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Independent Final Evaluation of the EU-UNDP project

Support to the Electoral Cycle in Jordan: 2012-2017

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List of Acronyms

CD	UNDP Country Director
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
DPA	UN Department of Political Affairs
EAD/DPA	Electoral Assistance Division, of UN/DPA
ECES	European Centre for Electoral Support
EDR	Electoral Dispute Resolution
EU	European Union
GPECS	Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Support
IPPJ	Inclusive Political Processes in Jordan
IRI	International Republican Institute
MOI	Ministry of the Interior
NDI	National Democratic Institute
OCV	Out-of-country voting
PDA	Peace and Development Adviser
RASED	Al Hayat Centre for Civil Society Development
RC	UN Resident Coordinator
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SECJ	Support to the Electoral Cycle in Jordan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Executive Summary

The project ‘Support to the Electoral Cycle in Jordan’ was primarily funded by the European Union (EU) with additional funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It was implemented by UNDP during the period November 2012 to March 2017 in response to a request for electoral assistance from the Government of Jordan. In line with UN policy, the assistance was mandated by a decision of the ‘UN Electoral Focal Point’, the Under-Secretary General of the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA). The main objective of the project was to build the capacity of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), established in 2012 to conduct parliamentary elections in Jordan as part of political reform process that continues.

An independent final evaluation of the project was carried out by Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, a retired Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, over a 21-day period between 12 March and 12 April 2017. The final evaluation follows an independent Mid-Term Evaluation that was conducted in November 2015.

The evaluation finds that, overall, the project has been successful in building the institutional and human resource capacity of the Commission. All interlocutors agree that the Commission is now capable of conducting credible and professional election management without significant external support even though there continues to be room for improvement. The evaluation also concludes that the technical assistance provided was sustainable and cost-effective. Some results envisaged in the SECJ project document, notably enhanced election dispute resolution (EDR) mechanisms, still remained to be achieved by the end of the project.

The IEC has requested the continuation of international electoral assistance for the next few years. Similar areas of activities that had been covered by the SECJ project are expected to be included in the future work programmes to be implemented by other assistance providers, including the International Foundation for Electoral Support (IFES) and the European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES), which will implement an EU grant for technical support to the IEC. It is understood that the IEC may also continue to receive budgetary support from USAID for specific activities that will be implemented directly by the IEC.

A new UNDP project ‘Inclusive Political Processes in Jordan’ (IPPJ) was designed to provide technical support to the IEC and also to the House of Representatives. The project, supported by UNDP core funding started implementation in mid-March 2017 and is expected to end in June 2018. The electoral component of this project includes specific support to the IEC in relation to the upcoming municipal and governorate elections in August 2017. In addition, it is expected that the EU will provide an additional contribution to this work via a separate project on decentralisation to be implemented by UNDP.

As regards future UNDP assistance to the IEC, the evaluation recommended that the IEC and the management of the UNDP country office in Jordan should meet as soon as possible to agree on the precise details of the continued UNDP support until June 2018. In addition to the specific support to

the 2017 elections, the priority areas may include electoral coordination under the overall guidance of the IEC, as well as providing collaborative support to the areas of activities being undertaken by other agencies. A specific area where UNDP's experience and expertise would be relevant is in the conduct of a new capacity development assessment to establish the precise areas where future capacity development activities in support of the IEC should focus. It is further recommended that UNDP support the IEC in the development of key benchmarks as part of its desire to have an exit strategy for external electoral assistance. The IEC has also indicated a preference on greater utilization of Arab electoral expertise along with increased 'peer learning', such as in the context of the Network of Arab Electoral Management Bodies and the development of a Regional Training Centre. There may also be scope for the UN to provide its expertise to the IEC and other stakeholders on issues related to legislative reform, out-of-country voting (CV), increased use of IT and further support to civil society.

Finally, it is recommended that, following the 2017 elections, the UN and UNDP may wish to consider a process for reviewing and reformulating their plans for providing further UN electoral assistance in consultation with the Jordanian authorities. In 2016, the UN Focal Point approved a request from the IEC and the Government of Jordan for the continuation of UN electoral assistance to 2020. However, the success of the 2016 and 2017 elections and other developments in the electoral landscape (including changes to funding structures) may impact on what kind of electoral assistance is required from the United Nations after June 2018, if any.

In case further assistance is needed, a resource mobilization exercise should be initiated. Consideration should be given by Jordanian government towards cost-sharing.

In the context of broader UN support to Jordan, the evaluation recommended that the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and the UNDP Country Office ascertain the interest of the relevant Jordanian Authorities and other UN agencies operating in Jordan in engaging more comprehensively in H.M. King Abdullah's political reform programme that is aimed at modernization and increased political participation of the Jordanian population in political decision-making.

Such a joint initiative may position the UN system more strategically in terms of supporting the stability of the Jordanian society and preventing political extremism in an unstable region with thousands of refugees arriving in Jordan as a result of turmoil in neighbouring countries. It would also offer an opportunity to embark on a joint programming exercise under the banner of 'the UN delivering as one.'

Joint programming may include further support to the parliament, political parties, media, civil society, women (including assistance to women as voters, candidates for political office and as political officeholders) and youth (participation of young people as responsible citizens, including as voters).

Introduction

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project ‘Support to the Electoral Cycle in Jordan’ (SECJ) was established to continue to provide support to the Jordanian Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) following the completion of a smaller GPECS¹-funded project that had run from January to December 2012. The SECJ project document was signed on 10 October 2012 and came into effect on 15 November 2012. The project document was initially limited to providing support to parliamentary elections, and was due to end in March 2016. It was revised in November 2015 to reflect an expansion in the scope of work to include sub-national elections and to allow a time-extension in the expectation that new elections would take place in late 2016. The project was completed on 15 March 2017.

The total funding amounted to US\$ 5,765,365 provided primarily by the European Union (EU), and also with a contribution from UNDP. The project involved two EU grants, the first for €4 million was signed in September 2012; the second, for €737,000 was signed in August 2015 and provided supplemental funding to allow an expansion of activities.

For UNDP, the SECJ project has been replaced by a new UNDP project entitled ‘Inclusive Political Processes in Jordan’ (IPPJ), which is currently being funded by UNDP resources, and which is scheduled to run until June 2018. The EU has provided a grant to a new implementing agency to provide technical assistance to the IEC.

In accordance with an agreement between UNDP and the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA)², all three projects were conceived and implemented under the overall umbrella and guidance of DPA through the mechanism of Needs Assessment Missions (NAMs) or Desk Review, led by the Electoral Assistance Division of DPA (EAD/DPA). The first NAM took place in December 2011 and recommended that UNDP should play a coordinating role in respect of electoral assistance and that UNDP should focus on capacity building and support activities for the (soon to be established) IEC. It also left open the possibility that UNDP could provide assistance to other national partners such as the judiciary, media, electoral observers and political parties. A Desk Review in December 2014 resulted in the inclusion of UN support for municipal elections, which following an amendment to the Jordanian Constitution would henceforth be conducted by the IEC. At the request of the Jordanian Government and the IEC, a second NAM took place in January/February 2016 and recommended that UNDP continue its support to capacity development in the IEC for the 2016 parliamentary elections; provide assistance to voter education and information; and strengthen the capacity of the judiciary to perform its role in electoral processes. It also recommended that UN electoral assistance continue through 2020 with a focus on further strengthening of IEC’s institutional capacities, enabling lessons learnt on electoral processes and identifying areas for follow-up. The NAM also agreed with the proposed extension of the SECJ for one year to March 2017.

¹ GPECS is the UNDP Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support, which was then funded by Spain.

² UN Department of Political Affairs and UNDP revised guidance note on UN electoral assistance, New York, 2010

Under UNDP rules, an independent evaluation of the project needed to be undertaken. Accordingly, UNDP recruited an independent consultant, Mr. Finn Reske-Nielsen, a former Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, to conduct the evaluation over a 21-day period between 12 March and 12 April 2017.

Methodology of the Evaluation

The objectives of the evaluation were as follows:

- 1) Assess the relevance and appropriateness of the project in terms of achieving the outputs as per the project document; meeting the needs of the IEC; contributing to UN and Jordan's outcome level goals.
- 2) Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the project in terms of the implementation of activities that achieve outputs and outcomes, following up on lessons learned, and responding to electoral and political development.
- 3) Establish the impact and sustainability of the project and the extent to which the approach and implementation of the project contributed to sustainable electoral management in Jordan and addressed cross-cutting issues, including gender.
- 4) Review the project design and management structures in terms of achieving clear objectives and strategies, the use of monitoring and evaluation, the level of coherence and complementarity with electoral assistance strategies, and the appropriateness of management structures.
- 5) Make clear and focused recommendations that may be required for enhancing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of a future electoral assistance programme in Jordan.

The complete terms of reference are attached as Annex 1.

The consultant first conducted a review of a broad range of documentation that had been made available by the UNDP Jordan country office. This included, among others, the original project document together with its November 2015 revision, work plans, progress reports, financial statements, the mid-term evaluation report of November 2015, the draft final report, minutes of meetings of the project Steering Committee and project Technical Committee as well as other relevant project-related data analysis and correspondence.

As per agreement with the UNDP country office, the evaluation while covering the entire lifespan of the project focused primarily on the period following the mid-term evaluation, the main recommendations of which are attached as annex 2. A brief analysis of the status of implementation of these recommendations has also been incorporated in this final evaluation report³.

³ See comments in 'bold and italics' in Annex 2.

It was furthermore agreed with the country office that the evaluation would not only make recommendations for further international and/or UNDP support to the electoral processes, if any, but also for UNDP and possibly UN country team support more broadly to popular participation and the implementation of H.M. the King's political reform programme.

The consultant undertook a field mission to Amman, Jordan from 18-29 March. During this time he conducted extensive consultations with stakeholders in the IEC, EAD/DPA, UNDP country office and the UNDP Regional Hub in Amman, current and former project staff, the Jordanian civil society, donors and other IEC partner organizations. Most consultations took place in face-to-face meetings but several were conducted in Skype sessions. The complete list of meetings and Skype sessions is attached as annex 3. The field mission also included a half-day trip to Irbil to witness a public outreach event conducted by the Chairman of the Board and staff of the IEC.

The Chairman and the Secretary-General of the IEC, relevant UNDP staff and the EU Delegation to Jordan were debriefed upon completion of the field mission.

The report was completed in final draft form and submitted to the country office by e-mail on 12 April 2017. On 10 May 2017, the country office forwarded a set of comments on the draft, which were incorporated, as appropriate, by the consultant on 18 May 2017. The final document was forwarded to the country office by e-mail on the same day.

The consultant would like to thank the Chairman and senior staff of the IEC, the UNDP Country Director and her staff as well as the Chief Technical Adviser of SECJ and his staff for the excellent cooperation extended to him during the evaluation.

Background

Since its emergence as an independent State in 1946, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has been a constitutional monarchy. It is a low- to middle-income country with a heterogeneous population with a significant number of its people being of Palestinian origin. In the wake of the Arab Spring in 2011, H.M. King Abdullah II embarked upon an ambitious political reform programme aimed at promoting modernization, democratization and popular political participation, as outlined in a series of ‘discussion papers’.

The parliament is composed of a 130-strong House of Representatives, which is elected by the Jordanian people, and a Senate of 65 members appointed by the King. Legislation needs to be passed by both houses. It is the King’s prerogative to approve or reject legislation after it has been passed.

Historically, political parties have been weak in Jordan with political choices more being anchored in tribal and/or familial connections. The King has indicated his desire that the role of political parties be strengthened under the reform programme. To date, there are some 50 registered parties, which however continue to be weak and at present represent less than ten per cent of the members of the House of Representatives.

Jordan remains a relatively stable country in an unstable Region with violent strife in neighbouring countries. Large numbers of refugees, notably from Syria, are currently seeking refuge in Jordan. This has put additional pressures on Jordanian communities.

Until 2012, national elections were conducted by the Ministry of the Interior (MoI) whereas local elections were organized by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. In April 2012, the King approved a new electoral law establishing an Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) charged with the responsibility of conducting parliamentary elections. The Commission is composed of a Board of Commissioners, which has five members including the Chairman, appointed by the King. To date, the Board has had three different chairmen, the first a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, the second a former Minister of Justice and the current Chairman, who is a former Minister of Political and Parliamentary Affairs.

The IEC Secretariat is headed by a Secretary-General and has some 70 staff members, excluding local offices which are only operational in the lead-up to, during and immediately after elections. In the early days, the staff consisted largely of former electoral staff of the MoI. However, over the years new staff have been recruited and the number of seconded staff members is now limited.

The first parliamentary elections under the new electoral law was held in January 2013, only about nine months after the IEC had been set up. The next parliamentary election took place in September 2016. In the meantime, the IEC also managed a series of parliamentary by-elections. In August 2014, the Constitution was amended to transfer responsibility for municipal and governorate elections to the IEC. The next such elections are scheduled to take place in mid-August 2017.

The main donor support to electoral processes in Jordan has been provided by the United States (through IFES) and the European Union (EU) and Spain through UNDP. In addition, Sweden provides financial support to a regional electoral project managed by UNDP through its Regional Hub, which is based in Amman but has neither mandate nor funding for electoral assistance specific to Jordan.

As the completion of the SECJ approached, the EU called for bids for a successor project to commence in 2017 with three main components: Support to the IEC (some US\$ 4.0 million), support to parliament (some US\$ 6.0 million) and political parties (some US\$ 2.0 million) for a total of some US\$12.0 million. UNDP submitted a bid, but was unsuccessful. Instead, it would appear that the European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES) will be awarded the new contract by the EU for commencement around the middle of 2017. The precise details of the envisaged contract were not made available to the consultant, but EU officials in Amman indicated that it would likely cover support to the IEC similar to the areas previously covered by the UNDP SECJ project, such as institutional strengthening; electoral dispute resolution (EDR) and other legal issues; voter registration; relations with stakeholders (political parties; civil society); voter education; and out-of-country voting.

In February 2017, UNDP and the IEC have signed a new project, ‘Inclusive Political Processes in Jordan’ (IPPJ), with the overall objective of ‘strengthening the effectiveness and transparency of Jordan’s democratic governance institutions to be more responsive to the needs of the citizens and to promote participation and inclusion in political processes’. The project, which commenced in mid-March 2017 upon the completion of SECJ, will focus on support to the IEC but will also include engagement in parliamentary support to the House of Representatives. It has a total budget of US\$ 1.5 million. It is expected that the EU will soon provide an additional sum of some US\$ 200,000 for UNDP electoral support to the IEC, which will be channeled through an EU/UNDP project on decentralization. This project will provide advice to the IEC for the period of the municipal and governorate elections, and lessons learnt, in line with the request of the IEC and the recommendations of the 2016 NAM. Altogether, it is expected that this project will continue until June 2018 but with a smaller team than has been the case in SECJ.

There has been only limited cooperation across the UN country team in support of the electoral processes in Jordan. In connection with the 2013 parliamentary election, UNESCO implemented a US\$ 1.0 million project to support the media. However, this appears to have been done largely unilaterally and with limited engagement with SECJ. UN Women has also implemented electoral activities to promote women’s electoral participation under the aegis of the Jordanian National Commission for Women but again with limited engagement with the SECJ.

Objectives, Activities and Planned Results of the SECJ

The strategic objectives of SECJ were defined as follows in the original project document:

1. Developing the IEC's necessary regulations and strategic and operational plan in place to function in a professional manner.
2. Developing its internal and external communication strategies.
3. Setting up a joint committee with civil society on voter education.
4. Setting up a Liaison Council with political stakeholders.
5. Drafting gender strategies for the IEC and the Political Parties Liaison Council.

The project document specified a total of six 'key activities' aimed at producing a series of project results. It is debatable whether these 'strategic objectives' are in fact strategic or just an enumeration of intended outputs. As noted, the original project document was limited only to working on the 2013 parliamentary elections, and on broader capacity development issues.

A revised project document was developed in November 2015 and approved by the Technical Committee of the project. The revisions took place to reflect changes in the constitutional mandate of the IEC to cover sub-national elections and also to allow engagement with the next round of parliamentary elections. The revision does not define any strategic objective but moves straight to the following 'key project activities' with corresponding envisaged results⁴:

Activity 1: Support IEC development as a professional and independent institution.

Results:

- 1.1 Developing IEC strategic capacities.
- 1.2 Developing IEC strategies for engagement of women other marginalized groups.
- 1.3 Developing professional election administration for procedural review and staff development.

Component 2: Enhance the IEC external relations with stakeholders.

Results:

- 2.1 Facilitating design and implementation of public relations mechanisms.
- 2.2 Enhancing IEC engagement with civil society.
- 2.3 Enhancing IEC public awareness and voter education.
- 2.4 Facilitating IEC engagement with election observers.

Component 3: Support the IEC in the development of a voter registration database.

⁴ The consultant agreed with the UNDP country office that for practical reasons, the evaluation would be based on these key activities and corresponding results, which in any case pertain largely to the period between the mid-term evaluation of November 2015 and the end of the project on 15 March 2017.

Results:

- 3.1 Developing voter registration database.
- 3.2 Improving quality assurance mechanisms on voter registration.

Component 4: Enhance IEC capacities for election operations.

Results:

- 4.1 Strengthening IEC election operations capacities.
- 4.2 Enhancing IEC recruitment and training of polling staff.
- 4.3 Enhancing IEC data management capacities.
- 4.4 Developing mechanisms for supervision of campaigns.
- 4.5 Enabling lessons learnt mechanisms.

Component 5: Strengthening electoral dispute mechanisms.

Results:

- 5.1 Enhancing election dispute mechanisms.
- 5.2 Enhancing awareness on election dispute resolution processes.

Component 6: Support IEC engagement with political parties.

Results:

- 6.1 Enhancing IEC engagement with political parties.
- 6.2 Developing IEC training for political parties.

Component 7: Provide specialized advisory services on electoral issues and project management.

Results:

- 7.1. Advising on electoral issues.
- 7.2. Advising on project management.
- 7.3. Advising on EU visibility

Evaluation of Project Results

Overall, all interlocutors commented positively on the results of UNDP's support to the IEC as a young institution, which essentially started from scratch at its establishment in the first half of 2012. The Chairman of the IEC Board felt that the IEC had benefitted greatly from UNDP's support. He specifically commented on the importance of UN involvement in Jordanian electoral processes to help ensure that international electoral standards would be met and that the electoral processes would be seen as legitimate in the eyes of the local and international communities alike. The Secretary-General of the IEC similarly praised UNDP's support saying that the Commission would continue to require UNDP's involvement for another four years. He also commented positively on the quality of the UNDP advisers, not least the three Senior Electoral Advisers (later called chief technical adviser) over the lifetime of the project. He was somewhat critical of a very small number of short-term consultants, who in his opinion had not lived up to the technical standards that the Commission required.

Both the Chairman and the Secretary-General noted with satisfaction that the collocation of UNDP staff with the IEC staff had ensured that there was active and effective day-to-day interaction and collaboration between the two sides.

Similar sentiments were recorded in interviews with other interlocutors including IEC staff, donors (USAID, EU and Spain) and other electoral support partners (IFES, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI)).

In both 2013 and 2016, there were large numbers of both national and international observers. By and large, they commented positively on the way the two parliamentary elections were conducted. For example, the 2016 report of the EU Observer Mission concluded that the IEC had delivered a 'well-administered and inclusive' election. However, it made a number of recommendations for the future, including to 'enhance participation, transparency and compliance with applicable international standards for democratic elections'.⁵ The report also observed that although 50 political parties took part in the election, one way or another, 'key political actors, comprising some 80 per cent of candidates running, were mostly local tribespersons and business people, former members of Parliament, and persons of Palestinian origin, rather than the political parties.'

Voter turnout has continued to be low during the period 2013 to 2016. In 2016, the turnout was 36%, an increase from 31% in 2013, indicating a continuing high level of voter apathy and perhaps a lack of trust in the elected institutions of the country. Overall, the turnout of men was significantly higher (40%) than that of women (33%). As for the participation of youth, the SECJ has carried out an analysis that, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, showed that 38% of youth aged 17-24 voted (2% above the average) voted. The turnout for the age group 25-30 was only 31% (5% below the average).

⁵ The SECJ project prepared a comprehensive analysis of the recommendations made by the EU observers in 2013 and 2016.

In addition to this general appraisal, the consultant has reviewed the progress made against the seven key activities listed in the revised project document of November 2015. A detailed overview of each individual component and area of activity as well as a list of outputs produced have been included in the draft Final Report produced by the project in March 2017 and do not need to be repeated here.

1. Support IEC development as a professional and independent institution.

1.1 Developing IEC strategic capacities

Understandably, the project initially focused on the immediate task of supporting the IEC in preparing for the parliamentary election in January 2013. However, later in 2013 the project started the work on the development of a capacity development plan. The plan was completed and approved before the end of that year and formed the basis of an operational plan that effectively guided capacity development activities over the next 3-4 years. In consultation with the IEC, it was agreed that IFES would take responsibility for the development of the IEC strategic plan, which is not yet in place.

1.2 Developing IEC strategies for engagement of women other marginalized groups

Various initiatives were undertaken to develop a strategy for increasing the participation of women in electoral processes, including a preparatory workshop in July 2015 and several discussion papers including a draft policy paper, which was adopted by the IEC Board in February 2016. The policy paper committed the IEC to adopt a gender strategy. However, this has not yet materialized.

Nevertheless, the Commission has made progress in terms of encouraging the participation of marginalized groups, including women, in the electoral processes. In 2016 there were 252 women candidates out of a total of 1,252, which represented an increase of about 25% as compared with the 2013 elections. In 2013, there were 16 female members of the House of Representatives out of a total membership of 150. In 2016, this number had increased to 20 out of a total membership of 130. According to the IEC, some 30% of the Commission staff members are women, including one commissioner and one female head of unit.

The overall conclusion is that there is a noticeable interest in the IEC to address the issue of low participation of marginalized groups. However, taking into account the progress made so far, further efforts are needed in this area.

1.3 Developing professional election administration for procedural review and staff development.

Whereas IFES took responsibility for most of the IEC's training activities, the project took the lead in implementing training in the area of electoral procedures. The project delivered a series of weekly internal workshops over the period July 2014 to March 2016 to review the procedural framework, and which led to a detailed set of proposals for procedural changes, many of which were adopted and implemented by the IEC.

Despite the shortcomings there is little doubt that the IEC has made tremendous progress including in terms of strategic capacity as an election management body. When asked whether the IEC was capable of conducting elections on its own, all interlocutors answered ‘yes’. When asked whether there was still room for improvement, the answer however was also ‘yes’.

2. Enhance IEC External Relations with Stakeholders

2.1 Facilitating design and implementation of public relations mechanisms.

It is beyond any doubt that the electoral awareness among voters is much higher today than it was in 2012 before the establishment of the IEC. To a large extent, this can be explained by the awareness raising campaigns conducted by the IEC with support from its partners, including UNDP. The use of the social media has been very successful with the Commission having around 197,000 followers on Facebook. The majority of these are assumed to be young people. The project provided support to the IEC in the development of a media and communications strategy and plan for the 2016 elections. More tangibly, the project supported the IEC in its re-launch of a corporate website.

On the other hand, it is noted that the project carried out a pre-election survey in 2016 to measure the general knowledge of electoral laws, procedures and institutions. The results of the survey indicated that there was still significant additional work to be done in this area although no post-election survey has been conducted to assess the impact of the IEC’s awareness campaigns.

2.2 Enhancing IEC engagement with civil society, and

2.3 Enhancing IEC public awareness and voter education

The IEC, supported by the project, has worked intensively with the media and the NGO community, and to work with those groups to disseminate voter education and information materials. An informal mechanism for interaction with local NGOs was established to foster communication and strengthen quality assurance. This seems to have worked reasonably well even though there were some indications that the NGOs ‘did their own thing’ without sufficient guidance from the IEC to ensure that the information disseminated was accurate.

2.4 Facilitating IEC engagement with election observers

As mentioned above, there were large numbers of domestic and international observers in both 2013 and 2016 and the IEC was able to provide effective accreditation support for them, with the assistance of the project. Again, this worked well but may in future require closer collaboration between the IEC and the domestic observers to ensure that the Commission provides them with the necessary technical information to conduct effective election observation.

Whereas there are clear indications that the IEC enjoys a higher level of confidence among the population than other State institutions, no survey has so far been conducted to actually measure the level of confidence in the Commission.

3. Support the IEC in the development of a voter registration database

3.1 Developing voter registration database

The voters' roll of the 2013 parliamentary election was based on a system of self-registration, which not surprisingly resulted in a relatively low registration level (estimated at 57% of eligible voters). The system was changed for the 2016 elections when the IEC started to use the highly developed civil registry, from which data were drawn and adapted to become an effective tool for an up-to-date and accurate voters' roll. The UNDP support in this area was by all accounts highly successful and effective and facilitated the technical arrangements for the shift from voluntary to 'automatic' registration to take place. This also included the procurement of a significant amount of tactical, high-specification IT equipment to handle the complex data management issues. Many interlocutors commented very positively on this, noting that future IT arrangements on elections could include the introduction of 'smartcards' and electronic voting.

For some reason, it would appear that there was no political focus on out-of-country voting (OCV) despite the fact that a large number of Jordanians live outside the country. Interlocutors indicated that in future this may become an important issue for the IEC. Such a decision would need extensive technical, logistical and procedural planning and IT development where the expertise of the UNDP and other agencies such as IOM may be of particular assistance.

3.2 Improving quality assurance mechanisms on voter registration

At the request of the IEC, the project conducted a national survey that was used to identify the baselines for the accuracy of the new voter registration database following its establishment. The survey showed 100% accuracy in the accuracy of the data included in the database, and a very high level (90%+) of public satisfaction in the automatic assignment of voters to polling centres based on their personal data.

4. Enhance IEC capacities for the implementation of election operations

4.1 Strengthening IEC election operations capacities

As mentioned above, the election observation reports were generally positive about the way the IEC conducted the parliamentary elections in 2013 and 2016 even though they also indicated that there was room for improvement in several areas.

It is also worth mentioning that the SECJ provided significant logistical support to both the parliamentary elections in 2013 (e.g. procurement of indelible ink and polling kits) and those in 2016 (e.g. advice on the design of a complex new ballot paper and procurement of warehousing equipment), as well as four intervening by-elections in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

There is no doubt about the very positive impact that the SECJ has had on the operational work of the IEC. This is impressive given that the Commission is still a very young institution, which in the beginning had to work with staff who had been seconded (largely) from the Ministry of the Interior and who may have been used to applying methods and policies that were different from those

adopted by the IEC. Over time, the Commission has recruited its own staff and has - with the assistance of its partners – been rather effective in building their capacities.

4.2 Enhancing IEC recruitment and training of polling staff

The project has provided support to the IEC Training Unit in its design and delivery of cascade training for polling staff for the two sets of national election elections, and the intervening by-elections. This mostly included advisory support (e.g. on content of training manuals). Observer reports indicated that polling staff generally performed well.

4.3 Enhancing IEC data management capacities

The project supported a comprehensive audit of the results management system after the 2013 elections, and also provided technical advice on adaptation of the results system upon the adoption of new electoral systems.

4.4. Developing mechanisms for supervision of campaigns

For the 2013 elections, the project provided support to the IEC in monitoring media coverage of elections through the contracting of academic specialists at the University of Jordan. There was no specific follow-up to the conclusions of that exercise. In 2015, the project also supported the IEC to conduct a stakeholder workshop to review campaign finance regulations. However, for the 2016 elections, the project was not requested by the IEC to support its work to supervise political campaigning. Issues of campaign regulation – whether in terms of campaign finance or media coverage – are clearly areas where further work is needed.

4.5 Enabling lessons learnt mechanisms

The project provided support to the IEC in conducting lessons learnt after each different election event.

5. Strengthening electoral dispute mechanisms

5.1 Enhancing election dispute mechanisms, and

5.2 Enhancing awareness on election dispute resolution processes

The number of electoral dispute cases so far has been relatively small and they appear to have been dealt with appropriately. However, it is noted that the progress in this area for a variety of reasons has been limited despite several initiatives taken by the project. The Director of Legal Affairs expressed the hope that this would be a priority area for UNDP support in the future. Further consultations would be needed with the relevant parts of the judiciary, which reportedly in the past have been hesitant to engage with the project and the IEC.

6. Support IEC engagement with political parties

6.1 Enhancing IEC engagement with political parties

As mentioned above, the political parties though numerous have tended not to play the critical role that parties normally do in democratic elections. This is due to a number of factors including the dominating role of traditional tribes and individual leaders as well as the fact that political parties generally are not highly regarded in the Jordanian society. It is part of the King's political reform programme to address this issue.

From 2012-14, there was little or no progress in terms of the IEC engaging with the political parties with the support of UNDP. However, the envisaged political parties' liaison committee has now been established with its first meeting having been held in February 2015. Another 6 meetings have since taken place to discuss electoral processes and issues, including where the project was asked to present on significant issues such as the changes to the electoral system. While this is a positive development, it is noted that it is only one of many elements required to ensure that the political parties begin to play their envisaged role in the electoral process and the broader political reform process. In the current House of Representatives less than 10% of the members represent political parties.

6.2 Developing IEC training for political parties

There has been no progress in terms of working with political party agents as envisaged in the project document. It would appear that the IEC does not envisage it has a role on training political party members.

7. Provide specialized advisory services on electoral issues and project management

7.1 Advising on electoral issues, and

7.2 Advising on project management

The provision of specialized advisory support through a core team of long-term advisers has been highly successful throughout the lifetime of the project. All interlocutors praised the quality of the technical advice provided by successive Senior Electoral Advisers/CTA and commented on the importance of their contributions to the high performance of the IEC. The same applied to other long-term advice provided by, amongst others, the adviser on electoral procedures. The quality of the project management inputs has also been consistently high. The current CTA deserves special mention for his meticulous and accurate records-keeping and reporting.

7.3 Advising on EU visibility

One issue that was highlighted not only by the EU but also by other interlocutors was a perception of 'lack of visibility' of the EU. Whereas there are - for obvious reasons - some limitations as to how far the project and the IEC could go in this regard, this remained a largely unresolved matter that may or may not have had an impact on the final decision of the EU as regards its second funding round in 2016/17. A more in-depth discussion with senior EU officials about how to resolve the 'visibility issue' would perhaps have been appropriate.

The EU Delegation signalled to the consultant that the EU intended to play a much more ‘active’ role during the implementation of the next EU grant likely to be managed by the ECES.

Validity of Project Design and Relevance

The project design has remained valid since the start of implementation in December 2012 even though it is obvious that the project document was prepared in a somewhat ‘generic’ way given the fact that the beneficiary was a new State institution with virtually no practical experience on the ground when the document was signed in October 2012. The project revision of November 2015 was therefore appropriate but could have been undertaken earlier to more accurately reflect the actual support provided and establish a stronger framework for monitoring and evaluation.

The project adapted appropriately to the changing circumstances of the electoral cycle with a main focus on operational support in the lead-up to, during and immediately after the main electoral events and several by-elections. In-between the electoral events, the project concentrated effectively on support to policy development and capacity building.

The project has continued to remain relevant in the context of the King’s political reform programme with its focus on supporting the newly established IEC that has been instrumental in ensuring a higher level of public confidence in democratic elections than was previously the case.

However, with the continuing strengthening of the capacity of the IEC, it is becoming evident that the project focus is somewhat limited in that it only provides support to one of a number of key elements of the reform programme. The level of popular participation in elections remains worryingly low and the public perception not only of the parliament but also of the political parties continues to be poor. In other words, from the perspective of supporting more broadly the stability of the Jordanian society and helping prevent extremism - two critical elements of the reform programme - the narrow perspective of strengthening the IEC, which has already in many ways proved itself through the conduct of major electoral events since its establishment, is insufficient. Other aspects of the reform programme will deserve more attention. Other development partners are already beginning to shift towards more comprehensive approaches.

On the other hand, there is little doubt that continued UN (and UNDP) involvement in future electoral processes, including the upcoming municipal and governorate elections in mid-August, which will pose new challenges for the IEC given the different nature of sub-national elections, remains critically important. It is likely that UN electoral assistance will continue to be required after the conduct of successful municipal elections albeit at a reduced level.

Management Arrangements

The project continues to be executed through the direct implementation modality (DIM), under which the UNDP country office remains directly responsible for the delivery of project activities and outputs. Not least given the continuing collocation of the project staff with the IEC, this does not appear to have impacted negatively on the feeling of ‘ownership’ of the project by the senior management and staff of the Commission. However, several IEC interlocutors did comment that there could sometimes have been more frequent and closer consultation with them, particularly as regards the recruitment of short-term project staff. Overall, this does not seem to have had much of a negative impact on project activities.

The project document provides for a Steering Committee composed of the Chairman of the Board of the IEC, the UNDP Country Director and the EU Ambassador to provide overall guidance and supervision to the project. In addition, there is a Technical Committee, composed of the Secretary-General, the CTA, the UNDP Programme Manager, and a technical-level representative of the EU, to guide the day-to-day activities. In principle, this is an appropriate organizational set-up, but in reality the system has been less than effective. Over the five-year lifetime of the project, the Steering Committee has only met four times whereas quarterly meetings were envisaged in both the original and the revised project documents⁶, once in 2012, twice in 2014 and once in 2015. Altogether the Technical Committee, which was also supposed to meet quarterly, has held ten meetings since 2012⁷, once in 2012, twice in 2014, four times in 2015, twice in 2016 and once in 2017.

It could be argued that given the close physical proximity of the IEC and the project staff, there may not have been a need for more frequent meetings. On the other hand, such meetings would perhaps have offered opportunities for more formal joint consideration of major project initiatives. As mentioned below, several such initiatives were taken at different points in time but were not formally adopted at the policy level. Similarly, more frequent meetings would perhaps have provided appropriate fora for the EU, as the main funder, to have had greater opportunity to contribute to the project in a substantive manner.

Nevertheless, it was clear to the consultant that frequent and effective interaction had taken place between the CTA and his staff and (in particular) the secretary-general and his staff. The interaction with the Chairman and members of the IEC Board has been less frequent and has tended to vary from one chairman to the other. This may have had a negative effect on the overall impact of the project.

The level of coordination of international electoral assistance has varied over time. Despite the fact that coordination had been identified as a key task to be entrusted to UNDP already in the first NAM report of 2011, this important function has never been fully incorporated into UNDP’s work.

⁶ Steering Committee meetings took place on 11 December 2012, 14 March 2014, 28 September 2014 and 15 April 2015 only.

⁷ Meetings of the Technical Committee took place on 11 December 2012, 11 March 2014, 9 September 2014, 27 January 2015, 8 April 2015, 4 August 2015, 26 November 2015, 1 June 2016, 1 August 2016 and 14 February 2017.

That said, it is also noted that throughout the project implementation there has been good cooperation between UNDP on the one hand and IFES, NDI and IRI on the other. Nevertheless, there were instances where UNDP and IFES, both based at the IEC, to their mutual embarrassment, discovered that they had embarked upon the same areas of support.

A number of interlocutors, including the IEC Chairman, the EU, USAID and Spain, commented on this situation and expressed the wish that henceforth UNDP should play a leadership role in electoral coordination, under the overall guidance of the IEC. The importance of effective coordination will be even greater when the ECES, as expected, enters the scene of electoral assistance in a country where the organization reportedly has no prior experience.

Efficiency of Resource Use

Overall, the consultant found that project resources had been spent in an appropriate manner, In terms of key activity areas, the funds were expended as follows:

	%
<i>Activity area 1:</i> IEC development as a professional and independent institution	4.0
<i>Activity area 2:</i> IEC external relations with stakeholders	14.0
<i>Activity area 3:</i> Development of a voter registration database	11.0
<i>Activity area 4:</i> IEC capacities for electoral operations	24.0
<i>Activity area 5:</i> Electoral dispute mechanisms	2.0
<i>Activity area 6:</i> IEC engagement with political parties	3.0
<i>Activity area 7:</i> Specialized advisory services and project management	42.0
Total	100.0

In terms of distribution by year, expenditures were as follows: 40%; 2014: 15%; 2015: 15%; 2016: 24%; and 2017: 6%.

This distribution reflects to a large extent the priorities agreed between the IEC and the project with a main focus on IEC capacities for electoral operations, specialized advisory services and IT. The rather high expenditure under key activity 7 is explained by the fact that the specialized advisory support, including that of the Senior Electoral Advisers/CTA and the electoral procedures adviser, has been charged to this project category. The low expenditure under ‘support to EDR’ reflects the relatively low priority accorded to this area over time.

A few interlocutors commented on the high cost of international staff. However, there was also a general recognition that it would be a challenge for the IEC to aspire to the highest international electoral standards absent international staff inputs. Some interlocutors suggested that greater use

could be made of expertise from the Arab Region, including national experts from Jordan, to the extent that it is available.

The overhead costs charged by UNDP are in line with UNDP's corporate policy.

The consultant took note of the fact that the project to date has not been audited. However, he was assured by the UNDP country office that this would happen during the course of 2017, in line with UNDP's corporate policy for DIM projects.

Impact and Sustainability

The consultant concluded that overall the impact of the project has been high in that it has effectively supported the development of a young national institution, which was unlikely to have achieved the results it has recorded over the years without strong international assistance, including that of the SECJ.

Nevertheless, he also identified several critical areas where more effort should be made in the future (by UNDP or other partners). These include, in particular, support to ensure increased political participation of women and youth, who together constitute more than half of the electorate. Similarly, further support will be required in the areas of EDR and voter education.

At the same time, it is recognized that the project has already made important progress in many of these areas. It is also noted that ultimately a technical assistance project can only make recommendations whereas the responsibility for adopting the overall strategy and making policy rests with the appropriate national authorities.

As mentioned above, the institutional capacity of the IEC and its human resource base have improved tremendously since 2012. Nevertheless, as pointed out by many interlocutors both within and outside the IEC, there is still room for improvement in the coming years if the Commission is to achieve its stated goals of being able to consistently deliver 'clean' elections and continue to enjoy the confidence of both the Jordanian population and the international community. The staffing situation of the Commission has changed over time and there is no guarantee that qualified staff can necessarily always be retained. As such, the Commission will require internal capacity for continuing learning and staff development.

Several Jordanian interlocutors asked the question: 'When do we graduate?' This is a legitimate question that should be addressed jointly by the IEC and its partners in the coming years. It was obvious to the consultant that whereas outside support will still be needed for some time to come, it is critical for both the partners and the Commission to begin to focus systematically on an exit strategy.

In parallel, there may well be scope for replacing at least some of the traditional capacity development activities with 'peer learning' in the context of recent regional initiatives. The Arab Network of Electoral Management Bodies offers one such opportunity as does the regional electoral

support programme managed by the UNDP Regional Hub. The consultant held discussions with senior staff of the Regional Hub to ascertain whether the main donor to the Hub - Sweden - might be interested in considering opening a (small) national window for continuing UNDP funding for the IEC in strategic areas.

The aspiration voiced by some Jordanian interlocutors of establishing a regional electoral training centre in Jordan is an idea that may well deserve attention. However, the credibility of such an initiative will depend, amongst others, on the confidence that other Arab states will have in the capability of the Jordanian authorities to bring the idea to fruition and deliver high-quality training.

Conclusions and Lessons Learnt

The overall conclusion of the evaluation is that the SECJ has been a highly successful project that has made a major contribution to the capacity of the IEC to deliver credible elections of a high standard. However, there are still several areas that will continue to need outside support in order to consolidate the results achieved to date so that the Commission will eventually 'graduate' and therefore no longer need traditional outside technical assistance.

It is evident that many other related areas of the King's political reform programme will require further attention, subject to a request by the appropriate Jordanian authorities. It is such broader assistance – along with a strong IEC capable of delivering good election – that may prove critical to the continued peace and stability in a country that has so far avoided the turmoil experienced in other parts of the Arab Region including in at least two neighboring countries. Indeed, the continuing turmoil and its spill-over into Jordan, including in the form of a rapidly growing refugee population, could end up putting an even greater strains on the country and thus threaten its medium- to long-term stability. A number of recommendations as regards future support by UNDP and the broader UN country team in these areas are discussed below.

The project is a good example of the need for a long-term approach to capacity building, particularly as regards a new institution such as the IEC, which is still in the process of 'finding its feet' in the context of an ongoing political reform programme. While UNDP was unsuccessful in its attempt to access additional financial support from the EU in this area, capacity building and other support to the IEC will still be forthcoming over the next four years. In this regard, it will be important for UNDP – in close consultation with the IEC – to define what role it should play in the future in smooth collaboration with the other electoral assistance partners, including the ECES.

The project is also a good example of the importance of close interaction and collaboration between external advisers and the national beneficiary. The continuous collocation has clearly had a positive impact on the delivery of project results. At the same time, it is also clear that much as the project has made a number of important policy recommendations, the leadership has retained its prerogative of not always following the advice given. Whereas this is an indicator of national ownership, it also provides a lesson learnt in terms of the methods to be employed at the various levels of the beneficiary institution to achieve the desired policy impact. The absence of an

approved strategic plan and a strategy for increasing women's political participation are examples of this.

Finally, despite more than four years of sustained international electoral support, there is still no exit strategy in place to phase out the assistance over time in an orderly fashion that will ensure continuous and increasing empowerment of the IEC even though everyone agrees with the end-goal, viz., to ensure that the Commission eventually is able to manage all its tasks without traditional technical assistance and deliver quality training.

Recommendations

This section falls into two interrelated parts: 1) Recommendations for future UNDP support to the IEC; and 2) an outline of suggested broader UN country team support to the King's political reform programme.

Future UNDP support to the IEC

As mentioned above, UNDP and the IEC have already signed a new project document, 'Inclusive Political Processes in Jordan (2017-18)' (IPPJ), for continued UNDP support, albeit at a lower level than has so far been the case.

In order to avoid duplication of the support envisaged to be delivered by other providers (including ECES) and to ensure effective cooperation among all providers, it will be important to identify the precise areas for continued UNDP assistance to the IEC. In this regard, the consultant wishes to make the following recommendations:

1. The Chairman and the Secretary-General of the IEC should as soon as possible convene a meeting with the senior management of the UNDP country office and the CTA to agree on the exact tasks to be performed by UNDP, taking fully into account the tasks expected to be performed by other partners, including IFES and the ECES.
2. An obvious role for UNDP would be to immediately embark on a mapping exercise to establish precisely who is doing what in the area of electoral assistance and related areas of political and civil participation that can be relevant to elections, as the basis for setting up a donor/partner coordination mechanism under the overall guidance of the IEC (and involving also the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, which has responsibility for managing international aid to Jordan),
3. As the 2013 capacity development strategy with its associated operational plan has now been under implementation for almost four years, the IEC may wish to request UNDP to immediately initiate a follow-up capacity assessment to establish where new capacity development initiatives should focus over the next four years. Such an assessment would enable the IEC to better manage both ongoing and new capacity developments initiatives.

4. Based on the results of the assessment, UNDP should also advise the IEC on the utilization of Jordanian and other Arab expertise as appropriate that may be called upon in the context of future activities.
5. The IEC may also wish to request UNDP to support the development of benchmarks for an exit strategy for international electoral assistance with a view to developing a common view as to when such assistance should come to an end.
6. The possibility of the IEC benefitting more extensively from technical support available from integrated country and regional activities managed by the UNDP Regional Hub in Amman should be explored further, including in terms of increased ‘peer learning’ through the regional electoral project. It should also include exploring with the regional project’s donors the possibility of opening a ‘country window’ for Jordan for support in relevant areas.
7. In the post-electoral period, the project should provide support and advice to the IEC on lessons learnt from the 2016 and 2017 electoral processes, as envisaged by the 2016 NAM, and which may also involve a review of the legislative and procedural framework. This work is likely to contribute significantly towards identifying where future UN assistance may be required.
8. It is further recommended that, in conjunction with EAD/DPA and the Jordanian authorities, a review should take place of the ongoing UN electoral assistance. The review can ascertain whether further UN electoral assistance is required, and the type of assistance to be provided, given the change in circumstances of improved IEC capacity and the delivery of assistance by other providers. A useful time for that review may be after the municipal and governorate elections. The review will determine whether a further UNDP project should be developed after the end of the current IPPJ project in June 2018 to the end of the currently envisaged period of UN electoral assistance in December 2020, as mandated by the 2016 NAM.

The above-mentioned recommendations may or may not necessitate a revision of the IPPJ to ensure compliance with the results of the proposed high-level consultation between UNDP and the IEC and to avoid overlap or ‘clash’ between agreed UNDP activities and those of other partners, including the ECES.

Subject to a request from the relevant Jordanian authorities, consideration could be given to UNDP support in one or more of the following areas: development of improved legal regulatory frameworks; adoption of new practices (such as OCV and improved use of IT); and enhanced support to civil society.

Depending on the recommendations made by the proposed post-electoral review of future UN/UNDP electoral assistance in Jordan, there may or may not be a need to formulate a new project structure and to raise additional financial resources for UNDP support to the IEC after June 2018.

In case more resources are required, it is recommended that the IEC commit to actively supporting UNDP's resource mobilization efforts. It is also recommended that the Government of Jordan consider allocating some of its own financial resources through the government cost-sharing modality.

Suggestions for broader UN involvement in support of H.M. King Abdullah's political reform programme

As mentioned above, strengthened electoral processes demonstrated by a successful IEC constitutes but one of many elements of the King's political reform programme. Whereas a competent and credible electoral commission is an important part of this picture, there are many others which are directly or indirectly linked to the electoral processes.

Much as the House of Representatives enjoys a certain legitimacy by virtue of the fact that it has been elected through what virtually all see as credible elections, there still appear to be many Jordanians who have little confidence in the institution as representative of their will and as an effective mechanism for channeling their wishes and aspirations. In this regard, the continuing low voter turnout is a concern.

Similarly, marginalized groups, notably women and youth, continue to display a relatively low level of interest in the political processes, as currently constituted. The higher-than-average turnout of the youngest voters in the 2016 election is encouraging. However, there is still considerable scope for further international support in this area, including civic education (as opposed to voter education which has been the main focus in years past). The aim should be to promote greater popular participation in political processes at both national and sub-national levels.

Similarly, there is scope for further engagement with the political parties to promote their role as legitimate political actors that compete for votes based on political platforms rather than personality or tribal affiliation.

In other words, the suggestion is for UNDP and the UN country to broaden its support for the King's efforts to create a modern political system that will be more representative of the Jordanian people.

Such broadening of the current UN programmes in the context of the drafting of the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is currently underway, would not only allow the system to engage more strategically with the Jordanian authorities, it would also ensure engagement with a much broader range of political and other actors. In this regard, the consultant notes that a P4 Peace and Development Adviser (PDA) position appears to be available under the joint UNDP/DPA PDA scheme, but remains to be filled. It is recommended that the exact status of this position be established as soon as possible and that UNDP consider what role, if any, the PDA could potentially play in the broader involvement of the UN country team at the strategic level.

Against this background, it is further recommended that the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Country Director initiate a dialogue with the appropriate Jordanian Authorities to ascertain their interest in pursue the above-mentioned objectives and in parallel discuss the possibility of joint UN programming in this area. The scope of such an initiative would go well beyond UNDP's current main focus on the IEC but does reflect UNDP's global developmental policy for broader engagement in relation to political and civil participation in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This could include further work with many more political actors including not only the political parties and the parliament, but also the media, civil society as well as women (as voters, candidates for political office and political officeholders) and youth (as constructive and committed citizens of Jordan, including as voters).

Preliminary discussions with UNDP, UN Women and UNESCO indicated significant interest in such an initiative where the relevant parts of the UN country team would work together in the spirit of 'the UN delivering as one', without necessarily moving to joint programmes with co-mingling of funds and integrated management structures. Another possible partner may be UNICEF, which reportedly is already supporting programmes of youth engagement. The possibility of setting up a multi-donor trust fund, managed by UNDP, should be explored.

The precise details of such an initiative would need further and much more detailed discussions. The obvious advantage would be that different members of the country team would bring their various areas of expertise to bear in a strategic initiative to help ensure continued democratic development as well as peace and stability in Jordan. An added advantage may well be a significant broadening of the current UN donor base.

Preliminary discussions with international partners who are already active in the proposed area of UN intervention indicated that there would be 'plenty of room' for the UN to engage further in this area. Nevertheless, great care should be taken to ensure that the proposed new UN programme not overlap with ongoing or planned activities by other international partners. In this regard, it is proposed that UNDP, under the guidance of the UN resident coordinator, as a first step undertake a mapping exercise to determine who is doing exactly what in this area. This may also lay the foundation for a further broadening of UNDP's proposed electoral coordination role.

Annexes

Annex 1: Terms of reference of the final evaluation of the SECJ.

Annex 2: Recommendations of the mid-term evaluation of SECJ of November 2015, with comments by the final evaluation report.

Annex 3: SECJ final evaluation: List of meetings/skype sessions.

Annex 1 - Terms of Reference of Consultancy for the Final Evaluation of SECJ

Date: 20 Feb. 2017

Country: Jordan

Description of the assignment:

Under the supervision of the Programme Manager of the UNDP, the Evaluation Consultant will conduct a final evaluation of the project “Support for the Electoral Cycle in Jordan”

Post Title: Evaluation Consultant
Starting Date: 1 March 2017
Duration: 21 working days
Location: Amman, Jordan and home based
Project: Support to the Electoral Cycle in Jordan (2012-2017)
Enhanced Support to the Independent Electoral Commission and the Judiciary in Jordan (2016-2017)

Period of assignment/services (if applicable): 21 working days. The consultant is expected to stay no more than 21 days in Amman. To apply, kindly read the procurement notice, attach the following documents and submit through the following email: saed.madi@undp.org

1. Technical proposal (proposed methodology describing the actions to be taken for successfully completing the assignment)
2. Financial proposal.

Any request for clarification must be sent by electronic communication to saed.madi@undp.org. Mr. Madi will respond by electronic email and will send written copies of the response, including an explanation of the query without identifying the source of inquiry, to all applicants.

1. Background

The UNDP Support to the Electoral Cycle in Jordan project seeks to enhance the institutional and professional capacities of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) of Jordan. Primarily funded by the European Union (EU), the US\$6m project was established in 2012 and consists of a multi-component programme of technical and material electoral assistance to the IEC in terms of parliamentary elections in 2013 and 2016 and towards institutional capacity building. The project ends in March 2017 and UNDP seeks the recruitment of an international evaluation consultant to conduct a final evaluation of the project “Support for the Electoral Cycle in Jordan”. The project activities fall within the following areas:

- (i) Institutional development, through engagement on IEC strategic planning, inclusion of targeted groups, and capacity building.
- (ii) External relations, through support to media and communication tools, voter education, consultation, and engagement with observers
- (iii) Voter registration, through building independent data management capacities
- (iv) Election operations, through support to operational planning, training of polling staff, results management, and conduct of lessons learned
- (v) Election dispute resolution
- (vi) Political parties’ engagement
- (vii) Specialized advice on electoral reforms

Previous evaluations have taken place of project activities related to the 2013 parliamentary elections, and a Mid-Term Review was conducted in November 2015.

2. Objectives of Final Evaluation

- 1) Assess the relevance and appropriateness of the Project in terms of: achieving the outputs as per the Project Document; meeting the needs of the IEC; contributing to UN and Jordan’s outcome level goals

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- 2) Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the Project in terms of the implementation of activities that achieve outputs and outcomes, following up on lessons learned, and responding to electoral and political development.
- 3) Establish the impact and sustainability of the Project, and the extent to which the approach and implementation of the Project contributed to sustainable electoral management in Jordan and addressed cross cutting issues including gender
- 4) Review the Project Design and Management structures, in terms of achieving clear objectives and strategies, the use of monitoring and evaluation, the level of coherence and complementarity with electoral assistance strategies, and the appropriateness of management structures
- 5) Make clear and focused recommendations that may be required for enhancing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of a future electoral assistance programme in Jordan.

3. Scope of Work

In assessing the Project and its alignment to the broader Project Document, the evaluation will take into consideration the following criteria:

Relevance and appropriateness

1. Was the project relevant, appropriate and strategic to IEC goals and challenges?
2. Was the project relevant, appropriate and strategic to the mandate, strategy, functions, roles, and responsibility of the IEC as an institution and to the key actors within that institution?
3. Was the project relevant, appropriate and strategic to the UN electoral assistance mandate and UNDP development goals?

Effectiveness and efficiency

4. Were the actions to achieve the outputs and outcomes effective and efficient?
5. Were there any lessons learned, failures/lost opportunities? What might have been done better or differently?
6. How did the project deal with issues and risks?
7. Were the outputs achieved in a timely manner?
8. Were the resources utilized in the best way possible?
9. Were the resources (time, funding, human resources) sufficient?

Impact and sustainability

10. Will the outputs/outcomes lead to benefits beyond the life of the existing project?
11. Were the actions and result owned by the local partners and stakeholders?
12. Was the capacity (individuals, institution, and system) built through the actions of the project?
13. What is the level of contribution of the project management arrangements to national ownership of the set objectives, result and outputs?
14. Were the modes of deliveries of the outputs appropriate to promote national ownership and sustainability of the result achieved?
15. Did the Project contribute to sustainable electoral management in Jordan?
16. Did the Project address cross cutting issues include gender?

Project design

17. To what extent did the design of the project help in achieving its own goals?
18. Was the context, problem, needs and priorities well analyzed while designing the project?
19. Were there clear objectives and strategy?
20. Were there clear baselines indicators and/or benchmark for performance?
21. Was the process of project design sufficiently participatory? Was there any impact of the process?
22. Was there coherence and complementarity by the project to other electoral assistance providers?
23. Was there coherence, coordination and complementarity by the project with other donor funded activities in the field of electoral support (including that by EU and EU member states)?

Project management

24. Are the project management arrangements appropriate at the team level and project board level?
25. Was there appropriate visibility and acknowledgement of the project and donors?

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26. This work will include reference to an electoral cycle approach at the core of the project design, and 2012 Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes recommendations) and more specifically at the project level (against SECJ project document and IEC needs). The Final Evaluation should be aligned with the principles established in UNDP’s Evaluation Policy and the UN Evaluation Group’s Norms and Standards for Evaluation.

4. Methodology

Based on UNDP guidelines for evaluations, and in consultations with UNDP Jordan, the evaluation will be inclusive and participatory, involving principal stakeholders into the analysis. During the evaluation, the consultant is expected to apply the following approaches for data collection and analysis.

- Desk review of relevant documents including progress reports and any records of the various opinion surveys conducted during the life of the Project;
- Key informative interviews with the IEC, other electoral assistance providers, and UNDP Senior Management and Project Staff;
- Briefing and debriefing sessions with the former Project Technical and Steering Committees
- Interviews with partners and stakeholders, government officials, service providers including CSO partners and donor partners, etc.

During the implementation of the contract, the consultant will report to the UNDP Programme Manager, who will provide guidance and ensure satisfactory completion of Midterm Review deliverables. There will be close coordination with the SECJ Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and project team who will assist in connecting the consultant with senior management, development partners, beneficiaries and key stakeholders. In addition, the CTA will provide key project documentation prior to fieldwork, and SECJ project staff will assist in developing a detailed programme to facilitate consultations as necessary. UNDP will provide office space and access to standard office services as needed.

5. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

The consultant is expected to deliver the following outputs:

- Inception report on proposed evaluation methodology, work plan and proposed structure of the report
- A draft preliminary evaluation report and presentation with, to be presented at a debriefing meeting with the IEC and partners
- Final report, including a 2-3 pages’ executive summary, including issues raised during presentation of draft.

The Implementation Arrangements and Reporting Requirements are as follows:

<i>Output</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>% of payment (US\$)</i>	<i>Target date</i>
1: Inception report on proposed evaluation methodology, work plan and proposed structure of the report	Within 5 days of contract	40%	
2: A draft preliminary evaluation report and presentation, to be presented at a debriefing meeting with the IEC and partners	After conclusion of necessary meetings	40%	
3: Final evaluation report	Within 5 working days after receipt of comments on draft report	20%	
TOTAL:		100%	

6. Duration of the Work

The detailed schedule of the evaluation and length of the assignment will be discussed with the Consultant prior to the assignment. The estimated duration of the Consultants’ assignment is up to 21 working days: Desk review and inception (5 days); Field Work and Preliminary Report (11 days); Final Report (5 days).

7. Qualifications of the Successful Individual Contractor

Competencies:

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The candidate should be able to:

- Ability to work under pressure against strict deadlines
- Ability to think out of the box
- Ability to present complex issues persuasively and simply
- Ability to contextualize global trends in accordance with dynamics of the operating working environment
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Excellent writing skills and proven ability to produce quality and analytical reports within the shortest period of time

Qualifications and Professional Experience

- Advanced university degree in public administration, law, international law, or related discipline
- 10 years of professional experience in fields relevant to public administration, electoral technical assistance and/or democratic governance.
- Preferably 5 years of experience in international development cooperation
- Previous experience as an expert in conducting electoral assistance evaluations
- Fluency in English, both written and spoken. Working knowledge of Arabic an asset.
- Competent in usage of MS Office programmes (MS Word, Excel, Power point)

8. Criteria for Selection of the best Offer

The selection process will be carried out in the following manner:

- a) Qualifications and technical proposal will be weighted at 70% based on the following criteria.

<i>Criterion</i>	<i>Max points</i>
Technical expertise	15
Relevant professional experience	20
Knowledge and experience in international development	10
Previous working experience on similar assignments	25

And,

- b) Financial proposal will be weighted at 30%.

9. Documents to be submitted

Interested persons are invited submit the following documents/information to be considered:

1. Offeror's letter, as per the attached form
2. Personal History Form (P-11), including 3 references
3. Technical proposal
 - i. Explaining why they are the most suitable for the work
 - ii. Providing a brief methodology (not more than 3 pages) on how they would approach and conduct the work.
4. Financial proposal in accordance with the attached schedule

Please submit above information no later than 27 February 2017, at 18:00 hrs (Jordan time) by email with subject: "Evaluation Consultant".

Annex 2 Recommendations of SECJ Mid-term Evaluation, November 2015 – with Comments by the Final Evaluation Report

This report has recommended that:

1. As a minimum, steps be taken to ensure that the project period be extended to end 2017 to maintain cohesion and stability during the current electoral cycle while assessment and discussion on and preparations for a new project to succeed the current one are pursued and finalized.

Comments by Final Evaluation: Done.

2. A window of complementary programme support to IEC electoral stakeholders (civil society, media, political parties, observers) be included as much as possible into re-programming of the current project, and be a key component in future programme models as a means of bridge-building between the EMB and other relevant parties as part of an approach to inclusive political processes.

Comments by Final Evaluation: This recommendation is consistent with overall recommendations of the final evaluation, which however proposes a broader approach that is based on support to H.M. the King's political reform programme aimed at ensuring the continued peace and stability of the country. The final evaluation also recommends that a new programme be anchored in joint programming across the relevant members of the UN country team.

3. Clarity be sought on any need to extend the mandate of UN support to electoral processes.

Comments by the Final Evaluation: This was achieved by way of the January/February 2016 Needs Assessment Mission (NAM)

4. A decision of the Project's engagement of an Operational Adviser be taken (given IFES's intention to also deploy a similar position) as a matter of priority.

Comments by the Final Evaluation: This recommendation was overtaken by events.

5. Electoral timeline challenges be addressed through an agreed transition process while future directions are cemented so that the significant and important achievements to date are not compromised and continuity is maintained through a critical period.

Comments by the Final Evaluation: The electoral timelines have been firmly established.

6. A robust MEL framework be developed and that a specialist advisor be recruited short term

to re-frame the log-frame in terms of measurable indicators of progress and substantive baselines that are more than a yes /no assessment.

Comments by the Final Evaluation: The November 2015 project revision to some extent has addressed this issue. The challenge is that in many cases survey data are not available to achieve the goal of establishing all the relevant baselines and tracking progress.

7. A mid-term gender assessment be conducted.

Comments by the Final Evaluation: This recommendation has not been implemented.

8. The project invest in on-going political economy analysis to advise on areas of traction; continually monitor the political context and landscape; inform on emerging risk and advise on emerging issues and opportunities.

Comments by the Final Evaluation: The project does not have dedicated human resources to implement this recommendation. However, the final evaluation found that the CTA was very effective in following developments in the broader political economy and advise the UNDP country office and other partners accordingly.

9. UNDP initiate and take the lead on a donor mapping exercise and on election coordination meetings that engage both other possible donors and broader electoral stakeholders.

Comments by the Final Evaluation: Much as good cooperation continued between SECJ and its partners, a systematic mapping and subsequent coordination exercise are yet to materialize. The final evaluation has recommended that this initiative should be formalized with the IEC forthwith.

10. With follow-up of the Capacity Development Plan not institutionalised, it is suggested that a mid term (or as the focus of an end of project evaluation) capacity assessment monitoring follow-up be conducted to assess progress and change across the facets of intervention using the capacity assessment study as the baseline and framework for the evaluation. A mid term lessons learned workshop with the IEC, the Project and IFES to revisit the Plan and assess progress would be a helpful end-of-year or start-of the –new –year exercise.

Comments by the Final Evaluation: The final evaluation recommends that the IEC agree to request SECJ to immediately initiate an assessment of the status of capacity building in the Commission so as to establish an effective baseline against which future capacity development efforts may be planned and directed by the Commission.

Annex 3 Meetings/Skype Sessions - SECJ evaluation

Saturday 18.03.17

20.15 Arrival in Amman

Sunday 18.03.17

9:00 Mr. Richard Chamber, Chief Technical Adviser (CTA), SECJ

10:00 Ms. Lajida Al-Assaf, Programme Manager, UNDP country office

11:00 Ms. Katie Green, Electoral Procedures Adviser, SECJ

13:00 Mr. Richard Chambers, CTA, SECJ

14:00 Ms. Sara Ferrer Olivella, Country Director, UNDP country office

16:00 Mr. Evrard Kouadio, IT Adviser, SECJ

17:00 Mr. Antonio Spinnelli, Country Director, International Foundation for Electoral Support (IFES), Jordan

Monday 20.03.17

9:00 H.E. Dr. Ali Drabkah, Secretary-General, IEC, and Mr. Aous Qtshietat, Adviser

9:45 Mr. Samar Tarawneh, Director, Capacity Building and Training, IEC

10:15 Ms. Samar El Haji Hasan, Commissioner, IEC

11:00 H.E. Dr. Khaled Kaladeh, Chairman IEC

12:15 Mr. Sharaf Al-Roumann, Director, Media, IEC

13:00 Director, Legal Affairs, IEC

13:45 Mr. Awaad Al Karadsheh, Director, Operations, IEC

14:00 Mr. Mahmoud Al-Zaban, Director, IT, IEC

18:00 Mr. Ray Kennedy, former CTA, SECJ (skype)

Tuesday 21.03.17

9:00-14:00 Field trip to Irbil to witness IEC outreach event

16:00 Mr. Hermann Thiel, former Country Director of IFES, Jordan (skype)

Wednesday 22.03.17

9:00 Ms. Badrieh Bibeisi, Secretary-General, Arab Network of Electoral Management Bodies and former Deputy Secretary-General, IEC

11:00 Ms. Zena Ali Ahmed, Deputy Director, UNDP Regional Hub, Amman

12:00 Mr. Luis Martinez-Betanzos, Regional Electoral Adviser, UNDP Regional Hub, Amman

13:00 Ms. Mais Al Atiat, former SECJ project officer

14:00 Mr. Amer Bani Amer, Founder and Director, Al Hayat Centre for Civil Society Development RASED, Amman

15:30 Ms. Constanza Farina, Representative, UNESCO, Jordan

17:45 Ms. Svetlana Galkina, EAD/DPA (skype)

Thursday 23.03.17

9:00 Mr. Andres Pedersen, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, and Ms. Sara Ferrer Olivella, Country Director, UNDP country office

10:00 Mr. Gonzalo Jorro Martinez, Attaché and Programme Manager, EU Delegation, Amman

12:30 Mr. Vicente Ortega, Head of Cooperation, Spanish Aid, Amman

16:00 Mr. Sean Osner, Director, USAID, Amman

17:00 Mr. Craig Jenness, EAD/DPA (skype)

Friday 24.03.17

16:00 Mr. Maarten Halff, former CTA, SECJ (skype)

17:00 Mr. Niall McCann, Lead Electoral Officer, UNDP HQs (skype)

Sunday 26.03.17

9:00 Mr. Richard Chamber, CTA, SECJ

10:00 Ms. Diana Kamal Jreisat, Governance and Disaster Risk Reduction Portfolio Analyst, UNDP Country Office

11:00 Ms. Majida Al-Asaf, Programme Manager, UNDP country office

12:00 Ms. Sara Ferrer Olivella, Country Director, UNDP country office

13:00 Mr. Richard Chambers, CTA, SECJ

16:00 Mr. Maxim Sansour, former Communications Adviser, SECJ.

Monday 27.03.17

9:00 Ms. Marta Garbarino, Advocacy and Partnership Analyst, UN Women, Jordan

11:00 Mr. Arianit Shehu, Senior Country Director, and Mr. Jonas Cekuolis, Deputy Chief of Party, National Democratic Institute (DNI)

13:00 H.E. Dr. Khaled Kaladeh, Chairman, IEC and Mr. Aous Qtshietat, Adviser (debriefing)

15:00 Mr. Ramsey Day, Resident Country Director, International Republican Institute (IRI), Jordan

Tuesday 28.03.17

8:45 H.E. Dr. Ali Drabkah, Secretary-General, IEC (debriefing)

10:30 Ms. Sara Ferrer Olivella, Country Director, UNDP country office (debriefing)

14:00 Mr. Gonzalo Jorro Martinez, Attaché and Programme Manager, EU Delegation, Amman (debriefing)

Wednesday 29.03.17

00:25 Departure from Amman

Monday 10.04.17

15:00 Mr. Ziad Sheikh, Representative, UN Women Jordan (Skype)