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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 March, 2019

Electoral Assistance Projects Update

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



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

On 10 March, the legislative elections were successfully held. Following the confirmation of the provisional results by the National Electoral Commission, political parties and the President of the Republic issued statements accepting the results.

GUINEA-BISSAU

On 9 March, the NIEC held discussions with political parties at a round-table meeting in Mogadishu. To date, the NIEC has provided temporary registration certificates to 43 political parties.

SOMALIA

The project supported the launch of the official campaign period and 3 political party televised debates on 7, 14 and 26 March in Lilongwe, Blantyre and Mzuzu respectively.

MALAWI

SUMMARY

GUINEA-BISSAU: Legislative elections were successfully held nationwide on 10 March. - Provisional election results announced on 13 March, considered final as of 15 March.

KENYA: The project supported the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties in the finalisation of its Strategic Plan. The project co-supported the Judiciary Training Institute and the Judiciary Committee on Elections in the organisation of an electoral dispute resolution debrief for High Court Judges to evaluate its performance, assess lessons learnt and identify lessons that arose from adjudication of election petitions from the 2017 elections. - The project supported the development and launch of various knowledge products.

LEBANON: The project supported the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities in candidate's registration, election operations, training of polling officials, voter education campaign. - The project also supported the Supervisory Commission of Election by providing technical support to the observers and media accreditation process, and to the media monitoring process.

LIBERIA: In an effort to ensure institutional and human capacity building at the National Elections Commission, the project has embarked on a number of interventions under the 2019 work plan with the aim of supporting NEC in discharging its statutory mandate, namely, to conduct free fair and credible elections in Liberia. It is worth noting that with the support of the project, the Commission has made some gains particularly with respect to taking ownership of election administration in the country. - The month of March 2019 witnessed the implementations of key activities geared toward institutional and human capacity strengthening.

LIBYA: The project supported the third High National Elections Commission (HNEC) Training-of-Trainer (ToT) workshop in Benghazi from 3 to 7 March 2019 which received an excellent feedback from participants.

MALAWI: The project supported the launch of the official campaign period and political party televised debates. - The training of the police on electoral security issues has been picking up momentum including the training of mobile investigators and prosecutors on electoral offences (70 participants) and the training on public order management and electoral security management for company commanders (40 company commanders and 70 platoon commanders). - A workshop on 'Hate Speech

and Incitement to Violence' was organised on 14 March.

NEPAL: The Electoral Support Project submitted the Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR) training manual to the Election Commission of Nepal.

SOLOMON ISLANDS: The electoral office, with support from the project, completed printing of ballot papers for national election in time. - The electoral office, supported by the project, successfully organised the first time ever early voting for police and electoral officials on 21 March. - The project continued to provide support to voter education and awareness raising activities. - From 4 to 8 March, the project organised the second school for 19 women intending to run for the 2019 elections for provincial assemblies.

SOMALIA: In March, the UNDP/UNSOM Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) held a series of strategic sessions with Commissioners and senior members of the Secretariat to discuss electoral timelines, crucial decisions for next year's voter registration, and issues on institutional governance. - On 9 March, the NIEC held discussions with political parties at a round-table meeting in Mogadishu. To date, the NIEC has provided temporary registration certificates to 43 political parties. - The NIEC opened this month offices also in Hirshabelle and Galmudug.

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
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



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.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Legislative elections were successfully held nationwide on 10 March.
- Provisional election results announced on 13 March, considered final as of 15 March.

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 (UNIOGIBIS).

On 1-2 March, sensitive materials, including ballot papers and other election documents, were distributed to all 9 regional election commissions (CREs) offices in Guinea Bissau and to the diaspora, according to the distribution plan developed by the CNE, CREs and the UN Integrated Electoral Support Unit (IESU) logistics’ advisor. IESU regional electoral advisers followed the reception of the materials, storage and further preparation and packing of polling station kits which took place between 2 and 5 March by the CRE staff.

On 8 March, the civic education campaign was officially finalised in all regions of Guinea Bissau, while the electoral campaign by the political parties also finished the same day.

On that same day, the CNE held a press conference, in which it called on the population to vote, assured the public that all logistics, material and human resources' conditions are met for the election on 10 March, and informed about the CNE's plenary deliberation that only those who present the voter card, and whose name is on the voters list will be allowed to vote. The CNE regretted that due to administrative issues, some citizens will not be able to exercise their right to vote. The problem was mostly concentrated in the Quebo sector in Tombali and the Sonaco sector in Gabu, but to some extent in other regions as well.

On 7 March, polling stations were opened at the CREs to allow for early voting for military, police, aeronautical and maritime personnel who would be on duty on 10 March. The early votes were placed in envelopes, identified by the electoral district and were then later integrated and counted with the votes cast on 10 March.



Voting day in Guinea Bissau. Voter casting her ballot; voters waiting in line to exercise their right to vote. Photo credits: IESU

On 10 March, legislative elections were successfully held. The polling stations generally opened on time (7am) and early morning turnout was the most significant. Throughout the day, no major security incident was reported. Security officers were present in many polling stations except few, in the regions of Biombo and Bafatá where there was a shortage of security personnel. The political party agents were present in most polling locations in Bissau but had a more limited presence in the regions. Both international observers and national monitors were present in most polling stations across the country.

The issue of voters not finding their names on the voter's lists, as predicted, featured in reports throughout the day. CNE indeed acknowledged this during its first press conference where it reported a global figure of about 2%. However, there was no report of this causing any major incident. Another issue was the misplacement of voters register in incorrect polling stations, which caused some delays in voting in some electoral districts but was corrected by CREs.

The closure of polling station was mostly on schedule - 17.00 hours. By 11pm, counting was generally finished and intake operations by the CREs started as of 8pm and continued throughout the night. The processing of electoral kits in the CREs was reported organised and efficient, despite lengthy waiting for polling stations staff in some CREs. Results forms were collected at the CRE or sectoral headquarter by CRE staff and the data entry for aggregation of results at constituency levels started in all regions on 11 March 2019. The Regional Electoral Advisers assisted the CRE presidents during the data entry process for constituency results and participated in the data collection on voting by gender in each region, to assess women's participation in this election.

On 13 March, the CNE announced the provisional results of the parliamentary elections which indicated a victory for the ruling African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), who garnered 47 seats. The Movement for Democratic Change (MADEM-G15), formed eight months ago, won 27 seats, ahead of the Party for Social Renewal, who won only 21 seats. Guinea-Bissau Democratic Party (APU-PDGB) won five seats while the Union for Change (UM) and the New Democracy Party (PND) won one seat each.

These provisional results were later confirmed as final by the CNE on Friday 15 March 2019, following the expiration of the 48-hour period of complaints. In a statement issued by the CNE on 15 March, it further noted that it had not received any administrative complaints to any of the (polling station or constituency) results forms produced upon which the CNE could have deliberated. A statement of results was affixed at the CNE on 16 March and the CNE and the results were then published in the official "Boletim da Republica". Following the announcement of the results, political parties and the President of the Republic issued statements accepting the results and/or congratulating the PAIGC on its victory in the parliamentary elections.

During the reporting period, IESU team conducted a two-day debriefing with the Regional Electoral Advisers, started working with the CNE in the preparation of a lessons learned exercise and in the development of the budget for the upcoming presidential elections later in 2019. IESU team has also been working in its final report on the legislative elections 2019.



Announcement of Provisional Election Results by the National Election Commission President and Executive Secretariat.
Photo credits: IESU

II. Plans for the next period

N/A

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.



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 project supported the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties in the finalisation of its Strategic Plan. The project co-supported the Judiciary Training Institute and the Judiciary Committee on Elections in the organisation of an electoral dispute resolution debrief for High Court Judges to evaluate its performance, assess lessons learnt and identify lessons that arose from adjudication of election petitions from the 2017 elections.
- The project supported the development and launch of various knowledge products such as: i) Journey to Gender Parity in Political Representation; ii) The Milestones: Equality and Inclusion in Kenya's 2017 Elections; iii) National Gender and Equality Commission Policy Brief on Promoting Participation of Special Interest Groups in Electoral Cycle; and iv) Stories of Courage and Transformation from 50 Women Political Leaders in Kenya.

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 will provide recommendations for improving programming on elections for UNDP and other UN agencies. Initial engagement of key national level partners through key informant interviews is ongoing. This assignment will generate important lessons to inform future electoral assistance to Kenya.

Evaluation of donor support to 2017 elections: The Donor Group on Elections (DGE) continued to work towards finalisation of the draft report of the Review of Democratic, Electoral and Diplomatic Support Towards and During Kenya's 2017 General Election. The objectives of the DGE evaluation are to assess the extent to which recommendations from previous electoral assistance projects were implemented, to review election observer evaluation reports to establish the impact of the DGE support, to ascertain actions and public perception of the diplomatic interventions and highlight recommendations to subsequent electoral assistance initiatives. The report will be disseminated to

targeted stakeholders to inform engagement, resourcing and coordination of donor support to the 2022 electoral cycle.

Ongoing preparation of SEPK successor project: The project continued spearheading design of a project document for a broader deepening democracy programme. 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, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) under the leadership of UNDP. The draft programme document has been shared with relevant agencies for review and approval.

Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR) debrief for high court judges following adjudication of election petitions from the 2017 elections: The SEPK project co-supported the Judiciary Training Institute and the Judiciary Committee on Elections to convene an EDR debrief for high court judges on the 2017 elections. This meeting brought together 110 judges to assess the performance of the judges in adjudicating electoral petitions and identify key issues for improving electoral dispute resolution. The EDR debrief was co-supported by UNDP-SEPK project, International Development Law Organization (IDLO), the Judiciary, among others.

Support to the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties: The project supported the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP) to finalise the ORPP Strategic Plan edit, design and publish the ORPP Political Parties Leadership Training Source Book and a popular version of the Political Parties Act. The project also supported the ORPP in holding workshops across Kenya’s 47 counties to engage stakeholders on the ORPP Taskforce to Review the Framework for Political Party Primaries which will inform development of a Draft Policy Framework on the conduct of political party primaries.

Development and launch of knowledge products on 2017 elections: SEPK project through UN Women supported the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) to develop, finalise, publish and launch the following publications: i) Journey to Gender Parity in Political Representation; ii) The Milestones: Equality and Inclusion in Kenya’s 2017 Elections; and iii) Policy Brief on Promoting Participation of SIGs in Electoral Cycle. Through the support of SEPK, UN Women developed and launched a publication entitled “50 Journeys: Stories of Courage and Transformation from Women Political Leaders”. This coffee table book provides a background of Kenyan women’s political journey, through narratives by 50 women who delve into their experiences in the political arena and their personal journeys to political office. The publication is available [here](#).

II. Plans for the next period

The activities planned for the next reporting period include:

- Completion of SEPK project end term evaluation;
- Development of a knowledge product and documentary on UN support to 2017 elections;
- Finalisation of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) gender and inclusion policy;
- Ongoing support to Judiciary Training Institute in development of its Strategic Plan.

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



LEBANON

UNDP LEAP

LEBANESE ELECTIONS ASSISTANCE PROJECT (LEAP)

The EU-funded UNDP Lebanese Elections Assistance Project (LEAP) started its activities in October 2012 with the main objective to strengthen the institutional capacity of the national institutions and stakeholders in terms of electoral management and administration, for the conduct of credible, periodical, transparent and inclusive elections in Lebanon.

To achieve these objectives, UNDP LEAP works closely with the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM), responsible for electoral management, administration and overall electoral operations. The project also supports other electoral stakeholders, such as the Constitutional Council, State Council, Supervisory Commission for the Election (SCE), judicial bodies and works in close cooperation with civil society organizations (CSOs). Within this context, UNDP LEAP provides electoral technical assistance and advisory support focused on: 1) management & administration of elections; 2) supervisory commission for elections; 3) voter education; 4) electoral dispute resolution; and 5) women's participation in elections. For more information, please visit the [project's website](#).

HIGHLIGHTS

- The project supported the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities in candidate's registration, election operations, training of polling officials, voter education campaign.
- The project also supported the Supervisory Commission of Election by providing technical support to the observers and media accreditation process and the media monitoring process.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Part of the ongoing support to the Lebanese electoral cycle, UNDP funded by EU is providing technical assistance and advisory support to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) and the Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE) for the preparation, organisation and conduct of the by-elections, scheduled to take place in Tripoli on 14 April.

1. Support to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM)

Candidate's registration

UNDP provided support to the candidate's registration and will continue to assist the Directorate General of Political Affairs and Refugees (DGPARG) of the MoIM through the withdrawal period. At the closing of the candidate's registration for Tripoli by-elections, eight candidates were registered to run for the 14 April's polls. The deadline for withdrawal ends at midnight on 3 April.

Elections operations

UNDP provided technical assistance in the development of the design and technical specifications of the ballot paper that will be utilised in the upcoming by-elections. The design and security features of the ballot are following the international standards. A total of 300,000 ballot papers will be produced by the MoIM for the voting of 241,000 registered voters. Also, as part of the operational support, the project supported the development and procurement of 300,000 elections envelopes, 1,000 polling booths and 1,000 vests and caps.

The elections hotline (1766) was prepared in March and will start to be operational on 3 April. Through this hotline number the citizens and voters could request information and clarifications regarding the organisation of the elections and the electoral procedures. The project provides technical assistance through project officers at the operations room (13-15 April) and hotline operators (2-15 April).

Training

On 4-5 April the MoIM, with the support of UNDP, will train over 800 polling officials that will be deployed in the 416 polling stations across Tripoli. UNDP supported the logistics and provided four senior trainers to facilitate the training sessions. Special attention will be given to opening and closing procedures, following the recommendations of the 2018 parliamentary elections. The project also supported the development and printing of the training manual and other required training materials.

Voter education

UNDP is supporting the design, development and implementation of the MoIM voter education campaign for the by-elections. The campaign was launched on 1 April and includes billboards, led-screens, TV and radio spots and posters. The main aim of the campaign is to provide relevant electoral information to voters and citizens on the organisation and conduct of the by-elections. The campaign materials will be displayed in key locations in Tripoli and across the country.

2. Support to the Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE)

Accreditation of observers and media

As part of the ongoing support to the SCE, the project provides technical support to the accreditation process. This includes the software, IT equipment and support personnel. Over 150 observers and 200 media officers are expected to be accredited for the upcoming by-elections.

Media monitoring and administrative support

Upon the request of the SCE, UNDP provides technical assistance to the media monitoring process through three media monitoring officers. Also, two admin support personnel are deployed to assist the Commission during the electoral period.

II. Plans for the next period

N/A

For more information on the project on LEAP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Dan Radulescu, dan.radulescu@undp.org and visit the [project's website](#).



LIBERIA



Election Project/UNDP Liberia

SUPPORT TO THE 2015 – 2018 LIBERIAN ELECTORAL CYCLE

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

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- In an effort to ensure institutional and human capacity building at the National Elections Commission (NEC), the project has embarked on a number of interventions under the 2019 work plan with the aim of supporting NEC in discharging its statutory mandate, namely, to conduct free fair and credible elections in Liberia. It is worth noting that with the support of the project, the Commission has made some gains particularly with respect to taking ownership of election administration in the country.
- The month of March 2019 witnessed the implementations of key activities geared toward institutional and human capacity strengthening.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Significant progress was made on the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) & Asset Management. On March 19, the IT firm Techno Brain, contracted by the project to rollout the ERP system, completed all requirements for the rollout and the project now awaits the National Elections Commission (NEC) to sign-off for the system to go live. A tailored ERP training was conducted covering various

areas of NEC work processes including finance and payroll, procurement, inventory/warehouse and asset management, and human resources management. A two-day training workshop on asset management was completed on 5 March paving the way for asset data collection which runs up till 17 May. Meanwhile the alignment of the ERP fixed asset module to NEC asset management requirement was also achieved.

A five-day asset and supply chain management training was conducted in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County on 4-8 March. The training brought together 37 participants (31 male and 6 female) from 19 magisterial offices and headquarter. It covered key areas of supply chain and asset management including physical inventory and collection of asset information. Meanwhile the conduct of asset verification, inventory and data entry continues at the headquarter of the Commission but will be extended to all magisterial offices and warehouses.

The last consignment of warehouse safety equipment and materials including forklift, pallets, trolleys, safety shoes, helmets and coveralls for NEC 28 logisticians was delivered to the National Elections Commission. This latest support is geared toward elevating safety standard in all NEC warehouses across the country. At long last, final documents for warehouse rehabilitations have been endorsed by the National Elections Commission. This means that the rehabilitation process will now go ahead as planned.


II. Plans for the next period

- Launch of bid for warehouses renovation and constructions / fencing;
- Official handover of safety materials and equipment to NEC;
- Presentation to NEC Board of Commissioners/Senior Staff on asset management policy document and standard operation procedures;
- Going live of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP);
- Sign off and rollout of regional and countywide consultants on electoral reform.

For more information on the support to the Liberia electoral cycle, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. George Baratashvili, george.baratashvili@undp.org and visit the [Project's website](#).



 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 processes(s);
3. Promote public participation in (the) electoral processes(s) targeting vulnerable groups; and
4. Raising the electoral awareness of local partners and stakeholders.

HIGHLIGHTS

- UNDP Resident Representative held a meeting with Chairman of the High National Elections Commission (HNEC) on 20 March, and reviewed progress of the rehabilitation and security upgrade works at the new HNEC headquarters. The civil and security upgrade works are funded by the EU and implemented by the PEPOL project through the basket fund.
- The project supported the third High National Elections Commission (HNEC) Training-of-Trainer (ToT) workshop in Benghazi from 3 to 7 March 2019 which received an excellent feedback from participants.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The project supported the third High National Elections Commission (HNEC) Training-of-Trainer (ToT) workshop in Benghazi from 3 to 7 March 2019. All three ToT workshops (two in Tripoli in February 2019) were successful and 80% of the participants graded the workshops as excellent during the evaluation.

The 2019 PEPOL Annual Work Plan (AWP) was endorsed by the donors on 14 March and final online

approval by the project board is expected in late March.

Security upgrade of the HNEC's new compound and rehabilitation of Building 2 were completed during the month. The contract for the exterior painting, façade and related items was awarded on 21-22 March and works are expected to commence in the week of 31 March and completed in less than two months.

The project has started developing the specifications of the Asset Management System (AMS) for the HNEC. A meeting introducing the AMS to four heads of departments (IT, field follow-up office, finance and logistics) was held on 27 March at the HNEC headquarters and was followed by a preliminary technical discussion on the scope, objective and outcome of the AMS. The project's logistics, IT and data management experts further solicited inputs on the AMS functioning and design from the heads of departments, as the end-users of the product.

The project supported the development of the HNEC public outreach strategy during the month. The project produced the first draft and shared it with HNEC for review and approval.

II. Plans for the next period

N/A

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



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

- The project supported the launch of the official campaign period and political party televised debates.
- The training of the police on electoral security issues has been picking up momentum including the training of mobile investigators and prosecutors on electoral offences (70 participants) and the training on public order management and electoral security management for company commanders (40 company commanders and 70 platoon commanders).
- A workshop on ‘Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence’ was organised on 14 March.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Support was provided for the launching of the official elections campaign period on 19 March. A highly mediated event involving the Minister of Justice, the chair, commissioners and the chief elections officer (CEO) of the Malawi Electoral Commission, the secretary generals of the main political parties, and, representatives from the various religious denominations and representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs). Strong messages on peaceful campaigning and the denouncing of gender-based violence and attacks on people with albinism were the recurrent themes of the launch.

The project advised on the structure and process of the Results Transmission System (RTS) which will be used in the forthcoming elections. The process involves a mix of ICT and manual processes, with a

strong emphasis on a paper-based audit trail. This process was presented to the political parties and accepted. It will now be presented to other electoral stakeholders.

Support was provided to three 'running-mates' televised debates on 7, 14 and 26 March in Lilongwe, Blantyre and Mzuzu respectively. These received wide attention and were deemed to have been well organised and well moderated. These came on the back of UN organised debates on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the debates around human rights and health issues having taken place on 1 and 3 March respectively, also supported by the project. These debates have been the closest the parties have come so far in setting out their policy agendas on key issues affecting the country. They also provided high visibility for the basket fund and the donors, with the logos being continuously displayed on the TV screen during the debates.

A workshop on 'Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence' was organised on 14 March involving the secretary generals, directors of elections and directors of campaigning from the 6 main political parties, but also involved senior representatives from the police, media and civil society. Aside from the greater understanding of what constitutes hate speech and incitement to violence, the political party representatives signed a joint declaration after the workshop on committing to speaking out against the recent crimes against people with albinism and using political rally platforms to address the issue.

The training of the police on electoral security issues has been picking up momentum including the training of mobile investigators and prosecutors on electoral offences (70 participants) and training on public order management and electoral security management for company commanders (40 company commanders and 70 platoon commanders). Practical exercises took place in the last week of March, witnessed by the development partners. On 25 March, a fourth police reform officer from the UN Police Standing Capacity was deployed in country and she will be supporting the police in improving their investigative techniques in the cases involving the recent abduction and murders of four people with albinism since the beginning of the year. This phenomenon tends to intensify around electoral periods due to superstitious beliefs.

The Gender Elections Engagement Room is now providing weekly reports on incidences of violence, intimidation, denigration against women candidates and liaising with the police as per the recently signed memorandum of understanding between the police and the monitoring organisations. Since the launch of the campaign period on 19 March, 11 incidences have been recorded.

II. Plans for the next period

The next period is going to focus on key procurement activities such as : providing laptops and phones to police command centres; identifying legal firms that will support MEC in the handling of election petitions; procuring an international audit firm that will assist MEC in confirming the tallying figures from the constituency centres to the mainframe in Blantyre; procuring expertise that will support the security protocols of the results transmission system. The additional challenge facing Malawi at present is dealing with the consequences of cyclone Idai, which affected many parts of the country in the south and is sure to have ramifications for the organisation of the elections in the most affected areas.

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. 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 submitted the Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR) training manual to the Election Commission of Nepal.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

In March 2019, the project handed over the Electoral Dispute Resolution (EDR) training manual in the Nepali language to the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN). There are two versions of the manual: one is more comprehensive and intended to be used in the non-election period with election officials and other stakeholders; the other is more condensed and intended for targeted training for the Chief Returning Officers and Returning Officers in the run up to an election. The project hopes that the manual will be piloted in the context of the by-elections in 2019. The training aims to improve the handling of the electoral disputes that may arise.

The project recruited two new staff members – a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and a Communications and Reporting Officer.

II. Plans for the next period

In April, the project will be supporting the participation of the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) representatives in the 9th Forum of Latin American Democracies in Mexico City. The National Electoral


Institute of Mexico is also organising a peer to peer exchange between election officials of Mexico, Tunisia and Nepal.

Furthermore, in collaboration with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), ESP will prepare to mark the World Press Freedom Day.

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 electoral office, with support from the SECSIP project, completed printing of ballot papers for national election in time.
- The electoral office, supported by the project, successfully organised the first time ever early voting for police and electoral officials on 21 March.
- The project continued to provide support to voter education and awareness raising activities, including face-to-face awareness activities and video production.
- From 4 to 8 March, the project organised the second school for 19 women intending to run for the 2019 elections for provincial assemblies.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Electoral operational support provided by the project to electoral preparations

The electoral office (EO) with support from the project completed printing of ballot papers for national election on time. The total number of candidates is 332.

Pre-polling: The EO successfully conducted an early voting on 21 March to enable police and electoral officials who will be engaged in official duties on election day to exercise their right to vote. The pre-poll was conducted in Honiara and provincial capitals of 8 provinces except Temotu as no police officers from this province applied for pre-poll. There was an overall turnout of 90.5% out of the total number of police and electoral officers who submitted request and were deemed to be entitled for pre-polling (out of 1,319 total registered prepoll applicants, 1,195 cast their votes).

Capacity building of election managers and returning officers: The project operations adviser and officials of the Australian Electoral Office facilitated the second training for 10 election managers and 50 returning officers on polling, counting, media and observer relations. Special emphasis was placed on the pre-poll and changes in the counting procedures (mixing and making of batches to enhance secrecy of the vote). The project support was instrumental to prepare the templates for the filing of voting and counting complaints which were included in the training manuals with a view to streamline the process and build the credibility of the process.

Data management expert (DME): Because of an urgent need identified by the chief electoral officer, the project engaged a DME for a month starting from 22 March. He will design data analysis and asset management tools and provide election result analysis support. This support is expected to strengthen the project's core operational support and assist to mitigate some of the limited functionalities of the biometric voter registration database and electoral management systems.

The project supported awareness actions through different media that have highlighted the changes made on the ballot paper. There will only be a serial number in the counterfoil, not on the ballot paper preventing the traceability of the ballot paper and the identification of the voter.

Voter education and awareness

- The project in partnership with Telekom Television Ltd (TTV) produced a 5 minutes video demonstrating 'how to vote' and started airing from 29 March. The video is available [here](#).
- The project and the electoral office communication team engaged a youth group to produce 1 video on 'youth messages to choose the right candidate' (available [here](#)) and 2 short animations (accessible [here](#) and [here](#)). These very small sized animations can be shared and watched through smart phones.
- The project prepared and distributed 2019 calendars highlighting electoral dates illustrated with the artworks of the winners of the secondary school competition on women's leadership and political participation (poster category).
- The project graduates' support was instrumental in the preparation of the scripts of four 15-minute weekly radio programmes on 'What is a political party?', 'Functions of a political party', 'Political Parties Integrity Act', 'Political Parties' Integrity Standards'.
- Eight civil society organisations (CSOs) partners were conducting face-to-face awareness activities in different remote islands targeting to reach minimum 8,000 voting aged people. SECSIP team conducted three monitoring visits to assess its implementation and interviewed several people.
- The project assisted the EO communication team in its efforts to enhance outreach of voter education in Western Province. The training was attended by 18 women from 9 CSOs from this province. As a pilot, each of these CSOs received a micro-grant (SBD \$10,000) from the Electoral Office after the training to conduct the voter awareness in 3 to 5 communities in their constituencies.

Briefing to national observers

The project established micro-grant agreement with OXFAM which has created the enabling environment to facilitate the participation of domestic observers representing accredited national civil society organisations. The project encouraged the inclusiveness in terms of composition of the observer group particularly in terms of women and people with disabilities. OXFAM collaborates with civil society umbrella organisation and the coalition of civil society organisations in Solomon Islands.



Briefing session on election observation, Honiara.

Photo credits: SECSIP

Due to this action, 167 domestic observers including 74 women submitted the application forms to be accredited. On 22 March, the EO organised a briefing session on election observation in Honiara. A questionnaire prepared by the project was also distributed amongst those who attended the session to gather some initial information and feedback on the background and composition of this group.

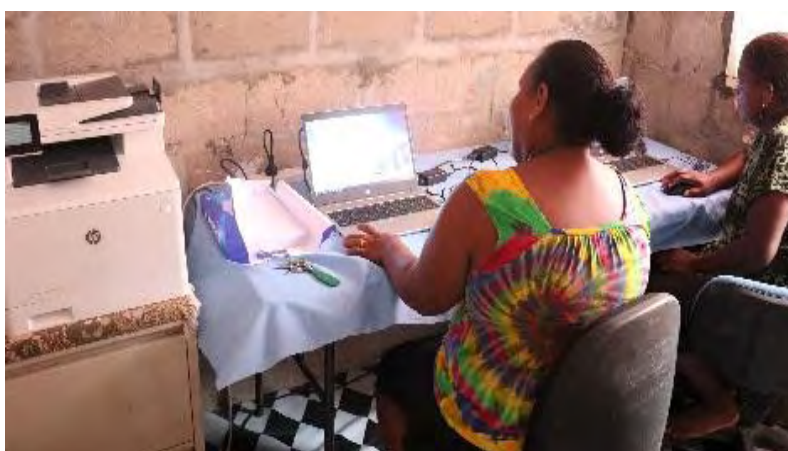
Support to women's political participation

Women candidate schools:

Following the successful completion of the first candidate school for women candidates running for 2019 national general election and their male supporters, the project organised the second school from 4 to 8 March for 19 women intending to run for the 2019 elections for provincial assemblies. This school is expected to build the electoral and voter awareness knowledge of the participants and their practical skills/tools related to campaign strategy, communications, vote canvassing. This capacity building initiative ended with key remarks from Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs Permanent Secretary, Australian High Commissioner Counsellor and UNDP Country Manager for the International Women's Day.

Women candidates' resource centres:

The project established four women candidate resource centres in Malaita, Makira, Isabel and Honiara provinces. During the closing ceremony of the second candidate school, the UNDP Country Manager and Presidents of Young Women's Christian Association of Solomon Islands (YWCA SI), Makira Ulawa Provincial Council of Women and Malaita Provincial Council of Women signed the Statement of Intents for these resource centres. The project's team visited the provinces and handed over the laptops, printers, papers, inks and made the centre operational. They also trained 10 women and 1



Women candidates' resource centre.

Photo credits: SECSIP

man on how to use the equipment at the centre and 2 male champions from Isabel province on operation and maintenance of portable generators.

II. Plans for the next period

- Ongoing operational support to the electoral office;
- Lesson learned workshop;
- Data analysis and result management support;
- Review and feedback to the second phase face to face voter awareness activities.

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

- In March, the UNDP/UNSOM Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) held a series of strategic sessions with Commissioners and senior members of the Secretariat to discuss electoral timelines, crucial decisions for next year's voter registration, and issues on institutional governance.
- On 9 March, the NIEC held discussions with political parties at a round-table meeting in Mogadishu. To date, the NIEC has provided temporary registration certificates to 43 political parties.
- The NIEC opened this month offices also in Hirshabelle and Galmudug.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

United Nations Security Council resolution 2461 – UN electoral support to Somalia

On 27 March 2019, the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 2461, which extends the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) until 31 March 2020, emphasizes the UN's “political, technical, operational and logistical support to the federal government for the delivery of inclusive, peaceful, free and fair one-person-one-vote elections in 2020/2021”.

Resolution 2461 underlines in particular the UN's support to Somalia's National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) at national and sub-national levels, for the Commission to fulfil its constitutional mandate in line with its Strategic Plan for 2017–2021. The Resolution also specifies the UN's support to a nationwide voter registration exercise in early 2020 and consequent polling operations for the 2020/2021 elections, as well as the coordination of international electoral support to Somalia. While the Security Council welcomed the agreement in Baidoa in June 2018 between the Federal Government and the Federal member states on the electoral system of representation, it expressed concerns about the delay in the passage of the electoral law and urged the government and parliament to finalise and adopt the electoral law by mid-2019.

IESG-NIEC strategic session on electoral timelines and voter registration methodologies

In March, the UNDP/UNSOM Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) held a series of strategic sessions with Commissioners and senior members of the Secretariat to discuss electoral timelines, crucial decisions for next year's voter registration, and issues on institutional governance. During a retreat in Mogadishu from 17 to 19 March, different potential voter registration methodologies and practical implications were debated at length to identify a system that is most suitable for the context in Somalia. Pros and cons were outlined for different voter registration methodologies, ranging from manual or electronic registration to different forms of biometric registration. The NIEC decided to focus on two options and further elaborate on the details of each. In the upcoming period, after further consultations with key stakeholders, the NIEC will make a formal decision which methodology it selects to register voters. In parallel, on 13 March, IESG held a briefing for key international partners on different voter registration methodologies and according technologies, budget and procurement timelines. During an electoral information sharing meeting on 15 April, the NIEC will inform international partners on the latest decisions and updates.

NIEC engagement with stakeholders

The NIEC continues to strengthen its engagement with external stakeholders. On 9 March, the NIEC held discussions with political parties at a round-table meeting in Mogadishu. To date, the NIEC has provided temporary registration certificates to 43 political parties. NIEC Chairperson Ms. Halima Ismail stressed on the importance engagements between political parties and the Commission on different electoral aspects. She reiterated that the electoral law needs to be enacted for the country to gear up to 'one person, one vote' elections. The Commission also informed the political party representatives about different options for voter



NIEC Commissioners addressing representatives of political parties on electoral issues and concepts of voter registration methodologies. Mogadishu, 9 March 2019. Photo credit: NIEC.

registration methodologies and that it would identify the best system that suits the country the most. The NIEC further held meetings with youth and local stakeholders in the field, including in Dhusamareb where its regional office of Galmudug has been set up.

NIEC field offices

In preparation of the planning of voter registration and other electoral operations, the NIEC is establishing a field presence in each of the capitals of the Federal Member States. After earlier in Puntland and South-West State, the NIEC opened this month offices also in Hirshabelle and Galmudug. In April, the NIEC plans a trip to Jubbaland to set up the last of its regional hubs. These offices will spearhead the Commission's electoral operations at state level. They will help the NIEC with the exploration of potential voter registration sites in each of the States, followed by security and logistical planning, as well as engagement of local electoral actors to inform the electorate on upcoming electoral processes. The UNDP/UNSOM Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) provides logistical support to the establishment of the NIEC's subnational offices, including hand-over of some assets from the previous 2016 electoral process. After Puntland last month and Hirshabelle in process, over the next months, the NIEC plans to open state offices in all the Federal Member States of Somalia.

IESG technical assistance and capacity development workshops with NIEC on electoral preparations

To strengthen the NIEC's institutional capacity and electoral knowledge, IESG provided in March different workshops together with NIEC Commissioners and members of the Secretariat, including on briefings and discussions on voter registration methodologies and technologies (2, 6, 17-21 March), on 'training of electoral master trainers' (3-7 March), on operational planning and electoral security (6 March), on strategic communication (12-14 March), and a retreat on institutional governance, electoral timelines and voter registration decisions (17-19 March).

The 'Training the Master Trainers' (3-7 March) is a professional development programme part of the international BRIDGE curriculum (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections). The workshop graduated electoral Secretariat staff on a module that elaborates on the system of master trainers and the mechanics of a cascade training approach which has to ensure proper knowledge transfer, skills development and quality assurance of the implementation of future electoral operations in the field by the thousands of temporary/short-term election workers.



Conduct of BRIDGE training of the master trainers. Mogadishu, 7 March 2019.
Photo credit: NIEC



Conduct of BRIDGE training of the master trainers. Mogadishu, 7 March 2019.
Photo credit: NIEC.

II. Plans for the next period

- 6-10 April: Training of Master Trainers (Train the Facilitators) - part 2;
- 15 April: NIEC – IESG information sharing meeting for international partners.

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



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: To get citizen's perspectives on the 2018 harmonized elections, a post-election survey is being conducted with data collection planned to be completed in March and the final report expected to be finalised by end of April 2019. The analysis of the survey, Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) internal and external reviews with political parties, civil society organisations (CSOs), faith-based organisations (FBOs) and media will inform the discussions during the National Post-Election Review Conference planned from 10-12 April 2019. This conference will enable ZEC and electoral stakeholders to prioritize areas of reform.

Longer term capacity development approach: Having agreed to use internationally recognized Building Resources in Democracy Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) methodology for the longer-term capacity

development of ZEC, an inter-departmental committee has been formed with UNDP providing technical assistance to prepare capacity development plans. BRIDGE Training of Trainers is being planned in May 2019 to develop a pool of 25 BRIDGE qualified trainers. The thematic training areas of focus for 2019 include voter registration, voter education, election operations, results management and gender in elections.

Results management system: ZEC internal review processes and observer reports identified results management system as an area that needs further improvement. A comparative analysis including country case studies and their relevance to Zimbabwe was developed and shared with ZEC to start discussions on different options for results management systems.

Gender mainstreaming: The process for development of gender and inclusion policy is expected to be finalised by May 2019 with stakeholder consultations having started. Dissemination of the Gender Baseline Survey (completed in 2018) is planned for 10 April 2019 and this event will also be used as an advocacy platform with stakeholders on promoting gender equality in electoral and political processes.

Training of police on human rights, elections and policing: A comprehensive participant handbook and a training manual have been developed for police training on human rights, elections and policing. Plans are being developed to roll out the Training of Trainers from 29 April – 3 May. This will enable Zimbabwe Republic Police to develop in-house pool of trainers, who will then 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 organisations (DPOs) and roll out of voter education activities on a continuous basis. The first workshop with CSOs has been planned in May 2019.

II. Plans for the next period

- Post-election review conference;
- 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](#).