

# Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support

## Phase II

### Annual Report - 2015

United Nations Development Programme

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE



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## Abbreviations

AU	African Union
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CEA	Chief Electoral Advisor
CO	Country Office
CORE	Cost of Elections and Registration
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DPA	Department of Political Affairs
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
EAD	Electoral Assistance Division
EMB	Election Management Body
GPECS	Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support
HLPF	High Level Policy Forum
ICMEA	Inter-agency Coordination Mechanism for Electoral Assistance
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
INE	Instituto Nacional Electoral
IPP	Inclusive Political Processes
JTF	Joint Task Force
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LAS	League of Arab States
LTO	Long-term Observation
NAM	Needs Assessment Missions
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RBA	Regional Bureau for Africa
REA	Regional Electoral Advisor
RRF	Results and Resources Framework
SAFE	Secure and Fair Elections
SDD	Sex-disaggregated data
TtF	Train the Facilitator

## Executive Summary

Phase II of the Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support was launched in March 2015 as an imminent successor to the highly successful phase of GPECS I (2009-2015). GPECS I and II have been designed to respond to the overall growing demands of UNDP electoral assistance worldwide and to ensure global coherence in the delivery, as well as in the development and implementation, of UNDP electoral policy and capacity development. GPECS II assists partner countries to manage long-term, sustainable and inclusive electoral processes. The Project's activities are clustered in three mutually reinforcing outputs on global, regional and national level, which are complemented by a fourth output, focusing on gender mainstreaming in electoral assistance and promoting the political participation of women.

Global Level Interventions focused on a) policy development, research and knowledge production; b) maintenance and expansion of existing global tools, platforms and partnerships, and c) supporting the EC-UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance. With substantial input from the GPECS team, two global policies were developed and issued through the UN DPA hosted Interagency Coordination Mechanism for Electoral Assistance (ICMEA). The "Policy Directive on UN Statements and Public Comment around Elections," clarifies the roles and responsibilities of different parts of the UN system in issuing statements or making public comments on elections and electoral processes. Secondly, the "Policy Directive on the Conduct of UN Personnel in and around Electoral Sites" sets the parameters for the conduct of UN personnel in and around electoral sites. The purpose of the directive is to ensure coherence and consistency in UN actions and comments and to make certain that the public perceives the UN to be independent and impartial. Further GPECS activities within ICMEA included a substantial amount of work in the population and relaunch of the UN 'Single Electoral Roster' (SER) and the governing Policy Directive for the roster. The SER will address one of the major challenges in UN Electoral Assistance, the timely selection and deployment of electoral experts to support field missions and UNDP Country Offices. In regard to thought leadership and research, GPECS identified a major policy gap in the field of identity management and subsequently developed a mapping on 'UN Activity in Support of Identity Management: Findings and Policy Recommendations', which documents current identification management practices and policies across nine different UN agencies that have experience with identification systems and/or are engaged in related activities. The report provides a set of recommendations aimed at facilitating a preliminary engagement of the UN system for the creation of a UN system-wide policy framework for identification management. Furthermore, GPECS developed several important knowledge tools, such as the 'Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide on Electoral Management Bodies and Women's Participation', focusing on the role of EMBs in encouraging the participation of women and a trilingual (Arab – French – English) 'Lexicon on Electoral Terminology'.

The Brussels based Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance (JTF)<sup>1</sup> manages the partnership between UNDP and the EC and is mandated to support all UNDP electoral assistance projects that receive EU funding. In 2015, the JTF provided in-country and remote assistance to a number of countries at all project stages, from formulation and resource mobilization, to inception of the project, recruitment and reporting (see Annex 2). Additionally, a high level policy dialogue (HLPD) between UNDP Administrator Helen Clark and EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven Mimica was facilitated that resulted in revised Guidelines on the cooperation in the field of electoral assistance. The total budget of

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<sup>1</sup> The JTF is an integral part of GPECS.

EU funds allocated for UNDP electoral assistance for 2015 amounted to almost 70 million USD, which is an increase of more than 50% compared to 2014.

In order to provide global capacity development sources and provide practitioners with an easy to access forum for knowledge exchange, GPECS continued to provide support to the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network and BRIDGE (Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections). The support to ACE has resulted in a significant increase in users over the last years, which also reflects a continuous and further growing demand in regard to knowledge and expertise.

In order to provide tailor-made support to EMB staff and other practitioners, UNDP/GPECS' contributed significantly to updating the BRIDGE Curriculum. This included for instance a review of the existing modules, a review and trialing of the Train the Facilitator and a subsequent commitment to revise and update the existing curricula (and significantly reduce the total amount of modules by eradicating duplication). While a significant amount of work in this regard was carried out in the reporting period, the curricula revision will continue throughout 2016.

In collaboration with International IDEA and the Electoral Integrity Project, UNDP developed the first ever electoral security curriculum. The Secure and Fair Elections (SAFE) Workshop Model Curriculum combines academic and practitioner perspectives to provide a holistic insight into the principles, challenges and good practices related to electoral security. The SAFE curriculum, which was first successfully rolled-out prior to the transitional elections in Myanmar, can be incorporated in electoral assistance programming, and will further assist other national and international stakeholders interested in safe elections.

Regional Level Interventions were severely affected by the lack of funding and thus mainly reduced to activities that were financed through UNDP Country Offices, such as the conduction of needs assessment (NAM) and other in-country support missions, as well as remote-support through Regional Electoral Advisors. In total 52 UNDP Country Offices and five regional organizations received support from GPECS advisors. The support varied from NAMs, to crucial support to COs and EMBs during critical stages of the electoral cycles, for instance provided to Bougainville (PNG), Guyana, Myanmar and Togo, to wider governance programming support (for instance Bangladesh and Maldives).

An exemption in regard to regional activities is the Arab States Region, which had a significant budget based on Sida funding. Among the most significant success of the Arab States GPECS' component is the creation of a regional EMB association, namely the 'Organization of ArabEMBs'. GPECS supported the gathering of EMBs from six countries (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, the State of Palestine and Yemen) to formally launch the Organization of Arab Electoral Management Bodies. Within six months of the launch event, the newly established organization expanded its membership with the addition of Sudan as its seventh founding member. The new organization also pursued cooperation with other similar networks resulting in the signing of a memorandum of agreements with the Association of European Election Officials (ACEEEO) and the Venice Commission. The regional GPECS component furthermore intensified its working relations with the League of Arab States, supporting the regional organization in enhancing its election observer capacities and facilitating regional exchange and South-South cooperation.

National level interventions were severely affected by the lack of funding during the beginning part of GPECS Phase II. National electoral cycle implementation was supported through global and regional electoral advisors through advisory services, yet planned activities such as seed-funding, project piloting or financially supporting projects during critical stages was not possible. Further resource mobilization

efforts are ongoing and it is expected that resources for country level interventions will be available in the future.

Gender mainstreaming and women empowerment activities during the reporting period include policy development, knowledge management and advisory support to Country Office (as financial resources were insufficient to provide financial support). GPECS has internally and externally been recognized as a champion in regard to promoting women's political participation throughout the electoral cycle and in regard to mainstreaming gender adequately in all its activities. The second phase has again implemented a two-pronged approach to gender mainstreaming: consequent mainstreaming gender throughout all outputs, plus one output explicitly dedicated to gender. Advisory services in regard to gender mainstreaming have been provided to UNDP Country Offices in Pakistan, Philippines, Solomon Islands and South Africa. In regard to knowledge development, the 2015 published 'Inclusive Electoral Processes: A Guide for Electoral Management Bodies on Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation' (which had already been mentioned) was very successful.

## Introduction

Phase II of the Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support ('GPECS') was officially launched in March 2015 to build on the successes and achievements of GPECS, and to concentrate efforts on additional areas that (external) evaluations and lessons learned had identified as relevant for strengthening UNDP's impact on electoral assistance. GPECS has been designed to respond to the overall growing demands of UNDP electoral assistance worldwide, and to ensure global coherence, in the delivery, as well as in the development, of global UN electoral policy and capacity development. As with the first phase, GPECS II focuses on assisting Member States to manage long-term, sustainable and inclusive electoral processes, rather than to help them simply deliver one-time electoral events.

The main objectives of GPECS Phase II are to: 1) provide leadership, advocacy and capacity development in the field of electoral cycle support at the global level; 2) support peer cooperation and promoting regional knowledge development, exchanges and capacity; 3) support electoral cycle interventions and lessons learned at the national level; 4) and mainstream gender in electoral assistance and promoting women's political participation. GPECS is organized around four outputs related to each of these objectives, with a decentralized team structure of electoral experts based in Addis Ababa, Amman, Bangkok, Brussels, New York, and Panama. GPECS compliments country level projects through the provision of advisory services (through missions and remote support); regional activities and networks; as well as global policies and capacity development tools. Furthermore, the GPECS regional components are closely interlinked and jointly promote initiatives. GPECS Arab States and GPECS Asia/Pacific, for instance, jointly developed a curricula on the prevention of electoral violence.

### **Output 1: Advocacy, capacity development and knowledge generation at the global level strengthened**

Electoral Assistance is a highly complex and constantly evolving field within the broader framework of democratic governance and peacebuilding. Ever evolving and transitioning political contexts, but also the continuous progress and innovations regarding the availability and usage of information and communications technology (ICT), require constant research and capacity development. In order to prevent and/or mitigate non-intended negative consequences (such as, for instance, data protection and privacy issues regarding biometric data), the development of new policies and guidance on the usage of ICT, as well as the establishment and maintenance of global partnerships and South-South Cooperation, is necessary. In this regard, UNDP, through GPECS, plays an important role regarding thought leadership and innovation in electoral assistance and electoral cycle support. The role of GPECS is to assure that all UNDP electoral assistance projects at the country level have access to and benefit from state-of-the-art policies and knowledge tools, as well as assuring that the design of new and the implementation of current electoral assistance projects reflect the latest trends and dynamics, and are coherent with the policy framework of the United Nations and other major stakeholders in electoral assistance, such as the European Union (EU).



GPECS global level interventions focus on three different areas: a) global level policy development, research and knowledge production; b) maintenance and expansion of existing global tools, platforms and partnerships, and c) supporting the EC-UNDP Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance.<sup>2</sup>

### **Policy Development, Research and Knowledge Production**

As per the UN normative framework, UN-wide electoral policies are issued by the USG for Political Affairs in his capacity as the UN Focal Point for Electoral Assistance. The policies are drafted by the Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) in the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), who support the Focal Point, together with the other UN agencies and programmes in the Inter-agency Coordination Mechanism for Electoral Assistance (ICMEA). ICMEA is a body for exchange, knowledge generation and policy development and GPECS global electoral advisors represent UNDP in this UN coordination body. ICMEA brings together all UN entities engaged in electoral assistance to assure coherence and efficiency regarding the provision of UN electoral assistance, which is ultimately determined by the parameters set by the Member States in the General Assembly.

With substantial input from the GPECS team, two important policies were finalized, issued and disseminated during 2015. The first one was the “Policy Directive on UN Statements and Public Comment around Elections,”<sup>3</sup> which clarifies the roles and responsibilities of different parts of the UN system in issuing statements or making public comments on elections and electoral processes, and provides guidance on key considerations, content and the consultation process required. Given the sensitivity of statements around elections and the high visibility of the UN and its staff (especially in post-conflict countries), this policy is important in order to avoid misperception or misinterpretation of UN statements around elections and the potential abuse of such messages (which could be counterproductive to the overall objective of the UN to promote peace and democracy).

Secondly, the “Policy Directive on the Conduct of UN Personnel in and around Electoral Sites”<sup>4</sup> sets the parameters for the conduct of UN personnel, including uniformed personnel, in and around electoral sites, particularly on election day itself. It focuses on what UN personnel should not do and say in order to avoid certain misperceptions (such as the UN “observing” or “monitoring” or “endorsing” the electoral process). The purpose of the directive is to ensure coherence and consistency in UN actions and comments, to ensure respect for national sovereignty, and to make certain that the public perceives the UN to be independent and impartial (and carrying out tasks in accordance with its mandate).

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