

EC-UNDP

1 - 28 February, 2018

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.



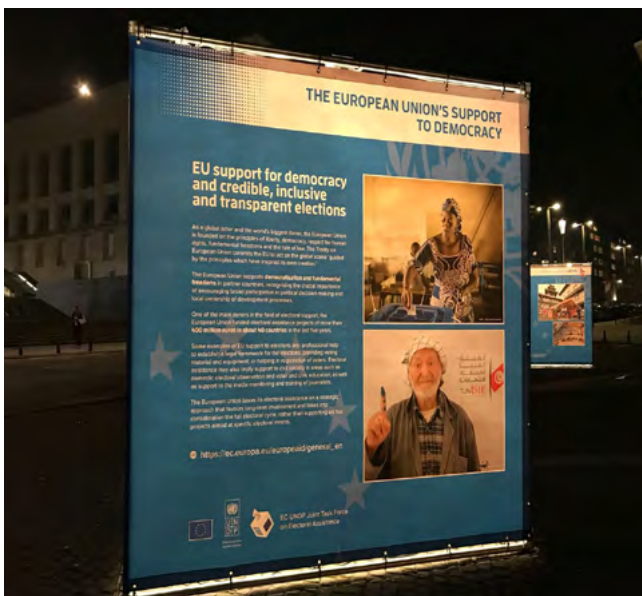
NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

The EC-UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance organized a joint photo exhibition entitled “The Power of Democracy” in the heart of Brussels from 20 February until 3 March 2018.



The overall goal of the exhibition was to demonstrate the importance and value of electoral processes world-wide and, more specifically, to highlight the breadth and reach of the EU-UNDP partnership in the field of electoral assistance. The exhibition showcased joint EU-UNDP projects and stories from Armenia, Guinea, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Malawi, Nepal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Zambia and Zimbabwe, with a specific focus on inclusiveness and the participation of women and youth.

Given the very positive feedback and a considerable interest by the public, the JTF is now considering replicating the event in more cities around Europe and in the countries implementing joint EU-UNDP electoral assistance projects.



Acronyms and abbreviations

AVETOs	Assistant Voter Education and Training Officers
BVR	Biometric Voter Registration
BRA	Benaadir Regional Administration
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DEVCO	European Commission Department for Development Cooperation
DGCS	Directorate General of Civil Status
DGPAR	Directorate General of Political Affairs and Refugees
ECN	Election Commission of Nepal
ECZ	Election Commission of Zambia
EDR	Election Dispute Resolution
EEAS	European External Action Service
ESP	Electoral Support Project
FBOs	Faith-Based Organisations
FGS	Federal Government of Somalia
FMS	Federal Member States
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IEBC	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
MoiM	Ministry of Interior & Municipalities
NCW	National Council of Women
NIEC	National Independent Electoral Commission
SCE	Supervisory Commission for Elections
SECSIP	Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project
SEPK	Strengthening the Electoral Process in Kenya
SIEC	Solomon Islands Electoral Commission
ToT	Training for Trainers
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZHRC	Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission
ZIM-ECO	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project
ZLDC	Zambia Law Development Commission

SUMMARY

GUINEA: On 4 February 2018, Guinea held municipal elections. The announcement of the official results by the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) led to protests by some political parties and independent candidates.

KENYA: Kenya's Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), embarked on a planning process for a comprehensive post-election evaluation, to draw lessons from the just-concluded General Elections and Fresh Presidential Elections. - SEPK was putting final touches in finalizing its 2018 Annual Work Plan. In this post-election period, the project will focus on evaluations and lesson learning, completion of any pending interventions that may have been set aside paving way for the elections, and project closure activities. Majority of lessons generated may be composed into a SEPK successor project as well as inform further democratic governance interventions.

LEBANON: During the month of February 2018, the preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections continued according to the electoral calendar. Individual candidates' registration process ended on 7 March with a total of 976 candidates. - The Electoral Management Body – the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) – continued its training of trainers for polling officials, voters' registration update, exhibition and challenges period, and procurement of sensitive and non-sensitive materials etc. - The Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE) started the media monitoring process as part of its supervisory and monitoring roles. The Commission is also preparing to initiate the accreditation process for observers, media and electoral agents.

LIBERIA: The project continued to provide legal support to the National Elections Commission at the Supreme Court level. - The UNDP project supported the National Elections Commission's lessons learnt programme in cooperation with IFES. - A debriefing was held for civil society organisations that partnered with the National Elections Commission providing civic and voter education during the run-up to the recently concluded 2017 general elections

MALAWI: The preparation for the 2019 Elections has been launched in front of 1,500 stakeholders. - The Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) Strategic plan has been validated by stakeholders. - This month saw the roll-out of the trainings for Master Trainers, who will train all elections field staff.

NEPAL: Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) held the National Assembly elections on 7 February. - ECN announced that the presidential election would be held on 13 March. - The Electoral Support Project (ESP) launched the impact evaluation of the BRIDGE programme.

SIERRA LEONE: In February 2018, the project continued supporting the National Electoral Commission (NEC) with procurement, preparation of training materials and logistics, as well as with the design and dissemination of inclusive voter information.

SOLOMON ISLANDS: Verification of Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) registration kits has been completed. - The construction of the voter registration and results management centre has started. Preparation of a voter awareness programme for 2019 elections has been launched. - Scoping mission for the research on women's leadership and political participation was conducted. - Secondary school essay & poster competition has been closed.

SOMALIA: On 11 February 2018, Somalia's National Security Council, which comprises the country's federal and state leaders, issued a communique for the Prime Minister to appoint a Technical Committee in preparation of the electoral law. - On 15 February, in Kismayo, Jubaland, and on 26 February, in Mogadishu, the National Independent Election Commission (NIEC) organised by-elections for two vacant seats of the Federal House of the People, respectively concerning a specific clan from Jubaland and one of Somalilanders. - On 28 February, the NIEC concluded in Mogadishu its nationwide consultations with sub-national stakeholders in each of the Federal Member States, the capital region of Benaadir, and with the Somaliland community in Mogadishu.

ZAMBIA: On 13 February, the Ministry of Justice convened stakeholders to review and validate proposed amendments to the draft Political Parties Bill, based on inclusive stakeholder consultations. The draft Bill was formally handed over to the Minister of Justice on 22 February. - Representatives of the EU from Brussels and the Delegation in Zambia met with the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) and UNDP representatives on 27 February to discuss implementation and likely future partnership on EU electoral support in Zambia. - Two ECZ staff attended training on strategic communications for public relations.

ZIMBABWE: ZIM-ECO project has been providing support in key capacity building and institutional strengthening areas of Biometric Voter Registration (BVR), operational planning for BVR, training of election staff, voter education, stakeholder, engagement, 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
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	31.12.19
	Lebanese Electoral Assistance Programme for the 2013 Parliamentary Elections	ENPI/2013/316-094	€ 3,000,000.00	01.01.13	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
Malawi	Malawi Electoral Cycle Support: 2017-2019	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	29.05.18
Sierra Leone	Support to the National Electoral Commission	FED/2017/390-345	€ 2,000,000.00	08.08.17	07.08.19
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	01.02.19
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



GUINEA

 PACEG

PROJET D'APPUI AU CYCLE ELECTORAL DE LA GUINEE (PACEG)

Since July 2015, the project to “Support the Electoral Cycle of Guinea” (PACEG) provides assistance to strengthen the capacities of the Electoral Commission (CENI) and its field offices, including organizational, technical, communicational, financial and operational capacities. The main objective of the PACEG is to enable a credible, inclusive and peaceful 2015-2017 electoral process in Guinea, complying with international standards, while ensuring the effective and inclusive participation of women and young people through providing civic education and coaching. For more information, please visit the [project's website](#).

HIGHLIGHTS

- On 4 February 2018, Guinea held municipal elections. The announcement of the official results by the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) led to protests by some political parties and independent candidates.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Project's activities

During the reporting period, the project assisted the CENI and its field offices during the electoral and post-electoral period through the deployment of national volunteers. The project also supported the development of terms of reference for March 2018 activities. The Working Plan for the year 2018 was also elaborated and approved.

CENI activities

CENI activities during this month included:

- Distribution of electoral material (ballot boxes, ballot papers, polling stations kits);
- Training of polling stations staff members;
- Deploying of magistrates and supervisors in all districts across the country;

- Setting up the centre for operations and alerts reception;
- Receiving the transcripts from the “commissions administratives de centralisation des votes” (CACV); and
- Announcing partial and final results of the elections.

Furthermore, the CENI held a press conference on 8 February to present the highlights of the elections and announce partial and final results.

During the press conference, the President of CENI recognised certain anomalies and noted logistics issues throughout the process, including 1) delays in transmitting the “procès-verbaux” to the CENI and 2) the presence of fictive field offices which were not registered in the CENI’s database.


II. Plans for the next period

In the month of March 2018, the project is expected to continue supporting the CENI in the inventory and the retrieval of voting material (ballot boxes and voting booths). The project will also support the training of national United Nations Volunteers on writing and oral communication and on UNDP gender policies.

For more information on the Projet d’appui au cycle électoral de la Guinée (PACEG), please contact Mr. Abdoul Latif Haidara, abdoul.haidara@undp.org and visit the [project’s website](#).



KENYA

 IEBC Communications Department

STRENGTHENING THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IN KENYA (SEPK)

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- Kenya's Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), embarked on a planning process for a comprehensive post-election evaluation, to draw lessons from the just concluded General Elections and Fresh Presidential Elections.
- SEPK was putting final touches in finalizing its 2018 Annual Work Plan. In this post-election period, the project will focus on evaluations and lesson learning, completion of any pending interventions that may have been set aside paving way for the elections, and project closure activities. Majority of lessons generated may be composed into a SEPK successor project as well as inform further democratic governance interventions.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The following activities were conducted during the month:

- Evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of voter education initiatives employed during the 2017 elections;
- Corporate governance training for commissioners and Chief Executive Officer of the Commission;
- Planning for the IEBC post-election evaluation;
- Development of SEPK 2018 work plan.

II. Plans for the next period

The activities planned for the following reporting period include:

- Roll out of post-election evaluation and related activities;
- Implementation of the SEPK 2018 annual work plan.

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.



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.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections continued according to the electoral calendar and in the first week of February, the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister approved the decree calling for parliamentary elections officially and marking the start of the candidate's registration period. Consequently, starting from 5 February, the candidates commenced to individually register to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities – Directorate General of Political Affairs and Refugees (DGPARG). Upon confirmation of the individual registrations, the candidates will form lists of candidates which will be registered to the DGPARG as well. The completion of the submission and approval of lists is scheduled for the 27 March, as per the electoral calendar.
- On 10 February, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities – Directorate General of Civil Status (DGCS) started the exhibition and challenges period in which voters are encouraged to check their data in the preliminary voter lists which are available in printed versions at Municipalities and Mukhtars and online at a dedicated website administered by the DGCS. This period will end on 10 March and the publication of the final voter roll will be approved on 30 March.
- Also, the Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE) moved into their new offices and continued drafting relevant electoral documents such as the codes of conduct for media, agents and candidates. The SCE is also preparing for the accreditation of observers, party agents and media.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

In the reporting period, UNDP prepared and implemented the following support activities:

Voters' Awareness Campaign Encouraging Voters to Check their Data

The Ministry of Interior & Municipalities (MoIM) – Directorate General of Civil Status (DGCS), supported by the project, developed and launched on 1 February a public media awareness campaign to remind citizens of their legal right to inspect the accuracy of their data on the voter register before 1 March at the municipality, the mukhtar, and encourage them to use this right by visiting www.dgcs.gov.lb or by calling 1766. Checking their data and amending mistakes, if found, will enable citizens to vote in the upcoming elections which will take place on 6 May 2018. The awareness campaign includes TV spot, radio spot, cinema spot, billboards visuals, social media exposure, and other communication channels (Link to the TV spot: <http://bit.ly/2Brtjpo>).



Hotline Service for the DGCS

During the month of February the DGCS, supported by the project, continued the elections hotline service which is aimed at responding to the calls of the voters, providing information, answering to enquiries and helping voters to check their electoral data.

Info Sessions with Potential Women Candidates and voters in the Regions

In support to the participation of women as voter and candidates, Women in Front, a local non-governmental organisation (NGO), and UNDP in partnership with UN Women organized awareness sessions on women's participation in parliamentary elections in eight different regions all over Lebanon, including during this month: on 7 February in Tripoli, on 15 February in Saida and on 16 February in Baakline.

The main objectives of the sessions are:

- Raise awareness on the current electoral law 44/2017 and educate voters (both males &

females) on the importance of the legal framework and the electoral calendar;

- Raise awareness on women's candidacy and educate voters (both males & females) on the importance of voting for female candidates;
- Identify women across Lebanon who are willing to present their candidacy for the upcoming parliamentary elections;
- Provide candidates and potential candidates with technical support needed for elections;
- Provide candidates and potential candidates with the tactics of networking.

Public Awareness Campaign to enhance the role of Lebanese women for effective and meaningful participation in the upcoming 2018 parliamentary elections

UNDP, EU and UN Women in partnership with the Office of the Minister of State for Women's Affairs (OMSWA) are implementing the second phase of the Public Awareness Campaign to enhance the role of Lebanese women for effective and meaningful participation in the upcoming 2018 parliamentary elections (Jan 26 - Mar 15). The second phase is focused on encouraging women to participate in the upcoming elections as candidates.

II. Plans for the next period

For the month of March, the project will continue to provide support in the following areas:

- Candidates registration system;
- Operations and logistics;
- Supervision and monitoring of elections;
- Voter registration update process;
- Women's participation in elections;
- Youth engagement and get-out-the-vote.

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

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- The project continued to provide legal support to the National Elections Commission at the Supreme Court level.
- The UNDP project supported the National Elections Commission's lessons learnt programme in cooperation with IFES.
- A debriefing was held for civil society organizations that partnered with the National Elections Commission providing civic and voter education during the run-up to the recently concluded 2017 general elections.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Legal support of the project has continued at the Supreme Court, with the project national legal counsel representing the National Elections Commission in the Supreme Court challenges to district level results of the House of Representatives elections.

The UNDP project supported the National Elections Commission's lessons learnt programme in cooperation with IFES. The programme commenced on 27 February 2018 and will run for five days and includes a complete review of the commission's organisation of the 2017 general elections with

staff attending from across Liberia.

A debriefing was held for civil society organizations that partnered with the National Elections Commission providing civic and voter education during the run-up to the recently concluded 2017 general elections. The recommendations fed into a full set of institutional lessons learnt sessions supported by the project in February 2018.

The project logistics expert continued to assist the National Elections Commission with support to retrieval and warehousing plans for sensitive and non-sensitive electoral material from 5,390 polling stations.

Support was provided in the development of a draft budget and an electoral calendar for the forthcoming by-elections as well as inputs into draft polling and counting procedures.

II. Plans for the next period

The project's annual workplan for 2018 is drafted and is awaiting final comments prior to being tabled to the project board for review and endorsement.

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](#).



MALAWI

Malawi Electoral Commission

MALAWI ELECTORAL CYCLE SUPPORT 2017-2019

The “Malawi Electoral Cycle Support 2017-2019” project is supported by a basket fund that is currently financed by the EU and UNDP. 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 organization 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.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The preparation for the 2019 Elections has been launched in front of 1,500 stakeholders.
- The Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) Strategic plan has been validated by stakeholders.
- This month saw the roll-out of the trainings for Master Trainers, who will train all elections field staff.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The 20th February saw the launching of the tripartite election preparations in front of 1,500 stakeholders representing government officials (to Minister level), political party leadership, religious leaders, traditional leaders, civil societies organisations (CSOs) representatives, development partners and the media. This event, supported by the project, was an important public relations event for MEC which saw the presentation of the election calendar.

The project also supported the validation of the new five-year MEC Strategic Plan. The event was an opportunity for MEC and the project-hired consultants to present the main aspects of the new strategy and allow for elections stakeholders from political parties, religious representatives and CSO representatives to voice any final opinions that should be integrated into the document. This event

confirmed the quality of the Strategy and only minor adjustments were needed after session.

The roll out of the Master Trainers training took place throughout the month. One hundred Master Trainers had been carefully selected around the country last year and February saw them being trained in all key aspects of election operations, from ward boundary delineation issues, to voter registration, to candidate nomination through to the operations on polling day itself. The Master Trainers will then be able to pass on their knowledge and skills through cascade training, a new approach for Malawi.

This aside, a variety of expertise was mobilised as follows: a disputes-handling expert for the Legal department that will establish appropriate processes for handling electoral disputes and petitions; a communication expert to review MEC's communication strategy; a voter education expert and an analyst to support the reviewing of the voter education strategy and relevant materials.

In terms of promoting women's participation in the political life of the country, work has been undertaken by UNWOMEN with dialogue sessions which were conducted in 4 selected districts of Mzimba, Dedza, Machinga and Thyolo. All anticipated stakeholders, particularly, local leaders participated in the dialogues. A total of 87 local leaders (46 male and 41 female) participated. It is expected that these dialogues will deepen local leaders' and their communities' understanding of gender equality and women's right to political participation.

Another activity that was completed in the month consisted of the training of 20 journalists (11 females, 9 males) in gender equality and women empowerment. A pre-training assessment showed broad knowledge gaps in gender equality and women empowerment. The training significantly enhanced their knowledge (as shown through the evaluation forms) and motivated increased media attention on different relevant topics affecting the participation of women to the political life of the country.

II. Plans for the next period

In the next period, the emphasis will be on initiating the work with the political parties on issues pertaining to programme-based campaigning and the heightened involvement of youth and women in political parties. Further preparatory work will be undertaken to ensure that MEC is ready for the voter registration exercise which is currently set to begin on 24 May and will take place in 6 phases until the end of August. Close collaboration with the UNDP mass registration project has been ongoing to ensure optimal use of the new biometric ID cards that have been issued to those who have registered (9.2 million Malawians above the age of 16 registered to date; 7 million ID cards distributed as of end of February). The project will also be seeing the initiation of the HeforShe campaign in the country alongside UNWOMEN.

For more information on the Malawi Electoral Cycle Support Project, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Richard Cox, richard.cox@undp.org.



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

- Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) held the National Assembly elections on 7 February.
- ECN announced that the presidential election would be held on 13 March.
- The Electoral Support Project (ESP) launched the impact evaluation of the BRIDGE programme.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

ESP launched the impact evaluation of the BRIDGE professional development programme that ECN implemented in Nepal from 2007 to 2016. The evaluation is led by one of the original creators of BRIDGE, and conducted together with a national consultant. The team will review the results and impact of the BRIDGE workshops conducted over the years, the overall strategies deployed and make recommendations for the future of the programme, particularly in terms of ensuring sustainability and allowing phasing out international assistance. The evaluation is to be finalized by the end of May 2018.

The project completed its support to ECN for an update to Nepal's social studies curriculum to take into account the developments of the past year in terms of the legal framework, the conduct of the elections and the implementation of the 2015 Constitution.

II. Plans for the next period

ESP will continue its analytical and conceptual work for the review of the 2017 election, a specific study on inclusion in those electoral processes as well as for the final project evaluation. In terms of inclusion, the project has been exploring possibilities of Nepal presenting and discussing its experience of the 2017 elections with peers internationally and is working on Nepal co-hosting a side event on women's participation at this year's session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

ESP will continue to encourage ECN to implement the new voter registration software.

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](#).



SUPPORT TO THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (SNEC)

In response to a request from the Government of Sierra Leone and the National Electoral Commission (NEC), UNDP established a multi-donor project to support the technical preparations for voter registration and the 2018 elections. This follows a successful project that supported the NEC in the drawing of new electoral boundaries in 2016.

Previous Sierra Leone elections received large amounts of donor support, not only for technical assistance but also through meeting the cost of processes such as voter registration and polling itself. Recognizing the maturation of Sierra Leonean institutions, the project focuses only on key processes and areas that require support or improvement.

HIGHLIGHTS

- In February 2018, the project continued supporting the National Electoral Commission (NEC) with procurement, preparation of training materials and logistics, as well as with the design and dissemination of inclusive voter information.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Ballot papers were designed and printed with assistance from UNDP. A ceremony was organized at the airport for the arrival of ballot papers in Freetown on 26 February. It was attended by political parties, who expressed satisfaction with the way the NEC is carrying out the process. The European Ambassador, the Irish Ambassador as well as the British High Commissioner attended the event too (please see photo below). Ballot papers were then dispatched to the 16 districts by the NEC with assistance from UNDP.



Photo credits: Emilie Bay-Scheidegger/UNDP Sierra Leone

The NEC also trained polling station staff and tally centre staff with assistance from the project. The project also supported the design and printing of both the polling and counting procedures manual and the tally and results manual. In addition to polling staff, copies were shared with domestic and international observation missions.

The project also supported the training of 19 Assistant Voter Education and Training Officers (AVETOs), in line with the project-supported assessment of access of people with disabilities to the electoral process. Themselves living with

disabilities and present in every district, AVETOs actively engage in promoting voting among people with disabilities. They visit them in their homes and inform them of their rights, procedures, and measures in place to support their participation and protect their right to a secret vote. They also train in the use of tactile ballot guides.

Voter information materials were disseminated throughout the country in February. These included radio jingles posters on voting steps, posters ('know your candidates'), flyers and stickers. In an effort to reach out to people with disabilities, information was made available in sign language and Braille. A drama skit was performed in all 16 districts to encourage the participation of women.

II. Plans for the next period

On 7 March 2018, elections will take place. Preparations for a second round may start shortly thereafter. This would include design and procurement of ballot papers.

For more information on SNEC, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Ms. Kate Sullivan, kate.sullivan@undp.org.



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 organizations 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.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Verification of Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) registration kits has been completed.
- The construction of the voter registration and results management centre has started.
- Preparation of a voter awareness programme for 2019 elections has been launched.
- Scoping mission for the research on women's leadership and political participation was conducted.
- Secondary school essay & poster competition has been closed.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Support to the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC) BVR Update

During the reporting period, the project's BVR consultants supported SIEC by completing the verification of registration kits. The consultants formulated an electronic checklist form, which has resulted in a more efficient process for the assessment of the status of BVR kits. BVR kits were categorized in 3 different

groups: a) functional laptops and printers, b) kits with faulty laptops, and c) kits with faulty printers. This assessment will assist to the timely identification of procurement needs for the upcoming next national voter registration campaign. SIEC, with the project's support, has supported the entire process for the update of the voter' registry conducted in Choiseul and Western Province, including the publication of the provisional voters' lists and throughout the period of exhibition and challenges during which 1230 claims were filed (930 lodged in Western Province and 200 in Choiseul). The ongoing revision for the production of the final voters' lists is expected to be completed in early March. The project has made a substantial contribution for the production of reliable voters lists of these two provinces.

Project's supports SIEC to build the BVR Database and Result Management Centre

The construction of a new database and results management centre began on 18 February and is expected to be completed by the end of March/beginning of April 2018. The new data-centre will contribute to a more efficient operation of the voter registration process enhancing the maintenance and security of the equipment in the appropriate conditions as well as improving the protection and the accessibility of equipment and data. The data-centre will reduce SIEC financial and logistical burden, as the current data-centre is located in leased premises in a different neighbourhood.

Development of a voter awareness programme

The project's Senior Electoral Adviser arrived to Honiara on 17 February for a three week in-country assignment to produce an integrated voter awareness programme in line with SIEC 2016-2019 Voter Awareness Strategy. The expected output is a multi-actors programme which will provide a framework to enhance the identification, development and implementation of awareness related activities including specific actions targeting women's political participation as well as youth and people with disabilities.

Research on women's political leadership and participation

The Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project (SECSIP) commissioned a research study to contribute to the full incorporation of women as political leaders and for the development of a strategic plan addressing the barriers to women's participation in the elections as candidates. This study will include a research on Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) exploring the dynamics between what people know, what they believe and how they behave in response to women's leadership and political participation. A representative of the vendor arrived on 27 February to conduct a scoping mission seeking to define a detailed plan for the research, to commence the identification of key stakeholders and make adjustments to the research methodology. The final product is expected to be completed by the end of May.

Poster and Essay competition

A total of 10 Honiara-based secondary schools were visited by SECSIP Gender Officer conducting 30-minute information sessions to encourage participation. Other actions to encourage participation included contacting education authorities and a SMS blast service which delivered a text message to 65,000 recipients across all 10 provinces of the Solomon Islands¹. The Secondary School Poster and Essay Competition closed the period of submissions on 28 February receiving a total of 165 applications experiencing a substantial increase over the inaugural edition held in late 2016 which had 42 entries. This competition provides an innovative avenue for youth and educators to reflect on issues related to women's leadership and political participation.

1. Choiseul - 5000, western - 5000, Isabel - 5000, Malaita - 10,000, Guadalcanal - 10,000, Renbel - 5000, Makira - 5000, Temotu-5000, central islands - 5000 and Honiara - 10,000.

Partner CSOs/ small grants

The National Council of Women (NCW) conducted two training of trainers (ToT) workshops in Buala, Isabel Province and Auki, Malaita Province which focused on the provision of skills for campaign managers for prospective female candidates.

II. Plans for the next period

List of activities planned for the following reporting period.

- Meeting of SECSIP Technical Advisory Committee;
- Presentation of the proposal for the voter awareness programme;
- International Women's Day – SECSIP contribution is focused on the importance of voter registration;
- On-going construction of the data-centre at SIEC compound;
- Commencement of data-gathering for the research on women's political participation and leadership;
- Technical assistance for the finalization of voters' lists for Choiseul and Western Province;
- On-going support to the Electoral Reform Task Force for the finalization of the new proposed legislation including the new Electoral Bill, the Political Parties Bill and the Constitutional Bill (consequential amendments);
- Award Ceremony for winners of 2017-2018 Essay competition.

For more information on the SECSIP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Ms. Olga Rabade, olga.rabade@undp.org.



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 11 February 2018, Somalia's National Security Council, which comprises the country's federal and state leaders, issued a Communique for the Prime Minister to appoint a Technical Committee in preparation of the Electoral Law.
- On 15 February, in Kismayo, Jubaland, and on 26 February, in Mogadishu, the National Independent Election Commission (NIEC) organised by-elections for two vacant seats of the Federal House of the People, respectively concerning a specific clan from Jubaland and one of Somalilanders.
- On 28 February, the NIEC concluded in Mogadishu its nationwide consultations with sub-national stakeholders in each of the Federal Member States, the capital region of Benaadir, and with the Somaliland community in Mogadishu.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

On 11 February 2018, Somalia's National Security Council, which comprises the country's federal and state leaders, issued a Communique for the Prime Minister to appoint a Technical Committee in preparation of the Electoral Law. The Technical Committee consists of 10 members from the Federal Government (FGS) and the Federal Member States (FMS) and is requested to submit “an applicable

electoral system” for the next meeting of the country’s federal and state leadership in March. The Technical Committee organised a first session end of February to discuss different electoral systems, with specific focus on the options for constituencies of a Parliamentary system with proportional representation and closed party list. The draft electoral law will require buy-in from the FMS, before submission to the Council of Ministers and ultimately to Parliament for discussion and passage. The UN Integrated Electoral Support Group continues to advise government partners on comparative electoral systems.

On 15 February, in Kismayo, Jubaland, and on 26 February, in Mogadishu, the National Independent Election Commission (NIEC) organised by-elections for two vacant seats of the Federal House of the People, respectively concerning a specific clan from Jubaland and one of Somalilanders. The NIEC followed the procedures of the limited franchise electoral process in 2016, including the provision of 51 clan-based voting delegates and a formal candidate campaign period. The UN Integrated Electoral Support Group provided polling and counting training according to the procedures.



NIEC by-elections process in Kismayo, Jubaland. 15 February 2018. Photo credit: NIEC

On 28 February, the NIEC concluded in Mogadishu its nationwide consultations with sub-national stakeholders in each of the Federal Member States (Puntland, Galmudug, Hirshabelle, South-West, and Jubaland), the capital region of Benaadir, and with the Somaliland community in Mogadishu. The meetings were attended by regional officials, traditional elders, political parties, religious leaders, women’s and youth groups, and civil society organisations. Widespread feedback from the Somali public strongly supports the FGS’ objective to reach universal multi-party elections in 2020 beyond clan-based power sharing arrangements. The NIEC plans to conduct in March additional out-of-country consultations with the Somali diaspora community in the United States, Canada, Europe and Kenya. The final consolidated report including recommendations to the FGS is expected to be submitted by the NIEC in the upcoming period.



IESG training to NIEC staff members on polling and counting procedures. Mogadishu, February 2018. Photo credit: UNDP

The UN Integrated Electoral Support Group provided technical, logistical and budgetary support to these consultations; which follow the Mogadishu Agreement of 5 November 2017 between the FGS, Federal Member States (FMS) and the Benaadir Regional Administration (BRA), and that requested the NIEC to undertake within 90 days an inclusive consultation throughout Somalia on the challenges facing the organisation of the country’s first universal suffrage elections since 1969.

II. Plans for the next period

- Advisory support on electoral systems to facilitate discussions between FGS and FMS delegates and interlocutors in preparation of the electoral law;
- NIEC out-of-country consultations with stakeholders from the diaspora community.

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



ZAMBIA

Public Relation Department of the Commission

SUPPORT TO THE ZAMBIA ELECTORAL CYCLE

The project “Consolidation of the Electoral Process in Zambia: Support to the Electoral Cycle” provides targeted support to the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) and other national entities to enhance the quality and credibility of electoral processes. Building upon previous electoral support, the project focuses on developing the capacity of the ECZ, enhancing public confidence in election results, strengthening modalities for dispute resolution and support to key electoral partners and stakeholders (political parties, media, CSOs, security agencies). The project started in February 2016, supported by the European Union, DFID, Irish Aid, USAID and UNDP.

HIGHLIGHTS

- On 13 February, the Ministry of Justice convened stakeholders to review and validate proposed amendments to the draft Political Parties Bill, based on inclusive stakeholder consultations. The draft Bill was formally handed over to the Minister of Justice on 22 February.
- Representatives of the EU from Brussels and the Delegation in Zambia met with the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) and UNDP representatives on 27 February to discuss implementation and likely future partnership on EU electoral support in Zambia.
- Two ECZ staff attended training on strategic communications for public relations.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Stakeholder Consultations on Draft Political Parties Bill: The project provided technical and financial support to the Ministry of Justice in its holding of a consultative forum with stakeholders on 13 February to review and validate the revised draft Political Parties Bill. This forum convened around 150 participants of political parties, civil societies organisations (CSOs) and faith-based organisations, who had participated in stakeholder consultations in 2017 and submitted recommendations to the Ministry of Justice. The meeting provided them the opportunity to review the revised draft developed by the Zambia

Law Development Commission (ZLDC) based on their earlier recommendations and agree any final amendments prior to its formal presentation to the Minister of Justice. The ZLDC also provided examples of similar legislation from other jurisdictions to the stakeholders during the validation process in order to allow the stakeholders to make informed submissions.

Submission of Draft Political Parties Bill: Following stakeholder validation of proposed amendments to the draft Political Parties Bill, on 22 February the Zambia Law Development Commission formally presented the draft Bill and its accompanying report of the stakeholder consultations to the Minister of Justice, for detailed review by legal drafters prior to its submission to Cabinet. This ceremony was attended by representatives of all stakeholders, including all opposition parties and representatives of smaller political parties not in parliament, who had been involved in the Bill's review process. Political parties expressed their appreciation of the inclusive consultation process.

EU Desk Mission to Zambia: On 27 February, ECZ Commissioners and senior staff and the UNDP Country Office met with mission representatives of the European Commission Department for Development Cooperation (DEVCO) and European External Action Service (EEAS) desks in Brussels and the EU Delegation in Zambia. The meeting was convened at the request of the EU Delegation in Zambia in order for the Brussels desk mission to obtain an overview of the work of the ECZ and discuss implementation of the EU support, its success and challenges.

Capacity Development on Strategic Communications Strategies: The project supported the attendance of two ECZ staff of the Public Relations Department in a five-day workshop on 'Advanced Strategic Communications, Crisis Management and Public Relations', held in Johannesburg on 19-23 February. This targeted defined capacity development objectives in strategic communications and corporate branding in response to needs identified in election lessons learned and observer mission recommendations from the 2016 general elections.

II. Project activities during the reporting period

- Convening of the first stakeholder dialogue forum on the development of a national domestic observation framework;
- ECZ review of performance of Voter Education School Clubs.

For more information on the Support to the Zambia Electoral Cycle, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Ms. Katie Green, katherine.green@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 institutional strengthening areas of Biometric Voter Registration (BVR), operational planning for BVR, training of election staff, voter education, stakeholder, engagement, election dispute resolution and gender mainstreaming.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Technical Assistance for Voter Registration Operations: Till 19 December 2017, ZEC has registered 4.87 million people. ZEC extended the voter registration for 30 days (January 10– February 08, 2018) considering the demand of stakeholders. The total number of voters registered during the mop exercise was 431,252, making the cumulative total 5,310,734, which is 73.5% of the estimated eligible voters. The target set up by ZEC as part of its Strategic Plan 2016-2020 is 80% of the eligible voter population. This is a significant achievement considering that this is a new voter registration exercise.

The project is providing technical assistance to ZEC to undertake the de-duplication process. The process is expected to be completed in April, after which inspection of the voter's roll will be undertaken throughout the country. Technical expertise is also being provided for the development of procedures and processes for de-duplication and inspection. This is a critical step towards a credible, accurate and inclusive voters roll.

Training of Polling Staff: The project assisted ZEC with development of training methodology that covers the different categories of election staff from the ZEC headquarters to the polling station level. The main innovation in the training methodology is the use of a training video as a tool to ensure quality and consistency in the training content and messages. The video shoot depicting all the aspects of polling processes was completed and the final video will be available for use by end of March 2018.

Stakeholder Consultations: The stakeholder consultations are continuing with the political parties, civil society organisations (CSOs), faith-based organisations (FBOs), media and the diplomatic community to discuss issues and challenges regarding the implementation of the BVR process and general preparation for elections. The new Chairperson of ZEC has reaffirmed ZEC's commitment towards these consultations and the periodicity has become regular. A stakeholder consultation on Election Dispute Resolution (EDR) is being organized by ZEC with support of another partner in March 2018.

Voter Education Campaign for Elections: The success of the BVR campaign designed by ZEC together with the CSOs has been recognized and acknowledged by the citizens and CSOs. This was for the first time that ZEC used creative communication mediums and tools to reach out to stakeholders with a focus on women, youth and people with disabilities. Based on the success of BVR Campaign, the project organized a voter education campaign and material design workshop from 27 February to 01 March 2018. The participants included ZEC head office and provincial staff, 25 CSOs and the Independent Commissions. The participants developed two campaigns, i) Voter Education Campaign for Inspection and ii) Voter Education Campaign for Elections.

Human Rights and dispute resolution: ZHRC has been able to mobilize resources for the implementation of the Election Strategy from Government and UNDP has mobilized funds from the Japanese. UNDP is assisting ZHRC to develop a voter education campaign with a focus on areas of election related human rights and this campaign will be finalized by end of March 2018. Training of the election monitors has been planned for March 2018.

Gender Mainstreaming: UNDP is working in partnership with UN Women for implementing gender mainstreaming interventions across all the project activities. A gender baseline survey with nationally represented sample was conducted and its findings are being used to develop a gender policy for ZEC and to identify key interventions to bring improvements in areas of voter registration, voter education, women's political participation and media coverage. The project is planning to have a gender-focused voter education campaign for coming elections.

Mid Term Evaluation Mission: Following the recommendations of the January mid-term Evaluation Mission, the project is now expanding its scope to cover important elements involving conduct of elections. The amended project document will be presented in the Project Board for approval.

II. Project activities during the reporting period

- Finalization of training video and training materials;
- Final voter education campaigns for Inspection and Election;
- Discussion on media monitoring and conflict management training with ZEC;
- Developing procedures and processes for voter registration inspection.

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.