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EVALUATION OF UNDP CONTRIBUTION TO STRENGTHENING ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

PARTICIPATION

Evaluation Office

United Nations Development Programme

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August 2012

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FOREWORD

Elections are among the most important ways citizens participate in the decisions that affect their lives and hold their representatives accountable for results. Elections have been an integral aspect of United Nations-supported democratic transitions, decolonization processes and peace-agreement implementation. Electoral assistance by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is grounded in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which affirm that the will of the people is the basis of government authority, as well as the right to freely choose their representatives through genuine and regular elections.

Strengthening electoral systems and processes has been a major area of UNDP work since 1976. In coordination with the Electoral Assistance Division of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs, UNDP has provided electoral assistance in 83 countries. Such assistance has spanned the entire electoral cycle—pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral phases—and focused on strengthening inclusive participation and professionalism of electoral administration, with the ultimate goal of deepening democracy and accelerating sustainable human development.

This evaluation examines UNDP contribution to attaining such results between 1990 and 2011, and in the past decade in particular. Looking across a diverse range of contexts, the evaluation assesses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of interventions, the added value of UNDP support, its responsiveness to evolving demand, and the challenges and opportunities inherent to the process.

The evaluation concluded that UNDP has made significant contributions towards strengthening electoral systems and processes. It has provided a highly valuable service to individual countries and contributed to the global expansion of democratic practices. UNDP is uniquely placed to provide electoral assistance due to its extensive field presence, development perspective, ability to mobilize and represent the donors, and impartiality, which provides the legitimacy needed to support sensitive national processes.

UNDP support has contributed to more professional electoral management, more inclusive processes and more credible electoral events than would have been the case without UNDP assistance. At the same time, the evaluation concluded that such results were evident primarily at the technical level. Support to strengthening countries' electoral processes and institutions for long-term sustainability, credibility and national ownership has been less effective, as a consequence of inconsistent application of the UNDP framework for electoral assistance, varied quality of country-office leadership and staff, and country-level perceptions of the UNDP role.

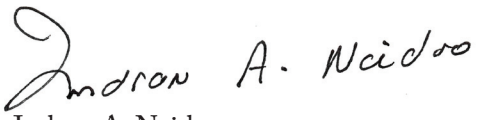
Grounding assistance in the normative values of free and fair electoral processes provided UNDP with its sense of purpose and increased the impact of its programmes. Thus, the evaluation recommends fostering this common sense of purpose and focusing UNDP efforts on strengthening the credibility of the electoral process. Such assistance is of particular importance in post-conflict and transitional contexts, as democratic electoral systems need widespread national support to be sustainable.

The evaluation also recommends that UNDP renew its focus on developing cost-effective, context-appropriate and sustainable processes and systems, thus helping build the national ownership required to sustain them. Operational issues also require attention; the evaluation recommends that UNDP review and streamline its administration

and reporting processes in order to ensure a timely and more effective response.

UNDP provides assistance in partnership with many different actors. This evaluation concluded that some of these relationships may need to be reframed due to the political nature of the processes assisted and the need to ensure UNDP impartiality. UNDP's role within the larger UN system framework for electoral assistance also requires clarification to ensure UNDP is able to provide its assistance within its institutional vision of a longer-term development framework.

Electoral assistance is a key area of development support, because credible electoral processes, systems and institutions foster democratic development and contribute to achieving more equitable and effective national development results. I hope that this evaluation informs future UNDP strategies and coordination efforts for work in this sectort.



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	Assessment of Development Results
BDP	Bureau of Development Policy, UNDP
BRIDGE	Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections
CIS	[Europe and the] Commonwealth of Independent States
ELECT	Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow project, UNDP
DFID	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
DFS	Department of Field Security, United Nations
DPA	Department of Political Affairs, United Nations
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations, United Nations
EAD	Electoral Assistance Division, Department of Political Affairs, United Nations
EC	European Commission
EMB	Electoral management body
ERIS	Electoral Reform International Services, United Kingdom
GPECS	Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support
ICAI	Independent Commission for Aid Impact, United Kingdom
ICMEA	Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanism for United Nations Electoral Assistance
ICT	Information and communications technology
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PAPEP	*Proyecto Análisis Político y Escenarios Prospectivos* (Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios Project)
STAE	*Secretariado Técnico da Administração Eleitoral* (Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration), Mozambique
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

1. This evaluation of the UNDP contribution to strengthening electoral systems and processes covers UNDP electoral assistance since 1990. Conducted from June 2011 to January 2012, the evaluation is part of the 2011–2012 Evaluation Office programme of work approved by the UNDP Executive Board. It is the first corporate-level thematic evaluation that focuses on the organization's electoral assistance. The evaluation examines UNDP performance in strengthening electoral systems and processes, and UNDP strategic positioning and ability to promote more credible and inclusive electoral processes and institutions.

2. Elections are among the most important ways citizens participate in the decisions that affect their lives and hold their representatives accountable for results. As such, elections have been an integral aspect of United Nations-supported democratic transitions, decolonization processes and post-conflict peace building efforts. General Assembly resolution 55/2 on the United Nations Millennium Declaration demonstrates the consensus among nations of the world to "spare no effort to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law, as well as respect for all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development". Elections stand as a cornerstone in this process.

3. UNDP electoral assistance is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which affirm that the will of the people is the basis of government authority, and that every eligible citizen has the right to take part in the government of her or his country. Credible, regular and inclusive elections confer the essential political legitimacy that underpins stable states and provides the mandates for governments to tackle the tough challenges of sustainable development. The ultimate UNDP goal is to deepen democracy and accelerate sustainable human development by giving all people the ability to participate in the decisions that affect their lives.[1]

4. This evaluation examines the UNDP role in and contribution to achieving such objectives. It assesses the performance quality and added value of UNDP electoral assistance between 1990 and 2011, focusing primarily on the past 10 years. The evaluation examines the different approaches used to provide electoral assistance in diverse contexts and, based on the evidence collected, identifies the main issues, assesses what has and has not worked, and concludes with a set of policy-relevant, forward-looking recommendations. The evaluation aims to support future work by contributing to an understanding of how UNDP can provide assistance in a more effective and sustainable manner.

5. The evaluation covers UNDP support in all geographic regions and within diverse contexts, such as: mission (peacekeeping or political) and non-mission countries, varying political environments (immediate post-conflict, post-conflict/transition, more stable state) and different types of assistance (event- or process-driven). The evaluation pays particular attention to national perspectives on UNDP support of these important national processes. It is important to note that this not an evaluation of national electoral processes or events.

6. The evaluation uses the UNDP results framework for electoral assistance as the basis for forming a judgment on the value and quality of UNDP work. The framework links electoral

1 UNDP, 'UNDP strategic plan, 2008–2011: Accelerating global progress on human development', 2008, paragraph 1.

assistance to a set of outcomes defined in UNDP strategic documents. These outcomes include achieving more credible and inclusive electoral processes, systems and institutions through more professional electoral administration and more inclusive participation. The evaluation also assesses country-office ability to manage electoral projects, mobilize funds and coordinate donors.

7. The evaluation team used the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability to guide the development of evaluation questions, data collection, and analysis. A mixed-method approach was used to develop a robust basis for generating evidence and to enhance explanations that support the findings. Evaluation methods included case studies, broad-based surveys with a variety of stakeholders and expert informants, interviews, and meta-analysis of existing evaluations.

8. To assess work in different contexts, the evaluation included 11 country case studies of UNDP assistance in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Chad, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Mexico and Mozambique. The case studies facilitated comparing results across countries, regions and contexts to identify the most effective types of assistance for specific conditions and the factors that contribute to or inhibit outcome achievement. Beyond country-specific studies, other in-depth analyses of UNDP support included: a historical analysis of UNDP work dating back to 1990; an examination of UNDP partnerships in electoral assistance; an assessment of the nature, configuration and budget of the UNDP portfolio of projects and programmes; and a review of the appropriateness and sustainability of electoral technology introduced by technical assistance.

9. This evaluation also coordinated and exchanged information with several other evaluations, which were undertaken at the same time. These included: 'Evaluation of UNDP Assistance to Conflict-Affected Countries' (UNDP Evaluation Office); 'Lessons Learned on the Longer-Term Impact of United Nations Electoral Assistance' (UNDP Bureau for Development Policy); 'Lessons Learned on Integrated Electoral Assistance' (UNDP Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Political Affairs); 'Entry Points for Gender Mainstreaming and Women's Empowerment' (UNDP Bureau for Development Policy); and 'Evaluation of Department for International Development Electoral Support Through UNDP' (United Kingdom Independent Commission for Aid Impact).

10. The main limitation to the evaluation stemmed from the enormous scope of support activities under review, programmatic and task-related complexities, and the vast range of contexts and conditions in which electoral assistance is provided. Equally important are the historical lack of consistency in classifying electoral projects in Atlas[2] and a general lack of institutional memory for completed projects at the country level, both of which made data collection and analysis difficult. Despite recent improvements to the Atlas system and its use, many UNDP electoral programmes remain under-reported. To compensate, the evaluation team requested specific information from every country office, which provided additional data for 52 countries. For the in-depth country case studies, the politically sensitive nature of the evaluation theme, the number of planned elections and concurrent country-level evaluation missions affected the selection of case-study countries. Country-level events such as elections and other missions also influenced the timing of fieldwork, compressing the evaluation's time for analysis and report preparation.

11. UNDP support to strengthening electoral processes started in the 1970s and expanded significantly after the end of the Cold War, when

2 Atlas is the Enterprise Resource Planning database system used by UNDP to manage projects, finances, human resources, inventory and procurement, and to facilitate internal control and accountability.

many countries first began to organize multi-party elections. Initial efforts focused on filling the knowledge gap on how to hold a democratic election. As understanding of the process improved, the focus of assistance shifted towards increasing the credibility and legitimacy of electoral processes, institutions and outcomes. In working towards these goals, UNDP identified 10 main entry points, which currently guide how the organization provides electoral assistance: electoral system reform, strengthening electoral administration, building sustainable electoral processes, mobilization and coordination of resources, civic and voter education, electoral dispute resolution, support to domestic observation, working with political parties, media strengthening and increasing women's participation. UNDP provides both event- and process-driven support. The former addresses the needs of a particular event, such as voter registration or an election. In contrast, process-driven support takes a more holistic and inclusive approach, providing assistance before, during and after an electoral event. Such support takes the 'electoral cycle' approach, reflected in about half of the current UNDP projects.

12. Although electoral assistance is similar to other types of support in the democratic governance sector, it is quite different from non-governance development assistance. Elections are national events mandated by a constitution, law or a peace accord. At the same time, there are widely accepted international obligations for credible elections, including the need for a competitive choice, the right of all citizens to participate as voters or candidates, and a free, secret and universal vote. Electoral timelines, institutions, processes and actors are prescribed, directly affecting the nature, quality and results of assistance. Elections are high-visibility events and mix logistical and technical work with important political consequences. In addition to being time-bound, elections have large-scale organizational, procurement, technological, logistical, security and training needs. Elections deal with the competition for power and control over resources; governments are actors in these processes, and ruling parties compete in them. The electoral process can both generate and help resolve conflict. Elections may not guarantee democracy, but democracy cannot exist without credible elections. In a credible, successful election, all stakeholders—winners, losers and voters—trust the process and accept the results. Electoral assistance is provided within this highly political and often volatile context.

13. There is a continuing demand for UNDP electoral assistance. The number of UNDP-supported countries has increased from 28 in 2004 to 62 in 2011, with the highest number of countries in Africa (24), followed by Asia and the Pacific (12), Latin America and the Caribbean (12), the Arab States (7) and Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (7). In total, UNDP has assisted 83 countries with a budget of approximately US$2.9 billion and expenditures of approximately $2.2 billion between 1999 and 2011. This represents a range of 5–27 percent of all UNDP democratic governance assistance and 2–10 percent of total UNDP support. The higher end of such ranges reflects UNDP assistance during years of large post-conflict elections, such as those in Afghanistan and Sudan. According to the data supplied by 46 country offices, approximately 95 percent of electoral assistance funding is from non-core sources, which was most notable in Africa and Asia and the Pacific.

14. In the context of electoral assistance, the largest UNDP focus area is strengthening electoral administration, accounting for approximately 25 percent of the total effort[3] in the estimate of 39 country offices. Civic and voter education follows with 19 percent, and building sustainable electoral processes ranks third at 12 percent. Increasing

3 The term 'effort' describes the degree of UNDP engagement in a focus area in the opinion of country-office personnel responding to evaluation questions. It does not necessarily parallel actual funds allocated to a project.

women's political participation and working with political parties received 9 percent and 5 percent of support, respectively. Areas receiving the lowest level of assistance are electoral dispute resolution (4 percent), media strengthening, and working with political parties (5 percent each). UNDP provides both 'hard' and 'soft' assistance, defined for this evaluation as project, and policy advice/advocacy/brokerage, respectively. Of the 33 country offices that provided this information, 70 percent had both hard and soft assistance, and 18 percent reported more soft than hard assistance. All but one of these (UNDP Sudan) are in non-mission countries. UNDP also supports South-South and peer-peer cooperation: more than 60 percent of evaluation survey respondents reported South-South and peer-peer cooperation in UNDP support to electoral administration and 50 percent in its support to women's participation.

15. At the corporate level, the Democratic Governance Group of the Bureau for Development Policy manages support for electoral assistance and has a dedicated full-time adviser (sub-practice leader). The recent Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support, a $50 million project with a three-year span, has expanded the elections assistance policy team to 19 officers working at headquarter and regional levels. UNDP has also entered into a number of multi-organizational partnerships; for example, in 2006, UNDP and the European Commission formed a Joint Task Force and adopted shared operational guidelines for implementing election assistance programmes and projects. UNDP has also entered into a number of memorandums of understanding for greater collaboration with democratic governance organizations and, through such partnerships, produced a number of joint products and tools on electoral matters.

16. UNDP provides electoral assistance within a larger United Nations context. A United Nations Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Activities was appointed in 1991, following the General Assembly resolution 46/137 to coordinate activities in the area and ensure system-wide coherence and consistency. The Focal Point, currently the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, assisted by the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs, makes formative decisions about whether and how the United Nations provides assistance. UNDP assistance begins with a country government request or mandate from the United Nations Security Council or General Assembly. The nature of the request defines the parameters for UNDP action, and, in some cases, may limit UNDP ability to address some key components of the electoral support process. The Electoral Assistance Division and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations typically take the lead in electoral assistance in mission contexts, though UNDP usually plays a significant implementing role.

FINDINGS

17. **UNDP is most relevant for its role as an impartial provider of electoral assistance, which supports processes and institutions so that they better reflect democratic values and international obligations.** However, this sense of purpose was not necessarily clear or consistently exercised at the country level. Some country offices saw their main purpose as supporting the government rather than the processes. In these cases, their programmes were seen as 'too close to government'.

18. **UNDP is highly relevant and adds value when it takes on a development role to strengthen electoral processes.** However, application of the United Nations electoral assistance policy framework is problematic and, in some cases, constrains UNDP ability to fully assume this development role, reducing the organization's relevance and effectiveness. This was most evident in the mission and transitional contexts, which focus primarily on achieving the political imperatives of a mission mandate or electoral event, but which was also increasingly visible in assistance in the development context.

19. **Institutionally, UNDP understands the nature of electoral assistance in different political contexts, but this understanding is not always integrated into programme design or implementation.** UNDP has codified best practices and

institutional policies, such as the electoral cycle approach, and developed, at headquarter level, a set of analytical tools. However, these are not systematically used or institutionalized at the country level, which remains predominately dependent on the analysis and individual experience of the Chief Technical Adviser and the political skills and interests of the Resident Representative.

20. **UNDP electoral assistance is relevant to improving human development and responding to national priorities to strengthen electoral processes.** In a mission context, UNDP assistance has successfully helped achieve processes mandated by peace agreements, helping foster peace and stability. In both mission and non-mission contexts, UNDP assistance was seen as relevant when it built national ownership of the electoral process and contributed to strengthened democratic governance and the ability of political and civil society to participate freely and more effectively.

21. **UNDP is generally effective at providing technical assistance that strengthens the work of electoral management bodies and results in the holding of credible electoral events.** UNDP technical assistance has improved the professionalism of electoral management bodies in most contexts. Similarly, such assistance has led to more credible electoral events than would have been the case in its absence. The degree of political will among different stakeholders to hold free and fair elections was a critical contributing factor of this achievement, as was having sufficient time to appropriately design and deliver specific interventions.

22. **UNDP effectiveness at improving the enabling environment for more credible elections and processes does not match the organization's level of success at the technical level.** A credible electoral process requires meaningful participation by citizens, candidates, political parties and the media. UNDP has had some good results at the event level, as demonstrated by improved voter turnout or curbed media excess. However, the organization has been less consistent with proactively promoting the normative values of a free and fair process, thus limiting effectiveness.

23. **UNDP support has led to the development of more inclusive electoral processes and increased participation by women and other groups, but further effort is needed in this area.** UNDP support has helped improve the legal frameworks for equal participation by all stakeholder groups. This has increased voter turnout for women and marginalized groups, as well as increased the number of elected female officials. In some cases, UNDP-supported registration processes provided a national identity to certain marginalized groups for the first time and an awareness of their civil and political rights. Although the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support provides a platform for gender mainstreaming, UNDP efforts to mainstream gender outside of this programme remain inconsistent.

24. **UNDP can effectively deliver high-tech solutions for electoral processes in developing countries, but there are growing concerns about the cost and appropriateness of some of these systems in the development context.** UNDP has effectively delivered high-tech solutions in more than half (approximately 55 percent) of assisted countries. Although this assistance has been aid-effective in that it supported short-term electoral event goals, it has not been development-effective, as some of the implemented systems are not sustainable without continued external financial and/or technical support.

25. **UNDP programming has been able to mitigate or prevent some election-related violence.** Corporate understanding of the links between elections and violence, and of the possible UNDP mitigating role, is only beginning to be systematized. UNDP programmes have been successful in reducing or mitigating some election-related violence, but this—similar to programming decisions at the country level—depended greatly on the quality, political sensitivity and experience of Resident Representatives and Chief Technical Advisers. There are limits to conflict prevention efforts, however, if the

root causes of the conflict or lack of political will to have a free, fair and peaceful process are not directly addressed.

26. **The UNDP process-focused (electoral cycle) approach is not systematically applied in practice, as most assistance still centres on events.** This process-based approach is a logical extension of the organization's development mandate and is used in about half of UNDP projects. Yet in many cases, the actual project focus remains on events and does not reflect a sustained effort to strengthen electoral cycle processes themselves. Where the cycle approach is genuinely followed, it is generally effective in developing national ownership, strengthening institutional capacities and creating a stronger enabling environment.

27. **Cumbersome procedures and slow recruitment and procurement processes affect UNDP management of electoral projects.** UNDP has managed billions of dollars in electoral assistance and is widely seen as the only organization that could manage such large amounts of funding. However, national and international partners are increasingly critical of the slow speed of UNDP institutional procedures, which, in some cases, have resulted in late delivery of commodities or staff, negatively affecting the supported processes and damaging UNDP credibility.

28. **Uneven quality of reporting on basket funds and project performance does not provide donors with adequate information on the use of their funds.** Electoral management bodies and donors have expressed concern that UNDP reports lack adequate performance data (reporting against outcomes) and financial information needed to assess the cost-effectiveness of assistance. Donors felt that pervasive lack of timely or adequate reporting has actually increased their transaction costs as a result of follow-up requests for information.

29. **UNDP is generally efficient at donor coordination and mobilization of funds, but donors are increasingly looking for more cost-effective solutions and more efficient project management and delivery.** UNDP basket funds have been the default electoral support mechanism for many donors. This has helped ensure consistency of approach, avoid duplication of efforts and raise substantial levels of funding for national electoral processes. However, internal inefficiencies and the high costs of some processes have resulted in some donors questioning the value-for-cost of their assistance through UNDP and assessing other options.

30. **UNDP is a leader in the field of electoral knowledge, but this knowledge is not systematically applied or shared at the country level, affecting efficiencies and performance.** UNDP has played a central role in the codification of knowledge in electoral assistance. There is now a body of knowledge and expertise available for use in the design and implementation of country-level projects, and for use by local electoral management bodies, non-governmental organizations and other national stakeholders. The UNDP challenge is to ensure that the knowledge contained in such resources is used to guide country-level electoral programming, as opposed to the current practice, which bases decisions primarily on the individual perceptions and experiences of Resident Representatives, governance units or technical experts.

31. **UNDP implementation modalities for electoral assistance require balancing the need for impartiality with the efficiency required in electoral contexts.** UNDP uses both national execution and direct execution project modalities. Nationally executed projects help build local capacity and encourage national ownership. However, given the size, complexity and political nature of electoral projects and the processes they assist, national execution is more appropriate for contexts with higher levels of democratic development and mature electoral management bodies.

32. **UNDP assistance that incorporates development and capacity-building considerations increases national ownership and contributes to more sustainable results.** UNDP projects that built capacity rather than replaced it showed a clear progression of national ownership—by

electoral management bodies and civil society—of the activities and normative values supported by the programme. Such ownership has reduced the need for continuing technical assistance over time. Financial independence and long-term changes to the enabling environment depended to a great extent on the degree of political will for these processes.

33. **UNDP support to developing sustainable electoral processes requires an increased focus on the appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of solutions.** UNDP programmes have not placed enough emphasis on developing sustainable electoral processes that use cost-effective and context-appropriate systems and technologies. Some of these may be politically expedient, especially in mission and fragile contexts, but some countries are unable to sustain the systems without external assistance.

34. **The enabling environment and whether root causes of local electoral problems are addressed, directly affect the sustainability of UNDP contributions.** Many of the problems relating to the enabling environment are structural and stem from the winner-takes-all nature of electoral and political systems. In these cases, UNDP and others have made substantial contributions when reform-minded governments or electoral management bodies were in place. However, sustaining such gains beyond the end of these progressive bodies' terms or the actual event has proven difficult if sufficient change has not also been made to the broader environment. Still, indicators suggest that gains in voice and accountability have been generally maintained over time.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1: UNDP has made significant contributions towards strengthening electoral systems and processes.

35. UNDP assistance has been instrumental to holding credible elections in complex post-conflict environments and amidst sensitive political transitions. In some cases, elections would not have happened without UNDP assistance. Its development perspective, larger democratic governance programme portfolio, long-term relationships with host governments and United Nations system status afford UNDP with the standing, expertise and moral authority to advise countries on these sensitive and highly political national processes. This position also confers upon UNDP the legitimacy to represent the international community in its collective efforts to support national electoral processes and to help ensure they meet international standards. In fulfilling this role, UNDP has provided a highly valued service and contributed to the global expansion of democratic practices. At the same time, the results achieved remain predominately of a technical nature.

Conclusion 2: The UNDP framework for electoral assistance is well conceived and enables an effective response, if applied appropriately.

36. The evaluation findings validated the UNDP electoral assistance framework. UNDP was most effective at promoting sustainable and credible electoral processes, systems and institutions when electoral assistance was integrated into a more holistic package of support. Such support targeted the enabling environment alongside the technical aspects of the process, integrating a long-term vision for the end result of all assistance. Successful efforts combined soft and hard assistance, targeted policy makers and technical implementers, and strengthened the range of entry points and their ability to contribute to a stronger, more democratic process. UNDP efforts were more successful when its support went beyond electoral management body assistance to also strengthen other key stakeholders within civil society, legislature, political parties and the media. This package of assistance did not come entirely from UNDP or from any one group, but rather combined and coordinated the efforts of national and international actors and institutions. Successful efforts also placed the strengthening of electoral processes at the centre of the larger process of strengthening democratic governance. However, more systematic and sustained efforts to implement this type of longer-term holistic support are needed.

Conclusion 3: The impact of the UNDP contribution is reduced when normative United Nations values are not consistently applied in electoral programming and implementation.

37. UNDP is most effective when its assistance is grounded in the normative United Nations values for democratic development. UNDP is the only organization able to concurrently represent national and international interests, situate individual pieces of assistance within a broader framework of electoral and democratic development, and provide this larger sense of purpose. In this regard, UNDP is irreplaceable. As an institution, UNDP has fully embraced this role, which is clearly reflected in its strategic plans and programme guidelines. However, this is not as evident at the country level, where the sense of purpose seems to depend more on the individual perspectives of Resident Representatives and Chief Technical Advisers and, within United Nations mission contexts, on the role that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Electoral Assistance Division envision for UNDP, rather than on delivering a consistent institutional response. Where such sense of purpose is missing from country-level programmes, UNDP credibility and its ability to make a meaningful difference is seriously undermined.

Conclusion 4: The building of cost-effective, context-appropriate and sustainable solutions is not consistently prioritized, limiting the effectiveness of UNDP efforts to build national ownership in the electoral processes.

38. Elections have become expensive undertakings. Some support, particularly in countries that received large-scale mission assistance, has resulted in the creation of systems that some of them cannot afford or manage without continued international assistance. As such, UNDP should focus on promoting more affordable and context-appropriate electoral systems and on building national capacity to manage them, thus avoiding a perpetual cycle of assistance and dependence. These are stated UNDP objectives and entry points, but they are not always put into practice as a result of the continuing event focus, unrealistic timelines and lack of national or international interest in the longer-term developmental aspects of electoral assistance. In addition, sustainability requires widespread national support for democratic political processes. Ownership issues that manifest around the electoral process, such as low participation or conflict, will continue if not addressed, threatening democratic advances and their sustainability.

Conclusion 5: Procedures are not sufficiently adapted to the fast-paced needs of electoral support, adversely affecting UNDP performance and relevance.

39. This is a systemic UNDP issue that affects electoral assistance from initial decisions on the type of assistance to provide (a process that involves the Electoral Assistance Division and UNDP timing issues) to finding the right people to staff a project and procuring equipment or materials within the tight timeline of an electoral calendar. Procedural shortcomings in this area are also related to the lack of effective systems to ensure implementation guidelines are used at the country level, to maintain institutional memory in the country office, and to provide donors with accurate, sufficiently detailed and timely reporting on project performance and use of funds. Unless UNDP becomes more efficient, it will find it increasingly difficult to find donor support for its programmes—particularly in non-mission contexts, where other credible electoral assistance bodies can provide technical support.

Conclusion 6: The nature of UNDP partnerships affects its performance and may, in some cases, need to be framed differently from those of other UNDP programmes.

40. The government is the most important institutional partner for the UNDP country office in its development programme. However, in an electoral competition, the government is usually an actor in the electoral race and has a stake in the outcome. This changes the dynamics of the relationship and requires UNDP to respond first and foremost to national needs for a credible electoral process rather than government priorities, which are not necessarily identical. Although electoral

management bodies are the most likely UNDP counterparts for providing electoral assistance, and the United Nations framework allows such bodies to submit national requests for assistance, many country offices are reluctant to provide assistance without the official approval from the executive for the content of the assistance programme.[4] At the global level, UNDP efforts to develop partnerships with the European Union and others have effectively expanded the organization's reach. However, the substance of these partnerships needs to be better coordinated and leveraged at the country level. Within the United Nations system, the partnership with the Electoral Assistance Division requires better definition with respect to the extent of the Division's authority over UNDP at the operational level—particularly for UNDP planning, programmatic decision-making and the implementation of development programmes that target electoral processes, systems and institutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. INSTITUTIONAL AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION SETTING

Recommendation 1: UNDP should intensify efforts to build the shared sense of purpose among headquarter, country-office and project teams, and to improve their understanding of the UNDP approach and programming options for electoral assistance.

41. UNDP should ensure that its institutional frameworks, vision for electoral assistance, and how these fit within the broader United Nations electoral assistance framework are more fully understood by staff and key stakeholders working at the country level. This should include training for country office and project staff on how UNDP promotes the normative United Nations values and fulfils an impartial role in the provision of electoral assistance. UNDP should better leverage the considerable amount of its knowledge products and in-house expertise through more systematic dissemination, networking efforts, and follow-up to its community of practice meetings. UNDP should also consider more intensive and comprehensive induction training—on the organization's institutional vision and implementation guidelines electoral assistance—for new Resident Representatives, Chief Technical Advisers, senior country office management and governance unit staff.

Recommendation 2: UNDP should assess the way it frames relationships with national authorities for electoral projects, and develop a model that embodies UN impartiality within its long-standing relationship within a country.

42. UNDP should guard its reputation as an impartial provider of electoral assistance, because this reputation can play a critical role in managing local political dynamics while promoting the broader requirements of electoral integrity. UNDP should ensure that its involvement in an electoral process serves as a mark of legitimacy, providing confidence to electoral management bodies to take the right decisions and dissuading nondemocratic forces from making frivolous claims or disrupting the process. UNDP should ensure that all country offices are aware of the option of providing support based on a request from an electoral management body. UNDP should focus its technical and normative assets on strengthening these independent institutions to enhance their standing in society and reinforce the political role they play as arbiters of the electoral contest.

Recommendation 3: UNDP should ensure a more consistent grounding of electoral assistance in the broader democratic governance framework to better incorporate the values of that framework.

43. UNDP should more firmly ground electoral assistance in its larger democratic governance programme to give more meaning to its support. Specifically, this means working more systematically to build synergies among different democratic governance programmes, some of which

4. Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme: Revised Note of Guidance on Electoral Assistance, September 2010

may already be assisting women's groups, civil society advocates, media, political parties and members of parliament. This process should start by taking advantage of existing opportunities and becoming more systematized as part of the Country Programme Action Plan process. This requires better diagnosis of governance issues and designing the governance programme, including electoral assistance, around that analysis. In contexts marked by a lack of political will, and where repeated electoral technical assistance has not resulted in the envisioned outcomes, UNDP should ensure that country offices are given full headquarter and regional support through mentoring and backstopping. In cases where there is no political will for competitive multiparty processes, UNDP should carefully assess its support options, as assisting parts of a process under such circumstances is tacit approval of them. Country offices with upcoming electoral events should be prioritized for training on the organization's new political economy-based analysis and on how to integrate this political analysis into soft and hard assistance. Strengthening contextual analyses and integrating early warning systems into electoral assistance programming could help country offices and regional bureaux identify potential triggers for electoral conflict and develop mitigation and prevention responses at the policy and technical levels.

Recommendation 4: Beyond addressing technical needs, UNDP programmes should strategically focus on the areas of critical need for credible, inclusive processes.

44. UNDP should be strategic in the choice of areas where it offers assistance. It should concentrate on ensuring that the most essential needs of the process are covered through its mobilization and coordination role, and, in conjunction with national and international partners, determine which partners are best-placed and able to address specific needs. This process should be based on sound analysis of the political and electoral context, prioritization of needs and a clear exit strategy. UNDP should ensure that its own programmes effectively leverage its United Nations status, multinational nature and development mandate, and that such programmes focus directly on strengthening the credibility of the processes assisted. In particular, UNDP should do more to exploit its convening capabilities and its comparative advantage of facilitating national dialogue on needed electoral reforms and reducing the winner-takes-all nature of electoral systems. Strengthening multiparty political systems should be a part of this process.

Recommendation 5: UNDP should prioritize efforts to clarify the application of the United Nations electoral assistance policy framework to more effectively fulfil the institutional mandate of development assistance.

45. UNDP should seek to resolve the differences arising from the application of the United Nations electoral assistance policy framework where it affects UNDP ability to fulfil its development mandate. Senior UNDP managers should engage with the United Nations Focal Point to discuss these issues and seek a synergistic application of the framework so that UNDP, as well as other United Nations organizations, are able to make the best use of their institutional mandates in support of these important national processes. UNDP should continue its efforts through the Inter-Agency Coordinating Mechanism on Electoral Assistance to resolve operational issues.

B. PROGRAMMATIC IMPROVEMENTS

Recommendation 6: UNDP should strengthen implementation of electoral cycle projects so they are able to retain their process-oriented focus.

46. UNDP should strengthen its efforts to fully implement electoral cycle projects by focusing on the process alongside the event. UNDP should provide country offices, Chief Technical Advisers and project teams with training on the electoral cycle approach, improve dissemination of implementation guidelines, and promote increased networking and peer-to-peer exchanges among electoral management bodies and civil society organizations in the periods between electoral events. UNDP should also leverage the range of entry points in an electoral cycle approach to reach media, political parties, legislators and

others to strengthen the process and promote the independence of electoral management bodies, whether they are formally independent or part of the executive branch. UNDP country offices should also be more proactive in the period between elections to maintain relationships with such bodies and election-oriented civil society organization (such as local observer groups) to promote improvements in electoral processes, electoral dispute resolution mechanisms, electoral management body independence and electoral law. Engagement with donors regarding post-election activities should begin long before the electoral event, in order to avoid losing momentum in the crucial months after an election. A post-election strategy that places due emphasis on sustainability and an exit strategy should be prepared as part of any election assistance project document.

Recommendation 7: More emphasis and effort are needed to reduce the costs of some of the supported processes and ensure they are context-appropriate and sustainable.

47. UNDP should renew and re-energize its efforts to develop cost-effective, sustainable solutions for electoral processes and institutions, and to build the national ownership needed to manage and maintain these systems. UNDP should facilitate the development of local solutions for local problems and avoid over-reliance on expensive imports, including inappropriately high-tech solutions implemented in low-tech contexts. UNDP should increase focus on strengthening national and, where relevant, subnational capacity and expertise for strategic planning, management, timely procurement and budgeting. Appropriate benchmarking, monitoring and budgetary controls should be considered to help foster cost-awareness. Elections are big business for some, particularly for vendors, and UNDP should assist electoral management bodies and civil society organizations in developing transparent and accountable procedures that reduce opportunities for economic and political corruption.

Recommendation 8: UNDP should streamline its electoral assistance processes to ensure that they are more efficient in the fast-paced environment of the electoral process they support.

48. UNDP should review the chain of its electoral support processes from conceptualization to assistance delivery. Some procedural and efficiency issues are internal to UNDP, while others stem from the larger United Nations framework of response and require resolution. In particular, this applies to the relationship between UNDP and the Electoral Assistance Division and the extent of the latter's authority over UNDP programmes. Timelines to review include those pertaining to the receipt and processing of assistance requests, EAD needs assessments and selection of their participants, and project formulation, negotiation and adoption. UNDP should also closely examine and streamline its recruitment and procurement processes. In addition, UNDP should encourage: the development of impact analysis for its work; a standard template to better track, monitor and report on the accomplishments of projects and their costs by intended outcomes; and more systematic efforts to document and share UNDP institutional memory. UNDP regional bureaux and the Bureau for Development Policy should strengthen oversight and monitoring of electoral programmes and improve the capacity of concerned staff, particularly for problematic processes or projects.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

This evaluation is part of the 2011–2012 UNDP Evaluation Office programme of work, approved by the Executive Board at the 2011 session. It is the first corporate-level thematic evaluation that focuses on UNDP electoral assistance. In addition to assessing UNDP performance in strengthening electoral systems, processes and institutions, this evaluation examines UNDP strategic positioning and ability to promote more credible, inclusive processes and to help establish conditions for democratic governance.

UNDP electoral assistance is grounded in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which affirm that the will of the people is the basis of government authority, and that every eligible citizen has the right to take part in electing their representatives through credible and regular elections. UNDP began supporting electoral processes in United Nations Member States in the 1970s, though activity accelerated after 1990. Since then, UNDP has assisted more than 80 countries through approximately 400 projects, investing well over $2 billion.[5] Demand for such assistance will likely continue. The first 2012 UNDP Executive Board session reviewed 19 country programmes in Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean most spanning 2012–2016. Nearly half of these country programme documents included plans for electoral assistance.[6]

Focusing on the past decade, this evaluation covers UNDP work on electoral assistance between 1990 and 2011. It reviews different approaches used across a range of diverse contexts and, based on the evidence collected, identifies key issues, assesses what has and has not worked, and concludes with a set of policy-relevant and forward-looking recommendations. The evaluation aims to support future work by contributing to an understanding of how UNDP can provide assistance in a more effective and sustainable manner.

Elections have been an integral aspect of United Nations-supported democratic transitions, decolonization processes and peace-agreement implementation. Elections are among the most important ways citizens participate in the decisions that affect their lives and hold their representatives accountable for results. Regular, credible and inclusive elections confer the essential political legitimacy that underpins stable states and provides the mandate for governments to tackle the challenges of sustainable human development. As Amartya Sen has written, "While democracy is not yet universally practiced, nor indeed uniformly accepted, in the general climate of world opinion, democratic governance has now achieved the status of being taken to be generally right."[7]

General Assembly resolution 55/2 on the United Nations Millennium Declaration demonstrates the consensus among nations of the world to "spare no effort to promote democracy and

5 The number of countries assisted (83) is based on data retrieved from the Atlas/Executive Snapshot and Balanced Scorecard databases (2004–2011), and from direct responses from country offices. The total budget for the 83 countries is approximately $2.9 billion, with the expenditure of $2.2 billion for 394 projects.

6 The country programme for Central African Republic was not available online for review. Two additional country programmes—in the Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean regions—could also involve electoral entry points but require further verification. Programmes that relate to electoral entry points include four in Africa, two in Asia and the Pacific, one in Arab States and one in Latin America and the Caribbean. See <http://www.beta.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/executive_board/documents_for_sessions/adv2012-first.html>.

7 Sen, A., 'Democracy as a Universal Value', *Journal of Democracy* 10, July 1999.

strengthen the rule of law, as well as respect for all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development." The number of countries classified as democratic has risen from 44 in 1985 to 77 by 1994 and 95 by late 2011.[8] In 2011, the world witnessed a historic change in the Arab States region, where people called for the right to elect their own leaders. In 2012, 59 countries plan to undergo elections at local, state or national levels.[9]

Despite the transformational changes underway in Arab States and the progress made over time in parts of the world such as Asia and Latin America, many countries have failed to consolidate and deepen democratic practices.[10] The challenge facing UNDP and others who work to promote democratic development is to support countries in their consolidation of credible and inclusive processes that can serve as a powerful democratic governance tool of voice, accountability and, ultimately, human development.

Addressing this challenge requires UNDP to take stock of its work in electoral assistance. A detailed understanding of how UNDP provides assistance and its effect, the evolution of partnerships, and the obstacles that impede progress can contribute to refining a strategy for effective and sustainable electoral assistance in the future. Furthering such understanding is the primary focus of this evaluation and its recommendations.

1.2 SCOPE

The evaluation focused on the UNDP response to the complex needs of the electoral sector, which encompasses a vast number of actors, institutions, processes and frameworks. The spectrum of needed assistance is similarly wide, ranging from technical and logistical to educational, political and security-related. To ensure that the evaluation work was manageable and realistic within its time-frame, the team examined UNDP assistance and its effect with a primary focus on the period of 2000–2010 and the larger issues involved in supporting electoral systems and processes. However, it also drew upon evidence dating back as far as 1990 in instances where significant historical issues or trends were evident.

The evaluation examined UNDP assistance and the implementation of global and regional programmes at the country level. The process reviewed project and non-project activities—respectively defined as 'hard' and 'soft' assistance—related to all types of elections, including national and subnational.

A large number of cross-cutting issues affect UNDP performance and overall relevance. Though the depth of analysis varies, this evaluation addresses cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, South-South cooperation and the use of information and communications technology (ICT). Another such issue is of the nature of the relationship between UNDP and the Electoral Assistance Division of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs in the provision of electoral assistance, which the evaluation examined only as far as this relationship impacted UNDP performance. In examining these areas, consideration was given to related concurrent studies and information they generated.

The evaluation covered UNDP support in all the geographic regions of UNDP work:

- Africa
- Arab States
- Asia and the Pacific
- Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
- Latin America and the Caribbean

8 Marshall, M.G. and B.R. Cole, *Global Report 2011: Conflict, Governance and State Fragility,* Center for Systemic Peace, 2011, page 12.

9 Zakaria, F., '2012 – the year of elections', CNN, 30 December 2011, available at <http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2011/12/30/zakaria-2012-the-year-of-elections/>.

10 UNDP, *Human Development Report 2002: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*, 2002, page v.

To highlight the commonalities and variations among support services provided in different contexts, the evaluation reviewed UNDP work in:

- **UN Mission and non-mission countries** where these have either a peacekeeping or political mission and where the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and/or the Department of Political Affairs play a much more directive and operational role in electoral assistance;
- **Varying political environments,** including the immediate post-conflict stage, transition from conflict, transition from an autocratic rule and political stability; and
- **Event- and process-driven approaches** to assistance provision.

One of the evaluation's mandates was to assess how internal structural and organizational issues impact performance. In making this process more manageable, as recommended by this evaluation's Advisory Panel, this area was examined primarily in terms of coordination and technical assistance provided to activities at the country level.

When formulating findings, the evaluation paid particular attention to national perspectives on UNDP support. It is, however, important to note that this not an evaluation of national electoral processes or events.

1.3 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation sought to determine UNDP contribution to strengthening electoral systems, processes and institutions, and to attaining broader, long-term development goals.[11] The analytical framework applied is that UNDP makes a contribution when the support it provides is relevant, effective, efficient, sustainable and has added value. These criteria were used as the basis for the evaluation questions, data collection and analysis.

1.3.1 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

UNDP strategic positioning, relevance and responsiveness

How well has UNDP positioned itself to add value and provide appropriate support and strategies that are responsive to contextual factors and important for enhancing long-term goals of democratic governance and improvements in human lives?

- What is the role of UNDP in supporting electoral assistance?
- What is the added value of this role, and how has UNDP positioned itself to carry it out?
- How appropriate has UNDP support been given the different contexts of work?
- How does UNDP support to this sector affect the longer-term human dimension?[11]
- Does the UNDP strategic framework for support (electoral cycle approach) enhance the deepening of democratic development and human dimensions in improving citizens' inclusion and participation in the decisions that affect their lives?

Effectiveness of UNDP assistance

What is the effectiveness of UNDP support?

- To what degree has UNDP succeeded in meeting the stated objectives of strengthening electoral systems, institutions and processes, and increasing participation?
- What is the contribution of UNDP to the key outcomes of deepening democracies, sustainable human development, and peace and stability?[11]

Efficiency

How efficient is UNDP in its work?

- Are UNDP programmes to strengthen electoral institutions, systems and processes efficient?

11 The links between democratic processes and broader human development goals are highly complex and difficult to determine. The Advisory Panel recommended that the evaluation focus directly on the question of strengthening electoral institutions and processes to keep the scope of work realistic within the allocated time-frame and resources.

- How well have UNDP country offices been able to mobilize funds, coordinate donors and manage basket funds? Can UNDP deliver in an electoral context (given the inflexible deadlines of the electoral calendar)?

Sustainability

How sustainable is UNDP support?

- Has UNDP assistance led to a more professional, independent management of electoral processes?
- To what extent has UNDP contributed to the establishment of durable, cost-effective democratic electoral processes and systems?

1.3.2 QUALITATIVE INDUCTIVE APPROACH

The evaluation used a qualitative methodology, drawing from Evaluation Office guidance[12] and systems theory for complex evaluations[13] to address the diverse set of questions and to enhance credibility, validity and reliability in establishing UNDP contribution to development results. It paid particular attention to the construct/theme being evaluated with due regard to its complex nature but also its politically sensitive dimensions. To establish the conceptual framework, the evaluation used the theory of change and the UNDP results framework, paying particular attention to not only the complex nature of the evaluation theme, but also to the varied contexts and the multiple stakeholders involved in the delivery of assistance. A mixed method approach was used to generate a robust basis for evidence and to enhance the rationale behind findings. Thus methods used included case studies, broad-based surveys with a variety of stakeholders and expert informants, and meta-analysis of existing evaluations.

To ensure the reliability and validity of generated information, and to enhance balance in perspectives and interpretations, the evaluation used systematic measurement procedures, including well-defined protocols and structured methods for ensuring consistency in primary data collection, extensive cross-validation to rule out competing or rival hypotheses, and extensive discussions within the evaluation team and with various stakeholders. Synthesis of the total set of information generated to define key findings and develop conclusions used an inductive methodology.

1.3.3 BALANCING CREDIBILITY WITH QUALITY: THE NATURE OF THE SUBJECT BEING EVALUATED AND METHODS TO ENHANCE CREDIBILITY

Given the politically sensitive nature of elections and electoral processes, the evaluation paid particular attention to the issue of credibility and of balancing it with quality in design, data collection, analysis and interpretation. Credibility was also a major factor in: defining the criteria selected for the evaluation; selecting experts to carry out the case studies and to help form a balanced perspective on electoral assistance; and deliberately focusing on including the views of nationals in data collection.

Thus, in studying relevance and responsiveness, UNDP responsiveness to governments was addressed with due regard to its role as an 'impartial provider' of electoral assistance. Credibility considerations also affected the evaluation's original intent to use national consultants with expertise in elections to carry out all of the case studies, thereby ensuring the inclusion of national and Southern perspectives in the evaluation. However, in some politicized contexts, only regional or international consultants were viewed as impartial by national stakeholders, resulting in only half of the case studies being conducted by national or regional consultants.

12 UNDP, 'A Methodology Guide for Thematic Evaluation', Evaluation Office, 2009.

13 Mostashari, A., 'Systems Thinking and Dealing with the Complexity of Development', Center for Complex Sociotechnical Systems, Stevens Institute of Technology, 2011; Ramalingam, B. and H. Jones, 'Ideas and Implications for Development and Humanitarian Efforts', working paper 285, results of Overseas Development Institute research presented in preliminary form for discussion and critical comment, October 2008.

Further enhancing credibility and quality of the evaluation was the composition of the core team that comprised members from North America, Europe and Africa with complementary expertise on electoral assistance and combined experience with related tasks in more than 50 countries.[14] The Advisory Panel included an internationally renowned electoral expert and a member of the African Union's Panel of the Wise; both played key roles in ensuring evaluation validity and balanced use of perspectives. The third member of the Advisory Panel contributed expertise in evaluation and the United Nations system, further ensuring a sound grounding in evaluation principles.

The views of different national actors and stakeholders were important to the credibility of this evaluation, as electoral processes are national processes. Such information was collected through case-study interviews that spanned government and elected officials, electoral management bodies' commissioners and staff, and representatives of political parties, civil society and domestic observer groups.

A survey developed as part of the evaluation gathered both national and international perspectives. Widely circulated through electoral networks, the survey was open to anyone with an interest in UNDP assistance. Of the 318 survey respondents, 136 were nationals of 18 countries in Africa, 6 countries in Arab States, 15 countries in Asia and the Pacific, 7 countries in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and 7 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Almost 90 of these were members of the UN system working on electoral assistance, more than 75 were experts and observers, some 50 were from national and international civil society groups, and another 49 were from electoral management bodies. The remainder were from governments, bilateral and multilateral organizations, academia, media and the private sector.

14 See Annex 9.

1.3.4 MULTIPLE APPROACHES

The evaluation used multiple methods for its design and to define, collect, analyse and synthesize the information it generated. This approach helped provide a broad information base for the evaluation, while also providing the means to validate the wide array of evidence. The evaluation used primary and secondary, quantitative and qualitative data. Methods included:

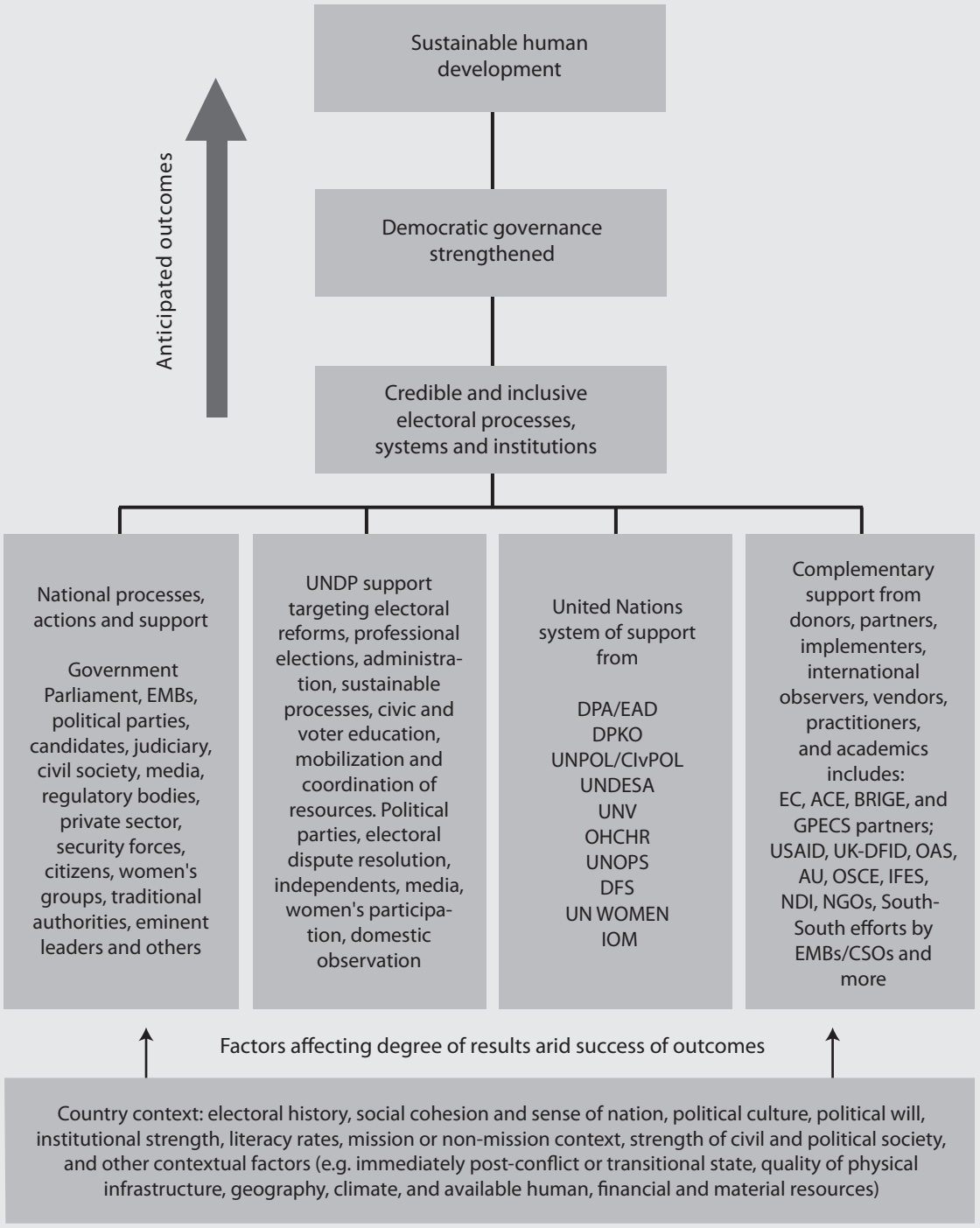
- Using the UNDP theory of change and results framework for electoral assistance to define the variables for investigation, analyse the achievement of results, and make plausible associations between UNDP work and longer-term outcomes;
- Systematically applying the systems theory for a complex and complicated phenomenon;
- Country-level and thematic case studies;
- Stakeholder surveys using questionnaires;
- Focused interviews with a sample of stakeholders and sector actors; and
- Meta-analysis of existing evaluation information from country-level and thematic UNDP evaluations conducted by the UNDP evaluation office.

Results achievement: analysis of outcomes and their association with UNDP

To ascertain the degree of change at the outcome level and better understand the nature, effectiveness and impact of UNDP contributions, the team explored associations between UNDP work and observed results in countries receiving UNDP support.

Figure 1 outlines the types of results anticipated as a consequence of UNDP electoral assistance. The depicted framework guided the development and/or selection of indicators to measure outcomes and success. Some of the key indicators of change considered in the country case studies and desk review were:

Figure 1. Electoral assistance: Framework for analysis



- Increased participation, especially by women and marginalized groups, as voters and candidates;
- Improved independence and professionalism among electoral management bodies;
- Increased sustainability and cost effectiveness of electoral processes;
- Improved voter awareness of their rights and responsibilities;
- Broader-based political parties;
- Acceptance of results and installation of the new government;
- Peaceful resolution of electoral disputes within the system;
- Well-coordinated international responses; and
- Reduced levels of international assistance and the evolution towards full national ownership.

For assessing higher-level results, broad governance indicators[15] were also examined for noticeable trends that could be associated with UNDP electoral assistance over a decade or more.

Country case studies

To assess work in different contexts, the evaluation included 11 in-depth country case studies of UNDP assistance in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Chad, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Mexico and Mozambique.[16] Annex 3 provides the basis for the selection of the countries for case study. The case studies facilitated comparing results across countries, regions and contexts to identify the most effective types of assistance for specific conditions and the factors that contribute to or inhibit outcome achievement. Data generation and information gathering for the country case studies used a variety of quantitative and qualitative, primary and secondary data. Sources included:

- Telephone, virtual and in-person interviews, questionnaires and focus groups;[17]
- Review and use of UNDP country-level evaluations (Assessments of Development Results) and Annual Reports of United Nations Resident Coordinators to the Secretary-General for case-study countries;
- Coordination and information exchange with concurrent evaluations, including:
  - UNDP EO **Evaluation of UNDP Support to Conflict-affected Countries** in the context of UN peace operations, which also conducted case studies in Haiti and Lebanon;
  - UNDP Bureau for Development Policy, Democratic Governance Group **Lessons Learned on the Longer-Term Impact of United Nations Electoral Assistance**, whose team joined this evaluation for joint field work on their respective case studies on Bangladesh, Mexico and Mozambique, and participated in regular video conferences to share information and findings;
  - UNDP Bureau for Development Policy, Democratic Governance Group **Lessons Learned on Integrated Electoral Assistance (UNDP/DPA/DPKO)**, also through regular video conferencing;
  - UNDP Bureau for Development Policy, Democratic Governance Group **Entry Points for Gender Main-streaming and Women's Empowerment** (funded through the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support), with which this evaluation coordinated the Bolivia case study and exchanged additional information;

15 Using the World Governance Indicators dataset, which includes Freedom House data, the evaluation focused on Voice and Accountability, Political Stability, No Violence and Regulatory Quality. Other reviewed sources included the Human Development Index, Voter Turnout, Gender Inequality Index, and Polity IV.

16 Annex 3 provides the basis for selecting countries for case studies.

17 Annex 4 lists the people consulted.

- UK Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) **Evaluation of Department for International Development Electoral Assistance,** fielded through UNDP, where UNDP EO and ICAI established a Memorandum of Understanding for collaboration, which included ICAI participation in this evaluation's debriefs on Afghanistan and Bangladesh (also ICAI case studies) and regular sharing of information and findings, such as the survey data collected by this evaluation and ICAI case studies on Burundi and Malawi.

Regular communications and information exchange with parallel studies enabled each to develop a broader perspective than it could have attained on its own. However, each of these evaluations drew conclusions and formulated recommendations independently.

Thematic case studies

This evaluation also examined a set of significant and recurrent themes in UNDP electoral assistance. Under the theme of information and communications technology (ICT), the evaluation commissioned a report on the appropriateness and sustainability of electoral technology introduced by technical assistance, in particular UNDP support for biometric voter registration. An Internet-based survey of ICT experts familiar with UNDP ICT support in the electoral sector was conducted as part of this thematic review, gathering around 40 responses. In addition, evaluation team members monitored themes in the course of their evaluation work to ensure these important issues were incorporated into the findings. These themes were: electoral support in post-conflict situations, UNDP role and ability to uphold international electoral standards, South-South cooperation and gender as related to UNDP support to increasing women's political participation.

Stakeholder surveys

The evaluation drew extensively from multiple stakeholder surveys that gathered information from UNDP staff and other professionals working in the field of electoral assistance on UNDP performance, comparative advantage and added value.

- **Survey of UNDP performance.** As part of this evaluation, an Internet-based questionnaire was designed to collect information on stakeholder perceptions of UNDP assistance. The survey was open to anyone with an interest in electoral assistance and included: 1) professionals who are members of various networks in the electoral field; 2) UNDP headquarter and field staff; 3) members of the wider United Nations system; 4) national and international partners in UNDP electoral assistance projects; and 5) experts regularly engaged in UNDP electoral assistance projects. More than 300 persons responded to the survey across the range of units sampled. About 50 percent of respondents were nationals.[18]
- **Surveys of related UNDP initiatives.** To access information on stakeholder perceptions of specific UNDP initiatives, the evaluation reviewed surveys conducted externally by other evaluations and internally by the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy (BDP). These included a 2010 BDP survey from the evaluation of the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network[19] project, a 2010 community of practice survey on the UNDP Global Practice Meeting, and a 2011 DGG country-office survey on Gender Mainstreaming and Women's Empowerment in Electoral Processes (conducted by DGG through the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support).
- **ICAI survey of DFID staff about UNDP.** The evaluation also had access to the results of the ICAI survey of the United Kingdom

18 Annex 7 provides additional details and discusses the main findings from this survey.

19 ACE was established in 1998 as the Administration and Cost of Elections (ACE) project. The name was changed to the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network in 2006. See <aceproject.org/about-en>.

Department for International Development (DFID) staff regarding UNDP electoral assistance. This evaluation assessed whether DFID electoral support funds delivered through UNDP is managed effectively and delivers value.

Other information-gathering and analytical approaches

Case studies and surveys were further augmented with interviews, use of secondary data and meta-analysis of existing evaluations.

- **Interviews.** To examine coordination and technical assistance provided by BDP to electoral activities at the country level, members of UNDP headquarter and field staff were interviewed on agency organization and structure. The information gathered was further enriched with a desk review of secondary data.
- **Use of secondary data and information.** To address political issues related to UNDP-supported electoral processes, the evaluation relied on existing, well-regarded sources of information and data. Examples include electoral observation reports (such as those by the European Commission), political analyses by think tanks and academics, and widely used indices that measure variables such as voice, accountability, stability, level of development and transparency.
- **Meta-analysis.** The evaluation conducted meta-analyses of existing evaluations by the UNDP Evaluation Office and a sample of evaluations completed by various UNDP programme units. Before the latter were included in the analysis, they were first assessed for rigor and quality. Meta-analysis was conducted for 31 country-level evaluations, 5 thematic evaluations and 35 outcome and project evaluations. The approach yielded rich and contextually specific data that formed a sound basis for assessment.

1.4 OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITATIONS

The evaluation benefited from the intense stakeholder interest in the topic and the willingness of national and international partners to spend time discussing UNDP work and complete surveys. This commitment demonstrates the level of partner support and commitment to UNDP work on strengthening electoral processes. The evaluation also benefited from the wealth of available documentation addressing UNDP and other electoral assistance programmes and the processes themselves.[20]

Cooperation and consultation with concurrent studies and lessons-learned exercises provided a great opportunity to enhance this evaluation with perspectives unique to specific contexts, thematic areas and organizational structures—such as conflict, gender equality, and integrated United Nations missions. Use of information from these sources took into consideration the key criteria of independence and quality in data collection.

At the same time, certain factors constrained or otherwise affected the design of the evaluation. These included:

- **Quantity and quality of available information.** The first key limitation stemmed from the enormous scope of support activities under review, programmatic and task-related complexities, and the vast range of contexts in which electoral assistance is provided. Second and equally important is the historical lack of consistency in classifying electoral projects in Atlas, the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) database system used by UNDP to manage projects, finances, human resources, inventory and procurement, and to facilitate internal control and accountability. Despite recent improvement of the system and its use, many past UNDP programmes and projects that contributed to strengthening electoral

20 Annex 5 provides a list of documents consulted.

systems and processes were not reported as electoral assistance, and work in the area remains under-reported.

The evaluation endeavoured to obtain this information directly from country offices by specifically requesting it, and the replies improved data coverage and quality. Although not all countries replied, analysis indicates no critical differences between respondents and non-respondents.

The evaluation also found a lack of institutional memory for electoral projects at headquarters before the early 2000s; the same was true for completed projects at the country level. As such, assessing UNDP efforts and their effect over time was difficult, and the uneven and non-standardized ways of information reporting had to be managed in the data analysis.

- **Limitations in case-study country selection.** Challenges included the politically sensitive nature of the topic, the number of elections being held at the time of this evaluation, and the number of concurrent studies. Such factors affected the selection and management of case study countries. Several more countries were identified for case studies and research under this evaluation, some particularly for their post-conflict and transitional contexts. However, some country offices declined participation because of the nature of the evaluation, its timing, national contextual issues being addressed by the country office, or the volume of other concurrent in-country evaluations.

  Alternatives were also limited by planned elections or previous coverage by the BDP lessons learned assessment. The evaluation had also planned to conduct a case study of Yemen as that was first among Arab States to receive UNDP electoral cycle assistance; however the study was dropped because of security considerations.

1.5 REPORT STRUCTURE

The report has four chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 provides an overview of how electoral support within different contexts is understood in this evaluation and describes the nature of UNDP support. Chapter 3 presents the main findings from case studies, surveys, data supplied by individual country offices, interviews, database searches and literature reviews, to understand electoral assistance strategies and UNDP contributions to their success or failure. Chapter 4 provides the evaluation conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 2

ELECTORAL CONTEXT AND UNDP RESPONSE

This chapter provides the background for UNDP electoral assistance, the different contexts under which that assistance is provided and the approaches used within each context. This review draws upon an extensive array of available information and two sources that were developed as part of the evaluation:

- **Historical description and analysis of UNDP electoral assistance.** A historical analysis dating back to the 1970s was conducted to understand the evolution of UNDP support and identify hypotheses for analysis in the evaluation. As noted in Chapter 1, much of the information on early UNDP work was not available.
- **Portfolio analysis 1998–2011.** An analysis of the nature and configuration of the UNDP portfolio of assistance was conducted using the entry points identified in the UNDP 'Electoral Systems and Processes Practice Note': electoral systems, electoral reform, electoral management body support, support to the process, civic and voter education, women's participation, electoral dispute resolution, media, political party strengthening and coordination/mobilization of electoral support.[21] Data was derived from the UNDP Atlas system and the worksheets completed by 52 of 139 country offices contacted for information on UNDP electoral projects and soft assistance support. This provided background on the range of budgets, expenditures, stakeholders, modes of implementation, and types of assistance (hard and soft) within the UNDP portfolio at the country, regional and global levels, and within both mission and non-mission contexts.

2.1 BACKGROUND

International assistance to electoral processes started after World War II and increased significantly after the end of the Cold War, when many countries first began to organize multiparty elections. At the time, new electoral management bodies (EMBs) lacked the experience and knowledge to deliver credible competitive elections. Supporting EMBs became a development priority, as elections were seen as a precondition for more stable, peaceful and economically sustainable democracies. Many bilateral and multilateral agencies assisted this "Third Wave"[22] of democratization, providing a significant level of financial and technical support for elections. In some cases, most notably for large peacekeeping elections such as in Namibia, Cambodia and Timor-Leste, the elections themselves were administered fully or mostly by the United Nations.

The majority of this assistance was short-term, directed at EMBs and other actors who lacked experience and knowledge. Support typically focused on activities directly related to an event, such as voter registration and education, electoral administration or observation of polling. Some

21 UNDP, 'Electoral Systems and Processes Practice Note', 2004.

22 In his 2001 book, *The Third Wave of Democratization,* Samuel Huntington described global democratization as coming in three waves. The first was in the 1800s – 1940s with 29 democracies, dropping to 12 by the end of World War II. The second wave came after the war, with 36 democracies. Huntington argued that the Third Wave started in 1974, with Portugal's revolution that doubled the number of democracies in the world.

attempts were made to simultaneously build capacity, but these were usually subordinate to the imperative of ensuring that the electoral event was held. Research on transitions in Eastern Europe, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s revealed that some of this assistance had resulted in democratic elections but infrequently translated into more democratic governance, generating discussions of a democratic recession. In some cases, elections were used to legitimize an authoritarian regime. In others, the lack of trust in electoral institutions and processes meant that even legitimate results were rejected by losers.

Successive elections in most countries resulted in EMBs gaining more experience with electoral administration, but in others EMBs remained challenged by lack of resources, political interference, low salaries and high turnover of the staff. These institutions continued to require the same or similar level of assistance, which even included replacing materials and resources provided for a previous electoral event. At the same time, it has been argued that successive credible elections in Africa over a 20-year period have made an important contribution to solidifying socio-political and economic freedoms across the continent.[23]

Although elections are a means for citizens to make choices about policies and representatives, they are also a means for the peaceful resolution of disputes, distribution of power and allocation of resources. Consequently, provisions for holding elections have become an integral part of most peace agreements, and post-conflict electoral assistance has become an integral part of peacekeeping operations. If successful, electoral processes can lead to a more peaceful and stable future, such as in the case of Mozambique. However, elections can also trigger or renew conflict when underlying issues of national identity, zero-sum politics, respect for the rule of law or socio-cultural differences are not resolved—as happened in Angola, Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti and Liberia.

Thus, development partners' challenge evolved from support to holding an event and closing knowledge and capacity gaps to the need to increase the credibility of and stakeholder confidence in electoral processes and institutions. This meant that development partners had to become fully cognizant of a country's political context and take a more integrated and holistic approach than the previous event-focused or 'elections' assistance. This 'electoral' support encompasses not only the event, but also the related processes, institutions and systems. It is also referred to as the 'electoral cycle' approach.

Electoral cycle support focuses on creating an inclusive and participatory electoral process and a professional electoral administration that can enhance the credibility of the process and trust in its results. Taking a longer-term development view, the electoral cycle approach seeks to increase national ownership and build capacity of national institutions and processes. It has been adopted globally by many development agencies, including UNDP.

Currently, about half of UNDP project assistance is classified as electoral cycle support. The nature of electoral assistance is quite different from development assistance programmes outside the democratic governance area. Elections are events mandated by a constitution, law or a peace accord. Their timelines, institutions, processes and actors are prescribed, directly affecting the nature, quality and results of electoral assistance. Elections are high-visibility events that mix logistical and technical work with important political consequences. In addition to being time-bound, elections have large-scale organizational, procurement, technological, logistical, security and training needs. Elections may not guarantee democracy, but democracy cannot exist without free and fair elections. In a credible, successful electoral process, both winners and losers accept the process and its results.

23 Lindbergh, S., 'The Power of Elections Revisited', paper presented at the Conference on Elections and Political Identities in New Democracies, Yale University, 28–29 April 2007.

There are widely recognized international standards for credible electoral processes: the need for a competitive choice, the right of all citizens to participate as voters or candidates, and a free, secret and universal vote. As elections deal with the competition for power and allocation of resources they are highly political. Governments are actors in these political and electoral processes, and the ruling party competes in the elections. In post-conflict and transitional contexts, factions that feel threatened by the transition can target the electoral process as a means to disrupt the transition and safeguard their interests. Electoral assistance is provided within a highly political and often volatile context. In some cases, this has cost the lives of national and international supporters, including United Nations and UNDP staff. Country context plays a major role in determining the type and approach of electoral support.

Each country has a unique political history and culture. In some, these are perceived to be less compatible with the inclusive, participatory, individualistic and equitable nature of a free, fair and transparent electoral process as defined by international standards. Such perceptions can vary widely within a country, based on geographic, historical, demographic and numerous other factors. In particular, the level of a country's democratic development shapes the nature of electoral assistance. Countries with more mature EMBs require more targeted assistance than countries in transition, which may require broader and longer-term support. Countries with political or peacekeeping missions have similarly specialized needs and different electoral assistance arrangements, which require, for example, devoting more attention to political consensus-building and addressing security-related considerations. Finally, post-conflict and fragile states' assistance and electoral processes themselves are often complicated by missing infrastructure, population movement and other issues associated with conflict-affected groups—ex-combatants, refugees, and the internally displaced.

The electoral process itself changes the local context, and assistance providers must be able to recognize and adapt to these changes. Agencies providing electoral support must also be aware of the impact technical decisions can have on the political processes, as such an impact can be negative if decisions are not firmly grounded in the actual context.

2.2 UNDP RESPONSE

In providing electoral assistance, UNDP has had to adapt to the contextual factors of individual countries and has learned a great deal, continuously adjusting its approach based on such lessons.

2.2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF UNDP SUPPORT

Strengthening electoral systems and processes has been a major component of UNDP work in fostering democratic governance or similar areas[24] since the 1970s. The concept of the outcome of UNDP assistance has evolved over time, from focusing on creating an enabling environment for sustainable human development to supporting institutional development, and, ultimately, deepening democratic governance.

Since 1998, UNDP assisted at least 83[25] of the 176 countries and territories[26] where it has a presence. These countries fall largely into two major categories for this evaluation: 31 are or were mission countries, while support to 52 was provided in non-mission contexts.[27] Since 1991, UNDP has invested significant resources in

24 Until the 2nd Multi-Year Funding Framework in 2004, UNDP described such work as "creating an enabling environment for sustainable human development."

25 Data from portfolio analysis for this evaluation.

26 UNDP, *Human Development Report 2011 – Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All,* 2011.

27 'Mission context' describes the situation of a country that has had prior missions by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations or Department of Political Affairs.

electoral support, which generally accounted for more than a third of total UNDP support in the democratic governance area.[28] This practice area averages 40 percent of UNDP support,[29] with the vast majority of assistance provided through country-level projects.

2.2.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND PARAMETERS FOR UNDP ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE

UNDP electoral assistance work is guided by five factors that define the character of project and non-project activities:

1. A results framework linking assistance to a set of outcomes defined in UNDP strategic documents;
2. A set of entry points that define where UNDP provides assistance;
3. Process- (electoral cycle) versus event-focused assistance;
4. The human development dimension; and
5. The larger United Nations context for electoral support.

Results framework

Figure 1 in Chapter 1 is based on the UNDP Strategic Plan (most recently 2008–2013) and presents the structure of UNDP work and the results expected from electoral assistance. The key elements of the conceptual framework of UNDP assistance include the systems operation framework of the electoral cycle, UNDP electoral assistance entry points, the human development dimension and partnerships. Although the figure depicts the UNDP electoral support framework as linear for graphic convenience, the relationships among its various dimensions is non-linear and recursive.

UNDP views credible and inclusive elections as a critical component of good governance. Elections are a means to ensure the legitimacy and accountability of the government and people's approval and support of the choices made by politicians and officials. Elections are also an important part of democratic transitions and peace agreement implementation. According to the UNDP Strategic Plan 2008–2013, "the ultimate goal is to deepen democracy and accelerate sustainable human development by giving all people the ability to participate in the decisions that affect their lives." This builds upon the Multi-Year Funding Framework (MYFF) 2004–2007 goal of fostering democratic governance and the lower-level MYFF result of strengthening sustainable, transparent electoral processes that allow all citizens to freely elect their representatives and hold them accountable for commitment and results.

To achieve these goals, UNDP focuses on strengthening electoral laws, processes and institutions, thus strengthening inclusive participation and improving the professionalism of electoral administration. This approach is expected to result in a credible and inclusive electoral process that culminates in the election of a stable and legitimate government that reflects the will of the voter majority and is accountable and responsive to its citizens. In turn, the election of such a government fosters democratic governance, which is an important contributing element for achieving sustainable human development.

The logic behind the results framework represents an important conceptual shift. Development was once considered a prerequisite for democracy. However, links between democratic good governance and development quality are now well established.[30] International obligations for credible and inclusive elections—the embodiment of democratic good governance—have been clarified in

28 Historical analysis conducted for this evaluation.

29 UNDP, 'Annual Report 2008, Capacity Development: Empowering People and Institutions', May 2008.

30 See Newman, E. and R. Rich, *The UN Role in Promoting Democracy: Between ideals and reality*, United Nations University Press, 2004; and Bhagwati, J., 'New Thinking on Development', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 1995.

Table 1. **Main UNDP entry points for electoral assistance**
• **Electoral system reform** focuses on making political institutions more broad based, inclusive and representative. UNDP helps design new electoral systems and/or supports the reform of existing systems, which can include proportional representation, first-past-the-post and other types. Such reform helps foster accountability of the government to the governed.
• **Strengthening electoral administration** aims at building independent and permanent electoral management bodies. UNDP works to strengthen institutions, support legal reforms, provide professional development programmes for election workers, improve public information and outreach capacity, and help countries with election-related resource management. This is a mainstay of UNDP assistance.
• **Building sustainable electoral processes** can include support for low-cost, free and fair elections. Such support typically focuses on fostering countries' election planning, monitoring and budgetary capacities. It can also include support for voter registration and /or the creation or update of a civil registry.
• **Mobilization and coordination of resources** for electoral support is an area where UNDP can serve as a conduit for financial contributions and third-party participation. This helps ensure coordination of international assistance and consistency of approach. UNDP projects often provide large-scale basket or trust funds, through which donors can channel their support.
• **Civic and voter education** expands democratic participation, particularly among women and under-represented segments of society. This type of support can include activities that highlight the rights and responsibilities of citizens in an electoral process and more broadly in a functioning democratic society. Educational activities can be integrated into support to electoral management bodies, delivered through civil society organizations, or using mix of approaches.
• **Electoral dispute resolution** has evolved into support to developing legal structures and systems for the redress of electoral complaints and appeals, increasing their transparency, fairness and credibility, and ultimately leading to increased stakeholder trust. UNDP also works on alternative forms of conflict prevention and resolution applied to the electoral process.
• **Support to domestic observation** involves strengthening systems for domestic observation, training or logistical support to umbrella civil society organizations. Such activities are often linked to support of a country's civil society, particularly in the area of civic education.
• **Working with political parties** ensures their involvement in voter registration and education efforts, improves party campaigning and media strategies, strengthens party caucuses within legislatures and ensures party accountability for commitments to addressing gender imbalances at the leadership level.
• **Media strengthening** typically begins with training its members to provide more professional, balanced and comprehensive election coverage. Media-centric support can also include strengthening communication links between the media and electoral management bodies, and improving qualitative and quantitative monitoring of media coverage, including compliance with relevant codes of conduct and regulations regarding access to media by political parties.
• **Increasing women's participation** involves build awareness and capacities for women's increased political participation—as candidates for office, political leaders, voters and electoral administrators.

numerous documents and international agreements, are widely accepted and are expected to be applied to electoral processes regardless of the type of electoral system.[31] Credible elections and processes must be built on concepts such as equal participation, universal suffrage, equal access to information, freedom of expression and the right to remedy.

31 Examples include the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948); United Nations General Assembly resolution 49/190, 'Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization' (1995); and the Inter-Parliamentary Union 'Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections' (1994).

Achieving higher-level results of the electoral assistance framework and ensuring their sustainability requires a systems operation framework and intensive partnerships. As such, UNDP applies a holistic and integrated approach embodied in the electoral cycle, which places elections in the broader democratic and governance contexts and involves a number of different actors and sectors. The implementation of such a framework involves formulating UNDP assistance in the context of ongoing national processes and actions that support electoral processes, the work of other United Nations system agencies, and the work of bilateral, multilateral and nongovernmental organizations. How well UNDP applies this framework and the associated conditions for effective implementation is an important component of this evaluation.

UNDP electoral assistance entry points

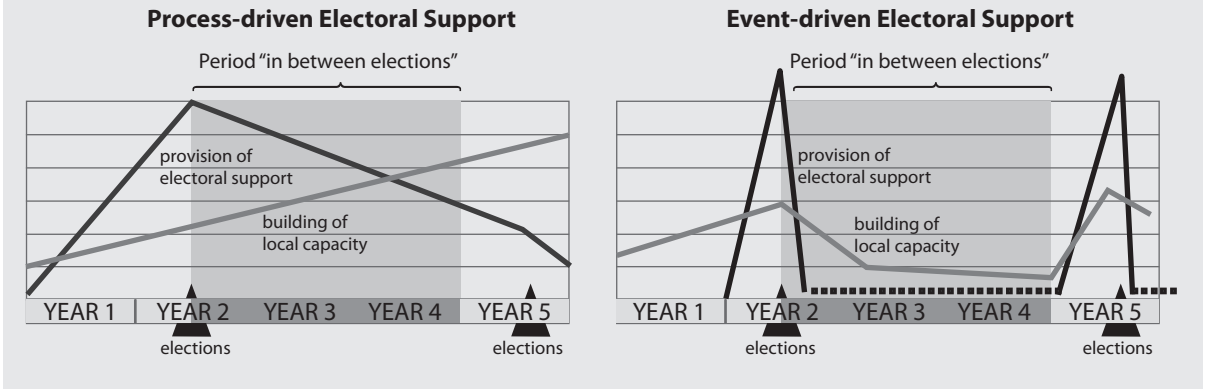
The current UNDP framework for assistance identifies 10 main entry points for electoral assistance (see Table 1). These programmatic areas, in which UNDP has recognized expertise, address some of the most critical components of a credible and equitable electoral process. While there are other entry points and ways to refer to assistance areas, these represent the prevalent areas of UNDP work.

In using these entry points at national regional and local electoral levels, UNDP addresses international standards and the demand and supply side for credible and inclusive elections. The development hypothesis is that strengthening these areas contributes to increased participation, improved professionalism of election administration and strengthened processes, systems and institutions—all prerequisites for credible and inclusive elections, and, in the broader view, for deepening democracy and improving human development. This thinking defines the framework within which UNDP assistance is assessed.

Event-driven versus electoral cycle approach

Event-driven assistance typically targets a specific need, such as holding a national election or designing a voter registry. Longer-term assistance, which provides more comprehensive support before, during and after an electoral event, is referred to as process-driven or electoral cycle assistance (see Figure 2). The latter has recently gained precedence because of its development perspective. The cycle approach allows for a more comprehensive, long-term engagement with a wide variety of stakeholders and takes advantage of the cooler political period between elections to formulate reforms, build capacities and pay increased attention to learning through exchanges, networking and South-South cooperation.

Figure 2. Process-driven versus event-driven support



The electoral cycle approach also addresses a major weakness of event-focused support: lack of follow-up and the consolidation of gains made during the process. Ending support immediately following an electoral event often results in a loss of capacity and institutional memory, which in turn often results in the need to repeat the assistance in the next cycle of events.

The human development dimension

"[The UNDP] mission is to support countries to accelerate progress on human development targeted at one end result: real improvements in people's lives and in the choices and opportunities open to them."[32] Providing assistance throughout the electoral cycle reflects this mission, because it allows for longer-term, multidimensional, interdisciplinary assistance at the micro (empowering citizens) and macro levels (improving policies, processes and institutions). Human development includes forming capabilities of citizens as participants and actors and their subsequent use, such as citizens exercising their rights and responsibilities. The electoral process is the indispensible mechanism that allows citizens to regularly and directly participate in selecting their representatives and in decisions that affect their everyday lives.

The values associated with human development are, therefore, inherent in a successful electoral process. Such values include ensuring equity and everyone's ability to participate; eliminating undue encumbrances to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of participation by voters and political actors; and empowering people to knowledgably participate and contribute to policy formulation and decision-making processes. Electoral processes that integrate human development values increase the legitimacy of political authorities, promote good governance, and provide a mechanism for regulating internal conflict, reconciliation and the achievement of peace.

From this perspective, UNDP electoral support addresses three key areas:

- **Citizen rights**, which are enhanced with an electoral process that improves citizen representation;
- **Inclusive participation** of minorities, women and other marginalized groups; and
- **Capacities**—of systems, processes and institutions—which ensure the sustainability of results and the deepening of democracy.

UNDP in the larger United Nations context

UNDP assistance begins with a country government request or the mandate of the United Nations Security Council or General Assembly. The nature of the request defines the parameters for UNDP action and, in some cases, may limit UNDP ability to address some key components of the electoral support process. To deliver assistance, UNDP works in coordination with other United Nations and international agencies with a local presence, and such relationships can also affect the scope and nature of UNDP assistance.

A United Nations Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Activities was appointed in 1991, following General Assembly resolution 46/137 to coordinate activity in the area of elections and advise the Secretary-General on requests from Member States. In 2007, the Secretary-General called for more attention to the issue of system-wide coherence and consistency in the electoral field,[33] as there are many agencies that provide different types of electoral assistance. Lengthy discussions led to the most recent, November 2011 Policy Committee decision on United Nations assistance (2011/23) which reinforces the Focal Point's leadership role for all electoral mission and non-mission assistance matters, assisted by the Electoral Assistance Division (EAD), which was established in 1992 within the Department of Political Affairs. The Focal Point (currently the Under-Secretary-General

32 UNDP, 'UNDP strategic plan, 2008–2011: Accelerating global progress on human development', 2008, paragraph 1.

33 United Nations General Assembly, resolution 49/190, 'Strengthening the role of the United Nations in enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections and the promotion of democratization', 1995.

for Political Affairs) makes the formative decisions regarding whether and how the United Nations will provide electoral support. After receiving a country request for assistance, EAD conducts a desk review or a needs assessment mission in consultation with relevant United Nations entities. The results of this process provide the basis for a decision about the appropriateness of assistance. In mission contexts, EAD and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) are in the lead for electoral assistance. UNDP has a development mandate to work in all contexts and works in partnership with DPKO and EAD. The different entities have different approaches and mandates, resulting in some differences of opinion over how assistance should be provided. The effect of such differences was examined by this evaluation, as it reportedly affected UNDP ability to position its assistance.

In a 2009 effort to increase coordination, the Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanism for United Nations Electoral Assistance was established to provide a forum to coordinate, mostly at the working level, the efforts of the various entities that provide assistance. Membership includes: DPKO Department of Field Services, EAD, UNDP Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and United Nations Office of Project Services, which provides logistical support. Other entities that provide support include UN Women, which works to advance women's political participation, and United Nations Volunteers, which supports many electoral assistance activities, including staffing for UNDP projects, particularly in mission contexts.

2.2.3 UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

Scope and expenditure

Within the framework guided by the five principles identified in Section 2.2.2, UNDP provides assistance across all UNDP regions, varied contexts and different parts of the electoral processes. The scope and budgetary information on 83 country offices that completed 394 electoral support projects during 1999–2011 is derived from this evaluation's analysis of the Atlas database and information provided by country offices upon request, with 2011 totals reflecting the evaluation team's conservative estimate.[34]

Regional variation. Table 2 shows the number of country offices reporting electoral assistance. All regions show a noticeable increase in assistance in 2010 relative to previous years.[35] Between 2002 and 2010, the largest portion of countries receiving electoral assistance from UNDP was in Africa. As such, this evaluation made a particular effort to ensure an equitable representation of cases from Africa.

Budget and expenditure. The estimated total budget for 1999–2011 support provided by 83 UNDP country offices is approximately $2.9 billion, with approximately $2.2 billion in expenditures.[36] It is conjectured that this amount represents 14 percent of democratic governance and 5 percent of total UNDP expenditure from 2004 to 2011 (see Table 3).

Budget fluctuation. Support for electoral assistance fluctuates, ranging from 27 percent to 5 percent of UNDP democratic governance expenditure (see Table 3), with highest spending during years of large-scale international efforts

34 The budget and expenditure encompass 1999–2011 for some country offices, not all of which replied to project information requests. Data is most complete for 2004–2010 due to the limitations detailed in Chapter 1 and the timing of this evaluation (2011 project information was collected before the close of the fiscal year).

35 The pattern observed indicates an increasing number of countries being provided with electoral assistance, despite incomplete data for some years and/or countries. However, the observed increase could also be due in part to better reporting of data in Atlas in more recent years.

36 Budget and expenditure figures span 1999–2011 for the country offices that responded to information requests. Data is most complete for the years 2004-2010. See Section 1.4 for details on this and other limitations.

Table 2. Number of Country Offices Reporting Electoral Support by Region

Region	Number of countries within region	Number of country offices reporting electoral assistance by year							
		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*
Africa	45	12	18	23	27	25	25	27	24
Arab States	20	4	6	7	7	8	9	7	7
Asia and the Pacific	33	6	8	7	10	11	12	12	12
Europe and the CIS	30	4	4	5	7	7	7	8	7
Latin America and the Caribbean	33	2	4	6	12	11	12	14	12
Total	**161**	**28**	**40**	**48**	**63**	**62**	**65**	**68**	**62+**

*Estimated.
Note: Numbers are not cumulative across all years. Data are not mutually exclusive across years.
Source: UNDP Atlas; country office communications.

Table 3. UNDP Election Expenditure as Percentage of Democratic Governance Practice and Total Agency Expenditure

Practice Area	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Democratic governance practice area	21%	27%	14%	6%	5%	6%	17%
Total UNDP	8%	10%	5%	2%	2%	2.5%	4.6%

Source: UNDP, Executive Snapshot database/Results Oriented Annual Report (ROAR) database, 2004–2010.

to support post-conflict elections. For instance, UNDP had large election-related expenditures in Afghanistan and Sudan in 2010 and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2005, while these countries saw a lower level of support for electoral assistance in other years. UNDP ability to leverage the assistance provided for an event to contribute towards cost-effective and sustainable electoral systems is a significant focus of the evaluation.

Significant funding variations among countries and projects. Projects of over $100 million[37] were implemented in Afghanistan ($809 million; 2004–2011), Nigeria ($112 million; 2006–2011) and Sudan ($196 million; 2004–2011). During 2004–2011, countries with electoral support project budgets of a minimum of $20 million included Argentina ($20 million), Bangladesh ($67 million), Benin ($51 million), Burundi ($30 million), Indonesia ($60 million), Iraq ($40 million) and Niger ($29 million).[38] Some of these countries had multiple concurrent UNDP assistance projects during the same time period, resulting in relatively large total budgets; for example, Bangladesh received more than $100 million of electoral support. The evaluation noted countries and projects with significant budgets alongside and in contrast to smaller budget countries when assessing effective uses of technology, procurement efficiency and overall use of resources. Staffing levels of UNDP projects also differed according to budget; staff members

37 Approximate amounts.

38 Based on portfolio analysis of the 52 country offices that completed Project Information Sheets for this evaluation.

Figure 3. Core versus Non-Core Sources of Funds (%), 1999–2016

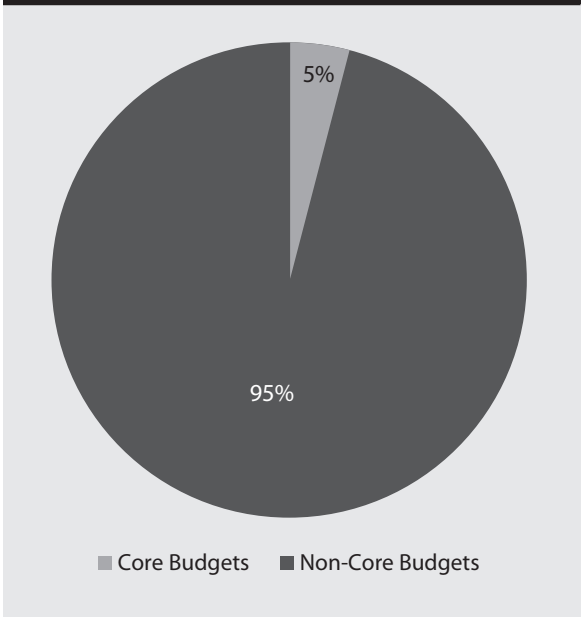


Table 4. Core versus Non-Core Funding for 46 Country Offices and 7 Case-Study Countries (US$)

Countries	Total Core Budgets	Total Non-Core Budgets
46 Country Offices	68,670,891	1,310,791,980
7 Case-Study Countries	16,894,503	521,571,681

ranged from national to international and total team size varied from no project staff to more than 100 people deployed nationwide.

Sources of funding. Country offices are the cornerstones of UNDP electoral assistance. They provide the largest share of UNDP personnel and funding to electoral support programmes and projects. Country-office funds and cost-sharing arrangements pay for the majority of the UN system's electoral activities, and Resident Representatives invest a significant amount of staff time and equipment in varying project-related tasks, most notably in mobilizing funds and assistance coordination.[39] Staff and management expertise and effort at the country level is a highly visible resource of electoral assistance.

Core versus non-core funding. Country programming is usually delivered through a combination of regular or core resources (target resource allocation from the core [TRAC]) and other, non-core resources provided through government or third-party cost-sharing and trust funds. On a project basis, electoral assistance relies heavily on donor funding. Analysis of data on core and non-core budgets[40] indicates that approximately 95 percent of country-office electoral assistance funds were from non-core resources (see Figure 3).

This pattern is equally valid for case-study countries in the aggregate (see Table 4). Regionally, however, non-core budgets prevail in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Arab States—but not in Europe and the CIS or Latin America and the Caribbean (see Figure 4). The evaluation investigated issues of funding, donor funding in particular.

Configuration of UNDP country programmes

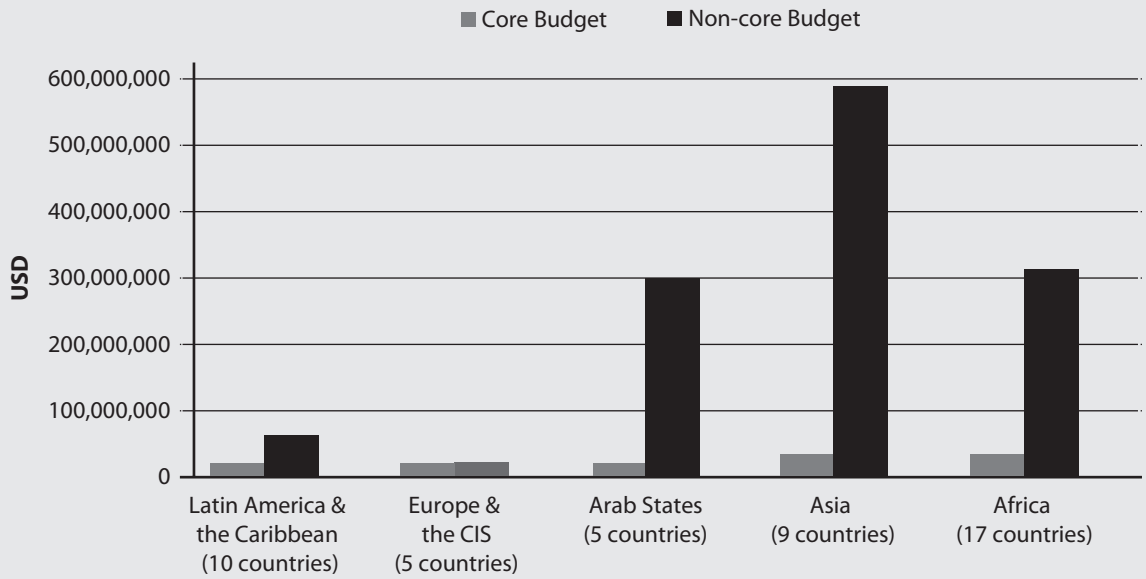
Electoral assistance entry points. In an effort to understand the nature and level of UNDP support, all country offices were asked to estimate the proportion of human and financial resources expended on projects for each of the 10 entry points. The response rate to this particular set of questions was 28 percent, and the data set had limitations; for example, not all the country offices provided information for all electoral assistance projects.[41] In addition, information was collected

39 Garber, L. and C. Gibson, *Review of United Nations Electoral Assistance 1992-93,* Project INT/91/033, UNDP, 1993.

40 Derived from election team's portfolio analysis of the 46 country offices that provided data in response to request.

41 Project budgets were weighted according to the information obtained from UNDP Atlas, Executive Snapshot and Balanced Scorecard for projects classified as election projects. Requests for corrections in project budgets by country offices were only partially successful; not all country offices responded, with implications for error in the data analysis.

Figure 4. Regional Variations in Core versus Non-Core Budgets, 1999–2016



at the entry-point level and did not elaborate on different types of activities within each entry point. There were also large-scale variations in individual project budgets, ranging from $400 million to $2,500 per project within the same country; therefore, information provided at the project level was subsequently weighted to also capture the level of effort. This also afforded some level of standardization to allow cross-case analysis. Despite data limitations, ongoing communications with various sources suggest a substantial degree of validity in the observed patterns.

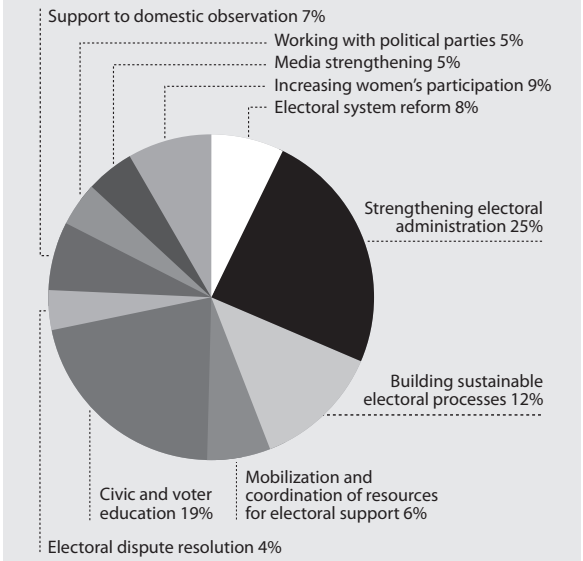
Analysis of country office efforts towards electoral entry points in 39 countries demonstrates that:

- The greatest focus of UNDP effort is on electoral administration (25 percent), followed by civic and voter education (19 percent) and building sustainable electoral processes (12 percent);
- Electoral dispute resolution (4 percent), media strengthening (5 percent) and working with political parties (5 percent) had the lowest level of effort (see Figure 5).

Regional analysis demonstrates both similarities and differences in level of effort (see Table 5):

- In Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, the greatest effort is directed at support to strengthening electoral administration. Europe and the CIS differs, with a primary focus on civic and voter education and electoral administration ranking second.
- Relative to others, Asia and Latin American and the Caribbean devote substantial effort to electoral system reform. Similarly, there is a higher level of effort directed at support to domestic observation in Arab States and Europe and the CIS. Africa, Arab States and Asia and the Pacific dedicate more effort to increasing women's participation compared to Latin America and the Caribbean or Europe and the CIS.

Figure 5. UNDP effort (human and financial) by electoral support entry point, 2002–2012



Although indicative of a trend, these observed variations suggest substantially differentiated portfolios. Chapter 3 examines the appropriateness of UNDP response in varying contexts.

Soft versus hard assistance. Soft assistance encompasses policy advice, advocacy and brokerage, while project support is considered a 'hard' form of assistance. These definitions have limitations, as they are open to country-office interpretation and allow the possibility of identifying soft assistance as part of a larger-scope project or outside of a project.[42] Of the 33 country offices that provided information, 23 reported having elections-related soft assistance activities, including six country offices that said they provided more soft than hard assistance. Only one of these countries, Sudan,[43] is a mission country; it is also the only UNDP Arab States country office reporting a significant amount of soft electoral assistance (80 percent). Latin American and Caribbean country offices reported by far the highest levels of soft assistance. Annex 6 includes figures that chart hard versus soft electoral assistance by country, region and mission or non-mission contexts.

South-South cooperation. South-South cooperation features prominently in UNDP electoral assistance. More than 60 percent of evaluation survey respondents reported that UNDP had supported South-South cooperation while working to strengthen their country's electoral administration or to support an electoral process. More than 50 percent said South-South cooperation was part of projects that aimed to increase women's political participation. Some projects with South-South cooperation components have taken a bilateral form, such as technical support to electoral management bodies in Ghana and Mexico. Others are regional initiatives, such as the Pro-Palop-TL, which provides support for African Lusophone countries and Timor-Leste, while training provided under the Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) professional development programme incorporates regional networking in its capacity-building methodology.

National and subnational support. Level of UNDP support at the country level ranges from national electoral processes—including referendums and parliamentary or presidential elections—to state, regional and municipal elections. Regardless of the level of election assisted, assistance is usually provided within a single project.

Gender. In the area of electoral assistance, gender mainstreaming is now driven in large part through the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support, a project that earmarked a significant portion (8 percent) of funding for this objective.

42 Given the reporting limitations discussed in Section 1.4, it is likely that past projects or activities that would today be classified as soft support under a particular electoral assistance entry point had not actually been classified as such at the time. As such, the projects and activities considered in this analysis were those specifically identified by a country office.

43 North-South Sudan country office and North Sudan country office data only.

Table 5. Regional variations in level of effort by electoral assistance entry point

Entry points	Africa (15 countries)	Asia (8 countries)	Arab States (2 countries)	Europe & CIS (5 countries)	Latin America (8 countries)
Electoral system reform	2%	13% (3)	7%	6%	12% (2)
Strengthening electoral administration	28% (1)	20% (1)	23% (1)	21% (2)	32% (1)
Building sustainable electoral processes	14% (3)	11%	19% (2)	6%	10%
Mobilization and coordination of resources for electoral support	8%	10%	6%	2%	5%
Civic and voter education	19% (2)	15% (2)	9%	37% (1)	12% (2)
Electoral dispute resolution	1% (10)	8%	3% (10)	5%	2% (10)
Support to domestic observation	3%	4%	16% (3)	9% (3)	2% (10)
Working with political parties	7%	1% (10)	4%	0% (10)	11% (4)
Media strengthening	4%	5%	3%	8%	5%
Increasing women's participation	14% (3)	12% (4)	10% (4)	4% (8)	10% (5)

Note: Numbers in parenthesis represent rank of entry points within regions, with 1 being the highest possible rank.

For most of the time-frame assessed by the evaluation, UNDP gender work was conducted at the country level, focusing on issues of gender equity and increasing women's participation in electoral processes. Women's participation is one of UNDP electoral assistance entry points; of the 52 countries that responded to the evaluation's request for information, 31 reported some support towards increasing women's participation, and 16 of these had projects that focused on or mentioned gender as part of the project purpose. Most of such efforts focused on participation in the form of voting, with only six projects that included support to women candidates or officials. Only Swaziland reported activities to strengthen government gender mainstreaming capacity. In five countries, projects promoting women's political participation were the only national projects supporting electoral processes, while India's project to build the capacity of elected women-representatives had the largest budget, $3.4 million. In addition, 15 countries reported targeting women among other stakeholder groups for training under BRIDGE and other capacity-building projects.

2.2.4 GLOBAL AND REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

Corporate support to country offices

To strengthen headquarter support to country offices in the area of electoral assistance, the Democratic Governance Group (DGG) of the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) established a full-time elections adviser position in the early 2000s. The elections adviser (or subpractice leader) supports country offices in electoral matters by sharing best practices,

developing relationships with partners and mobilizing resources to enhance advisory and capacity-building services.

In order to decentralize policy and programming expertise, and to bring it closer to country offices, UNDP established Subregional Resource Facilities (now referred to as Regional Service Centres) in nine locations around the globe. Three of these—Bangkok, Bratislava and Dakar—have staff elections policy specialists. During 2004–2011, BDP reported that 22 of its projects directly contributed to its electoral outcome (BDP Outcome 52: Electoral cycle approach strengthened, and electoral institutions more professional, particularly in post-conflict states) with expenditures of approximately $9.2 million.

With the implementation of the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS)[44], which was launched in July 2009 and became fully operational in 2010, the DGG elections assistance policy team expanded to five electoral policy specialists[45] at the headquarter level and four regional electoral advisers based in Bangkok, Dakar and Johannesburg. In addition, a GPECS management team of five and a four-person Joint Task Force team of the European Commission and UNDP Partnership on Electoral Assistance—consisting of two staff members, one consultant and one Junior Professional Officer (seconded by a member state)—are based in Brussels. GPECS also employs a procurement and operations adviser in Copenhagen. Currently, 19 officers work on electoral assistance policy at headquarter and regional levels. In contrast, electoral assistance in the 1990s was managed by one officer, whose 'Governing Institutions' portfolio encompassed electoral support among other governance-related work.

The expanded policy team supports country offices by providing backstopping, project design guidance, and electoral assistance publications, online resources and training—including training of democratic governance programme officers and electoral management bodies' staff at regional meetings, Joint Task Force staff training and community of practice training. The evaluation examined the adequacy, quality and capacity of these efforts in enhancing UNDP electoral support.

Regional programmes. During the last two programme periods spanning the past decade,[46] the Regional Bureau for Africa was the only regional bureau whose programming included a specific democratic governance outcome related to electoral assistance; its regional programme for 2008–2011 aimed to achieve "enhanced political participation and management of elections".[47] Between 2004 and 2010, one electoral assistance-related project was reported under this outcome.[48]

Multi-organizational partnerships. BDP supports global projects in partnership with governments, civil society, and bilateral, multilateral and nongovernmental organizations. UNDP developed many of such partnerships in the 1990s, collaborating with organizations that contributed significant experience in key areas. In 2006, UNDP and the European Commission formed the Partnership on Electoral Assistance,

44 GPECS is designed and implemented by the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy under the democratic governance practice area. Launched in 2009, GPECS is a three-year initiative with a budget of $50 million. It has four 'windows'—global, regional, country and gender. The programme is directly executed by the Democratic Governance Group, which manages the global and gender windows. Regional windows are managed by UNDP regional bureaux and centres, and the country window is a funding facility for supporting country-level electoral projects managed by country offices.

45 Five headquarter-level positions include two policy specialists, one gender adviser and two Junior Professional Officers seconded by a United Nations Member State.

46 Based on available Regional Programme Documents for 2002–2012.

47 UNDP Regional Programme Document for Africa (2008–2011), October 2007.

48 Project number 00072195, reported under "AFR_Outcome19: Enhanced political participation and management of elections"; UNDP Atlas/Executive Snapshot and Balance Scorecard, July 2011.

creating a Joint Task Force and adopting shared operational guidelines for the implementation of programmes and projects.

UNDP also entered into several Memorandums of Understanding for greater collaboration with democratic governance organizations, including the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs. Such partnerships have yielded a number of joint products and tools on electoral matters. The largest of these are the Building Resources in Democracy, Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) professional development programme, and the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network. The BRIDGE partnership, which includes the Australian Elections Commission, the Electoral Assistance Division of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs, IFES and International IDEA, provides a comprehensive curriculum on effective administration of electoral processes and modular training packages for electoral management bodies. The ACE Electoral Knowledge Network is an online repository of electoral information that promotes networking among electoral practitioners, developed in partnership with Elections Canada, the Electoral Assistance Division of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs, the Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa, IFES, Mexico's *Instituto Federal Electoral* (Federal Electoral Institute) and International IDEA.

Chapter 3

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the main findings related to the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the UNDP contribution to strengthening electoral systems, processes and institutions across the range of contexts and approaches applicable to the organization's work. Strategic positioning, partnerships, national ownership and gender-related issues are integrated throughout the analysis.

3.1 RELEVANCE

The evaluation assesses the relevance of UNDP activities and how it positioned itself *vis-à-vis* its partners and within the electoral assistance sector. In particular, the evaluation examines UNDP relationships with national and other stakeholders, how they perceive UNDP assistance and the relevance of that assistance to their needs. The evaluation also assesses UNDP strategic positioning at technical and policy levels to identify its added value, strategic niche, organizational understanding of the larger socio-political context in which elections take place, and how all such factors were addressed in UNDP efforts to strengthen electoral systems and processes.

3.1.1 UNDP is most relevant for its role as an impartial provider of electoral assistance, which supports processes and institutions so that they better reflect democratic values and international obligations.

However, this sense of purpose was not necessarily clear or consistently exercised at the country level. Since 2002, UNDP policy guidance has clearly linked electoral assistance with strengthening democratic governance through the development of credible and inclusive electoral processes, systems and institutions. The institutional vision of being an impartial—rather than neutral—provider of electoral assistance is a principled approach that supports processes and institutions so that they better reflect democratic values and international obligations as defined in United Nations conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[49] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[50], and Convention on the Political Rights of Women.[51] This gives UNDP the sense of purpose reflected in its 2008–2011 strategic plan[52] and guidelines for electoral support: 'Electoral Systems and Processes Practice Note' (2004) and *Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide* (2007).

The evaluation found this sense of purpose was one of the critical factors in ensuring the relevance and effectiveness of UNDP assistance and in mobilizing donor funding for projects. For example, in Bangladesh in 2008, UNDP played a clear leadership role in promoting more credible processes and facilitated the resolution of the political deadlock that threatened to derail the electoral process. UNDP also followed through with the process, helping to mobilize funds and provide critical support that facilitated the holding of credible and accepted elections, which were an important part of the political solution. UNDP played similar roles elsewhere: In Guinea-Conakry, it contributed to confidence-building among political parties and between

49 United Nations General Assembly resolution 217 A (III), 1948.

50 United Nations General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI), 1966.

51 United Nations General Assembly resolution 640 (VII), 1952.

52 UNDP, 'UNDP strategic plan, 2008–2011: Accelerating global progress on human development', 2008, Section F: Democratic Governance, updated pursuant to decision 2007/32.

candidates and the electoral management body; in Kyrgyzstan, UNDP proactively supported the 2010 and 2011 elections, which ushered in political stability. According to evaluation interviews, similar successes took place in Guinea-Bissau, Haiti among other countries.

National and international partners expect UNDP to be impartial yet proactive. Its United Nations status and multinational nature are universally recognized, creating expectations that UNDP will uphold international electoral standards. During evaluation interviews, representatives of governments, electoral management bodies, political parties and civil society organizations emphasized the importance of UNDP participation to increasing the perception of a credible process. Donors felt UNDP involvement reassured them that these processes were worth supporting. Donors saw this impartial role as a moral obligation for UNDP.

Dissatisfaction with UNDP performance and relevance increased when stakeholders, donors and experts felt that the UNDP country office did not embody this sense of purpose, as was the case in several case-study countries, including Bolivia (2002 and 2008), Guyana (after 2006) and Lebanon (2011). The same dissatisfaction was highlighted in evaluation interviews for other countries, such as Bahrain (before 2006) and Kenya (2007).

There appeared to be several reasons for the lack of a shared sense of purpose between corporate policy and country offices. The organization's decentralized nature means that country offices have more flexibility in programming decisions and the types of relationships they maintain with host governments and stakeholders. Several country offices indicated that their main purpose in electoral assistance was to support the government. If the government, for example did not request UNDP assistance to support a particular part of the process, such as electoral reform recommended by civil society, then the country office did not consider it as an effort that they should support.

This attitude was also reflected by some staff in the regional bureaux. In these cases, the evaluators heard from civil society groups, political parties and donors that UNDP was "too close to government"—meaning the Executive branch, which in most cases was also a ruling party competing in the election UNDP was supporting. This raised perceptions that the government's request for electoral assistance (or, more importantly, was not requested) had partisan overtones. In Guyana, UNDP had received an electoral management body request for assistance in addition to previous UNDP work in media monitoring, but UNDP did not act on it because the executive did not formally submit a request for assistance to the United Nations.[53] In Kenya in 2007, UNDP was perceived to have paid too little attention to the potential of conflict before election results triggered widespread violence. In Lebanon, embedded UNDP advisers in the Ministry of Interior, which manages the elections, filled staffing gaps for the Ministry, rather than work on the substantive issues that could help to strengthen the processes.

One of the most critical factors influencing the country office's sense of purpose and strategic positioning was office leadership. Specifically, a given Resident Representative's perception of the UNDP role in electoral assistance and her or his comfort level in the more political arena of electoral assistance was a major determinate of the relevance and quality of UNDP support in non-mission countries. This was less of a factor in mission contexts, where the role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the relationships among UNDP, the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Department of Political Affairs came into play.

A change in UNDP leadership, and consequently the new appointee's perception of the United

53 After September 2010, the ability to make a request was extended from exclusively government agencies to also include electoral management bodies.

Nations role, was the main reason for the abrupt decline in UNDP electoral support efforts in Guyana after 2006, and the lack of more active engagement in Bahrain prior to 2006 can be attributed to similar reasons. Conversely, the successful 2008 efforts in Bangladesh, in Mauritania in 2005 and in Liberia in 2011 reflected the higher level of Resident Representatives' engagement and understanding of their roles.

Other factors also contribute to divergent corporate and country-level views, including UNDP relationships with governments and other United Nations entities involved in electoral support (such as the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs), the degree of political will within a country to make needed changes, donor priorities and the quality of recruited project staff and experts. These issues are addressed by the evaluation in relevant sections on findings.

3.1.2 UNDP is highly relevant and adds value when it takes on a development role to strengthen electoral processes. However, application of the United Nations electoral assistance policy framework is problematic and, in some cases, actually constrains UNDP ability to fully assume this development role.

UNDP works within the context of the United Nations system and in partnership with the countries it assists. Although as a development organization, it has its own institutional vision of building credible and sustainable electoral processes, it works within the broader United Nations electoral policy framework set by its focal point. As discussed in Chapter 2, the United Nations Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Activities decides on the appropriateness of support to Member States based on their requests or as expressed in a country programme document or Country Programme Action Plan. Subsequently, the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs leads a needs assessment—either through a mission or a desk review in consultation with appropriate other entities. This assessment sets the parameters for assistance. In mission contexts, a general mandate for electoral assistance is often set by the Security Council but is generally buttressed by a request from the Member State and followed by a needs assessment mission. Although policy guidance was established to ensure system-wide coherence and consistency, differences in programmatic approaches based on the varying mandates of United Nations entities have led to differences in perspectives on how certain processes are best supported, especially when it comes to on-the-ground implementation.

The most important United Nations relationship for UNDP is with the Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) of the Department of Political Affairs. It is also the most problematic for UNDP. EAD represents the United Nations Focal Point for Electoral Assistance Activities. Recent policy guidance gives the Focal Point—currently the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs—a clear leadership role for all matters related to electoral assistance.[54] The situation differs in each country, depending on the context and personalities of the experts involved, but the two organizations' approaches are also different: UNDP as a development organization has a longer-term development and capacity-building view and grounds its assistance in democratic governance. EAD as a political affairs department tends to focus on the political imperatives of an electoral process, achieving the needs of a mission mandate and/or upcoming electoral event, usually within a much shorter time frame than one used for development work. In principle, the two institutional perspectives should complement each other, strengthening overall United Nations response and providing more durable results. This has been the case in some instances, but in others, synergies of the relationship remain unclear and insufficiently leveraged, resulting in adverse consequences for UNDP relevance and overall United Nations credibility.

54 Decision No. 2011/23 – Electoral Assistance Arrangements.

This evaluation did not review the EAD-UNDP relationship in depth, even though this was the type of issue that the evaluation would be expected to cover. There were two reasons for this: First, the focus was on UNDP performance. Second, the UNDP Democratic Governance Group was already engaged in an assessment of the working relationships among UNDP, the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Department of Political Affairs in the area of electoral assistance in integrated missions. However, stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation repeatedly raised issues related to the EAD-UNDP relationship and its effects on the UNDP role and nature of response, necessitating a discussion in this context. This issue was also flagged at the UNDP Global Practice Meeting in March 2011, where UNDP and other electoral practitioners discussed "how the niche areas of UNDP democratic governance programming, which include engagement with political parties, civil society, media and support to voter/civic education, can easily become casualties of the political pressures to deliver an electoral event."[55]

Personalities, mission mandates, levels of funding and country contexts determine how this relationship affects UNDP relevance in practice. In some cases, this has strengthened UNDP response. For example, in the mission context of Afghanistan (2010), the UNDP Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow (ELECT) project employed an integrated team with EAD and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and the UNDP project head also served as the Chief Technical Adviser to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. In the non-mission context of Bangladesh (2006–2009), the Resident Representative effectively used EAD monitoring visits to the country to strengthen UNDP response to improving the electoral framework and levelling the playing field. This included enhancing the participation of parties, candidates and citizens, and resulted in 99 percent of estimated total voters turning out to register and an 87 percent turnout for what had started out as boycotted legislative elections.[56] In Bolivia, the country office maintained an ongoing relationship with EAD, which had played important roles in local political crises, particularly in 2001 and during the 2006–2008 constitutional reform process. More recently, a United Nations system-wide response in Yemen included EAD help negotiating the political transition agreement and UNDP supporting electoral assistance.

In other cases, especially in high-profile or mission contexts, programmatic UNDP relevance is marginalized. This was obvious in Haiti and Iraq, where the UNDP role was limited primarily to basket-fund management and a very narrow area of technical assistance. Its capacity-building efforts were negligible, even though the electoral management bodies' dearth of capacity was widely recognized. Although differences between UNDP country offices and United Nations peacekeeping missions are generally understood, many national partners and stakeholders do not understand the different roles of EAD and UNDP, especially in non-mission contexts. They often attribute United Nations' electoral response to UNDP, as it is usually the better-known organization within the country. Even some in the international community said they did not always understand the differences between them and felt their roles in some country contexts were not clearly explained. Even when these differences were perceived, it was not always constructive; some donors and experts expressed concerns about being "caught between" EAD and UNDP positions. Donors felt they negotiated funding for a UNDP project that had certain activities and expected outcomes, and that subsequent EAD decisions—about priority areas of the process to support or the way assistance would be provided—would adversely affect the ability of the project to deliver on planned activities. UNDP Chief Technical Advisers felt particularly challenged by trying to balance the different EAD and UNDP positions in countries such as Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the

55 UNDP, 'UNDP Global Practice Meeting on Electoral Cycle Support: Meeting Report', 2011, page 9.

56 UNDP, 'Bangladesh: Support to Electoral Process, Evaluation Report', 2009, page 3.

Congo and Sudan. Many likened the relationship to a competition rather than a coordinated effort and felt it was hurting the credibility of the overall United Nations response.

These issues are well known at headquarter level, and UNDP and EAD have worked to refine and communicate their respective roles to better address needs in the field. This was a key reason for the creation of the Inter-agency Coordination Mechanism for United Nations Electoral Assistance (ICMEA) in 2009. Chaired by EAD with the participation of the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy and United Nations entities, including the Department of Field Security, the Department of peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Office of Project Services; ICMEA meets at a senior decision-making level (Electoral Assistance Steering Committee) and the working level (Electoral Assistance Working Group). Other agencies, such as UN Women, are invited on an *ad hoc* basis. According to interviews, this mechanism works well to facilitate inter-agency discussions, but the differences in approaches and institutional capacity issues still linger and need to be resolved. Operational issues receive increasingly more discussion than system-wide policy issues. At the request of the Secretary-General's Policy Committee, the Department of Field Security is undertaking an operational review on cross-organizational and cross-border sharing of resources, harmonization of systems and procedures, and delivery of operational support; the resulting report will be submitted in 2012 to the Policy Committee with recommendations on how to improve these areas.

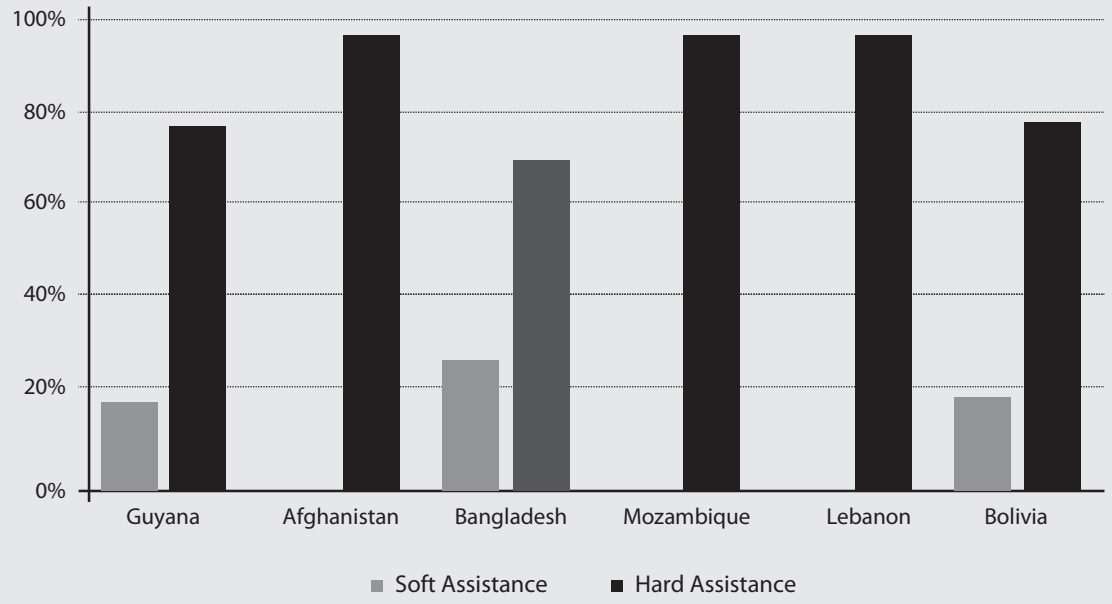
3.1.3 Institutionally, UNDP understands the nature of electoral assistance in different political contexts, but this understanding is not always integrated into programme design or implementation.

UNDP has been providing electoral assistance for more than 20 years. During that time, it has learned and documented many lessons, including best practices for different contexts. This is perhaps best illustrated by the adoption of the electoral cycle approach (see Chapter 2), which addresses electoral assistance with the understanding that credible, transparent and accountable electoral processes need more than event-driven support to an electoral management body. UNDP has also examined the complex issues surrounding elections' relationship with conflict, particularly in post-conflict situations or fragile states, and issued *Elections and Conflict Prevention: A Guide to Analysis, Planning and Programming* in 2009. UNDP has also developed a 'Strategy of Response to Transformative Change Championed by Youth in the Arab Region' (2011), which provides the analytical framework to guide work amidst the transformational process of the region.

Country offices have a long history of working on various aspects of development. This typically results in a good understanding of the country context and in forming long-term relationships with many of the main national actors and stakeholders. If a country office has an ongoing governance programme, it is more aware of how elections are situated in the broader political environment. UNDP undertakes risk analysis as part of its project designs, although at times these may be *pro forma*. These list the main project assumptions, including political risks, which are then tracked over the life of the project.

What is lacking in some cases is a deeper understanding of how electoral assistance can affect these processes, and how even technical issues in an electoral context are inherently political. Most experienced Resident Representatives and technical advisers understand these issues and treat them with the required sensitivity and appropriate programming. Yet the ongoing Democratic Governance Group's assessment of long-term lessons learned is also finding that this expertise and knowledge lies with individuals and is not institutionalized within governance units. This leaves UNDP heavily dependent on the analytical qualifications and quality of work of Chief Technical Advisers, and on the political skills and interests of Resident Representatives. This is evident in, for example, the case of Kyrgyzstan, where the experience and understanding of

Figure 6. Hard versus soft assistance: case-study countries (%), 2002–2012



the political context gained from assisting the process in 1995 was lost—not documented or otherwise institutionalized and, consequently, was not available to the electoral support team in 2007. In Latin America, however, it appears that governance units are more involved in electoral assistance and have developed significant levels of expertise, as demonstrated by the Bolivia and Mexico case studies.

The evaluation saw many examples of effective uses of soft assistance by senior country management teams and Chief Technical Advisers. Much of such assistance was based on political analysis generated by the local country office, a needs assessment report, EAD visits, and the United Nations mission when it was present in a given country. In Bolivia, *Proyecto Análisis Político y Escenarios Prospectivos* (Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios Project [PAPEP]) was developed within the framework of the 2002–2005 Human Development Report activities. This methodology, which analyses socio-economic and institutional environments for a country's development for public policy options, was adapted to governance and electoral contexts and is used by several Latin America and the Caribbean county offices.[57] PAPEP provided the Bolivian UNDP team with political analysis and scenarios for possible resolutions to the 2008 political crisis. The project yielded information, such as the results of monthly public opinion polls, which illuminated citizen perspectives of the crisis and enabled the country office to effectively promote a peaceful resolution of the conflict between the government and opposition. PAPEP analysis guided UNDP response, which supported the electoral court for dispute resolution, facilitated political dialogue with national institutions, and advocated dialogue and respect for human rights.[58] This methodology is now linked

57 This was used in Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Panama and Paraguay.

58 UNDP, 'The Experience of PAPEP [Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios Project] in Bolivia: Supporting Change in Peace and Democracy', 2011.

to the electoral cycle approach to support and has been used in several Latin American countries and, after 2011, in South-South cooperation work in Tunisia and Egypt. In Bangladesh, the Maldives and Nigeria, country offices hired political analysts to supplement in-house analytical capacity and guide soft and hard assistance. As shown in Figure 6, soft assistance was more prominent in Bangladesh, Bolivia and Guyana than in other case-study countries where this data was available.

In all such cases, relevance and effectiveness depended chiefly on the country-office ability to recognize the political implications of the different aspects of the process and to integrate this understanding into programme design and implementation. UNDP is aware of the need to more systematically strengthen internal analytical capacity and its integration into its programmes. Partially based on PAPEP, an 'Institutional and Context Analysis (ICA) Guidance Note' is currently in development. Institutional and context analysis is grounded in the assumption that development requires a change in power relations and/or incentive systems—that the powerful reward their supporters before anyone else, that all actors in society have interests and incentives, that resources shape actors' incentives and that all stakeholders have constraints. This type of analysis can help UNDP assistance become more relevant and effective; however, the challenge, as it is with all electoral best practices and guidance notes, is to ensure dissemination of such information and its integration into country-level programmatic work.

3.1.4 UNDP electoral assistance is relevant to improving human development and responding to national priorities to strengthen electoral processes.

The fundamental assumption of UNDP electoral assistance is that it contributes to the ability of all citizens to participate in and influence government policy and practice, and that the most direct means for citizens to do so is through regular elections that allow the free expression of political preferences and selection of representatives. This requires broad-based political parties, informed citizenry, cost-effective electoral processes, and independent and permanent electoral management bodies.[59] These areas form the basis for the selection of entry points adopted by UNDP to support countries in strengthening their processes, and for the electoral cycle approach, which takes this holistic view. The UNDP framework for assistance also assumes that UNDP focus on impartiality and brokerage among a broad range of development actors makes it well placed to play a coordinating and direct support role in electoral processes.[60]

This evaluation found that the UNDP approach and response in the electoral sector has been relevant to improving human development. As noted in *Human Development Report 2002: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World,* "politics matter for human development because people everywhere want to be free to determine their destinies, express their views and participate in the decisions that shape their lives. These capabilities are as important for human development- for expanding people's choices as being able to read or enjoy good health."[61] This is still true today, as evidenced by the Arab Spring, which for UNDP was a "defining moment where millions of women and men across the region issued a resounding call for change." UNDP sees this regional movement as a result of a development failure, particularly in the areas of governance, freedoms, social justice, and their nexus with poverty, unemployment and inequality.[62]

In a non-mission context, UNDP responds to a government priority, usually identified as part of the broader consultative process with

59 UNDP, 'Electoral Systems and Processes Practice Note', 2004, page 5. The degree of permanence is relative and can differ among countries.

60 Ibid.

61 UNDP, *Human Development Report 2002: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*, 2002.

62 UNDP, 'Strategy of Response to Transformative Change Championed by Youth in the Arab Region', 2011, page 1.

governments for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, country programme document and Country Programme Action Plan. Assessments of Development Results—country-level evaluations of UNDP contribution—of country programmes consistently show UNDP success in establishing partnerships with national governments. Many governments in this evaluation's case-study countries thanked UNDP for its contribution and felt the assistance was highly relevant to their national priorities and objectives of strengthening their electoral processes, and in particular in improving electoral administration and voter registration. They also cited the relevance and usefulness of the UNDP mobilization and coordination work, which successfully mobilized funds to support national processes and facilitated work by allowing governments not to deal with individual donors, in cases such as in Kyrgyzstan, where six donors participated in the Kyrgyz Republic Election Support Project, in Guyana's 2006 election that involved three donors, and in Afghanistan (2010), where the UNDP Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow (ELECT) project pooled the funding of 26 donors.

UNDP helps a broad range of national partners, most of which have competing needs and priorities. These include not only governments, but also electoral management bodies, political parties, the private sector and civil society groups, ranging from human rights organizations to those doing people-first development. This diversity of interests and complex nature of electoral processes can place UNDP in a very difficult position of balancing electoral assistance with development, political, economic, humanitarian and security priorities. The evaluation found that most of the differences in the perception of UNDP relevance among national partners arose when government priorities were seen as partisan or did not address what the opposition political parties, civil society groups or citizens thought were the real problems with the process.

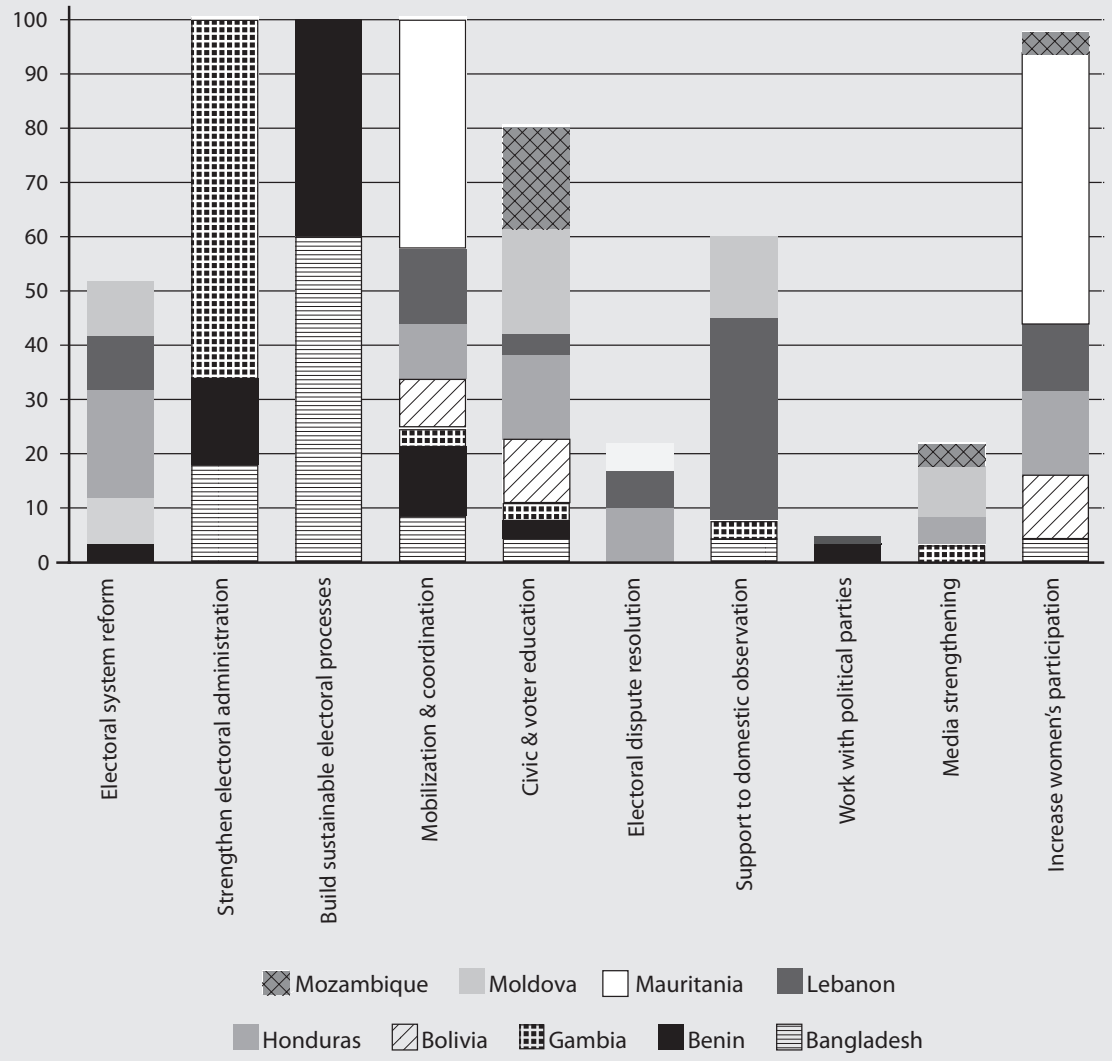
In these cases, UNDP was not perceived as relevant—or at least not *as* relevant as it could be. In one example, a national in Guyana commented that the UNDP Social Cohesion programme was a "pacification" programme that aimed to hold a peaceful event but did not address the root causes of electoral violence, as "UNDP just focuses on peace—not justice." Similar sentiments were expressed in Bolivia, Haiti and Lebanon. The issue of relevance was more pronounced in cases where the country office saw its role as supporting government priorities for the process, rather than as strengthening the processes themselves, and in contexts where there was a lack of political will for a free, fair and credible process.

In high-profile and mission countries, relevance is often linked to a successful electoral event and transition to the next government. Thus, UNDP work in these contexts is often seen as highly relevant, particularly in immediate post-conflict situations. This assistance has helped Bosnia-Herzegovina, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Mozambique and Sierra Leone successfully achieve processes mandated in peace agreements. In cases of continuing or repeated missions, UNDP relevance declined in the opinions of most national stakeholders, particularly when UNDP was not perceived to have included visible measures to build national capacity and ownership, or if assistance was not judged to have contributed to strengthened democratic governance and the ability for political and civil society to participate freely and more effectively.

3.2 EFFECTIVENESS

The evaluation assessed UNDP assistance across a range of different contexts, entry points and other factors that affect performance. Issues examined included building national capacities and ownership, political participation by women and marginalized group, and the extent to which UNDP assistance addressed and mitigated the potential for conflict inherent to electoral events. The evaluation also assessed whether or not UNDP contributed to improving the enabling environment and whether technical assistance opened the door to genuine political change. At

Figure 7. Estimated level of effort (human and financial) by entry point: select countries (%)



the thematic level, it was difficult to attribute results directly to UNDP efforts, due to the number of other actors working to strengthen electoral processes and systems. Nonetheless, the evaluation used some of the indicators of change provided in Chapter 1 to isolate trends and determine alignment with UNDP electoral assistance entry points.

This section presents the results of this analysis. (Please see Annex 6 for additional details.)

3.2.1 UNDP is generally effective at providing technical assistance that strengthens the work of electoral management bodies and results in the holding of credible electoral events.

A large part of UNDP technical assistance is directed towards strengthening electoral management to build independent and permanent electoral management bodies. This assistance can be short-term, in support of an event or improvement of a specific process (such as voter

registration or counting procedures), or longer-term, including support to electoral management body development and capacity building in planning, preparing for and conducting elections. UNDP provides technical assistance to nearly 60 countries per year, with contexts ranging from mature electoral management bodies in Latin America to nascent ones in Bhutan and South Sudan. The sheer number of institutions and actors involved in electoral processes and the complexity of the processes themselves require a vast range of skills, knowledge and expertise on the part of UNDP. Such skills can range from procurement and project management to addressing complex technological issues (e.g. electronic voter registration systems) or achieving results in politically sensitive areas (e.g. as electoral legislation, constituency delimitation).

UNDP is generally perceived as being very effective in delivering technical assistance, although the slow speed of recruitment and procurement were evident (see Section 3.3). Using a 5-point scale where 5 indicates the highest overall effectiveness, 56.4 percent of evaluation survey respondents rated overall UNDP effectiveness as 4 or 5, and only 10.5 percent rated it as 1 or 2. This perception was confirmed in evaluation interviews and in the country case studies; UNDP provision of technical assistance was consistently seen as a major contribution to the achievement of a more professional management of electoral processes and in the holding of more credible events.

Such technical assistance has provided a valued service to United Nations Member States in both mission and non-mission contexts. In the former, UNDP technical assistance has helped ensure that immediate post-conflict and other transitional elections critical to the resolution of a peace accord or completing a political transition are held. In some mission contexts, such as Afghanistan, UNDP technical assistance not only helped establish electoral institutions, it also helped build the legal frameworks needed to support those processes. This resulted in the holding of the 2004–2005 elections by a Joint Electoral Management Body comprised of internationals and nationals, and to the subsequent creation of an Independent Election Commission, which managed the 2010–2011 elections with international technical assistance. In 2008, 72 percent of Afghans surveyed in a national poll were confident in the ability of the government to conduct free and fair elections.[63] Similar processes of developing and strengthening national electoral bodies took place in Cambodia and Timor-Leste.

In non-mission contexts, UNDP technical assistance has helped build electoral management body capacities and, in some cases, helped ensure their permanence. In Guyana, UNDP and other assistance providers supported the Guyana Elections Commission for nearly 20 years, helping it evolve from a temporary, inexperienced institution initially regarded with much scepticism to a credible, trusted and permanent organization that managed the 2011 national election entirely on its own. Mozambique saw similar progress with UNDP support (see Section 3.4.1 for additional examples). In the parts of Latin America that have more established electoral management bodies, UNDP capacity building is more targeted, and electoral assistance is perceived in a broader sense than event-centric support, focusing instead on strengthening political participation, improving governance and empowering citizens, including youth, women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups.

However, this evaluation also observed variations in UNDP effectiveness, resulting from a number of factors. One major factor was the political context and degree of national stakeholders' political will to hold free and fair elections. Lack of political will directly affected the ability of technical assistance to address some of the key impediments to stronger electoral processes, or for the assistance to have meaning beyond the holding of an event. Lack of political will can also

63 The Asia Foundation, 'Afghanistan in 2009: A Survey of the Afghan People', 2009.

impede an electoral management body—often an independent entity with professional staff dedicated to improving electoral processes—from effectively leveraging UNDP assistance to make needed changes.

Another factor affecting effectiveness is a country's legal framework. Electoral management is often constrained, as was the case in Mozambique, by delays in legislative action needed for parts of the processes, such as setting electoral dates and deadlines. The experience and knowledge of a country's Chief Technical Adviser and her or his ability to work cooperatively with electoral management bodies was a crucial factor in mitigating such constraints.

Electoral projects are also greatly affected by the time available for their implementation. The shorter the project time-frame and the closer to the event, the less feasible is an effective and lasting transfer of knowledge and skills. Election deadlines are more fixed and unforgiving than those of other types of development assistance schedules. If these deadlines are missed, the election either has to be delayed—or be held without key elements of the process. For example, the evaluation found that civic education activities were often sacrificed due to time pressures. In addition, deadlines missed in an electoral environment are highly visible and undermine the credibility of both the process and the assistance providers.

Taking on more activities than a project team could handle also affected some projects' effectiveness. National partners and donors felt UNDP had taken on too many responsibilities and was thus unable to effectively manage them all in cases such as Afghanistan in 2009 and in Nigeria and South Sudan in 2010, resulting in implementation delays for some activities and insufficient attention to others. In Afghanistan, this led to a split of responsibilities for 2010 election support, with UNDP focusing on technical support to the electoral management body, while donors channelled funds through The Asia Foundation support to civil society for domestic observation and voter education. Effective UNDP-led coordination in these cases becomes especially important (see Section 3.3.1).

In sum, UNDP efforts have strengthened the work of electoral management bodies and resulted in more credible events than would have been the case without UNDP assistance. However, whether this capacity remains in place to manage future events depends in great part on whether the local electoral management body is a permanent institution or if it is reconstituted for each event. The latter is the situation in Haiti, where international electoral assistance is now entering its third decade but the country still does not have a permanent institution capable of managing the process without international assistance. Similarly, in some cases such as Malawi, the law requires that a new electoral management body be created for each election.

It is important not to confuse the competence of the electoral body with the political purposes for which it may sometimes be used. In Afghanistan, observers criticized the 2009 presidential elections for electoral fraud[64] and UNDP technical assistance for not having prevented it, but the management of the 2010 elections was perceived much better. The difference was that electoral commissioners at the political level had changed between 2009 and 2010. The newcomers' active participation enabled UNDP to assume a much lower profile for 2010 assistance, suggesting

64 See: International Crisis Group, 'Afghanistan: Elections and the Crisis of Governance', Asia Briefing No. 96, Kabul/Brussels, 25 November 2009; European Union, 'Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Final Report, Presidential and Provincial Council Elections', Elections Observation Mission, 20 August 2009; and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 'Election Support Team Final Report on the 2009 Afghanistan Presidential and Provincial Council Elections, 20 August 2009', Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Warsaw, 8 December 2009 .The European Union report mentions UNDP: "The storage and custody of the sensitive materials earmarked for polling centres that did not open on polling day was under the joint responsibility of the IEC and UNDP ELECT advisers. Somewhere along the custody chain, a substantial amount of these electoral materials was used to commit serious fraud." (See page 4.)

that UNDP and others had successfully increased the technical capacity of the institution with their assistance since 2003 but its effectiveness had been affected by political stakeholders.

3.2.2 UNDP effectiveness at improving the enabling environment for more credible elections and processes does not match the organization's level of success at the technical level.

Electoral processes and institutions function within the broader political and cultural environment of a country. This environment sets the parameters for political competition, quality of the process and its results. This evaluation found that UNDP has been effective at strengthening the technical aspects of a process, which included helping national stakeholders reduce the legal and procedural barriers to increased participation (see Section 3.2.1) and improve the quality of the processes through advocacy, voter education and monitoring. However, UNDP was less effective in improving the fairness of the process, particularly in cases where there was a lack of political will to make these types of changes.

Voter participation is essential for credible processes, as elections are the main means for people to express their voice and choice.[65] To be meaningful, citizens need to be able to engage constructively, to be well informed and to be willing to get out and vote. UNDP has assisted this process in many countries by supporting electoral management body and civil society efforts that informed voters and facilitated their access to more balanced information on the process and choices. In some cases, this successfully mitigated the use of public media for partisan purposes. For example, UNDP supported Guyana's Media Monitoring Unit that independently monitored government and private media for its national elections. This was credited with reducing the potential for election-related violence, because it not only curbed inflammatory journalism, but also helped to provide more balanced coverage. UNDP also helps media, political parties and domestic observation groups develop codes of conduct to improve the electoral climate (see Section 3.2.5).

Voter participation can vary for reasons beyond those addressed in this evaluation, but it is useful to note the turnout trends in the case-study countries. In contrast to the global trend of decreased turnout between 2000 and 2010, half of the case-study countries had increased turnout for their legislative elections (see Figure 8). The largest increase took place in Bangladesh and can be directly attributed to the UNDP-supported 2008 national voter registration effort. It is also highly likely that UNDP support to the revisions of Bolivia's constitution and subsequent efforts to reach indigenous populations contributed to the increased turnout noted there. Lebanon also shows a substantial increase, more likely as a result of negotiating a resolution of its political crisis than of any technical assistance for the elections.

However, in the case-study countries of Haiti, Mexico and Mozambique, voter turnout declined to well below the global average.[66] In Mozambique, it fell by 43 percent, even though assistance from UNDP and others has resulted in a technically competent electoral secretariat. Polling data shows that Mozambican voters are becoming increasingly sceptical of achieving change through elections. In 2005, 80 percent of those polled agreed that leaders should be changed through regular, honest and open elections; this figure was down to 71 percent by 2008. At the same time, the share of citizens who felt that elections sometimes produce bad results and other methods for selecting their leaders should be chosen increased from 14 percent to 19 percent.[67]

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65 UNDP, *Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide*, 2007, page 1.

66 International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) Voter Turnout database: http://www.idea.int/vt.

67 Afrobarometer, 'Summary of Results Round 3 Afrobarometer Survey in Mozambique, 2005', 2005; and Afrobarometer, 'Summary of Results Round 4 Afrobarometer Survey in Mozambique', 2008.

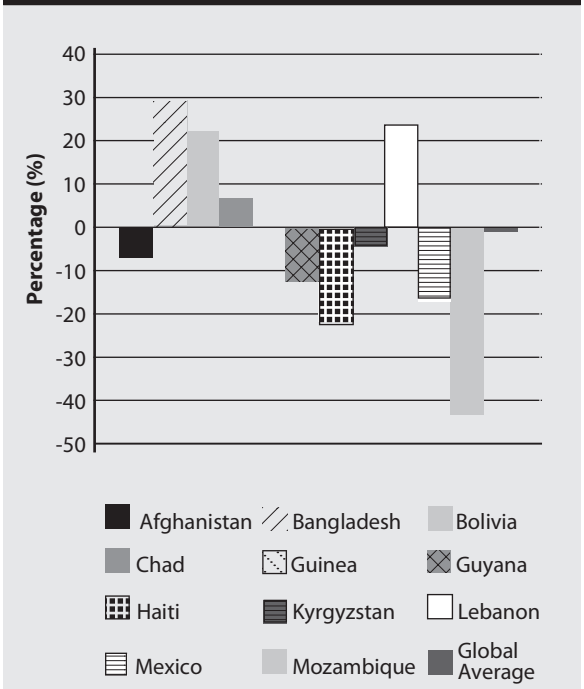
In Mexico, a very competent electoral management body oversaw a widely applauded political transition in 2000, yet voter turnout has declined from 78 percent in the 1994 presidential elections to 59 percent in the 2000 presidential elections and 44 percent in the 2009 legislative elections. Polling data on those who are "very satisfied" with the functioning of Mexico's democracy and those who are "not at all" satisfied shows no significant change since 2000.[68]

Turnout in Afghanistan fell only slightly for the legislative elections (see Figure 8). However, the turnout for the presidential elections declined by 46 percent between 2004 and 2009. This trend is also reflected in public opinion polls. In 2005, 20 percent of those who did not vote said they had no interest in the election; this number rose to 26 percent in 2009.[69] Nevertheless, 54 percent of Afghanis felt the elections were free and fair, with only 37 percent stating they were not.

Another area that is important to an enabling environment is the ability of citizens and political parties to voice their political opinions. Roughly half of the case-study countries are below global averages for both voice and accountability, and for political stability—in particular, Afghanistan, Chad, Guinea and Haiti[70] (see Figure 9). Correlating these higher-level indicators and UNDP contributions is difficult due to the large number of others working in these areas and many other variables, but it still offers a good indication of where issues still need to be addressed or progress has been made, such as in the cases of Bangladesh, Guyana and Mexico.

One of the unquestioned UNDP comparative advantages is that it was not perceived as just a service provider, but as an institution able to mobilize and represent the international community around a set of values and normative principles (see Section 3.1). This was important for both national stakeholders and the international community. When UNDP undertook this role and addressed the tough issues of political will and other root causes of problems, its work was perceived to be more relevant and effective, even if it did not result in substantial improvements in the enabling environment. This was clearly the case in Afghanistan in 2010, as compared to 2009, and in some project-level cases in other countries where stakeholders felt that UNDP had been effective.

Figure 8. Voter turnout over a decade: case-study countries



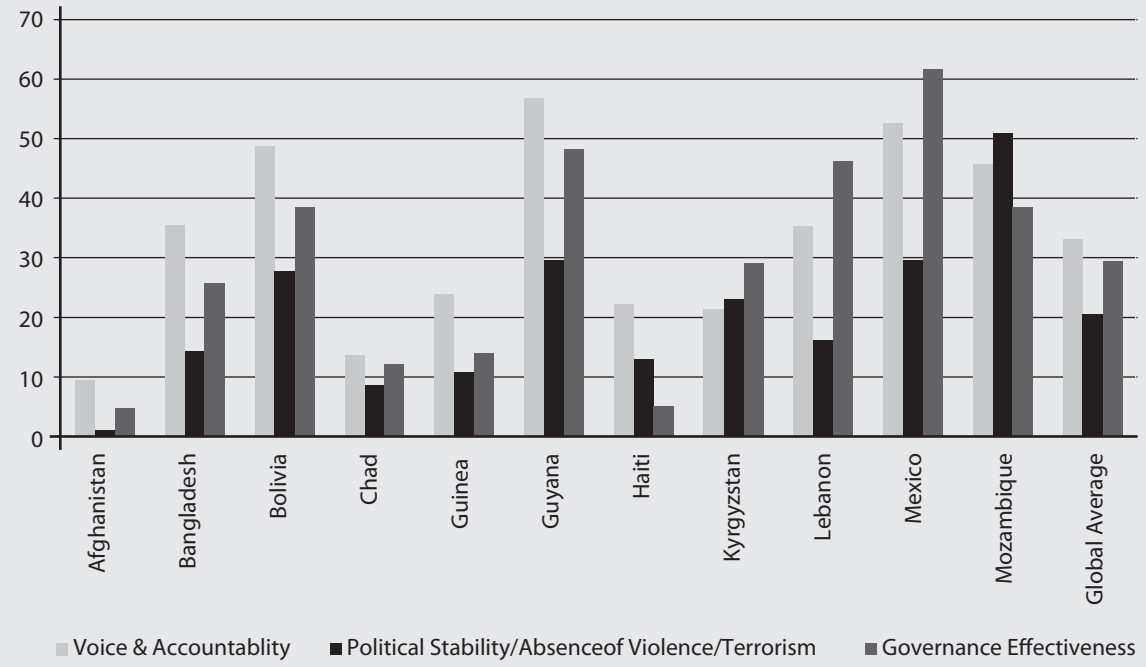
Source: Data from the IDEA Voter Turnout Database

68 Latinobarometro Web site, database of public opinion polls of Latin Americans, Mexico, 2000–2011; available at <www.latinobarometro.org/latino/latinobarometro.jsp>.

69 The Asia Foundation, 'Afghanistan in 2009: A Survey of the Afghan People', 2009, and 'Afghanistan in 2006: A Survey of the Afghan People', 2006.

70 These are 2010 World Bank Governance Indicators indicators, which do not include the data from the most recent electoral processes in Chad and Guinea.

Figure 9. Governance indicators: case-study countries, 2011



Source: The World Bank Governance Indicators

The UNDP results framework (see Figure 1) is based on the understanding that outcomes cannot be achieved by UNDP alone, but rather require a group effort, particularly by national counterparts and institutions. Some UNDP project documents set unrealistic goals for what a single project could accomplish. This is especially noticeable where project documents list reform of an electoral system or legislative framework as an outcome in a politically challenging context. This suggests that the country office either overestimates its level of influence and capacity—or underestimates critical risks and impediments to attaining this outcome, for example, the degree of political will by national institutions and actors to institute changes.

In Afghanistan, one of the outcomes of the second phase of the ELECT project expected that "transparent, effective, and efficient legislative and policy frameworks are established and implemented."[71] This overstated the project's ability to achieve this outcome and underestimated the degree to which this outcome is determined by national legislatures acting upon their own interests. Although the project design process tends to assume that the objectively superior legislative framework will be adopted if the correct advice is provided, political interests and other factors often contribute to the institutionalization of suboptimal processes over time.

UNDP country offices working in contexts marked by limited political will for more credible and inclusive processes face significant pressures, both to encourage a more democratic nature of the processes and to maintain good relationships with the government. In these situations, some

71 UNDP Afghanistan, 'Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow (ELECT), ID – 00050324, October 2006 – December 2010, Substantive Revision No. 2', December 2008, page 5.

country offices were concerned that playing a more active role to improve the enabling environment could jeopardize other vital humanitarian and development projects. At the same time, particularly in post-conflict situations and fragile states, it has proved difficult to find the balance between maintaining peace and stability and promoting the normative values of a credible and inclusive electoral process. In other places, UNDP fared slightly better; for example, serious concerns about potential violence during Guinea's 2010 elections were addressed through civic education campaigns promoting a culture of peace and non-violence and by building the capacity of the special security force FOSSEPEL,[72] established specifically to maintain security during the election, on its role in the electoral process and in human rights accountability.

Technical assistance alone has limited ability to make a meaningful difference if government or ruling party commitment to globally recognized democratic norms is missing. Even in cases where UNDP was able to make notable improvements in professionalizing an electoral management body and helped to retain this capacity over long periods of time, technical assistance did not translate to real changes in the enabling environment. Yemen, which hosted the first UNDP electoral cycle project in Arab States, presents this type of an example. UNDP country offices have justified continued technical interventions by asserting that over time, the increased capacity of election administrators, strengthened civil society groups, a more aware electorate and more enlightened political leaders will combine to make the political climate ultimately more conducive to effective democracy. In other cases, country-office leaders believe that maintaining a relationship with an electoral management body and/or the government positions UNDP to support genuine change when it occurs. Such was the case in Bangladesh, where UNDP had suspended its project because of a political deadlock but was able to immediately reactivate it when a caretaker government came into power and named new election commissioners. Without that project in place, UNDP could not have responded as quickly and effectively as it did; however, in other cases, some national stakeholders and donors questioned how long UNDP and others should support technical improvements when other problematic areas were not addressed or did not experience a change despite the intervention.

3.2.3 UNDP support has led to the development of more inclusive electoral processes and increased participation by women and other groups, but further effort is needed in this area.

Elections are among the most obvious and concrete means of allowing a population to participate in the direction and priorities of a government. As such, inclusive participation is a commonly recognized indicator of a credible electoral process. UNDP support focuses on enhancing the participation of traditionally underrepresented or under-participating groups—including women, minorities, indigenous peoples, the physically disabled and the young—in political and electoral processes.[73] In addition, UNDP considers gender equality and women's empowerment to be a fundamental human right, a cross-cutting theme to be mainstreamed into all development work, and a prerequisite to attaining not just the third, gender-focused Millennium Development Goal (MDG), but all MDGs. The establishment of the Global Programme for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS) has provided the UNDP Democratic Governance Group with a mechanism that allows it to more systematically promote the empowerment of women throughout the electoral cycle. GPECS funds gender-related regional and country-level projects and activities. It also has a dedicated Global Gender Adviser and a Gender and Elections Adviser deployed to cover Africa. The collaboration among the Democratic

72 *Agents of the Force Spéciale de Securisation du Processus Electoral* (FOSSEPEL, Special Force for a Safe Electoral Process).

73 UNDP, *Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide*, 2007, page 23.

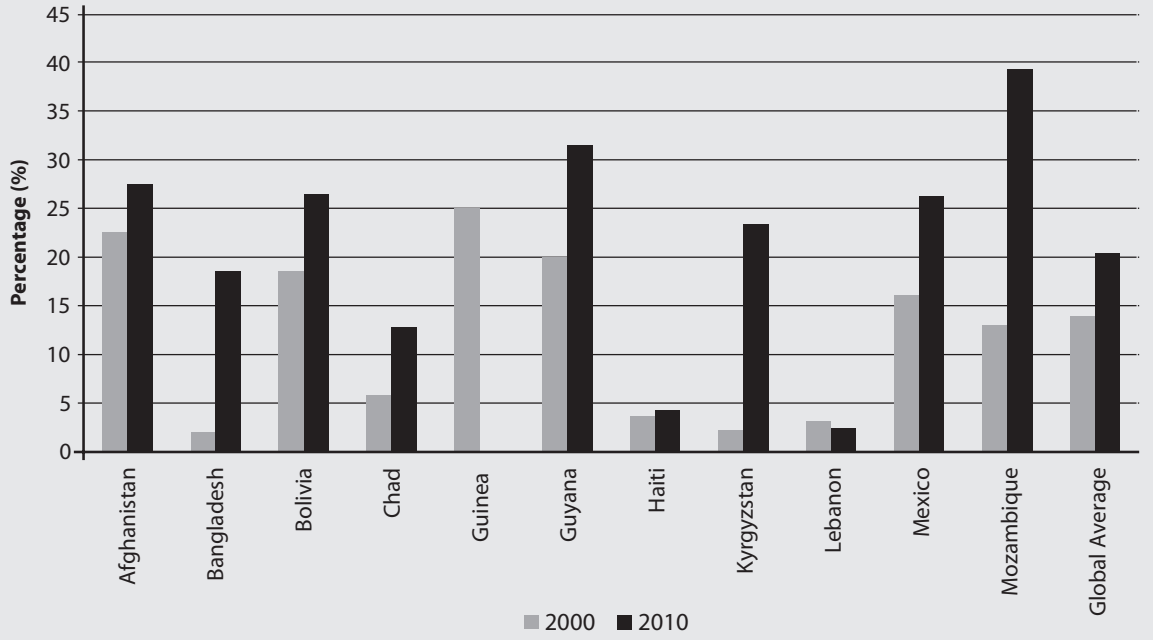
Governance Group, the UNDP headquarters-based Gender Team and its country-level focal points, and the GPECS Global Adviser has helped UNDP to more effectively leverage in-house expertise in both fields.

Many of current UNDP electoral projects address different aspects of gender equity in the electoral processes. More than half (60 percent) of the country offices that provided information to the evaluation reported supporting women's participation, while only 30 percent had projects that focused more specifically on gender issues. For about 11 percent, the women's participation project was the only project in support of the electoral process (see Section 2.2.3).

Early UNDP assistance assumed that women and other groups were included simply by not being excluded. Over time, however, UNDP assistance has become more sophisticated and now addresses competing priorities alongside the cultural and technical barriers to equal political participation. Most recently, GPECS has provided UNDP with the means to more systematically support efforts to mainstream gender within electoral management and administration. However, UNDP is still most effective at ensuring all groups are able to register and vote regardless of their gender, ethnicity or other status, which in some contexts has involved taking special measures. In particular, post-conflict and transitional situations provide opportunities for UNDP to make a major impact on shaping constitutional and legislative norms and promoting international obligations. Improving legislation that determines the social, political and economic status of women and marginalized groups has been one area of success, contrasted with the general difficulty of changing legislative norms (see Section 3.2.2).

In other cases, UNDP has provided technical assistance for the review of electoral and enabling legislation to ensure equal rights and, in some cases, for the adoption of affirmative action mechanisms such as quotas. Although the value

Figure 10. Women in parliament: case-study countries (%)



of quotas to increasing representation of different groups in legislatures continues to be debated among experts, UNDP assistance in this area, coupled with its work to support women-candidates, has been effective in increasing the number of women and minority groups in parliaments (see Figure 10). Even though there were other contributing factors, 6 of 11 evaluation case-study countries had more women in parliament than the global average. This included Kyrgyzstan, where UNDP support to a 2005–2007 national advocacy campaign by the women's movement resulted in candidate quotas in the Election Code of the Kyrgyz Republic for gender and youth. This produced rapid and wide-ranging results, raising the share of women members of the Kyrgyz Parliament from 0 in 2005 to 24 percent in 2011.[74] Kyrgyzstan's proportional representation system also helped ease this adoption.

In Haiti and Lebanon, however, UNDP efforts did not have as positive a result. Although Lebanese women have had the right to vote since 1953, there are few women in parliament or senior administration positions. In 2005, only 6 of 128 members of parliament were women, further declining to 4 in the subsequent 2009 parliament. The country case study found that UNDP missed opportunities to develop synergies between its Strengthening the Electoral Processes in Lebanon project and its Support to the Structure of the Lebanese Parliament, which could have offered a support platform for female candidates but instead opted to support a single civil society organization's advocacy for change. In Haiti, only 4 percent of parliamentarians are women, yet only UNDP raised the issue of gender during evaluation interviews.

UNDP also supports efforts to enable the broad-based political participation by women and other marginalized groups. In Afghanistan, UNDP assisted with the establishment of separate registration and polling stations for women, along with the hiring and training of female security agents, to ensure that cultural proscriptions against men and women meeting in public spaces did not prevent women from participating. This resulted in women comprising more than a third of the voter turnout for all elections. However, this number has remained relatively constant since 2004 (37 percent in 2004, 41 percent in 2005, 38 percent in 2009 and 39 percent in 2010).[75] Citizen surveys also found that 15 percent of the respondents who said that they had not voted in 2005 and 2009 because they were not permitted to do so were all women, mainly from rural areas.[76]

In many of the case-study countries, UNDP supported voter registration efforts that helped ensure voter registration and issuing of a voter card to all eligible citizens. In Bangladesh, the voter card with a photo and fingerprints served as a motivating factor for marginalized segments of society, including women and the poor, to come out and register; it also provided many of these people with a sense of national identity and an identification card for the first time. The voter registration process also raised their awareness of their civil and political rights. This indirect consequence of the voter registration effort had the potential to start a process of transformational change for citizens.[77]

In Kyrgyzstan, UNDP supported the reform of the voter registration system, which allowed citizens to vote where they actually lived rather than at their official residence as was the case

74 Inter-Parliamentary Union, PARLINE database of international parliaments, online report on the results of the 2005 elections in Kyrgyzstan; see <http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2174_05.htm>.

75 Independent Election Commission, *Getting the Grade? Lessons Learnt on Women's Participation in the 2010 Afghan Parliamentary Elections*, Gender Unit, Kabul, 2010, page 25.

76 The Asia Foundation, 'Afghanistan in 2009: A Survey of the Afghan People', 2009, and 'Afghanistan in 2006: A Survey of the Afghan People', 2006.

77 UNDP, 'Bangladesh: Support to Electoral Process, Evaluation Report', 2009.

before. This enabled some 147,000 citizens (including internal migrants) who lived and worked in areas other than their official place of residence to vote for the first time.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP programming is beginning to focus on increasing the participation of indigenous groups through its electoral cycle programmes in the priority countries of Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Mexico and Peru. Initial indications appear positive.

Available information on the effect of UNDP assistance on the mainstreaming of women among electoral management body staff was mostly anecdotal. Results are not only a function of varying recruitment policies, but also of the choices made by women entering government service, where working for an electoral management body can be seen as unattractive. In post-conflict and transitional contexts, gender perspective within national institutions is often at a deficit. In Guinea's 2010 elections, UNDP played a major role in ensuring the national election commission was gender-balanced after noting the lack of gender sensitivity in its first appointments. In Afghanistan, the ELECT project in 2008 and 2009 worked with the Independent Electoral Commission to develop working hours and internal procedures that accommodate the cultural and security challenges faced by female employees. In Kyrgyzstan, UNDP support to women's groups resulted in the introduction of a 70-percent ceiling for same gender of the staff within the Central Election Commission—the first gender quota of its kind in Central Asia.

Paradoxically, in many contexts of operation, UNDP found that one of the best ways to promote gender equality is for respected men to champion it. Such was the case for a Mongolian parliamentarian who launched a 45-day campaign to promote women's political participation after participating in the UNDP 2011 Asia Pacific Electoral Community of Practice meeting. The degree to which inclusion and gender mainstreaming has been addressed in electoral assistance projects has depended to a great extent on individual commitment. Chief Technical Advisers committed to gender equality, such as the case of Burundi, were able to make significant gains, especially when backed by their Resident Representatives. In Niger, the Resident Representative ensured that a gender adviser was part of the 2010 needs assessment mission so that a gender perspective would be factored into the design of the next programme. Participation of gender advisers in needs assessment missions is *ad hoc* rather than standard policy, and gender-sensitive programme design appears to be greatly dependent on personal commitments of country-office and project management, underscoring the continuing need to more effectively mainstream gender in electoral assistance. Recent GPECS efforts, however, appear to be promising. The Gender Steering and Implementation Committee found that "the gender component of GPECS was highlighted as a programme yielding returns for women on the ground, and the importance of expanding gender and elections staff was confirmed."[78]

3.2.4 UNDP can effectively deliver high-tech solutions for electoral processes in developing countries, but there are growing concerns about the cost and appropriateness of some of these systems in the development context.

UNDP approaches the use of appropriate and cost-effective technology in electoral processes as an entry point to making electoral processes more efficient and increasing the electoral management body effectiveness.[79] The organization has provided information and communications technology (ICT) solutions and support to about 55 percent of the countries assisted. Some of these have been high-cost efforts, such as the voter

78 According to the Bureau for Development Policy, 16 March 2012.

79 UNDP, *Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide*, 2007, page 17.

registration systems implemented in Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Togo and Zambia. UNDP ability to respond to requests for technical assistance in this area has become one of its comparative strengths; it is able to mobilize technical specialists to provide options, as well as to coordinate donor support for such processes. The evaluation found, however, that UNDP ICT support has been *aid-effective* in that it has effectively improved short-term electoral event goals, but not *development-effective* in that some of the systems implemented are unsustainable without continued international financial and/or technical support. The introduction of electoral technologies is complex, involving not only the need for training, but also changes to legislation and recruitment, logistical and voter-education approaches. There are also other factors to consider. As noted by a recent voter registration study, "the use of ICTs can positively impact election management, especially in making some processes quicker and more efficient. But ICT solutions also carry risks, they often suffer from unrealistic expectations and they may not be appropriate in some contexts."[80]

This evaluation's case study on ICT assistance found that UNDP has been effective in procuring and delivering high-tech solutions for electoral processes to developing countries, providing advice, procurement services and training. Effective ICT support for voter registration in Bangladesh was a critical part of successful UNDP support to the 2008 general election process. Despite the compressed timelines, UNDP helped ensure that the national effort that mobilized the nation was completed effectively and on time. This was also the case in Malawi in 2009. Yet the case study also found that UNDP had been less effective in shaping the decisions to adopt these technologies. Poor decisions about what technologies to adopt often resulted in the procurement of hardware, software and services that did not significantly strengthen the electoral systems and processes of recipient countries. UNDP ability to shape ICT-related decision-making depends in large part on the strength and knowledge of the Resident Representative and the timeliness and quality of advice from regional bureaux, the Procurement Support Office, various Bureau for Development Policy staff members and EAD. ICT solutions are also big business. The influence of vendors, and the fact that some countries have laws requiring their funds to be used on domestic industries, can lead to supply-driven rather than demand-driven technology procurement. As noted by the voter registration in Africa comparative study, "Where proprietary systems are already in place, any subsequent upgrade may give the vendor a virtual monopoly." Examples of this include Kenya's 2010 electronic voter registration pilot and Senegal's 2006 voter registration systems.[81]

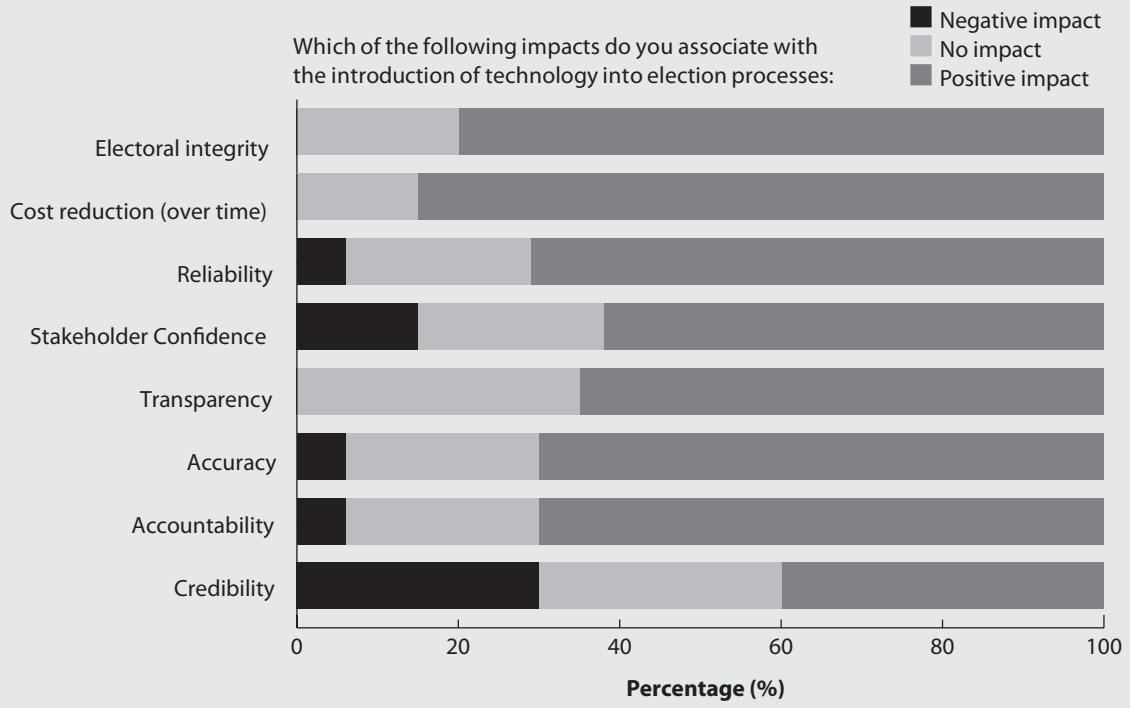
Even when appropriate technologies are identified, insufficient time to plan for their introduction and subsequent implementation can undermine their and, consequently, UNDP effectiveness. Lack of time to procure technology that identified duplicate voter registrations during the Democratic Republic of the Congo's 2005–2006 elections forced the outsourcing of this task to a French company. This left the electoral management body with no capacity. This approach can raise questions of national ownership for the voters list, as the work was done overseas. Similar issues were also found to be an issue in Guinea.

Despite proven UNDP capacity to provide technical advice, donors and governments often use UNDP only as an ICT service provider. In some cases, such as Liberia, the government and donors agreed on the provision of ICT products, but donors required these be procured by UNDP because of the due diligence and accountability

80 European Commission and UNDP, 'Procurement Aspects of Introducing ICT Solutions in Electoral Processes: The Specific Case of Voter Registration', Joint Task Force on Electoral Assistance, Brussels, 2010.

81 Evrensel, A. (Ed.), 'Voter Registration in Africa – A Comparative Analysis', Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa, South Africa, 2010, page 32.

Figure 11. ICT Impact on Electoral Processes



mechanisms in its procurement process. However, UNDP had no substantive input in the type of technology procured. On the other hand, UNDP Bolivia decided not to support a biometric register proposed by the government on the basis of a needs assessment mission's conclusion that the time-frame was not feasible. The government went ahead with the process using its own funds, resulting in a system that was not entirely sustainable and leading to a subsequent government request for UNDP and other donor assistance to improve it, a process currently underway.

The ICT case study found that governments and donors considered factors other than appropriateness or cost-effectiveness in ICT decisions. Some electoral management bodies wanted modern equipment without due consideration of their capacity to operate and/or maintain it. For example, it is doubtful that the skills and capacity gained by the local electoral management body during the Democratic Republic of the Congo's 2006 elections are sufficient to free it from dependency on external technical support.[82] Donors sometimes viewed technological solutions as required for political reasons, often without a real understanding of the complications involved in adopting new technologies.

3.2.5 UNDP programming has been able to mitigate or prevent some election-related violence. Corporate understanding of the links between elections and violence, and of the possible UNDP mitigating role, is only beginning to be systematized.

Many of the countries where UNDP provides electoral assistance exhibit characteristics such as ethnic or religious polarization, weak national

82 Ibid, page 92.

institutions, pervasive poverty, and recent history of armed conflict, all of which make these countries prone to elections-related violence. The past decade has seen an increase in such violence, including in countries where UNDP provided electoral assistance such as: Côte d'Ivoire (2010), Kenya (2007), Nigeria (2011), Pakistan (2007) and The Philippines (2009). Experience has shown that improved electoral processes alone are not sufficient to reduce or prevent violence. In anticipation of election-related violence in Kenya, UNDP supported the National Steering Committee on Peace Building in working to improve dialogue among government and civil society actors. This helped contribute to a larger-than-usual voter turnout and a considerably higher level of election administration, but when suspicions of tampering emerged during the counting process, widespread violence ensued nonetheless.

There are also examples where UNDP-attributable improvements in electoral processes have contributed to avoiding violence. In Kyrgyzstan, clear improvements of the electoral process, and the fact that national and international observers noted these, dissuaded the opposition from refusing to accept the results of the 2011 presidential election, or from issuing complaints that, while not grounded in evidence, might have been politically disruptive. In Bangladesh, following politically motivated violence in the run-up to the elections scheduled for January 2007, opposition demands included reforming the electoral commission and revising the voter register, both of which were supported by UNDP. The elections held in 2008 had significantly less violence than previous elections; however, such improvements are not always persuasive. In Burundi, opposition parties refused to accept the results of the 2001 elections, despite observer and diplomat assertions that there was no significant fraud.

The evaluation found that the common factors among projects that succeeded in reducing elections-related violence included adequate planning time, availability of expert political analysis, and country-office ability to develop and manage complex strategies. Successful interventions of Bangladesh and Kyrgyzstan were implemented over several years. Other factors, such as long-term UNDP presence in a country (regardless of whether it has an ongoing electoral project), perceived credibility and impartiality, technical expertise and political knowledge also affect its potential to play a more effective conflict-prevention role. Evaluation interviews and the 2009 UNDP study on elections and conflict prevention[83] also suggest that the quality and political sensitivity of a country's Resident Representative can be crucial.

There is often a need to maintain sustained hard (project) and soft (non-project) efforts to prevent violence. After a failed 2003 coup in Mauritania, UNDP implemented a project to foster political dialogue among actors. Originally, the Government of Mauritania refused to participate in UNDP-sponsored televised discussions among political parties between August and November 2004. Ultimately, government officials relented and joined the discussions, deciding that it was better to defend its positions in public. This was a case of an unusually proactive political approach by a country office, which persisted with the project despite the clear objection of the government and "proved it is possible to engage in an open dialogue among political parties without resorting to violence."[84] Here, UNDP exhibited all of the qualities necessary to play a positive role, in particular that of the Resident Representative fully embracing the advocacy and brokerage role. Still, a coup took place a year after the project concluded, making clear the limits of conflict prevention efforts. Even when such projects are implemented in a proactive and principled manner, there remains the need to directly address the root causes of the conflict in electoral or other programming.

The quality of political analysis is another important area where the UNDP record is mixed (see Section 3.1). 'Good' political analysis, despite

83 UNDP, *Elections and Conflict Prevention: A Guide to Analysis, Planning and Programming*, 2009.

84 UNDP, 'Evaluation of the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund: Mauritania', 2008, page 9.

efforts by UNDP to systematize it, is difficult to define and impart. Often, the validity of conclusions resulting from political analysis can only be determined in hindsight. It is easier to assess whether UNDP made full use of the available analytical resources. In Bangladesh, the Resident Representative made full use of UNDP-EAD monitoring missions by the Expert Election Team, which, along with the country office's staff political analyst, contributed to the success of the 2008 elections. In Guinea, the UNDP electoral project benefitted from political advice from the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa, based in Dakar. In mission contexts, this type of analysis is also performed by the mission and used by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident Representatives and others.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, *Comité International des Sages* (International Committee of the Wise)—a group of four reputed personalities headed by former President of Mozambique Joachim Chissano—was created in 2006 to ensure calm during the pre-electoral period and promote dialogue among political actors as an alternative to violence. The committee was launched at the initiative of MONUC, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which had the lead on elections in the country. UNDP implemented elections at MONUC request, because of greater UNDP flexibility in funding and recruitment. Still, UNDP decided to hire its own political affairs officers to support the team, rather than using those of MONUC, which had developed relationships with actors and understood the political context.[85] As such, the Comité lacked the political knowledge and access it needed, and was ultimately ineffective.

An evaluation of UNDP effectiveness in curbing politically motivated violence must be conditioned with an understanding of the limitations of development tools in shaping volatile and unpredictable political situations. Precisely because of such unpredictability, mechanisms intended to mitigate electoral violence are not always part of project documents. Even the best early warning systems can fail to predict some crises. What has been more effective than devising conflict prevention strategies ahead of time is fostering the country office ability to react to crises—either by mobilizing other resources from the UN system or by 'retooling' on-the-ground capacity. In Kyrgyzstan, the fact that a parliamentary support project was already underway was critical to the swiftness of United Nations response after the 2010 fall of the government. The availability of parliamentary advisers was both an entry point and a capacity set that allowed the country office to quickly establish, with EAD assistance, an election support team able to contribute to elections that did not lead to further violence. In Guinea, a project to support parliamentary elections had to be rapidly adjusted in 2008, when the death of the country's president resulted in the need to hold presidential elections. In Kenya, however, strategies were put in place to address anticipated violence, but the political forces that sought confrontation were too large to be mitigated by UNDP project activities.

Where the political will for peaceful electoral processes and transitions of government is lacking, this evaluation has the same finding as the Bangladesh country-office documented reflections on its electoral support: "While donors can help bring about positive change when the political leadership is committed to it, their influence is likely to be marginal when sufficient political will does not exist."[86]

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85 The Executive Summary of the committee's report of activities concluded: "For this type of project and taken in consideration in limited duration to 6 months, it will be preferable for that MONUC and UNDP would second experienced Personnel in Political and Administrative staff instead of hiring new staff when we know that the process of hiring in UN system is simply long." (Comité International des Sages, 'Report of Activities of the International Committee of Eminent Persons', Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2006, page 4.)

86 Eicher P., Z. Alam and J. Eckstein, 'Elections in Bangladesh: 2006–2009: Transforming Failure into Success', UNDP Bangladesh, Dhaka, March 2010.

3.2.6 The UNDP process-focused (electoral cycle) approach is not systematically applied in practice, as most assistance still centres on events.

UNDP adopted the electoral cycle approach in the mid 2000s. This process-based approach is a logical extension of the UNDP development mandate and is widely accepted as a best practice. An overwhelming number—83.9 percent—of election practitioners who responded to the evaluation survey considered the cycle approach to be more effective than event-driven assistance. Most UNDP donors, including the Canadian International Development Agency, the European Commission, the United Kingdom Department for International Development and the United States Agency for International Development, reported that they had also adopted a cycle-based approach and preferred it to event-centric support because of the former's development-driven nature and focus on attaining sustainable outcomes.

Close to 65 percent of UNDP electoral support projects are identified as electoral cycle support.[87] Most of such projects are five or more years in duration, although the longevity of a project is not in itself an indicator of using the electoral cycle approach to support. In many cases, however, the evaluation found that, despite the existence of a well-developed, clearly articulated and sophisticated policy framework for electoral cycle support, its country-level application has been neither consistent nor able to deliver the results envisioned. At the country level, application of the approach is often constrained by discordant donor priorities, slow UNDP procedures (see Section 3.3) and decisions made by national governments. Electoral cycle support efforts are also influenced by the quality of technical assistance, suitability of project design, availability of staff and funding, and contextual factors unique to a given country's political, social and economic landscape.

The timing of assistance was a key factor, as many projects begin implementation too close to an event, leaving little time to address flaws in the electoral framework or build the capacities of national actors, stakeholders and institutions. Similarly, many projects wind down activities immediately after a supported event, as technical experts tend to move on to another election project. The Democratic Governance Group's Longer-Term Lessons Learned exercise found that management of these projects would be subsequently picked up by governance units that for the most part had not been involved in their implementation. Projects would then languish with a few sporadic activities—until the next election approached and another Chief Technical Adviser was recruited. The same cycle was often reported for donors, whose interests peaked before an election and waned once it was over, despite professing a preference for the electoral cycle approach and long-term capacity building. Technical advisers interviewed felt that it in the post-electoral period, it was easier to mobilize funding for entry points such as women's participation than for others, such as working with political parties and civil society, because the work of these organizations was perceived as less substantive after an election.

In Afghanistan, UNDP assistance for 2004–2005 was event-driven and focused on supporting the first round of democratic elections. The ELECT project was developed in 2006 to continue this assistance and strengthen the country's electoral administration on a more sustainable basis. The project design embodied the electoral cycle approach. It focused on between-election capacity building and reform of the legislative framework. However, the project did not gear up until the 2009 elections came close, in large part because of donor fatigue and a lack of funding. Similarly, UNDP has been involved in Cambodia's electoral processes since the end of the 1992 elections, administered by the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia. The Strengthening Democracy and Electoral Processes project was designed in 2004 and considered to be "one of

87 According to the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy, May 2012.

the first genuine between-the-ballot-box initiatives."[88] However, by the time it became operational, it had to focus on the immediate needs of the upcoming election, essentially negating the advantages that should have been gained by using the cycle approach.[89] The evaluation of the UK Department of International Development electoral support through UNDP, conducted concurrently with this evaluation, found that UNDP projects in both Burundi and Malawi professed using the cycle approach but did not actually embody it beyond project title.

According to the electoral cycle methodology, sensitive electoral reforms can be more easily addressed and attained in between-elections periods, when the political climate is less volatile and these types of sensitive issues are easier to address. However, the Government of Yemen made an informal decision in 2005 not to amend the electoral law before the upcoming 2006 elections despite the findings of a 2004 needs assessment mission that noted deficiencies in the legal framework that needed to be addressed, demonstrating that governments also need to be committed to the electoral cycle approach and understand it, if it is to yield the results it conceptually promises.[90]

In other cases, process-based UNDP assistance appears to have been successful (see Section 3.4). In Mozambique, UNDP supported the capacity building of *Secretáriado Técnico de Administração Eleitoral* (STAE), the country's technical secretariat for the electoral commission, for nearly two decades. Today, STAE is considered a competent national electoral management body and is used by the UNDP ProPalop Timor-Leste and GPECS projects as a South-South cooperation and training resource. Currently, most donor support for Mozambique's electoral commission and STAE is provided in the form of direct budget support rather than through a UNDP project. While this makes UNDP less relevant in terms of managing election-related funding, it is a strong indicator that the electoral management bodies have gained sufficient capacity to be trusted by donors to control their own expenditures.[91] At the same time, case-study findings reveal that local-level STAE officials and offices still need capacity building.

UNDP is promoting a holistic approach to electoral assistance through GPECS, which uses the electoral cycle framework to provide support in the areas of leadership, advocacy, capacity and regional knowledge development, exchanges, women's empowerment and administration. The GPECS mechanism is a major development in how UNDP can provide assistance to support these processes from a global perspective, demonstrating UNDP responsiveness to evolutions in the field of practice. It is, however, still too early to evaluate the full measure of the GPECS contribution to the concept and UNDP practice of the electoral cycle approach. GPECS is also a three-year project that will require continued donor funding to continue its activities beyond 2012.

3.3 EFFICIENCY

Efficiency within the UNDP context is defined as "maximizing opportunities for individuals and communities with optimal use of human and material and institutional resources".[92] The evaluation was asked to consider the varied

88 UNDP, 'Assessment of the Strengthening Democracy and Electoral Processes in Cambodia Project (SDEP) – Mission Report 2008 and Summary 2008', November 2008, page 4.

89 Ibid.

90 UNDP, 'Electoral Support Project for the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum of Yemen in Preparation for the 2006 Presidential, Governorate and Local Council Elections; External Evaluation of Phase II', September 2007, page 6.

91 At the same time, donors in Mozambique raised issues of the UNDP country office's perception of its role and its closeness to the government. These factors affected donor decisions for how they channelled assistance to the electoral process.

92 Prabhu, K.S., 'Operationalising Human Development: Imperative and Implications', PowerPoint presentation, UNDP Evaluation Office, 14 November 2007.

approaches used in different contexts to assess UNDP efficiency in terms of its ability to meet the tight deadlines of an electoral calendar and provide durable solutions. Some of the questions asked focused on whether the UNDP business model and working relationships have led to success, how UNDP country offices worked with other donors, and the national and international organizations that work in the sector. UNDP has managed hundreds of electoral support projects since it began to provide such assistance more than two decades ago. Many of these projects involved basket funds, which pool donor funding to improve donor and other partner coordination in the implementation of complex, politically sensitive and highly visible projects.[93] Basket funds can be very large, with some exceeding $100 million and many others valued at $20 million or similar amounts (see Chapter 2). UNDP country offices typically manage both these basket funds and the projects they support, and the initial set-up of an electoral project can make a significant demand on country-office resources—especially on smaller offices. The project has to be designed, negotiated with the government and staffed. Depending on its size, UNDP can set up a Project Management Unit to coordinate project activities and funding and report to the country-office senior management. Such units typically handle day-to-day project management, including using donor funds to support its objectives, which can include hiring technical experts, sub-grants to non-governmental organization for observation or civic education, and the procurement of election materials. In some cases, notably in post-conflict and transitional environments, basket funds may also cover election costs such as poll worker salaries or ballot printing, and can reach hundreds of millions of dollars.

Several issues were identified during the evaluation of UNDP management of projects and basket funds. Chief among these were cumbersome procedures—for approvals, procurement, recruitment and diversions from annual work plans—and the slow speed of recruitment and procurement in particular. These affected not only UNDP efficiency but also its performance, relevance and sustainability.

3.3.1 Cumbersome procedures and slow recruitment and procurement affect UNDP management of electoral projects.

The evaluation found that UNDP efficiency was reduced by cumbersome procedures, negatively impacting both UNDP credibility and the processes assisted. Elections are complex logistical and political operations requiring large numbers of staff to be hired and large amounts of materials procured or produced and delivered throughout a country within the context of a time-bound political process. This is a major challenge.

UNDP was widely seen by government, electoral management bodies, national stakeholders and donors as the only organization that could handle such large amounts of donor funding in support of these processes at the global, regional and country levels. UNDP procedures were widely trusted to protect the integrity of the procurement and recruitment processes. This was particularly valued in post-conflict or transitional contexts, where issues of corruption and patronage are endemic. However, donors and national stakeholders increasingly criticize these processes, as they have evolved into complex and time-consuming mechanisms that are out of sync with the necessarily fast pace of electoral assistance. Some of the commodities procured or staff recruited by UNDP are essential to either or both the process and the effective implementation of the project. For example, the late arrival of sensitive materials such as ballots could easily escalate into a political crisis or trigger violence. Interviewees recalled many incidents where staff and materials arrived too late to be useful, and some cases of processes or activities being postponed or cancelled as a consequence.

93 UNDP, *Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide*, 2007, page 70.

Afghanistan provides an apt example of issues related to project staff recruitment: by the election day of 2009, the ELECT project—with 27 donors and a basket fund of $330 million—had yet to fill 13 percent of its adviser positions and 37 percent of its project management positions, including the head of finance, senior electoral policy adviser and the domestic observer adviser.[94] Although Afghanistan may have been an extreme case due to the country's security situation, recruitment problems were noted on many UNDP projects. While Chief Technical Advisers say it takes at least three months to recruit an expert, in many cases, it actually takes much longer. It took six months to fill this post on the Strengthening Electoral Processes in Lebanon project, even though local elections were planned within the year. It took nine months to recruit key staff for the Regional Centre in Egypt. In Kyrgyzstan, UNDP was unable to replace the Chief Technical Adviser who had left, until after the annual work plan was signed five months later. In Sierra Leone and Nigeria, positions have remained vacant for a year. The United Nations policy framework calls for a single roster of electoral experts, which is currently maintained by EAD. UNDP uses this roster to recruit many of its experts alongside using its own means. This means however, that in some cases, both entities can be competing for the same experts. In some high-profile cases, UNDP and EAD can differ over which organization will field the Chief Technical Adviser position or which expert to recruit, which can also cause delays.

Project staffing delays affect project performance. Once staff is in place, the first priority becomes supporting the immediate preparations for the process. This often comes at the expense of efficiency considerations such as cost, sustainability and capacity building. Remedies have included hiring available but less qualified candidates or outsourcing functions to the United Nations Office for Project Services (as was done in Afghanistan) or the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (as in the case of southern Sudan before the independence). Very competent experts manage some of the most effective projects. They have skills in electoral assistance, negotiation, strategic planning, political analysis and management. It is not always easy to identify candidates of this calibre or ensure their availability and interest, especially for key staff positions and projects in difficult contexts. For other posts, United Nations Volunteers can provide large volunteer contingents for UNDP projects,[95] particularly in mission contexts. This helps ensure that basic staffing needs are met at the field level in areas such as voter education, training of poll workers and some capacity building activities for electoral management bodies, specifically at the decentralized level.

In terms of procurement, vehicles ordered in April 2011 for use by UNDP Tunisia electoral project staff for support activities related to then-upcoming elections of October 2011 had not arrived by the time of this evaluation's interviews in January 2012. In Malawi, vehicles needed for similar purposes arrived a month after the 2009 election. In Ethiopia, the slow speed of obtaining authorization for using existing UNDP basket fund resources, which were previously allocated to the 2005 national elections, to support subsequent municipal elections resulted in voter education materials arriving four months late and only two months before election day, limiting their impact and usefulness. In Sudan, 2010 delays in planning and procurement decisions resulted in a last-minute purchase of cardboard polling booths from China, with airfreight charges raising costs to $75 per booth.[96]

94 UNDP Afghanistan, 'Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow (ELECT) Annual Progress Report 2009', undated, page 54.

95 United Nations Volunteers assigns an annual average of 760 volunteers to electoral support within United Nations missions, mainly in Africa, which accounted for 65 percent of assignments in 2011.

96 According to former project staff.

There are also issues other than cumbersome procedures that hamper procurement and recruitment efficiency. These include slow or delayed planning, late arrival of donor funding, changing or unclear commodity specifications, poor coordination of the procurement process, and insufficient attention to cost-effectiveness, maintenance needs and life-cycles of procured goods, particularly those in the area of ICT. Project management arrangements at the country level also play a significant role. In mission contexts, countries with big budgets tend to have large Project Management Units with a sufficient delegation of authority from the country-office, so they are able to more efficiently conduct financial and procurement transactions. This has helped somewhat speed up the processes, as such units can hire staff more quickly than many country offices. In non-mission contexts, projects often have to depend on country-office procurement staff, and small country offices in particular can be overwhelmed by the demands and timelines of an electoral project.

It should be noted that country offices and Project Management Units often procure goods and services or make deliveries on time; however, this requires significant resources and a level of effort and focus that distracts from substantive areas of electoral assistance which affects the efficacy of UNDP support. The establishment of the UNDP Global Procurement Unit in Denmark strengthened the procurement process and provided country-office support. The Global Procurement Unit has developed a fairly sophisticated approach and rationale towards the procurement process, and these mechanisms have risen to a critical level of importance due to the time-sensitive, material- and thus procurement-intensive nature of electoral assistance. UNDP has also adopted expedited processes, which it has used it in at least 11 countries to enable large-scale procurement of electoral commodities.[97] The use of these 'fast-track' processes is, however, still the exception and requires case-by-case authorization. Some interviewees felt that many country offices were still not aware that such processes existed.

3.3.2 Uneven quality of reporting on basket funds and project performance does not provide donors with adequate information on the use of their funds.

The evaluation found that UNDP efficiency in planning, monitoring and reporting on project and basket-fund activities was a concern for both donors and electoral management bodies. There was a general feeling that project reports focused on the electoral process or individual activities and did not provide a good overview of whether the project was on track and making progress towards meeting its anticipated outcomes. This was confirmed by some of the reports reviewed for case-study countries, including Chad and Haiti. In cases such as Afghanistan, the annual reports highlighted the performance of the Independent Election Commission, rather than project performance. In post-conflict and transitional contexts, UNDP country offices said this method of reporting was adopted to build national ownership of the processes by highlighting national stakeholder roles and the processes themselves instead of UNDP activities. Still, donors felt they needed more information on the specific uses of and results generated by their funding. In the case of Afghanistan, the ELECT project did provide donors with reports that disaggregated funding for programmatic area by activity and by donors, which allowed donors to assess the use and cost-effectiveness of their contribution; this was not the case for other projects.

Donors also expressed the need for financial reporting to be generally more comprehensive and timely. They expected that pooling funding through UNDP would lower their own transaction costs; however, many felt that these costs had actually increased as working through UNDP required constant follow-up and questions

97 Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Guinea, Haiti, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen.

regarding project design, work plans, progress reports and the contribution their specific funds made to expected project outcomes. The evaluation found this type of criticism to be primarily related to the quality of project and country-office management and the importance that the country office and the project team placed on consulting with and reporting to donors.

3.3.3 UNDP is generally efficient at donor coordination and mobilization of funds, but donors are increasingly looking for more cost-effective solutions and more efficient project management and delivery.

UNDP plays a major role in mobilizing and coordinating resources and in managing electoral basket funds, because of its multinational status, global network of country offices and impartiality. This role is appreciated by both national and international partners, as it helps to ensure consistency of approach and avoid duplication of efforts. However, the same coordination role can be taxingly labour-intensive for UNDP, depending on how large the support effort and the number of actors involved. UNDP generally coordinates with the local electoral management body and other key national and international partners, and with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and EAD in the mission context. In Afghanistan, coordination for the 2010 process—within the broader United Nations and mission contexts that included military components, and with donors, national institutions and partners—required several full-time ELECT staff. In Lebanon, the lack of coordination for the assistance in 2009 resulted in several activities already covered by others being included in the UNDP project plans.

Part of the UNDP coordination role includes mobilizing funds to support electoral processes and their strengthening. Here, UNDP has been very successful, especially in high-profile or emergency situations. For example, in Afghanistan, UNDP mobilized $100 million during a four-week window to support the 2009 electoral process. In Benin in 2006, donors used the UNDP basket fund to directly finance the electoral commission, which the government had not done for three months after the commission had been established. This allowed the election to take place, which might not have happened without the basket fund.[98]

Many of the donor funds go through the UNDP basket funds, which have been seen as the default mechanism for channelling large-scale donor contributions to electoral processes. Pooled donor funds have advantages; they help ensure consistency of donor assistance, reduce donor competition, ease government burden of individually managing arrangements with every donor and can help jumpstart processes for donors that have longer lead times for their funding. For example, in the cases of Afghanistan (2004), Bangladesh (2008) and Timor-Leste (2011), UNDP was able to cover immediate expenditures from its own or other donor funding until the actual designated donor funding arrived. Pooled funds also serve to avoid duplication and balance electoral activity support, so that areas are covered more evenly across the board and technical assistance is not all provided for the same things.

However, this also means that most electoral assistance projects are funded by non-core resources, with only 5 percent of the budget provided by UNDP through its core funding (see Chapter 2). This leaves UNDP highly dependent on donor funding for electoral assistance projects and raises the importance of mobilization efforts and ability to effectively manage the funding already available. Donors have expressed concerns about some project management and reporting issues (see Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2), and dependence on donor funds has also raised questions about programme design and the rationale

98 UNDP Benin, 'Projet d'appui aux élections présidentielles de mars 2006 : Rapport d'évaluation du projet', September 2006, page 15.

for programmatic choices in some cases. For example, UNDP created the Transparent Ballot Box Project in Bangladesh at the request of the Canadian International Development Agency to procure transparent ballot boxes for the 2008 elections with its funding. To remain as accommodating as possible, UNDP also attempted to undertake all of donor-requested activities during the first phase of the Afghanistan ELECT project, but the scope of such requests far exceed UNDP ability to effectively manage.

Another issue increasingly raised by donors and some national stakeholders was that of the 'value for cost' of UNDP assistance. An example of the importance of this issue is the concurrent United Kingdom government evaluation of its funding of UNDP electoral projects, prompted by a 2010 evaluation of DFID funding through multilateral organizations, which rated UNDP as 'satisfactory' overall while raising several efficiency and performance issues. Other donors, such as the European Commission at the country level, noted similar concerns both in terms of efficient financial and activity management and the value added by going through UNDP when it felt some country offices were not proactively engaged in the processes or in promoting the normative values expected from a United Nations organization. In some cases, UNDP multilateral strengths and pooled funding were deemed insufficient by donors, one of whom asked UNDP to become "a *competitive* player able to compete with other organizations providing electoral assistance."

Donors are exploring and using other options alongside UNDP. In Mozambique, donors shifted to budget support, leaving UNDP with only a minor role to play in 2011. The UK Department of International Development had planned to support UNDP Nigeria in 2011 with GBP 33 million; however, declining faith in UNDP ability to manage and deliver saw this contribution drop to GBP 4 million, and the same funds were instead channelled through other agencies. In Tunisia, the European Commission channelled funding through Electoral Reform International Services, a UK-based NGO—instead of the UNDP basket fund. The same donor also provided technical assistance in Lebanon through channels other than UNDP. In Kenya, the governments of Canada, Denmark and the United Kingdom set up a basket fund for civic education efforts outside of UNDP. DFID also established a Kenyan Drivers of Accountability Programme. Although it monitors a portfolio broader than just electoral support, it fulfils the audit and oversight function donors felt was needed.

DFID chose a similar strategy in Burundi, where it funded a specialist electoral adviser attached to the European Union observer mission. It felt that a third party monitoring the operations of elections in general and of the UNDP basket fund in particular added value to United Kingdom aid channelled through UNDP. In the specific case of Burundi, the donor also felt that electoral costs were not well controlled; the initially proposed UNDP budget was twice that of the 2005 elections, but donor questioning prompted a considerable reduction, from $43 million to $27 million, which the UK government evaluation found to have been sufficient.[99]

3.3.4 UNDP is a leader in the field of electoral knowledge, but this knowledge is not systematically applied or shared at the country level, affecting efficiencies and performance.

UNDP has played a central role in the codification of knowledge developed over decades of on-the-ground support. Its technical expertise is an acknowledged strength amongst all stakeholders. Alone and with partners that focus on different aspects of electoral assistance and processes, UNDP has produced a wealth of electoral assistance resources, ranging from manuals, publications and newsletters to online repositories of

99 This evaluation's interview with representatives of the United Kingdom's government evaluation agency, the Independent Commission for Aid Impact.

best practices, lessons learned, policy guidance documents and other information pertaining to electoral support. A corps of experienced, committed consultants and staff now wields the body of knowledge and expertise now available for use in country-level UNDP project design and implementation, and by national stakeholders such as electoral management bodies and non-governmental organizations working in this field. As part of this effort, UNDP has developed or incorporated an impressive portfolio of knowledge publications, networking opportunities, partnerships with leading electoral assistance actors, mechanisms for donor cooperation, gender mainstreaming tools, global and regional programming frameworks, training programmes and databases—including the ACE Electoral Knowledge Network, the BRIDGE professional development programme, and the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics).

The knowledge network approach is in line with the UNDP development mandate and the electoral cycle capacity-building approach. However, the decentralized UNDP structure leaves a large degree of programming discretion to country offices, which can determine how to respond to issues that arise in their local contexts. The evaluation found that these useful and practical resources are not always utilized by, or even known to, country offices. Some long-time Chief Technical Advisers reported never having seen some of this material nor been given guidance on the UNDP electoral policies or implementation approaches, despite the fact that the material is readily available on the Internet, and that the Bureau of Development Policy has been active with its community of practice mechanisms. Resident Representatives, Chief Technical Advisers and governance units base programmes more on past experience and perceptions of what needs to be done than on best practices or UNDP institutional guidelines, which has resulted in some flawed project designs and decisions (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2).

In addition, evaluation case studies found little institutional memory at the country level. Country offices were often unable to provide reports or information on earlier projects. Even in countries with a decade-long history of assistance, it was not unusual for country-office institutional memory to only go back one election. Few country offices appeared to document their electoral assistance efforts, and UNDP Bangladesh was one of these few, having documented its 2009 support. On a broader scale, documents placed on country-office Web sites are replaced with newer documents over time, making it difficult to find earlier documentation and reports. As Project Management Units and senior country-office management primarily handle electoral projects, the institutional memory appears to remain with these individuals and not the governance units. As a result, when senior advisers and managers leave, most of the institutional memory leaves with them.

UNDP-European Commission Joint Task Force on Effective Electoral Assistance trainings do focus on addressing this knowledge and communication gap and use a range of creative learning methods to improve reach and results; however, the impact of these appears to be limited. Through GPECS, the Democratic Governance Group is also making an effort to develop a more cohesive community of practice within UNDP and among its partners. The first global community of practice meeting was held in Manila in 2004, followed by a number of similar regional meetings. The next global practice meeting was not held until 2011. When it did take place in Gaborone with GPECS funding, it was considered extremely useful, because it allowed for exchange of experiences and network development within the community. However, more remains to be done, particularly pertaining to the use of regional offices to disseminate this information.

3.3.5 UNDP implementation modalities for electoral assistance require balancing the need for impartiality with the efficiency required in electoral contexts.

UNDP has improved the flexibility of field management and implementation modalities by using a mix of National Execution/National Implementation (NEX/NIM), under which

national agencies take implementing responsibility; Direct Execution/Direct Implementation (DEX/DIM), where UNDP retains this responsibility; and execution through other agencies. Of 205 electoral assistance projects examined by this evaluation, close to 50 percent used the DEX/DIM project modality and NEX/NIM accounted for slightly more than 40 percent. In the 52 countries that provided detailed programme information, 24 percent of projects used only NEX/NIM, 20 percent used only DEX/DIM and 31 percent combined the two. BDP guidance stresses that great care should be exercised in selecting the national modality, and that UNDP country offices should ensure adequate capacities and independent, impartial national partners exist. However, it is also clear that national execution enjoys a large amount of field use, in line with UNDP and the broader United Nations' goal of empowering local capacity and encouraging national ownership.[100]

NEX modalities appear to be more suitable to countries with higher levels of development and electoral body maturity, such as those in Latin America, than in to post-conflict or transitional countries with less experienced electoral management bodies. Direct execution has been prevalent among country offices managing large electoral assistance budgets, such as North-South Sudan ($196 million for 2005–2011) and Afghanistan ($809 million for 2004–2011). Some of the rationale behind these choices are related to the lack of national institution capacities immediately after cessation of hostilities in these countries and the transitional government's control over resources to their favour.

National execution modalities require more skilled local oversight than direct execution due to the necessary amount of accountability and reporting, as well as procurement challenges combined with the need to resist vendor pressure. Malawi demonstrates the complications associated with a straightforward transition from one execution mode to another. Support there started out as NEX/NIM in the 1990s, but the lack of sufficient financial controls had resulted in a slow move away from national execution. By the 2009 elections, NEX/NIM execution was combined with direct payments made by UNDP, and media alleged UNDP corruption—accusations that were proven to be unfounded. In 2010, the entire electoral management body was suspended based on suspicions of corruption associated with failure to account for MKW 1.4 billion. Both UNDP and the EMB have tried to tackle such issues by improving UNDP finance staffing, but the lack of an audit report on the missing funds has resulted in donor wariness of direct support to the EMB. Interviews indicate that support to the 2014 elections will use the DEX/DIM modality exclusively.

Indonesia, a non-mission country and one of the three highest-budget UNDP electoral assistance countries to date, offers a contrast. Since 1999, UNDP has executed 20 projects approaching $122 million in expenditure, and all used NEX/NIM in a manner that enhanced local capacity. UNDP project staff was co-located with financial staff at the electoral management body's facilities. Such close cooperation helped build EMB capacity to manage procurement and financial arrangements on its own. In countries such as Bolivia, NEX coordination of the UNDP basket fund allowed greater EMB control over the process. In Mozambique, NEX arrangements with the electoral management body have also been successful, due primarily to key stakeholders, including donors, recognizing the EMB capacity for ownership.

One question that emerges is whether DEX/DIM substitutes local control and ownership, thus perpetuating the cycle of dependency. In such a cyclical pattern, the capacity and competence of the host country can remain untested as UNDP continues to provide support with

100 See A/RES/62/208, which calls on the United Nations system to use national execution as the norm to the fullest extent possible.

a limited vision of an exit strategy. At the same time, the political aspects of the process need to be recognized alongside some governments' tendency to use electoral resources for partisan purposes. In development contexts, a clearer strategy must be formulated around national ownership of electoral project decision-making and management, in order to maintain impartiality, accountability and transparency.

3.4 SUSTAINABILITY

In his 1994 report on electoral assistance, the UN Secretary-General stated, "The ultimate objective of electoral assistance is to create its own obsolescence."[101] As such, the measure of success for United Nations assistance lies in host countries' ability to build the national capacity necessary to conduct periodic and credible elections on their own. The evaluation examined the degree to which UNDP assistance contributed to the establishment of durable democratic electoral processes, systems and national ownership thereof.

3.4.1 UNDP assistance that incorporates development and capacity-building considerations increases national ownership and contributes to more sustainable results.

Electoral processes are national processes. Their sustainability requires national ownership and stakeholder and government recognition that the democratic process is of sufficient value that it should be supported and paid for from scarce national resources. The historical review of UNDP electoral assistance noted a clear trend in the evolution of programming priorities for United Nations electoral involvement, from an initial focus on observation and a hands-on directive role in elections to a more embedded and supportive role in the processes and in working with national institutions. This was also reflected in the findings of a 1990–2000 BDP study[102] that showed that UNDP electoral assistance had been restricted, with some exceptions, to periods before elections, and did not extend into the post-election period, when opportunities for capacity development, legal reform and civic engagement were at their greatest. These represent missed opportunities to strengthen the management, structures, budgets and legal frameworks of electoral management bodies and to enhance their institutional capacity, specifically by investing in the development of a permanent professional staff. The same study also revealed that UNDP electoral assistance was most effective when it had a lead-time of at least one year prior to the elections.

The Mozambique country case study provides one example of the evolution from providing event assistance toward capacity building and increased national ownership. The 1994 Support to Elections project, implemented in a mission context, cost more than $80 million and involved a team of international technical advisers and more than 200 UN Volunteers deployed to every province, playing a leading role in logistics and other key aspects of the electoral administration. For the non-mission environment of the next elections in 1998, the electoral support project was downsized to less than half of its previous size, approximately $34 million. By early 2000s, programming priorities shifted to capacity development and training. National and international observation reports noted significant advances in the professional conduct of polling station officials and the national electoral secretariat. The country case study noted that, despite weaknesses in the areas of voter registration and local electoral capacity, the national secretariat now organizes the elections on its own, using the government budget.[103]

Indonesia offers another example of UNDP electoral support phased down in pace with growing domestic capacity. UNDP supported

101 United Nations, A/49/675 (1994).

102 UNDP, *UNDP and Electoral Assistance: Ten Years of Experience (1990–2000),* 2002.

103 The international community does, however, support these processes primarily through direct budget support.

Indonesia's first democratic elections in 45 years, channelling $60 million of the total $90 million of international support. UNDP assistance continued through a $34-million electoral cycle support project for the second-generation elections of 2004. Such support included a significant and dynamic investment in training, civic education and institutional development of Komisi Pemilihan Umum, the Indonesian National Election Commission. By the third-generation elections of 2009, UNDP support was $15 million and focusing on the strategic priorities of election preparation, longer-term capacity building of the national election commission and more than 400 district-level commissions across the country.[104] Support also helped to address the issue of voter fatigue and worked to institutionalize initiatives on electoral management, civic education and coordination, since assistance for the next phase of elections is expected to be minor.

When UNDP embedded technical experts in local electoral management bodies, it was able to effectively transfer knowledge and skills (see Section 3.2.5). Where a development and capacity-building approach was applied to electoral assistance projects over the long term, such as in Nepal and Timor-Leste, UNDP showed a steady progression from a heavy involvement in technical assistance to national EMBs with proven technical capacity to administer credible elections on their own. Most of these results are more noticeable at the national rather than subnational level, as national institutions had more access to training opportunities, study tours and regional networking opportunities. Where UNDP projects did not work on the counterpart basis but rather replaced local capacity in certain functions or areas, the outcomes were not as sustainable, such as in Haiti and Lebanon. In Lebanon, the UNDP technical assistance team of nine was embedded with the Ministry of Interior, which performs the function of a national electoral management body. However, this did not produce the positive capacity building results seen elsewhere. Capacity building was not among ministry priorities; permanent ministry staff was reluctant to participate, and UNDP trained temporary project-paid staff[105] that filled ministry positions during the electoral process. Consequently, the knowledge transferred to these individuals stayed with them, rather than the Ministry of Interior.

Sustainable electoral management body capacity was developed in Guyana, where the relatively large scale of support provided by UNDP and other international development agencies included training and institutional development for the Guyana Elections Commission. Such support helped strengthen its planning and ability to advocate for becoming a permanent institution, rather than one reconstituted for each election. This resulted in the development of a respected and credible institution, funded wholly by the government in 2011 and able to deliver a credible and peaceful 2011 election despite a polarized political environment and negligible international assistance. In contrast, Haiti's electoral commission has remained provisional for 20 years, and the capacity built in each election is lost as commissioners and most of the staff are replaced, sometimes even in the lead-up to an election or between the first and second rounds.

As demonstrated in some of the case studies, UNDP has contributed to increased credibility and acted as a counterpoint to political pressure by working on a counterpart basis (i.e. closely with EMB staff) or by supporting peer-to-peer exchanges. Anecdotal evidence from interviews and case studies indicates that senior officials who received training and were regularly involved in regional and global professional exchanges were more confident in their dealings with parliaments and executive branches, which helped to strengthen their independence. Certain transitions, such as those of Chile, Ghana and Mexico, were decisively affected by the integrity of EMB professionals who made the electoral process into

104 UNDP, *Assessment of Development Results: Evaluation of UNDP Contribution – Indonesia*, Evaluation Office, 2010; UNDP Indonesia, 'Evaluation of the UNDP Support Project 2004', 2004.

105 Hotline call centre staff and the information and communications technology team.

more than a democratic facade. Peer-to-peer exchanges have been increasing, particularly in Arab States, where UNDP support had strengthened the electoral management body officials in Iraq and the occupied Palestinian territory; these officials then went on to advise an electoral management body in Tunisia.

UNDP has been generally successful in strengthening civil society ownership of electoral processes, both by working to improve the enabling environment (see Section 3.4.3) and by providing capacity building and facilitating activities through financial and technical support (see Section 3.2.2). However, many civil society efforts remain dependent on external funding and are not financially sustainable, even though the organizations themselves may want to continue and are technically capable of managing activities on their own—in particular, voter and civic education and election monitoring. In Mexico, the government funds domestic observers through a UNDP project; UNDP is used largely as an impartial intermediary in the process to reduce the perception of partisan funding of civil society groups by a ruling party.[106]

While local capacity improved in Afghanistan in 2009 and again in 2010, the large cost of elections is still borne entirely by the international community. This was also the case in the other mission case-study country of Haiti and in the non-mission context of Guinea.

3.4.2 UNDP support to developing sustainable electoral processes requires an increased focus on the appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of solutions.

A key factor for sustainability is whether the introduction of systems and procedures through technical assistance is appropriate for a given country context and affordable enough for the country to maintain. The relative costs for elections supported through UNDP-managed electoral support basket funds and donor and country-office concerns over the rising costs of the processes supported were noted by this evaluation (see Section 3.3.3). This has been an area of concern for some time. As written in the 2009 Report of the Secretary-General, "Elections are expensive, regardless of the way in which they are conducted. But some processes are more costly per voter than others, and some of the poorest countries in the world have chosen some of the most expensive electoral processes and technology. While the choice of electoral system and process is of course the sovereign right of Member states, I am concerned about techniques and systems that might cause a State, in the conduct of its own elections, to be financially dependent on donors, or technologically dependent on specific vendors, for extended periods."[107] One of the main UNDP entry points is building sustainable electoral processes, which often involves support for cost-effective, yet credible elections.[108] However, the evaluation found that UNDP has not placed enough emphasis on developing electoral practices that a country could afford and sustain on its own, and that sustainability strategies are not consistently built into UNDP electoral projects at their outset.

There are large disparities in the sizes of UNDP electoral support projects. The evaluation case studies found that project size did not necessarily correspond to a country's actual needs for electoral assistance. The size and content of UNDP projects are affected by many different variables, including the nature of the government request, country office priorities, donor interests and presence of a UN mission in the country. Factors such as lack of infrastructure, rugged terrain or security issues also affect electoral and project costs.

106 UNDP also provides some training that aims to increase capacity among participating civil society organizations.

107 United Nations, 'Report of the Secretary-General on Strengthening the Role of the United Nations in Enhancing the Effectiveness of the Principle of Periodic and Genuine Elections and the Promotion of Democracy' (A/64/304), 14 August 2009, page 10.

108 UNDP, *Electoral Assistance Implementation Guide*, 2007, page 22.

Figure 12. UNDP project spending per vote cast: select non-mission countries, 2004-2011 (US$)

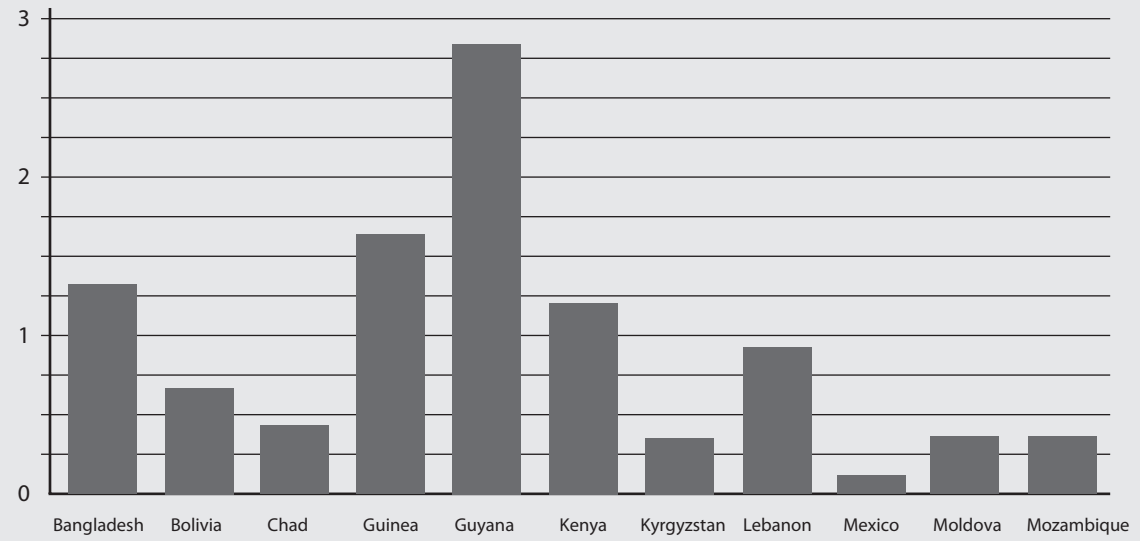
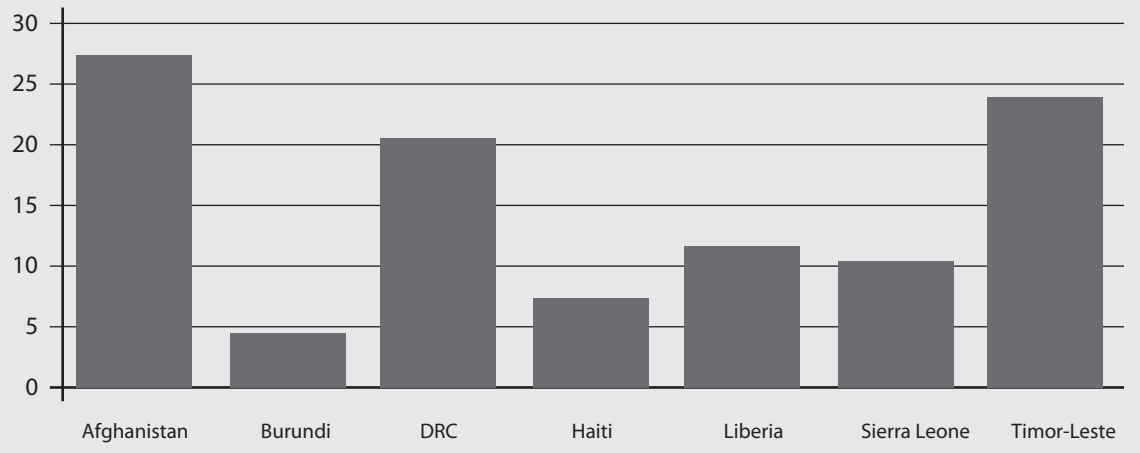


Figure 13. UNDP project spending per vote cast: select mission countries, 2004-2011 (US$)



However, Figures 12 and 13 demonstrate that UNDP programmes spent roughly 10 times more in mission contexts than in a non-mission context, when calculated on a per-vote-cast basis for 2004 to 2011.[109] In non-mission contexts, for the counties featured in Figure 12, the average

109 Costs were calculated based on the financial information provided by the country offices on the programme information sheets submitted to the evaluation team from 2004-2011 and divided by the average voter turnout during the period. They should be seen as illustrative and may not capture the entire range of costs or cost-savings that might have shown up in previous or subsequent years.

cost per vote cast was $0.11 (Mexico low of $0.04 and Guyana high of $2.87). The same cost averaged at $14.75 for the mission countries featured in Figure 13; this ranged from a low of $4.56 in Burundi to a high of $28 in Afghanistan.

There are also wide variations among the costs of various electoral processes supported around the world. It is not possible for this evaluation to assess the actual cost of UNDP-supported elections, given the number of elections and the different elements that contribute to the costs for each. However, UNDP and others have made some efforts to estimate costs per voter for some countries. UNDP and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems supported a 2005 Cost of Registration and Elections study.[110] It examined nine countries and found the average tended to range between $1 and $3 per voter on elections in stable countries, $3–$8 per voter for transitional contexts, and $8–$45 per voter in post-conflict settings where security and integrity costs dominate expenditures.

The rising costs of some electoral processes and the almost default support for expensive high-tech solutions to challenges such as voter registration raise questions on the efficacy of UNDP support. Building sustainable electoral systems is complex and dependent not only the nature of the elections, but also on how they are managed and the technological solutions adopted. Many of these decisions are beyond the UNDP ability to influence; for instance, Haiti's frequency and number of elections are constitutionally prescribed. A country decision that diverges from UNDP opinion is another example: Bolivia chose to undertake the development of a biometric voter registration system despite United Nations decision not to assist in its introduction. Other expensive systems can become institutionalized through the practices of assistance, particularly in mission contexts, where methods used or practices established by the international community in exceptional circumstances—such as the use of helicopters to distribute materials or payment for political party monitors or domestic observers—come to be seen as the norm. In some cases, the appropriateness and feasibility of the systems or solutions adopted are affected by the political context, and in particular by the political imperative to hold an event within a given time-frame. This can result in supporting technologies that UNDP and others realize may not be appropriate for the physical infrastructure or fiscal condition of the country. In mission contexts, these policy decisions are usually made by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, based on recommendations of electoral experts.[111]

UNDP-managed basked funds can also provide a large number of vehicles, communications equipment, generators and the other gear needed to manage and hold elections, especially in mission and transitional contexts. In some cases, these are provided repeatedly, most notably in contexts of political volatility and insecurity or where initial efforts fail—such as in Angola, Haiti and Liberia. In other cases, UNDP has been successful at protecting the initial investment and helping to ensure that it is available for use in subsequent elections. In Bangladesh,

110 López-Pintor, R. and J. Fischer, *Getting to the CORE: A Global Survey on the Costs of Registration and Elections*, International Foundation for Electoral Systems and UNDP, 2005. CORE represents a means to help guide UNDP work in relation to comparative cost analysis. The nine case study countries included Australia, Cambodia, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Iraq, Mexico, Spain and Sweden.

111 In Afghanistan, UNDP supported two separate comprehensive voter registration efforts at a cost of $215 million;* however, there is still no reliable voter register. UNDP efforts enabled the events to be held successfully, but Afghan government officials, observers and the project evaluation criticized the lack of a reliable register. In large part, this is the result of the electoral event being prioritized over process sustainability. Neither the Afghan government nor donors made the decisions that would allow the creation of a register that would both serve a given event and be sustainable in the long term. *Sources: 2003–2004 budget of $130 million – Yard. M. (Ed.), *Civil and Voter Registries: Lessons Learned from Global Experiences*, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, June 2011, page 61; 2008–2009 budget of $86 million – UNDP, 'Afghanistan: Mid-term Evaluatio of the Project on Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow (ELECT)', 2009, page 89.

the government, the electoral management body, UNDP and donors went to extraordinary lengths to help ensure the safety and maintenance of their $78-million investment in the biometric voter registration equipment and system. A separate UNDP project was developed that provided an additional $30 million to build the physical infrastructure needed to house the equipment nationwide and to protect the initial investment. UNDP also developed inventory systems for the equipment and trained warehouse managers and others on these systems, their proper storage and chain of custody. These were also elements of UNDP assistance in Haiti in 2006.

Significant sums of basket-fund or project money are spent on high-tech solutions such as digital voter registration incorporating varying degrees of biometric technology. Over and above the capital cost, and even where international suppliers use local partners, expensive technical expertise is required to implement and support these solutions during initial deployment. Furthermore, the impact of some solutions on operational costs is also very high, with phased voter registration exercises requiring increased logistics and more complicated voter education messages. National electoral management bodies lack or are often unable to retain necessary human resources in the area of information technology, frequently because public-sector remuneration falls quite far below private-sector salary levels. Many electoral management bodies lack the financial resources to store, maintain, reuse, extend or reconfigure systems implemented with UNDP support. Therefore, the vision of continuous registration, and reuse of the hardware and software purchased—or a full life-cycle return on initial investment—is often not realized. Despite efforts to shift to supporting the electoral cycle, EMBs often find themselves approaching an electoral event no better off than they were prior to receiving assistance. Significant electoral assistance is required to reactivate or rehabilitate older systems, continuing the cycle of dependence. The Guinea case study found that reusability and compatibility of the equipment purchased for the initial biometric voter registration system, and for the system that the government wanted to purchase to update the voters roll for the subsequent election, were not adequately considered before the initial introduction, which has raised sustainability concerns about the initial investment.

However, even when UNDP and the EMB are successful at protecting their investments, the cost and effort to maintain systems or the lifespan of the equipment are often underestimated. The use of technology in elections was examined at the UNDP Gaborone Community of Practice Meeting in 2011, which recommended a thorough analysis and comparative studies as necessary prerequisites to introducing new and often complex ICT-driven election solutions "These needed to consider, among other factors … the overall (and often hidden) costs, including maintenance costs, in relation to the national financial capacities. Sustainability also means that national ownership must be secured including through appropriate training, and ensuring national maintenance capacity."[112]

The ICT case study found that very little hardware (such as digital voter registration kits), particularly when used in harsh conditions, survives longer than 3–5 years, at which point the replacement costs, rarely considered in initial planning and never in budgets, surface. On the other hand, some technological solutions have the potential of long-term gains that go beyond the election. For example, the ability to derive a voter register from an established (and maintained) civil register or vice versa can improve the quality of both elections and other development projects. This was the case in Haiti, where UNDP supported Organization of American States efforts to undertake a biometric registration in 2006, and which subsequently helped to establish a government office for civil registration to maintain these

112 UNDP, 'UNDP Global Practice Meeting on Electoral Cycle Support: Meeting Report', 2011.

lists and helped ensure that a new voter registration effort was not required for the most recent rounds of elections in 2010–2011. Before that, the international community had supported an entirely new national voter registration effort for every national election since 1990.

Long-term gains require long-term planning, and assistance efforts usually start too close to events to afford the time needed for this long-term strategic planning or adequate thought to an exit strategy. UNDP experts are typically able to present options and make recommendations for a given technology, based in part on an understanding of the local environment (which determines appropriateness) and of the complexities of organizing the elections (which determines feasibility). However, the same experts are not consistently able to influence appropriate procurement or prevent the procurement of inappropriate and unfeasible technologies, particularly on nationally executed projects or in cases where a country office believes that it is not its role to refrain from funding a government choice. Even in Bolivia, where UNDP did not initially support the government decision to undertake a biometric registration for 2006, it ultimately helped address the problems in the flawed system during the next election.

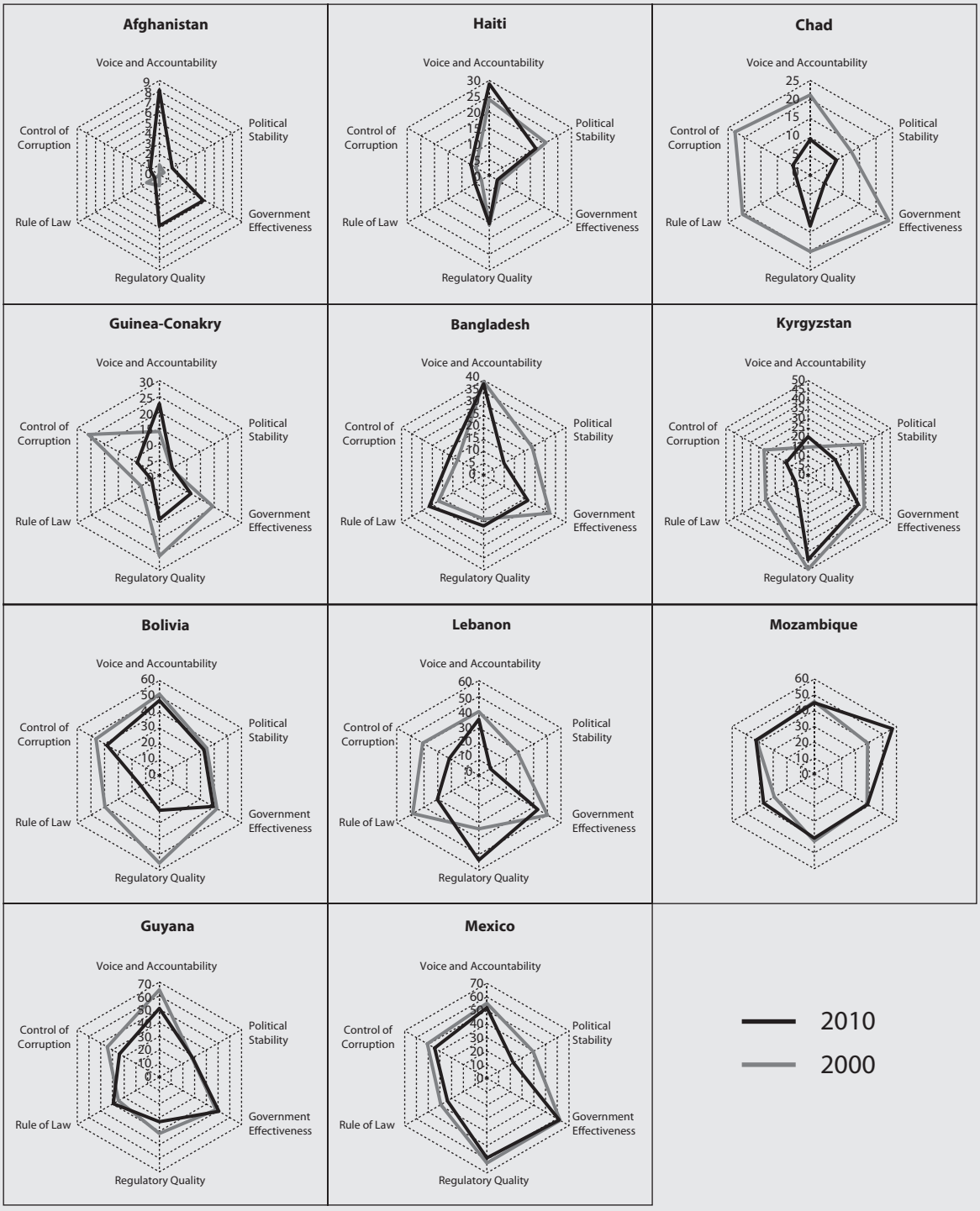
3.4.3 The enabling environment and whether root causes of local electoral problems are addressed directly affect the sustainability of UNDP contributions.

The enabling environment was found to be a critical factor in UNDP performance (see Section 3.2.2), but it was also found to be an indispensable element for sustainability. The case studies and other examples available to the evaluation team showed that a good enabling environment allowed for the national ownership needed to sustain these processes to flourish. However, UNDP has found that it has been more difficult to make sustainable changes to the enabling environment than it has been to fill knowledge gaps or build capacity on the how-to of a process. The enabling environment in which electoral assistance was provided varied considerably among the evaluation's case-study countries, as demonstrated by their governance indicators (see Figure 14), which in turn demonstrate that progress is not always linear. Many of the problems that manifested around the holding of elections are often symptomatic of other problems that, when not addressed, result in the electoral process losing credibility among citizens, boycotts by opposition parties and sometimes violence. This was clearly the case at different points in time for several of the evaluation case-study countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Chad, Guyana, Haiti, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon and Mexico.

Many of the problems relating to the enabling environment are structural and stem from the winner-take-all nature of electoral and political systems. In these cases, UNDP and others may have made a substantial contribution when a reform-minded government or electoral management body was in place, but sustaining such gains beyond their terms and the actual event was difficult if sufficient change had not also been made to the broader environment. It is interesting to note, however, that even in mission contexts, gains made in voice and accountability have been generally maintained over the past decade. Yet these were not accompanied by similar progress on strengthening the rule of law—an important accountability element required for credible electoral processes.

Mexico offers an example of sustainable change. With the support of UNDP and the United Nations, Mexico expended a significant and successful effort to turn a EMB captured by political interests into an independent and professional electoral management body, *Instituto Federal Electoral* (Federal Electoral Institute [IFE]). This has been sustained over time, as there was a strong national commitment to making this happen. Not only has Mexico become a model for the transformational change of its electoral system, it has also become an exporter of electoral

Figure 14. Governance Indicators: Comparison between 2000 and 2010



Source: World Bank Governance Indicators 2000-2010.

knowledge and assistance. That effort has also been supported by UNDP both through direct technical support to IFE to help it develop its international training institute, but also through support of its exchanges with other electoral management bodies in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. As Mexico is a net contributor to the United Nations, the Government of Mexico funds all UNDP support. IFE is also a partner in ACE, along with UNDP and EAD. Ghana is another example of a similarly successful transformation sustained by the political will for change and commitment to free and fair elections by the electoral management body.

In the case-study countries of Afghanistan and Bangladesh, national and international partners raised concerns about sustaining the advances of past elections as electoral commissioners come up for replacement. The gains made have not yet to be institutionalized or reflected in the two countries' enabling environments, making them vulnerable for regression. In other cases, such as in Chad, Guyana, Lebanon and Mozambique, civil society groups and opposition parties raised concerns that UNDP was not sufficiently addressing the root causes of the problems, which they felt meant that any advances made on the technical sides would not be sustainable.

Chapter 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions should be seen as being mutually reinforcing and conveying an overall sense of UNDP strengths and challenges in contributing to these important national processes that are essential to peace and security, and to democratic and human development. The recommendations highlight areas in which UNDP could strengthen its contribution, bearing in mind its mandate and comparative strengths in the sector.

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1: UNDP has made significant contributions towards strengthening electoral systems and processes.

UNDP played a significant role in the strengthening of electoral systems and processes over the past 20 years, assisting almost 80 percent of the countries that received United Nations electoral support.[113] This assistance was instrumental to the holding of credible elections in complex post-conflict environments and sensitive political transitions. In particular, the UNDP contribution resulted in more professional electoral management, more inclusive processes, and more credible elections than would have been the case without its assistance. In some cases, the elections simply would not have happened without UNDP support and that of its donors and partners.

UNDP is uniquely placed to address the real, usually long-term, challenges faced in a democratization process, to which credible electoral processes are indispensable. Its development perspective, larger democratic governance portfolio of programmes, long-term relationship with host governments and United Nations-system status are its strongest assets. These provide UNDP with the standing, expertise and moral authority to advise countries on these sensitive and highly political national processes. Such characteristics also confer upon UNDP the legitimacy to represent the international community in its collective efforts to support these processes and help ensure that they meet international standards. In fulfilling this role, UNDP has provided a highly valued service and contributed to the global expansion of democratic practices. At the same time, as discussed in Conclusion 3, the results obtained by UNDP remain predominately at the technical level and a more systematic focus on strengthening the credibility aspects of the process as well as its technical aspects would improve UNDP contribution.

Conclusion 2: The UNDP framework for electoral assistance is well conceived and enables an effective response, if applied appropriately.

The evaluation findings validated the UNDP electoral assistance framework. UNDP was most effective at promoting sustainable and credible electoral processes, systems and institutions when its electoral assistance was integrated into a more holistic package of support—one that targeted the enabling environment alongside the technical aspects of the process and integrated a long-term vision for the end result of all assistance. Successful efforts combined soft with hard

113 United Nations, 'Report of the Secretary-General on Strengthening the Role of the United Nations in Enhancing the Effectiveness of the Principle of Periodic and Genuine Elections and the Promotion of Democracy' (A/64/304), 14 August 2009; and UNDP Bureau for Development Policy statistics.

assistance, targeted policy makers and technical implementers, and strengthened the range of entry points and their ability to contribute to a stronger, more democratic process. UNDP efforts were more successful when its support went beyond electoral management body assistance to also strengthen other key stakeholders within civil society, legislature, political parties and the media. This package of assistance did not come entirely from UNDP or from any one group, but rather combined and coordinated the efforts of national and international actors and institutions. Successful efforts also placed the strengthening of electoral processes at the centre of the larger process of strengthening democratic governance.

However, more systematic and sustained efforts to implement this type of longer-term holistic support are needed. Although this broader approach was often evident within the scope of the United Nations response in a mission context, it was rarely sustained beyond the end of the mission or during the periods between electoral events, when significant gains could have been made. At the same time, evaluation case studies demonstrated that even when UNDP was able to undertake a substantial synergistic effort with its partners in the non-mission context, the focus tended to remain on achieving the event rather than strengthening the process, which limited the potential impact and sustainability of the UNDP contribution.

Conclusion 3: The impact of the UNDP contribution is reduced when normative United Nations values are not consistently applied in electoral programming and implementation.

UNDP was most effective when its assistance was grounded in the normative values of the United Nations for democratic development. With electoral assistance in its third decade, many other actors can now provide technical solutions that improve procedural aspects of electoral management, strengthen logistical operations or better distribute information. However, UNDP is the only organization able to represent national as well as international interests, situate the pieces of assistance within the broader framework of electoral and democratic development, and impart this larger sense of purpose. In this regard, UNDP is irreplaceable.

As an institution, UNDP has fully embraced this role, which is clearly reflected in its strategic plans and programme guidelines. However, this is not as evident at the country level, where the sense of purpose seems to depend more on the individual perspectives of Resident Representatives and Chief Technical Advisers and, within United Nations mission contexts, on the role that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Electoral Assistance Division envision for UNDP, rather than on delivering a consistent institutional response. Where such sense of purpose is missing from country-level programmes, UNDP credibility and its ability to make a meaningful difference is seriously undermined.

Conclusion 4: The building of cost-effective, context appropriate and sustainable solutions is not consistently prioritized, limiting the effectiveness of UNDP efforts to build national ownership in the electoral processes.

Elections have become expensive undertakings. Some support, particularly in countries that received large-scale mission assistance, has resulted in the creation of systems that some of them cannot afford or manage without continued international assistance. As such, UNDP should focus on promoting more affordable and context-appropriate electoral systems and on building national capacity to manage them, thus avoiding a perpetual cycle of assistance and dependence. UNDP understands the issues and how to address them at the technical level, as illustrated in its choice of entry points and the adoption of the electoral cycle approach. In some cases, UNDP has effectively empowered national actors through its capacity building and increased South-South exchanges, by facilitating the more active participation of civil society and others, and by connecting those interested in improving the processes to global knowledge networks.

But they are not always put into practice as a result of the continuing event focus, unrealistic timelines and lack of national or international interest in the longer-term developmental aspects of electoral assistance. In addition, sustainability requires widespread national support for political processes. Ownership issues that manifest around the electoral process, such as low participation or conflict, will continue if not addressed, threatening democratic advances and their sustainability.

Conclusion 5: UNDP procedures are not adapted sufficiently to the fast-paced needs of electoral support, adversely affecting UNDP performance and relevance.

The issue of UNDP ability to perform adequately in a timely manner was raised consistently across all contexts of assistance. These are systemic issues that relate to the way UNDP administers its programmes and the amount of due diligence the organization devotes to some parts of the process. Issues more specific to electoral support include the amount of time it takes to decide on the provision of support and the type of assistance to be provided (which also involves EAD timing issues), find the right people to staff a project within a reasonable period of time, and procure equipment and materials within the tight timelines of the electoral processes. Procedural shortcomings in this area are also related to the lack of effective systems to ensure implementation guidelines are used at the country level, to maintain institutional memory in the country office, and to provide donors with accurate, sufficiently detailed and timely reporting on project performance and use of funds. The lack of a consistent response and slow institutional processes negatively affect UNDP performance and its relevance as an electoral assistance provider.

Until recently, UNDP was the default institution for donors for a great deal of their international electoral assistance. It is still the default mechanism for assistance for mission contexts, because of its multilateral nature and ability to manage large-scale operations and basket funds. However, there are now other credible alternatives for providing selected technical support, and these are increasingly being considered and used by donors and national stakeholders. The use of these other options is likely to increase, if UNDP does not streamline the way it manages electoral assistance programmes or the way it engages the multiple partners on the ground. Timely delivery of assistance is critical for successful electoral support, and programmes that cannot deliver within a prescribed time-frame lose relevance and are rarely effective, regardless of which organization provides the assistance.

Conclusion 6: The nature of UNDP partnerships affects its performance and may, in some cases, need to be framed differently from those of other UNDP programmes.

UNDP has a long and rich history of working closely with governments, public administrations, civil society, elected officials and others. This is often a comfortable association, with strong, long-term relationships and joint efforts on government development priorities and projects. But electoral assistance is very different from other non-democratic governance–related assistance. The electoral sector is highly political, and even seemingly technical decisions on which activities to support can have political implications that can benefit an incumbent party or encourage more genuine political competition. The government is the most important institutional partner for the UNDP country office in its development programme. However, in an electoral competition, the government is usually an actor in the electoral race and has a stake in the outcome. This changes the dynamics of the UNDP-government relationship.

Although electoral management bodies are the most likely UNDP counterparts for providing electoral assistance, and the United Nations framework allows such bodies to submit national requests for assistance, many country offices are reluctant to provide assistance without the official approval from the executive for the content of the assistance programme. In these country offices, the concern that they could jeopardize their development agenda if they assisted in areas not specifically requested by the government directly affected the nature of electoral assistance, limiting its scope

and meaning. On the global scale, UNDP efforts to develop partnerships with the European Union for the Joint Task Force, and with others for the ACE, BRIDGE and iKNOWPolitics projects, have effectively expanded the UNDP reach. However, with the exception of BRIDGE, the substance of these partnerships needs to be better coordinated and leveraged at the country level.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.2.1 INSTITUTIONAL AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION SETTING

Recommendation 1: UNDP should intensify efforts to build the shared sense of purpose among headquarter, country-office and project teams, and to improve their understanding of the UNDP approach and programming options for electoral assistance.

UNDP should ensure that its institutional frameworks, vision for electoral assistance, and how these fit within the broader United Nations electoral assistance framework are more fully understood by staff and key stakeholders working at the country level. This should include training for country office and project staff on how UNDP promotes the normative United Nations values and fulfils an impartial role in the provision of electoral assistance. UNDP should better leverage the considerable amount of its knowledge products and expertise within the Bureau for Development Policy, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and some of its more experienced Resident Representatives through more systematic dissemination, networking efforts, and follow-up to its community of practice meetings. This would increase the consistency, effectiveness and relevance of the UNDP contribution.

UNDP should also consider more intensive and comprehensive induction training—on the organization's institutional vision and implementation guidelines on electoral assistance—for new Resident Representatives, Chief Technical Advisers, senior country office management and governance unit staff. This training should take place well in advance of the initial needs assessment mission so that a representative of the country office can participate in the mission and more effectively contribute to its findings and recommendations. Networking efforts between country-office governance and electoral project staff, and among offices and regions should be expanded.

Recommendation 2: UNDP should assess the way it frames relationships with national authorities for electoral projects, and develop a model that embodies United Nations impartiality with its long-standing relationship within a country.

UNDP should guard its reputation as an impartial provider of electoral assistance, because this reputation can play a critical role in managing local political dynamics while promoting the broader requirements of electoral integrity. UNDP should ensure that its involvement in an electoral process serves as a mark of legitimacy, providing confidence to electoral management bodies to take the right decisions and dissuading nondemocratic forces from making frivolous claims or disrupting the process. UNDP should ensure that all country offices are aware of the option of providing support based on a request from an electoral management body. UNDP should focus its technical and normative assets on strengthening these independent institutions to enhance their standing in society and reinforce the political role they play as arbiters of the electoral contest.

In cases where a primary counterpart may be within the host government's Executive branch (such as the Ministry of Interior), the country office should distinguish electoral technical assistance from other, non-political forms of technical assistance. The means by which this distinction could be made include hosting of a needs assessment mission, appointing a Chief Technical Adviser with clearly defined authority, establishing a consultative mechanism with representatives of civil society and opposition political parties, and appealing to UNDP and EAD when the executive institution appears to be coming under political pressure from the incumbent administration.

Recommendations 3: UNDP should ensure a more consistent grounding of its electoral assistance in the broader democratic governance framework to better incorporate the values of that framework.

UNDP should more firmly ground electoral assistance in its larger democratic governance programme to give more meaning to its support. Specifically, this means working more systematically to build synergies among different democratic governance programmes, some of which may already be assisting women's groups, civil society advocates, media, political parties and members of parliament. This process should start by taking advantage of existing opportunities and becoming more systematized as part of the Country Programme Action Plan process. This requires better diagnosis of governance issues and designing the governance programme, including electoral assistance, around that analysis. In contexts marked by a lack of political will, and where repeated electoral technical assistance has not resulted in the envisioned outcomes, UNDP should ensure that country offices are given full headquarter and regional support through mentoring and backstopping. In cases where there is no political will for competitive multiparty processes, UNDP should carefully assess its support options, as assisting parts of a process under such circumstances is tacit approval of them. Country offices with upcoming electoral events should be prioritized for training on the organization's new political economy-based analysis and on how to integrate this political analysis into soft and hard assistance. Strengthening contextual analyses and integrating early warning systems into electoral assistance programming could help country offices and regional bureaux identify potential triggers for electoral conflict and develop mitigation and prevention responses at the policy and technical levels.

Recommendation 4: Beyond addressing technical needs, UNDP programmes should strategically focus on the areas of critical need for credible, inclusive processes.

UNDP should be strategic in the choice of areas where it offers assistance and not try to address everything requested by national authorities or donors. The agency should also ensure that all of its hard and soft assistance, training and activities directly contribute towards the achievement of a more credible, peaceful and inclusive process. UNDP should concentrate on ensuring that the most essential needs of the process are covered through its mobilization and coordination role, and, in conjunction with national and international partners, determine which partners are best-placed and able to address specific needs. This process should be based on sound analysis of the political and electoral context, prioritization of needs and a clear exit strategy. UNDP should ensure that its own programmes effectively leverage its United Nations status, multinational nature and development mandate, and that such programmes focus directly on strengthening the credibility of the processes assisted. In particular, UNDP should do more to exploit its convening capabilities and its comparative advantage of facilitating national dialogue on needed electoral reforms and reducing the winner-takes-all nature of electoral systems. Strengthening multiparty political systems should be a part of this process. These types of activities are, by their very nature, process issues, and UNDP should allow sufficient time for them to be carried out both before and after the electoral event.

Recommendation 5: UNDP should prioritize efforts to clarify the application of the United Nations electoral assistance policy framework to more effectively fulfil the institutional mandate of development assistance.

UNDP should seek to resolve the differences arising from the application of the United Nations electoral assistance policy framework where it affects UNDP ability to fulfil its development mandate. Senior UNDP managers should engage with the United Nations Focal Point to discuss these issues and seek a synergistic application of the framework so that UNDP, as well as other United Nations organizations, are able to make the best use of their institutional mandates in support of these important national processes. UNDP should continue its efforts through the Inter-Agency Coordinating Mechanism on Electoral Assistance to resolve operational issues.

4.2.2 PROGRAMMATIC IMPROVEMENTS

Recommendation 6: UNDP should strengthen implementation of electoral cycle projects so they are able to retain their process-oriented focus.

UNDP should strengthen its efforts to fully implement electoral cycle projects by focusing on the process alongside the event. UNDP should provide country offices, Chief Technical Advisers and project teams with training on the electoral cycle approach, improve dissemination of implementation guidelines, and promote increased networking and peer-to-peer exchanges among electoral management bodies and civil society organizations in the periods between electoral events. UNDP should also leverage the range of entry points in an electoral cycle approach to reach media, political parties, legislators and others to strengthen the process and promote the independence of electoral management bodies, whether they are formally independent or part of the executive branch. UNDP country offices should also be more proactive in the period between elections to maintain relationships with such bodies and election-oriented civil society organization (such as local observer groups) to promote improvements in electoral processes, electoral dispute resolution mechanisms, electoral management body independence and electoral law. Engagement with donors regarding post-election activities should begin long before the electoral event, in order to avoid losing momentum in the crucial months after an election. A post-election strategy that places due emphasis on sustainability and an exit strategy should be prepared as part of any election assistance project document.

Recommendation 7: More emphasis and effort are needed to reduce the costs of some of the supported processes and ensure they are context-appropriate and sustainable.

UNDP should renew and re-energize its efforts to develop cost-effective, sustainable solutions for electoral processes and institutions, and to build the national ownership needed to manage and maintain these systems. UNDP should facilitate the development of local solutions for local problems and avoid over-reliance on expensive imports, including inappropriately high-tech solutions implemented in low-tech contexts. UNDP should increase focus on strengthening national and, where relevant, subnational capacity and expertise for strategic planning, management, timely procurement and budgeting. Appropriate benchmarking, monitoring and budgetary controls should be considered to help foster cost-awareness. Elections are big business for some, particularly for vendors, and UNDP should assist electoral management bodies and civil society organizations in developing transparent and accountable procedures that reduce opportunities for economic and political corruption.

Recommendation 8: UNDP should streamline its electoral assistance processes to ensure that they are more efficient in the fast-paced environment of the electoral process they support.

UNDP should review the chain of its electoral support processes from conceptualization to assistance delivery. Some procedural and efficiency issues are internal to UNDP, while others stem from the larger United Nations framework of response and require resolution. In particular, this applies to the relationship between UNDP and the Electoral Assistance Division and the extent of the latter's authority over UNDP programmes. Timelines to review include those pertaining to the receipt and processing of assistance requests, needs assessments and selection of their participants, and project formulation, negotiation and adoption. UNDP should also closely examine and streamline its recruitment and procurement processes. In addition, UNDP should encourage: the development of impact analysis for its work; a standard template to better track, monitor and report on the accomplishments of projects and their costs by intended outcomes; and more systematic efforts to document and share UNDP institutional memory. UNDP regional bureaux and the Bureau for Development Policy should strengthen oversight and monitoring of electoral programmes and improve the capacity of concerned staff, particularly for problematic processes or projects.

Annex 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE

JUSTIFICATION

Strengthening electoral systems and processes has been a major component of UNDP work to strengthen democratic development since 1976. They are an important part of good governance as well as democratic transitions and the implementation of peace accords. The ultimate goal is to *deepen democracy and accelerate sustainable human development by giving all people the ability to participate in the decisions that affect their lives* (Strategic Plan 2008–2011) and *hold their representatives accountable for commitments and results* (MYFF 2004–2007). To achieve these goals, UNDP has focused on strengthening electoral laws, processes and institutions in order to strengthen inclusive participation and professionalize electoral administration, which are its intermediate outcomes. How well UNDP has supported attainment of these intermediate outcomes is the focus of this evaluation. In addition, the relevance of UNDP electoral assistance for improving human development, especially in nations in transition and post-conflict circumstances will also be addressed. Thus the ultimate effect of UNDP electoral assistance is also an important dimension of this evaluation.

In UNDP, the governance practice area generally takes over 75 percent of resources and electoral assistance accounts for a consistently high proportion of resources within the area. The vast majority of electoral assistance funding is third-party cost-sharing (non-core) mobilized at country level. Since 1991, UNDP has provided assistance to over 68 countries. Currently UNDP supports about 60 countries. Analytical work by BDP indicates the UNDP scope of work now covers all dimensions of the electoral cycle- pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral phases. Within that, UNDP focuses on electoral system reform, strengthening electoral administration, building sustainable electoral processes (which among other things includes support for voter registration and elections), civic and voter education, the mobilization and coordination of resources for electoral support, political party strengthening, electoral dispute resolution, support for media, increasing women's participation, and domestic observation. In using these entry points, UNDP covers both the demand and supply side for free and fair elections as well as the upholding of international standards as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments. It does so at the national, regional and local levels depending on the context and request for assistance.

The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and the head of Department of Political Affairs (DPA) serves as the UN Focal Point for electoral assistance. All requests for assistance must go through the Focal Point who advises the Secretary General on requests from Member States and decides on whether the UN will provide assistance in a given country. S/he also defines the broad parameters of assistance and ensures consistency of assistance. UNDP has the mandate to deliver technical assistance for electoral support in all contexts and works in partnership with the Electoral Assistance Division (EAD) of the DPA since the EAD's inception in 1992. This coordination draws on the Guidelines for Electoral Assistance jointly developed at the time and updated periodically by EAD/DPA and UNDP.

Although UNDP provides electoral assistance in all contexts, Security Council resolutions and peacekeeping mission contexts usually place EAD in the lead in mission countries. Many of the mission countries involve large peacekeeping operations managed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) others may

just have a special political mission. UNDP also works closely with the United Nations Volunteers, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Office of Project Services. In 2006, it entered into a partnership with the European Commission, creating a joint task force and shared operational guidelines for the implementation of elections assistance programmes and projects. In addition, UNDP works closely with other bilateral and multilateral organizations and donors as well as national governments, civil society, political actors, other stakeholders and other electoral assistance providers.

Anecdotal evidence suggests emerging dynamism in how UNDP has been responding to increasing demands and evolving situations throughout the world. UNDP has national and international recognition for its elections support assistance. Its field presence and years of working within the country provides an in depth understanding of the developmental, social and political context within which elections take place. As a member of the United Nations, UNDP is perceived as an objective assistance provider that is able to work effectively with government as well as with civil and political society and can address the range of sensitive issues involved in electoral processes and systems.[114] These, coupled with its ability to mobilize donors and to bring the government and the international community together, give it its comparative advantage and a clear leadership role in this sector.

While a considerable number of issues of elections support have been resolved, there still exists a certain level of uncertainty in the division of roles and responsibilities that are still being worked out. There are also questions of how well UNDP and the United Nations in general understand the playing field and the complex nature of power relations, the links between elections and violence, incentive systems, political culture, and socio-political factors that contribute to the ultimate result of the electoral process, particularly in fragile states and post-conflict contexts.

There have been selected analytical notes, reviews and selected project evaluations of UNDP electoral assistance. However, there has been no systematic and strategic evaluation of UNDP role and contribution to strengthening electoral systems and processes. This evaluation responds to the request from the Executive Board and will provide an independent perspective on UNDP performance and its continued value in strengthening electoral systems and processes and their potential effects in deepening democracy. The evaluation will address some of the issues identified above, as well as other to be defined following a more in-depth literature search, discussions with various stakeholders of the evaluation as well as input from an Independent Advisory Panel of experts to be selected to enhance the robustness of the evaluation.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

This evaluation will guide UNDP in advancing its role in responding to government demands, in strengthening electoral systems and processes, and in contributing to enhance national and global efforts in establishing a sound foundation for democracy and stability. It will help to develop a more comprehensive understanding of how UNDP has engaged electoral assistance, the results attained and their effects and durability. It will shed light on successful cases and on what works, why and how, and will provide a basis for developing sound lessons for the future. It will examine the strategic niche of UNDP and its continued role in supporting electoral assistance. In this regards, the evaluation will support the accountability of UNDP as well as will guide the improvement of practice.

114 For the purposes of this evaluation, the term 'electoral system and process[es]' will be used in the broad sense to mean the various systems and procedures that goes into an electoral process (rather than the type of voting system such as the proportional representation system.

Particular focus will be directed at examining: the historical evolution over time since 1976 in its conceptualization and approach and relationship with the nature of demand from governments; the role and responsiveness to diverse political contexts and evolving situations; the ways it builds on its comparative advantage to address challenges and opportunities; the level of enhanced capacity and support for associated systems that enhance sustainability of capacities, the way it has managed partnerships within the UN system and supports coordination with other development partners. A particular focus will be given to the role in enhancing the human development dimensions that provide the foundation for sustainable democracy. These include the importance of civil society and its values, human development for tolerance, respect for process over personality, respect for human and political rights, and respect for the rule of law. At the same time, it is important to note that having a successful elections process is an important part of these larger processes, but is only one of many factors that contribute to the deepening of democracy and improved human development. An important part of the evaluation in examining the strategic approach will include addressing coordination with EAD/DPA and the larger UN body and other donor partners in addressing risk factors, in developing policies, and in implementation.

EVALUATION OF UNDP PERFORMANCE – THE RELEVANCE, EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF UNDP SUPPORT

The evaluation will determine the appropriateness, scope of coverage for inclusive participation, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNDP programmes, projects and activities directed at supporting countries to strengthen their electoral systems and processes. How UNDP responded to government demand in addressing immediate term needs as well as longer-term sustainability requirements of capacity development in establishing electoral systems, professional electoral administration and strengthening civil and political society to participate will be of focus. In this regard, UNDP work and success in moving from a focus on events to supporting an integrated assistance approach tied to the broader democratic governance agenda and the electoral cycle will be an important area of investigation. The evaluation will also examine how the objective of inclusive participation is reflected in the nature of UNDP work and the effectiveness of UNDP in addressing issues such as equity, gender empowerment and the outreach to various groups including disadvantaged groups and youth.

Equally important is the nature of partnership with EAD/DPA in responding to requests and the efficacy of this partnership in addressing risk factors, and enhancing an effective and stable support for electoral systems. An understanding of the factors that affect performance will be of critical importance in helping define lessons for improvement in policies, programmes and operations in general.

The success of performance on the ground is influenced by several factors including how UNDP is organized at the corporate level to support operations. The evaluation will examine the organizational structure and the role of UNDP Practice and Regional Bureaux and Service Centres in strengthening electoral systems development. Success is also affected by national social, cultural and political-dynamic factors. The evaluation will examine such factors and will also include an analysis of global conditions that affect success.

EVALUATION OF STRATEGIC POSITIONING

The evaluation will also assess how well UNDP has positioned itself to address the growing and changing demand for electoral support, as well as to address the challenges, and opportunities to enhance the goals of democratic governance via electoral assistance in the different contexts. To accomplish this, the evaluation will differentiate between mission and non-mission contexts as this directs the United Nations response. Mission assistance is mandated by a resolution

of the Security Council or General Assembly and includes peacekeeping and special political missions. In this context, the EAD has the lead for electoral assistance. In non-mission contexts, UNDP has the lead. In terms of context, the evaluation will differentiate between immediate post conflict, conflict/transition and development (development refers to where the development programme is being implemented and there is no peacekeeping or political mission or post-conflict/transition taking place), and take into consideration in those other important elements such as state fragility, social cohesion, degree of electoral maturity, and other factors as noted above that affect the effectiveness and types of UNDP assistance. This framework will be significant in studying UNDP's strategic approach to supporting electoral systems and process. Equally important would be how UNDP engaged various development partners to support governments and national institutions, and how they worked together to achieve common objectives.

SCOPE OF WORK AND APPROACH

The evaluation will focus on UNDP work on electoral assistance between 1990 and 2011 as outlined below.

1. *Historical description and analysis*: One of the first tasks of the evaluation is a description and analysis of the history of UNDP electoral assistance dating back to 1976. This historical outline will not only provide the evolution of support but will also highlight changes and progress as well as identify hypotheses for analysis in the evaluation.
2. *Portfolio analysis 1990–2011*: The second task is an analysis of the nature and configuration of the portfolio of projects and programmes dating back to 1990 and will use the areas where UNDP provides the bulk of its assistance as identified above: electoral systems, electoral reform, electoral management body support, support to the process, civic and voter education, increased women's participation, electoral dispute resolution, media, political party strengthening and coordination/mobilization of electoral support. The portfolio analysis will provide a basis to describe UNDP work, but also guide the analysis of long-term effects, the selection of countries for case study, and the selection of specific critical themes for in depth study
3. *The analysis of the long-term effects*: It is expected that the work done in many of the large missions in the 1990s will show the longer term results in the 2000s. There is information available on 68 countries for which UNDP provided support during this time. There are also a number of good indicators, including UNDP Human Development Report that has good data for that time period that can help to measure change. Based on a defined theory of change, the evaluation will seek to explore associations between UNDP work and observed results in countries of support. It is expected that this work will be based largely on desk review and analysis with consultations as deemed necessary.
4. *In-depth country case study of performance and strategic positioning*: The portfolio analysis will provide concrete information on the configuration of UNDP support that would help in categorizing countries for analytical case study. In conducting country case studies that would allow an analysis of performance in various contexts, the evaluation will differentiate by the type of UN response (mission and non-mission, with or without the electoral cycle approach and context (peacekeeping and development). It will select countries that illustrate the different aspects of UNDP work, such as conflict prevention, focused technical assistance to a mature electoral management body, and work done with civil society and political parties. As there is such a range of countries with diverse contexts, regions and responses by UNDP, the evaluation is likely to chose around 15 countries for short case studies done primarily by a desk-review, supplemented with questions specifically related to the evaluation (asked

virtually), and with short in country visits for those cases without adequate information.

The number of case studies will be guided by the principles of analytical generalizability (focus on a theory of elections in various contexts) rather than on the statistical generalizability more appropriate for deductive research. The case studies will also draw upon information from existing ADRs and outcome evaluations via a systematic meta-analysis. It will also explore integrating a set of questions with ongoing ADRs, e.g. Democratic Republic of the Congo, or coordinating follow-up questions or issues with ADRs like Liberia and Egypt. Other documentation on electoral processes within countries is widely available including international and domestic observer reports, news reports, electoral and political analyses and in mission countries, reports to the General Assembly and Security Council.

5. *Evaluation of critical themes/areas for study*: Besides the evaluation of performance on a sample of countries, the evaluation will also carry out an evaluation of a set of key themes that are significant in UNDP electoral assistance. These would be particularly important for developing a more in-depth understanding of UNDP work and of lessons to be generated. On a preliminary basis, themes that have been identified include the following: support in post-conflict countries and the transition from a mission-led electoral process to a UNDP-led process; UNDP role in upholding international standards; support to voter registration and issues of sustainability; South- South cooperation and the UNDP contribution to this area (for both the electoral management body and civil society organizations); partnerships; and national ownership of the process. The portfolio analysis and configuration to be carried out (see above) will help focus the themes. For this part of the evaluation, coordination will be explored with the ongoing UNDP lessons learned exercise looking at the long-term electoral assistance and their effects on sustainability, capacities and cost effectiveness. The evaluation will also explore coordination with the ongoing United Nations evaluation of its peacekeeping missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti—both of which include a look at their electoral assistance.
6. *Evaluation of how UNDP is structured to support its work on electoral assistance:* This organizational analysis will be conducted based on a clearly defined portfolio of questions and will be based on desk reviews of secondary data as well as interviews.

DATA COLLECTION AND GENERATION

In addressing all six areas, the evaluation will use a variety of data collection methods some of which have been indentified to include: desk review and analysis of secondary data; surveys and interviews for country case studies, thematic studies, UNDP organizational and institutional structure; meta analyses of existing UNDP evaluations.

THE EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team will comprise a core team of several international evaluators, one of whom will be the Team Leader. Other experts and regional and local experts will be recruited, as necessary, to support the conduct of country case studies, thematic studies or analytical notes. The Evaluation Office will recruit all team members. The composition of the evaluation team should reflect the substantive focus of the exercise. The Team Leader must have has Team Leader experience and demonstrated capacity to think strategically, develop evaluation methodologies, provide policy advice and work effectively within a team of experienced international experts. S/he must have had practical experience on electoral assistance as well as experience working a diverse range of countries.

The team composition will reflect a range of experiences in development and evaluation. The team should have expertise and solid experience in

electoral assistance, democratization, governance in general, conflict prevention and management, and the work of UNDP in electoral assistance. It is also expected to have extensive knowledge of issues relating to the United Nations reform process and principles of results-based management. Also extensive knowledge of the work of various development partners and academia on the subject is important. All team members must possess educational qualifications in the social sciences or related disciplines. The selection of team members should in no way compromise the independence of the evaluation. All team members will abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System, as approved by the members of the United Nations Evaluation Group on 19 July 2007, and will sign a declaration accordingly.

An Evaluation Office Task Manager will provide overall managerial and coordination support. He/she will also play a pivotal role in providing quality support and in facilitating the quality assurance process. The Evaluation Office Task Manager will provide substantive advice to the Team Leader as necessary and ensure that the evaluation is undertaken in accordance with EO policy. He/she will also be responsible for the overall organization of all aspects of the evaluation and serve as principal liaison with relevant units within UNDP including country offices as well as outside stakeholders. An Evaluation Consultant will assist with research and other aspects of the evaluation.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

An independent Advisory Panel, comprising at senior experts from academia, government, the UN and major institutions addressing governance and elections will be established to advise the Director of the Evaluation Office on the evaluation's scope, methodology, findings, conclusions and recommendations.

A reference group of headquarters-based peers from UNDP and other entities will be constituted to provide periodic comments on the evaluation's scope, methodology, findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Two senior Evaluation Office evaluators will be appointed provide quality support throughout.

The Evaluation Office Director and Deputy Director will provide oversight and guidance in the design and conduct of the evaluation.

Annex 2

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this evaluation, we use the following definitions of key terms that appear in the analysis and in the various sections of the evaluation report. The electoral definitions are from the UNDP/EC Joint Task Force training glossary for electoral assistance, and the entry point definitions are from the UNDP Practice Note on Electoral Systems and Processes. The gender definitions are from UN Women.

ENTRY POINTS

- **Electoral System Reform:** Involves political institutions undergoing institutional reform to make them more broad based, inclusive and representative. Purpose of assistance is to help foster accountability between the government and the governed.
- **Electoral Administration:** Building independent and permanent electoral management bodies (EMBs). Assistance focuses on strengthening institutions, helping them with legal reforms, offering professional-development programmes to election workers, building greater public information and outreach capacity, and helping countries with election-related resource management.
- **Sustainable electoral processes:** These activities aim to expand democratic participation, particularly among women and other under-represented segments of society. UNDP efforts include awareness-raising activities that highlight the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a functioning democratic society.
- **Mobilization and coordination of resources for electoral support:** The sensitivity and importance of electoral reforms and processes can attract wide international interest. UNDP can serve as a conduit for financial contributions and participation by third parties.
- **Strengthening political parties:** An emerging area for UNDP is to ensure parties are involved in voter registration and education efforts, and to improve party campaign and media strategies, strengthen party caucuses within legislatures and make parties accountable for their commitments to address gender imbalances at the leadership level. This work is closely linked with institutional development, since more effective, democratic and transparent parliamentary party caucuses allow legislatures to work more effectively.

ELECTORAL TERMS

- **Civic education:** An information and/or educational programme, which is designed to increase the comprehension and knowledge of citizens' rights and responsibilities.
- **Credible and inclusive elections:** Taken from Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: (1) everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country. (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.
- **Democratic consolidation:** The process by which a country's political institutions and democratic procedures become legitimised, stable and broadly accepted by both political actors and the wider population.

- **Electoral administration:** The measures necessary for conducting or implementing any aspect of an electoral process.
- **Electoral cycle:** The full series of steps involved in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of an election or direct democracy instrument, viewed as one electoral event in a continuing series. In addition to the steps involved in a particular electoral process, it includes pre-electoral activities such as the review of relevant legal and procedural provisions and electoral registration, as well as post-electoral evaluation and/or audit, the maintenance of institutional memory, the process of consultation and the planning of the forthcoming electoral process.
- **Electoral dispute resolution**: The process of hearing and adjudication of any complaint, challenge, claim or contest relating to any stage of the electoral process.
- **Electoral law:** One or more pieces of legislation governing all aspects of the process for electing the political institutions defined in a country's constitution or institutional framework.
- **Electoral management:** The process of execution of the activities, tasks and functions of electoral administration.
- **Electoral management body (EMB**): The organization tasked under electoral law with the responsibility for the conduct of elections. The EMB in most countries consists either of an independent commission appointed for the purpose or of part of a specified government department.
- **Electoral period:** That central part of the electoral cycle containing a series of steps involved in the implementation of a particular electoral process, usually starting with the official announcement of polling day and ending with the announcement of final results.
- **Electoral process:** The series of steps involved in the preparation and carrying out of a specific election or direct democracy instrument. The electoral process usually includes the enactment of the electoral law, electoral registration, the nomination of candidates and/or political parties or the registration of electors, the campaign, the voting, the counting and tabulation of votes, the resolution of electoral disputes and the announcement of results.
- **Electoral regulations:** Rules subsidiary to legislation made, often by the electoral management body, under powers contained in the electoral law, which govern aspects of the organization and administration of an election.
- **Electoral system:** That part of the electoral law and regulations, which determines how parties and candidates are elected to a body as representatives. Its three most significant components are the electoral formula, the ballot structure and the district magnitude. More simply it is defined as a way in which votes cast are translated into seats or offices won.
- **Electronic voting**: Any method of voting using electronic means, including the use of electronic machines, the Internet, telephones, mobile phones or digital television. Often referred to as e-voting.
- **First generation election:** The first election taking place post-conflict countries or newly formed states.
- **Fraud**: Intentional deception to gain unjust advantage.
- **Gender**: Refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men, and girls and boys as well as the relations between women and those between men.
- **Gender equality**: Equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men, girls and boys. This implies that the interest, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men.
- **Governmental model of electoral management:** An electoral management

model where elections are organized and managed by the executive branch of government through a ministry, such as the Ministry of the Interior, and/or through local authorities.

- **Independent model of electoral management:** An electoral management model where elections are organized and managed by an EMB which is institutionally independent and autonomous from the executive branch of government, and which has and manages its own budget.
- **Institutional memory**: The ability of an organization to retain understanding, expertise and physical records in order to be able to access and use these even after the passage of time or after a major or total change of personnel.
- **Internally Displaced Person(s) (IDP):** Persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border. In particular as a result of/or/in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights, or natural or human-made disasters.
- **International observer:** Representative of an international organization, association, government or professional body, who is authorised and accredited to observe and assess the preparation for or conduct of an electoral process in a foreign country.
- **International standards:** International standards for elections stem from political rights and fundamental freedoms, which are enshrined in universal and regional instruments. These instruments establish legal and political commitments to meet specific standards in relation to elections. The standards used for this evaluation are from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, UN Convention on the Political Rights of Women, Charter of the United Nations.
- **Impartial:** Not biased or prejudiced towards any side in a contest or conflict.
- **Legal framework:** The collection of legal structural elements defining or influencing an electoral process, the major elements being constitutional provisions, electoral laws, other legislation impacting on electoral processes, such as political party laws and laws structuring legislative bodies, subsidiary electoral rules and regulations, and codes of conduct.
- **Mixed model of electoral management:** Government runs the elections under the supervision of an independent body, such as in Timor-Leste and Cote d'Ivoire.
- **Monitoring (election):** An activity, which involves the authority to observe an electoral process and to intervene in the process, if relevant laws or standard procedures are being violated or ignored.
- **Needs assessment:** A method to address institutional sustainability, by which an organization informs itself of its current management capabilities and the resources, financial, technological and human, necessary to organize and conduct its activities. It can also be external, as done in the DPA needs assessments.
- **Observation (electoral):** A process under which observers are accredited to access an electoral process, and may assess and report on the compliance of the electoral process with relevant legal instruments and international and regional standards.
- **Post-electoral evaluation**: A retroactive evaluation of the conduct of an electoral process, or specified parts of that process that is completed after the electoral period.
- **Post-electoral period:** One of three periods of the electoral cycle, during which audit and evaluation takes place and during which legislation, regulations and administration are reformed and developed.
- **Pre-electoral period:** One of three periods of the electoral cycle, during which planning and

preparation for the conduct of elections take place, and during which legal and procedural provisions are reviewed.

- **Procurement:** The process by which goods and services are purchased.
- **Second or third generation election:** Elections taking place second or third in post-conflict countries or newly formed states.
- **Transparency:** Openness, visibility of process or event to the public. Improves accountability and trust.
- **Turnout:** The proportion of registered voters who voted.
- **Voter:** A person who casts a vote at an election or under a direct democracy instrument.
- **Voter education:** A process by which people are made aware of the electoral process and the particulars and procedures for voter registration, voting, and other elements of the electoral process.
- **Voter information:** A short-term programme focusing on specific electoral information, which aims to give relevant factual information about an electoral process to voters on a timely basis.
- **Voter registration:** The activity directed at identification of those citizens who are eligible to vote in a given election.
- **Voter registry:** A register accounting for all citizens who are eligible to vote.

Annex 3

CASE STUDY COUNTRIES: CONTEXT AND BASIS FOR SELECTION

Country	Context	Issues of particular interest to the evaluation[a]
Case studies with in-country field work		
Bolivia	Non-mission, development, topical assistance. Mature EMB.	(i) Relevance and effectiveness of topical support rather than electoral cycle; (ii) relationship between DPA and UNDP and how this affected the nature of UNDP support to the country; (iii) effectiveness of assistance that promoted political party dialogue and fostered inclusive participation; (iv) effect of supporting ICT with the electoral court on strengthening the broader electoral processes and systems.
Chad	Former mission, conflict/transition, event and electoral cycle support. Opposition boycott of last elections.	(i) UNDP's role and ability to promote international standards and strengthen entry areas beyond electoral administration; (ii) relevance and effectiveness of electoral cycle support in a context of low levels of human development, instability and displacement; (iv) effectiveness of partnership with UNVs and others for programme implementation; (iv) effectiveness of social cohesion efforts, conflict prevention and keeping political actors within the process.
Guinea Conakry	Non-mission, conflict/transition, electoral cycle support. ICT for registration	(i) Effectiveness of coordination/division of roles and responsibilities between UNDP (electoral assistance) and the UN Office for West Africa based in Senegal (political issues and crisis prevention/high level diplomacy efforts); (ii) efficiency of UNDP's management of its global funded project[b] and EC electoral funds; (iii) effectiveness of civic education and conflict prevention assistance; (iv) ICT support for voters list and issues of sustainability; (v) if long-term UNDP support generated political capital that UNDP was able to use effectively to assist the transitional elections
Guyana	Non-mission, conflict/transition, electoral cycle support. Long-term recipient. Social cohesion issues.	(i) Effect of long term UNDP assistance on building institutional capacity to manage the process and develop credible and sustainable systems; (ii) effectiveness of joint UN/EAD programme for social cohesion and to stem elections-related violence; (ii) relevance of UNDP assistance in the polarized context of ethnic voting, where the minority is outvoted by the majority, and effectiveness of programming to promote power-sharing and inclusive processes; (iii) strategic position of UNDP given the above.
Haiti	Mission, post-conflict, conflict/transition. Almost continuous mission context since 1990s.	(i) Relevance and strategic positioning of UNDP within an integrated mission, and its ability to address the root causes of the problems; (ii) efficiency of UNDP support and extent it builds on previous programmes and its institutional memory; (iv) effectiveness of political dialogue and conflict-prevention activities; (v) lessons learned.
Kyrgyzstan	Non-mission, electoral cycle, transition. Long term recipient. Regional coordination.	(i) Effectiveness of efforts to strengthen national management of process; (ii) degree of national ownership given the length and scope of UNDP assistance; (iii) if EMB capacity building increased its professionalism and if this in turn increased citizen trust in the results and deepened democratic development; (iv) relationship and coordination of UNDP with the regional DPA office in Turkmenistan which played a preventive diplomacy role. (Comparison with Guinea)

Country	Context	Issues of particular interest to the evaluation
Lebanon	Mission, topical assistance, conflict/ transition. State run elections through Ministry of Interior.	(i) Effectiveness of UNDP technical assistance to the Ministry of Interior and sustainability of results; (ii) relevance and effectiveness of UNDP's strategic position and focus on capacity building in the context of a polarized political climate with a history of political violence; (iii) effectiveness of event driven support rather than process electoral cycle support.
Case study done primarily as desk study but with some in-country interviews		
Afghanistan	Mission, immediate post-conflict, large-scale event and electoral cycle assistance. On-going transition from internationally-managed process to national ownership	(i) UNDP's role and ability to position itself strategically to best provide assistance within a large peacekeeping operation and international assistance effort; (ii) effectiveness of UNDP in: providing appropriate technical assistance and strengthening its entry areas given the difficult context, managing a large basket fund (22 donors), and developing national ownership of the process; (iii) role of personnel and coordination on national/international perceptions of UNDP's relevance, effectiveness and credibility; (iv) effectiveness and efficiencies of partnerships with UN mission, international community, national and local authorities, CSOs and others.
Case studies with the field work done in coordination with the BDP in-country research		
Bangladesh	Non-mission, conflict, electoral cycle and event assistance. Frequent electoral and political boycotts. Key role played by UNDP in last elections.	(i) Role of UNDP with DPA/EAD and representatives of the SG in resolving last electoral crisis and factors for that success; (ii) strategic positioning of UNDP and effectiveness of efforts to break the cycle of political/electoral boycotts; (iii) role of "soft" assistance vs. "hard" assistance and their relative merits; (iv) impact of UNDP support to developing the physical infrastructure for the EMB and the nationwide biometric voter registry and their sustainability, (v) extent and effect of South-to-South exchanges generated from UNDP assistance. Well-documented assistance.
Mexico	Non-mission, development, topical assistance. South-to-South cooperation	(i) UNDP's role in the development of credible and trusted electoral processes and institutions; (ii) relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of supporting development of the international electoral training centre; (iii) role and effect of UNDP management of government funds for domestic observers; (iv) development of EMB bilateral assistance programme and its partnerships with UNDP in international assistance; (v) best practices and lessons learned.
Mozambique	Former mission and immediate post-conflict, now development, electoral cycle. Successful transition to nationally managed process	(i) Factors for successful transition to national processes and UNDP's role in this transformation; (ii) if continued assistance has contributed to a more professionally administered electoral process and more open and pluralistic political environment; (iii) South-to-South cooperation; (iv) best practices and lessons learned.

[a] List of issues is not intended to be inclusive. In each country, the team asked a range of evaluation questions.
[b] Global Fund for Electoral Cycle Support (GPECS), which is managed out of the UNDP office in Brussels.

Annex 4

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Annex 6

PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS OF UNDP ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES: KEY INFORMATION

The Evaluation Team asked 82 UNDP country offices identified as providing substantial electoral assistance to respond to a series of questions and provide information on electoral assistance projects since 1991. The team received 52 responses, which are summarized in this annex.

Part 1. Configuration of 52 country offices (regional, mission versus non-mission)

Mission/Non-Mission	Country
Africa	
Non-Mission	Benin
Non-Mission Country	Burkina Faso
Mission (PKO 2004-06; UNOB 1996-1999, 2000-03, 2004-07; BINUB 2004-07, BNUB 2010-11-CURRENT)	Burundi
Non-Mission Country	Cape Verde
Mission (PKO 1960-1964)	Congo
Non-Mission	Gambia
Mission (UNOGBIS 1996-1999, 2000-03, 2004-07; UNIOGBIS 2006- CURRENT)	Guinea-Bissau
Mission (PKO 1993-1997 2003-CURRENT)	Liberia
Non-Mission	Madagascar
Non-Mission	Malawi
Non-Mission	Mauritania
Non-Mission	Mauritius
Mission (PKO 1992-1994)	Mozambique
Non-Mission	Nigeria
Non-Mission	Niger
Non-Mission	Sao Tome & Principe
Non-Mission	Swaziland
Non-Mission	Zambia
Asia & Pacific	
Mission (UNAMA 2000-03, 2004-07; PKO 1988-1990, 2002-2010-CURRENT)	Afghanistan
Non-Mission	Bangladesh
Non-Mission	Bhutan
Mission (PKO 1991-1992-1993)	Cambodia
Mission (PKO 1965-66, 1971-Current)	India
Non-Mission	Indonesia
Missions (UNMIN 2004-2007, 2011)	Nepal
Latin America & the Caribbean	
Non-Mission	Philippines
Non-Mission	Thailand
Non-Mission	Argentina
Non-Mission	Belize
Non-Mission	Bolivia
Non-Mission	Chile

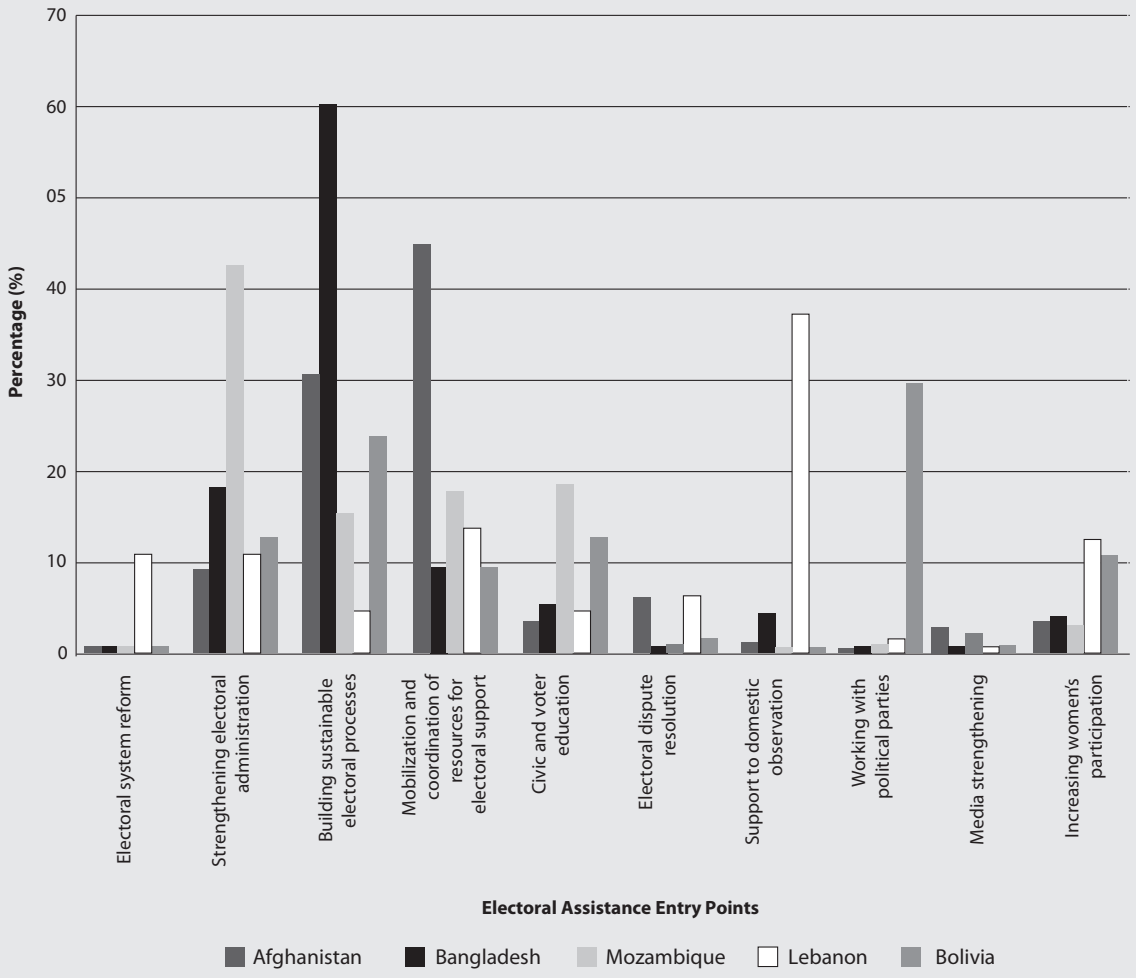
Part 1. Configuration of 52 country offices (regional, mission versus non-mission)	
Mission/Non-Mission	**Country**
Latin America & the Caribbean	
Non-Mission	Costa Rica
Non-Mission	Guyana
Non-Mission	Mexico
Non-Mission	Honduras
Non-Mission	Panama
Non-Mission	Paraguay
Non-Mission	Suriname
Arab States	
Mission (PKO 1988-1991-2003; UNAMI 2000-03, 2004-07, 2008-CURRENT)	Iraq
Non-Mission	Jordan
Mission (UNSCOL 2008-2009, 2007-CURRENT; PKO 1958, 1978-1982-2000--2006-CURRENT)	Lebanon
Mission (UNSCO 1994-CURRENT)	Programme of Assistance to Palestinian People
Mission (2005-CURRENT)	Sudan
Mission (PKO 1974-CURRENT)	Syria

Part 1. Configuration of 52 country offices (regional, mission versus non-mission)	
Mission/Non-Mission	**Country**
Europe and the CIS	
Non-Mission	Albania
Non-Mission	Armenia
Mission (PKO 1993-2009)	Georgia
Mission (UNRCCA-United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia 2004-2007-CURRENT)	Kyrgyzstan
Non-Mission	Moldova
Non-Mission	Romania
Non-Mission	Tajikistan
Non-Mission	Turkmenistan

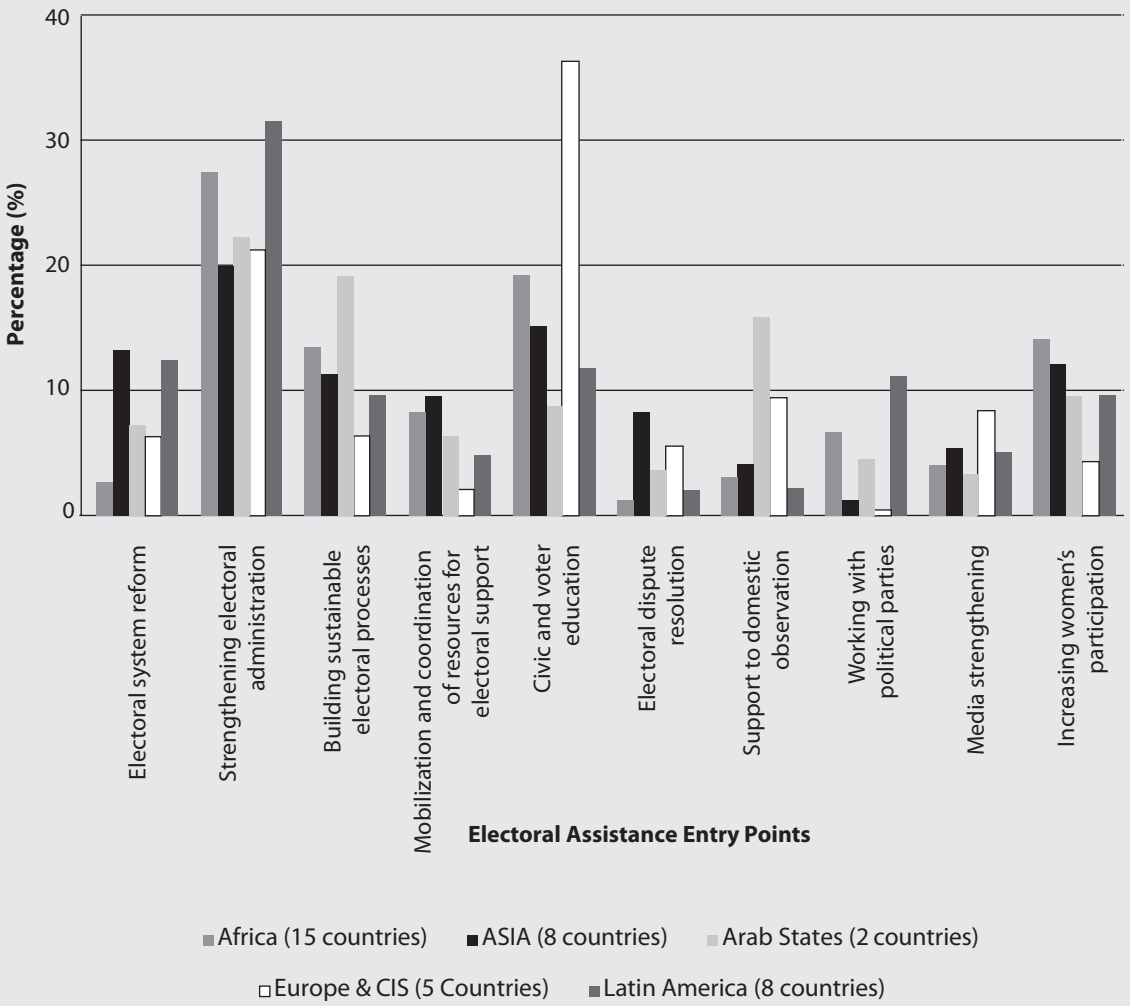
Previously known as North-South projects and North Sudan projects only. No South Sudan projects included. CO split into North & South Office as of July 2011.

Part 2. Budget and expenditures			
TOTAL of ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE BUDGETS for 52 country offices	1,863,486,906	**TOTAL of ELECTORAL ASSISTANCE EXPENDITURES for 52 country offices**	1,407,143,449

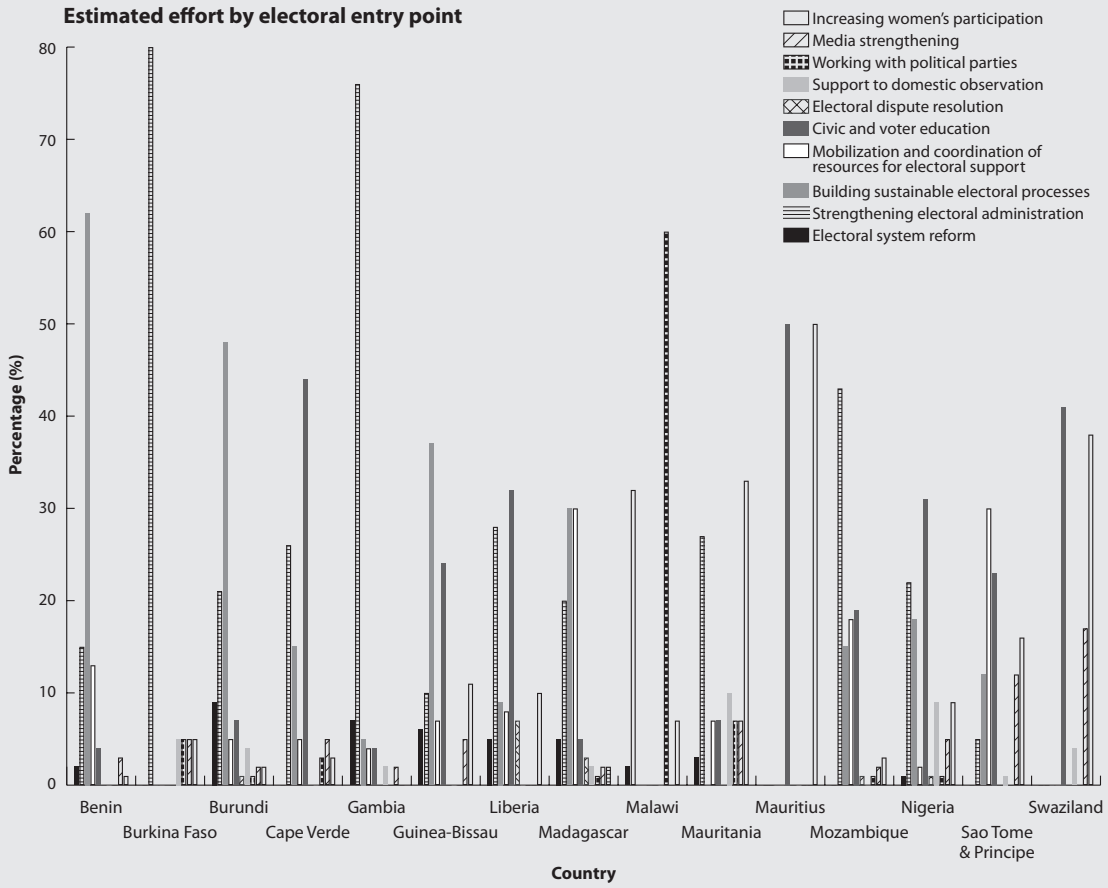
Part 3. Analysis of estimated efforts by electoral entry points for case study countries, 2002–2012

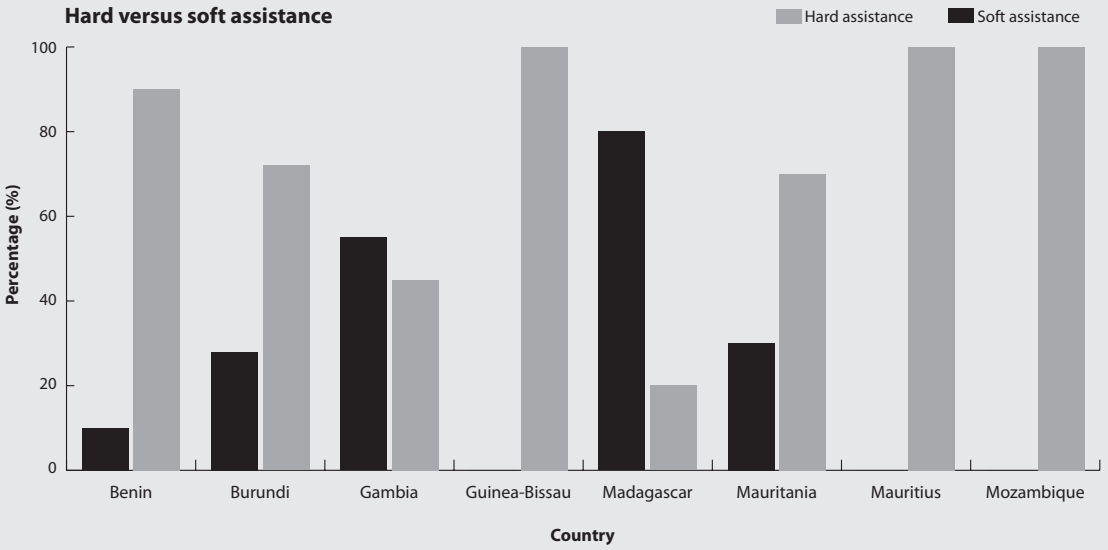


Part 4. Regional analysis of estimated effort (human and financial) by electoral entry point, 2002–2012

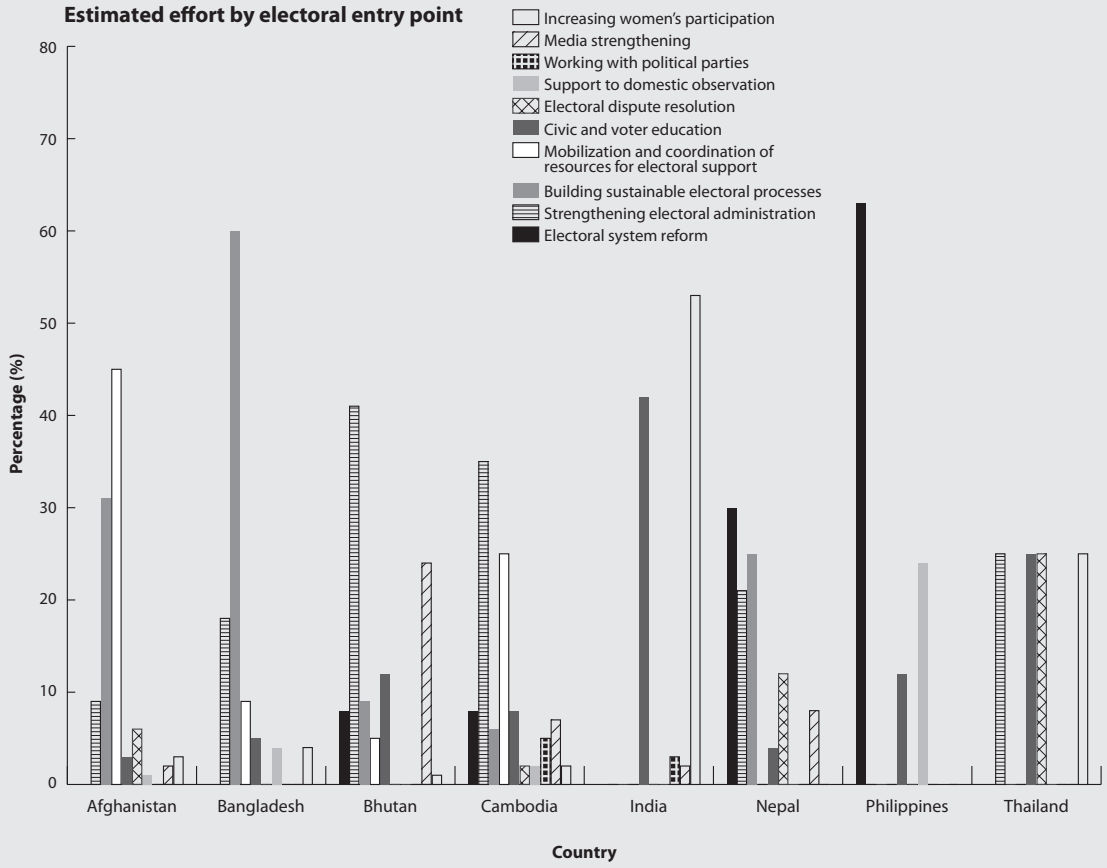


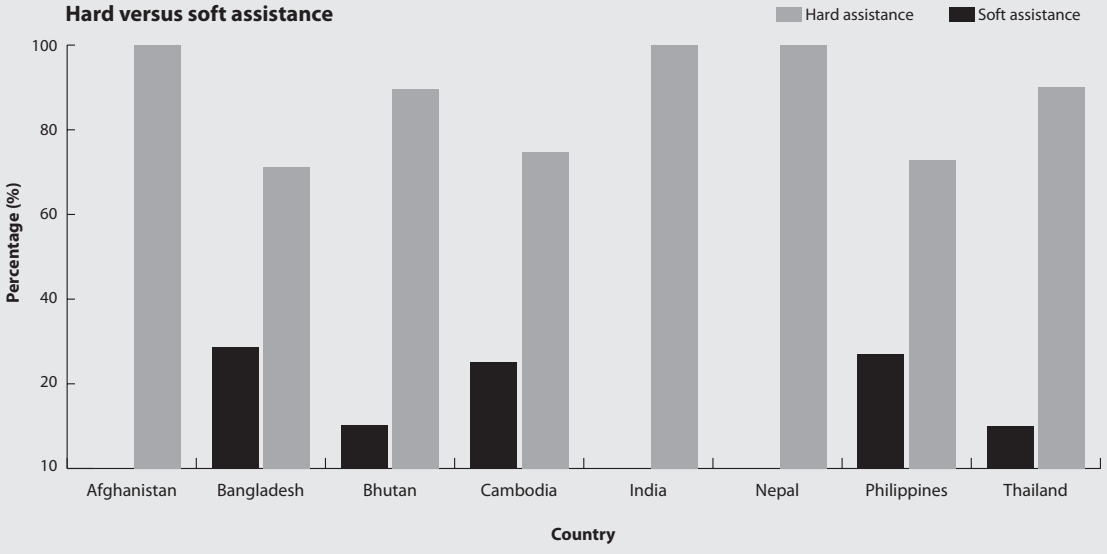
Part 5. Analyses of country offices within Africa region, 2002–2012



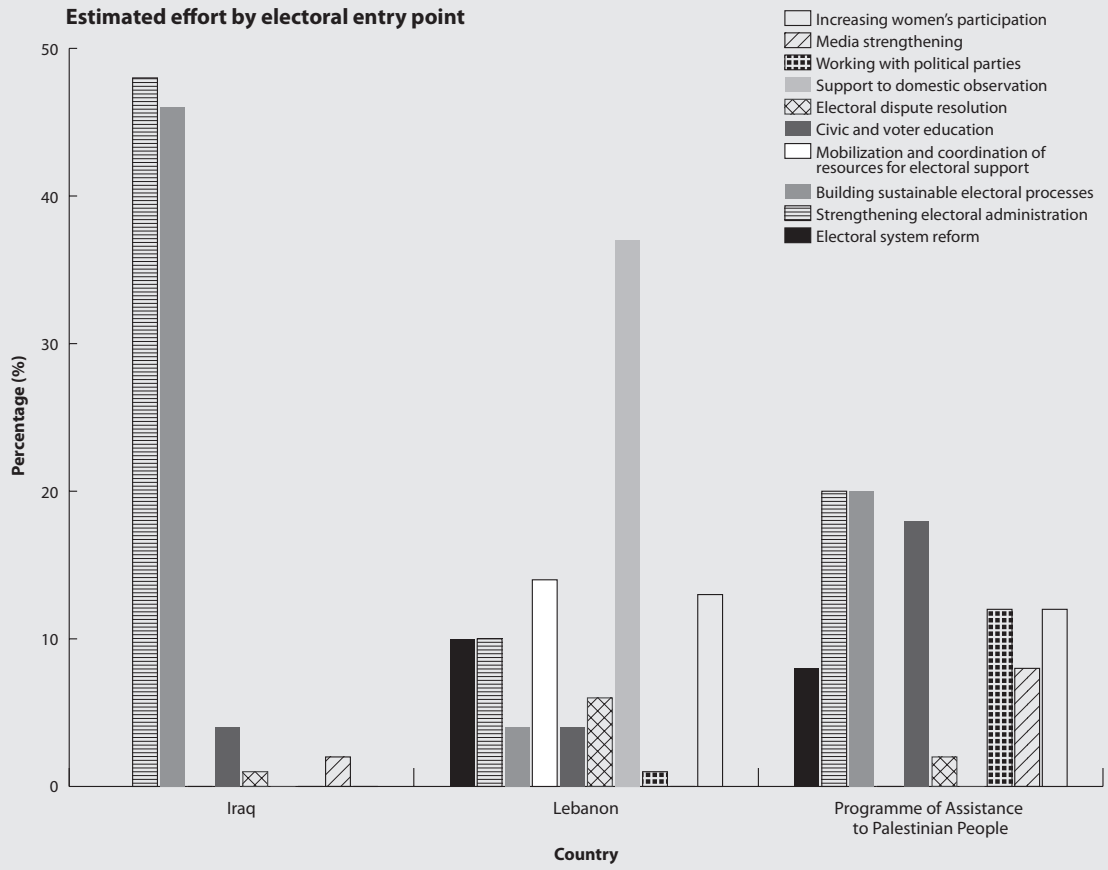


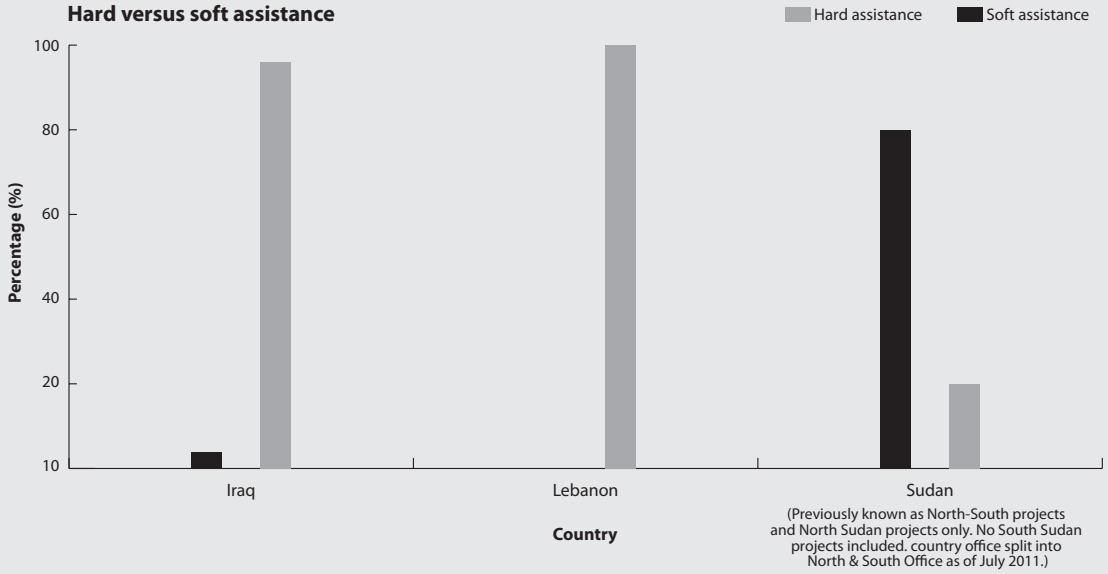
Part 6. Analyses of country offices within the Asia and the Pacific region, 2002–2012



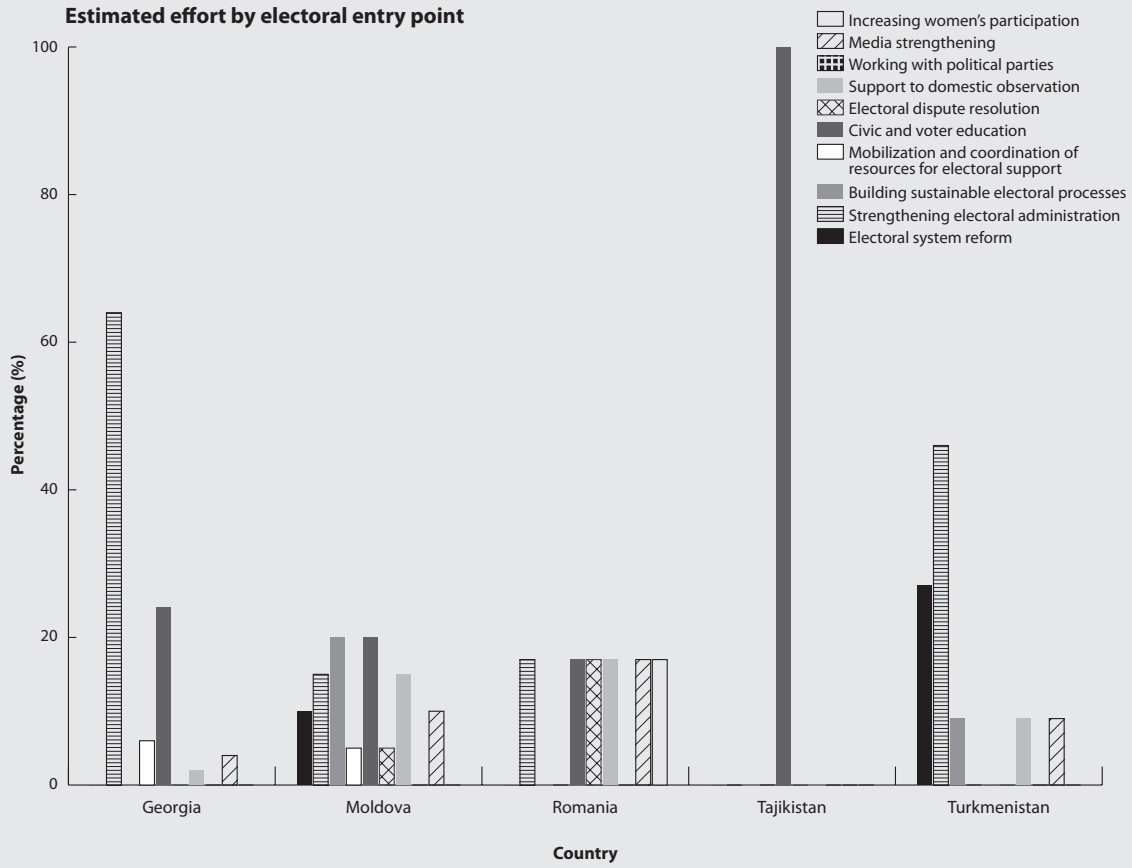


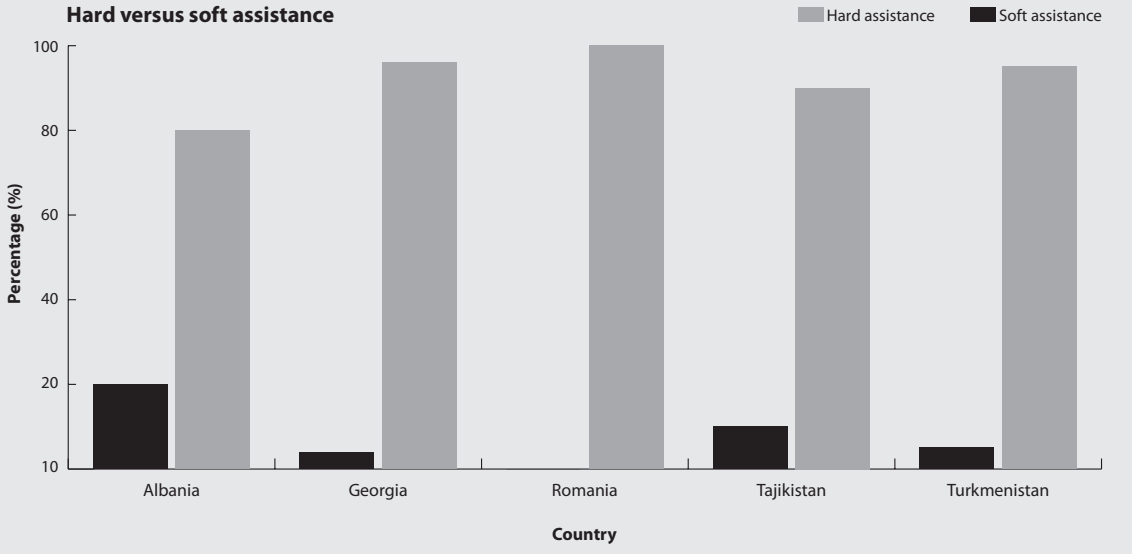
Part 7. Analyses of country offices within the Arab States region, 2002–2012



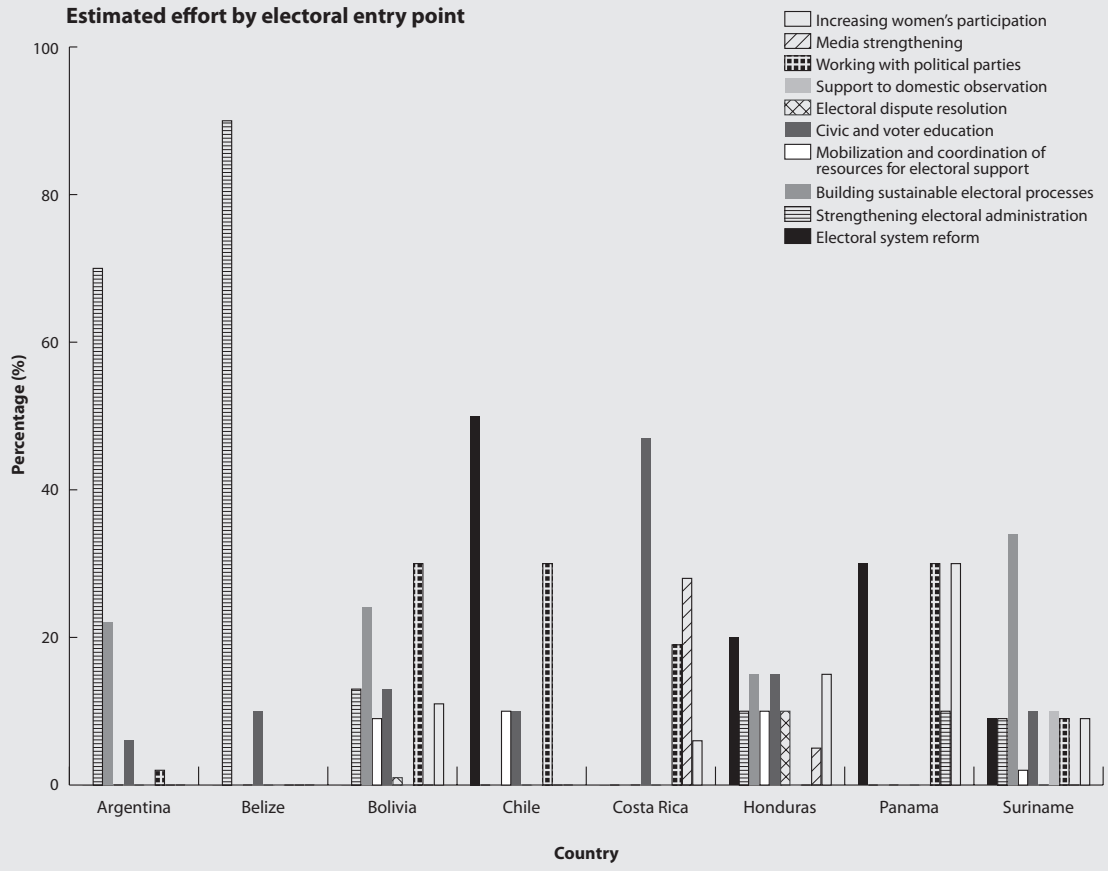


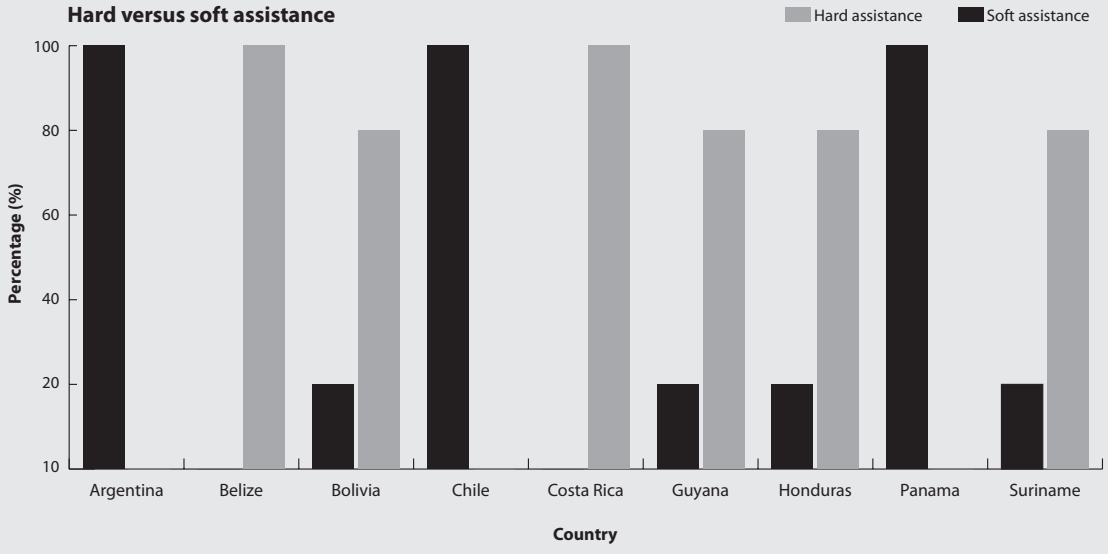
Part 8. Analyses of country offices within the Europe and the CIS region, 2002–2012



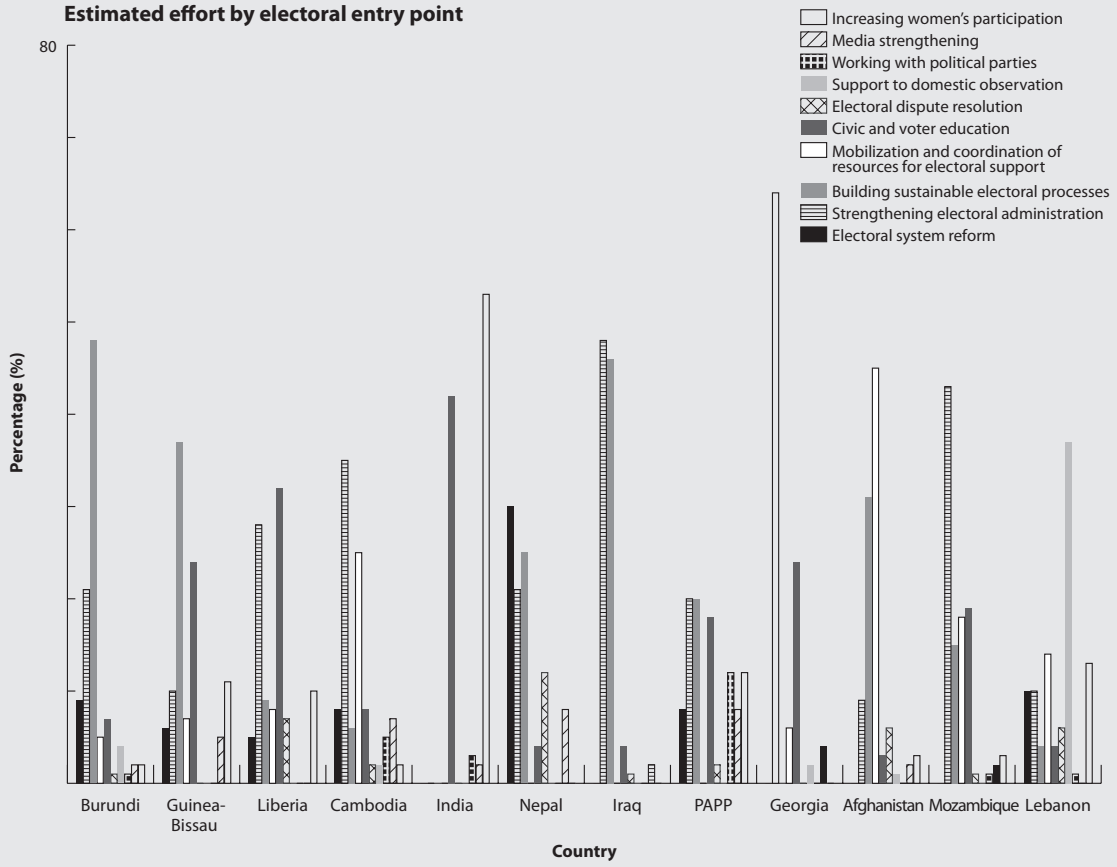


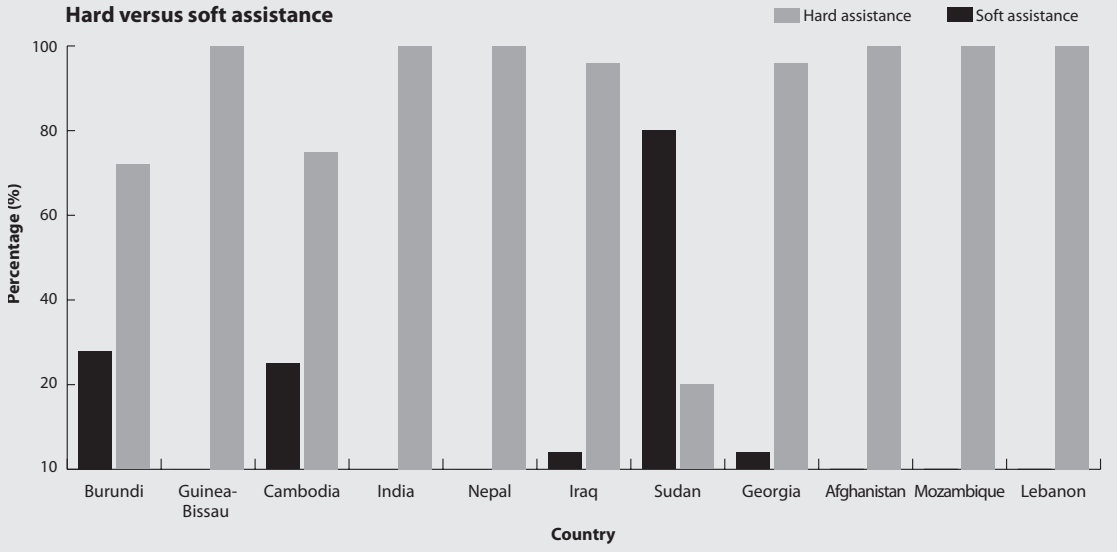
Part 9. Analyses of country offices within the Latin America and the Caribbean region



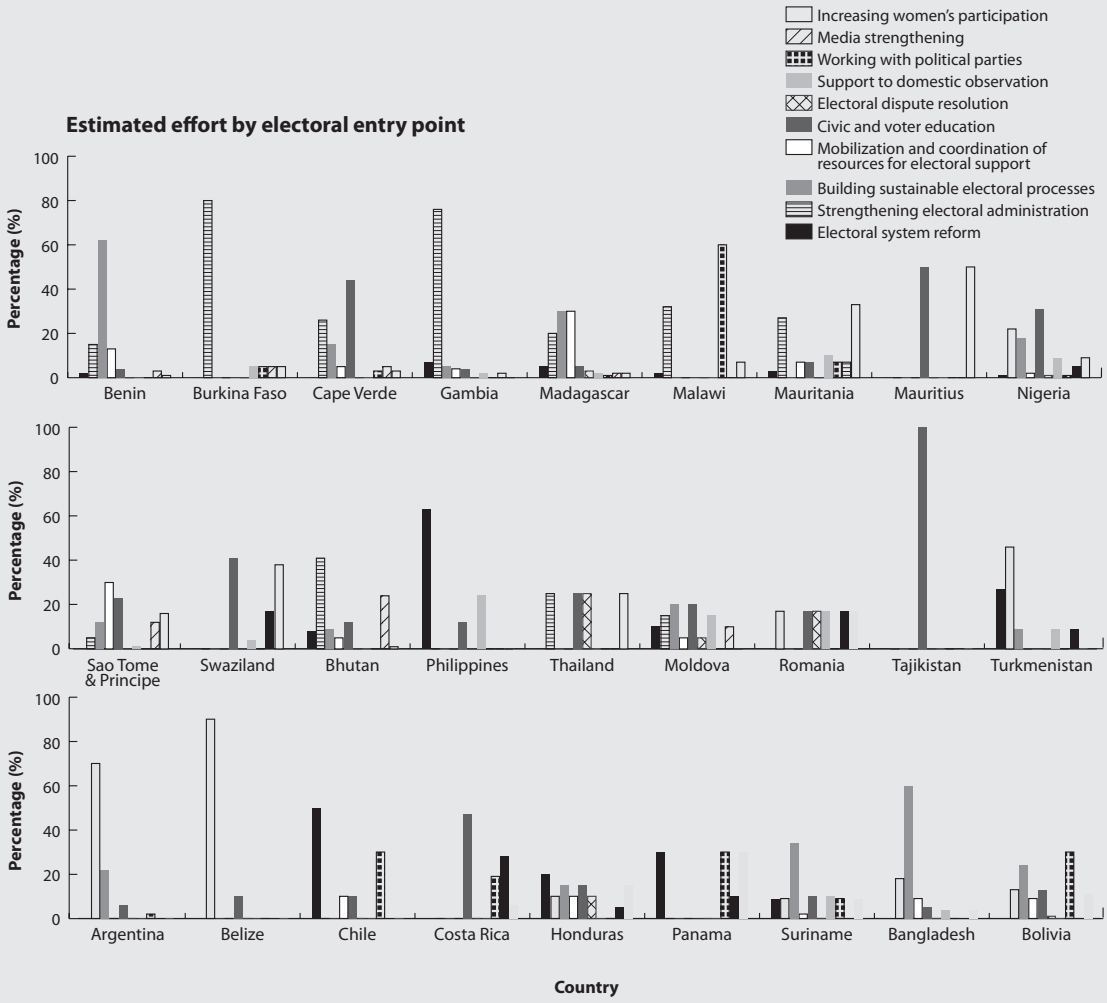


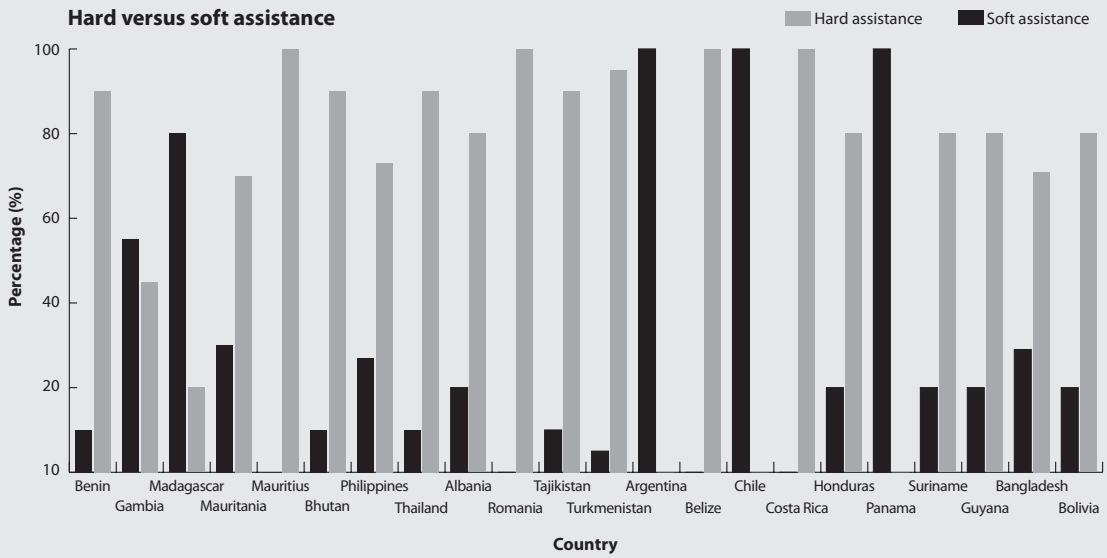
Part 10A. Analyses of mission countries, 2002–2012





Part 10B. Analyses of non-mission countries, 2002–2012





Annex 7

MAIN FINDINGS FROM EVALUATION SURVEY

The first part of Annex 7 provides the information on the survey respondents. The second part provides the survey information on their responses about the UNDP contribution to strengthening electoral systems, processes and institutions. Over 320 persons took the survey, which was open to anyone interested in UNDP electoral assistance. The questions were designed to capture the opinions of electoral management bodies, electoral practitioners, United Nations staff and representatives of local civil society organizations, media, donors and others working in the sector.

PART 1. INFORMATION ON SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Where do you work? (This should be where your office is located)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Africa	27.0%	80
Arab World	5.7%	17
Asia	13.9%	41
Caribbean	2.0%	6
Europe	14.5%	43
Latin America	8.1%	24
North America (excluding Mexico)	7.4%	22
Oceania	3.4%	10
Global (for those who change regions frequently)	17.9%	53
Answered question		**296**

Countries or territories where the survey respondents were working at the time they completed the survey

Afghanistan
Albania
Argentina
Armenia
Asia
Australia
Bangladesh
Belgium
Bhutan
BiH
Bolivia
Burundi
Cambodia
Cameroon
Canada
Central African Republic
Chad
Chile
Cote d'Ivoire
Denmark
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Egypt
El Salvador
Estonia
Ethiopia
France
Germany
Ghana
Guinea
Guinea Bissau
Haiti
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Iraq
Jamaica
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Kiribati
Kosovo
Kyrgyzstan
Liberia
Libya
Macedonia
Madagascar
Malawi
Malaysia
Maldives
Mali
Mauritius
Mexico
Moldova
Mongolia
Montenegro
Nepal
Netherlands
Nicaragua
Niger
Nigeria
Pakistan
Palestine
Papua New Guinea
People's Republic of China
Peru
Poland
Romania
Rwanda
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Solomon Islands
South Africa
South Sudan
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Swaziland
Sweden
Switzerland
Tanzania
Thailand
Timor-Leste
TOGO
Tunisia
UK
Ukraine
United States
Yemen
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Is your nationality the same as the country where you work?	
Answer Options	**Response Percent**
Yes	46.8%
No	53.2%

What is your gender?	
Answer Options	**Response Percent**
Male	69.1%
Female	30.9%

How long have you been working on electoral-related issues?	
Answer Options	**Response Percent**
Less than 1 year	2.4%
1 to 3 years	10.2%
4 to 10 years	32.2%
10 to 20 years	35.9%
More than 20 years	19.3%

What do you consider as your main affiliation?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Electoral Commission, Electoral Management Body or Electoral Court	16.2%	51
Parliamentarian, elected official or staff	0.6%	2
Political party leader or staff	0.3%	1
Government official or staff	1.0%	3
United Nations or affiliated organization	28.9%	91
Independent consultant (expert, observer, etc)	24.8%	78
Bilateral/multinational organization or political mission (DFID, EC, OSCE, SIDA, USAID, Embassies, etc)	6.3%	20
International NGO or consulting firm (such as IFES, NDI, etc)	7.9%	25
National NGO or Civil Society Organization	7.6%	24
Academic	0.6%	2
Journalist or media professional	0.3%	1
Private sector: electoral services or commodities	1.9%	6
Other (please specify)	3.5%	11

For those who marked that they worked for the United Nations or affiliated organization:

What organization do you work for?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
DESA	0.0%	0
DFS	0.0%	0
DPA	4.8%	4
DPKO	9.6%	8
EAD	15.7%	13
IOM	0.0%	0
OHCHR	1.2%	1
UNDEF	0.0%	0
UNDP	53.0%	44
UNOPS	1.2%	1
UN Women	0.0%	0
UNPOL/CivPol	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)	14.5%	12

Note: DESA – Department of Economic and Social Affairs; DFS – Department of Field Security; DPA – Department of Political Affairs; DPKO – Department of Peacekeeping Operations; EAD – Electoral Assistance Division (Department of Political Affairs); IOM – International Organization for Migration; OHCHR – Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; UNDEF – United Nations Democracy Fund; UNDP – United Nations Development Programme; UNOPS – United Nations Office of Project Services; UNPOL/CivPol – United Nations Police/ International Civilian Police.

For those who said they worked for UNDP:

How long have you been with UNDP?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Less than 1 year	14.3%	6
1-3 years	33.3%	14
4-10 years	38.1%	16
More than 10 years	14.3%	6

What is your primary work location?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
International headquarters	16.7%	7
Regional office	4.8%	2
Country level (national headquarters or office in the capital)	78.6%	33
Provincial or state level	0.0%	0
Local-level (city or other subprovincial office level)	0.0%	0

For those who said they were experts:

Which organizations do you work for the most?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
AusAID	5.5%	4
CIDA	15.1%	11
EAD	17.8%	13
European Union/ European Commission	16.4%	12
European Union/UNDP Joint Task Force	11.0%	8
DFID	4.1%	3
DPKO	12.3%	9
IFES	31.5%	23
International IDEA	12.3%	9
IOM	6.8%	5
IPU	0.0%	0
NDI	12.3%	9
OCSE/ODIHR	27.4%	20
UNDP	57.5%	42
UNOPS	9.6%	7
UNV	9.6%	7
USAID	15.1%	11
Other	13.7%	10
Other (please specify)	23.3%	17

Note: CIDA – Canadian International Development Agency; EAD – Electoral Assistance Division of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs; DFID – United Kingdom Department for International Development; DPKO – United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations; IFES – International Foundation for Electoral Systems; International IDEA – International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance; IOM – International Organization for Migration; IPU – Inter-Parliamentary Union; NDI – National Democratic Institute for International Affairs; OCSE/ODIHR – Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights; UNDP – United Nations Development Programme; UNOPS – United Nations Office of Project Services; UNV – United Nations Volunteers; USAID – United States Agency for International Development.

For those who said they worked for CSOs:

Please check the boxes that best describe your type of work		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Advocacy on electoral policy, legislation, systems	52.2%	12
Technical assistance or advisory services to election commissions	17.4%	4
Civic education and civic participation	56.5%	13
Electoral observation	78.3%	18
Elections and conflict, early warning systems	30.4%	7
Women in politics	17.4%	4
Human Rights	47.8%	11
Media	30.4%	7
Political party strengthening	21.7%	5
Electoral related evaluations and assessments	47.8%	11
Other (please specify)		1

Has your organization ever received funding from UNDP for an electoral support project or activity?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Yes, it is our main donor	0.0%	0
Yes, but it is only one of many donors	37.5%	9
Yes, but that was a long time ago	0.0%	0
No, no funding from UNDP	62.5%	15

For national organization including EMBs and CSOs

Have you received support from UNDP for your electoral processes?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Yes	41.5%	27
No	35.4%	23
Don't know/not applicable	23.1%	15

PART 2. SURVEY RESPONSES ON UNDP'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Did you feel there was an important area that needed strengthening that did not receive any international assistance?		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
No	37.5%	6
Yes (please explain in the box below)	62.5%	10
Managing procedures and enhancing accountability		
Managing internal procedures of UNDP. We (UNDP and EMB) must work on establish clearer basis for cooperation, to facilitate the process of accountability.		
There was need to assist buying operational vehicles for provinces and districts that are usable in the rough rural terrain.		
Resource mobilization		
The UNDP did not quite succeed in mobilizing donor support for Cameroon's 2011 presidential election. It also failed to meet its own engagement vis-à-vis Elections Cameroon in areas such as capacity building.		
Civic/voter education and reform		
In developing democracies civic/voter's education is very important factor, which requires more attention and work. This area did not get due attention and I personally feel that much more is required to be done especially women's participation in electoral system		
Voter education in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Training to electoral officials of election commission of Pakistan in general and in the tribal areas in particular-on sustained basis.		
Electoral system reform. Civic education. Build an Internal party democracy		
Capacity Development of electoral commissions		
Capacity Development of EMB staff and strengthening the capacity of domestic observer groups		
Zanzibar has for the first time in history conducted referendum in 2010. it was succesiful one but was conducted by people who were not conversant with it. i think it is a proper time for undp and other international organization to support zanzibar to build the capacity of zec staff with referenda experiences from different countreis matured in conducting referendum.		
Formatio, des membres de la Commission Electorale et des partis politiques		
Training of electoral officials in the field during voter registration and general elections		

How well do you think UNDP understands the needs and implications of electoral assistance within these different contexts? (Scale: 1 = does not understand; 5 = complete understanding)						
Answer Options	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Response Count**
UN mission context (peacekeeping or political missions)	8	32	59	80	52	231
Immediate post-conflict context	8	45	64	73	38	228
Fragile state or transitional context	8	40	80	67	36	231
Development-type context	6	19	65	83	52	225
Mature election commission or administration	8	34	67	72	45	226
Event-driven assistance approach	9	28	70	74	40	221
Process-driven assistance (electoral cycle) approach	10	32	71	64	46	223
Other context (please specify below)	4	4	11	3	14	36

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Scale: 1 = agree strongly, 5 = disagree strongly)						
Answer Options	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Response Count**
UNDP supports the most critical needs in our electoral process or for the elections I have worked on.	44	55	60	32	14	205
UNDP always upholds international standards for credible, competitive and fair elections in its work.	59	59	43	31	13	205
UNDP is an impartial provider of electoral assistance.	68	45	52	22	21	208
UNDP is too proactive in its support of electoral processes and systems.	21	38	58	56	23	196
UNDP's technical advisers are all experts in their fields and provide valuable technical assistance.	37	50	66	38	16	207
UNDP is able to deliver needed assistance within the tight timelines of the electoral calendar.	30	46	64	45	19	204
UNDP is trusted by all of the stakeholders.	45	46	62	38	13	204

Please rate the effectiveness of UNDP's support overall, and in the different areas it assists (Scale: 1 = lowest; 5 = highest)							
Answer Options	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**n/a**	**Response Count**
Overall	6	13	53	80	26	5	183
Policy, advocacy, brokerage for peaceful & credible electoral process	4	21	51	71	29	6	182
Electoral system reform	5	32	58	61	21	10	187
Strengthening electoral administration	3	19	52	72	39	4	189
Strengthening electoral processes (voter registration, polling, count, etc)	6	13	50	70	43	5	187
Mobilization and coordination of resources	6	15	48	52	56	8	185
Civic and voter education	11	23	62	55	27	8	186
Electoral dispute resolution	9	41	73	30	14	15	182
Support to domestic observation	13	34	60	40	24	14	185
Working with political parties	18	37	66	32	17	13	183
Media strengthening	13	39	62	34	21	11	180
Increasing women's participation	7	25	43	67	34	6	182
Election integrity	10	16	56	61	35	8	186
Election security	10	27	63	43	23	17	183

Do you think UNDP adequately includes gender and women's participation into its programming?	
Answer Options	**Response Percent**
Yes	63.5%
No	15.6%
Don't know/No opinion	20.8%

Do you think electoral cycle assistance is more effective than assistance provided for an electoral event or as a stand alone?	
Answer Options	**Response Percent**
More effective	85.2%
No difference between them	6.6%
Less effective	3.6%
Don't know/ No opinion	4.6%

How efficient is UNDP in the delivery of its support, overall and in these areas? (Scale: 1 = not efficient, 5 = extremely efficient)							
Answer Options	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**N/A**	**Response Count**
Overall	4	14	57	66	23	4	168
To deliver assistance within the timelines of an electoral calendar	6	29	48	73	27	4	187
To mobilize funds to support the process	7	13	51	72	37	7	187
To coordinate donors and avoid duplication of efforts for activities/support	7	23	50	63	35	8	186
To coordination positioning of the international community and soft support	10	18	59	52	34	8	181
To manage basket funds in support of the process	7	14	51	64	42	7	185
To recruit qualified staff and provide expert technical assistance when needed	13	29	51	62	27	3	185
To procure right items when needed and deliver them on time	10	27	60	54	24	9	184
To provide timely and useful reporting	7	19	55	61	31	7	180

To what extent has UNDP contributed to durable improvements in these areas: (Scale: 1 = low extent, 5 = high extent)							
Answer Options	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**N/A**	**Response Count**
Strengthened democratic governance	4	17	66	57	33	4	181
More broad based, inclusive representative and accountable governing institutions (elected bodies)	6	23	65	52	24	6	176
Credible elections held according to legal framework	6	9	63	72	26	3	179
More broad based constructive political parties	17	42	70	27	11	9	176
Increased women's political leadership and participation	10	28	57	49	24	10	178
Increased stability	7	26	74	41	18	11	177
More equitable policies	9	23	74	44	15	10	175
Improved electoral systems and processes	5	19	56	65	30	5	180
More professional electoral administration	3	21	42	72	37	4	179
Improved voter registration systems	6	18	52	63	34	6	179
More inclusive participation	6	17	59	53	30	10	175
Increased voter awareness of rights and responsibilities	8	18	64	56	22	8	176
More sustainable and cost effective election processes	14	26	60	46	19	7	172

How would you rate UNDP as a partner in this sector? (1 = lowest; 5 = highest)		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
1	3.7%	7
2	8.5%	16
3	30.7%	58
4	39.2%	74
5	18.0%	34

COMMENTS ON UNDP AS A PARTNER: CONTENT ANALYSIS OF OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Leadership role and what will make this better

- As the global leader, I think it is well positioned to be a strong partner in this sector
- UNDP has proved be the primary partner in this sector for state members and development partners, thanks to its neutrality and to the expertise it could mobilize with a view to efficiently and timely provide electoral assistance
- l'intervention du PNUD est déterminante quand à l'intervention d'autres partenaires et le PNUD depuis les années 1990 est devenu le pilier de l'appui international aux elections
- Many things still to be improved, but the presence of UNDP on electoral processes and its work are indispensable to build confidence and credibility and reinforce democracy.
- Multi-lateral engagement is complex and no one right correct response is possible rather leadership must be both sound and credible in terms of integrity of person and process.
- UNDP can bridge the gap between the donor community and the national government and stakeholders, which is often required and something not many actors can do. UNDP also has acquired good comparative experience and expertise in electoral assistance over the last decade.
- The UNDP is seen as the 'lead' in many countries asking for assistance. But they don't always have the personnel on the ground that can provide the partnership coordination needed, and sometimes act like they are the only ones who have authority to deliver anything of importance. This attitude can make other 'partners' feel abused and/or underutilized.
- Responsiveness, willingness to engage with donors, open to suggestions. Leadership on both the project and country office levels have excellent interpersonal skills and when they say they will do something, they do it.
- It wouldn't take much at the HQ level to improve this ranking - some vision, leadership at top levels, and acceptance of the word and intent of GA resolutions.
- The only one

How it compares with other partners in the business

- Within the current multilateral universe it has overarching integrity
- UNDP has the advantage of being -- and being seen as -- neutral, unbiased, without geopolitical axes to grind (as opposed to various International NGOs which rely on the West for their funding, e.g.)
- Despite some severe weaknesses I think UNDP is the most influential and neutral of the key players in the sector. IFES for example are must more effective in terms of procurement and recruitment but are not politically neutral
- Le PNUD a été un acteur déterminant qui a permis les élections en RCA.
- Reliable and usually longer term commitment
- Many years of experience in the area. Good partner for Resource Mobilization. Partner trusted by stakeholders
- Generally perceived unbiased, it is one of the good partners in the field.
- In contrast to other organizations, the UNDP is rated quite highly in my regard

Comparative advantage

- It has global reach and practitioners with comparative experience to call upon. It has a solid base of TA experience and can procure and manage funds quickly and capably
- Impartial
- Le PNUD est une agence de développement et de mise en oeuvre. IL dispose de l'expérience et c'est une structure pérenne. Il peut être présent à toutes les étapes d'un processus électoral (avant-pendant-post)-. Le PNUD a la capacité de développer des programmes ayant des impacts horizontaux pour l'amélioration de la gouvernance dans un pays. C'est donc un avantage certain pour le PNUD dans ce secteur où il peut établir/planifier avec le grouvernement des programmes sur 5 ans induisant un cyle électoral
- Because it is able to activate its global expertise to support country systems, where it is lacking internally at the field level. It supports impartially
- It focuses on democratic governance and targets on building the capacity of the national government agencies including CSOs.
- Good, solid and knowledgeable
- UNDP has essential role because it is the UN, is more likely to be seen as neutral and acceptable by governments
- They are the only one already in place
- UNDP plays a good role when it comes to long term electoral cycle projects. It is not however well suited to provide assistance to specific electoral events.

Relationships in UN system

- Parts of UNDP do not accept the leadership role of the focal point for UN electoral assistance and EAD
- UNDP does not always seem committed to a One UN approach to electoral assistance
- Basically the approach and understanding of the needs, contextual environment and rapid response, as well as support with qualified staff is not the most appropriate and in most cases it looks like UNDP is not happy nor validates the presence of other UN departments in this particular field
- UNDP is the main provider of electoral cycle assistance on the UN side and is an important player in the field.

UNDP staff and capacity

- It depends a lot on the competence and attitude of UNDP staff managing the electoral sector; they are sometimes over worked with more than one portfolio (ie governance, elections, etc) and just don't have the necessary time
- It depends mostly on who is on UNDP team
- Excellent staff quality, commitment to working together in the spirit of «delivering as one».
- If the technical support team on the ground is effective UNDP is an excellent partner in the process.
- Lots of bright and committed people, huge resources and capacities to influence actors in the process
- UNDP's presence is always assured even though its effectiveness often depends on the capacity and foresight of its officers on the ground.
- UNDP is an organization with experience and staff well trained
- UNDP has supported a number of electoral processes and has as such a vast experience and network into which one can tap.
- Overall UNDP provides a professional service.

Positive Aspects

Role and attributes

- UNDP have all chance to be independent and impartial in all kind of elections
- One thing worth appreciating is the fiscal responsibility exhibited by UNDP in managing the funds earmarked for the project.
- UNDP has been quite flexible in terms of providing different type of support including technical and financial support to electoral processes in Afghanistan, where major tasks are required to be done in short notices and in a imperfect environment
- Well thought out policies and guidance,
- Well my rating is based on the fact that; it has a network, necessary capacity, and more to it offering collaborative trainings
- UNDP is always open to participate in the different aspects with the purpose of improving the electoral administration.

Partnership and coordination

- UNDP has been providing electoral assistance to the Bangladesh Election Commission since 1996, however its support was truly recognized and appreciated since the 2006-2007 period. UNDP provided the platform for the various stakeholders to come together and form partnerships, provided soft assistance and hard assistance as required, has provided excellent support in procurement and recruitment, has provided need of the moment assistance and through its most recent project SEMB, will be providing the five year electoral cycle approach assistance

Performance

- UNDP continues to do its best in all spheres. This has, however not resulted in the most desired outcomes in elections (as regards disputes).
- UNDP has always delivered
- VERY GOOD PERFORMANCE
- UNDP operates in a difficult political environment. Each election is different and will have successes and failures. For example, SNTV in Afghanistan is an outstanding UNDP and UN failure yet the history of this is a little more complicated and UNDP elections fought against it while UNAMA actively promoted it.
- Porque la situación institucional en la provincia de Córdoba y en la República Argentina es totalmente aceptable y regular; restando sólo ampliar la noción de proceso electoral a través de la incorporación de la de ciclo electoral y todas sus connotaciones implícitas.
- UNDP has done good work and can still do better
- UNDP can support material or money for training or awareness
- They can mobilize resources, although sometimes slowly; they have international input.
- My experience was quite good in some countries UNDP was active in electoral support.
- Because UNDP assisted the EMB in securing materials and offering training electoral process
- They have sponsored our strategic planning process and capacity building
- Voters register was acceptable to all parties, election went well, nobody died.

Negative aspects, challenges and improvements needed Performance and credibility

- The partnership of the UNDP is very valuable. But the one think that misses in it's partnership is the results certifications to increase its performance and credibility in the field of the electoral assistance.
- I have personally experienced some great cases, as well as some nightmares.
- UNDP's handling of a soft process like election has still miles to go.
- Variable experience depending on local circumstances and personal relationships.
- I rate the U.N.D.P at 4 because despite all their efforts elections still have some hitches in some countries
- UNDP tries to do its best but sometimes the NEC have many problems with UNDP regarding the understanding of UNDP rules and regulations because the NEC doesn't like to follow the rules even its members have been trained
- UNDP with its experience and knowledge of the country can smooth the process but at the same time can also be a constraint to the work that has very limited time.
- UNDP is new in this area compared to DPKO. It is doing well however efforts need to be put in the area of the relies of fund from the country offices and then the procurement of electoral material.

Partnerships

- It has a legitimacy that no other organisation can provide Its performance is almost universally weak so can only be viewed as an unreliable partner. Whenever you know you're going to be working with UNDP on an elections support programme, you know the process will be tough!
- Because they usually collaborate poorly. I have worked in ten different countries where UNDP was active and in eight of the ten, UNDP had to be dragged into a productive collaboration or actively resisted getting involved at all. In only one country was the collaboration exemplary. In one country, UNDP changed the content of a Third party evaluation report on one of their training projects, after it was submitted and without permission of the authors, to be more complementary of their efforts, even though, overall the evaluation was very positive. This is just one example of their fear of any criticism.
- There is room for improvement to enable it be a good partner
- Seems to be doing good work and with good relations with government, seen as an impartial actor. However very slow to respond to and to coordinate with international partners such as donors. Not very responsive towards the partners in the basket fund.
- There are however instances where in some UNDP offices there is confusion of the role of UNDP and the role of the intended beneficiaries and partners. Weak in payments, Lengthy delays in reimbursement to partners.
- (partnership) Has been decreasing

Transformative change needed

- There are many strengths but also weaknesses and challenges which could be addressed if UNDP was willing to self examine and acknowledge weaknesses as opposed to wearing blinkers blaming others UNDP has huge potential but it is constrained by policy, nepotism and a lack of courage to change and adapt
- Its inability to include all stakeholders (national) in the policy formulation and implementation phase.

Absence of evaluation tool

- UNDP shows up to assist election bodies more at the event of election and not supporting the electoral cycle
- UNDP extends assistance at the highest level so it is not understandable whether it come down or not

Other Comments

- Haven't done anything.
- Por la experiencia en México de las misisones de asistencia y capacitación para observadores nacionales y extranjeros
- I have not had the opportunity to work directly with UNDP on Election matters and am not aware of them having operating in the countries I have worked
- Here, a distinction needs to be made between countries where UNDP works alone and countries where assistance is provided through a DPKO mission.
- Electoral processes needs assistance financial and technical

How often do you use these website resources?					
Answer Options	**Never**	**Occasionally**	**Frequently**	**Very Frequently**	**Response Count**
ACE Electoral Knowledge Network	27	69	64	32	192
iKNOW Politics	108	52	14	2	176
AGORA	120	46	7	0	173
EC-UNDP Joint Task Force	61	76	31	11	179
Wikipedia	21	71	55	34	181

Are you familiar with BRIDGE? (please mark all that apply)		
Answer Options	**Response Percent**	**Response Count**
Yes, I am a BRIDGE certified trainer	14.1%	29
Yes, I or my organization have received BRIDGE training	26.7%	55
Yes, I or my organization has funded and/or provided BRIDGE training	27.2%	56
I am familiar with the name but have no experience with BRIDGE	35.9%	74
No, I am not familiar with BRIDGE	14.1%	29

For those who knew BRIDGE:

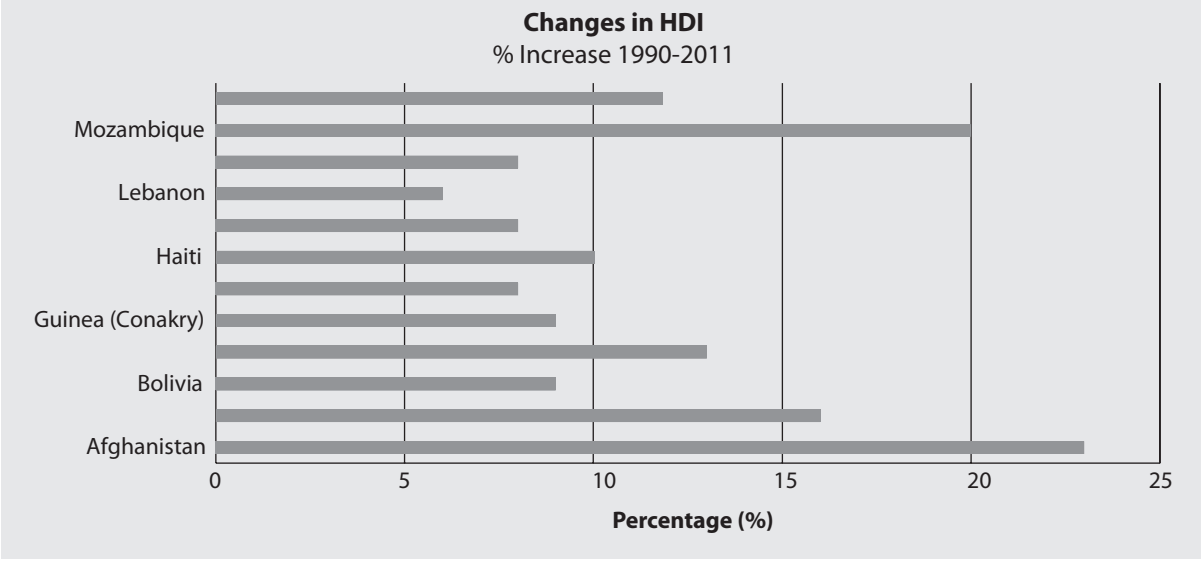
Please check the box that best corresponds to your situation and opinions							
Answer Options	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Rating Average**	**Response Count**
Bridge is useful (1 = not useful, 5 = extremely useful)	1	5	22	35	33	3.98	96
Our organization provides BRIDGE Training (1 = never, 5 = on a continual basis)	15	9	20	20	21	3.27	85
We fund BRIDGE training (1 = never, 5 = frequently)	15	8	24	20	17	3.19	84
We train all new staff in BRIDGE (1 = no BRIDGE training, 5 = all staff at all levels trained in BRIDGE)	28	21	18	8	5	2.26	80

Annex 8

CASE STUDY COUNTRY INDICATORS

The evaluation looked at a range of indicators for the country case studies that were listed in the Inception Report.[115] This annex presents some of the indicators primarily for the country case study countries and are for illustrative purposes only as attributing change for these differences to UNDP electoral efforts is not possible in most cases due to the large number of factors and other variables.

Figure A8-1. Human Development Index



Note: Human Development Index changes are due to a large number of factors and cannot be directly attributed to UNDP electoral efforts. Chart is for information on country context.

Source: UNDP, *Human Development Report 2011: Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All,* UNDP, 2011.

115 UNDP, 'Inception Report for the Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening Electoral Systems and Processes', Evaluation Office, 2 September 2011.

Figure A8-2. Change in voter turnout for legislative elections over 10 years (%)

Country	%
Afghanistan	–7.10%
Bangladesh	29.81%
Bolivia	22.39%
Chad	6.46%
Guinea	0.00%
Guyana	–12.18%
Haiti	–21.85%
Kyrgyzstan	–4.51%
Lebanon	23.63%
Mexico	–16.50%
Mozambique	–43.45%

Note: Data not available for Guinea as legislative elections have not yet taken place.
Source: International IDEA Voter Turnout Database

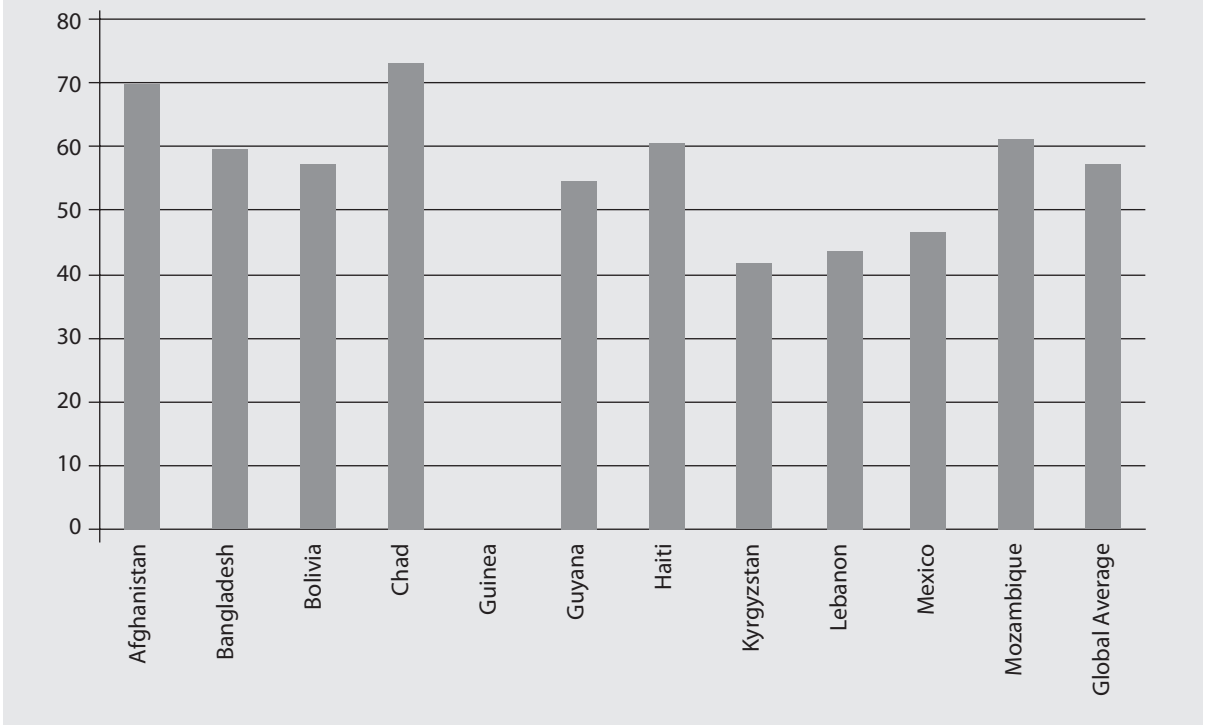
Figure A8-3. Women in parliament (lower house of or unicameral system parliament): case study countries (%), 2000 and 2010

Country	2000	2010
Afghanistan	22.50	27.45
Bangladesh	2.00	18.55
Bolivia	18.46	26.38
Chad	5.81	12.77
Guinea	25.00	–
Guyana	20.00	31.40
Haiti	3.61	4.20
Kyrgyzstan	2.22	23.33
Lebanon	3.13	2.34
Mexico	16.00	26.20
Mozambique	12.99	39.20

Figure A8-4. Women in parliament: regional averages (for regions with UNDP presence), 2000 and 2011

Country	2000			2011		
Africa	11.9	13.9	12.1	20.4	19.1	20.3
Asia	15	13.9	12.1	18.3	15.2	18
Arab States	3.8	2.7	3.6	13.5	7.3	12.2
Pacific	12	25.6	13.6	12.9	32.6	15.2

Figure A8-5. Gender Inequality Index, 1995–2010



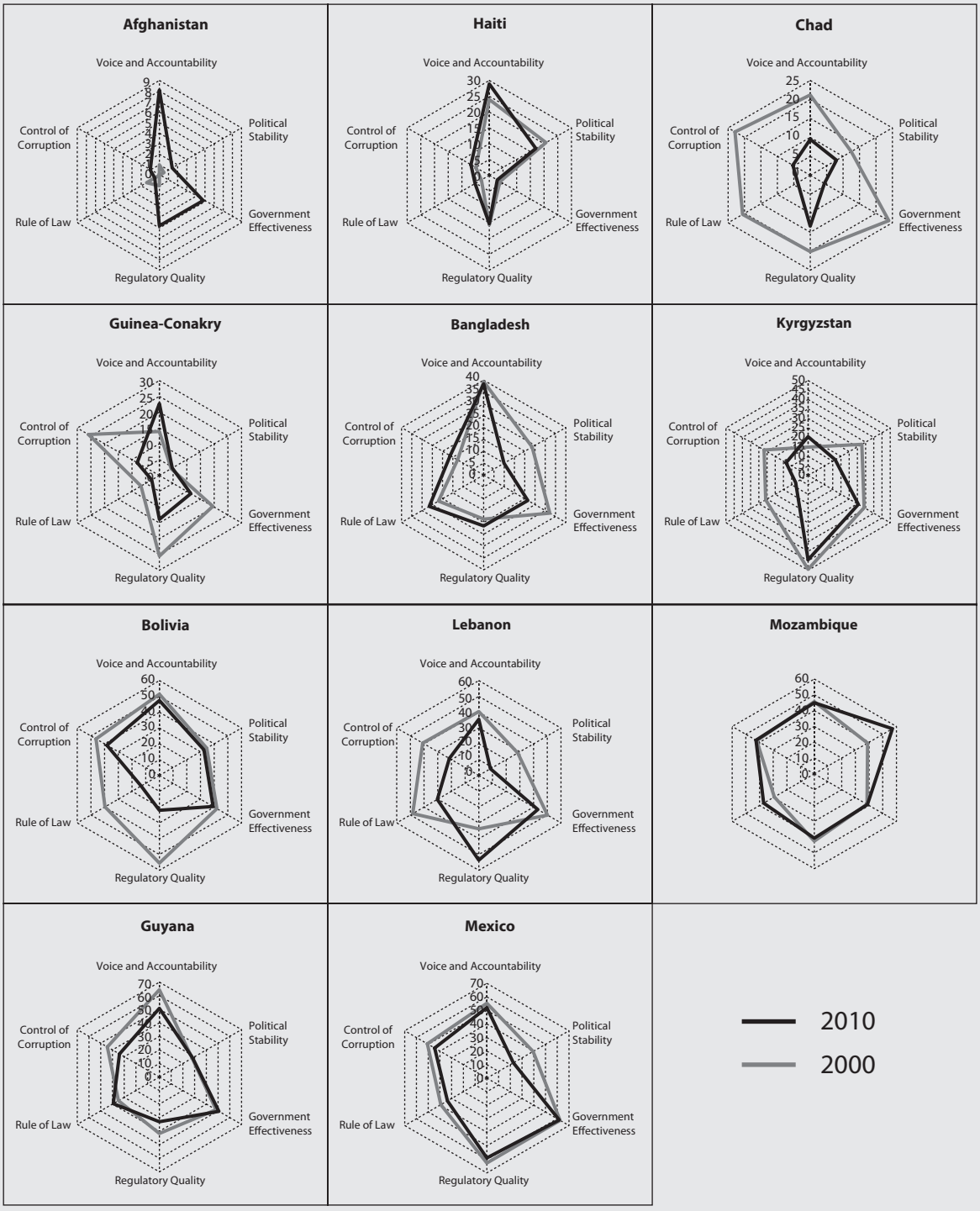
Note: Data not available for Guinea.
Source: UNDP, Gender Inequality Index (GII) Trend (1995-2011) http:/hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/gii/.

Figure A8-6. World Bank governance indicators for case study countries, 2011

Country	V&A	PS&AV/T	GE
Afghanistan	9.56	1.12	4.82
Bangladesh	35.49	14.32	25.80
Bolivia	48.80	27.68	38.43
Chad	13.64	8.59	12.22
Guinea	24.02	10.77	14.02
Guyana	56.77	29.73	48.33
Haiti	22.16	13.05	5.11
Kyrgyzstan	21.31	23.14	29.13
Lebanon	35.37	16.24	46.30
Mexico	52.68	29.67	61.58
Mozambique	45.76	50.95	38.58
	33.23	**20.48**	**29.48**

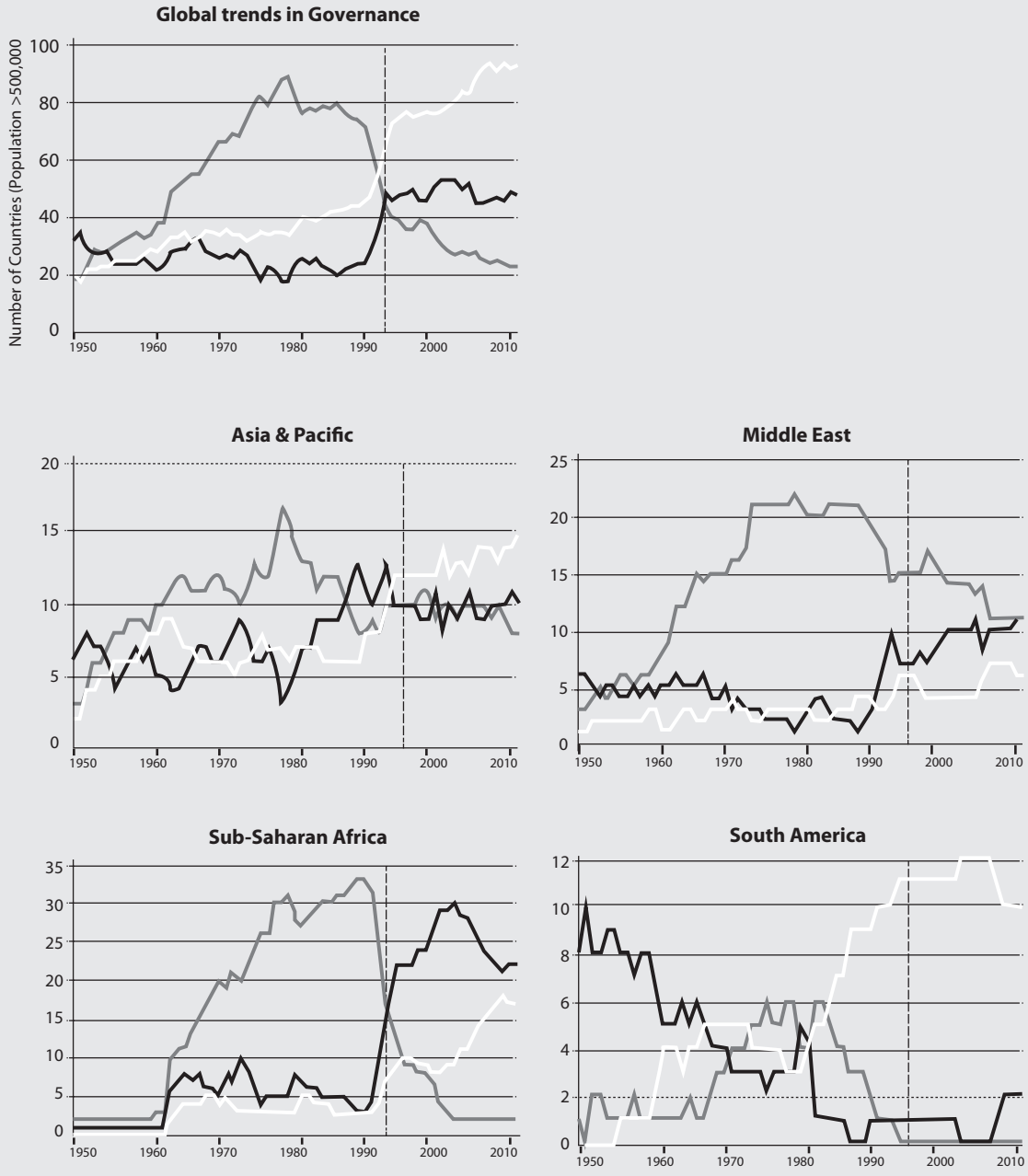
Note: V&A – Voice and Accountability; PS & AV/T – Political Stability and Absence of Violence and Terrorism; GE – Government Effectiveness

Figure A8-7. World Bank Governance Indicators: Comparison between 2000 and 2010



Source: World Bank Governance Institute

Figure A8-8. World Polity Indexes



Source: World Polity IV: http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity06.htm#sam

Annex 9

COUNTRY EXPERIENCE OF CORE TEAM EVALUATORS FOR ELECTORAL PROGRAMMES

Angola

Afghanistan

Armenia

Australia

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Botswana

Cambodia

Canada

Cape Verde

Costa Rica

Cote d'Ivoire

Chile

Denmark

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Ethiopia

Ghana

Guinea – Conakry

Haiti

Hungary

Georgia

Ghana

Guyana

India

Indonesia

Kenya

Kosovo

Jordan

Lebanon

Lesotho

Malawi

Mali

Mauritius

Mexico

Moldova

Mongolia

Morocco

Mozambique

Nepal

Netherlands

Netherlands Antilles

Nigeria

Papua New Guinea

Portugal

Senegal

Sierra Leone

Solomon Islands

South Africa

Sudan (South)

Sweden

Switzerland

Tajikistan

Timor-Leste

Thailand

Turkmenistan

Yemen

Zambia

Zimbabwe

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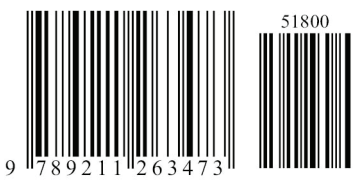

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