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GPECS II 
Global Project
for Electoral Cycle Support II



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



EC-UNDP

1 - 31 October, 2017

Electoral Assistance Projects Update

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



NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

With a view to assist Solomon Islands Elections Commission's (SIEC) lack of human resources as well as to enhance capacity building and national sustainability, the project has developed a 'graduate programme'. The expected outcome is to attain a group of highly qualified staff in key areas identified by the relevant national authorities, who will be initially engaged, trained and mentored by the project with a view to be considered for future direct engagement by the national authorities under the civil service structure.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Preparations for the November and December House of Representatives and State Assembly elections are in full swing. The project supported 54 training events in various fields of electoral operations and outreach, both at the national and state levels of Representatives elections.

NEPAL

The National Independent Elections Commission (NIEC) led a Voter Registration Feasibility Study, supported by the UN, which enabled discussions between key stakeholders in the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the Federal Member States (FMS), as well as civil society, to explore potential methodologies for voter registration with a view to universal elections in 2020.

SOMALIA

SUMMARY

GUINEA: The electoral calendar for local elections in Guinea starts on 7 October for a duration of 120 days and sets the election day on 4 February 2018. - The project supported the preparation of the BRIDGE training on Gender and Election targeting leader women of civil society organisations (CSOs) and trade unions.

KENYA: The fresh presidential election was held on October 26, 2017 and results declared on October 30, 2017. Jubilee Party candidate and Kenya's incumbent president, H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta was declared the winner of the fresh presidential election. President Kenyatta garnered 98.2% (7,483, 895) out of the total 7,616,217 (38.8%) votes cast.

LEBANON: The preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections continued, according to the electoral calendar. - As part of the preparations, UNDP LEAP continued to provide technical assistance and advisory support to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM).

LIBERIA: In advance of the 10 October 2017 general elections, UNDP supported 395 training sessions for 17,777 polling staff. A total of 27,000 copies of polling and counting procedures manuals and duty sheets for the runoff presidential election were printed. - Cascade training for the runoff election has commenced with refresher training for magistrates' offices and regional coordinators (36 men and 6 women) and 19 training sessions covering the 417 electoral supervisors in advance of the 7 November 2017 election. - The capacity of 41 hearing officers and clerks was increased with training on electoral dispute resolution and complaints procedures improving their capabilities in dealing with complaints at 19 magistrates' offices.

MALAWI: The capacity building and internal reforms work of the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) got underway with a functional review whilst procurement processes for resource management and accounting software as well as strategic planning expertise were in the final stages of procurement. - Work on gender empowerment began in earnest with a perception survey on women's political participation underway and community dialogues with local leaders and party governors held in 8 Districts. - Sensitization sessions were held with political party representatives and Members of Parliament on guiding the Political Parties Bill through the final consultation stages prior to a final vote in Parliament.

NEPAL: Preparations for the November and December House of Representatives and State Assembly elections are in full swing. - ESP supported 54 training events in

various fields of electoral operations and outreach, both at the national and state levels of Representatives elections.

SOLOMON ISLANDS: Two trainings were held for the media professionals in Honiara on 21 and 28 October 2017. - SIEC/SECSIP launched a School Poster and Essay competition in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Human Resource and Development (MEHRD). - The project has developed a 'graduate programme' in order to provide a temporary mechanism expected to contribute to the enhancement of capacities and sustainability of the partner organizations.

SOMALIA: The National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) commenced the temporary registration of political parties. The first political associations started to submit the required documentation in anticipation of formal registration at a later stage once voters are registered. - The NIEC led a Voter Registration Feasibility Study, supported by the UN, which enabled discussions between key stakeholders in the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the Federal Member States (FMS), as well as civil society, to explore potential methodologies for voter registration with a view to universal elections in 2020. - On 4 October, the UNDP/UNSOM Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) organized a Board Meeting together with the NIEC and the electoral law working group of the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MoIFAR), to discuss the Joint Programme for 2018, and the electoral building blocks for support next year to the preparations of 'one person, one vote' elections in 2020, Somalia's first universal elections since 1969. - On 19 October, a technical workshop for a federal-level working group to review electoral systems was conducted by the IESG, in cooperation with the NIEC and MoIFAR, with a focus on systems best suited to post-conflict environments. More specific options are envisaged to be discussed with leadership of the Federal Government of Somalia and the Federal Member States.

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



PROJET D'APPUI AU CYCLE ELECTORAL DE LA GUINEE

HIGHLIGHTS

- The electoral calendar for local elections in Guinea starts on 7 October for a duration of 120 days and sets the election day on 4 February 2018.
- The project supported the preparation of the BRIDGE training on Gender and Election targeting leader women of civil society organisations (CSOs) and trade unions.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The electoral calendar for local elections starts on 7 October for a duration of 120 days and sets the election day on 4 February 2018. The electoral calendar comprises 15 groups of activities.

The project assisted the CENI in drafting its 2017 working plan. The project also supported the preparation of the BRIDGE training on Gender and Election targeting women leaders of civil society organisations (CSOs) and trade unions, and advised different CENI departments according to the expressed needs (communication, logistics, operations).

II. Plans for the next period

The following activities are expected in November 2017:

- Follow the implementation of civil society organisations and NGOs activities in the field;
- Organise BRIDGE training for women leaders of civil society organisations and trade unions;
- Support the recruitment, training and deployment of the national United Nations Volunteers and technical assistants.

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

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- The fresh presidential election was held on October 26, 2017 and results declared on October 30, 2017. Jubilee Party candidate and Kenya's incumbent president, H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta was declared the winner of the fresh presidential election (FPE). President Kenyatta garnered 98.2% (7,483, 895) out of the total 7,616,217 (38.8%) votes cast. His closest competitor was the NASA opposition candidate, Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga who garnered 73,228 votes. It is to be noted that Rt. Hon. Odinga had withdrawn from the presidential race demanding that the irreducible minimum reform that had been advanced by the NASA coalition be first met by the IEBC prior to a fresh election. From the FPE, voter turnout stood at 38.8% of the 19,411,623 registered voters. Voter turnout was very low in opposition strongholds where voters heeded the call by the NASA coalition to not participate in the FPE election, NASA leadership urged their supporters to stay away from polling stations. In Kisumu, Migori, Siaya, Mombasa, Nairobi and Homabay counties, there was witnessed cases of tension and conflict between NASA protesters and the police. Subsequently no voting took place in 25 constituencies in Siaya, Homabay, Kisumu and Migori counties. Protestors prevented the IEBC from delivering election materials to the polling stations and to an extent, voters from accessing some polling stations.
- During the month, the court were busy processing petitions that sought to either delay or postpone the FPE. A petition seeking to bar the IEBC from declaring Uhuru Kenyatta the president-elect following the withdrawal of Raila Odinga from the October 26 election was filed. IEBC filed a case at the Supreme Court of Kenya seeking to get clarification on whether the national returning officer could alter the results as received from polling stations and constituency tallying centres. The Court ruled that the Chairman, who is also the National Returning Officer, cannot change the results as received. Thirdway Alliance party candidate Mr. Ekeru Aukot moved to the High Court to challenge the gazettement of Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga as the only candidates for the FPE. The high court ruled that the gazettement was discriminatory and ordered IEBC to publish a corrigendum including all the other candidates who

vied for president on October 8, 2017. A case filed at the Supreme Court to nullify and void the October 26, 2017 FPE did not take off, while another case seeking to compel Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga to participate in the FPE was thrown out on the grounds that one cannot be compelled to participate in any election.

- The national Assembly and the Senate enacted the Election Laws Amendment Bill 2017. The amendment to electoral laws in advance of the FPE received varying commentary as to the timing and the spirit of their passing. The Bill was submitted to the President for assent. The president expressed his reservations about signing the Bill into law. However, since he did not refer the Bill back to the National Assembly, it automatically became law on October 28, 2017. It remains to be seen how the Bill will affect the ruling of the Supreme Court on any petition challenging results of the October 26 FPE.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The project supported IEBC to develop a ten-point action plan for compliance with the Supreme Court of Kenya decision. This helped the Commission to internalize the decisions and to identify and implement activities aimed at ensuring that the Commission complied with the ruling.

The project supported the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties to train 900 party agents. All the agents trained were from Jubilee party agents trained since NASA boycotted the FPE.

With the support of the project, IEBC carried media content in 3 newspapers of national circulation to educate the public on the FPE. With the support of the project, the Media Council of Kenya contracted 20 radio stations in various counties to engage citizens and undertake editorial influencing and profiling women candidates before the FPE. African Child Services engaged members of the public in 7 counties.

The project supported Elections Observation Group (ELOG) to undertake the general observations. Through this support, ELOG developed a portal where the results can be accessed by the public and managed joint monitors and observers' platform. The project also supported National Gender and Equality Commission to post 94 monitors to observe the General Election and FPE from a gender perspective. UNDP provided 5 technology (2 national, 3 international) experts to provide technical assistance to IEBC on ICT. The ICT experts helped the Commission to identify 3072 polling stations which did not have network (reduction from 11,000 announced before August 8); develop a work flow and a tool to aggregate all the Forms 34B and aggregate the results and develop Form 34C; simplify the forms portal, reduce turnaround time to less than 20 minutes and improve navigation and user experience; open entire back end to improve transmission of results; develop and implement an ICT risk assessment of the commission; and develop an incidence management system for IEBC.

The project also provided support to the Supreme Court of Kenya via the Judiciary Training Institute and the Law Society of Kenya to prepare for any petitions arising from the FPE. The project supported training of magistrates gazetted to handle the petitions arising out of the General Election.

II. Plans for the next period

In November 2017, the project will support post-election audit including lesson learning for IEBC and other electoral stakeholders on the just concluded 2017 General elections and FPE. The project will monitor petitions arising from the FPE with a view to identifying any immediate interventions and support any priorities in case a new re-run is ordered.

There is an internal reflection of the project since inception to identify what worked and lessons learned for improving implementation for the remainder of the project. Work planning for 2018 will also commence.

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



LEBANON

UNDP LEAP

LEBANESE ELECTIONS ASSISTANCE PROJECT

HIGHLIGHTS

- The preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections continued, according to the electoral calendar.
- As part of the preparations, UNDP LEAP continued to provide technical assistance and advisory support to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM).

I. Project activities during the reporting period

As part of the preparations for the upcoming elections, UNDP LEAP continued to provide technical assistance and advisory support to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM). The ongoing support activities are focused on the upgrading of the candidates' registration system, procurement of necessary IT equipment and technical assessments. The project also provides significant support in the set-up and establishment of the Supervisory Commission for Elections (SCE). The support includes hardware, software and required facilities. In addition, as part of the effort to enhance transparency and data management, the project is assisting the ministry in developing a dedicated website that will manage the matters related to voter registration and personal status. In terms of branding, LEAP is supporting MoIM in the design of a new elections logo for the upcoming elections.

II. Plans for the next period

NTR

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

- In advance of the 10 October 2017 general elections, UNDP supported 395 training sessions for 17,777 polling staff. A total of 27,000 copies of polling and counting procedures manuals and duty sheets for the runoff presidential election were printed.
- Cascade training for the runoff election has commenced with refresher training for magistrates' offices and regional coordinators (36 men and 6 women) and 19 training sessions covering the 417 electoral supervisors in advance of the 7 November 2017 election.
- The capacity of 41 hearing officers and clerks was increased with training on electoral dispute resolution and complaints procedures improving their capabilities in dealing with complaints at 19 magistrates' offices.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

In advance of the 10 October 2017 general elections, UNDP supported 395 training sessions for 17,777 polling staff. A total of 27,000 copies of polling and counting procedures manuals and duty sheets for the runoff presidential election were printed by the National Elections Commission following technical inputs of the project.

Cascade training for the runoff election has commenced with refresher training for magistrates' offices and regional coordinators (36 men and 6 women) and 19 training sessions covering the 417 electoral supervisors in advance of the 7 November 2017 election.

Drafting of legal documents and terms of reference for the legal and hearing section of the National Elections Commission were completed. In advance of the 10 October 2017 election, the capacity of 41 hearing officers and clerks was increased with training on electoral dispute resolution and complaints procedures improving their capabilities in dealing with complaints at 19 magistrates' offices. A legal advisor also provided inputs into procedural implementation to ensure that consistent legal standards were applied during hearings.

Technical assistance supported the packing, coordination, deployment and retrieval of sensitive and non-sensitive election material delivered to major county centres across the country for the 5,390 polling places. Field coordination was supported with technical assistance provided to the National Elections Commission's operations centre on election day.

Providing for increased transparency, 2,500 copies each of the National Elections Commission's regulations, a summary of polling and counting procedures, as well as the observers' code of conduct were printed in support of the deployment of 4,400 national and 451 international election observers. Technical assistance also supported the chairman's office in producing weekly press statements and updates on election preparations increasing public accountability.

The UNDP-supported civic and voter education campaign ended in advance of election day, with the seven civil society organizations implementing the campaign and completing their activities. In advance of the runoff presidential election on 7 November 2017 the project's graphic designer redesigned the campaign material for use in the final phase.

Technical IT support to developing reporting formats and tools for online and hardcopy provisional and final results' updates assisted in ensuring transparent and timely release of election results for both presidential and House of Representatives elections.

II. Plans for the next period

A runoff for the presidential elections is scheduled for 7 November 2017. Lessons learnt from the first election have documented, reviewed and factored into the run-off. In particular, queue management will be improved with better sign-posting for voters. The project will support the National Elections Commission finalize logistical and operational preparations in advance of the election day as well as refresher training for polling staff including queue controllers. Continued support to results management and field coordination will be provided as well as legal advice related to complaints and appeals. A short period for civic and voter education will be used to increase awareness amongst voters of the runoff election. The project will also continue to support the transparency measures introduced by the National Elections Commission including regular public communications.

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- The capacity building and internal reforms work of the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) got underway with a functional review whilst procurement processes for resource management and accounting software as well as strategic planning expertise were in the final stages of procurement;
- Work on gender empowerment began in earnest with a perception survey on women's political participation underway and community dialogues with local leaders and party governors held in 8 Districts;
- Sensitization sessions were held with political party representatives and MPs on guiding the Political Parties Bill through the final consultation stages prior to a final vote in Parliament.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

October saw the opening of MEC's new Legal Department and the commencement of the new Legal Director. The project supported the sending of the new Director to the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ), that has a well-established legal department, in order for him to better understand the role, mandate, structure and required resources for such a department.

The project also sent members of MEC's IT department to India. In India, the staff members were hosted by the India International Institute for Democracy and were trained on electoral technology for strengthened voter registration and results transmission processes.

The project is facilitating the current functional review of MEC at headquarters and district levels based on previous UNDP supported recommendations. It is assessing the roles, functions and profiles of staff at all levels to see the coherence, logic and necessity of all its posts. This analysis will be completed by the end of November and will feed into the new Strategic Planning process that the project will be undertaking. Then, in order to strengthen MEC's accountability frameworks, the project is procuring resource management and accounting software to be implemented before the end of the year.

The project is also supporting the promotion and protection of women in politics. It is undertaking a

perception survey that will feed into a fact sheet that will inform the project's longer-term approach in this area. This aside, radio programmes that promote women political participation have been finalized and will air on national and community radio stations by the end of the year. Moreover, community dialogues are being convened in 8 districts across the country which engage local political and tribal leaders so as to bring about a change in attitude to women in politics.

Finally, sensitization sessions were held with political party representatives and MPs on guiding the Political Parties Bill through the final consultation stages prior to a final vote in Parliament.

II. Project activities during the reporting period

The month of November will see MEC present the detailed and comprehensive elections budget that will be discussed with Government. On this basis, the project will be encouraging the development partners, who have yet to state their planned contributions to the basket fund, to do so soon.

The project will be working on updating the Voter Education manual. Further work on organizing the political parties for heightened interaction with MEC will be prioritized as will the strengthening of MEC's Multi-Party Liaison Committees, its main electoral dispute management bodies. A monitoring mechanism for measuring transformative change on promoting women in politics will be established.

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

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

- Preparations for the November and December House of Representatives and State Assembly elections are in full swing.
- ESP supported 54 training events in various fields of electoral operations and outreach, both at the national and state levels of Representatives elections.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

The month of October was dominated by preparations for the combined House of Representatives and State Assembly elections to be held in two phases with polling on 26 November and 7 December. Vote counting is scheduled to start for both phases only after 7 December.

In this context, the Electoral Support Project continued implementing the support to the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) in 21 areas jointly identified with national counterpart and endorsed by the Project Executive Board meeting of 9 October.

The assistance provided was dominated by substantive technical, operational and logistic support to several trainings organized following the cascade modality. In total, the project supported 54 training events in October, including seven Master of Trainers trainings at the national level and 47 cluster and state-level ones, covering all of the seven states. The total number of participants was 1,378 – most of them ECN and government officials but also other electoral stakeholders as security forces and Returning Officers.

Within electoral operations, the project supported ECN trainings in election management, information technology management, accounting and logistics, security management and electoral dispute resolution. The first three types of trainings were supported both at the national and provincial level and the latter two (to date) only at the national level.

The election management training was the core training given by ECN to Chief Returning Officers and Returning Officers, who are responsible for implementing the electoral process at the district and constituency level. The Chief Returning Officers are normally the District Judges and for the upcoming elections all 77 were brought together to be among the 173 participants to receive guidance directly from all election commissioners.



Master of Trainers on information technology. Photo credits: UNDP Nepal



Master of Trainers on Security. Photo credits: UNDP Nepal

The trainings on information technology and on accounting and logistics concerned ECN internal processes. Information technology focused on the IT aspects of managing critical elements of the electoral process, such as the capture and transmission of data for candidate nomination, material deployment, polling operations and results. Across the seven states, over 500 ECN staff were trained in these events.

In the security management training, ECN provided guidance on the elections to 60 officials of Nepal's main security agencies to help them manage and coordinate the security aspects of the electoral process. This training is cascaded through the security agencies themselves and ESP only supports the Master training at the national level.

The interaction covering electoral dispute resolution was an innovation. Given that states are a new level of government, ECN decided to promote a peaceful environment for the elections through interactions at that level with key stakeholders – notably political parties, the media and civil society organizations. One aspect of this is communicating about the existing electoral dispute resolution and electoral justice mechanisms. In order to consolidate the information to be transmitted, the project supported a workshop at the central level for the 16 facilitators who will lead the seven state level events.

In relation to outreach and inclusion, the project's support was also focused on assisting ECN with the central and state-level trainings, notably of over 350 trainers for the voter education cascade

which ultimately transmits the relevant information to the social mobilizers and of close to 150 in the Election and Media cascade, which targets journalists.

In view of urgent support required for the 26 October elections in Kenya, ESP agreed to release two members of its IT team for a mission to work with the UNDP Strengthening Electoral Processes in Kenya project. All costs associated with the mission are borne by UNDP Kenya.

II. Plans for the next period

- As the elections of House of Representatives and Provincial Assemblies approaching, the ESP will speed up in providing the ECN with various supports in line with the approved 21 support areas, which include substantive, operational and logistic support for the training cascades in the fields of election management, information technology management, security management, logistics and finance, voter education and media relations at the central level and in the regions.

- With a goal to spread awareness amongst people with disability on their rights and foster their meaningful participation in the upcoming combined elections, the project is going to support the ECN in organizing a training on voter education for visually impaired citizens and another training for hearing impaired citizens. Election Dispute Resolution (EDR) and Promoting Peaceful Electoral Environment (PPEE) workshops will also be conducted in all seven provinces, with the objective of sensitizing major electoral stakeholders on the importance of peaceful electoral process and provisions regarding EDR as a tool for settling disputes that might arise during the process.

- ESP will also support the ECN in facilitating a comprehensive briefing package to domestic and international Election Observers' groups.

- Finally, the project will continue to provide general technical assistance and advice to the process, guided by international experience and the lessons gathered during the field visits that the project organized on the occasion of polling and counting of the three phases of the local level elections.

For more information on the Nepal ESP, please contact the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) Mr. Vincent da Cruz, vincent.dacruz@undp.org, and visit the [Project's website](#).



SOLOMON ISLANDS

SECSIP

STRENGTHENING THE ELECTORAL CYCLE IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS (SECSIP)

Since 2013, UNDP Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project (SECSIP) has contributed to the inclusiveness and integrity of the electoral process. The project supported the successful introduction of a new comprehensive biometric voter registration system which resulted in a more inclusive and reliable voters' roll and continues to provide assistance in terms of its updating and sustainability. The project also supports the review of the electoral legal framework with a view to promote the strengthening of the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC) and assist to the fulfilment of its mandate. It also strengthens the capacity of the SIEC to advocate for women's political participation and supports the national authorities and civil society 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

- Two trainings were held for the media professionals in Honiara on 21 and 28 October 2017.
- SIEC/SECSIP launched a School Poster and Essay competition in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Human Resource and Development (MEHRD).
- The project has developed a 'graduate programme' in order to provide a temporary mechanism expected to contribute to the enhancement of capacities and sustainability of the partner organizations.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

Media Training

Following the successful completion of the provincial election media trainings in the month of August and September 2017, two SIEC/MASI Media Trainings were held for the media professionals in Honiara on 21st and 28th October 2017. The topics of these last two trainings were, at the request of the participants, on social media and elections, and codes of conduct. The trainings had a turnout of 65 participants and 53 participants. Based on the assessment forms, 90 % of participants considered that the trainings have increased their knowledge on their use of social media to promote election process and general voter awareness.

SECSIP support actions on Biometric Voter Registration (BVR)

UNDP Country Manager and SECSIP CTA met with the Permanent Secretary for Ministry of Home Affairs on 23 October 2017 to provide him an update on the progress made by SECSIP Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) Expert to secure BVR data. This meeting was also attended by Acting Chief Electoral Officer and the ESSP Strategic Operations Adviser. The Permanent Secretary acknowledged the importance of urgent action to replace the BVR equipment and to appoint staff to work with the BVR Expert.

SECSIP has envisaged actions to tackle BVR sustainability in terms of equipment, human resources and human capacities. These actions are:

- a) Ongoing replacement and upgrading of the BVR server equipment, with redundant backup and disaster recovery capabilities;
- b) Upgrading the BVR software to reduce costs and risks;
- c) Start training a first pool of national graduates on elections and technology through a formal mid-term curriculum;
- d) Respond to the immediate absence of capacity in day-to-day maintenance of the BVR equipment and software by embedding a limited number of technicians within a south-to-south arrangement with the Nepal EMB. These technicians operate on daily basis with BVR software and have faced similar challenges which have been overcome by the development of BVR software by the UNDP electoral team in Nepal. They will initially contribute to the updating of the BVR database and will also transfer the know-how to the national graduates over the duration of their curriculum. The cost of this action presents significant legal (no proprietary rights) and financial advantages if compared to the engagement of a BVR international contractor.

SIEC/SECSIP awareness activities in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Human Resource and Development (MEHRD)

During the reporting period, the School Poster and Essay competition was officially launched at the provincial chamber in Buala, the provincial capital of Isabel province on 13 October 2017. During its visit to Isabel province, the SECSIP team also conducted the mock election exercises at Guguha CHS and Jejevo CH under the on-going school elections project. During this visit, the team also conducted activities for the pre-testing of the new posters for the voter awareness campaign.

From 30 October to 1 November 2017, the SECSIP also travelled to East Guadalcanal in the Weather coast area to visit 4 schools, such as, Avuavu Provincial Secondary, Makaruka, Kopiu and Potau Community High School promoting the Poster and Essay Competition with students and teachers and at the same time, the mock election was conducted at three (3) schools – Avuavu, Kopiu and Potau. In total is estimated that 765 participants had the opportunity of participating in these school activities focusing on voter awareness and women's political participation.

Collaboration with Media Association (MASI)

The media training activities jointly implemented by the Electoral Commission and MASI have been

very well received by the target audience and national stakeholders. In order to expand and explore other possible areas of collaboration, a meeting was held on 20 October 2017. Accordingly, during this meeting it was agreed to review and expand the areas of collaboration of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in February this year.

Graduate Programme

With a view to assist SIEC lack of human resources as well as to enhance capacity building and national sustainability, SECSIP has developed a 'graduate programme'. The purpose of the programme is to provide a temporary mechanism expected to contribute to the enhancement of capacities and sustainability of the partner organizations (namely SIEC and Political Parties Commission (PPC)). The expected outcome of this programme is to attain a group of highly qualified staff in key areas identified by the relevant national authorities who will be initially engaged, trained and mentored by SECSIP with a view to be considered for future direct engagement by the national authorities under the civil service structure. The objectives of the graduate programme are two-fold: to enhance the constraints of the current staff structure, with the particular focus of the upcoming national election; and to develop and contribute to the enhancement of technical skills in priority areas as identified by the national authorities (ICT/BVR, training, media/awareness, operations).

Accordingly, on 27 October 2017, SECSIP organized a meeting with representatives from the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission (SIEC), the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties Commission (ORPP), the Ministry of Public Service to discuss the general framework for this programme. A draft Memorandum of Understanding proposing a general framework has been circulated for discussion.

As a result, the draft MOU was submitted by SECSIP to the stakeholders for reviewing and finalizing.

II. Plans for the next period

- Supporting the update of BVR in Choiseul and Western Province Follow up on media programme.
- Media Training on 4th November 2017 in Honiara.
- Outreach on School Poster and Essay Competition – Students in four (4) secondary schools will be contacted: Henua, Vanua, New Place Community High School in Rennel Island and Angaiho Community High School in Bellona Island.

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

- The National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) commenced the temporary registration of political parties. The first political associations started to submit the required documentation in anticipation of formal registration at a later stage once voters are registered.
- The NIEC led a Voter Registration Feasibility Study, supported by the UN, which enabled discussions between key stakeholders in the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the Federal Member States (FMS), as well as civil society, to explore potential methodologies for voter registration with a view to universal elections in 2020.
- On 4 October, the UNDP/UNSOM Integrated Electoral Support Group (IESG) organized a Board Meeting together with the NIEC and the electoral law working group of the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs and Reconciliation (MoIFAR), to discuss the Joint Programme for 2018, and the electoral building blocks for support next year to the preparations of ‘one person, one vote’ elections in 2020, Somalia’s first universal elections since 1969.
- On 19 October, a technical workshop for a federal-level working group to review electoral systems was conducted by the IESG, in cooperation with the NIEC and MoIFAR, with a focus on systems best suited to post-conflict environments. More specific options are envisaged to be discussed with leadership of the Federal Government of Somalia and the Federal Member States.

I. Project activities during the reporting period

NIEC's Launch of the temporary Political Party Registration

In October, the NIEC started to register political parties. After decades of conflict resulting into a defragmented country, Somalia does not have formal nationwide political parties. In this month, already five political associations have submitted their registration documents. In line with the political party law adopted in 2016, political parties are first registered temporarily, in anticipation of official registration at a later stage once supporting voters are registered across different regions. So far, five political associations have submitted the requested documentation, which the NIEC is currently analysing for temporary registration as political parties.

Voter Registration Feasibility Study

In October, supported by the UN Joint Programme for Electoral Support, the NIEC concluded its interactions with key national and subnational stakeholders of a feasibility study examining all aspects related to the introduction of a voter registration system for Somalia in preparation of universal elections. A final report is being finalized and expected in the following reporting period. The study assessed the feasibility of different voter registration options and methodologies in the specific context of Somalia, where there has not been any nation-wide registration of people in decades. The team sought input and guidance from key government partners of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) and the Federal Member States (FMS), as well as different stakeholders including civil society. The study is to inform the NIEC of the voter registration methodology to be decided and accepted by all key stakeholders in 2018, in order for actual voter registration to commence in 2019 according to the NIEC strategic plan. Preliminary feedback from various stakeholders relate to the issues of accessibility (including security), the wider electoral legal framework, and the need of a political agreement on crucial constitutional issues. The citizenship law will be an important piece of legislation to define eligible voters. Other issues raised relate to the internally displaced persons (IDPs), nomadic population and the unknown size of the total population.

Consultations on electoral systems

On 19 October, a technical workshop for a federal-level working group to review electoral systems was conducted by the UN with a focus on systems best suited to post-conflict environments, in cooperation with the NIEC and MoIFAR, and including representatives of the President's office, the office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs. Different alternative systems based upon proportional representation were discussed. Specific options further elaborated by MoIFAR are envisaged to be discussed with leadership of the Federal Government of Somalia and the Federal Member States.

NIEC Management Implementation Workshop

From 1 to 10 October, the NIEC held a 10-days capacity development workshop on organizational management. The workshop, co-facilitated by the former Chair of the Kenyan Independent Electoral and Boundary Commission (IEBC) as part of south-south cooperation, helped the NIEC to streamline its organizational planning and strengthen its internal processes and operations in line with the implementation of its five-year Strategic Plan. The workshop was organized by the USAID-BUILD

project and was given significant input and support from the Joint Programme of Electoral Support.

II. Plans for the next period

- Finalization of the voter registration feasibility study;
- Ongoing advisory support to the electoral law working group on electoral systems;
- Finalization of the 2018 Joint Programme, including resource mobilization and budget prioritization with the NIEC;
- Preparation for the conduct by the NIEC of by-elections.

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



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, 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 ZIM-ECO project, ZEC has now started the implementation of the BVR process and a country-wide voter registration drive was launched on 14th September 2017. This launch started with the setting up of permanent registration centres at the 63 district offices of ZEC. After the delivery of all the 3,000 BVR Kits, mobile registration process was started on 10th October 2017 across the country, which will cover the entire country in 4 phases. Each phase will be for 16 days with approximately 2,500 registration centres per phase. This mobile registration drive is scheduled to end in December 2017, that will lead towards the development of a new preliminary voters roll after the voter inspection process. As Zimbabwe follows a continuous voter registration process, the registration will continue at the 63 District Centres even after December, which are permanent registration centres.

At the completion of Phase 1, a total of 1,240,000 voters have been registered country-wide. The number of expected eligible voters is 7.2 million and ZEC has set a registration target of 80% of the eligible voters. The first phase of registration had some teething operational issues, combined with a late start of the voter education process. Considering that the first phase targeted the most difficult and remote locations that are sparsely populated, registration of around 1.24 million is considered a good achievement. The Phase 2 of the registration process started on 29th October 2017 and will be completed by 13th November 2017.

Upgrade of Data Centre: After the technical assessment of the data centre, requirements were identified by ZEC and UNDP placed an order with its Long-Term Agreement provider for upgradation of the ZEC data centre. The equipment was delivered in the last week of October and a technical team has started installation and testing of equipment. The process is expected to be completed by mid-November 2017 providing the necessary capacity to process the new BVR data.

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. ZEC conducted stakeholder consultations with political parties, CSOs, FBOs and media before starting the mobile voter registration process. The stakeholders were informed about the entire process and important documentation was shared with them. After the start of the voter registration process, a meeting with Parliamentary Parties was convened on 12th October 2017 to discuss key operational issues emerging from the national voter registration drive. Based on the recommendations of the political parties, ZEC reduced the accreditation fee by 50% for political party agents and, to facilitate the requirement of proof of residence, ZEC submitted a request to Ministry of Home Affairs for making the voter registration supervisors as Commissioner of Oaths. This allows them to certify the Affidavits to be used as Proof of Residence.

Voter Education Strategy and its Implementation: With the support from UNDP, a comprehensive BVR Voter Education Campaign is being implemented by ZEC. In consultation with civil society, the voter education material was designed with the expertise of communication specialists, and translated into regional languages and braille. TV and radio advertisements have been developed and are being aired on all the stations. Road shows are targeting youth with creative infotainment that covers the messages on voter registration, these have been very successful. Targeted SMS messages are being sent to the prospective voters for each phase. A call centre has been established with toll free numbers enabling citizens to reach out to ZEC for information on the process and filing any complains. Pocket projectors are being used by the voter educators to reach out to citizens in the rural areas to undertake voter education.

Human Rights and dispute resolution: Based on the agreed areas among the UNDP and Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC), a stakeholder consultation has been planned for 14-15th November 2017 to start the process of developing an Election Strategy.

Gender Mainstreaming: UNDP is working in partnership with UN Women for implementing gender mainstreaming interventions across all the project activities. A gender baseline survey has been conducted that covered 2,000 households represented at a national level. The analysis from the questionnaires has been completed and the report is expected to be completed by end of November that covers areas of voter registration, voter education, women's political participation and media.

II. Plans for the next period

- Starting the third phase of the Registration Process;
- Upgradation of data centre;
- Continued implementation of Voter Education activities;
- Draft Election Strategy for the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC).

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.