

EC-UNDP

1 - 31 January, 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 JTF is preparing a joint EU-UNDP photo exhibition "The Power of Democracy" to be held in Brussels in February. The exhibition will raise awareness about the democracy and its impact on development, showcasing the electoral assistance provided by the EU and UNDP in many countries.

JTF

On 22 January, former football star George Weah was sworn in as President of Liberia, marking the country's first democratic transfer of power. For the first time since 1944, Liberia underwent a peaceful political transition with a democratic election on 10 October 2017 followed by a run-off election on 26 December.

LIBERIA

The project helped prepare for the 7 March elections with the printing of the ballot papers and the production of voter information material, to be disseminated and aired on TV and radio in February.

SIERRA LEONE

Acronyms and abbreviations

BVR	Biometric Voter Registration
CCMG	Christian Churches Monitoring Group
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
DGCS	Directorate General of Civil Status
DGPAR	Directorate General of Political Affairs and Refugees
ECN	Election Commission of Nepal
ECZ	Election Commission of Zambia
EMB	Electoral Management Bodies
ESP	Electoral Support Project
FBOs	Faith-Based Organisations
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEBC	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
IESG	Integrated Electoral Support Group
MASI	Solomon Islands Media Association
MEHRD	Ministry of Education, Human Resource and Development
MoIM	Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
MPLCs	Multi-Party Liaison Committees
NEC	National Elections Commission
NIEC	National Independent Electoral Commission
OMSWA	Office of the Minister of State for Women's Affairs
PS MOHA	Permanent Secretary Ministry of Home Affairs
Q&A	Question & answer
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
SSC	South-South Cooperation
ToT	Training for Trainers

TSI	Transparency Solomon Islands
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
USAID	United States Aid
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZHRC	Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission
ZIM-ECO	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project

SUMMARY

GUINEA: On 18 January 2018, the President officially signed a decree for the upcoming local elections.

KENYA: During the month of January 2018, there were renewed calls by various stakeholders for dialogue, in order to give space for conversations around the impending post-election issues. - The Support to Electoral Processes in Kenya (SEPK) project in this period started strategic reviews with electoral management body (EMB) with a view of advancing the work planning for 2018 and firming up the concept that will guide an integrated post-election evaluation and lesson learning exercise.

LEBANON: UNDP continued supporting the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) in various activities such as women empowerment.

LIBERIA: Following the successful conclusion of the general elections, the National Elections Commission (NEC) certified the winner of the presidential runoff election on 4 January 2018. - Legal support of the project has continued at administrative and Supreme Court levels. - The project logistics expert assisted the NEC with regard to storage and to retrieval and warehousing plans for sensitive and non-sensitive electoral material from 5,390 polling stations.

NEPAL: The Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) is making final preparations for the 7 February National Assembly elections. - The Electoral Support Project (ESP) focused on analytical and conceptual work for the post-electoral review and end-of-project evaluations.

SIERRA LEONE: In January 2018, the project supported the National Electoral Commission (NEC) with procurement, preparation of training materials and training logistics, as well as with the design of inclusive voter information in the run up to the March elections.

SOLOMON ISLANDS: Progress has been made toward the verification of Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) registration kits. - Consultations with churches have been initiated for voter awareness activities. - The project organised awareness raising sessions on the poster and essay competition in 13 schools in East Honiara.

SOMALIA: On 18 January, the Council of Ministers of Somalia's Federal Government endorsed the 2020 Political Roadmap, which sets out as a top priority a clear trajectory on the path toward universal elections in 2020. - On 22 and 23 January, the Ministries of Constitutional Affairs, and of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation, alongside the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) and the Boundaries and Federalism Commission, held a retreat in Mogadishu

discussing electoral issues linked to constitutional reform and boundary demarcation. The meeting enhanced coordination among the institutions in the light of the Political Roadmap on Inclusive Politics. - On 28 January, in Jowhar, the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) organized the by-election for the vacant seat in the Federal House of the People for Hirshabelle. - In January, the NIEC continued its consultations throughout Somalia, engaging with sub-national stakeholders in each of the country's different federal member states.

ZAMBIA: On 15 January, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) finalized its ICT Security Policy. - The ECZ undertook a mission to India to assess their EMB application of e-voting technologies. - On 12 January, UNDP team attended a Steering Committee meeting of the Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG) to initiate implementation of the workplan on a framework for domestic election observation.

ZIMBABWE: The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project (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 18 January 2018, the President officially signed a decree for the upcoming local elections.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The project, in collaboration with the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) Programme has finalized the contracting of national UNVs and has deployed them in the 33 prefectures and in the 5 communes of the Conakry region. The 2018 annual workplan has been developed, based on the revised project budget.

CENI activities

Following the update of the mapping of the polling stations, in line with the revised electoral code, the CENI has started the management of the candidates' applications and the distribution of the voters' cards from 4 to 11 January 2018. These activities have been supervised by commissioners and technical staff of the Electoral Management Body (EMB).

As part of the preparations of the upcoming local elections, the CENI organised a workshop which trained magistrates on the electoral dispute management, on 19 and 20 January. This workshop

contributed to building capacities of 36 magistrates not only on electoral dispute management but also on the management of complaints filed during the electoral period.

The CENI received a decree from the Constitutional Court proposing presidents for each of the “commissions administratives de centralisation des votes” from the 342 electoral districts.

Out of the 342 magistrates expected to be proposed, the constitutional court has only nominated 238. It has been decided that one magistrate will cover 3 electoral districts. The CENI has established a commission which will develop a deployment plan of the 238 magistrates over the 342 electoral districts.

In view of the upcoming local elections, CENI deployed a field mission from 28 January to 11 February with the aim of ensuring the smooth organization of the elections, management and transmission of the results.

From 31 January to 1 February, the CENI also organised a series of trainings for executives and magistrates expected to be part of these “commissions administratives de centralisations des votes”.

In order to ensure a smooth coordination of electoral operations, CENI created an operational centre throughout the electoral period. The 13 staff members of this unit will:

- Coordinate local elections operations;
- Put into practice directives and problem resolution mechanisms in line with the operational unit at the municipality level;
- Liaise with chiefs of elections monitoring missions and presidents of CENI field offices;
- Collect information on the delivery of electoral material before the election day;
- Monitor the reporting of incidents and issues from polling stations;
- Assess the voters' turnout number of participants to ballots and collect provisory results from each electoral district.

On 8, 11 and 13 January, the CENI organised meetings with its technical unit¹ to assess the electoral preparations and address main challenges. In particular, some polling stations reported different issues, including late delivery of voters' cards, delays in the validation of the candidates' lists, lack of magistrates to chair the “commission administratives de centralisation des votes (CACV)”, refunds of the deposit for nominates' lists rejected, difficulties regarding voters' relocation and voter's cards distribution, and the placement of logos on the ballot papers, and so on.

Finally, on 27 January, the inter-party committee meeting discussed:

- The number of past and ongoing trainings;
- The rate of distributed voter cards (73,50% on 26 January);
- The 26 requests received for electoral observation accreditation from national and international organizations;

1 The CENI technical unit is an ad hoc consultation framework implemented by the CENI in order to discuss the electoral operations and address difficulties and challenges. It is composed of representatives of the CENI, political parties, various stakeholders active in the field of electoral assistance, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and international organizations.

- The option of proxy-voting or by derogation;
- The creation of an information and communication unit called “soirée électorale” which, in close collaboration with local radios, will spread electoral news and collect voters’ feedbacks on the election day;
- The deployment of 238 magistrates over the 342 polling stations.

II. Plans for the next period

In the next reporting period, the project will follow up on activities of the national UN volunteers on the ground. The project will also prepare the BRIDGE and Gender equality trainings.

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](#).



 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

- During the month of January 2018, there were renewed calls by various stakeholders for dialogue, in order to give space for conversations around the impending post-election issues.
- The Support to Electoral Processes in Kenya (SEPK) project in this period started strategic reviews with electoral management bodies (EMBs) with a view of advancing the work planning for 2018 and firming up the concept that will guide an integrated post-election evaluation and lesson learning exercise.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The following activities were conducted during the month:

- Colloquium for lawyers on understanding the implications of the Supreme Court ruling on the 2017 presidential petitions.
- Internal reflection workshop for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) directorate to identify what worked well, what did not work during the 2017 elections and draw lessons for making ICT more robust in subsequent elections.
- Ongoing support for planning of Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) internal

reflection and lesson learning Post-Election Evaluation.

- Finalization of popular versions of the political parties' act and its amendments in English and Swahili.

II. Plans for the next period

The activities planned for the following reporting period include:

- Finalization of SEPK 2018 Annual Work Plan;
- Corporate governance workshop for IEBC Commissioners and senior staff;
- Data collection for the evaluation of effectiveness and impact of voter education initiatives employed during the 2017 elections.

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



 **LEBANON**

 UNDP LEAP

LEBANESE ELECTIONS ASSISTANCE PROJECT (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

- UNDP continued supporting the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) in various areas such as women empowerment.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

In the reporting period, UNDP continued supporting the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM) in the following areas:

Training of women party members and independent women candidates, in partnership with UN Women and the Office of the Minister of Women Affairs (OMSWA)

This activity is part of the roadmap developed within the partnership between UNDP, EU, UN Women and the Office of the Minister of State for Women (OMSWA) for the political empowerment of women in Lebanon. The road map aims to create a greater and stronger space for the participation of Lebanese women in the upcoming elections, especially in support of their political participation and

representation. This is centred around the following:

- Preparing women to enter the political arena and parliamentary elections;
- Reducing the level of procedural restrictions and launching of an awareness campaign that supports women's participation in elections.

The training plan targeted 50 candidates (from political parties as well as independents) for the parliamentary elections, divided into two groups each with 25 trainees.

The three-day training covered the following areas:

- Introduction of the new electoral law, the electoral cycle and an overview on the election processes;
- Definition of the electoral campaign;
- The components of a successful electoral campaign;
- Types of advertising campaigns;
- Strategic Planning for an electoral campaign and Team formation.

Info Sessions with Potential Women Candidates and voters in the Regions

Women in Front, a local NGO, and UNDP in partnership with UN Women, are organizing awareness sessions on women's participation in parliamentary elections during the months of January, February and March 2018, in eight different regions all over Lebanon. UNDP will present the technical aspect of elections i.e.: the required documents needed to run, how to vote, pre-printed ballots, electoral calendar and information related to voters and candidates alike. Also, a presentation will tackle issues related to campaigning, coalition-building, fundraising, awareness-raising and consensus-building on key issue platforms.

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

As part of the agreed roadmap between UNDP, the EU, UN Women and OMSWA, the overall objective of this public awareness campaign is to enhance the role of Lebanese women in the upcoming 2018 Parliamentary Elections and will target all Lebanese citizens. Thus, the campaign will focus on

delivering the following messages in a positive, respectful and politically neutral manner:

- Raise the public awareness on the role of women in leadership, politics and electoral process;
- Promote an inclusive electoral process and a fair portrayal of women political leaders;
- Encourage political parties to nominate women in leadership positions;
- Encourage women activists to run for elections;
- Encourage voters to vote for women candidates.

The media campaign will include 3 TV spots, advertisement on LED, billboards, cinema spots, radio spots and social media platforms. The campaign will be divided into three phases with 3 different messages. The first phase (Jan 10 –Jan 25) will promote women’s participation in elections. The second phase (Jan 26-March 15) will endorse women as candidates and the third phase (Apr 10-May 5) will promote women as voters.

Publishing of Constitutional Council Decisions

The Constitutional Council released on the 11 January the Council’s Decisions publications from 1994 to 2016 in French, in the presence of the President of the Council Dr. Issam Sleiman, and the UNDP Country Director, Ms. Celine Moyroud, accompanied by a delegation. As part of its ongoing support to the Constitutional Council, UNDP supported the translation and the production of the Council’s Decisions publications aiming to disseminate the Lebanese expertise in the field of the constitutional justice worldwide, and to share it with the Union of Constitutional Councils and Courts. The Constitutional Council Decisions are composed of 2 volumes: volume 1 is related to the constitutionality of laws and volume 2 is related to electoral disputes.

In addition, the project provided assistance in enhancing the administrative capacity of the Council, especially for the upcoming Parliamentary Elections, through procuring equipment such as computers, printers, shredders, photocopiers, amongst others.

II. Plans for the next period

For the month of February, the project will continue to work in the following areas:

- Candidates registration system;
- Operations and logistics;
- Supervision and monitoring of elections;
- Voter registration update process;
- Women’s participation in elections.

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

- Following the successful conclusion of the general elections, the National Elections Commission (NEC) certified the winner of the presidential runoff election on 4 January 2018.
- Legal support of the project has continued at administrative and Supreme Court levels.
- The project logistics expert assisted the NEC with regard to storage and to retrieval and warehousing plans for sensitive and non-sensitive electoral material from 5,390 polling stations.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Following the successful conclusion of the general elections, the National Elections Commission (NEC) certified the winner of the presidential runoff election on 4 January 2018. The project IT results management expert supported the NEC with the management of its results management system ensuring that these were transparently aggregated and available through an online website.

Legal support of the project has continued at administrative and Supreme Court levels. At administrative level, an international legal consultant has continued to advise the NEC legal department and monitored progress of all 91 complaints that are now completed. At the Supreme Court level,

the project national legal counsel continues to represent the NEC in Supreme Court litigations over district-level results of the House of Representatives elections.

The project logistics expert assisted the NEC with regard to storage and to retrieval and warehousing plans for sensitive and non-sensitive electoral material from 5,390 polling stations. Following the retrieval, an inventory exercise is being conducted with support from the expert.

Following the successful conclusion of the 2017 elections, consultants for IT, legal, gender, field coordination and results management have departed from the project. The NEC has expressed its appreciation for the support it received during this period.

The Chairman's office was supported with drafting of public communications that were released weekly throughout the period with election updates announced to the public and observers at regular press conferences.

UNDP also supported logistics and operations and assisted in the preparation, delivery and retrieval of sensitive and non-sensitive election material together with coordination support with the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) for air support.

Key communications and press conference statements delivered by the Chairman of the National Elections Commission were drafted in consultation with National Elections Commission counterparts to ensure more consistent public messaging. A short final phase of civic and voter education was also re-launched following the resumption of election preparations for a two-week period.

The project provided technical IT support to develop reporting formats and tools for online and hardcopy provisional and final results' updates. The goal is to ensure transparent and timely release of election results for the presidential run-off election.

II. Plans for the next period

In 2018, the project will have a focus on the following five central themes in line with the electoral cycle approach:

- Strengthening administrative efficient asset management and asset warehousing;
- Further capacity building of the NEC headquarters and 19 field offices, with particular focus on reviewing the legal framework;
- Election observer recommendations and supporting the NEC in advancing electoral and legal reform aligned with the broader constitutional reform;
- Support to the development of a school curriculum that includes civic education taught in all school years and;
- Generating improved electoral data on women voters down to county level. As a priority immediate post-election activity, UNDP will support the convening of a lessons learnt and debriefing session in February 2018 in partnership with the National Elections Commission with specific focus on logistics and operations given the experience from the elections.

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](#).



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 Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) is making final preparations for the 7 February National Assembly elections.
- The Electoral Support Project (ESP) focused on analytical and conceptual work for the post-electoral review and end-of-project evaluations.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The Electoral Support Project (ESP) focused on analysis and review of the support extended towards the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) as well as on preparation for the work to be completed in the project's remaining months. An outline of the Study of Gender and Inclusion in the 2017 Elections was prepared and shared with ECN. The study aims to present an overview of gender and inclusion in the 2017 elections, documenting advances, identifying gaps and making recommendations for future improvements.

The project continued its support to ECN in updating Nepal's social studies curriculum based on the changes and events brought by 2017 and in developing a standard curriculum for the induction of new staff. The project closed its five regional offices and a total of 20 team members from headquarter and the regions completed their assignments on 31 January.

II. Plans for the next period

The project will continue its analytical work and finalize the consolidation of main findings of the post-electoral internal review exercise conducted during the project retreat. The vacancy announcement of consultants (one international and two nationals) for the impact evaluation of BRIDGE workshops implemented in Nepal from 2012 to 2016 will be published on the UNDP procurement website.

The project will start archiving public documents using the ACE project website. In addition, the project will continue to encourage the ECN to implement the voter registration software that the project developed last year.

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.

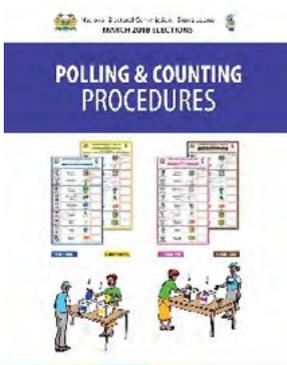
Previous Sierra Leone elections received large amounts of donor support, not only for technical assistance but also through meeting the cost of processes such as voter registration and polling itself. Recognizing the maturation of Sierra Leonean institutions, the project focuses only on key processes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

HIGHLIGHTS

- In January 2018, the project supported the National Electoral Commission (NEC) with procurement, preparation of training materials and training logistics, as well as with the design of inclusive voter information in the run up to the March elections.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

In January 2018, the National Electoral Commission (NEC) compiled and verified lists of candidates for the 7 March presidential, parliamentary and local elections. With assistance from UNDP, ballot papers were designed for each election and constituency. They will now be printed in South Africa.



The NEC also started the recruitment of polling station and tally centre staff, who will be trained in February with assistance from the project. The polling and counting manual was finalised for print.

Voter information material were designed. These include radio jingles posters on voting steps, posters 'know your candidates', flyers and stickers. They will be printed and disseminated, or aired on TV and radio, in February. These materials include information in sign language and braille. In addition,

a drama skit was developed, and will be performed in all 16 districts, late February/early March.

Following on from the 2017 access assessment, UNDP has hired a Disability Access Advisor to work with NEC and the project team. He has advised on the polling procedures and will participate in the training of NEC staff on offering an accessible polling experience. The advisor has also appeared on local radio along with NEC staff on the topic of the Tactile Ballot Guide and will continue to work on outreach efforts. The project has also engaged 18 locally based Assistant Voter Education and Training Officers to assist NEC's district officers in training polling staff and in conducting outreach to people from disabilities.

Some 300,000 voter cards were reprinted and will be distributed in February.

The NEC's software for results management is being quality assured by the project.

In January, the last of the UNDP-procured items started to arrive in Freetown. These include voting screens, polling station kits, and tactile ballot guides for visually impaired people, joining the already landed indelible ink. Plans were also made to procure a number of ramps to allow access of people with disabilities to the most inaccessible polling stations.



Photo credits: Kate Sullivan / UNDP Sierra Leone



Photo credits: Terry Pinto / UNDP Sierra Leone

II. Plans for the next period

- In February 2018, final preparations for the 7 March elections will take place.
- This will include the printing of ballot papers in South Africa, and their shipment to Sierra Leone, with the assistance of UNDP Procurement Support Unit in Copenhagen. Ballot papers will then be dispatched to all 16 districts and respective polling stations.
- Other procured items will continue to arrive. UNDP is also assisting with the management of warehousing and dispatching of electoral equipment to the districts.
- Voter information will be finalised and disseminated.
- Five regional tallying centres will be setup. Tallying staff will be hired and trained. UNDP is also assisting with the development of a manual on tallying.

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

- Progress has been made toward the verification of Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) registration kits.
- Consultations with churches have been initiated for voter awareness activities.
- The project organised awareness raising sessions on the poster and essay competition in 13 schools in East Honiara.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

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

During the reporting period, Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) consultants continued to provide support to the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC) in the verification process of registration kits. This task involved identifying faulty IT equipment, troubleshooting printers, laptops and biometric devices, and replacing different parts of printers and laptops. Additionally, BVR experts assisted SIEC

to develop and maintain a summary sheet of BVR kits inventory, and created software (scripts) that automate the process of registration kits verification, making it more efficient.

Ongoing support was made available by the BVR experts on matters such as updates of data-center, technical issues experienced by the IT department, integration of data into the BVR system as per request, sharing of information from the provinces to the central office, and printing of provisional voter lists.

The voter registration exercise undertaken in Choiseul and Western Province provides an opportunity to examine the process and identify areas for improvement. Accordingly, a lesson learned exercise will be conducted with a view to streamline procedures for the upcoming national registration exercise expected to commence in June 2018.

Consultations with Churches

As part of SIEC 2016-2019 Voter Awareness Strategy, national consultant on voter awareness has initiated consultations with local churches to identify possible ways of collaboration aligning church activities with those identified in SIEC 2018 voter awareness plan. This possible partnership presents an important opportunity to establish a new channel of cooperation expected to enhance SIEC's outreach. This will be done in view of the extensive network of the predominant churches and religious groups in Solomon Islands. These consultations aimed to collect information such as gatherings and conventions, calendar of events and activities planned for 2018, with the aim to introduce voter awareness activities during church events.

Poster and Essay competition

The competition, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD), was launched in September and was expected to close on 1 December 2017. During its last week, the project received several calls from the provinces alerting of the difficulty in submission due to bad weather, cancellation of flights and internet problems. At the request of the MEHRD, the deadline for the competition was extended to Wednesday 28 February 2018. This decision took into consideration that December - January is a holiday period and that the new academic year opens on 29 January, meaning that most classes would usually be underway by end of February. This has also enabled the project's gender officer to visit 13 schools located in the east side of Honiara to continue promoting the poster and essay competition and with the aim to increase the number of submissions. Visits to the remaining schools, some of which are in remote locations, will be conducted once schools resume activities, currently on hold due to a cyclone and weather warning.

Partner CSOs/ small grants

The project's Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), together with the project coordinator specialist, met with the Solomon Islands Media Association (MASI)'s Chief Executive Officer (CEO), to discuss MASI's project level of expenditure and delivery, currently on hold due to a restructuring plan of the organization. Activities in their work plan will resume after the new board is selected at a meeting scheduled for the 17 February.

II. Plans for the next period

List of activities planned for the following reporting period.

- 6 February 2018: meeting scheduled with Permanent Secretary Ministry of Home Affairs (PS MOHA) to provide an update of on-going project support;
- 8 February 2018: meeting scheduled with Transparency Solomon Islands (TSI) Executive Officer to discuss grant implementation related issues;
- Contract to be awarded for a Gender Research on women leadership and political participation;
- Training of trainers (ToT) in partnership with the Ministry of Rural Development for 50 constituency development officers;
- Completion of school visits for the essay competition until its deadline on 28 February.

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



★ 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.

HIGHLIGHTS

- On 18 January, the Council of Ministers of Somalia’s Federal Government endorsed the 2020 Political Roadmap, which sets out as a top priority a clear trajectory on the path toward universal elections in 2020. The Roadmap interlinks essential steps with regard to constitutional review, electoral preparations, state-formation and federalism. It outlines responsible partners and processes to be undertaken between 2017 and 2020, for the government to create a conducive political environment for universal elections in 2020.
- On 22 and 23 January, the Ministries of Constitutional Affairs, and of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation, alongside the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) and the Boundaries and Federalism Commission, held a retreat in Mogadishu discussing electoral issues linked to constitutional reform and boundary demarcation. The meeting enhanced coordination among the institutions in the light of the Political Roadmap on Inclusive Politics.
- On 28 January, in Jowhar, the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) organized the by-election for the vacant seat in the Federal House of the People for Hirshabelle. It was the first official election organized by the NIEC since its establishment in 2015.
- In January, the NIEC continued its consultations throughout Somalia, engaging with sub-national stakeholders in each of the country’s different federal member states.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

NIEC consultations with regional stakeholders

In an effort to reach out to Somalia's Federal Member States and to engage with sub-national stakeholders, the NIEC continued in January its consultations in the different regions of the country. Traveling to multiple locations in Puntland, Galmudug, Hirshabelle, South-West and Jubaland, the NIEC organized meetings on electoral issues with regional officials, local administration, traditional elders, aspiring political parties, religion leaders, women, youth groups and other civil society movements. It was the first time that the NIEC traveled this extensively within the country to reach out to stakeholders.

The aim of these consultations is to discuss challenges facing the organization of universal suffrage elections, for the NIEC to receive consultative feedback and to permit consideration of political agreements to address identified challenges. The consultations followed on the Mogadishu Agreement in November 2017 between the central government and the federal member states of Somalia to enhance the country's federal dynamics. The Mogadishu Agreement stipulated the NIEC to hold within 90 days discussions with local partners in preparation for universal elections in 2020. The consultations will conclude in February in Mogadishu, where the NIEC will meet partners from the capital region and the Somaliland community. The UN Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) assisted the NIEC with the development of a facilitation guide and provides logistical and budgetary support to the field missions, including UN air support where necessary. The NIEC's regional consultations have been welcomed by local stakeholders, and have been receiving wide media coverage on Somali radio, TV, and social media, including the NIEC's Facebook page and twitter account (<https://www.facebook.com/NIECSomalia>; and <https://twitter.com/NIECsomalia>).

Conduct of the by-election in Hirshabelle

On 28 January, in Jowhar, Hirshabelle, the NIEC organized the by-election for the vacant seat allocated to the Hawadle Ali Madahweyne sub-clan, as requested by the Federal Parliament in September 2017. Following the procedures of the '2016 electoral process', including the provision of 51 clan-based voting delegates, the NIEC team led by the Chairperson, Halima Ismail Ibrahim, successfully conducted the process. Mr. Nur Lidow Bayle, a former member of Parliament in the previous legislature, got elected in two rounds. The five candidates who did not get elected congratulated the NIEC for organizing the by-election in a transparent and professional manner. The by-elections were streamed live on TV and the NIEC Facebook page, and followed widely. It was the first electoral operation conducted by the NIEC since its establishment in 2015. It is expected that the NIEC will conduct in the next month by-elections for the three other vacant seats in the House of the People (Jubaland, Galmudug, Somalilanders).

II. Plans for the next period

- Finalization of the NIEC's regional consultations with subnational stakeholders;
- Engagement of the Electoral Task Force with representatives of the Federal Member States on systems of representation and the drafting process of the electoral law;
- By-elections for three vacant seats in the House of the People (Jubaland, Galmudug, Somalilanders).

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 15 January, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) finalized its ICT Security Policy.
- The ECZ undertook a mission to India to assess their EMB application of e-voting technologies.
- On 12 January, UNDP team attended a Steering Committee meeting of the Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG) to initiate implementation of the workplan on a framework for domestic election observation.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Development of ICT Security Policy: On 15 January, the ECZ finalized its ICT Security Policy, which was developed with technical support provided by the project. The need for the policy was identified through lessons learned from the 2016 elections and the desire to strengthen the security of ICT systems within the institution.

Research on E-voting Technologies: The ECZ completed its final visit to the electoral commissions of selected countries to better understand the application of electronic voting systems. This research was

undertaken in response to calls from political parties and other stakeholders for the ECZ to review its existing technology and assess the feasibility of the introduction of enhanced technological systems in the Zambian context. This last mission to India follows previous south south cooperation (SSC) missions to Brazil, Namibia, Peru and Panama.

Domestic Observation Framework: On 12 January, the project met with the Steering Committee of the Christian Churches Monitoring Group (CCMG) to agree on modalities for development of a sustainable framework for domestic observation. This represented the first activity of the agreed 2018 workplan for the initiative, which aims to convene domestic observer groups to support sustainable long-term national election observation.

II. Project activities during the reporting period

- Discussions with CCMG to plan for the first consultative stakeholder meeting with domestic observer groups.
- Agreement with the Ministry of Justice on the roadmap for public consultations for the review and amendments of the Public Order Act.

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

- The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project (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: With the support from the project, ZEC started the implementation of the BVR process last year. There were 4 Phases of BVR, the Phase-1 started on 10 October 2017 across the country and each phase spanned over 16 days with approximately 2,500 registration centres per phase. This mobile registration drive ended on 19 December 2017 with registration of 4.87 million people. Based on the demand from political parties and civic society organisations (CSOs), ZEC extended the voter registration for 30 days (January 10– February 08, 2018). The total number of voters registered till 31 January was 291,160, with the cumulative total of 5,170,648, which is 71.6% 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.

Training of Polling Staff: The project has started the development of training methodology, training manuals and training roll out plan for the polling staff together with Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC)'s officials. The main innovation of the training methodology is a training video used as a tool to ensure quality and consistency in the messages. A detailed concept has been submitted to ZEC and the script for the video has been finalized. The production of the video is expected to be completed in February 2018.

Stakeholder Consultations: The stakeholder consultations are continuing with the political parties, CSOs, faith-based organizations (FBOs), media and the diplomatic community to discuss issues and challenges regarding the implementation of the BVR process and general preparation for elections. Discussions are being held with ZEC to institutionalize these consultations and develop a link to the Multi Party Liaison Committees (MPLCs), which is a formal forum available in the Electoral Act to undertake conflict management. One of the areas that is being discussed is to develop ZEC capacity on conflict management, as the primary role of MPLCs is to mitigate and manage conflicts among political parties and candidates.

Voter Education Strategy and its Implementation: The success of the BVR campaign designed by ZEC together with the CSOs has been recognized and acknowledged by the citizens. This was for the first time that ZEC used several 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 is supporting ZEC with development of similar Campaigns for Inspection of Voters Roll and for Conduct of Elections. A consultative workshop is being planned for end of February 2018 for developing these campaigns together with CSOs.

Human Rights and dispute resolution: Based on inputs from stakeholders, the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) has developed an Election Strategy. Efforts are being made to implement the key areas of the strategy and gaps in the funding requirements are being addressed. ZHRC has been able to mobilize \$ 600,000 for the implementation of the strategy from Government resources and UNDP has mobilized \$ 150,000 from the Japanese funds. UNDP is also providing technical expertise to assist with effective implementation of the strategy and is already planning support for voter education with a focus on areas of election related human rights. A coordination mechanism is also being set up to have synergy among the different partners supporting ZHRC in this regard.

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: The UN Electoral Affairs Division, together with a UNDP team, undertook a two-week Mid Term Evaluation Mission from January 15-26, 2018. The Mission met with political parties, CSOs, FBOs, media, development partners, ZEC, other independent commissions and government authorities to get feedback on the project implementation and identify new areas of support. The overall feedback was very positive from the stakeholders on the contribution of the project towards the capacity building of ZEC, starting the process of BVR, conduct of voter education and stakeholder engagement. The report of the Mission is expected by end February 2018.

II. Project activities during the reporting period

- Completion of the extension phase of the Biometric Voter Registration Process;
- Finalization of plan for training of election staff;
- Discussion on media monitoring and conflict management training with ZEC;
- Development of a Voter Education Election Campaign;
- Implementation of the ZHRC strategy.

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.