning, and procedures, in light of ECOWAS best practices for electoral bodies. As a result of this process, CNE created and launched its gender unit and gender, social inclusion policy on 18 October in an official ceremony. CNE's policy aims to combat any form of gender discrimination and promote women's participation in election, as voters, candidates, observers and professional staff. It also intends to facilitate greater gender parity within the electoral bodies CNE and GTAPE. The policy includes provisions to implement gender responsive statistical analysis measures, civic education, staffing, and monitoring and evaluation, among others.

The Integrated Electoral Support Unit (IESU) Regional Electoral Advisers (REAs) were deployed on 7 October to all regions and presented themselves to the Regional Election Commissions (CREs). The REAs held meetings with the Regional Election Commission Presidents to formalise their relations and discuss the status of electoral preparations in their respective regions.

The IESU logistics adviser had meetings with all CRE presidents in early October to re-confirm physical quantities of bulk non-sensitive election materials in CRE offices. Following that assessment, logistics adviser assisted the CNE in the local procurement of office supplies which were delivered (50%) to the CNE warehouse on 30 and 31 October. Meetings were also held with POP (Public Order Police) and ECOMIB¹ officers, including joint visits to CNE Bissau warehouse to inspect the premises. The warehouse has been patrolled by POP and ECOMIB forces will also be deployed once the ballot papers arrive to Bissau. The IESU logistics adviser has also been assisting the CNE logistical team preparing the operation of ballot papers arrival, storage and further distribution to the regions.

¹ The ECOMIB is the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau.

II. Plans for the next period

- Civic education campaign will start on 1 November;
- Regional polling staff trainings to be conducted between 1-10 November;
- Ballot papers will arrive to Bissau on 8 November;
- Election day is 24 November.

For more information on the Support to the Electoral Cycle 2018-2019 project in Guinea Bissau, please contact Mr. Deryck Fritz, deryck.fritz@un.org and visit the [project's website](#).



LIBERIA

Election Project/UNDP Liberia

SUPPORT TO THE 2015 – 2018 LIBERIAN ELECTORAL CYCLE

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

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- The electoral reform consultations with political parties, civil society, and professional organisations have been completed.
- The National Election Commission's six-year Strategic Plan has been launched.
- The Needs Assessment Mission report has been shared with partners.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Regional consultative workshops on legal reform

The National Elections Commission (NEC) and its partners concluded the series of electoral reform consultations in a three-day interactive discussion in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County (22 – 24 October). The forum allowed NEC to discuss 2017 recommendations by national and international elections observers with political parties, civil society (CSOs), and other electoral stakeholders.

The proposals, amongst others, call for the reform of the current election law to improve electoral administration in Liberia. Among the cross-cutting issues discussed at the consultations were the change of election day, with the view to increase participation and decrease costs; reform in electoral dispute resolution; restructuring the NEC to allow for more efficient electoral administration; reduction of tenure of some elected officials, including the President, and the NEC Commissioners; enhancing political participation of women, youth and persons with disabilities; and review of political parties organisation and independent candidates' framework.

Upon completion of consultations, the Technical Working Group on Electoral Reform, supported by the project, begun drafting propositions for reform to be submitted to the Legislature following the international validation workshop and approval by the Board of Commissioners.



Launch of the NEC 2019 – 2024 Strategic Plan

On 17 October, NEC's Co-Chairperson officiated the launching of the Strategic Plan 2018-2024. The NEC Board of Commissioner, development partners, political parties, CSOs, and media, amongst others, attended the ceremony. In her address, the co-chairperson informed that the plan, adopted in a series of consultations and internal discussions, reassessed the mission and vision of the NEC, building upon its mandate, work, achievement, and challenges over the years. Envisioning the strategic direction for the next six years, the Plan highlights NEC's commitment to developing its staff professionally through excellence, fairness, respect, and collaboration. She reaffirmed NEC's commitment to conducting credible, inclusive, and transparent elections for the people of Liberia independently and impartially.



Needs assessment mission

The NEC presented to the development partners the Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) report, the basis for the new UNDP electoral assistance.

II. Plans for the next period

- Launch of the NEC warehouses' rehabilitation and construction;
- Building Resources in Democracy Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) training;
- Electoral Reform Validation Conference;
- International Youth Summit;
- Initial consultations on the new electoral project document.

For more information on the support to the Liberia electoral cycle, please contact Mr. Roosevelt Zayzay, roosevelt.zayzay@undp.org and visit the [Project's website](#).



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

- The inviolable minutes and envelopes for municipal and communal elections were produced and delivered on 27 October in Madagascar.
- A consultation framework between the CENI and the administrative courts and the State Council has been put in place. The judges benefited from capacity-building workshop from 7 to 10 October 2019.
- The District Information Centers leaders and Sections de Recensement Matériel de Vote (SRMV) presidents were trained on the module of good management and transmission of the results of the upcoming polls.
- Four radio spots were produced to raise Malagasy voters' awareness.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Production and delivery of sensitive prints supported by the SACEM project: The production of sensitive printed materials (minutes and envelopes) began in October in South Africa. Follow-up missions were held in Johannesburg as well as monitoring of the production and packaging of equipment. Nearly 58,000 reports and 370,000 tamper-proof envelopes were delivered on 27 October at Ivato Airport, Antananarivo, before being stored in a secure location pending deployment.

Information and capacity building of the administrative courts and the State Council. The judges

of the administrative courts and of the Council of State, in charge of electoral dispute resolution and the proclamation of the final results of the forthcoming elections (local elections), were informed and benefited from a capacity-building workshop organised from 7 to 10 October at the National School of Magistracy and Transcripts (ENMG). Decentralised consultation frameworks have been set up at the local level between the provincial CENI field offices (Provincial Electoral Commission-CEP) who will be in charge of proclaiming provisional results in their corresponding municipal constituencies and the geographically relevant Administrative Tribunal.

Training of District Information Centers leaders and operationalisation of the data transmission system: In order to optimise the centralisation of the compilation of results in the districts and then at the CENI level, the heads of the District Information Centers (CID) and the electoral material collecting sections (Sections de Recensement Matériel de Vote, SRMV)¹ presidents were strengthened in capacities. Two training cascades were organised from 24 to 30 October 2019. A training session for trainers of the Information System Directorate (french acronym DSI) (Cascade 1) was organised in Antananarivo from 24 to 25 October. The second cascade took place in eight different places in the country from 25 to 30 October, with the technical and financial support of the SACEM project.

Communication: Four radio spots on the election campaign, awareness of young people and women, the importance of peaceful voting and dispute resolution were produced in October.

II. Plans for the next period

Deployment of sensitive materials for municipal and communal polls. Sensitive printed materials for the 27 November polls will be deployed to the districts, communes and polling stations of the country from 8 to 25 November, in line with the CENI's calendar.

Consultation frameworks at local level. The operationalisation of the consultation framework between the provincial CENI field offices and the administrative courts will be continued and completed.

Training for the centralisation of results at the provincial level. Two capacity-building sessions for the centralisation of results will be organised for the CENI staff on one hand, and the presidents and IT experts of the administrative courts on the other.

Communication. The radio spots will be broadcast in the 22 regions of the country.

Holding municipal and communal elections. On 27 November, from 6 am to 5 pm, the Malagasy people will go to the polls to elect the future mayors and councilors of the 1,695 communes of the country. The final results of the elections, announced by the administrative courts, will be known in January 2020.

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 SMRVs in Madagascar – one per district. SMRVs do an inventory of the documents sent by each electoral office and their role is to verify the accuracy of the counting and procès-verbaux transmitted by polling stations.



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 project continued its initiatives to sustain election-related capacity-building.
- The project also launched series of workshops with women journalists to sensitize them on elections reporting.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The Electoral Support Project (ESP) continued to support capacity-building endeavours for electoral stakeholders around the country. This included 15 events of six different initiatives. Five of these had been rolled out in the previous months and October saw the addition of capacity-building work with women journalists in collaboration with UNESCO. In view of the upcoming by-elections as well as for sustainability, all of these activities were carried out through national implementing partners and direct reached a total of 699 participants, with 350 females and 349 males.

The Election Commission, Nepal (ECN) led electoral dispute resolution workshops in Sunsari and Bhaktapur for electoral stakeholders including representatives from political parties, the District Administration Office, the Armed Police Force, Nepal Police, journalists, observers and civil society.

Likewise, the Nepal Association for the Blind and the National Deaf Federation of Nepal conducted provincial level trainings for people living with visual and hearing disabilities in Chitwan, Biratnagar and



Participants at a training organised by the National Association for the Blind.

Mahottari. These organisations trained 223 participants on political participation for the visually impaired and the hard of hearing. While directed primarily at people living with disabilities, the trainings also played an important role in sensitizing other electoral stakeholders on the need for and the means to ensure inclusive elections, and they expressed their commitment to make elections accessible for all.

The message of inclusion in elections was also reasserted through the activities led by the Ministry of Education's Community Learning Centres and supported by the

project and UNESCO, which helped spread civic and voter education at the grassroots in four more of the districts where the by-elections are scheduled to take place.

The UNDP Social Cohesion and Democratic Participation (SCDP) project and the Nepal Transition to Peace Institute completed consultations on sustaining a peaceful environment for elections and launched municipal and provincial multi-stakeholder dialogues to explore local solutions to electoral risks that may arise.

A new initiative that was launched this month consists of workshops with female journalists to sensitise them on elections. Two such workshops were completed and followed by interactions between women in journalism and women in politics to support network-building, as well as to address the nuances involved in electoral reporting from a gender perspective.



A parliamentarian interacts at the workshop between women political leaders and women journalists.

II. Plans for the next period

The by-elections are scheduled for 30 November and ESP will continue to provide support to these elections. The end of October and the beginning of November will see support for the trainings of Chief Returning Officers and District Electoral Officers organised by the ECN. ESP will continue supporting the capacity building endeavours in the lead up to by-elections as well as to ensure their sustainability.

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

SECSIP

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 Knowledge Attitude and Practice Survey has been finalised.
- The Outstanding Women initiative is under implementation.
- A total of 167 domestic observers (74 women and 7 members of the Association of People with Disabilities) have been accredited to observe the national general election.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Support to electoral operations

As of 1 November 2019, the Solomon Islands Electoral Office will be responsible for the organisation of Provincial Assemblies Elections. One of the priorities identified by the Electoral Office is to explore the possibility of holding concurrent elections which would result in a more cost-effective approach.

In line with this, the upcoming by-election for the National Parliament seat for East Makira has been scheduled for 12 December 2019 to be held simultaneously with the Provincial Assembly Election for Makira province.

The project's support to these elections includes:

- Materials and funding for the face-to-face voter awareness actions which are particularly crucial given that this is the first time that a by-election and is held simultaneously with provincial elections;
- Provision of funding for the training of the Assistant Returning Officers (AROs). The training focuses on legislative changes adopted to merge these two election processes.

Other assistance provided by the project during this period includes:

- Supporting the Electoral Office to prepare and finalise electoral forms and materials and assisting in the preparatory work for the nomination of candidates.
- Completion of transfer of ownership of a vehicle procured in 2017 to provide transport and logistical support to the Electoral Office.

Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey report

The Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) report commissioned by the project was finalised in October 2019 and shared with stakeholders during the Technical Advisory Committee meeting held on 16 October. The meeting was attended by an EU official based in EU Delegation in Suva, Fiji.

Support to women's political participation

- *Outstanding Women (OW) of Solomon Islands initiative:* Ten contracts for Outstanding Women have been completed and will be implemented by the Provincial Council of Women. The funds are to be utilized in connection with the implementation of the Outstanding Women of Solomon Islands initiative. Four of them have conducted the initial stages of awareness on the OW and are now receiving nominations. The other five Provinces and Honiara City Council are expected to commence implementation by mid-November.

Domestic observers national general elections report 2019 finalised

With a view to enhance transparency and credibility of the national general election, SECSIP reached an agreement with OXFAM to collaborate with the Solomon Islands Social Accountability Coalition (SISAC) in the engagement of domestic observers. This resulted in the accreditation of 167 domestic observers (74 women and 7 members of the Association of People with Disabilities) to observe the national general election. SISAC consists of the major nine civil society organisations in Solomon Islands that work in the area of anti-corruption, good governance and transparency who were all represented in this exercise.

A report on the 2019 National General Election has now been finalised by SISAC domestic observers. The report acknowledges the improvement in the implementation of 2019 national general election with respect to previous elections particularly in terms of inclusiveness.



Some of the SISAC women and youth NGE 2019 Observers. Source: SISAC Domestic Observers report.

UN electoral needs assessment mission (NAM) 29 October - 3 November 2019

In response to the request of the Solomon Islands dated 6 September 2019 for the continuity of the UN electoral assistance, a NAM was deployed from 29 October to 1 November.

The purpose of the NAM is to evaluate the current political and electoral environment in Solomon Islands, the legal and institutional framework governing the electoral process and the capacity and needs of the various election stakeholders, with a view to recommending whether the UN should continue to provide electoral assistance.



NAM team meeting with women leaders and women candidates of National General Elections 2019

The project made arrangements for the NAM to meet and discuss with national authorities and international partners. NAM meetings included senior officials from Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening, Ministry of Women Youth, Children and Family Affairs, Ministry of Education, Human Resources and Development, Royal Solomon Islands Police Force. The NAM team also met with representatives of the Opposition, Honiara City Council, Electoral and Political Parties Commissions, civil society organisations and women leaders. The NAM also discussed with international development partners, including the EU, Australia, UK and Japan.

A report from the NAM mission is expected towards the end November 2019.

II. Plans for the next period

N/A

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](#).



★ SOMALIA

Ilyas Ahmed/UN Photo

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 Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) is working closely with the NIEC on the revision of specific articles in the draft electoral law.
- On 30 October, UNDP contractors started construction work on the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) data processing centre and warehouse building in the new NIEC compound.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Somalia Partnership Forum

From 1-2 October, Somalia and its international partners met in Mogadishu for the Somalia Partnership Forum (SPF). The participants took stock of the progress made since the previous SPF in July 2018, and agreed to priority actions in the Mutual Accountability Framework (MAF). The Government's side commitment was to hold one-person-one-vote federal elections in late 2020/early 2021 and the operationalisation of the National Electoral Security Task Force (NESTF).

Parliamentary ad hoc committee reviews draft electoral law

The Parliamentary Ad-Hoc Committee to review the draft electoral law was established in July and held various consultations with a broad range of stakeholders in Mogadishu and across the Federal Member States including the NIEC, civil society organisations, political parties, media and the UN. IESG is working closely with the NIEC to advocate with the ad-hoc committee to revise specific articles in the draft electoral law that are contradictory or are more suited to regulations. The Committee extended its workplan from the end of September and it is anticipated it may complete its work in November when it will be expected to submit its report to Parliament. The adoption of the electoral law is essential for NIEC to plan for the start of voter registration in early 2020 to meet the constitutional timeline for elections as outlined in the Government's Inclusive Politics Roadmap.

NIEC Chairperson meets with Deputy Secretary-General of UN

NIEC Chairperson Halima Ismail Ibrahim met with Ms. Amina Jane Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General (DSG) of the United Nations, and Mr. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa, in Mogadishu on 23 October. The NIEC Chairperson presented an update of the main electoral preparations and challenges. DSG Mohammed reiterated her appreciation for the NIEC's ongoing efforts to enhance women's participation in the electoral process and said she will continue to advocate for the need for the international community to support the electoral process in Somalia.



NIEC Chairperson meets with UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina J. Mohamed, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) James Swan and senior UN Mission management in Mogadishu. Topics discussed included the significance of Somalia achieving one person, one vote elections and the importance of women's inclusion in the electoral process as voters, decision makers and leaders. 23 October 2019.

Construction of NIEC data centre and warehouse

UNDP contractors started construction work on the NIEC data processing centre and warehouse building in the new NIEC compound on 30 October. The building is expected to be completed by the end of February 2020. Currently, the NIEC headquarters is located in Villa Somalia, which is difficult for electoral stakeholders to access.



Work has begun by UNDP contractors on the site where the NIEC data centre and warehouse will be located; construction is expected to be completed by end of February 2020.

Peacebuilding Fund approves projects

Two projects submitted to the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) in September were approved in October. One project will support the activities of the National Electoral Security Task Force (NESTF) while the second project will support the NIEC's Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR) mechanism to enhance peaceful dispute resolution and minimize elections-related violence.

II. Plans for the next period

N/A

For more information on the UNDP/UNSOM Joint Programme, please contact Mary Cummins, mary.cummins@undp.org, and visit the [Project's website](#).