



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



# EC-UNDP Workshop on **Formulating and Implementing Electoral Assistance Projects in the Context of the EC UNDP Partnership**

## **Evaluation of the EC-UNDP Partnership in Electoral Assistance (2010)**

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# The EC-UNDP Partnership in Electoral Assistance

- ❑ Formally established in 2004 in recognition of a *de facto* partnership that existed on the ground in a number of countries.
  
- ❑ Significant achievements:
  - ❑ Increase in:
    - ❑ number of country-level projects where the EC and UNDP are in partnership (approx. 23 at time of evaluation);
    - ❑ amount of EC funds committed to UNDP-implemented projects. From €84.8m to 17 countries (1995-2003), to approximately €580m to 46 countries (2004-2010) – 99% of Partnership resources;



## ***Significant Partnership achievements (continued)***

- Signing of the *EC-UNDP Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Electoral Assistance Programmes and Projects* (2006, 2008) – framework for the scope and parameters of joint EC-UNDP projects.
- The Joint Task Force, established under scope of the Guidelines, operationalises both the Partnership and the Guidelines (highlighted in successive policy reviews of the EC-UN cooperation and the SPA)



## ***Significant Partnership achievements (continued)***

- Electoral cycle approach.
- Development of training in effective electoral assistance, overall and thematic.
- Liaison and interaction with both South-based networks of EMBs (e.g. SADC ECF and EISA), and non-UN bodies such as International IDEA, the ACE and BRIDGE project, OECD GOVNET.



## *Challenges – country-level*

- UNDP's project management – poor financial /progress reporting, leading to EU DEL desire to be more involved in the day-to-day monitoring of the project, as Op Guidelines allow. Also, stick to project documents – problematic!
- Budget headaches – yearly vs. project vs. election
- Gap in follow-up of projects during implementation phase.



## *Country-level challenges (continued)*

- Slow project start-up and recruitment of experts. Best UN experts in larger missions, with less focus on capacity building
- DEX modality – no capacity building in budget control, donor liaison and procurement.
- UNDP critical enough, when required, of EMBs?



## *Challenges – Partnership-level*

### **□ Project formulation**

- joint EAD-BDP project formulation not in line with Operational Guidelines, task to JTF, in the wake of an EAD needs assessment.
- Problem for BDP and EAD – effect of associating UNDP electoral assistance work too closely with one donor
- Concerns exacerbated by the fact that the EC understandably content to deal almost exclusively with UNDP Brussels in the implementation of the Partnership.



## *Main recommendations*

- Greater follow-up of Implementation of country-level electoral assistance projects by EU DEL external experts and GPECS Regional Advisor.
- Regional thematic seminars dedicated to electoral assistance between EU Delegations and UNDP Country Offices.
- All electoral assistance advisors engaged by UNDP on electoral assistance projects with EC-funding should be provided with a copy of, and briefed on, the Operational Guidelines. Timelier deployment of experts.





## ***Main recommendations - continued***

- Both EU Delegation Task Managers and UNDP CO Programme Officers responsible for assistance project, should undergo day-long training sessions on each other's reporting systems as they pertain to the electoral assistance project and also to the FAFA and the Operational Guidelines
- DEX modality issues – chief electoral expert should be in charge of the project. All electoral assistance project staff, including PMU staff (where established) should be embedded within the EMB, including procurement, budget execution and donor liaison function. All PMU procurement and budget execution staff should be evaluated against the capacity-building objectives of the project.
- More regular Steering Committee meetings.



## *Future Partnership discussion points*

- Need for greater linking with wider democratic governance support
- Need for greater linking with election observation
- Need for greater linking with civil registry expertise
- Need for greater use of alternative implementation modalities
- Need for greater focus on standard quantitative evaluation techniques, including ex-ante cost-benefit analysis, that allow for realistic targets under more relevant performance indicators



## ***Main recommendations – partnership supra-national level***

- Joint EC-UNDP-IDEA trainings should continue, but also to include thematic training and financial/project formulation training. E-learning module on effective electoral assistance should be built upon. The creation of an academic network for the development and delivery of electoral assistance modules/academic programmes on electoral assistance (building on the work done with ISPI to date) should continue.
  
- Wide-scale impact assessment of the projects funded by the EC in the context of the EC-UNDP Partnership, the issue of the nature of the electoral assistance projects funded should be addressed against the goals and policy of the electoral cycle approach.



## ***Some points for debate I learned in this evaluation..***

- UN is not just an implementing agency and EU is not just a donor.
- The objective to “build the capacity of the national EMB to implement a credible electoral process” is two objectives. We need a through debate on what capacity-building is and how it is measured.
- Both partners need to accept that the ultimate stakeholder interest are the citizens of the partner country. Neither the EU nor the UN “own” the electoral process. Neither does the Electoral Management Body.