

# GPECS II



## Global Project for Electoral Cycle Support II



GENDER COMPONENT



June 2015

## Rapid Respond Mechanism for Women's Participation

### Quick Intervention Fund for Women's Participation in Post-Conflict Settings and Countries in Transition

In the aftermath of peace-agreements, coup d'états or any other unconstitutional regime change, interim governments and/or the international community often call for immediate elections in order to (re-) establish a legitimate government. Democratic elections are considered to be the foundation for the return or the transition to a civil, democratic and accountable governance. While elections are a milestone on the way to peace and democracy, they cannot be considered a quick "fix". Elections which are not based on responsive and accountable institutions and not conducted in an inclusive and credible manner, can be a trigger for (further) unrest and violent conflict. Hence, it is of utmost importance to have an independent, capable and well respected electoral management body, established and constitutional political parties, independent media, a vibrant civil society and a strategy for voter education which targets all groups within the society, especially marginalized or disadvantaged groups such as women, youth and ethnic minorities. The reform processes, stakeholder dialogues and national consultations that accompany peace-processes and the re-organization of the political and institutional set-up during the post-war period, can provide entry points for women's and youth's

political participation. Therefore, it is necessary to assist national authorities, as well as the civil society during this key period with advisory services, capacity development measures and the provision of experiences from other countries and respective best practices.

Support to relevant institutions and processes is core to the credibility of elections and hence essential for the peaceful transition of the respective country. In order to respond to sudden needs and requests for assistance or kick-off electoral assistance projects, UNDP/GPECS has established the **Quick Intervention Fund (QIF) for Women's Participation in Post-Conflict Settings and Countries in Transitions.**

QIF, a successful innovation from GPECS first phase (2009 - 2014), will continue to be an integral tool for GPECS electoral assistance and women empowerment in (post-) conflict countries. The focus of QIF measures is the inclusion of women in the electoral process as voters, candidates and within electoral administration(s). With the support of QIF, women can be enabled to affect change, to learn lessons from other experience and to sustain their participation throughout a transitional electoral cycle. QIF measures can also facilitate specific



debates on constitutional and other legal reforms, as well as on temporary special measures (TSMs) affecting women's political participation. Via UNDP Country Offices (COs), and if applicable, in cooperation with gender advisors within peacekeeping DPKO or DPA special political missions, the fund is easily accessible for women's organizations, women's political party caucuses, and other eligible civil society groups.

Measures to be supported by the QIF can include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting **gender mapping, audit, or assessment exercises** to identify needs and key entry points for addressing gender equality in the national electoral cycle;
- Supporting **capacity development** of key stakeholders, including Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) to mainstream gender in electoral administration;
- Supporting **women's groups mobilization** to influence inclusive constitutional and legal reform processes;
- Provision of **direct technical expertise** to relevant stakeholders (such as commissions or committees) at key points in the transition processes, including in constitutional, legislative reform(s) or the development of an EMB gender policy or action plan;
- Support **South-South** information exchanges and the establishment of good practices, including through peer-to-peer learning and exchange visits;
- Support for women holding **political mandates**, including parliamentary initiatives to develop and support women's caucuses and other meeting forums;
- Provision of **skills development** for women seeking political careers, including candidate training.

In order to execute measures that target these objectives, UNDP Country Offices can apply for QIF funds in case a concrete need is expressed by a national stakeholder and confirmed by the CO. The COs are requested to formulate an 'expression of interests' and submit it to the GPECS Manager and the GPECS Policy Analyst Gender and Elections in HQ. Thereafter, the QIF Advisory Committee<sup>1</sup> will review the proposal and make a decision on funding or recommendations for revision. Approval for funding will be depending on the proposals compliance with the core criteria defined in the QIF guideline.

Key criteria include (among others) that the main objective of the measures is to advance women's electoral and political participation; that the proposed measures are coherent with the recommendations of the NAM report in case the intervention directly targets electoral assistance (support to EMBs, voter education, etc.); as well as that the defined risks of operating in a post-conflict setting are manageable and the impact monitoring of the intervention is feasible.

In most cases, QIF funds are utilized for short- or medium-term experts, which are rapidly deployed to the countries in order to support the national counterparts in various areas related to the electoral and political participation of women. GPECS advisors in UNDP headquarters and in the regional service centres provide advisory services to the respective country office during the design and implementation of the QIF measures, as well as monitor, backstop and evaluate ongoing initiatives. The quarterly and final reports of the QIF interventions will contribute to the global lessons learned, as well as to policy development, good practices and the developing of training materials.

QIF allows for donors to earmark contributions for certain countries or regions, and impact monitoring reports will be provided by GPECS on an annual basis.

<sup>1</sup> The Advisory Committee is composed of the GPECS Manager and the GPECS Policy Analyst Gender and Elections, Director BPPS Gender Team (or delegated staff member), Gender Team Leader in the respective regional centre, and Policy Specialists for Gender, Political Processes, and Peacebuilding in HQs.