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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 August, 2017

Electoral Assistance Projects Update

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



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

On 16 August, the European Union Ambassador in Nepal and the UNDP Country Director signed an agreement for an additional EU contribution of EUR 1.65 million to the project. The additional funds received in 2017 from both the EU and Norway allow the project to expand activities in the area of supporting women's political participation and voter education, and enable the project to respond to emergency needs that may arise in the organization of the upcoming elections.

NEPAL

On 26 August, supported by the Joint Programme, Ministry of Interior and Federal Affairs (MOIFAR) organized a coordination session on the drafting process of the Electoral Law with key partners from the government. The aim is to strengthen the internal coordination within the Government on key elements of the electoral law, in particular on the eventual choice of the electoral system.

SOMALIA

SUMMARY

ARMENIA: The Project Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Advisor completed the verification of the final version of the VIU Client (Voter Authentication Device -VAD software) and Central Verification Information System (CVIS) software and reviewed the code during the reporting period and certified the final version of the VIU Client - version 2.2.14 and CVIS.

KENYA: Kenya held its General Election on August 8, 2017. During this election, six positions were contested: President, Governor, Senator, Member of National Assembly, Woman Member of National Assembly and Member of County Assembly. The elections saw the incumbent President Uhuru Kenyatta declared the winner of the presidential race. This was contested at the Supreme Court by his main challenger Mr. Raila Odinga.

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission announced the final election results on Friday 11 August 2017 noting that 15,073,662 Kenyans turned out to vote. This represents 78.91 % of the 19, 613, 846 total registered voters. In analysis against the 2013 elections this was a noted decrease in turnout from the 2013 elections, which stood at 85%.

Following the declaration of results, the main opposition coalition, National Super Alliance (NASA) rejected the results. The IEBC announced results had declared President Uhuru Kenyatta, the incumbent, as the President elect after attaining 8,217,251 votes (54.17%) with Raila Odinga (ODM) coming second after garnering 6,816,979 votes (44.94%). NASA filed a presidential petition in the Supreme Court of Kenya disputing the declaration of President Uhuru Kenyatta as President Elect on a number of grounds. The Court had been preparing to listen to election petitions for all elective posts by making early arrangements to listen to what was being predicted to be a larger than even number of petitions. On the 1st of September 2017, the Supreme Court annulled the Presidential election and therefore the re-election of President Uhuru Kenyatta citing irregularities and illegalities in vote counting, tallying and tabulation. The Court ordered a fresh election to be conducted within a period of 60 days as stipulated in the Constitution of Kenya. A detailed judgement would be issued within 21 days of the Courts declaration.

Nonetheless, the biggest winners in the just concluded elections were women. History was written for Kenyan elections with inauguration of the first ever women Governors for 3 counties. A further 3 women Senators were also elected. Twenty-three women Members of the National Assembly (MNA) were elected compared to 2013 when only 16 had been elected as MNAs. The number of elected women Members of the County Assembly (MCA)

stood at 98 nationwide, compared to 85 in 2013. This is an increase of 15% from 2013 and is 6.75% of the total number of MCAs of 1450. While this is encouraging, the constitutional principle that no more than two-thirds of all members of elective bodies shall be of the same gender is far from being achieved. It remains to be seen how the 12th Parliament will deal with ensuring that this principle is implemented to the letter of the Constitution.

LEBANON: UNDP LEAP continued to provide technical assistance and advisory support to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) in key electoral areas, namely in candidate's registration, results management systems and in the preparation of unified ballot papers.

LIBERIA: Training was conducted for 19 magistrates and four regional coordinators on hearings and dispute resolution. Total of 7,320 civilian security personnel were trained in electoral security and best practice in four regional centres across the country. Phase three of the civic and voter outreach campaign was launched by the National Elections Commission on 18 August 2017.

NEPAL: Combined State Assembly and House of Representatives elections were called. They are to be held in two phases on 26 November and 7 December. EU provided additional funds to support the electoral cycle in Nepal.

SOMALIA: On 8 August, the National Independent Electoral Commission of Somalia (NIEC) addressed the House of the People to present electoral plans, responding to questions raised during its previous visit to the Parliament on 26 July. On 15 August, the NIEC also presented its plans to the Federal Upper House of Somalia. On 17 August, as part of the plan to reach out to the Somalia's federal members states, a delegation from the NIEC visited the member state of 'South West', meeting the State President and other representatives in order to gain support in fulfilling its constitutional mandate. On 24 August, United Nations Under-Secretary-General (USG), Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, visited the NIEC as part of a high-level visit to the country. On 26 August, the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MOIFAR) organized a coordination session with key partners of the Federal Government on the drafting process of the Electoral Law.

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

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ONGOING ELECTORAL PROJECTS WITH EU FUNDING

Country	Project Title	Reference	EU Contribution	Start Date	End Date
Afghanistan	Support to Electoral Assistance in Afghanistan	DCI-ASIE/2015/368-884	€ 15,500,000.00	01.06.16	31.03.19
Armenia	Support to the Electoral Process in Armenia (SEPA)	ENI/2017/383-645	€ 2,000,000.00	01.07.16	01.10.17
Georgia	Studies and Research of Media Election Coverage in Georgia for Local Self-Government Elections 2017	ENI/2016/378-735	€ 276,663.00	01.01.17	31.12.17
Guinea	Projet d'Appui au Cycle Electoral de la Guinée – PACEG	FED/2015/367-390	€ 10,000,000.00	06.07.15	05.07.18
Kenya	Strengthening of the Electoral Processes in Kenya Project	FED/2016/372/463	€ 5,000,000.00	13.02.16	12.02.19
Lebanon	EU Support to the Lebanese Elections Assistance Programme (LEAP): Building Sustainability for Implementation of Electoral Reforms	ENPI/2013/333-144	€ 1,810,000.00	01.01.14	31.12.17
	Lebanese Electoral Assistance Programme for the 2013 Parliamentary Elections	ENPI/2013/316-094	€ 3,000,000.00	01.01.13	31.12.17
Liberia	Support to the 2015-2018 Liberian Electoral Cycle	FED/2015/367-723	€ 10,000,000.00	01.06.15	31.05.19
Nepal	Electoral Support Project-Institutional Strengthening and Professional Development Support for the Election Commission of Nepal (ESP)	DCI-ASIE/2012/305-833	€ 8,400,000.00	12.01.12	11.01.18
Solomon Islands	Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project (SECSIP)	FED/2013/328-922	€ 3,500,000.00	01.07.13	31.12.18
Somalia	Joint Programme for Support to the Electoral Process in the Federal Republic of Somalia	FED/2015/366-291 FED/2015/360-953	€ 5,193,878.00	21.11.15	30.09.17
Zambia	Support to the 2015-2017 Electoral Cycle	FED/2015/363-147	€ 5,250,000.00	23.06.15	31.07.18
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project (ZIM-ECO)	FED/2016/380-895	€ 5,590,000.00	01.09.16	30.08.20



 ARMENIA

SUPPORT TO THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN ARMENIA (SEPA)

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Project Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Advisor completed the verification of the final version of the VIU Client (Voter Authentication Device -VAD software) and Central Verification Information System (CVIS) software and reviewed the code during the reporting period and certified the final version of the VIU Client - version 2.2.14 and CVIS.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

During the reporting period, the vendor supplied the final version of the VIU Client - version 2.2.14 (VAD software) and full regression testing of the operational, training and testing software was successfully completed by the Project Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Team. The ICT team also completed the verification of the code for both the VIU Client and the CVIS, the latter being the last step of the process. The regressive testing and the verification of the code were successful and on 23 August the ICT advisors certified the system which is now final.

The ICT Advisors were in contact with the ITIL (Information Technology Information Library) standards

forum in the UK in regards to the documentation structure for the certification of the VA process. The main discussion concerned the inclusion of the “Enterprise Architecture of the Voter Authentication Environment Document” in the “Solutions Architecture Document”. Upon a full-length discussion and deliberation, it was agreed that this can be included in the Solution Architecture Document as an Appendix, given the fact that the Enterprise Architecture is not complex and will have a stable road map for at least the next 5 years. The Enterprise Architecture component was subsequently added to the Solution Architecture Document and finalized during the reporting period.

During the reporting period, upon receipt of the new VAD screenshots by the vendor, the training team completed the draft of the new VA Operator’s manual and transmitted it to the CEC on 25 April for review and approval.

During the reporting period, the Project issued the contract for the web developer to support the CEC (Central Electoral Commission) in upgrading its website. The developer is working on different graphic options for the CEC review and decision.

The Project team finalized the logistic/administrative preparations for the CEC lessons-learned exercise on the VA process. The CEC has finalized the list of attendees and presents. The workshop is confirmed to take place in Yerevan on 5 and 6 September 2017, while the Strategic Planning workshop is rescheduled for 25 and 26 September.

II. Plans for the next period

- CEC to conduct the VA process lessons-learned exercise, SEPA project to support the workshop on 5/6 September.
- Conduct the workshop “Introduction to Strategic Planning for Electoral Administrations” on 25/26 September.
- Organize four short ICT training on VA process for CEC staff.
- Issue ITIL Certification of the VA process.
- Hold final Steering Committee Meeting.
- Complete the Project’s final narrative and financial report.
- Close-down of the Project on 30 September.

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



 GUINEA

 PACEG

PROJET D'APPUI AU CYCLE ELECTORAL DE LA GUINEE

I. Project activities during the reporting period

NTR

II. Plans for the next period

NTR



KENYA

IEBC Communications Department

STRENGTHENING THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN KENYA

HIGHLIGHTS

- Kenya held its General Election on August 8, 2017. During this election, six positions were contested: President, Governor, Senator, Member of National Assembly, Woman Member of National Assembly and Member of County Assembly. The elections saw the incumbent President Uhuru Kenyatta declared the winner of the presidential race. This was contested at the Supreme Court by his main challenger Mr. Raila Odinga.
- The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission announced the final election results on Friday 11 August 2017 noting that 15,073,662 Kenyans turned out to vote. This represents 78.91 % of the 19, 613, 846 total registered voters. In analysis against the 2013 elections this was a noted decrease in turnout from the 2013 elections, which stood at 85%.
- Following the declaration of results, the main opposition coalition, National Super Alliance (NASA) rejected the results. The IEBC announced results had declared President Uhuru Kenyatta, the incumbent, as the President elect after attaining 8,217,251 votes (54.17%) with Raila Odinga (ODM) coming second after garnering 6,816,979 votes (44.94%). NASA filed a presidential petition in the Supreme Court of Kenya disputing the declaration of President Uhuru Kenyatta as President Elect on a number of grounds. The Court had been preparing to listen to election petitions for all elective posts by making early arrangements to listen to what was being predicted to be a larger than even number of petitions. On the 1st of September 2017, the Supreme Court annulled the Presidential election and therefore the re-election of President Uhuru Kenyatta citing irregularities and illegalities in vote counting, tallying and tabulation. The Court ordered a fresh election to be conducted within a period of 60 days as stipulated in the Constitution of Kenya. A detailed judgement would be issued within 21 days of the Court's declaration.
- Nonetheless, the biggest winners in the just concluded elections were women. History was written for Kenyan elections with inauguration of the first ever women Governors for 3 counties. A further 3 women Senators were also elected. Twenty-three women Members of the National Assembly (MNA) were elected compared to 2013 when only 16 had been elected as MNAs. The number of elected women Members of the County Assembly (MCA) stood at 98 nationwide, compared to 85 in 2013. This is an increase of 15% from 2013 and is 6.75% of the total number of MCAs of 1450. While this is encouraging, the constitutional principle that no more than two-thirds of all members of elective bodies shall be of the same gender is far from being achieved. It remains to be seen how the 12th Parliament will deal with ensuring that this principle is implemented to the letter of the Constitution.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The project supported the training of 175,000 security officials from the Kenya Police Service, Administration Police Service, National Youth Service, Kenya Forest Service, Kenya Wildlife Service, National Prisons Service to offer election day security under the Electoral Security Arrangement Programme (ESAP). The officials were deployed on the election day to provide security to 40,883 polling stations countrywide. Due to this support, no major security hitches were experienced during and shortly after polling.

The project provided ongoing support to Elections Observation Group (ELOG). ELOG is a long-term, permanent and national network of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), including Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), mandated to undertake impartial, integral and inclusive observation and monitoring of electoral processes. Through this support, ELOG deployed 290 long-term observers, 83 Special Interest Group observers, 21 hate speech monitors, 5710 General Observers, 290 Constituency Tallying Centre Observers, and 1703 Parallel Vote Tabulation (PVT) Observers. The project also supported the Kenya National Commission for Human rights (KNCHR) to recruit and train 139 monitors in 43 counties.

II. Plans for the next period

The project will:

- monitor the proceedings at the Supreme Court with a view to offering support aimed at implementing the decision of the Court;
- support IEBC to undertake an evaluation of voter education and its impact on the just concluded general elections;
- support a post-election evaluation to draw lessons which will inform future elections;
- in a bid to commence early strengthening of political parties, support Office of the Registrar of Political Parties to develop a popular version of the Political Parties Act and its amendments.

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



LEBANON

UNDP LEAP

LEBANESE ELECTIONS ASSISTANCE PROJECT

HIGHLIGHTS

- UNDP LEAP continued to provide technical assistance and advisory support to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) in key electoral areas, namely in candidate's registration, results management systems and in the preparation of unified ballot papers.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

As part of the preparations for the upcoming 2018 parliamentary elections, UNDP LEAP continued to provide technical assistance and advisory support to the MoIM in key electoral areas, namely:

- candidate's registration and results management systems: the project supported the development of a technical study, focused on the new requirements of the law. The expert study includes technical recommendations, hardware and software requirements as well as the human resources needed to implement the new automated results management.
- unified ballot papers: the project developed a technical document, which included the international standards, the technical requirements, the security features, etc.
- in addition, LEAP is working in partnership with the Ministry of Women Affairs and UN Women developing a comprehensive awareness media campaign focusing on temporary special measures and women participation. Also, the project will continue its successful partnership with Women in Front and will be organizing ten information sessions with potential women candidates, at regional level.

II. Plans for the next period

NTR

For more information on the project on LEAP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr.



LIBERIA

Election Project/UNDP Liberia

SUPPORT TO THE 2015 – 2018 LIBERIAN ELECTORAL CYCLE

The project to support the electoral process in Liberia aims to strengthen the capacity of the National Election Commission (NEC) to successfully carry out electoral processes within the electoral cycle 2015-2018. Key in this regard is the preparation and conduct of the Presidential and General elections scheduled for 10th October 2017. Among other specific objectives, it introduces modern administrative systems and procedures, enhances its communications and public outreach and supports voter registration ahead of the elections. In addition, the project seeks to enhance the participation of women in the elections and in political activities, support civic and voter education and strengthen NEC's capacity to engage with the stakeholders and resolve electoral disputes.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Training was conducted for 19 magistrates and four regional coordinators on hearings and dispute resolution.
- Total of 7,320 civilian security personnel were trained in electoral security and best practice in four regional centres across the country.
- Phase three of the civic and voter outreach campaign was launched by the National Elections Commission on 18 August 2017.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Technical expertise to support the design and preparation of specifications for the printing of ballot papers is now completed and they are being printed overseas.

Training was conducted for 19 magistrates and four regional coordinators on hearings and dispute resolution, improving the understanding of and commitment to the impartial administrative complaints and appeals mechanisms.

The polling and counting procedural manual for 28,500 election officials and staff was updated and 30,000 copies published. Training was conducted on civic and voter awareness strategies for partners from civil society. In cooperation with the National Democratic Institute (NDI), training commenced for 260 political party trainers that will train political party agents, providing increased transparency at polling stations.

Logistics and operational plans for election delivery were finalized. Magistrates participated in a three-day training session to increase institutional field level insight and awareness of these plans. A new system for communications with magistrates' offices was piloted during the voter registration card replacement period. Following evaluation, the communications system will be scaled up for the election day and counting processes.

In total 7,320 civilian security personnel were trained in electoral security and best practice in four regional centres across the country. Overall, 8,000 copies of a policing pocket guide were also produced as a reference for officers on election day. Funding of USD 1.1 million has been secured from Japan for the deployment of 5,500 security personnel for the escort and storage of electoral material and to provide polling day security in each electoral precinct.

Phase three of the civic and voter outreach campaign was launched by the National Elections Commission on 18 August 2017. Seven lead civil society organization will work with community groups across all 15 counties. A total of 70,000 A3 sized posters are printed, 40,000 of which highlighted specific gender messages, 32,000 A1 sized posters, 1,000 guides for campaigners as well as 2,900 t-shirts and 43 banners promoting voter participation and awareness.

The UNDP IT consultant is conducting an internal analysis and verification of the voter register database. This includes adding data sets for gender, labelling checks and updated formatting, as well as updates to search facilities allowing voters to search their details on the register.

II. Plans for the next period

- Operations and logistics departments will be supported with technical expertise in advance of the elections on 10 October 2017.
- Coordination between magistrates' offices will continue to be improved with the rollout of the communications plan in advance of election day.
- The results management system will be updated and support will continue for printing and quality assurance on the voter register with processes such as de-duplication of entries supported.
- The project will also support the accreditation of national and international observers, party agents and deployment of sensitive and non-sensitive electoral material.
- Cascade training programmes for the 28,500 temporary election officials is also scheduled to be delivered in September 2017.

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



ELECTORAL SUPPORT PROJECT

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- Combined State Assembly and House of Representatives elections were called. They are to be held in two phases on 26 November and 7 December.
- EU provided additional funds to support the electoral cycle in Nepal.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Government of Nepal, in consultation with the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN), announced that State Assemblies and House of Representatives elections will be held in two phases on 26 November and 7 December.

ECN is preparing the implementation of the last phase of local election, with polling date on 18 September. ESP focused on implementing the agreed support for Phase III, primarily in the areas of training, voter education, external relations, inclusion and IT.

The project supported ECN in organizing four separate training events which saw the participation of 167 Chief Returning Officers, Returning Officers and District Election Officers for the third phase of local elections.

As in the previous two phases of the local elections, ESP contracted local NGOs to organize a voter education campaign through holding community-level voter education events with a focus on women, isolated areas and marginalized communities. The programme aims at complementing the voter education campaign of the ECN and covers all eight districts of State 2.

ESP also supported the substantive preparation and organization of ECN interaction events with media, one in each of the eight districts of phase III. These events saw the participation of around 50 to 60 media professionals each. For this programme, the project successfully advocated for the inclusion of a specific session on women participation and inclusion of marginalized groups. This session was presented by project staff together with ECN officers in each of the eight locations.

The ESP IT team conducted a functional testing workshop for the new voter registration software with ECN counterparts. The ECN technicians' reactions to the software were positive and ESP hopes for ESP and ECN to work jointly on the issues that were identified in order to strengthen ECN ownership of the software.

On 16 August, the European Union Ambassador in Nepal and the UNDP Country Director signed an agreement for an additional EU contribution of EUR 1.65 million to the project. The additional funds received in 2017 from both the EU and Norway allow the project to expand activities in the area of supporting women's political participation and voter education, and enable the project to respond to emergency needs that may arise in the organization of the upcoming elections.

II. Plans for the next period

- In view of the third and last phase of the local election, the project will provide continuous support to the commission in voter education, but also IT support as well as advice and support for general operations.
- In particular, technical support for the third phase of local elections, especially in voter education through local NGOs will be implemented. Selected project staff will ensure monitoring of activities. It should ultimately see 200 facilitators trained, over 2,000 events organized and nearly 50,000 voters reached. Building on lessons from the programme to encourage women's political participation, which ESP implemented in April, ESP used this wave to pilot community-level engagement with male participants in order to encourage women's participation. Each of the 200 facilitators is to organize one event of this type in addition to the voter education sessions.
- Continued technical support for the voter registration update, including updating of voter roll and advising on subsequent needs for printing of voters' ID cards for voters recently added or for those who changed their address.
- Support to the national counterpart in drafting an electoral operational plan for future electoral cycles.

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



SOLOMON ISLANDS

SECSIP

STRENGTHENING THE ELECTORAL CYCLE IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS (SECSIP)

I. Project activities during the reporting period

NTR

II. Plans for the next period

NTR



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

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- On 8 August, the National Independent Electoral Commission of Somalia (NIEC) addressed the House of the People to present electoral plans, responding to questions raised during its previous visit to the Parliament on 26 July. On 15 August, the NIEC also presented its plans to the Federal Upper House of Somalia.
- On 17 August, as part of the plan to reach out to the Somalia’s federal members states, a delegation from the NIEC visited the member state of ‘South West’, meeting the State President and other representatives in order to gain support in fulfilling its constitutional mandate.
- On 24 August, United Nations Under-Secretary-General (USG), Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, visited the NIEC as part of a high-level visit to the country.
- On 26 August, the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MOIFAR) organized a coordination session with key partners of the Federal Government on the drafting process of the Electoral Law.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

- **NIEC’s outreach and engagement to the Federal Member State of South West**
On 17 August, supported by the UN Electoral Joint Programme, the NIEC visited the Baidoa, state

capital of the Somali member-state of South-West. This visit, as well as earlier visits of the NIEC to Puntland (Garowe - June) and Jubaland (Kismayo - July), are part of the Commission's external relations strategy to reach out to the different Federal Member States and receive political support to its mandate. Commissioners met the State President, different Members of Parliament, and civil society representatives to discuss plans for the 2021 federal elections, including presenting its five-year work plan and preparations for political party registration. The State President of South-West pledged and offered his support to the Commission in line with its constitutional mandate.

- **Visit of the UN Under-Secretary-General (USG) to NIEC**



United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, and NIEC Chair, Ms. Halima Ibrahim, giving a press conference on the electoral preparations for universal elections in Somalia by 2021. Mogadishu, 24 August 2017. Photo credit: UNDP

On 24 August, United Nations Under-Secretary-General (USG), Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, visited the NIEC as part of a high-level visit to the country. The Commission presented Mr. Feltman with its preparation plans for universal elections by 2021, the first general elections of the country since 1969. The NIEC Chairperson highlighted that the entire process will need continued political support from the Federal Government of Somalia and the international community, including the United Nations. A video of the USG's visit to the NIEC as well as to the Prime Minister can be found on the following link: <https://vimeo.com/230940719>. The NIEC's work towards universal elections is supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), funded through the EU, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

- **MOIFAR coordination meeting on the drafting process of the Electoral Law**

On 26 August, supported by the Joint Programme, MOIFAR organized a coordination session on the drafting process of the Electoral Law with key partners from the government, including the NIEC, representatives from the Office of the President as well as of the Prime Minister, a Member of the Parliament, and the Ministry of Constitution, of Women Affairs and Human Rights, and of Justice. The aim is to strengthen the internal coordination within the Government on key elements of the electoral law, in particular on the eventual choice of the electoral system. The participants underscored that women's representation rights must be clearly stated in the law.

- **NIEC observation mission to Rwanda and Kenya elections**

With logistical support from the Joint Programme, the representatives of the NIEC visited in early August Rwanda and Kenya for an election observation mission in those countries. In addition, on 31 August, the Joint Programme facilitated the mission of the NIEC Deputy Chair, Mr. Sayed Ali Mohamed to attend the third general assembly of the Association of the World Election Bodies (A-WEB), held in Bucharest, Romania. The NIEC, also member of the Arab EMBs since 2016, intends to capitalize on the electoral experience and knowledge of these international institutions.

II. Plans for the next period

- **Support to NIEC**

- Preparation of the voter registration feasibility study
- NIEC engagement with political associations and stakeholders on Political Party Registration
- NIEC ongoing engagements with the Federal Member States of Somalia
- NIEC Donor coordination meeting
- Ongoing enhancement of NIEC internal processes and regulations

- **Support to MOIFAR**

- Ongoing drafting and consultation workshops on the Electoral Law

- **Other activities**

- Development of revised UN Electoral Support Project Document - Donor and Stakeholder Engagements
- Project Board Meeting

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



ZIMBABWE

UNDP Zimbabwe

ZIMBABWE ELECTORAL COMMISSION CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT (ZIM-ECO)

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

HIGHLIGHTS

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

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Technical Assistance for Voter Registration Operations: UNDP has been providing technical assistance through an expert on Voter Registration to ZEC for preparation of the BVR roll out. Detailed procedures have been developed for the logistic requirements for BVR operations, protocols for data management, steps for the voter registration of citizens, administrative and other related procedures, software requirements, training plan and development of training materials etc. This technical assistance has helped and assisted ZEC in the finalization of the Voter Registration Operations. The Voter Registration Operational Plan developed by ZEC is being refined and updated considering the technical inputs provided by the VR Specialist and based on the final delivery of BVR Kits.

Procurement of the Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) Kits and Data Centre Upgradation: 2,600 BVR Kits are being supplied to ZEC for conduct of the voter registration process. The 400 BVR kits for training

were received by ZEC on 28 August, 2017. The final delivery of 2,600 BVR Kits are expected by mid-October, 2017.

Based on the requirements identified by ZEC, UNDP has placed an order with a data centre equipment provider for upgradation of the ZEC data centre. It is estimated that the data centre upgradation will be completed by end of September, 2017 enabling ZEC to store and process the BVR data.

Stakeholder Consultations: The stakeholder consultations are continuing with the political parties, civil society organisations (CSOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs) and media to discuss issues and challenge regarding the implementation of the BVR process. ZEC has committed to continue with the stakeholder consultation process and replicate it at the provincial level. It is expected that these consultations will reduce concerns of different stakeholders and, where appropriate, take them into account during the implementation of the BVR process which will also help build confidence.

Voter Education Strategy and its Implementation: Technical assistance was provided by UNDP for development of Voter Education Strategy and the associated Voter Education Plan. Based on the inputs from stakeholders, Communication Specialists of the project have developed a branding campaign, messaging and designs of the materials, which are ready to be used for voter education during the voter registration process. Contracts have been signed for printing of materials, radio and TV programs, SMS services, a call centre, road shows and interactive community programs by using pocket projectors that will strengthen the voter education campaign.

Human Rights and dispute resolution: A consultant was engaged by UNDP to present options for actions and activities to address issues of politically motivated violence in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Act. Some options have been suggested and discussions will be held with Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) to plan for the way forward. There are plans to assist the ZHRC on developing an election strategy in coming months.

Gender Mainstreaming: UNDP is working in partnership with UN Women for implementing gender mainstreaming interventions across all the project activities. A gender baseline survey has commenced aimed at determining public perception around electoral processes, including challenges of participation of women. It is a nationally representative survey of 2,000 households across Zimbabwe and data enumeration has been completed and the data is currently being analysed.

II. Plans for the next period

- Starting of the Master Trainers workshop for BVR Operators and Technicians
- Launch of the Voter Registration process
- Upgradation of data centre
- Implementation of Voter Education activities

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