UNDP Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide

Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide

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List of Acronyms

ACE	ACE – The Electoral Knowledge Network (formerly the Administration and Cost of Elections Project)
ARR	Assistant Resident Representative
BDP	Bureau for Development Policy
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CO	Country Office
CP	Country Programme
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CSO	civil society organization
DEX	direct execution
DGG	Democratic Governance Group
DPA	Department of Political Affairs (also abbreviated as 'UN DPA')
DRR	Deputy Resident Representative
DSS	Department of Safety and Security (also abbreviated as 'UNDSS')
EAD	Electoral Assistance Division
EC	European Commission
EDR	electoral dispute resolution
EISA	Electoral Institute of Southern Africa
EMB	electoral management body
EU	European Union
EUEOM	European Union Electoral Observation Mission
GMS	general management support
IAPSO	Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office
ICT	information and communications technology
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IFE	Instituto Federal Electoral (Mexico)
IFES	IFES – Democracy at Large (formerly the International Foundation for Election Systems)
IRI	International Republican Institute
ISS	implementation support services
JIOG	Joint International Observer Group
JTF	EC–UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance

MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDTF	multi-donor trust fund
MoU	memorandum of understanding
MYFF	Multi-Year Funding Framework
NDI	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NEX	national execution
NGO	non-governmental organization
PMU	Programme Management Unit
RR	Resident Representative
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SSA	special service agreement
ToR	terms of reference
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNV	United Nations Volunteers

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Elections are the means through which people voice their preferences and choose their representatives. Elections are a powerful tool: They can confer legitimacy on the institutions or representatives that emerge from them, or call their legitimacy into question. Elections are fundamentally political processes and are a critical element of the UN's mandate and UNDP's democratic governance work.

Elections represent a direct expression of citizens' voices and choices. As such they need not only to be transparent, fair and reflective of the will of the people in fact, but also to be popularly perceived as such. External support can be helpful in bolstering the ability of electoral institutions and processes to achieve all of these goals. As political events with high-stakes outcomes, elections are sometimes marred by political and social instability, including violence and/or intimidation. Because such conditions can threaten the integrity of an election process, it is often useful to help counter them with conflict-sensitive and cautious external support. Such support may also be beneficial in countries undergoing peaceful democratic transitions as well as those with fledgling institutions and/or a lack of adequate resources.

Electoral support comprises two major components: electoral assistance and electoral observation. UNDP does not observe elections[1]; instead, it concentrates on providing electoral assistance, often as a strategic entry point for broader democratic governance programmes. Such assistance stresses the transfer of professional skills and operational knowledge and on long-term capacity and institutional strengthening of the different stakeholders of an electoral process.

Ultimately, UNDP assistance aims to ensure that elections are fully owned nationally, that there is awareness of elections being part of a broader democratic governance framework, and that elections provide a vital means to safeguard human rights, exercise choice and express opinions. To advance these goals, UNDP helps countries acquire the necessary skills to organize elections that are both credible and enjoy the confidence of electoral stakeholders. This assistance can take myriad forms — helping electoral management bodies (EMBs) prepare to conduct a specific electoral event, supporting civic and voter education programmes, building the long-term capacity of institutions as diverse as the media or police forces, and providing capacity development support to political parties. A good deal of technical assistance is also increasingly targeted at EMBs in the periods between electoral events (or 'inter-election periods'), when the bodies can engage in a number of activities without the political and operational pressure of delivering an electoral event. These activities may include developing

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1   The UN can only observe elections if given a mandate by the Security Council or General Assembly. When this happens, the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) takes the lead on such activities on behalf of the UN system, given UNDP's usual role as provider of technical assistance. However, UNDP does at times assist in the coordination of international observers; provide logistical and operational support for the implementation of European Union Election Observation Missions (EUEOMs); and, as part of electoral assistance, often provides support to domestic observer groups that monitor registration and voting processes. See Chapter 3 for more information on observation and Annex 2 for the UN DPA Note on Coordination of International Observers.

TABLE 1: RECENT UNDP ELECTORAL EXPENDITURES

Practice Area (all amounts in US$ Thousands)	2004		2005		2006		2007	
	Programme Expenditure	Expenditure Weight	Programme Expenditure	Expenditure Weight	Programme Expenditure	Expenditure Weight	Programme Expenditure	Expenditure Weight
Not entered	402,873	14%	547,564	15%	674,199	17%	535,731	26%
Achieving MDGs and reducing poverty	562,381	19%	792,382	21%	1,003,730	25%	491,985	24%
Fostering democratic governance	1,095,412	38%	1,374,892	37%	1,474,036	37%	584,053	28%
SL2.3 Electoral systems and processes	230,360	21%	379,644	28%	200,321	14%	48,016	8%
BDP	0	0%	0	0%	0	N/A	0	N/A
BOM	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	N/A
NS_HQ	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	0%	0	0%
CO/RBA	20,726	9%	178,233	47%	170,337	85%	32,303	67%
CO/RBAP	163,409	71%	177,630	47%	2,944	1%	13,351	28%
CO/RBAS	41,295	18%	15,388	4%	13,328	7%	226	0%
CO/RBEC	2,779	1%	-1	0%	208	0%	0	0%
CO/RBLAC	2,150	1%	8,394	2%	13,505	7%	2,136	4%
Energy and environment for sustainable development	267,876	9%	335,934	9%	352,143	9%	157,997	8%
Crisis prevention and recovery	388,868	13%	399,719	11%	348,250	9%	179,598	9%
Responding to HIV/AIDS	172,371	6%	240,953	7%	181,342	4%	100,721	5%
Total	**2,889,781**		**3,691,445**		**4,033,699**		**2,050,086**	

Source: UNDP's Executive Snapshot: Expenditures by practices areas in 'electoral systems and processes' service line 2004-August 2007

multi-year strategic plans; consolidating human resources and financial strategies; and fulfilling election-related functions such as boundary delimitation, testing of technological innovations, procurement of electoral material, public outreach and voter registration.

As noted in **Table 1**, the service line for electoral systems and processes (SL2.3) forms a large part of UNDP's expenditures. In fact, it has been one of the largest service lines of UNDP as a whole in terms of development expenditures[2].

This Guide is based on Country Office (CO) demand, as recognized in the UNDP Global Practice Meeting on Electoral Systems and Processes, held in Manila, the Philippines, in November 2004[3]; in subsequent queries and discussions conducted on the Democratic Governance Practice Network; and through country-level policy and operational

advisory missions. It incorporates the collective knowledge and experience of numerous individuals with extensive experience in electoral administration and electoral assistance, and draws on the organizational knowledge within UNDP and other institutions — both within the UN system and beyond — that are involved in supporting electoral systems and processes worldwide.

The purpose of this Guide is to provide CO staff with clear direction on how to plan, formulate, monitor and implement electoral assistance using the concept of the Electoral Cycle to identify effective entry points, rather than approaching elections as a one-off event (see **Figure 1**). Electoral assistance that uses the Electoral Cycle's approach centres on longer-term support and provides a better opportunity to address in a much more sustainable manner issues of capacity development; institutional strengthening; participation of women, minorities, indigenous people and other disadvantaged groups; and the use of appropriate/cost-effective technology in electoral processes, among others.

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2 Sometimes Country Offices log their expenditures under the wrong service line (for example, 'public administration reform'). Electoral systems and processes expenditures should be carefully entered by programming units.
3 See www.undp.org/governance/eventsites/electoral-manila/.

Moreover, this strategy of approaching electoral processes as ongoing or cyclical activities helps to integrate elections into a broader democratic governance agenda. Ideally, an Electoral Cycle would start at the end of an election and run through the beginning of the next election. This strategy does not preclude short-term support specifically geared towards an electoral event. It does, however, favour short-term election-specific assistance that is connected (i) to other elements of the electoral process and (ii) to the broader democratic governance agenda in a given country.

Taking into consideration the different activities and phases of the Electoral Cycle allows for better identification of needs and advance planning, Moreover, it helps identify responses to urgent short-term requests for electoral assistance. To be effective, such responses should be developed as part of a longer-term approach addressing what can more appropriately be achieved in the short and long run through a single project or programme.

UN Electoral Mandate

The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs is the designated United Nations Focal Point for electoral assistance activities. Meanwhile, the Electoral Assistance Division of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (DPA/EAD) supports the Focal Point in ensuring consistency in the handling of requests; channeling requests to the appropriate office or programme; developing and maintaining a roster of international electoral experts; maintaining contact with regional and intergovernmental organizations; and maintaining the organization's institutional memory[4]. As per a General Assembly mandate, UNDP's involvement in electoral assistance can only occur following a (written) request from a recognized authority. Even when the request for assistance is channeled through UNDP, as it is in many cases, it must be forwarded to the Focal Point and DPA/EAD for official response. A copy of the request should also be sent to the relevant Regional Bureau and the Democratic Governance Group (DGG) of the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP). When responding to country requests, DPA/EAD is responsible for determining the political factors that affect, and political ramifications of, UN electoral assistance.

DPA/EAD consults with the UN/ UNDP Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative and the relevant divisions of DPA and UNDP Headquarters about the

FIGURE 1: THE ELECTORAL CYCLE
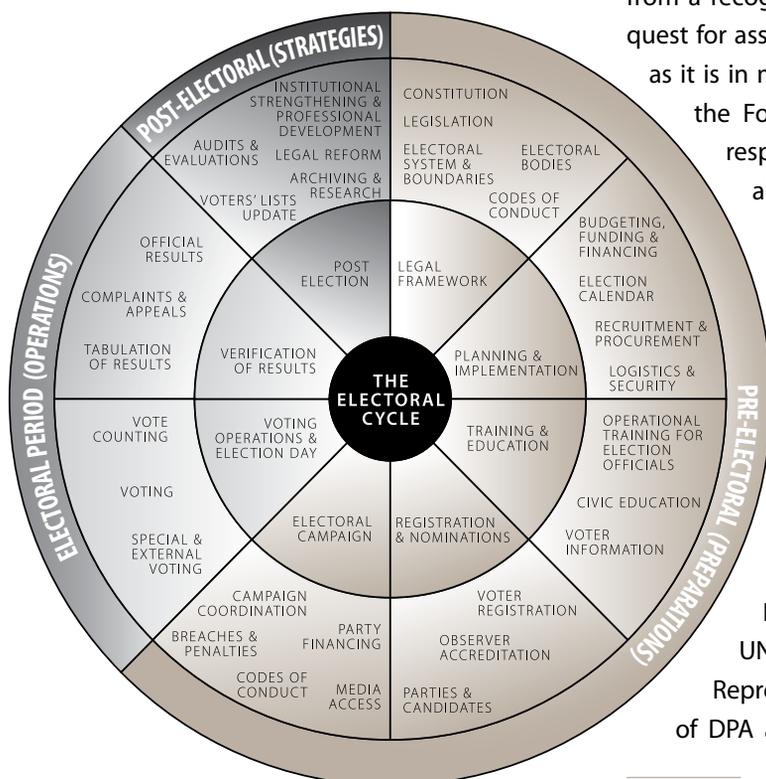
4   General Assembly Resolution 46/137 of 17 December 1991.

pre-electoral conditions in the requesting country. Based on the assessment and consultations, the Focal Point decides whether the UN should be involved in providing electoral assistance and under what conditions. These decisions take into account whether there is a clear need for UN assistance, whether it will improve electoral practices, whether political actors support international assistance, and whether UN norms will be respected through the provision of such assistance (see **Annex 1** for the Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance between the UN Department of Political Affairs and UNDP). In those cases where DPA/EAD determines that the United Nations should be involved, this decision is conveyed in writing by the Focal Point directly to the initial requestor for assistance, with a copy to the UNDP Country Office.

UNDP partners with DPA/EAD[5] and occupies a distinct role that includes the provision of technical assistance to an electoral event and to longer-term electoral systems and processes; donor coordination; institutional strengthening and capacity development of EMBs and the involvement of civil society in electoral processes[6]. In addition to DPA/EAD and UNDP, other UN actors are involved directly in electoral assistance or in activities that are relevant to electoral assistance, including the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

Objectives of UN Electoral Assistance[7]

UN electoral assistance has two primary goals:

- to assist Member States in their efforts to hold credible and legitimate elections in accordance with internationally recognized standards; and

- to contribute to building, in the recipient country, a sustainable institutional capacity to organize democratic elections that are genuine and periodic and have the full confidence of the contending parties and the electorate.

The primary entry point for UNDP to advance these goals is by either fostering the creation of a strong, professional and independent EMB (and related public institutions) or enhancing the independence and credibility of such institutions if they already exist. It is important to note that independence should not be seen in purely structural terms, but more importantly in terms of ability to undertake independent action and freedom to autonomously perform its mandate functions. As a former Chief Election Commissioner of India once noted, credible elections require several elements, one of which is "an election commission which is truly autonomous and fearless."

At the same time, it must be recognized that well-run, credible and legitimate elections — as critical as they are — can only go so far towards contributing to the democratic governance fabric of a country. There also needs to be a focus on the overall political environment within which elections are organized and conducted. Also for this reason, addressing the institutional and professional capacity of an EMB in complete isolation does not necessarily produce free and fair elections that enjoy the acceptance and trust of the various electoral stakeholders. Efforts therefore should also be made to build capacities beyond

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5   See Annex 1: Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat and UNDP: Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance, originally distributed in January 2001 (henceforth 'Note of Guidance'). Available in PDF format at www.undp.org/governance/docs/Elections_Guides_Note%20of%20guidance.pdf.
6   DP/2003/32 Multi-Year Funding Framework, UNDP Executive Board (2004–2007) and forthcoming Strategic Plan (2008-2011).

7   See Annex 1: Note of Guidance.

the EMB. This involves reaching out to and working with voters, the political parties, the media and civil society as well as other actors and institutions of democratic governance.

Major Types of Electoral Assistance

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical assistance, the type of electoral support most frequently requested from UNDP, covers a broad range of short- and long-term activities. It is important to differentiate between direct short-term election support and longer-term capacity-building projects. The former is linked to a specific electoral event and is principally aimed at assisting EMBs in the planning, preparation and conduct of an election (often with limited capacity effects). Longer-term capacity-building projects, on the other hand, are likely to look beyond the election per se to focus on development outcomes, notwithstanding possible immediate electoral support.

At the time this Guide was written, UNDP provided electoral assistance to an annual average of 40 to 50 countries as diverse as Armenia, Bhutan, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Mexico, Timor-Leste, Togo, Yemen and Zambia. Of this assistance, approximately half was focused on an election event and half on longer-term Electoral Cycle support. It is becoming more common, however, for these short- and long-term approaches to be combined into one, continuous approach that covers a time period of perhaps five years or so and provides cyclical support depending upon the needs vis-à-vis both specific electoral events and capacity development.

In cases where UN support to an electoral process is specifically mandated by the General Assembly or the Security Council, the electoral component will typically be established within the context of either a DPKO or DPA mission, supported by DPA/EAD. Recent examples include DRC, Nepal, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste. In these specific contexts, UNDP has worked in close collaboration with the DPKO or DPA Mission to ensure that UNDP assistance is designed to support the overall UN electoral mandate and that adequate measures are put in place to guarantee the sustainability of UN support. Normally, this support will be provided through the UNDP Country Office and/or UNDP election-support project upon the termination of the mandate of the peacekeeping or political mission.

Electoral assistance provided by UNDP includes, but is not limited to, support to electoral administration and planning, voter registration, voter and civic education, advice on drafting of electoral legislation/regulations, election budgeting, training of officials, compilation of results and procurement of electoral materials. It also involves coordinating and leveraging support through bilateral and multilateral donors and agencies, civil society (including international and national NGOs) and public institutions.

Capacity development of the EMB is a particularly important component of UNDP programming, and thus forms a significant part of this Guide. Mobilizing donors, partners and stakeholders — both domestic and international — is also a major part of UNDP's role in electoral support and is thus dealt with at length in the Guide.

Many electoral support programmes also include, or indeed may focus on, 'non-technical' support not only to the EMB but to other institutions with complementary responsibilities in the electoral process. This Guide addresses the importance of engaging other important stakeholders such as

the electorate, civil society, domestic observer groups, the media, political parties, and police and security forces. The development of synergies between non-governmental and governmental sectors, especially in the area of education, is also addressed in this Guide.

SUPPORT TO INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS

The UN does not observe elections unless specifically mandated by the General Assembly or Security Council. It also does not generally observe elections to which it has also provided technical assistance because to do so would constitute a conflict of interest. It may, however, choose to appoint an independent Electoral Certification Team or Electoral Expert Monitoring Team, as has been done recently in Nepal and Timor-Leste. In cases where the UN is requested to observe, monitor or certify elections, DPA/EAD would respond to the request and lead any ensuing effort. However, UNDP does at times help to coordinate and provide logistical support (normally through the establishment of a secretariat) to other international election observers (e.g., observers sponsored by Member States, resident staff of the diplomatic missions present in the country, intergovernmental and NGOs) that together may comprise a Joint International Observer Group (JIOG). Requests for coordination of international observers do not normally require a separate technical and political assessment process, particularly if one has already been completed to help prepare for UNDP technical assistance. However, Country Offices should notify DPA/EAD of the request and proposed UNDP action.

For example, prior to the 2004 elections in Indonesia, UNDP, in cooperation with the Asia Foundation, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and IFES, established an International Observers Resource Centre. That centre facilitated the work of an average of 560 international monitors fielded by different embassies and international organizations for each of the three elections. Support included boosting coordination between national and international monitors and providing briefings and information. A similar project is implemented in Nepal for the Constituent Assembly election.

In other places, UNDP has done this type of work in different ways, such as limited training and sensitization of observers drawn from the diplomatic corps (e.g., for the 2007 commune council elections in Cambodia) or technical support for the coordination of the different electoral observation missions — for example, in 2006 Ecuador, where UNDP performed this function for the Organization of American States (OAS), Participación Ciudadana and the Q'ellkaj Foundation. During the DRC electoral process in 2006, UNDP provided a financial pass-through mechanism for an elections observers' project implemented by UNOPS and directly overseen by the national elections steering committee.

At the request of the European Commission, UNDP also provides support to the implementation of some EU Election Observation Missions (EUEOMs). Such support is different in type and scope, however. It is illustrated in detail in **Annex 3**, the UN/UNDP Brussels Office Note on Providing Support to EUEOM.

Structure of Guide

The purpose of this Guide is to present information and guidance that are focused on the 'how' of providing electoral assistance. The concepts and policies (the 'what' and 'why') of electoral assistance, are outlined in great detail in the UNDP's Electoral Systems and Processes Practice Note[8]

8 See UNDP, Electoral Systems and Processes Practice Note, January 2004, www.undp.org/governance/practice-notes.htm#pn_elections.

TABLE 2: UNDP ELECTORAL PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	
Assessment	• Ongoing dialogue on electoral assistance with host country and development partners • Receipt of formal written request from a recognized authority for UN assistance • Contact DPA/EAD to assess political situation (desk review or on site) and secure UN Focal Point approval • Assessment /design mission (liaise with the EC–UNDP Task Force[9] and request ad hoc missions if EC funding is involved in the project)	• Discuss findings, recommendations of assessments and formulation missions with national partners and donors • Mobilize donors, partners and stakeholders around objectives • Discussion of strategy for support—funding arrangements, MoUs, Steering Committee membership, etc. as relevant
Design and Formulation	• Use in-house expertise or recruit specialist in project formulation to prepare or finalize project document based on assessment outcomes (unless already done so as part of assessment) • Decide on funding arrangements • Decide on management arrangements and appropriate management structures • Prepare budgets • Start formal donor coordination • Track pledges • Form steering committee	• Start draft technical specifications for electoral material • Start procurement for design phase • Recruit personnel for Programme Management Unit (PMU) and UNDP/CO (for extra workload) • Finalize project document • Do capacity needs assessment of EMB • Hold pre-Project Appraisal Committee (pre-PAC) review and refine programme design with CO programmatic staff • Hold Project Appraisal Committee (PAC) review and refine programme design with EMB, host country and donors

Implementation

Sample ongoing activities:
• Support continuous capacity-building for the electoral management body (EMB) personnel
• Support accountability and transparency of EMB (financial, administrative, operational)
• Facilitate stakeholder and donor meetings
• Conduct regular results-based monitoring and reporting
• Manage human and financial resources

Pre-Electoral	• Assist EMB in developing a strategic and operational plan, and election calendar • Review election budget • Assist EMB in developing recruitment methodology for required staff • Support training of EMB personnel • Ensure EMB infrastructure meets operational requirements (offices, warehouse, transport, communications, equipment) • Support procurement of necessary equipment and material	• Ensure timely procurement of election equipment and materials • Support electoral activities (e.g.,: review/revision of electoral framework and voter registration) • Boundary delimitation • Media and public outreach • Voter and civic education • Political party registration and candidate nomination • Determination of complaints • Recruitment and training of registration and election staff
Electoral	• Coordination of observers • Support to domestic observers • Logistics/operational support for media/results centre	• Support for results tabulation process • Support for determination of complaints • Public affairs support to EMB • Ongoing technical and capacity development support
Post-Electoral	• Public affairs support to EMB • Support for equipment and material retrieval and storage • Support for determination of complaints and appeals • Post-election tribunal processes • Support for EMB post-election evaluation process, including refining ops plan for post-election period • Capacity development support through BRIDGE[10] • Legal reform, electoral system design reform, gender and elections issues	• Training of journalists in responsible reporting of electoral issues • Institutional support to political parties as institutions of governance • Discussion of the options for appropriate use of technology in electoral processes • Ongoing stakeholder forums on conflict and election related issues

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	
Monitoring Monitoring, evaluation and audit	• Liaise constantly with Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) and Regional Centers/ Sub-regional Resource Facility (SURF) for the monitoring of the projects and request of ad hoc missions • Liaise constantly with the EC–UNDP Task Force for the monitoring of the projects and request of ad hoc missions if EC funding are involved in the project	• Plan for evaluation and audits • Prepare reports • Record learning • Identify challenges and entry points for continued and future democratic governance programming

9 See Chapter 3 for more on the Task Force.

10 BRIDGE is the most comprehensive professional development course available in election administration. It improves the skills, knowledge, and confidence both of election professionals and of key stakeholders in the electoral process, such as members of the media, political parties, and electoral observers. For more information, see www.bridge-project.org/.

and in other policy documents and publications. Links to these resources can be found in **Annex 8** of this Guide.

The ensuing chapters are arranged, as far as possible, in the same order that a UNDP Country Office staff member might typically follow when attempting to plan, formulate, implement and monitor electoral assistance. Note that all activities should ideally be implemented within the context of a larger democratic governance programme. Framing assistance in this manner is important to the success of the broader, long-term development goals of UNDP.

Table 2 summarizes the information presented in the Guide. It is important to note that the steps listed below are not in precise order and that some overlap in timing of activities or different sequencing are bound to occur. For example, UNDP typically discusses options for electoral assistance with requesting countries and donors as part of its Country Programme (CP) activities in the area of democratic governance. What should be highlighted, however, is that UNDP should discuss any potential electoral support with DPA/EAD at the earliest opportunity and that it cannot undertake a project commitment until approval for UN electoral assistance has been given from the UN Focal Point for electoral assistance.

Table 2 describes the typical UNDP electoral planning and implementation process. In cases where the support is more election-specific, the emphasis should be on operational aspects of planning and delivering the election. Where the support is more long-term, the emphasis should be on the post-election phase of support.

UN Photo/Sophia Paris

Assessment Process

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1 The Assessment Process

Electoral assistance occurs frequently as part of ongoing support to the process of democratic governance. UNDP only undertakes electoral assistance after a request has been received from a recognized authority (usually the host government and/or the EMB). Before the UN can provide electoral assistance, the organization must first assess the pre-electoral conditions in the requesting country to ensure that the UN is involved only in settings in which there is a genuine commitment to organize and conduct credible elections. DPA/EAD undertakes those assessments in close consultation with the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative. Recommendations based on the assessments are submitted to the Under Secretary-General for Political Affairs — the UN Focal Point for electoral assistance activities — who determines whether or not UN assistance is justified and appropriate.

It is the responsibility of the UNDP Country Office to help prepare and brief any DPA/EAD needs assessment mission and to arrange meetings with key stakeholders[11]. Typically, needs assessment missions produce the following outputs:

- an assessment of the existing conditions for conducting elections in the country, including the legal, political, human rights and institutional contexts; and

- an assessment of the pre-election technical, operational and human resources needs. This assessment should include recommendations for practical and cost-effective means of offering targeted assistance.

The political/electoral assessment mission fielded by DPA/EAD may be accompanied by a UNDP representative who would be responsible for formu-

lating an electoral support programme based on the findings and recommendations of the political and technical assessment team. The collaboration between DPA/EAD and UNDP in these circumstances, and the ability of the project designer to hear first-hand the concerns of all stakeholders, can expedite the project design stage and help to ensure that the content and scope of the eventual programme reflects as thoroughly and clearly as possible the political and technical priorities as identified by the needs assessment.

If a needs assessment mission is done by DPA/EAD alone, the composition of the team is normally one DPA/EAD staff member (a political/electoral affairs officer) teamed with one expert consultant; a representative from DPA's regional division may also participate depending on the context. If UNDP joins the mission as a joint needs assessment/project formulation exercise, the composition may be one or two DPA/EAD representatives

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11 Since electoral assistance projects are often accompanied by a significant increase of non-core resources to be managed, and since most electoral projects are direct execution or implementation, UNDP should also consider conducting an internal implementation capacity assessment that addresses its ability to mobilize, manage and report on resources.

(either staff or an expert consultant) and one or two UNDP representatives. The UNDP representatives could include staff from the DGG, the UN/UNDP Office in Brussels, the Regional Centres, the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (if there is a conflict prevention element), or a consultant.

If a joint mission is undertaken, it may be necessary to stress with national counterparts the different purposes of such a mission. For example, the DPA/EAD-led needs assessment process must retain its independence and freedom to draw conclusions that may recommend no UN involvement in the electoral process. Misunderstandings can be more easily avoided by clearly explaining to stakeholders the approval process and that a UNDP project can only proceed after Focal Point approval.

DPA/EAD needs assessment missions are normally funded by DPA through a trust fund established in part for that specific purpose, unless alternative arrangements are made with UNDP. However, if UNDP is participating in the mission for the project formulation component, the Country Office may need to pay the travel costs and/or daily rate of an expert from the Regional Centre, Bureau for Development Policy, UN/UNDP Office in Brussels, independent consultant, or a combination thereof.

It is important to strategically identify the persons/institutions with which the assessment mission will meet. Efforts should be made to ensure that it is a representative sample of actors and stakeholders, and, true to UNDP's mandate for inclusiveness, represents especially marginalized groups. It is also important to leave sufficient room in the mission's schedule to incorporate spontaneous/additional appointments.

In some cases, such an assessment can be done by desk review and submitted to the UN Focal Point for approval[12]. That process can be followed, for example, when significant and updated analytical information already exists; the electoral environment is considered fairly 'routine' based on a series of well-run and credible electoral events and demonstrated capacity of the EMB; or an assessment was recently done (for a national election, for example, and now UNDP is proposing to support local elections one year later).

Assessment Considerations

The official needs assessment process and mission conducted by DPA/EAD involves a review of some or all of the following electoral considerations. This is a non-exhaustive list and specific considerations depend on the country and its election-context.

GENERAL

- What are the key issues that may affect the success of the election and/or the performance of the electoral processes and institutions, and what type and length of support is required?

- What have been the recommendations of previous domestic and international observer missions? To what extent, if any, has there been a response to address such recommendations?

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Is the electoral framework consistent with provisions provided for in the constitution and other fundamental texts?

- What is the operational independence (mandate, powers, budget, appointment and dismissal) and perceived credibility of the body tasked with administering elections (be it gov-

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12 When there is a reasonable possibility that the European Commission will contribute to a UNDP-managed basket fund for the delivery of electoral assistance, and where conditions permit, project formulation missions should be carried out jointly following a modality agreed upon in the EC–UNDP Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Electoral Assistance Programmes and Projects (outlined in Annex 4). This allows for the development of a common understanding of the partner country's needs and for the Country Office and EC delegation to negotiate from the outset the conditions for EC participation in the pooled project.

- What is the management structure of the EMB? Is there a clear division of powers between policy makers (i.e. the commission) and implementers (i.e. the secretariat) of the EMB? To what extent are members of the electoral commission actively engaged in management versus policy development and oversight? Is their mandate long enough? Is the EMB represented in regional areas or does it rely on local government networks to act as its agents? How are appointments to the EMB made and does the appointments process have any bearing on perceptions of independence?

- Does the EMB receive an adequate budget in a timely manner from the government?

- Does the EMB have adequate infrastructure, means and facilities to conduct its work (offices, warehouse(s), transport, communications, etc.)?

- Are staff members of the EMB permanent civil servants? Is the EMB committed to the professionalization of its staff? Are there any capacity development initiatives already in place?

- Does the EMB have an institutionalized system to retain its historical memory, election materials, know how and lessons learned so that they could be re-used and applied to future elections?

- Does the EMB have the necessary human resources and operational structures (administrative, financial, technical) to manage the electoral process?

VOTER REGISTRATION

- What is the voter registration system in the country?

- Is there a voters' register and if so, is it regularly updated? Is a new voters' register required? If so, why (e.g., an electronic, centralized register to replace a manually compiled one)? How secure, up-to-date and inclusive is the data on the voters' register? Is there adequate infrastructure in place to support a new voter registration initiative?

- Does reliable census data exist on which voter registration activities are based? How does voter registration relate to the number of persons eligible to vote?

- If relevant, has boundary delimitation been carried out at appropriate intervals? What criteria have been used to determine the boundaries of electoral districts? Has it been a transparent and consultative process?

- Of those registered to vote, what are the proportions of men to women? Is it possible to determine whether young people are registering as they qualify? If not, why? Are the numbers of persons registering in remote regions the same proportionately as those registering in larger cities and towns?

- What are the criteria for voter registration? What special issues need to be addressed (e.g., citizenship, ethnicity, internally displaced people, refugees, out of country registration)?

- Was enough time allocated for carrying out the necessary data gathering and processing?

VOTING OPERATIONS AND COMPILATION OF RESULTS

- How effective is logistics management for the election process at the various levels, the timely and accurate dissemination of materials, and the level of knowledge and training of polling officials? (Such questions can help determine what areas in the EMB may require input and support.)

- Is the process of voting manual or electronic? Where are the votes counted (at polling station level or regionally)? Are the counting and results transmission processes transparent? Do political parties receive a copy of the preliminary vote count?

- What are the impediments, if any, to rapid collation and announcement of results? Is there a centralized process of results announcement and ready access to information by media?

- Is there a well-trained, easily mobilized domestic observation force? Do the domestic observer groups collaborate effectively (if at all)?

CIVIL SOCIETY

- Are there enduring civil society structures and umbrella bodies? How well represented is civil society in non-urban centres? Has a mapping exercise been done to identify the demographic groups served by and issues addressed by civil society? What are the strengths and weaknesses of civil society? To what extent is civil society politicized and/or partisan?

- To what extent is the non-governmental organization (NGO) sector controlled by government regulation? Is the impact of civil society at all measurable? How engaged is civil society in civic and voter education, and domestic observation?

POLITICAL PARTIES

- Is the political system party-based? Which are the main political parties and what is the balance of parties in the parliament? Has the proportion of opposition parties/members risen or fallen in recent elections? How many parties do not have representation in the parliament? If not represented, why?

- Are parties based around leaders or ethnic/regional groupings, or are parties differentiated in terms of ideology, policy and platform? What is the proportion of 'briefcase' parties to parties that represent a significant sector of society? How many parties have nationwide representation and how many are regionally based?

- Do parties receive funding from government? Do parties receive funding from international

bodies? What are the requirements for the reporting of funding and expenditure by the parties?

- Is there a code of conduct for political parties? Are party nomination processes transparent or subject to any scrutiny?

- Does the electoral law allow independent candidates? Are there some kinds of elections (e.g., local elections) that political parties are not allowed to contest?

MEDIA

- What is the balance between state-owned versus independent media? What proportion of media is owned by political parties or politicians?

- Have there been previous media monitoring exercises in terms of qualitative and quantitative election coverage? What is the general standard of journalism training and practice, and of investigative, independent, fair, accurate, impartial and balanced reporting?

- Is equitable or equal access to the media provided to all parties? Is there a code of conduct for media governing the election period?

- Does the NGO sector utilize media as a tool of education? To what extent do media owners and editors assume some responsibility for voter education?

SECURITY

- Have previous elections been marred by violence? If so, has this been generalized and widespread or focused in particular areas? Is election-related violence a top-down or grassroots-up phenomenon? Is enforcement of election and campaign laws applied equally to government and opposition parties?

- What has been the role of police in controlling or indirectly encouraging election-related violence? How effective is the relationship and the

coordination between the EMB and the police? Are police officers and other law enforcement authorities aware of their specific election-related responsibilities?

- What is the role, if any, of private security forces, however informal?

COORDINATION

- Who are the key stakeholders (domestic and international), and what is required to optimize their participation?

- What is the view of donors towards (i) a common 'basket' approach to election funding; (ii) their commitment to participate in an electoral support project; (iii) programming priorities; and (iv) funding modalities?

- In light of the expressed priorities, how many and what kind of specialized staff might be needed to achieve a successful project?

- In light of probable donor commitments, what are the most appropriate management structures for the project? Who might take the role of lead donor/organization?

While the needs assessment process should identify the range and scale of needs and possible areas of intervention, the eventual UNDP project document is required to provide measurable **indicators** of success. Such indicators will be scrutinized in any eventual evaluation, particularly those involving donors to the project, and will be used to judge the success of the project. Therefore it is important to carefully craft indicators that demonstrate progress but that are also measurable and for which data sources exist. For some donors as well, provision of baseline data, targets and indicators in acceptable formats is a precondition of the release of funding tranches and is required within specific timeframes of the signing of financial agreements.

Indicators of success typically comprise a blend of

the quantitative (e.g., numbers of persons registered to vote compared with numbers eligible to register, numbers of publications disseminated, attendees at events, number of informal or incorrect votes compared with previous election, etc.) and qualitative (which reflect changes of perception, understanding, and attitude or levels of public confidence in the electoral process).

While these issues are addressed later in the Guide under project development, it is useful to note at this early stage that mitigating against risk[13] means being alert to the criteria under which a project will be evaluated and ensuring that activities are geared towards the attainment of pre-determined objectives. Depending upon the original goals of the electoral assistance, an evaluation may look at the following elements:

- Completeness of the design and planning processes.

- Efficiency of the project vis-à-vis the quality of the results achieved. This can be determined by evaluating the appropriateness of management structures and the fluidity with which management responsibilities were conducted both at the Programme Management Unit (PMU) and UNDP levels.

- Effectiveness of project components.

- Impact of the project on the wider environment and its contribution to wider democratic governance objectives, such as inclusive participation and acceptance of the democratic process.

- Sustainability of the results achieved with particular reference to the development of national institutional capacity; to socio-cultural, legal, economical and financial factors; to gender-related issues; and to geographical factors vis-à-vis the appropriateness of technology

13 It is obligatory to have a risk log in accordance with the User Guide. The assessment mission can be utilized to identify risks and mitigating measures. Absence of a risk log, particularly if in a direct execution (DEX) project, reflects badly on the UNDP Country Office when the (DEX) audit is being done.

used. In this context, the following should be examined: evidence of the increased institutional capacity of the EMB to function effectively without continuing technical assistance; evidence of developed long-term partnerships with civil society; and evidence that ICT and technological inputs are safeguarded by adequately trained personnel, back-up systems and legal ownership.

- Appropriateness of the project in terms of setting objectives in line with the overall democratic development goal of the recipient country.

Stakeholders

Because of their ongoing or future interest in the electoral process, a number of different stakeholders need to be consulted during the course of any needs assessment. Who should be involved in discussions depends to a large extent on the current specific situation of the country and the judgment of DPA/EAD in close consultation with the UNDP Country Office. Among the most relevant actors typically are:

- High-level staff from the EMB (chairperson/commissioner level as well as secretariat/management level)

- Government representatives including:
  - Parliamentarians (from both ruling and opposition parties); committees that may be relevant to elections
  - Relevant ministers, such as those from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior/Internal Affairs/Planning (boundary delimitation), and Ministry of Finance (budgetary issues)
  - Judiciary, especially those from the Supreme/Constitutional Court (electoral dispute resolution)
  - Attorney General (constitutional and legislative environment); law reform commission

- Other relevant departments — either governmental or independent — e.g., registrar of persons (citizen ID); census department; anti-corruption commission; national human rights commission; education agencies (in relation to civic education curriculum development and possible future collaboration)

- Political parties — government and opposition, including those not represented in parliament

- Media
  - Editors
  - Media owners
  - Media council/journalists' union
  - Key media houses (e.g., principal independent print/electronic)

- Civil society
  - NGO umbrella organizations, especially those with regionally based membership
  - Faith-based organizations
  - Women's organizations
  - Disabled people's organizations
  - Civil society organizations engaged in civic education or who have had a relationship with the EMB in voter education
  - Domestic observation groups

- Police/security forces

- International community, including bilateral and multilateral organizations

- Other national and international organizations with electoral interests and probable present or future relationships with stakeholders in the broader electoral timeframe (see **Annex 8** on electoral assistance actors)

- Academics or prominent commentators on the current political scene

Capacity Assessment

As shown in **Table 3**, the capacity assessment methodology presented here takes into account

the broader context of policies and processes that affect electoral processes (macro level), as well as the institutions and individuals (institutional and individual levels) that function within this context. The framework in **Table 3** is adapted from UNDP's 'Capacity Assessment and Development in a Systems and Strategic Management Context'[14].

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is undertaken to predict possible problems, as well as identify their likely sources, so as to prevent such problems from arising in the first place. In the context of elections, with always evolving needs, the risks threatening the success of the electoral process and the electoral assistance efforts, as well as the

14 See UNDP, Capacity Assessment and Development in a Systems and Strategic Management Context, Technical Advisory Paper, No. 3, BDP (January 1998). A more detailed use of this methodology is explained in Chapter 3, under Capacity Needs Assessment for the Electoral Management Body.

risks brought about by electoral assistance activities, all need to be considered. These risks need to be identified and analyzed, and then quantified and prioritized. For any electoral assistance project, UNDP Programme Managers need to prepare a risk log, upload this into ATLAS and periodically update the log.

Risks related to the success of the electoral process often can be mitigated through programmed activities such as legal reform, civic education, media campaigns advocating non-violence, journalist training programmes, and conflict mediation among political parties. At the same time, it is important to be realistic about risks and their sources. In some cases risks arise because there are players who may not want the process to work, including those who are benefiting from the status quo. These players often are willing to

TABLE 3: CAPACITY ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

THE LEVEL	WHAT NEEDS TO BE ASSESSED
Macro level Global referent: democratization and degree to which the system is representative	Political (conducive environment) factors, security, law and order, civil society's perception of the process and how civil society is popularly perceived, civic knowledge and interest, public trust in the democratic process National authorities' attitudes towards democratization and international standard electoral processes, government commitment to reform, public sector support, electoral laws and legal frameworks, electoral systems and processes, legislature, judiciary International support and assistance, including development partners' readiness to support the electoral agenda Capacity of EMB to accept international or donor funds without compromising core funding from government sources Physical environment and logistical challenges
Institutional Level Sectoral referent: electoral apparatus improvement/reform	Electoral management bodies Judiciary/Supreme Court (electoral dispute resolution) Legislatures (electoral laws) Political parties Media Civil society Resources (EMB budget) Technological factors Strength of public institutions
Individual Level	Electorate Party officials and contestants (if individual candidates) EMB staff Staff of public institutions

undermine the electoral process. In such cases, potential remedies go beyond the remit of the technical assistance project per se and may take the form of advocacy by the Resident Coordinator for adherence to international standards, or political pressure at the international level.

At the macro level, risks may include:

- **Changes to the existing political culture, power structures or legal framework.** For example, new appointments to the EMB can have an impact on relationships with government and stakeholders and on the culture of transparency and on their professional needs. The reduction of institutional memory of electoral processes may affect the speed of implementation of the electoral calendar. Legislative amendments can have a huge impact on the timeline and rules of the game. New census data and new boundary delimitation can create tensions between parties, and a push to register previously unregistered voters may tilt delicate power balances.

- **Government or political forces' resistance to or support for electoral reform processes that could have an impact, positive or negative, on the credibility and acceptability of the outcome.** Constant dialogue and ongoing evaluation of the political environment is critical to mitigate potential negative fallout from reform processes.

- **Internal conflict, violence and intimidation.** Violence and conflict can deter people from participating in the process; prevent delivery of election materials; disrupt political campaigns; delay civic and voter education initiatives; prevent attendance at polling stations; lead to allegations of partisanship of security forces; and affect the acceptability of the outcome of the poll. Where violence is an issue, it should be addressed initially by researching its causes and then designing targeted initiatives such as police training, security dialogues, voter and civic education, conflict resolution, communications hubs, local peace committees, facilitated dialogue between political parties and media, agreement on codes of conduct, and other means of conflict mitigation.

- **Physical environment and conditions.** Difficulties caused by the physical environment or climate conditions, such as a severe rainy season, may delay the delivery of election materials, prevent people from reaching polling places or hinder the rapid transmission of results after the vote. Such occurrences can give rise to suspicion that results are being manipulated, which may therefore cast doubt on the confidence of the process and lead to violence. Elections should be scheduled in the most advantageous season for participation.

- **Procurement of election materials.** Cumbersome or poorly designed tendering processes are particularly vulnerable to manipulation. They may also delay implementation and procurement and increase costs. UNDP's Office of Procurement Support can assist with transparent tendering processes when given sufficient lead time. UNDP Programme Managers should bear in mind that for all new projects, an advance procurement plan is necessary. Discussing this plan timely with relevant involved actors is crucial for timely procurement. Where the project calls for large procurement and the UNDP Country Office does not have adequate capacity, procurement training should be provided to staff.

- **Appropriate technology.** If appropriate, the introduction of new technology can make electoral processes more efficient. However, the introduction of new technology shortly before the elections can also raise suspicions and create a lack of confidence, or may be impractical

for various reasons. Several issues need to be taken into consideration when contemplating technological upgrades. They include weighing actual vs. perceived benefits of introducing new technology, legal implications, the perceptions of voters and other stakeholders, feasibility, appropriateness, implementation time frame, cost effectiveness, maintenance, sustainability, balance between security and transparency, and integration with existing skills, electoral practice and procedures. Some of the strategies to use technology without jeopardizing the electoral process include involving stakeholders, surveying the political environment, surveying cultural issues, carrying out feasibility studies, presenting the benefits clearly, and being transparent about procurement procedures, time of deliveries, costs and risks. It may also be useful to carry out pilot and evaluation tests that can be used also as civic education, public outreach and consensus-building measures.

- **Difficulties created by lack of funding.** Delays in the receipt of funding from government or donors may inhibit the EMB's ability to carry out voter registration and education, procure materials on time, and pay ad hoc staff. All of these negative developments can reduce confidence in the process. Donors need to be aware of such conditions so they can respond in an adequate manner. Yet on the other hand, funding shortfalls or slow receipt of donor funds may inhibit the capacity of the programme to deliver its components. Efficient transmission and tracking of funds from donors to UNDP creates confidence in the management process and in the efficiency of the assistance provided.

Furthermore, UNDP should consult with other UN departments, notably the Department of Safety and Security (DSS), in regards to security concerns, and DPA/EAD, in regards to issues related to impartiality and credibility. Based at least partly on such consultations, UNDP can therefore determine the possibility and likelihood of the organization's actions in the election field having the following impacts:

- **Endangering staff, officials, observers and members of the population in general.** In post-conflict countries security has been a major issue and a significant cost. In extreme circumstances private security firms can be engaged. Even in more stable environments security risks are tangible. The UNDP Field Security Officer should always be involved closely with the electoral initiatives; appropriate travel clearances, security-in-the field training and other interventions must be in place. The security status of contracted project staff (not only international consultants but also local project staff or seconded government staff) and whether or not they fall under the UN immunities and privileges and are required to participate in, for example, security drills and warden systems, must be known to all interested parties.

- **Jeopardizing UNDP/UN impartiality or credibility.** The UN's impartiality is one of its greatest assets. At the same time, the UN is a value-based organization informed by the UN Declaration of Human Rights, Article 21 of which states that 'the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedure'. In some contexts, UNDP may provide a more useful service to programme countries and national stakeholders by not providing electoral assistance and instead retaining its good offices to mediate or resolve conflicts that ensue from the electoral process.

- **Affecting existing power structures within**

BOX 1: DRC AND TECHNOLOGY

In 2005, the UNDP project in support of the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) worked with the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office (IAPSO)[*], the Congolese Independent Electoral Commission, and the Electoral Assistance Division of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to prepare the technical specifications and procure up to 10,000 biometric voter registration kits. The advance specifications and assumptions were extensive. These kits were to be used to register an eligible voting population estimated at, in the absence of recent reliable census data, between 22 million and 30 million people. After registration, each voter was to receive a voter card with digital picture, fingerprint and other security features. The kit itself was to contain a laptop computer, a pre-installed specific software, a digital camera or a Webcam, a fingerprint scanner, a portable colour printer, and a power generator. Besides providing the kits themselves, the successful supplier was to provide cascade training as well as in-country technical support.

IAPSO pre-qualified 12 specialized companies that expressed interest and were deemed both technically and financially capable. In the end, IAPSO received five bids, three of which complied with the bid's terms of reference.

After further technical and financial evaluation, all three companies were asked to attend a validation test session in Kinshasa. The protocol of this test was jointly prepared by the Congolese Independent Electoral Commission, IAPSO, UNDP and MONUC. During this test, the kits of all three pre-selected companies were thoroughly tested in both urban and rural areas in a nationally publicized two-day mock voter registration exercise. This was done to ensure that the kits matched the required technical specifications and could perform successfully.

More specifically, the exercise both allowed comparison of the systems' relative function in the environment in which they would be used and allayed public anxiety about introducing new technology. Also, this validation test/mock voter registration exercise offered proof to all the stakeholders that the national and international actors involved in the implementation of the electoral process were actively engaged toward the organization of the elections. In addition, holding onsite tests that stakeholders were able to witness was an important step in building public confidence in the electoral process. Among others, the onsite tests helped boost confidence that the procurement process was being carried out in a transparent manner that followed international procurement best practices.

*   It should be pointed out that IAPSO's functions with respect to election-related procurement are now carried out by UNDP's Procurement Support Office.

the country. All democratic governance assistance is, by its nature, political — elections included. This does not mean that UNDP should avoid democratic governance work under a guise of impartiality, but rather that it needs to acknowledge and be aware that everything from public administration reform to political party support is political and affects the power balance and dynamic in a country. For example, UNDP needs to avoid acting or being seen to act in a partisan manner that favours certain political parties, interests or candidates over others. It is important that under no circumstances should UNDP actually have a direct impact on the results of the elections or be perceived as having done so. Those vital objectives can best be achieved by emphasizing that UNDP support is solely provided to help improve legal, technical and operational aspects of the process and produce results that are based on the free and true expression of the will of people.

- **Influencing transparency.** Unfounded criticism can be headed off by ensuring transpar-

ency of processes, creating clear accountability structures, establishing effective communications capacity and building allegiances and loyalties among project participants.

Note that risk assessment processes must consider the entire Electoral Cycle. That being said, some risks may need to be addressed in the short term, while others may need longer-term solutions. Projects should focus on producing a conducive, pluralistic environment to deepen democratic governance, going beyond immediate technical support to the EMB and looking at the overall political environment. This means that pre- and post-election conflict mediation mechanisms may require special emphasis.

Internal UNDP Implementation Capacity Assessment

Electoral support projects often entail significant workload increases both in programmatic and operational terms. This holds especially true in post-conflict settings where national EMBs may be newly constituted, understaffed and/or undercapacited.

In such settings, UNDP often plays the role of a funds manager for resources contributed by the international community. In addition, UNDP might also be asked to provide a 'corp' of temporary (national and international) elections support staff recruited and funded through UNDP, and to carry out the procurement of all major elections equipment.

In the DRC 2005/6 electoral process, UNDP, in partnership with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and other donors contributing to the electoral support 'basket fund', provided critical technical, financial and material support to the national EMB. Such support enabled the registration of 25.7 million voters throughout the country and the organization and holding of the constitutional referendum, as well as the presidential and national assembly elections — processes that, all told, involved the training of about 300,000 electoral agents and the establishment of 50,000 voting stations. In addition, joint donor projects managed by UNDP allowed equipping and training both the National Congolese Police, to ensure the security of the electoral process, and key judicial bodies (including the Supreme Court of Justice and courts of appeal in the provinces).

Achieving all of these goals necessitated a programme resources increase from US$66 million in 2004 to over US$220 million in 2005 and US$272 million in 2006. During this period, UNDP issued over 1,220 national and international contracts and carried out procurement activities totaling approximately US$200 million.

In preparing for such massive increases in resources and activities, UNDP Country Offices should consider an internal capacity assessment that:

• evaluates existing structures, procedures and capacities;

• analyzes expected workload; and

• identifies areas where additional capacities need to be established.

Since this process might lead to comprehensive changes in the structure and capacity of the Country Office, it is essential to start preparing the office as early as possible. For the design and management of the change process, COs might consider involving UNDP's Management Consulting Team. In some cases, donors have also been willing to contribute resources to UNDP in order to 'boost' CO capacities (as in Afghanistan and DRC).

ernmental, semi-governmental, independent electoral commission, etc.)?

- What is the electoral system (method by which votes cast are translated into seats/offices won) used for the various levels of elections? Does this represent a change from previous elections?

- Is there an adequate legal framework for the resolution of election disputes? How enforced/ enforceable are sanctions for electoral offences (if any)?

- What pressure, if any, exists for reform to the constitution or electoral legislation?

  - Is the political environment conducive to electoral reform (constitutional, legislative, structural)?
  - What is the level of commitment to political or electoral reform? (Such a determination is best made by engaging in dialogue with public officials.)
  - What specific political and/or electoral law reforms might improve the electoral environment?
  - To what extent might the political and institutional infrastructure support reforms to electoral processes, and what is required to internalize and sustain any reforms made?

- To what extent are the activities of political parties subject to regulation through registration, monitoring of party finances and so on? Who is responsible for the oversight of political parties?

PARTICIPATION BY POLITICALLY DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

- How engaged and empowered are women in the political/electoral process? What is the proportion of women in parliament and in local elected government? Are women candidates actively sought out and supported by parties?

Is the engagement of women in politics based on issues and performance?

- What are the key constraints on the political participation of minorities, indigenous and tribal peoples, women, young people, illiterate or poorly educated people, those in non-urban or remote communities and indigenous cultures, and what is required to enable their participation?

- What specific policies or electoral reforms might improve the participation of women and minorities? Are there quotas related to gender or other factors?

- Are there special measures in place to ease the participation of physically handicapped voters, such as special polling sites, home-based or alternative voting methods, support from the EMB, etc.?

ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BODIES

- Does the EMB have the confidence of government and citizens? What factors impact on the standing of the EMB? Has there been any history of interference by the government in the affairs of the EMB? Is the EMB perceived to be independent, impartial, accountable and efficient? Is the EMB perceived as taking decisions and operating transparently and in consultation with all electoral stakeholders?

- Is the EMB a permanent body? Are there other state bodies that have a role in the electoral preparations and process, such as the Supreme Court, electoral tribunals, others?

- Does the EMB have effective, ongoing relationships with political parties, civil society, the media, relevant government ministries, donors and other key stakeholders?

- Does the EMB have a policy of ensuring accessibility to the electoral process by people with physical disabilities?

UN Photo/P S Sudhakaran

Designing and Planning
Electoral Assistance

2 Designing and Planning Electoral Assistance

Capacity development is essential to the long-term success and credibility of electoral institutions and processes. Credible elections are more likely to occur if the authority charged with organizing elections is independent in its actions and professional, with adequate resources and the capability to carry out civic education, voter registration and other of its mandated functions between elections. Among the numerous activities that can be properly addressed in the period between elections are post-election reviews, legal and technical reforms, planning, staff development and reorganization, system testing, and improving election procedures.

Given the unique context in which every electoral assistance effort takes place, there is no single electoral actor or entry point that the UN endorses per se. A number of different factors, including the character of and relationship between existing institutions, the legal framework in place, the existing professional capacities, and the level of political security, will largely determine how electoral assistance is conceived and implemented. Electoral planning, and accordingly electoral assistance, is in a constant state of motion that addresses each and every stage of the Electoral Cycle. (As depicted in **Figure 2**, the Electoral Cycle contains eight key segments.)
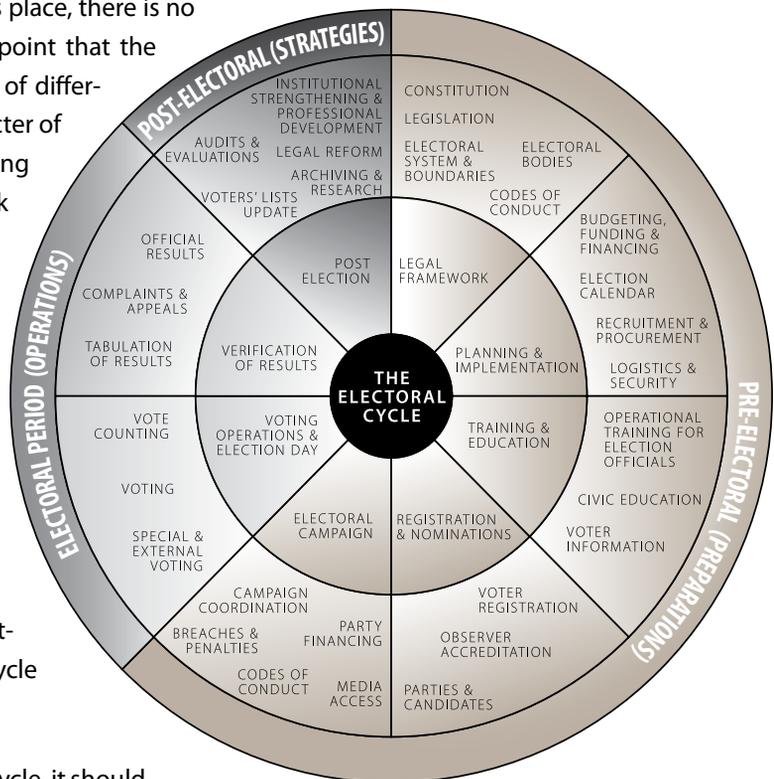
When examining the Electoral Cycle, it should be noted that its approach is informed primar-

FIGURE 2: THE ELECTORAL CYCLE

ily by electoral administration and development partner viewpoints. In other words, political parties, civil society organizations and/or parliaments may organize themselves differently than in the eight slices of the pie listed above. (For example, political parties would be involved in electoral law reform, civil society organizations would be involved in voting operations as domestic observers, and so forth.) Therefore, while the Electoral Cycle may not be cast in stone and may not be equally relevant to all electoral stakeholders, it provides a reference point for moving away from considering elections as events, towards a more sustainable notion of elections as cyclical processes that are ongoing, dynamic and embedded in a broader democratic governance context.

Main Entry Points for UNDP Electoral Assistance[15]

UNDP provides electoral assistance mainly in the following 11 areas:

- **Electoral reform.** This kind of assistance involves the reform of laws, systems or political institutions to make them more broad-based, inclusive and representative.

- **Electoral administration.** Assistance in this sphere takes the form of strengthening institutions, offering professional development programmes to electoral administrators, building greater public information and outreach capacity, and helping countries with election-related resource management. It can also be more election-focused by taking the form of helping EMBs in planning, preparing and conducting elections and referenda.

- **Building sustainable electoral processes.** This often involves support for cost-effective yet credible elections, and can take many forms.

Typically assistance focuses on fostering countries' election planning, monitoring and budgeting capacity. It can also include support for permanent voter registers that are updated periodically, or continuous voter registration processes and the creation or updating of a civil registry.

- **Civic and voter education.** Activities in this area aim to expand democratic participation, particularly among women and other underrepresented segments of society. UNDP's efforts include awareness-raising to highlight the rights and responsibilities of citizens in an electoral process and, more broadly, in a functioning democratic society. Voter education may be embraced within support to the EMB; be done independently through CSOs; or be a mix of both.

- **Mobilization and coordination of resources for electoral support.** Because of the sensitivity and importance of electoral reforms and processes, they can attract wide international interest. UNDP can serve as a conduit for financial contributions, overall coordination and participation by third parties.

- **Helping ensure security during the electoral process.** Electoral periods are often characterized by societal conflicts. While UNDP should make every effort to minimize its involvement in these conflicts, it might consider technical support for institutions responsible for the securitization of polling stations. Such institutions might include national and local police.

- **Strengthening political parties.** UNDP's work with parties is varied and depends on the context. Examples include working with parties to ensure that they are involved in voter registration and education efforts, to improve party campaign and media strategies, to strengthen party caucuses within legislatures and to help

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15 Electoral Systems and Processes Practice Note, January 2004, UNDP/BDP/DGG.

make parties accountable for their commitments to address gender imbalances at the leadership level. This work is closely linked with institutional development because more effective, democratic and transparent parliamentary party caucuses allow legislatures to work more effectively. Support must be provided transparently and should bear in mind the responsibility of the UN to provide all support in an impartial manner. Support should also focus on parties' responsibilities to 'lose gracefully' and on the important and integral role played by the opposition not only in Parliament, but in the enhancement of the democratic process overall.

- **Reduction of election-related violence and electoral dispute resolution.** Electoral disputes comprise first and foremost legal proceedings established to redress electoral complaints and appeals. The legal and institutional frameworks for dealing with electoral disputes can be the subject of electoral assistance activities with a view to strengthening their transparency, fairness and credibility, while increasing the confidence of stakeholders. In addition, UNDP has increasingly engaged in working on alternative forms of conflict prevention and conflict resolution applied to the electoral process. This work is recent, and not one in which UNDP has heretofore played a major role, apart for the good offices of the Resident Coordinator in some countries. UNDP's impartiality, however, is one the main potential advantages of its involvement in this area. In some places this has involved working with the EMB to bring; in others it has focused on local-level non-governmental processes of conflict prevention around the electoral process. And in still other places, UNDP has technically prepared the body in charge of election dispute settlement (such as the Supreme Court and courts of

appeal) while other organizations carried out ongoing legal assistance during the electoral process.

- **Media and elections.** Activities in this area might include supporting initiatives that provide access to the media to different political parties; training the media to provide more professional, balanced and comprehensive coverage of elections; strengthening the communication links between EMBs and the media; and helping improve qualitative and quantitative monitoring of media coverage, including compliance with relevant codes of conduct and regulations regarding access to media by political parties.

- **Support to international and domestic observers.** As noted previously, UNDP involvement in international observation is restricted to providing a facility for coordination to observers when requested and relevant. Support to domestic monitoring efforts or strengthening systems for improved domestic observation, however, is often included in larger projects of support that include civil society and political party elements.

- **Inclusive participation.** This area of support focuses on enhancing the participation of traditionally underrepresented or under-participating groups in political and electoral processes, including women, minorities, indigenous people, the physically disabled and the young. With particular respect to gender and elections, UNDP in partnership with UNIFEM works to build awareness and capacities for women to play a greater role in political life as candidates for office and political leaders, as voters and as electoral administrators.

Election Contexts

Electoral assistance takes place in a variety of different circumstances The scope of technical and financial assistance depends on the **type** of election (e.g., national or sub-national, presidential, parliamentary or local); the **environment** in which the election takes place (e.g., post-conflict, transition, third or fourth post-transition/post-independence election); and other prevailing **conditions** (size of electorate, health of the national economy and national funding available for elections, state of voter register and electoral institutions, physical constraints, etc.). The scope and effectiveness of the assistance also depends on the extent to which the political actors in the country are supportive of democratic processes per se — so that, for example, they are willing to see a good process as ultimately more important than achieving an outcome that favours them.

Table 4 illustrates how an electoral assistance project might segue from certain activities into others, and sustain some areas, as a country moves from a transitional environment to a more 'stable' or developing environment.

ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE IN POST-CONFLICT SETTINGS

Hastily planned, poorly designed elections in post-conflict or newly created states may actually exac-erbate the problems they are intended to help address[16]. Careful attention needs to be paid to the timing and conduct of post-conflict elections, along with the important factors of building strong democratic institutions, forming long-lasting relationships with civil society and strengthening political parties.

TABLE 4: ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE FROM TRANSITIONAL TO STABLE ENVIRONMENTS

Electoral Assistance in Transitional Environments

Sample elements of a project:

- Constitutional/legal reform
- Capacity-building of political parties
- Capacity-building of EMB
- Voter registration
- Civic and voter education campaigns
- Setting up electoral dispute mechanisms
- Election security
- Election logistics and infrastructure
- Integration of new technologies
- Media and elections

Electoral Assistance in Stable/Developing Environments

Sample elements of a project:

- Capacity-building of EMB
- Integration of new technologies
- Institutionalized civic education
- Transitioning to continuous voter registration systems
- Enforcement of campaign finance regulations. Note that this is mostly undertaken in post-conflict and transitional elections, but is less often an area of support in a stable and developing environment where enforcement mechanisms (such as the EMB's audit section, the anticorruption commission and the judiciary) are stronger
- Regular boundary delimitation
- Training for women candidates and political leaders
- Strengthening and institutionalizing electoral dispute resolution mechanisms

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16 See www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs04/Electoral%20Systems%20 &%20Processes.pdf.

Working with political parties in this context may be especially difficult, given that some parties may be converted from armed movements and, therefore, have members that in the past were members of militia groups with no tradition of democratic practices. Getting these actors to accept the rules of the democratic game is crucial and represents a key challenge of this work. However, UNDP also needs to be mindful of the risk of legitimizing former warlords and should take this into account when assistance is planned.

Often post-conflict elections take place in countries where the UN has either a peacekeeping mission (such as the 2006 elections in DRC) or a UN political mission (such as the elections in Nepal). In such elections, there is normally a Security Council resolution giving the peacekeeping or political mission the mandate to lead or coordinate electoral assistance, under the guidance of DPA/EAD. UNDP works in close collaboration with DPA/EAD in supporting the electoral component of the UN mission according to an agreed division of labour. UNDP support could include traditional technical electoral assistance to the electoral authorities, management of a 'basket fund' on behalf of donors (see Chapter 5 for detailed discussion of this option), and/or discrete projects supporting political party development or enhancing women's participation.

Post-conflict elections typically involve extremely high costs due to the number of activities that need to be carried out for the first time as well as the higher costs associated with securing the integrity of the vote and the safety of the voters. Tight deadlines, lack of adequate infrastructures and assets, and a volatile security environment can further drive up costs.

High capital costs associated with (but not unique to) post-conflict elections include:

- Setting up the election administration and its operational and territorial structure
- The first voter registration exercise
- Registration of parties and candidates
- Procurement and distribution of election materials
- Recruitment and training of inexperienced staff
- Development of stakeholders' capacity
- Extensive voter information and education campaigns
- Communications and transportation (including 4WD vehicles, boats, helicopters and/or planes)
- Security for people and materials

Essentials — Getting Started

Ideally, electoral assistance should begin immediately after the last election or, more appropriately put, should simply segue from election-related support to longer-term support focused on the Electoral Cycle. However, if a long-term approach is not possible, at a minimum preparations should begin at least 18 months in advance of a given electoral event.

For a Country Office, an important first step if approached for electoral assistance by the national EMB and/or government is to provide information on the UN procedures with respect to requests for electoral assistance. If a formal request for electoral assistance has already been submitted, this may need to be followed up with the Department of Political Affairs' Electoral Assistance Division (DPA/EAD). As mentioned previously, the division's needs assessment mission assesses the existing conditions for conducting elections in the country and provides recommendations on

the pre-election technical needs.

Upon approval of the recommendations of the needs assessment mission by the UN Focal Point for electoral assistance activities, the project formulation can be initiated (or continued if previously begun).

When Should Project Design Start?

An election is a cycle of interdependent events, with multiple phases often happening simultaneously and with inflexible timelines. UNDP's electoral assistance is most effective when given sufficient lead time or, better yet, when it is programmed in a continuous and encompassing manner. In accordance with the DPA – UNDP Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance, a request for electoral assistance should be sent by the government or electoral authorities at least four months prior to the scheduled election to allow for meaningful involvement[17]. Ideally however, the electoral assistance should start after the previous election or, as noted previously, at least 18 months prior to the next election. A late request to the UN for assistance by a recognized national authority could delay the process of project design. In light of this, it is helpful for UNDP Country Offices, in consultation with DPA/EAD, to maintain contacts on an ongoing basis with electoral stakeholders in the country to get a sense of the timelines, the likelihood of a request, and the potential areas of support even before the formal process of project design begins.

Timing is extremely important when it comes to establishing a PMU, particularly given the time it takes to get various components up and running, and when advertising for service providers and review by both the CAP and the Advisory Committee on Procurement (ACP) is involved. A proj-

ect should allow at least three months from the date of advertising to the singing of a contract. A PMU should be in a workable office and adequately staffed at least one full year prior to the election date.

Who Should Form the Planning and Design Teams?

Stakeholders that should be included or consulted in planning and design activities may comprise the following, with the caveat that some are going to play major roles in the process — such as the EMB — while others may have more specialized roles or types of consultation, such as security forces or the judiciary:

Electoral management body

Government

DPA/EAD needs assessment mission

Project formulation mission (if different from the needs assessment mission)

Media

Civil society

Political parties

Development partners

Representatives of minorities

Judiciary[18]

Security forces

Community-based groups

Technical advisors

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17 See Annex 1.

18 Great care needs to be exercised in seeking the involvement of the judiciary because there may be a risk of compromising its independent role in relation to the election process.

Formulating the Project

UNDP's Multi-Year Funding Framework (MYFF) for 2004–2007 sets fostering democratic governance as one of the key goals of UNDP and identifies electoral systems and processes as one of the seven contributing service lines to this goal. The new Strategic Plan for 2008–2011 retains democratic governance as one of the key goals of UNDP and places electoral assistance within a framework of fostering inclusive participation. Electoral assistance should be provided with these broader goals of democratic governance and inclusive participation in mind[19].

When formulating the project, the following steps should be taken into account:

STEP 1: Stakeholders should meet to analyze the recommendations of any recent assessment missions — including the DPA/EAD needs assessment mission, bilateral and multilateral assessments, and those done by international and domestic NGOs. The analysis should include a review of the existing electoral conditions and starting points for assistance.

STEP 2: Stakeholders should determine where they want to be not only by the time of the election but years beyond. The results from such analysis become the immediate outputs and the longer-term outcomes of the project(s), respectively. It is better to formulate the outcomes first, followed by the outputs, and then the activities and inputs, in a reductive approach.

STEP 3: Stakeholders should list the strategies or activities needed to reach the outcomes and outputs. Some activities or strategies may serve both.

By including stakeholders in this analysis, consensus can be generated around a shared vision of successful electoral systems and processes.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR GOOD PROJECT DESIGN

- Involve the right people in the process. Call on electoral expertise in project formulation from UNDP Regional Centres, Headquarters, electoral project staff elsewhere in the world; from established EMBs with the capacity to second staff or train other EMBs; from DPA/EAD and from private consultants. Yet, while doing so, maintain Country Office ownership by identifying a backstopping Assistant Resident Representative or programme officer who is fully involved in project design and follow up.

- Get input from all relevant stakeholders.

- Before adding the narrative and other sections, ensure that the results and resources required are accurate and agreed upon by the partners.

- Develop indicators that are SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and trackable).

- Where more than two UN agencies are involved in providing electoral support, consider developing a UN joint programme document, consistent with the broader UN reform and aid effectiveness agenda. Guidelines on joint programming, including joint programme document templates, are accessible at the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Web site at www.undg.org.

CHALLENGES TO GOOD PROJECT DESIGN

- Engaging the right people

- Correctly assessing internal or external conditions

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19 A good example of this is in the United Republic of Tanzania, where a successful electoral assistance project for the 2005 elections was formulated in 2003 within the context of wider democratic governance objectives. Another example is DRC, where (following the project in support of the electoral processes 2005–2006) a project in support of the 2007–2011 Electoral Cycle is being formulated as a component of a larger governance programme dealing with decentralization, support to parliament and provincial assemblies. Information on these projects can be accessed at http://content.undp.org/go/practices/governance/docs/?d_id=277740.

- Correctly identifying effective needs

- Establishing the right priorities

- Making comparative analysis of possible project implementation methods

- Developing a realistic budget

- Assessing the time needed

- Understanding the state of donor funding

- Facilitating on-time procurement and recruitment of personnel

- Avoiding vendor and/or donor influence

- Establishing clear definitions of role and relationships, particularly in the management of funds and decision-taking structures

Review of Basic Phases in Planning

The basic steps in planning that have been discussed previously are summarized below. They do not necessarily comprise a complete, ideal planning process that is applicable to every electoral situation. It is recommended, however, that if possible UNDP take an integrated approach where an election-related project is 'part' of an overall electoral support strategy. UNDP Programme Managers should, in addition, refer to the corporate guidelines on programming, to be found in the User Guide (http://content.undp.org/go/userguide/).

- **Reference overall desired result/change.** During the design phase, planners should use the overall objective of the assistance as a frame of reference. This objective may go beyond the conduct of an election to something larger and longer-term, such as a peaceful transition to a democratic government or the formation of sustainable electoral institutions.

- **Take stock outside and inside the system.** It is important to conduct an assessment of the overall political and electoral environment in the country to determine 'where we are now'. This assessment usually involves considering various driving forces, or major influences, that might affect the election.

- **Conduct situation analysis.** To the greatest extent possible, the Country Programme (CP), Common Country Assessment (CCA) and UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) situational analyses should be linked. The issue to be addressed should be stated, and reference (with hypertext links provided if available) to the relevant outcome in the CP should be given. Also included should be a clear problem statement in which the government agrees that such is/are indeed a problem(s).

- **Establish strategies to reach desired results.** The desired results of the project should be formulated clearly, in close consultation with the project partners. Different partners are likely to have different objectives and it is important to be clear and reach consensus before the project begins. The particular strategies (or activities) needed to reach desired results depend on matters of safety, practicality and efficiency. Typically, the outputs needed to reach the overall goal of the assistance should be identified and the activities and inputs required to achieve them should be listed.

- **Establish benchmarks and develop monitoring and evaluation systems.** Benchmarks, defined in this context as outputs selected to make progress toward higher-level results, should be identified and listed. Indicators need to be developed, as do monitoring mechanisms and sources and the type of evaluation to be used for the project or outcome.

- **Associate responsibilities and time lines.** Responsibilities should be assigned; ideally,

deadlines should be set for meeting each responsibility.

- **Develop project document.** The information collected should be organized and written into the project document. The work plan should be communicated and shared widely with all relevant stakeholders.

See Annex 7 for revised project format.

Developing a Strategic Plan

A strategic plan takes both external and internal (to the organization) factors into consideration. A strategic plan for supporting elections must consider, and find ways to address, risks such as security and political unrest. It may be beneficial for planners to conduct a 'SWOT' analysis[20]. However, a SWOT analysis will only take planners so far; the next step is interpreting what should be done and how to address the weaknesses and threats while protecting and building upon the strengths and the opportunities. It is especially important that any lessons learned from previous electoral assistance experiences be taken into account. The strategic plan could serve as a key input into an eventual project document.

While any UNDP project should be guided by a strategic plan, it is equally important that the counterpart (the relevant EMB) has a strategic plan as well. Ideally, the EMB should have developed a strategic and operational plan prior to the design of any UN assistance project. This helps to ensure that assistance is appropriately targeted towards needs. Planning should also carefully consider the time and resources required for operations and the EMB's internal capacity to manage the electoral process. If additional staff and/or temporary consultants are needed, they should be hired immediately.

20   SWOT is an acronym for 'strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats'.

It is worth emphasizing that any electoral assistance provided should take place within the overall context of promoting democratic governance. Seeking to solve serious political problems with hastily organized elections may only exacerbate a contentious situation. At a minimum, electoral plans should typically include the following elements:

- Building partnerships among domestic stakeholders and international actors
- Identifying and mobilizing stakeholders
- Mapping the entire Electoral Cycle
- Identifying where in the Electoral Cycle electoral assistance is needed, wanted and feasible
- Building a timeline of key events and work processes
- Budgeting and procurement
- Mobilizing and managing resources

Several useful global knowledge tools on electoral assistance are currently available on the Internet. These tools can provide specific knowledge and advice on different electoral issues necessary for identifying and formulating electoral assistance projects. Among the most valuable is the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network (ACE), which has positioned itself as the most comprehensive source of new ideas and insights on the design and implementation of electoral processes. ACE provides authoritative information on elections, promotes networking among practitioners, and offers training, online advisory services and partnerships to increase the capacity of electoral stakeholders to administer free and fair elections. A component of the project — the ACE Practitioners' Network — makes it possible to obtain on-demand advice from a large number of electoral experts on specific challenges faced

during the project design stage. Engaging with that component can help avoid mistakes that have plagued previous electoral assistance projects. (More information on ACE is available in this Guide in the Global Initiatives section of Chapter 3. Links to ACE and other resources can be found in **Annex 8**.)

Building Partnerships

The cost of holding an election requires capacities and resources that often are beyond the reach of many developing countries. Building partnerships with domestic stakeholders and international actors can help maximize the financial and technical assistance necessary. Effective coordination among partners is crucial to the success of joint operations; it helps optimize resources, avoid gaps and duplication in the provision of electoral assistance, and minimize possible conflicts of interest. Developing and coordinating partnerships is normally a responsibility within the context of an electoral support project that is shared between the Country Office (and, most importantly, the Resident Coordinator) and the project team.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

- Identify potential support for the project by engaging in dialogue with a variety of stakeholders **before** project design and implementation. In particular, this can be done by engaging stakeholders in the DPA/EAD needs assessment process.

- Identify areas of common interest among the partners and define key priorities.

- Program partnership-building activities at the beginning of the design phase.

- In order to build strong relationships, hold regular meetings and share information among partners and the EMB. Depending on the context, this may be most effective by having informal and regular discussions among the EMB, UNDP and one or two donors representing the wider group rather than holding formal meetings with the full range of interested partners.

- Ensure that systems, processes and technologies are in place to support regular communication and information sharing.

- If no working-level donor coordination group exists for electoral support, organize a subgroup of an already existing group of donors. This should of course not replace meetings convened by the national EMB for the purpose of informing donors and national partners of election preparations.

- Offer UNDP's assistance to act as the secretariat for any coordination group created and facilitate the development of terms of reference (ToR) for such a group.

- Maintain dialogue with potential donor partners and secure early commitments when possible (perhaps only verbally).

- Determine the type of funding mechanism to be provided (a pooled, or 'basket fund' mechanism that uses cost-sharing or trust fund modalities; one multi-donor trust fund; direct bilateral funding to the EMB, etc.). See Chapter 5 for more information on funding mechanisms.

- Begin recruitment of a team of international and national (depending upon the competencies required and the local conditions) long/short-term advisors, making sure to send out requests early enough to allow work to begin on-the-ground as soon as possible.

CHALLENGES TO BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

- Mobilizing a significant amount of resources (financial, human and logistical) well ahead of

time. Mobilization and availability of funds are critical issues, of course, and close attention should be paid to donors' calendar(s).

• Getting consultants or staff on the ground quickly and including electoral specialists in the design of projects. Electoral projects are inflexible in terms of timely implementation. Not having the necessary expertise during the project formulation can create serious problems in later stages. Moreover, having electoral specialists arrive after crucial activities in the electoral calendar have already been implemented can be considered a lost opportunity for related interventions — e.g., key improvements in voter registration.

• Establishing a clear division of labour with other international providers of electoral assistance. At times, key actors may have no interest or feel reluctant in forging partnerships. The lack of clear responsibility and defined areas of assistance for each partner can negatively affect the smooth implementation of the project.

Electoral Budget

Running an election is often the most complicated national logistical undertaking attempted in a country. Elections are nearly always expensive events, although the average cost varies greatly by country, depending upon a wide number of factors. In established democracies and countries with strong electoral management and a pre-existing information technology infrastructure, such as India, the costs per voter range from US$1 to US$3, which represents very low-cost elections[21]. The most expensive elections tend to be 'first-generation' elections in post-conflict countries or newly formed states, where the cost of elections can exceed US$40–US$50 per voter. Although less

costly, second- or third- generation elections also come at a high price, especially when voter registration rates increase, voter registration systems change, technological upgrades are needed, or other priorities require attention.

It can be extremely complicated for the national government and/or EMB to put together a realistic overall budget for elections; however, it is a task that is also critical for proper implementation of an assistance project. Yet in some cases, an EMB will not share its budget with UNDP or donors. Another crucial discussion is the relationship between the EMB's core budget and where donor funds fit in, particularly if the government reduces — or has the authority to reduce — core funding proportional to donor input.

In addition to running and staff costs associated with the EMB, usually the main items of electoral budgets address the following activities: voter registration, boundary delimitation, voting operations, counting and transmission of results, dispute adjudication, voter education and information, campaigning by political parties and candidates, and vigilance and oversight by party representatives and domestic or international observers[22]. **Table 5** summarizes findings from a survey UNDP and IFES did in 2006 on the cost of registration and elections, comparing the context for elections and the relative core (tending to be fixed) and integrity (tending to be variable) costs for elements of the electoral process. The categories of analysis used to classify costs are 'not relevant', 'relevant', 'high' and 'very high'.

Any electoral budget should cover the routine operational costs of the EMB, along with the specific costs of organizing and holding an election. The majority of budget decisions should be taken

21 See UNDP, Electoral Systems and Processes Practice Note, January 2004, www.undp.org/governance/docs/ElectionsPN_English.pdf.

22 See UNDP and IFES, Getting to the CORE: A Global Survey on the Cost of Registration and Elections, 2006; www.undp.org/governance/docs/Elections-Pub-Core.pdf.

TABLE 5: ELECTION COSTS IN STABLE, TRANSITIONAL AND POST-CONFLICT DEMOCRACIES

	Stable		Transitional		Post-Conflict	
	Core costs*	Integrity costs*	Core costs*	Integrity costs*	Core costs*	Integrity costs*
Voter registration	High	Not relevant	High	Relevant	Relevant	High
Boundary delimitation	Relevant	Not relevant	Relevant	Not relevant	Relevant	Relevant
Voting: Operations, materials, logistics, training	Very high	High	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high
Counting and transmission of results	High	Not relevant	Relevant	High	Very high	Very high
Dispute adjudication	Relevant	Not relevant	High	Not relevant	High	High
Voter education and information	High	Not relevant	Very high	High	High	Very high
Campaigning by political parties	Very high	Not relevant	High	Very high	Very high	Very high
Vigilance: Party agents, domestic monitors, international observers	High	Not relevant	Very high	Very high	Very high	Very high

* Core costs refer to costs routinely associated with running elections and tend to be fixed. Integrity costs refer to ballot and voter security and tend to be variable.

Source: UNDP and IFES, 'Getting to the CORE', p. 18.

during the planning stages so as to draw a realistic timetable for activities and expenditures.

It is important that the budget of any electoral project takes as its frame of reference and is integrated within the EMB budget per se in order to avoid duplication and to advocate transparency and accountability. Integrating also helps all stakeholders be aware of the overall cost of the process and helps with functional and integrative planning of expenditures by the EMB budget in relation to expenditures from the project budget. EMBs often need technical assistance in putting together their own budget. Without this crucial step the entire process might be set up inadequately.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR COST-EFFECTIVE ELECTIONS

Some considerations for cost-effective elections are given below, with the caveat that the timing of elections, type of voter register and other matters are national decisions that will always have both political and technical implications. UNDP's role as a development agency concerned with reducing poverty should be to help countries reduce the cost of elections overall in whatever ways make sense, are acceptable nationally, and do not negatively affect the integrity and the credibility of the electoral process.

- Consideration may be given to holding various levels of elections on the same day. There are, however, often compelling political reasons that need to be carefully considered as to why this may not be feasible or advisable.

- Potential problems related to climatic conditions should be taken into account. For example, elections should be held in the dry season, if possible.

- Voter registration is usually the single most expensive item in an election process. To address this, consideration may be given in some circumstances to moving from periodic voter registration to a permanent voter register that is periodically updated. Or, if bureaucratic and

political conditions allow, the permanent voter register could be continuously updated with links to the census process and civil registry (if one exists).

- Care should be taken to procure election materials that are suitable to the context in which they have to be used, re-used and maintained. The materials should also be technologically appropriate and cost-effective over the long term — for example, in some places high storage costs make it cheaper to use low-grade disposable materials at each election. Products can be sourced locally or regionally to the extent possible.

- Experienced polling staff of proven ability and impartiality may be re-hired.

- Innovations in technology that can reduce costs in some conditions should be considered. However, careful and cautious consideration should be given to the risks and hidden costs associated with upgrading technology of voting operations

CHALLENGES TO COST-EFFECTIVE ELECTIONS

- Planning for the long term

- The production of a realistic list of activities and an accurate electoral budget proposal

- Including election-tied funds in the budget that are from different state agencies or local institutions

Resources Needed for the Planning Stage

Mobilizing stakeholders and donors should begin before planning is underway. It is easier to solicit and obtain support and cooperation from stakeholders when they have been involved from the beginning of the project and if they perceive to have had a 'stake' in the planning process.

Funding at early stages of discussion should come from TRAC resources. Some generic requirements at this stage are:

- Budget for a needs assessment/project formulation mission[23]

- Salaries for PMU personnel

- Equipment and materials for communication

- Transportation

- Physical space

Again, UNDP Country Offices need to evaluate the impact of the proposed electoral assistance on existing staff and resources, especially in the finance, procurement and contracting areas. If necessary, additional UNDP staff should be brought in to reinforce the existing capacities in the COs, and relevant training should be provided.

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23 See Chapter 1 for more information on budgeting for needs assessment and project formulation missions.

chapter **3**

Capacity Development and the Electoral Cycle

3 Capacity Development and the Electoral Cycle

A major part of UNDP's electoral assistance focuses on strengthening national EMBs. Often, this involves supporting independent and permanent electoral commissions that both administer and supervise elections. At times, however, those two functions are divided between one body within or associated with government, which administers the elections, and an independent body that supervises elections[24].

At least one, but often both, of those two separate bodies lack sufficient capacity to fully undertake their responsibilities. From UNDP's perspective, capacity development on their behalf refers to building on the knowledge and capacity that is already present in a country; making more effective use of locally available resources; and taking into account local culture and processes while introducing new knowledge in a way that is sustainable.

This chapter elaborates some key issues that should be considered in the design of specific activities that may be included in the UNDP electoral assistance project. They are intended to complement the recommendations resulting from the DPA/EAD needs assessment mission. Any recommendations for areas of support will be specifically relevant to the country context and may or may not include all of the areas below.

Roles and Relationships

After an electoral assistance project document has been signed with the relevant national authorities — or electoral assistance is included in a signed Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP), which obviates the need for a separate signed project document — the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) usually has the lead role in coordinating all electoral assistance activities. However, if the UN has established a major peacekeeping or political operation or mission, the coordination role will be played by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), a Deputy SRSG or other representative of the Secretary-General. In some situations (such as DRC), the same person serves as a Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in charge of electoral assistance and the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative.

The presence of a DPKO peacekeeping mission might also lead to the establishment of a mission structure in which electoral support staff of the UN mission and UNDP-recruited support staff work within one structure and under common supervision lines. (An example of an integrated election support structure, from DRC, may be found in **Annex 9**.) In such a structure, it is crucial to define

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24 See UNDP, Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance, www.undp.org/governance/docs/Elections-Pub-EMBbook.pdf.

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responsibilities of involved partners and to designate clear reporting lines.

The relationships among the EMB and the PMU and/or the UNDP Country Office, as well as the role and relationships among other branches of the government (i.e., security forces, local government, etc.) are extremely important and may ultimately determine how the election is run, the effectiveness of the support provided and its impact on the administration of the electoral process.

UNDP, when it has been requested by a recognized national authority to provide electoral assistance, is formally responsible for communicating with the government in power. The EMB, regardless of whether it is the overall implementer of the project or one of the implementing institutions, should play a critical role in decision-making through a seat in the Steering Committee of the electoral assistance project. Implementing agencies (for example, an NGO running a training initiative for law enforcement officers) are responsible only for the content of their components and not for the overall project results.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

- Involve the EMB in the needs assessment as well as the design, planning and implementation of the project. It is important to discuss with the EMB the scope of the technical assistance support, both direct support such as capacity-building initiatives for the institution per se and indirect support such as media or political party work.

- Understand what the capacity development needs are of the EMB at all levels. Skills are not necessarily imported from outside a country and inserted into an EMB through training programs. Sometimes the challenge the EMB faces

is one of spreading more broadly the skills that already exist in the organization, especially to temporary staff taken on at election time.

- Ensure that the EMB has a sense of ownership for the project, that it agrees with the determination of the priorities to be addressed by the project, and that it has an unambiguous understanding of the roles of the various international actors and of the execution or implementation modality of the project. Ensure that the EMB has a representative on any Steering Committee created under the project.

- Donors to any project will understandably have their own goals in supporting the electoral process, just as national stakeholders will have their own goals in partnering with the international community. UNDP can be helpful in developing a project that meets the expectations of the EMB, donors and other key partners in a transparent, impartial and results-oriented manner.

- Due to considerable political and operational pressure, it becomes more difficult as election dates near to undertake capacity development work with an EMB in a way that promotes skill transfer and its sustainability. Where there is adequate time, incorporate on-the-job training components into all activities undertaken (for example, teaming each member of the EMB in a key function with an international advisor).

- Support job skills training — for example, in areas such as computer literacy courses, accounting and financial management, procurement of election materials and warehouse management, information management, monitoring and evaluation.

- Provide leadership and management training at the central and sub-national levels of the EMB and ensure that sufficient funds are guaranteed to maintain these activities between

elections.

- Strengthen the in-house training capabilities of the EMB to enable further capacity development.

- Try to embrace capacity development of local institutions within every activity. Where a local institution is not motivated or lacks the capacity to deliver results, ensure that partnership with a local entity is built into the ToR of externally sourced service providers.

- Incorporate funding for an evaluation and lessons-learning exercise to be conducted post-election to assess both the technical administration of the electoral process by the EMB and the effectiveness of the electoral assistance provided. Such an evaluation could form a solid basis for future assistance.

CHALLENGES IN ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

- The EMB may lack credibility with electoral stakeholders and/or be politically biased.

- The EMB's independence, efficiency, effectiveness and ability to deliver credible elections may be jeopardized by the inadequacy of existing management structures and lack of funding (or of the timely availability of funding).

- There may be internal resistance to electoral reform, new ideas and the introduction of new processes within the EMB.

- Morale may be low and staff retention difficult following national elections where heavy investments of staff time are made.

A Framework for Capacity Development of the EMB

The term 'capacity' refers to the ability of individuals, organizations or organizational units to perform functions effectively, efficiently and in a sustainable manner. Until recently, the main ob-

jective of capacity development in electoral assistance was often simply the conduct of a successful election. Today, however, the goal of UN electoral assistance stretches beyond the holding of a single electoral event, aiming instead for the development of professional, inclusive and sustainable institutions and processes that enable people to freely choose their representatives. Electoral assistance can only be defined as 'sustainable' and 'effective' when its impact is nurtured and endures beyond a single electoral event. Professional capacities can be developed differently depending on the level.

At the **systems (country) level** of electoral assistance, capacities should be developed to create and sustain a supporting environment for credible elections that reflect the will of the people. Capacity development includes reforming electoral institutions, polices and laws as well as enhancing the ability of civil society, political parties and all eligible voters, including the traditionally marginalized, to fulfil their role and participate in elections.

At the **organizational (EMB) level**, capacity should be developed to plan, organize and conduct elections and manage different Electoral Cycles in a professional, independent and sustainable manner over time. The establishment of procedures and knowledge management services that enable the institution to face sudden loss of key personnel/changes of commissioners is critical. At the same time, if the organization is technically sound, but does not display core values (such as transparency, neutrality and respect for the law) in its work, it will be unlikely to gain the trust of the community, or to grow in stature. Organizations that adhere to a strong set of values are also more likely to attract and retain top quality staff.

At the **individual level**, capacity should be devel-

oped in voters and candidates to participate in the electoral process, freely exercise their choices, and play a constructive, long-term role in a democratic society.

UNDP's systems approach to capacity development is based on the rationale that one cannot think of developing capacity at just one level, one institution or one thematic area. It is something that is so multifaceted in its nature that it requires interventions planned in such a way as to make systemic rather than individual improvements. A change in one link in the chain will not work if the rest of the system is not functioning properly.

ASSESSING CAPACITY AT THE SYSTEMS LEVEL

The following are all part of the broad political or enabling environment surrounding the electoral process:

- Political system
- Government
- Political parties
- Election laws, processes, electoral system, voter registration and voting methods
- Law enforcement and security forces
- Public policies related to democratic governance
- Donors
- Civil society and opportunities for public participation in elections
- Legislative bodies
- Judiciary
- Media
- Domestic observer groups

ASSESSING CAPACITY AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL (EMB) LEVEL

The 'organization' involved in capacity development is the EMB, which has its own mandate, mission, goals, culture, structure and competencies.

The following are among the numerous different capacities within the EMB that may be developed depending on context, available resources and needs:

- **Mission and strategy.** Role; mandate for conducting elections; legal, political and financial independence; laws and policies that govern the scope of the EMB's operations.
- **Culture, structure and competencies.** Organizational and management style, standards, structure, salaries, core competencies.
- **Processes.** Internal and external processes of the EMB that support planning; research; logistics, operational and financial and human resource management; relationships with other government departments, donors, media and political parties.
- **Human resources.** The most valuable of the organizational resources, upon which capacity development primarily depends.
- **Financial resources.** Operating and capital resources.
- **Information resources.** Technological and other tools used to manage operations, resources and tasks.
- **Infrastructure.** Physical assets such as computers, telecommunication systems, equipment, materials and buildings.
- **Interrelationships.** How the EMB interacts with its stakeholders, the various branches of government (executive, legislative and judicial), political parties, civil society, the media and the international community, among others.

ASSESSING CAPACITY AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Capacity assessment at the individual level addresses the individual's capacity to function efficiently and effectively within the EMB and within

the broader democratic system. It also must assess the individual's commitment to the core values of the institution. Some of the areas in which capacity can be addressed at the individual level are listed below:

- Required professional skills
- Incentives for career progression
- Professional satisfaction and security
- Compensation
- Professional development

Capacity Development and Other Entry Points in the Electoral Cycle

Although EMBs are treated as a particularly important entry point of the Electoral Cycle and as key partners to and direct beneficiary of UNDP electoral assistance programming, other entry points of the cycle also benefit from a capacity development approach. These elements include, but are not limited to, support to: voter and civic education, voter registration, regional networking activities and professional exchanges, the provision of balanced and fair media coverage, training of police, electoral observation and capacity-building for political parties.

Such activities help to strengthen democratic processes and provide for an environment that promotes fair and inclusive elections. They nurture a culture of tolerance, foster peace initiatives, address information needs, and facilitate people's ability to participate in the political process and to do so in an informed manner. Ultimately, investing in professional development of electoral institutions and strengthening other actors in the Electoral Cycle are the most effective means to guarantee an exit strategy from the assistance cycle.

Electoral Law Reform

For the sake of this Guide, an electoral system refers to the method used to translate votes cast into seats or offices won by the competing parties and/or independent candidates. The type of electoral system (e.g., majority-plurality, proportional representation, mixed, etc.) has long-term implications for accountability, inclusiveness and representation.

In addition to support to electoral system design and reform, UNDP typically provides policy and legal advice in the following areas:

- Constitutional drafting or reform

- Drafting or reform of election law(s), often to allow minority and

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TABLE 6: EMB TRAINING NEEDS

EMBs need trained and skilled personnel at various levels to perform the following activities, among others:

Conduct training needs assessments

Prepare electoral budgets

Procure electoral equipment

Conduct voter registration

Understand party and campaign financing

Perform polling and counting operations

Conduct or supervise voter and civic education

Help manage and coordinate stakeholder activities

Engage in public outreach and communication

Manage logistics for the election, including result reporting and tabulation

Advise and enact (when applicable) electoral law reform

Facilitate electoral observation activities

Engage in global/regional networking activities with other EMBs

marginalized voices to be heard

- Drafting or reform of political party law(s)

- EMB structure design or reform, often to ensure the body's independence, efficiency and wider levels of transparency in its work and the performance of its mandated functions

- Drafting or reform of electoral regulations

- Drafting or reform of codes of conduct (EMB, political parties, observation)

- Electoral procedures (i.e., activities through which regulations are implemented, such as the ones described in registration, polling and counting manuals)

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ELECTORAL LAW REFORM[25]

Constitutional law

- The electoral system elaborated in the Constitution should give voice to all groups and have broad public appeal.

- The Constitution should guarantee fundamental freedoms for speech, assembly and association.

Electoral system reform

- Any electoral system proposed should take into account whether the country is deeply divided along political, geographical, religious or ethnic lines. It should also ensure that minorities are fairly represented in the political system.

- The project may offer policy options that take into account how other countries have attempted to solve different inequalities. A number of countries have successfully experimented with quotas to boost women's representation in the legislative bodies. Others have

instituted proportional representation systems but may not have taken into account various implications, such as a change in the level of interaction and direct accountability between representatives and their constituents.

- Efforts should be made to encourage the adoption of legal provisions that are cost efficient (choice of system, frequency of the elections, calendar, use of suitable and durable election materials, etc.).

- Discussions relating to electoral legal reform should involve consultations with all political groups, to the extent feasible, as well as civil society and EMB representatives.

- The technical, logistical and financial implications of any proposed electoral system reform should be taken into account. In some cases, certain systems are written into the law and need to be accommodated[26].

CHALLENGES TO ELECTORAL LAW REFORM

- It is important to take into account specific national needs and particularities — social, political, historical and geographical. Certain constitutional provisions or electoral systems may work well in certain settings, but not in others.

- Efforts must be made to ensure that any project support to a particular party or group is not perceived as being biased. A more inclusive and transparent consultative process may reduce this risk.

- Reforming an electoral system within the legal framework of a particular country takes time. Moreover, it is best done as a nationally led process in the less politicized, post-election phase of the Electoral Cycle when there is also enough time to draft laws and undergo the

25 For more information on electoral systems please see UNDP, Electoral System and Processes Practice Note, www.undp.org/ governance/docs/ElectionsPN_English.pdf; ACE Project, www. aceproject.org; International IDEA, Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook, www.idea.int/publications/esd/upload/ ESD_full_with%20final%20changes%20inserted.pdf.

26 For example, in DRC both the voter census and the electoral law prescribed the use of digital technology. The possible implications of such steps need to be carefully evaluated prior to the adoption of laws.

proper consultation processes.

- The electoral system — especially the design of electoral districts and the choice of voting systems (e.g. majority vs. proportional) — has important implications for political actors. Therefore, discussions often divert from the appropriateness of the system towards political considerations.

- Timing for development and adoption of laws is often determined by the meeting calendar of national assemblies and might lead to major bottlenecks.

Voter Registration

Voter registration is one of the most complex, time-consuming and expensive operations of electoral administration. At the basic level, it consists of collecting and storing data on all adult citizens and using that data to create the list of those who are eligible to vote in an election. It can also be the most controversial segment of the electoral process because it is involved in making decisions regarding voters' eligibility criteria.

In general, the voter registration process is an area that is increasingly utilizing new technologies. Depending upon the electoral system used, the voter registration process may be linked to the process of delimitation of electoral boundaries.

Listed below are some considerations that should be kept in mind when planning support to voter registration processes.

- Voter registration activities should be implemented and conducted with enough time to allow for revision of the lists, public posting, challenges or other processes under the law. Depending on the specific context, there may be a possibility to develop a permanent electoral register that can be updated periodically to reflect population movements, cancellation of deceased voters and enrolment of new ones.

- There may be a possibility during the voter registration process to establish synergies with other relevant institutions (and UNDP projects) such as the Ministry of Interior, Bureau of Statistics, and the agencies in charge of the civil registry and the census, for example.

- The choice of technology has implications for the timing and feasibility of the registration process.

- Before voter registration starts, proper development of procedures and adequate provision for staff training initiatives are necessary. Such procedures include, for example, the complaints and appeals process.

- Voter registration should be integrated with civic and voter education and voter information efforts where possible.

- If a boundary delimitation process is being undertaken, efforts should be made to ensure that it is done through a transparent and consultative process by an independent body comprising neutral appointees. This independent body could be the EMB.

- Efforts should be made — starting at the legal framework level — to develop voter registration processes that are fair, inclusive and ensure that minorities, indigenous and tribal peoples, migrant workers, women, internally displaced

people and refugees have the opportunity to register.

- Adequate provision should be made to ensure that the data-gathering processes include as much personal data as possible to guarantee its usability regardless of future electoral reforms.

- Voter registration can be conducted on a rolled-out, region-by-region basis. This allows for early errors to be corrected; reduces demand and costs for resources such as cameras and other voter registration equipment; and allows the register to be gradually built up.

CHALLENGES TO VOTER REGISTRATION

- Restrictive citizenship laws and national identification documentation requirements may make it difficult or impossible for certain groups to register (e.g., refugees, ethnic or religious minorities, indigenous and tribal peoples or internally displaced persons). Inaccurate and incomplete voter lists can lead to the potential disenfranchisement of voters.

- Loose legal provisions and national identification documentation requirements may result in the enrolment of ineligible voters (e.g., under-age voters and alien residents). Such developments negatively affect the integrity of the voters' list and the overall credibility of the electoral process.

- While the use of information technology can help make voter registration more efficient and cost effective, it is not cure-all. The advantages, disadvantages and potential costs and benefits of using technology need to be carefully identified and weighed. In particular, the need for systems to be supported on an ongoing basis should be factored in at the outset. It must be ensured that any technology introduced for registration could be applicable for other re-

lated activities (e.g., voter list production and results aggregation) and beyond the specific election in question.

- Registration plans may be incompatible with the electoral calendar. In general, voter registration must be completed early enough to carry out tasks such as assigning voters to polling stations and allocating ballot papers, but not so early that significant numbers of voters reach the voting age between the registration exercise and the election.

- Physical access of voters to the voter registration process should be considered.

- Existing infrastructures might not be suitable or in adequate condition to support reform of the voter registration system.

- Potential voters may have limited knowledge and understanding of the voter registration process, the requirements to qualify to register, and various relevant procedures. Such limits are particularly likely if elements have changed between the previous and current elections.

Civic and Voter Education

Civic education is related to the broad concepts of democracy, while voter education provides information as to why voting is important. (Voter information, meanwhile, provides voters with the details on how, when and where to vote.) Both civic and voter education encourage citizens to participate in democratic processes and can help promote peace and prevent violence during elections.

Given the relative scarcity of financial resources, civic and voter education are often treated as less important than the operations and logistics of the electoral process. Early needs identification is crucial to ensure that necessary resources are mobilized and earmarked for civic education.

BOX 2: BIOMETRICS SYSTEMS AND VOTER REGISTRATION

The use of biometrics has become an undeniable trend in the last several years. Biometrics are used to measure physical characteristics and behaviors — for example, fingerprints, speech, face, iris, and hand geometry. The basic task of all biometric systems is to recognize patterns to distinguish those that match closely enough to be considered identical and those that have great enough variation to be considered non-identical. To do this, the system must first register and store the characteristics (for example, the fingerprint), and then be able to match this with new information.

The system can either be asked to verify someone claiming to be a person known to the system, in which case the system only has to compare the new information with one item in the stored data, or be asked to identify a person, thus requiring the system to compare the new information with every item in the database. By comparison, in voter registration operations the biometric requirements are to identify any individual who is known to the system more than once.

Automatic Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) refers to a computer system capable of establishing the identity of an individual through fingerprints by the use of biometrics. AFIS is now being used with a certain consistency in many countries in voter registration processes. In particular, it is increasingly popular in post-conflict countries and emerging democracies marked by a low level of ID cards distribution, such as in **Angola, DRC, Guinea, Nigeria** and **Togo**. In some case the use of this technology was enshrined in the law for voter registration (DRC) or in political agreements after a crisis (Togo). The cases of DRC and Togo are also interesting

for the south-south collaboration between the Congolese and Togolese EMBs, facilitated by the EC–UNDP partnership on electoral assistance, wherein the Togolese EMB borrowed at no cost 3,000 biometric voter registration kits from the Congolese EMB.

AFIS has been used also in **Venezuela** and electoral rolls have in previous elections been produced by **Pakistan**'s National Database and Registration Authority (which has systems including fingerprint biometrics) on behalf of the Election Commission of Pakistan. It was also considered for the 2003 elections in Yemen to address problems with the current voters register. In **Yemen**, the issue was not to develop a new AFIS system, but rather to explore the possibility of merging the voter registration with the existing AFIS-based civil registry system.

UNDP in the last three years acquired a good deal of experience in this area and the knowledge is being codified in a forthcoming publication to be produced with International IDEA. For the purpose of this Guide and in the meantime, there are several considerations to be made for the introduction and use of this technology.

First of all, AFIS is likely to have high initial introduction costs and costs linked to obsolescence. It is important therefore to initiate thorough technical specifications and procurement processes to find the most appropriate, country-adapted and cost-effective system. It is also important to plan for proper storage when the purchased material is not in use and, especially for cost-effectiveness and sustainability issues, to look for synergies among agencies in charge of census, civil registration and voter registration. *continued on next page*

A realistic understanding of the time required to establish an accurate AFIS-based voter register is necessary. It may take months to develop the system and produce a viable and trusted voter register and the voter cards based on it. The operational planning for the biometric voter registration should take into account the possibility to extend the operations for natural or technical constraints, which happened in DRC, Angola and Togo. Both the EMB and other stakeholders also need to maintain realistic expectations of what AFIS can deliver. Appropriate use of technology cannot be stressed enough; moreover, technology alone is not able to solve all problems, particularly those of a political nature.

Some success factors in implementing AFIS systems, based on UN experience, are as follows:

• Feasibility studies and study tours should be carried out prior to final decision to adopt the system.

• Technical specifications for software and hardware should be drafted only when considering comparative experiences adapted to the country's needs, electoral laws and practices, and traditions and customs of populations.

• Introduction of AFIS should be done gradually and at least 12 months prior to election day.

• Pilot/validation tests such as mock voter registration should be prepared, run and publicized so as to select the best service providers and provide a better understanding of the difficulties related to biometric data gathering, retrieval and aggregation.

• Selection of personnel should be done according to their knowledge of ICT. This is important because it is useful to have a pool of trained personnel available should contingency measures be required (such as training additional personnel on biometrics data gathering).

• Quality control vis-à-vis hardware and software should be assured prior to and during the operations.

• The country should be subdivided into operational zones in view of rationalizing the resources and applying acquired experience among different operational zones.

• Capacity development and knowledge-transfer efforts should be planned so they are not hostage of vendors/service providers. Open source solutions should be encouraged to avoid becoming locked in to a specific vendor.

• Plans should be made as early as possible regarding what to do with the material acquired after the elections. The plans should focus on several Electoral Cycles in the future, with a goal of identifying synergies that bolster cost effectiveness and sustainability.

• Civic voter education initiatives are useful. They should be aimed at increasing all stakeholders' trust in the technology.

Below are some considerations that should be made in planning support in the areas of civic and voter education.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION

• Surveys and/or assessments can help to determine the levels of current public awareness and opinions on democracy and electoral issues.

• To the extent possible, it can be useful to integrate voter education and voter registration efforts with broad-based civic education efforts.

• Civic education should ideally begin well in advance of an election and be sustained as part of an ongoing democratization process. Civic education should be focused in particular toward the young — for example, through

national education curricula, media outlets, popular culture, etc. — because they are the next generation of voters.

- Where the electoral process is combined with the introduction of a new voting process, civic and voter education should ideally start before new processes are introduced.

- Targeted voter and civic education can help to elicit the active participation of traditionally vulnerable and politically marginalized groups. Similarly, they can help promote conflict-prevention messages.

- Voter education is also needed before voter registration activities.

- Any reform in the electoral system is likely to require a significant civic education and voter information effort.

- Efforts can be made to institutionalize civic education through 'national champions' in key sectors. This could entail enlisting the support of government heads, national leaders, domestic NGOs, and public personalities, and key institutions (such as the Ministry of Education).

- Coordination of activities among EMBs, civil society organizations (CSOs), media and political parties can help to avoid duplication, maintain consistency and ensure as broad as possible coverage.

- Civic and voter education, especially if targeted at marginalized groups, should take into special consideration the potential need for using different languages and appropriate ways of delivering the information and messages (e.g., theater performances in local

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BOX 3: CIVIC EDUCATION IN SUPPORT OF NON-VIOLENCE

Civic education work can help create a national focus on peaceful, non-violent elections. In 2003 in **Nigeria**, the UNDP PMU managed a national advertising initiative entitled 'Our Year of Peaceful Elections'. In 2005 in the **United Republic of Tanzania**, the theme of civic education was 'Raia Makini – Informed Citizens'. In Zanzibar in 2005 the theme was 'Uchaguzi Salama – Peaceful Elections'. In those cases, all posters, civic education materials, curricula and trainings were targeted toward issues of tolerance, harmony and peace in an effort to reduce local tensions and potential conflict. In **Yemen** in 2003, UNDP produced 'Testimonials', a series of community service announcements with personality figures that were used to reinforce the civic and voter education messages.

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languages instead of written handouts in the official language).

- The impact of civic and voter education initiatives, and the pertinence of the messages, should be assessed during and after implementation.

- Grassroots-based and bottom-up approaches to civic education should be advocated.

CHALLENGES TO CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION

- The effectiveness of civic or voter education can be limited if the conceptualization or planning is poor, if there are limited funds, or if there is inadequate coordination among those implementing the various initiatives.

- CSOs delivering civic and voter education may lack competence, have poor financial accounting practices or lack consistency in the transmission of messages.

- Those conducting civic and voter education should have credibility and should not be affiliated with any political party.

Public Outreach and Media Communications

There are two levels at which public outreach and media communications should be approached: first, at the level of the national EMB and national media outlets as partners in assistance, and second, at the level of the UN country team and UNDP Country Office in terms of interacting with national and international media. The issues and strategies involved in each are different; hence they are treated separately below.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS — AS AN ENTRY POINT OF SUPPORT

Public outreach — normally conducted by the EMB but also by the national government and other stakeholders — is important not only to promote civic and voter education and to ensure safety and security, but also to inform the public about emerging electoral issues. Regular information updates cannot only help increase transparency, but in the long-run will also aid in bolstering the credibility and acceptability of the process as a whole.

Public outreach by the EMB or any other stakeholder should promote broad, equal and free access to information. An open communication policy that recognizes the public's right to know and the media's right to report can help equip the electorate with the tools necessary to effectively choose their leaders. It can also help to dispel rumors and neutralize intimidation by powerful political factions.

With respect to the media per se, it is important to evaluate the level of media rights within the electoral context. Does the press have access to polling stations, vote tabulation, voting officials, etc.? How, when and under what ground rules is the press involved in the electoral process? There are a number of different dimensions to media free-

dom that are of relevance in elections: freedom from censorship; freedom from arbitrary attack or interference; free access to necessary information; and pluralism of voices in the media[27]. External technical support can be important in building the capacity of the media and ensuring that access to the media is available not only to the party in power, but also to rival parties as well.

Media support projects can improve the capacity of local journalists to report independently and constructively on the democratic process, with particular focus on post-conflict elections and on the ongoing monitoring of corruption. Such media development projects can complement other elements of UNDP's work on access to information, including support for journalists' and other citizens' use of freedom of information statutes. To be effective, however, these projects should be in place long before election day.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS — UN RESOURCES AND SYSTEM COHERENCE

Public outreach and media communications before, during and after elections are critically important for the UN. There are a number of in-house resources available to UNDP Country Offices to assist with planning in these areas.

When electoral assistance is planned or being implemented, the first step should be the drafting of a clear, concise mission statement that is understood and approved by all UN parties, beginning and ending with DPA, and which can be used in an abridged form as talking points and/or a text for distribution to media and other interested parties. This includes defining in each case the specific mandate — extent and limits both — of

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27 See ACE Encyclopedia, www.aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/me/me20.

UN electoral assistance, as well as the differing structures and roles of others (national electoral authorities, international observers, political parties, etc.). It should also include an agreed short narrative on the country, recent history and the importance and context of the political process in question from the UN's perspective.

The second step should be to designate clearly who speaks to the press for the UN team in-country and on what basis (UN spokesperson, background briefer for electoral assistance team, etc.). These should be limited to just two or three people ideally — but the designated individuals must include the Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative (RC/RR), whose job includes being the chief voice of the UN generally and of the Secretary-General specifically in the country on a wide range of development and political matters. Given his/her role, the RC/RR must be part of the drafting and approval process for talking points.

The third step should be to request and empower the assistance of the UN communications team in-country and internationally (DPI, UNDP Communications Office) in drafting press releases, handling media relations, and so on — including offering support as needed/requested by the national electoral authorities. It is important to insist on media availability by competent spokespersons/press officers at all times in the run-up to elections, on election day and during the vote-counting aftermath period — and to include a system for regular briefings.

It is also important to establish consistent messaging among the donors through the sharing of information. As the main coordinator of electoral assistance at the country level, UNDP representatives (normally the RC/RR and/or Country Director) maintain relationships with media outlets and routinely make use of in-house or regional centre communications services. It is important to estab-

lish very early, even during project preparation (when the media want to report not only on potential donor support but want to speculate as to external involvement in national elections), what messages will or should (not) be given. Providing regular public updates with accurate information on electoral support may be an effective way of preventing misunderstandings from occurring.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PUBLIC OUTREACH AND MEDIA RELATIONS

- Efforts should be made to develop a free and impartial state media that allows access to a spectrum of political viewpoints through legislative reforms for balanced coverage and/or assistance to improve information technology systems.

- The national EMB should be encouraged to strengthen its public and media outreach and provide regular updates, with donor support as necessary.

- Agreement on common messages to be conveyed by the donor community should be encouraged, and donor impartiality should be maintained at all times.

- The CO should be transparent in its provision of support to the electoral process, providing the media with factual information on a regular basis.

- The media reporting on the electoral process should be monitored on a regular basis as part of the electoral assistance activities.

- Activities focused on the training of journalists should be encouraged, where relevant.

- Support may be provided to the EMB to set up an election results center that gives the media and political parties access to the processed results on timely and transparent basis. This may include the creation of a web site where results

are posted and made accessible to the media and public. At the same time, however, this can be a massive undertaking, depending on the country and electoral system. A results centre has to operate under tight time frames, there is only one opportunity to get it right, and results compilation systems tend to be complex, thereby requiring significant testing.

CHALLENGES TO PUBLIC
OUTREACH AND MEDIA RELATIONS

• It can be difficult at times to ensure that the international donor community conveys similar messages. This is usually relatively easier within the context of a technical assistance project, when donors are generally pursuing the same goals. It is less easy in the context of observation missions, where it is not always possible or sometimes desirable to harmonize messages.

• While national or programmatic efforts may be made to balance media coverage of political parties during election periods — for example, through equal or equitable access by all parties to state media for the campaign period — coverage may be particularly un-balanced in non-election periods when it is not bound by electoral-related provision.

• There may be parts of the coun-

BOX 4: MEDIA INITIATIVES

Drawing on its advisory role in the management of democratic elections, UNDP has organized targeted training sessions for local journalists covering landmark national votes in **Liberia** (2005), the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** (2006), **Sierra Leone** (2007), **Kenya** (2007) and other countries in the region. UNDP has also convened high-level briefing sessions for African journalists in conjunction with the Africa Governance Forum and related regional governance initiatives. In **Cambodia**, UNDP has supported for the 2003 and 2008 National Assembly elections and 2007 Commune Council elections an initiative known as 'Equity News', which seeks to ensure the equitable coverage by state news media of political parties during electoral periods. Under the initiative, parties are allotted (pre-publicized) percentages of airtime during which 'Equity News' covers whatever the parties do or say that might be newsworthy. Parties are allotted time based on criteria that includes their results from the previous election and current representation in the legislature. In 2007, 'Equity News' was extended into an 'Equity Weekly' installment, which is intended to be year-round and not restricted to the electoral period. Within the context of an electoral assistance project, support to the media could also include:

• Drafting a code of conduct to help the media (but also political parties) to professionally report on election coverage, as was done in **Sierra Leone** in 2007.

• Media monitoring (**Timor-Leste** 2001) or support to the national authorities or EMB (**The Gambia** 2006) or Media Commission (**Afghanistan** 2004 and **DRC** 2006) to enforce media rules during the election period (including equitable media coverage of political campaigning). Support may also be provided to NGOs, in particular journalist associations, many of which may have an interest in monitoring the exercise.

• Direct access programming aimed at guaranteeing equitable access to private and public media for all political contestants. This can be effected through the provision of technical support to political forces to develop political messages and facilitate their airing on public and private broadcasts (**Timor-Leste** 2001).

• Support to a Media Mediation Panel with a view to ensuring fairness and equity in the media coverage of the political campaign. In the absence of a regulatory body, such a panel may play a critical role in mitigating confrontational attitudes and playing a conflict resolution role among political and media actors (**Timor-Leste** 2001).

try, in particular rural areas, that are cut off from traditional media sources and are therefore particularly hard to reach.

Political Parties

Essential to any multi-party electoral system is the assurance of a competitive political arena that represents different groups, interests and opinions. Strong political parties with links to the grassroots are an essential part of such a system, providing a connection between citizens and political elites.

Building political parties is especially critical to democratization in post-conflict situations. The transition to political party membership from militia membership may be the essential first step towards a lasting peace in fragile communities.

Understanding the political environment is the very first consideration in determining the extent to which UNDP should become involved with political parties in a given country. Support can be extended to a wide variety of areas including the dialogues between parties on electoral reform and other issues; integrating human development and gender equality principles into internal party activities and platforms; internal operations of parties (fundraising, campaign planning, candidate selection and training); long-term capacity development; media outreach; and specific initiatives for women, youth and political party finance. Further information on political party assistance is contained in the 'UNDP Handbook on Working with Political Parties' (2006), which is available online at: www.undp.org/governance/docs/policy-pub-polpartieshandbook.pdf.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR POLITICAL PARTY SUPPORT

Some initial considerations when contemplating political party support are noted below.

- If support is provided by UNDP to political parties, it should aspire to the principles of impartiality of the UN. While it may not always be possible or practical to provide equal support to all political parties, particularly when there are large numbers of parties and only several that have national representation or viability, the criteria for supporting political parties should be very clearly defined and should be conveyed to all stakeholders in a public and transparent manner.

- Activities that would clearly be seen as a direct endorsement of a specific party must be avoided.

- Funding should never be provided directly to political parties. All assistance should be capacity-building, technical or advisory in nature. In some places, UNDP has put resources (in the form of libraries, vouchers for print shops, transportation expenses, etc.) at the disposal of political parties on an equal or equitable basis and based on strict eligibility criteria.

- Indirect and/or issue-based support — such as regarding the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), poverty reduction and gender equality —should be emphasized in situations that are sensitive or otherwise difficult to call.

- Information on any support provided to political parties should be disseminated through the media and other established means.

- Once party support initiatives are in place, they should be continually and closely reviewed, with close attention paid to potential political sensitivities and other risk factors.

- Activities may include the establishment of a political party resource center to provide technical assistance to parties and provide them with access to information and networking resources.

- Support may be provided to strengthening

political party liaison in initiatives designed to build the capacity of national EMBs.

CHALLENGES TO POLITICAL PARTY SUPPORT

- Care needs to be taken to avoid activities that could be seen as a direct endorsement of a political party. Examples might include allowing UNDP's name to be used in a political campaign, or singling out certain parties for support without a transparent and well-reasoned rationale.

- Working with political parties may require special resources and staff skills. These are necessary for high-level political analysis, negotiation and training.

- Partnerships with donors around activities involving political party assistance need to be considered carefully. National and international donors may have political links to some groups or may not be perceived as impartial in the national context.

Safety and Security

It is essential to develop plans to help ensure security not only on election day, but also during the pre- and post-election periods. The benefits of a smoothly run technical process can be jeopardized if peace and security are threatened. If, for example, law enforcement authorities are biased in favor of the ruling party, use excessive force at polling places or restrict the movement of opposition supporters, both the reality and perception of a well-run and accessible electoral process can suffer.

It must be acknowledged at the outset that security measures in post-conflict countries are quite different from those in non-crisis developing countries. The impact and emphasis of security consideration change radically in the two contexts, as does the budget. At the same time, however, care must be taken in all possible situations. That is because the electoral agenda, with its likely volatile atmosphere and political confrontation, may increase security threats and risks and require specific action.

In the context of post-conflict elections, it may be opportune to develop an integrated approach towards security that involves all key players (national and international security forces), as occurred in Afghanistan (2004–2005) and DRC (2005-2006). In both of those contexts, as well as in Togo in 2007, a specific project was designed and implemented to fund and coordinate security force efforts in view of providing adequate and timely support, thereby ensuring a peaceful exercise.

Issues of security management should be addressed at both the national and the community level, and should be continually reviewed and reassessed. Security management requires a good risk assessment which comprises two main phases: (1) threat and risk assessment and (2) risk mitigation and implementation.

The model developed for the first post-conflict elections in Afghanistan of the Electoral Security Operation Center (ESOC) was instrumental in conducting peaceful elections in a war-torn country. The approach used helped identify all potential risks and worked with respective security forces to find solutions. The relationships among the EMB and the security forces were reinforced through mutual understanding of the respective imperatives, and information-sharing was streamlined.

Developing a MEDEVAC (medical evacuation) plan is also essential. Outsourcing to the private sector is likely to be cost-effective and efficient to ensure that electoral staff — national and international — are covered by adequate medical support scheme, in particular when working in conflict areas.

Training and Education

Training and education on election-related issues are important for all stakeholders, including candidates, political party representatives, observers, journalists and the law enforcement community. UNDP projects typically focus on the capacity development of EMB staff — at the central and sub-national levels — with different thrust depending upon when in the Electoral Cycle the support is taking place. Yet capacity development is of course much more than training, even if training does represent an important tool in the capacity development toolbox.

One of the most powerful and cost-effective capacity development tools for electoral administration is BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections), a joint initiative of International Institute of Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), the Australian Electoral Commission and DPA/EAD. In 2007, UNDP and IFES also became partners in the BRIDGE project. BRIDGE, the most comprehensive professional development course available in election administration, places a strong emphasis on the enhancement of local capacities. Increasingly, BRIDGE modules are being included within UNDP

Electoral Cycle projects. More information can be found at www.bridge-project.org.

The ACE Electoral Knowledge Network (ACE) contains as well several materials and documents that could be used in training and professional development courses at very limited costs.

- Training for core and temporary electoral management staff appointed for electoral activities and election events should ideally be provided on a continuous basis.

- Training activities should promote norms, standards and principles of professional and ethical electoral practice in training and education: namely, impartiality, transparency, voting secrecy, equality of access, accountability and efficiency.

- Care should be taken to ensure that changes in procedures and technology are incorporated into any training for electoral staff.

- Training activities should promote equality and consider the needs of women, indigenous peoples, minorities and other traditionally disadvantaged or marginalized groups.

- EMB staff may be recruited late in the electoral calendar. Even permanent EMBs can recruit electoral staff at local levels and for polling stations very late in the process. In the best case scenario, many of these individuals are involved election after election and thus form a cadre of more or less known professionals.

- Training needs often exceed the time and resources available, particularly if there are a large number of staff who need to be trained in a very short time period. This often has a great (usually negative) impact on the overall quality and sustainability of the training provided.

- Ensuring quality and consistency of training can be difficult, especially in distant localities or when using a training-cascade system in which quality often tends to decrease when moving from level to level.

- Preserving institutional memory and learning from former experiences should be encouraged.

- Maintaining qualified and motivated staff can be difficult, especially when there are long periods between elections.

- Support for projects aimed at professional development outside and beyond the immediate electoral period is frequently overlooked.

- The turn-over of staff between electoral events is often high, which minimizes the retention of know-how.

Access by the Disabled

In programme countries, it is not unusual for people with physical disabilities to be less active participants in political processes, including elections, due to existing physical and cultural barriers in participation. The physically disabled are especially vulnerable to having their needs and issues omitted from political party platforms and policy discussions. They often have difficulty accessing political forums, as well as the information provided at such forums. For example, the deaf and blind may have difficulties in obtaining voter education information that is transmitted by radio, television or printed matter, while all physically handicapped voters may have difficulties in easily accessing polling stations.

Furthermore, voting in secret can become prob-

lematic for those who are unable to read. Voting exclusion based on mental infirmity also is increasingly becoming a contentious issue in several countries. However, assistance oriented toward extending political and voting rights to the disabled is growing and with it a set of emerging international standards[28].

Some ideas of activities in this area are included below.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ACCESS BY THE DISABLED

• The existing legal framework should be reviewed for potentially discriminating regulations. Efforts should be made to determine how such regulations can potentially be defused or eliminated.

• Disability access should be mainstreamed into the electoral process as much as feasible, including in areas such as voter and civic education.

• Electoral authorities may need assistance in identifying specific strategies to enfranchise voters with disabilities.

• There may be opportunities to partner with and engage organizations involved in advocacy for the disabled to seek their inputs on different areas of the electoral process.

• The needs of the disabled should be considered in the process of selection of polling places.

• Guidelines for officials at polling places should include instructions on how to extend special help to elderly, hospitalized and disabled voters.

• If feasible, efforts may be made to provide tactile ballot paper templates so the blind can vote in secret. In addition, consideration could be given to providing training or voter education materials in

Braille or through deaf signers.

• Efforts to develop the capacity of disabled people's organizations may be supported to strengthen demands for inclusion in the development of government and political party policies.

CHALLENGES TO ACCESS BY THE DISABLED

• In some societies there is often a low priority given to, or awareness of, disabled persons.

• Similarly, there is often a shortage of resources for initiatives to enhance the rights of disabled persons or for organizations undertaking advocacy specifically for this disadvantaged group.

• The segregation of the disabled's needs into programs or activities not mainstreamed in the overall project might mean that such activities have a limited impact.

• Disabled people's organizations often operate in competitive environments due to limited resources and skills; efforts should be made to develop collaboration among these bodies.

Support to Observation

As noted previously in this Guide, the UN cannot observe elections unless it receives a mandate to do so from a UN body such as the General Assembly or the Security Council. It also cannot typically provide observation with the same agencies engaged in offering technical assistance to an electoral process.

UNDP activities in the field of electoral observation mostly centre on coordinating international and/or domestic observers rather than UN observers.

28 See http://ace.at.org/ace-en/ace-es/focus/disability/default and www.electionaccess.org/.

Today, domestic observation is allowed in most environments and in many cases international observation missions have been deployed in countries where UNDP contributes technically and financially to the same electoral process. Electoral assistance and election observation therefore should be seen as complementary activities in the context of long-term assistance to an Electoral Cycle because they contribute — albeit in a different manner — to the democratic development of the beneficiary country. The observers' recommendations should represent the basis for the establishment of the reform agenda as well as a platform for the international community and the beneficiary country to programme the next series of interventions. By the same token, domestic and international observation missions may benefit from the experience gained through electoral assistance projects.

To support international observer missions, UNDP can do a number of different things. They may include briefing observers upon arrival in a country, arranging transportation, providing maps, planning routes and preparing emergency procedures, and establishing a resource centre to serve as a clearinghouse to facilitate both domestic and international election observation activities. The agency can also coordinate deployment of observers on election day, facilitate the collection and analysis of information gathered by observers, and organize debriefings.

To support domestic observation efforts, UNDP often includes in its projects an element of training or logistical support to umbrella civil society organizations. There is a window opportunity when designing and implementing election support projects for strengthening national observation capacities through limited and time-bound support. Tailored training programs for domestic observation groups and administrative/logistical support can be carried out with limited resources (human/financial) while having significant impact on the process, in particular with regard to the perception of the exercise by voters. In The Gambia (2006), a comprehensive training programme was developed in collaboration with NGOs and the election commission (including the printing of a domestic observation manual) and direct support (administrative cost/per diem for observers) provided to help deploy domestic observers countrywide. Support to domestic observation groups can be linked to support initiatives for civil society, in particular in the area of voter and civic education, where synergies in identifying local partnerships and implementing voter education programmes can be easily put in place.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUPPORT TO OBSERVATION

- The DPA Guidance Note on support to international observation should be followed (see **Annex 2**).

- If support to international electoral observation is identified as a priority, a separate project should be developed with the support of DPA/EAD. This project should be clearly distinct and separately managed from any UNDP technical assistance project.

- If support to a European Union Electoral Observation Mission (EUEOM) is requested and approved by the focal point for electoral assistance activities, advice and assistance should be sought from the UN/UNDP Brussels Office. That office has experience in discreetly supporting such missions without obstructing UNDP's overall role in electoral assistance. The office also maintains relations with the units of the EC tasked with planning and implementing such missions. (See **Annex 3** for more detail on EUEOMs).

- Support to domestic or international observation should be included among the elements to be considered in the needs assessment phase.

- Requests for international observation often arrive late and separate from requests for technical assistance.

- Security for international observers where UNDP is providing logistical or other support must be done in conjunction with DSS and its standards.

- Support to domestic monitoring efforts should be done as fairly and transparently as possible to guard against UNDP being associated too closely with the findings and recommendations of the observer groups.

- Mutual distrust and competition for donor funding among domestic observation groups/coalitions could make coordination efforts extremely difficult.

Global Initiatives

Lastly, a number of innovative global initiatives have been undertaken by UNDP in partnership with other electoral assistance providers to avoid duplications of efforts and rationalize donor activities targeting harmonization of procedures, cost effectiveness and sustainability. These initiatives can be helpful in myriad ways to Country Offices planning or implementing electoral assistance and include, inter alia, the following strategic partnerships:

- **ACE[29] – The Electoral Knowledge Network.** ACE is a joint initiative of International IDEA, IFES, Elections Canada, the Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico, the UN Department of Eco-

nomic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), DPA/EAD, the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), the European Commission and UNDP. ACE is the world's largest repository of information (with more than 10,000 pages divided by 12 electoral topics), tools and methodologies on electoral assistance and a global Practitioners' Network including more than 300 experienced election practitioners. It also has a regional infrastructure of affiliated electoral resource centres openly available online and a capacity development facility in the Southern Africa region. ACE aims to manage knowledge in the following three ways:

  - **Generate knowledge**. ACE established a platform for the generation, codification, sharing and dissemination of specialized electoral knowledge, comparative experience and documental resources.
  - **Share knowledge.** ACE promotes peer networking; professional dialogue and collaboration; and sustained sharing of knowledge, expertise, resources and information among experienced EMBs, networks and organizations worldwide;
  - **Apply knowledge**. ACE established a global infrastructure, with regional hubs, for the generation of specialized regional knowledge, dissemination of the knowledge already available in the network, and its practical application in electoral assistance projects with a beneficiary-led approach.

- **BRIDGE**. International IDEA, DPA/EAD and the Australian Election Commission launched the original version of the BRIDGE project as a capacity development tool. In 2007, IFES and UNDP joined the project as partners. BRIDGE is the most comprehensive professional development course available in election administration. As of the date this Guide was

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29 ACE originally stood for the 'Administration and Cost of Elections' project. More information can be found at www.aceproject.org.

published, BRIDGE had been conducted in 25 countries for more than 3,000 election officials. The course aims to improve the skills, knowledge, and confidence both of election professionals and of key stakeholders in the electoral process, such as members of the media, political parties and electoral observers[30].

- **UNDP–European Commission Partnership in Electoral Assistance**, operationalized through:

  - The signature of the EC–UNDP Operational Guidelines on the implementation of electoral assistance programmes and projects. This document rationalized the existing de facto partnership between UNDP and the European Commission on the ground. It clarifies several implementation details improving the overall EC–UNDP collaboration in this field (see **Annex 4**).

  - The establishment of the EC–UNDP Joint Task Force (JTF) on Electoral Assistance composed of the core group of staff, advisors and specialists who work in the electoral assistance field within EC and UNDP at Headquarters levels. The JTF is coordinated by the UN/UNDP Brussels Office and its overarching purpose is to further improve the effectiveness of electoral assistance activities by ensuring adherence of the projects to the common EC–UNDP approach, by identifying strategic options, and by responding to the new challenges facing electoral assistance.

- **UNDP, EC and International IDEA Joint Training on Effective Electoral Assistance** and the **Global Training Platform proposal** in the same area.

  - Between 2004 and 2006, UNDP, the EC and IDEA developed a joint training programme on effective electoral assistance and delivered two training sessions to EC and UNDP staff in Brussels and Dar es Salaam in September and November 2006, respectively. The objectives of the joint training were to introduce EC and UNDP staff to the policy and strategy framework that governs both EU and UN involvement in elections, share experiences, and familiarize practitioners with the Electoral Cycle approach in order to build capacity for formulation and implementation of future electoral assistance projects. EC and UNDP specialists in collaboration with IDEA have so far trained more than 100 of their colleagues on the principles of effective electoral assistance and on the institutional aspects of joint electoral assistance projects in the two sessions that took place in 2006.

  - The experience acquired through this initiative, unique in its kind, represents an investment that UNDP, the EC and IDEA intend to build on with the establishment of a Global Training Platform on effective electoral assistance. The methodology applied in the Joint Training in Effective Electoral Assistance will be further expanded to cater to larger audiences and applied to

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30 For more information, see www.bridge-project.org.

wider initiatives in the domain of democratic governance and public administration reform. It is proposed to put at the disposal of the Joint Donors' Competence Development Network the experiences acquired thus far by UNDP, the EC and IDEA and to create a common platform that could then be easily customized to fit the needs of every development agency. This platform allows the further refinement of the face-to-face training modules and also the development of blended and e-learning training programmes, primarily for the donor community but also for the capacity development of regional associations of EMBs, national EMBs, universities and practitioners.

Every new electoral assistance project can and should make use of these initiatives with activities to be formulated during the assessment/formulation missions. EMBs and UNDP Country Offices need to be made aware that these initiatives can be easily taken advantage of at relatively low costs and with limited implementing capacity. Ideally, the synergies with ACE and BRIDGE especially should be included as a key component in every electoral assistance project. To this purpose, UNDP is committed to make the mentioned tools available in several languages other than English.

IFES/ Kenesh Sainazarov

Management and Governance

4 Management and Governance

Effective electoral project management and governance are characterized by a commitment to excellence in communication among all management levels; an unambiguous focus on capacity development, institution-strengthening and sustainability; and the balancing of political realities and development objectives.

UNDP's Results Management Guide (RMG) has adapted the existing project management method Prince2™ (Projects in Controlled Environments) for UNDP to organize the project cycle and to govern the cycle in a structured manner. UNDP's resource management platform/system ATLAS has a module for project management available that is built on the Prince2 methodology and should be used to administer all development projects in the organization. Guidance on how to use the project management module in ATLAS can be found in UNDP's online 'On Demand' ATLAS training guide[31]. Furthermore, the RMG provides specific guidance and prescriptive contents on UNDP's management and governance of projects and programmes. Further tools and guidance to support the professionalization and improvement of CO-level UNDP programme and project management practices can be found online at the Programme and Project Management for Results — Maturity Toolkit (available at http://ppmtoolkit.undp.org).

Management structures used in electoral assistance projects vary widely from one context to another. Election support programming carried out within peacekeeping or other political mission structures led by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) or other representative of the Secretary-General differs from that managed by a UNDP Country Office in a more stable environment. In a peacekeeping context, the SRSG heads up the overall mission and is supported by deputies responsible for political and development/humanitarian areas. It is especially important in such contexts that the political and development interests are in close communication and that there is harmonization in the reporting process.

Thus far, the term 'integrated mission' has referred less to a specific management model than to a strategy of placing all of the UN component parts in a country — peacekeeping, humanitarian and development — as part of an effort to achieve a successful transition from peace to development. In practice, integrated missions have varied in structure and in the extent of integration, with some such as Sierra Leone having an Executive

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31 Available at http://ondemandweb.undp.org/
OnDemandProduction/OnDemandWebPortal/pg_portal1.shtml.

Representative of the Secretary-General who is also the top humanitarian and development official in the country (wearing the so-called, 'three hats'). In DRC, the Deputy Representative of the Secretary-General in charge of the electoral assistance portfolio was also the UNDP Resident Representative. He was supported in this role by a UNDP Country Director. In other places, such as Sudan, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General is supported by two deputies. One works closely with the Special Representative in addressing good offices and political support to the peace process and governance (including electoral support), while the other acts as UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator and deals with development concerns.

In more 'routine' development contexts, the UNDP Country Office takes the lead on coordination and management of electoral assistance — either directly or through a Programme Management Unit (PMU).

Coordination and Management Arrangements

A useful management model for an electoral assistance project receiving pooled funding from several donors may be a two-tiered management structure. One tier provides for a policy or oversight committee normally referred to as a Steering Committee to ensure the project remains on track, on time and on budget. The other tier refers to a day-to-day PMU that can implement the project at the technical level and report to the Steering Committee. (See Chapter 5 for more information on funding arrangements.)

To supplement these project-specific management tools, it is also useful to ensure that adequate donor coordination and stakeholder coordination forums exist.

The basic two management bodies and two coordination mechanisms — which can take different specific forms depending upon the country and context — are listed below. The first and fourth are properly characterized as coordination mechanisms, while the second and third are UNDP project management mechanisms.

1. An overall **Donor Coordination Mechanism** that includes heads of donor agencies — both those contributing to a common 'basket fund' and those contributing to the elections through bilateral or other means — and is often co-chaired by the national EMB or at least informed periodically by it. This mechanism, facilitated by the lead donor and/or UNDP Resident Representative on behalf of donors, should meet from time to time to discuss the evolving political environment, share plans and activities, deliberate issues of common concern, negotiate agreed responses, and analyze emerging needs and risks. This high-level forum can be an important part of donor coordination, with the emphasis on high-level policy development, collaboration and information-sharing.

2. Within the context of the project per se, there is a need for a specific policy and decision-making mechanism. Increasingly, these joint or pooled funding arrangements — usually managed by UNDP — are called 'baskets', and the committee created to manage the policy level is called a **Steering Committee**. A Steering Committee usually meets quarterly or monthly (and more frequently if elections are approaching) and is responsible for general oversight of project activities within the basket, including financial oversight and approval of funding allocations within the overall budget as recommended by the PMU (see below). It should receive regular reports from the PMU and the EMB, approve

major activities and expenditures, reach consensus and take decisions in any change in the project work plan, provide ongoing risk analysis, and consider funding for emerging issues. It is facilitated by the PMU, which provides secretariat services and liaises with the Steering Committee chair in the preparation of agendas, notification to members, reports on the various project components and provision of minutes. The Steering Committee includes representatives from contributing donors, the EMB and key domestic stakeholders as required (including CSOs). It may be chaired or co-chaired by UNDP, the lead donor, the EMB or a combination thereof. The reports of the Steering Committee can be shared with all donors to the basket. (See Chapter 5 for more information on donor coordination and management structures.)

3. The **Programme Management Unit** (PMU) is the dedicated, technically staffed unit that administers, manages and monitors the overall election project on a day-to-day basis. PMU staff should include experts in electoral management who have experience in the various components of the electoral assistance project — for example, voter registration, civil society, the media, political parties, and/or electoral observation — and some members should be familiar with UNDP procedures on recruitment, procurement and project execution modalities. The PMU is led by a Chief Technical Advisor or Project Manager and may include part- or full-time staff. The PMU should include a dedicated finance and administration officer to record, process, disburse and report income and expenditures on a regular basis. The finance officer works closely with the UNDP Country Office's finance professionals. The PMU can also serve a secretariat function for donor coordination and support as outlined under the Steering Committee functions noted previously. Given the political sensitivities and donor partnerships at stake, there is a need for regular (fortnightly at minimum) briefings and debriefings with the UNDP senior management (Deputy Resident Representative, Country Director and/or Resident Representative) and in mission environments with the SRSG/Deputy SRSG or other (executive or political) representative of the Secretary-General, whose support is often critical when swift decisions/actions are necessary.

4. A **Stakeholder** or **Information-Sharing Forum** has also proved to be a good overall coordination tool in some places and/or can function as a 'sounding board' for the project. This forum is usually best convened by the EMB per se, rather than UNDP, on a monthly basis or so. The invitees typically include all organizations working in the election field as well as relevant officers within donor agencies. The purpose of the forum is to ensure common knowledge on election activities, harmonization and 'leveraging of synergies' and to avoid duplication of programming. The agenda includes an update from the EMB on election preparations and related issues and short presentations from each group on their activities followed by general discussion on nominated or emerging issues.

TABLE 7: KEY FEATURES OF COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

High-Level Donor Coordination *Convened by UNDP* *UNDP/donors/EMB; high-level representation at ambassador or designate level* *Frequency: As required, but once every 1-3 months* *Political issues; resource mobilization*	**Information-Sharing Forum** *Convened by the EMB* *Includes, but not limited to, UN; national/international civil society organizations; development agency representatives; technical-level* *Frequency: Monthly* *Update on preparations; technical issues*	**Coordination and Information Sharing**
Project Steering Committee *Convened on a schedule by UNDP* *UNDP/EMB/project donors* *Frequency: Quarterly to monthly, depending on need* *Project oversight and decision-making*	**Project Management Unit** *Day-to-day administration and management of project* *Frequency: The PMU should meet as a team at least once a week.* *Serves as secretariat to Steering Committee*	**UNDP Project**

Table 7 above summarizes the key features of these various mechanisms.

As noted previously, the Steering Committee is intended to be the group responsible for making — on a consensus basis — management decisions for the project when guidance is required, including recommendations for UNDP approval of project revisions. Such decisions must adhere to UNDP rules and regulations. Project reviews by the Steering Committee should be made at regular intervals or as necessary.

The Steering Committee in this sense may have the same composition as the **Project Board** in the language of UNDP's Results Management Guide, which normally comprises the following members:

Project Executive: Head of Programme, UNDP Country Office (RR or Country Director/DRR-P)[32]

Senior Beneficiary: Head or designate of the EMB

Senior Supplier: Deputy Resident Representative, Operations UNDP Country Office, donors

Project support should be provided by the UNDP Country Office through operations personnel and a DEX service center if one exists, to support the day-to-day operational work of the project team or PMU. Project assurance in terms of substantive support should be provided through an Assistant Resident Representative and/or Programme Officer for governance or equivalent in the UNDP Country Office. An important principle to remember is that project assurance and project management should never be functions held by the same individual.

The project management structure described above can be illustrated as in **Figure 3**. The boxes in gray represent component parts of the PMU, and the boxes in white represent components of the UNDP Country Office. The project teams would offer temporary 'in and out' advisory services to help deliver key results under the project and would be located within the UNDP-based PMU.

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32 It should be noted that most electoral assistance projects are direct execution (DEX).

Steering Committee
Project Executive (Chair)
Senior Beneficiary (EMB)
Senior Supplier, Donors

Project assurance
UNDP ARR Governance
Elections Advisor
Programme Officer

Project management
Chief Technical Advisor +/or Project Manager
Operations Manager
Finance/Administration

Project support
UNDP Operations/DEX
Unit, Service Centre

Project teams as required

Project teams as required

Project teams as required
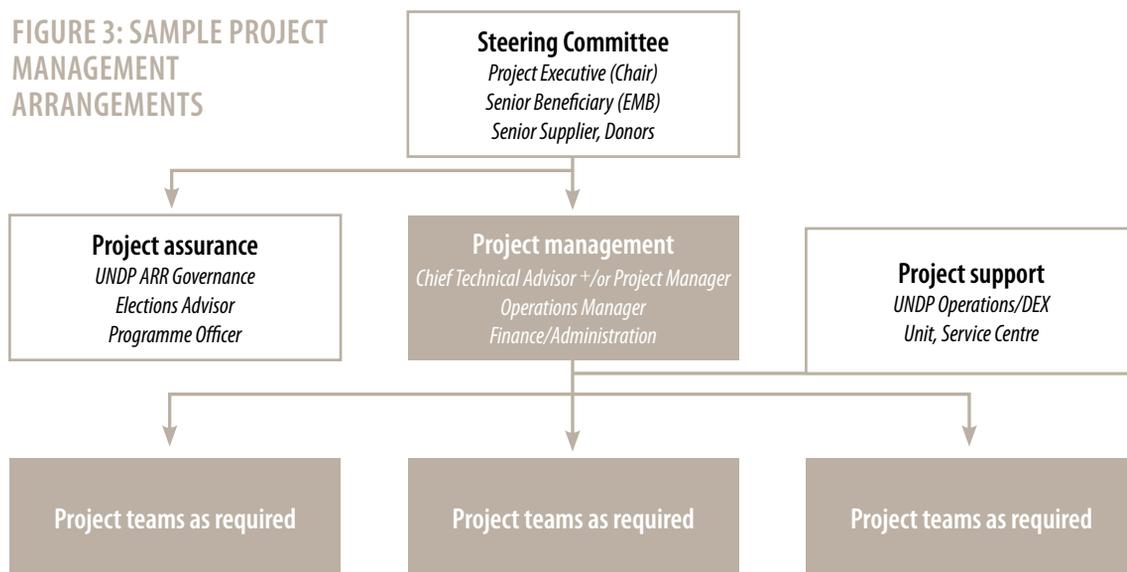
Execution and Implementation Arrangements

As detailed in the Note of Guidance between UNDP and UN DPA, election-specific projects use direct execution (DEX) as the default modality, where UNDP is the executing agent of the project, and the senior staff of the PMU report to UNDP (RR/DRR) and to the donors through the Steering Committee[33]. On the other hand, some longer-term electoral assistance projects that offer capacity development assistance to EMBs over a period of time have used the national execution (NEX) modality following an assessment of capacities within the national institution. Under NEX, the project is managed by the EMB and UNDP works closely with the managing body to identify specialist support needs and contract such personnel. Specialist experts report to the EMB but should have a good working relationship also with UNDP.

With direct execution it is important to note that regardless of where the PMU sits (within the UNDP Country Office, in the EMB or in some third loca-

tion), the Project Manager is under UNDP contract and UNDP has responsibility for making project management decisions.

Another factor that affects direct execution of election projects is the existence or not of delegation of authority[34]. Such authority usually flows from the senior UNDP management to the Chief Technical Advisor of the election project. Other relevant factors are (i) the different profiles and division of labour between the Project Manager and the Chief Technical Advisor if both positions exist and (ii) the delineation of responsibilities/intervention/chain of command among the various levels and individuals. An appropriate level of delegation of authority also allows for a clear separation of roles and functions according to Prince2, especially in the framework of DEX projects. If the Chief Technical Advisor or member of PMU for the elections support project is provided with authority to approve vouchers and purchase orders and is responsible to the steering committee, the UNDP Country Office staff can focus more on project assurance.

33 See Annex 5 for a sample terms of reference.

34 For more guidance, please refer to Direct implementation Guidance (http://intra.undp.org/bdp/modalities/index.html) which is available in RMG.

In 'harmonized' environments where a Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) exists, the definition of 'execution' shifts to one of overall ownership and responsibility for programme activities. All activities within the CPAP signed by government and UNDP are, therefore, nationally executed. 'Implementation' is redefined as management and delivery of programme activities to achieve specified outputs, as in the Annual Work Plans (AWPs).

Under the simplification and harmonization process, the CPAP elevates responsibility for execution of the project to the management of the Country Programme (CP). By reinforcing the definition of execution as 'overall management' rather than the management of inputs, the CPAP encourages government involvement in directing the strategy of the CP, rather than the micro-managing of inputs.

Under this harmonized procedure, UNDP's lexicon of DEX, NEX, etc. will eventually disappear. That is because in most countries, the signature of the CPAP would automatically imply NEX with implementation by various implementing partners. Execution would thus be de-linked from managing inputs.

Choosing Implementing Partners

The term 'implementing partner' in the harmonized (CPAP) regime is equivalent to 'executing entity' in the non-harmonized regime. By 'implementing partners' this section refers to those institutions or companies that were 'implementing entities' in the non-harmonized regime. Since 'implementing entities' are essentially contractors, a competitive process (procurement) will apply unless they are government institutions or UN agencies.

The UNDP Country Office and the PMU must review the capacities needed for performing all election-related tasks. In doing so, the Country Office and PMU should analyze each task, determine which of the capacities applies to the task, and assess if proper capacities are present. If capacities are not adequate, it should be determined what additional measures need to be taken and a follow-up action plan should be designed.

Necessary capacities include the following:

Technical capacity. Ability to carry out and monitor the technical aspects of assistance.

Managerial capacity. Ability to plan, monitor and co-ordinate activities.

Administrative capacity. Ability to prepare, authorize and adjust commitments and expenditures; ability to procure, manage and maintain equipment; and ability to recruit and manage the best-qualified personnel.

Financial capacity. Ability to produce project budgets; ability to ensure physical security of advances, cash and records; ability to disburse funds in a timely and effective manner; and the ability to ensure financial recording and reporting.

Negotiating with Implementing Partners

When contracting with the implementing partners, UNDP personnel should discuss and record the relationships and costs. These may include the following:

- Roles and relationships with the government, the EMB, political parties, CSOs, the media, the public, the PMU and all other stakeholders.
- An honest evaluation of the actual deliverables should be submitted to donors.

- Frequency and scope of reporting and data collection.

- Work plans and deadlines.

- Staff contracts and staff rules.

How to set up a PMU

The staffing of a PMU is closely related to the nature of the proposed assistance. For example, if the project calls for strong political coordination and democracy building, then the Project Manager should have the profile and experience that fits with those requirements. Where there is a primary focus on technical assistance to the EMB then it may be advisable for the manager's skills to reflect this priority or for there to be a Chief Technical Advisor post supported by a Project Manager. Additional guidance on office structures may be found in the Toolkit for Managing Change[35], which also contains some additional examples of mergers and functions in Azerbaijan, China and Vietnam in which the financial and PMU units were consolidated.

If electoral assistance is to be nationally executed, the EMB should manage the project and, after identifying requirements, UNDP should recruit technical experts who will report to the national programme manager or head of the EMB.

UNDP levies a 7 percent management fee for managing donor funds in order to recover costs. However, this only covers general management services. Support costs for the office/secretariat and the PMU per se should come from the project budget. It is often difficult to explain to donors that, in addition to general management support (GMS), UNDP also intends to charge implementation support services (ISS) for procurement and financial disbursement. Yet ISS costs can in most cases be built into the project budget through the inclusion of procurement and finance staff positions.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SETTING UP A PMU

- Identify staffing requirements in consultation and agreement with the project's beneficiary (usually the EMB).

- Determine the skills and experience required for staff, including the Project Manager and specialist staff; prepare ToR; seek assistance from DPA/EAD, UNDP regional centers and Headquarters, the EC–UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance, and the UNDP (senior) electoral advisor, if there is one, to identify appropriate personnel. Consider the possibility of obtaining assistance or skills from established EMBs.

- Set up bank accounts and financial authorizations.

- Allocate office space and procure necessary office equipment.

- After recruitment of the project manager, advertise and appoint local staff. Brief senior PMU staff on communication protocols with the government and other key stakeholders. Brief senior PMU staff on UNDP guidelines and procedures especially in relation to recruitment, procurement, tendering, ATLAS and so on.

- Clarify reporting relationships and communication protocols within UNDP, including media spokesperson responsibilities.

- Delineate relationships (communications and correspondence) among regular UNDP Country Office authorities and PMU staff (including the Chief Technical Advisor) with government and other key actors so as to avoid confusion on roles and authority.

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35 See http://managingchange.undp.org.

- Include the PMU in any inter-agency communication strategy to avoid duplications or conflicting policy decisions.

- An effective participatory partnership between the PMU and the RC/RR and UNDP CO team is essential for the smooth operation of a project. Weekly meetings should be held between the PMU and the programme and operations sections of the UNDP Country Office to facilitate programming needs. UNDP senior management team should meet with the PMU at least fortnightly.

- It is fundamental as well to identify within the CO a dedicated programme officer (ARR for instance), senior enough, who will act as the UNDP CO election Focal Point, help the PMU liaise with UNDP CO departments, follow project issues with UNDP senior management, and help bridge the gap that may exist between the PMU and the CO. This role is particularly important when the PMU is not located within the UNDP premises.

- An 'exit strategy' for the PMU should be established at the outset, and the hand-over of information, documentation and ongoing processes needs to be well in place.

CHALLENGES IN SETTING UP A PMU

- Ensuring a harmonious working relationship between the PMU and UNDP Country Office staff is vital. CO staff must be well informed about PMU activities and potential demands on their time, especially with contracting, tenders, evaluation committees and so on. It is also necessary to ensure that delineations of tasks and responsibilities between regular CO staff and PMU staff are made ahead and monitored by senior CO management.

- Any election-related project will be high profile, while routine electoral assistance may be less so. Therefore it is important to ensure that the UNDP Country Office is well informed about overall electoral activities, is as engaged as possible with the project, and is able to learn from it. The PMU should attend UNDP (governance cluster and, if possible, general) staff meetings and make presentations from time to time.

- The demands of an elections project on the time of the senior management (SRSG, DSRSG, RR, Country Director, DRR) will be high.

- Having a clear media policy is crucial. Such a policy should differentiate between provision of facts about election activities and opinion on political or electoral environment and events.

- Maintaining a focus on development goals is necessary.

- There should be clear supervisory lines in an 'integrated mission' context.

UNDP Brussels/ Fabio Bargiacchi

chapter 5

Resource Mobilization and Fund Management

5 Resource Mobilization and Fund Management

Initial discussions with donors about possible financial support for electoral assistance should start during the needs assessment phase. More detailed negotiations will ensue once project arrangements, the related project budget and donor positions have become clearer.

Donors may choose to fund electoral assistance in different ways: usually through direct bilateral support of the respective governments, through civil society or the UN, or a combination of the two. Regardless of how funding is channeled, it is important to ensure close coordination and information sharing among all partners involved so that assistance is delivered in a timely and efficient manner.

When donors decide to channel funding in support of an electoral assistance initiative through UNDP, then this funding is received and managed based on two possible scenarios determined by the related programmatic arrangement/set-up:

1. **Scenario #1: Funding is received and managed in support of a UNDP electoral assistance project.** When donor funding is raised in support of a UNDP project, then UNDP has two principal instruments to receive and manage such funding: cost-sharing and trust funds. In the context of electoral support, 'basket fund' arrangements can be established to better coordinate the implementation of these very complex, politically sensitive and highly visible projects. Based on those principle instruments,

three possible funding arrangements can be identified, each of which is discussed in greater detail in this chapter:

   a. standard cost-sharing arrangements
   b. trust funds
   c. 'basket fund' arrangements

2. **Scenario #2: Funding is received and managed on the basis of a multi-donor trust fund (MDTF) of which UNDP is part.** MDTFs are established based on the pass-through arrangement in the context of UNDG joint programmes. The legal basis for these programmes is a joint programme document or the terms of reference (ToR) of the MDTF that have been developed jointly between the participating UN organizations and the respective country government. Only in exceptional circumstances (most likely in post-crisis or transition environments) will electoral assistance be funded through an MDTF arrangement.

Additional information on resource mobilization and donor coordination in electoral assistance is provided in UNDP's 'Resource Mobilization Toolkit'[36].

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36 See http://resourcemobilization.brsp.undp.org/3d_EC_Electoral_Assistance.cfm.

Funding Mechanisms

SCENARIO #1: FUNDING IS RECEIVED AND MANAGED IN SUPPORT OF A UNDP ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

As discussed previously, the following funding arrangements apply when donor funding is received in support of an electoral assistance initiative that is based on a UNDP project. For more guidance on UNDP's programming instruments and project management issues please consult the UNDP User Guide[37].

Standard Cost-Sharing Arrangement

Cost-sharing is a co-financing modality under which contributions can be received for specific UNDP projects in line with UNDP policies, aims and activities[38]. Donor governments as well as other donors — such as private sector entities, foundations and CSOs, all called 'third parties' because they are not parties to signing the project document — contribute funds to UNDP projects. These funds are multi-donor in nature, meaning that as many donors as possible or necessary can contribute to a given set of agreed results and project outputs. Funding is co-mingled and can include funds from UNDP (TRAC allocations). Financial reporting on cost-sharing contributions (as well as closed trust funds, as discussed below) is undertaken at the project level in ATLAS. Cost-sharing contributions continue to be the instrument on which basis the majority of other (non-core) resources are being received.

Main advantages. Financial contributions received as cost-sharing are easy to manage: The Country Office has the authority to enter into these agreements as long as they are consis-

tent with current standard agreement templates and UNDP rules and regulations. It is important to remember that donor-specific agreements take precedence over the generic standard agreement templates[39]. Donors can earmark their contributions at the ATLAS project level.

If a donor insists on specific agreement clauses that differ from the agreed standard text, the Division for Resource Mobilization in BRSP should be contacted (via e-mail, at cosupport@undp.org) to assist with the clearance of non-standard agreements.

Trust Funds

A trust fund is a co-financing modality established as a separate accounting entity under which UNDP receives contributions to finance UNDP programme activities specified by the donor. Trust funds may be established by the executive board or by the administrator for specified purposes consistent with the policies, aims and activities of UNDP. Each trust fund is established either on the basis of a written agreement signed on behalf of UNDP and one or more donors or by the issuance of ToR for the trust fund in anticipation of receipt of contributions from prospective donors. The establishment of trust funds and the conclusion of agreements regarding contributions from donors take place under the authority of the Associate Administrator. That individual, except when she/he has explicitly delegated such authority, signs all trust fund agreements or documents establishing trust funds[40].

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37 See http://content.undp.org/go/userguide/results.
38 See BRSP Intranet at http://content.undp.org/go/groups/brsp/Non-Core/Cofinancing-Modalities/?g11n.enc=ISO-8859-1&src=brsp.

39 A list of standard co-financing agreements can be found at the BRSP Intranet Web site at http://content.undp.org/go/groups/brsp/Non-Core/Formats/?g11n.enc=ISO-8859-1). Meanwhile, donor-specific agreements are listed at http://content.undp.org/go/groups/brsp/Non-Core/Don/?g11n.enc=ISO-8859-1).
40 Standard documents and policies that apply to the different types of trust funds are available at the BRSP Intranet site at http://content.undp.org/go/groups/brsp/Non-Core/Formats/?g11n.enc=ISO-8859-1.

Main disadvantages. Trust fund arrangements must undergo a particular clearance process often involving various HQ units before they can be formally established. (Thematic Trust Funds are an exception here since they have already been corporately established.) A Trust Fund Manager has to be appointed for each fund. Financial reporting is undertaken at the fund (summary) level only; no project level reporting is available.

Receiving contributions from the European Commission on the basis of a standard 'closed trust fund' arrangement

Any contribution from the European Commission (EC) has to be received on the basis of a standard 'closed trust fund' arrangement. Such an arrangement implies that the trust fund allows receipt of only one contribution from one donor in support of one particular project; or, in other words, it is 'closed' to other donors and projects. Closed trust fund contributions are treated the same way as cost-sharing in ATLAS: Both arrangements are considered project-level co-financing with financial reporting at the project level.

In terms of resources and number of projects, the EC is UNDP's most significant partner in the area of electoral assistance. Between 1997 and 2006, the EC and UNDP collaborated on implementing 54 electoral assistance projects, mainly targeting African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. During that period, the EC contributed a total of €359 million (US$459 million) in support of such projects. More detailed guidance for Country Offices on how to work with the EC and what to keep in mind when signing agreements with the EC is available in the 'Resource Mobilization Toolkit'[41].

Receiving contributions through the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund

In some cases, donors prefer to channel their financial support through the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (DGTTF) using the service line for 'electoral systems and processes'. When doing so, they often earmark their funding towards a particular country project[42].

Main advantages. An existing funding mechanism is in place, which means there is no need to establish a new trust fund. Also, signature of trust fund agreements is delegated to the Country Office, where procedures are simplified through standard documents/templates. Some donors also assume that by contributing through the DGTTF they are particularly supportive of the thematic area, thereby 'buying into' the overall picture as reflected in DGTTF report. This is not a common way of receiving contributions for electoral assistance projects, given the preference for cost-sharing arrangements negotiated and signed at the local level.

Receiving contributions through an 'open trust fund'

In the past, Country Offices worked through specific trust funds in support of electoral assistance projects open to various donors. These 'open trust funds' frequently were established to give particular visibility to donors providing the necessary funding. However, UNDP has widely come to question the necessity of these trust funds arrangements because with the introduction of ATLAS there seems to be no particular operational argument in favor of trust fund instead of cost-sharing arrangements. In principal, trust fund arrangements are much more cumbersome to establish and costly to administer in comparison

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41 For more information about UNDP's partnership with the EC as well as related operational details, see http://resourcemobilization.brsp.undp.org/3d_Working_with_European_Commission.cfm

42 More detailed information on the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (DGTTF) and its operations can be found at http://practices.undp.org/democratic-governance/ttf/index.cfm?src=121515.

with cost-sharing arrangements. Therefore, the establishment of open trust funds is corporately discouraged and is only approved by the Associate Administrator on an exceptional basis.

Basket Funds

'Basket fund' arrangements in the context of electoral assistance are first and foremost instruments aimed at improving coordination among donors and partners involved in the implementation of these very complex, politically sensitive and highly visible projects. To emphasize their cooperation in supporting a particular electoral assistance project, donors and partners sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with UNDP to that effect. A standard MoU is available as **Annex 5** to this Guide.

Basket funds do not represent a new funding mechanism; in such arrangements, funding continues to be received on the basis of UNDP's standard cost-sharing or closed trust fund arrangements, both described previously. Financial reporting on basket fund arrangements has proved challenging in the past.

Main advantages. A basket fund arrangement enables a number of development partners to provide electoral assistance in close formal cooperation with each other. The enhanced coordination structure of a basket fund (reflected in the Basket

BOX 7: THE SPECIFIC CASE OF TANZANIA

For the 2005 elections in the *United Republic of Tanzania*, a total of 10 donor partners — Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom — agreed to support elections through a UNDP-managed basket. For this purpose an MoU was signed by all the partners, stating the partners' common, overarching goal of supporting the conduct of cost-effective, efficient, free and fair elections that are nationally owned and internationally recognized, and that enhance citizens' awareness of electoral processes. A UNDP project document was also drafted to capture this goal and the related outputs and activities. The following were among the factors positively influencing the experience:

- UNDP's engagement was timely. The agency was involved early on, developing the partnership arrangements and drafting the MoU in 2003.

- UNDP left the thematic lead to a donor, in this case the UK Department for International Development (DFID), thus avoiding a conflict of interests during project implementation.

- Programme goals matched UNDP's strengths in terms of the democratic governance practice area.

- The proposal was built on lessons learned from previous election experiences.

- UNDP offered timely, frequent reporting, which enhanced trust in the donor community.

- UNDP proposed innovative mechanisms (e.g., stakeholder forum).

- UNDP demonstrated a proven track record in election support.

- UNDP demonstrated a proven track record in serving the donor community, which helped to build the trust of the donor community. The agency was, for example, secretariat of the Donor Assistance Committee.

Fund Coordination Committee) helps resolve issues caused by the ad hoc and sometimes disjointed nature of informal collaboration. It assists in providing maximum efficiency in resource use and service delivery, thereby helping to eliminate duplication of efforts and over-supply of certain activities. The basket fund model embraces the advantages of networked linkages and collabora-

tion. Such arrangements provide a common voice and presence for donors in what can be a volatile environment.

SCENARIO #2: FUNDING IS RECEIVED AND MANAGED ON THE BASIS OF A MULTI-DONOR TRUST FUND

As described previously, multi-donor trust funds (MDTFs) are established based on the pass-through arrangement in the context of UNDG joint programmes[43]. The ToR of the MDTFs that have been developed jointly between the participating UN organizations and the respective country government lay out the programmatic and operational details of achieving the intended results. MDTFs have increasingly been used as appropriate funding mechanisms to address complex challenges (including elections) in post-crisis or transition environments.

In a pass-through arrangement, donors and participating UN organizations agree to channel funding through one of those organizations, which is selected as the administrative agent. Often, UNDP is selected to perform that function. UNDP's administrative agent portfolio has considerably increased since the establishment of the first MDTF, the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund, in 2004[44]. Currently, UNDP administers a number of other MDTFs including country-specific (such as the DR Congo Pooled Fund, Lebanon Recovery Fund, Peace Fund for Nepal, Sudan Common Humanitarian Fund) as well as global funds (such as the UNDP/Spain MDG-Achievement Fund, Central Fund for Influenza Action) and the Peace Building Fund.

Programmatic and financial accountability rests with the participating UN organizations and sub-national partners that would be managing their respective projects funded by the MDTF.

Donor funding is received by the administrative agent on behalf all participating UN organizations on the basis of a standard letter of agreement signed between the donor and the administrative agent. It is important to emphasize that UNDP standard cost-sharing and trust fund templates cannot be used.

Before donor funding can be received, the ToR of the MDTF have to be defined and the standard MoU between at least two participating UN organizations and the administrative agent must be signed.

The 'Resource Mobilization Toolkit'[45] contains more detailed guidance on how to receive donor contributions in support of joint programmes. Additional information regarding UNDP's administrative agent function and clearance of related MoUs and letters of agreement may be obtained by contacting the Executive Coordinator of the MDTF office in BRSP.

This is not a modality that has been used in electoral assistance to date, although it may perhaps have application within the context of a large peacekeeping or political mission run by other parts of the UN. In general, however, UNDP's role as a substantive provider of electoral assistance would make the MDTF option a less desirable one.

What to do

- Explore the options, costs and benefits of the various funding models with partners.

- Draft cost-sharing agreements or, where applicable, ToR of related trust funds with inter-

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43 For more details, see 2003 UNDG Guidance Note on Joint Programming, www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=240.
44 See www.irffi.org for more detailed information.

45 See http://resourcemobilization.brsp.undp.org/3d_Tips_on_JP.cfm.

ested donors and partners and follow up on the status of commitments.

- If necessary, discuss with senior management the possibility of allocating/reallocating more TRAC resources if there is an initial shortfall/delay in donor contributions.

- Ensure senior management is aware of the volume of disbursements likely to be channeled through the CO so that adequate administrative support is provided.

CHALLENGES

- Finalization of donor/partner committees, preparation of co-financing agreements and receipt of funds are time-consuming processes. Delays can have a critical effect on project delivery.

- The project document should address issues of under-subscription to the project. Guidance should be provided on prioritization of activities should this occur, with a certain percentage of resources allocated to address unanticipated emerging issues.

BOX 8: STEPS TO MOBILIZE RESOURCES FOR ELECTIONS

- Prepare a list of likely donors that have an interest in well-run, credible and inclusive electoral processes in the host country.

- Research interests of donors to help determine which activities different donors would want to support.

- Start project design early.

- Involve possible donors in design stage.

- Map funding options and preferred strategies.

- Prepare a list of possible requests along with options as to how donors can participate in the process.

- Avoid donors with overt political agendas that may be in conflict with the host governments or a majority of donor interests.

- Have a well-defined proposal when approaching donors; state clearly what is needed and operationally feasible.

- Share information on donor requirements.

- Provide information updates to donors on all project aspects.

- Share information on donor commitments among all donors.

UN Photo/ Martine Perret

Procurement and Logistics

6 Procurement and Logistics

Procurement and distribution of election materials is often the most costly part of the electoral process, apart from the payment of election workers and the voter registration exercise per se[46]. When designing the electoral support project, it is important to ensure that the budget for the election materials is realistic and estimated well in advance. Any delay or shortfall in the procurement or distribution of materials could have serious implications on the rest of the electoral schedule, thus potentially affecting the outcome of the election.

Professional advice should be sought in regards to the production of comprehensive and adequate specifications for products. The need for different kind of specifications in different context is often neglected. The inclusion of a procurement strategy and the consultation of procurement experts in the planning stage are thus crucial to the success of any electoral assistance projects. Procurement costs can dramatically increase or decrease depending on the lead time available.

There are a number of ways to better link procurement and logistics in planning from the outset:

Procurement Strategy

A successful procurement strategy should have six main objectives:

1. Delivery of all goods and services of the required quality and standards in compliance with the established deadlines for voter registration, voting operations or any electoral process without delay or shortfall.

2. UNDP project management unit/procurement officers should have a clear understanding of and familiarization with the materials required and technical specifications.

3. Clear, prior specification (qualitative and quantitative details), where political and legally possible, of the desired materials. This is necessary to ensure confidence among stakeholders that the procured materials are appropriate[47].

4. Cost-effectiveness through implementation of a transparent and competitive process.

5. Sustainability.

6. Avoidance of unrealistic expectations that cannot be met in subsequent elections.

Under UNDP financial rules, the Chief Procurement Officer, who is the head of the Bureau of Management, has delegated limited authority to

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46 See Jesper Perdersen, UNDP/IAPSO: Cost-Effective, Transparent Procurement for Elections, www.iapso.org.

47 There is a risk that when an election is internationalized, for example by the involvement of UNDP or other donors in supporting it, EMBs may feel driven either by pressure from political stakeholders, or through a fear that resources may only be available on this one occasion, to opt for high-tech equipment or processes of doubtful appropriateness and sustainability. Careful attention should be paid to the pros and cons of supporting systems that make sense in that context.

the Resident Representative to award contracts valued less than US$100,000. These contracts must, however, be approved by the local contracts committee.

Planning Procurement

Procurement planning for electoral assistance should be an integrated part of any electoral assistance project. This entails procurement of materials related to the election per se, and UNDP procurement of expertise to deliver the project.

Drafting a procurement plan is now a mandatory step in project design. Planning involves more than the selection of a procurement method; it also involves taking into account the legal and institutional frameworks in which procurement must be carried out. Major system enhancements — e.g., IT systems or new voter registration systems — should aim to start as early as possible in the post-election period, to maximize the time for system testing, procedural development, training, etc. Procuring major systems at the last minute maximizes costs, minimizes benefits and undermines sustainability.

The retention of consultants under special service agreement (SSA) contracts is now also considered a procurement issue, rather than a human resources one. This places even more importance on starting early in regards to the contracting of electoral expertise. Good electoral experts are not necessarily available at the specific time of the election in the country and need to be 'booked' well in advance, particularly if they are needed for medium- or long-term advisory posts. It is important to work with DPA/EAD to tap its roster of electoral experts and check references. Elections are always politically sensitive and the ability of electoral experts to function in such situations, in addition to their technical expertise, can be crucial to the success of the project.

Time and quality are crucial factors that must be carefully considered when planning the procurement of election materials. Those in charge of procurement should ensure that the solicitation of quotes or bids is timely, purchases are cost effective and materials are delivered on time. UNDP representatives should inform and agree with the EMB (and the donors) on the procurement requirements that must be followed. There are typically 10 steps in the UNDP procurement process:

1. Identifying needs
2. Planning
3. Specification
4. Sourcing
5. Solicitation
6. Bid evaluation
7. Pilot and validation testing
8. Negotiation
9. Award
10. Management

A procurement plan should consider the following issues:
- Procurement objectives
- Requirements/legal framework of the elections
- Roles and responsibilities
- Risks
- Costing
- Technical specifications/quality of materials
- Timeliness
- Logistics
- Disposal and retrieval

Procurement of Election Materials

Specific knowledge on how to access procurement services can considerably increase the efficiency, quality and transparency of an electoral process while reducing costs and delivery times.

Procurement of goods and services for elections can be divided into four main categories, corresponding to four different phases of the electoral process. Of the four listed below, procurement is especially important in terms of voter registration and election day activities:

Election administration. Hardware and software equipment, vehicles, communication tools, printing services.

Voter registration. Hardware and software equipment, means for printing and distribution of registration forms, voter cards and data processing, as well as other materials depending on the type of voter registration used[48].

Election day activities. Means for printing and distribution of ballot papers, ballot boxes, voting screens, indelible or invisible ink, tamper-proof materials, forms.

Results tabulation. Software, results and media centre hardware and other communication equipment.

The inflexible deadlines of electoral procurement are important to consider because timing of procurement greatly affects pricing. Although most materials are low-tech and easy to produce, only a limited number of specialized suppliers exist. The suppliers know that deadlines are tight and often take advantage of that fact. To procure materials,

UNDP may either (i) send out an invitation to bid (ITB) or (ii) request that UNDP's Procurement Support Office manage the procurement needs. That office is now responsible for election-related procurement functions formerly carried out by the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office (IAPSO).

The latter option is usually preferable because it reduces the administrative burden on the Country Office, an important consideration if capacity and understanding of elections materials are weak. It is advisable to request that Procurement Support Office colleagues conduct a short mission to assess procurement needs and offer a range of options before full-scale procurement is underway. A lead-time of one to two weeks is needed.

Procurement is generally paid for by the requesting office, with an agreement that the costs are deducted from the procurement handling fee if and when the requesting office uses the Procurement Support Office for electoral procurement.

If recruiting additional staff to support UNDP procurement functions, the Country Office should ensure that they are familiar with the UNDP procurement procedures and that they have a fair understanding of elections. If they are not familiar, intensive orientation and training initiatives should be considered as a matter of priority.

When the Procurement Support Office has been retained to undertake a competitive exercise, any subsequent clearance and review must be in compliance with UNDP's procurement guidelines. In such instances, the Country Office or the Programme Management Unit requires no further clearance from the contract review committees, regardless of the contract amounts. Instead, the Procurement Support Office must seek relevant approval of the contracts committee, in line with prevailing UNDP requirements.

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48 It is possible to group voter registration by three different types: manual and then computerized; optical mark reader (OMR) and then scanned; or digital from the field to the database.

- Weak CO support
- Vendor-driven procurement

Elections procurement often goes together with the establishment of contracts of significant financial amounts; for example, in the DRC case the purchase order for voter registration material was US$49 million. The international competition for such tenders can therefore be extremely intense, as can be the political pressure on the CO. In this context, it is crucial to fully inform all stakeholders (project partners, embassies, national and international companies) about procedures and to ensure maximum transparency.

The quality of technical specifications and tender documents also determines the success of the procurement process. If the CO decides to carry out the process, independent expertise should be recruited.

Whether to Retain UNDP's Procurement Support Office

The Procurement Support Office has the following advantages in electoral procurement compared with Country Offices:

- The Procurement Support Office handles multiple requests for electoral procurement every year. It therefore has considerable experience in the market and is aware of new trends and products.

- Long-term agreements already in place with vendors allow the Procurement Support Office to place orders directly with suppliers. This can reduce the lead time needed by two months.

- In principle, consolidating requests for electoral equipment from all UNDP Country Offices is cost-effective.

- Consolidating demand gives the Procurement Support Office better prices than a Country Office that only needs to procure election equipment once every three or four years.

- Country Offices may be able to obtain better prices from time to time, but often transaction costs, i.e., the internal cost of acquisition, are not taken into consideration.

The Procurement Support Office can also provide procurement advisory services for EMBs to ensure transparency and cost-effectiveness. Advisory services include needs assessment, procurement planning, budgeting, specifications writing, assessing and pre-qualifying local suppliers, and setting up local long-term agreements.

On the other hand, if the EMB has access to goods and services locally or regionally that are up to standards required by the specifications, that option should be encouraged from the perspective of cost, sustainability and value for money. Where possible, fairly basic consumable materials such as pens, pencils, papers and voter registration forms should be sourced locally or within the region. While diversifying sources of procurement may entail slightly more administrative work on the part of UNDP, the added benefits may include considerable contribution to the local or regional economy. Possible positive impacts might include local economic growth, jobs, and sustainability as well as possibly 'greener' procurement in the sense that there is likely to be reduced carbon emissions, particularly in transporting goods from a source nearest to where the elections are taking place. In addition, local suppliers can always register at the Procurement Support Office as suppliers and thus participate in international competition.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE PROCUREMENT

- Involve procurement from as early in the electoral assistance process as possible.

- Link procurement to logistics and, where possible, link the different units working on the issues.

- Ensure (through the EMB) that the national customs authorities are made aware of the incoming shipments of electoral equipment and that these are securely stored and guarded.

- Ensure that all sensitive materials are sampled and tested prior to placing orders. Tests should validate the evaluation when procuring highly complex productions — e.g., digital voter registration and e-voting systems.

- Ensure that the goods arrive in the country well in advance to be tested (as necessary) and distributed throughout the country.

- Maintain an inventory of goods procured; after the election, transfer the goods to the EMB.

- Standardize procurement, in particular the re-supply of consumables.

- Establish specific procedures for convening a Local Programme Advisory Committee.

- Liaise with New York to expedite Advisory Committee on Procurement (ACP) approval.

- Strategize procurement using long-term agreements (LTAs). (A number of these were developed by IAPSO and will be maintained by the Procurement Support Office on behalf of UNDP.) Develop local LTAs.

- Always compare national quotes with international bidding to ensure best value for money. Remember that best value for money does not mean the cheapest but the most adequate.

CHALLENGES TO EFFECTIVE PROCUREMENT

- Some well-established election supply firms may be contacting their embassies, the Country Office and the EMB to promote their products during the procurement process. It is important to avoid vendor-driven decision-making processes and, at the same time, advise the EMB based on the merits or demerits of approaches rather than suppliers.

- Close attention should be paid to the kind of specifications submitted to the Country Office by the EMB for procurement. They should contain sufficient detail, but without being too specific or mentioning brand names. For example, while it may be perfectly reasonable to specify the type and dimensions for procuring security locks for ballot boxes, it is not acceptable to insist that they should be identical to what was procured last time or that they should come from a certain company.

UN Photo/Sophia Paris

Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit

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7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit[49]

The purpose of monitoring and evaluating electoral assistance projects is to track progress and analyze results. Lessons learned should be generated during and after the completion of every electoral project. These lessons should be used and shared widely within and outside of UNDP, so that, if additional support is needed, they could form the basis for electoral assistance to follow.

The Prince2 project management methodology adopted by UNDP has a specific learning phase or stage called 'Closing a project' to document lessons learned. In UNDP's ATLAS system it is possible to upload any relevant monitoring and evaluation documentation; moreover, the project management module for such a project should already contain detailed monitoring data that was entered throughout the implementation of the project. Such data can be used to correct problems, refine design and development processes and fine-tune both current and future initiatives. Much of the information and guidance in this chapter deals with UNDP project and results monitoring and evaluation. However, these processes also need to be designed so as to be complementary with those of the EMB, rather than providing an opportunity for the EMB to avoid having to go through a process of self-analysis.

WHAT TO DO

- Set up a monitoring and evaluation mechanism before project implementation. This step proves particularly helpful later on during the audit and the independent evaluation often required by donors. Define realistic indicators that can easily be measured objectively (for instance, setting an indicator of xx% increase in voter turnout may be risky and indicate failure of the project if it is not met). Maintain records of monitoring meetings and decisions made during them; for auditing purposes, special attention should be given to adaptations/deviations in project implementation.

- Be aware that monitoring of the project outputs and progress towards outcomes, and reporting corporately on them, is the responsibility of the UNDP Country Office and the project management unit. At the same time, UNDP should be encouraging EMBs to evaluate their own processes critically and constantly, and without any sense of defensiveness or embarrassment.

- Ensure that the budget for monitoring and evaluation is adequate at the design stage of the project. The budget may need to include the cost of monitoring visits or a mid-term review by outside experts or internal UN/UNDP

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49 UNDP Evaluation Office, June 2002, Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating for Results.

policy advisors (from EAD, UNDP Regional Centre or Headquarters) as well as the EC–UNDP Task Force on Electoral Assistance.

- Define the scope of the project evaluation within the project document, which should state the goals or objectives of the evaluation.

- Determine what capacities should have been developed as well as what capacities were in fact developed (and how). Identify any additional or unanticipated capacities that were unexpectedly developed.

- Monitor the functionality of partnerships and information sharing networks.

- Identify whether innovative methodologies were used and were successful.

- Monitor results. For example, the important thing is not the number of voter education workshops that are held, but rather what attendees of the workshop learned about voting and how that knowledge was or was not translated into action.

- Identify the level of participation among stakeholders, including donors. It is usually preferable for UNDP to assist the EMB; ideally, the EMB should be driving the monitoring and evaluation process, not just participating in it.

- Share and examine monitoring data with donors and Country Office management.

- Assess which particular interventions or results contributed to strengthen democratic governance, sustainable development and human rights, so that linkages are made to long-term goals that UNDP is interested in pursuing.

- Assess the contribution of this project to any broader international programme of electoral assistance activities.

- Ensure that once a project is completed, lessons learned are passed along to the stake-holders that will continue to be involved in the strengthening of the electoral process, including BDP's Democratic Governance Group and DPA/EAD. If project consultants were selected from the DPA/EAD roster, provide DPA/EAD with an evaluation of their performance.

Drafting the ToR for the Evaluation Team

An evaluation may be carried out by UNDP or undertaken jointly with another organization. The organizers should determine the scope of the evaluation, assign tasks, select the funding modalities and draft the ToR. After evaluation results have been shared and discussed, partners in the evaluation should also decide on what follow-up actions should be taken. The following are UNDP's suggestions as to what should be included in a ToR for an evaluation:

Introduction. A brief description of what is to be evaluated (outcome or project, specific project components, series of interventions by different partners).

Objectives. The reason the evaluation is being undertaken and a list of the main stakeholders and partners.

Scope. The issues, subjects, areas and timeframe the evaluation will cover.

Products. What products the evaluation is expected to generate (findings, recommendations, lessons learned, rating on performance).

Methodology. The methodology suggested to the evaluation team.

Evaluation team. Composition and areas of expertise.

Implementation arrangements. Who will manage the evaluation and how it is organized.

- Keep evaluation in mind when preparing the project budget and selecting monitoring methods.

- Select evaluators for knowledge of the country and familiarity with electoral assistance.

- Evaluations can be internal (generated from within UNDP) or external, generated by national and/or international actors. All members of the team should be independent evaluators and contracted by UNDP specifically for this purpose. They should also have absolutely no connection with the donors, vendors or government related to the electoral activities or results. Other forms of monitoring, however, can and should be done less formally and by those involved in the activities to emphasize the continuous process of identifying lessons to be learned and integrating them into the process.

- After the report has been presented, stakeholder meetings should be held to discuss the findings and ensure that there is a common understanding of these findings.

- The findings, conclusions and recommendations should be internalized and acted upon by UNDP, DPA/EAD and partner organizations.

Reporting Evaluations

Only the evaluation team should be involved in analyzing the findings and drafting the evaluation report. The team is bound by its ToR in regards to selecting which issues to report, but it should bring to the attention of UNDP any important issues or aspects of the electoral assistance that were left out of the ToR.

The first draft of the evaluation report should be given to UNDP and the project management for comments, and only then passed along to donors and partners for their comments. The evaluation team should in turn incorporate or respond to all comments to the extent possible into the final version of the report.

Knowledge gained through monitoring and evaluation should inform future project design and decision-making in electoral assistance, democratic governance or other areas.

WHAT TO DO:

- Distinguish between ongoing monitoring, which should be as participatory and continuous as possible, and evaluation, which is a time-bound and punctuated activity.

- Record good practices and what activities led to positive results.

- Share monitoring and evaluation information widely — among stakeholders, donors and partners.

- Use Web sites to circulate lessons learned if possible.

- Establish formal linkages among different interventions and between regions and implementing agencies.

- Act on findings and modify ongoing initiatives.

CHALLENGES:

- Recording, storing, and analyzing large amounts of information.

- Keeping information flowing from one level to another among staff engaged in managing different interventions.

Audit

Audits[50] are an integral part of sound financial and administrative management, and of the UNDP accountability framework. UNDP administrative and programme funds are audited regularly and the findings are reported to the UNDP Executive Board.

Audit rules are generally written into the project document. An international audit may be required. Usually contributors to a 'basket fund', if one is set up, expect to have one set of monitoring and audit reports, rather than separate reporting. (This may depend on whether the basket is via trust fund or cost-sharing. Trust funds can have separate reporting to various donors, while cost-sharing will employ group reporting.)

It is recommended to develop continuous auditing mechanisms in cases when (i) UNDP sub-contracts activities such as logistics and payment of national electoral agents over a long period of time to companies, and (ii) significant resources are involved. A specific audit contract with an external audit firm might be considered to help audit the sub-contractor.

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50 UNDP audit rules may be found online under 'Additional Information on Operation of Projects' at http://content.undp.org/go/userguide/results/project/defining.en#Additional%20Information.

IFES/Gabrielle Bardall

Annexes

The annexes to this publication were obtained from several different sources. As a result, there are slight differences in terminology and word usage between the main text and the annexes — as well as among the annexes themselves.

Department of Political Affairs of the UN Secretariat and UNDP — Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance

OVERVIEW

1. Recognizing the need for strengthened system-wide coordination and implementation of electoral assistance activities, the present note is intended to clarify respective roles and standard procedures for the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the provision of electoral assistance to Member States and replaces all previous guidelines.

2. The United Nations system is engaged in a wide range of development assistance activities that are intended to support the efforts of Member States to promote democratic electoral processes and build sustainable capacity to manage electoral systems and processes. Member States most often request advice and assistance on the legal, institutional, technical and administrative aspects of organizing and conducting democratic elections or seek the Organization's assistance in supporting the international or domestic observation of electoral processes.

OBJECTIVES

3. The objectives of United Nations electoral assistance are two-fold:

   (a) To assist Member States in their efforts to hold credible and legitimate elections in accordance with internationally recognized criteria;

   (b) To contribute to building, in the recipient country, a sustainable institutional capacity to organize democratic elections that

are genuine and periodic and have the full confidence of the contending parties and the electorate.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

4. In view of the increasing demand for electoral assistance and in order to ensure consistency in the handling of requests of Member States which were organizing elections, the General Assembly, in resolution 46/137 of 17 December 1991, took steps to create an institutional framework to support activities in this area and recognized and affirmed the role of each of the main United Nations electoral assistance actors:

   (a) **Focal point for electoral assistance activities.** In accordance with Assembly resolution 46/137, the Secretary-General, in 1992 appointed a focal point for electoral assistance activities "to ensure consistency in the handling of requests of Member States organizing elections … to channel requests for electoral assistance to the appropriate office or programme … to build on experience gained to develop an institutional memory, to develop and maintain a roster of international experts … and to maintain contact with regional and other intergovernmental organizations to ensure appropriate working arrangements with them and the avoidance of duplication of efforts". The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs serves as the United Nations focal point for electoral assistance;

   (b) **Electoral Assistance Division.** The Elec-

toral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs was established in 1992, initially as the Electoral Assistance Unit, to provide technical support to the focal point in carrying out his functions. The main role of the Division is to evaluate requests for electoral assistance, to identify and maintain United Nations electoral standards, to undertake needs-assessment missions, to assist the organizations of the United Nations system and other organizations in the design of electoral assistance project activities, to develop operational strategies for electoral components of peacekeeping operations, to maintain a roster of electoral experts, to facilitate the international observation of elections and to serve as the institutional memory of the United Nations in the electoral field;

(c) **United Nations Development Programme.** The Assembly, by resolution 46/137, recognized the role of UNDP in the provision of technical assistance for electoral activities and underscored the importance of collaboration among actors in the United Nations system. At the country level, UNDP plays a lead role in the provision of policy advice and programmes to strengthen sustainable democratic institutions and processes (e.g., electoral bodies, parliaments, judiciaries etc.). The emphasis of its role and interventions in the electoral area is on long-term capacity-building of electoral institutions and processes, including civil society awareness and participation. UNDP also plays a key role at the country level in the coordination of electoral assistance among donors and national and international actors. This includes both financial coordination involving the channelling of donor funds for electoral support as well as the coordination of electoral support through meetings and donor coordination forums. In most cases, when United Nations electoral assistance is provided to a country, the resident coordinator/resident representative represents the United Nations system in such an undertaking. At UNDP headquarters, the Bureau for Development Policy teams up with the regional bureau concerned to provide support for the priorities and needs identified at the country level, in close liaison with the Electoral Assistance Division.

PROCEDURES FOR PROVIDING ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

5. Before the United Nations system can provide any type of electoral assistance, directly or on behalf of a third party such as a regional organization or other multilateral organization, the Organization must first carefully assess the pre-electoral conditions in the requesting country. It is essential to undertake such an assessment prior to any type of project commitment in order to ensure involvement only in settings in which legitimate elections are likely to be carried out. With this in mind, the procedure for obtaining United Nations electoral assistance is as follows:

(a) The Government or electoral authorities must send an official request for assistance to the United Nations focal point for electoral assistance at least four months prior to the scheduled election to allow for meaningful involvement. More lead time (6-8 months) would, however, reduce the costs and risks involved and provide for more thorough assistance, of better quality. The usual sources of requests are the national electoral authorities, the Office of the President or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

(b) The Electoral Assistance Division will consult with the resident coordinator/resident representative concerned, and the relevant divisions of the Department of Political Affairs and UNDP headquarters, among others, about whether pre-electoral conditions in the requesting country satisfy the established criteria for United Nations electoral assistance;

(c) If the focal point determines that a more thorough, on-site needs assessment is required before deciding whether to provide assistance, the Electoral Assistance Division, in cooperation with UNDP, will dispatch an assessment mission to evaluate the political, material and institutional situation in the requesting country. The mission will also assess the appropriateness, necessity and potential impact of United Nations assistance and ascertain whether the main contesting political parties and representatives of civil society support United Nations involvement;

(d) In the event the resident coordinator/resident representative deems it necessary and appropriate, prior to or following a formal request from the Government, he or she may request the Electoral Assistance Division to provide internal advice by dispatching an expert advisory mission. These are typically small, low-profile missions intended to provide early intervention and expert advice on coordination and operations of electoral assistance projects. An accurate and adequate assessment of the pre-electoral environment in countries seeking assistance will reduce the risk of associating the United Nations with elections whose organization and conduct do not adhere to internationally recognized criteria. It is, therefore, a critical factor in upholding the reputation of the United Nations as a credible, standard-setting institution in this field;

(e) Based on the above, the focal point will either approve or deem inappropriate a request for assistance. In the case of a positive decision, the Electoral Assistance Division will work in close collaboration with UNDP in preparing an appropriate electoral assistance project. Once drafted and reviewed by UNDP and the Division, the approval and implementation of a technical electoral assistance project is governed by the normal procedures laid out in the programming manual of UNDP. Medium-term and long-term capacity development of electoral institutions is an integral aspect of the governance activities of UNDP through the country cooperation framework. The Electoral Assistance Division must be consulted at the earliest possible stage with regard to the political and technical aspects of the proposed project, since these aspects can have a bearing on subsequent elections. The Division will respond with any input or advice within 10 working days after receipt of the documents. If no response is received by UNDP within that time period, the project development can proceed. Approval and implementation should follow standard procedures for all activities undertaken within the country cooperation framework. Given the political and often sensitive nature of the electoral environment, however, special caution should be exercised in the national execution of electoral assistance projects. This modality should be limited to cases in

which there has been full consultation and there is consensus as regards the impartiality and capacity of the executing agent. For assistance in identifying specialized expertise, the Electoral Assistance Division will provide qualified technical consultants from its roster of electoral experts, as required;

(f) If a Government requests United Nations assistance in the observation of elections, the Electoral Assistance Division will take the lead role in the design, staffing and implementation of such activities, in cooperation with the UNDP resident representative. Often, a separate project is established to provide the operational and legal framework for these activities. Consistent with the nature and purpose of observation, a project to support these activities should normally be independent of any project support provided to the electoral process, systems or institutions;

(g) UNDP resident coordinators/resident representatives will maintain a clear position as regards United Nations impartiality. As such, in supporting an international or national mission, the independent observer group may issue a statement on the election but the United Nations plays only a facilitative role and does not itself express a view on the process or outcome. Resident coordinators/resident representatives should refrain from making political statements to the press, unless specifically authorized by the focal point;

(h) In order to keep the focal point apprised of the political and technical status of electoral assistance projects, the resident representative will submit on a regular basis status reports, including reports from proj-

ect personnel, to the Electoral Assistance Division. These project reports will form the basis of the report that the Secretary-General is mandated to submit to the General Assembly every two years;

(i) At the conclusion of each project the Electoral Assistance Division, the Bureau for Development Policy of UNDP, and the UNDP regional bureau concerned shall receive a final project report from the resident representative. As appropriate, the Electoral Assistance Division will support the UNDP Country Office in undertaking independent technical evaluation missions of electoral assistance projects;

(j) Upon the completion of the assignment, or on an annual basis in the case of long-term experts, the resident coordinator/resident representative will be requested to submit to the contracting agency an assessment of the performance of the consultants and/or experts on the roster of the Electoral Assistance Division. This assessment will serve to enhance the effectiveness of the assistance provided and enable the Division to improve future performance and to better anticipate future country needs.

COORDINATION OF ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE AMONG DONORS

6. Effective coordination of technical assistance is crucial in situations in which several bilateral and multilateral donors, specialized institutions, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations are providing electoral assistance to a country. In the case of countries in which there is a resident special representative of the Secretary-General, the special representative is responsible for overall political coordination. Where there is no resident special representative, UNDP plays the lead United Nations role at

the country level as a coordinating mechanism for donor assistance and as a forum for coordination of the activities of a broader range of international and national actors. This coordination role can be exercised through a trust fund or cost-sharing modality, and is essential for maximizing impact and for avoiding potential difficulties, such as duplication or overlapping of assistance, competition among organizations in certain fields of assistance, overburdening national counterparts, or over-funding some aspects of the electoral process to the detriment of others. As required, the Electoral Assistance Division may be called upon to assist in this coordination role.

FURTHER CONTACT

7. The Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, may be contacted at:

> Telephone: +1 (212) 963-8737
> Facsimile: +1 (212) 963-2979

The Democratic Governance Group of the Bureau for Development Policy at UNDP may be contacted at:

> Telephone: +1 (212) 906-5054
> Facsimile: +1 (212) 906-6471

UN DPA Note — Coordination of International Election Observers

1. Since 1992, the United Nations has been offering and providing assistance for the coordination of international election observers. This modality of support was first tested in Ethiopia and Kenya (1992) and most recently has been provided in Palestine (2005 and 2006), Solomon Islands (2006) and Zambia (2006).

2. The European Union (EU) has also been increasingly requesting the United Nations to provide support to the EU deployment of observers for various election processes around the world. The support consists of all administrative actions needed to implement the mission, including contracting personnel (short and long-term observers and mission support staff), procuring of office facilities and other related activities. Examples include UNDP support to EU observer missions in Indonesia (1999) and Yemen (2006), and Nicaragua (2006).

3. The primary goal of providing assistance for coordination of international observers is to contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of an election observation effort. Support provided consists of all or some of the following activities:

    a. Organizing briefings aimed at providing observers with an understanding of the country and political context; helping observers understand the procedural requirements for conducting the elections; familiarizing observers with what to expect to find at a polling station based on provisions in the election law and related regulations; an ensuring observers understand the logistical arrangements and timetable for the observation effort;

    b. Organising briefings by key election actors (election management bodies, domestic observer groups, security forces, etc) and facilitating liaison between the observer groups and these actors;

    c. Assisting the electoral management body in the accreditation of international observers;

    d. Facilitating the sharing of information and analysis among observer groups to help to improve the quality, accuracy and credibility of observer statements and reports;

    e. Facilitating the production of joint checklists and reporting procedures;

    f. Providing logistical and operational support so as to minimize duplication of efforts between observer missions, thereby achieving certain economies of scale;

    g. Providing deployment plans to avoid duplication and to increase the breath of observation coverage;

    h. Facilitating the production of a joint statement of the observer groups.

4. A serious risk associated with international observation coordination by the UN is the possibility that the UN will be misperceived as having direct involvement in the substantive observation. It is therefore important that the UN observe the following standards in all cases:

    a. The UN should only agree to provide coordination support on request from a Member State;

    b. Neither the UN nor the government will oblige any observer group to participate in the coordination effort;

c. The UN should maintain a low profile throughout the coordination activity and should bar the use of UN logo or name in any materials related to observer activities or any of the observer statements reports;

d. The UN should not render an opinion on the electoral process or other wise seek to influence observer findings or statements;

e. UN staff should not be accredited as observers and should only be seen in polling stations on election-day if there is a justify reason for their presence.

5. With reference to cases in which the EU request the UN to support the implementation of its observers missions, as a general principle. UNDP should advise the EU to identify alternative administrative channels. Exceptions to the principle may be made on a case by case basis. Reasons for making exceptions would include the following:

a. Cases in which UNDP is the only practical option for providing administrative support and where the presence of an EU observation mission is considered an essential contribution to the credibility of the elections

b. Cases in which a negative response from UNDP might damage EU-UN relations

6. If an exception is made in relation to the above, the following condition should be applied:

a. If UN contracts are issued to the EU observers, DSS approval will also be required, pursuant to a Security Risk Assessment and adherence to any subsequent security requirements. If UNDP is involved in the recruitment of EU observers, they are bound by UN rules and regulations, including security guidelines. These are frequently not compatible with EU attempts to ensure a representative and widespread presence in the field which may expose the UN to security risks and other potential liabilities.

b. All efforts should be made to limit association of the UN with the EU observation, including barring the use of the UN logo and locating the premises of the EU observation mission away from UN offices.

c. The EU request for these services must be received within a reasonable timeframe prior to an election, permitting effective and efficient implementation.

d. The UN should issue public statement indicating the extent of its support to the EU observation mission and clarifying that the UN is not engaged in observing the electoral process.

7. We would like to request your approval for these general principles as a means of guiding and ensuring consistency in decisions made in response to UN support for international observer coordination activities

Signed by Craig Jenness,
Director of DPA/EAD on 19 December 2006

Approved by Ibrahim Gambari,
Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs
on 20 December 2006

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE TO UNDP COUNTRY OFFICES ON IMPLEMENTING EU ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSIONS (EUEOM)[51]

INTRODUCTION

The 2001 Note of Guidance signed between UNDP and the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) divides the UN labour on electoral assistance between the two entities by giving UNDP the role of provision and coordination of electoral technical assistance at the country level while giving to the DPA's Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) responsibility for facilitating international observation of elections. This division is meant to ensure that any initiative to support electoral observation is independent of any support provided to the electoral process, systems or institutions. While support to domestic observation is often included in UNDP technical assistance projects, international observation presents unique challenges. For this reason, if UNDP is approached to support international electoral observation, EAD should play a key role in the design, staffing and implementation of such activities, in cooperation with the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative.

The Note of Guidance also stipulates that Resident Coordinators/Resident Representatives must always both act and appear impartial. As such, in supporting an international (or national) mission, the independent observer group may issue a statement on the election but the UN does not itself comment on the process or outcome.

This Practical Guidance note is intended to ad-

dress one particular kind of electoral observation activity in which UNDP is involved: European Union Electoral Observation Missions (EUEOMs). Additional guidance on electoral observation at large is available in the UNDP Electoral Systems and Processes Practice Note and from the DPA.

FRAMEWORK FOR EU ELECTORAL OBSERVATION

EU support for human rights, democracy and the rule of law is established in the Treaty on the European Union (TEU). Article 6 of the treaty clearly states that the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights, and the rule of law are fundamental European values. Human rights field missions and election missions are accepted as part of the mandate of the EU, whose treaty considers the protection and promotion of human rights as well as support for democratization as cornerstones of EU foreign policy and EU development cooperation. Regulations 975/99 and 976/99 of 29 April 1999 provide the legal basis for community activities intended to further and consolidate democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights.

The EU election observation policy has enjoyed greater consistency and coherence, following the commission's Communication on Election Assistance and Observation of April 2000. Indeed, the European Parliament, the European Council and the EC now share a common approach to election observation and have clarified the role of each institution in this field. Focal contact points have been set up in the European Parliament and in the EC, and observers from all EU Member States have been trained on the common European approach to election observation. This has enabled EUEOMs

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51 This is intended to be a non-prescriptive guide to complement the DPA Note on Observation Missions (Annex 1) and the Note of Guidance signed between UNDP and DPA (attached as Annex 1 and Annex 2).

to develop in recent years into a much more credible, responsible and visible activity. As such, the EC has lately signed the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct for International Observers under the initiative of DPA/EAD[52].

Support for election processes is an important component of the EU's external relations policy. This support includes technical assistance to EMBs and to civil society organizations dealing mainly with domestic observation and media monitoring, as well as the deployment of EUEOMs. These are organized by the EC paid for from its budget, and composed of experts and observers from the Member States. The EU has been active in election observation since 1993. In 2000 the EC developed a standard methodology for election observation. This covers all phases of the election cycle: pre-election, election day, and immediate post-election. EUEOMs do not interfere in the organization of the election itself; instead, they collect and analyze factual information concerning the election process, and provide an independent public assessment. Since then, and with a total budget of more than €77 million (US$106 million), the EU has deployed 47 missions in 35 countries involving the participation of over 4,000 experts and observers.

In the EU's opinion, genuine elections are an essential basis for sustainable development and a functioning democracy. The EU believes that actions supporting the right to participate in genuine elections can make a major contribution to peace, security and conflict prevention. It believes that EUEOMs do not just serve to assess election day but observe the whole process and thus also help assesses the state of democratic development in a given country at a particular point in time. In addition to observing and reporting on the elections, the presence of EU observers can enhance transparency and confidence in the process, serve as a conflict prevention mechanism by deterring violence, and possibly prevent fraud.

The EU lately is also promoting the complementarity between electoral assistance and election observation. Via the establishment of even stronger synergies between the two activities, the EU is seeking to ensure that EUEOMs benefit from the experience gained through electoral assistance projects and that the recommendations of the EUEOMs are taken into account for the next electoral assistance interventions. For the EU, election observation is the political complement to election assistance and defined as: 'the purposeful gathering of information regarding an electoral process, and the making of informed judgments on the conduct of such a process on the basis of the information collected, by persons who are not inherently authorized to intervene in the process.'

In general, EUEOMs are deployed for national elections (parliamentary and presidential), but EU observation has also occurred during local elections (Cambodia in 2002 and the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 2005) and referendams (Rwanda in 2003 and DRC in 2005). However, the observation of local elections or referenda is an exception, reserved for cases of specific political significance or for use as a tool to support long-term democratization goals.

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52 Endorsing organizations as of 24 October 2005: African Union, Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL), The Carter Centre, Centre for Electoral Promotion and Assistance (CAPEL), Commonwealth Secretariat, the Council of Europe's European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), European Commission, European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO), Electoral Reform International Services (ERIS), IFES, International IDEA, Inter-Parliamentary Union, International Republican Institute (IRI), National Democratic Institute (NDI), Organization of American States (OAS), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), Pacific Islands, Australia & New Zealand, Electoral Administrators' Association (PIANZEA), Pacific Island Forum, and United Nations.

The EC, on behalf of the EU, currently undertakes about 15 observation missions per year, targeting countries that have been pre-selected on the basis of political priority and specific prerequisites. First and most importantly, an invitation must be issued by the government or the election authorities of the country. In addition, a number of other conditions should be met:

- Franchise is genuinely universal.

- Political parties and individual candidates are able to enjoy their legitimate right to take part in the election.

- There is freedom of expression, including allowing possible criticism of the incumbent government and the right to free movement and assembly.

- All contesting parties and candidates have reasonable access to the media.

Finally, an MoU must be signed between the EC and the main EMB as well as the Foreign Ministry of the host country. This MoU should detail the rights and responsibilities of observers and the host government and what constitutes adequate cooperation between both parties.

The decision on the number of EUEOMs every year depends on the election calendar and on available resources. Approximately 8-10 elections initially were observed each year after 2000, for a financial allocation of approximately €13 million (US$18 million) per year. In 2005 and 2006, the number has increased to 12-15 EUEOMs, for a total cost of about €30 million. A similar workload is expected to have been reached by the end of 2007. The increase of the funds allocated to EUEOMs underlined the importance of these missions.

Countries where EUEOMs are under consideration are carefully selected on the basis of complemen-

tarity with other human rights and democratization activities and the added value that such a mission can bring to the election process. A final decision is only taken after an exploratory mission has visited the country to determine whether an EUEOM would be useful, advisable and feasible. The EU does not observe elections where they can be credibly or systematically observed by other international organizations or local stakeholders. This is the case among Member States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), in which the OSCE takes the lead. It does so with extensive EU support in the form of observers seconded by EU Member States, delegations of the European Parliament, and additional support from the EC in exceptional cases.

UNDP'S EXPERIENCE WITH EUEOMS

UNDP has undertaken the implementation of nine EUEOMs since 2003: Nigeria (2003), Lebanon (2005), Burundi (2005), Liberia (2005), Yemen (2006), Nicaragua (2006), and Nigeria, Togo and Guatemala (all in 2007). Considering that the EC has implemented some 10 - 15 missions per year, it is clear that UNDP is not the main partner for these operations. Indeed, the EC has tended to favour the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as an implementing partner; it has worked with it in 90 percent of its operations, with the rest being divided up between among UNDP, the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), and AGMIN, a private company. Recently, the latter two organizations have diminished their involvement in providing this kind of support to EUEOMs, thus leaving the EC with two potential implementing partners: IOM and UNDP.

IOM has turned such operations into part of its mainstay business with the EC. It has built up its Brussels office accordingly, establishing a large staff pool and significant logistical capabilities.

IOM Brussels is therefore well-equipped to deal with the logistical challenges of the EUEOMs. It is important to highlight that the EC does not look for a 'partner' per se on these operations; organizations with which it works are more properly termed 'service provider' because the operations are independent EU missions in which all the political reporting and visibility vest in the EU. The service provider is merely requested to provide the significant logistical and security 'nuts and bolts' support to these operations.

At one point UNDP had a patchy reputation with the EC on EUEOMs because UNDP was not being perceived to be the most efficient or flexible partner. Its reputation has improved since 2005, however, due to largely successful missions in three countries that year and highly successful missions in Nicaragua (apparently one of the smoothest in EUEOM history) and Yemen in 2006. As a result, UNDP's credibility as an EUEOM partner is now on the same level as IOM, and the UN agency can now expect to be solicited at least three times per year to implement these operations. Moreover, the EC cannot be seen to have a monopoly situation with IOM; UNDP provides a worthy alternative.

There are however several reasons why UNDP should only offer its services on a last-resort basis, a message that has been widely conveyed by UNDP Brussels and supported by UNDP HQ. Among those reasons are the following:

- As lead UN Agency, UNDP should avoid playing the role of a service provider. That role does little to promote UNDP's credibility when it is working so hard to establish itself as a key policy and programmatic partner to this key donor (the EU).

- Because UNDP Resident Representative is often the UN Resident Coordinator, he or she continues to play a key political role in the country around the election period. EUEOM has sometimes considered such a role as inappropriate for its mission.

- Because UNDP is often a key actor in a country on governance in general and particularly on electoral assistance – and given the UNDP/DPA Note of Guidance and the special operational guidelines on electoral assistance signed with the EC – involvement in an observation mission could be perceived as a conflict of interest.

- Much of the content of the contribution agreement underpinning EUEOMs severely stretch some of UNDP's rules and regulations. This situation makes it difficult to defend UNDP's involvement in these operations without alternate agreements and procedures to address such issues.

- EUEOM operations place significant pressure and stress on the Country Office.

- Although such operations consist of low key, logistical support on the part of UNDP, the political importance of these missions to the EU institutions is such that should something go wrong to compromise observation deployment in a timely manner, the reputational risks for UNDP are high. Therefore there is a high risk associated with these missions should failings occur, but limited reward upon success.

In the light of the above, why should UNDP undertake these EUEOMs? These are some considerations that should be taken into account:

- Because EU institutions attach so much importance to this activity, turning down the EC if it approaches UNDP on a last resort basis could have negative effects on the overall relationship.

- Because electoral observations are an essential part of supporting democratic processes,

UNDP should facilitate what it can where absolutely possible.

- Often, national EMBs and other political stakeholders strongly support international electoral observation missions as a means to enhance the credibility and public perception of the process. If UNDP is the only option to support the EU mission, it may be politically difficult or impossible to turn down.

- Should a UNDP Country Office not have particularly strong relations with the EC in country, this could be one way of demonstrating UNDP's capabilities, assuming the operation goes well.

- UNDP is allowed to charge a standard 7 percent on GMS which, while not insignificant, should not be a main consideration.

HOW THE PROCESS WORKS (FROM THE EU STANDPOINT)

These are the steps taken by the EC when putting an EUEOM together:

- An initial list of countries is drawn up by the EC at the beginning of the year after an inter-EU institutional consultation that involves the European Council Working group and the European Parliament

- Based on the electoral calendar of the selected countries, the EC will undertake an exploratory mission to the country or countries which are expecting the earliest elections. The exploratory mission consists of:

  - one representative from the of Directorate General for External Relations (DG RELEX), which is responsible for the programming exercise of the EUEOM and for the political consistency of the EUEOM reporting;
  - one representative of the EuropeAid Cooperation office, which is responsible for

all the implementation issues;

  - the desk officer of the country concerned at Directorate General for Development (DG DEV) for the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries or External Relations (DG RELEX) for non-ACP countries;
  - one externally recruited electoral expert; and
  - one externally recruited operations expert, as well as, eventually one security expert

- The purpose of this exploratory mission is to verify the political feasibility and advisability of undertaking an EUEOM, assess which implementation partner would be the most suitable based on willingness and capabilities, and draft the ToRs and budget of the eventual mission.

- The exploratory mission report is circulated to the European Council working group, the European Parliament and the Commissioner for External Relations in order to obtain a green light on moving forward, if indeed that is what the report recommends.

- Once DG RELEX confirms to EuropeAid that the EUEOM implementation has been approved, EuropeAid contacts the identified service provider and work immediately begins on fine tuning the ToRs of the mission as well as the budget.

- Prior to EUEOM deployment, a formal invitation must be provided by the government to the EC and an MoU between the two must be approved. The late signing of these documents is often the reason for mission deployment.

An EUEOM includes four types of mission members:

- A chief observer. He/she is always a European parliamentarian who comes in and out of the beneficiary country at key moments but does

not remain in country. After deciding to deploy a mission, the EC Commissioner for External Relations appoints the chief observer in consultation with the European Parliament. The Parliament also may decide to send a delegation to observe the elections; if so, that delegation works closely with the chief observer and does not issue a separate statement.

- A core team of experts, including a deputy chief observer. Members of this team, support the chief observer, set the analytical framework for the mission, carry out specific tasks such as media monitoring, and manage the work of the observers. The core team comprises some 8-10 election observation experts, including a legal expert, election expert, country expert, media expert, press officer, operations expert, observers' coordinator and security expert. The experts of the observation team are chosen on the basis of their experience from a pool of experts compiled by the EC after a call for interest on its Web site at http://ec.europa.eu/europe-aid/observer/index_en.htm.

- Long-term observers (LTOs). These individuals are deployed ideally two months before election day and remain after the election results are official to observe the resolution of electoral disputes. They observe the unfolding of the electoral campaign, including particular questions such as the use of public resources by all candidates.

- Short-term observers (STOs) are deployed to observe polling day and the early counting of ballots. Both long- and short-term observers are selected by the EC on the basis of the applications proposed by Member States of observers included in the above mentioned EC dedicated online roster at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/observer/index_en.htm.

- Upon deployment of the core team, who are always the first members to travel out, there is a one-day briefing with the EC in Brussels that mostly deals with the political aspects of mission. However, the service provider is invited for part of the session to brief the team on what progress has been made on the logistics of the mission and to field any questions from members of the core team.

- After the deployment, the EUEOM's members (with the support of the service provider) begin gathering the qualitative and quantitative data for the final drafting of the preliminary statement. This is arguably the most important document produced by each EUEOM and maximum media coverage should be assured by the chief observer and core team. An EUEOM normally delivers a post-election statement within 24–48 hours after the close of the polling stations. The delivery of the statement is always a time-sensitive issue; it is important for the mission to issue a statement while the media are still interested (usually the day after the election or at most two days after). The statement is presented by the chief observer in a press conference.

- At the end of the mission, the EUEOM puts together its consolidated final report. This contains the mission's final conclusions and recommendations regarding the entire electoral process. It is delivered within a month after the EUEOM has closed its activities on the ground. This report, which gives guidance for electoral reform and possible future assistance, is distributed to the Council Working Group, the European Parliament and senior EC external relations officials. Comments are integrated into the report and then a special 'report handover' ceremony takes place in country from the chief observer to the government, which is the final task of the service provider from a logistical support standpoint.

- The end of the mission is accompanied by a debriefing from the core team to the EC in Brussels on the political and logistical aspects of the mission and all that cannot be put in writing. UNDP is invited to the logistical part of the debriefing and receives feedback from the core team regarding UNDP service provision performance.

- The EU institutions may or may not take diplomatic or programmatic steps in view of the report's findings on the conduct of the election period.

EC EXPECTATIONS AND SPECIFIC TASKS OF UNDP COUNTRY OFFICES AS SERVICE PROVIDERS

The service provider is contracted by the EC to implement a range of logistical tasks, including: providing and managing office space, communication equipment and transportation; organizing travel for all observers; and contracting long- and short-term observers who have been selected by the EU. The service provider places a dispatcher in the EUEOM throughout its deployment. The EC expects the following:

- Before leaving their home countries, all members of the core team and long- and short-term observers must have signed written agreements to take part in the election observation mission. International flights need to be arranged for all relevant personnel, who will also be provided with the necessary documentation such as air tickets and information about procedures for obtaining a visa. Once their participation has been confirmed, the personnel to be deployed must be given as much advance notice as possible about the deployment plan. They are also provided beforehand with practical information concerning the mission (such as in-country accommodation, climate conditions, currency in use, exchange rate, electrical outlets in use, and medical advice including vaccinations required), often via a dedicated Web page. Each member of the mission must be covered by an adapted insurance scheme including all medical and hospitalisation fees for illness, accidents related to election observation activities and evacuation and repatriation fees.

- Suitable accommodation and office space must be ready for the mission core team upon their arrival in the country. Core team members are based in the capital. Premises for office and accommodation should be within mobile phone coverage and preferably centrally located in areas known to be generally secure. Care must be taken to ensure that the landlords or owners of the rented accommodation or office properties are neither involved in the election process nor engaged in politics.

- Long-term observers are accommodated centrally for a few days in the capital upon arrival (briefing). They are then provided with reasonable accommodation facilities while deployed in the country, making the best use of facilities available in the deployment areas.

- Support staff should be recruited to assist core team members during the mission. When possible, support staff for the EUEOM should be recruited prior to the arrival of the mission to allow for an immediate commencement of the mission. All staff employed by the mission must be interviewed carefully and their respective skill sets confirmed. CVs must be checked thoroughly for authenticity of information.

- Mission employees must not be active members of a political party, must conduct themselves in a politically neutral manner at all times, and must sign a statement of confidentiality. They must not have any conflict of interest that may affect their EUEOM duties. All support staff must have a contract respecting

international labour law standards.

- Core team members must be provided with appropriate office equipment, including desktop computers, laptops, laser printers, a shredder and a photocopier of adequate size. Some media monitoring equipment should be provided as required by the mission media expert, in line with budget allocation. Long-term observers must be supplied with laptop computers and portable printers. Equipment for mission members must be accompanied by an adequate supply of consumables (ink cartridge, toner etc.).

- The EU visibility guidelines must be respected. Mission members must be provided with material kits containing large-size EU stickers, t-shirts, 'reporter' vests and caps. All t-shirts, uniforms and stickers must bear the EU logo and the following words, possibly in several languages: 'European Union Election Observation Mission' and indicating the country and year.

- The core team and teams of long- and short-term observers must be provided with an adequate number of vehicles and drivers. All vehicles should be rented from car rental companies or, if those are not available, from private owners. Because vehicles are used throughout the country, it is suggested that cars be rented from the provincial capital in which they are to be deployed. All vehicles provided must be mechanically sound, with adequate legal documentation and third party and passenger insurance. Depending on the requirements of the core team, observers may be transported to the various places of deployment by air, as appropriate.

- Telephone lines must be installed in the mission office. An appropriate number of fax machines should be provided and each core team member should receive a mobile/satellite phone, as appropriate. Core team members' laptops should be capable of being used as fax machines, if necessary. The mission should have access to the Internet, and be provided with e-mail facilities. Long-term observers deployed in-country should be equipped with radio or satellite phone devices and a computer connection that allows them to report to the mission by e-mail and/or fax on a regular basis. Where possible, teams of long- and short-term observers deployed in urban areas should be provided with mobile phones. Short-term observer teams deployed in the country, especially in rural areas, must be provided with radio or satellite phone devices guaranteeing communication between the mission and the teams at all times. Mobile phones, faxes and satellite phones can either be rented or purchased. Ownership of any equipment purchased in this way rests with the EC for potential use in future EUEOMs.

- The security of mission members is paramount, and an ongoing assessment of any security threats posed to any members of an EUEOM must be made. This requires ongoing liaison with national and/or international police/military officials to determine the level of any potential threat to an EUEOM. It also requires the development of an emergency and evacuation plan, in the event that conditions in a country deteriorate to a level that necessitates emergency measures and/or evacuation of observers. Steps must be taken to ensure that mission members benefit from the security net implemented by UN agencies, NGOs and other humanitarian and development partners. The logistics/security advisor should liaise with EU Member States' representatives in the respective country on security matters. A thorough security briefing should be provided to all observers, and logistical arrangements for their deployment (e.g., accommodation and communications) must take into account stringent security measures.

- All members of the mission must be provided with information about medical precautions needed in the country. In addition, the teams should be provided with complete medical and first aid kits. Where possible, arrangements must be made with existing medical emergency networks so that a medical evacuation can be organized without delay, if required. All observers are provided with a comprehensive international medical/evacuation insurance while in the country.

- Where possible, assistance should be provided to expedite the issuance of visas and accreditation for the election observers.

- The chief observer must be provided with periodic financial statements of funds committed and disbursed, so as to ensure proper financial control of the operation. A final financial statement must be produced within two months after completion of operations on the ground.

HOW THE PROCESS WORKS (FROM UNDP'S STANDPOINT)

- The first contact with the EUEOM process is during the exploratory phase. EuropeAid sends a message to UNDP Brussels with this standard text:

   *'We have been asked to conduct an ExM to *******. Therefore, this is to inform you that the ExM will take place from??/?? - ??/??. If your organization would be interested to be our Implementing Partner for this upcoming EU EOM, I would be interested to have a meeting with one of your representatives in-country to discuss the possibility of organizing this EU EOM and to assess the feasibility of such a mission. Could you please provide a contact person from your organization to contact me prior to the mission in order to arrange a meeting? For your information, our contact person at the EC*

   *delegation in ******* will be ********, who is coordinating our programme in ******'.*

- Upon receipt of this message, UNDP Brussels contacts the Country Office in question and briefs the Resident Representative/Country Director on the implications of such a mission. At the very least, the UNDP CO should agree to meet the mission and provide any useful information, from the political to the practical and the budgetary. The CO should also give a clear, early indication of whether it is interested in undertaking the assignment because that will be included in the mission report.

- If the CO agrees to undertake the mission, it is recommended in the mission report and is approved by the EC, the Country Office and UNDP Brussels work quickly together to establish the next steps. It should be kept in mind that these missions are always undertaken under fairly extreme time constraints. This means that UNDP is always required to pre-finance the operation, start undertaking preparatory measures without a contract, and derogate from normal recruitment and procurement procedures.

- In light of these demands and derogation requirements, it is important for the CO to give an early 'heads up' to the EXO/OSG, Office of Legal and Procurement Support (OLPS), its Regional Bureau, BDP (as the institutional interface with DPA/EAD at Headquarters level), DPA/EAD and DSS. Clearly DPA/EAD approval is required prior to CO participation in such a mission, and DSS needs to be kept closely in the loop if this is a security issue country. OSG and OLPS need the warning so that they are prepared to provide a green light to the eventual EC contract clearance process and to UNDP procedural derogation. Meanwhile, the Regional Bureau should help the CO with the pre-financing aspects of the operation. BDP can help troubleshoot

— on behalf of any of the actors — issues that may arise with respect to electoral technical assistance versus observation policy.

• Next, the priority is for the CO, UNDP Brussels and EuropeAid to finalize the EC contribution agreement as quickly as possible. In parallel, EuropeAid should be preparing the financing decision for Member States' approval. Both documents are usually ready at the same time for signature.

• The UNDP CO's first essential recruitment responsibility is to hire two project managers (also known as dispatchers). One of them is based in-country for the operation while the other remains in Brussels. The country-based dispatcher supports the CO in the planning and physical organization of the mission in close co-operation with the CO's operations unit and/or service centre where appropriate. The Brussels-based dispatcher helps UNDP Brussels arrange the SSA contracts for all mission members, sort out insurance, visas and plane tickets, and assist with any EU-based procurement and shipping that needs to be done. UNDP Brussels has a small pool of such dispatchers with tried and tested experience. These dispatchers should be recruited before the signing of the EC contribution agreement because they constitute a small investment risk that goes a long way in preparing the ground for the mission arrivals.

• The EC contribution agreement should always go through a closed trust fund modality, which means the contract needs to be underpinned by a project document. Preparation of the project document should be undertaken simultaneously with preparation of the contribution agreement. When the Country Office sends the contract to UNDP Brussels for clearance (as is the case for all EC-related closed trust funds), there should be confirmation that such a proj-

ect document exists. Thereafter, UNDP Brussels will ensure FAFA[53] compliance and once more explain the particularities of the mission to those who must sign off the clearance form.

• The main responsibilities of UNDP during the time of the mission include the following, as set out in the ToR and budget of the mission:

  • Ensuring the timely deployment of all mission members in line with the EC calendar. This is done in three waves, separately for members of the core team and long- and short-term observers.

  • All mission members must leave with an SSA, insurance, plane ticket, appropriate vaccinations and guaranteed accommodations.

  • The core team must have a decent Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS)-compliant and IT operational office upon arrival.

  • All members must receive their SSA-defined cash payments upon arrival. For the mission to go smoothly people must be paid when the SSA says they will be paid. The CO must be ready to undertake significant cash management for this and other items.

  • MOSS-compliant vehicles, radios, satellite phones, mobile phone, laptops, EU visibility clothing and office equipment, etc, must be made available upon each wave of entries. The dispatchers should help the CO define what ought to be procured locally and what should be procured in the EU.

  • Treatment of the chief observer, in terms of protocol and various special requirements, is particularly important. It needs to be coordinated with the local EC delegation.

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53 See http://resourcemobilization.brsp.undp.org/files/EC/EC_FAFA_2003.pdf

- Care must be made to handle, in a timely manner, any other logistical tasks set out in the ToR and for which a budget is foreseen.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Listed below are some of the particularities of UNDP's administrative responsibilities under such EC contribution agreements:

- The EC contribution agreements for EUEOM are run centrally and are therefore signed in Brussels. This means that UNDP Brussels usually signs on behalf of the CO once UNDP HQ has given its clearance.

- Because the operations are short in duration (no more than about four months), the payments are done in two parts: a large advance (up to 90 percent) with the 10 percent remaining paid upon acceptance of the final report. The final payment may not be required if the advance was sufficient to cover the operation, and sometimes UNDP must reimburse/refund the EC from the advance at the end of the operation if unexpected savings were made on certain budget headings.

- Closing these contracts has often proved to be problematic. Final payments to suppliers and other sub-contractors often drag on many months after the delivery of the EUEOM report in country. This aside, the CO often has difficulty seeing clearly into all the expenditures made and thus in making a clear and consolidated final financial report. UNDP Brussels of course must ensure that all its expenditures are transmitted to the CO accompanied by copies of all the invoices.

- The handing over of equipment bought under the project has also proved to be a difficult issue. UNDP is meant to provide a complete inventory of all items procured under the EC budget, from vehicles (if purchased and not rented) to laptops and phones. This inventory has usually taken COs an undue amount of time to put together, which it should not. Once the inventory is compiled, it should be transmitted to the EC with a formal suggestion on where the equipment should go (i.e., to local NGOs, another EC funded project, local authorities, etc). The recommendations need to be approved.

- The full list of documentation required to close a contract and clear the final payments is as follows:

  - Final narrative and financial report (in euros, as always). Please note that the narrative report should only relate to the logistical aspect of the operation, not the political side, which does not concern UNDP.
  - A request for remaining funds (where applicable) or confirmation that UNDP spent less than expected and needs to reimburse the EC. If the latter, a request should also be submitted to the EC for it to launch a recovery order.
  - Information on accrued interest on the advance payment needs to be provided where applicable.
  - An inventory of equipment bought and suggested handover solution provided.
  - A copy of receipt of goods handed over by the beneficiary organization(s).

KEY ASPECTS OF EUEOMS

- UNDP has no political role in the EUEOMs and is not privy to the political reporting of the mission members, despite the fact that they are all on UNDP SSAs. Moreover, this lack of political involvement and zero visibility is a requirement under the Note of Guidance for UNDP to undertake the assignment. These are EU independent missions. Therefore, it is justified that UNDP is

not involved in this aspect of the mission. However, the programme managers are expected to help UNDP put together a mission report on the logistical aspects of the intervention. The members of the observation team channel their 'logistical reports' through the core team and the programme managers, so that a consolidated document is produced. This is how all these staff members with UNDP SSAs report back to UNDP.

- The EC has traditionally not accepted the role of the designated official in these observation missions, and this has led to heated arguments on several missions in the past. DG RELEX in particular has not accepted that a mere 'service provider' can stop an independent EUEOM from deploying in certain areas or intervene in other ways if required by the security context. This attitude largely stems from the EC's lack of information about the existence and operationality of the UN security system and the role of the designated official. In any case, the contribution agreements now contain clear clauses in Annex I relating to the final authority of the designated official in security matters. This change was fully backed by EuropeAid. Where UNDP has opened matters up slightly is in the consultative process, whereby designated official explains to DG RELEX by phone and/or email why a certain decision has had to be taken or forewarning that a certain decision will need to be taken. Discussions can take place with the core team security adviser and the EC (if time allows), but the final decision rests with the designated official.

What was also misunderstood by the EC until very recently is that IOM, being part of the UN security system, also must comply with the DSS system and the final authority of the designated official. Clarifications from UNDP Brussels have filtered through the EC system and a clear message has been transmitted that this is one issue upon which there is a clear 'bottom line': i.e., without the EC acceptance of the security arrangements, missions cannot be accepted. Other aspects of these missions stretch UNDP rules and regulations but may be accepted — as long as agreements are in place to protect accountabilities. But security is non-negotiable. All EUEOM members have UNDP SSAs, which means that UNDP is responsible for their well-being and therefore cannot be overruled.

- The recruitment of EUEOM mission members is also particular. The EC reserves the right to select all core team members and all the observers. Candidates are submitted by the EU Member States and the EC makes a selection based on the candidates submitted through a special selection committee. This is part and parcel of the fact that EUEOMs are independent EU operations.

- The behaviour of certain mission members, especially in the core team (chief observer and deputy chief observer particularly) has not been appropriate in some past missions. The notion that this is an independent EU mission has sometimes given the EUEOM members the impression that 'independent' means 'superior to', and certain Resident Representatives and other UN staff have not been treated in the proper manner. Such cases have been brought to the attention of the EC, which is as adamant as UNDP that behaviour of that sort will no longer be accepted. If such disrespectful behaviour surfaces in future EUEOMs, the matter should be immediately brought to the attention of UNDP Brussels, which, in turn, will place the matter before RELEX and EuropeAid Co-Operation Office (AIDCO) for rapid treatment. UNDP Brussels and the EC will continue to mutually monitor the behaviour of individuals for the well-being of future missions.

- Despite some of the shortcomings and difficulties of EUEOMs, as described previously, it should be pointed out that a very close relationship has been established between RELEX, AIDCO and UNDP Brussels, and that a real team spirit exists. This has done much to ensure that these missions take place as smoothly as possible and that matters are quickly brought under control whenever a crisis seems to loom. Of the last seven missions, only two proved to be problematic; even then, however, solutions were found and the overall EC–UNDP relationship safeguarded.

CONCLUSION

As has been made clear in this Annex, EUEOM assignments do not sit comfortably on UNDP's shoulders for numerous reasons: (i) because of their very nature, (ii) because of UNDP's political role in the country and deep involvement in electoral assistance, (iii) because of the stress and risks involved, and (iv) because UNDP, as a lead inter-governmental agency, does not fit easily into the role of a simple EC service provider. As such, it should be obvious that UNDP Country Offices should not actively seek involvement or encourage the EC to choose them as implementation partners for such exercises. However, it is also clear that in the name of promoting democratic governance and in the name of good partnership with the EC, UNDP should remain open to working with the EC on these assignments as a last resort, if no other implementing mechanism is available to it.

This Annex concludes with two schemes illustrating the environments and the implementation arrangements within which EUEOMs work. EUEOMs have their own Web sites containing all the mission information: mission statement, team composition, contact details, etc. The EUEOM methodology and the links to the specific EUEOMs Web sites can be found at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/index.htm .

EU EOM EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT
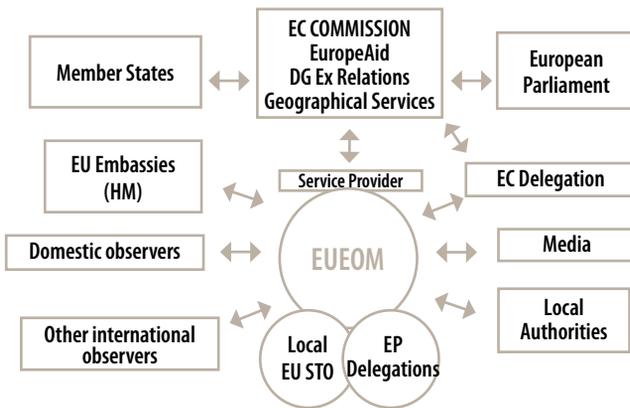
EU EOM: IMPLEMENTATION
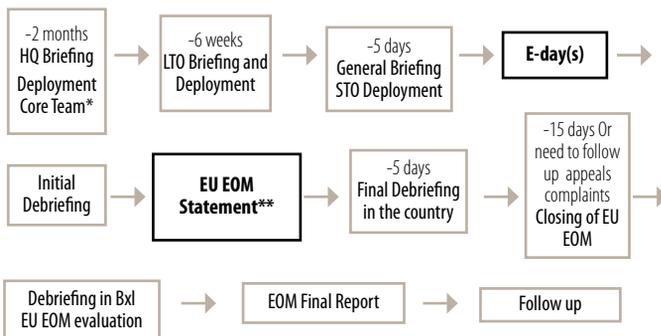
* during which:
1. Circulation of regular reports from the Mission to the Commission, Council, EP
2. Regular consultations between CO and Commission's Services (Del + HQ) and EU M State
** The EU Presidency may also make a Declaration subsequent to the EOM's statement

EC–UNDP Operational Guidelines — Implementation of Electoral Assistance Programmes and Projects[54]

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES IMPLEMENTATION OF ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

Whereas it is recognised that the European Commission (hereinafter referred to as 'EC') and the United Nations Development Programme (hereinafter referred to as 'UNDP') have established a strong partnership in the domain of electoral assistance over the last five years;

Whereas the EC and UNDP have signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement in 2004 covering the sectors of Conflict Prevention, Post Conflict Reconstruction and Good Governance, which covers electoral assistance activities;

Whereas it is recognized that elections are a fundamental building block in the democratic development of every state, and represent a critical channel to enhance citizens' participation in political life and achieve the interlinked objectives of poverty alleviation and human development, in line with the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals;

Whereas it is acknowledged by both parties that this partnership has proved to be of increasing value to electoral assistance operations to the beneficiary countries due to a history of sector experience, lessons learned and a mutual understanding of each other's approaches and capacities, and that each partner sees the other as a policy partner and provider of content;

Whereas it is recognised that the continuation and intensification of this relationship between the parties can further promote the effectiveness and efficiency of electoral assistance initiatives to beneficiary countries, as increasing experience in this collaboration will lead to better and more timely programming, planning, formulation and implementation, and is in line with the resolutions made in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability;

Whereas it is understood that electoral assistance has to take stock of all the steps of the electoral cycle and that inter-election periods are as crucial as the build up to the elections themselves, thus requiring regular inter-institutional contact and support activities before, during and after election periods, for the sake of lessons learned and inter-institutional memory aiming at improved electoral processes in beneficiary countries;

Building on the mutual analytical and evaluation-based work undertaken in 2005 by both organisations in a review of present and past electoral assistance and on the significant conclusions and observations which have come to light as a result and which will become an integral part of EC Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance;

Noting that all EC – UNDP contractual agreements are covered by the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA), signed on 29 April 2003 between the United Nations and the European Commission, and that these Operational Guidelines only intend to clarify certain

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54 These guidelines were updated in late 2007 and contain new guidance in a number of areas. See: http://resourcemobilization.brsp.

implementation aspects which are of particular relevance to electoral assistance;

Noting that UNDP has been given the mandate under General Assembly Resolution 46/137 of 17 December 1991 to co-ordinate electoral assistance at country level between national and international actors and as regulated by an internal agreement between UNDP and the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA/EAD) inside the United Nations Secretariat;

Noting that UNDP's involvement in elections within the United Nations system is governed by the same General Assembly resolution 46/137 and its successor resolutions, as well as regulated by an internal agreement between UNDP and DPA/EAD;

Whereas it is understood that the relevant Government authorities and local Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) of the partner countries benefiting from the EC – UNDP electoral assistance will allow domestic observation and invite international election observation missions that will carry out their activities according to the "Declaration of Principles for International Observation" as signed in New York at UN HQ on 24 October 2005[55],

Whereas it is understood that the relevant Government's authorities and the local EMBs of the partner countries benefiting from the EC – UNDP electoral assistance will engage in carrying out the elections exercise in line with: its constitutional mandates, the benchmarks for election standards contained in the international treaties ratified by the State in the context of the United Nations[56] and with non-treaty election standards adopted in the context of the Regional Organizations they belong to;

Noting that the EC minimum criteria for involvement of assistance are set out in the Commission Communication on Election Assistance and Observation[57] and include the request of the host country, the consensus of the main political parties and other stakeholders, a previous political monitoring of the country's specific situation, an adequate timeframe for the holding of the process and free movement for the EU assistance providers. A number of additional criteria were added by the 2003 Commission Working Paper on the Implementation of the 2000 Communication[58]. The additional criteria referred to the complementarity of the project within the larger State commitment to the electoral process, a clearer definition of the intended results, that is to say the anticipated usefulness of a project within the democratization and development context and the political advisability of a given project, that is to be weighed against the danger of being associated or perceived as endorsing a flawed or fraudulent process.

Noting that the UN has no precise formula for determining when a pre-election situation precludes United Nations assistance and that there-

55   Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation and Code of Conduct for International Observers. Commemorated October 27, 2005, at the United Nations, New York. Endorsing Organizations as of October 24, 2005: African Union, Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL), The Carter Centre, Centre for Electoral Promotion and Assistance (CAPEL), Commonwealth Secretariat, Council of Europe - European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), Council of Europe – Parliamentary Assembly, Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), European Commission, European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO), Electoral Reform International Services (ERIS), IFES, International IDEA, Inter-Parliamentary Union, International Republican Institute (IRI), National Democratic Institute (NDI), Organization of American States (OAS), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), Pacific Islands, Australia & New Zealand, Electoral Administrators' Association (PIANZEA), Pacific Island Forum, United Nations.

56   International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Convention of the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), Convention on the Elimination of all form of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Political Rights of Women (CPRW).
57   Communication from the Commission on EU Election Assistance and Observation, COM (2000)191 - 11/04/00
58   Commission Working Paper on the Implementation of the 2000 Communication, SEC (2003) 1472- 19/12/2003

fore the decision to support an electoral process is ultimately a political judgment by the Focal Point in consultation with the Secretary-General. At a minimum, however, UNDP must receive an official written request for electoral assistance before it provides any such assistance, and the Department of Political Affairs must be satisfied that the main contesting political parties and representatives of civil society support United Nations involvement.

The EC and UNDP, hereinafter referred to as 'the parties', have agreed to the following:

Article 1. Definition of electoral assistance initiatives

Article 1.1. Electoral assistance programmes/projects target one or more areas within the electoral cycle, ranging from legal reform, electoral administration, planning and operations, registration of voters and political parties, training of election officials and education of voters, domestic observation and media monitoring, polling activities, counting and results tabulation, electoral dispute resolution developing into post- and inter-election activities.

Article 1.2. There are different entry and exit points to the cycle depending on the aim of the programmes/projects specified in short, mid and long-term cooperation objectives. All projects should consider a sustainable approach to enhance the domestic capacity to administer electoral processes and consolidate developments in democratization.

Article 1.3. Within the collaboration between the parties, key areas of programmes/projects have included and shall continue to include institution building and capacity development of EMBs, procurement of electoral material, development of civil and voter registers, results tabulation, civic education, voter education, media development and domestic monitoring, with a specific long-term view to generating permanent national capacity.

Article 1.4. Other emerging areas could be considered for collaboration include the support to and strengthening of political parties and the resolution of electoral disputes – both areas in which UNDP's comparative advantage is its non-partisan approach. The work with political parties can cover initiatives to involve political parties in voter registration and education efforts, to improve party campaign and media strategies, to strengthen party caucuses within legislatures and to make parties accountable for their commitments to address gender imbalances at the leadership level.

Article 1.5 While post-conflict elections are a critical area of collaboration between the parties, the majority of electoral programmes/projects continue to be within the domain of countries organizing their subsequent generations of elections and address issues of the credibility, cost effectiveness and sustainability of elections.

Article 2. Purpose and scope of these Guidelines

Article 2.1. These Guidelines fall within the context and are in full respect of the provisions laid out in the existing Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) between the European Community and the United Nations and following the indications of the Communication of the Commission to the Council and to the Parliament over the 2005 UN Summit. They aim to outline practical measures for the strengthening and the facilitation of the already established cooperation between the two parties in the domain of electoral assistance. They will also act as a catalyst for aligning modalities for the participation of the other development partners.

Article 2.2. These Guidelines draw upon the experience gained in the past five years of cooperation and should be used by the EC Delegations and UNDP Country Offices in the definition of contribution agreements and other election-related cooperation projects. This is in the view to further reducing the time needed to formulate and implement any future eventual specific cooperation agreements by anticipating the needs and facilitating the tasks of EC Delegations and UNDP Country Offices.

Article 2.3. These Guidelines indicate a number of key components that are deemed feasible by the two parties as a basis for future agreements to be signed for the implementation of programmes/projects of electoral assistance. Any activity that the parties may decide to undertake in the framework of the partnership in the electoral assistance field, shall be regulated through the standard contribution agreements approved by the authorised officials of both parties, in conformity with their respective applicable regulations, rules and policies.

Article 2.4. The parties agree that in future cooperation agreements in the field of electoral assistance, there shall always be the possibility for them to introduce in the specific agreement targeted clauses on a number of aspects of their cooperation that can best reflect the past experience and the redefinition of their mutual cooperation provided that they adhere to previous agreements such as the FAFA and the Strategic Partnership Agreement.

Article 3. Key components of EC-UNDP partnership in electoral assistance

Article 3.1 - *Joint[59] Formulation Missions*

59 'Joint' in this document refers to EC-UNDP taking a collaborative initiative.

3.1.1. The parties agree that it can be mutually beneficial, where any new action of electoral assistance is to be launched in any partner country, and following a due request of the respective national authorities and the respective internal decisional processes of the parties, to undertake joint project formulation missions.

3.1.2. These missions would support UNDP Country Offices in the production of the Project Document and, where applicable and desirable, in the formulation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Development Partners supporting a certain electoral assistance project/programme. They would also support the EC Delegations in the production of the Project Identification Fiche and Financing proposal. The missions will look at the overall results sought from the electoral assistance, the activities to be carried out and the related operations, implementation methodologies and needed technologies for the implementation of the given electoral process. They would also properly assess the capacity of the procurement entities, as well as the timing and costs of various phases in the registration and electoral processes, including all relevant procurement aspects, with the support of existing internal or external specific expertise on the matter. A joint report will be produced reflecting the common position of both organisations. The joint formulation missions will usually last six to seven working days.

3.1.3 For UNDP's part, any project commitments for upcoming electoral assistance projects would need to follow a decision, based on an assessment, by the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who is the UN Focal Point on Electoral Assistance, regarding whether the UN will provide support to the election, and

incorporate the Focal Point's recommendations into any planned programme.

3.1.4. For the EC's part, formulation of projects will take due consideration of the recommendations of EU Election Observation and Assessment Missions previously deployed in the country.

Article 3.2. - *UNDP programming and financial arrangements and EC Financing Proposal*

3.2.1. The parties agree that the wording and content of their respective official project documents to be signed separately with State authorities, should be harmonised to ensure an efficient follow up within their respective organizational channels and reflect complementary actions. It is understood that the format of the respective documents will remain unaltered.

3.2.2. The parties agree that the projects/programmes will be financed through the existing standard contribution agreement signed between the EC and UNDP. In the case of multi-donor contributions, a basket fund can be established to emphasize the pooling of resources among development partners. Contributions to the basket fund will be based on existing standard UNDP cost-sharing and/or closed trust fund agreements.

3.2.3. Where appropriate and desirable, and in addition to the UNDP Project Document, an MoU can be signed between UNDP, the EC and all Development Partners, contributing to the basket fund, EMBs and other partners at country level to elaborate on the results sought from the electoral assistance and necessary financial and management arrangements. This MoU, the UNDP Project Document and

the UNDP-EC contribution Agreement should be aligned. The activities and performance indicators will be set out in the UNDP Project Document following agreement with the electoral management bodies of the given country. They can be elaborated upon in the MoU where appropriate.

3.2.4. It is recommended that projects/programmes within the scope of these Operational Guidelines should preferably be directly executed by UNDP or have UNDP as the implementing partner.[60] In this context, the EC Delegation might, where appropriate, adopt a modality of centralised management being allowed by the National Authorising Officer to sign on its behalf the contribution Agreement directly with UNDP.

3.2.5. UNDP Country Offices should ensure necessary project/programme implementation capacity. Preferably, a Programme Management Unit (PMU) should be established. The PMU would be responsible to the UNDP Country Office Senior Management and contain specific electoral expertise as needed. The PMU could be constituted as the day-to-day management component of the project and responsible to the Project/Programme Steering Committee on all its operations and activities. UNDP is would be charged with the responsibility of setting up and managing the PMU.

Article 3.3. - *UNDP Pre-financing and EC Retroactivity Clause*

3.3.1. The parties emphasize that future collaboration follows the existing standard contribution agreement between them. In certain cases the parties agree that it is pos-

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60 Depending on whether it is a non-harmonized or harmonized context.

sible to start up an agreed Project/Programme through the initial pre-financing of activities from the UNDP, on the basis of a duly signed contribution agreement between the EC and UNDP, and in accordance with UNDP's and EC's Financial Regulations and Rules.

3.3.2. The sensitivity of the electoral assistance field - which is often a critical part of the stabilisation and/or reconstruction of a country – as well as the frequently complex environment in which it takes place, often means receiving a late request from the local authorities for electoral assistance. Therefore, whenever the EC financial contribution can not be mobilised with sufficient anticipation, a retroactivity clause could be included. This would cover all eligible expenses incurred by UNDP from a date to be specified and timely communicated in writing by the EC Delegation to the UNDP Country Office concerned. The date would be generally the beginning of the EC Inter-Service Consultation corresponding to the end of the instruction/appraisal phase of the project/financial proposal in the EC. The use of the retroactive financing for ACP countries must be done in compliance with the annex IV, Article 19, of the EC-ACP Partnership Agreement signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000. For other theatres of operation the relevant EC financial regulations will apply.

3.3.3. The parties furthermore agree to consider including such a clause in their contribution agreement only when the implementation of the projects might be jeopardized by the late mobilization of the financial disbursements.

Article 3.4. *EU Participation in the steering and monitoring of the programme/projects and Visibility issues*

3.4.1. UNDP acknowledges the importance of ensuring the appropriate EC tenure and visibility during the implementation phase.

3.4.2. The parties agree that specific measures and initiatives shall be undertaken to ensure participation and adequate perception of the EC efforts among all the stakeholders of the electoral process. These shall be discussed and agreed upon by EC Delegations and UNDP Country Offices. The UNDP will strengthen the important objective for a broader EU visibility conceptualised in the "EC visibility matrix" prepared by the EC services and in the new EU visibility guidelines currently being prepared by the UN family in agreement with the EC services. To this extent, expenses for visibility actions are considered eligible project expenses. This aside, it is recommended that UNDP submits a visibility plan to the local EC Delegation for consideration within the first month of project start up.

3.4.3 In this context, EC Delegations would be allowed to take a more proactive role in promoting EC-funded activities implemented through UNDP, to take on additional responsibilities in steering committees and to follow technically the implementation of the programmes/projects, also with the support of external expertise. On the matter, the Delegations may consider recruiting electoral operations experts that would collaborate with the UNDP team in advising the electoral management bodies.

3.4.4. The parties agree that for any future collaboration specific steering and technical committees shall be formed.

3.4.5. The steering committees shall include the relevant EMBs and development partners

supporting the respective project/programme. Where appropriate, the UNDP and the EC can co-chair – with the representative of the local EMBs as relevant – such committees and provide secretariat services with the support of internal or externally recruited electoral assistance expertise.

3.4.6. The decisions within the steering committees shall preferably be taken by consensus. However, in the absence of a consensus and as a last resort, there will be a weighted vote – linked to contributions made - the result of which must have UNDP's backing as it is responsible for the management of the project.

3.4.7. The parties agree that restricted technical committees will be formed and can include the respective electoral experts of the major donors plus the representatives of the EMBs. These committees will be tasked with preparing the issues to be discussed within the Steering Committee.

3.4.8. Wherever the EC contribution is over 70%, the parties agree that the UNDP country office and the EC delegation can consider, where relevant, titling such activities as EC-UNDP "Joint Electoral Assistance Projects", or JEAPs.

Article 3.5. - *Selection of Electoral Assistance Experts for the Management Team*

3.5.1. The parties agree that the selection of electoral assistance experts to work in Projects/Programmes shall be done in collaboration and in agreement between UNDP Country Offices, the EC Delegations and the local EMBs, with specific support as relevant from UN DPA/EAD and Europe Aid, which both maintain a roster of international experts.

3.5.2. The selections shall be carried out by the UNDP Country Office within a standard timeframe of maximum 7 days after a suitable candidature has been proposed to UN DPA/EAD and to the EC services. This implies that if they are contacted for their feedback on a potential candidate, they will provide comments within 7 days.

3.5.3. The UNDP agrees that clearance for the selection of experts shall be provided in an expeditious manner and the selection of the entire set of experts required may be completed at different stages in order to allow the immediate implementation of the project. Recruitment of experts shall be done in accordance with UNDP regulations, rules and procedures.

Article 3.6. - *Performance indicators, benchmarks and phased disbursements*

3.6.1. UNDP agrees that the disbursement of the EC financial contribution may be subject to the meeting of specific performance indicators, conditionalities and/or benchmarks previously set by the EC in its Country Strategy Papers or National Indicative Programmes. These will be indicated also in the UNDP Project Document, EC Financing Agreement and, where applicable, MoUs, and devised during the formulation stage of the project via a consultation process with the EMBs.

3.6.2. The EC agrees to undertake a periodical review of such benchmarks, in accordance with the related developments of the political situation.

Article 3.7. - *Reporting Requirements*

3.7.1. The parties agree that, in addition to the standard reporting requirements laid out in the FAFA, specific reporting mechanisms may

be agreed upon by the UNDP Country Offices with the EC Delegations during the Project Formulation Phase.

3.7.2. Preferably, the PMU should act as a common information point for all development partners supporting the respective Project/Programme. The PMU can take responsibility for circulating information to the relevant partners as appropriate. The reports should include, but are not limited to the following: Technical progress report (monthly) outlining progress of activities against the outcomes and performance indicators articulated in the UNDP project document; Substantive report (quarterly) reflecting the status of the activities funded within the wider context of electoral preparation and implementation, drawing attention to any key issues that would impact on elections calendar implementation; Provisional financial information; Decisions and proceedings of Steering Committee Meetings; Project Website (updated according to the needs).

Article 3.8. - *Procurement of Specific Election Material*

3.8.1. The parties agree that the procurement of sensitive or highly specific or costly election materials should preferably be done in close collaboration and involvement of the UNDP Inter Agency Procurement Services Office (hereinafter referred to as UNDP/IAPSO) and, where applicable or desirable, conducted via UNDP/IAPSO.

3.8.2. Where the services of IAPSO are requested by the UNDP Country Office, UNDP shall ensure that timely and resumed information on the tenders' results and selection process shall be provided to all development partners

including the EC Delegations.

3.8.3. In the event of very costly procurement actions for highly technical electoral materials, the parties furthermore agree that particular additional mechanisms such as pilot and validation tests shall be put in place to enhance transparency of the process before the selection of the vendor is completed, in line with UNDP procurement procedures.

3.8.4 Where requested, UNDP/IAPSO can provide to UNDP Country Offices ad-hoc training courses on UNDP rules and regulations related to elections procurement.

3.8.5 Upon request UNDP/IAPSO can also assist UNDP country offices in developing procurement plans to ensure timely and cost-efficient deliveries of electoral equipment.

Article 4. Specific elements for enhanced collaboration on the production of content and participation to specialised networks

Article 4.1. - The parties agree to collaborate on new or existing initiatives and networks for the production of knowledge products and services for the support of electoral processes, such as the knowledge practitioners' networks within the Administration and Cost of Elections (ACE) global initiative. They also agree to undertake, where appropriate, studies of mutual interest, such as those on the synergies between civil and voter registration linked to the increased used of ICTs, on the issues of conflict, security and elections and on the issues of disadvantaged groups and elections

Article 4.2. The parties agree to collaborate towards the development of joint training curricula as appropriate for the respective officers in charge of Electoral Assistance Projects. These curricula shall be particularly focused on program-

ming, identification, formulation, the respective procedures for implementing electoral assistance activities, the procurement of specific electoral material and services, monitoring and evaluation. The parties furthermore agree to organize periodically practice meetings to review their cooperation, share acquired knowledge, best practices and strengthen linkages.

Article 5. - Entry into force and implementation

Article 5.1. These Guidelines enter into force on the date of signature by the duly authorized representatives of the UNDP and of the EC and may be amended at any time with the mutual written consent of the two parties.

Article 5.2. The parties agree to monitor, assess and take the necessary corrective measures on the implementation of these Operational Guidelines every calendar year. As a partner of both UNDP and the EC in electoral assistance, although not a party to these current Guidelines, UN DPA-EAD will be invited to participate in the review of the Guidelines' implementation.

Done in Brussels, on the 21st April 2006.

Koos Richelle
Director General - EuropeAid

Ad Melkert
UNDP Associate Administrator

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP) AND

[Insert the names of partners contributing to the Basket Fund e.g. the European Commission, Partner Governments etc.][61]   **ON**   *[Insert purpose e.g. "Cooperation for Support to the 2007 Electoral Process in Nigeria"]*

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into between the governments of *[List partners contributing to the Basket Fund alphabetically]* (hereinafter referred to as the "Partners") as represented by their official representatives in *[Insert location e.g. Abuja]*, and the United Nations Development Programme ("UNDP"), a subsidiary organ of the United Nations, an intergovernmental organization established by its Member States with its headquarters in New York (USA), represented by the UNDP Resident Representative in *[Insert location e.g. Abuja]*. The partners contributing to the Basket Fund and UNDP are hereinafter jointly referred to as the "Parties". Other partners may join the MOU by Addendum to it.

Whereas the *[Insert name of programme country]* is due to hold its elections in *[Insert relevant details on planned elections]*;

Whereas the UN has received and approved the official request from *[Insert name of programme country]* for UN support to the intended elections, and on the basis of this approval, UNDP is providing the electoral assistance set out in this MoU;

Whereas the Parties to this MOU have decided to extend support to these elections;

Whereas it is recognised that elections are a fundamental building block in the democratic development of *[Insert name of programme country]*, and represent a critical channel to enhance citizens' participation to political life and achieve the interlinked objectives of poverty alleviation and human development, in line with the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals;

Whereas it is understood that electoral assistance has to take stock of all the steps of the electoral cycle and that inter-election periods are as crucial as the build up to the elections themselves, thus requiring regular inter-institutional contact and support activities before, during and after election periods for the sake of lessons learned and inter-institutional memory aiming at improving the *[Insert name of programmme country]* electoral process;

[These "Whereas Provisions" are descriptive provisions meant to provide a brief background of the relationship between the Parties, they should address the questions: What are the common areas of interest? What is the context?]

Now, therefore, the Parties agree to cooperate as follows:

Article I: Purpose

1. The purpose of this MoU is to provide a framework of cooperation and facilitate collaboration between the Parties, on a non-exclusive basis, in areas of common interest.

*[The section 2. that follows should describe the purpose, objective and expected outcomes of the MoU. It should answer the questions: What are the overall purposes of the MoU and the objectives of the collaboration? The text is an **example** of what this*

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could look like.]

2. The overarching goals of the Parties' support to the elections are to assist *[Insert name of programme country] in:*

   a) achieving an electoral process that to the highest degree possible can be considered cost-efficient, free and fair, and leads to national and international recognition; and

   b) enhancing citizens' understanding of their rights and duties and capability to engage politically.

3. The Parties have decided to establish an arrangement (the "Basket Fund") to support the overarching goals as described above and requested that UNDP manage the Basket Fund in recognition of the key role UNDP plays in coordinating electoral assistance at country level between national and international actors, as acknowledged in the Note of Guidance signed between UNDP and the UN Department of Political Affairs (January 2001);

Article II: Areas of Cooperation

*[This Article should list the specific activities outlined within the overall scope of the MoU that will serve to accomplish the objectives stated under Article I. The text below is an **example** of what this could look like.]*

1. More specifically, the Parties agree to cooperate in the following areas of activity:

   a) Strengthening of the national Electoral Management Body's capacity to manage elections in line with its constitutional mandate and the benchmarks for election standards contained in *[Insert as necessary];*

   b) Supporting the civil society to play a more effective role in advocating for more transparent, credible and fair electoral processes (e.g. through support to voter education campaigns, support for domestic observation ef-

forts or their coordination[62] etc.);

Article III: Implementing Arrangements

1. All activities under this MoU will be carried out on the basis of a UNDP project (hereinafter referred to as the "project") in accordance with UNDP regulations, rules and directives. The respective project document will be signed between UNDP and the Government of *[Insert name of programme country].*

2. A Project Board/Steering Committee will be established as the highest policy and decision-making organ for the project. The Project Board/Steering Committee will consist of representatives of the national Government authorities and UNDP and can include Partners contributing to the Basket Fund as agreed. The Project Board/Steering Committee will approve the work plan and budget of the project.

3. For contributing to the Basket Fund, Partners will enter into separate cost-sharing or closed trust fund agreements[63] with UNDP on the basis of standard agreement templates in accordance with UNDP regulations and rules.

4. A Coordination Committee will be established to provide overall strategic guidance to the Basket Fund (hereinafter referred to as the "Coordination Committee"). It will consist of representatives of the Parties to this MoU. The Terms of Reference for the Coordination Committee are outlined in Annex 1. The members of the Coordination Committee may also be designated members of the Project Board/Steering Committee referred to in paragraph 1 above. The Terms of Reference for the Coordination Committee

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62 The UN does not observe electoral processes unless it receives a mandate to do so from an intergovernmental body (e.g. General Assembly or Security Council). Work in this domain, therefore, falls within the technical assistance domain and centres on the coordination of international and/or domestic observers rather than United Nations observation per se. Any support to international observers needs to adhere to the Declaration of Principles for International Observation, signed by, inter alia, the United Nations.
63 This applies to contributions from the European Commission. Closed Trust Fund arrangements need to undergo the standard Trust Fund clearance procedure.

shall be integral part of this MOU.

5. The Parties recognize that a dedicated Programme Management Unit (PMU) can be established by UNDP in accordance with UNDP's regulations and rules to manage the project on a day-to-day basis. The PMU may act as the Secretariat to the Project Board/Steering Committee. The Terms of Reference of the PMU are part of the respective UNDP project document[64].

6. Where deemed feasible and advisable, the Partners may wish to create a Technical Committee comprising of their respective electoral assistance experts present in the field. The role of this Committee would be to examine the technical aspects of the project and therefore help prepare the next Project Board/Steering Committee meeting by examining, highlighting and possibly providing ideas and solutions to technical issues which can then be more easily discussed and approved by the Project Board/Steering Committee.

Article IV: Consultation, Communication and Visibility

1. The Parties shall on a regular basis keep each other informed of and consult on matters pertaining to the activities supported by the Basket Fund.

2. The Coordination Committee will meet at such intervals as deemed appropriate to assess the progress of the activities supported by the Basket Fund. The frequency of these meetings will be decided by the Coordination Committee.

3. UNDP shall take all appropriate measures to publicize the fact that the project has received funding from the Partners, provided that such actions do not jeopardize the United Nations privileges and immunities provided under the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations and the safety and security of United Nations staff. Specific measures and initiatives to ensure adequate visibility of the role and efforts of each Partner may be further defined in the separate co-financing agreements[65].

4. Consultation and exchange of information and documents under this Article shall be without prejudice to arrangements, which may be required to safeguard the confidential and restricted character of certain information and documents. Such arrangements will survive the termination of this MOU and of any agreements signed by the Parties within the scope of this collaboration.

Article V: Reporting, Evaluation and Audit

1. The administrative, monitoring and reporting requirements of the activities supported by the Basket Fund will be articulated in the UNDP project document and the related cost sharing and closed trust fund agreements[66].

2. These requirements will include submission of work plans, substantive/technical reports, financial monitoring and reporting; and monitoring and reporting of results against outcome indicators as may be articulated in the project document.

3. The contributions to the Basket Fund shall be subject exclusively to the internal and external auditing procedures provided for in the financial regulations, rules and directives of UNDP. Should the biennial Audit Report of the Board of Auditors of UNDP to its governing body contain observations relevant to the contributions to the activities supported by the Basket Fund, such information shall be made available to the partner contributing to the Basket Fund.

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64 If so requested, the Country Office can annex the TOR of the PMU to this MoU to encourage transparency and building of trust with some Partners. In those cases, please include Annex 2.

65 The EC tends to have specific visibility requirements which are best addressed through a specific visibility plan which should be proposed by the UNDP CO to the respective EC Delegation.
66 This applies to contributions from the European Commission. Closed Trust Fund arrangements need to undergo the standard Trust Fund clearance procedure.

Article VI: Amendment of the MOU

Consultations with a view to amending this MOU, including cases where additional Partners wish to join the Basket Fund, may be held at the request of at least two Parties. The proposed amendment will be discussed in the Coordination Committee and a decision taken by consensus. Decisions on amendments will come into effect upon signing by all Parties. Amendments will be binding upon all Parties to this MOU. The amendments will form an integral part of the MOU as addenda to it.

Article VII: Termination

1. This MOU expires after the elections and not later than *[Insert appropriate date]* but may be extended to support post-election activities or the next electoral cycle on the basis of an amendment by all Parties.

2. Any of the Parties may withdraw from this MoU upon giving thirty (30) days' written notice to all other parties. The MoU may also be terminated by consensus of the Parties. However, such withdrawal or termination shall not impact any obligation entered into by the Partners and UNDP in the related cost sharing and closed trust fund agreements which will be governed by the terms of those agreements.

Article VIII: Entry into Force

This MOU enters into force upon signature of all Parties.

Article IX: Addresses

Any written communications between the Parties pursuant to this MOU may be sent to the addresses specified below:

Signed in duplicate in the [Insert UN official language] **language at** [Insert location],

this _____ day of _____, in the year _____.

For the partners contributing to the Basket Fund

[List partners contributing to the Basket Fund alphabetically]

Signature:	
Designation:	
Date:	

Signature:	
Designation:	
Date:	

Signature:	
Designation:	
Date:	

Signature:	
Designation:	
Date:	

For UNDP

Signature:	
Designation:	
Date:	

TERMS OF REFERENCE
THE COORDINATION COMMITTEE

A Coordination Committee will be constituted to provide strategic guidance on the electoral support activities financed through this Basket Fund.

The Coordination Committee will consist of the Development Partners contributing to the Basket Fund and UNDP. Representatives of the national government authorities of *[Insert name of entity]* can be invited to attend Coordination Committee meetings as observers.

The Coordination Committee will meet *[Insert frequency as appropriate],* and more frequently at the request of any of its respective representatives.

UNDP will periodically brief the Coordination Committee on the status of implementing activities supported by the Basket Fund.

Decisions of the Coordination Committee will be taken by consensus.

This Annex should only be included if it has been duly requested by Partners contributing to the Basket Fund and the CO does not have any objections of sharing these TOR here.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

UNDP PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT UNIT (PMU)

UNDP is charged with the responsibility of setting up and managing a Programme Management Unit (hereinafter "PMU") in accordance with its regulations and rules.

The PMU will be constituted as the day-to-day management organ of the UNDP project.

Staffing

[Staffing here should mirror arrangements specified in the UNDP Project Document.]

The PMU will consist of the following personnel:
• A Chief Technical Advisor/PMU Manager appointed by UNDP[67];
• Electoral advisers covering the fields of voter reg-

istration, electoral operations, public outreach, CSO capacity building and electoral technologies;
• Procurement and planning specialist(s);
• Programme officer(s);
• Financial officer(s);
• Operations and administrative management officer(s).

The PMU Manager will head the PMU and provide liaison with the Project Board/Steering Committee.

The selection of experts and staff for the PMU will be undertaken by UNDP in accordance with its regulations and rules. The selections shall be carried out within a standard timeframe of maximum 15 days after suitable candidates have been proposed. This implies that when the UNDPA-EAD, which maintains a roster of international experts, is contacted for potential candidates or for feedback on a potential candidate, it will provide comments within 15 days. UNDP will clear selected experts in an expeditious manner and the selection of the full complement of experts required may be completed at different stages in order to allow the immediate implementation of the project.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the PMU will comprise the following:

• Management, co-ordination and oversight of UNDP project activities;

• Application of financing procedures in compliance with UNDP regulations and rules and management of cost-sharing and closed trust fund agreements in relation to the Basket Fund;

• Procurement for Basket Fund activities and asset oversight in accordance with UNDP procurement guidelines;

• May act as the Secretariat of the Project Board/ Steering Committee.

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67 This individual must be a UNDP staff member and not a SSA or service contractor.

Terms of Reference Template

This template lists competencies needed from electoral advisors, experts and project managers. All these competencies are unlikely to be present in one person. The purpose of this template is to list knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences required for a range of election related jobs. Project planners can select what they need to customize a TOR that fits job requirements.

Knowledge

- ❏ Expertise in policy issues connected to electoral reform and democratic governance
- ❏ Knowledge of policy making institutions and how to influence those processes
- ❏ Knowledge of capacity development issues and delivering on the job-training
- ❏ Expertise in the preparation of electoral budget
- ❏ Knowledge of electoral processes

Skills

- ❏ Be able to create strategic plans for resource mobilization, media relations
- ❏ Communicating and networking skills among donors, partner organizations in public sector
- ❏ Ability to monitor technical aspects of election planning
- ❏ Be able to coordinate several different types of election programming interventions and work under stress
- ❏ Be able to use advocacy skills, coalition building and media relations
- ❏ Be able demonstrate creative problem solving in response to unforeseen events
- ❏ Strong writing skills for the preparation of background papers and concept notes on electoral processes

Attitude

- ❏ Be sensitive to political and cultural realities of the country
- ❏ Be committed to following participatory methods and approaches
- ❏ Understand and be sympathetic to different points of view

Experience

- ❏ Experience in managing work teams outside ones own culture
- ❏ Have been involved in planning, advising and implementing electoral assistance projects
- ❏ Have experience in working with donor funded programmes

Duties and Responsibilities of Project Manager

- ❏ Be responsible for leading UNDP electoral assistance in the Parliamentary/ Presidential elections of Host Country
- ❏ Advise Country Office on electoral reform, legislative and policy issues with a long term perspective
- ❏ Advice UNDP on possible key interventions to support democratic governance through parallel and future programming
- ❏ Lead resource mobilization efforts and coordinate with donors in support of electoral assistance
- ❏ Supervise day to day management of the Electoral Assistance Project including, finance, administration, procurement, staffing, monitoring and reporting
- ❏ Establish and maintain contacts with civil society organizations, and political parties
- ❏ Coordinate with EMB and Electoral Commission on the election related activities
- ❏ Support UNDP efforts to build sustainable capacity in the area of democratic governance

UNDP Project Document and Results Framework (CPAP vs. non-CPAP)

Title	Project Document: Required Formats and Contents
Document Language	English (original), French - Spanish (pending finalization of portal)
Source Language	English
Responsible Unit	BDP/CDG
Creator (individual)	Dien Le dien.le@undp.org
Contributor	Mari Matsumoto (BDP/CDG), John Patterson (BDP/CDG), Asoka Kasturiarachchi (BED/CDG), Peri Johnson (BOM/OPLS), Naoto Yamamoto (BOM.CBS), Dominic Sam (BRSP), Anne Jupner (BRSP)
Subject (Taxonomy)	Managing for Results, Programming, Strategy & Planning
Date approved	20 December 2006
Audience	All country offices. Primarily intended for staff involved in programming/project formulation.
Applicability	This project document format will be applicable to all projects.
Replaces	ATLAS supported project document and AWP. The purpose of this update is to clarify and simplify the requirements for projects under a CPAP, and projects outside a CPAP
Is part of	Results Management Guide
Conforms to	Harmonized programming procedures and ATLAS
Related documents	UNDG AWP guidelines, UNDP User Guide
Mandatory Review	After one year

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Details of specific UNDP development interventions are outlined in a Project Document. A Project Document articulates an agreement to implement a project in accordance with the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA)[68] between the government and UNDP as well as with UNDP's corporate policies and procedures.

For the purpose of simplification, the term "Project Document" is used to cover both "ATLAS supported project document" and "CPAP/AWP" formats currently in use, as well as any other formats, provided that the minimum documentation requirements as specified below are met.

PROJECT DOCUMENT GUIDELINES

The project document format can take one of the following two formats, depending on whether the project is within a CPAP or not.

- In harmonized countries (where CPAP/AWP together constitutes a Project Document) the following components are required to fulfill the SBAA requirement for a Project Document:

  1. **Cover Page (to be signed by UNDP and Implementing Partner)**

  2. **AWP Budget Sheet**

  3. **Management Arrangements**

  4. **Monitoring and Evaluation, including AWP Monitoring Tool**

  5. **Legal context**

  6. **Annexes: CPAP signed by Government and UNDP (incorporated by reference)**

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68 For non-SBAA countries, the governing agreement would serve this purpose. In addition, for non-SBAA countries, a standard annex to the project document or CPAP is required.

Project Document Components	Required components of a project document	
	CPAP	Non CPAP
1. Cover page	X[69]	X[70]
2. Situation Analysis		X
3. Strategy		X
4. Results and Resources Framework		X
5. AWP Budget Sheet(s)	X	X
6. Management Arrangements	X	X
7. Monitoring & Evaluation, including AWP Monitoring Tool	X	X
8. Legal Context	X	X
9. Annexes	X[71]	

69 Signed by UNDP and Implementing Partner
70 Signed by UNDP, Government, and Executing Agency
71 Signed CPAP (incorporated by reference) must be included

These are the minimal requirements which may be supplemented as required by additional narrative, AWP Budget Sheets of subsequent years, a results and resources framework, co-financing arrangements, etc. Since the CPAP already contains the general context within which the projects operate such as the situation analysis, proposed programme, etc. the narrative section need not replicate such content.

- Projects that are in countries without a signed CPAP (non-harmonized countries) or that are not incorporated into a CPAP would require the following components to fulfill the SBAA requirement for a Project Document:

  1. **Cover Page (to be signed by the Government, UNDP and Executing Entity)**

  2. **Situation Analysis**

  3. **Strategy**

  4. **Results and Resources Framework**

  5. **AWP Budget Sheet(s)**

  6. **Management Arrangements**

  7. **Monitoring and Evaluation, including AWP Monitoring Tool**

  8. **Legal Context**

- The above table summarizes the required formats and contents for a project document to be legally valid.

Notes:

1. *"X" means "mandatory"*

2. *Format and language for the following components are standard in a Project Document:*
   - *Cover Page*
   - *Annual Work Plan Budget Sheet*
   - *Annual Work Plan Monitoring Tool*
   - *Legal Context.*

3. *Content of other mandatory components must be included in a Project Document, but can take any format.*

PROJECT DOCUMENT FORMAT FOR CPAP COUNTRIES

Country: _____

UNDAF Outcome(s)/Indicator(s):   _____
(Link to UNDAF outcome; If no UNDAF, leave blank)

Expected Outcome(s)/Indicator (s):   _____
(CPAP outcomes linked to the MYFF goal and service line)

Expected Output(s)/Annual Targets: _____
(CPAP outputs linked to the above CPAP outcome)

Implementing partner: _____

Responsible parties: _____

Narrative

Programme Period:_____

Programme Component:_____

Project Title:_____

Project ID: _____

Project Duration: _____

Total Budget _____

Allocated resources: _____
- Government _____
- Regular _____
- Other:
  - Donor _____
  - Donor _____
  - Donor _____
- In kind contributions _____
Unfunded budget: _____

Agreed by *(Implementing partner[72]):* _____

Agreed by (UNDP):_____

_____
72 If an NGO is the Executing entity, it would not sign this page, but rather the Project Cooperation Agreement with UNDP

Notes On Component 1: Cover Page Template

UNDAF OUTCOME AND INDICATOR(S)

Outcome is defined as the intended or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs, usually requiring the collective effort of partners. Outcomes represent changes in development conditions which occur between the completion of outputs and the achievement of impact.

The cover page details the UNDAF outcome(s) articulated in the UNDAF results matrix as well as the expected Outcome(s) and Output(s) related to the project.

UNDAF Outcome indicators should be listed here.

EXPECTED OUTCOME(S) AND INDICATOR(S)

Expected Outcomes are Country Programme (CP) or global (GP)/regional programme (RP) outcomes. They should reflect MYFF outcomes and ACC Sectors, which are in the ATLAS.

Outcome indicator(s) should be listed here.

EXPECTED OUTPUT(S) AND INDICATOR(S)

Outputs are defined as the products and services which result from the completion of activities within a development intervention.

Expected Outputs are Country Programme outputs. They should reflect MYFF outputs.

Output indicator(s) should be listed here.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER:

Name of institution responsible for managing the project. Implementing partners include national institutions, UN agencies, UNDP or NGOs. A Ca-

pacity Assessment should be carried out when selecting implementing partners. Assessments of financial management capacity would be done by a UN Country Team as required by the Harmonized Framework for Cash Transfers to Implementing Partners (HACT)

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

Formerly referred to as implementing entities — partners that have been engaged by the implementing partner to carry out activities within a project. This would include UNDP when it provides Country Office Support services to national implementing partner.

Consistent with current practice, procurement procedures apply when using an NGO as a responsible party.

Narrative section: The narrative section can be expanded through attachments as needed.

Programme period: Refers to the Country Programme period

Programme component: Refers to MYFF Goal

Project title, project code, ATLAS award ID, project duration (self explanatory)

Management Arrangements: Indicate national, UN organization, NGO or UNDP implementation

Total budget: Includes the budget and General Management Support Fees. In-kind contributions can be listed under 'other' resources. Unfunded amounts cannot be committed until funds are available. A multi-year project can consist of several AWP budget sheets. The AWP sheet of the current year should be detailed and signed at the beginning of the year.

Signatures:

- The Implementing partner is the institution responsible for managing the project and its inputs.

- UNDP is the UNDP Resident Representative.

ANNUAL WORK PLAN BUDGET SHEET

Year _____

Annual Work Plan Budget Sheet

Expected Outputs should be linked to the expected output(s) and UNDAF outcome listed on the cover page, and include the relevant indicators/ benchmarks. For an explanation of the terms and concepts, please refer to the Results-Based Management (RBM) in UNDP: Technical Note (available on the UNDP Evaluation Office website).

Key activities would include the activities to be undertaken during the year to achieve the annual output targets for that year.

For ease of recording, inputs that contribute to more than one 'key activity' listed in the AWP (e.g., staff, equipment, project administration costs), can be listed as a separate 'key activity'. Since these inputs frequently have durations of more than one year, they should be included in the total budget, and pro-rated if appropriate[73].

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAME				RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
and indicators including annual targets	List all activities including M&E to be undertaken during the year towards stated CP outputs	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Source of Funds	Budget Description	Amount
TOTAL									

---

73 Since the UN does not depreciate equipment, equipment should be budgeted in the year expected to be purchased.

Timeframe would indicate the planned quarter for the activity.

Responsible party would be either the Implementing partner or 'responsible parties' listed on the cover page.

Source of funds The new budgeting practice will permit better donor reporting and country office management. In ATLAS, each budget category is associated to a chart of accounts (COA). A chart of accounts is composed of:

- Account to identify what type of input being financed
- Fund to specify what fund is used to finance an input
- Donor to specify who made contributions to an input
- Responsible party to specify who is accountable for provision of an input
- Department to specify who owns the budget to finance an input
- Operating Unit to specify whose balance sheet will belong to a transaction to finance an input

Budget Description is the input budget code (i.e., personnel, contract, etc.)

An Annual Work Plan Budget Sheet is produced for each year. When a project has multiple years of duration, AWP Budget Sheets covering the project duration will constitute the project budget. The level of detail in AWP budget sheets for subsequent years, provided at the beginning of the project, need not be complete and may contain only the agreed activities and contractual commitments. However as they progressively become current, the respective AWP budget sheet for a given year should be completed in detail. Project budgets in ATLAS would also be entered and revised accordingly.

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT
(minimum one paragraph, suggested maximum two pages)

It should be noted that under the CPAP arrangement, execution means ownership of the country programme documented in the CPAP. Therefore, projects are no longer 'executed.' Rather, they are implemented by Implementing Partners who are responsible for producing outputs and use of resources. Implementing partners may contract with Responsible Parties to carry out specific activities.

This section should explain the roles and responsibilities (including clarification on the accountability for resources) of the parties in carrying out, and oversight over, the project activities. These should correspond with the parties listed on the signature page as implementing partner and responsible parties, and include annexes (e.g., project cooperation agreements, TORs for staff or contracts if necessary) as needed. This section should note results of capacity assessments of the implementing partner (micro-assessment under HACT) and how resources will be transferred (e.g., advances, reimbursement, direct payment, country office support services). It should also address measures for strengthening capacities where they are weak.

Other elements in this section include collaborative arrangements with related projects (if any), prior obligations and prerequisites to mitigate identified project risks, a brief description/summary of the inputs to be provided by all partners, agreement on intellectual property rights and use of logo on the project's products, and audit arrangements.

The minimum requirements for the project man-

agement arrangements include the following roles and this section should explicitly list who will play these roles:

Project Board: The Project Board is the group responsible for making on a consensus basis management decisions for a project when guidance is required by the Project Manager, including recommendation for UNDP/Implementing Partner approval of project revisions. Project reviews by this group are made at designated decision points during the running of a project, or as necessary when raised by the Project Manager. This group is consulted by the Project Manager for decisions when PM tolerances (i.e. constraints normally in terms of time and budget) have been exceeded.

This group contains three roles:

- Executive representing the project ownership to chair the group,
- Senior Supplier role to provide guidance regarding the technical feasibility of the project, and
- Senior Beneficiary role to ensure the realization of project benefits from the perspective of project beneficiaries.

Potential members of the Project Board are reviewed and recommended for approval during the Local Programme Advisory Committee (LPAC) meeting. For example, the Executive role may be held by the Project Director, the Senior Supplier role may be held by representatives of the Implementing Partner and/or UNDP, and the Senior Beneficiary role may be held by the representatives of other government entities or civil society.

The Government Cooperating Agency and UNDP must always be present in the project board.

Project Assurance is the responsibility of each Project Board member, but the role can be delegated. The Project Assurance role supports the Project Board by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed. A UNDP Programme Officer typically holds the Project Assurance role for the UNDP Board member, and a similar government representative would undetake this role for the Project Director. Note that the Project Manager and Project Assurance roles should never be held by the same individual for the same project.

Project Manager: The Project Manager has the authority to run the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Project Board within the constraints laid down by the Project Board. The Project Manager is responsible for day-to-day management and decision-making for the project. The Project Manager's prime responsibility is to ensure that the project produces the results specified in the project document, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost. The Project Manager is appointed by the Implementing Partner.

More guidance on project management organization is available in the RMG at http://content.undp.org/go/userguide/results/rmoverview/progprojorg/

MONITORING AND EVALUATION
(minimum one paragraph, suggested maximum two pages)

Describe briefly how the key corporate principles for monitoring, measurement and evaluation will be applied in the project. A Communication and Monitoring plan (C&M plan) should be prepared that describes which activities and outputs will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated, how and by whom. The plan should articulate the types of

communications and associated scheduling required during the project, as well as methods of communicating project results to stakeholders.

The plan should be developed as part of the overall Country Programme monitoring and evaluation within the context of the UNDAF M&E plan.

Project evaluations are only required when they are mandated by partnership protocols, such as GEF. Country offices and programme units may use their discretion in selecting other projects to be evaluated to manage better for results.

Together with project issue/ risk logs, the following AWP Monitoring Tool should be used for the project review purpose.

Expected Outputs and Indicators: **List all CP outputs and indicators, including annual targets**

Planned Activities: List all the activities including monitoring **and evaluation activities, including evaluations, field monitoring visits, technical backstopping missions, and audits to be undertaken during the year towards stated CP outputs**

Expenditures: **List actual expenditures against activities complete**

Results of Activities: For each activity, state the results of the activity

Progress towards Achieving CP Outputs: Using data on annual indicator targets, state progress towards achieving the CP outputs. Based on the updated project issue/risk logs, comment on factors that facilitated and/or constrained achievement of results including:

• Whether risks and assumptions as identified in the CP M&E Framework materialized or wheth-

er new risks emerge

   • Internal factors such as timing of inputs and activities, quality of products and services, coordination and/or other management issues

LEGAL CONTEXT

The following text applies:

"This document together with the CPAP signed by the Government and UNDP which is incorporated by reference constitute together a Project Document as referred to in the SBAA [or other appropriate governing agreement] and all CPAP provisions apply to this document."

ANNEXES

• The CPAP signed by UNDP and the Government Coordinating Agency would be appended if necessary.

• Any additional agreements, such as cost sharing agreements, project cooperation agreements signed with NGOs (where the NGO is designated as the "implementing partner") should be attached.

PROJECT DOCUMENT FORMAT FOR NON-CPAP COUNTRIES

COMPONENT 1: COVER PAGE

Country: _____

UNDAF Outcome(s)/Indicator(s)[74]:   _____
(Link to UNDAF outcome; If no UNDAF, leave blank)

Expected Outcome(s)/Indicator (s):   _____
(GP/RP/CP outcomes linked to the MYFF goal and service line)

Expected Output(s)/Annual Targets: _____
(GP/RP/CP outputs linked to the above CP outcome)

Executing Entity: _____

Implementing agencies: _____

                                            _____

Narrative

Programme Period:_____

Programme Component:_____

Project Title:_____

Project ID: _____

Project Duration: _____

Total Budget	_____
Allocated resources:	_____
• Government	_____
• Regular	_____
• Other:	
• Donor	_____
• Donor	_____
• Donor	_____
• In kind contributions	_____
Unfunded budget:	_____

Agreed by (*Government*):_____

Agreed by (*Executing entity*[75]):_____

Agreed by (*UNDP*):_____

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74 For global/regional projects, this is not required
75 If an NGO is the Executing entity, it would not sign this page, but rather the Project Cooperation Agreement

Notes on Component 1: Cover Page Template

UNDAF OUTCOME AND INDICATOR(S)

Outcome is defined as the intended or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs, usually requiring the collective effort of partners. Outcomes represent changes in development conditions which occur between the completion of outputs and the achievement of impact.

The cover page details the UNDAF outcome(s) as well as the expected Outcome(s) and Output(s) related to the project. If the UNDAF lists outcomes, they should be included in the cover page. When UNDAF outcomes are not clearly articulated, country teams may decide to either revisit the UNDAF to clarify the outcomes or leave the field blank.

UNDAF Outcome indicators should be listed here.

EXPECTED OUTCOME(S) AND INDICATOR(S)

Expected Outcomes are Country Programme (CP) or global (GP)/regional programme (RP) outcomes. They should reflect MYFF outcomes and ACC Sectors, which are in the ATLAS.

Outcome indicator(s) should be listed here.

EXPECTED OUTPUT(S) AND INDICATOR(S)

Outputs are defined as the products and services which result from the completion of activities within a development intervention.

Expected Outputs are Country Programme or global/regional programme outputs. They should reflect MYFF outputs.

Output indicator(s) should be listed here.

EXECUTING ENTITY:

Name of institution responsible for managing the programme or project (formerly referred to as executing entity). Executing entities include national institutions, UN agencies, UNDP[76] or NGOs. A Capacity assessment should be carried out when selecting executing entities.

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES:

Implementing entities are partners that have been engaged by the executing entity to carry out activities within a project. This would include UNDP when it provides Country Office Support services to a national executing entity.

Consistent with current practice, procurement procedures apply when using an NGO as an implementing agency.

Narrative section: The narrative section can be expanded through attachments as needed.

Programme period: Refers to the Country/ Regional/ Global Programme period

Programme component: Refers to MYFF Goal

Project title, project code, ATLAS award ID, project duration (self explanatory)

Management Arrangements: Indicate national, UN organization, NGO or UNDP execution

Total budget: Includes the budget and General Management Support Fees. In-kind contributions can be listed under 'other' resources. Unfunded amounts cannot be committed until funds are available.

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76 UNDP shall limit its role as executing agency to countries in special development situations. Please note, however, that the default modality for election-related assistance is UNDP execution/ implementation given the political sensitivities involved and the Note of Guidance signed between UN DPA and UNDP on electoral assistance.

Signatures:

- The executing entity is the institution responsible for managing the project and its inputs.

- UNDP is the UNDP Resident Representative, RB or BDP director.

- The Government counterpart is the Government Coordinating Agency

SITUATION ANALYSIS

(minimum one paragraph, suggested maximum one page)

To the greatest extent possible, link to the Country Programme Document (CPD)/Global Programme Document (GPD)/Regional Programme Document (RPD), CCA and UNDAF situation analysis. If the situation analysis has been explained elsewhere in the document narrative section, there is no need to reproduce the text. Simply refer to the section (This would be especially true for GEF projects.) State the problem to be addressed usually in terms of needs for capacity development, and provide a reference (and hypertext links) to the relevant outcome in the country programme. References to the HDR and MDGs may also be included. Explain the national institutional and legal framework and the intended beneficiaries. Provide a reference (and hypertext links) to the findings of relevant reviews or evaluations.

STRATEGY

(minimum one paragraph, suggested maximum one page)

Link to the CP/GP/RP and UNDAF to the greatest extent possible, which should outline the global/national strategy including the national commitment to achieving the outcome and UN niche in supporting the strategy. If the strategy has been explained elsewhere in the document, there is no need to reproduce the text. Simply refer to the section (This would be especially true for GEF projects.) This section should detail how the project outputs will support achievement of the outcome. Explain in particular how UNDP will support policy development and strengthen national capacities and partnerships to ensure that there are lasting results. In addition, in cost sharing projects, the rationale for donor assistance and how they support the outcomes should be described.

RESULTS AND RESOURCES FRAMEWORK

Describe concisely the desired outcome (with outcome indicator), and outputs to be produced through UNDP-supported efforts, and related activities and inputs. Include annual output targets where necessary to clarify the scope and timing of the outputs. The RRF template is given as follows.

PROJECT RESULTS AND RESOURCES FRAMEWORK

Complete the table below for the outcome that the project is designed to address.

Intended Outcome as stated in the Country/ Regional/ Global Programme Results and Resource Framework:				
Assign a number to each outcome in the country programme (1, 2,…).				
Outcome indicators as stated in the Country/ Regional/ Global Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets.				
Applicable MYFF Service Line:				
Partnership Strategy				
Project title and ID (ATLAS Award ID):				
Intended Outputs	**Output Targets for (years)**	**Indicative Activities**	**Responsible parties**	**Inputs**
Specify each output that is planned to help achieve the outcome; where the output itself is not clearly measure able, include an associated output indicator, a baseline and target to facilitate monitoring of change over time. Number the intended outputs: 1.1, 1.2, etc.	Use this column for the more complex projects where an output takes more than one year to produce.	State the main activities needed to produce each output or annual output target Number the activities: 1.1.1, 1.1.2, etc.	Specify parties that have been engaged by the executing entity to carry out these activities	Specify the nature and cost of the UNDP inputs needed to produce each output.

ANNUAL WORK PLAN BUDGET SHEET

Expected Outputs should be linked to the expected output(s) and UNDAF outcome listed on the cover page, and include the relevant indicators/benchmarks. For an explanation of the terms and concepts, please refer to the Results-Based Management (RBM) in UNDP: Technical Note (available at the UNDP Evaluation office website).

Key activities would include the activities to be undertaken during the year to achieve the annual output targets for that year.

For ease of recording, inputs that contribute to more than one 'key activity' listed in the AWP (e.g., staff, equipment, project administration costs), can be listed as a separate 'key activity'. Since

these inputs frequently have durations of more than one year, they should be included in the total budget, and pro-rated if appropriate.[77]

Timeframe would indicate the planned quarter for the activity.

Responsible party would be either the executing entity or implementing agencies listed on the cover page.

Source of funds The new budgeting practice will permit better donor reporting and country office management. In ATLAS, each budget category is associated to a chart of accounts (COA). A chart of accounts is composed of:

- Account to identify what type of input is being financed

- Fund to specify what fund is used to finance an input

- Donor to specify who made contributions to an input

- Responsible party to specify who is accountable for provision of an input

- Department to specify who owns the budget to finance an input

- Operating Unit to specify whose balance sheet will belong to a transaction to finance an input

Budget Description is the input budget code (i.e. personnel, contract, etc.)

An Annual Work Plan Budget Sheet is produced for each year. When a project has multiple years of duration, AWP Budget Sheets covering the project duration will constitute the project budget. The level of detail in AWP budget sheets for subsequent years, provided at the beginning of the project, need not be complete and may con-

tain only the agreed activities and contractual commitments. However as they progressively become current, the respective AWP budget sheet for a given year should be completed in detail. Project budgets in ATLAS would also be entered and revised accordingly.

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77 Since the UN does not depreciate equipment, equipment should be budgeted in the year expected to be purchased.

ANNUAL WORK PLAN BUDGET SHEET

Year _____

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAME				RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
and indicators including annual targets	List all activities including M&E to be undertaken during the year towards stated CP outputs	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Source of Funds	Budget Description	Amount
TOTAL									

COMPONENT 6:

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

(minimum one paragraph, suggested maximum two pages)

This section should explain the roles and responsibilities (including clarification on the accountability for resources) of the parties in carrying out, and oversight over, the project activities. These should correspond with the parties listed in the signature page as executing entity and implementing agencies, and include annexes (e.g., project cooperation agreements, TORs for staff or contracts if necessary) as needed. This section should note results of capacity assessments of the partners and how resources will be transferred (e.g., advances, reimbursement, direct payment, country office support services). It should also address measures for strengthening capacities where they are weak.

Other elements in this section include collaborative arrangements with related projects (if any), prior obligations and prerequisites to mitigate identified project risks, a brief description/summary of the inputs to be provided by all partners, agreement on intellectual property rights and use of logo on the project's products, and audit arrangements.

The minimum requirements for the project management arrangements include the following roles and this section should explicitly list who will play these roles:

Project Board: The Project Board is the group responsible for making on a consensus basis management decisions for a project when guidance is required by the Project Manager, including recommendation for UNDP/ Implementing Partner approval of project revisions. Project reviews by this group are made at designated decision points during the running of a project, or as necessary when raised by the Project Manager. This group is consulted by the Project Manager for decisions when PM tolerances (i.e. constraints normally in terms of time and budget) have been exceeded.

This group contains three roles:

- Executive representing the project ownership to chair the group,

- Senior Supplier role to provide guidance regarding the technical feasibility of the project, and

- Senior Beneficiary role to ensure the realization of project benefits from the perspective of project beneficiaries.

Potential members of the Project Board are reviewed and recommended for approval during the Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting. For example, the Executive role may be held by the Project Director, the Senior Supplier role may be held by representatives of the Executing Entity and/or UNDP, and the Senior Beneficiary role may be held by the representatives of other government entities or civil society.

The Government Cooperating Agency and UNDP must always be present in the project board which works on a consensus basis and final decision making on project activities and accountability rests with UNDP in accordance with its applicable regulations, rules, policies and procedures.

Project Assurance is the responsibility of each Project Board member, however the role can be delegated. The Project Assurance role supports the Project Board by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed. A UNDP Programme Officer typically holds the Project Assurance role for the UNDP Board member, and a similar government representative would undertake this role for the Project Director. Note that the Project Manager and Project Assurance roles should never be held by the same individual for the same project.

Project Manager: The Project Manager has the authority to run the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Project Board within the constraints laid down by the Project Board. The Project Manager is responsible for day-to-day management and decision-making for the project. The Project Manager's prime responsibility is to ensure that the project produces the results specified in the project document, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost. The Project Manager is appointed by the Executing Entity.

More guidance on project management organization is available in the RMG at http://content.undp.org/go/userguide/results/rmoverview/progprojorg/

COMPONENT 7:

MONITORING AND EVALUATION
(minimum one paragraph, suggested maximum two pages)

Describe briefly how the key corporate principles for monitoring, measurement and evaluation will be applied for the project in terms of a Communication and Monitoring plan (C&M plan) should be prepared that describes which activities and outputs will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated, how and by whom should be prepared. The plan should articulate the types of communications and associated scheduling required during the project, as well as methods of communicating project results to stakeholders. The plan should be developed as part of overall Country Programme monitoring and evaluation within the context UNDAF M&E plan.

Project evaluations are only required when they are mandated by partnership protocols, such as GEF. Country offices and programme units may use their discretion in selecting other projects to be evaluated to manage better for results.

Together with project issue/ risk logs, the following AWP Monitoring Tool should be used for the project review purpose.

Expected Outputs and Indicators: List all CP outputs and indicators, including annual targets

Planned Activities: List all the activities including monitoring and evaluation activities, including evaluations, field monitoring visits, technical backstopping missions, and audits to be undertaken during the year towards stated CP outputs

Expenditures: List actual expenditures against activities complete

Results of Activities: For each activity, state the results of the activity

Progress towards Achieving CP Outputs: Using data on annual indicator targets, state progress towards achieving the CP outputs. Based on the updated project issue/ risk logs, comment on factors that facilitated and/or constrained achievement of results including:

- Whether risks and assumptions as identified in the CP M&E Framework materialized or whether new risks emerge

- Internal factors such as timing of inputs and activities, quality of products and services, coordination and/or other management issues

LEGAL CONTEXT
- If the country has signed the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA), the following standard text is quoted: "This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the SBAA between the Government of (country) and UNDP, signed on (date)."

- If the country has not signed the SBAA, the following standard text is quoted: "The project document shall be the instrument envisaged in the Supplemental Provisions to the Project Document, attached hereto."

ANNEXES
Any additional agreements, such as cost sharing agreements, project cooperation agreements signed with NGOs (where the NGO is designated as the "executing entity") should be attached.

In case of government cost-sharing through the project which is not within CPAP, the following clauses should be included:

1. The schedule of payments and UNDP bank account details.

2. The value of the payment, if made in a currency other than United States dollars, shall be de-

termined by applying the United Nations operational rate of exchange in effect on the date of payment. Should there be a change in the United Nations operational rate of exchange prior to the full utilization by the UNDP of the payment, the value of the balance of funds still held at that time will be adjusted accordingly. If, in such a case, a loss in the value of the balance of funds is recorded, UNDP shall inform the Government with a view to determining whether any further financing could be provided by the Government. Should such further financing not be available, the assistance to be provided to the project may be reduced, suspended or terminated by UNDP.

3. The above schedule of payments takes into account the requirement that the payments shall be made in advance of the implementation of planned activities. It may be amended to be consistent with the progress of project delivery.

4. UNDP shall receive and administer the payment in accordance with the regulations, rules and directives of UNDP.

5. All financial accounts and statements shall be expressed in United States dollars.

6. If unforeseen increases in expenditures or commitments are expected or realized (whether owing to inflationary factors, fluctuation in exchange rates or unforeseen contingencies), UNDP shall submit to the government on a timely basis a supplementary estimate showing the further financing that will be necessary. The Government shall use its best endeavors to obtain the additional funds required.

7. If the payments referred above are not received in accordance with the payment schedule, or if the additional financing required in accor-

dance with paragraph 6 is not forthcoming from the Government or other sources, the assistance to be provided to the project under this Agreement may be reduced, suspended or terminated by UNDP.

8. Any interest income attributable to the contribution shall be credited to UNDP Account and shall be utilized in accordance with established UNDP procedures.

In accordance with the decisions and directives of UNDP's Executive Board:

The contribution shall be charged:

   (a) […%]cost recovery for the provision of general management support (GMS) by UNDP headquarters and country offices

   (b) Direct cost for implementation support services (ISS) provided by UNDP and/or an executing entity/implementing partner.

9. Ownership of equipment, supplies and other properties financed from the contribution shall vest in UNDP. Matters relating to the transfer of ownership by UNDP shall be determined in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures of UNDP.

10. "The contribution shall be subject exclusively to the internal and external auditing procedures provided for in the financial regulations, rules and directives of UNDP."

Links to Actors and Other Resources in Electoral Assistance

ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS:

• United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *www.undp.org/governance/sl-elections.htm*

• United Nations Electoral Assistance Division, *www.un.org/Depts/dpa/ead/eadhome.htm*

• Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), *www.eisa.org.za/*

• International IDEA, *www.idea.int/*

• Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE), *www.ife.org.mx*

• IFES – Democracy at Large (formerly known as the International Foundation of Election Systems), *www.ifes.org/*

• Elections Canada, *www.elections.ca/*

• National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), *www.ndi.org/*

• International Republican Institute, *www.iri.org*

• Australian Electoral Commission, *www.aec.gov.au*

• OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *www.osce.org/ogihr*

• Electoral Reform International Services, *www.eris.org.za*

• European Commission, *http://europa.eu.int/europeaid/projects/eidhr/elections_en.htm, http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/index.htm*

• Electoral Reform Society, *http://electoral-reform.org.uk*

• The Asia Foundation, *www.asiafoundation.org*

USEFUL RESOURCES:

• UNDP, Electoral Systems and Processes Practice Note, *www.undp.org/governance/docs/ElectionsPN_English.pdf*

• UNDP and Electoral Systems and Processes, *www.undp.org/governance/docs/Elections_Pub_fastacts.pdf*

• UNDP, Essentials: Electoral Assistance, *www.undp.org/governance/docs/Elections-Pub-EssentialsElectoralAssistance.pdf*

• ACE Project, *www.aceproject.org/*

• Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) Project, *www.bridge-project.org*

• Electoral Process Information Collection (EPIC) Project, *www.epicproject.org*

• UNDP and IFES, Cost of Elections and Registration (CORE), *www.undp.org/governance/docs/Elections-Pub-Core.pdf*

• UNDP, A Handbook on Working With Political Parties, *www.undp.org/governance/docs/policy-pub-polpartieshandbook.pdf*

• UNDP and IFES, Electoral Management Bodies as Institutions of Governance, *www.undp.org/governance/docs/Elections-Pub-EMBbook.pdf*

• United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration, *http://unpan.org*

• IFES, Election Guide: A Guide to Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, *www.electionguide.org*

- EC, Methodological Guide on Electoral Assistance, *http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/ projects/eidhr/ec_methodological_guide_on_ electoral_assistance_en.pdf*

- International IDEA, Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook, *www. idea.int/publications/esd/upload/ESD_full_with %20final%20changes%20inserted.pdf*

- International IDEA , Voter Turnout Database, *www.idea.int/vt/index.cfm*

- International IDEA and Stockholm University, Global Database of Quotas for Women, *www. quotaproject.org/*

- International IDEA, The Electoral Management Design Handbook, *www.idea.int/publications/ emd/index.cfm*

- IFE and International IDEA, Handbook of External Voting, *www.idea.int/elections/upload/ External_voting_Preview_withlayout_07june06_ final.pdf*

Integrated Electoral Assistance Organizational Chart — DRC

Electoral Process Team

Gender & Elections Team

Securitization Team